



OHMVR COMMISSION MEETING Victorville CA

May 2, 2014

STAFF REPORT: DRECP
STAFF: Connie Latham – DRECP Project Coordinator
SUBJECT: Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) Briefing

Summary

The DRECP is a multiagency conservation and planning framework plan intended to guide renewable energy project siting in the Mojave and Colorado deserts of California helping to ensure that California can meet its Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS) and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emission reduction targets. The DRECP will provide for the conservation and management of certain species, habitats, and natural communities and also protect the historic and intrinsic land uses and values within the California desert. An interim draft document was released in December 2012. The public draft DRECP will be released this spring.

Discussion

Renewable energy development is critical to California's future. California has a 33% RPS, one of the highest in the country, and a GHG standard to reduce emissions to 1990 levels by 2020 and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. All are aimed at preventing impacts of climate change.

The DRECP is designed to comprehensively provide for the conservation of sensitive species and ecosystems and to streamline environmental review and permitting for renewable energy and transmission projects. The DRECP consists of three major planning components:

- A BLM Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA) in accordance with the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.
- A Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) to comply with the California NCCP Act and the California Endangered Species Act.
- A General Conservation Plan (GCP) to comply with the Federal Endangered Species Act.

The DRECP plan area encompasses ~22.5 million acres of private, state, and federal land (approximately 50% encompassing BLM administered lands). The plan area includes seven counties (Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino,

and San Diego), several state and federal agencies, and a large spectrum of uses, values, and resources. There are twelve State Parks within the DRECP plan area including Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area (SVRA), Heber Dunes SVRA and the proposed Eastern Kern County Property Acquisition.

DPR/OHMVR Division (Division) staff has been proactively involved in DRECP interagency collaboration at all levels of policy and management decision making. Division interests include ensuring the sustainability of OHV recreation opportunities within the California desert, maintaining ecosystem viability and connectivity with lands bordering State Parks, and collaborating with OHV stakeholders to ensure the interests of the Division Grant funding investments are protected and sustained in perpetuity.

What to expect in the DRECP public draft document

- A range of action alternatives will be included along with a no action alternative.
- Permitting would be streamlined for projects within Development Focus Areas (DFAs). DFAs are proposed where conflicts with biological and non-biological resources have been determined to be relatively low.
- Several public land designations will exclude renewable energy – BLM National Landscape Conservation Lands, Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs), and Open OHV areas.
- The plan does not propose to close any existing BLM designated routes.
- The DRECP via the BLM LUPA would create new or expanded SRMAs on public lands.

Release of Public Draft document

- Interim document was released in December 2012.
- Public draft plan planned to be released later this spring with a 90-day comment period. Public meetings will occur throughout the planning area to support the release of the DRECP public draft document.
- Data Basin – DRECP Gateway (www.drecp.gateway.org) is an online web-based mapping tool that provides easy to use functionality for anyone interested in reviewing the plan. Information on alternatives, documentation of underlying data and information, key images, modeling, and adaptive management will be available on this mapping site tool. This dynamic tool supports the DRECP as an adaptive management plan.

DRECP Implementation Plan

- Ensures collaboration among participating agencies, entities, and stakeholders and facilitates coordinated decision-making.
- Key to the successful implementation of the GCP, NCCP, and LUPA, which are integral to accomplishing the goals and objectives of the DRECP and the decision making process.
- Ensures plan implementation is transparent and understandable.

Commission Action

For information only

Attachments

PowerPoint Presentation



Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

Overview

*Presented to the
OHMVR Commission
May 2, 2014*



DRECP

- Multi-agency comprehensive planning effort:
 - Conserves desert resources, habitats, and intrinsic values
 - Identify appropriate lands for utility-scale renewable energy projects (50 MW +)
 - Streamline and standardize endangered species permitting
- Help California meet its energy goals and facilitate the Renewables Portfolio Standard (RPS)



Key Regulatory and Policy Drivers

DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- **Energy Policy Act 2005: President Bush (2005)**
 - *Tax incentives and loans for innovative technologies*
- **Interior Secretarial Order 3285 (2009)**
 - *RE production DOI priority*
- **California Legislation AB 32 (2006)**
 - *Reduce CA GHG to 1990 levels by 2020*
 - *80% below 1990 GHG levels by 2050*
- **Executive Order S-14-08 and codified with SB X1 2 in 2011**
 - *33% of California's energy via renewables by 2020 (RPS)*
 - *Established the REAT, DRECP, and the RETI initiative*
 - *MOU between DOI and State of California*



DRECP Collaborative Effort

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- **Renewable Energy Action Team Agencies:**
 - California Energy Commission – (CEQA Lead)
 - California Department of Fish and Wildlife
 - Bureau of Land Management – (NEPA Lead)
 - US Fish and Wildlife
- **Other participating federal and state agencies:**
 - California State Parks
 - The Natural Resource Agency
 - National Park Service
 - Environmental Protection Agency
 - California Public Utility Commission
 - California State Lands Commission
 - Department of Defense
 - California Independent System Operator
- **Numerous other Stakeholders:**
 - OHV (CORVA /ORBA)
 - Local Governments
 - Native American Organizations/Tribes
 - NGS
 - Industry

DRECP Plan Area

DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- Mojave, Colorado, and Sonoran desert regions
- Counties include:
 - Imperial
 - Inyo
 - Kern
 - Los Angeles
 - Riverside
 - San Bernardino
 - San Diego
- ~ 22.5 million acres

What is the DRECP?

DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

Bureau of Land Management
Land Use Plan Amendments

US Fish and Wildlife Service
General Conservation Plan
(Programmatic HCP under Sec. 10 ESA)

DRECP

Calif. Dept of Fish & Wildlife
Natural Communities Conservation Plan



DRECP Conservation Strategy

DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- 52 Covered Species
- 31 Natural Communities
- Biological Goals and Objectives
- Conservation Management Actions
- Reserve Design
- Monitoring and Adaptive Mgmt.




State Parks within the DRECP

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- Antelope Valley CA Poppy Preserve SNR
- Antelope Valley Indian Museum SHP
- Anza-Borrego Desert SP
- Arthur B. Ripley Desert Woodland SP
- Heber Dunes SVRA
- Ocotillo Wells SVRA
- Picacho SRA
- Providence Mountains SRA
- Red Rock Canyon SP
- Saddleback Butte SP
- Salton Sea SRA
- Tomo-Kahni SHP
- East Kern County acquisition



Recreation Interests

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- Sustaining Recreation opportunities historically supported by the OHMVR Division Grants and Cooperative Agreements Program
 - *Connectivity of OHV routes*
 - *Facilities*
 - *Motorized access to non motorized areas*
- BLM Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA) will designate:
 - *National Conservation Lands*
 - *Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs)*
 - *Wildlife Allocations*
 - *Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs)*



Recreation interests

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continued...

- Development Focus Areas will not impact BLM open OHV areas
- Plan will not affect designated routes on BLM land
- Conservation & Management Actions required to reduce impacts to recreation
 - Buffering of roads, trails, and visitor facilities
 - Mitigation for direct impacts to roads and trails and maintaining net access in development areas
 - Working cooperatively with State Parks to ensure joint land use and recreational opportunities are sustained



State Parks' Current Involvement

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- Renewable Energy Policy Group
- Renewable Energy Action Team Meetings
- Coordinate with DRECP leadership, stakeholder agencies, and organizations
- DRECP communication and outreach team
- Internal Interdisciplinary RE Team



What to Expect

DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- Public Draft expected to be released **spring/summer 2014** with 90 day comment period
- Public Meetings throughout planning area
- “DRECP Gateway” – web based mapping tool



How to get involved

DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- DRECP website – List-server
- Comment on DRECP Public Draft document
- Attend Public meetings
- DRECP Gateway
- Involvement in the Implementation of DRECP



For more information

DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- **Data Basin – DRECP Gateway**
www.drecp.gateway.org
- **DRECP**
www.drecp.org
- **DRECP List-server**
<http://drecp.org/about/contact.html#listserver>



Questions ?

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