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## News Release

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### **Secretary Salazar Approves Ninth Commercial-Scale Solar Energy Project on Western Public Lands**

*110 megawatt plant in Nevada will create 450 jobs*

WASHINGTON, DC – Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar today approved the Crescent Dunes Solar Energy Project, the ninth large-scale solar facility green-lighted as part of the administration’s initiative to encourage rapid and responsible development of renewable energy on U.S. public lands. The concentrated solar power plant will produce 110 megawatts, enough to provide electricity to 75,000 Nevada households, and generate about 450-500 new jobs during construction and up to 50 permanent operations and maintenance jobs.

“Crescent Dunes joins a host of renewable energy projects on public lands in the West that are opening a new chapter on how our nation is powered,” Salazar said in signing the Record of Decision. “Using American ingenuity, we are creating jobs, stimulating local economies and spurring a sustainable, clean energy industrial base that will strengthen our nation’s energy security.”

The project, proposed by Tonopah Solar Energy LLC a subsidiary of SolarReserve, LLC of Santa Monica, California, is sited on approximately 2,250 acres administered by the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) about 13 miles northwest of Tonopah in Nye County, Nevada. During the past three months the BLM has approved seven renewable energy projects on public lands in Nevada -- three solar, two geothermal, one wind and one transmission line.

“These energy projects exemplify the collaborative partnerships we have developed to help achieve our common goals to protect our natural environment while utilizing America’s wealth of renewable energy resources,” said BLM Director Bob Abbey. “I want to thank all of our partners in the development of the Crescent Dune Environmental Impact Statement and especially recognize the contributions of Nellis Air Force Base and the Air Force Scientific Advisory Board, which analyzed several proposed project sites. By working together we were

able to identify the optimal location for the facility and minimize operational impacts to Nellis and the Air Force’s testing mission.”

The BLM worked closely with state, federal and military agencies to advance an environmentally appropriate project, including the Environmental Protection Agency, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Nevada Department of Wildlife and the U.S. Air Force, as well as members of the environmental and conservation community. To minimize impacts to biological resources, the BLM selected an alternative plan that reduced the project size from 7,680 acres to 2,250 acres, with a development footprint of 1,776 acres. Following extensive public environmental review, the BLM published the Notice of Availability for final environmental impact statement on November 26, 2010.

Through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, Tonopah Solar Energy, LLC can qualify for grants in lieu of tax credits - up to 30 percent of the project’s eligible costs – as well as Department of Energy loan guarantees to assist with the construction of the facility. The developer has acquired a power purchase agreement with NV Energy; electricity produced at the facility will interconnect to NV Energy’s grid through a transmission line to be built from the site to the existing Anaconda Moly Substation, about six miles north of the site.

The plant will use concentrated solar thermal “power tower” technology to contribute 485,000 megawatt hours of cost-effective renewable energy annually to the Nevada grid. This innovative technology uses mirror fields to focus solar energy on tower receivers near the center of each array. Steam from boilers in the towers drive a turbine which generates electricity for the transmission grid.

Crescent Dunes will also have thermal energy storage capability which will help during the state’s peak electricity demand periods, including evenings in summer, when solar projects without storage can no longer generate solar energy. The State of Nevada is working to achieve a 25 percent Renewable Portfolio Standard by 2015.

Today’s announcement is part of an historic Administration-wide effort to advance a renewable energy economy. In 2010, the Department of the Interior has approved nine large-scale solar energy projects – the first to be built on U.S. public lands in California and Nevada – that, cumulatively, will generate more than 3,600 megawatts, power more than 1 million homes and generate more than 7,000 jobs.

A fact sheet on the proposed Crescent Dunes Solar Energy Project is available [HERE](#).

A map is available [HERE](#).

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