

Ontario Awards Feed-in Tariff Contracts for \$9 Billion in Private Investment

Nearly 19% of Capacity Goes to Community and Aboriginal Groups

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By Paul Gipe

In another in a series of stunning announcements from Ontario, the provincial power authority has awarded connections and contracts for 2,500 MW of new renewable generation capacity under its precedent-setting feed-in tariff program.

More announcements are expected in the months to come as the Ontario Power Authority brings on an additional 1,500 MW of new transmission capacity and works its way through an 80 MW backlog of residential rooftop solar applications.

In typical Canadian understatement, the Ontario Power Authority (OPA) says the contracts awarded may be "the single largest green initiative of its kind in Canada." In reality, the program may simply be the single largest green initiative in North America as the province races ahead in its plan to close its coal-fired power plants by 2014.

But equally as significant is Ontario's intent on sharing the investment opportunity with its own citizens. In a program unique in North America, OPA has awarded contracts and connections for some 460 MW of projects that will be owned by community and aboriginal groups.

One of the 36 community and aboriginal groups awarded contracts are the Chippewas of Georgina Island. Their 20 MW project is located on Lake Simcoe only a half-hour drive north of Toronto. "We are proud to add renewable energy to our heritage of environmental responsibility," said Donna BigCanoe, Chief of the Georgina Island First Nation, in a release.

OPA has also awarded the first contract for wind energy in the Great Lakes. And unlike other proposed Great Lakes projects, OPA's feed-in tariff is sufficiently high to drive actual development.

More than 650 MW of central-station solar PV were also awarded contracts. This is on top of the nearly 500 MW of contracts for solar PV from the previous Standard Offer Contract Program. Ontario now has more than 1,000 MW of solar PV on the

books and construction has recently begun on several new 10 MW projects.

Here is a summary of the contracts to date.

- microFIT (<10 kW); 8,500 applications for 77 MW
- microFIT (<10 kW); 3,000 awards made
- Wind onshore: 1,200 MW
- Wind offshore: 300 MW
- Solar PV: 650 MW
- Aboriginal-Owned: 120 MW
- Community-Owned: 260 MW
- Residential-Owned: ~80 MW
- Total Community-Owned: ~460 MW, ~19% of total connections awarded

[Ontario's Feed-in Tariff Program Backgrounder](#)

[Ontario Announces 184 Large-Scale Renewable Energy Projects](#)

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This feed-in tariff news update is partially supported by the Jan & David Blittersdorf Foundation in cooperation with the Institute for Local Self Reliance. The views expressed are those of Paul Gipe and are not necessarily those of the sponsors.

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