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AllEarth Renewables and SED install solar tracker and wind turbine at Berkshire East ski resort

May 23, 2013 - Green Buildings

From its lifts and lodges to its snowmaking and "magic carpet," a new solar installation has helped Berkshire East, become the world's first ski area to be powered entirely from on-site renewables.

The year-round resort developed a 500kW solar tracker farm that will produce 700,000kWh annually. The solar farm will supplement a 900kW wind turbine the company installed in 2011. Together, the two systems will cover the area's entire annual electric demand.

The 500kW solar farm consists of 90 dual-axis AllSun Trackers, which follow the sun throughout the day to boost energy production.

Sustainable Energy Development Inc. (SED) of N.Y. developed the project. SED chose the solar trackers for the project and managed the design and installation. The solar trackers at the farm use GPS and wireless technology to position the more than 2,000 solar panels directly into the sun throughout the day, boosting production by up to 45% over rooftop installations.

The solar farm is expected to produce 700,000 kWh annually and the wind turbine produces 1.4 million kWh annually.

Berkshire East hosts over 100,000 skiers annually, has six lifts and two lodges.

"We view on-site renewable as a hedge against the rising price of power," said Jon Schaefer at Berkshire East. "Energy is our largest non-labor expense and it's the one thing we are most dependent on beyond the snow."

"We built our product produce more energy from the sun each day and withstand the harshest of northeastern climates. We were particularly excited to be involved in this unique project and thrilled to have AllSun Trackers helping power Berkshire East's operations," said David Blittersdorf, CEO of AllEarth Renewables.

"Berkshire East Ski Area is a prime example of how distributed energy projects like wind and solar can help small, family-owned businesses thrive for years to come. Installing wind and solar projects at ski areas and resorts simply makes sense throughout the northeast, they are prime locations to take advantage of the benefits of renewable energy projects," said Kevin Schulte, CEO of SED.

The AllSun Tracker is manufactured by AllEarth Renewables. The ground-mounted solar systems are designed for homes, businesses, non-profits, and commercial-scale installations. The company has installed over 1,400 complete grid-connected solar tracker systems.

New England Real Estate Journal - 17 Accord Park Drive #207, Norwell MA 02061 - (781) 878-4540