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Ohio Power Siting Board
180 East Broad Street
Columbus, OH 43215

Case No. 18-1546-EL-BGN Nestlewood Solar I

February 25, 2020

Firstly, my neighbors and I applaud Mr. Randazzo for initially speaking up to suggest a defferal on the Nestlewood Solar I project ("Project") at the October 17, 2019 OPSB meeting. We also commend the other members of the board for unanimously agreeing with him. We were thrilled that you could see what we could see: the lack of communication with neighboring property owners as well as lack of evidence and follow-through from the Lendlease/Nestlewood Solar I ("Developer") regarding this project.

After learning last week from a neighbor about the adjudicatory hearing that will take place on February 26, 2020 at 10am, I felt the need to expand on my concerns from my June 11, 2019 public comment to the Ohio Power Siting Board ("OPSB") website. Since that last written comment, I have been thinking even more about safety and environmental issues that have not been addressed by Lendlease/Nestlewood Solar I which I will communicate below.

Communication

The Developer's communication with the surrounding residents has obviously been sub-par, as mentioned at the May 30, 2019 public hearing. As a neighboring property owner, I personally wasn't mailed the photo of the map showing the proposed project area until late March 2019 and discovering that a portion of this monstrosity would be located next to my property. Oddly, the first public hearing on November 7, 2018 had already passed by the time the map reached my hands. When I attended the May 30, 2019 hearing, I requested Ms. Anna Sanyal, Administrative Law Judge, if I could state questions about the Project directly to the Project representatives in attendance, Mr. Joe Jordan and Mr. Michael Settineri. I was denied and told that the hearing was only for comments and that the November hearing was for questions directed to the Developer. Needless to say, I was flabbergasted. I had questions about the property map that I was hoping could be put on the record. How was I to know of the proposed property area in November before receiving the map?

In his Supplemental Direct Testimony on February 10, 2020, Mr. Joe Jordan stated that Nestlewood has been engaged in speaking with neighbors to the Project Area. Yes, he spoke with us after the May 30, 2019 hearing for a brief amount of time before he and Mr. Settineri needed to leave ahead of answering all of our questions. Yes, he left me a voicemail within a week of our heated discussion following the public hearing stating that he would be available to speak with "as the project moves forward". In total, since the Nestlewood project was proposed, I have spoken with him for all of about 30 minutes. No other contact has been made or attempted to be made on Mr. Jordan's part or by any other representative for the Project. I would certainly not consider this as having been engaged in speaking with the surrounding neighbors and community. Additionally, in his February testimony he acknowledges that he ***was*** the Development Director

for the Nestlewood Solar Project through 2019. Who is the lead Development Director now that Mr. Jordan only assists with the Project and how do we contact that person when needed?

Screening

Regarding the proposed screening options for neighboring properties, I didn't learn about these until reading the February 10th testimony. I see on the proposed screening map that my non-participating property as well as my neighbors across the street will not have any screening provided for us in our direct line of sight of the panels. Why is this? Andrew English's February 10, 2020 testimony states:

> *Note that residential viewers would be at a greater distance, as non-participating residences are located on the opposite side of the road from the Project.*

Did he visit the Project site in person? Because my property will be located next to part of the Project, not across from it as he mentions in his above statement. Will the vegetative screening go on a homeowner's property or on the Project side? If it goes on our property, are they responsible for clearing fallen limbs? How much yard debris will this cause come Autumn when leaves begin to fall? When will maintenance be performed for the plantings and grass as shown in the screening scenarios?

Tree Removal

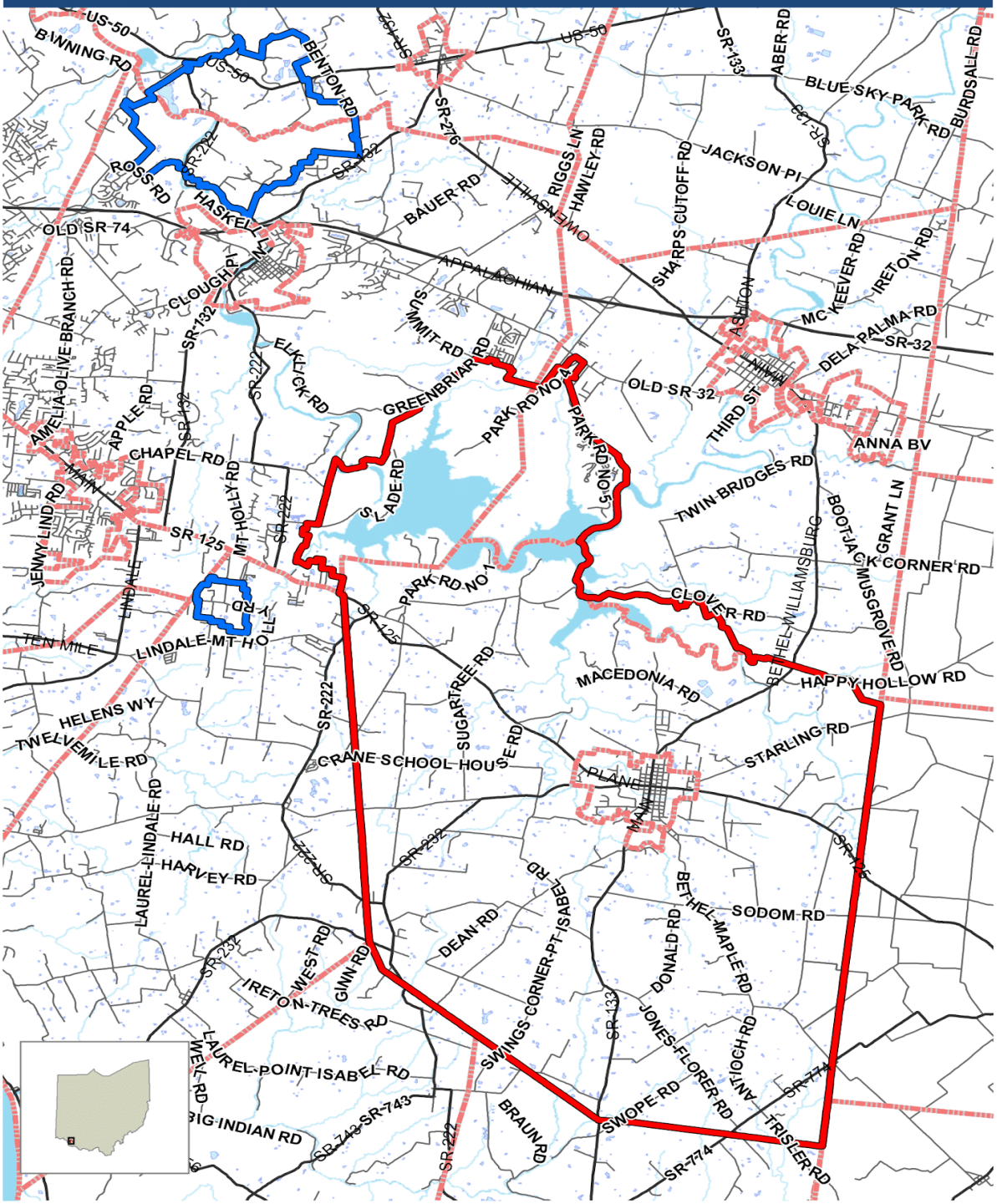
Another important topic that isn't mentioned in any of their testimonies or applications is the presence of the Asian Longhorned Beetle. Tate Township is part of the quarantine area (see image below) and must follow strict rules when removing any tree debris according to the Ohio Department of Agriculture:

> *To keep this tree-killing pest from spreading across Ohio, restricted areas are now in effect for Tate Township and East Fork State Park in Clermont County. Currently 57 square miles are under regulation. Previous quarantines in Batavia, Monroe, and Stonelick townships have since been lifted.*
>
> *It is illegal to remove the following items from the quarantine area:*
>
> - *Firewood, stumps, roots, branches, debris and other material living, dead, cut, or fallen from all hardwood species; and green lumber, nursery stock and logs of the following genera: Acer (maple), Aesculus (horse chestnut), Albizia (mimosa), Betula (birch), Celtis (hackberry), Cercidiphyllum (katsura), Fraxinus (ash), Koelteria (golden raintree), Platanus (sycamore), Populus (poplar), Salix (willow), Sorbus (mountain ash), and Ulmus (elm).*
> - *Any other article, product, or means of conveyance not covered by paragraph (a) of this section if the director determines that it presents a risk of spreading Asian longhorned beetle.*
>
> *If you perform work on regulated articles in any quarantine area, you must enter into a compliance agreement with the ALB eradication program in your State to move items to approved sites for disposal. Before entering into an agreement, you need to attend free compliance training.*

United States Department of Agriculture

ALB REGULATED AREAS

Asian Longhorned Beetle Cooperative Eradication Program



Regulated Bdry
Deregulated Bdry
Major Roads
Roads
Water Bodies
Municipal Boundaries

0 1 2 Miles
0 1.25 2.5 Kilometers

Ohio Department of Agriculture

Date Created: 4/17/2019

USDA, APHIS, PPQ
3079 Angel Drive
Bethel, OH 45106

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Document Path: I:\ROAM_Data\MXDs\Overview Maps\ALB_OH_InfestedTrees_Overview_Legal.mxd Coordinate System: NAD 1983 StatePlane Ohio South FIPS 3402 Feet

Local Officials & Construction Period

In my June 11, 2019 public comment on the OPSB website, I mentioned that the Tate Township Trustees had discussed during their April 2019 trustees meeting that they did not know about the proposed Project. From the April 10, 2019 summary of the April 9, 2019 Trustees meeting:

> *Trustees discussed the solar farm that is going in on the Brown/Clermont line with some of the acreage in Tate. The county commissioners okayed the project without consulting the township officials. The concerns are about possible road damage to both county and township roads and not knowing the details of the project. There were also questions about whether there would be any revenue in taxes to the township since the land being used will no longer be able to be farmed or developed which would generate tax dollars.*

On February 11, 2020, a representative from Nestlewood attended the Tate Township Trustees meeting to answer any questions and to inform them that:

> *The energy company has since resubmitted and expects approval out of Columbus in March 2020. Once they get the go-ahead, the process will still take a couple years to complete.*

Why did they decide to meet with township officials after the Project was deferred by the OPSB in October 2019? Shouldn't they have met with officials beforehand, when they were still in the application process? Additionally, in reading the above meeting notes, I noticed conflicting statements between it and the Staff Report of Investigation dated May 15, 2019, which is reiterated from the application filed on December 14, 2018. The Staff Report reads:

> *Many of the construction activities would generate significant noise levels during the 10 months of construction. The Applicant proposes to use temporary laydown areas scattered within the project area boundary during the approximately 10 month construction period.*

The Tate Township Trustees February meeting notes read:

> *Once they get the go-ahead, the process will still take a couple years to complete.*

My question: Ten months or a couple of years? Which one is it?

Emergency Responders Training

According to the Staff Report of Investigation, the Developer states:

> *Applicant would work with local fire departments and other emergency responders to provide training for response to emergencies related to a solar farm. The Applicant also intends to develop and implement an emergency response plan and consult with potentially affected local officials and emergency response personnel.*

- When will this training occur? Before or after the solar farm has gone in? If after, what is the deadline for training? Who will provide the training?
- Even if trained, do we have enough emergency services personnel in the vicinity? Which emergency personnel will be trained and from which counties/cities/townships?
- Fire hydrants in the area are few and far between. Do we have enough fire hydrants in close proximity to knock down fires around the solar fields as well as ward off flames that may be nearing our homes? Do the current hydrants have enough of a flow rate if there's a fire? If not, who will absorb the cost of upgrading old hydrants or installing new ones?
- Is the right equipment available to combat a combination electrical/environmental fire? If it's

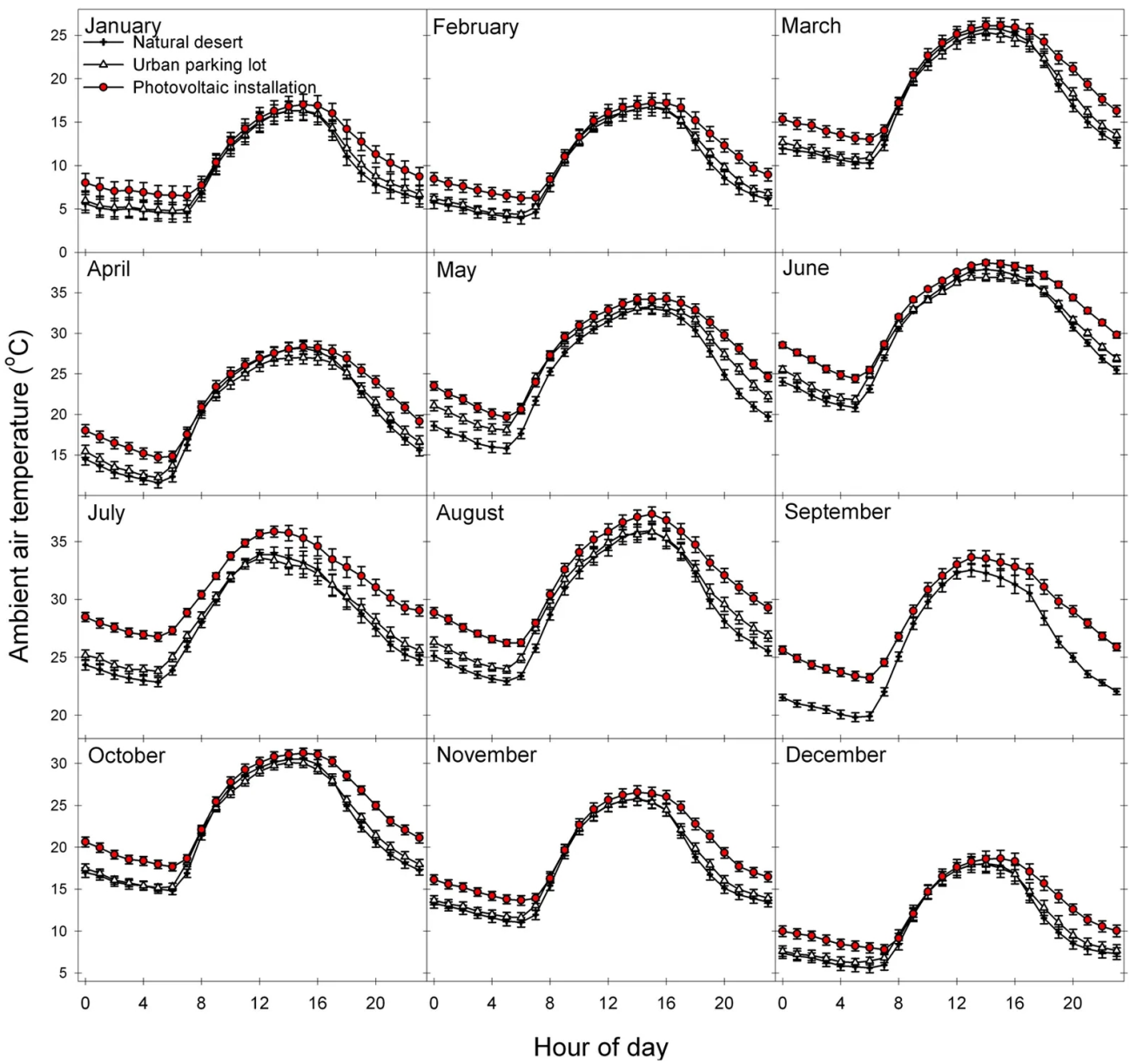
not, how will it be obtained and who will pay for it?

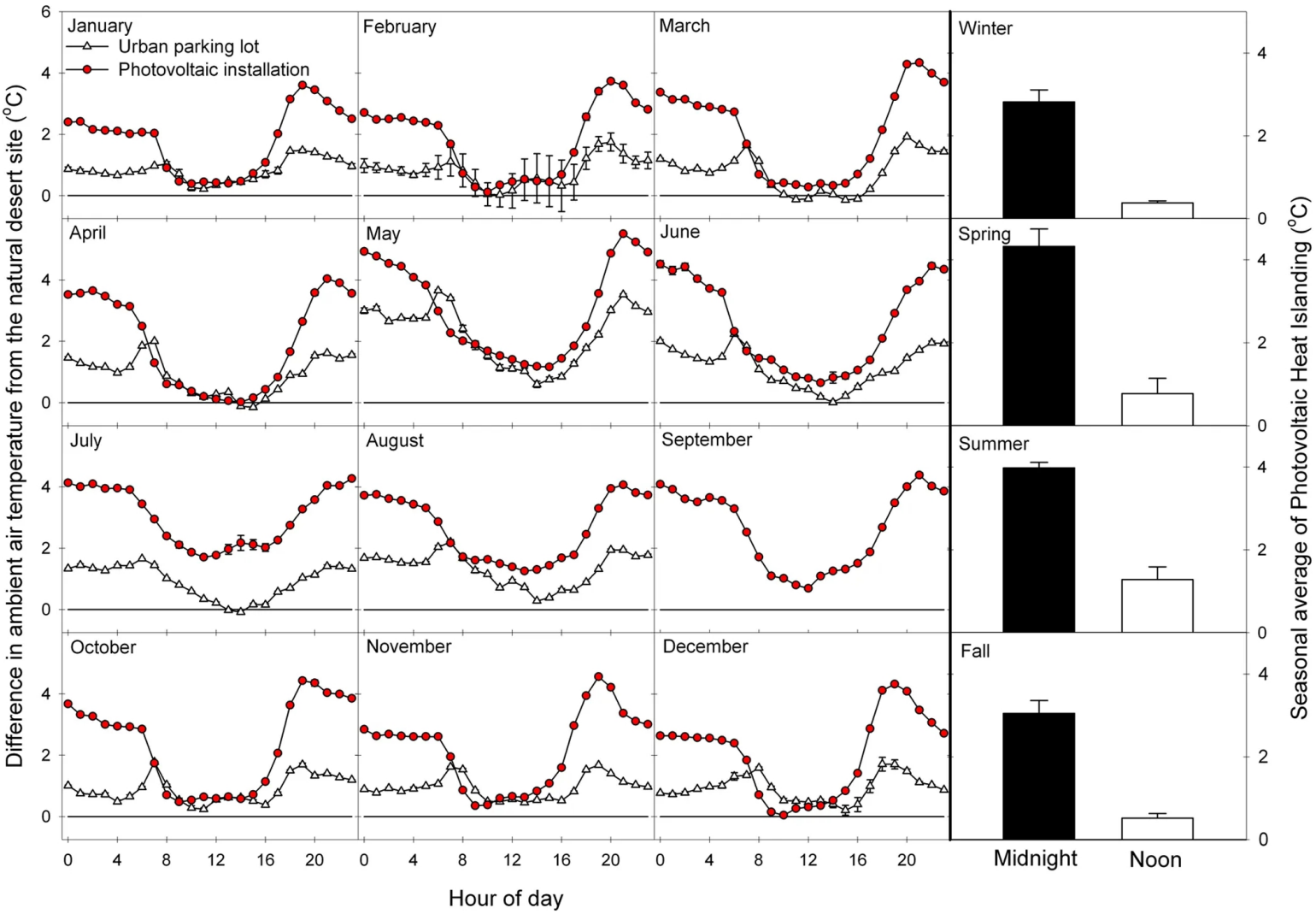
- How will the residents and our property be kept **SAFE**?

Increase in Temperatures

Research from Barron-Gafford, G., Minor, R., Allen, N. *et al.* discovered that large solar power plants increase local temperatures (see the following two images below).

- *We found temperatures over a PV plant were regularly 3–4 °C (37.4-39.2 °F) warmer than wildlands at night, which is in direct contrast to other studies based on models that suggested that PV systems should decrease ambient temperatures.*
- *Temperature differences between areas varied significantly depending on time of day and month of the year, but the PV installation was always greater than or equal in temperature to other (non-PV) sites. (see images below). There are also PVHI-based (Photovoltaic Heat Island Effect) concerns over health issues tied to Human Thermal Comfort (HTC).*





Solar Waste

Exactly how will the solar panels be recycled? There is no definitive plan on how this will happen, just *a plan to decommission the solar facility.* I understand that it can be difficult to plan for 20-40 years in the future. However, did you know that none of the solar panels that have been used or are being used today are not completely recyclable? Most of the panels are shipped to third world countries as waste.

Citing EnvironmentalProgress.org, here are a few points to consider regarding solar waste:

- Solar panels create 300 times more toxic waste per unit of energy than do nuclear power plants.
- If solar and nuclear produce the same amount of electricity over the next 25 years that nuclear produced in 2016, and the wastes are stacked on football fields, the nuclear waste would reach the height of the Leaning Tower of Pisa (52 meters or 0.0323113 miles), while the solar waste would reach the height of two Mt. Everests (16 km or 9.94194 miles).
- In countries like China, India, and Ghana, communities living near e-waste dumps often burn the waste in order to salvage the valuable copper wires for resale. Since this process requires burning off the plastic, the resulting smoke contains toxic fumes that are carcinogenic and teratogenic (birth defect-causing) when inhaled.

Wildlife Habitat Degradation

In regards to habitat loss in the area, the application reads:

> *The Project is not expected to significantly disturb or displace wildlife. Although the operation of the solar panels could affect wildlife in the immediate proximity, studies of displacement at solar energy project areas appear to indicate that, while impacts vary with different species, influence is typically relatively minor.*

In fact, solar projects have the potential to damage ecosystems through habitat degradation.

> *The impact that solar farms have on individual species can send ripples throughout entire ecosystems. For example, animals like burrowing owls in California's Mojave Desert rely on burrows dug by desert tortoises for shelter. When solar farms harm or remove species within a habitat, they also remove the valuable ecosystem services that they provide to the habitat. The habitat becomes less livable for plants and wildlife that have adapted to its specific conditions.*

My final point is that Lendlease has only developed two other solar projects. **TWO.** They have an extensive portfolio of large-scale buildings but not enough solar projects to put any sort of faith in their ability to properly complete this one. How are we to trust that the Developer can handle fronting a solar project which is ten times the size of the largest solar project they've ever completed here in the United States?

I hope that you are in agreement with me in the fact that the February 10, 2020 updated information and testimony submitted by the Developer is too little, too late. Failing to follow through on certain points of their proposal as they hastily did ahead of the OPSB meeting on October 18, 2019, whether deliberately or unintentionally, only shows their incompetence to handle a project of this magnitude. Lendlease had their chance to prove that they're adept to build a 610 acre large-scale solar project but failed.

Sincerely,

M. Kate Powers

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