

Coordinated Natural Resource Monitoring and the NPS Vital Signs Workshop

Desert Managers Group

April 21-22

Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command



- The DMG sponsored a Coordinated Natural Resource Monitoring Workshop Jan 30 - Feb 01, 2002 at Palm Springs, CA to identify common goals and information needs.
- Sonoran Desert, Desert Tortoise, Cal EPA, NPS, Ft. Irwin, MCGACC, Edwards AFB, BLM burro, and BLM OHV monitoring programs were presented.
- Following this workshop the DMG agreed that:
 - The primary purpose of monitoring is to accumulate useful information for making decisions and evaluating the effectiveness of management actions.
 - Cooperative monitoring efforts should start at a small scale.
 - A framework is needed to tie the multiple agency efforts together across desert ecosystem and jurisdictional boundaries.
 - Standardization in protocols is needed and should be tied to research results where available.
 - Land managers will cooperate where doing so will promote greater efficiency and effectiveness.



- An ad hoc committee of DMG staff met at this workshop to identify monitoring activities of common interest. This group decided that weather information was a common priority.
- A goal of the DMG is to coordinate/integrate monitoring efforts by identifying and developing compatible objectives, methodologies and data management systems.
- But following this workshop monitoring programs have continued to function independently.
- The NPS Inventory & Monitoring Program for the Mojave Network is continuing with its planning stages.



- The NPS Vital Signs Workshop is part of one phase of planning for the legally mandated Inventory and Monitoring Program.
- NPS Vital Signs Workshop Objectives are to:
 - Review identified management and scientific issues, candidate focal species and communities, and initial review of the draft conceptual ecological model for the Mojave Network.
 - Review, revise, and coarsely prioritize candidate vital signs that would serve as the focus of long-term ecological monitoring at the network and park levels.
 - For vital signs determined to be in the top 20% provide the following:
 - Review of justification – why is this vital sign important?
 - Development of monitoring objectives (from monitoring questions)
 - Identify existing protocols and methodologies
 - Identify potential partnerships and cost sharing opportunities
 - Identify appropriate level of implementation (spatial - temporal scale)



- AND Create a network of stakeholders united to preserve the most important resources in the Mojave Network.

Should the DMG be involved and if so, how?

- Benefit of having the same or similar ecosystem indicators
- Benefit of scientifically peer-reviewed monitoring protocols
- Benefit of standardized monitoring protocols
- Benefit of comparisons between various land management areas
- Provide input on the ecosystem conceptual framework
- Identify collaborative approaches to implement monitoring
- Observing the NPS process and how it might be used elsewhere



**NPS Vital Signs Workshop -- From 8 a.m.
Tuesday, May 25 to noon Thursday May 27,
2004 at AmeriSuites Hotel in Las Vegas**

- DMG should send a representative (or two) to the workshop as either a participant or an observer.
- The DMG should reconvene the ad hoc group from the Coordinated Natural Resource Monitoring Workshop to review the Vital Signs Workshop products and report on how these may contribute to integrating desert-wide monitoring.
- The mission of the ad hoc coordinated monitoring group is to review the NPS approach and make recommendations (at the July meeting) to the DMG on how it could be applied to the wider desert region.

