



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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BLM California State Office Report to the California State OHV Commission Date: February 25, 2010

CDD District Manager

BLM Desert District Manager Announces Retirement

After 33 years of public service, California Desert District Manager Steven Borchard has announced his retirement, effective January 1, 2010. Borchard assumed his duties as district manager in January 2006

In announcing his retirement to the desert district staff, he stated, "I have never worked with a more dedicated and professional group of people than I have as desert district manager. A person serves as a public servant because they want to and the staff that I managed across this desert conservation area demonstrated that with passion every day."

During his tenure, Borchard managed the vast 10.5 million-acre California Desert District comprised of public lands in the lower third of California, including the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA), created by Congress in 1976 to protect the desert's special values. The CDD also includes 300,000 acres of scattered parcels in the south coast area.

A native of Ventura County and a graduate of U.C. Davis, Borchard's career included assignments in Idaho, Nevada, northern California, and as riparian and wetlands program lead for BLM in Washington, D.C. in 1998. He then became the deputy group manager for rangeland resources in 2001. Prior to his desert district assignment, he served as a congressional fellow assigned to the U.S. Senate to work on public land policy issues.

Raml Named Desert District Manager for Bureau of Land Management

Teresa A. Raml has been selected as the new Desert District manager for the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) vast, 10.5 million-acre California Desert District in Southern California. Acting BLM State Director Jim Abbott announced the appointment of Raml today in Sacramento.

"Teri's diverse experience on the national, state and local levels will help us further the collaborative efforts in addressing the many challenges facing the BLM in the California

Desert District," said Abbott. "Her demonstrated ability in team building will lend greatly to managing the vast southern California public lands, where partnerships are the basic foundation of our management efforts in this complex region."

Raml is currently working in the BLM Arizona State Office as the program manager for the Restoration Design Energy Project, a pilot program funded by the American Reinvestment and Recovery Act to identify previously disturbed lands that are suitable for renewable energy development. Previous to taking on the pilot project, she was the Phoenix District manager.

Raml received a degree in wildlife biology from Colorado State University in 1979 and shortly after, began her government career with the U.S. Forest Services as the first wildlife biologist for the Fall River Ranger District in the Nebraska National Forest. She was also the wildlife biologist at the Black Hills National Forest before becoming the program assistant for the national threatened, endangered and sensitive species program in Washington, D.C. Other Forest Service positions Raml has held include appeal coordinator, endangered species program coordinator, legislative assistant, information manager, biological scientist, adaptive management area coordinator and district ranger.

In 1999, Raml transferred to the BLM to become the field manager for the Klamath Falls Resource Area in Oregon. She became the Phoenix District manager in 2003.

Raml is scheduled to assume her California Desert District manager duties within the next two months. She replaces Steven Borchard, who retired. Until Raml arrives, Jack Hamby, currently associate district manager of the California Desert District will serve as acting district manager.

The Desert District is comprised of public lands in the lower third of California, including the California Desert Conservation Area (CDCA), created by Congress in 1976 to protect the desert's special values. The CDD also includes 300,000 acres of scattered parcels in the south coast area.

CDPA of 2010

Senator Feinstein introduced the California Desert Protection Act of 2010 in late December 2009. The purpose of the bill is "To provide for conservation, enhanced recreation opportunities, and development of renewable energy in the California Desert Conservation Area, to require the Secretary of the Interior to designate certain offices to serve as Renewable Energy Coordination Offices for coordination of Federal permits for renewable energy projects and transmission lines to integrate renewable energy development, and for other purposes." Attached to this report is a complete summary of

the bill, provided by Senator Feinstein's office. A full briefing and discussion of this bill will occur later in the agenda.

Clear Creek – Comment period open to March 5.

The Clear Creek Management Area Draft Resource Management Plan and Environmental Impact Statement were released for public review on December 4, 2009. A 90-day public comment period on the CCMA Draft RMP/EIS extends through March 5, 2010. During this period, any person with an interest in the range of alternatives considered in the draft RMP/EIS is encouraged to submit written comments.

The BLM Hollister Field Office hosted three public meetings to gather comments on the CCMA Draft RMP/EIS in January 2010. A briefing on the plan is scheduled later during this meeting.

American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) Projects

BLM-California received \$40 million to fund 115 projects under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. The investments will restore landscapes and habitat, spur renewable energy development on public lands, and create jobs.

Types of projects:

- **Renewable Energy Authorization**

One of the President's specific goals in implementing the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 is supporting the renewable energy industry and providing capital over the next three years to eventually double domestic renewable energy capacity. Aiding in our nation's move toward a clean energy economy, the Bureau of Land Management will expedite the processing and permitting of environmentally-responsible renewable energy development on the National System of Public Lands.

- **Abandoned Mine Land Remediation**

With funding received from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009, the Bureau of Land Management will address abandoned mine land and abandoned well projects. Most of the abandoned mine land projects were selected for ARRA funding because of physical safety hazards and their close proximity to public places and high-use areas such as trails, designated off-highway vehicle areas, and picnic areas.

- **Habitat Restoration**

The Bureau of Land Management will use a portion of funds from the ARRA to restore and protect habitats supporting at-risk plant and animal communities in the BLM's National Landscape Conservation System. Other special BLM areas, such as Areas of Critical Environmental Concern, Special Recreation Management Areas, Wildland Urban Interface areas, and riparian areas on other BLM-managed public lands will also receive ARRA funding for important restoration work. Riparian-

wetlands play a prominent role in ensuring a life-sustaining and precious supply of water, acting as key indicators of watershed health.

- **Roads, Bridges, and Trails**

The Bureau of Land Management maintains over 40,000 miles of roads, 850 bridges, and thousands of miles of trails on the National System of Public Lands. This includes over 18,000 miles of scenic, historic, and recreational trails. American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 funds will be used to fund BLM road, bridge, and trail projects that improve the infrastructure and enhance recreation experiences on the National System of Public Lands. These projects will also provide safer transportation routes for BLM personnel and visitors to the public lands.

- **Construction and Deferred Maintenance**

The Bureau of Land Management maintains many structural facilities to support visitors and users of the BLM's National System of Public Lands. To help maintain these facilities, the BLM invests in capital improvements, including replacing aging and deficient communication towers; constructing facilities at popular recreation sites; installing energy-efficient systems on buildings to reduce energy use and related costs; repairing or replacing comfort stations, potable water systems and waste water treatment facilities; constructing new BLM facilities consistent with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) standards; and replacing buildings due to critical health and safety issues.

CDD Supplemental Rules

At the request of several OHV representatives, the CDD has begun the process of updating its Supplemental Rules relating to several recreation areas. The OHV community recognized that several of the recreation area, specifically dune recreation areas maintained supplementary rules that were inconsistent with each other. This inconsistency led to confusion on the part of recreationists that utilize various recreation areas in the CDD.

Supplemental Rules are used to augment the Rules of Conduct located at 43CFR 8365. The objective is to insure that public lands, including recreation areas, sites and facilities, can be used by the maximum number of people with minimum conflict among users and minimum damage to public lands and resources. The rules are established by the State Director once they have been analyzed consistent with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and published in the Federal Register.

The CDD has reviewed its Supplemental Rules for the OHV areas and other developed recreation sites and proposed new rules that would be applied consistently across those areas and sites. The proposed rules were analyzed through an Environmental Assessment which was subject to a 30 day public review period. A decision to adopt those proposed rules has been made, and a Draft Federal Register Notice and briefing documents have been developed and put forward for review by the BLM California State and Washington Offices.

The proposed rules include prohibitions on Public Nudity, Riding in Truck Beds or Other Unsecured Situations, Metal in Firewood, Glass Containers, Non-flexible Objects (stakes, poles, pipes etc.), Camping at Dumont Dunes Completion Hill, Reserving Camping Space, and uncontrolled trash and litter in campsites. These proposed rules will not go in to affect until they have been published in the Federal Register which is unlikely to occur before the end of this use season.

Shasta-Chappie Land Exchange

As you are aware Congressman Herger authored H.R. 689, "To interchange the administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal lands between the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management...". The bill has been reported out of the house subcommittee and awaits action by the full House.

CDD OHV Season

The OHV season is in full swing in the California Desert. OHV managers report that use is down 15% at the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA) and as much as 30% at the Dumont Sand Dunes. Despite the decrease in use, medical incidents are reported to be up 6% at the ISDRA. Visitors continue to enjoy the new access road along the eastern side of the ISDRA providing access to camping in that location.