

Thank you for your comment, Judyann Medeiros.

The comment tracking number that has been assigned to your comment is SolarM60203.

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Solar Energy Development PEIS
Comment ID: SolarM60203

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Comment Submitted:

I am gravely disturbed about you including the Red Sands solar energy study area for Solar Energy Development and have been studying the area in relation to environmental concerns. This area is NOT suitable for including in the development for large-scale solar energy for the following reasons:

1. The name "Red Sands" is a misnomer because it implies that the land has little value as an area of only sand dunes. In fact, the area is by and large north of the majority of the red sand area; therefore, it is instead mainly productive grasslands which support cattle and wildlife in good numbers.
2. The area has numerous archaeological sites as evidenced by the archaeological studies that have been conducted by BLM in the area. The area that I have concern with has been waiting for over 2 years to have archaeological clearance for pipelines.
3. The area has historic value as the settlers of the Tularosa Basin used various sites in the area to establish and settle this area. It has been a productive grazing area since before the settlers came in the late 1800's and has continued to support the industry well since that time.
4. The area has diverse wildlife including the burrowing owl, hawks, and migratory birds that have been endangered.
5. This area is used as an airplane fly zone between two military areas (White Sands Missile Range and Macgregor Range) that have restricted air space. With large expanses of land in our county taken for government purposes, it would seem that land taken previously from our citizens could be used for solar production.
6. This land has very few good surface tanks for water, and a large part of the area has poor water quality from wells.
7. The Escondida Well Ranch portion on the map dated July 27, 2009 of the Red Sands area barely meets the minimum 2,000 acres, and it is our best grassland pasture. Losing entry to that area would destroy our ranch, our heritage, our ability to survive economically, and the good pasture land.

In summary, solar energy production may be a viable energy production method in the future, but land taken for government purposes and already withdrawn from public use in our county should be considered to be used instead of greater government intrusion into people's livelihood on productive land. It would also become single user land instead of the current multiple use. The Red Sands area should NOT be included in the study for the above reasons.