

Programmatic Design Features for Specially Designated Areas and Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

The following design features have been identified to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate potential impacts on specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics from solar energy development identified and discussed in Sections 5.3.1 and 5.3.2 of the Draft and Final Solar PEIS.

General

LWC1-1 Protection of existing values of specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics shall be evaluated during the environmental analysis for solar energy projects, and the results shall be incorporated into the project planning and design.

(a) Assessing potential impacts on specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics shall include, but is not limited to, the following:

- Identifying specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics in proximity to the proposed projects. In coordination with the BLM, developers shall consult existing land use plans and updated inventories.
- Identifying lands that are within the geographic scope of a proposed solar energy project that have not been recently inventoried for wilderness characteristics or any lands that have been identified in a citizen's wilderness proposal in order to determine whether they possess wilderness characteristics. Developers shall consider including the wilderness characteristics evaluation as part of the processing of a solar energy ROW application for those lands without a recent wilderness characteristics inventory. All work must be completed in accordance with current BLM policies and procedures.
- Evaluating impacts on specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics as part of the environmental impact analysis for the project and considering options to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate adverse impacts in coordination with the BLM.

(a) Methods to mitigate unavoidable impacts on specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics may include, but are not limited to, the following:

BLM Solar Energy Program Design Features

- Acquiring wilderness inholdings from willing sellers.
- Acquiring private lands from willing sellers adjacent to designated wilderness.
- Acquiring private lands from willing sellers within proposed wilderness or Wilderness Study Areas.
- Acquiring other lands containing important wilderness or related values, such as opportunities for solitude or a primitive, unconfined (type of) recreation.
- Restoring wilderness, for example, modifying routes or other structures that detract from wilderness character.
- Contributing mitigation monies to a “wilderness mitigation bank,” if one exists, to fund activities such as the ones described above.
- Enacting management to protect lands with wilderness characteristics in the same field office or region that are not currently being managed to protect wilderness character. Areas that are to be managed to protect wilderness characteristics under this approach must be of sufficient size to be manageable, which could also include areas adjacent to current WSAs or adjacent to areas currently being managed to protect wilderness characteristics.

Site Characterization, Siting and Design, Construction

- **LWC2-1** Solar facilities shall be sited, designed, and constructed to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate impacts on the values of specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics.¹

¹ See Section 4.3 of the Final Solar PEIS for details on areas included in these categories.