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Contact: Amy Rutledge  
Manager - Corporate Communications  
Minnesota Power/ALLETE  
218-723-7400  
arutledge@mnpower.com

# NEWS

## Minnesota Power looks to advance action on solar projects that support economic recovery for communities affected by COVID-19

Duluth, Minn. — Minnesota Power is asking regulators for an expedited review of its plans for a \$40 million investment in solar energy to aid in the region's economic recovery, which will further advance Minnesota Power's *EnergyForward* strategy to bring more carbon-free energy to the company's customers and the region.

The company has asked the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission to consider acting quickly on its plans to construct approximately 20 megawatts of solar arrays in northern Minnesota. Minnesota Power also released additional details on all three solar projects that were announced in June after the MPUC asked utilities to evaluate projects they could speed up as a way to support the recovery of local economies. The three solar projects will also help the company meet the state of Minnesota's Solar Energy Standard sooner.

The projects are a 9.6-megawatt array at Minnesota Power's Laskin Energy Center, adjacent to the Laskin Energy Park in Hoyt Lakes, Minnesota; a 10-megawatt array near the company's Sylan Hydro Station near Brainerd, Minnesota; and a 1.6-megawatt array on a proposed site on Riley Road in the city of Duluth.

Minnesota Power estimates the three projects will:

- Create 36 local construction jobs.
- Provide enough energy to power 4,000 homes.
- Add \$16 million to the 2021 gross regional product.
- Increase annual local government revenues by about \$55,000 via direct tax payments and an additional \$110,000 indirectly.

The projects will use solar panels from regional manufacturers where possible and leverage existing electrical infrastructure with the bulk of construction starting in 2021.

"We believe Minnesota Power should play a strong role in the economic recovery of area communities from the COVID-19 pandemic," said ALLETE President and CEO Bethany Owen. "These planned solar projects will support local construction jobs and boost the tax base of local economies. We are particularly pleased that we can use these projects to help us meet our objective of 50 percent renewable energy, and we are looking ahead to additional opportunities to promote economic development through renewable energy."

When completed, Minnesota Power's energy portfolio will have approximately 30 megawatts of solar energy, including the existing 10-megawatt solar array at Camp Ripley, the Minnesota National Guard Base near Little Falls. Minnesota Power also operates a community solar garden

with a 40-kilowatt array in Duluth and a 1,000-kilowatt array in Wrenshall, and continues to explore community solar options.

Minnesota Power is also committed to providing opportunities for customers and communities to directly participate in a clean energy future. The company received approval from the MPUC earlier this month for a four-year continuation of its customer solar rebate program, which has been in place since 2004. Through this program, more than 250 customer solar installations have received rebates. Minnesota Power's low-income solar program, which is the first of its kind in the state of Minnesota, was also approved with continued funding to advance solar projects that benefit income-qualified customers or facilities that serve income-qualified customers.

Minnesota Power provides electric service within a 26,000-square-mile area in northeastern Minnesota, supporting comfort, security and quality of life for 145,000 customers, 15 municipalities and some of the largest industrial customers in the United States. More information can be found at [www.mnpower.com](http://www.mnpower.com).

*The statements contained in this release and statements that ALLETE may make orally in connection with this release that are not historical facts, are forward-looking statements. Actual results may differ materially from those projected in the forward-looking statements. These forward-looking statements involve risks and uncertainties and investors are directed to the risks discussed in documents filed by ALLETE with the Securities and Exchange Commission.*

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