

The background of the entire image is a deep blue space scene. In the lower-left corner, the curved horizon of the Earth is visible, showing a thin layer of white atmosphere and a dark, textured surface. The rest of the background is filled with a dense field of small, bright white stars of varying sizes, creating a starry night sky effect.

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FALL/WINTER 2021

West Virginia's Never-ending Evolution as a Leader in Powering America



Jay Schoenberger
Dakota Power Partners

Jay Schoenberger is a co-founder and Principal of Dakota Power Partners. He has been involved in the clean energy industry since 2005, participating in the development of 1,100 MW of operating and in-construction projects to date. Schoenberger has deep experience in all facets of large-scale clean energy development, including site origination, land acquisition, power marketing, environmental permitting, interconnection, project acquisition and sales. His development experience spans numerous U.S. power markets. Prior to Dakota, Schoenberger managed multiple investments in portfolios of clean energy assets under development across the United States.

Dakota Power Partners works closely with local communities, landowners and utilities to develop large-scale solar and energy storage projects. Our projects produce low-cost clean energy, benefit host communities and create 21st century American jobs. The Dakota Power Partners team has collectively participated in the development of more than 3,300 megawatts of operating and in-construction American wind and solar projects, representing an aggregate capital investment in rural communities in excess of \$4.1 billion.

We generally prefer to enter a market in its infancy, concentrate our time and investment dollars, and develop deep relationships with host communities and state stakeholders therein. When we began developing our first solar farms in West Virginia more than three years ago, there was little discussion within our industry of utility-scale solar in West



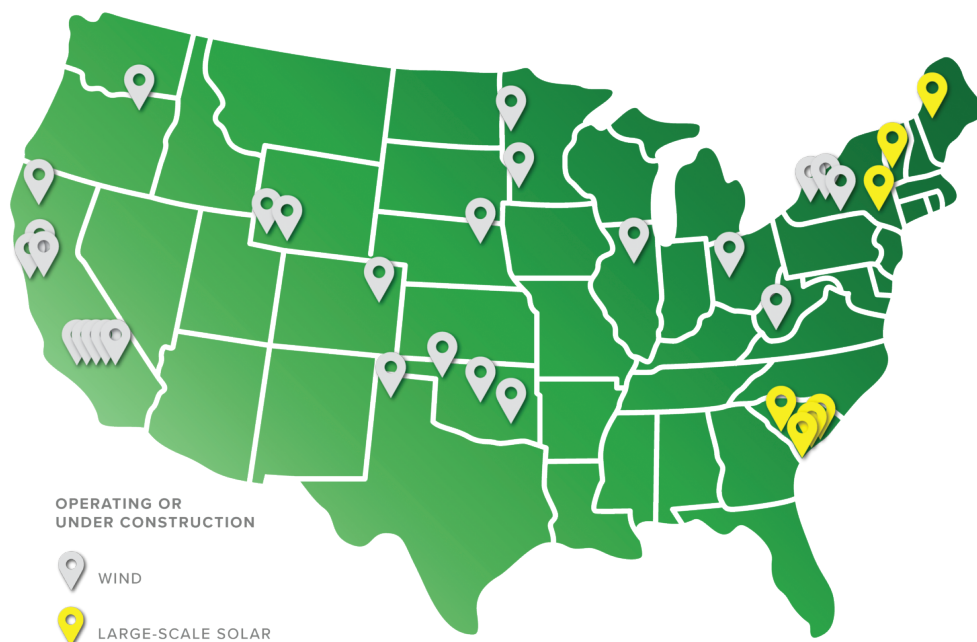
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Virginia. However, we viewed West Virginia as a pro-business place with a deep and rich history of energy innovation. West Virginia has powered economic development in the United States for well over a century. We believed utility-scale solar would be a critical component in West Virginia's never-ending evolution as a national leader in powering America.

We also witnessed neighboring states like Virginia become major hubs for large-scale solar. We saw no reason why West



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Virginia couldn't do the same with its robust transmission network and its well-articulated power plant permitting process at the Public Service Commission. We also observed West Virginia's efforts to attract new businesses – including Fortune 500 companies – to the state. Many of these businesses require a low-cost green energy supply as a part of setting up shop in a new market. Utility-scale solar could cost-effectively meet their needs. Lastly, adding utility-scale solar into the electric generation mix would complement West Virginia's increasing role as the outdoor recreation and eco-tourism hub of the Eastern United States.

Today, West Virginia utility-scale solar is no longer a rarely discussed topic.

There are multiple solar developers in the state pouring millions of dollars into making large-scale solar farms a reality. Thanks to receptive landowners and host communities, Dakota Power Partners now has multiple solar farms under development across the state. These developments, in aggregate, represent the potential for a multi-billion-dollar capital investment into West Virginia. These developments would also translate into the creation of hundreds of permanent operations and maintenance jobs, thousands of construction jobs, millions of dollars in landowner payments and substantial incremental tax revenue for local communities and the state.

Thankfully, our hunch from more than three years ago has been confirmed. West Virginia is an excellent, forward-looking place to do business. We've seen it from many landowners and host communities who are eager to see utility-scale solar and its attendant economic benefits in their community. We've seen it within the state's leadership and the business community who understand the importance of a balanced energy portfolio, who want to see West Virginia continue its American energy leadership and who want to attract new businesses that demand low-cost green electrons.

Undoubtedly, much work remains. But we believe the future looks bright for solar in West Virginia and remain grateful for the pro-business environment we've encountered within the state. **V**