

For Immediate Release

Governor Recognizes High School Students For Efforts to Combat Global Warming.

Yarmouth, ME – Tuesday October 23, 2007 – Maine Governor John Baldacci today presented Yarmouth High School with a Voluntary Renewable Resources Fund (VRRF) grant of \$26,400 for a student initiated, working solar power project.

The project involves the construction of an energy system that will produce approximately 3,600 kilowatt-hours of clean electricity for the school annually, offsetting 4,200 lbs of carbon dioxide, 6.5 lbs of sulphur oxide and more than 5 lbs of nitrogen oxide emissions each year.

The VRRF was established by the Legislature in 2000 and is supported by voluntary contributions made by consumers on their electric bill. The Maine Public Utilities Commission (PUC), which operates the VRRF, offers grants of up to \$50,000 to qualifying Maine-based nonprofits for the development of a project utilizing renewable resources like wind, water, sun, wood, tides, trash-to-energy, fuel cells and geothermal energy. These small-scale community projects will serve as demonstration projects that can educate Maine communities on the value and cost-effectiveness of harnessing natural resources for clean electricity.

Governor Baldacci said the Yarmouth High School project was not only special in that it would produce clean electricity for the school's use, but also because it was completely student initiated, from concept, to the writing and delivery of the Voluntary Renewable Resources Fund grant, and now the construction phase.

"This project will be an excellent opportunity to demonstrate solar power at work in Maine's schools and will also serve as an example for other students around Maine of how to get involved in combating the very real threat of global warming," said Governor Baldacci.

"Today's children will be living with the consequences of energy decisions we make now – and so will their grandchildren. The earlier we get our students focused on the issues and what they can do, the better the outcome will be for Maine and the world," Baldacci added.

Governor Baldacci's comments were reinforced by the PUC's Chairman, Kurt Adams, when presenting certificates to the three students, Emma Roose, Hannah Yardley and Nell Pierce, who had spear headed the school's application efforts to the VRRF.

"I am encouraged by the fact that four of the ten successful grant applications are from pre-college educational institutions," said Adams. "These four clean energy projects will serve as excellent teaching tools for not only the students but the community as a whole, on the importance of increasing the production clean energy in Maine."

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This year the VRRF awarded a total of \$362,889 for ten projects, seven involving solar energy, two-wind power and one tidal power.

The other 2007 Voluntary Renewable Resources Fund grant awardees were:

GRAY – NEW GLOUSTER HIGH SCHOOL - \$36,450 for a solar 3.44 kW PV system.

KITTERY – WASTE TRANSFER STATION - \$50,000 for a 50 kW wind turbine.

LINCOLN MIDDLE SCHOOL – PORTLAND - \$37,200 for a solar 3.5 kW PV array and 1 kW pole system for the school's Geodesic dome.

NORWAY WASTEWATER DEPARTMENT - \$50,000 for a solar-bee PV system to power wastewater circulators.

OCEAN ENERGY INSTITUTE – VINALHAVEN PROJECT - \$18,915 for the restoration of a historic tidal power dam on Vinalhaven Island.

DOWNEAST SALMON FEDERATION – E MACHIAS - \$50,000 for a 6,000-Watt PV System, powering display aquaria at the new laboratory and teaching facility in East Machias.

MIDDLE SCHOOL OF THE KENNEBUNKS - \$35,213 for a 5.6 kW ground-mounted solar PV system.

UNIVERSITY OF MAINE AT PRESQUE ISLE - \$50,000 for a 400-700 kW Wind Turbine.

THE WINTER CACHE PROJECT – PORTLAND - \$8,711 for a solar powered pump and irrigation system.

For more information on the Voluntary Renewable Resource Fund, please contact Shirley Bartlett of the PUC at 287-3318 or Shirley.bartlett@maine.gov or visit the MPUC website - www.maine.gov/mpuc/

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