

350 Montana

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350Montana.org announces upcoming panel discussion: Making Renewables Work For Montana

Missoula, MT. On Wednesday, February 8, 2017, at 7:00 p.m., at UM in the University Center Theatre on the 3rd floor, 350Montana.org will conduct a panel discussion entitled: “*Making Renewables Work For Montana*”.

350Montana.org works to reduce atmospheric CO2 concentrations to 350 ppm by implementing strategic actions and advocating policies to end fossil fuel burning with the greatest urgency. We envision a rapid conversion to a 100% renewable global energy system using wind, water, and solar. We work with the global grassroots climate movement to achieve these goals and safeguard Earth’s life-support systems.

“UM students care about sustainability and we really want to support community organizations that share our ideals,” said Tess Gallagher Clancy a member of UM’s student led *Re-Invest Montana*, a co-sponsor of the event. “Climate and environment-based organizations need to work together, whether we’re students or community members, because we can’t wait any longer to address mounting environmental concerns.”

This first panel discussion on renewables will include three sections:

- **Reducing Demand, or ‘The Cheapest Electricity Is the Watts We Don’t Use’**
Presented by Mary Fitzpatrick (Northern Plains Resource Council, Billings) and Abby Huseth (Climate Smart Missoula)
- **Storing Energy - Industrial Scale Storage and Battery Breakthroughs**
Presented by Carl Borgquist (Absaroka Energy, Bozeman)
- **Making It All Happen in Montana**
Presented by Anne Hedges (Montana Environmental Information Center, Helena)

Each section will be about 20 minutes followed by a moderated Question and Answer section with the audience and panelists at the end.

350Montana.org decided to hold this event in part because Northwestern Energy (NWE), Montana’s largest utility, recently put out a plan for how it wants to generate electricity for the next 40 years. The plan is over 200 pages long. In it NWE, over the next 13 years, wants to build 7 new natural gas facilities, comprised of 13 new gas units to meet ‘peak

demand' and deliver energy to Montana citizens. "Natural gas plants are currently their choice of energy production," said Jerome Walker a member of 350 Montana, "rather than adding new renewables and utilizing storage options to meet our projected needs."

NWE claims that because solar and wind are intermittent, they can't be used to meet peak demand, like what happens on hot afternoons in the summer or cold winter nights. "We at 350Montana.org, and many other organizations and allies in Montana, couldn't disagree more with this claim," said Jim Parker, another 350Montana.org member and moderator of the panel discussion. "That's why we decided to hold this panel discussion, to hear different takes on how we can meet these demands using renewables and emerging storage options."

350 Montana does not advocate any one solution to the problem of how to meet peak demand, except to use renewables and developing storage opportunities for the solution, not climate damaging fossil fuels—a path that is leading us to global climate catastrophe.

The panel will discuss a menu of possible solutions to peak demand concerns that use renewable technologies, storage capacities, conservation techniques and other advancements to meet this challenge. Panelists will also suggest how we as citizens can act now to let our legislative leaders, decision-makers and energy providers hear from us, and support our demands for a renewable energy future.

"And when we switch," continues Walker, "as we know we must, to clean, renewable electricity that's generated by all the wind, sun, and flowing water we have here in Montana, then some of these ideas, maybe even most of them, will be needed and will be used."

This event is co-sponsored by:

Citizens Climate Lobby
Climate Smart Missoula
Faith and Climate Action Montana
Montana Environmental Information Center
Montana Farmer's Union
Montana Renewable Energy Association
Northern Plains Resource Council
Reinvest Montana
Sierra Club, Montana Chapter
Northern Rockies Rising Tide
Friends United Against Climate Chaos (Big Sky High School students)

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(NOTE: Please find attached short BIOS of panelists for your use.)