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## Renewable Taos Newsletter - August 2016

1 message

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To: David Munoz <dmunoz@taosnet.com>

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# Newsletter

Hello, All — Remember to click on images and blue highlighted text for more information.

## COLORADO PUTS SOLAR POWER WITHIN REACH OF THE POOR

[The Colorado Energy Office](#) in 2015 issued a new grant to build solar projects for several of its Rural Electric Cooperatives. The \$1.2 million grant is for building [Community Solar Projects](#) exclusively for households with low incomes.



**COLORADO LEADS THE NATION WITH APPROXIMATELY 28 COMMUNITY SOLAR PROJECTS IN OPERATION GENERATING MORE THAN 16 MEGAWATTS (MW).**

**THERE ARE 26 MORE COMMUNITY SOLAR PROJECTS IN DEVELOPMENT IN COLORADO WITH THE POTENTIAL TO GENERATE AN ADDITIONAL 31 MW.**

The Colorado Energy Office grant funded [GRID Alternatives](#), a solar non-profit, to build the projects. The Colorado chapter of GRID Alternatives claims the community solar facility for [Delta-Montrose Electric Association \(DMEA\)](#) is the largest low-income solar facility in the USA.

***"The idea is to build something that will lock in affordable long-term electricity for low income***

## NEWSLETTER Volume 1 Issue 8 August 26, 2016



## BOB BRESNAHAN BLOG ON KIT CARSON ELECTRIC CO-OP ISSUES

KCEC Board of Trustees Member Bob Bresnahan writes about our Co-op.

See Bob's perspectives and offer your own on KCEC and our regional transition to a clean energy economy.

**homeowners who often spend a higher percentage of their income on energy than others.”**

The DMEA facility provides 600 solar panels to offset the electricity bills of about 45 eligible low-income households. DMEA, like Kit Carson Electric, is a Rural Electric Cooperative demonstrating strong leadership in our renewable energy transition.



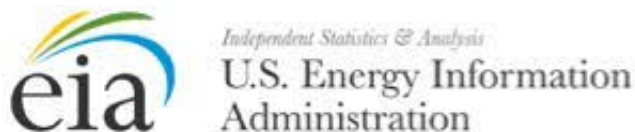
**GRID Alternatives' vision is a successful transition to clean, renewable energy that includes everyone. Our mission is to make renewable energy technology and job training accessible to underserved communities.**

**Renewable Taos states in its Core Values** that everyone in our communities at all levels of income is entitled to and should benefit from equal access to clean, renewable energy.

We recommend that our community — through our political representatives and Kit Carson Electric — form a commission on energy cost solutions for low income households. **Please contact us** if you or anyone you know would like to serve on such a commission.

## NATURAL GAS CO2 EMISSIONS SURPASS COAL

**The U.S. Energy Information Administration (EIA)** confirms the expected: In burning more and more natural gas (methane), we have reached the point where USA carbon dioxide (CO2) emissions from natural gas exceed those of burning coal.



### THE USEIA SHOWS THE SHARE OF TOTAL USA ELECTRICITY GENERATION BY SOURCE FOR 1950-2016

Carbon dioxide accumulates in Earth's atmosphere, and most of it remains there for hundreds of years. The CO2 we produce from



**READ MORE ABOUT COLORADO'S SOLAR GARDENS AND OTHER STORIES OF ENERGY INNOVATIONS AT INSIDE ENERGY**



### MAJOR ENERGY SOURCES AND PERCENT SHARE OF

burning fossil fuels — whether coal, oil or natural gas — only adds to the pollution problems we have already created.

Burning more and more natural gas — using the excuse that it is “cleaner burning than coal” — is not a solution to reducing global warming and stabilizing Earth’s climate.

Burning petroleum products (such as gasoline and diesel fuels) is also “cleaner” than burning coal, but we burn so much petroleum that its CO2 emissions far exceed those of either coal or natural gas.



**THE U.S. GLOBAL CHANGE RESEARCH PROGRAM PROVIDES ABUNDANT INFORMATION ON OUR CLIMATE CRISIS**

The substitution that matters most is replacing fossil fuels used for energy with renewables — primarily solar and wind power.

Renewable energy other than hydropower today stands at an anemic 7 to 8 percent of total power generation in the USA. We and the rest of our planet’s largest energy consumers need to push this percentage quickly into the 30-50 percent range, then beyond to help ensure climate stability.

Burning more and more natural gas will never stop carbon dioxide from further accumulating in Earth’s atmosphere, nor will burning more and more natural gas lead to climate stability.

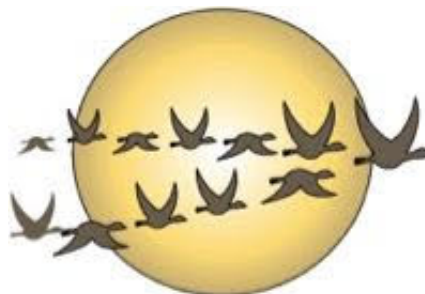
**AZTEC MUNICIPAL SCHOOL DISTRICT, NM INVESTS IN SOLAR TO CUT ENERGY COSTS**

In the heart of oil and natural gas country, a school district seeks to reduce its expenses by investing in solar power. In August 2016, board members of the Aztec Municipal School District approved a plan to install solar panels on the roofs and grounds of schools throughout the district.

The plan calls for installing 10 solar panel systems on the roofs of buildings at four schools, and building a ground-mounted solar farm on five acres of other school property.

**TOTAL USA ELECTRICITY GENERATION IN 2015**

- Coal = 33%**
  - Natural gas = 33%**
  - Nuclear = 20%**
  - Hydropower = 6%**
  - Other renewables = 7%**
    - Biomass = 1.6%**
    - Geothermal = 0.4%**
    - Solar = 0.6%**
    - Wind = 4.7%**
  - Petroleum = 1%**
  - Other gases = <1%**
- (SOURCE: EIA)**



**BE A RENEWABLE**



**AFFORDABLE SOLAR, BASED IN ALBUQUERQUE, NM WILL INSTALL THE NEW SOLAR SYSTEMS IN AZTEC**

According to the [Farmington Daily Times](#):

***“The district’s first solar project to install about \$350,000 in solar panels on the roofs of buildings at the district’s administrative office was completed at the end of July.”***

***“...the system could generate about 128 kilowatts of energy and about \$34,000 in electricity savings in its first year, according to a proposal from Taos-based PPC Solar.”***

Energy cost savings will allow the school district to employ more teachers, purchase more school supplies, and pursue more academic-focused projects.

The City of Aztec, like Kit Carson Electric Cooperative, is under contract with [Guzman Energy](#) for its electricity services. Guzman Energy is providing the city with cleaner and more affordable renewable energy.

The Aztec situation is a reminder that both solar photovoltaic and wind power today are cheaper than any other sources of fossil fuel or nuclear energy — even for those living next door to massive coal-fired power plants.



**LEARN MORE ABOUT THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION’S CLEAN ENERGY FOR ALL AMERICANS INITIATIVE**

***“More than 120 housing authorities, rural electric co-ops, power companies, and organizations in more than 36 states across the country are committing to investing \$287 million and putting in place more than 280 megawatts (MW) of solar energy projects, including projects to help low- and***

**TAOS MEMBER**



**JOIN NOW!**



**SUPPORT OUR LOCAL SOLAR SYSTEMS INSTALLERS!**



**GUZMAN RENEWABLE ENERGY PARTNERS - OUR NEW ELECTRICITY PROVIDER**

*moderate- income communities save on their energy bills and further the deployment of community solar."*

## NEW MEXICO IGNORES ITS RENEWABLE ENERGY TREASURES WHILE STATE REVENUES PLUNGE

New Mexico is one of several states in the throes of a financial emergency because of the continuing slump in prices of oil and natural gas.

Our state has chosen not to benefit from its vast solar and wind resources, choosing instead to focus on fossil fuels and nuclear power.

New Mexico has supplied coal-fired and natural-gas fired electricity to California for decades. About 30 percent of electricity and 90 percent of the natural gas produced in New Mexico goes westward to Arizona and California.

Today, California and Arizona are both seeking to limit their reliance on fossil fuels. California intends to be operating on 50 percent renewables by 2030, and expects to terminate its coal contracts with New Mexico and other states by 2025.



**CALIFORNIA SENATE BILL 350, THE CLEAN ENERGY AND POLLUTION REDUCTION ACT OF 2015, REQUIRES THAT ELECTRICITY SOLD TO CA CUSTOMERS FROM RENEWABLE ENERGY SOURCES MUST INCREASE TO 50% BY DECEMBER 31, 2030.**

**Arizona Public Service Company (APS)** is also seeking greater amounts of renewables for its energy portfolio. Even today, APS buys wind power from the **Aragonne Mesa** and **High Lonesome** wind farms in east-central New Mexico.



**ARIZONA PUBLIC SERVICE COMPANY (APS) INTENDS TO MEET 65% OF NEW ENERGY DEMANDS BY 2025 WITH RENEWABLES AND ENERGY EFFICIENCY**

New Mexico should benefit economically by developing our solar and wind resources to replace our increasingly obsolescent fossil fuel power generation.



**NEW MEXICO DEPENDS**



NM has longstanding energy business relationships with CA and AZ that should continue throughout the ongoing renewable energy transition.

The current NM budget shortfall makes it increasingly clear that the market for fossil fuels is in steep decline. It is long past time for our state to engage in the rapidly increasing market for renewables.

Renewable Taos is telling federal, state and local political representatives statewide to help resolve New Mexico's budget issues now and into the future by supporting the ongoing renewable energy transition.

Please join us by urging politicians, businesses, NGOs and others to make the changeover to a sound economic future by developing clean energy — New Mexico's most valuable and abundant resource.

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## OUR MISSION

**Renewable Taos** is dedicated to promoting and facilitating a full transition to renewable energy and energy efficiency in Taos County and our surrounding region.

We advocate for local generation of renewable energy with an emphasis on local ownership. We build community partnerships to facilitate the transition to renewables, and propose and support projects. We recognize that energy efficiency is integral to the transition to renewable energy. We also work with other organizations to change the political climate in the state and country to facilitate the transition to renewable energy and energy efficiency.

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**Edited by:** William M. Brown, August 2016

**HEAVILY ON OIL AND  
NATURAL GAS REVENUES**

**THESE REVENUES  
CONTINUE TO DECLINE  
BECAUSE OF LOW PRICES**



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