

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Office

Environmental Notification Form

For Office Use Only

EEA#: 16212

MEPA Analyst: Eva Murray

The information requested on this form must be completed in order to submit a document electronically for review under the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act, 301 CMR 11.00.

Project Name: Four Star Farms		
Street Address: 496 Pine Meadow Road		
Municipality: Northfield	Watershed: Connecticut River	
Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: 4722261N, 706629E 18T	Latitude: 42-37-30 N	Longitude: 072-28-49 W
Estimated commencement date: N/A	Estimated completion date: N/A	
Project Type: Agricultural	Status of project design: N/A %complete	
Proponent: Hopping Ahead, LLC		
Street Address: 496 Pine Meadow Road		
Municipality: Northfield	State: MA	Zip Code: 01360
Name of Contact Person: Eugene L'Etoile		
Firm/Agency: Field Engineering Co., Inc.	Street Address: 11D Industrial Drive	
Municipality: Mattapoisett	State: MA	Zip Code: 02739
Phone: (508) 758-2749	Fax: (508) 758-2849	E-mail: rriccio@fieldengrg.com

Does this project meet or exceed a mandatory EIR threshold (see 301 CMR 11.03)?
 Yes No

If this is an Expanded Environmental Notification Form (ENF) (see 301 CMR 11.05(7)) or a Notice of Project Change (NPC), are you requesting:

a Single EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.06(8))	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
a Special Review Procedure? (see 301CMR 11.09)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
a Waiver of mandatory EIR? (see 301 CMR 11.11)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
a Phase I Waiver? (see 301 CMR 11.11)	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No

(Note: Greenhouse Gas Emissions analysis must be included in the Expanded ENF.)

Which MEPA review threshold(s) does the project meet or exceed (see 301 CMR 11.03)?
11.3 (1)(a)(5) Release of an interest in land held for conservation, preservation or agricultural or watershed preservation purposes.

Which State Agency Permits will the project require? **N/A**

Identify any financial assistance or land transfer from an Agency of the Commonwealth, including the Agency name and the amount of funding or land area in acres: **Transfer of 130.2 Acres currently held under an Agricultural Covenant back to the owner**

Summary of Project Size & Environmental Impacts	Existing	Change	Total
LAND			
Total site acreage	130.2 ±		
New acres of land altered		-	
Acres of impervious area	-	-	-
Square feet of new bordering vegetated wetlands alteration		-	
Square feet of new other wetland alteration		-	
Acres of new non-water dependent use of tidelands or waterways		-	
STRUCTURES			
Gross square footage	-	-	-
Number of housing units	-	-	-
Maximum height (feet)	-	-	-
TRANSPORTATION			
Vehicle trips per day	< 10	-	< 10
Parking spaces	< 10	-	< 10
WASTEWATER			
Water Use (Gallons per day)	-	-	-
Water withdrawal (GPD)	40,000 for irrigation	-	40,000 for irrigation
Wastewater generation/treatment (GPD)	-	-	-
Length of water mains (miles)	< 1 mile	-	< 1 mile
Length of sewer mains (miles)	-	-	-
<p>Has this project been filed with MEPA before? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (EEA # _____) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>			
<p>Has any project on this site been filed with MEPA before? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (EEA # _____) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p>			

GENERAL PROJECT INFORMATION – all proponents must fill out this section

PROJECT DESCRIPTION:

Describe the existing conditions and land uses on the project site:

The project site is currently in active agricultural use with the growing of a variety of crops including vegetables, hops, turfgrasses, and other grains. Many of the crops are processed and sold from the proponent's facilities located on adjacent parcels to the project site. Existing Conditions Plans of the subject parcels are included as an attachment to this ENF.

Describe the proposed project and its programmatic and physical elements:

The proposal for the project site is to remove an existing Agricultural Covenant from the project site to allow the applicants to explore additional land uses and opportunities to support the continued use of the land in agriculture. These additional land uses would not currently be allowed with the Covenant in place. The applicant is currently exploring the potential for a dual-use solar array on the subject parcels, which would allow for the continued use of the land beneath the solar panels for agriculture while generating solar power in accordance with the Commonwealth's goals. A preliminary schematic plan of the proposed dual-use solar array including typical construction details is included as an attachment to this ENF.

As the attached preliminary plans show, a potential of 10 MW DC of power could be produced by the dual-use solar array constructed on the subject parcels. The dual-use solar array, if pursued, would be constructed in such a way that it would not remove land from agricultural production, require any direct impacts to wetlands, or require any tree clearing or land alteration that would otherwise trigger further MEPA review.

The preliminary plan shows the maximum potential build-out that the applicants are considering on the subject parcels and may change following review during local permitting and the interconnection process with the utility company. Any changes would likely be a reduction in the scope, or a reconfiguration of the panels in such a way that would not increase the proposed footprint from what is shown in this filing or deviate from the original intent of the design, which is to maximize the agricultural viability of the property while also producing solar power and eliminating the need for any wetland alteration or clear cutting on the subject parcels and on any other land of the landowner.

A copy of the Agricultural Covenant and the State Legislation which directs and governs the release of the Covenant is included in the Supplemental Data section of this ENF

NOTE: The project description should summarize both the project's direct and indirect impacts (including construction period impacts) in terms of their magnitude, geographic extent, duration and frequency, and reversibility, as applicable. It should also discuss the infrastructure requirements of the project and the capacity of the municipal and/or regional infrastructure to sustain these requirements into the future.

Describe the on-site project alternatives (and alternative off-site locations, if applicable), considered by the proponent, including at least one feasible alternative that is allowed under current zoning, and the reasons(s) that they were not selected as the preferred alternative: