



For Immediate Release  
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## Press Release

### Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative and Origis Energy Announce New 27.5 MWAC Solar Power Project

#### Ripley Solar to help SMECO fulfill its state mandated renewable portfolio standards

HUGHESVILLE, MARYLAND and MIAMI, FLORIDA – Southern Maryland Electric Cooperative (SMECO) and Origis Energy USA today announced the parties have entered into a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) to develop the new Ripley Solar 27.5 MWAC facility to be constructed on Ripley Road in La Plata, Maryland. The solar facility, developed by Origis Energy, is expected to reach full commercial operation by mid-2019. SMECO will purchase all generated energy, capacity and Solar Renewable Energy Credits (SRECs) for the next 25 years, helping the electric co-op to fulfill its state mandated renewable portfolio obligation at the lowest cost to its members.

Pending approval from the Maryland Public Service Commission and local permitting, the solar facility will be located on 300 acres in Charles County. The Origis Energy preliminary design calls for the use of single axis tracking technology and approximately 86,000 thin film solar panel modules. Construction will include the building of a short transmission line from the solar power site to the nearest substation. The project will create approximately 150 jobs during construction, which is anticipated to start in early 2019.

SMECO worked with the National Renewables Cooperative Organization (NRCO) to develop a request for proposals and evaluated approximately 20 submissions before selecting Origis Energy. According to Austin J. Slater, Jr., SMECO's president and CEO, "Ripley Solar is the third solar project that NRCO has facilitated for SMECO, and their expertise has been invaluable. Developing solar projects right here in our service area gives us a couple of advantages. Not only are we able to procure renewable energy to help meet state requirements, but we are also able to avoid costly transmission fees."

Slater added, "We're looking forward to partnering with Origis Energy on Ripley Solar. The amount of solar energy this project will produce nearly doubles SMECO's current solar capacity." Ripley Solar is expected to generate roughly 56,500 megawatt-hours (MWh) during its first year of operation, enough to power about 3,600 homes annually. An average SMECO household uses 1,300 kilowatt-hours (kWh) a month and 15,600 kWh per year.

"By purchasing more renewable energy, SMECO is demonstrating environmental leadership, sustainable energy generation responsibility and facilitating grid reliability," said Guy Vanderhaegen, Chief Executive Officer and President of Origis Energy. "We are most pleased to help SMECO provide its customers with clean, solar generated energy for many years to come."

Purchasing solar energy is one way SMECO works to fulfill its renewable portfolio obligation, as required by the state, at the lowest costs to its members. Utilities are obligated to purchase 1.15 percent of their load from solar energy resources in 2017; that percentage increases each year until reaching 2.5 percent by 2020. Utilities that don't purchase the required amount of solar energy must pay a penalty.

### **About SMECO - The Cooperative Difference**

Eighty years ago, when rural areas needed electricity, cooperatives were created. Visionary men and women helped to form SMECO, which now provides electric service to more than 160,000 customers in Charles County, St. Mary's County, southern Prince George's County, and most of Calvert County. Co-ops are distinctly different from investor-owned utilities because co-ops are owned by their customers. Customer-members elect the men and women who serve on the Board of Directors. They share the responsibility of ownership by financing the cooperative's operations, but they also share its rewards. Each year, SMECO's margins—revenue less expenses—are allocated to customers' capital credit accounts. SMECO uses margins as working capital for new construction and system improvements. Then, when the Board determines that the financial condition of the co-op warrants, members receive a refund. As a cooperative, SMECO will always put its members first and be responsive, reliable, and resourceful—the power you can count on.

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### **About Origis Energy**

Origis Energy is Powering the Solar Revolution<sup>SM</sup> with custom clean energy solutions for utility, commercial and public sector clients. The Origis team has worked to ensure the interests of all stakeholders are upheld in more than 100 projects worldwide totaling 600+ megawatts to date of developed solar capacity. Headquartered in Miami, FL, Origis Energy USA delivers excellence in solar project development, financing, engineering, procurement and construction (EPC) and operations, maintenance and asset management for investors and clean energy consumers across Europe and the Americas. For more information, visit the company online at [www.origisenergy.com](http://www.origisenergy.com).

### **About National Renewables Cooperative Organization**

Formed in 2008 by 21 cooperatives, the NRCO aims to increase access to cost-effective renewable energy resources for electric cooperatives around the country. NRCO provides full origination and development services for its Owner-Members and cooperative customers, with nearly one gigawatt of wind and solar projects completed to date including 41 cooperative-run community solar farms. For more information see [www.nrco.coop](http://www.nrco.coop).

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