

# Final Draft Desert Managers Group

## FY 2002 Accomplishment Report

and

## 5-Year Plan (FY 2003 - FY 2007)

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Information about the DMG is available at [www.dmg.gov](http://www.dmg.gov) or by contacting:

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## 1.0 Background and Purpose

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The California deserts (Figure 1) include some 100 communities, 2 national parks, 1 national preserve, 6 military bases, 8 counties, 10 state parks, 37 federally recognized Native American Indian tribes, and more than 11 million acres of public lands managed by the Bureau of Land Management. The 25 million-acre desert region is situated within a day's drive of 40 million people and is a well-known destination for hundreds of thousands of out of state visitors each year. The California deserts' abundant sunshine, wind, and geothermal resources also make it an important source of renewable energy in the western United States. In addition, the California deserts are critically important training and testing grounds for the U. S. military.

By 2020, the deserts' permanent population is expected to increase by over 1 million and the population of the surrounding area is expected to increase by about 10 million. The demands of increasing use by millions of visitors and permanent residents will create mounting pressure and new challenges for land management agencies in the deserts. A mechanism for addressing desert-wide issues was established in 1994 in the form of the Desert Managers Group (DMG), an interagency group that is coordinating and integrating desert conservation, visitor services, and public safety efforts in the California deserts. Under the multi-agency management umbrella provided by the DMG, interagency collaboration is occurring; duplication of effort is being eliminated; resources are being shared; data are being collected in a uniform manner; and complementary and more uniform management policies are being developed. Partners involved with the DMG include the State of California (Fish and Game, Parks and Recreation, and Caltrans), the Department of the Defense (Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps), the Department of the Interior (Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, and Geological Survey), and the U.S. Forest Service. More information on the DMG, including the Group's charter, organization, and current events is available at [www.dmg.gov](http://www.dmg.gov).

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The purpose of this document is to (1) summarize the accomplishments of the DMG in FY 02 and (2) describe the goals and plans established by the DMG for fiscal year 2003 through 2007. As with all cross-cutting, multi-agency programs, performance is dependent on the availability of adequate funds and staff for each agency to carry out the plan.

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## 2.0 The DMG 5-Year Plan and Accomplishment Report

The 5-Year Plan is an operational plan that is updated and approved annually by the DMG. The 5-Year Plan is intended to:

1. Facilitate internal and external communication about the goals and activities of the DMG;
2. Provide a tool for the DMG and its Work Groups to track activities and projects; and
3. Serve as a basis for future budget planning for DMG agencies.

In 2001, the DMG Managers reviewed the precepts, methodologies, and processes by which the DMG operates, how projects would be managed, and its priority goals and objectives. This review resulted in major changes to the DMG 5-Year Plan. Many of the goals/projects included in last year's 5-Year Plan were identified as a lower priority that would not be pursued given the current level of staff, funding, and agency support (see Appendix A). These goals/projects will be pursued by DMG agencies as time/resources permit.

The DMG 5-Year Plan includes 15 goals in four general categories:

1. Resource Conservation and Management
2. Visitor Services
3. Science and Data Management
4. DMG Program Management

A brief description of these goals, a summary of FY 02 accomplishments, and plans/activities to be completed in FY 03-FY 07 are provided below. The objectives/tasks, schedule and responsibilities for the FY 03-FY 07 activities for each goal are described in Table 2.0.

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## 2.1 Resource Conservation and Management Goals and Accomplishments

### *Goal 1. Restore selected upland and riparian habitats identified for restoration.*

#### **FY02 Accomplishments:**

1. A work plan for landscape-based restoration in the San Felipe Creek-San Sebastian Marsh watershed of Anza-Borrego State Park and El Centro Field Office was developed and stakeholders/partners have been identified.
2. The Restoration Work Group email list was reestablished to facilitate communication among workgroup members.
3. Planning for the Arid Southwest Lands Habitat Restoration Conference was initiated. The conference will be held in Palm Springs, CA on March 3-7, 2003. (<http://www.dmg.gov/conference.html>). The conference will include a session focused on the USGS Recoverability and Vulnerability of Desert Ecosystems (RVDE) project. The conference is made possible by financial contributions from Edwards AFB, NPS, and USGS. BLM and MDEP are planning and organizing the event on behalf of the DMG.
4. A Memorandum of Understanding to establish the Mojave Desert Weed Management Area (MWMA) was developed and finalized. Over 20 DMG members and local government agencies were signatories to the MOU.
5. The establishment of partnerships among federal, state local agencies and private groups to restore the Mojave River and Amargosa River watersheds were explored.
6. An ad hoc DMG workgroup was established to provide management guidance to USGS RVDE project

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**FY 03+ Goals:** High priority habitat restoration project will be pursued. In FY 03, the work

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plan to acquire land and restore habitat in the San Felipe Creek-San Sebastian Marsh Watershed will be implemented, subject to the availability of staff and funding. Pursuant to the MOU that established the Mojave Desert Weed Management Area, the DMG will assist with coordination of weed management activities in the Mojave Desert and the development of a five-year strategic plan. Discussions will be continued with stakeholders and potential partners to conduct landscape-based restoration of the Mojave River watershed. A management plan will be developed of the Amargosa River watershed. In addition, The DMG will coordinate and sponsor the Arid Southwest Lands Habitat Restoration Conference in Palm Springs on March 3-7, 2003. The DMG will continue to provide guidance and recommendations to the USGS RVDE project aimed at improving the management applicability of the research effort. The DMG Habitat Restoration Coordinator will assist DMG partners to procure funding for restoration projects.

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***Goal 2. Clean up and restore illegal dumps that pose a public health or environmental threat and reduce the incidence of illegal dumping in the future.***

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**FY02 Accomplishments:**

1. The Hazardous Materials Work Group remained active in FY 02; The Group met four time during the year; representatives reported on work group activities at all regular and special DMG meetings. Formatted: Bullets and Numbering
  
2. The Work Group sponsored, co-sponsored or provided regional technical training for participating agencies including an 8-hour annual hazardous waste operations and emergency response (HAZWOPER) refresher training in Riverside in June 2002; a 3-day EPA hazardous materials sampling training course in Riverside in May 2002; a 2-day environmental crime scene investigations training course in Riverside in September 2002; and an illegal dumping workshop in Bakersfield in October 2002. Formatted: Bullets and Numbering
  
3. The illegal dumpsite database was populated by BLM’s national technical service contractor, Dynamac; 118 sites were identified and visited in the field. The data base will be used to produce a list of priority sites for clean-up. Formatted: Bullets and Numbering
  
4. Six large legacy illegal dumps sites were cleaned-up: Formatted: Bullets and Numbering
  - Nipton
  - 3 Route 66 sites (Amboy, Chambless, and Essex)
  - Crevasse/Hi Vista, and
  - Vidal

The clean-up’s were funded under a cost share Program with the California Integrated Waste Management Board.
  
5. Four dumps in San Bernardino County near Landers were cleaned-up with funding provided through the State’s Farm and Ranch Grant program. Formatted: Bullets and Numbering
  
6. Met with representative of the Keep California Beautiful program in June 2002 to develop new partnerships focus on the prevention of illegal dumping. Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

**FY 03+ Goals:** The focus of the work group will be to work with Keep California Beautiful to develop and implement a program to prevent illegal dumping. The prevention program will focus on (a) educating the public about the problems associated with illegal dumping, (b) enforcing laws related to illegal dumping, (c) providing viable alternatives to illegal dumping, and (d) protecting sites that have been restored. The illegal dump database will be maintained and high priority sites will be selected for clean-up based on established criteria.

Illegal dumps identified for cleaned up and restoration in FY 03, include:

- ❖ Dillon Road Canyons illegal dumping sites (Long Canyon, East and West Wide Canyons, Fan Canyon, Berdoo Canyon, Indo Hills site, and Frago Canyon);
- ❖ Walter’s Camp illegal dumping site;
- ❖ Mesquite/Sandy Valley illegal dumping sites; and
- ❖ Two other yet to be identified sites.

Partnerships with the California Integrated Waste Management Board, counties, nonprofit organizations and other federal agencies will be continued or created. Funds will be leveraged to the maximum extent possible.

Sponsor or provide regional technical training for participating agencies to include 8-hour annual hazardous waste operations and emergency response (HAZWOPER) refresher training and at least one other technical training opportunity.

- ✓ Sponsor EPA air monitoring training in the Winter 2003;
- ✓ Sponsor the 8-hour HAZWOPER refresher training in Spring 2003; and
- ✓ Co-sponsor appropriate technical training such as the environmental crime scene investigations course in the Fall 2003.

**Goal 3. Recover the desert tortoise in the California recovery units.**

**FY02 Accomplishments:**

1. The DMG developed and approved the Desert Tortoise Recovery Action Plan, September 11, 2002. The Plan includes a variety of actions aimed at recovering the desert tortoise such as evaluating the effectiveness of recovery actions implemented since the desert tortoise was listed; monitoring and adaptive management; addressing causes of mortality with emphasis on disease and predation; public education and outreach; and implementation and funding strategies.
2. Produced a series of reports that summarize completed and ongoing recovery, monitoring and research actions for the desert tortoise for each of the recovery units in the Mojave Desert (<http://www.dmg.gov/dtactions.html>). Information in the reports was based on a comprehensive survey of land and resource management agencies and entities responsible for desert tortoise recovery and management. The information in the report will be used by the DMG to management and plan and effective recovery effort for the desert tortoise. The reports will be updated annually.

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 . 2. Continuation of Berdoo Canyon¶  
 . 3. High Vista¶  
 . 4. Continuation of Farm and Ranch Grant sites¶  
 . 5. Sandy Valley¶  
 . 6. Fargo Canyon¶  
 . 7. Andre Road¶  
 . 8. Border sites¶  
 . 9. Vidal

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**FY 03+ Goals:** The DMG will focus on completion/implementation of the following actions:

1. Conduct a scientific evaluation based on current information of the effectiveness of past recovery actions, specifically actions related to vehicle management, cattle and sheep grazing, and construction of tortoise fences.
2. Synthesize and evaluate existing information related to the status/trends of desert tortoise populations
3. Implementation of line distance sampling for critical habitat in the desert tortoise recovery units in the California desert
4. Integrate line distance sampling with permanent study plot sampling
5. Coordinate recovery actions in various agency land management plans with emphasis on the West Mojave recovery unit
6. Develop/implement recommendation for addressing the impacts of :
  - o Disease
  - o Raven predation
  - o Feral dogs
7. Develop and implement a public education outreach program to educate the public about the effects of the release of captive tortoises on wild tortoises and to build public and stakeholder support for desert tortoise recovery.

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**Goal 4. Reduce and maintain burro populations to appropriate management levels and in appropriate locations.**

**FY02 Accomplishments:**

In January 1999, the Bureau of Land Management and National Park Service signed the California Desert Strategic Plan for the Management of Wild Burros (<http://www.dmg.gov/documents/StrtgcPlanBurros.PDF>). The Plan was based on the recognition that overpopulation of wild burros in the desert was adversely impacting many desert resources. A key element of the strategy is to “aggressively remove existing excess burros to reach appropriate management levels (AML) and to maximize efficiency and reduce operational costs through innovative shared use of staff and resources.”

Since the wild burro strategy was signed BLM, NPS and various other agencies (Fish and Wildlife Service; California Fish and Game; BLM Field Offices in Yuma and Havasu; military reservations including China Lake, Chocolate Mountain Gunnery Range, and Ft. Irwin; Bureau of Reclamation, Metropolitan Water District, and the Chemehuevi Indian tribe) have worked collaboratively to accomplish the goals and objectives of the plan. Approximately 3,450 animals have been removed from the California Desert and placed in adoption programs. This averages 986 animals annually--significantly more than the historical annual average of 200 to 400 animals.

These removals have benefited special status animal and plant species, riparian habitat, all types of wildlife populations, and cultural resources. For example, more than 1,000 animals were removed from desert tortoise habitat, 493 animals were removed from or adjacent to Inyo California Towhee habitat, and 595 animals from along the lower Colorado river, from the

Deleted: Desert tortoise recovery actions included in the various agencies' land management plans will be evaluated to determine where collaboration and cooperation will improve effectiveness. Recommendations for consolidating and integrating recovery efforts among agencies will be developed and implemented by the agencies, where appropriate, as funding and staff are available. Activities will be carried out in coordination with the Desert Tortoise Management Oversight Group.¶

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Chemehuevi Indian Reservation down to Yuma and the Mexican border.

A total of 539 burros and 7 horses were removed from the Mojave Desert in FY 02. (BLM removed 3 horses and 416 burros; Death Valley NP removed 123 burros and 4 horses). These removals include:

- ❖ 75 burros removed from Butte Valley and the Panamint Mountain as well as from the Owlshhead Mountains
- ❖ 38 burros and 4 horses from saline Valley, Hunter Mountain and Lee Flat.
- ❖ 313 burros from Chemehuevi HMA
- ❖ 92 burros from Clark mountain HMA
- ❖ 3 horses from Chicago Valley HMA
- ❖ 13 burros from Park Moab, California

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The California BLM placed more than 1,200 animals from the corrals and satellite adoptions.

In addition, BLM completed a population census on Chemehuevi and Chicago HMAs. BLM also has completed monitoring on Chemehuevi, Centennial, Clark Mountain, Picacho, Chocolate-Mule Mountain, and Chicago Valley. BLM established vegetative monitoring studies within the Picacho Herd Area Complex, Chemehuevi HMA, Clark Mountain HMA, Panamint HMA, and Centennial HMA. A reduction in the level of use along the lower Colorado River has been observed as a result of removals in this area. BLM and California Fish and Game are two years into a five year study to monitor the seasonal movements of both burros and deer within the Picacho Herd Area complex.

**FY 03+ Goals:**

The continuing goal is to reduce burro populations on BLM, FWS, DOD and State lands to “appropriate management levels” and eliminated from Death Valley National Park and the Mojave National Preserve. An estimated 1,300 excess animals remain in and around BLM’s herd management areas in the California deserts. Also, BLM believes there is another 700 nuisance animals spread throughout southern California in Death Valley National Park and the Mojave National Preserve which are not protected under the Wild Free Roaming Horse and Burro Act. The key to removing these animal will be funding for additional removals and the successful adoption of the animals held in captivity. Currently there is a funding shortage in BLM and NPS and a backlog in the BLM adoption program. To address these problems, the DMG will explore opportunities for funding burro roundups and adoptions through private donors/foundations.

**Deleted:** Appropriate Management Levels (AML) of burros will be defined/refined as part of the BLM land management planning process. Burro populations will be reduced on BLM, FWS, DOD and State lands to “appropriate management levels” and eliminated on National Parks and Preserves by 2003. Management actions (e.g., fences) will be implemented as practical to prevent movement of burros to areas where they are not supposed to be (e.g., outside herd management areas or into National Parks/Preserves). Standardized population monitoring protocols will be developed and burro population and range land health monitoring will be conducted. The BLM will have lead responsibility for coordinating burro management activities throughout the desert in coordination with NPS, FWS, DOD, and State Parks/Fish and Game.

Management actions (e.g., fences) will be implemented as practical to prevent movement of burros to areas where they are not supposed to be (e.g., outside herd management areas or into National Parks/Preserves). Burro populations and rangeland health will be monitored subject to the availability of funds.

***Goal 5. Protect cultural resources and enhance public awareness of the sensitivity and value of paleontological and cultural resources in the California***

deserts.

**FY02 Accomplishments:**

- 1. The BLM Training Center sponsored a three-day ARPA class in July, 2002 in Ridgecrest, California that was attended by a variety DMG archaeologists and rangers.
- 2. Final editing was completed on over 60 technical papers that were presented at the May 2001 "Millennium Conference: the Human Journey and Ancient Life in the California Deserts."

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**FY 03+ Goals:**

- 1. Proceedings of the Millennium Conference will be published and distributed in FY 03.
- 2. The Paleontological and Cultural Resources Action Team (PACRAT) will meet to monitor CHRIS GIS implementation, management, and maintenance and identify new initiatives and activities.

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**Goal 6: Ensure the long-term sustainability of the military mission in the California deserts.**

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**FY02 Accomplishments:**

**FY 03+ Goals:**

- 1. BLM, NPS and the State will consider the DOD mission requirements in their land and resource management and planning activities and analyze/consider potential impacts of proposed land management decisions/actions on DOD lands and airspace.

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**2.2 Visitor Services and Public Safety Goals and Accomplishments**

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**Goal 7. Develop a coordinated interagency system for delivering useful, comprehensive, and consistent information about desert resources and recreation opportunities.**

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**FY02 Accomplishments:**

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The California deserts web site ([www.californiadesert.gov](http://www.californiadesert.gov)) was redesigned to provide easier access to information about recreation opportunities in the desert.

Clarence – Can you briefly summarize user statistics for Californiadesert.gov.

**FY 03+ Goals:**

The California deserts web site ([www.californiadesert.gov](http://www.californiadesert.gov)) will be updated and maintained by DOD and the NPS (Joshua Tree NP). Agencies will input data on recreation opportunities and

sites in the California desert into Caldesert.gov. The interagency "gateway" visitor center at Lancaster will be maintained by Cal State Parks.

**Deleted:** The website will be redesigned to provide easy access to information about recreation opportunities in the desert.

**Goal 8. Resolve noise issues related to aircraft over flights for all participating agencies.**

**FY02 Accomplishments:**

Clarence – can you summarize what what done to try to minimize over flight concerns at AB State Park.

**FY 03+ Goals:**

Working through the Overflight Work Group, information will be exchanged concerning military low level aerial over flights and associated resource and visitor use impacts. An interagency over flight brochure will be finalized and distributed by DMG agencies.

**2.3 Science and Data Management Goals and Accomplishments**

**Goal 9. Coordinate and conduct scientific studies and monitoring programs needed for effective resource management.**

**FY02 Accomplishments:**

1. The format for a research inventory database was created and procedures for DMG agencies to gather/enter data into the database were agreed to by the Managers. The Purpose of the Research Inventory Database is to provide ready access to ongoing, inventory, research and monitoring projects in the California desert.
2. The DMG approved a proposal for a Mojave Desert Science Symposium that will be held in late 2003 or early 2004. The purpose of the Symposium will be to inform managers of the best scientific information on physical and biologic resources, advise scientists of the most pressing research needs, and publish information on current research in the Mojave Desert.

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**FY 03+ Goals:**

1. The Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program and/or the University of Redlands will develop a web accessible Research Inventory Data Base. The inventory of existing resource inventory, research and monitoring studies will be initiated to populate the database. Managers will implement protocols to encourage scientist to input data and or update the data base
2. Planning for the Mojave Desert Science Symposium will continue.

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**Goal 10. Coordinate natural resource monitoring program.**

**FY 02 Accomplishments:**

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Monitoring is a common element of all the DOI, DOD and State land management plans in the California deserts. The National Park Service (NPS) through its Natural Resource Challenge is developing and implementing a comprehensive monitoring program for plants and animals on NPS units in the Mojave Desert. BLM is currently working with Geological Survey to develop monitoring programs to address the impacts of off-highway vehicle use. BLM also has programs to assess range-land health as part of its livestock and burro management programs. The Department of Defense installations in the desert have/are developing monitoring programs to assess the condition of their lands. USGS and FWS have developed monitoring programs for wetland resources and desert tortoise, respectively. Cal State Parks is also in the early stages of developing monitoring programs for their lands. The goal of the DMG is to coordinate/integrate these efforts by identifying and developing compatible objectives, methodologies and data management systems.

In January 2002, the DMG sponsored a multi agency natural resources monitoring workshop to:

1. Increased awareness among land and resource managers of the scope, objectives and status of existing/planned inventory/monitoring programs for the California desert.
2. Identify common goals/objectives and information needs.
3. Develop recommendations for coordinating/integrating inventory and monitoring programs.

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Approximate 80 people representing all the DMG agencies and other interested group participated in the workshop where about 20 papers were presented. A summary of the workshop and copies of many of the presentation are available at <http://www.dmg.gov/documents/monitoring-workshop.html>. Major conclusions of the workshop were that DMG agencies would:

1. Continue to cooperate to fund and implement desert tortoise line distance sampling;
2. Participate in the NPS workshop to develop a conceptual framework for monitoring in the California deserts; and
3. Describe existing weather data in the California deserts and develop recommendations for how important data gaps could be addressed.

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#### **FY 03+ Goals:**

1. Participate in the NPS workshop to develop a conceptual framework for monitoring in the California deserts (scheduling of this workshop is still uncertain). This workshop should provide the basis for the design of compatible monitoring programs by land and resource management agencies in the California deserts. Implementation of monitoring program will be subject to the availability of funds.

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Continue to cooperate to fund and implement desert tortoise line distance sampling;  
Participate in the January 2003 NPS workshop to develop a conceptual framework for monitoring in the California deserts;  
Describe existing weather data in the California deserts and develop recommendations for how important data gaps could be addressed.

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#### ***Goal 11. Monitor desert tortoise population status in relation to recovery goals for the California deserts recovery units.***

#### **FY02 Accomplishments:**

In 2001, a multi-year desert tortoise population study was initiated on 4.7 million acres of critical habitat in the California deserts. Over the next several years, the study will establish the

population baseline to evaluate whether tortoise populations are increasing, remaining stable, or declining and assess the effectiveness of recovery efforts.

The Fish and Wildlife Service is coordinating the monitoring effort on behalf of the DMG agencies. The tortoise monitoring data are being maintained in an interagency database that was established by the DOD Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program. The number of tortoises that were encountered in 2001 (388) was relatively small and less than needed to establish statistically reliable baseline estimates of tortoise density. In FY 02, the sampling protocols were adjusted and area sampled was increased by 25 % to provide more reliable estimates of tortoise density. However, due to drought conditions and other factors, the numbers of tortoises encountered (357) was still insufficient to establish reliable baseline estimate of the tortoise density.

**FY 03+ Goals:**

1. Line distance sampling will be implemented on BLM, NPS, DOD and state lands to assess the density of desert tortoise. Sampling will only occur in the West Mojave Recovery Unit due to limited availability of funds. In cooperation with the University of Redlands and the University of Nevada, Reno protocols will be modified and tested to reduce the variance in the data and thus provide more reliable density estimated. Formatted: Bullets and Numbering
2. The interagency data management system will be maintained by the DOD Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program (MDEP) and data will be collected in a manner that facilitates a regional multi-state assessment of the status of desert tortoise populations. Deleted: in the 5 recovery units in the California deserts.  
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3. An annual report will be produced by the FWS Desert Tortoise Coordinator no later than December of each year. Formatted: Bullets and Numbering
4. The University of Redlands will host a monitoring workshop in the Summer of 2003 to discuss the results and efficacy of the Line Distance Sampling technique and the need for additional population, habitat and management effectiveness monitoring. Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

***Goal 12. Monitor and protect desert water resources.*** Deleted: ¶

**FY 02 Accomplishments:**

Springs, seeps, playa lakes, marshes, oases, and other wetland areas are very scarce in many parts of the California deserts. They support human settlement, are rich in bio-diversity, and support 35 endangered, threatened, and sensitive plants and animals.

Under the auspices of the Desert Managers Group, NPS, GS, BLM, FWS, and several DOD facilities initiated an interagency study aimed at improving management and protection of water and biological resources in the California Desert. The DMG water study includes mapping the distribution of wetlands throughout the desert, assessing the hydrological and biological characteristics of priority wetlands and riparian sites, and implementing actions to restore their proper functioning condition.

In FY 2002, the FWS National Wetlands Inventory Program delineated wetlands and riparian habitats for an additional 129 7.5-minute USGS quadrangles, mostly in the West Mojave

Planning Area. Completed NWI maps are accessible through the NWI website at: <http://www.nwi.fws.gov>.

Standard protocols for assessing the hydrological and biological characteristics of desert spring developed by the DMG in FY 01 were tested by NPS in the Mojave National Preserve. Generally many of the protocol did not work very well for many of the small springs in the Mojave. In response, the National Park Service and Desert Research Institute has been entered a cooperative agreement to develop spring inventory protocols and associated databases that are applicable to all spring-fed water features in the Mojave Desert park network. Protocols and databases that are developed will build on existing information developed by the DMG.

**FY 03+ Goals:**

1. The ultimate goal is to map springs, riparian and wetland habitats throughout the California deserts. For FY 03 draft wetland and riparian maps will undergo quality control by NWI and eventual be posted on the NWI website. The first batch of 12 quads will be posted in February 2003 with new quads probably being added each month thereafter.
2. NWI will focus new wetland and riparian habitat mapping in the Mojave National Preserve in FY 03.
3. Level one protocols for characterizing the biological and hydrological characteristics of springs will be completed by DRI in March 2003. Training and field testing will occur in the Mojave Desert Parks (e.g, DEVA, JOTR, MOJA, LAME). The DMG water work group will review the draft protocols and be invited to participate in the field training and testing.
4. Level 2 protocols will be developed by DRI and submitted to the DMG water Group for review and comment

**Deleted:** Springs, riparian and wetland habitats will be mapped throughout the California deserts by FWS. Several DMG offices will assess the biological and hydrological characteristics and assess the Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) of priority springs/wetlands according to standard protocols developed by the DMG. Data will be stored in an interagency database developed and maintained by the DOD Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program (MDEP).¶

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**Goal 13. Integrate and share data and database management systems needed for effective resource management and planning.**

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**FY02 Accomplishments:**

**FY 03+ Goals:**

The Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program (MDEP) will maintain the Geographic Information System (GIS) of natural and cultural resources in the California deserts (see [www.mojavedata.gov](http://www.mojavedata.gov)). To expand the database, each Manager will provide a minimum of five corporate data sets, adhering to the DMG established data standards. MDEP will also provide data management and analysis support to a variety of DMG initiatives (wetland/springs inventory, desert tortoise monitoring, etc.) as the need arises.

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**2.4 DMG Program Management Goals and Accomplishments**

**Goal 14. Ensure the orderly and efficient operation of the DMG and its work groups.**

**FY02 Accomplishments:**

1. The DMG held four meetings and an Annual DMG Executive Coordination the DMG 5-Year Plan was updated and approved in April 2002. ← --- Formatted: Bullets and Numbering
2. The DMG recognized four individuals who provided outstanding service to the DMG.
3. An evaluation of the operation and effectiveness the DMG was completed. Based on the evaluation, the DMG deactivated several work groups, deferred work on several lower priority goals/activities in the DMG 5-Year Plan, and clarified the role of the managers and coordinators in the operation of the DMG.
4. Completed and distributes copies of the DMG FY 01 Annual Report <http://dmg.mojavedata.gov/documents/dmgannual02.pdf>. ← --- Formatted: Bullets and Numbering
5. DMG members participated in a Collaborative Management Training Class/Workshop in June 2002, in Ventura. The workshop resulted in the DMG asserting a leadership role in desert tortoise recovery (see Proposed DMG Desert Tortoise Recovery Actions, September 11, 2002 at <http://www.dmg.gov/documents/DTDMGPlan1.doc>).
6. The DMG approved a request of the U.S. Forest Service to become a member of the DMG. ← --- Formatted: Bullets and Numbering
7. The DMG website ([www.dmg.gov](http://www.dmg.gov)) was maintained and updated and used regularly to disseminate information about DMG activities and products

**FY 03+ Goals:**

1. The DMG's 5-Year Plan will be updated. Annual work plans will be developed for specific initiatives. ← --- Formatted: Bullets and Numbering
2. The BLM Natural Resources Restoration Coordinator will coordinate implementation of dump clean up and habitat restoration efforts. Deleted: annually
3. The FWS Desert Tortoise Coordinator will coordinate tortoise recovery and monitoring activities. Deleted: Detailed a
4. The DMG website ([www.dmg.gov](http://www.dmg.gov)) will be maintained to allow for the efficient dissemination of information about DMG and work group activities. Deleted: The DMG will also explore opportunities to establish a California deserts fund within the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.
5. Forest Service membership in the DMG will be formalized.

**Goal 15. Garner support for the DMG, its mission, activities, and funding initiatives.**

**FY02 Accomplishments:**

1. Worked with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to establish the California Desert Fund. Discussions with DaimlerChrysler Corp to establish the CDF have been promising—NWFF is currently waiting for a proposal. ← --- Formatted: Bullets and Numbering
2. Briefed key congressional staff, and DOI staff on the DMG. Continued to work with the congressional delegation, the agencies and department to maintain visibility of DMG.

**FY 03+ Goals:**

1. The DMG briefing packet and a report on DMG accomplishments will be produced/updated annually. ← --- Formatted: Bullets and Numbering
2. Federal and state agencies, Congressional representatives, and interested parties will be ← --- Formatted: Bullets and Numbering

briefed about DMG activities and initiatives.

3. The DMG will continue to pursue establishment of a California Desert Fund in cooperation with NFWF.

**Deleted:** The DMG website (www.dmg.gov) will be maintained to allow for the efficient dissemination of information about DMG and work group activities.

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**Table 2.0 Desert Managers Group  
5-year Plan (FY2003 - 2007)  
March 2003**

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	ACTIVITY	WHO	STATUS	FY 03 10/01 - 9/03	FY 04 10/02 - 9/04	FY 05 10/03 - 9/05	FY 06 10/04 - 9/06	FY 07 10/05 - 9/07
<b><u>Resource Conservation and Management</u></b>								
<b>1.0</b>	<b>Restore selected upland and riparian habitats identified as restoration priorities.</b>							
1.1	Develop partnerships to acquire land and restore habitat in the San Felipe watershed. Implement priority restoration and acquisition	A-B State Park/BLM	On track	X	X	X		
1.2	Develop partnerships among federal, state, local, tribal government entities and private organizations to secure funding, foster awareness and support for restoration efforts, and implement restoration efforts.	Restoration Coordinator	On going	X	X			
1.3	Sponsor and plan the Arid SW Lands Restoration Conference to foster an awareness of restoration projects and methods in the California deserts.	Restoration Coordinator/Team	On track	X	X			
1.4	Assist with developing a long range plan for the Mojave Desert Weed management Area and cooperate with local agencies to control invasive species.	Restoration Coordinator/Managers	On track	X	X	X	X	X
1.5	Explore opportunities for developing a Mojave River and Amargosa River watershed restoration initiative	Restoration Coordinator	On track	X	X			
1.6	Provide guidance and recommendations to the USGS RVDE project aimed at improving the management applicability of the research effort.	Restoration Coordinator	On going	X	X	X	X	X
<b>2.0</b>	<b>Clean up and restore illegal dumpsites that pose a public health, safety, or environmental threat and reduce future illegal dumping.</b>							
2.1	Input data and maintain illegal dumpsite database and determine priority sites for clean up.	Hazmat Team/Restoration Coordinator	On track	X	X	X	X	X
2.2	Clean up and monitor up to 20 illegal dump sites per year (5 sites will be cleaned up and monitored in FY 03).	Hazmat Team/Restoration Coordinator	On track	X	X	X	X	X
2.3	Foster federal, state and local partnerships and develop a desert wide constituency to support illegal dumpsite clean up and prevention.	Hazmat Team/Restoration Coordinator	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
2.4	Develop and implement a program to reduce/prevent the incidence of illegal dumping in cooperation with Keep California Beautiful and others.	Hazmat Team/Restoration Coordinator	On track	X	X	X	X	X
2.5	Sponsor Regional technical training re: hazard and solid waste	BLM/Team	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X

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	ACTIVITY	WHO	STATUS	FY 03 10/01 - 9/03	FY 04 10/02 - 9/04	FY 05 10/03 - 9/05	FY 06 10/04 - 9/06	FY 07 10/05 - 9/07
<b>3.0</b>	<b>Recover the desert tortoise in the California desert recovery units.</b>							
3.1	Conduct a scientific evaluation based on current information of the effectiveness of past recovery actions, specifically actions related to vehicle management, cattle and sheep grazing, and construction of tortoise fences.	Kenna/GS	On track	X				
3.2	Synthesize and evaluate existing information related to the status/trends of desert tortoise populations	GS/Redlands	On track	X	X	X	X	X
3.3	Integrate line distance sampling with permanent study plot sampling	FWS/Redland	On track	X	X	X	X	X
3.4	Coordinate recovery actions in various agency land management plans with emphasis on the West Mojave recovery unit	Redlands/ Managers	On track	X	X	X	X	X
3.5	Develop/implement recommendation for addressing the impacts of : ❖ Disease ❖ Raven predation ❖ Feral dogs	FWS/DFG	On track	X	X	X	X	X
3.6	Develop and implement a public education outreach program to educate the public about the effects of the release of captive tortoises on wild tortoises and to build public and stakeholder support for desert tortoise recovery.	DIRT	On track	X	X	X	X	X
<b>4.0</b>	<b>Reduce and maintain burro populations to appropriate management levels and in appropriate locations</b>							
4.1	Identify and implement management actions to control populations and movement.	Sjaastad (BLM), NPS, DOD, and State	On track	X	X	X	X	X
4.2	Define Appropriate Management Levels through BLM land management planning process.	BLM	Complete					
4.3	Remove burros and place in adoption programs. FY 03 - 1000.	Sjaastad, (BLM), NPS, DOD and State	On track	X	X	X	X	X
4.4	Standardize population monitoring techniques and monitor population status.	Sjaastad, (BLM), NPS, DOD and State	On track	X	X	X	X	X
4.5	Monitor rangeland health.	Sjaastad, (BLM)	On track	X	X	X	X	X
4.6	Adjust AML, as needed, based on results of 4.4 and 4.5	Sjaastad, BLM	On track	X	X	X	X	X
4.7	Explore opportunities for private funding for gathers/adoption	DOI Coordinator/ BLM/NPS	On track	X				

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	ACTIVITY	WHO	STATUS	FY 03 10/01 - 9/03	FY 04 10/02 - 9/04	FY 05 10/03 - 9/05	FY 06 10/04 - 9/06	FY 07 10/05 - 9/07
<b>5.0</b>	<b>Protect cultural resources and enhance public awareness of the sensitivity and value of paleontological and cultural resources in the California deserts.</b>							
5.1	Publish Millenium conference proceedings	PACRAT	On track	X				
5.2	Monitor implementation of the California Historic Resource Information System GIS for the California deserts.	SHPO	On track	X	X	X	X	X
5.3	Sponsor/attend ARPA training.	PACRAT/ BLM	On track	X				
<b>6.0</b>	<b>Ensure the long-term sustainability of the military mission in the California deserts.</b>							
6.1	Consider the DOD mission requirements in BLM, NPS and State land management planning.	DOI and State Agencies	On going	X	X	X	X	X
6.2	Analyze potential impacts of proposed land management decision/actions on DOD lands and airspace.	DOI and State Agencies	On going	X	X	X	X	X

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**Table 2.0 Desert Managers Group**  
**5-year Plan (FY2003 - 2007)**  
**March 2003**

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	ACTIVITY	WHO	STATUS	FY 03 10/01 - 9/03	FY 04 10/02 - 9/04	FY 05 10/03 - 9/05	FY 06 10/04 - 9/06	FY 07 10/05 - 9/07
<b><u>Visitor Services</u></b>								
<b>7.0</b>	<b>Develop a coordinated interagency system for delivering useful, comprehensive, and consistent information about desert resources and recreation opportunities.</b>							
7.1	Update and maintain the <i>California Deserts</i> website.	Managers/ DIRT	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
7.1.1	Redesign the California Deserts website.	MDEP	On track	X	X			
7.2	Maintain the Lancaster Visitor Center.	State Parks	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
<b>8.0</b>	<b>Resolve noise issues related to aircraft overflights for all participating agencies.</b>							
8.1	the Overflight Work Group will meet to exchange information concerning military low level aerial over flights and associated resource and visitor use impacts.	Overflight WG	Ongoing	X				
8.2	An interagency over flight brochure will be finalized and distributed by DMG agencies.	Overflight WG	On track	X				

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**Table 2.0 Desert Managers Group**  
**5-year Plan (FY2003 - 2007)**  
**March 2003**

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	ACTIVITY	WHO	STATUS	FY 03 10/01 - 9/03	FY 04 10/02 - 9/04	FY 05 10/03 - 9/05	FY 06 10/04 - 9/06	FY 07 10/05 - 9/07
<b><u>Science and Data Management</u></b>								
<b>9.0</b>	<b>Coordinate and conduct scientific studies and monitoring programs needed for effective resource management and planning</b>							
9.1	Develop a web accessible Research Inventory Data Base.	MDEP/ Redlands	On track	X				
9.2	Initiate an inventory of existing resource inventory, research and monitoring studies to populate the database.	Managers	On going	X	X	X	X	X
9.3	implement protocols to encourage scientist to input data and or update the data base	Managers	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
9.4	Sponsor and plan the Mojave Desert Science Symposium.	Hughson (NPS)	On track	X				
<b>10.0</b>	<b>Coordinate natural resource monitoring programs.</b>							
10.2	Conduct workshop for DMG agencies to develop monitoring framework for the California deserts	NPS	On track		X			
<b>11.0</b>	<b>Monitor Desert Tortoise population status in relation to recovery goals in the California recovery units.</b>							
11.1	Refine line distance sampling monitoring procedures	Tortoise Coordinator	On Track	X				
11.2	Implement line distance sampling in California desert recovery units.(FY 03: West Mojave Unit only)	Tortoise Coordinator	On Track	X	X	X	X	X
11.2.1	Analyze data collected and produce annual report with recommendation for the next year's monitoring.	Tortoise Coordinator	Behind schedule	X	X	X	X	X
11.3	Update and maintain data management system.	MDEP	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
11.4	Conduct monitoring workshop to review the results and efficacy of LDS and the need for additional population, habitat, and effectiveness monitoring.	Tortoise Coordinator/ Redlands	On track	X				
<b>12.0</b>	<b>Monitor and protect desert water resources.</b>							
12.1	Develop protocols and assess the hydro and bio resources of priority wetland areas according to established protocols.	NPS, BLM, DOD		X	X	X		
12.1.1	Map and digitize wetland and riparian areas.	FWS	On track	X	X	X		
12.1.3	Develop user friendly graphic interface to allow access to hydro and bio database.	DOD	On track	X				

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	ACTIVITY	WHO	STATUS	FY 03 10/01 - 9/03	FY 04 10/02 - 9/04	FY 05 10/03 - 9/05	FY 06 10/04 - 9/06	FY 07 10/05 - 9/07
<b>13.0</b>	<b>Integrate/coordinate and share data and Data Base Management Systems needed for effective resource management and planning</b>							
13.1	Identify, acquire/develop new datasets from DMG agencies	MDEP and DMG Agencies	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
13.2	Provide data management and analysis support to DMG initiatives.	MDEP	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X

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**Table 2.0 Desert Managers Group  
5-year Plan (FY2003 - 2007)  
January 2003**

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	ACTIVITY	WHO	STATUS	FY 03 10/01 - 9/03	FY 04 10/02 - 9/04	FY 05 10/03 - 9/05	FY 06 10/04 - 9/06	FY 07 10/05 - 9/07
<b><u>DMG Program Management</u></b>								
<b>14.0</b>	<b>Ensure orderly and efficient operation of the DMG and its work groups.</b>							
14.1	Develop and update/maintain the DMG's 5 year plan.	DOI/DOD Coordinators	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
14.2	Ensure adequate staffing to administer the DMG and provide for effective coordination and implementation of desert wide initiatives.							
14.2.2	Fund DOD/DOI Coordinators.	DOD/DOI	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
14.2.4	Fund FWS Desert Tortoise Coordinator	FWS	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
14.2.5	Fund BLM Restoration/Dump Coordinator.	BLM	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
14.3	Formalize FS membership in the DMG.	FS/DOI Coordinator	On track	X				
<b>15.0</b>	<b>Garner Support for the DMG, its mission, activities and funding initiatives</b>							
15.1	Update the DMG briefing packet.	DOI Coordinator	Ongoing	X	X		X	X
15.2	Produce annual accomplishment report.	DOI/DOD Coordinators	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
15.3	Update and maintain DMG website.	DOD Coordinator	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
15.4	Inform stakeholders and policy makers about the DMG activities and funding initiatives.	All	Ongoing	X	X	X	X	X
15.5	Explore opportunities to establish a California deserts fund within the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.	DOI ,DOD Coordinators	On track	X	X			

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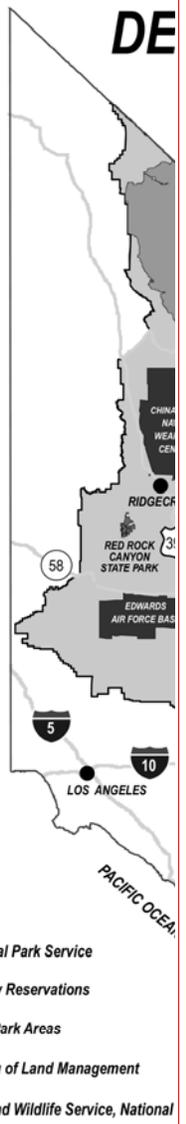
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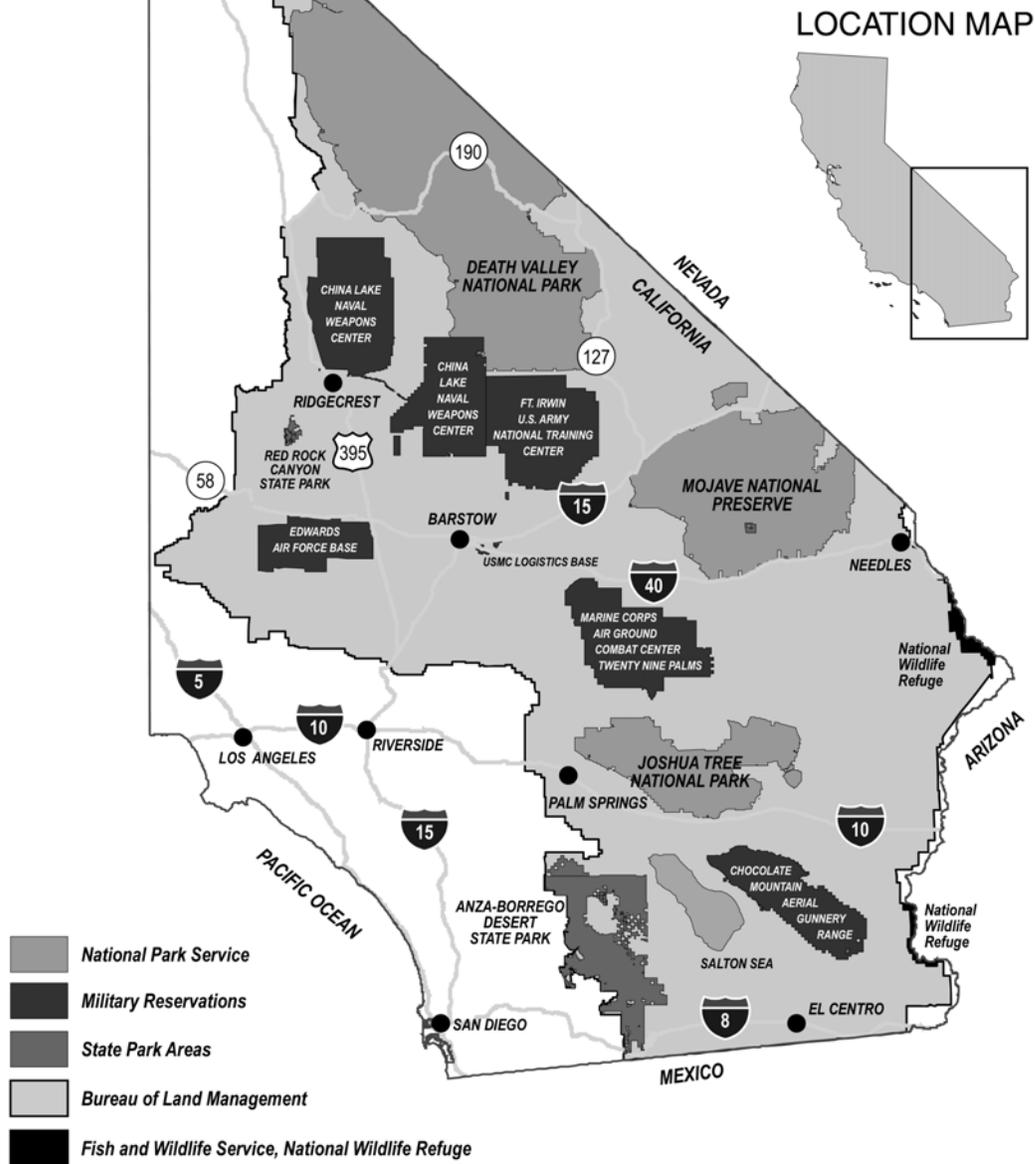
**Appendix¶**  
**Lower Priority DMG Goals¶**

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The following goals or elements of goals included in the Feb 2001 DMG 5-Year Plan have been determined too ambitious to complete given the current level of staff, funding, and agency support ... [4]

<b>Page 17: [1] Deleted</b>		<b>John Hamill</b>		<b>2/27/2003 2:08:00 PM</b>	
5.3	Improve coordination between cultural resources and law enforcement staff	PACRAT	On track	X	
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10.1	Conduct a workshop to review and summarize each agency's monitoring programs/practices. Identify existing barriers and opportunities to make the monitoring programs/practices compatible.	DOI Coordinator	Complete	X	
<b>Page 19: [3] Deleted</b>		<b>John Hamill</b>		<b>2/27/2003 2:28:00 PM</b>	
10.3	Review existing weather data and develop recommendation to fill data gaps.	Ad hoc group	On track	X	
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**Figure 1.** California deserts

# DESERT MANAGERS GROUP AREA OF INTEREST



FEBRUARY 2000

# DESERT MANAGERS GROUP AREA OF INTEREST



## **Appendix Lower Priority DMG Goals**

The following goals or elements of goals included in the Feb 2001 DMG 5-Year Plan have been determined too ambitious to complete given the current level of staff, funding, and agency support. These goals/elements will be maintained as long-term goals that will be pursued as time/resources permit.

**Goal: Reclaim priority abandoned mines in the California deserts.** Abandoned mines will be inventoried, incorporated into a database, prioritized, and reclaimed by agencies on a priority basis. An interagency group will be established to evaluate and streamline processes for complying with environmental laws and regulations.

**Goal: Reduce the incidence of wire burning in the desert.** There is anecdotal evidence that the California deserts are being used increasingly to illegally burn wire to salvage the valuable metals (e.g., copper) contained in the wire. Neighboring states have passed laws outlawing the sale of salvaged wire. This action may have displaced illegal wire burning activities to the California deserts. An information paper, brochure and action plan will be developed on wire burning. The action plan will provide direction for determining the extent of the problem and reducing the incidence of wire burning in the future.

**Goal: Reduce the incidence of roadside litter in the desert.** Roadside litter is widespread throughout the desert. The Hazmat Team will review existing litter clean up and prevention efforts, evaluate opportunities for interagency cooperation, and develop an action plan.

**Goal: Protect cultural resources and enhance public awareness of the sensitivity and value of paleontological and cultural resources in the California deserts.** Funding will be pursued to develop a Regional Handbook of the History and Prehistory of Desert Cultures.

**Goal: Develop a coordinated interagency system for delivering useful, comprehensive, and consistent information about desert resources and recreation opportunities.** An inventory of existing and planned visitor centers will be completed and recommendations for establishing additional gateway visitor centers will be developed. The feasibility of establishing a centralized system that allows visitors to make reservations at all agency's recreation facilities will be evaluated and implemented.

**Goal: Educate the public about the value and importance of desert resources to promote a conservation ethic.** Information and educational materials will be produced to provide consistent information to the public about California desert resources. This will include teacher packets, displays and a desert access guide. In addition, the DMG will develop and implement a desert-wide information and education strategy for the California deserts.

**Goal: Coordinate and integrate efforts in the California deserts to provide for the safety of desert users and agency personnel and to protect natural and cultural resources.** This goal will be achieved by (a) providing interagency training of rangers and wardens and (b) developing and implementing a plan to share law enforcement and emergency response personnel to deal more effectively with large events.

**Goal: Assist managers/staff in the use/application of technological and scientific information and knowledge in day-to-day decision making processes.** Based on the recently completed study of the feasibility of establishing a decision support system for the California deserts, a pilot application of a DSS will be implemented. The pilot will focus on information/decision making needs and processes common to all desert land/resource management agencies (e.g., NEPA assessments, evaluating alternative futures for the desert, tortoise habitat assessment, livestock grazing forage allocation, etc.).

**Goal: Ensure the orderly and efficient operation of the DMG and its work groups.** Agencies will hire the staff needed to coordinate implementation of initiatives included in the DMG 5-Year Plan. Two positions remain to be funded and filled:  
Outreach and Education Coordinator  
Research and Monitoring Coordinator

**Goal: Garner support for the DMG, its mission, activities, and funding initiatives.** An annual newsletter on the DMG will be produced and broadly disseminated.

**Goal: Ensure that Native American tribes, local governments, non-DMG State and Federal agencies, and stakeholders are appropriately represented on the DMG and/or informed of DMG activities.** Native American tribes and local governments in the California deserts will be contacted to determine their interest in participating in the DMG and/or its work groups. Options for involving interested parties will be identified, assessed, and implemented as appropriate