



Meeting Summary
Executive Coordination Meeting
Historic Mission Inn
3645 Mission Inn Avenue
Riverside, CA
May 24, 2005

1. Goals/Objectives of Meeting:

- Update agency executives on the activities/accomplishments of the DMG
- Obtain executive direction and support in achieving DMG goals/initiatives
- Identify changes in the DMG Charter and MOU in light of current agency policies and priorities
- Agree on steps/schedule for finalizing the DMG Charter and MOU.

2. Attendees (see attached)

3. Welcome and Introductions. Mike Pool, Steve Thompson, Wes Ward and Cicely Muldoon presented a plaque to John Hamill and Clarence Everly recognizing their contributions to the DMG.

4. DMG Overview. Hamill reviewed the history/background of the DMG, the goals in the DMG 5 Year Plan, and the results of the DMG self-evaluation process completed in June of 2002 (PowerPoint presentation attached). Everly summarized DMG accomplishments over the past several years (PowerPoint presentation attached). Steve Schwarzback, USGS WERC, recommended the DMG evaluate the States BIOS system to facilitate management of species data collected by various agencies.

5. Establishment of a California Desert Conservation Fund. Claire Thorp provided an overview of the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and their efforts to secure funding to establish a California Desert Conservation Fund. The purpose of the fund would be to obtain resources to support the mission and goals of the DMG. Claire was optimistic that seed money to establish the Fund would soon be provided through a grant by the Resource Legacy Foundation.

6. Road Side Rest Areas. James Woolsey (NPS) summarized the results of a two year project to develop interpretive exhibits at Caltrans roadside rest area throughout the desert. He reviewed the final conceptual design that was developed by a DMG ad hoc group for the Valley Wells Rest Area on I-15 (see PowerPoint presentation). Ralph

Carhart (Caltrans) reported Caltrans was seeking partnerships to help rehabilitate roadside rest areas throughout the State.

- 7. Desert Tortoise Recovery Action Planning/Implementation.** Bob Williams (FWS) summarized the results of the GAO audit of the desert tortoise recovery program and provided an overview of DMG desert tortoise recovery, monitoring and research actions. Bob also described the process for revising the Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan including the role of the DMG in the process and some of the challenges that lie ahead (see attached PowerPoint presentation). Hamill presented DMG proposed stakeholder involvement guidelines (attached). Steve Thompson indicated the stakeholder guidelines appeared reasonable but USFWS would need time to review them with the Department of the Interior before they could accept them.

- 8. DMG Roundtable Discussion: Role/Value of DMG in Management of the California Deserts: Successes and Challenges (Desert Managers)**
 - a. Bob Wood (Edwards) – valuable forum for collaboration/cooperation; too much emphasis on accomplishment; great merit on continuing.
 - Linda Hansen (BLM) said the DMG directly relates to the mission of the BLM; she emphasized the process must be based on integrity, honesty and commitment; and these were present in the DMG. She indicated that stakeholders want to be treated equally, and believed that the current process is working.
 - Caltrans pledged more involvement in the DMG in the future.
 - Mary Martin (NPS) indicated there was lots of value to the networking and the sidebar discussions that occur at DMG meetings.
 - Diane Noda (FWS) feels the networking that occurs at DMG meetings is most valuable; finding staff to stay actively involved is a challenge.
 - Gary Watts (State Parks) indicated that networking opportunities were great, and that State Parks benefited from the training opportunities offered through the DMG.
 - Mickey Quillman (Fort Irwin) indicated the DMG was invaluable in helping Fort Irwin comply with executive orders on ecosystem and invasive species management and desert tortoise recovery.
 - Russell Scofield (BLM) indicated that county and stakeholder participation will open new opportunities (caldes.gov, dumping, ravens, Mojave river).
 - Glenn Black (CDFG) indicated he was impressed with the honesty that occurs at DMG meetings.
 - Max Copenhagen (USFS) indicated the DMG allows him to keep Forest Service activities in proper perspective and develop invaluable partnerships. He better appreciates the mission of the different agencies and feels the DMG should provide more emphasis on water.

- 9. Regional Executive Perspective on the DMG**
 - Banky Curtis (CDFG) indicated he believed the DMG represented a major institutional change in how the desert is managed; the process was doing really well; he is totally supportive.
 - Wes Ward (GS) indicated that USGS participates in a science support role helping Managers to understand the consequences of actions.

- Steve Thompson (FWS) thinks DMG agencies share a lot of common ground and that agencies need to come together as a group to address challenges posed by future growth. He encouraged the DMG to strive to raise the bar, and recommended that we don't ask for help unless it's really needed, (solve problems at the lowest level possible).
- Mike Pool indicated that the DMG is unique, stakeholders are better informed, and up opening the process to limited stakeholder participation is the right decision. He has noticed that the rhetoric on desert tortoise issues is down as a result of the DMG and the Desert Tortoise Management Oversight Group (MOG).

10. DMG Charter and MOU. The Managers and Executives reviewed and approved the Charter and MOU (see attached). Information pertaining to County and Forest Service authorities to enter into the MOU is still needed for Section D of the MOU. The MOU and Charter will be sent to each agency for signature as soon as final comments are received.