

Public Service Commission of Wisconsin



Summer Strand, Chairperson
Kristy Nieto, Commissioner
Marcus Hawkins, Commissioner

4822 Madison Yards Way
P.O. Box 7854
Madison, WI 53707-7854

June 10, 2025

Re: Application of Porchlight Solar Project, LLC for a
Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to
Construct a Solar Electric Generation Facility, a Battery
Energy Storage System, 2.5 Miles of 138 Kilovolt
Generator Tie Line, and a Project Substation in the Towns
of Buena Vista and Pine Grove, Portage County, Wisconsin

9829-CE-100

To the Recipient,

Public Service Commission of Wisconsin (PSC or Commission) received an application for a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (CPCN) from Porchlight Solar Project, LLC (Porchlight Solar or applicant) to construct a new solar electric generation facility and associated facilities, including an electric transmission generator tie line (gen-tie) to connect the solar facility to the existing transmission grid, and a battery energy storage system (BESS). The project would be located in the towns of Buena Vista and Pine Grove in Portage County, Wisconsin.

The Commission is sending this letter to property owners near the proposed solar facility site or directly along the proposed routes of the gen-tie as well as interested individuals who have asked to be placed on our mailing list. This letter is also being sent to public officials who may wish to place this notification in a location where it can be viewed by the public.

PSC and Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) staff completed a joint-environmental review of the proposed project and prepared an environmental assessment (EA) to determine if an environmental impact statement (EIS) is necessary. The EA is written following the guidelines in Wis. Admin. Code PSC 4.20 and is a review of the potential environmental effects of the proposed project that would affect the quality of the human environment as described in Wis. Stat. § 1.11(2)(c). The EA also describes ways of mitigating or avoiding some of the expected impacts and concludes with the evaluation of ten items described in Wis. Admin. Code § PSC 4.20(2)(d).

The preliminary determination indicates that no significant impacts on the human or natural environment are likely to occur as a result of the construction and operation of this project. Therefore, preparation of an EIS is not required. Comments regarding this determination can be directed to the contact person listed at the end of this letter.

Proposed Project

Porchlight Solar, a wholly owned subsidiary of Savion, LLC, is proposing construction of a new electric generation facility for 163.8 megawatts (MW) of alternating-current (AC) power using



photovoltaic (PV) solar panels, a 50 MW BESS, and a 2.5-mile long 138 kilovolt (kV) gen-tie. The proposed solar arrays would be located on approximately 1,118 acres of land in the Towns of Buena Vista and Pine Grove in Portage County. The proposed solar array area would be in sections 23, 24, 25, 35, and 36 in the Town of Buena Vista and section 2 in the Town of Pine Grove; the alternative solar array area would be located in sections 25, 26, and 35 in the Town of Buena Vista. Within the proposed facility area would be the proposed solar arrays, electric collector system, access roads, collector substation, BESS components, and an operations & maintenance (O&M) building. A 4.6-acre primary laydown area would be used during construction. Two temporary 4.7-acre laydown areas will be constructed on the east and west sides of Isherwood Road. An additional 440 acres have been designated as alternative array areas. The proposed gen-tie right-of-way (ROW) impacts were also evaluated.

Construction

Temporary impacts during construction such as increased traffic, noise, and air pollution in the construction areas. Construction of the project would cause temporary increases to traffic in the project area because of workers, heavy equipment, and materials deliveries using local roads. Construction would also create loose or disturbed soils that could be susceptible to erosion and cause dust. The project applicant provided several plans to reduce construction impacts on traffic, noise, dust, and water runoff.

Aesthetics and Noise

After construction, the project would create impacts to the local environment resulting from the new facility and the change in land use. The project would affect the aesthetics of the area as long as it is in operation, which may be looked at favorably or unfavorably depending on the viewer. The applicant performed a glint and glare study that determined the new facility would create new periodic impacts to some residences and passing vehicles. A noise study was conducted to measure the current sound levels around the project area. The study estimated the impact of the proposed project using the specifications of planned equipment. The results found that the new project would not increase noise in the area above specified daytime and nighttime limits.

Wildlife and Natural Resources

The project would affect the animal and plant species that currently use the land. Vegetation, mostly remnant agricultural crops, would be removed and the project area would be converted into grassland. The change in habitat would negatively affect certain animals while benefiting some others. The applicant intends to replant the area with low growing plants as well as small patches of pollinator plant species. The applicant also plans to use animal-friendly fencing that allows small animals passage under or through fences.

The applicant completed an endangered resources (ER) review with the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The ER review recommended actions to help protect one butterfly, one mammal, and one herptile species that may be present in the project area. Recommendations

included habitat assessments, time of year restrictions, and exclusion fencing. There were no required actions to be taken to comply with state and/or federal endangered species laws.

Conclusion

The project as proposed in the application and subsequent filings, including use of the stated construction methods and implementation of the mitigation plans, is not expected to cause any significant environmental effects. No significant impacts on the human environment that would warrant the preparation of an EIS are expected if this project were constructed using some combination of the currently proposed array sites. Thus, preparation of an EIS, as described in Wis. Stat. § 1.11, is not required for this project.

Copies of the EA are available upon request, either in electronic or paper format (for a paper copy, an address must be provided). Requests for a copy of the EA should be made to Tyler Tomaszewski at the Public Service Commission of Wisconsin by telephone at (608) 266-2730, by e-mail at tyler.tomaszewski@wisconsin.gov, or by regular mail directed to the Public Service Commission, P.O. Box 7854, Madison, Wisconsin 53707-7854.

Comments on the finding of no significant impact for this proposed project should be made to Adam Ingwell at the address above or through the Commission's web comment form. Go to the Commission's web site at <http://psc.wi.gov>, click on "Commission Actions," then click on "File a Public Comment." On the next page, select "File a comment" for case 9829-CE-100.

Please provide any comments by Thursday, June 26, 2025.

Sincerely,



Adam Ingwell
Environmental Affairs Coordinator – Supervisor
Division of Digital Access, Consumer and Environmental Affairs

AI:TT:kle DL:02075206

