



NEWS RELEASE -

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Cooperative Solar Projects Underway ***Groundbreaking Held for Dairyland Power and Richland Electric Solar Projects***

La Crosse and Richland Center, WI—Dairyland Power Cooperative, Richland Electric Cooperative and SoCore Energy celebrated the start of construction of two solar projects with a groundbreaking event near Hillsboro, Wis., on Monday, May 23.

A community solar project is being constructed for members of Richland Electric Cooperative. The cooperative announced its “Transition Energy” program at its annual meeting last month. The program provides an opportunity for interested members to purchase the energy output of solar panels and have it applied to the energy usage at their home, farm or business.

“This solar project is another example of how member-driven cooperatives work together to accomplish great things,” said Shannon Clark, Richland Electric CEO/General Manager. “Members had a need they wanted met and expected us to deliver a product that was safe affordable, reliable and sustainable. By working with fellow cooperatives and their partners we were able to meet those needs and more.”

The second project is the first of 12 major solar projects announced by Dairyland Power Cooperative in February. Dairyland has power purchase agreements in place with two developers to purchase over 15 MW of renewable energy from multiple new utility-scale photovoltaic solar facilities in Wisconsin.

“Dairyland is a cooperative dedicated to providing safe, reliable and sustainable energy for our members. As Dairyland celebrates our 75th anniversary this year, we are excited to break ground on the first of many solar projects in our members’ service areas. Together, these projects far surpass current solar resources in the state,” said Barbara Nick, President and CEO.

SoCore Energy (Chicago, Ill.) will install, own, operate and maintain both of the solar facilities. “As a leader in providing solar power to rural cooperatives, we are honored to support Richland Electric and Dairyland in bringing reliable, cost effective renewable energy to their members” said Robert Scheuermann, President, SoCore Energy. These are among several solar projects SoCore will be constructing throughout the service areas of Dairyland Power Cooperative members in 2016.

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Additional Background:

In June 2015, Dairyland issued a request for proposals (RFP) for solar generation resources. The two solar developers selected—SoCore Energy (Chicago, Ill.) and groSolar (White River Junction, Vt.)—will be constructing 12 new solar facilities in western Wisconsin. Dairyland is also continuing negotiations for additional solar resources in its service territory.

The solar installations will range between .5 MW to 2.5 MW in scale. These facilities will be tracking systems which follow the path of the sun to increase energy production. Together, the solar facilities will be able to produce enough renewable energy to power over 2,500 homes.

As a cooperative initiative, the solar facilities will be built in the service areas of Dairyland's member electric cooperatives. The advantages of multiple projects in separate locations include: diversified weather, distributed grid infrastructure impacts and locally-based renewable energy.

"Dairyland's leadership role with renewable energy projects supports our strategic direction to diversify generation resources," said Nick.

Although these projects constitute Dairyland's largest solar investments to date, Dairyland also purchases energy from major solar installations (Westby, Wis., Oronoco, Minn., and Galena, Ill.) and supports 10 member cooperative community solar installations, with more planned. In addition, there are 700 consumer-owned distributed generation solar installations located in Dairyland's service area. Dairyland, its member cooperatives, groSolar and SoCore Energy look forward to working with residents and project stakeholders as we work cooperatively to develop these projects.

About Richland Electric Cooperative

Richland Electric Cooperative is an electric power distribution cooperative headquartered in Richland Center, Wis. Richland provides retail electric service and a host of other leading-edge technology solutions to over 3500 members in Richland County, as well as portions of Vernon, Crawford and Sauk counties. To learn more about Richland Electric Cooperative please visit www.rec.coop.

About Dairyland Power Cooperative

With headquarters in La Crosse, Wis., Dairyland provides wholesale electricity to 25 member distribution cooperatives, including Richland Electric, and 17 municipal utilities. A Touchstone Energy Cooperative, Dairyland's service area encompasses 62 counties in four states (Wisconsin, Minnesota, Iowa and Illinois). Dairyland's generation resources include coal, natural gas, hydro, solar, wind and biogas. For more information, visit www.dairylandpower.com.

About SoCore Energy

SoCore Energy (www.SoCoreEnergy.com) is a market leader in cooperative, commercial and industrial solar portfolio development. With hundreds of solar solutions designed and installed across dozens of states, SoCore offers cooperatives, multisite retailers, REITs and industrial companies portfolio-wide solar and energy storage solutions that provide energy cost savings and carbon reduction opportunities. As a wholly owned indirect subsidiary of Edison International, SoCore combines Edison's Fortune 500 stability with entrepreneurial creativity in order to provide energy solutions that our customers genuinely want and need.

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