



# EESI Update

Fall 2006

Environmental and Energy Study Institute ...*advancing innovative solutions!*

## "BEHIND THE SCENES" AT EESI

Welcome to this special Fall issue of *EESI Update*. In addition to sharing examples of EESI's current work, we are offering you a chance to look through the walls of 122 C St. NW #630 and take a peek at some of the lesser-known ways in which we help advance innovative solutions everyday. From the contributions of our interns to seeding ideas from which others bear fruit, EESI continues to educate and stimulate policy makers, coalition members, industry leaders and environmentalists on renewable energy/efficiency, transportation, agriculture, climate change, and smart growth issues.

## EESI Prompts the G8 to "Walk the Talk"

Previous to the meeting of the G8 in Gleneagles, Scotland in July of 2005, United Kingdom Farmers Union officials met with EESI's Carol Werner for advice on developing biofuels in their country. They chose EESI as part of their tour of experts because they understood EESI's advanced position on the issue. In the discussion, the officials expressed frustration that the UK government was so vocal in its call for action on climate change, yet had done little in the area of biofuels. The UK agriculture sector needed help in bringing the potential of biofuels to the attention of policy leaders.

Carol relayed this message to an official

G8 leaders rode in cars that utilized a fuel blended with cellulosic ethanol made from straw...  
*"You see—I'm listening to you!"*

with the British Embassy with whom we have worked quite closely on a number of climate issues. She pointed out that developing a biofuels industry presented a great opportunity to reduce dependence on fossil fuels, cut carbon dioxide emissions, and offer the Commonwealth islands a new market for sugar cane. As a result, when the G8 leaders met in Scotland in July 2005, they rode in cars that utilized a fuel blended with cellulosic ethanol made from straw. Afterward, the embassy official told us, "You see—I'm listening to you!"

## A Catalyst for Action on the Hill

EESI educates Member offices on critical issues and policy options that address them. Much of this work is done through one-on-one conversations with staff - in person, by email and by phone in addition to our well-known Congressional briefings, white papers, newsletters and other educational avenues. Almost every day, numerous requests come into our office from Congressional offices seeking help. We provide information for speeches, answer all sorts of questions, draft policy suggestions, refer people to additional experts, and most of all, help people see the connections between our issues and their concerns and provide opportunities for them to take action. Just a few recent examples:

- Helped ranking committee member with renewable energy facts for a speech
- Fulfilled staff requests for Farm Bill information
- Suggested bill language on Flex-Fuel Plug-In Hybrid Vehicles
- Hosted one-on-one meetings with House and Senate staff to give biofuels overview
- Provided talking points for Members of Congress on the relationship between oil, energy, and climate

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## Special points of interest:

- EESI Supports Geothermal Technology Despite DOE Omission
- EESI research submitted to Wikipedia - an online free-content encyclopedia
- EESI holds briefing on the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change



## Preparing the Next Generation

EESI always has utilized interns. Though we only provide a transportation allowance, we offer an unparalleled experience and exposure to policy work on Capitol Hill. The EESI staff take seriously our role of educating a new generation of environmental professionals. Our interns get a substantive experience unlike those found most places in Washington. They work closely with a policy analyst and our Executive Director to conduct research and learn about environmental and energy policy. They attend hearings on the Hill, help us organize Congressional briefings, read and summarize relevant items in the Congressional Record, track legislation, draft papers and fact sheets, and make other meaningful contributions to EESI's work. They are an invaluable part of our overall success.

We generally engage 3 interns each semester who come from colleges and universities across the country. Most are near completion of their Bachelor's degree, but we have employed interns ranging from a high school graduate (on her way to Yale) to post-Master's and even PhD degree individuals. Our interns have gone on to positions in federal, state, and local government, major environmental consulting firms, other national nonprofits, and sometimes have even been hired as full-time staffers at EESI. Our interns bring great value to the organization, and we are very appreciative of the work they do to help us advance a clean, healthy, sustainable energy future. Afterward, many of them stay in touch with us—a tribute to the experience they have had at EESI.

## Expanding the Reach of EESI Research via Wikipedia

A recent EESI intern, Shaun Brown, decided to take research he had done for EESI projects and translate them into Wikipedia articles. Wikipedia is an online free-content encyclopedia, managed by a non-profit company, which anyone can edit. Most of Shaun's work can be found at

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Climate\\_change\\_response](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Climate_change_response) in these sections:

- Sub-national level action
- What's being done in the states
- Regional initiatives
- Local governments
- Campus-level action

As well as in the 'Smart Growth' article at

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smart\\_growth](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Smart_growth) in these sections:

- Rationale for smart growth
- Economic rationale
- Climate change rationale
- Elements of smart growth
- Compact neighborhoods
- Transit-oriented development
- Walkable and bicycle-friendly design
- Other concepts

## Intern Profile: Priya Keane

Priya joined EESI this past September as a Sustainable Communities intern. She is currently a senior at UCLA majoring in Geography with an Environmental Studies concentration, as well as a minor in Global Studies.



Priya, an Alaska native, came to Washington, DC along with 30 other students as a part of her school's Center for American Politics and Public Policy (CAPPP) internship program.

Priya enjoys the opportunity to work for an organization that helps shape policy at the national level and to learn from a diverse staff. She says, "I'm really enjoying my time at EESI because the staff are knowledgeable, but also approachable." Her main task is to research current examples of how city planners are integrating different aspects of energy into their planning process. Her work will be used to help EESI and the American Planning

Association develop a "best practices" manual for the building of more energy efficient, sustainable communities.

*"I'm really enjoying my time at EESI... the staff are knowledgeable, but also approachable"*

Priya says that, thus far, her research has helped to broaden her knowledge of largely unknown people, organizations, and coalitions around the country who are engaged in the fight against climate change. She says

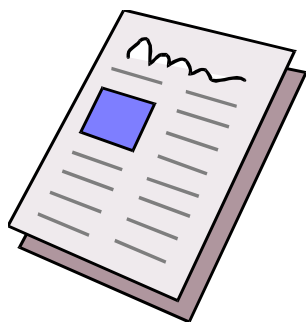
that discovering them has given her hope about the possibilities for a sustainable future. When she graduates she would like to work in either environmental policy or sustainable product marketing.



## EESI Seeds Ideas

One aspect of EESI's work that goes largely unnoticed is the constant "seeding" of ideas with many different audiences. For example, EESI's paper, [Subsidies: Historic, Current and the Skewing of Market Signals](http://www.eesi.org/publications/Presentations/NCC%20Energy%20Subsidies%207.29.05.pdf) (http://www.eesi.org/publications/Presentations/NCC%20Energy%20Subsidies%207.29.05.pdf) prepared for Carol's presentation to the Policy, Institutions, and the True Costs of Carbon conference organized by the New Mexico Council of Churches, prompted staff from Goldman Sachs to invite Carol to New York to talk with them about subsidies and the policy picture for investing in renewable energy. Goldman Sachs has made significant investments in clean energy technologies.

EESI's information resources are like seeds scattered to the wind - they reach people far and wide. Dozens of recipients of our e-newsletters pass them on to hundreds of their colleagues, use articles for their own newsletters or



post a link to our information on their website. In fact, a university ecology and environmental science lecturer told us, *"I've found that your electronic newsletters and publications are really essential for environmental education. Using these newsletters, we can inform our students and the public."*

Other similar glowing reviews of EESI newsletters include: *"Your weekly report is the best thing I get and read."* *"One word – OUTSTANDING! – best describes the recent EESI newsletter. You guys really put out a quality product."* and *"The positive and well-researched information you provide is critical to many of us. Thank you."* To receive any of our free electronic newsletters, go to <http://www.eesi.org/briefings/form.htm>

Policy ideas grow from many places. For example, policy professionals often send ideas to colleagues to get input and feedback. In a recent email discourse on climate policy and how to fund renewable energy and efficiency technologies, Carol suggested that perhaps it was time to consider a carbon tax as an option. After the energy tax proposal of the early '90s (which was a major effort of EESI) was defeated, support for the concept fell away. However, times have changed and, much to Carol's pleasant surprise, there were a number of positive responses. EESI hopes to help stimulate interest in this

and other effective policy options for controlling carbon emissions by vetting ideas, working with other interested parties and presenting concepts to policy makers as some of the *many ways* in which our country can advance an environmentally sustainable energy future and address the threat of climate change.

*"[Y]our electronic newsletters and publications are really essential for environmental education."*

To learn more about successful deployment of an "eco-tax," EESI staff members met with Dr. Anselm Görres, President of Green Budget Germany, an organization established to support the development of Ecological Tax Reform (ETR) in Germany. The group now works on improving the ETR and educating the public about it. Dr. Görres described Germany's experience with the phased-in energy tax. Eighty-nine percent of revenues were returned directly to the people through the pension system, helping to reduce labor costs (leading to an overall reduction in the tax burden by 4%) and the remaining 11 percent funded environmental improvement projects. The tax resulted in a 16% decrease in fuel consumption and the creation of 250,000 new jobs. For more information, please visit <http://www.eco-tax.info>.

## The Great Warming

*The Great Warming*, an exciting new documentary about global warming, was launched nationwide through the Regal Cinema chain on Nov. 3. *The Great Warming* is neither negative nor pessimistic and presents an array of solutions to climate change - leaving audiences with a positive message and sense of hope. The film's producers developed a month-long initiative that ran up to and through the film's launch date. This initiative was delivered by a coalition of voices from every shade of opinion in America; EESI is one of the partner organizations. [www.thegreatwarming.org](http://www.thegreatwarming.org)





## Recent EESI Briefings

EESI's recent briefings have garnered great attendance, media attention, and led to additional collaboration with Hill staff. Most of the briefings have had audiences of around 100. However, we had a packed house of over 150 people crowded into the room for both our September 22<sup>nd</sup> briefing on cellulosic ethanol (9/22/06) and our Stern review briefing (11/13/06), forcing us to turn others away. Some who were unable to make it into the room for the cellulosic ethanol briefing utilized a webcast of it on the Agriculture Committee website. Our November 1<sup>st</sup> briefing on the role of small business in the passage of California's recent global warming legislation, AB 32, generated several articles in the press, including *Congressional Quarterly*, *Greenwire*, and *American City Business Journals*, and has resulted in interest in potential Senate hearings on small business and global warming.



- **What Would the Elimination of the Conservation Reserve Program Do to Federal Spending and Commodity Prices? - September 7, 2006.**  
*Presenter:* Professor Daryll E. Ray, Agriculture Policy Analysis Center (APAC), Univ. of Tennessee.
- **Understanding the Energy-Water-Climate Nexus: Implications for Policy - September 13, 2006.**  
*Presenters:* **Nate Gentry**, Senate Committee on Energy and Natural Resources; **Dr. Allan Hoffman**, U.S. Department of Energy; **John Gasper**, Argonne National Laboratory; **Dr. Peter Gleick**, Pacific Institute for Studies in Development, Environment, and Security.
- **Cellulosic Ethanol Technology: Is it Ready To Be Commercially Deployed Today? - September 22, 2006.** *Presenters:* **Arnold R. Klann**, BlueFire Ethanol, Inc.; **Maurice Hladk**, Iogen, Corp.; **John Doyle**, Celunol, Corp.
- **Clean Energy, a Strong Economy and a Healthy Environment: Western Governors Take Action - September 27, 2006.** *Presenters:* **William Keese**, Western Governors' Association Clean and Diversified Energy Advisory Committee, and former Chairman of the California Energy Commission; **Dr. Douglas Arent**, Principal Analyst, Energy Analysis, National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

- **Small Business Takes Active Role in Supporting California's Global Warming Legislation, AB 32: Signals National Implications - November 1, 2006.**  
*Presenters:* **Byron Kennard**, Center for Small Business and the Environment; **Scott Hauge**, Small Business California; **Hank Ryan**, Small Business California.
- **Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change- November 13, 2006.** *Presenters:* **Julian Braithwaite**, Counselor for Global Issues, British Embassy; **David Thomas**, 1st Secretary, Energy and Environment, British Embassy.

## Please Make an End-of-Year Contribution to Support EESI's Successful Work

EESI is unique. No other organization provides the same quantity and quality of science, technology and policy briefings that EESI regularly orchestrates for policymakers. EESI brings together a wide range of experts from across the country to educate Congress and promote "win-win" policy options. EESI's highly acclaimed Congressional briefings (24 so far this year), free electronic newsletters, broad-based coalition building and policy development work elevate attention to critical issues and bring about groundbreaking solutions.

As you think about your charitable contributions this year, we hope you will include EESI as one that you support. A tax-deductible contribution to EESI will allow us to help free America from its "addiction to oil" and reduce global warming with clean renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies. You can take pride in knowing you are making a difference! And you can feel confident that your contribution will be well-spent: EESI has received **four stars from Charity Navigator** (their top rating) - America's largest independent charity evaluator, indicating that EESI excels at efficiently and effectively managing its finances to ensure that your contributions have the greatest impact possible.

Please go to <https://secure.groundspring.org/dn/index.php?aid=480> to make a donation online or contact EESI Development Director Ruth Lampi at [RLamp@eesi.org](mailto:RLamp@eesi.org) or 202-662-1887.

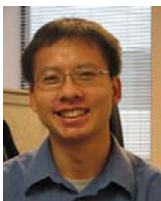


## Idling Reduction in School Buses

In late October, USDA announced grants to increase use of alternative fuels, one of which is to the Salt Lake/Utah Clean Cities Coalition, which includes the *Environmental and Energy Study Institute* as one of several partners. The program will create and disseminate model idling reduction curriculum; train school bus drivers; document the impact on reduced petroleum use, lower emissions and fuel cost savings; oversee implementation of the program as a model in six Utah and Nevada partner schools; and ultimately distribute the model curriculum/program experience to encourage replication by schools nationwide. <http://www.utahcleancities.org/strategies.htm>

## Welcome to New Biomass Fellow

Ian Siu joined EESI at the beginning of October to work on our USDA contract to develop workable incentives for bioenergy. For this project, EESI is working with team members New Uses Council and North Carolina State University to explore supportive policies to expand the production of biofuel, biopower, and biobased products. Ian's research will focus on helping the team construct three case studies, designed to demonstrate the social and economic impacts of recommended incentives in a particular location with a particular technology. Ian has a degree in economics from Brown University and has experience working with tax credits for small and minority-owned businesses.



## Plug-ins and the Environment



EESI, as part of its Flexible-Fuel Plug-in Hybrid vehicle campaign, developed a response to an American Council for an Energy-Efficient Economy (ACEEE) analysis released to the press in September about their interpretation of the environmental

and economic performance of plug-in vehicles. While the overall report presents a positive picture for plug-in technology, EESI felt it necessary to raise a few issues about the underlying assumptions of the analysis. Both the ACEEE report and EESI's response are part of developing a more complete and accurate picture of plug-in hybrid electric vehicles as this exciting technology generates more interest and policy considerations as well as ongoing analysis. View our response at [http://www.eesi.org/publications/Fact%20Sheets/ACEEEREport\\_EESIresponse.PDF](http://www.eesi.org/publications/Fact%20Sheets/ACEEEREport_EESIresponse.PDF)

## EESI Supports Geothermal

In February, EESI was aghast when the Administration's FY07 budget proposed to zero out geothermal energy funding. Moreover, the Administration excluded geothermal from its high-profile October renewable energy technologies conference (and rebuffed requests to include it). Geothermal also was excluded from those renewable energy technologies deemed eligible for the federal energy loan guarantee program. Clearly, the Administration is trying to eliminate the geothermal program. So when EESI examined DOE's recent draft of its Strategic Plan 2006, we were not surprised to find that geothermal energy sources were omitted from its list of renewable energy technologies. In September, EESI submitted comments about this omission to DOE for their consideration in reviewing the Strategic Plan. View EESI's comments at [http://www.eesi.org/publications/Press%20Releases/2006/9-7-06\\_eesi\\_comments\\_DOE\\_Geothermal.htm](http://www.eesi.org/publications/Press%20Releases/2006/9-7-06_eesi_comments_DOE_Geothermal.htm).

EESI knows that tremendous potential exists to advance geothermal technologies beyond their current capabilities if federal research and demonstration funding is available. In fact, geothermal was specifically mentioned as a critical resource in a recent Western Governors' Association (WGA) report, *Clean Energy, a Strong Economy and a Healthy Environment*. Geothermal energy is critical to a low-carbon energy future. As a result, EESI has been actively drawing policymaker attention to this undervalued energy source. EESI helped restore geothermal funding (FY 07 appropriations are still unresolved) as part of our overall effort to increase funding for energy efficiency and renewable energy in the federal budget. We hosted a briefing on geothermal energy in March as well as a September briefing on the WGA report. And, at the request of DOE's Office of Geothermal Technology, we provided a technical review of an MIT report on the development potential of geothermal in the United States by 2050.

## Integrating Energy with Planning

EESI has recently embarked on a joint project with the American Planning Association (APA) to better integrate energy sustainability with planning. With funding from the Surdna Foundation and the George Gund Foundation, over the next three years EESI and APA will be convening a scoping symposium and partner dialogue, identifying and documenting best practices, examining state and federal policy implications, developing a how-to manual and website, and conducting training. <http://www.planning.org/energy>

## Shop for the holidays on-line and benefit EESI!

EESI has a new partnership with Fundraising Solutions so that you can help EESI when you shop online. It is your doorway to **1,000 online stores**. Shop with any of these merchants and they will donate **a portion of every sale to EESI** in your name or anonymously. All you have to do is click on the little shopping bag and start shopping! You can even put a shopping bag directly on your desktop. **There is no additional cost to you.**

[http://www.fundraising-solutions.org/marketplace/marketplace.cfm?user\\_id=997&mids=2](http://www.fundraising-solutions.org/marketplace/marketplace.cfm?user_id=997&mids=2)



**Go to our Market-  
place!**

We welcome suggestions for this newsletter and other ways we communicate with you. You can send your ideas to [RLampi@eesi.org](mailto:RLampi@eesi.org). We look forward to hearing from you.



**Environmental and  
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*The Environmental and Energy Study Institute is a non-profit organization established in 1984 by a bipartisan, bicameral group of members of Congress to provide timely information on energy and environmental policy issues to policymakers and stakeholders and develop innovative policy solutions that set us on a cleaner, more secure and sustainable energy path.*

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