



## **Briefing Statement**

**Date:** August 15, 2007

**Title:** Climate Change Desert Science Symposium

**Issue:** DMG sponsoring the next Desert Science Symposium, which would be themed around the resource management implications of climate variability

## **Background/Discussion**

The DMG has sponsored two Mojave Desert Science Symposia, each of which has been a huge success with broad attendance from agencies and academia. At the Spring DMG meeting in Twentynine Palms, Pat Flanagan with the Mojave Desert Land Trust presented a statement encouraging the DMG to sponsor a climate change workshop. Mojave National Preserve (MOJA), USGS, and The Nature Conservancy (TNC) supported the concept.

Chris Jones, with University of Arizona Extension (UAE), has hosted several climate change workshops in Arizona. Chris said that UAE was interested in collaborating with DMG to sponsor a larger climate change symposium, along the Colorado River. Chris also said that he has funding to provide stipends and travel for speakers. UAE would look to the DMG to provide logistics and help put together the program.

TNC is interested in cosponsoring the symposium and will challenge the DMG by donating \$5,000 to go towards hiring a contractor that would organize the workshop's logistics. TNC would also help put the program together.

The proposed workshop would target agencies, especially land managers and academia. Potential sessions include a plenary session on *Separating Science from Spin* and breakout sessions on *Shifting ecosystems, Wildlife Migration, and Habitat Corridors, Mitigation Strategies, Changing Fire Regimes, and Human Impact on Water Resources*. The suggested location is Laughlin.

## **Proposed Action**

- Managers contribute the balance needed to hire a contractor to organize the symposium's logistics. With TNC's donation, approximately \$5000 will still be needed.
- Assemble an organizing committee and provide staff time to work on the symposium. Suggested committee members include: Russell, Debra Hughson (MOJA), Chris Jones (UAE), Karl MacArthur (UC Extension), Laure Crane (TNC), USGS (?), and DOD (?).
- Attend the symposium and provide staff the opportunity to attend the symposium.

## **Contact**

Russell Scofield, DOI Coordinator russell\_scofield@ca.blm.gov

760-365-0955

FOREST AND NATURAL RESOURCES AND CLIMATE CHANGE:  
COMMUNICATING TO RESOURCE MANAGERS THROUGH COOPERATIVE  
EXTENSION

Jones\*, C.K.<sup>1</sup>, Crimmins, M.A.<sup>2</sup>, Zaines, G.N.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Agent, University of Arizona, Gila County Cooperative Extension, 5515 Apache Avenue, Suite 600, Globe, Arizona 85501, [ckjones@cals.arizona.edu](mailto:ckjones@cals.arizona.edu)

<sup>2</sup>Climate Science Extension Specialist, University of Arizona, Department of Soil, Water & Environmental Science, P.O. Box 210038, Tucson, Arizona 85721, [crimmins@cals.arizona.edu](mailto:crimmins@cals.arizona.edu)

<sup>3</sup>Watershed, Riparian Areas and Rangeland Management Extension Specialist, University of Arizona, School of Natural Resources, 310 Biological Sciences East, Tucson, Arizona 85721, [zaines@cals.arizona.edu](mailto:zaines@cals.arizona.edu)

Forest estate models need to be designed to include region specific climate science. The University of Arizona Cooperative Extension Climate and Natural Resources Working Group is conducting a workshop series for multiple stakeholders to discuss climate change impacts on natural resources, and how planning and management practices can be adapted. In response to the 2002 wildfire season and pine beetle outbreaks in Arizona and throughout western North America, the Climate and Natural Resources working group was initiated as a think tank in 2003. The aim of the working group is to develop and provide relevant information, tools and models to assist forest and natural resource managers to address climate change impacts on the resources they manage. The working group developed an innovative workshop approach using “vertical integration” to explore the concerns of natural resources managers by fostering dialogue and collaboration between managers (end-users of scientific knowledge), extension agents and specialists (interpreters and disseminators of scientific knowledge), and leading scientists (producers of scientific knowledge). Three workshops attended by approximately 350 people have been conducted, focused on climate impacts on 1) forests and woodlands, 2) rangelands and 3) riparian areas. Leading climatologists, ecologists, researchers and resource managers provided a series of presentations to share their findings and the current state of knowledge. Interactive, thought-provoking breakout discussions and climate scenario exercises have been employed to engage the audience. Fact sheets and climate scenario exercises addressing climate impacts and related natural resources have been developed and published. We find a strong demand for climate change information coming from the natural resource management communities across the Southwest. As well, climatologists and ecologists are eager to share their knowledge and are interested in new research questions that meet the needs of resource managers. As such, there exists an important window of opportunity for university extension educators to take the lead as “translators” and “information brokers” that can put climatic and ecological science research findings into simpler terms to facilitate better understanding and application. Extension educators can effectively reach a broad audience by integrating climate science into existing forest and natural resource outreach programs.