



**WESTERN
GOVERNORS'
ASSOCIATION**

Jon M. Huntsman, Jr.
Governor of Utah
Chairman

Brian Schweitzer
Governor of Montana
Vice Chairman

Pam O. Inmann
Executive Director

Headquarters:
1600 Broadway
Suite 1700
Denver, CO 80202

303-623-9378
Fax 303-534-7309

Washington, D.C. Office:
400 N. Capitol Street, N.W.
Suite 388
Washington, D.C. 20001

202-624-5402
Fax 202-624-7707

www.westgov.org

July 10, 2008

Jim Caswell
Director
Bureau of Land Management
1849 C St NW, 5655 MIB
Washington, DC 20240

Dear Director Caswell:

The Western Governors' Association is pleased with the BLM decision to rescind the moratorium on accepting new applications for permits for solar projects on public land. Since the WGA adoption of the Clean and Diversified Energy Advisory Committee report in June 2006, Western Governors have been working to accelerate the deployment of new clean energy sources, including renewable energy.

In the past two years we have seen substantial progress in the development of both photovoltaic and concentrating solar technology in western states. According to the Solar Energy Industries Association, the number of new photovoltaic projects grew by 48% in 2007 compared to the previous year. There are 11 concentrating solar plants operational in the United States, with another 20 in various stages of planning or permitting. Obstacles to growth in solar energy can have a deleterious effect on our ability to achieve a clean energy future, especially in the West where the use of public land to produce high-quality, competitively priced solar power will be instrumental in helping us develop new solar generation facilities.

In order to meet increasing energy demands with carbon free renewables, states must substantially increase the clean energy portion of their electric generation portfolios. For that reason, the WGA urges the BLM to consider the following.


- Assure that all applications are promptly reviewed and final decisions rendered.
- Use the work being done by the WGA to identify renewable energy zones and the associated transmission to facilitate the approval of commercially and environmentally viable solar projects.

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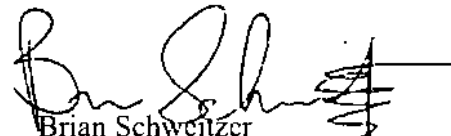
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Because the BLM environmental impact study is a necessary and critical element in the development of our renewable solar resources, we ask that the BLM devote the resources necessary to work through this study thoroughly and as expeditiously as feasible. We are at a critical time with respect to creating a clean energy future and we ask that the BLM work in partnership with the western states to achieve our critical renewable energy goals while at the same time ensuring the protection of our incomparable western lands.

Sincerely,



Jon Huntsman, Jr.
Governor of Utah
Chairman



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