

## Idaho in Action: Renewable Energy Companies

### Ridgeline Energy



Ridgeline Energy started as a small, two-man operation and has grown to 10 projects in development in Idaho—leveraging the growing interest in renewable energy into clean energy, jobs and financial opportunities for rural Idaho.

Nearly all of percent of Ridgeline Energy's permitted projects in Idaho are sited on private lands. Ridgeline staff prides themselves on the relationships they have built with Idaho farmers and ranchers and have spent many hours around kitchen tables ensuring that they do right by their partners in wind development.

Through wind development, landowners can make use of marginal land and supplement their agricultural income. But the benefits of wind go beyond the financial for Idaho communities. For instance, growing the wind industry will create a demand for more workers that could help keep young Idahoans in their communities. And these job skills will be in high demand. In neighboring states, technical and community college programs geared for the specialized training that these jobs require already have waiting lists.

Ridgeline is working with policymakers to create an environment that will attract wind and other renewable energy developers to the state and allow Idahoans to enjoy all the benefits that clean energy can bring.

### Intrepid Technology and Resource



Intrepid Technology and Resources (ITR) reached a milestone in the bioenergy arena when they built the first full-scale on-farm anaerobic digester in the state of Idaho. Clean natural gas from biomethane digesters is a great way of producing a fuel source and disposing of animal waste materials such as manure from farm stock. ITR's primary focus is dairy operations in southern Idaho.

The Whitesides Dairy in Minidoka County became operational in December 2004 and expanded in 2006 when the dairy increased its herd. Concurrent with the expansion of the Whitesides Facility, ITR has built an even larger system on the WestPoint Dairy in Gooding County.

ITR produces pipeline quality gas certified by the Gas Technical Institute. ITR has also passed the even more exacting Department of Transportation gas transport standards. This makes the firm the only biomethane producers in the country who can haul their product over the open road and deliver direct to customers.

Recently, ITR found a near-perfect match for the Whitesides methane plant output. Where there is no access to natural gas, industrial plants have traditionally used propane and are now

facing tripling prices--putting ITR in a unique position to offer a locally produced renewable energy source that can be trucked to their site

This virtually untapped energy resource in Idaho could meet a key need in the state.

## US Geothermal



U.S. Geothermal commenced commercial power production in January 2008 at the newly constructed Raft River Unit One geothermal power plant 200 miles southeast of Boise.

The US Department of Energy began construction of the world's first commercial-scale binary geothermal power plant at the same site in early 1980, but it was closed down after 1982. When US Geothermal looked at the Raft River project they saw more than abandoned wells and unused equipment foundations. They recognized an opportunity to capitalize on the growing interest from local utilities to add more renewable power to their generation resource mix.

This is the first commercial geothermal power plant in Idaho. Idaho Power has signed a Power Purchase Agreement with U.S. Geothermal for the first 10 megawatts of electricity from that plant and negotiations have begun for a 25-year power purchase agreement an annual average of 45.5 megawatts

Geothermal energy is a viable local energy resource that can provide advantages over traditional energy sources and reduce reliance on imported fossil fuels and their inherent price unpredictability.

Idaho's geothermal development potential is comparable to Nevada and California which together produce over 2,700 megawatts of electricity from geothermal plants,

## Idaho Wind Farms, LLC



Like everywhere else in the country, the housing market has fallen in Idaho, so when Idaho Wind Farm's projects got under way, local contractors working on the projects had a rich pool of skilled labor to draw from.

Early on, Idaho Wind Farms made a commitment to using local contractors and local workers wherever possible, the biggest contractor being Mullen Crane and Transport, of Soda Springs, with a local workforce of 35. In addition, there were contracts for equipment rental, concrete, road building, hauling, excavation and electrical construction resulting in many more high paying local jobs.

The other benefit of Idaho Wind Farm's two projects is the revenue streams they will create for farmers and ranchers – not only do landowners benefit from leasing their land, they can continue to use their land for on the ground farming – wind augments their agricultural revenue without using much land and no water.

Still under construction, the two projects with a total of 20 turbines will generate 42 MW of energy, enough to power 8,800 Idaho homes when completed. And the county will collect over \$7 million in property taxes over the lives of the projects – revenue that will be fed back into the communities where the wind farms are located.