



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF RECLAMATION
Phoenix Area Office
6150 West Thunderbird Road
Glendale, AZ 85306-4001
MAR 10, 2023

IN REPLY REFER TO:
PXA0-1500
2.1.4.17

VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL AND U.S. MAIL

Subject: Notice of Public Scoping for an Environmental Assessment on the CO Bar Solar Interconnection Project in Coconino County, Arizona (Action by 30 days from the digital signature date of this letter)

Dear Interested Party:

The United States (U.S.) Bureau of Reclamation (Reclamation) is preparing an Environmental Assessment (EA) as required under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that would consider the impacts of Reclamation's approval of the interconnection of the CO Bar Solar Complex to the Navajo Southern Transmission System (NSTS) at the Moenkopi to Cedar Mountain 500-kilovolt (kV) transmission line, referred to as the CO Bar Solar Interconnection Project (Project).

The Moenkopi to Cedar Mountain 500-kV transmission line is part of the NSTS, of which Reclamation is a part owner. All interconnection requests for the NSTS that result in a Large Generator Interconnection Agreement must be approved by Reclamation's Lower Colorado Basin Region, Regional Director. Reclamation is requesting public input to help identify issues and concerns associated with the proposed interconnection.

The proposed Project includes improving approximately 4.5 miles of roads managed by the U.S. Forest Service (Forest Service) Coconino National Forest (COF); therefore, the Forest Service is participating as a cooperating agency in the NEPA process. The improvement of National Forest Service Road (NFSR) 417 and NFSR 9003 would require CO Bar Solar, LLC, the Proponent, to obtain a Special Use Permit from the COF. The Land and Resource Management Plan for the Coconino National Forest (Forest Plan) guides Forest Service management in fulfilling its stewardship responsibilities to best meet the needs of the public for the present and into the future. The Forest Plan provides guidance for project and activity decision making, and the COF must ensure that its actions are in accordance with the Forest Plan. The proposed activities occurring on National Forest System (NFS) lands are a project implementing the COF's Forest Plan and are not authorized by the Healthy Forest Restoration Act. Given this, the activities occurring on NFS lands are subject to the pre-decisional administrative review process outlined in subparts A and B of 36 Code of Federal Regulations 218.

INTERIOR REGION 8 • LOWER COLORADO BASIN

ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA*, NEVADA*

* PARTIAL

Project Location

The proposed Project is located approximately 30 miles northwest of Flagstaff in unincorporated Coconino County, Arizona (Figure 1). The Project area is located on private land, Arizona State Land Department (ASLD) land, and COF land (Figure 2).

Project Background

The CO Bar Solar Interconnection Project is part of the CO Bar Solar Complex, a renewable energy project that consists of multiple proposed photovoltaic solar energy facilities located on private and ASLD lands. Total generation output of the CO Bar Solar Complex to the NSTS would not exceed 1,000 megawatts. The proposed Project would interconnect the CO Bar Solar Complex to the Moenkopi to Cedar Mountain 500-kV transmission line via an Arizona Public Service (APS) switchyard that will be built in 2023. APS would install new equipment within the switchyard to accommodate the proposed interconnection.

Project Description

The major components of the CO Bar Interconnection Project include the following components:

- CO Bar Solar Complex substation, collector lines, and intertie line(s)
- APS switchyard equipment
- Temporary equipment laydown areas and line pulling and tensioning sites
- Forest Service road improvements

Reclamation and the Forest Service have determined that an EA is the appropriate level of review under NEPA. The EA will evaluate the impacts of the proposed action on the human and natural environments. As part of this EA process, Reclamation is seeking your participation in identifying any potential issues or concerns with the proposed activity. This information will be used to analyze the environmental impacts of the Project and prepare the EA. To be most helpful, comments should be as specific as possible and related to the activities of the proposed project. Please be aware that by law, your name, address, and other personal identifying information may be made publicly available at any time. Individuals may request that their personal identifying information be withheld from public review by stating so prominently at the beginning of your comment. We cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so; however, we will honor your request to the extent allowable by law. All comments from organizations or businesses will be available for public inspection in their entirety.

Comments should be submitted to: Bureau of Reclamation, ATTN: CO Bar Solar Interconnection Project, 1645 South Plaza Way, Flagstaff, AZ 86001, via fax (928) 779-2709 or via email to cobarinterconnectionea@swca.com, no later than 30 days from the date of this letter.

For additional information regarding this letter, please contact Mrs. Kelly Bergin, Environmental Protection Specialist, Reclamation’s Phoenix Area Office, at (623) 773-6422 or via email at kbergin@usbr.gov. Individuals in the United States who are deaf, deafblind, hard of hearing, or have a speech disability, may dial 711 (TTY, TDD, or TeleBraille) to access telecommunication relay services. Individuals outside the United States should use the relay services offered within their country to make international calls to the point of contact in the United States.

Sincerely,

ALEXANDE
R SMITH



Digitally signed by
ALEXANDER SMITH
Date: 2023.03.07
18:04:22 -07'00'

Alexander B. Smith
Area Manager

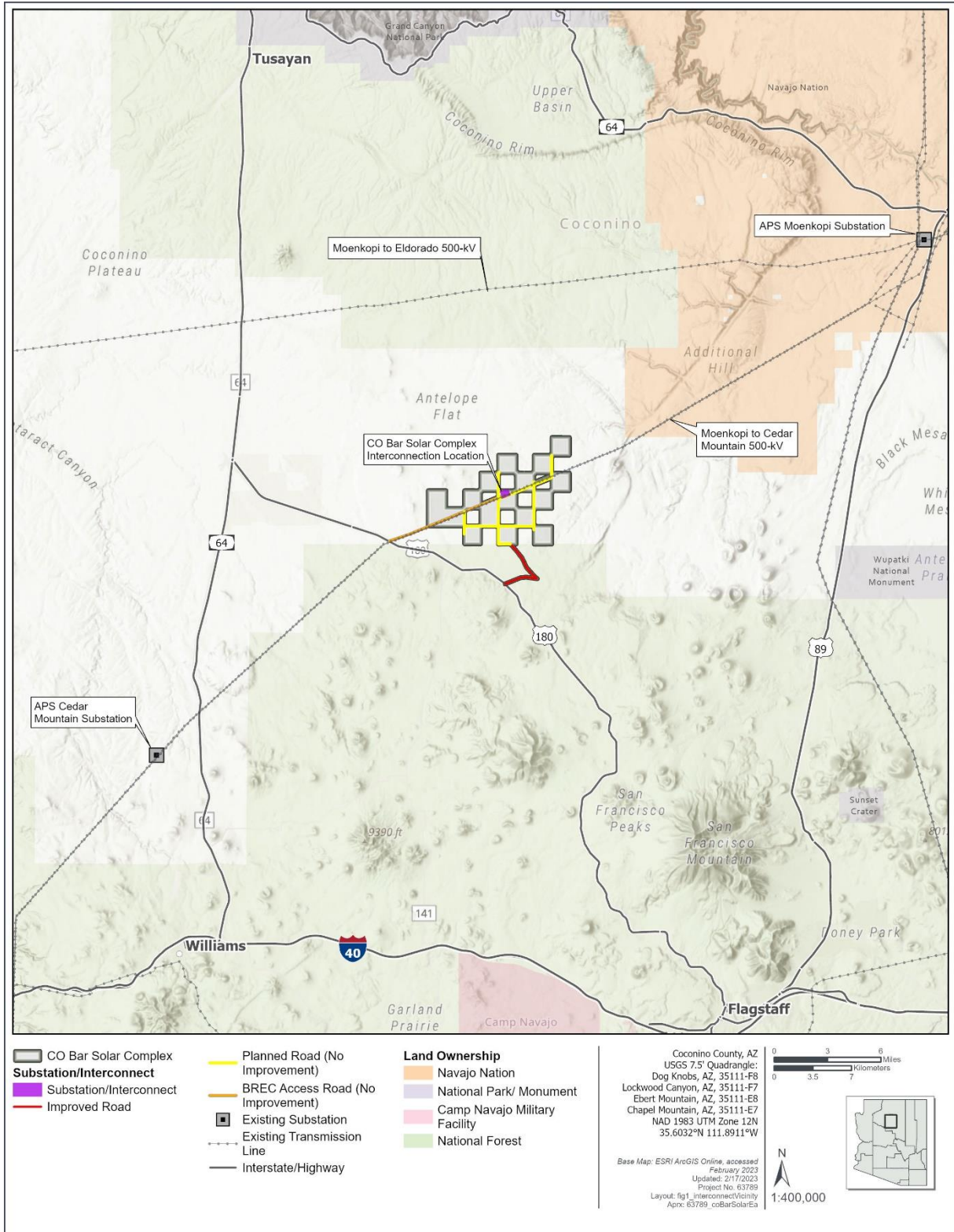


Figure 1. CO Bar Solar Interconnection Project location

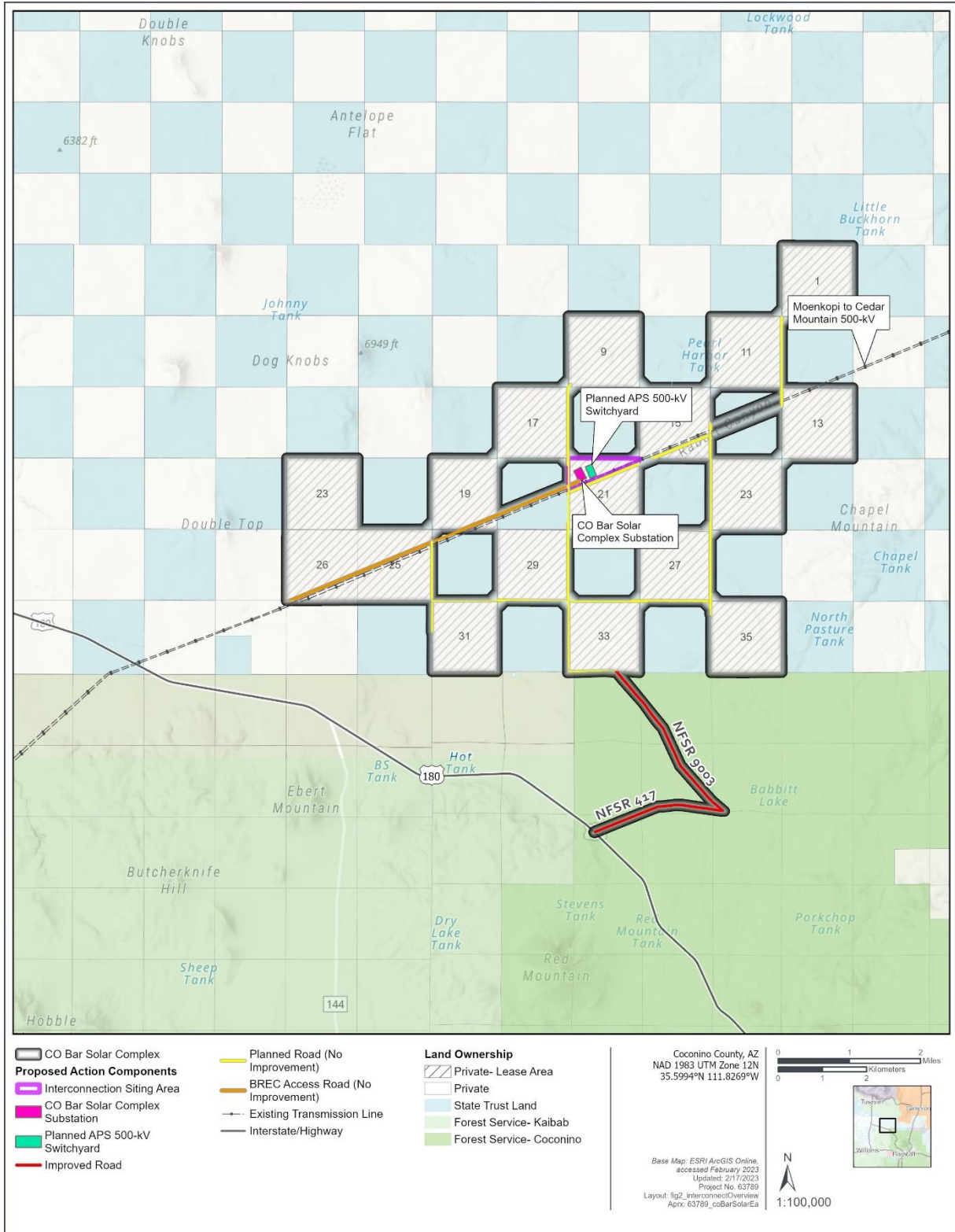


Figure 2. CO Bar Solar Interconnection Project detail