

Millions in Federal Money to Ruin Wisconsin Lands:

## The Truth About Solar Farms in Wisconsin

An application has been filed and soil borings are being conducted to begin a massive 2,500 acre industrial solar facility in the southeastern towns of Farmington, Ixonia, Watertown, and Concord. This industrial solar plan, along with a multitude of other solar farms planned and in progress for counties throughout Wisconsin, are devastating the lands in rural communities of Wisconsin. Solar companies use millions of dollars of federal money to build these gigantic solar farms knowing that the State of Wisconsin does not have regulations.

The Wisconsin Public Service Commission approves all the solar companies' massive industrial plans on Wisconsin land. These out-of-state solar companies are granted waivers to circumvent state rules allowing destruction of scenic views, protected lands and wetlands, and conserved wildlife, despite the state and towns having established guidelines.

The Dane County Town of Christiana, attempted to sue the solar company that was going to obliterate a third of their town. Instead the Wisconsin Public Service Commission prevented Christiana from enforcing any zoning rules that would stop the solar project. Records have already shown one solar developer in another state contributing nearly \$100,000 to lawmakers crucial in removing state oversight of new energy facilities. Meanwhile, Wisconsin and U.S. lawmakers are unwilling to stop these enormous industrial solar projects.

The Chicago company, Invenergy, which is controlled by billionaire Michael Polsky, is in the process of installing at least ten solar farm projects in Wisconsin while there are still no rules in place. Simultaneously many other solar companies are in the process of decimating farmlands, woods, and wetlands all over Wisconsin while scrambling to lease as much land as possible throughout Wisconsin to make unimaginable profits. These installations continue even though there are countless lawsuits against numerous solar companies and lawsuits specifically against Invenergy.

First-hand accounts of people that live near solar farms have stated that local ponds, wells, ditches, rivers and wetlands dried after the thousands of solar panels were installed. Vast amounts of wildlife have died in the areas, while the birds, bees, and other pollinators no longer exist.

Despite the current topsoil crisis in the midwest, twelve inches of topsoil will be stripped from the farmland and sold by the solar company after the natural hills and valleys of the countryside are flattened. Woodlands will be bulldozed and terrain will be changed

forever. Dust from the barren fields will fill the air and it will cause breathing problems for people, livestock, horses, pets, and wildlife.

There are personal stories of countless drain tiles being broken during construction, broken solar panels, piles of garbage and debris that is later hidden from the road in heaps and buried underground. With the runoff and ambient heat, the wetlands will never be the same, along with native plants, grasses and the water table. The safety, quality, and quantity of our natural resources, including the soil and drinking water, will be affected by large amounts of toxic elements leaching from any cracked, broken, or damaged solar panels.

Studies have shown that home values will decrease up to 40% and the health and quality of life will suffer greatly. Solar panels catch rainwater and the water will run off in a straight line, row after row, flooding the neighboring land. Families living near these enormous solar facilities are inundated with illnesses at an alarming rate. The constant, loud humming noise coming from the inverters has caused lawsuits against solar companies.

Reports show that fire is a major hidden danger of solar farms and have taken days to extinguish. Solar panels have started fires and battery energy storage has exploded and caught fire on solar farms. There are harmful cancer causing chemicals contained in the smoke. Firefighters need specialized training for the toxic solar fires and fire trucks have been unable to access the fenced in area of solar farms. Rural Wisconsin areas do not have easily accessible water sources to put out fires and some roads are not wide enough for fire truck turnarounds.

Del Monte Foods is permanently closing its Green Lake County facility, putting 90 people out of work in April. Some residents claim the closing is to make way for solar. Solar companies make lessors sign non disclosure agreements and Del Monte gave no reason for the closure. Prices will eventually rise as less produce is available for the economy. Local farmhands will lose their jobs, local fuel distributors will lose sales of diesel fuel for farm tractors, local parts stores and maintenance workers will lose farm business, local feed stores will no longer be needed, and local farm-supply stores will lose seed, grain, and fertilizer sales.

Solar companies are known to lie throughout the proposal and process and claim to not know answers during public meetings. Numerous out-of-state solar companies are destroying miles of farmland in Kenosha County and the few farmers who refuse to sign on with solar are inundated with offers to lease their land for solar.

Thirty year signed land leases do not include details of maintenance, cleanup of the deadly toxins, leaching harmful elements, or the event of the solar company filing bankruptcy. Solar companies have no interest in purchasing any of the land because they

do not want to be responsible for the change in land use taxes or final cleanup costs. In addition, by renting the land, solar companies do not have to pay taxes.

Sixty-one U.S. solar companies have closed or filed for bankruptcy in 2023 and 2024 alone. Once the solar company closes, the farmers who leased their land will no longer be paid and will be responsible for clearing the acres of toxic panels and discarded storage batteries.

After the solar companies have spent millions and millions of federal tax money to create massive solar farms, they will leave Wisconsin with tens of thousands of acres of stripped farmland and woodlands filled with solar panels, dead wildlife, toxic elements, and miles of buried conduit, wires and concrete for decades to come.