

Note:
This summary was last updated on **February 20, 2025**
For current information, follow this link: [PSC Docket Case #9746](#)

Elk Development Pleasant Valley Pleasant Valley Road Westminster, Maryland 21778 (Carroll County) [PSC Case #9746](#)

Note:
This summary is based on information provided in the CPCN. Applicant filed the CPCN with the PSC on **July 8, 2024**, all of which are subject to change and have not yet been fully reviewed by PPRP.

CPCN Timeline
CPCN Application filed on July 8, 2024
Applicant's Filed Direct Testimony Due: November 4, 2024
2nd Public Hearing: February 24, 2025
Applicant will File Supplemental Direct Testimony Due: March 7, 2025
PPRP's Direct Testimony Due: March 21, 2025
3rd Public Hearing (Virtual): March 24, 2025
Settlement Status Update: March 26, 2025
PSC Evidentiary Hearing (if settlement is reached): April 9, 2025

Project Location:

The Pleasant Valley Solar Project (Project) will be located on a 33.17-acre parcel in Westminster, Maryland (Figure 1) in Carroll County. [Google Map Link](#). Per the Applicant, the approximate limit of disturbance (LOD) for the Project will be 16.21 acres.

Project Overview:

Elk Development LLC (Applicant) has applied for a CPCN to construct a 2.142 MW AC solar array in Carroll County.

Project components include:

- Approximately 5,346 TALESUN BIPRO TD7G72M-545 panels on a pile-driven a single-axis tracking rack system;
- 18 string inverters;
- 1 Inverter and transformer pad

Site Description

The Project site consists of a dwelling, woodlands, pastures, and fallow field areas within the Agricultural Zoning District. Approximately 10.54 acres (99%) of the limit of disturbance (LOD) is considered prime farmland. The parcel is comprised of a farm field, farm accessory buildings, and wooded areas. The Site is bordered by undeveloped forest land and a few nearby residential dwellings. The Applicant's Environmental Review Document (ERD) notes that Carroll County currently does not permit community solar projects on agriculturally zoned land.

The Project is a Community Solar Energy Generating System (CSEGS) and will deliver all of its output to subscribers via the Baltimore Gas and Electric (BGE) electric distribution grid. The Applicant is approved as a subscriber organization by the PSC for 2.142 MWAC at the site, and at the time of filing, BGE had conditionally approved the Applicant's interconnection application.

Impact Assessment Highlights

Biological

- The Site is located in the Double Pipe Creek Watershed, a tributary of the Monocacy Scenic River.
- DNR's Land Acquisition and Planning Unit stated that "there will be no adverse impact from this project" on the Monocacy Scenic River.
- MDE's Nontidal Wetlands and Waterway letter dated 11/28/2023, states that "there are no impacts to nontidal wetlands" and "Due to required improvements to an existing stream crossing there will be impacts to stream and 100-year nontidal floodplain." Authorization to proceed would be required from MDE.
- The Applicant states that "No tree clearing is proposed for the Project, with the potential exception of a few disconnected trees on the fringe/border of the LOD."

Figure 1. Project Location



Source: Pleasant Valley CPCN Application

- The Applicant consulted with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, Wildlife and Heritage Service (DNR-WHS), and DNR-WHS determined that there are no official State or Federal records for listed plant or animal species within the delineated area.
- The US Fish and Wildlife Service IPaC review identified three threatened, endangered or candidate species Indiana Bat (*Myotis sodalists*), Northern Long-eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) and Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*). In its July 12, 2023, letter, USFWS states that the site does not overlap with the endangered Indiana Bat (*Myotis sodalists*) critical habitat. For the endangered Northern Long-eared Bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*), where no critical habitat has been designated, the “project is not reasonably certain to cause incidental take of the northern long-eared bat.” Habitat for the candidate Monarch Butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) may be present.
- The Project will add approximately two percent (2%) of impervious surface.

Noise Impacts

- The Applicant’s ERD states that the Project is designed to have approximately 500 feet of distance from the closest adjacent residence to the onsite electrical equipment.

Visual Impacts

- The Project will be enclosed by an 8-foot-tall security fence.
- The Applicant has proposed a landscape buffer to provide vegetative screening for areas surrounding the arrays that are not currently provided natural screening by existing trees. The existing vegetation and new planting will create a 15-foot landscape buffer.

Cultural Resource Impacts

- The Applicant has corresponded with the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT), which has determined that the Project would have no adverse effect on historic properties and that there are no historic properties within the Project’s area of potential effect.

Public Safety and Transportation

- The Applicant states that there are 8 public or private airports located within 10 miles of the Project. The Applicant utilized FAA’s Notice Criteria Tool and MAA’s Airport Zoning Permit Web Map to determine that both FAA notification and MAA notification were not required for the Project.
- During construction, large materials and equipment will be transported to staging areas on tractor-trailers and offloaded by construction vehicles. However, the Applicant anticipates that personnel vehicles will comprise most daily construction traffic. During operation, traffic will mostly be limited to maintenance crews for seasonal mowing and vegetation maintenance as well as maintenance for any operational issues.
- The Applicant states that the entrance to the Project site will be from Pleasant Valley Road.
- The Applicant indicates that a Waterway Construction Permit will be obtained for necessary entrance upgrades including an improved culvert and widening of the entrance road in this area to accommodate construction, operation, and emergency vehicle access. The Applicant plans to coordinate emergency vehicle access to the Project site with the State Fire Marshal.

Economic and Fiscal

- The Applicant estimates that the Project will create 50 design, management, and construction jobs during the construction period.
- The Applicant indicates that the Project represents a capital investment of approximately \$6.74 million.
- The Project will produce \$8M in one-time economic impact from construction, supporting forty (40) full-time equivalent job years and \$2.4M in employee compensation according to the 2022 IMPLAN model. The Project is expected to contribute an additional \$55,600 per year in tax revenue to the County over the life of the Project (\$1.112M).

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Avoided

- The Applicant indicates that the Project will displace 2,730 tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂) emissions over the course of its useful life.