



**California Energy Commission  
Integrated Energy Policy Report Lead Commissioner Workshop**

**Integrating Environmental Information in Renewable Energy Planning Processes**

**August 5, 2014 – 9:00 a.m.**

**Hearing Room A**

*(Additional public seating will be in the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor conference room from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. and then  
Hearing Room B from 1:00 p.m.-4:00 p.m.)*

**Introduction**

Heather Raitt, Integrated Energy Policy Report program manager

**Opening Comments**

Chair Robert Weisenmiller, California Energy Commission  
Commissioner Janea Scott, California Energy Commission  
Commissioner Karen Douglas, California Energy Commission  
Commissioner Michael Picker, California Public Utilities Commission  
Jim Kenna, State Director California, Bureau of Land Management

**Panel 1: Environmental Information in Renewable Energy Planning Processes**

**Moderator, Ed Randolph, California Public Utilities Commission**

*Each presenter will briefly describe ways in which their agency has used environmental information in renewable energy planning in recent years and how such information might inform planning to achieve possible future renewable energy targets above the current 33 percent statutory requirement.*

***Environmental Considerations in Generation Planning and Procurement***

Paul Douglas, California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC)

*Paul Douglas will discuss how the CPUC has utilized environmental scores provided by the Energy Commission in the development of renewable generation portfolio scenarios sent to the California ISO for use in transmission planning to meet state policy targets such as the 33 percent renewables portfolio standard (RPS). Paul will also describe the process underway at the CPUC to overhaul the RPS calculator, and request input/suggest possible direction for the use of environmental scoring or other environmental information in planning to meet future, higher renewable energy targets.*

***Incorporation of Environmental Scoring into Transmission Planning***

Dennis Peters, California Independent System Operator (California ISO)  
Neil Millar, California ISO

*Neil Millar will describe how the California ISO has evaluated scenarios provided by the CPUC and Energy Commission in its transmission planning process and request input/suggest possible direction for how the California ISO might incorporate additional environmental information, possibly including environmental information related to transmission needs identified for the scenarios.*

### **Environmental Scoring of Proposed Generation Projects**

Roger Johnson, California Energy Commission

*Roger Johnson will briefly discuss how the Energy Commission has scored projects in past years and will request input/suggest possible direction on what kind of environmental information, including but not limited to landscape level planning efforts such as the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP), could be the most helpful in the energy planning processes described above.*

### **Panel Discussion**

#### **Panel 2: Planning Approaches and Tools**

**Moderator, Carl Zichella, Natural Resources Defense Council**

*The focus of this workshop is on energy infrastructure planning processes; in particular, how and to what degree environmental information could or should inform scenarios developed in the long term procurement planning process and analyzed by the California ISO related to possible future renewable energy targets above the current 33 percent statutory requirement. However, it is helpful to ground this discussion by providing some context about ongoing and possible new approaches and tools that could help inform these processes.*

*This panel will begin with a discussion of how some of the ideas put forward in a recent report issued by the Department of Interior entitled “A Strategy for Improving the Mitigation Policies and Practices of The Department of the Interior” could apply in the renewable energy context. Panelists will also provide a brief overview of the goals and status of the DRECP and the geospatial mapping and decision support tool that is being used in DRECP to inform planning decisions and engage stakeholders and the public.*

Elizabeth Klein, Department of Interior (DOI)

*Drawing from a recent report entitled “A Strategy for Improving the Mitigation Policies and Practices of The Department of the Interior”, DOI will discuss different approaches to landscape level planning and mitigation and how they might apply in the renewable energy context, highlighting possible benefits of this approach.*

Chris Beale, Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

*Chris Beale will briefly describe the status and goals of the DRECP and briefly describe coordination between the DRECP and local governments in the plan area.*

Jim Strittholt, Conservation Biology Institute (CBI)

*Jim Strittholt will demonstrate CBI’s DataBasin tool, showing how it is being used to support the DRECP and how this approach could help inform renewable energy planning in other contexts.*

### **Panel Discussion**

### **Panel 3: Local Government Perspectives**

**Moderator, Terry Watt, Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan**

*Panelists will briefly describe recent experiences with renewable energy development in their counties and discuss their priorities in terms of renewable energy planning and coordination.*

Gerry Newcombe, County of San Bernardino **WebEx**  
James Caruso, County of San Luis Obispo **WebEx**  
Joshua Hart, County of Inyo **WebEx**  
Andy Horne, County of Imperial  
Cindy Thielman-Braun, County of Riverside **WebEx**  
Craig Murphy, County of Kern  
Paul McCarthy, County of Los Angeles **WebEx**

### **Panel Discussion**

**Lunch (12:30 – 1:30)**

### **Panel 4: Roundtable Discussion- Government, Utility, Developer, and Environmental Perspectives**

**Moderator, Commissioner Karen Douglas, California Energy Commission**

*This roundtable panel will open with brief introductions followed by a facilitated conversation using the discussion questions below.*

Chair Robert Weisenmiller, California Energy Commission  
Commissioner Janea Scott, California Energy Commission  
Commissioner Karen Douglas, California Energy Commission  
Jim Kenna, Bureau of Land Management  
JR DeLaRosa, California Natural Resources Agency  
Steve Chung, Department of Defense  
Sandra Schubert or Jim Houston, California Department of Food and Agriculture  
Ed Randolph, California Public Utilities Commission  
Kevin Kelley, Imperial Irrigation District  
Janice Frazier-Hampton, Pacific Gas and Electric  
Kevin Richardson and Katie Sloan, Southern California Edison  
Jan Strack, San Diego Gas and Electric  
Andy Horne, County of Imperial  
Jim Detmers, Westlands Solar Park  
Matt Stucky, Abengoa Solar  
Ray Kelly, NRG  
Jesse Gronner, Iberdrola Renewables  
Nancy Rader, California Wind Energy Association  
Rachel Gold, Large-Scale Solar Association  
V. John White, Center for Energy Efficiency and Renewable Technologies  
Erica Brand, The Nature Conservancy  
Sarah Friedman, Sierra Club  
Kate Kelly, Defenders of Wildlife  
Mark Tholke, EDF

Mark Nechodom, California Department of Conservation  
Karen Mills, California Farm Bureau Federation  
Lara Rozzell, NPS

**Public Comments (~4:15)**

**Lead Commissioner Summation/Closing Remarks**

**Adjourn**

## Discussion Questions

1. What kind of environmental information is most helpful to the CPUC and California ISO in development of renewable energy scenarios and analyzing related transmission needs? What type and level of information is most suitable and how should it be assembled, vetted and utilized?
2. Should the Energy Commission continue to provide project-specific environmental scores to the CPUC for the development of renewable energy scenarios or should the Energy Commission provide more aggregated values to help inform development of the scenarios? Should the approach that the Energy Commission takes to scoring differ for projects in areas where there is a plan such as DRECP, and if so, how?
3. Should environmental information about transmission needs associated with different scenarios be considered in conjunction with environmental information about differing locations of renewable energy generation in the scenarios? If high-level environmental information about transmission is incorporated in decisions about transmission for renewable energy planning, should that same information be considered by the California ISO in other transmission planning activities (reliability needs or economic needs) that aren't related specifically to renewable energy transmission?
4. How should planning efforts such as the DRECP be used to inform development of renewable energy scenarios and analysis of related transmission needs? What uses of DRECP or related efforts may not be appropriate in these processes?
5. How should the Energy Commission, the CPUC and the California ISO deal with differing levels of information in other regions of the state or out of state where differing levels of information may be available?
6. How and to what extent should DRECP or related efforts feed into the procurement process? What uses of DRECP or related efforts may not be appropriate in the procurement process?
7. To what extent should local government renewable energy planning help inform energy agency processes, and how? What additional recommendations do participants have for how the Energy Commission, CPUC and California ISO should work together to improve coordination, transparency and outcomes in renewable energy planning.
8. What data or information could state and federal agencies provide to help project developers minimize costs and uncertainty in project siting?