

Decarbonizing the Northwest Economy

*Pacific Lutheran University: Symposium and Earth
& Diversity Week*

April 17, 2023

Eileen V. Quigley and Ruby Moore-Bloom

Agenda

- Introduction to the Clean Energy Transition Institute
- Community-Defined Decarbonization Findings
- Interactive data visualization maps on the Northwest Clean Energy Atlas
- Discussion / Q&A



Clean Energy Transition Institute



What We Are:

Independent, nonpartisan
Northwest research and
analysis nonprofit organization



Our Mission:

Accelerate an equitable clean
energy transition in the
Northwest



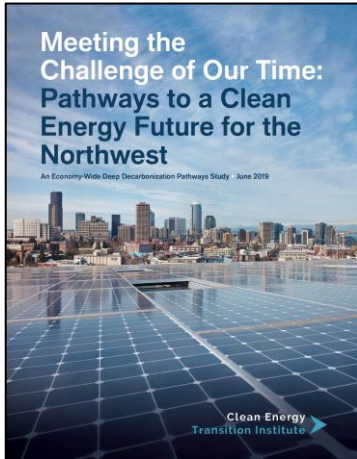
Our Role:

Provide unbiased research and
analytics, offer an information
clearinghouse for policymakers, and
convene diverse stakeholders

Photo by Jim Choate

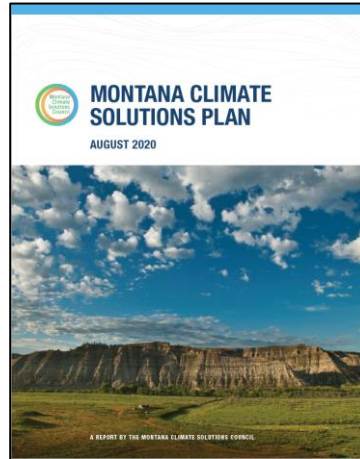
Research and Analytics to Support Policymakers

2019



- First economy-wide deep decarbonization study mapped to the Northwest's economic & institutional realities
- First regional decarbonization study in nation

2020



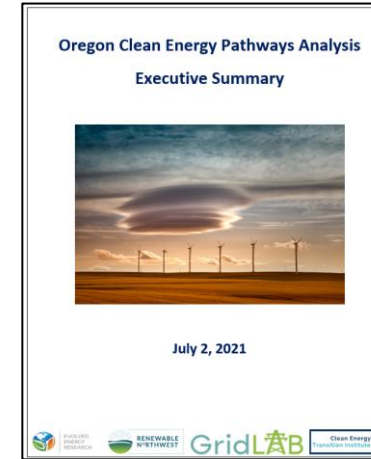
- Provided technical analysis for a chapter in the Montana Climate Solutions Council Plan
- Presented to Montana stakeholders in 2019, 2020, & 2021

2021



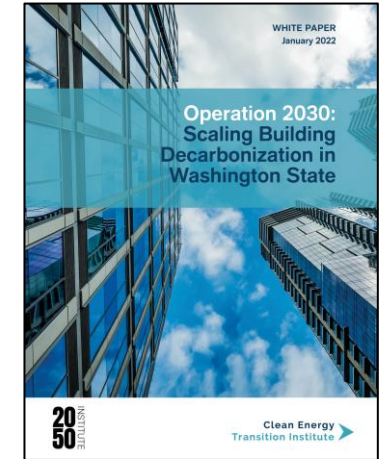
- Provided technical and economic analysis for the 2021 Washington State Energy Strategy
- Roadmap to get WA on the path to net zero over next decade

2021



- Examined technical and economic implications of accelerating decarbonization in OR
- Results informed 2021 OR clean energy standard bill

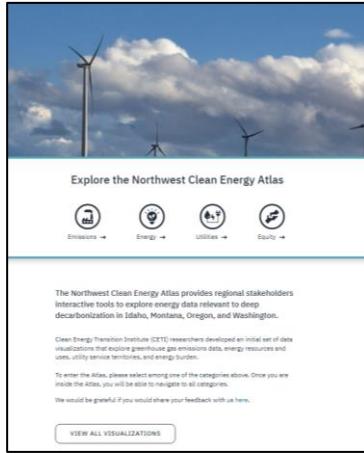
2022



- Charts the targets and requirements for how Washington can scale building decarbonization by 2030

Research and Analytics to Support Policymakers (2022)

May



May



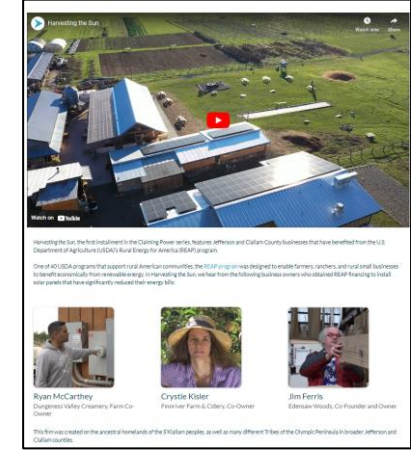
June



September



October



- Interactive data visualization platform
- Provides regional stakeholders tools to explore energy data relevant to deep decarbonization in the Northwest

- Analysis for six manufacturing sectors in Washington
- Explains industrial process emissions and decarbonization strategies

- Convened policymakers, labor leaders, industry representatives, and environmental advocates for a Clean Manufacturing Summit
- Collaborated with BlueGreen Alliance, UW Carbon Leadership Forum, and SEI-US

- Conducted qualitative and quantitative research to understand barriers for decarbonizing buildings in rural and Tribal communities

- Produced first *Claiming Power* film to tell stories of clean energy in rural communities
- *Harvesting the Sun* focused on small businesses installing solar panels

Rural and Tribal Community Decarbonization

- CETI program with portfolio of equity-focused projects
- Claiming Power
 - Video story-telling project that explores how Northwest rural communities experience the clean energy transition
 - *Harvesting the Sun*: Three small businesses in Jefferson and Clallam counties installing solar panels with support from the USDA REAP program
 - *Preserving a Way of Life*: Energy sovereignty, economic opportunities, and community resilience at the Lummi Nation.
- Community-Defined Decarbonization
 - Qualitative report sharing the challenges, strengths, and desires of residential decarbonization for rural and Tribal communities in Washington



Community-Defined Decarbonization

- ▶ *Community-Defined Decarbonization: Reflecting Rural and Tribal Desires for an Equitable Clean Energy Transition in Washington, September 2022*
- ▶ Aims:
 1. Understand the barriers to decarbonizing buildings for the state's rural and Tribal low-income, energy-burdened households.
 2. Determine whether decarbonization strategies and clean energy development could address energy inequities in rural and Tribal communities.



Project Team



CETI Research Fellow **Mariah Caballero** is the primary analyst and author. She performed the quantitative analysis to develop data visualizations, applied the theoretical frameworks to the interviews, and wrote the final report.



CETI Research and Policy Analyst **Aditi Bansal** conducted the interviews and produced the first draft of the paper in June 2021.



CETI Research Analyst **Ruby Moore-Bloom** provided research support and integrated the data visualizations into CETI's Northwest Clean Energy Atlas.



CETI Executive Director **Eileen V. Quigley** managed the project and edited the manuscript.

Methodology

- Semi-Structured Interviews
 - Conducted 24 semi-structured interviews via Zoom with rural and Tribal community members, as well as nonprofit organizations and government agencies.
- Analysis and Framing
 - Compiled statistics, historical background, and academic literature after the interviews were analyzed, because we are not experts in rural and Tribal aspirations for their respective communities.
- Participatory Approach
 - Received feedback from all participants throughout the process ensure themes were adequately summarized.



Key Findings

- ▶ Building decarbonization solutions cannot be advanced without addressing the **fundamental inequity that exists in rural and Tribal housing** and the **energy burden that low-income rural and Tribal households face**.
- ▶ Requires an **interdisciplinary approach**, with **community-defined desires** as the solution.



01. SOCIOECONOMIC



Challenges

- Legacy distrust
- Community capacity
- Climate threats
- Poor infrastructure
- Health risks
- Misinformation/political polarization

Strengths

- Community outreach
- Culturally-relevant programming
- Community-led design
- Data analysis/research
- Youth development
- Community organizing for power

Desires

- Community involvement
- Affordable and safe housing
- Infrastructural investments
- Climate mitigation
- Leadership development

02. MARKET



Challenges

- Workforce recruiting and retainment
- Expansive service areas
- Administrative capacity
- Equitable employment opportunities

Strengths

- Wrap-around worker services

Desires

- Accessible clean energy workforce
- Increased administrative capacity
- Tribal-Tribal connections

03. REGULATORY



Challenges

- Funding restrictions
- Poor housing stock
- Interest-free loan programs
- Patchwork funding
- Limited opportunity for renters

Strengths

- Multi-organizational collaboration
- Funding application assistance
- Utility collaboration
- Deferral pilot program

Desires

- Additional funds
- Funding flexibility
- Pre- and post-testing
- Organizational collaboration
- Energy sovereignty
- Open-data sources
- Landlord incentives

Challenges

➤ Patchwork Funding

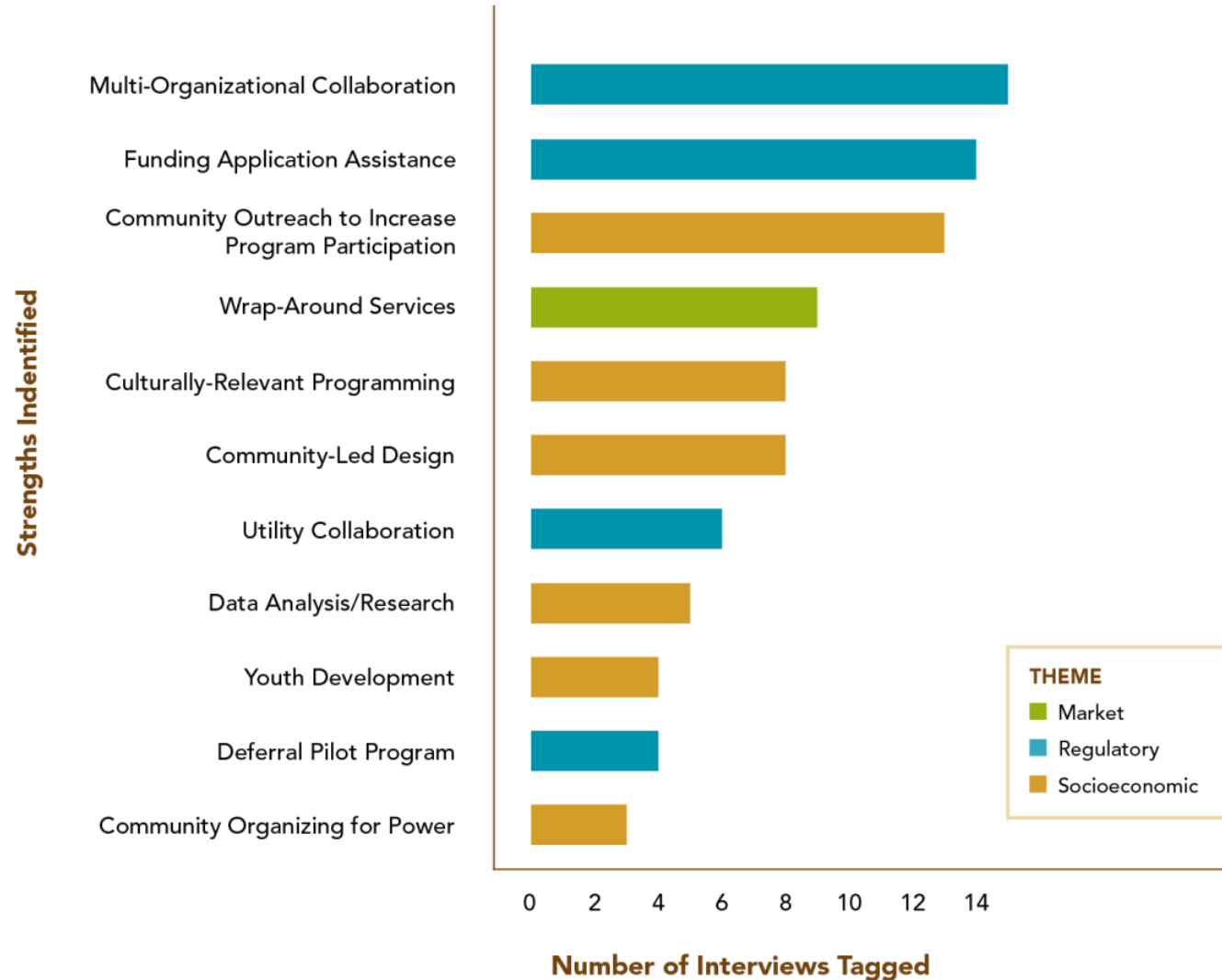
“It [limited funding] makes it really hard to build momentum. We have this sort of boom-and-bust cycle. We’ve built some fairly powerful infrastructure with our funding, but most of that [money] disappeared.” – *Vince Schueler, WSU Energy Program*



Strengths

➤ Multi-Organizational Collaboration

“When we learned to speak another agency’s language, we often found that our respective funds could be used more broadly than we understood previously. For example, some agencies speak to rehab and construction, while others speak to environmental remediation, and the work itself may be the same.”
– Erin McTigue, EPA, Region 10



Desires

➤ Affordable & Safe Housing

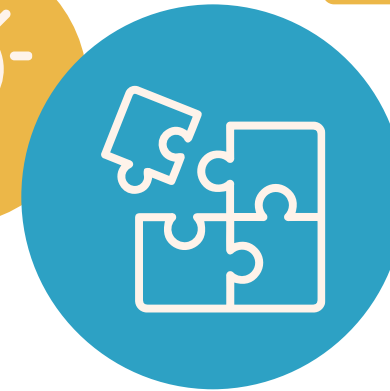
“If we were to start talking about **how do we actually break the cycle of intergenerational poverty** and what we’re seeing in the condition of the housing stock, [we ask ourselves] where can we create those types of [housing] developments? They become where **we’re creating a community of choice where people choose to live, where they feel like they’ve got opportunity.**” – *Ernie Rasmussen, WA Dept. of Commerce Tribal Affairs*



Looking Forward

Invest in opportunities for community involvement

Empower organizations to share resources and ideas



Address socioeconomic inequities concomitantly

Support Tribal and rural communities to ensure they benefit from state and federal funds

Co-create solutions with community members and local organizations

Save it for Later



➤ Scan for full report



Northwest Clean Energy Atlas

Northwest Clean Energy Atlas

www.nwceatlas.org

- Data visualization platform
- Launched in May 2022
- Provides regional stakeholders interactive tools to explore energy data relevant to deep decarbonization in Idaho, Montana, Oregon, and Washington.
- Source of aggregated data with visualizations and commentary to drive regionally focused energy system planning and analysis.
- Hosts a variety of data visualizations, including maps from the *Community-Defined Decarbonization* report



Join Our Community!

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