



## NEWS RELEASE

County Administrative Office

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### County seeks public comment on renewable energy

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Important dates are coming up for public participation in the development of two renewable energy policy initiatives.

The Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan, or DRECP, <http://www.drecp.org>, is a state and federal effort to balance desert conservation with renewable energy development in the desert regions of seven California counties, including San Bernardino County. San Bernardino County Government's role in the DRECP is essentially the same as the public's: The County can offer comments, but it has no direct authority over the content or outcome of the DRECP.

A draft of the DRECP can be viewed at <http://www.drecp.org/draftdrecp/>. The state and federal governments are accepting public comments on the draft DRECP through February 23, 2015. Comments can be made to [docket@energy.ca.gov](mailto:docket@energy.ca.gov) or by visiting <http://www.drecp.org/about/contact.html#comments>.

The County has drafted its proposed comments on the draft DRECP and on February 10, 2015, at 2 p.m., the Board of Supervisors will conduct a special meeting to consider staff's recommendation for the County's proposed response, which can be viewed at <http://cob-sire.sbcounty.gov/sirepub/pubmtgframe.aspx?meetid=2535&doctype=AGENDA> and clicking on Agenda Item 1.

The County cannot accept comments on the state/federal draft DRECP itself, only on the County's proposed response.

This special meeting will take place in the Board of Supervisors Covington Chambers in San Bernardino, with opportunities for videoconference testimony from both the Hesperia and Joshua Tree county government centers. The meeting will also be webcast and can be viewed at <http://www.sbcounty.gov/main/countydirect.asp>.

The other renewable energy policy initiative with an important date looming is the County General Plan renewable energy element. Unlike the DRECP, the County General Plan renewable energy element is a County government project that would balance desert conservation with renewable energy development within the unincorporated areas of San Bernardino County not owned by the state or federal government.



County Land Use staff will conduct a listening session on plans for the County General Plan renewable energy element on February 19, 2015, from 2 to 4 p.m. in the Board of Supervisors Covington Chambers in San Bernardino, with opportunities for videoconference testimony from both the Hesperia and Joshua Tree county government centers. This session will begin with an overview of the County's planning progress and priorities from County Planning Director Terri Rahhal. The listening session will be the third round of public exchange on the County General Plan renewable energy element process. Additional public workshops will follow in the spring.

"The DRECP and County General Plan renewable energy element both involve renewable energy land use planning, but the similarities end there," said County Land Use Services Director Tom Hudson. "The DRECP is a state and federal process over which the County has no jurisdiction. The County General Plan renewable energy element is the County's effort to involve County residents and other stakeholders in creating responsible renewable energy land use policy for the unincorporated areas."

Board of Supervisors Chairman James Ramos and Vice Chairman Robert A. Lovingood represent the County's desert communities and have been very active in both processes on behalf of their constituents.

"With the public's help, we can balance the need to preserve our desert environment with the need for renewable energy," Chairman Ramos said. "The upcoming hearing on the County's response to the DRECP and the County General Plan renewable energy element listening session are important opportunities for the public to become involved and have their voices heard."

"The DRECP is a state and federal plan that will have a major impact on our desert, so I encourage local residents to share their thoughts and concerns," Vice Chairman Lovingood said.

Both the February 10 special Board of Supervisors meeting and the February 19 listening session will be conducted at:

- Covington Chambers  
County Government Center, First Floor  
385 N. Arrowhead Ave., San Bernardino

During the meetings, the public can participate via videoconferencing at:

- Jerry Lewis High Desert Government Center  
15900 Smoke Tree Street, Hesperia
- Bob Burke Joshua Tree Government Center  
63665 Twentynine Palms Highway, Joshua Tree