



**PRESS RELEASE – 9/23/2014**  
**PHELAN PINON HILLS COMMUNITY SERVICES DISTRICT**  
**Approval of 1.16 Megawatt Solar Project**  
**to Save District \$13,856,965 Over 30 Years**  
For Immediate Release

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1.16 megawatt solar project, approved by the Phelan Piñon Hills Community Services District's Board of Directors at the September 17, 2014 Board meeting, to save District an estimated \$13,856,965 over the next 30 years.

On September 17, 2014, the Board of Directors of the Phelan Piñon Hills Community Services District approved contracts with SunPower Corporation for the installation of a 1.16 megawatt solar project, located on District owned property at the former Meadowbrook Dairy in El Mirage. The project, set to break ground in March 2015, is expected to save the District \$13,856,965 in electricity costs over the next 30 years.

In fiscal year 2013/2014, the District spent \$821,431.48 purchasing electricity from Southern California Edison (SCE) for operations such as pumping wells, and powering pressure reducing and booster stations. This expense represents 17% of the District's total water operations budget. While the solar project assumes savings based on a 4% annual increase in electricity rates from SCE, the District experienced an 18% increase in 2013, and an additional 10% increase in 2014, making the solar project even more profitable with potential increased savings for the District.

The project evaluation took longer than expected and experienced many setbacks. The request for proposal was sent out in November 2011, with selection of a developer taking place in December 2011. The Board originally elected to undertake a solar project under the California Renewable Energy Small Tariff (CREST) program offered through SCE. In July 2012, the CREST program was discontinued, rendering the project unviable. The original developer resigned and SunPower was contacted to discuss a potential solar project. SunPower proposed a 1.0 megawatt project utilizing the Renewable Energy Self-Generation Bill Credit Transfer (RES-BCT) program offered through SCE. The project would enable the District to generate utility bill credits which offset the District's total electrical costs. SCE then changed the rules of the RES-BCT program which made the project less profitable for the District and the project was put on hold. SCE changed the rules again and the project once more became viable. SCE rates then went up which led to an increase in the size of the project from 1.0 megawatts to 1.16 megawatts. The original site location CEQA mitigations led to the relocation of the project to the current location at the former Meadowbrook Dairy in El Mirage, acquired by the District in late 2012. A system impact study was conducted by SCE; Staff, SunPower, legal counsel, and the District's alternative energy committee worked tirelessly to mitigate the increased costs as a result of the study. Final contract negotiations took place and contracts were brought before the Board on September 17, 2014 where they were approved. With approval of the contracts, the next phase is engineering design. Installation is scheduled to begin in March 2015, with final project completion set for June 2015. At the September 17, 2014 Board meeting, Alex Brandon, President of the Board, thanked staff, alternative energy committee members Al Morrisette and Dan Whalen, legal counsel, Mike Whatley of SunPower, and former Director Charlie Johnson for all of the time and hard work spent bringing the project to fruition. President Brandon went on to say that, "along with the acquisition of the water rights, this is probably right up there with the best accomplishments of this District."

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For further information regarding this matter, please contact District staff at (760) 868-1212.