

DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN (DRECP)

The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) and its accompanying Environmental Impact Report is currently being developed in a joint effort between the State of California and the Federal Government. The State's Energy Commission and Department of Fish and Game are the lead the State agencies and the Bureau of Land Management and the Fish and Wildlife Service are the lead the Federal agencies.

The intent of the DRECP is to create a plan that developers of renewable energy projects can voluntarily avail themselves of for the purpose of speeding the issuance of take permits by the Department of Fish and Game for incidental take of endangered species and to obtain clarity and certainty with regard to mitigation and avoidance requirements prior to project design. Those alternative energy projects which comply with the provisions of the plan will no longer be required to complete what is currently a 3-year process with the Department of Fish and Game because the DRECP and its environmental impact report will address the anticipated impacts on an industry-wide scale regarding almost the entire Mojave and Colorado Deserts.

The provisions of the DRECP would not interfere with the County's current planning process. Conditional Use Permits would continue to be required, project specific environmental impact reports will continue to be required and the County's public hearing process will be unaffected. The provisions of the plan would streamline the process following the completion of the normal Department of Regional Planning process. In the event the project were determined to have impacts upon endangered species, the alternative energy developer would be issued a "take permit" without further lengthy review (normally a 3-year process) conducted by the State's Department of Fish and Game.

The Department of Regional Planning was designated by the CEO to represent Los Angeles County as a stakeholder during the advisory DRECP stakeholder meetings which have been conducted once a month during past year. During recent stakeholder committee meetings representatives from Southern California Edison and the renewable energy industry have urged Los Angeles, Kern, San Bernardino, Riverside, Imperial and Inyo Counties to become signatories to the proposed plan.

The Deputy Director for DRECP, Attorney Michael Valentine, has requested that he be given an opportunity to brief the Board of Supervisors regarding the role Los Angeles County may play in the DRECP process and the benefits which may accrue to developers of alternative energy within the County as a result of involvement. This briefing is intended as an introduction to the Board Offices regarding the DRECP process prior to the scheduling of a meeting with Mr. Valentine.