

From: [Puco ContactOPSB](#)
To: [Puco Docketing](#)
Subject: public comment 21-0960-EL-BGN
Date: Wednesday, April 6, 2022 1:06:27 PM

Subject: Opposition

Ohio Power Siting Board,

This is a letter of opposition for the Chipmunk Solar Project, case #21-0960-EL-BGN.

Please consider the local effects for Pickaway County, comparing the current agricultural land use to the proposed solar project. The change would result in a net REDUCTION of jobs and LESS money circulated locally!

The proposed site is 3,680 acres. There are about 2,800 tillable acres within the project area currently being farmed. But the area containing solar panels is only 1,655 acres. Landowners who have signed leases receive the full payment only in the areas containing solar panels. They receive a percentage of the lease rate for land without panels. This is important when comparing the actual agricultural revenue to the solar lease payments.

Of the 2,800 acres currently being farmed, the crop rotation over the last decade has been roughly 55% corn, 30% soybeans, and 15% wheat/double crop soybeans. Pickaway County yields from 2021 were 196 bu./ac for corn, 56 bu./ac for soybeans and 82 bu./ac for wheat. (double-crop soybeans yields 35 bu./ac for calculations). Pre-Ukraine pricing for the crops were \$6.20/bu. for corn, \$15.60/bu. for soybeans, and \$8.00/bu. for wheat. Based on the typical crop rotation for the 2,800 acres and the data collected from the National Agricultural Statistics Service, the crop proceeds raised from the proposed project area for 2021 would be \$3,110,000.

For the Chipmunk Solar Project, the majority of the land leased is through absentee owners. Most of the money would be leaving the county. Approximately \$600,000 in annual lease payments would remain locally, compared to the \$3,110,000 in agricultural proceeds from 2021. For what it's worth, none of the land that I am farming is at risk of being lost to a solar project. I am sharing this data on behalf of residents as an illustration of whether industrial solar is good or bad for Pickaway County. Industrial solar on productive farmland is BAD for Pickaway County!

Now compare the effect on jobs. The project developers at Chipmunk have estimated 6-8 permanent jobs, for the possible 40 year life of the project. It is difficult to imagine an industry that would require 3,680 acres and provide just 6-8 jobs. Now consider the current land use, with the distribution of the \$3,110,000 in grain proceeds from 2021. Of this total, approximately \$1,200,000 goes directly into the pipeline as income. This includes farmers, operators, custom applicators, technicians, truck drivers, mechanics, welders, hired labor, etc. The remaining \$1,800,000 from the crop proceeds is spent on ag-sales related businesses. We buy seed, fertilizer, crop insurance, equipment, and many other products, with local dealers receiving an average of 20% commission from the sale of the farm input. (20% of \$1,800,000 is \$360,000 in income that also stays locally). From the current farmland that is proposed for the Chipmunk project, we would be losing roughly

\$1,560,000 annually from the income stream of the people who live here. This equates to 26 jobs at \$60,000/year vs. the 6-8 jobs proposed by Chipmunk. We would have a net LOSS of jobs.

Farmers are great at spending money. The revenue created from crop production is dispersed locally. By today's standards, my operation would be considered a small farm. And yet, when I look at my farm account records, I've patronized at least 11 businesses within one mile of the proposed project area. Within a ten mile radius, I'm sure there would be dozens of businesses supported by farming. If this solar project gets approved the loss of farm commerce would certainly be felt by our community.

Much of this letter is in response to supporters of the project who were misled by the idea of creating new jobs for the area. Industrial Solar would have a negative effect on Pickaway County. The benefactors largely would be the solar companies and the landowners who have signed up. Many of the claims promoting "millions of dollars to the school" come from people who do not live in our school district. The residents of Monroe, Deercreek, and Jackson townships oppose the project by a large margin. People do not want the tax benefit in exchange for the nuisance, the noise, the mud, the traffic, the effect on neighboring properties, the eyesore, the inevitable drainage issues, the fact that younger families would move away from the area, all the possible (and yet unknown) negative consequences of living next to an industrial solar project, and the fact that it is unfair to people who have chosen to live in an area protected from an industrial use.

Thank you for your careful and responsible consideration,
Justin Barnes

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Case No(s). 21-0960-EL-BGN

Summary: Public Comment of Justin Barnes, via website, electronically filed by
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