

California needs to deploy renewable energy 5x faster.

A different approach to siting and permitting can make it possible.

California can use lessons learned from the Bureau of Land Management’s solar siting guidance and strategies of the housing mandate to accelerate project permitting.

California’s Renewable Energy Problem

- The state needs to deploy 6 GW of renewable energy per year to meet its clean energy goals while keeping pace with rising electricity demand.
- The state has deployed only 1.3 GW of renewable energy per year on average since 2015.
- A lengthy and difficult project permitting process slows down renewable energy deployment.
- Site selection and permitting will only get harder as “low hanging fruit” locations are developed.

Proposed Solutions

- Like housing mandates, require counties to plan for their “fair share” of renewable energy projects, accounting for differences in attractive site availability.
- Allow for countries to trade credits toward their quota.
- Establish “development focus areas” within each county that are pre-selected for renewable energy development.

Proposed Process

State studies individual county generation capacity



State provides guidance to counties on individual county generation contribution



County adopts plan and identifies suitable development areas



Developers plan, build, and operate projects on pre-selected areas



County buys “credits” if under quota or sells “credits” if over quota

This statewide planning method would clear a path to California’s renewable energy goals and give developers confidence to invest in projects that are likely to get approved easily.

SITING+
PERMITTING



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