



# **McHenry Solar Farm LLC**

## **Application for Conditional Use Permit**

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### **Project Narrative**

**Proposed 5.0 -Megawatt AC (MWac)  
Ground-Mounted Community Solar Energy System  
County of McHenry, Illinois  
January 2026  
Revised February 2026**

### **Project Company / Applicant**

**McHenry Solar Farm LLC  
141 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 1692  
Chicago IL 60604  
(224) 222-0035**

### **Developer**

**Surya Powered LLC  
141 West Jackson Boulevard, Suite 1692  
Chicago IL 60604  
(224) 222-0035**



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*All Exhibits to be Attached to the CUP Application / Project Narrative*

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<b>Exhibit C</b>	<b>Legal Description (MS Word)</b>
<b>Exhibit D</b>	<b>Phase I – Environmental Site Assessment</b>
<b>Exhibit E</b>	<b>Wetland Delineation Report</b>
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<b>Exhibit G</b>	<b>FAA Notice Criteria Filing</b>
<b>Exhibit H</b>	<b>AIMA – Agricultural Impact Mitigation Agreement (IDOA)</b>
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<b>Exhibit J</b>	<b>EcoCAT – Environmental Analysis (IDNR)</b>
<b>Exhibit K</b>	<b>US Army Corps of Engineers Documentation (USACE)</b>
<b>Exhibit L</b>	<b>US Fish &amp; Wildlife Service Documentation (USFWS)</b>
<b>Exhibit M</b>	<b>Drain Tile Mitigation Plan (DTMP)</b>
<b>Exhibit N</b>	<b>Stormwater Management Plan with BMPs (SWMP)</b>
<b>Exhibit O</b>	<b>Landscape Monitoring and Maintenance Plan (LMMP)</b>
<b>Exhibit P</b>	<b>Construction Trip Generation Estimate (CTGE)</b>
<b>Exhibit Q</b>	<b>Operations and Maintenance Plan (OMP)</b>
<b>Exhibit R</b>	<b>Emergency Response Plan (ERP)</b>
<b>Exhibit S</b>	<b>Local Jurisdictional Outreach</b>
<b>Exhibit T</b>	<b>Interconnection Application</b>
<b>Exhibit U</b>	<b>Equipment Specifications</b>
<b>Exhibit V</b>	<b>Decommissioning Plan Estimate (DECOM)</b>
<b>Exhibit W</b>	<b>Unanticipated Discovery Plan (UDP)</b>



## McHenry Solar Farm LLC Development Team

**Developer: Surya Powered LLC**

**Surya Powered LLC (Surya)** is a local Illinois-based community solar developer. Surya's initiative assists the State of Illinois' renewable energy transition - calling for 100% clean energy by 2050. Surya's mission focuses on delivering clean and affordable energy to residents and businesses throughout Illinois. With extensive knowledge of renewable energy and its unique development requirements, Surya successfully partners with multiple developers across the United States to deliver the highest quality community solar projects.

**Applicant: McHenry Solar Farm LLC**

**McHenry Solar Farm LLC (MSF)** is a limited liability company owned and operated by Surya Powered LLC, created for the purpose of developing this project. McHenry Solar Farm LLC (the Applicant) has prepared this application, seeking a **Conditional Use Permit (CUP)** to develop and operate a 5.0 MWac community-scale solar facility in unincorporated McHenry County, Illinois

## Professional Consultants

**Environmental: Baxter & Woodman, Inc.**

**Baxter & Woodman, Inc. (B&W)** has been retained to review, advise, and create environmental plans for McHenry Solar Farm LLC. B&W is primarily focused on environmental engineering, surveying, and providing environmental consulting expertise to clients across the Midwest. With deep roots in Illinois, B&W's experience and knowledge in all types of project development brings extensive professional expertise to the process.

**Civil Engineering: Bowman Consulting Group**

**Bowman Consulting Group** has been contracted by the applicant to review, advise, and design civil plans for McHenry Solar Farm LLC. Bowman has a staff of experienced Illinois certified engineers with a wide background and experience in Illinois development.

**Legal Counsel: Franks, Gerkin, Ponitz and Greeley, P.C.**

**Franks, Gerkin, Ponitz & Greeley, P.C.** has been retained to provide legal services and represent the project as needed. Franks, Gerkin, Ponitz & Greeley, P.C. are experienced attorneys with extensive knowledge in land use, zoning controls, and development across multiple industries.

**Wetland Delineation: Heartland Ecological Group, Inc.**

**Heartland Ecological Group, Inc. (HEG)** has been retained to advise MSF on the impact onsite wetlands would have on the design of the proposed solar facility, serving as regulatory advisors and providing mitigation support. Heartland's expertise in assessing and delineating wetlands contributes to the project's environmental design, supports the development of a stormwater management plan in full compliance with McHenry County code, and the overall preservation of the onsite ecosystem.



**Phase I ESA: Stateline Environmental Consulting Services, Inc.**

MSF has retained **Stateline Environmental Consulting Services, Inc.** to conduct detailed research into the current and historical uses of the property; attempting to assess whether adverse impacts associated with previous uses have impacted either soil or groundwater and affected the environment and/or human health. Research includes, but is not limited to, reviews of numerous federal, state, local, and tribal regulatory databases, historical records and maps, and state and local agency records.

**ALTA Survey: Vanderstappen Land Surveying, Inc.**

**Vanderstappen Land Surveying, Inc. (VLSI)** has been retained by MSF to review title documentation and through fieldwork, prepare the requisite survey documentation to support development and construction activity as well as the preparation of required legal descriptions.



# Section I - Project Narrative

McHenry Solar Farm LLC (MSF, the Applicant) is seeking approval of a community solar project through McHenry County's Conditional Use Permit (CUP) process, as required by the provisions of the County's Zoning Ordinance. Project details and site plan are provided below.

<b>Applicant:</b>	<b>McHenry Solar Farm LLC</b>		
<b>Project Name:</b>	<b>McHenry Solar Farm (MSF)</b>		
<b>Location:</b>	<b>1207 S Crystal Lake Road, McHenry IL 60050-6418</b>		
<b>Property Owner:</b>	<b>Michael J Wolff Living Trust, 321 Neville St, Grays Lake IL 60030</b>		
<b>Abbreviated Legal Description:</b>	<b>14-09-100-001 DOC 2021R0049210 ... N1/2 NW1/4 LYING WLY CEN HWY MEMO: STRIP OF CRYSTAL LAKE ROAD DEDICATED PER DOC 148825 14-08-200-002 ... DOC 2021R0049210, NE1/4 NE1/4</b>		
<b>APN/PINs:</b>	<b>APN/PIN</b>	<b>Acres</b>	<b>Used</b>
	<b>14-09-100-001</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>± 16</b>
	<b>14-08-200-002</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>± 20</b>
<b>Acreage:</b>	<b>39+40=79 per McHenry County GIS</b>		<b>± 36.53</b>
<b>Current Zoning:</b>	<b>A1 Agricultural District ... Community Solar Energy Facilities require a Conditional Use Permit ... Property Class 0021 / Farmland</b>		

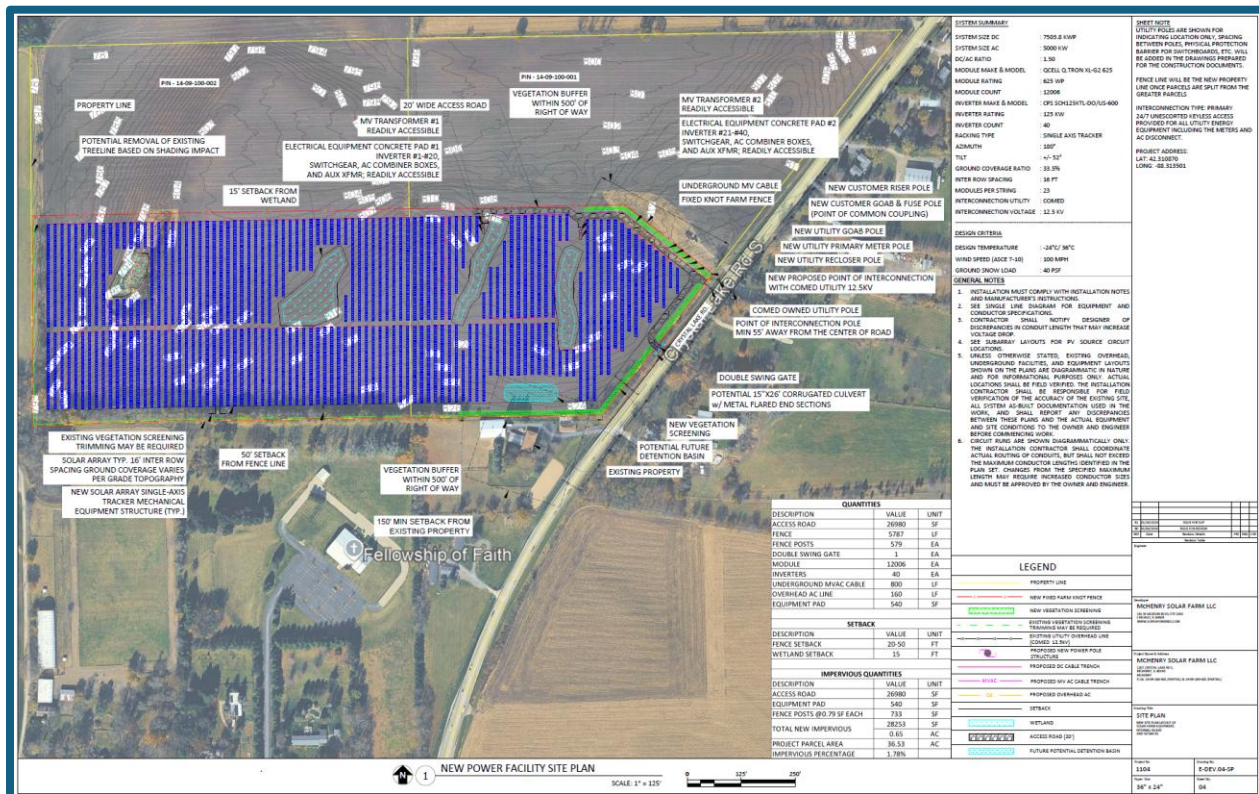


Figure 1 McHenry Solar Farm LLC - Site Plan

The McHenry Solar Farm LLC CUP application will address the following aspects of the project in preliminary detail. The narrative will be supplemented with additional documentation from various governmental entities, professional consultants, and MSF staff project-specific plans.

- ❖ **Project Narrative & Existing Conditions**
- ❖ **Preliminary Plans**
  - Drain Tile Mitigation Plan (DTMP)
  - Stormwater Management & BMPs (SWMP)
  - Construction Trip Generation Estimate (CTGE)
  - McHenry DOT Preliminary Review Comments
  - Landscape Monitoring and Maintenance Plan (LMMP)
- ❖ **Fencing, Lighting and Signage**
- ❖ **Solar Components**
  - Equipment Specifications
  - Noise Analysis
  - FAA Notice Criteria
- ❖ **Environmental Due Diligence, including, but not limited to...**
  - Wetlands Delineation and Flood Zone determination
  - Natural Resource Inventory Report (NRI)
  - EcoCAT Report, prepared by the Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)
  - United States Fish and Wildlife Services (USFWS) Determination
  - Illinois State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) Review
  - Agricultural Impact Mitigation Agreement (AIMA)
  - Vegetation Plan; including Maintenance, Screening, Ground Cover and Pollinators
- ❖ **Operations & Maintenance Plan / Guidelines (OMP)**
  - Corrective Maintenance
  - Routine Preventive Maintenance
  - Equipment Monitoring and Evaluation
  - Vegetation and Landscaping Maintenance
- ❖ **Emergency Response Plan (ERP)**
  - McHenry Township Fire Protection District Comments (Preliminary)
- ❖ **Decommissioning Plan Estimate (DECOM)**
- ❖ **Unanticipated Discovery Plan (UDP)**
- ❖ **Interconnection Application to Commonwealth Edison (ComEd)**
- ❖ **Insurance, Project Bonding**
- ❖ **Concluding Remarks**



## Section I - Project Description

**McHenry Solar Farm LLC (MSF or the Applicant)** is requesting administrative approval for a **Conditional Use Permit (CUP)** to allow for the development of a **Community Solar Energy Facility (CSES)**, a **5.0 MWac** ground-mounted distributed generation photovoltaic solar facility in accordance with McHenry County development protocol and in full compliance with the State of Illinois guidelines established in **P.A. 102-1123**, effective January 27, 2023, for renewable energy development. The project also complies with requirements related to **pollinator-friendly species/vegetation** being used onsite (525 ILCS 55/) and **noxious weed control** (505 ILCS 100/).

The project is proposed for parcels of land located adjacent to **South Crystal Lake Road** in unincorporated McHenry County, Illinois. County records indicate multiple parcel identification numbers (PINs), and the current zoning of the parcels is **Agricultural A1 District**. Current uses of adjoining properties are documented in the following table:

Land Use of Adjoining Properties		
Adjacency	Zoning Districts	Description
North	A-1 Agricultural	Unimproved Agricultural
South	E3-Estate(V) A-1 Agricultural	Institutional, Farmsteads and SF-Residential Fellowship of Faith, 6120 Mason Hill Road 1315 and 1409 Crystal Lake Road 6212 and 6220 Mason Hill Road
East	A-1 Agricultural	Crystal Lake Road (MDOT) Farmsteads and SF-Residential 1214 and 1308 Crystal Lake Road
West	Ag Agricultural	Village of Bull Valley / Unimproved Agricultural

The Applicant has determined that the subject property is highly feasible for development as a solar facility based on a variety of factors including:

- ❖ A **zoning designation** which allows for solar development as a conditional use.
- ❖ **Proximity to local utility infrastructure** with available hosting capacity.
- ❖ Limited presence of **wetlands/flood zones** impacting project design.
- ❖ Suitable **topography**; minimizing the need for grading onsite.
- ❖ **Road access** for construction, maintenance vehicles and equipment deliveries.

### ***Parcel Historical Use & Existing Conditions***

Historically, portions of the subject parcel have been utilized for agriculture. The Applicant retained **Stateline Environmental Consulting Services, Inc** to conduct a **Phase I Environmental Site Assessment (ESA)** of the parcels proposed for development. The ESA follows standards required for an **All-Appropriate Inquiry (AAI)** of the MSF site. The results of this study, documented in the following tables, conclude that no **Recognized Environmental Conditions (RECs)** are present in conjunction with the subject property or immediately adjacent properties:



General Property & Building Characteristics	
<b>Property Size:</b>	+/- 35 Acres within a 79 Acre Plot of Land Across Two (2) Parcels
<b>Building Size:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Stories:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Construction:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Year Built:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Use:</b>	Unimproved Agricultural Land / Vacant Land
<b>Occupant:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Climate Control:</b>	Not Applicable
<b>Remaining Areas:</b>	Agricultural Land, Low-Lying Rock & Dirt Deposit Area Near the West Property Boundary and a Tree Line Along the South Property Boundary
<b>Staining:</b>	None

Topic	De Minimis	REC	CREC	HREC	Other
<b>Visual Observations:</b>	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Historical Observations:</b>	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Database Review:</b>	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Adjacent Properties:</b>	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Significant Data Gaps:</b>	No	No	No	No	No
<b>Recommendations:</b>	No	No	No	No	No

Existing site conditions feature flat, open land primarily used as cropland with vegetation primarily limited to the perimeter. The project site will need to be prepped for development, including minimal grading and excavation for underground wiring and electrical infrastructure in accordance with construction plans approved during the building permit process.

### **Power Output**

The power generated by the McHenry Solar Farm LLC project is expected to exceed 11,500,000 kWh - sufficient to power approximately 1,300 homes annually. Power production may vary due to the final system size, operational exceptions, and weather conditions.

### **Solar Energy Basics**

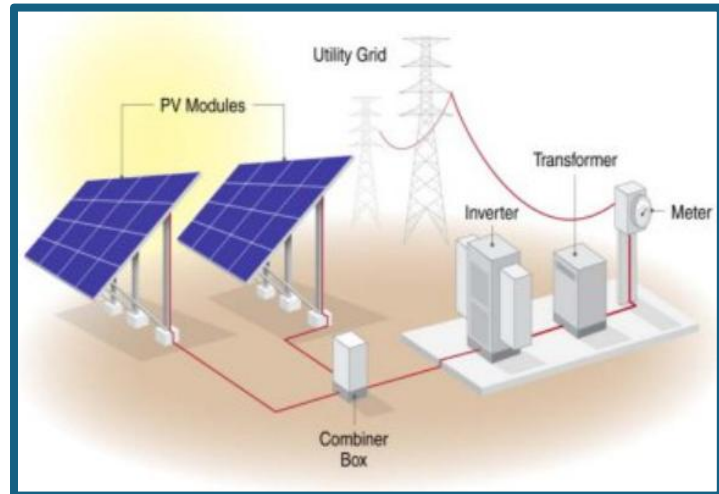
Community solar energy facilities generate electricity to be sent to metered accounts through a participating electric utility; in this case, **Commonwealth Edison (ComEd)**. For those utility customers that cannot meet their own energy needs by installing a personal solar energy system onsite, a **community solar subscription program** will be available, providing these customers with the ability to participate in a renewable, sustainable energy economy, while potentially hedging on future energy escalation; an especially valuable feature for subscribers with low to moderate incomes.

All solar components used in the development of MSF will be reviewed by local fire jurisdictions to assure compliance with the most recently adopted version of the **National Electric Code (NEC)**, **Underwriters Laboratories (UL)**, and/or **International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC)** product standards.



In compliance with these requirements, MSF will utilize **bifacial solar modules** manufactured by Tier 1 suppliers certified by Underwriters Laboratories (UL). These modules are mounted on single axis tracking systems; a racking system that follows the sun. The modules face east in the morning, transition to horizontal during midday, and then conclude their rotation facing west in the evening. Modules will have an anti-reflective coating to reduce glare. The process of community solar energy production can be briefly summarized in four steps:

- 1) Sunlight strikes solar photovoltaic (PV) cells/modules, which converts photons of light into electrons, producing low-voltage, direct current (DC) electricity.
- 2) Direct current (DC) electricity is transmitted to an inverter; this converts low voltage direct current (DC) to alternating current (AC).
- 3) Transformers step up alternating current (AC) electricity to the appropriate voltage to feed into the utility grid's electrical transmission system.
- 4) Electrical transmission systems are connected to the local substation where electricity is delivered directly to the utility grid's ratepayers.



**Figure 2 - Community Solar Energy Production**

This process creates energy for the local utility in a safe and efficient manner while mitigating any form of hazardous materials or substances affecting the local hosting environment. The production of energy from this process and this facility is considered safe and poses no negative impacts. The components of the proposed facility include PV modules, transformers, inverters, combiner boxes, underground cabling, single-axis tracker racking systems, equipment pads, a gravel access road, and fencing.

### **Regulatory Compliance**

The Applicant has compiled preliminary development plans designed to fully comply with **the State of Illinois Siting Standards (P.A. 102-1123)**, the **McHenry County Unified Development Ordinance**, and those specific provisions applicable to community solar energy projects structured as conditions of approval. These plans have been circulated to multiple jurisdictions to obtain comments and when possible, incorporate any requested revisions into our submittal.

MSF construction plans will be fully compliant with all applicable building codes and the County's **Stormwater Management Ordinance**; a preliminary outline of **best management practices (BMPs)** is provided in MSF's **Preliminary Stormwater Management Plan**. In addition, the Applicant will collaborate with local authorities having specific jurisdiction over aspects of the subject parcel's development to assure public safety is achieved.



In reviewing the MSF CUP application, the Applicant asks McHenry County staff to consider the following characteristics incorporated in our development plan:

- ❖ Location of proposed structures complies with identified setback requirements. The use of remote monitoring (24/7/365) not only ensures proper operation, but aside from normal construction activity, limits traffic on nearby roads due to a lack of employees onsite. A preliminary construction trip generation estimate is provided, based on similar project developments.
- ❖ The facility's perimeter will be fully enclosed using a gated, eight-foot agricultural fence with six-inch clearance at grade, providing access for construction equipment and routine maintenance activity. Onsite security lighting may be installed near our equipment pads, using 12' poles with shielded, focused LED fixtures.
- ❖ All solar components and electrical equipment will be UL-certified and where possible, be provided by American vendors. Specifications are provided.
- ❖ Solar panels (modules) are mounted on a tracking system affixed to a racking structure. Each panel is treated with anti-reflective coating to minimize glare.
- ❖ The racking structure is connected to steel beams. While a geotechnical analysis remains to be completed during the permit process, the structure and foundations will be designed to reflect soil conditions and topography.
- ❖ A gated access and necessary turnarounds will be installed to ease access to equipment and for emergency responders. The inverters, transformers, and associated equipment will be located on concrete equipment pads. To facilitate natural drainage, impervious surfaces are limited to the extent possible.
- ❖ Electrical cables will be installed underground throughout the project except for poles used to connect with the ComEd utility grid at the point of interconnection illustrated on the site plan.
- ❖ A landscape buffer utilizing drought-resistant greenery will be provided in accordance with County requirements. Perennial ground cover vegetation will be used throughout the project; using a seed mix agreed upon prior to construction.

The **MSF site plan** (see **Figure 1**) will clarify the location of the access road, transformer pads and turnarounds for emergency vehicles near the transformer pads, the location and number of inverters, wetlands and flood zones identified as areas of natural interest, fencing type and height, panel setbacks, interrow spacings, vegetation buffer and landscaping, the point of interconnection, and provide details of our impervious calculations and quantities.



## Section II - The Construction Plan

Construction of the McHenry Solar Farm will be conducted in three major phases detailed below: site preparation, installation, and final testing.

### ❖ Phase I – Site Preparation

Site preparation begins with **land clearance** – the removal of trees, vegetation, and current crops from the project area. Clearance enables **preliminary grading and fill activity**, and the implementation of measures outlined in a **Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP)** for erosion control. A temporary access road is laid out and an area set aside for the storage of construction materials and onsite parking for workers. Debris will be properly disposed of offsite.

### ❖ Phase II – Site Installation

Site installation will start the **excavation** needed for the installation of underground wiring, trenching for foundation poles, and setting up perimeter fencing. **Project components** will be installed - racking systems and modules – followed by connecting the balance of system (BoS) equipment including wiring, combiner boxes, transformers, and inverters.

### ❖ Phase III – Final Testing

Site testing is the final phase, verifying the **operational status** of the project’s utility interconnection, BoS equipment, and monitoring systems. Completion of this phase finalizes the facility prior to the facility’s energization - its **commercial operations date (COD)**.

The Applicant estimates the **construction of the MSF facility will require a minimum of 4-6 months**; assuming no technical, product supply, or logistical setbacks, and suitable weather conditions prevail. ComEd will upgrade the capacity of nearby infrastructure systems to enable the facility to supply energy directly to the utility grid; a process which may require 8-12 months for overall completion.

To obtain comments and input regarding the project, beginning with initial e-mails on **November 11, 2025**, MSF began an **ongoing outreach campaign** to the following jurisdictions via e-mail, initially providing a preliminary site plan, and subsequently, a revised plan, reflecting their critique in the submittal. While this remains an ongoing process, evidence of communications and/or MSF responses is provided (**EXHIBIT S**). MSF may also request a pre-application meeting with McHenry County staff as well, to identify issues resulting from this submittal.

- ❖ City of McHenry
- ❖ Village of Bull Valley
- ❖ Village of Prairie Grove
- ❖ Nunda Township
- ❖ Nunda Township Highway Department
- ❖ McHenry Township Fire Protection District
- ❖ No drainage district was identified.



### **Traffic Management**

The Applicant plans to minimize traffic congestion and assure public safety through careful scheduling of **phased construction** – reducing vehicular and foot traffic related to development. Localized traffic will be mitigated by the strategic use of **onsite storage** for both equipment and materials, and the newly constructed access road will virtually eliminate traffic queues. Based on similar solar project construction, the Applicant has prepared a **Construction Trip Generation Estimate**, quantifying local traffic generation as follows:

#### ❖ **Equipment Deliveries**

Deliveries will begin in the later stages of **Site Preparation** (Phase I) and throughout **Site Installation** (Phase II), continuing for 5-6 weeks using primarily box/delivery trucks and/or commercial tractor-trailers. The Applicant projects equipment deliveries of transformers, inverters, electrical equipment, and racking system materials. Heavy construction equipment will not traverse local roads. During construction, a **staging area** will be allocated for construction personnel parking; no vehicles will be parked on adjacent roads.

#### ❖ **Construction Personnel**

Between **20-40 workers** are expected to work onsite for the duration of construction (4-6 months). Construction workers and managers usually drive construction vehicles. Workers' parking will be restricted to an area onsite; no parking will be allowed on adjacent roadways. Once built, **maintenance traffic** will be minimal, consisting of 1-2 vehicles on a quarterly basis, or as needed.

### **Construction Routes and Parking**

Construction and maintenance routes will originate from the interstate highway system and utilize local state or county highways to directly access the project site. While routes will be finalized based on the suppliers' locations, the Applicant is confident the following segments will be the logical choices as described below.

#### ❖ **From the North**

- Illinois Route 120 to Crystal Lake Road

#### ❖ **From the East/West**

- Bull Valley Road to Crystal Lake Road

#### ❖ **From the South**

- Illinois Route 176 to Walkup Road to Crystal Lake Road

### **Road Use Approvals & Pre-Construction Conditions**

Through preliminary contact with **McHenry County Department of Transportation (MCDOT)**, the Applicant has determined the County retains jurisdiction over South Crystal Lake Road, and will work with state, county, and township authorities to ensure construction traffic will not cause damage to local roadways. A **road use agreement** will not be required; however, **right-of-way dedication** will be required to meet County requirements. Jurisdictions typically impose permit requirements, bonds, or applicable evaluations to ensure local roads are not negatively impacted by construction activity. In those cases, MSF will be responsible for road maintenance and dust-control measures related to construction and installation.



## Section III - Operations and Maintenance (O&M)

In this section, the Applicant provides the outline of a preliminary **Operations and Maintenance Plan (OMP)** for the MSF project; subject to change, pending final review by all authorities having jurisdiction over the subject. More details are provided in a separate planning document provided as part of this application.

The OMP is structured to not only enforce public safety requirements but also to assure regulatory compliance while prioritizing system performance, mitigating potential impacts to energy production during operation. MSF staff will ensure equipment monitoring and transmission protocols are routinely evaluated; contractors will perform preventive and corrective maintenance as needed, based on identified needs. All staff charged with operations and maintenance will be experienced contractors who specialize in solar facility operations. The OMP plan focuses on four (4) main elements summarized below:

- ❖ **Ongoing Preventive Maintenance**
- ❖ **Corrective Maintenance**
- ❖ **Equipment Monitoring & Evaluation**
- ❖ **Vegetation & Landscaping**

### ***Ongoing Preventive Maintenance***

Preventive maintenance for solar assets is a **proactive strategy**, reducing the chance of failure resulting in unplanned downtime. Once constructed, the Applicant anticipates 6-8 visits per year by maintenance and/or landscape teams. Our preventive strategy will include scheduled cleaning, component replacements, system repairs, routine inspection, and testing electrical connections. Structural integrity checks for rust/corrosion will be required to routinely identify structural hazards.

### ***Corrective Maintenance***

**Remote monitoring systems** will flag anomalies and system abnormalities **24/7/365**. Once identified, the Applicant will dispatch an experienced technician to evaluate onsite conditions. If the equipment is malfunctioning, the MSF team will initiate replacement and if appropriate, will promptly submit a warranty claim to the manufacturer. Our technicians will work closely with the manufacturer to identify the cause of the problem and prevent future issues of a similar nature.

### ***Equipment Monitoring and Evaluation***

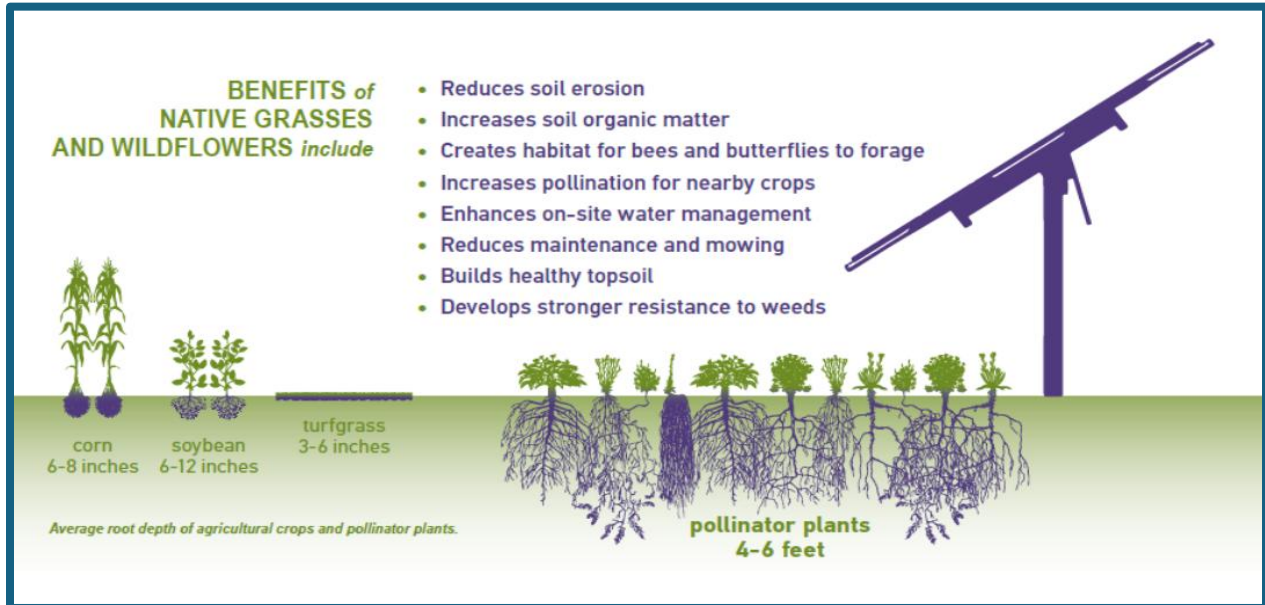
Daily monitoring of solar production systems – energy production, system temperatures, etc. - is critical to the ability to diagnose problems in real-time. Standard monitoring protocol involves **measuring system performance against normal output in real-time** - identifying irregularities **24/7/365**. Alarms quickly trigger reactions by monitoring personnel, identifying a need to halt production, and providing specific insight into the nature of the problem.

### ***Vegetative and Landscaping Maintenance***

Solar farms typically improve soil and water quality. The key to a successful, comprehensive vegetation plan lies in the **selection of the proper seed mixture** to cover the exposed soil between the rows of panels, as well as a **routinely implemented maintenance plan** to manage needed mowing and prevent invasive, noxious weeds from dominating the landscape.



In the Midwest climate, solar panels are routinely cleaned by random rainfall; specific cleaning activity is only anticipated in periods of drought. However, the vegetation selections reflect **drought-resistant, pollinator-friendly plantings**, lessening the chances of significant need for replanting/replacement. Once established, these plants typically require less water and fertilizer due to their inherent root strength – especially when compared to agricultural crops such as corn or soybeans.



**Figure 3 - Pollinator Root Systems vs Typical Crops**

Graphic by SWCA Environmental Consultants

Care is also directed towards the perimeter landscaping – trees and shrubbery – used to provide a visual aesthetic to the equipment. The Applicant has provided a **Landscape Monitoring and Maintenance Plan (LMMP)** as part of our submittal, outlining both short-term and long-term landscaping activities.

**Stormwater controls** are another key to vegetation management. MSF has prepared a **Preliminary Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP)** documenting some of **the best management practices (BMPs)** proposed for implementation as part of the construction permitting process. MSF will utilize BMPs to prevent runoff and/or flooding, using native plants and grasses to absorb rainwater to a degree greater than a typical row crop. Over time, the land will benefit from the lack of annual planting and upon decommissioning, soils are typically in better condition than at the start of the project, allowing for a productive return to agricultural use.



## Section IV - Public Safety

From initial design through emergency response, public safety is a major aspect of our project development. Responsible solar farm developers incorporate emergency responders' requirements into their site plan design. In the unlikely event of an incident, MSF will produce an **Emergency Response Plan (ERP)** in place to provide public safety personnel with easy access and complete knowledge of the facility and its components.

The ERP will outline the **procedures and protocols** for responding to emergencies that may occur during the operation of the facility. Overall, the ERP provides a preliminary approach to responding to emergencies that may occur during the operation of the McHenry Solar Farm. By following procedures and protocols, damage can be minimized and the safety of all personnel involved in responding to an emergency is assured.

Once construction is completed, an **electrical schematic** for the installation will be attached to the ERP, outlining the electrical distribution system, the main electrical components, and associated protection devices. The ERP also features a **Solar System Disconnect Switch** - a GAND operated air break 15kv, lockable in the off position.

To guarantee public safety and provide security onsite, access to the MSF is limited to trained staff and maintenance personnel only. Solar panel arrays and the electrical equipment will be surrounded by a farm fixed-knot fence or **agricultural fence** per the requirements of the **National Electrical Code (NEC)**. The project site will be secured and locked and only operator personnel will have access to the project (Knox Box or daisy chain type locks may be installed at the gated access).

### **Fire Protection**

As the main agency responsible for fire protection, the **McHenry Township Fire Protection District (MTFPD)** will have the primary responsibility of reviewing MSF construction plans for compliance with all applicable fire and life safety codes during the permitting phase. Preliminary site plans were shared with emergency responders early in the CUP process and MSF staff have responded to MTFPD's initial comments, and a copy of that response is being provided as part of the application; further changes produced through the permitting process will be incorporated into the final design.

MSF has been designed to maximize distance from neighboring parcels for the most critical components; the following are the most hazardous equipment/locations within the project:

- ❖ **Transformers**
- ❖ **Inverters and disconnects.**
- ❖ **System wiring and electrical boxes.**

Solar projects do not create extensive electromagnetic fields that could be measured outside a project. Inverters used in solar facilities generate fields similar to household appliances and are many times weaker than those created by normal power lines. Typically, the electromagnetic fields emitted from solar equipment are only detectable within 150 feet of the MSF inverters.



### Facility Signage

The McHenry Solar Farm project design ensures that MTFPD could contain any fire within the property's perimeter.

**Signage with an emergency phone number** will be clearly posted near the gated access point, and as needed at other locations on the fenced perimeter, allowing MTFPD personnel to contact our remote monitoring staff and have them deenergize the system in the event of an emergency, 24/7/365.

### Component Material and Fire Hazards

Solar farms are safe and do not use heat to generate electricity. Steel is the primary material used for the foundation and racking components of solar facilities, lessening the likelihood of fire as extremely elevated temperatures are needed to ignite steel foundations.

While evaluated for heat resistance, the possibility of modules catching fire remains extremely low. The tempered glass offers protection from heat and minimizes the minute potential for panel ignition. The OMP further minimizes fire by ensuring all conduits, wiring, and facility components are constantly monitored 24/7/365 and evaluated or routinely inspected.

### Product Specifications/Cut Sheets

Panels are primarily made of glass, aluminum, copper, and other common materials. Solar farms also utilize steel racks to position panels, electrical cables and a small number of inverters and electric transformers to deliver power to the grid. All this equipment is safe and contains the same materials found in household appliances. The trace amounts of chemicals in solar panels enable the production of electricity. These compounds are completely sealed within the glass and coatings of the panels.

The Applicant's preference is to use solar panels from **Qcells**, a public company with significant expertise and experience in manufacturing solar panels; specifically, the **Q.TRON XL-G2 625 series**. Qcells is recognized in the industry as a Tier 1 solar manufacturer, whose premium products give developers the ability to successfully finance projects like MSF. The glass of the photovoltaic module is anti-reflective (AR) coated heat strengthened glass. The module uses anti-reflective coating to minimize the potential for glare or afterimage effects during its use.

The Applicant's preference is to utilize inverters from **Chint Power Systems**; specifically, for MSF, the **CPS SCH125KTL-DO/US-600** product line, a heavy-duty product typically used for larger, utility-scale scale projects. This product allows our operations and monitoring team to ensure production is fluid and no anomalies exist within the facility.



Figure 4 - Examples of Emergency Signage



While an equipment preference exists, inverters are subject to change based on availability at the time of construction and every effort will be made by the Applicant to utilize American-made products. Equipment availability and/or improvements in technology by the time of construction will dictate purchases. The **equipment specifications** and available **Material Safety Data Sheet (MSDS)** containing information on photovoltaic (PV) module composition can be found included as part of our site plan and in **EXHIBIT U**.

### ***Emergency Response Plan***

Working with applicable jurisdictions, the Applicant will create an **Emergency Response Plan (ERP)** prior to MSF's commercial operations date (COD), allowing them to review the facility's design and equipment, such as the locations of the Knox Box, emergency shutoff switches and voltage signage.

The MSF system will be electronically monitored on a 24/7/365 basis, remotely, supplemented by onsite maintenance of equipment and landscaping an estimated 6-8 times per year, or on an as-needed basis when system monitoring indicates a need for equipment replacement.

All equipment will have labels as per NFPA guidelines including the project placard. In case of fire event, the remote site operator will detect equipment failures and will notify all emergency contacts configured for the site, i.e., emergency dispatch team.

MSF will coordinate with the local first responders regarding inverter locking and shutdown procedure and details will be outlined in the final ERP. All solar AC main circuit breakers will be lockable in the off position. Preliminary comments have been incorporated into our design and a detailed response provided to the MTFPD; a copy of our response is included with this submittal.

#### ❖ **Site Operation**

Contact details for the site operator will be shared during the construction permitting process and finalized before operations commence. In the event of an emergency requiring shutdown, the ground-mount PV solar system can be deenergized remotely by the site operator.

#### ❖ **Site Shutoff Procedure and Locations**

Each inverter switch should be turned to OFF position to shut off both the AC and DC switches. This will initiate rapid shutdown of PV modules and will deenergize PV (DC source). The solar system main circuit breakers (labeled as per NFPA) should be manually disconnected and locked into OFF position to disconnect AC side. Do not operate the inverter until at least 5 minutes after disconnecting all sources from DC and AC sides.

Copies of specifications for solar panels and inverters to be used for the MSF project will be provided as part of the CUP submittal. Further documentation on all components will be provided in the construction permit set.



## Section V - Component Analysis

Questions often arise concerning the impacts solar facility equipment may generate on nearby, non-participating properties. MSF has evaluated impacts specifically related to glare and noise.

### Federal Aviation Administration Review

As stated above, **GlareGauge** – is a globally utilized solar glare hazard analysis tool (SGHAT), compliant with **Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)** standards (78 FR 63276). However, should proximity to a local airport dictate, the Applicant submits the proposed site plan for evaluation using the **FAA Notice Criteria Tool**, identifying any impacts the proposed solar development may have on navigable airspace.

As a matter of practice, the Applicant submits four (4) points of measure - each corner of the solar facility – and each location is evaluated. The results are provided as **EXHIBIT G**; the conclusion being, MSF does not exceed the FAA criteria.

### Noise Analysis

Noise is commonly defined as an unwanted characteristic emitted from natural and/or man-made source. Noise – or more accurately – the sound pressure levels are measured in decibels (dB), a number which accounts for the intensity of varying frequencies found in a localized environment as experienced by the human ear. The sensitivity of noise for an individual is directly impacted by their environment.

Sound analysis typically factors in the presence of nearby structures, groundcover/soil typology and topography in dB calculations. Surrounding or nearby roadways also contribute to the ambient environment throughout the day.

Noise levels associated with community solar farms are regulated by local ordinances, using the standards compiled by the **Illinois Pollution Control Board (IPCB)**. The IPCB regulations mandate allowable sound pressure levels during daylight hours comply with the performance measures outlined in the table (**Class C** or Agricultural Shaded), with data provided for MSF selected components.

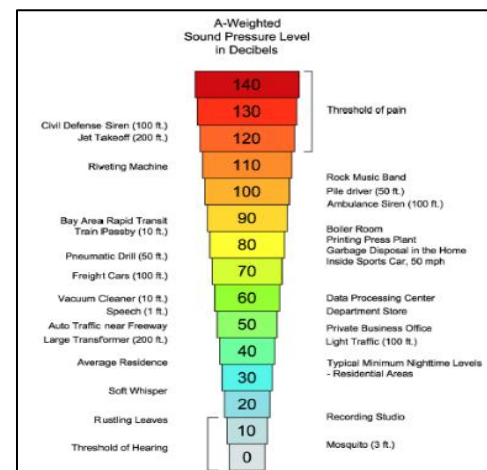


Figure 5 - Sound Pressure Levels



Maximum dB Sound Emissions: During Daytime Hours				Typical Equipment Emissions	
Octave Band Center Frequency (Hertz)	Allowable Sound Pressure Levels (dB) Emitted to Receiving Class A Land from...			Inverters 65 dB @ 1 Meter	Transformers 64 dB @ 1 Meter
	Class A Residential	Class B Commercial	Class C Agricultural	Chint Power Systems	Transformers (3,500 kVA)
31	72	72	75	58	21
63	71	71	74	57	41
125	65	65	69	59	53
250	57	57	64	59	55
500	51	51	58	66	61
1000	45	45	52	57	58
2000	39	39	47	56	54
4000	34	34	43	56	49
8000	32	32	40	51	39

Sound generated by solar components is not anticipated to significantly contribute to existing ambient noise levels, with noise levels further mitigated by providing offsets between the equipment and surrounding land uses. The solar panels themselves serve as a shield, dispersing a portion of the sound generated by the inverters and transformers. The resulting noise levels will dissipate as distance increases; approximating that of household appliances when measured at the property lines.



## Section VI - Environmental Due Diligence

The Applicant has commissioned a variety of environmental reports and conducted consultations with various agencies to assess existing conditions and identify protected lands; assuring the development of MSF does not negatively impact the site or the surrounding environment.

### *Phase I Environmental Site Assessment*

The Applicant retained **Stateline Environmental Consulting Services, Inc. (Stateline)**, to inspect the site, research the properties' current and historic uses, and provide an initial assessment of environmental risks and impacts on soil and/or groundwater related to previous land use. Stateline did not identify a record of adverse impacts related to the properties.

### *IDOA – Illinois Department of Agriculture*

State law regarding solar energy facilities requires McHenry Solar Farm LLC to initiate an **Agricultural Impact Mitigation Agreement (AIMA)** with the **Illinois Department of Agriculture (IDOA)** to ensure specific development standards are implemented regarding the construction, decommissioning, and operation of the facility. The Applicant executed an AIMA with the IDOA on **September 23, 2025**, countersigned by the IDOA director on **October 2, 2025**. The fully executed AIMA is attached as **EXHIBIT H**.

### *IDNR - Illinois Department of Natural Resources*

With a varied portfolio, the **Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)** is responsible for several review protocols/consultations relating to the development of community solar.

#### ❖ **EcoCAT**

The Applicant has conducted a review/consultation with the **Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)** via its **ecological compliance assessment tool (EcoCAT)**. The tool was developed to identify potential impacts on State-listed threatened and endangered species within the vicinity of project development sites. The **EcoCAT Natural Resource Review Results** show the consultation as terminated. The review was submitted on **December 30, 2025**, and identified no record of identified species, concluding adverse effects are unlikely. A subsequent consultation indicates the potential for an endangered species – Blanding's Turtles – within the project's vicinity. The full report can be found in **EXHIBIT J** along with its recommendations.

#### ❖ **SHPO – Illinois State Historic Preservation Commission**

In accordance with the **Illinois State Agency Historic Resources Protection Act**, the responsibility for assessing potential impacts of the project on archaeological and/or architectural (cultural) resources lies with the **Illinois State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO)**, a division within the **Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)**. Agencies such as IDNR, the Illinois Environmental Protection Agency (IEPA) and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) are mandated to undergo SHPO evaluation concurrently with their respective reviews.

MSF has engaged in consultation with SHPO concerning the project site, applying on **September 8, 2025**. The Applicant's preliminary review of the SHPO **HARGIS**



database indicates no surveys, archaeological sites, or historic buildings are listed on or within 0.5 miles of the site.

Based on the documentation submitted and the findings of the AGS Phase I ESA study, the Applicant received SHPO approval, via a **SHPO Exempt Letter, September 29, 2025**, with an official finding as follows:

***“Our files do not identify any known historic properties within the high probability area for archeological resources as defined in the stated Act. Accordingly, this project is EXEMPT pursuant to the Illinois State Agency Historic Resources Preservation Act (20 ILCS 3420/6).”***

### ***MLSWCD – McHenry-Lake Soil and Water Conservation District***

In compliance with McHenry County requirements, the Applicant applied to the **McHenry-Lake Soil and Water Conservation District (MLSWCD)** on **January 2, 2026**, to obtain a **Natural Resource Information Report (NRI)** for the subject property. This report calculates a **Land Evaluation Site Assessment (LESA) score** to evaluate the level of protection. The final report, prepared on **January 9, 2026**, was transmitted directly to County staff by the MLSWCD; a copy of the report included with this submittal.

Concerns regarding the impact of solar farm development on farmland, particularly prime farmland, are alleviated due to the **conservation practices** implemented onsite while the solar farm is in operation; preserving the land for future agricultural use once the McHenry Solar Farm reaches the end of its operational lifespan. In addition, once decommissioning begins, the Applicant commits to **complete site restoration** to its original state, in compliance with the project’s fully executed AIMA.

### ***Wetland Delineation Report***

The Applicant contracted **Heartland Ecological Group, Inc. (HEG)** to conduct an onsite assessment and produce a **wetland delineation report**. The design of the McHenry Solar Farm reflects our intent to locate development activity away from wetland areas wherever possible, primarily through the inclusion of required buffers.

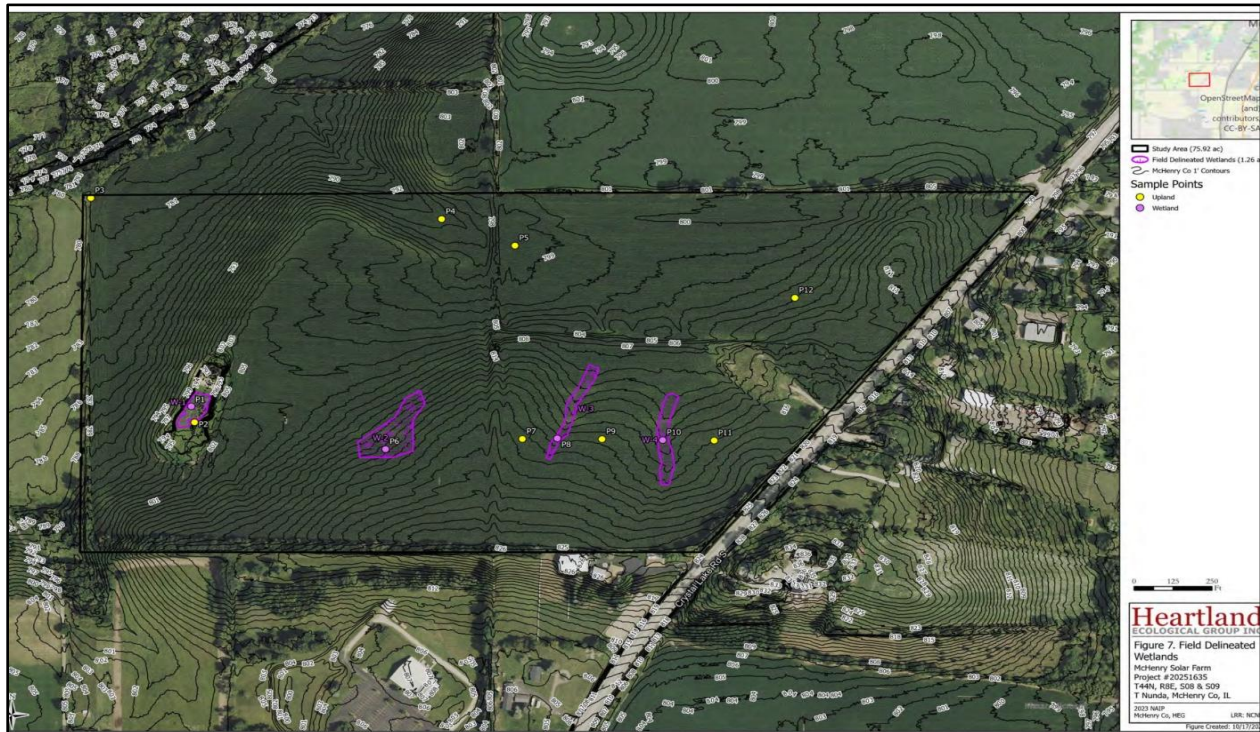
The report used standard criteria (vegetation, soil & hydrology) and protocols to determine the presence of wetland signatures under normal conditions. No wetlands were identified through either NWI mapping or NHD data.

Based on a combination of off-site analysis and field review, the wetlands identified in the report – ranging from .016 acres to 0.58 acres - were primarily located in depressions historically excavated and farmed with row crops. At least two areas are located along drainage channels. All were isolated.

The primary wetland hydrology indicators were identified to varying degrees in each defined area, but overall, wetland identification for each area were primarily based on secondary hydrology indicators such as aerial imagery and hydric soil parameters.



The MSF site plan is designed to accommodate the identified wetlands and provides each with a 15' buffer, separating panels and cabling from the wetland areas – respecting the environmental sensitivity of these areas. The full report is attached as **EXHIBIT E**.



**Figure 6 - Field Delineated Wetlands**

### **Flood Zone Review**

The Applicant conducted a desktop review of the MSF site for flood zones using FEMA's **National Flood Hazard Layer (NFHL)** maps on the NFHL website. All onsite wetlands and flood zones are mapped onto the site plan; no development activity will occur within these areas and required setbacks will be provided. The site is defined as an area of minimal flood hazard.

### **Drainage System and Stormwater Management**

Proper drainage control is critical to the successful operation of a community solar facility. Surface hydrology and subsurface drainage are essential considerations which must be integrated with adjacent stormwater systems such as roadways, drainage facilities, etc.

Based on our discussions with McHenry County staff and our interpretation of the County's stormwater ordinance and permitting requirements, the Applicant has determined the following will need to be completed prior to the receipt of construction permits:

- ❖ Prepare a preliminary **Stormwater Management Plan** to document mitigation efforts and **best management practices (BMPs)** proposed for the construction/maintenance process. Typical BMPs may address passive drainage



(trench slopes), perforated piping in drainage paths, and the use of cable jackets and/or conduits rated for moisture resistance.

- ❖ Compile a preliminary **Drain Tile Mitigation Plan** to outline MSF efforts to protect/preserve drain tiles and supplement the measures outlined in the executed AIMA.
- ❖ Completion of a **drain tile survey** to ascertain the location and condition of onsite drainage patterns, post-approval.

Consultants capable of adequately documenting onsite drain tiles and drainage patterns are typically booked 4-6 months out; completion of such a survey will unnecessarily lengthen the CUP approval process. Upon receiving final CUP approval from the County Board, and prior to, or in conjunction with the start of construction permit plan review, the Applicant will commission a **drain tile survey** to evaluate the presence of existing drain tiles and their condition prior to construction. This survey will enable MSF to assume responsibility to **repair/replace any damage to drain tiles** linked to construction, or later, linked to the decommissioning process, thus ensuring all drain tiles function properly.

To ensure the MSF fully complies with not only the intent, but also with the spirit of McHenry County's drainage requirements, the Applicant has consolidated all drain tile/stormwater recommendations and presented them as separate plans **EXHIBIT M** (Drain Tile) and **EXHIBIT N** (Stormwater).

#### ***USACE – United States Army Corps of Engineers***

If required, the Applicant has submitted a request to the **US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE)** to analyze the MSF project and issue a **“No Permit Required (NPR)”** determination. Given the project's location, topography and hydrologic circumstances, it is reasonable to expect the issuance of an NPR. All documentation is attached as **EXHIBIT K**.



## Section VII - Landscaping and Vegetation Management

To fully support landscaping requirements, the Applicant has prepared a preliminary **Landscaping Monitoring and Management Plan (LMMP)** for review by McHenry County staff and the MLSWCD in conjunction with the construction process. The LMMP outlines components and maintenance activities to be finalized later in the development process. MSF will comply with the State of Illinois requirements related to **pollinator-friendly species/vegetation** used onsite (525 ILCS 55/) and **noxious weed control** (505 ILCS 100/).

### ***Vegetation Management***

MSF is committed to implementing a comprehensive vegetation management plan for the duration of the project. The project will abide by guidelines established by the **Illinois Department of Natural Resources (IDNR)** utilizing comprehensive methods to protect the health of vegetation onsite.

Species will be chosen to prevent erosion and help manage stormwater runoff. The site will be surrounded by a fixed-knot farm fence to provide security and allow access for small ground-level mammals.



***Figure 7 - Typical Agricultural Fence***

The Applicant will consult a local ecologist for a preliminary evaluation to identify and subsequently remove all invasive species. Following completion of the finished grade, an approved native seed mix will be planted. To control noxious weeds and erosion in the project area, disturbed areas will be seeded with a native grass mix, including pollinator-friendly wildflowers.

### ***Perimeter Landscaping***

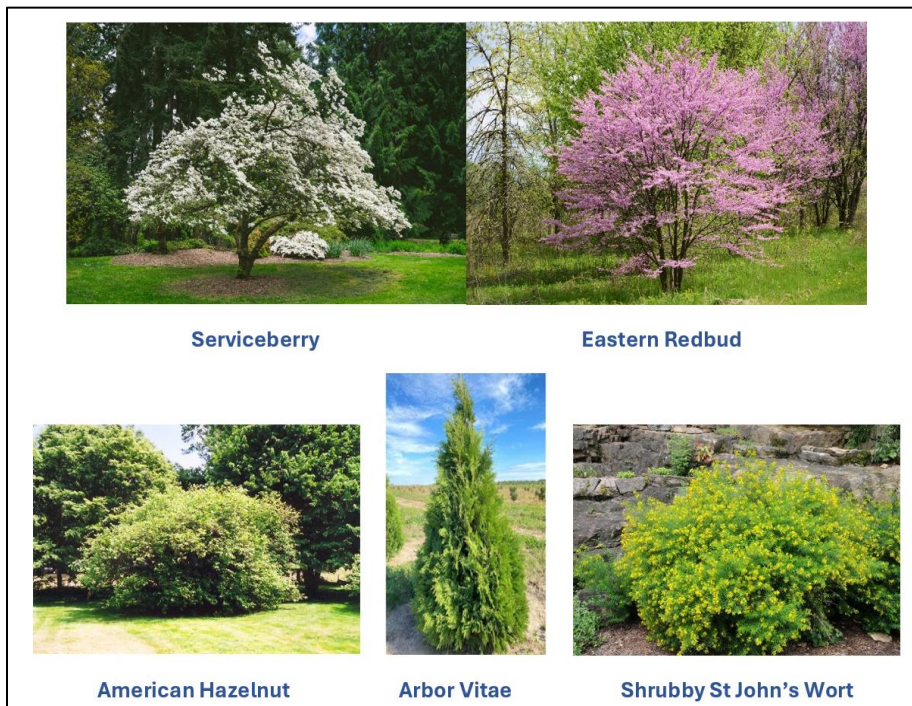
The perimeter landscaping proposed for the McHenry Solar Farm LLC has been selected to provide a degree of privacy for non-participating properties and visual appeal from adjacent rights-of-way. The examples below provide an indication of the perimeter landscaping's growth over time; gradually reducing the view of equipment and improving the project's visual aesthetic. The Applicant is providing a rendering of simulated perimeter landscaping growth at 5-year and 15-year maturity.





**Figure 7 – Projected Perimeter Landscaping Growth**

The selected species will consist of drought-resistant native trees and shrubs such as the Serviceberry, Eastern Redbud, Arbor Vitae, American Hazelnut, and Shrubby St. John’s Wort.



**Figure 8 - Perimeter Landscape Vegetation**



### **Vegetation Plan**

Regular vegetation management will be conducted multiple times annually during the growing season. This proactive approach will minimize shading on the solar modules and ensure the maintenance of a well-kept site.

Subject to change, the proposed vegetation for the McHenry Solar Farm project will consist of the Butterfly Milkweed, Spiderwort, Stiff Coreopsis, and Calico Beardtongue. As part of the landscape plan MSF is proposing the following:

- ❖ Planned plant diversity in rows and under solar arrays.
- ❖ Seeding used for native perimeter and buffer areas.
- ❖ Planned number of native species in perimeter and buffer areas.
- ❖ Planned percentage of perimeter and buffer area dominated by desirable wildflowers.
- ❖ Habitat site preparation prior to implementation.



**Figure 9 - Proposed Vegetation**

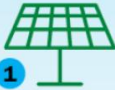
### **Pollinators**

Research conducted by the **Solar Technologies Office (SETO)** of the **US Department of Energy** has concluded that pollinators – bees, insects, butterflies, etc. – play a critical role in global food production. Planting beneficial vegetation under and around solar arrays has been proven to not only support native pollinators but play a key role in soil preservation by incorporating responsible environmental practices into renewable energy systems.




## WHAT IS POLLINATOR-FRIENDLY SOLAR?


Growing pollinator-friendly plants under solar panels can produce clean energy while providing habitat and food for birds, bees, butterflies, and other beneficial insects.



**1**  
Ground-mounted solar panels are installed.




**2**  
Pollinator-friendly plants are seeded beneath and around the panels. On average, these plants take 2-3 years to be established.



**3**  
The pollinator-friendly solar site attracts pollinators, like bees and butterflies.

**Pollinator-friendly plants can even improve water quality and help reduce erosion.**



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF **ENERGY** | Office of ENERGY EFFICIENCY & RENEWABLE ENERGY

**Figure 10 - Pollinators and Solar Arrays**

The McHenry Solar Farm project will feature a variety of pollinator-friendly plantings such as those illustrated below, to minimize the proliferation of weeds and prevent erosion for the life of the project.



**Hoary Vervain**



**Pollinators on a Typical Solar Site**



**Golden Alexanders**



**Black-Eyed Susan**



**Purple Prairie Clover**

**Figure 11 - Typical Pollinators Used on Solar Sites**



## **Weed Management**

From the initial stages of development through monitoring and retreatment phases, MSF will implement weed management, as the initial stage of a long-term **Landscape Management and Monitoring Plan (LMMP)**.

### ❖ **Early Eradication:**

- Initiate eradication of invasive species before any ground-disturbing activities, with collaboration between McHenry County and the local SWCD, if needed.

### ❖ **Strategic Seeding with Native Mix:**

- Utilize native grasses and pollinator-friendly seed mix.
- Engage a professional with expertise in re-vegetation to approve a final seed mix, ensuring compatibility with local conditions.

### ❖ **Regular Mowing:**

- Establish a routine maintenance schedule, including a minimum of six mowings per year within the project area.
- Adjust the frequency of mowing or grazing as needed, potentially conducting these activities during the growing season to effectively manage vegetation.

### ❖ **Long-Term Monitoring and Retreatment:**

- Recognizing the longevity of weed seeds in the soil, commit to a comprehensive, long-term site and weed management process.
- Regularly monitor for any resurgence of weeds.
- Revisiting areas as necessary using industry-standard weed management practices and procedures.
- Once grass is established spot mowing and hand pulling will be administered to maintain vegetation and limit weeds.



## Section VIII - Decommissioning

MSF is subject to decommissioning as per the guidelines set forth in the AIMA executed with the IDOA and under McHenry County code. All community solar facilities must, by state law, execute this agreement with the department to ensure the decommissioning of the system is successfully executed when the project reaches the effective end of its lifecycle.

In conformance with the AIMA, the Applicant must file a **decommissioning plan** with the AHJ responsible for approving the facility. Both the decommissioning plan and any required **financial surety or bond** will be placed with McHenry County to ensure sufficient decommissioning capital is available and the site can be restored to its pre-construction condition. **Restoration** will allow the site to be returned to agriculture after decommissioning and appropriate measures will be implemented to fulfill this objective by the Applicant.

**Facility decommissioning is described as the removal of all system components and rehabilitation of the site to pre-construction conditions.** The facility's components will either be recycled to then current standards recommended at the time of decommissioning, sold to third parties, properly disposed of, or donated to non-profit organizations if there is a need.

The decommissioning of MSF will proceed in the **reverse order of installation**. The step-by-step process to decommission the facility is as follows:

- ❖ The facility will be disconnected from the local utility power grid.
- ❖ Modules will be disconnected from the racking system.
- ❖ Racking systems will be disconnected, disassembled, and recycled (if possible).
- ❖ Steel foundation will be removed and recycled by an approved metals recycler.
- ❖ Above ground electrical interconnection cables will be removed and recycled or disposed of offsite at an approved facility.
- ❖ During the disassembly process, all equipment will be segregated and temporarily placed on site for transportation to its recycling or disposal facility.
- ❖ Electrical and electronic devices such as transformers & inverters will be removed and recycled or disposed of offsite.
- ❖ Fencing will be removed once all materials have been transported to offsite recycling facilities.
- ❖ Grading and necessary fill will be provided to restore the site to a condition conducive to the resumption of agricultural use. This would conclude the decommissioning process of the facility.

Per state law, the Applicant must post a **decommissioning bond** equal to the cost of decommissioning. Prior to the issuance of construction permits, the Applicant will engage a third-party engineer to review projected expenses to ensure the bonded decommissioning funds are accurate and sufficient to cover costs. Once reviewed, the engineer's decommissioning estimates will be submitted to McHenry County staff for further review and final approval.

As part of this submittal, the Applicant has provided a preliminary **Decommissioning Plan/Cost Estimate (DECOM)** which provides context for the specific items and costs to be included later in the final plan along with the required bond/surety.



## Section IX - Additional Considerations

The Applicant asks the McHenry County Board and designated reviewers to consider these factors and overall benefits associated with the McHenry Solar Farm and upon thorough review, approve the issuance of a conditional use permit.

- ❖ **Renewable energy sources** – like MSF – help lower the cost of electric bills, stimulate economic growth, and increase energy independence for our society, while decreasing our reliance on fossil fuels.
- ❖ **Property values impacted by solar development** have been extensively analyzed – with **data consistently showing no negative impacts** - a conclusion reached by numerous studies at the state and national levels – including **project-specific and comparative studies** conducted in Illinois (**McHenry**, Kane, LaSalle and Winnebago) and Indiana counties (Elkhart, Lake, Madison, Marion and Porter) ([www.illinoissolar.org](http://www.illinoissolar.org)) – and nationally some as recently as December 2024.
- ❖ The **low profile** of community solar farms along with project-specific landscaping minimizes the visual aesthetic associated with solar facilities. Solar is the least obtrusive type of energy generation available.
- ❖ Solar farms offer the **lowest cost method of power generation** with the added benefit of being pollution-free. Advances in technology have drastically reduced the price of solar power – cheaper than coal, gas, or nuclear power in most cases.
- ❖ Projects like MSF will generate **30 years of steady tax revenue – often in excess of \$1,000,000 dollars** - to help fund schools and other community services - contributing to lower taxes for homeowners. In addition to tax benefits, solar will create local construction and operations jobs, and increased business for local services.
- ❖ An **overall decrease in emissions** associated with power generation by public utilities – due to the introduction of renewable energy resources. Traffic controls indicate minimal congestion, post-construction, and minimal trip generation during operations.
- ❖ Community solar is a **temporary use of private land** combined with a commitment to respect the future use of the land for agricultural purposes while **allowing landowners the right to develop their property** with a use that complies with all federal, state, and local policies, codes, and development guidelines.
- ❖ At the conclusion of the project’s lifecycle, the Applicant is contractually obligated to **decommission the solar farm**, remove/recycle equipment and restore the site for agricultural use.
- ❖ **Respecting the land** translates into several demonstrable features:
  - Solar farms do not pose a threat to birds or wildlife – or humans.
  - The use of native vegetation onsite particularly pollinator-friendly plantings.
  - The lack of regular agricultural use creates fallow ground which helps preserve and recharge groundwater/aquifers.
  - No harmful chemicals are released into the ground.
  - Stormwater management and drain tile repair or replacement support a site’s eventual return to agricultural use.



## Section X - Insurance

McHenry Solar Farm LLC will be required to maintain adequate **insurance coverage** under long-term contracts with various parties, including, but not limited to, Commonwealth Edison, investors, and participating lenders.

## Section XI - Interconnection

McHenry Solar Farm LLC has filed an **interconnection application** with Commonwealth Edison, enabling the electricity generated by MSF to be distributed through the utility's grid. Interconnection is proposed to occur at a point illustrated on the project's site plan. A redacted copy of the final, executed **Interconnection Agreement** will be provided prior to construction permitting. A copy of the MSF interconnection application can be found in **EXHIBIT T**.

## Section XII - Concluding Remarks

On behalf of the McHenry Solar Farm LLC project team, I would like to thank you in advance for the time spent reviewing our CUP application. Our team looks forward to presenting the project for review and approval. In the interim, please contact us with any questions regarding our submittal or if any additional information is required.

Sincerely,



**Robert McNeill**

**Project Development Manager**

**McHenry Solar Farm LLC**

**P: 224-524-1830 | E-Mail: [robertmcneill@suryapowered.com](mailto:robertmcneill@suryapowered.com)**

