



## Peace Energy Renewable Energy Cooperative

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# MEDIA RELEASE

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## ***Peace River area solar farm still a go.***

**PEACE RIVER, ALBERTA:** Although an "Alberta Innovates" grant application was recently turned down, Peace Energy Cooperative is planning to move ahead with a community-owned solar farm in the Alberta Peace Region.

"We were disappointed to hear just this month that our grant application was not successful," says Peace Energy Cooperative executive director Don Pettit. "However, thanks to going through this grant application process, we now have most of the details worked out to possibly create the solar farm on our own. Certainly, there is keen interest in the Peace River area and among our membership to build this or a similar project as soon as possible."

The solar farm was planned to be built on property leased from the Town of Peace River at the Peace River airport. The three megawatt solar array would have some 7000 solar panels feeding electricity into the local grid, enough to power 350 modern homes.

"Even without the grant, the numbers look promising," explains Pettit. "If we move forward, PEC should be able to raise enough capital from its members to build and own its own small solar farm, maybe the first of many, and provide a return on our members' investments."

It would be financed and owned by Peace Energy Co-op. The Co-op would raise capital from its some 540 members through a share offering, and then distribute the profits to the investors as a return on their investments.

The Alberta "free market" approach to energy production, distribution and sales opens the door to community-owned renewable energy generation for profit, unlike many other provinces.

However, the costs for all of the initial studies and grid interconnection fees are very high, so getting relatively small solar projects off the ground can be a financial challenge.

Peace Energy Renewable Energy Cooperative, based in Dawson Creek, BC opened an office in the Town of Peace River in January to promote, sell and install solar energy systems, build local membership in the cooperative and coordinate efforts to kick start the solar farm.

"The Peace Region is very rich in solar," explains Jenn Ford, recently hired to run the new office in downtown Peace River. "We're here to help the Peace River area tap into this new resource. As we say, solar is not future energy, it's "now" energy!"

Peace Energy Co-op is one of the most experienced solar providers in the Peace. From their new Peace River office they will design custom solar energy systems, then supply all the equipment and professional installation for homes, businesses and municipalities who want to reduce their electrical bills by generating their own solar power.

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### **MORE INFO/INTERVIEWS:**

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