

TREIA Awards Spotlight Exceptional Contributors To Texas Renewable Energy Development

This year's Awards Luncheon on November 8 during Texas Renewables 2011 honored seven individuals and one company. 2011 Awards Committee chair **John Pitts, Jr.** was joined on stage by TREIA president **Steve Wiese** to welcome and recognize the award winners. Presentations were made under five categories this year – State Leadership, Special Recognition, Member Company of the Year, Individual Member of the Year, and the 2011 Service Award.

State Leadership Awards

This past legislative session was a busy one, and one of the more productive for the renewable industries in many years. Some 15 bills were passed that have some possible positive effect on renewables. Four specific bills were passed that most affect changes for which TREIA has been advocating for a long time, including clarification of net metering rules, clarification of third party ownership, clarifying the place in the market for energy storage, and less restrictive home owners association rules.

Furthermore, these bills were passed not only with bipartisan support, but by authors from both sides of the aisle. The values that this association holds dear, including the rights of private property owners and greater economic development opportunities in rural and urban communities, resonate throughout the capitol, and we look forward to continuing to work together with these legislators and others as renewable energy continues to make up a greater portion of Texas's diverse generation portfolio.

The awardees were:

Senator John Carona – Author, SB 981 (third party ownership) and SB 943 (storage defined as generation asset) – Award was accepted on Sen. Carona's behalf by Steven Polunsky, Committee Director, Senate Committee on Business & Commerce, which the Senator chairs.

Senator Jose Rodriguez – Author, SB 1910 (El Paso net metering) – unable to attend.

Representative Burt Solomons – Author, HB 362 (home owners associations) – unable to attend.

Representative Rafael Anchia – go-to team member always instrumental in renewable energy legislation – unable to attend.

Paul Sadler – Special Recognition Award

Legislative achievements are not only significant when a bill or certain language is passed, but also when certain language is kept from passing. Over the past few years, since Paul Sadler, former member of the Texas House of Representatives, became director of The Wind Coalition, he has had to play that defensive role continuously, and this past session was no different. Wind – and by extension, all utility-scale renewable technologies – had to fight to retain major policy support on a number of fronts: holding on to property tax abatements which help bring development to rural communities and attempt to level the playing field with fossil generation; fighting to keep CREZ moving forward to ensure transmission infrastructure for utility-scale renewable in West Texas; and last but



Kevin Gresham, chair of The Wind Coalition's Texas Committee, accepted award on behalf of Paul Sadler. John Pitts, Jr., Awards Committee Chair (l.), and Steve Wiese, TREIA President (r.), made all the presentations.

not least, keeping wind and other technologies from being unfairly targeted by certain new additional fees. Paul played a key role in fending off damaging measures on all of those fronts.

Cris Eugster – Individual Member of the Year

This honoree is well known in the Association from his current role as Chief Sustainability Officer for CPS Energy in San Antonio where he works tirelessly to not only promote renewable energy but also see that it actually gets built, no small feat in today's market. But what is not widely known is that before Cris Eugster made his way to CPS Energy, he served in the mayoral administration of Bill White, former Mayor of Houston (a recipient of TREIA's 2008 Public Official of the Year award). It was there that Cris helped make Houston an example of how a major city can run on renewable power. Cris is now overseeing renewable efforts at CPS, which

continues to make headlines in Texas and across the country for its dedication to renewable energy development.



Cris Eugster, Chief Sustainability Officer, CPS Energy

American Shoreline – Member Company of the Year

American Shoreline, Inc. ("Amshore") is an Oil and Gas Exploration and Development firm based in Corpus Christi, with an active Wind Power Development Division. Amshore is the original developer of the 404MW Peñascol Wind Power project in Kenedy County now owned by Iberdrola. The company made its decision to initiate wind development in South Texas in 2002, a time when few thought such activity was likely in the region anytime in the near future.

A lease was finalized with the Kenedy Charitable Trust for the Peñascol project on the Kenedy Ranch in 2004 and a research consortium for wind resource analysis and avian risk assessment was formed. The initial public presentation of the project occurred that same year at a workshop here in Corpus Christi organized by the TREIA established Rural Alliance for Renewable Energy. In 2005 a development agreement was signed with PPM Energy, later to be purchased by Iberdrola which began construction in 2007.



Blanca Cummins (2nd from left), wife of Mannti Cummins and Paul Strunk, Amshore President (far right)

Between 2006 and 2008 Amshore overcame a heavily funded series of legal challenges at state administrative levels, state and federal courts, legislation introduced in Austin to curtail wind power development, and a public outreach and media campaign to discredit wind power as unreliable, over subsidized and environmentally hazardous.

The 202 MW Phase I of the Peñascol Wind Power Project was commissioned in April of 2009, and the 202 MW Phase II in May of 2010.

Today Amshore has under lease over 500,000 acres for wind energy development. Its six separate project areas in South Texas and Northern Mexico represent a pipeline of over 2,000MW, with the goal of a total 1,000MW installed and operating within the next two years.

Amshore's pioneering efforts, including taking the arrows, set the stage for development of hundreds more MWs of wind projects now flying in South Texas – a resource which has proven to be quite beneficial to the ERCOT grid providing much needed electricity at critical times.

Steve Weikal – 2011 Service Award

For more than 15 years, operating as Weikal Media, Steve Weikal has delivered support and service to TREIA far beyond the occasional meager contract work the Association may have been able to provide. He was always ready to pitch in to go above and beyond, donating such things as logo and graphics design, web site design and support, sign making, photographic services, marketing advice, onsite meeting assistance, and even the use of his truck and muscle to transport and assemble the TREIA exhibit on numerous occasions. No member has given TREIA as much in service and materials over a broader time frame and range of activities than Steve Weikal.

