

Restoration Design Energy Project (RDEP) Environmental Impact Statement

October 2011



BLM

RDEP Overview

This newsletter continues the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) effort to keep the public updated on the Restoration Design Energy Project (RDEP). The purpose of the RDEP is to identify lands across Arizona that may be suitable for the development of utility- or distributed-scale solar and wind facilities and to establish a baseline set of environmental protection measures for such projects. A parcel of public land may be sufficient for a project, or it may serve as a piece of a larger parcel aggregated for a utility-scale renewable energy project.

In April, the conceptual draft alternatives were released for public review. An important component of the alternatives is the identification of proposed Renewable Energy Development Areas (REDAs). The BLM is currently refining the alternatives based on public input.

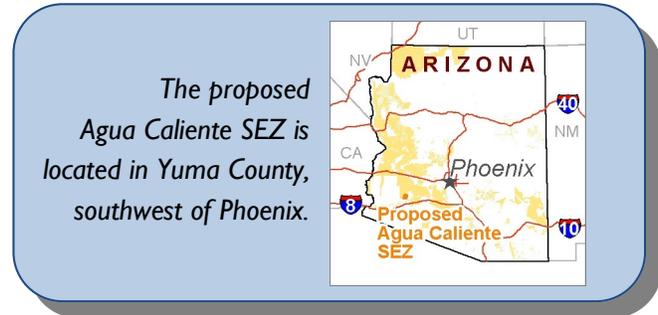
In coordination with the Solar Draft Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Solar Draft PEIS) and policy direction from the Department of the Interior, the BLM is using the RDEP to identify an additional Solar Energy Zone (SEZ) exclusively for utility-scale solar development. This proposed SEZ would be in addition to the three SEZs identified for Arizona in the Solar Draft PEIS.

RDEP Proposing the Agua Caliente SEZ

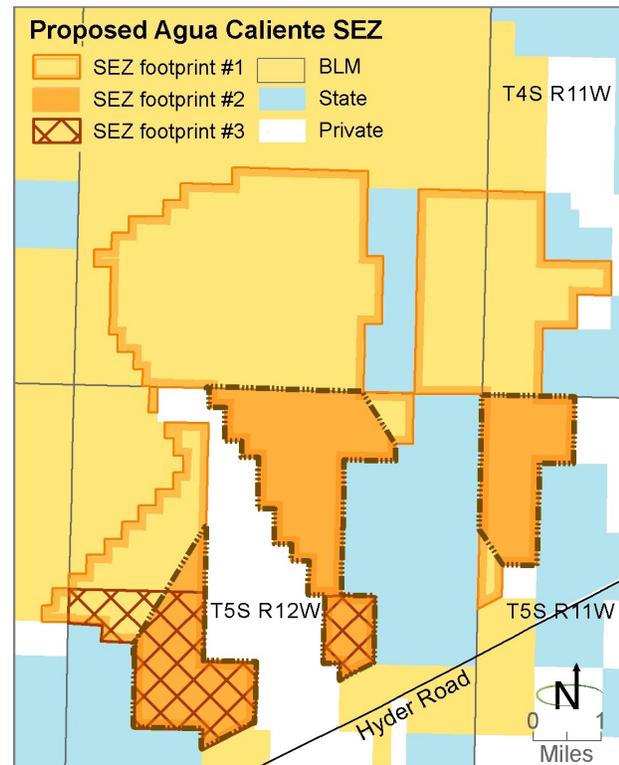
Based on a statewide review, the BLM identified the proposed Agua Caliente SEZ as a candidate for analysis. The screening criteria focused on large blocks of BLM-administered lands with limited sensitive resources located near existing solar energy developments on previously disturbed lands and near existing road and transmission infrastructure.

The analysis will establish whether the area is suitable for solar development and the extent of the

boundaries. Three alternative SEZ footprints are being considered and will be analysed in the EIS. The RDEP Record of Decision (ROD) will include a decision about the suitability of the land as a SEZ and the selected boundaries.



The public will have a chance to comment on the RDEP, including the proposed Agua Caliente SEZ, upon publication of the Draft EIS in early 2012. Public meetings will be held during the comment period. The Final EIS and ROD are expected to be published in late 2012.



Project Schedule

Public Review of Draft EIS – Early 2012

Final EIS and ROD – Late 2012

Additional information regarding the Solar PEIS and its status is available on the project's web site:
<http://solareis.anl.gov/>

The Restoration Design Energy Project (RDEP), funded by the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, will support the Secretary of the Interior's goals to build America's new energy future and to protect and restore treasured landscapes.

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If you would like to be added to our electronic mailing list, please submit your e-mail address to:
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The BLM is eager to educate the interested public about this exciting project.

Stay up to date, with the RDEP web site!

http://www.blm.gov/az/st/en/prog/energy/arra_solar.html