



Drill operator Jeronimo Torres prepares to drill 4 feet into ledge.

Putney solar garden hits ledge

By NICK ZITER

PUTNEY - Construction crews had a slight hiccup in the installation of Vermont's first community owned solar array this past week. Despite digging multiple test holes to gauge soil conditions, crews hit ledge much closer to the surface than anticipated.

The ledge required a special drill to be brought in to cut through the rock. Crew's have been working overtime to make up for lost time.

"You never know what to expect until you get down there," said drill operator Jeronimo Torres. "Sometimes you get lucky and sometimes you don't."

System designer and lead engineer on the project, Mike Whigham, said this is not all that uncommon, and he expects the array to be complete on schedule in August.

Upon completion, the 147kW solar array, will be Vermont's first community-owned solar array that is open to public participation.

The project is a collaborative effort between SunFarm Community Solar, the Clean Energy Collective and Integrated Solar. It will be connected to the grid through Green Mountain Power.

The Putney community solar model allows anyone who had a bill through GMP before the merger with CVPS to own panels. It is not restricted to Putney residents. Panel owners will receive monthly credit on their utility bill through Vermont's group net-metering program.

Project coordinator SunFarm is currently taking reservations for the remaining capacity in the array. The project is expected to be reserved completely before construction is complete. Limited space is still available.

For more information on participating in community solar contact SunFarm by phone at 802.536.4471, email at info@vtsolargardens.com or visit their website at www.vtsolargardens.com.



Solar racking sits in the ground shale from freshly drilled holes.