

Desert Tortoise Information and Outreach
DMG Update February 28-29, 2008

Project Budget Update

We have received and signed a \$95,000 grant agreement with the OHV Commission. OHV Funding will arrive soon.

The grant will provide funds to continue established outreach projects in FY09 such as: *Tortoise Times* newsletter, Mojave Max Emergence Contest, exhibit and brochure development, and radio PSA's. There are also additional activities such as attending OHV events to foster desert tortoise awareness and distribute information.

The Tortoise Outreach project has a current \$28,216 shortfall in our FY08 budget. We received \$64,784 from the CA OHV Commmission Grant out of a request for \$93,000. These are funds needed to support the Tortoise Outreach Coordinator position and cover salary, travel, vehicle lease, and basic supplies. Solutions to this problem include using the \$95,000 in the FY09 approved OHV grant to cover our FY08 shortfall. This will leave us short next year and may make it difficult to meet our contractual commitments for projects that are to be completed late in the year unless additional funding is identified.

Joshua Tree NP could also use existing funds for FY08 park exhibit projects to cover the difference in salary this year, but this would require pulling Anne Staley off the tortoise project for roughly ¼ of the year and require renegotiating our grant obligations with NFWF to defer some projects (most likely the TV PSAs and new brochures) to FY09 when we have full-year funding.

Alternative 3 is to find the funding needed in FY08 from existing DMG partners. We can get by with \$26,000 by making economies on travel and vehicle use.

Project Updates

We plan to design a desert tortoise information panel that can be used by a variety of government agencies. The park service has a specific design format for wayside exhibit development. The graphics and information will need to be adjusted to work for different agencies formats. We will need one

representative from each agency to act as an information and design consultant on the project.

Clark County sent us a Mojave Max DVD -PSA

With their permission we had it edited for Southern California Audiences

The DVD has been sent to target area movie theaters, Palmdale, Apple Valley, Victorville, Lancaster, El Centro.

Military bases, Ft. Irwin, Edwards AFB, Camp Pendleton, 29 Palms Marines Base and local public television stations.

The 29 Palms is playing it in the base theater.

Six radio PSAs are in production and will be ready Friday February 29. Two radio news stories have also been developed (Headstarting and Mojave Max).

The Mojave Max Emergence Contest is in process to date we have 236 entries.

The Third volume of the *Tortoise Times* has been published and copies are available. It is also in process of being distributed via .pdf file.

The California Desert Nature Festival.

The workgroup had a discussion about if the festival meets our NFWF grant obligation?

We discussed the original idea of holding a scientific symposium. The California Desert Nature Festival is not a scientific symposium. We discussed whether we would be duplicating the efforts of the Desert Tortoise Council / Desert Tortoise Symposium if we held a similar event.

What would be of greater benefit to the outreach program? Symposium or host/attend family style events?

It was decided by the group the best benefit to the program would be to attend or host family style events. The group also discussed possibilities such as attending the Huck Finn Jubilee in Victorville and the Poppy

Festival –Lancaster . Anne is in the process of making contact with event organizers.

Anne has met with the Natural Science Collaborative and staff at the Living Desert Preserve.

The California Desert Nature Festival will be held at the Living Desert Preserve in Palm Desert April 11-13. In conjunction with the California Desert Nature Festival the Living Desert will also be hosting an Earth Day event “Party for the Planet.”

We have two work shops scheduled for Saturday one concerns legalities surrounding desert tortoises and the other is a Pet Vet question and answer session.

During the event we will be hosting activities in the Children's Discovery room. Activities such as button making, puppets show, coloring, and tortoise trunks.

Anne also met and spoke to the Low Desert California Turtle and Tortoise Club. The club will assist with volunteers for the Festival.