



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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OHMVR Commission Report
October 28, 2010

Alternative Energy

BLM and the State of California have been working together on a number of fast-track solar projects on public lands on an expedited schedule, while ensuring full environmental and public review. Several of these fast-track projects have recently been approved and others have completed environmental review and are pending final decisions. The approved projects will provide 1,124 megawatts which is enough power for approximately 500,000 homes, and will generate over 2,000 jobs. Projects recently approved include;

- BrightSource Energy Ivanpah Solar Electric Generating System
- Tessera Solar's Imperial Valley Solar Project
- Chevron Lucerne Valley Solar Project

Follow the progress of other Solar Fast Track Projects going through the Federal and State process at; <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/prog/energy/fasttrack.html>

California Archeology Site Stewardship Program Workshops

The following CASSP volunteer training workshops are scheduled in November and December. There is a \$25 workshop fee for the initial volunteer training workshops.

--November 6-7 at the Hume Lake Ranger District, 35860 East Kings Canyon Road, Dunlap 93691. Our host will be Linn Gassaway, archaeologist for the Sequoia National Forest and Giant Sequoia National Monument. The Saturday classroom session will be held at the ranger office, which is located near the intersection of East Kings Canyon Road (Hwy 180) and Dunlap Road, about 37 miles east on Hwy 180 from the center of Fresno. For the Sunday field trip, we will carpool from the ranger office to several sites in Sequoia National Forest.

--December 4-5 for the Sierra National Forest at 1600 Tollhouse Road, Clovis 93611.

--December 11-12 for the Cleveland National Forest at 10845 Rancho Bernardo Road, San Diego 92127.

A CASSP advanced training workshop will be held on Sunday, November 14, for the Barstow BLM Field Office about the recognizing, recording, and photographing site characteristics for the official site record forms (DPR 523 forms). This one-day advanced training workshop will be held at the Desert Discovery Center (831 Barstow Road, Barstow 92311) for the BLM Barstow Field Office. With a little planning, the observations by site

stewards can add important information to the permanent record. At this workshop, we will learn how to describe sites, identify impacts, and take accurate photographs for the official site record forms. There will be classroom and field training. There is no workshop fee, but there will be a \$20 materials fee.

Prior registrations are required because space usually is limited to 25 participants. Please register as early as you can. You can register by sending your name and contact information to Beth Padon by e-mail (bpadon@discoveryworks.com) or phone (562-431-0300). Please identify the workshop that you plan to attend. Please visit the CASSP web site at www.cassp.org for more information.

Director Abbey Recognizes ASA

BLM Director Bob Abbey recently joined the American Sand Association in celebrating its 10th anniversary. The event was held during the Sept. 17-19 Sand Sports Super Show at the Orange County Fairgrounds, where booths with safety information and the latest equipment and vehicles for enjoying California's unique sand dunes -- including BLM's Imperial Sand Dunes -- were on display. He spoke at the evening anniversary event, and talked about the need for OHV organizations like ASA to work with BLM to raise safety awareness in the aftermath of the tragic OHV accident at Johnson Valley. "The organized groups and the individual, both spectators and participants, all have a critical stake in the future of the sport and all must take personal responsibility when it comes to public safety," he said.

Director Abbey recognized ASA and its board of directors for stressing responsibility and safety in all its extensive outreach efforts with a Director's Leadership Award. Abbey also announced the winner of the Jerry R Seaver Volunteer Recognition Award. This year's winners were Irma and Gary Johnson and family, long-time Dunes recreationists.

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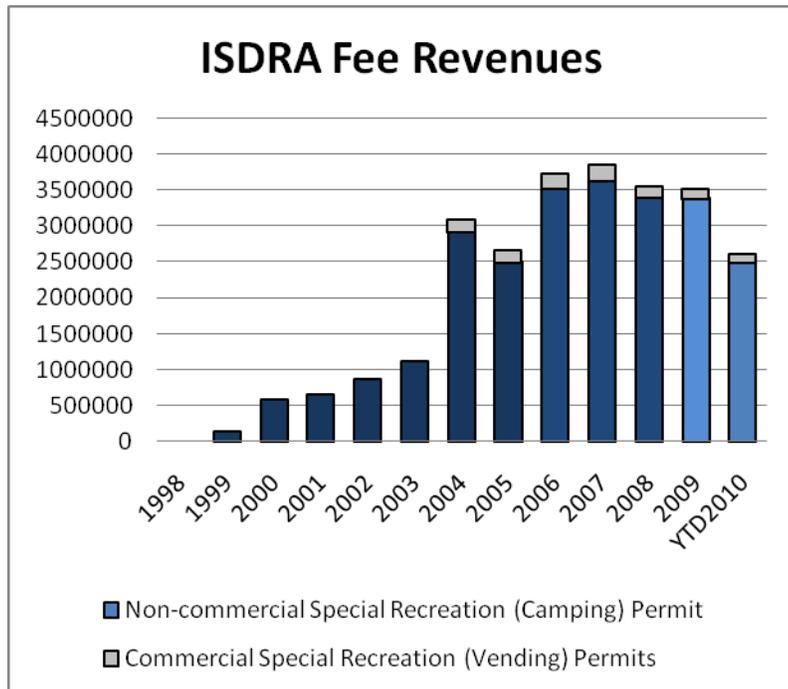
As of 9/6/2010 the cumulative visitation is 1,237,187, a 5% reduction compared to the same time last year. The next large spike in visitation will be during October 29 – 31, 2010. The majority of the 87,041 summer visits are tourists pulling off State Highway 78 and Interstate 8 to view the Dunes. Camp hosts are located in Buttercup throughout the summer to answer question and be a point of contact for the BLM.



Summer Projects: Summer time is when the large scale projects get done in the ISDRA. Braving the dangerous heat, the BLM staff continues to move the endless drifting sand off the camping areas and access road. Without this continual effort, there would be significantly reduced access when visitors arrive in October.

BLM is continuing to work on the Buttercup Ranger Station. Final stages of the storage building construction are underway and projected to be ready for use at the beginning of the next visitation season.

RAMP Update: The U.S. Bureau of Land Management (BLM) extended the public comment period for the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for 45 giving the public until August 9, 2010 to provide on the plan. We are now working with our contractors to compile and respond to the comments develop a Final EIS.



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Fee Collection: Between October 2009 and the end of Aug. 2010, the BLM has collected \$2,492,961 through the sales of 59,749 ISDRA permits. This is an 18% drop in revenues. Due to our differential on-site / off-site fee schedule, the off-site sales are at 67% YTD. These off-site sales, through vendors, have also injected \$189,185 into the local and regional economy and increased foot traffic in these retail outlets.

Law Enforcement: Halloween officially kicks off the high visitation season for the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area. Preparations are ongoing to ramp up for the many visitors to the ISDRA. Four special events are planned this season: Halloween, Thanksgiving, New Year's, and President's Day weekends.

Johnson Valley Incident

BLM-California is currently completing its internal review of the Johnson Valley OHV accident on August 14 that resulted in the tragic deaths of eight spectators and injuries to more than dozen others. We continue to cooperate fully with the California Highway Patrol that is the lead for the law enforcement investigation underway. Our own report focuses on our actions following the accident and reviews our entire Special Recreation Permit program in the California Desert District. It contains our findings and recommendations. We will soon be discussing it with our Washington Office and will share it with you as soon as possible.