

II.5 ALTERNATIVE 2

Alternative 2 is one of five action alternatives considered and analyzed in the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP or Plan) and Environmental Impact Report/Environmental Impact Statement (EIR/EIS). The description of Alternative 2 is first provided at an interagency level (Section II.5.1), which describes all Plan elements of the alternative. After the interagency description, the individual elements of the alternative are described, including the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA) elements of the DRECP (Section II.5.2), the Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) elements of the DRECP (Section II.5.3), and the General Conservation Plan (GCP) elements of the DRECP (Section II.5.4).

II.5.1 Interagency Description of Alternative 2

The interagency description of Alternative 2 includes the following main sections: Overview of Alternative 2, Conservation Strategy, Monitoring and Adaptive Management Program, Description of the Covered Activities, and Plan Implementation. The description of Alternative 2 for the DRECP and EIR/EIS encompasses the overall conservation strategy and description of Covered Activities on federal and nonfederal lands (i.e., state, county, city, and privately owned lands) within the Plan Area.

II.5.1.1 Overview of Alternative 2

The following provides a Plan-wide overview of Alternative 2. Alternative 2 integrates the renewable energy and resource conservation with other existing uses in the Plan Area and includes BLM LUPA elements, NCCP elements, and GCP elements.

Under Alternative 2 for the DRECP, an interagency conservation strategy for the Plan Area would be established that includes a streamlined process for the permitting of renewable energy and transmission development on both federal and nonfederal lands and a BLM LUPA providing Conservation and Management Actions (CMAs) for resources throughout the Plan Area on BLM-administered lands. Like the Preferred Alternative, Alternative 2 would consist of Development Focus Areas (DFAs), Study Area Lands, and the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope (including existing conservation areas, BLM LUPA conservation designations, and Conservation Planning Areas), Impervious and Urban Built-up Lands, Other Lands (including Military, Open Off-Highway Vehicle [OHV]) Areas, Tribal lands), and Undesignated Areas. These areas are defined in Section II.3.1, Interagency Description of the Preferred Alternative.

The BLM LUPA (Section II.5.2) provides the land use plan amendment description related to these components on BLM-administered lands, and it also describes the Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) designations and other CMAs for resources on

BLM-administered lands. The NCCP (Section II.5.3) and GCP for nonfederal lands (Section II.5.4) describe how these Plan components would provide for incidental take authorization of Covered Species under Section 2835 of the state Natural Community Conservation Planning Act and Section 10 of the federal Endangered Species Act.

Alternatives under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), including Alternative 2, must consider potential impacts on all aspects of the human environment, both the natural environment and the built environment, including biological and nonbiological resources. Additionally, Appendix M contains all the required components of a GCP.

Figure II.5-1 provides the Plan-wide map for Alternative 2.

Table II.5-1 provides an overview summary for Alternative 2. In summary, Alternative 2 would include approximately 2,473,000 acres of DFAs. Study Area Lands include 109,000 acres of Future Assessment Areas. The DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope would include 7,662,000 acres of existing conservation areas, 6,242,000 acres of BLM LUPA conservation designations, and 1,183,000 acres of Conservation Planning Areas. Of the over 19 million acres of the Plan Area outside of Military Lands, BLM Open OHV Areas, and Tribal Lands, there are approximately 13,565,000 acres of federally owned or administered lands and 5,420,000 of nonfederal lands. The BLM LUPA elements of Alternative 2 are described in Section II.5.2; the NCCP elements of Alternative 2 are described in Section II.5.3; and the GCP elements of Alternative 2 addressing nonfederal lands are described in Section II.5.4. Exhibit II.5-1 graphically displays the components of Alternative 2.

**Table II.5-1
Interagency DRECP Plan-Wide Alternative 2**

| Alternative Components | Acreage |
|---|----------------|
| DFAs | 2,473,000 |
| Study Area Lands | 109,000 |
| Future Assessment Areas | 109,000 |
| DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope | 15,087,000 |
| Existing conservation areas | 7,662,000 |
| BLM LUPA conservation designations | 6,242,000 |
| Conservation Planning Areas | 1,183,000 |
| Urban Areas, Other Lands, and Undesignated Areas | 4,916,000 |
| Impervious and Urban Built-up Land | 505,000 |
| Military Lands | 3,019,000 |
| Open OHV Areas | 264,000 |
| Imperial Sand Dunes, including the BLM Open OHV Area | 132,000 |

**Table II.5-1
Interagency DRECP Plan-Wide Alternative 2**

| Alternative Components | Acreage |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|
| Johnson Valley OHV Shared Use Area | 56,000 |
| Tribal Lands | 129,000 |
| Undesignated Areas | 811,000 |
| Total | 22,585,000 |

Notes: This Plan-wide alternative summary includes both federal lands and nonfederal lands. The summary specific to BLM-administered lands is provided in Section II.5.2, and the summary specific to nonfederal lands is provided in Section II.5.4. Overlaps of BLM LUPA conservation designations with existing conservation areas are reported in the existing conservation area acreages. The BLM LUPA conservation designation acreage reported includes both BLM-administered lands and non-BLM lands inholdings within the designation. The BLM LUPA would also designate approximately 2,463,000 acres of Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) in addition to the 193,000 acres of existing SRMAs, which are BLM designation overlays that overlap portions of the components provided in this table and described in Section II.5.2. Impervious and urban built-up lands occur within BLM LUPA conservation designations and DFAs 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.

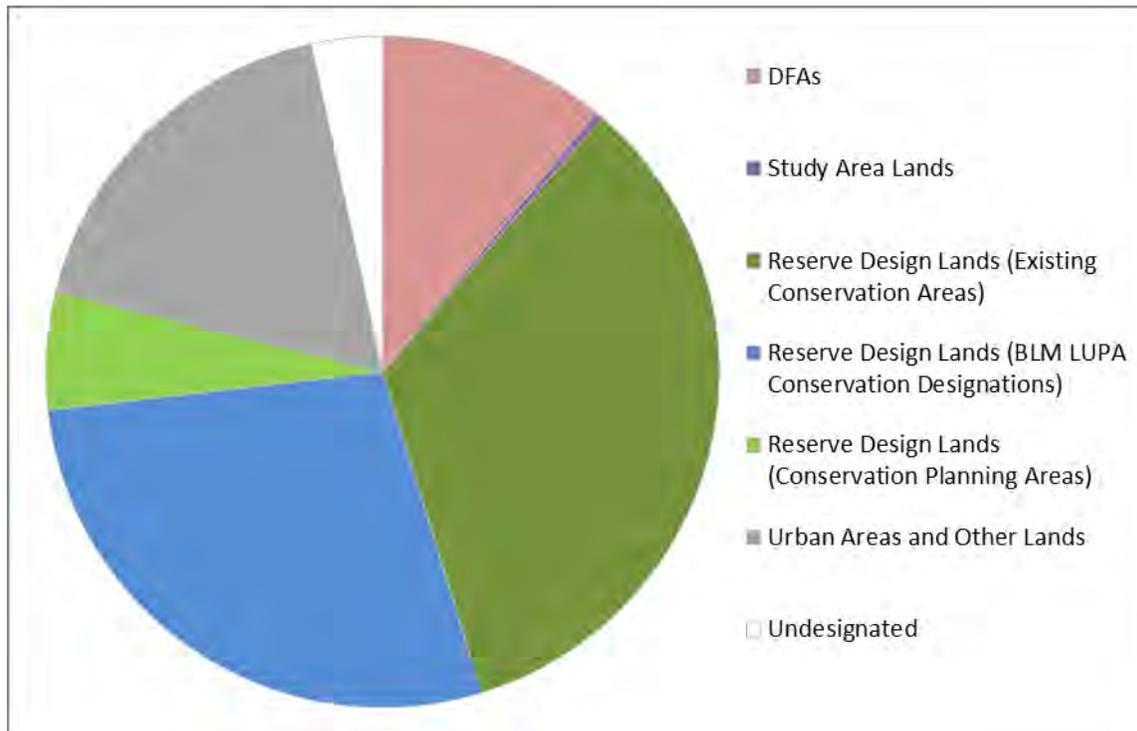


Exhibit II.5-1 Components of Alternative 2

II.5.1.2 Conservation Strategy

The Plan-wide conservation strategy for the DRECP was developed through the planning process described in Volume I, Chapter I.3. The process included: (1) establishing the

conservation focus on biological, cultural, recreation, and visual resources; (2) gathering baseline information; (3) identifying Biological Goals and Objectives (BGOs) and goals and objectives for nonbiological resources on BLM-administered land; (4) developing a comprehensive reserve design; (4) developing biological CMAs and CMAs for nonbiological resources on BLM land; and (6) developing a Monitoring and Adaptive Management Program. The approach and structure of the conservation strategy for Alternative 2 is the same as the conservation strategy for the Preferred Alternative.

II.5.1.2.1 Overview of the Structure and Content of the Biological Conservation Strategy for Alternative 2

The approach and structure of the conservation strategy under Alternative 2 is the same as that for the Preferred Alternative as described in Section II.3.1.2.

II.5.1.2.2 DRECP Proposed Covered Species List

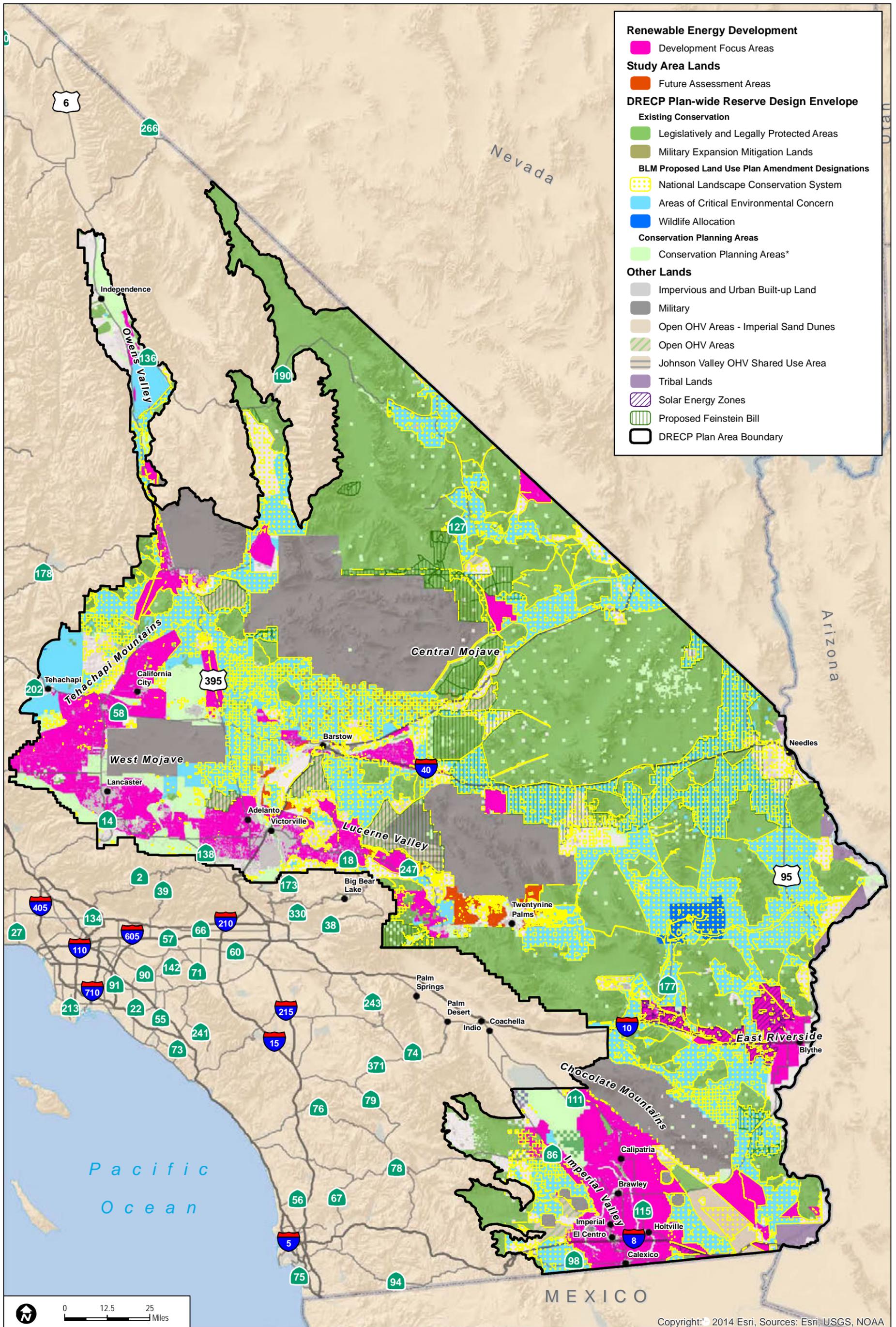
The proposed Covered Species list would be the same under Alternative 2 as it is under the Preferred Alternative. See Section II.3.1.2.2 for the proposed Covered Species list.

II.5.1.2.3 Plan-Wide Biological Goals and Objectives

The Plan-wide BGOs provide the broad guiding principles and define the desired outcome of the DRECP conservation strategy. The Plan-wide BGOs are described in Section I.3.4.3 and are provided in Appendix C at the landscape, natural community, and species levels. The Plan-wide BGOs are common to and apply to each of the DRECP alternatives. The Step-Down Biological Objectives describe the contribution of DRECP implementation towards achieving the Plan-wide BGOs.

II.5.1.2.4 DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope

The DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2 was developed based on the biological reserve design process described in Section I.3.4.4. The reserve design is the mapped expression of Plan-wide BGOs. Additionally, an interagency Plan-Wide Conservation Priority Area has been identified. This area represents the highest priority area for the creation and long-term management of habitat reserves for the conservation of the 37 proposed Covered Species and representative examples of the natural communities and processes that support them in the Plan Area. The interagency Plan-Wide Conservation Priority Area was the basis for the NCCP Conceptual Plan-Wide Reserve Design of each alternative.



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

*The portion of the reserve design outside Existing Conservation Areas and BLM LUPA Conservation Designations on private and non-BLM public lands from which reserve areas will be assembled from willing sellers as compensation for Covered Activities.

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**FIGURE II.5-1
Alternative 2**

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Overall, the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2 would cover 80% of the Plan Area (excluding Military Lands, Tribal Lands, and BLM Open OHV Areas), which includes 7,662,000 acres of existing conservation areas, 6,242,000 acres of BLM LUPA conservation designations, and 1,183,000 acres of Conservation Planning Areas.

Approximately half of the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2 is made up of existing conservation areas (i.e., Legislatively and Legally Protected Areas [LLPAs] and Military Expansion Mitigation Lands [MEMLs]). Approximately 41% of the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2 is made up of existing and proposed BLM LUPA conservation designations including combinations of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern (ACECs), National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS), and Wildlife Allocations, and approximately 8% of the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2 is comprised of Conservation Planning Areas.

The interagency Plan-Wide Conservation Priority Area within the reserve design envelope covers approximately 2,734,000 acres. This includes 2,427,000 acres of BLM LUPA conservation designations (1,958,000 acres on BLM-administered lands and 470,000 acres of non-BLM inholdings) and 307,000 acres of Conservation Planning Areas.

The DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2 is comprised of an interconnected network of federal and nonfederal (both public and private) lands that spans seven counties, multiple ownerships, and ten ecoregion subareas of the Mojave and Colorado/Sonoran deserts of California. Figure II.5-2 shows the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2, and Appendix G provides figures of the reserve design envelope for each ecoregion subarea in the Plan Area. Table II.5-2 shows the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2 by county. Table II.5-3 shows the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2 by ownership. Table II.5-4 shows the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2 by ecoregion subarea.

**Table II.5-2
DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2 by County**

| County | Existing Conservation Areas (acres) | BLM LUPA Conservation Designations (acres) | Conservation Planning Areas (acres) | Total Acreage |
|-----------------------|--|---|--|----------------------|
| Imperial County | 274,000 | 705,000 | 137,000 | 1,117,000 |
| Inyo County | 1,921,000 | 595,000 | 139,000 | 2,654,000 |
| Kern County | 135,000 | 514,000 | 156,000 | 805,000 |
| Los Angeles County | 6,000 | 41,000 | 238,000 | 286,000 |
| Riverside County | 982,000 | 639,000 | 59,000 | 1,680,000 |
| San Bernardino County | 4,145,000 | 3,747,000 | 449,000 | 8,340,000 |

Table II.5-2
DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2 by County

| County | Existing Conservation Areas (acres) | BLM LUPA Conservation Designations (acres) | Conservation Planning Areas (acres) | Total Acreage |
|------------------|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| San Diego County | 199,000 | 0 | 6,000 | 205,000 |
| Total | 7,662,000 | 6,242,000 | 1,183,000 | 15,087,000 |

Notes: Overlaps of BLM LUPA conservation designations with existing conservation areas are reported in the existing conservation area acreages. The BLM LUPA conservation designation acreage reported includes both BLM-administered lands and non-BLM lands inholdings within the designation. These include both existing and proposed conservation designations. The reserve design envelope also includes an interagency Plan-wide Conservation Priority Area that covered 2,734,000 acres of BLM LUPA conservation designations and Conservation Planning Areas. 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.5-3
DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2 by Ownership Class

| Ownership Class | Existing Conservation Areas (acres) | BLM LUPA Conservation Designations (acres) | Conservation Planning Areas (acres) | Total Acreage |
|-----------------------------|-------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Federal Lands</i> | | | | |
| BLM-administered land | 3,279,000 | 5,191,000 | - | 8,470,000 |
| Other federal land | 3,949,000 | 9,000 | 62,000 | 4,021,000 |
| <i>Nonfederal Lands</i> | | | | |
| Private land | 31,000 | 830,000 | 838,000 | 1,68,000 |
| State and local public land | 403,000 | 212,000 | 283,000 | 897,000 |
| Total | 7,662,000 | 6,242,000 | 1,183,000 | 15,087,000 |

Notes: Overlaps of BLM LUPA conservation designations with existing conservation areas are reported in the existing conservation area acreages. The BLM LUPA conservation designation acreage reported includes both BLM-administered lands and non-BLM lands inholdings within the designation. These include both existing and proposed conservation designations. The reserve design envelope also includes an interagency Plan-wide Conservation Priority Area that covered 2,734,000 acres of BLM LUPA conservation designations and Conservation Planning Areas. 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.5-4
DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope for Alternative 2 by Ecoregion Subarea**

| Ecoregion Subarea | Existing Conservation Areas (acres) | BLM LUPA Conservation Designations (acres) | Conservation Planning Areas (acres) | Total Acreage |
|---|--|---|--|----------------------|
| Cadiz Valley and Chocolate Mountains | 842,000 | 1,385,000 | 70,000 | 2,297,000 |
| Imperial Borrego Valley | 355,000 | 455,000 | 133,000 | 943,000 |
| Kingston and Funeral Mountains | 1,767,000 | 563,000 | 74,000 | 2,403,000 |
| Mojave and Silurian Valley | 786,000 | 569,000 | 57,000 | 1,412,000 |
| Owens River Valley | 32,000 | 143,000 | 98,000 | 272,000 |
| Panamint Death Valley | 1,253,000 | 308,000 | 19,000 | 1,580,000 |
| Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes | 739,000 | 462,000 | 97,000 | 1,298,000 |
| Piute Valley and Sacramento Mountains | 423,000 | 541,000 | 31,000 | 995,000 |
| Providence and Bullion Mountains | 1,305,000 | 825,000 | 136,000 | 2,265,000 |
| West Mojave and Eastern Slopes | 162,000 | 992,000 | 468,000 | 1,623,000 |
| Total | 7,662,000 | 6,242,000 | 1,183,000 | 15,087,000 |

Notes: Overlaps of BLM LUPA conservation designations with existing conservation areas are reported in the existing conservation area acreages. The BLM LUPA conservation designation acreage reported includes both BLM-administered lands and non-BLM lands inholdings within the designation. These include both existing and proposed conservation designations. The reserve design envelope also includes an interagency Plan-wide Conservation Priority Area that covered 2,734,000 acres of BLM LUPA conservation designations and Conservation Planning Areas. 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.

Existing Conservation

The Plan Area encompasses existing conservation areas that include LLPAs and MEMLs, which include among other designations Wilderness Areas, Wilderness Study Areas, National Parks, National Preserve, and California State Parks. LLPAs serve as the building blocks of the reserve design with existing boundaries and management regimes around which the BLM LUPA conservation designations and Conservation Planning Areas were designed. Existing conservation areas are the same for all alternatives. A full description of the existing conservation areas is provided in Section I.3.4.4 under the reserve design process. The existing conservation areas of the reserve design are shown on Figure II.5-2 and the ecoregion subarea maps of the reserve design in Appendix G.

BLM LUPA Conservation Designations

The BLM LUPA conservation designations are a critical component of the reserve design for the DRECP. These include existing and newly proposed NLCS designations, ACEC designations, and Wildlife Allocations. The land unit names included in BLM LUPA conservation designations in the reserve design by ecoregion subarea are provided in Section II.5.2 and Appendix L. The BLM LUPA conservation designations component of the reserve design is shown on Figure II.5-2 and the ecoregion subarea maps of the reserve design in Appendix G.

Conservation Planning Areas

Conservation Planning Areas are the portions of the reserve design located outside of existing conservation areas and BLM-administered lands. Conservation Planning Areas include both public and private lands. Reserve areas would be created within Conservation Planning Areas by acquiring land or conservation easements from willing sellers within the Conservation Planning Areas to provide compensatory mitigation for Covered Activities to contribute to meeting BGOs. Conservation Planning Areas within the interagency Plan-Wide Conservation Priority Area have been prioritized for conservation. The Conservation Planning Areas component of the reserve design is shown on Figure II.5-2 and the ecoregion subarea maps of the reserve design in Appendix G.

II.5.1.2.5 Biological CMAs

The biological CMAs under Alternative 2 would be the same as those for the Preferred Alternative described in Section II.3.1.2.5, except as described in the following discussion. The CMAs related to BLM LUPA conservation designations under Alternative 2 are described in Section II.5.2 and in the BLM unit-specific worksheets in Appendix L.

- **Exceptions to the Preferred Alternative CMAs.** The Plan-wide CMAs, landscape-level CMAs, Natural Communities and Covered Species CMAs in the DFAs, Natural Communities and Covered Species CMAs in the Reserve, and the Transmission-specific CMAs under the heading “Exceptions to the Preferred Alternative CMAs” will specify the CMA code (e.g., RIPWET-1) that corresponds to the specific CMA listed in the biological CMAs for the Preferred Alternative that will not be implemented for Alternative 2.
- **Additional CMAs to the Preferred Alternative.** The Plan-wide CMAs, landscape-level CMAs, Natural Communities and Covered Species CMAs in the DFAs, Natural Communities and Covered Species CMAs in the Reserve, and the Transmission-specific CMAs will list the additional biological CMAs under the heading “Additional CMAs to the Preferred Alternative” that will be implemented specifically for Alternative 2 in addition to the CMAs described for the Preferred Alternative.

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The following provides the biological CMAs for Alternative 2, including the CMAs listed in the Preferred Alternative that will not be implemented and any additional CMAs that will specifically be implemented for Alternative 2 in addition to the biological CMAs in the Preferred Alternative.

II.5.1.2.5.1 Avoidance and Minimization CMAs

Alternative 2 would implement avoidance and minimization CMAs including the Avoidance and Minimization CMAs in the Preferred Alternative with the exceptions and additions as described in Section II.5.1.2.5.2 through Section II.5.1.2.5.6.

II.5.1.2.5.2 Plan-Wide Avoidance and Minimization CMAs

Under Alternative 2, the Plan-Wide Avoidance and Minimization CMAs listed in the Preferred Alternative (Section II.3.1.2.5.2) will be implemented with no exceptions or additions.

II.5.1.2.5.3 Landscape-Level Avoidance and Minimization CMAs

Under Alternative 2, the Landscape-Level Avoidance and Minimization CMAs listed in the Preferred Alternative (Section II.3.1.2.5.3) will be implemented with the following exceptions or additions.

Exception to **AM-LL-1** in the Preferred Alternative:

- **AM-LL-1 (Alternative 2).** Under Alternative 2, AM-LL-1 from the Preferred Alternative (maintenance and habitat linkage function) would not apply.

II.5.1.2.5.4 Natural Communities and Covered Species Avoidance and Minimization CMAs in DFAs

Under Alternative 2, the Natural Community and Covered Species Avoidance and Minimization CMAs in DFAs listed in the Preferred Alternative (Section II.3.1.2.5.4) will be implemented with the following exceptions or additions.

Riparian and Wetland Natural Communities and Covered Species

Common to Riparian and Wetland Natural Community CMAs

Exception to **AM-DFA-RIPWET-1** in the Preferred Alternative:

- **AM-DFA-RIPWET-1 (Alternative 2).** The riparian and wetland natural communities and other features listed in Table II.5-5 will be avoided to the maximum extent practicable (see “unavoidable impacts to resources” in the Glossary of Terms) with the specified setback in DFAs.

**Table II.5-5
Riparian and Wetland Avoidance and Setbacks**

| Riparian and Wetland Natural Communities or Features | DFAs Setback ¹ |
|---|---------------------------|
| <i>Riparian Natural Communities¹</i> | |
| Madrean warm semi-desert wash woodland/scrub | 200 feet |
| Mojavean semi-desert wash scrub | 200 feet |
| Sonoran-Coloradan semi-desert wash woodland/scrub | 200 feet |
| Southwestern North American riparian evergreen and deciduous woodland | 0.25 mile |
| Southwestern North American riparian/wash scrub | 0.25 mile |
| <i>Wetland Natural Communities¹</i> | |
| Arid west freshwater emergent marsh | 0.25 mile |
| Californian warm temperate marsh/seep | 0.25 mile |
| <i>Other Riparian and Wetland Related Features</i> | |
| Managed wetlands ² | 1 mile |
| Mojave River ³ | 0.25 mile |
| Agricultural drains ⁴ | 25 feet |
| Undifferentiated riparian land cover ⁵ | 200 feet |

Notes:

- ¹ Setbacks are measured from the edge of the mapped riparian or wetland vegetation or water feature per AM-PW-3.
- ² Setback is from managed wetlands including U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) Refuges, state-managed wetlands, and duck clubs in Imperial Valley. See AM-DFA-RIPWET-1 for specifications related to the Salton Sea.
- ³ Setback is measured from the edge of mapped riparian or edge of Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) 100-year floodplain of the Mojave River, whichever is further from the center line of the Mojave River channel.
- ⁴ Setback for agricultural drains is measured from the edge of the drain or the Palos Verdes Irrigation District and Imperial Irrigation District right-of-way (ROW).
- ⁵ Undifferentiated "Riparian" land cover includes portions of major river courses (Mojave River and Colorado River) within the main channels where riparian natural communities were not mapped.

- For unavoidable impacts (see "unavoidable impacts to resources" in the Glossary of Terms) to the riparian natural communities, wetland natural communities, or encroachments on the setbacks listed in Table II.3-6 (Chapter II.3), the following will be required:
 - Written concurrence from the DRECP Coordination Group will be required prior to commencing the unavoidable impacts. Approval from the DRECP Coordination Group will consider previously permitted impacts and conservation for these natural communities, siting and design considerations, and proposed compensation for the unavoidable impacts.
 - Compliance with all applicable laws and regulations pertaining to wetlands and waters would be required prior to commencing the unavoidable impacts.
 - Hydrological function of the avoided riparian or wetland natural communities will be maintained.

- Unavoidable impacts to the riparian and wetland natural communities or other features including the setbacks listed in Table II.3-7 (Chapter II.3) will occur outside of the avian nesting season, which is from February 1 through August 31.
- The DRECP, and specifically the riparian and wetland natural communities setback for managed wetlands, is intended to be complimentary to the Salton Sea restoration planning effort. The Salton Sea DFA is limited to geothermal projects and surface occupancy from the current (2013) Salton Sea shoreline is the only impact allowed under DRECP. As the Salton Sea recedes, surface occupancy for any technology would need to be analyzed and the Plan would need to be amended if coverage is sought under DRECP.

Individual Covered Species (ICS)

Desert Bighorn Sheep (Ovis canadensis nelsoni)

Additional CMAs to the Preferred Alternative:

- **AM-DFA-ICS-43:** Prohibit rock climbing, during peak lambing and rearing season (March 1 through May 31), on BLM-administered lands, in locations of disturbance to occupied sheep core locations likely used for lambing and rearing, or in areas where disturbance is highly likely based on the level of recreation use, proximity to occupied core areas, line of sight, and topographic relief.

Desert Tortoise (Gopherus agassizii)

Exception to **AM-DFA-ICS-5** in the Preferred Alternative:

- **AM-DFA-ICS-5 (Alternative 2).** Under Alternative 2, CMA **AM-DFA-ICS-5** from the Preferred Alternative (avoidance of desert tortoise conservation areas [TCAs] and linkages) would not apply.

Exception to **AM-DFA-ICS-6** in the Preferred Alternative:

- **AM-DFA-ICS-6 (Alternative 2):** Under Alternative 2, CMA **AM-DFA-ICS-6** would be modified as follows:
 - Covered Activities within desert tortoise linkages identified in Appendix H, will require an evaluation of the effects on the maintenance of viable desert tortoise populations within the affected linkage. The analysis will consider the amount of suitable habitat required to ensure minimum functionality within each linkage given the linkage's population density, long-term demographic and genetic needs, degree of existing habitat disturbance, mortality sources, and most up-to-date population viability modeling.

II.5.1.2.5.5 Natural Communities and Covered Species Avoidance and Minimization CMAs in the Reserve

Under Alternative 2, the Natural Communities and Covered Species Avoidance and Minimization CMAs in the Reserve listed in the Preferred Alternative (Section II.3.1.2.5.5) will be implemented with no exceptions or additions.

II.5.1.2.5.6 Transmission Avoidance and Minimization CMAs

Under Alternative 2, the Transmission Avoidance and Minimization CMAs listed in the Preferred Alternative (Section II.3.1.2.5.6) will be implemented with no exceptions or additions.

II.5.1.2.5.7 Compensation CMAs

Under Alternative 2, the Compensation CMAs listed in the Preferred Alternative (Section II.3.1.2.5.7) will be implemented with the following exceptions or additions.

Exception to **COMP-1** in the Preferred Alternative:

- COMP-1 (Alternative 2).** Impacts from Covered Activities in the DFAs will be compensated using the standard compensation ratio, except for the biological resources and specific geographic locations listed as compensation ratio exceptions that will use the compensation ratio exceptions summarized in Table II.5-6 and described in further detail in Appendix H. The compensation acreage requirement calculated by the standard compensation ratio and the compensation ratio exceptions can be fulfilled through land acquisition compensation approved by the DRECP Coordination Group, through implementation of non-acquisition actions approved by the DRECP Coordination Group, or a combination of these options. Compensation criteria for land acquisitions and non-acquisition actions will be determined through implementation on a project-specific basis as described by the DRECP Biological Conservation and Mitigation Program in Section II.3.1.5.3.

**Table II.5-6
Compensation Ratios for the Impacts¹ of DRECP Covered Activities in the DFAs**

| Standard Compensation Ratio | Compensation Ratio Exceptions | |
|-----------------------------|---|-----|
| 2:1 | Desert tortoise (<i>Gopherus agassizii</i>) ¹ : Any critical habitat unit or Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area | 3:1 |
| | Mohave ground squirrel (<i>Xerospermophilus mohavensis</i>) ¹ : Key population centers and expansion areas | 5:1 |
| | Flat-tailed horned lizard (<i>Phrynosoma mcallii</i>) ¹ : Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Management Areas | RMS |

**Table II.5-6
Compensation Ratios for the Impacts¹ of DRECP Covered Activities in the DFAs**

| Standard Compensation Ratio | Compensation Ratio Exceptions | |
|-----------------------------|--|--|
| | Wetlands ¹ | 1:1 (preserve) 1:1 (restore or enhance) |
| | Silurian Valley ¹ | 3:1 |
| | Agriculture and disturbed lands ¹ | 1:1 |

¹ See Appendix H, Table H-4a, for full footnotes.
RMS = Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Rangewide Management Strategy

Exception to **COMP-2** in the Preferred Alternative:

- COMP-2 (Alternative 2).** Impacts from transmission Covered Activities in the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope will be compensated using the standard compensation ratio, except for the biological resources and specific geographic locations listed as compensation ratio exceptions that will use the compensation ratio exceptions summarized in Table II.5-7 and described in further detail in Appendix H. The compensation acreage requirement calculated by the standard compensation ratio and the compensation ratio exceptions can be fulfilled through land acquisition compensation approved by the DRECP Coordination Group, through implementation of non-acquisition actions approved by the DRECP Coordination Group, or a combination of these options. Compensation criteria for land acquisitions and non-acquisition actions will be determined through implementation on a project-specific basis as described by the DRECP Biological Conservation and Mitigation Program in Section II.3.1.5.3.

**Table II.5-7
Compensation Ratios for the Impacts of Transmission Covered Activities in the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope**

| Standard Compensation Ratio ¹ | Compensation Ratio Exceptions ¹ | |
|--|---|----------------|
| 2:1 | Desert tortoise designated critical habitat and TCA linkages | 5:1 |
| | Mohave ground squirrel ¹ : Key population centers and expansion areas | 5:1 |
| | Flat-tailed horned lizard ¹ : Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Management Areas | RMS |
| | Wetlands ¹ | 1:1 (preserve) |

**Table II.5-7
Compensation Ratios for the Impacts of Transmission Covered Activities in the
DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope**

| Standard Compensation Ratio ¹ | Compensation Ratio Exceptions ¹ | |
|--|--|--------------------------|
| | | 1:1 (restore or enhance) |
| | Silurian Valley ¹ | 3:1 |
| | Agriculture and disturbed lands ¹ | 1:1 |

¹ See Appendix H, Table H-4b, for full footnotes.
RMS = Flat-Tailed Horned Lizard Rangewide Management Strategy

II.5.1.3 Monitoring and Adaptive Management Program

The Monitoring and Adaptive Management Program for Alternative 2 would be the same as is described under the Preferred Alternative (see Section II.3.1.3).

II.5.1.4 Overview Description of Covered Activities

This section provides a description of the distribution, magnitude, and scope of activities under the DRECP for Alternative 2 under the DRECP. This describes how Alternative 2 would meet the renewable energy goals outlined in Section I.3.5. Renewable energy development technologies addressed under the DRECP include solar thermal, photovoltaic (PV) solar, wind, geothermal, and transmission.

On nonfederal lands, renewable energy and transmission siting, construction, operation, and decommissioning activities and conservation activities would be considered Covered Activities for incidental take permits under Section 2835 of the state Natural Community Conservation Planning Act and Section 10 of the federal Endangered Species Act. On BLM-administered lands, the BLM LUPA addresses renewable energy and transmission siting, construction, operation, and decommissioning activities, conservation activities, and other land use management decisions. The following describes the renewable energy generation-, transmission-, and conservation-related activities that would occur on both federal and nonfederal lands. The specific land use management decisions addressed by the BLM LUPA are described in Section II.5.2.

The section includes a summary of DFA distribution, and an estimated acreage associated with each technology. The description is subdivided by technology: solar, wind, geothermal, and transmission. For brevity, the description of the activities associated with siting, constructing, operating, and decommissioning are not repeated in this section as the information is identical to that which is provided in Section II.3.1.4.

In Alternative 2, renewable energy-related activities covered by the Plan would be confined to the DFAs. If the activities are not located within a DFA, they would no longer be considered a Covered Activity and would not enjoy the benefits the Plan affords.

Generation development is focused in the West Mojave and Eastern Slopes, Imperial Borrego Valley, and Cadiz Valley and Chocolate Mountains ecoregion subareas, and around Barstow, with smaller areas in the Owens River Valley ecoregion subarea and on the Nevada border. Figure II.5-3 shows the DFAs for Alternative 2, and Appendix G provides figures of the DFAs for each ecoregion subarea in the Plan Area.

Table II.5-8a provides a DFA acreage summary by ecoregion subarea and by ecoregion subunit (i.e., finer-grained geographic subdivisions within each ecoregion subarea). Figure II.5-3 shows the corresponding ecoregion subunits.

Table II.5-8a
Alternative 2 Development Focus Areas by Ecoregion Subarea and Subunit

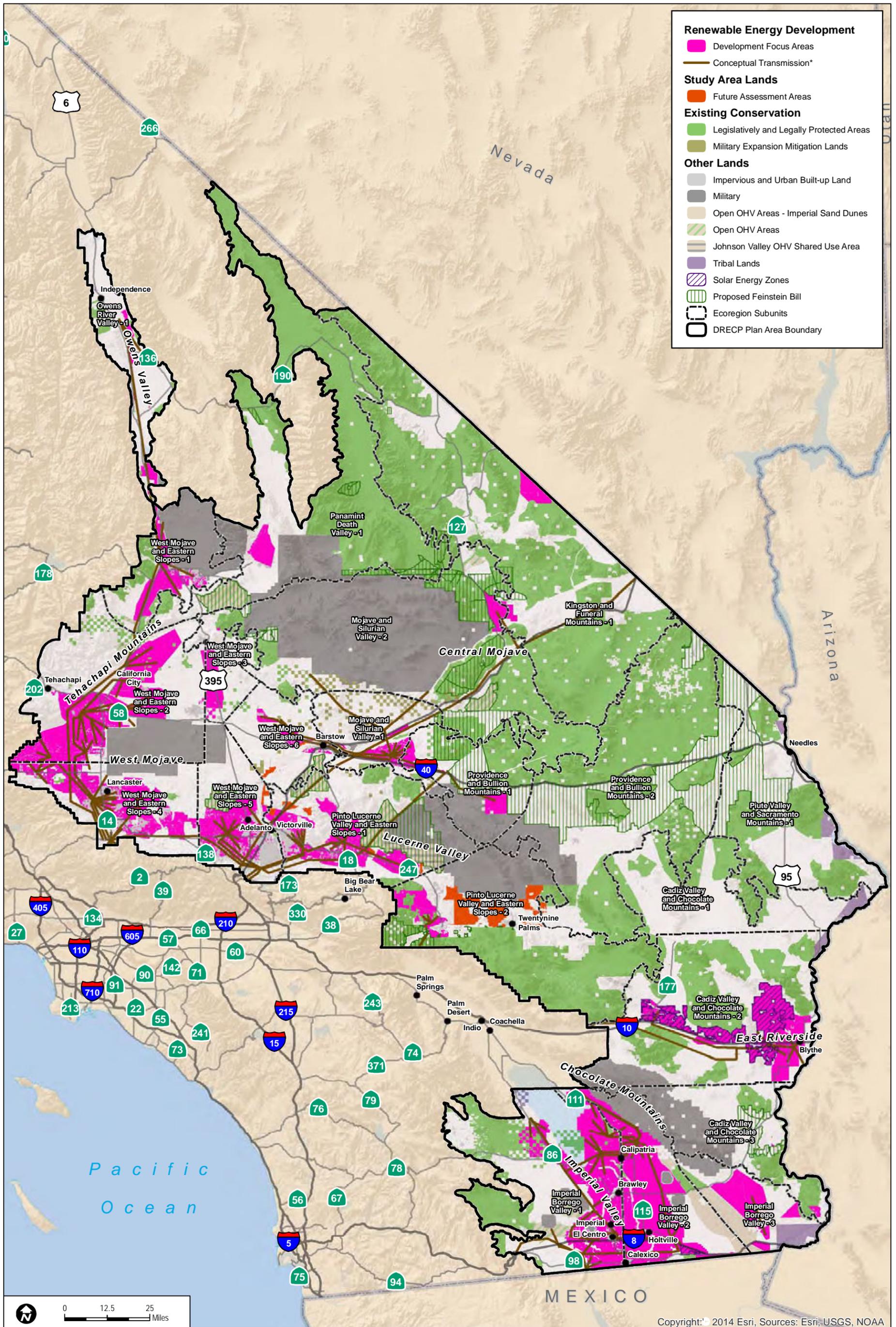
| Ecoregion Subarea | Ecoregion Subunit | DFA Acreage |
|---|-------------------|-------------|
| Cadiz Valley and Chocolate Mountains | Cadiz - 1 | — |
| | Cadiz - 2 | 267,000 |
| | Cadiz - 3 | 5,000 |
| Imperial Borrego Valley | Imperial - 1 | 344,000 |
| | Imperial - 2 | 389,000 |
| | Imperial - 3 | 106,000 |
| Kingston and Funeral Mountains | Kingston - 1 | 40,000 |
| Mojave and Silurian Valley | Mojave - 1 | 42,000 |
| | Mojave - 2 | 27,000 |
| Owens River Valley | Owens -1 | 28,000 |
| Panamint Death Valley | Panamint - 1 | 35,000 |
| Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes | Pinto - 1 | 180,000 |
| | Pinto - 2 | 49,000 |
| Piute Valley and Sacramento Mountains | Piute - 1 | — |
| Providence and Bullion Mountains | Providence - 1 | 46,000 |
| | Providence - 2 | — |
| West Mojave and Eastern Slopes | West Mojave - 1 | 88,000 |
| | West Mojave - 2 | 396,000 |
| | West Mojave - 3 | 47,000 |
| | West Mojave - 4 | 224,000 |

Table II.5-8a
Alternative 2 Development Focus Areas by Ecoregion Subarea and Subunit

| Ecoregion Subarea | Ecoregion Subunit | DFA Acreage |
|--------------------------|-------------------|------------------|
| | West Mojave - 5 | 136,000 |
| | West Mojave - 6 | 24,000 |
| Total DFA Acreage | | 2,473,000 |

Note: 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 distribution of different generation technologies varies depending on underlying factors that affect each technology. The method used to estimate the distribution of generation impacts across the Plan Area simultaneously accounts for the area available to each technology, potential interactions between technologies, and variation in the relative development potential of different DFAs. A more detailed description of the methodology is discussed in Chapter I.3 with additional detail provided in Appendix F. In the following section, each technology is discussed separately.



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

*Transmission lines shown are based on the DRECP Transmission Technical Group (TTG) Report, which provides a conceptual transmission plan for the DRECP alternatives and is not intended for siting or alignment purposes.

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FIGURE II.5-3
Alternative 2 - Plan-wide DFAs

August 2014

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Table II.5-8b includes a summary of the DFAs by technology type by county. The technology type listed indicates what technologies are assumed feasible in the DFA. If multiple technologies are listed, that indicates that more than one renewable energy technology could be feasible in that DFA. DFAs suitable for solar only are the most common in most counties. DFAs suitable for solar and wind together make up the largest technology type category in Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Geothermal is only proposed in Imperial, Inyo, and San Bernardino counties under Alternative 2. Table II.5-8c includes a summary of the DFAs by ownership. For Alternative 2, nearly 70% of the DFAs are on nonfederal lands, and over 30% of the DFAs are on federal lands.

Table II.5-8b
Alternative 2 Development Focus Areas by Technology Type by County

| Technology Type Category by County | DFA Acreage |
|---|--------------------|
| Imperial County | 844,000 |
| Geothermal | 114,000 |
| Solar | 364,000 |
| Solar and geothermal | 226,000 |
| Solar and wind | 111,000 |
| Solar, Wind and geothermal | 5,000 |
| Wind | 25,000 |
| Wind and geothermal | 40 |
| Inyo County | 68,000 |
| Geothermal | 8,000 |
| Solar | 36,000 |
| Solar and geothermal | 6,000 |
| Solar and wind | 16,000 |
| Wind | 1,000 |
| Kern County | 478,000 |
| Solar | 291,000 |
| Solar and wind | 129,000 |
| Wind | 57,000 |
| Los Angeles County | 225,000 |
| Solar | 204,000 |
| Solar and wind | 20,000 |
| Wind | 600 |
| Riverside county | 268,000 |
| Solar | 121,000 |
| Solar and wind | 144,000 |
| Wind | 4,000 |
| San Bernardino County | 590,000 |

Table II.5-8b
Alternative 2 Development Focus Areas by Technology Type by County

| Technology Type Category by County | DFA Acreage |
|------------------------------------|------------------|
| Geothermal | 500 |
| Solar | 198,000 |
| Solar and wind | 286,000 |
| Wind | 106,000 |
| San Diego County | - |
| Total | 2,473,000 |

Notes: See Chapter I.3 and Appendix F for detailed descriptions of the methodology used to identify the acreage amounts listed in this table. 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.5-8c
Alternative 2 Development Focus Areas by Ownership Class

| Ownership Class | DFA Acreage |
|-----------------------------|------------------|
| <i>Federal Lands</i> | |
| BLM-administered land | 718,000 |
| Other federal land | 25,000 |
| <i>Nonfederal Lands</i> | |
| Private land | 1,649,000 |
| State and local public land | 81,000 |
| Total | 2,473,000 |

Notes: See Chapter I.3 and Appendix F for detailed descriptions of the methodology used to identify the acreage amounts listed in this table. 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 contain a description of the distribution of the DFAs with an estimate of the total project area required for each technology and the associated area of permanent disturbance, a summary of which is provided in Table II.5-9. The estimated distribution of Covered Activities in the following sections aims to ensure that the DRECP evaluates a plausible magnitude of effects for each covered biological resource, such that the Plan would offer adequate minimization and mitigation for each covered technology.

**Table II.5-9
Summary of Permanent Disturbance and Project Area for All Renewable Generation
Technologies under Alternative 2**

| Technology | Estimated Permanent Disturbance (Acres) | Total Project Area (Acres) |
|------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|
| Solar | 86,000 | 86,000 |
| Wind | 15,000 | 270,000 |
| Geothermal | 17,000 | 17,000 |
| Distributed generation | 16,000 | 16,000 |
| Total | 135,000 | 390,000 |

Notes: See Chapter I.3 and Appendix F for detailed descriptions of the methodology used to identify the acreage amounts listed in this table. 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.5.1.4.1 Solar Energy Generation (Including Utility-Scale Distributed Generation)¹

This section provides an estimate of the size of impacts for Covered Activities associated with solar and utility-scale distributed generation projects that would be covered by the Plan under Alternative 2. Construction and operational activities are identical to those described in Section II.3.1.4.1 and listed in Table II.3-21 (Preferred Alternative). Although the area available to solar generation would be more extensive in the DFAs than for other technologies, not all DFAs were considered suitable for solar development. Consequently, it was assumed that solar development would occur within the subset of DFAs identified in Appendix G.

Solar projects can range from small-scale developments of a few megawatts (MWs) that occupy tens of acres up to 1,000 MW projects that occupy thousands of acres. Given the programmatic nature of the DRECP, 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 Covered Activities within different ecoregion subareas of the Plan Area. For the purpose of assessing the magnitude of impacts from ancillary facilities, construction impacts, and infrastructure, solar projects were assumed to be a mixture of 100 MW projects and 400 MW projects to

¹ For the purpose of analysis, all distributed generation was considered to be located in the same areas as utility-scale solar, therefore requiring the same ancillary facilities (i.e., Covered Activities) as utility-scale solar projects.

represent the diversity of projects currently under review and construction. Similarly, all ground-mounted distributed generation projects were assumed to be 20 MW projects.

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.5-10 summarizes the long-term impacts for solar technologies, and provides the following information by ecoregion subarea:

- Total Long-Term Ground Disturbance – Estimated total acreage affected by Covered Activities such as vegetation clearance, grading, and construction. This is effectively a summation of all potential solar generation facility footprints, including operations and maintenance building, switchyards, and road construction impacts. All ancillary facilities were assumed to be within the boundary of the Plan Area and result in total permanent 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 permanent for the purpose of analysis.
- Total Project Area – An estimate of the total area occupied by a given project. For area-intensive compact technologies like solar generation, the total project area is identical to the total permanent ground-conversion impacts.

Table II.5-10
Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area Acreages Associated with Solar and Ground-Mounted Distributed Generation by Ecoregion Subarea – Alternative 2

| Ecoregion Subarea | Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area (acres) | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------|------------|
| | <i>Plan-Wide</i> | <i>LUPA</i> | <i>GCP</i> |
| Cadiz Valley and Chocolate Mountains | 17,000 | 11,000 | 6,000 |
| Imperial Borrego Valley | 34,000 | 8,000 | 24,000 |
| Kingston and Funeral Mountains | 2,000 | 1,000 | 500 |
| Mojave and Silurian Valley | 3,000 | 2,000 | 1,000 |

**Table II.5-10
Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area Acreages Associated with Solar and
Ground-Mounted Distributed Generation by Ecoregion Subarea – Alternative 2**

| Ecoregion Subarea | Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area (acres) | | |
|---|--|---------------|---------------|
| | <i>Plan-Wide</i> | <i>LUPA</i> | <i>GCP</i> |
| Owens River Valley | 1,000 | 400 | 700 |
| Panamint Death Valley | 800 | 600 | 200 |
| Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes | 8,000 | 2,000 | 6,000 |
| Piute Valley and Sacramento Mountains | — | — | — |
| Providence and Bullion Mountains | 1,000 | 900 | 500 |
| West Mojave and Eastern Slopes | 36,000 | 12,000 | 23,000 |
| Total | 102,000 | 39,000 | 62,000 |

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.5.1.4.2 Wind Energy Generation

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

The area available to wind development was constrained by several factors, including areas where construction was considered infeasible, and areas where turbine construction has been precluded by ordinance or general policy. Consequently, it was assumed that wind development would occur within the subset of DFAs identified in Appendix G.

Wind projects can range from small-scale developments of a few MWs that occupy tens of acres up to several hundred MW projects that occupy thousands of acres. Given the programmatic nature of the DRECP, 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 Covered Activities within different ecoregion subareas of the Plan.

Wind projects result in a relatively diffuse impacts spread across a wide area. Turbines are widely spaced and connected by permanent access roads and transmission infrastructure, with a centralized maintenance facilities and switchyards. Unlike solar, not all the land within the boundary of a wind project was assumed to be permanently disturbed by project activities. For the purpose of analysis, estimates of disturbed acreage 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 permanent disturbance within the project boundary, and were also included in the estimate of permanently disturbed acreage. 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 MWs to enable an estimation of impacts from ancillary facilities, roads, turbines, etc. Table II.5-11 summarizes the long-term impacts 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 permanent impacts are distributed over a larger area.
- Estimated Long-Term Ground Disturbance – Estimated total acreage affected by Covered Activities. 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 permanent for the purpose of analysis.
- 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.5-11
Project Area, Long-Term Disturbance, and Rotor Swept Area Acreages Associated with
Wind Generation by Ecoregion Subareas – Alternative 2**

| Ecoregion Subarea | Project Area (acres) | | | Long-Term Disturbance (acres) | | | Rotor Swept Area (acres) | | |
|--------------------------------------|----------------------|--------|-------|-------------------------------|-------|-----|--------------------------|-------|-----|
| | Plan-Wide | LUPA | GCP | Plan-Wide | LUPA | GCP | Plan-Wide | LUPA | GCP |
| Cadiz Valley and Chocolate Mountains | 63,000 | 56,000 | 7,000 | 4,000 | 3,000 | 400 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 200 |
| Imperial Borrego Valley | 12,000 | 5,000 | 7,000 | 700 | 300 | 400 | 400 | 100 | 200 |
| Kingston and Funeral Mountains | 5,000 | 5,000 | — | 300 | 300 | — | 100 | 100 | — |
| Mojave and Silurian Valley | 11,000 | 11,000 | — | 700 | 700 | — | 300 | 300 | — |

**Table II.5-11
Project Area, Long-Term Disturbance, and Rotor Swept Area Acreages Associated with
Wind Generation by Ecoregion Subareas – Alternative 2**

| Ecoregion Subarea | Project Area (acres) | | | Long-Term Disturbance (acres) | | | Rotor Swept Area (acres) | | |
|---|----------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|
| | <i>Plan-Wide</i> | <i>LUPA</i> | <i>GCP</i> | <i>Plan-Wide</i> | <i>LUPA</i> | <i>GCP</i> | <i>Plan-Wide</i> | <i>LUPA</i> | <i>GCP</i> |
| Owens River Valley | 4,000 | — | 4,000 | 200 | — | 200 | 100 | — | 100 |
| Panamint Death Valley | 1,000 | 1,000 | — | 100 | 100 | — | — | — | — |
| Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes | 65,000 | 24,000 | 41,000 | 4,000 | 1,000 | 2,000 | 2,000 | 800 | 1,000 |
| Piute Valley, Sacramento Mountains | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — | — |
| Providence and Bullion Mountains | 13,000 | 11,000 | 2,000 | 800 | 600 | 100 | 400 | 300 | 100 |
| West Mojave and Eastern Slopes | 66,000 | 5,000 | 61,000 | 4,000 | 300 | 4,000 | 2,000 | 200 | 2,000 |
| Total | 239,000 | 117,000 | 122,000 | 14,000 | 7,000 | 7,000 | 7,000 | 4,000 | 4,000 |

Note: 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.5.1.4.3 Geothermal Energy Generation

This section provides an estimate of the size of impacts for Covered Activities associated with geothermal projects that would be covered by the DRECP. Construction and operational activities are identical to those described in Section II.3.1.4.3 and listed in Table II.3-25 of the Preferred Alternative.

The area available to geothermal development was limited to areas in the Imperial Borrego Valley and part of the Owens River Valley ecoregion subareas, where geothermal resources are concentrated. Consequently, it was assumed that geothermal development would occur within the subset of DFAs identified in Appendix G.

Geothermal projects would be 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 within the DRECP, geothermal projects were assumed to typically be 50 MW in size. Given the programmatic nature of the Plan, 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 estimated acreage that would be affected by Covered Activities within different ecoregion subareas of the Plan.

Geothermal projects result in extensive impacts associated with the power block and ancillary facilities, with more dispersed impacts resulting from the well-fields. Well heads 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 the land within the boundary of a geothermal project was assumed to be permanently disturbed by project activities. Estimates of disturbed acreage include the acreage required for well head 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.5-12 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 Covered 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. This estimate also includes the additional impacts that occur as 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 permanent for the purpose of analysis.
- 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 permanent impacts are distributed over a larger area.

Table II.5-12
Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area Acreages Associated with Geothermal Generation by Ecoregion Subarea – Alternative 2

| Ecoregion Subarea | Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area (acres) | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------|------------|
| | <i>Plan-Wide</i> | <i>LUPA</i> | <i>GCP</i> |
| Cadiz Valley and Chocolate Mountains | — | — | — |
| Imperial Borrego Valley | 16,000 | 6,000 | 10,000 |
| Kingston and Funeral Mountains | — | — | — |
| Mojave and Silurian Valley | — | — | — |

**Table II.5-12
Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area Acreages Associated with Geothermal
Generation by Ecoregion Subarea – Alternative 2**

| Ecoregion Subarea | Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area (acres) | | |
|---|--|--------------|---------------|
| | <i>Plan-Wide</i> | <i>LUPA</i> | <i>GCP</i> |
| Owens River Valley | 900 | 900 | — |
| Panamint Death Valley | — | — | — |
| Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes | — | — | — |
| Piute Valley and Sacramento Mountains | — | — | — |
| Providence and Bullion Mountains | — | — | — |
| West Mojave and Eastern Slopes | — | — | — |
| Total | 17,000 | 7,000 | 10,000 |

Note: 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.5.1.4.4 Transmission

The transmission Covered Activities components for Alternative 2 would be the same as those described for the Preferred Alternative in Section II.3.1.4.4.

The ecoregional distribution of major transmission, substation, and gen-tie impacts described in Table II.5-13 provides an estimate of right-of-way (ROW) requirements in acres from which it was possible to estimate the relative impacts of transmission-related Covered Activities described in Section II.3.1.4.4.

- 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 permanent for the purpose of analysis.
- 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, the permanent impacts are distributed over a larger area.

**Table II.5-13
Right-of-Way Requirements for Transmission Associated with Renewable Energy
Development by Ecoregion Subarea – Alternative 2**

| Ecoregion Subarea | Long-Term Disturbance and Project Area (acres) | | |
|---|--|---------------|---------------|
| | <i>Plan-Wide</i> | <i>LUPA</i> | <i>GCP</i> |
| Cadiz Valley and Chocolate Mountains | 8,000 | 5,000 | 4,000 |
| Imperial Borrego Valley | 14,000 | 3,000 | 11,000 |
| Kingston and Funeral Mountains | 700 | 500 | 200 |
| Mojave and Silurian Valley | 1,000 | 800 | 700 |
| Owens River Valley | 700 | 400 | 300 |
| Panamint Death Valley | — | — | — |
| Pinto Lucerne Valley and Eastern Slopes | 6,000 | 2,000 | 4,000 |
| Piute Valley and Sacramento Mountains | — | — | — |
| Providence and Bullion Mountains | 1,000 | 800 | 400 |
| West Mojave and Eastern Slopes | 1,000 | 200 | 1,000 |
| Total | 34,000 | 13,000 | 21,000 |

Notes: All transmission disturbance data reflect intermediate disturbance values used for comparative purposes in the analysis. Disturbance area estimates reflecting the most recent Transmission Technical Group Report are provided in Appendix K. 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.5.1.4.4.1 Transmission Outside the Plan Area

Transmission outside the Plan Area is not a Covered Activity under the DRECP. The potential direct effects of potential future transmission outside the Plan Area associated with development of covered renewable energy projects and transmission facilities inside the Plan Area are, however, programmatically described and analyzed in Volume IV 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 inside 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 CEQA 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.5-14 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.5-14
Right-of-Way Requirements for Transmission Outside the DRECP Plan Area
Associated with Renewable Energy Development – Alternative 2

| Geographic Area | Transmission | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------|
| | <i>Acre</i> s | <i>Miles</i> |
| San Diego area | 2,000 | 94 |
| Los Angeles area | 2,000 | 83 |
| Central Valley | 15,000 | 274 |
| Rialto/Moreno Valley/Devers area | 12,000 | 484 |
| Total Outside Plan Area | 32,000 | 935 |

Source: Transmission Technical Group Report, provided as Appendix K.

The new transmission lines outside the Plan Area are presented in the following list.

- **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 from the existing Vincent Substation (just inside the DRECP boundary) to the existing Mesa Substation.
 - One 500 kV Mead, Station 6 to Station 7 500 kV.
- **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 Substation to Vincent Substation.
 - One 500 kV line from the Devers Substation 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 200 miles of this corridor would be outside the DRECP boundary.

II.5.1.5 Plan Implementation

Plan implementation for Alternative 2 would be the same as that for the Preferred Alternative as described in Section II.3.1.5.

II.5.2 BLM LUPA Elements of Alternative 2

The BLM LUPA elements of Alternative 2 are the same elements as the Preferred Alternative (see Figure II.5-4).

As shown in Table II.5-15, approximately 9,834,000 acres within the Planning Area occur within the BLM LUPA on BLM-administered lands. Under Alternative 2, approximately 718,000 acres of DFAs occur on BLM-administered lands.

In this area, existing conservation totals 3,264,000 acres including 3,260,000 acres of LLPAs. All of the BLM LLPAs are Wilderness or Wilderness Study Areas and are managed to meet the statute of the Wilderness Act of 1964 and to ensure these congressionally designated areas meet DRECP conservation goals.

As shown in Table II.5-16, of the 5,191,000 acres of BLM LUPA conservation designations, 78,000 acres (2%) would be designated as Existing or Proposed ACEC, 4,228,000 acres (81%) would be Existing or Proposed ACEC or Wildlife Allocation and National Conservation Lands, 885,000 acres (17%) would be National Conservation Lands only, and 700 acres (less than 1%) would be Wildlife Allocation.

**Table II.5-15
Interagency Alternative 2 Within the BLM LUPA**

| Alternative Components | Acreage ¹ |
|---|----------------------|
| DFAs | 718,000 |
| Study Area Lands | 29,000 |
| Future Assessment Areas | 29,000 |
| DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope | 8,455,000 |
| Existing conservation areas | 3,264,000 |
| BLM LUPA conservation designations | 5,191,000 |
| Urban Areas, Other Lands, and Undesignated Areas | 631,000 |
| Impervious and Urban Built-up Land | 57,000 |
| BLM Open OHV Areas | 235,000 |

**Table II.5-15
Interagency Alternative 2 Within the BLM LUPA**

| Alternative Components | Acreage ¹ |
|--|----------------------|
| Imperial Sand Dunes, including the BLM Open OHV Area | 127,000 |
| Johnson Valley OHV Shared Use Area | 54,000 |
| Undesignated Areas | 157,000 |
| Total | 9,834,000 |

Notes: BLM LUPA conservation designations include NLCS lands, ACECs, and Wildlife Allocations. Overlaps of BLM LUPA conservation designations with existing conservation areas are reported in the existing conservation area acreages. The BLM LUPA would also designate approximately 2,463,000 acres of SRMAs on BLM-administered lands in addition to the 193,000 acres of existing SRMAs on BLM-administered lands, which are BLM designation overlays that overlap portions of the components provided in this table. Impervious and Urban Built-up Lands occurring within BLM LUPA conservation designations and DFAs 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 Acreages reported are on BLM-administered lands only within the BLM LUPA area.

**Table II.5-16
Alternative 2 BLM LUPA Conservation Designations Within the BLM LUPA**

| BLM LUPA Conservation Designation | Acreage ^{1,2} |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|
| NLCS | 885,000 |
| NLCS (and Existing ACEC) | 1,228,000 |
| NLCS (and Proposed ACEC) | 2,904,000 |
| NLCS (and Wildlife Allocation) | 96,000 |
| Existing ACEC | 14,000 |
| Proposed ACEC | 64,000 |
| Wildlife Allocation | 700 |
| Total | 5,191,000 |

Note: 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 Acreages reported are on BLM-administered lands only within the BLM LUPA area..

² Approximately 856,000 acres of BLM LUPA conservation designations on BLM-administered lands occur within existing conservation areas. These overlapping acres are not reported in this table.

In addition to the proposed BLM LUPA conservation designations, Alternative 2 includes proposed BLM LUPA Special Recreation Management Areas (SRMAs) as shown in Table II.5-17. Unlike the Preferred Alternative, Alternative 2 would not designate any Extensive Recreation Management Areas (ERMAs).

**Table II.5-17
Alternative 2 Special Recreation Management Areas and Extensive Recreation
Management Areas Within the BLM LUPA**

| SRMA/ERMA | Acreage ¹ |
|---------------|----------------------|
| Existing SRMA | 193,000 |
| Proposed SRMA | 2,463,000 |
| Proposed ERMA | — |
| Total | 2,656,000 |

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.

¹ Acreages reported are on BLM-administered lands only within the BLM LUPA area.

The proposed BLM LUPA would not modify existing energy corridors, including “corridors of concern” as defined in the Section 368 Energy Corridors settlement agreement described in Section I.2.1.7.7.

II.5.2.1 BLM Renewable Energy Policies

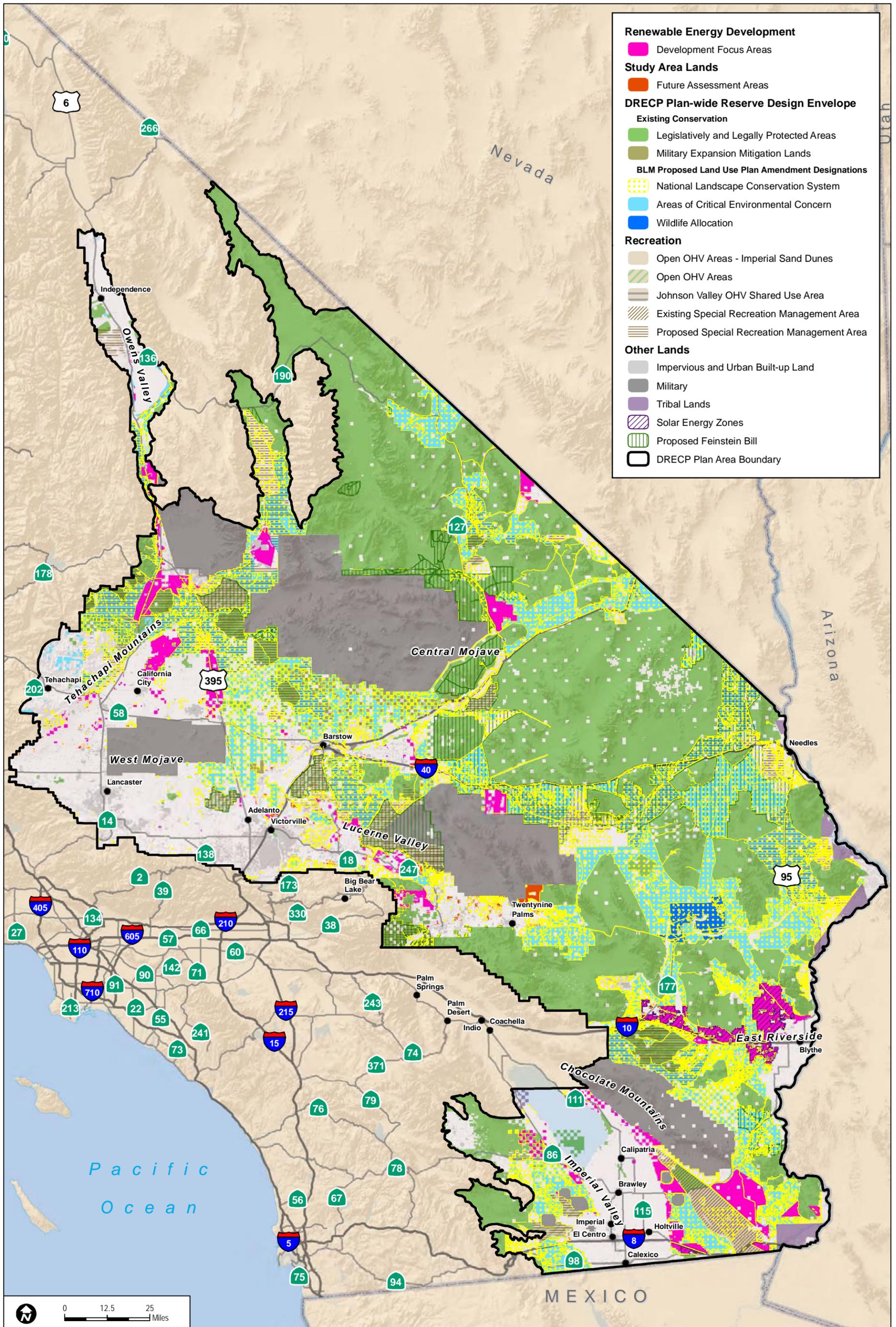
The BLM Renewable Energy Policies would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative.

II.5.2.2 BLM Conservation Areas

II.5.2.2.1 National Conservation Lands

This alternative includes all BLM lands in the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) except open OHV areas, DFAs, and active mine locations. Section 601 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (Public Law 94-579; 43 U.S.C. 1701–1785) recognized the nationally significant values of the California desert in designating it as the California Desert Conservation Area. This alternative is based on a broad interpretation of Public Law 111-11 and the premise that all lands in the California desert have been determined by Congress to be nationally significant. Therefore, lands not focused on development or other intensive uses under the BLM’s multiple-use mandate should be included as National Conservation Lands. This alternative would include existing transmission corridors. The use allocations regarding allowable uses respond to the larger renewable energy development footprint in this alternative by being the most restrictive of all alternatives regarding allowable uses.

This alternative would designate 5,188,000 acres as components of the National Conservation Lands on BLM-administered lands, which includes 856,000 acres within existing conservation areas (LLPAs and MEMLs) and 4,332,000 acres as part of the BLM LUPA conservation designations.



Renewable Energy Development

- Development Focus Areas

Study Area Lands

- Future Assessment Areas

DRECP Plan-wide Reserve Design Envelope

Existing Conservation

- Legislatively and Legally Protected Areas
- Military Expansion Mitigation Lands

BLM Proposed Land Use Plan Amendment Designations

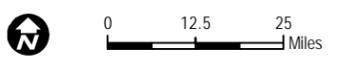
- National Landscape Conservation System
- Areas of Critical Environmental Concern
- Wildlife Allocation

Recreation

- Open OHV Areas - Imperial Sand Dunes
- Open OHV Areas
- Johnson Valley OHV Shared Use Area
- Existing Special Recreation Management Area
- Proposed Special Recreation Management Area

Other Lands

- Impervious and Urban Built-up Land
- Military
- Tribal Lands
- Solar Energy Zones
- Proposed Feinstein Bill
- DRECP Plan Area Boundary



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

*The portion of the reserve design outside Existing Conservation Areas and BLM LUPA Conservation Designations on private and non-BLM public lands from which reserve areas will be assembled from willing sellers as compensation for Covered Activities.

FIGURE II.5-4
Alternative 2 - BLM LUPA

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II.5.2.2.1.1 Management of National Conservation Lands

1. Planning Area-Wide National Conservation Land Management Direction

Like the Preferred Alternative, the use allocations for the National Conservation Lands in the CDCA are the allowable uses that would apply to all National Conservation Lands within the CDCA. The use allocations for the Preferred Alternative are provided in the following list. For resources where there are no specific use allocations for National Conservation Lands, Plan-wide rules would apply unless otherwise specified in the Special Unit Management Plans (Appendix L).

- **Comprehensive Trails and Travel Management.** National Conservation Lands would be designated in accordance to the appropriate Trails and Travel Management Plan (TTMP)/Resource Management Plan (RMP), and future travel management planning will put the emphasis of travel allowed on designated routes that provide for enjoyment of values, or necessary administrative access to conserve, protect, and restore area values
- **Cultural Resources.** No allowable uses that result in adverse effects to historic properties as defined under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act and the implementing regulations at 36 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 800 will be authorized.
- **Lands and Realty**
 - Rights-of-Way
 - **Sites Authorization.** National Conservation Lands would be exclusion areas.² Exceptions would only be considered where they clearly do not impact National Conservation Lands values. Site authorizations that protect or enhance conservation values, such as those granted as compensatory mitigation for Covered Activities within DFAs or for habitat restoration, would be allowed.
 - **Renewable Energy Generation.** National Conservation Lands would be exclusion areas for renewable energy ROWs.
 - **Linear ROWs.** Exclusion except for existing corridors. Exceptions only considered where they clearly don't impact National Conservation Lands values requires mitigation/compensation resulting in net benefit to National Conservation Lands unit.

² Defined in the BLM Land Use Planning Handbook (H-1601-1) as "areas which are not available for location of rights-of-way under any conditions."

- **Land Tenure**
 - Exchange, purchase, or donation would be permitted to acquire non-BLM lands within the National Conservation Lands unit. No lands would be disposed of in National Conservation Lands units.
 - National Conservation Lands inholdings would be a priority for acquisition from willing sellers. All inholdings would become part of the National Conservation Lands unit upon acquisition and be subject to associated management requirements.
- **Minerals**
 - Locatable Minerals
 - For the purposes of locatable minerals, National Conservation Lands would be treated as “controlled” or “limited” use areas in the CDCA, requiring a Plan of Operations for greater than casual use under 43 CFR 3809.11.
 - The BLM would develop priority list of subareas for potential withdrawal.
 - Initiate segregation of one subregion annually and complete mineral withdrawal review process (within 2-year time frame for each subregion).
 - **Saleable Minerals.** Saleable mineral development would be limited to approval on BLM parcels under 2,000 acres. Mitigation/compensation must result in net benefit to National Conservation Lands values
 - Leasable Minerals
 - National Conservation Lands would be unsuitable for all leasing.
 - The BLM would review National Conservation Lands values and undertake additional planning to determine if no surface occupancy leasing can be permitted in specific instances
 - **Recreation and Visitor Services.** Competitive and Commercial Special Recreation Permits would be permitted.
 - **Water Resources.** Apply for water rights on a case-by-case basis to protect water-dependent National Conservation Lands values.
 - **Disturbance Caps.**³ Development in National Conservation Lands would be limited to 0.25% of total authorized disturbance.

2. National Conservation Land Subareas — Description of Values to be Protected

The values protected in the National Conservation Lands are described in the following discussion. This alternative would designate all BLM-administered public

³ Disturbance caps only apply to lands not already included under ACECs or Wildlife Allocation disturbance caps, as described in the Special Unit Management Plans in Appendix L.

lands in the CDCA as National Conservation Lands except DFAs and OHV Open Areas, so encompasses the most acres as National Conservation Lands.

3. Area-Specific National Conservation Land and Area of Critical Environmental Concern Management Prescriptions

Similar to the Preferred Alternative, there is overlap with the ACEC designations, and management for individual units is described in the Special Unit Management Plans (National Conservation Lands and ACEC) in Appendix L.

II.5.2.2.1.2 Subarea Descriptions

Basin and Range Subarea

Ecological Values

Ecological values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- This alternative includes all ecological values described for the Preferred Alternative.
- It also includes the wildlife corridor between the El Paso Mountains and the Golden Valley Wilderness, which is habitat for the desert tortoise, burrowing owl (*Athene cunicularia*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), and Mohave ground squirrel, as well as a diversity of native species.
- National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 include black toad (*Bufo exsul*) habitat on both sides of California State Highway 168, in contrast to the Preferred Alternative which does not include habitat south of the highway.

Cultural Values

Cultural values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- This alternative includes all cultural values described for the Preferred Alternative.
- The larger amount of intact landscape would include more cultural resources eligible for listing, nominated for listing, or listed on the National Register of Historic Places.
- National Conservation Lands would include more areas with the potential to be identified as cultural landscapes or archaeological districts during future tribal consultation or cultural resource studies.

Scientific Values

Scientific values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 would compare to those in the Preferred Alternative in a manner consistent with the differences in ecological and cultural values as described above. The larger, intact tracts of National Conservation Lands would allow for more in-depth ecological research and landscape level studies of prehistoric and historic lifeways on these lands.

Acreage

This alternative would include approximately 590,000 acres of National Conservation Lands in the Basin and Range subarea.

Coachella Valley

Ecological Values

Ecological values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would encompass all of the ecological values described for the Preferred Alternative.
- Inclusion of the noncontiguous public lands parcels of the Willow Hole-Edom Hill Preserve adds mesquite hummocks, a fan palm oasis, Coachella Valley milk-vetch (*Astragalus lentiginosus* var. *coachellae*), Little San Bernardino Mountains linanthus (*Linanthus maculatus*), Palm Springs round-tailed ground squirrel (*Spermophilus tereticaudus chlorus*), Palm Springs pocket mouse (*Perognathus longimembris bangsi*), burrowing owl, Coachella giant sand treader cricket (*Macrobaenetes valgum*), least Bell's vireo (*Vireo bellii pusillus*), southwestern willow flycatcher (*Empidonax traillii extimus*), yellow-breasted chat (*Icteria virens*), yellow warbler (*Dendroica petechia*), and additional critical habitat for the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard (*Uma inornata*).

Cultural Values

Cultural values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative in that the greatest number of significant prehistoric and traditional cultural sites would be encompassed by National Conservation Lands in this alternative, including all sites described for the Preferred Alternative.

Scientific Values

Scientific values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative in a manner corresponding with the differences in ecological and cultural values described above.

Acreage

This alternative would include approximately 157,000 acres of National Conservation Lands in the Coachella Valley subarea.

Colorado Desert

Ecological Values

Ecological values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would include nearly all of the ecological values described for the Preferred Alternative.
- National Conservation Lands would connect each designated Wilderness in the subarea with at least one other Wilderness, encompassing areas of wildlife habitat connectivity. Areas of connectivity would include Cadiz Valley, Chuckwalla, Chuckwalla Chemehuevi linkage, McCoy Valley, McCoy Wash, Mule-McCoy, Picacho, Palen Ford, Upper McCoy, and Turtle Mountains Corridor.
- National Conservation Lands would encompass additional areas of wildlife habitat connectivity linking the Riverside Mountains and Whipple Mountains Wildernesses, and some of the habitat connectivity linking Joshua Tree National Park and Palen McCoy Wilderness.
- Slaughter Tree Wash and Big Wash, east of the Big Maria Mountains Wilderness, would be included in National Conservation Lands, encompassing microphyll woodland and part of the bird migration corridor near the Colorado River. Desert riparian zones at Vidal Wash would also be added.
- Less extensive areas of dune habitats at Palen Lake and Pinto Wash would be included.

Cultural Values

Cultural values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 would compare to those described for the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would encompass nearly all of the cultural values described for the Preferred Alternative.

- The additional lands would encompass more prehistoric and historic sites.
- Slightly less of the area of scenic values in northern Palen Valley would be included.

Scientific Values

Scientific values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would encompass all of the scientific values described for the Preferred Alternative.
- The additional lands included in this alternative would allow for more ecological research opportunities on National Conservation Lands, addressing such topics as the effects of conserving large-scale landscapes, and the effectiveness of different management practices for plants and wildlife in response to climate change.
- Opportunities to research cultural resources would exist on the added National Conservation Lands.

Acreage

This alternative would include approximately 1,187,000 acres of National Conservation Lands in the Colorado Desert subarea.

Kingston-Amargosa

Ecological Values

Ecological values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would encompass all of the ecological values described for the Preferred Alternative.
- This alternative would slightly expand the area encompassed by National Conservation Lands in the Shadow Valley area as compared to the Preferred Alternative, including areas important for genetic connectivity of desert tortoise and desert bighorn sheep.

Cultural Values

Cultural values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 include all of those described under the Preferred Alternative.

Scientific Values

Scientific values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 are the same as those identified for the Preferred Alternative.

Acreage

This alternative would include approximately 537,000 acres of National Conservation Lands in the Kingston–Amargosa subarea.

Lake Cahuilla

Ecological Values

Ecological values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- Nearly all of the ecological values described for the Preferred Alternative would be included in this alternative.
- National Conservation Lands in this alternative would include the Coyote Mountains, home to the barefoot gecko (*Coleonyx switaki*), a state-listed threatened species. Movement of Peninsular bighorn sheep (*Ovis canadensis nelsoni* Peninsular Ranges Distinct Population Segment) occurs through this area.
- Additional parts of the Yuha Basin are included as National Conservation Lands in this alternative. These contribute to a contiguous interconnected landscape that connects the highest elevations of the Peninsular Ranges in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park and the Cleveland National Forest with the Colorado/Sonoran Desert in the Imperial Valley and with similar undeveloped lands of northern Baja California, Mexico, encompassing areas that provide key physical and genetic connectivity for the Peninsular bighorn sheep.
- Acreage (but not additional key flat-tailed horned lizard or desert pupfish [*Cyprinodon macularius*] habitat) would be added to the National Conservation Lands linking the West Mesa with Anza-Borrego Desert State Park.
- National Conservation Lands would encompass two additional Unusual Plant Assemblages: Palm Oasis and Davies Valley Succulent Scrub Assemblage.
- National Conservation Lands in this alternative would include some areas of habitat connectivity in the southern Chocolate and Cargo Muchacho mountains. These would be less extensive than in the Preferred Alternative.

Cultural Values

Cultural values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- Most of the cultural values described for the Preferred Alternative would be included in this alternative.
- Additional National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 include the World War II Desert Training Center site at Camp Pilot Knob (a location separate from the Pilot Knob prehistoric sites).
- National Conservation Lands would not include lands in the southern Chocolate and Cargo Muchacho mountains, in particular the Singer Geoglyphs or lands adjacent to the Little Picacho Wilderness that are important for their cultural resources and for the spiritual values of Indian tribes in the region, or the historic Tumco mining district.

Scientific Values

Scientific values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- Most of the scientific values identified for the Preferred Alternative would be included in this alternative.
- Paleontological values associated with the Coyote Mountains would be added in this alternative. The Coyote Mountains are a nationally significant fossil site where a 50-million-year record of geologic history is exposed, particularly the fossil-bearing Imperial Formation. This small mountain range has been famous for paleontological collecting and research since the nineteenth century. Fossils are predominantly marine invertebrates such as coral, mollusks, and gastropods; however, vertebrate species are also represented by shark teeth and portions of a whale. The visibility of these resources, coupled with dramatic geology and spectacular scenic landforms, have made this area famous for paleontologists, students, photographers, and other visitors.
- National Conservation Lands in this alternative would link geologically and visually related lands in and surrounding the Coyote Mountains Wilderness. Unusual geologic features found on the lands that would be linked (although not on the proposed National Conservation Lands themselves) include unusual wind caves and rare sand chimneys in the wilderness, to the north and west in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park, and on other BLM lands to the south.

Acreage

This alternative would include approximately 473,000 acres of National Conservation Lands in the Lake Cahuilla subarea.

Mojave and Silurian Valley

Ecological Values

Ecological values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would include nearly all of the ecological values of Afton Canyon described for the Preferred Alternative.
- All critical habitat for desert tortoise, a federally listed threatened species, in Superior–Cronese and Ord–Rodman ACECs under BLM management in this subarea would be included as National Conservation Lands. This would be a much greater expanse than that in the Preferred Alternative
- Nearly all Mohave ground squirrel habitat in the subarea under BLM management, including nearly all of the habitat associated with the Fremont–Cramer ACEC, would be included as National Conservation Lands. This would be a much greater expanse than that in the Preferred Alternative.
- Additional Mojave fringe-toed lizard (*Uma scoparia*) habitats east of Barstow along the Mojave River, near Alvord Mountain, all of Coyote Lake, Cronese Lake, and Superior Lake would be included in National Conservation Lands
- National Conservation Lands would be added that encompass more habitat connectivity between the Mojave National Preserve and Death Valley National Park through the west side of Hollow Hills Wilderness, the west side of the Kingston Range Wilderness, and the Avawatz Mountains Wilderness Study Area.
- National Conservation Lands would include populations of rare plant species (California Rare Plant Rank 1.B) in addition to those listed under the Preferred Alternative: small-flowered androstephium (*Androstephium breviflorum*), Clokey's cryptantha (*Cryptantha clokeyi*), Mojave menodora (*Menodora spinescens* var. *mohavensis*), and creamy blazing-star (*Mentzelia tridentata*).
- Harper Lake, the site of focused management for recovery of wetland ecosystem function, would be added to the National Conservation Lands.
- No National Conservation Lands would be included in the large portion of the Silurian Valley that is within this subarea. The associated Mojave fringe-toed lizard habitat, and habitat connectivity and important migration areas for desert tortoise, desert bighorn sheep, and bats, would not be included in this alternative.

Cultural Values

Cultural values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would include most of the cultural values described for the Preferred Alternative.
- Additional National Conservation Lands around Afton Canyon and the Black Mountain Rock Art District would include associated cultural resources as described for the Preferred Alternative.
- National Conservation Lands would not include historic mining areas in the Silurian Valley, the Boulder Transmission Line, or segments of the Old Spanish National Historic Trail⁴ or Tonopah and Tidewater Railroad in the Silurian Valley. Segments of the historic trail and railroad in the adjoining Silurian Valley Corridor would be included.

Scientific Values

Scientific values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- Additional research opportunities would be available on National Conservation Lands corresponding with added ecological and cultural values described above. In particular, an expanded range of rare plant species encompassed by National Conservation Lands will include more opportunities to research the effectiveness of conservation methods to enhance habitats and populations of these species.
- Areas of paleontological values included in National Conservation Lands would increase in Rainbow Basin and slightly increase in the Manix area.
- Scientific value associated with cultural resources in the Silurian Valley would not be included in National Conservation Lands under this alternative.

Acreage

This alternative would include approximately 508,000 acres of National Conservation Lands in the Mojave and Silurian Valley subarea.

⁴ Although not included in the National Conservation Lands designated under Public Law 111-11, the Old Spanish Historic Trail remains a part of the NLCS as a National Historic Trail. Section II.5.2.2.2 discusses the National Historic Trail Management Corridor for this alternative.

Pinto, Lucerne Valley, and Eastern Slopes

Ecological Values

Ecological values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would encompass most of the ecological values described for the Preferred Alternative.
- This alternative would add National Conservation Lands between Twentynine Palms and Joshua Tree National Park, encompassing areas that are important for wildlife habitat connectivity.
- The existing Bendire's Thrasher ACEC is added to National Conservation Lands in this alternative.
- The Mojave Fishhook Cactus ACEC is added to National Conservation Lands in this alternative. It encompasses populations of the Mojave fishhook cactus (*Sclerocactus polyancistrus*), yellow-spined form; Mojave menodora (*Menodora spinescens* var. *mohavensis*); other plant species with restricted ranges; and habitat with connectivity values for several wildlife species.
- National Conservation Lands in this alternative encompass areas of habitat connectivity. These do not include lands linking the two units of the Bighorn Mountains Wilderness and extending toward the Pipes Canyon Preserve, San Gorgonio Wilderness, and Joshua Tree National Park.
- National Conservation Lands would include part of the Pipes Canyon Huge Joshua Trees Unusual Plant Assemblage.

Cultural Values

Cultural values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would encompass most of the cultural values described for the Preferred Alternative.
 - The cultural values associated with the Pipes Canyon area south of the Bighorn Wilderness, which is important to Native Americans and local residents, would not be included.

Scientific Values

Scientific values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 would compare to those in the Preferred Alternative in a manner corresponding with changes in ecological and cultural values represented on these lands, as described above.

Acreage

This alternative would include approximately 460,000 acres of National Conservation Lands in the Pinto, Lucerne Valley, and Eastern Slopes subarea.

Piute Valley and Sacramento Mountains

Ecological Values

Ecological values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would encompass all of the ecological values described for the Preferred Alternative.
- National Conservation Lands would include additional areas of habitat connectivity between the Dead Mountains and Chemehuevi Mountains wildernesses, and between the Chemehuevi Mountains and Whipple Mountains wildernesses.
- National Conservation Lands in this alternative include an area just east of the Whipple Mountains Wilderness with part of the only remaining population of saguaro cacti (*Carnegiea gigantea*) found in California, at the most westerly extent of the saguaro's range; and the only California occurrence of a plant community consisting of foothill paloverde desert scrub with saguaros towering over the smaller trees.
- All of the Chemehuevi Wash watershed would be included as National Conservation Lands.
- Additional National Conservation Lands would cover more populations of spiny-hair blazing star (*Mentzelia tricuspis*) and narrow-leaved psorothamnus (*Psorothamnus fremontii* var. *attenuatus*); and more colonies of rare bat species in the Sacramento Mountains.

Cultural Values

Cultural values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would encompass all of the cultural values described for the Preferred Alternative.
- National Conservation Lands would encompass additional significant cultural values associated with prehistoric and historic sites adjacent to the Colorado River, between Dead Mountains, Chemehuevi Mountains, and Whipple Mountains wildernesses, including the West Well rock art site.
- National Conservation Lands would encompass additional significant cultural values throughout the Sacramento Mountains, including petroglyphs, pictographs, village sites, congregation areas, and spring sites. Among these would be additional sites on the east side of the Sacramento Mountains, including numerous village sites near the prehistoric Colorado River course; and a particularly intact 1.5 mile segment of the prehistoric trail system that traverses the mountains, with abundant rock art; caves and shelters; and a variety of artifacts indicating seasonal and continuous use including milling stones, potsherds, blades, lithic scatters, fire-cracked rocks, hearths, burnt and unburnt bone.

Scientific Values

Scientific values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- There would be more extensive opportunities on National Conservation Lands to test the effectiveness of large-scale habitat management practices, and different management practices for facilitating the movement of wildlife and terrestrial plants in response to climate change.
- The National Conservation Lands would cover a greater number of culturally significant Native American sites, offering more cultural research opportunities on these lands.

Acreage

This alternative would include approximately 497,000 acres of National Conservation Lands in the Piute Valley and Sacramento Mountains subarea.

South Mojave–Amboy

Ecological Values

Ecological values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would encompass all of the ecological values described for the Preferred Alternative.
- Added National Conservation Lands between the Marble Mountains and the Sheephole Valley Wilderness encompass a broad corridor of connectivity. Added National Conservation Lands in the west end of the subarea, between the Ord–Rodman ACEC and the Superior–Crones ACEC, include habitat linkages for desert tortoise and linkages between the Rodman Mountains Wilderness and the Cady Mountains Wilderness Study Area.
- Bristol and Dale dry lakes, habitat for Mojave fringed-toed lizard, would be included in National Conservation Lands. The area around Dale Lake includes 3,000 acres connecting Cleghorn Lakes Wilderness, Sheephole Valley Wilderness, and the Pinto Mountain ACEC.
- Additional populations of rare plants are included in National Conservation Lands, particularly small-flowered androstephium, Emory’s crucifixion-thorn (*Castela emoryi*), and white-margined beardtongue (*Penstemon albomarginatus*), in the areas west of Pisgah Crater and east of Amboy Crater.

Cultural Values

Cultural values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would encompass all of the cultural values described for the Preferred Alternative.
- Cultural resources on additional acreage, which may include many previously unrecorded sites, would be included.
- National Conservation Lands would include a greater area of the historic Atchinson, Topeka and Santa Fe railroad and of the proposed Mojave Trails National Monument.

Scientific Values

Scientific values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative in a manner corresponding with the differences in ecological and cultural values described above.

Acreage

This alternative would include approximately 775,000 acres of National Conservation Lands in the South Mojave–Amboy subarea.

Western Desert and Eastern Slopes

Ecological Values

Ecological values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would encompass most of the ecological values described for the Preferred Alternative. Additional areas of the following would be included: foraging habitat for golden eagles between Golden Valley Wilderness and El Paso Mountains Wilderness and between Golden Valley Wilderness and Grass Valley Wilderness; more Mohave ground squirrel habitat east of Highway 395, emphasizing the area between Ridgecrest to south of Barstow; Bendire’s thrasher nesting habitat; and migratory flyway lands to the north and west of Dove Springs Canyon.
- The ranges of the following very rare plant species on BLM lands east of Highway 395 would be added to National Conservation Lands in this alternative: Desert cymopterus (*Cymopterus deserticola* – endemic to this subarea), Barstow woolly sunflower (*Eriophyllum mohavense* – near endemic in this subarea), and Red Rock poppy (*Eschscholzia minutiflora* ssp. *twisselmannii* – endemic to this subarea).
- Inclusion of Harper Lake in the National Conservation Lands in this alternative would add potential western snowy plover (*Charadrius nivosus nivosus*) nesting habitat.
- National Conservation Lands would be shifted to a larger and more southern portion of desert tortoise critical habitat in the Fremont–Kramer ACEC, principally west and south of Cuddeback Lake, east of State Highway 395 and south to just before El Mirage Lake. The Desert Tortoise Research Natural Area and the Western Rand Mountains ACEC, which constitute part of the Fremont–Kramer unit of Desert Tortoise Critical Habitat, are not included as National Conservation Lands.

- A portion of the migratory bird flyway in the eastern Sierra Nevada would be included in National Conservation Lands. This area is less extensive as compared to the Preferred Alternative.
- National Conservation Lands would not include wildlife habitat linkages between the El Paso Mountains Wilderness and the Kiavah Wilderness.

Cultural Values

Cultural values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- National Conservation Lands would include most of the cultural resources described for the Preferred Alternative.
- The following would be added to National Conservation Lands: Walker Pass National Historic Landmark; more of the culturally important lands in the Black Mountain, Inscription Canyon, and Last Chance Canyon Archaeological Districts; and more of the 20 Mule Team Road east of Highway 395.
- Some Native American resources previously identified within the Jawbone-Butterbrecht area would be omitted, while others would be added.
- The larger acreage of intact landscape included as National Conservation Lands represents areas that may be identified as cultural landscapes or archaeological districts during future tribal consultation or cultural resource studies.
- Most of the First Los Angeles Aqueduct north of Dove Springs in the Jawbone-Butterbrecht ACEC would not be part of National Conservation Lands.

Scientific Values

Scientific values of National Conservation Lands in Alternative 2 compare to those in the Preferred Alternative as follows:

- Opportunities for scientific research in desert tortoise habitat would still be available on National Conservation Lands; however, the Research Natural Area with its focus on research and education would not be included.
- Opportunities for scientific research on the Mohave ground squirrel in the intact habitat between Ridgecrest and Barstow would be available on National Conservation Lands in the Cuddeback Lake area.
- Opportunities for research to improve Bendire's thrasher habitat would be more extensive on National Conservation Lands.

- The southern Sierra Nevada interface zone in the Jawbone–Butterbrecht ACEC would include a greater range of elevations on National Conservation Lands for studies of species’ adaptations to climate change.
- Larger intact tracts of BLM lands included as National Conservation Lands would be available for in-depth landscape level studies of prehistoric and historic lifeways.

Acreage

This alternative would include approximately 565,000 acres of National Conservation Lands in the Western Desert and Eastern Slopes subarea.

II.5.2.2.2 National Trails

II.5.2.2.2.1 National Scenic and Historic Trails

Goals and Objectives

Goals and objectives for National Scenic and Historic Trails (NSHT) would be the same as the Preferred Alternative.

Conservation and Management Actions for Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail, and Juan Bautista de Anza and Old Spanish National Historic Trails Management Corridors

- **Management Corridor Width.** Establish a National Trail Management Corridor, width generally 10 miles from centerline.
- **Management of Trail Corridors.** Manage National Trails as components of the BLM’s NLCS. Where National Trails overlap other National Conservation Lands, the more protective CMAs or land use allocations will apply. Within these areas, the BLM will support the nature and purposes of the designated National Trails.
- **Lands and Realty**
 - Rights-of-Way
 - **Site Authorizations.** NSHT Management Corridors would be exclusion areas.
 - **Linear ROWs.** NSHT Management Corridors would be exclusion areas except in designated transmission corridors. Where development in transmission corridors affects trail management corridors, an analysis must be performed to ensure that it does not substantially interfere with the nature

and purposes of the trail, and that mitigation/compensation results in a net benefit to the trail.

- **Renewable Energy ROWs.** Exclude cultural landscapes, high potential historic sites, and high potential route segments identified along national historic trails management corridors from transmission except in approved DFAs. Where development affects national scenic and historic trail management corridors, an analysis must be performed to ensure that it does not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the trail, and that mitigation/compensation results in a net benefit to the trail.
- **Land Tenure.** Exchange, purchase, or donation of lands within NSHT Management Corridors would be allowed; disposal of land within NSHT Management Corridors would not be permitted.
- Minerals
 - **Locatable Minerals.** The BLM would propose NSHT Management Corridors for withdrawal from mineral entry. Withdrawals would be subject to valid existing rights.
 - **Saleable Minerals.** NSHT Management Corridors would be unavailable for saleable mineral development.
 - **Leasable Minerals.** NSHT Management Corridors would be unavailable for mineral leasing.
- **Recreation.** Competitive Special Recreation Permits would not be permitted. Commercial Special Recreation Permits would be limited to those uses that provide for enjoyment and appreciation of NSHT values resources, qualities, values, and associated settings, and the primary use or uses.
- **Cultural Resources.** No allowable uses that result in adverse effects to historic properties as defined under Section 106 of National Historic Preservation Act and the implementing regulations at 36 CFR Part 800 will be authorized.
- **Visual Resources Management.** All NSHT Management Corridors will be designated as Visual Resource Management (VRM) class II, except within approved transmission corridors (VRM Class III) and DFAs (VRM Class IV). However, state-of-the-art VRM best management practices for renewable energy will be employed commensurate with the protection of nationally significant scenic resources and cultural landscapes, and other identified resources, qualities, values, and associated settings and the primary use or uses to minimize the level of intrusion and protect trail settings.

- **Mitigation Requirements.** If a segment of a National Scenic or Historic Trail or trail under study for possible designation traverses a DFA, it will be subject to mitigation for impacts to trail resources, qualities, values, and associated settings, and the primary use or uses, including, but not limited to, and not in priority order: avoidance, the cost of trail relocation, on-site mitigation, and off-site mitigation. Compensation can include acquisition or restoration of corridor features and landscapes will be at a minimum of 2:1, and must result in a net benefit to the overall national trail management corridor. Development of Covered Activities in high potential route segments must not substantially interfere with the nature and purposes of the National Trail.

II.5.2.2.2 National Recreation Trails

Management for National Recreation Trails would be the same as under the Preferred Alternative.

II.5.2.2.3 Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

Alternative 2 would include 123 ACECs totaling approximately 5,020,000 acres (nonoverlapping ACEC acres) on BLM-administered lands (includes ACECs within Existing Protected Areas). Specific management and maps for ACECs under this alternative are included in the Special Unit Management Plans (National Conservation Lands and ACEC) in Appendix L.

II.5.2.2.4 Wildlife Allocations

This alternative would include 96,700 acres of Wildlife Allocations on BLM-administered lands (includes Wildlife Allocations within NLCS). Descriptions and maps are included in the Special Unit Management Plans (NLCS and ACEC) in Appendix L.

II.5.2.2.5 Special Recreation Management Areas

This alternative would include 28 SRMAs (2,656,000 acres on BLM-administered lands). Descriptions, maps, and management actions for each SRMA under this alternative are included in SRMA Management Plans in Appendix L.

II.5.2.2.6 Lands Managed to Protect Wilderness Characteristics

Under Alternative 2, all acreage that was inventoried and found to have wilderness characteristics, except those lands within DFAs and transmission corridors, would be managed to protect these characteristics (see Figure II.5-5). In summary, of the 633,000 acres found to have wilderness characteristics 317,000 acres would be managed to protect those wilderness characteristics.

II.5.2.3 BLM-Specific CMAs

The following CMAs are different than the Preferred Alternative. For all other resources, see the Preferred Alternative Section II.3.2.3.

II.5.2.3.1 *Lands and Realty*

CMAs for Lands and Realty would be the same as in the Preferred Alternative, except for Land Exchanges and Land Sales, as described in Section II.5.2.3.1.2.

II.5.2.3.1.1 CMAs for the Entire Planning Area

- In nondesignated lands (i.e., lands not covered by the specific CMAs), make lands available for disposal through exchange or land sale.

II.5.2.3.1.2 CMAs in Development Focus Areas and DRECP Study Areas

- Make lands within DFAs available for disposal by sale or exchange under Section 203(a)(1), 203(a)(3), 206 and 209 of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act.
- In DRECP Study Areas, make lands available for sale or exchange.

II.5.2.3.1.3 CMAs in National Conservation Lands

- Make lands within National Conservation Lands available for exchange, purchase, or donation in accordance with the CMAs outlined for National Conservation Lands in Section II.3.2.2.1.1.
- Make lands within National Conservation Lands unavailable for disposal.

II.5.2.3.1.4 CMAs in Areas of Critical Environmental Concern

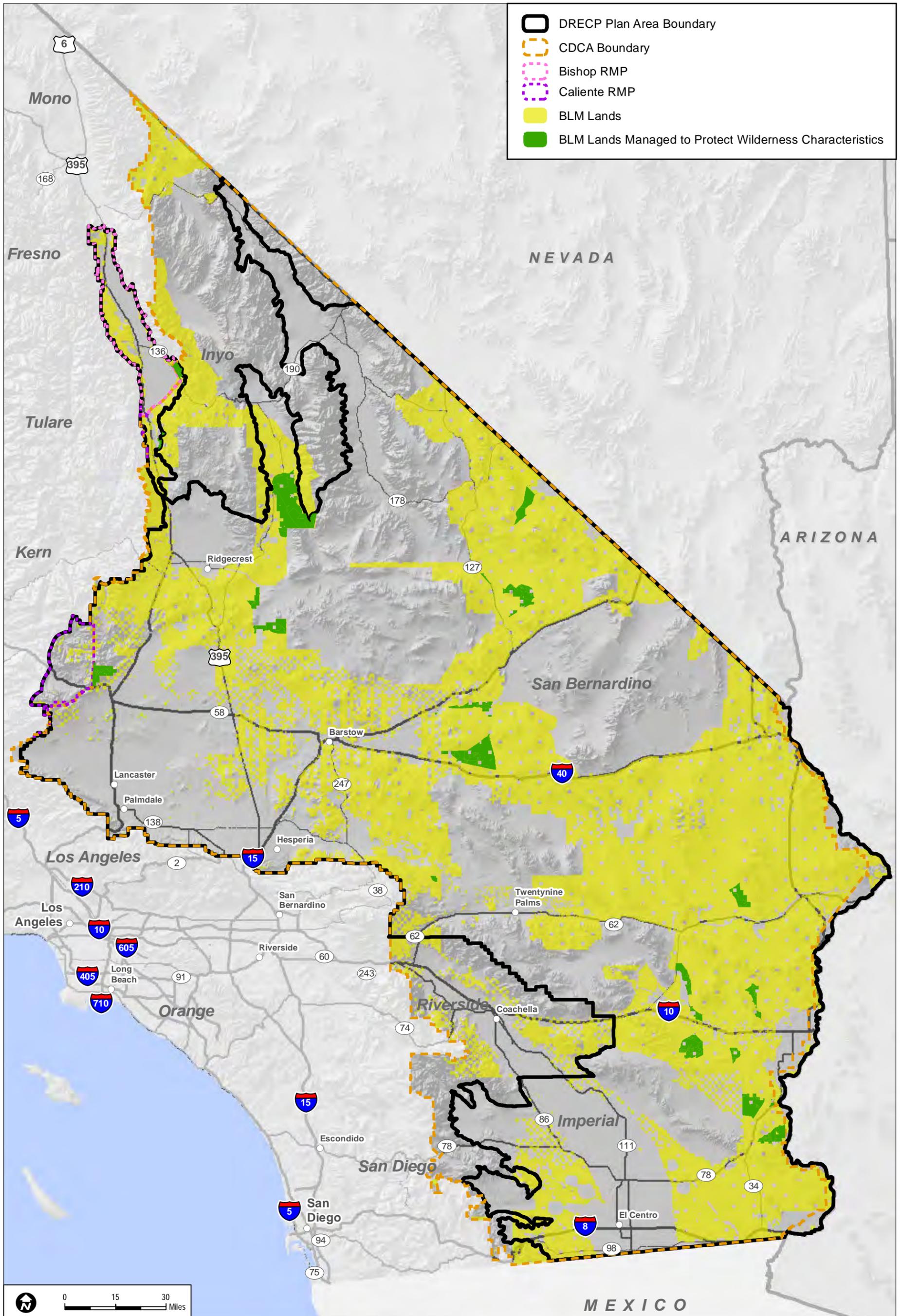
- Acquire lands in ACECs through exchange, purchase, or donation.
- Make lands in ACECs unavailable for disposal.

Conservation and Management Actions in Wildlife Allocations

- Acquire lands in Wildlife Allocations through exchange, purchase, or donation.
- Make lands in Wildlife Allocations unavailable for disposal.

Conservation and Management Actions in Special Recreation Management Areas

- Acquire lands in SRMAs through exchange, purchase, or donation.
- Make lands in SRMAs unavailable for disposal.



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

FIGURE II.5-5

Alternative 2 - BLM Lands Managed to Protect Wilderness Characteristics

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Conservation and Management Actions in Lands Managed to Protect Wilderness Characteristics

- Acquire lands managed to protect wilderness characteristics through exchange.
- Make lands managed to protect wilderness characteristics unavailable for disposal.

II.5.2.3.2 Soil, Water, and Water-Dependent Resources

CMAs for soil, water, and water-dependent resources would be the same as in the Preferred, except within DFAs, as described below.

II.5.2.3.2.1 CMAs in Development Focus Areas

- Limit disturbance of sensitive soil areas, so that no more than 20% of the sensitive soil areas within a proposed project footprint shall be disturbed for construction.
- Limit disturbance of sand dune areas, so that no more than 5% of sand dune areas within a proposed project footprint shall be disturbed for construction.
- Limit disturbance of sand flow corridors, so that no more than 5% of the sand flow corridors within a proposed project footprint shall be disturbed for construction.
- Limit disturbance of desert pavement, so that no more than 5% of the desert pavement within a proposed project footprint shall be disturbed for construction.
- Avoid development in flood plain, unless such development can be mitigated.
 - Exceptions: Exceptions to any of these stipulations may be granted by the authorized officer if the operator submits a plan that demonstrates:
 - The impacts from the proposed action are temporary;
 - The impacts minimal or can be adequately mitigated; *and*
 - Critical resources, including threatened and endangered species, are fully protected.
 - Modifications: No modifications will be granted.
 - Waivers: No waivers will be granted.

II.5.2.3.3 Visual Resources Management

Figure II.5-6 shows VRM Classes under this alternative. CMAs under this alternative would be the same as under the Preferred Alternative.

II.5.2.3.4 Wilderness Characteristics

All lands identified for management to protect wilderness characteristics would be closed to all mechanized and motorized transport

II.5.2.4 CDCA Plan Amendments

II.5.2.4.1 Multiple-Use Classes

The amendments to the multiple-use classes would be the same as the Preferred Alternative.

II.5.2.4.2 Visual Resource Management Classes and National Conservation Lands Outside of the DRECP

VRM Classes and National Conservation Land designations in the CDCA outside of the Plan Area are described in Section II.5.2.2.1 and Section II.5.2.3.3.

II.5.3 NCCP Elements of Alternative 2

The following provides an overview of the NCCP elements of Alternative 2. At the broadest level, the NCCP includes elements related to Covered Activities and conservation elements.

As described for the Preferred Alternative, each of the NCCP alternatives includes the full range of Covered Activities anticipated under the DRECP for each of the interagency Plan-wide alternatives. The Plan-wide description of Covered Activities serves as the description of Covered Activities for the NCCP alternatives.

The Natural Community Conservation Planning Act requires that NCCPs provide for the conservation and management of Covered Species and natural communities on a landscape or ecosystem level through the creation and long-term management of habitat reserves and the application of other equivalent conservation measures. To reflect the conservation that would occur under the NCCP, the NCCP elements of each alternative define the following means of providing conservation within the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope: an NCCP Conceptual Plan-Wide Reserve Design, a DRECP NCCP Reserve Design, and other conservation actions.

Reserve design features and other conservation actions within the NCCP alternatives are consistent with and nested within the DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope in the interagency Plan-wide alternatives, but differ in terms of how reserve design features are grouped with in the NCCP Conceptual Plan-Wide Reserve Design and the DRECP NCCP Reserve Design. Table II.5-18 summarizes the NCCP elements of Alternative 2. As shown in Table II.5-18, the DRECP NCCP Reserve Design covers approximately 811,000 acres of BLM and non-BLM lands. Figure II.5-7 depicts the NCCP for Alternative 2. Refer to Appendix N

for a description of how the Plan-wide description of the alternative serves as the description of the NCCP for the DRECP.

**Table II.5-18
NCCP for Alternative 2**

| NCCP Components | Acreage |
|---|-------------------|
| DFAs | 2,473,000 |
| Study Area Lands | 109,000 |
| Future Assessment Areas | 109,000 |
| DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope | 15,084,000 |
| Existing conservation areas | 7,662,000 |
| NCCP Conceptual Plan-Wide Reserve Design | 2,730,000 |
| Inside the DRECP NCCP Reserve Design | 811,000 |
| BLM LUPA conservation designations | 507,000 |
| Biological Conservation Priority Areas on non-BLM lands | 304,000 |
| Outside the DRECP NCCP Reserve Design | 1,920,000 |
| BLM LUPA conservation designations | 1,448,000 |
| Biological Conservation Priority Areas on non-BLM lands | 472,000 |
| BLM LUPA conservation designations outside the NCCP Conceptual Plan-Wide Reserve Design | 3,233,000 |
| Biological Conservation Planning Areas on non-BLM lands | 1,458,000 |
| Urban Areas, Other Lands, and Undesignated Areas | 4,919,000 |
| Plan Area Total | 22,585,000 |

Note: 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.5.4 GCP Elements of Alternative 2

As described in Section II.3.4 for the Preferred Alternative, the DRECP’s GCP elements include a streamlined permitting process for renewable energy development by nonfederal project proponents in the Plan Area. This section is intended to provide the description of the GCP elements of the DRECP for Alternative 2.

II.5.4.1 Overview of the Nonfederal GCP Lands of Alternative 2

The GCP component of Alternative 2 includes all nonfederal lands within the DRECP DFAs and Conservation Planning Areas, as well as nonfederal inholdings within existing conservation areas and BLM-administered lands in the Plan Area; these lands comprise the GCP Permit Area in the Plan Area. The larger GCP Plan Area encompasses the GCP Permit

Area as well as Priority Conservation Areas outside the GCP Permit Area where permittee non-acquisition mitigation measures may be implemented (i.e., BLM-administered lands corresponding to the DRECP NCCP Reserve Design). Nonfederal lands include privately owned lands and lands owned by state and local jurisdictions. The conservation strategy and Covered Activities under the GCP would be consistent with the DRECP. Table II.5-19 provides a summary of Alternative 2 within the GCP component of the DRECP; Figure II.5-8 depicts Alternative 2 within the GCP area.

As shown in Table II.5-19, the GCP portion of the Plan Area covers a total of 1,730,000 acres of DFAs on nonfederal lands (70% of the total DFAs in Alternative 2). The biological resources environmental setting/affected environment for the GCP portion of the Plan Area is described in Volume III, Section III.7.11. The impact analysis for Alternative 2 on nonfederal lands within the GCP area is provided in Section IV.7.3.4.4.

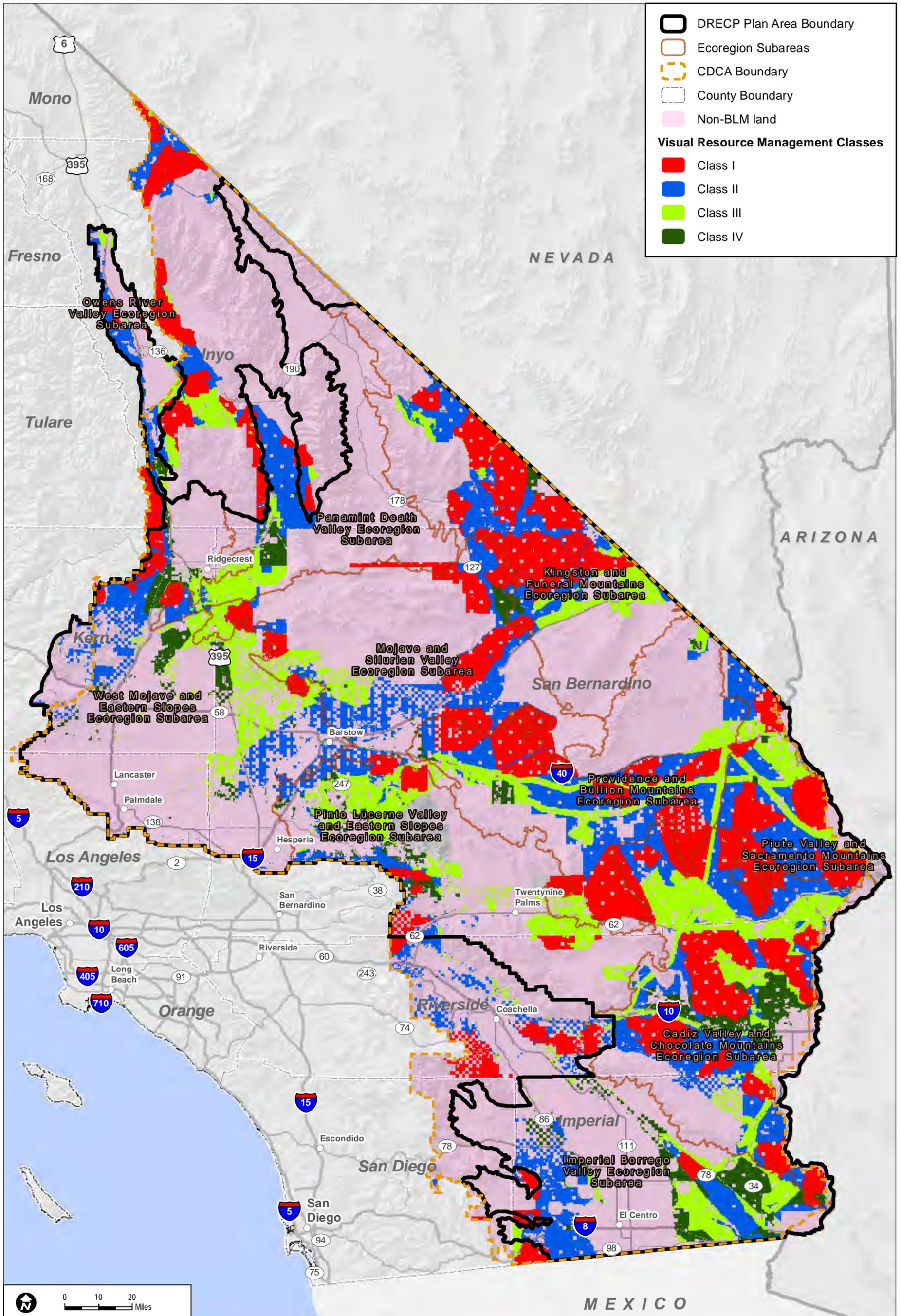
**Table II.5-19
 Alternative 2 Within the GCP**

| Alternative Components | Acreage |
|--|------------------|
| DFAs (Nonfederal Lands Only) | 1,730,000 |
| Study Area Lands (Nonfederal Lands Only) | 80,000 |
| Future Assessment Areas | 80,000 |
| DRECP Plan-Wide Reserve Design Envelope (Nonfederal Lands Only) | 2,596,000 |
| Existing conservation areas | 434,000 |
| BLM LUPA conservation designations | 1,041,000 |
| Conservation Planning Areas | 1,121,000 |

Notes: Urban Areas, Other Lands, and Undesignated Areas also occur on nonfederal lands but are not 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.

II.5.4.2 Overview of the GCP Permitting Process

The GCP permitting process under Alternative 2 would be the same as is described for the Preferred Alternative in Section II.3.4.2 and in Appendix M.



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

FIGURE II.5-6

Alternative 2 - BLM Visual Resource Management Classes

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DRECP Plan-wide Reserve Design Envelope

NCCP Categories

DRECP NCCP Reserve Design

- DRECP NCCP Reserve Design

NCCP Conceptual Plan-wide Reserve Design

- Legislatively and Legally Protected Areas
- Military Expansion Mitigation Lands
- BLM LUPA Conservation Designations Inside the NCCP Conceptual Plan-wide Reserve Design
- Biological Conservation Priority Areas on Non-BLM Lands

BLM Conservation Designations Outside the NCCP Conceptual Plan-wide Reserve Design

- BLM LUPA Conservation Designations

Biological Conservation Planning Areas

- Biological Conservation Planning Areas on Non-BLM Lands

Renewable Energy Development

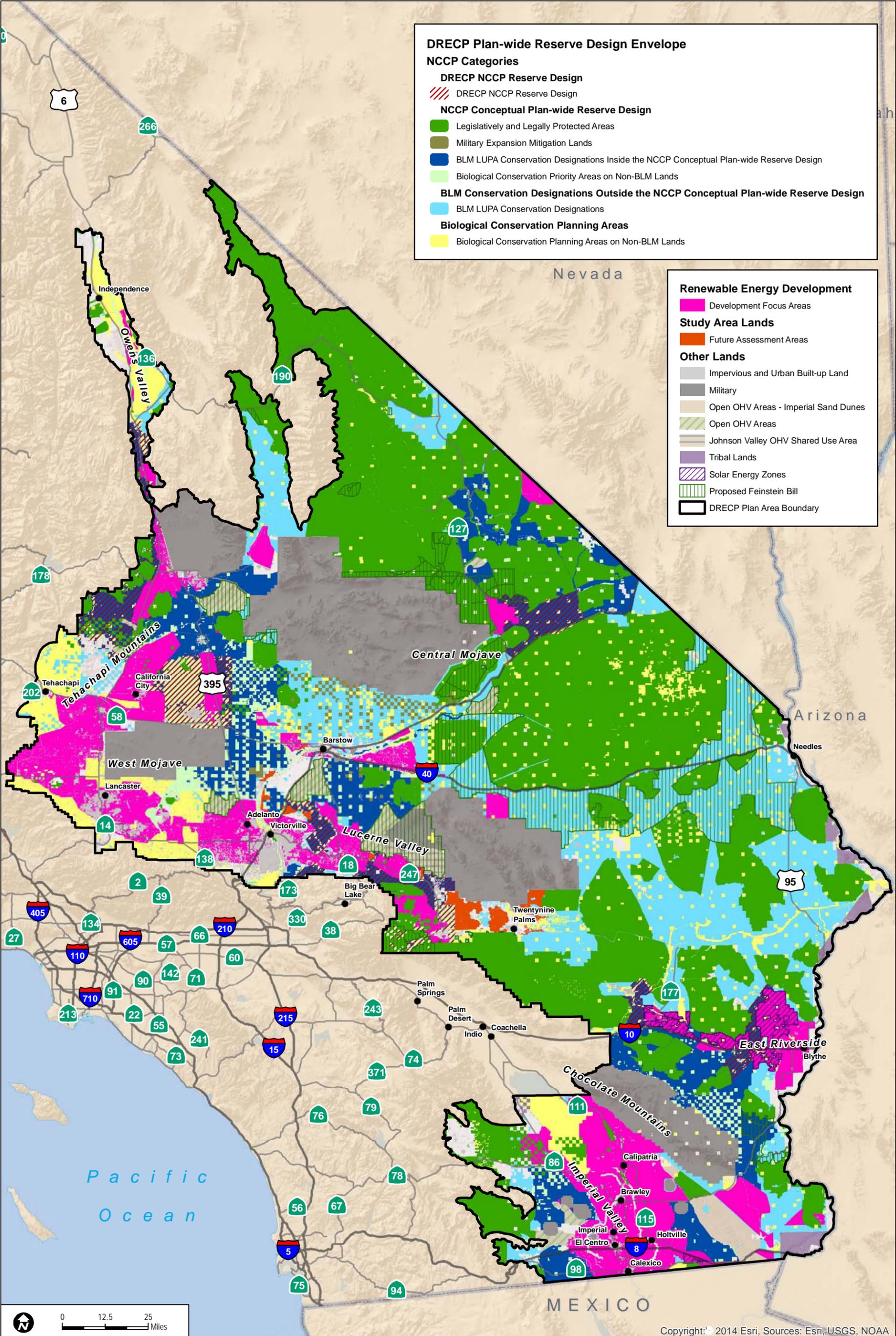
- Development Focus Areas

Study Area Lands

- Future Assessment Areas

Other Lands

- Impervious and Urban Built-up Land
- Military
- Open OHV Areas - Imperial Sand Dunes
- Open OHV Areas
- Johnson Valley OHV Shared Use Area
- Tribal Lands
- Solar Energy Zones
- Proposed Feinstein Bill
- DRECP Plan Area Boundary

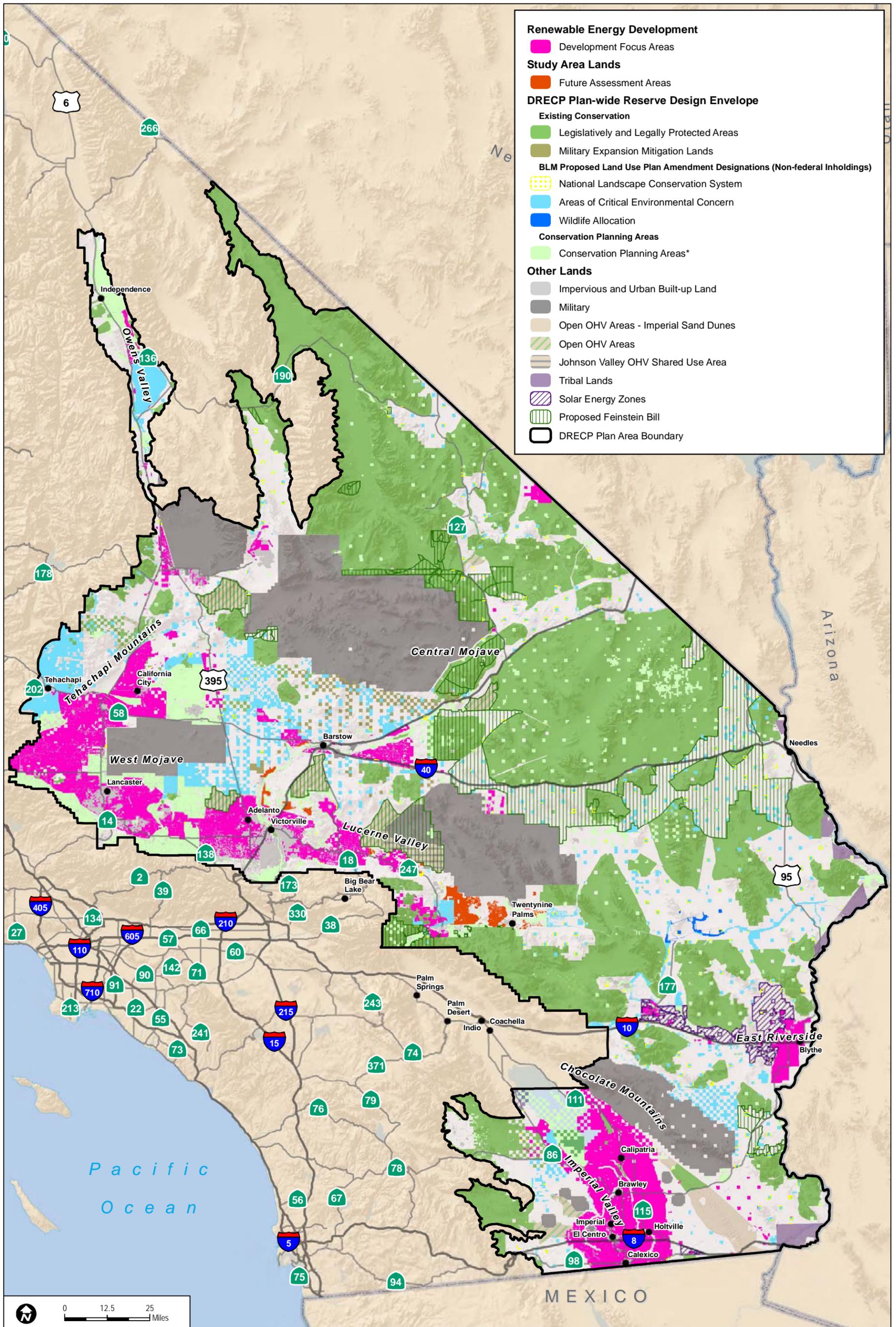


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Sources: ESRI (2014); CEC (2013); BLM (2013); CDFW (2013); USFWS (2013)

FIGURE II.5-7
Alternative 2 - Natural Community Conservation Plan

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

*The portion of the reserve design outside Existing Conservation Areas and BLM LUPA Conservation Designations on private and non-BLM public lands from which reserve areas will be assembled from willing sellers as compensation for Covered Activities.

Draft DRECP and EIR/EIS

FIGURE II.5-8

Alternative 2 - General Conservation Plan

August 2014

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