

Severiano DeSoto

Energy Siting Policy Advisor, Western Lands



Severiano DeSoto is the energy siting policy advisor for Western Resource Advocates (WRA). He develops policy to help harmonize WRA's dual goals of protecting at least 30% of land in the West by 2030 while simultaneously building new clean energy projects necessary to meet greenhouse gas reduction targets.

In his role, DeSoto advances solutions for smart energy siting practices that place land conservation at the center and ensures that clean energy development projects are designed and located in a way that minimizes harm to the environment and wildlife. By developing mitigation policy to offset impacts of clean energy development, he is helping to promote a more sustainable and equitable approach to energy development that balances the need for clean energy with the need to restore and protect high priority wildlife habitats and migration corridors. Currently focused on conservation policies in Colorado, his aim is for these efforts to become a model for other states.

Prior to WRA, DeSoto spent a decade working in various levels of restaurant management in Boulder and Denver. A lifelong resident of Colorado, DeSoto always felt a deep connection with nature and wanted to transition to work for an organization that focuses on the fight against climate change and protecting natural resources in the West for future generations.

DeSoto joined WRA in 2021 as a clean energy fellow and focused on identifying funding opportunities for Western states created by new federal laws, helping to inform policymakers of clean energy and climate policy successes from the Interior West and to identify state-level climate and clean energy policy efforts that could be boosted through additional federal support or resources. At WRA, he enjoys the ability to interact directly with various decision makers and feels that he joined the organization at a key time, with the alignment of federal, state, and local goals around climate change. Of particular importance to him is working with environmental justice and Tribal groups to raise voices that have previously not been part of the conversation on climate change policies.

Just nine months into his tenure at WRA, DeSoto was a panelist at Nevada Gov. Steve Sisolak's 2022 Infrastructure Summit and at the Nevada Clean Transportation Electrification conference. He has also played a key role in helping the states in WRA's region identify and apply for federal funds for clean energy initiatives like grid resiliency.

DeSoto holds a Master of Science in Environmental Policy and Management from the University of Denver and a Bachelor of Arts in Ecology and Evolutionary Biology from the University of Colorado, Boulder. He lives in Colorado with his wife and two children. He heads to Colorado's great outdoors whenever possible, and enjoys hiking, camping, fishing, and mountain biking.

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