

DESERT LANDS RESTORATION TASK FORCE
CALIFORNIA DESERT RESTORATION INITIATIVE
SUBGROUP MEETING
Barstow BLM Headquarters
March 7th 2000

In Attendance:	John Hamill	DOI Lead, DMG
	Jane Rodgers	DLRTF Co-Chair, JTNP
	Val Prehoda	DLRTF Co-Chair, MCAGCC
	Ruth Sparks	Ft. Irwin NTC ITAM
	Jim Keeler	BLM, Barstow
	Pete Lounsbury	MDRCD
	Nona Evans	MDRCD
	Dave Anderson	Co-Chair, HAZMAT Group
	Zina Dean	Stover Seed Company
	Bill Neill	CalePPC
	Michal Kurth	MDEP
	Eric Boerner	MDEP (DRLTF Webmaster)
	Dana York	Death Valley NP
	Ric Williams	Charis, Edwards AFB

MINUTES

Wednesday, Mar 7

9:30-10:00 AM Meeting started with welcome by Jane Rodgers, round table introductions, and review of current restoration projects, as follows:

Jane discussed the Joshua Tree/shrub survey in preparation for the major road renovation project in JTNP;

Val discussed this year's tamarisk and russian thistle removal project aboard the Combat Center, and the development of the Integrated Natural Resources Management and Integrated Training/Land Management Plans;

Zina said that the seed business was doing well, and that there was an upsurge in business from golf courses wishing to incorporate natural flora in their landscaping designs;

Ruth reported on a partnering grant with Bechtel Corp for reseeding large disturbed areas - they are doing a 5 acre test plot with a 4000 gal mobile irrigation unit that mimics natural rainfall. The cryptogram inoculation and wind tunnel study program is ongoing, and Jane Belknap is working on rain simulation studies and soil stabilization. Ft Irwin is also working on reducing road size (creep) by berming and application of dust control treatment on the useable portion of the MSR;

Dave reported that the ATT cable line was removed from the Mojave Nat'l Preserve, and restoration prep was started in some portions. He also shared that a term position was either open or just about to open for a restoration specialist;

Ric reported that EAB was busy closing off peripheral access roads to the base to deter scrapping and begin restoration, tamarisk was almost removed from the mesquite bosques; and he asked if anyone had heard of a project to introduce genetically altered Brassicaceae at IR (HAZMAT sites) that would fluoresce to show presence of certain bad chemicals - apparently the initiative is coming out of Oakridge TN. No one heard of it, and as it caused a great deal of consternation in the group, he said he would look into the rumor further and report back;

Jim reported that the Afton Canyon tamarisk removal and willow planting project is ongoing and preliminarily successful, the Willow fire revegetation efforts are also ongoing, as well as management of trails into/out of the area, and that BLM is busy working on the acquisition and land management of the soon-to-be acquired 25,000 acre El Mirage area west of Adelanto which will be heavily used by ORVs, and the BLM is under heavy pressure to monitor ORV recreationists because of a lawsuit filed by the SWC for BioDiv;

Dana reported that tamarisk removal in washes and springs of Death Valley NP is ongoing, as is the planting of willows, they are also removing Himalayan blackberry, figs and palm trees. The Euraka dunes campground is closed with plans to restore and allow the dunes to come back in and expand the range of endemic plants in that area - a new smaller campsite will be built in a less intrusive area;

Pete reported that the MDRCD is assisting in area restoration projects by supplying manpower - he urged members to consider using the MDRCD for short term projects (20% overhead) but trade off is contract vehicle in place, fast turn-around, he also mentioned the Mojave River Task Force which recently hired a grants person to get money to remove tamarisk;

Nona reported on the MDRCD annual drought resistant plant sale (deadline is 10 March, delivery 24/25 Mar) and asked the group to review the current list of plants and recommend additions or deletions - they are: Eldarica Pine, Leylandii Cypress, Black Locust, Italian Stone Pine, Golden Honey Locust, Hackberry, Japanese Black Pine, White Ash, Arizona Cypress, Aleppo Pine, Italian Cypress, Blue Palo Verde, Blue Sage, Red Sage, Butterfly Bush, Canyon Penstemon, Desert Cassia, Desert Globemallow, Desert Marigold, Desert Willow, Mexican Evening Primrose, Red Yucca, and Texas Ranger Cimarron. She also discussed the ongoing Mitsubishi Mine reclamation project and the Castle Mine project. She will ask Mike Eichelberger for permission to post his annual reports on DLRTF's website because they are an excellent source of reference material on restoration;

Bill introduced himself as a longtime CalePPC member and tamarisk remover, and who is now tackling Arundo on the coast.

10:00-10:30 AM The group shared upcoming classes, conferences and workshops as follows, which will also be posted on the DLRTF website:

From UCR Riverside: Flora of Joshua Tree National Park: Wildflowers (April 7-9), Ecology of the Joshua Tree (May 12-14);

From CSU San Bernardino: Restoration in the East Mojave Desert (March 24-26)

From California Native Grass Association: Techniques and Strategies for Using Native Grasses and Graminoids in Restoration Projects (April 10-11, and May 11), Grass ID Workshop (May 11), 2000 Annual Meeting (May 12)

From NRCS, BLM and FS: WEPP: A State-of-the-Science Erosion Prediction Model Workshop for Forest and Rangeland Applications (May 2-3)

From The Restoration Trust: Coastal and Freshwater Wetland Restoration (April 25-28)

From the Nevada Institute of Technology in Reno, the Nevada BLM and the University of Wisconsin: the Ninth Annual Integrated Mining and Land Reclamation Planning Short Course and Workshop (10-14 April)

From The Reveg Edge: Desert Revegetation utilizing Local Native Plants (April 4)

From the UC Berkley and Jepson herbaria: The Jepson Manual: How to Use the Keys (April 1-2), Poaceae (April 29-30), The Jepson Desert Manual: A Preview (April 28-30), Compositae (May 20-21), Challenges in Rare Plant Conservation (May 19-21), Mimulus (June 2-4), Astagulus II (June 9-11), Juncus (July 21-23), Restoration Ecology (Aug 11-13);

From the Southern California Botanists (CSU Fullerton): LOTS of great classes coming up, too many to list!! Call Val for details!!;

From Ruth Sparks!: Colorado River Restoration Celebration and Rendezous (March 14) Tel # (435)259-1063

10:30-10:45 AM Val discussed the latest actions of DIRT, which included the review of the draft DMG brochure, which contains information from the outreach package from DLRTF as well as other subgroups (the final draft will be presented at the April DMG meeting); the DMG logo progress (work in process, determination of the top three entries will take place on 19 April at the College of Design in Riverside, the DIRT logo subcommittee will rank the top three and present them at the June DMG meeting for adoption of one); and the DMG newsletter, which will be a quarterly electronic publication.

10:45-11:00 AM Michael Kurth from MDEP showed the group what he had put together for the HAZMAT team for tracking dump site cleanup information. The public access part of the program was not on line yet, but the rest of it is functional and can be accessed via link from the DMG

website. The CalDesert website will also have a link. The format appears to be workable for restoration sites, and Michael said he could have something up and running for DLRTF preview in two weeks, which was appreciated and approved by the group. Discussion then centered around the DLRTF website and thanks were given to Eric for his work to date. Ric volunteered (or did he volunteer Mark Egan?!) to be the DLRTF interface with Eric for website management, and Val will work with him to get information posted in a timely, consistent manner. Eric noted that John is trying to get the DMG site renamed as dm.gov, which is easier to remember. Jane brought up the need for a skills roster that could be posted to the DLRTF site, similar to the information SER requested in a recent survey to all desert restorationists. Clarence Everly and John Hamill dropped in about that time, and Clarence was able to inform the group that a spatial bibliography was done in 97/98. Jane will follow up on this to see if the spatial bibliography could serve the same purpose as a skills roster.

11:00-12:00 PM The mailing list was passed around in lieu of an attendance roster, and members confirmed, updated, or added their information, which Val will send to the website manager.

Email protocol was discussed, because several members were concerned with the frequency and type of emails they were receiving from the list server. All members are requested to adhere to the following: Mass mailing of information to the DLRTF list server must be cleared through the co-chairs. If the information can be shared at the quarterly meetings, that is the proper forum. Time-sensitive information for the benefit of all members will be disseminated by the co-chairs. It is important to remember that solicitations to government email addresses is illegal, and may result in fines or penalties.

Craig Dremann's restorationist survey was passed out as requested and the upcoming workshop was announced for anyone interested in attending.

Websites of interest were brought to the table, and Val will consolidate them for the website manager to post.

Jane brought up a proposal by Matt Brooks to form a Mojave Desert Weed Management Area group, or a Desert CalEPPC subgroup. Bill said there was going to be a CalEPPC board meeting in San Diego that he would bring the topic up with. Pete said that MDRCD would be the logical "home" for this entity, and there wasn't a formal organization to date, because the District has been aggressive on exotic species control for some time, but mostly focusing on agricultural exotic threats. He concurred that there should be a broader scope, and will talk to Matt about starting up a weed management group. Val will also participate in the planning process, and they will be prepared to discuss the issue further at the next meeting.

It was agreed that the next meeting should be a workshop on site, and Nona volunteered to talk to Mike Eichelberger about hosting a workshop at the Viceroy Mine reclamation site. The tentative date was set for 7 June. She will get back to the co-chairs within a week on Mike's availability.

There were no action items to bring up to the upcoming DMG meeting. There was, however, some light-hearted discussion on the need to change the DLRTF acronym to something easier to say and remember. Members are asked to post their suggestions to the DLRTF website for review and action at the next appropriate meeting.

Finally, Jane brought to the members' attention that she had served her agreed-upon year and then some as the Co-chair, and solicited nominations for her replacement, due to her workload at JTNP. Jessie Walker (BLM Barstow, not present) was suggested as a possibility, and after the meeting, she did express an interest. Any other interested members are urged to post their names to the website for consideration at the next appropriate meeting.

12:00 - 1:00 PM Lunch with SDMT

1:00-4:00 PM Joint meeting with the SDMT. Jeff Lovich, Len Gaydos, Len Downing (Geologist with USGS), Bill (Director of Zzyzxx), 2 USFWS personnel working on the National Wetlands Mapping initiative and were present from the SDMT. Len Gaydos gave a presentation on one of SDMT's current projects, conducted in the ValJean Valley, a modeling program which focuses on the vulnerability of the area to compaction after a major rain event. He passed out a one page synopsis of the USGS Recoverability and Vulnerability work that is in progress.

Jane stated that it would be beneficial for the SDMT to review DLTRF's Guide to Restoration. Ruth volunteered to consolidate any comments.

All present agreed that a joint meeting and collaboration between the two working groups was long overdue and that future joint meetings would occur at least biannually.

Jeff passed out website downloads and discussed the latest developments from the Biological Resources Division (BRD) of USGS. Of great interest was the Science Information System (SIS), which provides rapid access to a comprehensive scientific information database comprising summary descriptions, approaches, anticipated application of results, products, duration, progress reports, and results of BRD scientific efforts. For instance, Borman's works in progress on ravens, phainopeplas, etc, can be accessed for reference. The site address is <http://cristel.nal.usda.gov:8080/star/brd.html>. A companion site, called WERC Products (Western Ecological Research Center, USGS), contains finished products that are

easily accessible for reference/review. The site address is <http://ratbert.wr.usgs.gov/products/research.asp.html>.

Len passed out Bob Webb and Kathryn Thomas' paper on Recoverability of Severely Disturbed Soils and Vegetation in the Mojave Desert which was published in the Proceedings of Desertification 2000, International Conference on Desertification, in Dubai, United Arab Emirate, Feb 12-15 2000. He also passed out a summary of major ongoing scientific activities that SMDT is compiling, which can be found on their website at

<http://wrgis.wr.usgs.gov/MojaveEco/SDMT/summary.html>. Val agreed to consolidate a list of projects from DLRTF members and send it to Len for addition to the list. Len added that Bob Webb has over 100 historical photos with detailed captions that are being posted to the SDMT site.

Jeff added that Dennis Casebier at Goff's has over 36,000 photos of the Mojave Desert, and over 6,000 volumes in his reference library, that are available for researchers.

There was a group discussion on the requirement to merge bibliographies, which Clarence said was doable - Jeff's, MDEP's, JTNP's, MCAGCC's, and any others.

Finally, discussion centered on planning for a joint field trip/workshop. A joint sub-committee was formed, consisting of Ruth, Zina, Len, Bill, and Jane Belknap (not present, volunteered by Len!). The sub group will post the agenda in two weeks to the SMDT and DLRTF webservers (smdt@mohavedata.gov and restoration_team@mohavedata.gov). Tentative dates are for two days in the week of 22 May, or 5 June (to coincide with DLRTF's next planned workshop/fieldtrip). Len volunteered to pay for one 44-pax bus. If there is overwhelming interest, the cost of another bus will be prorated amongst the members. Fieldtrip locations will include the ValJean SMDT research site, and a restoration site, possibly Ft. Irwin, or the Viceroy Mine, and may include a stop at the burn site just off the freeway with the evening stop at Longstreet Inn or the Buffalo Bill's in Primm, or even Zzyzx, depending on what the sub-committee comes up with for sites. John recommended that the DMG managers for the two groups be invited to attend, as well as any congressional staffers who may be interested, and possibly the media. The group assented after much discussion, with the caveat that any attendees, not members of DLRTF or SDMT, understand that the purpose of the fieldtrip/workshop is for the two teams to expand on collaboration efforts, not a "dog and pony show".

The next meeting date was tentatively set for Wed, 7 June, possibly in conjunction with the joint SDMT field trip/meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

Val Prehoda and Jane Rodgers

Co-chairs, DLRTF