



Meridian Energy USA

CPUC Commissioner Bohn Dedicates California's First Grid-Connected Solar Farm

CalRENEW-1 Delivers Zero-Emission PV Solar Electricity to PG&E

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(MENDOTA, CA --) Dedication ceremonies were held today for CalRENEW-1, the first utility-scale photovoltaic solar electricity plant to connect to the California Independent System Operator's (CAISO) transmission grid under the state's Renewables Portfolio Standards program. California Public Utilities Commissioner John Bohn joined with PG&E Senior Vice President Fong Wan and the developer, Meridian Energy USA (formerly Cleantech America) in lauding the facility as a significant step toward meeting the state's highest-in the-nation renewable energy goals.

California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger was unable to attend, but he sent his congratulations.

"California has led the way in enacting ambitious policies and programs to combat climate change, reduce our dependency on oil and grow our green economy," said Governor Schwarzenegger. "The addition of the CalRENEW-1 Solar Farm in Mendota is further evidence that reliable, renewable and pollution-free technology is here to stay. Projects like this one are helping us meet both our renewable energy goals and our economic needs by powering more homes and businesses with sunshine and creating more jobs."

While many large solar projects have been announced by California's utilities, and two slightly larger PV solar farms (one in California and one in Nevada) are delivering electricity to



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PG&E, CalRENEW-1 is the first to achieve CAISO approval to deliver zero-emission solar power directly to the transmission level grid. This is significant because it enables electricity from solar facilities like CalRENEW-1 to be scheduled directly into the grid so that it can be moved over utility lines to meet electricity demands elsewhere.

“I’m delighted that CalRENEW-1 has achieved commercial operation. The grid-connected facility will help California meet our Renewables Portfolio Standards goals and reduce the amount of carbon we put into the atmosphere from energy generation,” said California Public Utilities Commissioner John Bohn.

"PG&E is committed to meeting our customers’ energy needs with sources of environmentally friendly power," said Fong Wan, Senior Vice President of Energy Procurement for PG&E. "Commercial operation of this project serves to broaden our renewable portfolio and aid our state in reaching its clean energy goals."

CalRENEW-1 will deliver 5 megawatts of emissions-free solar electricity to PG&E under a long-term power purchase agreement. It generates electricity from more than 50,000 solar modules, which occupy 50 acres of formerly fallow farmland in California’s Central Valley. The facility started commercial operations on April 30.

“It is noteworthy that CalRENEW-1 was developed and financed entirely by Meridian Energy USA. It further demonstrates Meridian’s commitment to renewables and to the US solar market,” said Meridian Energy USA CEO Bill Overholt. “And we are proud of the fact that we were able to recruit and train Mendota and other area residents to be installers, so that more than 70 percent of the labor involved in construction went to local residents. This demonstrates the potential for PV solar to create green jobs and stimulate economic development.”

As part of the festivities, Commissioner Bohn presented commemorative plaques to four local residents who had worked on the facility’s construction.



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From its inception CalRENEW-1 was a collaborative effort between Meridian Energy USA, PG&E, the CAISO and the city of Mendota, which is providing the site for the facility under a long-term lease. Being first on the grid meant that there were many challenges to be solved but the Meridian project team brought the facility in on time, within budget and with an impeccable safety record.

Engineering and installation of the facility was provided by Quanta Renewable Energy Services. Sharp Electronics Corporation's Solar Energy Solutions Group supplied the thin film photovoltaic modules, the first major deployment of Sharp's amorphous thin film product in the U.S.

CalRENEW-1 is among the most advanced photovoltaic solar facilities in the world. Avoided emissions from the facility will be an estimated 6.3 million lbs/year of CO₂, the primary source of global warming and climate change, plus 6,905 lbs/year of NO_x and 5,451 lbs/year of SO₂ (source: EPA eGRID2002 database).

The facility is owned and operated by Meridian Energy USA, a subsidiary of Meridian Energy Ltd., which plans to apply the lessons learned developing and constructing the facility to much larger renewable projects in the U.S. and internationally.

About Meridian Energy USA, Inc.

Meridian Energy USA is a California-based developer of utility-scale photovoltaic solar farms. The company is a wholly-owned subsidiary of New Zealand-based Meridian Energy Ltd. For more information, visit www.meridianenergyusa.com or call Meridian Energy USA at (415) 218-3935.

About Meridian Energy

Meridian Energy is a 100 percent renewable energy company and is the largest electricity generator in New Zealand. The state-owned enterprise serves 183,000 residential, business



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and rural customers throughout New Zealand and operates nine hydroelectric stations and three wind farms, which generate an average of 13,500 GWh per year. For more information, visit www.meridianenergy.co.nz.