

Transcript

Solar Energy Development Programmatic EIS Scoping Meeting held in Sacramento CA, June 19, 2008

This Acrobat PDF file contains the transcript of the above referenced Solar Energy Development Programmatic EIS public scoping meeting. If you are interested in reading the scoping comments provided by a specific person or organization at this meeting, you may use Acrobat's search tool to locate the commenter's name/organization within the transcript.

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT
PROGRAMMATIC ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT
(PEIS)
PUBLIC SCOPING MEETING

+ + + + +

THURSDAY,
JUNE 19, 2008

+ + + + +

6:30 p.m.

+ + + + +

held at the
Hilton Hotel, Sacramento Arden West
Shasta Room
2200 Harvard Street
Sacramento, California 95815

PRESENT:

TOM POGACNIK, Deputy Director
of the Division of Resources, BLM

LINDA RESSEGUIE
Project Manager, BLM

FRANK "TEX" WILKINS
Team Leader, DOE, Solar Energy
Technologies Program

JOHN GASPER,
Argonne National Laboratories

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PRESENT: (CONT.)

HEIDI HARTMANN,
Argonne National Laboratories

LISA JORGENSEN
U.S. Department of Energy, Golden Office

DOUGLAS E. DAHLE, P.E.
National Renewable Energy Laboratory
Senior Program Manager
Energy & Environmental
Applications Office

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1 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S

2 (6:30 p.m.)

3 MS. HARTMANN: Hello, everyone.

4 It's 6:30. We are going to start. Welcome to
5 the Public Scoping Meeting for the Department
6 of Energy and Bureau of Land Management's
7 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement
8 for solar resource development.

9 And we have tonight with us BLM's
10 Deputy State Director of the Division of
11 Resources, Tom Pogacnik, and he's going to
12 introduce the meeting for us.

13 MR. POGACNIK: Thank you for coming
14 to this Public Scoping Meeting about solar
15 energy development on BLM-administered lands.

16 As part of our ongoing effort to
17 increase domestic energy production and ensure
18 greater energy security, the Department of
19 Energy and the Bureau of Land Management have
20 initiated a Joint Solar Energy Development
21 Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement.

22 Our Agencies believe that preparing

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1 a Programmatic EIS is a critical step in
2 evaluating the extent to which public lands
3 with high-solar energy potential may be able
4 to meet the nation's need for renewable
5 energy.

6 The Bureau of Land Management
7 already has over 125 applications in the
8 pipeline for solar rights-of-way. And the
9 energy potential for these sites alone is
10 enormous: seventy billion watts of electricity
11 or enough to power 20 million average American
12 homes on a sustained basis.

13 The Joint Programmatic EIS that
14 will be overseen by the Department of Energy's
15 Argonne National Laboratory will assess the
16 environmental, social, and economic impacts
17 associated with solar energy development on
18 BLM-managed land in six Western States:
19 Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New
20 Mexico, and Utah.

21 The Joint Programmatic EIS will
22 also evaluate a number of alternative

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1 management strategies to determine which
2 presents the best management approach for the
3 Agencies to adopt in terms of mitigating
4 potential impacts and facilitating solar
5 energy development while carrying out their
6 respective missions.

7 I would also like to welcome the
8 representatives from the Department of Energy
9 and from the National Labs that are helping us
10 with this meeting. We appreciate your
11 interest in the project, your comments, and
12 your continued involvement as we proceed with
13 our analysis.

14 MS. HARTMANN: Thank you, Tom.

15 I'm going to fix the computer in a
16 second, but next we're going to have Frank Tex
17 Wilkins. He's with DOE. He is the Team
18 Leader for DOE's Solar Energy Technologies
19 Program and sponsor of this PEIS.

20 MR. WILKINS: Well, maybe while
21 Heidi is trying to get the computer back on
22 track, I'll just sort of launch into what I am

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1 going to say.

2 Again, I'm from the Department of
3 Energy. And I thought I'd give you sort of a
4 snapshot of why the Department of Energy is
5 interested in a Programmatic Environmental
6 Impact Statement.

7 And it all starts with the basic
8 goals of the Department of Energy. One is to
9 add supply from a diverse source of sources
10 and trying to make better use of renewable
11 energy.

12 And the second is, while we're
13 doing that, to try to improve the environment.

14 And we, in the Solar Program, think that
15 solar energy hits both of those. Solar is
16 certainly renewable, and in the production of
17 power, it doesn't emit any greenhouse gases.

18 Just a little bit of information
19 about what the resources are for our program
20 this year. We had about \$170 million
21 appropriated for this year.

22 And, as you can see from the slide

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1 there, the great bulk of it, 90 percent of it,
2 goes to R&D, research and development.
3 Basically DOE, at least in our part of the
4 program, is an R&D agency.

5 And what we do with that money is
6 we fund National Labs. Competitively we fund
7 industry and universities through their
8 research and development, pretty much all of
9 which is geared to lowering the cost of solar
10 technology and improving its reliability.

11 But we also have a little bit of
12 money, as you can see, this year it was about
13 \$18 million, that we use to look at working
14 with other organizations like cities, the
15 Bureau of Land Management and others, to see
16 if we can reduce some of the nontechnical
17 barriers that are inhibiting the deployment of
18 the technology.

19 This PEIS comes out of that pot,
20 although it's nowhere near the \$18-million
21 level.

22 Within the Solar Program there are

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1 two basic kinds of technology. The one you're
2 probably most familiar with is photovoltaics.

3 It generally goes on rooftops, although it
4 also powers a space station, and you can find
5 them located on major highways around the
6 country powering telephones.

7 It's generally distributed on
8 rooftops, but it can also be ganged together,
9 the modules put together, so that they can
10 provide a lot of power and go for
11 central-station or utility-scale solar energy.

12 The other type is concentrating
13 solar power. These by and large are mostly
14 geared toward large-scale systems that can be
15 used by utilities to put power into a grid.
16 And you will get a little bit more detail from
17 Doug Dahle a little bit later of what each
18 these technologies is all about.

19 Okay. Why are we interested in the
20 Programmatic EIS with BLM? Very specifically,
21 a utility-scale solar project has two
22 requirements. One is it needs a very highly

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1 intense amount of solar energy. And for those
2 of you who live in the Southwest, you are
3 blessed with a superb amount of very intense,
4 high solar radiation, not only the best in
5 this country, it's among the best in the
6 entire world.

7 And when you combine that with the
8 fact that there's a lot of people who live
9 around here, there is a load center that could
10 possibly use the power. The six states that
11 we're working with for this PEIS are:
12 California, Nevada, Colorado, Utah, Arizona,
13 New Mexico.

14 Okay. In addition to the solar
15 energy, these systems need land. And on
16 average it's at least about five acres for
17 each megawatt, a -- I don't want to say
18 typical, because there is no such thing as a
19 typical one of these things yet -- but a 250-
20 megawatt wouldn't be unusual. A project that
21 size would require at least two square miles.
22 So, again, you're looking at a fair amount of

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1 land use. And that brings us back to the
2 Bureau of Land Management.

3 BLM manages about 119 million acres
4 that are owned by the federal government. So
5 we are working with them to see which parts of
6 that land might be appropriate for solar.

7 What do we expect out of this?
8 Well, like I just said, the primary thing is
9 we want to find out which land is appropriate
10 for solar energy. Those of us at the
11 Department of Energy -- and I'm an engineer --
12 we tend to know the technical aspects of
13 things. And the technical things are
14 relatively simple. As I was just saying, you
15 need a certain amount of land; you need a
16 certain amount of solar energy. And the land
17 really should be pretty flat. The flatter the
18 better. Generally we go for land that has
19 under a five-percent slope.

20 But the other part is the
21 environmental aspects. And, again, here's
22 where there's more expertise within BLM than

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1 within the DOE. So we look to BLM to give us
2 a lot of information as to what land should be
3 excluded for a variety of habitat reasons,
4 water reasons, culture, history, or whatever.

5 We also want to get from this PEIS
6 a policy, something that we can say: Okay,
7 here's what we should be doing whenever DOE
8 puts some kind of resources into a future
9 project. This would include the best
10 management practices and also ways of
11 minimizing the environmental impact.

12 There will also be some advantages
13 to the developers. We're going to -- I expect
14 that we're going to learn a lot from this
15 PEIS. And when a developer comes along with a
16 project on a particular spot of land and they
17 do an Environmental Impact Statement on that
18 spot of land, they won't have to learn what
19 we've learned on this PEIS. So they'll be
20 able to sort of tier off what we're doing
21 here. And that will save them a little bit of
22 time and money a little bit later on.

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1 And then finally what is
2 particularly important for the Department of
3 Energy is we'd like to be able to predict what
4 the impact of the various technologies has on
5 the national power structure. And from this
6 we expect to have a lot better understanding
7 and a better model for predicting the solar
8 potential in this country and, in particular,
9 the Southwest, from three angles.

10 One is the amount of power that
11 could possibly be produced, the amount of jobs
12 it could create, -- and these technologies are
13 capital- intensive. They require a fair
14 amount of people to build them and then a fair
15 number of people to operate and maintain them.

16 And then finally what effect will
17 it have on mitigating climate change, which is
18 becoming more and more of a national priority.

19 So that's what we expect to get out of this
20 PEIS.

21 MS. HARTMANN: Next I'd like to
22 introduce Linda Resseguie. Linda is the

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1 Project Manager for BLM for this PEIS.

2 MS. RESSEGUIE: I want to mirror
3 what Tex did with the mic, which was set it
4 right here and talk into it. Is that audio
5 okay for you in the back? Okay, great.

6 I want to echo what Tom said. I'm
7 so glad that all of you were able to come
8 tonight. I hope that you find our
9 presentations, and the comment period to
10 follow, helpful on this important project.
11 Thank you for taking the time.

12 The Bureau of Land Management is an
13 agency within the Department of the Interior
14 that manages 258 million surface acres of
15 public lands. The slide that is in front of
16 you now -- oops. Can you go back one?
17 Thanks. Right there.

18 That shows the distribution of
19 BLM's lands, the lands that it manages across
20 the West and in Alaska. In the six-state
21 study area, as Tex mentioned, we manage 119
22 million acres. And that is about 46 percent

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1 of BLM's entire land base.

2 The BLM's multiple-use mission, to
3 sustain the health and productivity of the
4 public lands for the use and enjoyment of
5 present and future generations, is before us.

6 The Bureau accomplishes this by managing such
7 activities as outdoor recreation, livestock
8 grazing, mineral development, and energy
9 production and also by conserving natural,
10 historical, and cultural resources on the
11 public lands.

12 Solar energy is one of the many
13 energy resources now being developed or
14 considered for federal lands. To ensure the
15 best balance of uses and resource protections
16 for America's public lands, the BLM undertakes
17 extensive land-use planning through a
18 collaborative approach with local and state
19 governments, tribal governments, the public,
20 and stakeholder groups.

21 The result is a set of land-use
22 plans that provide the framework to guide the

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1 decisions for every action and approved use on
2 our public lands.

3 Many of BLM's existing land-use
4 plans, however, do not specifically address
5 solar energy development.

6 Why is BLM involved in the
7 Programmatic EIS? Well, there are two
8 reasons. Executive Order 13212, issued in
9 2001, directs federal agencies to expedite the
10 review of energy-related project applications.

11 Also, in 2005 the Energy Policy Act set a
12 goal for the Department of the Interior to
13 approve 10,000 megawatts of non-hydropower,
14 renewable energy on public lands by the year
15 2015.

16 BLM must manage public lands for
17 resource uses that include energy production.

18 The federal energy mix managed by BLM already
19 includes oil and gas, helium, coal,
20 geothermal, wind, biomass, and soon
21 utility-scale solar energy.

22 BLM has previously estimated that

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1 as much as two-thirds of the public lands
2 managed by BLM may have high potential for
3 concentrated solar power energy production.
4 Utility-scale solar energy projects on public
5 lands are authorized by rights-of-way issued
6 under the authority of the Federal Land Policy
7 and Management Act. All activities, including
8 rights-of-way proposed on public lands must be
9 consistent with the terms, conditions, and
10 decisions in approved land-use plans.

11 Before BLM can approve a solar
12 energy development project, it has to assess
13 the direct, indirect, and cumulative impacts
14 of such development and must consider other
15 resource values, sensitive areas, and public
16 concerns. This is completed through the NEPA
17 process.

18 To date BLM has received more than
19 130 applications for solar energy projects,
20 mainly in Southern California, Nevada, and
21 Arizona. Although this meeting is not about
22 specific projects, you will have an

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1 opportunity to comment on those projects as
2 they are processed.

3 Solar applications which have
4 already been filed with BLM will be processed
5 on a case-by-case basis through site-specific
6 NEPA. These pending applications will move
7 forward on a parallel process with the
8 Programmatic EIS. But new applications are
9 not being accepted until completion of the
10 Programmatic EIS.

11 What are BLM's programmatic goals?
12 Under our current solar energy development
13 policy applications are processed on a
14 first-come, first-served basis each with its
15 own site-specific NEPA process. BLM believes
16 that by looking programmatically at the broad
17 issues associated with solar energy
18 development, we will be able to develop a more
19 comprehensive, consistent, and efficient
20 program approach to address solar energy
21 proposals on public lands.

22 The Programmatic EIS will identify

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1 public lands best suited for solar energy
2 development, mitigation strategies, and best
3 management practices to guide future solar
4 energy development and possible additional
5 transmission corridors that may be
6 specifically needed to facilitate solar energy
7 development.

8 And some of you may be familiar
9 with our Westwide Corridor PEIS and may wonder
10 why we are also looking at transmission in
11 this PEIS, but that one was initiated a few
12 years ago. We have received many more solar
13 applications since then. The industry is in a
14 different place than it was then. We know
15 more about solar resources, and we want to use
16 this opportunity to make sure that if
17 corridors across BLM are needed for solar
18 energy development that we don't lose this
19 opportunity to address that issue.

20 BLM believes that the Programmatic
21 EIS will be key in advancing the understanding
22 about the impacts of solar energy development

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1 and how best to deal with those impacts, and
2 that the resulting decisions will better
3 foster and support the nation's need for
4 environmentally sound solar energy
5 development.

6 We do expect to amend land-use
7 plans in the six-state study area to adopt the
8 solar energy decisions made as a result of the
9 Programmatic EIS. These meetings are an
10 important part of not just the NEPA process
11 but BLM's planning process as well. We
12 included proposed planning criteria in the
13 Federal Register notice on May 29th, and we
14 are asking for your comments on those criteria
15 during this scoping process. Thank you.

16 MS. HARTMANN: Thank you, Linda.
17 The National Renewable Energy Laboratory,
18 NREL, is supporting DOE and BLM in a number of
19 ways on this PEIS. And Doug Dahle from NREL
20 is here to tell you what they're doing.

21 PRESENTATION ON BEHALF OF NREL

22 DR. DAHLE: It's a pleasure to be

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1 here tonight. Thank you for taking the time
2 out of your busy days to join us.

3 I am going to talk about three
4 basic topics and then give you sort of
5 overview, not get into the details so much as
6 to technologies, how they work, and things
7 like that, but basically an introduction of
8 the technologies that are being focused on for
9 this Programmatic EIS.

10 And, particularly, the essence of
11 it is we're looking at utility-scale power.
12 You know, Tex talked about the photovoltaics
13 that we see in small systems on rooftops, and
14 things like that, that distributed generation
15 is an absolutely appropriate way to use solar
16 energy, but this is really focused on the
17 utility-scale approach.

18 The other thing we're going to talk
19 about is to show you the geographical
20 information system-based solar resources. And
21 that's the first layer -- recall the map that
22 Linda showed us basically on the lands, and

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1 I'll show you what those same lands look like
2 in terms of the solar resource available. And
3 then talk about some federal policies that
4 have a huge impact on facilitating deployment.

5 Tex talked about the fact that
6 there are sort of two types which would be
7 photovoltaics and concentrating solar power.
8 There's also two categories of those which are
9 dispatchable, meaning it's not necessarily
10 coincident with the solar resource. You can
11 actually provide power after the sun sets, if
12 you will, through thermal sources and things.

13 The first one up on the left is
14 basically the Parabolic Trough System. It's a
15 parabola of mirrors, focused. It's a linear-
16 focusing tube, basically heats this
17 thermodynamic fluid to 400 degrees C, 450
18 degrees C. That is flashed through a heat
19 exchanger to create steam, and then run a
20 conventional steam turbine generator.

21 The power tower, the third slide
22 there, is something -- if you've ever driven

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1 on I-40 east of Barstow, you see the power
2 tower that was built -- actually it goes back
3 to the 80s.

4 The essence of this is you use a
5 molten salt and all these heliostats to access
6 mirrors, focus all their solar resource on
7 that tower, heat it. This particular
8 technology -- and we'll talk about it a little
9 bit more on the next slide -- has a huge
10 potential in terms of thermal storage in
11 dispatching power over a large number of hours
12 during the day.

13 The lower right is the other
14 linear-focusing solar technology. It's called
15 the Compact Linear Fresnel Reflector. In this
16 case it's still the linear, but the linear
17 tube, unlike the trough, which is a line north
18 to south and it tracks the sun through the
19 day, the actual tube is fixed and the mirrors
20 actually focus on that. It's a little less
21 expensive mirror technology, more flat than
22 the parabolic trough, and fairly new

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1 technology. In fact, PG&E just signed a power
2 purchase agreement for a 170-megawatt system.

3 We also know that the Arizona
4 Public Service just signed a contract with one
5 of the solar developers to do a 250-megawatt
6 Parabolic Trough System.

7 The others are the solar without
8 storage or nondispatchable, which is the dish
9 Stirling engine. That's the one in the fourth
10 picture there on the top. It basically
11 focuses energy to a point to the front of this
12 Stirling engine. Heats, provides a lot of
13 heat, drives the Stirling engine. Heats a
14 thermoelectric fluid. It's sort of a piston.
15 It's not like your reciprocating engine in
16 your car, but a very simple engine. And then
17 it runs a generator that's also solar
18 thermoelectric.

19 The other is the concentrating
20 photovoltaic. That's a second slide. And
21 we'll go into that in a little more detail,
22 but basically it takes the solar energy and

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1 concentrates it, a high degree of
2 concentration, on photovoltaic cells.

3 And the last is basically the
4 conventional photovoltaic systems that you saw
5 in Tex's slide called the flat-plate
6 photovoltaics.

7 Here's the concentrating solar
8 power again. This is the parabolic trough.
9 This basically has been fairly well
10 commercialized. This is the Kramer Junction
11 Plant consisting of five 30-megawatt modules,
12 if you will, built actually in the mid-80s,
13 have been running for over 20 years. Fairly
14 reliable. And we're talking about producing
15 power in the now 13-, 14-cent range. We'll
16 talk about the impact of that in terms of
17 federal policies.

18 The second one is this power tower
19 that we talked about. This is one of the
20 amazing things about this molten salt
21 technology. They store it in tanks, and
22 things like that, as they heat it through the

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1 day. In this particular -- the Daggett Solar
2 One Power Tower was able during one week to
3 actually produce at-power 24 hours a day until
4 the clouds reduced its potential in the
5 storage of molten salt. But that's the idea
6 of dispatchable power.

7 The point is the utilities are
8 interested in not only meeting their peak as a
9 peaking plant but being able to distribute
10 this after dark for loads that may be later in
11 the day.

12 Going to the next slide that
13 relates to this, here what we're talking about
14 is -- let's say this is the utility company.
15 And the dotted line represents the power curve
16 in terms of power required to deliver to
17 residential, industrial, and other customers.

18 Typically, in the case of Southern
19 California Edison where those big parabolic
20 trough systems have been in operation for a
21 while their peak tends to be in the 7:00 a.m.
22 timeframe. That's well before -- even on the

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1 longest day coming up here in a couple of days
2 -- solar power generation doesn't really occur
3 at that time. And then also Southern
4 California, their peak shows up at 7:00, 7:30
5 p.m., typically after the power generation
6 from these solar systems are, you know,
7 basically they're not generating much,
8 low-angle sun, and things like that.

9 So the idea here is using molten
10 salt thermal storage or other technologies,
11 which Tex is funding in terms of research and
12 development is through thermal storage
13 techniques or technologies allows that power
14 that's generated during the day to actually be
15 shifted to after the sun has gone down, a huge
16 benefit for an investor-owned utility that may
17 have peaks that are not coincident with solar
18 energy.

19 This is the concentrating solar
20 power. This is nondispatchable. The point is
21 they don't -- we haven't really come up with
22 an approach in terms of storing the energy

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1 from these.

2 On the left-hand side is what's
3 called the dish Stirling. These are
4 precommercial. There's six of them now at
5 Sandia National Laboratory, our partner
6 laboratory doing the R&D. Significant
7 testing. Reliability has come way up over the
8 last several years of testing. And, in fact,
9 they are going to -- they have a power
10 purchase company that produces this particular
11 technology as -- power purchase agreements
12 with Southern California Edison and SDG&E on
13 the order of 700 megawatts to be developed
14 over the next several years.

15 Those are typically 25-kilowatt
16 systems, so for this huge megawatt, there are
17 quite a few of these dishes that would be
18 deployed.

19 The next one here -- let's go back
20 to that one for a second. The other one is
21 the concentrating. Again, this is using
22 concentrating solar power. These are

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1 concentrating photovoltaics. And basically
2 I'll talk about it in the next slide, sort of
3 the details of it. But basically it uses that
4 same parabolic dish to focus the solar energy
5 on a single set of cells.

6 In this concentrating PV technology
7 there are sort of three different ways that
8 it's done. What we just showed you was the
9 idea that it's reflective and all the energy
10 is focused on this set of cells at the focal
11 point of this parabola of this dish.

12 And the interesting thing about
13 this and the other two is it creates the
14 effect of what you would call 500 suns. The
15 idea here is that, by using a small set of
16 cells, the most expensive part of any
17 photovoltaics is actually the silicon cells or
18 membrane materials or -- I can't come up with
19 the other one. But, anyway, the idea here is
20 that to get the same amount of power that's
21 being produced by these, you'd have to 500
22 times the amount of flat-plate cells to create

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1 the same amount of energy.

2 Second is the refractive, the one
3 that we showed you before. And basically it's
4 the cells are fairly close. But basically it
5 takes the direct solar radiation and refracts
6 through lenses onto the cell and produces that
7 same effect of 500-sun solar energy.

8 And then the last one, this is a
9 fairly new technology, it's called -- it's
10 using the reflective. It's sort of small
11 versions of that one on the left, but
12 basically there are cells throughout that
13 array. It's got sort of a parabolic focus.
14 And the same thing, this particular system
15 you're talking about 500 suns, so it would be
16 500 times the amount of flat-plate cells to
17 create the same amount of power that these
18 things produce. And in fact one of them is --
19 the one in the middle actually is part of a
20 five-megawatt system that Arizona Public
21 Service had put in place several years ago.

22 Basically all those technologies we

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1 just talked about, concentrating solar power,
2 which is thermoelectric in some cases, or the
3 photovoltaics, uses what's called direct,
4 normal insulation. What that is the component
5 of the sun you see in the sky that actually
6 hits at 90 degrees to whatever surface. This
7 basically is the exact same land area that you
8 saw in Linda's picture, but this is the
9 overlay of the solar resource.

10 And we're looking at, in the
11 Programming EIS, any resource greater than
12 five-kilowatt hours per meter squared per day,
13 that's the units that are used to identify the
14 solar potential.

15 Here are the flat-plate systems.
16 And, again, we talked earlier about the idea
17 that we're looking at large systems. We're
18 delighted that the Nellis Air Force Base,
19 through a very innovative power purchase
20 agreement, installed a 14.2-megawatt
21 photovoltaic system on the Nellis Air Force
22 Base lands.

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1 These are single-access trackers
2 that follow the sun. They're set at azimuth.
3 When you're doing photovoltaic systems you
4 want to set it at an angle equal to the
5 azimuth of your location, which maximizes the
6 potential. These are set at that azimuth, and
7 they also track the sun through the course of
8 the day. A fantastic system.

9 I just wanted to also show you
10 again this large-scale, 11-megawatt system in
11 Portugal that was put in. And these are fixed
12 flat-plate panels. And you can see the
13 magnitude of their size to generate this
14 utility-scale power.

15 The resource here is a little bit
16 different than those concentrating systems.
17 It's called a global solar resource. It has
18 the component of direct normal, but it
19 includes all the scattered light coming
20 through the atmosphere and whatnot. It's a
21 little lower intensity, but the point is this
22 is what photovoltaics use in terms of their

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1 power potential.

2 One of the things we'll be using
3 with these maps is -- this is sort of the
4 first layer, and then when we get into the
5 environmental issues and things like that, Tex
6 talked about slope. You would eliminate a
7 heck a lot of this land for the parabolic
8 trough technology because you need one- to
9 three-percent slope on that, so it's not
10 everything you see here.

11 We're also going to be eliminating
12 areas of Critical Environmental Concern, which
13 takes down another set of opportunities in
14 terms of location for siting and things like
15 that.

16 Lastly, I'd like to talk about some
17 of the federal policies that have a huge
18 impact on the deployment of solar technology.

19 Here, what I'm showing is, when
20 you're looking and analyzing a solar system
21 you're basically putting a lot of factors in
22 terms of the cost of the technology,

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1 operations and maintenance costs, investment
2 tax credits, property taxes, all these things
3 influence what the leveled cost of energy
4 is. It's basically saying this system would
5 produce power at this location with that solar
6 resource on three-percent or less land, let's
7 say for the parabolic trough. Without the tax
8 credit, which is shown in the blue bar, you're
9 looking at something maybe 15, 16 cents, maybe
10 higher.

11 The effect of the investment tax
12 credit that expires unfortunately at the end
13 of this calendar year has the effect of almost
14 reducing that leveled cost of energy, 15, 16
15 cents, by almost 20 percent. Because the
16 private developer, actually, is able to take a
17 30-percent tax credit on a \$550 million
18 system. That's a huge reduction in capital
19 cost to the buyer. And the effect is it
20 lowers the leveled cost of energy maybe in
21 the 12- to 14-cent range.

22 What we did, we had a model that

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1 we're going to actually be using with this
2 Programmatic EIS. And as part of the
3 alternatives you'll hear about later is trying
4 to project what would be the deployment of
5 solar energy technologies. It is a very
6 sophisticated linear model that has hundreds
7 of variables, has different transmission
8 regions and whatnot. It also compares -- it
9 acknowledges that there's fossil systems on
10 the grid, and so it addresses capacity needs,
11 load centers, things like that.

12 Would the solar investment tax
13 credit, this model, we've run it a number of
14 times, we're thinking that it's probably in
15 the four to five, maybe six gigawatts over the
16 next 20 years, which is the time period of
17 this study. That's 6,000 megawatt-hours.

18 In the case of the proposed eight-
19 year extension of the investment tax credit,
20 you can see the effect, again lowering that
21 leveled cost of energy, that we see
22 potentially as much as 40 gigawatts in solar

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1 production in the 20-year scope of this
2 Programmatic EIS. And I hope that helped just
3 to have a flavor of what the technologies
4 we're working with in the Programmatic EIS.
5 Thanks so much.

6 PRESENTATION on the EIS

7 MS. HARTMANN: All right. Next I'm
8 going to take just a couple of minutes to tell
9 everyone what an Environmental Impact
10 Statement is and particularly what we mean by
11 a programmatic environmental impact statement.

12 My name's Heidi Hartmann. I work
13 with Argonne National Laboratory. And Argonne
14 is conducting the PEIS for DOE and BLM.

15 Environmental Impact Statements are
16 done under the National Environmental Policy
17 Act, or NEPA. Things that are included -- but
18 the main purpose of an EIS is to evaluate the
19 environmental, socioeconomic -- and under that
20 is included things like cultural -- impacts of
21 a proposed action.

22 They also always look at

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1 alternatives to the proposed action. And
2 there's a clear statement of purpose and need
3 included. And it's also very importantly, a
4 few different types of impacts that are looked
5 at are short- and long-term impacts,
6 cumulative impacts, and commitment of
7 resources.

8 By cumulative impacts, that means
9 not only do you look at the impacts of the
10 proposed action, but you look at other
11 activities going on in the study area and
12 analyze the impacts of the proposed action in
13 conjunction with those other activities.

14 And then another important
15 component of EISs is that they have public
16 involvement.

17 An EIS is required to be prepared
18 for any major federal action. And this EIS
19 has been determined to be a major federal
20 action, the establishment of agency-specific
21 programs and policies and -- also a term we
22 use a lot is -- best management practices for

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1 solar energy development has been determined
2 to be a major federal action by BLM and DOE.
3 And so they are preparing this EIS.

4 Furthermore, it's been determined
5 to be programmatic. Programmatic means that
6 it is a broad agency action. It does not
7 address specific projects, but -- and the
8 purpose, as Tex mentioned earlier, is to help
9 with tiering of future site-specific projects.

10 The best management practices and mitigation
11 strategies identified in this PEIS will help
12 with future site-specific work. And also
13 hopefully establish a level of consistency
14 across different projects in the types of
15 mitigation measures and management practices
16 that they use.

17 I'm trying to see if I've forgotten
18 anything up here. I just want to also say
19 that generic impacts are looked at more so in
20 programmatic EISes so that by that we will
21 look at ranges of water uses for different
22 technologies, ranges of land disturbance.

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1 Scoping is where we're at in the
2 process now. The BLM and DOE would like to
3 get public input on basic elements of the
4 PEIS, what the proposed actions -- I'm sorry
5 -- what the alternatives are. If the public,
6 organizations, or individuals have information
7 about effective mitigation measures, they'd
8 like to hear about that.

9 And if there's data that
10 organizations or individuals have, there's an
11 opportunity during this period to submit that
12 data.

13 There have been three alternatives
14 proposed currently for this EIS, but we're
15 still in scoping, so more things may be
16 identified. There's the no-action
17 alternative. Under NEPA no-action
18 alternatives are looked at in every EIS.

19 The proposed action is what Linda
20 and Tex have told you about. Both agencies
21 would like to establish specific programs and
22 related policies that they will use to guide

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1 any solar energy development projects on
2 public lands or DOE-supported.

3 Also this is as stated previously,
4 limited to utility-scale and in the six-state
5 study area.

6 The no-action alternative -- I'm
7 sorry. I'll go back. For BLM, this also will
8 lead to amendment of their land-use plans.

9 The no-action alternative, in
10 comparison with the proposed action, does not
11 develop programs and policies. And so each
12 project would be evaluated on a case-by-case
13 basis, and using existing policy that BLM has.

14 For the limited-development
15 alternative, this really applies just to BLM
16 at this point in time. BLM has, as you've
17 heard, many outstanding applications but a
18 limited number of those have already
19 progressed to a point where they have
20 completed plans of development and are
21 awaiting application approval. And for the
22 limited-development alternative, the EIS would

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1 look at only those projects and impacts
2 limited to those projects.

3 Later on I'm going to give better
4 instructions about submitting comments and
5 other elements of the scoping process, but
6 right now we wanted to give everyone a chance
7 to ask the staff any questions about what
8 we've presented so far.

9 So if you have a question, just
10 raise your hand and I'll bring the mic over to
11 you.

12 If you don't mind stating your name
13 before you make your comment.

14 QUESTIONS and ANSWERS

15 MR. AMIRALI: Thank you. Hi. Ali
16 Amirali with LS Power. Just a clarification
17 question. A statement was made that no new
18 applications for solar development projects
19 are being accepted at this time. Does that
20 involve applications for transmission for the
21 -- land use for transmission -- construction
22 of transmission facilities as well, or just

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1 the solar development projects?

2 MS. RESSEGUIE: Thank you for that
3 question. We have had it at other scoping
4 meetings as well, because apparently some
5 companies are looking at putting solar
6 facilities on private land or other lands, but
7 they do need to cross BLM lands with access
8 roads and transmission lines.

9 My understanding is that those will
10 be processed as transmission applications, as
11 right-of-way applications, and so they are not
12 -- companies are not precluded from filing
13 applications for those.

14 What we are not accepting
15 applications on are new applications for
16 actual solar energy development proposals.

17 MR. AMIRALI: Thank you.

18 MR. SKUJA: Good evening. I am
19 Mike Skuja with the Defenders of Wildlife. I
20 just have a clarification question. I heard
21 that ACECs are off the table for solar, and
22 Desert Wildlife Management Areas are a type of

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1 ACEC. So can you just clarify where DWMAs
2 stand with this whole process?

3 MS. RESSEGUIE: This is a good
4 opportunity for me to clarify. In the Notice
5 of Intent, for those of you who have looked at
6 that, we did say that the study area would not
7 include lands within the National Landscape
8 Conservation System, National Conservation
9 Areas, National Monuments, Wilderness,
10 Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic
11 Rivers, National Historic Trails.

12 We should have been more clear
13 about the California Desert Conservation Area
14 because that particular, and I think it's
15 unique, that particular designation does allow
16 for renewable energy.

17 So the California Desert
18 Conservation Area is part of what we will be
19 looking at. In fact I think most of our
20 applications are there, most of the California
21 applications are actually located there.

22 As far as the DWMAs, the Desert

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1 Wildlife Management Areas, again, my
2 understanding is that the plan, I think it's a
3 1980 plan but it's had some amendments, sets
4 up certain management proscriptions to protect
5 desert tortoise habitat. I think Mojave
6 ground squirrel is another species.

7 And what has happened so far, and
8 the folks in California can correct me if I'm
9 wrong on this, is that when applicants have
10 come in, in most cases, BLM has encouraged
11 them not to apply for those areas. And I
12 think in fact we have actually rejected some
13 applications in those areas.

14 The Notice also talks about ACECs
15 as being a type, as an example of a type of
16 area that would not be considered appropriate
17 for a solar energy development right-of-way.
18 And it talks about -- because it would be
19 inconsistent with an extensive surface-
20 disturbing use, like a large solar facility.

21 But if you have comments on that
22 and you want some clarification and you want

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1 us to clarify, I would encourage you to submit
2 comments seeking additional clarification,
3 because this is a good opportunity to do that.

4 In fact it's a great opportunity, so I hope
5 you will comment on that.

6 MR. SCHORADT: I'm Brent Schoradt
7 with the California Wilderness Coalition. And
8 actually I just wanted to follow up on the
9 last question. I think you might have opened
10 up a can of worms with the CDCA.

11 Does that mean that all ACECs,
12 Wilderness Study Areas, and National Landscape
13 Conservation System lands within the CDCA are
14 not excluded at this point?

15 MS. RESSEGUIE: Oh, I'm sorry. You
16 are absolutely right about the can of worms,
17 because you do have to very carefully lay this
18 out. If they have another special designation
19 like Wilderness, for example, Wilderness
20 prevails and those are not going to be
21 reexamined or looked at under the terms of the
22 PEIS.

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1 The idea is we're going to look at
2 lands where BLM would and could issue a right-
3 of-way application for this type of
4 development.

5 MR. SCHORADT: So ACECs within the
6 CDCA, are they off the table?

7 MS. RESSEGUIE: Are they off the
8 table. Again I would encourage you to submit
9 comments on that because we have heard in
10 previous meetings that folks want us to look
11 at that issue some more, so --

12 MR. SCHORADT: What about WSAs?

13 MS. RESSEGUIE: Wilderness Study
14 Areas, --

15 MR. SCHORADT: Yes.

16 MS. RESSEGUIE: -- those are off
17 the table.

18 MR. SCHORADT: Okay. Thank you.

19 MR. HOGAN: As long as I get to
20 talk again because I have --

21 THE REPORTER: Your name, please.

22 MS. HARTMANN: This is not

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1 commentary, this is the time for questions.

2 MR. HOGAN: Okay. I'm Michael
3 Hogan with the Ridgecrest Field Office. I'm
4 the Program Lead Realty Specialist there. By
5 the way, we have rejected -- I have rejected
6 an application in a DWMA for solar. So that
7 was one of the first things that I rejected
8 when an application came in.

9 As far as ACECs, to put comment to
10 that, since ACECs -- there are a wide variety
11 of reasons why an ACEC is developed, it could
12 be, depending on what the purpose of the ACEC,
13 that's probably why it should be examined.

14 MS. RESSEGUIE: Can I comment on
15 your question?

16 MR. HOGAN: Yes.

17 MS. RESSEGUIE: That is a point
18 that I did intend to make and I'd like to
19 speak to that, is there are just a variety --
20 almost as many as ACECs as have been
21 established are the reasons for the
22 establishment of the ACECs. And in each land-

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1 use plan the plan itself will explain the
2 purpose of the ACEC, so you really have to get
3 further down. You have to drill further down
4 to understand the effect of it.

5 MR. HOGAN: Correct.

6 MS. RESSEGUIE: Thank you much.

7 MR. HOGAN: Just to help out a
8 little bit on that. The big thing is
9 cumulative impacts. And I just wanted to give
10 you an example of when you're --

11 [AUDIENCE MEMBER]: Speak up,
12 please.

13 MR. HOGAN: The biggest thing is
14 cumulative impacts. And I'd like to point out
15 a problem that you may be having when you come
16 up with cumulative impacts.

17 In my resource area we have been
18 developing wind energy since the mid-80s. And
19 one of the things with solar, as it's coming
20 up, you've got to -- how are you going to deal
21 with cumulative impacts.

22 Let's go to Mojave, for instance.

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1 In Mojave in just a ten-mile radius you've got
2 a spaceport/airport, okay. You've got wind
3 development on both public and private.
4 You've got solar that's both photovoltaic
5 application, you've got a -- that's on public,
6 and you got a parabolic project that's on
7 private, okay.

8 You've got an open area.

9 Yes.

10 MS. HARTMANN: You know we're going
11 to questions right now.

12 MR. HOGAN: Well, I'm just -- I'm
13 getting to it.

14 MS. HARTMANN: Okay.

15 MR. HOGAN: Please give me a
16 minute, okay?

17 You've got an open area. You've
18 got two current transmission lines, one
19 ongoing EIS for a planned transmission.
20 You've got two aqueducts, two highways,
21 community development, grazing, mining, cement
22 plants, and railroads. Okay. Those are

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1 cumulative impacts.

2 How are you going to address
3 cumulative impacts in an area that is
4 extensively utilized in such a manner?

5 Oh, yes.

6 MS. HARTMANN: We're still
7 developing our approach. What we will -- and
8 it's not site-specific at this point, so we'll
9 be doing sort of a broad assessment of how
10 much wind energy is being developed in the
11 area.

12 And we may do a land-disturbance
13 estimate for a whole area, a water-use
14 estimate. So that's primarily how we'll be
15 looking at it.

16 MR. HOGAN: I just wanted to point
17 out the multiple resources that you may have
18 just in a small footprint that you're going to
19 have to look at --

20 THE REPORTER: He needs a mic,
21 please.

22 MS. HARTMANN: Do you want to

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1 repeat what you said?

2 MR. HOGAN: I just wanted to point
3 out in just one small area what you're going
4 to have to potentially look at and examine in
5 this PEIS when you're dealing with cumulative
6 impacts.

7 MS. HARTMANN: So just to sum up
8 too, we'll be doing a summary of what's
9 happening in the study area and then trying to
10 do -- as I was saying, we're going to be
11 looking at generic impacts. And so we'll be
12 doing an assessment of what is happening with
13 those other types of development in a broad
14 sense.

15 MR. WEINER: Peter Weiner
16 representing CERT. Just a couple of
17 questions. Tex, you mentioned that the PEIS
18 would be -- I think you were the one -- used
19 to streamline what comes after and that that's
20 one of the purposes of creating BMPs and other
21 kind of siting guidance for that purpose.

22 But you then refer to doing an EIS

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1 afterward. Are you precluding the use of EAs
2 afterward if you've already developed enough
3 information from the PEIS?

4 MS. RESSEGUIE: The answer, Peter,
5 is no. But we fully intend for the site-
6 specific that come after to be tiered to this.
7 And we think it will be more efficient and
8 effective as a result, may or may not need a
9 full-blown EIS. I think it will depend on
10 each site and each project.

11 MR. WEINER: I'll reserve more
12 comment on that for comments.

13 MS. RESSEGUIE: Excellent.

14 MR. WEINER: I have one other
15 question. With regard to the DWMAs and
16 perhaps the ACECs, but with regard to, I think
17 it was with regard to DWMAs, you said there
18 are proscriptions to protect certain species
19 and so on, the Mojave ground squirrel or
20 desert tortoise, on those, and that obviously
21 one would reject extensive ground disturbance
22 that was incompatible with that proscription.

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1 But to the extent that those --
2 those DWMA^s or ACECs expressly permit some
3 very limited development or disturbance of
4 ground surface, are you saying that you are
5 not going to allow compliance with the DWMA^s
6 and the ACECs and you're going to proscribe
7 all development even if they, by their own
8 terms, would allow some limited development?

9 MS. RESSEGUIE: An excellent --
10 perhaps you should make some suggestions for
11 us in your comments.

12 MR. WEINER: Thank you.

13 MR. PILZ: Yes. My name is Wayne
14 Pilz. I'm just an independent contractor
15 helping the solar industry. The question I
16 have is I understand the goal here and it's
17 admirable. My concern is the 2015 --

18 MS. HARTMANN: (Comment out of
19 range of the microphone.)

20 MR. PILZ: Yes. I'm worried about
21 the 2015 implementation schedule for 10,000
22 megawatts. If I understand correctly, the

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1 PEIS will be out in spring of 2010 and if I
2 understand Bureau of Land Management policy
3 correctly, they won't be accepting any
4 applications until after they modify their
5 land-use plans. And those land-use plans, in
6 my experience, can take a year or two years,
7 and then you have two years after that for
8 your EIS. So you've just hit 2015.

9 MS. RESSEGUIE: Time does go by
10 quickly.

11 MR. PILZ: Yes.

12 MS. RESSEGUIE: I acknowledge that.
13 The amendment of the land-use plans will be
14 done based on the record of the decision that
15 comes out of the PEIS. We expect that that
16 can occur fairly quickly, so we're not looking
17 for another year or two in order to issue plan
18 amendments. We think it's going to follow
19 right on the heels of the final EIS through
20 the record of decision that's issued. So it
21 won't be separate processes. It will be one
22 record that does the amendment.

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1 MR. PILZ: So it will be
2 concurrent, the dates will be concurrent so we
3 could file on the date that the --

4 MS. RESSEGUIE: The record --

5 MR. PILZ: -- the EIS comes out,
6 the Programmatic EIS comes out?

7 MS. RESSEGUIE: The record of
8 decision that implements.

9 MR. PILZ: Correct.

10 MS. RESSEGUIE: But your question
11 is will you be able to file on that day. I
12 can't quite promise you what the rules will be
13 at this point, but the goal is to have the
14 record of decision come out, you know, I want
15 to snap my fingers and say right after the
16 final PEIS. That's the goal.

17 MR. PILZ: Because I know it's --
18 each resource area is -- some are faster than
19 others.

20 MS. RESSEGUIE: But, again, this
21 will be implemented through a single record of
22 decision.

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1 MR. PILZ: Okay. Thank you.

2 MS. HARTMANN: I just wanted to add
3 to that. That is the way it occurred for the
4 wind PEIS. The records of decision, I think
5 there were 52 of them, were amended with the
6 ROD in one time.

7 Is that it, anyone have any other
8 questions?

9 MS. KELLMAN: Hi. Thank you.
10 Janelle Kellman with PG&E. I just have a
11 question about process, probably for you,
12 Heidi. The question is: what will you do
13 with projects that are already one of the 125
14 accepted applications that have an EIS and
15 might be moving forward more quickly than the
16 Programmatic EIS? What will the timing
17 impacts be?

18 MS. RESSEGUIE: Actually, I think
19 I'll answer that question.

20 MS. KELLMAN: Oh, sure.

21 MS. RESSEGUIE: Each of these
22 projects will move forward kind of on its own

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1 time schedule. The ones that are already
2 filed and will continue to be processed, our
3 expectation is some of those will be completed
4 and through their own EIS process and actually
5 have rights-of-way grants issued prior to
6 completion of the PEIS. So the terms and
7 conditions of the right-of-grant will have
8 already been established before the PEIS is
9 finished and any new policies or procedures
10 are adopted.

11 For projects that aren't completed
12 and don't have granted rights-of-ways before
13 the PEIS is finished and the record of
14 decision is issued, those projects will
15 probably be subject to the mitigation
16 measures, best management practices that come
17 out of the record of decision.

18 MR. ARINGHOFF: Thank you. I'm Ron
19 Aringhoff with Solar Millennium but at the
20 same time also representing the solar industry
21 and the California Renewable Energy
22 Transmission Initiative.

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1 I mean it's a funny situation. Oil
2 prices are rising, gas prices are rising. Now
3 there is a time where solar plants for the
4 first time in history are competitive with
5 gas-fired power stations, at least if you take
6 the California market price reference. At
7 that time we come up, start to develop, put
8 millions into the development of these plants,
9 and then find out, number one, there is no
10 transmission, there is no capacity free on the
11 transmission grid.

12 The other is that some of the
13 highest resources in the world, like the
14 Mojave Desert, are basically totally blocked
15 for any further development. And I think we
16 are in discussions with agencies here to find
17 compromises. We are also in discussions with
18 environmental representatives to find a way
19 out because we, I think, do respect and do see
20 the needs of protecting the environment, but
21 there are also plans there that have been
22 developed 10, 15 years ago when nobody thought

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1 that his liter of gasoline or his gallon will
2 cost \$4.60 or so, and these plans foresee the
3 use of five times more area in the Mojave for
4 off-road than for renewable energy
5 development. That is somehow a little bit
6 strange.

7 My question, however, is -- with
8 this Notice of Intent you basically froze
9 everything, any new applications to BLM for
10 solar development. My question is: Is that
11 really a step in a phase where we are
12 developing and the industry is still in some
13 infant stage, but we are trying to start with
14 an emission-free technology and cannot proceed
15 because of blocking basically wide areas and
16 because of blocking further development
17 because we all know the 600,000 acres of what
18 has been quoted here in California that will
19 not all be development, that is where you had
20 applied for because you knew also that a lot
21 of areas will fall apart. So it does not mean
22 that 600,000 acres is 600,000 acres of use.

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1 MS. RESSEGUIE: I want to respond
2 to your question. Although I hope that some
3 of that comes forward as a comment as well
4 because I think that it's important for you to
5 submit those thoughts as a comment.

6 As you said, in California there's
7 600,000 acres under application and we have
8 heard from a variety of sources that all of
9 that land may not actually be developed for
10 solar energy projects by the original
11 applicant, but at this point we don't know
12 that. We are just beginning to process these
13 applications and we don't know how much of
14 that land will actually end up being part of a
15 solar facility.

16 So right now it looks like we have
17 a lot of land under application already. Some
18 people have said virtually all of the -- I'll
19 say -- the good stuff is under application in
20 California at least. And we have a limited
21 number of resources to deal with those
22 existing applications.

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1 We want to look at developing a
2 program through this PEIS for solar energy
3 development, but if all of the land is already
4 applied for there would be no land to which
5 the program could be applied. So we have
6 fully heard and understand the industry's
7 frustration. And I welcome any industry
8 representatives here tonight to please submit
9 your comments either orally or through the
10 website or in writing. Thanks.

11 MS. HARTMANN: That's actually a
12 good transition to our comment period, unless
13 there was someone who still wanted a question?
14 One more.

15 MR. SCHORADT: Can I just clarify?
16 So the projects that have already been
17 applied for, they're on hold or they're not on
18 hold?

19 MS. RESSEGUIE: They are not on
20 hold.

21 MR. SCHORADT: Okay.

22 MS. RESSEGUIE: Not.

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1 THE REPORTER: Your name, please?

2 MR. SCHORADT: Brent Schoradt, with
3 the California Wilderness Coalition.

4 THE REPORTER: Thank you.

5 ABOUT the SCOPING PROCESS

6 MS. HARTMANN: Okay. So to go back
7 to scoping in general, the scoping period
8 started with the publication of the Notice of
9 Intent, which was on May 28th, and it will
10 extend through July 15th. And BLM and DOE
11 will be accepting comments through that
12 period.

13 Another main, the big time that the
14 public can comment and have input on the PEIS
15 is when the draft is published, which is due
16 for spring of next year, in 2009. And at that
17 time the agencies accept comments for a
18 certain period -- it hasn't been specified
19 yet. Probably 30 to 60 days. And they
20 formally respond to all of those comments.

21 Then when the final is published,
22 then that will be the next time that everyone

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1 gets a look at it, which is scheduled for
2 spring of 2010.

3 The website listed here,
4 solareis.anl.gov will be a very good resource
5 for all people interested in this PEIS
6 process. It is for one thing. You can get
7 comment forms if you don't comment here at
8 this meeting tonight and you subsequently want
9 to submit a comment, you can submit the
10 comment on that website.

11 PEIS-related documents will be
12 available through the website. A scoping
13 summary report will be probably the first big
14 one that comes up. That will be all of the
15 meetings, a summary of all the issues. We'll
16 also be posting transcripts on each of these
17 meetings. We have court reporters here
18 tonight, as you see, and the transcripts will
19 be posted for each of the 11 meetings. There
20 are meetings in 11 cities in the study area.

21 Another thing, some of you may have
22 submitted your email address to get email

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1 notifications. You can also submit your email
2 address on the website.

3 You can submit your comments at
4 this meeting, on the website, or in writing.
5 If you want to submit them in writing, it will
6 say actually on the next slide, but you can
7 use the forms that you got at the back table
8 when you registered, or you can just send them
9 to the address on the form. And you can
10 submit supplemental information, documents
11 that you think would be useful to us in
12 preparing the EIS. You can also do that on
13 the website. You can submit attachments. So
14 we're really looking to get as much public
15 input as we can.

16 For tonight, if you'd like to
17 submit an oral comment, first I'm going to
18 call up the people who preregistered, and they
19 will have a chance to speak. And then we'll
20 call anyone who registered when they came to
21 speak.

22 And when those people are done

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1 making their statements, we'll ask for anyone
2 else who has been inspired to want to make a
3 comment during the process to come up. We
4 want to make sure everyone has a chance to
5 speak.

6 In the interests of making sure
7 everyone has their turn, we're going to
8 initially limit the time for the comments to
9 three minutes. I will -- when you've gotten
10 to two and a half minutes, -- I'll be sitting
11 over here, we're going to ask that you come up
12 here and state your name and make your
13 comments. At two and a half I'll flash this
14 yellow card. And at three I will flash this
15 red card. And at that point if you could wrap
16 up. And then whoever wanted to make a longer
17 comments, when the other speakers have had
18 their turn, you can come back up again.

19 Okay. I think that's it.

20 COMMENTS

21 MS. HARTMANN: Oh, once again we
22 are recording this in transcripts that will be

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1 published on the website.

2 Now we had probably about seven
3 people preregister and say that they wanted to
4 speak, but I think many of them may not be
5 here. So let me just call a few names and
6 see. Could you raise your hand if you're
7 here?

8 Is Joan Taylor here?

9 (No response.)

10 MS. HARTMANN: Lee Wallach?

11 (No response.)

12 MS. HARTMANN: April Sall or --
13 okay. And Claudia Sall?

14 (Raised hands.)

15 MS. HARTMANN: Okay. All right.
16 Well, I'm -- the first three people who are
17 going to speak will be: Rod Reis and then
18 Peter Weiner and April Sall.

19 Rod is here; is that correct?

20 Come on up, Rod. You're first.

21 MR. REIS: Oh, I do not want to be
22 first.

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(Laughter.)

2 MR. REIS: I'm not a public
3 speaker, as you're about to find out.
4 Basically what I wanted to say was: Kudos for
5 the green energy. Right.

Now getting down to my business:
Since the Europeans first came to California
we've been improving the place. It was
perfect as it was, as everybody knows, but
we've been improving it. We now have poisoned
air. We have poisoned water. The beaches are
cesspools, the ones that aren't fenced off.
But we keep improving California.

14 They tell us we need this stuff.
15 We can't even drive on the freeways right now,
16 it's so crowded, but let's build more
17 freeways, we'll get more people in.

18 Basically you take what we used to
19 have was pristine California and we degraded
20 it. We had pristine wildlands, pristine
21 wetlands, pristine grasslands. We built
22 agriculture on them. Killed a lot of

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1 critters. Killed a lot of flora and fauna.

2 Then once we had it tore up for
3 agriculture, then we had to come in and
4 develop it to make businesses and residences,
5 because that was better. We're improving it.

6 And then once it gets degraded to a
7 certain point, people move on. We have to
8 spread out and spread out. And this turns
9 into degraded area, kind of useless except as
10 kind of a slum area.

11 To make a short story long, you
12 tell us to improve California or improve
13 everything, that we need to destroy a whole
14 bunch of pristine desert and basically degrade
15 it. And that's going to make everything okay.
16 Well, I'm hoping you're right.

17 There was a crazy little German
18 genius who grew a conscious just before he
19 died, but one of his things was: You cannot
20 solve problems by using the same means that
21 you did to create the problems.

22 I'm just hoping you folks will be

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1 careful. There's better ways to do things.
2 Find degraded places to build your solar farm.
3 Don't kill the desert.

4 MS. HARTMANN: Thank you. Lee
5 Wallach, then Peter Weiner.

6 MR. WEINER: Thank you very much.
7 And actually I don't think I will be as
8 eloquent as Rod was. I want to thank you for
9 doing everything you're doing to try to let
10 solar energy development help save our
11 planetary environment and protect the local
12 environment at the same time.

13 At this time on our planet and in
14 the West the development of solar energy is
15 critical to fighting climate change and also
16 to providing energy for the human beings who
17 happen to be here.

18 The point, the most important
19 things that the PEIS can do are to identify
20 land in a coordinating way for transmission
21 planning so that we don't have solar energy
22 developed where there is no transmission; and

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1 then to identify and resolve -- I want to
2 emphasize the word "resolve" -- environmental
3 issues.

4 What we would like, and I should
5 say I'm here representing the Center for
6 Energy Efficiency and Renewable Technology,
7 and other solar industry members. We would
8 like the scope changed of your PEIS in a
9 couple of ways.

10 One, we think there needs to be
11 expressly stated not just that there are
12 cooperating agencies, but that you will
13 cooperate and coordinate with the California
14 Department of Fish and Game, for one, and
15 other of the environmental agencies, whether
16 it's Fish and Wildlife federally or other
17 states, to help resolve some of these
18 environmental issues with creative, HCPs,
19 Natural Community Conservation Plans in
20 California -- NCCPs; and other ways of
21 conservation planning that will allow the
22 protection and recovery and conservation of

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1 species while at the same time allowing for
2 solar energy development.

3 We are confident that there are
4 ways to do that. And my understanding is that
5 the governor at least in California is also
6 confident and committed to that process.

7 Secondly, we would like the scope
8 changed in the following sense: A freeze on
9 new solar application is a death knell for
10 investment in this industry and instead
11 telling capital to go into fossil fuels, which
12 we think is wrong for the planet, wrong for
13 this industry.

14 But, moreover, there are lots of
15 ways, and we've put this in our written
16 comments that we've submitted, to encourage
17 investment in lands, for example, that aren't
18 in sensitive areas. And so freezing
19 applications in areas where you don't have
20 ACECs and so on we think is contra-indicated.
21 That's what you want to encourage, in many
22 ways, and environmentally what one would want

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1 to encourage and to explore.

2 To say that we think that the
3 600,000 acres of applications are all that
4 there is or that's the hot stuff, we don't
5 know. Kind of depends. If you can't build in
6 the ones that are applied for, you don't know.

7 But we'd like to see an end on that
8 freeze and, rather, an expression of
9 flexibility -- I'm running out of time, so
10 I'll remain for later -- but flexibility
11 depending on resolving some of these
12 environmental issues, especially the DWMA and
13 ACECs where either that purpose is not an
14 issue or where the DWMA itself, for example,
15 permits one percent of the land to be
16 disturbed, and so on.

17 Finally, the scope should be
18 changed so it's not relying on the same PEIS
19 for 20 years. We know you would plan to amend
20 it within 20 years, but at the moment it says
21 that that's how you plan to use it. That's
22 incompatible with environmental change and

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1 climate change. It's incompatible with
2 technological change. And I think you need to
3 change the scope.

4 I've run out of time so I'll try to
5 see if there's additional meet later to make a
6 couple of other comments. Thank you.

7 MS. HARTMANN: April Sall and after
8 that will be Claudia Sall.

9 MS. APRIL SALL: Good evening and
10 thank you for the opportunity to comment on
11 this important issue. And I would also like
12 to commend the BLM for turning down the
13 projects thus far that were in appropriate
14 areas, such as the one from the Ridgecrest
15 Office in the DWMA; and encourage you to
16 continue to consider the sensitivity and
17 uniqueness of some of the desert ecosystems in
18 California when going through this process.

19 I would like to urge the BLM to not
20 allow the siting in ACECs and DWMA in
21 California, as was done with the wind PEIS.

22 Also, lands that were purchased

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1 with private donations and public land water
2 conservation funds for conservation purposes,
3 an example would be the Catellus land
4 purchase. The partners on that project were
5 the Department of Interior and the Wildlands
6 Conservancy, who gifted over \$30 million of
7 private donations for over 630,000 acres that
8 was donated to the Department of Interior for
9 conservation purposes.

10 And it was understood that that
11 would be conserved for in perpetuity. And
12 these lands are also being considered for
13 solar development. Some are in Wilderness
14 areas and thus would be excluded. Some are
15 not.

16 Also I would encourage the BLM to
17 not consider sensitive culture areas and areas
18 in the desert that are expected to have high
19 cultural resources. Only about a little less
20 than 15 percent of the California Desert
21 Conservation Area has been surveyed for
22 cultural resources on BLM land.

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1 And when siting projects I would
2 encourage the BLM to site projects within five
3 miles of existing legal roads, within five to
4 ten miles of existing transmission corridors,
5 federally-designed transmission corridors and
6 state-designated corridors, and close to major
7 load centers, as close to major load centers
8 as possible, such as L.A. and San Diego
9 Counties, the Central Valley.

10 I would encourage the BLM to
11 approve projects that are dry cooled or air
12 cooled or to approve projects that use
13 recycled water, as water is a precious
14 resource in our desert ecosystem.

15 Also sitings should not occur
16 adjacent to private conservation lands, where
17 impacts such as transmission would result in
18 further damage to conservation efforts and
19 conservation lands. And as PV, photovoltaic
20 costs decrease, there will be a drastic effect
21 on the amount of large-scale and remote solar
22 projects that are appropriate, and I would

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1 encourage the BLM to consider that when
2 designating large areas of land in the PEIS
3 that is appropriate for solar development.

4 Also the BLM is not charged with
5 managing or considering all of the lands in
6 the six western states. However, the
7 cumulative effects are extremely important,
8 and that is something that is going to be a
9 huge issue in terms of the land and the
10 conservation assets, and I encourage the BLM
11 to consider all the development and impacts on
12 these lands.

13 Thank you.

14 (Off mic comments.)

15 MS. APRIL SALL: April Sall, the
16 Wildlands Conservancy.

17 MS. CLAUDIA SALL: Good evening.
18 I'm Claudia Sall. I'm from the California
19 Desert Coalition and I represent folks in the
20 Mojave Desert.

21 And the Mojave Desert is not our
22 frontyard, it is not our backyard. It is our

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1 homes. And there are things that the folks in
2 the Mojave Desert are concerned about.

3 I've been to just a few of these
4 meetings, but I always see the gentleman from
5 Solar Millennium talking about lands that are
6 blocked. Well, blocked to him, conserved to
7 us. And these lands were conserved by
8 taxpayers and by donors to organizations like
9 the Wildlands Conservancy and the Mojave
10 Desert Land Trust. And we didn't expect these
11 types of projects to be coming on these lands
12 because we're trying to do linkages, we're
13 trying to create some buffer properties and
14 some inholdings. And we kind of feel like the
15 rug has been taken out of from under the money
16 that, you know, middle class people have put
17 toward these efforts. So we urge you to be
18 careful about these kinds of things that are
19 considered.

20 Other things that people who live
21 in the Mojave Desert all their life are
22 concerned about is water. We don't have a lot

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1 of it. We're concerned if aquifers are
2 drained for projects such as these and in the
3 short term you only have 20 years, it looks
4 like, of planning here, whereas the California
5 Desert Plan has a bit more of an eye to a
6 longer timeframe here. And we would be
7 concerned about these being mined for a short-
8 term project or technology may be changed in
9 20 years.

10 Another that was sort of alluded to
11 here was the tax credit that the gentleman
12 from the NREL was recommending. And that may
13 all be well and good, but there's another
14 subsidy that's going on here.

15 BLM rents these lands very cheaply.
16 And if we give them the tax credit and then
17 they get the subsidy of renting lands for \$14
18 a linear mile or whatever the very low cost is
19 they get, we're getting taxpayers or we're
20 getting industries that are from out of the
21 country able to use lands that we, as the
22 public, have put aside with our tax dollars.

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1 They're getting the tax credit and they're
2 getting subsidized by using this free land.
3 And there's not a lot of applications going on
4 private land.

5 We would like to see the
6 applications that are done to be done on the
7 -- since they need flat land -- to be done on
8 dry lakes, lands near urban center that can
9 use this so the transmission lines can be
10 existing and also of course stay in existing
11 corridors that have been already designated,
12 and places like already-disturbed farmland,
13 which may cause the companies to take a dollar
14 or two out of their pocket to purchase. And
15 so these are some of the issues that we are,
16 from the folks from the Mojave Desert are
17 concerned about, and we hope that you will
18 consider those very strongly.

19 We've been in the area conserving
20 this for the rest of the folks for lots of
21 years, beyond just what the BLM is doing. So
22 thank you for your time.

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1 MS. HARTMANN: Thank you, Claudia.

2 The next three speakers will be Mike Skuja,
3 Terry O'Brien, then Donald Lutz.

4 MR. SKUJA: Good evening. My name
5 is Mike Skuja and I work for Defenders of
6 Wildlife. We have 100,000 members in
7 California and we're based in Sacramento. So
8 I'm going to save my back here a little bit,
9 so.

10 First of all, I want to thank you
11 guys for taking the time to do a PEIS. We see
12 this as a very important development for the
13 whole of the U.S. and the world. Indeed
14 California as California goes so do a lot of
15 other parts of the country. So I think it's
16 important that we get this right and that we
17 do take our time with it.

18 One thing I do want to stress is
19 that once you disturb desert lands, they're
20 gone forever. It's really hard to revegetate.
21 And I think that you need to be careful about
22 where you site these things.

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1 So I do see the process that's
2 developing here in California a leadership for
3 the rest of the country because indeed Arizona
4 and New Mexico and other states will be
5 watching carefully.

6 One thing I do want to encourage is
7 no developments in the ACECs and the Desert
8 Wildlife Management Areas. And we will
9 structure our comments specifically for the
10 CDCA to get into that issue.

11 I think it's useful, seeing as we
12 are a leadership example, useful to go beyond
13 what is legally recommended to look at what we
14 should do, not just what we can do. And I
15 think this is a big issue for us and we have
16 to be careful with wildlife habitat, migratory
17 pathways, et cetera.

18 I'd like to echo a lot of the
19 statements that Claudia and April said about
20 water issues. We do support dry-cooling
21 systems.

22 Another thing in general is that we

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1 are very supportive of AB 32 and the goals
2 found therein. And we as environmentalists
3 have been working quite closely with the
4 Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative. I
5 think when you look in the media you see that
6 environmentalists a lot of times are
7 stereotyped as against green energy, against
8 renewable energy. Defenders of Wildlife is
9 not of that sentiment. And we've been working
10 for months now too with the solar companies to
11 try to map out these areas and where they
12 should go and shouldn't go, beyond what's
13 legally defined because, as I said, we lead by
14 example.

15 I think it's important to engage a
16 lot of parties in this process in the coming
17 months, not just the environmental community.

18 One of the big missing links in my opinion is
19 tribal communities, Native American
20 communities. A lot of the cultural resources
21 are not mapped and we need to start engaging
22 in that process.

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1 And I realize that that will delay
2 us slightly and the environmental concerns
3 obviously do delay us slightly, but again
4 we're trying to look at the big picture, we're
5 trying to look at the long term. Once these
6 goes, this land is disturbed for good. And
7 the lifetime of these plants in many cases are
8 30 years, too. So we need to be very careful
9 where we put this.

10 I think those are the majority of
11 my points. So thank you.

12 MS. HARTMANN: Next is Terry
13 O'Brien.

14 MR. O'BRIEN: Good evening and
15 thank you. I'm with the California Energy
16 Commission. I am the Deputy Director of the
17 Energy Facility Siting Division. I want to
18 thank BLM and the Department of Energy for
19 holding this meeting tonight in Sacramento and
20 the other meetings you're holding in
21 California. I think it's critically important
22 that members -- or that citizens of California

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1 from all different organizations have an
2 opportunity to provide input on this process.

3 I think it's a very important process to
4 California.

5 California has an aggressive,
6 perhaps the most aggressive renewable goal in
7 the country at this time. That's to get 33
8 percent of our electricity generated in the
9 state from renewable resources by the year
10 2020. I think that's a very important
11 environmental goal from the standpoint of
12 global warming.

13 The Energy Commission will be
14 working closely with the Department of Energy
15 and the Bureau of Land Management on this. We
16 will be a cooperating agency and we expect to
17 work closely with the federal agencies and
18 also other state agencies. From that
19 standpoint, we will be coordinating with the
20 other governmental agencies.

21 One of the things we'll be doing is
22 getting word out to the stakeholders, like

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1 many of you tonight who have shown up. As I
2 said, we think that's very important.

3 But as important to the Energy
4 Commission in terms of getting additional
5 energy from renewable resources is the
6 protection of California's environment and the
7 unique ecosystems here in California,
8 including the desert ecosystems.

9 So I think we have a great
10 challenge ahead of us, but we also have an
11 opportunity. I think working together we can
12 help meet the goals that have been set while
13 at the same time protecting the environment.

14 So we look forward to working
15 together very closely with you. Thank you
16 very much.

17 MS. HARTMANN: Thank you, Terry.

18 Next we have Donald Lutz and after
19 Donald we'll have Michael Hogan and Brent
20 Schoradt.

21 MR. LUTZ: I have decided not to
22 say anything. I don't have any comments.

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1 MS. HARTMANN: Are you -- okay,
2 you're done.

3 Okay. Can Michael Hogan come up,
4 please?

5 MR. HOGAN: Michael Hogan, Lead
6 Realty Specialist, Ridgecrest California. I'm
7 with the Bureau of Land Management.

8 For the past 17 years I've been
9 working with the Bureau of Land Management in
10 Ridgecrest developing renewable energy,
11 primarily wind. We got sort of hit pretty
12 hard with solar applications starting about
13 March of last year. And it was somewhat of a
14 side swipe that we weren't expecting because
15 everyone was looking at wind as being the big
16 renewable energy program.

17 But back in 1980 the California
18 Desert Conservation Plan did mention both wind
19 and solar as being a positive direction for
20 renewable energy. Unfortunately, the
21 subsequent plans that followed, whether it's
22 the West Mojave Management Plan or the

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1 Northeast Mojave Plan, or whatever plan we
2 planned, failed to really carry that forward
3 in a positive and dynamic way to really
4 emphasize renewable energy.

5 It emphasized a lot of other
6 resources but it didn't capture renewable
7 energy, whether it was wind or solar. And so
8 we failed as an Agency, I believe, in handling
9 that, and I hope this PEIS rectifies that.

10 Renewable energy already has a wide
11 variety of challenges: Emerging technologies,
12 which have the return on investment for
13 capitalized expenses for industry very
14 challenged already. We've got resource
15 impacts that you've already heard other
16 speakers talk about.

17 Military concerns. Now whether
18 it's reflective issues from solar panels or
19 wind turbines that are 499 feet in the area
20 and the military are worried about whether or
21 not they can fly their aircraft.

22 Visual impacts, "Not my backyard."

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1 People don't want it near them.

2 Rural America has been carrying the
3 burden of urban America's utilizations for a
4 long time.

5 So we've gone through all this.
6 BLM in the Ridgecrest Field Office and other
7 offices have been taking that burden on. But
8 the reality is we've got \$4.60-, \$5-, \$6-, \$7-
9 gallon gas coming up. And electric cars are
10 going to be coming up as a future here. So
11 what we do here, whether it's solar or
12 whatever, electric power is going to be a
13 mainstay and renewable energy is going to have
14 to be one of the things we consider seriously.

15 I think that we should reopen some
16 plans. At a minimum, the EIS should be really
17 addressing those. We should be putting
18 renewable energy at a strategic level. And I
19 think that it's time that we take a hard look
20 at that.

21 Remember, Ridgecrest as a field
22 office is the seventh windiest and sunniest

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1 place in the United States, and it's barred
2 from solar development. It's barred out from
3 it. So keep that in mind.

4 MR. SCHORADT: I'm Brent Schoradt
5 with the California Wilderness Coalition. I'd
6 like to thank the BLM and the Department of
7 Energy for moving this process forward.

8 I think it's pretty clear that
9 everyone in this room recognizes the
10 importance of alternative energy in terms of
11 our future really as a country and as a
12 people. But I also think that it's important
13 that we recognize the importance of
14 California's public lands and really what it
15 means to be California is really to have these
16 places to go to.

17 And we've all come together, the
18 state of California and the people of
19 California over the past, you know, 40 to 50
20 years to stand up and protect our public lands
21 and to establish Wilderness Areas, National
22 Parks, State Parks, ACECs, Wilderness Study

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1 Areas, and I think it's an important first
2 step that the Notice of Intent starts to set
3 out some exclusion areas that will be avoided
4 in terms of future alternative energy
5 development.

6 I think there's still some work to
7 go and we look forward to submitting written
8 comments, but especially in the California
9 Desert Conservation Area, which of course is
10 sort of the background or the backyard to one
11 of America's biggest urban areas in the Los
12 Angeles Basin.

13 So I think the ACECs and the desert
14 are going to be important, a big issue for us
15 to try and figure out a way to protect them as
16 much as we possibly can.

17 And when it comes to transmission,
18 it's clear that BLM transmission lines will
19 also impact other public lands and even
20 private conservation lands. So we think that
21 should be taken into account.

22 And we also think that no

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1 transmission lines should lead to National
2 Parks or State Parks, because those are
3 clearly not appropriate for transmission
4 lines.

5 And I think the State of California
6 has done a great job in terms of moving
7 forward with this stakeholder process, the
8 Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative. And
9 whatever maps of transmission lines that they
10 come up with should definitely be incorporated
11 into the federal plans here with the EIS.

12 And I also think it's key that the
13 EIS prioritize sites in already-disturbed
14 areas, whether that be old abandoned mines or
15 quarries or other areas that have already been
16 damaged, so that we're not going into the most
17 pristine, high-quality habitat that's out
18 there in the desert.

19 And also of course recycled water
20 should be prioritized as much as possible. We
21 should hopefully be able to develop a best
22 management practices system so that recycled

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1 water could be utilized. If the nuclear power
2 plants can do it, we should certainly be able
3 to do it with solar.

4 So thank you all for your time and
5 we look forward to submitting comments in
6 writing.

7 MS. HARTMANN: We have two more
8 people signed up to make a statement and then
9 after that anyone else who wants to will be
10 given a chance. Next is Rainer Aringhoff and
11 after Rainer Carl Zichella.

12 MR. ARINGHOFF: Yes. Thank you.
13 Didn't expect that I could speak up again.
14 I'll keep it short. I think it has been
15 mentioned here, the tradeoffs and the
16 challenges we have are clearly described, but
17 I'm also grateful that I could hear, for an
18 example, from April a sort of compromise that
19 is almost visible that could be done between
20 the developers and the environmental-concern
21 groups. That is really what we are also
22 trying in rating, however it looks so

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1 complicated sometimes. And it's sometimes
2 also slow.

3 And that is defining corridors,
4 mostly those that are existing already, that
5 do have the highest resources. And what Mike
6 Hogan just said here is it's the Kern area,
7 the Ridgecrest area, is the seventh highest in
8 wind, but it's the highest in solar in the
9 whole United States in terms of its direct
10 normal radiation intensity.

11 So if there is land disturbed, if
12 there is a transmission path, then in fact
13 let's define corridors along those. Also land
14 development for the projects are available or
15 made available. And let's be flexible. As
16 Peter said, on the rules that already exist
17 that have sometimes been applied for and have
18 been invented at a time when nobody thought
19 about solar, and even taxes, that we would get
20 competitive one day.

21 So I think there is a compromise
22 which we can almost grasp, so then let's also

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1 be fast, that we can really respond to the
2 challenges in the world energy market.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. ZICHELLA: Good evening,
5 everybody. I'm Carl Zichella. I'm the
6 Regional Director for the Sierra Club for
7 California, Nevada, and Hawaii. I'm also
8 participating in the Renewable Energy
9 Transmission Initiative and the Western
10 Governors' Association Western Renewable
11 Energy Zone Process. I'm representing our
12 300,000 members and supporters here in
13 California and our more than 800,000 members
14 and 1.3 million members and supporters
15 nationwide.

16 Global warming and climate change
17 are the top priority of the Sierra Club and
18 there's a big reason why. For the last more
19 than a century we have fought to help protect
20 many of the lands in this state and around the
21 country, Wilderness Areas, Wildlife Refuges,
22 Preserves. And we've realized that global

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1 warming and climate change are gradually going
2 to erode many of the successes we have,
3 undermine the biological integrity of the
4 areas that we fought to protect, and weaken
5 our ability now to fight the continued warming
6 of this planet.

7 Global warming will ultimately
8 result globally in the displacement of
9 millions, hundreds of millions of people
10 potentially, tens of millions in one country
11 alone, the country of Bangladesh, where a
12 five-meter increase in sea level, which is
13 quite possible, would displace 60 million
14 people in one place. So global warming and
15 climate change is critically important to us.

16 Here in California we've really
17 studied the effects of global warming and
18 climate change to a very great degree. We're
19 already seeing the impacts of global warming
20 here in reduced snowpack in the Sierra Nevada;
21 the changes in the migratory behavior of birds
22 and other wildlife; and of course as was

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1 mentioned by Terry O'Brien and others,
2 California has responded by becoming really a
3 global leader in global warming and climate
4 change action.

5 We are blessed with some wonderful
6 resources, as Rainer Aringhoff just told us
7 and as was mentioned previously by Mike Hogan.

8 But the fact is also we have a lot of
9 biological richness in our state. California
10 is the second-leading state in number of
11 endemic species in the United States, after
12 Hawaii. We have a lot of fragile habitats, as
13 others have mentioned. And we need to proceed
14 expeditiously but carefully.

15 Delay really is our enemy here. If
16 anyone happened to notice that just today it
17 was mentioned in the *New York Times* that sea
18 level rises are going to occur at roughly
19 twice the rate that people thought they were.

20 Things are happening almost every day,
21 opening a newspaper you're greeted with news
22 of some other adjustment in how fast things

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1 are happening. And, as we know, there are
2 tipping points.

3 I think we also have a lot of
4 reason to move expeditiously because if we
5 care about the special areas we are concerned
6 about and want to get the renewable energy out
7 to help meet our greenhouse gas reduction
8 goals and also to meet our renewable portfolio
9 standard goals, the goals that Terry just
10 talked about, we need to actually take charge
11 of that ourselves.

12 Under the Energy Policy Act of
13 2005, if California or other states delay in
14 building transmission, the Federal Energy
15 Regulatory Commission is empowered to build
16 those lines over the objections of states.
17 And I can assure you, I have a lot more
18 confidence in the stakeholders working in the
19 Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative than
20 I do with the staff at the Federal Energy
21 Regulatory Commission, no offense to them.

22 We need to take care of this

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1 ourselves. And that's another reason the
2 Western Governors have responded so
3 strenuously, to try to come up with a plan to
4 identify the best places. And by best places
5 we mean the highest renewable energy output
6 and the lowest environmental impacts possible.

7 I think everyone realizes there's
8 no such thing as an impact-free energy source.
9 However, we need to minimize the impacts that
10 we are going to create by generating these
11 renewable energy sources. And we need to do
12 that in an intelligent way.

13 I have to say that some of the
14 generators like Rainer Aringhoff and others I
15 could name have been good partners in trying
16 to sort that out. And we're grateful to them
17 for that. But a lot of working has gone into
18 the Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative.
19 And I wanted to urge you as one of the points
20 that we will be making in our written comments,
21 to take into account both what's happening
22 with the Renewable Energy Transmission

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1 Initiative and the Western Governors'
2 Association Res. process, because your agency
3 and many others are participating partners in
4 that, as are many state wildlife agencies with
5 many of the same concerns that we have here in
6 California for other lands across the western
7 interconnection. This is bigger than just
8 California, of course. And we need to be
9 engaged with those processes, because a lot of
10 good work is going to be happening.

11 I'd like to just say we will be
12 submitting written comments, detailed written
13 comments for the record. Thank you for coming
14 around to the numerous locations that you have
15 and for adding some hearings here in
16 California. As you can tell by the turnout
17 here in Sacramento tonight, people are really
18 concerned about this.

19 And I'm heartened to hear about the
20 number of my colleagues who have spoken for a
21 balance in both generating the renewable
22 energy resources here in California, as we are

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1 the big dog when it comes to consuming
2 resources, and also protecting our natural
3 heritage. We think we can do it, and we want
4 to help participate in that. Thank you.

5 MS. HARTMANN: Thank you, Carl.
6 Come back up. Before that is there anyone who
7 hasn't spoken and wants to make a statement.
8 Please.

9 MS. COPLEY: My name's Elizabeth
10 Copley. I'm a NEPA consultant for ENSR and
11 I'm very, very interested in this. I've done
12 a lot of NEPA work for the Army.

13 I just want to make a comment.
14 What I'm observing tonight, and I don't know
15 what your plans are, but we've often had
16 technical advisory committees. It looks like
17 the site screening, the site selection, the
18 criteria that are going to go into the
19 identification of how you identify the best
20 sites has a lot of value-laden judgments
21 within it. And if you're not having any kind
22 of a technical advisory committee or a

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1 stakeholders group, maybe a series of
2 workshops where people are able to provide
3 input into what the most essential values are
4 that need to be considered in this process.

5 And then I had a question too.
6 About the 130 existing applications, do they
7 become baseline or are you using them as part
8 of a cumulative analysis or just disregarding
9 them? Or how are you dealing with the
10 existing in terms of the prop., where that get
11 included in the analysis?

12 MS. RESSEGUIE: I'd get Heidi, but
13 she won't look at me.

14 MS. HARTMANN: I'm

15 THE REPORTER: We can't hear you,
16 Heidi.

17 MS. RESSEGUIE: You heard the
18 question. She's talking about the limited
19 alternative. Is that what you're talking
20 about or you're talking about cumulative
21 impacts, the baseline for cumulative impacts?

22 MS. COPLEY: Well, the first

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1 comment was about getting the involvement of
2 the stakeholders in the selection process in
3 terms of criteria. But then the second one
4 was, yes, what's going to happen to the
5 existing applications? How are they going to
6 be treated, are they going to be considered
7 somewhat of a baseline condition, or are they
8 going to be considered as not existing? Are
9 they going to be considered cumulative, or
10 what?

11 MS. HARTMANN: At this point we're
12 planning on considering a subset of the
13 existing applications that are well developed
14 already as that limited-development
15 alternative. And I think Linda's clarified
16 before that the others will be sort of -- I
17 should let Linda address this -- but the
18 others as they move along presumably will be
19 subject to the best practices and mitigation
20 plans that come out of the PEIS.

21 MS. COPLEY: Okay. Thank you.

22 MS. HARTMANN: Is there anyone else

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1 who wanted to make a statement that has not
2 spoken earlier?

3 (No response.)

4 MS. HARTMANN: Okay. Then it's
5 your turn again, Peter.

6 MR. WEINER: Thank you. Peter
7 Weiner again for CERT and solar industry
8 members. I want to apologize for not having
9 kind of made my talking points the right size,
10 but, first of all, I want to endorse
11 enthusiastically everything that Carl Zichella
12 just said, from the Sierra Club, and the need
13 to move both expeditiously and carefully.

14 What I want to go on to talk about
15 is this: In terms of the utility of the PEIS
16 it's going to be useful to the extent and only
17 to the extent that it does result in
18 streamlining the NEPA process for individual
19 projects. And for that we need robust BMPs,
20 we need robust guidance on siting, and we need
21 the various technologies that NREL was talking
22 about, that Doug Dahle was talking about in a

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1 way that will allow us hopefully to tier off
2 the PEIS and do environmental assessments
3 rather than full-blown EISes. That doesn't
4 mean you won't do a full-blown EIS in the
5 appropriate case, but we would like to make it
6 as streamlined as possible.

7 The second thing is that I think a
8 number of people here have been talking about
9 the consideration of nonBLM lands. There are
10 two ways in which that's important.

11 One, is that transmission is rarely
12 a matter of only going over BLM land. If that
13 were -- it's possible in Nevada. I mean your
14 map showed that BLM is all of Nevada, with the
15 possible exception of Las Vegas. But
16 otherwise we need to consider those. But at
17 the same time the remarks that Claudia Sall
18 made were correct -- I think it was Claudia
19 rather than April -- about considering impacts
20 on private conservation areas, places with
21 conservation easements. All of these things
22 have to be considered as part of the impacts

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1 of transmission. But as a result you also
2 need to consider those lands as part of
3 transmission. And we need to do it in a way
4 that has the least impact as possible.

5 Os I think that restricting the
6 scope to only BLM lands lends -- leads to some
7 problems both in terms of NEPA analysis and
8 with regard to the actual transmission that
9 will take place. That's especially true of
10 other federal lands. I realize that BLM owns
11 the universe in the western states. But DOD,
12 yes, maybe a little bit. Forest Service,
13 maybe a little bit. So I think we need to
14 consider that.

15 Finally, for NEPA compliance I do
16 think you need to beef up the alternatives
17 analysis. You've got the no-project, which is
18 okay, and the project, which is the
19 facilitated-development alternative. But the
20 limited-development alternative is really not
21 enough, I think, in terms of NEPA compliance.
22 We would urge you to consider some varying

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1 BMPs, some varying mitigation factors as other
2 kinds of alternatives. And I don't want to be
3 totally specific now, and I think that you all
4 are experts in NEPA and can help consider that
5 as well. We'll try to submit further comments
6 as this goes along. But we don't think that
7 the limited-development alternative is really
8 enough. I think you need to look at some
9 more.

10 Lastly, I'd really like to endorse
11 what I think Michael Hogan said. It appears
12 that when the West Mojave Plan and some of the
13 other plans were developed, that renewable
14 energy really wasn't considered. And at some
15 level it's who's at the table kind of speaking
16 up that kind of gets noticed, and that was not
17 part of what these plans were about.

18 I think that the PEIS needs to
19 consider how to reopen those Regional
20 Management Plans, and Michael probably has
21 better ideas than I do about how that is done.
22 But there needs to be some way of doing that

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1 in a strategic way. He said it better than I
2 did, but I'd like to endorse what he said.
3 Thank you.

4 MS. HARTMANN: Thank you, Peter.

5 April would like to come back up
6 again, too.

7 MS. APRIL SALL: April Sall, the
8 Wildlands Conservancy again. Just a couple of
9 other points I wanted to raise.

10 I do want to commend the BLM for
11 being supportive of renewable energy
12 development. I personally live and manage a
13 preserve that is operated entirely by solar
14 power. But the reality is there's a feeding
15 frenzy occurring in the Mojave Desert of
16 applications. And we're not making any more
17 pristine land here, to state the obvious. So
18 I think BLM is charged with being very
19 thoughtful about the choices of how we develop
20 and recreate and conserve the land that we
21 have.

22 In the Mojave Desert, for example,

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1 the plants there are extremely sensitive and
2 extremely old. We have a lot of ancient plant
3 ecosystems. And we have plants with genetic
4 material that's over 10,000 years old. And
5 once this land is developed or bladed, it's
6 gone forever. With other impacts and concerns
7 like global warming, you know we have a lot to
8 consider.

9 And we have the opportunity to
10 accomplish the greening of our energy supply
11 and meet the mandates of AB 32 and 1059, while
12 keeping open space and conservation areas that
13 we have. And there the times in American
14 history where we've gotten issues like this
15 wrong from placer mining to nuclear waste,
16 take your example. And what's the statement,
17 that those that do not learn from history are
18 doomed to repeat it.

19 So I encourage the BLM again to
20 prioritize sites in degraded areas and to
21 examine existing transmission so that we can
22 look back in 5, 10, 50 years and not have

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1 major regrets and say that this is the time
2 where we got it wrong.

3 So there's the right way to do
4 this.

5 MS. HARTMANN: Would anyone else
6 like to speak? Go ahead, Mike.

7 MR. HOGAN: Michael Hogan. My
8 final comment. I want to make a couple
9 clarifying statements for tonight. One, going
10 to the rental for -- and the subsidizing of
11 the public lands, the linear right-of-way
12 schedule for transmission, for roads,
13 pipelines, and so forth, is based on a acre
14 schedule. And I do believe that was what was
15 quoted tonight. It is a schedule that has a
16 high impact and a low impact, depending on
17 what you're using it for.

18 As far as site purposes, such as
19 solar, wind, communication sites and those
20 types of things, rental is on a totally
21 different scale that's based on an appraised
22 value. For wind, and because they haven't

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1 come up with the appraised value for solar,
2 for wind it's based on the installed capacity
3 for the land itself and it's on the kilowatts
4 that are -- or actually the megawatts now that
5 are installed capacity, it's \$2,463 per
6 megawatt installed capacity.

7 So if you have a large facility,
8 you can do the math on that. So I'd like to
9 clarify that. There is no subsidy that goes
10 with that. The linear right-of-way schedule,
11 I'll agree, is a subsidy.

12 But as far as mapping the cultural
13 resources, mapping the cultural resources.
14 Cultural resources, you'll never see them on a
15 map because people steal the cultural
16 resources. And I would object soundly to
17 anyone who maps our cultural resources and
18 puts them out for anyone to see.

19 The history of America, our Native
20 Americans' history has been stolen by people
21 who are out potting and out sifting for
22 arrowheads and doing various and sundry things

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1 in our deserts, in our Western lands. And
2 anyone who wants to see those mapped needs to
3 relook at the issue. They are mapped, but
4 they're mapped and they're put in archives in
5 our office. And it's a secret society of
6 archeologists even within our own office, I
7 don't even get to see the maps unless I have
8 to.

9 So if you don't have a purpose, you
10 don't have a need, you don't have a reason,
11 you don't need to know they're there. So I
12 just wanted to make sure that that's
13 clarified.

14 So just a couple things that I
15 wanted to make sure everyone knew. And
16 Ridgecrest, and although I made it sound like
17 I would like to see just wholesale development
18 of solar-wind on the public lands, it needs to
19 be sound and smart.

20 The development for renewable
21 energy needs to be encouraged but it needs to
22 be sound and smart. But also we need to have

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1 balance. We need to have balance in our
2 conservation. we need to have balance in how
3 we look at things. Because FTMA provides for
4 multiple use and sustained yield, and that is
5 of all resources. And renewable energy cannot
6 continue to be lumped into the development
7 mode of other industries at this point. It is
8 not oil and gas. It is not mining. It is not
9 other things. It is the future that we're
10 going to have to be looking at if we want to
11 save our planet.

12 MR. ZICHELLA: Just one last thing
13 to say about this. I mean we need to look for
14 meeting our goals here in California to
15 renewable resources of all kinds, there is no
16 one renewable resource that's going to help us
17 meet our goals for greenhouse gas reductions
18 or for our RPS standard. And if we can get a
19 healthy increment out of the Southern
20 California desert, places where the resource
21 is the best and arguably the best in the
22 world, closest to load of any major desert

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1 ecosystem in the world, which means less
2 transmission. Obviously if you were to do the
3 same thing in northern Africa your
4 transmission lines would be a 1,000 miles. So
5 we have 100-mile opportunity.

6 With that being said, we don't have
7 to do it all here. There's other places in
8 the state and throughout the Western
9 Interconnection that can help us meet our
10 goals. California also gets 16 percent of its
11 electricity from imported coal. I'd like to
12 see us replace that with renewable resources,
13 whether they're from California or elsewhere.

14 So I think it's a very key place.
15 We want to help, as I said, work expeditiously
16 but carefully to develop the renewables that
17 we can. And I know you're going to do a
18 careful job of the review. And we'll have
19 more comments in writing. Thank you.

20 MS. HARTMANN: Well, if there's no
21 one else who wants to make any more comments.
22 Well, Claudia would like to come back up one

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1 more time.

2 MS. CLAUDIA SALL: Dog and pony
3 show here. I didn't say that I was -- I'm
4 from the California Desert Coalition. We're
5 actually citizen advocacy.

6 So Mike pointed out something I
7 didn't articulate very well when I mentioned
8 subsidy. I really was referring to sort of
9 the thought that we have in California with
10 our education system, that those people who
11 are in state residence pay probably half the
12 costs of education at a university. USC, I
13 don't know what the figures are now, but last
14 I checked it was maybe \$40,000 a year.
15 Whereas the U.C. California maybe it was
16 around 20,000. So I was proposing that within
17 BLM there be a sliding scale of investors who
18 are American companies, who have been paying
19 taxes here and part of this American
20 landscape, as opposed to companies outside
21 that should have a little bit higher rate for
22 out-of-state, out-of-the-country areas, and

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1 that was more my thought I didn't articulate.

2 The other thing that probably was
3 articulated, I just want to say a little bit
4 more, is I heard Supervisor Hansberger say
5 that in San Bernardino, the largest county in
6 the United States and probably two-thirds of
7 these 130 projects phrase solar projects are
8 going to be in the Mojave Desert, so it's
9 substantial, even though five or six states
10 are involved, and of the lands in San
11 Bernardino County, a third of it, he said, was
12 military and a third is federal lands and a
13 third of it is private. So San Bernardino
14 county is going to take a big hit here. You
15 know, that they have been using a lot of their
16 lands, as someone was mentioning, to support
17 urban lifestyle because they have built beyond
18 their resources and then looked to their
19 outlying areas, whether it's Owens Valley or
20 the Mojave Desert, to keep their bloated
21 lifestyle going.

22 So military bases, we have a few

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1 abandoned ones here. And certainly those are
2 very close to power lines and really should be
3 included in those disturbed areas.

4 So sorry about that, for the second
5 time around.

6 MS. HARTMANN: If you didn't
7 comment here tonight and you think of
8 something that you'd like to let us know and
9 consider in proceeding with the PEIS, please
10 either submit the comment on the website or
11 mail it to us.

12 And I really want to thank everyone
13 for taking the time out to come tonight. We
14 appreciate your input.

15 (The meeting was concluded at 8:29
16 p.m.)
17

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