

Note:
This summary was last updated on **April 29 2026**
For current information, follow this link: [PSC Docket Case #9804](#)

Blacks Mill Road Solar 1 Project

7308 Blacks Mill Road

Thurmont, MD 21788 (Frederick County)

[PSC Case #9804](#)

Note:
This summary is based on information provided in the CPCN Application filed with the PSC on **July 22, 2025**, and **Applicant Responses to PPRP Data Request Numbers 1 and 2** which is subject to change and has not yet been fully reviewed by PPRP.

CPCN Timeline

CPCN Application filed on **July 22, 2025**
Applicant's Filed Direct Testimony: **January 20, 2026**
1st Public Hearing (Virtual): **January 27, 2026**
Intervenor's Direct Testimony Due: **May 29, 2026**
2nd Public Hearing: **June 1, 2026**
Settlement Status Update: **July 7, 2026**
PSC Evidentiary Hearing (if settlement is reached): **July 14, 2026**

Project Location:

The Blacks Mill Road Solar 1, LLC 5.0 MW AC Solar Project (Project) will be located on a 142.9-acre parcel in Thurmont, Maryland (Figure 1). [Google Map Link](#). Per the Applicant, the approximate limit of disturbance (LOD) for the Project will be 46.8 acres.

Project Overview:

Blacks Mill Road Solar 1, LLC (Applicant) has applied for a CPCN to construct a 5.0 MW AC solar array in Frederick County.

Project components include:

- 9,854 photovoltaic (PV) modules ground-mounted on a single-axis tracking racking system;
- Interconnection to the electric distribution grid via an existing pole-mounted distribution circuit along Hessong Bridge Road.
- 20 string inverters;
- One transformer; and
- Two equipment pads, which will support the transformer and inverters.

Site Description

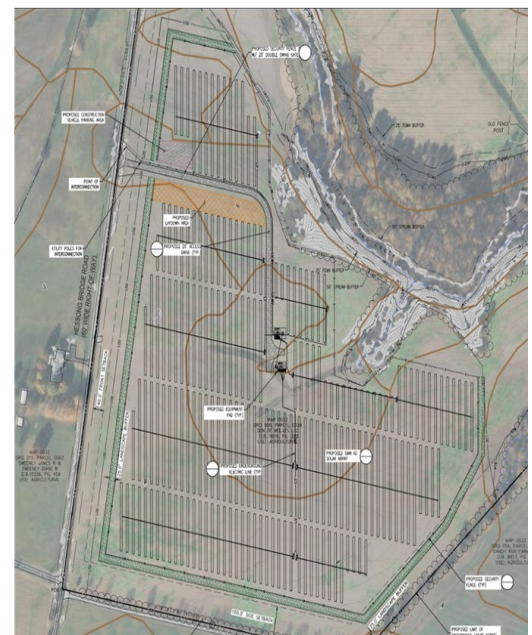
The parcel that comprises the Project site has been used for agricultural purposes, which included crop production and pasture use. Approximately 32.5 acres (or 69.4%) of the total Project LOD (46.8 acres) is considered prime farmland. The Property contains one wetland and one stream, Little Hunting Creek, located outside the LOD on the northern portion of the property and which flows to the Monocacy River. Surrounding land uses include residential structures, existing vegetation, additional agricultural lands, and public rights of way. The Project is located within Frederick County's Agricultural zone (A). Although Frederick County permits community solar projects within all zoning districts as an accessory use, Frederick County does not consider community solar an accessory use to Agricultural activities, therefore the Applicant is pursuing a CPCN.

The Project is a Community Solar Energy Generating System (CSEGS) and will deliver all its output to Maryland subscribers via the Potomac Edison (PE) electric distribution grid. The Applicant has submitted the interconnection application to PE, completed a feasibility study and received approval. The Applicant has received Subscriber Organization Number 24A3081080006992 and has executed an interconnection agreement with PE.

Impact Assessment Highlights

Biological

Figure 1. Project Location



Source: Blacks Mill Revised Concept Site Plan

- The Project property is located within the Monocacy River Watershed. The property includes 1 stream (Little Hunting Creek) outside the LOD with a 50-foot buffer surrounding the stream.
- The Project property includes one nontidal wetlands outside the LOD. The Project design includes a 25-foot buffer around the wetland.
- The Project is not located within the Chesapeake Bay Critical Area, or in the vicinity of a Tier II stream or catchment area.
- The Applicant states no forest clearing is planned.
- An October 25, 2024 letter from MDE Nontidal Wetlands and Waterways states no impact to wetlands, streams, or floodplains.
- The Applicant consulted with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources Wildlife and Heritage Services (DNR-WHS), and DNR indicated in its September 26, 2025 letter that the project site falls within the headwaters to Little Hunting Creek which supports occurrences of the Creeper mussel. WHS suggests several best management practices to ensure minimization of soil erosion and sedimentation in aquatic habitat.
- The Applicant intends to apply for the Pollinator-Friendly Solar Designation and does not propose the use of agrivoltaics.
- The ERD states that the Project will include 0.62 acres of impervious areas for access roads and equipment pads.

Noise Impacts

- The Applicant's ERD states that the closest residential dwelling is approximately 180 feet away from a proposed equipment pad. The Applicant anticipates sound levels to be significantly lower than the regulated 65 dBA.

Visual Impacts

- The Applicant proposes to enclose the Project with a 7-foot-tall screening fence.
- The Applicant is proposing a 25-foot-wide four-season landscape buffer on all sides of the Project, except the northeast area, where there is existing vegetation on the Project property.
- The Applicant utilized the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Notice Criteria Tool and the Maryland Aviation Administration (MAA) Project Locator to determine that the Project does not exceed notice criteria, it is not within an Airport Zoning District, and no further action is required.

Cultural Resource Impacts

- The Applicant has corresponded with the Maryland Historical Trust (MHT), which has determined that the Project will have no adverse effect on historic properties.

Public Safety and Transportation

- The Applicant states that construction traffic will access the Project site by an entrance along Hessong Bridge Road.
- During construction, the Applicant anticipates that daily traffic to the site may include tractor trailers, miscellaneous construction equipment, and personnel vehicles. The Applicant further states that temporary traffic control measures will be implemented during construction to ensure flow of traffic along Hessong Bridge Road.
- The Applicant's ERD states that during operation the Project will be monitored remotely with only occasional site visits and will not impact traffic.
- The Applicant plans to coordinate with the County Fire Department to ensure that the Project is compliant with the State Fire Prevention Code.

Economic and Fiscal

- The Applicant estimates that the Project will create approximately 32 direct jobs and 19 indirect jobs during the construction period and approximately two operation and maintenance jobs post-construction.
- The Applicant estimates that the Project will generate approximately \$90,000 to Frederick County and \$5,000 to the state in tax revenue annually and approximately \$3.6 million/\$200,000 over the life of the Project.

Greenhouse Gas Emissions Avoided

- The Applicant indicates that the Project will displace approximately 5,100 tons of CO₂ emissions in the Mid-Atlantic Region and 270 tons of CO₂ in Maryland annually.