Clear Spring Ranch Solar Array

Overview
- Located 20 miles southwest of Colorado Springs in El Paso County
- 10-megawatt project located on 156 acres of land owned by Colorado Springs Utilities and formerly used for agriculture and grazing
- Will be capable of generating enough electricity to power about 3,000 average homes
- Will avoid approximately 18,600 metric tons per year of carbon dioxide emissions that would have been produced if the electricity had been generated using fossil fuels
- Will be built, owned and operated by a subsidiary of NextEra Energy Resources, LLC
- The power generated will be sold to Colorado Springs Utilities under a 25-year contract starting in 2016
- Proposed interconnection with a Colorado Springs Utilities 12.5-kilovolt distribution system
- The project will use about 42,000 solar panels with trackers that will follow the sun east to west each day to maximize energy production

How the Clear Spring Ranch Solar Project will work
As sunlight hits the solar panels, the solar radiation is converted into direct current (DC) electricity. The DC flows into power inverters, where it is converted into alternating current (AC) that can be used by the local electric grid. Finally, the electricity travels through transformers, and the voltage is boosted for delivery onto the transmission grid for local distribution.
A shining ray of light for our community

In 2015, the Utilities Board approved a project to build a 10-megawatt, single-axis solar array on our Clear Spring Ranch campus, located on about 156 acres south of the city. The project, which will provide a long-term renewable energy source for Colorado Springs, broke ground in April 2016 and will produce energy by the end of the year. It will be the first solar array in our portfolio that is truly for the benefit of all our customers.

We entered into a 25-year contract with NextEra Energy Resources, who will design, build and operate the array; however, we will continue to own the land. We will pay $37 million over this time period for the energy the array produces, which includes maintenance costs.

This array will help diversify the community’s energy supply and provide long-term compliance with the 10-percent renewable energy requirement as stated in the Colorado Renewable Energy Standard. It also moves us significantly closer to our own Energy Vision, which requires 20 percent of our total electric energy be produced through renewable sources by 2020.

This project doubles our established solar capacity – rooftops and community solar gardens – and moves us closer to our 20 percent renewable goal by 2020 as stated in our Energy Vision.

Colorado Springs Utilities electric generation

We have a diverse electric resource mix and balance the priorities of low electric rates, reliable power and environmental stewardship.

About NextEra Energy Resources

- A leading clean energy provider operating wind, natural gas, solar and nuclear power plants
- With more than 21,140 megawatts of generating capacity in the United States and Canada
- The largest generator of solar and wind power in North America
- A subsidiary of NextEra Energy, Inc., with headquarters in Juno Beach, Fla.
- Generates approximately 95 percent of its electricity from clean or renewable sources