

## Briefing Paper

**Date:** April 16, 2004

**Subject:** Stakeholder Participation at DMG meetings

**Issues:** A majority of Managers expressed concern that stakeholder attendance at the meetings was stifling candid and open discussions among DMG members.

### Background/Status:

1. The DMG Charter (June 2000) states that: Federal, State, local and tribal government agencies that are not members of the DMG may serve as members of the DMG Work Groups, subject to approval of the DMG. The DMG will provide appropriate opportunities for stakeholder involvement.”
2. In April 2002, the DMG agreed “that stakeholders, local governments, tribal representatives, and other Federal and State Agencies may attend DMG meetings by invitation. The manager who is hosting the DMG meeting will coordinate with the DMG Coordinators to develop an invitation list for each meeting. Meeting notices will also be posted on the DMG website. Outside parties who want to attend a DMG meeting should contact the DOI/DOD Coordinator.” (April 2002, DMG meeting Summary). Since that time, a small number of stakeholders have attended DMG meetings).
3. At the June 2003 DMG meeting, the Managers again discussed stakeholder participation at DMG meetings. The group recommended that the agenda be arranged so that stakeholders would not have to leave and then return. (June 2003, DMG Meeting Summary)
4. At the Jan 2004, DMG meeting a majority of the Managers expressed concern that stakeholder attendance at the meetings was stifling candid and open discussions among DMG members. The DMG discussed options for providing stakeholders involvement/input in a way that did not stifle communication among the managers.
  - Invite stakeholders only to the first day of the meeting, where informational briefings would be presented.
  - Hold special stakeholder meetings periodically in lieu of inviting stakeholders to regular DMG meetings.
  - Invite stakeholders to a 2-3 hour session on the afternoon of the first day and to the DMG social event.
  - Have stakeholders identify issues before the meeting so the DMG would be better prepared to address the issues.
  - Develop “information/fact sheets” on various topics of interest to the stakeholders.
  - Ask the stakeholders for their ideas for how to best provide input.
  - Use the BLM/NPS advisory committee to allow for stakeholder input.

- Set parameters or ground rules on stakeholder participation.

No consensus was reached. The Managers left it up to the hosts for the next meeting (Curt Sauer and Major Aytes) to determine the best way to provide for stakeholder participation at the next meeting.

5. Stakeholders who have been invited to recent DMG meetings include (this does not include invited speakers):

- Bill Christian Nature Conservancy
- Bob Eillis Sierra Club
- Chris Sprofera Off Road Recreation
- Cliff McDonald Hunting/recreation access
- Mike Conner Tortoise
- Eddie Phillips Access to public lands
- Elden Hughes Sierra Club
- George Barnes Sierra Club
- Gerry Hillier County government coalition
- Howard Gross National Parks Conservation Association
- James Peterson Senator Feinstein
- Jim McGarvie Off road recreation
- Julie Allen Off road recreation
- Michelle Cassella Off road recreation
- Paul Smith local business
- Roy Denner Off road recreation
- Daniel Patterson Center for Biodiversity

6. Cons of stakeholder participation in DMG meeting

- Stifles an free exchange of information and viewpoints among Managers
- Additional time is required to allow for stakeholder comment at the meeting
- May provide information that could potentially be used in litigation or to otherwise
- If not properly managed stakeholders comments can disrupt the flow of the meeting

7. Pros of stakeholder participation

- Educates stakeholders about desert wide issues and Agency/DMG activities to address those issues.
- Fosters political support and partnerships for DMG initiatives
- Allows managers to identify and address stakeholder issues and concerns
- DOI and agency policies encourage stakeholder involvement whenever appropriate