Solar Energy in the Nonprofit Sector

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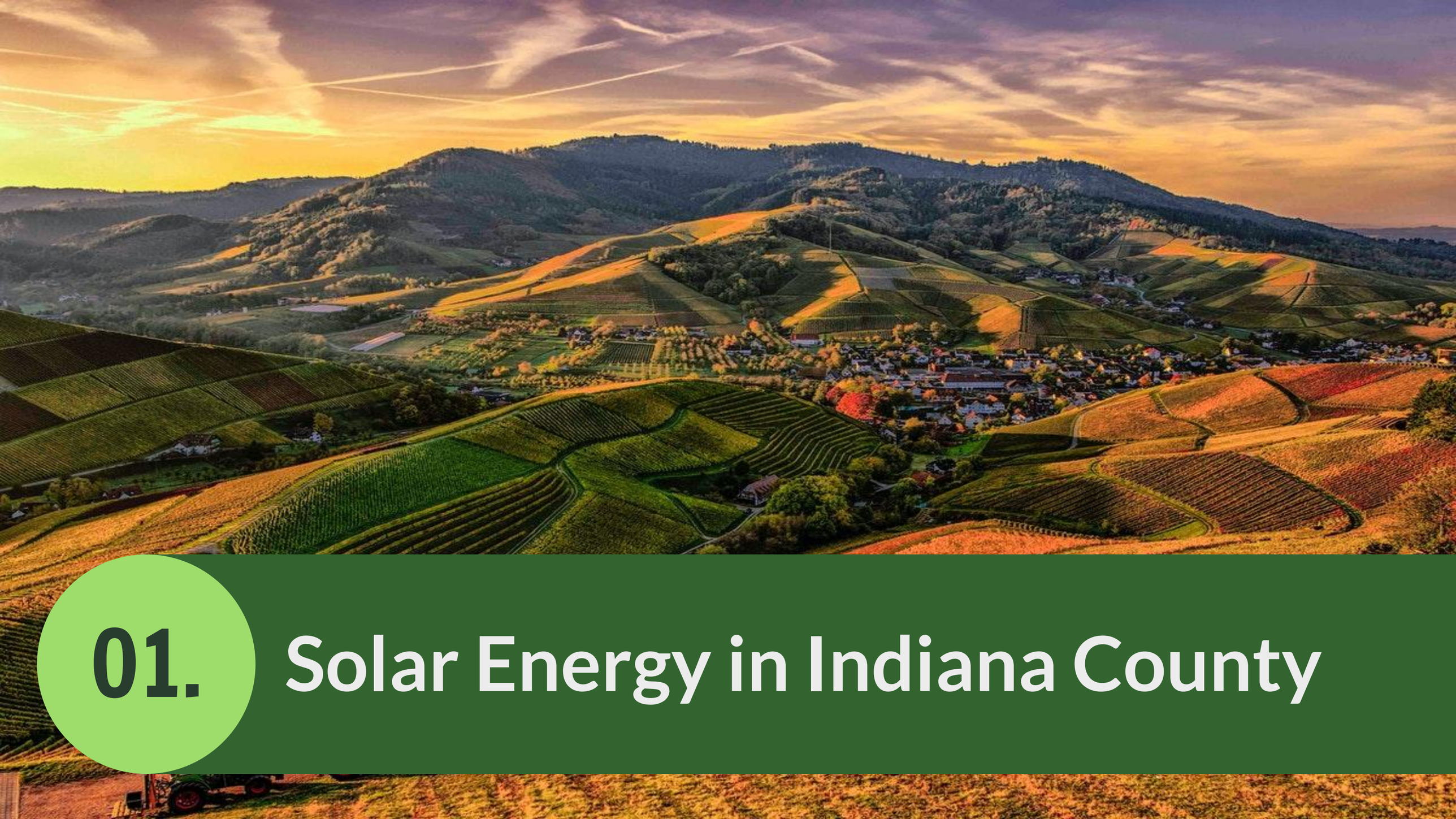

01. Solar Energy in Indiana County

Homer City Power Plant

“I think that the site itself is prime for a redevelopment for cleaner energy,” Schuster told Capital & Main. Reclaiming and redeveloping the site into a solar farm or battery storage facility would serve the aim of building out the state’s renewable energy sector while offering laid-off coal workers a place to land.”

Pa.'s largest coal plant is retiring. Could it transition to renewables? – Pennsylvania Capital-Star (penncapital-star.com)
U.S. Energy Information Administration - EIA - Independent Statistics and Analysis

Solar Energy in the Nonprofit Sector

What did we research?

How did our Literature Reviews help with our research?

Questions Asked In our Interviews

- Little primary research in Rural Pennsylvania
- Questions primarily about general thoughts on Solar
- Aimed to understand the needs of the Non-Profits

02. Candidate Interviews and Results

Our Organizations

Indiana County YMCA

Eric Neal

Chief Executive Officer

Indiana County Humane Society

Beth Finegan

ICHS Executive Director

Indiana County Conservation District

Doug Beri

ICCD Executive Director

Indiana County YMCA

Utilities as a burden in the nonprofit sector

- Regularly Increasing, Lack of Improvement, Relying on a broker

Disadvantage of Solar Power

- Upfront Cost
- Installation Issues [tentative disadvantage]

Currently in G.E.T. Solar Cohort

- Solar not originally part of their Capital Campaign

More Efficiency=Better able to serve community

YMCA CONTINUED

Power Plant

- Sympathy for those who lost their jobs, pride, and what's next.
  "Power doesn't matter as long as it's reliable." (Eric Neal, 2023)

"We provide so many services to the community from serving kids food, we're the only mentoring program around, our adaptive programs that we run, our free programs that we run all those sorts of things. We have to balance all that. And anytime we can save on a utility, it helps us balance all of that" (Eric Neal, 2023) .

Indiana County Humane Society

Environmental consciousness is a main tenet of the shelter's values

- Recycling projects, soft plastic collection for benches

Fears lack of "back up" if solar is implemented

- Animal health/wellbeing in an emergency

PA Solar is "really engaged"

- Helps her to understand data and juggle prospective switch with shelter duties

"If you can reduce your utility expense, and as a bonus, do something good for the environment, how can you get pushback on that?" (Beth Finegan, 2023)

ICHS CONTINUED

[I thought] well, how's it going to impact the Sheetz? And, you know, how's it going to impact Sanso's? How's it going to impact all those places you go during the day down there? So you know, it has a ripple effect in some ways, and I don't know how that's been actualized to date, but that's certainly the first thing that I thought about when I heard about the closing.

- *Beth Finegan, 2023*

Indiana County Conservation District

In contact with a contractor for solar panel install (2024)

- Local govt and other entities funding
- No executed solar agreement, waiting for loan approval

Interacted with PA Solar “primarily through local co-ops that have worked [with ICCD]”

- Cited board member as solar advocate that helped with most info

“Anything we can do to be more economically efficient is a benefit to the community.”

Doug Beri, 2023

03. Suggestions and Moving Forward

Common Themes

Solar Power as possibility, not a priority

- allowing the non-profits to better complete their function

Utilities are the biggest expense for Non-profits

- cost going down, ability going up

Furthering the Research…?

04. Any Questions?

Thank you!

Special thank you to the Indiana County YMCA, the Indiana County Humane Society, the Indiana County Conservation District, and PA Solar Center.

All transcriptions done by Otter.AI

the YMCA

THE HUMANE SOCIETY OF THE UNITED STATES

INDIANA COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT