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Solar research sought for state

Locating the new federal Solar Energy Research Institute (SERI) in Michigan would have a positive impact on the surrounding environment.

This was the finding of an environmental assessment of the proposed Michigan sites for SERI done by the Environmental and Community Factors Division of the Michigan Department of State Highways and Transportation.

The purpose of the assessment was to identify major social, economic and natural environmental features that would be affected by the selection of a Michigan site.

Positive effects of locating SERI at one of the five Michigan sites, the study found, include these:

- The addition of 1700 jobs to the area's economy.
- Potential diversification of the base employment.
- Increase in the unemployment rate.
- Increase in total area income.
- Increase in and diversification of the tax base of local government units.
- Expanded and strengthened curricula for area universities.

Thursday, December 9, 1976

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John E. Mook, president of the Michigan Energy and Resource Research Association (MERRA), said: "This is one more positive step in the direction of having SERI located in Michigan."

"NOT ONLY DOES Michigan offer the best location for SERI, but the project's effect on Michigan could be significant. It would bring new jobs and federal dollars to Michigan's economy and possibly spawn a totally new industry in the solar energy field."

The five Michigan sites proposed as a permanent location for SERI are in Northville, Romulus, Superior Township, Rouge Park in Detroit and near Willow Run airport.

SERI is a federally financed agency being developed to address the problems of harnessing solar energy, to be used in conjunction with other energy sources.

MERRA, a partnership of state government, universities and Michigan industry, is leading a strong Michigan effort to become the site of the SERI project.

Bids for SERI were submitted to the Energy Research and Development Administration on July 15.

SERI will begin operation in January 1, 1977.

GM joins sun power sponsors

The addition of General Motors to the MERRA membership helps broaden and strengthen the highly capable base of Michigan organizations working on the critical energy, resource and environmental needs of our state, said John E. Mook, president of the Michigan Energy and Resource Research Association.

Gene Tibers, vice president director of Energy, Management and Plan Engineering, said: "General Motors is glad to be a part of the joint research and development efforts MERRA is sponsoring. These are programs that are vitally important if the people of Michigan are to have safe, clean and economical energy in the future."

MERRA is a partnership of state government, universities and industry looking for ways to develop more efficiently use Michigan's energy resources.

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