

# San Diego Regional Renewable Energy Study Group

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## **NEW STUDY FINDS LARGE POTENTIAL FOR RENEWABLE ENERGY RESOURCES IN SAN DIEGO REGION**

### *Solar, Wind, Geothermal in San Diego, Imperial Counties, Baja California*

SAN DIEGO, Aug. 2, 2005 – A scientific study conducted by a group of local energy experts has found a large potential to develop renewable energy sources like wind, solar and geothermal in the San Diego region by 2020. The study did not consider cost or policy issues, which will ultimately determine how much of these resources are developed.

Renewable energy is a power source that does not use a limited resource such as oil or gas.

The study examined the potential in San Diego and Imperial counties and in the northern portion of Baja California, Mexico, including the possibilities for development of wind power, solar energy, geothermal, biomass resources, and hydroelectric power.

“This report provides a starting point for the next logical steps in renewable energy development for the San Diego region, including policy formulation and implementation of renewable development,” said Dr. Alan Sweedler, Director of the Center for Energy Studies, at San Diego State University (SDSU).

Members of the study group include San Diego State University, (SDSU), Rohy Consulting Associates, San Diego Gas & Electric (SDG&E), San Diego Regional Energy Office (SDREO), the Universidad Autonoma de Baja California (UABC), Resley Consulting and Tanaka Research and Consulting. The Department of Energy’s National Renewable Energy Laboratory also participated in the study.

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Among their findings:

- The report estimates that it could be possible to generate more than 5,000 megawatts (MW) from solar panels during periods of peak use. Solar thermal electric resources – in remote regions of San Diego and Imperial counties – would add another 35,000 MW to this estimate. (SDG&E’s peak usage is approximately 4,000 MW.)
- While there are only limited wind systems in the San Diego region right now, the study shows that wind energy could be a robust electricity resource. Potential power production could reach 1,400 to 1,500 megawatts. Wind power varies significantly by time of day and season.
- The study indicates that geothermal power – as close as Imperial County – could generate close to half of today’s maximum power demand in the San Diego region. Unlike wind and solar power, geothermal energy can be produced 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

The study also found small but significant roles for renewable resources such as biomass and hydroelectric energy.

The group noted that renewable resources need to be part of a balanced portfolio of energy options for the region.

“Developing renewable energy is crucial to providing our customers with the resources they’ll need in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, though we recognize that they cannot be counted on to meet the region’s total needs because they are not always available,” said David Geier, vice president of transmission and distribution for SDG&E.

According to Scott Anders, director of policy and planning for SDREO, “This landmark study puts a solid stake in the ground for renewables potential. This should help move our community beyond discussing “what’s possible” toward actually delivering these resources to the region.”

“We found significant renewable energy resources in Baja California, which is a good thing for residents of Baja California and California. We now need to put in place the financing and regulatory mechanisms to develop these clean sources of energy to the benefit of people on both sides of the border”, said Dr. Margarito Quintero, professor of engineering at the UABC.

SDG&E is a regulated public utility that provides safe and reliable energy service to 3.3 million consumers through 1.3 million electric meters and more than 800,000 natural gas meters. The company’s service territory encompasses 4,100 square miles in San Diego and southern Orange counties. Exceptional customer service is a priority of SDG&E as it seeks to enhance the region’s quality of life. SDG&E is a regulated

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subsidiary of Sempra Energy (NYSE: SRE). Sempra Energy, based in San Diego, is a Fortune 500 energy services holding company. To learn more, go to [www.sdge.com](http://www.sdge.com).

SDSU is the oldest and largest higher education institution in the San Diego region. Since it was founded in 1897, the university has grown to offer bachelor's degrees in 81 areas, master's degrees in 72 areas and doctorates in 16 areas. SDSU's nearly 33,000 students participate in an academic curriculum distinguished by direct faculty contact and an increasing international emphasis that prepares students for a global future. For more information, visit [www.sdsu.edu](http://www.sdsu.edu).

SDREO is an independent, nonprofit 501(c3) corporation that helps residents, businesses and public agencies save energy, reduce grid demand and generate their own power through a wide variety of rebate, technical assistance and education programs. SDREO also provides the community with objective information, research, analysis and long-term planning on energy issues and technologies. For more information, visit our website at <http://www.sdenergy.org> or call us toll free at 1-866-SDENERGY. *SDREO is working for a sustainable energy future.*

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