



U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

Solar Project Application Evaluation Process

Fact Sheet—Southern Nevada District Office, Nevada

The right-of-way regulations provide direction on solar and wind energy development applications located on BLM managed public lands. The BLM evaluates the appropriateness of right-of-way applications for utility-scale solar energy development on a case-by-case basis based on environmental considerations; coordination with appropriate federal, state, and local agencies and tribes; and public outreach.

The regulations provide direction on solar and wind energy development applications and state information provided by the applicant and other parties can be utilized when evaluating the appropriateness of an application. As part of the evaluation, the BLM has scheduled public information forums and a public input period for the Copper Rays Solar Project to provide opportunities for public outreach and input. Information gathered during the public input period will inform the BLM determination on whether to continue to process, or to deny, the right-of-way application (application evaluation determination). The application evaluation determination is separate and comes before the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) process.

In 2012, the BLM and the United States Department of Energy issued the Final Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement for Solar Energy Development (Solar PEIS) in six Southwestern States (Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah.) The comprehensive Solar PEIS facilitated the permitting of solar energy development projects on federal public land in a more efficient, standardized, and environmentally responsible manner. The Copper Rays Solar Project was considered a “pending” application under the Solar PEIS as it was submitted prior to publication of the Supplement to the Draft Solar PEIS. Because of this, the application is not subject to any decisions adopted by the Solar PEIS Record of Decision, including the variance process.

For more information about the application evaluation process, please see the graphic on the next page.

Solar Project Application Received

Solar Project Prioritization Process

Interdisciplinary Team
Review

Priority Recommendation

Priority Determination

Solar Application Evaluation

•Public Information Forums

•Agency Coordination

BLM to Determine Whether to Process or Deny
Application After Application Evaluation

If BLM determines to continue processing the application

NEPA Process

NEPA Analysis

Public Involvement