

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

Rural Development

AGENCY: Rural Utilities Service, USDA

ACTION: Notice of Availability of an Environmental Assessment - SE Municipal Solar, LLC (Sidney Solar Project)

SUMMARY: Notice is hereby given that the Rural Utilities Service (RUS), as required by the National Environmental Policy Act, is issuing an environmental assessment (EA) in connection with possible impacts related to a project proposed by SE Municipal Solar, LLC (SE Municipal Solar). The proposal is for construction of a solar facility and for the connection to the City of Sidney's electric grid. SE Municipal Solar has submitted an application to the RUS for funding of the proposal.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The Municipal Energy Agency of Nebraska (MEAN) issued a request for proposals soliciting distributed solar electric generation for the City of Sidney (Sidney), Nebraska. SE Municipal Solar, LLC (SE Municipal Solar) prepared the winning bid to develop a solar facility and connect to Sidney's electric grid. The proposed solar generation facility will be placed on land owned by Sidney, connecting to its municipal electric distribution system. The proposed project area is approximately one-half mile northeast of Sidney and consists of a 22-acre tract of farmland located in Section 29, Township 14 North, Range 49 West, Cheyenne County, Nebraska, near the intersection of Road 113 and Elm Street. No transmission lines are being proposed in association with this project. Power will not be exported to other communities and is for the benefit of the City of Sidney.

Terracon, retained by the applicant (SE Municipal Solar) 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

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/sidney-solar-project>

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: January 31, 2024

