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## **Florida's Gadsden County, "Big Bend" Region Win Southeast's Largest Solar Farm Project**

*~National Solar Power announces \$1.5 billion 400 MW project to boost jobs, economy~*

**Tallahassee, Fla.** - National Solar Power today announced the company will build the Southeast's largest solar farm in Gadsden County, Florida - generating hundreds of new jobs and pouring \$1.5 billion in economic investment into the region.

"Gadsden County was chosen for this significant project for many reasons, including its great year-round climate, strong community leadership, incredibly inviting regional support and the strong potential for future economic growth," said James Scrivener, CEO of National Solar Power.

Along with the large solar farm planned for Gadsden County, Scrivener added that the other geographic areas the company considered in Florida, Georgia and North Carolina as possible home of the solar farm project have excellent sites and will be considered for future expansion of solar farms. The company continues to have talks with representatives in those communities. However, discussions are most advanced in Hardee County, Florida. In the near future, plans include making an announcement about establishing a meaningful solar project in Hardee County.

In the end, Gadsden County won the nod for the large 400 MW farm because of the overall positives it demonstrated. Scrivener praised Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce Executive Director David Gardner for his "tireless work" to promote the county; Dr. Jim Murdaugh, president of Tallahassee Community College, for leadership that tipped the decision to Gadsden; and Florida Gov. Rick Scott, who strongly encouraged the company to invest its resources for this historic project in Florida.

"Governor Scott and his team played an instrumental role in securing this project for Florida and persuaded us that the Sunshine State deserved to win the right to host our exciting solar project - and it's a real bonus that this is our home state, too," said Scrivener.

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In a statement, Governor Scott welcomed the project to Florida.

"It's great to see innovative companies like National Solar Power choose to make their headquarters in Florida," said Governor Scott. "It's only fitting that America's 'Sunshine State' shines brightest in attracting this significant economic engine to make its home here."

Once the appropriate local and state permitting process is completed, the first phase of the project is expected to be up and running within six months of breaking ground. Hensel Phelps Construction Co., a world leader in construction that rebuilt the Pentagon after the 9-11 attacks in 2001, will design, build and operate the solar farms for National Solar Power.

National Solar Power estimates the project will create 400 jobs during the five-year construction phase and up to 120 permanent operations jobs. National Solar Power expects each farm segment will have a three-person maintenance crew, an engineer and security personnel and estimates the permanent operations jobs will have an average salary of about \$40,000 per year.

A minimum of 20 farms will be built on 200-acre sites at a cost of \$70 million each – injecting hundreds of millions of dollars in the North Florida community.

According to National Solar Power, Gadsden County vaulted into first place as its community partner for the new solar farm location and has very strong attributes including:

- Having ideal available sites with adequate supply of undeveloped land that can properly meet infrastructure needs related to the establishment of the solar facility;
- Receiving appropriate business, government and community support including strong regional support;
- Access to a qualified work force; and
- Opportunity to enter into positive partnerships with a strong higher-education sector – Tallahassee Community College, Florida State University and Florida A&M University.

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"With Gadsden County and the surrounding region, we know that we will have access to a qualified work force - for construction and operation," Scrivener said. "We are very excited to be near a great team of education resources in Tallahassee Community College, Florida State University and Florida A&M University and look forward to working with those fine higher education institutions to make this project a success."

During a news conference to announce the Gadsden County Solar Farm project, Scrivener outlined a partnership National Solar Power is establishing with Tallahassee Community College to create a solar energy educational and training center at TCC's Gadsden County campus - featuring a 2 MW utility scale solar farm. In fact, that anchoring element of the project and Dr. Murdaugh's leadership on behalf of the 'Big Bend' region were integral in National Solar Power's decision to choose Gadsden County for the massive project.

"National Solar Power is making a strong commitment to education in our area - not only with the establishment of the solar farm on our campus but also with the jobs that will be created in Gadsden County and the economic development benefits that will flow to help Gadsden County's schools, students and residents," said Tallahassee Community College President, Dr. Jim Murdaugh. "It is projected that by 2060, solar energy will meet half of all the world's energy needs. When you realize that, it makes sense to partner with National Solar Power to provide our students with the kind of education and training that will be available at the TCC-Gadsden Solar Farm."

By converting the natural power of the sun into electricity, National Solar Power's planned 400-megawatt farm will be capable of providing enough renewable energy to power roughly 32,000 homes.

National Solar Power is negotiating with multiple large financial institutions and private equity investors to provide project financing. The company has entered into an agreement with Progress Energy Florida and is having discussions with other potential customers to purchase power generated by the Gadsden County solar farm project. In total, National Solar Power expects to use 4,000 acres of property across the region for the 400-megawatt solar farm project.

Along with the agreement with Progress Energy Florida, National Solar Power has executed power supply agreements for more than 3,000 Megawatts of Solar Farms in the Southeastern United States. National Solar Power anticipates much of the power produced by the solar farm project will be used for peak shaving -- particularly energy production that will occur during the summer months.

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National Solar Power was established to meet the growing demand in the utility market for renewable energy generation by providing utilities with cost-effective solar solutions. The company has entered into power supply agreements for more than 3,000 megawatts of solar farms in the Southeastern United States. With these agreements, the company is well positioned to be a market leader in utility-scale solar production.

A market leader in utility scale solar power solutions, National Solar Power is uniquely positioned within the marketplace to offer cost effective solar power solutions on the utility scale. With more than 30 years of industry experience, National Solar Power's founders have been involved in the solar and utility energy marketplace and witnessed renewable energy gaining in popularity and affordability. Learn more about National Solar Power at [www.natlsolar.com](http://www.natlsolar.com).

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**Quotes in Support of Gadsden County Solar Project**

"National Solar Power's decision to build a world-class solar facility in Gadsden County will be a tremendous benefit to the region," said David Gardner, executive director of the Gadsden County Chamber of Commerce. "The hundreds of jobs and hundreds of millions of dollars the project will help to jumpstart our region's economy and help many in our community earn a new paycheck."

"The people of Gadsden County are excited about the opportunity to help build the Southeast's largest solar farm," said Gadsden County Commissioner Sherrie Taylor. "There is no better place for National Solar Power to invest their dollars and resources and we look forward to working with them as the project takes shape."