



DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT & TOURISM

NEWS RELEASE

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GOVERNOR

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State starts study of overall impacts for interisland cable
Programmatic EIS will look at broad wind issues with project-specific EIS to follow

HONOLULU--The State Department of Business, Economic Development and Tourism (DBEDT) Energy Office has filed state and federal notices of intent to prepare a programmatic environmental impact statement (PEIS) for the Hawai'i Interisland Renewable Energy Program (HIREP). The PEIS will examine the program-level impacts of the development of up to 400 megawatts (MW) of wind energy on Maui County, the transmission of the energy to Oahu via an undersea cable, and the integration of that energy into Oahu's electrical grid.

The PEIS will incorporate a thorough analysis of overall impacts and benefits, but will not grant any development rights or privileges to a specific wind farm project. Instead, it will provide a framework, uniform policies, and a process for comprehensively deciding how project components should be integrated within the framework. A PEIS is often employed on the federal level. It will specify best management practices for the three major HIREP components:

- Transmission of renewable energy via undersea cable to Oahu: The undersea interisland cable will allow the sharing of renewable energy generated in Maui County, particularly Lanai and Molokai where resources such as wind are substantial, with Oahu, where resources are limited and demand for energy is high.
- Generation of up to 400 MW of wind power on Lanai and Molokai: This PEIS will focus on wind, but the HIREP program could be expanded in the future to include other types of renewable technologies.

- Utility infrastructure upgrades on Oahu needed to integrate large amounts of wind energy into the electrical grids.

“We are examining large infrastructure investments with considerable impacts on our communities. The PEIS and the subsequent project-specific EIS will increase the opportunities for public input,” said Ted Peck, administrator of the State Energy Office. “We have to seriously study the best way we can use the renewable resources we have so that we can significantly reduce our use of imported oil.

“Our Neighbor Islands have the richest renewable energy resources. With an interisland cable, we can share these homegrown resources to reach the State’s goal of 70 percent clean energy by 2030.”

In 2008, the State Legislature passed a law to create the Hawai‘i Clean Energy Initiative (HCEI) with the goal of 70 percent clean energy by 2030. This can be achieved with a 30 percent increase in energy efficiency and 40 percent new renewable energy development. Wind energy to be studied in this PEIS has the potential of contributing 14 percent to the HCEI goals.

The public has a three-month opportunity to provide input through the beginning of March. For more information on how to comment, log on to www.hirep-wind.com.

The PEIS is funded by the federal American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) and has a scheduled completion date of April 2012. It will be conducted by AECOM Technical Services, Inc. (AECOM). AECOM is a global provider of professional technical and management support services to a broad range of markets, including transportation, facilities, environmental, energy, water and government with approximately 52,000 employees around the world and approximately 200 professionals living and working in Hawai‘i.

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