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## **Chugach Electric pursues community solar program** **Regulators give the green light for project to move forward**

Chugach Electric Association, Inc., is moving forward on a community solar program that will allow members to voluntarily subscribe and receive solar energy from the project. The Regulatory Commission of Alaska (RCA) approved the utility's request for an initial three-year pilot period.

“We are pleased the RCA has approved our filing that will allow members who are unable to put solar on their property to take advantage of renewable energy,” said Chugach CEO, Arthur Miller. “Our members have shown great interest in a community solar project for several years, and we look forward to moving forward on this project.”

Chugach's plan includes a 500-kilowatt, four-acre community solar project with 1,280 panels available for a 12-month subscription. Members electing to enroll in the service will submit an application and may request up to 20 panels per meter. On a monthly basis, the energy produced by the project will be applied equally across the total number of panels to determine the share to be allocated to each meter. Based on the number of panels in a member's subscription, the production share will be applied on the monthly bill to offset kilowatt hours that the member would have otherwise purchased.

A Request for Proposals (RFP) will be issued in the coming days for an Independent Power Producer to design, build and operate the project, which is located at Chugach's Retherford Substation in South Anchorage. The schedule anticipates member applications to be accepted beginning Oct. 1, 2024, construction to be completed by the end of this year, and the program to be online by March 1, 2025. Pricing will be better known after the RFP process is complete.

### **Power plants and operations building to add solar energy**

As the community solar program is moving forward, Chugach is also planning to put solar panels on its two major power plants, the Southcentral Power Project in South Anchorage, and the Sullivan Plant along the Glenn Highway. RFPs will be issued to design and build those projects which are anticipated to be roughly 100 kilowatts each. Putting solar panels on the power plants will increase the efficiency of the plants and offset the use of natural gas.

Additionally, solar panels will be installed as part of a remodel of the operations building on

Chugach's South Campus, which will add an additional estimated 165 kilowatts of solar capacity to the system.

"The community solar program and the solar additions to our power plants and operations building all contribute to our decarbonization goals," said CEO Miller. "We are committed to adding renewable energy where feasible to reduce our reliance on natural gas and diversify our generation portfolio."

Miller added that in addition to these renewable generation initiatives, Chugach is evaluating a large-scale wind and a large-scale solar project, which are undergoing detailed technical and economic studies. All of the projects are expected to receive investment tax credits or other federal funding assistance.

The Chugach Board of Directors set a goal of reducing the utility's carbon intensity by at least 35% by 2030 and at least 50% by 2040, using 2012 as a baseline year without a negative material impact on members' rates or reliability.

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