

# Spokesman-Review

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## **PNNL seeks spot as federally funded bioenergy research center**

The Spokesman-Review, Spokane, Wash.

Aug. 8--The Tri Cities-based **Pacific Northwest National Laboratory** wants to become one of two federally funded bioenergy research centers, its director said recently.

The U.S. Department of Energy announced plans to spend \$250 million to establish and operate two bioenergy research centers by 2008. Designation of the two centers is expected next year.

The goal of the centers will be to accelerate research and development of biofuels, including ethanol derived from waste products.

Len Peters, director of **PNNL**, said "We do plan to respond to this opportunity, and intend to partner with other institutions when submitting our proposal."

The DOE has said it will look at proposals that involve multi-party partnerships, including universities, corporations, laboratories and nonprofit operations.

Peters said **PNNL** already has a solid footing in advanced energy research.

"**PNNL** has world-class capabilities in microbiology and systems biology -- especially in proteomics -- that are directly applicable to this research," he said in an e-mail. Proteomics is the study of proteins and their functions.

Washington state and **PNNL** are jointly involved in building a Bioproducts, Sciences, and Engineering Laboratory at Washington State University's Tri-Cities branch campus in Richland, he noted. That center will be focused on developing new resources from agricultural products, he said.

He also cited **PNNL**'s collaboration with WSU plant-science researchers as another asset that would allow **PNNL** to assist the development of energy solutions for the nation.

The DOE has said the two centers are expected to help the United States replace 30 percent of transportation fuels with biofuels by 2030.

To meet that goal, future biofuels production will require the use of more diverse feedstocks, according to the DOE.