Working together to conserve our desert lands

FY05 Accomplishments & 5 Year Plan

March 2006

DESERT MANAGERS GROUP

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Copies of this report and additional information about the DMG are available at **www.dmg.gov** or by contacting:

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1.0 Background and Purpose

The California deserts (Figure 1) include some 100 communities, two national parks, one national preserve, six military bases, eight 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. It is also the home of many unique wildlife and plant species and contains many outstanding cultural and paleontological resources. 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.

Partners involved with the DMG include the State of California (Fish and Game, Parks and Recreation, and Caltrans), Kern, San Bernardino and Imperial Counties, the Department of Defense (Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps), the Department of the Interior (Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Indian Affairs 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**.

The purpose of this document is to 1) summarize the accomplishments of the DMG in fiscal year 2005, and 2) describe the goals and objectives established by the DMG for fiscal years 2006-2010. This document was approved by the DMG at its regular meeting on April 18, 2006. As with all crosscutting multi-agency efforts, performance is dependent on the availability of adequate funds and staff for each agency to actively participate in these efforts.

2.0 FY 05 Accomplishments

DMG accomplishments for FY 05 are summarized below.

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

A. DMG agencies actively participated in the Mojave Weed Management Area (MWMA). Major activities focused on developing a plan for inventorying invasive species (tamarisk) and implementing control measures in the Mojave River. The

B. The DMG Restoration Coordinator coordinated development of a Low Desert Weed Management Area (LDWMA) covering the desert portions of Riverside and San Diego Counties. An implementing Memorandum of Understanding was developed and is currently being signed by members.

C. The DMG hosted a workshop for parties interested in conservation and restoration efforts for the San Felipe Creek - San Sebastian Marsh Watershed and developed a work plan for cooperative conservation within the watershed.

D. The DMG obtained approximately $550,000 in grant funding for priorities identified in the draft *California Desert Riparian Challenge: A Strategic Plan for Restoration of Riparian Habitats in the California Deserts.* The DMG restoration coordinator is assisting in the management of these grants.

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

A. The Hazmat Work Group provided information on solid waste disposal to the Raven EA Work Group for inclusion in the Raven EA.

B. DMG partners sponsored community/volunteer illegal dump cleanups resulting in the removal of 497 tons of trash from the California deserts.

C. The DMG cooperated with state and local governments to increase the awareness of illegal dumping and its environmental consequences, create prevention solutions, and improve illegal dumping laws.

D. The DMG, Kern County, and others hosted an Illegal Dumping Prevention Workshop in Ridgecrest on 23 March 2006. Over 100 people from federal, state and local government organizations across California and Nevada attended.

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

A. FWS established a Desert Tortoise Recovery Office (DTRO) consisting of a Desert Tortoise Recovery Coordinator and three local field coordinators.

B. FWS empanelled a Desert Tortoise Science Advisory Committee (SAC) to serve in an advisory role to the DTRO and DMG.

C. The DMG formed a Desert Tortoise Recovery Implementation Planning Work Group to work directly with the DTRO and the SAC to develop and implement Recovery Action Plans for each desert tortoise recovery unit in California.

D. The DMG hired a Tortoise Outreach Coordinator to implement a multifaceted education and outreach campaign aimed at increasing public support of the involvement in desert tortoise recovery in California.

E. The DMG Desert Tortoise Information and Education Outreach Work Group collaboratively developed a desert tortoise information pamphlet that was printed and distributed by DMG partners.

F. The DMG Free Roaming Dog Work Group developed a preliminary draft report on feral and uncontrolled dogs in the desert. This preliminary information along with interim findings and recommendations was presented to the DMG at its' November 2005 meeting

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

A. 276 burros were removed from BLM, NPS, and DOD lands throughout the California deserts in FY 05. BLM removed 95 burros from the Centennial Mountains along the boundary between BLM and the North Range of NAWS China Lake. 89 burros were removed from Mojave National Preserve and 86 burros were removed from Slate Range within NAWS China Lake.

B. BLM continues to monitor the habitat within the three remaining herd management areas on BLM lands (Chocolate – Mule Mountain, Chemehuevi, and Chicago Valley). BLM collected monitoring data indicate the continued recovery of dry washes and riparian areas located within these HMAs.

C. BLM installed a below ground water storage tank for West Well located within the southern portion of the Chemehuevi HMA. This 10,000-gallon water storage tank was critically needed to maintain burros within the general region and to delay burro migration to the Colorado River during the summer. This has greatly reduced previously observed impacts within the residential areas of Havasu Landing and the riparian areas along this reach of the Colorado River.

D. BLM continues to place a large emphasis on adoptions as the main avenue for placement of burros. In FY05, BLM adopted just over 1,000 animals in California. Of those, 286 animals were adopted in Ridgecrest and approximately 250 animals were adopted at satellite adoptions held throughout southern California.

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

A. OHP selected a contractor to develop a web-based Mojave Desert Historical Resources GIS application. The contractor completed optical character recognition of scanned site records and related documents and began initial development of a user interface linking the data to GIS in a manner that allows multiple types of queries.

B. The DMG supported the inaugural Three Corners Conference and participated in its planning. The conference was attended by approximately 75 participants and included a series of presentations on a wide range of anthropological topics. A compendium of the papers presented will be made available to conference participants. The Three Corners Conference was considered a success by participants and organizers and will be held bi-annually. Greater participation by the PACRAT at future conferences will enhance both the content of the conference and its attendance.

C. A sub-committee of the PACRAT was formed to organize the first annual 2-day PACRAT Workshop scheduled for spring 2006.

Goal 6. DMG agencies will strive to understand and work collaboratively to resolve conflicts in each agency's mission.

A. Through regular DMG meetings and related activities, DMG agencies gained a greater appreciation of each agency's mission and programs.

B. The DMG sponsored Introductory Wilderness Training for non-wilderness professionals at various DMG office locations throughout the California deserts.

C. NAWS China Lake, Mojave National Preserve and California Department of Fish and Game completed NEPA compliance for translocation of Big Horn Sheep from the Old Dad Mountains in Mojave Preserve to the Eagle Krags area in China Lake.

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

A. The Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program (MDEP) maintained the California deserts website, **www.californiadesert.gov**.

B. DMG member agencies developed and installed interpretive posters at the Caltrans Desert Oasis, Kane, Valley Wells and John Wilkie roadside rest areas.

C. California State Parks maintained and operated the interagency "gateway" visitor center at Lancaster, California.

Goal 8. Coordinate scientific studies and monitoring programs needed for effective resource management.

A. An outline for the book, THE MOJAVE DESERT: Ecosystem Processes and Sustainability, resulting from the Mojave Desert Science Symposium was developed. This book proposal has been accepted by the University of Arizona press and is also being considered by other publishers. Manuscripts for sections of the book are currently being peer-reviewed.

B. A preliminary ecosystem conceptual model of the Mojave and Great Basin Deserts was developed by D. M. Miller, T. C. Esque, D. R. Bedford, R. H. Webb, J. Fenelon, K. M. Schmidt, and J. R. Nimmo. This model is published in the Mojave Inventory and Monitoring Network Phase I Report/Draft Phase II Report, which has been reviewed and accepted by the National Park Service Inventory and Monitoring Program. The report can be found on the DMG website.

C. High priority vital signs for ecosystem monitoring have been selected for the Mojave Network of national parks. Data mining for species inventories and existing monitoring was done as part of the Vital Signs selection process.

D. The Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program (MDEP) developed a web accessible Research Inventory Database. The database template is online and available for use at http://www.dmg.gov/science/.

Goal 9. Monitor desert tortoise population status in relation to recovery goals for the California deserts' recovery units.

A. DMG agencies supported implementation of rangewide desert tortoise monitoring to establish a population baseline and evaluate whether tortoise populations are increasing, remaining stable, or declining. In FY 05, over 9,000 kms of transects were sampled.

Goal 10. Inventory, monitor, and protect desert water resources.

A. DMG agencies utilized the Level I protocols provided by the Desert Research Institute for inventorying the hydrological and biological characteristics and quality of desert springs.

B. DOI agencies held two coordination meetings in accordance with the 2004 Amargosa Basin MOA.

1. A letter was sent to the Nevada State Engineer encouraging the requirement for meters on all existing water uses in the basin.
2. A draft GIS map of the DOI areas of concern and the critical water and water dependent resources was developed.
3. The framework for developing a coordinated interagency groundwater monitoring plan was discussed.
4. Funding was secured to support maintenance of the USGS Regional Groundwater model and application of the model to address DOI agency needs.

5. An agreement between DOI agencies and Nye County reference protesting water rights applications in the Amargosa Basin was drafted by the DOI Solicitor and circulated for review among DOI agencies. Nye County is currently reviewing the draft.

Goal 11. Integrate and share data and database management systems needed for effective resource management and planning.

A. The MDEP maintained its GIS database (**www.mojavedata.gov**) of natural and cultural resources in the California deserts.

Goal 12. Ensure the orderly and efficient operation of the DMG and its work groups.

A. The DMG updated and finalized its FY 05 Work Plan and accomplishment report in April 2005.

B. The DMG reviewed and updated its charter to reflect current priorities and policies. The DMG implementing memorandum of understanding was renewed and is currently in the signature process.

C. The DMG expanded its membership to include the Bureau of Indian Affaris, Kern, San Bernardino and Imperial Counties.

D. The DMG Natural Resources Restoration Coordinator coordinated implementation of dump clean-ups and habitat restoration efforts (see Goal 2 under accomplishments).

E. The FWS officially established the Desert Tortoise Recovery Office and coordinated tortoise monitoring activities on behalf of the DMG (see Goal 3 under accomplishments).

F. The Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program (DOD) maintained the DMG website (**www.dmg.gov**) to allow for the efficient dissemination of information about the DMG and its work group activities.

G. The DMG continued coordination with the Clark County HCP on development and implementation of a desert tortoise education and outreach program in California.

Goal 13. Garner support for the DMG, its mission, activities, and funding initiatives.

A. Briefings on DMG activities and accomplishments were provided to a variety of government and non-government entities.

B. The DMG worked with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and the Resource Law Group to secure funding for DMG projects and to establish a California Desert Fund.

3.0 The 5 Year Work Plan

The 5 Year Work Plan is intended to facilitate internal and external communication about the goals and activities of the DMG and serve as a tool to allow the DMG and its Work Groups to track activities and projects. The 5 Year Work Plan is updated and approved annually by the DMG.

A brief description of the goals and activities for FY 06 – FY 10 are provided below. Fiscal year of activity completion, lead agency, and current activity status are noted in parentheses.

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

A. The DMG will work with the Mojave Weed Management Area (MWMA) to coordinate weed management activities in the Mojave Desert and implement the WMA long-range plan, including assisting the MWMA with coordination of restoration activities in the Mojave River. The DMG will assist the MWMA in obtaining funding and implementing priority weed control activities identified in the Riparian Challenge. **(FY 06, BLM, ongoing.)**

B. The DMG will work with the Low Desert Weed Management Area (LDWMA) to develop a long-range plan, seek funding, and coordinate weed management activities in the Low Desert. **(FY 06, BLM ongoing.)**

C. The DMG will provide information on new/current restoration techniques, sources of labor and material, partnership opportunities, ongoing restoration projects, and monitoring via the DMG's restoration webpage. **(FY 06, BLM/MDEP, behind schedule.)**

D. Create a database of restoration projects in the Mojave and Colorado Deserts and analyze the effectiveness or various restoration projects and techniques. **(FY 06-07, USGS/BLM, on track)**

E. The DMG will provide guidance and recommendations to USGS researchers within the Mojave Desert, including the Recoverability and Vulnerability of Desert Ecosystems project, aimed at improving the management applicability of research efforts. **(FY 06-10, BLM/NPS, ongoing.)**

F. BLM, GS, State Parks, and CDFG will implement the terms of the Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for the conservation and restoration of the San Felipe Creek-San Sebastian Marsh Watershed. **(FY 06-10 BLM/ABDSP, ongoing.)**

G. The DMG will finalize the **Riparian Habitat Restoration Challenge for the California Deserts** effort, secure grant funding, support existing grants, and implement the following high priority riparian restoration projects:

1. Amargosa River
2. San Sebastian Marsh/San Felipe Creek
3. Mojave River
4. Dos Palmas
5. East Mojave Desert

(FY 06-10, BLM/NPS/CDFG/ABDSP, ongoing.)

H. The DMG will support NPS efforts to update and reprint the **Beginners Guide to Upland Habitat Restoration**. **(FY 06, NPS/USGS, behind schedule/funding dependent.)**

I. The DMG will coordinate and sponsor the 2nd Arid Southwest Lands Habitat Restoration Conference. **(FY 08, all, ongoing)**

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.

A. The illegal dump database will be maintained and high priority sites will be identified for cleanup based on threats to public health, safety or the environment. A report of priority dumpsites will be provided to the managers. **(FY 06, BLM/NPS/Kern County/San Bernardino County, behind schedule, dependent on staff support.)**

B. The DMG will clean up and restore illegal dumps by leveraging budgets with grants and partnerships, and sponsoring community/volunteer illegal dump cleanups on public lands. **(FY 06, BLM, NPS, Kern County, ongoing.)**

C. The DMG will coordinate and implement actions to prevent illegal dumping in the California deserts. The DMG focus will be on cooperating with state and local government to increase the awareness of illegal dumping and its environmental consequences, create prevention solutions, and improve illegal dumping laws. **(FY 06-10, BLM, NPS, Kern County, San Bernardino County, Imperial County, ongoing)**

D. The Hazmat Work Group will provide information to the Raven Work Group/EA team concerning solid waste disposal as needed/requested. **(FY 06, BLM, ongoing)**

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

A. USGS will finalize and distribute their report on the Effectiveness of Desert Tortoise Recovery Actions. **(FY 06, GS, behind schedule)**

B. The DMG will work with the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution and other stakeholders to develop recovery action plans for desert tortoise recovery units in the California deserts that identify and cost share high priority DT recovery, monitoring, and research actions. **(FY 06, DT Implementation and Planning Work Group/FWS, on track)**

C. The DMG will implement a multifaceted education and outreach campaign aimed at increasing public support for and involvement in desert tortoise recovery in California. Required actions include:

1. Maintain support for the Tortoise Outreach Coordinator **(FY 06-08, NPS)**
2. Media campaign
   a. Radio PSAs **(FY 06-07, NPS)**
   b. Media kit **(FY 06-07, NPS)**
   c. News releases **(FY 06-08, NPS)**
   d. Television PSAs/programming **(FY 06-07, NPS)**
   e. Desert Tortoise Summit **(FY 06, NPS)**
   f. Media Field Days **(FY 06-07, NPS)**
3. Desert tortoise education component **(FY 06-07, NPS)**
4. Desert tortoise newsletter **(FY 06-07, NPS)**
5. Desert tortoise color brochure **(FY 06-07, NPS)**
6. Public attitude and effectiveness study **(FY 06-08, NPS)**
7. Raven management **(FY 06, Defenders of Wildlife)**
8. Desert tortoise website **(FY 06-08, MDEP)**
9. Desert tortoise merchandise **(FY 06-08, Joshua Tree NP Association)**

D. The DMG will implement a raven management program in the California deserts. Actions include:

1. Complete appropriate NEPA documentation and secure the necessary permits required by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act to implement a raven management program. **(FY 06, FWS, on track)**
2. The DMG, in cooperation with the University of Redlands, USGS, and interested stakeholders will continue inventory of raven nests. **(FY 06, FWS, funding dependent)**
3. The DMG will implement raven management actions in selected Desert Wildlife Management Areas (DWMAs), critical habitat, and/or NPS units. **(FY 06, FWS, funding dependent)**

E. The DMG Free Roaming Dog Work Group will, in cooperation with local animal control agencies, acquire and analyze data and produce GIS maps depicting information on occurrences of "uncontrolled dogs" in the desert and observations of dogs on LDS transects, desert tortoise study plots and in the DTNA, as well as uncontrolled dog reports from participating county animal control agencies. An effort will be made to assess the threat of free roaming dogs associated with current and projected urban development in terms of its proximity to desert tortoise critical habitat and DWMAs. A completed draft report will be presented to the DMG. **(FY 06, CDFG, funding dependent)**

F. Develop a Coordinated Desert Tortoise Headstarting and Translocation Plan in cooperation with interested stakeholders. **(FY 06, DOD/USGS/FWS/CDFG, ongoing)**

G. The DMG will identify and implement actions to help control the spread of disease and allow for collection of information that will lead to a better understanding of diseases that affect desert tortoise. **(FY 06, FWS, to be integrated into Science Advisory Committee workload)**

H. The DMG will monitor desert tortoise population status in relation to recovery goals for California desert recovery units. Actions include:

1. Publish a report of desert tortoise LDS monitoring results for FYs 01-05. **(FY 06, FWS, behind schedule)**
2. Evaluate, modify as necessary, and continue the Line Distance Sampling (LDS) program to assess desert tortoise density, habitat quality, and threats. **(FY 06-10, FWS/MDEP, on track)**
3. Sample selected desert tortoise Permanent Study Plots (PSP) in California. **(FY 06, CDFG/USGS, on track)**
4. Identify opportunities to integrate LDS and PSP efforts to a) produce the best data in the most cost effective manner possible, and b) provide a method by which managers can prioritize funding for PSPs and LDS. **(FY 06-10, FWS, on hold pending LDS assessment)**
5. Establish an in-house repository for all desert tortoise data via an MOU. The MOU will outline protocols for the structure and maintenance of the data repository and accessing data in the repository. The DOD Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program (MDEP) will coordinate with the FWS to develop a single master database for all desert tortoise data and transition all of its desert tortoise data to the master database. **(FY 06-08, FWS/MDEP, on track)**

I. As a condition of any new or renewed Endangered Species Act (ESA) and/or California Endangered Species Act (CESA) research permit, the FWS DTRO and CDFG will require all agencies/institutions/researchers to abide by established data management protocols and submit to the desert tortoise data repository a brief annual report along with a complete copy of their field data. **(FY 06, FWS/DFG, complete data requirements pending development of DTRO recovery database)**

J. The DMG will explore and identify opportunities for increasing funding to support DT recovery action implementation, population monitoring, and effectiveness monitoring. **(FY 06, DMG Ad hoc work group, on track)**

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

A. BLM, FWS, DOD and the State will continue work to reduce burro populations to appropriate management levels (AML); NPS will work to eliminate burros entirely from Death Valley National Park and the Mojave National Preserve. Water trapping will be conducted within the Mojave National Preserve, NAWS China Lake, Ft. Irwin, Clark Mountain Herd Management Area (HMA), Centennial HMA, and along the Colorado River within the Picacho State Park west of Yuma AZ. An estimated

B. BLM will continue to monitor the habitat within the three remaining herd management areas, Chocolate – Mule Mountain, Chemehuevi, and Chicago Valley. **(FY 06, BLM, ongoing)**

C. BLM will continue to place a large emphasis on adoptions in FY06. The target for the State is 1,000 animals. Of those, 300 animals will be adopted in Ridgecrest with an additional 300 animals adopted at five scheduled satellite adoptions within Southern California. **(FY 06, BLM, ongoing)**

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

A. Complete development of a functional Mojave Desert Historical Resources GIS (MDHRGIS); provide DMG agency training on use of the system. **(FY 06, OHP/PACRAT, on track)**

B. Develop an MDHRGIS implementation plan to be executed upon delivery of the system by the California Office of Historic Preservation in the fall of 2006. **(FY 07, OHP/PACRAT/MDEP, on track)**

C. Conduct the first annual 2-day PACRAT Workshop, designed as a forum for sharing new information/methods and identifying high priority regional research questions, during the summer of 2006. **(FY 06, PACRAT, on track)**

D. Conduct a review of the written general overviews of the ethnography, rock art and historic/prehistoric archaeology of the California Deserts. Based on this review, the DMG will focus on and seek funding for creating/updating one overview topic. **(FY 06, PACRAT)**

E. Create a means for disseminating information to the general public on new archaeological/paleontological work in the desert through short (abstract length) written discussions and annotated bibliographies posted on the DMG website. **(FY 06, ongoing, PACRAT/MDEP)**

F. Develop an annual outreach program that contributes to other statewide events during California Archaeology Week. **(FY 06, PACRAT)**

G. Initiate effort towards scoping and implementing consistent regional standards in archaeological recording and reporting. **(FY 07, PACRAT)**

H. Initiate effort to develop an overarching Mojave Desert site protection plan to assist member agencies in dealing with looting of archaeological and paleontological sites **(FY 06, PACRAT)**

I. Identify and review means for protecting significant cultural and paleontological resources as new wind energy generation fields are developed and new energy transmission corridors are created or existing corridors are expanded. **(FY 06, PACRAT)**

J. Continue developing conference symposia regarding the paleontology, ethnography, rock art and historic/prehistoric archaeology of the California Deserts for the Great Basin Anthropological Conference and the annual meetings of the Society for California Archaeology; continue to support the Three Corners Conference **(FY 07 and ongoing, PACRAT**)

Goal 6. DMG agencies will strive to understand and work collaboratively to resolve conflicts in each agency's mission.

A. Each agency will actively consider DMG partner agency mission requirements in their land and resource management and planning activities and analyze/consider potential impacts of their proposed land management decisions/actions on other agencies. **(Ongoing, all)**

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

A. The California deserts website, **www.californiadesert.gov**, will be maintained by the Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program (MDEP). The interpretive subgroup of the DMG will reassess the success of this program during FY06**. (Ongoing, MDEP, on track)**

B. Agency webmasters will input information on recreation opportunities and sites in the California deserts on **www.californiadesert.gov** and update their information as needed. **(Ongoing, agency webmasters)**

C. DMG agencies will maintain interpretive posters currently installed at Caltrans roadside rest areas in the California deserts. **(FY 06, Caltrans/State Parks/NPS/BLM/MDEP, on track)**

D. DMG agencies (Caltrans, State Parks, NPS, BLM, MDEP, San Bernardino County) will complete conceptual exhibit plans for the exhibits at the reconstructed Valley Wells rest area. This will be followed up with formal exhibit designs in FY 06 and exhibit fabrication during FY07. **(FY 06 - 07, NPS/Caltrans, on track)**

E. Maintain and operate the interagency "gateway" visitor center at Lancaster, California. **(Ongoing, State Parks, on track)**

F. Work with private partners to assess the feasibility and scope of establishing national scenic byways on selected routes in the California desert. (**FY 06, Caltrans/State Parks/NPS/Counties, on track**)

Goal 8. Coordinate scientific studies and monitoring programs needed for effective resource management.

A. Complete manuscript peer review and publish THE MOJAVE DESERT: Ecosystem Processes and Sustainability, a compendium of papers form the 3rd Mojave Desert Science Symposium. **(FY 06, NPS/USGS, on track)**

B. Continue to support desert tortoise monitoring (Goal 9). **(FY 06+, FWS, ongoing)**

C. Coordinate the development of standard protocols for monitoring of climate and precipitation patterns in the desert. **(FY 06-07, USGS, behind schedule)**

D. Mine existing data on high priority monitoring needs. **(FY 06-07, NPS/USGS/ CDFG/BLM/DOD, ongoing)**

E. The Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program (MDEP) will maintain and update the web accessible Research Inventory Database. An inventory of existing resources, research and monitoring studies will be initiated to populate the database. Managers will implement protocols to encourage scientists to input data and/or update the database. **(FY 06, NPS, behind schedule)**

Goal 9. Inventory, monitor, and protect desert water resources.

A. Use DMG endorsed Level 1 spring survey protocols to inventory/characterize springs/wetlands in the deserts. **(Ongoing, NPS/BLM/DOD, funding dependent)**

B. Develop a web accessible database for spring and wetland data. **(FY 07-08, MDEP, on hold)**

C. DOI agencies (BLM, FWS, GS and NPS) will continue to work cooperatively to manage and protect water resources in the Amargosa Basin pursuant to the January 2004 MOA. Priority emphasis will be on:

1. encouraging the NV State Engineer to require meters on all existing water uses in the basin; **(FY 06, NPS, on track)**
2. developing a coordinated interagency groundwater monitoring plan; **(FY 06, USGS, on track)**
3. refining the Death Valley Regional Flow System Model to answer specific management questions within the Ash Meadows and Lower Amargosa areas **(FY 06-8, NPS/BLM/USGS, funding dependent)**
4. continuing development of an agreement between DOI agencies and Nye County re: protesting water right applications in the Amargosa Basin; **(FY 06, NPS, on track)**

D. Assess the scope and feasibility of a DMG sponsored workshop or conference to bring attention to the importance of and strategies for protecting water in the desert. (**FY 06, NPS, USGS, BLM, California State Parks, on track**)

Goal 10. Integrate and share data and database management systems needed for effective resource management and planning.

A. The Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program (MDEP) will maintain its GIS database (**www.mojavedata.gov**) of natural and cultural resources in the California deserts. **(FY 06, MDEP, on track.)**

Goal 11. Ensure the orderly and efficient operation of the DMG and its work groups.

A. Update the DMG Work Plan to reflect FY 06 priorities and FY 05 accomplishments. Detailed annual work plans will be developed for specific initiatives as needed. **(FY 06, DOD/DOI Coordinators, on track)**

B. The BLM Natural Resources Restoration Coordinator will coordinate implementation of dump clean up and habitat restoration efforts on behalf of the DMG. **(FY 06, BLM, on track)**

C. The FWS Desert Tortoise Recovery Office (DTRO) will coordinate implementation of various tortoise monitoring, research and recovery activities on behalf of the DMG. **(FY 06, FWS, on track)**

D. MDEP will maintain the DMG website (**www.dmg.gov**) to allow for the efficient dissemination of information about DMG and work group activities. **(FY 06, MDEP, on track)**

E. The DMG will coordinate its desert tortoise activities with the Clark County HCP and the SNPLMA Conservation Initiative where there is program overlap. **(FY 06, DOI, on track)**

F. DMG member agencies will provide incentives/time for appropriate staff to attend and actively participate in standing and ad hoc DMG work groups. **(FY 06, Managers, ongoing)**

G. DMG member agency Managers will participate in and provide management guidance to standing DMG work groups.

1. PACRAT **(Thomsen, Wood, Reynolds)**
2. HAZMAT **(Trost, Maben)**
3. DT Information and Education **(Sauer, Wood)**
4. DT Planning and Implementation Work Group **(Williams, Schramm)**

(FY 06, all DMG agencies, on track)

Goal 12. Garner support for the DMG, its mission, activities, and funding initiatives.

A. DMG representatives will brief federal, state, and local agencies, Congressional representatives, and interested parties about DMG activities and initiatives, as requested. **(FY 06-10, DOD/DOI, ongoing)**

B. The DMG will cooperate with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to secure funding for DMG initiatives and establish a California Deserts Conservation Fund. **(FY 06, DOI, ongoing.)**

Goal 13. Make high priority Abandoned Mine Land (AML) sites that pose a significant environmental and safety threat safe by reducing or removing physical and chemical hazards associated with the site.

A. Reclaim high priority AML sites that pose a significant environmental and safety threat. **(FY 06 – 10, BLM, NPS, Kern County, Ongoing, funding dependent)**

B. Gain a better understanding of AML sites by combining existing AML data into one database/data layer. **(FY 06, BLM, NPS, Kern County, MDEP, resource dependent)**

C. Form partnerships to leverage funding and accomplish initiatives and goal objectives. **(FY 06, BLM, NPS, Kern County, ongoing, on track)**

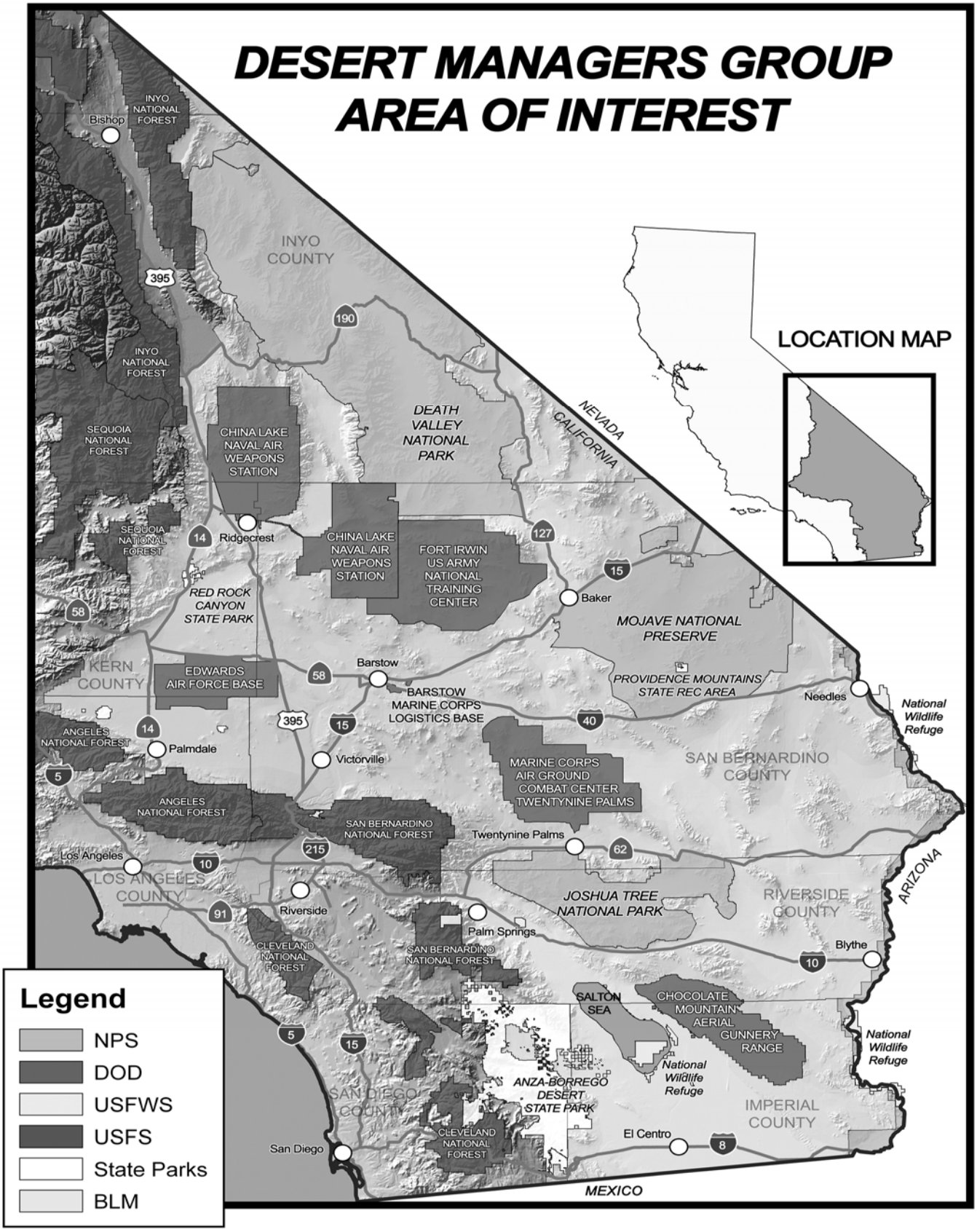
Goal 14. Ensure the long-term protection of Mojave Ground Squirrel habitat and the viability of the species.

A. Foster communication and coordination among participants and other interested parties to identify opportunities for collaborative action to further the acquisition, protection, restoration and management of MGS habitat. **(FY 06, CDFG/FWS/BLM/NPS/DOD/Kern County, San Bernardino County, ongoing)**

B. Conduct research needed to further define the range and ecological requirements of the species. **(FY 06, CDFG/FWS/BLM/NPS/ DOD/Kern County, San Bernardino County, ongoing)**

C. Implement conservation actions in accordance with a science-based adaptive management program. **(FY 07, CDFG/FWS/BLM/NPS/DOD/Kern County, San Bernardino County, ongoing)**

Figure 1


DESERT MANAGERS GROUP
AREA OF INTEREST
LOCATION MAP
INYO COUNTY
INYO NATIONAL FOREST
Bishop
SEQUOIA NATIONAL FOREST
CHINA LAKE NAVAL AIR WEAPONS STATION
DEATH VALLEY NATIONAL PARK
NEVADA
CALIFORNIA
Ridgecrest
RED ROCK CANYON STATE PARK
FORT IRWIN US ARMY NATIONAL TRAINING CENTER
Baker
MOJAVE NATIONAL PRESERVE
KERN COUNTY
EDWARDS AIR FORCE BASE
Barstow
BARSTOW MARINE CORPS LOGISTICS BASE
PROVIDENCE MOUNTAINS STATE REC AREA
Needles
National Wildlife Refuge
ANGELES NATIONAL FOREST
Palmdale
Victorville
MARINE CORPS AIR GROUND COMBAT CENTER TWENTYNINE PALMS
SAN BERNARDINO COUNTY
SAN BERNARDINO NATIONAL FOREST
Twentynine Palms
Los Angeles
LOS ANGELES COUNTY
Riverside
JOSHUA TREE NATIONAL PARK
RIVERSIDE COUNTY
ARIZONA
Palm Springs
Blythe
CLEVELAND NATIONAL FOREST
SALTON SEA
CHOCOLATE MOUNTAIN AERIAL GUNNERY RANGE
ANZA-BORREGO DESERT STATE PARK
SAN DIEGO COUNTY
IMPERIAL COUNTY
El Centro
San Diego
MEXICO
Legend
NPS
DOD
USFWS
USFS
State Parks
BLM