

PPRP Fact Sheet – Richfield Solar, Dorchester County

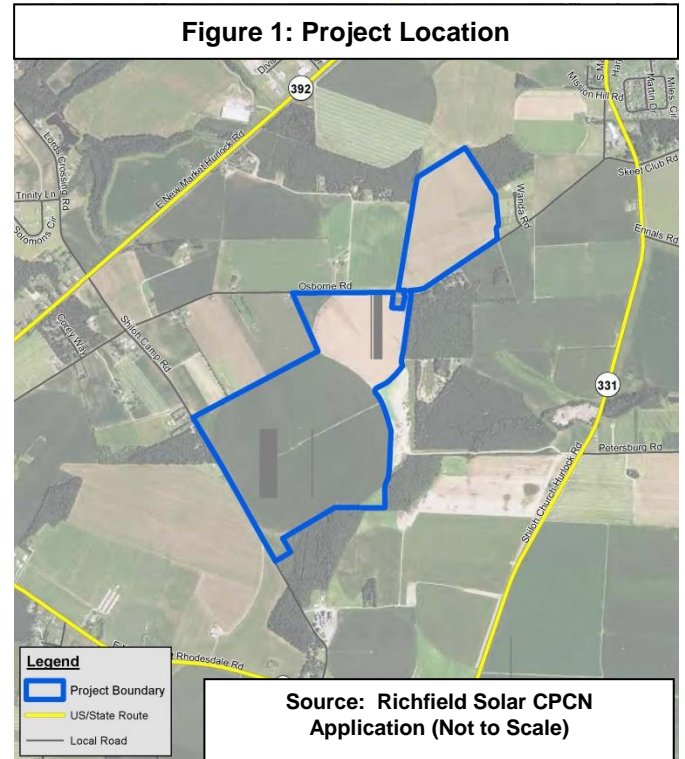
PSC Case Number 9457

Manager: Bob Sadzinski
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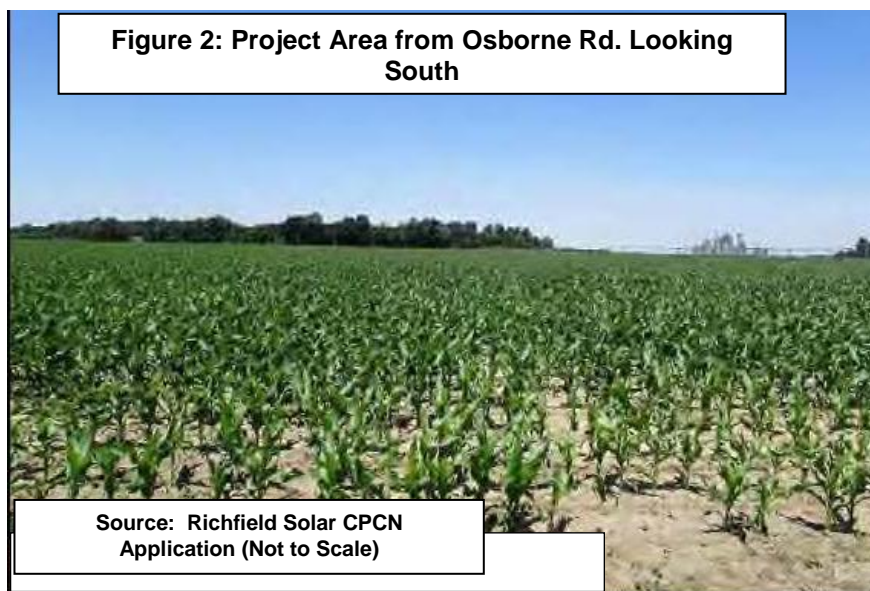
Project Overview:

Richfield Solar Energy, LLC has filed for a CPCN to construct and operate a 50 MW solar array in Dorchester County (Figure 1). The Project will occupy portions of 4 parcels, totaling approximately 380 acres located 1 mile south of the town of Hurlock. Project components include:

- 203,000 photovoltaic (PV) modules mounted on a single axis horizontal tracking racking system;
- 16 power centers with DC to AC power inverters, medium voltage transformers, and associated equipment;
- An on-site operations and maintenance facility;
- A project step-up collection substation, which will be located either within the solar array area or adjacent to the Todd Substation (the point of interconnection);
- If the project step-up substation is located within the solar array, an underground 69 kV circuit will run from there to the Todd Substation located approximately 1 mile away. If the substation is located outside the solar array, a 34.5 kV circuit will run underground to the substation, where the electrical output will be stepped-up to 69 kV for the interconnection with the Todd Substation.



Note: The information summarized in this fact sheet is based on information provided in the Richfield Solar Project CPCN Application and does not reflect State agency reviews. Potential impacts specific to the underground interconnection will be summarized once the design for this portion of the Project is finalized.



Site Description

The Project will occupy approximately 325-330 acres of the 4 parcels. In addition to these 4 parcels, portions of 3 additional parcels will be utilized for the underground interconnection right-of-way. The Applicant has entered into long-term lease and/or easement agreements with property owners for the construction and operation of the Project and associated interconnections.

At present, the Project area consists of agricultural fields with wooded buffers; an active gravel pit is also present within the property boundary. Surrounding land uses are agricultural and residential. The Project area is zoned Agricultural

Conservation (AC). The Applicant states that the Project will avoid the wooded areas and gravel pit. The Applicant has applied to Dorchester County Board of Appeals to obtain a zoning special exception for the construction of the Project along with variances for the substation and project fence height.

Impact Assessment Highlights

Biological

- The Maryland Wildlife and Heritage Service has determined that there are no records of rare, threatened or endangered species at the Project site.
- Although portions of the Project area contain wooded buffers, according to the Applicant these areas will not be disturbed for construction of the Project.
- The Project lies outside the Critical Area and contains no streams.
- The Project area includes a wetland area. The Applicant states that this wetland is located within one of the wooded buffers and will be avoided during Project construction.

Economic and Fiscal

- The Applicant anticipates that the Project will create 100-200 temporary jobs during construction and 2-3 permanent jobs to maintain the Project during operation.
- The Project represents a capital investment of \$80 - \$90 million. The Project will contribute to Dorchester County taxes.
- The Project represents a reduction in Maryland's out-of-state energy imports and will contribute to Maryland's Renewable Energy Portfolio Standard (RPS) solar carve-out.

Transportation

- The Applicant anticipates that delivery of Project components and construction materials will require 700 to 900 truck trips and 2 crane visits over the course of construction.
- Other equipment like dump trucks, trenching equipment, concrete trucks, front loaders, backhoes, post installation equipment, and excavators will also be needed at various times during construction.
- Once in operation, the Applicant indicates that traffic to the Project will be limited to quarterly to annual visits by maintenance crews and site inspectors.

Visual Impacts

- The Applicant indicates that the Project will be surrounded by a 50 foot screening buffer. The Applicant has also proposed to extend the setback for the Project to 150 feet and include enhanced vegetative screening in areas closest to residences.
- The Applicant performed glare hazard analysis for 4 off-site locations. The results of the analysis show that no glare is created at any of the subject observation points.

Cultural Resources

- There are no historic structures within the Project area.
- Three properties within ½ mile of the Project are listed in the Maryland Inventory of Historic Properties. Two of these: the Hurlock Historic District and Delaware Railroad contain multiple historic structures, but none of these structures fall within ½ mile of the Project. The third property is the Villa D'Adamo; although recorded as a historic site, its eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historic Places has not been determined. Visibility of the Project from Villa D'Adamo has not been determined.
- Although there are no recorded archeological sites within the Project area, the potential for these sites does exist, based on historic maps that show early 18th and 20th century structures within the Project area that are no longer present. The nearest documented archeological site is located within 2 miles of the Project.
- The Richfield Farm Family Gravesite is present within the Project boundaries. The Applicant is working with MHT to either protect or relocate the gravesite.

CPCN Status

- CPCN Application filed on 9/6/17.
- The Applicant filed direct testimony on 11/2/17 and supplemental direct testimony on 12/15/17.
- A public comment hearing regarding the Project was held on 1/9/18.
- For more current information, see: <http://www.psc.state.md.us/>

