

I, Timothy Melton, am not in favor of the solar project for several reasons, which include:

1. The owners of this project do not live in this area and have heard from others that are not in favor and do not seem to have a regard to the environmental impact that these solar panels could have on the ground or the livelihood of farmland in the community.
2. Corinth Church road and surrounding roads flood when it rains 1 inch or more because of 800+ acres of water shed.
3. By putting a fence around an area that many wildlife roam, this changes the migration routes of all animals.
4. The panels can make the ground, where many crops are grown, hotter and could adversely impact the quality of the crops planted which are sources of income for farmers in the area.
5. In an area where satellite internet tends to be the only option for some people living in the area, interference from such panels will make it harder for people in the area who rely on that connection for work.

*Thank You  
Timothy A Melton*

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# 2012 Solar Energy Development Programmatic EIS

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## Solar Energy Development Environmental Considerations

Utility-scale solar energy environmental considerations include land disturbance/land use impacts; potential impacts to specially designated areas; impacts to soil, water and air resources; impacts to vegetation, wildlife, wildlife habitat, and sensitive species; visual, cultural, paleontological, socioeconomic, and environmental justice impacts, and potential impacts from hazardous materials.

Solar power facilities reduce the environmental impacts of combustion used in fossil fuel power generation, such as impacts from green house gases and other air pollution emissions. Unlike fossil fuel power generating facilities, solar facilities have very low air emissions of air pollutants such as sulfur dioxide, nitrogen oxides, carbon monoxide, volatile organic compounds, and the greenhouse gas carbon dioxide during operations. In addition to these benefits of solar development, construction and operation of solar facilities creates both direct and indirect employment and additional income in the regions where the development occurs. However, there are also some adverse impacts associated with solar power facilities that must be considered in BLM's process of granting solar right-of-way authorizations and DOE's process of developing environmental guidance for solar facilities. Potential adverse impacts to various resources associated with the construction, operation, and decommissioning of solar power plants are briefly outlined below. These impacts and mitigation measures for solar facilities are addressed in detail in the Solar Energy Development Programmatic EIS.

### Land Disturbance/Land Use Impacts

All utility-scale solar energy facilities require relatively large areas for solar radiation collection when used to generate electricity at utility-scale (defined for the Solar PEIS as facilities with a generation capacity of 20 MW or greater). Solar facilities may interfere with existing land uses, such as grazing, wild horse and burro management, military uses, and minerals production. Solar facilities could impact the use of nearby specially designated areas such as wilderness areas, areas of critical environmental concern, or special recreation management areas. Proper siting decisions can help to avoid land disturbance and land use impacts.

### Impacts to Soil, Water, and Air Resources

Construction of solar facilities on large areas of land requires clearing and grading, and results in soil compaction, potential alteration of drainage channels, and increased runoff and erosion. Engineering methods can be used to mitigate these impacts.

Parabolic trough and central tower systems typically use conventional steam plants to generate electricity, which commonly consume water for cooling. In arid settings, any increase in water demand can strain available water resources. Use of or spills of chemicals at solar facilities (for example, dust suppressants, dielectric fluids, herbicides) could result in contamination of surface or groundwater.

The construction and operation of solar facilities generates particulate matter, which can be a significant pollutant particularly in any nearby areas classified as Class I under Prevention of Significant Deterioration regulations (such as national parks and wilderness areas).

## **Ecological Impacts**

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The clearing and use of large areas of land for solar power facilities can adversely affect native vegetation and wildlife in many ways, including loss of habitat; interference with rainfall and drainage; or direct contact causing injury or death. The impacts are exacerbated when the species affected are classified as sensitive, rare, or threatened and endangered.

## **Other Impacts**

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Because they are generally large facilities with numerous highly geometric and sometimes highly reflective surfaces, solar energy facilities may create visual impacts; however, being visible is not necessarily the same as being intrusive. Aesthetic issues are by their nature highly subjective. Proper siting decisions can help to avoid aesthetic impacts to the landscape.

Cultural and paleontological artifacts and cultural landscapes may be disturbed by solar facilities. Additionally, socioeconomic impacts (both positive and negative) may be associated with solar facilities. For example, solar energy development could provide new employment opportunities, but an influx of workers could disrupt public services. These impacts may be disproportionately experienced by minority or low-income populations, thus resulting in environmental justice issues.

Photovoltaic panels may contain hazardous materials, and although they are sealed under normal operating conditions, there is the potential for environmental contamination if they were damaged or improperly disposed upon decommissioning. Concentrating solar power systems may employ materials such as oils or molten salts, hydraulic fluids, coolants, and lubricants, that may be hazardous and present spill risks. Proper planning and good maintenance practices can be used to minimize impacts from hazardous materials.

Concentrating Solar Power (CSP) systems could potentially cause interference with aircraft operations if reflected light beams become misdirected into aircraft pathways. Operation of solar facilities, and especially concentrating solar power facilities, involves high temperatures that may pose an environmental or safety risk. Like all electrical generating facilities, solar facilities produce electric and magnetic fields. Construction and decommissioning of utility-scale solar energy facilities would involve a variety of possible impacts normally encountered in construction/decommissioning of large-scale industrial

**facilities. If new electric transmission lines or related facilities were needed to service a new solar energy development, construction, operation, and decommissioning of the transmission facilities could also cause a variety of environmental impacts.**

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