

Bozeman Manufacturer Creates Electricity In Addition To Outdoor Gear

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Pacific Outdoor Equipment of Bozeman, Montana creates sporting goods to improve enjoyment of the outdoors whether it's snowing, raining, or sunny.

That sunny weather triggered an idea, and company President Greg Garrigues put into motion a plan to reduce the energy and carbon footprint of their operation.

"We've always been trying to offset the energy produced from the equipment we make," said Garrigues. However, the

constant energy demands of running a business proved a daunting task. "The solar array will offset about 30 percent of our energy use. It'll cover lighting and power used at our desks and office spaces." with the remaining cost coming from heating the premises.

Using a grant through USDA Rural Development's Rural Energy for America Program, or REAP, Pacific Outdoor Equipment constructed a grid-tied solar array that sits atop their warehouse on the north side of Bozeman, Montana.

With funds provided by USDA as well as area power utility Northwestern Energy, and assistance from Montana Community Development Corporation, the array was installed and engaged in October of 2010, and generates 3,715 kilowatt hours per year.

Matthew Jones, Montana State Director for USDA Rural Development said "The REAP program helps small businesses like Pacific Outdoor Equipment, as well as farmers and ranchers, finance renewable energy projects or energy efficiency projects. Renewable energy is a priority of the Obama Administration, and getting 'green' energy technologies into less populated areas will allow the U.S. to become a leader on that front."

Pacific Outdoor Equipment has made a commitment to be a responsible global community member and be conservation-minded in its operations. This commitment extends beyond their products and reflects on the ethos of the company and its individual employees. This solar grid tie is just one more step in protecting the environment they're encouraging everyone to enjoy through their gear.



Pacific Outdoor Equipment President Greg Garrigues holds the switch engaging the solar array atop their building.