



PRESS RELEASE

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NREL and Private Industry Begin Nationwide Solar Measuring Network

The U.S. Department of Energy's National Renewable Energy Laboratory and IBERDROLA RENEWABLES have jointly deployed the first of several solar resource measuring stations as part of a planned instrumentation network throughout the United States.

The stations, located across Arizona, are part of NREL's Solar Resource and Meteorological Assessment Project (SOLRMAP), a collaboration between the national laboratory and the energy industry to collect precise, long-term solar resource measurements. The information will be incorporated into technical analyses that seek to minimize the risk of launching commercial solar energy conversion projects, including concentrated solar power plants.

The inaugural measurement station was installed by NREL and IBERDROLA RENEWABLES using an Irradiance Inc. rotating shadowband radiometer for global, direct, and diffuse solar measurements. The radiometers will record strength and consistency of the sunlight at the station locations, and will also collect wind and temperature measurements.

"The project is a win-win collaboration between NREL and industry to optimize the quality of solar resource data used to evaluate the viability of large-scale projects in the southwest U.S.," said Steve Wilcox, a senior scientist with NREL's Solar Radiation research program, and the lab's lead in the SOLRMAP collaboration.

"This also supports the solar industry as a whole by providing NREL a broader database by which to improve solar resource models," Wilcox said.

"Our expertise as one of the nation's leading wind power project developers has uniquely prepared us to responsibly develop renewable technologies of various types, including solar," said Martin Mugica, IBERDROLA RENEWABLES' senior vice president of renewables. "We are pleased to work closely with NREL as we take this important step to develop solar technology solutions."

NREL will combine the SOLRMAP data with information at existing regional solar radiation networks to upgrade models supporting a database of 10-km resolution solar resource data across the United States. The data collected will be used by NREL researchers and analysts to sharpen solar modeling, solar resource forecasting, and database development. The data must accurately represent the spatial (geographic) and temporal (hourly, daily, and seasonal), and spectral (wavelength distribution) variability of the solar radiation resource at different locations.

SOLRMAP industry partners provide funding for instruments, maintenance, and station operations. NREL provides expertise for station design, instrument selection, data acquisition, quality procedures, data analysis, calibrations, and data distribution. NREL is working with several other companies to install SOLRMAP stations and in the near future hopes to open the project to even more participants planning concentrating solar power plants.

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IBERDROLA RENEWABLES is currently the world's leading provider of wind power with 8,500 MW of wind power in operation globally now, plus over 600 MW of clean gas-fired generation and over 50 BCF of gas storage in the US and Canada.

www.iberdrolarenewables.us.

NREL is the U.S. Department of Energy's primary national laboratory for renewable energy and energy efficiency research and development. NREL is operated for DOE by The Alliance for Sustainable Energy, LLC.

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