

California Energy
CommissionCalifornia Department
of Fish and GameU.S. Bureau of
Land ManagementU.S. Fish and
Wildlife Service

Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Interim Document - FACT SHEET

What is the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan?

The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan, or DRECP, is an unprecedented collaboration among local, state and federal agencies to streamline renewable energy project permitting and transmission line permitting while conserving biological, cultural and natural resources in the California desert.

When complete, the DRECP is likely to be the most significant conservation effort in the desert in the last two decades. It will identify up to 8.5 million acres of the California Desert for potential conservation, while strengthening and enhancing special recreation areas and identifying areas for renewable energy development.

The DRECP will identify the places in the desert where solar, wind and geothermal projects would have the least environmental impact. It identifies 200,000 to 350,000 acres as development focus areas, enough to meet California renewable energy goals through 2040.

What is the document being released?

This interim document is called the Description and Comparative Evaluation of Draft DRECP Alternatives. It is intended to provide stakeholders and the public a chance to review and provide feedback on what has been developed so far regarding the plan alternatives and the agencies' approach to developing the plan. Input will help shape the Draft Environmental Impact Statement/Report, (EIS/EIR) due out next summer.

What kind of feedback is anticipated on this interim document, and how can I provide it?

The Renewable Energy Action Team (REAT) agencies are releasing the interim document to get feedback from the public regarding alternative approaches for renewable energy siting and species conservation. The input received will help the agencies shape the plan. Input can be provided from the DRECP website at www.drecp.org and will be accepted throughout the DRECP planning process. Members of the public can also sign up on the website to receive updates on the plan via

the DRECP listserv. To be most useful and fully considered prior to publication of the Draft EIS/EIR, input on the interim document should be submitted by January 23, 2013.

Who is developing the DRECP?

The DRECP is being prepared by the Renewable Energy Action Team (REAT), a collaborative effort among the California Energy Commission, California Department of Fish and Game, the U.S. Bureau of Land Management, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

The REAT agencies receive input from the DRECP stakeholder committee on the development of the DRECP. The committee includes local governments in the desert regions, renewable energy developers, environmental organizations, recreation and nongovernmental organizations, a Native American renewable energy organization and electric utilities.

What areas will be included in the DRECP?

The DRECP is focused on the desert regions and adjacent lands of seven California counties - Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego. Approximately 22.5 million acres of federal and non-federal California desert land are in the DRECP planning area.

Why is the DRECP needed?

Streamlined permitting of renewable energy projects is critical to meeting the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) established by state law. Senate Bill 2X (Simitian), signed into law by Governor Edmund Brown, Jr. on April 12, 2011, as Public Resources Code § 25740, requires California to meet the 33 percent renewable energy portfolio standard by 2020. The DRECP, when completed, is expected to further these objectives and provide binding, long-term endangered species permit assurances while facilitating the review and approval of compatible renewable energy projects in the Mojave and Colorado deserts in California.

As part of President Barack Obama's all-of-the-above strategy to expand domestic energy production and strengthen the economy, the U.S. Department of the Interior has been working to advance smart development of renewable energy on public lands. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar made renewable energy one of the highest priorities through his first Secretarial Order-3285A in 2009. The State of California and the Department of Interior have been working in partnership since 2009 under a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to facilitate conservation efforts and renewable energy development in a cooperative and timely manner.

The U.S. Congress also provided incentives for renewable energy projects with the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

The DRECP allows local, state and federal agencies to plan for renewable energy development and long-term conservation of precious desert areas across jurisdictional boundaries and on a landscape and ecosystem-based scale.