

STATE OF NORTH CAROLINA DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Roy Cooper Governor

Pamela B. Cashwell Secretary

June 22, 2021

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

Re: SCH File # 21-E-4600-0914 Application of Filo Solar, LLC for Certificate to construct a 80 MW Solar Photovoltaic Electric Generating Facility in Montgomery County. Docket #SP-33082 Sub 0. View document at http://starw1.ncuc.net/NCUC/portal/ncuc/page/Dockets/portal.aspx, Type SP-33082 Sub 0 in the Docket Number search line.

Dear Kimberley 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 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,

CRYSTAL BEST State Environmental Review Clearinghouse

Attachments

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 Control No.: 21-E-4600-0914 Date Received: 5/20/2021

County.: MONTGOMERY Agency Response: 6/21/2021

Review Closed: 6/21/2021

LYN HARDISON
CLEARINGHOUSE COORDINATOR
DEPT OF ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY

Project Information

Type: State Environmental Policy Act ironmental Review

Applicant: North Carolina Department of Commerce

Project Desc.: Application of Filo Solar, LLC for Certificate to construct a 80 MW Solar Photovoltaic Electric

Generating Facility in Montgomery County. Docket #SP-33082 Sub 0. View document at http://starw1.ncuc.net/NCUC/portal/ncuc/page/Dockets/portal.aspx, Type SP-33082 Sub 0 in

the Docket Number search line.

Located nearby 1679 NC HWY 24-27 E Biscoe, North Carolina

As a result of this review the following is submitted:						
	☐ No Comment	Comments Below	✓ Documents Attached			

Reviewed By: LYN HARDISON Date: 6/21/2021

ROY COOPER Governor JOHN NICHOLSON Interim Secretary JAMIE RAGAN Director



MEMORANDUM

To: Crystal Best

State Clearinghouse

NC Department of Administration

From: Lyn Hardison

Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Service Environmental Assistance and Project Review Coordinator

Washington Regional Office

Re: 21-0914

Environmental Review - Application of Filo Solar, LLC for Certificate to construct an 80 MW Solar Photovoltaic Electric Generating Facility, Docket #SP-33082 Sub 0.

Montgomery County

Date: June 21, 2021

The Department of Environment Quality has reviewed the proposal for the referenced project. Based on the information provided, no contamination sites were identified within one mile of the project site. In addition, several of our agencies have identified permits that may be required and offered some valuable guidance to help minimize impacts to aquatic and terrestrial wildlife resources in and around the project site. The comments are attached for the applicant's review.

The Department will continue to be available to assist the applicant with any question or concerns.

Thank you for the opportunity to respond.

Attachments





☐ NORTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION ☐

Cameron Ingram, Executive Director

MEMORANDUM

TO: Lyn Hardison, Environmental Assistance and SEPA Coordinator

NCDEQ Division of Environmental Assistance and Customer Services

Gabrile Garrison

FROM: Gabriela Garrison

Eastern Piedmont Coordinator

Habitat Conservation

DATE: June 15, 2021

SUBJECT: Comments on Filo Solar, LLC Solar Facility in Montgomery County; Project Number

21-0914.

Biologists with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (NCWRC) have reviewed the proposed project description. Comments are provided in accordance with certain provisions of the North Carolina Environmental Policy Act (G.S. 113A-1 through 113A-10; 1 NCAC 25) and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act (48 Stat. 401, as amended; 16 U.S.C. 661 et seq.).

Filo Solar, LLC proposes to construct an 80 MW solar photovoltaic electric generating facility in Montgomery County. The facility would be located along Highway 24-27, west of its intersection with South Main Street, west of Biscoe. A map with the proposed project boundary suggests the site is primarily forested. Clearing trees from this site and installing solar panels will displace wildlife species. Installing solar panels on previously cleared and disturbed land will have less impact and is therefore the preferred option. Solar projects should be sited to avoid impacts to wetlands, streams, riparian buffers, and priority wildlife habitat.

Aerial images and maps indicate the Little River and Dicks Creek flow north of the proposed project area; tributaries to Little River bisect the project site. Cedar Creek flows south of the southern portion of the project site. There are records for the state-threatened, notched rainbow (*Villosa constricta*) and the state-significantly rare (SSR), eastern creekshell (*Villosa delumbis*), downstream of the site in the Little River. There are also records for the state-endangered, Carolina creekshell (*Villosa vaughniana*) and the SSR, eastern creekshell, downstream of the site in Cedar Creek. The NCWRC offers the following recommendations to minimize impacts to aquatic and terrestrial wildlife resources:

1. Maintain or establish a minimum 100-foot undisturbed, native forested buffer along each side of perennial streams and 50-foot undisturbed, native forested buffer along each side of intermittent streams and wetlands. Forested riparian buffers provide habitat areas and travel corridors for wildlife species. In addition, forested riparian buffers protect water quality by stabilizing stream banks and filtering stormwater runoff.

June 15, 2021 Filo Solar, LLC

- 2. The project footprint should be surveyed for wetlands and streams to ensure there are no impacts to surface waters. In addition to providing wildlife habitat, wetland areas and streams aid in flood control and water quality protection. United States Army Corps of Engineers Section 404 Permits and NC Division of Water Resources Section 401 Certifications are required for any impacts to jurisdictional streams or wetlands. Temporarily disturbed wetland areas should be returned to original soils and contours, reseeded with annual small grains appropriate for the season (e.g., oats, millet, rye, wheat, or rye grass) and allowed to revert to natural wetland vegetation.
- 3. Use bridges for all permanent roadway crossings of streams and associated wetlands to eliminate the need to fill and culvert, where practicable. If culverts must be used, the culvert should be designed to allow aquatic life passage. Fords may be appropriate and preferred for intermittent stream crossings or where crossings will be used only once or twice a year. For fords, crossings in riffles are preferred with the banks lowered upstream and downstream of the crossing. Stabilize the stream bottom with geo-textile fabric and rock; concrete should not be used for bed stabilization.
- 4. The solar facility will connect to existing utility lines; impacts to wildlife habitat will be minimized by connecting along pathways that do not contain quality wildlife habitat, such as cleared or agricultural land. If additional overhead transmission lines will be installed, measures to minimize impacts to birds should be implemented. These can include increasing line visibility, insulating wires to cover exposed connections and increasing the distance between wires so no contact with ground or other energized wire can be made. For more information, see http://www.fws.gov/birds/documents/powerlines.pdf.
- 5. If site and/or transmission line maintenance is needed, avoid mowing between April 1 and October 1 to minimize impacts to nesting wildlife. Use a maintenance schedule that incorporates a portion of the area (e.g., one-third of the area) each year. Pesticides, fertilizers, herbicides, and other chemicals should not be used in wetland areas or near streams.
- 6. If pesticides or chemicals will be used for site maintenance, stormwater runoff from the site should be funneled to bio-retention areas prior to discharge to streams or wetlands to provide additional protection for water quality and aquatic and terrestrial wildlife habitats.
- 7. Consider planting native, wildflower seed mixes that will create pollinator habitat within the project boundary. Shade-tolerant plants that are within 12 to 18 inches can be selected for plantings both underneath and around the solar panels. Pollinator habitat with more diverse seed mixes can also be created in buffer areas outside of the panel region. In addition, consider adding other habitat-enhancing features, such as permeable fencing, bird/bat boxes and brush piles that will minimize impacts from habitat loss. Further information and free technical guidance from the NCWRC are available upon request. In addition, please refer to the NC Solar Technical Guidance document, created by the NC Pollinator Conservation Alliance: www.ncpollinatoralliance.org/energy.
- 8. Sediment and erosion control measures should be installed prior to any land clearing or construction. The use of biodegradable and wildlife-friendly sediment and erosion control devices is strongly recommended. Silt fencing, fiber rolls and/or other products should have loose-weave netting that is made of natural fiber materials with movable joints between the vertical and horizontal twines. Silt fencing or similar materials that have been reinforced with plastic or metal mesh should be avoided as they impede the movement of terrestrial wildlife species. Excessive silt and sediment loads can have detrimental effects on aquatic resources including destruction of spawning habitat, suffocation of eggs and clogging of gills.

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June 15, 2021 Filo Solar, LLC

9. Develop a plan that identifies the party responsible for decommissioning the facility as well as the conditions under which decommissioning will occur. In addition, the plan should emphasize that all equipment must be removed from the site, and the land should be restored to pre-construction conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to review and comment on this project. If I can be of further assistance, please contact me at (910) 409-7350 or gabriela.garrison@ncwildlife.org.

ROY COOPER Governor JOHN NICHOLSON Interim Secretary MICHAEL SCOTT Director



DATE: June 18, 2021

TO: Michael Scott, Division Director through Sharon Brinkley

FROM: Deb Aja, Western District Supervisor - Solid Waste Section

RE: SEPA Project 21-0914, Montgomery County, N.C.

Filo Solar LLC - Solar Facility Project near Biscoe

The Solid Waste Section has reviewed the Application of Filo Solar, LLC for Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity to construct an 80-MW solar generating facility located along Coggins Road, near the City of Biscoe, located in Montgomery County, North Carolina. The review has been completed and has found no adverse impact on the surrounding community and likewise knows of no situations in the community, which would affect this project from a solid waste perspective.

During the project, every feasible effort should be made to minimize the generation of waste, to recycle materials for which viable markets exist, and to use recycled products and materials in the development of this project where suitable. Any waste generated by this project that cannot be beneficially reused or recycled must be disposed of at a solid waste management facility approved to manage the respective waste type. The Section strongly recommends that any contractors are required to provide proof of proper disposal for all waste generated as part of the project.

A list of permitted solid waste management facilities is available on the Solid Waste Section website at: http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/waste-management/waste-managementrules-data/solid-waste-management-annual-reports/solid-waste-permitted-facility-list.

Please contact Teresa Bradford, Environmental Senior Specialist, with any questions regarding solid waste management for this project. Ms. Bradford may be reached at (704) 235-2160 or by email at teresa.bradford@ncdenr.gov.

Ec: Jason Watkins, Field Operations Branch Head Teresa Bradford, Environmental Senior Specialist



ROY COOPER Governor JOHN NICHOLSON Interim Secretary MICHAEL SCOTT Director



Date: June 17, 2021

To: Michael Scott, Director

Division of Waste Management

Through: Janet Macdonald

Inactive Hazardous Sites Branch – Special Projects Unit

From: Bonnie S. Ware

Inactive Hazardous Sites Branch

Subject: NEPA Project # 21-0914, North Carolina Department of Commerce, Montgomery County, North

Carolina

The Superfund Section has reviewed the proximity of sites under its jurisdiction to the North Carolina Department of Commerce project. Proposed project Application of Filo Solar, LLC for Certificate to construct an 80 MW Solar Photovoltaic Electric Generating Facility.

No Superfund Section sites were identified within one mile of the project as shown on the attached report.

Please contact Janet Macdonald at 919.707.8349 if you have any questions concerning the Superfund Section review portion of this SEPA/NEPA inquiry.



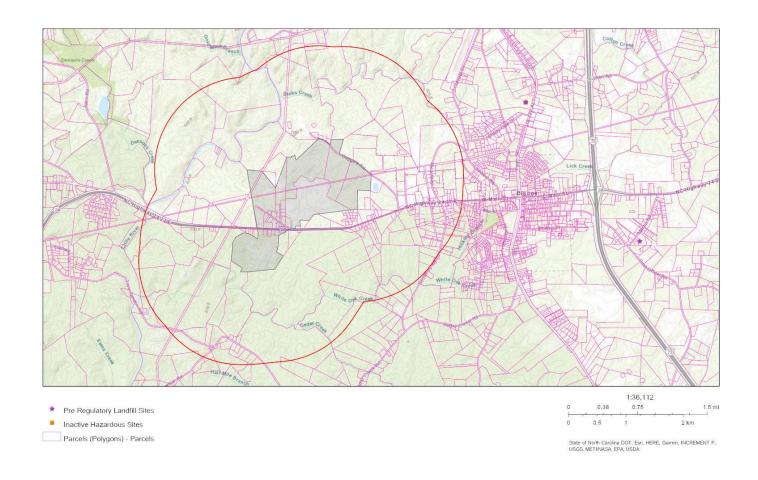


SUPERFUND SECTION SITES ONLY: SEPA/NEPA

Area of Interest (AOI) Information

Area: 5,828.48 acres

Jun 17 2021 10:38:48 Eastern Daylight Time



Superfund Section Sites Only: 21-0914 Montgomery County

Summary

Name	Count	Area(acres)	Length(mi)
Certified DSCA Sites	0	N/A	N/A
Federal Remediation Branch Sites	0	N/A	N/A
Inactive Hazardous Sites	0	N/A	N/A
Pre-Regulatory Landfill Sites	0	N/A	N/A
Brownfields Program Sites	0	N/A	N/A

Reviewing Regional Office: FRO

Project Number: <u>21-0914</u> Due Date: <u>06/17/2021</u>

County: MONTGOMERY

After review of this project it has been determined that the DEQ permit(s) and/or approvals indicated may need to be obtained in order for this project to comply with North Carolina Law. Questions regarding these permits should be addressed to the Regional Office indicated on the reverse of the form. All applications, information and guidelines relative to these plans and permits are available from the same Regional Office.

	PERMITS	SPECIAL APPLICATION PROCEDURES or REQUIREMENTS	Normal Process Time (statutory time limit)			
\boxtimes	Permit to construct & operate wastewater treatment facilities, non-standard sewer system extensions & sewer systems that do not discharge into state surface waters.	30 days (90 days)				
	Permit to construct & operate, sewer extensions involving gravity sewers, pump stations and force mains discharging into a sewer collection system	Fast-Track Permitting program consists of the submittal of an application and an engineer's certification that the project meets all applicable State rules and Division Minimum Design Criteria.	30 days (N/A)			
\boxtimes	NPDES - permit to discharge into surface water and/or permit to operate and construct wastewater facilities discharging into state surface waters.	Application 180 days before begins activity. On-site inspection. Preapplication conference usual. Additionally, obtain permit to construct wastewater treatment facility-granted after NPDES. Reply time, 30 days after receipt of plans or issue of NPDES permit-whichever is later.	90-120 days (N/A)			
	Water Use Permit	Pre-application technical conference usually necessary.	30 days (N/A)			
\boxtimes	Well Construction Permit	7 days (15 days)				
	Dredge and Fill Permit	55 days (90 days)				
	Permit to construct & operate Air Pollution Abatement facilities and/or Emission Sources as per 15 A NCAC (2Q.0100 thru 2Q.0300)	90 days				
\boxtimes	Any open burning associated with subject proposal must be in compliance with 15 A NCAC 2D.1900	60 days (90 days)				
\boxtimes	Demolition or renovations of structures containing asbestos material must be in compliance with 15 A NCAC 20.1110 (a) (1) which requires notification and removal prior to demolition. Contact Asbestos Control Group 919-707-5950	60 days (90 days)				
\boxtimes	The Sedimentation Pollution Control Act of 1973 must be properly addressed for any land disturbing activity. An erosion & sedimentation control plan will be required if one or more acres are to be disturbed. Plan must be filed with and approved by applicable Regional Office (Land Quality Section) at least 30 days before beginning activity. A NPDES Construction Stormwater permit (NCG010000) is also usually issued should design features meet minimum requirements. A fee of \$65 for the first acre or any part of an acre. An express review option is available with additional fees.					
	Sedimentation and erosion control must be addressed in accordance with NCDOT's approved program. Particular attention should be given to design and installation of appropriate perimeter sediment trapping devices as well as stable Stormwater conveyances and outlets.					
	Sedimentation and erosion control must be addressed in accordance withLocal Government's approved program. Particular attention should be given to design and installation of appropriate perimeter sediment trapping devices as well as stable Stormwater conveyances and outlets.					
	,	mwater Program which regulates three types of activities: Industrial, action activities that disturb ≥1 acre.	30-60 days (90 days)			
	Compliance with 15A NCAC 2H 1000 -State Stormy construction stormwater runoff control. Areas sub other counties and watersheds throughout the sta	45 days (90 days)				

Reviewing Regional Office: FRO

Project Number: <u>21-0914</u> Due Date: <u>06/17/2021</u>

County: MONTGOMERY

			Normal Process				
	PERMITS	SPECIAL APPLICATION PROCEDURES or REQUIREMENTS	(statutory time				
	Mining Permit	30 days (60 days)					
	Dam Safety Permit	30 days (60 days)					
	Oil Refining Facilities	N/A	90-120 days (N/A)				
	Permit to drill exploratory oil or gas well	File surety bond of \$5,000 with DEQ running to State of NC conditional that any well opened by drill operator shall, upon abandonment, be plugged according to DEQ rules and regulations.	10 days N/A				
	Geophysical Exploration Permit Application filed with DEQ at least 10 days prior to issue of permit. Application by letter. No standard application form.		10 days N/A				
	Application fee based on structure size is charged. Must include descriptions & drawings of structure & proof of ownership of riparian property		15-20 days N/A				
\boxtimes	401 Water Quality Certification	Compliance with the T15A 02H .0500 Certifications are required whenever construction or operation of facilities will result in a discharge into navigable water as described in 33 CFR part 323.	60 days (130 days)				
	Compliance with Catawba, Goose Creek, Jordan Lake, Randleman, Tar Pamlico or Neuse Riparian Buffer Rules is required. Buffer requirements: http://dea.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/water-resources/water-pranch/401-						
	Nutrient Offset: Loading requirements for nitrogen and phosphorus in the Neuse and Tar-Pamlico River basins, and in the Jordan and Falls Lake watersheds, as part of the nutrient-management strategies in these areas. DWR nutrient offset information: http://deq.nc.gov/about/divisions/water-resources/planning/nonpoint-source-management/nutrient-offset-information						
	CAMA Permit for MAJOR development	\$250.00 - \$475.00 fee must accompany application	75 days (150 days)				
	CAMA Permit for MINOR development	\$100.00 fee must accompany application	22 days (25 days)				
\boxtimes	Abandonment of any wells, if required must be in accordance with Title 15A. Subchapter 2C.0100.						
\boxtimes	Notification of the proper regional office is requested if "orphan" underground storage tanks (USTS) are discovered during any excavation operation.						
	Plans and specifications for the construction, expansion, or alteration of a public water system must be approved by the Division of Water Resources/Public Water Supply Section prior to the award of a contract or the initiation of construction as per 15A NCAC 18C .0300 et. seq., Plans and specifications should be submitted to 1634 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1634. All public water supply systems must comply with state and federal drinking water monitoring requirements. For more information, contact the Public Water Supply Section, (919) 707-9100.						
	If existing water lines will be relocated during the construction, plans for the water line relocation must be submitted to the Division of Water Resources/Public Water Supply Section at 1634 Mail Service Center, Raleigh, North Carolina 27699-1634. For more information, contact the Public Water Supply Section, (919) 707-9100.						
	Plans and specifications for the construction, expa the delegated plan approval authority. Plea						

Reviewing Regional Office: <u>FRO</u>
Project Number: <u>21-0914</u> Due Date: <u>06/17/2021</u>

County: MONTGOMERY

Other Comments (attach additional pages as necessary, being certain to comment authority)

Division	Initials	No	Comments	Date
		comment		Review
DAQ	GWR	\boxtimes		5/21/2021
DWR-WQROS	KMB	\boxtimes		6/9/2021
DWR-PWS				/ /
DEMLR (LQ & SW)	LHB	\boxtimes		5/25/2021
DWM – UST	KEC		The UST Section, Fayetteville Regional Office, does not have record of a petroleum release in the general area of concern for this project number, nor are there any records of registered USTs.	5/24/2021
Other Comments				/ /

				no	r are there any records of registered U		p. 0,000	
Other Co	omments			110	rate there any records of registered of	513.		/ /
		Questions	regardi	ng these p	REGIONAL OFFICES ermits should be addressed to the Reg	ional Office	marked below.	
	Asheville Regiona 2090 U.S. 70 High Swannanoa, NC 2 Phone: 828-296-4 Fax: 828-299-704	way 8778-8211 1500			Fayetteville Regional Office 225 Green Street, Suite 714, Fayetteville, NC 28301-5043 Phone: 910-433-3300 Fax: 910-486-0707		Mooresville Regiona 610 East Center Aven Mooresville, NC 281: Phone: 704-663-1699 Fax: 704-663-6040	iue, Suite 301, 15
	Raleigh Regional 3800 Barrett Driv Raleigh, NC 27609 Phone: 919-791-4 Fax: 919-571-471	e, 9 1200			Washington Regional Office 943 Washington Square Mall, Washington, NC 27889 Phone: 252-946-6481 Fax: 252-975-3716		Wilmington Regional 127 Cardinal Drive Ex Wilmington, NC 2840 Phone: 910-796-7215 Fax: 910-350-2004	t., 5
					Winston-Salem Regional Office 450 Hanes Mill Road, Suite 300, Winston-Salem, NC 27105 Phone: 336-776-9800 Fax: 336-776-9797			

OFFICIA

Jun 22 202

Department of Environmental Quality Project Review Form

Project Number: 21-0914 County: Montgomery Date Received: 5-20-2021

Due Date: 6-17-2021

Project Description: Environmental Review - Application of Filo Solar, LLC for Certificate to construct a 80

MW Solar Photovoltaic Electric Generating Facility. Docket #SP-33082 Sub 0.

View document at https://starw1.ncuc.net/NCUC/page/Dockets/portal.aspx, Type SP-33082 Sub 0 in the Docket Number search line. Located nearby 1679 NC HWY 24-27 E Biscoe, North Carolina. GPS Coordinates: 35°21'35.87"N 79°49'11.22"W

This Project is being reviewed as indicated below:

Regional Office	Regional Office Area	In-House Review			
Asheville V Fayetteville Mooresville Raleigh Washington Wilmington Winston-Salem		Air Quality Parks & Recreation ✓ Waste Mgmt Water Resources Mgmt (Public Water, Planning & W Quality Program) DWR-Transportation Unit	Coastal Management Marine Fisheries Military Affairs DMF-Shellfish Sanitation Wildlife Gabriela Wildlife - DOT		
Manager Sign-Off/Region:		Date: 6/14/21	In-House Reviewer/Agency: Melodi Deaver, Hazardous Waste Section		
Response (check all applie	cable)				
No objection to project as proposed No Comment Insufficient information to complete review Other (specify or attach comments)					
If you have any questions, please contact: Lyn Hardison at lyn.hardison@ncdenr.gov or (252) 948-3842 943 Washington Square Mall Washington NC 27889 Courier No. 16-04-01					

Control No.: 21-E-4600-0914 Date Received: 5/20/2021

County.: MONTGOMERY Agency Response: 6/21/2021

Review Closed: 6/21/2021

MATT REECE
CLEARINGHOUSE COORD REGION G
PIEDMONT TRIAD REGIONAL COUNCIL

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Type: State Environmental Policy Act ironmental Review

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Located nearby 1679 NC HWY 24-27 E Biscoe, North Carolina

As a result of this review the following is submitted:						
	✓ No Comment	Comments Below	Documents Attached			

Reviewed By: MATT REECE Date: 5/20/2021

Control No.: 21-E-4600-0914 Date Received: 5/20/2021

County.: MONTGOMERY Agency Response: 6/21/2021

Review Closed: 6/21/2021

JINTAO WEN
CLEARINGHOUSE COORDINATOR
DPS - DIV OF EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

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the Docket Number search line.

Located nearby 1679 NC HWY 24-27 E Biscoe, North Carolina

As a result of this review the following is submitted:						
	✓ No Comment	Comments Below	Documents Attached			

Reviewed By: JINTAO WEN Date: 6/18/2021