ES EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ES.1 Introduction

The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) is a multiagency conservation and planning document intended to guide solar and other renewable energy project siting in the Mojave and Colorado/Sonoran deserts of California, and provide for the conservation and management of certain species, habitats and natural communities that may be affected by those projects. The DRECP is being developed primarily by the California Energy Commission (CEC), California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and the California State Lands Commission (CSLC). Other agencies participating in the development of the DRECP include the Department of Interior, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, National Park Service, California Public Utilities Commission, and California Department of Parks and Recreation.

The Draft DRECP, when it is released, will be a detailed, combined document that includes a draft Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) under California's Natural Community Conservation Planning Act (NCCPA), a proposed Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) under the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), a draft BLM Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA) under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA), and a draft joint Environmental Impact Report (EIR)/Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA).

This document, *Description and Comparative Evaluation of Draft DRECP Alternatives*, contains a preliminary description and analysis of portions of the Draft DRECP that will be released in 2013 for public review and comment pursuant to NEPA and CEQA and is not an administrative draft or a draft EIS or EIR within the meaning of NEPA or CEQA. Neither CEQA nor NEPA require the agencies to issue this informal, preliminary document, and thus there are no applicable substantive or procedural requirements for its content or review. However, the applicable FLPMA regulations relating to public participation activities conducted by the BLM will apply.

The document contains a preliminary description of the affected environment/existing environmental conditions in the DRECP planning area, an overview of some of the possible project alternatives that the agencies are considering for inclusion in the Draft DRECP, and a discussion and tentative analysis of the potential impacts of those alternatives. The *Description and Comparative Evaluation of Draft DRECP Alternatives* will provide the public more information about the analysis that has been conducted to date, and will allow for additional public input before the CEC, CDFG, USFWS, BLM, and CSLC prepare and release

the draft DRECP for public review in 2013 pursuant to CEQA, NEPA, the NCCPA, FESA, and FLPMA. This document is also considered part of the NEPA scoping process.

Public input received on this document will be considered during preparation of the draft DRECP and, while the agencies will not provide formal responses to comments in the manner required by NEPA and CEQA for draft environmental documents, the BLM will document this information by a record or summary of the principal issues discussed in and comments made on the document. The opportunity for public comment on the Draft DRECP will not be affected by this earlier publication of the *Description and Comparative Evaluation of Draft DRECP Alternatives*.

ES.1.1 Contents

This document includes the interagency descriptions and draft comparisons for seven alternatives. These alternatives are based on the six development scenarios and five draft alternatives previously presented to stakeholders in April and July 2012 respectively. Those development scenarios and preliminary integrated alternatives have been refined into the alternatives presented in this document. The seven alternatives are:

- Alternative 1 – Disturbed Lands/Low Resource Conflict Alternative
- Alternative 2 – Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative B
- Alternative 3 – West Mojave Emphasis Alternative
- Alternative 4 – Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative A
- Alternative 5 – Increased Geographic and Technology Flexibility Alternative
- Alternative 6 – Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative C with BLM Variance Lands
- Alternative 7 – No Action.

Comparisons are provided for the following environmental resource categories: Biological Resources; Outdoor Recreation; Cultural Resources; Visual Resources; Land Uses and Policies; Mineral Resources; and BLM Land Designations, Classifications, and Allocations. The following additional environmental resource categories are not addressed in this document but will be included in the Draft DRECP when released for public review: Air Quality; Meteorology and Climate Change; Geology and Soils; Flood Hazard, Hydrology, and Drainage Areas; Groundwater, Water Supply, and Water Quality; BLM Lands and Realty—Rights-of-Way and Land Tenure; California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan Multiple Use Classes; Department of Defense Lands and Operations; Agriculture Land and Production; Livestock Grazing; Wild Horses and Burros; Transportation and Public Access; Noise and Vibration;

Public Health and Safety/Hazardous Materials/Public Safety Services; and Socioeconomics and Environmental Justice.

Several important elements of the DRECP are not completed and are not included in their entirety in this document or are not included at all, including the following:

BLM, HCP, and NCCP-specific elements of Alternatives: The six plan-wide action alternatives descriptions describe development focus areas, a conservation area reserve system, and BLM LUPA features for each alternative. BLM, HCP, and NCCP-specific elements will be described for each alternative in the draft DRECP and are not included in this summary.

Transmission: This document includes a December 2012 Transmission Technical Group (TTG) report, reflecting review and analysis of the current alternatives by the TTG, with the exception of Alternatives 4 and 7. Alternatives 4 and 7 we not reviewed by the TTG due to time constraints. Appendix A presents the TTG report.

Proposed Covered Species List: The Renewable Energy Action Team (REAT) Agencies continue to review and consider the expansion and/or reduction of the number of Covered Species and are utilizing the advice from Independent Science Advisors (ISA) 2010, Independent Science Panel (ISP) 2012, REAT Agencies' experts, and the DRECP Stakeholders Covered Species Working Group. The creation of the Covered Species list is a REAT Agencies' decision that must consider best available science, specific regulatory requirements, and various agency policies.

Additional Data: This document describes available data and the status of efforts to acquire and use additional data. The REAT Agencies continue to incorporate new vegetation mapping information specifically funded and developed to inform the DRECP planning effort. Additionally, CDFG is updating the vegetation classification system to help integrate and interpret the new mapping information. The REAT agencies are using the updated vegetation mapping to refine DRECP land cover maps, natural community descriptions and conservation analysis, and species models that make use of vegetation information. Appendix C includes updated expert species model results reflecting the new vegetation mapping information and input from outside peer (expert) review of the 2011/2012 draft expert models. These updated models are used in the conservation analysis presented in Section 4.1. These expert models have also been updated to reflect the new vegetation mapping data, where appropriate to the species.

Additional data still being collected and not contained in this document include: Updated vegetation mapping for East Riverside area (expected January 2013), Energy Commission Public Interest Energy Research (PIER) funded analyses including additional statistical

habitat modeling for plant and wildlife species; and revised modeling and analysis (e.g., Maxent, Marxan, climate change) as may be undertaken as part of the response to ISP 2012.

Independent Science Panel (ISP 2012): The REAT Agencies acknowledge the review completed by ISP 2012, as noted in the October 31, 2012, letter from David Harlow, Director, DRECP to Steven Schwarzbach, PhD, Chair, ISP 2012 (posted October 31, 2012, at http://drecp.org/documents/#science), are responding to the recommendations where appropriate.

Biological Goals and Objectives: Appendix E includes biological goals and objectives for the biological resource elements addressed in detail in this document. These elements include: dune processes, dune communities, desert tortoise, bighorn sheep, Mohave ground squirrel, golden eagle, and burrowing owl. Biological goals and objectives for other landscape processes, natural communities, and proposed Covered Species addressed in the DRECP are not included in this document.

Conservation and Management Actions including Allowable Uses and Use Restrictions: This document includes initial information regarding proposed conservation and management actions. In this document, three categories of conservation and management actions are identified: (1) landscape-level, natural community-level, and species-level conservation actions; (2) BLM allowable uses and use restrictions; and (3) other conservation actions identified by the National Park Service (NPS). The State Lands Commission approved the use of state school lands for conservation through language in the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) with BLM/Department of Interior (DOI) and the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the REAT agencies, but the specific details for implementation will be determined by the State Lands Commission in response to specific conservation project proposals. The BLM allowable uses and use restrictions will be incorporated in the proposed BLM LUPA and will be effective upon BLM's issuance of a Record of Decision for the LUPA.

Conservation and management actions described above are included in this document for the following biological resource elements: landscape level, natural community level (dune communities), and species level (bighorn sheep, burrowing owl, desert tortoise, and Mohave ground squirrel) (see Appendix E). This document also includes a framework for including golden eagles as a Covered Species under the plan and examples of conservation and management actions for eagle (see Appendix K). Not included in this document are landscape, natural community and species-level conservation and management actions for the remaining biological resource elements addressed in the DRECP which include four landscape level processes, 47 natural communities, and 56 proposed Covered Species.

Conservation and management actions for the full suite of biological resource elements will be included in the public review draft DRECP.

BLM Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA): This document includes initial information regarding the proposed BLM LUPA. LUPA alternatives depict alternative-specific BLM land allocations and designations for: National Landscape Conservation System lands (NLCS); Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC), including existing-unmodified, existing-modified, and new areas; Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMA), including existing-unmodified, existing-modified, and new areas; Long-Term Vehicle Areas (LTVA), including existing-unmodified and existing-modified; and, wildlife allocations. Appendix D contains preliminary BLM designation specific descriptions and maps describing the LUPA for each alternative. The proposed BLM LUPA map for each alternative is in Sections 2.3–2.8. Also included in this document are proposed incentives for renewable energy projects utilizing the Development Focus Areas, and a strategy for handling pending project applications, and a final agreement with CDFG regarding conservation lands. These are initial LUPA proposals and they will be refined prior to distribution of the Draft DRECP. Table ES-1 is a course summary of the proposed LUPA under each alternative.

Table ES-1
BLM LUPA – Summary of NLCS and ACEC Elements of DCLs by Alternative

Land Designation	Alternative 1 – Disturbed Lands/Low Resource Conflict (acres)	Alternative 2 – Geographically Balanced/ Transmission Aligned B (acres)	Alternative 3 – West Mojave Emphasis Alternative (acres)	Alternative 4 – Geographically Balanced/ Transmission Aligned A (acres)	Alternative 5 – Increased Geographic/ Technology Flexibility (acres)	Alternative 6 – Geographically Balanced Alt C with Variance Lands (acres)	Alternative 7 – No Action (acres)
	Acres						
National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS)	***1,708,776***	***3,292,594***	***2,526,284***	***3,288,065***	***5,368,823***	***2,233,553***	***NA***
NLCS designation over Non-ACEC	132,999	248,584	156,710	241,098	1,045,437	105,659	NA
NLCS designation over Existing ACEC	880,658	1,759,866	1,347,398	1,706,586	2,344,220	1,339,667	NA
NLCS designation over Proposed (new) ACEC	695,120	1,284,145	1,022,175	1,340,380	1,979,166	788,227	NA
Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC)	***2,859,691***	***1,518,207***	***2,163,528***	***1,634,027***	***55,315***	***2,127,722***	***2,426,203***
Proposed (new)	1,334,537	874,174	1,179,514	936,879	29,478	1,063,770	NA
Existing	1,525,154	644,034	984,013	697,148	25,837	1,063,952	2,426,203
Total	**4,568,467**	**4,810,802**	**4,689,812**	**4,922,092**	**5,424,138**	**4,361,276**	**2,426,203**

Notes:
Acreages are estimates and subject to change
Totals do not include Legally and Legislatively Protected Areas (LLPAs) on BLM administered land which are a constant 3,221,501 acres all across alternatives. BLM's Proposed Wilderness designation is counted within the BLM LLPAs.
ACEC acreages for Alternative 7 (No Action) are existing ACECs only on BLM-administered land outside of LLPAs.
Acreages reported for "Existing ACECs" and "NLCS designation over Existing ACEC" are adjusted to avoid double-counting due to overlap. Existing ACECs include both modified and unmodified "Existing ACEC on BLM-administered land outside LLPAs." "Proposed (new) ACEC" includes new proposed ACEC areas beyond that of "Existing ACEC on BLM-administered land."

Relationship of BLM-Department of Energy (DOE) Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) to DRECP: The Solar PEIS Record of Decision was signed on October 12, 2012 and thereby modified the land use plans within its planning area, including the DRECP planning boundary. The Solar PEIS established two Solar Energy Zones (SEZ) in California, Riverside East and Imperial East, both of which are encompassed by the DRECP. All seven alternatives preserve Imperial East in its entirety as a Development Focus Area (DFA). Four of alternatives (Alternatives 2, 5, 6, and 7) bring forward Riverside East in its entirety as a DFA. Alternatives 1, 3, and 4 carry forward portions of Riverside East as a DFA, with other portions of the SEZ designated as conservation lands.

Three alternatives depict the variance lands as per the Solar PEIS—Alternative 1 (Disturbed Lands/Low Resource Conflict), Alternative 6 (Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative C with BLM Variance Lands), and Alternative 7 (No Action). For Alternative 1, Solar PEIS variance lands that are contained within DFAs became DFA lands. The remaining variance lands were screened using resource criteria , consistent with that expected to be applied at a region or project area basis under the Solar PEIS. For Alternative 6, Solar PEIS variance lands are not contained within DFAs and remain exactly as per the Solar PEIS. For Alternative 7, variance lands are identical to those in the Solar PEIS. Variance lands would not be available for inclusion in DRECP conservation areas under these alternatives.

All six action alternatives change Solar PEIS exclusion lands to DFAs in varying degrees depending on the alternative. Alternative 7, no action, maintains the exclusion lands as per the Solar PEIS.

ES.2 Summary Description of Draft DRECP Alternatives

Seven alternatives are addressed in this document as noted above. Table ES-2 presents information regarding renewable energy development and conservation for each alternative. Tables ES-3 and ES-4 summarize renewable energy development technologies and distribution for each alternative. Table ES-5 summarizes the ground disturbance associated with transmission facilities required for each alternative.

The alternatives reflect different approaches to achieving the overall DRECP goals of guiding solar and other renewable energy project siting in the Mojave and Colorado deserts of California and providing for the conservation and management of certain species, habitats, and natural communities that may be affected by those projects. Certain factors common to all alternatives are as follows, with the exception of the No Action alternative:

- Renewable energy development would occur within identified development focus areas (DFAs) with variations in configuration of DFAs among the alternatives
- Renewable energy development covered under the DRECP would be 20,323 megawatts (MWs) with variations in solar and wind technology distribution among the alternatives and geothermal and ground-mounted distributed generation MWs constant
- Proposed Covered Species, natural communities and landscape processes subject to analysis constant among the alternatives
- Legislatively and legally protected lands, 7,563,773 acres of existing protected lands, constant among the alternatives
- Conservation strategy elements (proposed implementation structure, biological goals and objectives, adaptive management requirements, funding requirements) constant among the alternatives with alternative-specific variations as appropriate.

In the context of these common goals and factors, there is substantial variation among the alternatives.

ES.3 Summary Comparative Evaluation of DRECP Alternatives

Table ES-6 summarizes the comparison of alternatives for the following environmental resource categories:

- Biological Resources
- Outdoor Recreation
- Cultural Resources
- Visual Resources
- Land Use Policies
- Mineral Resources
- BLM Land Designations, Classifications, Allocations, and Wilderness Inventory.

Table ES-2
Summary of DRECP Alternatives

		Alternative 1	Alternative 2	Alternative 3	Alternative 4	Alternative 5	Alternative 6	Alternative 7
Working Title		"Disturbed Lands/Low Resource Conflict Alternative"	"Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative B"	"West Mojave Emphasis Alternative"	"Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative A"	"Increased Geographic and Technology Flexibility Alternative"	"Geographically Balanced Alternative C with Variance Lands"	"No Action"
Renewable Energy Development								
Total acres of DFAs		1,120,092	1,823,319	1,668,793	1,472,498	2,294,356	1,662,439	Total acres of Available Development Areas: 10,309,278
Total acres of public land within DFAs		• BLM: 81,991 (7% of DFAs) • Other: 74,493 (7% of DFAs)	• BLM: 360,553 (20% of DFAs) • Other: 89,435 (5% of DFAs)	• BLM: 324,535 (19% of DFAs) • Other: 83,682 (5% of DFAs)	• BLM: 214,153 (15% of DFAs); • Other: 89,416 (6% of DFAs)	• BLM: 621,432 (27% of DFAs); • Other: 101,513 (4% of DFAs)	• BLM: 252,966 (15% of DFAs); • Other: 81,783 (5% of DFAs)	Total acres of public land within Available Development Areas: • BLM: 5,893,975 (57% of DFAs); • California State Lands Commission: 254,111 (2% of DFAs); • Other: 316,054 (3% of DFAs)
Total acres of private land within DFAs		963,608 (86% of DFAs)	1,373,333 (75% of DFAs)	1,260,577 (76% of DFAs)	1,168,930 (79% of DFAs)	1,571,411 (68% of DFAs)	1,327,690 (80%)	Total acres of private land within Available Development Areas: 3,845,138 (37% of DFAs)
Acres of High Biological Sensitivity (HBS; Blue) and Moderate Biological Sensitivity (MBS; Green) areas within DFAs		70,559 (6% of DFAs)	477,051 (26% of DFAs)	507,827 (30% of DFAs)	191,427 (13% of DFAs)	690,013 (30% of DFAs)	371,926 (22% of DFAs)	NA
Total estimated development footprint (required acres)		161,361	225,672	191,976	195,294	353,725	219,215	NA
Relationship to BLM Solar PEIS	Variance Lands acres mapped in Alternative	172,537	NA	NA	NA	NA	605,065	605,065
	Variance Lands acres that would become DFAs	16,155	95,935	66,876	58,777	185,059	0	NA
	Acres of DFAs in Solar PEIS exclusion lands	1,357	4,398	1,262	3,932	11,549	1,756	NA
Conservation								
Legally and Legislatively Protected Areas (LLPAs)		7,563,773	7,563,773	7,563,773	7,563,773	7,563,773	7,563,773	7,563,773
Proposed BLM DCLs and Conservation Planning Area Acres		8,625,214	8,368,173	8,334,407	8,654,188	8,225,329	7,957,894	NA
Conservation Area Reserve System Total Acres		16,185,416	15,931,946	15,898,053	16,217,961	15,789,102	15,517,297	NA
Existing ACEC		NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	3,929,647

Note: Acreages are estimates and subject to change

Table ES-3
Distribution of Generation Capacity (MW) for By Technology for All Alternatives

	Alternative 1 – Disturbed Lands/Low Resource Conflict	Alternative 2 – Geographically Balanced/ Transmission Aligned B	Alternative 3 – West Mojave Emphasis Alternative	Alternative 4 – Geographically Balanced/ Transmission Aligned A	Alternative 5 – Increased Geographic/ Technology Flexibility	Alternative 6 – Geographically Balanced Alternative C with Variance Lands	Alternative 7 – No Action
Total MW	20,323	20,323	20,323	20,323	20,323	20,323	20,323
Solar MW	14,304	12,349	13,374	13,273	8,457	12,546	
Wind MW	802	2,757	1,732	1,833	6,649	2,560	
Geothermal MW	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,800	2,800	
Utility Scale Distributed Generation MW	2,417	2,417	2,417	2,417	2,417	2,417	

Note: Acreages are estimates and subject to change

Table ES-4
Total MWs and Estimated Ground Disturbance by Ecoregion for All Alternatives

Ecoregion	Alternative 1 – Disturbed Lands/Low Resource Conflict		Alternative 2 – Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned B		Alternative 3 – West Mojave Emphasis Alternative		Alternative 4 – Geographically Balanced/ Transmission Aligned A		Alternative 5 – Increased Geographic/ Technology Flexibility		Alternative 6 – Geographically Balanced Alt C with Variance Lands		Alternative 7 – No Action	
	MW	*Estimated Ground Disturbance (acres)*	*MW*	*Estimated Ground Disturbance (acres)*	*MW*	*Estimated Ground Disturbance (acres)*	*MW*	*Estimated Ground Disturbance (acres)*	*MW*	*Estimated Ground Disturbance (acres)*	*MW*	*Estimated Ground Disturbance (acres)*	*MW*	*Estimated Ground Disturbance (acres)*
Cadiz Valley and Chocolate Mountains	2,193	19,324	3,804	58,966	1,150	14,575	2,278	24,861	2,746	56,152	3,945	58,016		
Imperial Borrego Valley	9,811	63,591	7,009	44,118	3,511	18,075	8,463	55,326	7,632	70,631	7,060	44,456		
Kingston and Funeral Mountains	—	—	231	1,638	—	—	—	—	169	2,735	63	449		
Mojave and Silurian Valley	866	6,009	666	4,609	837	5,857	669	4,629	770	18,712	544	3,737		
Owens River Valley	237	1,682	160	989	70	362	191	1,200	196	3,248	175	1,085		
Panamint Death Valley	—	—	35	248	—	—	270	1,916	120	1,294	39	277		
Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes	1,518	18,152	1,426	27,398	2,595	36,803	1,686	27,731	1,597	38,154	1,300	23,505		
Piute Valley and Sacramento Mountains	2	11	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—		
Providence and Bullion Mountains	289	1,970	193	1,323	266	1,860	251	1,736	465	12,326	163	1,121		
West Mojave and Eastern Slopes	5,407	50,622	6,801	86,384	11,893	114,443	6,515	77,895	6,628	150,474	7,033	86,569		
Grand Total	**20,323**	**161,361**	**20,323**	**225,672**	**20,323**	**191,976**	**20,323**	**195,294**	**20,323**	**353,725**	**20,323**	**219,216**	**20,323**	

Note: Acreages are estimates and subject to change

Table ES-5
Estimated Ground Disturbance for Transmission Facilities for All Alternatives[1]

	Alternative 1 – Disturbed Lands/Low Resource Conflict	Alternative 2 – Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned B	Alternative 3 – West Mojave Emphasis Alternative	Alternative 4 – Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned A	Alternative 5 – Increased Geographic/ Technology Flexibility	Alternative 6 – Geographically Balanced Alternative C with Variance Lands	Alternative 7 – No Action
Within Plan Area	32,844	31,228	32,210	Not Analyzed	33,965	29,549	Not Analyzed
Outside Plan Area	32,495	29,095	21,342	Not Analyzed	29,095	31,656	Not Analyzed

Note: Acreages are estimates and subject to change

[1] The Renewable Energy Policy Group (REPG) did not request the TTG to analyze Alternative 4 because of the similarities that the REPG saw between that alternative and Alternative 2. Additionally, Alternative 4 and Alternative 7 were added after the TTG had completed its work.

Table ES-6
Summary of Comparative Evaluation of Draft DRECP Alternatives

Environmental Category[1]	Alternative 1 *"Disturbed Lands/Low Resource Conflict Alternative"*	Alternative 2 *"Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative B"*	Alternative 3 *"West Mojave Emphasis Alternative"*	Alternative 4 *"Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative A"*	Alternative 5 *"Increased Geographic and Technology Flexibility Alternative"*	Alternative 6 *"Geographically Balanced Alternative C with Variance Lands"*	Alternative 7[2] *"No Action"*
Biological Resources							
Conservation Area							
Acres of Reserve Design	16,185,416	15,931,946	15,898,053	16,217,961	15,789,102	15,517,297	NA
Acres of BLM DCLs	4,565, 544	4,810,802	4,689,812	4,922,092	5,424,138	4,361,276	NA
Overall Reduced Conservation	202,085	477,051	507,827	191,427	690,013	859,437	NA
Landscape							
Acres of Desert Habitat Linkages overlap with DFAs	6,017	87,834	124,533	23,185	200,385	67,650	2,471,299
Acres of Sand Dune Source material overlap with DFAs	7,782	28,713	7,806	11,584	32,490	28,689	225,669
Natural Communities							
Dune Community overlap with DFAs	3,759	24,271	3,970	8,810	29,391	22,254	88,764
Species							
BIGHORN SHEEP							
Critical Linkage overlap with DFAs	None	None	None	None	None	None	51,349
Acres of Intermountain Habitat overlap with DFAs	3,159	49,984	3,468	31,582	82,779	20,916	1,621,734
Acres of Mountain Habitat overlap with DFAs	159	19,809	17,796	16,380	96,542	11,373	1,811,201
DESERT TORTOISE							
Acres of Critical Habitat overlap with DFAs	1,556	4,827	45,922	3,982	37,598	4,367	2,238,154
Acres of Least Cost Corridors overlap with DFAs	5,978	55,747	68,403	30,522	56,393	30,181	1,367,473
Acres of USGS-USFWS Model Habitat overlap with DFAs	10,856	127,811	128,011	40,265	210,812	90,826	4,083,977
MOHAVE GROUND SQUIRREL							
Acreage of CDFG Model Habitat overlap with DFAs	12,963	57,521	221,779	83,443	172,972	27,787	1,471,055
Acreage of USGS Model Habitat overlap with DFAs	15,881	128,343	327,515	90,008	207,365	85,723	1,920,020
BURROWING OWL							
Acreage of Modeled Habitat overlap with DFAs	64,774	352,795	416,035	145,982	478,298	260,060	5,593,300
Outdoor Recreation							
Acres of Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs)	3,257,412	3,216,363	3,090,817	3,251,739	3,124,382	3,173,948	2,359,025
Acres of Recreation Lands within Conservation Planning Area[3]	12,612,010	12,901,311	12,879,239	13,042,743	12,675,012	12,475,936	7,324,687
Acres of Recreation Lands within Proposed DCLs[4]	5,557,675	5,379,358	5,349,152	5,541,554	5,195,779	5,139,180	3,170,823
Acres of Recreation Lands within Solar Variance Lands	158,767	NA	NA	NA	NA	573,342	573,342
Cultural Resources							
# Previously recorded sites[5] in DFAs	2,200	3,148	2,730	2,910	3,902	2,695	
# Previously recorded sites in Conservation Planning Area[3]	17,827	17,586	17,936	18,296	17,616	16,538	5,498

Table ES-6
Summary of Comparative Evaluation of Draft DRECP Alternatives

Environmental Category[1]	Alternative 1 *"Disturbed Lands/Low Resource Conflict Alternative"*	Alternative 2 *"Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative B"*	Alternative 3 *"West Mojave Emphasis Alternative"*	Alternative 4 *"Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative A"*	Alternative 5 *"Increased Geographic and Technology Flexibility Alternative"*	Alternative 6 *"Geographically Balanced Alternative C with Variance Lands"*	Alternative 7[2] *"No Action"*
# Previously recorded sites in Proposed DCLs[4]	6,697	4,602	4,658	4,721	4,332	4,151	3,212
# Previously recorded sites in Solar Variance Lands	380	NA	NA	NA	NA	1,423	1,423
Visual Resources							
BLM Visual Resource Management Classes							
% BLM VRM Class I in Conservation Planning Area[3]	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	97%
Acres of BLM VRM Class II & III lands within DFAs	66,515	302,591	226,482	124,495	476,054	243,054	NA
Acres of BLM VRM Class II & III lands within DCLs[4]	3,693,778	3,693,778	3,350,707	3,003,497	3,190,306	2,027,229	1,793,423
BLM VRM Class IV	Common to Alternatives 1-6: All BLM Lands within DFAs would be designated VRM Class IV						NA
National Parks and Preserves							
% in Conservation Planning Area[3]	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	96%
Viewshed[6]	Some DFAs or Solar Variance Lands adjacent to and/or within viewsheds of Mojave NP	Some DFAs within viewsheds of Mojave NP, Death Valley NP, and Joshua Tree NP	Some DFAs adjacent to or within viewsheds of Mojave NP and Joshua Tree NP	Some DFAs within viewsheds of Mojave NP and Joshua Tree NP	Some DFAs within viewsheds of Mojave NP, Death Valley NP, and Joshua Tree NP	Some DFAs or Solar PEIS Variance Lands adjacent to or within viewsheds of Mojave NP, Death Valley NP, and Joshua Tree NP	NA
National Historic Sites							
Viewshed	No overlap of DFAs with Manzanar NHS; DFAs nearby and potentially within the Site's viewshed	No overlap of DFAs with Manzanar NHS; DFAs nearby and potentially within the Site's viewshed	No overlap of DFAs with Manzanar NHS; no viewshed issues	No overlap of DFAs with Manzanar NHS; DFAs nearby and potentially within the Site's viewshed	No overlap of DFAs with Manzanar NHS; DFAs nearby and potentially within the Site's viewshed	No overlap of DFAs with Manzanar NHS; DFAs nearby and potentially within the Site's viewshed	NA
National Byways							
Viewshed	Common to Alternatives 1-6: DFAs, Solar Energy Zones, and Solar PEIS Variance Lands, would overlap and/or be within the viewshed of the easternmost segment (+-10 miles) of Bradshaw Trail Byway; no DFAs in close proximity to Death Valley Scenic Byway						NA
National Trails							
Viewshed	Common to Alternatives 1-6: Points along the Pacific Crest NT would have distant views of DFAs and Solar PEIS Variance Lands in the Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes Ecoregion, and in the West Mojave and Eastern Slopes Ecoregion; points along the Juan Bautista de Anza Trail could have views of DFAs and Solar PEIS Variance Lands in the Imperial Borrego Valley Ecoregion; DFAs and Solar Variance Lands overlap with or would be within the viewshed of points along the various Old Spanish Trail route segments, particularly in the Mojave and Silurian Valley Ecoregion and the Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes Ecoregion.						NA

Table ES-6
Summary of Comparative Evaluation of Draft DRECP Alternatives

Environmental Category[1]	Alternative 1 *"Disturbed Lands/Low Resource Conflict Alternative"*	Alternative 2 *"Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative B"*	Alternative 3 *"West Mojave Emphasis Alternative"*	Alternative 4 *"Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative A"*	Alternative 5 *"Increased Geographic and Technology Flexibility Alternative"*	Alternative 6 *"Geographically Balanced Alternative C with Variance Lands"*	Alternative 7[2] *"No Action"*
Wild and Scenic Rivers							
Viewshed	Common to Alternatives 1-6: No DFAs in close proximity to Amargosa River, located in Kingston and Funeral Mountains Ecoregion						NA
State Parks							
Viewshed	Common to Alternatives 1-6: Approximately 95% of State Park lands would be within the Reserve System; DFAs would overlap or be within the viewshed of many locations within State Parks, which are located primarily in the Imperial Borrego Valley Ecoregion and the West Mojave and Eastern Slopes Ecoregion						NA
State Scenic Highways/Routes							
Viewshed	Common to Alternatives 1-6: DFAs of Imperial Valley do not overlap, but could be within the viewshed of points along the 18-mile Anza-Borrego Scenic Route						NA
Land Use Policies							
County General Plan Lands – Urban (residential, commercial, industrial)							
Acres in DFAs[7]	316,911	422,226	436,558	392,066	440,672	420,635	862,544
Acres in Conservation Planning Areas[3]	352,484	304,623	291,042	328,747	311,814	332,081	0
County General Plan Lands – Rural							
Acres in DFAs[7]	166,383	285,818	273,098	214,536	252,843	283,460	799,967
Acres in Conservation Planning Areas[3]	496,689	447,328	428,885	491,038	461,370	449,685	0
County General Plan Lands – Agriculture & Open Space							
Acres in DFAs[7]	456,214	630,395	709,656	530,102	837,733	604,266	2,136,578
Acres in Conservation Planning Areas[3]	1,428,233	1,342,818	719,927	1,416,035	1,337,929	1,368,640	2,261
State Land Commission Lands							
Acres is DFAs[7]	7,170	19,399	22,525	19,238	22,032	14,260	258,257
Acres in Conservation Planning Area[3]	298,921	286,954	283,326	287,068	284,645	291,919	2,581
Acres in Solar Variance Lands	75	NA	NA	NA	NA	216	216
Mineral Resources							
Acres of Geothermal Resources in DFAs	71,388	88,982	88,967	88,982	88,982	91,368	NA
Acres of Geothermal Resources in Conservation Planning Area[3,8]	18,228	18,198	18,198	18,198	18,198	1,767	NA
BLM Land Designations, Classifications, Allocations, and Wilderness Inventory							
Acres of Designated NLCS Lands	1,708,776	3,292,594	2,526,284	3,288,065	5,368,823	2,233,553	NA
Acres of ACECs	2,859,691	1,518,207	2,163,528	1,634,027	55,315	1,127,722	2,426,2203
Acres of SRMAs	3,257,412	3,216,363	3,090,817	3,251,739	3,124,382	3,173,948	2,359,025

Table ES-6
Summary of Comparative Evaluation of Draft DRECP Alternatives

Environmental Category[1]	Alternative 1 *"Disturbed Lands/Low Resource Conflict Alternative"*	Alternative 2 *"Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative B"*	Alternative 3 *"West Mojave Emphasis Alternative"*	Alternative 4 *"Geographically Balanced/Transmission Aligned Alternative A"*	Alternative 5 *"Increased Geographic and Technology Flexibility Alternative"*	Alternative 6 *"Geographically Balanced Alternative C with Variance Lands"*	Alternative 7[2] *"No Action"*
Acres of DFAs on BLM Lands	81,991	360,553	324,535	214,153	621,432	252,996	NA
Solar Variance Lands on BLM Lands	172,537	NA	NA	NA	NA	605,065	605,065
Acres of BLM Lands with Wilderness Characteristics in DFAs	1,384	44,506	2,276	2,338	45,243	26,917	NA
Acres of BLM Lands with Wilderness Characteristics in DCLs	365,027	329,198	364,709	365,458	320,090	334,481	NA

Notes:
NA = not applicable.
Acreages are estimates and subject to change.
A description of the data sources for the species habitat reported here is provided in Section 3.1.6.2.
[1]Under Biological Resources, reported as overlapping acres represents mapped habitat areas (e.g., modeled suitable habitat) included in the reserve design (i.e., High Biological Sensitivity [HBS] and Moderate Biological Sensitivity [MBS]) that are within the DFAs and have the potential of being impacted by renewable energy project siting and development activities. Reduced conservation acres are HBS and MBS areas included within the reserve design but not available for conservation due to overlap with DFAs.
[2]Under Biological Resources, reported as overlapping acres for Alternative 7 (No Action) reflect the acreage outside Legally and Legislatively Protected Areas (LLPAs) with renewable energy resources that have the potential to be impacted by renewable energy project siting and development activities.
[3] Existing Conservation in Alternative 7 (No Action).
[4] Existing ACECs in Alternative 7 (No Action).
[5] BLM 2004 Legacy Geographic Information System (GIS) Data; sites recorded through 2004 for the CDCA Plan area and includes cultural resources on BLM, NPS, and private lands.
[6] As defined by BLM, a viewshed is "the landscape that can be directly seen under favorable atmospheric conditions, from a viewpoint or along a transportation corridor." Within a viewshed, views may be in the foreground/middleground distance zone (a distance of 3-5 miles from viewer/viewpoint), background distance zone (from 3-5 miles to a maximum of about 15 miles, or less depending on atmospheric conditions), or seldom seen distance zone (portions of the viewshed that are visible, but more than 15 miles distance.) (Source: BLM Manual 8400 - Visual Resource Management, 1984).
[7] Available Development Areas in Alternative 7 (No Action).
[8] Known Geothermal Resource Area (KGRA) directional drilling in Imperial County; no ground disturbance.