

## **Marine and Hydrokinetic Renewable Energy Act of 2013**

The Marine and Hydrokinetic Renewable Energy Act of 2013 Act promotes a new form of hydropower, marine hydrokinetic renewable energy, or MHK. An MHK project generates energy from waves, currents, and tides in the ocean, an estuary or a tidal area as well as from the free-flowing water in a river, lake, or stream.

The bill will help commercialize MHK technologies through research and development and a more efficient regulatory process for the siting of pilot projects intended to demonstrate the viability of these technologies. MHK has tremendous potential to generate a substantial amount of clean renewable energy and is poised to be a key part of the transition to a low carbon economy. It can also create thousands of jobs here in the United States.

What distinguishes MHK from conventional hydropower is that it generates energy without the use of a dam or other impoundment. This gets MHK off on the right foot in terms of minimizing any adverse environmental impact.

The Department of Energy (DOE) has released two nationwide resource assessments that indicate the waves, tides, and ocean currents off the nation's coasts could contribute significantly to the United States' total annual electricity production. DOE is currently developing an aggressive strategy to support its vision of producing at least fifteen percent of our nation's electricity from water power, including conventional hydropower, by 2030.

Oregon has made a strategic decision to be an international leader in the commercialization of the marine renewable energy industry. Led by the Oregon Wave Energy Trust, the Northwest National Marine Renewable Energy Center co-located at Oregon State University, and several private companies that are part of the MHK supply chain, Oregon is positioning itself to be a leading force supporting this newly emerging industry.

Unfortunately, regulatory obstacles are a major disincentive to MHK projects in the United States. The regulatory process is slowing progress in the MHK industry. Until companies get projects in the water for testing little progress can be made.

The Marine and Hydrokinetic Renewable Energy Act of 2013 will help advance MHK in a number of ways. It reauthorizes the DOE's MHK research, development and demonstration programs, including the National Marine Renewable Energy Research, Development, and Demonstration Centers.

The bill also streamlines the MHK regulatory process. Improvements include a goal to complete the pilot license process in 12 months or less and designation of FERC as the "Lead Agency" for the purpose of coordinating environmental reviews.

MHK is a clean, emissions-free source of electricity that can improve the security and reliability of the electric grid and create jobs. Investing in MHK today will pay great dividends in the future.