



**DMG Meeting
February 6, 2012
Meeting Notes**

Action Items

- Each office is requested to market the Mojave Maxine contest to the extent possible. Contestants need to go to www.mojavedata.gov/contest to record their entry.
- Please contact either Russell Scofield or [Peter Siminski](#) to get desert tortoise educational material for your office. Please also think about ways to incorporate desert tortoise education into existing interpretive and education activities.
- Legal review of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation MOA needs to continue.
- All agency reports of tortoise predation by ravens and/or possibilities for opportunistic raven removal need to be reported to [Chris Mullen](#) with DTRO as soon as possible. Russell Scofield is the backup for Chris if she is unavailable.

Decisions

- It was recommended that the DMG assemble a small team to evaluate the Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative Critical Management Questions and evaluate how DMG agency projects can be leveraged. The recommendation was approved and Russell Scofield will assemble the group.

Upcoming Meetings

- The next Desert Tortoise Information and Youth Education Work Group meeting will be a teleconference April 4 at 10:00.
- The Data Management Group will be holding a half-day GIS teleconference in March.
- The next DMG meeting will be held in conjunction with the Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative (DLCC) April 16, 17, and 18 at the Living Desert in Palm Desert. April 16 will be devoted to DLCC topics. The morning of April 17 will focus on shared scientific agenda items and the afternoon will include a joint field trip. The regular DMG meeting will occur April 18. Managers are encouraged to attend as much of the DLCC meeting as possible.

Meeting Notes

- **Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative (DLCC)**- Russell Scofield reported that the priority focus areas of the DLCC are development of new science, cataloging science needs and existing science, and technology transfer. The DLCC FY 2013 AWP was approved in January to implement those priorities. Of particular interest to DMG are factsheets and webinars for technology transfer and funding announcements. Bureau of Reclamation expects to have \$800k to \$900k for new science development in FY 2013.

The DLCC Science Committee has refined the science needs assessment and developed six Critical Management Questions (CMQs). Many CMQs are relevant to DMG agencies. *It was recommended that the DMG assemble a small team to evaluate CMQs and evaluate how DMG agency projects can be leveraged. The recommendation was approved and Russell will assemble the group.*

- **Desert Tortoise Recovery Office (DTRO)**- Roy Averill-Murray provided an update to the Recovery Implementation Teams' (RIT) progress in developing Recovery Action Plans (RAP). Upon completion, the draft RAPs will be presented to the Management Oversight Group (MOG) for approval in a meeting possibly as early as the summer of 2013.

Due to budget shortfalls, range-wide monitoring will only occur aboard the Chocolate Mountains Aerial Gunnery Range (CMAGR). G₀ transmitters will be removed due to a lack of funding to maintain those transmitters and track the animals as required in the permits. Linda Allison will take advantage of decreased fieldwork by spending additional time analyzing data from monitoring since 2004. Linda will provide a presentation at the Desert Tortoise Symposium on the initial trend analysis she is conducting. Roy also indicated that Linda could provide a webinar of the data to the DMG prior to its public presentation. *That webinar occurred February 14.* Linda is also writing a manuscript for peer reviewed publication and will have a more in-depth presentation at the spring DMG meeting.

- **Desert Tortoise Information and Youth Education (DTIYE)**- Russell Scofield said that the work group met January 10 to plan the 2013 Mojave Maxine contest and develop a strategy for the future. BLM, The Living Desert (TLD), and FWS Ventura will make the classroom presentations. *Each office is requested to market the contest to the extent possible. Contestants need to go to www.mojavedata.gov/contest to record their entry.* Grant money is available to have TLD and San Diego Zoo develop a middle school tortoise trunk. TLD has all of the interpretive material developed by the DTIYE Program and will be coordinating its distribution. *Please contact either Russell or [Peter Siminski](#) to get material for your office. Please also think about way to incorporate desert tortoise education into existing interpretive and education activities. The next DTIYE meeting will be a teleconference April 4 at 10:00.*
- **Sonoran Joint Venture (SJV)**- Robert Mesta and Carol Beardmore provided an [overview slide presentation](#) on the SJV. Robert and Carol proposed development of a relationship between DMG and SJV to promote bird conservation in California. Russell and Fon will be working with SJV to develop a proposal of what exactly the relationship would look like.
- **DMG Federal FY 2013 Annual Work Plan Implementation Status**- Highlights include:
 - Task 2.3- The raven film producer has been filming ravens in the towns of Mojave and Baker and is developing interviews with agency staff that will be participating in the video.
 - Task 2.4- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) MOA is approved for signature for Kern County, USGS, NPS, and CDFW. *Legal review by other agencies needs to continue.* Two deposits are held by NFWF to go into the account.
 - Task 3.2- An MOA among the monitoring network parties is under development. Inyo County is now a part of the monitoring network
 - Task 3.4- Amargosa Conservancy and Inyo County applying for a Safe Drinking Water, Water Quality and Supply, Flood Control, River and Coastal Protection Bond Act of 2006

(Prop 84) grant, which would match BLM funding for hydrologic studies along the Amargosa Wild and Scenic River.

- Task 3.5- The need has arisen to charter the previously ad hoc Amargosa Vole Work Group. A draft charter will be developed for DMG approval at the spring DMG meeting.
 - Task 4.1- A minimal camera trapping effort in the California City area is being funded by CDFW.
 - Task 4.2- There will need to be a meeting of the MGS Work Group this spring or summer to review and comment on the CDFW preliminary draft conservation strategy. The conservation strategy is expected to be an appendix to the Desert Renewable Energy and Conservation Plan (DRECP).
 - Task 4.4- A peer review journal article of the Mohave ground squirrel habitat suitability model is currently in press with publication imminent. Additional manuscripts on genetics and connectivity are in development.
 - Task 4.5- A draft report of the Mohave ground squirrel science workshop has been reviewed by participants and is currently being review by Legacy. The final report should be available this winter or spring and Dave Delaney plans to publish it as an Army Corps of Engineers Construction Engineering Research Lab report.
- **Raven Work Group-** Russell Scofield reported that bids for raven surveys were received from four contractors and contract(s) are expected to be let for work to begin on March 1. A programmatic agreement is now in place with Wildlife Services (WS), which will allow WS to bring on a temporary employee to work with surveyors and focus solely on raven removal. *All agency reports of tortoise predation and/or possibilities for opportunistic removal need to be reported to [Chris Mullen](#) with DTRO as soon as possible. Russell is the backup for Chris if she is unavailable.*
 - **Habitat Restoration Workshop-** Russell Scofield said that the opportunity for a joint workshop with the Mojave Desert Initiative (MDI) in Nevada, Arizona, and Utah was no longer a realistic option due to MDI travel concerns. That leaves DMG with the option of conducting a webinar and inviting MDI or hosting a “no travel” one day meeting in Barstow. The decision was deferred to the April meeting when we know more about travel restrictions and budgets.
 - **Data Management Work Group-** *The Data Management Group will be holding a GIS teleconference in March for half a day.* Areal imagery options for a collaborative solution are coming together causing various options to be available to the regional agencies.