Renewable Energy Application Process
Southern Nevada District Office
Renewable Energy Application Policy

• Code of Federal Regulations
  – 43 CFR 2804

• Solar Energy PEIS ROD

• Southern Nevada District Office Instructional Memorandums
  – IM-2019-002
  – IM-2020-001
Application Process Flow Chart

Submit an Expression of Interest (Applicant)

Prepare Resource & Constraints Map (BLM)

Provide Applicant and Local Government(s) with Resource & Constraints Map (BLM)

Attend Pre-Application Meeting 1
43 CFR 2804.10 (BLM & Applicant)

Coordinate with Local Government (Applicant)

Attend Pre-Application Meeting 2
(BLM and Applicant)

Submit Application Package
43 CFR 2804.12 (Applicant)

Begin the NEPA Process
40 CFR parts 1500-1508 (BLM)

GO: BLM will initiate the Variance and/or Pre-NEPA Processes

Prioritize Project
43 CFR 2804.35 (BLM)

Process Submitted Application
43 CFR 2804.25 (BLM)

Complete Variance and/or Pre-NEPA Requirements (Applicant)

NOTE: Should the need arise BLM may determine to proceed with a Competitive Variance Process in accordance with 43 CFR 2804.23

STOP: Wait for BLM to engage with more information

Establish Priority Order for Projects within each priority level (High, Medium, Low Priority) (BLM)

Applicant Notification regarding Acceptance or Denial of Application
43 CFR 2804.26 (BLM)
Submit an Expression of Interest

• Applicant provides BLM with
  – GIS shapefile or KMZ
  – Brief project description
    • Who is developing this project?
    • What type of technology is being proposed?
    • Where is the project located?
    • When do you hope to have a completed proposal?
    • Why is the project being proposed?
    • Why is the project located in that location?
    • How will the project be constructed?
Resource & Constraints Map

• BLM will prepare a resources & constraints map to answer:
  – Is the project in an exclusion area?
  – Is the project in a Solar Energy Zone (SEZ) or Designated Leasing Area (DLA)?
  – Does the project overlap with an existing application or other land use authorization?
  – What are the general constraints from the Resource Management Plan (RMP)?
  – Are there other resource constraints to consider?
Pre-Application Meeting 1

- **Attendees**
  - Applicant’s Project Manager
  - Others determined necessary by the applicant
  - BLM Energy and Infrastructure Team
    - Project Manager
    - Planning & Environmental Coordinator
    - Realty Specialist
    - Archaeologist/Tribal Liaison
    - Biologist

- **Objectives:**
  - Project overview from applicant
  - Initial constraints and opportunities of the site location from BLM
  - Provide the applicant with local government POC
Coordination with Local Government

• Applicant to coordinate with local governments to gauge their level of support for the project

• Applicant will need to provide BLM with documentation that this has occurred and the results of this coordination

• Early coordination with local governments is required
Pre-Application Meeting 2

• Attendees
  – Applicant’s Project Manager
  – Others determined necessary by the applicant
  – BLM’s Authorized Officer
  – BLM Energy and Infrastructure Team
  – BLM Resource Specialists

• Objectives
  – Review results of local government coordination
  – Details regarding constraints, opportunities, and potential resource impacts
  – Review application requirements
Application Package

• Application Package
  – SF299
  – Application filing fee
  – Initial Plan of Development
    • Project siting and design
    • Measures to avoid and minimize impacts identified during the pre-application meetings
    • Associated actions or facilities
Process Application Package

• 43 CFR 2804.25
  – Serialize application
  – Review application and Plan of Development (POD) for completion pursuant to policy
  – BLM will provide a date to notify the applicant of the application’s priority level
SNDO Prioritization Process

• Southern Nevada District IM-2020-001

• Purpose
  – Create a fair and transparent process for prioritization
  – Increase consistency in the review of applications by creating a standard process to conduct this review
  – Provide transparency in the decision-making process
Prioritization Background

• Many demands of the public lands managed by the Southern Nevada District
• BLM recognizes the need and desire for renewable energy projects
• Manage public lands in accordance with our multiple use mandate
SNDO Prioritization Policy

• 43 CFR 2804.35
  – Established screening criteria
  – BLM will prioritize applications
    • May re-categorize based on new information
  – Three categories (high, medium, low)

• Local considerations
• Resource considerations
Priority Decision

• Applicant notification regarding their application priority
  – Prioritization worksheet
STOP

• At this point, please wait for BLM to notify you that they are ready to go further with your project

• Please do not reach out to BLM specialists requesting their assistance in the review of protocols, qualifications, or report reviews.
Changing an Application’s Priority

• BLM may re-categorize any application based on new information received
  – surveys
  – public meetings
  – other data collection
  – after any changes to the application
• New information would be included, and the application would be re-prioritized
Establish Priority Processing Order

1. Obligations to authorized projects
2. Obligations to projects in process
3. Solar Energy Zones & Designated Leasing Areas
4. High priority applications
5. Medium priority applications
6. Low priority applications
Competitive Variance Process

• BLM Consideration
  – When two or more competing applications or expressions of interest in the same area

• Process is outlined in 43 CFR 2804.30
GO: Notification of Acceptance

• Applicant notification of application acceptance
• Notification will include
  – Statement that BLM is prepared to process your application
  – Variance process requirements as required
  – Required resources surveys and protocols
  – Specialist contact Information
  – Other requirements to complete prior to initiating the NEPA Process
Questions

• Please email questions related to policy or process you would like answered during the virtual workshop to Kirsten Cannon at k1cannon@blm.gov

• Q&As will be posted on Southern Nevada District’s homepage within a week