



Environmental Assessment for Construction and Operation of a Solar Photovoltaic System at Naval Station Newport Public-Private Venture Housing Sites, Newport County, Rhode Island

The Proposed Action

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), the Navy is preparing an environmental assessment (EA) for construction and operation of a solar photovoltaic (PV) system at public-private venture housing areas associated with Naval Station (NAVSTA) Newport.

The Navy proposes to authorize the sublease of up to 26 acres of Navy-owned property at the housing areas to be developed by an independently operated commercial power utility for a solar PV system. The generated electricity would feed into the local electrical grid.

Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action

The purpose of the proposed action is to benefit the Navy's privatized housing community by generating additional revenues that would be applied to management of the dependent housing facilities at NAVSTA Newport. The proposed action is needed to assist in meeting federal policies and goals for renewable energy.

Alternative Housing Site Locations

The power utility and/or solar PV developer would construct and operate solar facilities at one or more vacant housing sites, located in active housing areas that are owned and managed by Northeast Housing, LLC, under an agreement with the Navy. The project sites are the locations of former Navy housing that has been demolished.

Coddington Cove Housing Site (Town of Middletown, RI): A 4-acre vacant parcel of land would be developed for an approximately 0.7 MW solar PV facility.

Greene Lane Housing Site (Town of Middletown, RI): A 7-acre vacant parcel of land would be developed for an approximately 1.2 MW solar PV facility.

Melville Housing Site (Town of Portsmouth, RI): A 15-acre vacant parcel of land would be developed for an approximately 3.7 MW solar PV facility.

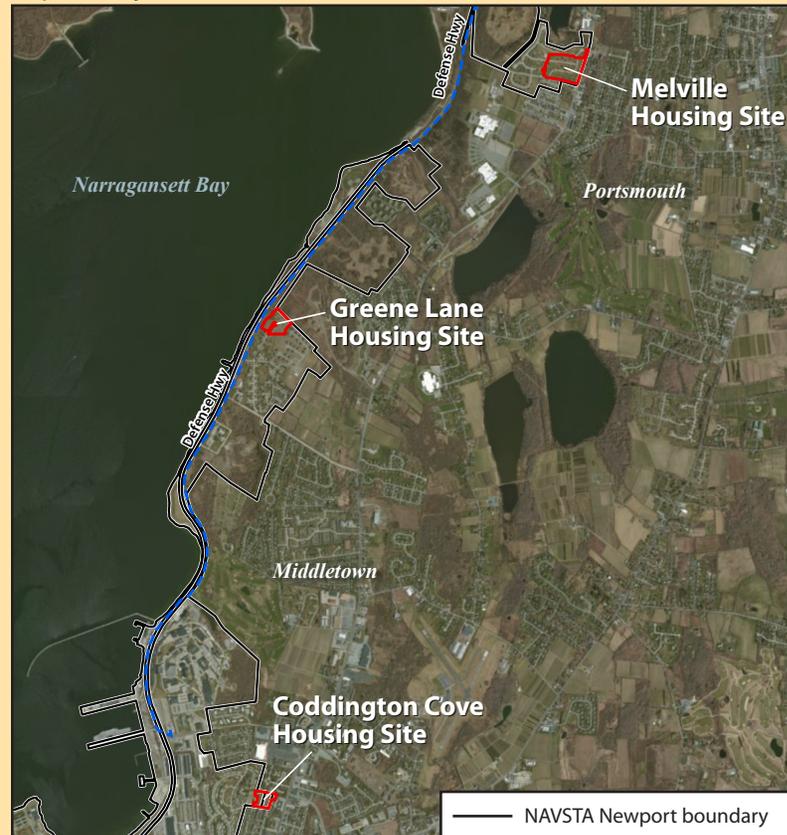
The proposed development areas are grass-covered with some scattered ornamental trees; therefore, minimal resources would be affected. Operational noise would be minimal. The sites would be fenced to ensure public safety, and the solar developer will use natural and manmade barriers to provide visual screening for off-base residents and recreationists.

Scope of the EA

The EA will present the existing conditions at the proposed project sites and evaluate the potential consequences of the proposed action on the natural and human environment. The EA will evaluate potential impacts of the proposed action on the following resource areas: land use, coastal zone management, visual resources, utilities and infrastructure, socioeconomic and environmental justice, cultural resources, air quality, biological resources, water resources, hazardous materials and waste, topography and soils, noise, traffic and transportation, and public safety.

The Navy is consulting on the proposed action with the Rhode Island Historical Preservation & Heritage Commission.

Proposed Project Sites





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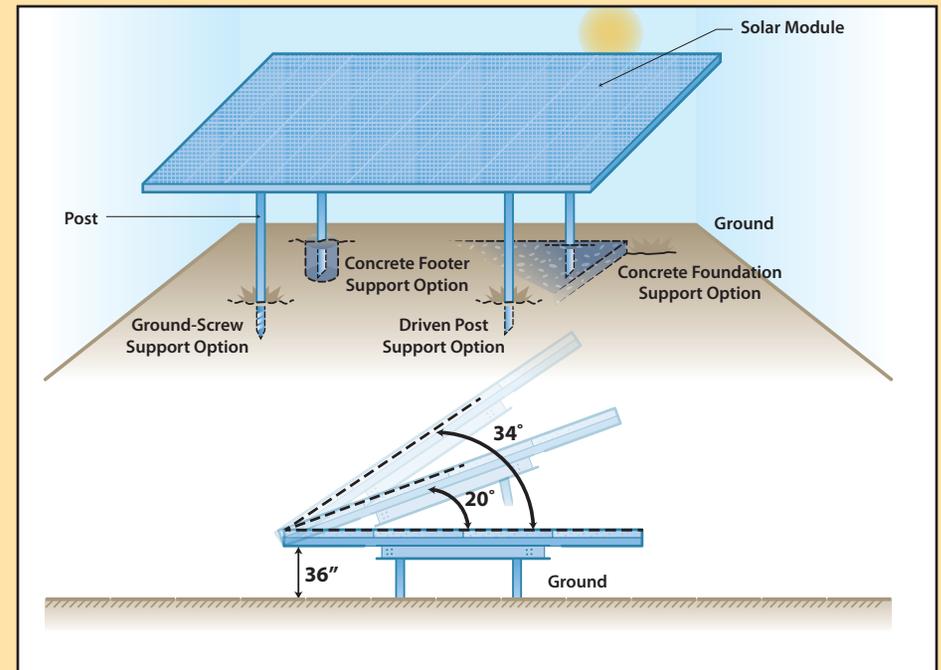
Solar PV Technology

Solar PV technology uses solar cells to convert energy from solar radiation into electricity. The ground-mounted facility to be constructed at one or more sites would include solar PV panels assembled in arrays, as well as electrical equipment (such as inverters, facility components, and electrical lines and wiring) to complete the generation of electricity and connect the solar PV facility to existing electrical infrastructure.

Ground-mounted Solar Arrays



Fixed-Tilt Ground-Mounted Solar PV Construction



Federal Policies, Goals, and Standards for Renewable Energy

To enhance energy security, efficiency, and sustainability, the federal government has established rigorous policies, goals, and standards for the production and use of alternative and renewable energy by federal facilities, including:

- Secretary of the Navy renewable energy goals:
 - 1 Gigawatt (GW) Initiative: Deploy 1 GW of renewable-energy generating capacity Navy-wide by 2020.
 - By 2020, produce or procure at least 50% of electricity consumed by shore-based facilities from alternative energy sources, and 50% of Navy installations must be “net zero” (i.e., use alternative energy sources to meet or exceed the electricity they consume).
- Executive Order 13693, Planning for Federal Sustainability in the Next Decade (March 19, 2015): By 2025, increase the share of electricity the federal government consumes from renewable sources to 30%.
- Other Standards: Energy Policy Act of 2005; 10 U.S.C. 2911(e).

For more information or to provide comments on the proposed action, please contact:

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