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Energy Northwest Joins Small Modular Reactor Initiative

RICHLAND, Wash. – Energy Northwest is teaming with NuScale Power and Utah Associated Municipal Power Systems as part of the Western Initiative for Nuclear collaboration to study the demonstration of a commercial, small modular reactor project, potentially in southeastern Idaho, by 2024. If NuScale receives federal development funding, Energy Northwest will have first right of offer to operate such a project and by doing so, become one of the industry experts for small modular reactor operation.

NuScale’s recent funding application to the Energy Department responds to a federal initiative designed to speed the nation’s transition to sustainable, clean sources of energy by bringing small modular reactors to market in the United States.

“NuScale’s SMR technology will provide reliable, affordable and carbon-free energy within the next 10 to 15 years,” said Dale Atkinson, Energy Northwest vice president. “This project would provide us with the opportunity to assess the potential future contributions of this technology to the Washington State energy mix, including helping to integrate with renewable sources.”

NuScale and partners are exploring a six- to 12-module facility to be located at a site like the Idaho National Laboratory. Designed to generate between 270 and 540 megawatts of electricity, the project would also serve to prove the feasibility of future SMR development.

Although both the Tri-Cities and INL boast a long history of reactor research, testing and operation, NuScale chose INL as its initial preferred location.

Energy Northwest CEO Mark Reddemann recently asked DOE to strongly consider NuScale’s application for matching development funds under the federal Funding Opportunity Announcement program. He also affirmed Energy Northwest’s support for bringing SMR technology to the Northwest.

“In an era in the Northwest of slow growing electricity demand, small modular reactor technology offers utilities and consumers the opportunity to invest incrementally, on an as-needed basis, in clean, cost-effective power,” Reddemann wrote in a letter to Dr. Peter Lyons, DOE’s Assistant Secretary for Nuclear Energy.

Energy Northwest first endorsed the NuScale SMR design in 2011 after two years of rigorous study of various SMR technologies by the Energy Northwest SMR Working Group. The group was formed by Energy Northwest in 2009 and is comprised of 10 public and investor-owned Northwest utilities. Like the Western Initiative for Nuclear, the group recognizes the important carbon-free power contributions SMRs can provide to the western energy mix

About Energy Northwest

Energy Northwest develops, owns and operates a diverse mix of electricity generating resources, including hydro, solar and wind projects – and the Northwest’s only nuclear generating facility. These projects provide enough reliable, affordable and environmentally responsible energy to power more than a million homes each year, and that carbon-free electricity is provided at the cost of generation. As a Washington state, not-for-profit joint operating agency, Energy Northwest comprises 27 public power member utilities from across the state serving more than 1.5 million ratepayers. The agency continually explores new generation projects to meet its members’ needs.

Energy Northwest – www.energy-northwest.com.



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