

# Renewable Energy in California:

Implementing the Governors Renewable  
Energy Executive Order

## *Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan*

DRECP Public Workshop  
June 18, 2009  
Victorville, California



**California Energy Commission**



**Department of Fish and Game**



**Fish and Wildlife Service**



**Bureau of Land Management**

# **Renewable Energy in California:** *Implementing the Governors Renewable Energy Executive Order*

This presentation will focus on the elements of the Executive Order that address comprehensive conservation planning in the California desert and activities, processes, and actions designed to reduce permit review and issuance time. Specifically, it will cover:

- The Renewable Energy Action Team (REAT)
- Element 7: Initiation of the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP)
- Elements 10-12: Process and structure of the DRECP

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The Executive Order is intended to provide a more predictable and streamlined regulatory compliance framework while completing a conservation plan that will balance renewable energy development with natural resource conservation

Establish and operate REAT



Create tools and collect and interpret data



Develop Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan



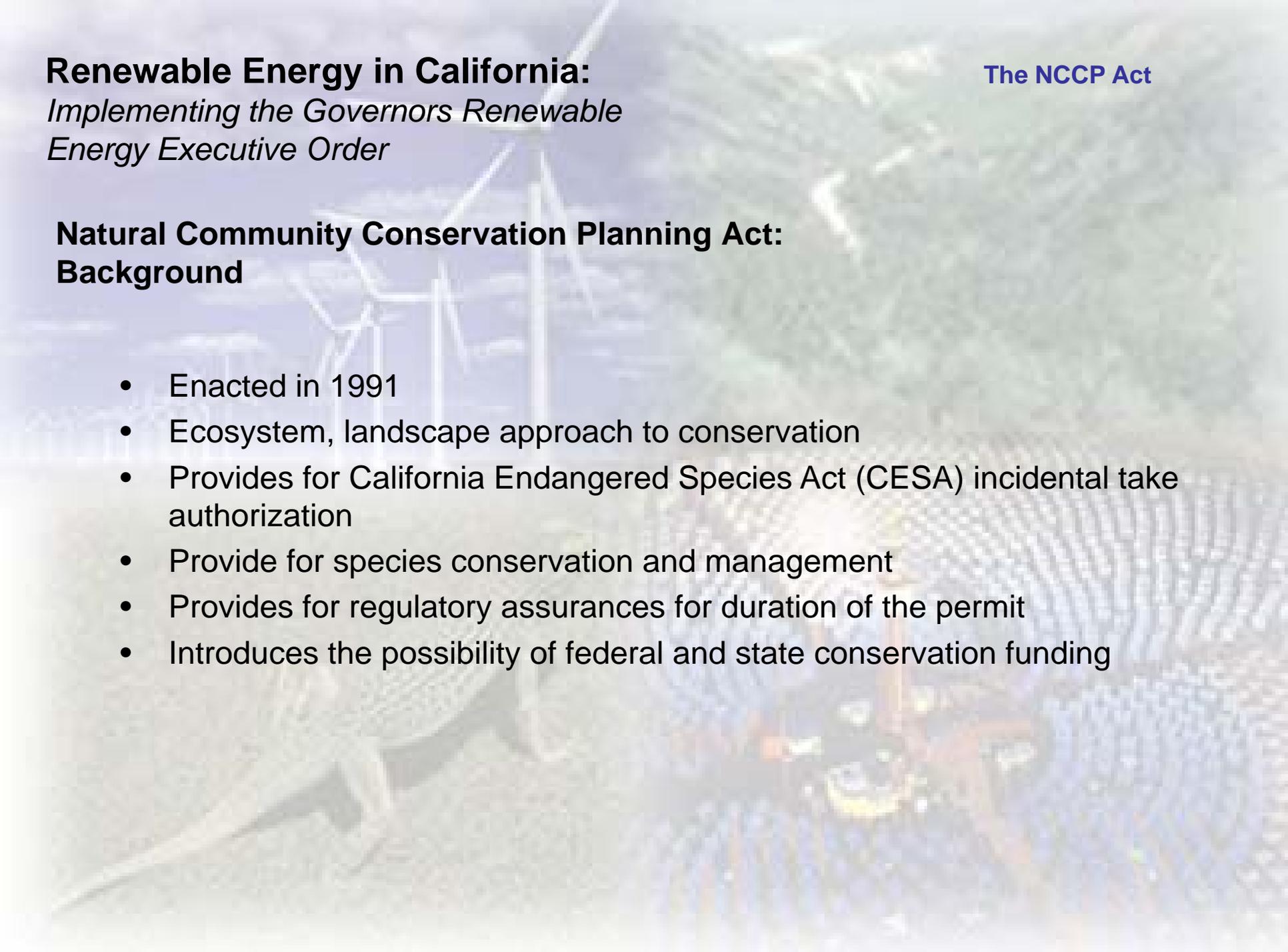
# **Renewable Energy in California:**

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The REAT

## **Renewable Energy Action Team**

- Comprised of the four MOU signatory agencies
- Holds “top to bottom” meetings every other week to address policy and process issues
- Primary function is to coordinate permitting and process activities among agencies
- Reports to policy team comprised of the Natural Resources Agency, Commissioners, and Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management directors
- Working technical unit for implementing the Executive Order

The background of the slide is a composite image. On the left, there is a white wind turbine against a blue sky. In the center, there is a green lizard, possibly a spiny-tailed lizard, on a sandy surface. On the right, there is a colorful bird, possibly a kingfisher, perched on a branch. The overall background has a light, textured appearance.

## **Renewable Energy in California:**

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The NCCP Act

### **Natural Community Conservation Planning Act: Background**

- Enacted in 1991
- Ecosystem, landscape approach to conservation
- Provides for California Endangered Species Act (CESA) incidental take authorization
- Provide for species conservation and management
- Provides for regulatory assurances for duration of the permit
- Introduces the possibility of federal and state conservation funding



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**Natural Community Conservation Planning Act:  
Background**

- Public stakeholder process
- Independent scientific review and input process
- Integration with other planning processes
- Integration with other conservation efforts

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The NCCP Act

## NCCP and Individual Take Permit Provision Comparison

<b><i>Individual Take Permit (ITP)</i></b>	<b><i>NCCP</i></b>
Intended for a single action with a finite impact and conservation horizon	Intended for a range of activities that would occur over the life of the permit
Usually a single project applicant	Often many applicants or local government or state agency applicant
Project centric and oriented	Ecosystem or functional ecological unit oriented
“Take” authorization standard is “fully mitigate” all project actions	NCCP standard is “provide for conservation and recovery” of species
No assurances	Department may authorize assurances
Applicant responsible for funding entire range of mitigation requirements	Provides for state and federal contributions to meet conservation and recovery standard

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The NCCP Act

## **Natural Community Conservation Planning Act:**

- Planning agreement establishes roles and responsibilities of Plan participants, defines initial “covered activities”, and identifies conserved species and habitats
- Acquisition and preservation actions funded by applicants with contributions from state and federal government
- Preserve design implemented through a variety of actions in concert with other planning efforts
- NCCP permit can have a working life of 50 years
- Rough step concept



# **Renewable Energy in California:** *Implementing the Governors Renewable Energy Executive Order*

**EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP**

## **The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan**

- Identify geographic areas designated for RPS project development
- Identify areas for conservation and species management and enhancement
- Focused on the Mojave and Colorado desert regions
- Goal is to coordinate and consider desert land uses and activities during the planning process



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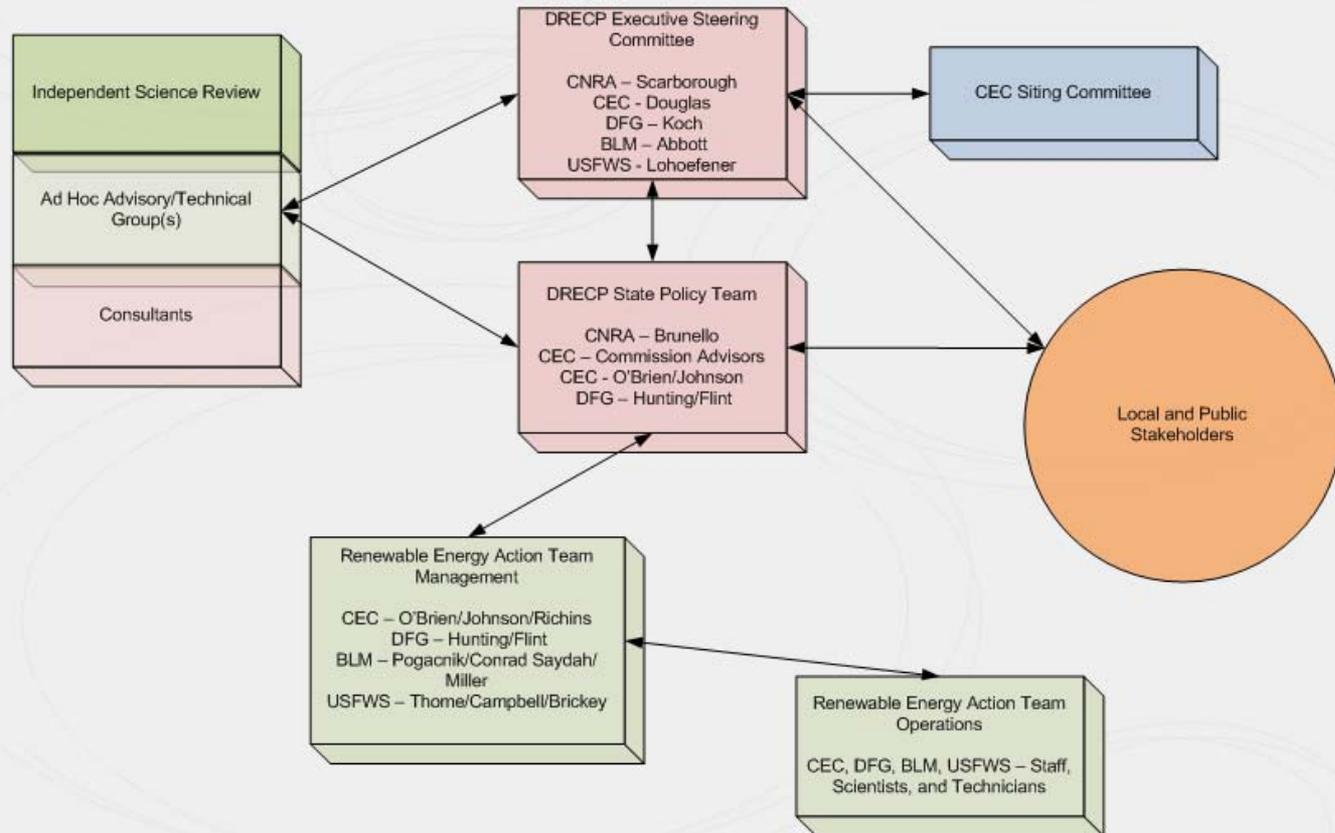
**EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP**

## **The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan: Planning Agreement**

- Identify Planning Area – Geographic Scope
- Identify Ecosystems, Natural Communities, Preliminary Covered Species List
- Identify Covered Activities – RPS Energy Projects, Transmission
- Identify Independent Science Process
- Identify Public Participation Process
- Identify Interim Project Siting and Permitting Processes
- Identify Joint Agency Planning Processes

# RPS Executive Order Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan Governance Structure

Draft – June 10, 2009



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EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP

## The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

- Includes the Mojave and Colorado Desert ecoregions
- Parts of six counties
- Focus is on Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) projects



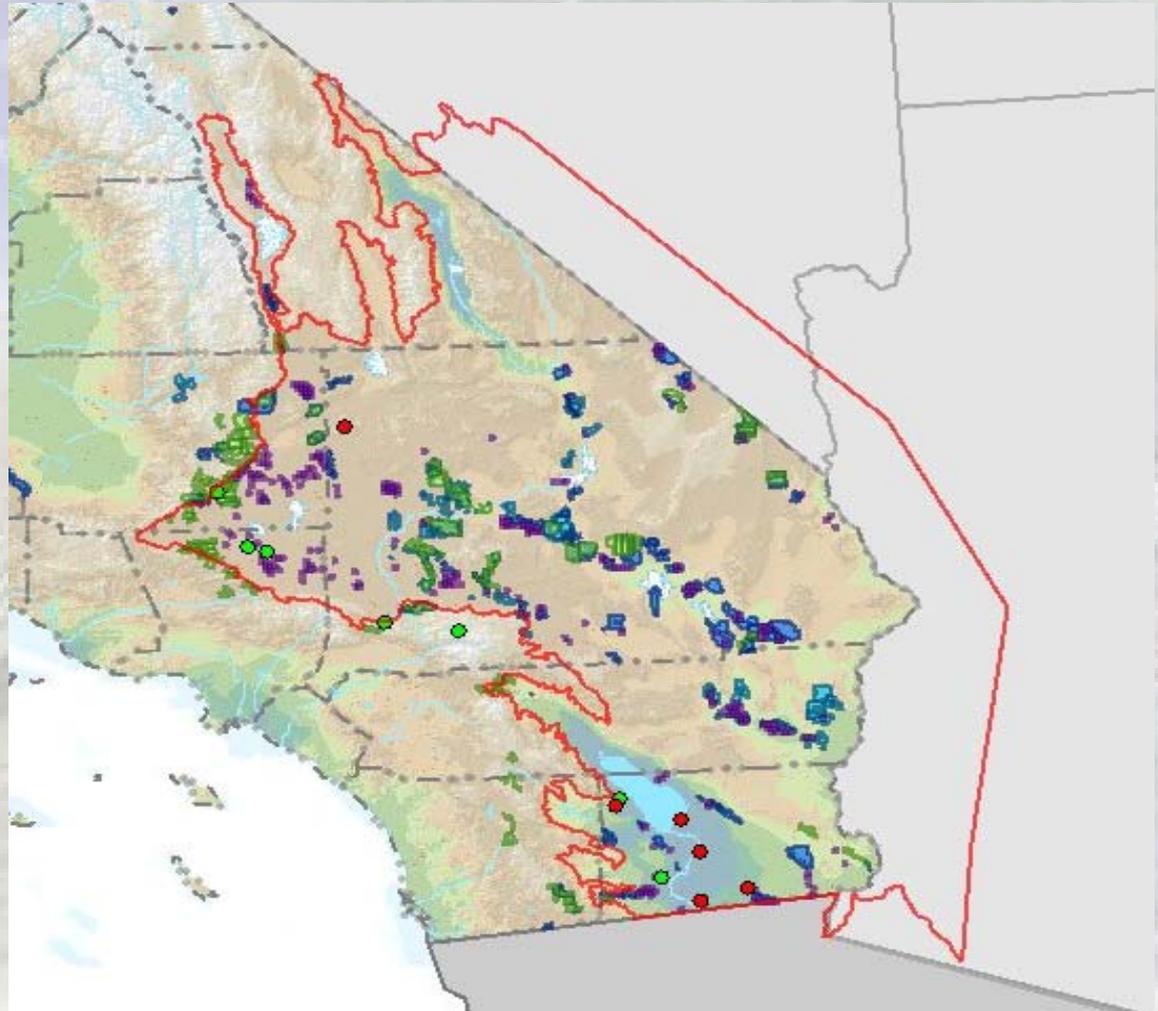
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EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP

## The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

- Designed to incorporate existing and potential project areas
- Specific covered activities (RPS projects) drive permit coverage
- RETI results will modify and help direct covered activity area design



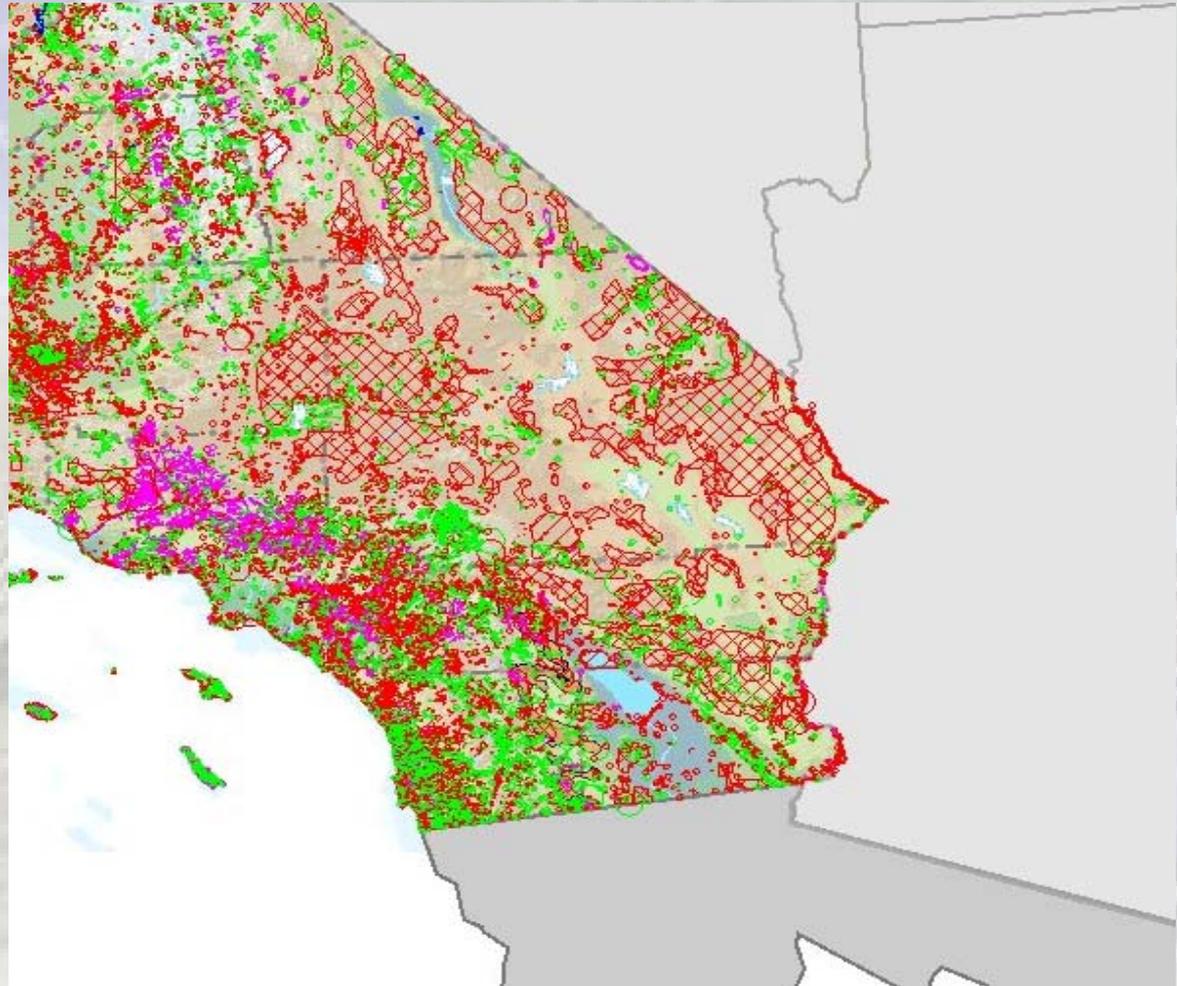
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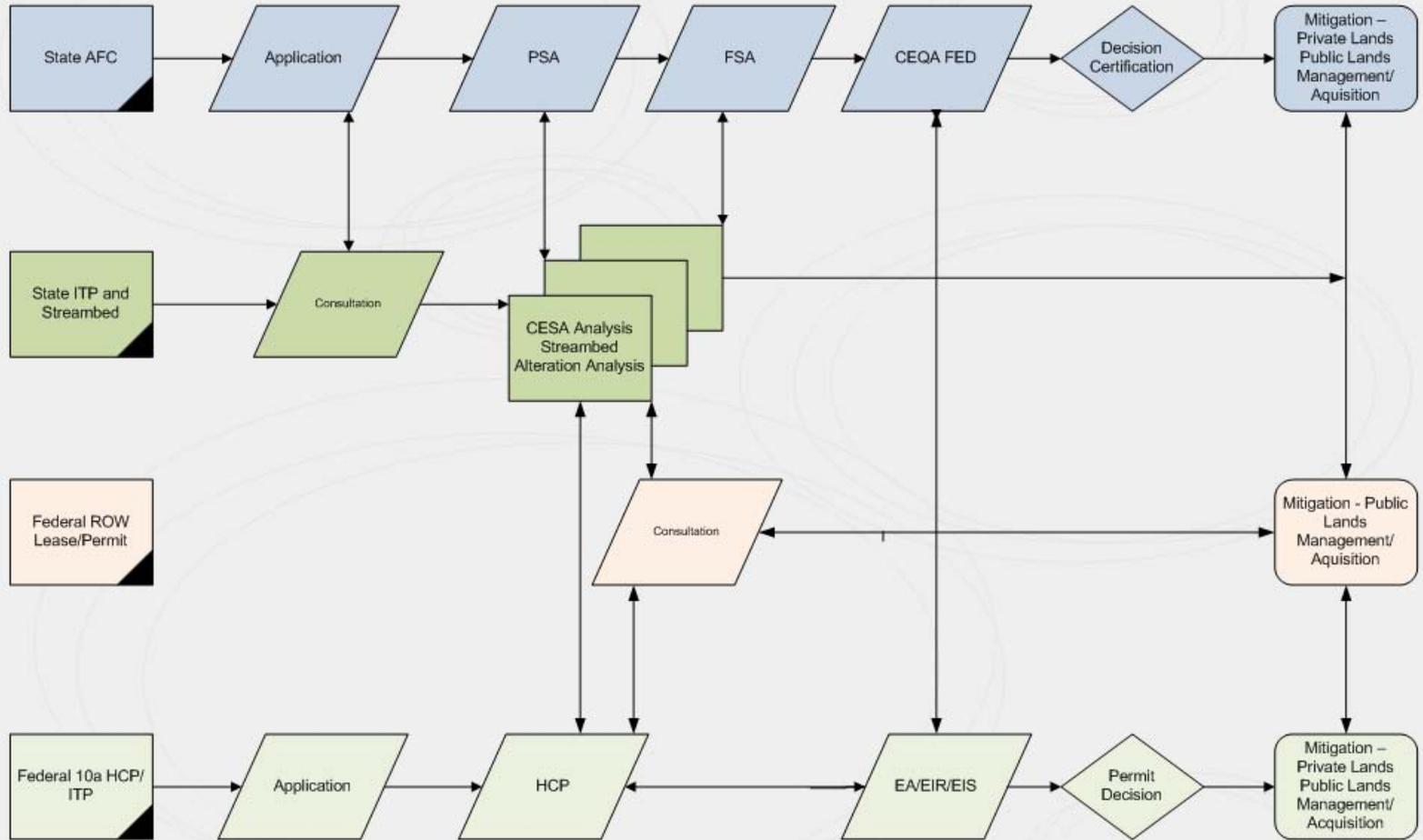
EO Elements 10-12:  
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## The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

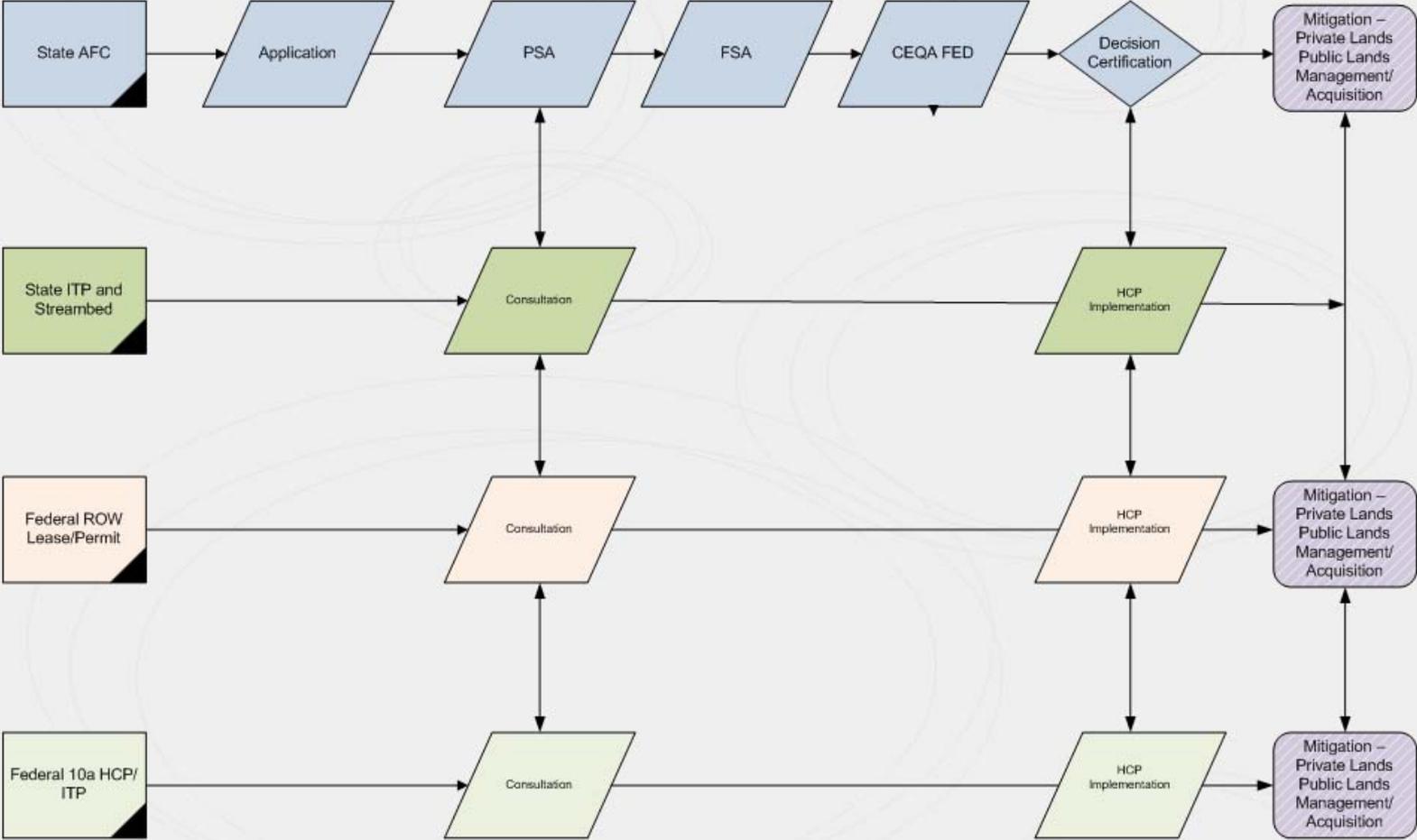
- Incorporates best existing biological data
- Conservation area designation will consider many factors
- Data quality, extent, and availability will be key!



PRIVATE LANDS – CEC JURISDICTIONAL



PRIVATE LANDS HCP/NCCP  
CEC JURISDICTIONAL





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**EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP**

## **The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan: Initial Conservation Strategy**

- Develop an initial set of alternatives for conservation and development scenarios.
- Identify Initial Renewable Energy Zones – preferred areas of development with lower biological value.
- Identify corresponding areas for species conservation to provide offset for project impacts.
- Develop and implement coordinated accelerated permitting and incentives for Initial renewable energy zones.



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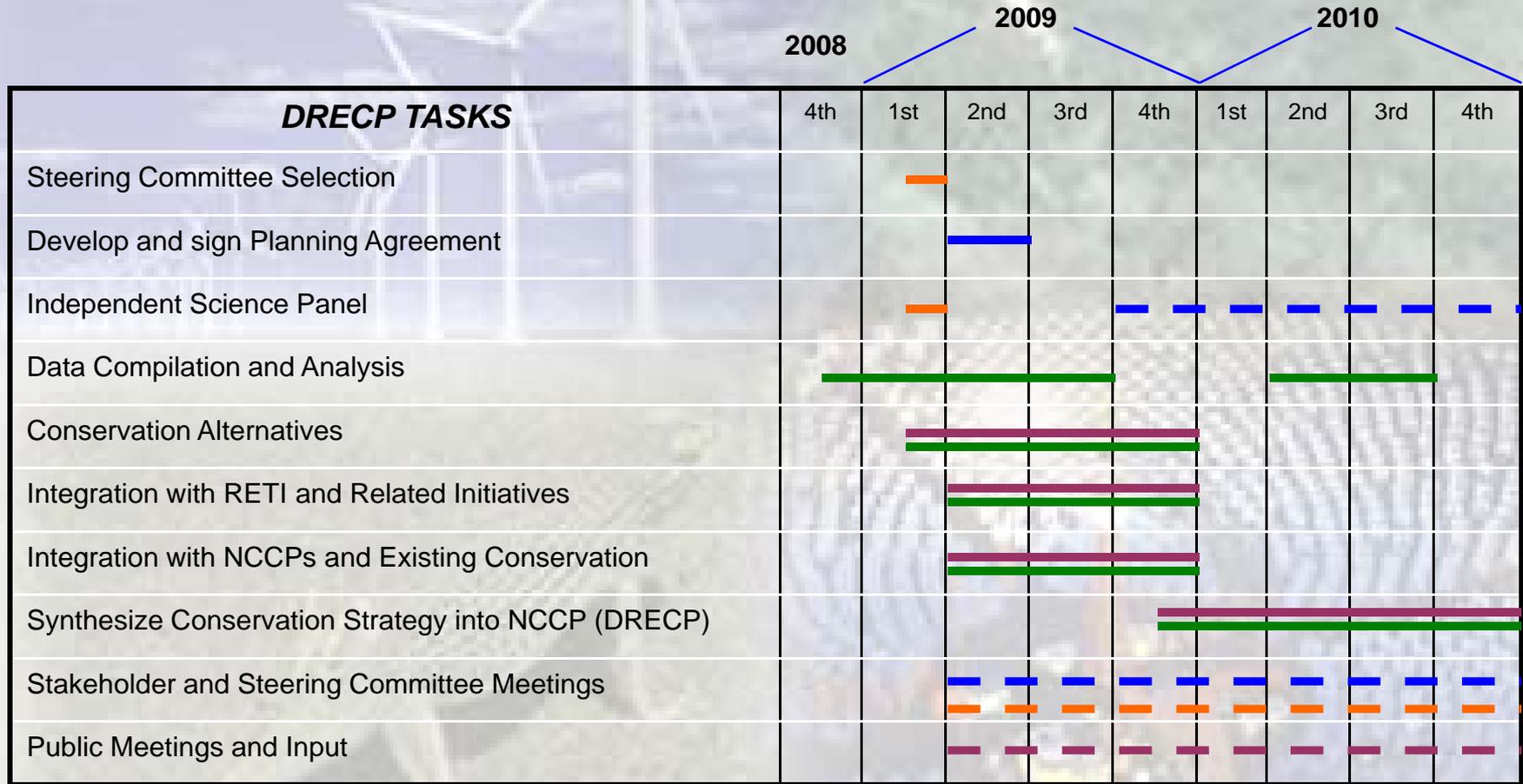
**EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP**

## **The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan: Challenges**

- Integration of, and coordination with, current conservation and planning efforts
- Integration of, and coordination with, current renewable energy and transmission planning efforts
- Aggressive time frame
- Meeting complex and evolving conservation objectives over multiple land owners and land uses
- Overcoming multi-agency culture and process impediments to create a seamless and integrated permitting process

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EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP



REAT

Resources Agency/CEC

Steering Committee

DRECP

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EO Elements 10-12:  
The DRECP

**Thank You!**

A few resources for stakeholders...

- Department of Fish and Game Renewable Energy Information:  
<http://www.dfg.ca.gov/habcon/energy/>
- Biogeographical Information and Observation System

<http://bios.dfg.ca.gov/>