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**Docket No. 525
Greenskies Clean Energy, LLC
Parcel No. 115-7823, North Stonington, and Parcel No. 90-1-1 Jeremy Hill Road, Stonington**

**Development & Management (D&M) Plan
Staff Report
June 6, 2025**

Notice

On January 10, 2025, the Connecticut Siting Council (Council) issued a Certificate of Environmental Compatibility and Public Need (Certificate) to Greenskies Clean Energy, LLC (GCE) for the construction, maintenance, and operation of a 4.75-megawatt (MW) AC solar photovoltaic electric generating facility and associated equipment on an approximate 21.6-acre site on two undeveloped host parcels located west of Jeremy Hill Road: a 62.45-acre host parcel in Stonington (Parcel No. 90-1-1) and a 9.23-acre host parcel in North Stonington (Parcel No. 115-7823), and associated electrical interconnection (Project). In its Decision and Order (D&O), the Council required GCE to submit a Development and Management (D&M) Plan in compliance with Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies (RCSA) §§16-50j-60 through 16-50j-62.

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On April 15, 2025, in compliance with RCSA §16-50j-61(d), GCE submitted the D&M Plan for the approved facility to the Council and the service list. No comments were received.

On April 29, 2025, the Council issued interrogatories to GCE. On May 13, 2025, GCE submitted responses to the interrogatories.

D&M Plan

Condition No. 1 of the Council’s D&O requires a copy of the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP)-issued Stormwater Permit to be submitted prior to the commencement of construction. GCE provided a copy of the Stormwater Permit, dated March 5, 2025.

Condition No. 2 of the Council’s D&O requires the following information to be included in the D&M Plan:

- a. A final site plan including, but not limited to, final facility layout, access drive, electrical interconnection and associated utility pole locations, equipment pads, stormwater management structures, fence design and landscaping;**

The final site plan consists of a single solar array area layout with a total of 11,388 non-reflective 540 watt solar panels (Heliene 144HC M10) installed on a single-axis tracking system and oriented in a north-south direction. At maximum tilt, the tops of the panels will be approximately 8.7 feet above grade at the highest point and 3 feet above grade at the lowest point. The panel rows will be separated by 8-foot-wide vegetated aisles. The fenced solar array will occupy a 21.2-acre area.

After the Certificate was issued, GCE modified the facility site layout to add an additional 1,066 solar modules to the facility, increasing output from approximately 4.75 MW to approximately 4.99

MW. Panel row spacing was decreased from 10-foot to 8-foot vegetated aisles to accommodate the additional panels. Two additional inverters were added to the facility.

Access to the facility will be from an existing 670-foot long gravel drive extending west from Jeremy Hill Road. A new 15-foot wide, 3,610-foot long gravel drive will be constructed at the end of the existing gravel drive to access the solar array, electrical equipment, and stormwater detention basins.

The electrical interconnection route will extend underground from two electrical equipment areas, transitioning to overhead supported by two utility poles near the northeast corner of the site. From there, the utility line would again extend underground, then transition to overhead supported by two utility poles near Jeremy Hill Road.

The facility interconnection requires four 35-foot tall utility poles, two on the customer (GCE) side (recloser pole and a GOAB pole) near the northeast electrical pad, and two on the utility (Eversource) side (meter pole and recloser pole) along the access drive near Jeremy Hill Road. GCE will install an underground line along the access drive between the two sets of poles.

The facility will be enclosed by a 7-foot tall chain link perimeter fence, installed flush with the ground to support agricultural activities at the site.

High voltage signage will be installed at all fence gate locations. Contact signs for the Project owner will be posted adjacent to the main access gate.

Two 12-foot by 25-foot concrete pads and associated gravel areas will be installed, one in the northeastern section of the array and one in the central section of the array, to support transformers, switchgear, and meter/monitoring equipment. The gravel area next to each pad will each support 20 inverters installed on posts.

Post-construction stormwater will be controlled by grass-lined swales and six grass lined stormwater management basins with controlled stone outlet structures that discharge overland.

The solar array area will be seeded initially with ryegrass to stabilize the site. After establishment, GCE will seed the site with ERNMIX – 146 Fuzz & Buzz seed mix which includes mostly grasses to support livestock and a small component of wildflower species to support pollinators.

GCE provided a revised noise analysis to account for the two additional inverters. The analysis concluded the Project will be in compliance with state standards.

- b. Erosion and sedimentation control plan consistent with the Connecticut Guidelines for Erosion and Sedimentation Control and the DEEP-issued Stormwater Permit including, but not limited to, temporary sediment basin detail, site stabilization measures during construction, inspection and reporting protocols;**

The D&M Plan contains Erosion and Sedimentation (E&S) Control Plans consistent with the *Connecticut Guidelines for Soil Erosion and Sediment Control*.

E&S control measures will be established in accordance with the DEEP Stormwater Permit and include, but are not limited to, a stone construction work area entrance, siltation barriers around the perimeter of the work area, erosion control blankets, mulch, and temporary seeding. Disturbed

areas will be stabilized after no more than 14 days if no work occurs in the specific area. The Site Plans specify the use of 100 percent biodegradable erosion control blankets.

Inspections and reporting will be conducted in accordance with the DEEP Stormwater Permit. All E&S controls will be inspected by the contractor on a daily basis and by an engineer on a weekly basis and within 24 hours of a rain event of greater than 0.5 inch. Repairs to E&S controls by the contractor will occur within 24 hours, when necessary.

The six stormwater basins will be used as temporary sediment basins during construction.

Once construction is complete, areas with sediment deposition will be cleaned, and disturbed areas final seeded with a solar farm seed mix or a mix conducive to agricultural activities undertaken by the owner of the site host parcels. E&S controls will remain in place until site stabilization, as verified by the engineer of record.

c. Vernal Pool Protection Plan;

GCE will implement a Wetland and Vernal Pool Protection Plan that includes contractor education, details for sediment control, exclusionary barriers, measures to ensure E&S controls are properly installed and maintained, a fuel storage and prevention plan, and refueling of vehicles/machinery a minimum of 100 feet from wetlands and vernal pools.

Installation of silt barriers and hay bales along the access drive during construction will prevent vernal pool species from moving into the construction areas as well as prevent siltation of adjacent wetlands and vernal pools. Temporary basin outfalls will be enclosed by wildlife exclusionary fencing which features a mesh pattern to allow water to discharge but prevent small wildlife from entering the basin and adjacent work areas.

d. Site construction detail/phasing plan including, but not limited to, construction laydown area, site clearing/grubbing, site grading, excess earth material disposal locations, and soil stockpile locations;

The total area of disturbance is approximately 28.5 acres. Approximately 3.5 acres of tree clearing is required to construct the facility.

The construction phasing plan includes, but is not limited to, installation of the construction entrance, perimeter erosion controls, and stormwater detention basins and swales, followed by tree clearing and grubbing. Access drives will be established as early as possible to prevent rutting. Woody debris will either be removed from the site or chipped for use during construction for berms and/or filter socks.

Once tree clearing/grubbing is complete, solar array infrastructure, fencing and utilities will be installed, followed by site stabilization.

Temporary staging and soil stockpile areas will be established within the limits of disturbance, at a minimum distance of 50 feet from wetlands. Excess soil will either be spread on-site or used by the owner of the site host parcels.

Construction hours will be Monday through Friday from 6:30 AM to 5:00 PM.

- e. **Final structural design for the racking system stamped by a Professional Engineer duly licensed in the State of Connecticut;**

GCE submitted the final structural design for the racking system stamped by a Professional Engineer duly licensed in the State of Connecticut.

- f. **An agricultural activity plan for the site, if an agricultural activity is implemented, with a document that shall indemnify and hold harmless the Council, its agents, representatives and employees from any and all losses, claims, actions, costs and expenses, judgments, subrogations, or other damages resulting from any injury to a person or to property arising out of the presence of third-parties within the fenced solar facility site; and**

The owner of the site host parcels (Devon Point Farms) may conduct agricultural activities at the site, in accordance with the terms of the lease that may include, but are not limited to, crop production, poultry/fowl grazing, and/or the planting of a mix of pollinator friendly flowers and grasses within the solar array area.

The owner of the site host parcels will be responsible for all farming and fowl management activity, including but not limited to, animal welfare, stocking rates, water supply, forage condition, removal of invasive plants and mowing cycles.

Training regarding agricultural activities will be provided to solar array maintenance technicians. Signage will be displayed at the main gate with emergency contact information for the farm manager.

GCE provided a fully executed Hold Harmless Agreement in the D&M Plan.

Condition No. 4 of the Council's D&O requires a bond for costs associated with decommissioning the facility and restoration of the prime farmland soils within the boundaries of the site as identified in Application Figure 7 at the end of the solar facility's useful life in accordance with CGS §16- 50k(a) and the site lease agreement.

GCE has an executed lease with the owner of the site host parcels that requires GCE to provide removal security to decommission and restore the site. The removal security may be in the form of a bond, letter of credit, insurance policy, cash, parent guaranty, or other such form acceptable to the owner of the site host parcels. Additionally, every five years, GCE will engage an independent engineer to estimate the removal and restoration cost.

Conclusion

The D&M Plan complies with requirements of RCSA §16-50j-60 to 16-50j-62 and is consistent with the Council's D&O for Docket No. 525, dated January 9, 2025.

If approved, staff recommends the following condition:

1. Submit a copy of the final Emergency Response Plan, which shall include, but not be limited to, contact information for local police, fire and emergency medical technicians, to the Council and local emergency responders prior to commencement of operation and provide emergency response training that includes an itemized list of necessary fire suppression equipment and adequate water supplies for any fire issues at the facility site, prior to the commencement of operation.

Revised Solar Array Layout

