

RECEIVED

October 2, 2025

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**PUBLIC SERVICE
COMMISSION**

Members of the Siting Board,

Thank you for another opportunity to express my opposition to Wood Duck Solar's 2,300 acre solar project proposed for Barren County. I am a neighboring property owner and have previously spoken and written about the many flaws and deficiencies in their plans. I appreciate that you have a forum for public comments and trust that each of you has read and considered the voluminous and factual volume of materials submitted in opposition to this proposal. Please give careful consideration to the following questions:

Why would you vote to approve this project when.....

- Inadequate notice was given to the public concerning the action being considered by the Joint City-County Planning Commission (JCCPC) at their August 20, 2018 meeting where, at the behest of Geenex (Wood Duck's parent company), the setback requirements in state law were reduced from 1,000 ft. to 50 ft. in JCCPC regulations. The notice referenced a "Text Amendment to the Barren County Subdivision Regulations for Alternative Energy Regulations". There was no mention of setbacks or solar farms to alert the public of the true nature of the action being contemplated. There was no one that spoke for or against the proposal and it passed unanimously. This was the genesis of the issue before us today.
- On October 26, 2023 an influence payment of \$10,000 was made by Geenex to the non-profit organization of Barren County Judge-Executive Jamie Byrd. Less than sixty days later the JCCPC had Geenex and Wood Duck requesting and obtaining action from the JCCPC.
- On December 18, 2023 JCCPC met to consider a "Pre-Construction Variance Application". Again the public was subjected to an inadequate and deceptive notice about the contemplated actions. The identity, nature and scope of the project is not mentioned in the Public Notice. There was no mention of a Development Plan being considered. After approving the variance request for Wood Duck, the JCCPC took up the Development Plan for the Wood Duck solar project and allowed Wood Duck representatives to make an extensive presentation about the solar farm. Because of the inadequate and deceptive notice, there was no one to speak to the project's many deficiencies. JCCPC members asked four less-than-probing questions and then approved the Development Plan. There was no discussion about the project's impact on property values, the Amish Community, quality of life issues for neighboring communities, risks to Mammoth Cave, fire or storm risks from the solar panels, or the need to be transparent with Barren County's citizens. There was no investigation into the purported economic benefits of the project. Just a pre-ordained outcome without citizen input.

- The Harvey Economics Report states that “Overall, the economic impacts of the Wood Duck Solar facility represent a positive, albeit small, contribution to the region”. Why risk damage to the citizens of Barren County and risk pollution to Mammoth Cave for a “small” economic benefit?
- Wood Duck is a shell company and has not demonstrated the financial wherewithal to complete a \$130 million dollar project or post a large decommissioning bond. Their structure is designed to limit liability and if you approve their project, your approval will likely be the chief asset to be sold to another entity.
- The Harvey Economics Report also says “The Barren County Judge-Executive and the Property Valuation Administrator are uncertain about the potential impacts on property values from the Wood Duck project”. Why subject Barren Countians to risk that their property values and liquidity will decline because of this scattered-site, 2,300 acre solar farm?
- After learning the true nature of the project, hundreds of citizens have, through public meetings, petitions, and other means, made known their opposition to the Wood Duck project. The public comment record has documented the damaging impacts of the project.
- The water lines serving the project area lack sufficient capacity to supply firefighters enough water to fight a solar fire.
- Protections for the Indiana Bat have not been addressed. Neither is there any protection for the Kentucky Cave Shrimp if, because of fire or storms, toxins from solar panels are leaked into the Mammoth Cave watershed.
- The Amish Community suffers severe negative impacts from this solar project.
- The negative impacts to wildlife and bird migrations has not been studied. This was a primary concern for JCCPC. Wetlands preservation has not been adequately addressed.
- There is no definitive answer about the amount of an adequate decommissioning security.
- Mammoth Cave is a national treasure and Wood Duck’s plan is to allow water from the project to flow to the cave without filtering and testing for shards and toxins.
- On May 20, 2025 Barren County Fiscal Court passed Ordinance No. 695 that established a minimum setback requirement of 1,000 feet from any non-participating property line.....applicable to utility-scale solar energy projects. This represents a tacit admission that changing the setback requirements on August 20, 2018 for Geenex was a mistake. By this action Barren County Fiscal Court has spoken clearly against solar projects that are designed like the pending Wood Duck project. Unfortunately, Wood Duck has been grandfathered in. You have the power to deny the application and implement the spirit of the ordinance passed by Fiscal Court on May 20 of this year.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak and please consider the totality of all the project’s deficiencies as you deliberate the primary question which is: **Does this project contribute materially to the quality of life for Barren County citizens?** The answer is obvious. **It is no.**

David L. Hawkins

Kentucky Public Service Commission
211 Sower Blvd.
Frankfort, KY 40601

RE: Wood Duck Solar Case #2024-00337

When I was first approached about the Wood Duck Project, I was very skeptical. I started conducting research and reviews of info concerning the topic of solar farm generation of electricity. I had many of the same concerns as expressed by those who oppose the project. Never did I want to become involved in a project that would potentially present a hazardous environment for my family and neighbors. After reviewing scientific research and documents it became apparent that solar farms do not pose a health risk to man.

My family farm has been dedicated to agricultural production for over a century, and I hold agriculture to be the greatest industry in the world to provide mankind with the essentials for survival (food, clothing, and shelter). I started thinking how I could best use my assets to best serve my community and county. My farm has been in row crop production for several decades producing corn and soybeans with only a small fraction remaining in the county. Therefore, the county and its residents have a very limited benefit from my production. After analyzing the situation, I felt my farm could best serve the county and its residents by converting the farm into solar energy production. According to the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, in 2023 40% of all U.S. corn production was used to produce ethanol. An acre of solar power can produce 70 times as much energy as an acre's worth of corn converted into ethanol. With this in mind, my farm's production as a solar farm could stay within the county and benefit everyone therein.

The U.S. Energy Information Administration recently reported that the lower 48 states experienced the greatest demand in history on July 28, 2025, with a peak usage of 758,053 megawatts and the next day, July 29 the demand was the highest ever at 759,180 megawatts. The U.S. and global demand for electrical energy is increasing annually. The Energy Information Administration also reported that Kentucky is an energy deficient state with 6% of its energy requirement being imported from other states.

An analysis conducted by the energy consulting firm, ICF, shows that U.S. demand for electricity will increase by 25% by year 2030, and by 78% by 2050, compared to 2023. This increase in demand cannot be filled by using petroleum and natural gas as these sources are mainly used for transportation purposes and space heating (e.g. residential and commercial buildings). Coal is not the answer, since 2020 U.S. electricity generated from coal has decreased over 50 gigawatts. Economics is driving this train because all the easily accessible coal has been consumed, and mining companies are having to go to much deeper sources causing the price of coal to escalate making it less competitive in the energy market. Conventional sources of energy are becoming less advantageous due to the economic law of supply and demand. Due to technological advances in the past few years alternative energy sources, solar and wind, are now cost effective to fulfill the energy gap.

According to the U.S. Department of Energy, solar energy is the most abundant energy resource on earth. It is predicted that by 2030 solar energy will be the cheapest electricity source across the United States. It is apparent that solar energy produced by utility-scale solar photovoltaic systems (solar farms) will soon become the king in alternative sources for electricity generation.

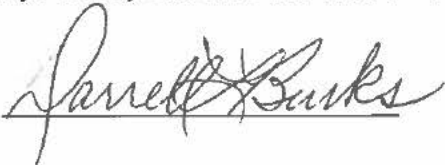
With any new developments there are those individuals who oppose the projects. Wood Duck Project is no different as it has opponents of this renewable energy source. They spew misleading false science, never using research-based information, to stir up local opposition to the project. They use scare tactics with misleading information and inaccurate risk assessments hoping to get their friends and neighbors to oppose solar generated electricity and to continue using more expensive energy sources, such as carbon generating sources. Why would anyone using electricity every day in their homes and businesses oppose the generation of electricity. I consider this hypocritical and refer to the people as "nimbys" (not in my back yard). I have attended hearing meetings and listened to their rhetoric as they claim the environment will become contaminated due to hazardous chemicals in the solar panels. They claim that cadmium will leach into the ground water due to rain run-off from the panels. The cadmium used in the panels is in the chemical form of cadmium telluride in a layer that is 3% the thickness of a human hair and totally encapsulated between two sheet of heat strengthened glass preventing leaching of the compound. Solar panels are non-hazardous as the EPA's Toxicity Characteristic Leaching Procedure indicates leaching of toxic chemicals does not occur. The Journal of Hazardous Materials in 2017 reported that research indicates that trace amounts of cadmium in a solar panel could possibly be released; however, to do so the panel would have to be ground into a powder and soaked in an acid solution for several weeks because cadmium telluride is not water soluble and is stable in nature. Due to passing the Toxicity Leaching Test solar panels are classified as non-hazardous waste and can be properly disposed in landfills.

The North Carolina Clean Energy Technology Center at North Carolina University reports that photovoltaic technologies and solar inverters are not known to pose any significant health dangers to humans. By replacing energy produced by solar farms with that of fossil-fuel-fired generated sources greatly reduces pollution from harmful sulfur dioxide, nitrogen dioxide, and small particulate matter. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory and the Lawrence Berkeley National Laboratory, both affiliates of the U.S. Department of Energy estimate the health-related air quality benefits from solar powered energy is worth more than the electricity itself. My fellow opponents claim fire is a big issue with solar panels and leaking of cadmium is a potential hazard. Research has shown that in instances of a fire, the fire melts the glass and encapsulates over 99.9% of the cadmium in the molten glass.

Another concern of my opponents is that people will get cancer from the electromagnetic fields produced by solar farms. In 2005 scientific experts and the World Health Organization (WHO) determined that there were no substantive health issues related to solar farms. Radiation emitted from solar farms is non-ionizing and not capable of

producing cancer. The Department of Surgery at the University of Kentucky College of Medicine conducted a study exploring relationships between cancer and solar energy. They found that cancer incidence for all invasive cancers and for 11 Of 22 leading cancers significantly decreased with increased solar radiation.

As a result of these findings, it is apparent that electricity generated by solar farms will become the major source of renewable energy as the demand for clean energy increases. This is why I totally endorse the Wood Duck Project.

Signed: 

Darrell L. Burks

Date: October 2, 2025

On-line petition

	Please provide your full Email	Please provide your full Address: Address: Lin Address: A Address: C Address: St Address: Zi Address: Country	Field #24: Do you have an additional message yo			
1	Connie Joy Alexander			605 Porter Thornton Road	Bowling Gr KY	42104 US
2	Thomas R Melton			3020 Hunting Creek Dr	Bowling Gr KY	42104 US
3	Jennifer S Price		My vote is no to this huge solar farm e	1193 County House Lane	Bowling Gr KY	42101 US
4	Amy Wynelle Coomer		We need to preserve our farmland to l	1960 Slash Road	Glasgow KY	42141 US
5	Tiffany Thompson		I am strongly against this project being	3303 millstown rd	Park City KY	98569 US
6	Linda Carter		Checked	1236 Park City Glasgow Rd	Glasgow KY	42141 US
7	Freddie Joe Wilkerson		Im very dissatisfied in the handling of	1534 N Lucas Rd		42142 US
8	Valerie Lewis			126 Whitney Rd	Scottsville KY	42164 US
9	Ryan Vaught		I oppose this solar project. We moved	2800 Fairview Church Rd	Smiths Gro KY	42171 US
10	Terry Smith					
11	Beth Vandyke		Checked			
12	Gwynne Aidala		Vote as if the solar panels are surround	3259 Park City Bon Ayr Rd	Park City KY	42160 US
13	Lee Mutter			1501 S Green St	Glasgow KY	42141 US
14	Jason Blakley		Checked	720 Tick Ridge Rd	Glasgow KY	42141 US
15	Randy Sizemore		This project is not a good idea for the l	1205 Combs Blvd	Glasgow KY	42141 US
16	Dianna Martin		Checked	8055 Roseville Rd	Glasgow KY	42141 US
17	Kevin Smith		Please stop this solar farm!!	158 JB Denham road	KY	42141 US
18	Kristie Smith		Please help protect the precious farml	158 JB Denham Road	KY	42141 US
19	Amy Hakola		Do not allow solar to take away any m	501 Jim Glover Rd	Glasgow KY	42141 US
20	Melvin Croley			3375 Millstown Rd	Park City KY	42160 US
21	Diana saylor		Checked	206 N FRANKLIN ST	Glasgow KY	42141 US
22	Kathleen M Robinson		I definitely do not want the Wood	9011 Finney Rd	KY	42141 US
23	Monica			601 south green st		US

Froedge

24	Ronnie L. Hamilton	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	119Hi Haven CT.	Glasgow	42141 US
25	Consuela Reinhart	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Stop the development of the solar pan 789 Patterson Road	Smiths Gro KY	42171 US
26	Paula Pedigo	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	Destroying farm land is wrong for kent 1616 Payne Loop Road	Smiths Gro KY	42171 US
27	Tonja Tuttle	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	935 Larmon Mill Rd	Alvaton KY	42122 US
	Tonja Tuttle	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	935 Larmon Mill Road	Alvaton KY	42122 US
	Tonja Tuttle	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	935 Larmon Mill Road	Alvaton KY	42122 US
	Tonja Tuttle	[REDACTED]	[REDACTED]	935 Larmon Mill Road	Alvaton KY	42122 US



 duplicates

Petition against the Wood Duck Solar development project in Barren County, KY

	Printed Name	Signature	Address	I had no knowledge of this project until	I have						My life is adversely affected	Date
					Health concerns	Environment concerns	Zoning concerns	Safety concerns	Property Value concerns	Funding Concerns		
1	Judy Wood	Judy Wood	3298 Lick Branch Rd.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-13-25
2	Kenneth Frazier	Kenneth Frazier		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-17-25
3	Susan Watson	Susan Watson	104 Brittany Lane	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-19-25
4	Judy Watkins	Judy Watkins	108 Coral Hill Secta Rd	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-17-25
5	Becky Boston	Becky Boston	889.2 - Timpkinsville Rd	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-17-25
6	Karen Bartley	Karen Bartley	1753 Summer Shade Rd. Summer Shade KY 42166		✓	✓		✓				8/19/25
7	Judy Deck	Judith A Deck	1014 Rainbow Dr, Glasgow, KY 42141	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			8/19/25
8	Linda Sewell	Linda Sewell	307 S. Liberty St. Apt. 302, Glasgow	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-19-25
9	Lisa Hale	Lisa Hale	209 Palmer Ct. Apt 4 Glasgow	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-19-25
10	Cherie Vaughan	Cherie Vaugh	208 E Main St. Glasgow		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-19-25
11	Sue Bishop	Sue Bishop	214	✓								
12	Bonnie Vernon	Bonnie Vernon	2785 Peckys Hill Glasgow KY		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-19-25
13	Della Pfeiffer	Della Pfeiffer	45 R.C. Wood RD Glasgow		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-19-25
14	Charlotte Davis	Charlotte Davis	309 W. Brown St. Glasgow	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-19-25

Health concerns include cancer, respiratory illness, headaches from noise and glare, heat related illness, etc.

Environment concerns include wildlife, habitat, trees removed, ground and run-off water contaminants, damaged panels and leaks.

Zoning concerns include the way this was approved without public input, the scattered site design and inserting solar utility plants in residential and farming communities.

Safety concerns include fires, lightning, hail damage, insufficient water, increased heat, wildlife who may jump the fence and can't escape.

Property value concerns include the decrease in property values due to commercial solar utilities in residential neighborhoods and the destruction of agricultural lands and woodlands.

Funding concerns include the origin of the funds and investors, lack of KY assets for the LLC, lack of government's financial analysis, prefer no government financing such as IRB/PILOT.

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GRACE ABBOTT	Grace M Abbott	514 N. MAIN ST. EDMONTON KY		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		8-19-25
Jackie B. Smith	Jackie B. Smith	206A E. Cherry St. Glasgow, Ky.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-19-25
Robin Lively	Robin Lively	106 Moran St. Glasgow, Ky.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-19-25
Vada Mauden	Vada Mauden	Cave City	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-19-25
Imogene Shirley	Imogene Shirley	111 Love St. Glasgow, Ky.									
Imogene Shirley	Imogene Shirley	111 Love St. Glasgow, Ky.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	8-19-25
Todd Hodges	Todd Hodges	118 Grace Glasgow Ky 40441		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9-9-25
Daniel Ray	Daniel Ray	747 Pritchardsville Rd Glasgow Ky		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	9-9-25
Belinda Honeycutt	Belinda Honeycutt	444 Heartstone Henderson Ky		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9-13-25
John Walker	John Walker	Henderson Ky		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9/13/25
Anthony W. Smith	Anthony W. Smith	Henderson KY		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		9/13/25
James Franks	James Franks	Henderson, KY	9/13/25	9/13/25	9/13/25	9/13/25	9/13/25	9/13/25	9/13/25	9/13/25	9/13/25
Linda Johnson	Linda Johnson	3720 Ky Hwy 1770 Stanford, Ky.	9/13/25	✓	✓		✓	✓			9/13/25
Rockey Johnson	Rockey Johnson	" " "	9/13/25	✓	✓		✓	✓			9/13/25

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Petition supporting the protection of Mammoth Cave and opposing the Wood Duck Solar development project in Barren County, KY

Printed Name	Signature	Address	I had no knowledge of this project until	I have (please initial)						My life is adversely affected	Date
				Health concerns	Environment concerns	Zoning concerns	Safety concerns	Property Value concerns	Funding Concerns		
ELANOR GRIFFIN	<i>Elanor Griffin</i>	126 CLARKSDALE CIR. GLASSBORO			EG		EG	EG			8/29/25
Ricky Jessic	<i>Ricky Jessic</i>	122 CLARKSDALE Circle			RS		RS	RS	RS		8/30/25
CALVIN COUNTER	<i>Calvin Counter</i>	126 CLARKSDALE CIRCLE			CC		CC	CC			9/8/25
BILL Moss Settle	<i>Bill Moss Settle</i>	120 Clarksdale Circle		BS	BS		BS	BS	BS		9/9/25
Nancy Settle	<i>Nancy Settle</i>	120 Clarksdale Circle		NC	NC	NC	NC	NC	NC		9/9/25
SHERRY JOHNSON	<i>Sherry Johnson</i>	114 Clarksdale Cir.		SJ	SJ	SJ	SJ	SJ	SJ		
Kathy Nason	Kathy Nason	103 Clarksdale Cir.									
Kathy Nason	<i>Kathy Nason</i>	103 Clarksdale Cir.		KN	KN	KN	KN	KN	KN		9/14/25
Coy Meadows	<i>Coy Meadows</i>	572 Lexington Dr.		CM	CM	CM	CM	CM	CM		9/14/25
Judy McBratton	<i>Judy McBratton</i>	108 Lexington Drive									9/14/25
Judy McBratton	Judy McBratton	108 Lexington Drive									
SUSAN Delph	<i>Susan Delph</i>	104 CLARKSDALE Circle	9-14-2025	S.L.D.	R.S.L.D	S.D	S.D	S.D.	S.D.		9-14-25
Daniel J. Delph	<i>Daniel J. Delph</i>	240 North Morgan St.	9-14-2025	DJD	DJD		DJD				9-14-25
Judy Reeves	<i>Judy Reeves</i>	127 Clarksdale Cir Glasgow	9-14-25								

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Danny Anderson	Danny Anderson	11639 New Bowling Green Rd 42171 Smith's Grove KY	4-2025	cancer respiratory	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	6-16-25
Ruby Anderson	Ruby Anderson	11639 New Bowling Green Rd 42171 Smith's Grove KY	4-2025	headaches RA	RA	RA	RA	RA	RA	RA	6-16-25
Lillian Wilson	Lillian Wilson	2801 STOVALL RD PARK CITY KY 42160	4-2025	LV	LW	LW	LW	LW	LW	LW	6-16-25
REVA BENTON	Reva Benton	800 PATTERSON RD 42171 SMITHS GROVE KY	3-2025	RB	RB	RB	RB	RB	RB	RB	6-16-25
Judy Underwood	Judy Underwood	3869 Whitney Woods Rd KY Cave City	9-2025	ru	ru	ru	ru	ru	ru	ru	9-2025
Wm Underwood	Wm Underwood	3869 Whitney Woods Rd KY Cave City	9-2025	bu	bu	bu	bu	bu	bu	bu	9-2025
Danny K Anderson II	Danny K Anderson II	300 Patterson Rd Smiths Grove KY	9/3/2025	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	DA	9-3-2025
Amber Anderson	Amber Anderson	300 Patterson Rd Smiths Grove KY	9-3-25	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA	AA
Tim Wilson	Tim Wilson	2801 STOVALL RD PARK CITY KY 42160	4-2025	TW	TW	TW	TW	TW	TW	TW	6-16-25
PAUL WILKERSON	Paul Wilkerson	600 PATTERSON RD 42171 Smiths Grove KY	4-2025	PW	PW	PW	PW	PW	PW	PW	9-29-25

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Cathy Knott	Cathy Knott	204 Hillview Dr. Vine Grove, Ky 40175	9-13-25	CK	CK		CK	CK			9-13-25
Billy Knott	Billy Knott	204 Hillview Dr. Vine Grove, Ky 40175	9-13-25	CK	CK		CK	CK			9-13-25
Dorothy J. Van Epps	Dorothy J. Van Epps	113 Jacob Dr. Nicholasville KY 40356	9-13-25	DV	DV		DV	DV			9/13/25
Harry E. Van Epps	Harry E. Van Epps	113 Jacob Dr. Nicholasville, KY 40356	9-13-25	HVE	HVE		HVE	HVE			9-13-25
John Hibbard	John Hibbard	104 Wheel-Dr. Frankfort, KY	9-13-25	Ⓟ	Ⓟ			Ⓟ			9-13-25
Tom Utecht	Tom Utecht	108 Stoochee Ln, Frankfort, KY	9-13-25		Ⓟ						
Dennis Schlentz	Dennis Schlentz	305 Flat Creek Frankfort	9-13-25	Ⓟ	Ⓟ			Ⓟ			9-13-25
Ciacob Hack	Ciacob Hack	1990 Bridgeport Benson Rd. Frankfort, KY	9/13/2025	CH			CH				9/13/2025
Susan Gilbert	Susan Gilbert	17 Audubon Plaza, Lou KY 40217	Apr 2025	SG	SG			SG			9/17/2025

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[illegible]

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MAKING A DECISION

Key hearing for Barren County solar project set for Thursday

By **DAVID MAMARIL
HOROWITZ**
The Daily News

Forty-three days ahead of the final decision deadline, the state board overseeing electric generation and transmission will hold a hearing Thursday for the controversial 2,259-acre solar electric project Wood Duck Solar proposed across Barren County.

The seven-member Kentucky State Board of Electric Generation and Transmission Siting Board will hold its final public questioning through a 12 p.m. Thursday evidentiary hearing for the subsidiary behind the project, Wood Duck Solar LLC, which operates under the North Carolina-based parent company Geenex Solar LLC. The project case, which has had multiple updates since its July hearing, will go to the Siting Board for a vote by Nov. 14.

The period between the hearing and vote offers a fairly tight voting window, and the decision usually comes the final day or days before, said Linda Bridwell, executive director of the Kentucky Public Service Commission. While public comments are accepted online until the case closes, Bridwell — one of the Siting Board members — advises that members of the public submit comments, at latest, a couple weeks after the Oct. 2 hearing.

Geenex anticipates the project will generate electricity for about 15,000 homes annually. It aims to provide sustainable energy and boost the economy by many millions of dollars countywide and statewide,



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Public Service Commission Executive Director Linda Bridwell (right) speaks about the siting board and the project application process to visitors at a public hearing on Tuesday, July 15 in the Barren County Fiscal Court meeting room in Glasgow.

according to Geenex.

"At the end of the day, we're doing what we think is best for this community and this planet, and we're following all the local and state guidelines to ensure that happens," said Donny de Castro, vice president of development for Geenex Solar.

Concerns among opponents — among them, area property owners, farmers, Mammoth Cave advocates and Amish community members — include fears that surround property value reductions, a removal of farmland, an alleged lack of transparency, potential project toxins, ramifications if

storms destroy the panels, project decommissioning details, glare issues and road problems.

"(There's) a concern: of our neighborhoods, our safety, our environment, our potential fire threats, the contamination to the water ...," said Paula Pedigo, a community organizer for project opposition. "From all of those very issues."

CONCERNS, EXPLANATIONS

Pedigo, who has collected more than 500 petition signatures and 100 letters in objection, said it's widely anticipated the proposal will pass. The siting board uses statute as its

criteria for approval, and it has passed all but one of some 44-45 projects, Bridwell confirmed.

So, Pedigo said, opponents intend to push for certain conditions — which, Bridwell confirmed, the Siting Board typically adds alongside project approvals.

One important condition for opponents, Pedigo said, is that the developer has sufficient funds to complete the project.

While it's completely unknown what conditions may be considered or added, Bridwell confirmed that that type of condition is within the realm of

See **KEY**, 3A

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what's possible for the Siting Board.

"The siting board has some pretty broad authority to ensure that it is a financially stable company and that they're going to continue throughout the construction and operation to be a stable entity," Bridwell said.

She added that financial viability is one of the factors the siting board looks for, as well as applicants with good environmental track records. If questions surround financial viability or a clean environmental record, the board could place conditions around it, she said.

Still, opponents worry that, as a limited liability corporation, Wood Duck Solar could potentially mitigate or escape liability if sued for more than it has in assets.

Bridwell confirmed that the siting board's authority solely applies to Wood Duck Solar LLC and its ownership and control.

That said, the Siting Board would seem to have more authority over any attempt to sell the project. In a different case on Aug. 1, the Siting Board passed a condition that if company ownership changed, the project must be brought back to the board for approval and certify a history of good environmental compliance. So, Bridwell said, she interprets that as meaning that the Siting Board would require a company to acquire the board's approval if it were to change ownership.

Asked about the sufficiency of funds for project completion, de Castro, of Geenex Solar, clarified how the com-



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Paula Pedigo of Glasgow voices her opposition to the controversial Wood Duck Solar, LLC, solar energy project at the July meeting.

pany works and what types of companies purchase its projects: Geenex Solar is an early-stage developer that acquires land documentation and permitting — solely pre-construction work — to support projects before selling them to a purchaser, de Castro said. For Wood Duck Solar, the intention is to sell it after acquiring the state permit, he said.

Companies that purchase these projects are Independent Power Producers.

These, he said, are financially robust companies that can be very large multinational, oftentimes billion-dollar corporations.

"These companies spend a lot of capital to acquire these projects," de Castro said. "It is in their financial interest to repair any damages and keep the system operating because that's how these companies generate revenue."

Another important condition that opponents hope the Siting Board passes, Pedigo said, is for the company to be held responsible if there's a

fire, windstorm, hail damage, sinkhole or other damaging event, or cleaning or upkeep is needed.

"We want protection for our community," she said.

But concerning that point, the siting board's authority is limited to approval for when construction begins through the date operations start, Bridwell said. At that point, the legislature turns the project over to the Energy and Environment Cabinet for annual monitoring under the Division of Waste Management.

So, Bridwell said, the siting board likely wouldn't have authority to place that type of condition through operations.

That said, de Castro added that a long-term owner-operator who purchases the project company would then "have to abide by any agreements that have been executed with Wood Duck Solar LLC in service of the project."

DECOMMISSIONING
Concerns among opponents have also

surrounded project decommissioning:

Pedigo, for instance, expressed concern over any potential for county decommissioning regulations to override the state's, and any potential for the company to circumvent a decommissioning bond through abiding by less-stringent local regulations or inaccurately lowering bond costs via salvageable materials credit.

Understanding this bond is important: The state requirement for such projects, Bridwell said, is for the companies behind them to put up a decommissioning bond equal to the cost of decommissioning. That way, if a company goes bankrupt or walks away, the state can pursue decommissioning with the bond funds.

The Wood Duck Solar application estimated that the net cost of roughly \$7 million in decommissioning expenses, after accounting for about \$2 million in revenue salvageable materials, to be \$4.9 million, without accounting for market fluctuations or inflation. A third-party engineer would assess the decommissioning costs, and that would happen every five years, de Castro said.

Barren County City-County Planning Commission Director Kevin Myatt said both sets of regulations would apply, and de Castro separately said that the company has to go through both local and state permitting, which includes abiding by local and state the decommissioning regulations.

Addressing community concerns that salvageable materials credit could compensate for the overwhelming majority of a bond, de Castro

added, "It certainly is not the majority of the cost."

WOOD DUCK DIRECTOR OUT

Among new developments is that in August, Wood Duck Solar requested board approval to substitute Geenex Senior Director of Development Aerin Garczyk for Wood Duck Solar's previous director of project development and upcoming hearing witness, Kelley Pope.

The company told the Siting Board that Pope is no longer with the company.

In early September, the Siting Board approved the substitution with good cause. That said, a previous board order adds that "the Siting Board does not look favorably upon motions to substitute witnesses or excuse witnesses from testifying" at its hearings.

COUNTY JUDGE UPDATES

Also since the July hearing, Barren County Judge-Executive Jamie Bewley Byrd codified in a Sept. 19 public comment memo that Wood Duck Solar will be expected to pay taxes as typically expected of a commercial development.

The memo confirmed that Barren County Fiscal Court will not provide Wood Duck Solar a county Industrial Revenue Bond or Payment in Lieu of Taxes — the latter being an alternative to taxes that's typically favorable to a company.

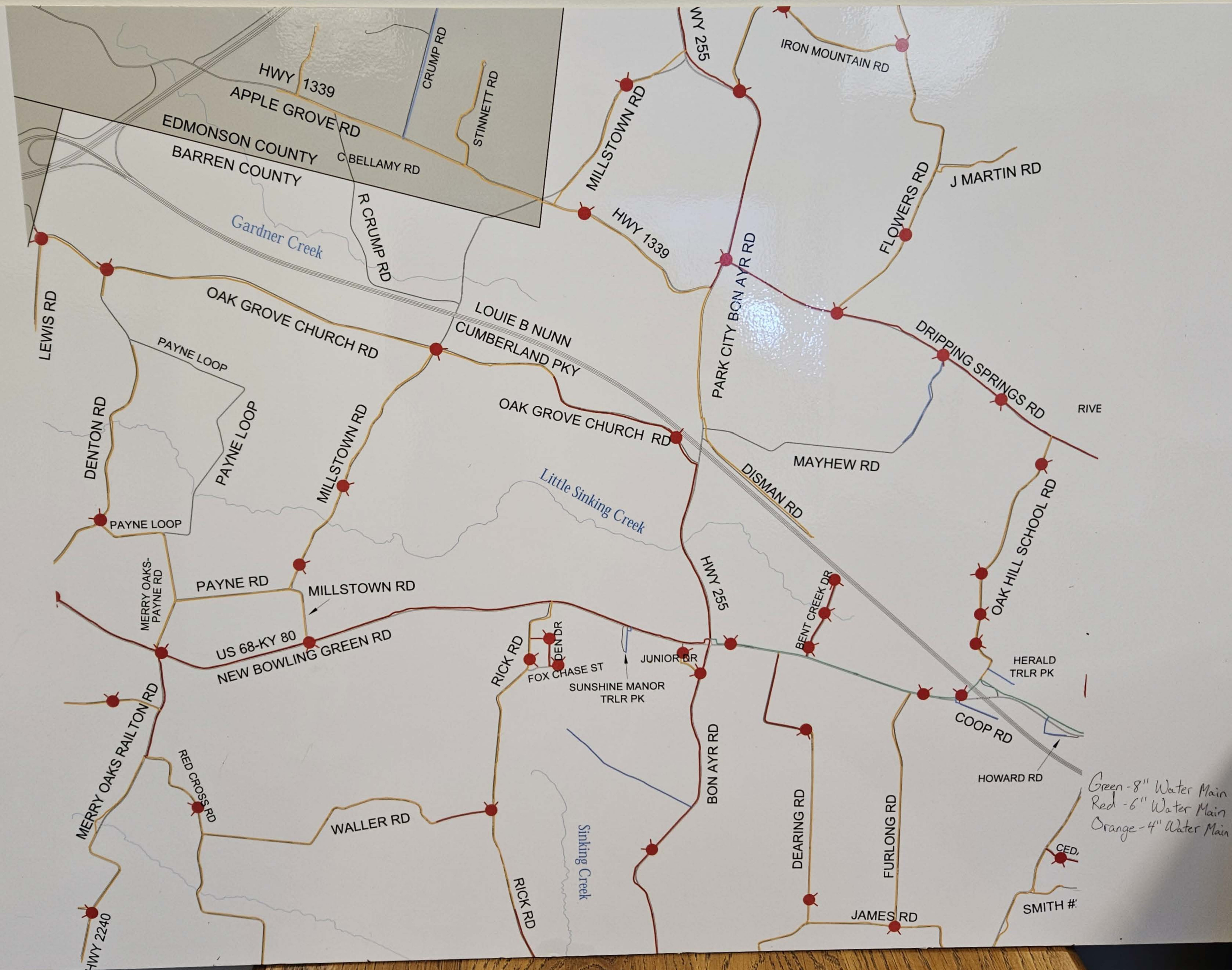
The memo also advises that the Barren County

Fiscal Court's new May 20 solar ordinance would apply to any expansion of the proposed project. This means that such expansions would have more restrictive requirements surrounding setbacks, the minimum distance from a property line where project construction is prohibited.

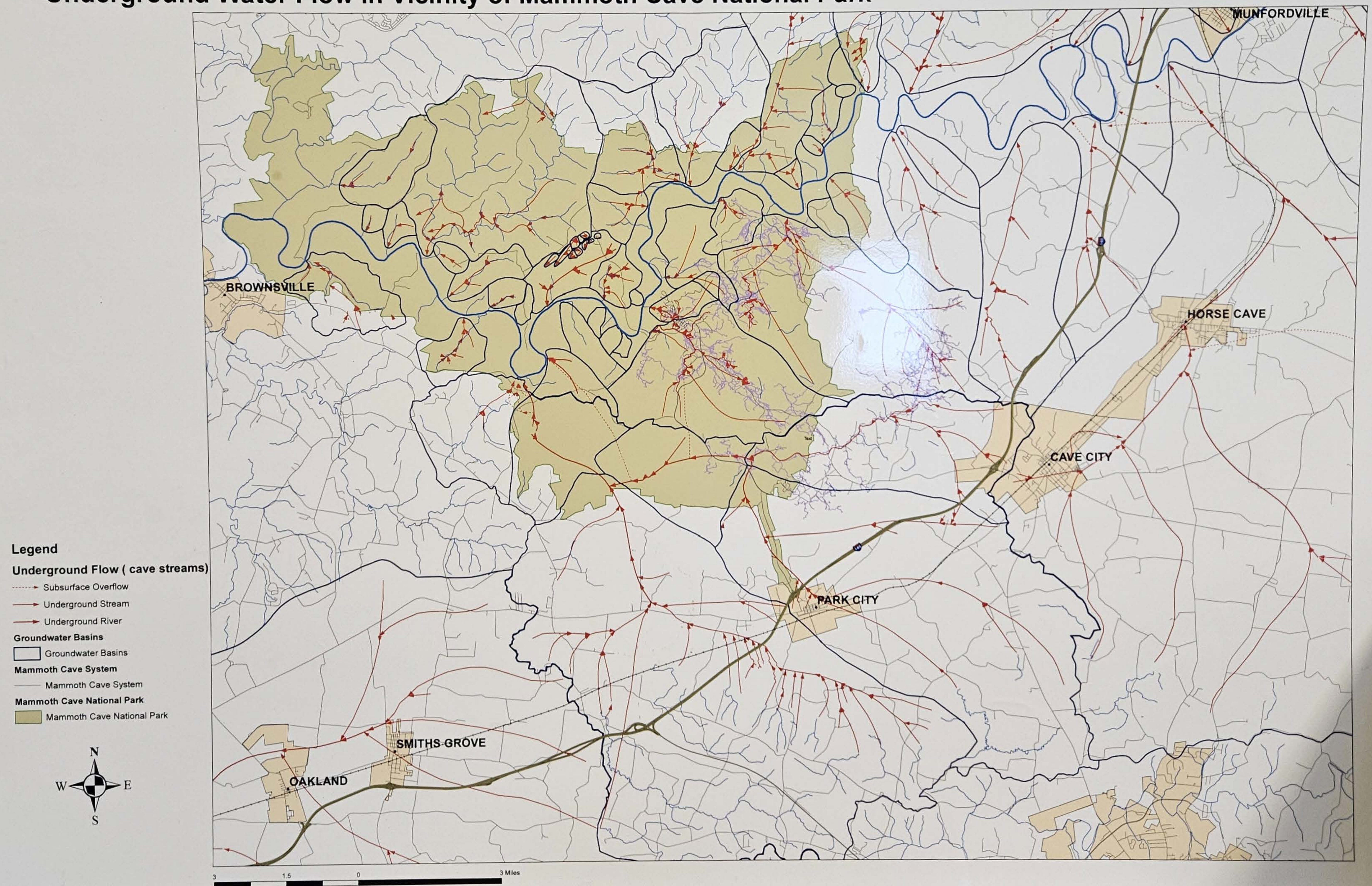
Bewley Byrd added that she had previously requested of the Public Service Commission that Wood Duck Solar pave and repair any roads affected by the construction once the project is complete, as the county's gas taxes wouldn't be enough to cover them.

She had also asked for a line of trees along Cumberland Expressway to close off the view of the solar project from that entrypoint to the community, and to address any potential glare issues. (Lines of trees are already required at the edge of any involved properties to hide the project from joining neighbors, she said.)

Instructions for public comment will be posted on the PCS website by 12 p.m. CT Wednesday at <https://psc.ky.gov>. An icon on the page will direct people to the livestream Thursday, which will also be available at <https://www.youtube.com/@KYPSC/streams>. The case number to access case documentation through the website is 2024-00337.



Underground Water Flow in Vicinity of Mammoth Cave National Park





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PROJECT APPROVED DECEMBER 18, 2023