



**Sensible Solar for Rural New York**  
P.O. Box 305  
Craryville, NY 12526

**Hecate Energy is seeking a new permit to build a  
42 MW utility scale solar installation in Copake, NY  
after ORES denied them a permit in January 2024**

ORES previously issued 3 Notices of Incomplete Application due to Hecate's failure to provide required information. ORES subsequently issued a draft permit in October 2023, then denied the permit in January 2024. The denial was due to the fact that Hecate lost control of a key parcel in September 2023, **PRIOR** to the issuance of the draft permit. *Hecate failed to disclose this to anyone.*

Now Hecate is back, seeking a permit for a 42MW project. They plan to file an application in June 2024 and recently mailed the attached brochure to the community.

**We feel obligated to correct the misinformation in Hecate's brochure to give the community an accurate picture of this poorly conceived project.**

A majority of the community continues to believe that this project should not move forward because it:

- Permanently removes 200+ acres of prime farmland for industrial use;
- Calls for clear cutting 40 acres of trees and vegetation on steep hillsides;
- Sits on sensitive wetlands and NYS protected watershed;
- Disturbs key wildlife habitats and migration paths;
- Violates multiple local laws;
- Conflicts with the objectives set forth in Town of Copake's Comprehensive Plan of 2005, 2011, 2014 and 2022;
- Adversely impacts 5 National Register eligible properties per NYS OPRHP;
- Negatively impacts property values;
- Hurts the local economy which depends on agriculture & tourism;
- Ruins scenic views forever.



You might have gotten **this brochure** recently from Hecate Energy.

Hecate is on a public relations campaign to spin a story to us that they are listening to our community and made Shepherd's Run better.

**This is FALSE.**

Hecate lost control of a key parcel, misled NYS and failed to revise their application which contained incorrect information about the project, which led to its rejection in January 2024.

And now they're back to convince you otherwise.

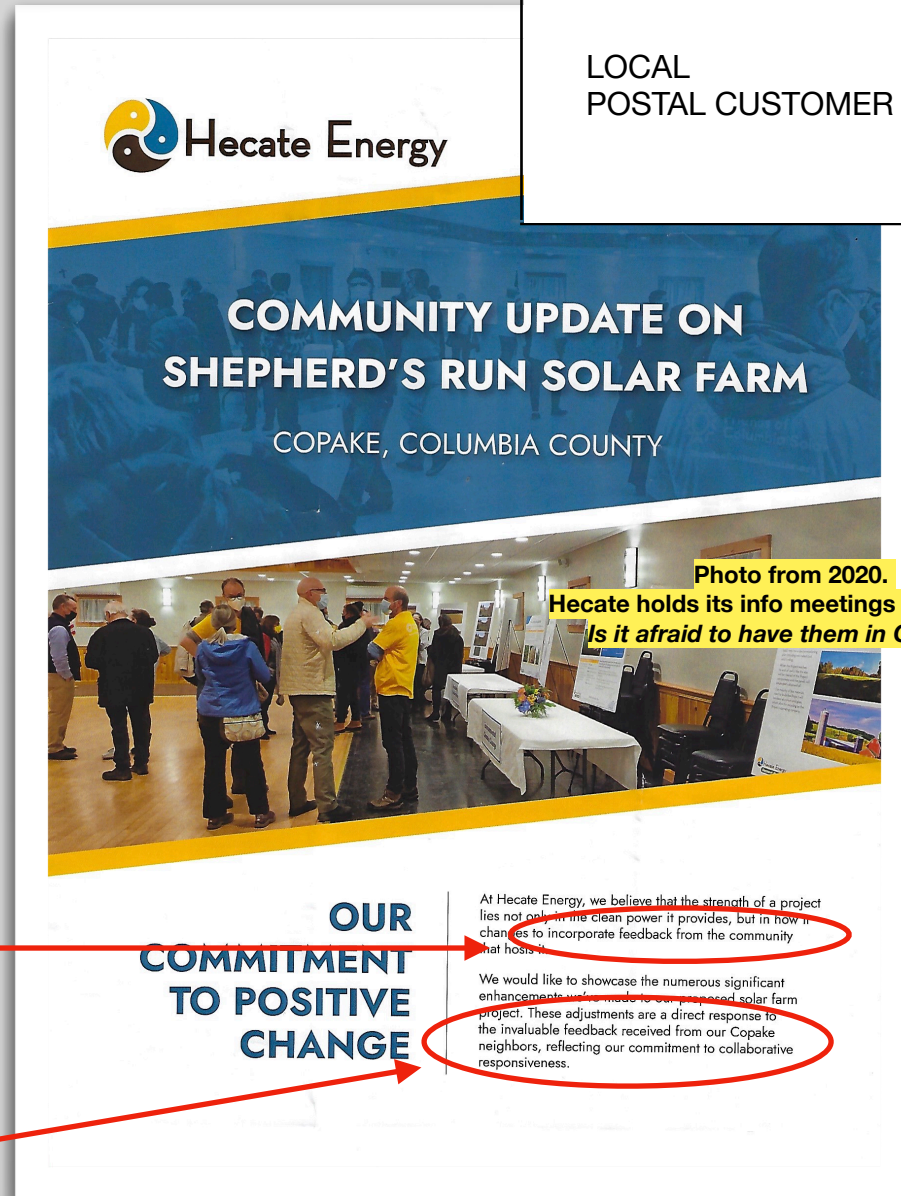
Do not be fooled by slick corporate propaganda...

**Community feedback is "Go Away!"  
Copake neighbors do not want this project and never have.**

"I haven't met with the neighbors across the street"  
[from the project.] Matt Levine, Hecate Project Manager  
- RevealNews.org podcast 1/6/2024

PRSR STD  
ECRWSS  
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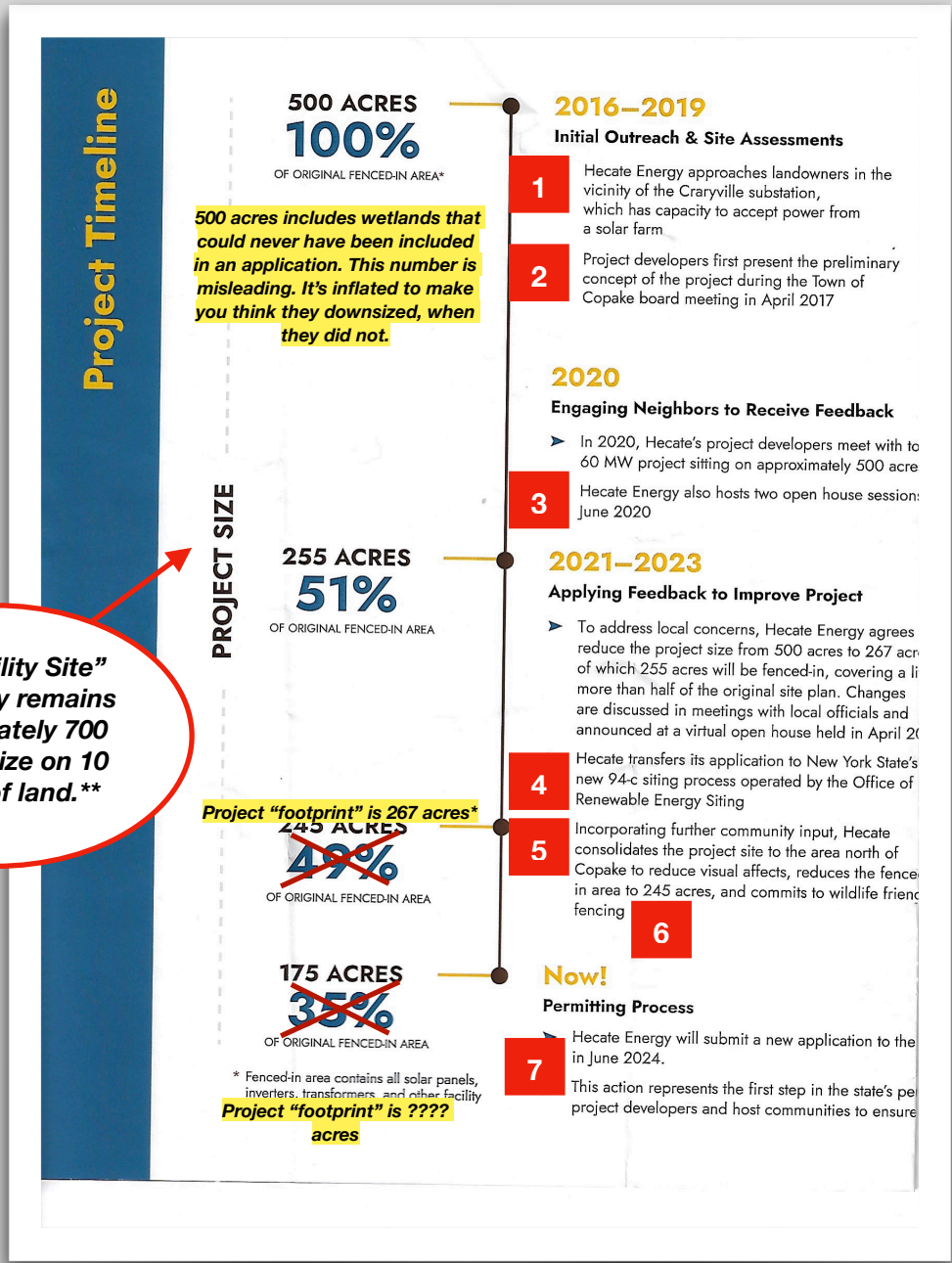
LOCAL  
POSTAL CUSTOMER



# What's new from Hecate? Nothing, but a **BIG MONEY GRAB** for private developers.

- 1 **90% of the project lease benefit goes to one landowner - Rasweiler Angus Farm LLC.**
- 2 **When Hecate floated its project idea in 2016-17, the Town of Copake grew greatly concerned Hecate would violate the goals of the town's Comprehensive Plan, Zoning laws, and consume working farmland. After a series of Town meetings and a unanimous vote by Copake's elected Town Board in April 2017, Copake passed new Zoning laws to prevent enormous industrial solar projects.**
- 3 **The pandemic allowed Hecate to avoid meeting with the public in person, and instead held its meetings online. Much time was wasted by Hecate having a beekeeper tell us for 30 minutes about the glories of encouraging pollinators.**
- 4 **Hecate transferred its application to the 94-C process so that it could side-step a public service commission committee. It wanted to fast-track its application with a new NY Siting Office which allows applicants to override our local laws.**
- 5 **Because Federal law prevents building on wetlands, Hecate was required to reduce the fenced in area to avoid them. This reduction was not to reduce visual effects, and not because of community concerns.**
- 6 **Wildlife friendly fencing was one of the few ideas of the volunteer Copake Working Group that Hecate accepted.**
- 7 **Hecate was forced to reduce its project size when it lost control of 60 project acres because the farmer did not renew his lease & sold the property. This made Hecate's 60 MW plans impossible and caused Hecate's application to be rejected by NYS. Now Hecate must reapply for a smaller project.**

**The "Facility Site" as of today remains approximately 700 acres in size on 10 parcels of land.\*\***



\* from NY ORES Draft Permit of October 24, 2023.  
\*\* adjusted from NY ORES Draft Permit 10/24/2023 - 880 acres, 13 parcels.

**What's new from Hecate? Nothing, but a BIG MONEY GRAB for private developers.**

Hecate Project Manager Matt Levine: "Inevitably, someone wanting to purchase a project will have to underwrite the economics of the deal, and so Hecate has a duty to make the project [financially] attractive and investible...."

— RevealNews.org podcast 1/6/2024

**1** Required by New York State -NOT optional.

**2** Relevant parts of Hecate's studies were redacted or hidden under invoked "confidentiality", unavailable to the public. Significant data relating to negative impacts to Archaeological Sites, Historic Properties & Wetlands are blacked out.

**3** NY State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation issued an Adverse Impact Determination Letter with respect to five cultural resources in the project area.

**4** Taghkanic Creek watershed supplies City of Hudson's reservoir, yet Hecate has requested exemptions from Copake's restrictions on building in wetlands — possibly exposing an important water source to severe storm erosions and sediment run-off. Collection lines will be fracked under streams.

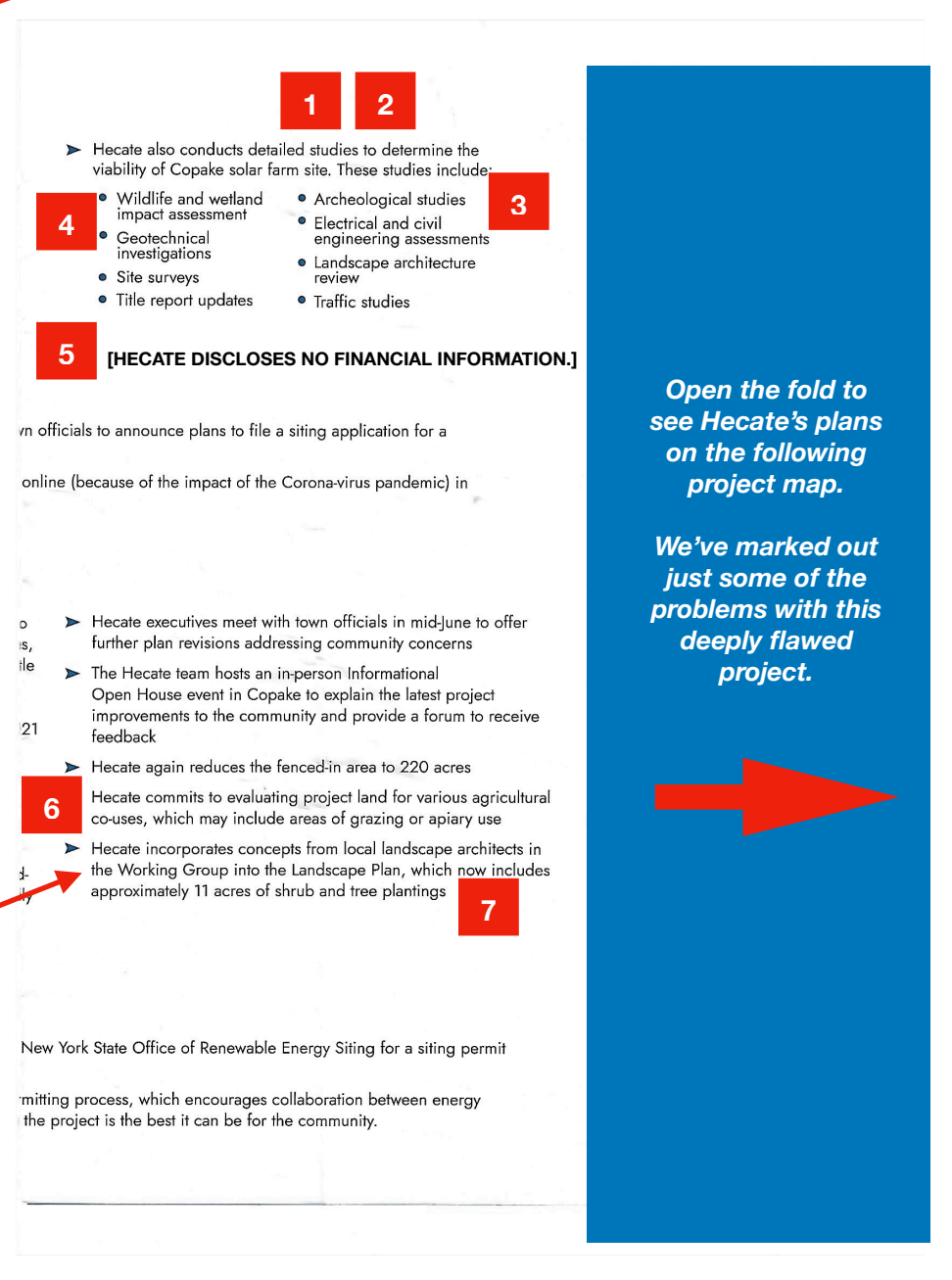
**5** Hecate withholds all financial information, including their huge projected profit and how much is paid to landowners. Hecate can sell the project to an unspecified buyer, and walk away once the permit is granted. Hecate will get tax breaks.

**6** At the public meeting, Project Manager Matt Levine said "That will be up to some future shepherd (yet TBD) to decide" and made no commitments that Hecate would provide the sheep.

"Hecate has always been reticent to commit to participate [in the Working Group plan] because it requires a lot of ongoing effort and maintenance."  
Matt Levine, Hecate Project Manager - RevealNews.org podcast 1/6/2024

**7** Pro bono landscape architects engaged by Copake's volunteer Working Group determined that Hecate's plans ignore expert input and are completely insufficient to screen the project.

All landscape screening has been removed from the southern end of the project. Is this really a better plan?



# What's new from Hecate? Nothing, but a **BIG MONEY GRAB** for private developers.

1

NY State Department of Agriculture and Markets considers farmland conversion to solar to be permanent. The removal of tons of concrete pilings, steel and glass will cost \$ millions to unearth and dispose of. At the end of its useful life, will the area become a brownfield industrial site abandoned by an anonymous investment partnership?

2

They've never published a so-called "Agrivoltaics Integration Plan", whatever that is.

3

Hecate will receive significant tax breaks PLUS get an annual subsidy in the \$ millions from NYS. There is no Copake windfall. Shepherd's Run will likely reduce values of neighboring properties, creating a negative impact on Town, County and School tax revenues.

4

Let's be clear:  
Will there really be any local construction jobs? As for permanent jobs, Hecate mentions none. At similar facilities, ongoing operations are handled by one or two person(s). Hecate has used out-of-state labor to design and build its projects: TRC Companies (Windsor, CT) and Burns & McDonnell (Kansas City, MO) have both been onsite in Copake. Hecate has no binding commitment to hire locally.

### Is Hecate Anti-Union??

The New York International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW Local #236) stated that Hecate promised them work, but then used only out-of-state and non-union labor at its Hecate Albany 1 & 2 LLC projects in Coeymans, NY. IBEW 236 says Hecate is unfit to do business in New York.

5

Battery storage facilities can catch fire and explode. Hecate always knew this, and removed this feature in 2022.

6

Hecate said it might give \$20K toward studies of trails. A pittance. Trails can cost up to \$800,000 per mile to build.

7

The "Net Conservation Benefit Plan" allows Hecate to destroy wildlife habitat at the project site in exchange for preserving habitat elsewhere.

8

Note the non-committal, wishy-washy language:  
- "direct" means indirect impacts are likely  
- "committing to not" is not "absolutely WILL NOT"  
- "bidding opportunities" is NOT WE WILL hire local suppliers and labor

9

Hecate Project Manager Matt Levine came in from Chicago to look at a sheep.



## Project Updates

2

The new Shepherd's Run Solar Farm will have an output of 42MW and a reduced fenced area of approximately 175 acres. based on local feedback, the new proposal will include an Agrivoltaics Integration Plan that provides for sheep grazing in two of the array areas covering 73 acres. This is in addition to the long list of priorities included in the previous application:

5

Exclusion of battery storage from the project scope  
Extensive native tree and shrub planting to minimize sightlines for neighbors

6

Support to extend/connect to local hiking trails or other possible recreational/educational opportunities

➤ Conducting local fire departments and first responder training

➤ Including pollinator species seed mix within the landscaping plan

7

Implementing a Net Conservation Benefit Plan for grassland birds to preserve more than 25 acres of additional habitat

➤ Incorporating wildlife-friendly rural style fencing instead of chain-link fencing

?

Avoiding direct impacts to all state regulated Class I wetland areas and developing a project with no net loss of wetlands

8

?

Committing to not source panels from suppliers who utilize forced labor or that contain the environmental contaminant PFAS (per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances)

?

Providing bidding opportunities to local suppliers and using local labor and purchasing when practicable

Did you know that according to the 2017 Census of Agriculture, Columbia County has 99,179 acres of farmland?

The Shepherd's Run Solar Project represents less than 0.18% of farmland in the county.

## Community Benefits

### ➤ Sustaining Local Agriculture

1

Long-term leases provide farmers with guaranteed revenue that allows owners to sustain operations and invest in modernization. By protecting the farmland from residential or commercial development, the site can return to agricultural use when the solar farm ends its useful life.

Hecate is working to thoughtfully implement a co-utilization plan including sheep grazing. During the operation of the project, pollinator-friendly seeding among the solar panels will enable Shepherd's Run Solar Farm to provide natural native species, crop pollination and enhance soil fertility and ecosystem stability — helping area farms have more bountiful harvests.

3

### New Revenues for Local Services

Shepherd's Run Solar Farm will provide a new source of revenue to fund schools and local projects and services. In addition, Hecate's investment in Copake and Columbia County will result in millions of dollars in positive stimulus for the area economy, local building trades, restaurants, lodging, gas stations, stores, and more.

4

### Jobs and Economic Opportunities

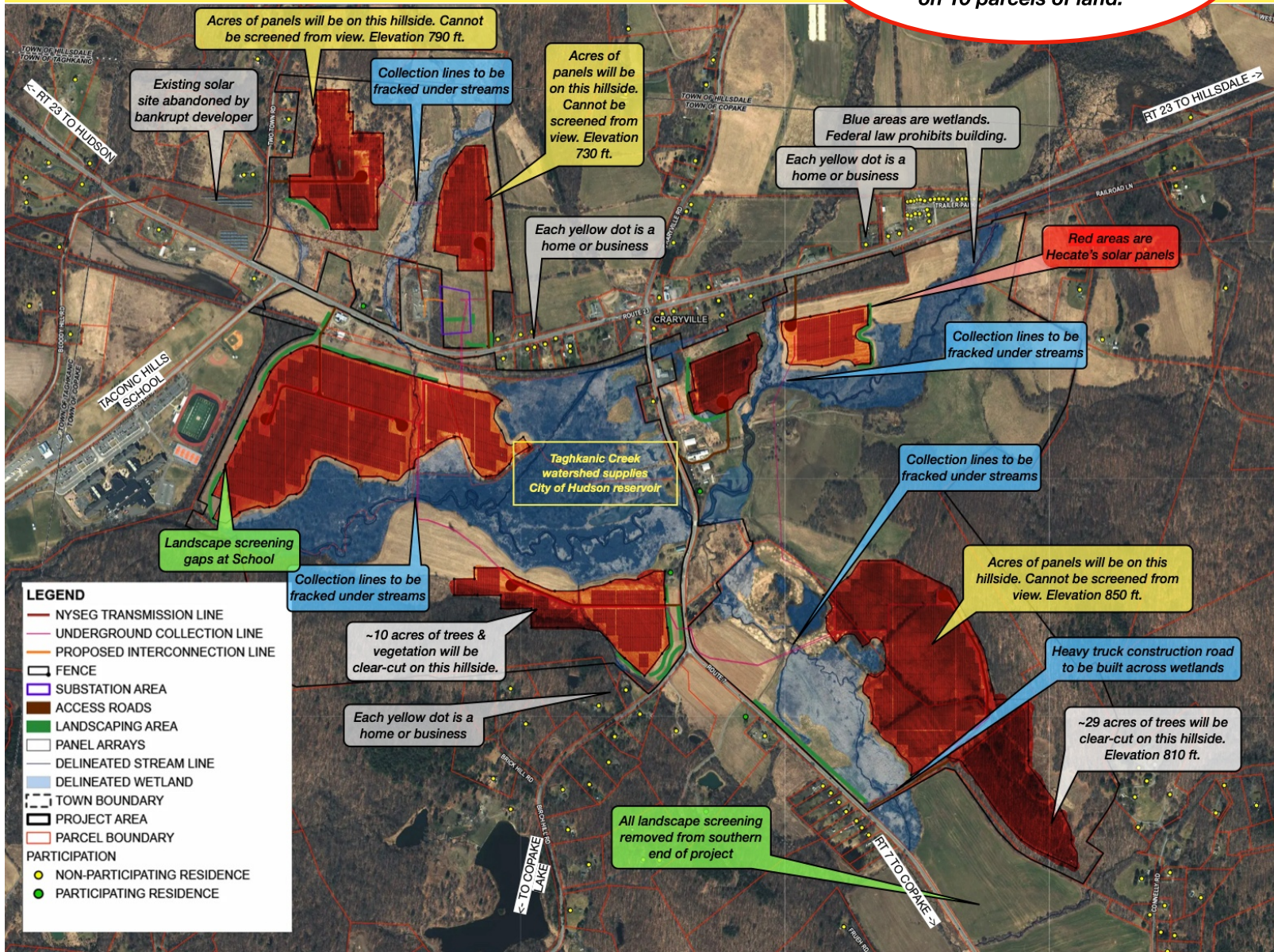
More than 100 construction jobs are expected to be created during construction. Local businesses and workers will have contract opportunities for engineering, surveying, site preparation, construction and ongoing operation and maintenance support to the extent practicable.



Shepherd's Run project developer Matt Levine supervising sheep grazing at Hecate Energy's nearby solar farm in Coeymans, New York.

**Hecate's Revised Plan map - see what's changed.  
And why this plan is still a *very big* problem.**

**The "Facility Site" as of today remains approximately 700 acres in size on 10 parcels of land.\*\***



Hecate's plan is wrong for Copake.

And Hecate is wrong for New York.

**What can I do about it???**

It's time to speak up and make New York State hear real community input.

Call Sen. Michelle Hinchey  
518-455-2350 Albany  
845-331-3810 Kingston

Call Assembly Member Didi Barrett  
518-455-5177 Albany  
518-828-1961 Hudson

Call Gov. Kathy Hochul  
518-474-8390

**Tell them:**

**"I oppose Shepherds Run. It is a money grab by out-of-state private developers that will harm our community.**

**We don't want Hecate Energy here."**



Scan the QR code above to go to [www.sensiblesolarly.org](http://www.sensiblesolarly.org)