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Bioenergy market heats up

Portland Business Journal - July 13, 2007

A new report from Oregon State University shows the biofuels industry is on track to be a \$2.5 billion chunk of the state's economy within 20 years. The study identifies 80 potential biodiesel, ethanol and biomass facilities which could produce a combined 400 million gallons per year of ethanol and another 315 million gallons of biodiesel. Here are some of the headliners:

- In addition to ethanol plants under construction by Pacific Ethanol in Boardman and Cascade Grain in Clatskanie, Treasure Valley Renewable Resources has nearly closed on financing for a project in Ontario. Three other ethanol plants could be under construction by the end of the year: Oregon Ethanol, Inland Pacific and Evergreen Biofuels.
- Potential biodiesel projects by Renewable Energy Group and Terra Fuels could produce a combined 200 million gallons annually. The study does not give a location for the projects.
- Five companies are considering cellulosic ethanol projects. Some consider cellulosic ethanol the most natural fit for Oregon. The technology turns plant and forest waste into fuel. Because it's more difficult than processing corn and oil, it's not yet commercially viable. One project could begin with a pilot at Mount Hood Community College. Trillium Fiberfuels and Montana Microbials would like to turn the straw from grass seed into fuel. The fourth wants to use softwood debris in Lane or Douglas County as a fuel source. The fifth company declined to share its plans, but will be in the Willamette Valley.

-- Matthew Kish

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