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## Renewable Taos Newsletter - May 2016

1 message

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# Newsletter

Greetings — Here is the May 2016 sample of Renewable Taos Inc.'s monthly newsletter.

Please reply to me at [swctaos@gmail.com](mailto:swctaos@gmail.com) if you would like to be on our email list for monthly newsletters and occasional action alerts.

Thanks! — Bill Brown

## NEWSLETTER

Volume 1 Issue 5

May 28, 2016

### BOB BRESNAHAN ELECTED TO KCEC BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Bob Bresnahan of Renewable Taos, Inc.** was elected to the Kit Carson Electric Cooperative, Inc. (KCEC) Board of Trustees in the May 10, 2016 District 1 election. Bob joins Luisa Valero-Mylet, David Torres and Manuel Medina as your representatives for Taos, El Prado, Ranchos de Taos, Arroyo Hondo, Valdez, Pilar, Twining, Taos Ski Valley, San Cristobal, Tierra Blanca, Valle Escondido, Pot Creek, and surrounding areas.



The **KCEC Service Territory map** shows the boundaries of all five KCEC Districts. Bob and re-elected incumbent Luisa Mylet will be formally seated on the KCEC Board of Trustees at the KCEC Annual Meeting on Saturday, June 18, 2016 at Taos High School.

### ARE YOU A MEMBER?

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### JOIN NOW!

**WE WANT YOUR FEEDBACK ON ALL ASPECTS OF OUR WORK!**

### CALIFORNIA'S COAL USE DROPS TO ALMOST NOTHING

California began major reductions in its use of coal-fired power with its **Greenhouse Gas Emissions Performance Standard Act of 2006 (CA Senate Bill 1368)**. The Act limits investments in baseload power generation to power plants that meet emissions performance standards that are unattainable by conventional coal-fired power plants.

This means that power generators wanting to sell their power in California must also meet the state's cleaner power standards.



In response to the Act, the share of California's total megawatt hours of power generated by coal dropped from about one percent in 2007 to about 0.2 percent in 2015. Today, there is only one active coal-fired electricity generating plant in California.

Further, California seeks to end all affiliations with out-of-state coal-fired power plants — including those in New Mexico — by 2025.

Whereas coal-fired power in California is being replaced with power from natural gas and renewable energy, major California efforts are continuing to reduce reliance on natural gas.

Thus, it make a lot of sense for New Mexico to step up its generation of renewable energy for sale to California, and quickly decrease our production and generation of fossil-fuel energy that will not have a California market within a few years.

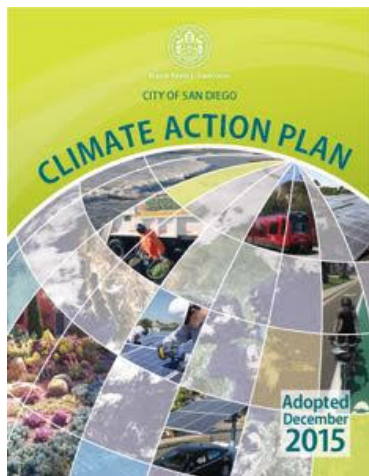
Despite criticism of the kilowatt-hour costs of electricity in California, the state consumes far less electricity per household than New Mexico and most other USA states. California's average monthly household electricity bills in 2014 were about \$23 less than the USA national average.



**SUPPORT OUR LOCAL SOLAR SYSTEMS INSTALLERS!**

## **SAN DIEGO, CA COMMITS TO 100% RENEWABLE ENERGY BY 2035**

San Diego, California recently enacted a legally binding initiative that commits the city to running on 100 percent renewable energy while cutting greenhouse gases emissions by 50 percent by 2035. This is a notable achievement because it happened with bipartisan support between a Republican Mayor and a Democratic City Council.



**ARE YOU A MEMBER?**



**JOIN NOW!**

San Diego's solar installations have grown by 76 percent over 2014-2016, and the city is looking for more and more solar and wind resources.

*"In addition to focusing on solar, wind, and tree canopy expansion, San Diego will also look to updating its transportation strategies. While this certainly covers an array of variables, the city will pinpoint its efforts on reducing vehicle miles traveled, improvements in mobility, and upgrading fuel efficiency in vehicles."*



**SAN DIEGO, CA SKYLINE**

*"San Diego is a leader in innovation and sustainability," the Climate Action Plan reads. "By striking a sensible balance between protecting our environment and growing our economy, San Diego can support clean technology, renewable energy, and economic growth."*



**AMERICAN WIND ENERGY ASSOCIATION**

## **SOLAR AND WIND POWER COMPLEMENT EACH OTHER IN OUR REGION**



**WE WANT  
YOUR  
FEEDBACK  
ON ALL  
ASPECTS OF  
OUR WORK!**

Throughout Northern New Mexico, we have the combined advantages of solar and wind power. We have abundant solar energy available throughout most days of the year. We have a huge solar resource throughout the Taos Valley.

Both during the day and after sunset, we also have a substantial wind resource. Wind is especially valuable for powering us through the early evening hours when our electricity demands and costs are greatest.

We can develop wind power locally to offset our fossil fuel energy demands, and we can buy power from wind farms in northeastern New Mexico. Both options have their pros and cons.

Accessing wind power from east of our Sangre de Cristo Mountains will require upgrades to the transmission lines that carry electrical power from Springer, NM through our mountains and into Taos.

Renewable Taos, Inc. is investigating all possible avenues to supplying renewable energy to power 100 percent of the energy demands of our citizens. We will keep everyone in our region updated on our progress through our Newsletter, public meetings, and a variety of other communications.

**Feel free to contact us at any time with your questions and ideas about our work.**

## **NET METERING IS A NET BENEFIT**

[The Brookings Institution's Advanced Industry Series](#) published a paper on May 23, 2016 enumerating the many benefits of net metering. Cost-benefit analysis of data from

the 41 USA states with net metering rules (including New Mexico) support the conclusion:

***"...whether conducted by PUCs (Public Utility Commissions), national labs or academics, the economic benefits of net metering actually outweigh the costs and impose no significant cost increase for non-solar customers. Far from a net cost, net metering is in most cases a net benefit for the utility and for non-solar rate-payers."***

There is much work to be done in getting to a good rate design that is essential for both utility revenues and the growth of residential and small scale commercial solar power. Renewable Taos, Inc. currently is planning a project with Kit Carson Electric Cooperative and the [Rocky Mountain Institute](#) on creating a modern, fair rate design for KCEC customers.



[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD RMI'S MAY 2016 REPORT, "A REVIEW OF ALTERNATIVE RATE DESIGNS."](#)

The Brookings Institution paper offers a list of reforms needed to push regulators and utilities away from outdated and ineffective utility business models. New models must view net metering as an important tool for integrating renewable energy into states' energy portfolios as we transition away from fossil fuels. Better rate designs will encourage rather than prevent solar power expansion. The paper concludes:

***"Ultimately, distributed solar is here to stay at increasing scale, and so state policies to support it have entered an important new transitional phase. More and more states will now likely move to update their net-metering policies as the cost of solar continues to drop and more homeowners opt to install solar panels on their homes."***

***"Utilities should have a shot at fair revenues and adequate ratepayers. Solar customers and providers have a right to cost-effective, reliable access to the grid. And the broader public should be able to expect a continued solar power boom in U.S. regions as well as accelerated decarbonization of state economies."***

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## SUPPORT KIT CARSON IN BREAKING FREE FROM TRI-STATE

Please sign our [Renewable Taos Petition to the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission \(NMPRC\)](#). This petition is to show our support for [Kit Carson Electric Cooperative and its Board](#). You can sign the online petition, or contact us to sign and circulate a paper petition.

We've looked into the KCEC rate increase proposal carefully, and are confident that it is the best thing for our community. If you have any questions, please address them with a reply to this email, or to one of our members. Also, please forward this request to other Kit Carson Electric Cooperative members.

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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.



**ARE YOU A MEMBER?**

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**JOIN NOW!**



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

This message was sent to Renewable Taos Members by [swctaos@gmail.com](mailto:swctaos@gmail.com)

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