

lands which have excellent solar development potential and limited resource conflicts.

The Solar PEIS will help BLM identify lands appropriate for solar energy development and establish a comprehensive list of mitigation requirements applicable to all future solar energy development on BLM-administered lands. As part of the Solar PEIS, the Agencies will conduct in-depth environmental analyses of 24 solar energy study areas for the purpose of determining whether such areas should be designated as Solar Energy Zones (SEZs), specific locations determined best suited for large-scale production of solar energy.

The solar energy study areas were identified based on preliminary results of California's Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative, the Western Governors' Association Western Renewable Energy Zone and Transmission Study, and existing BLM resource information. Criteria used to identify solar energy study areas include requirements that the area: be a minimum size of 2,000 acres, be near existing roads and existing or designated transmission line routes, and have a slope of less than 5%. Sensitive resource areas were also removed from consideration, including the following categories of lands:

(1) National Landscape Conservation System lands (except that lands within the California Desert Conservation Area that have no other special designation may be included in a solar energy study area);

(2) Threatened and endangered species designated critical habitat;

(3) Back-country byways;

(4) Areas of known Tribal concern;

(5) Areas of known high cultural site density; and

(6) Areas designated for right-of-way avoidance or right-of-way exclusion in BLM land use plans. Such areas include BLM areas of critical environmental concern, areas with important visual resources, special recreation management areas, areas allocated to maintain wilderness characteristics, wildlife movement corridors, and areas where the BLM has made a commitment to take certain actions with respect to sensitive species habitat.

Some or all of the solar energy study areas may be found appropriate for designation as SEZs as described above. The Agencies are making the maps of the solar energy study areas available to the public and soliciting written comments to provide an opportunity for public input as part of the ongoing Solar PEIS analysis. Specifically, the Agencies request information and comments on

the potential for significant impacts of solar energy development on known solar resources within a solar energy study area and the economic viability of solar energy development within specific areas. No additional public meetings are planned prior to the release of the draft Solar PEIS; however, the public will have additional opportunities to comment when the draft Solar PEIS is released.

The BLM's objective for the Solar PEIS is to create a more efficient process for authorizing solar energy development on public lands that would also:

- Facilitate near-term utility-scale solar energy development on public lands;
- Minimize potential environmental, social, and economic impacts;
- Provide the solar industry flexibility in proposing and developing solar energy projects (location, facility size, technology, etc.);
- Optimize existing transmission corridors; and
- Standardize the authorization process for solar energy development on BLM-administered lands.

The BLM will continue to accept new solar applications. The BLM is in the process of considering alternative procedures, such as non-competitive and competitive, application fees, and diligent development requirements, for solar energy development applications within the solar energy study areas. Any entity with an existing application for lands within the solar energy study areas received by the BLM prior to June 30, 2009 will continue to be processed under the BLM's current procedures. Applications received after June 30, 2009 for lands inside the solar energy study areas will be subject to the Record of Decision (ROD) for the Solar PEIS and any alternative procedures developed by BLM for non-competitive and competitive processes. All applications received for lands outside of the solar energy study areas will be processed under the BLM's current procedures. Any right-of-way grant for a solar energy application issued after the BLM's ROD for the Solar PEIS may be issued subject to the requirements adopted in the ROD.

The Agencies invite interested Federal and State agencies, organizations, Native American tribes and members of the public to submit written comments to assist in identifying significant environmental issues, existing resource data, and industry interest with respect to the solar energy study areas. You may submit comments in writing using one of the methods listed in the "ADDRESSES" section above. Before

including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comments—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

**Mike Pool,**

*Acting Director, Bureau of Land Management.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Bureau of Land Management

[LLWO350000.L14300000]

#### Notice of Proposed Withdrawal and Opportunity for Public Meeting; Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah

**AGENCY:** Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

**ACTION:** Notice.

**SUMMARY:** The Secretary of the Interior proposes to withdraw approximately 676,048 acres of public lands from settlement, sale, location, or entry under the general land laws, including the mining laws, on behalf of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to protect and preserve solar energy study areas for future solar energy development. This notice segregates the lands for up to 2 years from surface entry and mining while various studies and analyses are made to support a final decision on the withdrawal application. The lands will remain open to the mineral leasing laws.

**DATES:** Comments and requests for a public meeting must be received by September 28, 2009.

**ADDRESSES:** Comments and meeting requests should be sent to the BLM Director, 1849 C Street NW. (WO350), Washington, DC, 20240.

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT:** Linda Resseguie, BLM, 202-452-7774, or one of the following BLM State Offices.

**SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION:** The applicant is the Bureau of Land Management at the address above and its petition requests the Secretary of the Interior to withdraw, subject to valid existing rights, approximately 676,048 acres of public lands located in the States of Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah from

settlement, sale, location, or entry under the general land laws, including the mining laws, but not the mineral leasing laws. The lands are identified in the maps referenced in the Notice of Availability of Maps and Additional Public Scoping for Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement to Develop and Implement Agency-Specific Programs for Solar Energy Development; Bureau of Land Management Approach for Processing Existing and Future Solar Applications to be published in the **Federal Register**. Copies of the maps are available online at <http://solareis.anl.gov> and are also available from the BLM offices listed below:

Arizona State Office, One North Central Avenue, Suite 800, Phoenix, AZ 85004.

California State Office, 2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-1623, Sacramento, CA 95825.

Colorado State Office, 2850 Youngfield Street, Lakewood, CO 80215.

Nevada State Office, 1340 Financial Blvd., Reno, NV 89520.

New Mexico State Office, 1474 Rodeo Road, Santa Fe, NM 87505.

Utah State Office, 440 West 200 South, Suite 500, Salt Lake City, UT 84101.

The lands depicted on the maps described above are located within the following townships:

#### Arizona

##### *Gila and Salt River Meridian*

T. 9 N., R. 9 W.

T. 5 N., R. 15 W.

Tps. 4 and 5 N., R. 16 W.

Tps. 2 S., Rs. 6 and 7 W.

#### California

##### *San Bernardino Meridian*

Tps. 8 and 9 N., R. 4 E.

Tps. 7, 8, and 9 N., R. 5 E.

Tps. 8 and 9 N., R. 6 E.

Tps. 1 and 2 N., Rs. 17, 18, 19, and 20 E.

T. 4 S., R. 14 E.

Tps. 3, 4, and 5 S., Rs. 15 and 16 E.

Tps. 3, 4, 5, 6, 16, and 17 S., R. 17 E.

Tps. 1, 6, 16, and 17 S., R. 18 E.

Tps. 1 and 6 S., R. 19 E.

Tps. 4, 5, 6, and 7 S., R. 20 E.

Tps. 4, 5, 7, and 8 S., R. 21 E.

Tps. 4, 5, 6, and 7 S., R. 22 E.

T. 5 S., R. 23 E.

#### Colorado

##### *New Mexico Principal Meridian*

Tps. 34, 35, and 45 N., R. 8 E.

Tps. 32 and 45 N., R. 9 E.

T. 32 N., R. 10 E.

Tps. 37 and 38 N., R. 12 E.

T. 38 N., R. 13 E.

#### New Mexico

##### *New Mexico Principal Meridian*

Tps. 23, 24, and 25 S., R. 1 W.

Tps. 22, 23, 24, and 25 S., R. 2 W.

Tps. 22, 23, and 24 S., R. 3 W.

Tps. 23 and 24 S., R. 4 W.

Tps. 24 and 25 S., R. 1 E.

Tps. 17, 18, and 19 S., Rs. 8 and 9 E.

#### Nevada

##### *Mount Diablo Meridian*

Tps. 3 and 4 N., Rs. 39 and 40 E.

Tps. 1, 2, and 3 N., R. 64 E.

Tps. 1 and 2 N., R. 65 E.

T. 6 S., R. 41 E.

Tps. 13 and 14 S., R. 47 E.

T. 14 S., R. 48 E.

Tps. 5, 6, 7, 16, 17, and 18 S., R. 63 E.

Tps. 1, 16, 17, and 18 S., R. 64 E.

T. 1 S., R. 65 E.

Tps. 11 S., Rs. 69 and 70 E.

#### Utah

##### *Salt Lake Meridian*

Tps. 30 S., Rs. 10, 11, and 12 W.

Tps. 27, 33, and 34 S., R. 14 W.

Tps. 33 and 34 S., R. 15 W.

The BLM's petition for withdrawal has been approved by the Secretary of the Interior.

The purpose of the proposed withdrawal is to protect and preserve solar energy study areas for future solar energy development for a 20-year period.

Records relating to the petition may be examined by contacting Linda Resseguie at the above address or by calling 202-452-7774.

For a period of 90 days from the date of publication of this notice, all persons who wish to submit comments, suggestions, or objections in connection with the proposed withdrawal may present their views in writing to the BLM Director at the address noted above.

Comments including names and street addresses of respondents will be available for public review at the BLM Washington Office at the address noted above, during regular business hours 8 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, except holidays. Before including your address, phone number, e-mail address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so. Individual respondents may request confidentiality. If you wish to

withhold your name or address from public review or from disclosure under the Freedom of Information Act, you must state this prominently at the beginning of your comments. Such requests will be honored to the extent allowed by law. All submissions from organizations or businesses, and from individuals identifying themselves as representatives or officials of organizations or businesses, will be made available for public inspection in their entirety.

Notice is hereby given that an opportunity for a public meeting is afforded in connection with the proposed withdrawal. All interested persons who desire a public meeting for the purpose of being heard on the proposed withdrawal must submit a written request to the BLM Director no later than September 28, 2009. If the authorized officer determines that a public meeting will be held, a notice of the time and place will be published in the **Federal Register** and a local newspaper at least 30 days before the scheduled date of the meeting.

Any application for a withdrawal will be processed in accordance with the regulations set forth in 43 CFR 2310.1-2.

For a period of 2 years from the date of publication of this notice in the **Federal Register**, the lands referenced in this notice will be segregated from settlement, sale, location, or entry under the general land laws, including the mining laws, unless an application is denied or canceled or the withdrawal is approved prior to that date.

Licenses, permits, cooperative agreements, or discretionary land use authorizations of a temporary nature which would not impact the site may be allowed with the approval of an authorized officer of the BLM during the segregative period.

**Authority:** 43 CFR 2310.3-1.

#### Mike Pool,

*Acting Director, Bureau of Land Management.*

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## DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

### Fish and Wildlife Service

[FWS-R8-ES-2009-N127; 81420-1113-0000-F3]

#### Safe Harbor Agreement for the City of Elk Grove's Shed B and Whitelock Parkway Drainage Corridors, in Sacramento County, CA

**AGENCY:** Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.