



## Colorado roundtable and laboratory tour look toward future of renewable energy

by: Stan Austin

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Joining experts from industry, academia and NREL for the August roundtable were Bank representatives Alison Felix, vice president, Denver Branch executive and economist; Jason Brown, assistant vice president and economist; Sam Chapman, associate economist; and David Rodziewicz, commodity specialist. The NREL tour took place at the laboratory's main campus. The laboratory is the U.S. Department of Energy's primary center for research related to renewable energy and energy efficiency.

Rodziewicz said the roundtable and tour were timely and beneficial. He noted that the Tenth District is in a unique geographic position, with robust energy resources ranging from oil and gas to renewable sources, such as wind and solar.

Therefore, Kansas City Fed economists and researchers continually study developments across the energy sector and the effect on factors such as employment, investment and prices. They also develop contacts and interact with energy professionals such as those at the NREL roundtable.

"Renewables have become a fairly large share of energy generation in our District, and that is expected to rise as costs for those particular styles of generation decline," Rodziewicz said.

Felix's presentation titled "U.S. & Colorado Economic Update" showed that Tenth District activity in renewable energy—mostly wind and some solar—in recent years has increased sharply.

This upward trajectory for renewable energy bears watching and further study.

"The renewable sector affects labor, manufacturing and other parts of the renewables supply chain, and this is something we'd like to learn more about," Rodziewicz said. "It's really important for us to connect with those industries to better understand how those aspects are affecting the regional economy."