



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

California State Office
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W1623
Sacramento, CA 95825
www.blm.gov/california

In Reply Refer To:
1793

The Honorable Governor Newsom
Governor of California
1021 O Street, Suite 9000
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Newsom:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has developed the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Final Programmatic EIS) and Proposed Resource Management Plan Amendments (Proposed RMPA) for Utility-Scale Solar Energy Development (the “Updated Western Solar Plan”). The Proposed RMPA/Final Programmatic EIS is provided for your review prior to the public release on August 30, 2024. Please email lfox@anl.gov with the subject line "Final Solar PEIS" and provide a point of contact and email address to access the downloadable version of the Updated Western Solar Plan. The point of contact will be sent a link to the files.

To aid in your review of the Updated Western Solar Plan, BLM’s Web Mapper will be available on Wednesday, August 28, 2024 at <https://experience.arcgis.com/experience/269187273bc743c5a4d21c75b44d0f2f>.

The purpose of the proposed action is to improve initial siting of utility-scale photovoltaic solar energy development proposals by identifying “solar application areas,” which are areas of BLM-administered lands where proposals for solar energy development are anticipated to encounter fewer resource conflicts compared to areas identified as “exclusion areas” where solar development is likely to encounter significant resource conflicts, making them unsuitable for solar development proposals. There is a need to improve the solar development application process by providing development opportunities in specified solar application areas while maintaining sufficient flexibility to account for site-specific resource considerations on a case-by-case basis during consideration of project-specific applications and associated NEPA analysis.

The planning area is located within the States of Arizona, California (excluding the lands covered by the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan in the southern California deserts), Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah, Washington, and Wyoming. The Proposed RMPA would amend BLM land use plans throughout the planning area to exclude

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ARIZONA, CALIFORNIA, NEVADA, OREGON*

* PARTIAL

solar energy development in areas that need protection. The amendments would also update design features and environmental evaluation processes and incorporate new information and analysis.

The BLM planning regulations in 43 CFR § 1610.3-2(e) provide each governor up to 60 days to identify inconsistencies with approved state or local plans, policies, or programs and to provide written recommendations to the BLM State Director. Should you wish to participate in this

review, you may submit comments in writing to the BLM California State Director's office at 2800 Cottage Way Suite W1623, Sacramento, CA 95825 or josephstout@blm.gov. If the BLM California State Director does not accept the Governor's recommendations on plan consistency, the Governor may appeal to the BLM Director.

If no response is received by October 25, 2024, the BLM will assume the Proposed RMPA is consistent with the State of California's approved plans, policies, and programs.

If you or your staff have any questions about the Updated Western Solar Plan Proposed RMPA/Final Programmatic EIS or the Governor's Consistency Review process, please contact Jeremy Bluma at jbluma@blm.gov.

Sincerely,

Erica St. Michel
Acting State Director