

**Proposed Madison County  
Agriculture and Renewable Energy Business Park**

**Town of Lincoln,  
Madison County, New York**

**Draft Scoping Document  
SEQR Lead Agency: Madison County**

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### Attachments

Attachment 1 – Site Location Map

## **1.0 Project Description**

Madison County, herein referred to as “the County”, proposes to designate certain County-owned lands along Buyea Road and Tuttle Road for the development of an Agriculture and Renewable Energy (ARE) Park, herein referred to as “ARE Park”, in the Town of Lincoln, Madison County, New York. These lands are generally comprised of permitted or planned soil borrow areas and buffer properties for the County’s active solid waste disposal facility.

These designated ARE Park lands are located on two County-owned parcels that have been labeled Site 1a, Site 1b, and Site 2 for identification purposes. Sites 1a and 1b, which total approximately 65 acres in size, are located along Tuttle Road. These sites currently include a dominance of active and abandoned agriculture lands and some deciduous forested area. It is expected that the primary access point(s) to parcels on this site will be located on Tuttle Road. Most of the acreage included in Sites 1a and 1b has previously been reviewed and approved for use as a soil borrow area, as part of the County’s permitted landfill operation.

Site 2, which incorporates approximately 230 acres, is made up of active and abandoned agriculture lands, mixed forested areas, and un-vegetated fill and disturbed soil areas. Some of these previously disturbed areas are associated with the closed portions of the Madison County Landfill and appurtenances related to the active portion of the current Landfill site. The primary access point(s) for Site 2 is expected to be located off Buyea Road. Portions of Site 2 are proposed to initially be used for soil mining activities associated with the County’s adjacent landfill operation. It is currently anticipated that any such soil mining activity would be undertaken prior to or concurrent with the development of that portion of Site 2. The exact limits of this potential mining area will be determined in the future.

A variety of businesses may relocate or establish themselves in the ARE Park. Businesses that locate within the ARE Park will have access to a reliable, locally generated source of green energy. The adjacent landfill gas-to-energy (LFGTE) facility, that is owned and operated by Waste Management Renewable Energy (WMRE) in accordance with a contract with Madison County, can supply up to 42.7 billion British thermal units (btu's) of green thermal energy a year. A total of approximately 12 million kilowatt-hours of low cost green energy are available to park tenants subject to agreements between the tenants and the landfill gas to energy facility.

A Draft Request For Proposals (RFP) was issued by Madison County on January 7, 2009, to solicit proposals from companies that may be interested in using the green thermal energy. A lumber kiln facility, to be designed and operated by Johnson Brothers Lumber Company, responded to the RFP. The planning of this lumber kiln facility is currently in its final stages and has already undergone a separate environmental review process. It will be located on an approximately 2-acre portion of the County's landfill site, on the west side of Buyea Road and south of the existing truck entrance road for the landfill site. This lumber kiln facility proposal, the landfill, and the gas recovery and power production facilities are all co-located; however, each is separately owned, each has its own function, and each serves its own purpose. The lumber kiln project is proposed to utilize a portion of the hot water energy recovered from the landfill gas recovery project, but it will not require public water or public sewer system connections. The separate environmental review of this proposed Johnson Brothers Lumber project will not be determinative of future development in and around the landfill facilities or around the ARE Park.

Currently, the ARE Park site does not have access to municipal water or sewer facilities. Therefore, the County is planning to move forward with the extension of municipal water and sewer facilities to the ARE Park. Currently, various options for water and sewer facilities are being evaluated. The alternatives being reviewed to extend public water to the site are the construction of a connection between the ARE

Park and the Onondaga County Water Authority's (OCWA) water system or the use of a groundwater source located generally southwest of the ARE Park area; exact locations for these potential water line connections have yet to be determined. The alternatives being evaluated to provide sewer service to the ARE Park include the addition of a connection between the ARE Park and the City of Oneida's sewer system or a connection between the ARE Park and the Village of Canastota's sewer system; exact locations for these potential sewer line connections have yet to be determined. The potential for development of an on-site sewage treatment system may also be evaluated. Construction of sewer facilities for the ARE Park will further enable Madison County to reduce its carbon footprint by eliminating approximately 30,000 leachate tanker truck trips over a 30-year period. This will reduce diesel emissions and conserve fuel.

The purpose of the proposed ARE Park is to provide an economically stimulating, environmentally sound, and shovel ready development area that would be beneficial to the surrounding community and that would provide an opportunity for future industrial and commercial facilities to utilize green initiatives in their business plans.

The DGEIS will present a hypothetical, conceptual development area and operations parameters for the proposed ARE Park. These conceptual parameters will form the basis for the environmental impact assessments and studies that will be undertaken to complete the DGEIS. The intent of such a hypothetical plan and impact assessment is to identify, assess, and present mitigation measures for potentially significant environmental impacts as early as possible in the ARE Park planning process. This approach should help ensure that development of the ARE Park will take place in an environmentally sound manner, and should also help expedite future economic development efforts when a company chooses to locate its business at the ARE Park.

## **2.0 SEQR Status**

Part one (1) of a State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) Environmental Assessment Form (EAF) was completed for the proposed project. A coordinated review process was completed, in accordance with 6 NYCRR Part 617, and resulted in the issuance of a positive declaration by Madison County, acting as Lead Agency. The following agencies and groups have been identified as interested or involved agencies, as these terms are defined in 6 NYCRR Part 617, for this project: New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (NYSDEC), New York State Department of Health (NYSDOH), Madison County Department of Health, Oneida Indian Nation, Onondaga Indian Nation, Madison County Industrial Development Agency (IDA), New York State Environmental Facilities Corporation (EFC), Onondaga County Water Authority (OCWA), Madison County Highway Department, New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets, Madison County Farmland Protection Board, Town of Lincoln, Town of Lenox, City of Oneida, Village of Canastota, and the New York State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO).

### **2.1 Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS)**

The DGEIS will be the principal document that describes the general technical and environmental information and impacts associated with the proposed project. This document will help to establish specific conditions or criteria under which industrial and commercial facilities can be constructed and approved for development in the ARE Park. The DGEIS document will focus on issues that are common to the entire proposed ARE Park area and not those related to a specific location or specific type of industry.

In addition to the components described in Section 3 of this document, the DGEIS will also include a cover sheet, a table of contents, a summary of the

document's contents, and a discussion of the project's background, purpose, and public needs and benefits, including social and economic considerations.

## 2.2 DGEIS Scoping Process

A formal Public Scoping process will be undertaken as outlined in Part 617.8 of the SEQRA regulations. This draft scoping document is being prepared for review and comment by the public, as well as by all involved and interested agencies. All comments received will be evaluated and may result in changes to this draft scope. A Final Scoping Document that incorporates any such changes will be issued, prior to the preparation of a Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS).

### **3.0 Potential Project Impacts, Mitigative Measures and Alternatives**

The scope of the Draft Generic Environmental Impact Statement (DGEIS) for the proposed development of the Agriculture and Renewable Energy Park will focus on potential impacts that this project may incur upon site ecology resources (flora and fauna, land, water, air), agricultural resources, historic and archeological resources, open space and recreation, transportation, energy, public health, aesthetics (noise, odor, visual impacts), and growth and community character.

Informational resources which will be used as documentation during the completion of the DGEIS include environmental studies and field investigations that have been or will be conducted on-site and information provided by the public, participating groups and organizations, and local, state, and federal agencies. Methodologies for obtaining new information are delineated in the following subsections, as appropriate.

#### **3.1 Historic and Cultural Resources**

Studies have been conducted within portions of Sites 1a and 1b and Site 2 and along portions of the potential water and sewer pipeline corridors regarding the presence of historic, archaeological, and cultural resources. Additional areas within Site 1b and Site 2 will be investigated in accordance with the New York Archaeological Council's Standards for Cultural Resource Investigations and the Curation of Archaeological Collections, which has been endorsed by the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP), and in compliance with Section 14.09 of New York State Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation Law and/or Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966, if applicable. The results of already completed studies, and the results of the additional investigations that will be completed during this process, will be detailed in the DGEIS.

The previous studies have included a review of the NYS Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation (OPRHP) website for information regarding the presence of state and nationally recognized historic or cultural sites or structures, or archaeologically sensitive areas, within or adjacent to the existing landfill property. The information obtained from this resource and from subsequent studies and coordination with the OPRHP will be documented in the DGEIS. Additionally, details of the Indian Nation Consultation Process, as conducted by the NYS Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) in accordance with DEC Policy, *CP-42, Contact, Cooperation, and Consultation with Indian Nations*, that has taken place with the Oneida Indian Nation will also be documented.

Potential impacts to properties and sites located on the State and National Historic Registers and those of cultural and archaeological significance will be included in the DGEIS, along with potential mitigative measures that may be incorporated into this project.

### 3.2 Geology and Soils

ARE Park construction and the installation of private industries and businesses may involve excavating and moving quantities of soil on and around the site. Given that Sites 1a and 1b have been previously approved for use as soil borrow areas, potential impacts that the ARE Park project may have on soil and land resources will focus on Site 2. Potential soil mining activities may take place on Site 2 as well.

Issues to be addressed in the DGEIS include potential impacts to existing topography, soil resources, and future uses of the land resources. Construction activities, if not mitigated, may cause erosion which may, in turn, cause siltation of adjacent stream banks and wetland areas. The DGEIS will address temporary

and permanent management options that could be employed as mitigation measures to prevent and minimize the potential erosion of soils. The proposed project will remain compliant with all New York State Stormwater Regulations during site construction and the long-term management of the site.

Previous hydrogeologic studies have been undertaken at the proposed ARE Park site and adjacent areas. Information from these studies, from the Madison County Soil Survey which was completed by the Soil Conservation Service and the Cornell University Agricultural Experiment Station in 1981, and from the Natural Resource Conservation Service's (NRCS) Soil Survey Geographic (SSURGO) database will be used to characterize the existing geology and soils of the site and proposed utility line corridors.

### 3.3 Water Resources

This project has the potential to impact both surface and groundwater resources. Wetland locations were identified along portions of the potential utility corridors and within the proposed limits of Site 1b. No wetland locations were identified within the limits of Site 1a. Future wetland delineations will be completed within Site 2, and along utility corridor segments under consideration that have not previously been subject to such delineations, to determine the presence or absence of wetlands in that area. This delineation effort will be completed in accordance with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineer's 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual and the Northcentral/Northeast Regional Supplement to the 1987 Manual. Previously identified wetland locations are potentially under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE); no wetland locations were identified as being under the jurisdiction of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation.

Multiple water resources are located adjacent to Sites 1a, 1b, 2 and within the proposed utility corridors. Cowaselon Creek flows north along the eastern boundary of Site 2. Limestone Creek, a tributary of Clockville Creek, flows northeast between the south limits of Sites 1a and 1b and the Madison County Landfill Facility. Additional locations of mapped streams may be crossed depending on the selected water and sewer pipeline routes and the selected water and sewer system alternatives.

The DGEIS will assess potential temporary and permanent impacts that may occur as a result of the ARE Park construction and utility line extensions. Potential impacts that the proposed project may have on groundwater resources in the area will also be identified and reasonable mitigation measures proposed, if necessary. If permanent impacts to wetland areas are likely to occur, and total greater than 0.1-acres, suitable mitigation measures, in the form of compensatory wetland mitigation, will be proposed in the DGEIS.

Proposed developments within the ARE Park project area will also require State Pollution Discharge Elimination System (SPDES) Permits from the NYSDEC to discharge water to stormwater control structures, as necessary to comply with NYS Stormwater regulations. Stormwater management measures will be developed in accordance with current SPDES regulations to mitigate impacts associated with runoff and to maintain compliance with the SPDES regulatory permit program standards. It is anticipated that temporary stormwater management and erosion and sediment control (ESC) measures will be required during the construction of individual facilities and that permanent measures will be required for the long-term post-construction management of the ARE Park.

### 3.4 Ecology

The predominant vegetative cover types within the proposed ARE Park Sites consist of meadow/brushland (abandoned agricultural fields), mixed forestlands, and previously disturbed soils/un-vegetated earth. Sites 1a and 1b have been previously approved to be used as soil borrow areas in support of the County's adjacent landfill facility. Properties adjacent to the proposed water and sewer mains represent similar vegetative cover types, with the majority of land use in the area actively or historically associated with agricultural operations and facilities.

Research will be conducted to gather current and historic records of threatened, endangered, rare, candidate, and special concern species under state and federal protection that are located within Madison County, and more specifically, those with known populations within the Town of Lincoln and adjacent areas. Protected critical habitat locations would also be noted. Sources used to compile this information will include the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (USFWS) Cortland Field Office website, the NYSDEC's Natural Heritage Program, and the NYSDEC's Nature Explorer web program.

Initial field investigations have been completed within Sites 1a and 1b and along portions of the proposed water and sewer corridors to determine the potential for any protected species populations to inhabit areas of the proposed project. Habitat assessment field investigations will be completed for Site 2 in the near future to determine whether any rare plant or animal species, ecologically sensitive areas, or uncommon assemblages of natural communities are located within this area of the proposed project. Results from all field investigations will be included in the DGEIS. Potential impacts that the construction and management of the ARE Park may have on protected and

unprotected plant and animal species, and their associated suitable habitat areas, if identified, will also be addressed in the DGEIS.

### 3.5 Land Use and Community Character

Development of the proposed ARE Park will transform existing undeveloped land, and land that will be mined of soil, into areas of active industrial and commercial businesses. Potential impacts to Sites 1a and 1b have already been reviewed and approved as part of the permitted soil borrow plan for the County's landfill facility. Therefore, the inclusion of potential changes in land use, community character, and community services in the DGEIS will focus on the potential utility corridors and ARE Park Site 2. Impacts associated with removing a portion of these lands from an existing mapped agricultural district within Site 2 will also be examined.

Potential mitigation measures to minimize impacts to the local community and community services will be described in the DGEIS. Open space and recreational activity opportunities that would be lost or limited by the development of the ARE Park will be detailed in the DGEIS. The significance of impacts to these areas will be determined and addressed.

### 3.6 Visual Resources

From the perspective of visual resources, the proposed development of the ARE Park will introduce industrial and commercial buildings into an area that is adjacent to a closed and operational landfill facility, which is located in a rural portion of the Town of Lincoln. A handful of homesteads and private properties are located adjacent to the proposed project sites. Properties adjacent to the proposed utility corridors are not anticipated to be visually impacted due to the underground installation of the water and sewer mains. Many areas surrounding

Sites 1a and 1b and Site 2 of the ARE Park, and a few areas included within the project limits, most notably the eastern portion of Site 2, offer steep grades and rolling hills. This terrain, and the soil mining proposed to be undertaken prior to much of the ARE Park's development, will likely block some of the visibility of the ARE Park from certain surrounding vantage points.

Potential visual impacts of the proposed project will be assessed through a viewshed analysis and the development of computer assisted visual simulations from key vantage points to illustrate changes to the visual setting that would result from the conceptual development of the ARE Park. A conceptual maximum design height will be used to ascertain the visual impacts from the potential construction of multiple buildings and facilities at the ARE Park. If views of important resources are impacted by the proposed project, or identified sensitive receptors are visually impacted, appropriate mitigative measures will be proposed to eliminate or reduce these visual impairments. These potential mitigation measures will be included in the DGEIS.

### 3.7 Air Quality

Information available from EPA, DEC and NYSDOT will be reviewed to obtain information regarding existing air quality conditions and to determine if National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS) are being met in the vicinity of the proposed ARE Park. The development of the ARE Park has the potential to increase the amount of dust in the air, particularly during construction activities, and also has the potential to increase air emissions due to truck traffic and facility emissions. A hypothetical ARE Park development scenario will be described in the DGEIS that will provide the basis for an assessment of potential air impacts and mitigation measures.

### 3.8 Traffic

Currently, access points to the ARE Park Sites 1a and 1b and Site 2 are proposed along Tuttle Road and Buyea Road. Existing traffic conditions will be determined by utilizing existing information on traffic that can be obtained from NYSDOT, the Madison County Highway Department, and the Town of Lincoln. Additional information regarding existing traffic conditions will be obtained through the use of automated traffic counters that will be placed on Tuttle Road and Buyea Road for at least a one week period.

A Level of Service traffic analysis will be prepared for Tuttle Road and Buyea Road at the proposed access points to the ARE Park. A hypothetical set of future traffic data related to potential development of the ARE Park will be utilized in this Level of Service analysis. Potential mitigation measures will be described for any significant increases in traffic that may be identified through the Level of Service analysis.

### 3.9 Noise

Background noise levels will be obtained at ARE Park Sites 1a and 1b and Site 2 utilizing noise metering equipment. An assessment of potential noise impacts related to future development of the ARE Park will be undertaken based on a hypothetical development scenario for the ARE Park. This noise analysis will be conducted to determine potential impacts to properties adjacent to ARE Park Sites 1a and 1b and Site 2. This analysis will use noise levels commonly associated with the operation of construction equipment to determine short-term noise impacts. The analysis will also include an estimate of the long-term potential for noise impacts associated with a set of hypothetical ARE Park operation parameters. Measures that can be undertaken to mitigate potential off-site noise impacts will be described in the DGEIS.

## **4.0 Reasonable Project Alternatives**

An analysis of alternatives will be included in the DGEIS to investigate other options associated with the conceptual design and location of the proposed ARE Park. The alternatives analysis of the DGEIS will discuss the reasonable range of alternatives to the project that would achieve the same objective as the current project proposal. This analysis will include different ARE Park site configurations, different utility alternatives to provide water and sewer to the site, a “no action” alternative, and a discussion regarding alternative sites for development of the ARE Park. The alternatives analysis that will be included in the DGEIS will also include an evaluation of the need for the proposed ARE Park, including the economic benefits to the local community and the associated advantages that the project would provide on a County-wide level.

The following alternatives to the proposed project will be considered and discussed:

### **4.1 No-Action Alternative**

The option of not developing the ARE Park and associated utility extension will be deemed the “no action” alternative. This option will include an examination of potential issues should the Park and associated utility extensions not be constructed. Potential issues or scenarios would include the continuation of hauling leachate from the adjacent landfill facility, the requirement to provide potable water to the landfill site, the end-use of the energy produced by the landfill gas-to-energy plant, and the loss of economic benefits to the County and surrounding community.

#### 4.2 Alternative Site Locations

The general location of the ARE Park is based upon its proximity to the County's green energy source (the landfill gas-to-energy facility) and the availability of County-owned land that can be utilized for such a business park. Potential alternative locations within Madison County will be reviewed to determine if other potentially feasible or more attractive locations for the ARE Park are available for potential development.

#### 4.3 Alternative ARE Park Configurations

The DGEIS will present a hypothetical, conceptual development area (i.e., a potential area of ground disturbance and site infrastructure/facility development) and operations parameters for the proposed ARE Park that will form the basis for the environmental impact assessments and studies that will be undertaken to complete the DGEIS. Alternative hypothetical configurations of the ARE Park site will be examined to determine the advantages and disadvantages that they present, in comparison to the hypothetical baseline configuration set forth in the DGEIS. Potential impact reductions that may result from modifications to the dimensions and size of the ARE Park Sites will be examined.

#### 4.4 Alternative Utility Options

The ability to provide water and sewer services to the ARE Park Sites is an important component of this project. The feasibility and general assessment of readily identifiable potential impacts associated with the utility alternatives will be examined in the DGEIS.

In addition to the utility line extension alternative, other alternatives to provide the ARE Park site with potable water and sewer services will be analyzed. These additional alternatives include the potential use of the nearby

quarry site, located southwest of the ARE Park area, to develop a well field to supply potable water to the ARE Park site. The feasibility of providing on-site wastewater treatment as an alternative to the installation of sewer main will also be examined and included in the DGEIS.

## **5.0 Additional DGEIS Contents**

New York State's SEQRA regulations (6 NYCRR Part 617.9) establish what must be contained in a DGEIS. Additional components of the DGEIS are delineated below:

### **5.1 Summary of Proposed Action**

The purpose of the action and the public need for the action will be described, including social and economic considerations. A site location map will be included to supplement this description. This section will include a brief description of the site history and the current project, a summary of project benefits, potentially significant adverse impacts, and alternatives to be considered.

### **5.2 Cumulative Impacts**

This section will include a general evaluation of impacts associated with the potential development of the entire Site 1a, Site 1b, and Site 2 areas.

### **5.3 Unavoidable Adverse Impacts**

Potentially significant adverse environmental impacts for which mitigation is either not available or not feasible will be described in this section of the DGEIS. The potential significance of these unavoidable adverse impacts will also be discussed.

### **5.4 Growth-Inducing Impacts**

This section will examine potential effects that the development of the ARE Park may have on community growth, both residential and commercial.

## 5.5 Commitment of Resources

This section will examine the effects on those finite resources, such as land, that would be impacted by the proposed project. The level of availability of these resources surrounding the ARE Park and within the County will be addressed.

## 5.6 References

A bibliography of references utilized to support the analyses presented in the DGEIS will be included.

## 5.7 Preliminary List of DGEIS Appendices

- Final Scoping Document
- Applicable Correspondence
- Habitat Assessment Memorandum
- Wetland Delineation Reports
- Traffic Impact Level of Service Analysis
- Cultural Resources Investigations and Studies
- Visual Impact Assessment
- Noise Assessment

**Attachment 1**  
**Site Location Map**