

## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

### A

**action alternatives.** The range of alternatives analyzed in detail in the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP or Plan) that define the spatial distribution of Covered Activities, including renewable energy, transmission development, a reserve design, and Conservation and Management Actions (CMAs). Locations, configurations, and size of Development Focus Areas (DFAs) and the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope vary among alternatives. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA) element also includes proposed land allocations, in addition to those mentioned above, and Visual Resource Management classes.

**adaptive management.** A process for assimilating new information, including from monitoring and research, and assessing if adjustments to CMAs are needed. The Monitoring and Adaptive Management Program (MAMP) is the vehicle for structuring and reporting adaptive management in the DRECP Plan Area, and implementing actions deemed necessary as needed.

**Applicant.** A public or private entity, or an individual, that applies to the Wildlife Agencies for a permit for incidental take authorization under Section 2835 of the state Natural Community Conservation Planning Act and/or Section 10 of the federal Endangered Species Act, for taking that is incidental to a Covered Activity. Only nonfederal entities may apply for an incidental take permit under the Endangered Species Act.

**Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC).** A BLM area within public lands where special management attention is required to protect and prevent irreparable damage to important historic, cultural, or scenic values, fish and wildlife resources or other natural systems of processes, or to protect life and safety from natural hazards. The ACECs are part of the BLM LUPA conservation designations in the Plan Area. Defined in Section 103(a) of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) of 1976, as amended, and regulation 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) 1601.0-5(a).

**available lands (under the action alternatives).** Lands within the Plan Area, except for military, tribal, and open off-highway vehicle (OHV) areas.

**avoidance to the maximum extent practicable (as referenced in DRECP CMAs).** A standard identified in the DRECP CMAs and applied to implementation of DRECP Covered Activities. Under this standard, impacts to identified biological and nonbiological resources are not allowed unless there is no reasonable or practicable means of avoidance that is consistent with the basic objectives of the covered project or action. Compensation for unavoidable impacts would be required as specified in the DRECP. The term “maximum

extent practicable” as used here is applicable only to the term as it is used in the CMAs; it does not apply to the term as it is used in the Endangered Species Act incidental take issuance criteria.

## **B**

**baseline monitoring.** A type of monitoring in which a designated resource specialist that assembles an initial set of information or quantitative data, through an accepted protocol, for comparison or a control by which a determination can be made in the future as to whether change has occurred through events, actions, or time. Baseline monitoring may be appropriate in areas that have not been sufficiently surveyed or for which relevant data is otherwise lacking.

**biological monitoring.** Visual survey of an area conducted by a designated biologist to determine if a biological resource is present. Biological monitoring is commonly conducted on the sites of proposed projects. Biological monitoring conducted during the implementation of a Covered Activity is used to implement CMAs that require construction setbacks or that require the designated biologist to move a resource out of harm’s way.

**BLM disturbance cap.** Limit on ground-disturbing activities within BLM ACECs and/or National Conservation Lands (NCLs) as called for in the LUPA alternatives. Expressed as a percentage of total ACEC and/or National Conservation Land unit acreage, and cumulatively considering past, present, and future disturbance. Baseline (past and present) disturbance would be determined by the most current imagery and knowledge at the time of an individual project proposal.

**BLM LUPA conservation designations (also known as BLM conservation lands or BLM conservation allocations).** Administrative designations that would include NCLs, ACEC, and Wildlife Allocation designations on BLM-administered land. BLM Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, National Historic Trails, and Wild and Scenic River designations (existing and proposed) are included as part of the existing Legislatively and Legally Protected Areas (LLPAs). The BLM LUPA conservation designations were identified through the planning process and considered the biological and nonbiological resource values across the Plan Area.

**BLM unallocated land (also known as BLM undesignated land).** BLM-administered lands for which there is no specific land-use allocation.

**breeding habitat.** Natural communities or landscapes that contain elements required for the reproduction of a wildlife Covered Species; for example, tree or canopy structure, vegetation composition, soil type, or hydrological requirement. Breeding habitat is also mapped or modeled habitat with confirmed reproductive populations of wildlife Covered Species.

## C

**California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) fully protected species.** Any species identified in California Fish and Game Code Sections 3511, 4700, 4800, 5050 or 5515. Such species may not be taken or possessed at any time, and no licenses or permits may be issued for their take except under an approved Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) or for collection for necessary scientific research.

**California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA).** As defined in Section 601 of the FLPMA, the CDCA is a 25-million-acre expanse of land in Southern California designated by Congress in 1976 through the FLPMA. About 10 million acres of the CDCA are administered by BLM under its CDCA Plan.

**clearance survey.** Survey for Covered Species conducted immediately prior to vegetation and/or ground disturbance from a Covered Activity. Clearance surveys must be conducted throughout the project area and in accordance with applicable species-specific protocols, as approved by the DRECP Coordination Group and the Wildlife Agencies, to detect and clear (i.e., remove, translocate) out of harm's way as many individuals of a species as feasible prior to disturbance.

**compensation and compensatory mitigation.** For the purposes of the DRECP, compensation and compensatory mitigation mean replacing or providing substitute resources or habitats by acquiring and conserving lands from willing sellers and including them in the DRECP Conservation Area, or by non-acquisition measures, such as habitat management and enhancement activities on already-conserved lands.

**Conservation and Management Actions (CMAs).** The specific set of avoidance, minimization, compensation, and additional conservation actions for biological and other resources that would be required to meet the Step-Down Biological Objectives and other resource goals and objectives through implementation of the DRECP. The CMAs describe avoidance and minimization measures for siting, design, pre-construction, construction, maintenance, operation, and decommissioning of Covered Activities. On BLM land, the CMAs also apply to other activities. The CMAs also describe the compensation requirements for Covered Activities that would implement CMAs within the DRECP Conservation Area. Within BLM LUPA conservation designations (i.e., NCL, ACEC, or Wildlife Allocation), the BLM Management Plans (see DRECP Appendix L) for each land management unit (i.e., each named NCL, ACEC, or Wildlife Allocation area) describe the unit-specific management actions and are combined with additional CMAs that together serve as CMAs for those portions of the BLM-administered lands in the Plan Area.

**Conservation Planning Areas (CPAs).** In each action alternative, the portion of the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope that falls outside of existing conservation areas and

BLM-administered lands. CPAs encompass both private lands and nonfederal public lands and include, but are not limited to, nonfederal lands within the Interagency Plan-Wide Conservation Priority Areas. A portion of the DRECP Conservation Area will be assembled by acquiring land or conservation easements from willing sellers in the CPAs to contribute to meeting the DRECP Plan-wide Biological Goals and Objectives (BGOs).

**conserve.** The term “conserve” (or “conservation”) as used in the DRECP Plan-wide BGOs includes land acquisition (e.g., fee title purchase from willing sellers), other forms of land protection (e.g., recording a conservation easement on lands with willing land owners), BLM LUPA conservation designations (i.e., National Conservation Lands [NCL], ACEC, and Wildlife Allocations), restoration and enhancement activities, management actions identified for natural communities and Covered Species, and securing funding for land management and monitoring for Covered Species, natural communities, and ecological processes. For purposes of the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act and CDFW’s approval of the DRECP as an NCCP, to conserve Covered Species and natural communities means to use methods and procedures within the Plan Area that are necessary to bring any Covered Species to the point at which the conservation measures are not necessary, and for Covered Species that are not listed, to maintain or enhance the condition of the species so that Covered Activities do not contribute to the potential need for future listing by the state.

**Covered Activities.** Renewable energy development and transmission projects, and conservation activities as described and analyzed in the DRECP, and that would be considered for incidental take permits under Section 2835 of the state Natural Community Conservation Planning Act and/or Section 10 of the federal Endangered Species Act, for otherwise lawful activities. Covered renewable energy development includes geothermal, solar thermal, photovoltaic solar, and wind development and transmission.

**Covered Species.** Species whose conservation and management are provided for in the DRECP and for which Applicants may seek permits for incidental take of Covered Species resulting from Covered Activities under Section 2835 of the state Natural Community Conservation Planning Act, Section 10 of the federal Endangered Species Act, and/or the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, as appropriate.

**creosote bush rings.** Rings of creosote bush (*Larrea tridentata*) that form over long periods of time. As a single creosote bush produces new branches at the periphery of its crown, the branches in the center of the crown begin to die. Eventually a sterile area of bare ground occupies the center of the original shrub, and as the ring becomes larger the original shrub segments into several shrubs (satellites), forming a ring around the point where the original shrub originated. As more time goes by these rings become elliptical rather than circular. The satellite shrubs in a ring are the same genetically, attesting to the fact that they form a single clone originating from one original shrub. Vasek (1980) showed

that some of these clones are several thousand years old. The largest known creosote ring is 20.5 feet in diameter and may be 11,700 years old.

**Critical Habitat (CH).** Critical habitat is defined in Section 3(5)(A) of the federal Endangered Species Act as (1) the specific areas within the geographical area occupied by a species, at the time it is listed in accordance with the Endangered Species Act, on which are found those physical or biological features essential to the conservation of the species, and which may require special management considerations or protection; and (2) specific areas outside the geographical area occupied by the species at the time it is listed, upon a determination that such areas are essential for the conservation of the species. Designated critical habitat is protected under Section 7(a)(2) of the Endangered Species Act, which requires federal agencies to ensure that any action they fund, authorize, or carry out is not likely to result in the destruction or adverse modification of critical habitat.

## D

**designated biologist.** A biologist who is approved as qualified by the DRECP Coordination Group, including Wildlife Agency representatives as appropriate. A designated biologist is the person responsible for overseeing compliance with applicable CMAs for a Covered Activity, including measures to avoid and minimize biological impacts. The responsibilities of a designated biologist include organizing survey and monitoring efforts and being responsible for the content of compliance reports provided to the DRECP Coordination Group.

**Development Focus Areas (DFAs).** Locations where renewable energy generation is covered and could be streamlined for approval under the DRECP. The DRECP NCCP and General Conservation Plan (GCP) permits only cover renewable energy generation projects that are sited in a DFA, and the BLM LUPA will only streamline and provide incentives for renewable energy projects sited in a DFA. Transmission projects are linear projects traversing DFAs and areas outside DFAs and are covered within and outside of DFAs.

**distributed generation.** The 2011 Integrated Energy Policy Report published by the California Energy Commission (CEC) defines distributed generation as: “(1) fuels and technologies accepted as renewable for purposes of the Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS); (2) sized up to 20 MW; and (3) located within the low-voltage distribution grid or supplying power directly to a consumer” (CEC 2012).

**DRECP Coordination Group.** The DRECP Coordination Group is the multiagency group responsible for day-to-day implementation of Plan-wide programs, coordination among DRECP participating entities regarding implementation of each DRECP planning component, coordination with public agencies and stakeholders, and public outreach. See DRECP Volume II, Section II.3.1.5.2.4, for a description of the membership, roles, and responsibilities of the DRECP Coordination Group.

**DRECP Conservation Area.** Lands within the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope that have protection and management for Covered Species and other BLM Sensitive Species, their habitat, and ecosystem function. The DRECP Conservation Area includes LLPAs, BLM Conservation Lands, and CPA lands that are acquired as part of implementation of the DRECP. Non-acquisition compensatory mitigation actions would be implemented exclusively on lands in the DRECP Conservation Area. CMAs for the reserve would occur within the DRECP Conservation Area.

**DRECP Land Cover Map.** A detailed map of natural communities and other land covers for the entire Plan Area. The land cover map is a composite of fine-scale and medium-scale mapping organized hierarchically according to the National Vegetation Classification Standard, including general community groupings, natural communities, and alliance-level mapping units.

**DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope.** Mapped area within which protection and management of Covered Species, other BLM Sensitive Species, their habitat, and ecosystem function would occur to meet the DRECP Plan-wide BGOs; includes LLPAs, BLM Conservation Lands, and CPAs. A DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope is identified for each action alternative. These lands are also referred to in the document as “DRECP Reserve,” “reserve,” “reserve lands,” “reserve design,” and “reserve system.”

**DRECP Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP).** The NCCP prepared to provide for the conservation and management of Covered Species and to address the impacts of Covered Activities. The DRECP NCCP BGOs, the DRECP NCCP Reserve Design, BLM Conservation Lands, DFAs, and CMAs are the essential elements of the DRECP NCCP. The DRECP NCCP is informed by, and is designed to implement a substantial portion of, the DRECP Plan-Wide Conservation Strategy and a substantial portion of the NCCP Conceptual Plan-Wide Reserve Design. The DRECP NCCP provides the basis for the issuance of take authorizations for Covered Activities under Section 2835 of the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act.

**DRECP NCCP BGOs.** Refer to Step-Down Biological Objectives.

**DRECP NCCP Reserve Design.** The planning envelope that defines the areas within which durable, long-term protection and management of lands for DRECP Covered Species is necessary to achieve Step-Down Biological Objectives. The DRECP NCCP Reserve Design is a portion of the NCCP Conceptual Plan-Wide NCCP Reserve Design. The DRECP NCCP Reserve will be created by providing durable, long-term protection and management for lands within the DRECP NCCP Reserve Design.

**DRECP Plan-wide BGOs.** Biological Goals and Objectives (BGOs) contain both biological goals, which are broad guiding principles for the biological conservation strategy that are

typically qualitative, and biological objectives, which are biological conservation targets or desired conditions. They articulate a desired outcome resulting from implementation of the biological conservation strategy. To the extent feasible, objectives should be measurable and quantitative. The DRECP Plan-wide BGOs are a quantitative and qualitative description of what must be done to conserve natural communities and Covered Species in the Plan Area. DRECP Plan-wide BGOs drive the DRECP Plan-Wide Conservation Strategy. The Step-Down Biological Objectives are the contribution of DRECP implementation toward achieving the DRECP Plan-wide BGOs that is commensurate with the impacts of Covered Activities.

**DRECP Plan-Wide Conservation Strategy.** Plan-wide description of how to achieve the DRECP Plan-wide BGOs in the Plan Area. The DRECP Plan-wide BGOs, CPAs, Interagency Plan-Wide Conservation Priority Areas, BLM Conservation Lands, CMAs and DRECP MAMP are the essential elements of the DRECP Plan-Wide Conservation Strategy.

**DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope.** Mapped area within which protection and management of Covered Species would occur to meet DRECP Plan-wide BGOs; includes LLPAs, BLM Conservation Lands, and CPAs. A DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope is identified for each action alternative. For a description of the reserve design process and methods, see Volume I, Section I.3.3.4, and Appendix D.

**DRECP Variance Lands.** Areas addressed in certain DRECP action alternatives that represent portions of the BLM Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (PEIS) Variance Lands and other BLM lands identified through the LUPA as screened for the DRECP using BLM DRECP screening criteria (Section II.3.2.1.2), and Future Assessment Areas (FAAs). These lands are potentially available for renewable energy development, but projects on variance lands are not covered in the DRECP. Project Applicants must demonstrate that a proposed project on variance lands will avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate sensitive resources as necessary and will be compatible with the underlying BLM land allocation, and the overall DRECP design. Applications in DRECP Variance Lands will follow the process described in the Solar PEIS Record of Decision, Section B.5. In Alternative 4, the BLM Variance Lands have not been additionally modified for the DRECP and appear as they do in the BLM Solar PEIS.

## E

**ecoregion subarea.** Planning units based on U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) ecoregion boundaries and used for DRECP planning and analysis. Some USDA ecoregion boundaries were consolidated to define DRECP ecoregion subareas; see DRECP Figure I.3-1 (Volume I, Chapter I.3) for depiction of names and geographic boundaries of the ecoregion subareas. The DRECP contains 10 ecoregion subareas.

**ecoregion subunit.** A subunit within an ecoregion subarea (e.g., West Mojave 1); created specifically for DRECP and used for quantitative analyses to provide finer geographic

resolution in the megawatt distribution, analysis of operational effects, etc. See Volume IV for analysis of impacts, and see Figure IV.7-1 (Chapter IV.7) for a depiction of names and geographic boundaries of ecoregion subunits. The DRECP contains 22 ecoregion subunits.

**existing conservation areas.** Areas where natural resources are substantially protected under existing law or legal protections, including Legislatively and Legally Protected Areas (LLPAs), existing mitigation lands from previously approved projects, and Military Expansion Mitigation Lands (MEMLs). In the DRECP Plan-Wide Conservation Strategy, these lands are assumed to be protected and managed for the benefit of Covered Species under existing regimes.

**Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMAs).** BLM administrative units that require specific management consideration in order to address recreation use and demand. The ERMAs are managed to support and sustain the principal recreation activities and associated qualities and conditions. Recreation management actions within an ERMA are limited to only those of a custodial nature. Management of ERMA areas are commensurate with the management of other resources and resource uses.

## F

**federal lands.** Land or interest in land owned and/or administered by the United States. Covered Activities on federal lands in the Plan Area are administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the BLM. Other federal lands administered by the Bureau of Reclamation, or BLM lands withdrawn by other agencies and purposes not encompassing renewable energy generation and transmission, and not relied upon to meet DRECP goals and objectives, are therefore not included in the definition of federal lands as used in the DRECP context.

**foraging habitat.** Natural communities or landscapes that contain elements required for Covered Species foraging; for example, particular vegetation consumed by wildlife Covered Species or habitat for species that are a primary source of Covered Species' diets.

**Forest Service sensitive species.** Those plant and animal species identified by a Regional Forester of the USDA Forest Service for which population viability is a concern, as evidenced by significant current or predicted downward trends in population numbers or density, and significant current or predicted downward trends in habitat capability that would reduce a species' existing distribution.

**Future Assessment Areas (FAAs).** Designated areas in certain action alternatives that are subject to future assessment for suitability for renewable energy development or conservation designation. The knowledge about the value of these areas for renewable energy development is ambiguous. The current known value of these areas for ecological



conservation is moderate to low; therefore, the areas are not allocated to either development or conservation and are assigned to future assessment and decisions. The DRECP does not cover renewable energy development in FAAs, nor are the FAAs part of reserve design envelopes within alternatives or ecological conservation designation, but FAAs represent areas where solar, wind, and geothermal energy development, operation, and decommissioning, or inclusion in the reserve/ecological conservation designation could be covered through an amendment to the DRECP and permits issued thereunder. Where FAAs occur on federal public lands, these areas would be open to renewable energy development under the BLM LUPA, but would require that an Applicant follow a variance process before the BLM would accept their application for processing. Where they occur on nonfederal lands, these areas would be open to renewable energy development upon amendment of the GCP.

## G

**General Conservation Plan (GCP).** The USFWS proposed action evaluated in the DRECP (see DRECP Volume I, Section I.3.3). A GCP is an “umbrella” type of programmatic Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) for nonfederal lands in accordance with Section 10(a)(1)(B) of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended, that the USFWS develops for adoption by subsequent interested parties who then apply to USFWS for incidental take permits for Covered Species that are consistent with the GCP. The GCP provides a framework for streamlining future Endangered Species Act Section 10 permit decisions after the overall interagency DRECP is approved.

**geothermal project.** Covered Activities that involve the construction, operation, and maintenance of a facility that generates energy through steam from wells in geothermally active areas. Geothermal projects may include well sites, pipelines, towers, roads, pump or maintenance buildings, generators, transformers, and other supporting infrastructure.

**gigawatt (GW).** Measure of energy equal to one billion watts. Used as a measure of instantaneous generation capacity.

**gigawatt-hour (GWh).** Measure of power equivalent to  $10^9$  watt hours. Used as a measure of energy production from generation facilities.

**ground-mounted distributed generation project.** For purposes of DRECP, a solar power system of 20 megawatts (MW) or less consisting of solar modules held in place by racks or frames that are attached to ground-based mounting supports.

## H

**habitat assessment.** Use of the DRECP land cover mapping and/or species model(s), as well as reconnaissance-level site visits and available aerial photography for confirmation of site conditions and mapping of natural communities and species' suitable habitat. For all Covered Activities, a habitat assessment will be required to assess project site-specific natural communities and Covered Species.

**herd area.** The areas on BLM land in which wild horses and burros were found when the Wild Free-Roaming Horses and Burros Act of 1971 was passed. These are the only areas BLM may manage horses by law.

**Herd Management Area.** A BLM land allocation. The areas within each herd area that BLM manages to sustain healthy and diverse wild horse and burro populations over the long term.

## I

**impervious and urban built-up land.** Existing developed areas based on the DRECP land cover map.

**Interagency Plan-Wide Conservation Priority Areas.** Mapped areas of key biological importance within the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for each alternative within which protection and management of some lands for Covered Species is necessary to contribute to DRECP Plan-wide BGOs, achieve Step-Down Biological Objectives, and mitigate the effects of incidental take of Covered Species. Compensatory mitigation actions will be focused primarily within the Interagency Plan-Wide Conservation Priority Areas.

## K

**kilowatt (kW).** Measure of energy equal to 1,000 watts.

## L

**Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA).** BLM's component of the DRECP. The LUPA is a set of decisions that establishes management direction for BLM-administered land within an administrative area through amendment to existing land use plans. The DRECP BLM LUPA amends portions of the following BLM land use and resource management plans (RMPs): CDCA Plan and its amendments: Western Mojave Plan (WEMO), Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert Coordinated Management Plan (NECO), and Northern and Eastern Mojave Plan (NEMO). The LUPA also applies to the Bishop RMP and the Caliente/Bakersfield RMP. Described in Section 202 of the FLPMA of 1976, as amended, and in regulation 43 CFR 1600.

**Legislatively and Legally Protected Areas (LLPAs).** Existing protected lands, including: Wilderness Areas, National Parks, National Preserves, National Wildlife Refuges, California State Parks and Recreation Lands, CDFW Conservation Areas (Ecological Reserves and Wildlife Areas), CDFW areas, privately held conservation areas including mitigation/conservation banks approved by the Wildlife Agencies, land trust lands, Wilderness Study Areas, Wild and Scenic Rivers, and National Scenic and Historic Trails.

**limited area.** Under BLM's Trails and Travel Management program, an area restricted at certain times, in certain areas, or to certain vehicular use.

**LUPA Planning Area.** All BLM managed lands in the DRECP area as well as additional BLM-managed lands outside the DRECP Plan Area, but within the CDCA as identified in Chapter I.0, Figure I.0-1.

## M

**megawatt (MW).** Measure of energy equal to one million watts. Used as a measure of instantaneous generation capacity from a generation facility.

**Military Expansion Mitigation Lands (MEMLs).** Lands conserved as mitigation for the expansion of Department of Defense installations and considered part of existing conservation areas under the DRECP.

**military lands.** Department of Defense installations within the Plan Area, included as part of the Other Lands under the DRECP.

**Mineral Resource Zones (MRZs).** To implement the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act, the State Geologist developed the MRZ nomenclature and criteria based on the California Mineral Land Classification System. The California Mineral Land Classification System represents the relationship between knowledge of mineral deposits and their economic characteristics (grade and size). Lands are classified into four main categories: MRZ-1, areas where geologic information indicates no significant mineral deposits are present; MRZ-2, areas that contain identified mineral resources; MRZ-3, areas of undetermined mineral resource significance; and MRZ-4, areas of unknown mineral resource potential.

**mitigation.** As defined under both the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), mitigation includes: (a) avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action; (b) minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation; (c) rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment; (d) reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations during the life of the action; and (e) compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources or environments.

**Mojave yucca rings.** Rings of Mojave yucca (*Yucca shidigera*) that form in a similar manner as described for creosote bush rings (see definition). Mojave yucca reproduces sexually through the production of seed; vegetative reproduction is much more common and likely much more important to its persistence and spread (LaPre 1979; Gucker 2006). The species produces sprouts from short rhizomes that are close to parent stems (Gucker 2006). Rings form as the clonal growth proceeds outward from the original parent stem, and the central plant ages and dies (Gucker 2006). Mojave yucca rings can be as large as 20 feet in diameter and have up to 130 stems. Rings this large are thought to be at least 2,100 years old (mojavedesert.net 2013).

**Monitoring and Adaptive Management Program (MAMP).** A component of the DRECP Plan-Wide Conservation Strategy needed to comply with NCCP, LUPA, and GCP requirements. The MAMP is the vehicle for structuring and reporting adaptive management in the Plan Area.

## N

**National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS).** In accordance with and as defined by Public Law 111-11 in the Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009 (PL 111-11), Sections 2002(a),(b)(1)(A–F), and (b)(2)(D), the NLCS is a BLM land use designation to conserve, protect, and restore nationally significant landscapes that have outstanding cultural, ecological, and scientific values for the benefit of current and future generations. Areas specially designated as part of the NLCS in PL 111-11 are wilderness, wilderness study areas, National Scenic Trails, National Historic Trails, and National and Wild and Scenic Rivers. These NLCS lands are part of the LLPAs in the DRECP. PL 111-11 also directed BLM to designate public land within the CDCA administered for conservation purposes as part of the NLCS. The proposed NLCS lands are part of the BLM LUPA conservation designations in the Plan Area, and they may overlap ACECs or Wildlife Allocations. These areas are proposed as NCLs. The DRECP uses the terms and acronyms NLCS and NCL (National Conservation Lands) interchangeably; these proposed areas do not include the existing NLCS area, as designated by Congress.

**natural communities.** Natural communities are defined as assemblages of vegetation types and the plant and animal species that use those vegetation types as habitat. A natural community is generally characterized by similarities in the vegetation types and the natural ecological processes that dominate the community and give it its unique characteristics. Natural communities are included as a focus of DRECP conservation. For the purposes of mapping and characterization in the DRECP, natural communities are mapped within the National Vegetation Classification System hierarchy at the “group” level, which is finer-grained than the broad general community groupings but coarser than community “alliances.”

**NCCP Conceptual Plan-Wide Reserve Design.** The planning envelope that defines the areas within which durable, long-term protection and management of lands for DRECP Covered Species is important for achieving the DRECP Plan-wide BGOs in a manner that is consistent with the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act. The NCCP Conceptual Plan-Wide NCCP Reserve Design includes the LLPAs, Interagency Plan-Wide Conservation Priority Areas, and a portion of BLM Conservation Lands. Other NCCPs developed within the Plan Area in the future could also create or expand reserve areas within the NCCP Conceptual Plan-Wide Reserve Design. For additional detail on NCCP definitions, refer to Section II.3.3.

**NCCP Reserve.** LLPAs and lands within the DRECP NCCP Reserve Design that are added to the NCCP Reserve. A portion of the BLM Conservation Lands within the DRECP NCCP Reserve Design will be added to the DRECP NCCP Reserve by applying tools that provide durable, long-term assurances that the lands will be protected and managed for Covered Species. A portion of the private lands and nonfederal public lands within the DRECP NCCP Reserve Design will be added to the NCCP Reserve by purchasing them from willing sellers. All LLPAs by definition have durable, long-term protections and are included in the NCCP Reserve.

**nonfederal lands.** Land owned by state agencies, local jurisdictions (e.g., cities or counties), non-governmental organizations, or private citizens, or otherwise not under federal ownership or management. Incidental take resulting from Covered Activities on nonfederal lands will be authorized under the USFWS GCP and the DRECP NCCP.

**no surface occupancy.** A fluid mineral leasing stipulation that prohibits occupancy or disturbance on all or part of the lease surface to protect special values of uses. Lessees may explore for or exploit the fluid minerals under leases restricted by this stipulation by using directional drilling from sites outside the no surface occupancy area.

## O

**occupied habitat.** Suitable habitat determined to be inhabited by a Covered Species based on the results of a habitat assessment and species-specific presence/absence or protocol surveys. This term is not applicable to wide-ranging large mammals with often poorly defined home ranges. For example, linkages may be typically unoccupied most of the time but nonetheless critical to population viability. In addition, the concept is not applicable to nomadic species, such as burro deer (*Odocoileus hemionus eremicus*), which opportunistically exploit flushes of new plant growth in response to unpredictable precipitation patterns. Thus, an area may not be used for many years because of a lack of summer thunderstorms, but then used heavily when it does rain in that area.

**occurrences.** Positive detections of specific species or natural community in an area, resulting from protocol or presence/absence surveys, generally confirmed by a qualified biologist.

**Open Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Lands.** Designations on BLM-administered lands where motorized and non-motorized uses, including cross-country travel, is permitted (generally referred to as Open Areas). Included as part of the Other Lands under the DRECP.

**Open OHV Lands – Imperial Sand Dunes.** Open OHV Lands within the approved Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan (ISDRA). Included as part of the Other Lands under the DRECP.

**Other Lands.** This category of land is shown on DRECP maps and refers collectively to the following: impervious and urban built up lands (developed areas as per the DRECP land cover map), military lands, Open OHV Areas – Imperial Sand Dunes, Open OHV Areas, Johnson Valley OHV shared use area, and tribal lands. Other Lands are not considered for Covered Activities under the DRECP, but could be available for renewable energy development through other federal, state, tribal, or local approval processes. Other Lands are also not considered necessary for resource conservation in the context of the DRECP.

Though not depicted separately on DRECP maps, this category also refers to BLM lands with existing rights-of-way and easements previously committed to nonrenewable energy-related uses, Bureau of Reclamation fee and withdrawn lands, lands withdrawn from BLM surface management by other agencies or other purposes, and other ownerships not participating in DRECP (e.g., Metropolitan Water District, Los Angeles Department of Water and Power).

## P

**permittee.** The entities that receive permits from the Wildlife Agencies under Section 2835 of the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act, Section 10 of the federal Endangered Species Act, and/or the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, as appropriate.

**Plan Area.** The geographic area of the DRECP as defined in the Planning Agreement, which includes areas proposed for Covered Activities, areas in which conservation actions would occur, and Other Lands as depicted in Figure I.0-1 (see Chapter I.0).

**Plan-Wide.** The term used to clarify elements of the DRECP or analyses conducted for the DRECP that apply to all of the available lands within with the Plan Area. For example, the DRECP Plan-wide BGOs are BGOs that apply across the entire Plan Area within available lands. The Plan-wide conservation analysis considers the entire Plan Area within available lands. This contrasts with elements of the DRECP or analyses that are specific to portions of the Plan Area (BLM LUPA , USFWS GCP, CDFW NCCP).

**pre-construction survey.** Surveys conducted prior to project site preparation and construction of Covered Activities to determine presence and distribution of Covered

Species, suitable habitat for Covered Species, and/or natural communities, as well as the need to implement applicable avoidance CMAs.

**Preferred Alternative.** Under NEPA, the Preferred Alternative is the alternative that best meets the purpose and need while giving consideration to environmental, social, economic and other factors. The Preferred Alternative must be considered equally with all other fully considered alternatives. There is no guarantee or assumption that the Preferred Alternative will be selected for implementation and the Preferred Alternative may change between the Draft and Final EIS. For CEQA analysis, the action alternative that is the project being analyzed.

**presence/absence survey.** A survey conducted during the planning phase of proposed projects to determine the presence/absence by a Covered Species, when a standard protocol survey for that species is not available, as specified in the species-specific CMAs. A presence/absence survey methodology would be approved by the DRECP Coordination Group. A presence/absence survey may replace a protocol survey in some other circumstances, depending on site conditions and/or timing of the survey (e.g., breeding season), with approval from the DRECP Coordination Group.

**proposed Feinstein bill areas.** Areas identified for conservation, recreation, and other purposes proposed in the California Desert Protection Act of 2011.

**project area.** The total land area affected by a Covered Activity, including the area directly and indirectly affected (equates to 7.1 acres/MW for solar development, 40 acres/MW for wind development, and 5 acres/MW for geothermal development).

**project footprint.** The area of permanent and temporary ground disturbance associated with the construction, operation, and maintenance of a Covered Activity, including associated linear components, such as access roads, gen-ties, other utility lines, etc. May also be considered synonymous with project site.

**protocol survey.** Species-specific surveys that are conducted under a protocol that has been adopted by the Wildlife Agency(ies) or is otherwise scientifically accepted for determining the occupancy or presence and absence of Covered Species. These surveys would be required as specified in the species-specific CMAs.

**public land.** Land or interest in land owned by the United States, State of California, or the counties, typically administered by a federal, state, or local agency.

## R

**Renewable Energy Action Team (REAT) agencies.** The DRECP REAT comprises representatives from the California Energy Commission (CEC), California Department of

Fish and Wildlife (CDFW), Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS).

## S

**setback.** A defined distance, usually expressed in feet or miles, from a resource feature (such as the edge of a natural community or an occupied nest) within which construction and operations of Covered Activities (such as extension of a transmission line) would not occur; otherwise often referred to as a buffer. The purpose of the setback is to maintain the function and value of the biological resource features identified in the CMAs. See Section II.3.1.2.5 for a summary of setbacks incorporated in the CMAs.

**Solar Energy Zones (SEZs).** Zones of potential solar energy development on BLM-administered lands, established by the BLM Solar PEIS.

**Solar PEIS variance lands.** BLM-administered lands identified as variance lands in the BLM Solar PEIS Record of Decision that are potential development areas under the No Action Alternative and Alternative 4.

**solar project.** Covered Activities that involve the construction, operation, and maintenance of a facility that generates energy from sunlight, including photovoltaic panels and thermal systems that convert the heat from sunlight into steam. Solar projects may include up to several acres of photovoltaic or mirror panel arrays, a thermal tower, access roads, maintenance facilities, generators, foundations, and transformers, or other supporting infrastructure.

**Special Analysis Areas (SAAs).** An interim category used in certain DRECP alternatives to represent areas subject to ongoing analysis to inform the designation that is expected to be made for the areas prior to the signing of a NEPA Record of Decision(s) and CEQA certification for the DRECP. The SAAs are known to have high value for renewable energy development and high value for ecological and cultural conservation, and recreation. Following further analysis, the SAAs would be designated as either DFAs or included in the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope in the Final EIS for the DRECP. Covered Activities in SAAs could be permitted for NCCP purposes only through an NCCP plan amendment. In the absence of an NCCP plan amendment, any renewable energy development in an SAA would have to be permitted for state purposes under the California Endangered Species Act not the Natural Community Conservation Planning Act. If these areas are not allocated as DFAs or included in the reserve design envelope in the Record of Decision, where they occur on federal public lands, these areas would default to DRECP Variance Lands and would be subject to those requirements.



**Special Recreation Management Area (SRMA).** Designation on BLM-administered lands that are managed specifically to be high-priority areas for outdoor recreation defined in the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook H-1601-1 (2005). It is a public lands unit identified in land use plans to direct recreation funding and personnel to fulfill commitments made to provide specific structured recreation opportunities (i.e., activity, experience, and benefit opportunities). Both land use plan decisions and subsequent implementing actions for recreation in each SRMA are geared to a strategically identified primary market—destination, community, or undeveloped areas.

**special-status species—BLM.** BLM designation that includes proposed species, listed species, and candidate species under the federal Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended; state-listed, candidate, and fully protected species; and BLM State Director-designated sensitive species. See BLM Manual 6840, Special Status Species Policy, for more detail.

**species of special concern—CDFW.** A CDFW designation for species, subspecies, or distinct population segments that are extirpated from the state in their season or breeding role, meet the definition of threatened or endangered but are not listed, are experiencing population declines or range detracting, have naturally small populations with high risk factors, and/or are otherwise susceptible to becoming listed if current conditions continue.

**Step-Down Biological Objectives.** The DRECP Step-Down Biological Objectives express how implementation of the DRECP would contribute toward meeting the DRECP Plan-wide BGOs. The Step-Down Biological Objectives describe the desired conservation and targeted conditions of implementing the DRECP and resulting contribution to meeting the DRECP Plan-wide BGOs in terms of:

- Desired conservation within the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope, including conservation in existing conservation areas, BLM LUPA conservation designations on BLM-administered lands, and non-BLM lands added to the DRECP Conservation Area through DRECP implementation.
- Desired avoidance and minimization that would be implemented under the DRECP Plan-Wide Conservation Strategy.
- Monitoring and adaptive management activities that would be implemented under the DRECP Plan-Wide Conservation Strategy.

**stressors.** Physical, chemical, or biological factors (or conditions) that affect biological resources, including Covered Species or their suitable habitat, natural communities, and/or important ecosystem processes. The precise contribution of each stressor to a species' population may be uncertain, including which stressors have the greatest effect. In many cases stressors interact, and a combination of various stressors may affect a species.

**Study Area Lands.** Collectively the Special Analysis Areas (SAAs), Future Assessment Areas (FAAs), and DRECP Variance Lands (Solar PEIS Variance Lands in Alternative 4).

**suitable habitat.** Covered Species modeled habitat as determined by the DRECP species distribution models and confirmed or refined (i.e., expanded or reduced) by project-level habitat assessment and that require site-specific protocol or presence/absence surveys as specified in the species-specific CMAs. Suitable habitat consists of land within a Covered Species range that has, in the case of wildlife, breeding and foraging habitat characteristics required by the Covered Species, or in the case of plants, vegetation and microhabitat characteristics consistent with known occurrences, as determined by the habitat assessment.

## T

**transmission project.** Covered Activities that involve the construction, operation, and maintenance of a transmission line, including step-up transformers, towers, and substations, but generally consisting of a linear type of disturbance.

**Transmission Technical Group (TTG).** An independent technical advisory group that assists with transmission planning for the DRECP.

**Travel Management Areas.** On BLM-administered land, polygons or delineated areas where a rational approach has been taken to classify areas as open, closed, or limited, and which have an identified and/or designated network of roads, trails, ways, and/or other routes that provide for public access and travel across the LUPA Planning Area.

**tribal lands.** Those lands that constitute “Indian Country” within the meaning of Title 18 United States Code Section 1151. Included as part of the Other Lands that are unavailable under the DRECP.

## U

**unavoidable impacts to resources.** As applied to Covered Activities, refers to any small-scale impacts to Covered Species, natural communities, and nonbiological resources that may occur even after such impacts have been avoided to the maximum extent practicable. Unavoidable impacts are limited to minor intrusions to biological resources, such as a necessary road or pipeline extension across a sensitive resource required to serve a project, and do not rise to a level of significance that warrants development and application of more rigorous CMAs. Design features will be incorporated in such project elements to minimize effects on the functions and values of biological resources to the maximum extent practicable as determined by the DRECP Coordination Group. Compensation for unavoidable impacts would be required as specified in the DRECP CMAs. The term “maximum extent practicable” as used here is applicable only to the term as it is used in the

CMAs; it does not apply to the term as it is used in the Endangered Species Act incidental take issuance criteria.

**undesignated lands (also referred to as BLM unallocated lands).** BLM-administered lands that do not have an existing or proposed land allocation or designation. These areas would be open to renewable energy applications but would not benefit from the streamlining or CMA certainty of the DFAs. These lands are not needed to fulfill the DRECP biological conservation strategy.

**USFWS Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC).** Species, subspecies, and populations of all migratory nongame birds that, without additional conservation actions, are likely to become candidates for listing under the federal Endangered Species Act.

## V

**valid existing rights.** A documented, legal right or interest in the land that allows a person or entity to use said land for a specific purpose. Such rights include fee title ownership, mineral rights, rights-of-way, easements, permits, licenses, etc. Such rights may have been reserved, acquired, leased, granted, permitted, or otherwise authorized over time.

**Variance Lands.** Refer to DRECP Variance Lands definition above.

**Visual Resource Management (VRM) Classes.** BLM categories assigned to public lands based on scenic quality, sensitivity level, and distance zones. There are four classes, I–IV. Each class has an objective that prescribes the amount of change allowed in the characteristic landscape. See Chapter III.20, Table III.20-2, for the class descriptions.

## W

**Wildlife Agencies.** For purposes of the DRECP, the CDFW and USFWS.

**Wildlife Allocation.** BLM conservation designation on BLM-administered lands where management emphasizes wildlife values. A Wildlife Allocation may be part of an NLCS unit.

**wind project.** Covered Activities that involve the construction, operation, and maintenance of a facility that generates energy from wind, using an array of turbines to capture and convert the wind energy to electricity. Wind projects may include up to several acres of turbines and foundations, access roads, maintenance facilities, generators, and transformers.

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