



United States Department of the Interior



BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT

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Date: August 25, 2009
(Submitted August 9 2009)

BLM California State Office Report to the California State OHV Commission

Program Update

Although there is a lot going around BLM California- there is not a lot to report that I haven't mentioned in previous reports, and there haven't been many reportable events- but stay tuned. We expect pretty significant events this fall.

For this meeting report, I will focus first on an important element of BLM's management program- and one that is particularly significant for California- the BLM Resource Advisory Councils. I will also provide narratives from the five field offices in the California Desert District.

BLM Resource Advisory Councils:

BLM received full status as an agency in the Department of the Interior as a result of the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976 (FLPMA). The California Desert Conservation Area (CDD) and the King Range National Conservation Area were both creations from FLPMA; and our Law Enforcement Rangers were originally chartered as Desert Rangers in southern California. Another thing that was created for CDD was the Desert Advisory Council, an advisory council composed of a cross section of citizens appointed, and by the Secretary of the Interior.

In 1995, BLM expanded the concept, and appointed 23 more Resource Advisory Councils (RAC's) on the system of public lands across the west (24 including the Desert Advisory Council). In addition, each BLM National Monument will have an appointed Monument Advisory Council. Oversight of the federal recreational fee collection for US Forest Service and BLM lands in several states (including California) is also handled by a Resource Advisory Council chartered under the Federal Advisory Council Act.

California has four RACS :

North East: The NE California RAC includes Alturas; Susanville; and Cedarville Offices

North West: The NW California RAC includes Redding; Arcata; and Ukiah

Central California: The Central California RAC includes Folsom (Mother Lode Field Office), Bakersfield; and Bishop Field Offices

Desert Advisory Council: The DAC covers Field Offices in Ridgecrest; Barstow; Palm Springs; Needles; and El Centro, as well as the District Headquarters in Marino Valley, near Riverside.

The work of the desert advisory council truly highlights how unique partnerships can strengthen our management efforts and help promote cooperative conservation," states Steven Borchard, BLM California Desert District manager. "We rely on their creative input and active participation to help us resolve the myriad of land management issues facing the California desert." The same can be said of the other three RACS in California.

From time to time, the work of the BLM Resource Advisory Councils becomes complex enough, that sub- committees are chartered to work on special issues.

1. Currently the DAC has two appointed subgroups- a Dumont Dunes Advisory Group, and an Imperial Sand Dunes Advisory Group.
2. The Central California RAC appointed a subgroup to focus on OHV management and potential opportunities in the Central Valley, and Central Coast.

A running account of the details of the Desert Advisory Council is available on the California BLM Webpage at the following Link: <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/info/rac/dac.html>.

I will include in the Appendix to this report two documents, Appendix A will be a Frequently asked Questions about the Resource Advisory Councils; and an update on three RAC and DAC actions from July and August will be appendix B.

Field Office Reports- BLM California Desert District

El Centro Field Office

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area

RAMP: BLM is currently in the process of preparing the Draft Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Management Plan (RAMP) and Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) as an amendment to the California Desert Conservation Area Plan. United States Border Patrol and the Imperial County Planning Department have signed on to become cooperating agencies. The Draft RAMP is scheduled for release early fall of 2009.

Trash Service: BLM has received \$176,000 from the California Off Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division (OHV grant) to partially support trash service for the FY09/10 season. The new trash service contract, to provide trash service for the next five years, is currently out for bid.

Fees: ECFO has renewed the fee collection contract with the current vendor. This year the vendor will provide increased fee collection staffing for the Cahuilla and Buttercup Ranger Stations. The BLM exceeded our goal of increasing off-site sales during the 2008-2009 season. Off-site sales increased from 14% to 50% since the implementation of a differential fee. This has reduced the workload in the field, reduced traffic in the Dunes, and stimulated the local and regional economy. The ECFO looks forward to working closely with the new DAC Subgroup for the ISDRA to explore the possibility of improving the current fee program, which would be submitted to the RRAC.

Wash Road: Union Pacific Rail Road (UPRR) has installed a fence just inside their property line which extends 100' from the centerline of the rail road tracks and encompasses essentially all of Wash Road between Highway 78 and Wash 28, a stretch of about six miles. BLM has completed an Environmental Assessment (EA) analyzing the impacts of a grading a parallel road surface, just outside the UPRR right-of-way on public lands to provide legal access to the east side of the recreation area. The ECFO has secured two emergency hire equipment operators, and the rental of the necessary equipment to complete the development of the road. ECFO staff has already begun initial construction of the road. Completion is anticipated by October.

BARSTOW FIELD OFFICE

Recreation

The Barstow Field Office has been working to complete several OHV Restoration Grants from 2008 and 2009 with projects at Juniper Flats, Coolgardie Mesa, Edwards Bowl, and Afton Canyon. These projects included re-signing; trail improvements; and post & cable installation to insure riders remain on open routes. As we get ready to move into the "off-season" for OHV recreation, our plans are to continue our efforts to implement the new route network, especially in the Superior Cronese and Fremont Kramer Desert Wildlife Management Areas. We will be signing the new routes, removing any signs from the old route network, and signing the boundary areas for open and wilderness areas. We will also be doing restoration of tracks into the wilderness areas as we re-sign the wilderness boundaries.

In support of Friends of El Mirage, we had a successful El Mirage Days Clean-up and Poker Run on the 2nd and 3rd of May. The Friends fed over 200 people after the clean-up. Due to the typical wind periods in the spring, the clean-up for 2010 and beyond will be held in the fall. The two fee machines at the El Mirage Visitor Center continue to work very well.

We have completed 2 wilderness brochures and will continue to work on additional brochures for our wilderness and other areas.

Resources

The Barstow Field Office continues to work on Renewable Energy Programs, both wind and solar. There are approximately 24 solar and 30 wind applications in the Barstow Field Office. The BLM is in the process of setting up a Renewable Energy Office to help with the workload from the renewable energy projects.

Other projects within the Barstow Field office include: the Cal-Nev Pipeline Project from Rialto, CA to Las Vegas, NV. They published their Administrative Draft EIS in early June, The Desert Express high speed rail line from Victorville to Las Vegas completed the comment period on the Administrative Draft EIS in late May.

The US Marine Corp is continuing to work on their EIS for land expansion. They completed a review of the Scoping Comments in May. We expect to see a Draft EIS in late 2009.

The Barstow Field Office has developed a priority list of abandoned mines within the Field Office jurisdiction. As funds are made available, we will move quickly to seal these features to prevent accidents at these potentially dangerous areas.

The Barstow Field office applied for nine OHV Grants for the Fy09/Fy10 season. We are hopeful that we will be successful in obtaining at least some of these grants.

Law Enforcement



The Barstow Field Office is still in the selection process for a Chief Ranger. The Desert District Ranger is acting until a Barstow Chief Ranger is selected. We have seven delegated Rangers, two of which just completed Federal Law Enforcement Training Center (FLETC), and two more rangers scheduled to go to FLETC. The Barstow Field office has five Off- Highway Vehicle (OHV) areas for a total of 300,000 acres, 1,522,000 acres of Areas of Critical Environmental Concern and 631,000 acres of wilderness. The West Mojave plan has designated routes of travel throughout the rest of the nearly 2 million acres in the Barstow Field Office. The neighboring areas of Las Vegas, NV, the Los Angeles Basin and the Inland Empire occupy a large portion of a Ranger's time in educating the public on how to recreate responsibly. Neighboring counties have enacted laws restricting OHV use on private lands. This has led to a large increase in the population of OHV users in the Barstow Field Office area.

The Rangers work closely with the San Bernardino County Sheriff's office in enforcement of laws and protecting public safety and the public lands. Mutual areas of concern with the Sheriff's Department outside of the OHV areas are the Juniper Flats area, Edwards Bowl and Wonder Valley. The patrol times for both agencies have increased in the last two years. The Rangers also have a close relationship with San Bernardino County Code Enforcement dealing with trespass and illegal trash dumping on public lands.

RIDGECREST FIELD OFFICE**Minerals Program Updates**

- **Mine Land Hazards Remediation/Red Mountain and Randsburg Areas:** The BLM discovered high levels of arsenic in mine waste and mill tailings in the Red Mountain, Randsburg, and Johannesburg areas affecting about 3,000 acres. The high levels of arsenic (several 100 to about 20,000 ppm) exceed regulatory standards. Soils contaminated with arsenic have migrated into the communities, nearby washes, and floodplains. The mine wastes, mill tailings, and numerous physical mine hazards pose health and safety risk to residents and the recreating public. The BLM, under CERCLA, has the authority and responsibility to respond directly to any release or threat of a release of hazardous substances such as arsenic into the environment. The BLM has developed short and long term actions plans to address the health and safety risks. The BLM is implementing controls for physical safety hazards and to limit potential exposure to arsenic contamination. These include fencing, warning signs, access controls, education and outreach, air monitoring, mill tailings and mine waste removals, run-on and run-off controls, and additional testing and analyses. Approximately 80 physical mine hazards were remediated and a BLM designated trail was re-routed to avoid mill tailings containing high levels of arsenic. The BLM in partnership with the State of California Abandoned Mined Land Unit also fenced-off approximately 40 hazardous mine shafts in Kelly Mine area. In addition, a 6,000 linear foot chain link fence was constructed around the Kelly mine and tailings pond site in 2007. During September of 2008, a 13,427 linear foot chain link fence was constructed around the Descarga mill tailing pond and surrounding area. Four air monitoring stations are scheduled for construction and operation in the project area this summer (2009). The BLM is consulting with several other Federal, State, and County agencies and government officials on this matter.
- **Mine Land Hazards Evaluation/Ruth Mine Area:** The BLM has completed a preliminary environmental evaluation of the historic Ruth Mine and mill tailings located near the community of Homewood Canyon, Inyo County. Mine waste and mill tailing samples were collected covering a 40 acre area. Lab results confirm elevated levels (average concentration 3,000 ppm) of arsenic exist in the samples collected from the Ruth Mine area. Some of the mine waste and mill tailings have eroded into a nearby wash and migrated off-site. In March 2007, the BLM reported this information to the National Response Center and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services as required under CERCLA and BLM policies. Several significant physical mine hazards have also been identified. The mine wastes, mill tailings, and the physical mine hazards pose health and safety risk to the public. The BLM will develop an action plan to address the health and safety risks. The BLM completed drilling monitoring wells and tested the aquifers in the area. A contractor was selected to prepare an Engineering Evaluation/ Cost Analysis (EE/CA) in early 2009. The final report will be available in July 2009. As part of the EE/CA, a Community Involvement Plan (CIP) is scheduled for completion by July 2009. Remedial actions will be initiated starting in October 2009. In the meantime, the BLM has posted warning signs and plans to take additional interim steps to further assess the health risks and provide for the safety of the public. We plan to do some fencing of hazards and another community meeting soon. For more information contact Hector Villalobos at (760) 384-5405
- **Mine Land Hazards Evaluation/Darwin Mine Area:** The BLM has completed a preliminary environmental evaluation of the historic Darwin Mine and mill tailings (2008).

The mine is located near the Darwin town site, Inyo County. Mine waste and mill tailings were collected from public lands, over an area of about 60 acres. Recent lab results show samples contain high levels of lead (average concentration approximately 9,000 ppm), zinc (average concentration approximately 13,000 to 15,000 ppm), and moderate levels of arsenic (average concentration approximately 200 ppm). There is evidence that tailings and mine waste has migrated offsite. During June 2007, the BLM reported this information to the National Response Center and the Governor's Office of Emergency Services as required under CERCLA and BLM policies. Several significant physical mine hazards have also been identified. The mine wastes, mill tailings, and the physical mine hazards pose health and safety risk to the public. The BLM will develop an action plan to address the health and safety risks. A contractor has completed a draft Engineering Evaluation/Cost Analysis (EE/CA) in late spring 2009. The final report is scheduled for completion by September 2009. BLM will resurvey the site in order to determine the private and government property lines during the summer of 2009. In the meantime, the BLM will post warning signs and take additional interim steps to further assess the health risks and provide for the safety of the public. For more information contact Hector Villalobos at (760) 384-5405.

- **Cactus, Tropic and Golden Queen Mine Sites:** Preliminary sampling at these sites located in the Rosamond/Mojave, CA, areas indicate above background levels of arsenic on some of the BLM land. The BLM is working with claimants, mine owners, and EPA concerning releases onto private and or BLM land. Further sampling is being planned by BLM and EPA at some of these locations. EPA has completed a Site Assessment for the Tropic Mine.
- **Physical Safety Mine Hazards:** During Fiscal Year (FY) 2009 the Ridgecrest BLM has completed remediation of 22 dangerous abandoned mine sites, most in close proximity to residential subdivisions or within active open play areas. Our efforts this FY have resulted in the installation of nine cupolas, four bat gates, backfilling seven dangerous shafts up to 1,000 feet deep, and the eradication of two trespass cabins. Remediation actions planned for completion during the remainder of FY 2009 and through FY 2010 using the President's stimulus money include numerous sites in and around Randsburg, Johannesburg and Red Mountain, fencing of the Darwin and Homewood Canyon sites, and closure of the Steven Holdings Mine in the Spangler Hills Open Area. For more information contact Linn Gum at (760) 384-5450.

Ridgecrest- Route Designation Updates

- **Surprise Canyon EIS:** An initial draft EIS was extensively revised after staff reviews. A new administrative draft of the Surprise Canyon EIS underwent management review by BLM and DVNP managers. Last year, BLM staff joined DVNP to conduct additional field work and gather more data. Other field trips were conducted by interested parties. The internal management review has been completed and further revisions are underway. The BLM and DVNP will coordinate further review with the cooperators including the DAC TRT. For more information contact Hector Villalobos at (760) 384-5400, or Alan Stein at (951) 697-5382.
- **Furnace Creek EA:** In January 2005, the Forest Service (FS) and the BLM jointly released an EA for public comment. The EA evaluated 6 alternatives concerning access along

Furnace Creek. The range of alternatives evaluated limited access to allowing motorized access on both the FS and BLM segments. Public meetings were held in February 2005. Over 2,500 comments were received. The public comments were evaluated by the FS and BLM. The EA incorporated responses to the public comments through an addendum to the joint EA. The BLM initiated a Federal Register Notice notifying the public of the proposed plan amendment process to designate the Furnace Creek Road. Approximately 8000 comments were received and considered. The BLM develop a proposed plan amendment which was made available to public through a 30-day protest period which ended June 11, 2007. Over 200 protests were received by the BLM Washington Office (WO). A review team was formed, the protests were considered and WO directed the BLM to revise the EA. Also, the BLM completed an inventory of cultural resources and developed mitigation plans which were provided to the FS to incorporate into a Programmatic Agreement with SHPO. The BLM plans to revise the EA; however, the creation of the White Mountains Wilderness Area will require a review of the alternatives due to the inclusion of a cherry stem on the BLM portion and termination of the cherry stem at the FS boundary. The BLM plans to consult with State and District NEPA and Wilderness leads to review the existing EA and determine how to follow up on implementation of the Wilderness boundary and route designation. For more information contact Hector Villalobos at (760) 384-5400.

- **Rand Mountains Management Area Education and Permit Program and Interim ACEC Closure Rescission:** The final EIS for the WEMO plan amendment included a provision to implement a visitor use permit and an educational program for those desiring to use vehicles in the Rand Mountains/Fremont Valley Management Plan area. The provision requires visitors to obtain a permit and become aware of educational information about the management area. During this phase of the program, in order to ride on designated trails within the Rands, visitors will need to obtain a permit that includes a route map and educational information. Visitors may be cited if they do have this permit and are not on designated trails. The purpose of the educational orientation program is to provide details concerning the designated route system, visitor safety, sensitive resources and habitat values, restoration efforts, and recreational opportunities and other information. The BLM visitor use permit and education program was developed in consultation with Kern County and affected stakeholders as represented by DAC Rand TRT. The WEMO record of decision includes a continuation of the current temporary closure of the West Rand ACEC until the permit and education program is implemented. The BLM evaluated the permit and education program and use of certain routes within the closure and implementation of the permit and education program to mitigate OHV compliance problems. The EA/FONSI/DR and permit information was posted on BLM's website Oct.31, 2008. The program was implemented Nov. 1, 2008, and approximately 12,000 free permits have been issued by BLM staff. The free permits can be obtained at the Ridgecrest Office, Jawbone Station, CDD Office in Moreno Valley, California City Police Department, Kern County Sheriff's Off-road Team. For more information contact Craig Beck at (760) 384-5440

Ridgecrest Recreation/Wilderness/Maintenance Program Updates

- **OHV Restoration Projects:** Ridgecrest BLM has kick off its restoration season once again. During the 2008/2009 field season (Oct-May) the Ridgecrest Field Office hosted two Student Conservation Association (SCA) restoration crews. The crews focused work in the Jawbone-Butterbrecht ACEC and the Golden Valley Wilderness. The Jawbone crew restored 121 sites and restored 29,567 square meters of undesignated routes. The Golden Valley crew

constructed 16,090 meters worth of fence line, restored 13 sites and restored 4,412 square meters of incursions into wilderness. For more information contact Carrie Woods at (760) 384-5448.

- **Monitoring:** The SCA crews and BLM staff will continued to monitor the effectiveness of past restoration sites. Past effectiveness monitoring has shown success of restoration sites increases with distance from the OHV open areas, perimeter fencing, law enforcement actions, informational signing, and community outreach. This year's monitoring will focus on the Rand Mountain Management Area, and periphery areas of the West Rand ACEC and other areas adjacent to open areas. For more information contact Craig Beck at (760) 384-5440.
- **Maintenance:** To date, approximately 300 miles of trails and roads are being maintained or reconstructed by volunteers and staff. Maintenance team members have worked on many other projects assisting many programs this year. Some of the projects they have worked on include: boulder barriers to prevent wilderness incursions, mine hazard remediation including fencing and backfilling of mineshafts, trail head, parking, and camp area boundary definition, graffiti removal at the Trona Pinnacles, Goldbug Mining Interpretive Site development, hill climb exclosure fencing, PCT trail maintenance in association with the Pacific Crest Trail Association. For more information contact Randy Masner at (760) 384-5445.
- **OHV Grants:** Over the spring staff developed and submitted 6 grant proposals to the OHV Division of California State Parks. These applications included Ground Operations (510,000), Development (Jawbone Station Expansion) (583,000), Planning (El Paso CAPA) (149,000), Restoration (819,000), Education & Safety (Rands Permit) (126,000), Law Enforcement (247,842), and totaling \$2,434,842.00. As of June 1st and preliminary Intent to Award notification posted on the CA Park's webpage all of these Grant request would be funded. For more information contact Craig Beck at (760) 384-5440.
- **SRPs:** So far this FY the RIFO has processed 37 Special Recreation Permits. These have included permits for an Ultra Marathon, Equestrian Endurance Rides, 4WD and Dual Sport motorcycle tours, group outings, truck and buggy races, motorcycle races, and vending. We currently have 8 pending applications being worked on by staff. For more information contact Craig Beck at (760) 384-5440.

Ridgecrest Law Enforcement Program

- **Law Enforcement Patrols:** During this period, we plan to maintain our law enforcement coverage throughout our area and during weekends. We are coordinating with the Kern County Sheriff and other law enforcement agencies. Over 200 citations have been issued and more than 50,000 contacts have been made. Two LE Ranger positions are currently vacant. Recruitment for the positions has been started. Illegal Marijuana cultivation in our wilderness areas continues to be a problem. Additional rotating shifts are planned for the Ranger staff, to

target growers and suppliers to the illegal sites. For more information contact Chief Ranger Ron Lewis at (760) 384-5460.

- **Special Operations:** This FY, Law Enforcement Rangers plan to conduct holiday weekend operations within our OHV and Wilderness areas. Operations are designed to apprehend OHV users off trail or trespassing into wilderness areas. And to provide medical emergency assistance. We plan to conduct special law enforcement efforts during holiday weekends which include Halloween, Thanksgiving, New Year, MLK Day, President's Day, Easter, Memorial Day and 4th of July. Extra Rangers and staff may be detailed in and we are planning on additional support from Kern Co. Sheriff deputies.

NEEDLES FIELD OFFICE

Interpretive Program

BLM Action: The NFO has begun development of an Interpretive Prospectus that will define and guide the field office interpretive program. The prospectus outlines the NFO Interpretive Team approach to the development of our interpretive messages and how various media will be utilized to deliver those messages. Media being considered are brochures, signs, and internet in various formats. The Interpretive Program will be interlaced with all of our programs including our very successful Education and Outreach Program.

Status: The field office already maintains an impressive cadre of brochures and web based messaging. The Interpretive Prospectus is being developed to ensure consistency in form and message and to identify and prioritize future development. The prospectus is being developed utilizing a team approach lead by the Recreation Branch, but ultimately including the entire field office staff.

Signing Program

BLM Action: The NFO is developing a system of signs to provide directional, regulatory, and interpretive messages to the public within our jurisdiction. The signs will be consistent with the Interpretive Prospectus described above and appropriate BLM Sign Standards.

Status: Directional route signing has been completed in two 100K plus acre areas this winter. These included the Sacramento Mountains area adjacent to the community of Needles, and the southeastern portion of the office around Chemehuevi Wash/Whipple Mountains. The later area was signed utilizing a conservation crew funded through OHV funding and provided by the American Conservation Experience (ACE). ACE provides conservation crews made up of international students and has the ability to address both short and long term conservation crew needs. Route signing has slowed now that the summer heat is upon us but will continue throughout the summer. Currently, NFO maintenance staff are signing routes in the northern higher elevation portions of the field office.

Staff has also been installing "The Heart of the Mojave" gateway signs. The Gateway signs are being placed at dirt road intersections with major highways, welcoming visitors to the "Heart of the Mojave" Managed by the Needles Field Office. Signs indicating that access is limited to "Signed

Open Routes” and a reminder to “Pack It and Pack It Out”, will also be included as a part of the Gateway message. In time, mileage destinations along the NFO primary route network will be added. This signing is being completed in each area after signing the designated routes.

Abandoned Mine Lands

BLM Action: The Needles Field Office is very actively pursuing inventories, prioritization and closures of abandoned mines that can present a public safety hazard.

Status: Needles Field Office has received funding from various sources, such as the State’s OHV Grants, ARRA Stimulus funds, and Cost Share sources to inventory abandoned mines, perform the environmental documentation, including bat surveys as needed, and close abandoned mines. Among those targeted are the Riverview Mine at the southern boundary of the Whipple Mountains Wilderness, several mines on the east side of the Sacramento Mountains near the City of Needles, the Oro Plata Mine at the boundary of the Old Woman Mountains Wilderness, and Copper Butte approximately 15 miles west of Needles. An assistance agreement between the California Department of Conservation and the BLM State Office will facilitate the bat-friendly and permanent mine closures.

PALM SPRINGS-SOUTH COAST FIELD OFFICE

Off-Highway Vehicle Grant Program

BLM Action: Continue inventory and installation of signage and provide information to the public regarding riding opportunities in the Palm Springs Field Office. Conduct restoration work to repair OHV intrusions into closed areas.

Agency Roles: State Off Highway Vehicle Commission – Project funding through grants; Student Conservation Association – Restoration field work.

Status: Grants were provided to BLM Palm Springs in 2008-9 for ongoing restoration work, outreach, enforcement and signage conducted in the Mecca Hills, Dos Palmas, Big Morongo ACEC, and Coachella Valley Preserve.

Santa Rosa/San Jacinto Mountains Recreation Trails Planning

BLM Action: Preparation of a coordinated recreation trails plan that provides recreational opportunities and minimizes risk of impacts to the federally-listed Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep

Agency Roles: Bureau of Land Management – cooperator on EIS
Coachella Valley Association of Governments – CEQA lead
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – NEPA lead
Cities of the Coachella Valley, Riverside County, others – permittees

Status: Due to the mix of land ownership, this trails plan was conceived as a collaborative effort, and is part of the Coachella Valley Multiple

Species Habitat Conservation Plan (CVMSHCP) process. In coordination with the local jurisdictions through the Coachella Valley Association of Governments (CVAG), BLM jointly conducted public scoping sessions and coordination meetings to obtain public input based on two goals: 1) provide opportunities for trail use, and 2) minimize risk of impacts to the federally-listed Peninsular Ranges bighorn sheep from recreational activities. Interim measures are in place, promulgated from the Biological Opinion for the California Desert Conservation Area Plan Amendment for the Coachella Valley (2002). BLM currently relies primarily on a *voluntary* trail avoidance program.

The Draft Environmental Impact Report/Statement (EIR/EIS) for the CVMSHCP and trails plan was released for a 90-day public comment period in November, 2004. Public meetings were held in November, December, 2004 and January, 2005. The comment period was extended for one month to March 7, 2005. Numerous comments were received opposing a proposed trail permit system. Comments were addressed in the Final EIR/EIS with the proposed trail plan being modified to the satisfaction of most respondents.

The CVAG Executive Committee released the Final EIR/EIS to the various signatory agencies in early February 2006 for approval. About four months later, the City of Desert Hot Springs rejected the CVMSHCP. Since the plan requires approval of *all* permittees for it to take effect, CVAG initiated preparation of a recirculated draft plan, including the trails plan, along with a recirculated draft EIR and supplemental final EIS. The recirculated draft plan, which excludes lands within the City of Desert Hot Springs, was released for a 60-day public comment period in mid-March 2007.

On September 10, 2007, the CVAG Executive Committee released the Final Recirculated CVMSHCP and Final Recirculated EIR/Supplemental Final EIS to the various signatory agencies for approval. The trails plan element is essentially the same as proposed in the February 2006 Final EIR/EIS. The CVMSHCP was approved October 1, 2008. The Federal side of the trails plan will be approved subject to issuance of a biological opinion by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Status of Route Signing; Palm Springs - South Coast Field Office

BLM Action: All primary routes within the NECO planning area are signed with 4 x 4 steel posts consistent with the CDD sign policy. All major intersections have kiosks with maps. Secondary roads in the NECO area are not funded or signed at this time. Routes within the Coachella Valley planning area are not signed due to intermix of public and

private lands, (i.e. locked gates, low mileage public route segments, not useful to the public.) The South Coast planning area is not signed but route inventory and designation for the Border Mountains area of San Diego County is being done as part of the on-going South Coast Resource Management Plan Revision.

Legislation

Redding Field Office:

Washington, D.C.) – Congressman Herger (R-CA) released the following statement after the House passed legislation he wrote to provide more efficient management of federal lands in the 2nd Congressional District. H.R. 689 would allow the consolidation of federal lands in the Chappie-Shasta Off-Highway Vehicle area and reduce unnecessary bureaucracy for those looking to use the lands. The bill passed unanimously by voice vote.

Herger delivered the following speech on the House Floor in support of his measure today: “I rise today in support of H.R. 689 to interchange the administrative jurisdiction of certain Federal lands between the Forest Service and the Bureau of Land Management. I am a firm believer in policies that limit bureaucracy and limit government interference in our every day lives. H.R. 689 accomplishes these goals and will also improve access and recreational use of these federal lands. This bill is a simple jurisdictional exchange between federal agencies to allow for more consolidated and efficient management of the Chappie-Shasta Off-Highway Vehicle area in the Northern California congressional district I represent. For years, many of my constituents have raised their concerns over difficulties in dealing with two federal agencies to use one OHV area. Issues such as duplicative permits – at substantial and unnecessary cost to the users - and even different opening dates for the same area have resulted in frustration from the thousands of users, from across California and elsewhere, who try to cope with this redundant management.

“This noncontroversial exchange was developed collaboratively at the local level by the Forest Service and BLM in conjunction with the local OHV community. The BLM will be able to consolidate the OHV area while in exchange the Forest Service will benefit by receiving small tracts of wilderness area that are currently managed by the BLM but are contiguous to Forest Service land. The exchange only involves lands that are already controlled by the federal government and will not change the designation of these lands.

“This legislation is a prime example of commonsense solutions and better government that will result in a win-win for the taxpayers and their access to our public lands. I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, thank you.”###

6/3/2009: Referred to Senate committee. Status: Received in the Senate and Read twice and referred to the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources.

The Legislation was introduced to the Senate, sponsored by Senator Dianne Feinstein, and co-sponsored by Barbara Boxer. In the Senate, the new bill will become: Senate bill 1328, Shasta-Trinity National Forest Administrative Jurisdiction Transfer Act , introduced into Senate June 23

New/On-going Projects

Land Use Planning- Project Status

Clear Creek Management Area - Hollister Field Office

The Environmental Impact will amend the Clear Creek Resource management plan and set the stage for future recreational and OHV use in the area. A public release draft plan/EIS is in the final approval and printing stage. After release to the public, the draft will be available for a 90 day public review period.

Bakersfield Resource Management Plan- Bakersfield Field Office

This Resource Plan Revision is still in the development stages. First public release draft will be released in very late 2009, or possibly in early 2010.

Carrizo Plain National Monument- Resource Management Plan- Bakersfield

This plan has been through the public review, and revised. The final should be released this fall.

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Management Plan-El Centro Field Office

Draft management plan expected to be released for a 90 day public review period early this fall.

Appendix A

Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area Subgroup Members Selected

The California Desert Advisory Council (DAC) has selected members for the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA) subgroup. They are Dick Holliday, representing the DAC; Bob Hamm, representing Imperial County; Larry Jowdy and Jim Bramham, representing California off-highway vehicle (OHV) enthusiasts; Bob Mason and Chuck Hattaway, representing OHV organizations; Nicole Nicholas-Giles, representing nearby California communities; Ken Rosevear, representing nearby Arizona communities; and Glenn Montgomery, representing Arizona OHV enthusiasts.

Under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, input from the subgroup will be presented directly to the DAC for its deliberation and consideration. The DAC, in turn, in its advisory capacity, develops recommendations for the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) California Desert District manager concerning use, classification, retention, disposal, or other aspects of public land planning and management in the public interest.

The subgroup will meet at least three times per year, once before the recreation season, once during the season, and once after the season. Other meetings may be called as required. All meetings are open to the public. For further information, including dates

and locations of scheduled meetings, please visit the subgroup's website:
<http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/elcentro/recreation/ohvs/isdra/dunesinfo/funding/isdradacsg.html>

Salazar Announces New Appointments to BLM Desert Advisory Council

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar has appointed four new members and re-appointed one member to the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) citizen-based California Desert District Advisory Council (DAC) which advises the BLM on public land issues.

The council's new members are: Alexander Schriener Jr. of Bermuda Dunes who will represent renewable resource interests; Thomas Hallenbeck of Bishop who will represent transportation rights-of-way; San Bernardino County Supervisor Brad Mitzelfelt of Wrightwood who will sit as an elected official and represent county government; April Sall of Pioneertown who will represent public-at-large interests; and Tom Acuna of Encinitas who has been re-appointed and will represent renewable energy industry interests.

The 15 member DAC works closely with BLM field office managers in Ridgecrest, Needles, Barstow, Palm Springs, El Centro and the desert district office in Moreno Valley. The California Desert District Advisory Council was established by Congress through the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976.

"The work of the desert advisory council truly highlights how unique partnerships can strengthen our management efforts and help promote cooperative conservation," states Steven Borchard, BLM California Desert District manager. "We rely on their creative input and active participation to help us resolve the myriad of land management issues facing the California desert."

The BLM's resource advisory councils (RACs), composed of citizens chosen for their expertise in natural resource issues, help the agency carry out its stewardship of 261 million acres of public lands. The bureau, which manages more land than any other federal agency, has 24 RACs across the West, where most BLM-managed land is located. As an agency of the Department of the Interior, it is responsible for managing various public land uses - such as outdoor recreation, livestock grazing,

mineral development, and energy production - while conserving the land's natural, historical, and cultural resources.

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Release Date: 08/21/09

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Dumont Dunes Recreation Area Subgroup Members Selected

The California Desert Advisory Council (DAC) has selected members for the Dumont Dunes Recreation Area subgroup. They are Randy Banis, representing the DAC; Gerry Hillier, representing San Bernardino County; Ed Waldheim, representing off-highway vehicle (OHV) interests; Jim Bramham, representing OHV enthusiasts; Kathy Stosuy, representing OHV interests; Terry Allen, representing Nevada OHV enthusiasts; John Dalgleish, representing the Friends of Dumont Dunes; William Presch, representing biological/science issues; and Brian Brown, representing the local community

Under the Federal Advisory Committee Act, input from the subgroup will be presented directly to the DAC for its deliberation and consideration. The DAC, in turn, in its advisory capacity, develops recommendations for the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) California Desert District manager concerning use, classification, retention, disposal, or other aspects of public land planning and management in the public interest.

The subgroup will meet at least three times per year, once before the recreation season, once during the season, and once after the season. Other meetings may be called as required. All meetings are open to the public. For further information, including dates and locations of scheduled meetings, please visit the subgroup's website: <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/fo/barstow/dumontdunestr.html>

