



BOB FOWLER/NEWS SENTINEL

Snow-covered solar panels Wednesday at the entrance of the East Tennessee Technology Park in Oak Ridge are part of the Restoration Services Inc. solar array. Restoration Services is teaming up with Vis Solis for a much larger solar farm within the park.

# Solar farm planned in OR

■ To be built at former K-25 site

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OAKRIDGE — A former uranium enrichment site is becoming a green-power mecca.

Two companies that have already built solar power facilities at East Tennessee Technology Park — formerly the sprawling K-25 site — are teaming up to construct what will be one of Tennessee's top 10 solar farms.

Restoration Services Inc., an environmental services company doing work for the

Department of Energy, has formed a partnership with Vis Solis, a subsidiary of a German firm.

Planned: a one-megawatt project with 3,269 solar modules on a small tract that will be leased from Community Reuse Organization of East Tennessee. CROET, an economic development group, is involved

in redevelopment of the abandoned uranium enrichment site.

The solar facility will produce electricity that will go into the TVA power grid and create enough power to run the equivalent of nearly 100 typical Tennessee homes, said

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Bob Greenwell, a CROET executive.

Because of underlying infrastructure, the 4- to 5-acre tract for the solar

project is essentially unusable for any other purpose, said Gil Hough, manager of the renewable energy division of Restoration Services.

"We're turning a negative into a positive," he said.

While still on the drawing board, the project is "almost a done deal," Hough said.

"We have the financing worked out and we have a contract to sell power to TVA," he said.

It will be one of the

state's biggest solar projects in terms of power production, Hough said. He said construction is targeted to begin in April or May.

"We see that solar is a very bright industry for the future," Hough said.

"It's growing very quickly."

Vis Solis last April dedicated a new high-tech solar array at ETPP where solar panels track the sun as it moves across the sky.

Restoration Services in May 2012 launched its

conventional solar farm at the entrance to the technology park. That project is dubbed Brightfield One.

It was the outgrowth of a report the company did about solar farms on what are called restricted use sites.