



For America's Heritage

## Public Lands Foundation

P.O. Box 7226 Arlington, Virginia 22207

May 4, 2018

Mr. Brian Steed, Acting Director  
Bureau of Land Management  
1849 C Street NW, Room 5665  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mr. Steed:

The Public Lands Foundation acknowledges the renewable energy accomplishments of the BLM and encourages continued support for a diversified energy portfolio on the public lands that recognizes the growing demand for renewable energy resources as part of the Administration's commitment to achieve American energy dominance and boost economic growth. The BLM has approved over 17,000 megawatts of solar, wind and geothermal energy projects, with a current total installed and operating capacity of over 11,200 megawatts of renewable energy on the public lands. This installed capacity is enough to power some 3.4 million homes. This is a significant accomplishment and is a reflection of the hard-working and dedicated professionals throughout the BLM organization that serve our nation so well.

The BLM published a final rule in December 2016 that amended the right-of-way regulations to facilitate the responsible development of solar and wind energy projects on the public lands and to receive fair market value for such development. In September 2017, the BLM subsequently issued policy memoranda implementing several provisions of the new regulations. These policies included IM 2017-096 regarding rents and fees for solar and wind energy grants and leases, and IM 2017-099 regarding technical and financial evaluation procedures for solar and wind energy grants and leases on the public lands. We applaud these efforts and recognize these are critically important steps to assure continuity, clarity and certainty for industry and the American public in the development of renewable energy on the public lands. The BLM clearly now has the experience and the regulatory framework in place to aggressively move forward with future development, expedite the review and permitting process, provide for competitive leasing opportunities, and secure fair returns to the public for development on the public lands. It is also important that the BLM move forward in finalizing updated policies on mitigation for development activities on the public lands, including mitigation strategies for renewable energy projects on the public lands.

We acknowledge that the BLM has included funding in the FY 2019 proposed budget to support the renewable energy program and we encourage the BLM to continue to support and fund the renewable energy program in the future. This funding is critically important to support continued land use planning efforts for renewable energy development, the identification and designation of renewable energy "designated leasing areas," studies and inventory efforts, collaborative efforts with DOE and other agencies, tribal

