

From: [Ohio Power Siting Board](#)
To: [Puco Docketing](#)
Subject: comment for 20-1605 [ref: _00Dt0GzXt._500t0mSXf2:ref]
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I've lived in Shawnee Township and been a taxpayer here for more than 43 years of my adult life. I am 71-years old, a lifelong Allen County resident.

I was so shocked to hear so much negative publicity surrounding the proposed Birch Solar Farm that I became interested in learning more about it. The proposed site is just a couple of miles west of me.

After giving the issue thorough review, I write in support of the Birch Solar Project. I feel strongly that this project is a generational opportunity for our community which we would be foolish to miss.

As I understand it, at least \$81 million in payments will be made over the 30-year life of the project. Close to 80% of that goes to Shawnee and Logan Townships and the local school districts, dramatically enhancing their ability to serve their residents. The remaining 20% will go to the counties and Apollo Career Center. This revenue would be stable over the three-decade life of the project and would not be restricted in its use, allowing the money to flow to where it is most needed.


As the project would create over 400 jobs for 18 months of construction, plus permanent jobs in ongoing maintenance, I feel we would be foolish to let the company take this industry elsewhere. What alternative(s) do we have that would compensate us for such a massive lost opportunity?

But it's not just about the revenue for the region. America has decades of experience generating power with solar panels, and they've proven to be safe, resilient, and an increasingly critical part of American energy independence.

And better for the environment. The Birch Solar Farm is projected to generate enough clean electricity to power all the homes in Allen County for more than thirty years. And converting 1400 acres from crop-farmed to solar-farmed will increase the quality of the soil and nearby waterways. The area encompassed is usually subjected to conventional tillage to increase yields when corn is planted, resulting in some soil erosion. Thirty years without tillage will greatly reduce soil erosion and decrease runoff into area streams and rivers.

Large-scale solar installations offer farmers the chance to diversify and strengthen their operations at a time when farm income is increasingly precarious. Once in place, this happens without practically any noise or pollution and at a cost that beats nearly any other newly constructed power generation source - even without the subsidies that made the technology viable. And, after thirty years, the land can be returned to its present condition.


Utility-scale solar power generation benefits all of Ohio, but revenue generated by the Birch Solar project amounts to a significant boost for township and county residents. I trust that neighbors who question the project will be heard and their concerns addressed, and then I urge you to act to make this project a success in every way.

This is an industry we NEED contributing to the economy of Allen and Auglaize counties! 



Michael Wildermuth

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Summary: Public Comment of Michael Wildermuth, via website, electronically filed by
Docketing Staff on behalf of Docketing