
Horseshoe Solar to power Livingston County

By Jasmine Willis / Genesee Country Express

Posted Jan 22, 2019 at 3:02 PM

Updated Jan 22, 2019 at 11:47 PM

Caledonia solar farm in the planning stages

CALEDONIA — One of the largest solar farms in the state is being developed in the town of Caledonia.

Horseshoe Solar will bring record jobs to Livingston County, and create clean energy for our ever growing demand on electricity. It is scheduled to be fully operational by 2021.

This 180 megawatt and 600,000 solar panels project will power upwards of 50,000 homes year round.

Invenergy Manager, Marguerite Wells, spoke with Genesee Country Express about this state-of-art solar project.

“We got in touch with the landowner who was interested in using his property for the project. We like this area for project since it is next to transmitters. The property itself is 2,400 acres, but we will only be using 1,500 acres for the solar project. If anyone else near the project is interested in helping to expand it we would be willing to talk with them.”

It will provide three major impacts to the community including permanent jobs, up to \$26 million in landowner payments, and up to \$20 million in land property taxes. This could help pay off town and school debts.

Invenergy is the driving force behind this solar project. Invenergy drives innovation in energy. Invenergy and its affiliated companies develop, own, and operate large-scale renewable and other clean energy generation and storage facilities in the Americas and Europe. Invenergy’s home office is located in Chicago and it has regional development offices in the United States, Canada,

Mexico, Japan and Europe. Invenergy and its affiliated companies have developed more than 18,900 MW of projects that are in operation, construction or contracted, including wind, solar, natural gas-fueled power generation and energy storage projects.

“We will need local labor on this project once we get into the construction stage,” Wells said. “We have projects similar to this all over the country. Part of the reason this kind of project is getting popular is that it brings clean energy, and helps a lot with economic development.”

Invenergy began development of Horseshoe Solar in 2018, and is working to obtain necessary permits and agreements to support a 2020 construction start.

Currently, the company is starting the comprehensive application process required by New York’s Article 10 regulations. The application will include studies of wildlife, noise, visual impacts, shadows, wetlands, geology, archaeology, historic structures, economic benefits and many other topics required by state regulations.

The company chose to form this project in Livingston County as an unparalleled development opportunity for the host towns, with millions to be invested in the local economy over the life of the project. After careful evaluation, they selected this area for the project because of existing transmission lines, minimizing the need for new infrastructure, landowner interest, and community support.

Wells mentioned that other huge solar projects in the state include Wyoming, Genesee, and Clinton counties.

“The state government is very in favor of renewable energy lately, and the cost of solar energy has gone down,” she said. “The wind projects cost about the same as solar now. We are always competing with the wind projects. It would be great if we could get the whole state onboard for solar energy.”

Wells said there is a lot of hoops to jump through before the company can get started building the project, but she hopes to have it developed and operational in the next two years.

In the first 20 years of the solar projects operation the economic benefits are huge; it is projected to pay millions of dollars in property taxes, lease payments to

landowners, salaries to employees, and payment for local goods and service.

“PILOT is a document that helps with taxes for schools, towns, and the county involved in the project,” Wells said. “Right now this project is in the early stages, so we are just working on the documents now. This will be a wholesale project, so anyone within the solar project will have access to the power grid.”

For more information on the Horseshoe Solar project or to make a comment on the development visit <https://horseshoesolar.com/>