

DOE to spend US\$32 million on hydro plants

The US Department of Energy intends to spend US\$32 million in economic stimulus funds to upgrade existing US hydropower facilities. "There's no one solution to the energy crisis, but hydropower is clearly part of the solution and represents a major opportunity to create more clean energy jobs," says Energy Secretary Steven Chu. "Investing in our existing hydropower infrastructure will strengthen our economy, reduce pollution and help us toward energy independence." The money will go toward projects in two categories: facilities larger than 50 MW and facilities smaller than 50 MW. Specifically, the funding will go to non-federal facilities and will be limited to modifications that can be completed with little regulatory delay, according to DOE. DOE has set a late July deadline for letters of intent and 20 August for full applications. It also expects the projects to start before the end of 2010. Much of DOE's US\$39 billion in funds through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will go toward energy efficiency and renewable energy, including the funding of solar, wind, biomass and geothermal energy.

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