



# Imperial County Planning & Development Services Planning / Building

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Jim Minnick  
DIRECTOR

January 14, 2022

**Subject: Request for Proposal – Preparation of the Salton Sea Renewable Resource Specific Plan and Programmatic Environmental Impact Report**

Ladies & Gentlemen:

The Imperial County Planning & Development Services Department is soliciting proposals from qualified Consulting Firms for the preparation of a new Specific Plan and Programmatic EIR, along with other pertinent/related General Plan documents and a comprehensive environmental clearance document. The Planning & Development Services Department shall act as the coordinating agency to the proposed Salton Sea Renewable Resource Specific Plan as necessary and be the "Lead Agency" for the preparation of an environmental clearance document pursuant to the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA). The successful prime consultant shall work directly for the Imperial County Planning & Development Services Director and/or designee in the preparation of the draft and final Specific Plan, potential General Plan review/update and environmental clearance document.

The County has a long history of renewable energy development. Primarily geothermal power generation and more recently solar power generation and battery storage. The State of California is committed to the development of renewable energy and sustainability. Recent regulations have pushed for the reduction of fossil fuel vehicles in favor of electric (lithium), fuel cell (hydrogen) and other renewable powered options. The County's proposed specific plan would provide an area around known geothermal resource and for the development additional power plants, mineral recovery, lithium battery manufacturing, renewable hydrogen production and other renewable industries. The plan will also include the necessary ancillary services. A major goal is to provide opportunities through streamlining development and permitting, encouraging renewable energy industry investment that will in turn improve the County, providing quality jobs and economic diversity.

The project will also include review/revision to the County's General Plan, ordinances, overlay zone and applicable zoning maps. Special focus will include expanding renewable energy and mineral opportunities in the County in a manner consistent with Government Code Section 65450-65457. The key tasks that are attached hereto include the following: collection of baseline environmental information necessary for a Programmatic EIR, identification of renewable energy opportunities and ancillary uses. The identification of state and federal policies regarding renewable energy, review the General Plan for internal inconsistencies on renewable energy issues, develop and implement a public outreach program, revise (if required) the General Plan elements, revise the implementing ordinances and overlay zone and prepare the required environmental document.

Attached hereto is a synopsis of the Salton Sea Renewable Resource Specific Plan and a general area map. At this point, the area (size) of the Specific Plan has not been finalized.

The County hereby requests the following information:

- a. Project scope to be utilized in the preparation of a legally adequate Specific Plan, any necessary General Plan element revisions related to the Specific Plan and the CEQA document;
- b. All potential subcontractor(s) that will be utilized along with their estimated staff time and cost breakdown.
- c. An estimated timetable, which you and your subcontractor(s) can provide a comprehensive draft and final Specific Plan, General Plan review/update and environmental document;
- d. An estimated "not to exceed cost" to prepare the draft and final Specific Plan, General Plan review/update and environmental document;
- e. Identified milestones representing specific tangible work products to which payments by the County would be linked and become part of the legal contract. (Please note that all subsequent bills/invoices shall be required to include both the identified milestones and percent completed).
- f. A digital (flash drive) version of all documents prepared by the prime consultant and potential subcontractor(s).

The only exception to the "not to exceed" cost shall be the response to public comments received as a result of the environmental document's circulation. If the County receives excessive comments on the draft document, then the costs will be determined on a "negotiated basis" when the draft document and comments on the project become available. Excessive comments are generally considered to be more than twenty (20) commenting agencies/individuals and/or over 150 comments that require answers other than "comment noted".

Also, not included in the cost estimate is the printing of the draft and final Specific Plan, General Plan revisions and environmental document over 50 copies. The first 25 hard copies (12 hard copies to including appendices for local libraries) and 45 cd's are to be included within your estimate. Any additional copies, greater than 50, shall be prepared by you at cost.

Prior to any cost overruns the consultant shall seek and obtain written approval from the County Planning & Development Services Director before such costs are incurred. Failure to get prior written approval may result in such costs being disallowed.

We request that you provide within your cost estimate the preparation of the following studies/analysis necessary for the development of a Specific Plan and the following categories and related existing CEQA documents:

- Aesthetics
- Agricultural Resources (include LESA Model)
- Air Quality & Greenhouse Gas Emissions Studies
- Biological resources
- Cultural Resources/Archeological Study
- Geology and Soils Analysis
- Glare Analysis
- Hazards, Hazardous Materials Study

- Health Risk Assessment
- Hydrology/Water Quality
- Land Use
- Noise Study
- Population and Housing
- Public Health & Safety
- Public Services
- SB-18 Tribal Consultation
- Traffic Study
- Transportation/Circulation
- Utilities and Service
- Visualization Study
- Mitigation, Monitoring & Reporting Program
- Draft Findings for Project
- One (Administrative Draft/Final EIR)

The prime County consultant may wish to utilize sub-consultants for the review of the above areas of study and document preparation, which the County may or may not allow. Regardless of the applicant's desire, the decision of the County in consultation with the prime consultant shall determine whether or not these studies are acceptable for inclusion within the updated element(s) and/or environmental document. At the very least, you will be expected to review existing studies and reports to determine whether or not they are legally adequate, need to be revised, updated or, in fact, be reproduced.

Please use the following format as a guide in preparing your proposal:

1. **One page cover letter** introducing your firm.
2. **Project Understanding** (no more than one page).
3. **Project Team.** Please identify all company and consultant team personnel who will work on the project and short description of their education and work experience. Resumes of the prime and technical consultants can be attached to the proposal as an appendix. Elaborate organization charts are not necessary.
4. **Scope of Work.** Describe your work in order to accomplish/implementation scope of work listed as Exhibit "A" and the attached list of tasks related to the environmental clearance. Please include the deliverables for each task. Please include all applicable site visits, scoping meetings, staff meetings and public workshops/hearings. Be specific regarding your approach to completing these tasks that should include:
  - a) Project Initiation. Include how your work will complete the above listed-tasks as well as in the attachment, possible research needed, site visits, data collection/review, as outlined in the tasks.
  - b) Administrative Draft EIR. Include mandatory CEQA sections, required technical studies, include peer review of existing technical studies, number of possible revisions, meetings and coordination with County staff.
  - c) Public Review Draft EIR. Include document preparation, CEQA noticing, scoping meetings, and coordination with County staff.
  - d) Final EIR. Include document preparation, response to comments, CEQA notice, meetings, coordination with County staff and attendance at Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors public hearings.


- e) Mitigation, Monitoring and Reporting Program. Include the preparation per CEQA that identifies mitigation measures, responsible parties, timing and enforcement of the measures.
  - f) Notices and Findings. Preparation of noticing for public workshops and the preparation of CEQA findings and assisting in resolution preparation.
  - g) Assumptions. Please provide a specific section for assumptions. Include your assumptions regarding travel time, mileage, public noticing, or anything else that needs clarification.
  - h) The number of meetings and hearings that are included in your proposal should be detailed under each task.
5. **Proposed Schedule.** Provide the number of weeks for each task in tabular form from project initiation to public hearings
  6. **Cost Estimate/Milestones.** Provide a discussion of the proposed cost and any optional costs. Please include a spread sheet that details the personnel, their estimated hours and associated costs per task (can be attached as an appendix). A table of project milestones should be included in the Cost Estimate discussion.
  7. **Finally, it is requested that you disclose any conflict or potential conflict that you may have if you are submitting a proposal. The conflict by the County envisions at the very minimum, current/ongoing or previous contracts with the County, including current technical studies that either are or have been prepared for the County within the last year.**

If you are interesting in submitting a proposal, please submit it to Jim Minnick, Director of Development Services at Imperial County Planning & Development Services, 801 Main Street, El Centro, CA 92243, **no later than February 11, 2022.** This proposal must be postmarked or sent via facsimile on or before this date.

Please note that it is not necessary to present us with voluminous references or individualized background data on persons or personnel within your organization. We may require this at a later date. Thank you for your possible submittal on this RFP.

If you do have any questions, please contact Jim Minnick, at (442) 265-1736, extension 1776 or via email at [jimminnick@co.imperial.ca.us](mailto:jimminnick@co.imperial.ca.us) .

Sincerely,



Jim Minnick, Director of  
Planning & Development Services













Attachments Proposed Salton Sea Renewable Resource Specific Plan  
Salton Sea Renewable Resource SP Scope

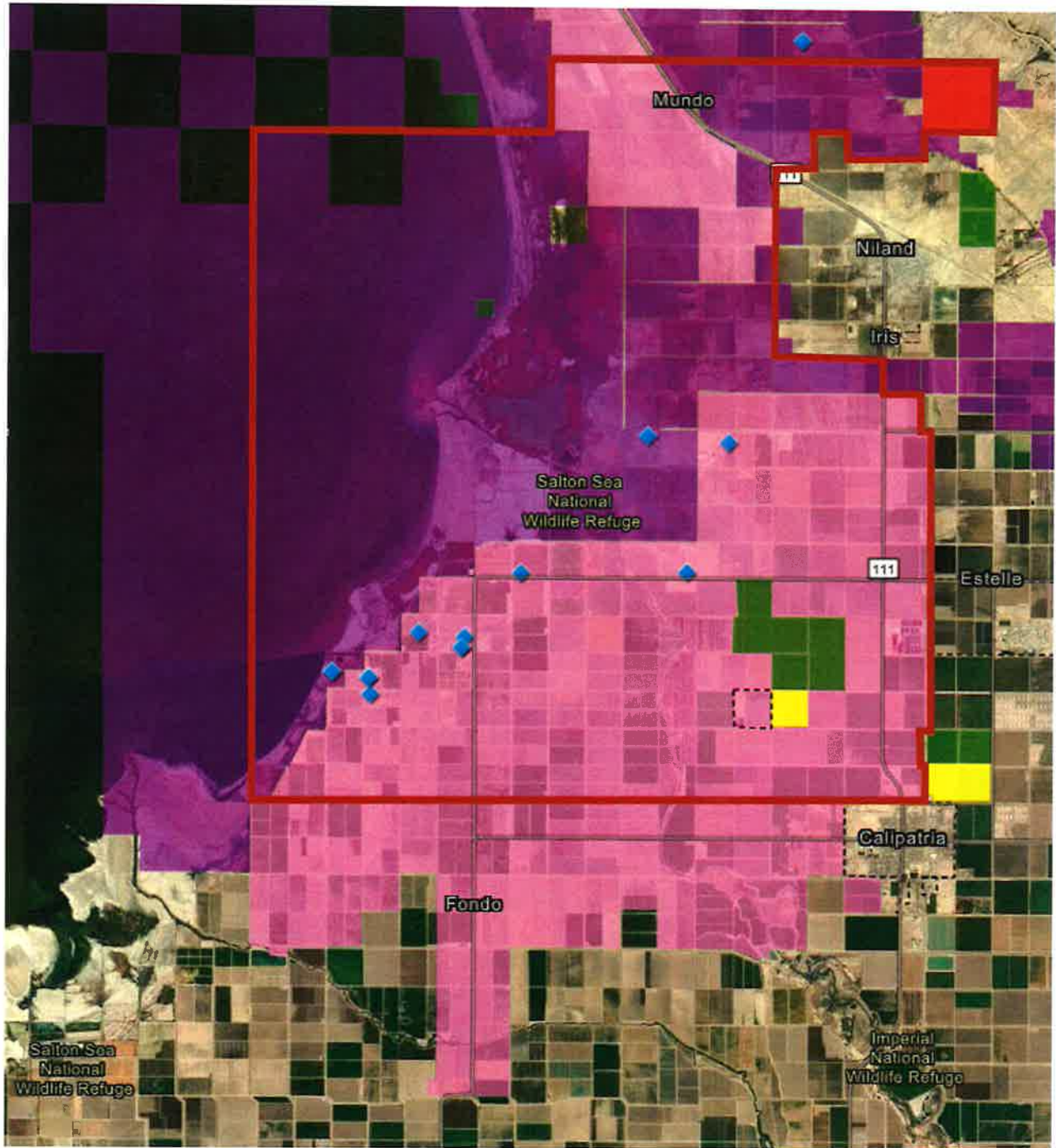
cc: Jesus Eduardo Escobar, Board of Supervisors (District #1)  
Ryan Kelley, Board of Supervisors (District #4)  
Eric Havens, County Counsel  
Faye Winkler, Deputy County Counsel  
Jim Minnick, ICPDS Director  
Michael Abraham, ICPDS Assist. Director  
Diana Robinson, Planning Division Manager

Files: 10.101, 10.102, 10.104, 10.130, 40.110

RFP Salton Sea Renewable Resource Specific Plan and PEIR  
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# Proposed Salton Sea Renewable Resource Specific Plan

- Cities
  -  Niland
  -  Iris
  -  Estelle
  -  Calipatria
- Geothermal Plants
  - 
- Solar Projects
  -  Operational
  -  Approved - Under Construction
  -  Approved - Not Built
  -  Pending Entitlement
- Renewable Energy Overlay
  -  Geothermal
  -  Renewable Energy/Geothermal
  -  Proposed SPA area



Geothermal (pink)  
22,722 Acres

All Renewable (purple)  
26,999 Acres

Total Acreage  
49,721 Acres

# Salton Sea Renewable Resource

## Specific Plan

### INTRODUCTION:

Renewability is defined as being capable of being renewed, also of a natural resource of energy not depleted when used. Imperial County has the ability to become a world leader in renewability. The Salton Sea Known Geothermal Resource Area, is one the nation's greatest sources of renewable energy. For the past fifty years Imperial County has developed over 500 MWs of geothermal renewable energy countywide, but this has only scathed the surface of our resource potential.

### PRIMARY GOAL:

The Salton Sea Renewable Resource Specific Plan seeks to help meet the State of California's renewable energy production goals, while improving the County's economic base and job sector in a responsible and sustainable manner. The Specific Plan's goal is built upon this effort, expanding the development opportunities, both in additional geothermal energy production along with mineral recovery lithium battery manufacturing, hydrogen, biofuels, and renewable manufacturing facilities.

There are a number of other sectors of the renewability that the Salton Sea Resource has the potential to develop. This includes environmental safe and renewable mineral recovery through geothermal brine. Development other sustainable fuels such as green hydrogen and bio-based fuels. Recycle and reuse of organic (plant based) and inorganic mineral waste (battery recovery), both diverting from landfills and reducing the depletion of raw materials.

### LOCATION:

The SSRR Specific Plan comprises approximately \_\_\_\_ *(to be determined)* \_\_\_\_ acres of land bounded by \_\_\_\_ *(to be determined)* \_\_\_\_ Road to the north, \_\_\_\_ *(to be determined)* \_\_\_\_ Road to the east, \_\_\_\_ *(to be determined)* \_\_\_\_ Road to the south and \_\_\_\_ *(to be determined)* \_\_\_\_ Road to the west. The plan's western portion will incorporate existing and future exposed Salton Sea playa. The playa provides land previously unavailable, the development of which help reduce air quality impacts. It is intended that as the development occurs additional lands under the established Salton Sea KGRA will be added to the overall plan through a phased expansion process.

#### GENERAL PLAN:

The Imperial County General Plan, Renewable Energy and Transmission Element (2015) is designed to provide guidance and approaches with respect to the future siting of renewable energy projects and electrical transmission lines in the County. This is intended to take into account both the expansion of new types of renewable energy projects and the potential and probable growth of major transmission facilities anticipated to occur in Imperial County. The Specific Plan is consistent with the goals and objectives of the General Plan.

#### ZONING:

The Salton Sea Renewable Resource Specific Plan will include four land use zones, Light Industrial (SR-1), Medium Industrial (SR-2), Heavy Industrial (SR-3), and Habitat Preservation (HP).

SR-1 Light Industrial Zone: this zone is intended to be for small scale industrial and manufacturing entirely with an enclosed building, office uses, and general commercial uses. The zone will provide general support for larger scale industrial uses. Hotels and company housing for short and long term occupancy.

SR-2 Medium Industrial Zone: this zone is intended to be for medium scale power production, mineral extraction, manufacturing of raw materials into semi-finished and finished products. Logistic facilities and medium intensity recycling facilities are also permitted. Lithium and other geothermal brine extracted mineral processing. Under site specific conditions the minor manufacturing and storage of hazardous materials could be found compatible with this zone.

SR-3 Heavy Industrial Zone: this zone is intended to be for large scale power production, mineral extraction, manufacturing of raw materials into semi-finished and finished products. The development of alternative fuel facilities, recycling and reuse facilities. Lithium and other geothermal brine extracted mineral processing. Under site specific conditions the manufacturing and storage of hazardous materials could be found compatible with this zone.

HP Habitat Preservation: this zone is intended to provide land for habitat preservation, maintaining lands developed by the Imperial Irrigation District and providing future expansion of preservation efforts. The Goal is provide sustainable habitat.

The Zoning of the Specific Plan will be initial layout in a pattern based on existing geothermal and industrial development with undeveloped lands connecting these developments with either increasing or decreasing zone intensity. Do to the fact that specific plans are intended to be developed over twenty to thirty year time frame flexibility needs to be incorporated. The Specific Plan will have a range of percentages for each zone and the ability to move up or down on intensity level for an adjacent zone depending upon market demands,

The base zoning is agricultural, participation in the Specific Plan will automatically convert the property to the planned zone. Participation Fee/Levy, will assist in offsetting the costs of Specific Plan wide, infrastructure, mitigation, community enhancement and administrative.

#### INFRASTRUCTURE:

The Salton Sea Renewable Resource Specific Plan will develop an infrastructure plan. The goal is develop both a macro and micro utility plan. Due to the vast area of the Specific Plan micro grids (campus power), utilizing onsite/adjacent power generation as the primary source reduces the demand for larger power grids. Reducing development costs. A linking macro grid will also be developed providing both export and import of power to the micro grid. Potable water, bulk water, onsite, micro and regional wastewater treatment facilities.

#### ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW:

A Program/Project level Environmental Impact Report will be developed. The intent is provide near term projects with a site specific analysis allowing them to commence development upon certification of the EIR. Additionally, the Specific Plan at program level would be analyzed, with detail review of permitted uses and cursory review of uses requiring additional review. This type of Program/Project level EIR provides the opportunity to move development within the Specific Plan forward in a pre-analyzed method



will understanding the market and technology advances cannot fully anticipated at the time of environmental analysis of the Specific Plan's initial approval.

**PARTNERSHIPS:**

The County of Imperial will develop the Salton Sea Renewable Resource Specific Plan in conjunction with the State of California, regional and local agencies, private industry stockholders, landowners and the public. The intent is to have a multijurisdictional and multi-disciplinary approach to ensure a cohesive project. Vastly improving the chance for success.