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## **Public Utilities Commission Announces 2011 Renewable Energy Grants Totaling \$1 Million**

The Public Utilities Commission has awarded grant funds for five renewable energy projects in New Hampshire. Funded by the State's Renewable Energy Fund (REF), the grants will help fund a range of renewable energy systems in the commercial and industrial sectors, helping to reduce NH's dependence on fossil fuels and to meet the state's renewable energy goals.

The grants were awarded through a competitive process. The Commission issued a Request for Proposals in February 2011, and received eighteen applications requesting a total of \$6.4 million. Applications were evaluated and rated by a screening committee consisting of staff from the Commission, the Department of Environmental Services, and the Office of Energy and Planning. Nine of the applicants were interviewed by the screening committee. The committee then passed its findings on to the three PUC Commissioners, who in turn carried out their own review process and made final decisions on all grants awards.

The five awards are as follows:

**Monadnock Paper Mills - \$151,040:** Monadnock Paper Mills, Inc. will rebuild a dormant hydroelectric generating unit and install flashboards on the dam crest at the Monadnock Station facility in Bennington, NH. These two investments will increase the total output capacity of the facility by approximately 140 kW, thus displacing electric load currently being pulled from the power grid and likewise displacing an equivalent of 17,458 gallons of oil per year. Monadnock Paper Mills, Inc. is a NH paper manufacturer and has been in operation for over 100 years, employing 161 people. This project will generate cost savings that will allow operating expenses to be available for future core business investments or on-site energy investments.

**Spaulding Ave. Industrial Complex - \$165,000:** Spaulding Ave Industrial Complex, LLC, will make improvements to a dam on the Salmon Falls River in Rochester to increase the generating capacity of its hydroelectric facility from 255 kilowatts to 300 kilowatts. As a result, the output of the facility will increase by an estimated 276,000 kilowatt hours per year,

enough to power several local businesses and homes in the area. The grant will be leveraged with approximately \$150,000 of in-kind labor and resources, and will create one new full-time job and help to retain two existing jobs.

**Greenville Elementary School - \$51,850:** The Mascenic Regional School District will install a wood pellet boiler at the Greenville Elementary School in Greenville, NH. This grant will enable the Greenville school to move beyond an oil-fired boiler, and install a highly efficient and clean-burning OkoFen Pellematic wood pellet boiler, which will be fueled with pellets sourced from New England Wood Pellet in Jaffrey, NH. The wood for the pellets will likewise be supplied from nearby NH forests. The Greenville school is well positioned to benefit from a wood pellet boiler, as it has already undertaken significant investments in improving the building's insulation and other energy efficiency measures.

**Revolution Energy and Favorite Foods - \$100,000:** Revolution Energy will install and operate a 140 kilowatt solar photovoltaic (PV) system on the main office of Favorite Foods, Inc. in Somersworth, NH. The grant will be leveraged with \$628,000 in other funds by utilizing the federal Investment Tax Credit, a Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) ownership model, private equity, and additional financing from a local NH lending institution. The PV system will generate approximately 5,355,356 kilowatt-hours over its thirty-five year life and will help sustain and create full and part-time jobs within NH. The PPA will allow Favorite Foods, a family owned company employing approximately fifty people, to utilize clean on-site energy, without having to purchase the PV system, which will be owned by Revolution Energy. The solar array and PPA combination provides long-term stable energy production in the face of rising energy costs.

**Carbon Harvest Energy - \$500,000:** Carbon Harvest will build a 1.6 megawatt landfill gas-to-energy combined heat and power (CHP) plant with heat distribution capabilities at the City of Lebanon Landfill. Methane gas that would otherwise escape into the atmosphere from the landfill will be used to generate both electricity and steam heat. The electricity will be sold to Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center, while the steam will be sold to nearby heat-using businesses. Carbon Harvest is leveraging the grant funds with an additional \$6,158,000 in project development funds. The company also plans to expand the scope of the project by capturing heat and carbon waste products for use in an on-site greenhouse, an aquaculture (fish farming) facility, and other facilities that will produce biofuels and animal feed.