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Light Source bp Development Director Shanelle Montana explained to the Auglaize County commissioners Tuesday how the project layout is continuing to change. The proposed Birch Solar Farm project is changing its layout to move away from more populated areas. Changes move the project south of Breese Road, with about 75 percent of the project in Allen County and 25 percent in Auglaize County.

The farm will still incorporate about 1,900 acres. The layout still isn't finalized and will continue to change as several studies are completed.

Montana said they are taking feedback to heart. She said they mitigate wildlife impact by consulting with Ohio Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. They also plan to use pollinator habitats on site.

A concern from several home owners is how this will impact their property values.

Montana said farm fencing will be used instead of chain linked fencing along with tree and shrub screening.

Payments to adjacent landowners ranging between \$5,000 and \$50,000 will be made based on impact.

Montana stressed that when the project is dismantled much of the material will be recycled and the Ohio Treasurer holds a de-commissioning bond for the project.

Commissioner Doug Spencer asked if there was a termination clause, if events were as unpredictable as they were in 2020. Montana said she didn't foresee a need to terminate, but that the OPSB could revoke licensing if they were violating their agreement.

Another concern was stormwater and drainage. Birch solar contractors are currently studying the impact on soil and hydrology. Montana said they are required by the EPA to have a storm pollution prevention plan, which would be detailed in their permit application.

She also said solar panels were rigorously tested as part of a process regulated by the EPA, and sound pollution would be limited.

While a final layout is still expected in the coming weeks, several land and wildlife studies are still ongoing aimed at minimizing the impact of the project.