



Briefing Statement

Date: March 23, 2011

Title: America's Great Outdoors

Background/Discussion

America's Great Outdoors (AGO) is a White House initiative designed to develop a 21st-century conservation and recreation agenda that addresses the challenges of development and fragmentation, unsustainable use, pollution, and the impacts from a changing climate. AGO takes as its premise that lasting conservation solutions should rise from the American people. The Secretaries of the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture, the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Chair of the White House Council on Environmental Quality are charged with AGO's implementation. These lead agencies have been instructed to coordinate with Department of Defense.

February 2011, the four lead AGO Agencies released a report outlining major themes of AGO. These themes include:

- Enhancement of recreational access and opportunities
- Raising the awareness of the value and benefits of America's Great Outdoors
- Conservation and Restoration of our national parks, wildlife refuges, forests, and other federal lands
- Making the Federal Government a more effective conservation partner

These themes run parallel with the DMG's new strategic plan and DMG is uniquely positioned to implement AGO in the California Desert.

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Crosswalk between America's Great Outdoors Report and California Desert Managers Group Strategic Plan

America's Great Outdoors Report		California Desert Managers Group Strategic Plan	
Action Item 2.1a	Coordinate recreation management, access, and policies across multiple agencies to improve public enjoyment and recreational use of federal lands and waters.	Goal 3.2	Promote [seamless] recreational opportunities and experiences in the California Desert.
	Provide the public with reliable and up-to-date web-based information that is easily accessible with modern communication devices.	Task 3.2.1	Develop and maintain interagency outlets (including the internet) for distribution of California Desert recreational information.
Goal 3 A	Cultivate stewardship and appreciation of America's natural, cultural, and historic resources through innovative awareness-raising partnership initiatives and through education.	Mission Area 3	Promote a greater understanding of the desert and its resources so that citizens can make informed choices about land use in this unique and often misunderstood region.
Recommendation 3.3	Promote and support replicable programs that teach about and connect children and families with their natural and cultural heritage.	Goal 3.1	Implement a multifaceted public information and youth education program to aid in the recovery of listed species and desert conservation.
Recommendation 8.1	Manage federal lands and waters within a larger landscape context to conserve and restore ecosystems and watershed health.	Mission Area 1	Maintain a healthy, sustainable California Desert landscape that ensures adaptability and resilience to the effects of change.
Recommendation 8.2	Manage federal lands and waters to increase their resilience to climate change.		
Action Item 8.1a	Expand programs to develop landscape-scale assessment, modeling, and mapping to support conservation planning on federal and private lands.	Goal 2.1	Facilitate and promote high quality research that provides a scientific basis for resource management decisions.
Action Item 8.2a	Develop science to support decisions related to climate change adaptation and resilience.	Goal 2.1.3	Gain a more complete understanding of how global change will affect desert ecosystems, in particular habitat migration, the movement of species, and their adaptability (e.g., develop predictive models for sensitive species).
Action Item 8.2b	Develop science-based inventories and monitoring programs to assess the impacts of climate change on fish and wildlife habitat regardless of land ownership.	Goal 2.2	Collaborate and improve the use of technology for the savings of tax dollars and greater efficiency in knowledge dissemination to DMG members and the public.
Recommendation 8.3	Manage federal lands and waters to create and protect critical wildlife corridors and maintain landscape connectivity in collaboration with other public and private stakeholders.	Goal 1.2	Restore and maintain habitat connectivity in order to preserve the desert's genetic diversity and ability to adapt to change.
Action Item 8.3a	Work with states and other partners to use and disseminate scientific data and other information concerning the locations of and threats to critical wildlife corridors to ensure effective investment in restoring and conserving of those corridors.	Goal 2.1.5	Coordinate research and knowledge to identify the key habitat corridors required to preserve the desert's genetic diversity and resilience.