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# Environmental Review of Solar Farms in the Southeast U.S. : Southern Environmental Law Center Policy Brief

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The Solar Environmental Law Center has issued a March 2017 *Policy Brief* titled:

The Environmental Review of Solar Farms in the Southeast U.S. ("Policy Brief")

The *Policy Brief* is subtitled:

Maximizing Benefits & Minimizing Impacts that Drive Smart, Sustainable Development of Solar Power

The *Policy Brief* provides an overview of the role of solar power in the south. It argues that local southern communities, utilities and solar developers are "seeing the benefits of solar energy through customer savings, energy independence, environmental benefits, and economic development." Further, solar farms above one megawatt in size are stated to make up a "growing portion of this changing energy landscape."

A number of issues related to permitting such facilities are addressed including:

- Overview of the environmental review processes that most solar farms in the southeast must address (including best practices that developers are stated to be embracing to maximize benefits and minimize environmental impact)
- Land use issues
- Efficient Land Use
- Minimization of Wildlife Habitat Disturbance and Ecology Protection
- Protection of Water Resources
- Land Reclamation and Restoration
- Sustainable Grounds Keeping
- Partnership and Consultation with Environmental Wildlife Agencies
- Additional Siting Considerations
- Stakeholder Engagement and Education
- Co-Locating Solar Farms
- Using Previously Developed or Degraded Lands

The appendices include:

- Resources for Solar Development and Mitigation
- Impact Analysis for National Environmental Protection Act or State Equivalents
- Common Federal and State Permitting and Approval Requirements for Solar Farms

[A copy of the Policy Brief can be downloaded here.](#)