



DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN

Preferred Alternative

The preferred alternative is one of six alternatives considered and analyzed in the Draft Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) and Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS). The partner agencies considered various approaches to meeting the DRECP objectives, differing in the extent and geographic location of proposed development and conservation areas.

The preferred alternative represents the interagency preferred approach to meeting the DRECP objective, which is to: *Provide a streamlined process for the development of utility-scale renewable energy generation and transmission consistent with federal and state renewable energy targets and policies, while simultaneously providing for the long-term conservation and management of covered species and natural communities as well as other physical, cultural, scenic and social resources within the plan area with durable and reliable regulatory assurances.*

The preferred alternative integrates the development of renewable energy infrastructure and resource conservation with other existing uses and values in the plan area. Development focus areas (DFAs) are areas identified with high potential for renewable energy development and more efficient and predictable environmental review for new projects. Areas identified for conservation will help to address species, ecosystem and climate adaptation requirements for 37 covered species and 31 natural communities as well as to protect recreation, cultural, scenic values and other desert resources.

Highlights of the Proposed Preferred Alternative:

- ▶ Over 2 million acres of DFAs on public and private lands for renewable energy development.
- ▶ Over 183,000 acres of Study Area Lands identified for future analysis.
- ▶ A biological conservation strategy including avoidance, minimization and compensatory mitigation requirements on both public and private lands.
- ▶ Conservation designations on over 4.9 million acres of BLM-managed lands.
- ▶ Recreation designations on over 3.6 million acres of BLM-managed lands.

Preferred Alternative

