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NEWS RELEASE

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Siting Board Conditionally Approves Solar Project for Hardin County

FRANKFORT, Ky. (March 4, 2022) – The Kentucky State Board on Electric Generation and Transmission Siting (Siting Board) has approved, with modifications and conditions, an application from Rhudes Creek Solar, LLC, to construct 100 megawatt (MW) solar facility on approximately 1,072 acres in Hardin County, Kentucky.

Rhudes Creek submitted its application, including the required Site Assessment Report, on Sept. 7, 2021. The Siting Board conducted a site visit on Nov. 8, 2021, a local public hearing on Jan. 10, 2022, and a formal evidentiary hearing on Jan. 13. There were no intervenors in this case.

Rhudes Creek also applied to construct an approximately 1.5 mile overhead 138 kV unregulated transmission line that will connect the project to the transmission network of Louisville Gas & Electric and Kentucky Utilities, and according to Rhudes Creek's application, the power from the project is intended to be sold LG&E/KU.

As authorized by statute, the Siting Board retained a consultant to review Rhudes Creek's Site Assessment Report and proposed mitigation measures. The Site Assessment Report, per statute, must contain a detailed site description of the proposed facility, as well as potential impacts to surrounding property both during construction and operation post-construction. In addition to evaluation of the factors contained in the Site Assessment Report, KRS 278.710(1) directs the Siting Board to consider the following criteria in making a decision:

- Economic impact on the affected region and state;
- Existence of other generation facilities;
- Local planning and zoning requirements;
- Potential impact on the electricity transmission system;
- Compliance with statutory setback requirements; and
- History of environmental compliance

The construction phase will be approximately 10 to 12 months, during which approximately 240 temporary, full-time solar panel installers, electricians, equipment operators, and other positions will be employed. Three to four individuals also be employed during the estimated 35-year operational phase of the project. Based on the review of the evidence provided in the case, the Siting Board has determined the solar project will generally have a positive economic impact in the region.

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Setbacks of generating equipment are established by local planning and zoning laws, but the Siting Board set additional distances between panels and residences. Any agreements by participating landowners to lesser setbacks must be filed with the Siting Board before project construction begins. Setbacks from any noise-emitting facilities during the operational phase of the project are also specified in the Order.

To minimize impacts both the construction and operational phases of the proposed solar facility, Rhudes Creek must comply with several mitigation measures and conditions. These include:

- Measures to minimize visual impacts, such as maintaining, as practicable, existing vegetation between the solar facility and nearby roadways and homes and planting and maintaining native evergreen species as a visual buffer.
- Measures to control noise, such as limiting construction activity and deliveries to the hours between 8:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. Monday through Saturday; deploying noise suppression methods during construction as necessary.
- Measures to minimize impacts to roads, including developing a traffic management plan and complying with all state and local state and local road permit, truck weight, and other requirements.

As the Siting Board has required in all cases, Rhudes Creek must file a full decommissioning plan that commits the applicant to removing all solar facility components, above and below ground plan at the end of the project life. This plan must be completed at least one month before construction begins. Rhudes Creek must file a bond equal to the amount necessary to carry out the decommissioning plan, naming Hardin County as beneficiary. The bond amount shall be reviewed every five years at Rhudes Creek Solar's expense to provide any updates to the cost of decommissioning.

The Siting Board found that Rhudes Creek met the requirements of KRS 278.710(1) so long as Rhudes Creek complies with these mitigation measures and conditions. Appendix A of today's Order provides a complete list and additional details on all of the required mitigation measures and conditions.

The Siting Board members consists of the three members of the Public Service Commission, the secretary of the Kentucky Energy and Environmental Cabinet or a designee, the secretary of the Kentucky Economic Development Cabinet or a designee, and for specific cases, the county judge or chair of local planning and zoning (if applicable), and a local member appointed by the governor. The local members for the Rhudes Creek case are Mark Hinton, chairman of the Hardin City-County Planning Commission, and Larry Wadell. The chairman of the PSC serves as chairman of the Siting Board.

The Siting Board is headquartered at the PSC and PSC staff also serves as staff to the Siting Board. The Siting Board's operations are funded through fees paid by applicants. The complete application, a description of the review process, mitigation measures and conditions, public comments, and other case filings are available at <https://psc.ky.gov/Case/ViewCaseFilings/2021-00127>.

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