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SolarWorld announces expansions of solar panel and advanced cell production in Oregon

Projects will add 200 jobs at company's North American manufacturing hub

HILLSBORO, Ore., Oct. 30, 2014 – SolarWorld, the largest crystalline silicon solar producer in the Americas for nearly 40 years, announced that in 2015, it would add a solar-panel production line in Hillsboro to bring the panel-assembly factory's capacity up to 530 megawatts (MW), expand advanced cell production capacity by 100 MW and add 200 jobs.

Details of the announcements include:

- SolarWorld's new line will increase annual solar-panel production capacity from 380 MW to 530 MW. The factory will remain the largest of its kind in the Western Hemisphere. The company views this expansion as a stepping-stone to 630 MW capacity in the near future.
- SolarWorld will increase production capacity of its advanced-technology PERC (passive emitter rear contact) photovoltaic cells from 335 MW to 435 MW. SolarWorld has led the world industry in industrializing PERC innovation, beginning with a \$27 million investment in Hillsboro in 2012. With the expansion, the company will produce 60-cell mono-crystalline panels with power densities of 280 watts-peak and higher.
- As a result of these expansions, SolarWorld will add about 200 full-time jobs. Using the state of Oregon's employment multiplier for manufacturing – the estimate of indirect jobs created for every new direct factory job – the expansions will result in an approximately 540 additional upstream and downstream jobs.

The projects, valued at more than a combined \$10 million, bring the company's total investment in the state to about \$630 million. SolarWorld employment in Hillsboro will return to 900 workers.

"It is no secret that the last several years have been tough for SolarWorld and for U.S. solar manufacturers in general," SolarWorld U.S. President Mukesh Dulani said. "However, thanks to a variety of factors, including our trade cases against China, difficult but necessary financial controls and a fantastic group of employees, we have turned the corner. Today's announcement shows that SolarWorld is not only here to stay, but it also is ready to extend our leadership in the American solar manufacturing industry."

Dulani was joined at a morning news conference by U.S. Sen. Ron Wyden (D-Ore.), chairman of the U.S. Senate Committee on Finance. Sen. Wyden received a commemorative plaque thanking him for his years of support for SolarWorld and its workers during the cases. He also spoke at a SolarWorld employee forum after the news conference.

“I am thrilled that SolarWorld’s new production line is adding 200 good-paying, high-skill manufacturing jobs to Oregon’s economy,” Sen. Wyden said. “These are jobs worth fighting for, which is why I have worked side by side with SolarWorld to ensure our trade agreements with China are actually enforced. The result of our teamwork is that an anchor of Oregon’s manufacturing base is once again growing and proving that U.S. workers and employers can succeed against any nation in the world, as long as they’re competing on a level playing field.”

Dulani continued: “We have always said that SolarWorld could compete with any company, foreign or domestic. We pursued our trade cases against the Chinese government and Chinese manufacturers to counter practices we thought were illegal. So far, I am pleased to say we have won every decision. But we have not sat on our hands. We have made the tough decisions to cut costs, to innovate and to invest so that we are a much stronger company than we were even two years ago.”

Today’s announcement comes at an important time for the company.

On Dec. 17, the U.S. Department of Commerce will announce final determinations on the company’s current anti-dumping and anti-subsidy duty petitions against manufacturers from China and Taiwan. Earlier this year, Commerce announced preliminary anti-dumping tariffs ranging from 26.33 percent to 58.87 percent (165.04 percent for the “China-wide rate”) for China and 20.86 percent to 27.59 percent for Taiwan and preliminary anti-subsidy duties ranging from 18.56 percent to 35.21 percent for China. If Commerce affirms its earlier determinations, the U.S. International Trade Commission is tentatively scheduled to make a final ruling on the cases on Jan. 20, 2015.

SolarWorld REAL VALUE: SolarWorld manufactures and sells solar power solutions and in doing so contributes to a cleaner energy supply worldwide. As the largest solar producer in the United States and Europe, SolarWorld employs about 3,400 people and carries out production in Hillsboro, Ore., and Freiberg and Arnstadt, Germany. From the raw material silicon to solar wafers, cells and panels, SolarWorld manages all stages of production – including its own research and development. The company maintains high social standards at all locations across the globe and is committed to resource- and energy-efficient production. Headquartered in Bonn, Germany, SolarWorld was founded in 1998 and has been publicly traded on the stock market since 1999. For more information, visit www.solarworld-usa.com.

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