

Calgary

Solar project approved for southern Alberta would be Canada's largest, by far

Greengate Power says array of 1.5 million panels will provide enough energy to power 100,000 homes

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A new solar project, set to start construction in 2020 in Vulcan County, was recently approved by the utilities commission. (Tom Steepe/CBC)

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The largest solar energy project in Canada has received provincial approval and the company hopes to start construction in southern Alberta next year.

"It will be, by far, the largest solar energy project in Canada and one of the largest in the world," said Dan Balaban, president and CEO of Greengate, the Calgary-based company behind the array.

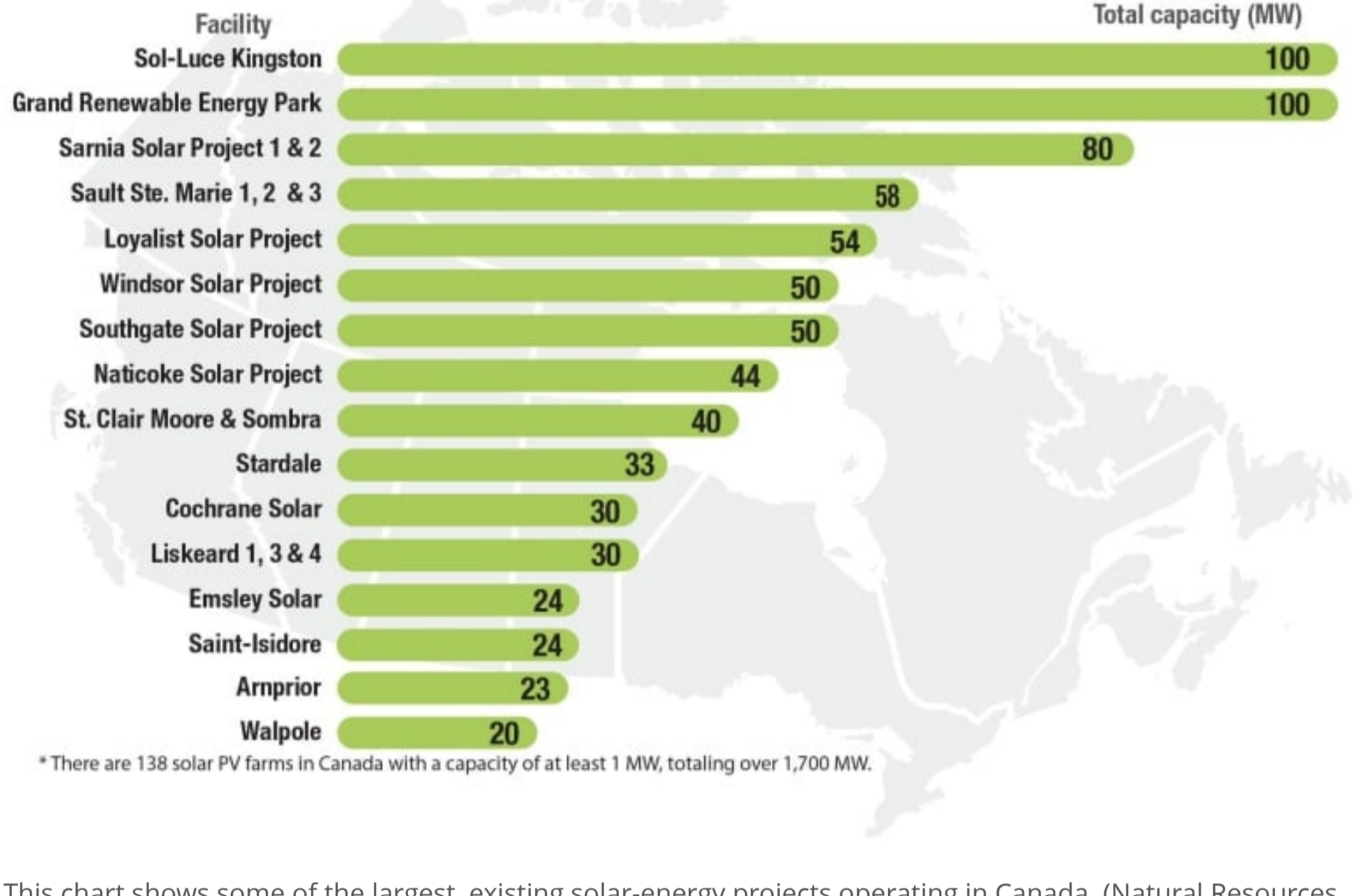
He says the project in Vulcan County will include 1.5 million solar panels that will generate about 800 million kWh per year, enough to power 100,000 homes.

"The power that will be generated by the project will be injected into the Alberta grid," he said. "The power goes to wherever it's needed in the province at the time."

The Alberta Utilities Commission approved the company to construct and operate its Travers Solar project.

Currently, the largest solar farms in Canada are the Sol-Luce Kingston project and Grand Renewable Energy Park, both in Ontario. Those each have a capacity of 100 megawatts, according to [Natural Resources Canada](#).

SOME OF THE LARGEST SOLAR PV FARMS IN CANADA* (≥20 MW)



This chart shows some of the largest, existing solar-energy projects operating in Canada. (Natural Resources Canada)

Greengate is also responsible for the largest wind energy project in the country, also located in Vulcan County.

Balaban says the project does not require public dollars to help finance it.

"Alberta is blessed with tremendous fossil fuel resources, but we also have among the best renewable energy resources in the world," he said.

"With the costs of renewable energy continuing to come down, we've now reached the point where renewable energy makes sense on a subsidy-free, market basis and can have a pretty significant role in our power mix going forward."

'Several hundred jobs created'

If all goes according to plan, Balaban says, construction will begin next year.

"There will be several hundred jobs created during the construction of the project, which will take place over two years, about a dozen or so permanent jobs to operate the project," he said of the employment impact.

According to a Greengate news release, the company wants to develop close to 1,000 megawatts of solar and wind energy projects.

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