

California Energy
CommissionDepartment of
Fish and GameBureau of Land
ManagementU.S. Fish and
Wildlife Service

Notice of Public Meeting for Implementing the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

Purpose

In March 2009, the Renewable Energy Action Team (REAT), composed of the California Energy Commission, California Department of Fish and Game, Bureau of Land Management, and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, held publicly-noticed scoping meetings in Sacramento and Palm Springs on the Governor's Renewable Energy Executive Order, S-14-08. At these two scoping meetings, we provided an overview of the Executive Order and the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP), and received valuable suggestions and ideas from interested stakeholders.

Another workshop is planned in which the REAT will further discuss the DRECP and the activities and schedule associated with its development. The REAT would appreciate receiving comments, either written or provided orally at the workshop, on the topics of special interest listed below under "Public Comments." In accordance with the Executive Order, the REAT will develop a conservation strategy that identifies areas suitable for renewable energy project development and areas that will contribute to the conservation of sensitive species and natural communities. The DRECP, when finalized, will provide binding, long-term endangered species incidental take authorizations and regulatory assurances, facilitate and streamline the renewable energy desert project approval process, and provide for conservation funding to implement the DRECP.

A Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative (RETI) workshop is being held in Victorville at 10 a.m. on June 18 [<http://www.energy.ca.gov/reti/index.html>], and the DRECP workshop will follow in the afternoon at the same location. The DRECP workshop will be held on:

THURSDAY, JUNE 18, 2009
2 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.
City of Victorville
14343 Civic Drive
Training Room
Victorville, CA 92392 (see map)
(wheelchair accessible)

WebEx info:
Topics: RETI (a.m.) / DRECP (p.m.)
Website address: <https://energy.webex.com>
Meeting Number: 925 983 632
Meeting Password: meeting@10

Future Opportunities to Participate

In the coming months there will be additional opportunities to participate and provide input into the development of the DRECP. Products will be provided in draft form with opportunities for written input. Major products that are released will be the subject of a workshop where written and oral comments will be encouraged. Some of the products that will be circulated for comment may include but not be limited to: a conservation strategy that identifies areas proposed for long-term natural resource conservation and proposed areas suitable for future renewable energy development, map(s) of these areas, approaches to minimize and mitigate impacts to covered resources, including protected species and their habitats, permit streamlining strategies, and funding mechanisms for the purchase, enhancement, and management of natural resource conservation lands. The process of developing and finalizing the DRECP will be an iterative one with refinements made as we progress through the process and after public input on draft documents.

An independent science advisory group (SAG), consisting of scientists and recognized experts in the fields of biology, botany, and desert ecology, will be convened. Members of the SAG may be drawn from academia, non-governmental organizations, and governmental agencies. These scientists and specialists will provide upfront input on various biological questions and issues that will be used to help guide the development of the DRECP.

For other issues that must be considered as part of the environmental review process for the DRECP, such as groundwater overdraft, cultural resources, Native American consultation, visual resources, land use, electric transmission engineering, and others, the REAT may form focused stakeholder working groups to address specific issues.

In addition to the DRECP, the REAT is developing a Best Management Practices (BMP) manual for renewable energy projects. A similar public input process will be followed upon release of a draft of the manual, with opportunities for written comment and oral comments to be provided at subsequent workshops. The REAT is anticipating at least two drafts of the BMP manual followed by workshops during the year.

Background

Governor Schwarzenegger issued Executive Order S-14-08 on November 17, 2008, which established a target for all retail sellers of electricity within the state to serve 33 percent of their electric load with renewable energy by 2020. The order directs the California Energy Commission and the California Department of Fish and Game to implement a number of specific directives pertaining to natural resource conservation planning and renewable energy permitting.

To meet the 33 percent target, it will be necessary to add substantial new renewable generating capacity within California. Many of these facilities will be located on federal public land necessitating close cooperation between the permitting agencies, such as the Energy Commission and the California Public Utilities Commission, the land management agencies, such as the Bureau of Land Management, and the resource agencies, such as California Department of Fish and Game and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. For facilities on private land, coordination with local permitting agencies will be necessary. The

State's greenhouse gas emissions reductions goal was established by Assembly Bill 32 (Nunez, Chapter 488, Statutes of 2006) and calls for the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by 2020. A key component of achieving these reductions is to reduce the use of fossil fuels to generate electricity and substitute the use of cleaner renewable resources.

Public Comments

This public meeting will be another opportunity to provide input on the DRECP. Topics of specific interest are:

- elements of the DRECP Planning Agreement (such as geographic planning area, description of covered activities, species and natural communities to be addressed, biological goals and objectives, process for scientific and public input, an interim process for project review, and the commitment of resources),
- critical natural resource conservation issues that should be considered when developing the DRECP,
- the attributes that areas in the desert should possess to be considered for development,
- attributes that areas in the desert should possess to be considered for long-term conservation,
- public and private funding mechanisms/strategies for the purchase and long-term management of natural resource conservation lands,
- issues of concern to local governments, and
- how to ensure effective coordination with other ongoing processes involving renewable energy development in the Mojave and Colorado deserts, e.g. the federal Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement and the Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative (RETI).

Please provide written comments by July 2, 2009. Include the docket number 09-Renew EO-01 and indicate "Renewable Energy Executive Order" in the subject line or first paragraph of your comments. Please hand deliver or mail an original plus 10 paper copies to:

California Energy Commission
Dockets Office, MS-4
Re: Docket No. 09-Renew EO-01
1516 Ninth Street
Sacramento, CA 95814-5512

The Energy Commission also encourages written comments by e-mail. Please include your name or your organization's name in the name of the file. Those submitting comments by e-mail should provide them in either Microsoft Word format or as a Portable Document Format (PDF) to [docket@energy.state.ca.us]. One paper copy must also be sent to the Energy Commission's Docket Unit at the above address and docket number.

Participation through WebEx, the Energy Commission's on-line meeting service

The DRECP workshop will be held in the afternoon at the same location as the RETI workshop; both workshops will use the same WebEx meeting number and password.

COMPUTER LOGON WITH A DIRECT PHONE NUMBER

1. Please go to <https://energy.webex.com> and enter the meeting number: 925 983 632.
2. When prompted, enter your information and the following meeting password:
meeting@10.
3. After you login, a prompt will appear on-screen for you to provide your phone number. In the Number box, type your area code and phone number and click OK to receive a call back on your phone for the audio of the meeting. International callers can use the "Country/Region" button to help make their connection.

COMPUTER LOGON FOR CALLERS WITH AN EXTENSION PHONE NUMBER, ETC.

1. Please go to <https://energy.webex.com> and enter the meeting number: 925 983 632.
2. When prompted, enter your information and the following meeting password:
meeting@10.
3. After you login, a prompt will ask for your phone number. **CLICK CANCEL.**
4. Instead call 1-866-469-3239 (toll-free in the U.S. and Canada). When prompted, enter the meeting number above and your unique Attendee ID number which is listed in the top left area of your screen after you login. International callers can dial in using the "Show all global call-in numbers" link (also in the top left area).

TELEPHONE ONLY (NO COMPUTER ACCESS)

Call 1-866-469-3239 (toll-free in the U.S. and Canada) and when prompted enter the unique meeting number above. International callers can select their number from <https://energy.webex.com/energy/globalcallin.php>.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT

For help with problems or questions trying to join or attend the meeting, please call WebEx Technical Support at 1-866-229-3239.

System Requirements: To see if your computer is compatible, visit <http://support.webex.com/support/system-requirements.html>.

Meeting Preparation: The playback of UCF (Universal Communications Format) rich media files requires appropriate players. To view this type of rich media files in the meeting, please check whether you have the players installed on your computer by going to <https://energy.webex.com/energy/systemdiagnosis.php>.

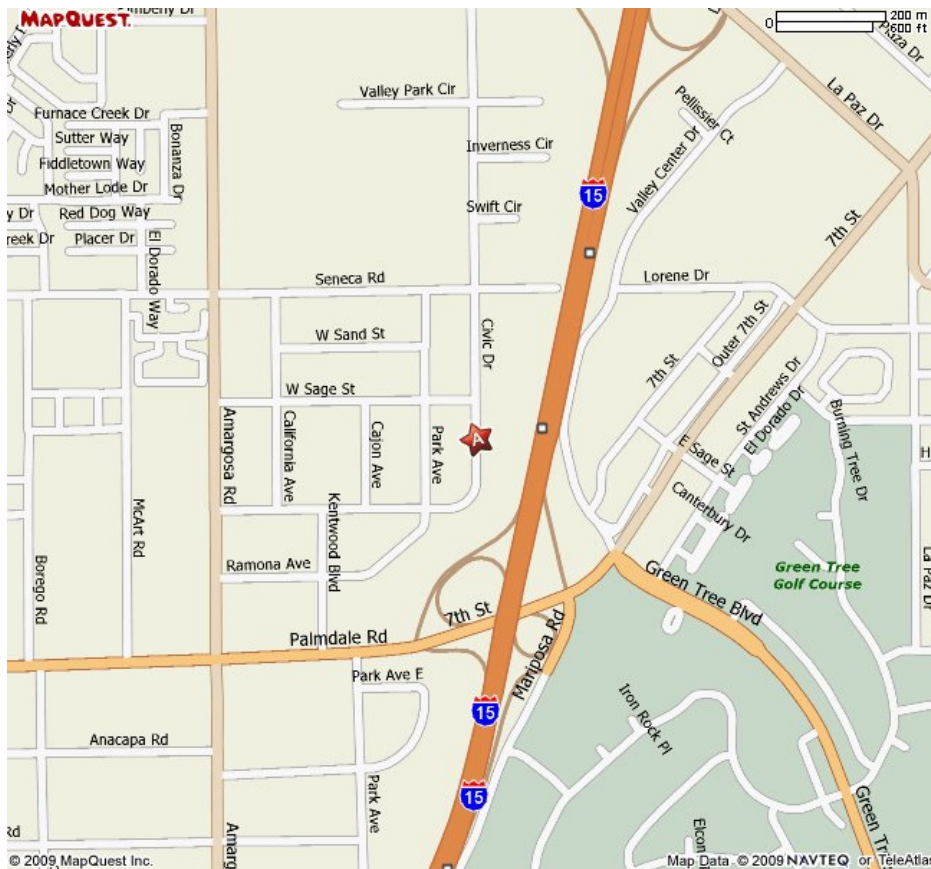
Please be aware that the workshop's WebEx audio and onscreen activity may be recorded.

Public Participation

Notices, documents, reports, and public comments are posted on the Energy Commission's website at [<http://www.energy.ca.gov/33by2020>]. To receive notices and information about the implementation of the Executive Order, sign up for the electronic list server on this webpage.

The Energy Commission's Public Adviser's Office provides the public assistance in participating in Energy Commission activities. If you want information on how to participate in this forum, please contact the Public Adviser, Elena M. Miller, at (916) 654-4489 or toll free at (800) 822-6228, by FAX at (916) 654-4493, or by e-mail at [PublicAdviser@energy.state.ca.us]. If you have a disability and require assistance to participate, please contact Lou Quiroz at (916) 654-5146 at least five days in advance.

Please direct all news media inquiries to the Media and Public Communications, at (916) 654-4989, or by e-mail at [mediaoffice@energy.state.ca.us]. If you have questions on the technical subject matter of this forum, please call Paul Richins at (916) 654-4074, or by e-mail at [prichins@energy.state.ca.us].



Date: June 5, 2009

Mail Lists: Renewables, Wind, 30%by2020, Siting, Solar PEIS, and RETI