

Desert Sunlight Solar Farm

Toward a safe, clean energy future: The Desert Sunlight Solar Farm will provide 550 megawatts of power using First Solar's advanced photovoltaic (PV) solar technology. It is the largest PV facility approved for U.S. public lands to date.

VITALS

Location: Riverside County, CA

Technology: Thin film Photovoltaic

Electricity production capacity: 550 megawatts

Company: Desert Sunlight Holdings, LLC, a subsidiary of First Solar Inc.



BY THE NUMBERS – the project is expected to:

- ✓ Generate enough electricity to power 165,000 – 412,500 homes
- ✓ Create 630 jobs at peak construction and 15 ongoing operations and maintenance jobs
- ✓ Generate \$27 million in sales and property tax revenue to Riverside County
- ✓ Infuse \$336 million into the local economy, including \$197 million in wages.
- ✓ Be located on 4,144 acres, including 3,761 acres for the solar farm and additional acreage for the gen-tie substation. The BLM oversees more than 1.5 million acres in Riverside County, including nearly a million managed for conservation.
- ✓ Include an on-site substation and a 230-kiloVolt (kV) generation tie line to connect the project to the Red Bluff substation which will convert the power from 230 kV to 500kV for transmission on Southern California Edison's regional grid.

SMART, COLLABORATIVE PROCESS: In April of 2009 the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) committed to helping the nation reach its clean energy future by guaranteeing coordinated, focused processing, full environmental analysis and public review for specific renewable energy projects where the companies involved had demonstrated they were ready to advance to the formal environmental review and public participation process.

STRONG ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW AND MITIGATION: The BLM worked closely with federal, state and local partners, members of the environmental and conservation community and interested stakeholders to advance an environmentally sound project.

- ✓ Smaller Footprint: The solar farm's size was significantly reduced from 19,000 acres to 3,761 acres in order to best protect environmental resources.

- ✓ Alternative Habitat: The BLM will require that First Solar provide funding for acquisition and enhancement of more than 7,513 acres of suitable habitat for desert tortoise and other sensitive wildlife species.
- ✓ A Good Neighbor: First Solar will implement and fund a Signage and Guidance Plan to minimize potential impacts to Joshua Tree National Park and Wilderness Areas. First Solar will also use state of the art lighting to protect the night sky views.
- ✓ Groundwater Monitoring: First Solar must avoid impacts to existing wells and sensitive vegetation communities during pre-construction, construction, and post-construction activities.

ANOTHER RECOVERY ACT LEGACY: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) has served as an opportunity to transform the way we use energy, reducing our carbon emissions and creating entire new industries based on America's resources, America's ingenuity, and America's workers. Through an extension of the Recovery Act's payments in lieu of tax credits for specified energy projects, Desert Sunlight can apply for payments of up to 30% of the eligible costs of the project. These payments are authorized by Section 1603 of the ARRA tax title.

THE BIG PICTURE: The Desert Sunlight Solar Farm is one of the projects that will help achieve the Administration and Interior's initiative to make a rapid and responsible move to large-scale production of renewable energy on public lands. The State of California is working to achieve a 33% Renewable Portfolio Standard, which will require 15,000 – 20,000 MW of renewable energy by 2020.