

Proposed Solar Park Net Metering Amendment

The Problem: Net metering systems are generally limited to facilities with no more than 500 kW capacity. Current law prohibits solar developers from grouping more than one 500 kW facility if they are located in “close proximity” and use the same infrastructure. *See* 30 V.S.A. § 219a(a)(4). This provision limits the ability of developers to maximize the efficient use of appropriate sites for solar development.

The Proposal: A town or municipality would be allowed to create a designated “solar park.” Up to five megawatts of co-located 500 kW net metering projects could be located at the site. The Public Service Board would be authorized to reduce the net metering credit that would otherwise be available based on any economies of scale that result in lower costs.

Proposed Language:

30 V.S.A. § 8002(18) (version effective Jan. 1, 2017) is amended to read:

(18) “Plant” means an independent technical facility that generates electricity from renewable energy. A group of facilities, such as wind turbines, shall be considered one plant if the group is part of the same project and uses common equipment and infrastructure such as roads, control facilities, and connections to the electric grid. Common ownership, contiguity in time of construction, and proximity of facilities to each other shall be relevant to determining whether a group of facilities is part of the same project. However, if a tract constitutes a solar park, solar net metering systems with a cumulative plant capacity that does not exceed five MW may be collocated on the tract and retain eligibility for treatment as net metering systems in accordance with section 8010 of this title regardless of whether they would otherwise constitute a single plant under this subdivision.

(28) “Solar park” means a tract of land that is designated by a municipality for the colocation of solar renewable energy plants with a cumulative plant capacity of not less than one MW;

Add to 30 V.S.A. § 8010(c)(2)(F) as amended by H.40, in an appropriate location:

The Board may provide an amount of credit for a net metering system to be located in a solar park that is lower than the amount that the system would receive if located outside a solar park, taking into consideration economies of scale.