



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

Natural Community Conservation Plan

The Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) program, administered by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) uses a broad-based ecosystem approach to plan for the conservation of declining species, natural communities, and supporting ecological processes while allowing compatible and appropriate economic activity. In the Desert Renewable Conservation Plan (DRECP) area, this includes renewable energy and transmission development. The NCCP is intended to:

- Provide for the long-term conservation and management of 37 covered species within the plan area, and preserve and enhance natural communities and ecosystems in which those species are found, by creating a reserve system that ensures conservation of the target species and communities.
- In coordination with the overall DRECP conservation strategy, provide for landscape-level connectivity and retention of ecological processes that are fundamental to a healthy desert ecosystem.
- Create a framework and approach for permitting renewable energy projects under the California Endangered Species Act in an efficient and predictable manner.

The NCCP will encompass the entire DRECP plan area, and includes:

- **Development Focus Areas** – The NCCP will allow CDFW to issue take authorizations for solar, wind and geothermal development projects and transmission projects sited within development focus areas. Such projects will benefit from a more efficient and predictable permitting process with clear avoidance and minimization requirements and simplified mitigation measures.
- **NCCP Conceptual Plan-wide Reserve Design** – Identifies priority areas from which the DRECP NCCP reserve design will be created in the form of long-term management of habitat reserves for the conservation of the 37 proposed covered species.
- **DRECP NCCP Reserve Design** – Identifies specific areas as reflected by the biological goals and objectives for the conservation and management of the proposed covered species. The reserve design will be created to provide both compensation for impacts from renewable energy and transmission projects within the DRECP plan area and to support the overall Conservation Strategy.

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