

Solar Energy Is Good for the Environment

Solar energy is one of the healthiest ways to generate electricity, protecting people and wildlife.

Solar energy uses sunlight that passes through special layers in the solar panel to create pollution-free electricity. Traditional forms of generation create pollution by burning coal, gas or oil to boil water to produce electricity. Because it doesn't need to burn

fuel or use water, solar energy production reduces dangerous air pollution and toxic water runoff, while preserving water for other uses, like agriculture. **Solar energy is critical to protecting people, wildlife, our resources and the environment.**



Clean & Green

Solar farms are compatible with a range of land uses. During a project's lifespan, a solar farm can double as green space for native vegetation, wildlife and pollinators. Landowners may also see water savings due to shade from solar panels, which can reduce water requirements for crops and livestock. The difference between land use for solar installations as opposed to fossil-fuel-fired power plants is stark.



Not Harmful to Plants or Wildlife

Unlike at fossil-fuel power plant sites, crops and native plants can thrive under solar installations, and solar panels have little to no harmful effects on wildlife, such as birds. **Solar panels are naturally cleansed by falling rainwater without any chemicals.** We can also take incremental steps to help wildlife at solar farms, such as installing bird boxes, bat boxes, insect hotels or hedgerows to provide for habitat. The largest threat to wildlife is climate change, and solar energy helps slow this trend.¹



Solar Energy & the Environment by the Numbers

60%

About 60% of energy used in the U.S. comes from burning fossil fuels, such as coal, oil and natural gas — releasing hazardous air and water pollution, and using millions of gallons of water each year.²

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Two-thirds of North American birds are at risk of extinction from global temperature rise.³

76%

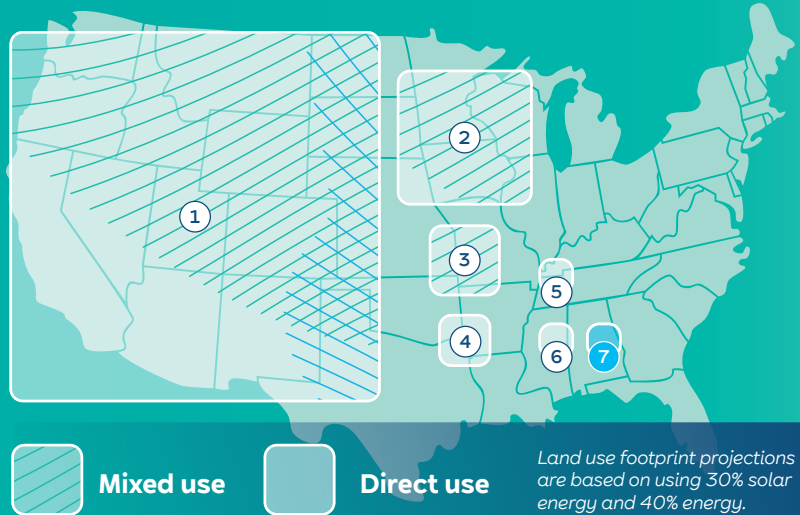
By stabilizing carbon emissions, 76% of vulnerable bird species will be better off, and nearly 150 species would no longer be vulnerable to extinction from climate change.³

0.3%

Solar energy development is estimated to require 5.7 million acres of land, which is only about 0.3% of the contiguous U.S., to achieve a carbon-free electricity grid by 2035.⁴

Solar Energy Footprint⁵

1. Livestock grazing and feed
2. Urbanized areas
3. Oil and gas lease on federal land
4. Railroads
5. Golf courses
6. Airports
7. Utility solar scale



About RWE

RWE is one of the largest global players in renewable energy. In the U.S., RWE operates a portfolio of 9+ GW installed capacity of onshore wind, solar and battery storage and is a preferred partner for communities, offtakers and suppliers. Learn more at: americas.rwe.com

1. "Counterfactuals to Assess Effects to Species and Systems From Renewable Energy Development" | NREL
2. "What Is U.S. Electricity Generation by Energy Source?" | U.S. Energy Information Administration
3. "Two-Thirds of North American Birds Are at Increasing Risk of Extinction From Global Temperature Rise" | The National Audubon Society
4. "Solar Energy, Wildlife and the Environment" | U.S. Office of Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy
5. "How Much Land Would It Require to Get Most of Our Electricity From Wind and Solar?" | Union of Concerned Scientists