Renewable Energy Project Siting Policy

1. Position-Taking on Renewable Energy Projects

The Board finds that proposals for renewable energy generating projects have significant impacts for electrical supply and grids outside the boundaries of any one chapter or state. Thus, establishing the Club's position on renewable energy projects is not delegated to chapters, even when the site itself is wholly within a chapter’s boundary. Because these proposals impact electrical supply and grids regionally and nationally, the Board or its designees will be the final decision-makers regarding the Club’s position, after consultation with chapter and other leaders as indicated below.

2. Beyond Coal Leadership Team is Board Designee

Except in those instances where the Review Panel or the Board determines that the Board will be the final decision-maker, the Board affirms that the Beyond Coal Campaign Leadership Team is its designee for determining the Club's position on renewable energy projects, with the following instructions:

(a) Consultation with Chapters and Other Campaigns

The Beyond Coal Campaign leadership and chapter leadership alike are expected to consult closely, early and collegially to determine the Club's approach and strategy for individual renewable energy projects. Either the campaign leadership or chapter leadership can initiate the dialogue, but the campaign leadership is the Board's designated final decision-maker. The Beyond Coal Campaign leadership is additionally expected to consult with other national campaigns as needed, such as the Our Wild America (WILD) Campaign.

(b) Identify a Single Chapter Representative

The Board expects chapter leaders to identify a single leader to be on-point for consultation with the Beyond Coal Campaign regarding any specific renewable energy project proposal. This leader should have the time, interest and commitment to consult with and represent the views of other chapter leaders as well as to coordinate closely
with campaign leadership. More than one chapter or other Club entity leader may be designated by agreement of the relevant chapter(s) and the campaign.

3. Board Designates “Early Review” Panel

The Board requests that the Sierra Club President, VP for Conservation, Executive Director, and Conservation Director serve as the Board’s “early review” body for renewable projects. The purpose of this panel is to determine when the Board should be the final decision maker (i.e., which disputes will be placed on the board's agenda for full board review). This is a consensus group: where there is disagreement between the four members, any panel member can request that the board be the final decision-maker. Review panel determinations will be reported promptly to the board, and nothing in this policy changes director's prerogatives under Club Standing Rules.

The Board directs the Beyond Coal Campaign leadership to keep the four members of this early review panel apprised as early as possible of all renewable energy sites for which the campaign is considering a position on behalf of the Club. This should include sites for which the campaign and chapters are in agreement, but especially if there is disagreement between the campaign and a chapter.


Please note that this policy applies to any form of opposition to renewable energy projects, including comments, testimony, etc. Chapters that believe the Club should take a position opposing a renewable energy project -- including solar or wind energy projects of any size -- should contact the Beyond Coal Campaign as early as possible so the early consultation required by the policy can take place. Chapter leaders who have questions about litigation requests involving renewable energy projects should contact the Environmental Law Program.