

HECATE CIDER SOLAR FARM PUBLIC OPEN HOUSE Q&A

Summary of Open Forums Held December 16, 2020, 1-3 PM and 5-7 PM

Q: Where will construction begin?

The location in which construction will start has not been determined but there is room for flexibility in the planning and design processes. Construction logistics will be further refined in spring and summer 2021.

Q: How long will Project construction last?

Project construction is expected to commence 3rd quarter 2022 and would occur over an 18-month to two-year period, ending in 2023. Once construction begins, it is anticipated that presence of construction crews will gradually increase with the bulk of the construction work occurring over a 12-month period. Construction activities over the final three to six months will then gradually decrease. During construction, crews will move from section to section by installing posts, followed by panels, wiring, and other Project equipment. A comprehensive construction management plan will be developed and adhered to over the entire construction phase of the Project. The plan will include a code of conduct for construction workers.

Q: Where will electrical collection wiring be constructed?

Collection lines between panel areas will be located underground, to the extent practicable. Hecate currently is working on obtaining crossing agreements and potential easement access for these collection routes and plans to continue to work with local landowners through this process.

Q: How long will pre-construction surveyors be needing to access landowner property?

Pre-construction field efforts to study wetlands, wildlife, visual resources, noise receptors, cultural resources, and other sensitive resources were commenced in July 2020 and/or will continue to intermittently occur between now and March 2021. Hecate will coordinate with landowners for survey work and ensure that field crews do not trespass on non-participating properties.

Q: What are the setback dimensions from non-participating landowner property lines? Will there be fencing around the Project?

The required setback dimension is 100 feet from non-participating parcels. Fencing will be installed around the entire Project perimeter; the fencing layout will be shared once the design has been completed. Landscaping will be installed outside of the fence.

Q: How will site access be controlled?

Hecate will develop a site security plan to establish site access and security procedures, which will be publicly available open 94-c application submittal to the Office of Renewable Energy Siting. Hecate also will be providing emergency response training to the local fire departments to respond in the unlikely event of a fire. These trainings also are anticipated to assist in fire department response to individual home solar panels within the community.

Q: Can I still access my property that may be isolated due to panel placement?

Hecate is working individually with landowners to discuss strategies for continued property access, per each specific landowner agreement.

Q: How will the Project benefit the local community?

The Project is anticipated to contribute tens of millions of dollars over its life directly to local and regional sources, such as schools, to local governments, fire departments, ambulance companies, and libraries. Indirect benefits also will include economic benefits by boosting the area's economy, creating full-time equivalent construction jobs, and creating an economic stimulus for local businesses. Hecate looks forward to further dialogue with the communities to discuss benefits.

Q: Where will the construction labor force come from?

Hecate's construction contractor will seek to utilize local labor sources for construction jobs associated with the Project. As discussed, it is anticipated that the local economy will benefit from the creation of jobs and associated local spending. Hecate also is currently using local consultants for surveys and other field-based work.

Most operations staff likely will be pooled from local labor sources with the possible exception of specialized solar technology performance tracking staff, which may be based remotely.

Q: How will vegetation in panel areas be maintained during operation?

The local workforce would be utilized for vegetation maintenance within the Project site. The use of herbicides will be minimized to the extent possible (most likely to be used sparingly in target areas such as near substation and fence entrances). Hecate also is exploring creative ideas, such as co-agricultural opportunities (e.g., sheep grazing in panel areas) to help maintain vegetation in the panel areas. Hecate welcomes feedback from landowners on potential co-agricultural opportunity interest.

Q: Will landscaping be arranged to avoid shading of panels? Who is responsible for landscaping once panels are installed?

A planting and screening plan will be developed by Hecate's landscaping subcontractor to minimize impacts to local viewsheds. The planting plan would be developed in advance of Project construction as part of Hecate's permitting requirements; plantings will be completed in accordance with State and/or local laws to avoid shading of panels. Hecate's subcontractor will be required to check the status of plantings after one year of installation and will be responsible for maintaining plantings over the life of the Project. Hecate is committed to collaborating with local landowners to develop a landscaping design that mitigates visual concerns.

Q: Are wildlife studies being conducted?

Hecate studied sensitive habitats within five miles of the Project and is cognizant of the Project's location in proximity to the Iroquois National Wildlife Refuge. Breeding bird surveys have been completed within the Project Site, and winter raptor habitat surveys currently are being conducted. Hecate has prepared a wildlife site characterization study and is currently consulting with the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation and the Office of Renewable Energy Siting on potential impacts from the Project and any previous observations of species within the Project Site. This study will be made available to the public at the time of permit application filing.

Q: Has COVID-19 impacted the Project timeline?

Given the Project is in the pre-application phase, COVID-19 has not significantly slowed down progress on any planning efforts. In general, construction companies have learned from COVID-19 and understand how to keep workers safe during the pandemic. In terms of public engagement, Hecate looks forward to collaborating on effective ways to interact with the local community, particularly given limitations due to COVID-19. If and when COVID-19 restrictions ease, Hecate plans to have an increased local presence to interact with community members.