

Thank you for your comment, Richard Spotts.

The comment tracking number that has been assigned to your comment is SolarS50225.

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Solar Energy Development PEIS
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I strongly support development of solar energy facilities because we need to reduce fossil fuel emissions that contribute to dangerous global climate change. However, I believe that we can promote solar development without sacrificing important or sensitive natural areas. Good planning and common sense will be necessary. The first priority for development of new solar facilities should be within existing developed areas. This would put the energy close to the users and reduce energy lost in transmission over distances. For example, photovoltaic panels could and should be placed on existing structures. Southern California Edison is already doing this in Orange County CA. The second priority should be locations near or adjacent to existing developments. Again, this will be near users, minimize transmission loss, and minimize new habitat destruction or fragmentation. For example, areas along or near existing power lines, freeways, and railroad lines would be ideal. The last or least desirable priority would be locating new facilities out in more natural, remote areas. This would increase construction and maintenance costs, increase transmission losses, and increase the relative level of habitat destruction and fragmentation. Indeed, areas with special designations (such as Wilderness Areas, WSAs, National Monuments, ACECs, Wild and Scenic Rivers, ESA critical habitats) should be totally avoided in terms of new development. If these priorities are followed, we should not have to choose between solar development and protecting special public lands or sensitive species. As such, I hope that the DPEIS adopts this priority screening approach as the preferred alternative. I also hope that the programmatic solar, wind, and geothermal RODs can be as consistent and compatible as possible in their decision approaches to minimize confusion among the industry and governmental officials who must implement them. Many thanks for considering my comments.