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## **First Solar and NRG Energy Open Largest Solar PV Power Plant in California**

### **Blythe Photovoltaic Solar Project Generates Renewable, Clean Electricity for Southern California Edison**

PRINCETON, N.J., Dec 21, 2009 (BUSINESS WIRE) -- First Solar, Inc. (Nasdaq: FSLR) and NRG Energy, Inc. (NYSE: NRG) today announced the start of commercial operation for the largest photovoltaic (PV) solar project in California. First Solar developed and built the 21-megawatt (MW) power plant in Blythe, Calif., which was acquired last month by NRG through its wholly owned subsidiary NRG Solar. Electricity generated by the solar facility is being sold to Southern California Edison (SCE) under a 20-year power purchase agreement.

Located in Riverside County about 200 miles east of Los Angeles, the Blythe plant is the largest thin film PV project in the United States and is five times the size of the next largest PV project in California. NRG estimates that at peak capacity, the project can supply the power needs of almost 17,000 homes while helping California meet its renewable energy goals. Approximately 175 people built Blythe during its three-month construction and installation period.

"It is no surprise that America's largest thin film solar project was built right here in California, where my Administration has successfully created a climate where green businesses can thrive," said California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger. "It is forward-thinking businesses such as First Solar that will help California reach its nation-leading greenhouse gas reduction and Renewable Portfolio Standard goals, as well as create the new green jobs that will help spur our economic recovery."

"Solar is the great untapped resource in California, and we are pleased to be part of this significant milestone for solar development in our state," said Marc Ulrich, SCE vice president, Renewables and Alternative Power. "Bringing this power to the grid helps SCE maintain its position as the nation's leading utility for renewable energy."

"California, as it has in many arenas, is leading the way in encouraging large-scale clean energy sources," said David Crane, NRG Energy President and CEO. "NRG, through our association with pioneers like First Solar and forward-thinking companies like SCE, seeks to help clean our air while stocking our country's clean energy economic growth through commercial implementation of solar technology."

First Solar expanded its offerings in California in 2008. The Blythe plant is a model for First Solar's future large-scale solar developments. "The development, project finance and construction of this solar plant demonstrate First Solar's capabilities in utility scale projects," said Bruce Sohn, president of First Solar. "With a three-month build-out, we are pleased to be bringing it online ahead of schedule."

Using First Solar's industry-leading thin film PV panels that convert sunlight directly into electricity with no water consumption during operation, the Blythe plant will generate over 45,000 megawatt-hours of clean, affordable, sustainable electricity per year. This solar generation will avoid approximately 12,000 metric tons of carbon dioxide emissions annually - the equivalent of taking over 2,200 cars off the road. First Solar will provide operations and maintenance services at Blythe under a long-term contract with NRG.

#### **About NRG**

NRG Energy, Inc., a Fortune 500 company, owns and operates one of the country's largest and most diverse power generation portfolios. Headquartered in Princeton, N.J., the Company's power plants provide more than 24,000 megawatts of generation capacity--enough to supply more than 20 million homes. NRG's retail business, Reliant Energy, serves more than 1.6 million residential, business, commercial and industrial customers in Texas. A past recipient of the energy industry's highest honors--Platts Industry Leadership and Energy Company of the Year awards, NRG is a member of the U.S. Climate Action Partnership (USCAP), a group of business and environmental organizations calling for mandatory legislation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. More information is available at [www.nrgenergy.com](http://www.nrgenergy.com).

NRG Solar is NRG's subsidiary company responsible for developing, constructing, financing and operating a multi-technology portfolio of solar power assets in North America. Blythe is part of NRG's solar strategy that also includes plans to construct

commercial-scale solar thermal generation at sites in California and New Mexico. The first of these units is anticipated to begin operating as early as 2011.

## **About First Solar**

First Solar manufactures solar modules with an advanced semiconductor technology and provides comprehensive photovoltaic (PV) system solutions. By continually driving down manufacturing costs, First Solar is delivering an economically viable alternative to fossil-fuel generation today. From raw material sourcing through end-of-life collection and recycling, First Solar is focused on creating cost effective, renewable energy solutions that protect and enhance the environment. For more information about First Solar, please visit [www.firstsolar.com](http://www.firstsolar.com).

## **For First Solar Investors**

This release contains forward-looking statements which are made pursuant to the safe harbor provisions of Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. The forward-looking statements in this release do not constitute guarantees of future performance. Those statements involve a number of factors that could cause actual results to differ materially, including risks associated with the company's business involving the company's products, their development and distribution, economic and competitive factors and the company's key strategic relationships and other risks detailed in the company's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission. First Solar assumes no obligation to update any forward-looking information contained in this press release or with respect to the announcements described herein.

## **NRG Safe Harbor Disclosure**

This news release contains forward-looking statements within the meaning of Section 27A of the Securities Act of 1933 and Section 21E of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934. Such forward-looking statements are subject to certain risks, uncertainties and assumptions and include NRG's expectations with respect to solar development and typically can be identified by the use of words such as "will," "expect," "estimate," "anticipate," "forecast," "plan," "believe" and similar terms. Although NRG believes that its expectations are reasonable, it can give no assurance that these expectations will prove to have been correct, and actual results may vary materially. Factors that could cause actual results to differ materially from those contemplated above include, among others, hazards customary in the power industry, general economic conditions, permitting and regulatory obstacles, construction delays, and changes in government regulation of environmental emissions.

NRG undertakes no obligation to update or revise any forward-looking statements, whether as a result of new information, future events or otherwise. The foregoing review of factors that could cause NRG's actual results to differ materially from those contemplated in the forward-looking statements included in this news release should be considered in connection with information regarding risks and uncertainties that may affect NRG's future results included in NRG's filings with the Securities and Exchange Commission at [www.sec.gov](http://www.sec.gov).

Photos/Multimedia Gallery Available: [www.businesswire.com](http://www.businesswire.com)

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