

November 9, 2015

NEWS

One megawatt solar PV facility to be built on Southern Ute Tribal lands *Southern Ute Growth Fund and LPEA announce milestone in breakthrough project*

IGNACIO, Colo. – Southern Ute Indian Tribe Growth Fund (Growth Fund) and La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) announced today (Nov. 9, 2015) that the Southern Ute Indian Tribe’s proposed solar photovoltaic project reached a major milestone last week when it received approval from the Southern Ute Tribal Council for interconnection and power purchase agreements with LPEA.

The LPEA Board of Directors approved the agreements during its regular board meeting, Oct. 21, 2015.

Southern Ute Alternative Energy, LLC (SUAE), a division of the Growth Fund, has worked with LPEA since early 2014 on details for connecting the approximately one (1) megawatt solar facility to LPEA’s electric distribution lines.

“We appreciate the support of LPEA’s staff and Board to help make this project a reality,” said Southern Ute Growth Fund Operating Director Bob Zahradnik. “We are pleased to be able to bring this project and its locally-produced energy to the tribal community.”

The project has grant funding from the U.S. Department of Energy, which specifies the project must be built on tribally-owned lands and that the electricity generated is for the benefit of the Tribe.

The project will occupy approximately 10 acres of Tribal land in proximity to LPEA’s Rock Creek Substation and will generate energy equivalent to a 15 percent offset of the total energy usage at about 10 tribally-owned buildings, or about the equivalent of the electricity consumption at 250 typical households.

“This will be the largest solar photovoltaic project within LPEA’s service territory,” said LPEA CEO Mike Dreyspring. “Now that these important agreements are completed, we look forward to working with the Tribe on next steps and seeing this project through to fruition.”

The next milestones for the project are to finalize the specific site on the Reservation, complete detailed design and pass LPEA’s engineering review.

The Growth Fund operates and manages the Southern Ute Indian Tribe’s businesses and business investments. In this role, the Growth Fund oversees a significant portfolio of companies and investments in energy, real estate, construction, and private equity. *"Our mission is to provide economic prosperity for the Southern Ute Indian Tribe by managing the Tribe’s businesses effectively, building new businesses prudently, and investing its money wisely. We provide analysis and advice to the Tribal Council on the Tribe’s businesses and financial affairs, and we provide the day to day executive management of the Tribe’s business enterprises."*

LPEA, a Touchstone Energy Cooperative established in 1939, provides to its more than 30,000 members, with in excess of 42,000 meters, safe, reliable electricity at the lowest reasonable cost, while being environmentally responsible.

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