



# CRES NEWS

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A Chapter of the American Solar Energy Society

MAY 2003

## Colorado Legislation Panel Discussion Rescheduled

### VICTORY IN IRAQ A Setback for Renewable Fuels?

A Commentary by Paul Notari

Not to question our motives for invading Iraq and expelling one of the worst tyrants in history, it must be pointed out that there is another reward for our victory that has been given scant attention but which is of monumental importance to the U.S. and the world. With our victory over Saddam, we have opened the second largest oil reserve in the world to the free market. The Bush administration has wasted little time in contracting one of the world's foremost oil industry development companies, the Halliburton Corporation, to rebuild and expand the Iraqi oil fields and to reopen the pipeline to the seaports in the Persian Gulf. The effort has already begun and the flow of oil should begin within months.

While proceeds from the sale of oil have been pledged to support the needs of the Iraqi people, it is yet unclear how this will be carried out. An ownership group, likely composed of Iraqi nationals but overseen by U.S. authorities, will undoubtedly be established. It is also reasonable to expect that this new organization will not become part of OPEC. And this could be very significant. As Iraqi oil is fed into the world's oil supply in greater and greater amounts without OPEC limitations (assuming the UN sanctions are lifted), the price of oil is bound to decrease substantially over the next several years. The price which recently reached its peak at over \$30.00 per barrel will certainly fall drastically, maybe even to the low level of a couple of years ago of roughly \$15.00 per barrel.

Imagine what this will do to our economy and the economies of most other nations of the world. The U.S. imports almost 60% of its oil, Japan 100%, and most other nations somewhere in between. Since our economy is highly dependent upon fuel costs (the airline component, for example), this price drop may do more to restore our flailing economy than any tax cut or other stimulus idea that could be conceived.

This is the good news. Now the bad news. If the price of oil drops to the low levels expected there will be a devastating impact on the development and use of renewable fuels. We will be back to where we were 10 years ago. Ethanol will continue to require large subsidies to be competitive and biodiesel's popularity will subside. Interest in the research and development of renewable hydrogen and fuel cells will wane, and federal and private industry support likely will diminish or disappear entirely. Electric and even electric-hybrid automobile sales will drop off as the price of gasoline at the pump becomes less a factor in auto purchases. In fact, it is not unlikely that the sales of gas guzzler vehicles will begin to soar again.

Since the amount of Iraqi oil is enormous, we must expect that this situation will continue for some time. Oil prices, universally forecasted by many to reach staggering heights by 2010, may not do so for many years beyond. And inasmuch as price will no longer be a factor, the renewable fuels industry will have to rely solely upon the argument that the use of fossil fuels for transportation is detrimental to the environment and should be curtailed. This will be an uphill battle, but one that we must continue to fight. It is no less a just cause today than it ever was before.

*(Readers comments are welcome and will be published in future issues)*

The snowed out March meeting of the Colorado Renewable Energy Society has been rescheduled to take place at **5:30pm** on Wednesday, **May 28**. It will still be held at the **NREL Visitor Center**, located about two blocks west of the Marriott Hotel in the Denver West office complex. Take exit 263 from I-70, or turn north at the Marriott sign on Colfax between Simms and Indiana.

**Heidi Van Genderen**, a member of the CRES Government Affairs Committee, will chair a panel of experts to review and discuss "Public Policy Efforts to Power Clean Energy in Colorado." Heidi is a Senior Associate, Wirth Chair, at the University of Colorado/Denver. She will describe the coalition building process that took place prior to this year's legislative session.

Panelists will consist of the following:

**Matt Baker**, Executive Director, Environment Colorado. He will provide an overview of the political strategy for renewable energy legislation and what went right/wrong at the Statehouse this year.

**Craig Cox**, Executive Director, Colorado Coalition for New Energy Technologies. He will provide a clean energy business perspective and explain the role of his organization at the Statehouse this year.

**Rick Gilliam**, Senior Technical Advisor, Energy Project, Land and Water (LAW) Fund of the Rockies. He will give us the LAW Fund's perspective on legislation as a public policy approach in Colorado.

**Randy Gee**, Solargenix Corp. This panelist, who is representing CoSEIA, will provide the solar energy industry's perspective on legislative matters and describe the industry's philosophical leanings and future direction in Colorado.

## Colorado Snap Shots

This column will feature short news items, meeting announcements, personality profiles and other energy matters of interest to Coloradans.

### CALENDAR OF LOCAL EVENTS

**June 13-15... Citizens' Conference on Climate Change and the West.** Millennium Hotel, Boulder Colorado. Sponsored by the Green House Network. A nontechnical conference addressing the possible effects of climate change upon the West. Registration fees: \$100 before June 1; \$125 after (discounts for families, students and seniors). For further information contact Leslie Glustrom at [lglustrom@aol.com](mailto:lglustrom@aol.com) or visit [www.greenhousenet.org](http://www.greenhousenet.org).

**July 26-30... 2003 NEED Energy Conference for Educators.** The conference provides teachers with the most up-to-date information on all aspects of energy, including the science of energy, sources of energy, consumption, efficiency, and environmental impacts. Conference participants receive instruction and materials to implement innovative hands-on energy units in their classrooms. Denver location to be announced. Registration fee:\$800 (customarily paid by school district sponsors. For more information visit [www.need.org](http://www.need.org) or contact Mary Spruill at [mspruill@need.org](mailto:mspruill@need.org).

## PV "TAKING OFF" IN CALIFORNIA

Led by California, the number of PV grid-connected installations in the U.S. has grown dramatically over the last two years. In fact, some estimates have indicated that the domestic PV market is now growing at a 60% per year rate attributed mainly to the upsurge in grid-tied installations. And the vast majority of this growth is occurring in just one state - California. At its current pace, California is expected to soon surpass Germany and Japan as the world's largest market for grid-tied solar applications.

What is the reason for this recent growth? The simple answer is that the PV market in California has now reached a point where the economics of solar power, given the right conditions, are competitive with rates charged by electric utilities. In other words, many businesses and home owners in California are making an economic, rather than ideological, business decision to generate their own power using solar energy. Admittedly, the main driver behind this phenomenal growth is a combination of generous government incentives, principally direct rebates and tax benefits, and new regulatory benefits such as net-metering and simplified interconnection procedures. These incentives and benefits act together to cover as much as 75% of a PV system's cost.

Suffice it to say that the market forces for all energy systems, be they coal, nuclear, wind or PV, are largely "artificial" to the extent that they reflect policy decisions and subsidies deemed appropriate and enacted into law by our elected officials. In California's case, the incentive programs have had very strong citizen and political support and have survived numerous legislative, legal and regulatory challenges unscathed.

California should be a model for us here in Colorado. Surveys show renewable energy technologies already have solid support from the majority of people in the state. If we can translate this into an aggressive campaign to influence our state legislators to enact legislation similar to California's, we could well see Colorado duplicating their success within a few short years. (*Much of the information in this article was excerpted from an article published in a recent issue of "EnergyPulse" titled "Solar Power in the Real World - Why California Businesses are Embracing Photovoltaics."*)

### Plan Ahead...Mark Your Calendar Now!

## 6th Annual Colorado Renewable Energy Conference

June 27-29, 2003

Montrose Pavillion  
Montrose, Colorado



For further information and  
registration forms visit

[www.cres-energy.org](http://www.cres-energy.org)

### Renewable Energy Now!

### Community Prosperity through Self-Sufficiency

The Colorado Renewable Energy Society will bring together rural community leaders, citizens and energy experts to learn how renewable energy and energy efficiency can play a role in the vitality of rural Colorado.

### PLENARY SPEAKERS

**Ed Marston** - Ph.D physicist. Long-time publisher and Senior Journalist for *High Country News*. Member of Board of Directors of *Grand Mesa Citizens Alliance*. Named "Journalism Fellow" by Stanford University and UC Berkeley. Authored several books on Western Slope issues and the environment.

**Tom Bartholf** - Director of Renewable Energy for CH2M HILL, provider of engineering, construction and other technical services to the energy and environmental industries. Formerly he was a market specialist for NREL's wind program, and a president of Northern Power Systems.

**Auden Schendler** - Director of Environmental Affairs for the Aspen Skiing Company, widely known to be the nation's leading "green ski resort." Formerly he was a Research Associate at the Rocky Mountain Institute and has written on the subject of Sustainability for the prestigious *Harvard Business Review*.

## CRES CORNER

### Former CRES President to Retire and Move On

Doug Balcomb, longtime supporter and former President of the Colorado Renewable Energy Society, has announced his retirement from the National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) effective August 15, 2003. Along with this announcement, Doug also disclosed that he will marry Cecillia Dahl on July 25th in Roche Harbor, Washington. *Our heartiest congratulations!*

Doug was one of the founding fathers of CRES, serving on our Board of Directors from 1996 through 2001 and as our President in 1999 and 2000. He joined the research staff at NREL on October 1, 1985 and was recently given the distinguished title of "Research Fellow." Prior to that he was a researcher at the Los Alamos National Laboratory for 26 years.

Doug also has been very active with the American Solar Energy Society where he served on the Board for many years and was twice elected Chairman. He has long been recognized as one of the foremost pioneers in passive solar design technology. He has written several notable publications on the subject, and created the "Energy 10" software program that is widely used throughout the world in the design and construction of passive solar structures. Doug has not yet disclosed whether he will continue to reside in Colorado after his retirement, but if he leaves it will truly be a loss for CRES, Colorado, and all his friends here who have known or worked with him these many years.

### Head of Cuba's Solar Society to Meet with CRES Board

Bruno Henriquez, the head of Cuba Solar (Cuba's counterpart to ASES) will be visiting Denver on June 13-15th. He has expressed interest in meeting with CRES Board and others members, and arrangements are being made for the meeting. Mr. Henriquez will be the house guest of CRES member Wendy Hawthorne, Program Manager/Energy Engineer for the North East Denver Housing Center. Board member Renee Azerbegi is making arrangements for a luncheon meeting. Since Mr. Henriquez will only be here for the weekend, Renee will try to set the time and date to best suit as many CRES participants as possible.

### Continuing Legal Education Program Seeking Energy Professionals to Speak at Upcoming Conference.

There will be an "Energy Regulatory Law" conference sponsored by the Denver Continuing Legal Education (CLE) Program on October 2 and 3, 2003. Co-chairs Bob Pomeroy and Thorvald A. Nelson are seeking speakers to address the topic: "The Benefits and Costs of Wind Power - Blowing Fossil Fuels Away or Simply Hot Air." The conference will likely draw many policymakers and lawyers involved in Rocky Mountain energy issues. It will provide a splendid opportunity to make our views known to a very influential group.

Bob Pomeroy is on the staff of CLE International, Thor Nelson is an attorney with Holland & Hart of Denver. They will welcome speakers from the CRES membership who have experience in legal matters relating to renewable energy technologies. All speakers will receive free admission for his/her self and a guest. For further information, contact Thor Nelson at 303-290-1601 or visit [www.hollandhart.com](http://www.hollandhart.com).

### Volunteers Needed for CREC Tours

CRES is seeking volunteers to act as guides and assistants for the Sunday tours that are being held following the CREC conference. The tours will be from 11:00am - 2:00pm on Sunday, June 29. Please contact Wendy Parker at 303-683-4748 or [wparker@ispg.org](mailto:wparker@ispg.org) to volunteer to help out.

## CRES NEWS

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The address of the editorial office is:

1050 S. Monaco Pkwy. Ste 77

Denver, CO 80224

Phone or Fax: 303-377-0711

e-m: [paulnotari@cs.com](mailto:paulnotari@cs.com)

**Editor:** Paul Notari

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## CRES MEETINGS

*Unless otherwise specified, CRES meetings will begin at 5:30pm and will be held at the NREL Visitor Center located off the Denver West exit of I-70 just past the Marriott hotel.*

**May 28 - General Meeting.** Panel discussion on Colorado legislative matters led by Heidi Van Genderen of University of Denver/Colorado. Panel to include experts and participants in state legislative action activities. See page 1 for further details.

**June 27-29 - CREC 2003.** There will be no regular general meeting for the month. See display ad on previous page for further details about the 2003 Conference.

## CRES "HOTLINE"

303-806-5317

## CRES INTERNET NOS.

e-mail: [info@cres-energy.org](mailto:info@cres-energy.org)

Web Pg: <http://cres-energy.org>

# RENEWABLE ENERGY BRIEFS

**Call for News Articles...** The new ASES chapter e-mail newsletter, *ASES Sun e-News*, is soliciting articles from its chapters for its June edition. All CRES members, who have not requested to be excluded from the ASES mailing list, will receive this newsletter on a regular basis. Topics can include news of chapter activities, how-to organize events, writing grants, developing partnerships with other organizations, lobbying methods, etc. Success stories or problem solving case histories are also welcome. Contributions of one page or less in length must be received by June 1, 2003. Submit to Carolyn Beach at [cbeach@ases.org](mailto:cbeach@ases.org) or ASES, 2400 Central Ave. Suite G-1, Boulder, CO 80301.

**Green Building Guidelines Handbook Issued by Sustainable Buildings Industry Council...** This new publication is designed for home builders and homebuyers who wish to learn about the elements of high-performance home design. For details, contact Doug Schroeder at [DSchroeder@SBICouncil.org](mailto:DSchroeder@SBICouncil.org) or 202-628-7400.

**Fort Collins Passes Renewable Energy & Efficiency Standards...** On March 25th, the Fort Collins city council adopted a policy calling for a 15% increase in the use of renewable energy and a 10% overall increase in the City's energy efficiency by 2012. Don Bihn of the Northern Colorado chapter of CRES (NCRES) should be applauded for his efforts in introducing this legislation to the Council. Proponents pointed out that this gives Fort Collins a more diverse energy supply, stabilizes prices, enhances environmental quality and will lead to significant economic development in rural Colorado where the electricity will be produced.

**Toyota Unveils New Hybrid Car for 2004...** Toyota has introduced a new version of its hybrid gas-electric Prius which will get better gas mileage (55+ miles per gallon), emit fewer air pollutants, and give passengers more room than previous Prius models. The car will hit showrooms late this year as a 2004 model. Toyota also said that it plans to eventually spread its hybrid technology throughout its fleet.

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## CRES CLASSIFIEDS

**Position Opening** - Denver builder, McStain Neighborhoods, Inc. is soliciting applications for the position of Vice President Community Design and Project Management. The position calls for a combination of undergraduate training in planning, engineering, landscape architecture or urban design, with an MBA or graduate degree in a related field, or equivalent experience. Contact Ann Stringfellow at 303-494-5060, x138 or [mailto:ass@mcstain.com](mailto:mailto:ass@mcstain.com).

**Business Opportunity** - The Colorado Governor's Office of Energy Management and Conservation is soliciting proposals from consultants with expertise in energy efficiency of buildings and marketing to provide services for the *Rebuild Colorado* program as a sales engineer. Contact Linda Pohle at 303-755-5249 or [lpwords@aol.com](mailto:lpwords@aol.com).

**Business Opportunity** - The National Renewable Energy Laboratory has announced its intent to issue a solicitation for R&D efforts from members of the PV and related industries to address a range of topics relating to the manufacturer of PV modules, components and systems. The RFP is posted at [www.nrel.gov/contracts/index.html](http://www.nrel.gov/contracts/index.html). For more information contact Christie Johnson at 303-384-7394 (Sol#RAX-3-33628).

**Business Opportunity** - The Environmental Protection Agency has announced its intent to seek a contractor to conduct cost-benefit, economic and market analyses and assessments to evaluate current agency policies on indoor environmental quality and make recommendations. Statement of work is posted at [www.epa.gov/oam/rtp\\_cmd](http://www.epa.gov/oam/rtp_cmd). For details contact Natalia Fisher-Jackson at 919-541-3564 (Sol# PR-NC-03-10349)

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### Colorado Renewable Energy Society

P.O. Box 933  
Golden, CO 80402