

SSTI Monthly Newsletter

Maximizing Solar Potential Across the Southwest

June 2012

SSTI Participants will be Highlighted at DOE SunShot Summit in June

The SunShot Initiative is leading the first in a series of Energy Department Grand Challenges that address the scientific, technological, and market barriers to achieving breakthroughs in national energy challenges. The SunShot Summit and Technology Forum will convene the best and brightest minds in government, industry, and academia to strengthen U.S. leadership in global clean energy in Denver on June 13th & 14th.

Ben Foster from the SSTI team will be moderating one of the breakout sessions focusing on soft cost reduction. The panel, entitled “Transforming Solar Markets at the State & Local Level”, will focus on specific actions that can reduce solar process times and costs. Panelists include SSTI participants and industry veterans who will share their experiences during an interactive Q&A discussion with the moderator and audience.

The Summit is a chance for Rooftop Solar Challenge teams to meet and share ideas, as well as to help establish the path forward for both the SunShot Initiative and future departmental efforts to support solar technology. The SSTI participants will be showcased through the solarroadmap.com website to a national audience, including the Secretary of the Department of Energy Dr. Steven Chu. If you have ideas about where the DOE can focus their efforts, please send them to the SSTI team in advance of the Summit. Our contact information is at the bottom of this newsletter.

What's Happening This Month

The SSTI team is working to finalize roadmaps and recommendations for our municipal partners. You will likely be hearing from the team as we develop the detailed plan. Check your agency's webpage at www.solarroadmap.com/national/ where the roadmaps will be appearing soon

Find more information here: <http://www.sunshotgrandchallenge.energy.gov/>.

Solar for Logan City, UT

Logan City Light & Power, the municipal utility serving Logan, UT, recently completed installation of a 19.2kW ground mounted solar array. The array, installed and owned by the utility, went online in April, 2012. The solar array generates clean, local power and produces enough power to offset the usage of around 5 average homes. Real time production data is available online by [following this link](#).

The utility is exploring options to make the power directly available to local citizens, including selling shares as part of a community solar garden.

Logan City Light & Power is a leader in solar friendly policies. In addition to offering net metering, their interconnection application is available online and quick turnaround times of less than one week are typically adhered to for approval of application. The utility webpage also contains information describing the net metering policy, information on solar contractors in the area, and recommendations for good system design.



Photo from the Herald Journal, <http://news.hjnews.com/>

Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) Financing for Solar – Clovis, CA Case Study

Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) financing is an alternative finance vehicle to a loan that can be used to encourage the installation of renewable energy and energy efficiency technologies by spreading the cost of the system over time. PACE financing allows property owners to borrow money from a local government to pay for renewable energy or energy efficiency improvements. The amount borrowed is typically repaid via a special assessment on property taxes, or another locally-collected tax or bill, such as utility bills, or water or sewer bills.

In addition to reducing the upfront costs of renewable energy and/or energy efficiency improvements, PACE financing allows the cost of home improvements to be linked to the property. If a property owner participating in a PACE program sells the property, then the repayment obligation will legally transfer with the property. This approach has a number of appealing features, including: long-term, fixed-cost financing; loans that are tied to the tax capacity of the property rather than to the owner's credit standing; a repayment obligation that legally transfers along with the sale of the property; and a potential ability to deduct the repayment obligation from federal taxable income, as part of the local property tax deduction.

In most states, the legislature must authorize cities or counties to issue special assessments on select customers' property taxes to finance solar energy systems. California, Nevada, and Colorado all have passed state laws allowing for these local improvement districts.

The City of Clovis, CA is a leader in taking advantage of the local authority. Clovis utilizes bond financing to provide commercial property owners fixed-rate, property-based, no money down financing for energy efficient, water conservation and renewable energy retrofits to their property portfolios. The finance amount is repaid over time through annual property tax assessments, appearing as a line item on the property tax bill. Energy and water efficiency retrofits must be installed by California PACE approved contractors.

[Click here](#) to learn more about the PACE program in Clovis. Pictured at right are SSTI team members and City of Clovis staff from our April site visit.



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.

www.optony.com

Contact: Thomas Yurysta, Senior Project Manager, thomas.yurysta@optony.com



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.

www.seiinc.org

Contact: Stephen Miller, Deputy Director, stephen@seiinc.org

