# Exhibit J Ecological Resource Analysis Report



Proposed Fox Squirrel Boundary Change Area Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road Madison County, Ohio October 5, 2021, 2021 Terracon Project No. N1217180



# **Prepared for:**

Geenex Solar Charlotte, North Carolina

# **Prepared by:**

Terracon Consultants, Inc. Cincinnati, Ohio

terracon.com



Environmental Facilities Geotechnical Materials



October 5, 2021

Geenex Solar 1930 Abbott Street Charlotte, North Carolina 28203

Attn: Mr. Juergen Fehr

P: 614-205-3798

E: juergen.fehr@geenexsolar.com

Ecological Resources Analysis Report Re:

Proposed Fox Squirrel Boundary Change Area

Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road

Madison County, Ohio

Terracon Project No. N1217180

Dear Mr. Fehr:

Terracon Consultants, Inc. (Terracon) is pleased to submit the enclosed Ecological Resource Analysis Report for the above-referenced site. Terracon's services were performed in a manner consistent with generally accepted practices of profession undertaken in similar studies in the same geographical area during the same time period. We appreciate the opportunity to provide services to Geenex Solar. If you have any questions concerning this report, or if we can assist you in any other matter, please call our office at (513) 612-9094.

Sincerely,

TERRACON CONSULANTS, INC.

Senior Staff Scientist

Scott West

Group Manager



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# **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

#### **Project Information**

Fox Squirrel Solar, LLC (Applicant or Fox Squirrel) is proposing to add land to the Initial Project Area that the Ohio Power Siting Board approved for the Fox Squirrel Solar Farm in Case No. 20-931-EL-BGN (Project). The additional land (Boundary Change Area (BCA)) for the Project is located in rural, unincorporated Madison County, Ohio, partially in Range Township and Oak Run Township, and approximately 4.25 miles southeast of London, Ohio and 7.25 miles northwest of Mt. Sterling, Ohio. The BCA comprises 1,494.45 acres of private land located on the northeast side of Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road. The proposed types of infrastructure that will be located within the BCA is identical to the types of infrastructure previously approved for the Initial Project Area and includes the development of photovoltaic (PV) panels and supporting racking infrastructure, as well as some access roads and fencing.

Terracon Consultants, Inc. (Terracon), on behalf of Fox Squirrel Solar, LLC, has completed an Ecological Resource Analysis (ERA) of the proposed Project. The ERA was conducted per the *Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) in order to fulfill the requirements of Ohio Administrative Code (OAC)* § 4906-4-08(B). The purpose of ERA was to evaluate potential impacts from the proposed solar project on ecological resources through environmental studies and state and federal natural resources agency coordination. This evaluation includes a desktop review of available data for the area, a plant and animal literature review, a plant and animal field survey, a Waters of the United States (WOTUS) field survey, a review of potential impacts to the aforementioned resources, and short-term and long-term mitigation measures. Findings presented in this report are specific to the BCA portion of the Project.

#### **Ecological Resource Project Site Map Review**

Terracon performed a literature review of threatened and endangered (T&E) species, migratory birds, critical habitat, and species that are of commercial or recreational value at the BCA. A review of federal and state-listed species that could potentially occur in the area of the BCA identified six federally endangered, one federally threatened, and one federal candidate species, as well as ten state endangered and four state threatened species, and one state species of concern. Five migratory bird species of concern were also identified as potentially occurring on or around the BCA. Critical habitat is not present on or around the BCA. Species of commercial or recreational value were not identified as occurring on or around the BCA.

# Field Survey Results - Plant and Animal

The BCA was observed to be predominantly open, agricultural land with limited, wooded areas in the south BCA area. Potential habitat for 9 of the 11 listed species identified as potentially occurring by Terracon from desktop and agency resources was observed within the BCA. Suitable habitat for the federally-listed Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) was observed within wooded areas on the BCA. Suitable aquatic

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habitat was identified on the BCA for the following mollusk species: Clubshell (*Pleurobema clava*), Northern Riffleshell (*Epioblasma torulosa rangiana*), Elephant Ear (*Elliptio crassidens*), Rabbitsfoot (*Quadrula (Theliderma) cylindrica cylindrica*), and the Wavy-rayed lampmussel; and the fish species Scioto Madtom (*Noturus trautmani*) and Tippecanoe Darter (*Etheostoma tippecanoe*).

#### Field Survey Results – Vegetation and Surface Water

Terracon conducted wetland delineations to identify potential Waters of the United States (WOTUS) and wetlands at the BCA and within a 100-foot buffer around the BCA. Based on the wetland delineation, two wetlands totaling 0.97 acres and three streams totaling 16,770 linear feet were observed on the BCA and within the 100-foot buffer. All delineated wetlands and stream channels are jurisdictional to United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), based on a Preliminary Jurisdictional Determination, dated March 23, 2021, and in accordance with Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). The BCA is located within the jurisdiction of the USACE Huntington District. The Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA), in accordance with Section 401 of the CWA and the Ohio Revised Code 6111.02 to 6111.028 for issuance of a Water Quality Certificate (WQC), takes jurisdiction of isolated wetlands that may exist or are impacted within the BCA boundaries.

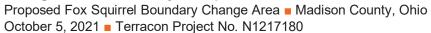
# **Ecological Impacts**

The conversion of agricultural land to a solar farm should have no significant adverse impact on wildlife within the BCA. Due to the presence of suitable habitat for the Indiana bat and Northern long-eared bat, any tree clearing, should it become necessary, should be performed seasonally (from October 1 to March 31) or a presence/absence survey may be required. In addition, incidental take of Northern long-eared bats is exempt in this location under the 4(d) rule.

Two fish species, the Western Creek Chubsucker (*Erimyzon claviformis*) and the Least Darter (*Etheostoma microperca*), identified in the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) Natural Heritage Database (NHD) as occurring in Bradford Creek near the BCA, are not anticipated to be impacted due to proposed avoidance of impacts to the on-site waters. Instream work is not proposed as part of the Project; therefore, impacts are not anticipated for the other fish and mussel species identified in the review.

Based on Terracon's review of the BCA and planned development activities, which include avoidance of impacts to habitat types and/or the significant amount of similar habitat in the surrounding areas, no adverse effects to threatened or endangered species are anticipated. Terracon has coordinated with ODNR and United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). Coordination correspondence records are appended to this report.

Regarding surface waters, a Preliminary Jurisdictional Determination has been issued by the USACE, dated May 23, 2021, concurring with Terracon's Wetland Delineation findings. Site





design plans indicate that solar arrays and associated equipment will not impact regulated features on the BCA. Three free span bridges for access roads are proposed to be constructed over S-1 (Bradford Branch), S-2, and S-3 (Bradford Creek), which will avoid impacts to those waters. If plans change and in-stream work becomes necessary for bridge placement, any associated impacts to the streams will potentially require permitting by the USACE and mitigation.

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# 1. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

# 1.1. Project Site

The Boundary Change Area (BCA) is located in rural, unincorporated Madison County, Ohio, partially in Range Township and Oak Run Township and approximately 4.25 miles southeast of London, Ohio, 7.25 miles northeast of Mt. Sterling, Ohio, and approximately 15 miles southwest of Columbus, Ohio. The BCA is 1,494.45 acres and is comprised of a north BCA area and a south BCA area, both located on the northeast side of Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road. Approximately 150-acres within the BCA boundaries are set aside as areas that will not be disturbed as part of the Project. The majority of the BCA consists of agricultural land with minimal wooded area in the southeastern portion of the BCA and can be seen in Figure 1. Residential structures, associated outbuildings, and associated, apparent agricultural facilities are depicted in the southwestern portion of the BCA, along Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road and another in the north-central portion of the BCA along Madden Higgins Road. Overhead power lines appear to cross the BCA and are assumed to provide a point of interconnection for the Project.



Figure 1. Aerial overview of the Boundary Change Area (red outline) and areas that will not be disturbed as part of the Project (magenta overlay).

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# 1.2. Project

The proposed Project consists of the development of a photovoltaic (PV) solar energy facility, which includes the installation of PV panels and supporting steel frames. Foundations for the solar array may consist of wide flange steel piles (W6x9 or similar) or other propriety sections. In addition, Terracon understands that invertors, transformers, and other appurtenant equipment may be supported on shallow spread or mat foundations or through a direct drilled pier foundation. We anticipate that the solar field will follow existing topographic grade with minimal grading required. Terracon understands plans also include the development of access roads, a security fence, and a small substation.

## 2. REGULATORY REVIEW

As stated in the Executive Summary, this Ecological Resource Analysis (ERA) was conducted per the Ohio Power Siting Board (OPSB) in order to fulfill the requirements of Ohio Administrative Code (OAC) § 4906-4-08(B). The purpose of this ERA was to evaluate Project impacts on ecological resources through environmental studies and state and federal natural resources agency coordination. Per OPSB regulations, the evaluation includes a literature survey of the plant and animal life within a 0.25 mile radius of the BCA boundary, field survey of suitable habitat and occurrence for plant and animal species identified in the literature review (1-A), a field survey of the vegetation and surface waters within 100-feet of the potential construction (1-B), and a summary of any additional studies which have been made by or for the applicant addressing the ecological impact of the proposed facility (1-E). Utilizing the results of the field survey, this evaluation details ecological resources that may be impacted during construction including, but not limited to linear feet and acreage impacted, proposed crossing methodology of each stream or wetland, the extent of vegetation clearing, potential reduction of woody vegetation clearing, potential impacts to wildlife and their habitat (2-A). Short-term and long-term mitigation measures are included and describe post-construction site restoration / stabilization of disturbed soils, best management practices (BMPs) including sedimentation and erosion control for construction around streams and wetlands, and vegetative protection (2-B-i-vii).

## 3. LITERATURE REVIEW

## 3.1. Ecological Resource Project Site Map Review

## 3.1.1. Topographic Map

The United States Geologic Survey (USGS) 7.5-Minute Topographic Map of the BCA was reviewed to identify drainages or other potential water features within the BCA. The USGS map indicates the presence of two perennial streams on site; Bradford Branch and Bradford

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Creek. Additionally, two intermittent streams are depicted across the site; one in the northwestern portion draining into Bradford Branch, and one in the eastern portion draining into Bradford Creek. The site appears to be relatively flat with an approximate elevation of 1000 feet above sea level (asl). The USGS topographic map is included in Appendix A.

# 3.1.2. Aerial Imagery

A recent aerial photograph (2020) of the BCA was reviewed to determine land use and evaluate vegetative cover. The BCA is predominantly shown to consist of agricultural land with forested land in the southern portion. Several apparent streams are shown throughout the site. The aerial is included as Exhibit 4 in Appendix A.

#### 3.1.3. Wetlands and Waters of the United States

National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) data for the BCA was reviewed to identify potential wetland areas. NWI data for the BCA is published by US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and depicts possible wetland areas based on stereoscopic analysis of high-altitude aerial photographs. Features indicated within the BCA boundaries from the review of the NWI data are summarized in the table below. The NWI map is included in Appendix A.

Table 1. NWI Features on the BCA.

Number and Type of Feature	Cowardin Classification	General Location		
One perennial stream	R5UBH	Northern portion of the BCA; draining west to east.		
One intermittent stream	R4SBC	Eastern portion of north BCA area; draining to the east then southeast		
Three intermittent streams	R4SBC	Western portion of north BCA area; draining from north, west, and southwest of BCA, joining on-site, exiting the BCA to the south, and becoming the perennial stream described below.		
One perennial stream	R2UBH	Northern portion of south BCA area; draining to the east then southeast		
One emergent wetland, temporarily flooded	PEM1A	Western boundary of north BCA area.		

#### 3.1.4. Soils

Data from the soil survey of Madison County, Ohio was reviewed to identify soil types, including hydric soils. Data for the soil survey was compiled by the U.S. Department of

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Agriculture Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) in 1981. Hydric soils information was gathered from the 'National Hydric Soils List' (USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service, https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/soils/use/hydric/). A soil survey map is included as Exhibit 3 in Appendix A.

The following soil types were identified within the BCA boundaries on the soil survey map:

- Crosby silt loam, Southern Ohio Till Plain, 0 to 2 percent slope (CrA): This soil is defined as somewhat poorly drained, gently sloping, and is typically located on the edge of broad, nearly level areas and along small waterways. The soil color ranges from brown to yellowish-brown. This map unit is not classified as hydric.
- Crosby-Lewisburg silt loams, 0 to 2 percent slope (CsA): This soil is defined as somewhat poorly to poorly drained and nearly level. The soil color is typically grayish brown. This map unit is classified as hydric.
- Crosby-Lewisburg silt loams, 2 to 6 percent slope (CsB): This soil is defined as moderately well drained, gently sloping to sloping, and is typically found along ridgetops and shoulders of the loess-capped till plains. The soil color ranges from dark grayish brown to yellowish-brown. This map unit is classified as hydric.
- <u>Eldean silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slope (EIB):</u> This soil is defined as moderately well drained, gently sloping to sloping, and is typically found along ridgetops and shoulders of the loess-capped till plains. The soil color ranges from dark grayish brown to yellowish-brown. This map unit is not classified as hydric.
- Kokomo silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (Ko): This soil is defined as very poorly drained, nearly level, and is typically found in flood plains. The soil color ranges from very dark gray to dark grayish brown. This map unit is classified as hydric.
- Miamian silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slope, eroded (MIC2): This soil is defined as well drained, gently sloping, and typically found on the backslope of till plains. The soil color ranges from dark brown to yellowish brown. This map unit is not classified as hydric.
- Odell-Lewisburg complex, 0 to 2 percent slope (OdA): This soil is defined as somewhat poorly drained or moderately well drained in upland areas. This unit is nearly level, and typically found on the summit of till plains or moraines. The soil color ranges from very dark brownish gray to black friable silty clay loam. This map unit is not classified as hydric.
- Westland silty clay loam, Southern Ohio Till Plain, 0 to 2 percent slopes (Wt): This soil is defined as very poorly drained, slowly or moderately slowly permeable soils on low stream terraces and outwash plains. The soil color ranges from very dark gray to dark grayish brown. This map unit is not classified as hydric.

Highly erodible soils are not present on the BCA.

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#### 3.1.5. Land Use

The proposed BCA consists of multiple land use types based on field observations and desktop data review and included as Exhibit 6 in Appendix A. The following land use categories and their approximate acreages were identified within the BCA boundaries:

- Row Crop Agriculture Land 1,428 acres +/-
- Herbaceous Vegetation Agricultural and Stream Boundary 35 acre +/-
- Deciduous Forest Land 18 acres +/-
- Developed (Farmsteads and Roads) 17 acres +/-
- Woodland (Sparse Tree Cover) 6 acres +/-

Row crop agricultural land use comprises approximately 96% of the land use, with another 2% made up of herbaceous vegetation typically found around the edges of agricultural fields and in riparian corridors on the BCA. Deciduous forest and farmsteads and roads each make up approximately 1% of the landcover. Finally, sparsely wooded land found in the southeastern portion of the south BCA area made up less than 1% of land use.

The conversion of these agricultural fields is likely to have negligible environmental impact, as agricultural fields provide minimal habitat for plant and animal species and are seasonally disturbed via farming activities. Project development will provide similar minimal habitat as cropland. Adequate vegetative ground cover will be maintained as part of post-construction and operation activities. Where possible, the client will utilize native plant species for post-construction ground cover.

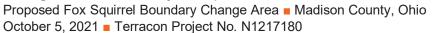
## 3.2. Literature Review – Plant and Animal

### 3.2.1. Wildlife Resource Conservation Areas

A review of the ODNR Division of Wildlife Area maps (Ohiodnr.gov) was conducted to determine the potential for wildlife areas, nature preserves, and other conservation areas being located within the BCA boundaries or within a 0.25-mile buffer surrounding the BCA. The nearest wildlife conservation area is the Madison Wildlife Production Area 49-2, located approximately 4.3 miles northeast of the BCA. There are no wildlife areas or nature preserves within the BCA boundaries or within the 0.25-mile buffer, as shown in Exhibit 8 of Appendix A.

## 3.2.2. Migratory Birds and Bald Eagles

Migratory birds are protected by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) of 1918 and bald eagles are protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA). These Acts prohibit the "take", possession, import, export, transport, sale, purchase, barter, or offer for sale, purchase,





or barter of any migratory bird, or the parts, nest, or eggs of such bird. The Act defines "take" as "pursue, shoot, shoot at, poison, wound, kill, capture, trap, molest, or disturb". "Disturb" means, "to agitate or bother such bird to a degree that causes, or is likely to cause, based on the best scientific information available, 1) injury to an eagle, 2) a decrease in its productivity, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior, or 3) nest abandonment, by substantially interfering with normal breeding, feeding, or sheltering behavior". Bald eagles, like most native birds, are also protected by the MBTA.

Construction activities on the BCA have the potential to displace these species from the habitat that is regularly utilized for foraging, breeding, and nesting. Terracon reviewed multiple bird species conservation platforms to determine the likelihood of utilization of the BCA by these species. Terracon utilized the USFWS Information, Planning, and Conservation System (IPaC), which provides an online list of threatened and endangered species as well as migratory birds, including eagles. Six migratory bird species were identified on the IPaC list as being of special concern based on the BCA location.

Table 2. Migratory bird species listed in the USFWS IPaC system for the BCA.

Species Name	Species Habitat	Status	Potential Habitat/Presence on the BCA
Bald Eagle	Large, super-canopy roost	Protected by	Wooded areas in the south BCA
(Haliaeetus	trees that are open and	BGEPA	area are potential habitat.
leucocephalus)	accessible. Forested areas		
	adjacent to large bodies of		
	water.		
Bobolink (Dolichonyx	Large fields with grasses and	Bird of	Potential habitat not present on
oryzivorus)	broadleaved plants; hayfields	Conservation	the BCA.
	and meadows; freshwater	Concern	
	marshes		
Prothonotary Warbler	Large, flooded bottomland	Bird of	Wooded areas in the south BCA
(Protonotaria citrea)	forests, wooded swamps, and	Conservation	area are potential habitat.
	forests near lakes and streams	Concern	
Red-headed	Deciduous woodlands with	Bird of	Wooded areas in the south BCA
Woodpecker	oak and beech trees and	Conservation	area are potential habitat.
(Melanerpes	snags, in areas with	Concern	
erythrocephalus)	disturbance or edge		
	characteristics		
Rusty Blackbird	Wet forests, bogs, swamps,	Bird of	Wooded areas in the south BCA
(Euphagus carolinus)	and pond edges	Conservation	area are potential habitat.
		Concern	
Wood Thrush	Mature deciduous forests	Bird of	Wooded areas in the south BCA
(Hylocichla		Conservation	area are potential habitat.
mustelina)		Concern	

Terracon also reviewed eBird (Cornell Lab of Ornithology, 2002), which provides an online checklist program that compiles bird abundance and distribution data made by recreational and professional bird waters. The nearest eBird 'personal location' of a migratory bird listed above was a Prothonotary Warbler, observed approximately 3 miles north of the BCA

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boundary at Madison Lake State Park in late April 2021. There are no records for known bald eagle nests within the BCA boundaries or 0.25-mile buffer.

The proposed Project solar array will employ PV solar panels. PV solar panels, in comparison with coal, oil, natural gas, and wind energy, provide electricity without emitting any carbon pollution. The BCA predominantly consists of cultivated cropland, which is seasonally disturbed for agriculture, with apparently maintained boundary areas of herbaceous, non-crop vegetation. Approximately 1,316 acres +/- of croplands will be converted to energy generation use as a result of the Project. Changes to agricultural land will include revegetation, where necessary, with native grasses. Forested areas are located in portions of the BCA that will not be disturbed as a result of the Project. The forested and wooded areas on the BCA provide habitat for a variety of avian species. Impacts to trees on the BCA are not anticipated; however, should tree impacts become necessary, Terracon recommends that any tree clearing be performed seasonally (October 1st – March 31st), to avoid potential take of migratory birds.

Based on the proposed avoidance of impacts to forested and wooded areas, it is Terracon's opinion that the Project will have a minimal effect on migratory birds and bald eagles within the BCA boundaries and 0.25-mile buffer.

# 3.2.3. Threatened and Endangered Species

Terracon has performed a desktop T&E species review to determine the potential for federally protected species being located within the BCA boundaries and within a 0.25-mile buffer surrounding the BCA boundaries. Terracon searched available online data to evaluate the known past presence and potential presence of T&E species and critical habitat in the BCA area. The USFWS IPaC list was reviewed to identify federally listed species that may occur in the area of the site. Terracon submitted early coordination letters to the USFWS and ODNR for occurrences of listed species within the BCA boundaries and 0.25-mile buffer. The species listed in Table 3 were identified through these reviews.

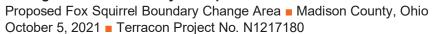
Table 3. Federal/State-listed threatened and endangered species and desktop evaluation of habitat presence on the BCA.

Taxon	Species Name	Species Habitat	Status	Potential Habitat/Presence on the	
Tuxon	opecies nume	ille Species Habitat Sta		BCA	
Mammal	Indiana Bat ( <i>Myoti</i> s sodalis)	During winter, this species hibernates in caves or, occasionally, in abandoned mines. During summer, this species is found in wooded areas.	Federally Endangered, State Endangered	Potential suitable habitat is present on the BCA within forested areas.	

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Mammal	Northern long- eared bat ( <i>Myotis</i> septentrionalis)	ared bat ( <i>Myotis</i> occasionally, in abandoned		Potential suitable habitat is present on the BCA within forested areas.
Fish	Scioto madtom ( <i>Noturus</i> <i>trautmani</i> )	This species can be found in high quality water in stream riffles of moderate currents on gravel bottoms	Federally Endangered, State Threatened	Potential suitable habitat is present on the BCA within stream channels.
Fish	Spotted darter (Etheostoma maculatum)	This species is found in medium sized rivers and streams near riffles in the upstream edge of boulders or flat slabs of rock.	State Endangered	No suitable habitat is present on the BCA.
Fish	Tippecanoe darter (Etheostoma tippecanoe)	This species is found in medium to large streams, in riffles of moderate current with small cobble and/or gravel substrate.	State Threatened	Potential suitable habitat is present on the BCA within larger streams.
Avian	Upland sandpiper ( <i>Bartramia</i> <i>longicauda</i> )	This species breeds in grasslands and in mosaics of unkempt agricultural land, old fields, and crop lands.	State Endangered	No suitable habitat is present on the BCA.
Avian	Northern harrier ( <i>Circus</i> <i>hudsonius</i> )	This species prefers grasslands and, sometimes, large marshy areas for breeding.	State Endangered	No suitable habitat is present on the BCA.
Avian	King rail ( <i>Rallus</i> elegans)	This species prefers large wetlands with cattails and sedges, marshy fields, and other wet areas.	State Endangered	No suitable habitat is present on the BCA.
Mollusk	Clubshell ( <i>Pleurobema</i> <i>clava</i> )	This species is found in small to medium rivers and streams with clean, loose sand and/or gravel substrate.	Federally Endangered, State Endangered	Potential suitable habitat is present on the BCA within stream channels.





Mollusk	Northern riffleshell ( <i>Epioblasma</i> torulosa rangiana)	This species is found in a wide variety of stream sizes with sand and/or gravel substrate.	Federally Endangered, State Endangered	Potential suitable habitat is present on the BCA within stream channels.
Mollusk	Rabbitsfoot (Quadrula (Theliderma) cylindrica cylindrica)	This species is found in a wide variety of stream sizes with shallow areas of reduced stream velocity along banks and other stream features and typically consisting of sand and/or gravel.	Federally Candidate Species, State Threatened	Potential suitable habitat is present on the BCA within stream channels.
Mollusk	Rayed bean ( <i>Villosa fabalis</i> )	This species is generally found in larger and headwater streams with moderate to swift currents.	Federally Endangered, State Endangered	Potential suitable habitat is present on the BCA within stream channels.
Mollusk	Snuffbox mussel (E <i>pioblasma</i> triquetra)	This species is generally found in larger and headwater streams with moderate to swift currents.	Federally Endangered, State Endangered	Potential suitable habitat is present on the BCA within stream channels.
Mollusk	Elephant-ear ( <i>Elliptio</i> crassidens)	This species is found in medium to large rivers and streams with mud, sand, and/or fine gravel substrate.	State Endangered	Potential suitable habitat is present on the BCA within larger stream channels.
Mollusk	Wavy-rayed lampmussel (Lampsilis fasciola)	This species is found in small to medium shallow streams, near riffles, and in areas of good current.	State Species of Concern	Potential suitable habitat is present on the BCA within stream channels.

Based on the desktop evaluation of potential habitat, there is potential suitable habitat for 11 of the 15 species listed above on the BCA. A field habitat assessment was performed for species that are likely to be present on site. This field habitat assessment and its findings are further detailed in Section 4.2.

A Natural Heritage Database (NHD) review was performed by ODNR to evaluate the presence of listed species and natural features of interest within one mile of the BCA. The NHD review identified records of two state species of concern within Bradford Creek at the northeastern edge of the BCA - Western Creek Chubsucker (*Erimyzon claviformis*) and the Least Darter

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(Etheostoma microperca). The NHD review also identified records of the Western Creek Chubsucker in Bradford Creek, approximately 800 feet east of the south BCA area and for the Western Creek Chubsucker and the Least Darter in South Fork Bradford Creek, approximately 500 feet south of the south BCA area. The NHD did not identify any other ecological resources, nature preserves, wildlife areas, or natural resources of interest within one mile of the BCA.

The USFWS IPaC report did not identify critical habitat on the BCA. The agency coordination documents are provided in Appendix B.

# 3.2.4. Commercial and Recreational Plant and Animal Species

Due to the nature of the current BCA use for row crop agriculture, commercial and recreational plant and animal species are not anticipated to be present on the BCA.

# 4. FIELD SURVEY RESULTS

Field surveys were performed at the site as applicable, based on the results of the desktop studies detailed above.

# 4.1. Field Results – Vegetative Communities

Various plant communities and types of land cover were observed at the site including forested wetlands, emergent wetlands, and various upland communities. The BCA landcover is dominated by agricultural row cropland with remnants of corn (*Zea mays*). There are wooded areas dominated by Osage orange (*Maclura pomifera*), white ash (*Fraxinus americana*), black locust (*Robinia pseudoacacia*), honeylocust (*Gleditsia tricanthos*), black walnut (*Juglans nigra*), eastern redcedar (*Juniperus virginiana*), honeysuckle (*Lonicera maackii*), white oak (*Quercus alba*), shagbark hickory (*Carya ovata*), and blackberry (*Rubus allegheniensis*), present in the southeastern portion of the BCA. Additionally, emergent wetland areas identified on the BCA were dominated by reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*). Finally, herbaceous cover uplands were dominated by yellow foxtail (*Setaria pumila*) and Canada wildrye (*Elymus canadensis*).

# 4.2. Field Results – Plant and Animal Threatened and Endangered Species

As stated above in Section 4.2.3, an ecological resource BCA map review of threatened and endangered species and early coordination with ODNR and USFWS identified three federally-listed and five state-listed threatened or endangered species within the BCA boundaries and within the 0.25-mile buffer surrounding the BCA boundaries. Due to lack of habitat within the

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BCA boundaries or 0.25-mile buffer, select species were determined to not likely be present on or within the vicinity of the site.

Terracon performed a species habitat survey, within the BCA boundaries, in an effort to identify potential suitable habitat for the species listed in Table 3 that were deemed likely to be present on site. The results of the field assessment for potential, on-site habitat is summarized for each species in Table 4. Critical habitat for these species was not identified within the BCA boundaries.

Table 4. Federal and State-listed threatened and endangered species the evaluation of habitat presence

and potential impacts related to the Project and BCA.

Taxon	Species Name	Species Habitat	Results of Threatened and Endangered Species Field Survey	Effect Finding / Implication for Project
Mammal	Indiana Bat (Myotis sodalis) and Northern Long-eared Bat (Myotis septentrionalis)	Potential summer roosting habitat for these species generally consists of sites that contain mature and/or standing dead trees (snags) with exfoliating bark, and/or stream/river corridors which serve as flight paths. Additionally, sites that caves and mines could be used by these species for winter hibernacula.		Tree clearing during summer roosting could impact these species. Any tree clearing should be performed seasonally (October 1st – March 31st), or presence/absence surveys would be necessary. Incidental take, which is the incidental to, and not the purpose of, the carrying out of an otherwise lawful activity, of Northern long-eared bats is exempt in this location under the 4(d) rule. Based on the planned avoidance of impacts to wooded areas on the BCA, impacts to this species are not anticipated.
Fish	Scioto madtom ( <i>Noturus</i> <i>trautmani</i> )	This species can be found in high quality water in stream riffles of moderate currents on gravel bottoms.	Potential habitat was identified on the BCA.	In-stream work is not proposed; therefore, impacts to this species are not anticipated.
Fish	Tippecanoe darter (Etheostoma tippecanoe)	This species is found in medium to large streams, in riffles of moderate current with small cobble and/or gravel substrate.	Potential habitat was identified on the BCA.	In-stream work is not proposed; therefore, impacts to this species are not anticipated.

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Mollusk	Clubshell ( <i>Pleurobema</i> <i>clava</i> )	This species is found in small to medium rivers and streams with clean, loose sand and/or gravel substrate.	Potential habitat was identified on the BCA.	In-stream work is not proposed; therefore, impacts to this species are not anticipated.
Mollusk	Northern Riffleshell ( <i>Epioblasma</i> torulosa rangiana)	This species is found in a wide variety of stream sizes with sand and/or gravel substrate.	Potential habitat was identified on the BCA.	In-stream work is not proposed; therefore, impacts to this species are not anticipated.
Mollusk	Rabbitsfoot (Quadrula (Theliderma) cylindrica cylindrica)	This species is found in a wide variety of stream sizes with shallow areas of reduced stream velocity along banks and other stream features and typically consisting of sand and/or gravel.	Potential habitat was identified on the BCA.	In-stream work is not proposed; therefore, impacts to this species are not anticipated.
Mollusk	Rayed bean ( <i>Villosa fabalis</i> )	This species is generally found in larger and headwater streams with moderate to swift currents.	Potential habitat was not identified on the BCA.	Due to the lack of suitable habitat and no proposed instream work, impacts to this species are not anticipated
Mollusk	Snuffbox mussel (E <i>pioblasma</i> <i>triquetra</i> )	This species is generally found in larger and headwater streams with moderate to swift currents.	Potential habitat was not identified on the BCA.	Due to the lack of suitable habitat and no proposed instream work, impacts to this species are not anticipated.
Mollusk	Elephant-ear ( <i>Elliptio</i> <i>crassidens</i> )	This species is found in medium to large rivers and streams with mud, sand, and/or fine gravel substrate.	Potential habitat was identified on the BCA.	In-stream work is not proposed; therefore, impacts to this species are not anticipated.
Mollusk	Wavy-rayed lampmussel (Lampsilis fasciola)	This species is found in small to medium shallow streams, near riffles, and in areas of good current.	Potential habitat was identified on the BCA.	In-stream work is not proposed; therefore, impacts to this species are not anticipated.

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Due to the presence of suitable habitat for the Indiana bat and Northern long-eared bat, any tree clearing would likely need to be performed seasonally (from October 1 to March 31), based on correspondence with the USFWS (Appendix B). In addition, incidental take of Northern long-eared bats is excepted in this location under the 4(d) rule.

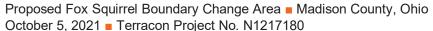
Terracon conducted a species habitat survey within the BCA in an effort to identify potential suitable habitat for the species listed in Table 3 that were deemed likely to be present. Critical habitat for listed species was not identified within the BCA. Potential habitat for 9 of the 11 listed species was identified within the BCA. Suitable aquatic habitat was identified on the BCA for the following mollusk species: Clubshell, Northern Riffleshell, Elephant Ear, Rabbits foot, and the Wavy-rayed lampmussel; and the fish species Scioto Madtom and Tippecanoe Darter. In-stream work is not proposed as part of the Project; therefore, impacts are not anticipated for these species.

Two fish species, the Western Creek Chubsucker and the Least Darter, identified in the ODNR NHD as occurring in Bradford Creek near the BCA, are not anticipated to be impacted due to avoidance of impacts to the on-site waters.

#### 4.3. Field Results – Wetland Delineation

Terracon completed a Wetland Delineation Report, which can be found in Appendix C, to determine if wetlands or other waters under the jurisdiction of the USACE or the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) are present at the BCA. The purpose of these investigations was to identify and evaluate the impacts of this project to potential jurisdictional waters. Terracon conducted a site reconnaissance of the BCA, on November 12 and 16, 2020, to characterize the existing site conditions and observe for the presence of wetlands and potential jurisdictional waters. The evaluation methods generally followed the routine on-site determination method referenced in the 1987 USACE Manual and 2010 Midwest Regional Supplement. Additionally, following OPSB reporting requirements, water features were field identified within a 100-foot buffer around the BCA. This requirement leads to slight differences between the delineated water features noted in this report and the appended Wetland Delineation Report, which only identified waters within BCA boundaries (Appendix C).

Wetlands generally have three essential characteristics: hydrophytic (wetland) vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology. Based on NWI data, aerial imagery and topographical data, on-site areas were investigated for potential wetland properties. Additional areas were investigated, based on observations made during the site reconnaissance. Data regarding the three essential characteristics was gathered within observed suspect wetland areas to further delineate boundaries.





Upon completion of the review of the three wetland criteria at each area, a wetland determination was made. Under normal circumstances, if one or more of the wetland criteria were not identified, the area was not considered to be a wetland. If all three wetland indicators were identified, the area was classified as wetland. Additional observations were made throughout the wetland area to define the wetland/non-wetland boundary. Vegetation, soil and hydrology assessment data from at least one location within the wetland and one upland location outside of the wetland were recorded on a USACE Wetland Determination Form which can be found in Appendix C.

Terracon also made observations of site features that may be considered a jurisdictional waterbody. If a potential jurisdictional waterbody was identified, observations regarding its characteristics were recorded.

The majority of the BCA consisted of agricultural land with small areas of forested land in the eastern portion of the south BCA area. Ground photographs, included in the Wetland Delineation Report (Appendix C), provide an indication of the physical characteristics observed during the site visit. Descriptions of the observed areas are listed in the following sections.

#### 4.4. Wetland Characteristics

Various plant communities and types of land cover were observed at the BCA including emergent wetlands and agricultural, forested, and herbaceous-cover upland communities.

The dominant plant species observed in the emergent wetland areas was reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*).

# 4.5. Delineated Features

The following wetlands were observed at the BCA and within the 100-foot buffer during the site reconnaissance. The size of each wetlands, Cowardin classification as palustrine emergent (PEM), and jurisdictional status are noted. These features were delineated with field flagging and located with a submeter, Eos Arrow 100 GPS unit.

Table 5. Wetland features observed on the BCA and within 100-foot buffer.

Wetland	Size On-Site (acres)	Additional acreage within 100 feet	Total Area (acres)	Cowardin Classification	USACE Jurisdictional (Y/N)	Impacts
Α	0.27	0.42	0.69	PEM	Y	N
В	0.02	0.26	0.28	PEM	Y	N
TOTAL	0.29	0.68	0.97			•

PEM – Palustrine emergent wetland

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The above listed wetlands were observed to have a significant nexus to Bradford Branch, a perennial stream on the BCA, thereby falling under jurisdictional features to the USACE.

#### 4.6. Streams

The following streams (Table 6) were observed at the BCA and within the 100-foot buffer during the site reconnaissance. These features were delineated with field flagging and located with a submeter GPS unit. The streams are considered jurisdictional feature regulated by the USACE.

A Preliminary Jurisdictional Determination (PJD) dated March 23, 2021, has been granted by the USACE, for the water features located within the BCA boundaries. This PJD was consistent with Terracon's reported findings and is included in Appendix C.

Table 6. Stream features observed on the BCA and within 100-foot buffer.

Streams	On-Site Length (linear feet)	Additional Stream Length within 100 feet (linear feet)	Total Length (linear feet)	Flow Regime	Average Stream Width at Top of Bank (feet)	Impacts
1	7,537	232	7,769	Intermittent	10-15	N
(Bradford Branch)	1,005	261	1,266	Perennial	15-30	N
2	912	115	1,027	Ephemeral	5-10	N
3	6,383	325	6708	Perennial	10-30	N
(Bradford Creek)						
TOTAL	15,837	933	16,770			

## 4.7. Stream Scoring

Project design indicates that underground collector lines are proposed to cross beneath all four on-site streams. Terracon completed Headwater Habitat Evaluation Indices (HHEI) (Ohio EPA 2018) for four streams with proposed underground collector line crossings. The results of those evaluations are provided in Table 6. Additionally, the HHEI forms are included in Appendix F.

Table 7. HHEI scoring for steams with proposed underground collector line crossings.

Stream ID	HHEI Score	Category
Bradford Creek	66	CLASS II
South Fork Bradford Branch (INT)	60	CLASS II
South Fork Bradford Branch (PER)	77	CLASS III
Stream 2	44	CLASS I

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# 5. SUMMARY OF FIELD SURVEYS

A summary of field observations and conclusions concerning jurisdictional status of observed water features and status of protected species is outlined in the following sections.

# 5.1. Threatened and Endangered Species

A species habitat survey was performed within the BCA boundaries for the 14 species that were deemed to potentially have suitable habitat on the BCA or be located on the site (Table 3). Field surveys identified potential habitat for 12 of the 14 species on the BCA. Critical habitat for listed species was not identified within the BCA.

Due to the presence of suitable habitat for the Indiana bat and Northern long-eared bat, tree clearing should be performed seasonally (from October 1 to March 31). In addition, incidental take of Northern long-eared bats is excepted in this location under the 4(d) rule. It is Terracon's understanding that the forested areas on the BCA are designated as "Do Not Disturb" areas and will not be impacted as a result of the Project.

In-stream work is not proposed as part of the Project; therefore, impacts are not anticipated for listed aquatic species as a result of the Project. Based on the proposed avoidance of impacts to forested areas on the BCA, impacts to avian species are not anticipated as a result of the Project.

Coordination documentation with USFWS and ODNR can be found in Appendix B.

#### 5.2. Potential WOTUS and Wetlands

Two wetlands totaling 0.97 acres were observed within the BCA boundaries and the 100-foot buffer during the site reconnaissance. All wetlands within the BCA boundaries are considered jurisdictional to the USACE. Three streams totaling 16,770 linear feet were observed within the BCA boundaries and the 100-foot buffer during the site reconnaissance. These streams are considered jurisdictional within the BCA boundaries.

#### 5.3. Impacts to WOTUS

The most recent BCA Plans (Appendix D) indicate three stream crossings by proposed Project access roads: one across Bradford Branch (Stream 1), one across Stream 2, and one across Bradford Creek (Stream 3). Based on conversations with the client, site design drawings, and bridge design drawings (Appendix D), it is Terracon's understanding that all access road bridges are free-span in design and will avoid work and placement of fill within streams.

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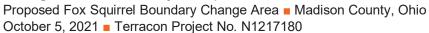
# 6. ECOLOGICAL IMPACTS

Terracon performed an ERA to evaluate the Project's potential adverse impact on natural resources. An Ecological Resources Map depicting forested/non-forested land use, water features, and potential erodible soils has been provided as Exhibit 1 in Appendix A. Based on the review of readily available published lists, files, documented resource documents, and field studies, Terracon concluded the following:

- The conversion of the BCA from primarily disturbed, cultivated cropland to commercial solar development should have no significant or adverse impact on wildlife within the BCA and surrounding areas.
- The Project is not expected to result in impacts to bald eagles due to lack of observed nests on the BCA and the avoidance of impacts to forested areas on the BCA. Migratory birds are not anticipated to be impacted due to lack of suitable habitat for some species, avoidance of potential habitat, and/or adequate presence of suitable habitat proximal to the BCA.
- The Project is not expected to impact listed fish and mollusk species due to proposed avoidance of in-stream work.
- Suitable habitat (mature forests) for the federally-listed Indiana and Northern long-eared bats was observed within the forested areas on the BCA. It is Terracon's understanding that impacts to forested areas will be avoided in the BCA. All other federal and state-listed species are not anticipated to be impacted by the Project.
- It is Terracon's understanding that the project has been designed to fully avoid impacts to all delineated, on-site waters. Three free span bridges for access roads are proposed to be constructed over S-1 (Bradford Branch), S-2, and S-3 (Bradford Creek). Impacts to the these and all other on-site WOTUS features are not anticipated, thus impacts to associated aquatic T&E species is not anticipated. Any Project changes resulting in impacts to WOTUS would likely require reevaluation of impacts to listed species dependent on these habitats.

#### 6.1. Post-Construction Site Stabilization

Minimal grading and clearing are anticipated, due to the relatively flat nature of the BCA and prior clearing and use for agriculture. Open-cut trenching and boring methods will be used to





install the underground collection system. As previously noted, direct impacts to wetlands, streams, and ponds will be avoided.

Permanent stabilization of BCA soils through seeding will occur periodically throughout construction. Areas disturbed during construction activities will be seeded with a low-profile, native grass seed mix under the solar array. Select open areas outside of the solar array will be planted with a pollinator-friendly, native seed mix. Invasive and noxious plant species will be managed through mechanical methods (mowing) and application of commercially available herbicides.

The Project will be permanently stabilized when soil disturbing activities have been completed and a uniform, perennial vegetative cover density of at least 70% has been established in all BCA areas that do not have existing permanent groundcover. All seed, straw, and/or matting used to meet Project stabilization goals will comply with Ohio stormwater standards (ODNR 2006).

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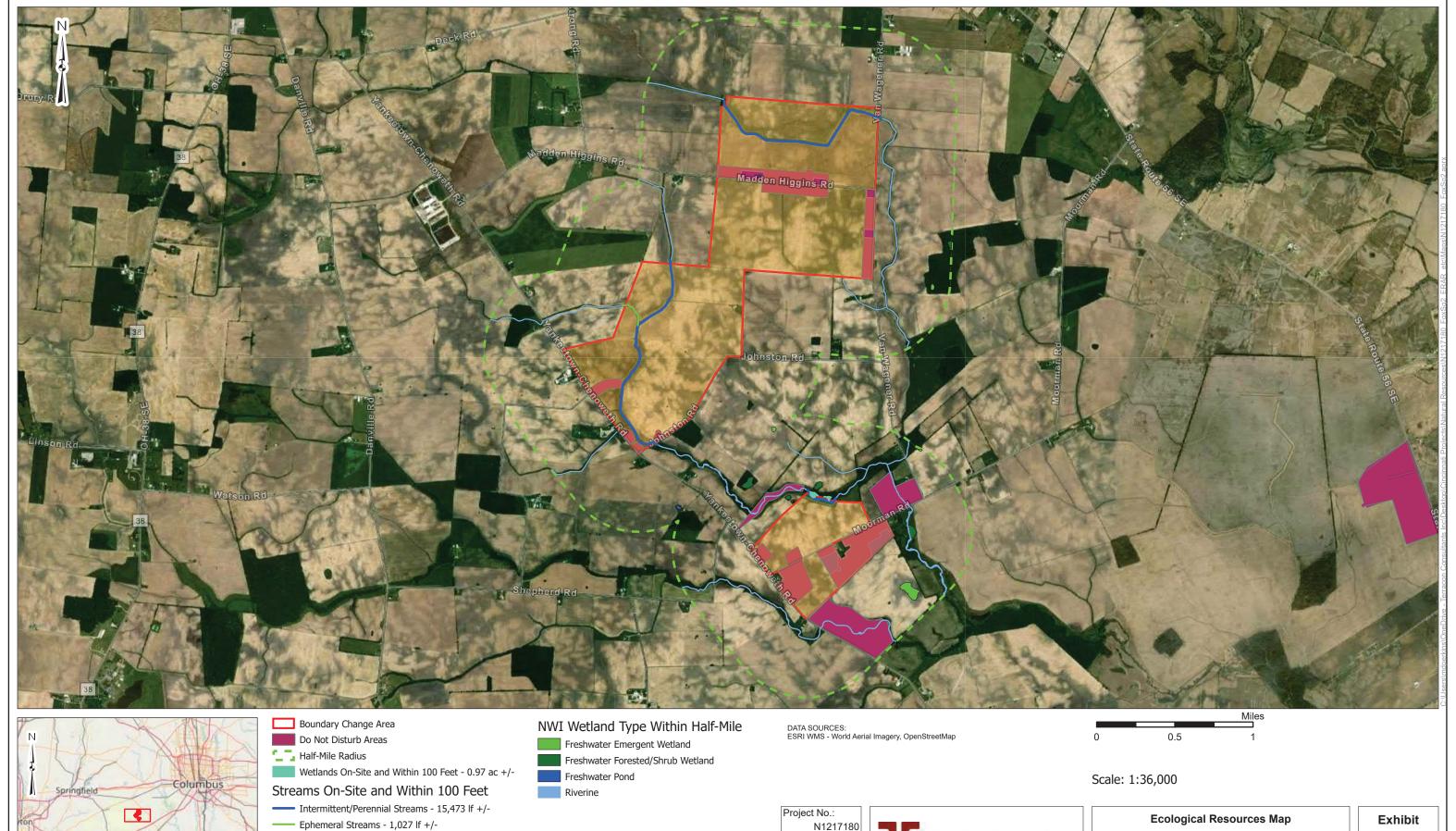


# 7. REFERENCES

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- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). 2010. Regional Supplement to the Corps of Engineers Wetland Delineation Manual: Midwest Region Version 2.0. ERDC/EL TR-10-16. Vicksburg, MS: U.S. Army Engineer Research and Development Center.
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS); Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC) online system. U.S. Department of Interior, Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington, D.C. Available at https://ecos.fws.gov/ipac/



# **APPENDIX A**



Land Cover \*All Boundary Change Area soils are Forested - 18 ac +/-Non-Forested - 1,465 ac +/-

considered hydric. Highly eroded/erodible soils are not present on the Boundary Change Area.

N1217180 Sep 2021 Drawn By:

PH: (513) 321-5816

MDP

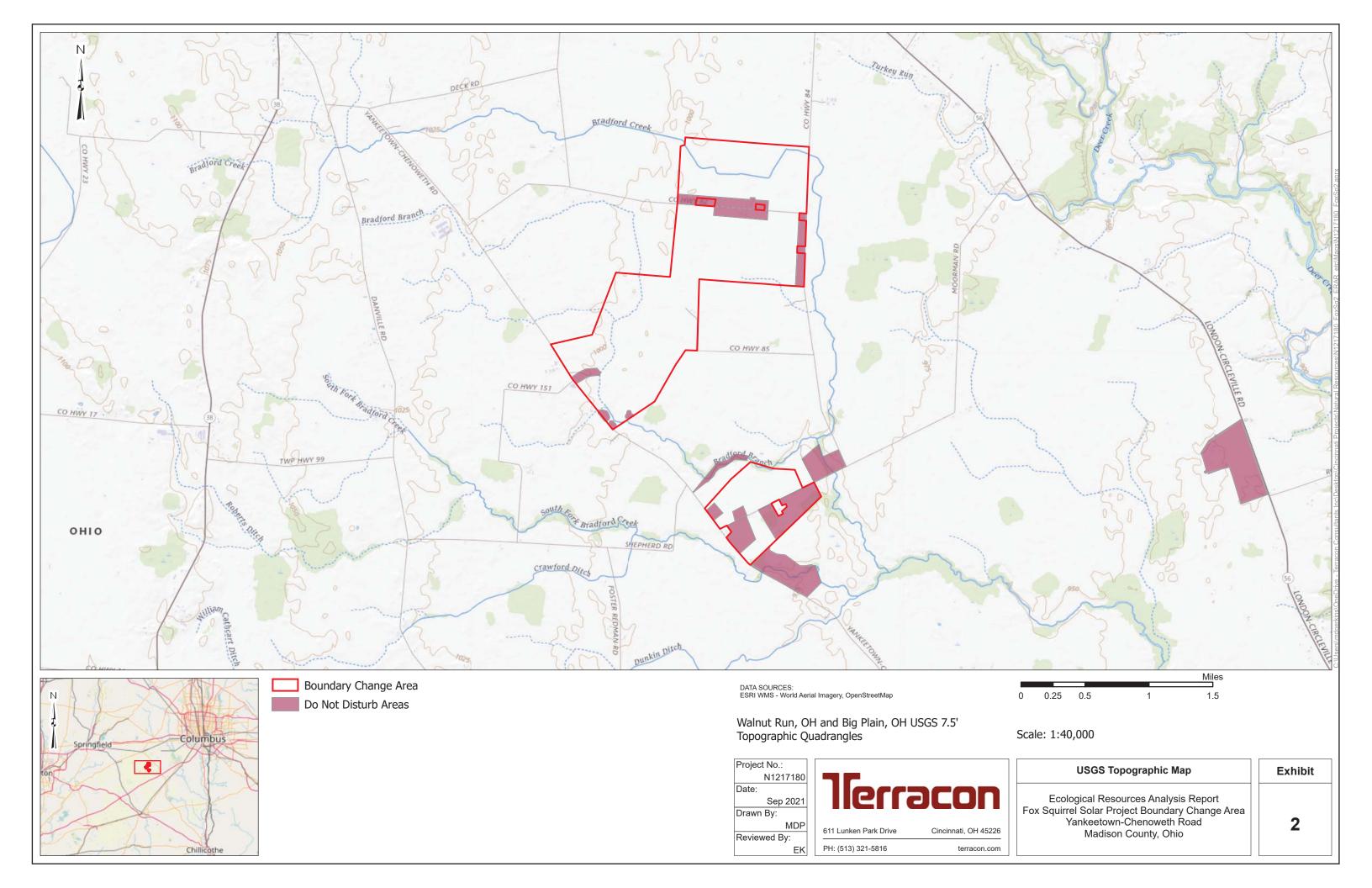
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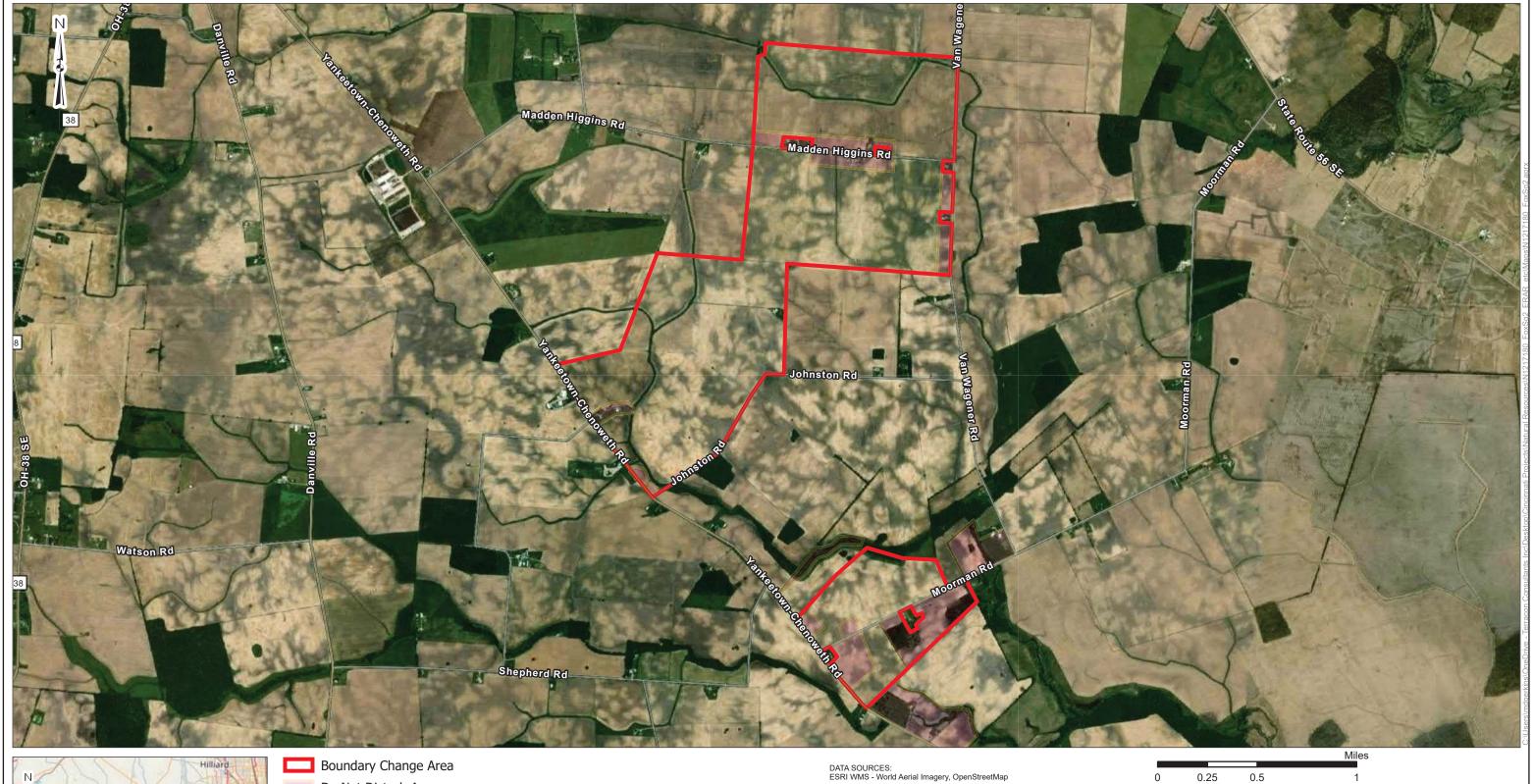
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Ecological Resources Analysis Report Fox Squirrel Solar Project Boundary Change Area Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road Madison County, Ohio

1







Do Not Disturb Areas

DATA SOURCES: ESRI WMS - World Aerial Imagery, OpenStreetMap

Scale: 1:30,000

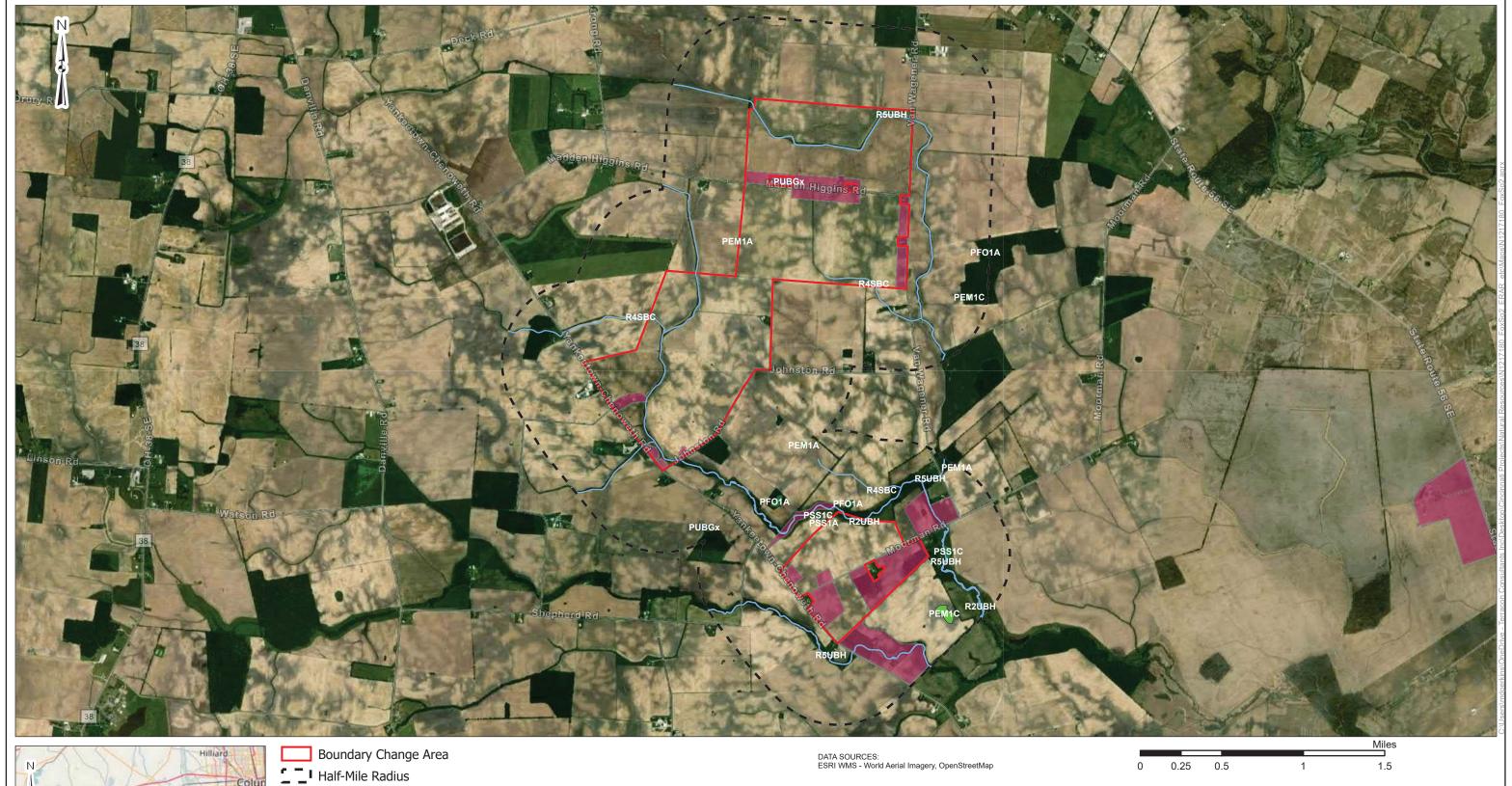
Project No.: N1217180 Sep 2021 Drawn By: 611 Lunken Park Drive Cincinnati, OH 45226 Reviewed By: PH: (513) 321-5816 terracon.com

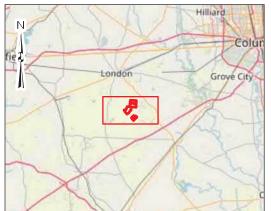
Aerial Site Diagram (2020 Imagery)
Ecological Resources Analysis Report Fox Squirrel Solar Project Boundary Change

ological Resources Analysis Report irrel Solar Project Boundary Change Area Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road Madison County, Ohio

3

**Exhibit** 





Do Not Disturb Areas

**NWI Wetland Type** 

Freshwater Emergent Wetland

Freshwater Forested/Shrub Wetland

Freshwater Pond

Riverine

Scale: 1:36,000

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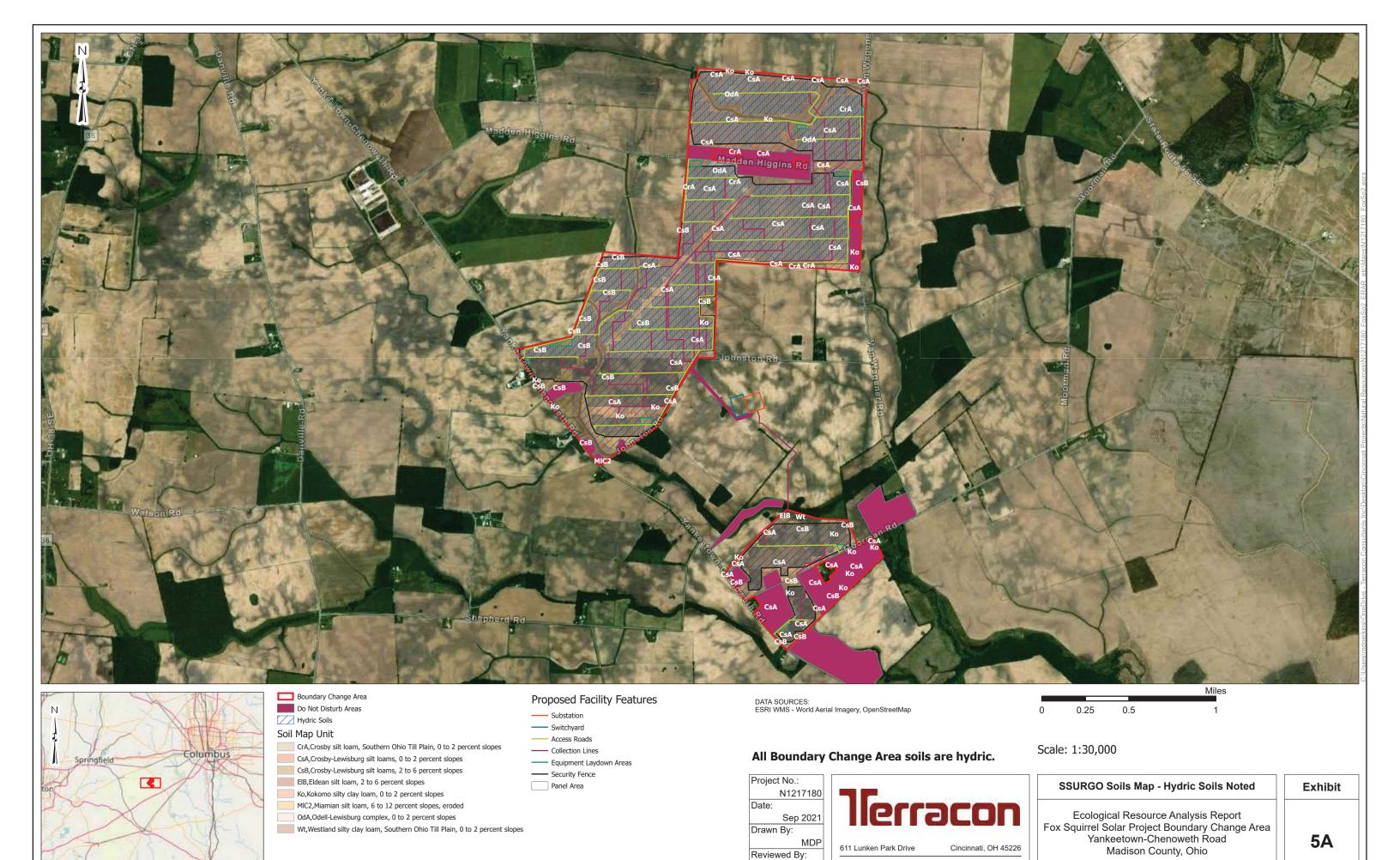
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# **National Wetlands Inventory Map**

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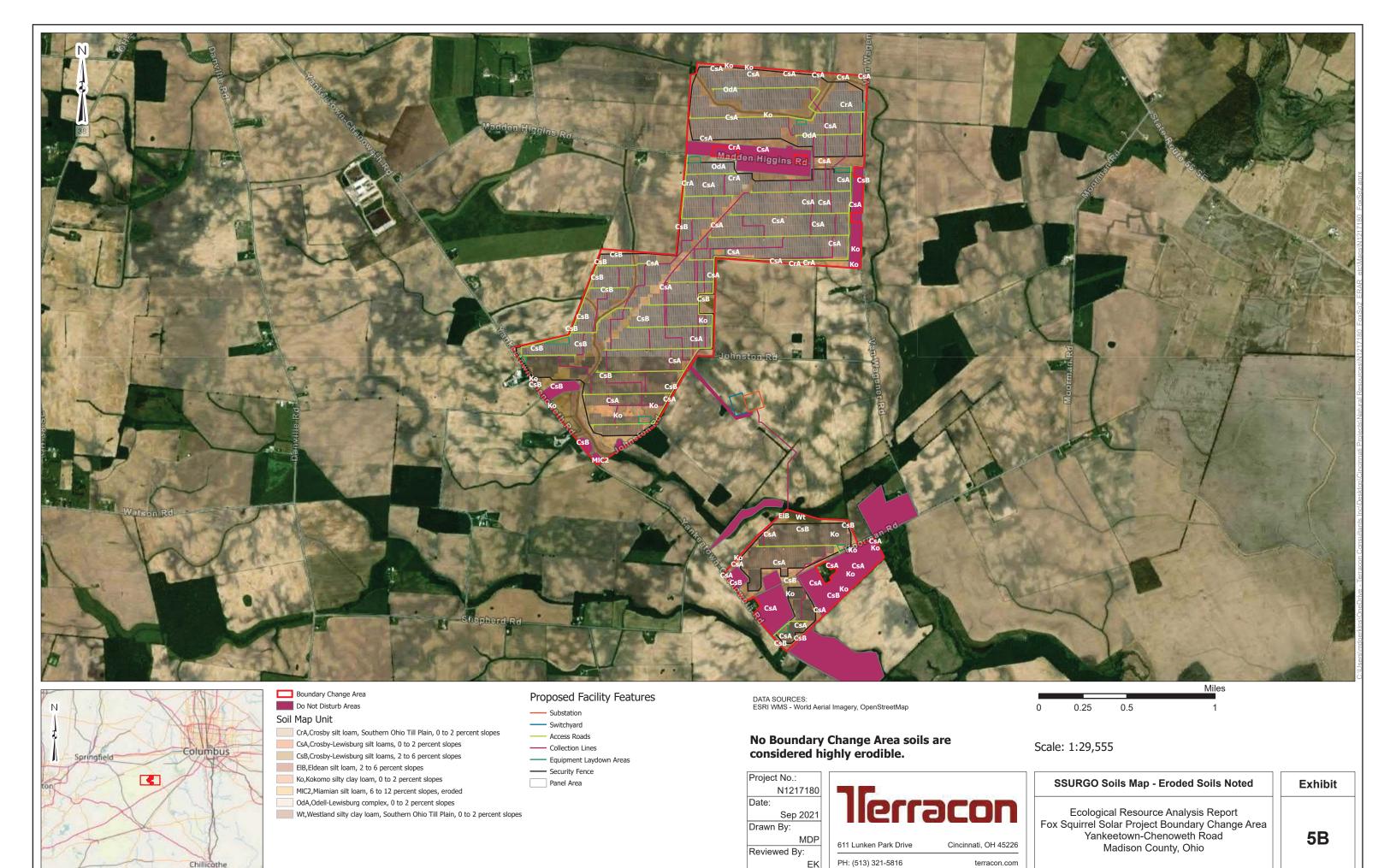
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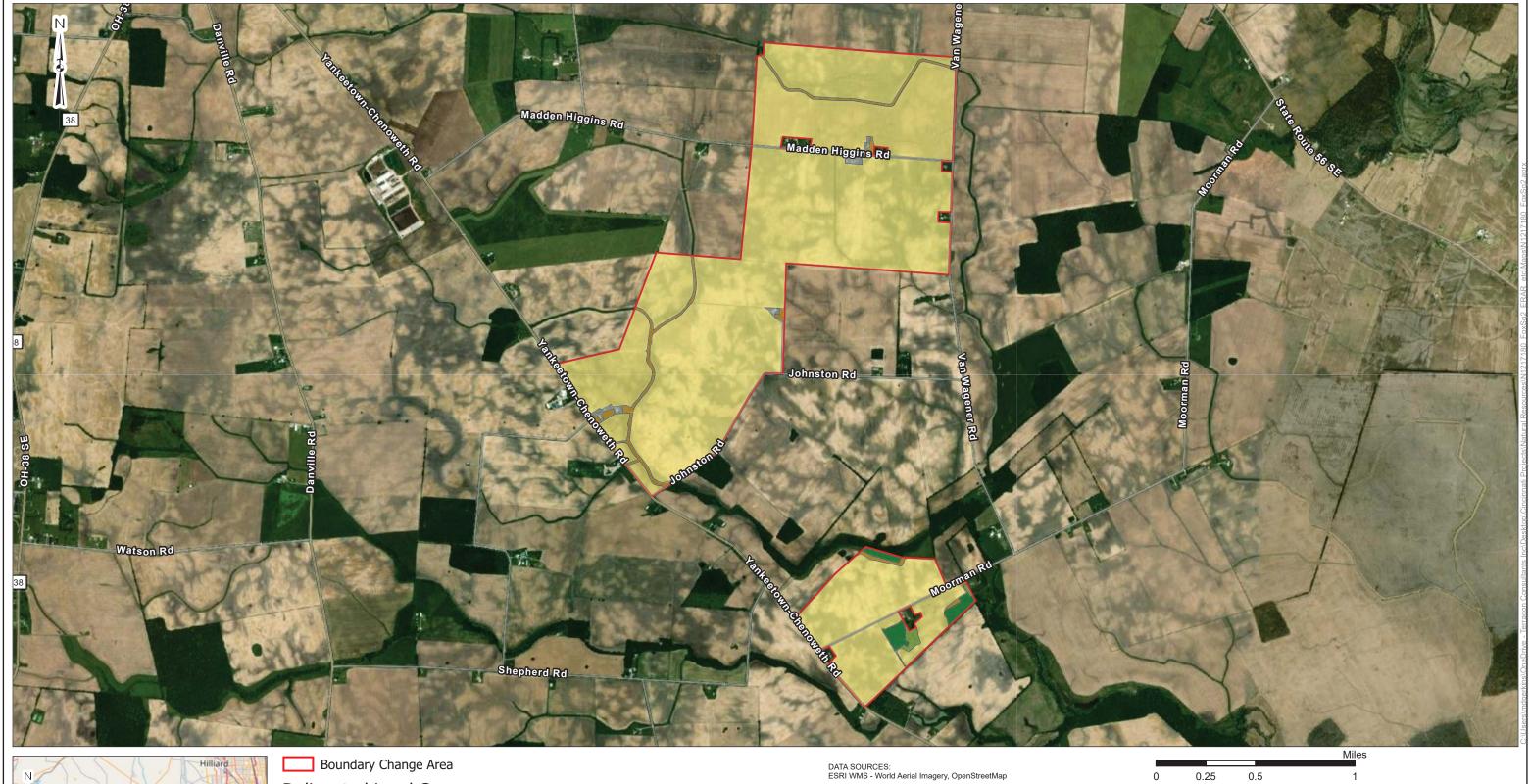
**Exhibit** 



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# **Delineated Land Cover**

Row Crop Agriculture - 1,428 ac +/-

Herbaceous Vegetation – Agricultural and Stream Boundaries - 35 ac +/-

Deciduous Forest Land - 18 ac +/-

Developed (Farmsteads and Roads) - 17 ac +/-

Woodland (Sparse Tree Cover Land) - 6 ac +/-

Scale: 1:30,000

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Delineated	Land	Cover
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6

**Exhibit** 





Do Not Disturb Areas

\_\_\_\_\_ 100-Foot Radius

Wetlands On-Site and Within 100 Feet - 0.97 ac +/-

# Stream Type

- Intermittent/Perennial Streams 15,743 lf +/-
- Ephemeral Streams 1,027 lf +/-

DATA SOURCES: ESRI WMS - World Aerial Imagery, OpenStreetMap

Reviewed By:

			Feet
0	500	1,000	2,000

Scale: 1:12,000

Page 1 of 3

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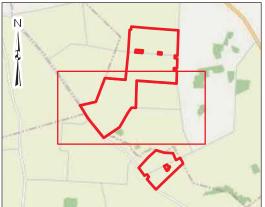
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Fox Squirrel Solar Project Boundary Change Are
Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road
Madison County, Ohio

**Delineated Water Features Map** 

**Exhibit** 





Do Not Disturb Areas

100-Foot Radius

Wetlands On-Site and Within 100 Feet - 0.97 ac +/-

# Stream Type

- Intermittent/Perennial Streams 15,743 lf +/-
- Ephemeral Streams 1,027 lf +/-

Scale: 1:12,000

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Page 2 of 3

Project No.: N1217180 Date: Sep 2021 Drawn By: MDP 611 Lunken Park Drive Cincinnati, OH 45226

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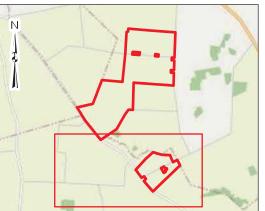
Reviewed By:

Ecological Resources Analysis Report Fox Squirrel Solar Project Boundary Change Area Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road Madison County, Ohio

**Delineated Water Features Map** 

**Exhibit** 





Do Not Disturb Areas

\_\_\_\_\_ 100-Foot Radius

Wetlands On-Site and Within 100 Feet - 0.97 ac +/-

# Stream Type

Intermittent/Perennial Streams - 15,743 lf +/-

— Ephemeral Streams - 1,027 lf +/-

			Feet
0	500	1.000	2.000

Scale: 1:12,000

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Page 3 of 3

Project No.: N1217180 Sep 2021 Drawn By: 611 Lunken Park Drive Cincinnati, OH 45226 Reviewed By:

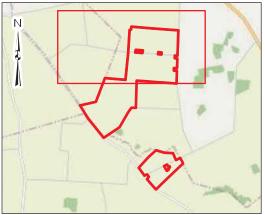
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**Delineated Water Features Map** 

**Exhibit** 





Stream Type

Intermittent/Perennial Streams - 15,743 lf +/-

— Ephemeral Streams - 1,027 lf +/-

Collection Lines

Equipment Laydown Areas

— Security Fence

Panel Area

Proposed Free Span Bridges

Access Roads (20-feet wide)

The access road crossings of on-site streams will be achieved with free span bridges that avoid any work or fill placement within the streams. Impacts to on-site waters are not anticipated.

Scale: 1:12,000

Page 1 of 3

Project No.: N1217180 Date: Sep 2021 Drawn By:

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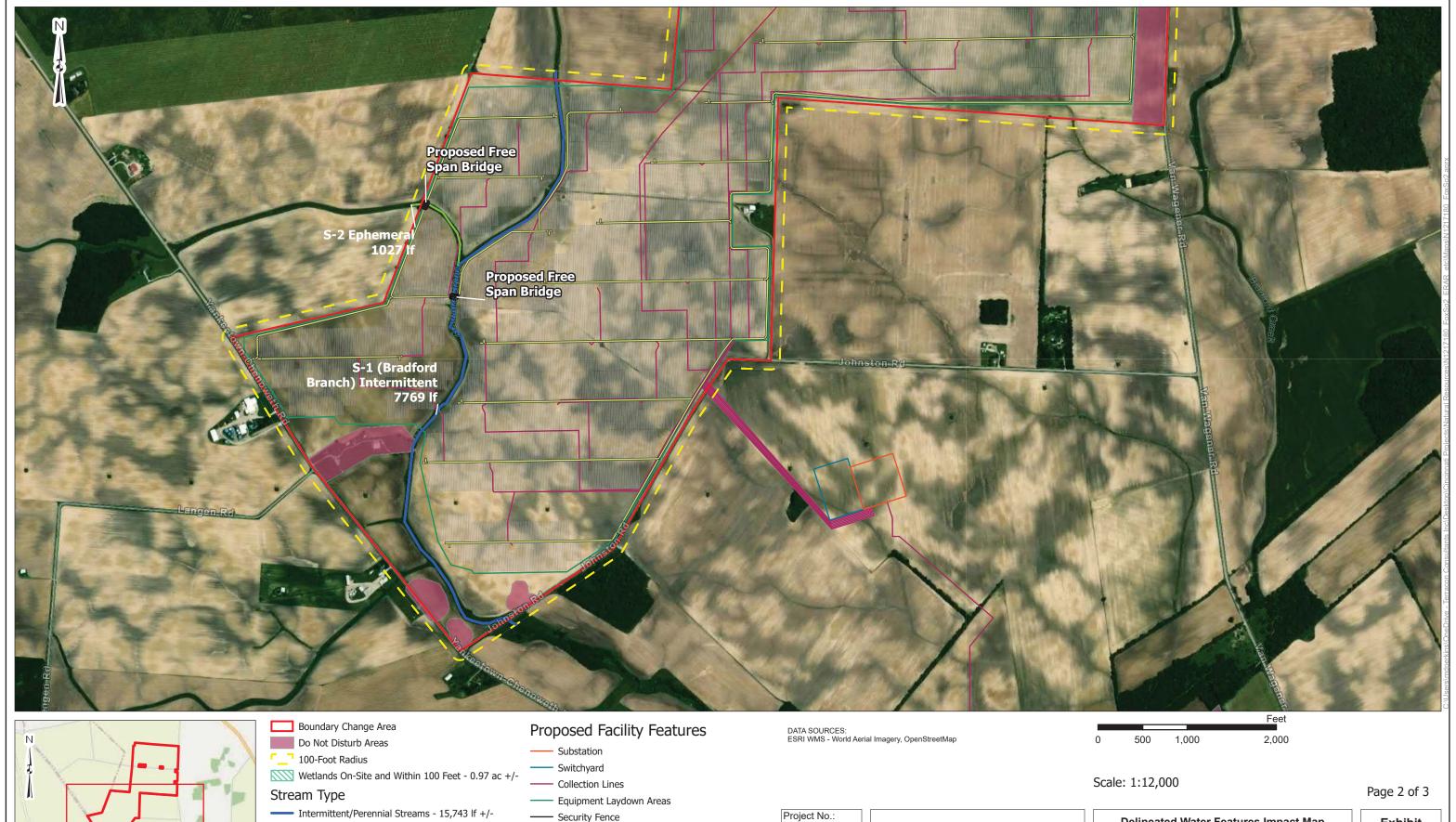
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Delineated	Water	Features	Impact	Map

Ecological Resources Analysis Report Fox Squirrel Solar Project Boundary Change Area Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road Madison County, Ohio

**Exhibit** 

8





Intermittent/Perennial Streams - 15,743 lf +/-

— Ephemeral Streams - 1,027 lf +/-

— Security Fence Access Roads (20-feet wide) Panel Area

Proposed Free Span Bridges

The access road crossings of on-site streams will be achieved with free span bridges that avoid any work or fill placement within the streams. Impacts to on-site waters are not anticipated.

N1217180 Date: Sep 2021 Drawn By:

PH: (513) 321-5816

MDP

Reviewed By:

611 Lunken Park Drive Cincinnati, OH 45226

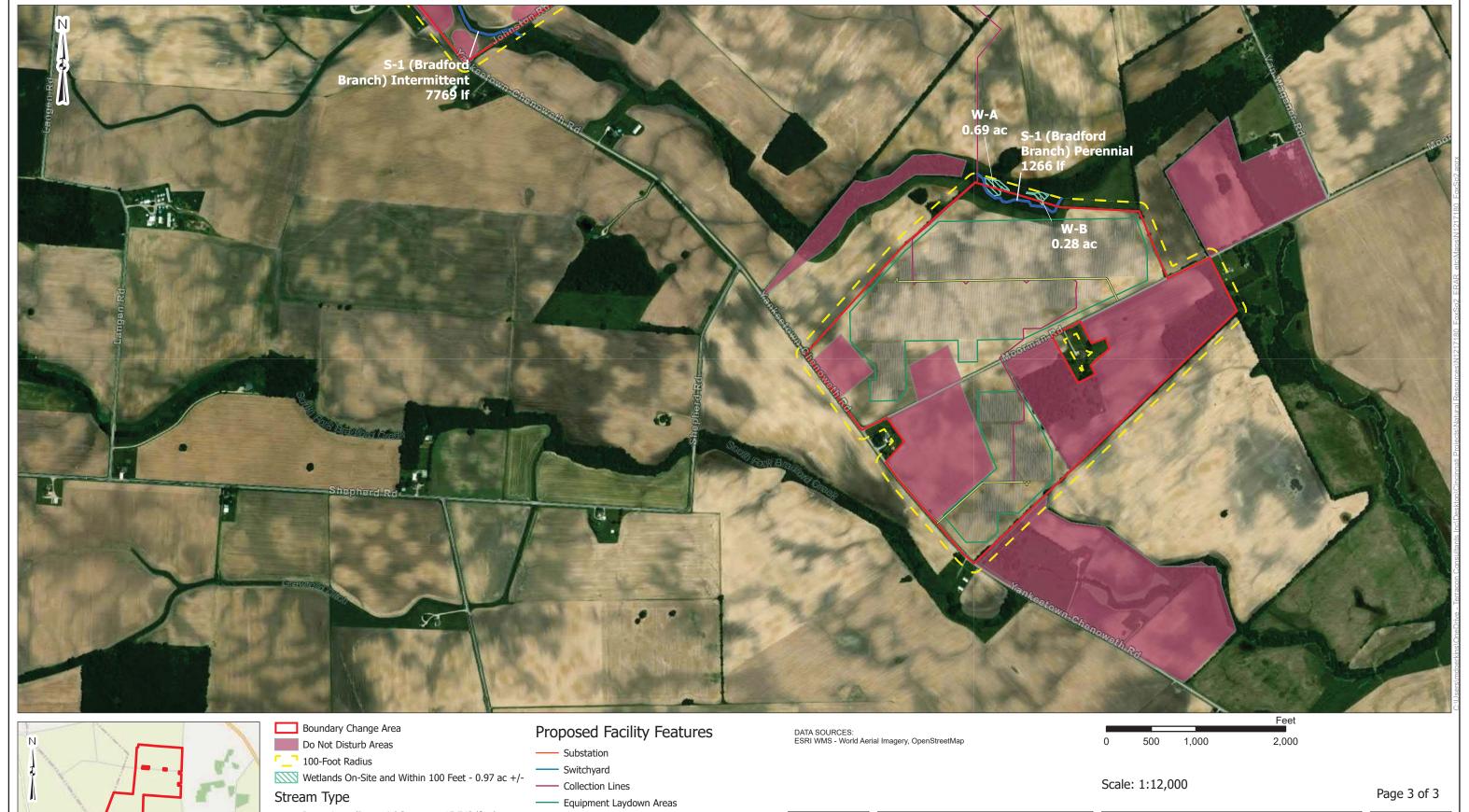
terracon.com

Ecological Resources Analysis Report Fox Squirrel Solar Project Boundary Change Area Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road Madison County, Ohio

**Delineated Water Features Impact Map** 

**Exhibit** 

8





Intermittent/Perennial Streams - 15,743 lf +/-

Ephemeral Streams - 1,027 lf +/-

---- Security Fence

Access Roads (20-feet wide)

Panel Area

The access road crossings of on-site streams will be achieved with free span bridges that avoid any work or fill placement within the streams. Impacts to on-site waters are not anticipated.

Project No.:	
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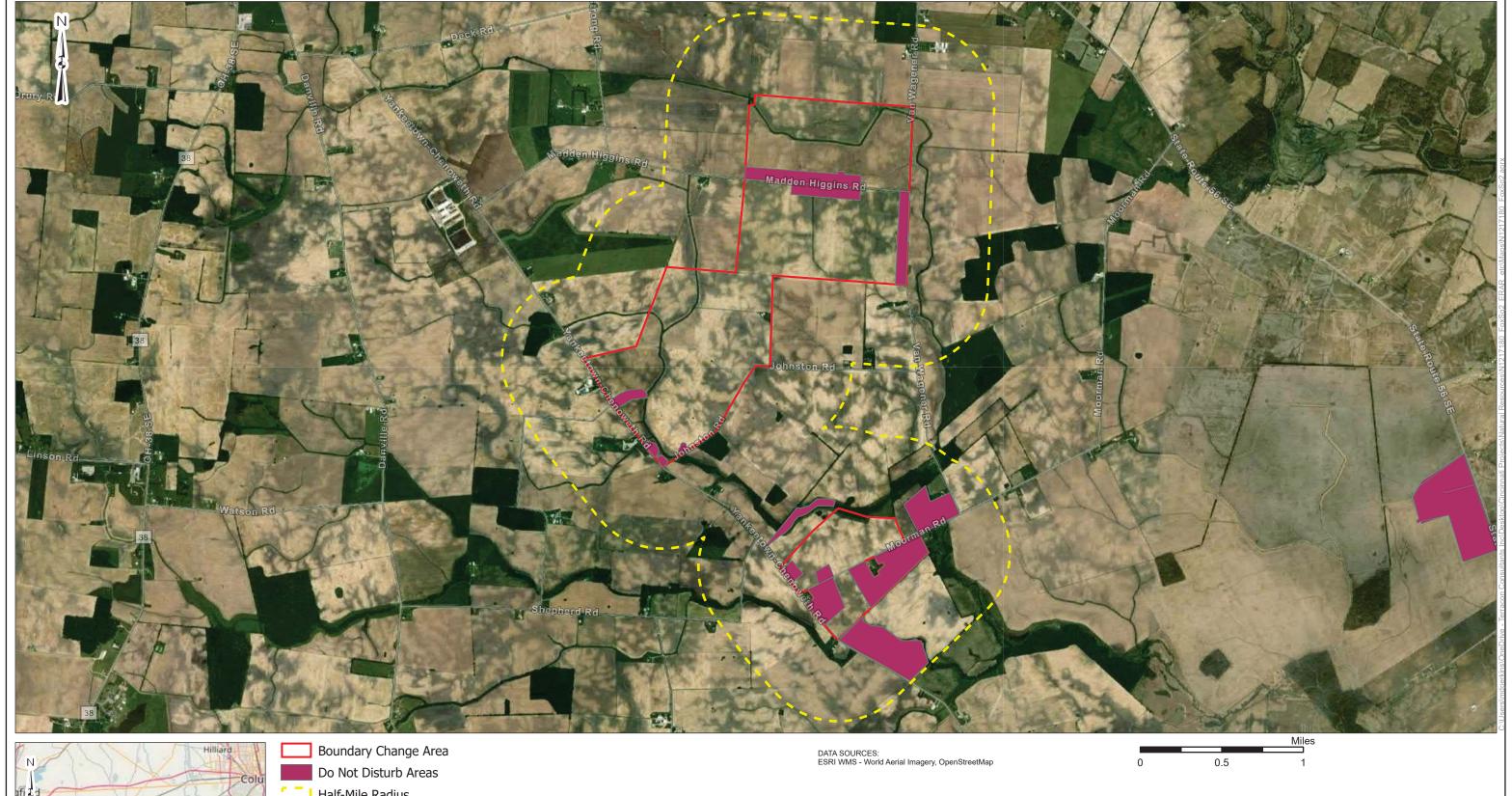
PH: (513) 321-5816 terracon.com

Ecological Resources Analysis Report
Fox Squirrel Solar Project Boundary Change Are
Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road
Madison County, Ohio

**Delineated Water Features Impact Map** 

Exhibit

8





Half-Mile Radius

Scale: 1:36,000

Sep 2021 Drawn By: Wildlife preserves, refuges, and management areas are not present on or within 0.5 miles of the Boundary Change Area.

| Drawn By: | MI | Reviewed By: |

Project No.:

ct No.:		
N1217180		
Sep 2021 n By:	llerr	acon
MDP	611 Lunken Park Drive	Cincinnati, OH 45226
wed By:		
EK	PH: (513) 321-5816	terracon.com

Wildlife Preserves and Refuges Map

**Exhibit** 



# **APPENDIX B**

## Perkins, Michael D

From: West, Scott

**Sent:** Thursday, May 13, 2021 12:42 PM

**To:** Perkins, Michael D

**Subject:** FW: Additional Review for the Proposed Fox Squirrel Solar Farm, Mt. Sterling Madison

County, Ohio

Follow Up Flag: Follow up Flag Status: Flagged

From: Ohio, FW3 <ohio@fws.gov>

Sent: Monday, December 14, 2020 11:12 AM

To: West, Scott <Scott.West@terracon.com>; Brendel, Cassandra E <Cassandra.Brendel@terracon.com>

Cc: nathan.reardon@dnr.state.oh.us; Parsons, Kate <kate.parsons@dnr.state.oh.us>; Lott, Keith <keith\_lott@fws.gov>

Subject: Additional Review for the Proposed Fox Squirrel Solar Farm, Mt. Sterling Madison County, Ohio



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ecological Services Office
4625 Morse Road, Suite 104
Columbus, Ohio 43230
(614) 416-8993 / Fax (614) 416-8994



TAILS# 03E15000-2020-TA-0815

EVENT# 03E15000-2021-E-00645

Dear Mr. West,

The U.S Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) has received your recent correspondence requesting information about the subject proposal. We offer the following comments and recommendations to assist you in minimizing and avoiding adverse impacts to threatened and endangered species pursuant to the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (16 U.S.C. 1531 et seq), as amended (ESA).

Federally Threatened and Endangered Species: The endangered Indiana bat (Myotis sodalis) and threatened northern long-eared bat (Myotis septentrionalis) occur throughout the State of Ohio. The Indiana bat and northern long-eared bat may be found wherever suitable habitat occurs unless a presence/absence survey has been performed to document absence. Suitable summer habitat for Indiana bats and northern long-eared bats consists of a wide variety of forested/wooded habitats where they roost, forage, and breed that may also include adjacent and interspersed non-forested habitats such as emergent wetlands and adjacent edges of agricultural fields, woodlots, fallow fields, and pastures. Roost trees for both species include live and standing dead trees ≥3 inches diameter at breast height (dbh) that have any exfoliating bark, cracks, crevices, hollows and/or cavities. These roost trees may be located in forested habitats as well as linear features such as fencerows, riparian forests, and other wooded corridors. Individual trees may be considered suitable habitat when they exhibit the characteristics of a potential roost tree and are located within 1,000 feet of other forested/wooded habitat. Northern long-eared bats have also been observed roosting in human-made structures, such as buildings, barns, bridges, and bat houses; therefore, these structures should also be considered potential

summer habitat. In the winter, Indiana bats and northern long-eared bats hibernate in caves, rock crevices and abandoned mines.

Seasonal Tree Clearing for Federally Listed Bat Species: Should the proposed project site contain trees  $\geq 3$  inches dbh, we recommend avoiding tree removal wherever possible. If any caves or abandoned mines may be disturbed, further coordination with this office is requested to determine if fall or spring portal surveys are warranted. If no caves or abandoned mines are present and trees  $\geq 3$  inches dbh cannot be avoided, we recommend removal of any trees  $\geq 3$  inches dbh only occur between October 1 and March 31. Seasonal clearing is recommended to avoid adverse effects to Indiana bats and northern long-eared bats. While incidental take of northern long-eared bats from most tree clearing is exempted by a 4(d) rule

(see <a href="http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/nleb/index.html">http://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/nleb/index.html</a>), incidental take of Indiana bats is still prohibited without a project-specific exemption. Thus, seasonal clearing is recommended where Indiana bats are assumed present.

If implementation of this seasonal tree cutting recommendation is not possible, a summer presence/absence survey may be conducted for Indiana bats. If Indiana bats are not detected during the survey, then tree clearing may occur at any time of the year. Surveys must be conducted by an approved surveyor and be designed and conducted in coordination with the Ohio Field Office. Surveyors must have a valid federal permit. Please note that in Ohio summer mist net surveys may only be conducted between June 1 and August 15.

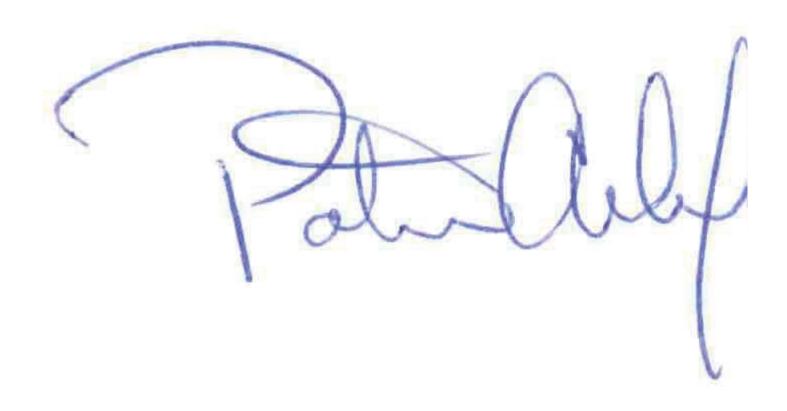
<u>Section 7 Coordination</u>: If there is a federal nexus for the project (e.g., federal funding provided, federal permits required to construct), then no tree clearing should occur on any portion of the project area until consultation under section 7 of the ESA, between the Service and the federal action agency, is completed. We recommend the federal action agency submit a determination of effects to this office, relative to the Indiana bat and northern long-eared bat, for our review and concurrence. This letter provides technical assistance only and does not serve as a completed section 7 consultation document.

Stream and Wetland Avoidance: Over 90% of the wetlands in Ohio have been drained, filled, or modified by human activities, thus is it important to conserve the functions and values of the remaining wetlands in Ohio (<a href="https://epa.ohio.gov/portals/47/facts/ohio">https://epa.ohio.gov/portals/47/facts/ohio</a> wetlands.pdf). We recommend avoiding and minimizing project impacts to all wetland habitats (e.g., forests, streams, vernal pools) to the maximum extent possible in order to benefit water quality and fish and wildlife habitat. Additionally, natural buffers around streams and wetlands should be preserved to enhance beneficial functions. If streams or wetlands will be impacted, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers should be contacted to determine whether a Clean Water Act section 404 permit is required. Best management practices should be used to minimize erosion, especially on slopes. Disturbed areas should be mulched and revegetated with native plant species. In addition, prevention of non-native, invasive plant establishment is critical in maintaining high quality habitats.

Due to the project type, size, and location, we do not anticipate adverse effects to any other federally endangered, threatened, or proposed species, or proposed or designated critical habitat. Should the project design change, or additional information on listed or proposed species or their critical habitat become available, or if new information reveals effects of the action that were not previously considered, coordination with the Service should be initiated to assess any potential impacts.

Thank you for your efforts to conserve listed species and sensitive habitats in Ohio. We recommend coordinating with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources due to the potential for the proposed project to affect state listed species and/or state lands. Contact Mike Pettegrew, Acting Environmental Services Administrator, at (614) 265-6387 or at mike.pettegrew@dnr.state.oh.us.

If you have questions, or if we can be of further assistance in this matter, please contact our office at (614) 416-8993 or ohio@fws.gov.



Patrice Ashfield Field Office Supervisor

cc: Nathan Reardon, ODNR-DOW Kate Parsons, ODNR-DOW



# Ohio Department of Natural Resources

MIKE DEWINE, GOVERNOR

MARY MERTZ, DIRECTOR

Office of Real Estate
John Kessler, Chief
2045 Morse Road – Bldg. E-2
Columbus, OH 43229
Phone: (614) 265-6621
Fax: (614) 267-4764

May 8, 2020

Cassie Brendel Terracon Consultants, Inc. 800 Morrison Road Gahanna, Ohio 43230

Re: 20-362; Proposed Fox Squirrel Solar Farm, Terracon Project: N1207080

**Project:** The proposed project involves the development of the site with solar panels.

**Location:** The proposed project is located in Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio.

The Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) has completed a review of the above referenced project. These comments were generated by an inter-disciplinary review within the Department. These comments have been prepared under the authority of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.), the National Environmental Policy Act, the Coastal Zone Management Act, Ohio Revised Code and other applicable laws and regulations. These comments are also based on ODNR's experience as the state natural resource management agency and do not supersede or replace the regulatory authority of any local, state or federal agency nor relieve the applicant of the obligation to comply with any local, state or federal laws or regulations.

**Natural Heritage Database:** The Natural Heritage Database has the following records at or within a one-mile radius of the project area:

Snuffbox (Epioblasma triquetra), E, FE Clubshell (Pleurobema clava), E, FE Western creek chubsucker (Erimyzon claviformis), SC Least darter (Etheostoma microperca), SC

The review was performed on the project area you specified in your request as well as an additional one-mile radius. Records searched date from 1980. This information is provided to inform you of features present within your project area and vicinity.

Please note that Ohio has not been completely surveyed and we rely on receiving information from many sources. Therefore, a lack of records for any particular area is not a statement that rare species or unique features are absent from that area. Although all types of plant communities have been surveyed, we only maintain records on the highest quality areas.

Statuses are defined as: E = state endangered; T = state threatened; P = state potentially threatened; SC = state species of concern; SI = state special interest; A = species recently added to state inventory, status not yet determined; X = presumed extirpated in Ohio; FE = federal

endangered, FT = federal threatened, FSC = federal species of concern, FC = federal candidate species.

Fish and Wildlife: The Division of Wildlife (DOW) has the following comments.

The Division of Wildlife is working closely with our partners at Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative (OPHI) to create and enhance pollinator habitat at solar power installations. Attached for your use is the Ohio Solar Site Pollinator Habitat Planning and Assessment Form. This form was developed by the OPHI Solar Pollinator Program Advisory Team. We recommend that the areas between and around the solar panels be planted with legumes and wildflowers (i.e. forbs) that are beneficial to pollinators and other wildlife and reduce use of non-native grass and gravel. The recommended legumes and forbs listed below are low-growing so as not to cast shadows on the solar panels and would only require one to two mowings a year for maintenance, which should minimize maintenance costs. For other areas of the installation where vegetation does not have to be low-growing, alternative pollinator mixes are available with a more diverse array of flowering plants. This perennial vegetation will provide beneficial foraging habitat to songbirds and pollinators while reducing storm water runoff, standing water, and erosion. Please contact the Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative <a href="http://www.ophi.info/">http://www.ophi.info/</a>, and specifically Mike Retterer <a href="mretterer@pheasantsforever.org">mretterer@pheasantsforever.org</a> for further information on solar power facility pollinator plantings.

Recommended low-growing grasses and forbs may include:

Little Bluestem	Schizachyrium scoparium	
Sideoats Grama	Bouteloua curtipendula	
Alfalfa	Medicago spp.	
Alsike Clover	Trifolium hybridum	
Brown-eyed Susan	Rudbeckia triloba	
Butterfly Milkweed	Asclepias tuberosa	
Lanceleaf Coreopsis	Coreopsis lanceolata	
Partridge Pea	Chamaecrista fasciculata	
Timothy	Phleum pratense	
Orchardgrass	Dactylis glomerata	
Crimson Clover	Trifolium incarnatum	
Ladino or White Clover	Trifolium repens	

The DOW recommends that impacts to streams, wetlands and other water resources be avoided and minimized to the fullest extent possible, and that Best Management Practices be utilized to minimize erosion and sedimentation.

The project is within the range of the Indiana bat (Myotis sodalis), a state endangered and federally endangered species. The following species of trees have relatively high value as potential Indiana bat roost trees to include: shagbark hickory (Carya ovata), shellbark hickory (Carya laciniosa), bitternut hickory (Carya cordiformis), black ash (Fraxinus nigra), green ash (Fraxinus pennsylvanica), white ash (Fraxinus americana), shingle oak (Quercus imbricaria), northern red oak (Quercus rubra), slippery elm (Ulmus rubra), American elm (Ulmus americana), eastern cottonwood (Populus deltoides), silver maple (Acer saccharinum), sassafras (Sassafras albidum), post oak (Quercus stellata), and white oak (Quercus alba). Indiana bat roost trees consists of trees that include dead and dying trees with exfoliating bark, crevices, or cavities in upland areas or riparian corridors and living trees with exfoliating bark, cavities, or hollow areas formed from broken branches or tops. However, Indiana bats are also dependent on

the forest structure surrounding roost trees. If suitable habitat occurs within the project area, the DOW recommends trees be conserved. If suitable habitat occurs within the project area and trees must be cut, the DOW recommends cutting occur between October 1 and March 31. If suitable trees must be cut during the summer months, the DOW recommends a net survey be conducted between June 1 and August 15, prior to any cutting. Net surveys should incorporate either nine net nights per square 0.5 kilometer of project area, or four net nights per kilometer for linear projects. If no tree removal is proposed, this project is not likely to impact this species.

The project is within the range of for the snuffbox (*Epioblasma triquetra*), a state endangered and federally endangered mussel; the clubshell (*Pleurobema clava*), a state endangered and federally endangered mussel; the Northern riffleshell (*Epioblasma torulosa rangiana*), a state endangered and federally endangered mussel; the rayed bean (*Villosa fabalis*), a state endangered and federally endangered mussel; the rabbitsfoot (*Quadrula cylindrica cylindrica*), a state endangered and federal candidate mussel; the elephant-ear (*Elliptio crassidens crassidens*), a state endangered mussel; and the wavy-rayed lampmussel (*Lampsilis fasciola*), a state species of concern.

This project must not have an impact on freshwater native mussels at the project site. This applies to both listed and non-listed species. Per the Ohio Mussel Survey Protocol (2020), all Group 2, 3, and 4 streams (Appendix A) require a mussel survey. Per the Ohio Mussel Survey Protocol, Group 1 streams (Appendix A) and unlisted streams with a watershed of 5 square miles or larger above the point of impact should be assessed using the Reconnaissance Survey for Unionid Mussels (Appendix B) to determine if mussels are present. Mussel surveys may be recommended for these streams as well. This is further explained within the Ohio Mussel Survey Protocol. Therefore, if in-water work is planned in any stream that meets any of the above criteria, the DOW recommends the applicant provide information to indicate no mussel impacts will occur. If this is not possible, the DOW recommends a professional malacologist conduct a mussel survey in the project area. If mussels that cannot be avoided are found in the project area, as a last resort, the DOW recommends a professional malacologist collect and relocate the mussels to suitable and similar habitat upstream of the project site. Mussel surveys and any subsequent mussel relocation should be done in accordance with the Ohio Mussel Survey Protocol. The Ohio Mussel Survey Protocol (2020) can be found at:

 $\underline{\text{http://wildlife.ohiodnr.gov/portals/wildlife/pdfs/licenses\%20\&\%20permits/OH\%20Mussel\%20Survey\%20Protocol.pdf}$ 

The project is within the range of the Scioto madtom (*Noturus trautmani*), a state endangered and federally endangered fish, the spotted darter (*Etheostoma maculatum*), a state endangered fish, and the Tippecanoe darter (*Etheostoma Tippecanoe*), a state threatened fish. The DOW recommends no in-water work in perennial streams from April 15 through June 30 to reduce impacts to indigenous aquatic species and their habitat. If no in-water work is proposed, the project is not likely to impact these or other aquatic species.

The project is within the range of the upland sandpiper (*Bartramia longicauda*), a state endangered bird. Nesting upland sandpipers utilize dry grasslands including native grasslands, seeded grasslands, grazed and ungrazed pasture, hayfields, and grasslands established through the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). If this type of habitat will be impacted, construction should be avoided in this habitat during the species' nesting period of April 15 to July 31. If this type of habitat will not be impacted, the project is not likely to impact this species.

The project is within the range of the king rail (*Rallus elegans*), a state endangered bird. Nests for this species are deep bowls constructed out of grass and usually hidden very well in marsh vegetation. If this type of habitat will be impacted, construction should be avoided in this habitat during the species' nesting period of May 1 to August 1. If no wetland habitat will be impacted, the project is not likely to impact this species.

The project is within the range of the northern harrier (*Circus cyaneus*), a state endangered bird. This is a common migrant and winter species. Nesters are much rarer, although they occasionally breed in large marshes and grasslands. Harriers often nest in loose colonies. The female builds a nest out of sticks on the ground, often on top of a mound. Harriers hunt over grasslands. If this type of habitat will be impacted, construction should be avoided in this habitat during the species' nesting period of May 15 to August 1. If this habitat will not be impacted, the project is not likely to impact this species.

Due to the potential of impacts to federally listed species, as well as to state listed species, we recommend that this project be coordinated with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service.

Water Resources: The Division of Water Resources has the following comment.

The local floodplain administrator should be contacted concerning the possible need for any floodplain permits or approvals for this project. Your local floodplain administrator contact information can be found at the website below.

http://water.ohiodnr.gov/portals/soilwater/pdf/floodplain/Floodplain%20Manager%20Community%20Contact%20List 8 16.pdf

**Geological Survey:** The Division of Geological Survey has the following comments.

#### **Physiographic Region**

The proposed project area is in Range, Oak Run and Pleasant townships, Madison County. This area is in the Darby Plain physiographic region. This region is characterized by moderately low relief and few large streams. The region is primarily made up of broadly hummocky ground moraine and includes several indistinct recessional moraines. Loamy till that is Wisconsinan in age with a high lime concentration covers Silurian and Devonian-aged carbonate and shale bedrock (Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey, 1998).

#### Surficial/Glacial Geology

The project area lies within the glaciated margin of the state and includes several Wisconsinanaged glacial features. The entirety of the project area sits on a ground moraine made up of late Woodfordian ice deposits. Till in this area generally has a silty loam composition. The most common tills in this area are the Darcy, Bellefontaine and Centerburg tills (Pavey et al, 1999). Glacial drift throughout most of the study area is between 82 and 347 feet thick. Interbedded lenses of sand and gravel may be present within the till (Powers and Swinford, 2004).

#### **Bedrock Geology**

The uppermost bedrock unit in the project area is the Salina Undifferentiated. This unit is Silurian-aged and consists of a gray to brown dolomite which contains argillaceous partings, brecciated intervals, algal laminations and anhydrite/gypsum zones. This unit covers both the northwest and the southeast portions of the project area. Underlying the Salina Undifferentiated is the Silurian-aged Tymochtee Dolomite. This unit is characterized by an olive gray to yellowish brown dolomite. It frequently contains brownish-black to gray shale laminae. This unit covers much of the center portion of the project area. Underlying the Tymochtee Dolomite is the Silurian-aged Greenfield Dolomite. This unit is characterized by olive gray to yellowish brown dolomite. There is an absence of shale laminae compared to overlying units. It may contain sedimentary breccia zones. This unit is found in the northeast corner of the study area. It should

be noted that bedrock is not exposed at the surface within the boundaries of the project area due to significant glacial drift (Slucher et al, 2006).

## Oil, Gas and Mining

ODNR has record of no oil and gas wells within one mile of the proposed project area. The closest oil and gas well to the site is approximately 3 miles away and is listed as plugged (Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Oil and Gas, *Ohio Oil and Gas Wells Locator*).

### **Seismic Activity**

Several small earthquakes have historically been recorded near the site. The three events closest to the site are listed in the chart below (Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey, *Ohio Earthquake Epicenters*):

Date	Magnitude	Distance to Site Boundary	County	Township
March 17, 1985	1.9	9 miles	Fayette	Paint
October 21, 2013	2.0	16 miles	Pickaway	Jackson
October 4, 1980	2.0	20 miles	Clark	Green

#### Karst

There are no known karst features in this area (Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey, *Ohio Karst*).

#### Soils

According to the USDA Web Soil Survey, the project area consists primarily of soils derived from glacial till. Kokomo and Crosby are the most common soil series found within the boundaries of the project area. These two soil units make up over 75% of the study area and consist of a clay loam media. The alluvial deposits consist primarily of the Sloan soil series. This series is a silt loam and makes up about 8.5% of the project area (USDA Web Soil Survey).

There is a low to moderate risk of shrink-swell potential in these soils. Other limiting factors include poor drainage. Slope remains relatively flat, with slope seldom exceeding a 6% grade (USDA Web Soil Survey).

#### Groundwater

Groundwater resources are plentiful throughout the project area. Wells developed in bedrock are likely to yield between 100 and 500 gallons per minute. This aquifer consists of carbonate bedrock at depths typically less than 350 ft (Hallfrisch, 1994 and Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water, Bedrock Aquifer Map, 2000). Wells developed in the unconsolidated sand and gravel lenses interbedded within the till are likely to yield between 5 and 25 gallons per minute. The New Holland Complex Aquifer covers most of the project area, with Deer Creek Alluvial Aquifer covering the alluvial areas along Bradford Branch and South Fork Bradford Creek. This alluvial area may have yields as high as 500 gallons per minute where coarse sand and gravel outwash deposits underly the floodplains (Hallfrisch, 1994 and Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water, Statewide Unconsolidated Aquifer Map, 2000).

ODNR has a record of 70 water wells drilled within one mile of the study area. These wells range in depth from 30 to 227 feet deep, with an average depth of 98.4 feet. The most common aquifer listed is sand and gravel. There are 16 wells that are developed in the underlying bedrock. A sustainable yield of 10 to 100 gallons per minute is expected from wells drilled in this area based on well log records. The average sustainable yield from these records within one mile was 42.4 gallons per minute (Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water, *Ohio Water Wells*).

#### References

Hallfrisch, M. (1994). *Groundwater Resources of Madison County*, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey, map, scale 1:62,500.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey, *Ohio Earthquake Epicenters*, online interactive map, <a href="https://gis.ohiodnr.gov/MapViewer/?config=earthquakes">https://gis.ohiodnr.gov/MapViewer/?config=earthquakes</a> Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey, *Ohio Karst*, online interactive map, <a href="https://gis.ohiodnr.gov/website/dgs/karst">https://gis.ohiodnr.gov/website/dgs/karst</a> interactive map/

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey, (1998). *Physiographic Regions of Ohio*. Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey, map with text, 2 p., scale 1:2,100,000. Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Oil and Gas, *Ohio Oil and Gas Wells Locator*, online interactive map, https://gis.ohiodnr.gov/MapViewer/?config=oilgaswells.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water, *Ohio Water Wells*, online interactive map, <a href="https://gis.ohiodnr.gov/MapViewer/?config=waterwells">https://gis.ohiodnr.gov/MapViewer/?config=waterwells</a>.

Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water, (2000). *Statewide Bedrock Aquifer Map*, GIS coverage. Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Water, (2000). *Statewide Unconsolidated Aquifer Map*, GIS coverage.

Pavey, R., Goldthwait, R., Brockman, C.S. Hull, D., Swinford, E.M., and Van Horn, R. (1999). *Quaternary Geology of Ohio*, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey, map, scale 1:500,000.

Powers, D.M., and Swinford, E.M. (2004). *Shaded drift-thickness map of Ohio*, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey, map, scale 1:500,000

Slucher, E., Swinford, E., Larsen, G., Schumacher, G., Shrake, D., Rice, C., Caudill, M., Rea, R. and Powers, D. (2006). *Bedrock Geologic Map of Ohio*, Ohio Department of Natural Resources, Division of Geological Survey, map, scale 1:500,000.

USDA Web Soil Survey, (Last modified 2019). *Web Soil Survey Interactive Map*, United States Department of Agriculture, National Resources Conservation Service, online interactive map, <a href="https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx">https://websoilsurvey.sc.egov.usda.gov/App/WebSoilSurvey.aspx</a>.

ODNR appreciates the opportunity to provide these comments. Please contact Sarah Tebbe, Environmental Specialist, at (614) 265-6397 or <u>Sarah.Tebbe@dnr.state.oh.us</u> if you have questions about these comments or need additional information.

Mike Pettegrew Environmental Services Administrator (Acting)



# Ohio Department of Natural Resources

MIKE DEWINE, GOVERNOR

MARY MERTZ, DIRECTOR

Jeff Johnson, Chief Division of Natural Areas & Preserves 2045 Morse Rd, Building A Columbus, Ohio 43229

17 May 2021

Michael Perkins Terracon Consultants, Inc. 611 Lunken Park Dr. Cincinnati, OH 45226

Dear Mr. Perkins,

I have reviewed the Natural Heritage Database for the Fox Squirrel 2 Solar project area, including a one mile radius, in Oak Run and Range Townships, Madison County, Ohio. The numbers on the list below correspond to the areas marked on the accompanying map. Common name, scientific name and status are given for each species.

- 1. Erimyzon claviformis Western Creek Chubsucker, species of concern
- Etheostoma microperca Least Darter, species of concern
- 2. Erimyzon claviformis Western Creek Chubsucker, species of concern
- 3. Erimyzon claviformis Western Creek Chubsucker, species of concern

Etheostoma microperca – Least Darter, species of concern

We are unaware of any unique ecological sites, geologic features, animal assemblages, scenic rivers, state nature preserves, wildlife areas, parks or forests, national wildlife refuges, parks or forests, or other protected natural areas within a one mile radius of the project area.

Our inventory program has not completely surveyed Ohio and relies on information supplied by many individuals and organizations. Therefore, a lack of records for any particular area is not a statement that rare species or unique features are absent from that area. This letter only represents a review of rare species and natural features data within the Ohio Natural Heritage Database. It does not fulfill coordination under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S. C. 661 et seq.) and does not supersede or replace the regulatory authority of any local, state or federal agency nor relieve the applicant of the obligation to comply with any local, state or federal laws or regulations.

Please contact me at 614-265-6818 if I can be of further assistance.

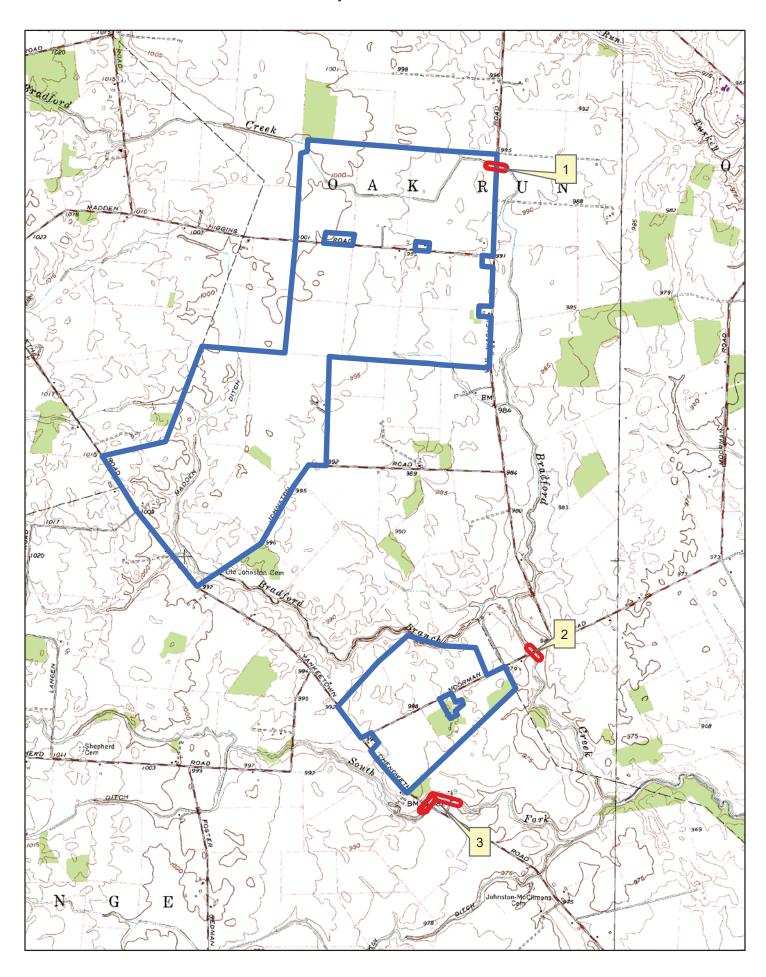
Sincerely,

Debbie Woischke

Ohio Natural Heritage Program

Deppie Worschhe

# Fox Squirrel 2 Solar





# **APPENDIX C**



December 15, 2020

Geenex Solar 1930 Abbott Street Charlotte, North Carolina 28203

Attn: Mr. Juergen Fehr

E: juergen.fehr@geenexsolar.com

Re: Wetland Delineation Report

Proposed Fox Squirrel Solar Farm – Additional Parcels

Yankeetown Chenoweth Road Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio Terracon Project No. N1207473

Dear Mr. Fehr:

Terracon is pleased to submit the wetland delineation report for the above referenced project. Based on the results of the assessment, Terracon observed three streams and two wetlands on the project site.

A cover letter addressed to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) has been included with the enclosed report; however, a copy of this report has not been provided to USACE by Terracon. A copy of the wetland delineation report and attached letter should be submitted to USACE for review and concurrence. The USACE can be reached at the following address:

US Army Corps of Engineers – Huntington District ATTN: Regulatory Branch 502 Eighth Street Huntington, WV 25701-2070

Terracon appreciates the opportunity to have worked for you on this project. If you have any questions regarding the content of this report, please contact me at (513) 612-9094 or via email at swest@terracon.com.

Sincerely,

**TERRACON Consultants, Inc.** 

Cassie Brendel Staff Scientist Scott E. West Group Manager

Proposed Fox Squirrel Solar Farm – Additional
Parcels
Yankeetown Chenoweth Road
Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio

Date: December 15, 2020 Terracon Project No. N1207473



# Prepared for:

Geenex Solar Charlotte, North Carolina

# Prepared by:

Terracon Consultants, Inc.
Cincinnati, Ohio

terracon.com



Environmental Facilities Geotechnical Materials



December 15, 2020

US Army Corps of Engineers – Huntington District ATTN: Regulatory Branch 502 Eighth Street Huntington, WV 25701-2070

Re: Wetland Delineation Report

Proposed Fox Squirrel Solar Farm – Additional Parcels

Yankeetown Chenoweth Road Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio Terracon Project No. N1207473

# Regulatory Branch:

Terracon is pleased to submit the wetland delineation report prepared for Geenex Solar for the abovementioned project. This assessment describes the observations made during our site visit and other sources of information used to investigate the project site for wetlands and other waterbodies. Based on the results of the assessment, two wetlands and three streams are present at the project site. At this time, we are requesting that your office perform a review of the report for the project site and advise our client if a permit will be required for any proposed activities.

If you have any questions concerning this report, please contact Scott West at (513) 612-9094 or by e-mail at swest@terracon.com.

Sincerely,

**TERRACON Consultants, Inc.** 

Cassie Brendel Scott E. West Staff Scientist Group Manager

Copy to: Mr. Juergen Fehr

Geenex Solar 1930 Abbott Street

Charlotte, North Carolina 28203



Terracon Consultants Inc. 611 Lunken Park Drive Cincinnati, OH 45226-1813

P 513-321-5816 F 513-321-0294 terracon.com

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# Wetland Delineation Report Proposed Fox Squirrel Solar Farm – Additional Parcels Yankeetown Chenoweth Road Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio Terracon Project No. N1207473 December 15, 2020

# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Terracon Consultants, Inc. (Terracon) was retained by Geenex Solar (client) to perform a wetland delineation to determine if wetlands or other waters under the jurisdiction of the United States Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) or the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (OEPA) are present at the approximately 1,482-acre property, hereafter referred to as the project site. The project site is located east of Yankeetown Chenoweth Road in Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio. The project site location is depicted on Exhibit 1 in Appendix A.

The purpose of performing this wetland delineation of the project site was to characterize the existing site conditions, observe the project site for suspect waterbodies and wetlands and provide a recommendation regarding whether or not suspect waterbodies (if observed) would be considered jurisdictional with the USACE.

It is important to note that the findings presented in this report represent Terracon's professional opinion, based upon field observations made during the site visit and our experience with current regulatory guidance under the Clean Water Act. In order to verify the delineation boundaries and jurisdictional classifications presented in this report, the USACE must review this report and make a jurisdictional determination.

#### 2.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES

Terracon performed the following scope of work:

- Reviewed United States Geologic Survey (USGS) topographical maps, National Wetlands Inventory (NWI) maps, United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) National Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic Database (SSURGO) soil maps and surveys, Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Flood Insurance Risk Maps (FIRM), and aerial photographs to assist with identifying suspect Waters of the United States (WOUS) and wetland areas at the project site.
- Mobilized to the project site to conduct the preliminary site visit.
- Prepared a map showing approximate locations of suspect waterbodies or wetland areas observed during the site visit, if any.
- Completed a wetland delineation report that included site characterization information, a discussion of applicable data, and recommendations for the project site.

Fox Squirrel Solar – Additional Parcels ■ Mt. Sterling, Ohio December 15, 2020 ■ Terracon Project: N1207473



# 3.0 PRELIMINARY DATA GATHERING AND ANALYSIS

Prior to performing the delineation, several map and aerial photograph resources were reviewed to assist with identifying potential wetland areas at the project site. Each source of data is described in detail below.

# 3.1 Topographic Map

The USGS 7.5-Minute Topographic Map of the project site was reviewed to identify drainages or potential wetlands and streams within the project site. The USGS map indicates the presence of three perennial streams on site; Bradford Branch, and Bradford Creek. Additionally, two intermittent streams are depicted across the site; one in the northwestern portion draining into Bradford Branch, and one in the eastern into Bradford Creek. The site appears to be relatively flat with an approximate elevation of 1000 feet above sea level (asl). A portion of the Mt. Sterling, Ohio Quadrangle can be seen as Exhibit 1 in Appendix A.

# 3.2 National Wetlands Inventory Map

The NWI Map of the project site was reviewed to identify potential wetland areas. The map for the project site was published by the U.S. Department of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and depicts probable wetland areas based on stereoscopic analysis of high-altitude aerial photographs and analysis of infrared bands from remotely-sensed imagery. The NWI map depicts two intermittent streams (R4SBC) each draining into two perennial streams (R2UBH and R5UBH); one in the western portion and one in the northeastern portion of the project site, respectively. The NWI map for the project site can be seen as Exhibit 2 in Appendix A.

# 3.3 Soil Survey

Data from the soil survey of Madison County, Ohio was reviewed to identify soil types, including hydric soils. Data for the soil survey was compiled by the USDA NRCS in 1973. Hydric soils information was gathered from the 'National Hydric Soils List' (USDA NRCS, https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/portal/nrcs/main/soils/use/hydric/). A soil survey map is included as Exhibit 3 in Appendix A.

The following soil types were identified within the project site boundaries on the soil survey map:

- Crosby silt loam, Southern Ohio Till Plain, 0 to 2 percent slope (CrA): This soil is defined as somewhat poorly drained, gently sloping, and is typically located on the edge of broad, nearly level areas and along small waterways. The soil color ranges from brown to yellowish-brown. This map unit is not classified as hydric.
- <u>Crosby-Lewisburg silt loams, 0 to 2 percent slope (CsA)</u>: This soil is defined as somewhat poorly to poorly drained and nearly level. The soil color is typically grayish brown. This map unit is classified as hydric.

Fox Squirrel Solar – Additional Parcels ■ Mt. Sterling, Ohio December 15, 2020 ■ Terracon Project: N1207473



- Crosby-Lewisburg silt loams, 2 to 6 percent slope (CsB): This soil is defined as moderately well drained, gently sloping to sloping, and is typically found along ridgetops and shoulders of the loess-capped till plains. The soil color ranges from dark grayish brown to yellowish-brown. This map unit is classified as hydric.
- <u>Eldean silt loam, 2 to 6 percent slope (EIB):</u> This soil is defined as moderately well drained, gently sloping to sloping, and is typically found along ridgetops and shoulders of the loess-capped till plains. The soil color ranges from dark grayish brown to yellowish-brown. This map unit is not classified as hydric.
- Kokomo silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent slopes (Ko): This soil is defined as very poorly drained, nearly level, and is typically found in flood plains. The soil color ranges from very dark gray to dark grayish brown. This map unit is classified as hydric.
- Miamian silt loam, 6 to 12 percent slope, eroded (MIC2): This soil is defined as well drained, gently sloping, and typically found on the backslope of till plains. The soil color ranges from dark brown to yellowish brown. This map unit is not classified as hydric.
- Odell-Lewisburg complex, 0 to 2 percent slope (OdA): This soil is defined as somewhat poorly drained or moderately well drained in upland areas. This unit is nearly level, and typically found on the summit of till plains or moraines. The soil color ranges from very dark brownish gray to black friable silty clay loam. This map unit is not classified as hydric.
- Westland silty clay loam, Southern Ohio Till Plain, 0 to 2 percent slopes (Wt): This soil is defined as very poorly drained, slowly or moderately slowly permeable soils on low stream terraces and outwash plains. The soil color ranges from very dark gray to dark grayish brown. This map unit is not classified as hydric.

# 3.4 Aerial Photographs

A recent aerial photograph (2019) of the project site was reviewed to determine land use and evaluate vegetative cover. The project site is predominantly shown to consist of agricultural land with forested land in the southern portion. Several apparent streams are shown throughout the site. For reference, the aerial photograph has been included as Exhibit 4 in Appendix A.

#### 3.5 FEMA FIRM Data

Terracon reviewed FEMA FIRM data (Panel #'s 39097C0275D, 6/18/2010, 39097C300D, 6/18/2010) to identify areas that may have elevated likelihoods of containing WOUS. The FEMA FIRM data indicated that the majority of the project site is in Zone X, an area of minimal flood hazard. However, riparian zones along Bradford Creek and South Fork of Bradford Creek, within the project site boundary, are consider within the 1% Annual Chance Flood Hazard Zone which is known as 100-year floodplain. This data is included as Exhibit 5 in Appendix A.

Fox Squirrel Solar – Additional Parcels ■ Mt. Sterling, Ohio December 15, 2020 ■ Terracon Project: N1207473



# 4.0 FIELD TECHNIQUES

Terracon personnel, Cassie Brendel conducted a reconnaissance of the project site on November 12 and 16, 2020, to characterize the existing site conditions and observe for the presence of wetlands and potential jurisdictional waters. Characteristics of jurisdictional waters and wetland areas were assessed utilizing the criteria detailed in sections 4.1 and 4.2 of this report. The evaluation methods generally followed the routine on-site determination method referenced in the 1987 USACE Manual and 2010 Midwest Regional Supplement.

#### 4.1 Wetland Observations

Wetlands generally have three essential characteristics: hydrophytic (wetland) vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology. Based on NWI data, aerial imagery and topographical data, on-site areas were investigated for potential wetland properties. Additional areas were investigated, based on observations made during the site reconnaissance. Data regarding the three essential characteristics was gathered within observed suspect wetland areas to further delineate boundaries.

# 4.1.1. Plant Community Assessment

Suspect areas were visually observed to determine the species, when possible, and absolute percentage of ground cover for four stratum of plant community types. Herbs were generally observed within a five-foot radius, shrubs/saplings within a fifteen-foot radius, and trees and vines within a thirty-foot radius of the observation location.

For each species of vegetation observed, their wetland indicator status was evaluated. Indicator status was determined using the NRCS Plants Database. Indicator categories for vegetation are presented below:

- Obligate Wetland (OBL) occur almost always (estimated probability greater than 99%) under natural conditions in wetlands.
- Facultative Wetland (FACW) usually occur in wetlands (estimated probability 67% -99%) but occasionally found in non-wetlands.
- Facultative (FAC) equally likely to occur in wetlands or non-wetlands (estimated probability 34% 66%).
- Facultative Upland (FACU) usually occur in non-wetlands (estimated probability 67%
   99%) but occasionally found in wetlands.
- Obligate Upland (UPL) rarely occur in wetlands, but occur almost always (estimated probability greater than 99%) under natural conditions in non-wetlands.

Fox Squirrel Solar – Additional Parcels ■ Mt. Sterling, Ohio December 15, 2020 ■ Terracon Project: N1207473



The percent cover of each stratum was determined and dominance was evaluated. Dominant species were the most abundant species that accounted for more than 20 percent of the absolute percent coverage of the stratum. The number of dominant species with an indicator status of OBL, FACW, and/or FAC was compared to the total number of dominant species across all strata. Typically, when more than 50 percent of the dominant species had an indicator status of OBL, FACW, and/or FAC, hydrophytic vegetation was present.

If the percentage of dominant species with an indicator status of OBL, FACW, and/or FAC was less than 50 percent, prevalence index and morphological adaptations may have been evaluated to confirm if hydrophytic vegetation was present or absent.

# 4.1.2. Hydric Soils Assessment

After Terracon evaluated wetland vegetation, subsurface soil samples were collected using a soil probe or similar method. The samples were collected to a depth of approximately 15 inches below ground surface and were visually compared to <a href="Munsell Soil Color Charts">Munsell Soil Color Charts</a> (Munsell, 2009), which aided in the evaluation of hydric soil characteristics. The soil samples were further examined for hydric soil indicators including, but not limited to, histosol, thick dark surface, sandy gleyed matrix, sandy redox, loamy gleyed matrix, redox dark surface, and/or redox depressions. If these or other hydric soil indicators were observed in the subsurface soil sample, the observation location was considered to have hydric soil.

# 4.1.3 Wetland Hydrology Assessment

Visual indicators of wetland hydrology were evaluated. Examples of primary wetland hydrology indicators include, but are not limited to, surface water, high water table, soil saturation, water marks, sediment deposits, drift deposits, iron deposits, inundation visible on aerial imagery, sparsely vegetated concave surface, and water-stained leaves. If at least one primary or two secondary indicators were observed, the observation location was considered to have wetland hydrology.

#### 4.1.4 Classification of Wetlands

Upon completion of the review of the three wetland criteria at each area, a wetland determination was made. Under normal circumstances, if one or more of the wetland criteria were not identified, the area was not considered to be a wetland. If all three wetland indicators were identified, the area was classified as wetland. Additional observations were made throughout the wetland area to define the wetland/non-wetland boundary. Vegetation, soil and hydrology assessment data from at least one location within the wetland and one upland location outside of the wetland were recorded on a USACE Wetland Determination Form (Data Sheet).

Fox Squirrel Solar – Additional Parcels ■ Mt. Sterling, Ohio December 15, 2020 ■ Terracon Project: N1207473



#### 4.2 Other Waters Observations

Terracon also made observations of site features that may be considered a jurisdictional waterbody. If a potential jurisdictional waterbody was identified, observations regarding its characteristics were recorded. Potential jurisdictional waterbodies were evaluated based on the observation of the following characteristics:

#### Flow Characteristics:

- o Perennial: contains water at all times except during extreme drought.
- o Intermittent: carries water a considerable portion of the time, but ceases to flow occasionally or seasonally.
- Ephemeral: carries water only during and immediately after periods of rainfall or snowmelt.

# Ordinary High-Water Mark:

The limit line on the shore established by the fluctuation of the water surface. It is shown by such things as a clear line impressed on the bank, shelving, changes in soil character, destruction of terrestrial vegetation, the presence of litter and debris or other features influenced by the surrounding area.

# Bank Shape Descriptions:

- Undercut: banks that overhang the stream channel
- o Steep: bank slope of approximately greater than 30 degrees
- Gradual: bank slope of approximately 30 degrees or less

#### Aquatic Habitat Descriptions:

- Pool: deeper portion of a stream where water flows slower than in neighboring, shallower portions, smooth surface, and finer substrate
- o Riffle: shallow area in a stream where water flows swiftly over gravel and rock or other coarse substrate resulting in a rough flow and a turbulent surface
- Run: section of a stream with a low or high velocity and with little or no turbulence on the surface of the water.

# 5.0 FIELD OBSERVATIONS RESULTS

On November 12 and 16, 2020, Terracon performed field observations at the project site. The project site consisted of agricultural land, with forested areas in the southern portion. Ground photographs, included in Appendix B, provide an indication of the physical characteristics observed during the site visit. Descriptions of the observed areas are listed in the following sections.

Fox Squirrel Solar – Additional Parcels ■ Mt. Sterling, Ohio December 15, 2020 ■ Terracon Project: N1207473



# 5.1 Plant Communities Found at Project Site

# 5.1.1 Emergent Wetlands

The dominant plant species observed in the emergent wetland areas was reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*).

# 5.1.2 Forested Uplands

The dominant plant species observed in the forested upland areas were Osage orange (Maclura pomifera), white ash (Fraxinus americana), black locust (Robinia pseudoacacia), honeylocust (Gleditsia tricanthos), black walnut (Juglans nigra), eastern redcedar (Juniperus virginiana), honeysuckle (Lonicera maackii), white oak (Quercus alba), shagbark hickory (Carya ovata), and blackberry (Rubus allegheniensis).

#### 5.1.3 Emergent Uplands

The dominant plant species observed in the emergent upland areas were yellow foxtail (*Setaria pumila*), and Canada wildrye (*Elymus canadensis*).

### 5.1.4 Agricultural Uplands

The dominant plant species observed in the agricultural upland areas were the remnants of corn (*Zea mays*).

# 5.2 Wetland Area Description

The following wetlands were observed at the project site during the site reconnaissance.

Wetland	Size (acres)	COWARDIN CLASSIFICATI ON	WATER SOURCES	USACE JURISDICTIONAL (Y/N)
Α	0.27	PEM	Precipitation, Surface Runoff	Υ
В	0.02	PEM	Precipitation, Surface Runoff	Υ
TOTAL	0.29 ACRES			

PEM – Palustrine emergent wetland

The on-site wetlands are considered jurisdictional based on their significant nexus to on-site stream, Bradford Branch.

#### 5.3 Streams

The following streams were observed at the project site during the site reconnaissance.

Fox Squirrel Solar – Additional Parcels ■ Mt. Sterling, Ohio December 15, 2020 ■ Terracon Project: N1207473



Streams	Length (linear feet)	Flow Regime	Average Stream Width at Top of Bank (feet)
1 (Bradford	1,005	Perennial	15-30
Branch)	7,537	Intermittent	10-15
2	912	Ephemeral	5-10
3 (Bradford Creek)	6,383	Perennial	10-30
TOTAL	15,837 linear feet		

Terracon considers all on-site streams jurisdictional.

#### 5.4 Other Waters

Other waters were not observed on site during the site reconnaissance.

# 6.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS OF FIELD OBSERVATIONS

A wetland delineation was conducted at an approximately 1,482-acre site located in Mt Sterling, Ohio on November 12 and 16, 2020. A review of the project site was conducted utilizing readily available information including, but not limited to, topographical, aerial, soils, floodplain, and wetland data. In addition, a preliminary site visit was performed to characterize the existing site conditions and observe the project site for suspect waterbodies and wetlands (if any). A summary of field observations and conclusions concerning jurisdictional status is outlined in the following sections.

#### 6.1 Wetlands

Two wetlands, totaling 0.29 acres, were observed across the project site during the site reconnaissance. Terracon considers all of the on-site wetlands jurisdictional based on their significant nexus to on-site waters.

#### 6.2 Streams

Three streams totaling 15, 837 linear feet, were observed across the project site during the site reconnaissance. Terracon considers all of the on-site streams jurisdictional.

#### 6.3 Other Waters

Other waters were not observed on site during the site reconnaissance.

Fox Squirrel Solar – Additional Parcels ■ Mt. Sterling, Ohio December 15, 2020 ■ Terracon Project: N1207473



# 7.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

According to our preliminary site investigation, potential jurisdictional waters are present on the project site. However, for all on-site areas, only the USACE can make the final determination on the jurisdictional status of waterbodies, and on the need for permit processing and compensatory mitigation. In addition, it should be noted that the State of Ohio has an isolated wetlands program, which included isolated ponds, and any impacts to on-site waters may have to be processed through the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency's 401 program.

Again, Terracon recommends a copy of this report be submitted to the USACE for their final determination of the findings of this delineation on the site. The USACE can be reached at the following address:

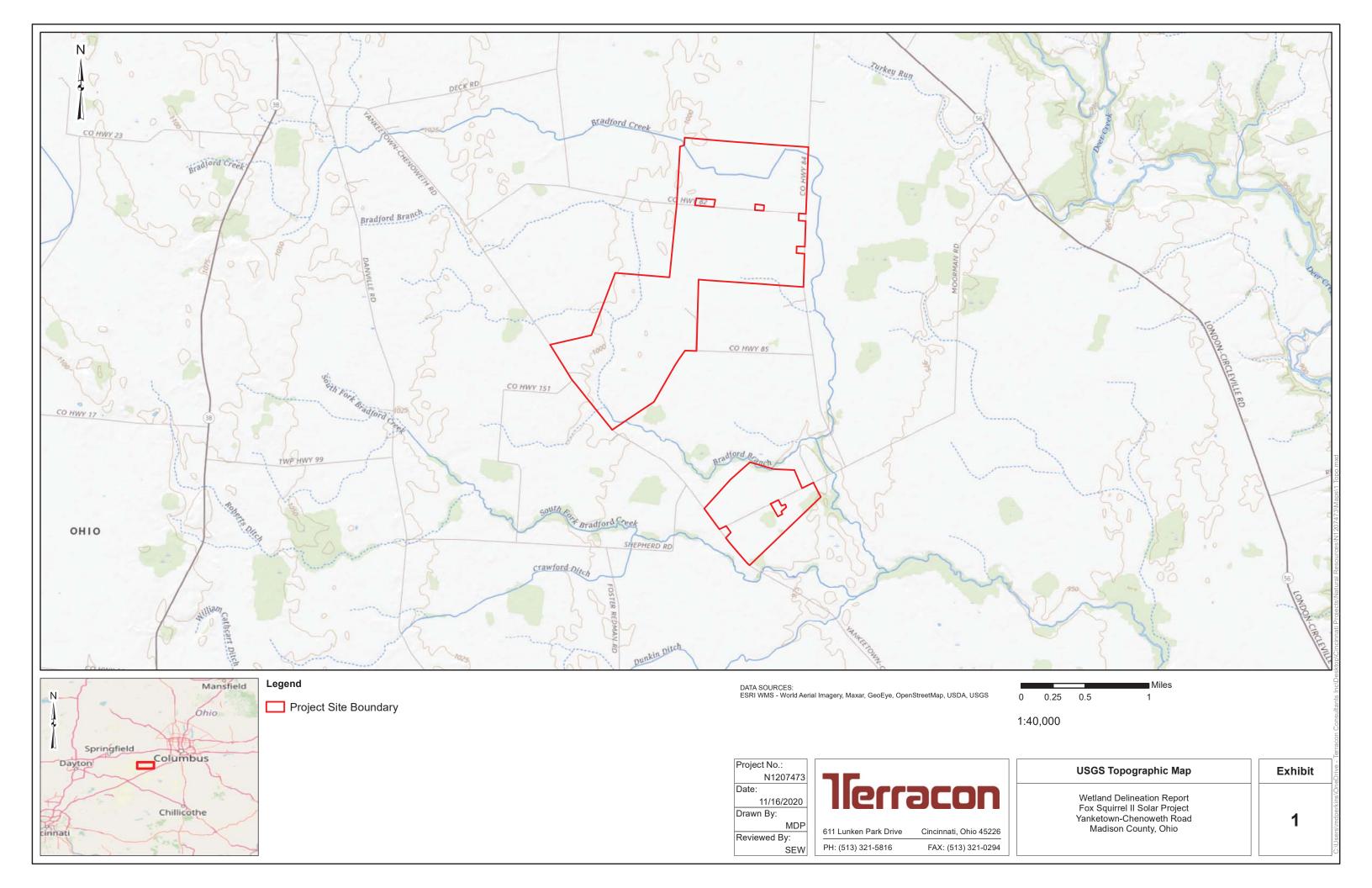
US Army Corps of Engineers – Huntington District ATTN: Regulatory Branch 502 Eighth Street Huntington, WV 25701-2070

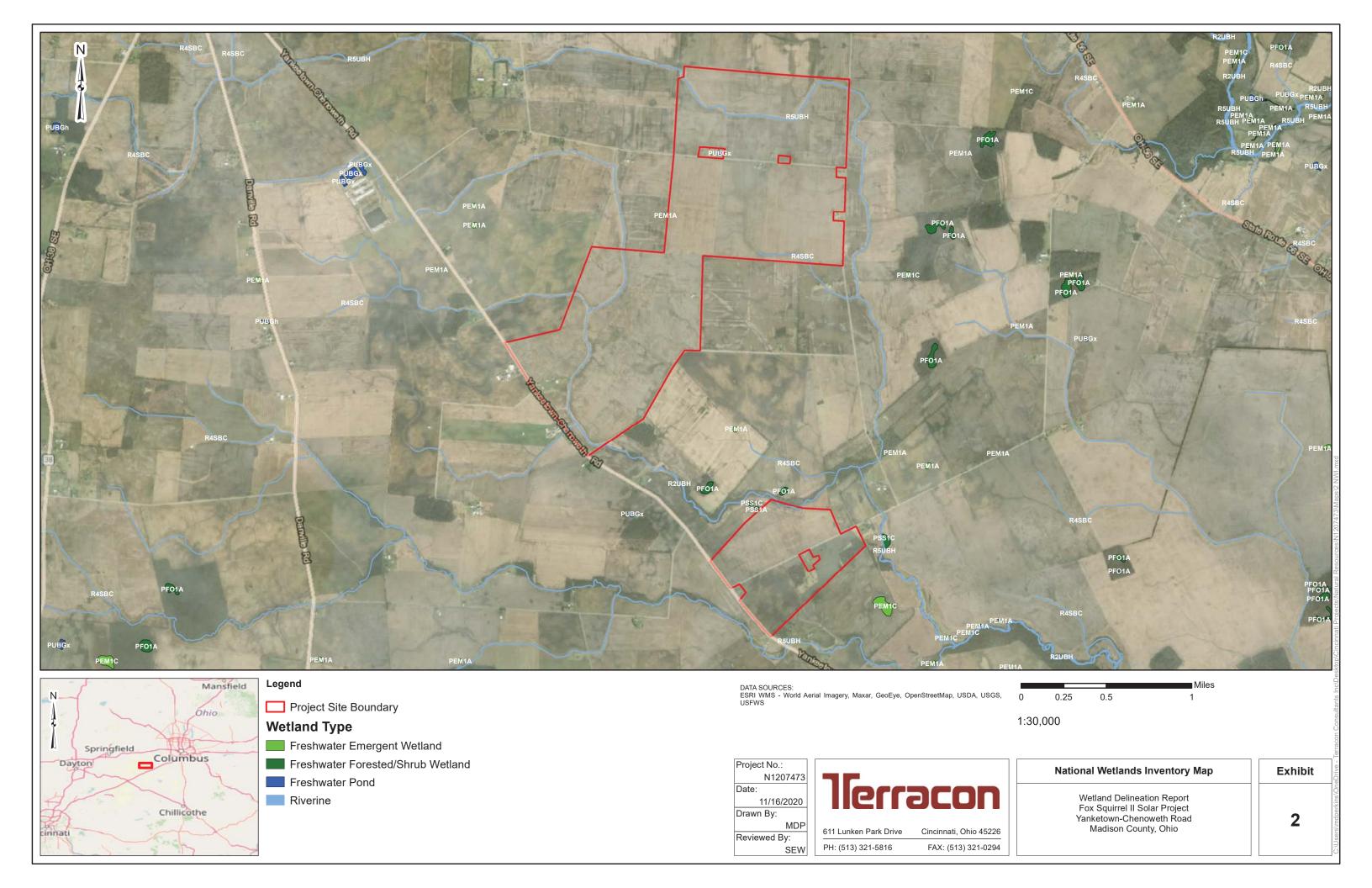
# 8.0 GENERAL COMMENTS

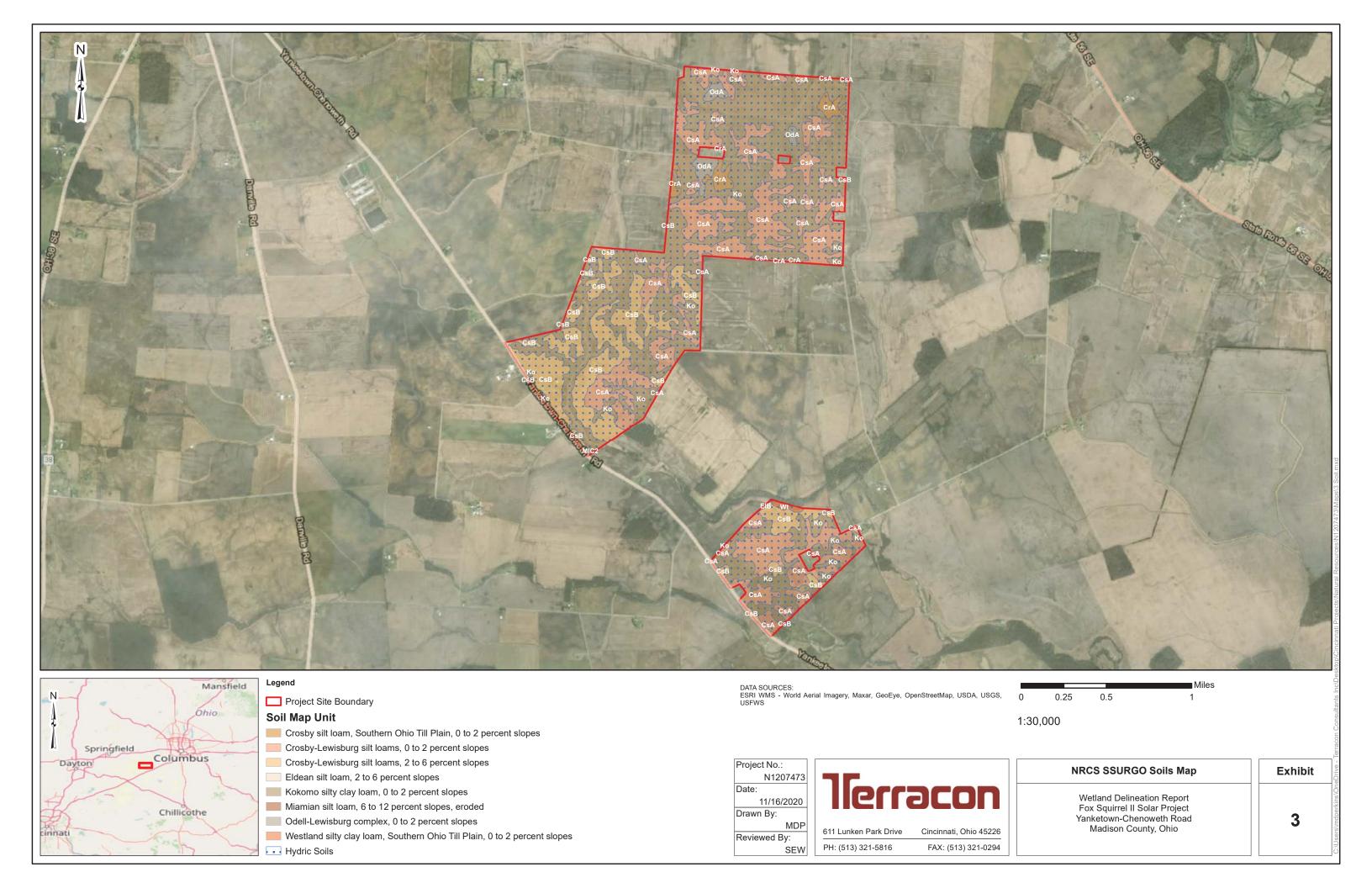
The wetland delineation was performed in accordance with generally accepted practices of this profession undertaken in similar studies at the same time and in the same geographical area. A wetland delineation, such as the one performed at this site, is of limited scope, is noninvasive, and cannot eliminate the potential that wetlands or waterbodies are present at the site beyond what is identified by the limited scope of this preliminary assessment. In conducting the limited scope of services described herein, certain sources of information and public records were not reviewed. No biological assessment can wholly eliminate uncertainty regarding the potential for concerns in connection with a project. The limitations of this preliminary assessment should be recognized.

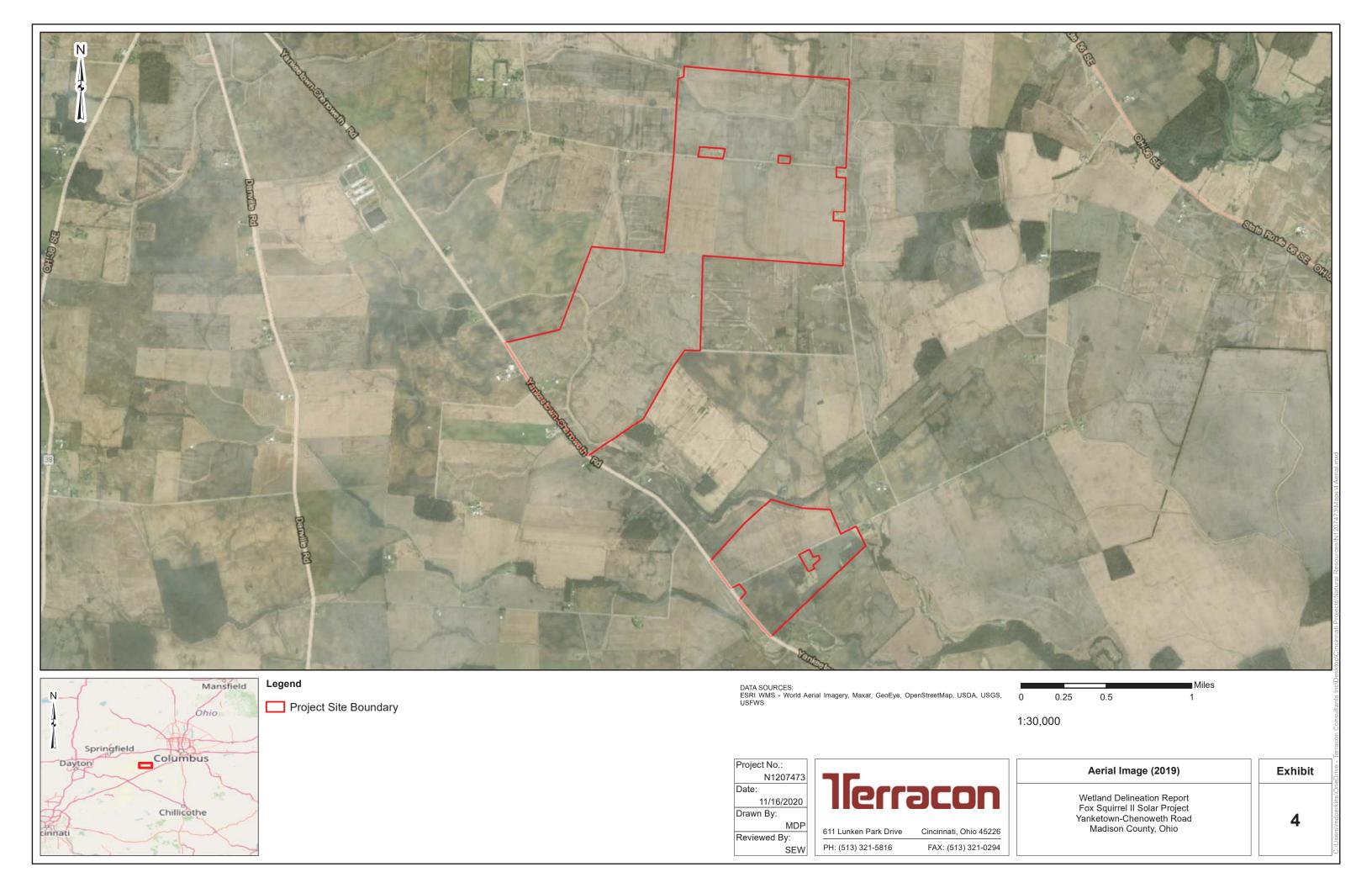
This report has been prepared in accordance with generally accepted scientific and engineering evaluation practices. This report is for the exclusive use of the client for the project being discussed. No warranties, either expressed or implied, are intended or made.

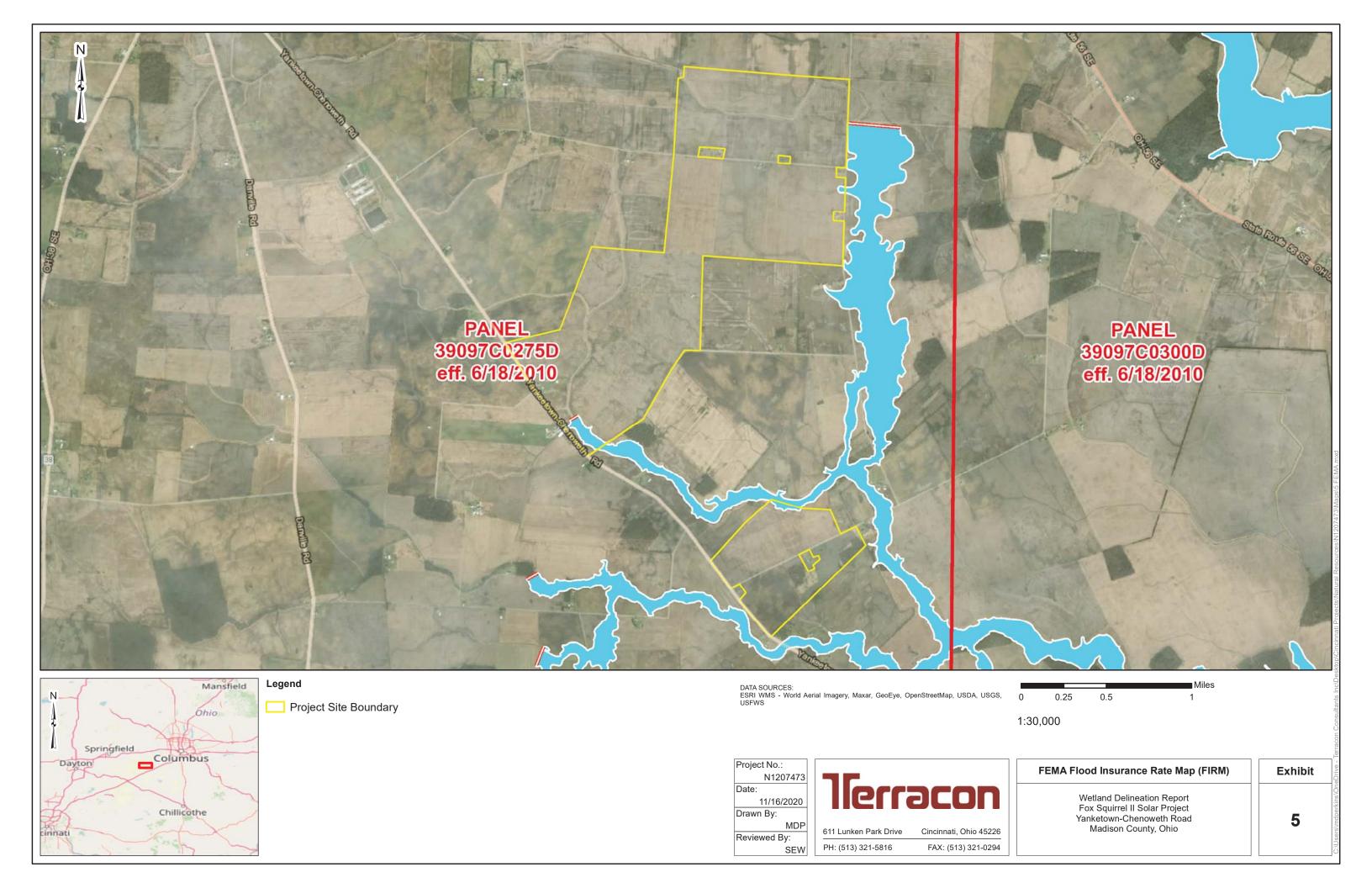
# **APPENDIX A – EXHIBITS**

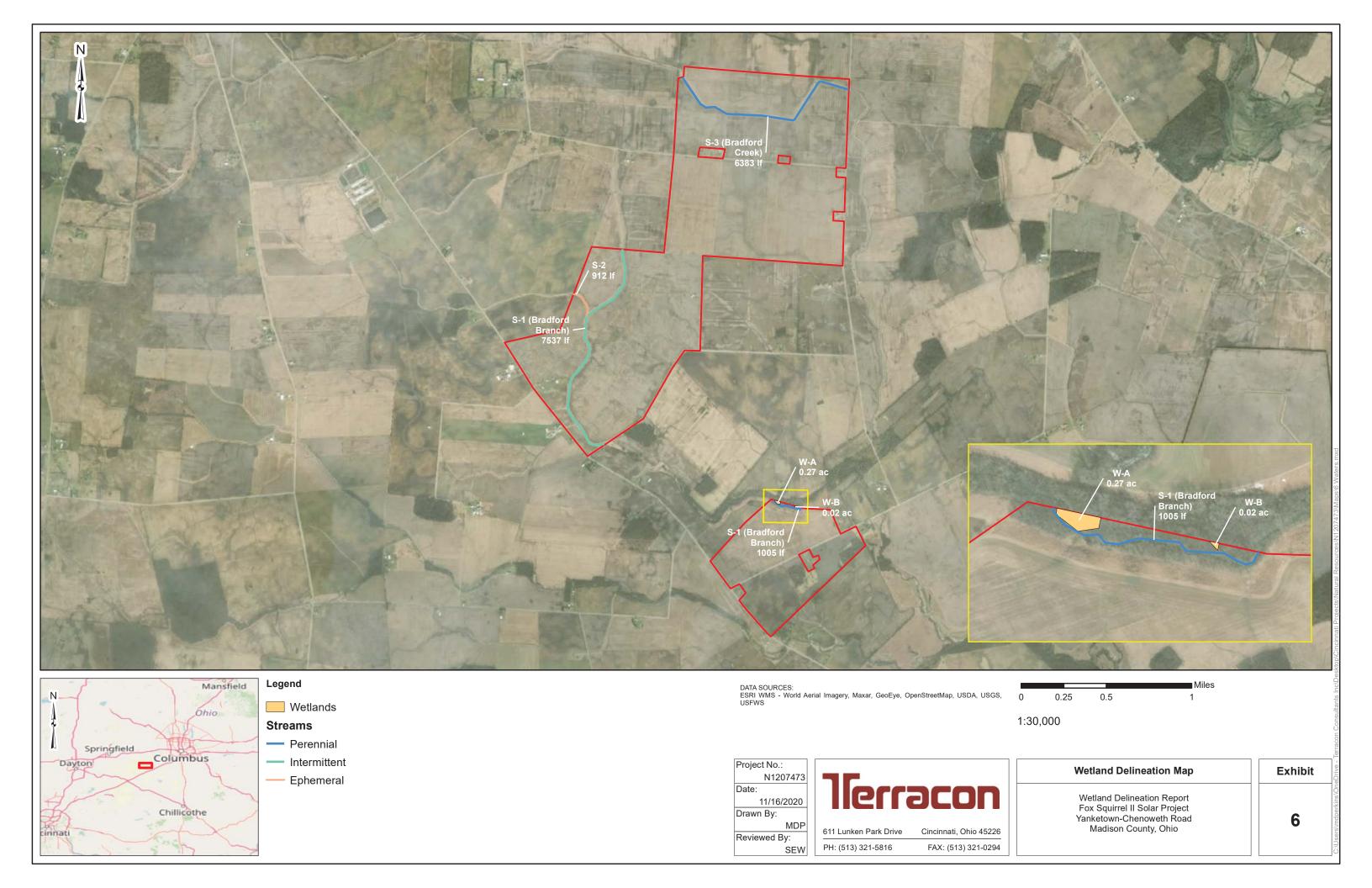












# **APPENDIX B – GROUND PHOTOGRAPHS**



# Photographic Documentation

Client: Fox Squirrel Additional Parcels Project Number: N1207473

Location: Yankeetown Chenoweth Road Mt. Sterling, Photographer: C. Brendel

Ohio

Photograph No. 1

Date: November 12, 2020

**Direction:** East

**Description:** 

General view of the southern

portion of the site.



Photograph No. 2

Date: November 12, 2020

**Direction:** West

**Description:** 

General view of the northern portion of the site.





# Photographic Documentation

Client: Fox Squirrel Additional Parcels Project Number: N1207473

Location: Yankeetown Chenoweth Road Mt. Sterling, Photographer: C. Brendel

Ohio

Photograph No. 3

Date: November 12, 2020

**Direction:** West

**Description:**Bradford Creek



Photograph No. 4

Date: November 12, 2020

**Direction:** North

**Description:** 

Bradford Branch (intermittent)





# Photographic Documentation

Client: Fox Squirrel Additional Parcels Project Number: N1207473

Location: Yankeetown Chenoweth Road Mt. Sterling, Photographer: C. Brendel

Ohio

Photograph No. 5

Date: November 12, 2020

**Direction:** North

**Description:** 

Bradford Branch (perennial)



Photograph No. 6

Date: November 12, 2020

**Direction:** East

**Description:** Stream 2



# APPENDIX C – DATA SHEETS

## WETLAND DETERMINATION DATA FORM - Midwest Region

Project/Site: Fox Squirrel Solar	City/County: Mt. S	terling/Madison	Sampling Date: 3/6/20
Applicant/Owner: Geenex		State: OH	Sampling Point:
Investigator(s): C.Brendel	Section, Township, F	Range:	
Landform (hillside, terrace, etc.):	Local relief	f (concave, convex, none):	
Slope (%): Lat:	Long:		Datum: NAD83
Soil Map Unit Name: Kokomo silty clay loam, 0 to 2 percent		NWI classif	ication: N/A
Are climatic / hydrologic conditions on the site typical for this		No (If no, exp	
Are Vegetation, Soil, or Hydrologysignific	antly disturbed? Are "Norma	al Circumstances" present?	Yes X No
Are Vegetation, Soil, or Hydrologynatural	lly problematic? (If needed,	explain any answers in Rer	narks.)
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS – Attach site map sh	owing sampling point	locations, transects,	, important features, etc.
Hydrophytic Vegetation Present? Yes X No Hydric Soil Present? Yes X No Wetland Hydrology Present? Yes X No			No
Remarks: Wetlands A/B			
<b>VEGETATION</b> – Use scientific names of plants.			
	olute Dominant Indicator cover Species? Status	Dominance Test wor	ksheet:
1.		Number of Dominant S	Species That
2		Are OBL, FACW, or F	
3		Total Number of Domi Across All Strata:	inant Species 1 (B)
5.		Percent of Dominant S	
Sapling/Shrub Stratum (Plot size: )	=Total Cover	Are OBL, FACW, or F.	
1		Prevalence Index wo	rksheet:
2.		Total % Cover of:	
3.		OBL species 0	x 1 = 0
4		FACW species 10	
5	=Total Cover	FAC species 0 FACU species 0	
   <u>Herb Stratum</u>	-10lai 00vei	UPL species 0	
1. Phalaris arundinacea 10	00 Yes FACW	Column Totals: 10  Prevalence Index =	0 (A) 200 (B)
3.		-	2.00
4.		Hydrophytic Vegetati	ion Indicators:
5		- I <del></del>	Hydrophytic Vegetation
6.		X 2 - Dominance Te	
7		X 3 - Prevalence Ind	lex is ≤3.0° Adaptations¹ (Provide supporting
8		- I <del></del>	s or on a separate sheet)
10.		Problematic Hydro	ophytic Vegetation <sup>1</sup> (Explain)
	00 =Total Cover	<sup>1</sup> Indicators of hydric so be present, unless dis	oil and wetland hydrology must turbed or problematic.
1		- Hydrophytic	
2.	=Total Cover	Vegetation Present? Yes	X No
Describes (line) also also de consente de la consen		Tresent: Tes	<u> </u>
Remarks: (Include photo numbers here or on a separate sh	leer.)		

US Army Corps of Engineers

SOIL Sampling Point:

Depth	Matrix		Redo	x Featur						
(inches)	Color (moist)	%	Color (moist)	%	Type <sup>1</sup>	Loc <sup>2</sup>	Texture	_	Remarks	
0-14	7.5YR 5/3	75	10YR 5/8	25	С	M	Loamy/Clayey	Promine	ent redox concer	trations
								_		
								_		
								_		
•	ncentration, D=Depl	etion, RM	=Reduced Matrix, N	/IS=Mas	ked Sand	d Grains.			ining, M=Matrix	_
lydric Soil I			0 1 0		. (0.1)				ematic Hydric S	oils':
Histosol (			Sandy Gle					oast Prairie Red		
	pedon (A2)		Sandy Red					n-Manganese		
Black His			Stripped M		5)			ed Parent Mate		
	Sulfide (A4)		Dark Surfa	` '				-	k Surface (F22)	
	Layers (A5)		Loamy Mu				O1	her (Explain in	Remarks)	
2 cm Mud	` '	(* 4 4)	Loamy Gle							
	Below Dark Surface	(A11)	X Depleted N				3, ,,			
	k Surface (A12)		Redox Dar		, ,				ytic vegetation a	
	ucky Mineral (S1)	`	Depleted D		` '	)			y must be prese	nι,
	cky Peat or Peat (S3	)	Redox Dep		S (FO)		ui	less disturbed	or problematic.	
	ayer (if observed):									
Type:	-1 \.						Under Oall Book	10	Waa V	N
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US Army Corps of Engineers Midwest Region – Version 2.0



#### **DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY**

HUNTINGTON DISTRICT, CORPS OF ENGINEERS 502 EIGHTH STREET HUNTINGTON, WEST VIRGINIA 25701-2070

March 23, 2021

Regulatory Division North Branch LRH-2021-212-SCR-Bradford Branch

#### PRELIMINARY JURISDICTIONAL DETERMINATION

Mr. Juergen Fehr Greenex Solar 1930 Abbott Street Charlotte, North Carolina 28203

Dear Mr. Fehr:

I refer to the *Wetland Delineation Report Proposed Fox Squirrel Solar Farm – Additional Parcels, Yankeetown Chenoweth Road, Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio* dated December 15, 2020, submitted on your behalf by Terracon Consultants, Inc., and received in this office on March 11, 2021. You have requested a preliminary jurisdictional determination (JD) for the potential jurisdictional aquatic resources on the approximately 1,482-acre site located east of Yankeetown Chenoweth Road in Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio at approximately 39.80802 latitude, -83.403073 longitude. Your JD request has been assigned the following file number: LRH-2021-212-SCR-Bradford Branch. Please reference this number on all future correspondence related to this JD request.

The United States Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) authority to regulate waters of the United States is based on the definitions and limits of jurisdiction contained in 33 CFR 328, including the amendment to 33 CFR 328.3 (85 Federal Register 22250), and 33 CFR 329. Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (Section 404) requires a Department of the Army (DA) permit be obtained prior to discharging dredged and/or fill material into waters of the United States, including wetlands. Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (Section 10) requires a DA permit be obtained for any work in, on, over or under a navigable water.

Based upon a review of the information provided, this office has determined 0.29 acre of two (2) emergent wetlands (Wetlands A and B), 7,388 linear feet of two (2) perennial streams (Streams 1 and 3), 7,537 linear feet of one (1) intermittent stream (Stream 1), and 912 linear feet of one (1) ephemeral stream (Stream 2) are located within the 1,482-acre site. The aquatic resources identified above and on the enclosed preliminary JD form may be waters of the United States in accordance with the Regulatory Guidance Letter for JDs issued by the Corps on October 31, 2016 (Regulatory Guidance Letter No. 16-01). As indicated in the guidance, this preliminary JD is non-binding and cannot be appealed (33 CFR 331.2), and only provides a written indication that waters of the United States, including wetlands, may be present on-site.

You have declined to exercise the option to obtain an approved JD in this instance and at this time for the above aquatic resources. However, for the purposes of the determination of impacts, compensatory mitigation, and other resource protection measures for activities that require authorization from this office, the above aquatic resources will be evaluated as if they are waters of the United States.

Enclosed please find a copy of the preliminary JD form. If you agree with the findings of this preliminary JD and understand your options regarding the same, please sign and date the preliminary JD form and return it to this office within 30 days of receipt of this letter. You should submit the signed copy Kayla Osborne by email at kayla.n.osborne@usace.army.mil or to the following address:

United States Army Corps of Engineers
Huntington District
Attn: North Branch
502 Eighth Street
Huntington, West Virginia 25701

In order for an RFA to be accepted by the Corps, the Corps must determine that it is complete, that it meets the criteria for appeal under 33 CFR 331.5, and that it has been received by the Division Office within 60 days of the date of the NAP. Should you decide to submit an RFA form, it must be received at the above address by May 22, 2021. It is not necessary to submit an RFA form to the Division Office if you do not object to the determination in this letter.

A copy of this letter will be provided to your agent, Scott West with Terracon Consultants, Inc. If you have any questions concerning the above, please contact Kayla Osborne of the North Branch at 304-399-5850, by mail at the above address, or by email at kayla.n.osborne@usace.army.mil.

Sincerely,

LimAMoor

Laurie Moore Regulatory Project Manager North Branch

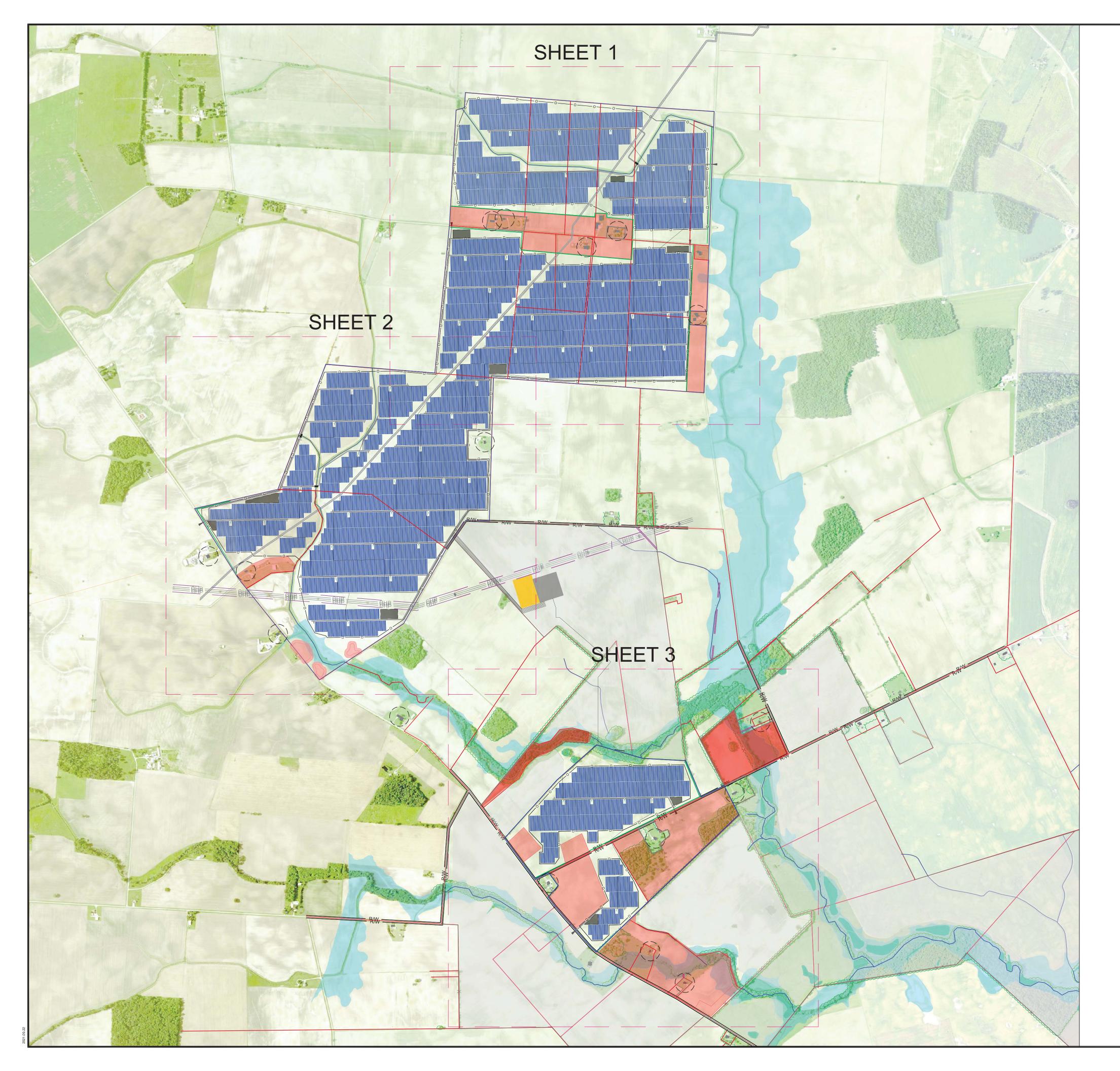
**Enclosures** 

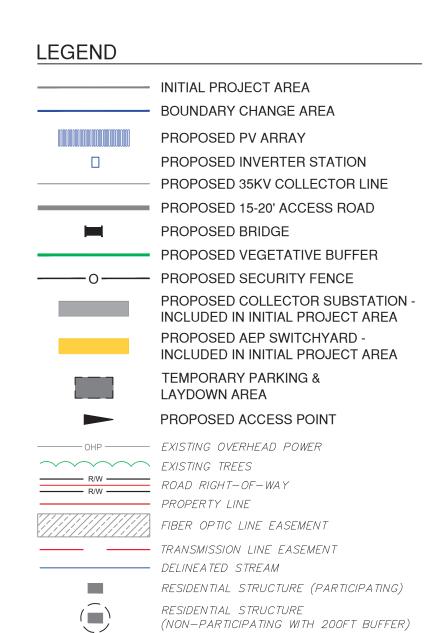
cc:

Scott West, Terracon Consultants, Inc. (via email)

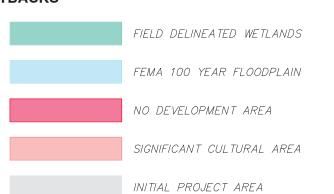


# **APPENDIX D**





## **SETBACKS**



• FINAL PROPERTY LINES, RIGHT-OF-WAYS, EASEMENTS, AND EXISTING INFRASTRUCTURE MAY BE REVISED ONCE ON-SITE ALTA SURVEY HAS BEEN COMPETED.

SETBACK TABLE			
FEATURE	MINIMUM SETBACK TO SOLAR EQUIPMENT	MINIMUM SETBACK TO FENCE LINE	
DITCH EASEMENT	10 ft.		
FIELD DELINEATED STREAM	25 ft.	25 ft.	
FIELD DELINEATED WETLAND	25 ft.	25 ft.	
NO DEVELOPMENT AREAS	50 ft.		
NON-PARTICIPATING PROPERTY LINE	75 ft.	25 ft.	
NON-PARTICIPATING RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE	200 ft.		
ROAD RIGHT-OF-WAY	100 ft.	25 ft.	
TRANSMISSION LINE EASEMENT	25 ft.		

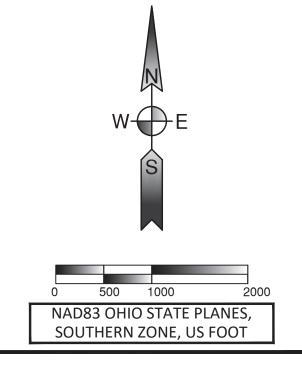
# Fox Squirrel Solar Project

Madison County, Ohio

Rev	Date	Description	Ву
0A	03/12/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS
0B	04/01/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS
0C	04/08/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS
0D	09/22/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS



15445 Innovation Dr. San Diego, CA 92128



THIS DRAWING IS PRELIMINARY AND IS NOT TO BE USED FOR CONSTRUCTION. FOR REVIEW PURPOSES ONLY.

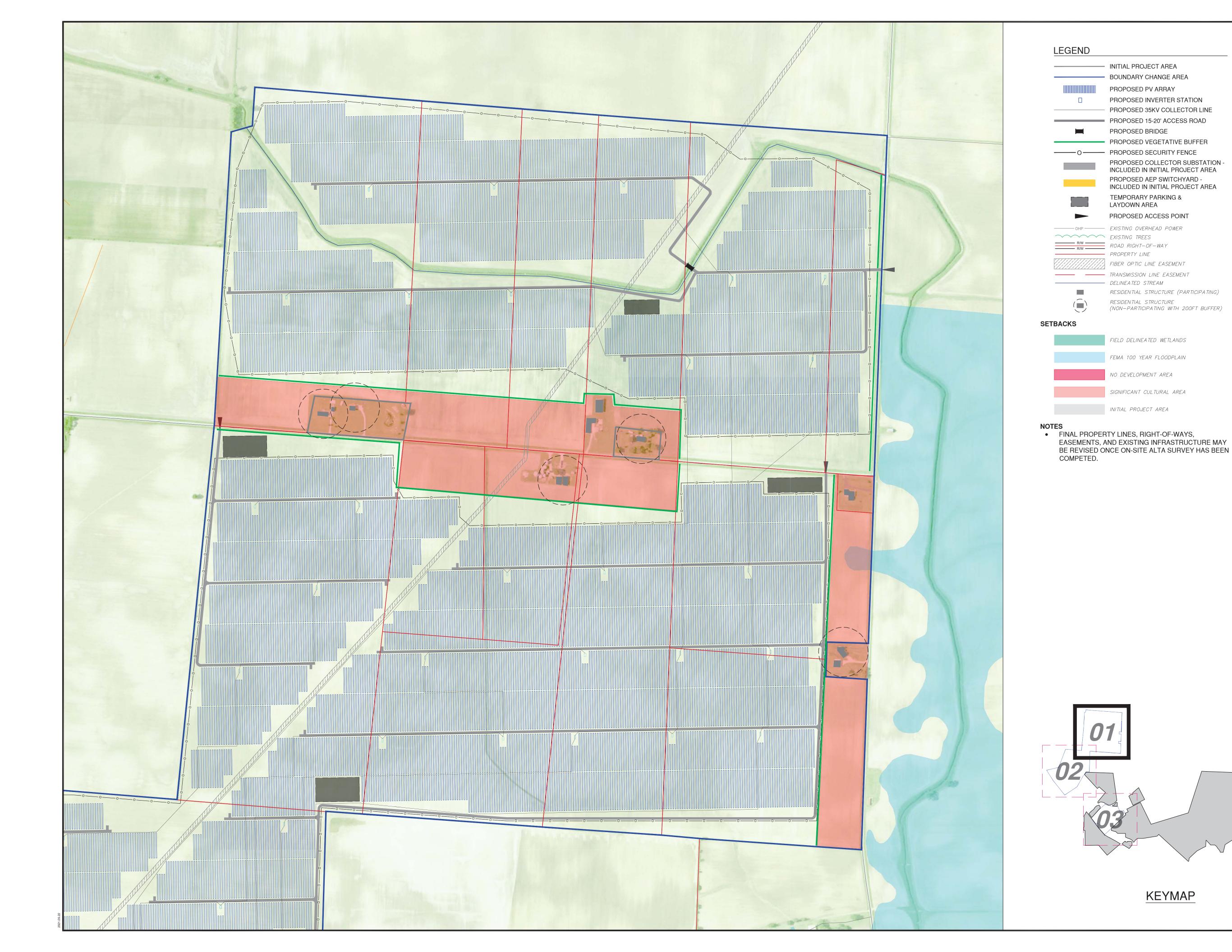


3350 38th Avenue South
Fargo, North Dakota 58104
Phone: 701.280.8500
Fax: 701.237.3191
www.ulteig.com

Design By: T. BERENDS B. PEDERSON Approved By: C. SMAALADEN
Project Number: 21.00665

**OVERALL SITE PLAN** 

FSS-OSP-001



# Fox Squirrel Solar Project Madison County, Ohio

BOUNDARY CHANGE AREA

PROPOSED INVERTER STATION PROPOSED 35KV COLLECTOR LINE

PROPOSED VEGETATIVE BUFFER

PROPOSED AEP SWITCHYARD -INCLUDED IN INITIAL PROJECT AREA

TEMPORARY PARKING &

PROPOSED ACCESS POINT

LAYDOWN AREA

--- PROPERTY LINE

--- DELINEATED STREAM

PROPOSED COLLECTOR SUBSTATION - INCLUDED IN INITIAL PROJECT AREA

RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE (PARTICIPATING)

RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE (NON—PARTICIPATING WITH 200FT BUFFER)

**KEYMAP** 

FIELD DELINEATED WETLANDS

FEMA 100 YEAR FLOODPLAIN

SIGNIFICANT CULTURAL AREA

NO DEVELOPMENT AREA

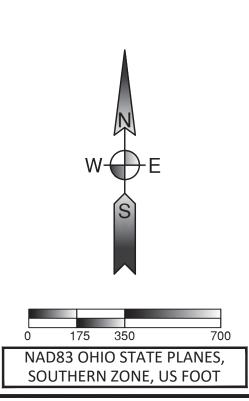
PROPOSED PV ARRAY

PROPOSED BRIDGE

Rev	Date	Description	Ву
0A	03/12/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS
0B	04/01/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS
0C	04/08/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS
0D	09/22/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS



15445 Innovation Dr. San Diego, CA 92128



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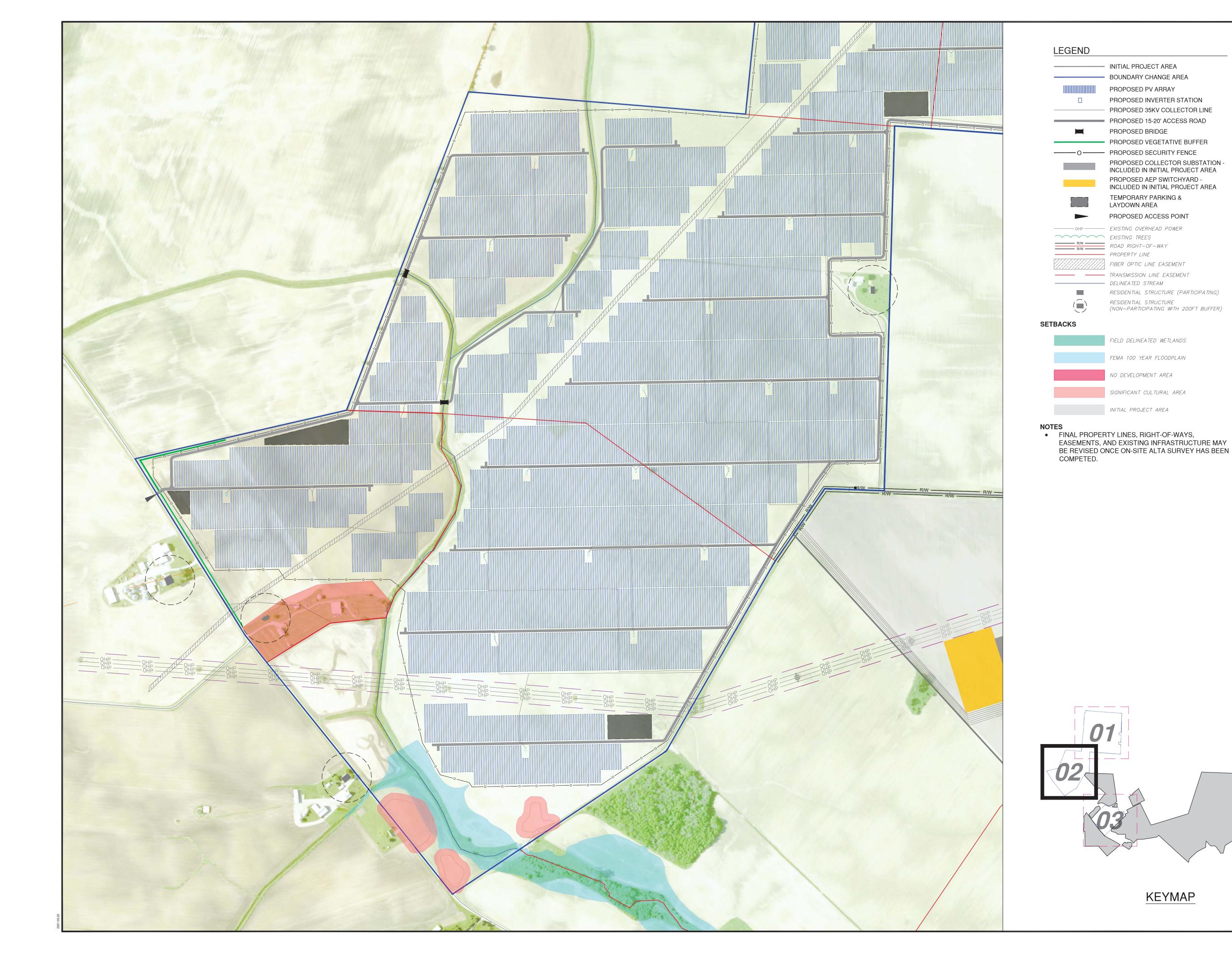
3350 38th Avenue South Fargo, North Dakota 58104 Phone: 701.280.8500 Fax: 701.237.3191 www.ulteig.com

Design By:

T. BERENDS B. PEDERSON Drawn By: Approved By: C. SMAALADEN
Project Number: 21.00665

SITE PLAN (1 OF 3)

DWG #: FSS-CVL-001



# Fox Squirrel Solar Project Madison County, Ohio

BOUNDARY CHANGE AREA

PROPOSED INVERTER STATION PROPOSED 35KV COLLECTOR LINE

PROPOSED VEGETATIVE BUFFER

PROPOSED AEP SWITCHYARD -INCLUDED IN INITIAL PROJECT AREA

TEMPORARY PARKING &

PROPOSED ACCESS POINT

LAYDOWN AREA

--- PROPERTY LINE

--- DELINEATED STREAM

PROPOSED COLLECTOR SUBSTATION - INCLUDED IN INITIAL PROJECT AREA

RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE (PARTICIPATING)

RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE (NON—PARTICIPATING WITH 200FT BUFFER)

FIELD DELINEATED WETLANDS

FEMA 100 YEAR FLOODPLAIN

SIGNIFICANT CULTURAL AREA

**KEYMAP** 

NO DEVELOPMENT AREA

INITIAL PROJECT AREA

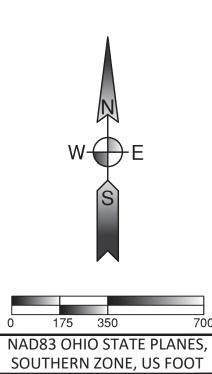
PROPOSED PV ARRAY

PROPOSED BRIDGE

Rev	Date	Description	Ву
0A	03/12/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS
0B	04/01/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS
0C	04/08/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS
0D	09/22/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS



15445 Innovation Dr. San Diego, CA 92128



# THIS DRAWING IS PRELIMINARY AND IS NOT TO BE USED FOR CONSTRUCTION. FOR **REVIEW PURPOSES** ONLY.



3350 38th Avenue South
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Design By: T. BERENDS
Drawn By: B. PEDERSON
Approved By: C. SMAALADEN
Project Number: 21.00665

SITE PLAN (2 OF 3)

DWG #: FSS-CVL-002



# Fox Squirrel Solar Project

Madison County, Ohio

BOUNDARY CHANGE AREA

PROPOSED INVERTER STATION PROPOSED 35KV COLLECTOR LINE

PROPOSED VEGETATIVE BUFFER

PROPOSED AEP SWITCHYARD -INCLUDED IN INITIAL PROJECT AREA

TEMPORARY PARKING &

PROPOSED ACCESS POINT

LAYDOWN AREA

- PROPERTY LINE

— DELINEATED STREAM

PROPOSED COLLECTOR SUBSTATION - INCLUDED IN INITIAL PROJECT AREA

RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE (PARTICIPATING)

RESIDENTIAL STRUCTURE (NON—PARTICIPATING WITH 200FT BUFFER)

FIELD DELINEATED WETLANDS

FEMA 100 YEAR FLOODPLAIN

SIGNIFICANT CULTURAL AREA

**KEYMAP** 

NO DEVELOPMENT AREA

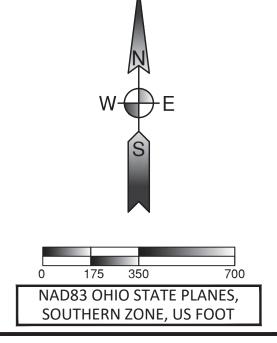
PROPOSED PV ARRAY

PROPOSED BRIDGE

Rev	Date	Description	Ву
0A	03/12/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS
0B	04/01/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS
0C	04/08/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS
0D	09/22/2021	10% SUBMITTAL	CSS



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Design By: T. BERENDS
Drawn By: B. PEDERSON
Approved By: C. SMAALADEN
Project Number: 21.00665

SITE PLAN (3 OF 3)

DWG #: FSS-CVL-003



# **APPENDIX E**



# Primary Headwater Habitat Evaluation Form

HHEI Score (sum of metrics 1, 2, 3): SITE NAME/LOCATION Fox Squirrel Mt. Sterling, Ohio SITE NUMBER RIVER BASIN DRAINAGE AREA (mi2) 8,542 LENGTH OF STREAM REACH (ft) LAT. LONG. RIVER CODE RIVER MILE **COMMENTS** Bradford Branch - intermittent portion DATE 11/12/20 SCORER C. Brendel NOTE: Complete All Items On This Form - Refer to "Field Evaluation Manual for Ohio's PHWH Streams" for Instructions □ NONE / NATURAL CHANNEL □ RECOVERED □ RECOVERING □ RECENT OR NO RECOVERY STREAM CHANNEL **MODIFICATIONS:** SUBSTRATE (Estimate percent of every type of substrate present. Check ONLY two predominant substrate TYPE boxes HHEI (Max of 32). Add total number of significant substrate types found (Max of 8). Final metric score is sum of boxes A & B. Metric TYPE PERCENT PERCENT **Points** BLDR SLABS [16 pts] SILT [3 pt] 50% BOULDER (>256 mm) [16 pts] LEAF PACK/WOODY DEBRIS [3 pts] 0% 0% Substrate 0% 0% BEDROCK [16 pt] FINE DETRITUS [3 pts] Max = 400% 25% COBBLE (65-256 mm) [12 pts] CLAY or HARDPAN [0 pt] 25% 0% MUCK [0 pts] GRAVEL (2-64 mm) [9 pts] 15 0% 0% SAND (<2 mm) [6 pts] ARTIFICIAL [3 pts] Total of Percentages of (B) 0.00% 100% A + BBldr Slabs, Boulder, Cobble, Bedrock 12 SCORE OF TWO MOST PREDOMINATE SUBSTRATE TYPES: TOTAL NUMBER OF SUBSTRATE TYPES: 3 Maximum Pool Depth (Measure the maximum pool depth within the 61 meter (200 ft) evaluation reach at the time of Pool Depth 2. evaluation. Avoid plunge pools from road culverts or storm water pipes) (Check ONLY one box): Max = 30> 30 centimeters [20 pts] > 5 cm - 10 cm [15 pts] > 22.5 - 30 cm [30 pts] < 5 cm [5 pts] 25 > 10 - 22.5 cm [25 pts] NO WATER OR MOIST CHANNEL [0 pts] COMMENTS MAXIMUM POOL DEPTH (centimeters): BANK FULL WIDTH (Measured as the average of 3-4 measurements) (Check ONLY one box): Bankfull > 4.0 meters (> 13') [30 pts] > 1.0 m - 1.5 m (> 3' 3" - 4' 8") [15 pts] Width > 3.0 m - 4.0 m (> 9' 7" - 13') [25 pts] Max=30 ≤ 1.0 m (<=3' 3") [5 pts] > 1.5 m - 3.0 m (> 9' 7" - 4' 8") [20 pts] 20 COMMENTS AVERAGE BANKFULL WIDTH (meters): This information must also be completed RIPARIAN ZONE AND FLOODPLAIN QUALITY ☆NOTE: River Left (L) and Right (R) as looking downstream ☆ RIPARIAN WIDTH FLOODPLAIN QUALITY R (Per Bank) R (Most Predominant per Bank) Wide >10m Mature Forest. Wetland Conservation Tillage Immature Forest, Shrub or Old Moderate 5-10m Urban or Industrial Field Open Pasture, Row Crop Narrow <5m Residential, Park, New Field Fenced Pasture Mining or Construction None COMMENTS Riparian quality relatively equal on both banks FLOW REGIME (At Time of Evaluation) (Check ONLY one box): Moist Channel, isolated pools, no flow (Intermittent) Stream Flowing Subsurface flow with isolated pools (Interstitial) Dry channel, no water (Ephemeral) COMMENTS SINUOSITY (Number of bends per 61 m (200 ft) of channel) (Check ONLY one box): None 1.0 2.0 3.0 0.5 15 25 >3 STREAM GRADIENT ESTIMATE Moderate (2 ft/100 ft) Flat (0.5 ft/100 ft) Flat to Moderate Moderate to Severe Severe (10 ft/100 ft)

ADDITIONAL STREAM INFORMATION (This Information Must Also be Completed):	
QHEI PERFORMED? - Yes V No QHEI Score (If Yes, Att	tach Completed QHEI Form)
DOWNSTREAM DESIGNATED USE(S)	
WWH Name:	Distance from Evaluated Stream
CWH Name: _	_ Distance from Evaluated Stream _
EWH Name:	Distance from Evaluated Stream
MAPPING: ATTACH COPIES OF MAPS, INCLUDING THE ENTIRE WATERSHE	ED AREA. CLEARLY MARK THE SITE LOCATION
USGS Quadrangle Name: Mt. Sterling, Ohio NRCS Soil Map	Page: NRCS Soil Map Stream Order
County: Madison Township / City:	
MISCELLANEOUS	
Base Flow Conditions? (Y/N):_ N Date of last precipitation:_	Quantity: 0.00
Photograph Information:	
Elevated Turbidity? (Y/N): N Canopy (% open): 0%	
Were samples collected for water chemistry? (Y/N): N (Note lab sample no. or id.	. and attach results) Lab Number:
Field Measures: Temp (°C) Dissolved Oxygen (mq/l) pH (S.U.)	Conductivity (µmhos/cm)
Is the sampling reach representative of the stream (Y/N) If not, please explain:	
Additional comments/description of pollution impacts:	
Performed? (Y/N):  Y  (If Yes, Record all observations. Voucher collections options ID number. Include appropriate field data sheets from the P Fish Observed? (Y/N)  Frogs or Tadpoles Observed? (Y/N)  Voucher? (Y/N)  Voucher? (Y/N)  Aquatic Macroinvertebra  Comments Regarding Biology:	Voucher? (Y/N) N

DRAWING AND NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF STREAM REACH (This <u>must</u> be completed):

Include important landmarks and other features of interest for site evaluation and a narrative description of the stream's location







# Primary Headwater Habitat Evaluation Form

HHEI Score (sum of metrics 1, 2, 3): SITE NAME/LOCATION Fox Squirrel Mt. Sterling, Ohio SITE NUMBER RIVER BASIN DRAINAGE AREA (mi2) 8,542 LENGTH OF STREAM REACH (ft) LONG. RIVER CODE RIVER MILE DATE 11/12/20 **COMMENTS** Bradford Branch - perennial portion SCORER C. Brendel NOTE: Complete All Items On This Form - Refer to "Field Evaluation Manual for Ohio's PHWH Streams" for Instructions STREAM CHANNEL **MODIFICATIONS:** SUBSTRATE (Estimate percent of every type of substrate present. Check ONLY two predominant substrate TYPE boxes HHEI (Max of 32). Add total number of significant substrate types found (Max of 8). Final metric score is sum of boxes A & B. Metric TYPE PERCENT PERCENT **Points** BLDR SLABS [16 pts] SILT [3 pt] 35% BOULDER (>256 mm) [16 pts] LEAF PACK/WOODY DEBRIS [3 pts] 15% 0% Substrate 5% 0% BEDROCK [16 pt] FINE DETRITUS [3 pts] Max = 400% 0% COBBLE (65-256 mm) [12 pts] CLAY or HARDPAN [0 pt] 45% 0% MUCK [0 pts] GRAVEL (2-64 mm) [9 pts] 17 0% 0% SAND (<2 mm) [6 pts] ARTIFICIAL [3 pts] Total of Percentages of (B) 5.00% 100% A + BBldr Slabs, Boulder, Cobble, Bedrock 12 SCORE OF TWO MOST PREDOMINATE SUBSTRATE TYPES: TOTAL NUMBER OF SUBSTRATE TYPES: 5 Maximum Pool Depth (Measure the maximum pool depth within the 61 meter (200 ft) evaluation reach at the time of Pool Depth 2. evaluation. Avoid plunge pools from road culverts or storm water pipes) (Check ONLY one box): Max = 30> 30 centimeters [20 pts] > 5 cm - 10 cm [15 pts] > 22.5 - 30 cm [30 pts] < 5 cm [5 pts] 30 > 10 - 22.5 cm [25 pts] NO WATER OR MOIST CHANNEL [0 pts] COMMENTS MAXIMUM POOL DEPTH (centimeters): BANK FULL WIDTH (Measured as the average of 3-4 measurements) Bankfull (Check ONLY one box): > 4.0 meters (> 13') [30 pts] > 1.0 m - 1.5 m (> 3' 3" - 4' 8") [15 pts] Width > 3.0 m - 4.0 m (> 9' 7" - 13') [25 pts] Max=30 ≤ 1.0 m (<=3' 3") [5 pts] > 1.5 m - 3.0 m (> 9' 7" - 4' 8") [20 pts] 30 COMMENTS AVERAGE BANKFULL WIDTH (meters): This information must also be completed RIPARIAN ZONE AND FLOODPLAIN QUALITY ☆NOTE: River Left (L) and Right (R) as looking downstream ☆ RIPARIAN WIDTH FLOODPLAIN QUALITY R (Per Bank) R (Most Predominant per Bank) Wide >10m Mature Forest. Wetland Conservation Tillage Immature Forest, Shrub or Old Moderate 5-10m Urban or Industrial Field Open Pasture, Row Crop Narrow <5m Residential, Park, New Field Fenced Pasture Mining or Construction None COMMENTS Riparian quality relatively equal on both banks FLOW REGIME (At Time of Evaluation) (Check ONLY one box): Moist Channel, isolated pools, no flow (Intermittent) Stream Flowing Subsurface flow with isolated pools (Interstitial) Dry channel, no water (Ephemeral) COMMENTS SINUOSITY (Number of bends per 61 m (200 ft) of channel) (Check ONLY one box): None 1.0 2.0 3.0 0.5 15 25 >3 STREAM GRADIENT ESTIMATE Moderate (2 ft/100 ft) Flat (0.5 ft/100 ft) Flat to Moderate Moderate to Severe Severe (10 ft/100 ft)

ADDITIONAL STREAM INFORMATION (This Information Must Also be Completed):	
QHEI PERFORMED? - Yes V No QHEI Score (If Yes, Att	tach Completed QHEI Form)
DOWNSTREAM DESIGNATED USE(S)	
WWH Name:	Distance from Evaluated Stream
CWH Name: _	_ Distance from Evaluated Stream _
EWH Name:	Distance from Evaluated Stream
MAPPING: ATTACH COPIES OF MAPS, INCLUDING THE ENTIRE WATERSHE	ED AREA. CLEARLY MARK THE SITE LOCATION
USGS Quadrangle Name: Mt. Sterling, Ohio NRCS Soil Map	Page: NRCS Soil Map Stream Order
County: Madison Township / City:	
MISCELLANEOUS	
Base Flow Conditions? (Y/N):_ N Date of last precipitation:_	Quantity: 0.00
Photograph Information:	
Elevated Turbidity? (Y/N): N Canopy (% open): 0%	
Were samples collected for water chemistry? (Y/N): N (Note lab sample no. or id.	. and attach results) Lab Number:
Field Measures: Temp (°C) Dissolved Oxygen (mq/l) pH (S.U.)	Conductivity (µmhos/cm)
Is the sampling reach representative of the stream (Y/N) If not, please explain:	
Additional comments/description of pollution impacts:	
Performed? (Y/N):  Y  (If Yes, Record all observations. Voucher collections options ID number. Include appropriate field data sheets from the P Fish Observed? (Y/N)  Frogs or Tadpoles Observed? (Y/N)  Voucher? (Y/N)  Voucher? (Y/N)  Aquatic Macroinvertebra  Comments Regarding Biology:	Voucher? (Y/N) N

DRAWING AND NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF STREAM REACH (This <u>must</u> be completed):

Include important landmarks and other features of interest for site evaluation and a narrative description of the stream's location







# Primary Headwater Habitat Evaluation Form

44

HHEI Score (sum of metrics 1, 2, 3): SITE NAME/LOCATION Fox Squirrel Mt. Sterling, Ohio SITE NUMBER RIVER BASIN DRAINAGE AREA (mi2) 1,027 LENGTH OF STREAM REACH (ft) LAT. LONG. RIVER CODE RIVER MILE DATE 11/12/20 SCORER C. Brendel **COMMENTS** Stream 2 - ephemearl NOTE: Complete All Items On This Form - Refer to "Field Evaluation Manual for Ohio's PHWH Streams" for Instructions □ NONE / NATURAL CHANNEL □ RECOVERED □ RECOVERING □ RECENT OR NO RECOVERY STREAM CHANNEL **MODIFICATIONS:** SUBSTRATE (Estimate percent of every type of substrate present. Check ONLY two predominant substrate TYPE boxes HHEI (Max of 32). Add total number of significant substrate types found (Max of 8). Final metric score is sum of boxes A & B. Metric TYPE PERCENT PERCENT **Points** BLDR SLABS [16 pts] SILT [3 pt] 50% BOULDER (>256 mm) [16 pts] LEAF PACK/WOODY DEBRIS [3 pts] 0% Substrate 0% 0% BEDROCK [16 pt] FINE DETRITUS [3 pts] Max = 400% 50% COBBLE (65-256 mm) [12 pts] CLAY or HARDPAN [0 pt] 0% 0% MUCK [0 pts] GRAVEL (2-64 mm) [9 pts] 14 0% 0% ARTIFICIAL [3 pts] SAND (<2 mm) [6 pts] Total of Percentages of (B) 0.00% 100% A + BBldr Slabs, Boulder, Cobble, Bedrock SCORE OF TWO MOST PREDOMINATE SUBSTRATE TYPES: TOTAL NUMBER OF SUBSTRATE TYPES: 2 Maximum Pool Depth (Measure the maximum pool depth within the 61 meter (200 ft) evaluation reach at the time of Pool Depth 2. evaluation. Avoid plunge pools from road culverts or storm water pipes) (Check ONLY one box): Max = 30> 30 centimeters [20 pts] > 5 cm - 10 cm [15 pts] > 22.5 - 30 cm [30 pts] < 5 cm [5 pts] 15 > 10 - 22.5 cm [25 pts] NO WATER OR MOIST CHANNEL [0 pts] COMMENTS MAXIMUM POOL DEPTH (centimeters): BANK FULL WIDTH (Measured as the average of 3-4 measurements) (Check ONLY one box): Bankfull > 4.0 meters (> 13') [30 pts] > 1.0 m - 1.5 m (> 3' 3" - 4' 8") [15 pts] Width > 3.0 m - 4.0 m (> 9' 7" - 13') [25 pts] Max=30 ≤ 1.0 m (<=3' 3") [5 pts] > 1.5 m - 3.0 m (> 9' 7" - 4' 8") [20 pts] 15 COMMENTS AVERAGE BANKFULL WIDTH (meters): This information must also be completed RIPARIAN ZONE AND FLOODPLAIN QUALITY ☆NOTE: River Left (L) and Right (R) as looking downstream ☆ RIPARIAN WIDTH FLOODPLAIN QUALITY R (Per Bank) R (Most Predominant per Bank) Wide >10m Mature Forest. Wetland Conservation Tillage Immature Forest, Shrub or Old Moderate 5-10m Urban or Industrial Field Open Pasture, Row Crop Narrow <5m Residential, Park, New Field Fenced Pasture Mining or Construction None COMMENTS Riparian quality relatively equal on both banks FLOW REGIME (At Time of Evaluation) (Check ONLY one box): Moist Channel, isolated pools, no flow (Intermittent) Stream Flowing Subsurface flow with isolated pools (Interstitial) Dry channel, no water (Ephemeral) COMMENTS SINUOSITY (Number of bends per 61 m (200 ft) of channel) (Check ONLY one box): None 1.0 2.0 3.0 0.5 15 25 >3 STREAM GRADIENT ESTIMATE Flat (0.5 ft/100 ft) Flat to Moderate Moderate (2 ft/100 ft) Moderate to Severe Severe (10 ft/100 ft)

ADDITIONAL STREAM INFORMATION (This Information Must Also be Completed):	
QHEI PERFORMED? - Yes V No QHEI Score (If Yes, Att	tach Completed QHEI Form)
DOWNSTREAM DESIGNATED USE(S)	
WWH Name:	Distance from Evaluated Stream
CWH Name: _	_ Distance from Evaluated Stream _
EWH Name:	Distance from Evaluated Stream
MAPPING: ATTACH COPIES OF MAPS, INCLUDING THE ENTIRE WATERSHE	ED AREA. CLEARLY MARK THE SITE LOCATION
USGS Quadrangle Name: Mt. Sterling, Ohio NRCS Soil Map	Page: NRCS Soil Map Stream Order
County: Madison Township / City:	
MISCELLANEOUS	
Base Flow Conditions? (Y/N):_ N Date of last precipitation:_	Quantity: 0.00
Photograph Information:	
Elevated Turbidity? (Y/N): N Canopy (% open): 0%	
Were samples collected for water chemistry? (Y/N): N (Note lab sample no. or id.	. and attach results) Lab Number:
Field Measures: Temp (°C) Dissolved Oxygen (mq/l) pH (S.U.)	Conductivity (µmhos/cm)
Is the sampling reach representative of the stream (Y/N) If not, please explain:	
Additional comments/description of pollution impacts:	
Performed? (Y/N):  Y  (If Yes, Record all observations. Voucher collections options ID number. Include appropriate field data sheets from the P Fish Observed? (Y/N)  Frogs or Tadpoles Observed? (Y/N)  Voucher? (Y/N)  Voucher? (Y/N)  Aquatic Macroinvertebra  Comments Regarding Biology:	Voucher? (Y/N) N

DRAWING AND NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF STREAM REACH (This <u>must</u> be completed):

Include important landmarks and other features of interest for site evaluation and a narrative description of the stream's location







# **ChieFP** Primary Headwater Habitat Evaluation Form

HHEI Score (sum of metrics 1, 2, 3):

SITE NAME/LOCATION Fox Squirrel Mt. Sterling, Ohio	
SITE NUMBER RIVER BASIN DRAINAGE AREA (mi²)	
LENGTH OF STREAM REACH (ft) 6,383 LAT. LONG. RIVER CODE RIVER MILE	
DATE 11/12/20 SCORER C. Brendel COMMENTS Bradford Creek	
NOTE: Complete All Items On This Form - Refer to "Field Evaluation Manual for Ohio's PHWH Streams" for Instru	uctions
STREAM CHANNEL	OVERY
1. SUBSTRATE (Estimate percent of every type of substrate present. Check ONLY two predominant substrate TYPE boxes	uuei
(Max of 32). Add total number of significant substrate types found (Max of 8). Final metric score is sum of boxes A & B.  TYPE  PERCENT  TYPE  PERCENT	HHEI Metric
□ □ BLDR SLABS [16 pts] 0% SILT [3 pt] 55%	Points
□       BOULDER (>256 mm) [16 pts]       0%       □       LEAF PACK/WOODY DEBRIS [3 pts]       0%         □       BEDROCK [16 pt]       0%       □       FINE DETRITUS [3 pts]       0%	Substrat
☐ ☐ COBBLE (65-256 mm) [12 pts] ☐ ☐ CLAY or HARDPAN [0 pt] ☐ ☐ 10%	Max = 40
GRAVEL (2-64 mm) [9 pts] 25% MUCK [0 pts] 5%	16
SAND (<2 mm) [6 pts]	
Total of Percentages of 0.00% (A) Substrate Percentage Check (B)	A + B
SCORE OF TWO MOST PREDOMINATE SUBSTRATE TYPES:   12   TOTAL NUMBER OF SUBSTRATE TYPES:   4	
2. Maximum Pool Depth (Measure the maximum pool depth within the 61 meter (200 ft) evaluation reach at the time of	Pool Dep
evaluation. Avoid plunge pools from road culverts or storm water pipes) (Check ONLY one box):  > 30 centimeters [20 pts]  > 5 cm - 10 cm [15 pts]	Max = 30
> 22.5 - 30 cm [30 pts] < 5 cm [5 pts]	25
> 10 - 22.5 cm [25 pts] NO WATER OR MOIST CHANNEL [0 pts]	25
COMMENTS MAXIMUM POOL DEPTH (centimeters):	
3. BANK FULL WIDTH (Measured as the average of 3-4 measurements) (Check ONLY one box):	Bankful
> 4.0 meters (> 13') [30 pts] > 3.0 m - 4.0 m (> 9' 7" - 13') [25 pts] > 1.0 m (<=3' 3") [5 pts]	Width Max=30
> 1.5 m - 3.0 m (> 9' 7" - 4' 8") [20 pts]	
COMMENTSAVERAGE BANKFULL WIDTH (meters):	25
This information <u>must</u> also be completed  RIPARIAN ZONE AND FLOODPLAIN QUALITY ☆NOTE: River Left (L) and Right (R) as looking downstream ☆	
RIPARIAN WIDTH FLOODPLAIN QUALITY	
L R (Per Bank) L R (Most Predominant per Bank) L R  Wide >10m Mature Forest, Wetland Conservation Tillage	
Moderate 5-10m Immature Forest, Shrub or Old Urban or Industrial	
Field  Narrow <5m  Residential, Park, New Field  Open Pasture, Row Cro	pp
Narrow <5m Residential, Park, New Field Mining or Construction	
COMMENTS riparian quality relatively equal on both banks	_
FLOW REGIME (At Time of Evaluation) (Check ONLY one box):	
Stream Flowing  Subsurface flow with isolated pools (Interstitial)  Moist Channel, isolated pools, no flow (Intermittent)  Dry channel, no water (Ephemeral)	)
COMMENTS  COMMENTS	-
SINUOSITY (Number of ben <u>ds</u> per 61 m (200 ft) of channel) (Check ONLY one box):	
☐ None ☐ 1.0 ☐ 2.0 ☐ 3.0	
None 1.0 2.0 3.0 3.0 5 1.5 2.5 3	
☐ None ☐ 1.0 ☐ 2.0 ☐ 3.0	)O ft)

ADDITIONAL STREAM INFORMATION (This Information Must Also be Completed):	
QHEI PERFORMED? - Yes V No QHEI Score (If Yes, Atta	ach Completed QHEI Form)
DOWNSTREAM DESIGNATED USE(S)	
WWH Name:	Distance from Evaluated Stream
CWH Name: _	_ Distance from Evaluated Stream
EWH Name:	Distance from Evaluated Stream
MAPPING: ATTACH COPIES OF MAPS, INCLUDING THE ENTIRE WATERSHED	O AREA. CLEARLY MARK THE SITE LOCATION
USGS Quadrangle Name: Mt. Sterling, Ohio  NRCS Soil Map P	Page: NRCS Soil Map Stream Order
County: Madison Township / City:	
MISCELLANEOUS	
Base Flow Conditions? (Y/N): N Date of last precipitation:	Quantity: 0.00
Photograph Information:	
Elevated Turbidity? (Y/N): N Canopy (% open): 0%	
Were samples collected for water chemistry? (Y/N): N (Note lab sample no. or id. a	and attach results) Lab Number:
Field Measures: Temp (°C) Dissolved Oxygen (mg/l) pH (S.U.)	Conductivity (µmhos/cm)
Is the sampling reach representative of the stream (Y/N) If not, please explain:	
Additional comments/description of pollution impacts:	
BIOTIC EVALUATION	<u>,</u>
Performed? (Y/N): N (If Yes, Record all observations. Voucher collections optional ID number. Include appropriate field data sheets from the Pri	•
Fish Observed? (Y/N) Voucher? (Y/N) Salamanders Observed? (Y/N) N Frogs or Tadpoles Observed? (Y/N) Voucher? (Y/N) Aquatic Macroinvertebrat	Voucher? (Y/N) N
Comments Regarding Biology:	

DRAWING AND NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF STREAM REACH (This <u>must</u> be completed):

Include important landmarks and other features of interest for site evaluation and a narrative description of the stream's location







# **APPENDIX F**



December 16, 2020

Geenex Solar 1930 Abbott Street Charlotte, North Carolina 28203

Attn: Mr. Juergen Fehr

E: juergen.fehr@geenexsolar.com

Re: Threatened and Endangered Species Report

Proposed Fox Squirrel Solar Farm – Additional Parcels

Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio Terracon Project No. N1207473

Dear Mr. Fehr:

Terracon is pleased to submit the Threatened and Endangered (T&E) Species Review report for the above referenced project. The purpose of our services was to characterize the existing site conditions in an effort to identify any potential habitat for T&E species and submit a report of the findings.

Terracon appreciates the opportunity to have worked for you on this project. If you have any questions regarding the content of this report, please contact me at (513) 612-9094 or via email at swest@terracon.com.

Sincerely,

**TERRACON Consultants, Inc.** 

For

Cassie Brendel Scott E. West
Staff Scientist Group Manager



Proposed Fox Squirrel Solar Farm – Additional
Parcels
Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road
Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio

Date: December 16, 2020 Terracon Project No. N1207473



# **Prepared for:**

Geenex Solar Charlotte, North Carolina

## Prepared by:

Terracon Consultants, Inc. Cincinnati, Ohio

terracon.com



Environmental Facilities Geotechnical Materials

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Threatened and Endangered Species Review
Proposed Fox Squirrel Solar Farm – Additional Parcels
YankeetownChenoweth Road
Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio
Terracon Project No. N1207473
December 16, 2020

#### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Terracon Consultants, Inc. (Terracon) was retained by Geenex (client) to perform a Threatened and Endangered (T&E) Species Review in an effort to identify any known occurrences of federally listed T&E species or any areas of designated critical habitat on or in the vicinity of the proposed, approximately 1,482-acre property, hereafter referred to as the project site. The project site is located between Yankeetown-Chenoweth Road and County Road 84 near Mt. Sterling, Madison County, Ohio. The project site location is depicted on Exhibit 1 in Appendix A.

The purpose of performing a threatened and endangered review at the project site was to characterize the existing site conditions, observe the project site for any potential habitat of federally listed T&E species, and provide recommendations regarding whether or not the T&E species are at risk of take, if potential habitat is observed.

It is important to note that the findings presented in this report represent Terracon's professional opinion, based upon field observations made during the site visit and our experience with current regulatory guidance under the Endangered Species Act. In order to verify the findings presented in this report, further consultation with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) and Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) may be necessary.

#### 2.0 SCOPE OF SERVICES

Terracon performed the following scope of work:

- Regulatory correspondence regarding the potential of threatened, endangered, and candidate species to be listed in the vicinity of the project site;
- Reviewed aerial photographs to assist with identifying existing project site conditions;
- Mobilized to the project site to conduct the preliminary site visit; and
- Completed a T&E Species Review that included project site characterization information, a discussion of applicable data, and recommendations for the project site.

Proposed Fox Squirrel Solar Farm – Additional Parcels ■ Mt. Sterling, Ohio December 16, 2020 ■ Terracon Project No. N1207473



## 3.0 THREATENED AND ENDANGERED SPECIES REVIEW

Terracon has requested a file review by the USFWS and the ODNR in an effort to identify any known occurrences of federally listed T&E species or any areas of designated critical habitat on or in the vicinity of the project site. Concurrence from the USFWS and ODNR has not been received. Additionally, Terracon has reviewed the USFWS Information for Planning and Conservation (IPAC) website for a list of threatened, endangered, and candidate to be listed species for Madison County, Ohio. The IPAC listed three species, which are discussed below. Critical habitat for these species was not identified within project site boundaries. The IPAC review has been included as Appendix C.

- The Indiana bat (*Myotis sodalis*) and Northern long-eared bat (*Myotis septentrionalis*) are federally-listed, endangered species known to occur in Madison County, Ohio. Potential summer roosting habitat for these species generally consists of sites that contain mature and/or standing dead trees with exfoliating bark, and/or stream/river corridors which serve as flight paths. Additionally, sites that contain caves could be used by the Indiana bat and Northern long-eared bat for winter hibernacula. In addition to on-site streams (ephemeral, intermittent, and perennial), forested areas containing mature trees and with relatively open understories were observed within the site boundaries. Therefore, it is Terracon's opinion that potential habitat was identified on the project site. Due to the presence of potential habitat, any tree clearing would need to be performed seasonally (between October 1st and March 31st) to avoid a potential take of the species. If seasonal tree clearing is not possible, additional investigations and consultation with regulatory agencies and may be necessary.
- The Scioto madtom (*Noturus trautmani*) is a federally-listed, endangered fish species listed as potentially occurring in Madison County, Ohio. This species was typically found in high quality water in stream riffles of moderate currents on gravel bottoms. Streams meeting these criteria were observed on site during the site reconnaissance. However, because madtom populations have not been observed since 1957, it is Terracon's opinion that this species is not present on the project site. Additionally, based on the proposed project activities that include avoidance of impacts to water features, it is Terracon's opinion that there is not likely to be an adverse effect on this species.

#### 4.0 SITE RECONNAISSANCE

A site reconnaissance was performed on November 12, 2020, to determine if potential habitat for federally and/or state listed species was present at the project site. The project site consisted of agricultural land, with forested areas in the northern and southern portions. Ground photographs,

Proposed Fox Squirrel Solar Farm – Additional Parcels ■ Mt. Sterling, Ohio December 16, 2020 ■ Terracon Project No. N1207473



included in Appendix B, provide an indication of the physical characteristics observed during the site visit. Descriptions of the observed areas are listed in the following sections.

## 4.1 Plant Communities Found at Project Site

#### 4.1.1 Emergent Wetlands

The dominant plant species observed in the two emergent wetland areas observed on the project site were reed canary grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*).

#### 4.1.2 Forested Uplands

The dominant plant species observed in the forested upland areas were Osage orange (Maclura pomifera), white ash (Fraxinus americana), black locust (Robinia pseudoacacia), honeylocust (G. tricanthos), black walnut (Juglans nigra), eastern redcedar (Juniperus virginiana), honeysuckle (Lonicera maackii), white oak (Quercus alba), shagbark hickory (Carya ovata), and blackberry (Rubus allegheniensis). The forested upland areas contained snags, as well as numerous trees containing exfoliating bark and cracked branches.

#### 4.1.3 Emergent Uplands

The dominant plant species observed in the emergent upland areas were yellow foxtail (*Setaria pumila*) and Canada wildrye (*Elymus canadensis*).

#### 4.1.4 Agricultural Uplands

The dominant plant species observed in the agricultural upland areas were the remnants of corn (*Zea mays*).

#### 5.0 SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

A T&E species review of the approximately 1,482-acre project site located in Mt. Sterling, Ohio was conducted on November 12, 2020. The review utilized readily available information including, but not limited to, IPAC documentation, aerial imagery and other available data to assist with the findings. In addition, a preliminary site visit was performed to characterize the existing site conditions and observe the project site for potential T&E habitat.

Terracon has reviewed the USFWS IPAC website for a list of threatened, endangered, and candidate species to be listed in the vicinity of the project site for Madison County, Ohio, which listed three species. In addition, a preliminary site visit was performed to characterize the existing site conditions and observe the project site for potential T&E species habitat. Potential habitat

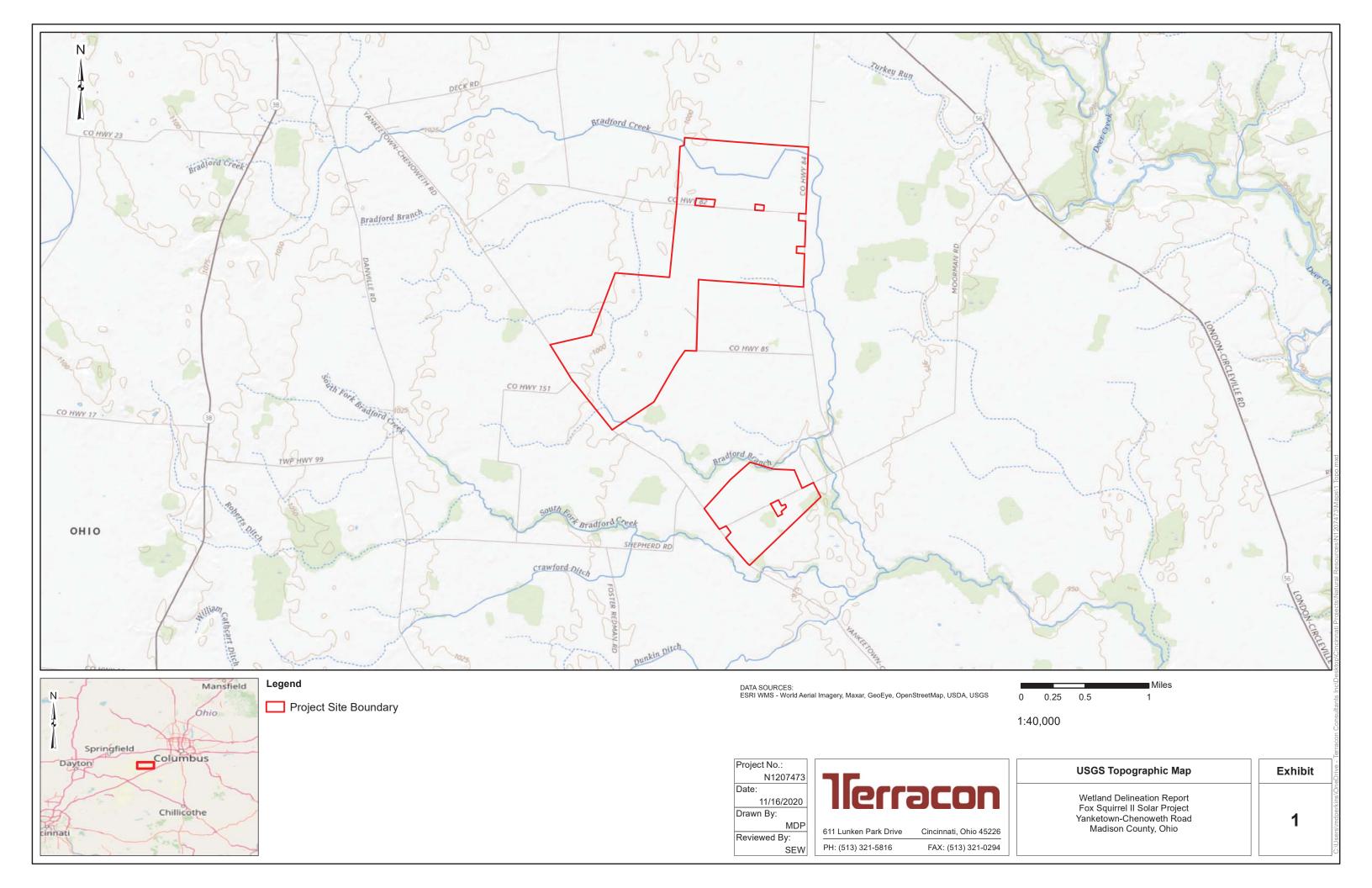




was determined to be present for all three federally listed species. Due to the presence of potential habitat for the Indiana and Northern long-eared bats, any tree clearing would need to be performed seasonally to avoid a potential take of the species. If seasonal tree clearing is not possible, additional investigations and consultation with regulatory agencies may be necessary. Based on the proposed project activities that include avoidance of impacts to water features, it is Terracon's opinion that there is not likely to be an adverse effect on remaining listed species. If impacts to on-site waters are unavoidable as the project progresses, additional investigations and consultation with regulatory agencies may be necessary.

Therefore, it is Terracon's opinion that the proposed activities are not likely to adversely affect any listed species.

# Appendices APPENDIX A – EXHIBIT



# APPENDIX B – GROUND PHOTOGRAPHS



### Photographic Documentation

Client: **Project Number:** Fox Squirrel Additional Parcels N1207473

Location: Yankeetown Chenoweth Road Mt. Sterling, Photographer: C. Brendel

Photograph No. 1

Date: November 12, 2020

Direction: East

**Description:** 

General view of the southern

portion of the site.



Photograph No. 2

Date: November 12, 2020

**Direction:** West

**Description:** 

General view of the northern portion of the site.





### Photographic Documentation

Client: Fox Squirrel Additional Parcels Project Number: N1207473

Location: Yankeetown Chenoweth Road Mt. Sterling, Photographer: C. Brendel

Ohio

Photograph No. 3

Date: November 12, 2020

**Direction:** West

**Description:**Bradford Creek



Photograph No. 4

Date: November 12, 2020

**Direction:** North

**Description:** 

Bradford Branch (intermittent)





### Photographic Documentation

Client: Fox Squirrel Additional Parcels Project Number: N1207473

Location: Yankeetown Chenoweth Road Mt. Sterling, Photographer: C. Brendel

Ohio

Photograph No. 5

Date: November 12, 2020

**Direction:** North

**Description:** 

Bradford Branch (perennial) and

potential roost trees



Photograph No. 6

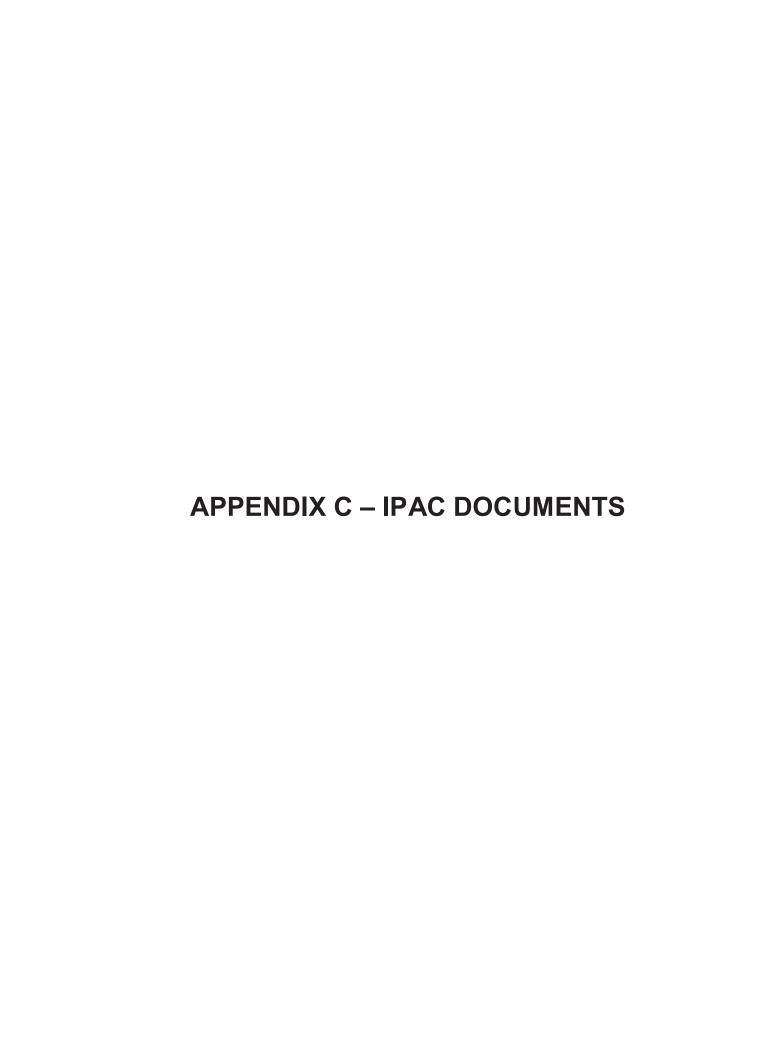
Date: November 12, 2020

**Direction:** East

**Description:** 

View of forested area and potential roost trees







# United States Department of the Interior



### FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Ohio Ecological Services Field Office 4625 Morse Road, Suite 104 Columbus, OH 43230-8355 Phone: (614) 416-8993 Fax: (614) 416-8994

In Reply Refer To: March 09, 2021

Consultation Code: 03E15000-2021-SLI-0945

Event Code: 03E15000-2021-E-01314

Project Name: Fox Squirrel II - Additional Parcels

Subject: List of threatened and endangered species that may occur in your proposed project

location or may be affected by your proposed project

### To Whom It May Concern:

The enclosed species list identifies threatened, endangered, proposed and candidate species, as well as proposed and final designated critical habitat, that may occur within the boundary of your proposed project and/or may be affected by your proposed project. The species list fulfills the requirements of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) under section 7(c) of the Endangered Species Act (Act) of 1973, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

New information based on updated surveys, changes in the abundance and distribution of species, changed habitat conditions, or other factors could change this list. Please feel free to contact us if you need more current information or assistance regarding the potential impacts to federally proposed, listed, and candidate species and federally designated and proposed critical habitat. Please note that under 50 CFR 402.12(e) of the regulations implementing section 7 of the Act, the accuracy of this species list should be verified after 90 days. This verification can be completed formally or informally as desired. The Service recommends that verification be completed by visiting the ECOS-IPaC website at regular intervals during project planning and implementation for updates to species lists and information. An updated list may be requested through the ECOS-IPaC system by completing the same process used to receive the enclosed list.

The purpose of the Act is to provide a means whereby threatened and endangered species and the ecosystems upon which they depend may be conserved. Under sections 7(a)(1) and 7(a)(2) of the Act and its implementing regulations (50 CFR 402 *et seq.*), Federal agencies are required to utilize their authorities to carry out programs for the conservation of threatened and endangered species and to determine whether projects may affect threatened and endangered species and/or designated critical habitat.

A Biological Assessment is required for construction projects (or other undertakings having similar physical impacts) that are major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment as defined in the National Environmental Policy Act (42 U.S.C. 4332(2)

(c)). For projects other than major construction activities, the Service suggests that a biological evaluation similar to a Biological Assessment be prepared to determine whether the project may affect listed or proposed species and/or designated or proposed critical habitat. Recommended contents of a Biological Assessment are described at 50 CFR 402.12.

If a Federal agency determines, based on the Biological Assessment or biological evaluation, that listed species and/or designated critical habitat may be affected by the proposed project, the agency is required to consult with the Service pursuant to 50 CFR 402. In addition, the Service recommends that candidate species, proposed species and proposed critical habitat be addressed within the consultation. More information on the regulations and procedures for section 7 consultation, including the role of permit or license applicants, can be found in the "Endangered Species Consultation Handbook" at:

http://www.fws.gov/endangered/esa-library/pdf/TOC-GLOS.PDF

**Migratory Birds**: In addition to responsibilities to protect threatened and endangered species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), there are additional responsibilities under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA) and the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA) to protect native birds from project-related impacts. Any activity, intentional or unintentional, resulting in take of migratory birds, including eagles, is prohibited unless otherwise permitted by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (50 C.F.R. Sec. 10.12 and 16 U.S.C. Sec. 668(a)). For more information regarding these Acts see http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/ RegulationsandPolicies.html.

The MBTA has no provision for allowing take of migratory birds that may be unintentionally killed or injured by otherwise lawful activities. It is the responsibility of the project proponent to comply with these Acts by identifying potential impacts to migratory birds and eagles within applicable NEPA documents (when there is a federal nexus) or a Bird/Eagle Conservation Plan (when there is no federal nexus). Proponents should implement conservation measures to avoid or minimize the production of project-related stressors or minimize the exposure of birds and their resources to the project-related stressors. For more information on avian stressors and recommended conservation measures see http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/CurrentBirdIssues/Hazards/BirdHazards.html.

In addition to MBTA and BGEPA, Executive Order 13186: *Responsibilities of Federal Agencies to Protect Migratory Birds*, obligates all Federal agencies that engage in or authorize activities that might affect migratory birds, to minimize those effects and encourage conservation measures that will improve bird populations. Executive Order 13186 provides for the protection of both migratory birds and migratory bird habitat. For information regarding the implementation of Executive Order 13186, please visit http://www.fws.gov/migratorybirds/AboutUS.html.

We appreciate your concern for threatened and endangered species. The Service encourages Federal agencies to include conservation of threatened and endangered species into their project planning to further the purposes of the Act. Please include the Consultation Code in the header of this letter with any request for consultation or correspondence about your project that you submit to our office.

03/09/2021

## Attachment(s):

Official Species List

# **Official Species List**

This list is provided pursuant to Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act, and fulfills the requirement for Federal agencies to "request of the Secretary of the Interior information whether any species which is listed or proposed to be listed may be present in the area of a proposed action".

This species list is provided by:

Ohio Ecological Services Field Office 4625 Morse Road, Suite 104 Columbus, OH 43230-8355 (614) 416-8993

# **Project Summary**

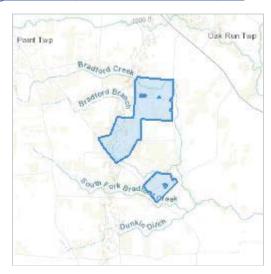
Consultation Code: 03E15000-2021-SLI-0945 Event Code: 03E15000-2021-E-01314

Project Name: Fox Squirrel II - Additional Parcels

Project Type: POWER GENERATION Project Description: Solar Energy Project

Project Location:

Approximate location of the project can be viewed in Google Maps: <a href="https://www.google.com/maps/@39.806181,-83.40925167186703,14z">https://www.google.com/maps/@39.806181,-83.40925167186703,14z</a>



Counties: Madison County, Ohio

## **Endangered Species Act Species**

There is a total of 3 threatened, endangered, or candidate species on this species list.

Species on this list should be considered in an effects analysis for your project and could include species that exist in another geographic area. For example, certain fish may appear on the species list because a project could affect downstream species. Note that 1 of these species should be considered only under certain conditions.

IPaC does not display listed species or critical habitats under the sole jurisdiction of NOAA Fisheries<sup>1</sup>, as USFWS does not have the authority to speak on behalf of NOAA and the Department of Commerce.

See the "Critical habitats" section below for those critical habitats that lie wholly or partially within your project area under this office's jurisdiction. Please contact the designated FWS office if you have questions.

NOAA Fisheries, also known as the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS), is an
office of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration within the Department of
Commerce.

### **Mammals**

NAME STATUS

### Indiana Bat Myotis sodalis

Endangered

There is **final** critical habitat for this species. The location of the critical habitat is not available.

Species profile: https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5949

#### Northern Long-eared Bat Myotis septentrionalis

Threatened

No critical habitat has been designated for this species.

This species only needs to be considered under the following conditions:

Incidental take of the northern long-eared bat is not prohibited at this location. Federal
action agencies may conclude consultation using the streamlined process described at
https://www.fws.gov/midwest/endangered/mammals/nleb/s7.html

Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/9045</a>

#### **Fishes**

NAME STATUS

#### Scioto Madtom *Noturus trautmani*

Endangered

No critical habitat has been designated for this species. Species profile: <a href="https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5395">https://ecos.fws.gov/ecp/species/5395</a>

### Critical habitats

THERE ARE NO CRITICAL HABITATS WITHIN YOUR PROJECT AREA UNDER THIS OFFICE'S JURISDICTION.

This foregoing document was electronically filed with the Public Utilities

**Commission of Ohio Docketing Information System on** 

10/8/2021 3:25:35 PM

in

Case No(s). 21-1031-EL-BGA

Summary: Application - 13 of 24 (Exhibit J – Ecological Resource Analysis Report) electronically filed by Christine M.T. Pirik on behalf of Fox Squirrel Solar, LLC