

Mad River Community Solar Farm – Waitsfield, Vermont

The Mad River Community Solar Farm is a solar array installation designed and installed by Aegis Renewable Energy of Waitsfield and spearheaded by Dotty Kyle and the other members of the Mad River Community Solar LLC steering committee. The 616-panel array, completed in December 2015, will generate approximately 225,000 kWh of electricity annually. An aspect most notable about this project is that it utilizes an innovative member-owned concept in which community members purchase and own the solar panels that make up the array. Members opted to purchase from one to any number of available panels, depending on their needs and energy savings goal, making this a true community-owned project. The solar array is democratically managed by the member-owners.

Member-owners include a variety of local residences and businesses, lawyers, investment advisors, accountants, a fitness facility, a former US Assistant Secretary of Energy, a former CEO of a well-known wind turbine manufacturing company, and a local architectural firm well known for its innovative work in net zero sustainable design.

This project utilized a new and innovative pour-in-place ballasted foundation system, enabling construction at this very rocky location. The array was specifically located in close collaboration with the Agency of Natural Resources to avoid impact to local wetlands. Additional collaboration with abutting landowners responsibly addressed siting and resulted in zero visual impact on the neighboring community.

The MRCSF project provided an excellent opportunity for members to positively impact their community, save substantially on energy costs, and contribute to a cleaner environment. Further, the REC's (renewable energy credits) associated with the array were retired, making this a truly "green" project for 2016.

Publications:

<http://www.valleyreporter.com/stories/11-news/10607-new-community-array-could-make-solar-more-affordable>

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