



**US Army Corps
of Engineers®**

PUBLIC NOTICE

Applicant:
Gary Kassem
SunConnect

Published: July 7, 2025
Expires: July 21, 2025

**New Orleans District (CEMVN)
Permit Application No. MVN-2025-00165-EDM**

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN: The New Orleans District of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) has received an application for a Department of the Army (DA) permit pursuant to Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (33 U.S.C. §1344) **and/or** Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 U.S.C. §403). The purpose of this public notice is to solicit comments from the public regarding the work described below:

APPLICANT: Gary Kassem
SunConnect
3021 Airport Pulling Road North
Suite 201
Naples, Florida 34105

AGENT: Imbrie Packard
Royal Engineers & Consultants LLC
1501 Religious Street
Suite C
New Orleans, Louisiana 70130

WATERWAY AND LOCATION: The project would affect waters of the United States associated with forested wetlands situated between Interstate 510 Service Road East and the Village De L' Est neighborhood; at Latitude 30.037639 and Longitude -89.938108; in New Orleans, Orleans Parish, Louisiana.

EXISTING CONDITIONS: Undeveloped forested wetlands situated between an interstate and residential development.

PROJECT PURPOSE:

Basic: Energy Production

Overall: To produce energy from solar arrays.

PROPOSED WORK: The applicant requests authorization to clear wetlands to construct and install solar arrays and associated utilities. Approximately 10.22 acres for forested wetlands will be converted to emergent wetlands. Approximately 0.1 acres will be permanently impacted for solar panel piles.

AVOIDANCE AND MINIMIZATION: The applicant has provided the following information in support of efforts to avoid and/or minimize impacts to the aquatic environment: Applicant states that forested wetlands will be converted to emergent wetlands by ensuring that hydrology is maintained through returning the site to pre-construction contours and allowing the site to re-vegetate naturally with appropriate emergent wetland vegetation. If necessary, additional planting may be considered if natural regeneration is insufficient. Access to the panels will be infrequent and most repairs and maintenance will occur outside of wetlands.

COMPENSATORY MITIGATION: The applicant offered the following compensatory mitigation plan to offset unavoidable functional loss to the aquatic environment: The applicant has proposed to compensate for any unavoidable impacts to jurisdictional wetlands by utilizing a Corps approved mitigation bank within the watershed.

CULTURAL RESOURCES:

The Corps is evaluating the undertaking for effects to historic properties as required under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act. This public notice serves to inform the public of the proposed undertaking and invites comments including those from local, State, and Federal government Agencies with respect to historic resources. Our final determination relative to historic resource impacts may be subject to additional coordination with the State Historic Preservation Officer (SHPO), federally recognized tribes and other interested parties.

The District Engineer's final eligibility and effect determination will be based upon coordination with the SHPO and/or federally recognized tribes, as appropriate and required, and with full consideration given to the proposed undertaking's potential direct and indirect effects on historic properties within the Corps-identified permit area.

ENDANGERED SPECIES: The Corps has performed an initial review of the application for Endangered Species Act (ESA) compliance via the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Information for Planning and Consultation (IPaC), National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) Section 7 Mapper, and the NMFS Critical Habitat Mapper to determine if any threatened, endangered, proposed, or candidate species, as well as the proposed and final designated critical habitat may occur in the vicinity of the proposed project. Based on this initial review, the Corps has made a preliminary determination that the proposed project will not affect any listed species or critical habitat.

This notice serves as request to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for any additional information on whether any listed or proposed to be listed endangered or threatened species or critical habitat may be present in the area which would be affected by the proposed activity.

NAVIGATION: The proposed structure or activity is not located in the vicinity of a federal navigation channel.

SECTION 408: The applicant will not require permission under Section 14 of the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899 (33 USC 408) because the activity, in whole or in part, would not alter, occupy, or use a Corps Civil Works project.

WATER QUALITY CERTIFICATION: Water Quality Certification may be required from the Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality.

NOTE: This public notice is being issued based on information furnished by the applicant. This information has not been verified or evaluated to ensure compliance with laws and regulation governing the regulatory program. The geographic extent of aquatic resources within the proposed project area that either are, or are presumed to be, within the Corps jurisdiction has been verified by Corps personnel.

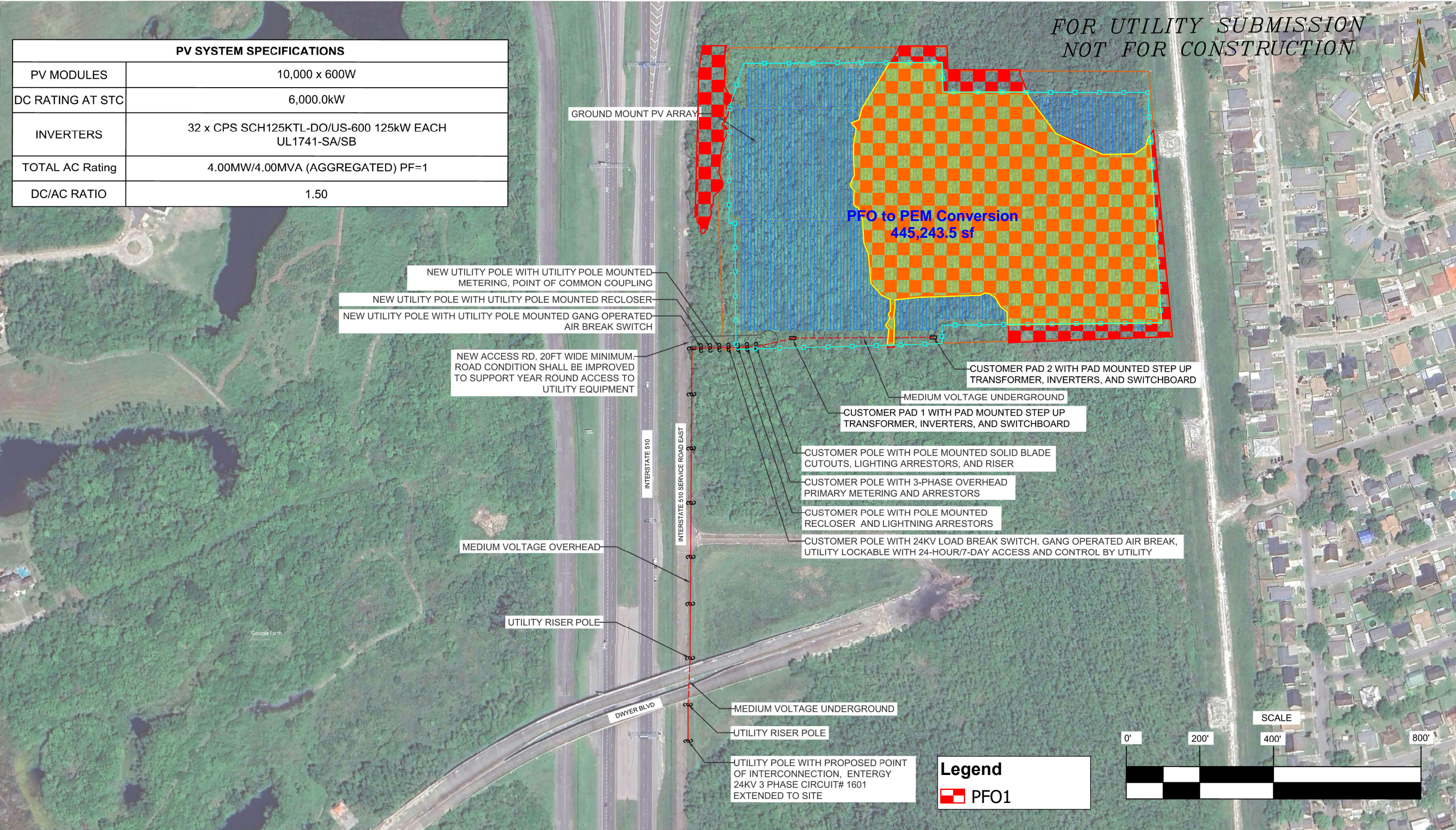
COASTAL ZONE MANAGEMENT ACT: The applicant has certified that the proposed activity described in the application complies with and will be conducted in a manner that is consistent with the Louisiana Coastal Resources Program (Louisiana Coastal Zone Application (P20240737). The DA permit will not be issued unless the applicant received approval or a waiver of the Coastal Use Permit by the Louisiana Department of Energy and Natural Resources. You are invited to communicate the information contained in this notice to any other parties whom you deem likely to have interest in the matter.


EVALUATION: The decision whether to issue a DA permit will be based on an evaluation of the probable impact including cumulative impacts of the proposed activity on the public interest. That decision will reflect the national concern for both protection and utilization of important resources. The benefits, which reasonably may be expected to accrue from the proposal, must be balanced against its reasonably foreseeable detriments. All factors which may be relevant to the proposal will be considered including cumulative impacts thereof; among these are conservation, economics, esthetics, general environmental concerns, wetlands, historical properties, fish and wildlife values, flood hazards, floodplain values, land use, navigation, shoreline erosion and accretion, recreation, water supply and conservation, water quality, energy needs, safety, food, and fiber production, mineral needs, considerations of property ownership, and in general, the needs and welfare of the people. Evaluation of the impact of the activity on the public interest will also include application of the guidelines promulgated by the Administrator, Environmental Protection Agency, under authority of Section 404(b) of the Clean Water Act or the criteria established under authority of Section 102(a) of the Marine Protection Research and Sanctuaries Act of 1972. A DA permit will be granted unless its issuance is found to be contrary to the public interest.

COMMENTS: The Corps is soliciting comments from the public; Federal, State, and local agencies and officials; Indian Tribes; and other Interested parties in order to consider and evaluate the impacts of this proposed activity. Any comments received will be considered by the Corps to determine whether to issue, modify, condition, or deny a DA permit for this proposal. To make this determination, comments are used to assess impacts to endangered species, historic properties, water quality, general environmental effects, and the other public interest factors listed above. Comments are used in the preparation of an Environmental Assessment (EA) and/or an Environmental Impact Statement pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). Comments are also used to determine the need for a public hearing and to determine the overall public interest of the proposed activity.

The New Orleans District will receive written comments on the proposed work, as outlined above, until July 21, 2025. Comments should be submitted electronically via the Regulatory Request System (RRS) at <https://rrs.usace.army.mil/rrs> or to Damon Morse at Damon.Morse@usace.army.mil. Alternatively, you may submit comments in writing to the following address: U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New Orleans District, Attention: Damon Morse, 7400 Leake Avenue New Orleans, Louisiana 70118. Please refer to the permit application number in your comments.


Any person may request, in writing, within the comment period specified in this notice, that a public hearing be held to consider the application. Requests for public hearings shall state, with particularity, the reasons for holding a public hearing. Requests for a public hearing will be granted, unless the District Engineer determines that the issues raised are insubstantial or there is otherwise no valid interest to be served by a hearing.





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REVISIONS				
REV	DESCRIPTION	DATE	DESIGN	REVIEWED
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
-	-	-	-	-
1	ISSUED FOR UTILITY SUBMISSION	04-18-2024	RW	JB
0	ISSUED FOR REVIEW	04-17-2024	RW	JB



NEO Virtus
Engineering, Inc. Since 2001
LITTLETON, MASSACHUSETTS

JAMES M. BING

INTERSTATE 510
SOLAR
9001 INTERSTATE 510
SERVICE RD EAST
NEW ORLEANS, LA
70129

DWG NAME

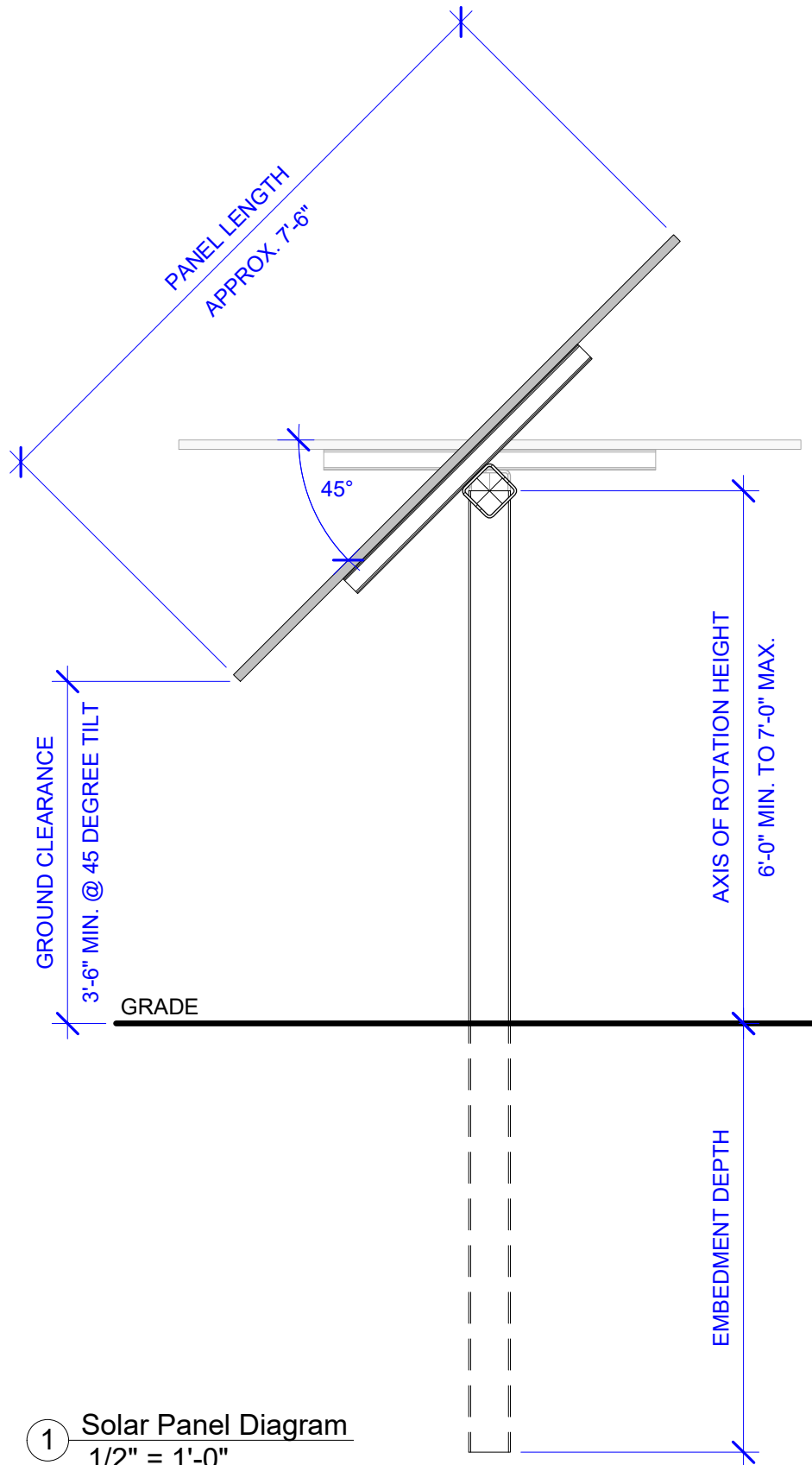
SITE ACCESS PLAN

SIZE	SCALE	DATE
D	AS-NOTED	04-17-2024

DWG NO.

PV-1.0

NOT FOR CONSTRUCTION



1 Solar Panel Diagram
 1/2" = 1'-0"

SO-24-05 Interstate - Wetland Impact Areas

Item	Qty	Unit Area (SF)	Total Area (SF)	In Wetland	Notes
Solar Array Piles	3750	0.25	515.6	Partial	Estimated 6"x6" 1 pole every 10' of panel array 55% of site in Wetland
PFO Wetland Conversion Footprint	1	445245.00	445245.0	Y	Partial Impact (Conversion)

Total Area of PFO Permanent Impact (SF)	515.6
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Total Area (Acres) of Partial Impact (PFO to PEM Conversion)	10.221
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Maintenance & Vegetation Management Plan

This Maintenance and Vegetation Management Plan describes the post-construction operations for the solar facilities to ensure proper functioning of the system while preserving wetland function and minimizing long-term impacts to jurisdictional waters. The facilities have been designed to minimize disturbance while allowing continued wetland function and vegetation regrowth. Long-term maintenance will involve limited vehicle access, minimal site disturbance, and periodic low-impact mowing beneath the arrays.

The plan applies to the following project sites:

- Dwyer Rd - SO-24-03 LLC Community Solar
- Industrial Parkway - SO-24-02 LLC Community Solar
- Interstate - SO-24-05 LLC Community Solar

1. LIMITS OF DISTURBANCE

- Clearing will be limited to the area within the fenced solar array footprint and the permanent access road.
- No clearing, grading, or construction activities will occur outside of the designated fence line or roadway limits.
- Fence lines will be installed along the property lines as shown on final site drawings.
- No tree removal or disturbance is planned beyond these limits.

2. ACCESS AND MAINTENANCE FREQUENCY

- Routine site access will occur primarily for:
 - **Annual system inspections.**
 - **Preventive maintenance and repairs** , primarily at the equipment pads.
 - **Ad-hoc repairs** if unexpected system issues arise.
- Most service activities will be limited to the equipment pad locations.
- Panel-level repairs are rare, but technicians will access panel rows as needed.

3. VEGETATION MANAGEMENT

- Wetland vegetation under the solar arrays will naturally regenerate as **Palustrine Emergent Wetlands (PEM)**.
- Vegetation will be managed to maintain safe operation of the solar arrays and electrical infrastructure:
 - Vegetation will be kept at approximately **2 feet in height or less** .
 - **Bush hog-type mowers** or similar low-ground-pressure wheeled or tracked equipment will be used.
 - Mowing is anticipated **2–3 times per year** , subject to actual growing conditions.
 - No chemical herbicide applications are proposed.



- The solar panel structures provide adequate clearance (approximately **6 to 7 feet**) to allow mowing and access equipment to operate beneath the arrays.

4. PANEL CLEANING

- Routine panel washing is not required due to sufficient natural rainfall.
- Cleaning will only occur if unusual soiling conditions develop, which is not anticipated under normal operations.

5. HYDROLOGY AND CONTOURS

- Existing site contours will remain undisturbed except for stump removal and backfilling during clearing.
- Access roads will include culverts (minimum **24-inch diameter every 500 feet**) to maintain sheet flow across the site.
- No grading or contour modifications are proposed within the wetlands.
- Hydrology is expected to remain consistent with pre-construction conditions.

6. RESTORATION COMMITMENT

- All temporarily disturbed areas will be allowed to reestablish naturally with appropriate emergent wetland vegetation.
- If necessary, additional planting may be considered if natural regeneration is insufficient.