

USDA, NAVY Launches Effort to Encourage the Development and Use of Renewable Energy

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Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan and Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations & Environment Jackalynne Pfannenstiel today kicked off the first of several energy forums to look at ways to increase biofuels production and meet the Navy's renewable energy needs. The forum comes as a result of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) recently signed by the USDA and the Department of the Navy to encourage the development of advanced biofuels and other renewable energy systems.

"As we continue to expand efforts to build a clean energy economy, create new jobs and reduce our dependence on foreign oil, we can use the Navy's fleet as a catalyst to increase demand for biofuels and spur economic opportunity in rural communities throughout the country," said Agriculture Deputy Secretary Kathleen Merrigan. "President Obama has an ambitious renewable energy agenda, and the USDA/Naval partnership we are highlighting today is a critical step to enhance America's energy security."

"The Department of the Navy is very energized about the partnership with the Department of Agriculture," said Navy Assistant Secretary Jackalynne Pfannenstiel. "This collaborative effort will enable us to reduce our petroleum consumption and increase our alternative energy opportunities. The Navy and Marine Corps' warfighting capability will benefit through a more secure energy future."

From a strategic perspective the objective is to reduce reliance on fossil fuels from volatile areas of the world. Tactically, on the battlefield, the costs of transporting fuel is exponentially increased; in extreme cases a gallon of gasoline could cost up to \$400. To address this reality, DON announced five ambitious energy targets for the Navy and Marine Corps and biofuels are a major component of four of those goals. Those targets are summarized below:

When awarding contracts, appropriately consider energy efficiency and the energy footprint as additional factors in acquisition decisions.

By 2012, demonstrate a Green Strike Group composed of nuclear vessels and ships powered by biofuel. By 2016 sail the Strike Group as a Great Green Fleet composed of nuclear ships, surface combatants equipped with hybrid electric alternative power systems running on biofuel, and aircraft running on biofuel.

By 2015 cut petroleum use in its 50,000 non-tactical vehicle commercial fleet in half, by phasing in hybrid, flex fuel and electric vehicles.

By 2020, produce at least half of shore based installations' energy requirements from alternative sources. Also 50 percent of all shore installations will be net zero energy consumers.

By 2020 half of DON's total energy consumption for ships, aircraft, tanks, vehicles and shore installations will come from alternative sources.

The MOU, signed by Agriculture Secretary Tom Vilsack and Navy Secretary Ray Mabus on January 21, complements USDA and the Navy and Marine Corps' existing renewable energy programs and efforts. USDA has a variety of programs and services that support renewable energy development, including:

Rural Development loan and grant programs focused on developing renewable energy systems and helping agricultural producers and businesses adopt energy efficiency improvements;

The Farm Service Agency's Biomass Crop Assistance Program, which supports the establishment and production of crops for conversion to bioenergy, biobased products and power, and

The Research, Education and Economics division's comprehensive bioenergy research program focused on developing new varieties and hybrids of bioenergy feedstocks.

The Department of the Navy recently established the Deputy Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy Office to develop and employ proven business models and investment strategies that leverage public and private investment to achieve naval, defense, and national energy goals.

The departments will work together to support President Obama's initiative to make the United States a global leader in developing a renewable energy economy, reducing energy consumption derived from fossil fuels, and increasing energy production from renewable energy sources. The United States has abundant natural resources - including wind, solar, hydrokinetic, ocean, geothermal, and land for biomass energy



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y crops - that can be refined into biofuels to meet commercial, military transportation and other energy needs.

USDA Rural Development administers and manages more than 40 housing, business, and community infrastructure and facility programs through a network of 6,100 employees located in 500 national, state and local offices. These programs are designed to improve the economic stability of rural communities, businesses, residents, farmers and ranchers and improve the quality of life in rural America. Rural Development has an existing portfolio of more than \$125 billion in loans and loan guarantees.

USDA's Farm Service Agency (FSA) facilitates income support, disaster assistance and conservation programs for the nation's farmers. It provides operating loans for the procurement of farm equipment, seed and fertilizer, and offers ownership loans to help new and veteran producers purchase a farm. FSA also works to procure various commodities to benefit low-income families through domestic food assistance programs.

USDA's Research, Education and Economics mission area is dedicated to the creation of a safe, sustainable, competitive U.S. food and fiber system and strong, healthy communities, families and youth through integrated research, analysis and education. This mission area includes the Agricultural Research Service, the National Institute of Food and Agriculture, the Economic Research Service, and the National Agricultural Statistics Service.

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