



# COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE

## Board of Supervisors

District 1	<b>Bob Buster</b> 951-955-1010
District 2	<b>John F. Tavaglione</b> 951-955-1020
District 3	<b>Jeff Stone</b> 951-955-1030
District 4	<b>John J. Benoit</b> 951-955-1040
District 5	<b>Marion Ashley</b> 951-955-1050

February 8, 2011

Mr. Dave Harlow

Director, California Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan

1516 Ninth Street, MS-46

Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: RIVERSIDE COUNTY'S POSITION ON THE DESERT RENEWABLE ENERGY CONSERVATION PLAN (DRECP)

Dear Mr. Harlow:

Riverside County is a recognized leader in the protection of natural communities and endangered species. It developed both the Coachella Valley and Western Riverside Multi Species Habitat Conservation Plans (HCP) and has been implementing them for over ten years. These HCPs balance environmental protection and economic development objectives, while simplifying compliance with endangered species laws.

Consistent with this leadership role, the County has been actively participating in the DRECP process through our designated representative on the DRECP Stakeholder Committee. Although the County supports renewable energy production and acknowledges the positive effects it will have generally, the County also recognizes that conservation required by the DRECP will result in local impacts in the form of lost economic development potential (jobs, property tax revenue, etc.), lost recreation potential and lost historical resources (farmland, historic sites, etc.) Without appropriate ways to reduce these impacts, Riverside County will bear a disproportionately heavy burden for renewable energy production because it is uniquely suited for the location of such facilities. Before Riverside County can support the DRECP, the County needs to be assured that the following matters will be resolved:

- The DRECP will define the total number of renewable energy projects to be permitted in Riverside County through the Plan, the number that will be located on land within the County's jurisdiction, and the number that will be located on land outside the County's jurisdiction.
- The DRECP will define the mitigation required for the renewable energy projects to be permitted wherever located.
- In considering mitigation, the DRECP will evaluate options other than land set-asides such as the payment of fees or the cost of making the local workforce employable in the renewable energy industry.
- The DRECP will encourage renewable energy production at or near the point of consumption.

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- The DRECP will acknowledge that permitted Habitat Conservation Plans will remain intact and that the DRECP will not mandate any additional requirements.
- In spite of the area encompassed by the DRECP, it will, by design, work to preserve the unique values and character of Riverside County.
- The DRECP will establish an integral role for Riverside County in the formal implementation process of the DRECP and will in no way impact local land use control.
- The DRECP will memorialize guarantees to ensure that the burden of acquisition, management, and/or monitoring do not fall on the local jurisdiction(s).
- The DRECP will ensure that lands conserved within Riverside County are managed by land managers selected and overseen by jurisdiction(s) or entities within the County.
- Research done on and for projects within Riverside County will be conducted by local entities.
- The DRECP will ensure that the conservation impacts of renewable energy production are appropriately reduced so that the County does not bear a disproportionate burden of such impacts.

Riverside County intends to continue to contribute to the DRECP process and anticipates that the final product will meet the broad scale needs of local jurisdictions, facilitate the permitting of quality renewable energy projects, and provide for the protection of the environment. Please feel free to contact Gail Barton, Principal Planner ([gbarton@rctlma.org](mailto:gbarton@rctlma.org)) if you require clarification or additional information.

Sincerely,

Bob Buster, Supervisor  
First District  
Chairman of the Board