

COMMUNITY INFORMATION PACK

Proposed Birch Solar Farm

Six foot farm fencing will be used at Birch Solar

For more information please visit www.lightsourcebp.com/birch

Lightsource bp is in the process of developing the Birch solar farm in Ohio, about 10 miles southwest of Lima. Birch will be financed with private capital, built, owned and operated by Lightsource bp and will have an output power capacity of 375 megawatts.

The site for Birch has been carefully selected. Our project development involves site specific environmental assessments that include cultural surveys, threatened and endangered species assessments, wetlands delineations, as well as consultation with wildlife regulatory agencies.

Note: Numbers provided may be adjusted as system design is finalized

CLEAN ELECTRICITY

locally generated renewable power



375MW_{DC}

contributing to Ohio's energy security



423,700MT

of CO₂ reduced each year

NEW REVENUE

from project to benefit local schools & other public services



\$2.7M

per year



\$81M

over project life

JOBS

created by the project for the community



400

direct jobs during construction, with 80% or more local labor



400+

indirect jobs in the state economy

INVESTMENT IN OHIO

new energy infrastructure privately funded



\$337M

private capital will fully fund this project



\$4.6M

annual operations budget primarily spent in the region



WHY SOLAR?

Solar is a passive form of technology, generating emissions-free electricity that adds security to our country's energy mix. This, combined with its affordability and correlation to peak electricity demand periods, makes it an ideal energy source for the US.

Solar offers several advantages to the community:

- Solar arrays are only about 10 feet tall. With proper planning and land management, solar farm site topography and vegetation can be designed to limit project visibility from neighbors and nearby roads.
- Solar farms do not emit any noise beyond the site boundaries.
- With a long-term land management plan, studies have shown that solar farms can meaningfully increase wildlife populations and biodiversity.
- Solar farms can help strengthen rural economies by creating local jobs, contributing significant property tax revenue, providing dependable revenue to landowners in order to supplement farm income, and bringing multi-million dollar annual operations budgets that are primarily spent in the region.



COMPREHENSIVE PLANNING & COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Lightsource bp's model is to develop, own and operate our solar farms throughout their full life cycle. With solar farms having a life span of up to 40 years, it's important to us to be stewards of the land and long-term partners of local communities.

At Lightsource bp, we work with various stakeholders when building our solar farms to make sure our projects benefit the local community – not just by generating clean electricity that improves air quality, but by improving the ecosystem as well.

We construct our solar farms with a view to improving soil health, fostering biodiversity, and strengthening rural economies. From ecological assessments to community engagement, we do our best to be good neighbors and create solar farms that local communities can be proud of.



OUR APPROACH

Empowered local participation

It's important to us that the local community is informed of the plans for the site. We offer transparency and the ability for public input.



Preserving existing vegetation

Part of our planting plan involves an assessment of the vegetation already in place on each site. Where possible, we seek to preserve as much of the existing vegetation as we can.



New vegetation planting and natural screening

We work hard to make sure our solar farms have minimal impact on their local surroundings, and this includes shielding them from residents' views. We often use natural screening techniques such as planting hedgerows, shrubs and trees. We create a detailed planting plan, which will focus on screening the installation from view using vegetation and increasing the biodiversity values on the site.



WHO ARE WE?

Lightsource bp is a global market leader in the development, financing and long-term management of large-scale solar projects. We are a 50:50 joint venture with bp, working together to help drive the world's transition to low carbon energy through competitively priced and sustainable electricity.

We have 2 gigawatts of operating solar under management across 300 projects worldwide and over 8 gigawatts in our US pipeline. We work closely with local businesses and communities to supply clean, dependable and low-cost electricity to energize healthier communities.

Green open spaces

The installation will be designed to leave wide spaces around the site boundaries and between the row of panels to avoid shading the panels, which will leave the majority of the fenced solar array area as undisturbed or revegetated land.



Seeding

Our solar farms are designed with wide boundary margins which can be seeded with site-specific mix, such as wildflowers, grassland meadow or other suitable mix designed to feed and support local wildlife. Fostering pollinator habitats can help boost nearby crop yields.



Customized landscape plans

Our plans are prepared by land management experts, who conduct a wide range of ecological assessments to create a customized plan for each site.



Continued agriculture use

Solar farm design provides multiple opportunities for complementary uses such as sheep grazing beneath and between the rows of elevated panels or the planting of pollinator friendly vegetation.

COMBINING SOLAR WITH AGRICULTURE & HABITAT CONSERVATION



LOCAL BENEFITS

With Lightsource bp's model of owning and operating our projects, we're committed to being a long-term partner in Ohio.



Lightsource bp is a member of the American Solar Grazing Association (ASGA), a non-profit founded by farmers dedicated to agrivoltaics: the combination of agriculture and solar photovoltaics through sheep grazing on solar sites to maintain the land and provide a diversified source of income to America's local farmers.

Working in partnership with ASGA, local farmers, grazing and ecology experts, we're planning to implement both sheep grazing as well as create a pollinator habitat at our Birch project in Ohio. Here in Ohio as well as around the world, habitat loss, disease and environmental contaminants have caused pollinator populations to decline.

According to the US Department of Agriculture, three-fourths of the world's flowering plants and about 35 percent of the world's food crops are dependent on pollinators to reproduce, so declining populations have detrimental effects on food systems worldwide.

Sheep grazing will keep the farmland in farm production and can also improve soil health by increasing the cycling of nutrients, carbon and water. Grazing is ideal as it can also be co-located with native vegetation to restore pollinator habitat as well as offer nature lovers a place to view wildlife, including birds and butterflies.

Energy Infrastructure for Ohio



Lightsource bp and project partners will invest an estimated \$337 million of private capital into building this new clean energy infrastructure in Ohio, helping diversify the state's energy portfolio and increase security with locally generated power.

Jobs



Along with growing Ohio's solar market and supply chain, Birch will create 400+ jobs during construction, hiring local subcontractors and recruiting from the local labor pool. Solar job training opportunities will be made available to community members with an interest in participating in the project.

New Revenue



Birch would contribute \$81 million of dollars in new revenue under a PILOT agreement over its project life, benefitting local schools, as well as local and county governments.

Revenue for Landowners



Birch is on land that will be leased by Lightsource bp from local landowners, providing families with a new source of reliable revenue for 25-30 years, and helping keep the land in the family for generations.

Educational Opportunities



The solar farm will provide educational opportunities for local schools and universities, with Lightsource bp providing curriculum support, research opportunities and site tours.

Clean, Local Energy



The Birch solar farm will abate 423,700 metric tons of CO2 emissions, enhancing air quality by helping to mitigate the health effects of harmful air pollutants.

Philanthropic Commitments



Lightsource bp is committed to dedicating funds to philanthropic activities and charitable donations to local organizations.

Enhanced Biodiversity



We're committed to minimizing the effect of the solar farm to the ecosystem as well as improving soil health, fostering biodiversity and pollinators, and creating wildlife habitats wherever possible.

FAQ

How safe is a solar farm?

A solar project is about as safe as a facility can be. There are no air or chemical emissions from the solar farm. No trucks will be coming and going on a daily basis once construction is complete. The power will leave the solar project on lines just like the power lines in your neighborhood.

What about reflected sunlight?

The more sunlight a solar panel absorbs, the more electricity it can produce. Solar panels are thus designed to absorb light, and only reflect a small amount of the sunlight that hits them as compared to most other everyday objects. For example, solar panels reflect significantly less light than flat water.

Can the land used by a solar farm be redeveloped in the future?

Once built, a solar farm is a secure site with little disturbance from humans or machinery for decades. This gives the land a recovery period, increasing future soil quality and land value. At the end of the project the installation will be dismantled, removed and recycled without harming the land – we make sure that the land is restored to its original state, or better.

How will traffic flow be managed?

Once the solar farm is in place it requires very few cars for operation and maintenance workers that would cause no traffic disruption. While the solar farm is being constructed, a traffic management plan will be put in place.

How do solar installations affect health?

Solar is a passive technology which doesn't produce any harmful by-products. In fact, solar energy replaces polluting energy generated by fossil fuels, improving the health of people and the environment they live in.

Will new transmission lines be run for this project?

No – the parcels selected for the project have access to existing transmission infrastructure, so we do not need to build new transmission lines.

Who is paying for the installation of the solar system?

Lightsource bp and our project investors will fully fund the project with private capital, an estimated \$337 million of private investment into energy infrastructure for Ohio.

