

FLS Energy, Inc.

Location:

Black Mountain, NC (Buncombe County)

Investment Purpose:

Working Capital for Expansion

Total Financing:

\$250,000 (NCIF \$200,000)

About the Company:

FLS Energy, Inc. is a rapidly growing designer and installer of solar thermal (hot water heating) and solar photovoltaic (electric generation) systems for residential and commercial customers. The company can finance commercial projects and it also provides sustainability consulting services to businesses. Hardy LeGwin (a building designer), Dale Freudenberger (a general contractor) and Michael Shore (an engineer) incorporated FLS Energy in the Spring of 2006 to “make solar energy mainstream, sooner rather than later.” FLS Energy quickly gained positive exposure for its installation of a large-scale 100-panel solar thermal system on the roof of the LEED certified Proximity Hotel in Greensboro, NC. In the last two years, the company installed over 70 commercial and residential systems across North Carolina, and through its internet site (www.flsenergy.com), it sells solar energy systems all over the US.



Role of NCIF:

FLS' s accelerating growth in 2008 led it to seek financing from Mountain BizWorks of Asheville, NC (www.mountainbizworks.com), with which NCIF has a partnership to provide green business financing in Western North Carolina. In addition to providing a \$50,000 line of credit to the company, Mountain BizWorks introduced the company to NCIF, which provided additional senior working capital financing.

Impact:

FLS products and services provide families and business owners with concrete strategies to reduce their consumption of electricity and non-renewable fossil fuels. The drivers for FLS's rapid growth have been: a) the availability of NC and federal tax credits for solar energy installations; b) the 2007 passage of legislation that created a North Carolina Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) mandating that 12.5% of NC's electrical generation from investor owned utilities must come from renewable energy sources by 2020 ; and c) growing public awareness about global warming. FLS is the developer of a 1 MW solar farm on a landfill in Haywood County in Western NC; through a power purchase agreement with Progress Energy, the installation will provide energy sufficient to power 1,100 homes.

FLS expects to add 10 -12 employees to its payroll over the next year, including a manager of its new energy efficiency services. The company provides a stipend for employee health insurance and is committed to providing health insurance for all employees as it grows.

Company Website:

www.flsenergy.com