



Transition Energy

**Richland Electric Cooperative  
Transition Energy Frequently Asked Questions**

Richland Electric Cooperative has compiled a list of 'Frequently Asked Questions' (FAQ) related to our upcoming Transition Energy Community Solar Project. These are some of the most common questions have received as of March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2016. If you have a question please refer to the FAQ first and if it is still not answered feel free to call us at 608-647-3173 or send email to [transition@rec.coop](mailto:transition@rec.coop). We expect further additions to FAQ over the next few months as program details are finalized.

- **What is the price per panel subscription?** \$699
- **How much energy will each panel produce?** We estimate that in a normal year each panel will produce around 475 kilowatt hours but that is not guaranteed. It will depend on the amount of sunshine we have in a given year.
- **How many panel subscriptions can I buy?** We would like as many members as possible to have the opportunity to participate in this program but we have a limited number of solar panels, therefore during the initial offering members can buy the lesser of **a) 10 panel subscriptions** or **b) 50% of their annual consumption**. (Example: Member uses 4750 kwh per year they can buy expected production of 2375 kwh/475= 5 panel subscriptions)
- **Will there be an opportunity to buy more panel subscriptions in the future?** Maybe, it depends on the subscription rate of our initial offering.
- **How many panels will be at the Ash Ridge Site?** There will be over 2000 panels at the Ash Ridge Site but 1980 of these panels are part of the Dairyland Power Cooperative Utility Scale Solar project. 396 panels are available to the Transition Energy subscribers of Richland Electric Cooperative members.
- **How much energy will the Ash-Ridge community solar array produce?** Approximately 188,000 kilowatt hours a year. This amount can vary based on the available sunshine in any year.
- **How much energy will the Dairyland Ash-Ridge array produce?** Between 900,000 and a million kilowatt hours. This is enough electricity to power over 80 average homes in the Richland service area.
- **When will the Ash-Ridge project be complete?** No later than the end of 2016 but construction may be completed as early as July.
- **What do I need to do to sign up and buy panel subscriptions?** Contact the REC office and express your interest now! Final subscription details will be available by our Annual Meeting held on April 2<sup>nd</sup>.
- **How long will the panels last?** When you purchase a subscription to a panel you will receive the energy output of that panel for 25 years.
- **Do I have to pay for maintenance or operations cost?** The cost of ongoing maintenance and operations for 25 years is included in the purchase price of \$699

- **Are the panels fixed or trackers?** They are single axis trackers.
- **Can I take the federal investment tax credit for my purchase?** No. As part of the developer agreement the purchase price of \$699 has been reached assuming the tax credit will be claimed by a tax equity investor.
- **Do I own the panels?** No. You are purchasing the all of the energy output of the panel for 25 years, not the physical hardware.
- **Who actually owns the panels?** SoCore Energy, our partner in this project.
- **Does the panel output degrade over time as the panel ages?** Yes, we estimate the production will decrease by about .5 % per year.
- **Does maintenance include removing snow from panels in the winter?** No. We rely on Mother Nature to melt snow because mechanically removing snow can physically damage the panels.
- **Is wind/hail/lightning damage repaired?** Yes, under the maintenance agreement these types of damages will be repaired or replacements made in a reasonable amount of time.
- **Where are the panels manufactured?** Panels are manufactured all over the world. Some are manufactured in the United States, some in Germany and other European countries, and some in the Asia-Pacific, including China. It's often difficult to determine exactly where panels are fully manufactured because some are made up entirely from Asia-Pacific components but assembled in another country and labeled as being made there. The main focus of SoCore Energy, our developer is to obtain high-quality panels that have a proven track record and are backed by financially stable, reputable companies.
- **If I buy a panel subscription and later decide to move or sell the panel subscription, what options do I have?** There are specific transfer rules being developed now which will; **a)** prohibit the sale of the panel to anyone who is not a member of Richland Electric Cooperative, **b)** allow the sale or transfer directly to another member who, with the addition of the panel will not exceed the limits of the initial offering and completes an REC subscription agreement **c)** provide for the sale of the panel back to the Richland Electric Cooperative at a price that factors in depreciation and other items. Other opportunities or restrictions may apply as we finalize the details of the program.
- **How much will I be paid for the energy my panel(s) subscriptions produce?** Energy produced in the current month will be multiplied by the energy rate you are paying for energy you buy from Richland Electric Cooperative. For example, if your energy bill shows you are paying 12.95 cents per kilowatt hour and your panel produces 40 kilowatt hours, your bill will be credited  $.1295 \times 40$  or \$5.18.
- **What if my panel(s) subscriptions produce more energy than I consume in a month?** This shouldn't happen except in very rare cases since you were only allowed to buy panels up to 50% of your total annual consumption. In those rare cases you will see a reduced credit applied to your bill for the excess energy. If this occurs regularly you may want to consider selling or transferring your panel(s) as the return on your investment may not meet your goals.
- **I already have solar or wind installed on my property and it is being bought back by Richland Electric Cooperative via your existing net-metering program. Can I participate?** You should call our office to learn more but the initial offering combines the Transition Energy Program panel(s) subscriptions with your privately owned distributed generation and if the total is more than 50% of your annual consumption you may not participate.
- **What if I have more questions?** We are putting the final details together right now and we will provide a 'Frequently Asked Questions' brochure in late March which may answer your questions then. If the FAQ doesn't answer your questions call REC at 608-647-3173

