

Conservation Needs, which are announced annually by AFWA at the same time as its request for proposals. Further, applicants must provide certification that no activities conducted under a Multistate Conservation grant will promote or encourage opposition to regulated hunting or trapping of wildlife or to regulated angling or taking of fish.

Eligible project proposals are reviewed and ranked by AFWA

Committees and interested nongovernmental organizations that represent conservation organizations, sportsmen's and women's organizations, and industries that support or promote fishing, hunting, trapping, recreational shooting, bowhunting, or archery. AFWA's Committee on National Grants recommends a final list of priority projects to the directors of State fish and wildlife agencies for their approval by

majority vote. By statute, AFWA then must transmit the final approved list to the FWS for funding under the Multistate Conservation Grant program by October 1 of the fiscal year.

This year, we received a list of 12 recommended projects from AFWA. We recommend all of them for funding in fiscal year 2012. The list follows:

MULTISTATE CONSERVATION GRANT PROGRAM—FY 2012 CYCLE RECOMMENDED PROJECTS

ID	Title	Submitter	PR funding ¹	DJ funding ²	Total 2012 grant request
12-034	Multistate Conservation Grant Program Coordination.	AFWA	\$145,260.00	\$145,260.00	\$290,520.00
12-001	Coordination of Farm Bill Program Implementation to Optimize Fish and Wildlife Benefits to the States.	AFWA	156,600.00	52,200.00	208,800.00
12-008	Coordination of the Industry, Federal and State Agency Coalition.	AFWA	152,775.00	50,925.00	203,700.00
12-028	State Fish and Wildlife Agency Coordination and Administration.	AFWA	299,359.80	299,359.80	598,719.60
12-029	State Fish and Wildlife Agency Director Travel Coordination and Administration.	AFWA	64,075.00	64,075.00	128,150.00
12-010	2011 Economic Impacts of Sportfishing	American Sportfishing Association	0.0	82,503.00	82,503.00
12-022	The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program 75th Anniversary.	Wildlife Management Institute	50,000.00	50,000.00	100,000.00
12-011	Investigating Factors Related to Hunting and Fishing License Sales Increases.	American Sportfishing Association	92,886.15	92,886.15	185,772.30
12-017	Longitudinal Evaluation of Hunting, Fishing, and Shooting Recruitment/Retention Programs.	National Wild Turkey Federation	173,172.38	173,172.38	346,344.76
12-033	Organizational Development Training for Fish Habitat Partnerships to Increase Capacity.	National Fish Habitat Action Plan Board.	0	100,000.00	100,000.00
12-021	Trailblazer Adventure Program	U.S. Sportsman Alliance Foundation.	40,000.00	40,000.00	80,000.00
12-030	Conserving Fish Habitat from Whitewater to Bluewater.	Atlantic States Marine Fisheries Commission.	0	261,440.38	261,440.38
			1,174,128.33	1,411,821.71	2,585,950.04

¹ PR Funding: Pitman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration funds.

² DJ Funding: Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration funds.

Dated: December 28, 2011.

Rowan W. Gould,

Acting Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

[LLCA9300000 L13400000.DS0000]

Notice of Amendment to the Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan, Including Kern, Los Angeles, San Bernardino, Inyo, Riverside, Imperial, and San Diego Counties; and Possible Land Use Plan Amendments

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management

Act of 1976 (FLPMA), as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Central California District, Sacramento, California and California Desert District, Moreno Valley, California intend to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) which may include amendments to the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA) Plan, Bishop Resource Management Plan (RMP), Caliente/Bakersfield RMP, and Eastern San Diego County RMP for the areas that are within the planning boundary of the proposed Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP). These potential plan amendments will be analyzed in the DRECP Draft EIS and CDCA Plan Amendment (PA), as noticed in the **Federal Register** on November 20, 2009 (74 FR 60291) and August 29, 2011 (76 FR 45606). By this notice, the BLM is announcing the beginning of the scoping process to

solicit public comments and identify issues related to the proposed RMP amendments.

DATES: This notice initiates the public scoping process for the EIS and possible RMP amendments. Comments on issues may be submitted in writing until May 4, 2012. In order to be included in the Draft EIS/PA, all comments must be received prior to the close of the scoping period. We will provide additional opportunities for public participation upon publication of the Draft EIS/PA.

ADDRESSES: You may submit comments in writing on issues and planning criteria related to the Bishop, Caliente/Bakersfield, or Eastern San Diego plan amendments as addressed in the DRECP Draft EIS/PA by any of the following methods:

- *Web site:* <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/cdd.html>.
- *Email:* DRECP@blm.gov or docket@energy.state.ca.us (include "Docket No. 09-RENEW EO-01/ Scoping" in the subject line).
- *Fax:* (916) 978-4657 or (916) 654-4421 (Attn: Kristy Chew).
- *Mail:* ATTN: Vicki Campbell, DRECP Program Manager, BLM California State Office, 2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-1623, Sacramento, California 95825, or California Energy Commission, Dockets Office, MS-4, Docket No. 09-RENEW EO-01, Scoping Comments, 1516 Ninth St., Sacramento California 95814-5512.

Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the BLM California State Office (see **ADDRESSES** above); BLM California Desert District office, 22835 Calle San Juan de Los Lagos, Moreno Valley, California 92553-9046; BLM Bakersfield Field Office, 3801 Pegasus Drive, Bakersfield, California 93308; or the BLM Bishop Field Office, 351 Pacu Lane, Suite 100, Bishop, California 93514.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information and/or to have your name added to our mailing list, contact Vicki Campbell, DRECP Program Manager, telephone (916) 978-4320; address BLM California State Office, 2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-1623, Sacramento, California 95825; email DRECP@blm.gov. Persons who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at (800) 877-8339 to contact the above individual during normal business hours. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question with the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: The BLM, along with the California Department of

Fish and Game, the California Energy Commission, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service propose to amend the CDCA Plan, Bishop RMP, Caliente/Bakersfield RMP, and Eastern San Diego RMP within the DRECP planning area. The DRECP will advance State and Federal conservation goals in the desert regions of California while also facilitating the timely permitting of renewable energy projects under applicable State and Federal laws, and is intended to complement the Solar Programmatic EIS, which is currently under environmental review as well. Thus far, the agencies have identified the need to: provide conservation and management of identified species in the planning area, along with the natural communities and ecosystems that support these species, build on the Competitive Renewable Energy Zones identified by the State's Renewable Energy Transmission Initiative, while identifying the most appropriate locations in the planning area for development of utility scale renewable energy projects that will not burden existing resources, standardize mitigation and compensation requirements for energy activities in the planning area, and to streamline the permitting process of energy projects that results in greater conservation values than current methods.

The purpose of the public scoping process is to determine relevant issues that will influence the scope of the environmental analysis, including alternatives for the RMP areas and to guide the process for developing the Draft EIS/PA. The BLM has identified the following preliminary issues: special status species, mitigation measures for special status species, vegetation communities, cultural resources, special area designations, and areas of high potential for renewable energy development. These issues along with interagency guidance and cooperation have helped frame preliminary planning criteria, which will work to define the scope of the planning area. These criteria include:

- The plan amendments will be completed in compliance with FLPMA, NEPA, and all other relevant Federal law, implementing regulations, Executive Orders, Secretarial Orders, and management policies of the Department of Interior and the BLM.
- The plan amendment will recognize BLM's responsibility to manage for multiple use and sustained yield throughout the planning area.
- Although the plan amendments will only apply to BLM-managed lands, the BLM will develop and analyze in its range of alternatives, potential land use

plan decisions that address a larger, landscape context, which will include considerations of private lands.

- The California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment will recognize the unique values and resources in the California Desert, as found by Congress in Sec. 601 of FLPMA.

- The plan amendments will be consistent with the California Natural Communities Conservation Planning Act, to the extent that the decisions reached in the NCCP are consistent with Federal law, regulation, and BLM policies regarding management of public lands.

- The plan amendment will comply with the Memorandums of Understanding between the Department of the Interior (including those agreements signed by BLM-CA) and the State of California (including those agreements signed by state agencies and commissions) and the DRECP Planning Agreement, to the extent that the direction in those documents is consistent with Federal law, regulation, and BLM policies regarding the management of public lands.

- Native American Tribal consultation will be conducted in accordance with Federal law, regulation, and policy, and Tribal concerns will be given due consideration.

- Plan amendment decisions will strive to be compatible with the existing plans and policies of adjacent local, state, tribal, and federal agencies, or with changes to those policies and plans contemplated as part of the DRECP, as long as the decisions are in conformance with Federal law, regulation, and BLM policies on management of public lands.

Authorization of this proposal will require amendments of the CDCA Plan, Bishop RMP, Caliente/Bakersfield RMP, and Eastern San Diego RMP. By this notice, the BLM is complying with requirements in 43 CFR 1610.2(c) to notify the public of potential amendments to land use plans predicated on the findings of the environmental review process. The BLM is integrating the land use plan amendment process with the NEPA process for this project.

The BLM will use and coordinate the NEPA commenting process to help fulfill the public involvement process under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (16 U.S.C. 470(f)) as provided for in 36 CFR 800.2(d)(3). Native American Tribal consultations will be conducted in accordance with policy, and Tribal concerns will be given due consideration, including potential impacts on Indian trust assets. Federal,

state, and local agencies, along with tribes and other stakeholders that may be interested or affected by the BLM's decision on this project are invited to participate in the scoping process and, if eligible, may request or be requested by the BLM to participate as a cooperating agency. Before including your address, phone number, email address, or other personal identifying information in your comment, you should be aware that your entire comment—including your personal identifying information—may be made publicly available at any time. While you can ask us in your comment to withhold your personal identifying information from public review, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to do so.

The minutes and list of attendees for each scoping meeting will be available to the public and open for 30 days after the meeting to any participant who wishes to clarify the views he or she expressed. The BLM will evaluate identified issues to be addressed in the plan, and will place them into one of three categories:

1. Issues to be resolved in the plan amendment;
2. Issues to be resolved through policy or administrative action; or
3. Issues beyond the scope of this plan amendment.

The BLM will provide an explanation in the Draft RMP/Draft EIS as to why an issue was placed in category two or three. The public is also encouraged to help identify any management questions and concerns that should be addressed in the plan. The BLM will work collaboratively with interested parties to identify the management decisions that are best suited to local, regional, and national needs and concerns.

The BLM will use an interdisciplinary approach to develop the plan amendment in order to consider the variety of resource issues and concerns identified. Specialists with expertise in the following disciplines will be involved in the planning process: rangeland management, minerals and geology, outdoor recreation, paleontology, archaeology, wildlife, lands and realty, hydrology, soils, sociology and economics.

Authority: 40 CFR 1501.7 and 43 CFR 1610.2.

Thomas Pogacnik,
Deputy State Director.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Bureau of Land Management

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

Western Area Power Administration

[LLNM930000 L51010000.ER0000
LVRWG11G0790 NMNM124104]

Notice of Intent To Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Southline Transmission Line Project in New Mexico and Arizona (DOE/EIS-0474) and Possible Land Use Plan Amendments

AGENCY: Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Department of the Interior; Western Area Power Administration, U.S. Department of Energy.

ACTION: Notice of intent.

SUMMARY: In compliance with the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), as amended, and the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA), as amended, the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) Las Cruces District Office, Las Cruces, New Mexico, intends to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) analyzing the impacts of the proposed Southline Transmission Line Project (Project), a 345-kilovolt (kV) and 230-kV transmission line, and addressing associated potential land use plan amendments. This notice announces the beginning of the scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues. Western Area Power Administration (Western) is a joint lead agency with BLM for preparing the EIS. Western is a power-marketing agency within the Department of Energy (DOE) and is proposing to participate in the Project with the applicant, Southline Transmission, LLC (Southline).

DATES: This notice initiates a 60-day public scoping process to solicit public comments and identify issues, opportunities, and concerns that should be considered in the preparation of a Draft EIS. During the scoping process, the BLM will also evaluate the need for any land use plan amendments to any of the affected Resource Management Plans (RMPs). The scoping period will end on June 4, 2012, or 15 days after the date of the last public scoping meeting, whichever is later. In order to ensure consideration in the Draft EIS, all comments must be received prior to the close of the scoping period. The BLM and Western will provide additional opportunities for public participation upon publication of the Draft EIS. The public will be notified in advance of

future opportunities for participation as the EIS is prepared.

To provide the public with an opportunity to review the proposal and project information, the BLM and Western expect to hold six public meetings at various locations in New Mexico and Arizona during the public scoping period. The BLM will announce public scoping meetings through local news media, newsletters, and posting on the BLM Web site at <http://www.blm.gov/nm/southline> at least 15 days prior to each meeting.

ADDRESSES: Comments related to the proposed Project may be submitted by any of the following methods:

Web site: <http://www.blm.gov/nm/southline>.

Fax: (575) 525-4412.

Mail: BLM, Las Cruces District Office, Southline Transmission Project, Attention: Frances Martinez, Realty Specialist, 1800 Marquess Street, Las Cruces, New Mexico 88005.

Email: fmartine@blm.gov.

Documents pertinent to this proposal may be examined at the Las Cruces District Office or on the above Web site.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Tom Hurshman, BLM National Project Manager; telephone (970) 240-5345; email: thurshma@blm.gov.

For information about Western's involvement, contact Mark Wieringa, Western NEPA Document Manager; telephone (800) 336-7288 or (720) 962-7448; email: wieringa@wapa.gov. For general information on DOE NEPA (42 U.S.C. 4321-4347) review procedures or on the status of a NEPA review, contact Carol M. Borgstrom, Director of NEPA Policy and Compliance, GC-54, U.S. Department of Energy, 1000 Independence Avenue SW., Washington, DC 20585-0119, telephone (202) 586-4600 or toll free at (800) 472-2756, fax (202) 586-7031.

People who use a telecommunications device for the deaf (TDD) may call the Federal Information Relay Service (FIRS) at (800) 877-8339 during normal business hours to contact the BLM Project Manager listed above. The FIRS is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, to leave a message or question for the above individual. You will receive a reply during normal business hours.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Southline has filed a right-of-way (ROW) application with the BLM pursuant to Title V of FLPMA proposing to construct, operate, maintain, and eventually decommission a high-voltage, alternating current electric transmission line. The proposed Project would consist of two segments. The first segment would be the construction of a