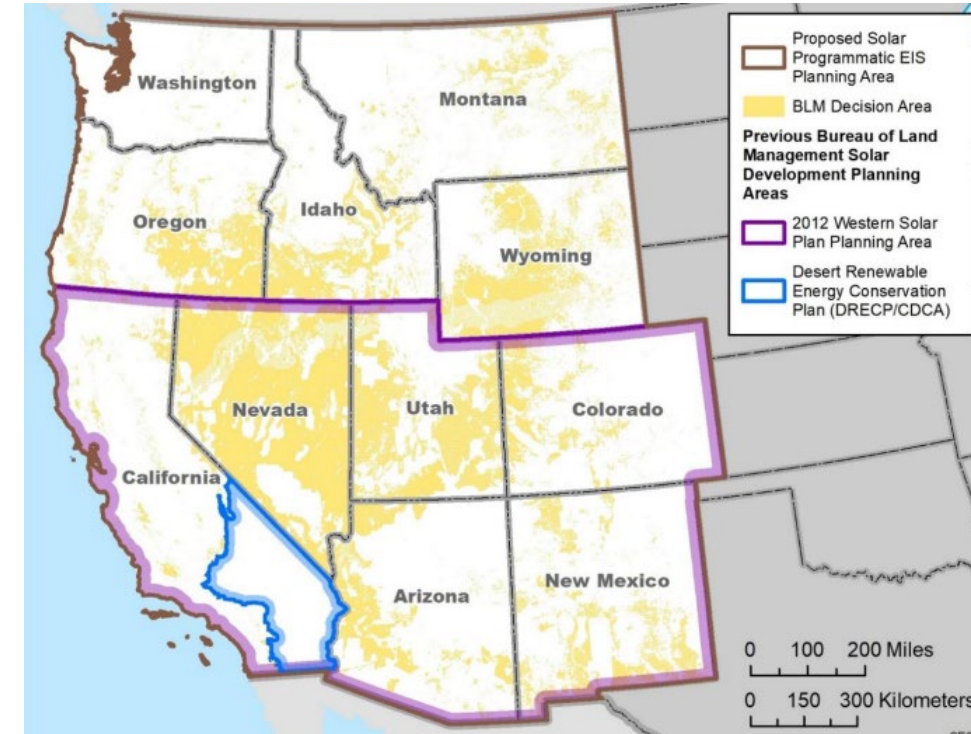




Introduction

- BLM's multiple-use mission includes supporting America's energy needs
 - 9,400 megawatts of solar energy permitted
 - Solar development interest increasing and expanding
 - Updated plan needed for better solar array siting
- The updated Western Solar Plan:
 - Covers more states and more projects
 - Keep sensitive areas off-limits
 - Improves required protective measures for projects
 - Requires further project-specific reviews
 - Eliminates the current variance process



Solar Programmatic EIS
(Western Solar Plan) Planning Area





Why is BLM Updating Solar Planning?

- Guide solar proposals to better locations:
 - Identify solar application areas with fewer resource conflicts, more development interest and overall improved likelihood of success.
 - Exclude areas with known sensitive resources
- Address changes since 2012:
 - Growing interest and competitive cost for renewable energy
 - Advancements in photovoltaic (PV) and battery technology
 - Increased development interest in northern states
 - National goals to increase renewable energy generation



Gemini Solar Project; Nevada





Key Elements in Updated Western Solar Plan

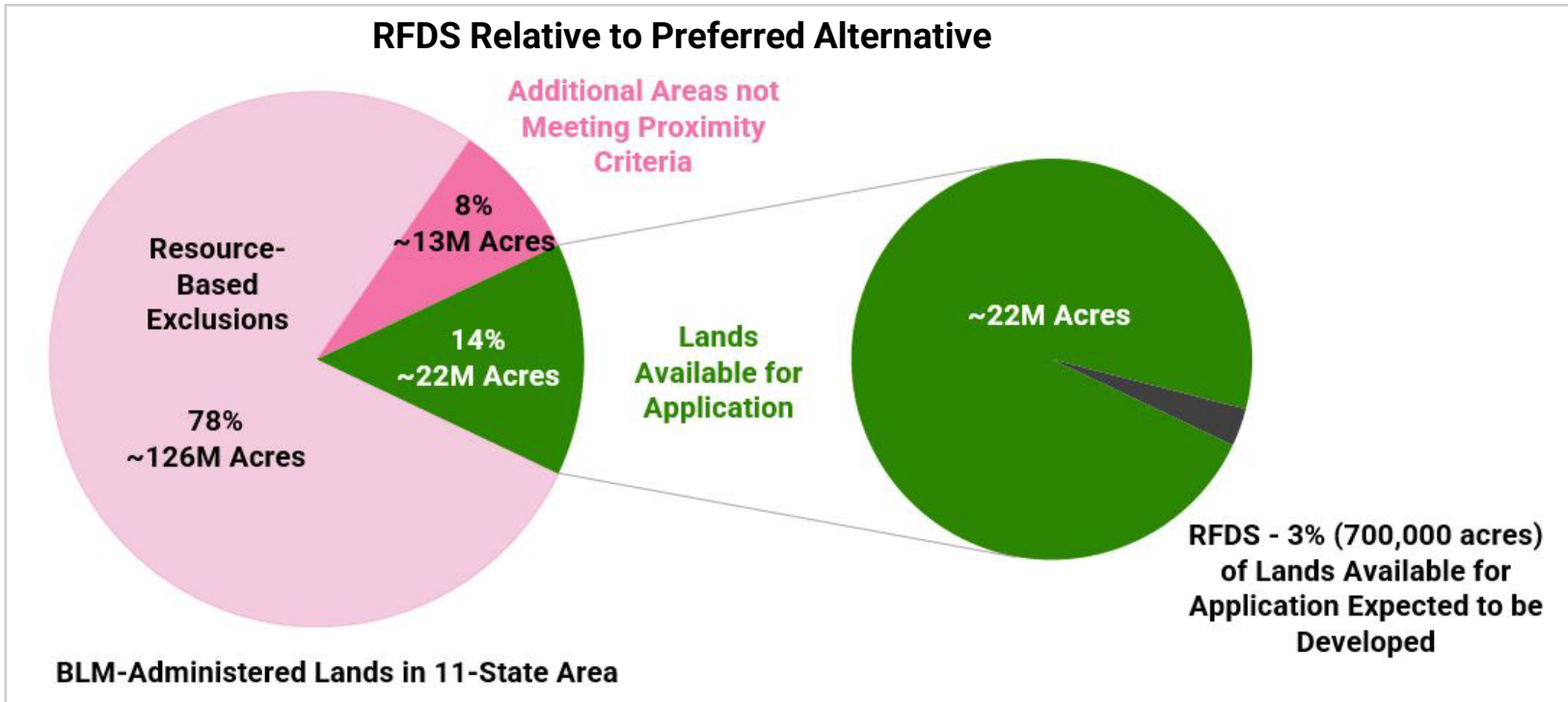
2012 Western Solar Plan - No Action Alternative	2023/2024 Draft Programmatic EIS - Action Alternatives
6-state planning area (Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah)	11-state planning area (Previous 6-states + Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming)
Created discrete “Solar Energy Zones” and conditionally allowed development on other lands through a variance process	Identifies broad areas open to applications which will be subject to site-specific screening and further analysis
Applies to solar projects 20 megawatts or larger	Applies to solar projects 5 megawatts or larger
Allows development in areas with 5% slope or less	Alternative 1 removes the slope limitation; Alternatives 2-5 allows development in areas with 10% slope or less
Limits development in areas with solar intensity less than 6.5 kWh/m ² /day	Removes limit for development based on solar intensity
Identified exclusion criteria to make certain areas off-limits	Builds on 2012 exclusion criteria by adding and strengthening
Created programmatic design features to mitigate impacts for all solar projects	Updates and additions made to programmatic design features





Reasonably Foreseeable Development Scenario

- Based on acres needed to meet renewable energy goals through 2045
- Same scenario regardless of alternative
- Based on “Solar Futures Study” (Department of Energy)
- **Anticipates about 700,000 acres of BLM-administered lands**



State	RFDS, Estimated BLM Area Developed by 2045 (acres)
Arizona	198,210
California	109,972
Colorado	45,207
Idaho	89,574
Montana	5,387
Nevada	48,119
New Mexico	11,123
Oregon	51,387
Utah	39,793
Washington	71,781
Wyoming	27,255
Total	697,809

Please provide your comment on the Draft Solar Programmatic EIS, at:
<https://eplanning.blm.gov/eplanning-ui/project/2022371/510>

