

Yesterday former Colorado governor Bill Ritter, director of Colorado State University's Center for the New Energy Economy, inaugurated the nation's largest community-owned solar array in Rifle, Colorado.

"Our ability to move to a clean energy economy in Colorado is a product of the public's will and the political will that the people of the state have to really try and find clean energy solutions," Ritter said. "This is a way for people to be able to have affordable power and to be able to participate and feel good about how they're generating their energy."

The 5-acre, 858-kilowatt Garfield Community Airport Solar Array is sited on an otherwise unusable south-facing hillside at the Garfield County Airport. The array's 3,575-panels will produce more than 1.5 gigawatt hours of clean, renewable energy each year, serving up to 350 members of the [Clean Energy Collective](#), which develops community-based renewable energy facilities. Based in Carbondale, Colorado, the CEC is pioneering the delivery of clean power generation through large-scale facilities that are collectively owned by participating utility customers. The CEC's proprietary RemoteMeter system automatically calculates monthly credits and integrates with existing utility billing systems, enabling all residential and commercial utility customers to easily have clean, renewable power credited on their monthly utility bills, without modifying their home or office.

"We are leveraging scalability to the benefit of each individual panel owner, and our structure allows members to receive all of the rebates and tax incentives of home-sited systems", explains CEC founder and CEO Paul Spencer. "You don't even need a roof to adopt clean energy today, and the paybacks are higher than ever – both for the environment and financially."

"This community solar array farm represents the future of renewable energy for Coloradans," Colorado Sen. Mark Udall said in a statement. "It helps to make clean energy accessible to every American by breaking down barriers, such as high costs, and it will help ensure our country's path to energy independence. I applaud the Clean Energy Collective for their achievement."

Rural electric association Holy Cross Energy is a leader among Colorado's 22 electric distribution cooperatives in terms of installed capacity for renewable energy generation. Ritter encouraged Holy Cross Energy to continue finding ways to produce energy through renewable resources.