

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC INFORMATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT SCOPING MEETINGS**

**Issued: December 26, 2024**

**In the Matter of the Application of Benton Solar, LLC for a Site Permit for the 100 MW Solar Energy Generating System for the Benton Solar Project in Benton County, Minnesota**

**In the Matter of the Application of Benton Solar, LLC for a Site Permit for the 100 MW Battery Energy Storage System for the Benton Solar Project in Benton County, Minnesota**

**In the Matter of the Application of Benton Solar, LLC for a Route Permit for a 115 kV High-Voltage Transmission Line Associated with the Benton Solar Project in Benton County, Minnesota**

**Docket Number:** IP7115/GS-23-423 (Solar Facility)  
IP7115/ESS-24-283 (Storage Facility)  
IP7115/TL-23-425 (Transmission Line)

**PLEASE TAKE NOTICE** that the Minnesota Public Utilities Commission (Commission) and Minnesota Department of Commerce will hold public information and environmental assessment (EA) scoping meetings on the joint application of Benton Solar LLC for site and route permits for the proposed Benton Solar Project, including an up to 100 megawatt alternating current (MWac) solar energy generating system and a 100 MWac battery energy storage system (BESS), and a route permit for a new approximately 0.5-mile 115-kilovolt (kV) transmission line.

The proposed project is located on approximately 632 acres of private land on a 951.4-acre project site located 4.0 miles east of St. Cloud in Minden Township, Benton County, Minnesota. The main components of the project include, but are not limited to, solar modules and tracking systems, electrical collector lines, inverters, transformers, battery energy storage systems, a project substation, security fencing, access roads, stormwater basins, an operation and maintenance building, and weather stations.

Benton Solar has identified the existing Great River Energy (GRE) Benton County Substation as the point of interconnection (POI) for the Project and has proposed to build a 0.5 mile long 115-kV transmission line to deliver the energy from the Project to the electrical grid. A Project Overview Map is included below.

The Applicant indicated it has secured a Generator Interconnection Agreement as of December 7, 2022, to connect the Project to the grid at GRE's Benton County Substation and is working toward securing an agreement related to the sale of power generated by the Project. Construction is anticipated to begin in Q2 of 2026 and commercial operation in Q4 of 2027.

**In-Person Meeting**

**Date:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025  
**Time:** 5 PM (doors open pre-meeting hour),  
6 PM to 9 PM or until there are no more questions or comments (public meeting)  
**Location:** Sauk Rapids Government Center  
250 Summit Ave N  
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379

**Online Meeting via WebEx**

**Date:** Wednesday, January 15, 2025  
**Time:** 6 PM to 9 PM or until there are no more questions or comments

**Join by WebEx (Webinar) Link:** <https://minnesota.webex.com>  
**Webinar Number:** 2482 742 6550  
**Webinar Password:** MNPUC  
**Join by Phone:** 1-855-282-6330 Toll Free  
**Access Code:** 2482 742 6550

If you are joining the meeting via WebEx and would like to ask a question or make a comment during the designated portion of the meeting, use the chat or raised-hand functions to send a message to the meeting moderator. If you are joining the meeting by phone, press \*3 on your phone. When it is your turn to speak, your line will be unmuted, and you will be able to ask questions and provide comments.

Additional information and instructions are available at: <https://mn.gov/puc/activities/meetings/webex/>

The purpose of the meeting is to: (1) provide information about the proposed project and the state's permitting process; and (2) provide an opportunity to participate in developing the scope of the environmental assessment.

Doors will open one hour prior to the in-person meeting to provide attendees an opportunity to review the application, maps, and other materials for the proposed project and ask questions of state staff and the applicant. **During this time, comments made by attendees will become a part of the record for Commission consideration only if the attendee submits the comment in writing.** Forms will be available for this purpose.

State staff and the applicant will both make presentations during the meeting. State staff will explain the permitting and environmental review processes, and the applicant will provide an overview of the proposed project. Following the presentations, attendees will have the opportunity to offer oral and written comments for the record. The meetings will end when all attendees have had the opportunity to comment and all other business has been concluded, or the scheduled end time of the meeting, whichever occurs first. The information presented will be the same at all in-person and online meetings.

If any reasonable accommodation is needed to enable you to fully participate in these meetings, please contact the Commission at 651-296-0406 or 1-800-657-3782 at least one week in advance of the meeting. To find out if a meeting is canceled due to bad weather or other call 1-855-731-6208 or visit [mn.gov/puc](https://mn.gov/puc).

**Comment Period**

Written comments will be accepted through **Friday, January 31, 2025, by 4:30 p.m.** Please include the docket number in all communications. Comments received after the close of the comment period may or may not be considered by the Commission.

**Topics for Comment**

- What potential human and environmental impacts of the proposed project should be considered in the EA?
- Are there any methods to minimize, mitigate, or avoid potential impacts of the proposed project that should be considered in the EA?
- Are there any unique characteristics of the proposed project that should be considered in the EA?

**Submit Comments**

**Online:** <https://mn.gov/commerce/energyfacilities/#comment>

**Email:** [logan.m.hicks@state.mn.us](mailto:logan.m.hicks@state.mn.us)  
**U.S. Mail:** Logan Hicks  
Minnesota Department of Commerce  
85 7th Place East, Suite 280  
St. Paul, MN 55101

Comments will be made available to the public via the Commission's website, except in limited circumstances consistent with the Minnesota Government Data Practices Act. The Commission and the Department of Commerce do not edit or delete personal identifying information from submissions.

**Additional Information**

**Minnesota Statutes and Rules.** This project is being reviewed under 216E.04 and 7850.2800- 3900. The rules and statutes are available for review at: [www.revisor.mn.gov](http://www.revisor.mn.gov)

**Review Process.** Information on the review processes for certificates of need and site and route permits for large electric power facilities is available on the Commission's website at: <https://mn.gov/puc/activities/energy-facilities/>

**Filing Requirements.** Utilities, telecommunications carriers, official parties, and state agencies are required to file documents using the Commission's electronic filing system (eFiling). All parties, participants, and interested persons are also encouraged to use eFiling: [mn.gov/puc/edockets](https://mn.gov/puc/edockets), select Go to eDockets and follow the prompts.

**Full Case Record.** See all documents filed in this matter via the Commission's website at [mn.gov/puc/edockets](https://mn.gov/puc/edockets), select Go to eDockets, enter the year and the docket number (23-423 for the Solar Facility, 24-238 for the Storage Facility, and 23-425 for the Transmission Line), and select Search.

**Subscribe to the Docket.** To receive email notification when new documents are filed in this matter visit: <https://www.edockets.state.mn.us/EFiling>, select Subscribe to Dockets.

**Project Mailing List.** Sign up to receive notices about project milestones and opportunities to participate or change your mailing preference. Email [eservice.admin@state.mn.us](mailto:eservice.admin@state.mn.us) or call 651-201-2246 with the docket number (23-423, 23-425, 24-283), your name, mailing address, and email address.

**Department of Commerce Website:** <https://apps.commerce.state.mn.us/web/project/15684>

**Contacts**

**Public Utilities Commission**

Cezar Panait, Energy Facilities Planner,  
[cezarc.panait@state.mn.us](mailto:cezarc.panait@state.mn.us) or 651-201-2207  
Jacques Harvieux, Public Advisor,  
[jacques.harvieux@state.mn.us](mailto:jacques.harvieux@state.mn.us) or 651-201-2233

**Department of Commerce**

Logan Hicks, Environmental Review Manager,  
[logan.m.hicks@state.mn.us](mailto:logan.m.hicks@state.mn.us) or 651-539-2712

**Benton Solar, LLC**

Adam Gracia, Solar Project Manager, Development,  
[Adam.Gracia@nexteraenergy.com](mailto:Adam.Gracia@nexteraenergy.com) or 561-694-3330

To request this document in another format such as large print or audio, call 651-296-0406 (voice). Persons with a hearing or speech impairment may call using their preferred Telecommunications Relay Service or email [consumer.puc@state.mn.us](mailto:consumer.puc@state.mn.us) for assistance.

FR-11B

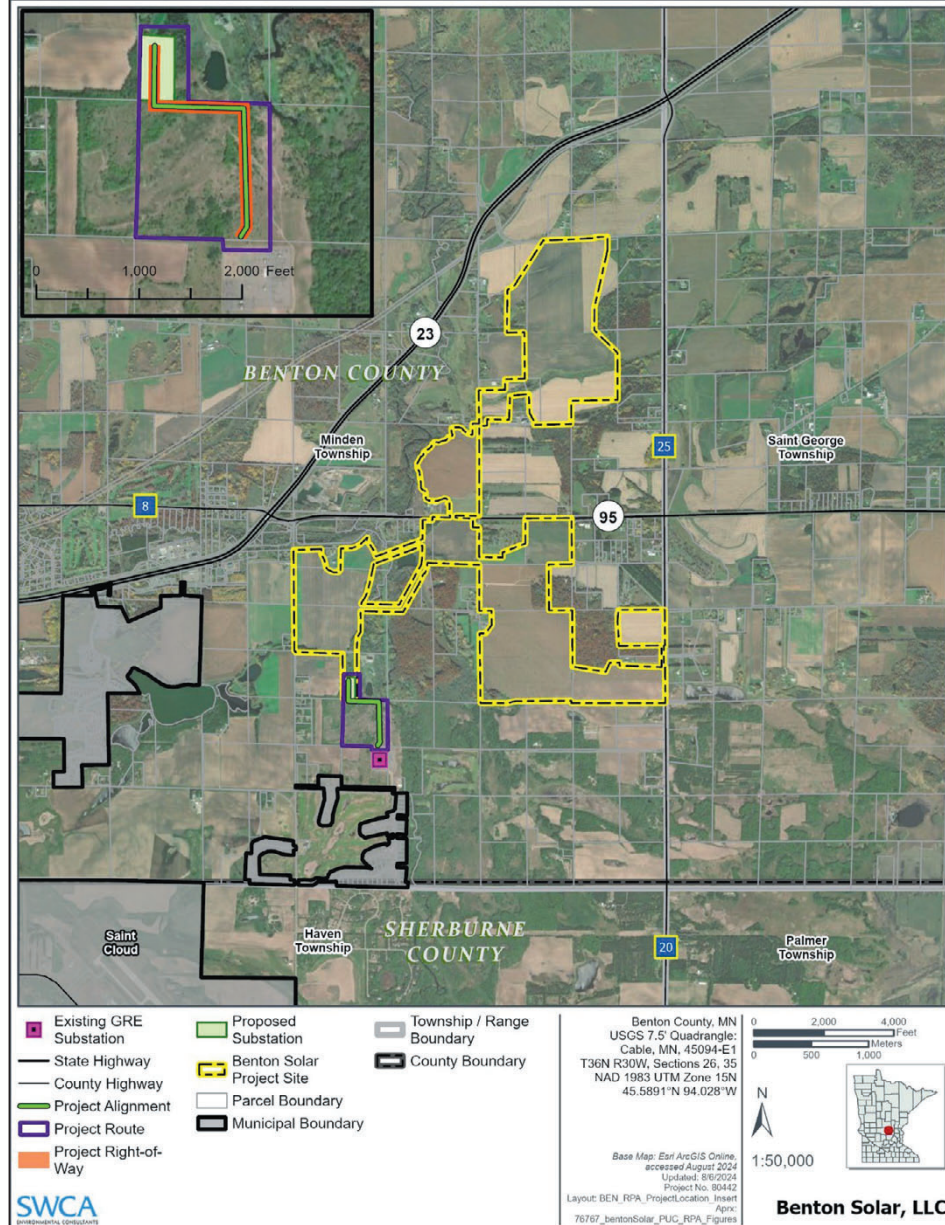


Figure 1. Project location.

**PUBLIC NOTICES**

**PROBATE NOTICE**  
STATE OF MINNESOTA  
COUNTY OF STEARNS  
IN DISTRICT COURT  
SEVENTH JUDICIAL  
DISTRICT  
PROBATE DIVISION  
Court File No:  
73-PR-24-10030

ORDER AND NOTICE OF  
HEARING ON PETITION  
FOR FORMAL  
PROBATE OF WILL AND  
APPOINTMENT OF  
PERSONAL  
REPRESENTATIVE IN  
UNSUPERVISED  
ADMINISTRATION AND  
NOTICE TO CREDITORS

In Re: Estate of:  
Geraldyn Mary Albers,  
Deceased.

TO ALL INTERESTED  
PERSONS AND CREDI-  
TORS:

It is Ordered and Notice is hereby given that on the 24th day of January 2025, at 8:45 a.m., a hearing will be held in the above-named Court at 725 Courthouse Square, St. Cloud, Minnesota, for the probate of an instrument purporting to be the will of the above-named deceased, dated April 28, 2017, and for the appointment of Jon Paul D'Allesandro whose address is 1274 11th Avenue North, St.

Cloud, Minnesota 56303, as personal representative of the estate of the above-named decedent in unsupervised administration, and that any objections thereto must be filed with the Court. That, if proper, and no objections are filed, a personal representative will be appointed to administer the estate, to collect all asseets, pay all legal debts, claims, taxes and expenses, and sell real and personal property, and do all necessary acts for the estate. This is an administrative hearing, and your appearance is not required.

Notice is further given that ALL CREDITORS having claims against said estate are required to present the same to said personal representative or to the Court Administrator within four months after the date of this notice or said claims will be barred.

Dated: December 17, 2024

/s/ James E Dehn

Judge of District Court

By George Lock

Court Administrator

Joseph S. Mayers  
KELM & RUETER, P.A.  
Attorney No. 0295747  
1287 2nd Street North,  
Suite 101  
Sauk Rapids, MN 56379  
(320) 251-1423  
kelmreuter@kelmreuter.com

R-52-2B

**PUBLIC NOTICE****BENTON COUNTY SUMMARY BUDGET STATEMENT**

The following is a summary of the operating budget for the 2025 fiscal year for Benton County. This summary is published in accordance with Minnesota Statute §375.169. The detail of the County budget is on file in the County Administrator's Office at the Benton County Government Center, 531 Dewey Street, Foley, Minnesota, and may be reviewed during normal business hours. Summary and detailed budget information can also be viewed on the Benton County website ([www.co.benton.mn.us](http://www.co.benton.mn.us)); see "Budget" under the "Government" link on the homepage.)

<u>Budgeted Governmental Funds</u>	<u>2024 Budget</u>	<u>2025 Budget</u>
<b>Revenues:</b>		
Current Property Tax Levy	\$23,748,478	\$24,931,859
Local Option Sales Tax for Transportation	3,500,000	3,500,000
County Program Aid	3,472,217	3,330,744
All Other Taxes	1,303,000	1,243,000
Licenses and Permits	407,180	448,560
Intergovernmental - Federal & State	18,499,113	23,511,580
Fees for Services	1,933,444	2,129,189
Fines and Forfeits	6,000	6,000
Interest on Investments	700,000	800,000
Miscellaneous	611,970	733,764
<b>Other Sources:</b>		
Proceeds from Bond Sales	0	0
Transfers from Other Funds/Other Financing Sources	454,917	9,252,062
<b>Total Revenues and Other Sources</b>	<b><u>\$54,636,319</u></b>	<b><u>\$69,886,758</u></b>
<b>Expenditures:</b>		
General Government	\$8,787,388	\$9,452,332
Public Safety	10,882,537	11,632,013
Highway and Streets	11,824,566	21,819,437
Human Services	15,003,465	15,726,409
Health	1,870,280	1,983,194
Culture and Recreation	79,364	88,929
Conservation of Natural Resources	248,341	274,130
Economic Development	125,000	125,000
Debt Service	804,783	304,375
Capital Projects	1,821,672	758,462
Library	540,045	528,480
Historical Society	13,070	14,070
Soil and Water Conservation District	250,000	255,000
<b>Other Uses:</b>		
Transfers to Other Funds/Other Financing Uses	2,385,808	6,924,927
<b>Total Expenditures</b>	<b><u>\$54,636,319</u></b>	<b><u>\$69,886,758</u></b>