



United States Department of the Interior

BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

California State Office
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W1834
Sacramento, CA 95825
www.ca.blm.gov



Date: November 16, 2014

Bureau of Land Management California State Office Report to the California State OHV Commission

Further updates on the following subjects will be provided at the next OHV Commission meeting:

- Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP)
- West Mojave Plan Amendment (WEMO), Travel Transportation Management Plans & Environmental Impact Statement.
- Briefing from Bakersfield Field Office on Resource Management Plan and OHV Program

West Mojave Plan Amendment, Travel Transportation Management Plans & Environmental Impact Statement

BACKGROUND

The West Mojave Plan is a federal land use plan amendment adopted in 2006, that (1) presents a comprehensive strategy to conserve and protect the desert tortoise, the Mohave ground squirrel and over 100 other sensitive plants and animals and the natural communities of which they are a part, and (2) provides a streamlined program for complying with the requirements of the California and federal Endangered Species Acts (CESA and FESA, respectively).

The planning area covers 9.3 million acres in the western portion of the Mojave Desert in southern California covering parts of San Bernardino, Los Angeles, Kern, and Inyo Counties. The plan applies to the 3.2 million acres of public lands.

The Record of Decision for the West Mojave Plan /Amendment to the California Desert Conservation Area Plan was signed in March 2006. Other agencies did not adopt the habitat conservation plan proposed in the West Mojave Plan to cover their jurisdictions, and therefore the adopted plan only applies to public lands.

An amended Biological Opinion to the WEMO Plan from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service was signed in December 2007.

In September of 2009, the Court issued a summary judgment remanding the route designations made in the West Mojave Plan, but keeping other parts of the plan, primarily related to the conservation of species, in



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place. A remedy order based on this judgment was issued in January, 2011, and identified the West Mojave route network, with few changes, would be in place until the remedy order is satisfied.

To satisfy the remedy order, new route designations must be completed, consistent with the court's order, by September 30, 2015. This is the basis for the supplemental West Mojave EIS and specific travel management plans now under development.

As part of the remedy order, the court mandates the submission of quarterly progression reports, these reports can be found http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/cdd/west_mojave_wemo.html



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Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP)

Release Date: 11/13/14

Contacts: Dana Wilson, U.S. Bureau of Land Management,
916-978-4622
Jane Hendron, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
760-431-9440 ext. 205
Lori Sinsley, California Energy Commission,
916-654-4989
Clark Blanchard, California Department of Fish and
Wildlife, 916-651-7824

News Release No. CA-SO-15-06

Comment Period Extended on Draft Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

SACRAMENTO, Calif. – In response to public requests, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), California Energy Commission (CEC) and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) will extend the public comment period for the draft Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS) for 45 days.

The comment period, originally scheduled to close on January 9, 2015, will be extended through February 23, 2015.

The draft DRECP is an innovative renewable energy and conservation plan covering more than 22 million acres of land in Imperial, Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego counties. The draft is the result of collaboration among the BLM, FWS, CEC, CDFW and other stakeholders.

The draft proposes to protect areas in the California desert that are important for wildlife, recreation, cultural and other uses while also facilitating the timely permitting of solar, wind and geothermal energy projects and associated transmission in appropriate areas. The draft plan presents six alternative approaches for meeting renewable energy and conservation goals through 2040. Each alternative proposes a different conservation design and configuration of lands available for more efficient and predictable renewable energy project review. The draft plan also includes an analysis of the potential environmental impacts of these alternatives.

A recorded informational webinar to help the public navigate the DRECP documents is available at www.drecp.org. The website also contains instructions for providing written comments on the draft document.



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The draft DRECP EIR/EIS is available for review and download at www.drecp.org, at local libraries and agency offices, and on DVD. To request a DVD, please send an email request to drecp.info@energy.ca.gov or call (866) 674-9996 and provide a mailing address. For a list of local area libraries and agency offices that have the document on file (most are on DVD), please visit www.drecp.org/draftdrecp.

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California State Office 2800 Cottage Way W1623, Sacramento, CA 95825



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Stoddard Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Area

Located in the Mojave Desert of Southern California, Stoddard Valley Off-Highway Vehicle Area offers a diverse landscape for off-highway vehicle recreation. It is characterized by steep rocky mountains, rolling hills, open valleys, and winding sandy washes.

Elevations range from 5,000 feet on Stoddard Peak, to 2,800 feet at Turtle Valley. Vegetation consists of creosote scrub, annual grasses, wild flowers and the Joshua tree; a symbol of the Mojave Desert.

Access

The triangular-shaped riding area is formed by Interstate 15 and California Highway 247 (Barstow Road), immediately south of Barstow. Most visitors access the area to the east, off Interstate 15 at the Outlet Center Drive Exit (Sidewinder Road) or at the Hodge Road Exit, to the south on I-15.

From Barstow, take California Highway 247 (Barstow Road Exit from I-15) and go south 10 miles, turn either on Stoddard Wells Road or on to the access road behind the Slash-X Cafe. All entrances are dirt roads.



Activities

Most area visitors ride motorcycles or ATVs, or tour the area in four-wheel drive vehicles. The easily accessed areas off Sidewinder Road (Outlet Center Drive exit on I-15) are used extensively for OHV free play.

The eastern portions of the area and the Stoddard Mountain area are considered the most challenging places in the park to ride. The broad expanse of the central valley and the southern portions are for the novice and are used to improve skill of the rider. There are areas to the west of the slash X entrance that become a challenge for the intermediate rider. This 53,000 acre open riding area will offer a challenge to every degree of expertise and type of vehicle from the motocross racers to the beginning Quad rider. Four wheel drive clubs offer events in this area because it has diverse landscape and a riding experience for everyone.



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This area is used extensively for competitive racing events by permit. There are many occasions for hiking, rock scrambling, rock hounding, and plant, bird and wildlife watching. The desert tortoise, a state and federally listed threatened species, are found within the riding area.