



NEWS RELEASE

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University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign Announces Final Stage of Ultra-Sustainable Solar Farm 2.0 Project

*The Project Makes the U of I the Third-Largest Producer of
Onsite Clean Power Among U.S. Universities*

CHAMPAIGN, IL – May 13, 2021 – Today, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, Facilities & Services (F&S) announces the final stage of completion for Solar Farm 2.0, totaling 12.3 megawatts (DC), with the planting phase of the farm’s pollinator habitat commencing this month. The project is the second solar farm constructed at the U of I and achieves clean energy sustainability goals outlined in the university’s [Illinois Climate Action Plan \(iCAP\)](#), nearly four years ahead of schedule. Clean energy production will now support approximately 12 percent of the school’s annual electricity demand. The planting of the project’s native pollinator habitat bookmasks the solar farm’s unique array of state-of-the-art technological and sustainable features.

The site’s 54 acres will serve as a major demonstration and research location for pollinator-friendly solar arrays. The University of Illinois Solar Farm 2.0 project exceeded the required 85 minimum points established by the State of Illinois’ Pollinator Friendly Solar Site Act. With 134 points achieved on the pollinator scorecard, including the adjacent landscape buffer, the solar array officially “[Provides Exceptional Habitat](#).” The custom seed mix designed by Natural Resource Services, with more than 21 different plant types that are native to the area, will make the land between and around the panels more resilient and create a natural habitat for a variety of local and migratory birds and beneficial insects. In total, the site will contain more than 6.5 million flowering plants and native grasses.

Solar Farm 2.0 was developed by national solar energy firm Sol Systems, which built the farm with innovative features such as bifacial solar panels, single-axis trackers, pollinator habitat, and zero waste construction practices. This project is among the most technologically advanced and sustainable solar projects in the U.S. Through the firm’s development wing, Sol Customer Solutions, a joint venture between Sol Systems and Capital Dynamics, Capital Dynamics will serve as owners of the project with Sol Systems managing the asset throughout the 20-year term of the agreement.

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F&S Executive Director Dr. Mohamed Attalla said, “In only four months, Solar Farm 2.0 has already become an integral part of the university’s energy enterprise. There are days when the array is meeting almost 30 percent of the university’s electrical demand for that day. It has been extraordinary to watch this site’s renewable energy make an immediate impact to support learning and discovery across campus.”

Since the array was energized on January 29, 2021, the installation has produced over 4,000 megawatt hours (MWh). On May 1, Solar Farm 2.0 provided its largest output of 102 MWh in a single day, enough to offset the consumption of more than 8,000 gallons of gasoline. This installation puts the university at the top of the list for onsite clean energy production, according to the U.S. [Environmental Protection Agency](#). In combination with other solar installations on campus, the Urbana campus is now generating approximately 27,000 MWh/year, ranking UIUC third amongst U.S. universities in onsite clean power production.

The University will purchase all energy produced by the array under a power purchase agreement (PPA) at a fixed price over a 20-year term. In addition to the long-term fixed rate, which hedges UIUC against future utility price uncertainty, the PPA allows the university to go solar with no upfront costs, providing an expected \$300,000 in savings in the first year alone.

“The use of innovative technology and land-use practices and strong, ongoing partnership between Sol Systems and the University of Illinois is what makes this project so remarkable,” said William Graves, Director of Originations at Sol Systems. “Solar Farm 2.0 is a marquee project not only for the university but also for the state of Illinois.”

Sol Systems partnered with South Bend, Indiana-based Inovateus Solar, which constructed the solar arrays. Inovateus used reduced-waste construction practices that prevented as much as 45 tons of materials from reaching landfills. Specifically, Inovateus worked with F&S Waste Management to recycle nearly 94 percent of the project’s construction packaging, plastics, wood pallets, and other refuse.

“Inovateus Solar is truly excited to have partnered with Sol Systems and contributed our best practices for sustainable solar construction. We believe this solar farm will be the new role model for ultra-sustainable solar development,” said T.J. Kanczuzewski, CEO of Inovateus Solar. “We’re also proud to have assisted U of I in meeting an important sustainability goal for the campus. Helping to preserve the environment for current and future students and faculty directly reflects our company mission of ‘building a brilliant tomorrow.’”

Academic collaboration is a major theme emphasized in the F&S Strategic Plan because using the campus as a living learning laboratory for students and researchers is essential to the success of the university. Sol Systems and Inovateus worked with students in the Institute for Sustainability, Energy, and Environment’s campuswide sustainability minor to assess the carbon footprint of Solar Farm 2.0 from sourcing to installation. Sol Systems will use the reports, produced by the student groups as part of their Sustainability, Energy and Environment Fellows Program capstone, to assess potential sustainability improvements to all future projects.

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The University hopes to offer onsite tours this fall, along with a celebratory ribbon-cutting for the project.

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University of Illinois Contact:

Steve Breitwieser
Customer Relations & Communications
Facilities & Services
sbreit@illinois.edu
217-300-2155

Sol Systems Contact:

Will Patterson
Manager, Marketing and Communications
Sol Systems
William.patterson@solsystems.com
240-778-3530

ABOUT FACILITIES & SERVICES AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

Facilities & Services (F&S), at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign, provides all physical plant, operational, and essential services for sustaining an environment that fosters research, teaching, and public engagement activities. F&S supports the university's education, research, and outreach missions by improving the physical condition of the facilities and grounds through construction and building maintenance activities, providing utilities production and distribution, implementing energy conservation initiatives, and increasing customer satisfaction by delivering quality services in a responsive, reliable, and customer-focused manner. Visit www.fs.illinois.edu to learn more.

ABOUT SOL SYSTEMS

Sol Systems is a leading national solar energy firm with an established reputation for integrity and reliability across its development, infrastructure and environmental commodity businesses. To date, Sol has developed and/or financed over 1 GW of solar projects valued at more than \$1 billion for Fortune 100 companies, municipalities, counties, utilities, universities and schools. The company also actively shapes and trades in environmental commodity and electricity markets throughout the United States. The company was founded in 2008, is based in Washington, D.C., and is led by its founder. Sol Systems works with its team, partners, and clients to create a more sustainable future we can all believe in. For more information, visit <https://www.solsystems.com/>.

ABOUT CAPITAL DYNAMICS

Capital Dynamics is an independent global asset management firm focusing on private assets including private equity, private credit and clean energy infrastructure. Capital Dynamics' Clean Energy Infrastructure is one of the largest renewable energy investment managers in the world with USD 6.6 billion AUM and has one of the longest track records in the industry. The CEI strategy was established to capture attractive investment

opportunities in the largest and fastest growing sector of global infrastructure – proven renewable energy technologies, primarily in North America and Europe, across solar, onshore wind, energy storage and related infrastructure with a focus on both utility-scale and distributed generation technologies. The CEI platform’s fully-integrated asset management affiliate provides highly-specialized services to ensure optimal performance and value from projects. The CEI strategy currently manages 7.9 GWdc of contracted gross power generation across more than 150 projects in the United States and Europe, and is one of the top 3 global solar PV owners.

As a sustainable asset manager, we have gone beyond standard ESG requirements by designing, implementing and trademarking the Capital Dynamics R-Eye™ Rating System – a unique, best-in-class approach to diligence and rating of each investment based on PRI principles and UN Sustainable Development Goals. Since Capital Dynamics’ Clean Energy Infrastructure platform’s inception in 2010, over 19 million metric tons of greenhouse gas emissions have been avoided as a result of the firm’s renewable investments. This is equivalent to the power needed to supply more than 3 million homes or passenger vehicles for one year.

In 2020, the CEI strategy received top rankings from GRESB (the ESG benchmark for real assets) for commitment to sustainability, and in 2019 awarded Global PE Energy Firm of the Year by Private Equity International. For more information, please visit: www.capdyn.com.

ABOUT INOVATEUS SOLAR

Inovateus Solar is a leading solar and energy storage development, EPC (engineering, procurement, and construction), and supply company in the Midwest United States. Headquartered in South Bend, Indiana, the company has built over 500 MW of utility, commercial, industrial, and education sector solar projects. With deep roots in the communities that it serves, Inovateus has been a strong employer and invested millions of dollars in the Indiana economy in support of its commitment to invest in the energy future of its clients.