



News Release

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Energy, Interior Departments Announce New Location for Solar Decathlon 2011

Collegiate design competition to be held at the National Mall's West Potomac Park

WASHINGTON -- The Department of Energy and the Department of the Interior today announced that the U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon 2011 will be held at the National Mall's West Potomac Park, on the banks of the Potomac River along the path between the Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials. Specifically, the event will be held on the peninsula just south of the new Martin Luther King Jr. National Memorial – scheduled to open in August of this year – between the Franklin Delano Roosevelt Memorial and the Potomac River. The Decathlon will begin in late September as originally scheduled.

The event is being moved from its previous location on the Mall between the Washington Monument and the Capitol to balance the many uses and demands on the Mall.

“We look forward to holding another world-class Solar Decathlon in a world-class location – the National Mall's West Potomac Park,” said Secretary Chu. “Keeping the competition on the National Mall property allows the students to proceed with their existing home designs, specifically tailored for Washington's latitude, temperature, and humidity conditions. The West Potomac site is in close proximity to a number of attractions and will provide an ideal stage to highlight clean energy solutions for thousands of public visitors.”

“Solar energy is a key component of President Obama's vision for a new energy future and the solar decathlon is part of that future,” said Secretary Salazar. “The National Mall is America's Front Yard and we have a responsibility to do what is best for the long term health of the Mall. I am pleased that we have been able to find a strong alternate location for the Solar Decathlon and I am looking forward to a successful event.”

The U.S. Department of Energy Solar Decathlon is a competition that challenges collegiate students from across the globe to design, build, and operate solar-powered houses that are affordable, highly energy-efficient, attractive, and easy to live in. During the competition, 20 homes from 16 domestic and four international collegiate teams, will undergo extensive testing and expert judging in ten different contest categories. The winner of the competition is the team that best blends affordability, consumer appeal, and design excellence with optimal energy production and maximum efficiency. This will be DOE's fifth Solar Decathlon; previous events were held in 2002, 2005, 2007, and 2009.

The Solar Decathlon provides participating students with unique training to enter our nation's clean-energy workforce. It is also a popular public event, open to visitors who come to see the designs and learn about money-saving clean-energy solutions for their own homes. The public will be encouraged to meet the students and visit their highly efficient, innovative solar homes during the event. Specific public viewing hours for this year's competition will be published at a later date.

A preliminary layout of the National Mall's West Potomac Park site can be seen here http://www.solardecathlon.gov/pdfs/2011_map.pdf.

The Solar Decathlon supports the Obama Administration's goal of creating an economy based on clean-energy technologies while saving families and businesses money and reducing reliance on fossil fuels.

For more information, please visit SolarDecathlon.gov.

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