

SUPPORT HB 3181

Finding Opportunities and Reducing Conflict Around Solar Siting in Oregon

Research shows it's possible to affordably and reliably meet clean energy goals while avoiding our most sensitive natural areas and working lands.



Solar panels © Fauna Creative; Wallowa County. © Aaron Huey

About HB 3181

Reaching Oregon's energy policies will require a significant increase in renewable energy resources. Multiple studies suggest total renewable development in Oregon could be in the range of 25-30 GW by 2040. Much of this development will be solar energy in eastern Oregon where solar resources are richest. HB 3181 takes important steps to ensure this development maximizes benefits and minimizes impacts to communities and other land uses while also creating a clear and predictable path for permitting solar projects. It directs DLCD, in coordination with ODOE, to find opportunities and minimize conflicts in siting solar projects by engaging stakeholders through a rulemaking process.





LEFT: Solar installation. © Adobe Stock RIGHT: Overlooking rangelands in Central Oregon. © Brady Holden

Continuing the Conversation

Building on months of collaboration through the Oregon Siting Policy Table convened by Verde, 1000 Friends of Oregon, and Renewable Northwest, HB 3181 directs DLCD to undertake two rulemaking processes which balance the need to remove barriers to siting solar in some circumstances and seeking long-term, sustainable solutions for Oregon's energy future:

- Updates to Goal 2 implementing rules to increase certainty for projects seeking goal exceptions.
- A rulemaking that considers updates to relevant goals to define the characteristics of low impact and least conflict areas for solar development in eastern Oregon.

The rulemaking advisory committee convened for these updates will also advise on whether additional changes are needed, including to the rules implementing other Goals, and make recommendations for improving habitat mitigation policy and developing agricultural mitigation policy to ensure Oregon's natural and working lands continue to thrive.

A Piece of Oregon's Clean Energy Vision

HB 3181 directs DLCD to coordinate closely with ODOE to ensure siting updates are consistent with ODOE's development of a state energy strategy, as directed in HB 2534 (2023 - proposed). Together, these bills offer the opportunity to provide a framework for creating a thoughtful state-level vision driven by stakeholders and local-level direction for Oregon's energy future.

50% MORE

of Oregon's sensitive natural areas, working lands, and waters can be preserved by better siting compared to today's energy development practices.

Source: Power of Place - West, The Nature Conservancy, 2022

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HB 3181 ENDORSERS

