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[Poll: 3 out of 4 Americans Approve of Solar Energy Development on Public Lands](#)
Industry and Environmental Leaders Share Upbeat Outlook for Utility-Scale Market

WASHINGTON, DC – The Solar Energy Industries Association (SEIA) today released new national polling data showing that 75 percent of those surveyed support the development of solar energy plants on public lands. The poll was conducted by Gotham Research Group. Solar industry and environmental leaders, as well as Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords (AZ-8th) and pollster Jeff Levine joined SEIA President Rhone Resch on a call to discuss the results.

“The polling data we are releasing today confirms what we already knew,” said SEIA President and CEO Rhone Resch. “The American public overwhelmingly supports the development of solar energy. It is time for our elected officials to respond to this high public demand and enact policies that allow solar to compete with other energy sources on a level playing field.”

The survey also revealed that solar power was the top choice (38 percent) as the best use of public land. Respondents also selected solar farms and wind power (22 percent each) as the top energy sources that the government should prioritize for support, beating out natural gas (16 percent), nuclear (16 percent), oil (11 percent) and coal (4 percent).

“When Americans talk about solar energy, they usually envision rooftop systems, which are great. But it’s important to also realize the significant role that utility-scale solar has to play. Large solar installations use economies of scale to achieve significant cost savings and help Americans to get the most solar ‘bang for the buck.’ It’s great to confirm that the rest of America is just as excited about utility solar as we are,” said Congresswoman Gabrielle Giffords (D-AZ).

“The 17 gigawatts of utility-scale solar projects proposed in the United States offer great opportunities for companies like ours,” said Tom Hecht, Vice President of Sales & Marketing, SCHOTT Solar. “Not only will these projects produce clean, reliable energy, but they will create tens of thousands of high-paying, American jobs in manufacturing and construction trades from coast to coast. This would include significant new jobs at our state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in New Mexico, where we manufacture both high-quality photovoltaic panels and concentrating solar power receivers.”

“With a successful 10 megawatt pilot project, more than 3,000 megawatts in the pipeline, and two recent PPAs with Nevada Energy and PG&E, we are primed for explosive growth in the United States, as is the entire utility-scale solar sector,” said Tom Georgis, Vice President, Development, SolarReserve. “This industry can provide clean solar power to millions of households while creating thousands of new green energy jobs.”

“We have seen what utility-scale solar such as the eSolar Sierra SunTower project can do. We know that solar energy can be generated cleanly, reliably and with a stable fuel price,” said Marc Ulrich, Vice President of Renewable & Alternative Power, Southern California Edison. “Solar is California's great untapped renewable resource, and we look forward to integrating more into our energy generation portfolio and to working toward the state's renewables goal.”

The industry leaders also discussed the promising outlook for utility-scale solar in the U.S. Five new pilot plants came on line in 2009 and there are more than 100 utility-scale solar projects under development. These projects represent more than 17 gigawatts of capacity, enough to provide clean power to 3.4 million households and to create more than 100,000 American jobs.

“The sun provides more energy in an hour than all the coal mines and oil wells do in a year. This solar energy is limitless and pollution free,” said Sean Garren, Clean Energy Advocate, Environment America. “Solar energy will play a major role in weaning the nation from dangerous, polluting, unstable and, in many cases, increasingly expensive forms of energy. America can and must figure out how to tap the heat and power of the sun.”

The findings of the survey are based on polling conducted from February 24 through February 26, 2010, among a representative sample of 500 U.S. adults, age 18+. The margin of error on the total sample of 500 is +/- 4.4 percent.

About SEIA:

Established in 1974, the Solar Energy Industries Association is the national trade association of the solar energy industry. As the voice of the industry, SEIA works with its 1,000 members to make solar a mainstream and significant energy source by expanding markets, removing market barriers, strengthening the industry and educating the public on the benefits of solar energy. Learn more at www.seia.org.

SEIA President & CEO Rhone Resch is on Twitter: <http://twitter.com/RhoneResch>
SEIA is on YouTube (<http://www.youtube.com/thesolarindustry>) *and Facebook*
(<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Solar-Energy-Industries-Association/112495296809>)

Sign the Solar Bill of Rights: www.SolarBillofRights.org

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Background Resources:

Utility-Scale Solar Poll Findings by Gotham Research:
<http://seia.org/galleries/pdf/UtilityScalePollResults.pdf>

Utility-Scale Solar Projects (Operational, Under Construction, or Under Development):
<http://www.seia.org/galleries/pdf/Major%20Solar%20Projects.pdf>

14 BLM Fast-Tracked Solar Projects:

http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/prog/energy/renewable_energy/fast-track_renewable.html

Environment America's "Building a Solar Future" report:

<http://www.environmentamerica.org/uploads/37/06/370684e48c4a60d6c25763175070f0ae/Building-a-Solar-Future.pdf>

Utility-Scale Solar Fact Sheets

Utility-Scale Solar Power General Background:

http://seia.org/galleries/pdf/factsheet_ustp.pdf

Concentrating Solar Power (CSP) Technologies:

http://seia.org/galleries/pdf/factsheet_csp.pdf

Photovoltaic Solar Technologies:

http://www.seia.org/galleries/pdf/SEIA_PV_Factsheet.pdf

Habitat Conservation: http://seia.org/galleries/pdf/factsheet_habitat.pdf

Water Use: http://seia.org/galleries/pdf/factsheet_water_use.pdf

Land Use: http://seia.org/galleries/pdf/factsheet_land_use.pdf

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