

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

January 12, 2022

**Solar co-op launches for Uncompahgre residents to go solar together**

Mountain Village, COLO – The nonprofit group [Solar United Neighbors](#) (SUN) is pleased to announce the launch of the Uncompahgre Solar Co-op alongside the [Town of Mountain Village](#), [San Miguel County](#), [San Miguel Power Association](#) (SMPA), [Solar Energy International](#) (SEI), and [EcoAction Partners](#). SUN announced the launch of the Uncompahgre Solar Co-op to help area residents go solar.

“The co-op will enable homeowners and business owners in both Mountain Village and San Miguel County to join the growing community of people saving money by harnessing solar power,” said Bryce Carter, Colorado Program Director for Solar United Neighbors. “Together, we’re building a movement to create a more sustainable electricity system that directly benefits households and small businesses in the community.”

The co-op is free to join and open to homeowners and business owners in Mountain Village and San Miguel County. Together, co-op members will learn about solar energy and leverage their numbers to purchase individual solar systems at a discounted group price.

The group is free to join. Joining is not a commitment to purchase solar. Members will have the option to individually purchase panels and electric vehicle chargers based on the installer’s group rate.

After a competitive bidding process facilitated by SUN, co-op members will select a single solar company to complete the installations. SUN provides guidance on the process but remains vendor neutral, empowering the co-op members to decide.

“Anyone thinking about solar should consider joining the co-op,” said Marti Prohaska, Town of Mountain Village Town Council, Green Team Chair, and participant of the 2021 Mountain Village Solar Co-op. “It’s a great way to learn about solar technology, its benefits for the environment and your energy budget, and to connect with others in the community who are also interested in renewable energy.”

Through the co-op, EcoAction Partners and SEI will also provide educational outreach to the rural community.

“We at EcoAction Partners are excited to contribute to education in the renewable energy and energy efficiency fields, as well as to work with San Miguel County residents and agricultural producers on the benefits of solar through this co-op model,” said Chris Medary, AmeriCorps VISTA member at EcoAction Partners.

Qualifying rebates will also be available on a limited basis for co-op members who are residents of Mountain Village and unincorporated San Miguel County.

“The first 20 Mountain Village properties to sign up for [Solar United Neighbors’ co-op](#) will receive a \$2,500 rebate from Mountain Village when a solar array is installed. Additional incentive funds are available for deed-restricted properties, up to a \$5,000 total rebate,” said Lauren Kirn, Environmental Efficiencies and Grant Coordinator for the Town of Mountain Village.

In 2021, SUN worked with partner organizations, including the Town of Mountain Village, to help 14 people go solar through a co-op. Rebates were also offered to qualifying participants of that co-op.

“My family is committed to doing our part for the environment, so converting to solar was always a dream,” said Zoe Gillett, Telluride Intermediate School Principal and a participant of the 2021 Mountain Village Solar Co-op. “But, as a public school educator, I had been very wary about upfront and maintenance costs, as well as how long it would take to recoup the investment. What convinced me to sign up for the 2021 Mountain Village Solar Co-op was definitely the rebates. I never thought it would be this much fun and affordable to do the right thing for the environment!”

San Miguel Power Association was a partner with last year’s solar co-op and will continue their engagement.

“We look forward to working with the San Miguel County and the Town of Mountain Village solar co-op to tackle the challenge of expanding renewable options for our members,” said Wiley Freeman, Manager of Member Services with San Miguel Power Association.

SUN will host several free informational webinars to educate community members about solar energy and the co-op. Individuals interested in going solar can sign up for the co-op or one of the upcoming information sessions at [www.solarunitedneighbors.org/uncompahgre](http://www.solarunitedneighbors.org/uncompahgre).

An informational launch event for the solar co-op will take place on Wednesday, January 19 from 4 p.m. to 6 p.m. in Mountain Village Town Hall (located above Village Market). This event will feature remarks about the benefits of rooftop solar energy and how the co-op works. You'll hear from members of Solar United Neighbors, Town of Mountain Village Town Council, San Miguel County, San Miguel Power Association, and last year's co-op.

The event is free and open to the public. Snacks will be provided. A virtual option through Zoom is also available. After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

**What:** Uncompahgre Solar Co-op launch event

**Who:** Bryce Carter, Colorado Program Director, Solar United Neighbors

**Marti Prohaska**, Town of Mountain Village Town Council, Green Team Chair, 2021 Mountain Village Solar Co-op Participant  
**Pete Duprey**, Town of Mountain Village Town Council, 2021 Mountain Village Solar Co-op Participant  
**Kris Holstrom**, County Commissioner, San Miguel County  
**Sheamus Croke**, COVID-19 Recovery Funding Coordinator, San Miguel County  
**Terry Schuyler**, Key Accounts Executive, San Miguel Power Association  
**Zoe Gillett**, Telluride Intermediate School Principal, 2021 Mountain Village Solar Co-op Participant

**When:** Wednesday, January 19th at 4:00 p.m. MT

**Where:** Mountain Village Town Hall  
455 Mountain Village Blvd  
Suite A  
Mountain Village, CO 81435

Zoom (register in advance):

[https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMucO6spz0rEtA\\_7ijVFh2mnAlg8mD5qsPG](https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMucO6spz0rEtA_7ijVFh2mnAlg8mD5qsPG)

### **About Solar United Neighbors**

Solar United Neighbors is a nonprofit organization that works in Colorado and nationwide to represent the needs and interests of solar owners and supporters. Solar co-ops are part of the organization's mission to create a new energy system with rooftop solar at the cornerstone. Solar United Neighbors holds events and education programs to help people become informed solar consumers, maximize the value of their solar investment, and advocate for fair solar policies.

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