



# United States Department of the Interior

## BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

San Luis Valley Field Office  
46525 Colorado Highway 114  
Saguache, Colorado 81149



In Reply Refer To:  
1790 (COF0000, JV)

Name  
Agency  
Location, ST Zip

Dear XXXX:

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is announcing the launch of a *San Luis Valley – Taos Plateau Landscape Assessment* which will inform the development of *Regional Mitigation Strategies* for BLM Colorado Solar Energy Zones (SEZ's) as designated by the Department of Interior (Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement, Record of Decision, Oct 12, 2012). With this letter, we are notifying your agency of this joint Landscape Assessment and Solar Regional Mitigation Strategy development. The process is expected to continue through Mid FY 2015, and we invite your agency participation in the process.

In recognition of the landscape context in which we work, we strive to improve upon land use decisions posed by our multiple use mission. We are dedicated to interagency partnership, collaboration, and public engagement in pursuit of a broader understanding of the conditions and trends of our natural and human environment. The geographic area for this Landscape Assessment is based on EPA Level IV ecoregions, which are defined by 5<sup>th</sup>-level watersheds that cover BLM administered lands in the San Luis Valley and Northern New Mexico including the Rio Grande del Norte National Monument. The assessment will rely on existing and available data while following BLM Rapid Ecoregional Assessment (REA) conceptual and modeling protocols.

Regional Mitigation Strategies for BLM CO SEZ's will be developed using unavoidable impact assessment and stakeholder engagement. Both the Landscape Assessment and development of SEZ Regional Mitigation Strategies will be supported by the Department of Energy Argonne National Laboratories (Argonne). BLM staff in Colorado and New Mexico and Argonne will be working closely on this effort, as well as other issues, in pursuit of healthy landscape, resource conservation and national renewable energy priorities.

Your agency involvement would involve some staff time for:

1. Interagency discussion and/or webinars focused on:
  - a. existing baseline data,
  - b. landscape management questions,
  - c. conservation elements,

- d. potential off-site mitigation opportunities including measures and locations, and
2. Participation in field visits and public meetings tentatively scheduled for summer 2014.

Attached is a map and frequently asked questions explaining BLM Regional Mitigation Strategies that provide more information. If you have any questions please feel free to contact Joe Vieira, project manager, at 719-852-6213.

Thank you for your attention to this matter, and, as always, we look forward to working with you.

Sincerely,

Andrew Archuleta  
Field Manager  
San Luis Valley Field Office  
Bureau of Land Management