

Sign In or Sign Up

Switch

Membership Services Jobs Cars Real Estate Subscribe Rentals Classifieds Custom Publishing Place Ad

# Los Angeles Times | LOCAL

LOCAL U.S. WORLD BUSINESS SPORTS ENTERTAINMENT HEALTH LIVING TRAVEL OPINION DEALS

L.A. NOW POLITICS CRIME EDUCATION O.C. WESTSIDE NEIGHBORHOODS ENVIRONMENT OBITUARIES

IN THE NEWS: PRESIDENTIAL DEBATE | FELIX BAUMGARTNER | RUSSELL CROWE | ARLEN SPECTER | SHUTTLE ENDEAVOUR

Search



**Why Galápagos is on so many 'bucket lists'**  
Provided by Lindblad Expeditions



**What is the best non-prescription eyelash enhancer?**  
Provided by DermStore.com



**Paying down debt? 5 simple strategies for success**  
Provided by Envoy

## Federal plan designed to create large solar energy plants

Incentives to cluster projects on 285,000 acres of U.S. land in the West will be offered and an additional 19 million acres of the Mojave Desert opened for new facilities.

Comments 22 Email Share 7 Tweet 58



A giant solar receiver is surrounded by mirrors turned upward in California's Ivanpah Valley, five miles south of the Nevada state line. (Mark Boster / Los Angeles Times / October 13, 2012)

Connect

Recommended on Facebook

advertisement

**SOLAR ENERGY!**  
**NOW THAT'S 100% SPILL PROOF**  
Go Solar Now!  
**SUNERGY SYSTEMS**

\$99 for 90-minute horseback vineyard tour & wine tasting (reg. \$210)



Some climate scientists, in a shift, link weather to global warming



Pierce College weather station gets major upgrade

Ads by Google

**Low Cost Solar Energy**

By Julie Cart, Los Angeles Times  
October 13, 2012

The Obama administration has formally adopted a plan to help create large-scale solar energy plants, offering incentives for solar developers to cluster projects on 285,000 acres of federal land in the western U.S and opening an additional 19 million acres of the Mojave Desert for new power plants.

The plan places 445 square miles of public land in play for utility-scale solar facilities.

The program, announced Friday by Interior Secretary Ken Salazar at an event in Las Vegas, will apply to new projects only and not the 17 solar facilities already awarded permits or the 78 currently in the approval pipeline.

"This historic initiative provides a road map for landscape-level planning that will lead to faster, smarter utility-scale solar development on public lands," Salazar said.

The plan establishes 17 solar energy zones in six Western



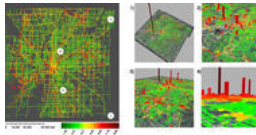
Songs of hope at skid row karaoke



Swordfish is likely source of big eyeball



One Kenyan's crusade against corruption



Scientists mapping Los Angeles sources of greenhouse gas emissions



Oceans' rising acidity a threat to shellfish — and humans

states, including 154,000 acres in California. The zones were chosen because they avoided major environmental, cultural or other conflicts. The policy encourages developers to select sites within zones by promising minimal environmental reviews and expedited permitting and a range of additional financial incentives.

But developers can sidestep the zones under certain conditions. Companies may construct plants on 19 million acres designated as "variance" zones, but the government offers fewer incentives to build there. Another 79 million acres are in exclusion zones, where no energy development is allowed.

California has 2 1/2 times more acreage in solar zones than any other state. The state has 750,000 acres in variance areas.

Some conservation groups fought to prevent approval of utility-scale projects in the region, contending that the desert — home to scores of endangered plants and animals — was not capable of absorbing industrial-scale projects.

"We are ... disappointed to see that vital habitat for the federally threatened desert tortoise is still open to potential development through the variance process," said Jamie Rappaport Clark, president of Defenders of Wildlife.

Critics contend that the policies are too late, coming after years of free-for-all leasing that encouraged rampant

Better prices, pro install & local rebates. Free solar evaluation!  
[www.SunergySystems.com](http://www.SunergySystems.com)

**Alternative Energy Films**  
A Series of Short Films that Will Change the Energy Conversation.  
[RationalMiddle.com](http://RationalMiddle.com)

speculation. Since leasing began, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management has been working to process more than 300 solar applications.

Many of those are for land in California's Mojave Desert, where counties have seen the cost of private land soar and the desert given over to thousands of acres of mirrors.

Earlier this week the Interior Department announced that it had surpassed a milestone — authorizing the first 10,000 megawatts of power. The fast-tracking of solar facilities on public lands is expected to generate nearly 24,000 megawatts of renewable power by 2030, officials said.

But so far, the unprecedented urgency given to solar energy projects on public land has yielded only 50 megawatts of produced power, according to officials.

Janine Blaeloch of the group Solar Done Right supports renewable energy but said wholesale development of the desert is a mistake.

"This should all be happening on rooftops and in cities," Blaeloch said. "But that wouldn't profit the big utilities, and industry wouldn't be able to get tax breaks, so we wreck the desert instead. We aren't getting that public land back. Once it's industrialized, everything that lives there and everything we enjoy about it will be gone."

[julie.cart@latimes.com](mailto:julie.cart@latimes.com)

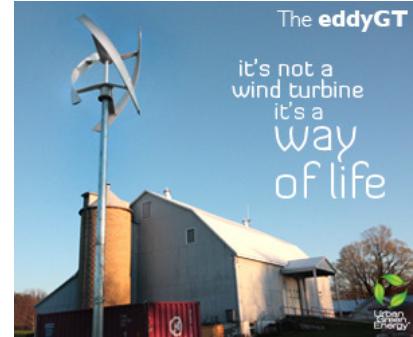
Copyright © 2012, Los Angeles Times

Comments 22 Email Share 7



Russell Crowe and wife reportedly separate

Ads by Google



Most Viewed Latest News

Watch skydiver Felix Baumgartner's jump immortalized by Lego *10/15/2012, 1:29 p.m.*

Big, whining nerds: 'SNL' offers its take on iPhone complainers *10/15/2012, 1:29 p.m.*

'Once Upon a Time' recap: Snow White and a mother's sacrifice *10/15/2012, 1:18 p.m.*

'Call of Duty: Elite' subscription fee scrapped *10/15/2012, 1:13 p.m.*

Review: Lives reborn in struck-by-lightning tale 'Creation' *10/15/2012, 1:07 p.m.*

## Videos

### MORE FROM THE TIMES

Five Guys voted favorite burger chain, McDonald's near bottom

Many cancer patients don't understand purpose of chemo, study says

Danny DeVito, Rhea Perlman separate after decades together

Dog left to die on Colorado mountain; owner defends actions

Past 1:30 a.m., cheers as space shuttle moves -- then, a leak

### FROM AROUND THE WEB

Crash Course in Startup Fundamentals | *The Atlantic*

Why Two of The Best Companies No Longer Manufacture for the US | *Washer Dryer Info*

13 Ugliest Phones of the Mobile Era | *TheStreet*

ATM error costs BofA big time | *Bankrate.com*

If You Have Gmail... You Must Have This | *Charles Hudson's Weblog*

[what's this]

In Case You Missed It...

Ads by Google

**Power Purchase Agreement** [EnergyPlace.com/Solar](http://EnergyPlace.com/Solar)  
Commercial Solar Financing Experts in PPA Contract Negotiation

**Home Solar Panels Cheap** [smarter.com/HomeSolarPanelsCheap](http://smarter.com/HomeSolarPanelsCheap)  
Clean & Affordable Energy For Cheap Prices. Shop Home Solar Panels.

**Solar Generation Company** [www.SilveradoPower.com](http://www.SilveradoPower.com)  
Complete Solar Solutions For Today Utilities, Communities, Land owners

Comments (22)

[Add / View comments](#) | [Discussion FAQ](#)

**hamamama** at 6:37 PM October 13, 2012

Rooftop solar, please! And more tax incentives and consumer/small business subsidies so people can actually afford to install it.

**JustBobF** at 11:43 AM October 13, 2012

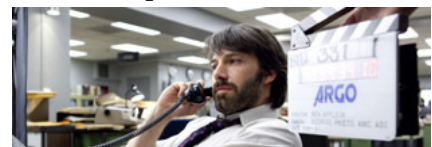
The energy companies really want the solar plants because they want to continue charging us for power. They probably detest solar panels on home roofs. That is what we really need. Electricity right by where we live, on our own roof.  
We need federal policies to encourage solar panels in our cities, not in the desert.

**Chillipepper** at 9:56 AM October 13, 2012

I urge everyone of you to also consider LED lighting. The price has drop by almost 50 percent. I have replace all my lighting to LED lighting. Imaging saving more than 80 percent of your enery usage on lighting. Flourecent liht has mercury in it and you are still consuming at least 40Watt. You can reduce that to 8Watt on Led.

*Comments are filtered for language and registration is required. The Times makes no guarantee of comments' factual accuracy. Readers may report inappropriate comments by clicking the Report Abuse link next to a comment. Here are the full [legal terms](#) you agree to by using this comment form.*

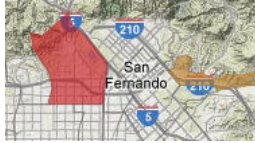
The Envelope »



Catch up on the latest awards buzz.



**Photos and more:**  
Hollywood awards



**Database:** Los Angeles  
County crime reports



**Photos:** 40 tailgate-inspired  
recipes



**Video:** Street gang MS-13's  
international influence



**Photos:** Endeavour rolls  
through the streets of L.A.



[Corrections](#)

[Horoscopes](#)

[Media Kit](#)

[About Us](#)

[Contact Us](#)

[Site Map](#)

## Los Angeles Times

[Burbank Leader](#) | [Coastline Pilot](#) | [Daily Pilot](#) | [Huntington Beach Independent](#) | [News Press](#) | [Pasadena Sun](#) | [Valley Sun](#) | [KTLA](#) | [Hoy](#)  
[Baltimore Sun](#) | [Chicago Tribune](#) | [Daily Press](#) | [Hartford Courant](#) | [Los Angeles Times](#) | [Orlando Sentinel](#) | [Sun Sentinel](#) | [The Morning Call](#)

[Terms of Service](#) | [Privacy Policy](#) | [About Our Ads](#) | Los Angeles Times, 202 West 1st Street, Los Angeles, California, 90012 | Copyright 2012

*A Tribune Newspaper website*