



# Greenough River Solar Farm

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## MEDIA RELEASE

### GREENOUGH RIVER SOLAR FARM - COMMUNITY SUPPORT INITIATIVE

Australia's biggest commercial solar farm continues to generate benefits for the MidWest community, thanks to \$20 million from the State Government, with \$10 million being from Royalties for Regions funding.

Opened in 2012, the Greenough River Solar Farm 50kms south of Geraldton has been producing about 22,000 megawatt hours (MWh) a year of clean energy - that's enough for about 3000 average households.

Now the GRSF company will provide educational benefits for the Mid West region through a funding arrangement reached with the Hollomby Foundation which has been supporting local university students since 2010.

GRSF will contribute \$200,000 over five years to the Hollomby Foundation, to benefit local students and initiatives at the Geraldton Universities Centre.

GRSF General Manager, Hugh Webster said the company was very pleased to be able to support such a successful and worthwhile local educational initiative.

*"It's important that regional students have the same opportunity to further their studies and their careers locally. Scholarships and other means of support financed by our community support initiative will help fulfil that objective.*

*"What is particularly pleasing is that the solar farm could be used for renewable energy research. As the first solar farm in Australia, and located in one of the best solar and wind energy sites, GRSF is ripe for some research initiatives.*

*"I foresee some ground breaking research initiatives coming out of our funding arrangement," Mr Webster said.*

GRSF will provide \$40,000 a year for five years to Hollomby Foundation to be used for "science, engineering, technology and renewable initiatives and associated scholarships.

Founder of the Hollomby Foundation, Ian Wheatland, said this was the most substantial donation to have been made to the Foundation.

*"This support is most significant and will allow GUC to provide outstanding opportunities for local students in science and technology fields," he said. "For a local enterprise to recognise the importance of giving back to its community and developing our next generation is particularly heartening."*

MidWest Development Commission Chairman, Murray Criddle said it is fantastic that Greenough River Solar Farm is investing into the region's future through the students studying at GUC.

GUC Chair Steve Douglas thanked GRSF for their generous support and hoped this would inspire other businesses to follow suit.

Greenough River Solar Farm is owned 50/50 by Verve Energy (now Synergy) and GE Energy Financial Services. GRSF has 150,000 solar photovoltaic panels on the 50 hectare site on the Nangetty-Walkaway Road. One local person is full time employed on the operation and maintenance of the solar farm and is in turn supported by a number of local contractors.

**CONTACT REFERENCE:** Natalie Nelmes, Geraldton Universities Centre  
Tel: (08) 9920 4403

