

Press Release

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Contact:
Mike Drei
Director of Marketing and Communications
mdrei@rerenergygroup.com
717.433.1192

Madison County to Install 2.4 Megawatt Solar Project

County Plans to Add Renewable Energy Capacity to Continue Sustainability Initiatives and Reduce Long-Term Electric Costs Through NY-Sun Initiative

Madison County, New York – January 23rd, 2015 - This rural community in central New York is taking steps to significantly reduce energy consumption and pursue renewable energy sources for all of the county's municipal electric needs.

The county expects to soon break ground on a 2.4 megawatt solar array. This new solar PV system is the cornerstone for a proposed Agriculture and Renewable Energy (ARE) business park in the Town of Lincoln. The solar electric system is expected to be operational by fall of 2015, providing power to offset county electric use via a remote net metering program, reducing county electric bills.

The county has long been an innovator in the areas of energy efficiency, sustainability, and renewable energy generation. In 2010, Madison County was selected to participate in the EPA-sponsored Climate Change Innovation Program (C2IP). Through this program, the county—in collaboration with the Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board—received guidance and technical assistance to help it inventory its governmental and community greenhouse gas emissions. More recently, the county developed a strategic plan to use that inventory knowledge to build an actionable roadmap for the implementation of energy and greenhouse gas-saving goals.

“Madison County has long been at the forefront of the green energy movement,” says the county's Director of Planning, Scott Ingmire. “From its groundbreaking work on two ‘New York's-first’ projects—a pair of commercial wind farms in the early 2000s, and Solarize Madison—to the installation of a micro-hydroelectric system at one of its county parks, the current effort to implement large-scale solar with RER Energy Group continues our commitment to alternative energy, fiscal sensibility, and forward-thinking governance. We are proud to be a part of this project.”



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Following the “Reduce-then-Produce” philosophy, after the implementation of efficiency-increasing measures, Madison County will look to use renewable energy sources to produce the balance of electricity the county buildings will need. A large-scale solar project such as this is a critical component of their sustainability solution, with the opportunity for replication at the municipal and community level.

Mike Roach of RER Energy Group, located in Tully, New York, is the project developer for this solar array. Mike has a special connection to this region and the project: “I attended Morrisville College in Madison County and graduated from their Renewable Energy Program,” he says. “It is very rewarding to now be a part of the county’s ongoing clean energy efforts as they embark on a solar energy project of this scale. They truly are innovators in this field.”

Every hour the sun shines, there is enough solar energy reaching the Earth to satisfy the electric needs of the entire planet for a year. Moreover, the price of solar panels has dropped about 80 percent in the last five years. This has helped bring the cost of solar electricity generation to near parity—or in some cases even lower—than fossil fuels in certain regions.

In addition, individual solar panels are typically warrantied for 25 years, with full arrays having a life expectancy of 30 or more years. With no moving parts, an array requires minimal maintenance over its lifespan—especially when compared to fossil fuel-based methods of generating power.

Most of the project will be funded using the Sunvestment Group’s Community Sourced Funding Platform. This unique financing structure will engage an anchor investor who will fund the majority of the project while allowing local, community-based businesses and accredited investors to participate in the investment opportunity. These community investors will receive an attractive return on their money, and their dollars will stay local, creating a multiplier effect by facilitating further economic development in the county.

In addition, there will be no maintenance fees incurred by the county for the 25-year contract period. During that timeframe, the county will obtain the clean, solar-generated electricity at a significantly discounted rate compared to other options currently available in the energy market.

Support for this project came from Governor Cuomo's NY-Sun initiative, which is administered by the New York State Energy Research and Development Authority (NYSERDA). NY-Sun is a \$1 billion initiative to advance the scale-up of solar and move the state closer to having a sustainable, self-sufficient solar industry.

About RER Energy Group

RER Energy Group is an industry leader in providing cost-effective, high-quality solar systems throughout the Mid-Atlantic and Northeast region. The company has developed more than 20 megawatts of solar energy, obtaining over \$22 million in grant proceeds for commercial, industrial, agricultural, municipal, and non-profit customers. For more information, visit www.rerenergygroup.com.



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About Sunvestment Group

Sunvestment Group provides a web-based platform that brings the key participants of a solar project together in an interactive, easy-to-use solar-funding portal. Using a proprietary project aggregation process and a community sourced finance platform, Sunvestment Group lowers project costs and assists in obtaining investors to make solar more financially feasible than ever before. For more information, visit www.sunvestmentgroup.com.

About Madison County

Madison County is located in the Heart of New York State, situated between the cities of Syracuse and Utica. A rich history, resilient and diverse economy, vast open spaces, and a strong farming backbone make Madison County a great place to live, work, and play. Madison County prides itself on its many green energy projects and is enthusiastic about this large-scale solar endeavor. For more information on the county, visit

www.madisoncounty.ny.gov/.

Media Contact for Madison County:

Scott Ingmire, Director

Madison County Planning Department

315-366-2498

Scott.ingmire@madisoncounty.ny.gov