



**Office of
Renewable
Energy Siting**

ANDREW M. CUOMO
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ACTING EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mill Point Solar

Pre-application Wildlife Site Characterization Consultation

May 25, 2021

Pursuant to § 900-1.3(g), ConnectGen Montgomery County LLC (ConnectGen) provided a Wildlife Site Characterization Report dated April 2021. As discussed in the initial pre-application meeting occurring on 5/25/2021, the Office of Renewable Energy Siting (ORES or Office) and New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) reviewed this report. ORES, in consultation with DEC, shares its initial findings regarding the presence of occupied habitat at the facility and recommended habitat assessments and/or field studies herein:

Initial Findings of Occupied Habitat

[REDACTED]

Indiana Bat

The proposed facility site is not within two and a half (2.5) miles of a maternity roost site or a hibernaculum site.

Bald Eagles

The proposed facility site is not within one-quarter (0.25) mile of a known bald eagle nest.

Grassland Birds

There is no known occupied habitat for grassland bird species within the proposed facility.

[REDACTED]



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[REDACTED]

Construction and operation of the project within occupied habitat will result in a take of listed species. To avoid impacts to listed grassland bird species, no project elements should be placed in fields where nests, roosts, or essential foraging behavior are determined to be located, or in fields greater than 25 acres in size located within one half (1/2) mile of these locations.

The Applicant has conducted 2020-2021 winter raptor surveys and [REDACTED] [REDACTED] It is recommended the Applicant develop and submit a work plan for 2021 breeding bird surveys prior to the commencement of field work, following NYSDEC protocols. Upon receipt and review of the full reports and associated shapefiles for both these surveys, a determination will be made regarding the extent of impacts to listed grassland bird species.

Other State-listed Species

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Changes to the current project location may result in impacts to these species.

Figure 1 illustrates estimated occupied habitat within vicinity of the proposed facility site.

Preliminary Estimate of Occupied Habitat

Based on the above findings, it appears that the proposed facility area [REDACTED] [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Additional information from the results of on-site surveys, details on the location and placement of project components, and a description of the current habitats where project components will be placed are needed before a complete determination of occupied habitat can be made.

Please note that these initial findings are based on an initial review of the Wildlife Site Characterization Report provided by ConnectGen and ORES will update these findings upon receipt and review of the above referenced winter raptor and breeding bird survey reports and associated shapefiles.



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Recommended Habitat Assessments and/or Field Surveys

Habitat assessments (field surveys) are recommended in the appropriate seasonal windows within one year. In general, all fields greater than 25 acres within the facility area boundary should be surveyed for breeding birds and wintering raptors following an approved work plan. Habitat assessments for breeding grassland birds should include a description of the current landcover and the crop history for the most recent 5 years for any fields greater than 25 acres in size where components may be sited.

If ConnectGen concurs with these recommendations and agrees to conduct the habitat assessments and field surveys described above, please develop a pre-construction study work plan and submit for review by the Office and NYSDEC prior to the commencement of field work, in compliance with §900-1.3(g)(4). If the Applicant opts not to conduct the recommended surveys and believes that suitable habitat for a given species is not present at the site, please provide a detailed description of the methodology used to determine that no suitable habitat exists in compliance with §900-1.3(g)(3).



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