



## Organizers give outlook of what to expect at Energy and water summit

By EDWIN DELGADO, Staff Writer | Posted: Thursday, March 16, 2017 1:10 am

HOLTVILLE — The first of the three-day Renewable Energy and Water Summit kicked off on Wednesday with a series of tours exploring the diverse renewable energy projects within the Valley and an opportunity for businesses to begin making contacts.

Guests had a choice to take part in one of three different tours which allowed them to have a close look at different renewable sources being produced in the county. The tours conducted took attendees to the Tenaska Imperial Solar Energy project which produces 150 megawatts of electricity, the recently completed Battery Energy Storage from the Imperial Irrigation District and a tour of the EnergySource geothermal plant near the Salton Sea.

“You got to be able to see these things for themselves. Also on their way there they can see the agriculture and our water systems,” said Tim Kelley, president and chief executive officer of the Imperial Valley Economic Development Corporation, during a press conference. “They don’t just get to see the geothermal plants but the solar farms, the wind and the biomass projects that are going on in the Valley.”

Another major goal of the tours is to allow the guests to better understand the discussions that will take place during the panels and be able to have a picture of the issues and opportunities in their minds.



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2017 Renewable Energy Summit attendees had the opportunity to schedule meetings and expand their business contact during the Business to Business Expo on Wednesday

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Also as part of the first day of the conference the attendees had the opportunity to take part in the Business to Business Expo, where they had the opportunity to market their business and build essential business contacts.

Kelley said the conference is unique in the sense that businesses that come really want to get involved with the local community.

“What makes this conference so unique is that people come here because they want to do projects in Imperial County,” Kelley said. “They want to make a difference in this community they want to hire local contractors and local people.”

Without giving too many details, Kelley offered a few pointers as to what to look expect from the next day and a half full of panels, discussion, meetings and additional tours, he said that IID General Manager Kevin Kelley is expected to make an important announcement related to the partnership on the electricity side with Mexico.

Concurrent with the Energy Summit, a big number of dignitaries and state legislators are expected to fly into the Valley on Thursday to take part in a tour of the Salton Sea to learn about the challenges and what the state and local stakeholders are doing to mitigate the effects of the receding shoreline. After the tour of the Salton Sea the dignitaries, which include California Secretary for Natural Resources John Laird along with Assemblyman Eduardo Garcia, state Sen. Ben Hueso and another dozen legislators will then make their way to the conference and be present for the “Imperial Valley’s Path Forward” panel scheduled at 4 p.m.

Kelley said the California Natural Resources Agency is expected to make an announcement pertaining to the Salton Sea. Although Kelley said he didn’t have any additional information on the announcement, it’s likely that the agency will make an announcement pertaining to the state’s Salton Sea Management Program 10-year plan which has been worked on during the last few months.

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