



## Leading The Way In The Clean Energy Transition

It wouldn't be wrong to say that we, as humans, and many of our economic activities have led to the degradation of the environment. Though extracting non-renewable resources and producing energy could be the primary source for dwelling over comfortable livelihood but, it has also led and still leads to scarcity of these resources disrupting the earth's ecosystem. Yet, it's never too late. There is a possibility to rejuvenate these ecological factors without disrupting the

current livelihood; by generating energy from renewable resources. And one such source is never-ending solar energy.

Pine Gate Renewables was founded in 2014, and is a development and financing company for utility-scale solar projects, with a vision and mission of "Getting Solar Done" by providing renewable energy to local communities across the U.S. It understood the growing concern and is inspiring more solar

development across the country, therefore having an even greater global impact on climate change. The company's Pine Gate Impact initiative contributes to multiple non-profit organizations aimed at improving the environment and local communities and the company has formed corporate partnerships with GivePower and the Arbor Day Foundation. Being a leading renewable energy provider, the company focuses on project development and strategic financings



**Ben Catt**  
Chief Executive Officer

“ We do things that others can't. Our teams are nimble, hard-working, and smart

throughout the country. Though headquartered in Asheville, NC, Pine Gate has expanded its spectrum in various cities like Charlotte, NC; Jacksonville, FL; and Midland, MI.

The company believes in making an impact in the rapidly-changing landscape of renewable energy. The highlights and challenges in this business are constantly evolving, but in general, every challenge has ultimately made Pine Gate stronger and has led it to achieve its current stature. Currently, Pine Gate is working

with local cranberry farmers to tend to the land and manage the harvest process for two solar projects it's building in Massachusetts.

### CEO's PERSPECTIVE

Under the guidance of its exemplary Chief Executive Officer, Ben Catt, the company has been leading the way in the ongoing energy transition, creating a commercial solution that drives growth and innovation in the market. "We finance, develop and build utility-scale

solar and storage projects across the country. By partnering with local communities, we drive economic growth, create jobs, and make a positive impact on the environment. Our projects connect to the existing utility grid, thus making large-scale access to renewable energy possible," says Ben. "We work tenaciously in every department to think creatively and find solutions to complex problems." The company currently manages 770MW of operational assets, with more than 12GW in active development, and Ben and his team have raised

over \$2 billion in project capital to date. He also mentions that the company more than tripled the amount of revenue in 2020. "As cities, states, and corporations develop their own growth plans to incorporate green initiatives, Pine Gate is contributing a solution to help them achieve their goals," states Ben.

### DIVE INTO THE DEPTHS OF PINE GATE'S PROJECT

The 101MW Bowman Solar Project in Orangeburg County,

SC, is Pine Gate's 17th project in the state, and one of the largest solar energy developments statewide. "Construction on the 849,840-panel project began in the second quarter of 2019 and now generates enough energy to power approximately 14,400 homes," Ben addresses. Pine Gate raised more than \$539 million in capital to develop and build Bowman Solar, which in turn generated nearly \$1 million in personal property taxes for the local communities.

Moreover, Pine Gate was awarded one of the first 20-year power purchase agreements under Duke Energy's Competitive Procurement of Renewable Energy (CPRE) program for the 108MW Trent River solar project. "Located near Pollocksville, NC, Trent River is currently under construction and is expected to go online in the summer of 2021," he adds. "Once online, Trent River will provide enough energy for approximately 15,000 homes in its first year of operation alone."

Ben shares another example of innovative projects where he and his team are breaking new ground in Massachusetts with its Solar Carver 1 and Solar Carver 3 projects, which will be a combination of solar and storage and constructed over active cranberry bogs. These two new dual-use solar projects will bring 7MW of solar energy and storage to the community of Carver, Massachusetts, while also maintaining the ground for cranberry farming. *"These are Pine Gate's first projects in the state of Massachusetts and will add to the company's existing portfolio of more than 770MW of operating solar sites,"* says Ben.

Solar Carver 1 is being built on a 70-acre site that will produce 5MW of energy along with a 30MWh battery energy storage system, while Solar Carver 3 will produce 2MW and house a 12MWh battery energy storage system spread across a 35-acre site. The long-duration batteries will allow the system to optimize its energy profile on the grid. The projects are anticipated to be complete by late 2021 and will produce enough energy to power approximately 1,800 homes annually. *"Solar Carver 1 & 3 will be a part of the Solar Massachusetts Renewable Target (SMART) program, a statewide long-term, solar incentive program with the intent to procure 3,200MW of new solar projects in the Commonwealth,"* says Ben.

He continues, *"Most solar projects are built using steel racking, but to create enough space for the cranberry bogs below, Pine Gate's adept EPC team will engineer the Solar Carver projects to be built on 25-40 ft long wooden utility poles, which are more durable for the wet terrain. These poles will*

*be driven 15-30 ft into the ground in order to keep the trackers at least 10 ft above the cranberry bogs and allow for annual fall harvesting."*

These Solar Carver projects will provide temporary construction jobs to hundreds of workers during the build-out and will keep local cranberry farms active. Additionally, the storage component to both projects provides necessary backup power to maintain the reliability of the grid for the Commonwealth. These projects have also been selected to take part in a University of Massachusetts-Amherst study on the dual-use solar projects inter-row solar panel spacing over cranberry production.

## FUTURE PROSPECTS

By quoting, *"Our home state of North Carolina was a first-mover in the Southeast on clean energy policy, which led to many local solar companies becoming national industry players,"* Ben highlights the company's local achievements. *"Our industry was given a limited opportunity to compete in the regulated monopoly energy sector, and we proved we could deliver low cost, reliable energy for the Tar Heel State."*

These foundational policies led North Carolina to become the second-largest solar-producing state in the country, behind California. Ben says, *"Federally, consistent tax policy is hugely important to our business, and legislation is needed at both the local and national level to continue creating a path for more solar development."*

He further asserts that the company will continue to seek the need for energy storage across the country. Ben emphasizes such needs by presenting an example, *"The power outages our country faced just a few months ago in Texas, painfully show the financial and human cost of having service disrupted and underscore the need for interconnection issues to be resolved, for long-term energy planning and for utilities to be regulated to protect consumers."*

In 2021 the company announced its first storage project: Grissom Solar in Enfield, NC, which recently went online and is 6.9MW project, generating enough energy to power approximately 1,030 homes annually. It is one of 12 projects in the solar and solar-plus project portfolio of Pine Gate, all of which are expected to be online by the end of the year. *"The portfolio's 10MWh of storage will dispatch power during peak demand hours and provide critical ancillary services to ensure the reliability of the electric grid,"* mentions Ben. *"Grissom Solar is one of Pine Gate's existing 30 solar projects already in operation or under construction in North Carolina and is expected to be online in spring 2021."*

He envisions to continuing making an impact in the renewable energy landscape and play a role in the ongoing energy transition. *"We're also expanding who we partner with and have projects in motion that will supply clean power to corporations, private companies, and major universities,"* says Ben.