

# The Oklahoma WinCharger

1 January 2002

(A Newsletter for Oklahoma Wind Stakeholders)

Vol. 2, #1



## Oklahoma Wind Power Initiative

A Collaborative Project by the  
University of Oklahoma and Oklahoma State University  
based at the

Environmental Verification and Analysis Center

710 Asp Ave., Suite 8

Norman, OK 73069

Tel: (405) 447-8412

[www.seic.okstate.edu/owpai/](http://www.seic.okstate.edu/owpai/)

## Staff

Editor and contributor: Tim Hughes, OWPI, OU

Copy editor/contributor: Troy Simonsen, OWPI, OU

## Contributors:

Steve Stadler, Geography Department, OWPI - OSU

Mark Meo, Science and Public Policy Program, OWPI - OU

Mark Shafer, Oklahoma Climatological Survey, OWPI - OU

## Federal PTC Not Extended Before Expiration

**Republicans and Democrats Pledge to Extend Credit Next Year** *(Editor's note: the following 2 paragraphs are modified from a news bulletin distributed by the American Wind Energy Association in late December.)*

The wind energy Production Tax Credit (PTC) expired December 31 without being extended. Congress adjourned for the year without agreeing to an economic stimulus bill containing tax extensions or passing a routine one-year extension of expiring tax provisions. A 2-year PTC extension had been included in the "economic stimulus" bill but negotiations on that legislation – despite agreement on nearly every major issue – ultimately failed due to differences over how to deliver health care services to unemployed workers.

Key Senators and House members have indicated they plan to act on a tax extension bill next year. In the past, such bills have contained retroactive treatment for credits that have expired. Congress officially returns January 23, 2002, but is unlikely to take significant action on tax legislation until the spring. In the interim, AWEA will be seeking a letter from the Republican and Democratic leaders of the House and Senate tax committees indicating their intent to extend the PTC as expeditiously as possible next year.

What does this mean for Oklahoma? The WinCharger thinks that as long as the PTC is extended by late Spring of 2002 (and that seems

likely), there will be no serious delays to plans for wind farm development in Oklahoma. A more important driving factor for development is opening a market for wind power within the state. Since Oklahoma already has a state PTC, the next key-driving factor for market stimulus would be the creation of a statewide renewable portfolio standard (RPS is a green energy requirement); perhaps on the scale of the one that Texas has in place. Further discussions on RPSs and the economic development potential that can result will be addressed in future issues.

## OU Offers Renewable Energy Course

The University of Oklahoma's College of Geosciences is offering a new course on renewable energy through the School of Geography. GEOG 3890 or "Renewable Energy Resources" is a general education course (will satisfy "gen-ed" requirements) open to the entire campus. This new course will cover topics such as renewable energy technology, Oklahoma's potential as a major player in wind power, energy policies, options and the transitions to cleaner fuels. OU's Energy Management Program is allowing students in their program to take this course as one of three restrictive electives.

Mark Meo, Professor in Science and Public Policy, will lead the course and will be assisted by Tim Hughes, Project Director for OK Wind Power Initiative. Support for development of this course has come from OU's Dean of GeoSciences, Dr. John Snow, who has had a long-time interest in

renewable energy technologies, and OU's Gen-Ed committee.

### **OG&E polls web site visitors on green energy**

The Oklahoma Gas and Electric Co. is conducting a poll on citizens' interest in renewable energy. Interested readers can find the form on OG&E's web site at: [www.oge.com/backup/surveys/renewable.htm](http://www.oge.com/backup/surveys/renewable.htm). The WinCharger will address green pricing programs - those in which customers may opt to pay for electricity generated from "green" sources (wind, biomass, solar, hydro, etc.) as part or all of their loads - in later issues. We will also watch for the results of the poll and report back to our readers.

### **2<sup>nd</sup> Interim Study on Green Energy**

The House Committee on Energy and Utility Regulation will hold a second interim study on green energy on January 23, 2002 at the State Capitol, Room 432A. Presenters will be given about one hour in the early part of the committee's morning agenda. Presentations will focus on the economic benefits of green power. Call or email the WinCharger, or visit the Oklahoma Renewable Energy Council web site ([www.seic.okstate.edu/orec](http://www.seic.okstate.edu/orec)) for more information on presentations and times.

### **Cosponsors sought for 2002 Oklahoma Wind/Bioenergy Conference**

The second annual Oklahoma Wind Power Conference will be held on April 11, 2002 at the Myriad Convention Center in downtown Oklahoma City. For this conference, the goal is to attract at least 500 attendees and 25 exhibitors and to bring together a yet wider base of Oklahoma stakeholders. The agenda will be expanded to offer more breakout sessions catering to many different areas and levels of interest and expertise. This event promises to be even more educational and exciting than last May's conference. It will offer great opportunities for stakeholders in the Oklahoma renewable energy industry (or those interested in entering the industry) to network and learn about the tremendous potential for economic benefit and long-term energy production offered by wind power, bioenergy, and related technologies.

A web site will be constructed soon and more information on agenda, speakers, etc. will be provided in the February and March issues of the WinCharger. In the meantime, planners are happy to hear from potential cosponsors. If you are

interested in having yourself, your company or other organization listed as a cosponsor, please call or email Tim Hughes, Planning Committee Chair, c/o the WinCharger.

### **Energy Policy Preview for 2002**

#### **By Mark Meo**

When Congress reconvenes on January 23<sup>rd</sup>, it will begin a much-anticipated debate about the future of the nation's energy prospects. For a variety of reasons, renewable energy is expected to play an important role in the country's evolving energy policy. Several policy options have been proposed for adoption in the Energy Policy Act of 2002, which was introduced by New Mexico Senator Jeff Bingaman on December 5<sup>th</sup> (see [www.senate.gov/~bingaman/](http://www.senate.gov/~bingaman/)). As an "infant industry" compared to more traditional energy systems, the renewables industry requires government intervention in the form of market agreements, purchase agreements, tax credits, technology development and demonstration, and related forms of subsidies to enable it to compete more effectively in an energy market that is undergoing a transition toward less regulation. Of all the renewables, wind energy is the most attractive to Great Plains states and is expected to get a good deal of attention from lawmakers.

According to Senator Bingaman, the Energy Policy Act is designed to:

- ensure a diversity of fuels and technologies for adequate and affordable supplies of energy;
- improve the efficiency and productivity of energy use including the reliability of the electric transmission system; and
- keep environmental protection, including climate, in mind as the country develops its energy policy.

With respect to fostering renewable energy, the bill identifies five different mechanisms.

1. Provide market incentives that would triple the amount of electricity produced from renewable energy over the next 20 years, including:
  - a Renewables Portfolio Standard that creates a market for new renewable resources;
  - a partial federal load purchase requirement (7.5%) for renewables;
  - reauthorization of the renewable energy production incentive to help rural electric cooperatives and municipal utilities generate renewable energy.

2. Expand the contribution of renewables in powering vehicles in transportation. By 2005, 75 percent of the federal government's vehicles that can burn alternative fuels will be required to do so. By 2012, 5 billion gallons per year of renewable fuels will be blended into gasoline.
3. Help renewables contribute more to the energy mix by removing existing regulatory barriers that impede greater use of renewable energy. This is done by:
  - requiring electric utilities to offer their customers "net metering,";
  - requiring fair transmission rules for intermittent generation, such as wind and solar, so that they are not unfairly penalized;
  - mandating easier interconnection for distributed energy production into the interstate transmission grid; and
  - requiring states to examine facilitating interconnection of distributed energy in local electric distribution systems.
4. Promote the use of renewables by disseminating information about, and facilitating access to, areas with high resource potential, particularly on public lands. The bill creates a pilot program in the Department of Interior for development of wind and solar projects on federal lands. Also, the bill authorizes a study of renewable energy development potential on Indian tribal lands, and requires an annual publication of an assessment of available domestic renewable resources by the Department of Energy.
5. Enlarge the R&D budget for renewables from an authorized level of \$500 million in fiscal year 2003 to \$733 million in fiscal year 2006.

As reported in the December WinCharger, renewable energy figures prominently in the Senate agriculture bill (S. 1731) introduced by Senator Tom Harkin, which includes a new title, **Title IX – Energy**. Senate Bill 1731, also likely to be debated by Congress in early 2002, seeks to enhance the agricultural sector's ability to produce renewable energy for several reasons. These include increasing energy security and independence, increasing farmer and rancher income, promoting rural economic development, providing environmental and public health benefits, and improving electric power grid reliability. The bill notes that wind energy is one of the fastest growing clean energy technologies and that there are tremendous economic development and environmental quality benefits to be achieved by developing both large-

scale and small-scale wind power projects on farms and in rural communities. It also notes that farm-based renewable energy generation can become one of the major cash crops in the nation, thereby improving the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of family farmers, ranchers, and others and revitalizing rural communities.

**Reminder: OK Native American Wind Workshop set for January 9th**

A workshop on wind power development specifically targeted for Native American groups will be held on January 9, 2002 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on the Tulsa University Campus in the Allen Chapman Activities Center, Chouteau – C (second floor).

There is no registration fee, but advanced registration is important in planning for lunch. To register or for more information, contact:

Earl Hatley,  
 Director of Tribal Environmental Mgmt. Services  
 (918) 631-3049  
 email: earl-hatley@utulsa.edu

**Reminder: E-mail Distribution of WinCharger**

Due to the need to conserve funds, the WinCharger staff will limit hardcopy mailings to those who do not have access to e-mail. Therefore, if you receive a hardcopy of this January issue and have an e-mail account, we would appreciate receiving that address from you. Please send your e-mail address to Kyla Kissinger, our WinCharger database manager, at [ouweatherchick@hotmail.com](mailto:ouweatherchick@hotmail.com).

Thank you for helping us keep our mailing costs down. For those of you with e-mail who would still like hardcopy versions for sharing/distribution, please contact the WinCharger to request that some be mailed to you.

**Questions? Issues?**

If you have questions or issues you would like to see addressed in future issues of 'The Oklahoma Wincharger', please call or write to:

The Oklahoma Wincharger  
 Oklahoma Wind Power Initiative  
 710 Asp Ave., Suite 8  
 Norman, OK 73069  
 (405) 447-8412 or by email: simonsen@ou.edu

## Calendar of Coming Events

- Jan. 9** Oklahoma Native American Wind Workshop will be held from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Tulsa University in the Allen Chapman Activities Center, Chouteau – C (second floor). See inside issue for more information.
- Jan. 16** Meeting of the Oklahoma Renewable Energy Council, 10 to Noon at the State Capitol in Room 108.
- Jan. 16** Planning committee for the April 11<sup>th</sup> Windpower/Bioenergy Conference will meet from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m. at the Oklahoma Department of Commerce in Oklahoma City (900 N. Stiles).
- Jan. 23** Second interim study on green energy, conducted by the House Committee on Energy and Utility Regulation. Location: State Capitol, Room 432A. See inside issue for more information.
- Feb. 13** Meeting of the Oklahoma Renewable Energy Council, 10am to noon, location TBA. (see later issues or [www.seic.okstate.edu/orec](http://www.seic.okstate.edu/orec) for updates)
- Mar. 13** Meeting of the Oklahoma Renewable Energy Council, 10am to noon, location TBA.
- Apr. 11** 2002 Oklahoma Windpower/Bioenergy Conference, Myriad, OKC, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m.

---

**EVAC - Environmental Verification and Analysis Center**  
**University of Oklahoma**  
**710 Asp Ave., Suite 8**  
**Norman, OK 73069**

**125-5050**

Oklahoma  
*owpi* Wind  
Power  
Initiative



**January 2002**