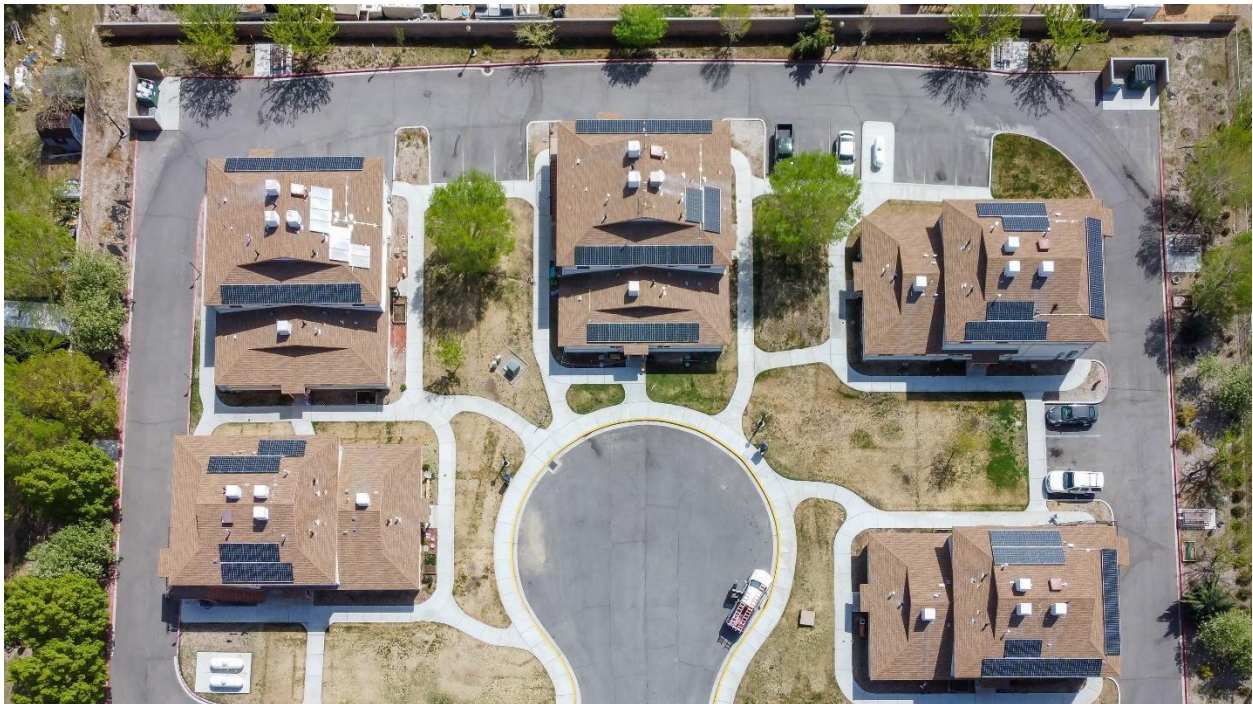




FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Bishop Paiute Tribe Celebrates California's First Tribal SOMAH Funded Solar Installation



Aug. 9, 2023 (Bishop, CA)— The [Bishop Paiute](#) Tribe is celebrating a newly installed 49 kW DC system as part of the tribe's overall sustainable energy plan, which seeks to improve energy efficiency for reservation residents through the addition of renewable energy resources. The project was installed in part with funding from the California Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing ([SOMAH](#)) Program at Coyote Mountain Apartments, an affordable housing and sober living facility. A ribbon-cutting ceremony was held August 9.

"We are proud of the efforts of the Bishop Paiute Tribe's Environmental Management Office (EMO) and our EMO Director Brian Adkins for spearheading this endeavor," the Bishop Paiute Tribal Council said in a statement. "The Tribe continuously looks for improvements that benefit our tribal members and the community. This project took a lot of planning and execution, and we hope other Tribal communities can look to us as

an inspiration and bring similar projects to their communities. We don't want to take the credit for this amazing achievement. That credit belongs to all of those involved from start to finish, who made this project come to fruition."

The project is the first SOMAH Program incentivized installation to be completed within a tribal reservation in the state. The \$180,666 system is projected to save the 24 households \$473,747 on their energy bills over the lifetime of the system.

California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) Commissioner John Reynolds shared his enthusiasm about the completed project: "I congratulate the Bishop Paiute Tribe and GRID for completing the first tribal solar project under the SOMAH Program. This is exactly the kind of community-based and community-led solar project we need more of, and as the Public Utilities Commission considers ways to improve the SOMAH Program in the future, I hope we hear from tribes and organizations like the ones here today about what we can do to make sure solar reaches everyone."

The project also received praise from Christina Snider, Tribal Affairs Secretary to Governor Gavin Newsom. "California commends the Bishop Paiute Tribe for its leadership in advancing our shared goals of tribal self-determination, clean energy workforce development and equitable access to energy efficient housing on tribal lands through this historic project," she said.

The solar project is a partnership between the Bishop Paiute Tribe Community Development Department and [GRID Alternatives' Inland Empire](#) (GRID IE) office. "From our first solar installation with the Bishop Paiute Tribe 10 years ago, to this most recent and historic solar project at Coyote Mountain Apartments, GRID IE is proud of its decade-long partnership of delivering renewable energy solutions and job-training opportunities to tribal residents," said Jaime Alonso, Executive Director of GRID IE Office. "We look forward to deepening and expanding our energy and job training working partnership with the Bishop Paiute Tribe for decades to come."

The solar installation was completed by Scott Smith, a local contractor, via GRID Alternatives' [Sub Contractor Partnership Program](#). As part of SOMAH's on-the-job training, a tribal member took part in the installation as a paid trainee referred from the local job training organization [High Point Solar](#). The workforce development aspect of the project reflects both a SOMAH Program commitment to local neighborhoods and the tribe's commitment to train 100 tribal members in the skills and trade of renewable energy installation per its 2017 Strategic Energy Plan.

"SOMAH is honored to collaborate with the Bishop Paiute Tribe in our shared mission to empower communities through renewable energy," said SOMAH Program Manager Rachael Diaz. "By bringing over 49 kilowatts of solar to Coyote Mountain Apartments, we aim to provide tangible benefits to the residents, such as energy bill savings, allowing them to allocate more resources towards their families. We look forward to further enhancing our partnership with Tribal communities, including the Bishop Paiute Tribe, in our shared pursuit of building an equitable sustainable future."

GRID Alternatives IE supported the tribe through each milestone of the process from program enrollment to project completion. The project was fully funded through the \$114,457 incentive provided by the SOMAH Program, \$51,086 from a [Tribal Solar Accelerator Fund Sempra Foundation](#) grant and over \$15,000 as an in-kind donation from the Bishop Paiute Tribe.

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About Bishop Paiute Tribe

The Bishop Paiute Tribe is located at the foot of the Eastern Sierra Nevada Mountains in Bishop, CA, and is the fifth largest tribe in California, with over 2,000 enrolled members. The tribe provides members with various programs and services and operates a variety of tribal-owned entities and enterprises. The tribe is engaged in progressive development and highly values self-sufficiency, self-reliance, and is committed to being a strong self-governing sovereign nation.

About GRID Alternatives Inland Empire

GRID Alternatives Inland Empire (GRID IE) envisions a rapid, equitable transition to a world powered by renewable energy that benefits everyone. Our mission is to build community-powered solutions to advance economic and environmental justice through renewable energy. GRID IE opened in April 2011, and its success is derived from its triple bottom line: People, Planet, and Employment. Each solar project generates three-pronged results: savings for low-income families, hands-on experience for people interested in the solar industry, and environmental benefits by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and raising environmental consciousness.

About SOMAH

The Solar on Multifamily Affordable Housing (SOMAH) Program provides up to \$100 million annually in financial incentives for installing photovoltaic (PV) energy systems on multifamily affordable housing in California. The program's unique, community-based approach ensures long-term, direct economic benefits for low-income households, helps catalyze the market for solar on multifamily housing and creates jobs. SOMAH is overseen by the California Public Utilities Commission and funded through the greenhouse gas allowance auction proceeds of Pacific Gas and Electric Company, San Diego Gas & Electric Company, Southern California Edison Company, Liberty Utilities Company and PacifiCorp. SOMAH aims to install 300 megawatts of generating capacity by 2030. For more information, please visit calsomah.org.

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