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**Presentation Title:** Perceptions Of Who Adopts Solar In Rural America

**Abstract:** Charting a sustainable energy transition for the United States will as a predicate require addressing the multivalent costs related to the human dimensions of technology adoption. Recent scholarship has sought to characterize these soft costs in terms of market base development, intellectual property, and other factors. Within the context of solar energy, these soft costs are known to be a significant barrier to widespread adoption in the residential sector; yet, despite this knowledge, gaps remain in the characterization of the system by which knowledge about solar and communications about its potential impact are poorly understood. The communication and dissemination of knowledge about emerging energy technologies is a complex social dynamic between adopters and those who are establishing the technical possibility of adoption through new technologies, infrastructures, business practices, and marketing techniques targeted towards new customer bases. Drawing on a study of solar adoption in the State of Georgia, this analysis leverages insights from dialectology to explicate a deeper understanding of who rural Americans, a routinely underexamined population of potential adopters - think adopts or does not adopt solar energy, why they do or do not, and where they live. These perceptions will be compared against actual adoption trends nationally and how the participants characterize the gaps to identify alignments and, importantly, where the market may indicate underexplored barriers. Developing techniques for analyzing knowledge systems that bridge individual user perceptions with larger technology adoption trends at a scale commensurable with policy action improves the fidelity of soft cost characterization and the deeply challenging gap between local energy transition dynamics and national visions of energy futures.