

The following is a synthesis of the questions that Racehorse Solar has received from the neighboring community, as of 9/18/2021, along with our response:

Q: I live across Quarters Road and am used to looking at an agricultural field. Will I be staring at a sea of solar panels?

A: No, the project will be surrounded by a robust vegetative buffer. The Caroline County requires that solar projects, like Racehorse, maintain a 150-foot setback with a 75-foot vegetated buffer area along all rights-of-way. This buffer requirement is robust when compared to the requirements of other Virginia counties but, in response to concerns over neighbor visibility, we have agreed to increase this to a 100-foot buffer along the right-of-way. This buffer will be made up of natural vegetation that grows during the project life cycle, in addition to two rows of evergreen trees (4 foot at planting) to be planted at the beginning of construction. Caroline County also requires that, prior to construction, Racehorse Solar will submit a buffer plan for approval, including plans to maintain the buffer the life of the project. We will also be required to submit a financial surety to enable the County to make corrections, at the project's expense, if the buffer does not result in the visual screen presented in the plan. Additionally, topography will play a role in cutting down on visibility. Most houses across Quarter Road are significantly lower in elevation than the field where Racehorse will be sited. This elevates the buffer from the perspective of the homes and helps in its effectiveness.

Q: Is solar a good neighbor?

A: Absolutely. Solar is a quiet, low profile, passive use with no emissions. It does not generate traffic outside of the construction period and it does not burden county-funded services like schools or water / sewer. If viewsheds are properly protected, as they will be with Racehorse, neighbors and passersby will not be aware that the project is even there. The same cannot be said about many other types of development common to the region, which could occupy the land without the need for a formal permit process.

Q: Will the site require destruction of forest?

A: As with virtually any type of real estate development, it is sometimes necessary to remove trees. Removal of trees and stumps adds to project cost, and Racehorse Solar is looking to minimize its use of forested land. Additionally, most of the forested land on this parcel is protected wetlands and must remain untouched. While the project does anticipate using some forested land to ensure we have the land we need to meet our necessary output, less than half our current development envelope uses currently forested land.

Q: Will the site disrupt animal habitat?

A: Any change in land use may change the species that are able to use that land. Prior to construction Racehorse Solar is required to go through the VA Department of Environmental Quality's (DEQ) Permit-By-Rule process, which includes a survey of potential threatened or endangered species habitat. If the project is at risk of disturbing any such habitat, the DEQ will require mitigation measures be put in place or it will not grant the project its necessary permit.

Q: Who has spoken for the electricity that this site will generate?

A: Unlike many solar projects in the region, this electricity is being marketed exclusively to Old Dominion Electric Cooperative (ODEC), who purchases power on behalf of Rappahannock Electric Cooperative (REC), your local utility. We are in late-stage negotiations on a Power Purchase agreement. We are proud to be able to say that, if this project is built, the power will be used locally to the benefit of local ratepayers like you.

Q: Who cleans up at the end of the project's life?

A: The project is responsible for removing solar equipment and restoring the land to a state suitable for its current use at the end of its project life. Before the project can be built, Caroline County requires that the project submits a decommissioning plan for approval, including a third-party estimate of the cost of decommissioning. If approved, the project must provide a financial surety matching the amount required for carrying out the decommissioning plan, so that the county can engage another party to conduct decommissioning operations in the unlikely event that the project is unable to do so. For the life of the project, the project must update the cost estimate, along with the surety, every five years.

Q: Will this project cause erosion of groundcover?

A: Potential for erosion is factored heavily into the project's planning and permitting process. Prior to construction, Racehorse must complete the Erosion and Sediment Control Permitting Process with Caroline County. This ensures control devices, designed in accordance with the Virginia E&S Control Handbook, be implemented to capture and treat any potential run-off during the construction phase. This also includes a bonding requirement, to ensure compliance. Also prior to construction, Racehorse must work with the Department of Environmental Quality to establish a Stormwater Management Plan, in accordance with VSMP and the Virginia Runoff Reduction Method to capture and treat runoff during operations. The stormwater management plan includes an ongoing maintenance plan in coordination with DEQ.

Q: Will the site be covered with gravel or concrete?

A: No. A seed mix of native grasses will be planted under and around the panels. This seed mix will be selected based on its ability to grow in the region and establish a robust root system that will mitigate the potential for runoff issues. Gravel will be implemented to create access roads to critical infrastructure and may represent 1-2 percent of the Project's footprint.

Q: Will this site be lit up at night?

A: It will not. Security style lighting will be installed at critical points throughout the site. These lights will be dark sky compliant (shielded and directed downward) and only be illuminated in the unlikely event that an issue arises at night that needs immediate attention during nighttime hours. During regular operations, the site will be dark at night.

Q: Are your claims about local hiring and spending realistic?

A: In our application, we present this benefit as an *opportunity* and will elaborate that they will only be realized if local skills and supplies match the needs the project. We hope that this is the case with many of Racehorse's needs; in addition to being able to provide further benefit to the community, the project stands to save money by avoiding shipping materials and labor in from other areas. We feel that Caroline County does have a pool of vendors specializing in many of the core needs of Racehorse, such as landscaping, earthworks, fencing etc. who will have opportunity to bid on this work when the project reaches that stage. Additionally, SolUnesco has been a leader in developing a Virginia-based workforce to capitalize on the growing local solar industry, including as a founding member of the Solar Hands-On Instructional Network of Excellence (SHINE) program.

We also ask you to consider that it is only one of one of many benefits that Racehorse will bring your community, including tax revenue for the county and the opportunity for REC ratepayers to realize the financial and environmental value of solar energy.