

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Wind Power Purchase Agreement to Significantly Expand Campus Renewable Energy Usage**

CHAMPAIGN, IL – A 10-year power purchase agreement (PPA) between [Prairieland Energy, Inc.](#), a wholly-owned subsidiary of the University of Illinois, and [Rail Splitter Wind Farm LLC](#), a subsidiary of EDP Renewables (EDPR) North America LLC, will significantly increase the amount of renewable energy used by the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

For 10 years, through October 2026, the Urbana campus will receive a percentage-based portion of the wind-generated electricity and associated environmental attributes from the Rail Splitter Wind Farm located north of Lincoln, Illinois. The PPA specifies that 8.6% of the total wind generation from the farm will be sold to the university, which is expected to be an annual amount of more than 25,000 megawatt-hours (MWh).

This acquisition of wind power — in conjunction with energy generation from the utility-scale 20.8 acre Solar Farm (7,863 MWh/year) brought online last December, and other solar installations on campus — raises the amount of Urbana campus clean energy to approximately 33,200 MWh/year, or 8.9% percent of projected FY17 annual electricity consumption.

Director of Utilities & Energy Services Kent Reifsteck said, "Obtaining wind power on this scale is a tremendous next step in diversifying and optimizing the university's energy portfolio to meet future campus demand for more than 54,000 students, faculty, and staff. This long-term contract for low-carbon energy produced in Illinois reinforces the university's commitment to achieving sustainability goals and developing partnerships for statewide economic development."

Since the Illinois Renewable Portfolio Standard was passed in 2007, EDPR has invested more than \$1.5 billion in new Illinois wind farms. EDPR is the largest owner of wind energy in the state with an operating fleet of the Rail Splitter Wind Farm, the Top Crop I & II Wind Farms, and the Twin Groves I & II Wind Farms.

"The PPA with the University of Illinois marks a new path forward for college campuses to play an important role in building a clean energy future," Tommy Greer, EDPR Director of Energy & REC Sales, said. "We are excited to partner with the campus on a long-term agreement to produce clean, renewable energy in Illinois. This is the first time we have signed a long-term PPA with a university, and we are eager to see other academic institutions follow Illinois' lead."

The Rail Splitter Wind Farm began commercial operation in 2009 with 100.5 MW of installed capacity, which can power roughly 35,000 average U.S. households. The farm's annual environmental benefits are equivalent to taking more than 45,000 cars off the road.

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The [Illinois Climate Action Plan \(iCAP\)](#), the Urbana campus' strategic sustainability plan, contains specific clean energy targets, including an objective to obtain at least 120,000 MWh per year from low-carbon sources by FY20.

The idea of signing a wind PPA was supported by a formal recommendation from the Energy Generation, Purchasing, and Distribution (EGEN) Sustainability Working Advisory Team (SWATeam). These SWATeams, created by the Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment (iSEE), are charged with tracking progress on the iCAP targets and making recommendations to advance campus sustainability goals.

The new Provost Fellow for Sustainability, Physics Professor Scott Willenbrock, was previously the chair of the EGEN SWATeam and led the development of the wind PPA recommendation. "It was a natural recommendation to make, but we did not appreciate at the time how nuanced the PPA would be. Many people worked hard to make this a reality," Willenbrock said.

Pursuing additional renewable energy projects and power purchase agreements to achieve clean energy targets was one of the recommendations of the [Utilities Production and Distribution Master Plan](#) released in September 2015.

The university is proactively shaping its energy enterprise through improved utility production, distribution, and monitoring methods and systems. Through dedicated energy conservation programs, such as Retrocommissioning, Energy Performance Contracting, campus-wide lighting retrofits, and building system upgrades, the campus has reduced energy consumption by 28% since 2008.

The university's good work to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions has allowed the Urbana campus to sell approximately \$1.5 million in verified carbon credits since 2014 to fund additional emission reduction and energy conservation projects.

A summary of the wind PPA is available at: <http://go.fs.illinois.edu/windppa>.

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**The Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment (iSEE)** has a three-fold mission: funding and shepherding interdisciplinary research projects that have an immediate and lasting impact in solving global grand challenges related to sustainability, energy, and the environment; leading efforts to make the U of I campus a leading model of sustainability, energy efficiency, and environmental friendliness; and educating and preparing students to be leaders in these fields when they leave campus. [sustainability.illinois.edu](http://sustainability.illinois.edu)

**EDP Renewables North America LLC ("EDPR NA")** and its subsidiaries develop, construct, own, and operate wind farms throughout North America. Headquartered in Houston, Texas, with 37 wind farms and 10 regional and development offices across the United States, EDPR NA has developed more than 5,000 megawatts (MW) and operates more than 4,600 MW. With approximately 400 employees, EDPR NA's highly qualified team has a proven capacity to execute projects across the continent.

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