



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

www.DRECP.ORG

Overview

Presented to the
California Water Commission
July 17, 2013

Renewable Energy Action Team Agencies



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- **Oversee development of the DRECP via MOUs between State and Federal agencies**
- **Goal is to streamline & expedite permits for renewable energy projects, while conserving endangered species and their habitats**

Comprised of four agencies:

- 1. California Energy Commission (CEC)**
- 2. California Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (DFW)**
- 3. Bureau of Land Management (BLM)**
- 4. U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)**

What is DRECP?



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

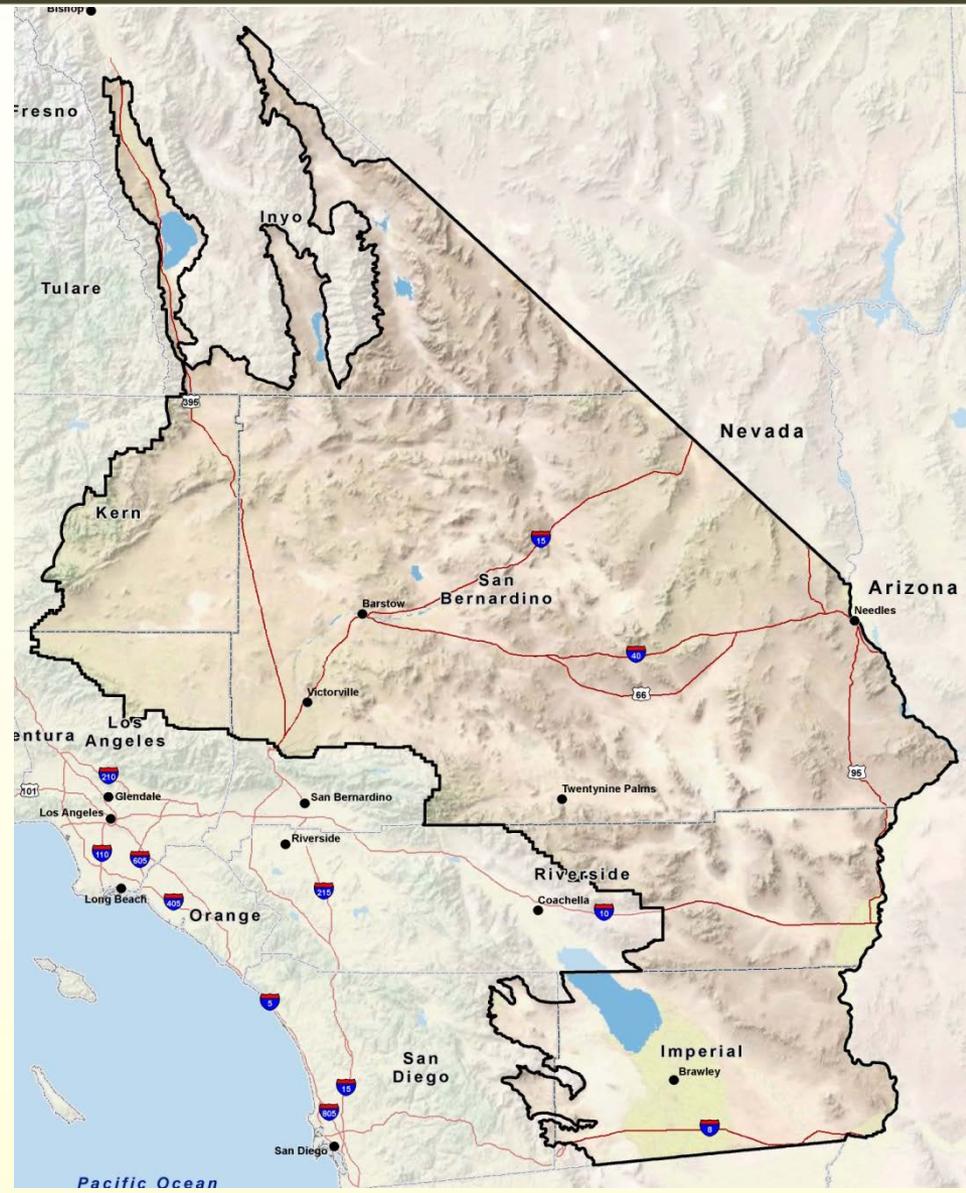
- **Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) complies with the Federal Endangered Species Act**
- **Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) complies with CA NCCP Act & CA Endangered Species Act**
- **BLM Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA)**
- **DRECP = HCP/NCCP/LUPA**
- **Focused on renewable energy projects and compliance with State and Federal law**

DRECP Plan Area



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- Mojave & Colorado Desert Eco-regions
- Counties include:
 - Imperial
 - Inyo
 - Kern
 - Los Angeles
 - Riverside
 - San Bernardino
 - San Diego
- ~ 22,587,000 acres



Why DRECP?



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

Opportunity to:

- **Streamline endangered species permitting and siting, and BLM project review, for renewable energy projects and associated transmission only**
- **Minimize environmental impacts**
- **Identify priority lands for both renewable energy projects and habitat conservation using a regional approach**

DRECP Will ...



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- **Provide permits.** USFWS & CDFW will issue 25 yr. permits to plan participants for “take” of covered species.
- **Conserve species and natural communities.** Mitigate impacts to species and natural communities from RE projects and provide for species conservation and management.
- **Pre-define mitigation.** Provide large-scale habitat/species conservation in areas of high biological value—avoid project-by-project approach.

DRECP Will Also...

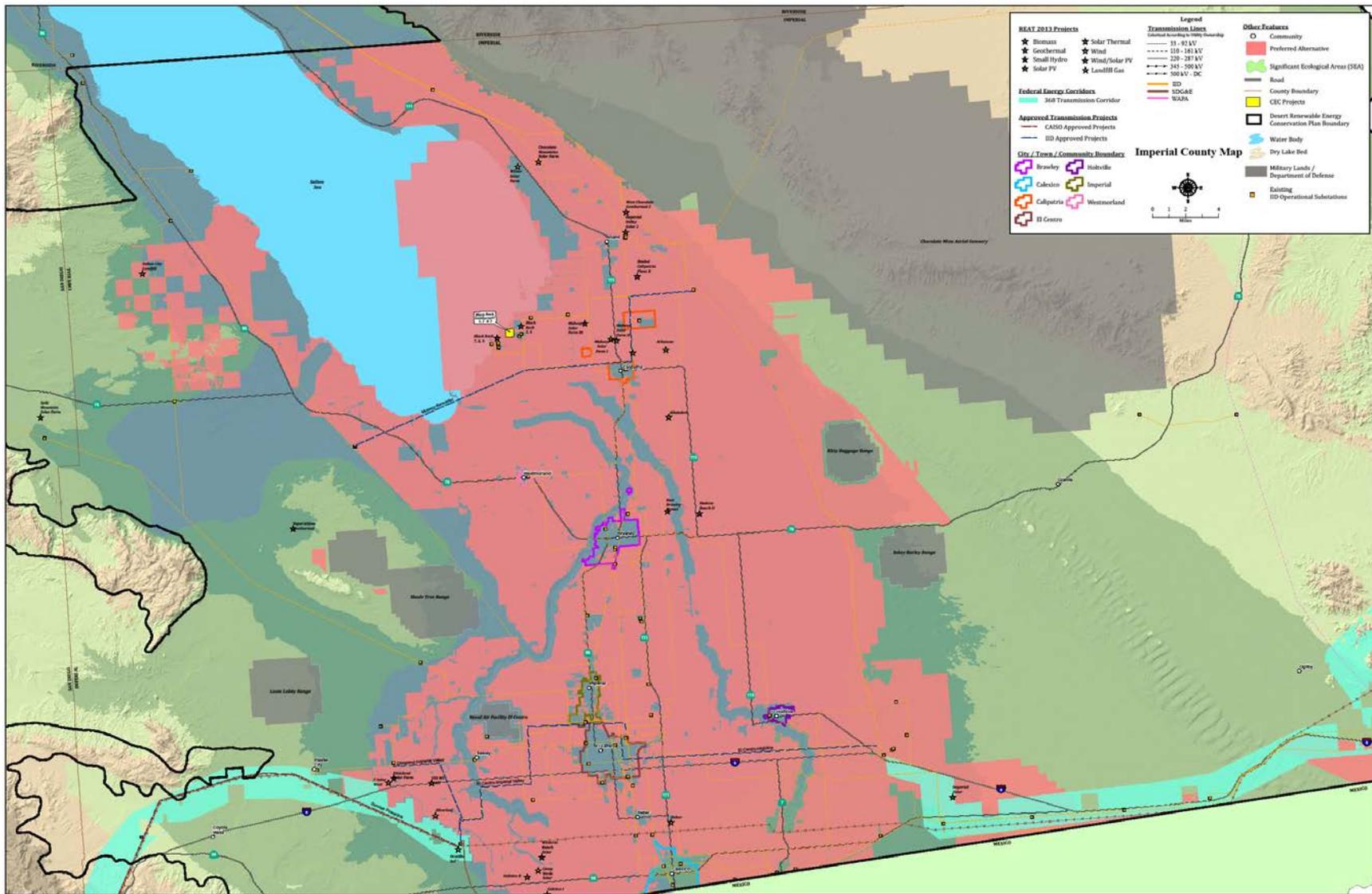


DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- **Streamline, standardize, and create predictable process for endangered species authorizations and BLM project review within defined “Development Focus Areas,” creating greater regulatory and economic certainty for renewable energy projects.**
- **Facilitate California Renewables Portfolio Standard and enable long-term renewable energy development beyond 2020**

Imperial Development Focus Area

DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN



Proposed Covered Activities



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- **Construction & development; operation & maintenance and decommissioning of renewable energy projects and transmission within the Plan area:**
 - **High-voltage Transmission Facilities**
 - **Solar (Photovoltaic and Thermal)**
 - **Wind**
 - **Geothermal**
 - **DRECP Conservation Actions**

Proposed Covered Species



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- **Specific plants and animals for which conservation and management are provided and “take” is authorized**
- **List developed through iterative planning process via input from applicants, public, stakeholders & Independent Science Advisors**
- **Covered species include desert tortoise, Mohave ground squirrel, bighorn sheep, golden eagle, Mojave fringe-toed lizard**

Transmission

 DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- **Garamendi Principles**

- Reconductor, rebuild, and use existing ROW before new ROW is acquired

- **Transmission Technical Group**

- Utility transmission planners identified the transmission improvements necessary to support the DRECP

- **IID/SCE Joint Path 42 project will increase the transfer capacity from 600 MW to 1,500 MW of renewable energy from IID to SCE**

- **IID will construct a new Imperial Valley transmission line and collector station that will advance California's 33% RPS goals**

Local Government or Agency Opportunities for Involvement



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- **Participate in Plan development**
 - Engage in Plan development & resulting documents
 - Provide input on strategy development; costs & funding options; implementation activities
 - Develop complementary local land use policies
- **Opt-in after Plan completion as permit holder**
 - Receive “take” coverage for 25 years
 - likely to require additional analysis under CEQA/NEPA



DRECP Schedule

DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- **Preliminary Conservation Strategy Oct 2011**
- **Description and Comparative Evaluation of Draft DRECP Alternatives Dec 2012**
- **Public Review Draft Plan, EIR/EIS Fall 2013**
- **Final Plan and Final EIR/EIS Spring 2014**

Planning Grants



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

The Energy Commission has entered into grant agreements with five counties. County recipients will use grant funds to update their general plans and zoning codes as well as engage the public and complete environmental studies and mitigation plans.

- Imperial
- Inyo
- Los Angeles
- San Bernardino
- San Luis Obispo

Imperial County Planning Grant



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

- Comprehensive update to the county General Plan
- Update the Geothermal/Alternative Energy and Transmission Element
- Programmatic Environmental Impact Report (EIR).

Salton Sea Restoration



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

REAT Agency Coordination

- CDFW is supporting both Salton Sea Restoration and DRECP
- REAT Agencies are meeting with biologists and managers in the Imperial Valley to discuss ideas for conservation and restoration of Salton Sea habitats in conjunction with the DRECP