

**NOTICE OF AVAILABILITY OF THE DRAFT PLAN AMENDMENT (PA)/  
ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT STATEMENT (EIS)/ENVIRONMENTAL  
IMPACT REPORT (EIR) FOR THE SODA MOUNTAIN SOLAR PROJECT  
(SCH #2012101075)**

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), together with the County of San Bernardino (County), California, has prepared a Joint Draft Plan Amendment/Environmental Impact Statement/Environmental Impact Report (PA/EIS/EIR) for the proposed Soda Mountain Solar Project located in central San Bernardino County, Calif., entirely on BLM-administered lands approximately 6 miles southwest of the town of Baker. The BLM and the County of San Bernardino have prepared the Draft PA/EIS/EIR to evaluate potential impacts associated with the proposed Soda Mountain Solar Project and Alternatives. This project is proposed by Soda Mountain Solar, LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of Bechtel Development Company, Inc. (Bechtel). Soda Mountain Solar, LLC has submitted applications to the BLM seeking a right-of-way grant for the proposed project and to the County seeking a groundwater well permit.

The Draft EIS/EIR for the Soda Mountain Solar Project is available for public review and comment. The Soda Mountain Solar Project includes the construction, operation, maintenance, and decommissioning of an approximately 2,222-acre (ac), 358-megawatt (MW) alternating current (AC) solar photovoltaic (PV) energy generation facility. The proposed action would include construction and operation of solar arrays, access roads, collector lines, a substation, a switchyard, and ancillary buildings and other infrastructure. All of the proposed facilities would be located on Federal lands managed by the BLM Barstow Field Office.

The document includes a draft BLM California Desert Conservation Area Plan (CDCA Plan) Amendment (PA) also available for public comment. BLM, as the lead agency under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and the County of San Bernardino, as the lead agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), jointly prepared the Draft PA/EIS/EIR to analyze the site-specific impacts of the proposed project on air quality, biological resources, cultural resources, water resources, geological resources and hazards, hazardous materials handling, land use, noise, and visual resources. In addition, the Draft PA/EIS/EIR analyzes the effects of administrative actions that would be associated with the approving the proposed solar facility, including the ROW grant and the necessary amendments to the BLM's 1980 CDCA Plan, as amended.

This document has been prepared to meet the state requirements of CEQA and the federal requirements of NEPA. The Draft PA/EIS/EIR is being circulated to the public, and to interested agencies in accordance with CEQA and NEPA, to provide a meaningful opportunity for the public and affected agencies to review and comment on the document. As identified therein, key potentially significant impacts from the proposed action would include: 1) Air Quality (maximum daily construction-related emissions would exceed air district thresholds); 2) Wildlife (removal of 2,455.57 acres of desert tortoise habitat, potential collision risk for birds and bats, impacts to wildlife movement corridor); 3) Visual Resources (cumulative visible alteration to the I-15

corridor); and 4) Water Resources (potential groundwater drawdown impacts on nearby springs).

**The public comment period will begin on November 29, 2013, and will end on March 3, 2014.** Comments can be sent by mail to Jeff Childers, BLM California Desert District Office, 22835 Calle San Juan de Los Lagos, Moreno Valley, CA 92553, or by email to [sodamtnsolar@blm.gov](mailto:sodamtnsolar@blm.gov). Paper copies and compact discs of the Draft PA/EIS/EIR are available upon request, and can be reviewed at the locations listed below.

Public meetings will be held and noticed separately by mail to recipients of the Draft PA/EIS/EIR and in area newspapers. All written public comments received during the comment period will be used to prepare the final environmental documents and plan amendment.

Further details on the proposed Soda Mountain Solar Project can be found at: [http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/barstow/renewableenergy/soda\\_mountain.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/barstow/renewableenergy/soda_mountain.html). For information contact the Bureau of Land Management Project Manager, Jeff Childers at (951) 697-5308, or e-mail at [jchilders@blm.gov](mailto:jchilders@blm.gov).

The Draft PA/EIS/EIR is available for review at the following County locations:

**San Bernardino County  
Land Use Services Department**  
Planning Division  
385 North Arrowhead Avenue  
San Bernardino, CA 92415-0182

**San Bernardino County  
Land Use Services Department**  
Planning Division  
15900 Smoke Tree Street  
Hesperia, CA 92345

The Draft PA/EIS/EIR is also available for review at the following libraries and community locations:

**Barstow Branch Library**  
304 East Buena Vista  
Barstow, CA 92311

**Victorville Branch Library**  
15011 Circle Drive  
Victorville, CA 92392

**Needles Library**  
1111 Bailey Avenue  
Needles, CA 92363

**Adelanto Branch Library**  
11497 Bartlett Avenue  
Adelanto, CA 92301

**Rialto Branch Library**  
251 W. First Street  
Rialto, CA 92376

**Baker Community Services District**  
P.O. Box 590 Baker, CA 92309 [Mailing Address]  
72730 Baker Blvd., Baker, CA 92309 [Physical Address]