PANTHER CREEK SOLAR

NEWSLETTER 2
JANUARY 2024

ENVIRONMENTAL STUDIES EXPLAINED

Pine Gate Renewables (PGR) is committed to educating the community by providing regular communications, hosting local office hours, and engaging with the broader community regarding the proposed Panther Creek Solar Project. We are pleased to provide information regarding the environmental studies required for the Project to apply for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (CECPN) application with the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB), within this newsletter edition.

This spring, environmental scientists, engineers, and associated survey crew members will be out in the field conducting surveys, such as the ones listed below, so that PGR can best evaluate the land to properly site the Project in a way that mitigates risk to local wildlife, habitat, and neighboring landowners. Although just a few studies are listed below, several more are conducted that the PGR team thoroughly analyzes prior to selecting the location of the equipment for Panther Creek Solar.

Wetlands Delineation

This field survey determines the extent of water features within the project area. Fully identifying all existing water sources allows the project to have proper setbacks from these features and implement best management practices, such as grassy buffers and other stormwater control features. The results of this survey are reviewed by Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the US Army Corps of Engineers.

Threatened and Endangered Species Survey

This survey identifies potential habitat that could support threatened and endangered species within the project area. If potentially suitable habitat for these species is identified within the project area, the locations are mapped. Using this knowledge, mitigation measures are put in place for plant, animal, or habitat protection. Examples of mitigation measures can consist of avoiding certain locations and implementing natural buffer zones or not constructing the project during critical times of the year, such as nesting or mating seasons. The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) and US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) will be consulted with to review the survey results and proposed mitigation measures.

Scan the code to learn more or visit pinegaterenewables.com/Panther-Creek

Phase I Environmental Site Assessment

This assessment identifies potential or existing environmental contamination within the Project area. This can consist of anything from debris or leaks from storage containers to historic evidence of storage or mixing of herbicides and pesticides. If a potential contamination is identified, PGR will work with their experienced environmental consultant team to determine next steps such as testing the soil and/or groundwater to determine the extent of the impacts.

Glare Analysis

The glare analysis determines if there is any potential glare for planes and helicopters that may fly over the project area, for cars driving along roads around the project area, and structures near the project as well. The study analyzes the time of day as well as the extent of potential glare. If any glare is identified, the project can mitigate the identified glare by implementing screening and vegetative buffers such as trees or shrubs. This analysis is performed as required by law, but because solar panels are designed to absorb the sun's energy, not reflect it, impacts of glare are typically very minimal.

Architecture and Archaeological Survey

This survey identifies any structures or archaeological finds that may be considered historically significant. PGR will coordinate with the Ohio State Historic Preservation Office (OHPO) to get feedback on proposed survey methodology. If any resources are identified as a result of this survey effort, PGR will coordinate with OHPO to evaluate their significance and the potential eligibility for listing on the National Register of Historical Places. PGR will continue to work with the OHPO to avoid and protect these resources and possibly establish screening so the viewsheds will remain unchanged.

Pile Testing

Piles are beams anchored into the ground that hold solar panels and solar racking. During development, there will be compressive pile load testing (push test), lateral pile load testing, and uplift pile load testing (pull test). These tests inform Project engineers in their planning of an optimized system design. They may require installing a few piles in a couple of locations around the Project that may remain for a few weeks before being removed. They are tests only and do not reflect the start of construction for the Project.

While this list of studies is not exhaustive, the Project team would like neighbors of the Project and the community to be aware both of the process and procedures that are required and to not be alarmed when any upcoming testing regarding required studies takes place.