



OREGON'S RENEWABLE ENERGY TAX CREDIT PROGRAM Fact Sheet

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The Green Energy Institute's analysis of Oregon's Residential Energy Tax Credit (RETC) program for the period between 2013 and 2015 identified significant benefits from the program across the state and among different communities. In total, the program helped incentivize the development of thousands of renewable energy projects throughout the state.

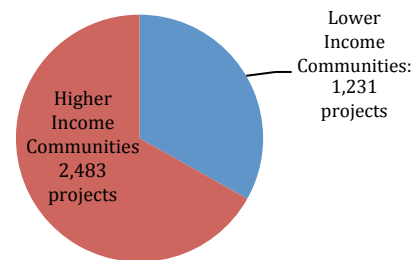
The RETC Helped Bring Significant Renewable Capacity Online

Between 2013 and 2015, Oregon awarded \$21,970,460 in residential energy tax credits for qualifying renewable energy investments. These tax credits incentivized Oregonians to build **3,733 solar photovoltaic projects**, bringing **18,488 kilowatts** of solar PV capacity online.¹ The RETC also supported two residential wind energy projects generating 13,352 kilowatt-hours of renewable energy.²

During the 2013–2015 period, the average cost of a RETC solar PV project was \$23,250 and the average RETC granted was **\$5,885**. On average, these tax credits represented approximately 25% of total project costs.³

The RETC Has Provided Benefits to Low-Income Communities

The RETC appears to benefit low-income communities. In the period between 2013 and 2015, one-third of projects were located in zip codes with median incomes below the statewide median income.⁴ In addition, projects in lower income communities received higher average incentives on a per-project basis than did those located in higher income communities.⁵



¹Data analyzed for this fact sheet came from Oregon's Transparency Website, which provides all of Oregon's RETC tax expenditures for 2012–2015. Oregon Department of Energy, *Energy-Related Tax Expenditures*, <https://www.oregon.gov/transparency/Pages/Tax-Expenditures.aspx>.

² ODOE's RETC data provided only generation data for its two wind projects (kWh), and only capacity data for all the solar PV projects (kW).

³ Residential solar PV projects received an average RETC of \$1.41 per watt, and the average system capacity was 4.96 kW.

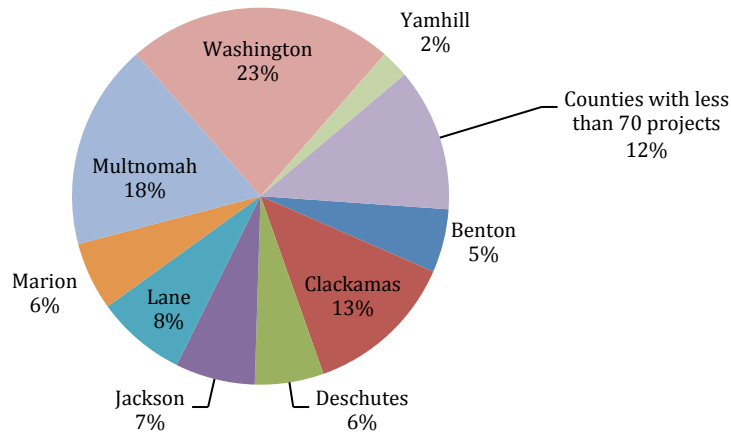
⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 2014 5-year estimates; generated by Andrea Lang using American Factfinder, <http://factfinder2.census.gov> (June 29, 2016).

⁵ Projects located in zip codes with median incomes below Oregon's statewide median income received an average incentive of \$1.42 per watt, while higher income projects in higher income zip codes received an average incentive of \$1.35 per watt.

The RETC Has Provided Benefits Throughout Oregon

The RETC has benefitted residents throughout the state of Oregon. Between 2013 and 2015, Oregonians constructed RETC projects in all but two of Oregon’s counties.⁶ Although slightly more than half of the RETC projects built during this period were located in the Portland metropolitan area, the counties that saw the highest number of projects per capita include rural or semi-rural Crook, Hood River, and Jefferson counties.⁷ Moreover, on a per-project basis, the RETC provided greater economic incentives in rural or semi-rural Baker, Curry, Harney, Tillamook, and Wheeler counties.⁸

RETC Project Locations, by County



⁶ Lake and Morrow counties were the only Oregon counties lacking RETC projects between 2013 and 2015.

⁷ To derive per capita data, we used 2015 county population estimates from the U.S. Census Bureau Population Estimates Program. U.S. Census Bureau, *Quick Facts*, <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/>.

⁸ These counties received the highest RETCs on a per-watt basis.