OCTOBER 15, 2024



# Flat Creek Solar

# **Community Meeting**

flatcreekinfo@cordeliopower.com

https://cordeliopower.com/project/flat\_creek/



### Agenda

- Panel Introductions
- Overview of the Project
- Siting Process and Evolution
- Public Engagement
- Review of Key Article VIII Exhibits
- Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)
- Question & Answer Session
- Hard Copies of the Article VIII Application are Available at the Following Locations:
  - Canajoharie Library 2 Erie Blvd Canajoharie, NY 13317
  - Town of Root Town Hall 1048 Carlisle Road Sparkers, NY 12166
  - Town of Canajoharie Town Hall 12 Mitchell Street Canajoharie, NY 13317

Cordelio Power is an independent power producer that develops, owns and manages renewable power facilities across North America.

Operating Projects: 1,400 MW

Development Projects: 18,000 MW

Cordelio Power will construct, own, and operate the Facility.

Cordelio is 100% owned by the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board, and is fully committed to its mission of becoming a leading North American developer, owner and operator of renewable power facilities across North America.

### About CORDELIO POWER



SunEast Development is a development partner with Cordelio Power and renewable energy company with permitting and project development experience in New York developing over 25 projects and permitting 12 solar projects throughout the state including several solar projects anticipated for construction in 2025 with Cordelio Power.

### Flat Creek Solar Project





- Project Owner: Flat Creek Solar NY LLC
- Host Communities: Towns of Root and Canajoharie, Montgomery County, New York
- Renewable Resource: Solar Energy
- Project Capacity: 300 MW
- Leased Land: Approximately 3,800 acres
- Project Footprint: Approximately 1,600 acres
  - Approximately 400 acres in Town of Canajoharie
  - Approximately 1,200 acres in Town of Root
- Point of Interconnection: Existing NYPA 345 kV Transmission Line #352 in the Town of Root
- Projected In-Service Date: Fall 2028



### Facility Site and Surrounding Area





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# Siting Process and Evolution

The Facility Site was selected due to proximity to the existing New York Power Authority (NYPA) 345 kV #352 Transmission Line and available land from willing landowners. The Site was evaluated for environmental and engineering resources, including slopes and technological constraints. In addition to engineering considerations, the Applicant developed the Site Layout based on the factors noted below.

Resource	Siting Process and Evolution
Wetlands	<ul> <li>Significant effort to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands, both federal and State</li> <li>Avoid parcels with many wetland features</li> <li>Micro site panels, collection, access roads, and borings to minimize impacts</li> </ul>
Agricultural Resources	<ul> <li>Limiting impacts to Mineral Soil Groups (MSGs) 1-4</li> <li>Develop an Agricultural Plan</li> <li>Construction techniques to decrease impact to topsoil</li> </ul>
Visual Resources and Local Viewshed Impact	<ul> <li>Provided stakeholder outreach letter; met with the Towns of Root and Canajoharie in March 2024 to discuss viewpoints and solicit feedback</li> <li>Design a detailed Landscaping Plan</li> <li>Provide analysis in Visual Impact Assessment (VIA) for resources identified in stakeholder outreach</li> </ul>
NYS Threatened & Endangered Species	<ul> <li>Completed Grassland Bird Breeding Surveys May 3 – July 15, 2022</li> <li>Completed Winter Grassland Raptor Surveys in the winter of 2020-2021, and the winter of 2021-2022</li> </ul>

# Siting Process and Evolution (cont'd)

Resource	Siting Process and Evolution
Archaeological Resources	<ul> <li>Early Studies to help site Facility components</li> <li>Phase 1A, Phase 1B Studies (desktop and field studies)</li> <li>Visual Assessment for historic resources</li> </ul>
Transportation	<ul> <li>Coordination with local school district and Amish community</li> <li>Prepared a transportation study</li> <li>Minimized use of seasonal roads</li> </ul>
Host Community Engagement	<ul> <li>Host community engagement since 2022</li> <li>Hosted one community open house in February 2024, and Q&amp;A session in April 2024</li> <li>Town meetings with representatives from both the Towns of Root and Canajoharie</li> </ul>
Landowner Considerations	<ul> <li>Certain lease agreements limit potential development areas to allow for ongoing farming activities, farm operation considerations, future plans, and setbacks from areas of concern</li> <li>Some landowners only agreed to specific easement areas for collection line siting</li> </ul>

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# Public Engagement



Community Group and Outreach	Detail		
Town of Root and Canajoharie Town Board Meetings	<ul> <li>Regularly attend the Town of Root and Canajoharie Board meetings</li> <li>Communication with Town of Root and Canajoharie Town Officials</li> </ul>		
Community Outreach	<ul> <li>Community Meeting held on February 15, 2024</li> <li>Q&amp;A Session held on April 17, 2024</li> <li>Noticed in local papers and Stakeholder Notification List mailings</li> <li>A Newsletter was mailed to the Stakeholder Notification List on August 2, 2024</li> <li>Met in-person with many adjacent and nearby residents to provide additional information about the project, answer project-related questions, and resolve comments and concerns. Have offered Neighbor Agreements to adjacent neighbors.</li> <li>Met with local Amish Community Bishop and are providing additional hard copies of materials directly to the community.</li> </ul>		
Project Website/Email/800 Number	<ul> <li><u>https://cordeliopower.com/project/flat_creek/</u></li> <li>Team has responded to emails and calls with questions about the Project</li> <li>FAQ documents with responses to common questions are available on the Project website</li> </ul>		

# **Article VIII Process**

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### Article VIII Application **Exhibits**

The Article VIII **Regulations include 25** Exhibits which provide detailed studies, analyses, and figures covering a range of topics and resource areas. The requirements for each Exhibit are specifically in outlined in the Article VIII **Regulations**.

Exhibit 1General RequirementsExhibit 2Overview and Public InvolvementExhibit 3Location of Facilities and Surrounding Land UseExhibit 4Real PropertyExhibit 5Design DrawingsExhibit 6Public Health, Safety, and SecurityExhibit 7Noise and VibrationExhibit 8Visual ImpactsExhibit 9Cultural ResourcesExhibit 10Geology, Seismology, and SoilsExhibit 12New York State Threatened or Endangered SpeciesExhibit 13Water Resources and Aquatic EcologyExhibit 15Agricultural ResourcesExhibit 16Effect on TransportationExhibit 17Consistency with Energy Planning ObjectivesExhibit 18Socioeconomic EffectsExhibit 20Effect on CommunicationsExhibit 21Electric System Effects and InterconnectionExhibit 22Electric and Magnetic FieldsExhibit 23Site Restoration and DecommissioningExhibit 24Local Laws and OrdinancesExhibit 25Other Permits and Approvals	Exhibit #	Exhibit Title	
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# Exhibit 6 – Public Health, Safety, and Security

- This exhibit presents how to respond to emergency situations.
- Site Security Plan describes the proposed security measures and procedures to be employed during Facility operation to prevent and minimize unauthorized access to the Facility and its infrastructure, thereby protecting the Facility, its employees, and the public.
- Coordination with the Rural Grove Fire Department, Ames Fire Department, and Canajoharie Fire Department.
- Plans were sent to the New York State Division of Homeland Security and Emergency Services, requesting review and comment. As of the date of the Application, no comments have been received.
- Applicant will provide annual emergency response training to local first responders and will
  maintain communication with those first responders so that clear roles and responsibilities are
  delineated regarding emergency response.
- Applicant has and will continue to coordinate with Amish and local school district to ensure safety of transportation of children in the community.

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### Outreach

- Stakeholder outreach letter (18 stakeholders received letters)
- In-person meetings with Town of Canajoharie and Root officials. Also discussed during meeting with Montgomery County.

### Minimization

- Tracking solar arrays will assume less height during daytime hours
- Approximately 31,000 linear feet (6 miles) of proposed landscaping will decrease impacts
- Electrical overhead structures and cabling will be minimized with use of underground collection
- Increased setback and enhanced screening for array visible from the Canajoharie Central School
- Substation is sited adjacent to the existing transmission line to minimize the extent of new transmission structures

Photo-Simulation with 5 Year Landscaping Post Construction

#### Photo-Simulation With Landscaping Depicted At 5 Years Post-Construction

Viewpoint Location - Topographic Map

Viewpoint 16: Representative view from Conway Road – Town of Root







Photo-Simulation with 5 Year Landscaping Post Construction

Photo-Simulation With Landscaping Depicted At 5 Years Post-Construction

Viewpoint Location - Aerial Map

**Viewpoint 21**: Representative view from Currytown Road – Town of Root







#### Photo-Simulation With Landscaping Depicted At 5 Years Post-Construction



**Viewpoint 83**: Representative view from Canajoharie Senior High School Athletic Fields – Town of Canajoharie

**Viewpoint Location - Aerial Map** 





#### Photo-Simulation With Landscaping Depicted At 5 Years Post-Construction



**Viewpoint 85**: Representative view from Canajoharie Senior High School – Town of Canajoharie

Viewpoint Location - Aerial Map

### Exhibit 12 – NYS Listed Species



- A Wildlife Site Characterization Report was submitted to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC) and ORES on April 29, 2022.
- Grassland breeding bird surveys and wintering grassland raptor surveys were conducted in May-July 2022, and the winters of 2020-2021, and 2021-2022. The Applicant has sited components to avoid and minimize impacts to avian species to the extent practicable.
- A bald eagle nest was identified within 0.25 mile of the original Facility boundary. As part of final Facility design, portions of panels were removed to avoid potential impacts.
- The Applicant is proposing a Net Conservation Benefit Plan (NCBP) involving permittee-funded grassland bird habitat conservation in partnership with a third-party mitigation provider that has developed a mitigation banking site.

# Exhibit 13 – Water Resources and Aquatic Ecology

- The Facility Site contains 122 waterbodies, including Flat Creek. The Project will require crossing via Horizontal Directional Drilling (HDD) and one crossing will upgrade an existing farm road crossing for safe access.
- Best management practices (BMPs) for stormwater control will be implemented including silt fencing, compost filter socks, flow spreaders, grass filter strips, and erosion control matting. Stormwater control measures are further discussed in the preliminary Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) of the Application.
- Well surveys were sent to landowners of tax parcels within 1,000 feet of the Facility Site boundaries.
- Pre-construction water well testing will be offered within specified distances from Facility construction, in accordance with Article VIII Regulations, as follows:
  - Collection lines or access roads within 100 feet of an existing, active water supply well or water supply intake;
  - Pier or post installation points within 200 feet of an existing, active water supply well or water supply intake;
  - At the location of an HDD operation within 500 feet of an existing, active water supply well or water supply intake;
  - At the location of any blasting operation within 1,000 feet of an existing, active water supply well or water supply intake. Blasting is not anticipated.



### Exhibit 14 – Wetlands

- There are approximately 460 acres of wetlands in the Facility Site (approximately 290 acres of which are State-regulated wetlands).
- The Applicant has avoided impacts to 20 of the 26 State-jurisdictional wetlands within the Facility Site.
- Impacts to have been avoided and minimized to the extent practicable and include impacts to 6.08 acres of State-regulated wetlands and 15.25 acres of regulated 100foot adjacent areas.
- The Applicant will mitigate for the 6.08 acres of wetland impact via an in-lieu fee program within the same HUC 8 Watershed.

# Exhibit 15 – Agricultural Resources



#### Outreach

• Landowner Agricultural Survey; Land Use Consultations; Real Property Data

#### **Minimization and Mitigation**

- Designed Facility to minimize impacts to prime farmland and mineral soil groups (MSGs) 1-4 to the extent practicable.
- Developed an Agricultural Plan and will comply with New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets (NYSDAM) Guidelines.

#### **Temporary Impacts**

- The Facility is being sited primarily on previously disturbed agricultural land, consisting primarily of row crops.
- The majority of impacts (1,396.1 acres) will occur to MSG 5-10 (not prime farmland), with only 240.6 acres occurring within MSG 1-4 (prime farmland).
- Facility will impact approximately 6% of the MSG 1-4 soils in the Facility Site, and less than 1% of the MSG 1-4 soils in the 5-mile Study Area, Town of Root, Town of Canajoharie, Montgomery County, and the State of New York.
- Farmland outside of the Facility fence line will be able to continue agricultural use at the landowner's discretion.

### Exhibit 16 – Effect on Transportation





# **Frequently Asked Questions**



### **1. How will stormwater discharge be handled?**

The project will have a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), which will provide for sediment and erosion controls to manage the volume and composition of any stormwater discharged from the project site. There are no anticipated stormwater runoff issues for land hosting or adjacent to panel areas.

### 2. Will groundwater/wells be affected by the Flat Creek solar project?

The water table within the vicinity of the project will not be negatively affected by the Flat Creek solar project – during either construction or operations. The project equipment is installed at relatively shallow depths – for example:

- Transformer pads: approximately 3 to 4 feet;
- Substation structure foundations: approximately 4 to 6 feet;
- Racking posts: 8 to 12 feet;
- Collection lines: 4 to 5 feet.

Given the shallow placement of project equipment, we do not foresee any impact to groundwater sources. As an added safety measure, we conducted a well survey which was sent to all landowners within 1,000 feet of the project site to identify any wells located within 100 feet of collection lines and access roads, 500 feet of drill locations, and 200 feet of racking post locations. For any active water wells within these distances, Cordelio will engage a qualified third party to conduct potability testing both before and after construction.

### 3. How will the Flat Creek solar project affect prime farmland?

The Flat Creek project will have minimal impact (less than 1%) on prime farmland in Montgomery County. While the County holds approximately 40,000 acres of prime farmland soils (as defined by the NYS Department of Agriculture and Markets, or NYSDAM, as soils having a mineral soil group (MSG) ranking between 1 and 4 [MSG1-4]), only 240 acres of the Flat Creek project resides on such soil. The construction, restoration, and decommissioning of the Flat Creek project will be conducted in accordance with NYSDAM's "Guidelines for Solar Energy Projects – Construction Mitigation for Agricultural Lands" to mitigate construction impacts.

#### 4. Will the Flat Creek solar project cause my property taxes to go up?

No – the project will not result in an increase in property taxes. The economic effects of the project are solely positive. The project will make annual payments to the towns of Root and Canajoharie, providing the towns with substantial resources to direct toward public safety, road upgrades, and other infrastructure improvements without needing to raise property taxes. In addition, the project will reduce utility bills for town residents by \$1.5 million per year for the first 10 years of operation.

### 5. What impact will the Flat Creek solar project have on neighboring property values?

Multiple property value studies from across the country have demonstrated that proximity to large-scale solar projects (a) does not measurably affect property values, and (b) does not impair the sale of agricultural or residential land near the project. In some instances, property values may be influenced, positively or negatively, by a particular project setting, the use of the land prior to the introduction of the project, and other factors, including the long-term tax revenue and employment opportunities created by the project for the local community.

### 6. Does the Flat Creek solar project have the right of eminent domain?

No, Flat Creek does not have the right of eminent domain and receipt of a permit through the Article VIII (formerly 94(c)) process does not grant any rights of eminent domain to private entities such as Flat Creek. Flat Creek has, and will, secure all land rights for the project through voluntary contractual agreements with landowners who are interested in participating in the project.

### 7. What happens if the project impacts the local roads? Who will be responsible for road improvements/repairs?

The Flat Creek solar project anticipates entering into Road Use Agreements with the Towns of Root and Canajoharie. This will outline the process of inspecting, improving and, if necessary, repairing roads that will be used during construction and operations. A before-and-after visual inspection will be conducted to ensure that after construction the roads are left in as good or better condition than they were prior to construction. In addition, financial assurance will be put in place in an amount necessary to repair any damage to public roads caused by construction and operations.

#### 8. How much of the generated electricity will the Towns receive?

Electricity generated by the Flat Creek solar project will be transmitted to the electric grid via a New York Power Authority (NYPA) bulk transmission line. While this electricity may not necessarily be utilized locally, the revenue generated by the sale of this power will provide a local benefit. In addition, as part of a host community benefit program required by the Public Service Commission, residents of the communities will receive a credit on their utility bills for the first 10 years of operations. This credit will result in a total benefit of \$1.5 million over those 10 years.

### **Thank You**



#### Flat Creek Solar Contact: Telephone: (888) 524-8168

Email: flatcreekinfo@cordeliopower.com

