Clover Creek: Accelerating the Future of Energy through Community Partnership

By AES U.S. Renewables

Photo of the Clover Creek solar facility. Credit: AES

Overview & Purpose

Every solar facility has a story that begins long before it begins generating clean energy. From identifying the right project location, to breaking ground, these projects undergo extensive due diligence, frequent collaboration, and meaningful, long-lasting relationship building. These partnerships with local communities are crucial to advancing sustainable and reliable clean energy development.

AES' Clover Creek facility is a testament to the strength of public-private collaboration and a shared vision and commitment to responsible, community-first development. This case study offers municipal leaders with actionable insights and proven strategies for building successful and thoughtful clean energy facilities.

Project Background

The Clover Creek facility is an 80 MW solar facility located just 1.5 miles west of Mona, Utah in Juab County. After years of siting, development, and construction, the facility reached commercial operation in November 2021. Clover Creek solar generates enough clean energy to reduce an equivalence of 140,564 metric tons of carbon dioxide per year and the equivalent of powering

25,532 Utah homes. This groundbreaking project is directly supporting the advancement of clean energy onto Utah's electric grid.

The Clover Creek facility also provides reliable and clean energy to the six central cities that make up the Utah Municipal Power Association (UMPA): Provo, Spanish Fork, Salem, Manti, Nephi, and Levan. This was one of UMPA's early renewable energy power purchase agreement and is a major milestone in bringing clean energy directly to Utah municipalities.

"The Clover Creek Solar Project offers Utah Municipal Power Agency (UMPA) the first big step into the renewable solar and clean energy resources located in the middle of the State. This new green power supply at a low price replaces a fossil-fuel contract and starts us on an economic path of meeting our renewable energy and carbon reduction goals without rate impacts. UMPA and Nephi City value the long-term partnership with AES in supplying clean, renewable power to our communities, businesses, and homes for the future. We thank AES for making this happen."
-Glade Nielson, Nephi Mayor and UMPA Board Director

Expanding Benefits Through a Community Reinvestment Area

The Clover Creek project would not have reached operational status if not for the close collaboration between AES team members and local leadership at the county, city, and school district boards. During early stages of development, AES formed a Community Reinvestment Area (CRA) which adds greater community benefits by allowing local taxing entities, specifically the Juab School District and Juab County, to benefit from real and personal property growth generated within the project area to support and finance redevelopment activities.

Juab County, the Juab County School District, and other taxing entities will see a large increase in tax revenue based on real and personal property taxes. $5.7 million in property taxes will be created over the life of the project, allocating $3.6 million to Juab schools and $1.4 million to Juab County and other taxing entities. Additionally, from the CRA, $788,000 will be allocated to low-income housing.

Development & Construction

Daily morning safety briefing during construction of Clover Creek. Credit: AES

Solar facilities bring a range of long-term benefits once operating. Throughout the development of Clover Creek, it was important to the AES project development team that the project was a good neighbor and prioritized local benefits wherever possible throughout development and construction.

During project development, AES worked closely with landowners and local stakeholders to ensure that we were known, available, and consistent in providing project updates, permitting information, answering questions, and compromising on any community concerns.

During peak construction of Clover Creek, the project employed over 100 local construction workers, and the project employs 2 full-time employees throughout the 20–25-year lifespan of the project. Clover Creek contracted with several Utah-based companies, including B.H., Inc., Hunt Electric, and Intermountain Consumer Professional Engineers (ICPE).

Social Impact

As the clean energy sector grows rapidly, AES has seen a critical need to approach workforce development in a people-positive way. At the kindergarten through 12th grade level, AES supports students through curriculum development partnerships, educational tours of our sites, and capacity building workshops for science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) educators.

Together with the STEM Careers Coalition – an alliance of industry and non-profit organizations powered by Discovery Education – AES has invested over $1 million since 2020 to improve access to high-quality K-12 STEM education across the United States, including in the state of Utah. In 2024, the Coalition surpassed our goal reaching over 10.7 million students due to the collective contributions of all members.

In the state of Utah, our direct investment benefited Juab School District by providing access to Discovery Education Experience for teachers and students in grades 9 - 12 at Juab High School from 2021 through the spring 2024 semester. Based on information from the National Center for Education Statistics, more than 850 students attended Juab High School in the 2023-2024 school year and had access to these educational resources through AES partnership.

Advancing Sustainable Development through Dual Use

Clover Creek is also home to over 500 sheep who happily graze in, around, and under the panels, keeping the site looking beautiful without the use of additional carbon from traditional lawn-care machinery. Juab native and farmer Seth McPherson works with a local sheepherder to manage the Clover Creek herd, and this project allowed Seth to switch roles and work closer to his home and family.

Photo of the Clover Creek solar facility. Credit: AES

Conclusion

The Clover Creek project provides clean energy, community benefits, and agricultural connections. AES is happy to have collaborated with core local entities to make this project beneficial to all stakeholders and support Utah's renewable energy goals.

Acknowledgments

AES would like to acknowledge the following entities for their partnership on this project:

- Utah Municipal Power Agency
- Juab County Commission
- Juab County School District
- B.H., Inc.
- Hunt Electric
- Intermountain Consumer Professional Engineers (ICPE)
- STEM Careers Coalition
- Discovery Education Experience

About Solar Scale

Solar@Scale is a partnership between the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) and the American Planning Association (APA) that aims to help cities, towns, counties, and special districts understand and realize the potential benefits of large-scale solar development.

Learn more about Solar@Scale and download the updated Solar@Scale Guidebook, 3rd Edition

ICMA advances professional local government management worldwide through leadership, management, innovation, and ethics. ICMA provides member support; publications; data and information; peer and results-oriented assistance; and training and professional development to more than 12,000 city, town, and county experts and other individuals and organizations throughout the world. Learn more at icma.org

APA is an independent, not-for-profit educational organization that provides vital leadership in creating great communities for all. APA and its professional institute, the American Institute of Certified Planners (AICP), are dedicated to advancing the profession of planning, offering better choices for where and how people work and live. Learn more at planning.org

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