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**Humboldt Edition** |

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## Partnership wins grants for a renewable energy secure community

Redwood Times  
Posted: 06/04/2009 09:32:21 AM PDT

Humboldt County is on its way to being a pioneer in the quest for local energy self-sufficiency. The California Energy Commission has awarded a local partnership a \$200,000 grant from the CEC's Public Interest Energy Research program to plan for energy security and prosperity in Humboldt County by using homegrown renewable energy. The partnership includes the Redwood Coast Energy Authority (RCEA), the Schatz Energy Research Center (SERC) at Humboldt State University, and the Pacific Gas and Electric Company. Project work is expected to start July 1, 2009 and continue through July 31, 2011.

The CEC grant will be supplemented by a \$38,800 grant recently awarded by the local Headwaters Fund to the Schatz Center to carry out the economic analysis portion of the work.

The goal of the project is to create a strategic plan that will empower Humboldt County to develop its renewable energy resources in an effort to meet 75% to 100% of the county's electricity demand as well as a significant fraction of its heating and transportation needs. The plan will examine a full range of renewable energy resources, energy efficiency and demand management options, and energy storage and conversion technologies.

RCEA, a Joint Powers Authority that serves all of Humboldt County, will oversee the project and will assist with various tasks. SERC will conduct the engineering and economic analyses. PG&E will provide in-kind technical assistance and data and will engage in efforts to explore collaborative partnership opportunities.

This project is a natural follow-on to the Humboldt County Energy Element report prepared by SERC, RCEA and others in 2005. That report found that renewable energy resources in Humboldt County, biomass, wind, and wave power, are more than adequate to meet all of our energy needs. This grant will fund the detailed engineering and economic analyses and development of a strategic action plan for the use of our local renewable energy resources.

According to SERC Director Peter Lehman, "This grant is a wonderful opportunity for Humboldt County to lead the way to the renewable energy future our world needs. We're very pleased to be working with RCEA, PG&E, and the people of Humboldt County to start down this road."

RCEA was formed in 2003 as a Joint Powers Association, representing seven municipalities (the Cities of Arcata, Blue Lake, Eureka, Ferndale, Fortuna, Trinidad and Rio Dell) and Humboldt County. RCEA's purpose is to develop and implement sustainable energy initiatives that reduce energy demand, increase energy efficiency, and advance the use of clean, efficient and renewable resources available in the region.

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