



1 PUBLIC MEETING REGARDING THE DRAFT DESERT RENEWABLE  
2 ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN AND EIR/EIS AT 2000 CONVENTION  
3 CENTER WAY, ONTARIO, CALIFORNIA, COMMENCING AT  
4 6:35 P.M., ON THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6, 2014, BEFORE  
5 DIANE CARVER MANN, CSR NO. 6008.

6

7 APPEARANCES

8 AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES:

9 ROGER JOHNSON - DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR THE SITING,  
10 TRANSMISSION, ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION OF THE  
11 CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

12 MENDEL STEWART - MANAGER, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
13 CARLSBAD AND PALM SPRINGS ECOLOGICAL SERVICES OFFICE

14 TIM WAKEFIELD - ASSOCIATE DISTRICT MANAGER, BUREAU OF  
15 LAND MANAGEMENT CALIFORNIA DESERT DISTRICT

16 LESLIE MCNAIR - PROGRAM MANAGER, CALIFORNIA DEPARTMENT  
17 OF FISH AND GAME

18 STAFF:

19 CHRIS BEALE - DRECP EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

20 KRISTY CHEW - SITING, TRANSMISSION AND ENVIRONMENTAL  
21 PROTECTION, CALIFORNIA ENERGY COMMISSION

22 PRESENTER:

23 JENNESS MCBRIDE - DIVISION CHIEF, COACHELLA AND IMPERIAL  
24 VALLEYS U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

25 ALSO PRESENT:

STEVE CHUNG - DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE

CONNIE LATHAM - STATE DEPARTMENT OF PARKS AND RECREATION

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1 about what's in the plan, why we're preparing it and  
2 where we are in the process. If you have more specific  
3 questions or more complex questions, folks here can help  
4 you find the information you want in the document to  
5 help understand what the DRECP says about your  
6 particular area of interest.

7           And then we'll also have a couple of times --  
8 I'll say more about this. We'll have a couple of times  
9 tonight where you'll have an opportunity to provide  
10 comment. And the draft document has been out for about  
11 a month. It's substantial. We don't expect you to have  
12 read the entire thing by now, but we do want to help you  
13 focus your -- to focus reading the document on what  
14 interests you. Also if you have early impressions or  
15 want to provide input tonight, we would love to hear  
16 that input.

17           We also have, as you saw when you came in,  
18 several fact sheets, we have a brochure and a  
19 frequently-asked-questions document. So we were hoping  
20 to provide as much information as we can that focus on  
21 your area of interest.

22           A couple of things I want to stress before we  
23 start the program tonight. One is that the Desert  
24 Renewable Energy Conservation Plan is a planning  
25 document. There are no specific renewable energy

1 projects proposed as part of the plan. There are no  
2 specific transmission projects proposed as part of the  
3 plan. The purpose of the DRECP is to plan for potential  
4 future renewable energy development and transmission  
5 development.

6 Another key thing to note, it has been reported  
7 in some articles about the DRECP that the plan is  
8 opening up two million acres of the desert for renewable  
9 energy generation. We'll say more about this tonight,  
10 but it's really important to understand that, by our  
11 estimate, that's nearly ten million acres in the desert  
12 now where renewable energy could potentially be sited,  
13 nearly ten million acres where renewable energy  
14 development is not prohibited.

15 One of the main things we are trying to do with  
16 this plan is trying to identify where within that ten  
17 million acres or so it's most appropriate to site  
18 renewable energy projects. So you'll hear more about  
19 that, but it's really important to understand the areas  
20 we're identifying are sort of within the areas that are  
21 currently available or potentially available for  
22 renewable energy development.

23 The format for tonight is, we'll start with a  
24 fairly brief presentation. It's about 30 minutes. It's  
25 intended to provide sort of an overview of the draft

1 plan to give you a sense of the opportunities you'll  
2 have for public participation and also to introduce you  
3 to an online planning tool, or a mapping tool, that you  
4 can use if you'd like to understand some of the work  
5 that's gone into the draft plan.

6           The presentation you'll see tonight will be  
7 posted online later. We also have a video of a  
8 presentation that is very similar to this but a bit  
9 longer. So you will have an opportunity in the future  
10 if you would like to kind of review the presentation or  
11 to see, you know, the full extended version, if you'd  
12 like.

13           After we have the presentation, after the  
14 30-minute presentation, probably at about 7:15, we'll  
15 have an open house. You see tables we have on the back,  
16 lots of poster boards. We'll have information stations.  
17 The planning team will be at the stations available to  
18 answer your questions about the draft plan. So this is  
19 your opportunity to learn more about it, to talk to the  
20 people who participated in preparing the plan and get to  
21 know the plan a bit better.

22           During the information stations, you'll have --  
23 or open house, you'll have your first opportunity for  
24 public comment. We have a court reporter here  
25 tonight -- if you could raise your hand, please -- and

1 she'll be available while others are at the information  
2 station. If you would like to make a public comment,  
3 you can talk to her. The comments you make to her will  
4 be recorded and submitted as formal comments on the  
5 Draft DRECP. That's your first opportunity. We'll have  
6 another in a moment I'll touch on.

7 I also want to point out we have  
8 representatives of agencies here that didn't prepare the  
9 draft plan but with whom we collaborated in preparing  
10 the plan. So we have Steve Chung from the Department of  
11 Defense. And, Steve, if you could raise your hand. So  
12 if you have any questions about the Department of  
13 Defense's interest in renewable energy in the desert,  
14 their operations in the desert and so forth, he's here  
15 to answer your questions.

16 We also have Connie Latham from the State  
17 Department of Parks and Recreation. She was -- oh,  
18 Connie, thank you. Could you raise your hand? She's in  
19 the back straight there. Could you raise your hand?  
20 Thank you. So if you have questions about the  
21 Department of Parks and Recreation's participation in  
22 the planning process, their interest in renewable energy  
23 development, please talk to Connie.

24 All right. So we'll have the presentation.  
25 We'll have the open house. It will be about 45 minutes,

1 and then promptly at 8:00 we will have a public comment  
2 session. And this is an opportunity for you to come to  
3 the podium here to make comments to the agencies. Again  
4 our court reporter will be recording the comments. The  
5 comments you make during that time will become formal  
6 comments on the record. Again there is no limit on the  
7 number of comments you make.

8           This is again pretty early in the public review  
9 process. If you make a comment tonight, you can still  
10 make written comments or comments at future meetings, so  
11 there is no limit. We welcome any comments you would  
12 like to provide tonight.

13           If you would like to speak during the public  
14 comment session, I do ask that you fill out one of the  
15 blue speaker cards that were on the table as you came  
16 in. Valerie, who is at the table, can take the cards.  
17 You can put a lot of information on the cards, but the  
18 only thing we really need for purposes of public comment  
19 is your name.

20           And if you'd like to have your affiliation,  
21 your group associated with the comment that you make on  
22 the record, please feel free to put that in. But all I  
23 really need is your name, and that's to give us a sense  
24 of how many people want to talk tonight. And also I can  
25 call you up and let folks know ahead of time where they

1 are in the queue for making public comments.

2           This meeting is also being broadcast or made  
3 available online as a WebEx meeting, so we have folks  
4 that are participating, listening in, who will be  
5 watching the presentation. And in the public comment  
6 section, after folks here have had a chance to comment,  
7 I will open up the lines, and people on the phone can  
8 also make a public comment on the draft plan. All  
9 right. So that's my introduction.

10           We're going to switch over now to the  
11 presentation. Jenness McBride from the U.S. Fish and  
12 Wildlife Service is here to make the presentation, and  
13 as I said, after the presentation we will go to our open  
14 house. So thank you very much again for coming.

15           MS. MCBRIDE: Thank you, Chris. Good evening,  
16 everybody. I'm Jenness McBride of the U.S. Fish and  
17 Wildlife Service's Palm Springs office. The  
18 Palm Springs Fish and Wildlife office is the service's  
19 lead for the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan.

20           The DRECP is the result of an intense  
21 collaborative inter-agency planning process. It's a  
22 comprehensive plan that contains a great deal of  
23 information. We've organized the document to make it as  
24 accessible to you as possible in a format that's similar  
25 to the Environmental Impact Reports and Environmental

1 Impact Statements that you're used to seeing. Thank  
2 you.

3           The DRECP contains six main volumes and an  
4 additional volume of technical appendices. Volume 1  
5 provides background on the development of the DRECP,  
6 including the purpose and need. Volume 2 describes the  
7 alternatives. Volume 3 describes the environmental  
8 setting and existing conditions. Volume 4 contains the  
9 draft environmental analysis. Volume 5 describes  
10 scoping of public participation, and Volume 6 includes  
11 details about implementation of mitigation measures.

12           There are 24 technical appendices that provide  
13 additional information on covered species, biological  
14 goals and objectives, climate change and many other  
15 topics.

16           Volume 1 describes how the agencies develop the  
17 DRECP. The Draft DRECP is an unprecedented  
18 collaboration of state and federal agencies. Many  
19 federal, state and local agencies, tribes and private  
20 citizens provided helpful input into the development of  
21 the draft plan. The four agencies that were principally  
22 responsible for preparing the DRECP are the California  
23 Energy Commission, the California Department of Fish and  
24 Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Management and the  
25 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

1           The purpose and goals of the Draft DRECP are to  
2 provide a long-term adaptable plan for renewable energy  
3 development and resource conservation within  
4 22-and-a-half million acres of the Mojave and Sonoran  
5 Deserts in Southern California. The DRECP has a 25-year  
6 planning horizon, and it's intended to be implemented  
7 through 2040. The DRECP is intended to streamline the  
8 environmental review and permitting process for  
9 renewable energy projects and transmission that are  
10 sited in appropriate areas.

11           "Streamlined" under the DRECP means that the  
12 review and permitting process would be more efficient  
13 and more predictable. "Streamlined" does not mean that  
14 the environmental analyses would be incomplete or that  
15 steps would be skipped. The DRECP would not weaken  
16 requirements for environmental review under state or  
17 federal law. It would make them more efficient and more  
18 predictable.

19           The DRECP would conserve 37 sensitive species  
20 and their habitats, including species listed as  
21 endangered or threatened under the federal Endangered  
22 Species Act or the California Endangered Species Act.  
23 On BLM lands the DRECP would also conserve other  
24 valuable desert resources, such as recreation, cultural,  
25 visual and wilderness characteristics.

1           A core element of the DRECP is the significant  
2 increase in conservation and recreation designations  
3 that the BLM is proposing to protect these resources and  
4 uses on BLM lands.

5           The DRECP would provide a framework for  
6 considering renewable energy, conservation and a range  
7 of other resources and values in one land-use and  
8 conservation planning process. The DRECP identifies  
9 appropriate areas for renewable energy projects, creates  
10 incentives for developers to site projects in those  
11 areas by streamlining the environmental review process  
12 and would conserve sensitive species, their habitats and  
13 ecological processes. The DRECP would also protect  
14 recreation and other desert resources and uses on BLM  
15 lands.

16           Now, as it is now, the siting of renewable  
17 energy and transmission projects and the mitigation of  
18 environmental impacts are considered on an individual,  
19 project-by-project basis and not on a comprehensive  
20 landscape scale as proposed under the DRECP.

21           The DRECP would also help to improve the  
22 coordination of federal, state, local, tribal and  
23 private conservation efforts in the desert by  
24 identifying high priority, landscape-scale goals that  
25 can be used to guide and achieve greater conservation

1 outcomes.

2           The DRECP plan area covers about 22-and-a-half  
3 million acres across portions of seven counties in the  
4 deserts of Southern California. It includes both  
5 federal and non-federal Lands. The plan area includes  
6 only a small portion of some counties, like San Diego,  
7 and a large portion of others, such as San Bernardino  
8 County.

9           This map shows you general land ownership in  
10 the DRECP plan area. The largest landholdings are BLM  
11 lands in yellow, National Park Service lands in green,  
12 military lands in dark gray and private lands in light  
13 gray.

14           The DRECP is a combination of three different  
15 types of plans: a BLM Land Use Plan Amendment, a  
16 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service General Conservation Plan  
17 and a California Department of Fish and Wildlife Natural  
18 Community Conservation Plan. The three plans are  
19 integrated and together help to achieve the DRECP's  
20 overall goals.

21           Each of the agency plans applies to a different  
22 portion of the DRECP plan area. The BLM Land Use Plan  
23 Amendment applies only to BLM lands, which cover nearly  
24 ten million acres of the plan area. The U.S. Fish and  
25 Wildlife Service General Conservation Plan covers

1 5.4 million acres of non-federal lands and does not  
2 apply to BLM or to any other federal lands. The Natural  
3 Community Conservation Plan applies to both federal and  
4 non-federal lands, and that's nearly 19 million acres in  
5 the plan area.

6           The DRECP would provide a more efficient and  
7 predictable environmental review and permitting process  
8 for certain types of Covered Activities. Renewable  
9 energy projects that would be sited within Development  
10 Focus Areas, or DFAs, as you see on the slide, those  
11 Covered Activities include solar, wind and geothermal  
12 projects. And transmission is also a Covered Activity.  
13 It would be covered both within and outside the  
14 Development Focus Areas so that energy produced can be  
15 delivered where it's needed.

16           Covered Activities include biological  
17 conservation and compensation actions to avoid, minimize  
18 and mitigate for the impacts of renewable energy and  
19 transmission development. On BLM lands there are  
20 conservation and compensation actions for a variety of  
21 other resources and uses, such as cultural, recreational  
22 and visual.

23           The DRECP would cover all phases of renewable  
24 energy Covered Activities, including pre-construction,  
25 construction, operation and maintenance and

1 decommissioning of projects after they've completed  
2 their operational life.

3           The DRECP plans for up to 20,000 megawatts of  
4 new utility-scale renewable energy generation and  
5 transmission in the plan area through the year 2040.  
6 The DRECP's renewable energy strategy is only one part  
7 of California's comprehensive plan for addressing  
8 climate change and meeting the state's energy needs.  
9 This statewide strategy includes utility scale renewable  
10 energy development, transmission, distributed  
11 generation, energy conservation, demand response, a  
12 strong -- strong energy efficiency standards and  
13 investment in research and development.

14           Utility-scale renewable energy plays an  
15 important role in this overall strategy by allowing for  
16 immediate deployment of large-scale renewable energy  
17 generation, grid stability, optimal use of the state's  
18 best renewable energy resources and technologies with  
19 unique benefits, such as energy storage.

20           It's important to note that the DRECP's plan  
21 for 20,000 megawatts of new renewable energy generation  
22 is just a planning assumption. It is not a goal. It is  
23 not a target. The DRECP is not intended to drive that  
24 level of development or any other level of development.  
25 Instead, a 20,000-megawatt estimate of demand for

1 renewable energy in the desert was used to estimate the  
2 acres of ground disturbance that might occur as a result  
3 of that level of development, and we used those  
4 estimates to conduct the environmental analysis.

5           The potential for 20,000 megawatts of renewable  
6 energy development in the DRECP plan area is based on  
7 certain assumptions about energy generation in  
8 California, including an assumption that nearly 30,000  
9 megawatts of distributed generation -- and that includes  
10 rooftop solar -- 30,000 megawatts of distributed  
11 generation would be built in California statewide.

12           The Draft DRECP assumes that about 20,000  
13 megawatts of customer-side distributed generation --  
14 again, rooftop solar -- would be built by 2040. And  
15 this projection is about ten times the amount of  
16 customer-side distributed generation that is currently  
17 installed today, and it's equivalent to roughly about  
18 3.3 million new residential rooftop solar systems.

19           Other assumptions for the DRECP include limited  
20 generation from nuclear and fossil fuel resources and  
21 continued state policies that limit imports of renewable  
22 energy from outside the state.

23           Again we want to emphasize that the DRECP is  
24 not targeting the production of 20,000 megawatts in the  
25 desert. It's possible that the potential for renewable

1 energy in the DRECP plan area through 2040 would be  
2 lower than 20,000 megawatts if changes in technology or  
3 public policy encourage or require different resources  
4 for energy generation.

5           We estimate that the production of 20,000  
6 megawatts from utility-scale renewable energy projects  
7 would result in about 177,000 acres of ground  
8 disturbance in the DRECP plan area.

9           The DRECP analyzes the effects of all phases of  
10 renewable energy development under a range of  
11 alternatives. One of the key differences among the  
12 alternatives is the size and location of the Development  
13 Focus Areas where renewable energy projects would be  
14 sited.

15           The DRECP includes specific renewable energy  
16 designations. The most important of these are the  
17 Development Focus Areas, DFAs on the screen there. DFAs  
18 are where the renewable energy projects would benefit  
19 from a more efficient and streamlined environmental  
20 review and permitting process. And these areas are  
21 suitable because they have renewable energy resources --  
22 they're sunny, they're windy, or they have geothermal  
23 resources and also because they are compatible with  
24 conservation of species and other resource values and  
25 uses.

1           In most of the alternatives the Development  
2 Focus Areas are located where natural resource values  
3 are relatively low to minimize the conflicts between  
4 renewable energy development and resource conservation.  
5 BLM would also offer incentives to renewable energy  
6 projects sited in DFAs on BLM lands.

7           Study Areas are the other type of renewable  
8 energy designation. Study Areas are lands that could be  
9 appropriate for development in the future but that  
10 require further analysis. Study Areas are not regarded  
11 as Development Focus Areas in the Draft DRECP.

12           The DRECP's biological conservation strategy  
13 was used to develop the Land Use Plan Amendment, the  
14 General Conservation Plan and the Natural Community  
15 Conservation Plan. The biological conservation strategy  
16 is designed to protect 37 sensitive species and their  
17 habitats, 31 natural communities and desert ecological  
18 processes, and it's based on a set of overarching  
19 biological goals and objectives.

20           The biological conservation strategy includes  
21 Conservation and Management Actions to avoid, minimize  
22 and mitigate for impacts to covered species and to  
23 contribute to their recovery. The conservation strategy  
24 also includes a monitoring and adaptive management  
25 program to allow the DRECP to incorporate new

1 information throughout the 25-year term of the plan.

2           Next slide, please. Okay. Alternatives.

3 We'll go into the next slide, please. The Draft DRECP  
4 analyzes six alternatives, five action alternatives and  
5 one no-action alternative. The agencies have identified  
6 one of the five action alternatives as the preferred  
7 alternative. The no-action alternative describes what  
8 is expected to happen if the DRECP is not completed or  
9 approved.

10           The BLM Land Use Amendment, the Natural  
11 Community Conservation Plan and the General Conservation  
12 Plan are included in all five of the action  
13 alternatives. Other common elements of the five action  
14 alternatives include the conservation strategy,  
15 Development Focus Areas, recreation designations and a  
16 monitoring and adaptive management program.

17           Another common element of each of the five  
18 action alternatives which is not listed on the slide  
19 that you see on the screen now is the potential  
20 production of 20,000 megawatts of renewable energy,  
21 which would result in about 177,000 acres of ground  
22 disturbance. This acreage is dispersed and analyzed  
23 differently in each action alternative, depending on the  
24 configuration of the Development Focus Areas.

25           This is a map of the no-action alternative,

1 which assumes that the DRECP would not be approved. The  
2 light pink areas are where renewable energy projects  
3 could potentially be built today, an area of about  
4 9.8 million acres. The darker pink hatched areas show  
5 where the renewable energy projects would occur under  
6 the DRECP's preferred alternative, and that's a little  
7 over two million acres of Development Focus Areas.

8           One of the most important differences among the  
9 DRECP alternatives is the size and geographic  
10 distribution of Development Focus Areas, again, DFAs on  
11 the slide. This slide shows you a comparison of the  
12 DFAs in three of the action alternatives, and the DFAs  
13 are shown in pink.

14           On the left is Alternative 1, which has the  
15 smallest extent of Development Focus Areas. The  
16 preferred alternative in the middle has somewhat larger  
17 Development Focus Areas than Alternative 1. And  
18 Alternative 2 on the right has the largest acreage of  
19 Development Focus Areas. Alternative 2 provides the  
20 most flexibility for siting renewable energy projects in  
21 the most geographically dispersed area. Alternative 1  
22 would provide the least, and the preferred alternative  
23 would provide moderate siting flexibility.

24           This slide also shows where the Development  
25 Focus Areas differ among these three alternatives. For

1 example, Alternative 1 on the left has less land  
2 proposed as DFAs than the preferred alternative, or  
3 Alternative 2, and especially in the West Mojave,  
4 Imperial Valley and Eastern Riverside County areas.  
5 Alternative 2 on the right has more land proposed as  
6 DFAs than the other two alternatives and especially in  
7 the West and Central Mojave and in the Owens Valley  
8 areas.

9           And again we estimate the size of distribution  
10 of DFAs in each of the five action alternatives would  
11 result in about 177,000 acres of ground disturbance.

12           Another important difference among the DRECP  
13 alternatives is the amount of BLM lands proposed as  
14 additions to the National Landscape Conservation System,  
15 and that's noted as NLCS designations on the slide, and  
16 we also call those National Conservation Lands. They're  
17 shown in purple on the slide.

18           Again Alternative 1 is on the left, and it has  
19 the least amount of new National Conservation Lands  
20 proposed. Alternative 2 on the right has the most. The  
21 preferred alternative in the middle has a moderate  
22 amount of proposed National Conservation Lands. The  
23 amount of proposed National Conservation Lands is  
24 related to the amount of Development Focus Areas in each  
25 alternative.

1           Larger, more geographically dispersed DFAs,  
2 such as those in Alternative 2, would put more natural  
3 resources at risk, so larger designations of National  
4 Conservation Lands are proposed to offset that increased  
5 impact.

6           This map orients you to the West Mojave and  
7 Lucerne Valley part of the DRECP plan area. The  
8 proposed Development Focus Areas are shown in pink.  
9 Study Area lands are in light or dark orange.  
10 Conservation planning areas are in light green.  
11 BLM-proposed conservation designations are shown in  
12 light blue and dark blue. Proposed National Landscape  
13 Conservation System lands are shown by yellow hatching,  
14 and proposed Special Recreation Management Areas are  
15 shown in brown hatching. Dark gray areas are military  
16 lands, and dark green are existing conservation lands,  
17 such as BLM wilderness areas and State Park lands.

18           This slide -- excuse me -- this slide shows  
19 some basic highlights about the preferred alternative.  
20 The overall biological conservation strategy would cover  
21 about 15 million acres, and that includes about  
22 7.6 million acres of existing Conservation Lands, such  
23 as National and State Parks. BLM conservation  
24 designations would cover about four million acres;  
25 Development Focus Areas, about two million acres;

1 Study Area lands about 183,000 acres; and BLM recreation  
2 designations, about 3.6 million acres.

3           This map gives you a general picture of the  
4 preferred alternative, and here you see the Development  
5 Focus Areas, again in pink, in relation to the DRECP's  
6 proposed conservation lands, Study Area lands,  
7 recreation lands, military bases and existing  
8 conservation lands. And you'll be able to see this map  
9 up close at the information stations later, and it's  
10 also on one of the handouts at the front table.

11           For the preferred alternative, a little over  
12 two million acres are proposed as Development Focus  
13 Areas, DFAs. But to meet the DRECP's planning  
14 assumption of 20,000 megawatts of new renewable energy  
15 generation, projects actually would be built on only  
16 about 177,000 acres, or about nine percent of that total  
17 DFA acres. The dark striped slice at the top of the pie  
18 chart represents this estimated ground disturbance as a  
19 portion of the total DFA acreage.

20           If less than 20,000 megawatts of new generation  
21 is actually needed in the DRECP plan area, then the  
22 actual amount of ground disturbance would be less than  
23 177,000 acres. The total proposed DFA acreage is much  
24 larger than the estimated acres of the impact to provide  
25 for flexibility in locating where projects would be

1 built within a DFA.

2           This map shows the Development Focus Areas in  
3 pink again and the amount of estimated ground  
4 disturbance expected to occur in each county within the  
5 DRECP plan area. For the seven counties in the  
6 plan area the estimated ground disturbance that would  
7 occur within the DFAs ranges from five percent to 16  
8 percent of the total proposed DFA acreage in each  
9 county. This map has a lot of detail on it, and it's  
10 also on one of the handouts at the front table, if you'd  
11 like to look at it in more detail later.

12           This slide zooms us back into the West Mojave  
13 and Lucerne Valley part of the plan area and shows a  
14 relative amount of ground disturbance that would occur  
15 in the proposed Development Focus Areas in Los Angeles,  
16 Kern and San Bernardino Counties.

17           For example, in Los Angeles County up to five  
18 percent of the total DFA acreage proposed in that county  
19 would be disturbed by renewable energy development if  
20 20,000 megawatts of new renewable energy generation is  
21 needed in the DRECP plan area, and that would be about  
22 10,000 acres of the total DFA acreage of 218,000 acres  
23 proposed in Los Angeles County.

24           Likewise in Kern County up to six percent of  
25 the total DFA acreage would be developed, or about

1 21,000 acres of the total DFA acreage of 360,000. And  
2 in San Bernardino County up to eight percent of the  
3 total DFA acreage would be developed, and that's about  
4 30,000 acres of the total DFA acreage of 399,000 acres.

5 Environmental analysis includes a description  
6 of the environmental setting in Volume 3 and an  
7 Environmental Impact Analysis in Volume 4. The  
8 environmental analysis considers 23 resource categories.  
9 We identified these resource categories based on scoping  
10 meetings, preliminary analysis and input from tribes,  
11 the public and agency experts.

12 In the environmental analysis for each of these  
13 resource categories we compared the alternatives based  
14 on the proposed level of renewable energy impacts;  
15 Conservation and Management Actions to avoid, minimize  
16 and mitigate impacts to covered species; Conservation  
17 and Management Actions for recreation, visual, cultural  
18 and other resources on BLM lands and the types and  
19 acreages of land allocations on BLM lands.

20 The draft analysis concludes that impacts to  
21 most of the 23 resource categories would be less than  
22 significant. For ten of the resource categories, which  
23 are listed here on the slide, impacts would be  
24 significant in one or more of the alternatives,  
25 including the no-action alternative.

1           Now I'll briefly describe how the DRECP would  
2 be implemented. For implementing the DRECP it's  
3 important to note that no new government entity would be  
4 created. All agencies would retain their current  
5 authority and responsibilities.

6           The purpose of identifying the implementation  
7 structures for the DRECP is to improve agency  
8 coordination and communication. Implementation would  
9 also include participation and input from tribes, local  
10 governments, the public and the scientific community.

11           The DRECP also estimates the cost of  
12 implementing the plan's biological conservation strategy  
13 and identifies sources of funding.

14           Local governments may use the DRECP to inform  
15 their independent land-use planning decisions. The  
16 DRECP would not restrict or change local land-use  
17 planning or permitting authority for renewable energy  
18 projects. With the DRECP local governments would have  
19 the option of applying for permits from the U.S. Fish  
20 and Wildlife Service and the California Department of  
21 Fish and Wildlife for renewable energy projects within  
22 their local jurisdictions.

23           And now a little bit about options for public  
24 participation. We agencies have completed our work for  
25 this draft plan, and now we need your help and input to

1 help us shape the final DRECP. We created a dedicated  
2 website for the DRECP at [www.drecp.org](http://www.drecp.org) to help you  
3 understand the DRECP. We prepared a series of fact  
4 sheets, a list of frequently asked questions and an  
5 informational video, and they're all available on that  
6 website. The Draft DRECP is on also on the website, and  
7 it's also on the Bureau of Land Management and the  
8 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service websites. We also have  
9 an innovative mapping tool called the DRECP Gateway,  
10 which I'll talk a little bit more about in a moment.

11           You can review the DRECP at local libraries and  
12 agency offices in the plan area, and DVDs are also  
13 available upon request. You can give us your comments  
14 by e-mail, fax, U.S. mail, in-person delivery and at  
15 these public meetings. If you want to receive automated  
16 updates about the DRECP, including public meetings and  
17 other news releases, please sign up for the DRECP  
18 LISTSERV at the internet address on the slide. And all  
19 of the information on the slide is on a handout  
20 available at the front table, and it's also posted at  
21 [drecp.org](http://drecp.org).

22           Public review and comment is absolutely  
23 critical to developing the final DRECP. We want your  
24 voice to be heard, and we assure you that all public  
25 comments are welcomed, valued and will be considered.

1           The public comment opened on September 26th,  
2 and it closes on January 9th of next year. Public  
3 meetings are being held throughout the DRECP planning  
4 area and the surrounding population centers.  
5 Information about the public meetings is posted on  
6 [drecp.org](http://drecp.org).

7           To help us develop the final plan, we need to  
8 know what you want us to change. Substantive comments  
9 will have the greatest effect on the final DRECP because  
10 they will tell us specifically what you want added,  
11 removed or otherwise changed and why you want those  
12 changes. Examples of comments that would be most  
13 helpful include comments that raise significant  
14 environmental concerns, issues that require  
15 clarification or modification of any of the  
16 alternatives, new or different alternatives, new or  
17 missing information or corrections that could  
18 substantially change the conclusions of the  
19 environmental analysis.

20           The DRECP Gateway is our innovative online data  
21 and mapping tool. It's free, it's user friendly, and we  
22 encourage you to go in and explore. There is a sign-in  
23 function, but you only have to use it if you want to  
24 save information and come back later and use it again.  
25 Anyone with a computer, regardless of your experience

1 with GIS, can use the Gateway, and you can use it to  
2 view, edit and analyze maps and data. You can create  
3 your own custom maps and put your comments right on  
4 those maps and then save, print or export the maps for  
5 inclusion with your comments.

6           The Gateway web address is at the bottom of the  
7 slide, [drecp.databasin.org](http://drecp.databasin.org). This site is a really  
8 useful tool, but it's just a tool. It's not necessary  
9 to use the Gateway to review, to understand or to  
10 comment on the DRECP. It's an optional resource  
11 available for your use.

12           And that's the end of our presentation this  
13 evening. Thank you for your interest in the DRECP. We  
14 look forward to talking to you and hearing your comments  
15 later in the second part of the meeting tonight.

16           DENNIS WILSON: You skipped over a map. You  
17 didn't cover it in your presentation before the  
18 analysis, right there.

19           MS. MCBRIDE: I think we did go over that about  
20 Los Angeles, Kern and San Bernardino Counties.

21           DENNIS WILSON: You did not. You skipped right  
22 over it. You had it opened for one second.

23           MS. MCBRIDE: I apologize.

24           MR. BEALE: We'll leave it up on the screen  
25 here for a second.

1 MS. MCBRIDE: Yeah. Let me go -- so this  
2 slide, we were zooming back into the West Mojave and  
3 Lucerne Valley part of the plan area. Okay. And it  
4 shows a relative amount of ground disturbance that would  
5 occur in the proposed Development Focus Areas in  
6 Los Angeles, Kern and San Bernardino Counties.

7 So for example, in Los Angeles County up to  
8 five percent of the total DFA acreage in that county  
9 would be disturbed by renewable energy development, and  
10 that's based on the assumption that 20,000 megawatts of  
11 new renewable energy generation would be needed in the  
12 DRECP plan area. Now, for Los Angeles County that means  
13 about 10,000 acres of the total DFA acreage of 218,000  
14 acres would be disturbed.

15 And likewise in Kern County up to six percent  
16 of the total DFA acreage would be developed, and that  
17 represents about 21,000 acres of the total DFA acreage  
18 of 360,000 acres in Kern County. And in San Bernardino  
19 County, up to eight percent of the total DFA acreage  
20 would be developed, and that's about 30,000 acres of the  
21 total DFA acreage of 399,000 acres.

22 And I apologize for that. I can't see the  
23 slides myself.

24 DENNIS WILSON: Yeah, I understand. Thank you.

25 MR. BEALE: Thank you, Jen. Just a reminder

1 that this whole presentation will be posted online.

2           So we are now moving to the open house session.  
3 I'll turn on the lights as soon as I just let you guys  
4 know where our information stations are. Again this is  
5 an opportunity for you to ask the planning team  
6 questions about the draft document. They are prepared  
7 to answer your general questions and also to help you  
8 locate in the document where more specific information  
9 is, if you're interested in that.

10           We have six information stations. And if I  
11 could ask folks to go to your stations, please. And  
12 while they're doing that, I do want to remind you that  
13 our court reporter will be available during this time  
14 during the open house if you would like to make  
15 comments. Any comments you make to the court reporter  
16 will be part of the public record. The reason we  
17 provide an opportunity now is, some folks don't want to  
18 make comments in front of the room, but you're welcome  
19 to do either.

20           So we have six information stations. Starting  
21 back to my right, we have our general station. Thank  
22 you folks for raising your hand. This is where you  
23 should go if you have general questions about what's in  
24 the DRECP, what the difference is among the different  
25 alternatives that are presented. And if you have

1 questions about the analysis of impacts on the human  
2 environment in the EIS and EIR, that's Station 1.

3           Moving counterclockwise we have our renewable  
4 energy station, if you guys could raise your hand back  
5 there. If you have questions about the renewable energy  
6 assumptions that are behind the Desert Renewable Energy  
7 Conservation Plan or information about the transmission  
8 planning that informed the development of the plan,  
9 that's your station.

10           Moving counterclockwise a bit more straight in  
11 the back, we have our Bureau of Land Management Land Use  
12 Plan Amendment station. If you have questions that are  
13 particular to that part of the DRECP, please go there.

14           Further counterclockwise we have the Fish and  
15 Wildlife Service's General Conservation Plan station.  
16 If you have questions about that, please go there.

17           Moving one more over, we have the California  
18 Department of Fish and Wildlife's Natural Community  
19 Conservation Planning station. Folks there are ready to  
20 answer your questions.

21           And then finally to my left, moving further  
22 counterclockwise, we have a station for the biological  
23 conservation strategy that was used to develop all three  
24 components of the DRECP, the LUPA, the GCP and the NCCP.

25           So I'm going to turn on the lights. We'll be

1 open, the information stations, for about 45 minutes.  
2 And then about 8:00 we will reconvene for more public  
3 comments, so thank you again for coming.

4 (Breakout public comment session begins at 7:17 p.m.)

5 STEVE LANG: My name is Steve Lang. I live in  
6 Rancho Cucamonga. As an active public land user via  
7 off-road, camping, hiking -- what other good activities  
8 are there? -- I just wanted to express my family's  
9 opinion on the proposal that we're here today to look at  
10 or see, and it's super overwhelming.

11 The maps are very great graphics. The amount  
12 of people that are here as far as agencies and also  
13 contractors and subcontractors -- and I think there's  
14 probably 12 different agencies that are being paid to  
15 what I feel like is take public land away from the  
16 citizens that are paying the taxes.

17 We're paying a lot of money right now for this  
18 meeting and for these signs and people, and it's a  
19 billion-dollar number to try to even just start  
20 something like this. I'm just disappointed that it's  
21 taking and going that direction, but I understand  
22 there's also needs in development for the future, but it  
23 needs to not take public land away from the public. We  
24 get a smaller and smaller footprint every year for our  
25 kids and everybody to utilize Public Lands, and I want

1 to keep as many of those Public Lands open as possible.

2 I also completely disapprove that they had a  
3 public hearing meeting and it cost five dollars to park.  
4 That is unacceptable. If this was to remove low-cost  
5 housing in the middle of L.A. and they had a meeting and  
6 charged five dollars to come to that meeting, this would  
7 not happen. So this is totally unacceptable.

8 In closing, I vote for the no-action  
9 alternative, which means do nothing. That's what I'm  
10 here to support is, do nothing in the way of closing  
11 Public Lands. Thank you.

12 JEFF WATTS: I just want to make the comment  
13 that these people or the organization wants to take land  
14 from us to put the power grids up or solar or whatever,  
15 they need -- if they take land from us as far as  
16 general-purpose play areas in the desert, then they give  
17 us land somewhere else, because the military just did it  
18 in Lucerne Valley. They took 6,000 acres or something  
19 from us on a part-time basis.

20 And I don't understand why the military didn't  
21 go east of their base instead of west of their base,  
22 because there's hundreds and hundreds of miles east of  
23 the base that they could use, and nobody goes out there,  
24 and it's -- I don't know whose land, state or government  
25 land -- but that's land that nobody uses. So why would

1 they have to come into the off-road areas that people  
2 use year-round and take away land from us? I just feel  
3 that's not fair to the general public that enjoy the  
4 desert.

5 DENNIS WILSON: I'm here to voice my opinion  
6 regarding the plan and in particular for recreational  
7 use, including off-road, camping, racing and Jeeping on  
8 the BLM lands. And I started back in 1974. There used  
9 to be a race called Barstow to Vegas, and the  
10 Sierra Club intercepted that race and stopped that race.  
11 In return what they did was, they said, okay. We're  
12 going to form the BLM, and we are including "green  
13 sticky" money for off-roaders. In return we're going to  
14 guarantee you ten to 15 million acres, which you'll be  
15 able to pay your fee for your green sticky on all of  
16 your vehicles. It will be required. And only certain  
17 races will be approved, no longer mass starts like there  
18 was in Barstow to Vegas.

19 We had three- to 4,000 riders and went all the  
20 way to Vegas. And that was in '72, '73 and '74. '74  
21 was the last year, and they promised, well, we're going  
22 with BLM. We're going to do green sticky money. You're  
23 going to have plenty of area. We're going to designate  
24 the area for racing, recreational-use camping, off-road  
25 camping.

1           And so now -- that was '74. So now we're  
2 exactly 40 years later. Now we're down to 3.6 million  
3 acres off-roading. So my suggestion is, we need BLM to  
4 fight for the off-road riders and off-road campers,  
5 recreational use, recreational vehicle use, to protect  
6 us and to grow our acreage, not shrink it.

7           For instance, the expansion of the 29 Palms  
8 military down the Bessemer Mine corridor in  
9 Lucerne Valley is taking 500,000 acres away from our  
10 promised area that we were given for the Green Sticker.  
11 Now, my proposal is, you're going to take that 500. We  
12 understand the military needs certain things. We don't  
13 understand why they went west towards Lucerne Valley to  
14 grab that land. They could have gone east towards  
15 Amboy.

16           But my proposal is, if they're going to take  
17 land from us, then they need to give us two for one. If  
18 you're taking 500,000, they need to give us a million  
19 acres somewhere else for the inconvenience and breaking  
20 the promise. So they need to give us a million acres of  
21 other property that we can incorporate into BLM for  
22 off-road vehicle use.

23           Same with this DRECP plan. They're taking --  
24 they want -- in L.A. they want five percent of it to  
25 be -- of the land to be renewable. In Kern they want

1 six percent. In San Bernardino they want eight percent.  
2 So what I'm suggesting is, for every five acres they  
3 get, we should get an additional acre, one acre, five  
4 for one, back to the BLM for off-road vehicle use.

5 And I'd really like to see the BLM fight for  
6 us. Part of the problem is, there's too many agencies.  
7 They're all grabbing what they want. We lose everything  
8 we get because we're not a big enough voice and, you  
9 know, we're just the public.

10 And another big issue now is Diane Feinstein is  
11 proposing even more acreage taken away from the  
12 Lucerne Valley BLM area as well. It's included in her  
13 new bill, and so she tends to save areas that horses can  
14 go into, not vehicles. But honestly I've never seen  
15 horses in Lucerne Valley unless they're on ranches, not  
16 off-roading. They don't go where the off-road vehicles  
17 are. So I think she needs to be curtailed. She's taken  
18 way too much acreage in the last ten to 15 years.

19 I'm from Orange County. I own land all through  
20 the high desert, and I've been in off-road racing since  
21 1972. We come to these meetings. It doesn't matter if  
22 it's AMA, District 37, CORVA and any of the other  
23 off-road-vehicle entities. We speak until we're blue in  
24 the face, and every decade we keep losing more and more  
25 land.

1           So I think enough is enough. We're down to  
2 3.6, so if they're going to give other entities for  
3 renewable, we want property as well back, five to one.  
4 So that's my suggestion. And including the military at  
5 Lucerne. We want two for one for there. They took  
6 500,000 acres away from our race. That's an area we  
7 race, did racing and rock climbing primarily and  
8 recreational off-road camping, off road bugging, that  
9 kind of thing.

10           Glamis is a whole different other area. That's  
11 more sand off-roading. I'm talking about trails and  
12 regular off-roading vehicles, not sand.

13           MARTIN CEPIELIK: I'm an off-road user, a  
14 taxpayer, a property owner and a registered voter in the  
15 state of California. The only concern that I have is  
16 that anything that changes the existing multiple-use  
17 plan or affects the multiple-use plan that is currently  
18 being administered by the BLM and that may change or  
19 preclude people from any form of recreation in what few  
20 open areas we have adjacent to one of the largest  
21 metropolitan spaces in the United States, I would think  
22 that that would be unfavorable because we have limited  
23 resources available to the general public, and any  
24 changes in the ability for us to access those lands  
25 because of special interest use by the proposed plan

1 from the -- under the DRECP or any of the special  
2 interest power companies, I find that's something that  
3 would be not in the best interest of the citizens of the  
4 State of California. That's it.

5 (On the record at 8:01 p.m.)

6 MR. BEALE: This is our public comment session.  
7 This is a chance for you to all have sort of the last  
8 word in the meeting today. I want to just clarify that  
9 this is not a Q-and-A session. This is a chance for you  
10 to make your comments and for the agencies to listen. I  
11 do want to reiterate that we have our court reporter,  
12 who will be recording public comments. They'll become  
13 formal comments in the record.

14 So while you won't hear verbal responses today,  
15 I do want to assure you that comments will be taken and  
16 read, considered by all the agencies and discussed, and  
17 written responses to the comments will be provided in  
18 the final plan.

19 Again to remind you, I have six speaker cards  
20 here. If you would like to be one of our speakers  
21 today, please go fill out one of these cards from the  
22 front table. Again all I need really is your name. If  
23 you'd like to add your affiliation, you're welcome to do  
24 that.

25 Before we get going here, I want to ask our

1 agency representatives to introduce themselves. We have  
2 senior representatives of the four agencies that are  
3 preparing the plan here with us to hear your comments.

4 MR. JOHNSON: Good evening. My name is  
5 Roger Johnson. I'm the Deputy Director for the Siting,  
6 Transmission, Environmental Protection division of the  
7 California Energy Commission.

8 MS. MCNAIR: Hello. I'm Leslie McNair. I work  
9 for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and  
10 I'm program manager.

11 MR. STEWART: I'm Mendel Stewart. I work for  
12 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. I'm the manager of  
13 the Carlsbad and Palm Springs Ecological Services  
14 office.

15 MR. WAKEFIELD: Hello. I'm Tim Wakefield. I  
16 work for you. I'm also the representative from the  
17 Bureau of Land Management. I'm the Associate District  
18 Manager from the California Desert District. Thank you  
19 all for taking time out of your busy day to come down  
20 and provide us with insight to how the public feels  
21 about the plan. It's greatly appreciated, and I hope  
22 you get what you need out of this meeting this evening.

23 MR. BEALE: All right. I think based on the  
24 number of cards I have and the size of the group  
25 tonight, everyone who wants to speak can speak.

1           What we've been doing at all of our meetings is  
2 asking folks to limit their comments to three  
3 meetings -- three minutes. You can comment on as many  
4 meetings as you'd like. I think I have 11 or 12. But  
5 limit your comments to three minutes. If we have time  
6 at the end -- and I think we will -- you're welcome to  
7 come back up. We want to make sure that we let everyone  
8 make a comment. And also just to remind you, we are  
9 going to open up the lines and let folks on the phone  
10 make comments as well.

11           So I have a timer here. It will be yellow  
12 until you get down to one minute. Then it will turn  
13 red. This is just to give you a sense of how much time  
14 you have left in your comments. I'll go through the  
15 list of cards once, open up the lines and then after  
16 that ask anyone in the room who wants to make an  
17 additional comment or comment for the first time, you'll  
18 be welcome to do that.

19           All right. So just to get us going here, we  
20 have -- first public commenter is Justin Burleson.  
21 Second is Frazier Hancy (verbatim) and then  
22 Allen Hernandez. Hope I got those names right. And  
23 please come up to the mic and go ahead. Thank you, sir.

24           JUSTIN BURLESON: Justin Burleson, no  
25 affiliation. But I am an off-roader and an

1 environmentalist. My -- I have some questions, and some  
2 in the room have already heard it. As we go -- we go --  
3 as you go forward in looking with the DRECP as a way to  
4 protect the environment and to limit greenhouse gases,  
5 we're looking at it from the time that production of  
6 renewable energy stops, from the time a windmill or a  
7 solar panel leaves the factory. What are we -- what are  
8 you doing to look at what happens prior to that and its  
9 environmental impacts and its social impacts? How does  
10 that fit into this plan?

11 Are we answering questions or --

12 MR. BEALE: No. This not the Q and A.

13 JUSTIN BURLESON: I apologize.

14 MR. BEALE: You will get an answer in writing.

15 JUSTIN BURLESON: Let me stop, then. They're  
16 kind of looking at me like -- I feel that we need to in  
17 the DRECP -- one, I don't feel that this plan is going  
18 to save any environment. We are heavily reliant on  
19 China for their rare earth minerals. We're buying them  
20 in bulk. China also owns a large part of Africa. We  
21 are -- we are arguably keeping the Civil War in the DRC,  
22 the Democratic Republic of the Congo, going over these  
23 rare earth minerals. We are as a society -- by calling  
24 these renewable energies and developing them in such a  
25 way and lining our deserts with them, we are impacting

1 the environment, and we are impacting societies in such  
2 a negative way that you are not saving anything on the  
3 back end. So if you're -- we have to stop looking at  
4 this environmental issue from the time that production  
5 of these renewables ends. We need to look at the whole  
6 picture.

7           We also need to stop looking at the desert as  
8 non-environment. This project would never happen in  
9 Northern California, where you would have to cut down  
10 forests to put up windmills and solar panels. This  
11 project, if this is the -- if this is the project that  
12 is going to be kind of the poster child for renewable  
13 energy throughout the world or at least throughout our  
14 country, how would this same project -- how could you  
15 put renewables up in such a way to power, you know, the  
16 New York City metropolitan area, the St. Louis area?

17           That's three minutes?

18           MR. BEALE: You can finish your thought. Go  
19 ahead.

20           JUSTIN BURLESON: So, you know, I don't see  
21 this being, you know, the process that is going to save  
22 the environment. We need to -- we need to stop looking  
23 at -- we need to redefine what renewables are and really  
24 question what we've defined them as currently, if  
25 they're even close to being renewable. Those are my

1 comments.

2 MR. BEALE: Thank you, sir.

3 JUSTIN BURLESON: Thank you for your time.

4 MR. BEALE: So we have Frazier Hancy  
5 (verbatim), Allen Hernandez and Kim Campbell Erb.

6 FRAZIER HANEY: Hey, Chris, that's "Haney."

7 MR. BEALE: I should know better.

8 FRAZIER HANEY: Yeah, you should. Yeah, my  
9 name is Frazier Haney, and I am the Conservation  
10 Director for the Mojave Desert Land Trust. We are a  
11 non-profit that works on land acquisition and  
12 conservation projects throughout the California Desert  
13 Conservation Area. It just so happens that's the exact  
14 outline of the DRECP.

15 We've conserved in the California Desert  
16 Conservation Area over 50,000 acres of land to date  
17 since 2006 using foundation money. We partner with BLM  
18 to spend LWCF monies, and we raise money from other  
19 various sources, the states included.

20 We've worked through SB34 with the state on  
21 advanced mitigation. We've also worked with the  
22 Department of the Navy to help protect flight corridors  
23 around the 29 Palms Marine Corps Base.

24 So as we look at the plan and where we've come  
25 from a few years ago, I'm generally encouraged that we

1 have a plan now. Five years ago there was very little  
2 planning, and there was a major rush on in the desert,  
3 and we're encouraged that we're tightening the ideas  
4 about where to place renewable energy up quite a bit.

5           Having said that, I think that the DRECP still  
6 has some issues that we're very concerned about. And  
7 for instance -- I'll use most of my three minutes on  
8 this, I think -- that in the Lucerne Valley area, both  
9 Clint Epps has done a study on bighorn sheep  
10 connectivity, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has  
11 done a study about how to connect the critical habitat  
12 units.

13           And the Development Focus Areas around the  
14 Lucerne Valley area impact heavily the Fish and Wildlife  
15 Service identified tortoise corridor connecting the  
16 Ord-Rodman critical habitat unit to the Joshua Tree  
17 Pinto Basin critical habitat unit. And also the  
18 corridor identified from the San Bernardino Mountains  
19 out to the Granites and on into the Ord Rodmans for  
20 bighorn sheep is impacted by that Development Focus  
21 Area.

22           That's just one way that we're still concerned  
23 that there are some major impacts of the DFAs as they're  
24 drawn on areas that have scientifically published  
25 literature for certain species. And I don't see that

1 addressed in the plan. I haven't honestly gotten to  
2 read the entire thing yet. So if you've addressed it,  
3 sorry. But we're concerned about that.

4 We're also concerned about the plan doesn't  
5 address things like the Soda Mountains Solar Project.  
6 That's also in a bighorn sheep connectivity corridor  
7 that's been studied and is published. So overall I  
8 think the connectivity in the desert is what we're most  
9 concerned about at this point.

10 We have great core habitat areas, and we want  
11 to see that the plan really integrates all the published  
12 science that's been put on the table in the last few  
13 years. Yep. I knew I'd use the rest of my time on  
14 that. Thanks very much. Have a good night.

15 MR. BEALE: Thank you. So we have Allen  
16 Hernandez, Kim Campbell Erb and Opamago A.

17 ALLEN HERNANDEZ: Greetings. My name is  
18 Allen Hernandez. I'm from Fontana, California. Just a  
19 little comment on the DRECP. I know there's a need to  
20 talk about renewable energies, given the issue of  
21 climate change and especially here in this region, where  
22 you can feel it and see it every day. But I'd like to  
23 offer a little alternative solution.

24 I think if the DRECP focused on more of the  
25 local distributed generation, local clean energy, as

1 much it does on the utility scale, I think we would have  
2 quite a solution on our hands right there.

3           If you came here and you drove down the 10 the  
4 15 or the 210, you probably saw a ton of warehouses, a  
5 ton of businesses, a ton of homes. I think there's a  
6 lot of potential on these rooftops to really ramp up our  
7 renewable energy and to really take a lot of the burden  
8 away from the desert and bring it here. It doesn't only  
9 take the burden away from the desert, but it also  
10 creates a lot of local jobs here in this region, where  
11 we have some of the highest unemployment rate comparable  
12 to, like, Detroit metropolitan area.

13           And so I think we're close enough to the desert  
14 out here, you know. A lot of us, you know, who live  
15 here -- I live in Fontana. For me the drive up the 15  
16 to go to the desert is not that far. I've been going to  
17 the desert my whole life. And so it's a living,  
18 beautiful, thriving ecosystem for a lot of us out here.  
19 It's not just a barren wasteland where you can dump a  
20 lot of renewable energy projects.

21           And so I would propose if the DRECP could put a  
22 little more emphasize on local D.G. In these regions,  
23 there's cities, even desert cities, where you can even  
24 line those rooftops with solar. If we could put a  
25 little more emphasis on that in the DRECP, I think that

1 would make a lot of us out here happy. Thank you so  
2 much.

3 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Kim Campbell Erb,  
4 Opamago A., and Danielle Murray.

5 KIM CAMPELL ERB: Hello. My name is  
6 Kim Campbell Erb, and my particular interest in the  
7 desert is as a rockhound. I represent recreation on the  
8 Desert Advisory Council.

9 First of all, I'd like to request that you  
10 extend the public comment period by 90 days in order to  
11 give the public an opportunity to really review the  
12 plan. I have done my best to get the word out to the  
13 rockhound community, have them look at your maps, and  
14 they are looking at the maps a little more than they  
15 even did when we were doing the West Mojave route plan  
16 network, which is reassuring to me. But it's going to  
17 take time. I'm having trouble absorbing the maps, and  
18 these people aren't used to looking at them like I am at  
19 all.

20 There's a lot of other things. This is a  
21 first-ever plan. It's very complex. Most of us don't  
22 understand how it's going to interact with the other  
23 planning in the desert. So we need a little more time,  
24 and we need an opportunity to ask more questions. I  
25 would suggest and recommend that you have some Saturday

1 meetings for the people that live in the metropolitan  
2 areas. There are thousands and thousands of people that  
3 recreate in the desert that live, like I do, in  
4 Orange County and L.A. County and In Ventura County. It  
5 took me over two hours to get here tonight from work in  
6 Cypress. It was really tough. Most people aren't going  
7 to do that, but a lot of people are interested in what's  
8 happening.

9           So if you want to get the people out that are  
10 recreating that live the distance that I do, you're  
11 going to have to have some Saturday meetings somewhere,  
12 where they will have an opportunity to get there,  
13 because weeknights it's pretty tough out here.

14           But I did want to applaud at least -- I may not  
15 agree with everything, but I want to applaud the intent  
16 of protecting access for the people who recreate and for  
17 the environment. The desert is a wonderful place. I  
18 really appreciate the fact that it's there and that I  
19 have an opportunity to spend time there, not just to  
20 collect rocks and minerals, but it's a wonderful place  
21 to be. It's the only place I know where you can go  
22 somewhere and see nobody. You can go for the entire  
23 weekend and see nobody the entire weekend. It's pretty  
24 cool. Thank you.

25           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Opamago A., and I hope

1 I'm getting the name right. I apologize if I'm not.

2 Danielle Murray and Glenn R. Stewart.

3 OPAMAGO A.: Hello. My name is Opamago. So  
4 you were close. You were close. Today I came -- first  
5 I want to say thank you, because I think the initiative  
6 is wonderful and you guys are, like, moving on it,  
7 making it happen. It's wonderful.

8 But I do think that it would be great if we  
9 could reduce some of the intensity of the desert  
10 requirement, if we would, you know, just think about  
11 solar and putting solar on rooftops right here in the  
12 area around, you know, the warehouses we have, even on  
13 this convention center. It just saves the impact on the  
14 desert, I mean, from what you -- like the goal of what  
15 you need.

16 And also I would like to say that the outreach  
17 was kind of problematic for me. I mean, the people that  
18 live in these areas don't really -- well, the people I  
19 know that live in these areas didn't even know this was  
20 happening. I think whatever mechanisms that you use for  
21 outreach you might want to ramp it up so more people  
22 could come in and actually have a say and be part of  
23 this.

24 And that's basically all I had to say. Thank  
25 you for listening to me.

1           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Danielle Murray,  
2 Glenn R. Stewart and Barbara Boyle.

3           DANIELLE MURRAY: Hi. My name is  
4 Danielle Murray, and I came all the way out here from  
5 Durango, Colorado, so you can see the breadth and  
6 importance of the DRECP in my travels today.

7           I work for the Conservation Lands Foundation,  
8 and we are really focused on BLM's conservation mandate  
9 and the 28 million acres of conservation land that BLM  
10 manages and, with the DRECP, will be growing. And we're  
11 really excited about the potential to add millions of  
12 acres to the National Conservation Lands.

13           And one thing that is important to know about  
14 the National Conservation Lands is that there are  
15 national policy standards that make sure that they're  
16 all managed for conservation. And these standards, you  
17 know, are from California, Nevada, you know, all around  
18 the west. And it allows for consistency in management  
19 and managed for conservation.

20           And the one thing I would ask of especially BLM  
21 and maybe challenge BLM in some of these alternatives is  
22 looking for lands that meet these standards nationally,  
23 and that includes a mineral withdrawal and no  
24 disturbance cap. Those are concepts that other National  
25 Conservation Lands throughout the nation currently don't

1 have, and we want to make sure that the DRECP lands that  
2 are added to the National Conservation Lands aren't  
3 considered second tier, that they are considered just as  
4 great as all the lands that have just been added to the  
5 system through presidential proclamation and through  
6 Congress, that they really have the same sort of  
7 standards.

8           So thank you for your time. This is my first  
9 meeting. I'm sure this is your tenth. So I appreciate  
10 your willingness to hear our comments. Thank you.

11           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Glenn R. Stewart,  
12 Barbara Boyle and Helen O'Shea.

13           GLENN STEWART: Good evening. I'm  
14 Glenn Stewart. I'm representing the Desert Tortoise  
15 Council, which is an organization that has existed for  
16 nearly 40 years now. We hold scientific symposia every  
17 year and invite land managers and scientists and the  
18 general public to participate and learn as much as they  
19 can about the desert and particularly the desert  
20 tortoise.

21           We have a number of concerns. I phrased them  
22 as questions, so I'm going to have to change that and  
23 just mention maybe two or three of them. The one that  
24 most concerns us as an immediate issue is that of the  
25 Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area, which is up there

1 just north of California City. It includes about  
2 39 square miles of habitat and has been protected as a  
3 research and habitat area for as long as the Desert  
4 Tortoise Council has existed. We have a sister  
5 organization, Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, that  
6 particularly looks over after the tortoise preserve and  
7 works together with the BLM and California Fish and  
8 Wildlife.

9           What we noticed in looking at some of the  
10 tables -- you know, there's a lot more that needs to be  
11 done here, and I second the request for more time and  
12 hope we can get that. But the preferred alternative and  
13 also Alternatives 3 and 4 according to Appendix R2.14  
14 eliminates the tortoise area. Here's an area that's  
15 been protected for 40 years, basically, ideal tortoise  
16 habitat, probably the best habitat remaining in the  
17 West Mojave desert. And to even think that it could be  
18 eliminated in any of these alternatives is very  
19 disturbing.

20           We also have some other concerns. One is that,  
21 looking at the no-action alternative, it has some  
22 favorable aspects to it, actually, and doesn't seem to  
23 acknowledge that the ACECs and Desert Wildlife  
24 Management Areas actually contribute significantly to  
25 protecting tortoises and other resources. So we're

1 hoping that there can be some mixing and matching of the  
2 favorable aspects of the no-action alternative and some  
3 of the others into a composite alternative that meets  
4 the best needs of the tortoise and other wildlife in the  
5 desert.

6           And then there's one other thing that I  
7 discussed with the Fish and Wildlife Service  
8 representative, but it seems that that agency is both an  
9 author of the DRECP, at least a co-author, and at the  
10 same time a reviewer. Should, for example, the need  
11 come for a biological opinion about impact to the  
12 tortoise, which is a federally listed species, it seems  
13 a little inappropriate for the same agency to serve both  
14 of those functions. So we hope that can be resolved.

15           So that's about all I have time for, I think.  
16 And I'd just like to second the comments of most of the  
17 previous speakers and their concerns, which I think are  
18 indeed very valid. Thank you.

19           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Barbara Boyle, Helen  
20 O'Shea and David Lamfrom.

21           BARBARA BOYLE: Hi. Thanks for this  
22 opportunity to speak. My name is Barbara Boyle, and I'm  
23 representing Sierra Club, but we will be of course  
24 submitting voluminous comments once we figure out what's  
25 in this intimidating document that you've put together.

1           I just wanted to say first of all that it's  
2 great that this plan is being developed. We really need  
3 a plan that is thoughtful and that provides conservation  
4 at the same time that we build renewable energy and that  
5 we put renewable energy in the least impact places  
6 possible. And I know that many of you have been working  
7 on this for years, and we do appreciate all the work  
8 that's gone into this iteration of the plan. So thank  
9 you for that. And we do hope to see a DRECP that is  
10 successful and actually is implemented.

11           I just want to hit a few highlights of concerns  
12 or questions that we have. And one of the primary  
13 issues that we have is the durability of conservation.  
14 These projects will go out -- we know that when we go  
15 out and build in the desert environment, the impacts  
16 last a very long time, and it's very difficult to  
17 recover these ecosystems. So it's extremely important  
18 that the conservation provided as mitigation lasts as  
19 long as the impacts of the projects, and that could be  
20 hundreds of years.

21           We're really concerned specifically about the  
22 NLCS units being able to be taken out of that system by  
23 Land Use Plan Amendment. And I know there's differing  
24 legal opinions on that. But we would like to see much  
25 more confidence that those mitigations will last as long

1 as the project impacts do.

2           Just a few other quick comments. Engagement of  
3 the counties is essential. This plan falls flat on its  
4 face if we don't get most of the counties signed on, as  
5 you know. And so there's been real progress in that, in  
6 working with the counties on their local plans. And so  
7 we encourage that that continue.

8           One of the things that I was dumbfounded at in  
9 reading -- I think it was the introductory part, maybe  
10 Volume 1 -- was the whole -- there was a statement that  
11 there would be no additive funding to BLM for carrying  
12 out the conservation management actions that were going  
13 to be included as enhanced mitigation on BLM lands.  
14 That's a serious problem that needs to be fixed. I  
15 would assume that some of the mitigation fees could go  
16 to that purpose.

17           Am I already at my red point? I don't know  
18 what that little thing means.

19           MR. BEALE: About 20 seconds.

20           BARBARA BOYLE: So -- and then just finally I  
21 think that this is something that -- I was talking to --  
22 is it Roger? -- Roger about earlier. It's kind of  
23 frustrating that we are just accepting the proposals  
24 from renewable energy developers to develop whatever  
25 kind of renewable energy they want to and just passively

1 accepting that. I think that we need to move to a  
2 system that integrates high levels of renewable energy  
3 into the system, and to do that we need to balance  
4 renewables with one another. And therefore there needs  
5 to be a lot more thoughtful planning as to what the grid  
6 really requires and where we need to build it and  
7 incentivizing the kind of development that we need.

8 Thank you very much for this chance to speak.

9 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Helen O'Shea,  
10 David Lamfrom and Earl DeVries.

11 HELEN O'SHEA: Hello. My name is  
12 Helen O'Shea, and I work for the National Resources  
13 Defense Council. And Barbara Boyles said about  
14 90 percent of what I was going to say, so I'm going to  
15 move through this really quickly. I'm sure everyone  
16 will be happy about that.

17 First I just wanted to thank the agencies,  
18 staff and all the consultants who have been working for  
19 years on this now. I told someone earlier I've gotten  
20 married and had a kid, and he's turning three this month  
21 during the scope of this planning process. So it's kind  
22 of a marker for me, at least. And I'd also like to  
23 thank all the other stakeholders who have been working  
24 on this for years and commenting and attending workshops  
25 and stakeholder steering committee meetings.

1           And NRDC strongly supports landscape level  
2 planning and guided development for renewable  
3 facilities. We think that this is the best approach for  
4 finding low-conflict sites, for the energy plans  
5 themselves and also helping to figure out what special  
6 places need to be protected from development.

7           The DRECP, if done right, is exactly the kind  
8 of plan that can help us get to both of these goals, and  
9 it will help us avoid the sort of industrial sprawl that  
10 I think we could end up if we continue with the ad hoc,  
11 project-by-project, developer-driven mode that has been  
12 the trajectory for the past few years.

13           The draft plan is a good first step, but it  
14 does need work on some pretty significant issues, and  
15 I'll flag a couple, several of which Barbara already  
16 touched upon, one of which is that the conservation  
17 strategy itself needs more detail and specificity,  
18 especially with regard to the biological goals and  
19 objectives for the individual species. And I'm assuming  
20 we will see more of that as the plan moves forward, but  
21 that was something that jumped out in the first draft.

22           Also the DFAs -- sort of the flip side of the  
23 coin, the Development Focus Areas need more refinement  
24 and need to be, I'll say, shrunk, need to be fine tuned  
25 with the input from local communities, county

1 governments, county planners. And that's something we  
2 would hope to see in the next iteration of the plan.

3           The issue of durability, which Barb also  
4 flagged, the enduring nature of the conservation on  
5 Public Lands is a critical issue, especially to meet the  
6 state NCCP standards. So we're looking closely at the  
7 draft MOU that's out that is separate from the DRECP  
8 document but obviously related.

9           The funding issue also raised by the previous  
10 speaker is definitely something that's of concern. It  
11 appears from the document that no additional funding  
12 will be coming to BLM to carry out the many  
13 responsibilities that are going to come with the plan,  
14 and that is something definitely to look at more  
15 closely.

16           I think I'd just like to close with reiterating  
17 the request for more time on the comment period. I know  
18 folks have asked from 30 to 180 days. I think 60, 90,  
19 whatever can be given would be great. This is an  
20 incredibly dense document, and we're all working really  
21 hard to try to get through it.

22           I'd also like to request -- I'll finish  
23 quickly -- request that the agencies consider more  
24 public meetings. Adding Joshua Tree was great. I think  
25 there's room to add even more public meetings, and that

1 is something that hopefully you will consider. Thank  
2 you very much.

3 MR. BEALE: Thank you. All right. We have  
4 David Lamfrom, Earl DeVries and Lorrie Steely. If  
5 anyone else would like to make a comment, please feel  
6 free to bring me your comment card.

7 DAVID LAMFROM: Good evening. David Lamfrom.  
8 I'd like to reiterate the ask for an extension in order  
9 to provide substantive comments on a draft of this  
10 quantity. I think it's critical that we actually have  
11 the time to look it through and to provide comments. I  
12 think it's going to take much more than 30 additional  
13 days. We would be happy to get any extension we could  
14 get at this point.

15 I'd like to reiterate the ask for another round  
16 of meetings. The way that some people choose to  
17 participate publicly is to attend public meetings and to  
18 give public testimony. I think we should honor that  
19 type and quality of participation, so please consider  
20 down the road additional maybe even smaller round of  
21 meetings but giving people an additional opportunity.

22 Due to the short time, I'm just going to agree  
23 with some other comments and then make my own. I'd like  
24 to agree with the comments that have been made about the  
25 importance of durability to making this plan work, about

1 the importance of mitigation not just being for the life  
2 of a project but rather for the life of the impact. We  
3 understand that the impacts to the desert are really  
4 significant. These are not eastern forests. We don't  
5 return to the old growth in 150 years. We have to honor  
6 that.

7           Also the statements that were made about the  
8 need for additional funding -- we just, I think, have to  
9 be honest about what it takes to get things done. And  
10 we recognize that to have staff to do any of the number  
11 of things that they'll need to do, that they'll need to  
12 actually implement this plan responsibly, we will need  
13 additional funding.

14           I also question a no-action alternative that  
15 has the same net result as all the other alternatives.  
16 I think that -- I am not a lawyer, but I would look at  
17 that deeply.

18           I want to reiterate the comments that were made  
19 about the DTNA. As we look at it, if we look at  
20 developing a plan in one of the species that we're  
21 looking to protect, such as the desert tortoise, how  
22 could we possibly look at creating a DFA on top of the  
23 Desert Tortoise Natural Area? It's almost criminal.

24           I would also like to say the Soda and Silurian  
25 projects directly undermine the conservation goals of

1 the plan, and, in specific parts of the plan  
2 Soda Mountains and Silurian are looked at as key  
3 linkages, so please think about and look at the data  
4 that you guys have already inserted in the plan when  
5 making decisions about the landscapes.

6 I also want to ask that Lucerne Valley --  
7 people underestimate the value of that particular  
8 connectivity corridor. I think Frazier did a really  
9 good job of explaining that. But when you go from the  
10 Sky Islands of the San Bernardino Mountains and you go  
11 to the Granites, you're looking at really intense  
12 habitat for golden eagles and connectivity for desert  
13 tortoise and bighorn sheep. And the Granites connect to  
14 the Ord Rodmans, which connect to the Central and then  
15 the East Mojave. So it is one of the most fundamental  
16 linkages in the desert. So we'd just ask that you  
17 consider that in your design of DFAs.

18 I'll leave it there, but thank you for the  
19 opportunity to comment again.

20 MR. BEALE: Thank you. All right. Earl  
21 DeVries and  
22 Lorrie Steely.

23 EARL DEVRIES: Good evening. I do appreciate  
24 that you had the meeting in the evening time. Quite  
25 often they have meetings at lunchtime, when people are

1 working, so Saturday meetings might also be a good idea.

2 I'm here to speak on behalf of taxpayers like  
3 myself. If solar and wind panels were very efficient,  
4 they would sell them at Walmart, and obviously they  
5 don't do that, so this is government subsidizing these  
6 experiments. And I think that's a poor use of our  
7 money.

8 You drive down to Palm Springs, and you have  
9 the view of the beautiful mountains, and the landscape  
10 is broken up by these big, old, white machines. And I  
11 think that's a real detriment. We have that beautiful  
12 landscape blocked by those wind machines.

13 If you take the 15 Freeway to Vegas and you see  
14 the solar farm out there, you can see it from 50 miles  
15 away. A friend of mine tonight said he could see it  
16 from the airplane flying overhead. How is that enjoying  
17 our landscape that we thought we want to preserve for  
18 our children?

19 In fact the wind farm in Vegas -- there was an  
20 article in the L.A. Times -- on the way to Vegas an  
21 article in the L.A. Times saying the wind farm was only  
22 45-percent effective, and yet they spend billions and  
23 billions of dollars on it. Maybe somebody should have  
24 spent a million dollars and say, hey, this is not an  
25 efficient way to do that. I'm assuming it's covered by

1 dust during windstorms and so on, so we don't get the  
2 electricity that they promised to have. It's an  
3 inefficient way of making electricity, obviously, and a  
4 poor use of our taxpayers' money.

5           It was mentioned tonight by several people  
6 about putting solar panels on roofs. Maybe you're not  
7 aware of the dangers for firemen. Because the  
8 electrical panel is still full of electricity, there's  
9 no way to shut them off when when they're on the roof if  
10 there's a fire in your house. And how do the firemen  
11 punch holes in the roof to ventilate your house when  
12 it's on fire if it's basically an electrical charge on  
13 the roof? So that was something that was another reason  
14 I think solar panels are not a very good thing.

15           And that also would apply to electric cars. A  
16 friend of mine who's a fireman says, when you get in an  
17 accident, they're not sure how to use the Jaws of Life  
18 to get you out because it doesn't just have a little car  
19 battery like your car battery that will shock you. It's  
20 got this huge battery that is full of electricity and  
21 closing underneath the car. So that's my opinion.

22           As far as the taxpayer, this is a poor use of  
23 our taxpayer money to come up with ways to make  
24 electricity that are inefficient. And I think that is  
25 not something we should be doing. So thank you for your

1 time.

2 MR. BEALE: Thank you. All right. The last  
3 speaker card I have is for Lorrie Steely.

4 MS. STEELY: Hello, Chris. Good evening,  
5 everyone. My name is Lorrie Steely with the Defenders  
6 of Wildlife. And I would like to applaud that -- we  
7 appreciate the fact that the Draft DRECP appears to  
8 identify a great deal of Public Lands for conservation  
9 purposes, including identifying new Conservation Lands.  
10 However there is little detail and a lot of uncertainty  
11 as to whether or not these lands will be protected and  
12 managed over the long-term for the benefit of the  
13 public, their communities and also our desert wildlife.

14 This plan needs significant additional work and  
15 detail in order to show that these Conservation Lands  
16 will be protected and managed over the long-term, as  
17 many have said, throughout the impact of the projects.

18 I understand one of the core goals of the DRECP  
19 is to protect critical areas. These places should be  
20 exempted from development. The preferred plan as  
21 written does not extend protection to severe critical  
22 areas. Special and important places like the  
23 Morongo Basin, Iron Mountain, Juniper Flats in the  
24 Lucerne Valley local mountains should be protected from  
25 development, as well as the Silurian Valley and the

1 Soda Mountain area, parts of Cadiz. These areas are  
2 classified as special area lands which are not -- which  
3 would not be fully protected and would not protect  
4 wildlife from harm.

5           Also there is no actual -- maybe I've missed  
6 it. I haven't read the whole thing. But maybe there is  
7 no funding that's identified in the DRECP to show how  
8 this plan conservation will be carried out. Without  
9 reliable sources of funding, we cannot be confident that  
10 the federal and state agencies will live up to their  
11 commitments in this plan.

12           The maps are frightening. The public's  
13 perception when they look at these big pink blobs is,  
14 they need to be refined, they need to be more precise.  
15 I understand it's 2.2 million acres. But when you dial  
16 it back and you actually get down to the acreage that  
17 will be developed, it's 177,000. That needs to be  
18 communicated better. The public perception is going to  
19 be key in order to get this plan to be accepted and to  
20 be palatable, and they need to comprehend what this plan  
21 really is really about.

22           I also would like to reiterate that this is a  
23 tremendous document. We need time to be able to digest  
24 it, comprehend it and come back to you. We're here  
25 speaking to you. You're the experts. You've put

1 together this document. I would imagine the list of  
2 people who have worked on this document are probably as  
3 long as this document. I mean, this is a Frankenstein  
4 of different elements putting all of these pieces  
5 together to come to the best, better goal for us so that  
6 we can achieve what we need to for our energy needs.

7 But we need time to be able to comprehend so  
8 that we can make intelligent comments. I'd like to ask  
9 for more comment periods towards the end, when people  
10 have had the time to do their due diligence and be able  
11 to comprehend. And I would like to reiterate also that  
12 the DRECP really needs to work with the counties so that  
13 the counties are engaged and that they can get the  
14 proper comprehension on what it all means. Thank you.

15 MR. BEALE: Thank you. All right. So that's  
16 all the speaker cards I have, unless there is anyone who  
17 wants to turn another one in. Now we'll go to the  
18 phone.

19 DENNIS WILSON: I already spoke once. Can I  
20 give additional comments?

21 MR. BEALE: Absolutely.

22 DENNIS WILSON: Good evening. Dennis Wilson,  
23 Orange County. My most concern is the recreational use,  
24 and it's being taken away. Personally I think we've got  
25 enough land that's been reserved for years. So if the

1 Sierra Club wants the BLM to buy them more land, then  
2 have them pay for it. That's the way I feel, because  
3 the off-roaders pay for green sticky (verbatim) money  
4 for our parks, and our parks keep shrinking and  
5 shrinking, so -- including the military taking away from  
6 part of the Lucerne Valley area.

7           On the solar side, I think it's a great idea  
8 that they've already started on the south side of 247 in  
9 Lucerne Valley. So keep those parks, the solar portion  
10 down through there, expand our racing area because of --  
11 the military has taken away 500,000 acres, so we'd like  
12 to see -- for every acre they take, we'd like to see two  
13 more acres added somewhere else. So they've taken  
14 500,000. We'd like to see another million acres  
15 somewhere else where we can go enjoy on our off-road  
16 camping and off-road activities.

17           But again we'd love to see the BLM fight more  
18 for our off-road contingency. We feel that, since 1974,  
19 they took the Barstow to Vegas away from us. They  
20 promised us anywhere from ten to 15 million acres for  
21 off-roading, and green sticky money would fund that. So  
22 we'd like to see the BLM fight more for us. We could  
23 care less with more conservative -- adding more land for  
24 offset for conservation, because Dianne Feinstein has  
25 already done all that, so she had her share. She got

1 her share, so it's now our turn to get our share back.

2           So if you're going to do -- if you're going to  
3 do solar and wind and all that, we'd like to see -- for  
4 every five acres you give them, we'd like to get an  
5 additional acre for off-roading and recreational use.

6           So I appreciate your time and effort. I do  
7 agree that you could open this up a little bit more. We  
8 haven't seen -- I got lucky and had it e-mailed to me  
9 from a friend who shared. He's an off-roader as well,  
10 so that's why I'm here today. Thank you.

11           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Comments, sir?

12           JEFF CEPIELIK: One more, if you don't mind.  
13 I'm Jeff Cepielik. I'm sorry. I'm a desert  
14 recreationist, a taxpayer, property owner, voter here in  
15 the State of California. Move this back a little  
16 better.

17           I hope the citizens of California really have  
18 someone representing our interests as aggressively as  
19 the special interests seem to. We've heard from the BLM  
20 you're on our side. I hope so.

21           The reality of the whole matter is, it's  
22 basically a land grab, any way you look at it. The  
23 study needs to consider not only the use of the land  
24 immediately but what's going to happen in the future.  
25 When we give an inch, everybody takes a mile eventually.

1 We've got to consider that. And I hope that's looked  
2 at, because the citizens of California have very little  
3 access to land, and that's one of the things we need to  
4 consider.

5 So with that in mind, I hope you guys do  
6 consider the multiple-use format and how it affects  
7 everybody, not only special interests. Thank you.

8 MR. BEALE: Thank you. I'd like to see if we  
9 have any commenters on the phone now.

10 Kristy, do we have -- Kristy, do we have anyone  
11 on the phone?

12 MS. CHEW: One.

13 MR. BEALE: Would you mind opening up the line  
14 to see if they --

15 Hello. Is the phone line open now? Okay.  
16 Thank you. Is there anyone on the phone that would like  
17 to make a comment tonight?

18 All right. I think no comments from the phone.  
19 All right. So that means we're back for any closing  
20 comments here in the room. Would anyone like to make  
21 any final comments?

22 DENNIS WILSON: Again Dennis Wilson. One other  
23 thing I forgot. I'm a title agent, so I've done a lot  
24 of land research, and I've done a lot of inspections of  
25 property. I know metes and bounds. But there's one

1 fact in California: there's less than five percent  
2 buildable land left. All of the rest of it is either  
3 conservative issues, churches, BLM. So it's shrinking  
4 our pie. So just keep that in mind when you start  
5 taking more and more land away because of special  
6 interests and agendas that other people have. They have  
7 plenty of land out there, but if you look -- when you  
8 look at the map and you look at comments -- how much  
9 independent and private owners are in the desert, it's  
10 very little, very, very little. It's all special  
11 interest stuff or stuff that's highly restricted. So  
12 we'd like to see the lands open up, especially for the  
13 recreational use. Thank you.

14 MR. BEALE: Thank you. All right. Sir?

15 JUSTIN BURLESON: Justin Burleson. I would  
16 like to see us use the nasty word "nuclear" be  
17 considered in part of an energy plan for the state of  
18 California, not just what is dubbed renewables now. I  
19 think that it should be considered as heavily as any of  
20 the other sources of energy. That's it.

21 MR. BEALE: Okay. Thank you. All right. Any  
22 other public comments? Please.

23 KIM CAMPELL ERB: Kim Campbell Erb. One other  
24 thing I wanted to mention. A lot of us love the desert.  
25 We can't do a lot of recreation in the desert without

1 motorized access, and there is not -- there's just not  
2 enough land left, particularly for things like mineral  
3 collecting, where a lot of our locations have already  
4 been closed to wilderness, the preserve, the military  
5 bases, the national monuments, et cetera. Shared use is  
6 really the only solution for what we have left. So I'm  
7 hoping that you will consider that when you are  
8 continuing to modify the plan and refine it. Thank you.

9 MR. BEALE: Thank you. All right. Anyone  
10 else? All right. Well, I want to thank you all for  
11 coming. We know it's not easy to get here in the middle  
12 of the week. We heard about the traffic. It's also not  
13 easy to stand up in front of a group of people and speak  
14 your mind, and I just want you to know that we  
15 appreciate your time and your interest. And whether  
16 your comments were to support the plan or tell us how to  
17 do better, we welcome it. So it's how we improve the  
18 plan and develop a final plan that is better than this  
19 draft. So I want to thank you all for your comments.

20 I do want to let you know that we have a couple  
21 of additional public meetings coming up. If you want to  
22 make further public comment or ask more questions of our  
23 planning team or whether you really just like our slide  
24 show, you're welcome to come back. We are going to be  
25 in Palm Desert tomorrow night. Our meeting is at 4:00,

1 and the details are posted online. If you have any  
2 questions about it, feel free to come ask me after the  
3 meeting. And then on November 19th we'll be in  
4 Joshua Tree at the Joshua Tree Community Center. So I  
5 hope some or all of you can come join us at one of our  
6 future meetings.

7 UNIDENTIFIED AUDIENCE MEMBER: What time is the  
8 Joshua Tree meeting?

9 MR. BEALE: 5:30 Wednesday, November 19th.

10 MS. CHEW: And Sacramento on the 13th.

11 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Sacramento on the 13th  
12 at 2:00. So we have two more opportunities for you to  
13 make public comment, ask questions and so forth. So  
14 anyway, thank you very much for coming tonight. We  
15 really appreciate it. You've been a great, great group.

16

17 (The meeting was adjourned at 8:52 p.m.)

18 (One public comment was made following the conclusion of  
19 the meeting.)

20 NIHARIKA SAXENA: I had two comments to make.

21 One of them was -- just they're both kind of just  
22 echoing what a lot of other people said about like how  
23 we should explore other alternatives to, instead of --  
24 sorry -- putting solar panels in the desert, we should  
25 make better use of the rooftops that we have available



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I, Diane Carver Mann, C.S.R. No. 6008, in and for the State of California, do hereby certify:

That the foregoing pages were taken down by me in shorthand at the time and place stated herein and represent a true and correct transcript of said proceedings.

I further certify that I am not interested in the event of the action.

Witness my hand this \_\_\_\_\_ day of \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

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Certified Shorthand  
Reporter in and for the  
State of California