

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Development

Big Rivers Electric Corporation: Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment

**AGENCY:** Rural Utilities Service, USDA

**ACTION:** Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment for public review

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) has issued an Environmental Assessment (EA) to meet its responsibilities under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and RUS's Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970) in relation to possible financial assistance for a proposed project by Big Rivers Electric Corporation (Big Rivers). The proposal is for construction of a Transmission Operations Center (TOC) Facility in the town of Owensboro, Daviess County, Kentucky. Big Rivers has submitted an application to the RUS for funding the proposal. The proposed project will impact 46 acres of a 113-acre parcel of property owned by Big Rivers.

Construction of the proposed facility would enable Big Rivers to combine its existing Energy Transmission & Substation Facility; energy control, planning and compliance operations; engineering; and other support operations at one central location. The facility would include an office building, warehouse, fuel storage, enclosed and covered vehicle storage space, outdoor equipment storage, and a loading dock.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION or to obtain copies of the EA, CONTACT:

[RUSPublicComments@usda.gov](mailto:RUSPublicComments@usda.gov)

**SUPPLEMENTAL INFORMATION:** The Proposed Action includes construction of a 29,691 square foot office building to house the Energy Control, Planning & Compliance operations, Engineering, and other support operations, including Control Center operations with the ability for full remote control of the entire Big Rivers' transmission system and generating unit dispatch. In addition to the office building, the Proposed Action would include a 22,703-ft<sup>2</sup> warehouse, 33,529 ft<sup>2</sup> of enclosed and covered vehicle storage, a 12,396-ft<sup>2</sup> vehicle maintenance building, as well as onsite fuel storage and a vehicle fueling island. Project-related activities connected to the Proposed Action in time and proximity include the extension of Industrial Drive and construction of a new nominal 157-foot above ground level communications tower.

Sargent & Lundy, retained by the applicant (Big Rivers), has prepared an EA for RUS that describes the project, assesses the proposed project's environmental impacts, and summarizes as applicable any mitigation measures used to minimize environmental effects. RUS has conducted an independent evaluation of the environmental assessment and believes that it accurately assesses the impacts of the proposed project. No significant impacts are expected as a result of the construction of the project.

Written questions and comments should be emailed to RUS at: [RUSPublicComments@usda.gov](mailto:RUSPublicComments@usda.gov) or to submit comments by mail, please send them to Jill Lagace, Sargent and Lundy, 55 E. Monroe, Chicago, IL 60603.

RUS will accept questions and comments on the environmental assessment for 14 days from the first date

of publication of this notice. All comments must be provided electronically with no hard copy comments being accepted at this time.

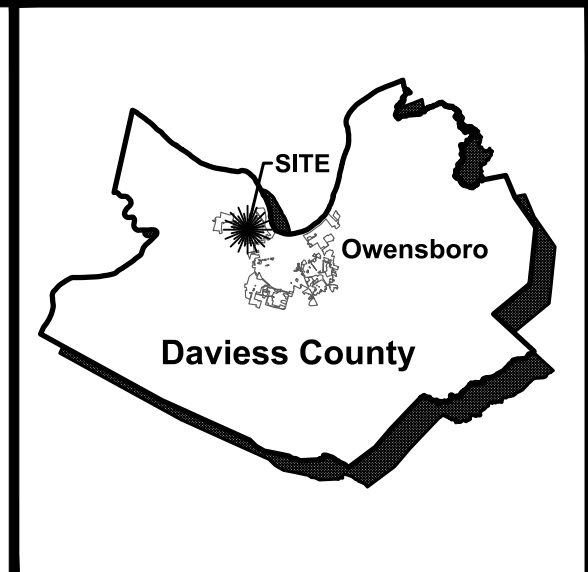
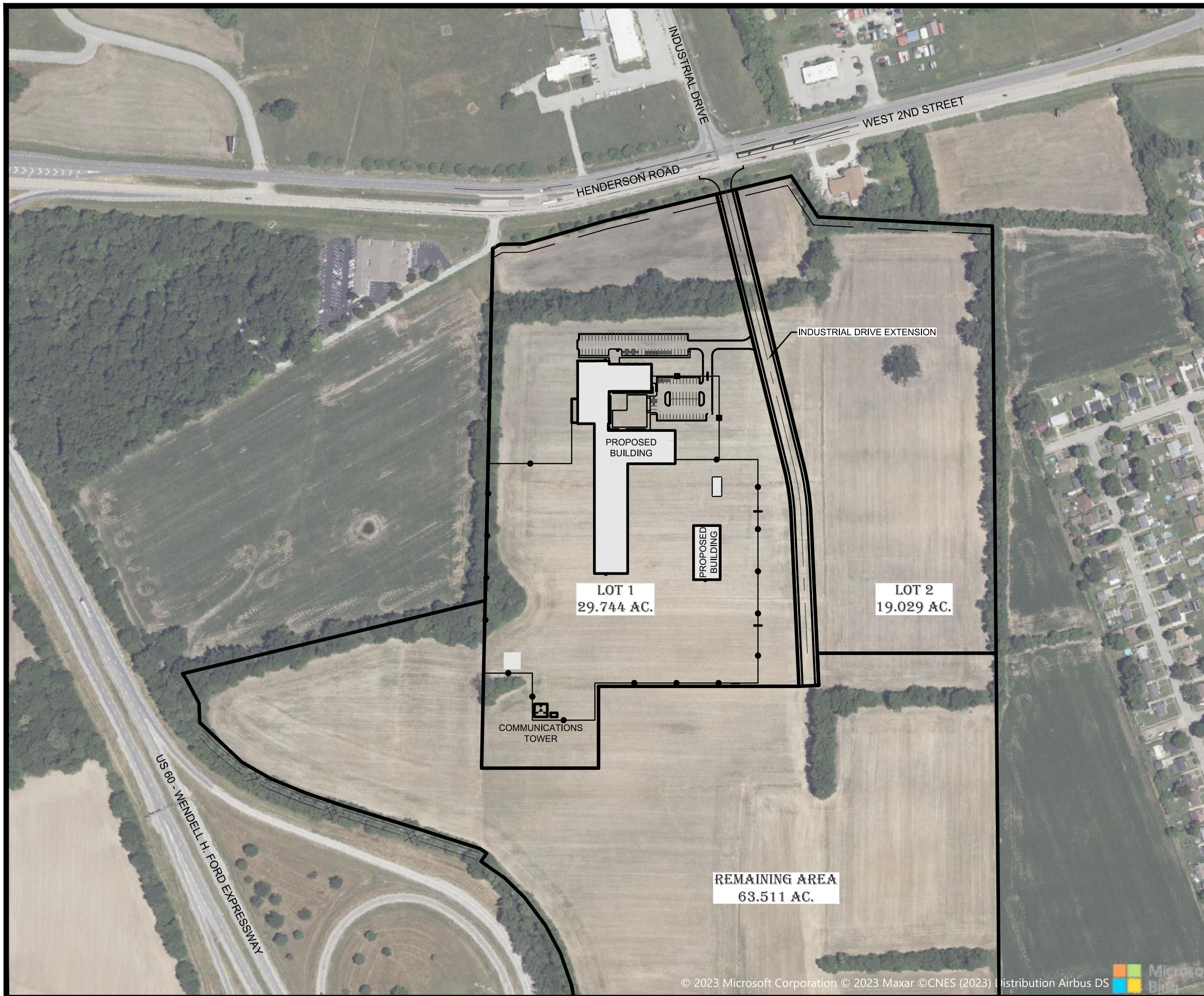
Copies of the Environmental Assessment and supporting documentation will be available for public review at:

<https://www.rd.usda.gov/resources/environmental-studies/assessments>

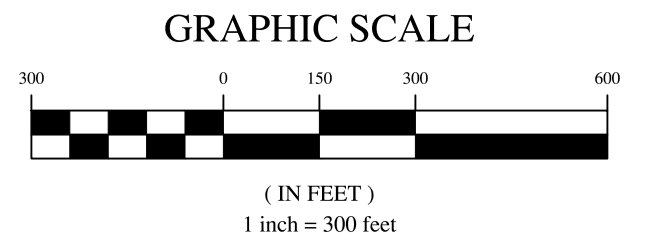
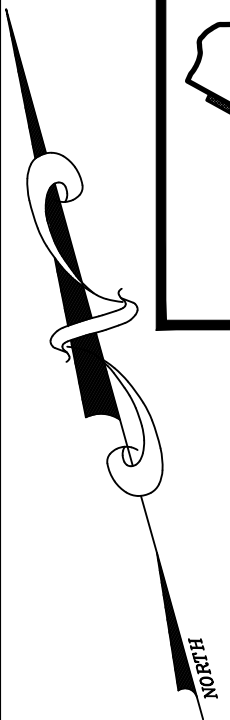
Any final action by RUS related to the proposed project will be subject to, and contingent upon, compliance with all relevant Federal environmental laws and regulations and completion of environmental review procedures as prescribed by 7 CFR Part 1970, Environmental Policies and Procedures.

A general location map of the project is shown below.

Dated: 08/XX/2023



**VICINITY MAP**



**REVISED  
 GENERAL ARRANGEMENT  
 - BUILDINGS -**  
 BIG RIVERS ELECTRIC CORP.  
 NEW TRANSMISSION OPERATIONS CENTER PROJECT