



Actions and Agreements Related to the Operation and Priority Projects of the Desert Managers Group

December 12, 2001

Underlying Assumptions/Facts

1. Most if not all the Managers believe that the DMG plays a valuable role in fostering better management of the California Desert.
2. A majority of the desert managers believe that the primary value of participating in the DMG is to:
 - meet people with shared professional interests and responsibilities;
 - network those contacts in a way that is valuable to them personally; and
 - build relationships that help them address issues or collaborative projects that are important to their agency's mission.
3. Many managers believe identifying and/or facilitating collaborative projects is a major benefit of the DMG. Collaborative projects are defined to include interagency training/workshops, establishing common data collection protocols and databases, or working cooperatively to achieve specific management objectives (burro removal, tortoise recovery, etc). A collaborative project may involve two or more DMG members with a shared interest and commitment to achieve a common goal.
4. It appears unlikely that significant additional funding for DMG collaborative projects will be forthcoming from either the federal or state government in the foreseeable future. Consequently, new initiatives will need to be funded from existing agency budgets or non-traditional sources (e.g., grants).
5. The ability of the DMG to achieve common goals comes exclusively from the member agencies and the leadership they provide (i.e., the DMG has no independent authority to design or direct work in the California desert). Consequently, there is no such thing as "DMG projects" or "DMG work"—it is all agency work that will be managed collaboratively by DMG participants and facilitated by the small DMG support staff.

DMG Actions and Agreements

1. DMG meetings will be structured to foster a broad and deep level of networking among the Managers and key stakeholders in the California deserts. This will be accomplished by the following:
 - A portion of each regular DMG meeting will be devoted to having manager's report on work within their organization/office that could be useful to other members of the group. This includes scientific reports/information, new or emerging issues of regional significance, and initiatives started/completed. It will also include the addition of new personnel with special expertise, and experience with useful or not so useful training experiences, consultants and other resources. Manager reports will be concise and focused on topics of interagency interest.
 - Managers will encourage their agency executives to attend one regular DMG meeting each year in addition to the DMG's annual executive coordination meeting. Agency executives will also be encouraged to send their senior staff to attend at least one DMG regular meeting each year.
 - Outside speakers will be invited to make presentations about technical, scientific, political topics of value and interest to the group. The Coordinators will regularly solicit suggestions from the Managers/Executives on topics that would be of interest or do a periodic survey to give Managers choices and ask about their interests.
 - Representatives of other State, federal or local government, non-government organizations with a shared interest in work described in the DMG Charter, and Native American tribal representatives will be invited and encouraged to attend DMG meetings. Managers will be actively involved in identifying and inviting the appropriate people to the meetings.
2. The DMG will encourage but not manage interagency collaborative projects. Project management will be provided by a lead agency agreed to by the Managers that are directly involved in the project. Progress on collaborative efforts will be reported to the full DMG membership on a regular basis. Barriers to progress will also be reported and requests for assistance and advice along the way will be freely sought and provided. DMG Coordinators will provide appropriate guidance and assistance to the agencies, as requested.
3. The DMG Coordinators will chair and facilitate DMG meetings and serve as the principal spokesperson for the DMG. However, the manager who hosts the quarterly DMG meeting will plan a segment of the meeting. The focus will be on areas of known common interest, potential collaborative projects, and providing the Managers with the opportunity to put faces together with names and titles. This responsibility

4. A general outline for future DMG meetings is found in Attachment B.
5. The DMG will continue to coordinate and/or sponsor training programs that meet the special needs and interests of its members. This may include technical training and organizational development skills (i.e. strategic planning, partnering skills, communications, etc.). Each fiscal year, the Managers will identify the specific training needs or opportunities that will be sponsored/coordinated by the DMG. Ad hoc groups will be established to plan the training, as needed.
6. The DMG will consider sponsoring a team building class, for Managers and key staff, to improve communications, build trust, and improve collaboration skills (e.g. the National Conservation Training Center course: Collaboration in Resource Management—an interagency approach).
7. The goals and projects identified in the DMG 5-Year Plan are too ambitious to complete given the current level of staff, funding, and agency support. The goals and projects shown in Attachment A are supported by two or more DMG members and have the resources needed to make significant progress. These goals and projects will be pursued by the DMG. Other projects included in the 5-Year Plan will be maintained as long-term goals and pursued as time/resources permit.
8. Managers will provide adequate time and appropriate performance incentives for their staff work on collaborative projects.
9. The PACRAT, HAZMAT, and Overflight Work Groups will continue as active standing DMG committees so long as they are regularly attended, have active leadership, and clear work assignments. By March 2002, the Managers will evaluate the Data Management, Restoration, Desert Information Resources, Wilderness, and Law Enforcement work groups to determine if they will remain active or formally placed in an inactive status. The Science Team will be placed in an inactive status. Coordination of science related goals will be provided through ad hoc work groups. Members who have actively contributed to the success/ accomplishments of the work groups will be formally acknowledged by the DMG.
10. As needed, the Managers will establish ad hoc work groups to address specific goals/projects in the DMG 5-Year Plan. Upon completion of their assignment, ad hoc work groups should be disbanded and participants who actively contributed will be formally recognized by the DMG.
11. The DMG agencies have no coordinated strategy for securing funds to implement the 5-Year Plan. Each agency will evaluate and determine the best strategy for securing the resources needed to support its participation in DMG collaborative projects. The

12. The DMG agencies will work cooperatively to actively seek grants for collaborative projects. The DMG Coordinators will assist by coordinating ad hoc teams to develop grant proposals.
13. A California Desert field trip should be conducted every other year for high level state and national executives, Congressional representatives/staff, and key stakeholders. The goal will be to raise the visibility of Desert issues, projects, and funding needs among people who do not have it as their primary management/policy focus. DMG Executives and the Managers will be involved in inviting the right people and planning the field trips.

Attachment A

DMG Priority Goals and Projects

Goal 6: Recover Desert Tortoise

1. review/compare land management plans
2. review and prioritize budget needs
3. implement recovery actions

Note: Subject to a determination by FWS whether it will make the Desert Tortoise Coordinator available to provide staff support for this goal/activities

Goal 12: Monitor Desert Tortoise Populations

1. implement LDS
2. establish/maintain interagency database

Note: FWS Desert Tortoise Coordinator will lead this task and data management support will be provided by Mojave Desert Ecosystem Program

Goal 10: Coordinate Science and Research Programs

1. review existing studies and identify research needs

Note: NPS/MOJA will lead this task

Goal 11. Coordinate Natural Resource Monitoring Programs

1. review agency monitoring programs and plans
2. coordinate/integrate agency monitoring programs

Note: The DOI Coordinator will organize a workshop to review agency monitoring programs and plans. An ad hoc group will be formed to develop recommendations for coordinate/integrate agency monitoring programs.

Goal 13: Protection of Water Resources

Death Valley NP and the Mojave NP will work collaboratively on this effort.

Goal 2: Clean-up and prevent illegal dumps

1. develop/implement a dump prevention plan
2. develop and maintain partnerships
3. develop dump database
4. clean-up dumps

Note: The Restoration Coordinator will lead the effort with funding provided by BLM.

Attachment A (continued)
DMG Priority Goal and Projects

Goal 14: Share Data

1. establish a data clearinghouse
2. populate the clearinghouse with data

Notes: MDEP will lead this effort; agencies will provide appropriate data as time and resources allow. NPS data will be provided through the NPS inventory and monitoring program.

Goal 5: Protect Cultural Resources

1. develop strategy/action plan protection of specific cultural resources
2. implement CHRIS

Notes:

- PACRAT will submit a proposal on the scope and objectives of the cultural resources strategy/action plan for approval by the DMG
- PACRAT will serve as a forum to discuss issues related to CHRIS maintenance and implementation

Goal 1: Habitat Restoration

1. restore sites
2. develop partnerships

Notes: lead by BLM Restoration Coordinator and continued BLM funding

Goal 4: Manage wild burros

1. identify and implement management actions to control burros
2. standardize census techniques
3. monitor burro populations
4. remove burros

Notes: lead by BLM Burro Coordinator (Dave Sjaastad) and continued BLM and NPS funding.

Goal 9: Coordinate Visitor Services Information and Systems

1. Update and maintain the *Californiadesert.gov* website.

Note: The Managers will evaluate the current use, potential and future support for *Californiadesert.gov* website.

Attachment B
General DMG Meeting Outline

Day 1

1. Introductions and Administration (10 Minutes)
2. Agency/Coordinator Reports (120 minutes)
3. Break (30 minutes)
4. Outside Speaker (60 minutes)

Lunch (90 minutes)

5. Project/Work Group reports and updates (120 minutes)
6. Break (30 minutes)
7. Outside Speaker (60 minutes)

Evening Social event

Day 2

1. Manager(s) presentations (time TBD)

Noon - adjourn