

SSTI Monthly Newsletter

Maximizing Regional Solar Potential Across the Southwest

April 2012

SSTI Project Timeline Update

When can you expect to see the SSTI team in your neighborhood? The calendar to the right shows a high-level snapshot of the project timeline for this year:

The first round of site visits is underway and will continue throughout April and into early May. In addition to meeting with key stakeholders within each jurisdiction, the SSTI team is reaching out to regional installers and project developers to understand what the needs are from the industry and how best to increase solar market activity in each community. Results and feedback from the meetings have been very positive with over 14 agencies visited so far. The SSTI team looks forward to meeting with all local and regional stakeholders over the next 8 weeks.

For further information about upcoming meetings, check out the updated events calendar at:

<http://www.solarroadmap.com/news/events/>

What's Happening This Month

The SSTI team is conducting site visits with local agencies and regional stakeholders to define existing solar processes and determine specific needs for each jurisdiction along with evaluating solar market potential. These activities will set the baseline for roadmap building this summer.



Below is a picture from meetings on March 29th with local installers and building department officials in Fresno, CA:



Participant News: Logan, UT

Utah State University's new agricultural sciences building, opened last month, features solar awnings on the Southern façade, providing shade as well as energy. The array was funded in part by a state grant supporting building integrated PV systems.



Community Solar Taking Off in Colorado

A new approach to solar has been proliferating throughout Colorado that significantly broadens the pool of investors who can participate in solar. While PV systems have traditionally been built on-site, community solar programs allow shared ownership of a PV system that is located remotely from the customer's home. These programs extend the option of 'going solar' to those who rent, live in multi-unit buildings, don't have good solar access on their own roof, don't plan to stay in their home long term, or simply can't afford the full cost of a traditional PV system.

Colorado is a nationwide leader in community solar systems in part due to initiative taken by the state legislature. House Bill 1342 (2010) allowed for the creation of "community solar gardens" within electric utility service territory. Community solar gardens normally have at least 10 subscribers who are located in the same municipality where the solar array is located. Subscribers receive credit on their utility bill for their portion of the electricity produced by the array.

Participant News: Visalia, CA

City staff in Visalia are working in conjunction with Strategic Energy Innovations to revisit a draft of the city's Climate Action Plan that integrates solar energy measures into the menu of strategies that the city will pursue to meet their greenhouse gas emission reduction goals.



In addition to the traditional benefits of distributed PV (generation of clean electricity, avoidance of long transmission distances, and creation of local jobs) community solar gardens also provide reduced upfront costs for participants by allowing them to purchase a portion of the system, lower solar costs due to economies of scale, and allow for optimal project siting and system design.

The first solar garden was built in Colorado in 2010, and since that time arrays have been developed or are being considered in nearly every Colorado county. Community solar gardens vary widely in size, with a typical system being around 500kW (about 3 acres). Host locations can be any commercial or private rooftops, open fields, brownfields, and even airports.

The SSTI will share case studies to increase visibility for community solar gardens in participating jurisdictions.

About Optony

Optony is a global research and consulting firm focused on enabling governments, schools, investors, and commercial organizations to bridge the gap between solar energy goals and real-world results. Leveraging our independence, domain expertise and unique market position, our clients are empowered to make informed decisions that reduce risk, optimize operations, and deliver the greatest long-term return on their solar investments.

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About SEI

Strategic Energy Innovations (SEI), a nonprofit organization established in 1997, helps empower schools and universities, small businesses, local governments, affordable housing agencies, and agricultural communities to reduce pollution and save money through energy and resource efficiency.

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