Resiliency & Renewable Power Investments Through Microgrids

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Dan Whelan, Director of Government Affairs, Sustainable Northwest

Sustainable Northwest works with with rural and tribal communities to promote sustainable land, water, and energy practices to grow local economies and sustain natural resources.

SUSTAINABLE NORTHWEST

The Problem: Grid Disruptions and Disasters

Summer of 2024: Wallowa County

- 31 Public Safety Power Shutoffs
- 2024 wildfires in neighboring counties
- Inadequate public alerts (if any)
- Business disruptions/ damages (especially refrigeration/freezer units)
- Critical infrastructure disruptions
- Damage to older electrical wiring and equipment throughout the county
- Aging electrical infrastructure
- Over 120 miles of power lines for 7,000 pop.
- Dirty Power (surges, spikes, distortion)
- Upgrades upon failure

“There’s a way to do it better – find it” –Thomas Edison

Microgrids are an innovation – not a new technology

- **US Department of Energy's Microgrid Program Strategy:**
  - *"By 2035, microgrids will be essential building blocks of the future electricity delivery system."*
- **Microgrid variations can adapt to different resilience, economic, and power needs of Oregon communities. (Behind-the-meter & In-front-of-the-meter).**
- **"If you've seen one microgrid, you've seen one microgrid…"**
- **Microgrids can ensure essential services and critical businesses can endure long term power outages.**
- **Microgrids offer options to develop local renewable power (biomass, solar, wind, micro hydro, geothermal) and boost economic development potential.**
- **Microgrids can help the state meet HB 2021 emission reduction mandates.**

Microgrid Legislation History

2020: Wildfires

2021: Increase in Public Safety Power Shut Offs statewide

2022: Wallowa County & Wallowa Resources draft County Microgrid Plan (Feb 2024)

Sustainable Northwest forms Making Energy Work Coalition (MEW) Policy Committee: a network of municipalities, nonprofits, energy developers, farms, ranches, and state agencies working to advance community energy projects, programs, and policies.

2023: First Microgrid bill written and introduced by HCEE Chair Rep. Marsh

Bill fails.
Rep. Marsh & Rep. Owens form the Energy Resilience Work Group.
Bill concepts developed.
ODOE County Energy Resiliency Planning Grant Program created.

2024: Microgrid bill concepts rewritten by MEW Policy Committee from Work Group ideas

2025: HB 2066, HB 2065, HB 2064 introduced pre-session by HCEE Chair Lively

Amendments provided by IOUs, COUs, PUC, & SNW Making Energy Work Committee
HB 2066 and HB 2065 pass out of committee 11-1 with a DO PASS recommendation.

County Energy Resilience Grants

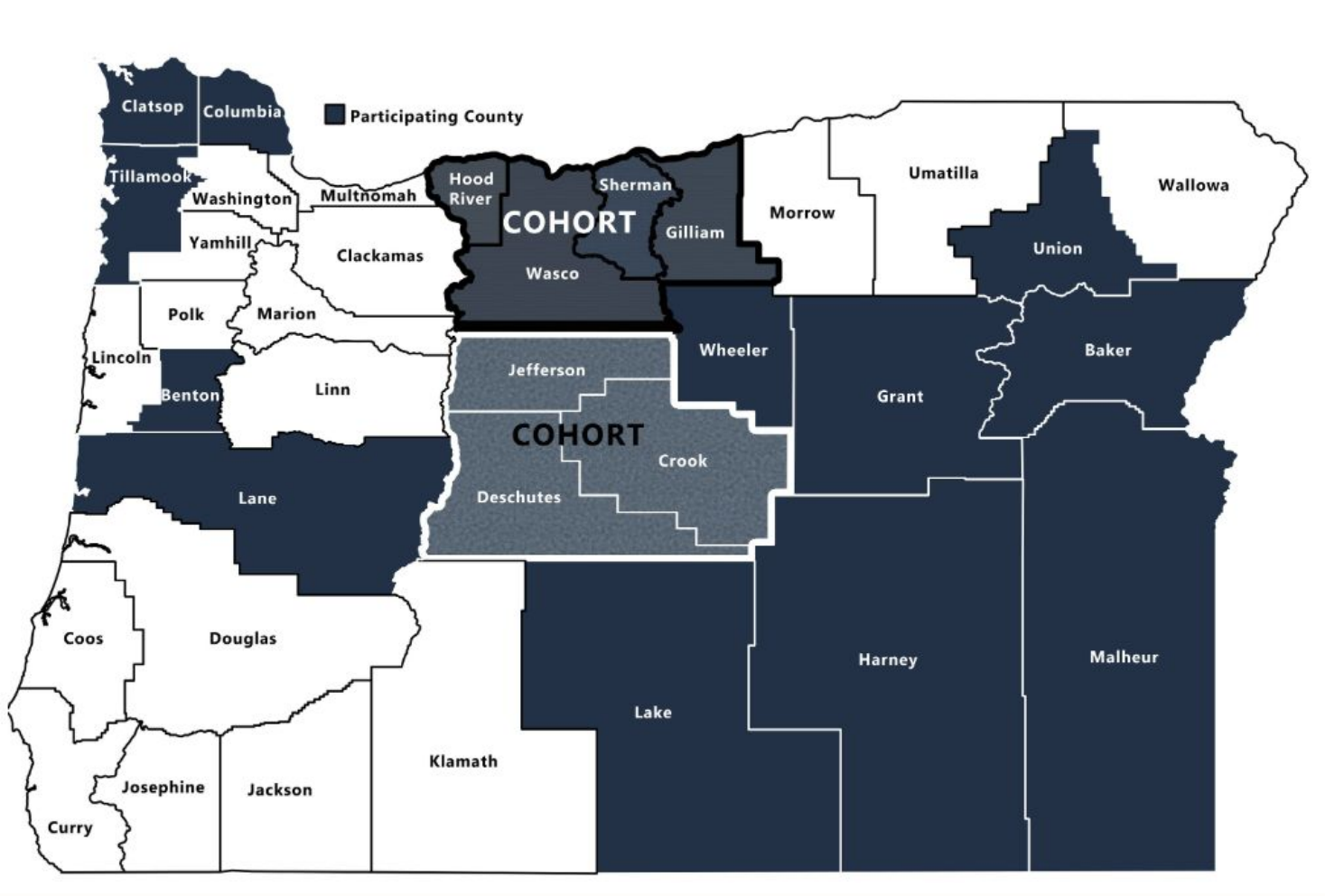
HB 3630 (2023):

- Allowed 36 counties in Oregon to receive $50K grants to develop county-level energy resilience plans for critical infrastructure, resilience needs, and system vulnerabilities.
- To date, 19 Counties awarded grants

HB 3171 (2025):

- If passed, this would extend the timeline for the program and allow the remaining 17 counties to participate in this ODOE program.

County Energy Resilience Grants

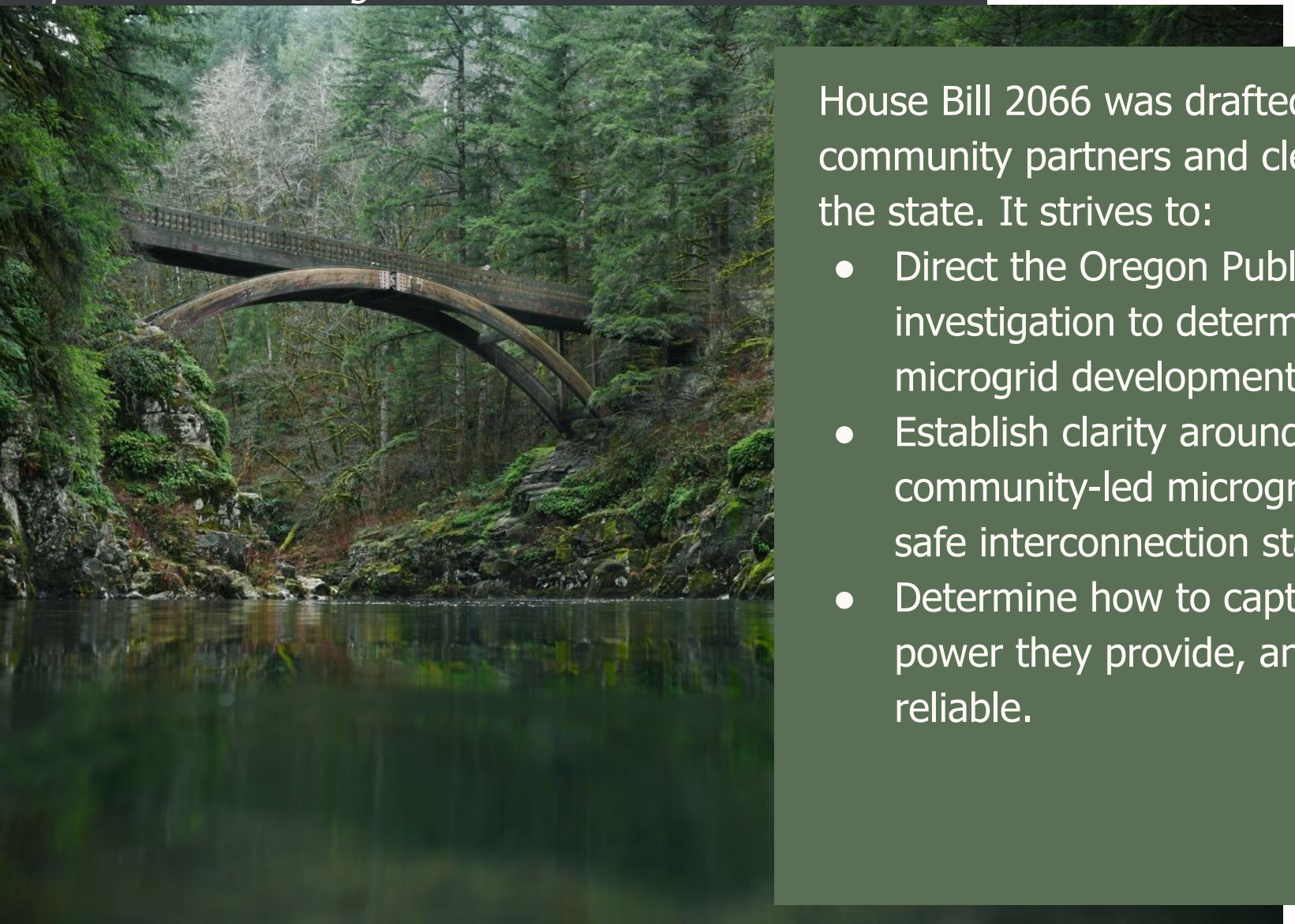


March 17th, 2025:

"Oregon Department of Energy's County Energy Resilience Grant Program awards $950,000 in grants to 19 Oregon counties to support the development of their energy resilience plans."

House Bill 2066:

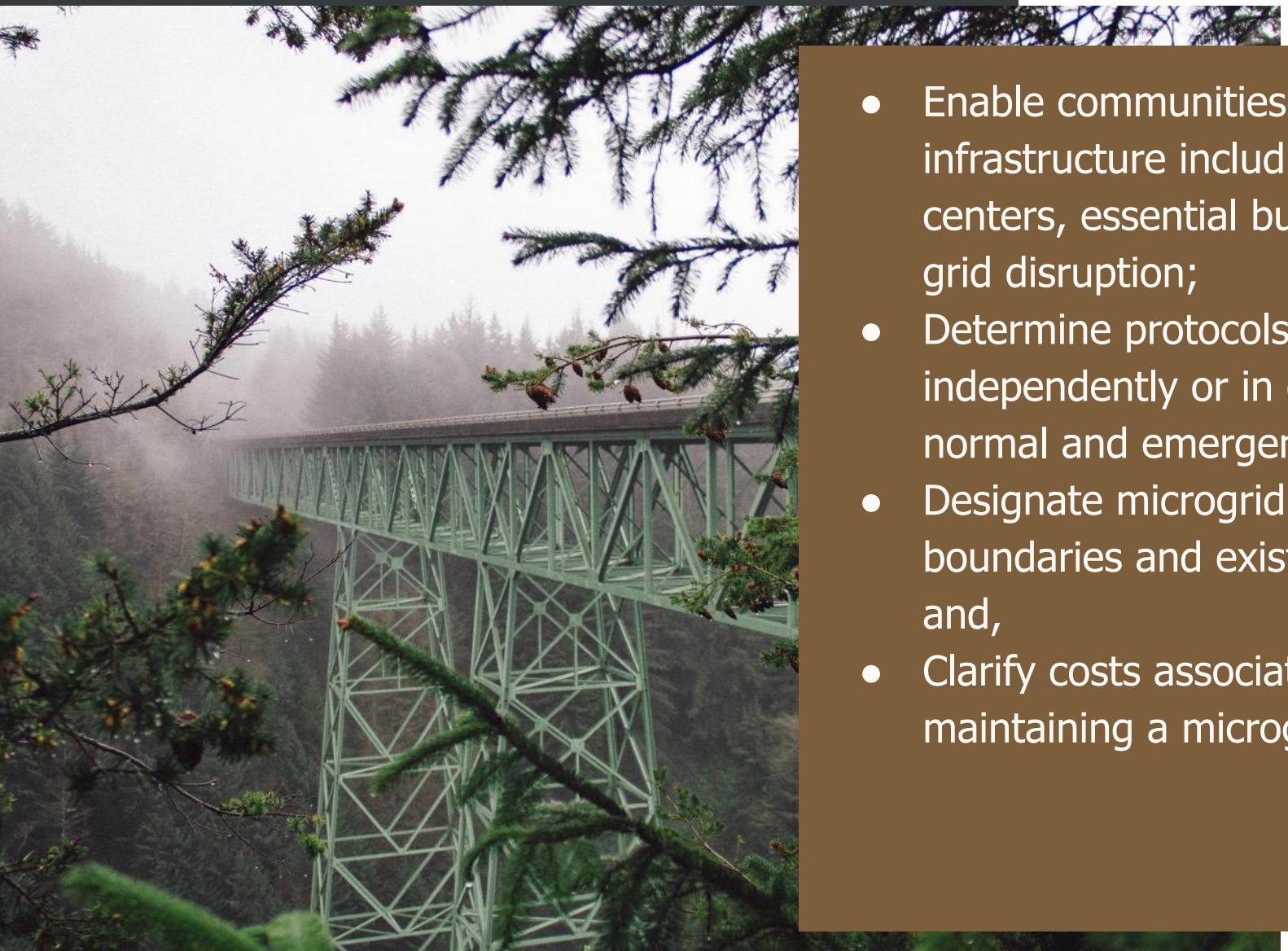
Establishing Clarity around Legality, Ownership, and Operations of Microgrids



House Bill 2066 was drafted in direct response to the needs of community partners and clean energy project developers across the state. It strives to:

- Direct the Oregon Public Utilities Commission to conduct an investigation to determine the benefits and constraints of microgrid development;
- Establish clarity around who can own and operate community-led microgrids, and how to establish fair and safe interconnection standards and requirements; and,
- Determine how to capture the true value of microgrids, the power they provide, and their ability to make the grid more reliable.

House Bill 2066 (former HB 2064 provisions)

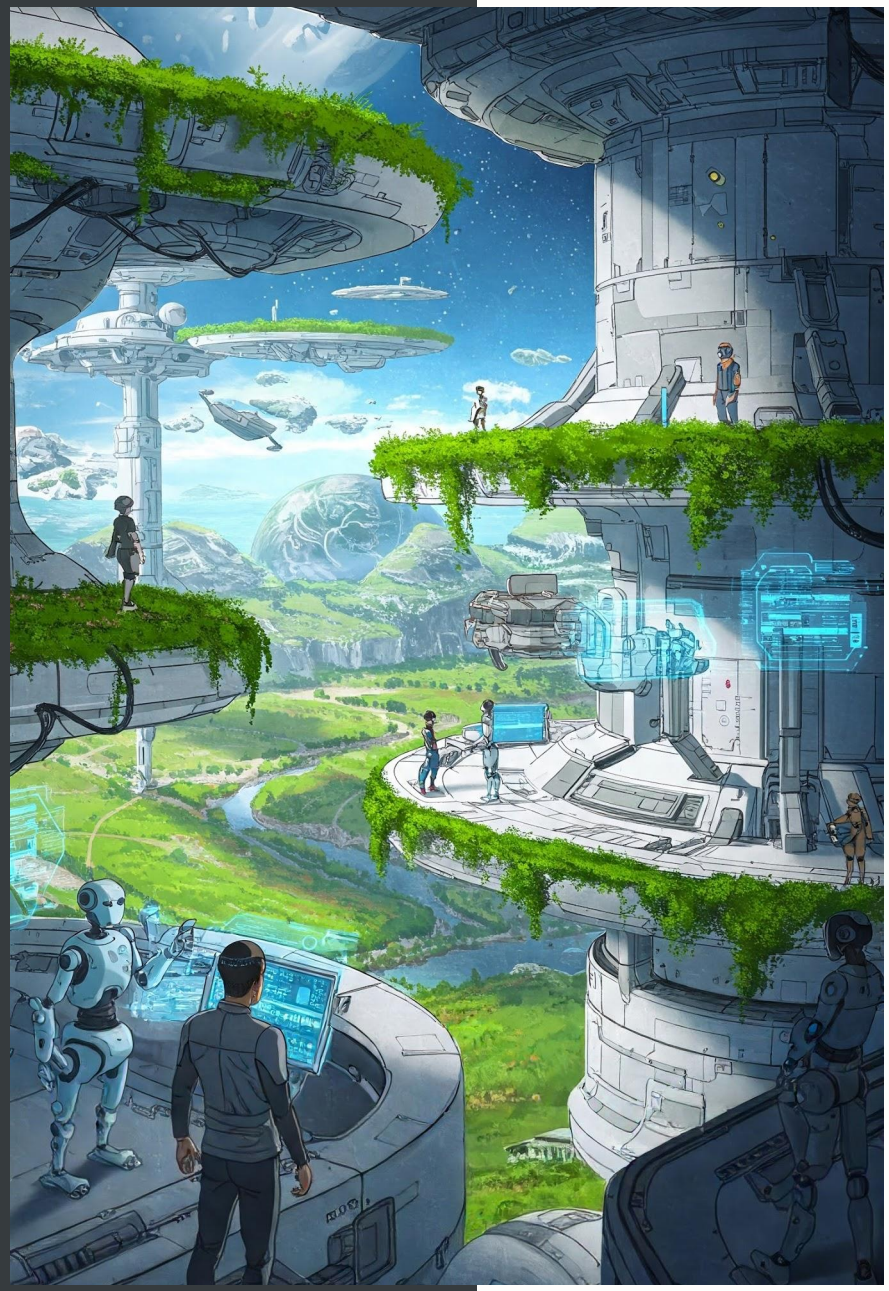


- Enable communities to provide power to critical infrastructure including schools, hospitals, communications centers, essential businesses and utility services during a grid disruption;
- Determine protocols that allow microgrids to operate independently or in coordination with the grid during both normal and emergency conditions;
- Designate microgrid zones based on geographical boundaries and existing electric services infrastructure; and,
- Clarify costs associated with designing, constructing, and maintaining a microgrid.

House Bill 2065

Allowing Third Party Participation

- Allow communities to contract with a licensed third party expert to conduct a study or engineering evaluation, ensure the public utility reviews and approves studies within a reasonable amount of time;
- Allow third party experts to work with utilities as technical collaborators to add capacity and expedite the review process; and,
- Require studies or engineering evaluations to receive a professional stamp of approval in order to interconnect a community energy project with the public utility transmission or distribution system.



The Solution?

Our current electrical service delivery model is over 120 years old.

You are either part of the solution, or you are part of the problem.

Bride Whelan

Microgrids represent innovation.

Microgrids are not *THE* solution.

Microgrids are *PART* of the solution.

Questions?

Scan to join SNW's Making Energy Work Coalition and stay engaged!

Dan Whelan, Director of Government Affairs, dwhelan@sustainablenorthwest.org

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