

March 14, 2002

Memorandum

To: Desert Managers Group, Work Group Chairs, and Interested Parties  
Mike Pool, State Director, BLM  
John Reynolds, Regional Director, NPS  
Steve Thompson, Manager, California-Nevada Operations, FWS  
Michael Carr, Regional Geologist, GS  
Mike Dietrich, Acting Deputy Forest Supervisor, USFS

From: John Hamill, Executive Coordinator California Desert Management  
Project, Department of the Interior

Clarence Everly, Department of Defense Coordinator

Subject: Desert Managers Group Meeting, April 10-11, 2002, Borrego Springs

The draft agenda for the subject meeting is attached. Advanced review materials will be emailed to you and posted on the DMG website ([www.dmg.gov](http://www.dmg.gov)) around April 1, 2002. Please note that a portion of the agenda is dedicated to having Managers and Coordinators report on their assignments from the last meeting and topics of interagency or regional significance (e.g. new scientific reports/information, ongoing or emerging issues or political developments, the addition of new personnel with special expertise, useful training experiences). Please plan your presentation to be concise; use handouts or visual aids as appropriate. The assignments and action items from the last meeting are attached for your information.

The meeting will be held at the Borrego Springs Resort and Country Club, 1112 Tilting T Drive, Borrego Springs, CA (directions attached) and starts at 8:30 am on April 10 and will adjourn by 1:00 pm on April 11. A block of rooms has been reserved at the Borrego Springs Resort under the name Desert Managers Group until March 25. For reservations call 888-826-7734 (Hotel Switchboard: 760-767-5700). The rate is \$89.00 plus tax. (The tax will be waived if you bring a tax exemption form).

The Borrego Springs Resort is located in the heart of the magnificent Anza-Borrego State Park and has an 18-hole championship golf course, tennis courts, swimming pools, spa, and a state-of-the-art fitness center.

Anza-Borrego State Park is hosting a field trip on April 9, 2002 to several important habitat areas that will be the possible focus of a DMG coordinated watershed restoration effort. Depending on spring rain, this will be prime time to view wildflowers in the Park. All managers, work group members, and interested parties are welcome to attend. Information on the field trip is attached.

Last but not least, we plan to play golf at the resort immediately following the DMG meeting on April 11 and would welcome your company. If interested, please let us know and we will reserve a tee time.

If you need additional information or have comments on the agenda, please contact John Hamill at 760-255-8888, or Clarence Everly at 760-255-8896. We look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

Attachments



**DRAFT Meeting Agenda  
DESERT MANAGERS GROUP  
Borrego Springs Resort, Borrego Springs, CA  
April 10-11, 2002**

**April 10, 2002**

8:30 am Introductions/Review Agenda/Administration (Everly/Hamill)

8:40 am Colorado Desert State Parks Activities/Issues Related to the DMG (Dave VanCleve, Superintendent, Colorado Desert State Parks)

9:30 am US Forest Service membership in the DMG (Mike Dietrich, USFS)

10:00 am Break

10:15 am DMG Effectiveness Evaluation Follow-up

1. Work Group deactivation
  - DIRT and Webteam (Quintana)
  - Pacrat (Thomsen)
  - Wilderness (Villalobos)
  - Law Enforcement (BLM?)
  - Data Management (Everly/Quillman)
  - Restoration (Villalobos)
2. Stakeholder/tribal/local government attendance of DMG meetings (Hamill)
3. Realignment/Responsibilities of DOI Coordinator(Pool/Thompson)--tentative
4. DMG Interagency Collaboration Class (Hamill)
5. Role of Managers in Chairing DMG Meetings (Pool/Thompson)

12:00 pm Lunch

1:00 pm Coordinating Natural Resource Monitoring Efforts in the Cal Desert

1. Introduction and Overview (Kenna)
2. Identifying important components of a Cal desert monitoring program
  - Monitoring framework for the Cal deserts/DMG involvement (Hughson)
  - Conceptual framework for DT recovery and monitoring (Medica)
3. Weather Monitoring in the Cal deserts (Hamill/Alan Flint)
4. Conclusions and next steps (Kenna)
  - Agree on areas/activities for DMG collaborative efforts
  - How will leadership be provided (individual or team? who?)
  - What are the next steps? How/when do we expect them to be completed?
  - Are there smaller scale opportunities suitable for interagency partnerships? (identify who, what, when, where, how...)

2:30 pm Break

2:45 pm Funding opportunities for Cal desert (David Brunner, NFWF)  
1. National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Overview  
2. Prospects for corporate sponsorship of Cal desert projects  
3. Discussion and Next steps

3:45 pm Review/Approve the DMG 5-Year Plan  
1. 5-Year Plan Overview (Hamill/Everly)  
2. Discussion  
3. Approval

5:00 pm Adjourn

Social event to be announced

**April 11, 2001**

8:00 am Formation of a Mojave Desert Weed Management Area (Pete Lounsbury)  
1. Background and purpose  
2. Draft MOU  
3. Next steps

8:30 am Project and Work Group Update  
1. Desert Tortoise Monitoring and Recovery (Medica, FWS)  
    ▪ Integrated data management (Rob Fisher, USGS)  
2. Illegal Dump Project Clean-up and Prevention (Key/Scofield)  
3. Habitat Restoration (Scofield)  
4. Update on the inventory of research projects (Hughson)

10:00 am Break  
  
5. Burro Management and Monitoring (Sjaastad)  
6. PACRAT (Thomsen)  
7. Overflight brochure  
8. Ad hoc Water Group (Kearns/Hamill)

11:00 am Manager and Coordinator Reports

12:30 pm Wrap-up  
1. Meeting Summary (Everly)  
2. Next DMG meetings  
    ▪ June ??, 2002, Marine Corp base @ 29 Palms  
    ▪ Summer Meeting: Host/Date/Theme to be determined

12:45 pm Adjourn

**Directions to the Borrego Springs Resort  
1112 Tilting T Drive  
Borrego Springs, CA**

The closest commercial airport to Borrego Spring is Palm Springs to the north or San Diego to the southwest.

Borrego Springs, CA is accessed by Highway S3 from the south or Highway S22 from the east or west.

Take highway S3 or S22 to Borrego Valley Road, which is located about 2 miles east of Borrego Springs

Follow Borrego Springs Road to Tilting T Drive. Head west to the resort.

**Action Items and Assignments**  
**Desert Managers Group Meeting**  
**December 13 – 14, 2001**  
**Death Valley National Park, California**

1. The DMG Managers recommended they serve as ceremonial chairs for DMG meetings. The DMG Coordinators would retain functional chair roles.
2. Managers are tasked to discuss with their respective state/regional manager their thoughts on the Chair of the DMG and how the regional managers can best support the DMG process.
3. The Coordinators are tasked to conduct a review of commitments, action items and agreements made during the course of the meeting at the end of each meeting. Managers with commitments, action items, and agreements will provide an update on the status of these items at subsequent meetings. Additionally, prior to the close of each meeting, a host will be determined for the next upcoming meeting and a theme for the meeting selected.
4. The DMG will consider sponsoring a team building class, for Managers and key staff, to improve communications, build trust, and improve collaboration skills. The Managers recommended this class be conducted in conjunction with an existing meeting. The Coordinators were charged to look into course options and whether a course can be taught over the course of the normal two-day DMG meeting.
5. By March 2002, the Manager representatives for the Data Management, Restoration, Desert Information Resources, Wilderness, and Law Enforcement work groups will meet with Work Group members to determine if there is sufficient value and work for the group to remain active. If so, Managers will submit a work plan for the work group at the next DMG meeting. If not, Managers will recommend their Work Group be formally placed in an inactive status at the next DMG meeting.
6. The Superintendent of Joshua Tree National Park will meet with members of the Website subgroup and representatives of the DIRT Work Group to review the value of the DMG website and determine whether the DMG has the ability and the will to keep it current and of value to the public.
7. The Mojave National Preserve volunteered Debra Hughson as chair of an ad hoc group that will address the coordination of science and research programs in the desert. USGS volunteered Len Gaydos to support this effort. The group is tasked to develop a list of existing studies followed by development of a statement of need for additional studies.
8. Death Valley National Park agreed to develop subtasks for the protection of water resources goal in the DMG 5 year plan. All involved agreed to become more responsive in using and submitting the Water Project field forms, developed by the Water ad hoc work group, to MDEP.

### **Action Items and Assignments (continued)**

9. BLM agreed to continue support for the Dump/Restoration Coordinator position. Based on national budget priorities, California BLM may not be able to fully fund the dump program in FY 02.
10. The DOD Coordinator was tasked to develop a list of what data are required from each of the DMG agencies. The status of data received and data still owed will be briefed at each DMG meeting until all commitments are fulfilled.
11. Pacrat was tasked to identify the specific scope, purpose, and focus of a cultural resources action plan and to articulate what benefit doing this will provide. The Managers indicated the plan should be focused on priority issues where interagency cooperation is needed. Pacrat was directed to stay involved in the State CHRIS system in terms of long- term implementation, management, and maintenance.
12. Dave Sjaastad, along with Kitty Jensen for the Park Service, will establish an ad hoc group to discuss issues and develop recommendations related to burro monitoring protocols.
13. The managers directed Clarence, John Hamill, and Phil Medica draft a memo from the DMG to the Univ. of Redlands stating the DMG's interest in the Univ. of Redlands project and outlining the DMG's priorities for tortoise research/recovery. The managers also selected Phil Medica as the DMG representative to the Univ. of Redlands project.
14. John Hamill, Phil Medica, and Clarence Everly were directed to review all anticipated cost requirements, analyze contractors participating in FY 02 and their projected costs, and determine cost per kilometer for FY 02 line distance sampling.
15. Managers invited representatives from the Mojave Desert Weed Management Area to attend the April DMG meeting.
16. Bruce Shaffer, BLM, was volunteered to be the Vice Chair for the Overflight Work Group. Approved by the managers.
17. Phil Medica agreed to discuss with Bob Williams whether FWS will take the lead to review Desert Tortoise recovery actions included in agency land management plans and report back to the Managers at the next DMG meeting. The Managers agreed to make staff available to USFWS to assist in the review of agency land management plans.
18. Managers were requested to review the Overflight brochure for content/substance and provide comments to the Overflight Work Group by 15 January 2002.

## **Desert Managers Group Field Trip**

### **Riparian Corridors and Cienegas of the Western Colorado Desert**

**April 9, 2002**

**Location/Time:** Presentation will begin at 08:30 at Anza-Borrego Desert State Park Visitor Center in Borrego Springs and the field trip will return to the Visitor Center at approximately 17:00 to 17:30.

**Reservations:** If you plan to attend, please complete and return the attached Field Trip Reservation Form by Thursday, April 4.

**Field Trip Overview:** The field trip will focus on four major desert riparian systems within the western Colorado Desert region (San Diego and Imperial Counties): San Felipe Creek, Vallecito Creek, Fish Creek and Carrizo Creek. There are three cienegas, or freshwater marshes, associated with these riparian systems: Sentenac Cienega, Carrizo Marsh and San Sebastian Marsh. These riparian and freshwater marsh habitats are critically important for desert wildlife and provide refuge for such state and federally-listed endangered species as the least Bell's vireo, Peninsular bighorn sheep, desert pupfish, yellow-billed cuckoo; southwestern willow flycatcher and California red-legged frog. There are at least a dozen other California Species of Special Concern that are found within these riparian systems. Over the past 250 years these riparian systems and cienegas have been adversely impacted by cattle-grazing, off-highway vehicle activity, invasions of exotic species (primarily *Tamarix* spp.) and cutting of wood. San Felipe, Vallecito, Fish and Carrizo Creeks cut across a variety of public and private ownerships between their origins along the eastern flanks of the Peninsular Ranges, in eastern San Diego County, and the southwestern edge of the Salton Sea in Imperial County. Public land ownership within these four riparian systems includes the following: San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area (CDFG), Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®, Ocotillo Wells State Vehicular Recreation Area, San Felipe Creek Ecological Reserve (CDFG), San Sebastian Marsh/San Felipe Creek Area of Critical Environmental Concern (BLM) and Vallecito County Park (San Diego County). Recent acquisitions by State Parks, BLM and CDFG have added more than 3,000 acres of additional public ownership within the San Felipe Creek riparian system. State Parks, BLM and CDFG have all initiated exotic plant control projects in an attempt to restore these systems to their pre-disturbance conditions. Following the one-hour overview, we will travel to CDFG's San Felipe Valley Wildlife Area; to Sentenac Cienega, Tamarisk Grove and Kenyon Overlook in Anza-Borrego Desert State Park®; and to the BLM/CDFG San Sebastian Marsh/San Felipe Creek ACEC/Ecological Reserve in Imperial County.

The field trip will begin with a briefing at the Anza-Borrego Desert State Park® visitor center conference room in Borrego Springs. Participants will then caravan to San Felipe Valley State Wildlife Area, several marsh areas within the State Park, and then to San Sebastian Marsh. Transportation will be provided.

**What to Bring/Wear:** Participants should bring hat, water, and sunscreen. There will be short hikes at each stop.

**Lunch:** Participants can purchase box lunches for about \$5.00 by reservation prior to April 4<sup>th</sup>.

**Additional Information:** Contact Jim Dice (Anza Borrego State Park) at (760) 767-3074.



## Field Trip Registration Form

**Riparian Corridors and Cienegas of the Western Colorado Desert  
Anaza Borrego State Park  
April 9, 2002**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Affiliation: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone and Fax: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you want to reserve a lunch?  Yes;  No

Please send or FAX the registration form by **April 4, 2002** to:

**Cyn LeFever  
Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program  
222 E Main Street Suite 202  
Barstow, California 92311  
760-255-8886; FAX 760-256-6863  
clafever@mojavedata.gov**