Weirs Creek Solar, LLC

Case No. 2024-00099

Application – Exhibit 12
Attachment A
Exhibit 8

Decommissioning Plan
(7 Pages)

DECOMMISSIONING PLAN
Weirs Creek Solar Project

Prepared for:

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

Weirs Creek Solar, LLC ("Applicant") contracted Environmental Consulting & Technology, Inc. ("ECT") to prepare a Decommissioning Plan ("Plan") for the Weirs Creek Solar Project ("Project") in Hopkins and Webster Counties, Kentucky. This Plan was prepared to document the Applicant's intent to decommission the Project. As of the date of this report, neither Hopkins County nor Webster County has a zoning ordinance that dictates the requirements of a decommissioning plan. Therefore, the Applicant has chosen to prepare the decommissioning plan utilizing the same requirements that have been previously approved through the Kentucky State Siting Board (KYSB). These requirements include the following (1) defining the conditions upon which the decommissioning will be initiated; (2) removal of all non-utility-owned equipment, conduit structures, fencing, roads, and foundations; (3) restoration of the property to a substantially similar physical condition that existed immediately prior to construction; (4) the time frame for completion of decommissioning activities; (5) the party currently responsible for decommissioning, and; (6) Plans for updating the decommissioning plan.

The Project is a proposed 150-megawatt alternating current (MW AC) photovoltaic energy generating facility located within Hopkins and Webster Counties. The final design Project Facilities (i.e., fenced-in array areas with PV solar panels and access roads) will be constructed within a 2,260-acre site, mapped approximately two (2) miles east of the City of Providence, directly west of the City of Nebo, north of US-41 ALT, and south of Kentucky Route 120 (KY 120). More specifically, the final Project design footprint of the Project Facilities (i.e., fenced-in array areas with solar panels and access roads) will be constructed within an approximately 810-acre site contained within the larger Project Area.

The Project components consist of photovoltaic (PV) modules mounted on a fixed tilt racking system, central electric inverters and transformers, underground electrical collection systems, solar meteorological stations, supervisory control and data acquisition (SCADA) hardware, control house and associated facilities, private gravel access roads with gated ingress/egress points, and security fencing. Temporary facilities associated with construction will include a laydown yard that will serve as facilities for construction office trailers and delivery points for major equipment. Collectively, the facilities listed in this paragraph comprise the "Project Facilities."

The site restoration will remove all above ground equipment associated with the Project. All below grade structures, including solar module support posts, will be completely removed. Gravel access roads will be removed unless the landowner requests that they remain in place.

As previously stated, the purpose of this Plan is to outline the procedures to decommission the facility and to restore the properties to be substantially similar to their pre-construction state to the extent practicable upon expiration of the operational life of the Project. Estimated costs are provided based on the array design and associated Project Facilities proposed to be installed for the Project. The Applicant plans to reevaluate these decommissioning costs every five (5) years throughout the life of the Project and will adjust the financial assurance accordingly.

2.0 SOLAR FACILITY COMPONENTS

The primary components of the Project include the following solar components and associated infrastructure. These amounts of equipment are preliminary and subject to change as a detailed design is not yet complete.

- Photovoltaic modules: 384,154
- Collector substation and associated equipment: inverters (see specifics below), one GSU transformer, one control house with associated data monitoring equipment, telecommunications equipment, electrical breakers, miscellaneous steel structures
- 4.105 MVA Inverter PE HEM F54105M: 41
- Underground collection system: 450,000 linear feet of cable
- Combiner Boxes: 923
- Meteorological station: 3
- Data monitoring systems (i.e., SCADA): 1 with 41 SCADA panels
- Private gravel access roads: 40,945 linear feet
- Security fencing: 87,544 linear feet

The Applicant, or its successors and assignees, will be responsible for the decommissioning of the Project. Utility-scale solar facilities have a mechanical life expectancy of 30 years.

3.0 DECOMMISSIONING TASKS AND SEQUENCE

The Applicant acknowledges that all solar components including Project Facilities constructed above ground and any structures below-grade will be removed offsite for disposal except for: (i) access roads or driveways on private property if the property owner requests in writing to the Applicant for such to remain, (ii) any infrastructure the subsequent landowner at the time of decommissioning may wish to retain as it may be beneficial to post-solar agricultural land use; infrastructure such as, but not limited to, fencing and stormwater basins (iii) switchyard, interconnection facilities and other similar utility facilities not owned by the Applicant, and (iv) non-recoverable underground cables.

The Applicant estimates decommissioning will occur over a period of one (1) year, unless, external circumstances prohibit site work, such as weather delays. All applicable local and state approvals and permits for the removal of the Project Facilities will be obtained prior to the start of decommissioning.

The anticipated sequence of decommissioning and removal is described below. However, an overlap of activities is expected.

- De-energize solar arrays and other facilities, if not already de-energized.
- Dismantle panels, racking, and frames.
- Remove inverters, transformers, and electrical cables and conduits (as recoverable).
- Remove fencing and miscellaneous equipment.
- Remove structural foundations.
- Remove access and internal roads, if not retained by the property owner.
- De-compact soils (if needed) and restore disturbed land to pre-construction conditions to the extent practicable.

- Revegetate any exposed soil that was disturbed during decommissioning.

The restoration efforts will return the land to substantially its original condition to the extent practicable, leaving any desirable infrastructure as requested by the subsequent landowner. It is unlikely that a significant amount of earthwork will be required due to the limited disturbance associated with construction and operations of the Project. Nonetheless, restoration activities may include regrading to restore land contours to the extent practicable, seeding to revegetate disturbed areas, de-compacting of soils determined to be compacted, and back-filling with native subsoil or topsoil as needed.

4.0 DECOMMISSIONING BOND

The Applicant will secure a bond or similar security to assure the financial performance of the decommissioning obligations. The bond amount will equal the (1) percent of the total cost of the installed solar energy system (SES). The decommissioning bond will be issued prior to the start of construction. The amount will be established based on the Estimated Decommissioning Costs Less Salvage Value illustrated on **Table 1**.

Upon completion of all issued-for-construction engineering documents, the amount of the bond or similar security shall be determined by an independent, licensed engineer who is experienced in the decommissioning of solar electric generating facilities and has no financial interest in either the merchant electric generating facility or any parcel of land upon which the Applicant facility is located. The bond or other similar security will then be changed to this updated determined amount prior to start of Project operations.

The beneficiary of the bond will be in accordance with KRS 278.706(2)(m).

5.0 DECOMMISSIONING COST ESTIMATE SUMMARY

The decommissioning costs detailed in **Table 1** include labor and material expenses for removal of solar modules, steel posts, transformers and inverters, access roads, perimeter fencing, cabling below-grade, and other Project Facilities at the estimated end of Project operations. The estimates provided include both the cost of decommissioning and removal (including site restoration) and the salvage value from the recovered materials. Solar components anticipated to have a resale or salvage value that can offset the cost of decommissioning include solar modules, steel piles, inverters, and transformers. The materials recovered include the insulated copper wire, bare copper, aluminum, and steel that constitute raw materials making up the Project Facilities. Reselling these valuable materials is a common practice in demolition and decommissioning of facilities because of the high value of these components.

Materials that have no value at the time of decommissioning will be recycled when possible or hauled offsite to a licensed solid waste disposal facility. The costs of removal, transportation, and disposal are included in these estimates. Furthermore, with the growth and development of solar technologies, there are secondary market opportunities to reuse and/or repurpose solar modules. These opportunities are not accounted for in the current estimates.

Table 1. Estimated Decommissioning Costs and Salvage Values After 30 Years of Operation

Decommissioning Task Description	Decommissioning Cost	Salvage Value
De-energize the facility	$51,302.40	--
Dismantle panels and PV frames	$6,489,154.50	$3,375,705.00
Remove inverters, electrical cables and conduits	$229,895.00	$566,400.00
Remove fencing and miscellaneous equipment/ Grading	$304,033.50	$15,700.00
Remove structural foundations and access roads (if not retained by owner)	$477,895.00	$349,525.00*
Earthwork and stabilization (de-compact, restore, revegetate as needed)	$451,232.11	$451,232.11*
Total Decommissioning Cost	**$8,003,512.51**	
Total Estimated Material Recovery (Salvage) Value	**$3,957,805.00**	
Total Estimated Decommissioning Costs Less Salvage Value	**$ 4,045,707.51**	
Total Estimated Decommissioning Costs with Reductions Applied	**$3,244,950.40***	

*Value derived from optional owner retention of components or not requesting soil restoration; not material salvage.

6.0 RESTORATION

It is unlikely that a significant amount of earthwork would be required, as the construction, operations, and maintenance of the Project involves limited earth disturbance. Nevertheless, if necessary, the Applicant or the assigned responsible party would regrade and contour the area to establish proper stormwater and sediment controls until the area is established. Other initiatives will be taken as needed to restore vegetative cover to its original or an improved condition, such as through soil decompaction and reseeding, as it was prior to development.

7.0 TIMELINE AND PARTIES RESPONSIBLE TO COMPLETE DECOMMISSIONING

Decommissioning will begin no later than 12 months (365 days) after the Project has ceased to generate electricity, the land lease has ended, or succession of use of abandoned facility, etc.

Decommissioning would be completed no later than 12 months (365 days) after commencement of decommissioning. The Applicant or a designated party will assume responsibility to conduct decommissioning activities within the posted time frame.

8.0 DECOMMISSIONING PLAN UPDATES

The Applicant has prepared this final Decommissioning Plan based on the finalized Project design. This final Decommissioning Plan will be provided to Hopkins and Webster Counties prior to the commencement of construction along with a surety bond or other form of financial security. Applicant agrees to update this Decommissioning Plan every five (5) years during the life of the Project.