

Affordable Community Renewable Energy (ACRE) Program

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Agenda

- ACRE Background & Goals
- American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)
- ACRE Program Design
- Benefits of ACRE Funded Programs

ACRE Background

- Act 74 of 2021 –Allocated \$10 million of ARPA funding to the PSD for “Affordable Community-Scale Renewable Energy... for Vermonters with low-income.”

ACRE – Goals

- Improve access to clean distributed energy for *all* Vermonters including those left out of the energy transition
- Reducing energy burden of most vulnerable
- Avoid cost-shift and cross-subsidization
- Explore different mechanisms that may offer alternatives to net-metering

American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA)

Goals

- Offer economic recovery to those harmed by the COVID-19 Pandemic – including utility assistance
- Investment in key infrastructure needs and economic development
- Investment in climate change prevention and mitigation

ARPA Requirements

- Funds must be “obligated” by December 31, 2024
- Funds must be “expended” by December 31, 2026
- Defines low-income as 185% of Federal Poverty Level (FPL)

ACRE Design 1.0

- Statewide Program – DU Group
- ARPA funding invested in “Community-Scale” Project(s)
- Participating DUs pay into fund supporting program growth
- Benefit to Impacted Community - Production monetized on-bill for income-qualifying recipients for life of project

ACRE 1.0 v. ARPA

- Recipients lacked “ownership”
- Benefit extended beyond 2026

ACRE Design 2.0

- State-wide program – DU Group
- “Community-Scale” 1-5MW Projects
- Participating DUs pay into fund supporting program growth
- ARPA funding buys down PPA
- Benefit to Impacted Community – Membership = tangible asset

ACRE Design 2.0 Issues

- Appetite for participation amongst DUs varied
- Power supply issues

RFP for ACRE Funded Programs

- Meet ARPA requirements for fund obligation and expenditure
- Recipients meet low-income eligibility requirements (185% FPL)
- Memberships with characteristic of fungible asset
- “New” renewables – commissioned July '21 or later

ACRE Benefits

- Memberships provide Long-Term Value to participating Customers (5-10 years)
 - \$12-45/month credit
 - \$240-540 annual credit
 - 8,000 customers
- Increased equity in the energy transition
- Explore innovative ways deliver energy assistance

Field to Family Program



- Offers participants a rate of \$0.06 for a 200-kWh block of energy per month
- Savings of \$12-26 per month, depending on which VPPSA member DU the participant is served by.
- Participants in this program will receive a ten-year membership
- Generation Project: Yet-to-be developed solar and storage project planned to be built in Barton with an expected commissioning date of 2024.
- Will serve more than 700 Vermont municipal electric customers.

Cooperative Renewable Energy Invitation Program



- VEC and WEC have partnered for this program that
- Will provide participants a \$45 on-bill credit per month
- Five years
- The energy for this program will come from VEC's 2.2MW Jericho Landfill solar generation project.
- This program will serve an estimated 950 VEC/WEC members
- RECs associated with the generation for the program will be retired for the participants above and beyond the Coops' RES compliance requirements making this program model one that includes a high level of renewability/additionality

Village of Moscow Community Renewable Energy Project



- Stowe Electric Department's program will offer a 12.5-25% discount to the energy portion of their participants' monthly bills
- The energy from this program will come from the proposed 3.5MW Outback Acres Solar Project to be located in Pittsford with a 2023 expected commissioning date
- SED also has a solar PV project planned along with the rebuilding/recommissioning of the hydro dam at their headquarters. If those projects are commissioned prior to the end of 2024, SED proposes moving the program's generation source from the Outback Acres project to the PV and hydro projects located at their headquarters
- SED's program could serve more than 200 customers

GMP Solar Share Program

- Offer participants a \$0.06 discount for a block of energy
- Block size based on the participant's consumption ranging 100-600kWh per month
- GMP offers \$0.02 discount per kWh with ACRE funding supplements \$0.04 per kWh additional savings coming from ACRE funding will offer savings for five years
- Projects in different stages of development throughout GMP's service territory.
- Could serve as many as 6,000 customers
- Participants eligible for Electric Assistance Program (EAP)

More Information

- <https://publicservice.vermont.gov/>
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PSD RES Public Engagement

- Ongoing Public Engagement throughout 2023
- Informational Webinars Q1 2023
- <https://publicservice.vermont.gov/renewables>
- PSD.REPrograms@vermont.gov