

APPEARANCES

AGENCY REPRESENTATIVES

Scott Flint, California Energy Commission

STAFF

Chris Beale, DRECP Director

Kristy Chew, California Energy Commission

ALSO PRESENT

Unidentified Male

AGENDA

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P R O C E E D I N G S

4:03 p.m.

BLYTHE, CALIFORNIA, WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 5, 2014

MR. BEALE: Hi everyone. We're going to get started -- started now. It's a little after 4:00.

On behalf of the California Energy Commission, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Bureau of Land Management, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service, I'd like to welcome you to this meeting about the Draft Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan.

I'm Chris Beale. I'm the Director of the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan, or as we call it, the DRECP. And I'm joined here today by several members of the planning team that put together the draft plan, from -- both from the state and federal agencies that are responsible for preparing the plan, also from the consulting team. And I just want to say that we really appreciate your coming out. We know it's not easy to make it out here on a weekday. We appreciate your interests and we appreciate -- we appreciate your time.

The purpose of the meeting today is to help you get to know the draft DRECP. The document has been out for about a month. It's very substantial. We know that you have not read it all. And what we're hoping to do today is help you understand what's in the draft DRECP, why we're

1 preparing it, and where we are in the process. If you have
2 started reading it and you have more specific questions or
3 want more information, we have folks here who can help you
4 find the information you want within the document, the
5 information that answers your questions or is relevant to
6 your concern.

7 And we're also providing today an early
8 opportunity for public comment. And I'll say more about the
9 different ways you can comment today. But I do want to
10 stress that we know this is still kind of early in the
11 public comment period. This is a chance for you to provide
12 your kind of initial observations or impressions of the
13 draft document. You're always welcome to make additional
14 comments later. We hope you do.

15 And before I kind of get into the format of the
16 meeting and let you know what our -- we have in store for
17 the next couple of hours, I do want to say a little bit
18 about the scope of the DRECP based on some early input we've
19 received. I want to stress a couple very basic points about
20 it. One is that the Draft Desert Renewable Energy
21 Conservation Plan is a planning document. It doesn't
22 propose any specific renewable energy projects. It doesn't
23 propose any specific transmission projects. It's a document
24 that plans for potential development in the future.

25 Another thing I want to stress is that it's been

1 reported in some articles in the media that the Draft DRECP
2 is opening up the desert for renewable energy development.
3 It's really important to, I think, to point out that by our
4 estimate there are nearly 10 million acres in the desert now
5 of renewable energy projects that could be potentially be
6 sited, nearly 10 million acres where renewable energy
7 development is not prohibited.

8 One of the basic things that the Draft DRECP is
9 trying to do is to identify where in that, you know, roughly
10 10 million acres is it most appropriate to actually site
11 projects. And that's one of the basic things that we are
12 trying to do with the plan that we're here to talk about
13 today and one of the most basic things that we hope you
14 comment on, if you were reviewing the draft plan and wanted
15 to provide comments.

16 The format of the meeting today is it will start
17 with a fairly brief presentation; it's about 30 minutes.
18 It's intended to give you an overview of the plan, talk
19 about opportunities for public comment, and also talk about
20 an online web-based tool that we developed to help you
21 review the plan.

22 Scott Flint from the California Energy Commission
23 to my left here will be making that presentation.

24 We're echoing. It stopped. Okay.

25 After the presentation we'll have an open house.

1 You see the posterboards across the back of the room. We'll
2 spend about 45 minutes where members of the planning team
3 will be available to answer whatever questions you have
4 about the draft plan. So this is a chance for you to talk
5 to folks who prepared the plan, to answer any -- ask any
6 questions you have about the plan, and to get some answers.
7 And then following that, right at 5:30, we'll have an
8 open -- open mike sort of opportunity for public comment.

9 So the -- the two ways that you can make -- you
10 can comment on the documents tonight are during our open
11 house, you know, during the information station where we'll
12 have folks available to answer questions.

13 We'll also have Marlee, our friendly Court
14 Reporter here, who is available, if you'd like, to take your
15 comments. You can talk to Marlee. She will write down your
16 comments, and they'll become part of the formal record as if
17 you had submitted a written comment. So that's -- that's
18 the first opportunity to provide comments about the Draft
19 DRECP.

20 And then the second opportunity is during the hour
21 or so that we have reserved for public comments. You can
22 come to the podium, make your comments in front of everyone
23 to hear, and Marlee will also be recording that and, those
24 comments will be made part of the formal record.

25 A couple of other things I do want to highlight at

1 the beginning, we have other folks here who -- from agencies
2 that have been collaborating on the development of the Draft
3 DRECP but aren't necessarily the folks who prepared the
4 draft plan. We have Lara Rozzell from the National Park
5 Service. We have Connie Latham from the State Department of
6 Parks and Recreation. And we have David Weir for the
7 Department of Defense. Their agencies all have an interest
8 in the desert. They have an interest in renewable energy
9 development in the desert. And if you have any questions or
10 concerns about their role in the planning process or their
11 perspective on the plan, please -- please find them.
12 They're happy to answer your questions.

13 Let's see, one more thing. If you do want to make
14 a public comment during our open session at 5:30 we ask that
15 you fill out one of the blue speaker cards we have at our
16 front table. The reason we do that is just so we know how
17 many people would like to speak. I think we're going to
18 have plenty of time for everyone to comment here today. But
19 if you would please fill out -- fill out a card, just to let
20 us know that you do want to make a public comment during
21 that period. The cards -- you can put a lot of information
22 on the cards if you like. That information will be
23 associated with your formal comment. But all we really need
24 is your name. We just want to be able to know who's
25 speaking and know that -- and know to call you up.

1 We also have, I think, folks on the WebEx, on the
2 phone. And we'll reserve time for folks on the phone to
3 comment after folks here in the room have had a chance to
4 make comments. And likewise, for folks on the phone, Marlee
5 will be recording your comments and they'll become part of
6 the public record.

7 All right, so that's -- that's my introduction.
8 And we are ready to get started now with the presentation.
9 And then after the presentation, again, we'll have the open
10 house, and that's the time to ask your questions.

11 So Mr. Flint?

12 MR. FLINT: Thank you, Chris.

13 MR. BEALE: Can I just -- are you guys -- can you
14 hear me there in the back? We don't have a mike today, but
15 we thought the acoustics -- can you hear us okay? Okay.
16 Thanks.

17 MR. FLINT: Thanks, Chris. I was going to do a
18 sound check also.

19 Is my voice okay for your folks? Okay. Good.

20 So I'm Scott Flint. I'm with the California
21 Energy Commission. And good afternoon and welcome to this
22 public meeting and introductory presentation on the Draft
23 Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan or DRECP.

24 The DRECP is the result of an intense
25 collaborative interagency planning process. It is a

1 comprehensive plan that contains a great deal of
2 information. We've organized the document to make it as
3 accessible as possible in a format similar to the
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 volume of technical appendices.

8 Volume I provides background on the development of
9 the DRECP, including the purpose and need for the DRECP.
10 Volume II describes the alternatives. Volume III describes
11 the environmental setting and existing conditions. Volume
12 IV contains the draft environmental analysis. And Volume V
13 describes public scoping and public participation process.
14 Volume VI includes details about planning -- about
15 implementation of mitigation measures.

16 There are also 24 appendices that provide
17 additional information on covered species, biological goals
18 and objectives, climate change, and many other topics.

19 The four agencies that were principally
20 responsible for preparing the DRECP are the California
21 Energy Commission, the Bureau of Land Management, California
22 Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the US Fish and
23 Wildlife Service. Many federal, state and local agencies,
24 tribes, and private citizens provided helpful input into the
25 development of the draft plan.

1 The purpose and goals of the Draft DRECP are to
2 provide a long-term adaptable plan for renewable energy
3 development and resource conservation within 22.5 million
4 acres of the Mojave and Sonoran Deserts in Southern
5 California. The DRECP has a 25-year planning horizon and is
6 intended to be implemented through 2040.

7 The DRECP is intended to streamline the
8 environmental review and permitting process for renewable
9 energy projects sited in appropriate areas. "Streamlined"
10 under the DRECP means that review and permitting processes
11 will be more efficient and predictable. Streamlined does
12 not mean that environmental analyses would be incomplete or
13 that steps would be skipped. The DRECP would not weaken
14 requirements for environmental review under state or federal
15 law; it would make them more efficient and more predictable.

16 The DRECP would cover and conserve 37 sensitive
17 species and their habitats, including species listed as
18 threatened or endangered under the Federal Endangered
19 Species Act or the California Endangered Species Act.

20 On BLM lands the DRECP would also conserve other
21 valuable resources such as recreation, cultural, visual, and
22 wilderness characteristics. A core element of the DRECP is
23 the significant increase in conservation and recreation
24 designations that BLM is proposing to protect valuable
25 resources and uses on BLM lands.

1 The DRECP would provide a framework for
2 considering renewable energy conservation and a range of
3 other resources values in one land use planning --
4 conservation planning process.

5 The DRECP identifies appropriate areas for
6 renewable energy projects, creates incentives for developers
7 to site projects in those areas by streamlining the
8 environmental review and permitting processes, and would
9 conserve sensitive species, their habitats and ecological
10 processes that support them. The DRECP would also protect
11 other desert resources and values on BLM lands.

12 As it is now the siting of renewable energy
13 projects and the mitigation of environmental impacts are
14 considered on an individual project-by-project basis and not
15 on a comprehensive landscape scale as proposed under the
16 DRECP. The DRECP would also help to improve the
17 coordination of federal, state, local, tribal, and private
18 conservation efforts in the desert by identifying high
19 priority landscape-scale goals that can be used to guide and
20 achieve greater conservation outcomes.

21 The DRECP plan area covers about 22-and-a-half
22 million acres across portions of seven counties in the
23 Mojave and Sonoran Deserts and includes federal and non-
24 federal lands. The plan area includes only a small portion
25 of some counties, like San Diego, and a large portion of

1 others, such as San Bernardino County.

2 This map shows you the general land ownership of
3 the DRECP plan area. The largest land holdings are BLM
4 lands in yellow, National Park Service lands in green,
5 military lands in dark gray, and private lands in light
6 gray.

7 The DRECP is a combination of three different
8 types of plans, a BLM Land Use Plan Amendment, a US Fish and
9 Wildlife Service General Conservation Plan, and a California
10 Department of Fish and Wildlife Natural Community
11 Conservation Plan. The three plans are integrated and
12 together help achieve the DRECP's overall goals.

13 Each of the agency plans applies to a different
14 portion of the DRECP plan area. The BLM Land Use Plan
15 Amendment applies only on BLM land which cover nearly 10
16 million acres of the plan area. The US Fish and Wildlife
17 Service General Conservation Plan covers 5.4 million acres
18 of non-federal lands; the GCP does not apply to BLM or any
19 other federal lands. The Natural Community Conservation
20 Plan applies to both federal and non-federal lands and
21 covers the entire plan area.

22 The DRECP would provide a more efficient and
23 predictable environmental review and permitting process for
24 certain types of covered activities. Renewable energy
25 projects that would be sited within development focus areas,

1 or DFAs, are the largest category of covered activities and
2 include solar, wind and geothermal projects. Transmission
3 is also a covered activity and would be covered both within
4 and outside of the development focus areas so that the
5 energy produced can be delivered to where it is needed.

6 Covered activities include biological conservation
7 and compensation actions to avoid, minimize and mitigate for
8 the impacts of renewable energy and transmission
9 development. On BLM lands there are conservation and
10 compensation actions for a variety of other resources and
11 uses such as cultural, recreation and visual.

12 The DRECP would cover all phases of renewable
13 energy project development, including preconstruction and
14 construction, operations and maintenance, and
15 decommissioning of projects when they've completed their
16 operational life.

17 The renewable energy component of the DRECP is one
18 part of California's comprehensive strategy for addressing
19 climate change and meeting the energy needs of residents and
20 businesses. The statewide strategy includes utility-scale
21 renewable energy development and associated transmission,
22 distributed generation, energy conservation, strong energy
23 efficiency standards, and investment in research and
24 development for energy.

25 Utility-scale renewable energy plays an important

1 complementary role in this overall strategy, allowing for
2 immediate and sizeable deployment of renewable energy
3 generation, grid stability, and optimal use of the state's
4 best renewable energy resources, while at the same time
5 allowing for technologies with unique benefits such as
6 energy storage.

7 The DRECP plans for up to 20,000 megawatts of new
8 renewable energy generation and transmission in the plan
9 area through the year 2040. It is important to note that
10 20,000 megawatts of new generation is not a development goal
11 or target. The DRECP is not intended to drive that or any
12 other level of development. Instead, an estimate of 20,000
13 megawatts of demand for renewable energy in the desert was
14 used to estimate the amount of acres of ground disturbance
15 that might occur, and we used these estimates to conduct the
16 environmental analysis.

17 The potential for 20,000 megawatts of renewable
18 energy development in the DRECP plan area is based on
19 certain assumptions about energy generation in California,
20 including an assumption that nearly 30,000 megawatts of
21 distributed generation would be built statewide. The draft
22 plan does assume that there would be 20,000 megawatts of
23 consumer-side distributed generation like rooftop solar,
24 which is about ten times the amount that is installed today.
25 Assumptions also include limited generation from nuclear and

1 fossil fuel plants, and the continuation of state policies
2 that limit imports of renewable energy from outside the
3 state. Renewable energy in the DRECP plan area through 2040
4 would be lower than 20,000 megawatts if changes in
5 technology or public policy encourage or require different
6 resources for energy generation.

7 We estimate that the production of 20,000
8 megawatts from central station renewable energy plants would
9 result in about 177,000 acres of ground disturbance in the
10 plan area.

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

16 The DRECP includes specific renewable energy
17 designations. The most important of these are the
18 development focus areas where renewable energy projects
19 would benefit from a more efficient and streamlined
20 environmental review and permitting process. These areas
21 are suitable because they have renewable energy resources;
22 they are either windy or sunny, or they have geothermal
23 resources, and also because they are compatible with the
24 conservation of species and other resource values and uses.

25

1 In most of the alternatives the development focus
2 areas are located where natural resource values are
3 relatively low to minimize conflicts between renewable
4 energy development and resource conservation.

5 Study areas are the other type of renewable energy
6 designation. Study areas are lands that could be
7 appropriate for renewable energy development in the future
8 but require further analysis. Study areas are not regarded
9 as development focus areas in the draft DRECP.

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

18 The biological conservation strategy includes
19 specific conservation and management actions to avoid,
20 minimize and mitigate for the impacts to covered species and
21 contribute to their recovery. The conservation strategy
22 also includes a monitoring and adaptive management program
23 to allow the DRECP to incorporate new information throughout
24 the 25-year term of the plan.

25 Six alternatives are presented and analyzed in the

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

6 The BLM Land Use Plan Amendment, the Natural
7 Community Conservation Plan, and the General Conservation
8 Plan are included in all of the action alternatives. Other
9 common elements of the action alternatives include the
10 conservation strategy, development focus areas, recreation
11 designations, and a monitoring and adaptive management
12 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. This acreage is dispersed and analyzed
17 differently in each action alternative depending on the
18 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 or completed. The
21 light pink areas are where renewable energy projects could
22 potentially be built today, an area of about 9.8 million
23 acres. In the dark pink hatched areas shown -- the dark
24 pink hatched areas show where renewable energy projects
25 would occur under the DRECP's preferred alternative, an area

1 of about 2 million acres of development focus areas.

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

6 The DFAs are shown in pink.

7 On the left of the slide we have Alternative 1.
8 In the middle of the -- in the middle of the slide we have
9 the preferred alternative. And on the right side of the
10 slide we have Alternative 2. This slide shows where
11 development focus areas are -- are different among these
12 three alternatives. For example, Alternative 1, on the
13 left, has the smallest amount of development focus area.
14 Alternative 2 on the right has a moderate amount, and
15 alternative -- I'm sorry, the preferred alternative in the
16 middle has a moderate amount, and Alternative 2, on the
17 right, has the largest amount of development focus area.
18 The slide shows differences between Alternative 1 and 2, for
19 example, in the West Mojave, the Eastern Riverside and
20 Blythe area, and in the Imperial Valley area.

21 Remember, regardless of DFA size and distribution,
22 we are estimating about 177,000 acres of ground disturbance
23 impacts in each of the five action alternatives.

24 Another important difference among the DRECP
25 alternatives is the amount of BLM lands proposed as

1 additions to the National Landscape Conservation System
2 known as the NLCS or National Conservation Lands. They are
3 shown here in purple. Again, Alternative 1 is on the left,
4 has the least amount of new conservation -- National
5 Conservation Lands proposed. Alternative 2 on the right
6 side has the largest amount. And the preferred alternative
7 in the middle and has a moderate amount of proposed National
8 Conservation Lands.

9 The amount of proposed National Conservation Lands
10 is related to the amount of development focus areas in each
11 of the action alternative. Larger, more geographically
12 dispersed development focus areas would put more natural
13 resources at risk, so larger Natural Conservation Lands
14 designations are proposed to offset that increased impact.

15 This map orients you to the Imperial and Eastern
16 Riverside region of the DRECP plan area. Proposed
17 development focus areas are shown in pink, and BLM proposed
18 conservation designations are shown in blue, light blue, and
19 proposed National Landscape Conservation System Lands are
20 shown in yellow.

21 So what you're -- what you're really seeing -- so
22 next to the gray area there that's military near the
23 Chocolate Mountains right in the center of the slide, the
24 green around that you're seeing -- the greenish around that
25 you're seeing BLM conservation lands in light blue that are

1 overlaying by national -- National Conservation Lands. So
2 it's yellow over blue and it looks green. You'll be able to
3 see these maps much better at the information stations in
4 the back. Also on this map, proposed recreation management
5 areas show up in a light slashed gray. So just below the
6 Chocolate Mountain area we see the Imperial Sand Dunes,
7 which is a combination of off-road -- off-road vehicle OHV
8 designation and SRMA, Special Recreation Management Area
9 designations. So again, you'll be able to see these much
10 better on the maps at the -- at the stations in the back.

11 Here are some basic highlights about the preferred
12 alternative. The overall biological conservation strategy
13 for the preferred alternative covers about 15 million acres,
14 and that includes 7.6 acres of existing conservation lands
15 such as national and state parks. BLM conservation
16 designations cover about 4 million acres, and development
17 focus areas about 2 million acres, study area lands in the
18 preferred alternative cover approximately 183,000 acres, and
19 BLM recreation designations cover 3.6 million acres.

20 This map gives you an overview of the preferred
21 alternative. And here you see the development focus areas
22 in pink in relation to the DRECP's proposed conservation
23 lands, study area lands, recreation lands, military bases,
24 and existing conservation.

25 For the preferred alternative a little over 2

1 million acres are proposed as development focus areas.
2 However, even if 20,000 megawatts of new renewable energy
3 generation was needed in the DRECP plan area, renewable
4 energy projects would be built on only about 177,000 acres,
5 or 9 percent of that total DFA acreage. The dark striped
6 slice at the top of the pie chart represents this estimated
7 ground disturbance as a portion of the total DFA acreage.
8 If less than 20,000 megawatts of new generation is actually
9 needed in the DRECP plan area, then the amount of ground
10 disturbance would be less than 177,000 acres.

11 The total proposed DFA acreage is much larger than
12 the estimated amount acres of impact to allow for
13 flexibility in locating and siting projects, even within the
14 DFAs.

15 This map shows the development focus areas in pink
16 and it shows the amount of estimated ground disturbance
17 expected to occur in each county within the DRECP plan area.
18 The little gray box that you see to the right of the map
19 legend and in each of the sub-areas of the legend give you
20 an idea of how large the percentage of ground disturbance
21 within that area of the development focus areas would be in
22 comparison with the total area of the DFA in pink. For the
23 -- for the counties in the plan area the estimated ground
24 disturbance that would occur within the DFAs in each county
25 ranges from 5 to 16 percent of the total proposed DFA acres.

1 Let's zoom back into the Imperial and East
2 Riverside region and look at the estimated ground
3 disturbance. In Riverside County the DFA area is
4 approximately 368,000 acres. And if we were to build out to
5 the 20,000 megawatt assumption plan-wide, that would be
6 development of up to 42,000 acres, or 16 percent of that
7 area in Riverside -- showing in Riverside County.

8 In Imperial County the DFA area is approximately
9 734,000 acres. And again, if we were to need and build out
10 20,000 megawatts of renewable energy generation, that would
11 impact up to 69,000 acres in that area, or 9 percent of that
12 DFA in Imperial County.

13 A little bit about the environmental analysis.
14 The environmental analysis considers 23 resource categories,
15 and we identified these resource categories based on scoping
16 meetings, preliminary analyses, and input from tribes, the
17 public, and agency experts.

18 In the environmental analysis for each of the
19 resource categories we compared the alternatives based on
20 the proposed level of renewable energy impacts, conservation
21 and management actions to avoid, minimize, and mitigate for
22 covered species, the conservation and management actions for
23 recreation, visual, cultural and other resources on BLM
24 lands, and the types and acreages of land allocations on BLM
25 lands.

1 The draft analysis concludes that impacts for most
2 of the 23 resource categories would be less than
3 significant. For ten of the resource categories listed here
4 on this slide, impacts would be significant in one more of
5 the alternatives, including in the no-action alternative.

6 For implementation of the plan it is important to
7 note that no new government entity would be created by the
8 DRECP. All agencies would retain their current authority
9 and responsibilities. The purpose of identifying an
10 implementation structure for the DRECP is to improve agency
11 coordination and communication. Implementation would also
12 include participation and input from tribes, local
13 governments, the public, and the scientific community. The
14 DRECP also estimates the cost of implementing the plan's
15 biological conservation strategy and identifies sources of
16 funding.

17 Local governments may use the DRECP to inform
18 their land use planning decisions. The DRECP would not
19 restrict or change local land use planning or permitting
20 authority for renewable energy projects. With the DRECP,
21 local governments would have the option of applying for
22 permits from the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the
23 California Department of Fish and Wildlife to cover
24 renewable energy projects within their local jurisdictions.

25

1 Now a little bit about public -- options for
2 public participation.

3 The agencies have completed our work for this
4 draft plan, and now we need your help to shape the final
5 DRECP. We have created a dedicated website for the DRECP
6 and it is at www.drecp.org. To help you understand the
7 DRECP, we have prepared a series of fact sheets, a list of
8 frequently asked questions, and an informational video, all
9 available on the website. The fact sheets and the
10 frequently asked questions are also available at the table
11 right outside the door where you came in. The draft DRECP
12 document is available on this website, and also they are
13 available on the Bureau of Land Management and the US Fish
14 and Wildlife Service websites.

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

17 You can also review the DRECP at local libraries
18 and agency offices throughout the plan area. DVDs of the
19 documents are also available upon request. And I know it's
20 hard to see, so all of the information on this slide is
21 available on a handout from the front table. And it's also
22 posted at www.drecp.org.

23 Public review and comment is absolutely critical
24 to developing the final DRECP. You can give your comments
25 by email, fax, US Mail, in person, and at all of these

1 public meetings. Addresses for sending your comments are on
2 a handout at the front table, and on the website. We want
3 your voice to be heard. And we want to assure you that all
4 public comments are welcomed, valued, and will be
5 considered.

6 The public comment period opened on September 26th
7 and closes on January 9th, 2015.

8 Public meetings like this one are being held
9 throughout the DRECP planning area and in the surrounding
10 population centers. All the information about the future
11 public meetings are posted on the DRECP website,
12 www.drecp.org.

13 To help us develop a final plan we need to know
14 what you want us to change. Substantive comments will have
15 the greatest effect on the final DRECP because they will
16 tell us specifically what you want added, removed or
17 otherwise changed, and why we should make those changes.

18 Examples of substantive comments include comments
19 that raise significant environmental concerns, comments that
20 raise issues that require clarification or modification of
21 any of the alternatives, comments that identify new or
22 different alternatives, new or missing information, or
23 corrections that could substantially change the conclusions
24 of the environmental analysis.

25 The DRECP Gateway is an innovative online data and

1 mapping tool. It is free and user friendly, and we
2 encourage you to go -- go in and explore. There is a sign-
3 in function, but you only have to use it if you want to save
4 information and come back and use this information again
5 later. Anyone with a computer, regardless of your
6 experience with GIS, can use this gateway to view, edit and
7 analyze maps and data. You can create a custom map and put
8 your comments right on those maps, and then save, print or
9 export the maps for inclusion with your written comments.

10 The Gateway web address is at the bottom of the
11 slide; it's drecp.databasin.org. This site is a really
12 useful, but please note that it is just a tool. It is not
13 necessary to use the Gateway to review, understand or
14 comment on the DRECP. It is an optional resource available
15 for your use.

16 That is the end of our presentation this
17 afternoon. We thank you for your interest in the DRECP and
18 look forward to talking with you and hearing your comments
19 in the next two parts of the meeting. Again, thank you.

20 MR. BEALE: Thank you, Scott.

21 All right, so we move on now to our open house,
22 our information stations. We have -- excuse me -- several
23 people here to answer your questions. We've -- as Scott was
24 mentioning, we're doing a series of these meetings
25 throughout Southern California. We've had as many as 360 or

1 370 people at our meetings, and we are staffed for that. So
2 there are plenty of folks here to answer your questions, and
3 I hope you'll take advantage of it.

4 I do want to repeat, if you would like to make a
5 public comment for the record now rather than later, Marlee
6 is available, our friendly Court Reporter. And you can do
7 that in addition to asking questions or instead of asking
8 questions.

9 But we have our six information stations lined up
10 across the back of the room, and I'm going to orient you to
11 where they are so you can know where to go to answer
12 whatever your particular questions are. To your right, to
13 my left, at this end of the room we have Station Number 1
14 which is our general station. So if you want to know -- if
15 you have basic questions about what is the DRECP, what are
16 the alternatives, how the alternatives are different, what's
17 in the environmental analysis, please go to Station 1.
18 Raise your hand there, please. Thank you very much.

19 Next to that station is our Station 2. It's our
20 renewable energy station, back and a little bit to your
21 left. And we have David Vidaver from the California Energy
22 Commission there. So if you have any questions about the
23 renewable energy planning assumptions behind the plan or
24 transmission, questions that have to do that, please go talk
25 to David.

1 Moving next around the room we have BLM's Land Use
2 Plan Amendment station. Are BLM folks available to answer?
3 Anyway, so it's right there. They'll be standing over there
4 next to those -- those maps. It says BLM Land Use Plan
5 Amendment or LUPA. So if you have questions about that part
6 of the document, please go there.

7 Moving around a bit more, back to -- straight back
8 to the back of the room there, the General Conservation Plan
9 station. So if you have questions about the Fish and
10 Wildlife Service's General Conservation Plan, that's the
11 place to go.

12 And then moving one more we have the Department of
13 Fish and Wildlife Natural Community Conservation Planning
14 station. You'll be able to see these by the posterboards,
15 too, but I just want to let you know to go where -- so you
16 can go straight to where you want to at first.

17 And at the far end we have a station on the
18 overarching biological conservation strategy that was used
19 for all components of the plan, the Land Use Plan Amendment,
20 the General Conservation Plan, and the Natural Community
21 Conservation Plan.

22 So, excuse me, so please feel free to go ask
23 questions. We'll be -- we'll be open for questions for
24 about another 45 minutes. And then we'll come back here and
25 reconvene and have an opportunity for public comment on the

1 record.

2 So anyway, thank you, and please feel free to
3 check out our stations.

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

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

6 MR. BEALE: All right, so we -- we are at the
7 public comment phase of the meeting now. Let me just ask
8 first, do we have anyone who would like to make a public
9 comment? Most -- most people here are with the agency, so I
10 just need to ask. Any public comments? It's not mandatory,
11 but this is -- we have plenty of time.

12 UNIDENTIFIED MALE: I'm not with the agency but I
13 don't want to make a comment.

14 MR. BEALE: Okay. All right, so if no one -- no
15 one here wants to make a public comment I think we'll
16 just -- I'm not going to go through the ground rules for how
17 long you have to speak.

18 We'll just go to the phone and see if anyone on
19 the phone would like to make a comment?

20 MS. CHEW: There's no one on the line.

21 MR. BEALE: There's no one on the phone. All
22 right. All right, well, that concludes our public comments
23 section.

24 I do want to thank the folks who did come out for
25 coming out. And we know it's not easy to get out here

1 during the week, and we appreciate your interest.

2 We have some additional public meetings coming up.
3 We are in Ontario tomorrow, and in Palm Desert on Friday.
4 And then on Wednesday, November 19th we'll be in Joshua
5 Tree. And those meetings are now posted online, and we
6 invite you to come to all of them, if you like.

7 And I do want to say that for folks who were here
8 earlier, the PowerPoint presentation you saw will be posted
9 online. We already have -- in addition to that we also have
10 a video of a longer version of that PowerPoint presentation.

11 So if you want to see the full extended version, you can do
12 that. If you want to see the slides that we showed tonight,
13 I mean, you'll see that. We're posting the PowerPoints from
14 each of our meetings.

15 So anyway, again, thank you for coming. And I
16 hope we will see you at a future meeting. Thank you.

17 (The meeting adjourned at 5:32 p.m.)

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CERTIFICATE OF REPORTER

I, MARTHA 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 5th day of November, 2014.

/s/ Martha Nelson
MARTHA 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

November 5, 2014