



Mayor Newsom Praises SFPUC for Approving New Five Megawatt Solar Project at Sunset Reservoir

New Contract with Recurrent Energy Would Bring State's Largest Solar Photovoltaic and Nation's Largest Municipal Solar Project to San Francisco's Biggest Reservoir by 2010

SAN FRANCISCO, CA – Thursday, December 11, 2008 – Today Mayor Gavin Newsom praised the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission (SFPUC) for approving a new contract with Recurrent Energy to generate five megawatts (MW) of solar power atop the recently seismically-retrofitted Sunset Reservoir. The project, which is expected to be completed and generating solar power for the City in 2010, will be California's largest solar photovoltaic system and the nation's largest municipal solar project. The project will also increase total municipal solar generation in San Francisco by more than 300%, from the current 2 MW to a total of 7 MW of solar power.

"This is an exciting day for San Francisco and a major step for solar energy in California," said Mayor Newsom. "With this one large project on top of our largest City reservoir, we're going to more than triple the amount of energy we generate from the sun and set a new standard for solar power in California."

"We applaud the forward-thinking approach of the City, the Mayor, and the SFPUC in making this landmark project possible," said Recurrent Energy's CEO, Arno Harris. "We're proud to play a part in San Francisco's path to a clean energy future - by building clean, onsite solar power plants exactly where they're needed most."

The photovoltaic system and the solar energy it will generate will be developed and operated under a "Power Purchase Agreement" between the SFPUC and Recurrent Energy. San Francisco-based Recurrent Energy is a distributed power company and a leading provider of onsite solar energy. Under the contract, Recurrent will finance, design, build and operate the solar energy projects and provide all the energy generated to the SFPUC for a period of 25 years. The solar panels will be manufactured and supplied by Suntech Corporation.

The five megawatts generated will be used to help power other San Francisco public services and buildings, including streetlights, San Francisco General Hospital, Muni light rail and city schools. AB 2573, sponsored by now-State Senator Mark Leno and signed into law by Governor Schwarzenegger in 2007, enabled the installation of this large solar project on Sunset Reservoir by permitting the City to use power generated at this site for other municipal facilities.



Previously, city-owned solar projects like those at the Moscone Convention Center, San Francisco International Airport, the Southeast Wastewater Treatment Plant and others were developed through a more traditional approach, with the City contracting directly to design and build these projects while the City owns and operates them. The "Power Purchase Agreement" approach will allow the SFPUC to develop more rapidly large-scale solar projects, take advantage of federal tax credits not directly available to municipalities, and generate solar energy at a more cost-effective rate. The contract must also be approved by the San Francisco Board of Supervisors.

"We've done a good job developing solar power in the City under more traditional City contracting methods," said SFPUC General Manager Ed Harrington. "But this innovative approach is an example of our efforts to dramatically accelerate and expand solar energy projects in the City on both municipal facilities like the Sunset Reservoir and on residential, commercial and nonprofit rooftops through our GoSolarSF solar energy incentive program."

According to national data provided by the U.S. EPA, the solar energy system is expected to reduce carbon emissions by more than 109,000 metric tons. This is equivalent to removing more than 850 automobiles from operation or preserving over 30 acres of forest from deforestation.