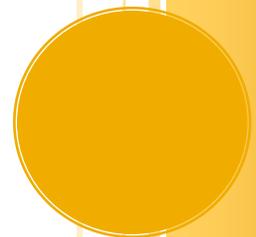


# IDAHO ENERGY JUSTICE SNAPSHOT



National Association for the Advancement of Colored People,  
Environmental and Climate Justice Program

5/1/2017



# IDAHO ENERGY JUSTICE SNAPSHOT

## SUMMARY

Access to clean energy is not just an environmental issue, but also a civil right. Communities of color bear a disproportionate share of the burdens of the fossil fuel based energy economy. This is why the NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program stands for just energy policies that will help protect our communities from harmful energy production processes and provide equitable access to the clean energy economy.

This Snapshot profiles Idaho's energy portfolio, evaluates key state energy policies, documents state utility disconnection policies, and outlines opportunities in the clean energy economy. This snapshot also provides information that will inform NAACP members on avenues for future engagement.

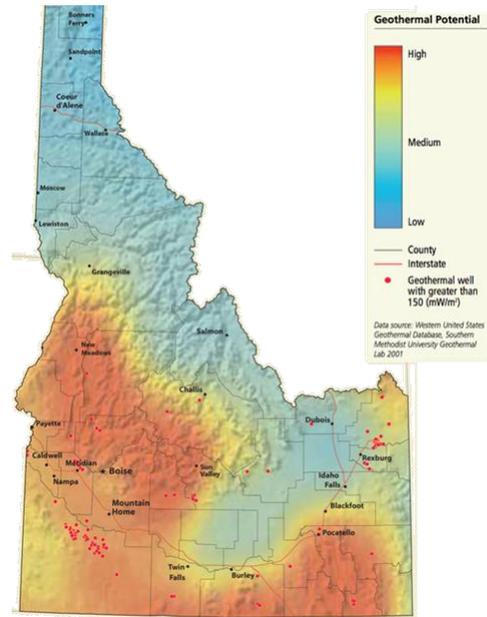


Figure 1: <http://idahoenergycollaborative.weebly.com/geothermal.html>

## STATE ENERGY PROFILE

Idaho is a national leader in the renewable energy sector. A majority of the state's energy is sourced from renewable energy sources, though the state still has work to do in advancing ambitious state clean energy policies and diversifying the sources of renewable energy. This section provides an overview of Idaho's current energy portfolio, highlights key state energy policies, and indicates potential clean energy infrastructure and policy solutions.



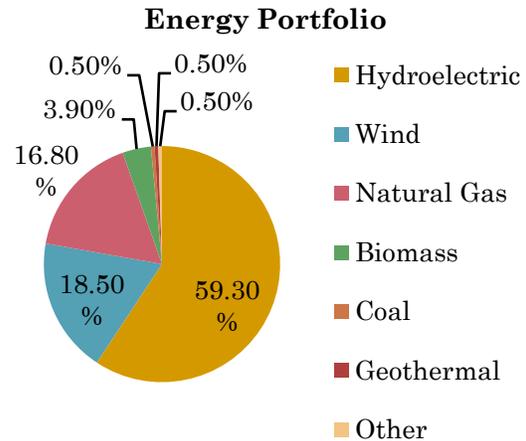
## Energy Portfolio

With a rugged and diverse geography, **Idaho is endowed with diverse renewable energy potential.** A majority of Idaho's energy is generated through hydroelectricity and wind energy resources. **Hydroelectricity generated on river dams dominate Idaho electricity generation.** While this low-carbon energy source is preferred over burning fossil fuels for energy, solar, wind, and geothermal should be expanded to diversify the Idaho's renewable energy portfolio.

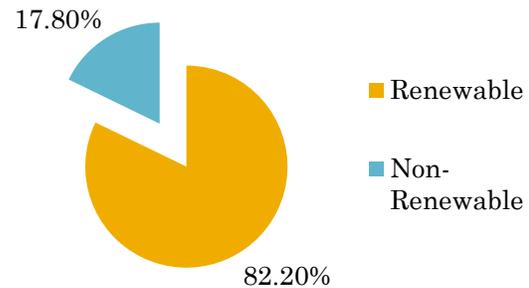
**Idaho has substantial wind energy potential** along the Snake River and on mountain ridges across the state. In 2015 wind provided one-sixth of the state's net electricity generation. Although Idaho is endowed with abundant solar energy potential, the state underutilizes its solar resources. There is no large-scale solar in Idaho, but **distributed solar is beginning to be used in Idaho's rural communities.** The Idaho town of Sandpoint is the first in the nation to test solar road panels.

A recent study conducted by the Western Governors Association Geothermal Task Force estimated that **Idaho has the geothermal resources to power about one-third of the state's energy needs.** In order to harness this energy, additional resources need to be devoted to building up geothermal energy generation mechanisms.

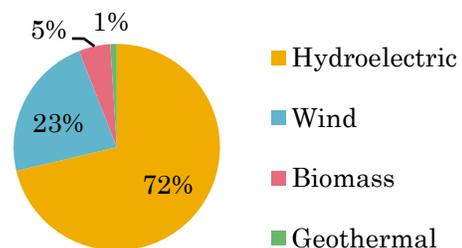
**Natural gas is the most heavily used fossil fuel resource in Idaho.** Idaho consumers generally receive nearly all their natural gas supply by pipeline from out of state. Coal follows natural gas, though the reliance is slim and the resource is being phased out.<sup>i</sup>



## Renewables vs. Non-Renewables



## Renewable Energy Portfolio



Figures 2-4: <http://spotforcleanenergy.org/state/idaho/>

For more detailed information and data on Idaho's energy portfolio visit the U.S. Energy Information Administration's webpage,

<http://www.eia.gov/state/?sid=ID>

## State Energy Policies<sup>ii</sup>

Policy Type	NAACP Recommended Policy Standards	Idaho Policy Details
<b>Net Metering</b>	<p>Net Metering Standards require utility companies to provide retail credit for new renewable energy produced by a consumer.</p> <p><b>Capacity Limit Recommendation:</b> 2,000 kW (minimally), per system</p> <p><b>Mandatory/Voluntary:</b> Mandatory</p>	<p><b>Idaho has voluntary net metering policies</b> that vary by utility provider and are capped overall at .1% of a utility's peak demand in various baseline years.</p> <p>Idaho must establish system capacity limits minimally 2,000kW across the board and remove limiting caps.</p>
<b>Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS)</b>	<p>A RPS requires electric utility companies and other retail electric providers to supply a specific minimum amount of customer load with electricity from eligible renewable energy sources.</p> <p><b>Recommended Standard:</b> Minimally 25% renewable by 2025</p> <p><b>Mandatory/Voluntary:</b> Mandatory</p> <p><b>Allowable Sources:</b> Wind, solar, geothermal, ocean/wave energy</p>	<p><b>Idaho does not have a renewable portfolio standard.</b></p> <p>Idaho must establish an aggressive renewable portfolio standard that focuses on the development of solar, wind, and geothermal resources as the best possible options for in-state clean energy development.</p>
<b>Energy Efficiency Resource Standard (EERS)</b>	<p>A EERS establish a requirement for utility companies to meet annual and cumulative energy savings targets through a portfolio of energy efficiency program.</p> <p><b>Recommended Standard:</b> Minimally 2% annual reduction of each previous year's retail electricity sales.</p> <p><b>Mandatory/Voluntary:</b> Mandatory</p>	<p><b>Idaho does not have an energy efficiency resource standard.</b></p> <p>Idaho must establish an EERS with the minimum target of a rate of 2% annual reduction over each previous year's retail electricity sales.</p>
<b>Local Hire Provision</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Extra renewable energy credit multipliers for in-state installation and in-state manufactured content</li> <li>• Renewable energy credits for utility providing incentives to build a plant in-state</li> <li>• Renewable energy credit for utility that makes an investment in a plant located in-state</li> <li>• Quota for government assisted construction project employers to hire a percentage of workers locally</li> <li>• Bidding Preferences for companies that hire a percentage of their employees in-state for state-funded public works projects and service contracts</li> </ul>	<p>Idaho does not have a local hire provision law.</p>
<b>Disadvantaged Business Enterprise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide training opportunities</li> <li>• Notify DBEs of state business opportunities</li> <li>• Set-aside funds for DBEs</li> </ul>	<p>The Idaho DOT certifies DBEs. This program should be expanded to include energy projects.</p>

## Utility Disconnection Policies<sup>iii</sup>

**Notice** Initial written notice must be provided seven days before scheduled disconnection. Second written notice may be sent three days before scheduled disconnection. Utility must attempt in person or telephone notice at least 24 hours before the scheduled disconnection.

**Date Based Protection** No disconnections for households with children, elderly occupants, or seriously ill occupants from December-February. No disconnections for households with children, elderly occupants, or seriously ill occupants when customer enters an approved payment plan from November-March.

**Temperature Based Protection** None

**Payment Plan** Payment plans are offered at the utility company's discretion outside of the winter protection period. Winter payment plans are available November-March.

**Reconnection Fee** No

**Disconnection Limitations** No disconnections on Fridays, weekends, legal holidays, or days preceding legal holidays. No disconnections when the utility is closed.

**Other Protections** Postponement of disconnection for thirty days with medical certification.

*Utility shut-offs have a disproportionate impact on low-income and African American communities. Check out the [NAACP report](#), "Lights Out in the Cold" for more information.*



Access to energy is not a luxury, it's a necessity. With exposure to both extreme heat and extreme cold, folks should not be forced to choose between paying for medications or their energy bill. Public officials have implemented some policies that protect consumers from the life-threatening practice of utility disconnection. However, energy justice advocates must continue to hold utility companies and regulators accountable to human rights and basic but life-saving protections.

*Temperatures in Idaho range widely based on the time of year and location in the state. The state has a record high of 118°F and a record low of 60°F below zero.*



More details about Idaho's disconnection policies are available at: <http://www.puc.idaho.gov/consumer/consumerfaqs.html>

## DEVELOPING THE BLACK-GREEN PIPELINE

African Americans are inadequately represented in the clean energy sector. It is the goal of the NAACP Black-Green Pipeline Initiative that African Americans will have increased representation across all sectors of the clean energy economy. The Black-Green Pipeline Initiative promotes the equitable inclusion of communities of color into the green economy in order to address unemployment in our communities and to increase the voices and influence of our communities in the green economy.

To subscribe to the Black-Green Pipeline Initiative Weekly Digest send a blank email to:  
naacp-bgp-subscribe@yahoogroups.com

## The Green Labor Market and Communities of Color

Idaho's concentration of energy employment parallels national averages, with 13,468 traditional energy workers statewide (2% of total state employment compared to 2.4% of national employment). Idaho has an additional 7,606 jobs in energy efficiency.<sup>iv</sup>



*"The development of clean energy sources, such as solar, provides an opportunity to improve the health and well-being of everyone while creating economic enterprise opportunities."*

*ID NAACP President Jeanetta Williams*

Renewable energy generation is not only environmentally sustainable, but it can also provide numerous economic benefits. According to a recent [report](#) from the Environmental Defense Fund, the solar and wind industries are creating jobs at a rate 12 times faster than that of the rest of the U.S. economy.<sup>v</sup>

### Electric Power Generation Employment by Technology

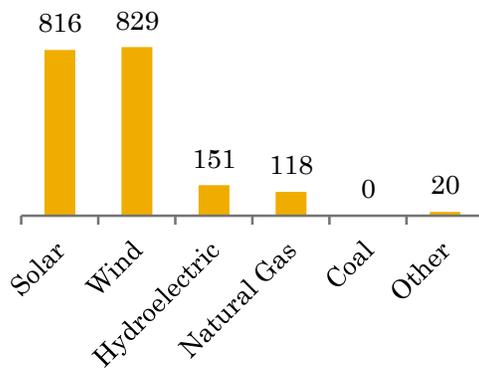


Figure 5:  
[https://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2017/01/f34/2017%20US%20Energy%20and%20Jobs%20Report\\_0.pdf](https://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2017/01/f34/2017%20US%20Energy%20and%20Jobs%20Report_0.pdf)

**Action step:** Host a *Bridge the Gap: Connecting Black Communities to the Green Economy* Program to establish working groups with existing organizations to increase African American engagement with local green economy. More details are listed on the following page.

## TAKE ACTION

A state already in the lead in terms of clean energy, the Idaho NAACP branches can be leaders in ensuring that state energy practices are not only clean but also just and equitable. Below are some potential action steps branches can take:

### Release the Hawaii Just Energy Policies Report

- The first step state NAACP leaders can take is to release the Just Energy Policies: Reducing Pollution and Creating Jobs report and launch a Just Energy Policies Campaign.
- With the NAACP respected reputation, policymakers take notice. Therefore, launching state just energy policies campaigns is an important way NAACP members can introduce equity into energy policy debates.
- Make your branch stance on energy justice issues known; host a press conference and seek coverage of the report release from local media outlets.

### Host a Bridging the Gap: Connecting Black Communities to the Green Economy Roundtable

- The NAACP ECJ Program is committed to advancing a meaningful dialogue and concerted action on engagement of communities of color in the green economy.
- To start taking action, organize a multi-stakeholder roundtable with socially responsible energy business leaders, historically black colleges and universities, environmental groups, civil rights organizations, labor unions, and others to discuss developing and implementing a strategy to ensure that policies/laws/regulation, research initiatives, community level practices, corporate social responsibility measures, etc. are in place to ensure greater engagement of communities of color in the green economy.

### Implement a demonstration project such as a community solar garden or rooftop solar project

- Interested in taking a direct role in implementing clean energy practices in your community? Install rooftop solar or community solar.
- There are several rebates and incentives available to the people of Idaho interested in pursuing renewable energy projects. Visit [energy.gov](http://energy.gov) for a list of renewable energy incentive program available on the state and federal levels.
- You can also check out funding opportunities offered through the Department of Energy SunShot Initiative, which aims to support solar energy adoption by making solar energy accessible to all Americans.

### Launch a Just Energy Policies Campaign

- Identify one or more of the focal policies outlined in this snapshot and documented more extensively in the Just Energy Policies to champion.
- Build a coalition with likeminded energy justice advocates and other local and state allies to build power and momentum.
- Host a town-hall to educate the community about the policy and get input from members on their needs, priorities, and perspectives.
- Launch an intentional campaign to advocate that Idaho adopts the recommended policy standard.
- Set up lobby trainings and coordinate a lobby-day with elected officials.

### Make public the NAACP energy justice platform and engage the public through media

- Develop and place an op-ed by NAACP Unit President or ECJ Chair in a local newspaper
- Participate in a radio interview, TV interview, podcast
- Post an article or blog to an online platform

**Idaho Energy Collaborative:** An organization that works to advance renewable energy solutions for Idaho.

**Climate Justice Alliance:** A coalition of organizations united for a just transition to a clean energy economy.

**Northwest Toxic Communities Coalition:** A coalition of 40 organizations from the Pacific Northwest States who are working to clean up toxic sites that are jeopardizing their communities.

**United Vision for Idaho:** A statewide coalition dedicated to social, economic, and environmental justice.

**Kootenai Environmental Alliance:** A nonprofit conservation group in Idaho focused on safeguarding the environment through the lens of land, water, and community.

**Western Environmental Law Center:** This regional law firm has a climate and energy program that works to create and enforce laws and policies that harness the American West's renewable energy potential and transition to a clean energy future.

***Need additional support, resources, or other assistance?***

Contact: [ecjp@naacpnet.org](mailto:ecjp@naacpnet.org)

## CLOSING

Today there is unprecedented urgency for climate action and a just transition to clean renewable energy. States like Idaho have the power to be leaders in the energy transition. As NAACP Tri-State Conference of Idaho-Nevada-Utah President Jeanetta Williams penned in a [2014 op-ed](#), "our nation's choice to get the vast majority of energy from dirty fossil fuel sources has serious consequences for the physical and economic health of our communities."



Embracing a transition to clean, renewable energy sources will not only provide significant environmental and health benefits for the people of Idaho, but will also diversify and strengthen the state's economy. While the state has significant renewable energy potential, state policies have not incentivized the growth of renewable energy. NAACP just energy leaders should advocate on behalf of a strong Renewable Portfolio Standard, Energy Efficiency Resource Standard, Net Metering standards, Local Hire Provisions, and Minority Business Enterprise Programs. Our communities have the potential to be key leaders facilitating a just transition to clean, renewable, locally owned and controlled energy.



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<sup>iii</sup> Jacqueline Patterson, Marcus Franklin, Caroline Kurtz, Mike Alksnis, Lorah Steichen, Chiquita Younger, "Lights Out In the Cold: Reforming Shut-Off Policies as if Human Rights Matter," *NAACP Environmental and Climate Justice Program*, March 2017,  
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<sup>iv</sup> "2017 US Energy and Jobs Report State Charts," *United States Department of Energy*, accessed 11 July 2017,  
<https://energy.gov/sites/prod/files/2017/01/f34/2017%20US%20Energy%20and%20Jobs%20Report%20State%20Charts%200.pdf>.

<sup>v</sup> "Now Hiring: The Growth of America's Clean Energy and Sustainability Jobs," *Environmental Defense Fund*, 2017,  
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