Riverside Solar Virtual Community Meeting Q&A
March 2, 2021

1. **As the solar panels fail or reach end of life, who will pay to remove them?**

   AES Clean Energy will be fully responsible for the maintenance and/or removal of the panels. Financial security will be provided for the benefit of the project to fund the decommissioning.

2. **Is any ground or groundwater testing planned to check environmental contamination from leaking panels?**

   Water resources, including wells, are part of the analysis conducted for one of the 94-c exhibits. Currently there is no blasting proposed for this Project, but we will continue to evaluate the soil and subsurface conditions to see if blasting is required to build the Project. If blasting is ultimately required, we will likely conduct pre-construction water well testing. Other than that, no testing is required or necessary for the Project.

3. **How far away will the solar panels be built from my property?**

   There are specific setback regulations in the new 94-c guidelines, which can be found here. **Subpart 900-2.6** of the new 94-c regulations establishes the following setback requirements for solar facility components:

   - **Non-participating residential property lines:** 100 feet
   - **Centerline of Public Road:** 50 feet
   - **Non-participating property lines (non-residential):** 50 feet
   - **Non-participating occupied residences:** 250 feet

4. **What is the setback (distance between) from the solar panels/fence to the road and/or private property?**

   The equipment (panels, inverters, etc.) are required to be at least 50 or 100 ft away, depending on the type of boundary (see previous question). The fencing can be outside of this setback distance, as well as any vegetative buffering that might be added for visual mitigation.

   Section 94-c has specific standards for roads and property lines, as do local zoning laws. Both sets of standards are taken into consideration in the design of the facility. These requirements are either 50 feet or 60 feet to non-participating property lines, depending on whether you are talking about Brownville or Lyme, or 94-c, and 50 or 100 feet from roads, again depending on whether you're talking about the local zoning requirement or Section 94-c.

   In our preliminary Project design (the current Project layout as presented on March 2nd), we have designed the layout in compliance with the most conservative setback distances. For example, where ORES (Section 94-c) might require setbacks of 50 feet and the town law might require 60 feet, we have used the 60 foot setback to comply with the local regulations.

5. **How will you be addressing the Chaumont Barrens Preservation?**

   As part of the wildlife site characterization report we conducted, we did an extensive desktop analysis and review according to the 94-c guidelines. These guidelines require that you look at all types of significant communities, wetland areas, state designated resources etc. out to a five-mile distance from the Project Area, so the Chaumont Barrens Preservation was evaluated and included as part of that analysis. The Preservation is also within our two-mile study area, so we anticipate having conversations with the DEC and ORES regarding any potential requirements or things that we need to know about the community types in that area. We will not be impacting the Preservation directly. However, as it is an area that's used for hiking, walking trails etc., it may be one of the areas considered for the visual impact analysis.

6. **How does this geographic area rate as far as necessary solar resource requirements?**

   Siting a solar project requires optimizing on several different parameters. The land needs to be of the appropriate type (not too hilly, zoned to allow solar development, etc.), needs to have access to nearby interconnection, and most importantly, needs to have ready and willing landowners that want to host these projects. A fourth requirement for solar development is an engaged local community and stakeholders that want the project to happen. We feel that this Project meets all of these parameters. This geographic area rates perfectly well in terms of solar capacity in relation to most anywhere else in the state (typically solar projects are in the 20% + capacity factor range).

   It is also important to note that the technology for solar photovoltaics has grown immensely quickly - even on cloudy and snowy days, solar panels are able to gather solar energy and produce electricity. We are potentially using bifacial panels, which in addition to absorbing the sun's rays from above, can produce energy from any reflection below the panels (notable in snowy weather). Additionally, our panels will be on tracker units so that they rotate to follow the sun, gathering the maximum amount of solar energy available at any point of the day. We will be using all of the appropriate equipment to ensure that we maximize the solar potential of this geographical area.

7. **Are there any existing winter snowmobile trails across the existing properties? If so, will they remain open to snowmobilers or cross country skiing? Could parking areas be built for cross country skiers?**

   We are working with the local snowmobile club to ensure that the one snowmobile trail that runs along the Project Area will be able to connect through and continue on past our Project. There will likely not be parking areas built for cross country skiers, as this Project is built on private property, and while AES Clean Energy will have leases with these landowners, we must ensure that we protect their properties. However, if there happen to be appropriate areas for cross country skiing around the Project fence, and the folks who want to ski have agreements with the landowners who own these areas, they are more than welcome to do that.

8. **How do you plan to assure you have qualified, local labor for the construction of this Project?**

   We will instruct our contractors to hire as much local labor as they possibly can.

9. **Will the energy from the solar panels benefit us in town?**

   There are $500,000 total of electricity credits that will be distributed over the Project's first 10 years of operation to all residential electric utility customers in the Towns of Lyme and Brownville - this is a new requirement that has been established as part of the law which created the 94-c process. The actual energy produced by the Project will enter the grid and be distributed as electricity as is normally distributed.

10. **There is an existing solar project under construction now adjacent to the village of Chaumont. As a consumer, am I going to have to choose between National Grid or AES?**

    No – everybody in the local community will continue to get their electricity from National Grid. Whatever provider of electricity you have right now, will continue to be your provider. AES Clean Energy is not a retail power provider, so nothing will change for local residents in terms of what entity is providing their electricity.

11. **What type of storage system?**

    The storage system for this Project will likely be a lithium-ion, 4-hour system, adhering to all local safety and State code requirements. It will be located directly adjacent to the Project substation, within the fenced Project Area, and will look much like all the other electrical equipment that is required for a solar project. A 20 MW storage system requires a very small footprint, roughly one acre. We are very aware of and are monitoring, all the health and safety requirements of these battery storage systems.

12. **What is the project's anticipated capacity factor?**

    Similar to other Projects, 20%+.

13. **How many solar panels to be installed?**

    At this time, we do not have an actual count/number of panels. However, all the panels for this Project will be installed within the areas indicated on the preliminary Project layout map in our presentation.

14. **Is the reduced project size still 1,000 acres?**

    The total Project Area is approximately 1,000 acres. However, this does not mean there will be 1,000 acres of panels – the panels will comprise a portion of the total acreage.

15. **It appears that your project may adjoin property owned by The Nature Conservancy, which is Calcareous Pavement Barrens, a unique archeological ecosystem. It is difficult to tell from your map if this is true.**

    There are quite a few of that community type mapped within the five-mile radius of the Project Area, and all of those community types are mapped and are important to the state for multiple reasons. This community type will be taken into consideration not only with the goal of protecting the ecosystem and that community type itself, but the habitat that is potentially there for species.

16. **Will the Construction jobs be paid at the prevailing rate?**

    Yes.

17. **Do 2-3 permanent jobs justify a PILOT agreement?**

    We will be providing a significant investment to the local community both through the investment of capital (including short-term construction jobs), and the ongoing economic benefits that our Project will generate. While we are not in the position to be able to answer this question in full detail at this stage of project development, we are happy to continue the conversation of economic benefits with the community.

    Additionally, it is important to note that it is a common misperception that a PILOT agreement for renewable energy projects is intended to support job creation, and that is not necessarily the case. Sometimes, PILOTs serve simply as a settlement of the tax obligations of a project, as renewable energy projects pose a unique type of taxing assessment. The PILOT represents a settlement of the taxes to be paid by the project throughout its life and provides both the taxing jurisdictions and the developer the amount of payments for the term of the agreement.

18. **What studies have you or your company done to show the impact of property values near and around these solar "farms"? Why has your company not met with the directly affected homeowners to address these concerns?**

    We have met with some of the homeowners surrounding the Project Area. As emphasized in our presentation, we view community engagement as a two way street, and welcome conversation with anyone who may have questions or concerns. We have provided Project contact information as well as personal contact information for the Project managers, and we are happy to speak with anyone about any topic of interest or concern.

    See the response to **Question 59** below for more information regarding property values.

19. **Is the entire area going to be fenced? If so, what provisions will you incorporate for the passage of wildlife?**

    Yes, as according to code, the entire area of a power producing facility must be fenced for safety reasons. The only wildlife that will be able to get through the fence will be wildlife small enough to make it through or over the fence, or wildlife that are able to fly in and out of the Project Area.

    Although the entire area of the facility must be fenced, the entirety of the Project Area will not be within one single fence. Please see the responses to **Questions 44, 57, 67 and 72** below for further elaboration on fencing and passage of wildlife.

20. **Will this project require overruling any local regulatory laws?**

    It is too early to give a definitive answer to this question. However, specific to setbacks and in some other provisions of the local laws, our intent is to conform to local laws wherever we can, and to look at areas where we can't conform and find ways that we can either modify the Project design so that we are in conformity, or come up with another arrangement with the local municipality if this is not possible. While it is our intent to fully conform to local laws, there are many factors associated with the site design (environmental constraints as well as other factors) that will need to be taken

into consideration. To the extent that there are any provisions that would be considered unreasonable in their application to this Project because they are ambiguous or otherwise, there is the potential that these local provisions could be waived. At this time, the intent is to try to conform the design of the Project to the local regulatory requirements, even where they are more stringent.

21. **Why do you need to build on both sides of 12E rather than have it further back, so it doesn't seem so confining? The current solar project on art 179 is right next to the road and it is completely overwhelming to those of us who live near the project.**

    The current Project layout is still preliminary, so while the Project is currently designed to be on both sides of 12E, this could potentially change. The final layout will depend on a few of our studies that are still being contemplated and finalized, and a number of other design factors. We will be working closely with the town and landowners with regard to vegetative screening, and we will be integrating a full landscaping plan into our Project application as one of the 94-c exhibits.

22. **What does the total capacity mean? ___ megawatts per hour, per day or per year?**

    What we refer to as the nameplate capacity (100 MW for this Project), is the maximum amount of power the Project can produce in one hour. Megawatts per hour is the amount of power that can be produced per hour, and this metric can be calculated on other scales, on a per day, per month or per year basis. The general way capacity factor is calculated is by taking the nameplate capacity, multiplied by 8,760, divided by the amount of actual production -- that gives you a capacity factor number.

23. **Please address any coordination efforts with Fort Drum Office of Plans & Policy to ensure no impact to Wheeler Sack Airfield AND military training operations in the area.**

    We have already engaged with Fort Drum, about a year ago now. The Fort Drum Office was provided with extensive Project information, the Project map, etc. The Fort Drum Office studied the provided Project materials, and confirmed that they anticipate no problems, and are receptive to the Project. Coordination with Fort Drum was a hurdle that we wanted to clear early on, and we will continue to communicate and coordinate with them as we move the Project forward.

24. **Who gets to access the 25% of intervenor funds not reserved for municipalities?**

    The groups that qualify for this remaining 25% of intervenor funds fall within the definition of "potential community intervenor" as defined in **Subpart 900-5** of the finalized 94-c regulations, which can be found here. The regulations state:

    "Potential community intervenor means any person residing within a municipality within which a major renewable electric generating facility is proposed or residing outside the municipality within which the facility is proposed, but within one (1) mile of a proposed solar facility (as defined in subdivision (bu) of this section) or five (5) miles of a proposed wind facility (as defined in subdivision (ca) of this section) or any non-profit organization that can demonstrate a concrete and localized interest that may be affected by a proposed facility and that such interest has a significant nexus to their mission. For the purposes of this definition, the term "residing" shall include any resident or owner of property within the geographical limitations described above."

25. **Please consider wildlife friendly fences especially in wetlands so that species can travel under the fence (turtles). It reduces habitat fragmentation.**

    Thank you for the comment, we will take that into consideration. As can be seen in our Project map of where the wetlands are located, there are little fingers of wetlands that stick down throughout the Project Area. We have been working closely with our engineers to ensure that we place the fences around those areas.

26. **How far do the panels have to be from any residence?**

    Under the 94-c regulations, the panels must be at least 100 feet from non-participating residential property lines, and at least 250 feet from non-participating occupied residences.

27. **Do the residents have any say in whether this project comes to our area?**

    If any residents have concerns or questions about why this Project is a good fit for the area, please feel free to connect with us. One of the factors essential to getting these types of projects developed is the support of community stakeholders. While we are developing this Project through a state permitting process, this process requires a significant amount of local involvement and stakeholder engagement. We take this engagement very seriously not just as something we have to do but as something we want to do, since we are going to be here for the entire life of the Project, and we want to build positive and meaningful relationships as a community member and neighbor. We want to make sure that everyone is on board and that we are taking community concerns into consideration. While the state board is voting on this Project and they have the right to potentially set aside some local laws, that is not our plan. We want to make sure that the community is supportive and that we are receptive to what is going on locally. We are happy to continue this dialogue as much as possible.

28. **What qualifies as a mitigation for impacted wetlands?**

    There are a couple of different factors to consider when deciding on the type of mitigation to be carried out. Namely, the amount of wetland that you could potentially lose from a permanent impact of the Project, and the type of wetland, as there a few different types in this Project Area. One common mitigation option is called a wetland mitigation area and involves creating a wetland or enhancing an existing wetland community near the Project Area. There are also mitigation options throughout the state including wetland banking or contributing financially to a larger wetland complex that is being preserved and taken care of in perpetuity. There are a few options, depending on the Project circumstances.

29. **Within the project, how many solar panels are you talking about?**

    We do not currently know the exact number of solar panels that will comprise this Project, as we don't have a final Project layout yet. However, the number of panels will be included in the permit application.

30. **Do you have customers lined up to buy this power?**

    We do not sell directly to residential customers or businesses and we do not yet have a contract to sell the power from the Project, though we have several options. The first plan would be to sell the

power to NYSERDA, which is a New York State organization that usually buys RECs (renewable energy certificates) on behalf of the state. Alternatively, we could sell the power to other corporate buyers or other entities that would sign a power purchase agreement (PPA). We will be pursuing a contract for the sale of the project energy output over the next year or two. The fact that we do not yet have a contract is not affecting the development timeline of the Project.

31. From COD, when do you expect to become profitable?

The timeline for profitability varies from project to project, and at this stage of Project development we cannot anticipate the answer to this question. COD, or 'commercial operation date', refers to the date by which the Project is commissioned and officially up and running, safely contributing power into the grid and is being metered.

32. Any dangers we should know about if we have a fire at the battery storage facility?

We will be working directly with the local EMS and fire departments to be prepared in case of a fire, but we also have comprehensive and redundant monitoring and safety programs in place for these storage facilities. One of the companies that AES Clean Energy is in close partnership with, Fluence, is a world-leader in battery installation, and we are very aware of working with our battery suppliers on safety and safety requirements, which have improved significantly over the years. While the risk of fire is very low, we will be acutely monitoring this risk for the life of this storage system. This equipment will be located near the other electrical equipment required for a solar facility, which is equipment that is especially restricted, distanced and located within the fenced Project Area to ensure safety.

33. Will this project be under a Project Labor Agreement?

A PLA is an agreement typically signed with multiple labor unions to get them to perform to a contract. It is too soon to have an answer to this question for this Project, as we have yet to choose an EPC (Engineering, Procurement and Construction) contractor, and ultimately it will be up to them to determine whether a PLA is in the best interest of the Project or not. We want to hire local labor and we will pay prevailing wages, but whether this is all subject to a PLA is still to be determined.

34. How will you treat vegetation around the solar panels?

We plan to have a grass covering throughout the Project Area within the fence, primarily a mix of low-growing species that don't exceed two to three feet in height, so that they don't end up shading the panels. As part of our compliance requirements and standards for the Project under 94-c, we will be required to submit an operations and maintenance plan and vegetation maintenance plan, which will indicate the frequency of mowing of this grass covering. We don't plan to use any widespread herbicides in the treatment of the Project vegetation. If we need to do some spot treatment with herbicides to control any vegetation, this will be done by someone who is trained and certified, using DEC-approved herbicides. Periodic mowing will be the primary treatment of the vegetation.

35. Do landowners within the setback areas around the project get paid by AES?

In general, the people that own land within a fenced-in Project Area have a contract with the Project company. Landowners within the setback areas - the actual landowners that are participating in the Project - will be compensated by AES Clean Energy.

36. Some of this land was in the state bird acreage program until just a couple of years ago. How does this affect solar development on these particular fields?

This would be something that the DEC would keep in mind as part of our conversations that are happening based on the wildlife characterization report. Until we have those conversations with the DEC, we will not know how this specific program may implicate this Project.

37. How frequent is it for utilities like AES to sell projects like these to other utilities as part of their strategy to generate earnings and increase the value of their stock?

AES Clean Energy is not a utility in New York, we are an independent power producer. We cannot comment on that frequency. However, for well-capitalized developers like AES Clean Energy, our intention is to develop, own, and operate our projects for their entire contracted project life.

38. Will any power from this utility-scale Project provide power to residences in Jefferson County? If yes, where? If no, where do you expect to transport the power to?

Electricity takes the flow of least resistance, just like water. We will be injecting the power produced by this Project into the grid from our Project substation via the Lyme to Lyme Tap, which is a 115 KV line directly adjacent to the Project Area. That transmission line will bring the power to another substation, and from there the power will move again, being split off to little distribution substations further and further down the line. From the initial 115 KV level, the power will be transformed down and distributed within local neighborhoods. Energy and electrons typically get utilized in the area where they are created, as long as the demand for this power exists. If the demand in areas closest to the Project is not high enough to use up all of the electrons that are created by the Project, then those electrons will continue to travel downstream through the State transmission lines until they are used up.

39. Since most of this land is viable farmland, per state guidelines I understand that not more than 50% of the acreage can be occupied, how is this figured into your plans?

The Project will be designed in accordance with NY Ag and Market guidelines for project development, so all state guidelines will be taken into consideration. Additionally, the Project application under 94-c requires an entire exhibit dedicated to identifying potential impacts to agricultural resources. We are not specifically familiar with this 50% occupancy regulation regarding viable farmland, but will be looking into it further, and all state guidelines will be complied with for this Project.

40. When you speak of setbacks, is that from the solar panels themselves or the setback from the fencing and greenscape?

Setbacks are measured and required from the location of the equipment used to produce power within the Project Area (the panels and electrical equipment). The fencing and greenscape will be

outside of that setback. This is how both the local zoning laws and the 94-c regulations are established.

41. You say power so many homes, how exactly will I see that and what benefit will I receive?

While this Project will produce electricity equivalent to powering 22,000 homes' per year, this metric serves mainly to help measure and conceptualize the general capacity that this Project has to produce power and support electricity users – this number of homes is meant to provide a concept of the scale of impact of this Project, but we cannot anticipate exactly which homes these will be. The 'number of homes powered' metric is provided to help demonstrate the scale and size of the Project rather than indicate an actual direct plug of power into specific homes.

As regards the benefit that you will receive, there are several potential and expected benefits. If you are a local resident, these benefits will include the increase in local tax revenue that this Project will provide, the electric utility bill credit provided over the first 10 years of Project operation, indirect economic benefits through increased local spending and investment (particularly during construction), potential short and long-term job creation, and educational and vocational opportunities related to solar, among others. More broadly, as more renewable energy projects are developed and more renewable energy comes onto the grid, we will all benefit from the reduction of the negative environmental and climate impacts associated with conventional energy generation, experiencing cleaner air, water and soil for ourselves and future generations.

42. Are there any setbacks/boundaries established with regards to additional solar projects that are/will be introduced to the towns of Lyme and Brownville? Basically, how close to your project can another utility come to construct additional projects?

Cumulative impacts are addressed as part of the permitting process – in the case of multiple solar projects being sited within the same area, there could be potential cumulative visual or noise impacts that would be addressed in terms of setbacks. In this situation there typically are not setback requirements, whether under local zoning laws or under 94-c, so it is more likely that the impacts of this situation would be addressed as environmental impacts.

Something that is relevant to note here is the fact that we are very close partners with the participating landowners for this Project, and generally, solar developers must first have close relationships with willing landowners for a project to be viable. We do not just bring projects to municipalities; we first talk to the landowners in the area we are hoping to develop and make sure that they are willing to participate and are supportive of the project. Without the local landowners, we wouldn't have a project.

43. Will there be lighting overlooking these projects and what can residents surrounding the project expect to see at night?

Lighting for the Project is minimal and should be limited to the collection substation and battery storage system. As required by Section 94-c, the Application will include a Lighting Plan, which also includes provisions for avoiding off-site light trespass.

44. I know they are completely fenced in. How do you make accommodations for the deer, coydogs, fox that live on the rodents?

The panel areas and other Project facilities will be fenced in as a security and safety measure and will not allow for access to the site by larger mammal species. It is important to note that the entirety of the Project Area will not be within one single fence. The fencing will encompass specific areas of panels and other Project equipment and there will be breaks in the fencing where no Project facilities are located throughout the approximately 1,000-acre Project Area. Larger mammal species would be able to traverse in these areas.

45. I have heard that battery storage will be so good in 20 years that the land will not be needed for solar panels... As stakeholders in the area, how confident can we be that this Project will be decommissioned appropriately?

As part of the 94-c process, Riverside Solar will prepare a Decommissioning and Site Restoration Plan which addresses the following: 1) safety and removal of hazardous conditions; 2) environmental impacts; 3) aesthetics; 4) recycling; 5) potential future uses for the site; 6) funding; and 7) schedule. The regulations also require a gross and net decommissioning and site restoration estimate to be allocated between the Towns based on the estimated costs associated with removal and restoration of the facilities within each Town.

Pursuant to 94-c, the decommissioning estimate will include a 15% contingency and will be reduced by the estimated salvage value of the facility. Financial security will be provided as part of the permit application. The decommissioning security will be updated every five years and adjusted for inflation or other cost increases.

46. Since solar generated electricity is carbon neutral, how do you justify snowmobile trails where snowmobiles are creators of petroleum and noise pollution?

In addition to environmental considerations, the evaluation of the potential impacts of a solar facility such as the Riverside Solar Project, under Section 94-c, requires a review of recreational and other land uses which may be affected by the Project, which would include the designated snow mobile trail. AES Clean Energy will work with the Thousand Islands Snowmobile Club to reroute or modify the trail as necessary to allow for continued use of the trail. This would not represent a significant change in the current snow mobile traffic in the area, and the overall impact is likely to be negligible.

47. Once the project has reached its lifespan and these panels have been removed what will the environmental impacts be on the land? What will be left behind (concrete etc.)?

An Applicant under Section 94-c is required to prepare a Decommissioning and Site Restoration for implementation following the useful life of the Project. This requires removal and appropriate disposal of all Project facilities and restoration of the Project Area. Additionally, the Applicant will prepare and submit a Vegetation Management Plan which will outline restoration of vegetative areas, including “restoration of disturbed areas, ruts, and rills to original grades and conditions with permanent re-vegetation and erosion controls” (§900-10.2(e)(4)(iv)). Areas with specific restoration requirements, such as wetlands and streams, will be restored in accordance with the Wetland and Stream Restoration and Mitigation Plan(s) if impacted. Agricultural areas will be restored according

to the New York State Department of Agricultural and Markets (NYSAGM) Guidelines for Solar Energy Facilities – Construction Mitigation for Agricultural Lands (Revision 10/18/2019).

48. Will topsoil be taken off as part of the grading and site preparation?

Topsoil will be segregated in agricultural areas as required by the NYSAGM Guidelines for Solar Energy Facilities – Construction Mitigation for Agricultural Lands (Revision 10/18/2019).

49. In the event of a battery malfunction at the same time as an ice storm, would the facility need to draw energy from National Grid...parasitic load? Could it cause black outs like in other areas of the country?

Parasitic load is minimal - only 2% of the nameplate capacity of a battery storage system. But, when the grid is constrained, the Balancing Authority, NYISO or the governing Utility (in this case, National Grid) will shut down the battery as needed. This only limits the battery's ability to cool – the battery will degrade (lose some energy storage capacity), but there is no immediate danger of thermal runaway.

It is also important to note that battery storage systems are now used to **prevent** blackout because they are capable of black starting – restoring an electric power station (ex. A solar facility), or part of an electric grid, to operation without reliance on the external transmission network.

50. Is National Grid in competition with AES or in partnership? Please explain.

National Grid is neither a direct competitor nor a partner of AES Clean Energy (AES' US-based renewable energy development business). National Grid is a regulated utility that delivers electricity from generators to its New York customers. AES Clean Energy is a developer, owner, and operator of renewable energy generation projects in New York and across the country.

51. What is your estimated capacity factor for this area...not Arizona?

The estimated capacity factor for the Riverside Solar Project is the same value given in answer to earlier questions on this topic, 20%+. The capacity factor for any solar project is dependent on a number of parameters – not just the solar resources/weather conditions of a particular area, but the types of panels, racking system, system layout and design of the project as well.

52. Since the plan is to fill the acres of fields from Chaumont across the towns of Lyme and Brownville to the Brownville Depauville Road, can the present lines handle it or are some of the prospective property owners going to be left out?

The Project has been sited in this location because preliminary NYISO studies indicate that the existing infrastructure has the capacity to handle the proposed load. The Project will not fill the acres from Chaumont to the Brownville Depauville Road.

53. How are these solar farms going to affect water resources, aquifers etc.? The photovoltaic manufacturing process can employ toxic chemicals such as hydrochloric, sulfuric and nitric acids to name a few. What is the potential for surrounding properties to develop fouled water resources?

The manufacturing process for PV solar panels is separate from their material components, installation and operation, and the potential for any water contamination due to this Project is very low. While the specific panels for this Project have not yet been selected, the primary components

that make up solar panels include solar cells (comprised of silicon crystalline wafers), layers of encapsulant (often comprised of EVA), outer surfaces of glass and/or polymer-backing, and a frame. Solar panels are manufactured to be entirely sealed and impervious to environmental elements, including water. Thus, no negative impact of the PV panels components used for this Project is anticipated.

Regarding panel installation, the racking support for the panels for this Project will be driven into the ground on piles, typically no further than ~15 feet below the ground. Any impacts to groundwater/aquifer resources from installation of this Project (as well as Project operation) is highly unlikely.

To ensure the safety of local water resources, we will be conducting water testing. Additionally, the Operations and Maintenance (O&M) plans executed for this Project, including regular oversight by our O&M team, will ensure that the panels are intact and operating safely. Please see the response to **Question 66** below for specific information on the water testing that will be executed for this Project.

54. Where are the invertors going to be placed, and what kind of inverters, as I understand they can create noise?

AES Clean Energy is actively reviewing inverters for the Project and will select the inverters based on multiple factors and Project-suitability. Inverters will be placed centrally in the Project Area (i.e., among the panels) to the maximum extent practicable to limit potential noise impacts. The Section 94-c regulations, in **Subpart 900-2.8**, indicate the maximum noise limits acceptable for solar facilities, including inverters and collector substation equipment. The Project will be designed in accordance with the ORES standards.

55. How far from wetlands or streams will the panels be?

The majority of the wetlands identified and delineated at the Project Area are likely jurisdictional by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) and therefore do not have setback requirements; however, AES Clean Energy is proposing a 25-foot minimum setback from wetlands to protect wetland areas, as well as a 25-foot minimum setback from delineated streams. If any wetlands onsite are determined to be regulated by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), a 100-foot regulated adjacent area would be designated and AES Clean Energy would be required to get a permit for impacts in that area, if required. AES Clean Energy intends to avoid and minimize impacts to wetlands and their regulated adjacent areas to the maximum extent practicable.

56. What is the specific plan for training emergency personnel for this project or any other? How much would a battery leakage cost to clean up?

AES Clean Energy is committed to ensuring the safety of emergency personnel and will consult with local fire departments and first responders during preparation of the Emergency Response Plan (ERP) and Site Security Plan for the Project, and will consult and provide training where deemed necessary through coordination with the local emergency response organizations. AES Clean Energy always trains local emergency personnel on the provisions of the Project ERP before a battery storage system is commercially operational.

While we cannot provide an estimate of the cost to clean up a battery leakage (as this is an uncommon incident and one we have never had to address), in the unlikely event that such an incident should occur, AES Clean Energy would be responsible for costs associated with cleanup.

57. Are you aware that white tailed deer can jump over a 10-12 ft fence?

The fencing for the Project will be designed for safety and security of the Project facilities and the public. It is noted that white tailed deer have the capacity to jump over fencing; however, the entirety of the approximately 1,000-acre will not be enclosed within one fence line. Areas where Project arrays or other facilities are located will be enclosed and will result in multiple, separately fenced areas. This allows for continued movement of species such as white tailed deer between the fenced-in areas.

58. Who pays for a battery leakage or explosion cleanup?

Battery storage-related incidents are highly unlikely. AES Clean Energy procures batteries with the latest safety standards built-in, including the strictest requirement for UL9540A (Battery Thermal Runaway Prorogation Testing). When batteries pass the UL9540A requirement, explosion and leakage is very rare because there are multiple provisions in place to prevent these occurrences.

If an incident were to occur, AES Clean Energy would be responsible for costs associated with such instances and would execute the cleanup. In addition, as the battery storage system will be permitted as part of the Project in its entirety, the battery storage system would be addressed as part of the overall Emergency Response Plan (ERP) for the Project.

59. As of 1 October 2020, a study conducted by economists at the University of Rhode Island with all the solar built in Rhode Island and Massachusetts found that the price of homes within a mile of a solar installation declined by 1.7%. Homes within a tenth of a mile went down by 7%. This study was conducted over a period of a decade and a half. Not to be confrontational, but this was the first study that came up on a Google search, how do you not have this data?

There are multiple studies regarding property values of properties near commercial solar projects. Each study analyzes property value impact with different research methodologies and in different regions of the country.

The study referenced in this question is discussed in this article, published in the Providence Journal. The results in the actual study, indicate that "the negative externalities [from nearby commercial-scale solar arrays] are primarily driven by solar developments on farm and forest lands in **non-rural areas**."

The study cautions against generalizing the benefit-cost findings to other regions in the US, and says, "Careful siting of installations in states that have large tracts of open land available and around sparsely populated regions may allow for more favorable cost-benefit ratios," - such as in the Riverside Solar Project Area.

In this 2018 study published by research at the University of Texas, Austin, the authors state, "Results from our survey of residential home assessors show that the majority of respondents believe that proximity to a solar installation has either no impact or a positive impact on home

values…Regression analyses suggest that closer proximity to an installation is associated with more negative estimates of property value impacts, as is larger installation size."

To date, there have been no studies about impact of commercial solar projects on nearby properties in NY or rural NY.

60. What happens when the panels are covered with snow, and what is the % of efficiency of the particular panels you are using?

The Project is currently planned to use a tracking racking system which allows for maximum solar exposure. The solar exposure will allow for melting of snow on the panels. The panels and racking system we select for the Project will be built to withstand the winter storms and snow typical of this area.

We have not yet selected the specific panels we will be using for this Project, however most solar PV panels on the market today have efficiency ratings between 15%-22%,. While total production of this Project will be lower in the winter months, the capacity factor and projected production for this Project take into account this seasonal variation, and when selecting the panels for this Project, we look at the performance of the panels throughout all seasonal conditions.

61. How will you handle the impacts to threatened and endangered grassland bird species?

A Wildlife Site Characterization Report (WSCR) has been prepared for the Project and submitted to ORES and the NYSDEC for review. The Riverside Solar Project WSCR includes a detailed desktop review and analysis of the sources required under Section 94-c, as well as a summary and details of the grassland breeding bird and winter raptor survey results. Per the Section 94-c regulations, following submittal of the WSCR to ORES and the NYSDEC, a meeting will be set up between the agencies and the Applicant to discuss any potential for occupied habitat in the Project Area and potential impacts to listed species. Information resulting from this coordination will be presented in the Application and addressed in accordance with the applicable state and/or federal regulations.

62. Will any herbicides be applied to retard or discourage any shrubs or trees growing between panels? Or will you introduce sheep to keep the weeds down?

If required, spot application of NYSDEC-approved herbicides may be implemented at the Project Area; however, the primary method of vegetation management, including growth of saplings, will be periodic mowing.

AES Clean Energy has used grazing sheep as a component of vegetation management in other Projects within our solar portfolio, though not yet in New York. AES Clean Energy is open to evaluating the potential to include grazing sheep as a vegetation management option for this Project; however, this would still occur in conjunction with periodic mowing and spot treatment of herbicides as needed.

63. Have you ever toured a working Lithium Ion battery manufacturer? Are you aware how toxic those conditions are? How can we ask another living soul to produce one? How is this considered clean energy?

Our energy storage team is very familiar with the manufacturing environment for battery cells and has never encountered one that could be identified as toxic.

Fluence, a leading energy storage technology company, is a subsidiary and partner of AES. You can read more about Fluence's commitment to safety here.

64. Didn't AES just sell a solar division to Brazil earlier this week. There is nothing stopping this project from being sold to a corporation in another country.

It is true that on February 25th, a local unit of AES Brasil (AES Inova), finalized a deal with the Brazilian power company EDP Energias do Brasil SA, selling a portion of solar energy assets. AES Clean Energy, the operating entity for this Project, is AES' US-based renewable energy development business.

We are committed to remaining the owner and operator of this Project for its entire life, not only because this is what we have committed to from the start of development, but because AES Clean Energy is motivated to grow its renewable energy portfolio in New York, and has a commitment sustainable energy growth. Additionally, the ambitious clean energy goals in New York State have made sustained operation of clean energy projects a growing and profitable endeavor.

65. Why aren't we planting trees to offset carbon instead of building a solar facility with a low capacity?

The purpose and intent of this Project is to generate clean, renewable electricity. As a company in the business of developing renewable energy projects, this is how we contribute to the offsetting of carbon – by generating clean energy, thus helping to green the electric grid and reduce NY's reliance on polluting electricity resources such as coal and gas plants. Additionally, the capacity factor for this Project is comparable to utility-scale solar projects across the region, 20%+. This is standard efficiency for solar projects in this region of the country, and solar PV technology is continuing to make strides in efficiency. The project will produce a substantial amount of clean, renewable energy, helping to reduce the state's reliance on fossil fuels and reduce emissions, and diversifying the state's electric grid, making it more stable and resilient.

While we are also supportive of planting trees, and will be planting a number of trees around the Project Area as part of our plan for vegetative screening and visual mitigation, it is important to note that trees do not sequester carbon indefinitely – efforts to plant trees as a method of carbon sequestration must recognize the need for continued management, because when trees die, all carbon formerly sequestered by them is released back into the atmosphere.

There is no one way to best offset carbon, and renewable energy generation as well as the planting of trees are both important options.

66. I asked about the water and ground sampling and it sounded like it was only going to happen in the beginning and not on a periodic schedule throughout the life of the project. If so, pollution could be getting into wetlands and animals. We would not know until plants and animals start dying. I hope I heard that wrong?

In accordance with the Section 94-c regulations, AES Clean Energy will perform pre- and post-construction testing of existing water wells to ensure that water quality is not being affected by the Project. Testing will be performed on wells within the following distances of Project components:

(a) Collection lines or access roads within one hundred (100) feet of an existing, active water supply well on a non-participating property;

(b) Blasting within one thousand (1,000) feet of an existing, active water supply well on a non-participating property;

(c) Pier or post installations within two hundred (200) feet of an existing, active water supply well on a non-participating property; and (d) HDD operations within five hundred (500) feet of an existing, active water supply well on a non-participating property.

If the water well testing indicate that specified water standards are not being met, AES Clean Energy will construct a new water well.

As solar projects are not likely to impact water supply, continued water testing is not required. Additionally, the Project will implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) and develop permanent stormwater features, as necessary, at the Project Area to meet state requirements for water quality.

67. I realize the need for the panels to be fenced off, but why can't corridors be made to accommodate the wildlife? Even if it is raised up from the ground for the fox and coy-dogs to keep the rodent population down. And corridors for the deer.

Our current Project site design does include corridors that will accommodate the passage of wildlife, including deer. While the panels must be fenced for safety and security, and to comply with the National Electric Code, the Project will consist of several distinct fenced areas, rather than a single fenced area containing the entire Project. This can be seen in the preliminary Project layout included in the Virtual Community Meeting slide deck, on slides 13 and 14. We are also considering using a fencing option that is either raised off the ground, or that has periodic raised portions throughout, to enable the passage of smaller wildlife such as foxes and coydogs.

68. Will we be contacted for location proximity? Are adjacent land holders being compensated?

Landowners within a 1-mile radius of the Project Area have been informed of the current Project layout and associated boundaries. Certain adjacent landholders may be approached to execute agreements and may be compensated should such agreements be necessary.

69. I understand you are going to mow to keep control of grass cover. Will you consider joining the DEC's ground nesting bird program, which delays mowing until after ground nesting birds have hatched and fledged?

AES Clean Energy has performed breeding grassland bird surveys in accordance with the NYSDEC protocol and developed a site-specific study plan for the surveys at this Project through coordination with the NYSDEC. AES Clean Energy is currently coordinating with ORES and the NYSDEC regarding the results of the surveys and potential habitat for breeding grassland birds and will discuss the need for mitigation measures as part of this coordination. Following this consultation, and when any site-specific requirements specified by ORES or the NYSDEC are decided, AES Clean Energy will implement accordingly to avoid and minimize impacts to grassland bird species.

70. Is the project going to get a PILOT?

We plan to pursue a PILOT agreement for this Project and will be working with the Towns of Lyme and Brownville, Lyme Central School District and Jefferson County to negotiate this agreement or another taxation arrangement for this Project.

71. How does the $500,000 over 10 years credit to town resident's electric bills happen, what does a resident have to do to get it?

The bill credit will be provided annually on a residential utility customer's first electric bill of the calendar year. Renewable energy facility developers, including AES Clean Energy, will fund the Bill Credit Program (the Program) and the local electric utility (National Grid) will distribute the fees paid among the residential utility customers within the Host Community (Towns of Lyme and Brownville).

Both NYSERDA and the electric utility services the Host Community will play a role in administering the Program. The exact requirements for implementation of the credit are still being determined.

The Bill Credit Program (the Program) was adopted by the NY's Department of Public Service in accordance with section 8 of the Accelerated Renewable Energy Growth and Community Benefit Act. The order adopting the Host Community Benefit Program was filed by the PSC on February 11, 2021, and can be found here.

72. Can you give a description of the fence? What will be the total height? Will it be 6' or more above the ground?

Our engineering team is still finalizing plans for the fencing that will surround the Project components. At this time, we plan to use 7-foot-tall, chain-link fencing. It is planned that this fencing will either be slightly raised above the ground, or include raised portions throughout, to allow for the passage of small wildlife.

The fencing for this project will comply with the 94-c regulations, which state in **Subpart 900-6.4**, "All mechanical equipment, including any structure for storage of batteries, shall be enclosed by fencing of a minimum height of seven (7) feet with a self-locking gate to prevent unauthorized access."