

# PPRP's Fact Sheet – Bluegrass Solar Project, Queen Anne's County

## PSC Case Number 9496

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### Project Overview

Bluegrass Solar, LLC filed for a CPCN to construct and operate an 80 MW solar array in Queen Anne's County (Figure 1). The Project is being developed by OneEnergy Development, LLC. The Project will occupy approximately 500 acres across three parcels. The Project site is located east of State Route 213, north of State Route 300, and southeast of Chestertown. Project components include:

- Approximately 271,375 photovoltaic (PV) modules and single-axis horizontal tracking racking system,
- 32 DC to AC power inverters,
- Medium voltage collection system and transformers,
- 138kV step-up substation and other interconnection equipment,
- Approximately 5.01 miles of gravel access road, and
- Approximately 500 acres of pollinator habitat.

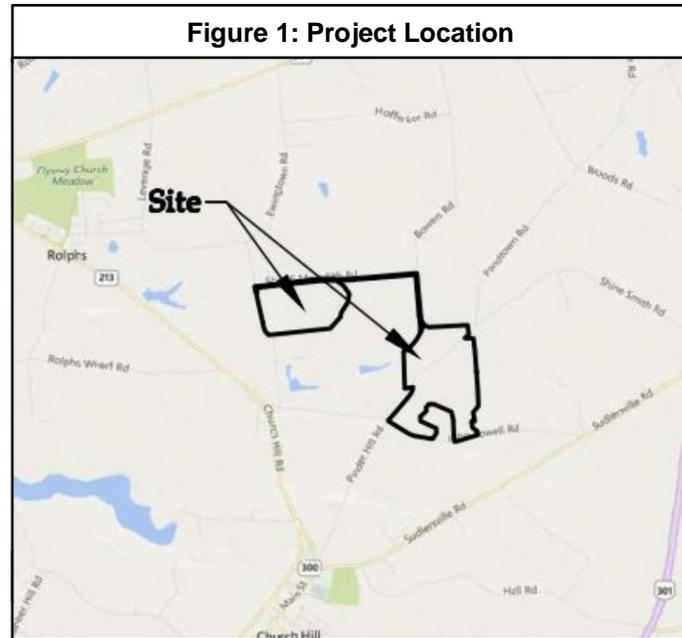


Figure 2: Site Boundary and Array Designation



### Site Description

The proposed Project layout includes a northern and southern array, connected by a 50-foot easement (Figure 2). The site boundary acreage is approximately 538. The Applicant has entered into a long-term land lease option with the Landowner. The site is located in a rural area and is currently used for agriculture. Surrounding land use is a mixture of agricultural, residential, and wooded land. Approximately 69 percent of the site is considered Prime Farmland.

The site is zoned AG (Agricultural). Utility scale solar is a conditional use allowed in the AG zone in Queen Anne's County. The Project has received a favorable recommendation by the County's Planning Commission and anticipates all local Site Plan approvals by September 2019.

### Impact Assessment Highlights

#### Biological

- The Applicant will comply with the Maryland Pollinator Friendly Solar standard which will also create nesting habitat for grassland birds.
- No forest clearing is proposed for the Project. The Applicant has proposed placing 70 acres of existing forested areas in permanent conservation easement and plant approximately 40 acres of new forest to satisfy Maryland's Forest Conservation Act.
- No aquatic or terrestrial rare, threatened, or endangered species were identified within the project area, which is located in an area identified as critically significant for biodiversity conservation.
- Forest Interior Dwelling Species habitat is present on the site and adjacent forest areas that are part of Maryland's Green Infrastructure Network. These areas will be permanently protected.
- The Maryland Department of Environment (MDE) and the Army Corps of Engineers have conducted field delineation of wetlands on the site and there are no planned activities within 50 feet of these areas.



- The Project will add approximately 15 acres of impervious surface. The project will obtain stormwater permits from MDE and local agencies and use best management practices to minimize negative impacts to the watershed.
- The Project is located adjacent to two DNR conservation easements and the River and Field Campus owned by Washington College.

#### *Economic and Fiscal*

- The Project is expected to create more than 250 temporary design, management, and construction jobs and up to three (3) permanent onsite jobs for long-term facility operations and management.
- The Applicant states that the Project represents a \$100 million capital investment in Maryland.
- Economic benefits to the State will be primarily in the form of corporate income tax revenues.
- Queen Anne's County will collect up to \$6 million in property tax revenue over the life of the Project.

#### *Transportation*

- During construction, equipment will be delivered by tractor-trailer. Heavy equipment may include front loaders, dump trucks, concrete trucks, excavators, trenching equipment, backhoes, post installation equipment, and other similar equipment. Daily construction traffic will include pickup trucks and other personnel vehicles.
- After construction, there will be limited traffic to and from the site. Traffic will mostly be limited to three round-trip visits to the site per day during the normal plus seasonal mowing.
- The most probable route for construction traffic will be State Routes 213 and 300 and three County Roads (with one main entrance off Sheriff Meredith Road).
- The nearest airport (Delaware Airpark) is located approximately 22 miles east of the site. The Applicant used the Federal Aviation Administration online Notice Criteria Tool to determine that glare from the Project would not impact airborne traffic.

#### *Visual*

- The Applicant intends to comply with Queen Anne's County Code regarding installation of landscape buffers along portions of the Project boundary that are currently unscreened. Project setbacks included in the Application are as follows: Agricultural/Commercial (75 ft.); Residential (300 ft.); fence line (30 ft.); Road right-of-way (100 ft.); wetland buffer (25 ft.)
- The Applicant used Forge Solar's GlareGauge software to assess the potential for glare trespass onto adjacent properties and found no glare on any of the analyzed properties.
- No additional lighting will be used, except for security as required by Queen Anne's County.

#### *Cultural and Aesthetic*

- Two Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties (MIHP) listings are within the Project's Area of Potential Effect (Collin's Gift and I.B. Schoolhouse). The Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) has determined these listings are not eligible for the Historic Registry.
- MHT has reviewed the Phase I archeological survey and determined no further study is required.
- The Project site is within the Stories of the Chesapeake Heritage Area.

#### *Public Service Impacts*

- The Project will require minimal water and sewer use for sanitary facilities.
- The Applicant states that the Project will comply with the State Fire Prevention Code.

#### **CPCN Status**

- CPCN Application filed on 11/13/2018.
- For more current information, see: [Bluegrass PSC case jacket](#).

