

Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Utility-Scale Solar Energy Programmatic EIS – Preliminary Alternatives Matrix

No Action Alternative	Action Alternatives				
	Alternative 1 (Resource-based exclusions only)	Alternative 2 (Resource-based exclusions and 10%-slope)	Alternative 3 (Transmission Proximity Focused)	Alternative 4 (Disturbed or Degraded Lands Focused)	Alternative 5 (Focused on Disturbed or Degraded Lands Proximate to Transmission Infrastructure)
The 2012 Western Solar Plan remains in place and applicable only to six southwestern states (Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, and Utah).	Eleven State Planning Area: The six states covered by the 2012 Western Solar Plan (Arizona, California (excluding the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Planning area), Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico and Utah) as well as five additional states (Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington, and Wyoming)				
	All BLM-administered lands in 11-state planning area are either open to development or excluded from development under resource-based exclusion criteria.	Same as Alternative 1 except lands with greater than 10% slope are also excluded.	Preferred application areas identified within 10 miles of transmission lines ≥ 100 kV. No development outside of these areas.	Preferred application areas identified as previously disturbed or degraded lands (lands with lowest intactness). No development outside of these areas.	Preferred application areas identified as previously disturbed or degraded lands within 10 miles of transmission lines ≥ 100 kV. No development outside of these areas.
	No variance lands or process		Alternatives 3, 4, and 5 (above) do not include additional lands open to application under a variance process.		
			Alternatives 3v, 4v, and 5v (below) would allow for lands outside the preferred application areas and not excluded to be open to application under a variance process.		
		Alternative 3v Areas outside preferred application areas (beyond 10 miles of transmission lines >100 kV) and not otherwise excluded would be open to development under variance process.	Alternative 4v Areas outside preferred application areas (undisturbed/undegraded lands) and not otherwise excluded would be open to development under variance process.	Alternative 5v Areas outside preferred application areas (beyond 10 miles of transmission lines >100 kV and/or undisturbed/undegraded lands) and not otherwise excluded would be open to development under variance process.	
Resource-based exclusion criteria and design features are applied to all action alternatives. For example, exclusion criteria could prohibit solar development in all designated and proposed critical habitat areas for species protected under the Endangered Species Act or all units of the BLM National Landscape Conservation System. Design features are mitigation requirements incorporated into the alternatives to avoid and/or minimize adverse impacts. For example, an ecological design feature could require turning off all unnecessary lighting at night to limit attracting wildlife, particularly migratory birds.					