

THE HINTON VOICE

HINTON'S LOCALLY OWNED WEEKLY NEWS

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2022

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In Hot Pursuit

Don Harris works to keep pace with the pack during the 2022 Hinton Growler Fat Bike Race on Feb. 12. For more coverage see Page 8.

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Hinton tapped for geothermal agri-project

Proposed 400,000 square-foot geothermal-powered farming facility could create local produce, seafood and 120 jobs

Tyler Waugh

Local Journalism Initiative

Hinton will learn more next month about a proposed major development that would see an industrial sized greenhouse grow local produce and seafood using a closed-loop geothermal system.

The 400,000 square-foot vertical farm facility is being proposed by Novus Earth, which states the project would result in 200 temporary construction jobs over a three-year duration and around 120 permanent renewable energy and agriculture jobs.

"We're really excited to share

more with the community," said Jeff Messner, president of Novus Earth in a phone interview Feb. 16.

Messner said he and members of the team have worked a fair amount with oil and gas around Hinton and Edson, and said he and the Novus team wanted to bring their knowledge into the geothermal landscape.

He said the closed-loop geothermal system will create power and the residual heat will be used in heating and cooling. It's a critical element to controlling costs in a large agri-operation and keeping it sustainable, he added.

Novus forecasts that the operation

will produce 3.1 megawatts of electricity per year and 25 megawatts of thermal energy per year.

There is an anticipated six million kilograms of produce per year and an output of 0.5 million kilograms of shrimp per year.

There is also an estimated 4.85 million tonne reduction of greenhouse gases (GHG) over 50 years, the equivalent of 25,625 cars off the road.

Messner said Novus is still working to secure the necessary land, but that there are a couple options they are considering.

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