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Clean Energy Collective to develop one-megawatt solar facility

September 8, 2011, 1:45 pm



Clean Energy Collective President and Founder Paul Spencer.

CARBONDALE, Colo.—San Miguel Power Association, Inc (SMPA) has chosen the Clean Energy Collective of Carbondale to pursue negotiations for a community solar project within the cop's service territory.

In March SMPA released a request for proposal seeking bids for the design and construction of a renewable energy project. SMPA's Board of Directors selected the Clean Energy Collective at their August 22 meeting. SMPA and the Clean Energy Collective are now working to develop a one-megawatt community-owned solar facility.

"The Clean Energy Collective brought everything to the table that SMPA was looking for. They have experience working with other electric cooperatives and specialize in community solar projects," explained SMPA General Manager Kevin Ritter.

Community solar projects, or solar gardens, offer many advantages over traditional private installations. Currently, members who are interested in solar generation must install panels on their individual homes or businesses. This limits the participation of renters and members with poor solar locations. In contrast, community projects are located on ideal sites with excellent sun exposure. The member incurs no operation or maintenance costs. And it's more affordable than a traditional private solar installation.

"We are very excited to be chosen as SMPA's partner for community solar and look forward to offering all SMPA customers the opportunity to benefit from community solar ownership," said Clean Energy Collective's President and Founder Paul Spencer.

A community solar project will give all SMPA members the option to invest in solar generation. Members can buy in to the solar garden, meaning they can purchase one or more of the solar panels and receive a monthly monetary credit for the energy their panel(s) produce.

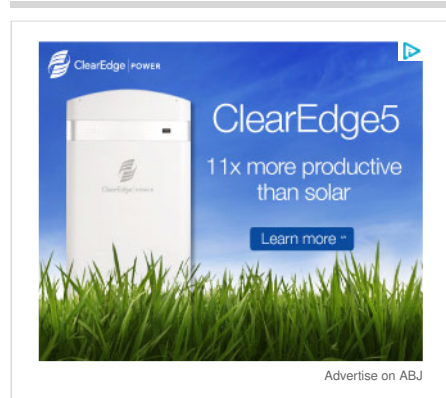
Specific details of SMPA's community solar project are not yet available.

The Clean Energy Collective will be evaluating potential sites for the project and working with SMPA staff members to finalize contract details. The Clean Energy Collective has committed to utilizing as many local businesses and solar installers as possible during project construction.

It was also important to us that the Clean Energy Collective demonstrate a commitment to our local community and our local businesses. Solar projects like the one we're looking at will require sub-contractors for groundwork, solar panel sales, and panel installation. And, we hope

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to involve as many local businesses as possible, said Ritter.

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