

## **DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE**

### **Rural Development**

#### **SE Municipal Solar, LLC: Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact**

**AGENCY:** Rural Utilities Service, USDA

**ACTION:** Notice of Finding of No Significant Impact.

**SUMMARY:** The Rural Utilities Service (RUS) has made a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI) with respect to a request for possible financing assistance to SE Municipal Solar, LLC for the construction of the Gering Solar project in Scotts Bluff County, Nebraska.

**FURTHER INFORMATION:** To obtain copies of the Environmental Assessment (EA) and FONSI, or for further information, contact: Environmental and Historic Preservation Division, USDA Rural Development, Rural Utilities Service, 1400 Independence Ave. SW, Washington, DC 20250-1570. The EA and FONSI are also available for public review at <https://www.rd.usda.gov/resources/environmental-studies/assessment/Gering-solar-project>. Questions and comments should be emailed to RUS at [RUSPublicComments@usda.gov](mailto:RUSPublicComments@usda.gov).

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The proposed project consists of building the Gering Solar project on a 22.6-acre tract of land. It will be approximately 500 feet west of the intersection of U Street (County Road N) and Lockwood Road (County Road 23) near the City of Gering. The project will construct a solar energy generation facility which will connect to the City of Gering's electrical distribution system. Alternatives considered by RUS and SE Municipal Solar, LLC include: No action; alternative electricity generation. The alternatives are discussed in the Gering Solar EA. The RUS has reviewed and approved the EA for the proposed project.

The availability of the EA for public review was announced via notice in the following newspaper: Gering Courier on June 27 & July 4, 2024. A comment period was announced in the newspaper notice. The EA was also available for public review at the USDA Rural Development website, as well the SE Municipal Solar, LLC office. No comments were received during the public comment period.

Based on its EA and mitigation commitments made by SE Municipal Solar, LLC, and public comments received, RUS has concluded that the project will have no significant impact to water quality, wetlands, floodplains, land use, aesthetics, transportation, or human health and safety.

The proposed project will have no adverse effect on resources listed or eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places. The Agency has also concluded that the proposed project is not likely to affect federally listed threatened and endangered species or designated critical habitat thereof. The proposed project will not disproportionately affect minority and/or low-income populations.

No other potential significant impacts resulting from the proposed project have been identified. Therefore, RUS has determined that this FONSI fulfills its obligations under the National Environmental Policy Act, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 4321–4347), the Council on Environmental Quality Regulations (40 CFR §§ 1500-1508), and USDA Rural Development's Environmental Policies and Procedures (7 CFR Part 1970) for its action related to the project.

RUS is satisfied that the environmental impacts of the proposed project have been adequately addressed. RUS's potential federal action will not result in significant impacts to the quality of the human environment, and as such it will not prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for its action related to the proposed project.

Dated: July 23, 2024 (August 6, 2024)