

Thank you for your comment, Randy price.

The comment tracking number that has been assigned to your comment is SolarM60185.

Comment Date: September 11, 2009 17:06:27PM

Solar Energy Development PEIS

Comment ID: SolarM60185

First Name: Randy

Middle Initial:

Last Name: price

Organization: Mesa County, Planning and Economic Development

Address: PO Box 20,000

Address 2:

Address 3:

City: Grand Junction

State: CO

Zip: 815025022

Country: USA

Email: randy.price@mesacounty.us

Privacy Preference: Don't withhold name or address from public record

Attachment: Solar PEIS Review 9 11 2009.pdf

Comment Submitted:



**MESA  
COUNTY**

**Department of Planning and Economic Development**

**Land Use and Development • Long Range Planning**

**Development Engineering • Development Services and Code Enforcement**

750 Main Street, P. O. Box 20,000 Grand Junction, CO, 81502-5022 (970) 244-1636 [www.mesacounty.us](http://www.mesacounty.us)

September 11, 2009

Solar Energy PEIS, Argonne National  
Laboratory, 9700 S. Cass Avenue—EVS/  
900, Argonne, IL 60439.

To Whom it May Concern;

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the scoping for the Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement. Please consider the following comments during the drafting of Solar PEIS. Mesa County is interested in the development of all forms of energy in a manner that will preserve our quality of life while minimizing impacts on the communities and environment. We would like to see development of the solar energy resources within the County. However, none of the proposed reserved tracts under consideration are in this county. Mesa County is located approximately 150 miles northwest of the nearest location in the San Luis Valley.

The Solar PEIS proposes to reserve 24 tracts of land in six States. There are 4 tracts in Colorado. The Solar PEIS will reserve and restrict uses and prohibit mineral leasing and surface uses in the study areas during the time of the study. The following are concerns, comments and questions that we would like to see addressed in the drafting of the PEIS.

- The PDF maps on the Solar PEIS website provide insufficient detail to evaluate the 4 sites proposed in Colorado. The data used to create these maps should be made available for download in formats that can be used by popular GIS software. Additionally, maps should be made available interactively online similar to <http://www.nrel.gov/eis/imby/>.
- The PDF maps only show the extent of the transmission corridors within the area Solar PEIS. An additional map of a wider scale should show how the corridors connect with the surrounding transmission grid. The map should show the existing capacities of the transmission lines.
- The PEIS should take into account existing infrastructure and proximity to urban areas in a formula for calculating suitability of BLM land for solar development. The map titled “Solar Potential from Concentrating Collector,” shows that the tracts in southern Colorado that are part of this PEIS provide 6.0 to 6.5 kwh/sq. meter/day. Other areas managed by BLM of slightly less available solar energy with values of 5.5 to 6.0 kwh/sq. meter/day that are closer to urban areas and are located along existing transmission lines were not considered for this PEIS. Electrical transmission loss over long distances may negate the slightly higher (10%) solar energy available in the PEIS study area. New

electrical transmission corridors and higher capacity transmission lines will consume land and create their own negative environmental and aesthetic impacts. As part of the draft Solar PEIS, areas slightly less than 6.0 to 6.5 kwh/sq. meter/day, should be considered and included as one of the alternatives if they are more efficient by their close proximity to existing infrastructure.

- The BLM Grand Junction Field Office is currently revising the GJFO Resource Management Plan. The plan is revised every 20 years. Revision of this plan should include the identification of those areas suitable for solar development and include addressing DOI initiatives in support of the President's New Energy for America Plan. Options for solar energy development in areas not identified in the Solar PEIS such as the Grand Junction resource management area should be looked at and included as an alternative in the PEIS.

Thank you for your consideration. We look forward to reviewing the Draft PEIS. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

(emailed)

Kurt Larsen, AICP  
Director of Planning and Economic Development

cc: Mesa County Board of County Commissioners  
Jon Peacock, County Administrator  
Lyle Dechant, County Attorney  
Catherine Robertson, GJFO Manager