

December 13, 2000

Memorandum

To: California Desert Managers Group
California Desert Managers Group Interagency Working Group Team Leaders

From: Executive Coordinator, California Desert Managers Group
DOD Coordinator, California Desert Managers Group

Subject: December 5 - 6, 2000 California Desert Managers Group Meeting Summary

Attached is the draft meeting summary for the California Desert Managers Group meeting conducted December 5 - 6, 2000. Please review these items and contact either John Hamill (760-255-8888) or Clarence Everly (760-255-8896) by October 27, 2000, if you have any changes.

Attachments

Draft Meeting Summary
CALIFORNIA DESERT MANAGERS GROUP MEETING
December 5-6, 2000
Black Rock Canyon Nature Center
Joshua Tree National Park

Integrated Ecological Monitoring Discussion and Field Trip

1. The Science Team, in coordination with USGS-BRD, sponsored a day-long field trip and discussion of integrated ecological monitoring. The presentation by NPS, BLM, USGS and the Coachella Valley Conservancy demonstrated that the agencies and scientist have similar needs and approaches. The field trip illustrated the practicality of monitoring species diversity over a large area. The discussions and field trip reaffirmed that an integrated-multi agency approach is the most biologically and cost effective way to proceed.
2. The Science Team agreed to develop a list of needs, issues, and priority action items related to implementation of the integrated ecological monitoring program for future discussion with the DMG.

Desert Managers Group Update

1. The DMG supported holding briefings for the new administration and members of Congress on the DMG and FY 02 funding requests sometime in February, if possible. Briefings should be conducted by key agency staff from DOI, DOD and the State and involve the DOI/DOD Coordinator. The DOI/DOD coordinators will set up the meetings.
2. Recommendations for implementation and support of the Alternative Futures process will be presented at the next DMG meeting, based on the results of the pilot application in the West Mojave planning area.
3. The DIRT team will develop recommendations for equitable cost sharing of the Lancaster Visitors center.
4. The managers supported the DOI/DOD Coordinators giving a presentation on the DMG to the Native American Heritage Commission and an "open door" policy on tribal participation in the DMG.
5. The DMT will be present a final draft MOU on common data standards at the next DMG meeting

FY 01 Project Work Plan Review and Approval

1. Illegal Dump Work Plan

- ◆ Managers support the proposed allocation of BLM-DMG funds (i.e., \$125K for clean-up; \$50K for a coordinator; and \$25K for education and prevention)
- ◆ Managers supported hiring a single coordinator for both the Dump and Restoration programs. Tim Salt requested to review the Position Description and indicated he will determine the BLM manager that will supervise the position
- ◆ Managers agreed to the process in Hamill's Dec 4, 00 memo for determining priority sites for clean up and requested the nomination process be distributed to the DMG and posted on the DMG website.

- ◆ Managers requested the Data Management Team review the Hazmat database.
- ◆ The Managers requested the DOI coordinator to distribute memo re: establishing a point of contact for the dump database for each DMG office. The target for completing the database was May 1, 2001.
- ◆ The Hazmat and DIRT teams should meet to develop plans for spending the funding associated with prevention and education.

2. Habitat Restoration Work Plan

- ◆ Managers support the proposed allocation of BLM funds (i.e., \$125K for restoration; \$50K for a coordinator; and \$25K for education and prevention)
- ◆ Managers supported hiring a single coordinator for both the Dump and Restoration programs. Tim Salt requested to review the Position Description and indicated he will determine the BLM manager that will supervise the position.
- ◆ Managers agreed to the process in Hamill's Dec 4, 00 memo for determining priority sites for restoration and requested the nomination process be distributed to the DMG and posted on the DMG website.
- ◆ Managers requested the Data Management Team review the Restoration database.
- ◆ The Restoration Work Group will meet on Jan 16 to review nominations.
- ◆ The Restoration and DIRT teams should meet to develop plans for spending the funding associated with prevention and education.

3. Desert Tortoise Monitoring Work Plan

- ◆ Tim Salt identified Larry Foreman as the interim contact for BLM on DT monitoring; Tim Salt will identify a permanent contact for the this project at a later date.
- ◆ The Managers supported the process proposed by FWS for monitoring in each of the recovery units in California, subject to review by the Recovery Unit Teams. Tim Salt also requested to review the plans for monitoring on BLM lands. The final recovery unit plans will be presented at the next DMG meeting for approval.
- ◆ DOD (MDEP) agreed to serve as the data clearinghouse and provide Data Management support for the project. These in kind contributions will be reflected in the budget for the project.
- ◆ The Managers agreed that DMG members should enter into some type of agreement or MOU re: use/support of MDEP as the data clearinghouse and data management support center for the Cal desert. The DOD and DOI coordinator agreed to explore this issue and report back to the DMG.
- ◆ FWS agreed to develop a data management plan for the DT monitoring effort and to utilize its' funding to help implement the plan, as needed. The final plan will be presented at the next DMG meeting for approval.
- ◆ BLM indicated they would rely on FWS to determine how to implement monitoring on BLM lands including hiring and managing field crews.
- ◆ FWS agreed to review if any of FWS funds could be made available to monitor in Joshua Tree National Park.
- ◆ Hamill will organize a meeting to determine the most cost effective way to contract, hire personnel or otherwise execute the monitoring effort. Meeting participants will include: Mike Reynolds, Tim Salt, Mickey Quillman, Rhys Evans, Bob Williams, and Phil Medica.
- ◆ Mike McBride (Cal F&G) agreed to explore use of ESA Section 6 funds for DT monitoring.

4. ESA Section 7/HCP support

- ◆ No action identified

5. Burro Work Plan

- ◆ DMG awards were presented to Dave Sjaastad (BLM), Doug Threlloff (Death Valley NP), and Chris Stubbs (Mojave NP) for their exemplary contributions to the interagency burro management program. DMG certificates will be prepared for other agency staff who contributed to the success of the effort.
- ◆ Sjaastad indicated that FY 01 burro removal efforts could be compromised by the fact that adoptions are not keeping pace with captures and there is no place to hold the excess burros. To address this problem, Sjaastad is developing arrangements with the Wildlands Conservancy to hold excess burros on a ranch near Bakersfield, CA.

6. Millenium Conference

- ◆ The Managers requested the DOI/DOD coordinators evaluate staff support needed to successfully plan and coordinate the conference.

7. Desert Water Study

- ◆ The Managers supported the "no funding" work plan recommended by the Science Team for implementing the water study this FY.

Non-Profit Organization for the California Desert

1. DOD members expressed concerns over potential effects of a non-profit organization on the military mission in the Cal desert. However, the DMG unanimously agreed to move forward to assess the feasibility/desirability of establish a non-profit.
2. The DMG supported establishing a small working group to act as advisors and oversee continuing work on the proposed nonprofit organization. This group will include DMG members that have been working on this issue up to this point (Mary Martin, Richard Woods, Dave Van Cleve, Clarence Everly, and John Hamill) and technical advisors drawn from outside the DMG who have experience in establishing successful non-profit organizations.
3. The DMG supported production of a revised prospectus by December 18, 2000 that reflects changes provided by members of the DMG.
4. The DMG supported presenting the revised prospectus to senior agency management for review and buy-in.
5. The DMG supported seeking guidance from internal legal counsel in order to determine a proper role for governmental agencies in the non-profit.
6. A list of strategic allies (including existing non profits in the Cal desert) will be established and contacted to assess their interest and concerns related to establishing a desert wide non-profit.
7. The results of this work will be presented in an update report to the DMG at its next meeting.

DMG 5-Year Plan Review and Update

1. The managers, in consultation with the work group chairs, reviewed each of the goals in the 5-year plan. Numerous changes were recommended and approved. The Managers requested the DOI/DOD coordinator revise the plan, based on comments discussed during the meeting, and present a final draft for approval at the next DMG meeting.

Future DMG meetings

1. The Mojave National Preserve agreed to host the next meeting. The location will be Primm, NV or the Barstow area, and include a field trip on Desert Tortoise line distance sampling. Alternative dates were Feb 21-22 or March 7-8. The DOI coordinator will select the final date after consulting with the entire DMG.
2. A DMG meeting was also set for June 6-7; the theme will be Desert Cultural Resources; the location is yet to be determined.