

Figure 2. Desert Tortoise Critical habitat in the California Desert

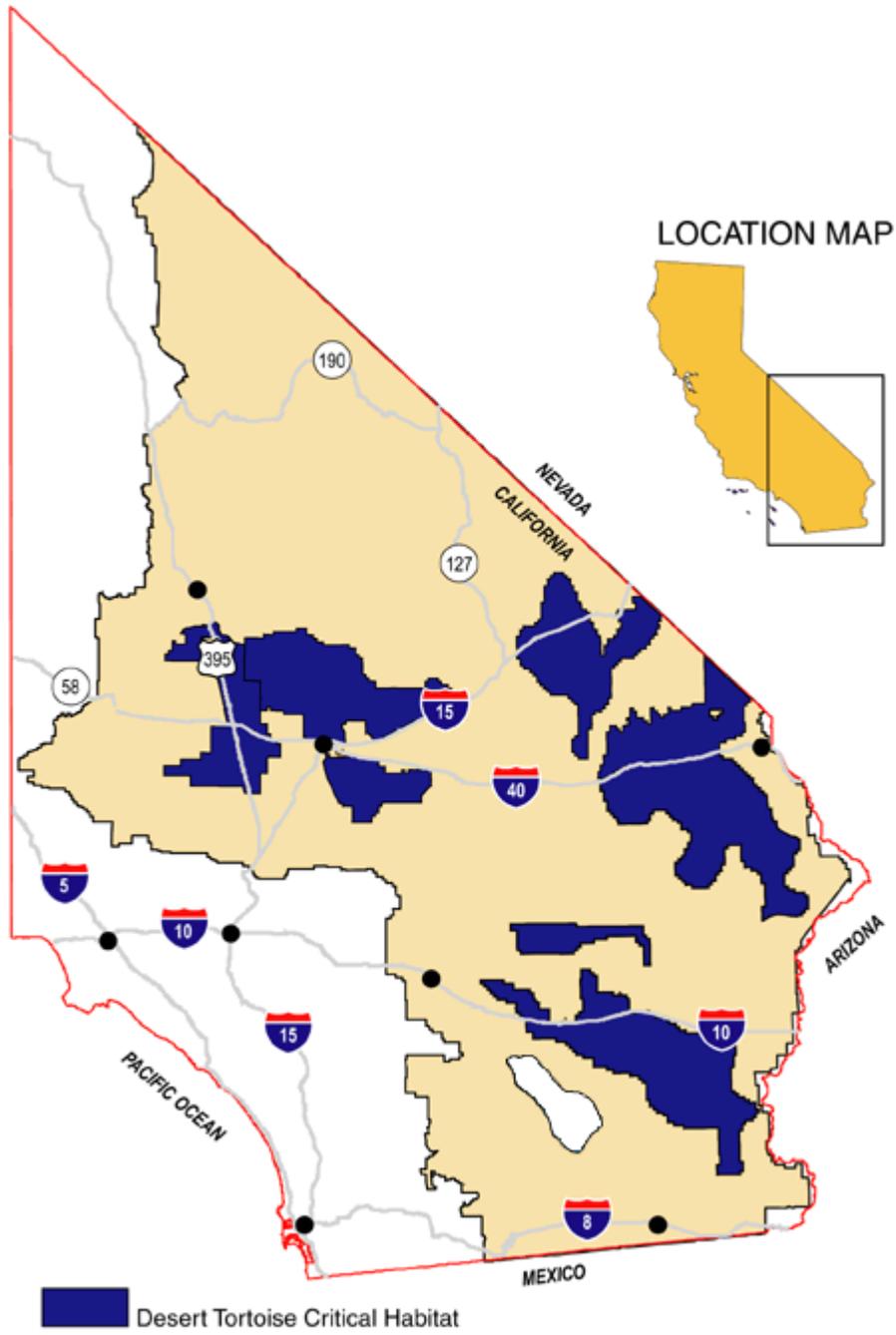


Table 1. California Desert Managers Group member agencies.

Department of the Interior

- Bureau of Land Management
- Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service
- Geological Survey

State of California

- Department of Fish and Game
- Department of Parks and Recreation
- Department of Transportation

Department of Defense

- Naval Air Weapons Station, China Lake
- Edwards Air Force Base
- National Training Center, Fort Irwin
- Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms
- Marine Corps Logistics Base, Barstow
- Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma

Table 2. Major Desert Managers Group Accomplishments (1994-2001).

- Facilitated completion of over 70 tasks to ensure the timely and efficient implementation of the California Desert Protection Act without compromising the mission of participating agencies.
- Developed a joint strategy for managing wild burro populations on Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, California State Parks, and military lands. Over 2500 burros have been captured and placed in adoption programs under this strategy.
- Established a Geographic Information System (GIS) containing over 50 maps of natural and cultural resources in the Mojave Desert. The GIS is accessible over the Internet at www.mojavedata.gov.
- Established an interagency approach at visitor information centers in Barstow, Lancaster, Baker, and Needles, California to better serve the public by providing “one stop shopping” for information on the desert.
- Established a California Desert web site (www.californiadesert.gov) that includes information about the desert’s recreational opportunities, natural and cultural resources, public lands and desert safety.
- Established consistent agency guidance and direction for management of 72 wilderness areas that are administered by the BLM, NPS, and FWS.
- Developed a joint Bureau of Land Management/National Park Service fire management center. Staff and equipment are shared by the agencies resulting in a more cost-effective fire management program.
- Cleaned up 10 illegal dumps in cooperation with the California Integrated Waste Management Board.
- Sponsored numerous interagency training courses on wilderness management, hazardous waste management, Native American consultation and coordination, law enforcement, desert tortoise monitoring, desert land restoration, and water resource monitoring.
- Implemented a standardized monitor program to determine the population status of the desert tortoise on 4.7 million acres of critical habitat in the California Desert.
- Sponsored a major cultural/paleontological resource conference in May 2001: ***“The Millennium Conference: the Human Journey and Ancient Life in the California Desert.”***

Table 3. Federally listed plants and animals of the California Desert as of May 2001.
P = Proposed; T = Threatened; E = Endangered; CH = Critical Habitat

Common Name	Scientific Name	Status
Peninsular bighorn sheep	<i>Ovis canadensis nelsonii</i>	CH E
Mountain plover	<i>Charadrius montanus</i>	P T
Southwestern willow flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	E
Bald eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	T
Inyo brown towhee	<i>Pipilo fuscus eremophilus</i>	CH T
Yuma clapper rail	<i>Rallus longirostris yumanensis</i>	E
Least Bell's vireo	<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	E
Desert tortoise	<i>Gopherus agassizii</i>	CH T
Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard	<i>Uma inornata</i>	T
Desert slender salamander	<i>Batrachoseps aridis</i>	E
Arroyo southwestern toad	<i>Bufo microscaphus californicus</i>	CH E
California red-legged frog	<i>Rana aurora dratonii</i>	CH E
Desert pupfish	<i>Cyprinodon macularius</i>	E
Owen's pupfish	<i>Cyprinodon radiosus</i>	E
Mohave tui chub	<i>Gila bicolor mohavensis</i>	E
Owen's tui chub	<i>Gila bicolor snyderi</i>	CH E
Amargosa vole	<i>Microtus californicus scirpensis</i>	CH E
Cushenbury milkvetch	<i>Astragalus albens</i>	E
Lane Mountain milkvetch	<i>Astragalus jaegerianus</i>	E
Coachella Valley milkvetch	<i>Astragalus lentiginosus</i> var. <i>coachellae</i>	E
Fish Slough milkvetch	<i>Astragalus lentiginosus</i> var. <i>piscinensis</i>	T
Peirson's milkvetch	<i>Astragalus magdalenae</i> var. <i>peirsonii</i>	T
Triple-ribbed milkvetch	<i>Astragalus tricarnatus</i>	E
Spring loving centaury	<i>Centaureum namophilum</i>	T
Hoover's woollystar	<i>Eriastrum hooveri</i>	T
Parish's daisy	<i>Erigeron parishii</i>	T
Ash Meadows gumplant	<i>Grindelia fraxinopratensis</i>	CH E
Amargosa niterwort	<i>Nitrophila mohavensis</i>	CH E
Eureka Valley evening-primrose	<i>Oenothera californica</i> ssp. <i>eurekensis</i>	E
Eureka dune grass	<i>Swallenia alexandrae</i>	E

Table 4. DMG goals/activities that may potentially contribute to recovery of the desert tortoise.

- Restore all upland habitats identified for restoration.
- Reclaim priority abandoned mines in the California Desert.
- Clean up and restore illegal dumps that pose a public health or environmental threat and reduce the incidence of illegal dumping in the future.
- Reduce and maintain burro populations to appropriate management levels and in appropriate locations.
- Educate the public about the value and importance of desert resources to promote a conservation ethic.
- Resolve noise issues related to aircraft overflights for all participating agencies.
- Coordinate and integrate efforts in the California Desert to provide for the safety of desert users and agency personnel and to protect natural and cultural resources.
- Coordinate and conduct scientific studies and monitoring programs needed for effective resource management.
- Develop an interagency ecological monitoring program.
- Monitor and protect desert water resources.
- Integrate and share data and data base management systems needed for effective resource management and planning.
- Assist managers/staff in the use/application of technological and scientific information and knowledge in day-to-day decision making processes.

Table 5. Federal and State listed plants and animals and Species of Special Concern associated with California Desert wetlands and riparian habitats (FT = Federal–Threatened; FE = Federal–Endangered; FCH = Federal-Critical Habitat; SE = State–Endangered; ST = State–Threatened; CSSC = California Species of Special Concern; SP = State Protected)

Desert bighorn sheep	<i>Ovis canadensis nelsoni</i>	SP
Bald eagle	<i>Haliaeetus leucocephalus</i>	FT
Southwestern willow flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii extimus</i>	FE
Least Bell’s vireo	<i>Vireo bellii pusillus</i>	SE FE
Yuma clapper rail	<i>Rallus longirostris yumanensis</i>	FE
Inyo brown towhee	<i>Pipilo fuscus eremophilus</i>	FCH FT
Western yellow billed cookoo	<i>Coccyzus americanus occidentalis</i>	SE
Yellow warbler	<i>Dendrocia petechia brewsteri</i>	CSSC
Yellow breasted chat	<i>Icteria virens</i>	CSSC
Western least bittern	<i>Ixobrychus exilis hesperis</i>	CSSC
Hepatic tanager	<i>Piranga flava</i>	CSSC
Summer tanager	<i>Piranga rubra</i>	CSSC
White faced ibis	<i>Plegadis chihi</i>	CSSC
Virginia warbler	<i>Vermivora virginiae</i>	CSSC
Gray vireo	<i>Vireo vicnoir</i>	CSSC
Elf owl	<i>Micrathene whitneyi</i>	SE
Vermillion flycatcher	<i>Pyrocephalus rubinus</i>	CSSC
Arroyo southwestern toad	<i>Bufo microscaphus californicus</i>	FCH FE
Desert slender salamander	<i>Batrachoseps aridis</i>	FE
Black toad	<i>Bufo exsul</i>	SE
Couche's spadefoot toad	<i>Scaphiopus couchi</i>	CSSC
Mohave tui chub	<i>Gila bicolor mohavensis</i>	FE
Owen’s tui chub	<i>Gila bicolor snyderi</i>	FCH FE
Owen’s pupfish	<i>Cyprinodon radiosus</i>	FE
Desert pupfish	<i>Cyprinodon macularius</i>	FE
Amargosa River pupfish	<i>Cyprinodon nevadansis amargosae</i>	CSSC
Shoshone pupfish	<i>Cyprinodon nevadansis shoshone</i>	CSSC
Amargosa Canyon speckled dace	<i>Rhinichthys osculus ssp</i>	CSSC
Cottonball Marsh pupfish	<i>Cyprinodon salinus milleri</i>	CT
Amargosa vole	<i>Microtus californicus scirpensis</i>	FCH FE SE
Amargosa niterwort	<i>Nitrophila mohavensis</i>	FCH FE
Fish Slough milkvetch	<i>Astragalus lentiginosus var. piscinensis</i>	FT
Spring loving centaury	<i>Centaurium namophilum</i>	FT
Ash Meadows gumplant	<i>Grindelia fraxinopratenensis</i>	FCH FE
Hoover’s woolystar	<i>Eriastrum hooveri</i>	FT

Appendix. Overview of the Desert Managers Group (DMG)

Vision and Mission of the DMG

The vision and mission of the DMG evolved over a period of several years through discussions by the desert managers and the various work groups that were established by the managers to address issues of mutual interest (e.g., wilderness, law enforcement, habitat restoration, science and data management, etc.). The final vision and mission of the DMG is identified in the Group's Charter, which was approved in June 2000. The vision for the DMG is to:

- To work together to conserve and enhance the California Desert for current and future generations.

The Group's mission is to:

- A. Develop coordinated and complimentary management guidelines, practices, and programs.
- B. Coordinate and integrate efforts in the California Desert to:
 1. Conserve and restore desert resources;
 2. Provide high quality recreation, public education and visitor services;
 3. Provide for safety of desert users.
- C. Develop and integrate the databases and scientific studies needed for effective resource management and planning.
- D. Promote compatibility in the application of each agency's mission.

Geographic Scope of the DMG

The geographic scope of the DMG is the Mojave Desert and Colorado Desert ecoregions within the state of California (Figure 1).

Legal Authority

All the participating agencies have general authorities that encourage and allow them to work cooperatively, but no specific legal authority exists for the DMG. The most specific authority for the DMG is found in section 601(h) of Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976, which states:

“The Secretary (of the Interior), the Secretary of Agriculture and the Secretary of Defense, are authorized and directed to consult among themselves and take cooperative actions to carry out provisions of this subsection...”

The DMG currently operates pursuant to a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) among the Department of the Interior, the Department of Defense, and the State of California that was signed on September 27, 2000. The MOU formally commits these agencies to participate in and carry out the mission of the DMG as provided for in its Charter.

Appendix. Overview of the DMG (continued)

Governing Principles

The operation of the DMG is based on a number of principles that establish the foundation for the partnership. These principles include:

- A. Participation in the DMG does not diminish an agency's autonomy or authority to conduct/accomplish their mission.
- B. Agencies participating in the DMG will work to create opportunities and develop partnerships to effectively and efficiently manage resources.
- C. Participating agencies recognize the diverse uses of the California Desert and their responsibility to the American people for being good stewards of desert resources.
- D. Participants in the DMG agree to make decisions by consensus. Consensus for the DMG is defined to mean a proposed solution or decision that participants can support or live with.
- E. Participating agencies recognize their responsibility to keep the public informed and provide opportunities for comment on DMG activities and initiatives.
- F. DMG activities will be consistent with and/or designed to implement agency resource management plans (i.e., National Park Service General Management Plans; Bureau of Land Management Resource Management Plans; Department of Defense Integrated Natural Resource Plans).

Membership

The DMG is comprised of managers from agencies with land management or regulatory responsibilities in the California Desert, and the U.S. Geological Survey, which serves in a scientific support role to the manager (Table A-1). Additional members may be added to the DMG based on the consensus of the voting members of the group. Federal, state, local and tribal government agencies that are not members of the DMG may serve as members of the DMG work groups, subject to approval of the DMG.

The DMG has committed to providing appropriate opportunities for public involvement. Currently the only formal mechanism for public involvement is through National Environment Policy Act (NEPA) compliance on agency land management plans and DMG projects. The DMG falls within the exemptions from the Federal Advisory Committee Act that are provided for in the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act (e.g., membership is currently limited to federal and state agencies). Consequently, the DMG is not a FACA authorized group.

Appendix. Overview of the DMG (continued)

Organization

The DMG consists of a body of Desert Managers, interagency work groups, and a small coordination staff (Figure A-1) that are responsible for carrying out the vision and mission of the DMG. The 9 work groups operate under their own mission/charter that were approved by the Desert Managers. Work groups are encouraged to identify opportunities for collaboration and propose innovative ways of managing desert resources or serving the public. At least one manager serves as an advisor to each work group. This arrangement has proven to be a useful way to provide a management context to work group activities and to reinforce the relationship between the DMG and the work groups.

Coordination Staff

The Department of the Interior (DOI) and Department of Defense (DOD) have each appointed a full time manager to coordinate their Department's participation in the DMG and provide staff support to the DMG. The DOI Coordinator works out of the Office of the Secretary of the Interior and is co-located with the DOD Coordinator in Barstow, California. The DOD Coordinator is a private contractor that answers to an internal management group that includes representatives from the military installations participating in the DMG. The State of California is seeking funding for a similar position to coordinate its involvement in the DMG. The general responsibilities of the DOI/DOD Coordinators are to:

- provide staff support to the DMG and related work groups,
- foster collaboration and communications among DMG participants,
- represent the DMG to outside groups, organizations and Congress,
- promote the development of consistent policies dealing with the desert, and
- secure the financial and political support needed to carry out the DMG's mission and related initiatives.

The DMG has determined that additional staff is needed to coordinate implementation of several major DMG initiatives. Specifically the DMG approved four program coordination positions that will be filled subject to the availability of funds:

- Natural Resource Restoration Coordinator (BLM)
- Public Outreach and Education Coordinator (BLM/State)
- Research and Monitoring Coordinator (GS)
- Desert Tortoise Coordinator (FWS)

These positions will be supervised by various DMG agencies/managers (identified in parentheses above). However, the program coordinators will be accountable to the DMG to carry out their responsibilities in a seamless manner. The Desert Tortoise Coordinator was hired by FWS in FY 2000 and has responsibilities for the desert tortoise over a four-state area, and is located in Las Vegas, Nevada. BLM is currently recruiting the Natural Resource Restoration Coordinator position.

Appendix. Overview of the DMG (continued)

The DMG 5-Year Plan

DMG goals and work activities are described in the DMG's 5-Year Plan. The 5-Year Plan is updated and approved annually by the DMG and its work groups. The current plan contains 21 goals (Table A-2) and identifies specific responsibilities and schedules for accomplishing each goal/task. The plan was developed to ensure that all the DMG participants have a common understanding of DMG goals and activities, inform stakeholders and interested parties about DMG goals and activities, and provide more accountability for DMG activities.

Funding DMG Activities

Beginning in FY 2000, the DOI agencies involved in the DMG prepared a coordinated budget request for several new or expanded initiatives included in the DMG's 5-Year Plan, including burro management, habitat restoration, ecological monitoring, and illegal dump clean up. Of the \$7.2 million requested in the President's budget, Congress provided \$1.2M to BLM and \$770K to FWS. No funding was specifically provided to the NPS or GS. However, all the DMG agencies have contributed substantial program funds and staff support to achieve the DMG goals.

Figure A-1. DMG Organization

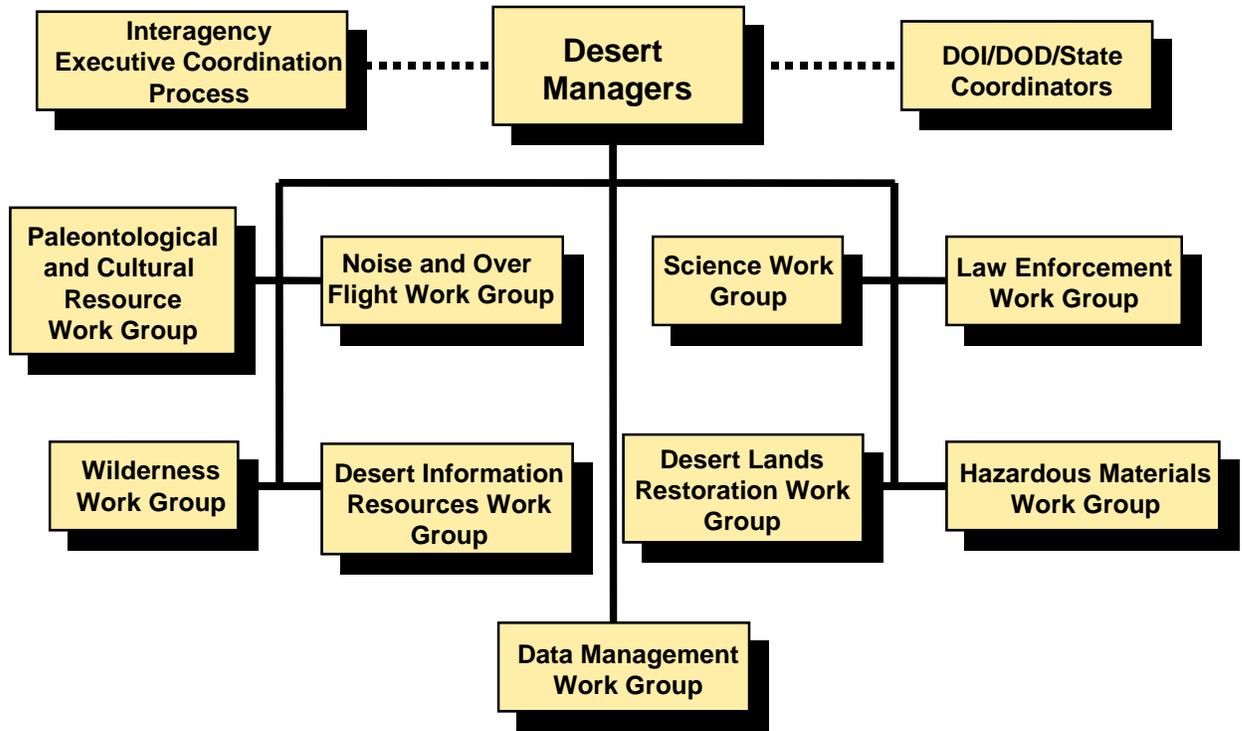


Table A-1. Members of the DMG

Department of the Interior

- Bureau of Land Management
 - California Desert District Manager
 - Field Manager, Palm Springs
 - Field Manager, Needles
 - Field Manager, El Centro
 - Field Manager, Ridgecrest
 - Field Manager, Barstow

- Fish and Wildlife Service
 - Field Supervisor, Ventura
 - Field Supervisor, Carlsbad

- National Park Service
 - Superintendent, Death Valley National Park
 - Superintendent, Joshua Tree National Park
 - Superintendent, Mojave National Preserve

- U.S. Geological Survey
 - California District Chief, Sacramento

State of California

- Department of Fish and Game
 - Regional Manager
- Department of Parks and Recreation
 - Superintendent, Colorado Desert State Parks
 - Superintendent, Mojave Desert State Parks
- Department of Transportation
 - District Division Chief - Planning

Department of Defense

- Commander, Weapons Division, Naval Air Warfare Center, China Lake
- Commander, Air Force Flight Test Center, Edwards Air Force Base
- Commander, National Training Center, Fort Irwin
- Commanding General, Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center, Twentynine Palms
- Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Logistics Base, Barstow
- Commanding Officer, Marine Corps Air Station, Yuma, AZ

Table A-2. Goals identified in the DMG's 5-Year Plan (February 2001)

Resource Conservation and Management Goals

1. Restore all upland and riparian habitats identified for restoration.
2. Reclaim priority abandoned mines in the California Desert.
3. Clean up and restore illegal dumps that pose a public health or environmental threat and reduce the incidence of illegal dumping in the future.
4. Reduce the incidence of wire burning in the desert.
5. Reduce the incidence of roadside litter in the desert.
6. Recover the desert tortoise in the California Recovery Units.
7. Reduce and maintain burro populations to appropriate management levels and in appropriate locations.
8. Protect cultural resources and enhance public awareness of the sensitivity and value of paleontological and cultural resources in the California Desert.

Visitor Services and Public Safety Goals

9. Develop a coordinated interagency system for delivering useful, comprehensive, and consistent information about desert resources and recreation opportunities.
10. Educate the public about the value and importance of desert resources to promote a conservation ethic.
11. Resolve noise issues related to aircraft overflights for all participating agencies.
12. Coordinate and integrate efforts in the California Desert to provide for the safety of desert users and agency personnel and to protect natural and cultural resources.

Science and Data Management Goals

13. Coordinate and conduct scientific studies and monitoring programs needed for effective resource management.
14. Develop an interagency ecological monitoring program.
15. Monitor desert tortoise population status in the California Desert in relation to recovery goal in the California Recovery units.
16. Monitor and protect desert water resources.
17. Integrate and share data and data base management systems needed for effective resource management and planning.
18. Assist managers/staff in the use/application of technological and scientific information and knowledge in day-to-day decision making processes.

DMG Program Management Goals

19. Ensure the orderly and efficient operation of the DMG and its work groups.
20. Garner support for the DMG, its mission, activities, and funding initiatives.
21. 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.