

QUARTERLY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

January—March, 2022



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DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM

The Desert Conservation Program (DCP) manages Endangered Species Act compliance on behalf of Clark County and the cities of Boulder City, Henderson, Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Mesquite and the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) (collectively, the Permittees) through implementation of the Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) and associated Section 10(a)(1)(B) incidental take permit. The MSHCP and permit allow private landowners to develop land in Clark County without the need for individual project-by-project consultations and negotiation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) to comply with the Endangered Species Act, providing a streamlined process for compliance. In exchange for this permit, the DCP implements actions to mitigate impacts from development. These actions include research, acquisition of sensitive habitats, habitat restoration, public information and education, the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line, and installation and maintenance of fencing along roadways to reduce tortoise mortality.



BOULDER CITY CONSERVATION EASEMENT (BCCE)

The incidental take permit requires the establishment of a conservation easement in the Eldorado Valley to be managed and protected for the benefit of the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) as partial mitigation for the take of desert tortoise and its habitat. The BCCE was established between Clark County and Boulder City in July of 1995 to fulfill this requirement.

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Continued to provide oversight and project management for the interlocal agreement with Boulder City for Law Enforcement on the BCCE. Law Enforcement officers are assisting in investigating the source of unauthorized dumpsites and routes. Law Enforcement continues to engage in contacting those responsible and investigations are currently ongoing.
- This quarter, Boulder City Law Enforcement increased their public contact by 78%. The County is participating in patrol ride-alongs with Law Enforcement on the BCCE to work together in minimizing illegal road use, trash dumping, and other illegal activities.
- This quarter, there was an increase of shooting areas, illegal dump sites and unauthorized routes observed on the BCCE.
- Continued to administer a contract for ongoing maintenance of roads, fences, and other various maintenance needs.
- Continued coordination with utility companies based in the Energy Zone in order to meet desert conservation and restoration goals.
- Continued mapping and assessment of unauthorized roads and other disturbances to guide prioritization of restoration activities on the BCCE.
- Gothic Landscape, Inc. has continued maintenance and scheduled watering of shrubs planted in late 2021 to restore a decommissioned road located in valuable desert tortoise habitat at the BCCE (2017-GOTHIC-1745A). Post-restoration monitoring is scheduled for early spring.

Click on the link for a comprehensive list of [BCCE](#) management accomplishments for this quarter.

RIPARIAN RESERVE UNITS

The incidental take permit stipulates that take of covered avian species is conditioned upon the acquisition of private lands in desert riparian habitats along the Muddy and Virgin rivers and the Meadow Valley wash. To comply with this permit condition, the DCP has acquired properties with riparian habitat along the Muddy and Virgin rivers in Clark County. These properties serve to mitigate impacts to covered species and conserve habitats and important connectivity corridors.

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

Click on the link for a comprehensive list of [Riparian Reserve Units](#) management accomplishments for this quarter.

Muddy River Reserve Unit

- Continued planning efforts for the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 16 project to conduct habitat restoration on the Muddy River Reserve Unit - Natural Channel Design was selected to complete the restoration design. Their design is in its final stage and currently under review with Public Works and Clark County Regional Flood Control District for the necessary construction permits. Continued coordination with adjacent landowners to request easements for future restoration implementation activities. American Conservation Experience began tamarisk treatment in Q1 of 2022.
- Awarded a contract to First Choice Tree Service to remove mature palm trees along the Muddy River that pose a fire threat.
- Continued monthly data collection on groundwater monitoring wells.
- Attended monthly meetings with Muddy River Biological Advisory Committee meetings.
- Attended site visit at Moapa Valley National Wildlife Refuge for a recent stream restoration project.



BEFORE: Fire threat—mature palm trees along Muddy River



AFTER: Fire threat mitigation project complete

Virgin River Reserve Unit

- Continued monitoring of Mormon Mesa parcel for browsing and trampling by trespass cattle, and non-native plant species.
- All work was completed the SNPLMA Round 15 project. 40 acres of habitat restoration was implemented on the Mormon Mesa subunit including planting material from NPS Song Dog Nursery, harvesting and planting willow cuttings, and installing exclusion fencing. Staff submitted the closeout request package to the SNPLMA Program Manager. A final inspection of the completed project was conducted in late 2021. Staff continues monitoring project area for non-native plant species and browsing by trespass cattle.
- Request to adjudicate hydrobasins 222, 223, and 224, was submitted in Q2 2020 to Nevada Division of Water Resources. Currently under review.
- Examined inventory of water rights and determined that fifty-eight (58) surface water rights and twelve (12) groundwater rights could be conveyed to the Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDOW). Board of County Commissioners approved proposed conveyance of water rights. Final approval by the State is expected in Q2 2022. Staff will coordinate with NDOW to update the ownership of each water right with the State of Nevada Division of Water Resources.
- Continued management of National Park Service (NPS) Invasive Plant Management Team for survey of non-native vegetation and maintenance activities for enhancement of native riparian species.
- Participated in Virgin River Coalition meeting.

Property Acquisition

- A willing seller contacted with one parcel along the Virgin River they are interested in selling. DCP is currently evaluating the parcel to determine if an offer should be sent.

Other

- Continued management of contract with SWCA to evaluate archaeological resources. They are currently evaluating resources for the newly acquired parcels on the Virgin River and will submit a final report next quarter.
- Participated in meetings with Clark County Regional Flood District for development of an In Lieu Fee Program.
- Attended Connecting Native Plant Materials Development with Successful Habitat Restoration Conference.
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Muddy River tamarisk treatment on parcels G & H

PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

One of the requirements of the MSHCP is to provide public information and education and to complete outreach projects that support messages of the DCP.

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

Mojave Max Education Program

- Continued to provide oversight and project management for the contract with Get Outdoors Nevada for the Mojave Max Education Program.
- New Public Outreach Coordinator was hired and started on March 7, 2022.
- Announced Mojave Max's emergence via news release (185 media recipients) and social media (nearly 10,000 followers combined).
- Presented 14 Mojave Max assemblies at 14 different schools. Student reach was approximately 1,650.
- Conducted 22 virtual Tortoise Talks with 42 classes. Student reach was approximately 950.
- Continued to administer a contract with Inform Evaluation and Research to conduct an evaluation of the Mojave Max program.

Outreach Events and Mojave Max Appearances

- Participated in one community outreach event to connect with approximately 300 community members (Spring Festival-Lunar New Year celebration)

FOLLOW MOJAVE MAX

Visit MojaveMax.com to get information about Mojave Max; who is he? where does he live? why he is an important mascot for the Desert Conservation Program?

Follow him on social media too!



Mojave Max



Mojave_Max



@MojaveMax



Mojave_Max



Permit Amendment

The DCP continues to pursue a major amendment to the MSHCP and incidental take permit. This amendment would allow for additional take authorization in Clark County while providing long-term assurances to the Clark County community for continued economic growth.

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Continued to coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management to discuss issues related to the proposed MSHCP amendment; held quarterly coordination meeting on February 2, 2022.
- Continued to work with Permittees on a proposed federal lands bill that will support efforts to obtain an amended MSHCP; draft legislation was introduced in March 2021; continued to coordinate with Bureau of Land Management to refine and finalize boundaries for various land use designations identified in the legislation.
- Continued to administer a contract with WRA Environmental Consultants to assist with the preparation of documents and analyses that will support development of the MSHCP amendment. This quarter, additional revisions were made to draft chapters; we received preliminary feedback from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service on the draft take analysis and held a meeting to discuss feedback; and held an internal meeting to further develop the draft conservation strategy.
- Issued a request for quotes to conduct bat surveys across the County to improve knowledge of ecology and distribution of proposed covered bat species. SWCA Environmental Consultants was selected to complete this work and a kick-off meeting will be held next quarter.
- Continue to administer a contract with SWCA Environmental Consultants to conduct avian surveys to improve knowledge of ecology and distribution of proposed covered avian species. We held a kick-off meeting for year 2 of the contract and the work plan and data management plan have been submitted; surveys began in late March.
- Continued to administer a contract with Ventajas, LLC to conduct research on conflicts and encumbrances within the proposed Special Management Areas that will serve as the Reserve System under an amended MSHCP. Summary reports for the Bird Springs Valley, California Wash, Jean Lake, Gale Hills, and Mesa Milkvetch special management areas were completed this quarter.
- Continued to administer a contract with Cogan Technology to prepare a County-wide fine-scale vegetation map. Completed the Coarse Level Mapping for 4 Additional Work Zones, 18 total completed out of 22 work zones. This quarter, site visits were conducted for field verification of photo interpretations. SNPL-MA Nomination was submitted for Round 19 funding to further develop the Fine Scale Mapping Project.



ATTENTION CONSTRUCTION PERSONNEL

If you see a wild desert tortoise on a construction site, please call the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance line at 702-593-9027. The tortoise will be picked up free of charge.

CONSTRUCTION SITE TRAINING

Please contact the DCP if you would like to schedule a desert tortoise training session for your construction staff. The DCP will explain what to do if you find a wild desert tortoise on your construction site and the training will be provided free of charge. Please contact the DCP at 702-455-3536 if you're interested.

WILD DESERT TORTOISE ASSISTANCE

The DCP implements numerous conservation actions to benefit the desert tortoise and to assist with recovery efforts. Two of the key projects implemented to reduce the impacts of development on wild desert tortoises include operation of the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line and the implementation of a translocation program, conducted in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Desert Tortoise Recovery Office. Additional projects that benefit wild desert tortoise populations include the construction and maintenance of over 400 miles of desert

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line

- Continued to administer a contract with Ecocentric to provide support for the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line and in conducting health assessments for tortoises that are removed from construction sites.
- Removed 5 tortoises from construction sites and placed them into quarantine to await health assessments.
- Planned and held the Desert Tortoise Habitat Workshop for 50-70 tortoise biologists, land managers, and restoration biologist to determine the state of the knowledge of restoration in desert tortoise habitat.

Translocation

- Continued to radio track previously translocated tortoises on the BCCE to look at movement, survival and reproduction in relation to resident tortoises in the same area. This will allow us to determine how well they have adapted to their new area and how they contribute to the population

Connectivity

- Continued to administer several contracts related to examining the state of desert tortoise population connectivity in Clark County; these projects will culminate in the development of a Connectivity Management Plan for Clark County, scheduled to be completed in quarter 2 of 2022. This quarter we completed final reports for three of the associated projects and completed a rough draft of the connectivity management plan.

Desert Tortoise Fencing

- Continued planning activities for the construction of post-and-cable and desert tortoise fencing along the boundary of the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument. A revised scope of work was sent out for bid in December 2021 and was awarded to JNJ Engineering this quarter. Construction will begin next quarter.

Misc. Projects

- Natural Resource Conservation LLC participated in and provided academic consultation for our Mojave Desert Tortoise Habitat Restoration Workshop in late January. A final synthesis report combining the findings of the literature review and discussions from the workshop is in development.
- Southwest Decisions Resources, Inc. organized planning meetings, corresponded with speakers, and facilitated the Mojave Desert Tortoise Habitat Restoration Workshop in late January. A workshop summary report is in development.

OTHER CONSERVATION WORK

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Continued planning activities for the construction of wildlife protective fencing at Willow Creek Spring in the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area.
- Completed a contract with U.S. Geological Survey to conduct an assessment of the genetic diversity among Gila monster populations. Findings were presented to the County; revealed evidence of moderate population structure throughout Nevada and Utah that partitioned populations into three regional clusters. Also found some regional adaptation based on climate variables, specifically the coldest month.
- Continue to administer a contract with University of Nevada Reno to model Gila monster habitat. This quarter, the draft project report was submitted and draft future movement models were developed in coordination with UNR climatologists.
- Ironwood Consulting completed rare plant surveys at the end of 2021. A final project report is in development (2017-IRONWOOD-1775A).
- U.S. Geological Survey continued to study rare plant propagation for this project through an interlocal agreement. Research activities included seedbank emergence trials, seed longevity trials, and seed propagation trials (2019-USGS-1990A).



ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

As a requirement of the incidental take permit, the DCP is required to have an Adaptive Management Program (AMP) in order to gauge the effectiveness of existing conservation measures, propose alternative conservation measures as the need arises and to deal with changed or unforeseen circumstances.

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Continue to administer a contract with Alta Sciences to provide for an independent Science Advisor Panel; held the Quarterly Science Advisor meeting.
- Attended and presented two presentations at the Desert Tortoise Council annual symposium

EXTERNAL AGENCY COORDINATION AND ASSISTANCE

In order to keep well informed on the current and future land use impacts to Clark County, the DCP will review and potentially provide comments on issues relevant to Clark County. As a public agency, the DCP also provides data as requested to interested parties.

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Continued to participate in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Desert Tortoise Transportation Ecology work group.
- Served as a cooperating agency to the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM's) Gold Butte Implementation Plan project; attended the cooperating agency meeting on March 1, 2022, and submitted comments for their information gathering period on March 31, 2022.
- Agreed to serve as a cooperating agency for the BLM's Logandale Trails Resource Management Plan Amendment; a briefing meeting on this effort will be held next quarter.
- Continue to serve as a cooperating agency to the BLM's Piute–Eldorado Valley Area of Critical Environmental Concern Management Plan; comments on the draft Environmental Assessment will be submitted next quarter.
- Participated in the BLM's Restoration Opportunities Mapping project; provided data to support this effort.
- Continued to participate in the Desert Tortoise Recovery Center meetings.
- Continued to participate in the Eastern Mojave Conservation Collaborative.

LIST OF PROJECTS ADMINISTERED THIS QUARTER

Ongoing and active projects this quarter

Project Number	Title	Contractor
803F	DT Health Assess and Pickup Svc Support	Ecocentric, LLC
1521G	Muddy River Flood Inundation Project	US Geological Survey (USGS) -Western Eco Rsrch Ctr
1570C	Muddy River Habitat Restoration	Natural Channel Design, Inc.
1570D	MR Habitat Restoration Implementation	American Conservation Experience
1580E	DT Telemetry around Culverts	Ecocentric, LLC
1580G	Connectivity Management Plan	Recon Environmental, Inc
1580H	Culvert Image Inspection	SWCA Environmental Consultants
1580J	Connectivity Data Analysis	Heron Ecological, LLC
1580K	Connectivity Movement Simulation	Alta Sciences & Engineering, Inc.
1720E	Water Rights Consulting (w/1440D & 1520Q)	Farr West Engineering
1720F	Riparian Reserves Maintenance	Eagle View Contractors, Inc.
1745A	Restoration at the BCCE (W/809 & 1421)	Gothic Landscape, Inc
1750D	Archeological Resource Evals on Rip Rsv Parcels	SWCA Environmental Consultants
1755A	Rare Plant Surveys	Ironwood Consulting, Inc.
1760A	Academic Consultant for DT Rest Workshop	Natural Resource Conservation LLC
1760B	Restoration Workshop Facilitation	Southwest Decisions Resources, Inc
1782B	Avian Surveys	SWCA Environmental Consultants
1910C	Riparian Reserves Vegetation Management	National Park Service (NPS)
1915A	Mojave Max Education Program	Outside Las Vegas Foundation
1915F	Mojave Max Education Prg Eval (w/1715)	Inform Evaluation & Research
1920A	Science Advisor Panel	Alta Sciences & Engineering, Inc.
1920B	DT Occupancy on the BCCE	Bio Logical, LLC
1965A	Vegetation Map for Clark County (w/1460G)	Cogan Technology Inc
1970B	HCP Consultant for the MSHCP Amendment	WRA Environmental Consultants
1975A	Tule Springs Monument Fence (w/804, 1525, 1725, 1780)	JNJ Engineering Construction Inc
1990A	Rare Plant Propagation Research (w/809)	US Geological Survey (USGS) -Western Eco Rsrch Ctr
1997C	Gila Monster Habitat Modeling	University of Nevada Reno (UNR) - BRRC
2005B	BCCE Law Enforcement	City of Boulder City
2005C	BCCE Law Enforcement	Boulder City Conservation Easement Law Enforcement
2005D	BCCE Weed Survey	National Park Service (NPS)
2005E	BCCE Maintenance	Gothic Landscape, Inc
2020B	East Moj Cnsrv Collaborative Facilitation II	Southwest Decisions Resources, Inc
2020C	Science Advisor Panel	Alta Sciences & Engineering, Inc.
2020D	Desert Tortoise Occupancy	Bio Logical, LLC
2020E	Avian Surveys	SWCA Environmental Consultants
2025A	DT Range Wide Monitoring (w/1920, 1925, 2020)	Great Basin Institute
2030A	BCCE DT Telemetry & Health Assess (w/1740C & 1930B)	Great Basin Institute
2040B	Reptile Monitoring and Surveys	Great Basin Institute
2042A	Road Warriors DT Mortality & Fence Survey	Tortoise Group
2065A	Riparian Plant-Pollinator Ecology Phase 2	University of Nevada (UNLV) - Board of Regents
2085A	Mojave Poppy Bee Surveys	US Dept of Agriculture (USDA) -Agri Rsrch Service
2095A	MSHCP Amendment Reserve System Research	VENTAJAS LLC
2095B	Workzone 6 Imagery	SkyWatch Space Applications Inc

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

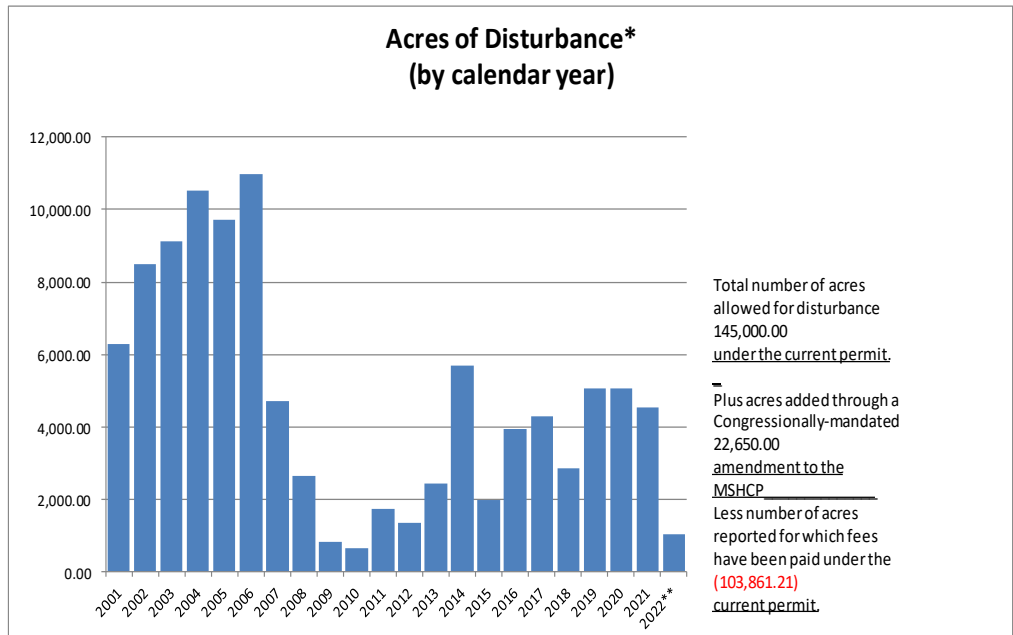
ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Processed vendor payments 48 invoices: 47 accepted (98%), 1 rejected (2%).
- Fiscal Year (FY) 22 Budgets are being reconciled to prepare for end of year close. Expenditures continue to be monitored regularly to ensure appropriate spending and reporting occur. The process of developing the Fiscal Year 21 estimates and Fiscal Year 22 budgets are completed and submitted to County Budget and Finance.
- Phase 1 of converting all the existing credit card terminals to the new processor, Wells Fargo, is completed. Phase 2 of converting the existing web and IVR systems has been completed. Phase 3 is in process to establish e-payments services for County departments that did not currently offer e-payments.
- Continued production of the desert tortoise specialty license plate and plates are being distributed at Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles (DMVs). Active plates are currently exceeding the 1,000 minimum threshold.
- Continued oversight of the SNPLMA Round 16 – Round 18 projects totaling \$16,509,396 in the County’s financial system. The projects continue to be monitored for progress and reimbursement.
- Received reimbursement for SNPLMA projects: Round 16 – thirteen draw downs (\$124,944.00), Round 17 – seven draw down (\$53,191.00).
- Kicked-off development of the 2023-2025 Implementation Plan and Budget process with stakeholders. A public draft report is expected to be available in October 2022.
- Completed recruitment processes to hire two additional staff members for the positions of Management Assistant and Management Analyst I/II.



Red Rock Canyon, NCA

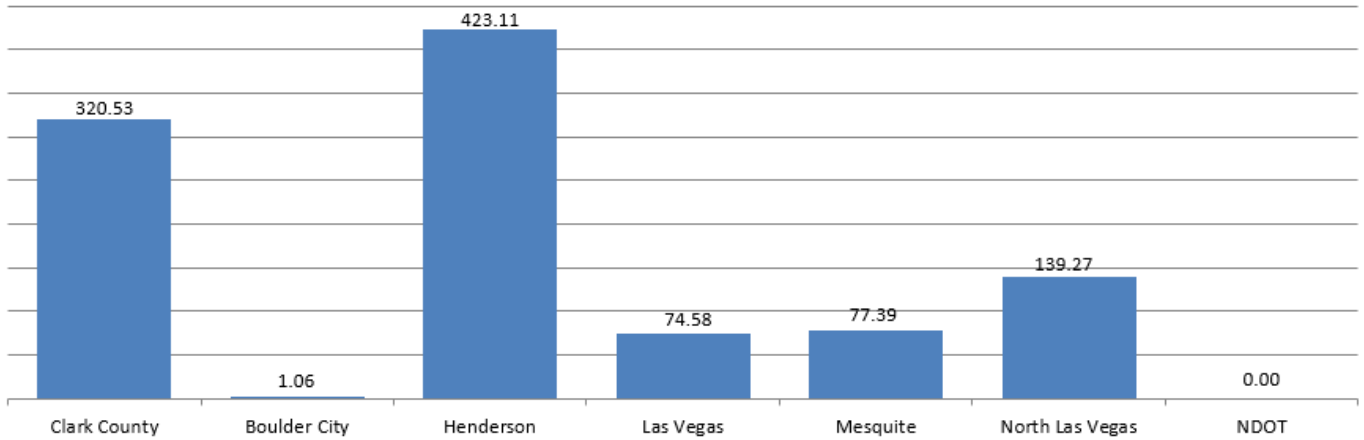
DCP staff is responsible for ensuring that land disturbed pursuant to the MSHCP is accounted for and monies are collected and deposited in the Section 10 special reserve fund established under the MSHCP. Below are charts which outline the total amount of fees collected and acres disturbed for the period 2001-2022.



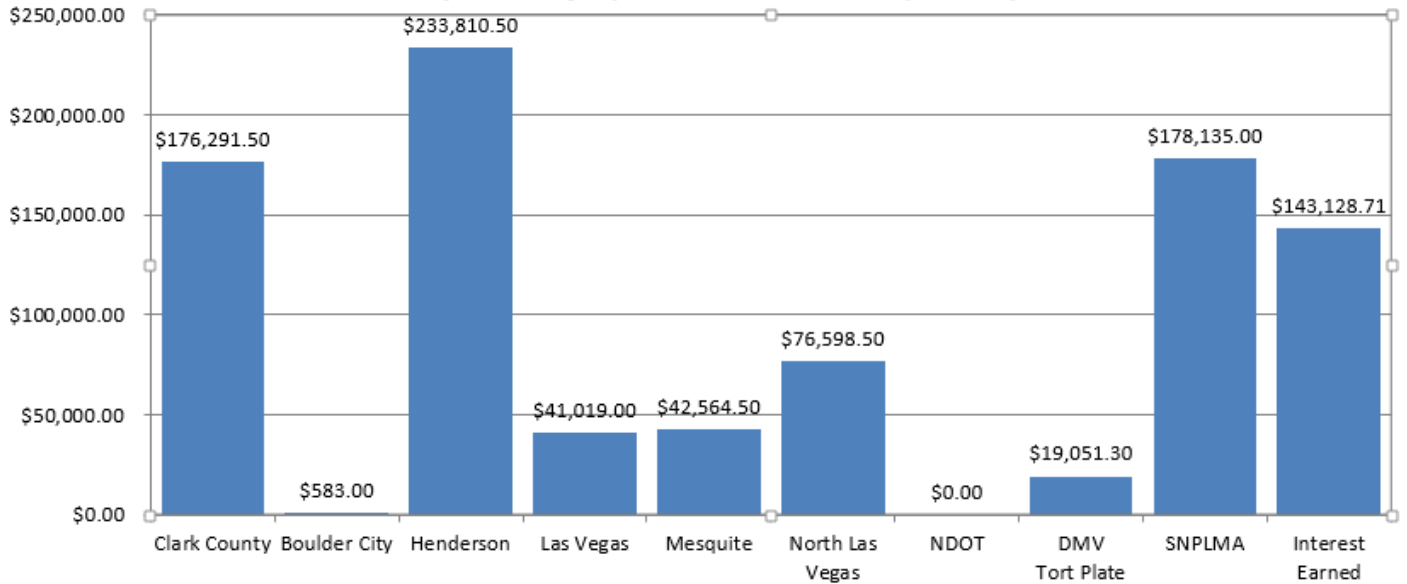
*Total acres reported in this chart do not include 15,000 acres of municipal development, which were exempt from the payment of mitigation fees through January 2010.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE — CONTINUED

**Disturbance
(January 1, 2022 through March 31, 2022)**



**Revenue by Source
(January 1, 2022 - March 31, 2022)**



OPPORTUNITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Desert Tortoise License Plate

- DCP's Desert Tortoise License Plate is available at Nevada Department of Motor Vehicle offices across the state. Click here for more information about the [plate](#).
- Those interested in viewing any RFPs that are advertised for the DCP, are encouraged to sign up through Nevada Government EMarketplace ([NGEM](#)) to receive RFP notifications. Please check the [Clark County Current Opportunities page](#) regularly for RFP opportunities.

Employment opportunities:

DCP currently has no active recruitment opportunities; please check for employment opportunities within the DCP and other County departments frequently by visiting Clark County's Human Resources [webpage](#).

DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM

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