II.2 NO ACTION ALTERNATIVE

II.2.1 Interagency Description of the No Action Alternative

The No Action Alternative describes how state and federal renewable energy goals are currently being met. The No Action Alternative is utilized to compare the relative impacts of not approving the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP or Plan) with all other action alternatives and thus assumes that renewable energy and transmission development and mitigation for such projects would occur on an ad hoc basis in a pattern consistent with past and ongoing renewable energy and transmission projects on federal and nonfederal lands within the planning area. The No Action Alternative would also carry forward current planning documents, such as Bureau of Land Management (BLM) land use plans (including existing amendments to those plans, such as the Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement [PEIS]). The No Action Alternative assumes a continuation of current renewable energy development and mitigation, and current BLM land management, and serves as a baseline for comparison of the action alternatives.

II.2.1.1 Overview of the No Action Alternative

The following provides a Plan-wide overview of the No Action Alternative, which is further detailed in the subsequent sections. Under the No Action Alternative, the BLM conservation strategy for the California desert region would continue to apply as reflected in the current and existing land use plan/resource management plans (RMPs). Permitting of renewable energy and transmission development would occur on a project-by-project basis. Under the No Action Alternative, renewable energy and transmission development could generally occur anywhere in the planning area where suitable solar insolation, wind speed, or geothermal resources exist and where such development is not prohibited or otherwise inconsistent with existing land use plan decisions, subject to applicable National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) analysis, and assumes that renewable energy development and transmission would generally be sited in the same regions as approved and current projects, subject to existing laws and regulations. A specific land use plan amendment would likely be necessary to site a renewable energy project under some land use plans. Further, under existing plans, a particular site may be denied. The Plan-wide description of the No Action Alternative (Section II.2.1) characterizes existing and potential conservation in the planning area and existing and potential renewable energy and transmission development for the entire 22.6-million-acre DRECP planning area. This Plan-wide description is analogous to the Plan-wide description provided for all action alternatives, as described in Chapters II.3 through II.7.

Under the No Action Alternative, the BLM would not amend its existing land use plans to address a strategic approach to renewable energy resource development. The No Action Alternative, as described in Section II.2.2 for BLM-administered lands, brings forward the

existing management as described in the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan, Bishop RMP, and Caliente RMP, including applicable amendments (including the land use plan amendments from the Solar PEIS Record of Decision [ROD]), as they apply to the BLM's decision area (Plan Area and CDCA outside of the Plan Area). Only land use plan level decisions described in these plans are presented and summarized. In the absence of specific resource decisions, management has occurred based on federal law, regulation, and BLM policy and guidance. Specific decisions in the CDCA Plan related to energy development have been limited to adoption of approximately 20 joint-use transportation and energy planning corridors for the transmission of large-scale energy loads to and through the CDCA, and classification of geothermal areas as either competitive or non-competitive. Current BLM Land Use Plans are available online at: http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/prog/planning.html.

Under the No Action Alternative, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) would approve a Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) to provide for the conservation of Covered Species and to streamline future permitting of incidental take of California Endangered Species Act (CESA) listed species resulting from renewable energy projects and associated transmission in the California deserts. CESA permitting would occur on an ad hoc, project-by-project basis, and any mitigation required to offset the effects on state-listed species would not be based on a comprehensive, desert-wide conservation strategy, as proposed under the DRECP; rather, it would be based on the conservation requirements of the existing plans. In addition, under the No Action Alternative, no incidental take permitting of fully protected species would be allowed. As described in Section II.2.3, the Plan-wide No Action Alternative (Section II.2.1) serves as the description of the No Action Alternative for the NCCP.

Under the No Action Alternative, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) would not approve a General Conservation Plan (GCP) to streamline future permitting of incidental take of federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) listed species on nonfederal lands resulting from renewable energy projects and associated transmission in the California deserts. In the absence of a federal nexus, project proponents desiring incidental take authorization from USFWS would need to develop Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) for their individual permit applications. Because these HCPs would be developed on a project-by-project basis, any mitigation required to offset the effects of incidental take would not be based on a comprehensive, desert-wide conservation strategy, as proposed under the DRECP. Similarly, under the No Action Alternative, the USFWS would not propose to issue incidental take permits to the California Energy Commission (CEC) or California State Lands Commission (CSLC) under the GCP. In the absence of a federal nexus, project proponents needing CEC licenses or CSLC leases for renewable energy projects would need to seek incidental take authorization from USFWS through development of HCPs for their individual incidental take permit applications. Because CEC license applications and CSLC

lease applications would be requested on a project-by-project basis, any mitigation required to offset the effects of incidental take would not specifically be based on a comprehensive, desert-wide conservation strategy, as proposed under the DRECP.

Table II.2-1 summarizes the No Action Alternative by available development areas, existing protected areas, existing BLM land use plan conservation designations, and other lands. Under the No Action Alternative, available development areas include the portion of the planning area where renewable energy development (i.e., solar, wind, or geothermal technologies) is not prohibited, that meets BLM policy considerations, where the particular resource criteria is met, where a further land use plan amendment may be approved, and where past and current renewable energy projects are being sited, which totals approximately 6,285,972 acres. The No Action Alternative map is provided in Figure II.2-1.

Table II.2-1
No Action Alternative

Alternative Component	Acreage
Available Development Areas Under No Action[1]	**6,286,000**
Existing Protected Areas	**7,662,000**
Legislatively and Legally Protected Areas (LLPAs)	7,567,000
Military Expansion Mitigation Lands (MEMLs)	96,000
Existing BLM Land Use Plan Conservation Designations[1,2]	**2,966,000**
Urban Areas, Other Lands, and Undesignated Areas	**7,064,000**
Impervious and Urban Built-up Land	515,000
Military	3,019,000
BLM Open Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) Areas	264,000
Imperial Sand Dunes – including the BLM Open OHV Area	132,000
Johnson Valley OHV Shared Use Area	56,000
Tribal Lands	129,000
Undesignated Areas	2,9749,000
Planning Area Total	**22,585,000**

Notes:
Plan-wide alternative summary includes both federal lands and nonfederal lands. The summary specific to BLM-administered lands is provided in Section II.2.2, and the summary specific to nonfederal lands is provided in Section II.2.4. The BLM land use plan conservation designation acreage reported includes both BLM-administered lands and non-BLM lands inholdings within the designation. Impervious and urban built-up lands occur within available development areas and existing BLM land use plan conservation designations were not explicitly included in the urban category reported here. The following general rounding rules were applied to acreage values: values greater than 1,000 were rounded to nearest 1,000; values less than 1,000 and greater than 100 were rounded to the nearest 100; values of 100 or less were rounded to the nearest 10, and therefore totals may not sum due to rounding. In cases where subtotals are provided, the subtotals and the totals are individually rounded. The totals are not a sum of the rounded subtotals; therefore the subtotals may not sum to the total within the table.

[1] Available development areas under No Action includes the portion of the planning area where renewable energy development (i.e., solar, wind, or geothermal technologies) is not prohibited and where past and current renewable energy projects are being sited. Not all areas are available for all renewable energy technologies. The BLM Solar PEIS identified approximately 737,000 acres of Solar Energy Zones (SEZs) and Variance Lands in the planning area, of which

approximately 438,000 acres occur in regions where past and current renewable energy projects are being sited (BLM and DOE 2012). The Available Development Areas acreage includes 1,393,000 acres designated as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) that do not prohibit renewable energy development. These acres are also included in the existing BLM land use plan conservation designations.

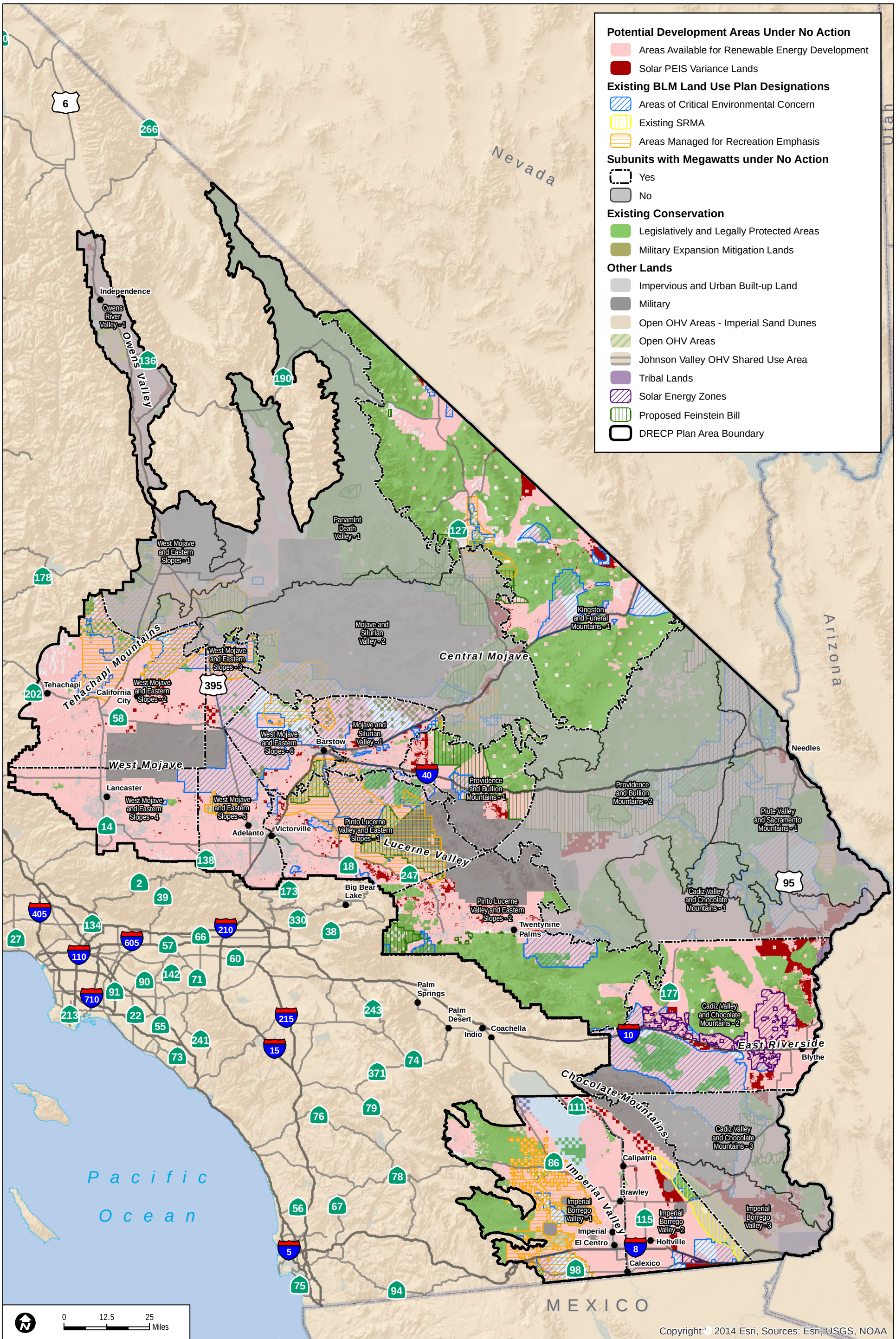
[2] Existing BLM land use plan conservation designations include existing ACECs. Overlaps of existing BLM land use plan conservation designations with existing protected areas or open OHV areas are reported as existing protected areas or open OHV areas.

II.2.1.2 Conservation Under the No Action Alternative

Conservation in the planning area under the No Action Alternative includes the following: conservation provided by existing protected areas, conservation provided by existing BLM land use plan conservation designations, and existing and planned conservation resulting from project-specific mitigation used to avoid or offset the impacts of development of renewable energy and transmission development in the planning area.

As part of the DRECP planning process described in Volume I, Chapter I.3, existing protected areas (e.g., National Parks, Wilderness Areas) were identified as an initial step in the reserve design process for the DRECP (Section I.3.4.4). These Legislatively and Legally Protected Areas (LLPAs) and Military Expansion Mitigation Lands (MEMLs) are considered existing protected areas under the No Action Alternative. Existing BLM National Conservation Lands (as described in Section II.2.2; also referred to as National Landscape Conservation System [NLCS] lands) are included in these existing protected areas.

Existing BLM land use plans and subsequent amendments have designated Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs) in the planning area that provide resource conservation by specifying and managing uses within each ACEC unit. The BLM land use planning process is described in Section I.3.1. The existing management of the ACECs on BLM-administered lands under the No Action Alternative is described in Section II.2.2. Desert Wildlife Management Areas (DWMAs) are included as ACECs here. Existing BLM land use plans have other designations, including wildlife allocations, Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs), Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMAs), Cultural Districts, eligible Wild and Scenic Rivers, grazing allotments, and lands with wilderness characteristics that, combined with the BLM multiple use class overlays, determine BLM land management decisions and provide for resource management in these areas; however, these designations are not specifically included as biological conservation under the No Action Alternative.



Sources: ESRI (2014); CEC (2013); BLM (2013); CDFW (2013); USFWS (2013)

FIGURE II.2-1

Alternative No Action

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

Project-specific mitigation used to offset impacts from renewable energy and transmission development projects would also provide resource conservation in the planning area under the No Action Alternative. The amount, location, and resources conserved by project-specific mitigation for projects developed under the No Action Alternative would be dependent on the specifics of these projects and the requirements of the federal, state, and/or local jurisdictions permitting the projects; therefore, this portion of conservation under the No Action Alternative has not been quantified because it's not known. However, the amount, location, and resources are generally more extensive than in the project development area and may include resources within the original project development area or remotely located.

Table II.2-2a summarizes conservation by county under the No Action Alternative. Table II.2-2b summarizes conservation by land ownership under the No Action Alternative. Table II.2-2c summarizes conservation by ecoregion subarea under the No Action Alternative.

Table II.2-2a
Conservation Under the No Action Alternative by County

County	Existing Protected Areas[1] (acres)	Existing BLM Land Use Plan Conservation Designation[2] (acres)	Total Acreage
Imperial County	274,000	312,000	586,000
Inyo County	1,921,000	29,000	1,950,000
Kern County	135,000	274,000	409,000
Los Angeles County	6,000	25,000	31,000
Riverside County	982,000	260,000	1,242,000
San Bernardino County	4,145,000	2,065,000	6,210,000
San Diego County	199,000	-	199,000
Total	**7,662,000**	**2,966,000**	**10,628,000**

Notes: This summary includes both federal lands and nonfederal lands. The summary specific to BLM-administered lands is provided in Section II.2.2, and the summary specific to nonfederal lands is provided in Section II.2.4. The BLM land use plan conservation designation acreage reported includes both BLM-administered lands and non-BLM lands inholdings within the designation. Project-by-project mitigation generated from renewable energy and transmission development is not reflected in this tabular summary. The following general rounding rules were applied to acreage values: values greater than 1,000 were rounded to nearest 1,000; values less than 1,000 and greater than 100 were rounded to the nearest 100; values of 100 or less were rounded to the nearest 10, and therefore totals may not sum due to rounding. In cases where subtotals are provided, the subtotals and the totals are individually rounded. The totals are not a sum of the rounded subtotals; therefore the subtotals may not sum to the total within the table.

1 Existing protected areas includes LLPAs and MEMLs.

2 Existing BLM land use plan conservation designations include existing ACECs and DWMAs. Overlaps of existing BLM land use plan conservation designations with existing protected areas are reported as existing protected areas.

Table II.2-2b
Conservation Under the No Action Alternative by Ownership Class

Ownership Class	Existing Protected Areas[1] (acres)	Existing BLM Land Use Plan Conservation Designation[2] (acres)	Total Acreage
Federal Lands			
BLM-administered land	3,279,000	2,395,000	5,674,000
Other federal land	3,949,000	9,000	3,959,000
Nonfederal Lands			
Private land	31,000	501,000	532,000
State and local public land	**403,000**	**61,000**	464,000
Total	**7,662,000**	**2,966,000**	**10,628,000**

Notes: This summary includes both federal lands and nonfederal lands. The summary specific to BLM-administered lands is provided in Section II.2.2, and the summary specific to nonfederal lands is provided in Section II.2.4. The BLM land use plan conservation designation acreage reported includes both BLM-administered lands and non-BLM lands inholdings within the designation. Project-by-project mitigation generated from renewable energy and transmission development is not reflected in this tabular summary. The following general rounding rules were applied to acreage values: values greater than 1,000 were rounded to nearest 1,000; values less than 1,000 and greater than 100 were rounded to the nearest 100; values of 100 or less were rounded to the nearest 10, and therefore totals may not sum due to rounding. In cases where subtotals are provided, the subtotals and the totals are individually rounded. The totals are not a sum of the rounded subtotals; therefore the subtotals may not sum to the total within the table

[1] Existing protected areas includes LLPAs and MEMLs.

[2] Existing BLM land use plan conservation designations include existing ACECs. Overlaps of existing BLM land use plan conservation designations with existing protected areas are reported as existing protected areas. Although non-BLM lands may be included within BLM land use plan conservation designations, BLM land use plan decisions only direct management on BLM-managed lands and are not binding for other land owners.

Table II.2-2c
Conservation under the No Action Alternative by Ecoregion Subarea

Ecoregion Subarea	Existing Protected Areas[1] (acres)	Existing BLM Land Use Plan Conservation Designation[2] (acres)	Total Acreage
Cadiz Valley and Chocolate Mountains	842,000	497,000	1,339,000
Imperial Borrego Valley	355,000	155,000	509,000
Kingston and Funeral Mountains	1,767,000	151,000	1,918,000
Mojave and Silurian Valley	786,000	421,000	1,208,000
Owens River Valley	32,000	900	33,000
Panamint Death Valley	1,253,000	8,000	1,260,000
Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes	739,000	259,000	998,000
Piute Valley and Sacramento Mountains	423,000	412,000	835,000
Providence and Bullion Mountains	1,305,000	288,000	1,592,000
West Mojave and Eastern Slopes	162,000	774,000	936,000
Total	**7,662,000**	**2,966,000**	**10,628,000**

Notes: This summary includes both federal lands and nonfederal lands. The summary specific to BLM-administered lands is provided in Section II.2.2, and the summary specific to nonfederal lands is provided in Section II.2.4. The BLM land use plan conservation designation acreage reported includes both BLM-administered lands and non-BLM lands inholdings within the designation. Project-by-

project mitigation generated from renewable energy and transmission development is not reflected in this tabular summary. The following general rounding rules were applied to acreage values: values greater than 1,000 were rounded to nearest 1,000; values less than 1,000 and greater than 100 were rounded to the nearest 100; values of 100 or less were rounded to the nearest 10, and therefore totals may not sum due to rounding. In cases where subtotals are provided, the subtotals and the totals are individually rounded. The totals are not a sum of the rounded subtotals; therefore the subtotals may not sum to the total within the table.

[1] Existing protected areas includes LLPAs and MEMLs.

[2] Existing BLM land use plan conservation designations include existing ACECs. Overlaps of existing BLM land use plan conservation designations with existing protected areas are reported as existing protected areas.

Under the No Action Alternative, numerous resource management planning documents have been prepared addressing portions of the planning area. These resource management documents are summarized in Table II.2-3. Several of these documents address management of lands considered existing protected areas, like national parks and state parks. The BLM documents relate to BLM land use planning and management on BLM-administered lands, which is more specifically described in Section II.2.2. The species-specific USFWS Recovery Plans specify recovery actions for federally listed species relevant to the planning area. Additionally, several documents listed describe resource management planning on military lands.

II.2.1.3 Renewable Energy and Transmission Development Under the No Action Alternative

This section provides a description of the anticipated distribution, magnitude, and scope of activities associated with the construction and operation of renewable energy generation under the No Action Alternative. Because development is currently allowed within the planning area, the No Action Alternative assumes that the state can achieve its renewable energy goals in support of greenhouse gas reduction targets. It further assumes that the contribution of the Plan Area to the state goals under the No Action Alternative would be similar to the Preferred Alternative and other alternatives. The main difference between the No Action Alternative and the Preferred Alternative and other alternatives—as analyzed in Volume IV, Environmental Consequences/Effects Analysis—is the No Action Alternative lacks an integrated, interagency conservation strategy for Covered Species and natural communities throughout the California deserts that addresses a strategic approach to renewable energy development.

This section is subdivided by technology: solar, wind, geothermal, and transmission. The renewable energy development activities that would take place under the No Action Alternative are identical to development activities on the list of Covered Activities included in the Preferred Alternative, a detailed description of which is provided in Section II.3.1.4, although the location of those activities would vary from what would occur under the action alternatives.

Table II.2-3
No Action Alternative – Existing Resource Management Planning Documents

Plan Name	Approval Year	Responsible Agency	Description of Plan
Anza-Borrego Desert State Park General Plan and Environmental Impact Report (EIR)	2005	California State Parks	The objective of this general plan is to provide management guidelines that will allow for visitor use while protecting the park resources.
BLM California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan, as amended (including Solar PEIS land use plan amendments)	1980	Bureau of Land Management	This document serves as a land-use guide for management of BLM lands within the CDCA.
CDCA Amendment: BLM Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert Coordinated Management Plan (NECO)	2002	Bureau of Land Management	This document is a landscape-scale, multi-agency planning effort that provides protection and conserves natural resources while balancing anthropogenic uses with the California portion of the Sonoran Desert ecosystem.
CDCA Amendment: BLM Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan (NEMO)	2002	Bureau of Land Management	This document addresses threatened and endangered species conservation and recovery and adoption of public land health standards, and evaluation of segments for eligibility in the National Wild and Scenic Rivers System.
CDCA Amendment: BLM West Mojave Plan (WEMO)	2006	Bureau of Land Management	This habitat conservation plan and federal land use plan amendment describes a strategy to conserve and protect desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), Mohave ground squirrel (*Xerospermophilus mohavensis*), and other sensitive plants, animals, and natural communities.
CDCA Amendment: BLM Western Colorado Desert Routes of Travel Designations (WECO)	2002	Bureau of Land Management	This document specifies recreational use areas and designated routes in the western Colorado/Sonoran Desert portion of Imperial County, California

Table II.2-3
No Action Alternative – Existing Resource Management Planning Documents

Plan Name	Approval Year	Responsible Agency	Description of Plan
CDCA Amendment: BLM Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan (ISD RAMP)	2013	Bureau of Land Management	This document provides guidance for the conservation and management of public lands in and adjacent to the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area.
CDCA Amendment: BLM Western Colorado Desert Routes of Travel Designations (WECO)	2002	Bureau of Land Management	This document specifies recreational use areas and designated routes in the western Colorado/Sonoran Desert portion of Imperial County, California.
BLM: Bishop RMP	1993	Bureau of Land Management	This document serves as a land-use guide for management of BLM lands within the Bishop Field Office.
BLM: Caliente RMP (Bakersfield Field Office)	1997	Bureau of Land Management	This document serves as a land-use guide for management of BLM lands within the Bakersfield Field Office.
BLM ACEC and joint Sikes Act Management Plans	Multiple	Bureau of Land Management / CDFW	Management plans prepared for individual ACEC units.
China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station EIS	2004	Department of the Navy, U.S. Department of Defense	This document analyses the environmental consequences of an increase in the tempo of military and operational activities at China Lake Naval Air Weapons Station.
Death Valley General Management Plan	2002	National Park Service	This plan outlines the Death Valley National Park's overall management strategy for a 10- to 15-year period.
Edwards Air Force Base Integrated Natural Resources Management Plan (INRMP)	2008	U.S. Department of Defense	The goal of this INRMP is to identify regional issues of importance so as to provide a more efficient management of natural resources on a landscape basis while sustaining military readiness.

Table II.2-3
No Action Alternative – Existing Resource Management Planning Documents

Plan Name	Approval Year	Responsible Agency	Description of Plan
Flat-tailed Horned Lizard Rangewide Management Strategy (also includes a CDCA Amendment)	2003	Flat-tailed Horned Lizard Interagency Coordinating Committee	This document provides guidance for the conservation and management of sufficient habitat to maintain extant populations of flat-tailed horned lizards (*Phrynosoma mcallii*) in each of five management areas in perpetuity.
Joshua Tree National Park General Management Plan EIS	1995	National Park Service	This document includes a general management plan, development concept plans, and an EIS for Joshua Tree National Park.
Lower Colorado River Multi-Species Conservation Program (LCR MSCP)	2004	USFWS; LCR MSCP Steering Committee	The goal of this document is to conserve habitat and work toward the recovery of threatened and endangered species, reduce the likelihood of additional species being listed, to accommodate present and future water and power development and provide the basis for incidental take authorizations.
Lower Colorado River Wildlife Refuges Management Plan (1994–2014)	1994	USFWS; U.S. Bureau of Reclamation	This document is primarily concerned with the management of the four national wildlife refuges along the lower Colorado River including Havasu, Bill Williams, Cibola, and Imperial national wildlife refuges.
Owens Valley Land Management Plan	2010	Los Angeles Department of Water and Power	The Owens Valley Land Management Plan provides management direction for resources on all City of Los Angeles-owned lands in Inyo County, California, excluding the Lower Owens River Project area.

Table II.2-3
No Action Alternative – Existing Resource Management Planning Documents

Plan Name	Approval Year	Responsible Agency	Description of Plan
Species Recovery Plans (USFWS)	Multiple	USFWS	These documents guide the species recovery process and measure progress towards recovery of a species.
Supplemental Final EIS, National Training Center, Fort Irwin	2006	U.S. Department of the Army	This document addresses the potential environmental impacts associated with the addition of maneuver training land at Fort Irwin.
Twentynine Palms Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center INRMP	1993	United States Marine Corps	The purpose of this INRMP was to provide information and guidance that would enhance the Natural Resources Program of the Marine Corps Air-Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms.

Notes: Only major amendments to the BLM CDCA are included in this table.

In the No Action Alternative, renewable energy-related activities are assumed to be feasible on open, non-military lands that are not currently protected or where such development is not prohibited; these areas are disbursed throughout the Plan Area (Figure II.2-1). However, the distribution of different generation technologies varies depending on underlying factors that affect each technology. Therefore, for the purpose of analysis, the future technology mix and spatial distribution was assumed to be similar to current development patterns at the ecoregion scale. To approximate future distribution patterns, the distribution of existing projects that are either operational, under construction, or approved or under environmental review was used as a proxy for estimating the spatial distribution of renewable energy development under the No Action Alternative. It should be noted that, as a consequence of projecting future development from the distribution of existing projects, some ecoregions were not assigned generation impacts.

Tables II.2-4a and II.2-4b summarize the potential acreage of areas available for renewable energy and transmission development under the No Action Alternative by county and ownership. Most of this acreage is in Imperial and San Bernardino counties.

Most of the areas available for renewable energy development are located on private lands, where solar and wind development is the most common (on a per-acre basis) technology class. For the "federal (non-BLM)" land and "nonfederal" categories of land, geothermal technology is the most prevalent technology type. On BLM and CSLC land, wind energy development is the most common technology type.

Most of the areas available for renewable energy development are located in the Imperial Borrego Valley and West Mojave and Eastern Slopes ecoregional subareas. Solar is the most common technology class in the Imperial Borrego Valley subarea, and wind is the most common technology class in the West Mojave and Eastern Slopes subarea.

Table II.2-4a
Areas Available for Potential Development under the No Action Alternative by Technology Type and by County

Areas Available by Renewable Energy Technology by County	Acreage
Imperial County	*1,065,000*
Geothermal	68,000
Geothermal and wind	2,000
Solar	601,000
Solar and geothermal	266,000
Solar and wind	72,000
Solar, geothermal, and wind	12,000
Wind	45,000

Table II.2-4a
Areas Available for Potential Development under the No Action Alternative by Technology Type and by County

Areas Available by Renewable Energy Technology by County	Acreage
Inyo County	*250,000*
Solar	99,000
Solar and wind	82,000
Wind	69,000
Kern County	*929,000*
Solar	12,000
Solar and wind	435,000
Wind	482,000
Los Angeles County	*528,000*
Solar	900
Solar and wind	368,000
Wind	159,000
Riverside County	*995,000*
Solar	183,000
Solar and wind	444,000
Wind	367,000
San Bernardino County	*2,462,000*
Geothermal	0
Geothermal and wind	1,000
Solar	104,000
Solar and wind	857,000
Solar, geothermal, and wind	20
Wind	1,499,000
San Diego County	*57,000*
Solar	46,000
Solar and wind	9,000
Wind	2,000
Total	**6,286,000**

Notes: Excludes existing protected areas, military, tribal, and subareas or subunits where megawatts were not assigned under the No Action Alternative. The following general rounding rules were applied to acreage values: values greater than 1,000 were rounded to nearest 1,000; values less than 1,000 and greater than 100 were rounded to the nearest 100; values of 100 or less were rounded to the nearest 10, and therefore totals may not sum due to rounding. In cases where subtotals are provided, the subtotals and the totals are individually rounded. The totals are not a sum of the rounded subtotals; therefore the subtotals may not sum to the total within the table.

Table II.2-4b
Areas Available for Potential Development under the No Action Alternative by Ownership

Areas Available by Ownership Class	Acreage
Federal Lands	
BLM-administered land	2,817,000
Other federal land	37,000
Nonfederal Lands	
Private land	3,243,843
State and local public land	188,469
Total	**6,285,972**

Notes: Excludes existing protected areas, military, tribal, and subareas or subunits where megawatts were not assigned under the No Action Alternative. All types of renewable energy development are available to be developed in all of the acreage reported here. The following general rounding rules were applied to acreage values: values greater than 1,000 were rounded to nearest 1,000; values less than 1,000 and greater than 100 were rounded to the nearest 100; values of 100 or less were rounded to the nearest 10, and therefore totals may not sum due to rounding. In cases where subtotals are provided, the subtotals and the totals are individually rounded. The totals are not a sum of the rounded subtotals; therefore the subtotals may not sum to the total within the table.

The following sections describe the anticipated distribution of generation that could occur under the No Action Alternative, and estimate the total project area and the area of permanent disturbance for each technology, a summary of which is provided in Table II.2-5.

Table II.2-5
Summary of Anticipated Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area Acreage for All Renewable Generation Technologies under No Action

Renewable Generation Technology	Estimated Long-Term Disturbance (Acres)	Total Project Area (Acres)
Solar	103,000	103,000
Wind	12,000	218,000
Geothermal	2,000	2,000
Distributed generation	5,000	5,000
Total	**122,000**	**329,000**

II.2.1.3.1 Solar Energy Generation

This section provides an estimate of the area of impacts for activities associated with solar projects in the absence of the DRECP. Construction and operational activities are identical to those described for the Preferred Alternative in Section II.3.1.4.1 and listed in Table II.3-21.

As with other alternatives, the No Action Alternative was analyzed at a programmatic level. Extensive detailed analysis of effects that are project-specific (i.e., geographically site-specific) is infeasible. Consequently, the magnitudes of impacts are described in terms of the acreage that would be affected by activities within different ecoregion subareas of the Plan Area (Table II.2-6). It was assumed that solar development would occur within the subset of ecoregions identified in Figure II.2-1.

When estimating the impacts of solar projects it was assumed that the construction of projects would result in the loss of all habitat within the boundary of the project footprint. Two reasons are given for this: (1) Unlike other technologies, solar projects are generally fenced to exclude wildlife and result in modification to natural processes for the life of the project; and (2) although some vegetation may be preserved at some project locations, this is not universal and conditions of service often lead to the removal of vegetation to reduce fire risk. Further, the extensive removal, modification, and grading within the project boundary, even if vegetation is not completely removed, may lead to edge effects that effectively modify the remaining vegetation communities. Therefore, the acreage requirements for roads, operation and maintenance facilities, and switchyards required for each facility are included in the overall estimated boundary of the solar project. Similarly, short-term impacts, such as construction and laydown yards, were assumed to be within the final boundary of the project and therefore subsumed within the boundary estimate. Table II.2-6 summarizes the long-term impacts for solar technologies and provides the following information by ecoregions:

- Total Long-Term Ground Disturbance – Estimated total acreage affected by solar development activities such as vegetation clearance, grading, and construction. This is effectively a summation of all potential solar generation facility footprints. Operations and maintenance buildings, switchyards, road construction, and all ancillary facilities were assumed to be within the boundary of the Plan Area and result in long-term disturbance to the entire project site. Due to the difficulty of restoration in a desert environment, all activities that result in vegetation removal or disturbance were considered long term for the purpose of analysis. However, all temporarily impacted areas would be subject to restoration plans, therefore, considering them long-term disturbance is a conservative approach.
- Total Project Area – An estimate of the total area occupied by a given project. For area-intensive technologies like solar generation, the total project area is identical to the total long-term ground disturbance.

Table II.2-6
Distribution of Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area Acreages Associated with Solar and Distributed Generation Across DRECP Ecoregion Subareas Under the No Action Alternative

Ecoregion Subarea	Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area		
	Plan-Wide	*BLM*	*Non-BLM*
Cadiz Valley and Chocolate Mountains	40,000	29,000	11,000
Imperial Borrego Valley	20,000	5,000	15,000
Kingston and Funeral Mountains	16,000	13,000	3,000
Mojave and Silurian Valley	—	—	—
Owens River Valley	—	—	—
Panamint Death Valley	—	—	—
Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes	1,000	500	500
Piute Valley and Sacramento Mountains	—	—	—
Providence and Bullion Mountains	13,000	10,000	3,000
West Mojave and Eastern Slopes	18,000	4,000	14,000
Total	**108,000**	**61,500**	**46,500**

Notes: The following general rounding rules were applied to acreage values: values greater than 1,000 were rounded to nearest 1,000; values less than 1,000 and greater than 100 were rounded to the nearest 100; values of 100 or less were rounded to the nearest 10, and therefore totals may not sum due to rounding. In cases where subtotals are provided, the subtotals and the totals are individually rounded. The totals are not a sum of the rounded subtotals; therefore the subtotals may not sum to the total within the table.

II.2.1.3.2 Wind Energy Generation

This section provides an estimate of the size of impacts for potential activities associated with wind projects in the absence of the DRECP. Construction and operational activities are identical to those described for the Preferred Alternative in Section II.3.1.4.2 and listed in Table II.3-23.

As with other alternatives, the No Action Alternative was analyzed at a programmatic level. The magnitudes of impacts are described in terms of the acreage that would be affected by activities within different ecoregion subareas of the Plan Area (Table II.2-7). It was assumed that wind development would occur within the subset of regions identified in Figure II.2-1.

Extensive detailed analysis of effects that are project-specific (i.e., geographically site-specific) is infeasible. Consequently, the magnitudes of impacts are described in terms of the acreage that would be affected by activities within different ecoregion subareas of the Plan Area. Wind projects result in relatively diffuse impacts spread across a wide area. Turbines are widely spaced and connected by permanent access roads and transmission infrastructure, with centralized maintenance facilities and switchyards. Unlike solar, all the land within the boundary of a wind project was not assumed to be permanently disturbed

by project activities. For the purpose of analysis, estimates of disturbed areas were the sum of the estimated acreage required for turbine pads, roads, ancillary facilities, and supporting infrastructure. Short-term construction activities, such as laydown yards, were assumed to result in long-term disturbance within the project boundary. In addition to estimates of ground disturbance, the area likely to be impacted by the operation of the turbine rotors (airspace) was also estimated. For analysis purposes, turbines were grouped into conceptual projects of up to 200 megawatts (MWs) to enable an estimation of impacts from ancillary facilities, roads, turbines etc. Table II.2-7 summarizes the long-term impacts assumed for wind technologies, and provides the following information by ecoregion subarea:

- Total Project Area – An estimate of the total area occupied by a given project. For technologies where the impacts may be spread across a greater area (e.g., wind energy generation), the long-term impacts are distributed over a larger area.
- Estimated Long-Term Ground Disturbance – Estimated total acreage affected by wind energy activities described above. This is effectively a summation of all potential wind generation facility footprints, including individual turbine pad, operations and maintenance building, switchyard, and road construction impacts. This estimate also includes the additional impacts that would occur as a consequence of construction activities including construction areas, laydown yards, and storage facilities. Due to the difficulty of restoration in a desert environment, all activities that result in vegetation removal or disturbance were considered long term for the purpose of analysis. However, all temporarily impacted areas would be subject to restoration plans; therefore, considering them long-term disturbance is a conservative approach.
- Turbine Rotor Swept Area – An estimate of the total aerial acreage affected by the rotation of turbine blades while a wind facility is operating.

Table II.2-7
Potential Distribution of Long-Term Disturbance, Rotor Swept Area, and Project Area Acreages Associated with Wind Generation Across DRECP Ecoregion Subareas Under the No Action Alternative

Ecoregion Subarea	Project Area			Long-Term Disturbance			Rotor Swept Area		
	Plan-Wide	*BLM*	*Non-BLM*	*Plan-Wide*	*BLM*	*Non-BLM*	*Plan-wide*	*BLM*	*Non-BLM*
Cadiz Valley and Chocolate Mountains	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Imperial Borrego Valley	27,000	—	27,000	2,000	—	2,000	800	—	800

Table II.2-7
Potential Distribution of Long-Term Disturbance, Rotor Swept Area, and Project Area Acreages Associated with Wind Generation Across DRECP Ecoregion Subareas Under the No Action Alternative

Ecoregion Subarea	Project Area			Long-Term Disturbance			Rotor Swept Area		
	Plan-Wide	*BLM*	*Non-BLM*	*Plan-Wide*	*BLM*	*Non-BLM*	*Plan-wide*	*BLM*	*Non-BLM*
Kingston and Funeral Mountains	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Mojave and Silurian Valley	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Owens River Valley	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Panamint Death Valley	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes	5,000	3,000	2,000	300	200	100	200	100	100
Piute Valley, Sacramento Mountains	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Providence and Bullion Mountains	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
West Mojave and Eastern Slopes	175,000	39,000	136,000	10,000	2,000	8,000	5,000	1,000	4,000
Total	**207,000**	**42,000**	**165,000**	**12,300**	**2,200**	**10,100**	**6,000**	**1,100**	**4,900**

Notes: The following general rounding rules were applied to acreage values: values greater than 1,000 were rounded to nearest 1,000; values less than 1,000 and greater than 100 were rounded to the nearest 100; values of 100 or less were rounded to the nearest 10, and therefore totals may not sum due to rounding. In cases where subtotals are provided, the subtotals and the totals are individually rounded. The totals are not a sum of the rounded subtotals; therefore the subtotals may not sum to the total within the table.

II.2.1.3.3 Geothermal Energy Generation

This section provides an estimate of the size of impacts for potential activities associated with geothermal projects under the No Action Alternative by the DRECP. Construction and operational activities are identical to those described for the Preferred Alternative in Section II.3.1.4.3 and listed in Table II.3-25.

The area available to geothermal development was limited to portions of areas in the Imperial Borrego Valley and part of the Owens River Valley ecoregion subareas, where geothermal resources are concentrated. Geothermal projects are more limited in size (in the Plan Area) than other renewable energy projects. Recent projects vary from about 50 MW to 160 MW in size. For analysis under the No Action Alternative, potential geothermal projects were assumed be typically 50 MW in size. Extensive detailed analysis of potential effects that are project-specific (i.e., geographically site-specific) is infeasible.

Consequently, the magnitudes of impacts are described in terms of the estimated acreage that would be affected by activities within different ecoregion subareas of the Plan Area. It was assumed that geothermal development would occur within the subset of regions identified in Figure II.2-1.

- Geothermal projects result in extensive impacts associated with the power block and ancillary facilities, with more dispersed impacts resulting from the well fields. Wellheads that inject and collect heat transfer fluids are widely spaced and connected by permanent access roads and pipelines to the centrally located power block and steam turbine facilities. All land within the boundary of a geothermal project was assumed permanently disturbed by project activities. Estimates of disturbed acreage include the acreage required for wellhead pads, roads, ancillary facilities, and supporting infrastructure, and also includes the land fragmented by the roads, pipelines and well pads in the well-field, which was assumed to retain no conservation value. Short-term construction activities, such as laydown yards, were assumed to result in permanent disturbance within the project boundary, and are also included in the estimate of permanently disturbed acreage. Table II.2-8 summarizes the long-term impacts for geothermal technologies and provides the following information by ecoregion subarea: Estimated Long-Term Ground Disturbance – Estimated total acreage affected by geothermal development activities such as vegetation clearance, grading, and construction. This is effectively a summation of all potential geothermal energy generation facility footprints, including operations and maintenance building, switchyard, and road construction impacts, plus the additional impacts that occur as a consequence of construction activities, , and the fragmented land within the well-field. Due to the difficulty of restoration in an arid environment, all activities that result in vegetation removal or disturbance were considered long term for the purpose of analysis. However, all temporarily impacted areas would be subject to Restoration Plans, therefore, considering them permanent disturbance is a conservative approach.
- Total Project Area – An estimate of the total area occupied by a given project. For technologies where the impacts may be spread across a greater area (e.g., geothermal energy generation), the long-term impacts are distributed over a larger area.

Table II.2-8
Potential Distribution of Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area Acreages Associated with Geothermal Generation Across DRECP Ecoregion Subareas Under the No Action Alternative

Ecoregion Subarea	Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area		
	Plan-Wide	*BLM*	*Non-BLM*
Cadiz Valley and Chocolate Mountains	—	—	—

Table II.2-8
Potential Distribution of Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area Acreages Associated with Geothermal Generation Across DRECP Ecoregion Subareas Under the No Action Alternative

Ecoregion Subarea	Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area		
	Plan-Wide	*BLM*	*Non-BLM*
Imperial Borrego Valley	1,400	400	1,000
Kingston and Funeral Mountains	—	—	—
Mojave and Silurian Valley	—	—	—
Owens River Valley	—	—	—
Panamint Death Valley	—	—	—
Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes	—	—	—
Piute Valley and Sacramento Mountains	—	—	—
Providence and Bullion Mountains	—	—	—
West Mojave and Eastern Slopes	—	—	—
Total	**1,400**	**400**	**1,000**

Notes: The following general rounding rules were applied to acreage values: values greater than 1,000 were rounded to nearest 1,000; values less than 1,000 and greater than 100 were rounded to the nearest 100; values of 100 or less were rounded to the nearest 10, and therefore totals may not sum due to rounding. In cases where subtotals are provided, the subtotals and the totals are individually rounded. The totals are not a sum of the rounded subtotals; therefore the subtotals may not sum to the total within the table.

II.2.1.3.4 Transmission

The transmission components for the No Action Alternative would be the same as those described for the Preferred Alternative in Section II.3.1.4.4, although the location of transmission facilities would vary from the Preferred Alternative since distribution of new generating facilities would be different.

- Estimated Long-Term Ground Disturbance – Estimated total acreage affected by Covered Activities such as vegetation clearance, grading, and construction. This is effectively a summation of transmission impacts. This estimate also includes impacts that occur as a consequence of construction activities, including construction areas, laydown yards, and storage facilities. Due to the difficulty of restoration in a desert environment, all activities that result in vegetation removal or disturbance were considered long term for the purpose of analysis.
- Total Project Area – An estimate of the total area occupied by a given project including the full width of the right-of-way (ROW). For technologies where the impacts may be spread across a greater area, the permanent impacts are distributed over a larger area.

Table II.2-9
Right-of-Way Requirements for Transmission Associated with Renewable Energy Development in the No Action Alternative

Ecoregion Subarea	Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area		
	Plan-Wide	*BLM*	*Non-BLM*
Cadiz Valley and Chocolate Mountains	14,000	8,000	6,000
Imperial Borrego Valley	12,000	3,000	9,000
Kingston and Funeral Mountains	—	—	—
Mojave and Silurian Valley	2,000	1,000	1,000
Owens River Valley	—	—	—
Panamint Death Valley	—	—	—
Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes	600	200	400
Piute Valley and Sacramento Mountains	—	—	—
Providence and Bullion Mountains	1,000	900	300
West Mojave and Eastern Slopes	4,000	400	4,000
Total	**36,000**	**14,000**	**22,000**

Source: See Appendix K, Transmission Technical Group Report.
Notes: The following general rounding rules were applied to acreage values: values greater than 1,000 were rounded to nearest 1,000; values less than 1,000 and greater than 100 were rounded to the nearest 100; values of 100 or less were rounded to the nearest 10, and therefore totals may not sum due to rounding. In cases where subtotals are provided, the subtotals and the totals are individually rounded. The totals are not a sum of the rounded subtotals; therefore the subtotals may not sum to the total within the table

II.2.1.3.4.1 Transmission Outside the Plan Area

As with other alternatives, the No Action Alternative would result in transmission development outside the Plan Area. The potential direct effects of potential future transmission outside the Plan Area associated with development of renewable energy projects and transmission facilities inside the Plan Area are, however, programmatically described and analyzed in Volume IV of the DRECP for each environmental resource category. This section presents a description of the transmission facilities outside the Plan Area that are programmatically analyzed in Volume IV.

The assumptions used to calculate acreages of effects for transmission and substation facilities in the Plan Area are the same as those used to calculate effects of transmission and substations outside the Plan Area, and are described in Section II.3.1.4.4. However, approval of the DRECP would not result in any approval of the potential future transmission lines outside the Plan Area that are discussed here. All future transmission lines outside the Plan Area would require new applications by the developer or utility, compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act and NEPA as appropriate, and approvals from the developer (if municipal utilities or irrigation districts) or from the California Public Utilities Commission (if investor-owned utilities) prior to construction.

Table II.2-10 provides the acreage of effects for transmission and substations outside of the DRECP boundary. For ease of analysis, the transmission lines and substations have been clustered into general geographic boundaries.

Table II.2-10
Right-of-Way Requirements for Transmission Outside the DRECP Plan Area Associated with Renewable Energy Development – No Action Alternative

Geographic Area	Transmission	
	Acres	*Miles*
San Diego	2,000	94
Los Angeles	2,000	83
Central Valley	15,000	274
Rialto/Moreno Valley/Devers	12,000	484
Total Outside Plan Area	**32,000**	**935**

Source: See Appendix K, Transmission Technical Group Report.
Notes: The following general rounding rules were applied to acreage values: values greater than 1,000 were rounded to nearest 1,000; values less than 1,000 and greater than 100 were rounded to the nearest 100; values of 100 or less were rounded to the nearest 10, and therefore totals may not sum due to rounding. In cases where subtotals are provided, the subtotals and the totals are individually rounded. The totals are not a sum of the rounded subtotals; therefore the subtotals may not sum to the total within the table.

The potential new transmission lines outside the Plan Area are listed below.

- **San Diego Area:** One 500-kilovolt (kV) line from the Imperial Valley Substation to the existing Sycamore Substation (San Diego).
- **Los Angeles Area:**
  - One 500 kV line from the existing Vincent Substation (just inside the DRECP boundary) to the existing Lighthipe Substation.
  - One 500 kV line from the existing Vincent Substation (just inside the DRECP boundary) to the existing Mesa Substation.
  - One 500 kV line Mead, Station 6 to Station 7.
- **Central Valley:**
  - One 500 kV transmission line from the Whirlwind Substation (just inside the DRECP boundary) to the Pacific Gas and Electric (PG&E) Midway 500 kV Substation.
  - Two 500 kV lines from the PG&E Midway Substation to the Tesla/Tracy Substation.

- **Rialto/Moreno Valley/Devers Area:**
  - One 500 kV line from the Devers to Vincent Substation.
  - One 500 kV line from Devers to Rancho Vista Substation.
  - One 500 kV line from Colorado River Substation to existing Valley Substation. About 103 miles of this line would be outside the DRECP boundary.
  - Three 500 kV lines from Midway X (Imperial Valley) to Devers Substation. About 220 miles of this corridor would be outside the DRECP boundary.

II.2.2 Existing BLM Land Use Plan Elements of the No Action Alternative

The following section summarizes the No Action Alternative for the BLM Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA). This alternative brings forward the existing management as described in the CDCA Plan, Bishop RMP, and Caliente RMP, including applicable amendments, as they apply to the BLM's decision area (Plan Area and CDCA outside of the Plan Area). Only land use plan level-decisions described in these plans are presented and summarized (see Figure II.2-2). In the absence of specific resource decisions, management has occurred based on federal law, regulation, and BLM policy and guidance, and since no resource decisions would be made, no decisions are described in this alternative. Current BLM land use plans are available online at: http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/prog/planning.html.

II.2.2.1 BLM Renewable Energy Policies

II.2.2.1.1 Solar

Under the No Action Alternative, solar energy development on BLM-administered land would be directed by the Solar PEIS ROD (see Figure II.2-3). The Solar PEIS ROD (October 2012; BLM 2012a) amended BLM plans in six southwestern states, including California, and created a comprehensive set of updated and revised policies and procedures. The BLM California land use plans that were amended by the Solar PEIS ROD (BLM 2012a) include the CDCA Plan, the Bishop RMP, and the Caliente RMP.

The Solar PEIS ROD established categories of lands to be excluded from utility scale solar development and identified specific locations well suited for utility scale production of solar energy, called Solar Energy Zones (SEZs). The ROD also allowed for responsible solar energy development in variance areas outside of SEZs in accordance with the newly established variance process, and established programmatic design features for utility scale solar energy development on BLM lands (BLM 2012a).

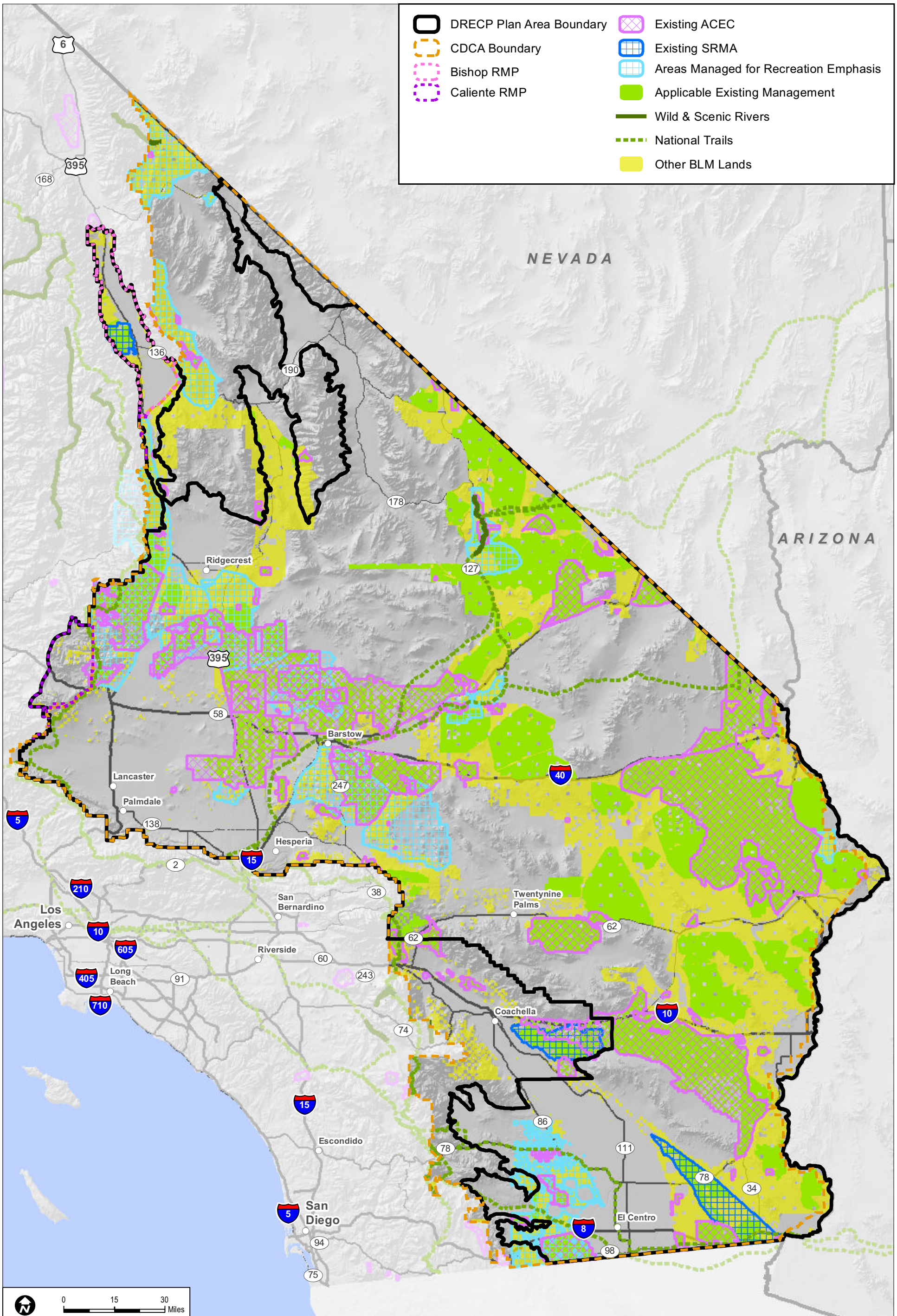
The Solar PEIS ROD established two SEZs in the Plan Area—Riverside East and Imperial East. A third SEZ was established through the West Chocolate Mountains Renewable Energy Evaluation Area ROD (August 2013). These three SEZs total approximately 164,000 acres. In addition, approximately 577,000 acres of variance lands are in the Plan Area. The remaining BLM lands in the Plan Area are excluded from utility-scale solar development, and would not be developed under the No Action Alternative. BLM Solar Energy Program policies can be found in Appendix B of the Solar PEIS ROD (BLM 2012a), starting on page 146.

As of November 2013, 13 first-in-line solar ROW applications in the Plan Area are considered "pending applications" by the Solar PEIS and are not subject to any of the decisions of the Solar PEIS ROD. These applications, covering approximately 82,808 acres, could continue to be processed under the No Action Alternative, regardless of their location in exclusion, variance, or SEZ lands. More information on pending applications may be found in Appendix B of the Solar PEIS ROD, Section B.1.2 (BLM 2012a).

II.2.2.1.2 Wind

The Wind Energy Development Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement (Wind PEIS) ROD (BLM 2005) established policies, best management practices, and minimum mitigation requirements for wind development on BLM land; these policies, practices, and mitigation requirements were revised through BLM Instruction Memorandum 2009-043 (BLM 2008a). However, the Wind PEIS did not amend BLM plans in the DRECP Plan Area. Thus, under the No Action Alternative, wind energy development within the Plan Area would be dictated by the CDCA Plan as amended, Bishop RMP, and Caliente RMP.

The CDCA Plan allows wind energy generation facilities to be considered in Multiple Use Class (MUC) L (limited use), M (moderate use), and I (intensive use) lands if the project site is identified in the plan (which may require a plan amendment) and when NEPA requirements are met. Sites not identified must be considered through a Plan Amendment process. No wind energy is allowed in MUC C (controlled) lands. The Bishop and Caliente RMPs do not address wind energy. Thus, under the No Action Alternative, wind energy ROW applications would continue to be considered on a case-by-case basis in MUCs L, M, and I lands in the CDCA and in lands covered by the Bishop and Caliente RMPs within the Plan Area. If wind energy is proposed in the Bishop or Caliente planning areas, the BLM would evaluate the application on a case-by-case basis to determine if it could be developed consistent with the goals and objectives for the application area. This would amount to approximately 6,719,000 acres within the CDCA, and approximately 116,000 acres in the Bishop and Caliente planning areas.

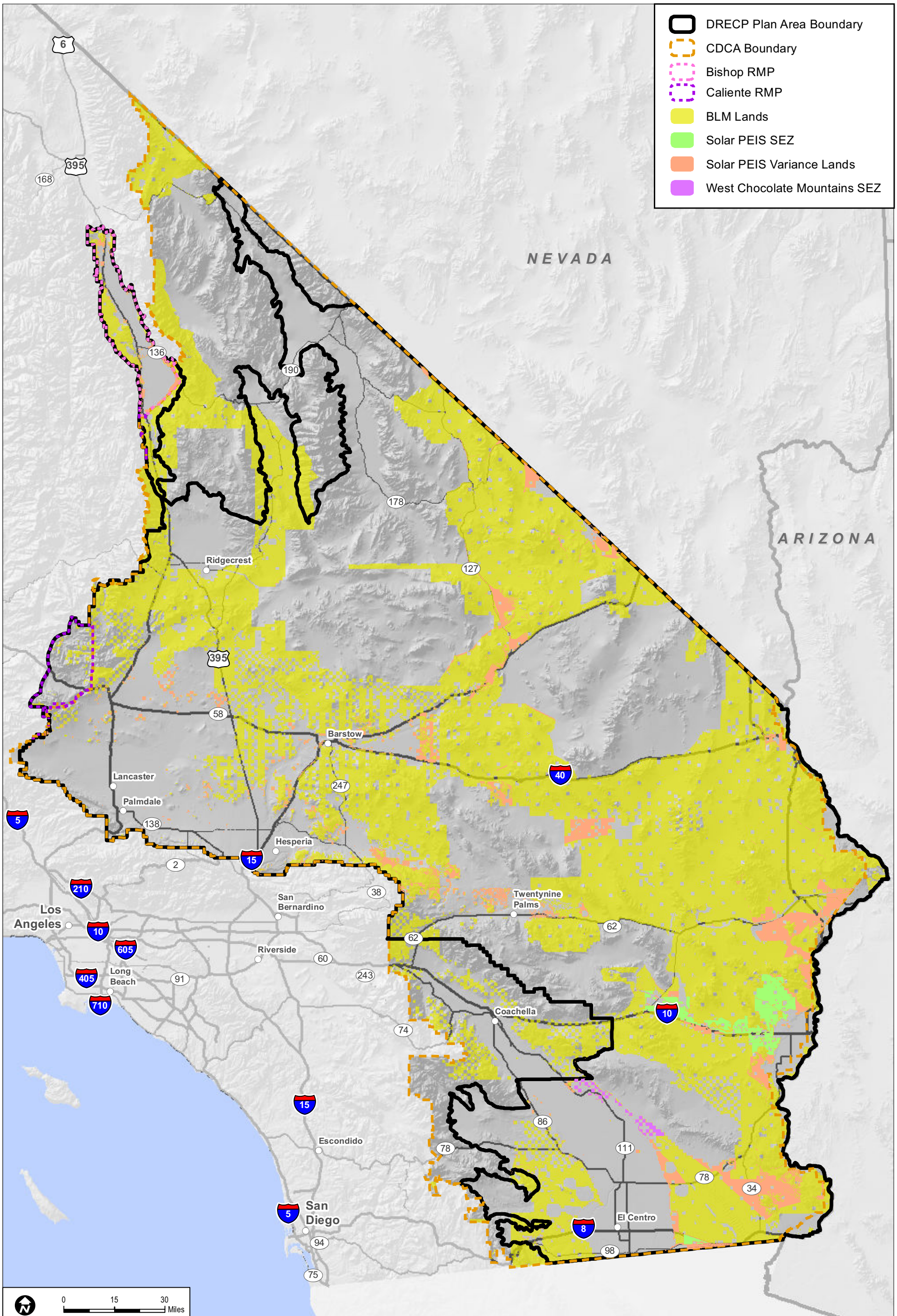


Sources: ESRI (2014); CEC (2013); BLM (2013); CDFW (2013); USFWS (2013)

FIGURE II.2-2

BLM Decision Area and Applicable Existing Management

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK



Sources: ESRI (2014); CEC (2013); BLM (2013); CDFW (2013); USFWS (2013)

FIGURE II.2-3

Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement Designations

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

II.2.2.1.3 Geothermal

The ROD for the PEIS for Geothermal Leasing in the Western United States (Geothermal PEIS) (December 2008; BLM 2008b) evaluated various alternatives for allocating lands as being closed or available for leasing and analyzes standard and special stipulations to protect sensitive resources. The document describes the proposed amendments for 122 BLM-administered RMPs to adopt the allocations, stipulations, procedures, and best management practices analyzed in the Geothermal PEIS. The Geothermal PEIS provides site-specific analysis for 19 pending geothermal lease applications for lands within 7 geographical areas that were filed prior to January 1, 2005, including two lease parcels located within the West Chocolate Mountains Renewable Energy Evaluation Area (WCM REEA). The Geothermal PEIS ROD did not amend any BLM plans within the Plan Area (BLM 2008b). Under the No Action Alternative, geothermal energy development located within the Plan Area would be allowed as analyzed under the FEIS and ROD for the Truckhaven Geothermal Leasing Area (BLM 2008c), the FEIS and ROD for the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan (ISD RAMP) (BLM 2013a), and the FEIS and ROD for the WCM REEA (BLM 2013b) (see Figure II.2-4).

Competitive geothermal lease nominations would also be considered on a case-by-case basis in MUCs L, M, and I lands in the CDCA if the site is identified in the plan (this may require a plan amendment).

II.2.2.2 BLM Conservation Areas

II.2.2.2.1 National Conservation Lands

The BLM currently manages approximately 3.9 million acres within the CDCA as part of the NLCS, also identified as National Conservation Lands. This includes Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas (WSAs), a Wild and Scenic River, National Scenic and Historic Trails, and other special areas identified through acts of Congress. Under the No Action Alternative, additional lands designated by Congress in Public Law 111-11, Additions to the National Wilderness Preservation System, as public land within the CDCA administered by BLM for conservation purposes would not be identified as National Conservation Lands or added to the NLCS by way of land use plan amendments.

II.2.2.2.1.1 Wilderness

The Plan Area contains 2,856,000 acres of designated wilderness within BLM-administered lands (See Table III.14-1 and Figure III.14-1 in Volume III, Chapter III.14, BLM Land Designations, Classifications, Allocations, and Lands with Wilderness Characteristics). These lands are managed under the direction of the Wilderness Act of 1964 and *BLM Manual 6340—Management of Designated Wilderness* (BLM 2012b). The BLM manages these lands to protect wilderness character, including unroaded, undeveloped, natural qualities, and opportunities for primitive recreation.

Management of Wilderness Areas would remain the same under the No Action Alternative.

II.2.2.2.1.2 Wilderness Study Areas

The Plan Area contains six WSAs, totaling 378,000 acres. (See Table III.14-2 and Figure III.14-3 in Chapter III.14.) These lands are managed under the direction of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act (FLPMA) and *BLM Manual 6330—Wilderness Study Areas* (BLM 2012c). Under that direction, the BLM manages these areas to protect wilderness values until Congress makes a final determination to either designate the area as wilderness or release it.

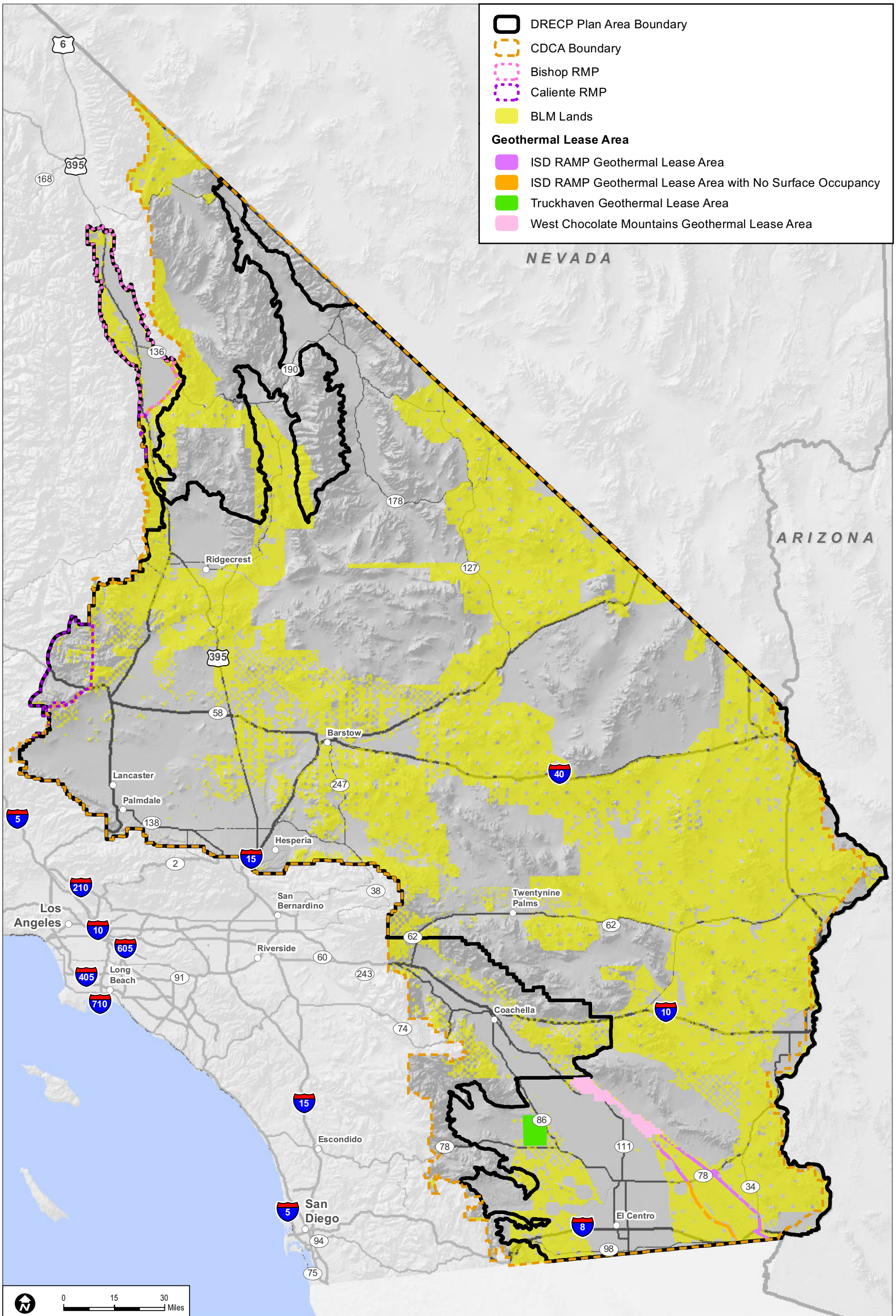
Management of WSAs would remain the same under the No Action Alternative.

II.2.2.2.1.3 Wild and Scenic Rivers

The Amargosa River is the only Wild and Scenic River within the Plan Area (see Figure III.14-2 in Affected Environment). The Amargosa River has 22.7 miles within the Plan Area that are also within BLM-administered lands. The river corridor is 0.25 mile from the ordinary high water mark on either side of the channel. The Amargosa River is managed under the direction of the Wild and Scenic Rivers Act of 1968 and *BLM Manual 6400—Wild and Scenic Rivers* (BLM 2012d), to protect the "outstandingly remarkable values" for which the river was designated, the free flowing condition, and water quality.

Management of the Wild and Scenic River Corridor would remain the same under the No Action Alternative. A comprehensive river management plan is currently under development for the river corridor and will outline specific management objectives and actions to protect the free-flowing conditions, outstandingly remarkable values, and water quality. Until that time, all actions will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis to ensure that these values are protected or enhanced. This plan will also identify a final lateral boundary for the corridor. Until that time, an interim boundary of 0.25 mile on either side of the river (above mean high water mark) will constitute the corridor,

In addition, the Mojave River (2.9-mile segment) and Surprise Canyon Creek (5-mile segment) were found to be eligible for Wild and Scenic River designation under previous CDCA plan amendments (West Mojave Plan [WEMO] and Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan [NEMO], respectively). A suitability analysis for these segments will not be conducted in the DRECP due to the targeted nature of this plan amendment. Therefore, the eligible segments of both streams will remain under protective management under all alternatives until a suitability analysis is completed in a future planning effort. Both of these stream segments are within designated ACECs, and protective management actions are contained on the respective ACEC Worksheets (see Afton Canyon for Mojave [Appendix L]).



Sources: ESRI (2014); CEC (2013); BLM (2013); CDFW (2013); USFWS (2013)

FIGURE II.2-4

Geothermal Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement Areas Available for Leasing

INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

II.2.2.2.1.4 National Scenic and Historic Trails

The BLM manages portions of three National Scenic and Historic Trails in the Plan Area: the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (114 miles within the Plan Area), the Juan Bautista de Anza National Historic Trail (83 miles within the Plan Area), and the Old Spanish National Historic Trail (367 miles within the Plan Area). National Scenic and Historic Trails are managed under the direction of the National Scenic and Historic Trails Act of 1968 and *BLM Manual 6250—National Scenic and Historic Trail Administration* (BLM 2012e). None of these trails have a designated trail management corridor on BLM lands, and under the No Action Alternative, none would be designated.

II.2.2.2.2 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

There are currently 89 ACECs within the Plan Area, covering 2,395,000 acres (see Figure III.14-4 and Table III.14-3 of Chapter III.14, and Appendix L; non-overlapping acres on BLM-administered lands outside other designations). This number includes DWMAs, which are managed as ACECs under the CDCA Plan.

Management of ACECs varies on a case-by-case basis, based on individual land use plans and ACEC management plans. Acreage, land use allocations, and management actions for individual current ACECs is detailed in Appendix L.

II.2.2.2.3 Wildlife Allocations

Currently the CDCA Plan recognizes over 365 species of vertebrates and thousands of invertebrate organisms in a diversity of wildlife habitats which reside within the CDCA. In order to protect unique and sensitive habitats; sensitive, rare, threatened, and endangered species; and representatives of the more common desert habitats and ecosystems and the fish and wildlife resources they support, the CDCA Plan established various types of management areas. Map 3 in the CDCA Plan identifies the ACECs, HMP, road restriction areas, and the special attention areas that the CDCA Plan established. Each of these areas, along with the requirements set by the MUC that overlays the CDCA land, has specific administration requirements to manage the underlying land for wildlife resources.

Among other tools, the CDCA Plan uses designation of Special Areas (SA) to manage for wildlife. This tool highlights habitats and species known to be important for special consideration in the environmental assessment process for any kind of project. Additionally Map 4 in the CDCA Plan identifies the geographic location that is managed for specific wildlife. Tables 2 and 3 in the CDCA Plan identify specific wildlife species in the CDCA and the number of acres that is managed for each species. Table II.2-11 includes the SAs designated in the CDCA Plan, as amended. Note that many SAs were

also designated as ACECs, and therefore are not included here. Existing ACECs are discussed in Section II.2.2.2.2.

Table II.2-11
Management Areas for Fish and Wildlife (Table Updated February 1999)

Location	Acres	Special Wildlife Habitat	Federally Listed Species	State-Listed Species	BLM Sensitive Species	Other Species
Cottonwood Creek	5,000	X				X
Deep Spring Valley (shadscale community and black toad)	10,000	X				X
Western Rand Mountains	23,000				X	
East Slope Inyo Mountains	64,000	X				X
Saline Valley (dunes, mesquite marsh)	9,000	X				X
Hunter–Cottonwood Mountains, Grapevine Canyon (bighorn sheep)	59,000					X
Lee Flat (shadscale community)	33,000	X				
Black Springs	<1,000	X				
Darwin Falls Canyon	6,000	X				X
Argus Mountains (bighorn sheep)	90,000			X		X
Argus Range (Inyo towhee)	9,000	X		X		X
Panamint Lake	4,000	X				
West Panamint Mountains Canyon	121,000	X				X
Surprise Canyon	13,000	X				X
Rose Valley (Mohave ground squirrel)	18,000			X		
East Sierra Canyons	88,000	X				X
Sand Canyon	2,000	X				X
Robber's Roost	3,000					X
Upper Amargosa River	3,000	X				
Shoshone Cave (whip-scorpion)	<1,000					X
Chicago Valley (mesquite)	10,000	X				

Table II.2-11
Management Areas for Fish and Wildlife (Table Updated February 1999)

Location	Acres	Special Wildlife Habitat	Federally Listed Species	State-Listed Species	BLM Sensitive Species	Other Species
California Valley (mesquite)	4,000	X				
Amargosa River/Grimshaw	14,000	X		X		X
Kingston Range	64,000	X				X
Salt Creek (Dumont)	3,000	X				
Lone Tree Canyon (Bighorn Sheep Reintroduction Area)	47,000			X		
Sierra-Mojave-Tehachapi Ecotone	162,000	X		X		X
Desert Tortoise Natural Area	26,000			X	X	
Koehn Lake	4,000	X				
Red Mountain/El Paso Mountains (raptors)	304,000					X
Western Mojave Crucial Habitat (tortoise)[1]	512,000	X		X	X	X
Harper Dry Lake	4,000	X				X
Superior Valley (Joshua tree woodland and Mohave ground squirrel habitat)	55,000	X		X		
Newberry Granite Mountains (raptors)	256,000					X
Ord Mountains (Jojoba habitat)	6,000	X				
Shadow Valley (tortoise)	42,000				X	
Clark Mountain	20,000	X				X
Ivanpah Valley (tortoise crucial Habitat)	38,000				X	
East Cronese Lake	8,000	X				X
Cady Mountains (bighorn sheep)	67,000					X
Afton Canyon	7,000	X				X
Pisgah lava flow	17,000	X				

Table II.2-11
Management Areas for Fish and Wildlife (Table Updated February 1999)

Location	Acres	Special Wildlife Habitat	Federally Listed Species	State-Listed Species	BLM Sensitive Species	Other Species
Fenner/Chemeheuvi Valleys (tortoise crucial habitat)	692,000	X			X	
Stepladder Mountains (teddy bear cholla thicket)	25,000	X				
Chemehuevi Wash	333,000	X				
Whipple Mountains	55,000	X				X
Vidal Wash	77,000	X				
Bullion Mountains (bighorn sheep)	16,000					X
Cadiz Dunes	32,000	X				X
Whitewater Canyon	12,000	X				X
Big Morongo Canyon	4,000	X		X		X
Coachella Valley (fringe-toed lizard habitat)	4,000			X		X
Little San Bernardino Mountains (palm oasis)	<1,000	X				
Santa Rosa Mountains	196,000	X	X	X		X
Salt Creek (pupfish/rail habitat)	3,000	X	X	X		
Orocopia Mountains (bighorn sheep)	55,000					X
Granite/Palen Mountains (bighorn sheep)	67,000					X
Midland (ironwood thicket)	44,000	X				
Rice Valley Dunes	9,000	X				
McCoy Wash	20,000	X				
Chuckwalla Bench (tortoise crucial habitat)	225,000	X			X	
Chuckwalla Bench	80,000	X			X	
Chuckwalla Mountains (bighorn sheep)	63,000					X
Corn Springs	4,000	X		X		

Table II.2-11
Management Areas for Fish and Wildlife (Table Updated February 1999)

Location	Acres	Special Wildlife Habitat	Federally Listed Species	State-Listed Species	BLM Sensitive Species	Other Species
Ford Dry Lake	6,000	X				X
Chuckwalla Valley Dune Thicket	3,000	X				
Milpitas Wash	125,000	X				
Palo Verde Mountains (saguaro)	2,000	X				
Picacho Land and Wildlife Management Area	86,000					X
Indian Wash	29,000	X				X
Algodones Dunes	132,000	X				X
East Mesa Flat-tailed Horned Lizard	110,000					X
San Sebastian Marsh/San Felipe Creek	23,000	X				X
Coyote Mountains/Davies Valley (magic gecko)	38,000			X		
Smuggler's Cave (southern chaparral)	4,000	X				X
Yuha Basin	98,000					X
Pinto Wash	5,000	X				
Soldier Pass/Piper Mountains (bighorn sheep)		X			X	X
E. Slope White Mountains (bighorn sheep)		X			X	X

Notes:
[1] Includes Fremont/Stoddard Valleys (desert tortoise crucial habitat); Indian Wells Valley (Mohave ground squirrel habitat); Fremont Valley (Mohave ground squirrel habitat); Boron/Black Hills (Mohave ground squirrel habitat) and Western Mojave (desert saltbush community).

In addition to the Special Areas listed in Table II.2-11, the BLM has amended the CDCA Plan to include Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Management Areas, and the Mohave Ground Squirrel Conservation Area.

Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Management Areas

The Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Management Areas were developed as part of the Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Rangewide Management Strategy (Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard

Interagency Coordinating Committee 2003), and total approximately 354,000 acres in California. The BLM amended the CDCA in 2004 to adopt this strategy, which included four Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Management Areas: East Mesa, West Mesa, Yuha Basin, and Borrego Badlands, and include approximately 264,000 acres of BLM-administered land.

Each Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Management Area is controlled by multiple agencies. Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Management Areas were designed to include most flat-tailed horned lizard habitat identified as key areas in previous studies. The Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Management Areas are the core areas for maintaining self-sustaining populations of flat-tailed horned lizards in perpetuity. The Flat-tailed Horned Lizard Rangewide Management Strategy established certain conservation measures.

Mohave Ground Squirrel Conservation Area

The WEMO Amendment (BLM 2006) establishes an approximately 1,727,000-acre conservation area for the long-term survival and protection of the Mohave ground squirrel. This area overlaps portions of the Fremont-Kramer and Superior-Cronese DWMAs, and additional essential habitats located west and north of the two tortoise DWMAs. Approximately 1,309,000 acres of this area are managed by the BLM and are designated as a Wildlife Habitat Management Area (WHMAs).

Bishop and Caliente Resource Management Plans

The Bishop and Caliente RMPs do not identify Wildlife Allocations.[1]

II.2.2.2.4 Special Recreation Management Areas

There are currently two designated SRMAs, Alabama Hills and Imperial Sand Dunes, within the Plan Area, covering 193,000 acres. In addition, there are 30 other areas managed for recreation emphasis under the "limited" vehicle access designation within the multiple-use classes of intensive, moderate, or limited. Management of these 2 SRMAs and the 30 other areas varies on a case-by-case basis, based on the land use plan or land use plan amendment designating them, and area specific management plans. Acreage, land use allocations, MUCs, and management actions for these 32 individual areas are detailed in Appendix L.

[1] The Bishop RMP designates Yearlong Protection for endangered, threatened, candidate, and sensitive plant and animal habitats and tule elk (*Cervus canadensis*) calving areas. Yearlong protection is defined as "No discretionary actions which would adversely affect target resources would be allowed." The Bishop RMP also requires Seasonal Protection from November 1 to April 30 for mule deer (*Odocoileus hemionus*) winter range (BLM 1993). These management prescriptions are based on the presence of species and are not specifically mapped in the plan; therefore , they are not included in Wildlife Allocations.

II.2.2.2.5 Open and Limited Off-Highway Vehicle Areas

There are currently 13 areas managed as open and limited off-highway vehicle (OHV) areas with the plan area. These OHV areas include lands designated in the CDCA as "open" vehicle access motorized vehicle play areas and "limited" vehicle access areas. These 13 areas are within the MUCs I and M. Acreage, land allocations, and management actions for these 13 OHV areas are detailed in Appendix L.

II.2.2.2.6 Lands with Wilderness Characteristics

The ISD RAMP ROD identifies 42,083 acres as possessing wilderness characteristics, and includes management actions to protect some of those characteristics while also allowing OHV and other recreation opportunities. See Section II.2.2.3.12 for specific management actions on these lands.

II.2.2.3 BLM-Specific Management

II.2.2.3.1 Air Resources

II.2.2.3.1.1 California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as Amended

Management of Air Resources under the CDCA Plan is described on page 115 of the 1999 Reprint (Air Quality; BLM 1999) and are listed here:

- To encourage maintenance of air quality as needed for Department of Defense operations.
- To ensure that proposed major stationary sources are located at optimum locations to minimize future air quality degradation in the CDCA.
- To establish an active BLM program for cooperating with the California Air Resources Board, and all other agencies responsible for air quality in the CDCA, in the implementation of the air-quality management plan.

In summary, the management actions contained within the CDCA Plan include:

- Manage all MUCs (C, L, M, and I) to protect their air quality and visibility in accordance with Class II objectives of Part C of the Clean Air Act Amendments unless otherwise designated another class by the State of California as a result of recommendations developed by any BLM air-quality management plan.
- Coordinate and fully support state and local government air quality planning efforts, conducting in-house planning to minimize air pollution sources on public lands, and field studies to determine impact of BLM management activities and those from outside sources on BLM lands.

- Integrate the Clean Air Act into the BLM planning efforts.
- Develop an air-quality management plan for BLM lands in the CDCA.
- Actively participate in hearings and proceedings for siting of major stationary sources in the CDCA. Minimize emissions from these sources and select a most suitable site for the overall air-quality benefit of the CDCA, if it exists.
- Actively participate in the preparation of air quality management plans developed by responsible air-management authorities in the CDCA.

West Mojave Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for this resource under the WEMO.

Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for this resource under the NEMO.

Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert/CDCA Plan Amendment

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for this resource under the Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert Coordinated Management Plan (NECO).

Although air quality was not specifically addressed in the NECO, the following management actions were found to improve air quality: the Issue 2: Recovery of Desert Tortoise and to result in increased wind erosion of soils and PM_{10} (particulate matter less than or equal to 10 microns in diameter) concentrations from Issue 5: Motorized-Vehicle Access/Routes of Travel Designations/Recreation (BLM 2002b).

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan and Amendment to the CDCA Plan

The goals and objectives for Air Resources under the ISD RAMP are described on page 2-24 of the ROD (BLM 2013a), and include:

- Maintain or improve air quality as established by the National Ambient Air Quality Standards and California Ambient Air Quality Standards through cooperative management of emissions with industry, the State of California, and federal agencies.
- Strive to minimize, within the scope of the BLM's authority, any emissions that may cause violations of air quality standards, add to acid rain, or degrade visibility.

In summary, the management actions contained within the ISD RAMP included:

- Comply with the applicable State of California air quality standards for all actions that will contribute to particulate matter emissions in the air as a result of actions taken.
- As needed, based on the BLM Dust Control Plan, treat the entry road to Dunebuggy Flats Campground for dust control to reduce the impact of OHV activities on air quality, as personnel and funding levels allow.
- Install air meters (numbers and locations to be determined) for ozone and PM_{10} in the planning area, if requested by the Imperial County Air Pollution Control District (ICAPCD) or the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Implement actions to mitigate for contributions to the nonattainment due to activities in the planning area, as requested by ICAPCD, and as personnel and funding levels allow.
- Evaluate impacts of activities within the planning area to air quality nonattainment. Implement BLM Dust Control Plan to reduce the effects to air quality as required by the ICAPCD.
- Use the best available control measures. These measures may include hardening of applicable roadways, watering or applying dust suppressants to roadways, limiting vehicle speeds, or restricting vehicular access. The BLM maintains a Dust Control Plan with the ICAPCD and will use this plan to determine what best available control measures to use.

II.2.2.3.1.2 Caliente Resource Management Plan

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for Air Resources under the Caliente RMP.

II.2.2.3.1.3 Bishop Resource Management Plan

Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) outlined in the Bishop RMP, which provide specific guidelines for managing resources and activities throughout the field office area, include the following (BLM 1993, p. 13):

- Secure any necessary permits or clearances from state and local agencies relative to air quality requirements for projects that may impact air quality.

II.2.2.3.1.4 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The 2012 ROD for the Solar PEIS (BLM 2012a) amended land use allocation decisions and utility-scale transmission decisions within 89 BLM plans in 6 southwestern states, including the CDCA Plan, the Bishop RMP, and the Caliente RMP. Amendments specific to Air Resources include amending land use plans with programmatic design features that

would be required for all utility-scale solar energy projects on BLM-administered land, including (p. 90):

- Early consultation with BLM regarding potential conformance to air quality and other constraints.
- Siting, designing, and constructing solar facilities to minimize impacts on air quality.
- Monitoring terms and conditions for air quality by project developer including consultation with BLM.
- For reclamation of the site, incorporating design features listed for construction.

II.2.2.3.2 Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management

II.2.2.3.2.1 California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as Amended

Management for Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management under the CDCA Plan is described on page 75 (Motorized-Vehicle Access Element; BLM 1999), and include:

- Provide for constrained motorized vehicle access in a manner that balances the needs of all desert users, private landowners and other public agencies.
- When designating or amending areas or routes for motorized vehicle access, to the degree possible, avoid adverse impacts to desert resources.
- Use maps, signs and published information to communicate the motorized vehicle access situation to desert users. Be sure all information materials are understandable and easy to follow.

In summary, the management actions contained within the CDCA Plan include:

- Designation of all public lands in the California desert as “open,” “closed,” or “limited.” Area designations are made on a basis of multiple-use classes with exceptions set for in the CDCA Plan.
    - Open Areas: Vehicle travel is permitted anywhere in the area if the vehicle is operated responsibly in accordance with regulations and subject to permission of private land owners if applicable. This applies to (1) lands in Class I specifically designated as “open”, and (2) certain sand dunes and dry lakebeds specifically listed in the CDCA Plan.
    - Closed Areas: No vehicle travel is allowed. This applies to (1) all wilderness areas when established by Congress (unless exempted); (2) land in some ACECs and Special Areas where provided in their management plan; (3) certain sand dunes and dry lakebeds specifically listed in the CDCA Plan; and (4) other

identified areas closed under the Interim Critical Management Plan (listed on p. 76 of CDCA Plan as amended).

  - Limited Areas: Vehicle access is allowed only on certain routes of travel. In areas of limited vehicle use, special attention will be given to identifying conflict areas, zones of route proliferation, and special sites or resources being damaged by vehicle use. Lands not specifically designated as "open" or "closed" in the CDCA are designated as "limited." Specific limitations for designation in each of the multiple use classes are detailed on page 77 of the CDCA Plan.

- Unless amended, stopping and parking will be limited to within 300 feet of the route.
- Unless amended, specific stopping and parking areas may be signed as open or closed to protect sensitive resources.

West Mojave Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

The goals and objectives for Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management under the WEMO are described in Table 2-23 of the plan. In summary, the management actions contained within the WEMO include:

- Maintaining existing route network (adopted June 30, 2003) except for minor modifications including select route closures and designation of additional open routes in several areas.
- Placing restrictions on motorized vehicles stopping/parking on public lands within and outside of DWMAs.
- Designating open routes as available for a variety of use including commercial, recreational, casual access, and noncompetitive permitted uses.
- Providing route management actions including signage on open routes and rehabilitation of closed routes.

Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

The goals and objectives for Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management under the NEMO are described on page 2-28 (BLM 2002a):

In summary, the management actions contained within the NEMO include:

- Route designation occurs in all critical desert tortoise habitat, consistent with federal regulation and CDCA Plan guidance, based on the existing route inventory. Refer to Chapter 8, Figures 4c and d for the route inventory existing network for Alternative 1 (No Action). Routes not approved for vehicle access would, in most instances, be obliterated, barricaded, signed, or marked. Specific techniques chosen

would depend on location, potential effectiveness, and sensitivity of resources and availability of manpower and funding.

- Stopping, parking and camping will be allowed within 100 feet of route centerline within proposed DWMAs.
- Navigable washes may be designated open or limited, if they are major vehicle transportation routes in DWMAs. Outside of DWMAs, washes would be designated consistent with 43 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) criteria and multiple-use guidelines. Parking and camping will be allowed only within the banks of the wash.

Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert/CDCA Plan Amendment

The goals and objectives for Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management under the NECO RMP are described on page 2-66 of the plan (BLM 2002b).

In summary, the management actions contained within the NECO include:

- BLM would require motorized-vehicle access to be managed in accordance with current MUC L guidelines, irrespective of MUC, except for MUC C (wilderness) and areas designated "open."
- BLM would designate "existing" routes as "open" for motorized-vehicle use except for certain circumstances including where specific biological parameters minimize harassment of wildlife and significant disruption of habitats. BLM proposed route-specific designations, including maps.
- A total of 4,743 miles of unpaved routes were available for use by motorized vehicles and a total of 239 miles of routes were closed due to proximity of bat roosts, prairie falcon (*Falcon mexicanus*) or golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*) eyries, or waters.
- BLM modified the "Stopping and Parking" section in the Motorized-Vehicle Access element of CDCA Plan such that stopping, parking, and vehicle camping are allowed within 300 feet from the centerline of an approved route except within sensitive areas (such as ACECs) where the limit would be 100 feet. Stopping, parking, and vehicle camping would be allowed no more than 100 feet from the centerline of a route within DWMAs.

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan

The Imperial Sand Dunes RAMP ROD (BLM 2013a) identifies goals and objectives and management actions for Transportation and Public Access (Travel Management). The goals and objectives for Transportation and Public Access under the ISD RAMP are described on page 2-94 and page 2-101 (Routes of Travel) of the ROD, and include:

- Ensure that the BLM minimizes impacts to identified sensitive cultural, natural, biological, and visual resources.

- Ensure that the BLM continues to provide essential motorized access to nonfederal lands, prior existing rights on BLM lands, and private in-holdings surrounded by BLM lands.
- Ensure that the BLM continues to provide adequate motorized access for the maintenance of wildlife guzzlers and for dispersed recreation activities such as hunting.
- Ensure that the BLM provides for a wide variety of recreational opportunities (e.g., hiking, OHV recreation, horseback riding, and commercial activities).
- Reduce or halt the unauthorized incursions into closed areas.

In summary, the management actions contained within the ISD RAMP include:

- Designate all BLM-administered public lands within the planning area (ISD) as open, closed, or limited to motorized use (See Map 2-7 of the ISD RAMP ROD):
    - Open: 127,000 acres
    - Closed: 35,000 acres
    - Limited: 52,000 acres
- Designate routes of travel within the OHV limited use area surrounding and within the ISD SRMA. This includes open routes (routes available to motorized vehicles), limited routes (routes which may have additional limitations on use including vehicle size, vehicle type, and season of use), and closed routes (routes closed to motorized vehicles, including OHVs, but open to biking, hiking, and equestrian use). (See Map 2-8 of the ISD ROD.)
- Limit stopping, parking, and camping along the open routes in the Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Management Area to within 50 feet on either side of the route centerline.
- Maintain, and where necessary, improve Wash Road.
- Allow primary motorized vehicle travel only on designated routes. Emergency vehicles may use a drivable wash to access a site. Where no roads exist, vehicles could be authorized on a case-by-case basis to travel cross-country to avoid the need for road building, with appropriate environmental analysis.
- Ensure that designated routes within the planning area are adequately signed and mapped for public use.
- Where new roads are considered in the future, roadbeds will be no wider than needed for reliable access. Proposed new roads will be considered only after appropriate environmental analysis and will use BLM specifications and best management practices to minimize impacts to resources and reduce erosion.

- Reduce vehicle incursions or trespass on closed routes or in closed areas by restoring lands to their pre-disturbance conditions as rapidly as funding permits. Sensitive resources in immediate danger or those that have been damaged by linear disturbances will be a high priority for restoration. Typically, the restoration will be limited to that portion of the route of trespass that is in line of sight from an open route. Each route will be evaluated on a case-by-case basis, and the most appropriate method of restoration will be used based on geography, topography, soils, hydrology, and vegetation.

Western Colorado Desert Routes of Travel Designations/CDCA Plan Amendment

The Western Colorado Desert Routes of Travel Designations (WECO) CDCA Plan Amendment does not establish any additional goals and objectives for travel management beyond the recreation goals in the CDCA Plan (BLM 2003). This plan amendment designates a route network for the WECO planning area, and describes under what situations camping and parking will be allowed.

II.2.2.3.2.2 Caliente Resource Management Plan

Area-wide decisions in the Caliente RMP designate all public lands as limited or closed to OHV vehicles. There are no open areas. The areas that are closed to all vehicular travel include wilderness and the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail (BLM 1997, p. 65).

Motorized and mechanized travel on public land would be "limited" to existing mapped or maintained roads and trails or designated routes of travel, with the exception of the following areas that would be managed as closed to all travel (except foot and equestrian): Point Sal, Blue Ridge, Short Canyon, Cholla Canyon, Cane Canyon, and the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. Caliente Mountain Ridge Road would be closed to motorized vehicles but open for mechanized travel. Salt Creek would be closed to motorized travel, but only until an ACEC plan addressing public access is completed. Designated routes of travel would be posted and include roads and trails shown on surface management maps. Existing roads and designated routes may be closed to protect resources following public notification; use of closed roads may be allowed by the authorized officer.

Except as otherwise noted, travel is allowed on existing roads and trails which appear on BLM Surface Management maps, aerial photographs, and U.S. Geological Survey topographical maps at the time this plan is approved. Routes are considered to be open unless indicated as closed on the ground by signs, barricades, or other physical considerations which appropriately direct the user. All authorized public land users that hold a special authorization (i.e., grazing permittees, ROW holders, mining claimants) may drive off road if their authorization allows. Emergency services and/or law enforcement

activities are exceptions to these policies. Administrative access may be granted by the authorized officer to individuals requiring such access for official business (pp. 65–66).

Except for areas closed to all vehicles, the use of mountain bicycles is allowed on all roads and trails available to pedestrians. Bicycles are not allowed to travel off road (p. 65).

II.2.2.3.2.3 Bishop Resource Management Plan

The Bishop RMP ROD SOPs for Recreation include the following (BLM 1993, p. 14):

- All BLM land will be designated as closed, limited, or open to OHV use. (See page 17 of the Bishop RMP.)
- OHV use will be monitored throughout the resource area. Monitoring efforts will be concentrated in ACECs, WSAs, other specially designated areas, and areas incurring resource impacts. Mitigation, where needed, will be applied to eliminate or reduce resource problems caused by OHV use.
- Some seasonal closures will be designated in the resource area in OHV management plans. Snowmobile use will be limited to designated areas and routes.

II.2.2.3.2.4 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The ROD for the Solar PEIS (BLM 2012a) amended land use allocation decisions and utility-scale transmission decisions within 89 plans in 6 southwestern states, including the CDCA Plan, the Bishop RMP, and the Caliente RMP. The Solar PEIS ROD does not contain programmatic design features specifically addressing comprehensive trails and travel management (BLM 2012a).

II.2.2.3.3 Cultural Resources and Tribal Interest

II.2.2.3.3.1 California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as Amended

The goals and objectives for Cultural Resources under the CDCA Plan are described on page 22 (Cultural Resource Element; BLM 1999) and include:

- Broaden the archaeological and historical knowledge of the CDCA through continuing inventory efforts and the use of existing data. Continue the effort to identify the full array of the CDCA's cultural resources.
- Preserve and protect representative sample of the full array of the CDCA's cultural resources.
- Ensure that cultural resources are given full consideration in land use planning and management decisions, and ensure that BLM authorized actions avoid inadvertent impacts.

- Ensure proper data recovery of significant (National Register quality) cultural resources where adverse impacts can be avoided.

In summary, the applicable Cultural Resource Element management actions contained within the CDCA Plan include:

- Recognition of 47 ACECs and other special systems designations that recognize prehistoric and historic resources.
- Preservation and Protection through a variety of management tools, including Cultural Resources Management Plans, environmental awareness/education, surveillance, stabilization, restoration, and road designation.
- Monitoring of resource locations to determine types and extent of impacts on archaeological sites caused by multiple-use class designation as well as impacts from consumptive uses and natural processes.
- Inventory of more portions of the CDCA to improve knowledge and management of the cultural resources in the desert.
- Mitigation Plans when resources cannot be protected and/or preserved. Plans will detail steps necessary to recover the resources and otherwise ameliorate the impacts. A list of priority areas for cultural resource mitigation planning is presented in Appendix VII to the proposed CDCA Plan (October 1980).
- Encouragement and support of archaeological, ethnographic, and historical research especially in high-impact risk areas, as in MUCs M and I.
- Review of prehistoric and historic undertakings and report and coordination with the California State Historic Preservation Office and Advisory Council on Historic Preservation.
- Within all MUCs, archaeological values will be preserved and protected. Procedures described in 36 CFR 800 will be followed as described in BLM's National Programmatic Agreement and State Protocol. The goals and objectives for Tribal Interests under the CDCA Plan are described on page 26 (Native American Element), and include:
    - Identify Native American values through regular contact and consultation with tribal entities and/or individuals, consistent with policy.
    - Give full consideration to Native American values in land use planning and management decisions, consistent with statute, regulation and policy.
    - Manage and protect Native American values wherever prudent and feasible.

In summary, the Native American Element management actions contained within the CDCA Plan include:

- Management, protection, and enhancement of Native American cultural values and the resources with which they are associated. Components of the MUC guidelines, plan guidelines, and other plan elements incorporate Native American concerns.
- ACECs provide a tool for dealing specifically with sensitive resources of Native American value that are exposed to a high risk adverse impact.
- For all MUCs, Native American cultural and religious values will be preserved where relevant and protected where applicable. Native American group(s) shall be consulted.

West Mojave Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for this resource under the WEMO.

Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for this resource under the NEMO.

Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert/CDCA Plan Amendment

The NECO RMP does not include goals and objectives for Cultural Resources.

The management actions for cultural resources include (BLM 2002b):

- BLM proposed an amendment to the CDCA Programmatic Agreement between BLM and California State Historical Preservation Office (SHPO) to formalize implementation of a phased cultural resource strategy for routes of travel. Specifically the amendment would:
    - Define the nature of undertaking and level of effort necessary to address effects on historic and cultural resources.
    - Allow designation of routes to proceed.
    - Provide phased identification and evaluation of historical and cultural sites over a specified period of time in consultation with SHPO, interested persons, and tribal entities.
    - Provide remedies (route closure, mitigation) when eligible historical and cultural resources would be affected.

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan

The goals and objectives for Cultural Resources and Tribal Interest under the ISD RAMP are described on page 2-54 of the ROD (BLM 2013a):

In summary, the management actions contained within the ISD RAMP include:

- Current legal, regulatory, and policy direction concerning cultural resources exists to protect and preserve these national heritage assets, as well as support development of literature, interpretive sites, and other forms of public education designed to increase knowledge, understanding, and enjoyment of these irreplaceable resources. Legal protection, physical preservation and restoration, documentation, and access by scientists and the general public are regulated by federal law. The electronic management and archiving of cultural data are vital to the management of these resources. The management actions presented here are a result of the need to update the existing plan and incorporate current legislation and policy direction for the management of cultural resources.
- Maintain current cultural resource data in a GIS [geographic information system] format and increase knowledge of cultural resources within the planning area through proactive surveys. The inventory will include a prioritized list (high/medium/low sensitivity) of areas for future inventory—based on sensitivity and the likelihood of significant, unrecorded sites. Inventory strategies for unsurveyed areas will be continually refined.
- Work cooperatively with the California SHPO on data sharing and information management, and the promotion and enhancement of public education, including Archaeological Awareness Week/Historic Preservation Month, outreach, and stewardship programs.
- Provide for and/or increase interpretive educational opportunities at selected cultural and historic sites, including the Plank Road (CA-IMP-4764H). Work with communities, Tribes, interested individuals, and other agencies to enhance public understanding, appreciation, and enjoyment of cultural resources.
- Implement protection measures to stop, limit, or repair damage to sites that are on or eligible for the National Register of Historic Places. A variety of protection measures, described in BLM Manual 8140, may be used to protect the integrity of sites at risk and will include signing, fencing or barriers, trash removal, erosion control, backfilling, repairing, shoring up or stabilizing structures, restricting uses and access, and closures. Where feasible, acquire non-BLM-administered properties within the planning area that contain significant cultural resources including, but not limited to, those properties listed or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places.
- Manage spiritually significant and traditional cultural properties in consultation with Native American Tribes, accommodate Tribal access to spiritually significant

and traditional cultural properties, and prevent physical damage or intrusions that might impede their use by religious practitioners (pursuant to Executive Order 13007 and American Indian Religious Freedom Act [42 U.S.C. 1996]). The locations of spiritually significant and traditional cultural properties and other places of traditional or religious importance to Native American Tribes will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law.

- Coordinate with Native Americans to manage harvesting areas for the collection of medicinal herbs, ceremonial herbs, other vegetation, and/or minerals for traditional or ceremonial use (see Section 2.12.4—Vegetative Use Authorization and Appendix G of the ISD RAMP for more information).
- Evaluate and allocate cultural properties (including cultural landscapes) to one of six uses as outlined in BLM's Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1) and BLM-IB No. 2002-101—Cultural Resource Considerations in Resource Management Plans.

II.2.2.3.3.2 Caliente Resource Management Plan

The Caliente RMP identifies the Walker Pass National Historic Landmark as a Special Management Area to be managed to protect the characteristics of the natural landscape and viewshed of the pass which contributed towards its designation as a national historic landmark (BLM 1997, p. 156).

II.2.2.3.3.3 Bishop Resource Management Plan

The Bishop RMP ROD identifies the following laws and policies that guide planning and implementation of the RMP (BLM 1993, p. 9):

- The BLM will comply with the provisions of Sections 106 and 110 of the Historic Preservation Act including consultation with the State Historic Preservation Officer and the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation for actions which may affect prehistoric and historic properties.
- The BLM will consult with local Indian communities to identify their concerns when projects might affect them. These concerns will be considered in the decision making process.

The Bishop RMP also includes the area-wide decision (p. 22):

- Manage cultural resources for information potential by initiating data recovery at threatened sites.

II.2.2.3.3.4 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The 2012 ROD for the Solar PEIS amended land use allocation decisions and utility-scale transmission decisions within 89 plans in 6 southwestern states, including the CDCA Plan, the Bishop RMP, and the Caliente RMP (BLM 2012a). Amendments to the CDCA specific to Cultural Resources include amending land use plans with programmatic design features that would be required for all utility-scale solar energy projects on BLM-administered land including (p. 110):

- Exclusions under the BLM's Solar Energy Program include traditional cultural properties and Native American sacred sites as identified through consultation with tribes and recognized by the BLM.
- Early consultation with BLM regarding identifying and minimizing cultural resources and BLM consultation with federal, tribal, state, and local agencies.
- Siting, designing, and constructing solar facilities to minimize impacts on cultural resources including encouraging use of previously disturbed lands.
- Monitoring terms and conditions for cultural resources by project developer including consultation with BLM.
- Prior to reclamation, BLM may require additional planning for treatment of historic properties.
- Notifications of BLM prior to demolition or substantial alteration of any building or structure.
- Soil-disturbing reclamation and decommissioning activities will be limited to previously disturbed areas.
- California SEZ-specific design features for cultural resources and tribal concerns.

Amendments to the CDCA specific to Native American concerns include amending land use plans with programmatic design features that would be required for all utility-scale solar energy projects on BLM-administered land including (p. 114):

- Early consultation with federally recognized tribes to identify issues and areas of concern regarding proposed solar energy projects.
- Training of personnel whose activities could affect issues and areas of concern to federally recognized tribes.
- Ongoing consultation with tribes during life of the project.
- Returning the site to its pre-construction condition.

II.2.2.3.4 Paleontology

II.2.2.3.4.1 California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as Amended

The goals and objectives for Paleontology under the CDCA Plan are described on page 22 (BLM 1999) and include:

- Ensure that paleontological resources are given full consideration in land use planning and in management decisions.
- Preserve and protect a representative sample of the full array of the CDCA's paleontological resources.
- Ensure proper data recovery of significant paleontological resources where adverse impacts cannot be avoided or otherwise mitigated.

In summary, the applicable Cultural Resource Element management actions related to paleontology contained within the CDCA Plan include:

- Manage paleontological resources within the CDCA to maximize their protection, systematic and scientific material recovery, and the development of educational and interpretive programs.
- Recognition of four paleontological ACECs.
- Preservation and Protection through a variety of management tools, including Cultural Resources Management Plans, environmental awareness/education, surveillance, stabilization, restoration, and road designation.
- Monitor resource locations to determine types and extent of impacts on paleontological resources caused by MUC designation as well as impacts from consumptive uses and natural processes.
- Develop mitigation plans when resources cannot be protected and/or preserved. Plans will detail steps necessary to recover the resources and otherwise ameliorate the impacts.
- Preserve and protect paleontological values within all MUCs.
- Encourage and support paleontological research especially in high-impact risk areas, as in MUCs M and I.

West Mojave Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment:

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for this resource under the WEMO.

Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for this resource under the NEMO.

Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert/CDCA Plan Amendment

The NECO RMP does not include goals and objectives and management actions for Paleontology.

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan

The goals and objectives for Paleontology under the ISD RAMP are described on page 2-58 of the ROD (BLM 2013a) and include:

- Protect and conserve significant paleontological resources as they are discovered on public lands.
- Manage paleontological resources in ways that prioritize research needs, facilitate educational and recreational needs, and protect important sites.
- Develop specific objectives and management actions for fossil localities, when paleontological resources are discovered in the planning area.

In summary, the management actions contained within the ISD RAMP include:

- Evaluate paleontological resources as they are discovered, considering their scientific, educational, and recreational values. Identify appropriate objectives, management actions, and allowable uses for fossil localities as they are found.
- Restrict the collection of all vertebrate fossils and invertebrate and plant fossils of paleontological interest to legitimate scientific or educational uses in accordance with permitting procedures.
- Allow recreational collecting of common invertebrate and plant paleontological resources, in accordance with the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act.
- Require immediate notification should paleontological resources be encountered during project surface-disturbing activities, and cease work in the area of the discovery. Work may not resume until the BLM issues a written authorization to proceed.
- Although all lands within the planning area have been classified as Potential Fossil Yield Classification (PFYC) Class 2 (low likelihood for sensitive fossils), a field survey by a qualified paleontologist may be required if future information determines or indicates the presence of important paleontological resources prior

to surface-disturbing activities. Management prescriptions for resource preservation and conservation through controlled access or special management designation could be considered. Surface-disturbing activities may require an assessment in PFYC Class 2 areas to determine further courses of action. Assessment or mitigation in PFYC Class 1 areas will not be required except in very rare circumstances.

II.2.2.3.4.2 Caliente Resource Management Plan

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for this resource under the Caliente RMP.

II.2.2.3.4.3 Bishop Resource Management Plan

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for this resource under the Bishop RMP.

II.2.2.3.4.4 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The 2012 ROD for the Solar PEIS (BLM 2012a) amended land use allocation decisions and utility-scale transmission decisions within 89 plans in 6 southwestern states, including the CDCA Plan, the Bishop RMP, and the Caliente RMP. Amendments to the CDCA specific to Paleontological Resources include amending land use plans with programmatic design features that would be required for all utility-scale solar energy projects on BLM-administered land including (p. 108):

- Early consultation with BLM regarding identifying and minimizing paleontological resources.
- Developers shall use qualified paleontological monitor during exaction and earth-moving activities in areas with high potential for paleontological resources.
- Developers shall notify BLM immediately upon discovery of fossils and halt work until qualified personnel can visit the site, determine the significance, and make site-specific recommendations. The area of the discovery shall be protected to ensure that the fossils are not removed, handled, altered, or damaged until the site is properly evaluated and further action determined.

II.2.2.3.5 Lands and Realty

II.2.2.3.5.1 California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as Amended

The goals and objectives for Lands and Realty under the CDCA Plan are described on page 93 (Energy Production and Utility Corridors) and page 97 (Land Tenure Adjustments Goals) of the plan (BLM 1999) and include the following.

Energy Production and Utility Corridors

- Fully implement the network of joint-use planning corridors to meet projected utility needs to the year 2000.
- Identify environmental constraints and siting procedures that can be used desert-wide by telecommunications firms and public agencies to guide their planning of both individual communication sites and line-of-sight communication systems.
- Identify potential sites for geothermal development, wind energy parks, and power plants.

Land Tenure Adjustment

- Establish a land tenure program that complements the goals of other Desert Plan elements through the consolidation of public lands within special management areas, such as ACECs, intensive use recreation areas, and MUC C areas.
- Initiate a program for the disposal of public land through sale and exchange within the "Unclassified" areas of the CDCA to reduce inefficient management of isolated and fragmented parcels.
- Sell, exchange, or lease public lands to meet the needs of other governmental agencies for public facilities such as parks, recreation areas, refuse disposal sites.
- Cooperate with other public agencies at all levels to insure that locally adopted land use plans are considered in any land tenure action.

In summary, the management actions contained within the CDCA Plan include:

- All of the lands in the CDCA Plan under BLM management, except for a few scattered parcels (approximately 285,000 acres), have been designated geographically into MUCs. The CDCA Plan identified four MUCs (identified on page 13 of the Plan) which were based on the sensitive of resources and kinds of uses for each geographic area. Each MUC described a different type and level of degree of use permitted within that geographical area. The MUC guidelines described land use and resource management guidelines for 19 land uses and resources as they applied to each class (Table 1, page 15 of the plan).

Table II.2-12
Existing Multiple Use Classes in the CDCA as Amended
(acreage includes major amendments listed below)

Multiple Use Class	Acres in BLM Ownership
Class C (controlled)	2,759,000
Class I (intensive)	554,000
Class L (limited)	3,915,000
Class M (moderate)	2,285,000
Unclassified	243,000
Total	**9,756,000**

- Land Tenure Adjustments for all MUCs will be acquired, disposed of, or exchanges in accordance with FLPMA.
  - Within MUC C and L lands, public lands will not be sold.
  - Within MUC M and Unclassified lands, sale of public lands may be allowed in accordance with FLPMA and other applicable federal laws and regulations. Sales in WSA will not be allowed until after Congressional action.
  - Within MUC I lands, public lands will not be sold.
- ROWs, electrical generation facilities, new transmission, and distribution facilities are permitted based on the MUC.
  - MUC C lands do not allow electrical generation facilities, wind energy facilities, solar energy facilities, and geothermal facilities, new transmission or distribution facilities or communication sites; and allow maintenance of existing transmission facilities and communication sites subject to wilderness management plans.
  - MUC L lands do not allow new nuclear generation facilities; MUC L lands allow new electrical generation facilities, wind energy facilities, solar energy facilities, geothermal facilities, and communication sites if NEPA is met; MUC L allows new transmission facilities if within designated corridors and new distribution facilities (with design constraints).
  - MUCs M and I allow all these actions if NEPA requirements are met; however,
    - New transmission facilities are only allowed within corridors.
    - Existing transmission facilities within designated corridors may be maintained and upgraded; existing facilities outside designated corridors may be maintained by not upgraded or improved

  - New distribution facilities may be allowed and shall be place within existing rights of way where they are reasonably feasible.

- Unclassified Lands: Scattered and isolated parcels of public lands within the CDCA which have not been placed within MUCs are unclassified land. The BLM will retain or transfer to other appropriate managing agencies those unclassified parcels containing sensitive resources. Parcels with known mineral resources will be selectively retained. Parcels which are found not to contain sensitive resources and would be better used for development purposes will be considered for disposal after appropriate inventories and consultation with local governments are completed.

Western Mohave Desert/CDCA Plan Amendment

The goals and objectives for Lands and Realty under the WEMO RMP are described on 2-29 of the plan (BLM 2006). In summary, the management actions contained within the WEMO include:

- Modification of boundaries of consolidation, retention, and disposal zones to conform with conservation area goals.
- Amendment of select MUC classes to reflect new management actions.
- Removal lands available for exchange within ACECs and change to retention.
- Land acquisition is guided by current BLM and Department of Defense acquisition priorities set by the BLM – Edwards Air Force Base land tenure adjustment strategy. This "LTA" strategy identified lands for disposal (Disposal Zone) while maintaining other lands (Retention and Consolidation Zones), the latter being located primarily in an L-shaped pattern running from north of Adelanto, to the Fremont Peak region, and then east through Superior Valley.

Northern and Eastern Mojave/CDCA Plan Amendment

The goals and objectives for Lands and Realty are under the NEMO RMP are described in on page 2-30, 2-90, and Appendix N (Strategy for Land Tenure in the NEMO planning area; BLM 2002a) and include:

> Acquire sufficient habitat. The goal is to adjust the land ownership pattern through acquisition and disposal of selected lands (1) to improve opportunities for both the management of areas and conservation of natural resources within DWMAs, WHMAs, and existing wilderness; and (2) to facilitate the use of public and private lands in areas of low natural resource values for private, commercial, or social purposes, including the opportunity for community expansion. Acquisition of Catellus and CSLC lands (as well as other private lands) in wilderness areas is a

continuing independent process requiring no specific action through the NECO planning process. All acquired lands would automatically be managed under the same criteria as the surrounding public lands.

- The objectives of adjusting the land ownership pattern are to
  - Acquire habitat within DWMAs and WHMAs (limited application in bighorn sheep corridors), to ensure long-term manageability of these areas for conservation of biological ecosystems.
  - Dispose of public lands to private ownership for community expansion where environmentally suitable.
  - Acquire lands for protection of threatened and endangered species, where prudent.

In summary, the management actions contained within the NEMO include:

- Establishing MUC for 475,000 acres of released WSAs.
- Classifying lands as "unclassified" to make them available for future disposal for the purposes of community expansion; acquisition of lands within wilderness.
- Retaining public ownership within DWMAs and WHMAs according to the guidelines of MUCs, ACECs, wilderness areas, and other federal requirements unless there is a compelling reason for disposal as determined through NEPA and land use plan amendments. The plan describes the required considerations when decisions are made to dispose of federal lands.
- Acquiring private lands would be accomplished as much as possible and practical through exchange to reduce the impact of loss of tax base to counties and only from willing sellers.
- Prioritizing acquisition of lands within designated DWMAs, WHMAs, and Wilderness Areas.
- Prioritizing acquisition of lands within critical habitat (Amargosa vole [*Microtus californicus scirpensis*]) in support of conservation and recovery.
- Assigning MUC L to all public lands within DWMAs.
- Changing landfill classifications to MUC U to make them available for disposal.
- Actively seeking to acquire lands or interests in lands within DWMAs and WHMAs (except within bighorn sheep corridors) through purchase, donation, or exchange according to scheduled priorities. In DWMAs this includes both private and CSLC lands. In WHMAs this includes only private lands. This action adds to existing policy to acquire both private and CSLC lands in wilderness areas.

- BLM would dispose of lands in areas outside wilderness, DWMAs, and WHMAs which do not containing known occurrences of rare plants, springs, bat or other special-status species, and where such action supports consolidation and location of private land to promote private development and increase tax base for local governments. Federal lands potentially suitable for disposal under this action could include lands along freeways and freeway exits; lands adjacent to urban, agricultural, and industrial centers; lands in checkerboard ownership outside other sensitive areas; lands in unclassified areas; and other lands deemed to be unmanageable under federal ownership. Although exchange would be the BLM's preferred method of disposal, the sale of lands could be considered.
- BLM would be interested in acquiring private and CSLC lands outside National Park Service (NPS) lands with known occurrences of Coachella Valley milk-vetch [*Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *coachellae*] where (1) there is a willing seller, (2) such lands would be manageable, and (3) such lands are not encumbered by highway, other ROW conflicts, or other conflicts. Acquisition would occur only where the action would be consistent with obtaining and retaining lands in federal ownership and would be consistent with current or future urban/agricultural lands uses in the Desert Center area.

Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert/CDCA Plan Amendment

The goals and objectives for Lands and Realty under the NECO RMP are described on page 2-90 of the plan (BLM 2002b) and include:

- Acquire habitat within DWMAs and WHMAs (limited application in bighorn sheep corridors), to ensure long-term manageability of these areas for conservation of biological ecosystems.
- Dispose of public lands to private ownership for community expansion where environmentally suitable.
- Acquire lands for protection of threatened and endangered species, where prudent.

In summary, the management actions contained within the NECO include:

- BLM would dispose of lands in areas outside wilderness, DWMAs, and WHMAs and not containing known occurrences of rare plants, springs, bat, or other special-status species and where such action supports consolidation and location of private land to promote private development and increases tax base for local governments.
- Federal agencies would actively seek to acquire lands or interests in lands within DWMAs and WHMAs (except within bighorn sheep corridors) through purchase, donation, or exchange according to ranked priorities.

- Land acquired through compensation or mitigation would be classified CLOSED for disposal or use.
- Designate all MUC M lands in DWMAs as MUC L.
- Acquire private and CSLC lands outside NPS with known occurrences of Coachella Valley milk-vetch.

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan

The goals and objectives for Lands and Realty under the ISD RAMP are described on pages 2-105 (Land Tenure), 2-106 (Land Use Authorizations), 2-107 (Right-of-way Permits), 2-107 (Communication Sites), 2-111 (Renewable Energy), 2-112 (Withdrawals), and 2-112 (Utility Corridors) of the ROD (BLM 2013a), and include the following.

Land Tenure

- Lands or interest in lands (including easements) to be acquired must either:
  - Facilitate access to public lands and resources.
  - Maintain or enhance public uses and values.
  - Facilitate implementation of this proposed RAMP/CDCA Plan amendment and Final EIS.
  - Provide for a more manageable land ownership pattern.
  - Include significant natural or cultural resource values.

Land Use Authorizations

- Manage recreational and commercial activities within the planning area to accommodate visitor needs, improve visitor experience, and—where consistent with management goals—allow economic benefits for local and regional communities.
- Maintain public access to BLM-administered lands through easements when needed.
- Be responsive to public demand for leases, permits, and easements on a case-by-case basis, consistent with management prescriptions.
- Land is not available for leasing for residential purposes.

Right-of-Way Permits

- Be responsive to public demand for ROWs on a case-by-case basis, consistent with management prescriptions.

Communication Sites

- When practicable, consolidate future proposed facilities within existing communication sites, consistent with management proscriptions.

Renewable Energy (Solar and Wind)

- Provide for the production and distribution of renewable energy, consistent with management of the recreation area and prescriptions.

Withdrawals

- Protect sensitive or significant natural, biological, and cultural resource and/or recreational values from disturbances relating to locatable mineral entry.

Utility Corridors

- Major ROWs within the approved corridor would be consolidated to minimize resource impacts.
- The designated corridors will be the preferred location for major utility ROWs consistent with the CDCA Plan, as amended (see Map 2-9).

In summary, the Lands and Realty management actions contained within the ISD RAMP include:

- No lands will be available for disposal within the planning area.
- Currently pending land acquisitions equal 6,603 acres.
- Manage all acquired lands in accordance with the approved land use and planning decisions for surrounding or adjacent BLM-administered lands.
- Consolidate split-estate pursuant to Sections 205 and 206 of FLPMA.
- Any lands acquired by the BLM will include both the surface and subsurface (minerals) estate when possible and will be managed in accordance with the approved land use decisions for the surrounding area.
- Consider leases, permits, and easements on a case-by-case basis to meet public demand consistent with exclusion and avoidance areas identified by alternative.
- Locate new major ROWs in designated corridors, unless an evaluation of the project shows that locating outside of a designated corridor is the only practicable alternative.
- Ensure any application for proposed facilities at existing communication sites is compatible with other uses at the site existing at the time of application.

- Consider applications for new communication sites outside the three existing sites on a case-by-case basis emphasizing co-location and subleasing of facilities, consistent with management proscriptions.
- Make land available for renewable energy development consistent with applicable laws, regulations, and policy and in accordance with the approved land use and planning decisions.
- Use BLM Wind Energy Development Program Policies and best management practices established in Attachment A of the ROD (BLM 2005) for all site-specific wind development projects.
- Use BLM's Solar PEIS ROD for all qualifying site-specific solar development projects. Projects within the Planning Area will be administered as variance lands under the policies and processes described in the Solar Programmatic EIS ROD.
- Use the State of California Best Management Practices and Guidance Manual: Desert Renewable Energy Projects, for development of renewable energy projects in the planning area. The BLM and other Renewable Energy Action Team agencies authored the manual. The BLM may modify these best management practices as necessary over time.
- Land available for lease for solar energy development within the planning area includes 27,606 acres available as variance lands; no avoidance areas; and 161,226 acres excluded (Map 2-10).
- Land available for lease for wind energy development within the planning area includes 35,115 acres available; no avoidance areas; and 153,717 acres excluded (Map 2-11).
- Seek revocation of existing withdrawals, if the land is no longer needed for the original purpose of the withdrawal. Current withdrawal lands are shown in Map 2-12.
- Continue periodic review of existing withdrawals, including other agency withdrawals, to ensure that the reasons for the withdrawal are still valid and that only the acreage needed is retained in withdrawn status.
- Continue the existing three utility corridors (one is a contingency corridor). There is one 2-mile-wide existing utility corridor along Interstate 8 on BLM-administered lands within the planning area. A second utility corridor begins in the northernmost portion of the planning area near Mammoth Wash and runs north (see Map 2-9). The contingency corridor travels along the eastern boundary of the planning area adjacent to the Union Pacific Railroad tracks (see Map 2-9).
- Locate all new major utility ROWs within the designated corridors and consisting of the following types: (1) new electrical transmission towers and cables of 161 kV or above; (2) all pipelines with diameters greater than 12 inches; (3) coaxial cables for

interstate communications; and (4) major aqueducts or canals for interbasin transfers of water.

- Avoid special designation areas and environmentally sensitive areas, where practical.

II.2.2.3.5.2 Caliente Resource Management Plan

The Caliente RMP does not include goals and objectives for the Lands and Realty program.

In summary, the management actions contained within the Caliente RMP (BLM 1997) include the following, by management area.

Plan-Wide Land Decisions

- All existing or occupied utility corridors delineated in the Western Regional Corridor Study of 1986 are designated as utility corridors.
- Mineral Estate (Split-Estate) Lands are suitable for disposal. Mineral Estate lands patented by RPPA and STA would be managed consistent with county zoning requirements.
- Manage newly recognized lands consistent with adjacent public lands.
- Lands are unsuitable for entry under DLE and IAA.

South Sierra Management Decisions

- Approximately 113,500 acres (160 parcels) would be identified for local repositioning through land exchanges to consolidate natural resource values and meet the management objectives of this plan. Special emphasis would be placed on repositioning to enhance wilderness values, recreation, and special plant communities, and to meet local community needs.
- Approximately 53,540 acres would be targeted for Cooperative Management with other federal and state agencies (U.S. Forest Service, USFWS or CDFW, NPS, Bureau of Indian Affairs, California Department of Parks and Recreation). Of this, approximately 1,300 acres within the DRECP Plan Area were identified for cooperative management with the California Department of Parks and Recreation in the Horse Canyon/Sand Canyon.

II.2.2.3.5.3 Bishop Resource Management Plan

The Bishop RMP ROD identifies the following SOPs for Realty (BLM 1993, p. 14):

- A site-specific environmental assessment will be required before any disposal of BLM land. Only parcels identified in the RMP will be available for disposal. All other BLM lands will be retained in public ownership.

- All existing and future power lines must meet nonelectrocution standards for raptors. Raptor habitat enhancement will be incorporated into facility design where feasible.

The Bishop RMP also includes the following area-wide decisions applicable to lands and realty within the DRECP Area (p. 16):

- Unless otherwise stated in the plan, all BLM lands will be retained in public ownership. Lands identified for disposal are either difficult or uneconomic to manage and would best serve the public interest in private ownership. Land disposal may also be used to resolve inadvertent occupancy trespass (cases where survey error has resulted in home construction on BLM land). BLM lands will not be available for disposal under the agricultural land laws.
- Land exchange is the preferred method of disposal. Where land exchange is impractical, lands identified for disposal may be sold under authority of FLPMA.
- Disposals to resolve inadvertent occupancy trespass will be limited to the smallest legal subdivision which includes the private development.
- Recreation and Public Purposes Act patents may be issued on lands identified for disposal.

Bishop RMP area-wide decisions designated north–south utility corridors along existing transmission lines, as follows (p. 16):

- Utility corridors 0.50 mile wide are designated along the following transmission lines:
    - The 500 kV DC Intertie from where it enters California near State Highway 167 to where it exits the resource area near Olancha.
    - The 115 kV Southern California Edison Double Circuit Line from the Bishop Substation to where it exits the resource area near Olancha.
- The following conditions and mitigation measures apply to these corridors:
    1. Corridors extend 0.25 mile on both sides of the specified lines with two exceptions, both outside the DRECP Area.
    2. Future facilities in these corridors may be allowed to exceed Visual Resource Management (VRM) and Yearlong Protection standards. Extensive mitigation will be required and may include, but is not limited to:
        a. Painting and use of non-specular steel materials to reduce visibility.
        b. Requiring the use of shared facilities.

The first applicant for a ROW in either corridor will be required to conduct a study to determine how many transmission lines the corridor can accommodate.

II.2.2.3.5.4 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The 2012 ROD for the Solar PEIS (BLM 2012a) amended land use allocation decisions and utility-scale transmission decisions within 89 plans in 6 southwestern states, including the CDCA Plan, the Bishop RMP, and the Caliente RMP. Amendments to the CDCA specific to Lands and Realty include:

- Specific land use allocation for Solar Exclusion Areas (closed to solar)
- Specific land use allocations for SEZs (open to solar and incentivized, Section B.4.3); CDCA Amendment: Riverside East and Imperial East SEZs
- Processes for expanding or including new SEZs (B.4.5)
- Specific land use allocations for Solar Variance Lands (open to solar, with environmental considerations and policies)
- Programmatic Design Features for Lands and Realty (among other resources) and SEZ-specific design features
- Programmatic Policies for Utility-Scale Solar Development
- Public Lands within designated SEZs are withdrawn for a 20-year duration pursuant to Public Land Order (June 27, 2013) subject to valid existing rights, from settlement, sale, location, or entry under the general land laws, including the mining laws, as follows:
    - New mining claims cannot be filed on the withdrawn lands; however, valid mining claims filed prior to the date the lands were segregated (i.e., the date withdrawal notice was published in the *Federal Register*) would take precedence over future solar energy development ROW application filings.
    - Lands cannot be sold, exchanged, or otherwise disposed of during the term of the withdrawal.
    - Withdrawn lands remain open to mineral leasing, geothermal leasing, and mineral material laws; the BLM could elect to lease the oil, gas, coal, or geothermal steam resources, or to sell common-variety mineral materials, such as sand and gravel, if the authorized officer determined there would be no unacceptable impacts on future solar energy development.
    - Withdrawn lands remain open to ROW authorizations and land leases or permits authorized under Section 302 of the FLPMA.

II.2.2.3.6 Livestock Grazing

II.2.2.3.6.1 California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as Amended

The goals and objectives for livestock grazing under the CDCA Plan are described on page 56 (Livestock Grazing; BLM 1999) and include:

- Use range management to maintain or improve vegetation to meet livestock needs and to meet other management objectives sit forth in the plan.
- Continue the use of the California Desert for livestock production to contribute to satisfying the need for food and fiber from public land.
- Maintain good and excellent range condition and improve poor and fair range condition by one condition class, through development and implementation of feasible grazing systems or Allotment Management Plans. Adjust livestock use where monitoring data indicate changes are necessary to meet resource objectives.

In summary, the management actions contained within the CDCA Plan include:

- Allocation of animal unit months for perennial forage for livestock on existing allotments designated and perennial and ephemeral/perennial, and use of ephemeral forages as it becomes available. Allotments will be managed accordingly as required by the Allotment Management Plans and include establishment of appropriate stocking levels, seasons of use, turnout times, levels of forage use, monitoring and adjustment procedures, watering and handling practices, and range improvements.
- Review and adjust forage allotments if monitoring indicates the need.
- Incorporate range improvements including elements such as fencing, water pipeline, wells, spring developments, catchments, and troughs.
- Base turnout dates on the emergence of tortoise in habitat. Riparian habitats will be protected either by fencing or by ensuring proper use levels.
- Manage grazing based on MUCs:
    - MUC C:
        - Grazing will be allowed subject to limitations to preserve wilderness characteristics and the protection of sensitive resources, except that existing grazing will only be subject to the protection of sensitive resources.
        - Major support facilities, such as permanent corrals, loading chutes, and significant water developments, will not be allowed except for existing facilities pursuant to valid existing leases, licenses, and permits. Maintenance of such facilities will be controlled to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of wilderness values.
        - Manipulation of vegetation by chemical or mechanical means will not be allowed.

- MUC L:
  - Grazing will be allowed subject to the protection of sensitive resources.
  - Support facilities such as corrals, loading chutes, water developments, and other facilities, permanent or temporary, may be allowed consistent with protection of sensitive resources.
  - Manipulation of vegetation by chemical or mechanical means will not be allowed, except for site-specific needs.
- MUCs M and I:
  - Grazing will be allowed subject to protection of sensitive resources.
  - Support facilities, such as corrals, loading chutes, water developments, and other facilities, permanent or temporary, will be allowed.
  - Manipulation of vegetation by chemical or mechanical means may be allowed and may be designed, development, and managed for intensive livestock use.

West Mojave Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

The WEMO recommended the establishment of Regional Standards for Public Land Health and set forth guidelines for grazing management (BLM 2006). Until these standards are approved by the Secretary of the Interior, these lands continue to be managed under the fallback standards specified at 43 CFR Part 4100.

In summary, the management actions contained within the WEMO include:

- Prescriptions governing utilization of key perennial species by livestock in continuous year-long operations.
- Specific prescriptions for all cattle allotments managed by the BLM in the planning area that are not located within either desert tortoise habitat or the Mohave Ground Squirrel Conservation Area, including conducting Health Assessments and implementing corrective actions as needed.
- Specific prescriptions for all cattle allotments managed by the BLM in the planning area that are located within either desert tortoise habitat or the Mohave Ground Squirrel Conservation Area. These include management prescriptions from existing Biological Opinions as well as allotment boundary modifications, changes in livestock kind and use designations at select locations, and specific measures to minimize and prevent adverse effects to tortoises.

- Specific prescriptions for sheep grazing including minimum ephemeral forage that must be present before sheep can be turned out, limits to the number of sheep in a combined band, Health Assessments for all allotments available for grazing (except for allotments that will be excluded from grazing), and restrictions on sheep grazing in the Mohave Ground Squirrel Conservation Area.
- Exclusion of grazing from select locations that support target species.

Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

The NEMO recommended the establishment of Regional Standards for Public Land Health and set forth guidelines for grazing management (BLM 2002a). Until these standards are approved by the Secretary of the Interior, these lands continue to be managed under the fallback standards specified at 43 CFR Part 4100.

In summary, the management actions contained within the NEMO include:

- Recommend the establishment of Regional Standards for Public Land Health and set forth guidelines for grazing management. Until these Standards are approved by the Secretary of the Interior, these lands continue to be managed under the fallback standards specified at 43 CFR Part 4100.

Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert/CDCA Plan Amendment

The NECO recommended the establishment of Regional Standards for Public Land Health and set forth guidelines for grazing management (BLM 2002b). Until these standards are approved by the Secretary of the Interior, these lands continue to be managed under the fallback standards specified at 43 CFR Part 4100.

In summary, the management actions contained within the NECO included:

- Locating facilities away from riparian-wetland areas when they conflict with achieving the riparian-wetland functions.
- Design development of springs and seeps or other water affecting projects to protect ecological functions and processes.
- New range improvement facilities and supplements would be located away from wetland systems.
- Management practices would maintain and promote perennial stream channel morphology and functions appropriate to climate and land form.
- Grazing management practices must meet state and federal water quality standards.

- In the CDCA, all wildfires in grazing allotments would be suppressed. To restore degraded habitats infested with invasive weeds, prescribed burning may be used.
- When weather results in extraordinary conditions, seed germination, seedling establishment, and native plant species growth would be allowed by modifying grazing use.
- Grazing on designated ephemeral rangeland would be allowed only if reliable estimates of production have been made, an identified level of annual growth or residue to remain on site at the end of the grazing season has been established, and adverse effects on perennial species are avoided.
- During prolonged drought, range stocking would be reduced.
- The extent of invasive and/or exotic plants and animals would be recorded and evaluated for future control measures.
- Methods and prescriptions would be implemented, and an evaluation would be completed to ascertain future control measures.
- Habitats would be restored, maintained, or enhanced to assist in the recovery of federally listed threatened and endangered species.
- Grazing activities would support biological diversity across the landscape, and native species and microbiotic crusts are to be maintained.
- Experimental research efforts would be encouraged to provide answers to grazing management and related resource concerns through cooperative and collaborative efforts with outside agencies, groups, and entities.
- Livestock utilization limits of key perennial species would follow guidelines established in this RMP.

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for Livestock Grazing under the ISD RAMP because there are no grazing allotments with the ISD. The ISD RAMP does include goals and objectives, and management actions for Land Health Standards Management, which are described starting on page 2-18 of the ROD (BLM 2013a), and are incorporated by reference. Until these standards are approved by the Secretary of the Interior, these lands continue to be managed under the fallback standards specified at 43 CFR Part 4100.

II.2.2.3.6.2 Caliente Resource Management Plan

The goals and objectives for Livestock Grazing under the Caliente RMP are described on pages 17 and 20 of the RMP (BLM 1997) and include:

- In the South Sierra Management Area, assist in the maintenance of rural lifestyles and economies of local communities by providing for livestock grazing, community infrastructure needs, and a range of dispersed recreational opportunities.

The ROD, Central California Standards and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing (2000) amended the RMP.

In summary, the management actions contained within the Caliente RMP include the following, by management area.

Plan-Wide Land Decisions

- Livestock grazing would be managed under the standards, guidelines, and criteria described in RMP Chapter 6. These standards and guidelines will be modified as necessary to maintain consistency with those adopted in the ROD for the Rangeland Health Standards and Guidelines EIS. Grazing authorizations, including class of livestock and season of use, may be modified to meet these standards and to meet the needs of the grazing operation.
- Allocations for new grazing allotments would be handled on a case-by-case basis following the criteria listed in RMP Chapter 6. Mulch, utilization, and seasonal use restrictions would be consistent with guidelines used for existing allotments found in RMP Chapter 6.
- Grazing treatments that are occurring as a part of research may be modified to reflect the needs of the study and may not conform with the guidelines in RMP Chapter 6.
- Grazing lessees and permittees whose allotments include lands identified in this plan as being available for potential land tenure adjustments are hereby notified, as required by 43 CFR 4110.4-2(b), of the proposed disposal of those properties.

South Sierra Management Decisions

- Approximately 220,800 acres of the public land within the Sierra Management Area would be available for livestock grazing. Of this figure, 188,400 acres lie within existing allotments, and 32,400 acres are currently unalloted and available for application for livestock grazing. The remainder of the management area, approximately 55,200 acres, would be classified as unavailable for livestock grazing.
    - Unalloted lands which have known sensitive resource concerns would be considered closed to new grazing authorizations.

  - Unalloted lands which are inaccessible to livestock due to heavy brush, steep slopes, rough terrain, or are too far from water sources are considered unsuitable for new grazing authorizations.
- Livestock grazing would continue to be authorized on 188,400 acres of public land in 53 allotments at levels shown in RMP Chapter 6.
- New grazing applications may be authorized if residual impacts to sensitive resources are not significant. Applications for new grazing allotments would be evaluated on a case-by-case basis following the criteria listed in RMP Chapter 6. Mulch, utilization, and seasonal use restrictions would be consistent with guidelines used for existing allotments found in RMP Chapter 6.

II.2.2.3.6.3 Bishop Resource Management Plan

Bishop RMP SOPs for Livestock Grazing are described on pages 10–12 of the ROD (BLM 1993).

They address grazing systems, grazing management practices, and range improvement project development. The ROD, Central California Standards and Guidelines for Livestock Grazing (2000) amended the RMP and are listed in the previous discussion for the Caliente RMP. Following this, the Bishop Field Office conducted Environmental Assessments and issued subsequent decisions resulting in fully processed 10-year grazing permits for all allotments within the DRECP Area. The Bishop RMP also specifies which lands are allocated (allotted) to permitted livestock grazing and prescribes the mandatory terms and conditions for all allotments administered by the Bishop Field Office.

II.2.2.3.6.4 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The adoption of the 2012 ROD for the Solar PEIS (BLM 2012a) amended land use allocation decisions and utility-scale transmission decisions within 89 plans in 6 southwestern states, including the CDCA Plan, the Bishop RMP, and the Caliente RMP. Amendments to the CDCA specific to grazing include amending land use plans with programmatic design features that would be required for all utility-scale solar energy projects on BLM-administered land including:

- Early consultation with the BLM to identify activities that could impact rangeland resources and grazing (p. 56).
- Construct, improve, and maintain roads to minimize impacts on grazing.

II.2.2.3.7 Minerals

II.2.2.3.7.1 California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as Amended

The goals and objectives for Minerals under the CDCA Plan are described on page 84 (Geology, Energy and Mineral Resources Element; BLM 1999) and include:

- Within the multiple-use management framework, assure the availability of known mineral resource lands for exploration and development.
- Encourage the development of mineral resources in a manner which satisfies national and local needs and provides for economically and environmentally sound exploration, extraction, and reclamation processes.
- Develop a mineral resource inventory, Geology, Energy, and Mineral database, and professional, technical, and managerial staff knowledgeable in mineral exploration and development.

In addition, specific objectives of the element are to:

- Continue to recognize ways of access and opportunities for exploration and development on public lands which are assessed to have potential for critical mineral resources, those minerals of national defense importance, those of which the U.S. imports 50% or more, and those of which the U.S. is a net exporter.
- Continue to recognize ways of access and opportunities for exploration and development on public lands which are assessed to have potential for energy mineral resources. These are geothermal, oil, gas, uranium, and thorium, considered to be paramount priorities both nationally and within the State of California.
- Continue to recognize ways of access and opportunities for exploration and development on public lands which are assessed to have potential for mineral resources of local and state importance. These are sand and gravel, limestone, gypsum, iron, specialty clays, and zeolites. (Since the analysis was made in June 1980, zeolites have become of national importance.)

In summary, the management actions contained within the CDCA Plan include:

- Maintain an accurate and comprehensive information base of mineral resources in the CDCA.
- All mineral exploration and mining operations on public lands under BLM surface administration in MUCs C, L, M, and I will be subject to the BLM's surface-mining regulations under 43 CFR 3802 and 43 CFR 3809. This includes regulating to prevent "undue degradation" of public lands and to provide environmental safeguards. Regulations incorporate three distinct levels of operations (p. 89):

Casual Use – No Notice or Plan Required, Surface Disturbance of Less than 5 Acres – Notice Required, and Disturbance on More than 5 Acres Due to Mining in Special Areas – Plan of Operations Required.

- Lands affected by all operations regardless of level shall be reclaimed as required by regulations (43 CFR 3809.1-1).
- An environmental analysis (EA) is required to be completed on each plan of operation submitted. The EA will focus only on the proposed operation and the mitigation requirements necessary to prevent unnecessary or undue degradation of the area of operations. Bonding of a plan of operations is discretionary and is based on the actual cost of reclamation, on a per-acre basis.
- Salton Sea. While the area surrounding the Salton Sea has been excluded from the MUC due to the sensitive nature of the Salton Sea, which is potential habitat for some federally listed rare and endangered wildlife species, the guidelines for MUC L will apply to all mineral leasing activities (oil, gas, geothermal, sodium, and potash) on public land in and under the Salton Sea.
- Through agreement with the State Resources Agency, allow the State of California, through the counties which are the lead agencies under the State Mining and Reclamation Act of 1975 (SMRA), to jointly administer the BLM's surface-mining regulations on the public lands. The combined BLM and SMRA requirements, whichever are stricter in terms of required mitigation measures, will be the requirements that the operator will eventually have to meet. While the State of California may administer much of the permitting process, BLM recognizes its responsibility to monitor mining activities and will do so.
- All mineral-exploration and surface-mining operations that are not grandfathered under Section 603 of FLPMA are subject to the BLM's surface-mining mandate that all surface-mining and exploration operations conducted within a WSA must be conducted in such a manner as not to impair the suitability of the area of wilderness. The two main criteria involved are the reclamation potential of the disturbed area and how the disturbed site affects the WSA as a unit, not on a localized basis.
- Manage mineral resources based on MUCs:
    - MUC C: Management is based on Congressional designation.
    - MUC L, M, and I:
        - Leasable Minerals: Except as provided in BLM Categorical Exclusions, prior to approving any lease, notice, or application that was filed pursuant to 43 CFR 3045, 3100, 3200, 3500, and S.O. 3087, as amended, an EA will be prepared on the proposed action. Mitigation and reclamation measures will

be required to protect and rehabilitate sensitive scenic, ecological, wildlife, vegetative, and cultural values.

- Locatable Minerals:
  - Location of mining claims is nondiscretionary. Operations on mining claims are subject to 43 CFR 3809 regulations and applicable state and local law.
  - NEPA requirements will be met.
  - BLM will review plans of operations for potential impacts on sensitive resources identified on lands in this class. Mitigation, subject to technical and economic feasibility, will be required.
- Saleable Minerals:
  - Except as provided in BLM Categorical Exclusions, new material sales locations, including sand and gravel sites, will require an EA.
  - Continued use of existing areas of sand and gravel extractions is allowed subject to BLM permits as specified in 43 CFR 3600.

West Mojave Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

Specific goals and objectives for this resource are not identified under the WEMO.

In summary, the management actions contained within the WEMO (BLM 2006) include:

- Federally acquired private lands and mineral resources within conservation areas are withdrawn, limiting access and availability of these resources to development.
- Existing mines in HCAs and DWMAs, where the activity is not in occupied habitat, would be allowed to continue without compensation payments because they qualify as grandfathered uses.

Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for this resource under the NEMO.

Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert/CDCA Plan Amendment

The NECO RMP does not include goals and objectives for Mineral Resources.

The management action for mineral resources (BLM 2002b) is:

- All mining and mineral activities are subject to mitigation and compensation requirements. Whenever feasible, existing pits would be utilized for sand and gravel operations.

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan

The goals and objectives for Minerals under the ISD RAMP are described on page 2-72 of the ROD (BLM 2013a) and include:

- Provide opportunities for exploration, location, and development of mining claims and sites while preventing unnecessary or undue degradation of public lands and resources.

In summary, the management actions contained within the ISD RAMP include:

- Consolidate, through land tenure adjustments, surface and subsurface (minerals) estates under single ownerships when possible, thereby improving manageability of the federal lands involved. Consolidate split-estate pursuant to Sections 205 and 206 of FLPMA.
- Require a notice prior to conducting any exploration—defined as the search for and collection of geochemical, rock, soil, or mineral specimens using mechanized and/or motorized earth moving equipment—when removing less than 1,000 tons of presumed ore for testing, and causing surface disturbance of less than 5 acres.
- Require mining plans of operations for any explorations that would remove 1,000 tons or more of presumed ore for testing and/or result in surface disturbance greater than 5 acres, any operations that would result in greater than negligible surface disturbance, and operations that would use any mechanized or motorized earth moving equipment. A plan of operations must be approved by the authorized officer of the BLM and may be subject to stipulations to assure conformance with the land-use plan.
- Require an investigation and a report to determine the validity of the mining claim prior to approval of a mining plan of operations in withdrawn areas where the mining claim predates the withdrawal.
- Require a mining plan of operations in any special designation in accordance with existing 43 CFR 3809 regulations.
- Mining activities will be in compliance with all State of California reclamation requirements, particularly the Surface Mining and Reclamation Act.
- Congressionally designated wilderness is legislatively withdrawn from all forms of entry, appropriation, or disposal under the public land laws.
- Maintain ACEC(s) as open to mineral entry under the Mining Law, subject to Section 7 and Section 106 consultations.
- Maintain the ISD SRMA, excluding wilderness, as open to mineral entry under the Mining Law, subject to Section 7 and Section 106 consultations.

- Map 2-4 shows land available for geothermal minerals leasing within the Planning Area. For geothermal leasing, 35,115 acres are available, 139,691 acres are not available, and 14,025 acres are available, but with a no surface occupancy stipulation.
- In highly sensitive areas, where special stipulations are not sufficient to protect surface resource values, including recreation, special status species, and special designations, stipulations for no surface occupancy for leasable mineral development may be attached to the lease, in addition to no surface occupancy stipulations outlined in this plan.
- Manage consistent with the Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Rangewide Management Strategy.
- Classify the flat-tailed horned lizard management area as available for geothermal leasing, but with a no surface occupancy stipulation.
- Classify the 1-mile-wide planning zone surrounding the SRMA (excluding the flat-tailed horned lizard management area) as available for geothermal minerals leasing.
- Exclude donated lands from geothermal minerals leasing.
- Exclude the ISD SRMA from geothermal minerals leasing.
- Prohibit surface occupancy within critical habitat, ACEC(s), other special area designations, and camping and staging areas.
- Wilderness is not available for minerals leasing.
- Issue mineral material sales or free use permits on a case-by-case basis in the approximate 1-mile-wide planning zone around the ISD SRMA consistent with applicable land use plans.
- Prohibit mineral sales or free use permits within the ISD SRMA.

II.2.2.3.7.2 Caliente Resource Management Plan

The goals and objectives for Minerals under the Caliente RMP do not include goals and objectives applicable to DRECP decisions.

In summary, the management actions contained within the Caliente RMP (BLM 1997) include the following, by management area.

South Sierra Management Decisions

Fluid Minerals

- The South Sierra Management Area contains a total of 472,000 acres of mineral estate of which approximately 128,300 acres are within Wilderness and WSAs,

which are closed to mineral leasing. Approximately 346,400 acres remain potentially available for leasing.

- Approximately 10,100 BLM acres would be closed to oil and gas leasing, and an additional 18,500 acres would be closed to geothermal development.
- Approximately 3,000 acres would be open to oil and gas leasing with a No Surface Use stipulation.
- Approximately 234,700 BLM acres would be open to oil and gas leasing under standard terms and conditions.
- Approximately 95,600 acres would be open to oil and gas leasing under a Limited Surface Use (LSU) stipulation.
- Special categories of the LSU stipulation will be applied as follows:
  - 34,400 acres are subject to the LSU-Protected Species stipulation
  - 22,300 acres are subject to the LSU-Critical Habitat stipulation
  - 27,400 acres are subject to the LSU-Sensitive Species stipulation
  - 18,500 acres are subject to the LSU-Raptor stipulation

Solid Minerals

- Existing land use allocations for Wilderness Areas have closed 109,000 acres to entry under the General Mining Act of 1872.
- Approximately 6,300 acres are proposed for withdrawal from entry under the mining law in four areas. These areas would include portions of the Blue Ridge and Case Mountain ACECs and Erskine Creek and Keyesville SMAs.
- The remaining 356,700 acres within the South Sierra Management Area would remain open to exploration and development under existing laws and regulations.
- Management objectives and guidelines would be utilized to evaluate applications for development of the solid mineral and mineral material resources.

II.2.2.3.7.3 Bishop Resource Management Plan

Bishop RMP SOPs pertaining to Minerals are described on page 14 of the ROD (BLM 1993). In summary, they address reclamation bonds; claim markers; review of Notices of Intent for undue and unnecessary degradation determination; conformance with state, county, and local requirements; and survey and management of underground mines for wildlife, particularly bats.

Area-wide decisions pertaining to minerals (p. 22) indicate specific areas and acreages closed to locatable mineral entry (none within the DRECP Area) and state:

- Provide salable minerals for community and private use.

II.2.2.3.7.4 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The 2012 ROD for the Solar PEIS (BLM 2012a) amended land use allocation decisions and utility-scale transmission decisions within 89 plans in 6 southwestern states, including the CDCA Plan, the Bishop RMP, and the Caliente RMP. Amendments to the CDCA specific to mineral resources include amending land use plans with programmatic design features that would be required for all utility-scale solar energy projects on BLM-administered land including (p. 67):

- Early consultation with the BLM to identify activities that could impact mineral development activities and ways to minimize potential adverse impacts.
- All qualifying solar energy development ROWs will stipulate that the BLM retains the right to issue oil and gas or geothermal leases with a stipulation of no surface occupancy within the ROW area.
- Solar energy development shall be located to minimize conflicts with valid existing mineral rights and/or ongoing mineral development.
- For the Imperial East SEZ, the management design feature include protecting the potential for geothermal leasing under solar energy facilities, such that ROW authorizations would be made subject to future geothermal leasing with no surface occupancy stipulations.

II.2.2.3.8 Recreation and Visitor Services

II.2.2.3.8.1 California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as Amended

The goals and objectives for recreation and visitor services under the CDCA Plan are described on page 69 (Recreation Element; BLM 1999) and include:

- Provide for a wide range of quality recreation opportunities and experiences emphasizing dispersed undeveloped use.
- Provide a minimum of recreation facilities. Those facilities should emphasize resource protection and visitor safety.
- Manage recreation use to minimize user conflicts, provide a safe recreation environment, and protect desert resources.
- Emphasize the use of public information and education techniques to increase public awareness, enjoyment, and sensitivity to desert resources.

- Adjust management approach to accommodate changing visitor use patterns and preferences.
- Encourage the use and enjoyment of desert recreation opportunities by special populations, and provide facilities to meet the needs of those groups.

In summary, the applicable goals and management actions contained within the CDCA Plan include:

- Designate Superior and Ivanpah Dry Lakes for nonmotorized open-space recreational activities.
- Manage public lands to meet the demand for recreation use especially any significant demand adjacent to desert communities.
- Survey and construction activities on the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail and complete the BLM Management Plan. BLM will study National Historic Trail portions and consider Desert Trail concepts and implementation. Recreation Activity Management Plans will consider connector trails from urban centers to trail systems in the CDCA.
- Provide for scientific research and education on public lands, establish new areas for study, and incorporate education and research into the BLM's ongoing monitoring systems.
- Provide opportunities for solitude and primitive or unconfined forms of recreation in wilderness areas.
- Provide opportunities for motorized-vehicle play open areas. Make areas suitable for motorized-vehicle recreation available to the public through use of the state OHV funds.
- The BLM allows organized competitive events in MUCs M and I areas and across some MUC L areas including some specific routes established exclusively for permitted competitive recreation use.
- Ensure that access routes necessary for recreation are provided.
- To ensure visitor services are adequate, the BLM provides four basic components including Environmental Awareness Programs (interpretation and environmental education programs that provide practical and interesting information to enhance desert recreational experiences), an Outreach Program (a public affairs information office will be established in the Los Angeles area to provide information about the desert to the public), Volunteer Program (identify projects and sites which could be appropriate for volunteer efforts), and Maps and Brochures (develop maps and brochures for the desert).

- BLM rangers and other visitor services personnel will provide information, limited vehicle assistance, emergency medical assistance, search and rescue, enforcement of federal laws and regulations, and posting of signs.
- Visitor facilities such as campgrounds, trail heads, parking loops, and visitor information kiosks may be developed but such facilities will be kept to a minimum in the desert.
- Suitability of land for recreation experience is based on its MUC:
  - MUC C: This class is suitable for nonmechanical types of recreational experience which generally involve low to very low user densities. Permanent or temporary facilities for resource protection and public health may be allowed at the discretion of authorized officer or in accordance with approved Wilderness Plans.
  - MUC L: This class is suitable for recreation which generally involves low to moderate user densities. Permanent or temporary facilities for resource protection and public health may are allowed.
  - MUC M: This class is suitable for a wide range of recreational activities which may involve moderate to high user densities. Permanent or temporary facilities for resource protection and public health may are allowed.
  - MUC I: This class is suitable for recreation activities which generally involve High user densities. Permanent or temporary facilities for resource protection and public health may are allowed.

West Mojave Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

Specific goals and objectives for Recreation and Visitor Services are not identified under the WEMO.

In summary, the management actions contained within the WEMO (BLM 2006) include:

- Exclude vehicle speed events from DWMAs and Mohave Ground Squirrel Conservation Area; and eliminate select races.
- Seasonal restrictions on dual sport in DWMAs.
- Motorized vehicle camping guidelines.
- Minimum impact recreation (e.g., hiking, equestrian use, bird watching, photography) allowed in all areas.

Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

Specific goals and objectives for Recreation and Visitor Services are not identified under the NEMO.

In summary, the management actions contained within the NEMO include (BLM 2002a):

- Eliminate the existing Barstow to Vegas racecourse within the NEMO planning area.
- Eliminate general design criteria contained in 1980 CDCA Plan MUC Guidelines because of the extreme difficulty in finding environmentally suitable opportunities in the planning area.

Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert/CDCA Plan Amendment

The NECO RMP does not include goals and objectives and management actions for Recreation.

Note that in the NECO, OHV management is addressed under Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management; those management actions are listed here. The management actions for recreation include (BLM 2002b):

- Use of firearms would be permitted and regulated according to state regulations and county ordinances.
- Before a competitive OHV event in Johnson Valley to Parker corridor would be authorized an event-specific EA would be completed.
- Competitive motorized-vehicle events in which speed is the primary competitive factor would be prohibited except on approved competitive recreation routes (e.g., Johnson Valley to Parker route) and within OHV Recreation Areas.

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan

The goals and objectives for Recreation and Visitor Services under the ISD RAMP are described on page 2-80 of the ROD (BLM 2013a) and include:

- This recreation and visitor services blueprint (based on the BLM National Recreation and Visitor Services program) for the future also sets three primary goals for the BLM recreation program:
  - Improve access to appropriate recreation opportunities on BLM-managed lands.
  - Ensure a quality experience and enjoyment of natural, biological, and cultural resources on BLM-managed lands.
  - Provide for and receive fair value in recreation.
- To meet the specific needs and changing demands of recreation visitors and changes in BLM recreation management, a BLM California-specific Recreation and Visitor Services Strategy was completed in 2008 (BLM 2008). The strategy outlined a framework with specific goals, objectives, and actions to be implemented. The three primary goals of the document were designed to increase public land stewardship through consistent and coordinated management of the BLM California recreation

program in order to achieve the best possible balance of recreational uses and land health standards statewide. The three primary goals are to:

  - Set a framework for achieving sustainable experiences and quality of life outcomes for individuals, communities, and the environment.
  - Sustain diversity, distinctive character, and capacity of BLM recreation settings.
  - Increase the economic stability and sustainability of the BLM California recreation program.

- The seven main objectives for BLM recreation management in California are to:
  1. Manage public lands for recreation experiences and quality of life.
  2. Encourage sustainable travel/tourism collaborations.
  3. Provide fair value and return through fees and commercial services.
  4. Establish a comprehensive approach to travel management.
  5. Ensure public health and safety and improve facility condition and accessibility.
  6. Enhance and expand visitor services.
  7. Encourage and sustain collaborative partnerships, volunteers, and public service.

In summary, the management actions contained within the ISD RAMP include:

- Develop or retrofit facilities to accommodate visitation and meet agency requirements.
- Design all new facilities to meet the social needs of the visitors and the management needs of the BLM.
- Provide a minimum number of recreational facilities. Those facilities should emphasize resource protection and visitor safety.
- Determine if existing facilities meet accessibility standards, management objectives, and desired future conditions. Existing facilities deemed critical will be maintained and/or modified to be accessible, to the extent possible, and safe for visitor use. Facilities not meeting management objectives and accessibility standards will be considered for removal.
- Collect recreation fees.
- Collect Special Recreation Permit fees for commercial and noncommercial activities under the authority of the Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (Public Law 108-447, Section 804) and other applicable regulations and BLM policy.

- Conduct a visitor survey to provide public input on safety, natural, biological, and cultural resources concerns, and management of the planning area. Implement a visitor and OHV recreation survey.
- Work cooperatively with the OHV community, the environmental community, and other local, state, and federal agencies to develop and implement interpretive and public relations programs about issues and resources related to the planning area.
- Develop and maintain educational programs which may include on-the-ground improvements such as signs and interpretative kiosks, partnerships, and educational materials throughout the planning area as funding allows.
- Provide quality informational and interpretive materials and programs to enhance the visitor's knowledge of the planning area's flora, fauna, historic, recreational, and other significant resources and opportunities. Emphasize the use of public information and education techniques to increase public awareness, enjoyment, and sensitivity to desert resources REC-14 Consider utilization of concessionaire(s) to manage certain activities and uses in the planning area within the framework of the ISD RAMP.
- Develop ways of using concessions to help maintain or operate recreation areas.
- Protect at-risk cultural and historical resources from recreational damage as needed throughout the planning area. Work together with new and existing groups to foster partnerships that accomplish BLM goals and objectives.
- Prohibit collection of wood for home heating purposes.
- Prohibit burning wood with noncombustible items (pallets).
- Maintain and/or develop volunteer campground host program in appropriate areas.
- Prohibit vending in all areas closed to OHV recreation and in limited use areas.
- Create an environment to promote the health and safety of visitors, employees, and nearby residents by working with local, state, and federal agencies and interest groups.
- Manage recreational uses to minimize user conflicts, provide a safe recreation environment, and protect desert resources.
- Engage communities, including key enthusiasts, in the resolution of health and safety issues/other conflicts at BLM recreational sites or areas.
- Improve capacity to inform visitors about safety concerns (e.g., facilities, fire), environmental conditions, and emergency situations, both on site and by using web-based and other technologies.
- Work with law enforcement officers and public affairs staff when possible to publicize vandalism and convictions.

- Maintain involvement in community-based planning to address mutual needs including communities (all local governments), service-providing businesses, and the BLM.
- Engage chamber of commerce/tourism groups, outdoor businesses, heritage organizations, outfitters, other private recreation providers, and organized groups for ideas and ways to disseminate information regarding suitable visitor destinations on public lands, maps, and user ethics.
- Develop and maintain partnerships that fulfill local needs while balancing recreational demands in administering public lands.
- Continue and enhance partnerships with other federal and state agencies, such as the Department of Defense, California State Parks, and CDFW.
- Adjust management approach to accommodate changing visitor use patterns and preferences.
- Continue working with the business community, organized recreation groups, outfitters, communities, and interested individuals to instill a sense of pride and caring for public lands.
- Expand visitor education regarding a "pack it in, pack it out" policy. Continue to educate the public regarding "Leave No Trace or Tread Lightly!" ethics.
- Use alternative funding sources (such as Safe Accountable Flexible Efficient Transportation Equity Act: A Legacy for Users) to partner with local groups to further transportation planning.
- Allow camping and OHV recreation within the Dunebuggy Flats Campground.
- Allow camping and OHV recreation within some of the microphyll woodlands south of State Route 78 and north of Interstate 8.
- Prohibit camping within the microphyll woodlands south of Wash 33 and north of Wash 70. OHV recreation will continue to be allowed in this area.

II.2.2.3.8.2 Caliente Resource Management Plan

The goals and objectives for Recreation and Visitor Services under the Caliente RMP are described on page 15 of the RMP (BLM 1997) and include:

- In the South Sierra Management Area, assist in the maintenance of rural lifestyles and economies of local communities by providing for livestock grazing, community infrastructure needs, and a range of dispersed recreational opportunities.

In summary, the management actions contained within the Caliente RMP include the following, by management area.

Plan-Wide Land Decisions

- Camping up to 14 days per person within any 30-day period and up to 28 days in a 1-year period is allowed in any location not specifically closed to camping. Dispersed camping is not permitted within 100 feet of any freshwater source.
- Personal property left unattended on public land for more than 72 hours would be treated as abandoned.
- Shooting is not allowed within 0.25 mile of developed recreational sites, visitor facilities, livestock water improvements, guzzlers, the Poso Creek area (E½NE¼, Sec. 32, T. 27 S., R. 27 E., MDB&M), the area around Soda Lake, the vicinity of Painted Rock (closed to both shooting and hunting), and all authorized facilities belonging to lessees or permittees of the federal government, as well as buildings and residences on adjacent private lands. These areas, except Painted Rock, are still available for the lawful taking of game. The restrictions do not apply to federal, state, and local law enforcement officers who are engaged in their official duties.
- The speed limit on unpaved roads not maintained by the county shall be a maximum of 25 mph [miles per hour] (unless otherwise posted).
- Collection of wood, plant material, or minerals specimens, other than casual collection, requires a permit.

II.2.2.3.8.3 Bishop Resource Management Plan

Bishop RMP SOPs for Recreation and Visitor Services (BLM 1993, p. 14) include those pertaining to Travel Management and described in Section II.2.2.3.2.3; and another expressing the commitment to make suitability determinations for waterways under the Wild and Scenic River review process.

The following area-wide decisions address recreation and visitor services within the DRECP Area (p. 17):

- Manage the resource area to provide for a variety of dispersed recreation opportunities. Emphasize primitive, semi-primitive motorized, semi-primitive nonmotorized and roaded natural experiences. Maintain and enhance semi-primitive and other physical settings by providing compatible recreation opportunities within those settings. Manage visitor use to conform with semi-primitive and other physical settings. Recreation management may include developing trails for hiking, mountain biking, and horseback riding; providing OHV

use opportunities; designating scenic byways; interpreting natural and cultural resources; and establishing an environmental education program. The Bodie Bowl and the Alabama Hills will remain designated as SRMAs.

- Manage the Alabama Hills SRMA to protect unique geologic features and scenic values and to provide compatible recreational opportunities.
- Provide campgrounds at Tuttle Creek and Goodale Creek (Owens Valley Management Area).

The following Bishop RMP decisions by management area also address recreation and visitor services within the DRECP Area:

Owens Valley Management Area

- Manage the Alabama Hills SRMA to enhance semi-primitive nonmotorized and roaded natural opportunities such as photography, mountain biking, hiking, four-wheel-drive touring, and horseback riding.
  - Allow camping in designated areas only.
  - Yearlong Protection of the Alabama Hills. Target resources are scenic values, geologic features, and riparian habitats.
  - Acquire up to 634 acres of private land to protect recreational and scenic values.
- Manage the remainder of the area for semi-primitive nonmotorized and motorized recreation opportunities.
- Designate Scenic Byways along Manzanar Road, Movie Flat Road and State Highway 168.

South Inyo Management Area

Manage for primitive recreation opportunities in the proposed Southern Inyo Wilderness Area.

Provide for semi-primitive motorized and semi-primitive nonmotorized recreation opportunities in the remainder of the area.

- Manage the suitable portion of the Southern Inyo WSA as wilderness.
- Acquire easements for hiking access to the Long John Canyon, Pat Keyes, Union Wash, and Forgotten Pass trails.
- Yearlong Protection of the proposed wilderness. Target resources include all wilderness values.

Owens Lake Management Area

- Provide direction and financial support to the Interagency Visitor Center.

II.2.2.3.8.4 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The 2012 ROD for the Solar PEIS (BLM 2012a) amended land use allocation decisions and utility-scale transmission decisions within 89 plans in 6 southwestern states, including the CDCA Plan, the Bishop RMP, and the Caliente RMP. Amendments to the CDCA specific to recreation include amending land use plans with programmatic design features that would be required for all utility-scale solar energy projects on BLM-administered land including:

- Exclusions under the BLM's Solar Energy Program include developed recreational facilities, special-use permit recreation sites, and all SRMAs identified in applicable land use plans (p. 38).
- Exclusions under the BLM's Solar Energy Program include Secretarially designated National Recreation, Water, or Side and Connecting Trails and National Back Country Byways (BLM State Director-approved) identified in applicable BLM and local land use plans (available at http://www.americantrails.org/NRTDatabase), including any associated corridor or lands identified for protection through an applicable land use plan (p. 39).
- Exclusions under the BLM's Solar Energy Program include Wild, Scenic, and Recreational Rivers designated by Congress, including any associated corridor or lands identified for protection through an applicable river corridor plan (p. 39).
- Project developers shall consult with the BLM early in the project planning to identify public access and recreation use areas in and adjacent to the project site and identify methods to minimize conflicts (p. 60).
- Solar facilities shall not be sited in areas designated as unique or important recreation resources (such as SRMAs), where it has been determined that a solar facility or other such development of the land would be in direct conflict with the objectives of the relevant management plan (p. 61).
- Exclusions under the BLM's Solar Energy Program include all units of the BLM NLCS, congressionally designated National Scenic and Historic Trails (National Trails System Act, Public Law 90-543, as amended), and National Trails System Act trails recommended as suitable for designation (p. 39).

- Project developers shall consult with the BLM and the trail administering agency early in the project planning to help determine the proposed project's conformance with trail management prescriptions and other potential trail-related constraints (p. 127).
- Potential replacement of acreages lost for OHV use (p. 60).

II.2.2.3.9 Soil, Water, and Water-Dependent Resources

II.2.2.3.9.1 California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as Amended

The CDCA Plan does not establish goals specifically for soil resources. The goals, objectives, and authorities for water resources under the CDCA Plan are described on page 117 (CDCA Water-Resources Program; BLM 1999) and include:

- Clean Water Act—The purpose of BLM implementation of this act is to prevent water-quality deterioration and to improve water quality where it has already been degraded. In addition to the act itself, further direction is given by Executive Order 12088, which instructs the federal government to comply with water-pollution control regulations, and by the 208 Water-Quality Management Report (BLM 1979).
- Safe Drinking Water Act—The purpose of complying with this act is to insure safe drinking water in accordance with applicable drinking-water standards. Executive Order 12088 instructs Federal agencies to implement the act.
- Floodplain Management—The purpose of floodplain management is the avoidance of adverse impacts resulting from the occupancy and modification of floodplains.
- Water Rights—Presidential messages of June 6 and July 12, 1978, provided the initiative for establishing certainty in regard to federal and state relations in water rights. The Department of the Interior Solicitor's Opinion No. M-36914 of June 25, 1979, was an initial step in clarifying federal and state roles. Ultimately, however, federal water rights must be identified and quantified. This will be accomplished through an inventory of existing BLM water uses and needs, in relation to existing or needed water rights. Procedures for BLM compliance with state water-right laws will be identified in BLM Manual 7154, "Water Rights," (reserved). This manual will be used in complying with acceptable State procedures to obtain water rights for Bureau management programs, wherever possible. This effort will be undertaken in close coordination with the State of California.
- Water Development—Several Bureau management programs specified in the FLPMA require the use of developed water supplies to insure the availability of water. In addition to obtaining and protecting water rights, adequate data concerning the occurrence of surface and ground water must be available to facilitate the location of developments.

- Water Storage Project—A number of water conservation projects are being investigated by the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California (MWD) with encouragement and support from the U.S. Water and Power Resources Service, State Resources Agency, and CSLC. These projects may include spreading facilities near the Colorado River Aqueduct and retrieval and pump-back facilities within storage basin areas. The MWD is presently investigating two such basins for underground storage—Shavers and Hayfield. The BLM recognizes the importance of these future projects and the present uncertainty associated with the location of facilities. These facilities may be allowed on public land but will be considered on a case-by-case basis in MUCs L, M, and I with appropriate environmental assessment (i.e., EA or EIS).

In summary, the management actions contained within the CDCA Plan include:

Soil

- Potential reclamation of motorized vehicle-use open areas such that they could be continuously used in the future and avoid spreading to new areas.
- Implement soil studies to investigate the impacts to soils from different management actions such as cattle grazing, off-road vehicles, and utility corridors. Conduct soil inventories with different levels of detail throughout the CDCA where appropriate.
- Monitor soil impacts.

Water and Water-Dependent Resources

- Implement the CDCA Water Resources Program including tasks such as acquisition and protection of water rights, performing a water use and needs inventory, regional and site specific investigation of water quantity and quality, monitoring baseline water quality and impacts of activities, monitoring public drinking water, conducting floodplain delineations, impact analysis, and special studies; and non-BLM initiated projects (p. 117).
- Manage wetlands and riparian areas to avoid long-term and short-term impacts associated with destruction, loss, or degradation; preserve and enhance natural and beneficial values, and include practical measures to minimize harm in all actions.
- Manage water resources based on the MUC:
    - MUC C: These areas will be managed to maintain and enhance both surface and groundwater resources
    - MUC L: Areas designated in this class will be managed to provide for the protection and enhancement of surface and groundwater resources, except for instances of short-term degradation caused by water development projects. Best

management practices, developed by the BLM during the planning process outlined in the Clean Water Act Section 208, will be used to avoid degradation and to comply with Executive Order 12088.

- MUCs M and I: Areas designated in this class will be managed to minimize degradation of water resources. Best management practices, developed by the BLM during the planning process outlined in the Clean Water Act, Section 208, will be used to keep impacts on water quality minimal and to comply with Executive Order 12088.

West Mojave Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

The WEMO recommends the establishment of Regional Standards for Public Land Health and set forth standards to meet or exceed national policy for watersheds, ecological processes, water quality, and habitats, as well as guidelines to meet those standards (BLM 2006). These are detailed on pages 2-120 to 2-122. Until these standards and guidelines are approved by the Secretary of the Interior, these lands continue to be managed under the fallback standards specified at 43 CFR Part 4100.

Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for Soil, Water, and Water-Dependent Resources under the NEMO.

Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert/CDCA Plan Amendment

The NECO recommends the establishment Regional Standards for Public Land Health and set forth Standards to meet or exceed National Policy for watersheds, ecological processes, water quality, and habitats, as well as guidelines to meet those standards (BLM 2002b). These are detailed on pages 2-11 through 2-13 of the Plan. Until these standards and guidelines are approved by the Secretary of the Interior, these lands continue to be managed under the fallback standards specified at 43 CFR Part 4100.

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan

The goals and objectives for Soil Resources under the ISD RAMP are described on page 2-25 and for Water Resources on page 2-26 (BLM 2013a). These goals and objectives include:

Soil

- Manage soils to maintain productivity and to minimize erosion.
- Preserve the natural process of dune movement and formation.
- Meet Land Health Standard No. 1, as related to soils and as described in Section 2.8.

Water

- General
  - Promote BLM activities or authorized activities that do not degrade surface or groundwater in the planning area.
  - Promote water quality to achieve or make significant progress toward achieving established BLM management objectives such as meeting wildlife needs.
  - Meet proposed Land Health Standard No. 4, as related to water quality (see Section 2.8.2).
- Surface Water
  - Identify and protect surface waters where possible.
  - Preserve and enhance the natural condition and hydrology of washes.
  - Identify area-wide use restrictions or other protective measures to meet federal, state, and local water quality requirements.
- Groundwater
  - Make groundwater, where present, available for beneficial use on public lands in coordination with the State of California and Imperial County.

The following are the management actions for Soil and Water resources:

- Minimize surface disturbance from authorized activities. Post-activity disturbed surfaces will be restored to pre-disturbance or natural conditions as applicable.
- Incorporate erosion control measures into project on a case-by-case basis.
- Prevent or reduce water quality degradation through implementation of applicable best management practices or other specific mitigation measures, when applicable.
- Continue to maintain or improve water quality in accordance with state and federal standards. Consult with the appropriate state agencies on proposed projects that may significantly affect water quality.
- Maintain authorized vehicle routes in a manner that will promote natural hydrology and protect water quality through application of best management practices.

The ISD RAMP recommends the establishment Regional Standards for Public Land Health and sets forth standards to meet or exceed National Policy for watersheds, ecological processes, water quality, and habitats, as well as guidelines to meet those standards. These are detailed on pages 2-21 to 2-23. Until these standards and guidelines are approved by

the Secretary of the Interior, these lands continue to be managed under the fallback standards specified at 43 CFR Part 4100.

II.2.2.3.9.2 Caliente Resource Management Plan

Caliente RMP area-wide management objectives for soils, water, or water-dependent resources are described on pages 3 and 49–52 (BLM 1997) and are incorporated by reference.

In summary, the management actions contained within the Caliente RMP include:

- Naturally occurring waters on public lands, including public water reserves, would be managed to maintain, improve, or benefit in-stream flow requirements needed for riparian systems. Applications for water developments or diversions on public lands would be approved only if the above needs have been met (p. 20).

II.2.2.3.9.3 Bishop Resource Management Plan

Bishop RMP SOPs for Soil, Water, and Air are described on page 13 of the ROD (BLM 1993):

In summary, the plan-wide management actions contained within the Bishop RMP include:

- Prohibit groundwater pumping where it would interfere with valid existing water uses, desired plant community goals, or other resource condition objectives.

II.2.2.3.9.4 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The 2012 ROD for the Solar PEIS (BLM 2012a) amended land use allocation decisions and utility-scale transmission decisions within 89 plans in 6 southwestern states, including the CDCA Plan, the Bishop RMP, and the Caliente RMP. Amendments to the CDCA specific to soil and water resources include amending land use plans with programmatic design features that would be required for all utility-scale solar energy projects on BLM-administered land including (p. 62 and p. 67):

- Coordinate with BLM and other federal, state, and local agencies to assess soil erosion and minimize potential impacts.
- Solar energy development shall be sited, designed, and constructed to minimize soil erosion and geologic hazard concerns.
- Developers shall monitor compliance with conditions for soil resources and geologic hazards.
- Permanent stabilization of disturbed areas during final grading and landscaping of site and maintenance through life of facility.

- Soil erosion features for reclamation and decommissioning.
- Control project site drainage, erosion, and sedimentation related to stormwater runoff, and develop measures to prevent adverse impacts associated with soil deposition and erosion throughout and downslope of the project site. Implement a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan.
- Project developers shall conduct a hydrologic study (or studies) that demonstrate a clear understanding of the local surface water and groundwater hydrology. Developers shall coordinate with BLM and other federal, state, and local agencies to identify water use for solar energy project and secure a reliable and legally available water source.
- Project developers shall avoid and/or minimize impacts on existing surface water features, including streams, lakes, wetlands, floodplains, intermittent/ephemeral streams, and playas (any unavoidable impacts would be minimized or mitigated) and in nearby regions resulting from the development in accordance to applicable laws and regulations. Project developers shall avoid, minimize, and mitigate impacts on groundwater and surface water resources in accordance with laws and policies.
- Developer will monitor compliance with terms and conditions regarding water resources and consult with the BLM through operations and maintenance and decommissioning of the project.
- Maintain aquatic, riparian, and other water-dependent resources.

II.2.2.3.10 Visual Resources Management

II.2.2.3.10.1 California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as Amended

The CDCA Plan incorporates VRM goals based on the MUC Guidelines (BLM 1999).

In summary, the management actions contained within the CDCA Plan include:

- Appropriate levels of management, protection, and rehabilitation on all public lands in the CDCA commensurate with visual resource management objectives in the MUC guidelines.
- Evaluate the extent of change created in a given landscape and specify appropriate design or mitigation measures using BLM's contract rating process.

West Mojave Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for VRM under the WEMO.

Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for VRM under the NEMO.

Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert/CDCA Plan Amendment

The NECO RMP does not include goals and objectives and management actions for visual resources.

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan

The goals and objectives for VRM under the ISD RAMP are described on page 2-60 of the ROD (BLM 2013a) and are incorporated by reference. The ISD RAMP set VRM classes ranging from Class I to IV, and all future projects and actions must adhere to the VRM class objectives. These classes are described in detail on page 2-60 of the ROD. See also Map 2-2 of the ROD.

Table II.2-13
Visual Resource Management Classes within Imperial Sand Dunes Planning Area

VRM Class	Acres
Class I	26,000
Class II	105,000
Class III	69,000
Class IV	15,000
Total	**215,000**

The management actions contained within the ISD RAMP includes:

- Incorporate design considerations to minimize potential impacts to public lands' visual values into all surface-disturbing activities, regardless of size. Proponents will be encouraged to meet with BLM personnel to discuss and provide input during the initial planning and design phase to minimize costly redesign and mitigation at a later time.
- Evaluate proposed surface-disturbing activities in accordance with BLM VRM Handbook H-8431-1 Visual Resource Contrast Rating. Conduct a visual contrast analysis to ensure that projects meet the VRM class requirements for that area. This visual contrast analysis from Key Observation Points will consider the following factors: distance (between project and Key Observation Points), angle of observation, length of

time the proposed project would be in view, relative size or scale, season of use, light conditions, recovery time, spatial relationships, atmospheric conditions, and motion.

- Use visual resource design techniques and best management practices to mitigate the potential for short- and long-term visual impacts from other uses and activities until demonstrated to meet the VRM class objectives.
- Designate wilderness as Class I, in accordance with BLM's national policies.
- Encourage retrofitting of existing facilities to comply with the VRM Class objectives for that area by working in partnership with existing ROW holders (such as communication sites). Incorporate mitigation measures, such as repainting existing facilities, and carefully locating and designing new facilities (such as by using topographic screening) to minimize their contrast with the characteristic landscape.
- Designate ACECs as Class II or in some cases as Class III. Designate Class III and IV to areas with high potential for renewable resource uses, areas that are managed for high recreational value, and other areas which continue to be managed primarily for habitat values, regardless of scenic quality.

II.2.2.3.10.2 Caliente Resource Management Plan

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for VRM under the Caliente RMP.

II.2.2.3.10.3 Bishop Resource Management Plan

The Bishop RMP assigned VRM classes and corresponding VRM standards to all lands in the Field Office area, and states as an area-wide decision, "Manage all activities to conform with VRM standards. VRM standards will be applied according to Visual SOPs" (p. 17). VRM Class Objective Descriptions are provided in the RMP Appendix 3 (p. A3-1) and are incorporated by reference (BLM 1993).

The following Bishop RMP SOPs (pp. 14–15) pertain to visual resources within the DRECP Area:

- Enforcement emphasis for VRM classes 2–4 will be along key observation points. Outside key observation points, the BLM will apply designated VRM class prescriptions but the Area Manager may allow development to exceed the VRM class for reasons such as technological infeasibility or low visitor use.
- The Area Manager may allow temporary projects to exceed VRM standards in class 2–4 areas, if the project will terminate within 2 years of initiation. Rehabilitation will begin at the end of the 2-year period. During the temporary

project, the Area Manager may require phased mitigation to better conform with prescribed VRM standards.

- VRM classes acknowledge existing visual contrasts. Existing facilities or visual contrasts will be brought into VRM class conformance to the extent practicable when the need or opportunity arises (i.e., ROW renewals, mineral material site closures, or route designation activity plans).
- All power lines will be constructed using non specular wire. Steel towers will be constructed of corten steel.

Area-wide decisions include utility corridor designations and state,

- Future facilities in these corridors may be allowed to exceed VRM and Yearlong Protection standards. Extensive mitigation will be required and may include, but is not limited to:
  - Painting and use of nonspecular steel materials to reduce visibility; and
  - Requiring the use of shared facilities.

Bishop RMP decisions by management area specify the locations to be managed according to the following VRM standards (for locations within the DRECP area):

Owens Valley Management Area

- VRM II — Alabama Hills SRMA, Red Mountain, and Crater Mountain
- VRM IV — Poleta Canyon and Fish Springs Hill
- VRM III — Remainder of the area

South Inyo Management Area

- VRM I — Proposed wilderness area
- VRM II — The foothills of the Inyo Mountains and that portion of the Inyo Range south of Swansea
- VRM III — Remainder of the area

Owens Lake Management Area

- VRM III — East of Owens Lake
- VRM IV — West of Owens Lake

II.2.2.3.10.4 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The 2012 ROD for the Solar PEIS (BLM 2012a) amended land use allocation decisions and utility-scale transmission decisions within 89 plans in 6 southwestern states, including the CDCA Plan, the Bishop RMP, and the Caliente RMP. Amendments to the CDCA Plan specific to visual resources include amending land use plans with programmatic design features that would be required for all utility-scale solar energy projects on BLM-administered land including (p. 94):

- Early consultation with BLM to help determine a proposed project's potential conformance to VRM class designations and potential constraints to avoid costly unforeseen planning implications and redesign.
- Site solar facilities to minimize glint and glare and night-sky effects.
- The siting and design of solar facilities, structures, roads, and other project elements shall explore and document design considerations for reducing visual dominance in the viewshed and shall comply with the VRM class objectives.
- Project developer shall perform a preconstruction meeting with BLM to coordinate the project construction VRM mitigation strategy. Final design and construction documents will be reviewed with regard to the visual mitigation elements. The review of construction documents will include, but not be limited to, grading, drainage, revegetation, vegetation clearing, and feathering.
- Compliance for visual mitigation will be monitored by the project developer.
- Reclamation will begin immediately after construction to reduce visual impacts, in coordination with the BLM.

II.2.2.3.11 Wild Horses and Burros

II.2.2.3.11.1 California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as Amended

The goals and objectives for wild horses and burros under the CDCA Plan are described on page 51 (Wild Horse and Burro Element; BLM 1999) and include:

- Provide year-long feed, cover, and water requirements for wild horses and burros within specified areas. Feed and water requirements will be satisfied by reserving and developing sufficient forage and water to maintain biological demands for a specific number of animals. Cover or living area will be provided and preserved through Herd Management Area Plans
- Protect wild horses and burros on public lands by conducting surveillance to prevent unauthorized removal or undue harassment of animals.

- Remove all wild horses and burros from areas not designated for retention. Remove excess wild horses and burros from designated retention areas.

In summary, the management actions contained within the CDCA Plan include:

- Protect and Manage 17 Herd Management Areas. Eliminate herds from five horse and burro areas. Prepares Herd Management Area Plans (HMAPs) for the 17 areas, grouping the areas as appropriate. HMAPs will identify objectives for the horses and burros management techniques to improve the conditions of the animals and improve the habitat requirements of food, cover, water, and living space. Preparation of the HMAPs is prioritized based on the level of resource conflicts found within the HMAPs.
- No Herd Management Areas will be established on military land. The Yuma, Arizona BLM District has the lead for implementing the Colorado River HMAP which contains the Dead Mountain, Chemehuevi, Chocolate/Mules, and Picachos Herd Management Area.
- A capture plan will be prepared whenever horses and burros are removed. If it is not possible to capture horses and burros, burros may be euthanized.
- Protection of wild horses and burros on public lands will be provided through vehicular patrols of the Desert by Desert Rangers and other BLM employees.
- A monitoring system will be designed to evaluate the effectiveness of HMAP management techniques in meeting objectives of the HMAP including estimates of population numbers, monitoring distribution and movement patterns, monitoring population dynamics, determination of seasonal diets, and monitoring vegetation. HMAP population levels may be adjusted based on monitoring.

West Mojave Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for Wild Horses and Burros under the WEMO.

Northern and Eastern Mojave Desert Management Plan/CDCA Plan Amendment

There are no goals and objectives specifically identified for Wild Horses and Burros under the NEMO.

In summary, the management actions contained within the NEMO include (BLM 2002a):

- Eliminate the Clark Mountain Herd Management Area for wild horses and burros in the Ivanpah DWMA and adjust the Appropriate Management Level (AML) from 44 to 0 throughout the herd area to provide for recovery of the desert tortoise.

- In the Chicago Valley Herd Management Area, adjust the AML for wild horses and burros in the Amargosa watershed to reflect the current situation and prevent future impacts from the growth of herds on listed plants. AML for wild horses would be adjusted from 28 to 12 to maintain the current herd of animals, and AML for burros would be adjusted from 28 to 0.

Northern and Eastern Colorado Desert/CDCA Plan Amendment

There are no goals and objectives specifically identified for Wild Horses and Burros under the NEMO. The management actions for wild horses and burros include (BLM 2002b):

- Retaining and combining common herds and management units that are common to California and Arizona administrations, adjusting the boundaries and AMLs and designating a single BLM field office to manage the units, resolve management issues, and improve program administration.
- BLM would add historic burro range in the Chocolate Mountains-Cargo Muchacho Mountains.
- BLM would combine Chemehuevi and Havasu Herd Management Areas into a single burro herd management area and modify boundaries to reduce conflicts.
- Eliminate the Picacho Herd Management Area for horses.
- Combine historical burro range and Chocolate/Mule Mountains and Cibola-Trigo Herd Management Area and modify boundary to reduce conflicts with Picacho State Recreation Area.

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for Wild Horse and Burro Management under the ISD RAMP. There are no designated herd management areas or populations of wild horses and burros within the ISD RAMP area.

II.2.2.3.11.2 Caliente Resource Management Plan

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for Wild Horse and Burro Management under the Caliente RMP. There are no designated herd management areas or populations of wild horses and burros within the Caliente RMP area.

II.2.2.3.11.3 Bishop Resource Management Plan

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for Wild Horse and Burro Management under the Bishop RMP. There are no designated herd

management areas or populations of wild horses and burros within the DRECP Area in the Bishop Field Office area.

II.2.2.3.11.4 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The 2012 ROD for the Solar PEIS amended land use allocation decisions and utility-scale transmission decisions within 89 plans in 6 southwestern states, including the CDCA Plan, the Bishop RMP, and the Caliente RMP (BLM 2012a). Amendments to the CDCA specific to wild horses and burros include amending land use plans with programmatic design features that would be required for all utility-scale solar energy projects on BLM-administered land including (p. 57):

- Early consultation with the BLM to assess and consider options to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate impacts on wild horses and burros and their management areas.
- Project access roads shall be sited, designed, constructed, fenced, and/or improved to minimize potential wild horse and burro collisions. Fences, or other appropriate structures, should be constructed to exclude wild horses and burros from solar energy project site facilities. Either water sources or access routes to water sources for horses and burros should be excluded from the solar energy development area, or alternate water sources or routes should be provided

II.2.2.3.12 Lands With Wilderness Characteristics

Where a given land use plan does not address Lands With Wilderness Characteristics, an inventory will be completed on a case-by-case basis and incorporated into the project-level NEPA document.

II.2.2.3.12.1 California Desert Conservation Area Plan, as Amended

The CDCA Plan does not address Lands with Wilderness Characteristics outside of Wilderness Areas and WSAs.

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan

The ISD RAMP ROD identified 42,083 acres as possessing wilderness characteristics (Wilderness Characteristic Unit [WCU] 1). The goals and objectives for Lands with wilderness characteristics under the ISD RAMP are described on page 2-69 of the ROD (BLM 2013a), and are incorporated by reference.

The management actions contained within the ISD RAMP include:

- Allow motorized recreation per OHV use allocations.

- Protect resource values that are present on the lands through prescriptions of the recreation management zones for that area.
- WCU 1 will be managed under Open, Open/No Camping, and Resource Protection Recreation Management Zones.
- WCU 1 is unavailable for solar and wind energy development.
- WCU 1 is not available for mineral leasing, mineral material sales, or free use permits.
- Lands within WCU 1 are to be retained and are not available for disposal (sale or exchange).

II.2.2.3.12.2 Caliente Resource Management Plan

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for Lands with Wilderness Characteristics under the Caliente RMP.

II.2.2.3.12.3 Bishop Resource Management Plan

There are no goals and objectives or management actions specifically identified for Lands with Wilderness Characteristics under the Bishop RMP.

II.2.2.3.12.4 Solar Programmatic Environmental Impact Statement

The 2012 ROD for the Solar PEIS amended land use allocation decisions and utility-scale transmission decisions within 89 plans in 6 southwestern states, including the CDCA Plan, the Bishop RMP, and the Caliente RMP (BLM 2012a).

The following design features are identified in the Solar PEIS ROD to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate potential impacts on specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics from solar energy development:

- Protection of existing values of specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics shall be evaluated during the environmental analysis for solar energy projects, and the results shall be incorporated into the project planning and design.
    - Assessing potential impacts on specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics shall include, but is not limited to, the following:
        - Identifying specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics in proximity to the proposed projects. In coordination with the BLM, developers shall consult existing land use plans and updated inventories.
        - Identifying lands that are within the geographic scope of a proposed solar energy project that have not been recently inventoried for

wilderness characteristics or any lands that have been identified in a citizen's wilderness proposal in order to determine whether they possess wilderness characteristics. Developers shall consider including the wilderness characteristics evaluation as part of the processing of a solar energy ROW application for those lands without a recent wilderness characteristics inventory. All work must be completed in accordance with current BLM policies and procedures.

- Evaluating impacts on specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics as part of the environmental impact analysis for the project and considering options to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate adverse impacts in coordination with the BLM.

- Methods to mitigate unavoidable impacts on specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics may include, but are not limited to, the following:
  - Acquiring wilderness inholdings from willing sellers.
  - Acquiring private lands from willing sellers adjacent to designated wilderness.
  - Acquiring private lands from willing sellers within proposed wilderness or WSAs.
  - Acquiring other lands containing important wilderness or related values, such as opportunities for solitude or a primitive, unconfined (type of) recreation.
  - Restoring wilderness, for example, modifying routes or other structures that detract from wilderness character.
  - Contributing mitigation monies to a "wilderness mitigation bank," if one exists, to fund activities such as the ones described above.
  - Enacting management to protect lands with wilderness characteristics in the same field office or region that are not currently being managed to protect wilderness character. Areas that are to be managed to protect wilderness characteristics under this approach must be of sufficient size to be manageable, which could also include areas adjacent to current WSAs or adjacent to areas currently being managed to protect wilderness characteristics.

- Solar facilities shall be sited, designed, and constructed to avoid, minimize, and/or mitigate impacts on the values of specially designated areas and lands with wilderness characteristics.

II.2.3 Natural Community Conservation Plan Elements of the No Action Alternative

Under the No Action Alternative, the CDFW would not propose to develop an NCCP to streamline future permitting of incidental take of CESA-listed species resulting from renewable energy projects and associated transmission in the California deserts. CESA permitting would occur on a project-by-project basis, and any mitigation required to offset the effects on state-listed species would not be based on a comprehensive, desert-wide conservation strategy, as proposed under the DRECP. The existing and proposed conservation and existing and proposed renewable energy development described under the Plan-wide No Action Alternative (Section II.2.1) serves as the description of the No Action Alternative for the NCCP.

II.2.4 General Conservation Plan Elements of the No Action Alternative

The USFWS proposed action is a component of the interagency DRECP Preferred Alternative. USFWS proposes to issue incidental take permits under the programmatic GCP, and to approve the GCP through the signing of a ROD for the USFWS NEPA portion of the DRECP Draft EIR/EIS and other internal USFWS analyses. Under the DRECP No Action Alternative, the USFWS would not approve the GCP or issue permits under the GCP.

Under the No Action Alternative, the two currently existing options for nonfederal proponents of renewable energy projects (individual developers, local jurisdictions, state agencies) would be available: (1) Projects that would not affect ESA-listed species could go forward, assuming other federal, state, and local laws would be met, as no USFWS incidental take permit would be needed. (2) Proponents of projects that would result in incidental take of ESA-listed species would have to apply to USFWS individually, project by project, for an incidental take permit, in order to comply with the ESA. Each applicant would have to develop an HCP; the streamlining benefits of the DRECP GCP would not be available. The USFWS has not received inquiries from any renewable energy proponents regarding incidental take permitting on nonfederal lands within the California deserts.

Under the No Action Alternative there would be no comprehensive conservation strategy implemented to include mitigation for renewable energy development on nonfederal lands. Any mitigation required by individual project HCPs likely would be piecemeal; however, the USFWS's permit decisions and determinations regarding HCPs would be informed by information and analysis developed during the DRECP planning process. Under the No Action Alternative, applicants would have to acquire mitigation lands only on appropriate nonfederal lands, as approved by USFWS.