



Briefing Statement

Date: August 16, 2007

Title: Acquisition Ad Hoc Work Group Charge

Background

There is a variety of different conservation land acquisition programs currently underway or soon to be underway within the California deserts. These programs include military installation buffer land acquisition, state and federal mitigation and compensation land acquisition for the desert tortoise and other listed/sensitive species, wilderness and NPS inholding acquisition programs, and the Missing Linkages program. Wildlands Conservancy has already acquired many parcels within BLM wilderness and NPS expansion areas. The Nature Conservancy (TNC), Amargosa Conservancy (AC), and the newly established Mojave Land Trust (MLT) are also active in desert land acquisitions. MLT recently acquired a full section adjoining Joshua Tree National Park. Historically, agencies and NGOs based acquisitions on targets of opportunity or long-term strategies for a single resource (i.e. wilderness) not on regional coordinated strategies. Additionally, differences in policy and opinion vary among agencies on how to hold and manage compensation lands.

Objective

Agencies must reach an agreement on how to generally handle compensation lands to meet FWS and DFG requirements. All acquisitions, including those without direct compensation ties, should be strategized on a bioregional basis. Acquisition strategies should consider the potential future development of both private and public lands, military buffer needs, and the benefits and threats to sensitive species. TNC and South Coast Wildlands (SCW) have developed tools to aid in conservation planning. These tools and the NGOs expertise should be used to the extent possible.

The goals of an Acquisition Ad Hoc Work Group (AWG) would include the development of complimentary acquisition strategies including development of funding strategies for long-term management of acquired conservation lands. While strategies will not likely identify individual parcels, specific high priority areas will (i.e. occupied core habitat for the Amargosa vole).

Recommended work group members include Russell Scofield (DOI-DMG), Clarence Everly (DOD-DMG) Larry LaPre (BLM), Ray Bransfield (FWS), Denyse Racine (CDFG), NPS?, DOD?, Laura Crane (TNC), Pat Flannigan (MLT), Kristeen Penrod (SCW), others?. Workgroup chairs?

Contact

Steve Borchard, CDD-DM	steven_j_borchard@ca.blm.gov	951-679-5204
Russell Scofield, DOI Coordinator	russell_scofield@ca.blm.gov	760-365-0955



Acquisition Ad Hoc Work Group Goals

Goals

1. Develop regional strategies for acquiring lands based on:
 - 1.1. DT, MGS, etc mitigation
 - 1.2. Wildlife Coordinators in light of climate change and pending development (on public and private land)
 - 1.3. DOD buffer programs and other opportunities
 - 1.4. Wilderness
2. Develop coordinated bioregional recovery implementation plans based upon the revised recovery plan

Fundamental Objectives

1. Come to agreement on management of lands acquired for compensation purposes.
2. Map area for potential development, threats, and habitat value for sensitive species.
3. Develop strategy for management of external funding to be used for:
 - 3.1. Real acquisition
 - 3.2. Management of acquired lands
4. Recovery/restoration actions on existing lands

Means Objectives

1. Achieve common understanding of each agency's mission, policies, philosophies, etc.
2. Identify overlaps in missions, goals, policies, and philosophies.
3. Understand how acquisition fits into the DT Recovery Plan
4. Come to agreement on management of funding acquired for compensation purposes.