

Solar Regional Mitigation Strategy Objectives and Process

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Regional Mitigation: Why are we here?



Regional Mitigation: Why are we here?

- Regional mitigation: landscape approach to dealing with impacts
- Commitment made in BLM's Solar Energy Program (PEIS)
- First step in the development of a regional mitigation strategy for Arizona's Solar Energy Zones
 - Better define needed mitigation and costs
 - Stakeholder-driven
- To identify unavoidable impacts of development in the Solar Energy Zones (SEZs) that may warrant offsite mitigation

Regional Mitigation: Why are we here?

- Regional mitigation strategy is not a binding decision document
- It is a recommendation that will inform future project-specific NEPA analysis
- Impacts can also be **AVOIDED** or **MINIMIZED ONSITE**

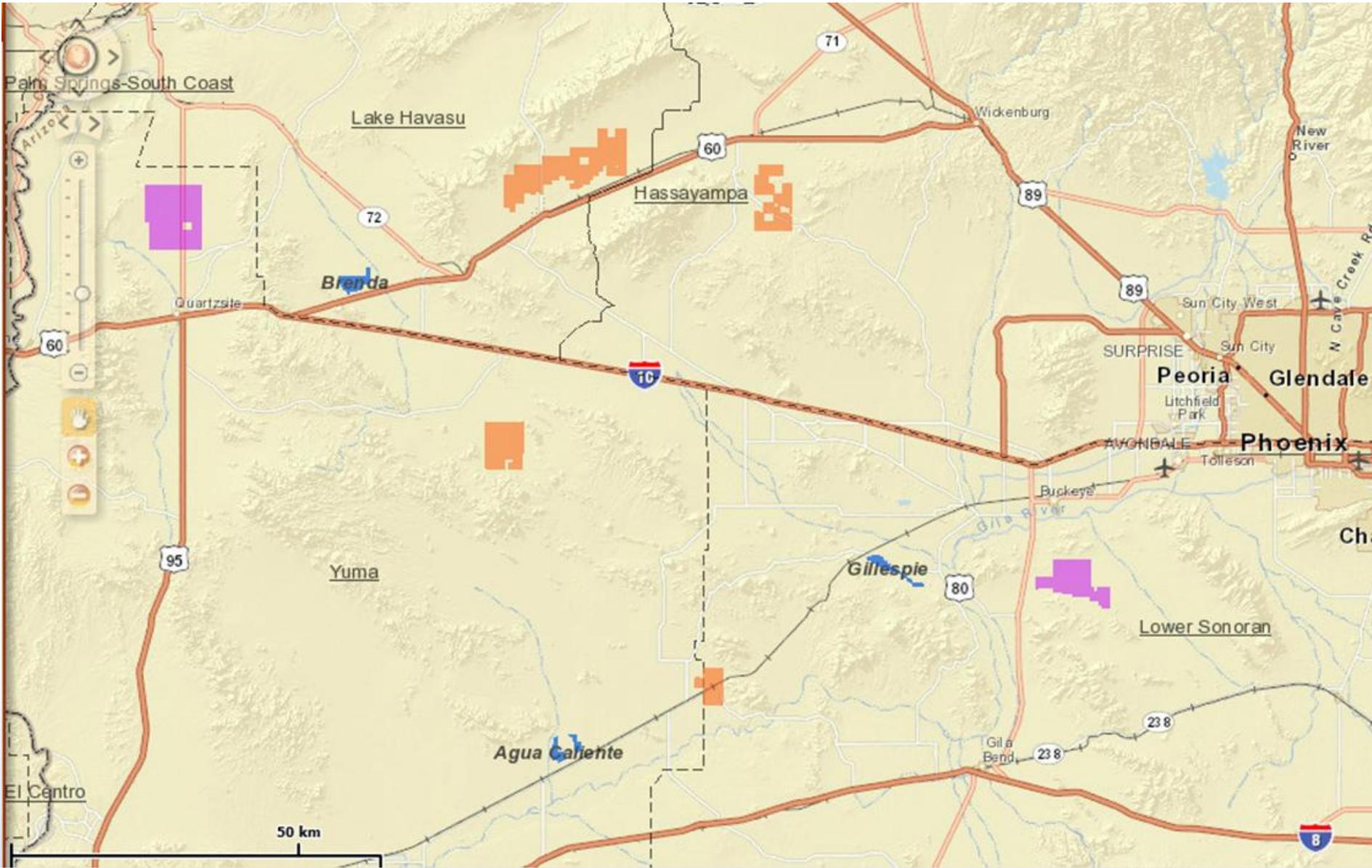
BLM's Solar Energy Program

- Defined in Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and Record of Decision (2012)
 - 17 SEZs- 2 in Arizona- Brenda and Gillespie
 - Variance lands and application process
 - Design features and development requirements
- Additional state-specific work in Arizona- Restoration Design Energy Project (RDEP)
 - 192,000 acres of Renewable Energy Development Areas- low resource conflict
 - 1 SEZ- Agua Caliente
 - Additional required design features, studies, and BMPs

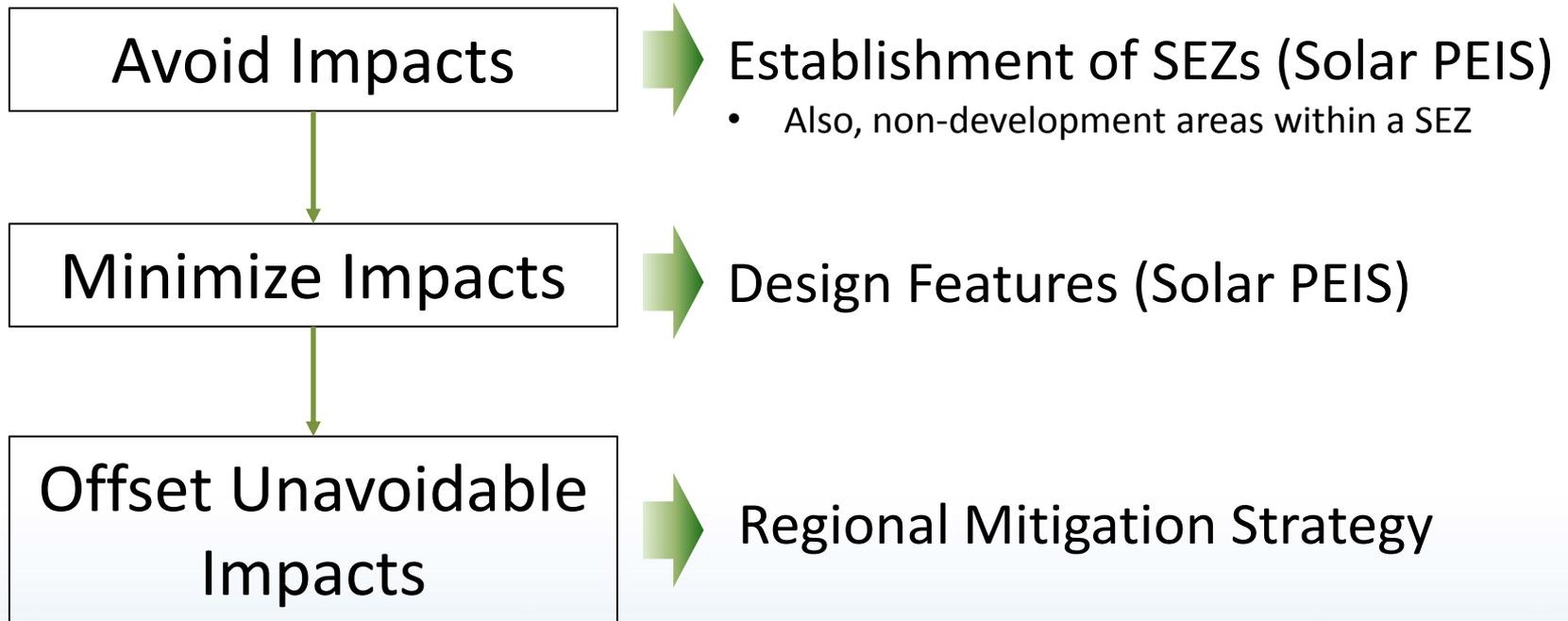
Arizona's SEZs

- Brenda- 3,348 acres- Lake Havasu Field Office
- Gillespie- 2,618 acres- Lower Sonoran Field Office
- Agua Caliente- 2,550 acres- Yuma Field Office

- Identified in the Solar PEIS (national) and Restoration Design Energy Project (Arizona)
- Solar development prioritized within SEZs
- Competitive leasing regulations under development



BLM Mitigation Hierarchy



Data and Guidance

- Analysis of impacts from the Solar PEIS and Restoration Design Energy Project
- Sonoran Desert Rapid Ecoregional Assessment (REA)
- Pilot Project: Regional Mitigation Strategy for the Dry Lake Solar Energy Zone- BLM Technical Note 444
- BLM Resource Management Plans
- BLM Interim Policy- Regional Mitigation Manual 1794

Element 1 Collect Baseline Data for Assessing Unavoidable Impacts

Element 2 Assess Degree of Impacts and Identify Resources that May Warrant Regional Mitigation

Element 3 Identify Regional Mitigation Goals

Element 4 Evaluation of Appropriate Mitigation Locations, Objectives, and Actions

Element 5 Recommend Method for Calculating Mitigation Compensation for SEZs

Element 6 Recommend Solar Regional Mitigation Fee Structure

Element 7 Develop Mitigation Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan

Where are we going next?

- BLM and Argonne will incorporate stakeholder input and any new data to our initial assessment of unavoidable impacts
- Next public engagement- August 2014 webinar
- Elements 3 and 4 of SRMS
 - Identification of Regional Mitigation Goals
 - Evaluation of mitigation locations, objectives, and actions