

Project
Name:

Bookcliff Community Solar Garden

Clifton, Colorado

Service to the Community using Agrivoltaics, harvesting from both sun & soil



Set on a 22-acre farm in western Colorado, **Tibre Enterprises** is a family-owned farming operation with a mission to 1) Serve our local community & 2) help further the concept of agrivoltaics as an important part of the transition to clean energy for both the farming community as well as solar developers. Tibre Enterprises will be building the 2.3 MWdc **Bookcliff Community Solar Garden (BCSG)** using an agrivoltaic design, raising the panels high enough above the ground to continue normal farming activity beneath the solar array. Our overarching goals with the project are **1)** To serve our income qualified (IQ) community by helping to provide for both their energy needs as well as hunger relief. We will be donating &/or discounting the sale of the electricity to IQ households, as well as providing fresh produce to the local food banks to support their hunger relief programs. **2)** Partner with Grid Alternatives to utilize the training in solar & workforce development they can provide to provide a pathway to well paying jobs in the energy field to members of the community. **3)** Partner with Colorado State University to continue the research of the symbiotic relationship between solar, soil health & crops, **Joining Tibre in our endeavors are:**

- **Byron Kominek**, owner/manager of “**Jack’s Solar Garden**” & executive director of the “**Colorado Agrivoltaic Learning Center**”(Calc)
- **Alisha Wenger**, executive director of the Grand Junction Community Food Bank (“CFB”), an independent nonprofit serving Mesa County for over 45 years..
- **Amanda McQuade, PH.D**, Program Coordinator for The Community Alliance for Education and Hunger Relief, a part of Stem Center of Colorado State University at the CSU Western Colorado Research Center, located in Grand Junction
- **Analissa Sarno, PH.D.** Dr. Sarno will be heading up the research element of our project, studying everything from the affect of the PV construction process on soil compaction & health, to furthering the understanding of the symbiotic relationship between crops & solar using the crops grown locally such as produce, orchard crops & wine grapes.

We will be engaging with **Energy Outreach Colorado (“EOC”)**, the Grand Valley Catholic Outreach, & the other local housing authorities for the enrollment & management of IQ subscribers to the solar garden. **“In 2022 alone, EOC assisted 949 Mesa County residents with over \$650,000 in past due energy bills, a 31% increase from the prior year. Most of these customers were renters and had an average household income of just 26% of the Area Median Income, thus most lack the ability to access the benefits of renewable energy. Community solar projects like the Bookcliff Solar Garden offer a solution and can provide significant relief to its energy burdened neighbors.”** (Former director of EOC). EOC’s mission is to ensure that all Coloradans can meet their home energy needs. BCSG will directly support the work EOC & the other organizations do to achieve their mission by expanding access to affordable energy for income-qualified individuals in our community. BCSG will generate enough electricity to meet the annual electrical needs of 400-500 homes. We plan to donate 50% of that energy to IQ households & to discount the pricing of the balance of the energy to other IQ households.

Also, we will be partnering with **Grid Alternatives Colorado** to make use of the workforce development program they offer to provide training in & a conduit to jobs in the solar industry. **“Our training offers the unique opportunity to participate in the installation process from start to finish. Trainees learn while participating on real-world solar installations, getting a full picture of the industry. Hands-on experience is central to our model, and we want to help turn that experience into meaningful employment opportunities for people in the communities we serve.”** (from Grid Colorado) We plan to establish a scholarship fund for the trainees to help cover this wage while in classroom & on jobsite, then use our project as a platform for the “hands on experience” for the students.

The focal point of our project is the junction between communities, renewable energy, and agriculture.

Learn more about our vision at www.BookcliffSolargarden.com.