



Briefing Statement

Date: February 18, 2010

Title: Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative

Issue: DMG's role and involvement in the Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperative

Background/Discussion

- Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCC) were established as applied conservation science partnerships by Secretarial Order 3289. LCCs inform on-the-ground strategic conservation efforts at landscape scales by using adaptive management principles. LCCs will engage in biological planning, conservation design, inventory and monitoring program design, and scientific research that seeks to answer management questions. LCCs provide scientific and technical support for a geographic region. Without duplicating existing partnerships, LCCs will accomplish conservation objectives that no single agency or organization can accomplish alone. For more reading, please visit <http://www.fws.gov/science/shc/lcc.html>.
- The primary role of an LCC is to build scientist-manager partnerships that coordinate, prioritize, and fund landscape research that informs on-the-ground conservation within a geographic region.
- FWS has the lead for establishing the LCCs, however, all DOI bureaus will participate in the LCCs (SO 3289 and FY 2011 DOI Budget Highlights) and each bureau will receive funding to participate in LCCs. Each LCC will require a host agency that employs the LCC Coordinator and convenes the LCC partnership. Basic governance of LCCs nationwide will be similar and each LCC will have:
 - a steering committee of line officers that provides direction and sets priorities
 - partnership and science coordination
 - GIS/data management capacity
 - population modeling capacity
 - monitoring and evaluation capacity
 - decision analysis expertise
- The Desert LCC includes all of the Mojave, Sonoran, and Chihuahuan Deserts. Many managers and scientists believe that combining the Mojave Desert with the Sonoran and Chihuahuan Deserts does not make sense due to the large geographic scale and the uncommon issues between three very different ecoregions. A Mojave Desert Sub-unit of the Desert LCC will better serve land and resource managers working in the Mojave Desert.
- In addition to the DMG partnership, the Southern Nevada Agency Partners (SNAP) (<http://snap.gov>) and Mojave Desert Initiative (MDI) are existing partnerships currently functioning within the greater Mojave Desert Ecoregion. SNAP is chartered, employs two full-time coordinators, and is geographically focused on Clark County and the Southern Nevada BLM District. MDI is more ad hoc but has a work plan and geographically focused on the broader Mojave Desert in Nevada, Utah, and Arizona.

- While the Desert LCC and Mojave Desert Sub-unit will not be established in time to inform the solar PEIS or the initial development of the DRECP, LCCs will be important as adaptive management plans are developed for long-term management of desert resources. Current renewable energy conservation planning activities in California and the greater Mojave Desert, will establish a basis for the LCC.

Proposed Action

- DMG work with SNAP and MDI to build a framework for the Mojave LCC with initial coordination coming from DMG and SNAP coordinators
- Line officers from the DMG, SNAP, and MDI form a joint, standing Mojave LCC Management Committee. Initial participants should include, but not be limited to, BLM from all four states, NPS, FWS, USGS, FS, DOD including Nellis, and the state wildlife agencies. The primary purpose of the Management Committee is to provide management direction and set conservation and research priorities.
- DMG, SNAP, and MDI form a joint, LCC Work Group that will develop structure and governance of the Mojave LCC for Management Committee approval. The LCC Work Group will also develop proposals for projects starting immediately. The upcoming Science-Manger Climate Change Workshop in April will help identify research needs and opportunities.

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