



## Briefing Statement

**Date:** August 23, 2012

**Title:** Desert Tortoise Information and Youth Education (DTIYE)

**Issue:** Strategy to transition to the DTIYE Program operate absent funding for a coordinator

## Background

- DMG established the DTIYE program in 2004 as a recovery action for the desert tortoise. The Living Desert (TLD) has employed a program coordinator since June 2011. Previously Joshua Tree National Park employed the program coordinator from 2005 to 2010.
- Grants, primarily from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the State of California Off-highway Motor Vehicle Recreation program, have funded these positions and all operations for DTIYE. **As of September 2012, all current grant funding will be expended and no funding will be available for DTIYE program coordinator labor or program operations.** Absent grant funding, TLD is unable to employ the DTIYE program coordinator and the program must transition from active development and marketing to one of minimal maintenance.

## Discussion

- **Distribute existing brochures** (*You're in Tortoise Country*, raven, builders' brochure, and educators' brochure) through TLD, visitors centers, agency attendance at events, etc. As brochure stocks are depleted, TLD and agency staff can seek a small grant for reprinting.
- **Distribute existing tortoise education trunks** using the current checkout system. Trucks are located at TLD, San Diego Zoo, Barstow Discovery Center, and Joshua Tree National Park. A fully refundable deposit should be charged teachers upon trunk checkout to ensure trucks are properly cared for and maintained.
- **Conduct the Mojave Maxine Contest** using an intern or collateral duty employee for coordination. Small grants will be required annually for prizes and intern support.
- Existing public service announcements will be maintained for media download on MDEP's education webpage.
- If a larger grant were obtained, it would be used for product development and/or refurbishment of existing products. TLD does not intend to refill the program coordinator position absent a long-term funding strategy.
- The DTIYE Workgroup would continue to meet as needed to develop grant proposals and coordinate program implementation and marketing.

## Contact

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