



Community Solar: Steps to obtain a favorable analysis

The Community Solar Act (SB84) was signed into law April 2021 and proposed rulemaking by the New Mexico Public Regulation Commission (Title 17, Chapter 9, Part 573 New Mexico Administrative Code) requires a project to have a favorable analysis from the Department of Cultural Affairs. To obtain a favorable analysis, please provide the following information:

- 1. Description of the solar project.** Describe in detail the scope of work including related activities (for example, staging areas, equipment parks, access roads, etc.). Include preliminary drawings or plans of the solar array.
- 2. Project location map.** Provide a Google Earth or other aerial map with the project area clearly marked and provide UTMs, latitude/longitude, Township, Range, and Section, or street address.
- 3. Land ownership.** Identify the owner(s) of the land (private, state agency, federal agency).
- 4. Funding, permitting, or licensing.** Identify the source of funding. If state or federal funding will be used, identify the type of funding (grant, bonds, etc.) and the agency providing the funding. Identify any permits or rights-of-way easements that may be required from state or federal agencies.
- 5. Cultural Resources Survey Report.** If a cultural resource survey has been completed, please forward the report and all attachments for review. Attachments will include but are not limited to, a NMCRIIS Investigation Abstract Form (NIAF), Laboratory of Anthropology (LA) forms if archaeological sites were documented, and/or Historic Cultural Property Inventory (HCPI) forms for buildings or other historic/engineering structures in the project area.

Submit the above information to nm.shpo@state.nm.us. Upon receipt of the information, the project will be assigned to a staff archaeologist. Please allow up to 30 days to receive a response; however, the response time is usually much shorter. The archaeologist will review the cultural resources survey report if applicable, or conduct a records review to determine the following:

- if a cultural resources survey has been conducted of the project area previously and archaeological sites, historic buildings or structures were identified,
- if the solar project could affect properties listed in the State Register of Cultural Properties,
- the potential for unknown archaeological sites or historic buildings/structures to exist within the project area.

A letter will be provided with the information from the records review or the review of the cultural resources survey report. The letter may provide recommendations in accordance with applicable state and federal laws and regulations.

Please direct any questions or concerns to Michelle Ensey, Deputy State Historic Preservation Officer & State Archaeologist at (505) 827-4064 or michelle.ensey@state.nm.us.