



Maine Public Utilities Commission



NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
October 24, 2007

Money and Environmental Saving Grant Awarded to University of Maine at Presque Isle

PRESQUE ISLE, ME - Wednesday, October 24, 2007 - Maine Public Utilities Commission Chairman Kurt Adams today presented the University of Maine at Presque Isle with a Voluntary Renewable Resources Fund (VRRF) grant of \$50,000 for a wind power project which will save the University more than \$100,000 annually in electricity charges.

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

The grant to the University of Maine at Presque Isle will go towards the construction of a 400 to 700 K W wind turbine that will produce one million kilo watt-hours of electricity per year.

On presenting University President Don Zillman with the VRRF grant certificate, Adams said just as important as the dollar savings that will be enjoyed with the Turbine, is the opportunity for the University to achieve its commitment of carbon neutrality.

“Once fully operational, the turbine will save an estimated 572 tons of Carbon Dioxide from being released into the atmosphere each year - the equivalent of removing 123 cars from the road,” he said.

“It will serve as a demonstration project that can educate Maine communities on the value and cost-effectiveness of harnessing natural resources for clean electricity.”

“We are thrilled to receive this grant as we begin the hard work of finding and then installing a turbine on our campus to reduce our energy costs,” President Don Zillman said. “This project will

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save the University more than \$100,000 per year and help us meet our carbon neutral commitment. We are pleased that this grant funding will help us in achieving those goals.”

Adams said this year the VRRF is awarding a total of \$362,889 to ten organizations, seven involving solar energy, two involving wind power and one tidal power.

“It is encouraging to note that of the ten successful grant applications this year; four are from educational institutions ranging from middle school to College level with students actively involved in the grant writing process. This shows that Maine’s students are learning about the importance of alternative energy sources, something that is vitally important because they are the ones that will be living with the consequences of energy decisions we now make. 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.

The other 2007 Voluntary Renewable Resources Fund grant awardees are:

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.

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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University of Maine, Presque Isle