



STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

ROY COOPER
GOVERNOR

MACHELLE SANDERS
SECRETARY

November 6, 2019

Ms. Kimberley Campbell
North Carolina Department of Commerce
Utilities Commission
4325 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-4325

Re: SCH File # 20-E-4600-0070; Amended Application of Apex Solar, LLC for Certificate to construct a 30 MW Solar Facility in Cleveland Co. Docket #SP-11723, Sub 0.

Dear Ms. Campbell:

The above referenced environmental impact information has been reviewed through the State Clearinghouse under the provisions of the North Carolina Environmental Policy Act.

Attached to this letter are **additional comments** made in the review of this document. Because of the nature of the comments, it has been determined that no further State Clearinghouse review action on your part is needed for compliance with the North Carolina Environmental Policy Act. The attached comments should be taken into consideration in project development.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Crystal Best".

Crystal Best
State Environmental Review Clearinghouse

Attachments
cc: Region C

Mailing Address:
NC DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
1301 MAIL SERVICE CENTER
RALEIGH, NC 27699-1301

Telephone: (919) 807-2425
Fax: (919) 733-9571
COURIER #51-01-00
Email: state.clearinghouse@doa.nc.gov
Website: www.ncadmin.nc.gov

Location:
116 WEST JONES STREET
RALEIGH, NORTH CAROLINA

OFFICIAL COPY

Nov 06 2019

NORTH CAROLINA STATE CLEARINGHOUSE
DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION
INTERGOVERNMENTAL REVIEW

COUNTY: CLEVELAND

H11: ENERGY RELATED
FACILITIES/ACTIVITIES

STATE NUMBER: 20-E-4600-0070
DATE RECEIVED: 09/25/2019
AGENCY RESPONSE: 10/21/2019
REVIEW CLOSED: 10/25/2019

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Nov 06 2019

MR JOSEPH HUDYNIA
CLEARINGHOUSE COORDINATOR
DEPT OF AGRICULTURE
1001 MSC - AGRICULTURE BLDG
RALEIGH NC

REVIEW DISTRIBUTION

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DPS - DIV OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT
ISOTHERMAL PLANN & ECON DEV

PROJECT INFORMATION

APPLICANT: North Carolina Department of Commerce
TYPE: State Environmental Policy Act
Environmental Review

DESC: Amended Application of Apex Solar, LLC for Certificate to construct a 30 MW Solar Facility in Cleveland Co. Docket #SP-11723, Sub 0. - View document at <http://starwl.ncuc.net/NCUC/portal/ncuc/page/Dockets/portal.aspx>, Type SP-11723 Sub 0 in the Docket Number search line.

Located on the west side of Plainsview Church Road, approximately .5 miles west of the intersection with East Stage Coach Trail, Lawndale, NC

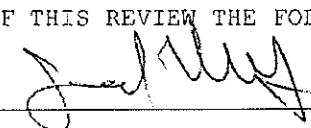
Amended due to the additional land that has been added to the facility.

CROSS-REFERENCE NUMBER: 18-E-4600-0301

The attached project has been submitted to the N. C. State Clearinghouse for intergovernmental review. Please review and submit your response by the above indicated date to 1301 Mail Service Center, Raleigh NC 27699-1301.

If additional review time is needed, please contact this office at (919)807-2425.

AS A RESULT OF THIS REVIEW THE FOLLOWING IS SUBMITTED: NO COMMENT COMMENTS ATTACHED

SIGNED BY: 

DATE: 11/5/2019

This application

1 Did ~~Did Not~~ have a CREP conservation easement on the subject property.

Did ~~Did Not~~ have a Swine buyout easement on the subject property

Did ~~Did Not~~ have ADFP easement on the subject property

Did ~~Did Not~~ have a plant conservation easement on the subject property

Did ~~Did Not~~ have a plant conservation priority site on the subject property



Dr. Alexander Stewart
Assistant Commissioner

North Carolina Department of Agriculture
and Consumer Services
Agricultural Services

Joseph Hudyncia
Environmental Programs

Crystal Best
State Clearinghouse
N.C. Department of Administration
1301 Mail Service Center
Raleigh, NC 27699-1301

November 5, 2019
RE: S# 20-E-4600-0070

Dear Ms. Best:

The proposed ground-mounted photovoltaic electric generating facility has the potential to negatively impact agricultural, environmental and economic balance in the area of the development project. Development of all types continues to be a threat to one of the state's most valuable natural resources, i.e. productive farmland. As productive farmland is removed from agricultural production the associated potential for providing necessary agricultural products for a growing population is reduced, and with it a substantial amount of recurring, local ag-related economic activity generated by local farming incomes.

We encourage conservation of highly productive soils for their best use – agriculture - and recommend locating ground-mounted solar arrays of this scale on less productive sites on the associated tract if possible. Prioritization of sites based on potential agricultural productivity, whereby less productive sites (e.g. marginal lands) are selected for development and more productive sites are retained for agricultural production, may help mitigate some impact to agricultural resources. One means to assess the agronomic potential of soils is to first consult the published county soil survey to identify soil types (soil map units) and distribution, and then use the NC State Cooperative Extension Realistic Yield Expectation for NC Soils database (<https://realisticyields.ces.ncsu.edu/>) to compare yield potential of soil map units on the tract. This analysis may help prioritize areas for retention in agricultural production.

Additionally, the use of best practices in construction and operation and maintenance of the facility are encouraged to preserve the productive capabilities of the site for future agricultural use, while maintaining the integrity of unique or sensitive habitats. It is also recommended that a decommissioning plan that clearly defines the responsible party, process details, timeline, and specific responsibilities (including restoration) be incorporated into the development agreement.

We have cross-referenced the parcel for existing easements related to agriculture and found no CREP conservation easements, swine buyout easements, ADFP easements, plant conservation easements, plant conservation priority sites, or Voluntary Agricultural Districts associated with the subject property.

Respectfully,

Joe Hudyncia
Environmental Programs
N.C. Department of Agriculture & Consumer Services
(919)707-3070