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Energy Commission Awards Nearly \$3.4 Million for Research Alternative Fuels Research Awarded to UC San Diego

SACRAMENTO - The California Energy Commission has awarded \$3,357,965 for three research projects on low-carbon, alternative fuels, climate change and energy generation, and "green" job training. Funds for the three projects come from the Commission's Public Interest Energy Research (PIER) program.

The University of California at San Diego received \$2 million to establish the California Initiative for Large Molecule Sustainable Fuels. This new research initiative will develop advanced tools to make renewable liquid fuels from biomass to help meet California's transportation needs. Such fuels could be used in place of petroleum-based fuels such as gasoline and diesel. These alternative fuels can be produced through a variety of technologies including biosynthesis (algae, bacteria, yeast), processing of biomass and oil-bearing farm crops. Training scientists and technicians for "green collar" jobs is a major focus of the partnership between the Energy Commission and UC San Diego. The initiative will work with regional and statewide economic and workforce development organizations, as well as the California university and community college systems, to develop a training curriculum. The initiative is expected to take three years to complete.

On Wednesday, the Energy Commission also awarded funding to the following projects:

- Scripps Institution of Oceanography at UC San Diego will receive \$1.2 million to investigate changing climate conditions that may affect energy generation and demand and to develop new climate scenarios specifically for California. Climate change will affect every sector of the California economy and the state's natural resources. It can affect the energy sector in multiple ways, ranging from increased electricity demand for cooling to reduce energy demand for home heating. Since 2003, the Energy Commission's Climate Change Center at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography has produced policy-relevant research that has been extremely valuable in providing information for California policy. This fifth research phase will continue supporting core research that will be used for future reports to the Governor and the Legislature and support adaptation planning by local, regional, and state entities. The fifth research phase will monitor climate, archive the state's climate data, model new climate scenarios for California, and examine relationships between coastal fog and climate change. Researchers will use results for future reports to the Governor and Legislature. The project term is 30 months.
- UC Irvine's Advanced Power and Energy Program will receive \$157,965 to develop a roadmap identifying current knowledge, research gaps, and recommended research pathways. These will, in turn, help determine the air quality, energy, and environmental benefits and risks of using renewable generation and alternative fuels in California. The variability of California's fuel cost and supply, the state's focus on reducing greenhouse gases emissions, and the new law requiring utilities to obtain 33 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2020 will culminate in large increases in the use of renewable generation and fuels. The roadmap will guide PIER research so these alternative resources can be used in California in the most environmentally sound manner. The project would take three years.

The Public Interest Energy Research (PIER) program supports public interest research and development that helps improve the quality of life in California by bringing environmentally safe, reliable, and affordable energy services and products to the marketplace. For more information, visit www.energy.ca.gov/research/.

Created by the California Legislature in 1974, the California Energy Commission is the state's primary energy policy and planning agency. The Energy Commission has five major responsibilities: forecasting future energy needs and keeping

historical energy data; licensing thermal power plants 50 megawatts or larger; promoting energy efficiency through appliance and building standards; developing energy technologies and supporting renewable energy; and planning for and directing state response to energy emergency.

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