

SOLAR VALLEY

Newsletter | September 7, 2020



This year's conference will examine the current public policy conditions under which solar operates, with an emphasis on creating pathways for increased deployment throughout Riverside and San Bernardino Counties. Overall, the purpose is to establish the region as "Solar Valley," a model for a green energy economy.

The conference will focus on what decision-makers are thinking and planning, and how we can coordinate as an industry to get more done. Senior officials from the state, the counties, and cities will discuss their initiatives. The conference will be a place where we, as stakeholders, can work together on a coordinated push to transition from fossil fuels to renewable energy. The conference will also be used as a platform to identify additional members for the Solar Valley Consortium.

Key technologies and industry trends will be identified. Regulations and taxes and how they are impacting the industry will be discussed. The benefits that accrue from solar will also be quantified.

For registration & more information, please visit:
www.cert.ucr.edu/solar-valley-conference



On August 6th, Solar Valley hosted a webinar attracting energy industry members, city officials, UCR staff and faculty, and government agency personnel. Adam Fowler of the UCR School of Business and Beacon Economics discussed solar installation trends in Inland Southern California, and showed that this area has one of the highest solar radiation levels in the USA: making it a prime area for solar development and transportation electrification. Ed Smeloff of Vote Solar demonstrated how political and economic developments in the West intersect to

You're Invited

Join us on **September 14** in strategizing a coordinated approach to deploy solar energy throughout the Riverside and San Bernardino Counties, advancing environmental sustainability and community resilience. Ensure that your organization, government department, or business is included in the movement that electrifies Solar Valley.

[Register for the Conference](http://www.cert.ucr.edu/solar-valley-conference)

The Solar Valley Consortium Presents:
An Introductory Webinar to the 2020 Solar Valley Conference
August 6, 2020 | 10:00 AM - 11:00 AM
This webinar offers a preview of our upcoming 2020 Solar Valley Conference that will examine the current public policy conditions under which solar operates, with an emphasis on creating pathways for increased deployment throughout Riverside and San Bernardino Counties.
For more information visit our event website: www.cert.ucr.edu/solar-valley-webinar

Assemblymember Eduardo Garcia
56th Assembly District

Adam Fowler
Director of Research
UCR School of Business & Beacon Economics, LLC

Ed Smeloff
Director,
Grid Integration, Vote Solar

forecast widespread decarbonization: and how renewable energy generated in the Solar Valley can easily reach markets throughout the Western USA, Canada, and Mexico. [Click here to watch the webinar.](#)

How quickly should California strive to meet 90-95% of its electricity needs through renewable and other carbon-free resources? [Click here to share your thoughts in our poll.](#)

Solar in the Market

The International Renewable Energy Agency found that a majority of new renewable energy projects in 2019 achieved lower power costs than the cheapest coal-produced energy. Solar energy costs in particular are dropping. “Solar PV projects that have won recent auction and power purchase agreements (PPAs) [to be commissioned in 2021] could have an average price of just \$0.039 per kilowatt-hour.” Find the full report [here](#). Additionally, solar energy costs in the U.S. were \$2.89 per watt in the last quarter of 2019 according to the latest [Solar Market Intel Report](#) from Energy Sage.

Cybersecurity is a growing concern for solar energy providers as solar technology advances and integrates with online communication systems. NASEO (The National Association of State Energy Officials) and NARUC (The National Association of Regulatory Utility Commissioners) are conducting a joint project to identify effective cybersecurity measures for solar consumers and utilities. Read the official release [here](#), and think about how cybersecurity can impact your business and consumers.

Solar is growing quickly in US cities, and Los Angeles leads the pack with a total solar PV capacity of [483.8 MW](#). Riverside [ranks 8th](#) in the country in per capita installed solar. [A study by Energy Sage](#) found that Californians are particularly interested in adopting solar as a means of energy security amid power outages caused by worsening wildfire seasons.

Sunrun acquires Vivint, another residential solar provider. They will have a combined customer base of 500,000.

Industry Tips

PV manufacturers might examine [IKEA's sustainable and resilience-oriented supply chain](#): They have cut costs by automating material restocking with DNNs (Deep Neural Networks), which model demand based on customizable variables. They are also working towards a circular supply chain by imposing sustainability requirements on material suppliers, using more recycled materials, and extending the life of products with strategies such as spare parts warranties.

Sponsors in the News

Southern California Edison has [signed contracts](#) to build 7 new solar storage projects, totalling 770 MW of grid battery. These storage units will connect to existing solar farms, allowing these to satisfy peak energy demand

periods. 3 out of 7 projects will be built in Riverside County by NextEra Energy Resources. These projects have a short timeline, with the goal to be operational by August 2021.

Grant Opportunities

- [Advanced Plug Load and Smart Exterior Lighting Systems](#)

California Energy Commission

Deadline: Oct. 5

- [Perovskite Funding Program](#)
DOE Solar Energy Technology Office
\$5,000,000 to \$10,000,000
Deadline: Sept. 23

Perovskite has shown potential as a low-cost, high efficiency material for light harvesting. It is usually a [tin or lead-halide](#) compound with a Perovskite crystal structure which is easy to manufacture. Thin, translucent, and flexible layers of Perovskite can harvest sunlight while coating various surfaces, [including windows](#). The U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) has announced \$20 million in funding for Perovskite research around material stability and large-scale manufacturing. Companies currently producing Perovskite solar cells are Raleigh Solar Tech, SolarTech Universal, REC Group Alpha, Panasonic HIT, and Oxford PV, who is producing a Perovskite-silicon tandem module.



Jose Etcheverry, York University

Associate Professor

Co-Chair, Sustainable Energy Initiative

Director, International Renewable Energy Academy

Video: Climate Solutions with Jose Etcheverry

As part of Solar Valley's pre-conference video series, Associate Professor Jose Etcheverry of York University discusses climate solutions with Solar Valley's Fred Schwartz: an environmental solutions park, adopting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals at a university level, and international partnerships. Etcheverry shares projects he is currently working on, including the UCR-York University partnership, and why he believes governments should emulate the Canadian approach to climate solutions.

[Watch Video](#)

Community Solar

California's first low-income community solar project is currently underway with the Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians Tribal Reservation, Riverside County. GRID IE (a subsidiary of GRID Alternatives), Anza Electrical Cooperative, and the Santa Rosa Band of Cahuilla Indians have collaborated to build this 1 MW grid which will offset energy bills for low-income members of the Santa Rosa Band and members of the Anza Electrical Cooperative. This project, due to be operational this Fall (2020), was financed by a \$2.05 million grant from the California Department of Community Services and Development Low-Income Weatherization Program. Read more [here](#).

Community Choice Aggregation (CCA) allows a non-profit entity to negotiate power costs with energy providers on behalf of consumers.

- CCAs can contract more than one energy provider to supply their community's energy needs, often resulting in greener energy portfolios and lower bills for consumers.
- There are currently 21 CCAs in California. Multiple cities can participate in a single CCA, such as with Desert Community Energy, the CCA comprising Palm Springs, Cathedral City, and Palm Desert.
- Read about the promises and challenges of CCAs in California in a [report from UCLA's Luskin Center for Innovation](#).

Policy and Regulation

Biden unveils a climate change action plan, promising to incentivize rapid deployment of renewable energy in the U.S., and spending [\\$1.7 trillion of federal funds](#) on clean energy, climate change research, and climate-resilient infrastructure. Read more [here](#).

Solar projects that began construction in 2016 and 2017 will benefit from an extension of 1 year of the **solar investment tax credit (ITC)** and production tax credit (PTC) thanks to the efforts of Senate Finance Committee Chairman Chuck Grassley, R-Iowa. The purpose of this timeline extension is to accommodate projects that may have been delayed by the effects of COVID-19, such as supply chain disruptions or unemployment. Read more [here](#).

Senator Dick Durbin, D-Ill, has introduced a [‘Clean Future Fund’ bill](#), which proposes the creation of a Climate Change Finance Corps. This independent federal agency would [“finance and support investment and job creation in clean energy projects, climate resilience, and research, development, and deployment.”](#) promising to invest \$50 billion in renewable energy projects during its first year. The bill also proposes to invest in frontline communities experiencing disproportionate effects of climate change, transitions for carbon-industry communities, and a carbon emission fee by 2023.



Together in the quest for a healthy climate, Solar Valley is proud to support **California Clean Air Day**. The actions we take right from our living room make a huge difference in creating clean air in our communities.

California Clean Air Day is designed to allow every Californian to participate from where they are, even during a time of social distancing. And for organizations looking to connect employees, customers and stakeholders together, #CleanAirDayCA helps create a community through shared – virtual – action. Click [here](#) to take the Clean Air Day pledge.

Environmental News

A petition from the Center for Biological Diversity to classify the Western Joshua tree as an endangered species is being opposed by some wind and solar energy groups, who claim the protections to the native desert tree will create yet another hurdle for clean energy development in the desert. Sean Gallagher of the Solar Energy Industries Association [expressed opposition](#) to the petition, arguing that “California needs a lot of solar energy facilities built in order to meet its renewable energy goals.”

The Fish and Game Commission who are expected to vote in favor of the petition in mid-September, says they will [“hash out a deal to allow developments, including a dozen or so solar and wind projects that were already nearly fully permitted, to move forward with an expedited review process.”](#)

Thinking about driving electric? Our consortium is proud to support the California Clean Vehicle Rebate Project that offers rebates between \$1,000 - \$7,000 for the purchase or lease of an electric car. Click [here](#) to discover how electric cars save money, time, and the environment.



Thank you to our generous sponsors:



