



APPEARANCES

AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

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Mendel Stewart, US Fish and Wildlife Service

Scott Flint, California Energy Commission

STAFF

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Vicki Campbell, Bureau of Land Management

Kristy Chew, California Energy Commission

ALSO PRESENT

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Catherine Svehla

Greg Bay

Sarah Kennington, Morongo Basin Conservation Association

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Raquel Andrade

Marina West

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APPEARANCES (CONT.)ALSO PRESENT

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Pat Flanagan, Morongo Basin Conservation Association

Richard Selby, Lucerne-Johnson Valley Municipal Advisory Council

Alan Lewis

John Laraway

Bob Howells

Bryan Mashian, Alliance for Desert Preservation

Lorrie Steely, Defenders of Wildlife

Phil Hill

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Neville Slade

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April Sall, The Wildlands Conservancy

David Lamfrom, National Parks Conservation Association

Robert Vega

Joel McCabe

Richard Ravana, Alliance for Desert Preservation

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Tom O'Key

Tina Glidden

John Miller

Robert Conaway

APPEARANCES (CONT.)

ALSO PRESENT

Tom Piper

Buck Buckley

Karen Smith

David Smith

Eva Soltes

Robert Allen

Laraine Turk

Steve Bardwell

Seth Shteir, National Parks Conservation Association

Bill Lembright, Lucerne Valley Economic Development  
Association

Chuck Bell, Lucerne Valley Economic Development Association

Erin D'Orio, Mojave Communities Conservation Collaborative

John Zemanek

Earl Wilson, China Lake Astronomical Society, Western  
Amateur Astronomers

Carlos De La Peza

Tony Malone

Sue Marks

Peggy Lee Kennedy

John Smith

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Stephan Mills

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P R O C E E D I N G S

4:05 p.m.

VICTORVILLE, CALIFORNIA, WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 29, 2014

MR. BEALE: On behalf of the California Energy Commission, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Management, and the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, I'd like to welcome you tonight.

I'm Chris Beale. I'm the Director of the DRECP, the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan.

At the meeting tonight, I'm joined here today with folks from the agencies and the consulting team that helped prepare the Draft Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan.

And I need to open up the phone. Actually, I'm going to sit down so I could -- folks on the phone can hear me.

I want to thank you all for coming tonight. I know it's difficult to make it here on a weeknight. I want you to know that we all appreciate your time and your interest. We welcome you, whether you're here to support the plan or to tell us how we can make it better, you're equally welcome. So thank you very much for coming.

I'd also like to welcome -- we have a special guest tonight, Supervisor Robert Lovingood from the San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors is here. And I'll ask him to come up in just a moment to make a couple of

1 introductory remarks.

2           But before that I have an announcement to make.  
3 At the request of Supervisor Lovingood and Supervisor Ramos,  
4 we are going to be scheduling an additional public meeting  
5 in the Lucerne Valley. We are working with Supervisor  
6 Lovingood's office about the details, the exact time and  
7 date. But it will be in November, probably Morongo Basin or  
8 Yucca Valley, so stay tuned for that. There will be at  
9 least two weeks advance public notice, so more -- more to  
10 come on that.

11           And with that I'd like to welcome Supervisor  
12 Lovingood. Thank you very much for coming tonight.

13           SUPERVISOR LOVINGOOD: Good afternoon. I'd like  
14 to welcome you folks. I think it's very important that we  
15 have a couple opportunities normally not given to us. One,  
16 that the meeting is being held here by the DRECP, and this  
17 is an opportunity to make recommendations, suggestions of  
18 where these -- if you don't agree where they're currently  
19 being proposed, where they should go. This is a very unique  
20 opportunity to be heard, and I think it's something to see.

21           I want to thank you for coming down. I do think  
22 the meeting is going to be in Morongo Basin, not Lucerne,  
23 but that's still a positive. So we have had that added.  
24 It's a strong relationship there, you know, when I say that.

25

1           So just really value the opportunity that you have  
2 tonight to give input, so thank you for coming. Look  
3 forward from hearing from folks.

4           MR. BEALE: Thank you very much. All right, so I  
5 want to -- before we start I just want to give you a sense  
6 of what we have in store for you tonight. The purpose of  
7 the meeting tonight is to introduce you to the Draft Desert  
8 Renewable Energy Conservation Plan. It was first released  
9 about a month ago. We don't expect you to have read it all.

10          If you have read some of it that's -- that's fantastic.  
11 It's a substantial document. What we're hoping to do  
12 tonight is answer your basic questions about what is in the  
13 draft document, why we're preparing it, and where we are in  
14 the process. If you have more detailed questions, we'll try  
15 to help you locate where in the document you can find the  
16 information that's relevant to your concern or question.

17                 And also we're going to provide a couple of  
18 opportunities for public comment on the record tonight. We  
19 know that, again, that's it early in the process. But this  
20 is an early opportunity for public comment. You can comment  
21 as much as you like. This can be your first comment. You  
22 can comment as much as you want later. And I'll talk more  
23 about the opportunities for public comment.

24                 I do want to stress that the DRECP is a planning  
25 document. We're not talking about any particular proposed

1 renewable energy project or transmission like. We're  
2 talking about the development of a plan for future projects.  
3 So there's no specific project being proposed tonight or in  
4 the draft plan.

5           The format tonight is going to be -- we'll start  
6 off with a brief presentation. It takes about 30 minutes.  
7 And Vicki Campbell from BLM will be our presenter tonight.  
8 That will be followed with -- and the presentation, if  
9 you've seen -- we have a presentation online, it's a video,  
10 it's similar to that. This is a shorter version of that.  
11 The PowerPoint that you're going to see will be posted  
12 online. So if you want to see just the PowerPoint slides,  
13 that will be available later.

14           Following that we're going to have sort of a brief  
15 open house session. You see the information stations across  
16 the back of the room. We'll have an opportunity for folks  
17 to ask questions of the planning team, if you want to  
18 understand about what's in the document, and I'll talk more  
19 about that later. That will probably start at 4:30. It  
20 might be a little bit after that.

21           Regardless of when we start on the public  
22 information stations, we will move to public comment  
23 promptly at 5:30. At 5:30 we'll have -- we have a Court  
24 Reporter here, Marlee in the back, if you can raise your  
25 hand. You may not see her on this side. She's right around

1 the corner. She will be available, recording all the  
2 comments that are made during the public comment session.  
3 It will be formal public comments on the record. It will be  
4 just as if you had submitted a written comment. And  
5 we'll -- we're planning to extend the meeting tonight by 30  
6 minutes. So we are planning to provide a full 90 minutes of  
7 public comment, 5:30 to 7:00.

8           If you are interested in speaking, please fill out  
9 one of our speaker cards. You saw them on the table,  
10 probably, when you came in, the blue cards. What we'll do  
11 is use that to gauge the number of speakers we'll have and  
12 the amount of time each speaker will have. There's a lot of  
13 information you can add to the cards, if you like, but all  
14 we really need is your name. And if you would like your  
15 affiliation included with your public comment, please  
16 include your affiliation on the -- on the blue card. And  
17 the blue cards, you can either give them to me or to Valerie  
18 who was at the front desk. Valerie is raising her hand in  
19 the back.

20           We will also at the very end of the public comment  
21 period, this -- this meeting is being broadcast on WebEx.  
22 Some folks are calling in. The last five minutes or so  
23 we'll open up the lines and see if there are any comments  
24 from the phone.

25           A couple of other things I want to point out, and

1 I'll remind you again later, but the -- we have folks here  
2 from the Department of Defense. If Eric Negrete (phonetic)  
3 could raise his hand? So if you have any questions of -- of  
4 the Department of Defense and their interest in or concern  
5 about renewable energy or their operations in the desert,  
6 he's available to answer your questions about that.

7 All right, so with that I want to quickly turn to  
8 our presentation. And then, again, I'll introduce the  
9 information stations at the end -- end of the presentation.  
10 Thank you very much for coming.

11 MS. CAMPBELL: Hello. I'm Vicki Campbell. I am  
12 the DRECP Program Manager for the Bureau of Land Management.  
13 Welcome. And if you see us passing back and forth the  
14 phone, it's -- that's how we're actually having the folks on  
15 WebEx hear us because the speaker system in the ceiling  
16 isn't quite working for us. So technology at its finest.

17 So I want to take you through a brief presentation  
18 about the DRECP. And first, like Chris did, I want to  
19 welcome you on behalf of the Bureau of Land Management, the  
20 California Energy Commission, US Fish and Wildlife Service,  
21 and California Department of Fish and Wildlife to this  
22 public meeting and to this brief presentation.

23 The DRECP is the result of an intense  
24 collaborative interagency planning process. It's a  
25 comprehensive plan that contains a great deal of

1 information, as many of you know if you've opened up the  
2 document. We've organized the plan to make it as accessible  
3 as possible. The DRECP is organized in a format similar to  
4 environmental impact statements and environmental impact  
5 reports that you are used to seeing.

6           The DRECP contains six main volumes and an  
7 additional technical appendices. The volumes in the DRECP  
8 correspond to chapters that you're used to seeing in  
9 environmental impact statements and other environmental  
10 impact reports.

11           Volume I contains the background, including the  
12 purpose and need. Volume II describes the alternatives.  
13 Volume III describes the environmental setting and existing  
14 conditions. Volume IV contains the draft environmental  
15 analysis and environmental consequences. Volume V describes  
16 the scoping and public participation. And Volume VI  
17 includes details about implementation of mitigation  
18 measures.

19           There are 24 technical appendices, including  
20 appendices for covered species, biological goals and  
21 objectives, and climate change. There are also specific  
22 appendices that provide additional detail on the BLM Land  
23 Use Plan Amendments, US Fish and Wildlife Service General  
24 Conservation Plan, and California Natural Communities  
25 Conservation Plan.

1           Volume I is an introduction to the plan itself.  
2 Many federal, state, local agencies, tribes, and private  
3 citizens provided helpful input into the development of this  
4 Draft DRECP. The four primary agencies that were  
5 responsible for the document include the California Energy  
6 Commission, Bureau of Land Management, US Fish and Wildlife  
7 Service, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

8           The purpose and goals of the DRECP are to provide  
9 a long-term adaptable plan for renewable energy development  
10 and resource conservation for more than 22.5 million acres  
11 in the Mojave and Sonoran Deserts of Southern California.  
12 The DRECP has a 25-year planning horizon and is intended to  
13 be implemented through the year 2040.

14           The Draft DRECP is intended to streamline the  
15 environmental review and permitting process for renewable  
16 energy projects sited in appropriate areas. "Streamlined"  
17 under the DRECP means the review and permitting processes  
18 will be more efficient and more predictable. Streamlined  
19 does not mean the environmental analysis will be incomplete  
20 or that steps or portions of any state or federal law will  
21 be skipped. The DRECP will not weaken requirements for  
22 environmental review under state or federal law; it will  
23 make them more efficient and more predictable.

24           The DRECP will conserve sensitive species and  
25 their habitats, including species listed as threatened or

1 endangered under the Federal Endangered Species Act and  
2 California Endangered Species Act.

3           On BLM administered lands the DRECP will also  
4 conserve other valuable resources and uses such as  
5 recreation, visual, cultural, and wilderness  
6 characteristics, to name a few. A core element of the DRECP  
7 is the significant increase in conservation and recreation  
8 designations that BLM is proposing to protect valued  
9 resources and uses on BLM land.

10           The DRECP provides a framework for renewable  
11 energy, conservation, and a range of other valued resources  
12 and uses in one land use and conservation planning process.

13           The DRECP identifies appropriate areas for  
14 renewable energy projects and creates incentives for  
15 developers to site projects in those areas. It would  
16 streamline the environmental review and permitting process  
17 in those areas. The DRECP also proposes to conserve  
18 sensitive species, their habitat, and ecological processes  
19 and other valued resources and uses in the desert on BLM  
20 land. As it -- as it is currently, the siting of renewable  
21 energy projects and the mitigation of impacts are considered  
22 on an individual project basis, not on a comprehensive  
23 landscape scale.

24           The DRECP considers development, mitigation, and  
25 conservation at a comprehensive landscape scale. The DRECP

1 would also improve the coordination between federal, state,  
2 local, tribal, and private conservation efforts by  
3 identifying high priority landscape-scale goals that can be  
4 used to guide and achieve greater conservation outcomes.  
5 Consideration of renewable energy development, transmission,  
6 and conservation of a range of values and uses together in  
7 one land use and resource planning process is considered  
8 smart from the start.

9           The DRECP plan area encompasses approximately 22-  
10 and-a-half million acres across portions of seven counties  
11 in the Mojave and Sonoran Deserts of Southern California.  
12 It includes federal and non-federal lands. The plan area  
13 includes only a small portion of some counties, such as San  
14 Diego, and large portions of others, such as San Bernardino  
15 County.

16           This map shows you the general ownership within  
17 the plan areas. The largest holdings are BLM lands in  
18 yellow, National Park Service in green, Department of  
19 Defense lands in dark gray, and private lands in light gray  
20 color.

21           The DRECP is a combination of three different  
22 types of plans, a Bureau of Land Management Land Use Plan  
23 Amendment referred to by the acronym LUPA, a US Fish and  
24 Wildlife Service General Conservation Plan referred to as  
25 the GCP, and a California Department of Fish and Wildlife

1 Natural Communities Conservation Plan referred to as the  
2 NCCP. These three plans are integrated and work together to  
3 achieve the DRECP's overall goals.

4           Each of the three different plans apply to  
5 different portions of the DRECP plan area. The BLM Land Use  
6 Plan Amendment applies only to BLM lands, covering nearly 10  
7 million acres of the plan area. The General Conservation  
8 Plan applies to 5.4 million acres of non-federal lands. It  
9 does not apply to any BLM or any other federal lands. The  
10 NCCP applies to both federal and non-federal land, covering  
11 nearly 19 million acres.

12           The DRECP's covered activities are categories of  
13 actions for which the DRECP could provide a more efficient  
14 and predictable environmental review and permitting process.

15       Renewable energy projects that are sited within DRECP's  
16 development focus areas, you see the acronym there as DFA,  
17 are the largest category of covered activities and include  
18 solar, wind, and geothermal projects. Transmission needed  
19 to support renewable energy generation is another category  
20 of covered activities. Transmission projects would be  
21 covered, both within and outside of these development focus  
22 areas and in order to deliver energy to the places where it  
23 is needed.

24           Biological conservation and compensation are also  
25 covered activities. On BLM land, conservation and

1 compensation actions for a variety of resources and uses are  
2 covered activities which include but are not limited to  
3 biological, cultural, recreation, and visual resources.

4           The DRECP would also cover all phases of renewable  
5 energy development, including preconstruction, operation,  
6 maintenance, and ultimately decommissioning of those  
7 renewable energy projects when they've reached the end of  
8 their life.

9           The DRECP plans for up to 20,000 megawatts of new  
10 generation and transmission in the plan area through the  
11 year 2040. It's important to note that the 20,000 megawatts  
12 of new generation is not a goal or a target. The DRECP is  
13 not intended to drive a level of development. Instead, the  
14 20,000 megawatts was used as a planning tool to estimate the  
15 amount of acres of ground disturbance that might occur. The  
16 20,000 megawatts and estimated ground disturbance were used  
17 in the environmental analysis.

18           The 20,000 megawatts of renewable energy  
19 development in the desert is based on specific assumptions  
20 about energy generation in the State of California,  
21 including the assumption that nearly 30,000 megawatts of  
22 distributed generation, for example rooftop solar, limited  
23 generation from nuclear and fossil fuels, and state policies  
24 that limit the import of renewable energy from outside the  
25 state.

1           We estimate that the production of 20,000  
2 megawatts would result in about 177,000 acres of ground  
3 disturbance from renewable energy projects in the plan area.  
4 However, the actual amount of renewable energy development  
5 would be driven by market conditions as it currently.

6           The DRECP, as I've said before, analyzes the  
7 effects of all the phases of renewable energy development.  
8 One of the key differences among the alternatives is the  
9 size and location of the development focus areas and where  
10 that development would be sited.

11           This slide includes the specific renewable energy  
12 designations. The most important of these are the  
13 development focus areas, you see the acronym here, DFA.  
14 This is where renewable energy projects would benefit from a  
15 more efficient, predictable, and incentives-based process.  
16 The areas are suitable because they have the renewable  
17 energy resources; they're windy, sunny, and have geothermal  
18 resources. They are also compatible -- excuse me -- with  
19 the conservation of species and other resources and uses  
20 that we value in the desert.

21           In most of the alternatives the DFAs are located  
22 where resource values are relatively low, to minimize  
23 conflicts between renewable energy development and resource  
24 conservation. BLM would be offering incentives for  
25 renewable energy projects to be sited in DFAs on BLM land.

1 Study area lands are another type of renewable  
2 energy designation. Study area lands could be appropriate  
3 for development in the future, but require additional  
4 analysis. Study area lands are not development focus areas,  
5 and they are not analyzed as such in the environmental  
6 document.

7 The DRECP's biological conservation strategy was  
8 used to develop the Land Use Plan, General Conservation  
9 Plan, and Natural Communities Conservation Plan. The  
10 biological conservation strategy includes 37 covered species  
11 and 31 natural communities. It is designed to protect  
12 species and their habitats, natural communities, and  
13 ecological processes, and is based on a set of overarching  
14 biological goals and objectives.

15 The biological strategy includes specific  
16 conservation and management actions. You will find these in  
17 the document called CMAs. That's the acronym for  
18 conservation and management actions. These CMAs are  
19 designed to avoid, minimize, and compensate for impacts to  
20 covered species and to contribute to their recovery. The  
21 conservation strategy also includes a monitoring and  
22 adaptive management program to allow the DRECP to  
23 incorporate new information throughout its 25-year life.

24 Volume II, the alternatives. Six alternatives are  
25 presented and analyzed in the draft DRECP; five action

1 alternatives and one no-action alternative. The agencies  
2 have identified one of the five action alternatives as the  
3 preferred alternative. The no-action alternative describes  
4 what is expected to happen if the DRECP is not completed or  
5 approved.

6           The BLM Land Use Plan Amendment, Natural Community  
7 Conservation Plan, and General Conservation Plan are  
8 included in all five of the action alternatives. Other  
9 common elements of the five action alternatives include the  
10 biological conservation strategy, development focus areas,  
11 recreation designations, and a monitoring and adaptive  
12 management program.

13           Each of the five action alternatives analyzes the  
14 potential production of 20,000 megawatts of renewable energy  
15 which would result in about 177,000 acres of ground  
16 disturbance. These acres are dispersed and analyzed  
17 differently in each of the action alternatives depending on  
18 the configuration of the development focus areas.

19           This is a map of the no-action alternative which  
20 assumes the DRECP would not be approved. The light pink  
21 areas are where renewable energy projects could potentially  
22 be built today. This is an area of about 9.8 million acres.  
23 The dark pink hatched areas show where renewable energy  
24 projects would occur under the DRECP's preferred  
25 alternative. This is an area of about 2 million acres.

1           One of the most important differences among the  
2 DRECP alternatives is the size and geographic distribution  
3 of the development focus areas, the DFAs. This slide shows  
4 you a comparison of the DFAs in three of the five action  
5 alternatives. The DFAs are shown in pink.

6           Alternative 1, on the left, has the smallest  
7 extent of development focus areas. The preferred  
8 alternative in the middle has somewhat larger development  
9 focus areas than Alternative 1, and it provides a moderate  
10 siting flexibility and moderately dispersed development  
11 impacts. Alternative 2, on the far right, has the largest  
12 development focus areas, would provide the most siting  
13 flexibility and the most geographically dispersed impacts.

14           Remember, regardless of development focus area  
15 size we are estimating about 177,000 acres of impact in all  
16 five of the action alternatives. If you look closely, and  
17 when you look at the document, you'll see differences in --  
18 let's see if I can get it to do it, and I -- oh, there we  
19 go. The West Mojave is an area where you'll see a big  
20 difference, East Riverside, and Imperial. In each of the  
21 alternatives those are the three areas where the biggest  
22 difference between DFAs occurs, again, in the West Mojave,  
23 in East Riverside area, and in Imperial Valley.

24           Another important difference among the DRECP  
25 alternatives is the extent of the BLM lands proposed to be

1 added to the National Landscape Conservation System. This  
2 slide shows the same three alternatives, Alternative 1, on  
3 the left, the preferred alternative in the middle, and  
4 Alternative 2 on the right.

5           The proposed National Conservation Lands are shown  
6 in purple. Alternative 1, on the left, has the least amount  
7 of proposed National Conservation Lands proposed. The  
8 preferred alternative in the middle has a moderate amount.  
9 And Alternative 2, on the right, has the greatest amount.  
10 The amount of proposed National Conservation Lands  
11 corresponds to the amount of development focus areas in each  
12 of the action alternatives. The larger and more dispersed  
13 the development focus areas means the more natural resources  
14 are put at risk of being impacted. So larger National  
15 Conservation Land designations are proposed to address that  
16 potential larger impact.

17           This map orients you to the West Mojave and  
18 Lucerne Valley region of the DRECP. Development focus areas  
19 are shown in pink. Study area lands are shown in a dark  
20 blue. Private conservation lands, potential private  
21 conservation lands, are shown in pale green. On BLM land  
22 you see proposed areas of critical environmental concern in  
23 light blue, National Landscape Conservation Lands in yellow,  
24 which you don't see many on this slide, and special  
25 recreation management areas in a light slashed gray. Dark

1 gray areas are Department of Defense, and dark green are  
2 existing conservation lands, such as wilderness or national  
3 parks.

4           Here are some of the basic details and highlights  
5 about the preferred alternative. The overall biological  
6 conservation strategy for the preferred covers 15 million  
7 acres which includes existing conservation such as existing  
8 wilderness and national park units. BLM conservation  
9 designations cover about 4 million acres. The development  
10 focus areas about 2 million. The study area lands cover  
11 about 183,000 acres. And BLM recreation designations cover  
12 about 3.6 million acres.

13           This is the complete map of the preferred  
14 alternative. Here you see many colors, many designations.  
15 But you see the development focus areas in relationship to  
16 the conservation lands, study area lands, recreation lands,  
17 Department of Defense lands, and national park units,  
18 wilderness, etc. This map gives you the full extent of all  
19 the land allocations proposed and in existence in relation  
20 to one another.

21           For the preferred alternative a little over 2  
22 million acres, as we said, are proposed for development  
23 focus areas. To meet the DRECP planning assumption of  
24 20,000 megawatts, projects would be built on approximately  
25 177,000 acres of those 2 million acres. That's about nine

1 percent of the development focus areas. The dark striped  
2 slice at the top of this pie chart represents the estimated  
3 ground disturbance in proportion to the overall development  
4 focus area acreage.

5 This map shows the development focus areas in pink  
6 and the estimated ground disturbance expected to occur in  
7 each of the counties within the DRECP. For example, you can  
8 see San Bernardino County, about eight 8 percent of the  
9 development focus areas or about 30,000 acres are estimated  
10 to be developed out of about 350,000 acres of development  
11 focus area.

12 Volumes III and IV; this is the environmental  
13 analysis. Volume III is the environmental setting. Volume  
14 IV is the analysis, also known as the environmental  
15 consequences. Twenty-three resource areas were analyzed in  
16 the environmental analysis. These resource areas were  
17 identified based on scoping meetings, preliminary analysis,  
18 and input from tribes, local governments, the public, and  
19 agency experts.

20 In the environmental analysis we compared the  
21 alternatives, based on renewable energy development impacts,  
22 proposed conservation and management actions for recreation,  
23 visual, biological, covered species, cultural, and other  
24 resources on BLM lands, and acreages and types of land  
25 allocations on BLM land.

1           The draft analysis concluded that impacts to most  
2 of the 23 resource areas would be less than significant.  
3 For ten of those resource areas impacts would be significant  
4 in one more of the alternatives, including the no-action  
5 alternative. You see those ten resource areas listed here  
6 on this slide.

7           Now we're going to discuss briefly how the DRECP  
8 will be implemented.

9           It's important to note that no new government  
10 entity is being created by the DRECP. All existing agencies  
11 retain their current authority and their current  
12 responsibilities. The purpose of identifying an  
13 implementation structure for the DRECP is to improve agency  
14 coordination and communication. Implementation will also  
15 include local governments, tribal governments, the public,  
16 and scientific participation and input. The DRECP also  
17 includes an estimated cost of implementing the DRECP's  
18 biological conservation strategy and some sources of that  
19 funding.

20           Local governments may use the DRECP to inform  
21 their land use planning decisions. The DRECP will not  
22 restrict or change any local land use planning or permitting  
23 authority for renewable energy projects. Local governments  
24 will have the option of applying for permits from the US  
25 Fish and Wildlife Service and from California Department of

1 Fish and Wildlife to cover renewable energy projects within  
2 their jurisdictions.

3 This concludes our overview of the Draft DRECP.  
4 And now we want to go over just a little bit about public  
5 participation. We're going to explain some of the options  
6 in public participation.

7 So as you can see the agencies have completed our  
8 work on the draft plan, and now we need you to help us shape  
9 the final.

10 We created a dedicated website for the DRECP,  
11 [www.drecp.org](http://www.drecp.org). Most of you have probably been on it. It is  
12 your primary source of information on the web. The DRECP is  
13 also available on the BLM website and on the US Fish and  
14 Wildlife Service website.

15 We have an innovative mapping tool called the  
16 DRECP Gateway, and I'll talk about that in a moment.

17 The DRECP is available for review at local  
18 libraries and agency offices in the plan area. You can find  
19 the addresses of these local libraries and agency offices on  
20 [drecp.org](http://drecp.org), and also at handouts in the front of the room --  
21 or at the back of the room, at the entrance when you came  
22 in. DVDs are also available upon request. We know that  
23 some of you have download speeds which are not conducive to  
24 color maps and that sort of thing. And so we do have DVDs  
25 available to make review easier for you. You can request

1 those across email or by calling a toll free number. And  
2 those -- that information is also available on that handout  
3 in the lobby. We also have a series of fact sheets,  
4 frequently asked questions, and a video which is a longer  
5 version of this presentation on [www.drecp.org](http://www.drecp.org). The fact  
6 sheets are also available at the front of the room, so you  
7 don't have to print them out.

8           We really want to stress that public review and  
9 comment is absolutely critical to us developing the final  
10 DRECP. Your comments will be accepted by email, fax,  
11 physical delivery, and at these public meetings, both with  
12 Marlee during the station where you want to talk to her more  
13 in private, or up in front when we get to that session,  
14 which are also being recorded. You can also hand us written  
15 comments here at the meetings. Again, you can also send  
16 them in, send them by email. We want to make it as easy as  
17 possible for you to give us your comments.

18           We also want to stress that all your comments, all  
19 of them, are welcomed, valued, and considered. We opened  
20 the public comment, as Chris said, on September 26th, 2014.  
21 We close the comment period 106 days later on January 9th,  
22 2015.

23           We have some tips for you when developing your  
24 comments, especially your written comments. To help us  
25 develop the final plan we really need to know what you want

1 us to change. So substantive comments will have the  
2 greatest effect on the final DRECP because they tell us  
3 specifically what you want us to add, remove, remove or  
4 otherwise change, and most importantly, why, why you want  
5 those kinds of changes.

6           Some examples of specific types of comments that  
7 will have the greatest effect on the final DRECP include  
8 comments that raise significant unaddressed issues, issues  
9 that require clarification or modification in the document,  
10 modification to one of more of the alternatives, inclusion  
11 of new or different alternatives, addition of new or missing  
12 information that could substantially change our analysis  
13 conclusions, or corrections in our analysis that could  
14 substantially change any of our conclusions.

15           This is the DRECP Gateway. It's our innovative  
16 online data and mapping tool. It is free and user friendly.  
17 There is a sign-in function, but you only have to use it if  
18 you want to save maps, layer your own maps and come back  
19 later and use it again. If you want to go in and just turn  
20 layers off on, print them out, you don't have to sign in.  
21 In this tool you can view, edit and analyze maps and data.  
22 The Gateway contains data sets. So anyone with a computer,  
23 regardless of your experience or inexperience with GIS, can  
24 use all the maps in this site. We want to encourage  
25 everyone to go in and explore or play, as the case may be.

1 You can create custom maps and put your comments right into  
2 those maps, and then print them out and put them in your  
3 written comments and send to us.

4           You see the website below, [drecp.databasin.org](http://drecp.databasin.org).  
5 There is also a link to the Databasin on the [drecp.org](http://drecp.org)  
6 website. So there's many ways to get to it.

7           It is important to note that this site is an  
8 innovative tool, but it is just a tool. It is not necessary  
9 to use Databasin or any of its functions to review,  
10 understand or comment on the DRECP. It is an optional  
11 resource available for your use.

12           This concludes our presentation. Thank you very  
13 much for listening and your interest in the DRECP. We look  
14 forward to talking with you at the stations. We look  
15 forward to your comments that you'll give to Marlee. And we  
16 look forward to hearing from you at the podium starting at  
17 5:30.

18           MR. BEALE: Thank you, Vicki. So now we are --  
19 we're going to move the open house information station  
20 session. I'm going to let you know where the different  
21 stations are so you can know where to go for your particular  
22 area of interest. The idea here is we have folks who worked  
23 on preparing the plan and they're available to answer --  
24 answer your questions. We'll reconvene right around 5:30 or  
25 right on -- right at 5:30 for public comment.

1 Starting with -- in Station 1 I believe is in the  
2 back corner over here. This is our general station. If you  
3 have a general question about what the DRECP is, what's in  
4 it, how the alternatives are different, how the  
5 environmental analysis works, that's Station 1 in the back.

6 Next to that we have -- not next to that. Well,  
7 I'm going to go down the row here. What do we have there  
8 today? Energy Commission is next. Okay. So the energy  
9 station is here. If you have questions about the renewable  
10 energy planning assumptions of the plan, that's straight in  
11 the back. David and Eli are raising their hands, and  
12 Eileen.

13 Next over we have the BLM Land Use Plan  
14 Amendments. Vicki, who should be very familiar to you by  
15 now, has already moved to the back there. If you have  
16 questions about BLM's Land Use Plan Amendment, please go  
17 there.

18 Next to that we have a station for the General  
19 Conservation Plan -- Jenness is raising her hand -- if you'd  
20 like to ask questions about the General Conservation Plan.

21 And then at the end the NCCP station in the far  
22 corner there. We have folks from the Department of Fish and  
23 Wildlife there to answer your questions.

24 And then finally near the exit, biological  
25 conservation strategy station if you have questions about

1 biological goals and objectives and how conservation  
2 considerations were factored in.

3 I do want to stress that your first time to make  
4 verbal comments, oral comments is right now. If you want to  
5 make sure you get your comments in early, if you're  
6 uncomfortable speaking in front of a group, please go back  
7 and talk to Marlee here. Your comments will be on the  
8 record, just as if you had submitted a written comment.

9 So thank you, everyone, for your participation and  
10 interest. And I'll ask everyone to take their seats again a  
11 little bit before 5:30. Thank you.

12 (Off the record at 4:46 p.m.)

13 (Breakout Session Public Comment begins at 4:48 p.m.)

14 MR. HUTCHENS: My comment is, is that on your  
15 environmentalist study, I only saw where you impacted  
16 endangered species. My comment is what -- what about the  
17 species that are endangered that will be affected? I've  
18 seen where particular with ravens, they're not endangered by  
19 any sense of the meaning but, you know, I've seen where they  
20 fly over these solar towers and they get fried to a crisp.  
21 And my concerns is do we wait until they have to get on the  
22 endangered species to do research as to how, you know, these  
23 things will have on our environment? And that's my comment.

24 MS. SVEHLA: Catherine Svehla, and I was going to  
25 read from that. Thank you. Because I already gave a

1 written comment to the woman at the front. Go ahead?

2           To our San Bernardino County, California state and  
3 federal officials, I've lived in the Mojave Desert since  
4 2001 and my husband and I have owned property in Joshua  
5 Tree, California since 2006. This community is our home and  
6 where we plan to retire. We chose the Mojave Desert for its  
7 beauty and quiet and for the creative inspiration that it  
8 provides us. I am a writer and artist with a PhD in  
9 mythology, and my husband is a songwriter, musician and  
10 poet.

11           My most immediate concern about the current plan  
12 is that we've not been given adequate time to review it.  
13 This is an 8,000 page document. I request a 60-day  
14 extension so that community members have a reasonable amount  
15 of time to review and discuss it.

16           I also request that additional meetings be held in  
17 the East Mojave, for example, Needles, Barstow and Yucca  
18 Valley.

19           I am also very concerned about the Soda Mountain  
20 Solar and Silurian Valley solar and wind projects that are  
21 being allowed to proceed outside of the DRECP process. Why  
22 are these projects moving ahead? This undermines the  
23 integrity of this massive planning process and public trust.  
24 I think these projects should be placed on hold and folded  
25 into the DRECP.

1           Finally, I notice that all of the proposed  
2 alternatives provide for 20,000 megawatts of renewable  
3 energy to be generated in the desert. These aren't really  
4 alternatives if the proposed outcome is ultimately the same.  
5 I think this reflects a common misperception about the  
6 desert, that it is so huge that we can take chunks out here  
7 and there and it won't matter, but that's not true.

8           As a mythologist my expertise in study involves  
9 how people make and find meaning in life. The desert is an  
10 iconic landscape with a long history as a place of  
11 revelation and inspiration. Consider the roots of major  
12 world religions the creative output of uncountable artists,  
13 poets and musicians. Undertake a short investigation into  
14 the subject and confirm this for yourself. What makes the  
15 desert uniquely powerful is its vastness and seeming  
16 emptiness. Its unbroken vistas and harshness speak to the  
17 human heart and imagination of eternity and the divine.

18           The stakes surrounding our energy needs and use  
19 are very high. Global warming is real, and I have children  
20 and grandchildren who represent my investment in a  
21 sustainable future. But we must be careful not to trade  
22 away the foundations of our culture. We should not  
23 sacrifice an irreplaceable source of nourishment for the  
24 human soul. If we do then our ability to flip a light  
25 switch or drive the highways will mean very little.

1           If sufficient renewable energy is what we are all  
2 after there are better ways to do it. Plenty of rooftops  
3 are sitting under the sunshine today. I would like to see  
4 greater consideration of distributive resources options.

5           Thank you for your consideration. Catherine  
6 Svehla, Joshua Tree, California. Thank you.

7           MR. BAY: I'm particularly concerned about the  
8 area south of Highway 18 between Lucerne Valley and Apple  
9 Valley where some industrial size renewable projects have  
10 been slated. I'm particularly concerned because the hills  
11 that cover that area are extremely fragile. And in order to  
12 put industrial size or large scale renewable projects along  
13 that mountain ridge would cause major disruption. They'd  
14 have to build roads. They would probably be putting  
15 transmission lines in through there. The transmission lines  
16 would -- would disrupt the natural habitat and the  
17 residents. And I feel that that area really, really needs  
18 to be protected.

19           I'm particularly concerned about the hillside.  
20 It's a recreational area. It's magnificent in its beauty.  
21 And, you know, I would stress that that area that's targeted  
22 between Lucerne Valley and Apple Valley be protected and  
23 nothing be allowed on a large scale to be developed in that  
24 area. Thank you.

25           MS. KENNINGTON: Thank you for this opportunity to

1 comment on the DRECP draft EIS/EIR. I'm Sarah Kennington, a  
2 voting resident and property owner in Pioneer Town in San  
3 Bernardino County. I have had a relationship with this area  
4 for over 25 years. I'm also President of the Morongo Basin  
5 Conservation Association. MBCA is the oldest conversation  
6 oriented organization in the basin, incorporated in 1969,  
7 dedicated to preserving the basin's economic and  
8 environmental welfare. MBCA's e-blasts are regularly sent  
9 out to over 800 supporters.

10 MBCA has watched the evolution of the DRECP over  
11 the years and are eager now to address the -- the draft.  
12 Even with our past attention, coming to grips with a 6,000  
13 page document is daunting. It's beyond reasonable to think  
14 we can substantively comment in a 90-day period. In fact,  
15 you're asking for comments today, only 33 days since the  
16 draft was published. Extend the comment period an  
17 additional 60 more days. At least 30 days more are required  
18 to provide adequate time to study the document and provide  
19 the input you request.

20 The value of the wildlife, the wilderness  
21 experience, vast open spaces with ancient and historic  
22 cultural treasures cannot be underestimated. The plan  
23 targets generation without providing adequate guidance on  
24 the value of protecting irreplaceable species and their  
25 habitats. What guarantees that conservation and mitigation

1 measures will be in place in perpetuity? How will this be  
2 monitored and funded?

3           Since the DRECP process began, technology and  
4 economies have changed. Industrial-scale renewable energy  
5 projects and transmission are increasingly proven to be too  
6 costly and inefficient; unintended consequences proliferate.  
7 Distributed generation has the potential to ease the burden  
8 on wildlands. Incorporate distributed generation into the  
9 energy calculations.

10           San Bernardino County has the greatest amount of  
11 territory at stake. MBCA strongly advocates that the county  
12 planning agency work with the communities impacted to  
13 protect the public's interest. This would require dedicated  
14 communication and coordination to foresee impacts the  
15 plans -- of the plans development focus areas and to  
16 identify low-conflict areas for development. Projects that  
17 harm county interests, national parks, and quality of life  
18 must be opposed. With the county's leadership, conflict can  
19 be minimized and hopefully avoided.

20           Thank you for listening and considering my  
21 comments.

22           MR. MILLER: I'm very concerned about -- the  
23 impacts of the NCCP and the Conservation Plan don't appear  
24 to have been adequately addressed or analyzed with respect  
25 to their impacts upon two areas, existing natural historic

1 trails, especially the Old Spanish Trail which is adopted by  
2 Congress and recognized by BLM and National Park Service.  
3 It's an existing trail that has an adopted alignment, and  
4 yet it doesn't seem to have been adequately analyzed with  
5 respect to the National Historic Preservation Act section  
6 106. So if the DRECP is intended to streamline the review  
7 process I feel that that trail should be recognized in the  
8 plan so that people know it's there and that it has to be  
9 protected.

10           The other area I'm concerned about is the impact,  
11 again especially of the conservation areas in the NCCP upon  
12 existing recreation trails in the desert. They've talked a  
13 lot about OHV areas and sort of equated that with  
14 recreational use. But there are many existing trails  
15 throughout the desert that people travel for recreational  
16 purposes that are outside the OHV areas and provide access  
17 to historic cultural activities in the desert. So I don't  
18 feel that those have been adequately analyzed. Thank you.

19           MS. LONG: Why doesn't anybody talk about  
20 population control? If we -- that's number one.

21           Number two, why don't we use the existing power  
22 poles or huge metal power transformer lines that are running  
23 through the desert and use cylindrical-type windmills that  
24 can sit on top of these huge transformer that are traveling  
25 across the country? I believe because it's in the desert,

1 it's already there existing, we would not tear up the desert  
2 anymore. And it would be more appealing.

3 We need big corporate to stay out of our desert.  
4 Here we are and people think we're in San Bernardino County.  
5 Nobody cares. This is our home. It's been our home for 23  
6 years. We want to see our grandchildren enjoy it.

7 That's it. I'm done.

8 MS. REEDER: First of all, I just have a few  
9 comments. We talk a lot about the sensitive species and  
10 compatible to animals and all that research that you're  
11 doing, but there isn't a lot of mention about how compatible  
12 it is to the homeowners who live in the area to be impacted.  
13 And the human habitat, this is why we're here, it's the  
14 human habitat, as well as all of the indigenous species that  
15 we're concerned about.

16 I'd also like to mention that I haven't heard a  
17 lot about the earthquake potential in that area. There  
18 is -- it's called the North Slope Fault right from High  
19 Road. It's north of the railroad tracks. And it's got a  
20 potential of an 8.0 earthquake. And again, I haven't seen a  
21 lot of research of what that potential would have to do with  
22 these -- with the project.

23 And that's about all I have to say. Thank you.

24 MS. ANDRADE: What I've noticed since the solar --  
25 all these solar farms or whatever have been coming around --

1 I live in Apple Valley -- you know, these big things that  
2 they've been putting in, the bird population, I've noticed a  
3 drastic dwindling of the bird population. We live out in  
4 kind of like a farm thing, and we used to have birds come  
5 in. You know, we have these piles of dirt where the birds  
6 would come in and do their bird bath, you know, all the  
7 time. We'd have holes in the -- in the piles of dirt and  
8 everything. It's like almost disappeared, the birds, you  
9 know, the birds, even the birds flying around.

10 But anyway, I always had to complain about that  
11 because I had to go fix the piles because they had all these  
12 holes because the dirt -- the birds were getting in there  
13 and doing their dirt baths. We don't have that happening  
14 anymore. So I've noticed big time a dwindling of the bird  
15 population. Okay. And I think it has to do with -- I mean,  
16 I'm going like, oh, they got sizzled here and there.  
17 They're getting sizzled, you know? You know, poor guys. It  
18 has had an effect on our environment.

19 That's my comment. Okay. Thank you.

20 MS. WEST: Without having been able to digest the  
21 entire DRECP document, I want to be sure the following  
22 concerns are noted and evaluated.

23 Time extension and more meetings please.

24 Cumulative -- number one, cumulative effects from  
25 airborne particulates released as a result of DRECP

1 renewable energy development goals includes evaluations of  
2 risk exposure to Valley Fever and other pathogens, etcetera,  
3 and the overall air quality. And the unintended consequence  
4 of soil disturbance in the desert which could release more  
5 CO2, how will these effects be mitigated?

6           Number two, issues such as lack of consideration  
7 that the federal renewable energy goals could be met in less  
8 destructive ways without designating such a large amount of  
9 private land in San Bernardino County. What about load  
10 centers in Los Angeles, Orange, and San Diego Counties?  
11 Shouldn't these counties have to bear some responsibility to  
12 develop renewable energy state goals? And why does such a  
13 large percent of the DRECP federal mandate have to be in  
14 California?

15           Number three, the excuse that distributed  
16 generation alternative does not meet the agencies' mandate  
17 to develop 20,000 megawatts on public lands is absurd.  
18 First, if distributed generation could meet the goal then it  
19 is within the purpose and need because it would meet the  
20 mandate for conservation and would still meet the federal  
21 goal with less destruction and lower risk of unintended  
22 consequences.

23           And then why is so much of the land on private  
24 property in San Bernardino County?

25           Why does the DRECP not consider perpetuity and

1 durability of conservation beyond project and DRECP life?

2           Number five, have impacts to property values been  
3 evaluated? How will degradation of communities be  
4 mitigated? Projects should -- projects avoid reassessment  
5 on private lands, negatively affecting the tax resources  
6 used to provide local services such as water.

7           Number six, water will not mitigate blow sand  
8 generated upon soil disturbance, so these projects just  
9 waste water. For instance, Lucerne Valley's project took as  
10 much as the Pauley Pavilion in the first few weeks, and the  
11 sand still blows. Such land use considerations have never  
12 been considered in local or regional urban water management  
13 plans. How is it possible the Executive Summary states  
14 water is, quote, "a less than significant impact," unquote?  
15 And how does the no-action alternative cause a more  
16 significant impact?

17           In closing, remember MTBE. It was going to  
18 freshen our air but it polluted water all over California.  
19 In the five-plus years of DRECP planning the technology,  
20 science and culture of renewable energy has changed. While  
21 the plan nears its end isn't it prudent to consider that  
22 behind the meter where smaller scale distributed generation  
23 would be more creative and more acceptable without so much  
24 sacrifice to our natural environment and rural communities.  
25 Let's not make this about political mandates and Wall Street

1 profiteers. Let's make it about real conservation and real  
2 efforts to promote energy independence. Thank you.

3 MS. FOLEY: I would like to respectfully request  
4 an extension of the commenting period. I'd also like to  
5 request more meetings close to the end of the comment  
6 period.

7 In the parts of the plan that I've had a chance to  
8 read so far I see lots of references to adaptive management.  
9 I would like to request that the DRECP stakeholders  
10 adaptively manage the plan to take advantage of new and  
11 evolving technologies and variables. This could be done by  
12 rolling out the plan in phases and taking advantage of the  
13 latest information, science and technology.

14 (An audience member sneezes.)

15 Bless you. You're allergic to science and tech?  
16 I'm sorry.

17 The distributed generation alternative was  
18 rejected because, quote, "Local governments cite lack of  
19 funds in time to update codes and address local renewable  
20 technology," end quote. The San Bernardino County is  
21 underway with a General Plan and Development Code amendment  
22 to include renewable energy updates. I think we could  
23 incorporate some of the distributed generation model by  
24 refining the DFAs and incorporating the latest information.

25 In the DG alternative that was discarded, BLM said

1 that it doesn't meet their purpose and need because it  
2 wouldn't advance federal orders that compel the BLM to  
3 evaluate renewable energy. They said it would, quote, "It  
4 would not respond to BLM's purpose to conserve biological,  
5 physical, cultural, social, scenic values of the CDCA  
6 because it wouldn't ID and incorporate public lands managed  
7 for conservation purposes within the CDCA." This seems to  
8 be in conflict with the purpose of the plan, and with some  
9 adaptive management could incorporate the DG and DFAs to  
10 meet BLM's purpose and need.

11 And that is all I have. Thank you.

12 MS. SALL: Hi. My name is Claudia Sall, and I am  
13 from Pioneer Town area. I've lived most of my life there,  
14 probably 50 years or more, and have been -- I've spent a lot  
15 of time with land use and conservation areas in my community  
16 to come up with a quality of life. And I'm familiar with  
17 organizations that have put a very big conservation  
18 investment in our area, and I'm anxious to see that that  
19 gets preserved. While I recognize renewable energy and  
20 understand that that really is our future, I'm here to try  
21 and shape that to a better plan than what I'm seeing.

22 So a couple comments to begin with. We would like  
23 to see -- we're really concerned about the time here that  
24 we've been given to absorb this plan. We want to see a  
25 lengthy -- the comment period lengthened 60 days, you know,

1 remembering that this plan came out in the Federal Register  
2 in -- September 25th. And that was only 33 days that was  
3 given us to read the 8,000 pages. So it's been very -- too  
4 challenging.

5           We also would like to see a second round of  
6 meetings in January, given our lengthening, and to remind  
7 DRECP, the REAT folks, that this comment period is falling  
8 over the biggest holiday period in the season. And there's  
9 a lot of folks that have made commitments with family. It's  
10 very hard to read this 8,000 pages. So we think that those  
11 two ideas we have a lot of justification for having that  
12 period lengthened.

13           One of the things that we're -- I'm very concerned  
14 about is the wildlife ecological linkages. We want to see  
15 those conservation investments protected. We want to see  
16 wildlife habitat on private lands protected. We want to  
17 see -- we want to promote the reserve design without harmful  
18 projects like Soda Mountain and Silurian Valley. And we  
19 want to see -- we want to work with communities to find out  
20 the low- and no-conflict areas in San Bernardino County. We  
21 think the DFA should include conversations with the  
22 communities and not just polygons. And also to remind the  
23 REAT team that many of the linkages' studies that were done  
24 here in Southern California were done through a private --  
25 were privately funded. And so we've been -- we think that

1 we've got some real eyes on all of this.

2           In the alternatives we see that the range of  
3 alternative is flawed, that we have not really a full DG.  
4 We understand it's -- the DG is invested in the conservation  
5 element. But we don't see enough what-if scenarios. All  
6 the outcomes in the -- assume to be about producing 20,000  
7 megawatts of utility-scale. And this is where we think the  
8 conservation -- the conversation needs to go to incorporate  
9 DG.

10           We wonder if the renewable energy continues to go  
11 with DG as it is now, what will be the point of having DRECP  
12 codified? We would have this plan and will have -- the  
13 market moves toward DG. So we need to have some  
14 adaptiveness in these alternatives, not just in the  
15 Conservation Plan, how they could change if -- if the future  
16 changes into a scenario with more DG and less need for  
17 utility-scale. So I would -- would like to see some sort of  
18 adaptive management in the DFAs.

19           We see that there's a reserve design on public  
20 lands, but we would like to see the mitigation also  
21 happen -- what happens when renewable energy is done on  
22 private lands, can we then have some mitigation on public  
23 lands? Let's have that go both ways.

24           We want to see lasting conservation. Instead of  
25 conservation tied to the length of DRECP or to a project we

1 want to see it more toward the impacts, the length of the  
2 impacts. Being from the desert we understand so easily that  
3 impacts will probably go past our lifetime. So to only have  
4 these impacts be mitigated or addressed through the life of  
5 the plan really falls short of lasting conservation, which  
6 we want to see that durability in perpetuity in there.

7           We're not sure about -- we've heard everything  
8 that the 20,000 megawatts is not. It's not a plan. It's  
9 not a goal. But we haven't really heard what it is and how  
10 it was arrived at. It just keeps appearing in, and we need  
11 to see -- have some answer and clarifications on that 20,000  
12 megawatts.

13           And we want to know that -- understand that some  
14 of the conservation areas, we have questions that the REAT  
15 team and the DRECP picked the correct areas for  
16 conservation. And when we see Silurian Valley and Soda  
17 Mountain is kind of eliminated, that really puts a question  
18 mark in our minds whether we need to really go over some of  
19 this data.

20           And again, we want to see -- when you talk about  
21 adaptive management we want to understand what is the  
22 funding for that? Because we -- if all of the development  
23 is allowed to have -- be -- if we allow the development,  
24 what's going to fund all of the adaptive management and the  
25 conservation? And we don't see where that is part of it.

1 We want to see the data that's in the adaptive management  
2 made public and shared. We want to make sure the adaptive  
3 management, that they include some kind of monitoring around  
4 the process and the species and that that is -- that data is  
5 made public. And we want to make sure that adaptive  
6 management is not an unfunded mandate, that we want to  
7 understand what the funding is going to be for that and that  
8 it's intrinsic to this plan. It's not just proposed.

9           And I think at this point that's all I have.  
10 Thank you.

11                           (On the record at 5:29 p.m.)

12           MR. BEALE: I'm joined up here by some senior  
13 representative of our -- the state and federal agencies.  
14 I'm going to ask them to introduce themselves here in just a  
15 moment.

16           This is the part of the meeting where we  
17 essentially want to allow you to have the last word. The  
18 purpose of this part of the meeting is for you to comment.  
19 It's not a Q and A session. The folks up here won't respond  
20 here now. But know that your comments during this portion  
21 will be entered in the formal record. And agencies will  
22 review them, consider them, and provide written responses in  
23 developing the final document. So we're here today to  
24 listen to you.

25           I want to thank you again for being here. And for

1 those of you who have signed up to speak, we have 55 speaker  
2 cards. So I think what we're going to try to do, we have  
3 allotted 90 minutes at least. We're going to have two  
4 minutes per speaker. We don't want to go any shorter than  
5 that. I know that it's a balance about trying to get  
6 everybody in. I'm going to see if we can still do it. But  
7 I don't want to allow less than two minutes because I  
8 want -- that seems that will give you a chance to speak your  
9 mind.

10 We have a timer here, I'll just let you know, I'll  
11 hold it up, for speakers. This will show yellow until you  
12 get to one minute.

13 Thank you, Kristy for reminding me to turn on the  
14 phone.

15 It will be yellow until it gets down to one  
16 minute, and then it goes to red. And then you'll hear a  
17 beep at the end.

18 What I'm asking you to do, it's voluntary, of  
19 course, you have two minutes if you want it, if you can make  
20 your remarks shorter than two minutes, please do that. That  
21 will allow us to allow more speakers to have the chance to  
22 speak.

23 So with that I'm going to ask my partners here at  
24 the desk from the agencies to introduce themselves please.

25 MS. SYMONS: Good evening. I'm Katrina Symons.

1 I'm the Field Manager for the Barstow Field Office, Bureau  
2 of Land Management.

3 MS. MACNAIR: Hi. I'm Leslie MacNair. I work for  
4 the California Department of Fish and Wildlife.

5 MR. STEWART: Hello. I'm Mendel Stewart. I work  
6 for the US Fish and Wildlife Service. And I'm the Manager  
7 for the Carlsbad Ecological Services Office and the Palm  
8 Springs Ecological Services Office.

9 MR. FLINT: Good afternoon. I'm Scott Flint and I  
10 am the DRECP, Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan,  
11 Program Manager for the California Energy Commission.

12 MR. BEALE: All right, so what I've done is kind  
13 of shuffle the cards because I know some folks had to come  
14 here after work and some are coming for more rural parts of  
15 the county, and I didn't want to exclude anyone who -- who  
16 made the trip, you know, because of the short time. So  
17 these are not in the order they were submitted. It's  
18 somewhat random.

19 And I do -- before you start, our first speaker  
20 today, just to let you know, is Reza Hadaegh, and after that  
21 Pat Flanagan, and Richard Selby, just to prepare you.

22 I want to thank you again for coming to make  
23 comments. I know it's not easy to stand up in front of a  
24 crowd and speak your mind. I want you to know that we're  
25 eager to hear your comments, even if they're critical. We

1 know if we want to make the plan better we have to be open  
2 to that. So you know, please relax and know that we are  
3 anxious to hear what you have to say.

4 I'm going to -- I have to pull the phone over  
5 there for the speakers so that people on the phone can hear  
6 the speaker.

7 But, Reza, come up please.

8 MR. HADAEGH: Do I have to hold this up or you can  
9 hear me?

10 MR. BEALE: Yeah, you should make sure. Is it on?  
11 Yeah, it looks like it's on.

12 MR. HADAEGH: Hello? Okay. Good afternoon. My  
13 name is Reza Hadaegh. My comment has to do with the fact  
14 that the DRECP discards and throws away the alternative  
15 which allowed for locating utility-scale renewable projects  
16 and seriously disturb private lands and brownfields. What  
17 is mindboggling is the fact that the reasoning and  
18 justification for this decision to ignore seriously  
19 disturbed private land applies just as much and even more so  
20 to the private land that is targeted and included in the  
21 DFAs from the Victor and Lucerne Valley.

22 For example, the DRECP worries that some private  
23 lands, and I'm quoting here, "would not align with existing  
24 transmission corridors," end of quote. Yet the DFAs of the  
25 preferred alternative in the Pinto Lucerne area have no

1 connection to existing transmission lines.

2           The DRECP also says that putting big energy  
3 projects on private lands, quote, "would result in  
4 substantial conflicts with current and proposed land uses on  
5 private lands." Well, again, here this is extremely ironic  
6 because the preferred alternative in Pinto Lucerne area  
7 consists of extensive private lands which are zoned rural  
8 living and rural conservation. These are where people live,  
9 work, and raise their families. So the question is: Why  
10 are these DFAs on private lands okay but DFAs on brownfields  
11 are not?

12           Certainly the private lands that have been  
13 seriously disturbed, that approach deserves to be one of the  
14 alternatives on the list. The fact that it is not and that  
15 it was thrown out for so flimsy a set of reasons, these are  
16 very serious holes in the DRECP. It is a big flaw.

17           I will leave you with a couple of quotes from  
18 judicial decisions. First, "The existence of a viable but  
19 unexamined alternative renders an environmental impact  
20 statement inadequate."

21           Second, "The touch zone for our inquiry is whether  
22 an EIS's selection and discussion of alternative fosters  
23 informed decision making and informed public participation."

24           These are wise words and noble goals, but there  
25 are also legal requirements embedded in this system.

1 Unfortunately, they have not found their way into the DRECP.

2 Thank you.

3 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Our next speaker is Pat  
4 Flanagan, followed by Richard Selby, and Alan Lewis.

5 MS. FLANAGAN: Good evening and thank you. Am I  
6 at the right distance? I am a resident of the Morongo Basin  
7 and for the last 13 years. And I have experienced in the  
8 last couple of years with wind-blowing sand coming off of 3  
9 100-acre solar fields. So soil has become an important part  
10 of my thinking process.

11 And so I've been examining the DRECP. I've looked  
12 at geology and soils in Volume III and Volume IV. And I've  
13 also looked at Appendix R1.4. And I understand that there's  
14 more that I can do. But at this particular point there is  
15 no way I can tell from anything that I have read what will  
16 happen when the wind blows.

17 And I also know based on -- well, let's see here.  
18 If I look at United States Geologic Survey information, the  
19 40 percent, 8 percent of the entire desert area for this  
20 plan is less than 5 percent slope. That's important because  
21 the less than 5 percent slope is where you want to put  
22 solar: 8.3 percent is less than 1 percent, highly valuable;  
23 98 percent of the lowest slopes are Aeolian, alluvium, or  
24 fine grained sands, and they are susceptible to dust and  
25 sand transport, especially after disturbance. I have a lot

1 of very specific information there.

2           If I look at the USDA Soil Survey, Mojave River  
3 Area, they describe 77 soil types and analyze them, not only  
4 for texture but also for their characteristics. So then I  
5 know that of the 77, 56 of these are on 0 to 15 percent  
6 slope, a little high but that's the way they bracketed, and  
7 that 44 percent are high to moderate for soil blowing.  
8 Okay.

9           And then I also know that San Bernardino County  
10 fits within the 80 to 100 percent of the counties in the  
11 United States with the dirtiest and worst air in the United  
12 States. That means that PM10 is high. Our PM2.5 is high.  
13 None of this can I actually get that kind of information  
14 from the DRECP.

15           I went and I looked, using the Adobe search tool,  
16 and so far I have found -- I did sand blowing, percent  
17 slope, zero mention, wind velocity, zero mention, sediment  
18 transport, there's one mention, dust hazards with desert  
19 pavement only, and I'm suspicious of the description of  
20 their desert pavement. Human health is mentioned once. Air  
21 quality is mentioned twice in very general ways like the air  
22 quality, you know, but nothing specific. PM10 is never  
23 mentioned, nor is PM2.5, nor is Valley Fever.

24           So I think that this would be really good to get  
25 this stuff in there. Thank you.

1           MR. BEALE: Okay. Thank you. Richard Selby,  
2 followed by Alan Lewis, and John Laraway.

3           MR. SELBY: Thank you for the opportunity. My  
4 name is Richard Selby. I'm Chairman of the Lucerne/Johnson  
5 Valley Municipal Advisory Council to the Third District,  
6 Supervisor Ramos.

7           You might remember about two years ago we had a  
8 meeting out in Lucerne Valley -- and I'm here to speak just  
9 about -- for Lucerne and Johnson Valleys -- when we had the  
10 DRECP meeting in Lucerne Valley we actually had quite a  
11 vociferous crowd. And there's a lot of things I'm hearing  
12 from the community, and we're not ready to submit the  
13 comments yet because we're still working through this.  
14 We've had DRECP on our agenda all year long, but we've had  
15 nothing until September. And now we've got January around  
16 the corner. We're having a hard time with fitting in the  
17 process to get comments from the community and bring it back  
18 to you folks on the DRECP. But I don't want to use foul  
19 language so I'll keep this short. We've had a lot of folks  
20 out there who are just having a real problem even trying to  
21 understand it.

22           But that meeting we had two years ago, we took a  
23 lot of you folks out and showed you an area in the Lucerne  
24 Dry Lakes that would be fine for solar. But the maps  
25 haven't changed, or haven't changed very much. So the --

1 the development focus areas around Lucerne Valley have made  
2 Lucerne Valley pretty much ground zero. Your other large  
3 area -- development focus areas are not in populated areas.  
4 We've not saying Lucerne Valley is a very populated area,  
5 but it has, you know, 7,000 people that live out there. And  
6 so we're going to want to redraw the map and resubmit that  
7 to you.

8           So -- and the other thing, on renewable energy so  
9 far all I've seen is solar, wind, and geothermal, yet  
10 there's people in this room that can give you more  
11 information about other types of renewable energy that need  
12 to be considered that could be more well placed in the more  
13 urban environments. So we need -- I think the DRECP should  
14 address some of that urban environment as well. There's --  
15 you know, you can make oil from algae and things like that.  
16 I mean, there's other, you know, renewable energies I think  
17 that need to come to the front.

18           But anyhow, I'm done. Thank you.

19           MR. BEALE: Thank you, Richard.

20           Alan Lewis, then John Larawry, and Bob Howells.

21           MR. LEWIS: Thirty years ago Southern California  
22 Edison built Solar 1 out in Daggett. The reason they built  
23 it was for R and D and to find out the advantages and  
24 disadvantages of solar power. The first issue that was  
25 addressed was the killing of birds.

1           When we fast forward to Ivanpah the agencies  
2 represented here today made the decision to permit Ivanpah  
3 to be built. Now 30 years ago Edison proved that it would  
4 kill birds. It's estimated that 28,000 birds will be killed  
5 every year. If I were to poach game birds out of season I  
6 would be subject to fines or worse. I question the ability  
7 of the Bureau of Land Management and the Department of Fish  
8 and Game to make common sense decisions regarding the desert  
9 areas.

10           We are at the crossroads with solar power  
11 generation infringements on our desert areas. We can either  
12 push back hard against it or let the Bureau of Land  
13 Management and Department of Fish and Game make our  
14 decisions.

15           Our desert area has cool-water generating station  
16 out in Daggett. It generates power with natural gas.  
17 That's probably enough for our area.

18           Let the Los Angeles area build their own solar  
19 plant if that is where the power is needed. Thank you.

20           MR. BEALE: Thank you, Alan.

21           John Laraway, Bob Howells, and Bryan Mashian.

22           MR. LARAWAY: I'm dead set against this for two  
23 reasons. I don't want this -- in the first place, I don't  
24 want the Coolwater-Lugo Station in there which will enable  
25 it. If we get rid of one or the other you can't have the

1 other.

2           Now the -- the plan that was rejected that was not  
3 even up here was distributed generation. That is the way to  
4 go if you want to do this, if you want to stop emissions.  
5 Because there are so many spaces in the cities you could put  
6 solar panels. You can even put small windmills in. That's  
7 the way to go, not clutter up the desert creating dust,  
8 creating all sorts of problems. And so my question is why  
9 is the BLM so set against distributed generation?

10           Also, one reason why it might not be practical is  
11 because of Edison. If people want to put in a solar panel  
12 system they have to watch out not to put in so much that  
13 they generate like twice what they need because they'd lose  
14 that much. They'd lose it. Edison steals it from them and  
15 almost any extra they produce.

16           So we need to change two things. The reason the  
17 BLM is against it, and the law regarding Edison -- or not  
18 just Edison, all electric companies, that they have to pay  
19 you back everything you make in excess. Then people would  
20 be encouraged to put in panels, to put in systems that would  
21 be more than what they actually need. And it would  
22 generate, I don't know how much, but you'd probably have a  
23 whole ton of energy generated extra that would help solve,  
24 if not completely solve, this problem.

25           Now those two questions were somewhat rhetorical

1 for me. I think the answer is BLM and government is doing  
2 this because they want control. It's all about control, for  
3 now and the future. And for electric companies it's greed.  
4 They like stealing your power when you generate extra.  
5 That's it.

6 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Bob Howells, Bryan  
7 Mashian, then Lorrie Steely.

8 MR. HOWELLS: My name is Bob Howells. I'm a  
9 Lucerne Valley property owner and a fifth generation native  
10 of the high desert.

11 As the previous speaker mentioned, the DRECP  
12 rejected the distributed generation alternative. And, you  
13 know, so what was supposed to be a renewable energy plan,  
14 the DRECP is disregarding the least destructive of all  
15 possible options.

16 It is allowing for -- a gentleman from the CEC  
17 explained this to me -- 20,000 megawatts of solar rooftop in  
18 California statewide. And where that figure came from  
19 apparently is absolutely arbitrary. It's a figure pulled  
20 out of the air, 20,000 megawatts. So for an arbitrary  
21 figure, which by the way I think is pathetically low, that  
22 can potentially drive massive scale desert destruction  
23 because the potential is so much greater than 20,000  
24 megawatts, a pathetically low figure.

25 UCLA's Luskin Center has published a study showing

1 that 1.5 million rooftops in Los Angeles County alone can  
2 generate 19,000 megawatts of energy. That's without  
3 scraping bare a single acre of California Desert. A Black  
4 and Veatch report to the CPUC says that California has the  
5 capacity of 55,000 megawatts of decentralized solar PV.

6 Distributed generation doesn't require expensive  
7 and destructive transmission lines, and it doesn't raise  
8 agonizing questions about how badly and permanently we have  
9 to destroy the desert. So why is it dismissed by the DRECP?  
10 Because, quote, "It would not advance the federal orders and  
11 mandates that compel the BLM to evaluate renewable energy  
12 projects on federally administered land." So what? If  
13 energy from city rooftops can eliminate the supposed need  
14 for utility-scale projects on that land, well, that's good  
15 news. But the DRECP is intent on streamlining 20,000  
16 megawatts worth of already obsolete energy projects in the  
17 desert, and never veers from that ill-advised target.

18 Distributed generation has to have a central place  
19 in the DRECP discussion. In the draft plan it doesn't. So  
20 as it stands now the plan is fatally defective.

21 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Bryan Mashian, Lorrie  
22 Steely, and Phil Hill.

23 MR. MASHIAN: Good evening. My name is Bryan  
24 Mashian. I'm with the Alliance for Desert Preservation.

25 And I -- the DRECP's proposed development focus

1 areas or DFAs for Lucerne Valley and Victor Valley try to  
2 impose a policy of intense energy development on private  
3 land. And I look at all these people's faces and I can tell  
4 you that this is contrary to the wishes of the owners and  
5 residents of both Lucerne Valley and Victor Valley. You  
6 don't see one smiling face out here. And they're not out  
7 here because they're in favor of the Lucerne Valley DRECP.

8 I looked at the location of the proposed DFAs  
9 right here in Victor Valley and Lucerne Valley. And guess  
10 what? They're all almost located, all of them, on private  
11 land. Now you got to ask yourself, what are you thinking?  
12 You guys, none of you, have any jurisdiction over private  
13 land. The Renewable Energy Action Team doesn't have  
14 jurisdiction in San Bernardino County. So how do you expect  
15 to implement or make these development focus areas really be  
16 built the way you envision it when you can't make what you  
17 planned happen? It's like me planning to remodel my  
18 neighbor's house. But the jurisdictional problem is a  
19 sidebar.

20 The big fundamental problem with the planned DFAs  
21 in Victor Valley and Lucerne Valley is that the people and  
22 residents don't want it. We don't want mass industrial-  
23 scale renewable energy projects disturbing and looming over  
24 our houses, our properties, our recreation areas, and our  
25 businesses. Most of these DFAs are zoned for rural

1 conservation and rural living. Most people don't move into  
2 these areas unless they like the benefit of a rural  
3 lifestyle. And big energy is not rural living, okay?  
4 They're the exact opposite.

5           Now good decisions are the ones that have the  
6 benefit of participation from the affected people. So all  
7 of these people here are telling you what they want. And  
8 the democratic process is at work, and it's up to you to  
9 listen. They don't want these big renewable energies. And  
10 your -- your DRECP has taken a wrong turn and wants to keep  
11 going even though we keep telling you, stop, you're going  
12 the wrong way.

13           MR. BEALE: Thank you, Bryan.

14           Lorrie Steely, Phil Hill, and Neil Nadler.

15           MS. STEELY: Hi. Good evening, everyone. Lorrie  
16 Steely with the Defenders of Wildlife.

17           We are concerned that the communities within the  
18 DFAs need to have a real voice in refining and setting the  
19 areas and boundaries so that they're consistent with our  
20 community-specific needs. We would really request input and  
21 outreach to some significant community organizations and  
22 some of the bigger organizations that are here and that are  
23 concerned with the Mojave.

24           We really would like to engage with the County of  
25 San Bernardino so that we can come up with -- we want

1 solutions, we just want smart solutions. We would really  
2 like to see the DRECP engage with the county to try to come  
3 up with some of these solutions. We'd like to -- we've been  
4 engaging with the county and they've been working really  
5 well with the community organizations. So we'd like to  
6 encourage that type of interaction.

7           I know one of the goals of the DRECP is to protect  
8 critical areas. And these places should be exempted from  
9 development. The preferred plan as currently written does  
10 not extend protection to several of the critical areas,  
11 important places like Morongo Basin, Iron Mountain, our own  
12 Juniper Flats here in our foothills, these should all be  
13 protected from development.

14           We appreciate that the DRECP appears to identify a  
15 great deal of public lands for conservation purposes,  
16 including identifying new conservation lands. But there's  
17 little detail and a lot of uncertainty as to whether or not  
18 these lands will actually be protected and managed over the  
19 long term. Who is going to be responsible to make sure that  
20 these measures are put in place and policed and that it  
21 actually happens? We need to make sure that after the fact  
22 if these -- if this comes to fruition, that when it's time  
23 to timeout these projects that the land is brought back to  
24 its original condition and that there's measures in place  
25 for that to be done.

1           And I think that this -- this is a good first step  
2 potentially for what we see. However, this is a huge  
3 document, and I would request more time. I mean, I know  
4 it's -- it's a double-edged sword to request more time  
5 because as we march along and we see more and more and more  
6 projects in our communities being proposed when we don't  
7 have the elements in place like the DRECP or our SPARC,  
8 there -- there's no guidelines for these projects. And  
9 they're -- it's -- we're playing the Whack-A-Mole game as  
10 they come up one by one by one.

11           There's a new solar project in the proximity  
12 between Lucerne Valley and Apple Valley that's just applied  
13 for the permit with the County of San Bernardino.

14           So I think some action is better than no action,  
15 but we really need to be smart and make sure that we have  
16 time to digest and give you good comments. Because comments  
17 when we haven't had the opportunity to digest and understand  
18 are going to be useless comments. So thank you.

19           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Phil Hill, Neil Nadler,  
20 and Ileene Anderson.

21           MR. HILL: Hello. My name is Philip Hill and I've  
22 lived in the Victor Valley area for approximately 40 years.  
23 I do it by choice. I left once and I came back because I  
24 love it.

25           And I look at this map, and each of you know, this

1 one covers the Victor Valley. I really hate to tell you  
2 folks, this is Edison driven. Everything depends on their  
3 substations and where they're located. They don't want to  
4 put in new transmission lines so they're going to use the  
5 old transmission lines and bury us in solar or wind energy  
6 so they can make their short run. That's exactly what  
7 happens. And each of you look at the map that covers your  
8 area and watch it; it's Edison driven. That's exactly what  
9 it is.

10 We sit here and we listen to how many  
11 committees -- people from different committees are back  
12 there. And the fish and the turtles have more say than we  
13 do. Where is somebody from this community or the community  
14 that's going to be governed by this sitting on this panel?  
15 I don't see it. And I'd like to see that done.

16 I'm going to cut it short, and I do thank you for  
17 your time.

18 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Neil Nadler, Ileene  
19 Anderson, and Neville Slade.

20 MR. NADLER: Good evening. My name is Neil  
21 Nadler.

22 The DRECP fails to address the massive costs and  
23 impacts of the construction and operation of transmission  
24 lines needed to feed the L.A. Basin and the Bay Area. None  
25 of this DRECP plan benefits the desert whatsoever. 20,000

1 megawatts in the plan would require more than 1,000 miles of  
2 new transmission lines. New transmission lines are hugely  
3 expensive, and that does not even include the substations or  
4 any of the other ancillary products as well. And that's  
5 both inside and outside the deserts.

6           Since the DRECP didn't bother, the Alliance for  
7 Desert Preservation hired a transmission expert, Flynn  
8 Resource Consultants. According to Flynn the costs of the  
9 proposed 500 kV lines alone would cost in the range of \$10  
10 to \$22 billion, that's with a B. When you add in the profit  
11 to big energy over 30 years these tens of billions of  
12 dollars balloon to \$30 to \$66 billion dollars. Even this  
13 estimate is very low because it does not include 19  
14 substations, super collector stations, low voltage feeder  
15 transmission lines, mitigation costs, and purchasing rights  
16 of way.

17           How much is too much? \$100 billion before we even  
18 get one solar panel or one megawatt at all? The agencies  
19 must go back to the drawing board and come up with a new  
20 plan that benefits all of Californians, not just a few.

21 Thank you.

22           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Ileene -- Ileene Anderson,  
23 Neville Slade, and George Stone.

24           MS. ANDERSON: Hi. I'm Ileene Anderson. I'm with  
25 the Center for Biological Diversity.

1           We believe that the draft environmental impact  
2 statement should analyze alternatives other than industrial-  
3 scale solar that is located far away from the areas that  
4 it's consumed. All of the alternatives assume that 20,000  
5 megawatts of large scale renewable energy projects will be  
6 developed in the desert. We believe the DRECP needs to  
7 include a range of alternatives to meet the goals for  
8 renewable energy generation, including alternatives that  
9 integrate energy conservation, efficiency, and distributed  
10 generation.

11           We also think that most of the development focus  
12 areas are just too large and too unwieldy and fail to  
13 identify key conservation resources, such things as wildlife  
14 connectivity, rare -- rare plant populations, etcetera, and  
15 those need to be preserved within them. Smaller, more  
16 refined DFAs would provide more certainty, both for  
17 developing projects and for conservation, and is one of the  
18 key benefits that could arise from the plan. The plan must  
19 identify cohesive meaningful DFAs and provide sufficient  
20 detail to support their adoption. Failing to do so would be  
21 a fundamental mistake.

22           The biological goals and objectives in most cases  
23 are woefully lacking in measurable and actionable metrics  
24 and triggers for action. Indeed, we have yet to find the  
25 scientific basis for many of the assumptions that are the

1 basis for take and for conservation. The so-called step-  
2 down BGOs that the plan -- the plan fails to explain how the  
3 remaining conservation would be achieved within the DRECP if  
4 the plan only commits to a limited percent of the goal for  
5 each covered species.

6           Despite the new vegetation mapping efforts that  
7 the agency supported, the draft plan identifies much too  
8 generalized community-level designations when more specific  
9 alliances and series need to be used as a basis for  
10 conservation. Thanks very much.

11           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Neville Slade, George  
12 Stone, and April Sall.

13           MR. SLADE: Thank you very much. I hope people  
14 will be able to understand my Southern Texas accent.

15           You know, I love this country. My family told me  
16 I caught the wrong bus when I ended up in the desert to come  
17 out because I come from South Africa, the most bio-diverse  
18 place in the world. But do you know that the Mojave Desert  
19 is well -- and I teach this, so I think I can say this --  
20 but the Mojave Desert is considered the most bio-diverse  
21 semi-desert in the world. In fact, people from all over the  
22 world come to visit it, and that's very well recognized.

23           So conservation is such an interesting word in the  
24 very name because I'm going to question the process because  
25 what is it conservation of? Because when I teach my

1 students I teach them that it's wise management, and it  
2 includes the economic health, the social health, and the  
3 environmental health. What I see here is economic health of  
4 very big multi-national out-of-area companies where there  
5 are no jobs, and so there's no economic health. Our  
6 property values will plummet. And I see social health of  
7 destroying our rural living.

8 I think we believe that you're sitting in the  
9 epicenter and there's a storm and you guys are one of the  
10 big clouds. Because if we can't get this right you're not  
11 going to represent us possibly. And we believe that this  
12 wave, this flood, this tsunami of renewable energy will kill  
13 us. And we are already in a very depressed social and  
14 economic situation. I'm very depressed, I know that.

15 Environmental health; okay, so streamlining, you  
16 know? But streamlining is great. You say that in your  
17 planning goals. You never mention the people in your  
18 planning process, you know? And we have -- we have this  
19 lovely EIR -- EIS and EIR project, but that barely touches  
20 on the most important endangered species that we're looking  
21 at, and I'm being dead serious, I'm not being facetious, and  
22 that's the new species that I've come up with called the  
23 Mojave Desert Rat. Okay, that's the people. They are not  
24 represented.

25 And then when we comment, Lavita's (phonetic)

1 plan, Matt's (phonetic) plan, when we tell you that we don't  
2 want renewable energy at the 20 meetings I've been to,  
3 that's not on the built environment and it's not at the  
4 point of use, it's not even mentioned. In fact, in some  
5 documents they say that, well, the comments, there were no  
6 comments of any significance. So we're -- we're asking you  
7 basically where in the EIS you have a no-plan option, I am  
8 very clearly challenging you guys, no-plan option in the  
9 sense, let's go back to the drawing board and let's fix it.  
10 Let's bring all this expertise you've heard here tonight.  
11 These people live here, they know. You've heard some  
12 wonderful solutions. They're not even included.

13           And I appreciate your time and I appreciate this  
14 great country, because in South Africa I'd probably be --  
15 would have been walked out of here. So thank you very much.

16           MR. BEALE: Thank you. George Stone, April Sall,  
17 and David Lamfrom.

18           MR. STONE: Thank you for a chance to address you  
19 tonight.

20           I came up with an acronym. I saw the DRECP as an  
21 acronym. I came up with one of my own called VORTACS, and  
22 it's Void of Rational Thought and Common Sense. And  
23 frankly, that's what I saw when I looked at the DRECP plan  
24 as it is currently written. I've seen a couple of different  
25 alternatives. You know, I'm more impressed about speaking

1 to these folks because these are the folks that live here.  
2 We live here, we work here, we play here. We invested here.  
3 And now we have outside foreign interests, outside  
4 international companies, and politics pressuring our way of  
5 life.

6           You know, it's not about conservation.  
7 Conservation is preservation, protection and restoration of  
8 the natural environment, natural ecosystems, vegetation, and  
9 wildlife. Frankly, this is just about the exact opposite.  
10 It's about destroying and disturbing our deserts and our way  
11 of life, and don't let anyone try and tell you different.

12           Now we use fancy words. We use mitigation,  
13 conservation, biological resources. We use conditional  
14 take. Conditional take meaning, well, we're going to kill a  
15 bunch of things that really are rare and protected and  
16 endangered, but we'll mitigate them or we'll compensate  
17 them. One of the comments that I was -- we'll compensate  
18 for any loss of biological resources. Hmmm. I wonder what  
19 a Bald Eagle is worth in today's market?

20           Anyhow, realistically we have given viable  
21 options. If they would listen to us, we have talked about  
22 distributive generation. Frankly, it's real. It's the best  
23 alternative, we all know it. But guess what? It doesn't  
24 play to the international companies, their business model  
25 and their profit margin, and that's why we're here tonight.

1 We're actually saying no to big business. We're not saying  
2 no to being environmentally safe and environmentally  
3 conscious. We want you to be green. We don't want you to be  
4 green by killing everything that's green and calling it  
5 green. Thank you very much.

6 MR. BEALE: Thank you, George.

7 April Sall, David Lamfrom, and Robert Vega.

8 MS. SALL: Thank you. My name is April Sall. I  
9 am the Conservation Director for the Wildlands Conservancy,  
10 a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

11 One of the first things I'd like to ask is we have  
12 a group of constituents that would like to ask some specific  
13 and broad questions that were not answered in the FAQs. And  
14 we would like to understand how we can get formal responses  
15 or get those responses on the record. So you can address  
16 that now or at another time, but we'd like to get that  
17 understanding.

18 The Wildlands Conservancy aided in the -- in the  
19 protection of about 630,000 acres in the Mojave Desert. And  
20 we are very concerned with ecological connectivity and the  
21 functioning systems throughout the Mojave Desert. We  
22 greatly appreciate the analysis and scientific information  
23 and collaboration that has gone into the DRECP. We support  
24 the concept of a DRECP that utilizes landscape level  
25 planning and cumulative analysis to ID known development

1 zones on the edge of the desert to protect our conservation  
2 investments and preserve and enhance the natural, cultural  
3 and recreational resources of the California desert.

4 We request an extension of 45 days and additional  
5 meetings within the DRECP planning boundary before the  
6 public comment period ends since these meetings were so  
7 early in the process we could not formulate draft --  
8 substantive comments on the draft EIS/EIR.

9 We need further assurance and better understanding  
10 and explanation of how durable conservation that ensures the  
11 protection of the Mojave Desert ecosystem will be  
12 implemented in the DRECP. We believe that mitigation needs  
13 to extend beyond the life of the project and should extend  
14 for the life of the project's impacts as desert restoration  
15 is slow and unattainable by 2040.

16 Is that it?

17 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: Keep going.

18 MS. SALL: Okay. Just a couple more things.

19 Sorry.

20 We need to protect and provide landscape  
21 connectivity for healthy wildlife and plant populations and  
22 ecosystem functioning. We need DRECP to identify and  
23 quantify and protect soil crust, caliche layers, and other  
24 natural carbon sequestration mechanisms in the California  
25 Desert.

1           The Mojave and Sonoran Deserts serve as a quick  
2 visual analysis. Some -- some could compare it to an upside  
3 down rainforest. The majority of the biomass carbon  
4 sequestration and symbiotic relationships occurs  
5 underground, buffered from the desert extreme weather.

6           Lastly, we need to see more county engagement and  
7 coordination on renewable energy goals and implementation  
8 in -- within and separate from the DRECP. San Bernardino  
9 County must take a leadership role in renewable energy goals  
10 and development. That is the single most important issue of  
11 our time on the landscape. San Bernardino County has a  
12 unique opportunity to further renewable energy goals  
13 throughout the state while minimizing the loss of open space  
14 and desert resources. We need further participation and  
15 enhancement to revise the SPARC process and coincide with  
16 DRECP.

17           The California Desert is an international legacy  
18 and we just protect it for current and future generations.  
19 Thank you.

20           MR. BEALE: Thank you. David Lamfrom, Robert  
21 Vega, and Joel McCabe.

22           UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: We can't hear you. When the  
23 clapping is going on we can't hear you.

24           MR. BEALE: I'm sorry. So David Lamfrom, Robert  
25 Vega, and Joel McCabe.

1 MR. LAMFROM: So I'll be -- I'll be pretty brief.  
2 Can folks hear me? Is this one? The story of my life.  
3 Let's see, I got it. No, we're good. We're good. And I'll  
4 hold it close to my mouth and everybody will be able to hear  
5 me.

6 The first thing I want to say is I want to thank  
7 everybody for coming out here tonight. I've been working on  
8 renewable energy policy in the California Desert for the  
9 last seven years. It's been extremely difficult, painful.  
10 And to see a crowd like this gather to give public comment  
11 is truly inspiring, and so thank you.

12 It's important for folks to recognize that folks  
13 live in the California Desert, not because they were forced  
14 to but because we choose to. And as the world gets  
15 increasingly smaller, people from all over the world look to  
16 our desert as one of the -- kind of one of the envies of the  
17 world, places where people still have broad landscapes, deep  
18 night skies, abundant wildlife. Those factors provide a  
19 powerful quality of life for us. And, you know, as I'll  
20 make more -- I'll make some really specific comments.

21 But I think the general thing that I want to  
22 convey is that we have an opportunity -- I want to let folks  
23 know that this DRECP process, if it melts away what's  
24 underneath it, is still a problem. And I think that we  
25 really have to think about planning for a solution. Because

1 if there is no DRECP, there's a million acres of solar  
2 energy development available on public lands and about, I  
3 think it's something like 5 million acres of wind. And I  
4 think we are at kind of a watershed moment in the history of  
5 our deserts. And we need to, I think -- and looking at the  
6 energy and folks in the room -- I think we have the will to  
7 come up with real solutions, and so I want to encourage  
8 that.

9 I want to encourage an extension of the comment  
10 period. I don't think that it's reasonable to assume that  
11 we could make substantive comments on an 8,000 page plan in  
12 a month. That's just not real. We need an extension.

13 I also want to recommend that there's -- and I'll  
14 be very quick, I'm sorry. I also want to recommend that  
15 there are additional public meetings. An issue of this  
16 magnitude is not something where we should be, you know,  
17 giving preliminary comments on, and then the agencies go  
18 back into back rooms and make decisions. We need to have a  
19 public discussion about these issues, about the values we  
20 want to protect.

21 Finally, I just want to say the California Desert  
22 is one of the most protected and connected landscapes on  
23 this planet. And we still have projects out there on public  
24 lands that are incredibly harmful that are not being dealt  
25 with responsibly in this planning process, including Soda

1 Mountains right next to Mojave National Preserve which is  
2 harmful to Big Horn Sheep, Silurian which is right on the  
3 way up to Death Valley which is one of the wildest places in  
4 the lower 48, and Eagle Crest right next to the Eagle  
5 Mountain Area.

6 I'll leave it there, but thank you all for showing  
7 up.

8 MR. BEALE: Thank you. We have Robert Vega, Joel  
9 McCabe, and Richard Ravana.

10 MR. VEGA: Good evening. My name is Robert Vega,  
11 and I reside in the Lucerne Valley. Let's talk for a minute  
12 about groundwater and renewable energy.

13 First, the basins underlying much of the proposed  
14 DFAs in the Western Mojave region are in a state of  
15 overdraft.

16 Second, utility-scale renewable energy projects  
17 require a great deal of water, and that water would have to  
18 come from already stressed local aquifers.

19 Despite these sobering facts the DRECP never  
20 analyzes groundwater impacts. Instead it says that 20,000  
21 megawatts of wind and solar projects will have a less than  
22 significant impact on water supply and water quality with no  
23 supporting data on the magnitude of the overdrafts or the  
24 effects of a decade-long drought.

25 The Upper Mojave Groundwater Basin here in Lucerne

1 and Victor Valleys are on life support. It's becoming  
2 clear, the State Water Project, due to the drought, can no  
3 longer be counted on to infuse the basin with much needed  
4 water. And we're seeing groundwater pumping in the Mojave  
5 region has caused land subsidence, as well as significant  
6 declines in well levels and basins along the Mojave River  
7 and regions to the east.

8           Utility-scale solar projects that the DRECP wants  
9 to put here would consume almost 1,000 acre feet of water  
10 per year. That's enough water to fill the Rose Bowl in  
11 Pasadena four times. Where will all that water come from?

12           To close, in the Executive Summary the DRECP  
13 acknowledges that groundwater is, as it states, an area of  
14 controversy. True enough. But a more accurate statement  
15 would be that groundwater is an area of total analytical  
16 failure. Only a fool would track out in the desert without  
17 calculating how much water they will need, yet that's the  
18 DRECP is doing with renewable energy and groundwater, no  
19 calculations, no clear idea of the impact, just roaming  
20 around the desert, keeping its fingers crossed. We need to  
21 do the analysis now. Thank you.

22           MR. BEALE: Thank you. We have Joel McCabe,  
23 Richard Ravana, and Nancy Hadaegh.

24           MR. MCCABE: Good evening. My name is Joel  
25 McCabe.

1           The calculator suffers from drastic gaps in  
2 information. At the March 15, 2014 DAC meeting, Terry Watt  
3 of the Governor's Office said that DRECP in the form as it  
4 was at that time suffered from serious voids in needed  
5 information. She asked what are local governments doing  
6 with rooftop solar?

7           Now what could be more critical than this question  
8 to a master plan for renewable energy in the desert? You  
9 have Ms. Watt who said that the Governor's Office and the  
10 Office of Planning and Research were doing their best to  
11 assemble this information. Well, I've looked through the  
12 DRECP and the websites of the Governor's Office and the  
13 Office of Planning and Research and the California Energy  
14 Commission, and I have to tell you, there is no updated  
15 information.

16           Why doesn't the DRECP take note of these critical  
17 information gaps? If a doctor is missing critical  
18 information the first thing he or she does is to conduct all  
19 the necessary tests and gather all vital information so that  
20 the patient isn't seriously misled and misdiagnosed. You  
21 are the doctors of the desert. You are responsible for its  
22 long-term health. Why is the DRECP so reckless?

23           The local government rooftop issue is not only  
24 important -- it's not the only important information gap  
25 either. On a host of other issues such as private-party

1 rooftop of distributed generation, or the true and real  
2 impact of putting 20,000 megawatts of utility-scale  
3 renewable in the desert, the DRECP simply hunkers down and  
4 pretends these questions don't matter.

5 I speak on behalf of myself, and I'm sure for many  
6 others in this room, and our children and their children,  
7 and I ask you to do the right thing. Go back to the drawing  
8 board, get all of the critical information, and then and  
9 only then put out a master plan for 22 million acres of  
10 precious California Desert. Thank you.

11 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Richard Ravana, Nancy  
12 Hadaegh, and Peggy Lee Kennedy.

13 MR. RAVANA: I'd like to start by saying it's  
14 great to see a full house here tonight. Hi. My name is  
15 Richard Ravana. I'm with the Alliance for Desert  
16 Preservation. And I would also like to touch on the  
17 calculator that was used for the DRECP.

18 The calculator is outdated and inaccurate. So  
19 everything in the DRECP that's based on the calculator,  
20 which is basically everything, is flat out wrong.

21 Paul Douglas, the CPUC Supervisor Over Renewables  
22 stated in the August 2014 CEC workshop that, quote, "The RPS  
23 Calculator is in need of a very significant overhaul.  
24 Specifically, the calculator doesn't measure transmission  
25 impacts and it doesn't reflect changes in technology or

1 costs." He went on to say that, quote, "All of California  
2 is suitable for solar, not just the desert, and there are  
3 many places that are already close to existing transmission  
4 lines."

5 So why build new transmission lines here?

6 At the same conference Ed Randolph, the Chief of  
7 the Energy Division of the PUC, said, quote, "We are by and  
8 large at the 33 percent goal in terms of procurement." This  
9 was also voiced by Terry Watt of the Governor's Office at  
10 the March 2014 DAC meeting.

11 So I have to ask, if these well informed public  
12 officials say that the 2020 goal has been reached, what in  
13 the world is the calculator calculating? Why is Victor  
14 Valley being targeted for industrial-scale renewables? It's  
15 not needed and should not be here.

16 I'm asking the DRECP to take off the blinders, see  
17 the errors created by the faulty calculator, and take the  
18 necessary steps needed to protect our delicate ecosystem  
19 which would never recovery from such lofty, unneeded  
20 development. It's time for our planners to stop in their  
21 tracks and ask, what in the world are we doing? Thank you.

22 MR. BEALE: Thank you. We have Nancy Hadaegh.

23 MS. HADAEGH: Hadaegh.

24 MR. BEALE: Hadaegh?

25 MS. HADAEGH: It's the same thing.

1 MR. BEALE: Peggy Lee Kennedy, and then Tina  
2 Glidden.

3 MS. HADAEGH: Hi. I'm Nancy Hadaegh with the  
4 Alliance for Desert Preservation.

5 There is a lot of sunshine in California.  
6 Therefore, the entire state is well suited for solar  
7 projects. Paul Douglas of the CPUC told us that. So there  
8 is no reason that the desert has to automatically bear the  
9 brunt of development. Is there some reason that no one on  
10 the DRECP said, wait a minute, maybe we should call it the  
11 California Renewable Energy Conservation Plan? We're not  
12 restricted to the desert. We could consider putting a DFA  
13 in Malibu or Irvine or La Jolla. Well, that would have been  
14 very interesting. And we can be sure that there would have  
15 been a very thorough and thoughtful analysis of exactly how  
16 big renewable energy projects would impact the people who  
17 live in those communities and their property and their  
18 environment, but no one said that.

19 So here we are with Lucerne Valley and Victor  
20 Valley in the bull's-eye. Now these communities are made up  
21 of largely low income and minority populations. In fact,  
22 the DRECP acknowledges that the DFAs in San Bernardino  
23 County are disproportionately focused on seven minority  
24 census tracts. The DRECP shrugs off declining property  
25 values, deteriorating aesthetic quality, and negative health

1 effects in these tracts as if they were of no importance.  
2 This is not environmental justice. It's not environmental  
3 justice to exclude the people most impacted by the decisions  
4 from the process of making the decisions. Everyone, rich or  
5 poor, regardless of race or status, is entitled to  
6 participate. And this has not happened with the DRECP.

7           There hasn't been one meeting in the past six  
8 years where the impact of the -- and the input of the people  
9 of the high desert was actively solicited. The lead  
10 agencies never sought the citizens out, residents,  
11 neighbors, ordinary people, and asked them if they'd prefer  
12 solar panels on their roofs or on the roofs of government  
13 offices, rather than have big profit-making companies build  
14 enormous renewable energy projects in their surrounding  
15 desert.

16           Now you need to hear that this doesn't look like a  
17 mere oversight. It looks instead like a deliberate attempt  
18 to shift the burdens onto those perceived to be least able  
19 to protest and protect themselves, and that is not  
20 environmental justice. Thank you.

21           MR. O'KEY: I'm not Peggy, but Peggy was kind  
22 enough to let me have her spot since I have a star party at  
23 Joshua Tree that's waiting for me and a bunch of people that  
24 are expecting to look through my telescopes there tonight.  
25 So she gave me her spot. I'm Tom O'Key from Joshua Tree,

1 California. And maybe you can give Peggy my spot when you  
2 call my name.

3 I want to join with the group, that is your  
4 working group from DRECP, in requesting a time extension. I  
5 read their notes. I have 16 people on that team asking for  
6 an extra 60 days. I don't think that's enough time,  
7 honestly, with an 8,000 page document that is pretty  
8 daunting to try and deal with.

9 The reason that I think that they need more time  
10 than the 60 days is because of what happened at the Palen  
11 Project, that Palen got to a point in the situation where  
12 suddenly the information about Palen was realized to be  
13 false, that a 750-foot tower that had basically been agreed  
14 to and approved turned out to really, in fact, be 860 feet  
15 tall, an oversight not only of just the idea that the  
16 community didn't know, the agencies didn't know, BLM didn't  
17 know. All of a sudden this is being pointed out by one of  
18 our local citizens who got into the documentation and found  
19 this discrepancy.

20 Not only that, that this beacon of light that was  
21 going to be visible for miles and miles, sucking birds out  
22 of the sky and bats and insects and everything else in an  
23 ecological disaster, that that project was going to slip on  
24 through and become that 860-foot tall tower, two of them,  
25 that -- and nobody would have done anything until all of a

1 sudden it's, oh, my gosh, it's 860 feet tall. How come you  
2 didn't know? How is it that that tower got approved to  
3 begin with, with the idea that it is not what they said it  
4 was going to be? It had twice the visual impact that it was  
5 stated to have, that the surface area of the -- of the  
6 absorber of the part that's focused upon was going to be  
7 twice as large as what it was predicted to be.

8           So right within the types of projects you're  
9 approving, within the types of opportunities that are  
10 available in this desert, you're just grabbing at whatever  
11 you can grab, it seems to me. And if you're adhering to  
12 ideas like Ivanpah and Palen and the rest of those types of  
13 systems, then I think that they are flawed from an  
14 engineering standpoint, that they're being pushed through  
15 the idea.

16           The same goes for wind energy and the ideas that  
17 are being evaluated there. How much oil does it take to  
18 build a windmill? How much oil does it take to be able to  
19 decommission one? Trucks and trains and all that fiberglass  
20 that can't be thrown away, is the evaluation of how it's  
21 actually saving energy working? I don't know that the DRECP  
22 is addressing that.

23           So that's all I really have to add. I wanted to  
24 just be sure that maybe there's more time to understand  
25 these things. Thank you.

1 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Tina Glidden, John Miller,  
2 and Robert Conaway.

3 MS. GLIDDEN: Hi. Can you hear me? How about  
4 now? How about now?

5 My name is Tina Glidden. And I'm really -- I feel  
6 very unprepared. I had no intentions of coming up here and  
7 making a comment until I heard what you had to say, or  
8 rather what you didn't.

9 I've been a resident of the high desert for 34  
10 years. And my initial reaction is that I'm irate, and I  
11 feel like you're trying to take my desert from me, our  
12 desert from us. There is a reason that we live here. We  
13 like the living here.

14 Some of the things I didn't hear mentioned was  
15 humans. I hear no mention of us. I hear no mention of any  
16 species other than the 37 on your list. I'm glad I  
17 recognize more than 37. I've heard no mention -- I heard  
18 mention of, I think it was roughly 2 million acres of  
19 disturbed areas. I definitely need to do research; this is  
20 a lot to absorb. Two million disturbed acres; what are you  
21 going to do with the rest? Why do you need 22.5 million?  
22 Maybe the information is on your website, I don't know.  
23 I'll definitely go look. I can tell you, I've learned more  
24 from the public tonight than I have from you guys have had  
25 to present. Thank you.

1 MR. BEALE: Thank you. John Miller, Robert  
2 Conaway, and Tom Piper.

3 MR. MILLER: Is it on? Oh, man. All right. How  
4 about now? It says on. Hello? There you go. All right.

5 My name is John Miller. I work as an independent  
6 land appraiser. And I've been commissioned to do a study,  
7 looking at the impacts of large scale solar developments in  
8 residential areas.

9 Interestingly for me, on a side note, when I came  
10 in, we all know about the Coolwater-Lugo Project, but  
11 according to that map you guys are planning on putting two  
12 brand new power lines through the backside of Lucerne  
13 Valley, right along the base of the foothill. That's new to  
14 me. Because the Lugo Project is just one line. That's two  
15 lines. So that will have a significant impact on property  
16 value, I can tell you, I've done the study.

17 My feel from what you guys are proposing is that  
18 really you're -- it's extremely poorly placed projects.  
19 Planning to put these things in the middle of residential  
20 neighborhoods is very detrimental to property values, not  
21 just from the aesthetic standpoint but from the health  
22 standpoint. I understand that you guys state that there's  
23 less than significant impact.

24 I'm going to tell you, there's a solar project  
25 over in San Luis Obispo County where Aspen Environmentals

1 stated that -- I believe it was Aspen, don't want to call  
2 you guys out -- but you guys stated that there was a less  
3 than significant impact that has to do with Valley Fever.  
4 Twenty-eight of those solar workers came down with Valley  
5 Fever.

6           Therefore, my belief in your ability to tell us  
7 what a less than significant impact is has been -- well,  
8 it's kind of not -- not really there.

9           Nevertheless, I'm going to tell you, there is a  
10 very significant impact from Valley Fever. The rate of  
11 increase of Valley Fever in San Bernardino County in the  
12 last four years has increased 371 percent; that's the fact.  
13 It's 3,000 percent in Antelope Valley. There is a direct  
14 correlation -- check with Dr. Robert Ravara -- there's a  
15 direct correlation between solar projects and Valley Fever,  
16 development and Valley Fever. You have to take that into  
17 consideration.

18           As far as your determination that there's less  
19 than -- that there's less than significant impact on  
20 property value, prove it. Prove it. Show me the report. I  
21 haven't seen the report. I've seen your opinion of it, but  
22 show me the report, prove it. Because I can tell you, I've  
23 done the report, I've done the research, I've looked at the  
24 data. There is a very significant impact on property value.  
25 So prove it.

1           Lastly, I will say that -- lastly, I'm just going  
2 to touch on this real quick, the most significant impact on  
3 property value will come from Valley Fever. There are  
4 projects that are planned in this area next to schools.  
5 Those kids are going to come down with Valley Fever. When  
6 they come down with Valley Fever it will blight the  
7 neighborhood. You can keep your eye on Hinkley. That is  
8 your example. That is what will happen to the value in  
9 neighborhoods when people find out that Valley Fever has  
10 broken out. Thank you.

11           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Robert Conaway.

12           MR. CONAWAY: Thank you.

13           MR. BEALE: Tom -- Tom Piper, and then Claudia  
14 Sall.

15           MR. CONAWAY: As a fellow desert rat, I can -- I  
16 can tell you've got to ask, where's the cheese? And it's  
17 not funny because this -- this plan that's been set together  
18 creates a dovetail process.

19           If anybody is familiar with county applications  
20 for permits it starts with a conditional use permit or a  
21 permit if it's not -- doesn't fall within those categories.  
22 It gets reviewed by staff. And most of the staff in this  
23 county happens to be, in many instances, outside vendors  
24 that are hired by the county to review paperwork. I wonder  
25 who they work for? Then it goes to the Planning Commission,

1 which are political appointees of the Board of Supervisors.  
2 Guess what? They tend to approve things. Then it goes to  
3 the Board of Supervisors only if it's an appeal. You've got  
4 to look at who they're getting their political contributions  
5 from.

6           And I tell you this is important because take a  
7 look at one thing. Once you get the planning process  
8 through and you get the permit issued this DRECP says,  
9 "including environmental review." They're going to have  
10 one-shoe-fits-all type of program which would benefit from  
11 environmental -- the environmental document would establish  
12 survey and mitigation requirements.

13           I asked a question of one of the gentleman outside  
14 who happens to work with Fish and Game. I won't identify  
15 him. I don't want to get him in too much trouble. But he  
16 said, "Well, we really don't know under the implementation  
17 section who's going to decide which mitigation measures  
18 should be used."

19           Whoa. They don't know. They don't have a budget  
20 for it either. And, oh, by the way, I'll tell you one other  
21 thing that's dangerous, they're mid-level people, which  
22 means they're entry level or they've been -- maybe they're  
23 five or ten years as a federal civil servant or as a state  
24 civil servant, and do you think that they're going to nix a  
25 project? No way. That's a career ender.

1           So what you have here is you have a system which  
2 ramps up an escalator approval process. You have then a  
3 process which then looks at what needs to be mitigated and  
4 tells everybody this is what we need to do, but who are  
5 these people?

6           This process here, Ladies and Gentlemen, is a  
7 sham, okay? Because what it's going to do is once they  
8 select a site, once they select a location, you're going to  
9 have unelected people that are accountable to no one make  
10 decisions on what is going to be a proper mitigation.

11           So while they can talk about being concerned about  
12 our community and our health and our environmental impacts,  
13 you'll never know what the thought process was because these  
14 are mid-level civil servants that are going to make these  
15 decisions that they can't even identify yet, much less have  
16 a budget for.

17           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Tom Piper, Claudia Sall,  
18 and then Buck Buckley.

19           MR. PIPER: Hi. My name is Tom Piper. I'm  
20 running for Apple Valley Town Council. I am pro solar and  
21 pro wind, I'm a little different. I want to decentralize  
22 power. I want to put a solar panel and a small wind turbine  
23 on every house in this valley, then we don't need big wind  
24 turbines. But then again, I've seen smog pour through in  
25 the pass like it's a pitcher. We'll get more smog if they

1 don't get cheap -- cheap clean energy.

2           Wind turbines are ugly, big ones especially. I  
3 actually work in fiberglass. I worked on 2.5 megawatts.  
4 They produce a lot of electricity and they're clean. They  
5 don't put a big footprint down.

6           I'm pretty sure everybody gets their electricity.  
7 Anybody know? All right, how -- if we need some more power,  
8 everybody who wants a diesel power plant, raise your hand  
9 please. How about a coal power plant? Natural gas? Oh, we  
10 got a hand. All right. That's not bad. How about nuclear?  
11 Ooh. Okay. As long as you figure out the cooling problem  
12 you'll be okay.

13           I like solar. I like wind. We have natural  
14 resources in this neighborhood, we ought to use them. I  
15 don't like smog. The more solar, the more wind, the less  
16 smog. Ten years ago you could look from horizon to horizon  
17 and see deep blue. You don't see it anymore. The smog is  
18 coming.

19           I used to live in Duarte. I could walk out my  
20 front yard, look up at the San Gabriel Mountains and not see  
21 them. Yes, we too can have that. I don't think solar --  
22 the solar arrays and the wind turbines are right or wrong,  
23 we just have to make them work for us. Thank you.

24           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Claudia Sall, Buck  
25 Buckley, and Nelson Miller.

1 MS. SALL: Hi. Good evening. I'm Claudia Sall.  
2 I'm a resident of Pioneertown. And I've been working on  
3 land use issues. I've lived in the desert for about 55  
4 years but not just sitting around on my hands, but working  
5 on land use issues that I hope will protect our quality of  
6 life in San Bernardino County.

7 And really having spent a lot of time with the  
8 organization that I work with, California Desert Coalition,  
9 with -- to sort of inspire the county to really be a leader  
10 in this and set the direction of the DRECP where a lot of  
11 these folks would like it to go. And I know from CEC,  
12 looking back at our comments, we submitted two sets of  
13 comments to DRECP, and one of them was about more meetings,  
14 and we didn't see that happen. We understand that's going  
15 to happen, but it didn't come out. And we wanted to make  
16 sure we had enough time, and we're having to request that  
17 now ourselves.

18 We also asked that we had a distributed generation  
19 alternative worked in there, and that we saw some of this  
20 development on the EPA disturbed lands. So we haven't seen  
21 where we've gotten any action on that. And we hope that San  
22 Bernardino County is looking at this and they will be our  
23 guardians in making sure that they can push back, with the  
24 53 percent of the lands being in the DRECP, making a  
25 difference with the REAT team. Because we think that they

1 are the heavy hitter in here, and we really want them to  
2 come to bat for us.

3           Just want to say a couple things about -- we talk  
4 about adaptive management in the conservation part of our  
5 DRECP. But we'd like to see that adaptive management where  
6 it includes something with some of the planning. For  
7 instance, what if the technology, as it seems to be going,  
8 becomes about distributed energy? What will happen to this  
9 plan if it's codified? Will the DFAs have some sort of  
10 adaptive management that they can shrink, or are we only  
11 talking about adaptive management when we're talking about  
12 conservation? So we'd like to see something that has some  
13 flexibility that we're not just stuck with this.

14           We want to see impacts on -- on these projects  
15 that go not for the life of the plan or the life of the  
16 project but the life of the impacts, because we -- it is  
17 special here in the desert that our impacts last more than a  
18 lifetime. And we want to see that there's funding for it,  
19 there's monitoring for it, and we want to see data shared.  
20 Thank you.

21           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Buck Buckley, Nelson  
22 Miller, and Bill Jensen.

23           MR. BUCKLEY: Hi. I'm Buck Buckley from Joshua  
24 Tree. I'm a distributed rooftop solar installer. And with  
25 the California Renewal Program you can put them on your

1 property taxes and write them off.

2           The county has done some good things. And I  
3 appreciate what you all are trying to do in protecting our  
4 lands. But being a distributed solar guy I don't see the  
5 need for utility-scale. I think it will antiquated before  
6 it ever reaches its life expectancy.

7           This is the little key chain I got from Southern  
8 California Edison. It's a solar panel on one side, and  
9 there on the other. It took them four months to turn on my  
10 own system because I made it too big, and I could double  
11 that size on my rooftop.

12           So I'm kind of here talking because I'm passionate  
13 about solar. I think it is the right way. I think  
14 distributed is the right way, way less of a footprint.  
15 Actually, I'm with a group called Transition Joshua Tree,  
16 and we're about permaculture. And permaculture says  
17 whatever you do make it do three things: When I put this on  
18 my roof, my roof will last longer because it's in the shade;  
19 it acts like a giant radiator, it absorbs UV; and then the  
20 cool air passes through it and my house is cooler. Three  
21 things. You put it on the ground you don't get those three  
22 things. You actually lose energy pushing it to people's  
23 homes, a lot of energy.

24           I'm also into vacation rentals, I've restored old,  
25 trailers. So I went to the Tourism Summit. I go out to

1 things that the county puts out. This is the Tourism  
2 Summit. This is a brochure they put out, come -- you know,  
3 they spent \$15 million on California to get tourists to come  
4 to the desert, and then they want to cover it with  
5 transmission lines and solar?

6 And again, I appreciate protecting our desert and  
7 what you're trying to do.

8 I feel like I'm on a Star Trek episode and Captain  
9 Kirk's on the bridge going, "Scotty, I need more power."

10 And Scotty's going, "I can't do it, Captain."

11 We really need to rethink what we're doing here.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Nelson Miller, Bill  
14 Jensen, and Sarah Kennington. Nelson Miller? All right.  
15 Bill Jensen? Sarah Kennington?

16 MS. KENNINGTON: Yeah.

17 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Karen -- then Karen Smith,  
18 and David Smith.

19 MS. KENNINGTON: Hello. I'm Sarah Kennington from  
20 Pioneertown and a resident of some years. I have been  
21 associated with that area about 25 years. I'm also  
22 President of the Morongo Basin Conservation Association.

23 MBCA has watched the evolution of the DRECP over  
24 the years and are eager now to address the draft -- the  
25 draft. Even with our past attention, coming to grips with a

1 6,000 or 8,000-plus page document is daunting. It's beyond  
2 reasonable to think we can substantively comment in a 90-day  
3 period. In fact, you're asking for comments today, only 33  
4 days since the draft was published. Extend the comment  
5 period an additional 60 days. At least 30 days more are  
6 required to provide adequate time to study the document and  
7 provide the input requested.

8           MBCA also requests an additional round of meetings  
9 to ensure stakeholders and residents are able to comment  
10 publicly on these critical issues. Locations should include  
11 places that were not included in this first round of  
12 meetings, such as the East Mojave and Barstow, Baker,  
13 Shoshone, Yucca Valley, or Needles.

14           The value of wildlife, the wilderness experience,  
15 vast open spaces with ancient and historic cultural  
16 treasures cannot be underestimated. The plan targets  
17 generation without providing adequate protections for  
18 irreplaceable species and their habitats. What guarantees  
19 that conservation and mitigation measures will be in place  
20 in perpetuity? How will this be monitored and funded?  
21 Mitigation must be for the life of the impact versus the  
22 life of the project.

23           Since the DRECP process began, technology and  
24 economies have changed. Industrial-scale renewable energy  
25 projects and transmission are increasingly proving to be

1 costly, too costly and inefficient; unintended consequences  
2 proliferate. Distributed generation has the potential to  
3 ease the burden on wildlands. Incorporate distributed  
4 generation into the energy calculations.

5           San Bernardino County has the greatest amount of  
6 territory at stake. MBCA strongly advocates that the county  
7 planning agency work with communities impacted to protect  
8 the public's interest. This will require dedicated  
9 communication and coordination to see -- to foresee impacts  
10 of the plan's development focus areas and to identify low-  
11 conflict areas for development. Projects that harm county  
12 interests, national parks, and quality of life must be  
13 opposed. With the county's leadership conflict can be  
14 minimized and hopefully avoided. Thank you.

15           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Karen Smith, David Smith,  
16 and Eva Soltes.

17           MS. SMITH: Can you hear me? Oh, good. God, I  
18 feel inept after listening to the people that have spoken up  
19 here.

20           But I would like to say that I've been to only  
21 four or five of these meetings. And there's been a group  
22 like you to represent what's supposed to happen. And I  
23 always feel like I'm swimming upstream in that Governor  
24 Brown is sitting up there just ready to write it all off.  
25 He's -- he's foaming at the mouth to get all of this done.

1 And all I know is that this red blob right here is where I  
2 live. And my husband and I thought we were going to retire  
3 here. The other young lady that said they could put in,  
4 where was it, Malibu? I thought Hollywood Hills. I thought  
5 maybe Matt Damon and his family would like them.

6 My family wouldn't like them. We wouldn't like  
7 any of the things you're doing. I don't even want to work  
8 with you. And I don't like to be a monster about this but  
9 my husband and I have worked for 42 years. We want to  
10 retire here. And the windmill that's above our head, I read  
11 a holistic horse magazine, and in Spain the baby horses that  
12 lived under the windmills got crippled. And that's --  
13 people don't want to get crippled. And you did leave off  
14 people, there are no people. And I know you've spent  
15 thousands of dollars on all of these gorgeous colored  
16 things, including my red dot. Thank you.

17 MR. SMITH: My name is David Smith. I'm from  
18 Lucerne Valley. And I wrote a few notes because I tend to  
19 forget what I want to say. They don't give you much time.

20 The area that you guys are talking about for  
21 extenuated ground disturbance is not a very big area  
22 compared to the whole picture. But the -- the small picture  
23 that you want to develop happens to be in the area that most  
24 of the people live in around here. And then your  
25 alternatives areas are way out in the middle of nowhere.

1 Nobody is living there. Put them there. If you're going to  
2 put them at all put them someplace where nobody is living,  
3 nobody is affected by it. Everybody in Victor Valley is  
4 going to be affected by all this stuff you guys want to  
5 build, so there's got to be somewhere else.

6 I hear that all the solar projects that they  
7 build, like say in a parking lot, they don't count that as  
8 the percentage that Governor Brown wants, 30 percent, 50  
9 percent of alternative energy, but they don't count that, I  
10 hear. They could put solar in lots of parking lots and get  
11 a lot of energy. Let them do it down the hill. We don't  
12 want it up here.

13 And let me get my -- get my thoughts together.  
14 It's -- again, I'm so glad to see so many people come  
15 tonight. And I've seen so many people with such wonderful  
16 comments, it just gives my heart a boost. A lot of smart  
17 people, a lot of smarter people than I, made a lot of very  
18 good comments. I hope you guys listen to these comments. I  
19 hope that you just don't blow smoke up us and just say, oh,  
20 yeah, I'm listening, then ignore us. I hope you listen to  
21 all these smart people that made some wonderful comments. I  
22 hope this thousand page whatever it is thing doesn't become  
23 one them, oh, we've got to pass it to find out what it says.  
24 So I hope that's not the case. I hope that isn't the case.  
25 Thank you.

1           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Eva Soltes, Robert Allen,  
2 and then Meg Foley.

3           MS. SOLTES: Hi. Good evening. I'm Eva Soltes,  
4 and I appreciate the opportunity to speak today. And I want  
5 to start by saying that I applaud the fact that there is a  
6 plan, and I think it is smart to have a plan. I also  
7 applaud the fact that you mentioned you would like the  
8 people to shape that plan, and I think that's a very  
9 important thing.

10           And I'd like to have a show of hands of who thinks  
11 we need another six months to be able to shape that plan?  
12 Right. I mean, I think you have spent years working on this  
13 plan and to accept public comment when it's the holiday  
14 season. You're looking at volunteers. We're all, I'd say,  
15 95 percent of us volunteering here. You're all probably  
16 getting paid professionally, and maybe overtime. But there  
17 is a lot of expertise in this room. And I think it's very  
18 important to go into the communities that you're affecting.

19           And so I would say extend the period, I'd say at  
20 least 90 days. I mean, this is the holiday season. There's  
21 so -- we're all leading busy lives as it is. And if you are  
22 really looking for us to volunteer our time and to give our  
23 expertise, really allow time to do that and then have  
24 another series of public meetings. Let us really put our  
25 heads together and come up with some good solutions.

1 I'd like to say that I personally am the former  
2 President of the Joshua Tree Chamber of Commerce. And I run  
3 an international artist residency program in Joshua Tree.  
4 I've been a resident for eight years and have owned property  
5 longer than that. And I welcome a lot of international  
6 travelers that come through. And the aesthetics, the  
7 spirituality of the desert is something to be considered  
8 very, very carefully. We have a million-and-a-half visitors  
9 to the national park. About a third of them go to several  
10 parks and they -- they make a loop, they drive through them.  
11 And the unobstructed views and the fact that we're actually  
12 living in the wild.

13 So it's not just about the residents who are  
14 living there and the residents that love the desert and  
15 there's, you know, not -- relative to the cities, the  
16 population is small. But it's really representing a global  
17 community and representing an asset that can't be replaced,  
18 that really needs to be thought through very, very  
19 carefully.

20 And I understand that we do we need energy. I  
21 understand that the population is growing, that probably  
22 some facilities are going offline and, you know, nuclear  
23 facilities and so forth. But I'd say really give people a  
24 chance to come back with some very good solutions and very  
25 good thinking about this. Because there's nothing like

1 having lived in a place for 10 years or 5 years or 20 years  
2 to really know the lay of the land. And I think it's really  
3 important to let people shape this. So thank you.

4 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Robert Allen, Meg Foley,  
5 and Steve Bardwell.

6 MR. ALLEN: It's good to see such a nice big crowd  
7 here today. I'm Robert Allen.

8 A couple of ways of thinking about this, if you  
9 want to see what they're going to do, go to Tehachapi. Has  
10 anybody been to Tehachapi? Do you like what the hillsides  
11 look like there? Have you seen it at night? Wow. Is that  
12 even worse at night? And they forget about when you break  
13 the ground in the desert it's permanently broken. Now you  
14 get weeds and you get whatever. I know two women right now  
15 that are very, very sick with Valley Fever, and they didn't  
16 cause it, they just happened to be unfortunately next to it.

17 Don't forget these people can actually say no to  
18 Los Angeles. Let them conserve that much power, or let them  
19 say, finally, no more houses. We are full. Let the  
20 environmental impact people say if you don't have power you  
21 can't build any more houses, and more and more cities need  
22 to do that. Even -- I happen to live in Hesperia where it's  
23 a one-path cow town. Think about it. You can't go to any  
24 business on Main Street without using Main Street. There  
25 are no other streets. They want to build Las Flores and

1 22,000 more houses. Maybe this will get them to say no and  
2 think about it. Thank you.

3 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Just a note, we're about  
4 at seven o'clock. We can go a little bit over. We need to  
5 leave a little bit of time for folks on the phone. So I  
6 think we'll do five more speakers, and then we'll go to the  
7 phones.

8 MS. TURK: I'm not Meg. She gave her court  
9 reporter dictation. So my name is Laraine Turk. I've lived  
10 in -- I'm on the list, so you can check me off if I come up.  
11 I've lived in San Bernardino County for about 33 years. I  
12 have five topic points that I decided to touch on quickly.

13 Accountability is a main one, especially for  
14 mitigation. My understanding is that there's really no  
15 focused amount of money or plans on how to get the money to  
16 do the mitigation. And that's going to be very clear,  
17 that's a big hole in the plan.

18 Cumulative impacts; there has never been such an  
19 outrageously large plan for land management. The balance of  
20 the large and small energy generation, the plan plus the  
21 distributed generation that we've heard so much about, needs  
22 to be balanced. It's critical to balance it so that we  
23 don't overuse and kill and destroy a lot of that precious  
24 desert land which provides us with the benefits of carbon,  
25 you know, absorption and all the recreation, the wildlife,

1 the biology that keeps us happy, I know, those of us  
2 especially that live in the desert and those that visit it.  
3 And of course, distributed generation is so much less  
4 impactful. We need to think about that.

5           We oppose any of the alternatives as they exist  
6 that have any more than the preferred one in terms of the  
7 amount of land. Remember that this is a giant experiment.  
8 And to my mind, as has been referred to by many speakers,  
9 there's a lack of really forward-looking detail and plans  
10 and projection on the dangers of it. And to me it's sort of  
11 like building a skyscraper based on a plan that is basically  
12 a little, maybe a deck of cards with one of those little  
13 card houses on a table, and then you build a whole big  
14 skyscraper out of that, out of which you've learned from a  
15 little pile of cards on a table.

16           A number of areas of critical habitat are still in  
17 the DFAs, and they must be removed so that they are not  
18 built on.

19           And I guess finally I do applaud your efforts for  
20 this public involvement and -- but I still get this sense  
21 that there is a very real and inevitable outcome in the plan  
22 as it exists, and wrote, "There will be great sacrifice  
23 required of residents in small desert communities for the  
24 alleged greater good of the majority of California's urban  
25 dwellers. This would not be necessary if there were more

1 focus on distributed generation."

2 I don't see why acknowledgment in the current plan  
3 isn't there, and why a real important plan that can be  
4 doable can't focus greatly on the distributed and greatly  
5 reduce the amount of the large scale solar. Thank you.

6 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Steve Bardwell, Seth  
7 Shteir, and then Bill Lambright.

8 MR. BARDWELL: Hello. My name is Steve Bardwell.  
9 I'm a resident of Pipes Canyon area up in Pioneer Town.  
10 I've been -- I've had a relationship with that area for  
11 nearly 25 years. I am an architect and also on the board of  
12 an artists residency, the Joshua Tree Highlands Artist  
13 Residency. And I know that many of the artists which come  
14 from all over the world value so much the beauty and unique  
15 character of the Mojave Desert. So this should be foremost  
16 in our minds to maintain that.

17 A few basic items. I think that we do need to --  
18 it is so important to have an extension to the comment  
19 period. This is such a complicated process here that -- and  
20 as other people have said, occurring when it does within the  
21 holidays, and just the overall complexity of things.

22 I visited the Gateway site yesterday and I was  
23 very surprised to see that there were -- that particular  
24 site had 1,000 hits on it. And that really surprised me  
25 that it was that few a number of hits on the thing, which I

1 think gives an indication of how much more this needs to be  
2 exposed to -- to the public, and the public needs to be  
3 exposed to it.

4 I know there has been talk about the mitigation of  
5 the environmental impacts on this. And I think it is very  
6 important, as other people have said, that the mitigation be  
7 for the life of the impact of these developments in terms of  
8 the DRECP is considering these things, not just for the life  
9 of the project because things work in a much different time  
10 scale here in the desert, as we all know.

11 A couple of other items that I think need to be  
12 considered within the DRECP and haven't been, and they've  
13 been touched on before, is the use of water. With the  
14 drought and the over-pumping of so many of our aquifers I  
15 think this needs to be considered and taken into account  
16 within the DRECP. Dust and the type of soils on which these  
17 developments could potentially be placed needs to be  
18 considered within the DRECP analysis.

19 And again, no alternative that uses -- that has  
20 more land than is within the preferred alternative should  
21 even be considered. That should be the maximum that would  
22 ever want to be considered.

23 And lastly, regarding the energy calculator, so  
24 much has happened since the DRECP was first conceived of in  
25 terms of rooftop solar that has been installed within the

1 State of California. I was a member of the -- or am a  
2 member of a committee for the Morongo Unified School  
3 District to install solar on all of the schools, the Morongo  
4 Basin Schools, that just passed last week. So that's going  
5 to be 3.3 megawatts of power that's going to be generated  
6 through rooftop power there. And I wonder very much if  
7 that's been -- so has the -- has that amount of power been  
8 considered within the overall, this 20,000 megawatts which  
9 the whole DRECP is predicated on, let's say, what 20,000  
10 megawatts would -- would take. But if it's not going to  
11 take that much the whole analysis really seems  
12 inappropriate.

13 Distributed generation I think is most important  
14 to consider. Thank you.

15 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Seth Shteir.

16 MR. SHTEIR: Good evening. Seth Shteir. I'm a  
17 Field Rep for National Parks Conservation Association. I'm  
18 also a member of the Desert Advisory Committee. And I'm  
19 here tonight with a group from the Morongo Basin. I'm a  
20 six-year resident of the high desert. And I want to thank  
21 you for letting us provide comment on the DRECP tonight.  
22 And thank you again for the extra meeting. I think that  
23 shows a lot of goodwill.

24 We believe that we need to invest in a renewable  
25 energy future, but we must do so in a way that doesn't harm

1 our national parks, wildlands, other protected areas, or  
2 desert communities. And, you know, the metric of success of  
3 the DRECP is going to be on a number of things, I think.  
4 Does it meet renewable energy goals, will be one of those.  
5 Does it make real and durable conservation measures? But  
6 also how it integrates community and experiential knowledge.  
7 And I think that has been a little lackluster to date,  
8 frankly.

9 I want to make and underscore a couple comments  
10 that have already been made by David Lamfrom and April Sall  
11 of the Wildlands Conservancy. One is the real need for an  
12 extension. There's a very large document, it's an 11,000  
13 page, I believe, document. And it's our job as the public  
14 and as organizations to make meaningful substantive  
15 comments, but we can't do that unless we can truly analyze  
16 what's inside the document. And so I'm looking to the  
17 public. Out in the public tonight there's a lot of people  
18 here. And I wonder if I could have just a show of hands for  
19 who would like to see an extension of at least 60 days on  
20 this.

21 UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: More.

22 MR. SHTEIR: Ninety? Ninety. So can -- can the  
23 record indicate that I'd say we have 300 people here  
24 tonight, perhaps, and that -- maybe more, 500 have indicated  
25 they would like an extension of at least 90 days.

1           The second thing I'd like to say is the need for  
2 further meetings and for meaningful public participation.  
3 And this is definitely a good, good thing tonight. But  
4 those communities -- some communities have been left out.  
5 And there are particularly communities in the East Mojave  
6 like Barstow, Baker, Shoshone and Needles who would also be  
7 affected by this plan. And I think it's really necessary to  
8 schedule some extra meetings for those too.

9           I have a couple comments about -- that April Sall  
10 made, and I'd just like -- I'm going to finish up here real  
11 quick. But I think, you know, as a member of the DAC and as  
12 a member of a conservation organization and community,  
13 there's a bunch of underlying assumptions in the DRECP that  
14 we haven't been able to get clarity on. And some of those  
15 involved the energy calculator, some of the assumptions  
16 behind that. Some of those involve durability of reserve  
17 design. And some of those involve things about the  
18 monitoring like will, you know, the data be made public?  
19 How will it be funded? How will trends be assessed? How  
20 will adaptive management work?

21           But what I'm looking for from your committee, and  
22 I'd really like a response tonight, is if, you know, we can  
23 count on you for a response to these. We'd like to provide  
24 these questions in writing to whoever you put as point  
25 person, but we'd like a response whether we can submit that

1 and get real answers from you?

2 MR. BEALE: Please do submit your questions.

3 MR. SHTEIR: And, Chris, would you like those to  
4 you?

5 MR. BEALE: You can send them to me, yes.

6 MR. SHTEIR: Okay. Thank you. Thank you very  
7 much.

8 MR. BEALE: Thank you. We have Bill Lembright.  
9 And then I'm informed we don't have anyone on the phone, so  
10 we're going to have a couple more speakers here. I'm sorry  
11 we can't get to everyone tonight. But Chuck Bell, and then  
12 Erin D'Orio.

13 MR. LEMBRIGHT: Bill Lembright, Lucerne Valley. I  
14 started there in 1975. So it's been awhile. We need the  
15 six-month extension.

16 Two, Lucerne Valley has had the dubious privilege  
17 of just having two of its -- the two first solar fields put  
18 in there. They're not pretty. They're sucking Lucerne  
19 Valley dry. And they're small projects compared to the  
20 total acreage that they'd like -- that the state would like  
21 to see happen in Lucerne Valley. We can't do it. And  
22 you'll get more info from us on that, detailed info from  
23 Lucerne Valley.

24 Okay, then when you're dealing with -- Lucerne  
25 Valley is a community that's made an offer to the DRECP and

1 these various agencies, including the County of San  
2 Bernardino. And we haven't said, "Not in my backyard,"  
3 which most places have. But we're saying we'll let it  
4 happen in an orderly fashion, by our stipulations, and the  
5 areas that we know are good in our community. We've set  
6 aside and shown the DRECP and the county six square miles of  
7 land perfectly suited for solar. We've also said no solar  
8 thermal and no industrial-scale wind. They're very invasive  
9 in an area like ours.

10           We've also said this area of six square miles, we  
11 want it to be community solar. And what that would do, it  
12 would still be helping the state with more energy, but we  
13 wouldn't be using the state -- from the state's pool. We  
14 would be creating a lot of our own energy and we'd be paying  
15 less for it. Then L.A. can have the part we don't use.

16 Okay.

17           And we want to work with the county of San  
18 Bernardino. We want them to be our lead agency and our  
19 protecting agency so that these things are done in a right  
20 fashion and acceptable to our communities. And we're the  
21 real conservationists, the people who live out in the  
22 desert. We know what all the critters need. We know what  
23 we need. We know what the state needs. So just trust us,  
24 work with us. So far in the meetings we've had with the  
25 state, which you guys have been real nice and everything,

1 but just like nothing we've said has really entered the  
2 process, and I don't understand it.

3           And then lastly, I think it's pretty overwhelming  
4 here that the people of the desert believe in distributed  
5 generation and creating our own solar energy or whatever  
6 way, but solar is pretty benign, and the state should take  
7 that up. Distributed generation ought to be going on at a  
8 much faster rate in the cities. The state, what we do is  
9 take the money of the DRECP and these other such efforts and  
10 give us incentives. Get -- help us get financing to put in  
11 our own solar. The demands are going to go way down. And  
12 by 2020 we're supposed to have net-zero construction. I  
13 don't know what people are thinking. We shouldn't be  
14 needing more energy, we should be needing less if these  
15 things are done. Thanks.

16           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Chuck Bell, and then our  
17 final speaker, Erin D'Orio.

18           MR. BELL: Okay. Thank you. Chuck Bell here for  
19 Valley Economic Development Association.

20           A lot has already been said and I hope you guys  
21 are listening, and I hope it becomes more effective than the  
22 last round because we didn't get much of what we were  
23 talking about then.

24           Since the previous draft, even after all of our  
25 submittals and meetings, our field trips to the proposed

1 six-square mile area that we were offering that Bill talked  
2 about, with an Energy Commissioner and Terry Watt from the  
3 Governor's Office, we still come up with this preferred  
4 alternative, literally smothering Lucerne Valley. And it's  
5 -- it's unacceptable. And even if it's just a broad brush  
6 overlay for future planning, as I've heard, it sends the  
7 wrong message. And it also tells applicants where to start  
8 applying for projects, renewable energy projects within  
9 Lucerne Valley and other areas, before we know where to put  
10 them before this plan gets approved. So it's a bad message.

11           The state's goal should be determining how and  
12 where megawatts can be successfully generated and not just  
13 focus on industrial-scale projects. There are tremendous  
14 opportunities for localized distributed generation that  
15 don't require any land use conflicts and long distance  
16 transmission. It should be part of the 33 percent state  
17 goal. And the utilities, if you guys can help force the  
18 issue, they're going to have to change their model; it  
19 doesn't work anymore. It has to be able to accommodate this  
20 distributed localized generation.

21           We are encouraged by our two county supervisors,  
22 desert county supervisors who seem to understand our issues  
23 and concerns. We can provide a coalition, and we've made  
24 this offer, of eight to ten representatives from  
25 organizations and communities from Yucca Valley to Hesperia

1 to work directly with the state and county -- and county to  
2 come up with valuable -- with viable options and resolve  
3 those issues, and certainly we do look forward to the  
4 effort. This stuff needs more than just a few of these  
5 public scoping meetings. You need some one-on-one. Bottom  
6 line, we cannot allow the state to dictate or influence  
7 local land use planning, trumping county land use authority.  
8 Let's work on this together.

9           The bottom line, guys, you've got to find a way to  
10 get water if you're going to have all these projects. The  
11 Lucerne Valley -- two Lucerne Valley projects under  
12 construction, still under construction, have already  
13 consumed 60 to maybe 80 acre feet of water from an  
14 adjudicated over-drafted groundwater basin. You've heard it  
15 before, water is a major issue. Thank you.

16           MR. BEALE: Thank you.

17           MS. D'ORIO: Hi everybody. My name is Erin  
18 D'Orio, and I'm with the Mojave Communities Conservation  
19 Collaboration. We're just a small group that got started to  
20 try and find better solutions to this. And we've been so  
21 happy to be with other groups here like the Alliance for  
22 Desert Preservation. You know, we're finding that there's a  
23 lot of us that are all in the same boat and we're working  
24 really hard together.

25           But I really want to talk to the people that are

1 new tonight. What the DRECP wants most is for us to come up  
2 with some solutions. I don't know if that's fair because,  
3 you know, I wish that they were presenting them -- us with  
4 them. But the fact is that we also have to come up with  
5 solutions. And so we're going to have a public educational  
6 meeting on November 20th. And for especially the new people  
7 that haven't been involved in this yet, please see me after  
8 the meeting. We're going to try to get some more  
9 involvement. We're a scraggly little group that is really  
10 bone tired from fighting this thing already, and we welcome  
11 the help and the -- and all of the technology that all the  
12 rest of you also have.

13           And, you know, one of the things that stands out  
14 to me is returning the desert to original condition, that's  
15 impossible. You know, after some of this stuff happens we  
16 could never return it to original condition. There's I  
17 don't know how many hundreds or thousands of pounds of  
18 cement would go into one of these wind turbines. It will  
19 never be the same.

20           So I know we're all stressed. I know we're all  
21 tired, you know, but too bad. Let's -- let's get busy and  
22 let's fight for our desert. You know, this is a call to  
23 action. I'm asking all of you to get a little busier and a  
24 little stronger than we've been. Let's get after this  
25 thing. You know, Mahatma Gandhi said, "Be the change you

1 want to see in the world." Let's be it. And so please see  
2 me after the meeting. Thank you.

3 MR. BEALE: Thank you.

4 MR. ZEMANEK: Chris, I know this is a little bit  
5 out of order, but may I make a request that since a lot of  
6 us have traveled such a long distance and have waited  
7 patiently throughout the entire presentation to be able to  
8 make our comments to you guys after you have spent five-and-  
9 a-half or six years on the project, let's not cut it off  
10 now. There's a few comments left. Everybody deserves to be  
11 heard.

12 MR. BEALE: We do have several comments left. Can  
13 I ask if folks could make comments a little briefer for the  
14 last lap here. We do have, I think, about ten more cards,  
15 so -- and if you want to give up your time to someone else,  
16 that's another thing we can do. I mean, it would be great  
17 to get through all the cards.

18 MR. ZEMANEK: Thank you. We appreciate that.

19 MR. BEALE: Excuse me. I'll set the timer at 90  
20 seconds. And I'll give the next three folks.

21 Do you have a speaker card?

22 MR. ZEMANEK: Yes, I do.

23 MR. BEALE: Well, since you're up here.

24 MR. ZEMANEK: It's Zemanek. It's always at the  
25 end.

1 MR. BEALE: I didn't mean to alphabetize them.

2 Second to last.

3 MR. ZEMANEK: Okay.

4 MR. BEALE: Thank you.

5 MR. ZEMANEK: All right. You want me to go? Here  
6 it is, 90 seconds.

7 The big problem with the DRECP is that it takes  
8 8,000 pages discussing how, and about half a page discussing  
9 why. As a result we have endless discussion of how to  
10 inflict 20,000 megawatts of industrial-scale on the desert,  
11 but the DRECP never discusses why it is we need to inflict  
12 this kind of damage. That makes the DRECP, unfortunately, a  
13 very, very faulty planning document.

14 To the extent that it addresses why what the DRECP  
15 says is that, well, there are these outside mandates, and it  
16 points to AB 32 and to the 33 percent RPS goal. But the AB  
17 32 statute is a greenhouse gas statute. Nowhere does it say  
18 that there needs to be 20,000 megawatts, nowhere does it say  
19 that it needs to be utility-scale, and nowhere does it say  
20 it needs to be in the California Desert.

21 And, in fact, if you want to look for a mandate in  
22 AB 32 you can much more easily read a mandate that there  
23 ought to be distributed generation everywhere and there  
24 ought to be throughout the State of California and not  
25 simply inflicted on the desert.

1           The 33 RPS, what we keep hearing is we're  
2 basically there. So why in the world should the 33 percent  
3 RPS compel that you plan for another 20,000 megawatts of  
4 utility-scale in the California Desert. It doesn't follow.  
5 Unfortunately, DRECP never got into those why questions, and  
6 so we have an extremely lengthy document that plans for a  
7 destruction that is probably never going to be necessary.  
8 And it would be extremely unfortunate if the DRECP in its  
9 current form became policy.

10           One more thing about policy, DRECP really is a  
11 policy document. It's not a planning document. You're very  
12 clear on the policy you're trying to implement. If you're  
13 going to implement policy then please do it in straight  
14 forward way. Don't call it a planning document when it's  
15 not. And make sure if you're going to implement policy,  
16 please hear from the people who are most directly affected,  
17 just like you're doing tonight. Thank you.

18           MR. BEALE: Thank you. All right, so we have Earl  
19 Wilson, Christian Guntert, and Carlos De La Peza. And let  
20 me know if you want to -- if you still want to use your  
21 place in the queue.

22           Earl?

23           MR. WILSON: Hello. My name is Earl Wilson. I am  
24 a resident of Lone Pine, way up on the top of the DRECP  
25 thing where we dealt with the county in the DRECP and kind

1 of pushed it down to the southern part. But we still have  
2 to face the Department of Water and Power.

3 Now the main reason I came up here, I will  
4 continue, is on night lighting. I'm President of the China  
5 Lake Astronomical Society, and on the Board of Directors of  
6 Western Amateur Astronomers. And I heard somebody say the  
7 magic world, telescope, a while ago. Well, we recreate in  
8 the desert. And we need good access, permanent access, and  
9 we don't need huge swaths of land that are going to be  
10 fallowed by the solar energy developers which we will never  
11 be able to go on again because it will be 1,000 years before  
12 they're restored to their original conditions.

13 And I'm starting to see red.

14 The document that I actually bit into was the  
15 preferred one and it is full of weasel words and phrases  
16 like "avoid, feasible, feasibility." Okay. I think we all  
17 know what we're talking about there. There should be  
18 mitigation for night lighting at a five-to-one ratio at  
19 least. One light on, five lights off. Thank you.

20 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Christian Guntert, Carlos  
21 De La Peza, and Marina West.

22 Christian? Is Christian Guntert here? Are you,  
23 sir?

24 Carlos?

25 MR. DE LA PEZA: I'm Carlos.

1 MR. BEALE: Okay. Carlos, please go ahead.

2 MR. DE LA PEZA: Well, I think -- hello? I think  
3 everything is being transmitted to you people more than  
4 once. But I do have a write-up from a writer from -- his  
5 name is Chris Clark, and he's got the solution for you. In  
6 other words, start all over again and follow this, which I'm  
7 handing as part of the package.

8 We talk about the 20,000 megawatts. But from what  
9 I understand 20,000 includes the nation, not the desert. So  
10 please, if you could squeeze some of those megawatts  
11 someplace else, please do so.

12 I don't know, you took -- you took five-and-a-half  
13 years or thereabouts with a group of experts and this is the  
14 best plan you came up with? I just don't understand. And  
15 you've given us basically two-and-a-half months to reply  
16 with half a month being part of the holidays. So we -- I  
17 ask you politely to give us an extension.

18 Plan or no plan, the BLM -- the BLM is still  
19 issuing permits right and left. So why don't we ask from a  
20 moratorium to see what the plan is going to be? I guess  
21 everybody is going by an agenda, but the BLM has their own  
22 agenda. The people are -- have never been consulted. They  
23 just go and grant it. And can we learn from the past  
24 experiences? Like somebody already mentioned, you're  
25 massacring a lot of birds. And is there an answer for that?

1 When are we going to get a solution for that? Right now I  
2 think it would solve a lot of the -- a lot of the problems.

3           If you talk about jobs, I don't think that the  
4 jobs have been what most people expected. But the problems  
5 that have -- that are being caused has been horrendous. If  
6 you're talking about jobs, why don't you try to get the  
7 casinos in. The casinos will bring three to three or four  
8 times some of these industrial projects. A lot of the  
9 people have been dreaming about the casinos for years.

10           I really don't have any more to add because  
11 everything has been said twice. Thank you.

12           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Marina West, Tony Malone,  
13 and Steven Schallus.

14           Marina?

15           Tony? Tony Malone?

16           MR. MALONE: Right here.

17           MR. BEALE: Come on up.

18           MR. MALONE: Hello. I'm a resident of Lucerne  
19 Valley. I've been there for 35 years. Of that, two-thirds  
20 of that time I was -- I measured the air, I measured PM10,  
21 2.5, for the Mojave Desert Air Quality Management District.  
22 Yes, Lucerne Valley has PM10 exceedances. And, yes, we do  
23 worry about the air, and we do worry about things like  
24 Valley Fever.

25           But let me show you something. That picture right

1 there, that's the desert. That's the beautiful part of our  
2 desert. See those big boulders? The system that they put  
3 in, the 20 megawatt system, it's loaded with those boulders.  
4 And they had to dig them up. Now what they've got is sand  
5 left. And, you know, of course the sand blows and things  
6 like that.

7           But that's not what really worries me. See, I'm  
8 off the grid. I have two plugin cars and a plugin electric  
9 motorcycle. I get my energy for free. I'm off the grid,  
10 okay? I suggest everybody to do that, let me tell you,  
11 because that's a great way of going.

12           But here's the thing, when you take this kind of  
13 desert and you put 20,000 megawatts worth of systems on  
14 there, and I used to work for Edison, too, you know,  
15 teaching high school, 40 percent of the energy of a large  
16 scale system never gets to its end, never gets there, 40  
17 percent. So when you build 20,000 megawatts you're lucky to  
18 get 12,000 megawatts at the final place.

19           Whereas if you did it yourself, if you had it on  
20 your own roof, first of all, it's going to be cooler on your  
21 house. Number two, it's all -- it's right there, so you  
22 don't have the losses. Number three, you don't have  
23 terrorist problems. You don't have one person trying to  
24 disrupt the whole system because you can't, not with  
25 distributed generation. And let me tell you, this -- these

1 are the facts, 40 percent.

2 I think that's ridiculous and I think you ought to  
3 go back to looking at distributed generation.

4 MR. BEALE: Thank you. Stephen Schallus, Sue  
5 Marks, and after Sue Marks, Ted Stimpfel, and Tom O'Key.

6 MS. MARKS" Hi. I wanted to talk tonight about  
7 the transmission line and how these transmission lines are  
8 going to impact the fragile desert environment. The DRECP  
9 never answers that question.

10 I can't for the life of me understand your  
11 thinking. This is supposed to be an environmental impact  
12 report. And one of the biggest impacts are the transmission  
13 lines. And there's nothing in there about the impact of  
14 those lines.

15 You don't need a PhD to know that 1,000 miles of  
16 new transmission lines and all of the service and access  
17 roads that are going to be required will be a major  
18 distribution [sic] to the land. All of the plants and  
19 animals that depend on this frail ecosystem are going to be  
20 seriously disrupted. The transmission lines will cut  
21 migration routes. All of the dust will create major new  
22 health issues. We've heard of Valley Fever tonight so many  
23 times. Why am I, an ordinary citizen, standing here, trying  
24 to list what the impacts are going to be when the DRECP is  
25 not only supposed to list them, but also to study them in

1 detail?

2           There is one fact that I found, that the primary  
3 insulator in electrical transmission lines and in the  
4 switching equipment is sulphur hexafluoride. Sulphur  
5 hexafluoride is a super powerful greenhouse gas. One pound  
6 of it does as much damage as 11 tons of carbon dioxide. But  
7 unlike carbon dioxide, nothing sequesters it. It has a  
8 half-life in the atmosphere of 3,200 years. What are we  
9 thinking here? We know most of that gas comes from  
10 electrical equipment, and we're putting in 1,000 new miles  
11 of new transmission.

12           The DRECP has a responsibility to find out what is  
13 going to harm our desert and study it. Thank you.

14           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Ted Stimpfel, Tom O'Key.

15           You don't look like Tom.

16           MS. KENNEDY: I swapped with Tom. Hi. I'm Peggy  
17 Lee Kennedy. Thanks for giving us extra time. I really  
18 appreciate it. And thank you for being so patient and  
19 listening to everybody.

20           And, you know, I can see why people are upset  
21 because I felt upset after the presentation. And I want  
22 controls. I live in an area where they put in some solar  
23 farms and it's horrible. I moved there in this area that --  
24 because there's no power lines. And then later on two solar  
25 fields went up, one on one side and one on the other side.

1 It's terrible. I want control, so it's a great idea to  
2 control this.

3           And one of them is right in the middle of a  
4 wildlife linkage corridor. Duh. Put a fence up, you know,  
5 in a linkage corridor. It doesn't work for the animals.  
6 They don't go through chain-link fence, large areas of it,  
7 so I want controls.

8           But after watching the presentation, you know, I  
9 really felt like I was at the doctor's office with a lump on  
10 my breast that was the size of a ping-pong ball, and the  
11 doctor was this elderly man telling me, "Don't worry your  
12 pretty little head, we've got it covered." I don't think  
13 so. I think that all these people are right and that we  
14 have to give this more time and look at distributed  
15 generation. You know, it doesn't make any sense to not.

16           And also I want to say that if you're doing  
17 conservation and this is environmental at heart, then maybe  
18 you should protect more area. So I looked at my area. It's  
19 white. But guess what? I live in a major linkage area.  
20 There are -- my neighbors are Burrowing Owl and endangered  
21 Desert Tortoise, to name a few. Those are my neighbors. I  
22 love them. And I know that these people are saying that  
23 you're not talking about them, but you're not protecting my  
24 linkage corridor in your efforts.

25           So maybe you could take that overlay and put that

1 color over our linkages, even if they're not being developed  
2 as part of your plan, because we need to protect these areas  
3 for the future. And people are planning these solar farms  
4 in these areas already while you're talking, it's happening.  
5 So we need to protect them. And it should be part of your  
6 plan to protect as much area as possible if this is about  
7 the environment and conservation.

8 MR. BEALE: Thank you. John Smith, Sophia Merk,  
9 and Brian Hammer.

10 John Smith? I see him coming up.

11 And, Sophia, are you here too?

12 MR. SMITH: I'm John Smith. I got to turn it on  
13 here. On. On. On. On. There's a halfway on.

14 I'm actually speechless. That's the last time I  
15 let any of you borrow my notes. I really don't have  
16 anything to add to what's been said. It's been going  
17 through my mind for a long time, not that I'm way ahead of  
18 everybody. No. Probably a lot farther behind.

19 But there's one thing that I mentioned last night,  
20 and there's a board back there, and it's been mentioned  
21 several times before about the protected species. And one  
22 thing that's, frankly, missing is the Mojave Desert Rat.  
23 And I just wonder if the take on the Mojave Desert Rat is 30  
24 percent, say, then let's have the first four rows stand up  
25 here because you're it. Because one thing that is missing,

1 is the people that we pay that are on our payroll are not  
2 listening to their boss, it's as simple as that.

3 By the way, the lump on the breast, no, I didn't  
4 have that in there.

5 But you need to pay attention because you just --  
6 this is lunacy. My grandchildren handed me a Rubik's Cube  
7 one time and I worked on it for about an hour, and then I  
8 never worked on it again. This is a Rubik's Cube you've  
9 created. And I don't know that anybody can work the puzzle.  
10 You need to start over again.

11 And you need to take into consideration an item  
12 that you had on your board there, that the recommendations  
13 of things that -- new ideas and other ways of doing things,  
14 and you've heard loud and clear tonight, I want to challenge  
15 you to have the courage to go back to your supervisors and  
16 start telling them what the -- what the mood of the people  
17 is toward authoritarian edicts. And that's really what this  
18 comes down to, an upside down government which tells the  
19 people, the supreme element of our government, that you must  
20 do what we tell you to do. Wars have been fought over that.

21 A recent survey said that one out of four citizens  
22 in the United States would have their state secede from the  
23 union. Now I'm not saying it ought to be done, but that  
24 ought to give you notice to where people are coming from.  
25 Thank you.

1 MR. BEALE: Thank you. And the last three speaker  
2 cards, and these really are our last three speakers tonight,  
3 Sophia Merk, Brian Hammer, and Stephan Mills.

4 MS. MERK: Is it on? Yes. Thank you for letting  
5 me speak again tonight. Last night I talked to you about  
6 groundwater and my concerns about groundwater in the desert.

7 Tonight I just -- I want to resubmit my scoping  
8 comments because it was not answered. And I want to  
9 highlight Section 601 of the Federal Land Policy Management  
10 Act. And does it really compete with an executive order? I  
11 don't know. That's for the lawyers to find out. But I  
12 would advise everybody to take a look at this and I'm -- so  
13 I'm resubmitting it.

14 I also am requesting again that the comment period  
15 be extended for at least 90 days, hopefully 180 days,  
16 considering the size of this document. And I also am  
17 requesting another round of public meetings being held in  
18 the desert. The two scoping comment periods that were held  
19 were in the Ontario area; not everybody could go. I went to  
20 one. I couldn't go to the second one. I was confined to a  
21 wheelchair. However, the people of the desert need to be  
22 listened to. The water of this land needs to be looked at,  
23 the aquifers. You have your vegetation, you have your  
24 animals, they all need water, and so do the human beings,  
25 and let's not forget the human beings.

1           Here's my original scoping.

2           MR. BEALE: Thank you. Sorry about that. We  
3 have -- the last two speakers are Brian Hammer and Stephan  
4 Mills.

5           MR. HAMMER: Good evening. My name is Brian  
6 Hammer. I proudly work for the State of California as an  
7 analyst helping manage natural resources. As a matter of  
8 fact, I've worked for a bunch of you in this room and I'm  
9 grateful. I'm also an adjunct professor teaching GIS for  
10 natural resources. I speak here tonight as a private  
11 citizen. I don't say all that stuff because it makes me any  
12 better or any worse. I just am qualified for what I am  
13 about to say.

14           I'd like to speak to the flawed analysis. The  
15 whole DRECP EIR/EIS process is based on the flawed premise  
16 that the GIS modeling is reality. GIS is a helpful tool, I  
17 use it every day. But without boots on the ground you have  
18 no idea of the on-the-ground reality. It is flawed to think  
19 that you can do a meaningful EIR/EIS at any level above a  
20 site-specific level. Blanket EIRs and EISs are a way of  
21 justifying doing bad things to satisfy a predetermined goal.  
22 The goal of the DRECP does not justify the means you're  
23 using.

24           I am offended by the use of the word  
25 "conservation" in this process. This is not conservation.

1 This is open season on habitats, animals, and the citizens  
2 who live in and near the development focus areas. Thank  
3 you.

4 MR. BEALE: Thank you. And for the last word  
5 tonight, Stephan Mills.

6 MR. MILLS: Well, I couldn't help shaking my head  
7 hearing that the DRECP is just a planning document that  
8 doesn't favor any particular projects and lets the market  
9 decide where the particular big utility plants will go. But  
10 the reality is that the DRECP is actively promoting utility  
11 plants in the DFAs with powerful financial incentives, as  
12 well as by facilitating and streamlining the renewable  
13 projects into the DFAs.

14 On top of that, as was mentioned earlier in the  
15 presentation, there is the goal of making the review process  
16 efficient and predictable. Well, in promoting this policy  
17 the DRECP is greatly distorting the market, and they're  
18 doing it in a way that brings utility developers flocking  
19 into the DFAs like moths to a floodlight.

20 Meanwhile, the DRECP is, for all of its endless  
21 detail, devoid of any real plan-wide analysis of what 20,000  
22 megawatts is going to do to the desert. Instead it says,  
23 well, we'll deal with the actual impacts. We'll really  
24 drill down on that when the particular projects come up.  
25 But then when the particular projects come up they say,

1 well, we've been -- we've been green-lighted already by the  
2 programmatic landscape level analysis that's been done by  
3 the DFAs -- excuse me, that's been done by the DRECP. So as  
4 a result we have a hide-the-ball approach to environmental  
5 review, where there really isn't any ball and there really  
6 isn't any environmental review. At each stage the review  
7 has already supposedly been done at another stage. That  
8 mindset has to change completely. Thank you.

9 MR. BEALE: Thank you. And thank everyone for  
10 coming tonight. I know it's not easy to get here. We do  
11 appreciate your comments, even your critical ones. I do  
12 want to let you know -- all of them. We appreciate --  
13 welcome -- that's how we make the plan better. The reason  
14 we're here is to hear your advice about having to plan  
15 better. So as I said at the beginning, we welcome those  
16 comments. Thank you very much for those.

17 I do want to let you know about our upcoming  
18 meetings. In Monday we're in Lancaster. On -- and  
19 Wednesday we're in Blythe. And Thursday we're in Ontario.  
20 And then again, remind you that we're scheduling an  
21 additional meeting in the Morongo Basin, details to be  
22 determined. We'll put notice out at least two weeks ahead  
23 of that, and I hope you can join us there. So thank you all  
24 very much.

25 (The meeting adjourned at 7:47 p.m.)

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## CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, MARTHA L. NELSON, an Electronic Reporter, do hereby certify that I am a disinterested person herein; that I recorded the foregoing California Energy Commission's Draft Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan; that it was thereafter transcribed.

I further certify that I am not of counsel or attorney for any of the parties to said conference, or in any way interested in the outcome of said conference.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 29th day of October, 2014.

/s/ Martha L. Nelson\_  
MARTHA L. NELSON

## CERTIFICATE OF TRANSCRIBER

I certify that the foregoing is a correct transcript, to the best of my ability, from the electronic sound recording of the proceedings in the above-entitled matter.

/s/ Martha L. Nelson  
MARTHA L. NELSON, CERT\*\*367

October 29, 2014