

Thank you for your comment, Gary Munsterman.

The comment tracking number that has been assigned to your comment is SolarS50028.

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Solar Energy Development PEIS  
Comment ID: SolarS50028

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The Air Force Western Regional Environmental Office has participated in a collaborative effort with other military services and federal land management agencies over the past four years on the review of policies and projects involving the siting of Wind Generated Energy Facilities (WGEF) in California and Nevada. Recently, the Southwest Wind Working Group has become engaged in the review of utility scale solar projects. We have identified the following areas of concern for consideration in the review of projects and request that they be considered as a part of your analysis within the PEIS. The areas of primary concern include the potential for obstruction of low-level military testing and training routes and radar interference. These concerns are predominate in our experience with the conflict generated by WGEF. Areas of secondary concern include 1) the displacement of T & E species habitat onto DoD installations and ranges, 2) thermal plumes over low-level military training routes and approach surfaces, 3) thermal plant impacts on regional water supply, 4) glare for heliostats in proximity to training routes and ranges, 5) solar equipment tolerances to sonic booms, 6) lighting and night vision impacts, 7) transmission interconnects, and 8) tracking and communication system spectrum.

Many public land areas within the desert with high potential for utility scale solar energy development contain testing and training areas which have been essential to the development of modern weapon systems and maintenance of military readiness. These desert test and training areas are essential to mission requirements. Solar development can be compatible with the mission, as evident by the 14 MW PV plant developed recently on Nellis AFB and other plans being developed for facilities at other desert installations and ranges. Thoughtful consideration of military requirements within the PEIS will assure development of the subject national renewable energy resource, while preserving the national military testing and training asset which exists in the study area. Data on the location of military training routes and special use airspace was previously provided to the ANL team working on the West-wide Energy Corridor PEIS. If you require separate data set or require additional clarification regarding these comments, please contact me.