

Reclaimed Kentucky Coal Mine Sees the Sun Shining on New Solar Power Purchase Agreement with Toyota

May 24, 2023



MARTIN COUNTY, Ky. (May 24, 2023) – The sun will power more of Toyota Motor North America Inc.’s (Toyota’s) operations thanks to a new power purchase agreement with [Savion](#). Today, Toyota announced that it has agreed to offtake 100-megawatts (MW) of the electricity generated as part of renewable energy company Savion’s Martin County Solar Project through a virtual power purchase agreement (VPPA). The project is converting the former Martiki Coal Mine, a brownfield site in Martin County, on the border of Kentucky and West Virginia, into a new, clean solar photovoltaic energy facility. Once an active coal mine on the top of a mountain that closed in the 1990s, the Martiki site has clear access to light from the sun, making it an ideal location for reclamation and the installation of solar photovoltaic panels for electricity generation. Construction on the project is anticipated to begin in mid-2023 and commercial operation is expected in 2024.

“The Martin County Solar Project in Kentucky is really special as an example of how renewable energy VPPAs can bring new opportunities to former coal and energy communities and will help Toyota achieve our goal of increasing purchased renewable electricity to 45 percent or more of our total purchased electricity by 2025,” said David Absher, senior manager of environmental sustainability at Toyota Motor North America. “It is

important that renewable power is more available to large-scale U.S. energy buyers, and converting brownfields like this offers a path forward for former energy communities to take advantage of the infrastructure they already have with transmission lines while providing clean energy to the grid.”

The 100 MW that Toyota will offtake from the project will be used primarily to help reduce the company’s carbon footprint in North America, supplementing the model it has created of environmental stewardship in Kentucky, the state with Toyota’s largest vehicle manufacturing plant in the world. The move is in-line with the company’s plans to make all its operations in North America carbon neutral by 2035.

Savion is developing the Martin County Solar Project with the support of local development partner [Edelen Renewables](#). With dedicated support from state officials and local leadership, the project’s development phase continues to advance. The overall project, once completed, is expected to be one of the largest solar energy generation facilities operating in Kentucky.

“We are thankful for the local community, community officials, state officials, and the many local professionals that have supported this project,” said Kevin Butt, regional environmental sustainability director at Toyota Motor North America.