

Minnesota Power breaks ground on Boswell Solar project

By STAFF REPORT HERALD REVIEW, Jul 29, 2026

COHASSET—Minnesota Power has broken ground on the Boswell Solar project, an 85-megawatt solar energy facility that will be built at the Boswell Energy Center site in Cohasset.

The project, announced during a groundbreaking ceremony, is expected to begin generating electricity by mid-2027. It will be constructed on about 500 acres of company-owned and leased land and include more than 178,000 solar panels.

Minnesota Power said the project is part of its EnergyForward strategy to expand carbon-free electricity generation while using existing infrastructure at the Boswell Energy Center. The solar array will connect to the site's existing electric transmission infrastructure, allowing the company to add renewable generation without building new transmission facilities.

"Boswell has been the backbone of our energy system since our original groundbreaking in 1956 and first commercial operation in 1958," Minnesota Power Chief Operating Officer Josh Skelton said in a statement. "Boswell will continue to play a critical role in northern Minnesota's energy grid."

The utility said the project will serve customers across northeastern Minnesota while supporting the state's transition to carbon-free electricity. According to the company, nearly 60% of the electricity it currently delivers comes from renewable sources. Minnesota Power's goal is to provide more than 80% renewable energy by 2030 while meeting Minnesota's requirement for carbon-free electricity by 2040.

The Boswell Solar project is part of Minnesota Power's long-term resource plan approved by the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission, which includes adding up to 300 megawatts of regional solar generation.

Minnesota Public Utilities Commission Chair Katie Sieben said the project represents years of planning involving the utility, regulators and local communities.

"The groundbreaking of Boswell Solar is a chance to celebrate the collaboration and hard work of Minnesota Power and stakeholders in bringing reliable, affordable power, good-paying jobs and community benefits to the region," Sieben said.

Company officials said the project is expected to provide economic benefits during construction through the use of local labor, apprenticeships and diverse suppliers.

Kevin Pranis, marketing manager for LiUNA of Minnesota and North Dakota, said the project will create work opportunities for union members.

“We applaud Minnesota Power for the reinvestments in our communities,” Pranis said. “We hope this is the first reinvestment of many.”

Cohasset Mayor Josh Casper said the community welcomes Minnesota Power’s continued investment at the Boswell site.

“Boswell has always been more than a power plant to our community,” Casper said. “It’s been a neighbor, an employer and a partner. As Minnesota Power continues its transition to cleaner energy, we’re proud to see that same commitment extend to the people and communities that have been part of its story for so many years.”

Minnesota Power, a division of ALLETE, provides electric service to about 150,000 customers, 14 municipalities and several large industrial customers across a 26,000-square-mile service area in northeastern Minnesota.

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