



Rivian Automotive, Paris BPU, Silicon Ranch, and Clearloop:
The Tennessee Renewable Infrastructure Partnership
Rivian Automotive, Inc., Paris Board of Public Utilities, Silicon
Ranch Corporation, and Clearloop
2024 Innovative Partnership Awardee

The Paris Solar Farm – Puryear, the first project of its kind in Henry County, Tennessee – represents an impactful partnership between the **Paris Board of Public Utilities, Rivian Automotive**, and **Silicon Ranch** and its carbon solutions platform **Clearloop** to expand access to clean energy in the Tennessee region. Each partner had individual needs and goals, all of which were met by this collaboration.

Rivian had made ambitious climate commitments and was searching for a partner to help them accomplish those goals in Tennessee in such a way that maximized positive impact on the community. Paris BPU, for its part, was seeking to make the local grid more resilient while continuing to provide the reliable and cost-effective energy its customers had come to expect, while still supporting the push towards locally generated, diversified, and sustainable energy sources. Silicon Ranch has a longstanding mission to bring new solar to areas where renewable energy has a meaningful impact on not merely the grid and environment, but also on the economic development of the local community. By partnering, these three entities—from both private corporations and local public utilities—were able to realize their mission and goals.

In Tennessee, solar energy accounts for only 0.4% of the grid, as compared to California where solar energy comprises 16% of the grid. As a result, one megawatt hour of electricity in Tennessee emits around 32% more carbon than a megawatt hour in Northern California. Projects like the Paris Solar Farm – Puryear expand access to clean energy in areas that stand to benefit most, while also bringing a massive tax infusion to the community, attracting new businesses looking to locate operations where renewable energy infrastructure already exists, and delivering lower costs per megawatt of energy.

This solar project is a testament to how carbon solutions can be used to bring big brands and local power companies together to effect long-term benefit to its community. Local leaders like those at Paris BPU are setting a clear example for other communities on how

mutual partnerships like this make it possible for local utilities to provide safe, reliable energy either at or below the prices customers have come to expect, while reducing carbon emissions in the region and supporting the country's larger push toward renewables.

The partnership among these three entities established the Paris Solar Farm – Puryear, an 80-acre solar facility owned and operated by partner Silicon Ranch that generates 6.75 megawatts (MWAC)—enough energy to power approximately 1,000 homes annually. The project began delivering energy to the Paris BPU electric grid in December 2022.

A portion of the power generated—supported by upfront capital from Rivian—matches or exceeds the power consumed by the automaker's Waypoints chargers located at 11 state parks across the state of Tennessee, as well as Rivian's other clean energy commitments in the region. Since the very first vehicle delivery, every kilowatt hour from all Rivian Network chargers has been powered by renewable energy, and this partnership is in part an extension of that commitment. But the partnership also highlights the mutual dedication of the partners to ensure that Tennessee's energy mix becomes more sustainable without compromising energy independence over the long term, and to bringing renewable energy infrastructure to the places where it is needed most.

In addition to providing local customers with safe, reliable, cost-effective energy, the solar project will generate hundreds of thousands of dollars in new tax revenue for the county over the life of the project. This revenue will go to local infrastructure, and other community-identified priorities, while requiring little to no county services in return. Additionally, construction of the solar facility in 2022 created approximately 150 craft labor jobs.

Throughout the development of the project, community member meetings were a key part of the stakeholder engagement process. Furthermore, Silicon Ranch's Clearloop team deliberately engaged others outside of the primary stakeholder groups through two key events held within the first year of the solar project's operation. One of these events was a "First Charge" event to celebrate the commencement of solar facility and electric vehicle charger operations. Not only did this event include local leaders, but also included a group of high school students from nearby Henry County High School.

This experience influenced the STEM teacher at Henry County High School to pursue further ways to collaborate with Silicon Ranch's Clearloop team and Rivian to educate students about the clean tech industry. This culminated in a "Clean Tech Careers Panel Event," at which representatives from Silicon Ranch, Rivian, Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation, and Paris Board of Public Utilities spoke to 50 STEM and automotive students about careers within clean tech. Students also enjoyed looking at a Rivian truck and solar panel up close and talking one-on-one with the panelists, two of whom attended Henry County High themselves.