

# Public Service Commission of Wisconsin

Summer Strand, Chairperson  
Kristy Nieto, Commissioner  
Marcus Hawkins, Commissioner

4822 Madison Yards Way  
P.O. Box 7854  
Madison, WI 53707-7854

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January 23, 2025

Re: Application of Porchlight Solar Project, LLC for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to Construct a Solar Electric Generation Facility in the Town of Buena Vista and the Town of Pine Grove, Portage County, Wisconsin 9829-CE-100

To the Person Addressed:

The Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (Commission or PSC) received an application from Porchlight Solar Project, LLC (Porchlight) for the construction of a new solar electric generation facility, a battery energy storage system (BESS), 2.5 miles of 138 kilovolt generator tie line, a project substation, and associated facilities in the Towns of Buena Vista and Pine Grove, Portage County, Wisconsin. The proposed project would require 1,133 acres of land including 1,118 acres of primary arrays. There are 440 acres that could be used alternatively if issues are found within the proposed array area during application review. The Commission is sending this letter to property owners near the proposed solar facility site or associated facilities, as well as individuals who have asked to be placed on our mailing list or have expressed interest in the project. This letter is also being sent to public officials in the project area. If you are a municipal clerk and receive this letter, please post it in a location where it can be viewed by the public.

Commission and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) staff are now analyzing the application and conducting a review of the environmental impacts of the proposed project. As part of this effort, the agencies are requesting comments from the public to help the state agencies determine the potential impacts associated with the project and the scope of the environmental assessment (EA). The agencies encourage persons with local information or environmental concerns to provide comments.

Comments on the scope of the EA can be submitted:

1. By letter addressed to the environmental assessment coordinator for the docket (see contacts at the end of this letter); or
2. Through the Commission's website at <https://psc.wi.gov> where you can click "file a comment" on the lower left-hand side of the page, then locate docket 9829-CE-100.

**The deadline for submitting environmental review scoping comments is February 28, 2025.**



Please note that comments will be made available to the public via the Commission's Electronic Records Filing System. Personal identifying information is not edited or deleted from submissions.

There will be additional public comment periods throughout the review process, including comments on the preliminary determination of the EA, and comments submitted as part of the public hearing.

Comments for the EA scoping are most effective when they discuss:

- Any potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed solar generation project; or
- Any specific actions or changes to the proposed project that might minimize or mitigate the potential impacts of the project.

### **Project Description**

Porchlight is proposing construction of a new electric generation facility for 163.8 MW of alternating current (AC) power using photovoltaic (PV) solar panels. The project would be located on approximately 1,133 acres of land in the Towns of Buena Vista and Pine Grove, in Portage County. Major components of the project include a 50 MW BESS, PV panels, inverters, access roads, an operation and maintenance building, approximately three miles of overhead 34.5 kilovolt (kV) collector circuits, up to 19 miles of overhead 34.5 kV collector circuits, a 34.5/138 kV project substation, and an approximately 2.5-mile 138 kV generator tie line. The solar arrays and substation would be fenced, and the applicant has provided some alternative solar array sites for evaluation and use if needed. The project area is comprised predominantly of agricultural land that has been in production for decades. See the attached map for a general layout of the proposed project facilities.

### **State and Federal Agency Jurisdiction**

The proposed project requires a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) from the Commission before construction can begin. Based on the record of analysis of potential environmental and societal impacts, the Commission will decide whether to approve, modify, or deny the applicant's proposal. DNR will consider the application for wetland and waterway permits, if applicable under Wis. Stat. ch. 30, potential impacts to rare species, and other affected resources under its jurisdiction. Other reviews, approvals, or permits may be necessary from local, state, or federal entities.

### **Environmental Assessment**

This a Type II action under Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 4.10(2). The Commission will prepare an EA for this project jointly with DNR that will evaluate the location of the project and its potential environmental, community, and private property impacts. There will be a preliminary determination when the EA is complete that will determine whether the preparation of an EIS is necessary. Comments on this preliminary determination will be accepted and considered before

a final determination is made. At the time of the preliminary determination, the Commission shall make copies of the EA available to those persons that request it.

### **Public Hearings and Commission Decision**

The Commission intends to hold technical and public hearings (date and times have not yet been confirmed) on the proposed project. At least 30 days before the hearings, the Commission will issue a Notice of Hearing (Notice) for this proposed project and notify the local news media. The Notice will include the time, date, and location of the hearings, as well as instructions regarding how to provide testimony for the hearing record. If you have any concerns about the project, you should attend the hearing to make the Commission aware of your concerns. People can speak and submit comments about the project at the hearing. The Commission must base its decisions about the project, in part, on the record of the hearing. The Commission will discuss the record for this project at a meeting open to the public where it will make its decision on the project.

Additional opportunities for public participation include the opportunity to comment on the preliminary determination on the need to prepare an EIS for the project, and the public hearing comment period. Notification for the preliminary determination will be sent to the mailing list for this project and you can be added to this mailing list by contacting the PSC Docket Coordinator for this project listed below under project contacts.

For more information on becoming involved in the Commission review of construction cases, please visit our [public participation page](#) or call one of the project contacts listed below.

### **Information and Contacts**

#### ***To review project application materials and additional related documents***

- PSC website (<https://psc.wi.gov>) under the docket's "E-Services" tab, docket search number 9829-CE-100.
- Also on the PSC website, type "Porchlight Solar Project" in the search field to navigate to the project-specific webpage.
- An interactive web-map of the project is available via the project-specific webpage.



## Contacts

- PSC Docket Coordinator  
Spencer Watson  
(608) 261-9401  
[spencer.watson1@wisconsin.gov](mailto:spencer.watson1@wisconsin.gov)  
P.O. Box 7854, Madison, WI 53707-7854
- PSC Environmental Assessment Coordinator  
Tyler Tomaszewski  
(608) 266-2730  
[tyler.tomaszewski@wisconsin.gov](mailto:tyler.tomaszewski@wisconsin.gov)  
P.O. Box 7854, Madison, WI 53707-7854
- DNR Contact  
Geri Radermacher  
(262) 239-0994  
[geri.radermacher@wisconsin.gov](mailto:geri.radermacher@wisconsin.gov)
- PSC Media Contact  
Meghan Sovey  
(608) 267-3871  
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Sincerely,

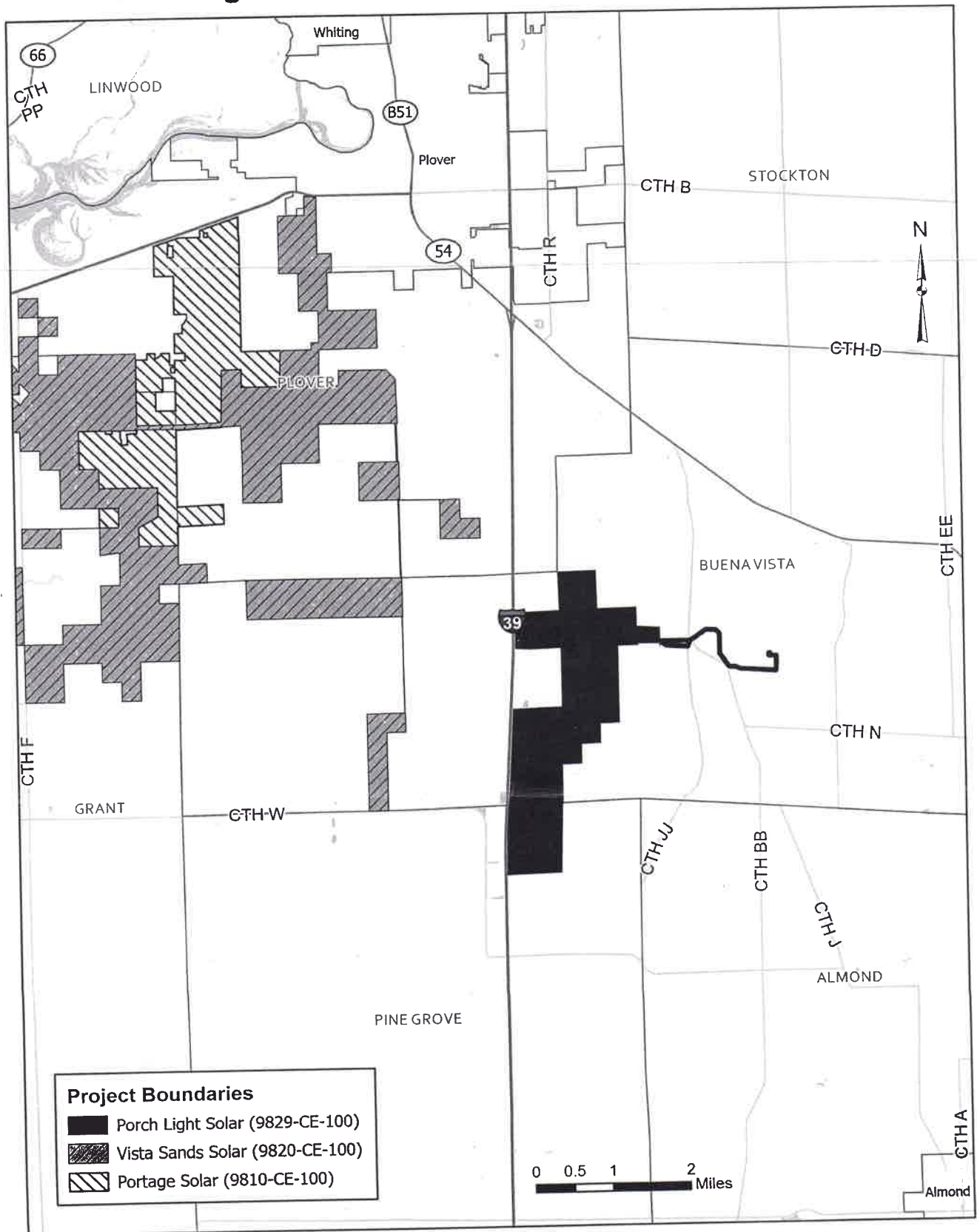


Tyler Tomaszewski  
Environmental Analysis and Review Specialist – Adv.  
Division of Digital Access, Consumer, and Environmental Affairs

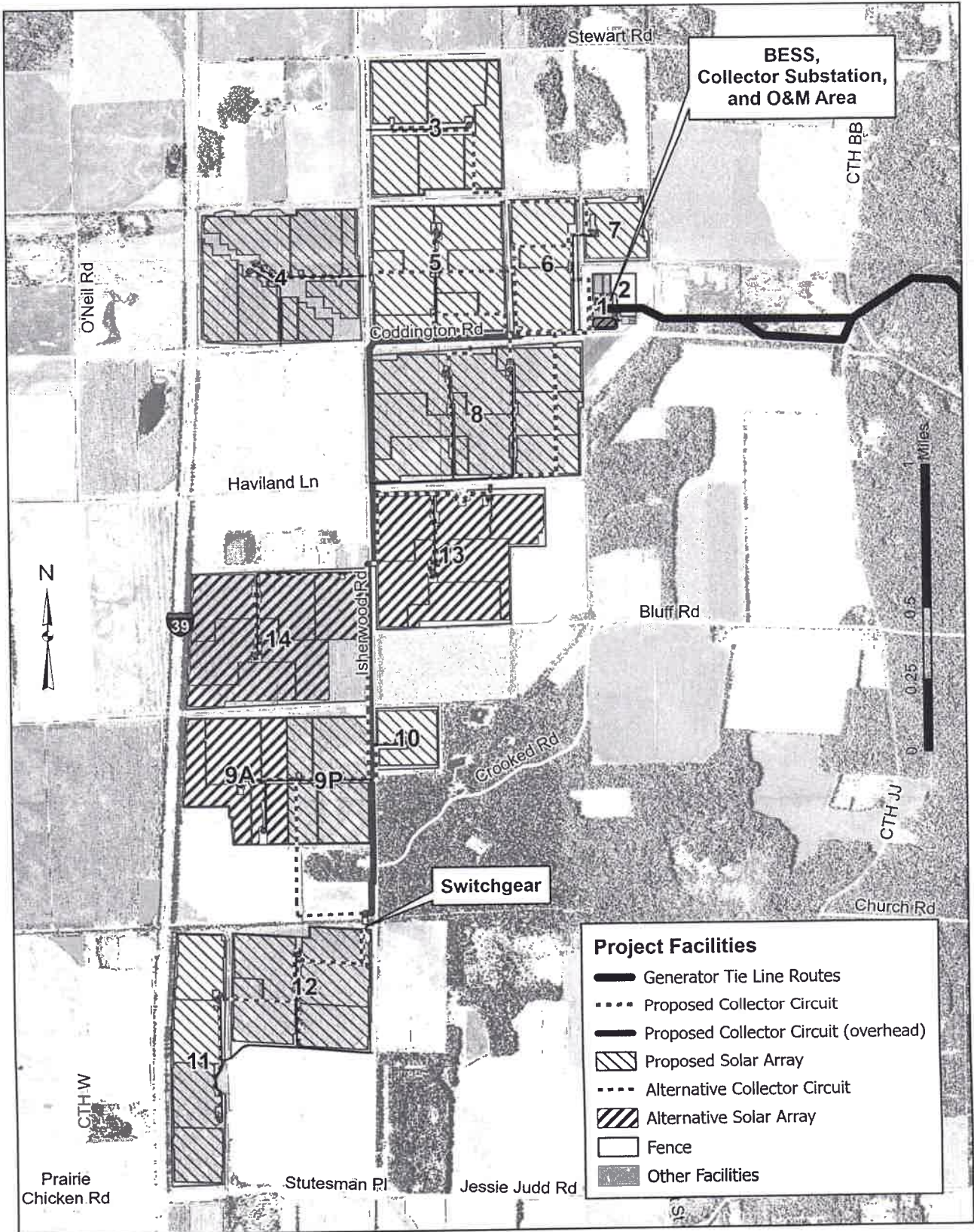
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Attachments: Porchlight Solar Project Maps

### Porchlight Solar Project 9829-CE-100 (Overview)



### Porchlight Solar Project 9829-CE-100



# Porchlight Solar Project 9829-CE-100 (Gentle Area)

