

BEFORE THE OHIO POWER SITING BOARD

In the Matter of the Application of Ross County Solar, LLC for a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need.)))))	Case No. 20-1380-EL-BGN
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SUPPLEMENTAL TESTIMONY OF RYAN RUPPRECHT

Q.1. Please state your name, title and business address.

A.1. My name is Ryan Rupprecht. I am a Senior Project Manager, Practice Lead for the Renewable Energy Group in the Northeast/Mid-Atlantic and Midwest regions, and a Practice Lead for the Eastern Region Siting and Licensing Group for Cardno, Inc. (“Cardno”). My business address is 121 Continental Drive, Suite 308, Newark, Delaware 19713.

Q.2. On whose behalf are you offering testimony?

A.2. I am testifying on behalf of the Applicant, Ross County Solar, LLC (“Applicant”), in support of its Application filed in Case No. 20-1380-EL-BGN.

Q.3. Did you previously provide testimony on behalf of Applicant?

A.3. Yes, on April 14, 2021.

Q.4. What is the purpose of your supplemental testimony?

A.4. The purpose of my supplemental testimony is to address Conditions 18, 19, 20, 21, and 22 in the Joint Stipulation filed on May 18, 2021.

Q.5. Do you support Condition 18 in the Joint Stipulation?

A.5. Yes. This condition ensures that if the Applicant encounters any new listed threatened or endangered plant or animal species or suitable habitat of these species it will identify, to Staff, avoidance areas or mitigation measures to accommodate construction

activities. The condition also notes that communication with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (“ODNR”) and/or the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (“USFWS”) may allow for a different course of action.

Q.6. Is Condition 18 in the public interest?

A.6. Yes. The Applicant has completed an Ecological Assessment (Exhibit S to the Application) and did not identify any state- or federally-listed rare, threatened or endangered (“RTE”) plant or animal species in the Project Area. However, Condition 18 ensures that if any threatened or endangered species are encountered prior to construction, the Applicant has a process to minimize and mitigate any potential impacts to these species.

Q.7. Do you support Condition 19 in the Joint Stipulation?

A.7. Yes. The Applicant has already committed to adhere to time-of-year (“TOY”) restrictions for construction activities in the Application, such as limiting the tree clearing (approximately 1 acre spread across the 1,440 acres Project Area) between October and March in order to assure no potential impacts to migrating listed bats. This condition imposes a similar requirement on the Applicant. Additionally, the condition notes that coordination with the ODNR and USFWS may allow for a different course of action.

Q.8. Do you support Conditions 20 and 21 in the Joint Stipulation?

A.8. Yes. Again, the Applicant has already committed to TOY restrictions for construction within potential nesting habitat (which is limited in the Project Area) for the upland sandpiper and/or northern harrier. These two conditions impose similar TOY restrictions on the Applicant for the northern harrier (May 15 through August 1) and upland sandpiper (April 15 through July 31). Additionally, the condition notes that coordination with the ODNR and USFWS may allow for a different course of action.

1 **Q.9. Are Conditions 19, 20, and 21 in the public interest?**

2 **A.9.** Yes. As indicated in the Ecological Assessment (Exhibit S to the Application),
3 during Cardno's Spring 2020 field surveys, Cardno's studies found no RTE species and
4 limited potential for RTE species habitat within the Project Area (1,440 acres). However,
5 these conditions ensure that any potential impact to the Indiana bat, northern long-eared
6 bat, northern harrier, and upland sandpiper is further minimized.

7 **Q.10. Do you support Condition 22 in the Joint Stipulation?**

8 **A.10.** Yes. The condition directs the Applicant to have an environmental specialist,
9 mutually agreed to by the Applicant and Staff, to be on site during construction activities
10 that may affect sensitive areas. Sensitive areas may include but are not limited to wetlands
11 and streams, and locations of threatened or endangered species. The condition also directs
12 the Applicant to provide a map of sensitive areas which would be impacted during
13 construction to Staff. The environmental specialist is authorized to halt construction
14 activities for up to 48 hours. This will allow the Applicant and Staff to respond to any
15 reported issues and minimize environmental impacts, if any, to the sensitive areas within
16 the Project Area.

17 **Q.11. Is Condition 22 in the public interest?**

18 **A.11.** Yes. As I previously mentioned in my direct testimony the Project will have very
19 limited environmental impacts. The Project is proposed to be primarily built on land that
20 has already been disturbed seasonally/annually for agriculture with limited identified
21 habitat of significant value to RTE species and other wildlife. Additionally, the Applicant
22 has designed the Project to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands, waterbodies,
23 woodlots, and aquatic and terrestrial wildlife species. However, this condition ensures that

1 any unforeseen impacts to sensitive areas, as described in the condition, are immediately
2 minimized and mitigated.

3 **Q.12. Does this conclude your supplemental direct testimony?**

4 **A.12.** Yes, it does.

CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE

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Summary: Testimony Supplemental Testimony of Ryan Rupperecht electronically filed by Ms. Anna Sanyal on behalf of Ross County Solar, LLC