

Petition to Deny Large Scale Solar Facilities In Logan County, OH
(Specifically Washington, Stokes, Bloomfield, McArthur, and Villages within these zones)
(Case #: _____) ; Being developed by Open Road Renewables

To the Ohio Power Siting Board of the State of Ohio

To the Logan County Commissioners
Joe Antram, Mike Yoder, Mark Robinson

**To the Trustees in Bloomfield, McArthur, Stokes, Washington Townships and the
Mayors and Council Members for the Villages of Huntsville, Lakeview, and Russells Point**

The large utility scale solar project possesses a threat to the well-being of residents, including financial security and the right to fully enjoy the property we own, without suffering such devastating destruction of the peace, beauty, and harmony of our community which will result from the solar project.

Our tourism will be severely affected due to us not maintaining the nostalgia of being a vacation destination, which will directly affect our local businesses and economy and have devastating effects.

Large scale solar facilities will impact the local environment in negative ways. Concerns range from visual impacts to property devaluation, noise, quality of our drinking water supply, unmanaged drainage systems and watersheds, health and safety of our community, degradation of our natural resources and historical landmarks, and permanent damage to our businesses who currently thrive from the tourism attracted to our beautiful location of Indian Lake.

Concerns:

Community Repercussions - Our community and its businesses depend on the tourism we attract. Building an industrial solar facility will have tremendous and permanent negative effects. Indian Lake is the second largest inland lake in the state and is currently set to be situated within 1 mile or less of the massive solar project. We draw in over 2 million visitors annually. We will be severely affected due to us not maintaining the nostalgia of being a vacation destination, which will directly affect our local businesses and economy and have devastating effects.

Visual Impact - Like any proposed structure, concerns can be raised over the visual impact a solar development will have on its surroundings. To construct a solar farm, numerous panels must be installed. This alters the landscape in practical and aesthetic ways. The land can no longer be used for anything but power generation for years to come. The reflective panels may not be personally attractive to many people. The panels, once installed, can also alter local habitats and affect wildlife in negative ways.

Natural Resources and Historical Impact – Indian Lake was built between 1850 and 1857 (then known as the Lewistown Reservoir) and is now home to many greenspaces and walking trails that are managed by Ohio Department of Natural Resources. We are also the location of where the historical Sandy Beach Amusement Park once stood. The 1920's footbridge that connected 2 sides of a harbor still stands today. Much of our land was once Native American reservations because of our close proximity to the Miami River. With many occupied villages in our area, we soon became a trade route linking the Ohio River and Lake Erie. Daniel Boone and Simon Kenton were known to travel here. We have seen many instances of digging that resulted in discovering Native burial grounds. These artifacts and relics would be threatened by the massive proposed solar project that would go right through the middle of known Native Village sites.

By 1898, the Ohio General Assembly recognized the lake as a recreation and tourist area and renamed us “Indian Lake”. We now bring in over 2 million people, annually, largely from tourism for our lake and beautiful natural resources.

Reflections from the Panels - Panel reflection is possibly the most common safety concern raised for solar developments and is commonly referred to as ‘glint and glare’ concerns. Solar panels are designed to absorb as much light as possible and reflect as little as possible. Many modern commercial panels are NOT ‘anti-glare’ to minimize reflections further. They also involve large amount of metal piles for mounting the panels, which often do cause glare. These solar panels would run along State Route 33 and State Route 274 where there is high traffic volume. We are also situated within 8 miles of Bellefontaine Regional Airport, which could potentially cause issues for flying. The addition of these solar panels will only worsen these statistics due to the poor visibility, possible glare and local traffic distraction.

Noise - Concerns over noise can be expressed in a solar development. Any issues would most likely be constrained to locations in very close proximity to the inverters. Sound equals to generator-like noise. In order to provide a significant amount of electrical energy, solar farms require large tracts of land. The construction noise of pounding each metal pile into the ground to mount the panels will be significant, wide-spread, and likely last for over a year. Many of the residential property owners homes will be within 100’ of the construction noise and 500’ of the permanent, noisy inverters.

Environment - Eastern states have abundant space and sunshine, but these areas are also natural habitats that support wildlife. For example, environmental reports underestimated the number of wild animals that would be displaced by the large Solar Generating Systems. Many solar farms also came under scrutiny when an increasing number of bird deaths were reported on its premises. Many of their wings had been melted or burned off by heat from the solar farm’s mirrors. Also, the fields proposed support herds of deer. With the proposed fields there will be no way the deer can roam which logically would affect the hunters in this area.

Property Devaluation - The solar farms would devalue residents properties due to present health risks from the installation, electromagnetic exposure, visual impact, solar panels glare, drinking water supply, poor water drainage management, continuous noise during the solar production (generator like noise), and habitat degradation. No matter the excuse, the visual picture of these panels will lower property values because the majority of buyers would not want to live near or next to them. This area is zoned agricultural and residential; not commercial zoning.

Loss and Damage to Farmland and the Agricultural Economy – Committing thousands of acres to solar for 40 years will undoubtedly have a large impact on our agricultural dollars spent in the community. Taking this land out of farming means not only that less crops are being produced, but also that less seed, fertilizers, and equipment is being purchased and maintained. Which directly affects the monetary benefits it currently provides. According to a report done in 2017, Logan County agricultural community alone adds \$129,164,871 in value to the economy. 1,854 people are employed in some aspect of the ag community. Agriculture provides \$33 billion in value to the state of Ohio, and we are currently being attacked by solar companies which will have a drastic effect on that rate.

Fire Safety - The possibility of fires resulting from or intensified by PV systems may trigger concern among the general public as well as among firefighters. Even without a battery facility within our project, the panels themselves can still catch fire due to electrical arcing, improper installation, component defects, or faulty wiring.

Habitat Degradation - The impact that solar farms have on individual species can send ripples throughout entire ecosystems. When solar farms harm or remove species within a habitat, they also remove the valuable ecosystem services that they provide to the habitat. The habitat becomes less livable for plants and wildlife that have adapted to its specific conditions. Logan County and the surrounding area is a habitat for the American Bald Eagle, a protected species. They not only live here; they nest, feed, and breed here. Also, there are at least eight Bald Eagles needing protection in our county. Indian Lake lies along one of the country's major avian migration routes and is an important resting stop for birds such as ducks, grebes, swans, egrets, and herons. Many stay over the summer to nest. One of the threatened species that calls Indian Lake home are Sandhill Cranes, who now permanently nest in this area.

Land Use Consequences - Utility-scale solar power installations require a lot of space because solar energy collection is relatively inefficient; it can take up to 10 acres of solar panels to produce 1 megawatt of electricity. Clearing land for a solar power plant will destroy wildlife habitat and degrade soil quality by removing plants and their root structures. Water Supply Management could easily be threatened if not carefully managed, especially because we are in a flood plain area. Logically, it is very possible for groundwater, rivers, lakes, and wells to be contaminated.

Water Maintenance & Drainage - Construction projects need to have serious consideration of the quantity of stormwater retained at the construction site. The integrity of the town's water system is among the concerns that potentially toxic components of the solar equipment could leak. Estimating stormwater retained for a solar farm project can be challenging because the panels are impervious but the area beneath the panels is often pervious, and the solar panels create driplines that dump large amounts of rain in one area. There is also a concern that damaged field tiles will not be fixed and cause uncontrolled flooding and erosion. Unmanaged drainage systems, even when designed to properly remove sufficient water from solar farms, will have detrimental effects on nearby properties. Erosion is currently considered a critical concern in Ohio. Our lake is a feeder lake and is the beginning of the Great Miami River which flows into the Ohio River; having erosion, flooding, and silt entering the water that surrounds us would greatly compromise not only our areas, but numerous locations along those rivers.

Energy Consumption - Solar power plants generate clean energy, but they do not yet produce enough to provide electricity for the production of all solar power equipment. Most PV cells and other solar equipment are produced in facilities that rely on fossil fuel-based power sources, such as traditional power plants. Therefore, the manufacture of these components results in the emission of greenhouse gases and other pollutants that affect the air and nearby water bodies. Transporting, installing and maintaining solar power equipment also contributes to the carbon footprint of this power source.

Considerations: The above-mentioned concerns are a real threat to our community. Many will be virtually surrounded on almost every side of the community. Our tourist community would likely amount to just "homes surrounded by a solar power plant" and we would lose the nostalgia of being a vacation destination. This would cause unmeasurable harm to our entire community. What about the local hunters? With a solar desert, wildlife and game will be rerouted and leave the area. Our farmers and economy would suffer. Our community as a whole is VERY MUCH against the idea of this project! It is imperative that it be preserved for future generations. Only with a deep, inherent love for this land can preservation occur. And with the fighting spirit of our community and elected officials. That will be our best hope to save this lake and land we love.

THE COMMUNITY OF INDIAN LAKE and SURROUNDING AREAS