

Existing View



Proposed View



View with Mitigation



Existing Condition

Viewpoint 63SE is located approximately 240 feet from the collection substation and 600 feet from the point of interconnection (POI) switchyard. It is the same location as Viewpoint 63S on County Route 6, but the view is oriented to the southeast rather than the south. The existing view in this direction features the surface of County Route 6 on the left, extending from the immediate foreground into the middle ground. The roadway is lined on the right by a roadside ditch, a band of unmanaged vegetation, an overhead utility line, and agricultural fencing. These linear features draw the viewer’s attention down the roadway toward two large semi-trailers situated behind the fencing. The foreground to the right of the roadway features a fenced pasture. The trailers and pasture are backed by a band of dense deciduous vegetation that blocks views of more distant landscape features. The view has relatively low scenic quality due to its enclosed character, level topography, lack of interesting focal points, and presence of the existing trailers.

Proposed View

With the proposed Facility in place, the proposed collection substation is situated to the right of the view in the foreground, and the POI switchyard is situated in the center of the view in the middle ground, partially obscured by the existing trailers and woody vegetation. The sound barrier wall associated with the collection substation appears as a long, rectangular box on the left side of the view in the foreground. The solid massing presented by the wall screens views of the forest and vegetation behind it. The stations appear large and visually complex. Several new man-made structures, including overhead gantry structures, transmission poles, lighting poles, and substation components, extend into the sky and present significant contrast with existing features of the landscape in line, color, texture, and form. The stations add significant visual clutter to the view and become the dominant character defining feature of the landscape. Because the stations, particularly the POI switchyard, are semi-transparent, views of the forest and existing transmission line behind it are still available. However, the forest is clearly subordinate to the utility infrastructure that now dominates the view. While introducing new built elements and a contrast in texture, the stations have lines and colors similar to the existing fence posts, utility poles, and background vegetation present in the view. Although these new structures add substantial utility infrastructure to the view, their setback from the road, partial screening, and the presence of existing built/man-made feature somewhat limit their dominance and visual impact.

Landscape Mitigation

With proposed mitigation plantings in place, and following five to seven years of growth, the visual mass of the collector substation sound barrier wall is softened, yet still strongly visible. The plantings provide some screening of the lower portions of the substations, while the high contrast upper portions are unscreened and continue to draw viewer attention. With additional growth, taller trees will provide additional softening of the lower portions of the substation and will help to blend with the existing background vegetation. However, the upper portions of the tall, vertical gantry structures are likely to remain unscreened and present visual contrast with the background vegetation. Although the presence of conifers in the plantings is not consistent with the existing forest vegetation, it enhances screening during the dormant season and will be less noticeable during the growing season.

Viewpoint Sensitivity¹:

Scenic Quality:

☒ Low

☐ Moderate

☐ High

Viewer Exposure:

☐ Continuous

☒ Repeated/Regular

☒ Occasional/Brief

☐ Rare

¹ Viewpoint Sensitivity information is gathered from rating panel results. Scenic Quality is an average based on Low = 1, Moderate = 2, High = 3. Viewer Exposure reflects all those selected by the review panel.

Contrast Rating Scores²:

Component	Score		Contrast Rating 5-7 Years
	Install	5-7 Years	
Landform	2.0	1.8	Moderate
Vegetation	3.0	2.6	Moderate/Appreciable
Land Use	2.6	2.3	Moderate/Appreciable
Water	NA	NA	NA
Sky	3.4	3.1	Appreciable
Viewer Activity	3.3	2.9	Appreciable
AVERAGE	2.9	2.5	Moderate/Appreciable

² Contrast Rating Scale: 0.0 - 0.2 (Insignificant), 0.3 – 0.7 (Insignificant/Minimal), 0.8 – 1.2 (Minimal), 1.3 – 1.7 (Minimal/Moderate), 1.8 - 2.2 (Moderate), 2.3 – 2.7 (Moderate/Appreciable), 2.8 – 3.2 (Appreciable) 3.3 – 3.7 Appreciable/Strong), 3.8 – 4.0 (Strong).

Contrast Rating - Lowest and Highest Scores:

Install			Mitigation		
Component	Score		Component	Score	
	Low	High		Low	High
Landform	1	3	Landform	1	2.5
Vegetation	2	4	Vegetation	2	3.5
Land Use	1	3.5	Land Use	0.5	3
Water	NA	NA	Water	NA	NA
Sky	3	4	Sky	2.5	4
Viewer Activity	2.5	4	Viewer Activity	2.5	3.5

Existing Conditions



Simulation



Simulation with Mitigation 5-7 Year Post Install



Simulation with Mitigation 5-7 Year Post Install (Leaf-off)



Attachment D. Visual Simulations

Viewpoint Information

Viewpoint ID: 69
County: Chautauqua
Town: Ripley
Location: South Ripley Cemetery off of County Route 6
Latitude, Longitude: 42.19770°N, 79.70978°W
Direction of View: North
Viewing Distance: 417 feet
Distance Zone: Near-foreground

Photograph Information

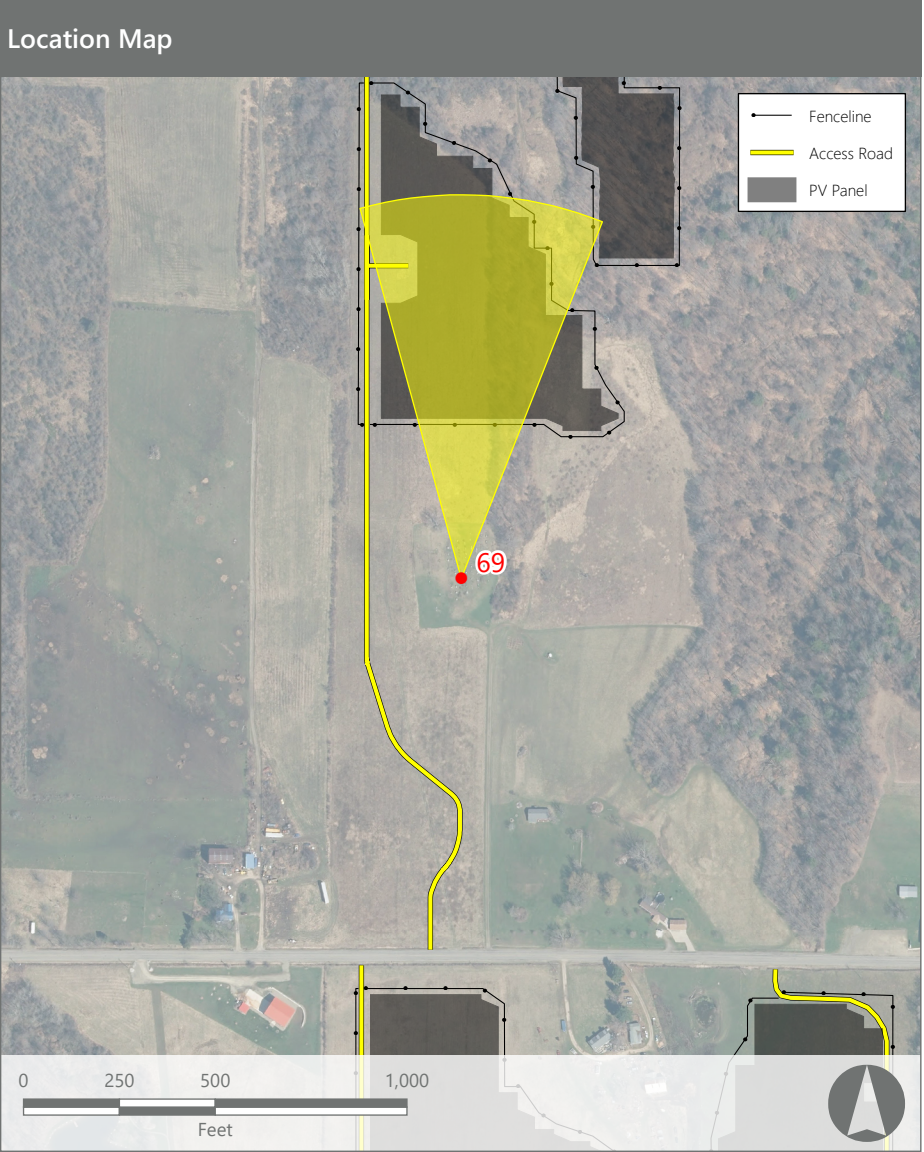
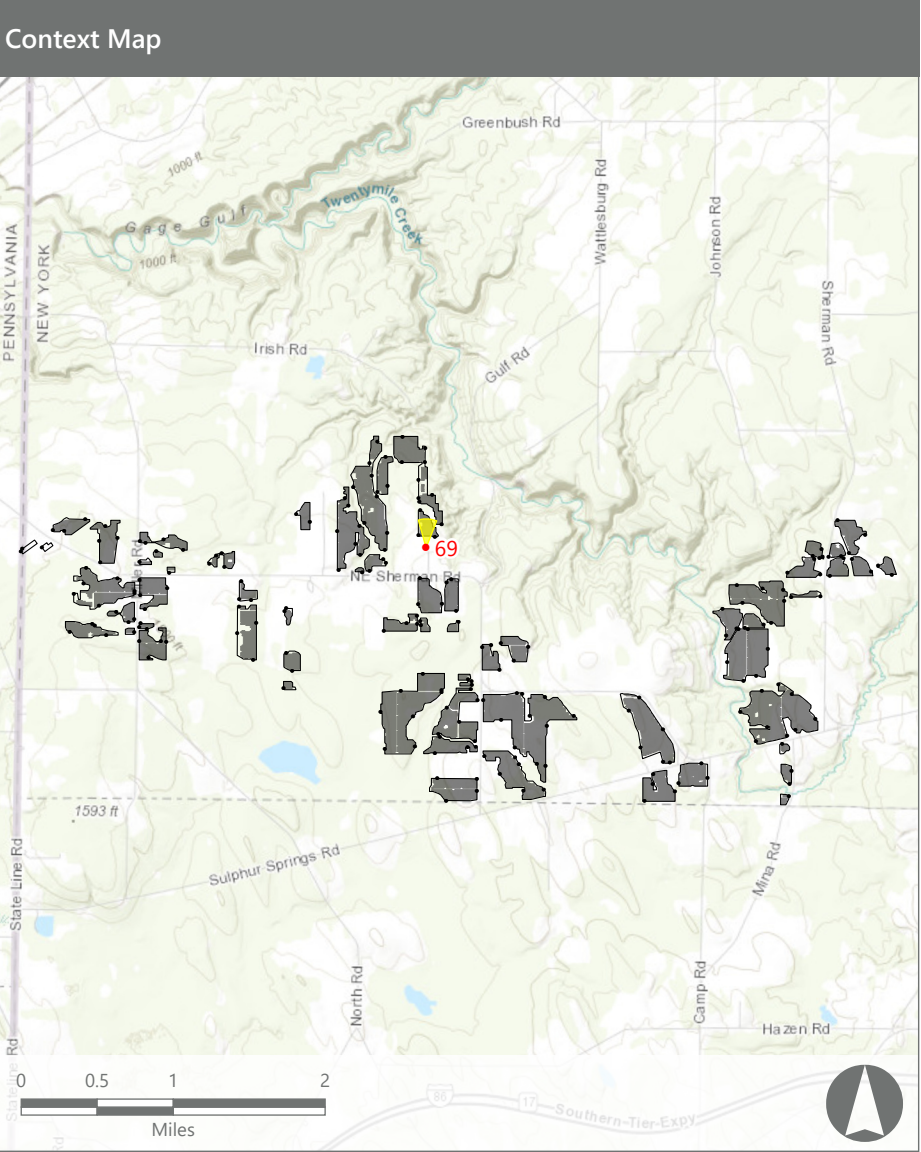
Date Taken: March 12, 2021
Time: 6:06 PM
Camera: Nikon D7100
Resolution: 24.1 Megapixels
Lens Focal Length: 35 mm
Camera Elevation: 1,453 feet
Field of View: 37°

Visual Resources

Landscape Type: Rural Residential/
Agricultural
User Group: Local Residents, Tourists/
Recreational Users
VSR: Concord Grape Belt State Heritage
Area, South Ripley Cemetery

Project Information

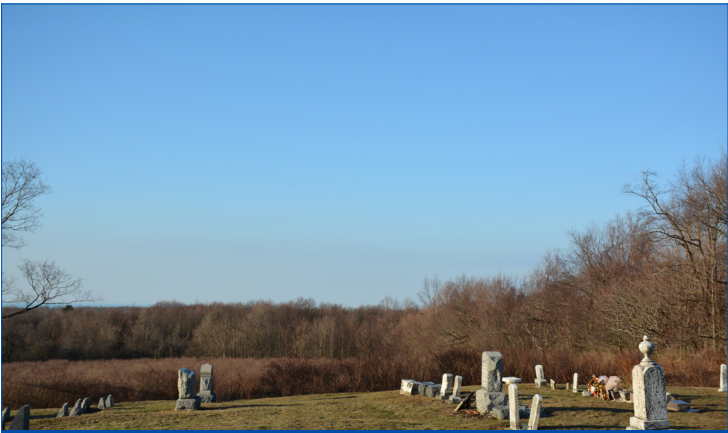
Racking Type: Fixed Tilt PV Array
Max Panel Height: 13 feet AGL
Project Area: 3,382 acres



Context Photo: View to the West-Northwest



Context Photo: View to the North-Northwest



Simulation Photo: View to the North



Context Photo: View to the Northeast



Existing View



Proposed View



View with Mitigation



Existing Condition

Viewpoint 69 is located at the South Ripley Cemetery off County Route 6, approximately 411 feet from the nearest proposed PV panel array. This viewpoint is in the central portion of the Facility Site and is representative of views available to visitors from the cemetery’s interior. The existing view to the north from this location features a mowed lawn and rows of headstones within the cemetery which draw the viewer’s eye to the foreground. The edge of the cemetery is defined by a band of brushy vegetation that extends into an overgrown open field to the north. Beyond this low brushy vegetation, the view is enclosed by mature deciduous trees in the middle ground that wrap around the edges of the field and border the cemetery to the east. An expanse of clear blue sky overhead gives the view a feeling of openness and adds to the layering of distinct horizontal bands of color in this view. Other than the headstones in the cemetery, the view lacks evidence of development and has a secluded and peaceful feel. Scenic quality is moderate to high.

Proposed View

With the proposed Facility in place, the overgrown field in the middle ground is now occupied by a large mass of solar panels that become a dominant feature of the view. Because the panels are facing the viewer, their surface reflects the blue color of the sky and individual rows are difficult to discern. Presence of the panels appears to flatten the topography and presents line, texture, color, and form contrast with the existing vegetation. The panels are compatible with the existing horizontal layering up the landscape, and tree clearing to accommodate the panels makes the former field wider, which maintains a sense of open space. However, the panels represent a significant change in land use and present strong contrast with the peaceful rural character of the cemetery.

Landscape Mitigation

With proposed mitigation plantings in place, the harsh horizontal line of the panel array is interrupted, and the array partially screened. However, most of the array remains visible and continues to present appreciable contrast with the existing landscape and land use. The screening and softening effect of the plantings would be greater if they were installed closer to the edge of the cemetery. However, in doing so, the sense of openness in this view would be reduced. Increased enclosure of the view and more complete separation of the two distinctly different land uses could be beneficial at this location.

Viewpoint Sensitivity¹:

Scenic Quality:
☐ Low
☐ Moderate
☒ High

Viewer Exposure:
☒ Continuous
☐ Repeated/Regular
☐ Occasional/Brief
☒ Rare

¹ Viewpoint Sensitivity information is gathered from rating panel results. Scenic Quality is an average based on Low = 1, Moderate = 2, High = 3. Viewer Exposure reflects all those selected by the review panel.

Contrast Rating Scores²:

Component	Score		Contrast Rating 5-7 Years
	Install	5-7 Years	
Landform	2.5	2.1	Moderate
Vegetation	3.3	2.5	Moderate/Appreciable
Land Use	3.8	3.5	Appreciable/Strong
Water	NA	NA	NA
Sky	1.1	1.1	Minimal
Viewer Activity	3.8	3.4	Appreciable/Strong
AVERAGE	2.9	2.5	Moderate/Appreciable

² Contrast Rating Scale: 0.0 - 0.2 (Insignificant), 0.3 – 0.7 (Insignificant/Minimal), 0.8 – 1.2 (Minimal), 1.3 – 1.7 (Minimal/Moderate), 1.8 - 2.2 (Moderate), 2.3 – 2.7 (Moderate/Appreciable), 2.8 – 3.2 (Appreciable) 3.3 – 3.7 Appreciable/Strong), 3.8 – 4.0 (Strong).

Contrast Rating - Lowest and Highest Scores:

Install			Mitigation		
Component	Score		Component	Score	
	Low	High		Low	High
Landform	1	4	Landform	1	3
Vegetation	3	4	Vegetation	2	3
Land Use	3.5	4	Land Use	3	4
Water	NA	NA	Water	NA	NA
Sky	0	2.5	Sky	0	2.5
Viewer Activity	3	4	Viewer Activity	3	4