



## **Cape & Islands' Largest Solar Collection Field Under Construction at Hyannis Airport**

For Immediate Release

May 14, 2014

HYANNIS – Airline passengers coming and going from Barnstable Municipal Airport this season will notice work crews installing thousands of support posts and angled racks in grassy areas alongside both runways. That's the infrastructure for what will become the Cape & Islands' largest solar panel array, some 24,700 photovoltaic modules spread across 18.8 airfield acres, creating a 6.9 megawatt resource.

When connected to the region's power grid later this year, the array will collect the Sun's energy and convert it to 8,103 annual megawatt hours of electricity to benefit the airport, the Barnstable Fire District and ultimately, ratepayers in the Town of Barnstable and in other jurisdictions that belong to the Cape and Vineyard Electric Cooperative (CVEC). This is enough electricity to power 1,077 average-sized homes annually.

"It's a win-win for everyone," said Airport Manager Roland "Bud" Breault.

According to John Checklick, CVEC president and Falmouth representative, "The Cape & Vineyard Electric Cooperative's energy projects are unique. They will provide regional benefits to all the people of the Cape and Martha's Vineyard through savings to the towns and significant carbon reductions."

The solar array is being installed by G & S Solar, an industry leader that has built, operated and owned more than 100 solar systems in Massachusetts and New Jersey. The firm has a contract with CVEC to build and maintain the airport installation and 16 others on Cape Cod and Martha's Vineyard in exchange for per-kilowatt-hour payments that is expected to result in a profit for the company. Under what's known as a power purchase agreement (PPA), CVEC will buy the green energy from G & S Solar. The airport and the Barnstable Fire District get first call on the generated power; the excess will be sold by CVEC to ratepayers in participating towns, along with Barnstable and Dukes counties. Most of the revenue will accrue to the airport and the Town of Barnstable in equal amounts.

G & S Solar and CVEC also benefit from financial incentives offered by Massachusetts and from federal tax credits, both of which are intended to promote the generation of energy from non-fossil fuel sources.

Breault estimated that the airport-based panels, when operational, will reduce the airport's cost of electricity by more than 17 percent and provide more than \$7 million in revenue over 20 years. It's part of the airport commission's effort to expand its revenue base from non-traditional sources.

Breault reported that the airport's annual electric bill is about \$225,000. While still a significant budget line item, the cost of the power used in the new terminal, tower and parking areas is substantially less than it was in the old, less-energy-efficient facilities.

The project was held up for several months by the Federal Aviation Administration which was concerned with reported glare from similar solar projects at other airports that was affecting pilots and air traffic controllers. The concern has since been resolved to the agency's satisfaction.

##

For further information, please contact Airport Manager Bud Breault at 508 775-3033 or at [Roland.Breault@town.barnstable.ma.us](mailto:Roland.Breault@town.barnstable.ma.us).

Reach Liz Argo, special projects coordinator with CVEC, at 508 375-6891 or at [largo@cvecinc.org](mailto:largo@cvecinc.org).

John Faltings is president of G&S Solar. He can be reached at 212 286-8100.