

Centering Communities in Their Energy Future

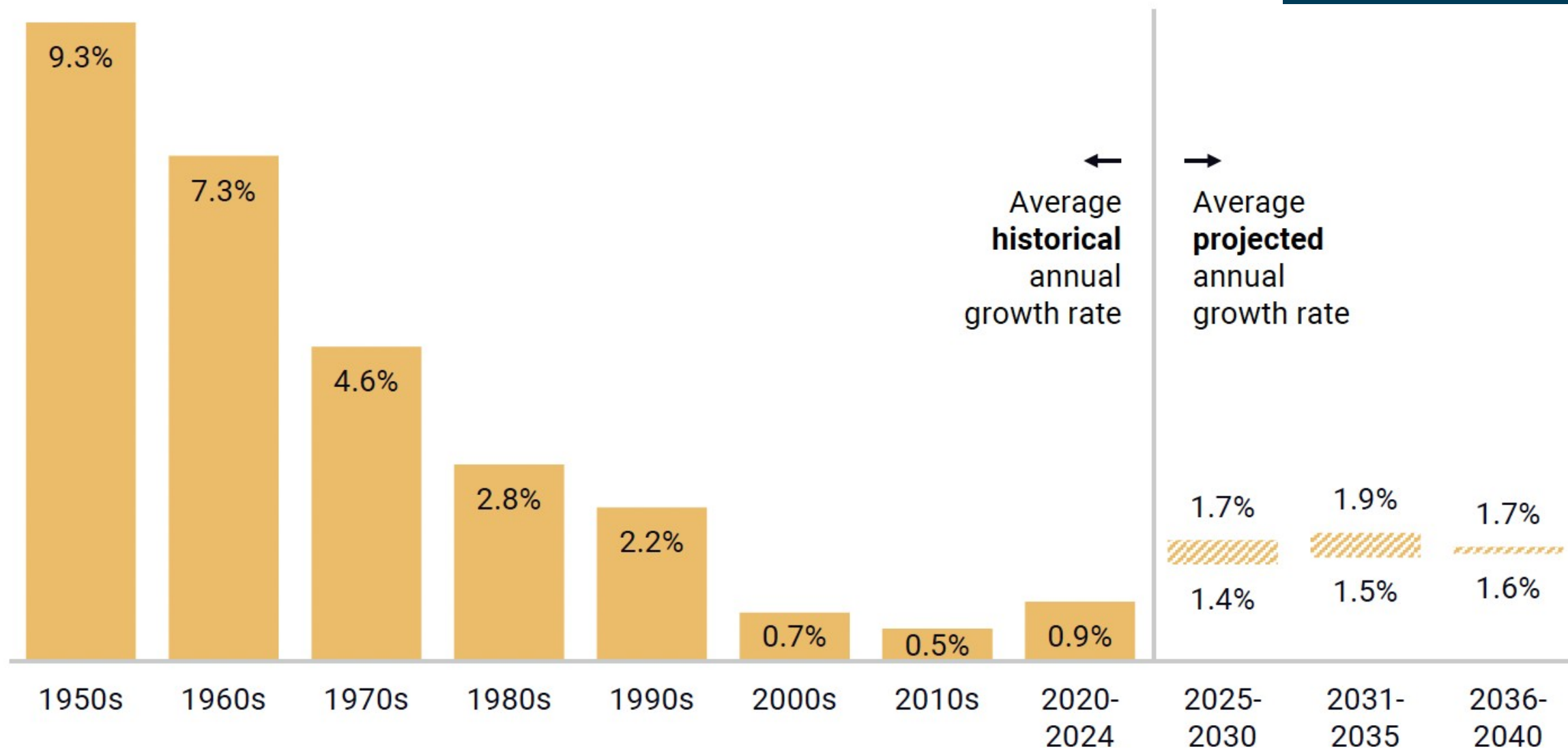
Jessica Wilkinson
North America
Renewable Energy Lead



FIGURE 1

Evolution of electricity demand since the 1950s

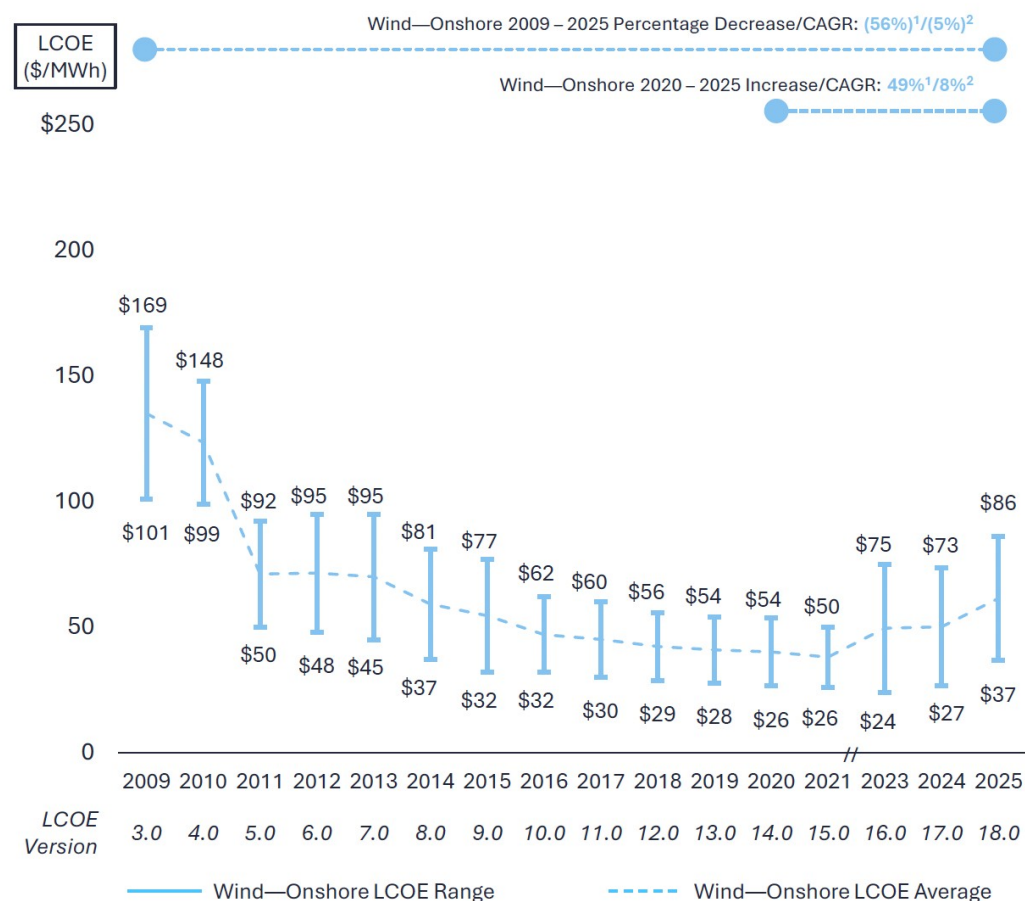
Average annual percent growth



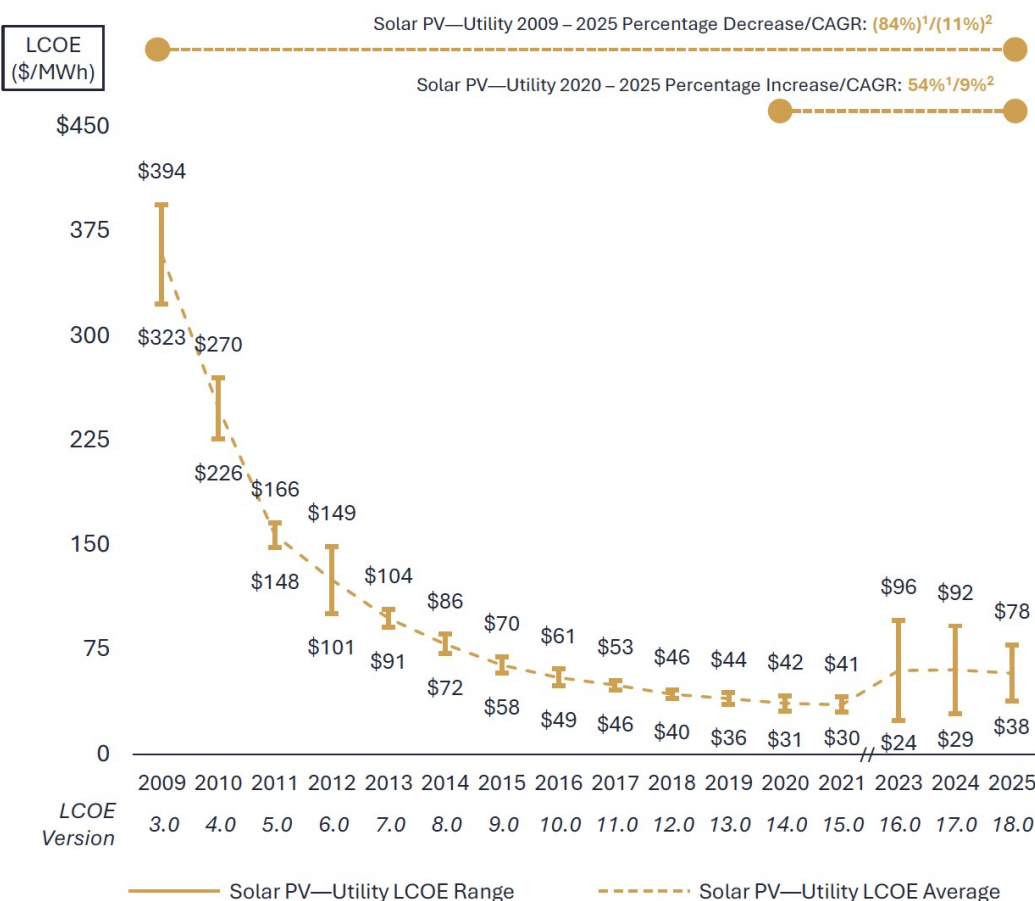
Levelized Cost of Energy Comparison—Historical Renewable Energy LCOE

This year's analysis shows a divergence in trends between wind and solar with solar costs declining slightly and wind costs increasing, likely reflecting the difference in supply chain conditions across each technology

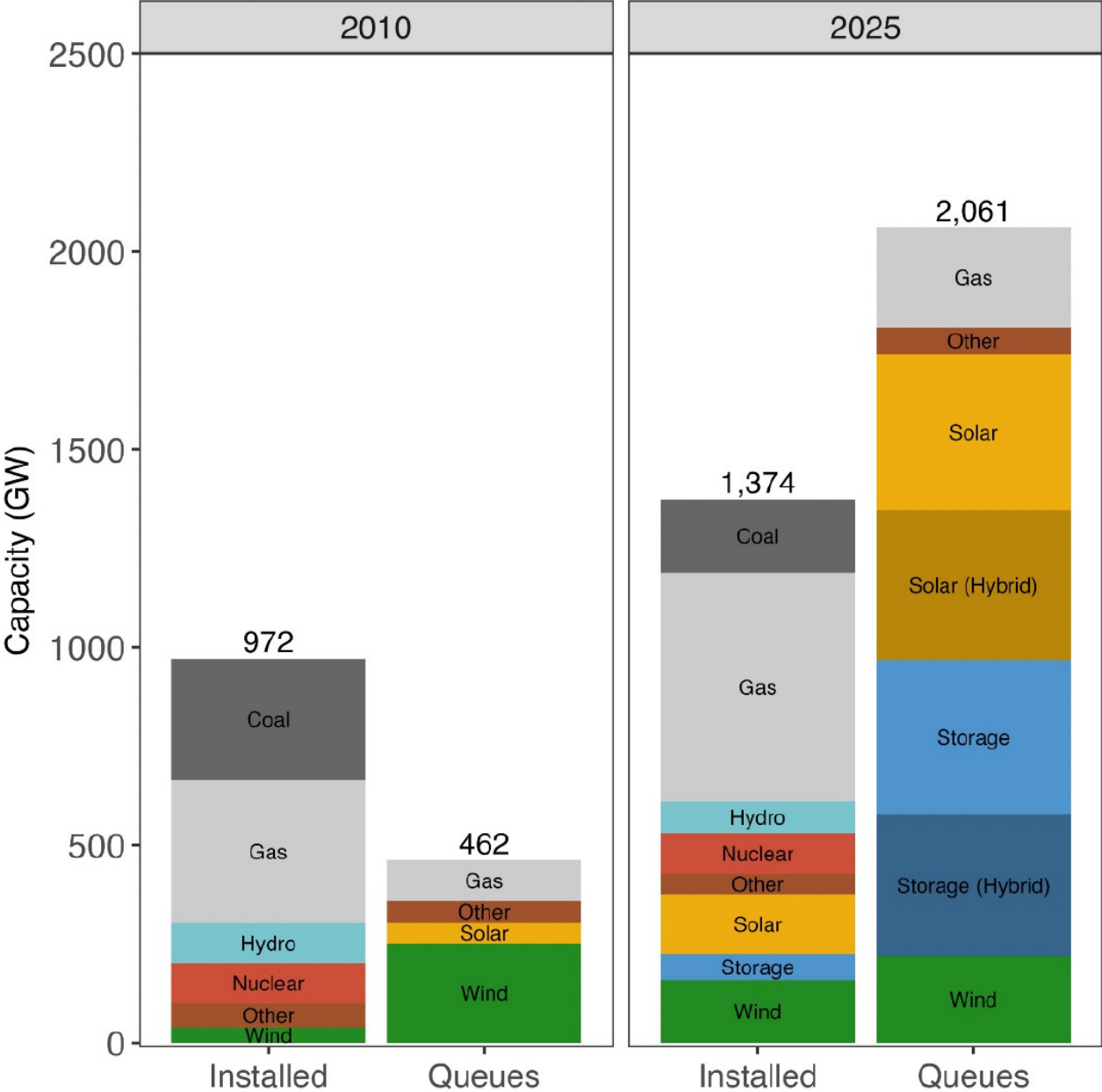
Wind—Onshore



Solar PV—Utility



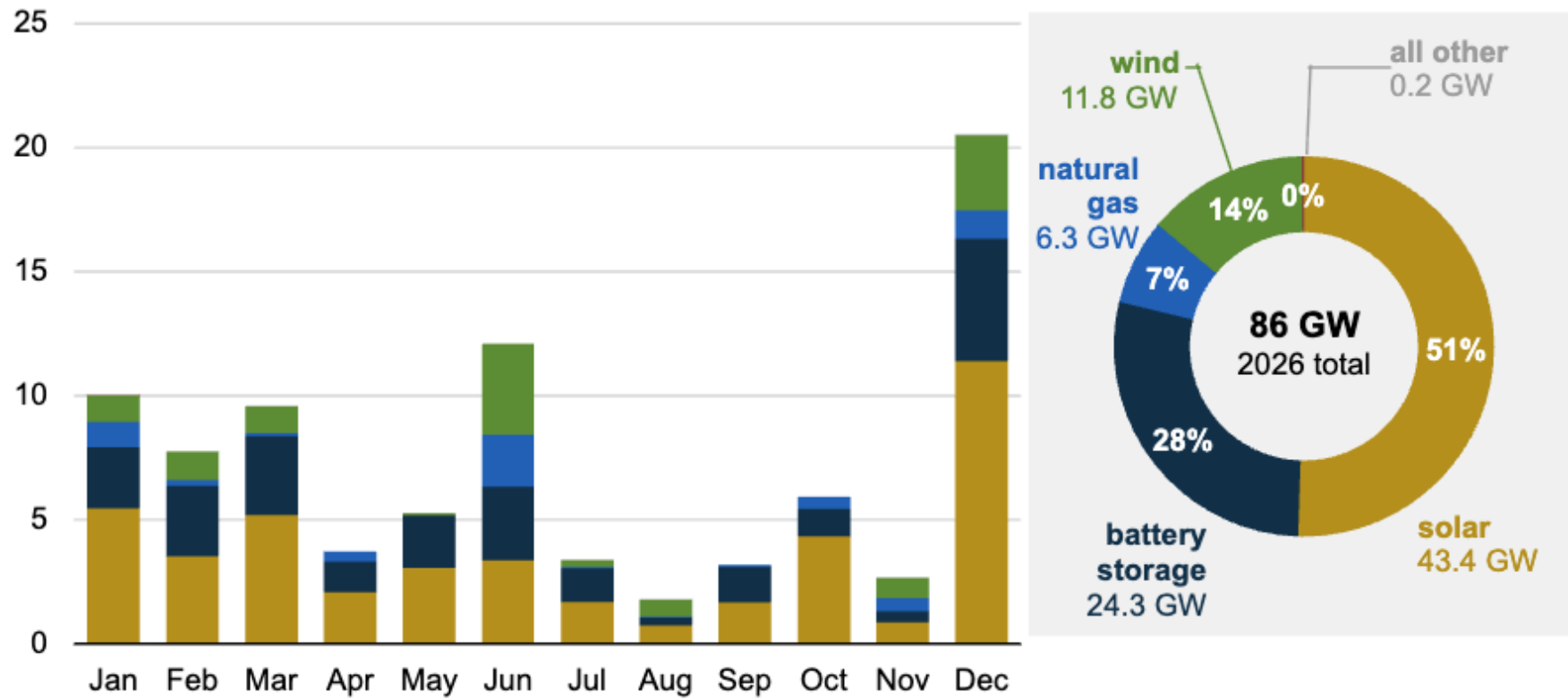
Entire U.S. Installed Capacity vs. Active Queues



FEBRUARY 20, 2026

New U.S. electric generating capacity expected to reach a record high in 2026

U.S. planned utility-scale electric generating capacity additions (2026)
gigawatts (GW)



Data source: U.S. Energy Information Administration, [Preliminary Monthly Electric Generator Inventory](#), December 2025

Community Benefits for Wind and Solar

1

**Tax Revenue & Municipal
Funding**

2

**Community Benefit
Agreements & Host
Community**

3

**Infrastructure & Economic
Development**



Clean Energy Can Move Faster When Projects Deliver for Climate, Conservation and Communities



Why it matters: Considering the 3Cs early can help reduce conflict, avoid costly delays and improve project outcomes.

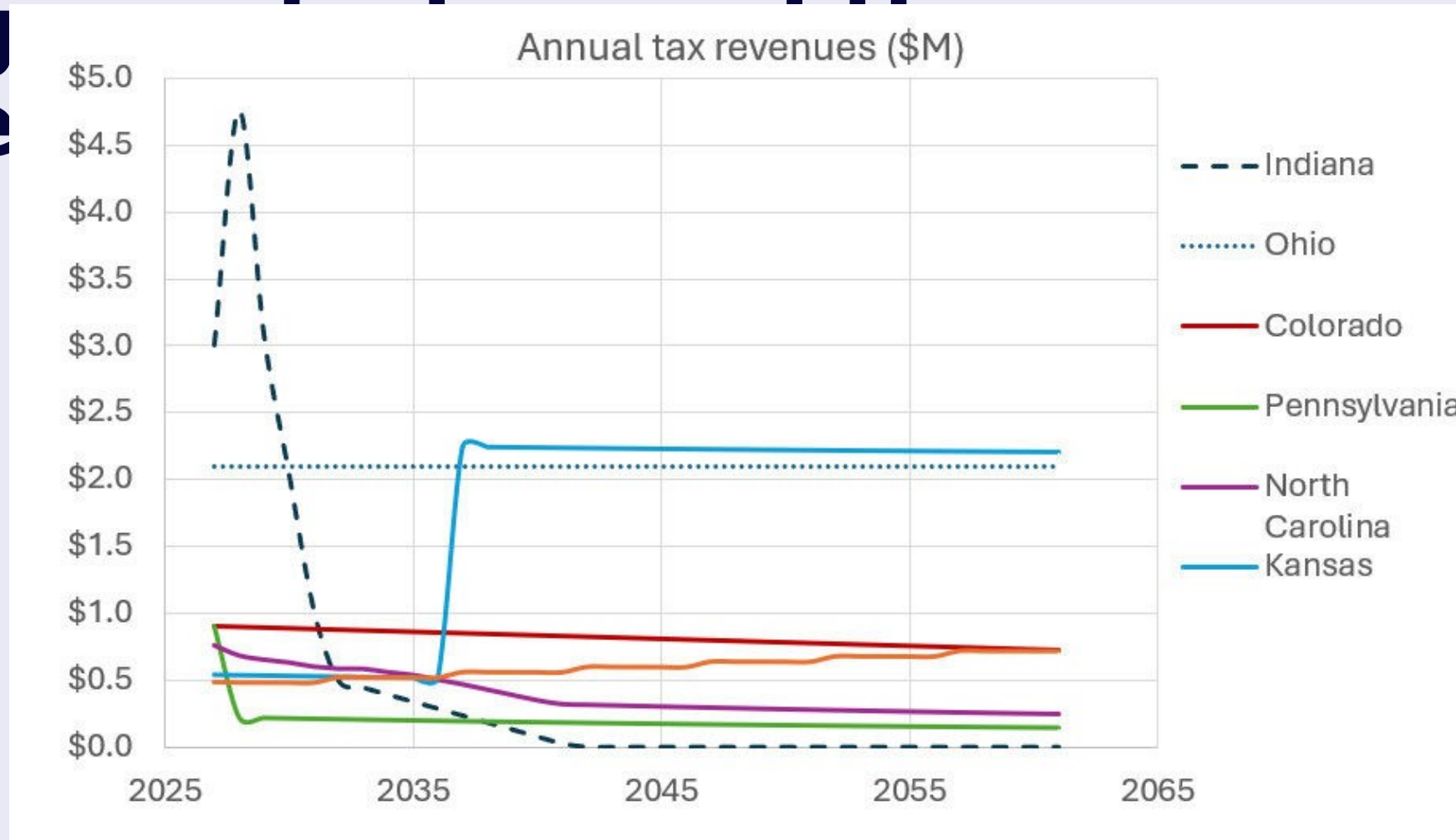


The Clean Energy Compass



SCAN ME

States take wildly different approaches to taxing renewable energy conse



Clean Tomorrow : *Comparison of Property Tax Treatment for Solar and Battery Storage in Seven States*

TNC's 3Cs Framework: Communities, Conservation and Climate

Successful clean energy
deployment requires early
consideration of:

Conservation

Avoid impacts to wildlife
and habitat and restore and
enhance nature's values



Climate

Maximize reductions
in greenhouse gas
emissions

Communities

Center communities and Indigenous Peoples,
working in collaboration to support shared
benefits and an equitable transition

Why it matters: Considering the
3Cs early can help reduce conflict,
avoid costly delays and improve
project outcomes.

Compass Resource Hub

The Compass Resource Hub complements the Compass map by providing curated resources that are primarily organized around the 3Cs—climate, conservation, and communities—to support more informed clean energy planning. These resources help users connect to information that can support informed 3C clean energy planning. We recognize there are many additional resources available to support engagement on the 3Cs.

Communities

- Understand community characteristics
- Move from data to partnership

Tribal and Indigenous People

- Increase understanding about Indian Country
- Data has spirit
- Advance meaningful Tribal partnerships through enforceable agreements

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Conservation

- Conduct desktop screening – [Clean Energy Compass](#)
- Further evaluate sites - [Find your state fish and wildlife agencies](#)
- Mitigate impacts where possible
- Consider alternative sites

Climate

- Speed matters
- Prioritize projects with the greatest climate impact



The Clean Energy Compass

Navigating 3Cs considerations for clean energy planning

Welcome to the Clean Energy Compass, The Nature Conservancy's first-stop tool for clean energy planning. It is designed to inform—not determine—planning decisions.

Use the map to identify potential **climate, conservation and community (3C)** considerations that may warrant further evaluation. The Compass provides national-scale information to support early-stage planning and should be used alongside site-specific assessments, input from state and federal wildlife agencies, robust community engagement, Tribal consultation and other local analyses.

It is important to note that the presence of wildlife and habitat resources or community considerations does not necessarily preclude wind and solar development, as many impacts can be avoided, minimized or addressed through thoughtful project design, operations and mitigation measures. The **Compass Resource Hub** helps the user navigate these considerations. Learn more www.nature.org/cleanenergycompass

☐ Hide splash screen at startup

ENTER TOOL >



DATA LAYERS



Conservation Values



Disturbed Lands



Agricultural Considerations



Community Considerations



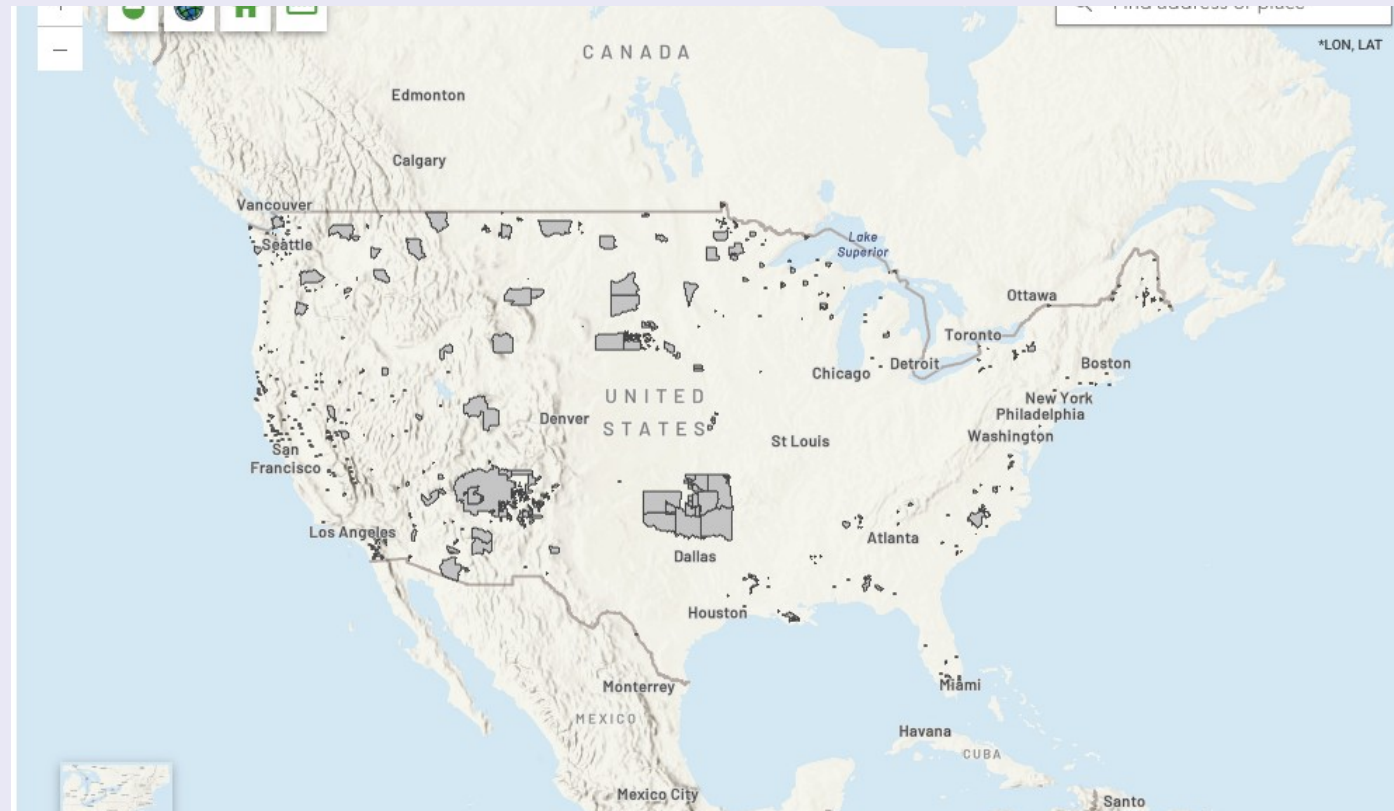
Probability of Renewable Energy Buildout



Indigenous Lands



Federally recognized Tribal lands and jurisdictions.

American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native
Hawaiian Areas



SITE REPORT



LAYER INFO

DATA LAYERS



*Energy type filters the conservation layers below.



Wind



Solar ✓



Floating Solar



Highly Sensitive



Protected Areas



Floodplains, Wetlands, and Groundwater-fed Ecosystems



Biodiversity, Resilience and Flow



Resilient, biodiverse areas



Connectivity pinchpoints



Coastal migration space



Threatened and Endangered Species



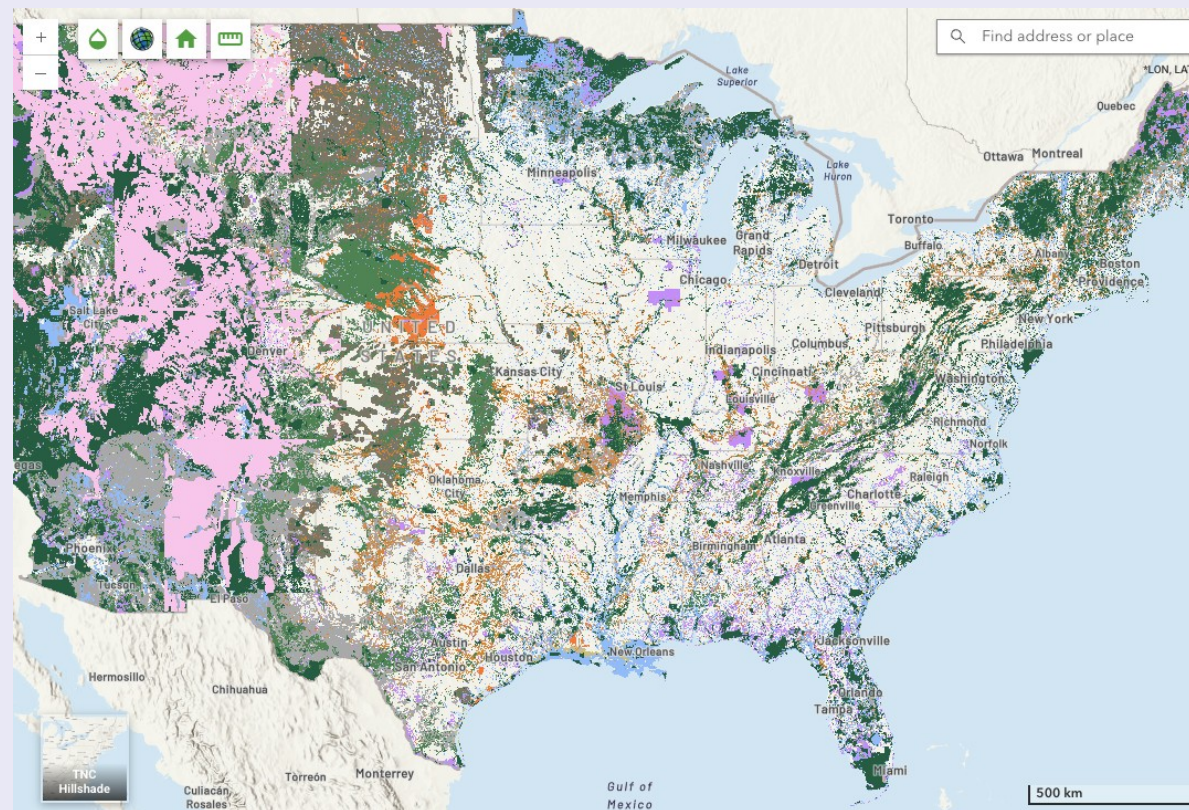
Prairie and Sage Grouse



Whooping Cranes



Big Game (Elk, Mule Deer, Moose, and Pronghorn Antelope) (solar only)





DATA LAYERS



Disturbed Lands



Former mining and contaminated sites that are less likely to encounter environmental and community concerns.

☒ Former Mine Lands☒ Brownfields Over 50 Acres

Agricultural Considerations



Community Considerations



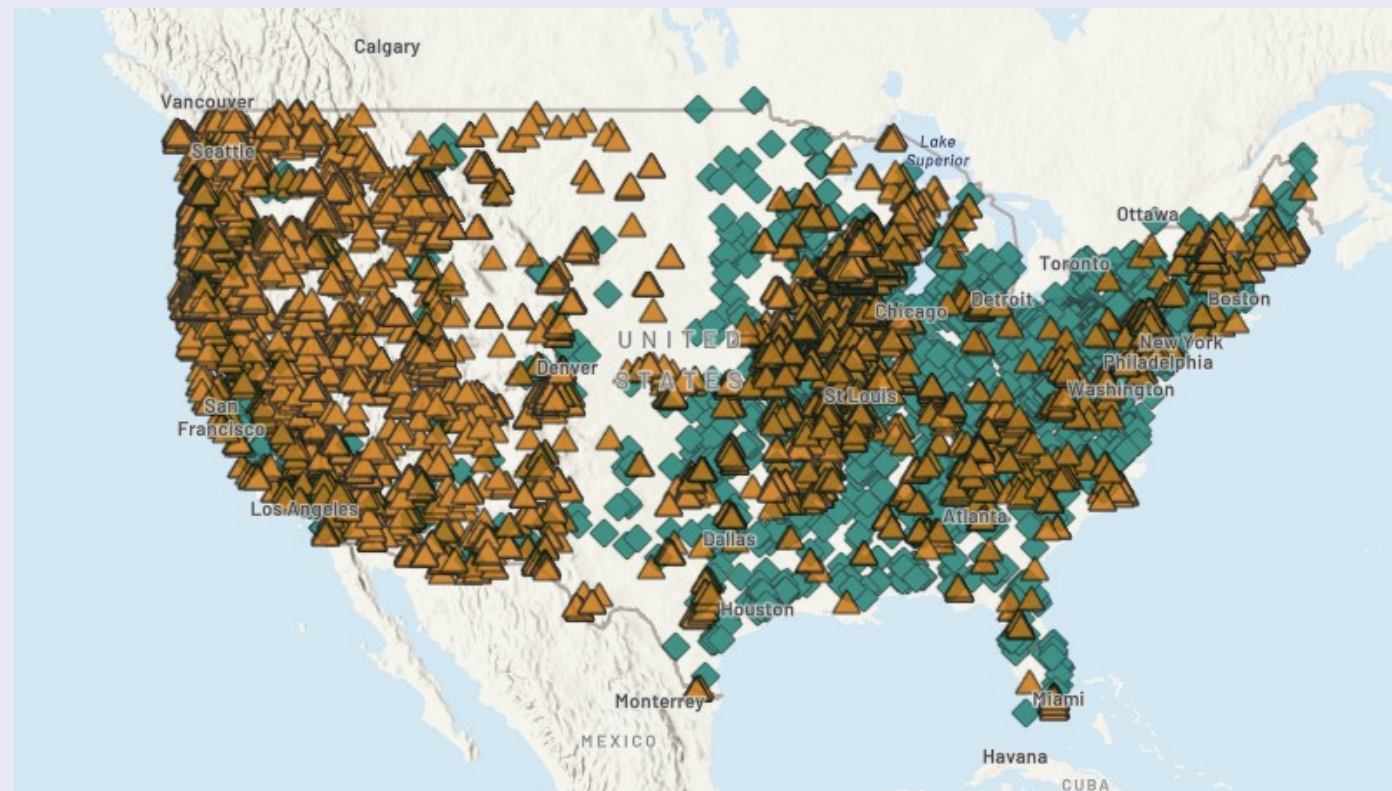
Probability of Renewable Energy Buildout



Indigenous Lands



Federally recognized Tribal lands and jurisdictions.





DATA LAYERS



Conservation Values



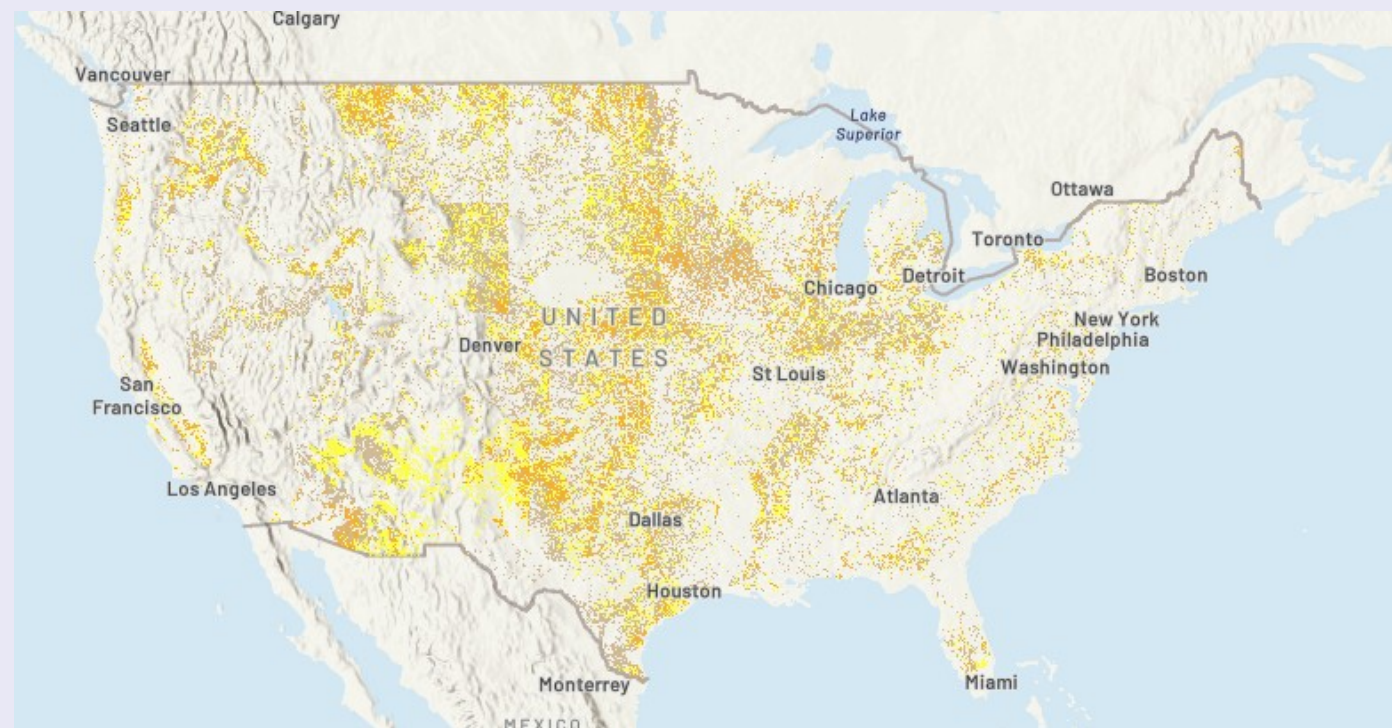
Disturbed Lands



Agricultural Considerations



Areas where farmland is most productive, now and in the future.

☒ Highest Quality Farmland☒ Highest Quality Farmland: 50-75th percentile☒ Highest Quality Farmland: 75-90th percentile☒ Highest Quality Farmland: >=90th percentile☐ Limitations to Farmland☐ Abandoned Cropland☐ Water-limited Lands



DATA LAYERS



Agricultural Considerations



Areas where farmland is most productive, now and in the future.

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☒ Highest Quality Farmland: 75-90th percentile



☒ Highest Quality Farmland: >=90th percentile

☒ Limitations to Farmland

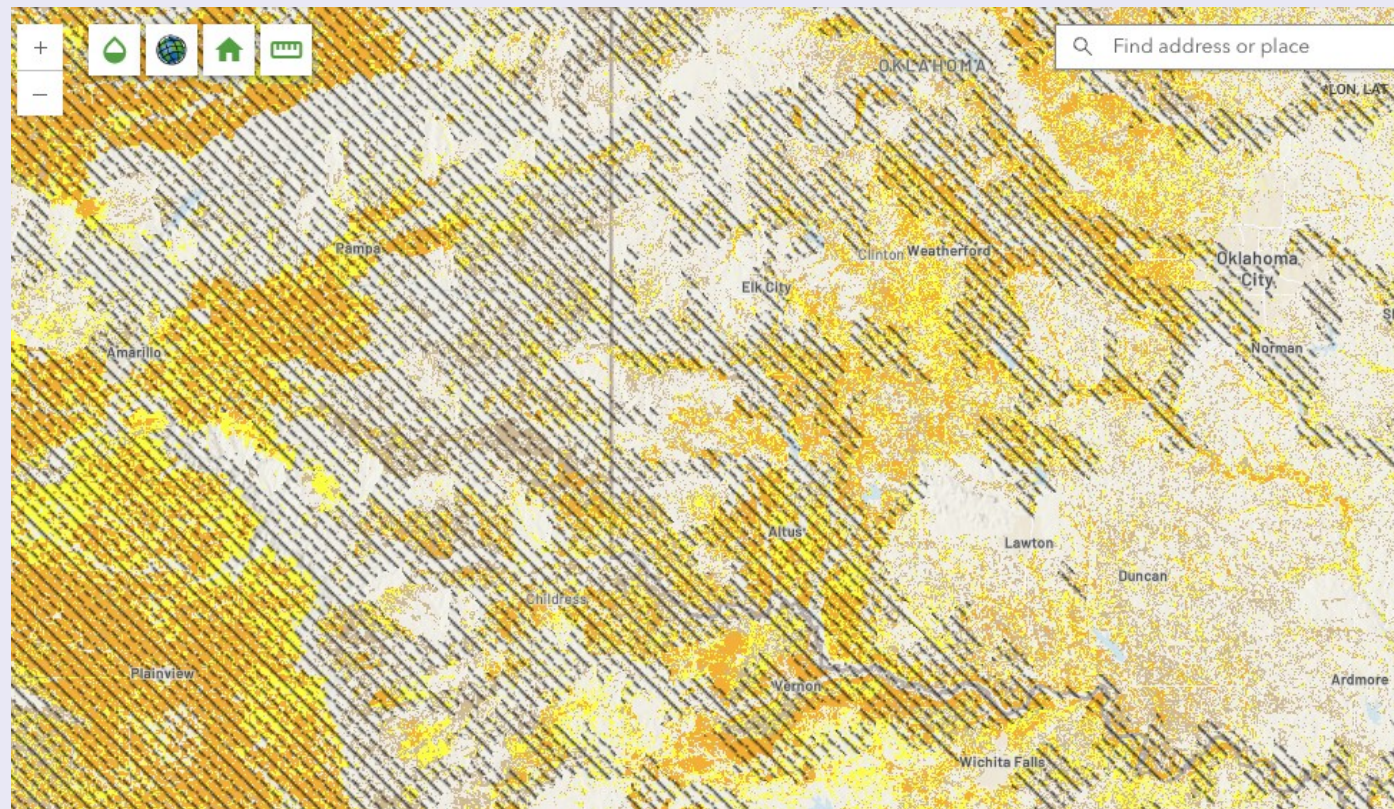
☐ Abandoned Cropland



☒ Water-limited Lands



Community Considerations





Community Considerations



Community characteristics to consider in wind and solar development.

**Click census tract on the map to view summary info*

Low Income Percentile



Climate Burdened



Energy Burdened



Health Burdened



Housing Burdened



Pollution Burdened



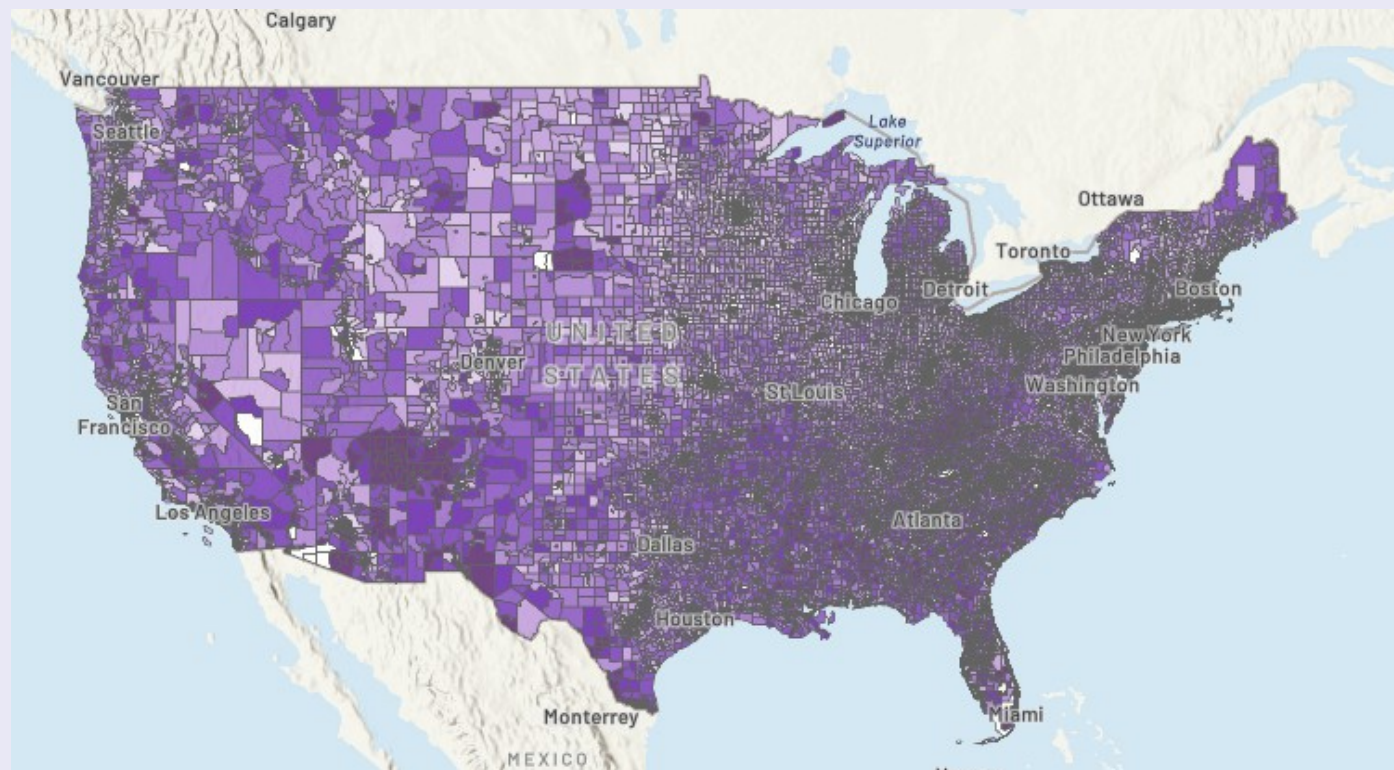
Transportation Burdened



Water Burdened



Workforce Burdened





DATA LAYERS



Community Considerations



Community characteristics to consider in wind and solar development.

**Click census tract on the map to view summary info*

Low Income Percentile



Climate Burdened



Energy Burdened



Health Burdened



Housing Burdened



Pollution Burdened



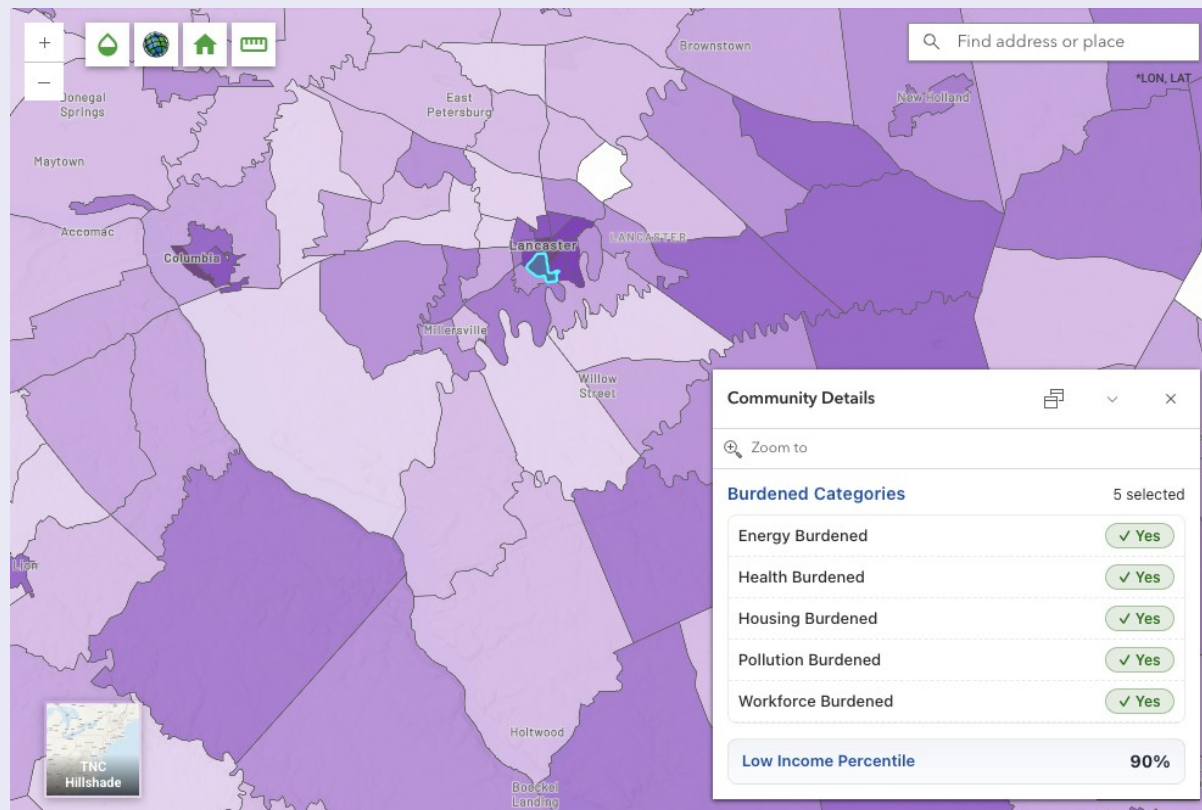
Transportation Burdened



Water Burdened



Workforce Burdened





SITE REPORT



LAYER INFO

DATA LAYERS



Conservation Values



Disturbed Lands



Agricultural Considerations



Community Considerations

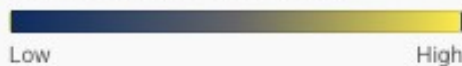


Probability of Renewable Energy Buildout

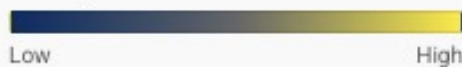
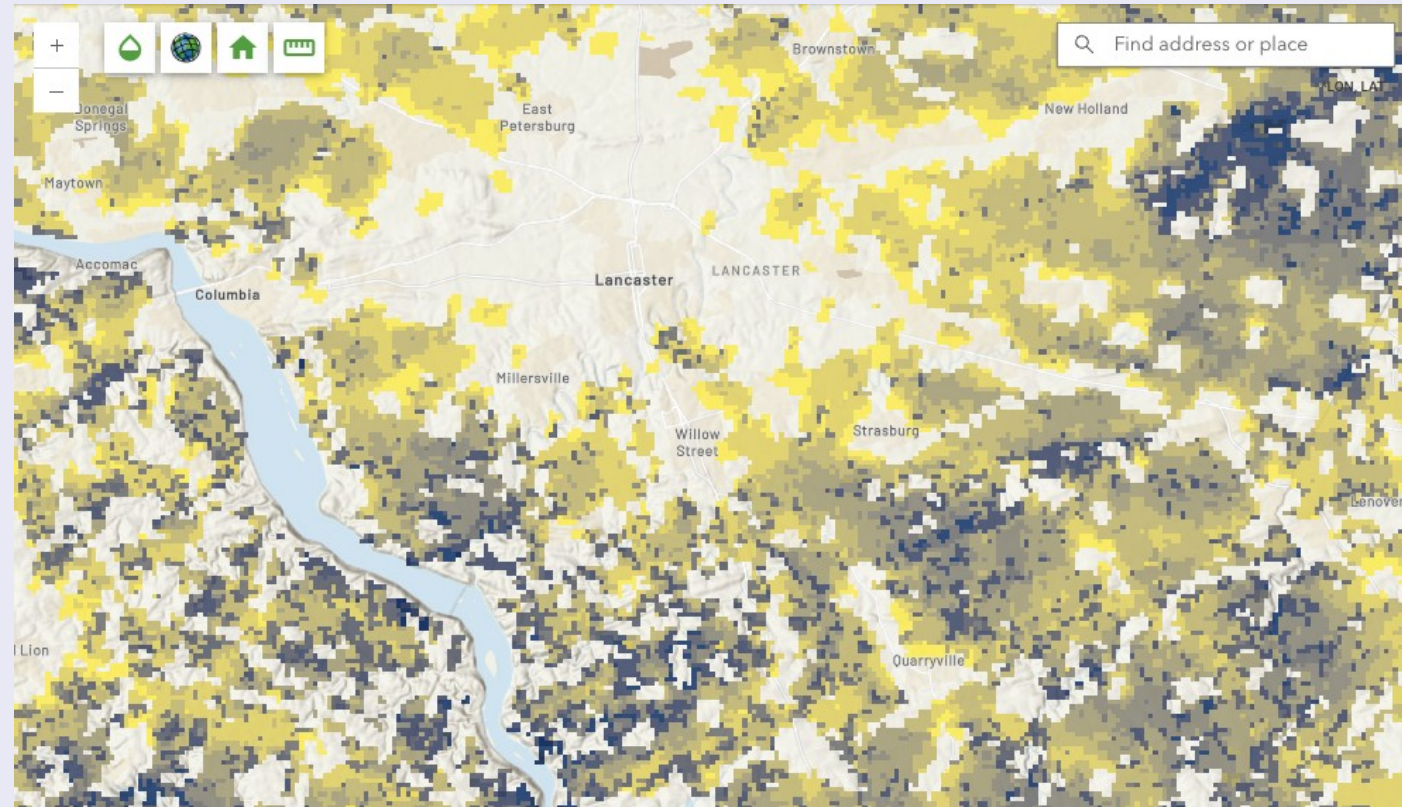


Areas with a higher likelihood for future wind and solar development.

Probability of Solar Buildout



Probability of Wind Buildout



DOWNLOAD DATA



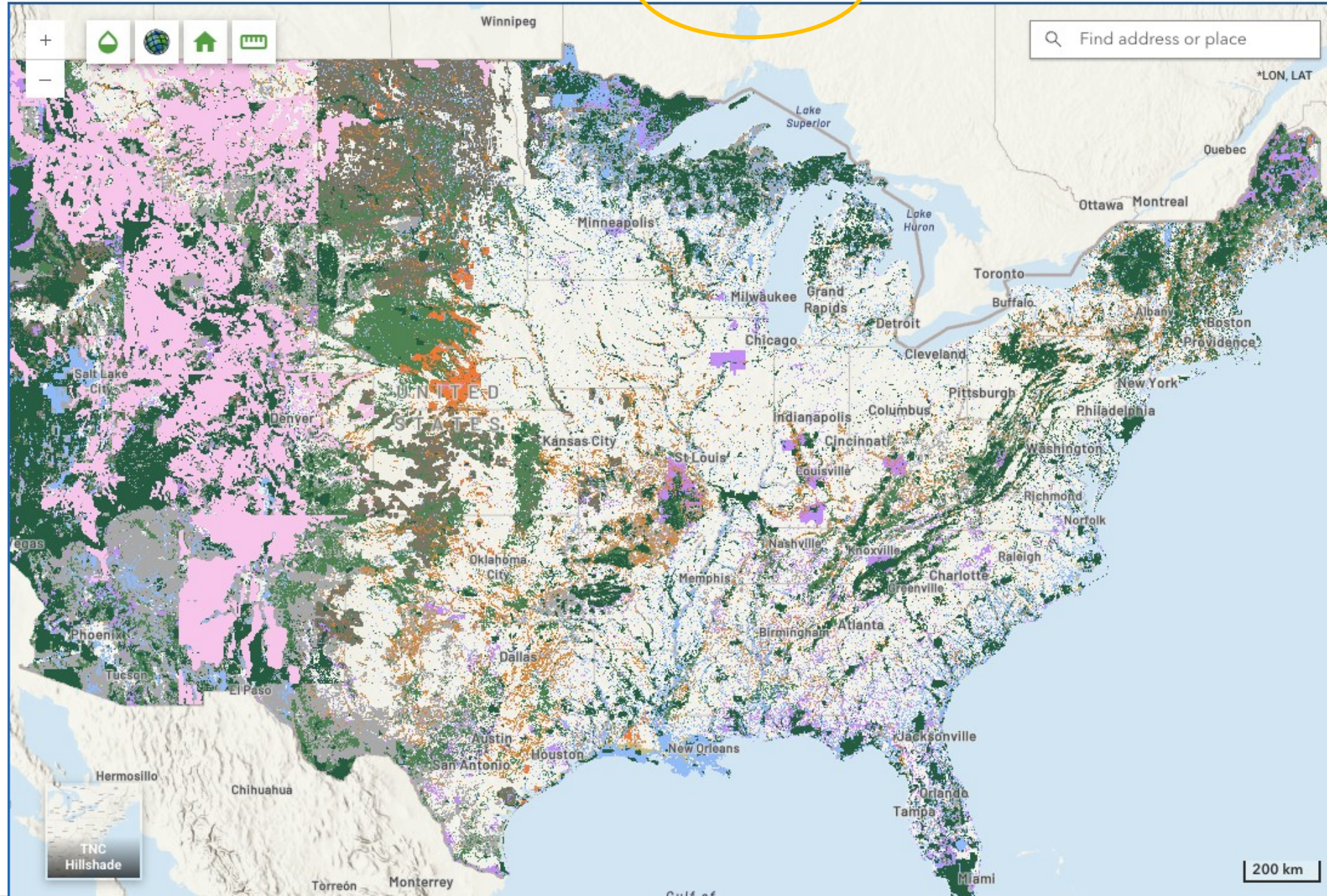
START TOUR



LAYER INFO



ABOUT





Clean Energy Compass

Navigating 3Cs considerations for clean energy planning



DOWNLOAD DATA



START TOUR



LAYER INFO

ABOUT

TOOLS



SITE REPORT



LAYER INFO

DATA LAYERS

Conservation Values

Wildlife, habitats and ecosystems to consider during wind and solar planning.

*Energy type filters the conservation layers below.



Wind



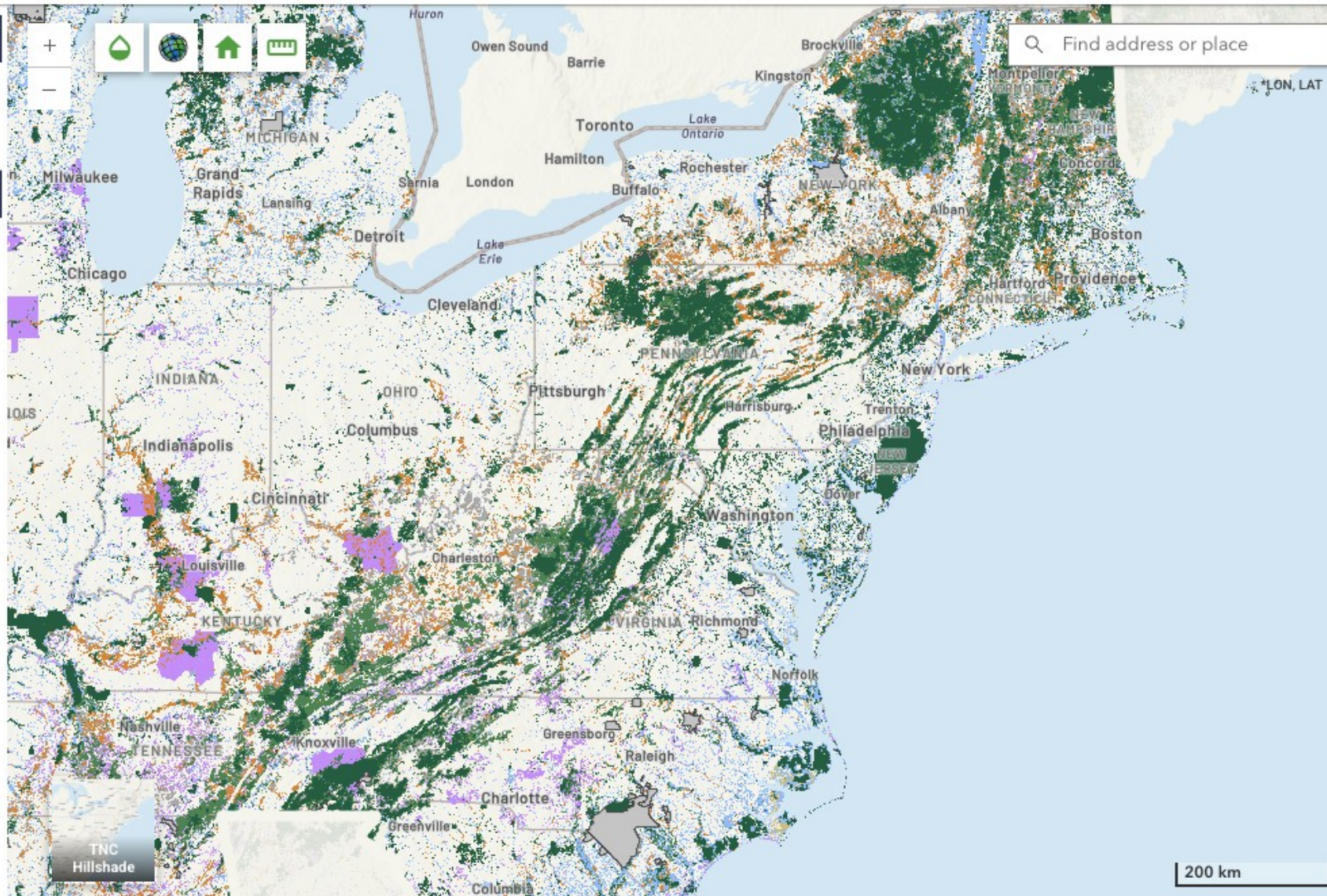
Solar ✓

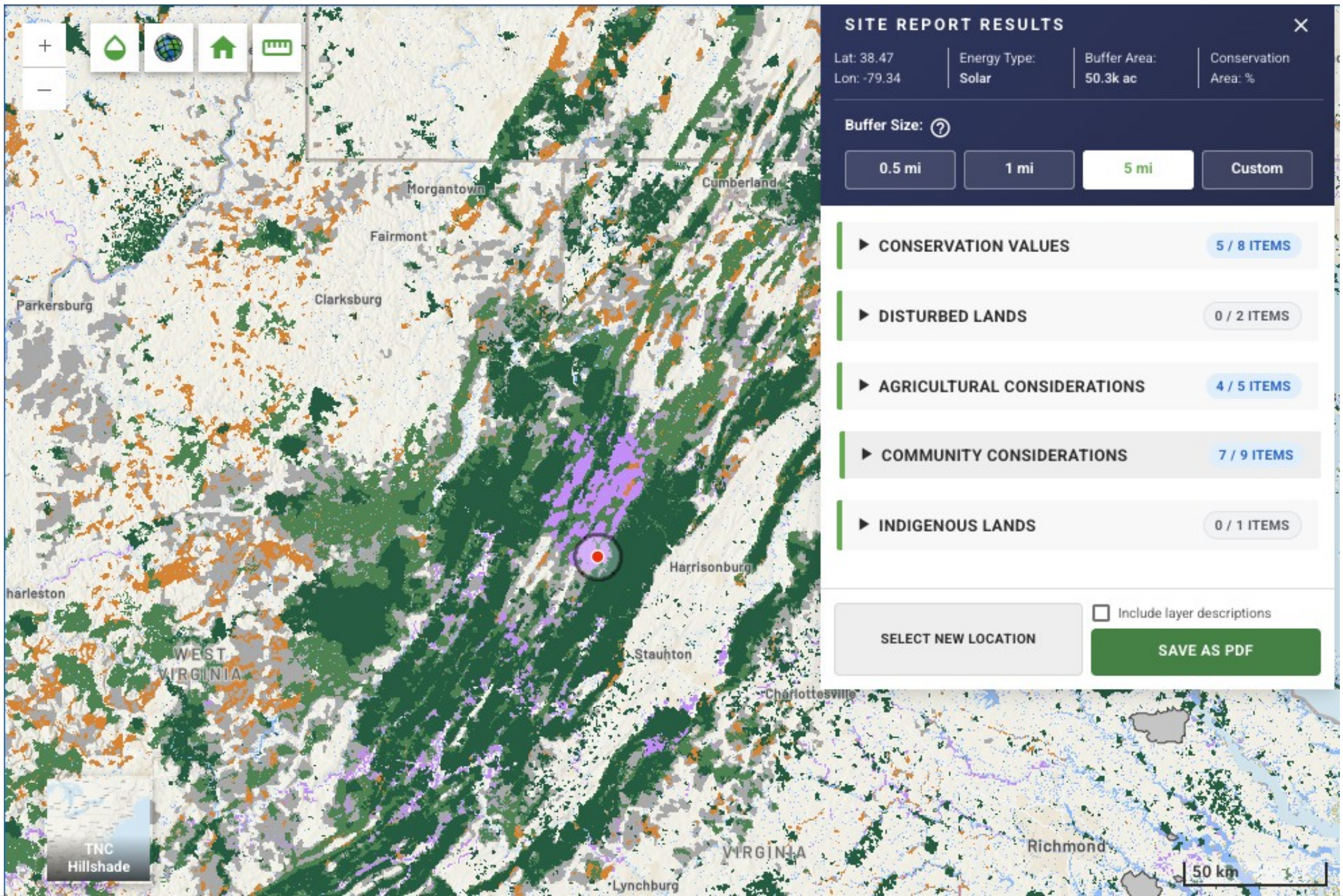


Floating Solar

✓ Highly Sensitive

- ✓ Protected Areas
- ✓ Floodplains, Wetlands, and Groundwater-fed Ecosystems
- ✓ Biodiversity, Resilience and Flow
 - Resilient, biodiverse areas
 - Connectivity pinchpoints
 - Coastal migration space
- ✓ Threatened and Endangered Species
- ✓ Prairie and Sage Grouse





SITE REPORT RESULTS



Lat: 38.47
Lon: -79.34

Energy Type:
Solar

Buffer Area:
50.3k ac

Conservation
Area: %

Buffer Size: ?

0.5 mi

1 mi

5 mi

Custom

► CONSERVATION VALUES

5 / 8 ITEMS

► DISTURBED LANDS

0 / 2 ITEMS

► AGRICULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

4 / 5 ITEMS

► COMMUNITY CONSIDERATIONS

7 / 9 ITEMS

► INDIGENOUS LANDS

0 / 1 ITEMS

SELECT NEW LOCATION

☐ Include layer descriptions

SAVE AS PDF