

A Community Solar Garden for Lake County

What is a Solar Garden?

A solar garden is a solar electric array sized for multiple users, which provides 'subscribers' throughout the County with low-cost clean energy.

XCEL Energy customers within Lake, Park, and Chaffee Counties can subscribe, including residences, businesses, local governments, non-profits, and faith-based organizations.



How do I subscribe?

Fill out and return our subscriber interest form (page 3) or drop us a note at lynne@highcountryconservation.org. Interested subscribers will not be required to make a financial commitment until program details are release by Xcel Energy and pricing is finalized. No subscriber will be charged until the system is built.

How much solar can I buy?

The minimum subscription size is one kilowatt (about 4-5 panels). Subscribers who qualify for LEAP have no minimum. The maximum subscription size is enough panels to provide 120% of the average annual consumption of electricity at the subscriber's premises. We can work with you to determine the appropriate system size for your usage and your pocket-book. No one entity can subscribe for more than 40% of the system.

How much will I save?

With our **Solar Savings Now Plan**: A 10% electric bill savings with no money down - subscribers receive a monthly credit of about 6.8 cents per kilowatt-hour, and make a monthly payment of about 5.5 cents per kilowatt-hour on approved credit. Prices may be subject to change. Exact prices will be available when XCEL's program rules are complete and construction bids are received.

With our **Community Supported Energy Plan**: A kilowatt (kW) of solar power generation will cost the approximately \$2,000 – \$2,500, due when the system is commissioned. Subscribers receive a monthly bill credit of about 6.8 cents per kilowatt-hour and pay a monthly maintenance fee of 99 cents per kilowatt (minimum \$1.99). Simple payback is approximately 12 years, or 6% annual return on investment. This equates to approximately \$15 off your electricity bill per month for each kilowatt purchased. Exact prices will be available when XCEL's program rules are complete and construction bids are received.

What if I move?

If you plan to sell your home or building, your subscription is transferable to any electricity meter in the county. If you leave the county, you can sell your subscription at current market value. The subscription is considered separate from the home-sale or can be sold separately or with the home, depending on your preference.

For additional information or to sign up for the Solar Garden Subscriber list, please contact Lynne Greene at High Country Conservation Center: (970) 668-5703 or lynne@highcountryconservation.org.

When will it be built?

If Lake County's application is accepted with Xcel Energy, the system will most likely be built in the summer, 2012. Subscribers will NOT pay for their subscription until the system is built.

Who pays for the array to be built?

A solar garden will be possible in Lake County through several partnerships, including partnership with our developer and hosting service provider, Solar Panel Hosting (SPH). SPH will finance the upfront cost of building the system and claim applicable tax credits to lower the subscriber's cost. Solar Panel Hosting will work with local partners to develop the project. Their role includes: financing of project construction, procurement, liability, ownership and payment models. They are developing several other projects across Colorado. Check them out at: <http://www.solarpanelhosting.com/>.

Where will the solar garden be?

The most likely location is a county owned site near the intersection of US24 and CR10, which is also used as a gravel pit.

How big will it be?

We are currently exploring a system size of 50 kilowatts (1/2 acre) in year one, with the possibility of expansion to a 500-kilowatt (3 acre) system over time. As an example, an average single family home would typically offset 100% of their electricity usage with about 2-5 kilowatts of solar power. Many homes in Lake County have 1-3 kW systems.

Who handles maintenance ?

SPH charges a small monthly maintenance fee to cover both predictable and unpredictable costs, including inverter replacement breakage and snow removal.

What about warranty and insurance?

Panels typically have a warranty of 25 years. In year 25, they are guaranteed to produce 85% of what they were making on day one. Comprehensive insurance is included in price.

How long does it last?

In year 20, the county and subscribers will decide whether to renew the lease with the existing system in place, renew and upgrade to new technology, or decommission the system.

What is the High Country Conservation Center's role?

We are a non-profit community organizing group, paid through the Governor's Energy Office to help start local energy projects. We will help facilitate the application, marketing and subscriptions. We are playing a similar role in Summit County's (larger) solar garden bid. We will post updates on our webpage at: <http://www.highcountryconservation.org/LakeSolarGarden.htm>.

Why is it so cool?

Unlike big power plants, this is distributed generation project. Power is produced and used locally, which increases energy independence, local jobs, and reduces the necessity and cost of energy transmission. And the best part is that the energy production process is clean. This project, in year one, will result in 80 tons of CO2 emissions reduced.

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Yes, I am interested in being on the subscriber list for a Lake County Solar Garden.



There is no obligation on my part at this time to purchase a subscription. When final pricing is released I will be notified. When the Lake County project is accepted by XCEL Energy (most likely early in 2012), I may be asked for a deposit on my subscription.

Name:

Address (where power is used):

City or Town:

County:

Annual Power Usage:

(Get your 12 month usage from Xcel Energy at 1-800-895-4999)

I am interested in (check all that apply):

Solar Savings Now - Save 10% on electricity with no money down on approved credit

Community Supported Energy - At a cost of \$2000-\$2500 per kilowatt (minimum 1 kilowatt), receive credit for production of your panels on your electric bill – simple payback about 12 years.

kilowatts -or- % of my usage -or- \$ total cost

Helping to organize my community for solar

Hosting a solar garden on my property

Solar Panels on My Home (I own my home and have good sun)

Fine print:

This document indicates interest in participating in the solar garden program and does not involve any fee or constitute investment advice or a solicitation for the sale of a security. There is no obligation on the part of either Solar Panel Hosting LLC or the potential subscriber. A subscription may be sold or transferred and is portable to a subscribers new address within a limited area.

Solar gardens programs may be limited in size or availability, and program rules are still being established in some areas. The subscription types, savings, and pricing above are our “best guess” given current knowledge and may change given program rules, equipment prices, and market / financial conditions.

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