

**Minutes from Science and Data Management Team  
meeting, 25 May, 1999, UC, Riverside**

Agenda

0900 - Overview of DMG meeting (Clarence, Jeff)

1000 - Presentation by Dr. Michael Allen of the UC, Riverside Center for Conservation Biology

1100 - Work on the draft FY2000 Integrated Ecological Monitoring workplan

- scope of study area
- questions from Desert Managers
- integration with other efforts
- general design

1245 - Assignments, announcements, schedule next meeting

1300 - Adjourn

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The meeting started with an overview of the last Desert Manager's Group (DMG) meeting by John Hamill. Emphasis was placed on the discussion that focused on the Integrated Ecological Monitoring in the Mojave Desert initiative being put forward by the DMG. The issue of scope was resolved by the DMG in that the monitoring effort will occur in the California deserts (including the Colorado Desert) and Lake Mead National Recreation Area in Nevada.

Dr. Michael Allen, the Director of the Center for Conservation Biology at UC, Riverside followed with an overview of the role that the Center is playing in desert research. The Center is working very closely on issues related to the proposed Eagle Mountain Landfill. They are very interested in filling the research needs of various bioregional planning efforts and other ecological initiatives in the desert.

Most of the subsequent discussion focused on the draft FY2000 Integrated Ecological Monitoring workplan. It was decided that a coordinator would be hired for the effort and that the group needed to have a Position Description (PD) in place as soon as possible, so that the person could be hired as early as October. The incumbent would need to have strong scientific credibility, and excellent oversight and coordination abilities. We will mount an aggressive recruitment campaign to include outreach to universities. Larry Foreman, Kent Turner and Jeff Lovich will work together to put together a PD.

The effort expended in FY2000 to develop the Integrated Ecological Monitoring program for deployment in FY2001 will be based on the templates of the National Park Service's Vital Signs program and the Bureau of Land Management's Standards and Guidelines. Emphasis will be placed on acceptable limits of ecological processes and population fluctuations.

Michael Burroughs discussed the proposal of the DMG to implement rangewide monitoring of the desert tortoise in FY2001. They would hire a separate coordinator for this effort. The proposed budget includes \$2.2 million for FY2001, \$2.7 million in FY2002, and \$3.2 million in FY2003. It would be desirable to co-locate both coordinators for economy of scale and to achieve better integration between the projects. Perhaps they could share a database manager in the same shop. Since the DMG is focused on the California Desert the office should likely be in California, perhaps Riverside or Barstow.

A variety of tasks were identified for the Integrated Ecological Monitoring Coordinator to accomplish in FY2000.

- what is the scope/resolution of the model?
- emphasize prediction and transfer functions
- how will early warning, diagnosis, etc. translate to decision-making process
- emphasize rapid assessment
- emphasize relevance

The next meeting is scheduled for July 15 from 0900-1300 at the BLM office in Riverside.