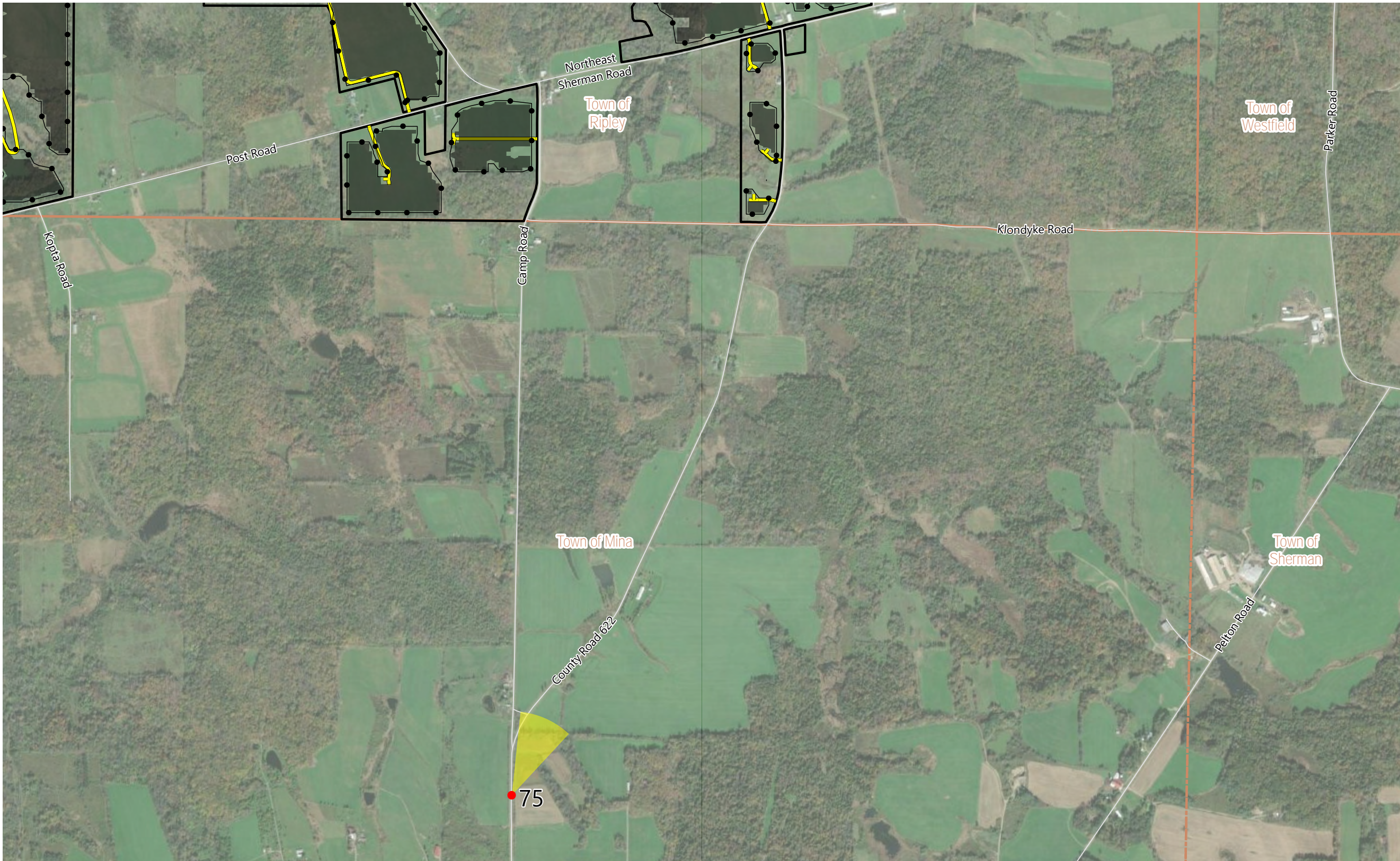


South Ripley Solar Project

Town of Ripley, Chautauqua County, New York

Viewpoint 75 | Camp Rd.
Viewpoint Location Map

DRAFT



- Selected Viewpoint Location
- Fenceline
- PV Panel Area
- Facility Site
- Access Road
- Cone of View
- Substation



South Ripley Solar Project

Town of Ripley, Chautauqua
County, New York

Viewpoint 75 | Camp Rd.
Existing Conditions

DRAFT



South Ripley Solar Project

Town of Ripley, Chautauqua
County, New York

Viewpoint 75 | Camp Rd.
Visual Simulation

DRAFT



6. Virtual Open House Slide Deck (1-28-2021)

South Ripley Solar Project Public Information Meeting

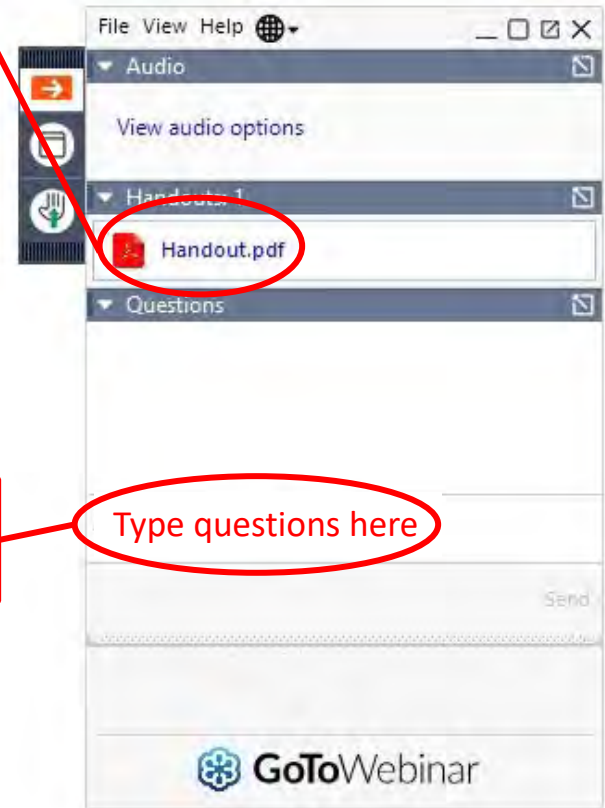


Connecting Power, Projects, and People

Welcome!

Technological Housekeeping

- Technical assistance handout available in GoToWebinar access panel. If at any time you require IT support, please contact GoToWebinar:
 - URL: <https://support.goto.com/webinar?labelid=4a17cd95>
 - Chat Support: <https://support.goto.com/webinar#856-299>
 - Toll Free Phone: +1(833) 851-8340
- Presentation will be approximately 45 minutes with an additional 45-minute question and answer session at the end of the presentation.
- To post a question for the Q&A session, utilize the “Questions” section in your GoToWebinar panel at any time.
- If you’re unable to post a question using the GoToWebinar panel, please send questions to etauzer@edrdpc.com.
- Watch video recording of virtual presentation on project website and let us know of any additional questions.
- Contact information is on the bottom right of the screen throughout the presentation.



Introductions

Presenters:



Isaac Phillips

Project Developer
CONNECTGEN



James Muscato

Attorney
YOUNG SOMMER



Benjamin Brazell

*Principal, Environmental
Services*
EDR



Matthew Robinson

Project Manager, Visual
EDR



Ken Kaliski

Senior Director, Noise
RSG

Other Team Members and Experts Available:

Caton Fenz, **CEO, ConnectGen**

John Kuba, **Environmental Director, ConnectGen**

William Whipps, **Environmental Project Manager, EDR**

Nick Warner, **Founding Principal, Safety, ESRG**

Erin Szalkowski, **Principal, PR, Innovant**

Erica Tauzer, **Project Manager, Planning, EDR**

Sarah Kirsch, **Moderator, EDR**

Purpose

The purpose of today's virtual public information meeting:

- Provide an update on the work that has been completed on the project.
- Distribute information and guidance on the New York State permitting process.
- Ensure that the community is informed about next steps in project development and how you can get involved in the permitting process.
- Satisfy public engagement requirements of the 94-c permitting process.

Given the current COVID crisis, ConnectGen is not able to hold an in-person public open house for the safety of our team and the local community. This presentation will be recorded and posted on the materials section of the project website, www.southripleysolar.com/materials, and a transcript of Questions and Answers will also be documented and posted.

Presentation Agenda

- About ConnectGen
- Project Overview
- Project Benefits
- Public Engagement To-date
- New York State Regulatory Overview
 - Article 10
 - 94-c
 - Intervenor Funding
- Technical Topics
- Question and Answer Section

About ConnectGen



Founded in 2018, ConnectGen is an independent renewable energy company focused on the development of high-quality wind, solar, and energy storage projects across North America.

Based in Houston, Texas, our experienced team has developed, built, and operated thousands of megawatts of renewable energy projects.



ConnectGen is a subsidiary of 547 Energy, Quantum Energy Partners' clean energy platform company.



Founded in 1998, Quantum Energy Partners is a leading provider of private equity capital to the global energy industry, having managed together with its affiliates more than \$15 billion in equity commitments since inception.

Project Overview



South Ripley
SOLAR PROJECT

Project Owner:
ConnectGen Chautauqua
County LLC

Host Community:
South Ripley, within the
Ripley town boundaries

Renewable Resource:
Solar energy

Projected Capacity:
Up to 270 MWac

New York Homes Powered:
Over 60,000

Projected Project Footprint:
Up to approximately 1,500
acres

Projected Completion Date:
End of 2023

Point of Interconnection:
National Grid South Ripley
230 kV substation

Energy Storage:
20 MWac battery energy
storage component

Project Benefits

DIRECT BENEFITS



Up to **\$30 million dollars in payments to local landowners** in the form of solar leases, easement agreements, and good neighbor agreements through the life of the Project.



Over **\$16 million** in increased property tax revenue over the life of the project to the Town of Ripley and Chautauqua County, comprising over 40% of the Town of Ripley's annual property tax revenue.



Over **\$5 million** in increased revenue to the Sherman and Ripley school districts during the life of the Project.



Up to **220 jobs** anticipated during the peak of construction.

INDIRECT BENEFITS



Revenue to local shops, hotels, restaurants, service and construction material suppliers during construction and operation.



Partnerships with local community groups, local sponsorships, and donations.

Public Engagement to Date

ConnectGen has worked since late 2018 to introduce the Project to the local Ripley community and solicit feedback from interested parties.

- Attended nearly every Town of Ripley Board meeting since **March 5, 2019**
- Landowner meetings held on **April 4, 2019** and **August 15, 2019**
- Project benefit ads in the Dunkirk Observer and Jamestown Post Journal on **August 15, 18, and 22, 2019**
- Project website launched **October 2019**
- Public Involvement Plan (PIP) filed **October 2019**
- Public open houses held on **December 4, 2019**. Meeting notices ran in the local papers two weeks prior to the event and notification letters were mailed to the Stakeholder Notification List
- Project newsletter mailed to each person on the Stakeholder Notification List in **April 2020**; 50 additional copies mailed to the Ripley Town Hall
- Notices of Preliminary Scoping Statement (PSS) filing ran in the local papers **May 14-16, 2020**
- Notices of PSS filing mailed to each person on the Stakeholder Notification List on **May 14, 2020**
- PSS informational packet mailed to the Stakeholder Notification List in **June 2020**
- PSS Public comment and response period completed in **June 2020**
- A project Facebook page was created in **November 2020** to provide project updates and share information

Regulatory Overview: Existing Article 10 Process

- The New York State Article 10 process governs the development of all large-scale energy generating facilities larger than 25 MWs.
- Article 10 Regulations require a comprehensive review of potential project environmental and health impacts, with a focus on sensitive resources including wetlands, nearby residences, sensitive species, agricultural resources, and others.
- Decisions are made by the Board on Electric Generation Siting and the Environment (Siting Board).
- Includes a pre-application phase with a Public Involvement Program Plan (PIP) and Preliminary Scoping Statement (PSS).
 - ConnectGen filed a final PIP in October 2019.
 - ConnectGen filed a final PSS in May 2020.
 - ConnectGen completed the PSS public comment period in June 2020.
- The final Article 10 Application outlines all of the environmental and technical studies and surveys completed for a project and includes a project design that avoids or minimized potential impacts to the local community.

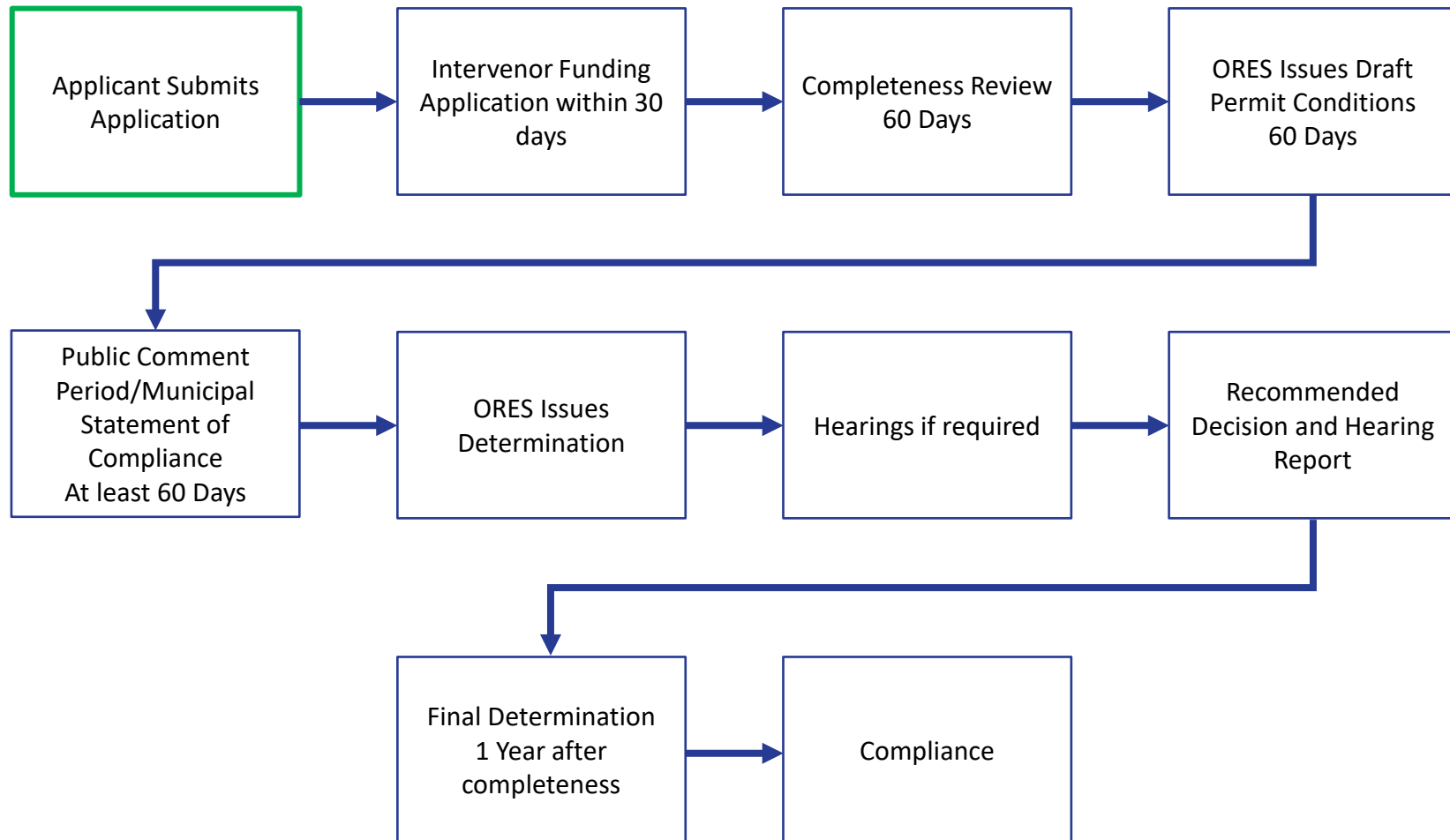
Regulatory Overview: New “Section 94-c” Siting Process

- In 2020, New York State introduced a new permitting process for large scale renewable energy projects, the “Section 94-c” process.
- Final Application is substantively similar to the Article 10 requirements, with many of the same surveys and studies required under both processes.
- Review and decision will be made by the Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES) within the Department of State – draft Regulations and Uniform Standards and Conditions (USC) were issued by ORES on September 16, 2020, with a public comment period through December 6, and are anticipated to be final before April 2021.
- Provides for election to transition into process for existing Article 10 Projects.
- Requires pre-application consultations with state agencies, host municipalities, and meetings with community members.
- Uniform Standards and Conditions (“USCs”) outline design requirements for large scale projects to standardize design expectations regarding setbacks and potentially sensitive resources. Site specific requirements will also augment the USCs.
- Projects must be designed to avoid or minimize, to the maximum extent practicable, potentially significant adverse environmental impacts.

New “Section 94-c” Siting Process (continued)

- ORES must make finding that the project, along with uniform and site-specific conditions, would comply with applicable laws and regulations.
- Only projects with “substantive and significant” issues require evidentiary hearings and briefing.
- Similar to Article 10, ORES can elect not to apply a local law that is unreasonably burdensome in view of CLCPA targets and environmental benefits of the project.
- Requires municipalities to submit a statement of compliance with local laws at least 60 days after issuance of the draft permit.
- Local community intervenors and host towns are able to seek intervenor funds (\$1,000/MW).
- 75% of funds reserved for municipalities.
- Must apply for funds within 30 days of application filing.
- Requires host community benefit.

Section 94-c Schedule Overview



Intervenor Funds

What is Intervenor Funding:

Intervenor funding is money that Applicants such as ConnectGen make available to qualified, locally affected parties and municipalities to offset certain expenses they incur in participating in the state permitting process. These funds were created to encourage early and effective public involvement in project development and permitting.

Article 10 PSS Intervenor Fund:

- In May 2020, ConnectGen made \$94,500.00 (\$350/MW) accessible for local community intervenors and the host town for the review of the project's PSS filing.
- The Town of Ripley and the Ripley Fire Department requested and were granted intervenor funds to assist with their review of project documents.

94-c Application Intervenor Fund:

- Upon the filing of a 94-c Application, ConnectGen will post an intervenor fund (\$1,000/MW) which can be sought by local community intervenors and host towns. 75% of funds are reserved for municipalities.
- Must apply for funds within 30 days of Application filing:

Applications for Intervenor Funds to:

19 NYCRR 900-5

New York State Office of Renewable Energy Siting

Attention: Request for Local Agency Account Funding

99 Washington Avenue

Albany, New York 12231-0001

Local Zoning Regulations

The Town of Ripley's existing zoning regulations provide guidance for solar energy development and construction. These regulations are currently under review by the Town Planning Board and regulations governing energy storage are also being considered.

Applicable Zoning Laws

Section 505: Visibility at Intersections

- Height limitations for vegetation hedges within 50 ft. from intersections.

Section 507: Topsoil Excavation

- Management of runoff to neighboring property and topsoil replenishment if necessary.

Section 610: Signs

- Requirements for new signage.

Section 618: Off-Street Parking

- Off-street access and size requirements.

Section 620: Solar and Wind Systems

- Property line setbacks for adjoining properties, zoning district allowances, operations and maintenance plan, decommissioning plan, height and setback requirements, lot size requirements, lot coverage requirements, and fencing requirements.

Compliance with Local Laws

ConnectGen is designing the project to comply with all existing zoning regulations and will continue to evaluate applicable laws if and when the Town updates specific standards for solar and energy storage.

Technical Topics: 94-c Siting Application

All Section 94-c Application Exhibits

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. General Requirements | 10. Geology, Seismology and Soils | 18. Socioeconomic Effects |
| 2. Overview and Public Involvement | 11. Terrestrial Ecology | 19. Environmental Justice |
| 3. Location of Facilities and Surrounding Land Use | 12. NYS Threatened or Endangered Species | 20. Effect on Communications |
| 4. Real Property | 13. Water Resources and Aquatic Ecology | 21. Electric System Effects and Interconnection |
| 5. Design Drawings | 14. Wetlands | 22. Electric and Magnetic Fields |
| 6. Public Health, Safety and Security | 15. Agricultural Resources | 23. Site Restoration and Decommissioning |
| 7. Noise and Vibration | 16. Effect on Transportation | 24. Local Laws and Ordinances |
| 8. Visual Impacts | 17. Consistency with Energy Planning Objectives | 25. Other Permits and Approvals |
| 9. Cultural Resources | | |

Overview of Technical Topics for Discussion

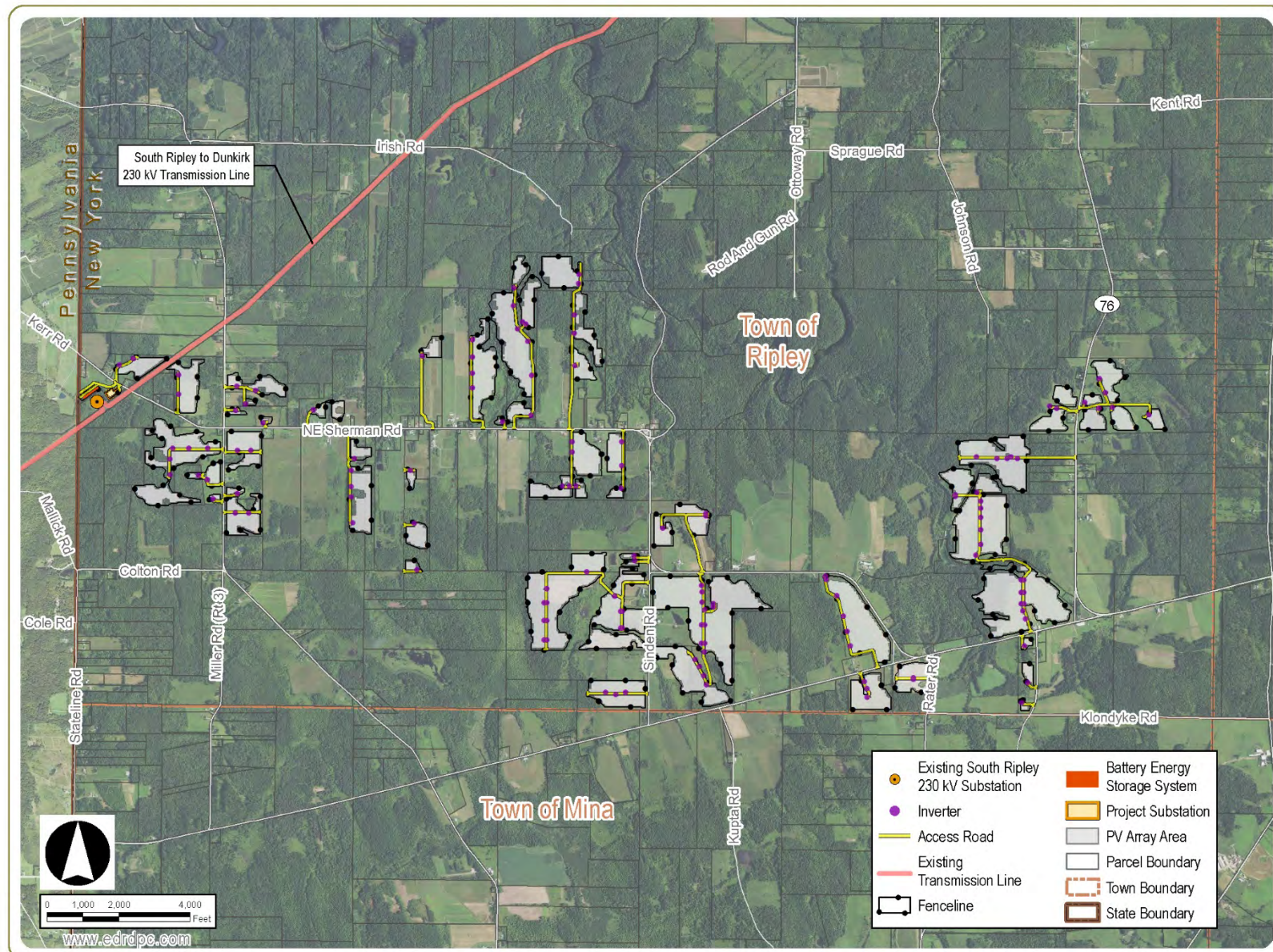
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|---------------------------------------|--|
| • Layout and Design | • Visual Impact |
| • Local Zoning Regulations | • Sound and Noise |
| • Stormwater and Groundwater | • Public Health, Safety, and Security |
| • Wetland and Stream Resources | • Decommissioning |
| • Avian Resources | |

Layout and Design

Solar Panel Locations and Project Layout

- The Project includes solar equipment, an electrical collection and interconnection system, battery energy storage, and access road locations, which are designed to avoid and mitigate potential impacts, incorporating a wide range of environmental, social, and technical considerations.
- The Project is being designed using New York State regulations, industry standards, and feedback from local community members to minimize potential impacts.
- Development of the project layout and design is an iterative process that considers various sensitive resources and endeavors to balance impacts to identified resources.

South Ripley Preliminary Solar Layout



Stormwater and Groundwater

Section 94-c ensures that renewable energy projects study potential stormwater and groundwater impacts from project development and design management plans to ensure that projects do not change the water runoff characteristics of a site through construction and operation. PV panels are designed to ensure no release or leakage of panel material into the surrounding environment.

A final 94-c Application will include:

- A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for the collection and management of stormwater discharges from the facility site during construction.
- A preliminary plan for post-construction stormwater management practices that will be used to manage stormwater runoff from the developed facility site. This plan will be finalized before construction as part of Compliance.
- Plans must be prepared in accordance with the applicable NYS Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activity, the NYS Standards and Specifications for Erosion and Sediment Control, and NYS Stormwater Design Manual.
- ConnectGen will complete a local water well survey for properties within 1,000 feet of project boundaries to effectively site project equipment to avoid potential impacts during construction.
- The 94-c Application will also identify other groundwater resources, such as aquifers.

Wetland and Stream Resources

Resource Identification and Field Survey:

- Wetland and stream desktop approximations were completed in March 2020.
- On-site wetland and stream delineations were completed from June – Sept 2020.
- Boundaries of wetland and stream resources were identified within the study area.
- Results are being used to inform Project design through impact avoidance and minimization.
- A final wetland stream and delineation report will be included in the Section 94-c Application.

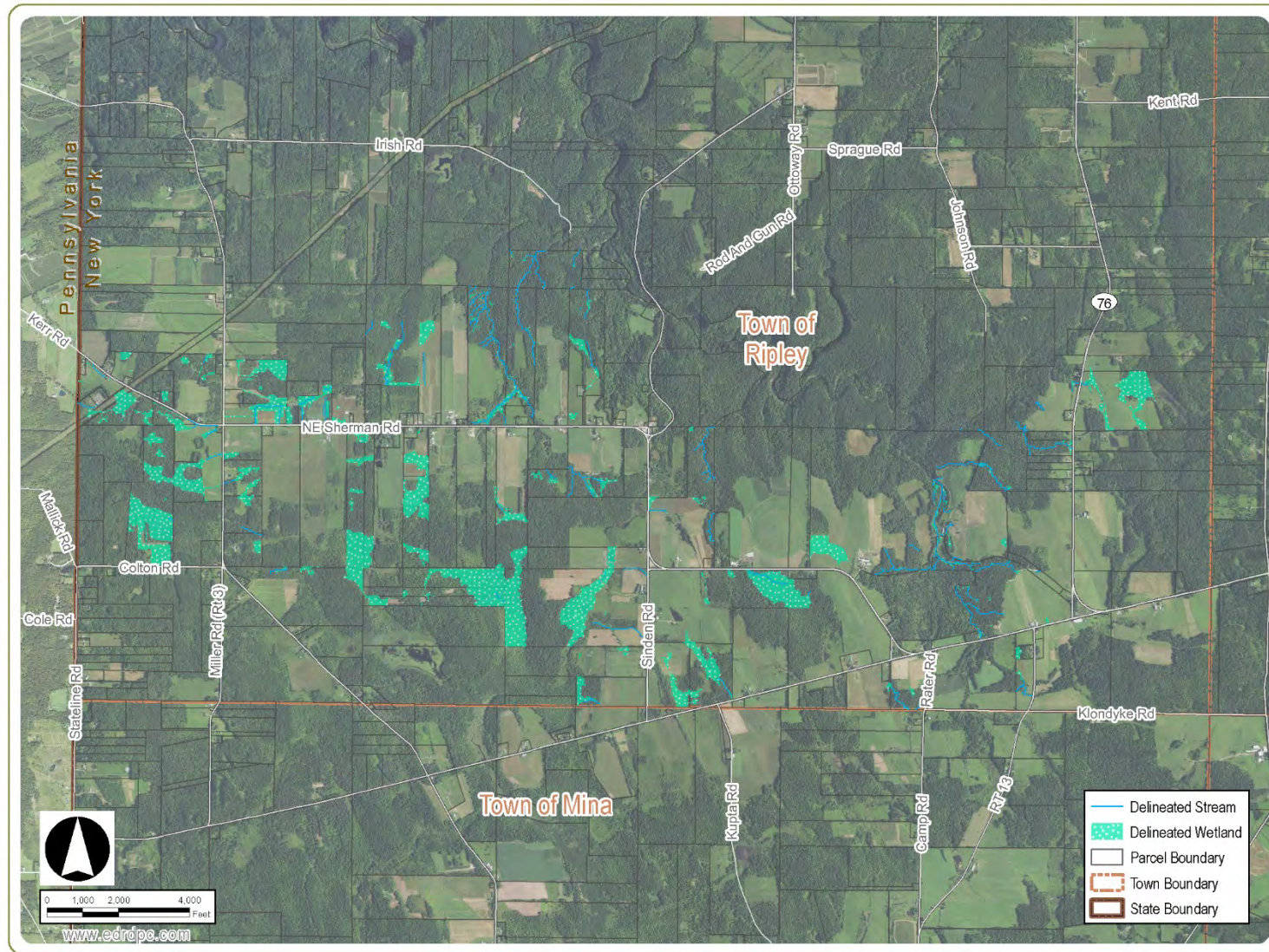


Mapped Wetland: South Ripley, 2020

ORES Consultation and Jurisdictional Determination:

- ORES was provided data from delineations and representatives conducted site review visits with EDR in November and December 2020.
- Based on delineation efforts and subsequent site visits, a draft wetland and stream delineation report was provided to ORES and NYSDEC in January 2021.
- ORES must issue final jurisdictional determination regarding state-regulated wetlands and streams within 60 days of receipt of the draft wetland delineation report.

Wetland and Stream Resources: Project Map



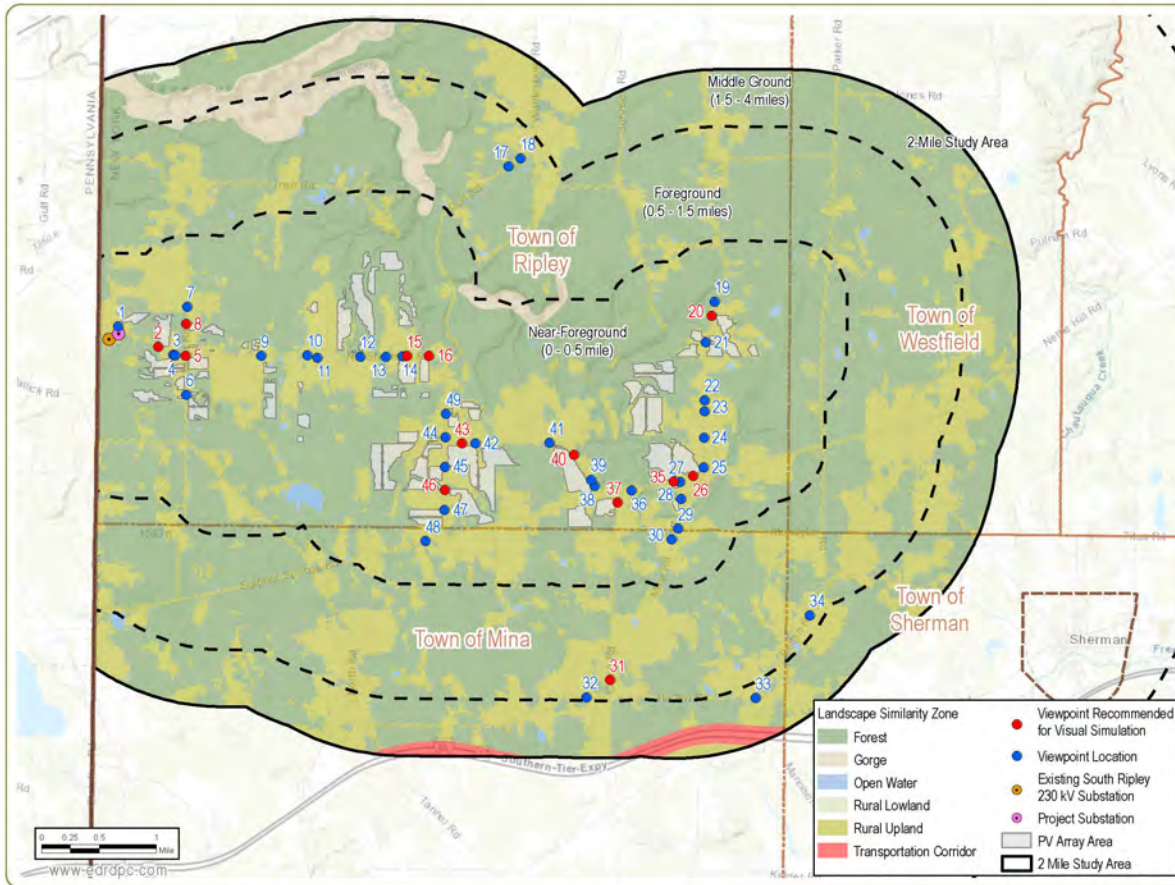
Avian Resources: Consultations and Surveys

- Consultation with state and federal resource agencies initiated in the summer of 2019, through initial review of databases maintained by the NYSDEC and the USFWS.
- Further consultation and records review with NYSDEC Central Office and Region 9 occurred in the fall of 2019.
- Based on the potential presence of rare grassland species, a winter raptor survey workplan was prepared and provided to NYSDEC in November 2019.
- A Winter Raptor Survey (WRS) took place from November 2019 – March 2020.
- A virtual meeting was held with NYSDEC in April 2020 to review survey results, and a complete WRS report was provided to NYSDEC in May 2020.
- Additionally, a spring Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) workplan was prepared for NYSDEC review in May 2020 and surveys conducted from May – July 2020.
- A complete BBS report was provided to NYSDEC in September 2020.
- The results of all avian surveys were discussed with ORES, and all reports were provided to ORES in October 2020.

Avian Resources: Results and Conclusions

- The WRS resulted in more than 5,600 survey minutes (over 93 survey hours).
- A total of 62 raptors were observed, most of which were common species such as red-tailed hawk and turkey vulture.
- The only state-listed threatened species observed were bald eagle (5) and northern harrier (7); however, no suspected roost locations or areas of concentrated activity were identified. No state-listed endangered species were observed.
- Of the more than 5,600 survey minutes, only 16 survey minutes included northern harrier and 16 survey minutes included bald eagle, totaling less than 1% of the entire survey effort.
- The BBS resulted in more than 4,680 survey minutes (over 78 survey hours).
- A total of 81 species were observed, most of which were common species such as song sparrow and red-winged blackbird.
- No state-listed threatened or endangered species were observed during the BBS.
- Based on the results of the WRS and the BBS, it was concluded that the Facility Area does not contain occupied habitat for wintering or breeding state-listed threatened or endangered avian species.

Visual Impacts



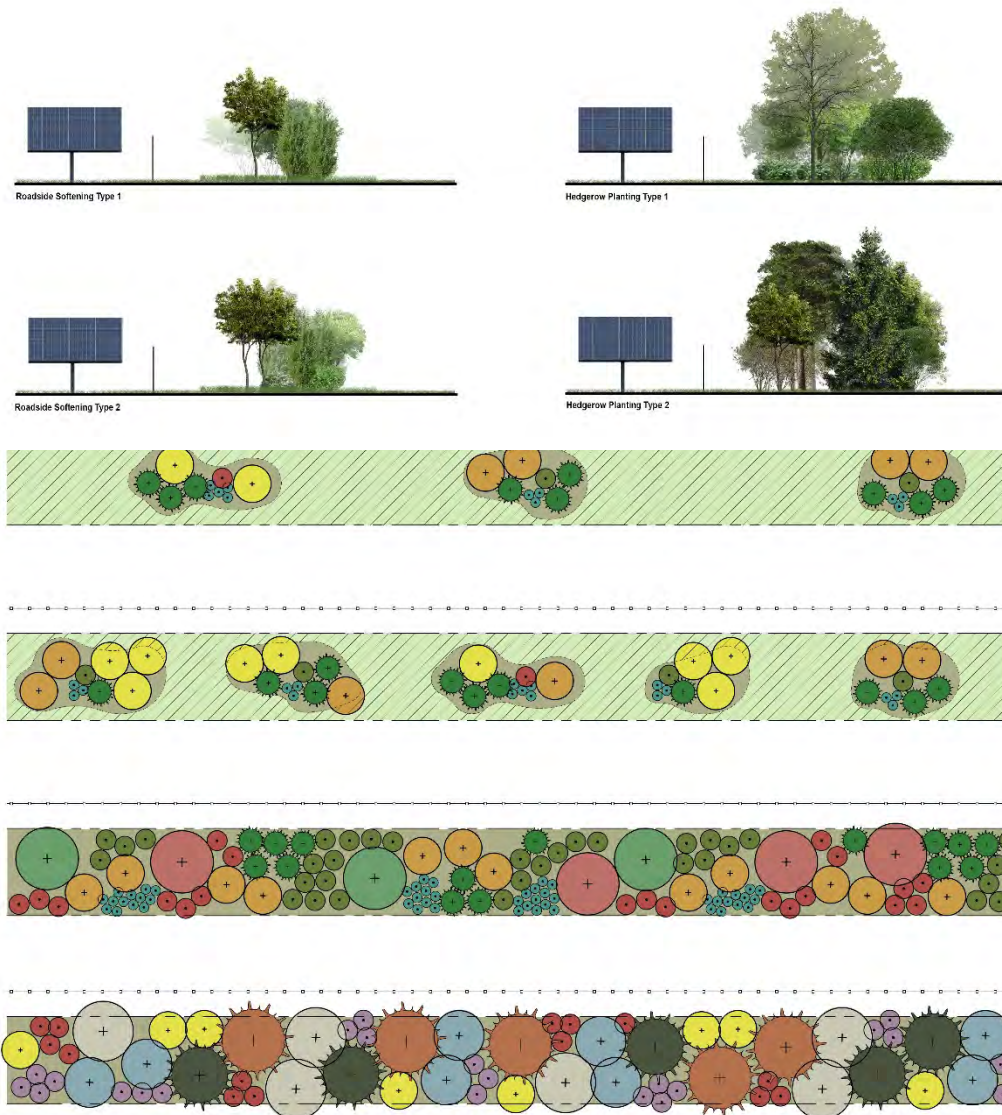
Define Affected Environment:

- Definition of a Visual Study Area (2 miles)
- Identification of Visually Sensitive Resources
 - Review of publicly available data
 - Consultation with state & local stakeholders
- Identification of Viewer Groups
- Landscape Similarity Zone mapping

Evaluate Potential Visibility:

- Viewshed Analysis Mapping
- Field Review and Assessment

Visual Impacts



Appearance of the Facility:

- Proposed Equipment
 - PV Panels and Racking
 - Inverters
 - Fencing
 - Substation
 - Above ground collection
 - Energy Storage System

- 3-Dimensional Model

Results and Conclusions:

- Visual Impact Analysis
 - Visual Simulations
 - Rating Panel Analysis
 - Visual Mitigation

Visual Simulations

Existing Conditions



Visual Simulations

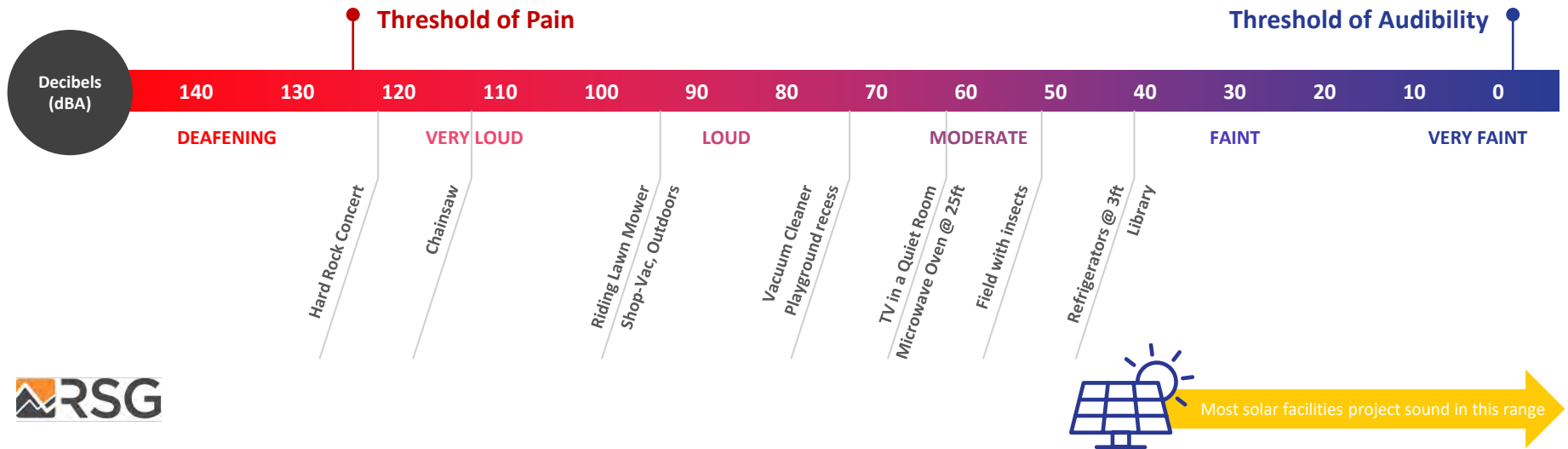


Visual Simulations

Visual Simulation – 5-7 years post installation



Sound and Noise Impact



The equipment anticipated to be used in the South Ripley Solar Project Include:

Solar Panels	Collect solar energy and transform into electricity	<i>Not expected to generate any sound</i>
Inverters	Convert DC to AC current	<i>Generate limited sound during the day</i>
Transformers	Increase the voltage for collection and distribution	<i>Generate limited sounds day and night</i>
Energy Storage	Stores and releases power as needed	<i>Generate sound mostly via the cooling systems</i>

Sound Level Monitoring and Analysis



Sound Monitoring Device in South Ripley (2020)

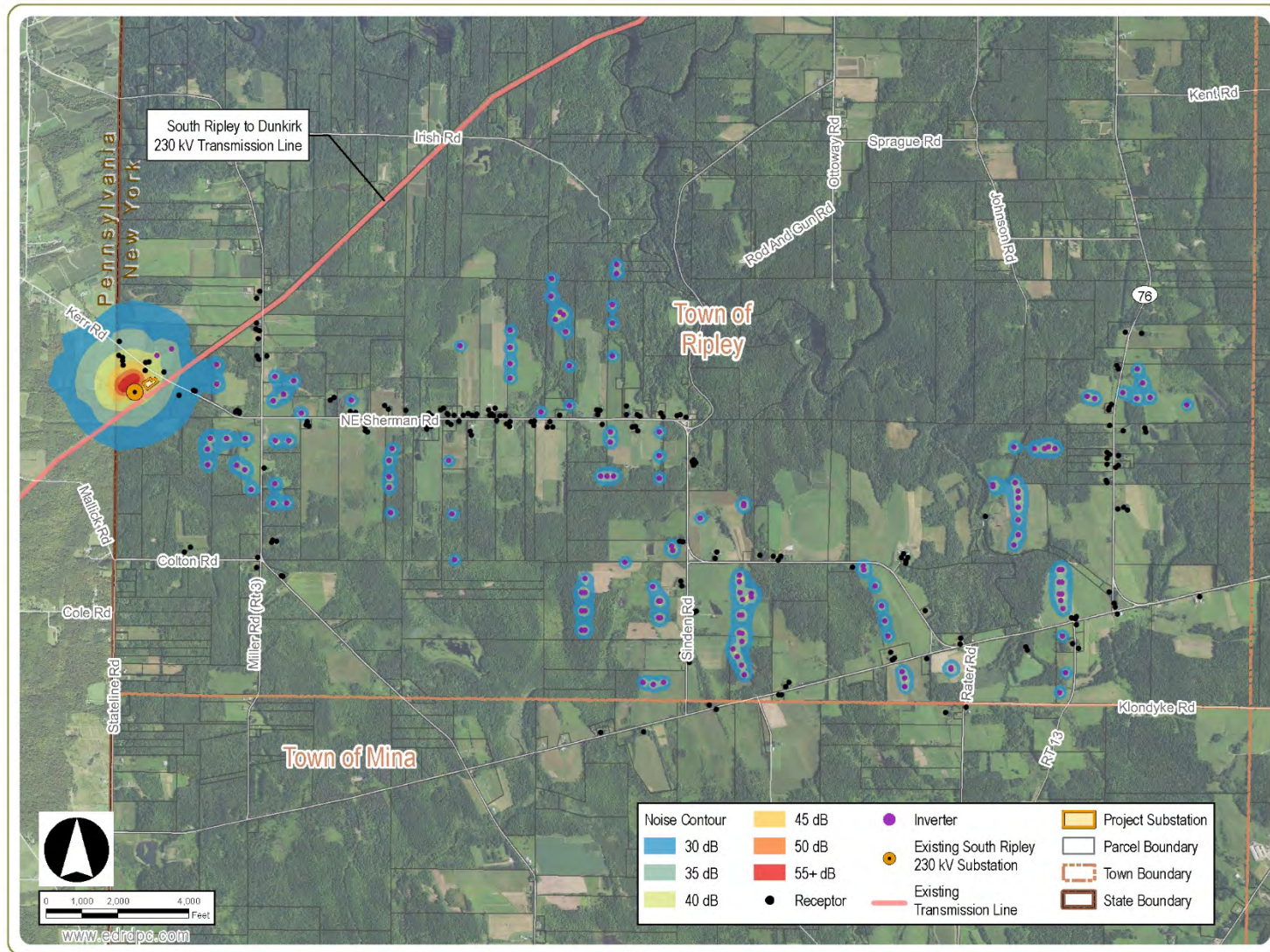
Sound Level Monitoring:

- ConnectGen completed on-site sound level monitoring in the project area during the 2020 winter and summer seasons.
- Average measured winter background sound in South Ripley is 37 dBA at night and 41 dBA during the day.

Sound Level Modelling:

- International Standards Organization procedures (ISO 9613-2) are used.
- Equipment locations and their maximum sound power are entered in the model.
- Meteorological conditions for downwind or, equivalently, nighttime inversion are assumed.
- Output modeled for all homes and properties in the study area.

Preliminary Representative Noise Map



Noise Design Goals – Section 94-c

94-c Uniform Conditions and Standards for Sound:

- Non-participating residence = 45 dBA (8-Hour L_{eq})
- Participating residence = 55 dBA (8-Hour L_{eq})
- Non-participating residence = 40 dBA due to substation
- Non-participating property line = 55 dBA (8-Hour L_{eq})
- Separate limits on low frequency sound
- Penalty for audible prominent tones

Other 94-c Requirements:

- Sound propagation model parameter specifications
- Reporting requirements
- Complaint resolution plan

Public Health, Safety, and Security

Solar Panels and Electrical Equipment

- Solar panels must meet strict electrical safety standards.
- Solar panels are designed to ensure no release or leakage of panel material into the surrounding environment.
- Solar projects result in no water discharges.

Battery Energy Storage

- Battery storage systems meet strict local, state, and federal electrical and fire safety standards.
- Battery systems are designed to contain numerous redundant safety measures including 24/7 remote monitoring, internal heat sensors and electrical monitoring, built in exhaust and ventilation, and internal fire suppression systems.

A 94-c Application will include:

- A Safety Response Plan that outlines emergency response measures, descriptions of on-site protection equipment and compliance with New York Fire Code, a requirement to conduct training drills with local EMS once a year.
- A Site Security Plan that includes site plans and descriptions of fencing, gates, electronic security, lighting, and cyber security for the facility.

Decommissioning

94-c Requirements for Decommissioning:

An Application will include a Decommissioning and Site Restoration Plan which addresses:

- Commitments for equipment removal
- Safety
- Environmental impacts
- Aesthetics
- Recycling
- Potential future uses for the Site
- Financial aid commitments
- Schedule
- Estimated cost for decommission and allocation of funding to local municipalities

Question and Answer Session

- To post a question during the Q&A session, utilize the “Questions” section in your GoToWebinar panel.
- If you’re unable to post a question using the GoToWebinar panel, please send questions to etauzer@edrdpc.com.

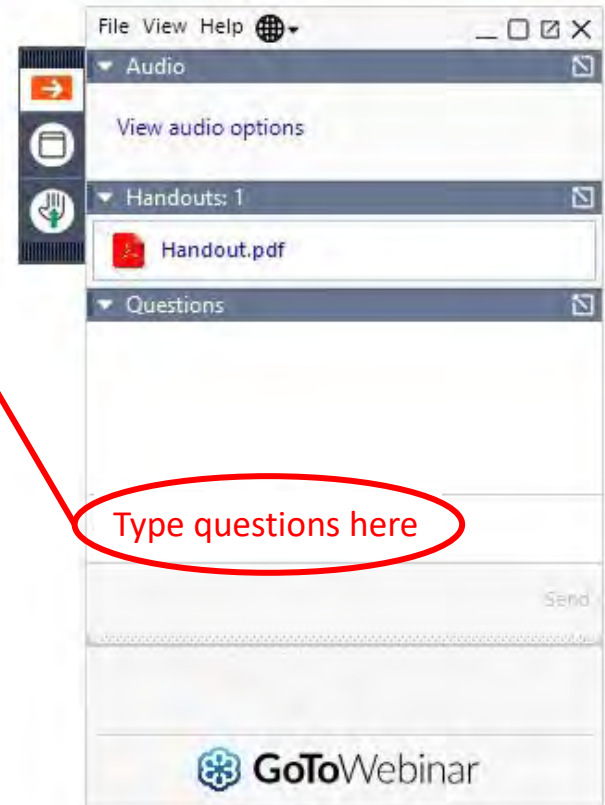
How to Contact Us After the Session:

Project Website: www.southripleysolar.com

Project Email: info@southripleysolar.com

Project Phone Number: 800-338-8905

Project Facebook Page: South Ripley Solar Project



7. Virtual Open House Q/A Transcript (1-28-2021)

Public Information Meeting Questions and Answers

South Ripley Solar Project

Ripley

Chautauqua County, New York

Prepared for:



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<https://www.connectgenllc.com/>

Prepared by:



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217 Montgomery Street, Suite 1000
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P: 315.471.0688
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January 2021

South Ripley Solar Project Public Information Meeting Live Q&A Session
January 28, 2021
6:00 PM – 8:15 PM

Moderator: Sarah Krisch; EDR

Panelists and Support: John Kuba, ConnectGen; Isaac Phillips, ConnectGen; Caton Fenz, ConnectGen; Ken Kaliski, RSG; Nick Warner, ESRG; Erin Szalkowski, Innovant; Jim Muscato, Young Sommer; Mathew Robinson, EDR; William Whipps, EDR; Laurie Stubenrauch, EDR; Ben Brazell, EDR; Samantha Morrone, EDR

This Q&A session was part of a series of public engagement events related to the South Ripley Solar Public Information Meeting. During this session, the project team, including the panelists listed above, delivered a presentation containing information about the South Ripley's Solar Project. Following the presentation, attendees were able to ask questions, which were answered by the panelists. The paraphrased questions and responses are listed below. The second half of this report includes questions that were asked but not answered due to time constraints during the public meeting, as well as questions that were sent via email during or after the public meeting. Answers to these questions are provided.

Live Q&A Session

Question 1

ConnectGen hasn't built a project to date. Why should we trust that you know what you're doing?

Answer: (Caton Fenz) ConnectGen has put together an experienced set of hands, not only at our senior management level, but throughout the organization that have built thousands of megawatts of projects across North America; wind, solar, and battery storage. We'll apply this expertise; although the ConnectGen is a relatively new company, we will apply this expertise to the South Ripley project. We did, last year, partner with another developer to construct the project that Isaac mentioned earlier in Arizona, California, and Nevada. We learned some valuable lessons there in terms of construction. And we'll look forward to applying that on this project.

Question 2

How many acres of forest will be cut to support this project? This includes lessor required removal to comply with ConnectGen required deforestation prior to the commencement of the project?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) I'm not 100% sure on the second half of that question, what's being asked, but I can provide an answer more comprehensively. We don't have the exact numbers at this time and until we finalize the design, we're still not going to be able to provide them. However, this information will be included in the Application with the final design drawings and locations of any clearing. This question kind of had two parts, but for the second part, any clearing required for the project will be included in these calculations. So, that will all be included in the Application.

Question 3

How can ConnectGen submit an Application under Section 94c if ORES has not finalized and promulgated the regulations yet?

Answer: (Jim Muscato) With respect to the timing of the application, I think either Isaac or I stated in the presentation that the anticipated filing date is May 2021, and the regulations are required by statute to be promulgated by April. So, the regulations should be in place by time the application is filed. But also, the Section 94-c law explicitly states that the office can receive Applications prior to the promulgation of the regulations, and that those Applications must conform substantially to the requirements of Article 10.

Question 4

How much of ConnectGen's capital funding is coming from or being facilitated by the NYSERDA Green Bank?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) ConnectGen is not funded by the Green Bank and all the development and construction of the solar project will be self-funded by ConnectGen and ConnectGen's investors. The project will receive compensation for production after the project has been constructed and has gone into operation. We'll receive compensation for energy production and renewable energy credit production, but there is no Green Bank funding being used for development or construction.

Question 5

ConnectGen Statement: "Solar Power is one of the cheapest new sources of electricity in most of the world due to declining equipment costs, improved technologies, and public policy supporting the procurement of renewable energy across the country". Given that the solar irradiance of the South Ripley area is the poorest in the nation, how does ConnectGen's business case justify this project? Can ConnectGen share this with the public?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) I think it's important to note that solar projects are being installed all over the country in all 50 states. New York has been consistently in the top 10 solar markets and is projected to install over 4,300 megawatts within the next five years, all over the 40th parallel, all in similar irradiance zones. As technology has improved, solar production has improved significantly. With the introduction of bi-facial solar panels, we're seeing 11% more energy production than the standard panel, just due to the bi-faciality. In terms of the solar radiance of this location, we have had a resource monitoring device that measured over a year of on-site solar and weather data for the project area and used that data to generate the contract agreement that we signed with NYSERDA, which has binding megawatt hour commitments that we have to reach. When you ask about the production and our business case, as I mentioned in the previous question, we will be selling the output from this project via a power purchase agreement and REC contracts, and we have a contractual commitment through NYSERDA for a certain number of RECs. and that will be supporting the project. I think a long answer to that question, but we have established that this site can support the development of large-scale project like this with the income that we would generate from energy sales and rec sales with actually measured on-site weather and solar irradiance data.

Question 6

Given the Biden's Administration new emphasis and the tightening of "Buy America" standards, will ConnectGen be purchasing "Made in the USA" solar panels? If not, why?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) As we have mentioned previously, we're still iterating on the design here, and final equipment selection has not yet been made. We are considering panels made in a variety of different countries, so the United States produced panels are in the mix. I can't commit to a specific manufacturer at this time.

Question 7

Will the solar panels be coated with Teflon?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) I haven't heard of the crystalline silicon panels, this type, being coated with Teflon. However, I think that is a question that I would like to note that we will follow up with the written response on the website.

Written Response: We do not expect the panels used in South Ripley to be coated with Teflon.

Question 8

Your web page says that you will employ local people but there is no percentage or quota. Is your company willing to contractually sign only local people for the jobs?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) We're working with local labor unions to develop these types of contracts and make sure that we will have a labor force that has the requisite experience and skills in establishing and constructing these types of projects. There will need to be several folks from outside the state, in terms of our engineering team, et cetera. But for the majority of laborers were looking for in-state commitments and working with the local labor unions in Chautauqua County, specifically to meet those needs. I don't have a percentage quota at this time, I think that will be determined

as we move into the construction stage, and you have a more defined timeline on construction to see how many people we do need and what the local labor force can support. We are working with the relevant groups in the county that will be supplying the labor and working to set up agreements with them.

Question 9

How many permanent jobs will be offered by your company to local people?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) For a project of this size, solar does not require significant amount of O&M maintenance folks to work on the project. We would expect 2 to 4 full-time, long-term jobs. Typically, these would be from a New York-based entity or workers that could be near to the project sites because that's where they will be spending the majority of the time.

Question 10

Will those 60 thousand homes you estimate will be supplied be only in Ripley or Chautauqua County?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) We will not have control over where the electricity goes on the grid. We will be transferring all the electricity from the project into the local grid. If there is a load need in Chautauqua County that can take the full output of the project, then it will all be used in the local area. When you think about these types of projects, we don't necessarily take a production of an Electron from our project and say we're going to ship this over, to Buffalo, or anything like that. The electricity goes where it's needed. You would expect it to be used on the local grid, the closest place where there is need.

Question 11

The estimates for the Ripley Fire Department is listed as 1.5 million but if there are only 5 firefighters in the South Ripley crew how will adding more money compensate for the lack of humans hands?

Answer: (Caton Fenz) Just assume from the question that we're referring to the \$1.5 million dollars in expected local revenue that will be generated for the fire department over the 30-year life of the project. And if that's the case, that results in approximately \$50,000 per year that would end up at the Ripley Fire Department. And ultimately, it will be up to the leadership of that department to decide how to put that money best to work. Whether that's additional people, whether that's additional equipment, or other fire safety related issues, that will be up to the local department of what to do with those funds.

Question 12

If on average a tree takes in 48 pounds of CO2, a year how can you rationalize the cutting thousands of trees?

Answer: (John Kuba) I think if I understand the question, they're talking about the carbon sequestration benefits trees. I can't calculate and do the math just yet, but I will acknowledge that, yes, trees will be removed as part of the construction and long-term operation of the project. So, there will be some loss of that sequestration benefit from those trees. At the same time, though, that impact is mitigated by the sequestration benefits of the vegetation management practices on the solar facility itself. We will need to manage vegetation on the site long term. We will obviously be planting trees, as Isaac mentioned on the screening aspect. There will be tree replacement that occurs as well as replanting of grassland species within the panel array itself. Grassland species, especially deep-rooted perennials, provide a great carbon sequestration environmental service and we feel that's going to be a benefit here in mitigating some of the impact of loss of trees.

Question 13

How much money do you expect to make and then leave the situation?

Answer: (Caton Fenz) ConnectGen is in the business of owning projects for the entire life cycle. We're in the business of, and we were chartered to, develop, build, owned, and operate projects for the long term. And we expect to be in the South Ripley community for a very long time.

Question 14

Will your company be responsible for decommissioning the panels as the project ends, monetarily and physically?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) As I mentioned in the slide deck, part of the state siting process requirement is that the decommissioning plan does outline our responsibilities. And specifically to your question, we are responsible for decommissioning both physically and economically. I know that the Town of Ripley does have a provision in their local law requiring a decommissioning plan. So, an added layer of protection there for residents. For all the landowners that have signed the lease agreements with our company, we have an additional provision in the lease requiring that. Three layers of protection there on the decommissioning side. And I know this is a question we have a few duplicates of, to be clear, we will be responsible for decommissioning and also including a decommissioning bond.

Question 15

Discharging at full capacity how many MWs of electricity and for how many minutes will the lithium battery storage system supply electricity?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) The battery system is a planned 20-megawatt, four-hour system, so 20 megawatts for the four-hour duration, that is 240 minutes.

Question 16

Upstate and especially WNY has a severe transmission bottleneck that will realistically take at least a decade to alleviate. This project will likely be subject to curtailment. How will that affect the PPA with Jamestown BPU's REC procurement? Is the contract based on actual production or the projects rated MW capacity?

Answer: (Caton Fenz) We're very excited about the agreement with the Jamestown Board of Public Utilities, a relatively nearby provider of electricity. I can't speak to the specifics of the details of the PPA, due to a confidentiality provision in that agreement, but I can tell you that we expect our project to experience low curtailment and to be a strong provider of electricity to local load. So, we don't have any issues with BPU obligations under that contract.

Question 17

Have you decided if you will use fixed tilt or tracking solar panel array?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) We have been designing the product with a fixed tilt system. There are several reasons for that: land use, wind load, snow loading, et cetera.

Question 18

How long is "the life of the project"?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) We expect 30 to 35-year project life.

Question 19

I need a map of where EXACTLY locations of these farms and access routes will be. Do you have that to share?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) So that will be part of the Application. You will have a comprehensive map of the project area. That will include fencing, the solar arrays, access roads, inverter locations, the battery energy storage system, and the product substation collection line. All of that will be included with significant engineering detail in the Application. As Jim said, we are looking at mid Q2 of this year to have the Application submitted to the state and publicly available. As of now, we're still working to iterate on the design and incorporate environmental data we collected on site and incorporate some feedback from the community. I would expect that information would be available later this year, in a couple of months here, and well in advance of construction. So, at least a year in advance.

Question 20

Do you understand there is opposition to the solar project? How do you plan on handling this opposition?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) We have been committed since 2018, as I mentioned in the presentation, to engaging the community. We are available to answer questions. I attend board meetings, we have a website, a Facebook page,

phone number, so it can help address and answer questions. Additionally, as we move through the permitting process, there will be a significant amount of information on the Project available. Once we have the application prepared, I think a lot of questions that people have will be answered, and I'm hopeful that with continued engagement with the town, we're not going anywhere. So, we'll be around and able to answer questions. We'll hopefully be able to get everyone who has outstanding questions comfortable with the work that we're doing.

Question 21

Where do we get draft regulations?

Answer: (Jim Muscato) ORES already has a website, it is <https://ores.ny.gov/> and if you go to the website, there's a tab for regulations and they would be right there (<https://ores.ny.gov/regulations>).

Question 22

Wise energy policies are decided using the standard of Energy Returned on Energy Invested EROEI. Information documented in Forbes shows that solar falls below the "economically viable threshold". Solar is rated as a 4 compared to nuclear at 75 on a Forbes graph. Why would policy makers allow a project that uses more energy to build it than it can produce in its lifetime?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) I'm not familiar with the Forbes economic viability threshold. All I can say is solar projects do not emit pollution. They produce no greenhouse gas emissions, and they don't use finite fossil fuel resources when they're producing power. A typical large-scale project relies only on the sun to generate power and repays its carbon footprint in roughly 12 months or less, providing decades of emission free energy. I would push back and say that within 12 months a project is getting to emission free energy.

Additional written follow up: EROEI is a common metric used in energy studies, despite being based on a very simple model that has a long history of methodological problems. Solar energy falls victim to many erroneous EROEI calculations due to the use of outdated information and inconsistent comparisons with traditional fossil fuel resources. For example, using a 10-year average for the rate of energy returned puts solar at a great disadvantage; it ignores the well-documented fact that solar PV efficiencies and environmental profiles have been steadily improving over the last decade.

Question 23

What is meant by host municipalities?

Answer: (Jim Muscato) Host municipalities is defined in the law to mean County, City, Town Village. So, in this case, it would be The Town of Ripley, and Chautauqua County.

Question 24

What will zoning change to? Can that ever go back to Residential or Agricultural?

Answer: (Jim Muscato) While the town controls the zoning, the zoning will not change as a result of the project. And presumably, after the project is decommissioned and restored after its useful life on the project, lands would be able to be returned to any number of uses that would be allowed under the zoning at the time, whatever the zoning may be.

Question 25

Is there EPA testing before, during, and after the solar project? If so how often and who receives the results?

Answer: (John Kuba) There's quite a bit of testing that occurs associated with the project. With regard to EPA testing, there's not a requirement for us to perform any sort of EPA-specific testing for the project whether that be soil or water, quality, et cetera. However, as developers when we develop a new site, we perform what's called Phase 1 Environmental Site Assessments, which involve going out to the site, interviewing landowners, determining whether there's any known spills in the area or recognized environmental concerns on the site. If those are identified from your previous activities prior to us, we would do specific soil or water testing to determine what type of contamination may occur. So that is one form of testing that that does occur separately. Another form of testing that is required of the project under the 94-c regulations is testing of water quality and sampling of existing water wells within the vicinity of

the project. So, under the regs there are protections put in place for water wells in the sense that construction effects, mostly concerns associated with vibration effects to water wells and affecting those water wells, typically when it comes to blasting, when blasting is required for a project, the project then goes out, tests the water wells prior to construction, take samples, and then following construction takes additional samples to determine whether there's any effect to that water well. So, that is a testing required under 94-c regulations, a testing that we will do depending on the final location of the site and where those activities may occur.

Question 26

Will the farms be expanded to additional land in future?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) I think by this question, they're asking, will the solar farm be expanded to additional land in the future?. We have no plans to expand the project to any additional parcels that are not signed up in in this permitting process. Additionally, just to mention, for projects that would have a later phase, it would have to be re-permitted through whatever required permanent process for that size of the additional phase. So once we get the permit, it will be discussing the environmental studies and land that we have actually worked on to this point. Anything outside of the fence line on this project that has not been studied would not be covered under the siting process. In the future, if there's some type of additional phase, it would be a completely new project, a completely new process, it would not be something we could just add in. At this time, no, there's no expansion plans.

Question 27

Mr. Muscato referenced the 94-c consultation process a couple times. Has a consultation meeting been held with the Town of Ripley? If not, when?

Answer: (Jim Muscato) We had hoped to have it before today or tonight. Currently it's in process to have that scheduled and take place.

Question 28

What happens to raptors? Why the study?

Answer: (Ben Brazell) Certain rare species such as northern harrier and short eared owl use grassland habitat for some of their essential behaviors, such as breeding and foraging. Because solar projects are often located in open areas that could contain suitable habitat, studies are often conducted to determine if rare grassland raptor species are present. As I indicated earlier in my presentation, based on some of the early consultation done for this project, the potential existed for the species to be present at the South Ripley site. So, we conducted two separate seasons of surveys, one in the winter, one in the spring, specifically dedicated to rare grassland raptor species. As I also mentioned during the presentation after conducting the surveys and analyzing the data and the results, it's EDR's professional opinion that occupied habitat for these species is not present at the project site.

Question 29

Who did the bird surveys?

Answer: (Ben Brazell) The bird surveys were conducted by qualified biologists with EDR. It's worth noting, as I mentioned during the presentation, the work plans for the surveys, both surveys (Winter Raptor Survey and in the Spring Breeding Bird Survey) were specified, were detailed, and were provided to the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) for review and comment. The surveys themselves were then implemented in accordance with the work plans. It's also worth noting that the surveys followed a guidance document that the DEC issued in 2015 specific to conducting survey protocol for stateless and breeding grassland bird species.

Question 30

Is there any security for the facility if the project is completed?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) As I mentioned in the presentation, there will be security covered under the Application. So that would be, security fencing, gating, any electronics security, and any cybersecurity measures. Yes, there will be security. The fencing will encompass the facility to ensure not only security of the facility, but also safety of the community.

Question 31

What is a transportation corridor? Only I-86 was listed when there are multiple other roads in the area.

Answer: (Mathew Robinson) The definition for our landscapes similarities zones, when we're talking about a transportation corridor, really is for a divided limited access highway. Which really is only that one road through there. The other roads, whether they're a state road that receives a fair amount of traffic or a local county road, will be divided into the other similarity zones, because those roads, rather than being a dominant feature in the landscape (like the divided single access, limited highway) those roads really are part of the landscape and part of what makes the character of those areas.

Question 32

Will they be local plants?

Answer: (John Kuba) In relation to the replanting effort we will seek to use local seed sources, local nurseries for plants, tree saplings, et cetera, to the extent that they're available. So that is a part of the effort in developing a landscape screening plan as well as a veg management plan. Identifying reclamation seed sources is it is an important component there.

Question 33

The tree roots would grow into the solar base panels, would this cause problems to the construction of the solar panels?

Answer: (John Kuba) The trees associated with the vegetation screening would be placed away from the panel development area, so there will be a buffer between where the trees are located and those panels. So there's no potential for the trees to impact the panels.

Question 34

I understand that you did not see any endangered species in your study. Are there plans to add grassland or prairie habitat around the panels such as native plantings to provide quality habitat for species in the future? Grassland?

Answer: (John Kuba) Absolutely, absolutely agree with the commenter there. We're looking at alternative vegetation management practices, that has been something we've been looking at for quite a while on this project. We see there's great opportunity at this location in this environment to manage grassland habitats within the project facility, and the lands that we control under the lease agreements. I mentioned earlier using native seed sources, planting with perennials seed mixes that provide multiple benefits, including water absorption for stormwater runoff, habitats for grassland birds, for small game small mammals, as well as habitat for pollinators. So, definitely something that we have been looking to incorporate into our vegetation management practice for the site.

Question 35

What is threshold sound for energy transfer?

Answer: (Ken Kaliski) So under the current Draft 94-c Regulations, there's no specific noise standard for energy storage. If the final regulations still do not have noise limits for energy storage, we would use the same limits as the rest of the facility. So, 45 decibels at homes and 55 at property lines. The same low frequency noise limits and tonal penalties that are applied.

Question 36

Where does the power come from to for the cooling systems?

Answer: (Nick Warner) For the cooling itself, it can come from a couple of different sources. Sometimes the circuitry is wired from within the container and runs as part of the battery. Other times, it has its own auxiliary powered circuit and is run that way. So, if there's any disruption, the operation of the battery will continue to operate, but there isn't an industry standard for that right now. In fact, a lot of systems are moving away from traditional HVAC to a water-cooled system, even more energy efficient, and almost always runs off of the battery alone.

Question 37

If the internet goes out in the area, what will happen to the cooling system and electronic security?

Answer: (Caton Fenz) We are required to have a multiple path communication with the substation facility that allows us to communicate with both the plant and the energy storage facility and related equipment through multiple channels. We will have a primary channel as well as a backup channel to address that issue.

Question 38

Will there be fences around the panels or just the inverters and substation? About how many acres of the 1500 will be fenced in?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) The substation will have fencing, the battery energy storage will have its fencing, and the inverters and solar arrays will also be fenced. That's to maintain both the security of the system and the safety of the community. In terms of the acreage that is going to be fenced, it would be all of the major panel areas. We do not fence the underground collection lines, just to make sure that there are nature breaks and the ability for local wildlife to cross through the project area. I don't have a number off the top of my head for the number of acres within a fence line, but that's something that we provide in the Application.

Question 39

Have you created a safety plan yet? And if you have, why haven't you shared it with the fire department yet? It would be a great help in calming a lot of fears?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) The safety plan is going to be required in the section 94-c Application. We are working to develop it, but several things feed into it that we're still working on. Namely, access roads, making sure that we've designed turnaround locations for fire engines and first responder vehicles. Once that information is complete, we can really finalize that and get that out to local stakeholders. We understand the concern and it's something that we're trying to work on to make sure that we get it out to everyone. It is dependent on a number of the facility design components that we want to make sure we get finalized so that we can answer all questions that come in once we send it off. We are working on it, but we don't have anything completed, and that's why it hasn't been shared at this time.

Question 40

Solar panels covering ground (which keeps sun away from soil) destroys ecosystem. All agriculture will be spoiled. How do you react to this?

Answer: (John Kuba) First, I think there's a couple of things we need to parse out. I'm not quite sure what the commenter was focusing on - either agriculture being impacted at the onset of development, versus agriculture being impacted in the long term after the project has been decommissioned. So, I'll address both topics. So, first and foremost, the company must address potential impacts to Ag resources, as part of the development of the project and as part of its application to ORES, we will have to show how we're doing that. So, there will be the development of an agriculture plan that shows how we're avoiding minimizing or mitigating impacts to agriculture resources within the project area. That will include things like preserving topsoil, decompaction of topsoil in areas that are compacted, as well as avoiding certain agricultural features that could be important to the landscape or important to farm practices. Separately, to address the potential impacts on agriculture after the decommissioning of the project ends, the project will apply its decommissioning plan and the specific measures there, which will focus on things like reclaiming topsoil and making sure that we're not leaving the project site in the preexisting farmland in a state where it can't be arable and farmable anymore. There are specific measures in there that we'll have to apply. The point there is after decommissioning takes place, the site can continue to be farmed or be brought back into farmland. Separately, thinking about how a solar site operates on agriculture land for the 35 plus years of its useful life, there's not resources being taken out of the ground to grow crops. So, in essence, our management of the site for grasslands and keeping cover on the ground helps preserve the soil, rebuilds the soil long-term and ultimately results in a preservation of topsoil and a preservation of farmland long term.

Question 41

Are there any forests in the project area that may be impacted and if yes how much?

Answer: (John Kuba) There are forests in the project area, obviously folks familiar with the area know it is very forested, especially around some of the creeks and riparian areas along with scattered farmlands, hay, pastureland, et cetera. There are forested areas that are being considered as part of the area being developed for the project. I don't know the exact calculation of how many acres that is. But that will be calculated based on the final design and provided in the Application.

Question 42

Are you a publicly traded company?

Answer: (Caton Fenz) The answer is no. We're not a publicly traded company.

Question 43

What other storage methods have been considered? Have a study been done on the different options vs their environmental impact? Considering it's a hilly area with different elevations and wetlands with a dam lake nearby and a lake below, has pumped hydro been considered? Also, wouldn't pumped hydro have way less environmental impact, longer life with less fire/ explosion hazard and the possibility of release of toxic gases in the air and aquifer leaks, less sound impact?

Answer: (Caton Fenz) As a developer of projects that use energy storage around the country, we're constantly evaluating and paying attention to the available storage technologies in the market, whether that is lithium-ion technology, whether that is flow battery technology, or potentially pumped hydro. In the case of this particular project, we've determined that the right technology selection is the lithium-ion selection for cost of energy reasons, as well as safety and suitability reasons for this particular application.

Question 44

How many acres of wetlands or 100 ft check zone lands are included in the project sites?

Answer: (Ben Brazell) I interpret this question as partially being related to state versus federal jurisdiction. As mentioned earlier, part of the pre application process is for ORES to determine which wetlands among those that were delineated within the project site are state jurisdictional. State-regulated wetlands also have a regulated 100-foot upland buffer area. So once that's determined, all those wetlands also have this regulated upland area, and any impacts to those features will be quantified and explained in the 94-c application. Now, during the delineations, a total of approximately 380 acres of wetlands within the study area were identified. Some of those are going to be state regulated. Some of those are going to be federally regulated. All of those are a sensitive resource that are considered, as I mentioned earlier, during iterative design process and the impacts are balanced with impacts to other potential sensitive resources, and that process is ongoing.

Question 45

Our family property borders Twenty Mile Creek, so we will be concerned with topsoil excavation in the plateau above us. To what degree can we observe the development of the wetland survey? Or is it just a matter of waiting for the 94-c report?

Answer: (Ben Brazell) It's kind of a two-part question. So, the first part with respect to excavation above this commenters land. As I mentioned, there will be a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan implemented for this project during construction. Some of the details associated with that plan will be in the 94-c application, it ultimately is going to include sediment and erosion control measures that essentially require that any siltation, any sedimentation, any soil must remain on site, it can't go off site. Therefore, it couldn't get to an adjacent properties land. With respect to observing the wetland survey, if I interpreted that correctly, the wetland work is done. As I mentioned during the presentation, the results are complete. There was a map in the presentation which will be available on the website. Anybody can access that map and look at the results of the delineation effort. And then there's going to be a lot more detail as well on the application itself.

Question 46

How far from non-participating properties will the solar panels be? Is there a buffer zone from equipment to my property line? I heard rumors of 200ft.

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) I can't address rumors. I know that the town is considering their zoning regulations. So, there may be changes in the future. I do not know what anticipated changes are planning to be made or have been suggested. But I will say that the current zoning law has a maximum setback in the southerly direction of 100 feet, and so we've been applying that from every direction just to make sure that we're adhering to the maximum of the current zoning law that's in place for the Town of Ripley. For your question, you would expect the panels to be 100 feet from property boundaries. That is assuming that a neighboring property is completely developable, so we will also be avoiding wetlands and avoiding other environmental impacts. Even if there are properties on an adjacent property to you, and you're not participating, that doesn't necessarily mean solar panels will be up to the 100-foot setback boundary. But at a minimum, 100 feet for solar panels.

Question 47

Will this project commit to using local labor to the extent possible? Will this project be required to pay NYS prevailing wages?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) Yeah, I think I talked about the first part of that question earlier with our coordination with the local labor unions in Chautauqua County. We will be paying New York State prevailing wages as a requirement of our renewable energy contract with NYSERDA.

Question 48

What are the potential impacts from toxic chemicals leaching to the land if the panels are damaged in something like a hailstorm? Is there a regular inspection schedule of the panels?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) As I mentioned, the studies done to this type of panel have shown that they do not present a danger of toxicity to the general community. Now, this is an interesting question because I think that the other parts are something we haven't discussed yet. But should a panel be damaged in some type of hail event: I know that South Ripley had a pretty gnarly hailstorm a couple of years ago when I was up there, but should panels be damaged, the good thing about solar panels are they are very modular. So, you can remove individual panels or even a block of damaged panels that can be replaced immediately. We will have a full-time operation and maintenance folks monitoring the project area. So, it's not going to be a situation in which they are damaged and then they are just left out there because no one's around. We will have people actively monitoring the project area and for weather events, reviewing and checking in on all the solar equipment, and making repairs or replacement as needed. I think the answer would be a very frequent review to ensure that there's no damage that gets left out there. As I mentioned earlier in the presentation, this type of panel has been studied and does not show the potential of toxicity to the general community.

Question 49

I'm a former farmer who sadly sold because of a declining rural farm economy. I would have loved a project like this to add a passive income stream to our farm and keep the family on the land. Can you speak to how solar projects can work collaboratively with rural farm economies and save farms? There is certainly fear about solar taking farmland. Excited to support project.

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) I think the good part about this type of project is that we are working with landowners that voluntarily signed up and we have done a significant amount of work with landowners to determine what part of properties they want to use. So, we have a couple of farms that I can think of off the top of my head that want to continue to maintain part of their property for farming and use the additional revenue stream for something that won't be impacted by varying prices or a bad year of weather. They use this to help support their farm and continue to make improvements on their farm. We're committed to working with folks, it's not an all or nothing on property situation. If someone wants to lease a smaller amount of property to help support the rest, we have been happy to entertain that and we're committed to working with the farmers that want to sign up. If folks do not want to sign up and continue farming nearby, that's completely fine with us and we're letting them continue to do so. And it's a completely voluntary project. I think it creates a great opportunity for the farmers that are interested like yourself, and it's going to be a huge

boom to the community of Ripley in landowner payments, as I mentioned, \$30 million over the course of the project. Many of those folks live in the project area and will spend money in the project area.

Question 50

How can you say that a solar farm will not affect property value if the NREI in-depth? The national renewable energy laboratory?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) It sounds like they were trying to reference a specific study that I'm not familiar with. If they want to resubmit the question with the study, we can get a written response afterwards. But, you know, in terms of property values we have a few property values studies. I believe they're available on our website in the FAQ section. They have been conducted across the country and they've consistently shown that proximity to large-scale solar projects does not measurably impact property values or deter the sale of properties. These projects are 12-to-14-feet high with minimal noise emitted. They're designed in accordance with strict electrical safety standards. We will be implementing a comprehensive vegetation management plan to help screen them. The impacts on neighboring properties is really limited. The data that has been collected has shown that there's not been a measurable impact on property values. That is what we can say. Something we do offer for neighbors is good neighbor agreements, which for folks that are adjacent to the property that's being developed, that will provide them with an annual benefit. That is another opportunity for folks to get some benefit out of the project, even if they're not participating. Feel free to submit an additional question with the survey or the study that you're trying to reference. And I we can get you a written response.

Question 51
How many acres of pasture/hay will be occupied by the project?

Answer: (John Kuba) This is like a few others that we received like the forest response. The project design is still being finalized and that will ultimately determine the exact number of acres for each type of land use associated with the project area. I can say the project area is made up of pastureland and hay land, very minimal cropland and then some forest land. Those are generally the land use categories that are going to be in the project area.

Question 52

Am I to understand correctly that the net greenhouse gas/CO2 sequestration of the project has not been computed? Not even a first approximation?

Answer: (John Kuba) I think that's a follow up to a question and answer that we received earlier on. I think that was focused on the impacts of removing a tree single tree and its carbon sequestration benefits, versus, the overall impact on the project. And my response was focused on benefit – they're associated with managing grasslands within the larger project area and in place of those forest areas that are removed. In that response, no, we have not run that calculation specifically. I think that's maybe where the commenter was getting, is that the overall impacts of the project on net carbon impact. In this case there's a lot of studies out there that review utility-scale solar projects from birth, through life, and the data there shows after about 12 months of the projects operating as a non-thermal generating source, it repays its carbon footprint in that first 12 months. So, all in all a solar project provides net carbon sequestration benefits by managing the long term but also there's no carbon impact associated with the actual material and design and construction of the project.

Question 53

Could made in USA panels be part of contract?

Answer: (Caton Fenz) I'm willing to assume that the question is about the contract that the project has with NYSEERDA to purchase the renewable energy credits that Isaac discussed earlier. In that case, that contract does not contain any provision requiring the purchase of equipment from any geography. Also, as Isaac referred to earlier, were still in fairly early days from an equipment selection standpoint, for this project. So, when it comes time to do that, we're going to evaluate suppliers for the equipment globally, and then make the best decision for the project.

Question 54

Will you be recycling the panels in the same process of computers?

Answer: (Caton Fenz) So, I'm going to assume that the question that was getting at is what would happen to the panel at the end of the project's life. So, going back to this response earlier, we're assuming a 30 to 35-year project life. How to recycle the solar project equipment, whether it's the panels, whether it be piles or other equipment, is a decision we got a little while to figure out. As we get to year 25, 26, 27 we will evaluate the best way to recycle the panels at that time. And if the last 30 to 35 years have been any indication, we're going to see a lot of evolution in the world, over the next three decades. Ask me that question again in about 25 years.

Question 55

What will be done along borders, so I am not looking at solar panels out my back door that used to consist of a nice woodlot view?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) Yeah, I think this goes back to a couple responses we've made, the first being my response about the setbacks from property lines in the Town of Ripley, having a 100-foot setback. But that doesn't necessarily ensure that there would be any infrastructure within 100 feet because we must look at each individual property and the environmental features on each. Without looking at a map and knowing who asked this, just more generally looking around the project area, we had a couple slides on visual screening and visual viewpoints. And so, for folks that are concerned about specific viewpoints this is something that we're looking at through our visual analysis and putting together a plan for visual screening. There was a planting plan that was demonstrated in those two slides and you can see what the area looks like now, what it will look like with panels and what it will look like with screening, I think that will give you a better idea of our plan to try to shield this from visually sensitive areas. I think it's something that, if you have areas that you want to be considered, we had already coordinated a bit with some of the community on identifying these areas, including The Town of Ripley, but feel free to follow up via e-mail with specific questions about specific properties.

Question 56

Has ConnectGen consulted US Energy Department online solar energy "time to break-even" calculators for this project?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) Not that I know of.

Question 57

How is the NYS DEC involved in this and what are they examining?

Answer: (John Kuba) The NYSDEC is the state regulating agency overseeing the public trust resources such as wildlife, waters, wetlands, et cetera. And so we work with them in multiple ways, they know the resources, they know where sensitive species may occur. They have longstanding records and documentation of that. They can also provide us early information on a project site to help us inform development, inform design, and inform siting. So, we've worked with DEC, starting back in early 2019, identifying resources, gathering data, getting their input on the site. So that's one way that they're involved. Another way is in the regulatory and environmental permitting process. So, under the old Article 10, they were heavily involved as a kind of a permitting body, and under the 94-c process, they are also involved in requiring coordination with developers on various species or natural resource considerations and ultimately providing feedback on design parameters, avoidance minimization, and mitigation measures. As Ben mentioned, a lot of our wildlife study design was coordinated with the DEC to get their feedback and make sure it meets their methodology standards. And then ultimately those study results are reviewed by DEC for their determination of what the potential impacts could be. And then lastly, on waters and wetlands, for any water and wetland crossings of the project, we will need to permit those crossings with the DEC if those crossings are associated with state-jurisdictional waters. So they also have a permitting process that is associated and similar to the 94-c process.

Question 58

Are landowners able to hunt on their property or neighboring property with the solar project in place?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) The solar equipment should be treated as, there are plenty of residents in Ripley that people hunt around, so treated with the same respect you treat someone else's property. You can hunt on your adjacent property and just take the normal precautions that you would take with your property lines and direction of fire, et cetera. We will not be limiting hunting on any adjacent properties and if there are properties that do have solar panels in place, that are large enough to also support a hunting area, that is permitted as long as it is not taking place within the solar panel area.

Question 59

Any vineyards with active grape production proposed for solar arrays?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) For the South Ripley Solar Project there are no vineyards with active grape production within the proposed area to be included at all.

Question 60

Is this meeting recorded and available?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) Yes, this meeting is recorded, and it will be available on our website on materials section. It might take us a week to get everything put together, but it will go on the website, and we'll put up a news bulletin as well, so it's easy to find. It will be available on the website as a video that you can watch. And I think there was another question about availability of Maps. And I just wanted to be clear that final maps will be available with the Application, but this presentation, which included a few maps, is going to be on the recording.

Question 61

Will subcontractors hired by connectgen also be required to pay the New York State prevailing wage for any work performed?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) I believe so. I will need to do a written follow-up on that just to confirm.

Written follow up: Yes, subcontractors will also be required to pay the prevailing wage.

Question 62

Is money set aside for cleanup in the event in 30 yrs. you don't have the income to pay for proper cleanup?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) It goes back to the decommissioning bond and decommissioning plan that will be put in place. So, yes, financial aid commitments will be made early in the project life, specifically for this reason. And I think that's included under the state process and we're going to be outlining the specifics of that in the Application. Bear with us until the Application is prepared. But, yes, there will be protections for the community, down the road.

Question 63

Is there a Deadline for Property owners to sign up for the Solar Project?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) There's not a deadline, but frankly we pretty much completed the majority of the work on the land side. I understand who wants to participate, and who doesn't. So, No, I don't think that there's an official deadline for anyone, but we are kind of finalizing the project plans as we speak.

Question 64

What is decommissioning? Isn't this a permanent endeavor?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) For projects like a solar facility, a 30-year life does feel like a permanent endeavor. However, the equipment and the construction required to implement a solar facility is pretty low impact. So, piles are driven into the ground with limited use of concrete and most of the equipment can be removed quite easily on a large scale. And once these projects are complete and have reached the end of project life, it's the responsibility of the company to remove the project equipment. So that involves taking down the panels, removing the piles, removing some underground infrastructure, including collection lines, anything that's running underground and fences. That is what we

talk about when we talk about the decommissioning. We're not developing a building with a concrete base structure, that kind of takes a permanent impact on to the property. A lot of this equipment can be removed, and the land can be restored quite easily. And so that's why we've been talking about the burden of decommissioning being on the company because we are going to be removing the equipment and returning the land to as it was previously.

Question 65

Have the results of the bird surveys been compared with any open source or other corroborating data source? If so, what were the results of this comparison?

Answer: (Ben Brazell) Yes. I mean, the bird surveys themselves are standalone survey efforts. As I mentioned earlier, they're very specific to some specific types of species grassland species. There are specific protocols put into place to implement those surveys. It's the result of the on-site surveys that become the written report. That will be appended to the 94C application. However, the regulations also require a pre-application phase of the regulations that requires the preparation of what's known as a wildlife site characterization report, which requires obtaining a lot of data and information from various publicly available sources such as Ebird in the Audubon Christmas bird counts, USGS breeding bird survey routes, things of that nature. And so, the wildlife site characterization is also another document that essentially provides another tool for the analysis of wildlife at the facility site.

Question 66

Will you be using broad scale herbicides at the facility?

Answer: (Ben Brazell) To answer that directly, no the plan is not to use broadscale herbicide applications across the site. Now, I want to clarify that we will have a veg management plan that describes how we will manage vegetation long term on the site. And our approach to veg management is one that integrates or incorporates components of integrated veg management, which is a system that uses different techniques depending on the target of your management regime. So, in this case, we want to maintain grassland habitat across the project site and within our veg management zones. We'll use different best management practices, and it can be mechanical, herbicide, or even physical hand plucking of certain plants out right. So, we may use herbicides on the site, but we're not anticipating using them widespread as a broad scale application.

Question 67

What happens to the water-cooling system when the air is well below freezing, like tonight?

Answer: (Nick) Yeah, so it depends on the environment where the system is installed, out in the desert or in the US south, where the weather never gets below freezing, that's just a purely a cooling loop. In environments where it gets a little cooler, they look more closely at the estimated battery time, as well as the anticipated battery use cycle, and a lot of cases, battery just being used to generate enough heat that they don't need to do anything. But for an environment like New York, where they can reasonably expect there may be issues of freezing, they can just put basic anti-freeze in there like what would be in your car. That's the most common. In some cases, some lithium-ion battery performance can be degraded by cold temperatures if the battery isn't being used regularly. Sometimes they will go as far to put an electric heater/cooler loop so they can work to keep the batteries at temperature. But depends on the use case, depends on the manufacturer, a lot of different answers to them.

Question 68

My biggest concern is sound. if I'm sitting on my deck at night.... will I hear buzzing or this type of sound?

Answer: (Ken) We don't do an audibility analysis because everybody's hearing is different and the background sound level changes over time, so I couldn't guarantee that you wouldn't hear anything at night, but it depends on where you are and how close you are, to the energy storage as opposed to the rest of the array. So, what we'll do in the application is describe what the range of the background sound is, and the range of the project sound is, both around the energy storage facility and around the rest of the solar facility. And then also describe what it will sound like and we'll do that for both the daytime and nighttime. Generally, the nighttime impacts, especially in that the main part of the solar facility is relatively low, the inverters generally off and the transformers are relatively quiet. We'll address all that in the sound report.

Question 69

If you put fences around the sites how will the local animals migrate through and use the areas underneath the panels?

Answer: (John Kuba) I want to say back to the map that we showed earlier on the screen, and if you recall, the panel placement areas are aligned in different blocks, kind of spread out and not in one big, lumped area. So, this is done for multiple reasons. There are certain properties that are participating, and so we have the ability to site panels there. But also, more importantly, we sited around certain environmental sensitivities such as riparian corridors, streams, wetlands, et cetera. So, what happens is, the project inherently becomes a patchwork, and in-between that patchwork there are what one could consider riparian or wildlife corridors. So, wildlife can continue to move through the larger project area, unencumbered. To address a couple of specifics, I think the questioner mentioned migration, regarding avian migration, which obviously occurs in this area. There should be no impact there from the project regarding potential short distance migration associated with large mammals out here. Probably the only mammals that are associated with this area with the white-tailed deer and black bear. Those species can move through the project area unencumbered through those existing corridors. Fences are also put up for security reasons. That's an industry best practice that we will apply here. Those fences only occur around those panel box, not around things like collection lines, or access roads, et cetera. So, there's really a limitation on which areas will be affected by fences.

Question 70

How many solar panels will be in the total project?

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) This is one that will be answered in the Application. You know, as I mentioned that the detailed design is still ongoing. That number is still in flux, but it's one of the requirements of the 94-c Application.

Question 71

What can those of us in the local construction industry do to help push this along. What is the next step? How do we help? We are in favor of this going forward.

Answer: (Isaac Phillips) This project is entering a critical phase with the state permitting process. It's always great to hear folks are in support of the project and for any local businesses or local organizations, we'd love to get you involved. On our website we have a couple options. We have a show your support tab where you can sign a support letter for the project that will be sent to local stakeholders. We also have a local business opportunity section, so if you do own a local business that you think could provide a service to us, such as vegetation management, or I've had a few people that own agriculture, or do trucking, feel free to submit your information on our website because we love to keep a database of local entities that can provide these services. So that when we do contract to work out, we can try to bring benefit locally. I think those are the two items that would be great help, especially support letters. As we move through this process, there will be plenty of public meetings. There will be opportunities at The Town of Ripley to speak your mind and say that you're in support of the project and we always value folks doing that. Please check out our website for opportunities there and send an e-mail or your information to our info and we'll be happy to get in touch with you. Once this COVID situation is wrapped up, I'm back to traveling and happy to meet folks in person, as well.

Additional Questions

The following questions were asked during the Live Q&A session, but they were not answered because of time constraints.

Additional Question 1a

Isn't it premature to switch to 94-c /ORES when the 94-c draft regs. have not been adopted or approved?

Written response: DUPLICATE SEE QUESTION 3

Additional Question 1b

How are we having a 94C meeting when they have not been adopted yet? Have you had your meeting with the town first?

Written response: DUPLICATE SEE QUESTION 3

Additional Question 2a

How many jobs remain after construction is done?

Written response: DUPLICATE SEE QUESTION 9

Additional Question 2b

How many full-time workers will this employ?

Written response: DUPLICATE SEE QUESTION 9

Additional Question 3a

In 20 years+., how are you going to ensure antiquated solar panels will be cleaned up?

Written response: DUPLICATE SEE QUESTION 14, 62, 64

Additional Question 3b

Will there be a decommissioning Bond?

Written response: DUPLICATE SEE QUESTION 14, 62, 64

Additional Question 4

What is a transportation corridor?

Written response: DUPLICATE SEE QUESTION 31

Additional Question 5

How does ConnectGen ""ensure"" Ripley Fire District will have the proper equipment and training to respond to any emergency at the project site?

Written response: The Section 94-c regulations will require the preparation of an Exhibit on Public Health, Safety and Security (Exhibit 6). The Exhibit requires the preparation of, among other things, a Site Security Plan and a Safety Response Plan. In addition, Exhibit 18 will include an analysis of whether emergency response contingency plans can be fulfilled by existing local emergency response capacity and identify any specific equipment or training deficiencies in local emergency response capacity. The Application will describe all on-site systems to prevent or handle fire emergencies and hazardous substance incidents in compliance with the New York State Fire Code. Also, the regulations require the operator to conduct training drills with emergency responders at least once per year.

In preparing these Exhibits, ConnectGen will be consulting with local first responders and the Ripley Fire District. Typically, in our experience, the operation of the Facility will not require new specialized equipment or specific purchases for the Facility. As mentioned in Question 11, the Project will generate significant annual revenue for the Fire Department through the Ripley Fire Protection District property tax, which the Facility will be subject to during its operation. Additionally, ConnectGen is committed to working with the Fire District on any necessary additional equipment purchases.

Additional Question 6

Since solar does not meet the Energy Returned on Energy Invested EROEI standard, why would policy makers allow a project that uses more energy to build it than it can produce in its lifetime?

Written response: DUPLICATE SEE QUESTION 22

Additional Question 7a

Are these panels made in China or any other Country outside of our own.

Written response: DUPLICATE SEE QUESTION 6

Additional Question 7b

Will you explain where the components will be built since construction materials from China are constructed using the most toxic methods of any form of energy?

Written response: DUPLICATE SEE QUESTION 6

Additional Question 8

Do you feel that solar farms are appropriate for residential zoning districts and why?

Written response: The South Ripley Solar Project will be located in the Rural/Agricultural Zoning district as defined by the Town of Ripley. No residential zoning districts (R-1 or R-2) are located in the facility site. Please see the Town of Ripley Zoning Map for a comprehensive map of Town Zoning Districts.

Additional Question 9

Will it be rezoned as industrial or commercial?

Written response: DUPLICATE. SEE QUESTION 24

Additional Question 10

Why can't we have map now? Isn't at time of application too late for change?

Written response: DUPLICATE. SEE QUESTION 19

Additional Question 12

Can't we vote on this? Just answering questions doesn't help.

Written response: The development of large-scale renewable energy generating facilities is required by State law to obtain a siting permit pursuant to Executive Law Section 94-c. Development of projects follows a strict process to minimize and mitigate local impacts and the final permit decision is made by the Office of Renewable Energy Siting. New York law does not permit projects through "referendums".

Additional Question 13

Is there a buffer zone from equipment to my property line? I heard rumors of 200ft.

Written response: DUPLICATE SEE QUESTION 46

Additional Question 14

What will this do to my property value?

Written response: DUPLICATE SEE QUESTION 50

Additional Question 15

What benefits are there for residents besides sales/leases of land? Will I experience a reduced electric bill?

Written response: There are many important environmental and energy resiliency benefits associated with solar powered electric generating projects. In sum, the 270 MWs of electricity generated by the South Ripley Solar Project is a substantial amount of clean, renewable electricity that will power modern life without the negative attributes of carbon generating electricity sources. This means that electricity can be generated without air, water, or other harmful emissions or pollution. This benefits the residents of Ripley and the regional generally.

From an economics standpoint, the South Ripley project will generate economic benefits in three ways: (1) direct payments annually to participating landowners and the ripple effect those payments will have when spent in the local economy; (2) good-paying and desired solar construction jobs and permanent operation jobs, which generate

secondary benefits in the local community during construction through the purchasing of local goods and services; and (3) direct payments to the taxing jurisdictions (Town, school districts, County) annually. All residents of the Town benefit by the increased school district revenue, which enables districts to spend money on additional programs, resources and sports. This, in turn, can raise property values and enhance the overall well-being and desirability of the community. Additionally, the direct payments to the Town are over 50% of the Town of Ripley's annual property tax levy (the amount needed to be raised by taxes), thereby creating an opportunity for the Town to spend on additional services, programs or, for example, reducing taxes, as the Town determines to be appropriate.

Additional Question 16

What makes a landowner a "good neighbor" how does that effect compensation?

Written response: Proximity to the facility site is among the determining factors of eligibility for a Good Neighbor Agreement. Please contact the project email, info@southripleysolar.com with requests for Good Neighbor Agreements.

Additional Question 17

Is receipt of the "good neighbor" payments in any way contingent on the recipient's agreement to not complain or criticize ConnectGen? Are any other strings attached?

Written response: The Good Neighbor Agreement (GNA) is voluntary agreement offered to non-participating adjacent landowners who live or own property in the project area. By signing a GNA, the signatory is committing to working with us directly on any issues that arise in the future. If you are considering whether a GNA would work for you, please contact us at info@connectgenllc.com and we can answer questions regarding the agreement.

Additional Question 18

Project life was mentioned early in the presentation. What exactly is the project life?

Written response: The expected project life is 30-35 years.

Additional Question 19

When you are out here? This seems like it could create a bias as they have said they like how they are being paid more by you. This could create bias when they respond to emergency calls.

Written response: Unfortunately, the meaning of this question is not clear. Please submit a clarification to info@southripleysolar.com and we will prepare a response.

Additional Question 20a

Is there a way to get a list of all the individuals that are attending this public meeting?

Written response: In the interests of the privacy of the individuals that attended the event, ConnectGen will not be providing a specific list of attendees, given we did not receive consent from attendees prior to the meeting to share personal information. The meeting received 75 separate registrations.

Additional Question 20b

Will the attendance list for this meeting be made available? Is there anyone from NY State or any NY agency in attendance? If so, who?

Written response: DUPLICATE. SEE ADDITIONAL QUESTION 20A

Additional Question 20c

Curious how many participants are on this call?

Written response: DUPLICATE. SEE ADDITIONAL QUESTION 20A

Additional Question 23

What if the solar panels are damaged in transport or through different storms that could help in a year?

Written response: DUPLICATE. SEE QUESTION 48

Additional Question 24

"So is the answer to the question (has a study been made for storage alternatives including environmental/ initial cost / running cost / longevity and efficiency?) Is yes and if so where we can find such study?"

Written response: ConnectGen did not utilize a publicly available study for the development of its preferred technology type. ConnectGen's project development process utilizes a wide range of factors including, but not limited to, environmental characteristics of sites, land use, equipment economics, and technical characteristics of different electricity producing and energy storing technologies to determine the siting of its projects.

While there are a number of energy storage technologies that have been utilized around the world, improvements in lithium-ion energy storage technology over the last decade have made it best technical option with a limited site footprint. Environmental factors, cost, O&M, longevity, and efficiency are all built into our site and technology selection and project models.

8. Chautauqua County Pre-Application Consultation Meeting Slide Deck (1-26-2021)

South Ripley Solar Project Information Meeting



Connecting Power, Projects, and People

Project Overview



South Ripley
SOLAR PROJECT

Project Owner:
ConnectGen Chautauqua
County LLC

Host Community:
South Ripley, within the
Ripley town boundaries

Renewable Resource:
Solar energy

Projected Capacity:
Up to 270 MWac

New York Homes Powered:
Over 60,000

Projected Land Use:
1,200 to 1,500 acres

Projected Completion Date:
End of 2023

Point of Interconnection:
National Grid South Ripley
230 kV substation

Energy Storage:
20 MWac battery energy
storage component

Project Benefits

DIRECT BENEFITS



Over **\$16 million** in increased property tax revenue over the life of the project to the Town of Ripley and Chautauqua County, comprising over 50% of the Town of Ripley's annual property tax revenue.



Over **\$5 million** in increased revenue to the Sherman and Ripley school districts during the life of the Project.



Up to **220 jobs** anticipated during the peak of construction.



Up to **\$30 million dollars in payments to local landowners** in the form of solar leases, easement agreements, and good neighbor agreements through the life of the Project.

INDIRECT BENEFITS



Revenue to local shops, hotels, restaurants, service and construction material suppliers during construction and operation.



Partnerships with local community groups, local sponsorships, and donations.

Public Engagement to Date

ConnectGen has worked since late 2018 to introduce the Project to the local Ripley community and solicit feedback from interested parties.

- Attended nearly every Town of Ripley Board meeting since **March 5, 2019**
- Landowner meetings held on **April 4, 2019** and **August 15, 2019**
- Project benefit ads in the Dunkirk Observer and Jamestown Post Journal on **August 15, 18 and 22, 2019**
- Project website launched **October 2019**
- Public Involvement Plan (PIP) filed **October 2019**
- Public open houses held on **December 4, 2019**. Meeting notices ran in the local papers two weeks prior to the event and notification letters were mailed to the Stakeholder Notification List
- Project newsletter mailed to each person on the Stakeholder Notification List in **April 2020**; 50 additional copies mailed to the Ripley Town Hall
- Notices of Preliminary Scoping Statement (PSS) filing ran in the local papers **May 14-16, 2020**
- Notices of PSS filing mailed to each person on the Stakeholder Notification List on **May 14, 2020**
- PSS informational packet mailed to the Stakeholder Notification List in **June 2020**
- PSS Public comment and response period completed in **June 2020**
- A project Facebook page was created in **November 2020** to provide project updates and share information

Regulatory Overview: Existing Article 10

- The New York State Article 10 process governs the development of all large-scale energy generating facilities larger than 25 MWs.
- Article 10 Regulations require a comprehensive review of potential project environmental and health impacts, with a focus on sensitive resources including wetlands, nearby residences, sensitive species, agricultural resources, and others.
- Decisions are made by the Board on Electric Generation Siting and the Environment (Siting Board)
- Includes a pre-application phase with a Public Involvement Program Plan (PIP) and Preliminary Scoping Statement (PSS)
 - ConnectGen filed a final PIP in October 2019
 - ConnectGen filed a final PSS in May 2020
 - ConnectGen completed the PSS public comment period in June 2020
- The final Article 10 Application outlines all of the environmental and technical studies and surveys completed for the project and includes a project design that avoids or minimized potential impacts to the local community.

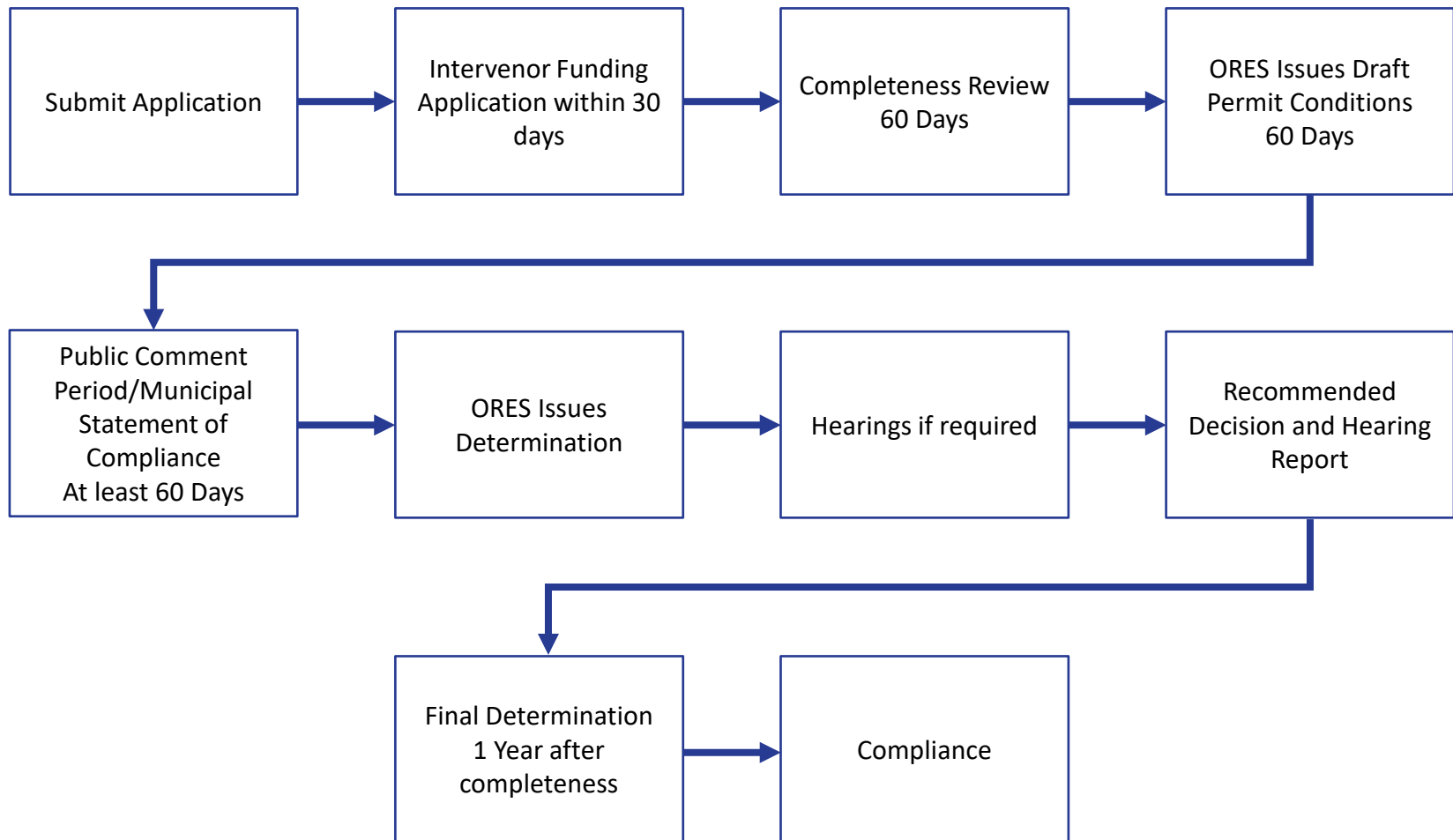
Regulatory Overview: New “Section 94-c” Siting Process

- In 2020, New York State introduced a new permitting process for large scale renewable energy projects, the “Section 94-c” process.
- Final Application is substantively similar to the Article 10 requirements, with many of the same surveys and studies required under both processes.
- Review and decision will be made by the Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES) within the Department of State – draft Regulations and Uniform Standards and Conditions (USC) were issued by ORES on September 16, 2020, with a public comment period through December 6, and are anticipated to be final before April 2021.
- Provides for election to transition into process for existing Article 10 Projects.
- Requires pre-application consultations with state agencies, host municipalities, and meetings with community members.
- Uniform Standards and Conditions (“USCs”) outline design requirements for large scale projects to standardize design expectations regarding setbacks and potentially sensitive resources. Site specific requirements will also augment the USCs.
- Projects must be designed to avoid or minimize, to the maximum extent practicable, potentially significant adverse environmental impacts.

New “Section 94-c” Siting Process (continued)

- ORES must make finding that the project, along with uniform and site-specific conditions, would comply with applicable laws and regulations.
- Only projects with “substantive and significant” issues require evidentiary hearings and briefing.
- Similar to Article 10, ORES can elect not to apply a local law that is unreasonably burdensome in view of CLCPA targets and environmental benefits of the project.
- Requires municipalities to submit a statement of compliance with local laws at least 60 days after issuance of the draft permit.
- Local community intervenors and host towns able to seek intervenor funds (\$1,000/MW).
- 75% of funds reserved for municipalities.
- Must apply for funds within 30 days of application filing.
- Requires host community benefit.

Section 94-c Schedule Overview



Intervenor Funds

What is Intervenor Funding:

Intervenor funding is money that Applicants such as ConnectGen make available to qualified, locally affected parties and municipalities to offset certain expenses they incur in participating in the state permitting process. These funds were created to encourage early and effective public involvement in project development and permitting.

Article 10 PSS Intervenor Fund:

- In May 2020, ConnectGen made \$94,500.00 (\$350/MW) accessible for local community intervenors and the host town for the review of the project's PSS filing.
- The Town of Ripley and the Ripley Fire Department requested and were granted intervenor funds to assist with their review of project documents.

94-c Application Intervenor Fund:

- Upon the filing of a 94-c Application, ConnectGen will post an intervenor fund (\$1,000/MW) which can be sought by local community intervenors and host towns. 75% of funds are reserved for municipalities.
- Must apply for funds within 30 days of application filing:

[Applications for Intervenor Funds to:](#)

19 NYCRR 900-5

New York State Office of Renewable Energy Siting

Attention: Request for Local Agency Account Funding

99 Washington Avenue

Albany, New York 12231-0001

Technical Topics: 94-c Siting Application

All Section 94-c Application Exhibits

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. General Requirements | 10. Geology, Seismology and Soils | 18. Socioeconomic Effects |
| 2. Overview and Public Involvement | 11. Terrestrial Ecology | 19. Environmental Justice |
| 3. Location of Facilities and Surrounding Land Use | 12. NYS Threatened or Endangered Species | 20. Effect on Communications |
| 4. Real Property | 13. Water Resources and Aquatic Ecology | 21. Electric System Effects and Interconnection |
| 5. Design Drawings | 14. Wetlands | 22. Electric and Magnetic Fields |
| 6. Public Health, Safety and Security | 15. Agricultural Resources | 23. Site Restoration and Decommissioning |
| 7. Noise and Vibration | 16. Effect on Transportation | 24. Local Laws and Ordinances |
| 8. Visual Impacts | 17. Consistency with Energy Planning Objectives | 25. Other Permits and Approvals |
| 9. Cultural Resources | | |

Overview of Technical Topics for Discussion

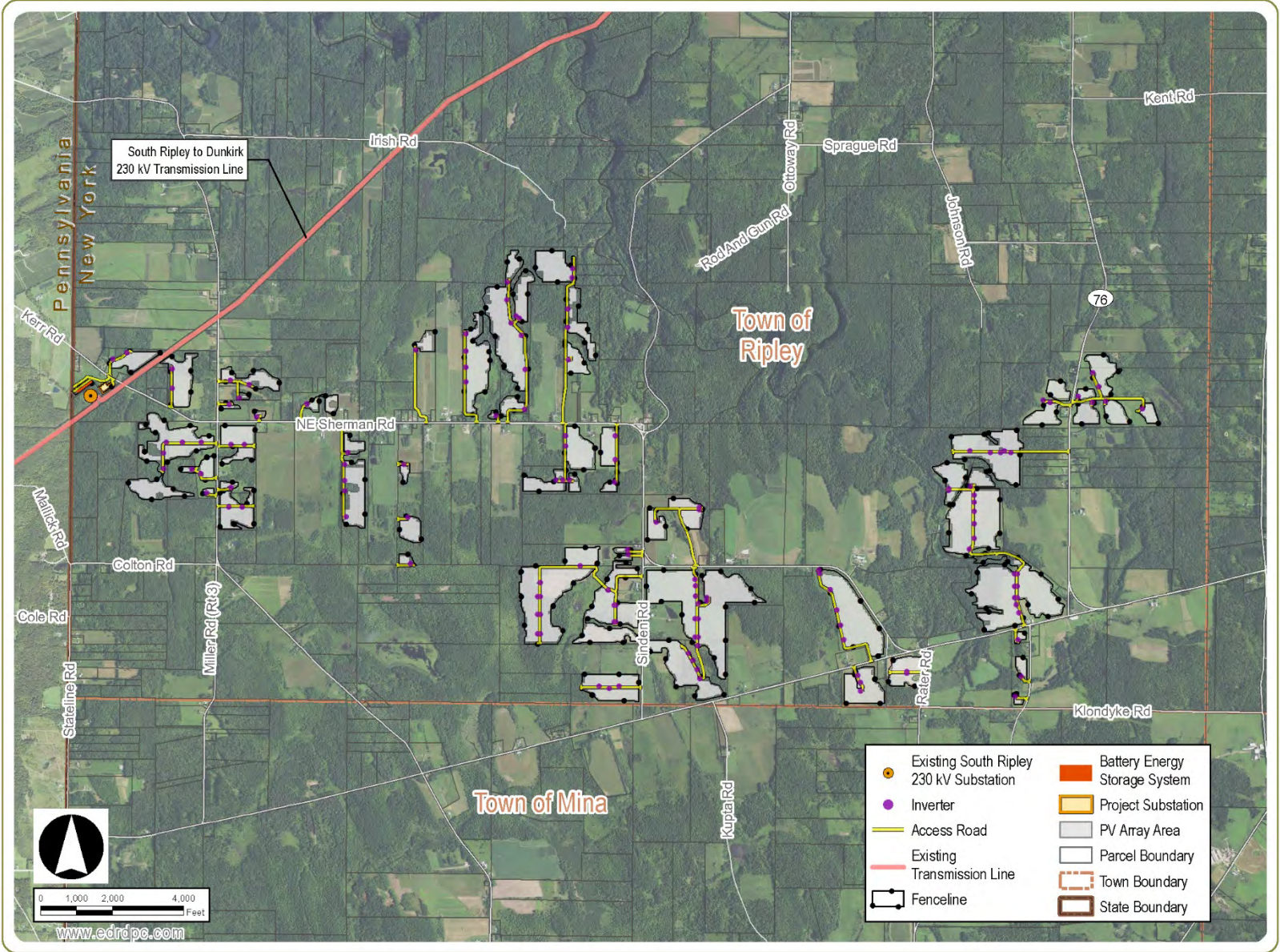
- | | |
|--|---------------------------------------|
| • Layout and Design | • Avian Resources |
| • Local Zoning Regulations | • Wetland and Stream Resources |
| • Public Health, Safety, and Security | • Sound and Noise |
| • Stormwater and Groundwater | • Decommissioning |
| • Visual Impact | |

Layout and Design

Solar Panel Locations and Project Layout

- The Project includes solar equipment, an electrical collection and interconnection system, battery energy storage, and access road locations, which are designed to avoid and mitigate potential impacts, incorporating a wide range of environmental, social, and technical considerations.
- The Project is being designed using New York State regulations, industry standards, and feedback from local community members to minimize potential impacts.
- Development of the project layout and design is an iterative process that considers various sensitive resources and endeavors to balance impacts to identified resources.

South Ripley Preliminary Solar Layout



Local Zoning Regulations

The Town of Ripley's existing zoning regulations provide guidance for solar energy development and construction. These regulations are currently under review by the Town Planning Board and regulations governing energy storage are also being considered.

Applicable Zoning Laws

Section 505: Visibility at Intersections

- Height limitations for vegetation hedges within 50 ft. from intersections

Section 507: Topsoil Excavation

- Management of runoff to neighboring property and topsoil replenishment if necessary

Section 610: Signs

- Requirements for new signage

Section 618: Off-Street Parking

- Off-street access and size requirements

Section 620: Solar and Wind Systems

- Property line setbacks for adjoining properties, zoning district allowances, operations and maintenance plan, decommission plan, height and setback requirements, lot size requirements, lot coverage requirements, and fencing requirements.

Compliance with Local Laws

ConnectGen is designing the project to comply with all existing zoning regulations and will continue to evaluate applicable laws if and when the Town updates specific standards for solar and energy storage.

Stormwater and Groundwater

Section 94-c ensures that renewable energy projects study potential stormwater and groundwater impacts from project development and design management plans to ensure that projects do not change the water runoff characteristics of a site through construction and operation. PV panels are designed to ensure no release or leakage of panel material into the surrounding environment.

A final 94-c Application will include:

- A Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) for the collection and management of stormwater discharges from the facility site during construction.
- A preliminary plan for post-construction stormwater management practices that will be used to manage stormwater runoff from the developed facility site. This plan will be finalized before construction as part of Compliance.
- Plans must be prepared in accordance with the applicable NYS Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activity, the NYS Standards and Specifications for Erosion and Sediment Control, and NYS Stormwater Design Manual.
- ConnectGen will complete a local water well survey for properties within 1,000 feet of project boundaries to effectively site project equipment to avoid potential impacts during construction.
- The 94-c Application will also identify other groundwater resources, such as aquifers.

Avian Resources: Consultations and Surveys

- Consultation with state and federal resource agencies initiated in the summer of 2019, through initial review of databases maintained by the NYSDEC and the USFWS.
- Further consultation and records review with NYSDEC Central Office and Region 9 occurred in the fall of 2019.
- Based on the potential for rare grassland species to be present, a winter raptor survey workplan was prepared and provided to NYSDEC in November 2019.
- Winter Raptor Survey (WRS) took place from November 2019 – March 2020.
- A virtual meeting was held with NYSDEC in April 2020 to review survey results, and a complete WRS report was provided to NYSDEC in May 2020.
- Additionally, a spring Breeding Bird Survey (BBS) was conducted, including preparing a workplan for NYSDEC review in May 2020 and conducting surveys from May – July 2020.
- A complete BBS report was provided to NYSDEC in September 2020.
- The results of all avian surveys were discussed with ORES, and all reports were provided to ORES, in October 2020.

Avian Resources: Results and Conclusions

- The WRS resulted in more than 5,600 survey minutes (over 93 survey hours).
- A total of 62 raptors were observed, most of which were common species such as red-tailed hawk and turkey vulture.
- The only state-listed threatened species observed were bald eagle (5) and northern harrier (7); however, no suspected roost locations or areas of concentrated activity were identified. No state-listed endangered species were observed.
- Of the more than 5,600 survey minutes, only 16 survey minutes included northern harrier and 16 survey minutes included bald eagle, totaling less than 1% of the entire survey effort.
- The BBS resulted in more than 4,680 survey minutes (over 78 survey hours).
- A total of 81 species were observed, most of which were common species such as song sparrow and red-winged blackbird.
- No state-listed threatened or endangered species were observed during the BBS.
- Based on the results of the WRS and the BBS, it was concluded that the Facility Area does not contain occupied habitat for wintering or breeding state-listed threatened or endangered avian species.

Wetlands and Stream Resources

Resource Identification and Field Survey:

- Wetland and Stream desktop approximations were completed in March 2020.
- On-site Wetland and Stream delineations were completed from June – Sept 2020.
- Boundaries of wetland and stream resources were identified within the study area.
- Results are being used to inform Project design through impact avoidance and minimization.
- A final wetland stream and delineation report will be included in the Section 94-c Application.

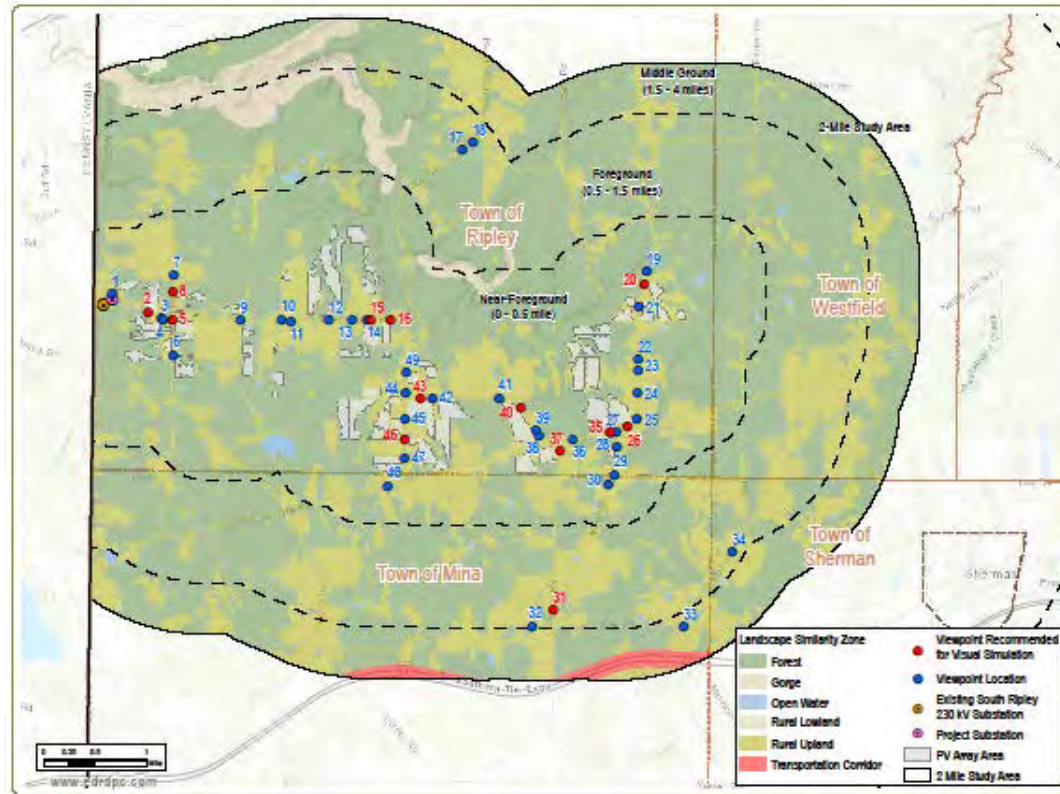


Mapped Wetland: South Ripley, 2020

ORES Consultation and Jurisdictional Determination:

- ORES was provided data from delineations, and representatives conducted site review visits with EDR in November and December 2020.
- Based on delineation efforts and subsequent site visits, a draft wetland and stream delineation report was provided to ORES and NYSDEC in January 2021.
- ORES must issue final jurisdictional determination regarding state-regulated wetlands and streams within 60 days of receipt of the draft wetland delineation report.

Visual Impacts



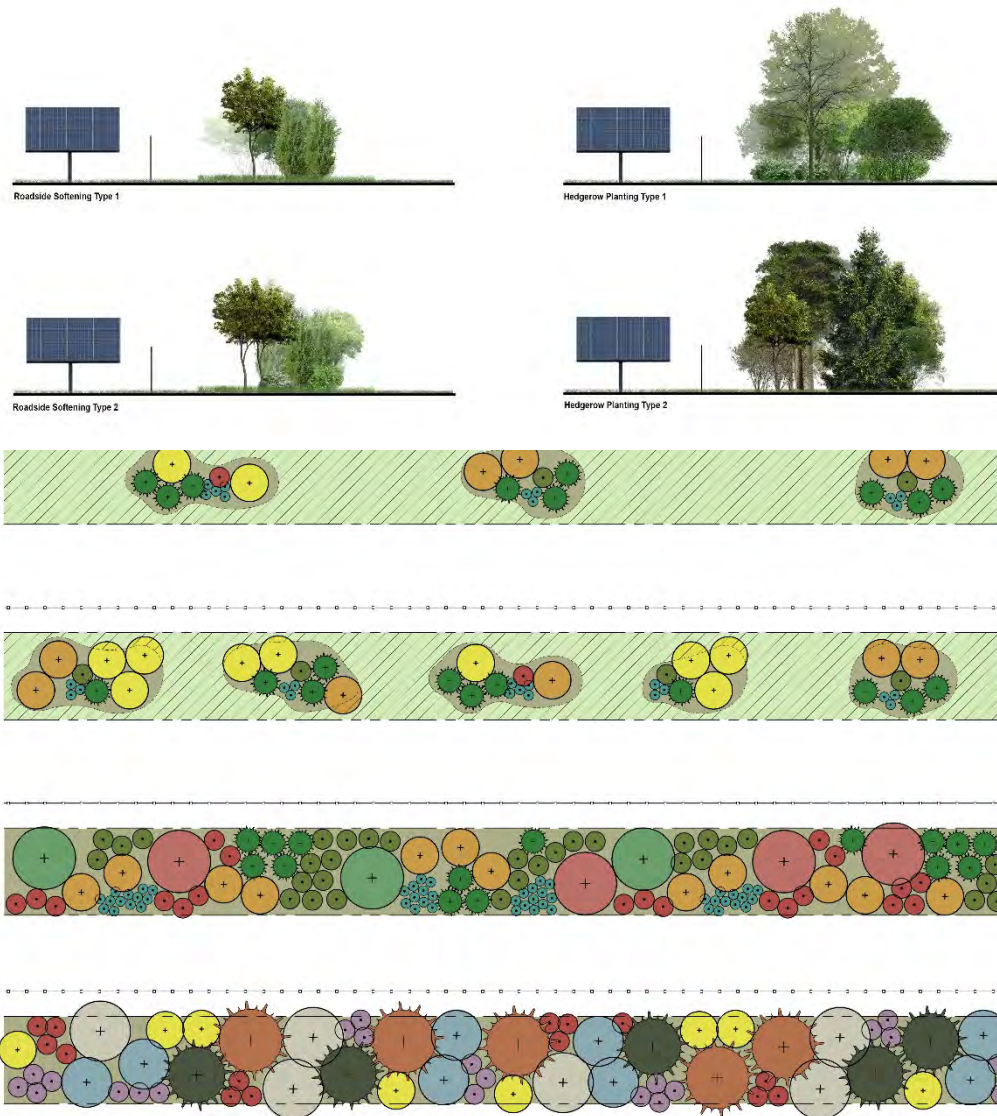
Define Affected Environment:

- Definition of a Visual Study Area (2 miles)
- Identification of Visually Sensitive Resources
 - Review of publicly available data
 - Consultation with state & local stakeholders
- Identification of Viewer Groups
- Landscape Similarity Zone mapping

Evaluate Potential Visibility:

- Viewshed Analysis Mapping
- Field Review and Assessment

Visual Impacts



Appearance of the Facility:

- Proposed Equipment
 - PV Panels
 - Racking
 - Inverters
 - Fencing

- 3-Dimensional Model

Results and Conclusions:

- Visual Impact Analysis
 - Visual Simulations
 - Rating Panel Analysis
 - Visual Mitigation

Visual Simulations

Existing Conditions



Visual Simulations

Visual Simulation



Representation visual simulation only and is not of South Ripley Solar Project

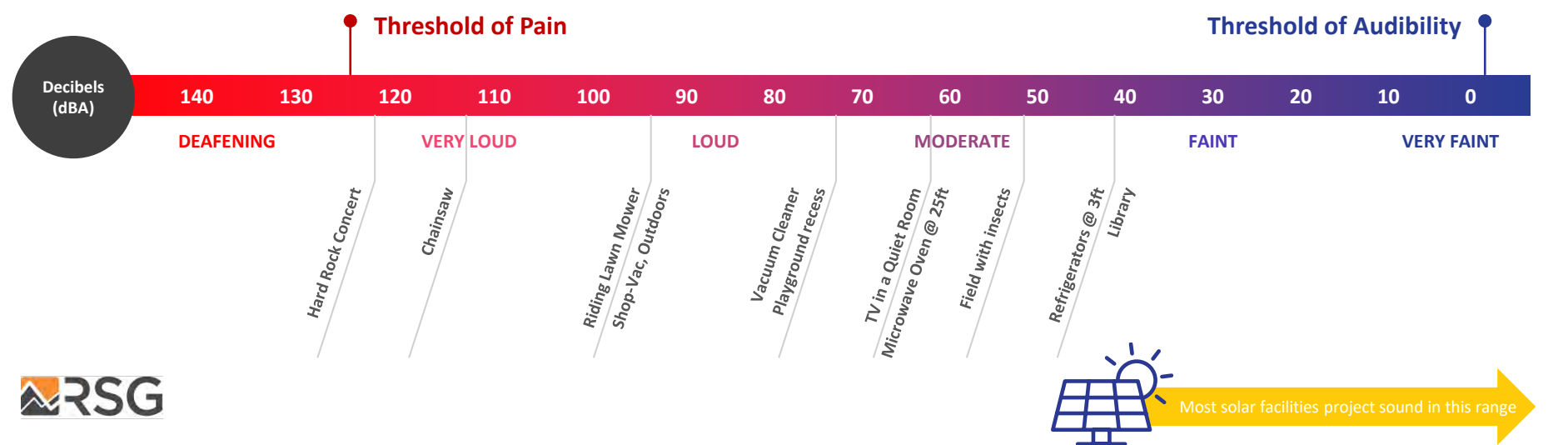
Visual Simulations

Visual Simulation – 5-7 years post installation



Representation visual simulation only and is not of South Ripley Solar Project

Sound and Noise Impact



The equipment anticipated to be used in the South Ripley Solar Project Include:

Solar Panels	Collect solar energy and transform into electricity	<i>Not expected to generate any sound</i>
Inverters	Convert DC to AC current	<i>Generate limited sound during the day</i>
Transformers	Increase the voltage for collection and distribution	<i>Generate limited sounds day and night</i>
Energy Storage	Stores and releases power as needed	<i>Generate sound mostly via the cooling systems</i>

Sound Level Monitoring and Analysis



Sound Monitoring Device in South Ripley (2020)

Sound Level Monitoring:

- ConnectGen completed on-site sound level monitoring in the project area during the 2020 winter and summer seasons.
- Average measured winter background sound in South Ripley is 37 dBA at night, 41 dBA during the day.

Sound Level Modelling:

- International Standards Organization procedures (ISO 9613-2) are used.
- Equipment locations and their maximum sound power are entered in the model.
- Meteorological conditions for downwind or, equivalently, nighttime inversion are assumed.
- Output modeled for all homes and properties in the study area.

Noise Design Goals – Section 94-c

94-c Uniform Conditions and Standards for Sound:

- Non-participating residence = 45 dBA (8-Hour L_{eq})
- Participating residence = 55 dBA (8-Hour L_{eq})
- Non-participating residence = 40 dBA due to substation
- Non-participating property line = 55 dBA (8-Hour L_{eq})
- Separate limits on low frequency sound
- Penalty for audible prominent tones

Other 94-c Requirements:

- Sound propagation model parameter specifications
- Reporting requirements
- Complaint resolution plan

Public Health, Safety, and Security

Solar Panels and Electrical Equipment

- Solar panels must meet strict electrical safety standards.
- Solar panels are designed to ensure no release or leakage of panel material into the surrounding environment.
- Solar projects result in no water discharges.

Battery Energy Storage

- Battery storage systems meet strict local, state, and federal electrical and fire safety standards.
- Battery systems are designed to contain numerous redundant safety measures including 24/7 remote monitoring, internal heat sensors and electrical monitoring, built in exhaust and ventilation, and internal fire suppression systems.

A 94-c Application will include:

- A Safety Response Plan that outlines emergency response measures, descriptions of on-site protection equipment and compliance with New York Fire Code, a requirement to conduct training drills with local EMS once a year.
- A Site Security Plan that includes site plans and descriptions of fencing, gates, electronic security, lighting, and cyber security for the facility.

Decommissioning

94-c Requirements for Decommissioning:

An Application will include a Decommissioning and Site Restoration Plan which addresses:

- Commitments for equipment removal
- Safety
- Environmental impacts
- Aesthetics
- Recycling
- Potential future uses for the Site
- Financial aid commitments
- Schedule
- Estimated cost for decommission and allocation of funding to local municipalities

Project Overview



South Ripley
SOLAR PROJECT

Project Owner:
ConnectGen Chautauqua
County LLC

Host Community:
South Ripley, within the
Ripley town boundaries

Renewable Resource:
Solar energy

Projected Capacity:
Up to 270 MWac

New York Homes Powered:
Over 60,000

Projected Land Use:
1,200 to 1,500 acres

Projected Completion Date:
End of 2023

Point of Interconnection:
National Grid South Ripley
230 kV substation

Energy Storage:
20 MWac battery energy
storage component

9. Preliminary Scoping Statement Slide Deck (5-31-2020)



South Ripley Solar Project

PRELIMINARY SCOPING
STATEMENT SUBMITTAL
AND PROJECT UPDATE

Purpose

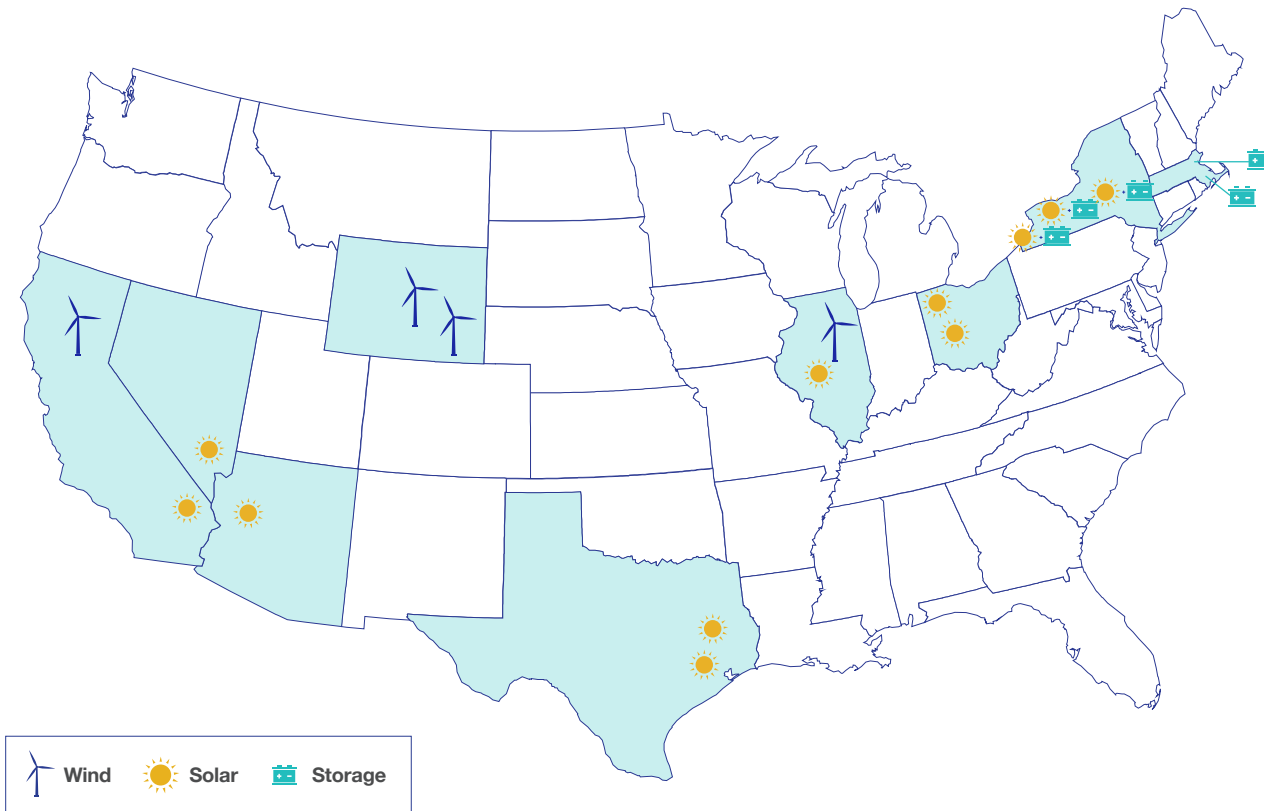


The purpose of this document is to notify the Ripley community that the South Ripley Solar Project submitted its Preliminary Scoping Statement (PSS) on May 22, 2020 and to provide details regarding the information included in the PSS and how you, as a local stakeholder, can get involved in the review process.

Given current COVID-19 concerns, ConnectGen is not able to safely hold a public open house meeting at this time. This mailer contains the information that you would receive at a public open house, and our Project team is available to provide additional information or context as needed. ConnectGen intends to hold future public open house meetings once it is deemed safe to do so and as the Project progresses.

Please submit any questions through the Project website at www.southripleysolar.com or call **1-800-338-8905** to speak to a Project team member. If we do not answer the phone, please leave a detailed message so our team can promptly return your call.

About ConnectGen



Founded in 2018, ConnectGen is an independent renewable energy company focused on the development of high quality wind, solar, and energy storage projects across North America.

Based in Houston, Texas, our experienced team has developed, built and operated thousands of megawatts across North America.



ConnectGen is a subsidiary of 547 Energy, Quantum Energy Partners' clean energy platform company.



Founded in 1998, Quantum Energy Partners is a leading provider of private equity capital to the global energy industry, having managed together with its affiliates more than \$15 billion in equity commitments since inception.

Project Overview



South Ripley
SOLAR PROJECT

Project Owner:
ConnectGen Chautauqua
County LLC

Host Community:
South Ripley, within the Ripley
town boundaries

Renewable Resource:
Solar energy

Projected Capacity:
Up to 270 MWac

New York Homes Powered:
Up to 67,000

Projected Land Use:
Up to 2,000 acres

Projected Completion Date:
End of 2023

Point of Interconnection:
South Ripley 230 kV
Substation

Energy Storage:
20 MWac battery energy
storage component

Project Benefits

DIRECT BENEFITS:



Over **\$18 million** in increased revenue to the Town of Ripley, Chautauqua County, and the Sherman and Ripley school districts during the life of the Project



Up to **220 jobs** anticipated during the peak of construction



Up to **\$40 million dollars in payments to local landowners** in the form of solar leases, easement agreements, and good neighbor agreements through the life of the Project

INDIRECT BENEFITS:



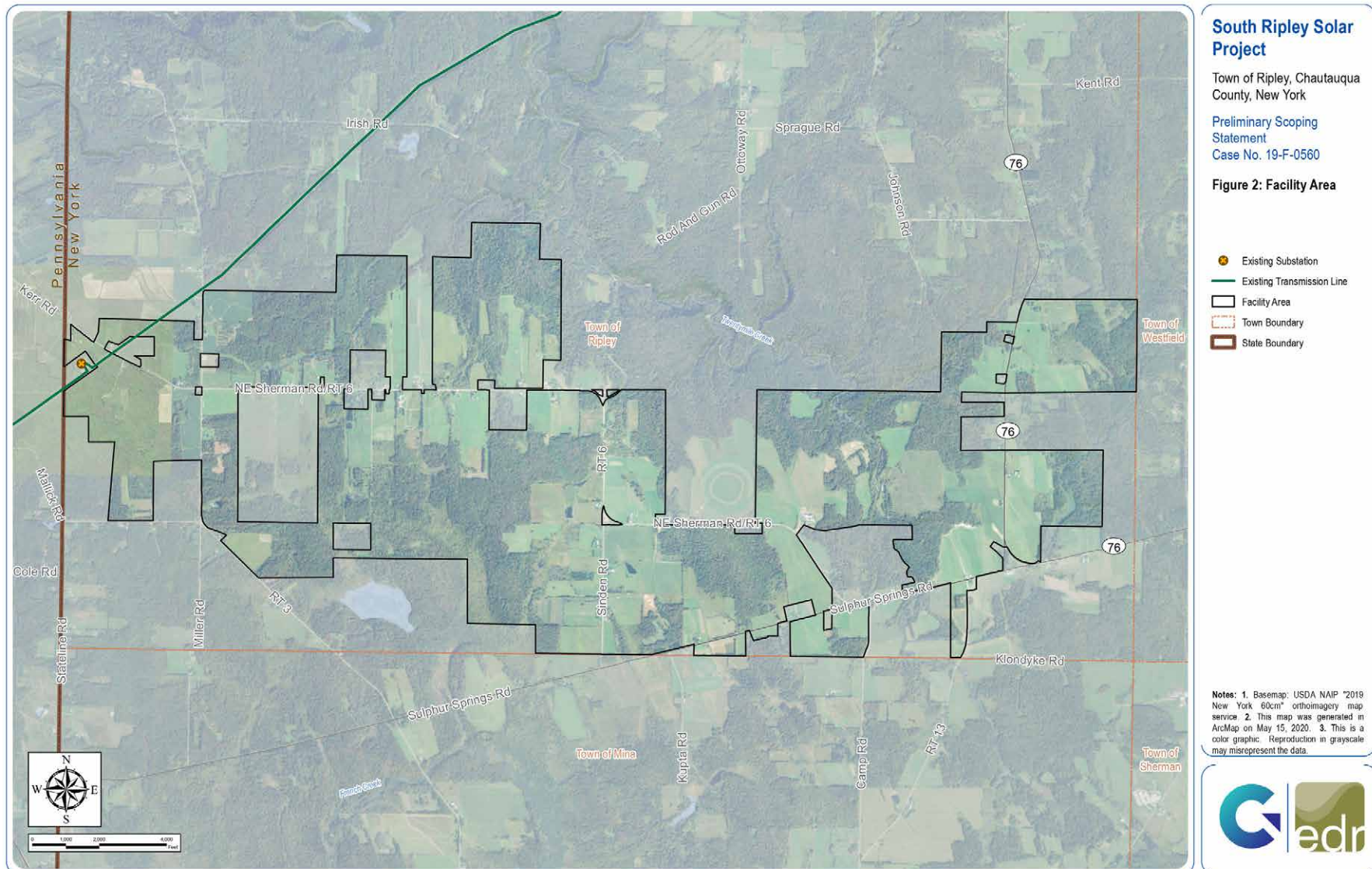
Revenue to local shops, hotels, restaurants, service and construction material suppliers during construction and operation



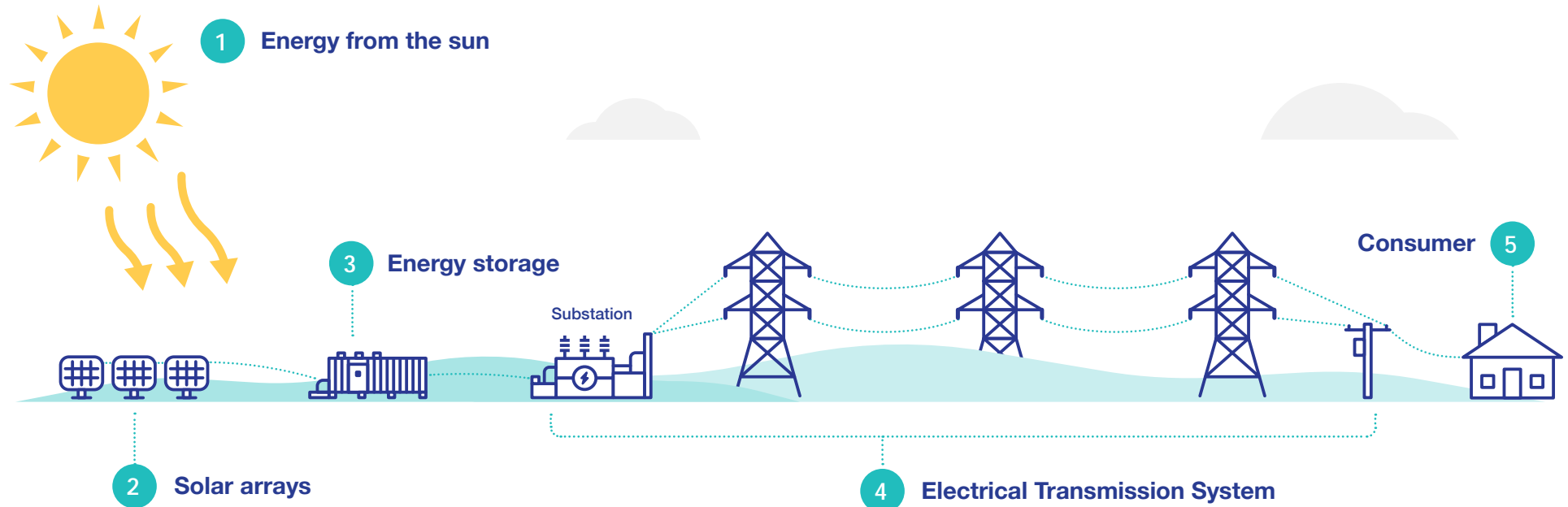
Partnerships with local community groups, local sponsorships, and donations

Potential Facility Area

Map shows potential participating parcels. Not all parcels within map boundaries will participate, and solar panels will not be installed over the full area. Final Facility maps will be available once ConnectGen files its Project Application in accordance with the New York State permitting process.



How Does Paired Solar and Energy Storage Work?



1 Energy from the sun falls onto the earth's surface each day in the form of sunlight. The sunlight is absorbed by the solar panels, converting it into electricity.

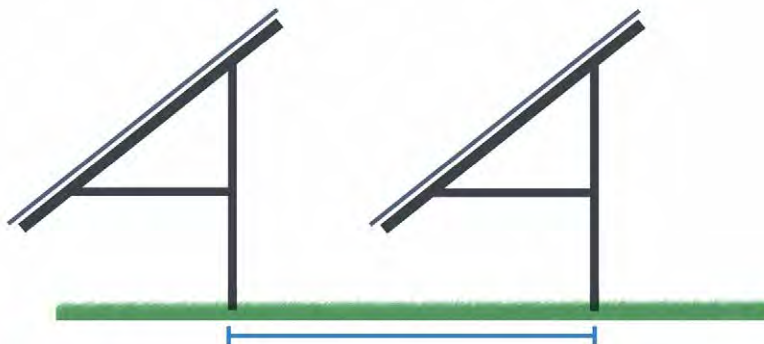
2 The absorbed sunlight is transformed into usable energy by way of an inverter that turns direct current (DC) energy into alternating current (AC) electricity. AC is the form of power used in homes and businesses.

3 Energy storage in the form of batteries allows projects to store electricity produced by the solar arrays and use it when the electric grid needs it most.

4 Electricity generated travels through transmission/distribution lines to homes and businesses.

5 Electricity produced by solar can then be used by the consumer

The Basics of Solar



Typical Solar Module Spacing: at least 12 feet



Typical Solar Module Height: 12 feet

Solar panels are safe

- Photovoltaic (PV) panels must meet strict electrical safety standards
- PV panels are designed to ensure no release or leakage of panel material into the surrounding environment
- PV panel arrays are fenced to ensure safety and security

Solar panels produce minimal glare

- PV panels are designed to absorb light, not reflect light, and therefore produce minimal glare

Solar panels are quiet

- PV panels make little or no sound
- Associated electrical equipment creates minimal sound
- Limited required equipment maintenance such as mowing or access road upkeep would be conducted periodically during the day

Solar panels do not pollute

- PV panels produce no combustion, emissions, or odors
- PV panels result in no water discharges or use of neighboring water bodies for heating or cooling

Energy Storage

The Project is anticipated to include 20 megawatts (MW) of energy storage in the form of batteries near the South Ripley Substation

WHAT BENEFITS DOES ENERGY STORAGE BRING?

- Energy storage allows the Project to save energy during low load times and discharge onto the grid when people need power.

WHAT TECHNOLOGY IS USED?

- Most large-scale energy storage projects utilize lithium-ion batteries – the same technology used in electric vehicles and medical equipment.
- ConnectGen will continue to evaluate the best technologies for the South Ripley Solar Project.

WHAT DO THESE BATTERIES LOOK LIKE?

- Batteries are typically installed in 40 ft x 8 ft enclosures, similar to shipping containers.
- The total footprint of the energy storage system is expected to be less than 1 acre.

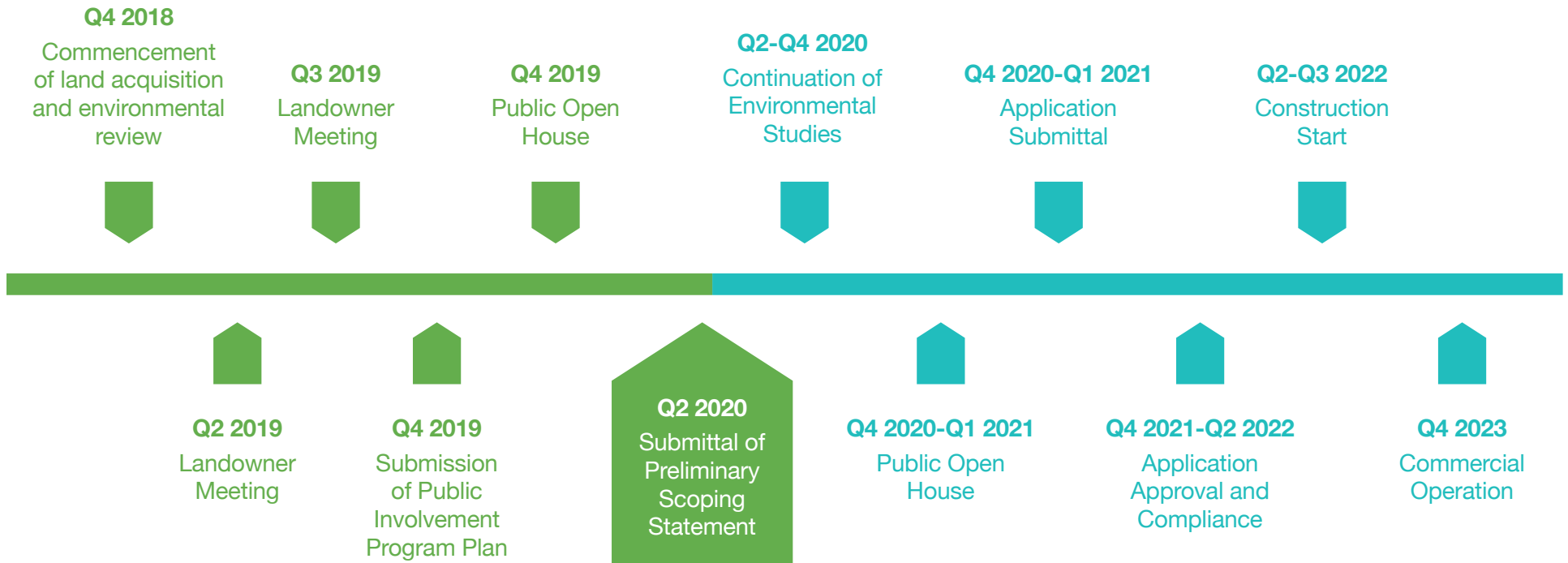


Aerial view of KCE NY 1 located in Saratoga County, NY. Photo courtesy of Key Capture Energy.

Anticipated Project Timeline



- ConnectGen has worked since late 2018 to introduce the Project to the local Ripley community, perform initial environmental analyses, and progress through the early stages of the state permitting process
- Through 2020, ConnectGen will perform and complete a wide range of environmental and technical studies to prepare for the submittal of a formal Application through the state permitting process
- ConnectGen expects to commence construction on the Project in Q2 or Q3 of 2022, with commercial operation starting by the end of 2023



CONTINUED PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT THROUGHOUT THE PROJECT LIFE

New York State Permitting Process

New York State requires that major electric generation facilities (25 MW or more), including solar projects, undergo a rigorous state permitting process, prior to construction and operation.

The South Ripley Solar Project is currently progressing under Article 10, which requires the New York State Board on Electric Generation Siting and the Environment (Siting Board) to issue a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Certificate) authorizing the construction and operation of major electric generating facilities.

For more information on the New York State permitting process, visit the New York State Department of Public Service's Siting Board home page:

www3.dps.ny.gov (see Featured Pages in the footer on the DPS website)



Under the New York State permitting process, utility scale solar developers are required to:

- Solicit extensive public input
- Engage a wide range of local stakeholders
- Evaluate environmental, public health, economic benefits and public safety impacts of development
- Establish comprehensive strategies for safe operation, project maintenance, and end of life decommissioning

Public Involvement Program Plan (PIP)



On October 30, 2019, ConnectGen filed the Project's Public Involvement Program (PIP). The PIP identifies the project's stakeholders, the methods by which stakeholders will be notified and consulted throughout the Article 10 process, and activities ConnectGen will engage in to encourage stakeholder participation. ConnectGen's goal is to provide information to stakeholders, understand stakeholder interests, identify any additional stakeholders potentially affected by the South Ripley Solar Project, solicit information from stakeholders during public outreach events and generally foster public participation in the Project review process.

In addition to the public engagement performed under the PIP, ConnectGen understands from firsthand experience that it is essential to be an active part of the communities in which we work. We are pleased to have supported the following organizations in the Town of Ripley and Chautauqua County:

- South Ripley Firehall Holiday Extravaganza
- Meeder's Restaurant COVID-19 Community Support
- Ripley Elementary School Table or Treat, and Student Work Showcase
- Findley Lake Harvest Festival
- Great Blue Heron Music Festival
- Main Street Pizza COVID-19 Community Support



ConnectGen team members at the August 2019 landowner meeting

Preliminary Scoping Statement (PSS)



On May 22, 2020, ConnectGen filed the Project's Preliminary Scoping Statement (PSS). The PSS provides a description of the proposed Project, potential environmental and health impacts, details the proposed studies that will be performed to evaluate potential impacts, and outlines the proposed mitigation measures and reasonable alternatives to the Project. The major components of the PSS include a discussion on:

- Proposed facility and environmental setting
- Potential significant, adverse environmental and health impacts
- Proposed studies to evaluate potential adverse impacts
- Proposed measures to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts
- Proposed reasonable alternatives
- Proposed visual simulations to identify potential visual impacts
- Information regarding plans for decommissioning
- Proposed socioeconomic impact studies
- State and federal requirements

Stakeholders can find a copy of the PSS on the Project website at <https://www.southripleysolar.com/article-10-process/> or by visiting one of the local document repositories (see last slide for locations). There is a 21-day period for the public to comment on the PSS, and ConnectGen will have 21 days to respond to all comments received. Members of the public can submit comments by serving such comments on ConnectGen and filing a copy with the Secretary of the Siting Board at the addresses provided below.

ConnectGen LLC
Attn: Isaac Phillips
1001 McKinney Street, Ste. 700
Houston, TX 77002
Toll-Free Phone: (800) 338-8905
Email: info@southripleysolar.com

New York State Siting Board
Honorable Michelle L. Phillips
Secretary to the Commission
NYS Public Service Commission
Agency Building 3
Albany, NY 12223-1350

Intervenor Funding



Through the state permitting process, ConnectGen will provide funds to encourage intervenor participation.

\$94,500

**IS NOW
AVAILABLE FOR
INTERVENOR USE**

\$1,000/MWac

**WILL BE PROVIDED AT
THE TIME THE OFFICIAL
PROJECT APPLICATION
IS FILED**

- Funds will be distributed to certain parties that make a request to cover expenses toward participating in the review and providing feedback on project materials.
- At least 50% of the funding is reserved for municipal stakeholders.

To learn more about intervenor funding, please visit the DPS website at www3.dps.ny.gov.

ConnectGen is required to provide funds to be disbursed by the Siting Board to intervenors – qualified, locally affected parties and municipalities – to offset certain expenses they incur in participating in the state permitting process. This requirement was put in place to encourage early and effective public involvement.

Following the PSS filing, on May 27, 2020 the Hearing Examiner issued a notice of availability of pre-application intervenor funds. Initial requests for funding must be submitted within 30 days of the notice. Eligible municipal and local parties may file requests for funds with the Secretary of the Siting Board, submitting a copy to the Presiding Examiner and other parties to the proceeding. A pre-application meeting or conference call will be scheduled by the Hearing Examiner and will occur between 45 and 60 days after the filing of the PSS, and funds will be disbursed to parties if it is determined that the funds will be used to contribute to a complete record leading to an informed decision.

Once the application is submitted, an additional amount of intervenor funding will be made available for parties to participate in the Application and Hearings phases of the state permitting process. The Hearing Examiner will set a deadline for parties to request money and will hold a pre-hearing conference to discuss requests and award funds.

By law, 50% of the intervenor funds are reserved for use by municipalities.

Public Health and Safety



ConnectGen is committed first and foremost to public safety throughout the development, construction, and operation of the South Ripley Solar Project. ConnectGen will coordinate extensively with the local and county Fire Departments and Emergency Services to ensure the Project is designed safely and that a comprehensive Emergency Response Plan is put in place prior to operation to protect the community.

SOLAR PANELS AND ELECTRICAL EQUIPMENT

- PV panels must meet strict electrical safety standards
- PV panels are designed to ensure no release or leakage of panel material into the surrounding environment
- Solar projects produce no fossil fuel combustion, emissions, or odors
- Solar projects result in no water discharges or use of neighboring water bodies for heating or cooling

BATTERY ENERGY STORAGE

- Battery storage systems meet strict local, state, and federal electrical and fire safety standards
- Battery systems are designed to contain numerous redundant safety measures including 24/7 remote monitoring, internal heat sensors and electrical monitoring, built in exhaust and ventilation, and internal fire suppression systems



Environmental Considerations

ConnectGen will consult with many state and federal agencies and stakeholders, including: the NYS Department of Public Service, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, State Historic Preservation Office, local historical society, and planning/special interest groups to ensure that potential environmental impacts are fully considered. Studies to help avoid and minimize potential impacts include the following:

WETLANDS



Review of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Wetland mapping

Field investigations to identify and delineate wetlands and streams

RARE/THREATENED/ ENDANGERED SPECIES



Coordination with NYSDEC, USFWS, and natural resource management entities

Field investigations to identify potential habitats or species of concern

ARCHAEOLOGY



Coordination with the New York State Historic Preservation Office, and regional advocacy groups

Research and field investigations to identify previously known or unidentified archeological sites

HISTORIC PROPERTIES



Research, consultation with State Historic Preservation Office and regional historical groups

Evaluate historic properties to determine their eligibility for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places

Evaluate potential visual effect on historic properties

Visual Impact Assessment

ConnectGen has initiated the process of conducting a visual impact analysis to assure that potential visual impacts from the Project are minimized through a variety of screening practices. The assessment includes:

- Coordination with local stakeholders to identify visually sensitive areas
- Visual simulations of the Project overlaid on high resolution Project-specific photography from representative viewpoints
- Development of minimization recommendations and designs such as vegetation screening, fencing, and setbacks to avoid, minimize, or mitigate visual effects



STATE PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS

- Identification of visually sensitive resources, including recreational areas, residences, businesses, historic sites and scenic byways (interstate and other highway users), as well as specific locations identified by municipal planning representatives and relevant state agencies
- An evaluation of potential Project visibility through a viewshed analysis
- Visual simulations of the Project from representative views
- An assessment of the potential visual impacts associated with the Project and a description of the visual resources potentially affected
- A description of proposed measures that may be implemented to avoid, minimize, or mitigate visual effects

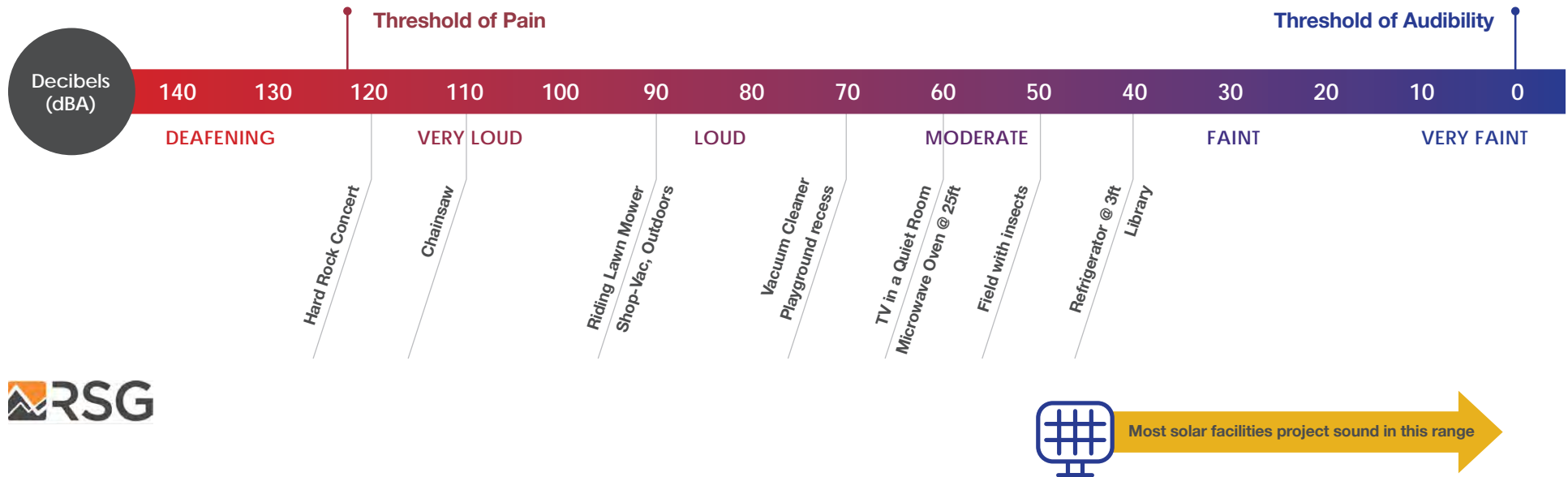
WHO IS CONDUCTING THE STUDY?

- Environmental Design and Research (EDR) has been retained to conduct the visual study
- EDR is a leading firm in environmental impact analysis of renewable energy projects in the New York SEQRA and Article 10 processes

Noise and Acoustics

NOISE AND ACOUSTICS

- Average measured winter background sound in South Ripley is 37 dBA at night, 42 dBA during the day
- Typical solar projects are sited such that noise levels do not exceed 45 dBA at the nearest non-participating residence



THE EQUIPMENT ANTICIPATED TO BE USED IN THE SOUTH RIPLEY SOLAR PROJECT INCLUDE:

Solar Panels	Collect solar energy and transform into electricity	Not expected to generate any sound
Inverters	Convert DC to AC current	Generate some sound during the day
Transformers	Increase the voltage for collection and distribution	Generate some sound day and night
Tracking Motors*	Tilt the panels toward the sun	Minor source of sound during the day
Energy Storage	Stores and releases power as needed	Generate sound mostly via the cooling systems

*ConnectGen is currently evaluating the project both with and without tracking motors. Any noise study or modelling will utilize the anticipated site layout with equipment defined.

Noise Impact Assessment

ConnectGen is in the process of conducting a noise impact assessment. The assessment includes:

- Background sound monitoring to assess existing sound levels throughout the Project area
- Sound propagation modeling to project future sound levels from the Project through the surrounding area
- Development of mitigation recommendations to ensure that the Project meets applicable sound limits



Photograph from Background Sound Monitoring Station in South Ripley during the Winter

STATE PERMITTING REQUIREMENTS

- Evaluation of pre-construction sound levels, future sound levels, prominent discrete tones, and construction noise
- An evaluation of potential indoor and outdoor impacts from sound generated by the Project
- Mitigation measures designed to meet any local requirements and sound design goals for the facility at residences, outdoor public facilities and areas, other noise-sensitive receptors, and representative external property boundary lines of the Project

WHO IS CONDUCTING THE STUDY?

- Resource Systems Group (RSG) has been retained to conduct the noise study
- RSG is a leading firm in the field of noise from renewable energy facilities
- RSG is a member of the National Council of Acoustical Consultants and consultants working on this Project are Board Certified through the Institute of Noise Control Engineering

Other Project Considerations Identified in the PSS



In addition to the environmental impact analyses discussed in previous slides, the PSS outlines a wide range of design considerations, technical studies, impact analyses, and management plans that ConnectGen will develop for the Application. These include, but are not limited to:



Design Drawings – Preliminary Design Drawings will depict the approximate location of all proposed Project components and anticipated construction staging/material laydown areas and areas of disturbance.



Effect on Transportation – An analysis of the suitability of, and potential impacts to, the transportation networks to be used in the construction and operation of the Project.



Socioeconomic Effect – A Socioeconomic Report that quantifies the potential countywide and statewide socioeconomic impacts of the Project based on current socioeconomic conditions of the area.



Site Restoration and Decommissioning Plan – A Site Restoration and Decommissioning Plan requiring/outlining commitments for equipment removal, recycling and disposal considerations, and financial aid commitments.



Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan – A comprehensive stormwater management plan providing information on construction erosion and sediment control measures, post-construction erosion and sediment control measures (vegetative and structural), and anticipated stormwater management practices that will be used to reduce the rate and volume of stormwater runoff after construction has been completed.



Electric and Magnetic Fields – An EMF study that models the strength and locations of EMFs that will be generated by the Project.

Application

Once ConnectGen has completed all environmental and technical studies identified in the PSS, the company will file an Application for Certification of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need. ConnectGen currently anticipates filing the Application in late 2020 or early 2021. The Application must include major Project information including but not limited to:

- *A Project description and design specifications including a preliminary Project layout*
- *A summary of all public involvement activity*
- *Evaluation of expected environmental and health impacts, environmental justice issues, and reasonable alternatives*
- *Project and community safety plans*

Following the Application submittal, the Siting Board will set a schedule for public hearings and review of the Application materials. This review process often takes at least twelve months after the Application has been filed.

Siting Board Decision: The Siting Board must make explicit findings about the nature of the environmental impacts related to construction and operation of the Project and related facilities. Specifically, the Board will consider impacts and benefits to:

- *Statewide electrical capacity*
- *Ecology, air, ground and surface water, wildlife, and habitat*
- *Public health and safety*
- *Cultural, historical, and recreational resources*
- *Transportation, communication, utilities, etc.*
- *Cumulative emissions on the local community according to environmental justice regulations*

The Siting Board must determine that the Project is a “beneficial addition or substitute for” generation capacity, that construction and operation are in the public interest, that adverse environmental effects will be minimized or avoided, and that the Project is in compliance with state laws and regulations.

How can you get involved?

South Ripley Solar Project Contact:

Isaac Phillips
Development Associate
ConnectGen LLC

(800) 338-8905
www.SouthRipleySolar.com
info@SouthRipleySolar.com

DPS Public Information Coordinator:

James Denn, Public Information Coordinator
NYS Department of Public Service
3 Empire State Plaza, Albany, NY 12223-1350
(518) 474-7080
James.Denn@dps.ny.gov

State DMM:

<https://tinyurl.com/south-ripley-article-10>; Case Number: 19-F-0560

Local Document Repositories:



Ripley Town Clerk's Office

14 North State Street
Ripley, NY 14775



Ripley Library

64 Main Street
Ripley, New York 14775



Minerva Free Library

116 Miller Street
Sherman, NY 14781

Local Business Opportunities

We are in the process of identifying qualified local and regional businesses that could assist with the development, construction and maintenance of the South Ripley Solar Project. Please visit www.southripleysolar.com/local-business-opportunities to see a list of business opportunities and to help us understand your business capabilities. We look forward to hearing from you.

10. Open House Meeting Boards (12-4-2019)



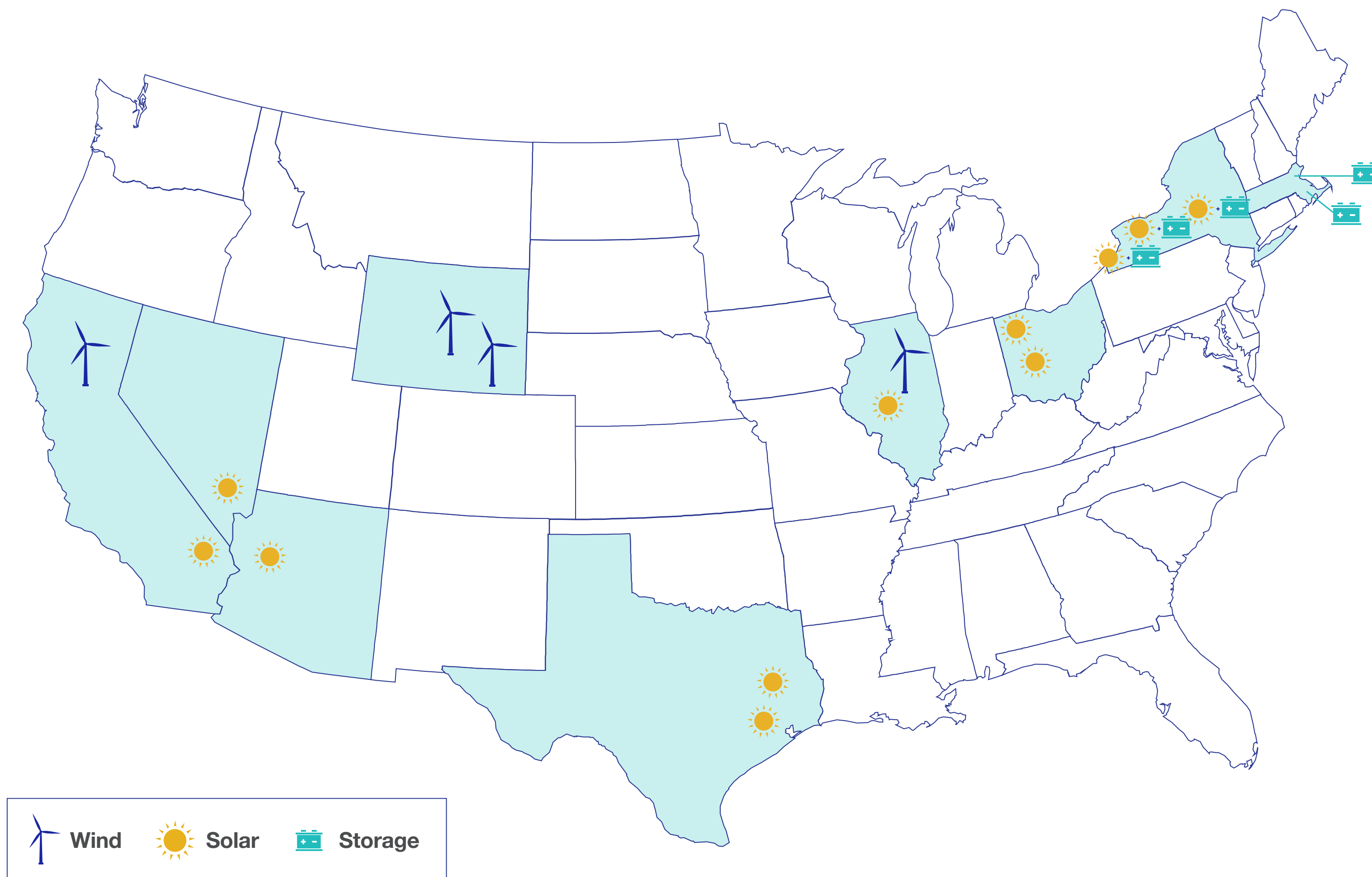
WELCOME TO THE

South Ripley Solar Project

OPEN HOUSE MEETING

PLEASE SIGN IN

About ConnectGen



Founded in 2018, ConnectGen is an independent renewable energy company **focused on greenfield development** of high quality wind, solar and energy storage projects across North America.

Based in Houston, Texas, our experienced **team has developed, built and operated** thousands of megawatts across North America.

ConnectGen is backed by Quantum Energy Partners. Founded in 1998, Quantum Energy Partners is a leading provider of private equity capital to the global energy industry, having managed together with its affiliates more than \$16 billion in equity commitments since inception. You can find more information about Quantum Energy Partners at: www.quantumep.com.



ConnectGen's New York Experience



EXPERIENCE

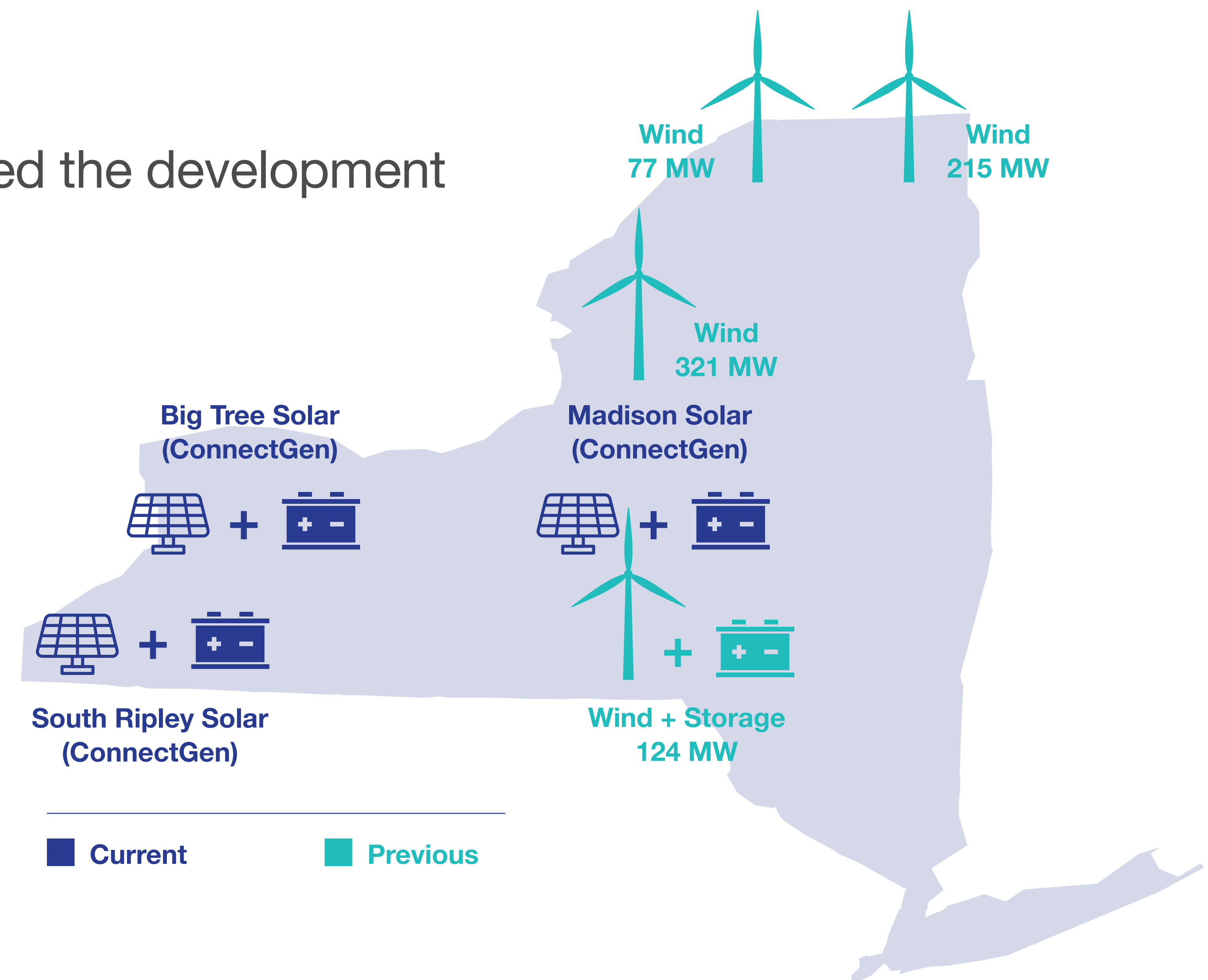
The ConnectGen team has previously managed and led the development of four utility-scale wind farms across New York, three of which are currently in operation.

CURRENT DEVELOPMENT

ConnectGen is in the process of developing three utility-scale paired solar / storage facilities in New York while also continuing to assess additional opportunities across the state.

CONNECTING POWER, PROJECTS, AND PEOPLE

ConnectGen's experienced development team has a track record of successfully identifying, developing and constructing renewable energy projects. Our previous project successes have been built on a foundation of strong relationships with the landowners and communities hosting the projects. We are committed to working with landowners, neighbors, and all project stakeholders to safely and responsibly design and build projects that bring long-term benefits to the communities.



Project Overview



Project Owner: ConnectGen Chautauqua County LLC

Host Community: South Ripley, within the Ripley town boundaries

Renewable Resource: Solar energy

Projected Capacity: Up to 270 MWac

New York Homes Powered: Up to 67,000

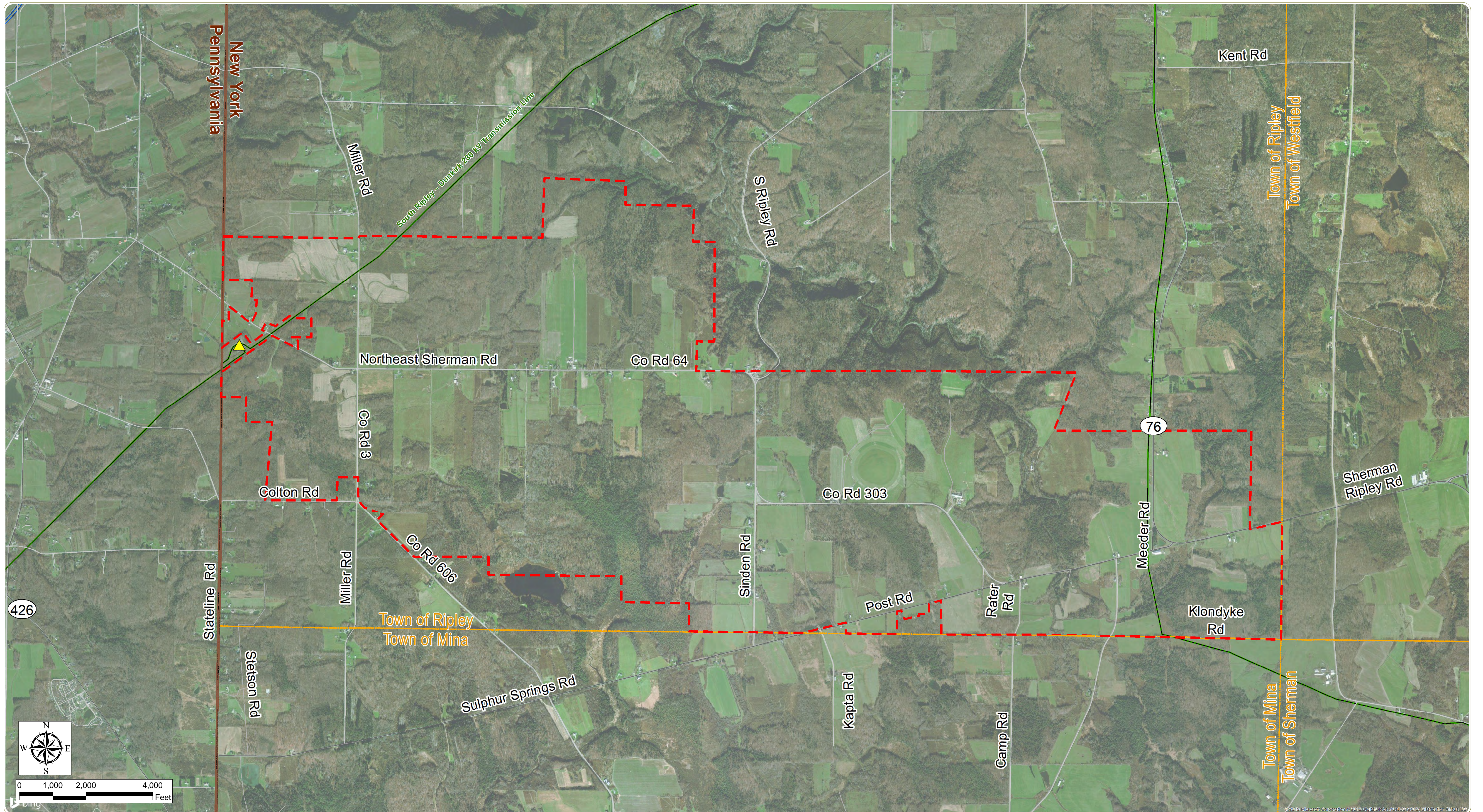
Projected Land Use: ~2,000 acres

Projected Completion Date: End of 2022 or 2023

Point of Interconnection: South Ripley 230 kV Substation

Energy Storage: Potential battery energy storage component





South Ripley Solar Project

Town of Ripley, Chautauqua County, New York

Preliminary Facility Area

▲ South Ripley 230 kV Substation

— Transmission Line

- - - Facility Area

- - - Town Boundary

— State Boundary

Notes: 1. Basemap: Bing Maps "Aerial" map service.
2. This map was generated in ArcMap on November 22, 2019.
3. This is a color graphic. Reproduction in grayscale may misrepresent the data.



Why did ConnectGen Choose South Ripley, New York?



State Renewable Goals

- New York State has set a goal for the state's utilities to source 70% of their electricity from renewable energy by 2030 and for them to reach 100% zero carbon electricity by 2040.



Article 10 Permitting

- Article 10 provides for the siting review of new electric generating facilities in New York State by the Board on Electric Generation Siting and the Environment (Siting Board) in a unified proceeding instead of requiring a developer to apply for numerous state and local permits.



Supportive Community

- Chautauqua County has a historic interest in renewable energy development.
- Ripley and South Ripley have supported the development of renewable energy.



Existing Transmission

- The South Ripley Solar Project will be located in close proximity to the existing 230 kV South Ripley substation and transmission line, which has the available capacity to accommodate all electricity generated by the project.



Available Suitable Land

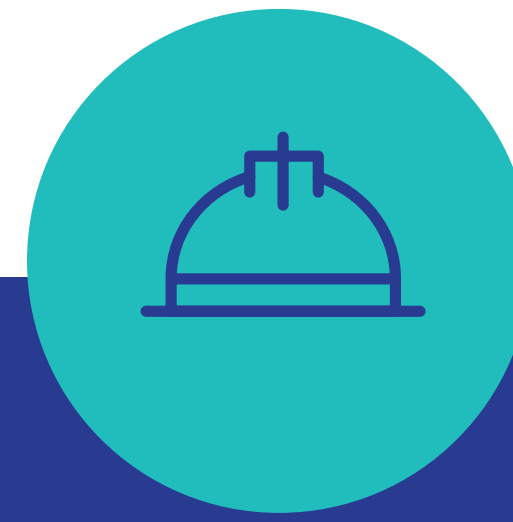
- Preliminary environmental review suggests high site suitability and limited development constraints.
- Minimal impacts to designated Prime Farmland are expected.
- Forest vegetation and topography in the area creates the potential for natural visual screening.

Local Benefits

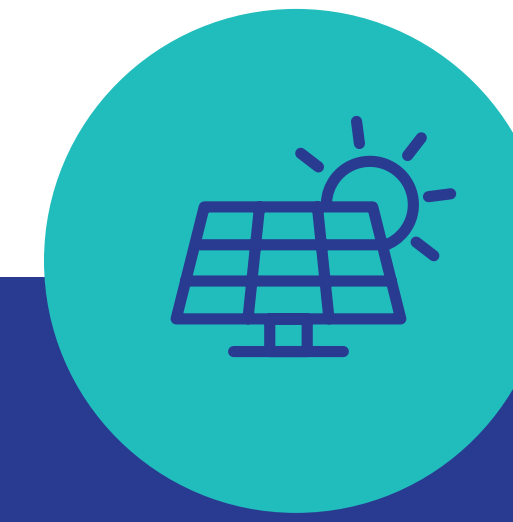
Direct Benefits:



Up to **\$15 million** in increased revenue to the Town of Ripley, Chautauqua County, and the Sherman school district



Up to **180 jobs** anticipated during the peak of construction

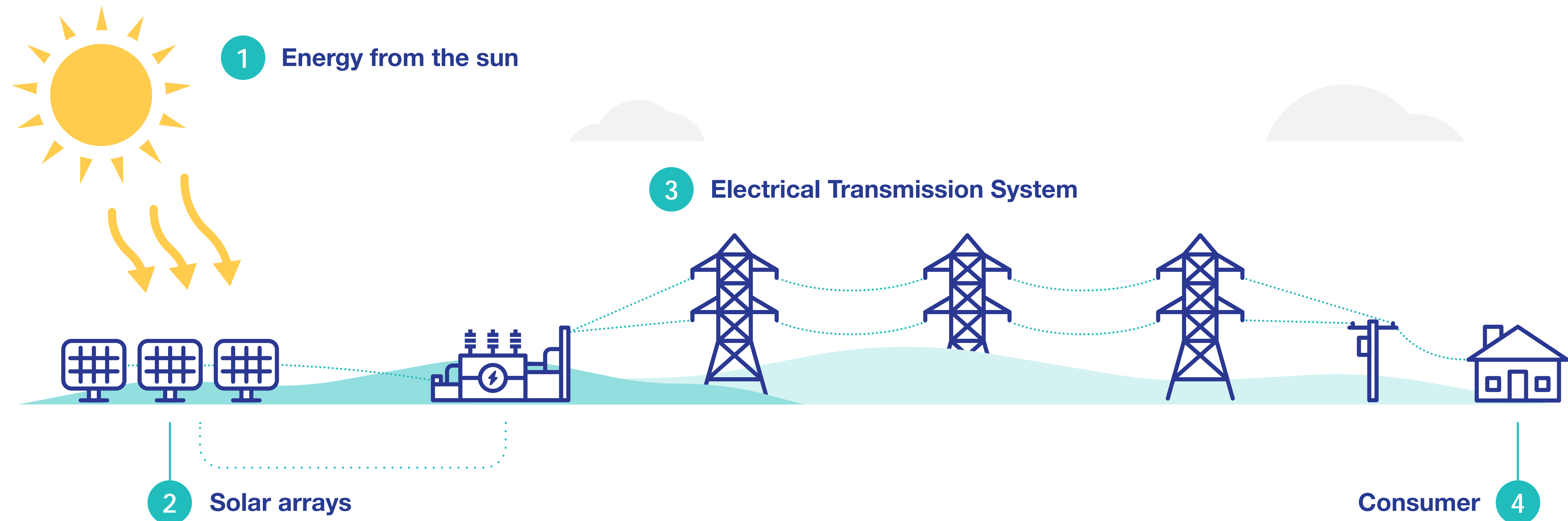


Up to **\$40 million dollars in payments to local landowners** in the form of solar leases, easement agreements, and good neighbor agreements through the life of the project

Indirect Benefits:

- Revenue to local shops, hotels, restaurants, service and construction material suppliers during construction and operation
- Partnerships with local community groups, local sponsorships, and donations

How Does Solar Energy Work?



1

Energy from the sun falls onto the earth's surface each day in the form of sunlight. The sunlight is absorbed by the solar panels, converting it into electricity.

2

Solar cells are small, square-shaped silicon semiconductors. Each solar cell is connected into a network of many other solar cells to create a PV (Photovoltaic) module or panel. A solar facility is comprised of thousands of panels.

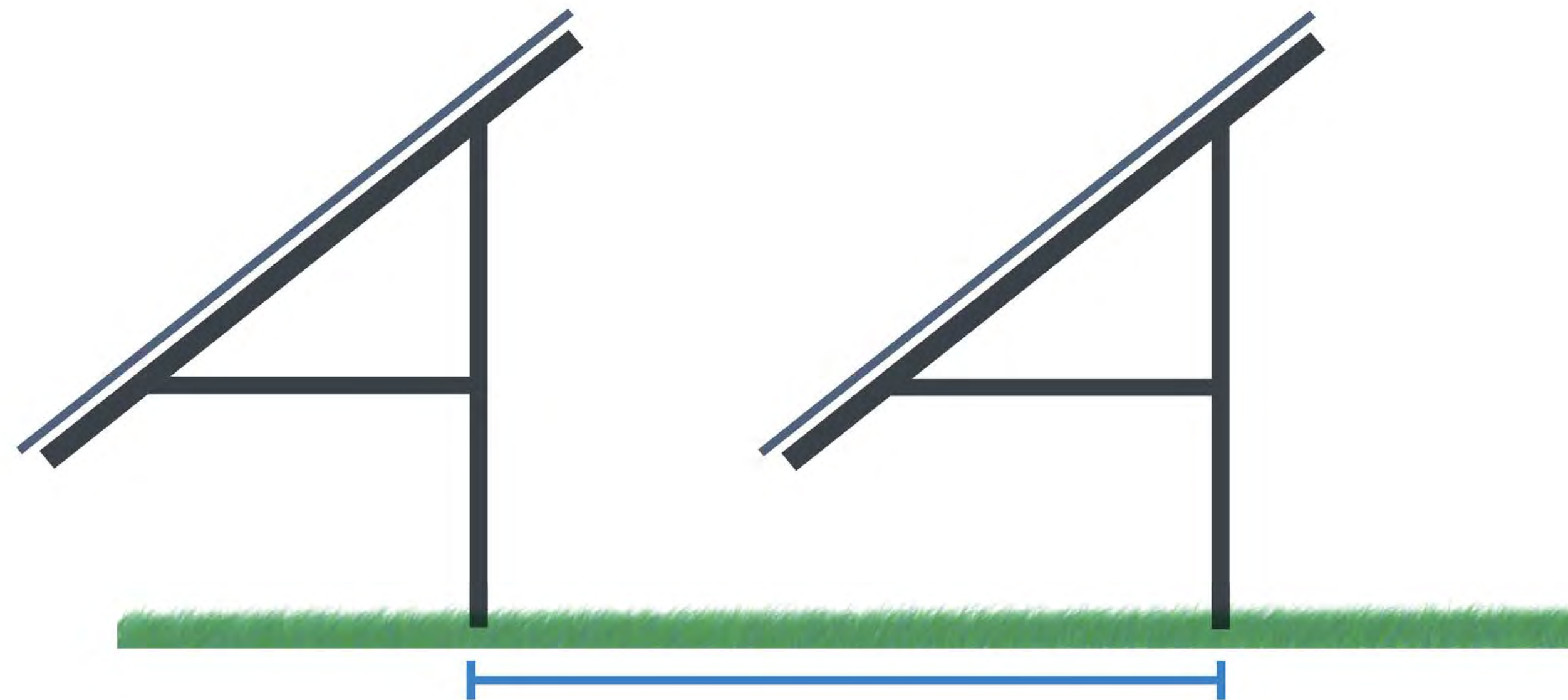
3

The absorbed sunlight is transformed into usable energy by way of an inverter that turns direct current (DC) energy into alternating current (AC) electricity. AC is the form of power used in homes and businesses.

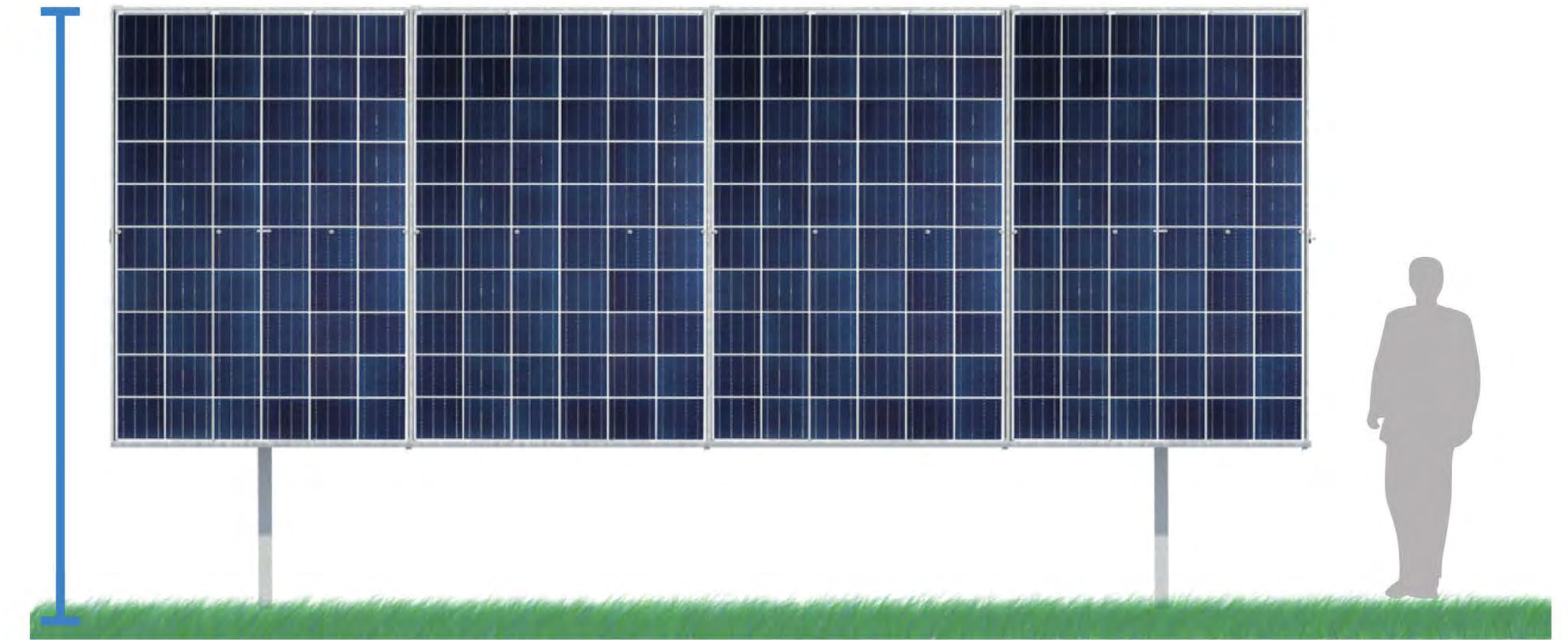
4

Electricity generated travels through transmission/distribution lines to homes and businesses.

The Basics of Solar



Typical Solar Module Spacing: at least 12 feet



Typical Solar Module Height: 12 feet

Solar panels are safe

- PV panels meet strict electrical safety standards
- PV panels are designed to ensure no release or leakage of panel material into the surrounding environment
- PV panel arrays are typically fenced to ensure safety and security

Solar panels produce minimal glare

- PV panels are designed to absorb light, not reflect light, and therefore produce minimal glare

Solar panels are quiet

- Solar photovoltaic (PV) panels make little or no sound
- Associated electrical equipment creates minimal sound
- Limited required equipment maintenance such as mowing or access road upkeep would be conducted during the day

Solar panels do not pollute

- No combustion, emissions, or odors
- No water discharges or use of neighboring water bodies for heating or cooling

Energy Storage

The Project may include up to 20 megawatts of 4 hour duration energy storage in the form of batteries co-located with the point of interconnection

WHAT BENEFITS DOES ENERGY STORAGE BRING?

- Energy storage allows the project to save energy during low load times and discharge onto the grid when people need power.

WHAT TECHNOLOGY IS USED?

- Most utility scale energy storage options utilize Lithium-ion batteries – the same technology used in electric vehicles.
- ConnectGen will continue to evaluate the best technologies on the market prior to construction.

WHAT DO THESE BATTERIES LOOK LIKE?

- Batteries are typically installed in 40 ft x 8 ft enclosures, similar to shipping containers, with built-in fire suppression systems.



Construction

SITE PREPARATION

- Clear and grade land as required
- Construct site entrances and access roads
- Create temporary laydown yards

PILE/FOUNDATION INSTALLATION

- Install piles to hold panel racking system
- Final pile length dependent on slope and soil type
- Common steel pile types: Driven piles, ground screws, helical anchors (no concrete expected)
- Pour concrete pads for inverters and high voltage equipment

RACK ASSEMBLY AND PV INSTALLATION

- Install panel racks on piles, then install solar modules on panel racks
- Panel racks and modules typically up to 12 feet tall
- Install inverters on pads located near or in between racks of panel modules, and connect to high voltage substation

CONCLUSION OF CONSTRUCTION

- Remove all construction equipment
- Clear laydown yards
- Restore disturbed land



Operation & Removal

SITE MANAGEMENT

- Limited upkeep is required during the life of the facility.
- Most common maintenance activities are associated with vegetation management such as mowing.
- It is also common to seed the field with low growing native grasses or plants to minimize the need to mow frequently.

EQUIPMENT MAINTENANCE

- The project facilities will be designed for a minimum 30-year lifespan. Should a panel or other piece of project infrastructure be damaged or malfunction, the system's modular design allows for simple repair or replacement.

DECOMMISSIONING

- ConnectGen is responsible for the decommissioning and removal of project infrastructure at the end of the project's useful life.
- NY State will require a decommissioning fund as part of the state permitting process.
- Ensures funds will be available to dismantle and remove facility components at the end of their useful lives.
- After decommissioning, ConnectGen will strive to return the property to as close to the condition it was in prior to the project.



Next Steps for ConnectGen



DEVELOPMENT
24 – 36 MONTHS

CONSTRUCTION
9 – 18 MONTHS

OPERATION
30 – 43 YEARS

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND LAND ACQUISITION

- Coordinate with landowners to introduce the project
- Execute lease agreements
- Engage elected town officials and other community leaders in an effort to inform the broader community

2019/2020 NYSERDA RENEWABLE ENERGY STANDARD RFP

- Secure long term contract for the sale of renewable energy credits with the State of New York

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES AND PRELIMINARY DESIGN

- Complete desktop and field studies to identify environmental sensitivities in the project area

ELECTRIC GRID INTERCONNECTION STUDIES

- Undergo technical studies completed by the local utility and NY grid operator to secure the right to connect to the electrical grid

REGULATORY REVIEW & PERMITTING

- Stakeholder engagement and environmental impact assessment through the New York State Article 10 process
- Secure all federal, state, and local permits necessary for construction and operation of the project
- Negotiate tax agreements with local and state taxing authorities

FINAL ENGINEERING & DESIGN

- Complete final engineering and design in preparation for construction

Article 10

New York State requires that major electric generation facilities (25 megawatts or more), including solar projects, undergo a rigorous state permitting process, under Public Service Law Article 10, prior to construction and operation.

Article 10 requires the New York State Board on Electric Generation Siting and the Environment (Siting Board) to issue a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Certificate) authorizing the construction and operation of major electric generating facilities.

The Siting Board consists of five permanent members and two project-specific local ad hoc members who are appointed specifically to provide a local voice in each proceeding. The New York State Senate Majority Leader and the Speaker of the New York State Assembly each appoint one ad hoc member from a list of candidates submitted by the host Town and County.

For more information on the Article 10 process, visit the New York State Department of Public Service's Siting Board home page.

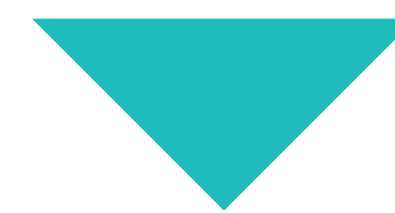


Under the Article 10 permitting process, utility scale solar developers are required to:

- **Incorporate extensive public input**
- **Engage a wide range of local stakeholders**
- **Evaluate environmental, public health, and public safety impacts of development**
- **Establish comprehensive strategies for safe operation, project maintenance, and end of life decommissioning**

Pre-Application

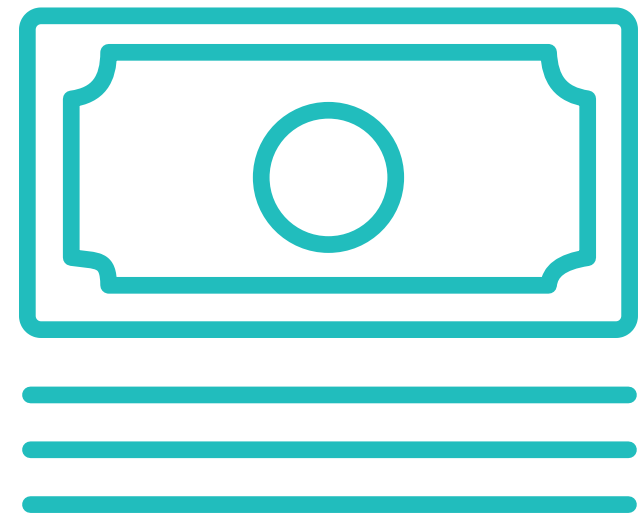
The Public Involvement Program (PIP) is the first document filed as part of the project's progress through the Article 10 Application process. The PIP Plan identifies the project's stakeholders, the methods by which stakeholders will be notified and consulted throughout the Article 10 process, and activities ConnectGen will engage in to encourage stakeholder participation.



The Preliminary Scoping Statement (PSS) provides a description of the proposed project, details the studies that will be performed to evaluate potential impacts, and outlines the steps that will be taken to avoid and minimize impacts. The PSS can be filed 150 days following the filing of the PIP and at least 90 days before filing an Application. The PSS must be provided to state and municipal agencies, state and local officials, and local libraries. A notice summarizing the PSS must also be placed in newspapers. There is a 21-day period for the public to comment on the PSS, and ConnectGen will have 21 days to respond to all comments received. Agreements on the scope and methodology of studies (i.e., proposed Stipulations) occur after the PSS. The major components of the PSS include:

- *Proposed facility and environmental setting*
- *Potential significant, adverse environmental and health impacts*
- *Visual simulations showing potential visual impacts*
- *Proposed studies to evaluate potential impacts*
- *Measures to avoid or mitigate adverse impacts*
- *Reasonable alternatives*
- *Information and plans for decommissioning*
- *Socioeconomic impact studies*
- *State and Federal requirements*

Intervenor Funding



Under Article 10, ConnectGen is required to provide funds for intervenor participation.

\$350/MWac

AT THE TIME THE PUBLIC
SCOPING STATEMENT
(PSS) IS FILED

\$1,000/MWac

IN ADDITION AT THE TIME
THE PROJECT ARTICLE 10
APPLICATION IS FILED

- Following the PSS and Application submissions, funds are distributed to parties making a request to cover expenses toward participating in the review and providing feedback on project materials
- At least 50% of the funding is reserved for municipalities
- For more information on intervenor funding, please consult the project website.



Environmental Considerations



ConnectGen will consult with many agencies and stakeholders, including: the NYS Department of Public Service, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, State Historic Preservation Office, and other stakeholders to ensure that potential environmental impacts are fully considered. Studies to help avoid and minimize potential impacts include the following:

WETLANDS	RARE/THREATENED/ ENDANGERED SPECIES	ARCHAEOLOGY	HISTORIC PROPERTIES	VISUAL IMPACTS
				
<p>Review of U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation Wetland mapping</p> <p>Field investigations to identify and delineate wetlands and streams</p>	<p>Coordination with NYSDEC, USFWS, and natural resource management entities</p> <p>Field investigations to identify potential habitat or species presence</p>	<p>Coordination with the New York State Historic Preservation Office, Native American Tribes, and regional advocacy groups</p> <p>Research and field investigations to identify previously known or unidentified archeological sites</p>	<p>Research, consultation with State Historic Preservation Office and regional historical groups</p> <p>Historic properties are evaluated to determine their eligibility for listing on the State and National Registers of Historic Places</p> <p>Evaluate potential visual effect on historic properties</p>	<p>Identification of Visually Sensitive Resources</p> <p>Viewshed mapping of areas with potential Project visibility</p> <p>Coordination with stakeholders and preparation of visual simulations to illustrate what the facility will look like when completed</p>

Application

Application: Once ConnectGen has completed the Pre-Application phase of the Article 10 Process and all environmental studies identified in the PSS, we will be ready to file an official Article 10 Application for Certification of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Application). The Application must include major project information including but not limited to:

- *A project description*
- *A summary of all public involvement activity*
- *Evaluation of expected environmental and health impacts, environmental justice issues, and reasonable alternatives*
- *Facility and community safety plans*

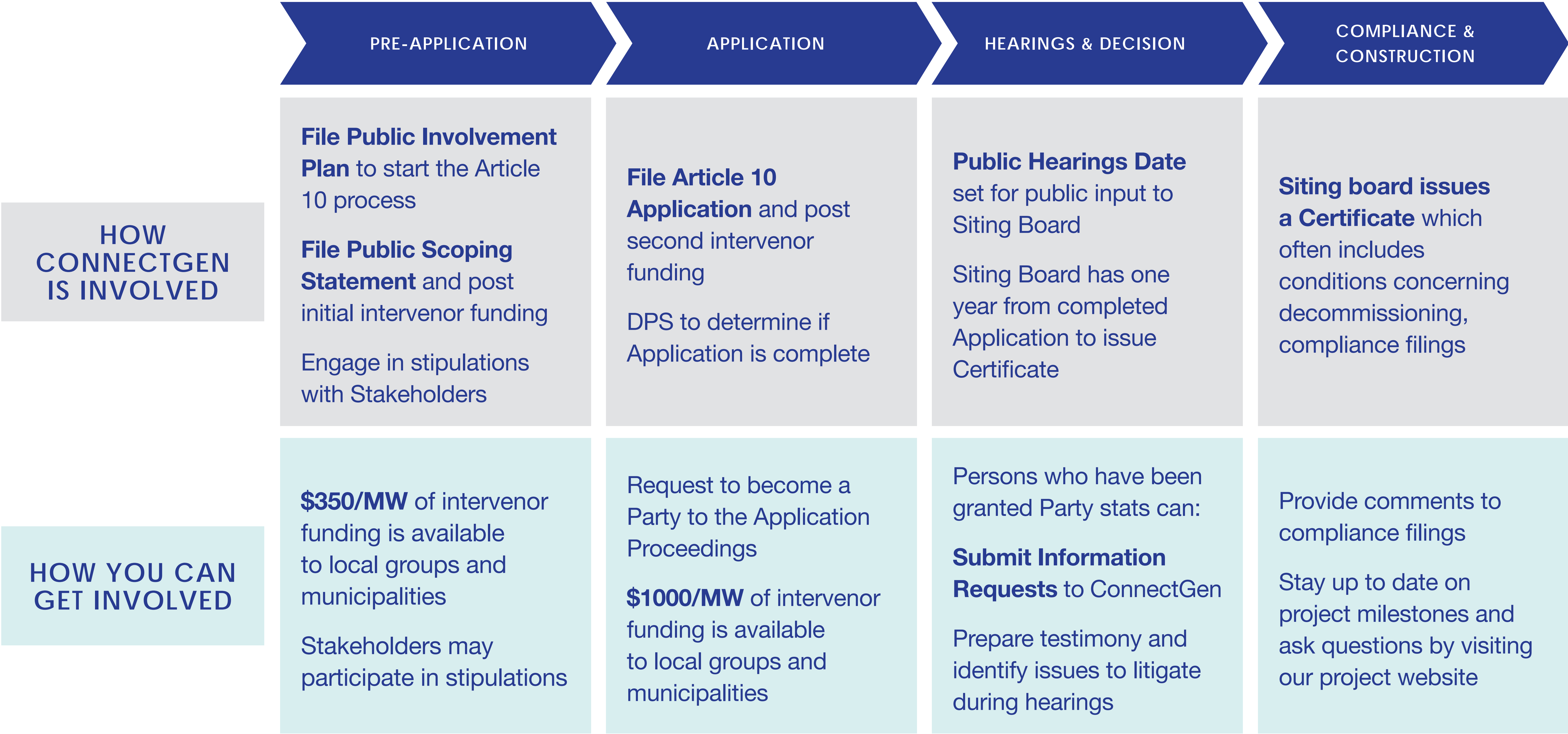
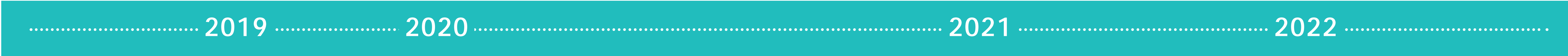
Following the Application submittal, the state Siting Board will set a schedule for public hearings and review of the Application materials.

Siting Board Decision: The Siting Board must make explicit findings about the nature of the environmental impacts related to construction and operation of the facility and related facilities. Specifically, the Board will consider impacts to:

- *Statewide electrical capacity*
- *Ecology, air, ground and surface water, wildlife, and habitat*
- *Public health and safety*
- *Cultural, historical, and recreational resources*
- *Transportation, communication, utilities, etc.*
- *Cumulative emissions on the local community according to environmental justice regulations*

The Board will determine that the facility is a “beneficial addition or substitute for” generation capacity, that construction and operation are in the public interest, that adverse environmental effects will be minimized or avoided, and that the project is in compliance with state laws and regulations.

Article 10 Process Timeline



How can you get involved?

South Ripley Solar Project Contact:

Isaac Phillips
Development Associate
ConnectGen LLC

(800) 338-8905
www.SouthRipleySolar.com
info@southripleysolar.com

State DMM:

<https://tinyurl.com/south-ripley-article-10>
Case Number: 19-F-0560

Local Document Repositories:



Ripley Town Clerk's Office

14 North State Street
Ripley, NY 14775



Ripley Library

64 Main Street
Ripley, New York 14775



Minerva Free Library

116 Miller Street
Sherman, NY 14781

11. General Materials Available at Public Meetings



Benefitting the Town of Ripley and South Ripley for Decades to Come

ConnectGen is developing a commercial-scale solar and storage project in South Ripley along NE Sherman Road. ConnectGen expects to install up to 270 megawatts (MW) of solar with a 20 MW battery storage component in the area, which has the potential to power over 60,000 homes in New York State annually. The South Ripley Solar Project filed its Preliminary Scoping Statement in May 2020 and is working towards filing its New York State siting application. The target commercial operation date is Q4 2023.

Bringing a Long-Term Economic Boost to the Town of Ripley and Chautauqua County

Solar power pumps billions of dollars into the country's economy every year, particularly into rural areas, where a large percentage of large-scale solar projects are located.

The South Ripley Solar Project represents an approximately **\$350 million capital investment**, which will result in a significant increase in the Town of Ripley's and Chautauqua County's taxable property base.



Providing additional tax revenues of **more than \$800,000 annually** to the Town of Ripley, totaling **more than \$26.8 million** over its operational life. The increased annual revenue would **comprise approximately 100%** of the Town's total annual property tax levy, allowing for reduced taxes for all residents of Ripley or increased spending on public services and other critically important infrastructure.



Providing additional tax revenues of **more than \$389,000 annually** to the local school districts, which could total **more than \$15.5 million** over the life of the project for the Sherman and Ripley School Districts.



Providing **more than \$190,000** annually in increase property tax revenue to Chautauqua County, totaling **more than \$7.8 million** over the project's life.



Providing additional revenues to the Ripley Hose Company Station 1, Ripley, and Ripley Hose Company Station 2, South Ripley, averaging **more than \$189,000 annually** and totaling **more than \$5.6 million** in payments over the project's life.



Creating up to **220 family-wage construction jobs** directly and supporting other jobs by increasing business activity among local hotels and motels, grocery stores, gas stations, restaurants, equipment rentals, materials suppliers, and similar businesses.



Paying **more than \$30 million** to local landowners over the life of the project through annual lease payments, easement agreements, and good neighbor agreements, resulting in a consistent stream of revenue that can protect against fluctuating commodity prices and help maintain family farms.



Being an active participant in the local community by developing meaningful relationships that translate into **long-term partnerships** with local organizations, schools, and community members.

In Support of the South Ripley Solar Project? Let Us Know!

If you are in support of the South Ripley Solar Project and the long-term benefits it will bring to the Town of Ripley and Chautauqua County, we would love to hear from you. **Please call 1-800-388-8905 to learn about the different ways that you can show your support.**

Frequently Asked Questions

ARE SOLAR PANELS SAFE?

Yes. Solar panel materials are enclosed with glass and do not mix with water or vaporize into the air, so there is little to no risk of chemicals, including greenhouse gases, being released into the environment during normal use. Crystalline silicon PV panels, an extremely common type of solar panel used around the world, “do not pose a material risk of toxicity to public health and safety.” ConnectGen is committed to installing these types of panels to ensure safety within the community.

All solar facilities are designed to strict electrical safety standards to ensure safe operation. Product safety standards, installation requirements, and building codes for solar facilities are addressed by the National Fire Protection Agency’s National Electrical Code, the International Code Council’s International Fire Code, the International Association of Firefighters, and several other national, state and local safety and product standards groups.

ConnectGen will be fully responsible for the security of the facility and for maintaining consistent safety standards within the project area.

Prior to operation, we will develop an Emergency Response Plan in accordance with industry best practices, which will outline the response procedures to be employed should an emergency arise at the project site. We will work closely and collaboratively with local departments and authorities, including the Ripley Volunteer Fire Department, and will provide pre-construction training to all emergency response personnel.

WHO WILL BE RESPONSIBLE FOR MAINTAINING THE SOUTH RIPLEY SOLAR PROJECT ONCE IT IS CONSTRUCTED?

ConnectGen will be fully responsible for maintaining the solar facilities and underlying property, including reseeding the disturbed areas with native plants and grasses that will allow flora and fauna to utilize the panel areas. Landscape maintenance at the project site will be performed by companies contracted directly by ConnectGen.

WILL PEOPLE STILL BE ABLE TO HUNT NEAR THE SOUTH RIPLEY SOLAR PROJECT?

Yes. During construction, ConnectGen will coordinate with participating landowners to ensure that hunting activities are conducted in a safe manner while construction workers are on-site. Once operational, hunting will no longer be allowed within panel areas, but landowners will be able to hunt on parcels around the project area without restriction. Limited fencing, a security measure put in place in accordance with industry best practices and local requirements, will be erected around panel areas. Collection easements between panel areas will not be fenced to allow wildlife to traverse these corridors without disruption.

DO SOLAR PROJECTS AFFECT AGRICULTURE?

Solar projects are low impact and coexist well with agriculture, operating without any impact to adjacent agricultural properties. During the solar project’s 30 year or more lifespan, the land hosting the project gets a recovery period, allowing the soil to restore fertility and rebuild. Native vegetation can grow under the panels, allowing the land to retain water and topsoil and improving soil health over time, which can increase the productivity and value of the land for agriculture in the future.

Further, ConnectGen will have a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which will outline ConnectGen’s plans for sediment and erosion controls to manage both the amount and composition of any stormwater discharged from the project site. There are no anticipated stormwater runoff issues for land hosting or adjacent to panel areas.

At the end of the solar project’s useful life, the project is decommissioned and the land can be returned to agricultural use. In addition, a solar project can offer a consistent, weather-resistant source of income for rural farmers and their local economies, providing an alternative “crop” that diversifies farmers’ revenues.

DO SOLAR PROJECTS NEGATIVELY IMPACT PROPERTY VALUES?

Property value studies conducted across the country have shown that proximity to large-scale solar projects does not measurably impact property values or deter the sale of agricultural or residential land. For example:

- A study conducted across Illinois determined that the value of properties within one mile increased by an average of two percent after the installation of a solar project.
- A study of five counties in Indiana indicated that upon completion of a solar project, properties within two miles were an average of two percent more valuable compared to their value prior to installation.
- An appraisal spanning from North Carolina to Tennessee shows that properties adjoining solar projects match the value of similar properties that do not adjoin solar projects within one percent.

Mounted solar projects are typically no more than 12 feet high, emit minimal noise, and are designed in accordance with strict electrical safety standards to ensure safe operation. In addition, we can take steps to minimize and mitigate the visual impacts of the project through vegetative buffers and setbacks from property lines.

Solar leases offer a viable, long-term revenue stream to landowners. Lease payments are stable and predictable, can protect against fluctuating commodity prices, and allow landowners to diversify their income, which can help maintain and preserve their properties.

* Please visit our website for more information and links to supporting citations.

Please Contact Us with Your Questions, Ideas, and Thoughts

Email: info@southripleysolar.com
Phone: (877) 338-8905

Who is ConnectGen?

ConnectGen is a renewable energy company comprised of seasoned energy industry professionals focused on developing wind, solar, and energy storage projects across the United States.

Founded in 2018, ConnectGen's strategy is to apply its proven ability to develop, construct and operate clean energy assets to create a multi-technology portfolio of generation and storage projects. The company currently has 139 megawatts (MW) of solar projects in operations and is developing over 4,000 MW of wind, solar and energy storage projects across North America. ConnectGen LLC is a subsidiary of 547 Energy. 547 Energy is Quantum Energy Partners' clean energy platform company.

Does the South Ripley Solar Project have the right of eminent domain?

No, the South Ripley Solar Project is a merchant generator of renewable energy, not a fully regulated public utility company with an obligation to serve utility customers, and therefore does not have the power of eminent domain in New York State. Eminent domain is defined as the right of the government to take private property for a public purpose.¹ ConnectGen does not have the right to utilize eminent domain and will secure all land rights for the project through voluntary contractual agreements with project participants.

Additionally, in general, New York State law prohibits investor-owned utilities such as National Grid from owning large-scale generation facilities, like the South Ripley Solar Project. While National Grid may have the ability to take property by eminent domain in order to provide safe and reliable electric transmission and distribution service, current law would not allow National Grid to utilize eminent domain to take a private merchant generation projects. Therefore, eminent domain will not be used under any circumstance for the South Ripley Solar Project.

What is the footprint of the South Ripley Solar Project?

ConnectGen expects to use approximately 2,000 acres for the South Ripley Solar project. Of that, only 1,250 to 1,500 acres are expected to host project infrastructure, and the project will be located wholly within the town boundaries of Ripley. Construction of solar projects is typically low impact and does not typically require significant site work or soil disturbance. ConnectGen aims to further minimize potential environmental impacts by avoiding wetlands, limiting tree clearing, and working with participating farmers to utilize less productive agricultural fields. While ConnectGen has made sure to keep landowners and stakeholders in neighboring towns informed about the development of the project, the project boundaries have always been and will remain within Ripley.

Does solar power make economic sense?

Solar power is now one of the cheapest new sources of electricity in most of the world due to declining equipment costs, improved technologies, and public policy supporting the procurement of renewable energy across the country.²

1. <https://ag.ny.gov/real-property/faqs-about-nys-eminent-domain-procedure-law>

2. <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2020-04-28/solar-and-wind-cheapest-sources-of-power-in-most-of-the-world>

In the last decade, the cost to install solar has dropped by more than 70%, and as of Q2 2020, prices are at their lowest historical level across all market segments.³ According to Lazard’s Levelized Cost of Energy Analysis – Version 14.0 (2020), even without tax credits, new solar resources have a levelized cost of energy in the range of 3.1¢/kWh – 4.2¢/kWh for large-scale crystalline solar. This range falls below the levelized cost of energy for new coal or gas combined cycle power production.⁴ These results have been bolstered by the International Energy Agency’s World Energy Outlook 2020,⁵ which found that “For projects with low-cost financing that tap high-quality resources, solar photovoltaic (PV) is now the cheapest source of electricity in history.”⁶

Adding to the growing appeal, solar energy is uniquely able to offer electricity at a fixed-price contract over the life of the project. Solar energy has no fuel cost and therefore no fuel price risk, allowing it to act as a hedge against future volatility of natural gas prices.⁷ Levelized power purchase agreements for commercial-scale solar projects fell to \$24/MWh in 2019, down 17% from 2018 and more than 80% since 2010.⁸

How do solar panels work?

Solar photovoltaic (PV) panels are constructed of silicon, tempered glass, electrical wiring, and a metal frame. Silicon, an element most commonly found in sand, has conductive properties that allow it to absorb and convert sunlight into electricity. When light interacts with a silicon cell, it causes electrons to be set into motion, which initiates a flow of electric current in a process known as the “photovoltaic effect.”⁹

Is solar power reliable above the 35th parallel?

Solar power is a reliable source of energy, with solar projects being installed in all 50 states across the US.¹⁰ New York State, which has a considerable amount of solar potential, has consistently been in the top 10 US solar markets and is projected to install 4,367 megawatts (MW) over the next five years, all above the 40th parallel.¹¹

A solar project will produce power most days of the year, even under cloudy conditions, and in some cases, clouds can result in better panel performance. Further, a recent industry trend is the use of bifacial solar panels, which have solar cells that capture sunlight from the front of the panel as well as sunlight that is reflected off the ground. These panels have been shown to yield 11% more energy than standard solar panels in a tilted, ground-mounted solar installation.¹² We have measured and analyzed over a year of on-site solar and weather data in the project area to confirm that the solar resource in South Ripley can support solar project operations, with production estimates at least 500% higher than what has been claimed in some public comments. ConnectGen is contractually bound to the anticipated production estimates through its REC contract with NYSERDA.

No electricity source runs 100% of the time, including coal, gas, and nuclear plants. While solar is variable as a power resource, its variability can be predictably forecast and used to complement other generation sources. Grid operators have decades of experience managing changes in supply and demand, including the gradual, predictable changes in solar output.¹³

Further, the combination of solar + storage makes solar power available when the sun isn’t shining. The batteries charge when the resource is abundant and stores the excess energy, releasing it during peak hours when the solar resource is not readily available.

3. <https://www.seia.org/solar-industry-research-data>

4. <https://www.lazard.com/perspective/lcoe2020>

5. <https://www.iea.org/reports/world-energy-outlook-2020>

6. <https://www.resilience.org/stories/2020-11-06/solar-is-now-cheapest-electricity-in-history-confirms-iea/>

7. <https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy13osti/59065.pdf>

8. <https://emp.lbl.gov/utility-scale-solar/>

9. <https://news.energysage.com/solar-panels-work/>

10. <https://www.seia.org/us-2-million-solar-strong>

11. <https://www.seia.org/sites/default/files/2020-09/New%20York.pdf>

12. <https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/bifacial-plus-tracking-boosts-solar-energy-yield-by-27-percent#gs.wLGHolY>

13. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/joshuarhodes/2018/08/21/what-does-100-renewable-energy-really-mean/?sh=2d5a71f21ac8>

What will the South Ripley Solar Project look like?

A solar project is a large group of solar panels that operate together as one power generation facility, delivering electricity to the existing electric grid. Solar projects are typically arranged in north to south rows with access buffers between each row, not less than 8 feet wide. In addition, access roads will be built between major panel areas to allow operations and maintenance staff to access the solar panels.

A panel array, which includes both PV panels and mounting racks, typically stands around 12 feet tall. The mounting racks are supported by steel pile foundations generally set up to 8 feet into the ground without the use of concrete. Panel designs currently being evaluated by ConnectGen rotate slowly from east to west once a day, keeping the sun at a 90-degree angle from the panels to ensure maximum energy is absorbed. Each section of solar panels is typically fenced off to ensure security and safe operation.

What other equipment is usually present at a solar project?

Other project infrastructure present at a solar project includes common electrical equipment such as inverters and transformers, and the electrical equipment necessary to deliver energy to the existing electrical grid such as underground and overhead transmission lines. ConnectGen's project will also include a battery storage facility (see Storage FAQs for more information).

Will the electricity produced by the South Ripley Solar Project be sent to New York City?

ConnectGen has signed a contract with the Jamestown Board of Public Utilities (BPU) for Renewable Energy Credits produced by the project, which will help the Jamestown BPU meet its regulatory requirements pursuant to New York State's Clean Energy Standard Program. ConnectGen does not currently have a power purchase agreement to deliver the power generated at the South Ripley Solar Project to other areas of New York. In addition, the energy consumption tends to take place near the generation sources, therefore the energy produced by the project will likely be utilized locally through the New York State electric grid.

Will the project produce enough energy to offset the energy used in manufacturing components?

Solar projects do not burn fossil fuels to generate electricity, and as a result, do not emit any air pollutants such as carbon dioxide, sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxide, or particulate matter. Both fossil fuel and non-fossil fuel power technologies induce life-cycle greenhouse gas emissions that stem from the energy requirements for their construction and operation. Known as a "carbon debt", this debt of energy must be paid off to calculate how solar projects reduce emissions over their lifetime. A typical utility-scale solar project repays its carbon footprint in roughly 12 months or less,¹⁴ allowing them to provide decades of zero emission energy.

Are solar panels safe?

Yes. Solar panel materials are enclosed with glass and do not mix with water or vaporize into the air, so there is little to no risk of chemicals, including greenhouse gases, being released into the environment during normal use. Crystalline silicon PV panels, an extremely common type of solar panel used around the world, "do not pose a material risk of toxicity to public health and safety."¹⁵ ConnectGen is committed to installing these types of panels to ensure safety within the community.

Electric and Magnetic Fields (EMF) are present everywhere in our environment, including TV antennas, radio signals, Wi-Fi, cell phones, and common household appliances.¹⁶ EMF emissions from solar panel systems are non-ionizing and in the same extremely low frequency range as those induced by household appliances.¹⁷

14. <https://www.nature.com/articles/ncomms13728>

15. https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/static/publication/js/pdf_js/web/viewer.html?slug=health-and-safety-impacts-of-solar-photovoltaics

16. <https://www.who.int/peh-emf/about/WhatIsEMF/en/>

17. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/26023811/>

All solar facilities are designed to strict electrical safety standards to ensure safe operation. Product safety standards, installation requirements, and building codes for solar facilities are addressed by the National Fire Protection Agency's National Electrical Code, the International Code Council's International Fire Code, the International Association of Firefighters, and several other national, state and local safety and product standards groups.¹⁸

Will runoff from panels leach chemicals into the ground and local bodies of water?

The construction of the South Ripley Solar Project will not require toxic chemicals or processes. PV panels typically consist of glass, aluminum, copper, silver, and semiconductor materials that can be successfully recovered and reused. Solar panel materials are enclosed with glass and do not mix with water or vaporize into the air, so there is little to no risk of chemicals, including greenhouse gases, being released into the environment during normal use. Crystalline silicon PV panels, which represent approximately 90% of the solar panels in use today, "do not pose a material risk of toxicity to public health and safety."¹⁹ ConnectGen is committed to installing these types of panels to ensure safety within the community.

In addition, to provide decades of corrosion-free operation, panels – like the ones that will be used for the South Ripley Solar Project – are encapsulated from air and moisture between two layers of plastic. The encapsulation layers are further protected with a layer of tempered glass on the front and a polymer sheet on the back. For decades, this same material has been used between layers of tempered glass to give car windshields and hurricane windows their great strength, allowing them to stay intact even if damage occurs.

What happens if a solar panel gets hit by lightning?

Solar projects are designed with lightning protection on all system components, which protect against damage in the event of a lightning strike. The ground grid will be designed in consideration of the conductivity of soils in the area as well as any other nearby conductive materials that are buried or connected to the ground, such as water or natural gas pipes.

Do you work with local fire departments in your project area?

Prior to operation, we will develop an Emergency Response Plan in accordance with industry best practices, which will outline the response procedures to be employed should an emergency arise at the project site. We will work closely and collaboratively with the local departments and authorities. We provide pre-construction training to all emergency response personnel, which includes a description of the facility, any potential construction risks, and the role of emergency responders should an incident occur. After construction is complete, we will host the emergency response personnel for a site visit to make sure they are familiar with the system and our Emergency Response Plan.

Do large-scale solar projects make noise?

Temporary, elevated noise levels may occur during the construction phase of a solar project, but once construction is complete, an operating solar project emits minimal noise during the day and is dormant at night. As part of the Article 10 application process, ConnectGen will submit a detailed study of the potential noise impacts associated with the construction and operation of the facility. The results of the study will assess expected noise levels, and also propose noise limits, which will minimize and mitigate adverse impacts associated with construction and operation of the South Ripley Solar Project. In addition, ConnectGen is committed to taking steps to minimize and mitigate visual impacts of the project through vegetative buffers and setbacks from property lines, which will provide additional sound dampening benefits as well.

^{18.} <https://www.seia.org/initiatives/fire-safety-solar>

^{19.} https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/static/publication/js/pdf_js/web/viewer.html?slug=health-and-safety-impacts-of-solar-photovoltaics

Do solar projects negatively impact property values?

Property value studies conducted across the country have shown that proximity to large-scale solar projects does not measurably impact property values or deter the sale of agricultural or residential land. For example:

- A study conducted across Illinois determined that the value of properties within one mile increased by an average of two percent after the installation of a solar project.²⁰
- A study of five counties in Indiana indicated that upon completion of a solar project, properties within two miles were an average of two percent more valuable compared to their value prior to installation.²¹
- An appraisal spanning from North Carolina to Tennessee shows that properties adjoining solar projects match the value of similar properties that do not adjoin solar projects within one percent.²²

Mounted solar projects are typically no more than 12 feet high, emit minimal noise, and are designed in accordance with strict electrical safety standards to ensure safe operation. In addition, we can take steps to minimize and mitigate the visual impacts of the project through vegetative buffers and setbacks from property lines.

Solar leases offer a viable, long-term revenue stream to landowners. Lease payments are stable and predictable, can protect against fluctuating commodity prices, and allow landowners to diversify their income, which can help maintain and preserve their properties.

Do solar projects affect agriculture?

Solar projects are low impact and coexist well with agriculture, operating without any impact to adjacent agricultural properties. During the solar project's 30 year or more lifespan, the land hosting the project gets a recovery period, allowing the soil to restore fertility and rebuild. Native vegetation can grow under the panels, allowing the land to retain water and topsoil and improving soil health over time, which can increase the productivity and value of the land for agriculture in the future.²³

Further, ConnectGen will have a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which will outline ConnectGen's plans for sediment and erosion controls to manage both the amount and composition of any stormwater discharged from the project site. There are no anticipated stormwater runoff issues for land hosting or adjacent to panel areas.

At the end of the solar project's useful life, the project is decommissioned and the land can be returned to agricultural use.²⁴ In addition, a solar project can offer a consistent, weather-resistant source of income for rural farmers and their local economies, providing an alternative "crop" that diversifies farmers' revenues.

Will the South Ripley Solar Project affect the local wildlife?

If sited and developed properly, the South Ripley Solar Project will have minimal impacts on local wildlife. In fact, studies show that solar facilities can provide shelter for species, promote land stability, preserve habitat, and support biodiversity.²⁵

As part of the New York State siting process, the Project is consulting with state/federal agencies & stakeholders, including the NYS Department of Public Service, NYS Department of Environmental Conservation, NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to ensure that potential environmental impacts are fully considered. Studies to help assess potential impacts include a noise impact assessment, seasonal avian studies, sensitive wildlife surveys, wetland and habitat delineations, and a wide range of other studies and surveys. The information gathered from this comprehensive coordination and review is used to inform final siting and design as well as various resource management plans and environmental protection measures to avoid, minimize or mitigate impacts to wildlife.

20. <https://www.southripleysolar.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/09/Kirkland-Grandy-Solar-Impact-Study.pdf>

21. <https://www.mcleancountyil.gov/DocumentCenter/View/13192/Patricia-L-McGarr-Property-Value-Impact-Study?bidId=>

22. McGarr, Patricia. Property Value Impact Study. Cohn Reznick LLP Valuation Advisory Services, 2 May 2018

23. <https://www.energy.gov/eere/solar/farmers-guide-going-solar>

24. <https://www.seia.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/Solar%20Ag%20Land%20Usage%20FactSheet%202019-PRINT.pdf>

25. <https://www.solarpowerworldonline.com/2019/03/utility-scale-solar-wildlife-stewardship/>

Once constructed, the South Ripley Solar Project will produce no pollution or emissions. Further, native vegetation can grow under the panels, and the project can provide sanctuaries for flora and fauna to thrive.²⁶ Vegetation management concepts, such as integrated vegetation management and pollinator friendly practices, provide opportunities to promote beneficial plants species and enhance habitats on the site.

Fencing, a security measure put in place in accordance with industry best practices, will be limited to areas around panels. Collection easements between panel areas will not be fenced to allow larger wildlife to traverse through the Project Area without disruption.

Will people still be able to hunt near the South Ripley Solar Project?

Yes. During construction, ConnectGen will coordinate with participating landowners to ensure that hunting activities are conducted in a safe manner while construction workers are on-site. Once operational, hunting will no longer be allowed within panel areas, but landowners will be able to hunt on parcels around the project area without restriction. Limited fencing, a security measure put in place in accordance with industry best practices and local requirements, will be erected around panel areas. Collection easements between panel areas will not be fenced to allow wildlife to traverse these corridors without disruption.

How will this project benefit the Town of Ripley and Chautauqua County?

ConnectGen has already paid local host landowners over \$600,000 for site control agreements and expects to pay more than \$1 million dollars per year directly to Ripley landowners through lease, easement, and neighbor agreements, resulting in more than \$30 million in payments to local landowners over the course of project life. These landowners, in turn, will use this money to reinvest in new farm equipment or home improvements, which will generate additional income for the County in assessed property taxes and sales tax. Additionally, ConnectGen is contractually obligated through its REC contract with NYSERDA to provide over \$35 million of in-state economic benefits to New York within the first 3 years of project operation alone. These benefits include: in-state construction labor, landowner payments, PILOT and HCA payments, local equipment and materials purchases, local sponsorships and donations, and full-time operations jobs.

Further, the South Ripley Solar Project represents an approximately \$350 million capital investment, which will bring significant revenue, jobs, and economic development into the Town of Ripley and Chautauqua County. The Project will also result in significant revenue to the Town of Ripley, Sherman and Ripley School Districts, and Chautauqua County without burdening existing resources. It is estimated that through the PILOT and Host Community Agreements, the project will provide additional tax revenues, expected to average approximately \$800,000 per year during project operation, resulting in more than \$26.8 million in payments to the Town of Ripley over the life of the project. This increased revenue to the Town of Ripley would comprise approximately 100% of the Town's annual property tax levy. Through the PILOT agreement and CCIDA agency fee, the project is expected to provide over \$7.8 million to Chautauqua County and the CCIDA, making it one of the top five taxpayers in the county.

In addition, the project will result in additional tax revenues expected to average over \$480,000 per year for the Sherman School District (\$14.5 million over the life of the project) and over \$33,000 per year for the Ripley School District (\$990,000 over the life of the project). The project is also expected to provide annual tax revenue and direct benefits averaging over \$189,000 per year to the Ripley Fire Protection District, resulting in over \$7.6 million in payments to the local fire department over the project's life.

26. <https://www.seia.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/Solar%20Ag%20Land%20Usage%20FactSheet%202019-PRINT.pdf>

Will herbicides be used during maintenance activities?

ConnectGen will develop and implement a Vegetation Management Plan that establishes vegetation goals and identifies the specific treatments that may be used to ensure safe and reliable operation of the facility. Common practices to control and manage vegetation will involve mechanized and agrarian means; however, herbicides may be employed, depending on the target plant species, land use activities and landowner input. ConnectGen is committed to the conscientious use of appropriate management techniques to control vegetation in a way that is designed to minimize the risk of unreasonable adverse effects on human health and the environment.

What is the typical life span of a photovoltaic (PV) panel?

PV panels are designed to last more than 25 years, and many manufacturers offer performance guarantees backed by warranties.²⁷ ConnectGen anticipates that the panels used for the South Ripley Solar Project will have a useful life of at least 30 years. Like many other durable products and construction materials, solar equipment can last for decades with proper maintenance, of which they require very little due to the presence of very few, if any, moving parts.²⁸ Proper operations and maintenance can increase efficiency, extend a project's lifetime, and ensure safety.²⁹ Prior to construction, the South Ripley Solar Project will develop and implement an Operations and Maintenance Plan based on industry best practices and site-specific environmental conditions.

Will the South Ripley Solar Project be the largest solar and battery project in the world?

No. There are many operating solar projects, both in the US and worldwide, which are larger than the South Ripley Solar Project. As of 2019, the five largest solar projects in the US alone were all more than twice the size of the South Ripley Solar Project.³⁰ In the NYISO interconnection queue alone, there are eight projects that exceed 270 MW in size, including a 500 MW project under development in Genessee County.³¹ Further, in the PJM interconnection queue, there are 48 projects that exceed 270 MW in size, including nine at or above 500 MW.³²

Battery storage systems are beginning to be deployed more widely across the US, and grid-scale battery storage is projected to have a thirteen-fold increase over the next six years.³³ As the battery storage deployment trend grows, so does the size of the batteries. As of 2019, the world's eight largest battery storage projects were all 100 MW or more, with the largest being 409 MW.³⁴ In comparison, the South Ripley Solar Project's 20 MW battery storage element is quite small and is expected to have a footprint of approximately 1-2 acres. In September 2019, NYSERDA announced the completion of a 20 MW battery storage project,³⁵ and several other 20 MW+ projects are under development in other areas of New York State, including a 316 MW project located in Queens, an extremely densely populated area. Further, in the NYISO interconnection queue, there are 67 battery storage projects that exceed 20 MW in size, including several 500 MW or larger.³⁶

Will ConnectGen use local labor for construction of the project?

During its approximately year-long construction, the project is expected to create up to 220 family-wage jobs, many of which will be sourced from the local labor pool. ConnectGen has executed an MOU with Laborers Local 631 and is in the process of negotiating one with IBEW Local 106. These agreements designate local members as the first option to support the construction of the project.

27. <https://www.seia.org/initiatives/recycling-end-life-considerations-photovoltaics>

28. <https://news.energysage.com/how-long-do-solar-panels-last/>

29. <https://www.nrel.gov/docs/fy17osti/68281.pdf>

30. <https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/the-five-biggest-solar-projects-in-the-u-s-right-now>

31. <https://www.nyiso.com/interconnections>

32. <https://www.pjm.com/planning/services-requests/interconnection-queues.aspx>

33. <https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/global-energy-storage-to-hit-158-gigawatt-hours-by-2024-with-u-s-and-china>

34. <https://www.greentechmedia.com/articles/read/the-biggest-batteries-coming-soon-to-a-grid-near-you>

35. <https://www.nysedra.ny.gov/About/Newsroom/2019-Announcements/2019-09-12-NYSERDA-Announces-Completion-of-Largest-Battery-Installation-in-the-State#:~:text=The%20New%20York%20State%20Energy,will%20help%20reduce%20greenhouse%20gas>

36. <https://www.nyiso.com/interconnections>

Who will be responsible for decommissioning the South Ripley Solar Project?

ConnectGen's lease agreement states that the company is responsible for the decommissioning and removal of project infrastructure at the end of the project's life.

Additionally, New York State will require a Decommissioning and Restoration Plan be put in place as part of the state Article 10 permitting process. The Decommissioning and Restoration Plan will outline the various ways in which ConnectGen will safely and responsibly remove installed solar equipment and how the property within the project area will be restored to as close to its state prior to construction as possible. ConnectGen will put financial security in place early in the life of the project to ensure that host communities and landowners will bear no responsibility for decommissioning or restoration.

Can solar panels be recycled?

Solar PV panels typically consist of glass, polymer, aluminum, copper, and semiconductor materials,³⁷ which can be safely disposed of in landfills at the end of the project life. In addition, recycling technologies have emerged in the last several years that have enabled these materials to be recovered and recycled at the end of their useful life.³⁸ PV solar panel recycling technologies have been put in place over the last decade that have been shown to recover over 95% of semiconductor materials and over 90% of the glass in the panel.³⁹ In other cases, solar PV components can be reused or refurbished to have a "second life" of generating electricity.⁴⁰ The industry continues to work with recycling partners and to research and explore additional cost-effective recycling technologies.⁴¹

When will the South Ripley Solar Project be completed?

ConnectGen expects to start construction on the South Ripley Solar Project in 2022, with a goal to complete construction and begin delivering energy in 2023. Landowners and members of the community will be kept apprised of the project's milestones and progress throughout the development and construction phases of the project.

37. <https://www.seia.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/SEIA-EOL-Considerations-PV-Factsheet-May2019.pdf>

38. <https://www.irena.org/publications/2016/Jun/End-of-life-management-Solar-Photovoltaic-Panels>

39. https://iea-pvps.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/IRENA_IEAPVPS_End-of-Life_Solar_PV_Panels_2016.pdf

40. <https://www.seia.org/initiatives/recycling-end-life-considerations-photovoltaics>

41. <https://www.seia.org/initiatives/seia-national-pv-recycling-program>



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Q. What is large-scale energy storage?

A. Large-scale energy storage is the method and apparatus used to store energy within an electrical power grid. Electrical energy is stored during the day when there is an abundance of electricity being generated, and it is discharged during peak hours when the need is greatest. Advances in technology and materials, paired with economies of scale, have led to dramatically reduced costs associated with energy storage.¹

Q. What kind of energy storage application will be used for the South Ripley Solar Project?

A. The South Ripley Solar Project will include a 20 megawatt (MW) AC battery storage component. The project will use lithium ion batteries, which is the same type of battery found in everyday consumer electronics, medical devices, and electric vehicles.

Q. How is the electricity stored?

A. Rechargeable battery cells, very similar in composition to the small batteries used in consumer electronics, are arranged into protective cases, called modules, which are then arranged into groups of modules, called racks. These racks are stored in either containers or a building and are connected to the electrical grid. This will allow us to charge and discharge from battery storage project when there is a demand. An analogy is that the arrangement of battery racks is similar to a shoe rack in a shoe store; the battery cells are the shoes, the modules are the shoe box, and the rack is where you put the shoe box.

Q. Are battery storage systems safe?

A. At the end of 2019, 1300 MW of batteries had been installed on the U.S. electric grid.² Energy storage has a safety record that is similar to or better than other electricity generation, distribution, or management methods.³ Driven by the need for grid resiliency and reliability, grid-scale battery storage is projected to have a thirteen-fold increase over the next six years.⁴

Battery manufacturers perform extensive testing before deployment, and energy storage systems are required to be designed to high safety standards. These systems are designed with multiple layers of risk monitoring and mitigation in place. In addition, the site will be remotely monitored 24/7 by trained personnel to ensure no abnormalities are occurring on the system. Internal fire suppression and ventilation systems are designed as backstop protection should any abnormality occur. Moreover, the remote control center has the ability to emergency stop the system in addition to the on-site safety design measures.

Fencing will be erected to keep the public at a safe distance from our storage facility. Only trained personnel will be allowed inside the fenced area to minimize any risk.

In addition, we will comply with the safety measures required by the Federal Regulatory Energy Commission, the North American Electric Reliability Corporation, and applicable regional and local laws. We are also bound by the International Building Code, the International Fire Code, National Fire Protection Association codes and standards and state fire regulations.

1. <https://www.ubs.com/global/en/investment-bank/in-focus/2019/energy-storage.html>
2. https://energystorage.org/wp/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/ESA_AR_2020_FINAL.pdf

3. <https://energystorage.org/resources/thought-leadership/faqs/>

4. https://greentechnewstoday.com/renewable_energy/energy-storage-to-become-key-grid-asset-with-13-fold-growth-through-2024/

Q. Do you work with local fire departments in your project area?

A. Prior to operation, we will develop an Emergency Response Plan in accordance with industry best practices, which will outline the response procedures to be employed should an emergency arise at the project site. We will work closely and collaboratively with the local departments and authorities. We provide pre-construction training to all emergency response personnel, which includes a description of the project, any potential construction risks, and the role of emergency responders should an incident occur. After construction is complete, we will host the emergency response personnel for a site visit to make sure they are familiar with the system and our Emergency Response Plan.

Q. What are the benefits of energy storage?

A. Large-scale energy storage improves the way that we generate, deliver and consume energy, providing many benefits⁵:

- Energy storage has minimal developmental impacts. Storage projects occupy little land, can be screened to minimize visual impacts, are emission-free, and have a low noise profile.
- Energy storage smooths out the electricity supply from energy sources with variable outputs, ensuring that the energy generation meets energy demand.
- Energy storage has a rapid response time, discharging power to the grid quickly to maintain grid stability when rapid changes occur in energy demand.
- Energy storage cuts energy costs by reducing economic losses from major and minor power outages and allowing cheap energy to be stored for later use.
- Energy storage allows for energy diversification by allowing it to be consumed on demand and at a controlled rate.

Q. How long does it take to construct a battery storage project?

A. Depending on the size of the project, construction typically takes 4 to 6 months.

Q. What kind of signage will you use for the South Ripley Solar Project?

A. We will provide signs that include the project name, address, and emergency contact number, in accordance with the various regulatory authorities, such as the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission, North American Electric Reliability Corporation, International Building Code, International Fire Code, National Fire Protection Association, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, and New York State Uniform Fire Protection and Building Code, that require signage at all energy storage facilities. We will ensure that the signs at our sites meet all current requirements and provide sufficient safety notices as well as an emergency contact number.

5. <https://energystorage.org/why-energy-storage/benefits/>





How do solar panels work?

Solar photovoltaic (“PV”) panels typically consist of silicon, tempered glass, aluminum, copper, and semiconductor materials. Silicon, an element most commonly found in sand, has conductive properties that allow it to absorb and convert sunlight into electricity. When light interacts with a silicon cell, it causes electrons to be set into motion, which initiates a flow of electric current in a process known as the “photovoltaic effect”.¹

What will these projects look like?

A solar farm is a large group of solar panels that operate together as one power generation facility, delivering electricity to the existing electric grid. Solar farms are typically arranged in parallel rows with approximately 8 feet wide access buffers between each row.

A panel array, which includes both PV panel and rack mounting, typically stands around 12 feet tall. The mounting racks are supported by steel pile foundations generally set up to 8 feet into the ground without the use of concrete. Panel designs currently being evaluated by ConnectGen include fixed mounting, which are fixed at a set angle, and single-axis tracking mounting, which rotate slowly from east to west once a day, keeping the sun at a 90-degree angle from the panels to ensure maximum energy is absorbed. Each section of solar panels is typically fenced off to ensure security and safe operation.



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SOLAR FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS



Frequently Asked Questions

What other equipment is usually present at a solar farm?

Other project infrastructure present at a solar farm includes common electrical equipment such as inverters and transformers and the electrical equipment necessary to deliver energy to the existing electrical grid such as underground and overhead transmission lines. ConnectGen’s projects may also include a battery storage facility.

Are solar panels safe?

Yes. Because the PV panel materials are enclosed and do not mix with water or vaporize into the air, there is little-to-no risk of chemicals, including greenhouse gases, being released into the environment during normal use. Crystalline silicon PV panels, an extremely common panel variant used around the world, “do not pose a material risk of toxicity to public health and safety.”² Additionally, any Electromagnetic Fields (EMF) produced by solar panel systems are in the same extremely low frequency range as those induced by household appliances.³

All solar facilities are designed to strict electrical safety standards to ensure safe operation. Product safety standards, installation requirements, and building codes for solar facilities are addressed by the National Fire Protection Agency’s National Electrical Code, the International Code Council’s International Fire Code, the International Association of Firefighters, and several other safety and product standards groups.⁴

ConnectGen will be fully responsible for the security of the facility and for maintaining consistent safety standards within the project area.

What benefits do utility-scale solar farms bring to local communities?

Utility-scale solar farms represent a significant investment into the local and surrounding communities. Host landowners will receive annual lease payments for thirty years or more. The projects also benefit communities by contributing millions of tax dollars to towns, counties, and local school districts that host the projects.

Utility-scale solar farms also benefit communities by creating local construction jobs, generating revenue for local businesses, and supporting community organizations through sponsorships and donations.

Do solar farms affect agriculture?

Solar farms are low impact and coexist well with agriculture, operating without any impact to adjacent agricultural properties. During the solar farm’s thirty-year or more lifespan, the land hosting the project gets a recovery period, allowing the soil to rest and rebuild, which can increase the value of the land for agriculture in the future.⁵ At the end of the solar farm’s useful life, the project is decommissioned, and the land can be returned to agricultural use.

Who will be responsible for maintaining the solar farms once they are constructed?

ConnectGen will be fully responsible for maintaining the solar facilities and any

properties within the projects’ boundaries. Landscape maintenance at the solar farms will be performed by companies contracted directly by ConnectGen.

Will herbicides be used during maintenance activities?

ConnectGen will develop and implement a Vegetation Management Plan that establishes vegetation goals and identifies the specific treatments that may be used to ensure safe and reliable operation of the facility. Common practices to control and manage vegetation will involve mechanized and agrarian means; however, herbicides may be employed, depending on the target plant species, land use activities and landowner input. ConnectGen is committed to the conscientious use of appropriate management techniques to control vegetation in a way that is designed to minimize the risk of unreasonable adverse effects on human health and the environment.

What happens if a solar panel gets hit by lightning?

Solar farms are designed with lightning protection on all system components, which protect against damage in the event of a lightning strike. The ground grid will be designed in consideration of the conductivity of soils in the area as well as any other nearby conductive materials that are buried or connected to the ground, such as water or natural gas pipes.

Do large-scale solar projects make noise?

Temporary, elevated noise levels may occur during the construction phase of a solar farm, but once construction is complete, an operating solar farm emits minimal noise during the day and is dormant at night. As part of the Article 10 application process, ConnectGen will submit a detailed study of the potential noise impacts associated with the construction and operation of the facility. The results of the study will assess expected noise levels, and also propose noise limits, which will minimize and mitigate adverse impacts associated with construction and operation of the solar project. In addition, ConnectGen is committed to taking steps to minimize and mitigate visual impacts of the project through vegetative buffers and setbacks from property lines, which will provide additional sound dampening benefits as well.

How are solar projects permitted in New York State?

New York State requires that major electric generation facilities, including solar farms, undergo a rigorous state permitting process, under Public Service Law Article 10, prior to construction and operation. The Article 10 process provides rigorous requirements for the study of the environmental, public health, and public safety impacts as well as the incorporation of extensive public input and local stakeholder engagement into the development, design, and construction of solar energy projects.

How long does it take to complete a large-scale solar project?

The commencement of construction will happen once ConnectGen completes the Article 10 process, which takes approximately 2 to 3 years to complete. Construction of a utility-scale solar project takes between 9 and 12 months, depending on weather constraints and other potential construction limiting factors. ConnectGen

expects to start construction on its utility-scale solar projects in western New York in 2022 with a goal to complete construction and begin delivering energy in late 2022 or 2023. Landowners and members of the community will be kept apprised of the projects’ milestones and progress throughout the development and construction phases of the projects.

What happens at the end of the project life?

ConnectGen is responsible for the decommissioning and removal of project infrastructure at the end of the project’s life. As added protection for project landowners and host municipalities, ConnectGen will put financial security in place early in the life of the project to ensure that host communities and landowners will bear no responsibility for decommissioning or restoration.

Additionally, New York State will require a decommissioning and restoration plan be put in place as part of the state Article 10 permitting process. The decommissioning and restoration plan will outline the various ways in which ConnectGen will safely and responsibly remove installed solar equipment and how the property within the project area will be restored to as close to its state prior to construction as possible.

What happens to the solar panels once they have been decommissioned?

Solar PV panels typically consist of glass, polymer, aluminum, copper, and semiconductor materials⁶, which can be safely disposed of in landfills at the end of project life. However, recycling technologies have been implemented in the last several years that have enabled these materials to be recovered and recycled at the end of their useful life.⁷ In some cases, over 95 percent of semiconductor material and over 90 percent of the glass used in a solar PV panel can be recycled.⁸ In other cases, solar PV components can be reused or refurbished to have a “second life” of generating electricity.⁹ The industry continues work with recycling partners and to research and explore additional cost-effective recycling technologies.

¹ Energy Sage: “How do Solar Panels Work?: <https://news.energysage.com/solar-panels-work/>

² “Health and Safety Impacts of Photovoltaics.” N.C. Clean Energy Technology Center at N.C. State University: https://content.ces.ncsu.edu/static/publication/js/pdf_js/web/viewer.html?slug=health-and-safety-impacts-of-solar-photovoltaics

³ NYSEDA New York Solar Guidebook: <https://www.nyserda.ny.gov/-/media/NYSun/files/Model-Solar-Energy-Law-Guidance-Document.pdf>

⁴ SEIA: Fire Safety & Solar: <https://www.seia.org/initiatives/fire-safety-solar>

⁵ Department of Energy: <https://www.energy.gov/eere/solar/farmers-guide-going-solar>

⁶ SEIA: <https://www.seia.org/sites/default/files/2019-05/SEIA-EOL-Considerations-PV-Factsheet-May2019.pdf>

⁷ International Renewable Energy Agency: <https://www.irena.org/publications/2016/Jun/End-of-life-management-Solar-Photovoltaic-Panels>

⁸ International Renewable Energy Agency: <https://www.irena.org/publications/2016/Jun/End-of-life-management-Solar-Photovoltaic-Panels>

⁹ SEIA: <https://www.seia.org/initiatives/recycling-end-life-considerations-photovoltaics>



How to request party status for a Section 94-c proceeding

In order to formally file papers related to issues of fact and have them considered as part of the evidentiary record, you must be granted full party or amicus status pursuant to Section 900-8.4 of the 94-c regulations. The period for filing a petition for party status shall be at least sixty (60) days from the Office of Hearing's issuance of notice of the public comment hearing. Nonparties who wish to have their comments recorded are permitted to submit oral or written comments during the public comment portion of the proceedings, or as otherwise provided by the Administrative Law Judge (ALJ). Such public statements will not constitute evidence in the adjudicatory hearing but may be used by the ALJ as a basis for further inquiries.

To request full party or amicus status, an interested party should file a written petition and complete one of the following two options:

For **full party** status, interested parties should file a petition that includes:

- Identification of the proposed party together with the name(s), address, telephone number and email address of the person or persons who will act as representative of the party;
- Statement of the petitioner's interest related to the standards and conditions established by the ORES for the siting, design, operation, and construction of the project;
- Identification of any interest relating to statutes administered by other State agencies or the ORES relevant to the project;
- Statement that the petition is for full party status;
- Identification of the precise grounds for opposition or support.
- Identification of an adjudicable issue(s) which meets the criteria set forth in section 900-8.3(c) of this Part; and
- An offer of proof specifying the witness(es), the nature of the evidence the person expects to present and the grounds upon which the assertion is made with respect each issue identified.

For **amicus party** status, interested parties should file a petition that includes:

- Identification of the proposed party together with the name(s), address, telephone number and email address of the person or persons who will act as representative of the party;
- Statement of the petitioner's interest related to the standards and conditions established by the ORES for the siting, design, operation, and construction of the project;
- Identification of any interest relating to statutes administered by other State agencies or the ORES relevant to the project;
- Statement that the petition is for amicus status;
- Identification of the precise grounds for opposition or support.
- Identification of the nature of the legal or policy issue(s) to be briefed which meets the criteria of section 900-8.3(c) of this Part; and
- A statement explaining why the proposed party is in a special position with respect to that issue.

Questionnaire and Comment Form

Thank you for attending our open house. The purpose of this event is to present and discuss the South Ripley Solar Project. We would appreciate if you would take the time to give us your feedback on the content and quality of this open house and/or the engagement process thus far. Your opinion is important to us, and we want to make sure that we continue to provide useful information that matters to you.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: _____

Would You Like to Receive Project Updates? **Yes** **No**

What was your reason for attending this open house?

After attending this open house, do you have any remaining questions or feedback for the team?

Thank you for your feedback!



Local Business Opportunities Expression of Interest Form

The South Ripley Solar Project, currently under development in the Town of Ripley, Chautauqua County, New York, is anticipated to be a 270 megawatt (MW) solar energy project with a 20 MW battery storage component comprised of solar panels, electrical equipment, access roads, collection lines and other associated infrastructure. The project is in the process of leasing approximately 2,000 acres of land in South Ripley and anticipates commencing construction activities in 2022.

According to the Solar Energy Industries Association, solar energy supported more than 230,000 family wage American jobs in 2020, including approximately 10,214 in the State of New York. As of the 3rd quarter of 2021, New York was ranked 10th in the nation for installed solar capacity with over 2,980 MW online, and there are at least 91 manufacturing facilities producing components and supporting high-quality jobs for the solar industry.

We are in the process of identifying qualified local and regional businesses that can assist with the development, construction, and maintenance of the South Ripley Solar Project.

BUSINESS OPPORTUNITIES



Technical and Construction Employment

- Civil contractors
- Directional boring
- Gravel supply and delivery
- Heavy equipment operators
- Surveying
- Trucking and hauling
- Excavation and clearing/grubbing
- Site grading and restoration
- Framing and drilling foundations
- Building temporary access roads
- Vegetation management and removal
- Electrical wiring
- Medium-voltage collection system installation

Services

- Fuel supply
- Vehicle and equipment rentals
- Indoor storage
- Vehicle and equipment maintenance
- Accommodations and catering
- Meeting rooms and temporary office space
- Supporter services for the construction offices (sanitation, security, and portable restrooms)
- Signage

Help us understand your business capabilities by filling out our supplier form online at: www.southripleysolar.com/local-business-opportunities or by filling out the below section and mailing this document back to ConnectGen c/o Isaac Phillips at 1001 McKinney, Suite 700, Houston, Texas 77002

Organization: _____

Name: _____

Title: _____

Mailing Address: _____

City/State/Zip/County: _____

Phone Number/Cell: _____

Email Address: _____

Company Website: _____

Nature of Business: _____

About ConnectGen: ConnectGen is a renewable energy company focused on developing best-in-class wind, solar, and energy storage projects that will increase America's supply of low-cost, domestically produced clean energy. The company currently has 139 MW of solar projects in operations and is developing over 8,500 MW of wind, solar, and energy storage projects across the United States. For more information, please visit www.connectgenllc.com.

Please Contact Us with Your Questions, Ideas and Thoughts

EMAIL: info@southripleysolar.com

PHONE: (877) 338-8905

CONNECTING POWER, PROJECTS & PEOPLE.

