

Western legislators follow up on Energy & Environment agenda

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JACKSON — The Western States Energy & Environment Symposium (WSEES) released a final report today, following the late-October symposium in Jackson Hole.

States participating in the WSEES identified the following six categories to pursue in a cooperative manner because doing so is likely to generate mutual benefits throughout the Western region:

1. Advance the development of new transmission lines;
2. Accelerate the development and deployment of carbon capture and storage technology;
3. Streamline and harmonize energy-related regulatory processes;
4. Facilitate the creation of mechanisms for rate payer protection;
5. Promote energy efficiency as a critical strategy; and
6. Conduct cooperative research to overcome energy-related economic, legal, policy, and technology challenges.

During the symposium, legislators made specific commitments to follow up through possible hearings in their respective legislatures and/or drafting legislation. They also emphasized the opportunity to consult with leaders from the West that are serving important roles in the current administration, including Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, FERC Chairman Jon Wellinghoff, and Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid.

A primary focus of the CSG-WEST Energy and Environment Committee will be integrating ideas from the symposium on the critical need for new electrical transmission infrastructure in the Western electrical grid into the ongoing collaborative effort by CSG-WEST and the Western Governors' Association to develop a Western Renewable Energy Zones project.

The final report of the WSEES is available online at <http://legisweb.state.wy.us/>.