California Energy Commission | Department of Fish and Game | Bureau of Land Management | U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

RENEWABLE ENERGY ACTION TEAM (REAT) STARTING-POINT MAP NARRATIVE

BLM Solar Study Areas

The BLM Solar Study Areas are those areas which have been identified as potential areas for utility-scale solar development through the federal process for the Solar Energy Development Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Solar PEIS), a joint venture between Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the Department of Energy. The Study Areas were chosen based on a number of criteria, including quality of solar resources, suitable slope, proximity to roads and transmission, acreage, and the conservation value of the land. Following further study, those areas selected would be available for projects capable of producing 10 or more megawatts of electricity for distribution, and companies that propose qualified projects in those areas would be eligible for priority processing. The BLM released maps of Study Areas for public comment last year, and the period for public comment has now closed. These areas will be finalized through the Solar PEIS process.

REAT Study Areas and REAT Conservation Opportunity Areas

The identification of the following areas is preliminary and represents a starting point for discussion among the California Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) stakeholders and participants and not an interim or final designation by the REAT agencies. Accordingly, they are intended to foster the deliberative process that will eventually lead to consensus on designation of conservation and renewable energy development areas.

REAT Study Areas

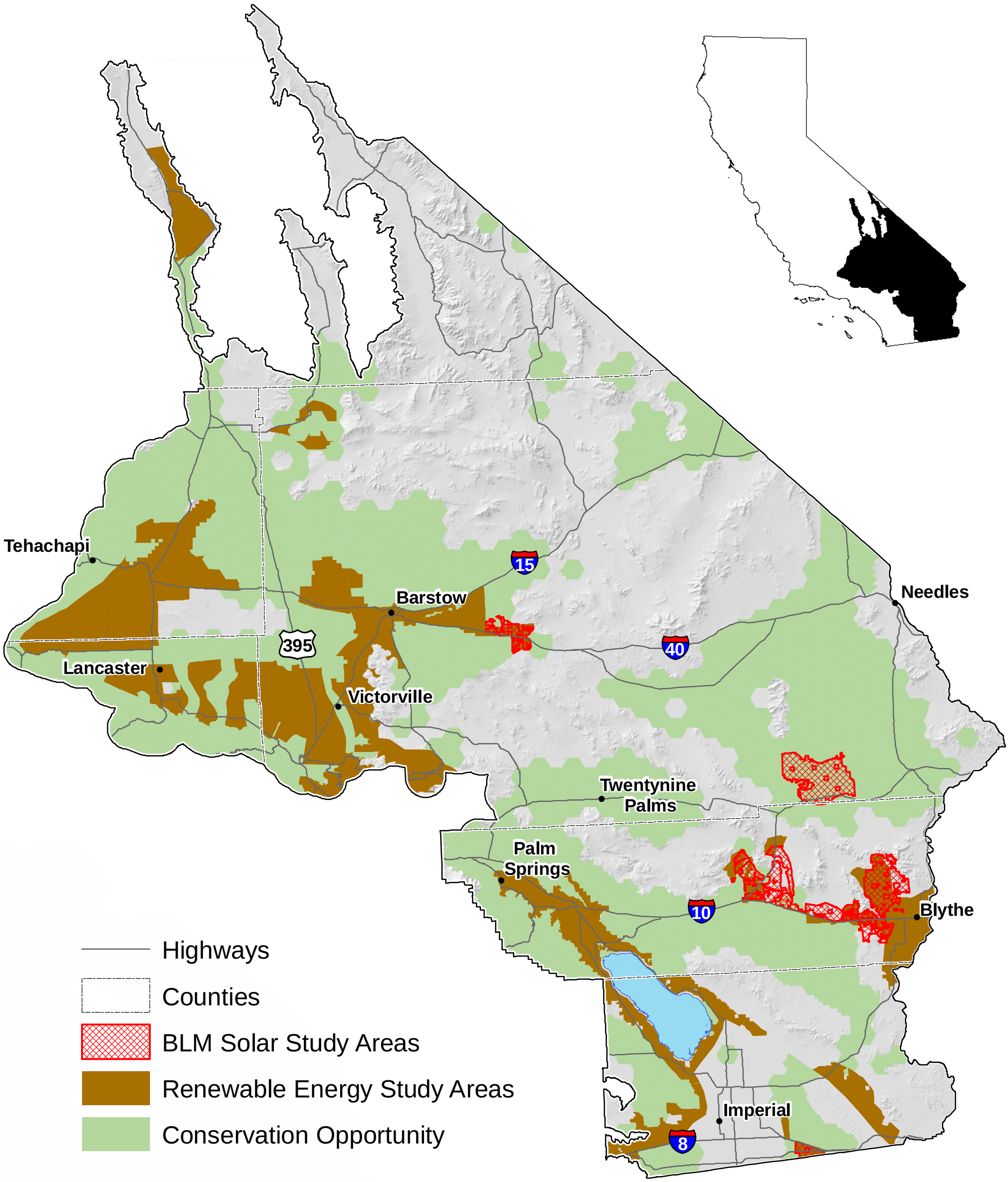
The REAT Study Areas are those areas which have been identified by the Renewable Energy Action Team (REAT) as potential areas for utility-scale renewable energy development. The purpose of the Study Areas is to identify places where a renewable energy developer could anticipate an easier, expedited permitting process. The REAT based the identification of these Study Areas solely on biological sensitivity data. As such, these areas do not take into account land ownership, availability, or other applicable land use planning and zoning requirements. Moreover, these Study Areas do not take into account other resource issues that the California Energy Commission (CEC) and/or BLM would consider during their respective permitting processes, such as archaeological resources, visual resource management, or recreation.

REAT Conservation Opportunity Areas

The REAT identified REAT Conservation Opportunity areas as those areas with high biological value. These areas support key populations or connections between key populations. As such, private land acquisition or habitat enhancement on public lands would be encouraged within these zones. The applicability of any one Conservation Opportunity to any specific project must be determined on a project-by-project basis. The identification of REAT Conservation Opportunity areas does not preclude development within these areas. However, developers should recognize that renewable energy projects within Conservation Opportunity areas will likely have higher mitigation ratios because of a higher impact to biological resources, and a longer permit process time. Once areas have been selected through the final DRECP, developers will be able to utilize the identification of Conservation Opportunity areas to expedite their mitigation and acquisition needs.

March 23, 2010

RENEWABLE ENERGY ACTION TEAM
STARTING POINT



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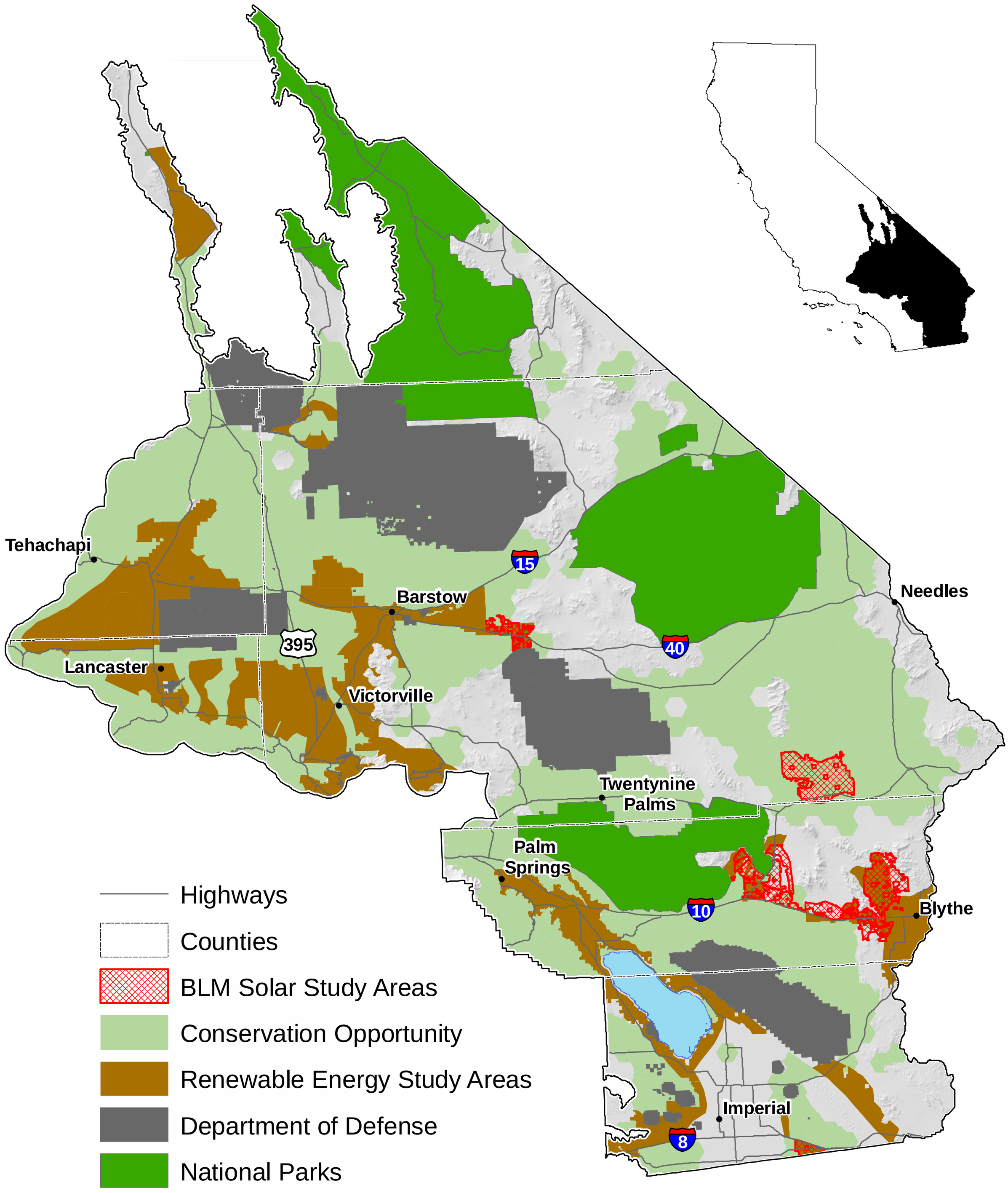
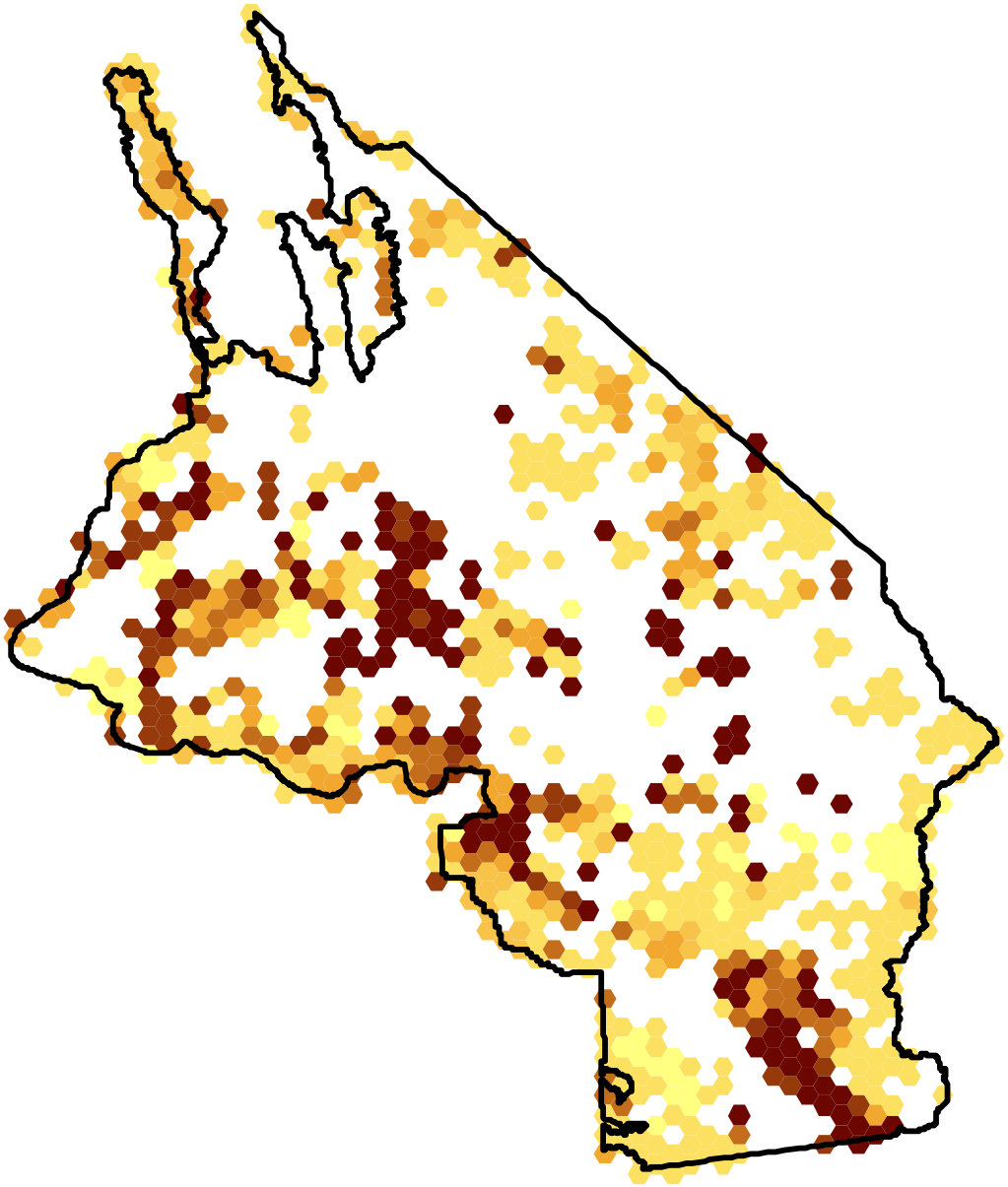
STARTING POINT



March 23, 2010

SPECIES SENSITIVITY RANKING



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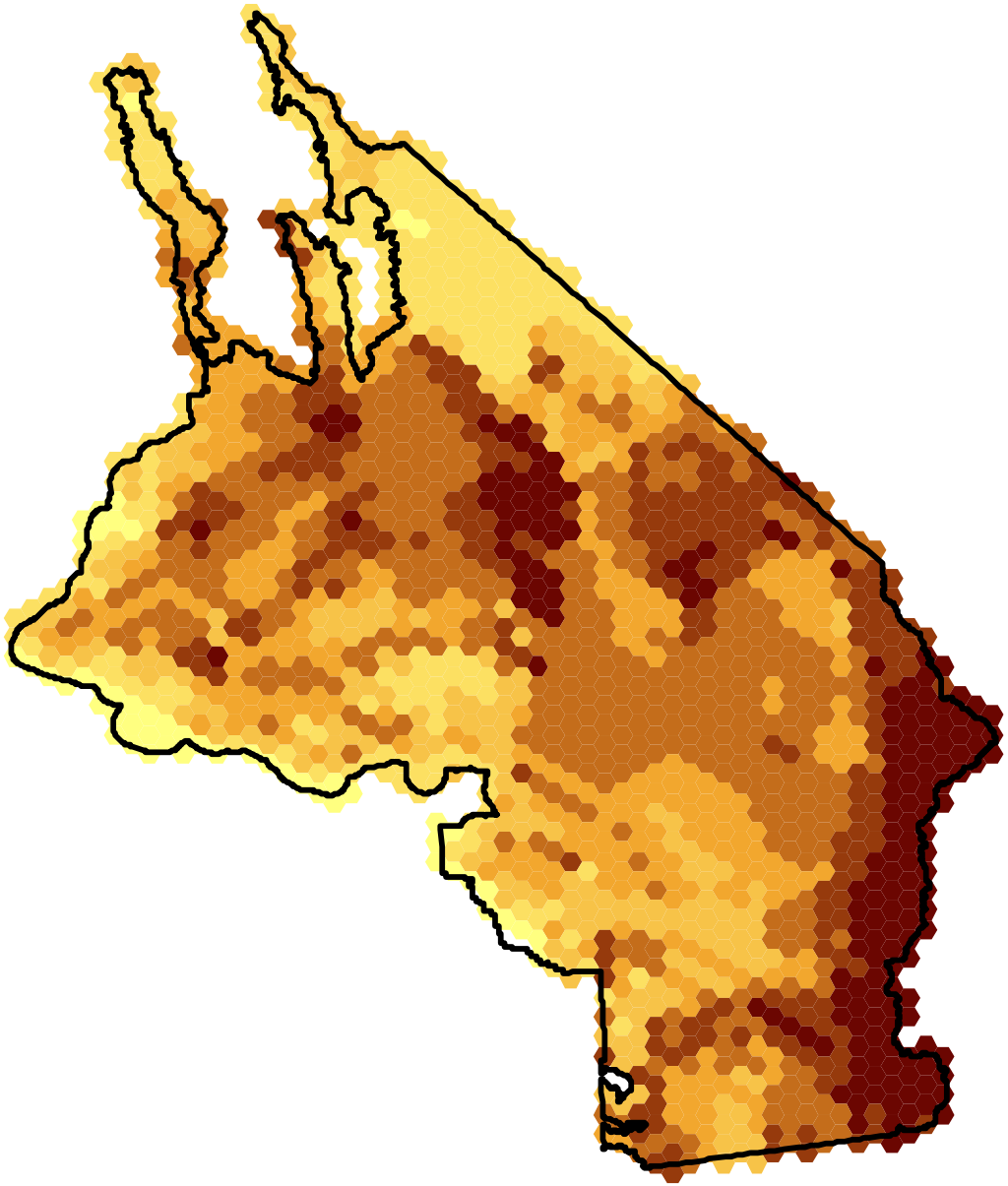

WILDLIFE

***The darker the color the higher the sensitivity.**