



**MILL POINT SOLAR I PROJECT
TOWN OF GLEN
MONTGOMERY COUNTY, NEW YORK
OPRHP PROJECT 21PR00133
ConnectGen Montgomery County LLC
OPRHP Information Request: Glen Historic District**

June 16, 2023

William Floyd, Historic Preservation Technical Specialist
New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation
Division for Historic Preservation
Peebles Island
PO Box 189
Waterford, New York 12188-0189

Introduction

This letter report addresses a request for additional information from the New York Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation, which functions as the New York State Historic Preservation Office (NY SHPO). The NY SHPO has reviewed the Mill Point Solar I Project (Project or Facility) and expressed a concern for visual impacts on the Glen Historic District in the Hamlet of Glen. In its letter dated November 23, 2022, the NY SHPO requested additional information on project infrastructure in the Area of Potential Effect (APE) within the vicinity of the Glen Historic District to continue their review of the undertaking. The NY SHPO writes:

“We are particularly concerned with the project’s impact on the Glen Historic District, which is noted for its rural, agricultural character. As such, please submit project plans of the APE nearest the historic district so the visual impact can be better understood.”

NY SHPO requests that the information regarding infrastructure in the vicinity of Glen be provided via the NY SHPO’s Cultural Resource Information System (CRIS).

NRHP-Listed Historic District (National Register number 01NR01763 and USN 05705.000069)

Description, Boundary, and Significance

The Glen Historic District consists of 65 resources (54 contributing and 11 non-contributing), and its period of significance ranges from circa 1795 to circa 1900. It encompasses 26 acres. The historic district’s NRHP listing dates from 2001. It is listed under Criteria A and C as a substantially intact example of a crossroads community in rural Montgomery County. Its historic built environment illustrates development from the Federal period to the end of the nineteenth century. The historic district portrays settlement patterns, social and economic development, and vernacular building practices in Glen during the period of significance, which spans the settlement era to the decline of the community’s economic importance at the turn of the century. The district includes residential, commercial, agricultural, and religious resources that combine to illustrate design, materials, and decorative elements characteristic of local vernacular architecture. The district retains integrity. Setting within the historic district is a

characteristic defining feature of this historic district, and the NRHP boundary corresponds to historic lot lines in the community. The boundary includes farm complexes, but it excludes excessive farm acreage from the historic district's boundary. Setting beyond the historic district's NRHP boundary is not required for the historic district to convey its recognized historic and architectural significance.

National Regulatory Framework for Evaluation of Impacts

Categories of evaluation under the Criteria of Adverse Effect are found in 36 CFR §800.5 [a](1 and 2)]. As stated in federal regulations, an undertaking has an effect on a historic property if the undertaking may alter the characteristics of the historic property that qualify it for inclusion in the National Register of Historic Places (NRHP) by diminishing its integrity of location, design, setting, materials, workmanship, feeling, or association. Consideration is given to all qualifying characteristics of a historic property, including those that may have been identified subsequent to the original evaluation of the property's eligibility for the NRHP.

Adverse effects may include physical destruction; alterations inconsistent with the Secretary of the Interior's Standards; removal from original location; change in character of use or setting; introduction of visual, atmospheric, or audible elements that diminish integrity of significance; neglect; and transfer by sale or lease out of federal (or state, if applicable) ownership. Adverse effects may also include reasonably foreseeable effects caused by the undertaking that may occur later in time, be farther removed in distance, or be cumulative. An adverse effect finding may be addressed and resolved through agreed-upon measures to avoid, minimize, or mitigate the adverse effect.

Examples of adverse effects are discussed in 36 CFR §800.5 [a](2). There are seven potential adverse effects to historic properties that include, but are not limited to:

- (i) Physical destruction of or damage to all or part of the property;
- (ii) Alteration of a property, including restoration, rehabilitation, repair, maintenance, stabilization, hazardous material remediation, and provision of handicapped access, that is not consistent with the Secretary's standards for the treatment of historic properties (36 CFR part 68) and applicable guidelines;
- (iii) Removal of the property from its historic location;
- (iv) Change of the character of the property's use or of physical features within the property's setting that contribute to its historic significance;
- (v) Introduction of visual, atmospheric or audible elements that diminish the integrity of the property's significant historic features;
- (vi) Neglect of a property which causes its deterioration, except where such neglect and deterioration are recognized qualities of a property of religious and cultural significance to an Indian tribe or Native Hawaiian organization; and
- (vii) Transfer, lease, or sale of property out of Federal ownership or control without adequate and legally enforceable restrictions or conditions to ensure long-term preservation of the property's historic significance.

State Regulatory Framework for Evaluation of Impacts

Additionally, TRC follows state guidelines in this assessment. The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), Division of Environmental Permits, Glossary in DEP-00-2 "Assessing and Mitigating Visual and Aesthetic Impacts" defines Aesthetic Impact and Visual Impact:

“An aesthetic impact occurs when there is a detrimental effect on the perceived beauty of a place or structure. Mere visibility of a project should not be a threshold for decision making. Instead, a project, by virtue of its visibility, must clearly interfere with or reduce the public’s enjoyment or appreciation of the appearance of a significant place or structure.” The guidelines also state, “Visual impact occurs when the mitigating effects of perspective do not reduce the visibility of an object to insignificant levels. Beauty plays no role in this concept. A visual impact may also be considered in the context of contrast. For instance, all other things being equal, a blue object seen against an orange background has greater visual impact than a blue object seen against the same-colored blue background” (NYSDEC, DEP-00-2).

TRC uses the above regulatory framework and prescribed state definitions for assessing visual impacts and potential adverse effects to the Glen Historic District by the Project at this current stage of its planning and development.

Project Infrastructure

Within the vicinity of the Glen Historic District, the above-ground vertical infrastructure associated with the Project includes panel arrays, inverters, and security fencing; all collection lines will be buried underground. Figures 1 through 3 that are provided as attachments herein illustrate the potential visibility of solar arrays near the Facility. The potential visibility takes existing vegetation, structures, and dwellings into consideration. Specifically, Figure 3 illustrates the potential visibility within the boundary of the Glen Historic District; which illustrates that the majority of the Glen Historic District will not have visibility of the arrays, and the areas where array visibility is possible, it will be low visibility.

Potential Impacts to the Glen Historic District

Location in Viewshed

The setting around the Glen Historic District is noted for its rural and agricultural character. The topography features rolling hills that slope toward the Mohawk River. Residences and a few businesses cluster at Glen where farmland and farm structures are also visible. Figure 1 shows the locations of solar arrays in the vicinity of Glen based on current preliminary design.

Visual Impact Assessment

To assess impacts, TRC will be compliant with the rigorous standards of Chapter 18, Title 19, §900.2.9 of NYCRR (94-c); however, TRC may also reference federal guidelines and NYSDEC definitions to determine whether impacts on historic properties are adverse while also applying the Criteria of Adverse Effect (36 CFR §800.5). The assessment was completed by TRC senior architectural historians who exceed the Secretary of the Interior’s standards for historians and architectural historians. This provisional assessment provided herein utilizes information available in the Visual Stakeholder Outreach Letter submitted to OPRHP on April 20th, 2023, regarding the status of the Mill Point I Solar visual impact assessment. The purpose of the letter was to solicit formal review and feedback from a preliminary table of aesthetic resources and to recommend candidate locations for preparation of photo-simulations, which conforms to §900-2.9 (b)(4) of the Section 94-c regulations. A final visual impact assessment will ultimately be prepared and provided as Exhibit 8 of the 94-c application.

From within the Glen Historic District, there is a potential for partial visibility of the undertaking. As currently planned, the nearest solar array groupings to the Glen Historic District are approximately 0.22-mile northwest and 0.45-mile north, respectively. The preliminary viewshed analysis indicates that

Project visibility from the Glen Historic District will be limited to only partial views in isolated areas situated north and east of the crossroads. On the north side of SR 161, viewers at the Glen Reformed Church may have visibility of solar arrays. Farther east along SR 161, viewpoints at locations in the rear of residences may have visibility of solar arrays, but these are anticipated to be partial views. Predicted visibility does not necessarily mean most or all solar arrays will be visible, nor does it inform the reviewer of the magnitude or scale of the solar arrays (or lack thereof) in each view, but rather, it is a simple indication of positive visibility. A visual impact minimization and mitigation plan will be developed for reducing visual contrast of the Project. Minimization efforts, such as vegetative landscaping, is proposed around the Project to moderate views of the solar arrays.

The Glen Historic District consists of a 0.05-square mile area in the Hamlet of Glen. Of this area, approximately 0.01-square mile, or only 20 percent, is expected to receive views of the Project. As seen in Figure 1 and Figure 2, all areas of predicted visibility around the historic district are indicated by the color red. The NRHP boundary for the Glen Historic District is featured in Figure 2, Sheet 3 and Figure 3. As noted in the legend, red visible areas indicate less panel visibility than areas closer to solar arrays, which are shaded with different colors, with blue shading representing a greater number of panels that are visible. Reduced visibility from the Glen Historic District toward visible Project infrastructure is likely due to vegetative and building obstructions beyond the Historic District boundary.

The Historic District will not be physically damaged by the solar facility development and ground-disturbing activities. Construction of the Project will not require demolition or physical alteration of the Glen Historic District or any of its contributing and non-contributing resources. Therefore, no physical impacts in the Glen Historic District are anticipated as a result of the Project. The Glen Historic District will not be materially altered by the Project. The Historic District will maintain its distinctive visual aspects, historic materials, textures, feeling, association, and physical features that qualify it for NRHP eligibility under Criterion C and Criterion A. The immediate setting around and adjacent to the Glen Historic District will not be changed by the undertaking, and it will not be removed from its historic location. The undertaking is unlikely to change the character of this historic property's use or physical features that contribute to its historic significance. ConnectGen Montgomery County LLC sited the Project to intentionally minimize impacts to the Glen Historic District and specific historical areas. The Project has been fully sited outside of the Hamlet of Glen to further decrease visual impacts to the Historic District. In addition, the parcel directly to the northeast of the Glen Village Cemetery has been removed from consideration for hosting aboveground facilities to maintain views from the cemetery northward and eastward toward the Village of Glen.

The undertaking is unlikely to introduce visual, atmospheric, or audible elements that diminish the integrity of the historic property's significant historic architectural features. The illustrative material provided in this letter report indicates that only partial and filtered views of the proposed undertaking may be possible from the Glen Historic District (see Figure 1 and Figure 2). The historic district has been listed in the NRHP for its local historical merit and its aesthetic architectural qualities. The historic district does not require picturesque views or views of agricultural land that has not changed since 1900, the terminal date of the period of significance, to maintain its NRHP eligible status. For example, construction of modern buildings near the historic district has not compromised its ability to convey its historic significance. The present cultural and aesthetic value identified for the Glen Historic District subsists in architecture and history. The historic agricultural significance of the historic property, according to the nomination, also resides in agricultural buildings within the historic district boundary. That the historic property is likely to have partial visibility of the undertaking's visible infrastructure is due to the presence of vegetation and trees that, even in a leaf-off condition, shall maintain sufficient mass to afford only limited views of the undertaking as they grow and mature.

There are no locations within the Glen Historic District anticipated to have full views of the entirety of the undertaking. Visibility of the undertaking is reduced and filtered by intervening structures and vegetation, as well as distance, which diminishes contrasts. Additionally, vegetative screening and planting schemes that will be provided and installed will limit views of panel arrays from the historic district. Therefore, any visual change anticipated at the Glen Historic District is likely to be characterized as minimal.

Conclusion

There may be no detrimental impact on the Glen Historic District from the undertaking, and public enjoyment and appreciation of the historic and architectural values of the Glen Historic District are expected to be maintained. Figure 2, Sheet 3, shows that the undertaking is not likely to introduce new visual elements into views from this historic property that would physically impact or materially alter the character-defining features that contribute to its historic significance and NRHP eligibility. Thus, the Project has a low potential to introduce negative visual impacts into views from the Glen Historic District that would adversely impact character-defining features that support and maintain its historic significance and NRHP eligibility. The Project is unlikely to have a detrimental aesthetic impact on the Glen Historic District. TRC recommends that, based on current design and landscape planning, which is on-going, the Project is unlikely to introduce visual impacts into views from the Glen Historic District that would adversely impact character-defining features of the historic district that contribute to its historic significance and NRHP eligibility.

TRC appreciates the opportunity to provide additional information that facilitates NY SHPO's review of the Mill Point solar development project. Please contact me at 878.670.1957 or mhyland@trccompanies.com if you would like to discuss any aspect of our letter report.

Sincerely,



Matthew G. Hyland, Ph.D.
Senior Architectural Historian

Attachment: Figures

cc: Andrew Barrett, ConnectGen Montgomery County LLC
Colleen Nash, ConnectGen Montgomery County LLC
John Kuba, ConnectGen Montgomery County LLC
Kala Laughlin, ConnectGen Montgomery County LLC
Tegan Kondak, TRC
Tim Sara, TRC

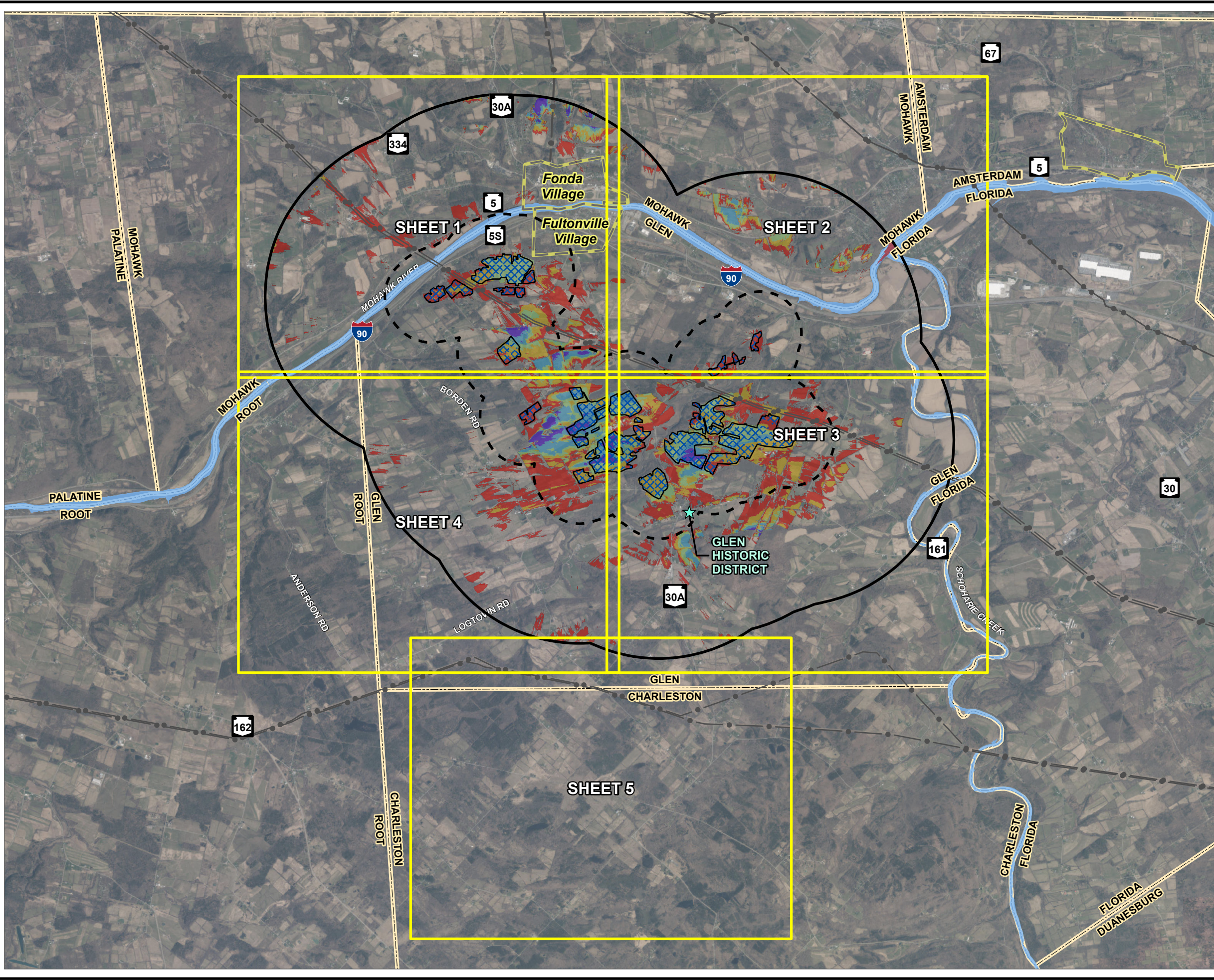


317E Carson Street, Suite 1B
Pittsburgh , PA 15219

T 412.713.7100
TRCcompanies.com

Attachment: Figures

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PROPOSED ARRAY LOCATION
 PROPOSED ARRAY LOCATION

PROPOSED FENCE LINE
 PROPOSED FENCE LINE

DISTANCE ZONE 2 - TWO MILES
 DISTANCE ZONE 2 - TWO MILES

DISTANCE ZONE 1 - HALF MILE
 DISTANCE ZONE 1 - HALF MILE

POTENTIAL VISIBILITY OF SOLAR ARRAYS

MORE PANELS VISIBLE

LESS PANELS VISIBLE

LESS PANELS VISIBLE

EXISTING TRANSMISSION

MAP INDEX

VILLAGE BOUNDARY

MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY

MOHAWK RIVER/SCHOHARIE CREEK

NOTES:

1. THIS FIGURE SHOWS VISIBILITY OF PANELS FROM THE PRELIMINARY SOLAR AREA ONLY.
2. LIDAR DATA PROVIDED BY USGS NATIONAL MAP - NY FEMAR2 CENTRAL_2018_D19 AND NY SCHOHARIE 2014.
3. SOLAR ARRAYS ASSUMED TO BE 10' TALL AND AN OBSERVER HEIGHT OF 6' WAS USED FOR VIEWSHED ANALYSIS.
4. THE VIEWSHED MODEL ASSUMES THAT VEGETATION IS OPAQUE AND THEREFORE REPRESENTS A LEAF-ON CONDITION. ALSO, THE MODEL ASSUMES THAT A VIEWER WOULD NOT SEE THE PROJECT IF STANDING IN A STRUCTURE OR AMONGST TREES.
5. VISIBILITY DOES NOT MEAN THE ENTIRETY OF PROJECT WILL BE SEEN. THE MODEL DOES NOT ACCOUNT FOR THE LIMITATIONS OF HUMAN VISION AT A GREATER DISTANCE OR ATMOSPHERIC CONDITIONS THAT MAY CAUSE REDUCED VISIBILITY.
6. INFORMATION PRESENTED HERE IS THE RESULTS OF A DESKTOP ANALYSIS AND HAS NOT BEEN GROUND-TRUTHED.

BASE MAP: NYSGIS ORTHO IMAGERY SERVICE, 2022
 DATA SOURCES: TRC

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1:76,032
 1" = 1.2 Miles

0 0.6 1.2 MILES

CONNECTGEN - MILL POINT 1 SOLAR PROJECT
 TOWN OF GLEN
 MONTGOMERY COUNTY, NY

TITLE:
PROJECT OVERVIEW MAP

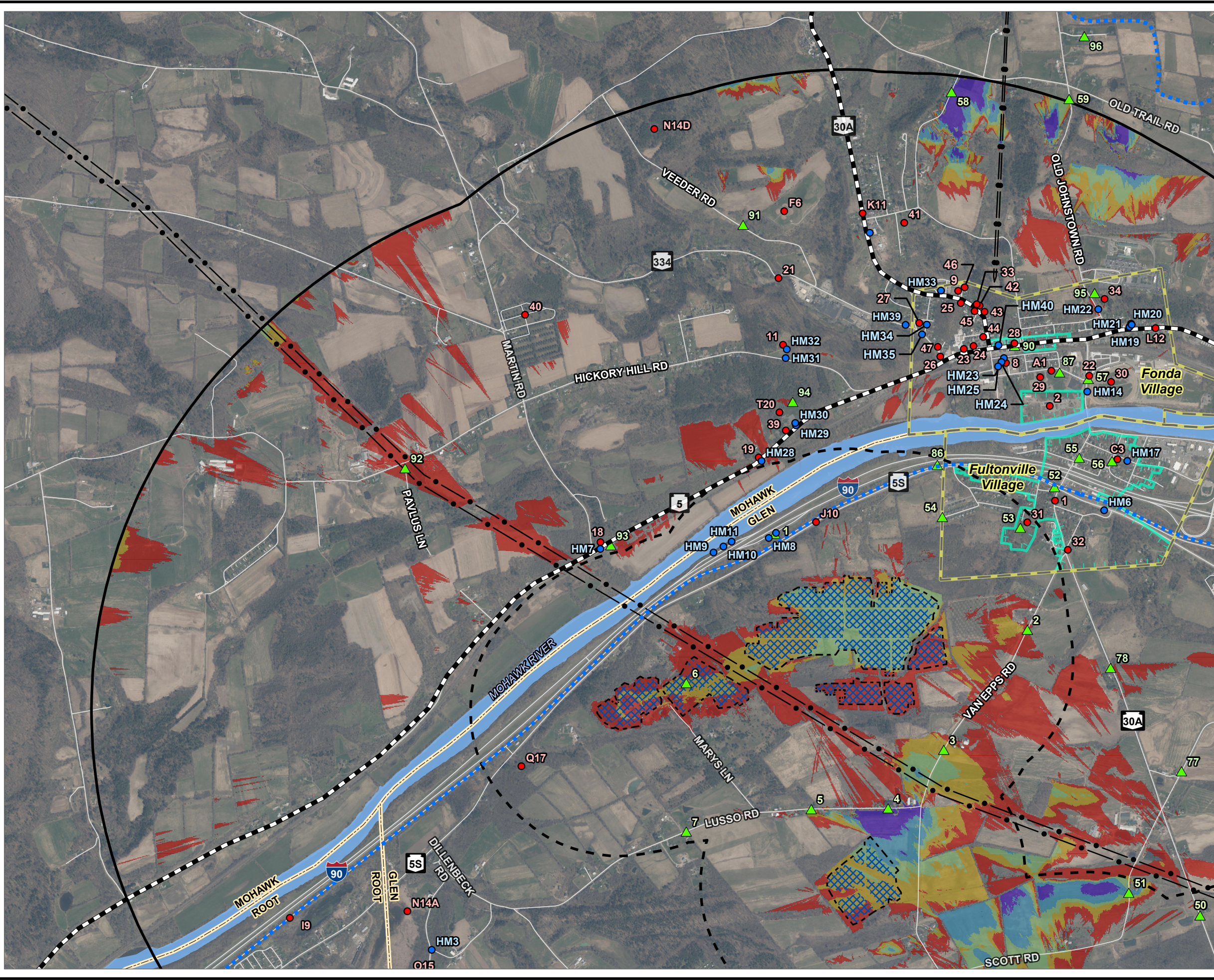
DRAWN BY:	S. MOTURI	PROJ. NO.:	411360
CHECKED BY:	B. MASTERSON	FIGURE 1	
APPROVED BY:	J. BARTOS		
DATE:	MAY 2023		

TRC

3 CORPORATE DRIVE
 SUITE 202
 CLIFTON PARK, NY 12065
 PHONE: 518.348.1190

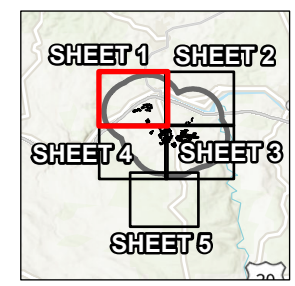
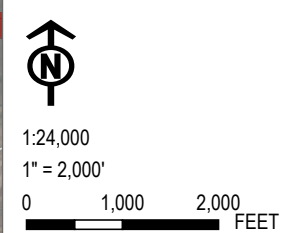
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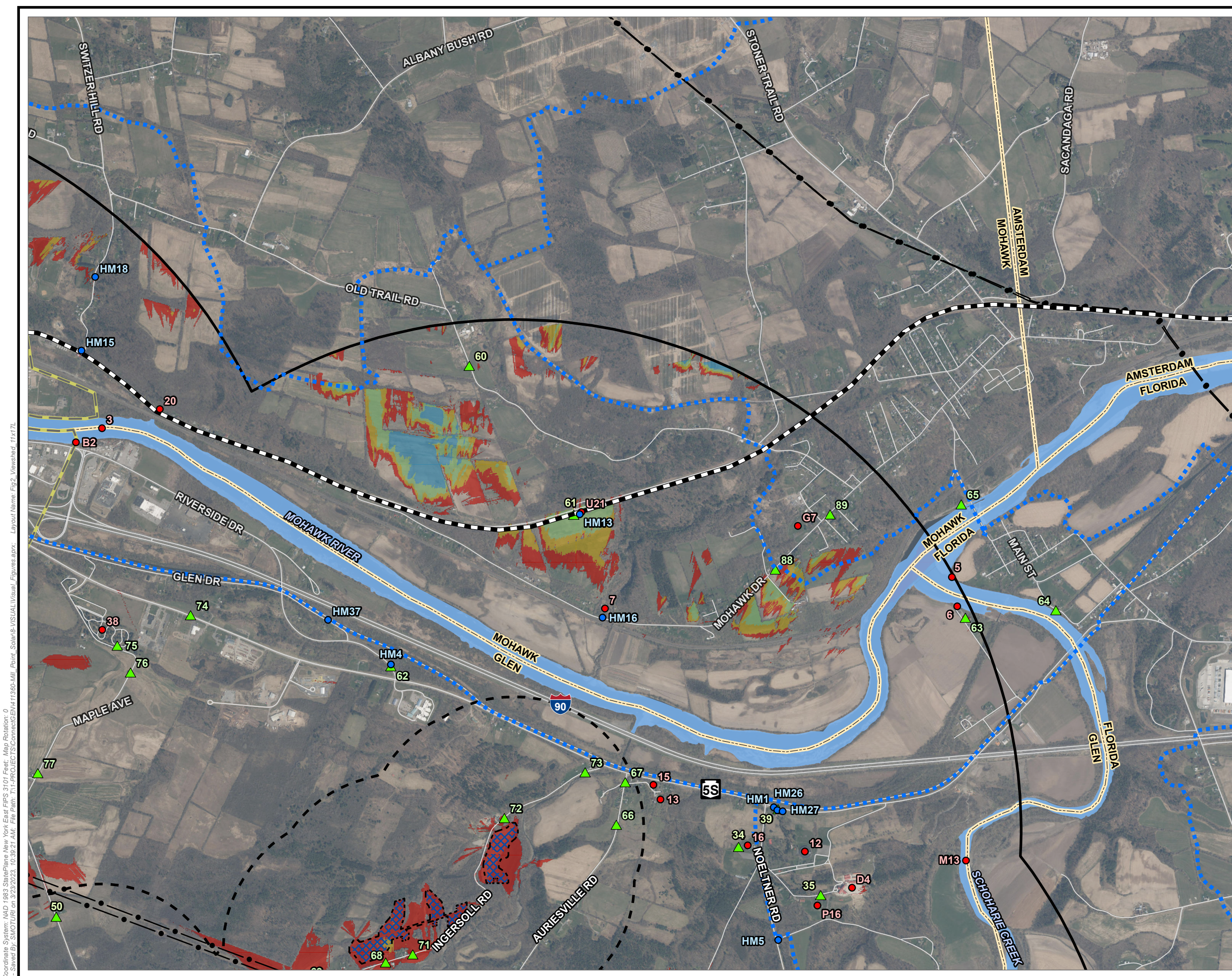





















- PROPOSED ARRAY LOCATION
- PROPOSED FENCE LINE
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- DISTANCE ZONE 2 - TWO MILES
- POTENTIAL VISIBILITY OF SOLAR ARRAYS**
- MORE PANELS VISIBLE
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- LESS PANELS VISIBLE
- VIEWPOINT LOCATION
- HISTORICAL BLUE MARKER
- AESTHETIC RESOURCE
- REVOLUTIONARY SCENIC BYWAY/ADIRONDACK TRAIL
- NYS SNOWMOBILE TRAIL
- EXISTING TRANSMISSION
- MOHAWK RIVER/SCHOHARIE CREEK
- HISTORIC DISTRICT
- MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY
- VILLAGE BOUNDARY

NOTES:
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 BASE MAP: NYSGIS ORTHO IMAGERY SERVICE, 2022
 DATA SOURCES: TRC



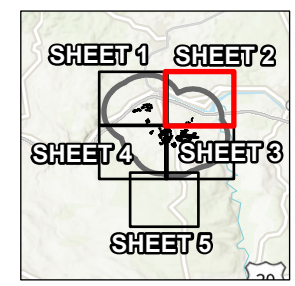
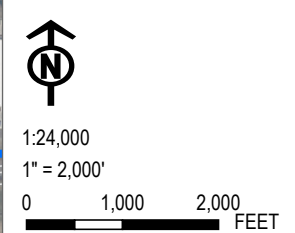
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APPROVED BY: J. BARTOS	FIGURE 2 (SHEET 1 OF 5)
DATE: MARCH 2023	
3 CORPORATE DRIVE SUITE 202 CLIFTON PARK, NY 12065 PHONE: 518.348.1190	
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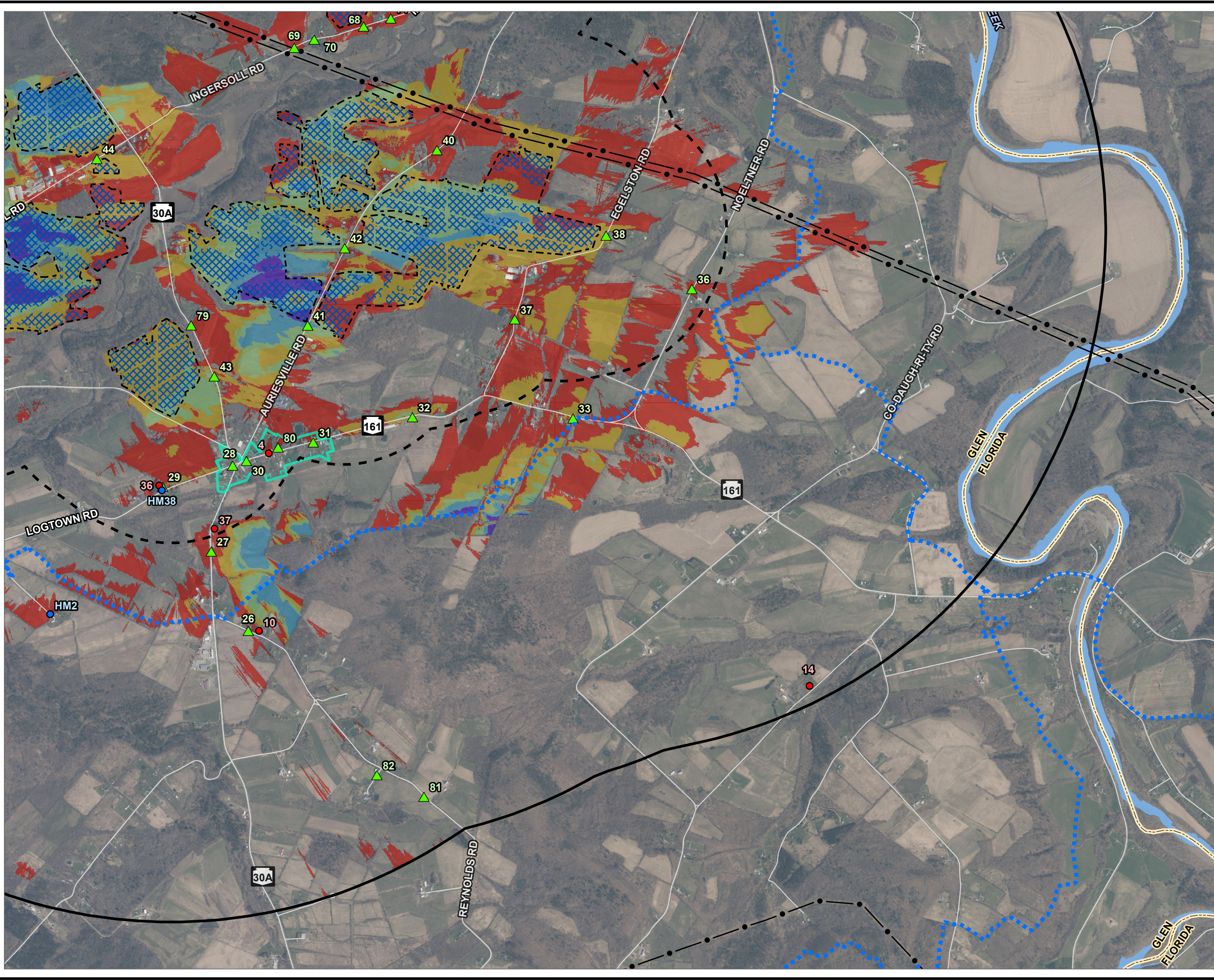
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APPROVED BY: J. BARTOS	FIGURE 2 (SHEET 2 OF 5)
DATE: MARCH 2023	
	
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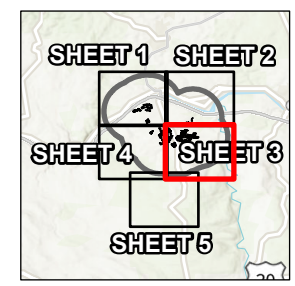
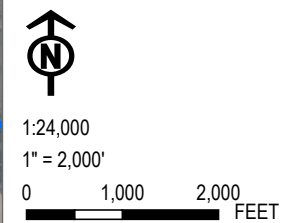
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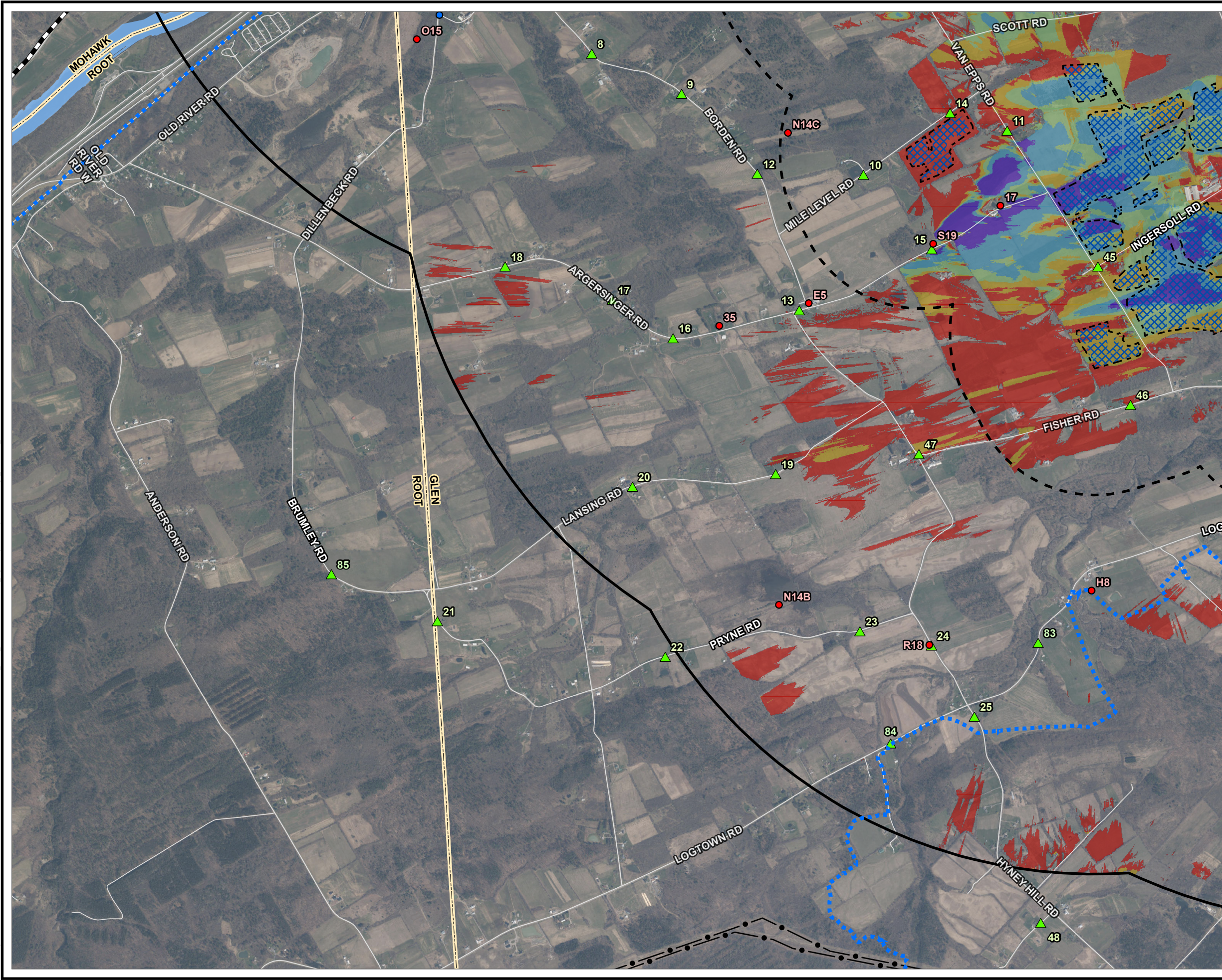
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APPROVED BY: J. BARTOS	FIGURE 2 (SHEET 3 OF 5)
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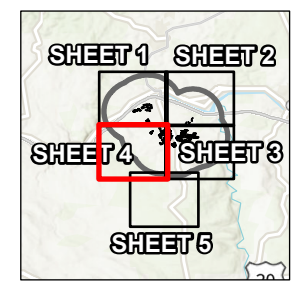
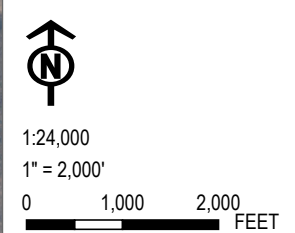
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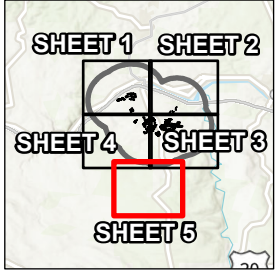
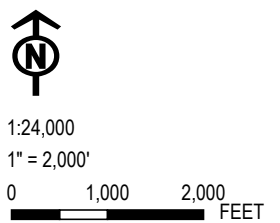
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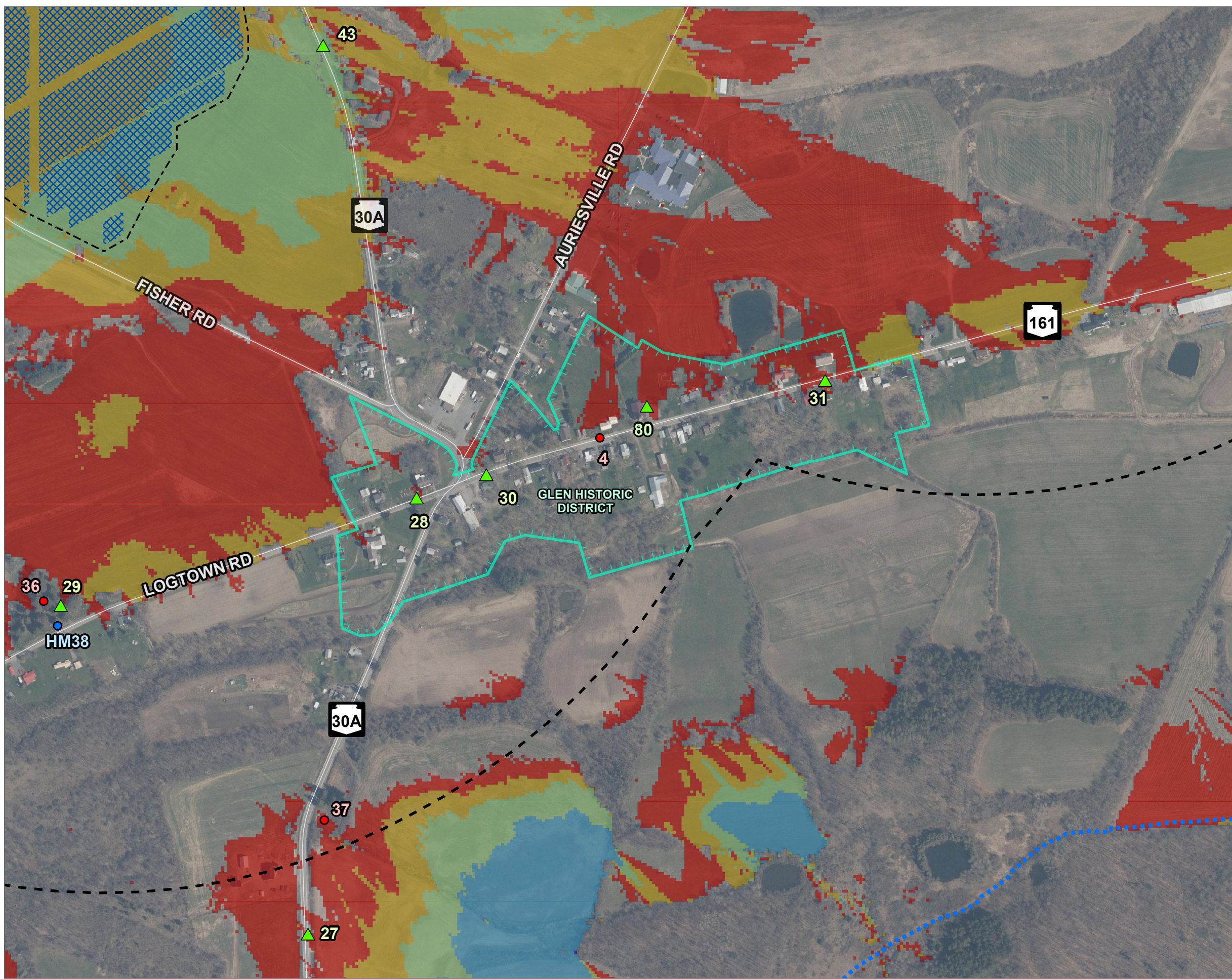
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











BASE MAP: NYSGIS ORTHO IMAGERY SERVICE, 2022
 DATA SOURCES: TRC



CONNECTGEN - MILL POINT 1 SOLAR PROJECT	
TOWN OF GLEN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, NY	
TITLE: POTENTIAL VISIBILITY AND VIEWPOINT LOCATIONS FOR ARRAYS	
DRAWN BY: S. MOTURI	PROJ. NO.: 411360
CHECKED BY: B. MASTERSON	FIGURE 2 (SHEET 5 OF 5)
APPROVED BY: J. BARTOS	
DATE: MARCH 2023	
3 CORPORATE DRIVE SUITE 202 CLIFTON PARK, NY 12065 PHONE: 518.348.1190	
FILE: Visual_Figures.aprx	

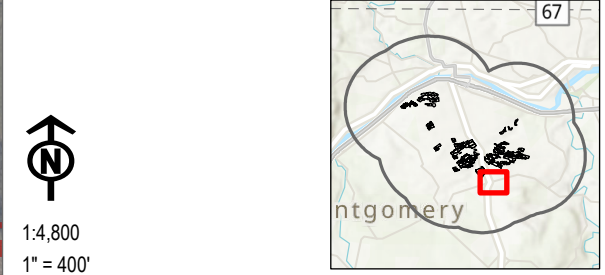
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-  PROPOSED ARRAY LOCATION
-  PROPOSED FENCE LINE
-  DISTANCE ZONE 1 - HALF MILE
- POTENTIAL VISIBILITY OF SOLAR ARRAYS**
-  MORE PANELS VISIBLE
-  MORE PANELS VISIBLE
-  MORE PANELS VISIBLE
-  LESS PANELS VISIBLE
-  VIEWPOINT LOCATION
-  HISTORICAL BLUE MARKER
-  AESTHETIC RESOURCE
-  NYS SNOWMOBILE TRAIL
-  HISTORIC DISTRICT
-  MUNICIPAL BOUNDARY

NOTES:
 1. THIS FIGURE SHOWS VISIBILITY OF PANELS FROM THE PRELIMINARY SOLAR AREA ONLY.

BASE MAP: NYSGIS ORTHO IMAGERY SERVICE, 2021
 DATA SOURCES: TRC



CONNECTGEN - MILL POINT 1 SOLAR PROJECT	
TOWN OF GLEN MONTGOMERY COUNTY, NY	
TITLE: POTENTIAL VISIBILITY FOR ARRAYS WITHIN GLEN HISTORIC DISTRICT	
DRAWN BY: S. MOTURI	PROJ. NO.: 411360
CHECKED BY: B. MASTERSON	FIGURE 3
APPROVED BY: J. BARTOS	
DATE: JUNE 2023	
	
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FILE:	Visual_Figures.aprx