



desert conservation
PROGRAM

JUL 2015—SEPT 2015

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DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM

Quarterly Administrator Update

OCTOBER 2015

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. This permit provides a streamlined process for compliance with the Endangered Species Act by private landowners. 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

- Provided oversight and project management for an interlocal agreement with Boulder City for Law Enforcement on the BCCE.
- Completed over 21 site visits to the BCCE to monitor use, disturbances, and related issues, to perform signage maintenance and upgrades, for restoration monitoring and planning and in support of the BCCE Predation Study, including wildlife camera downloads and monitoring.
- Site visits were conducted to track desert tortoises equipped with radio telemetry tracking devices in support of a number of research projects.
- Four site visits were conducted to meet with law enforcement to discuss patrols and issues.
- DCP staff initiated a new six month monitoring study to determine a pattern of use for particular sites.
- Continued mapping of roads on the BCCE and collaboration with other agencies to use the Database for Inventory Restoration Tracking (DIRT).
- Completed gabion kiosk project build and signage fabrication.
- Continued planning efforts for a project to close off the "Energy Zone" on the BCCE from desert tortoises by installing desert tortoise exclusionary fencing around the energy zone, installing desert tortoise guards at key access points, and constructing a culvert along Eldorado Valley Drive to maintain habitat connectivity.

A comprehensive list of BCCE management accomplishments for this quarter can be viewed on this webpage: <http://bit.ly/1OI2le3>

Construction underway on gabion signage at the BCCE.





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 Virgin and Muddy rivers in Clark County. These properties serve to mitigate impacts to covered species and conserve habitats and important connectivity corridors.

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

Muddy River Reserve Unit

- Completed contract with Stillwater Sciences to conduct geotechnical investigations to support pilot restoration project on Parcels A, B and E.
- Planning process for pilot restoration project ongoing.
- Completed a three-year weed management contract with National Park Service (NPS) to survey, treat and control noxious weeds and invasive species.
- Coordinated with neighboring landowners to identify a fencing project that would prevent unauthorized access of private property.

Virgin River Reserve Unit

- Continued monthly photo-documentation of restored areas within Subunit 1.

Property Acquisition

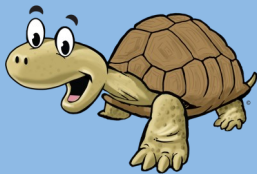
- Boundary surveys of properties are currently pending review and approval by the County Surveyor's Office. Phase II will be contracted once the County Surveyor has completed review of Phase I surveys.

A comprehensive list of Riparian Reserve Units management accomplishments for this quarter can be viewed on this webpage: <http://bit.ly/1RedG3n>



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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 contract with Red Rock Canyon Interpretive Association for education programs. The 2016 Mojave Max school assemblies will be starting in January!

Outreach Events

Public Health Fair at St. Rose Hospital Siena Campus, Henderson, NV	August 1, 2015
Nat'l Night Out / South Central Command (Metro) at Town Square	August 4, 2015
Candlelighters Childhood Cancer Foundation 5K at Mountain's Edge Exploration Park	Sept. 12, 2015



Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Assisted USFWS and Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) in conducting a Desert Tortoise Sterilization Clinic.
- Aided the San Diego Zoo with Health Assessments of desert tortoises.
- Assisted with a Desert Tortoise Health Assessment training for biologists.

Desert Tortoise Fencing

There was no desert tortoise fencing installed during this reporting period.



Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line

The 1995 Desert Conservation Plan and the 2001 MSHCP require the DCP provide a hotline and pick up service to deal with wild desert tortoises which are displaced by development or appear to be in harm's way due to construction activity. The DCP operates the wild desert tortoise assistance line to meet this requirement.

- The wild desert tortoise assistance line logged four calls during this reporting period. No desert tortoises were picked up.

Attention all 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.



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 and propose alternative conservation measures as the need arises and to deal with changed or unforeseen circumstances.

- Conducted interviews for a new biologist July 7 – July 8, 2015.
- Presented at and facilitated the Annual Progress Symposium held at the Clark County Government Center on August 13, 2015. The symposium presentations can be viewed by clicking on this link: <http://bit.ly/1PQbfFn>
- Worked with Heron Ecological to develop baseline models for the desert tortoise occupancy sampling project.
- Participated in the Covered Species Analysis Request for Proposals (RFP) oral interviews on September 17, 2015.



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 meet with USFWS to negotiate terms of an Amended MSHCP and incidental take permit.
- Executed a contract with TerraSpectra Geomatics to conduct a geospatial solutions feasibility assessment. This project will assess the feasibility of potential data sharing applications and permit processing applications in support of the proposed amendment.
- Advertised a request for proposals to hire an environmental firm to prepare species distribution models and conduct species research in support of revising the list of covered species under an Amended MSHCP.
- Continued to meet with Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) to negotiate the terms of a master permit for the take of state-listed plant species.
- Met with Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to review proposed Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) nominations and negotiate terms of a cooperative management agreement that would allow the DCP to manage ACECs as part of a proposed Reserve System under an Amended MSHCP.



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

- Provided GIS datasets (Rare Plant Data) to NDOT.
- Provided BLM's office GIS datasets of designated roads within BLM's ACECs.
- Provided GIS datasets of penstemon plant data to BLM.
- Provided GIS and species occurrence maps for a proposed project area to Amec Foster Wheeler Inc.
- Provided Light Detection and Ranging Sensor (LiDAR) datasets to the Nevada Bureau of Mines and Geology.
- Provided GIS and species occurrence analyses for Henderson's proposed annexation areas.



Opuntia basilaris
(Credit: C. Floyd)

Out and About with the DCP



Muddy River Reserve Unit



Mojave Max



Mojave Max—Public Health Fair at St. Rose Hospital



Boulder City Conservation Easement

New, Ongoing, and Closed Projects

New projects started this quarter

- BCCE Desert Tortoise Predation Study—Phase 2, Project 803D
- Mojave Max Education Program, Project 1515A
- Covered Species Analysis Support, Project 901B
- GIS Data Management and Needs Assessment, Project 901C
- Boulder City Conservation Easement Law Enforcement, Project 1510A
- Aerial Photography, Project 1412B
- 2013-2015 Biennium Progress Report Editing & Printing, Project 1500G
- 15-Year Anniversary MSHCP Video & Booklet, Project 1500H
- 15-Year Anniversary MSHCP Event Planning, Project 1500J

Ongoing Projects this quarter

- Hotline, Pick-up Service and Outreach Sessions for Wild Desert Tortoises Project 719S
- Boulder City Conservation Easement Weed Survey, Project 714K
- Boulder City Conservation Easement, Site Rehabilitation and Cleanup, Project 910B
- Michael Buschelman Water Rights Consulting, Project 805Q
- OHV Education, Project 807B

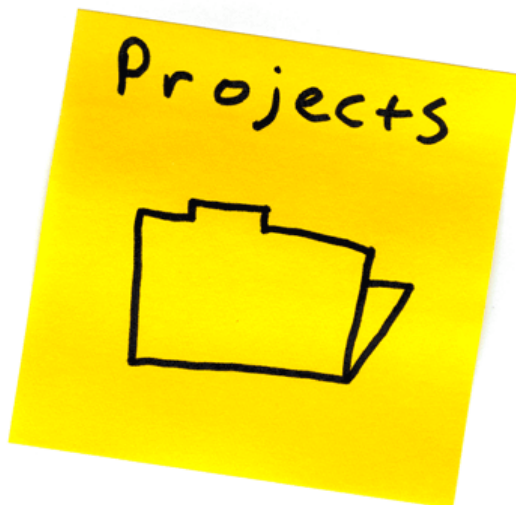
- Boulder City Conservation Easement Desert Tortoise Predation Study, Project 803D
- Science Advisor for the DCP, Project 801D
- Las Vegas Valley Water District Desert Tortoise Habitat, Project 719Q
- Eldorado Desert Tortoise Monitoring, Project 1451A
- Desert Tortoise Occupancy Sampling Crews, Project 1012D
- Desert Tortoise Telemetry on the BCCE, Project 1450B

Projects closed this quarter:

- Mojave Max Emergence Contest Ads, Project 1430K
- Creation of DCP Logo Variations, Project 916Z
- Pre-Translocation of Desert Tortoise Surveys on the BCCE, Project 719T
- Pet Tortoise Sterilization Clinic, Project 1555A
- Acquisition of Mojave Max Coloring Books, Project 1430S

Requests for Proposals (RFPs) this quarter

Desert Tortoise Range-Wide Monitoring, Project 1540A
 DCP Branding Project, 1515C
 Independent Science Advisor Panel, Project 1410B
 Hotline and Processing of Wild Desert Tortoises, Project 803E
 Desert Tortoise Range-Wide Monitoring, Project 1540A



Administration and Finance

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

Processed vendor payments 61 invoices: 58 accepted (97%), 2 rejected (3%).

Fiscal Year (FY) 16 budgets continue to be monitored regularly to ensure appropriate spending and reporting occur.

Continued process development for centralized fee collection of tortoise fees—County has selected a potential vendor for credit card and electronic payments processing and is currently in contract negotiations. It is going slower than expected and County is exploring its option regarding vendor selection.

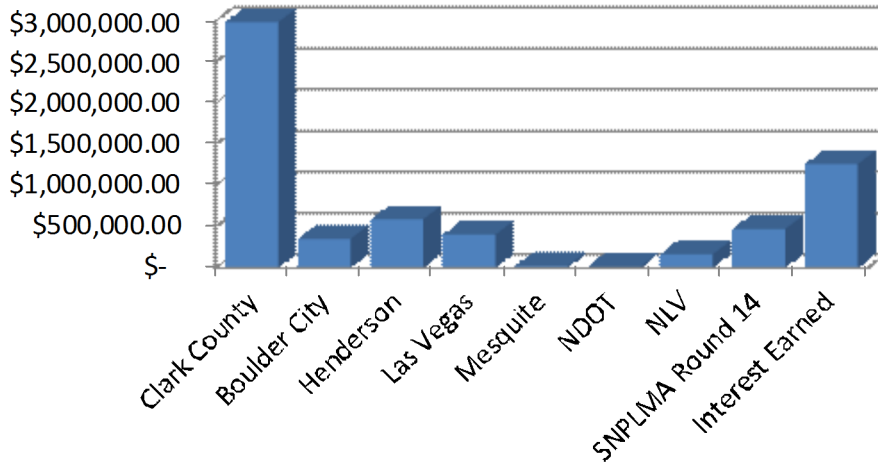
The Commission on Special License Plates will consider the DCP's application for a special license plate on Wednesday, October 28, 2015.

Oversight of the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 8 (R8)—Round 14 (R14) projects totaling \$1,649,992 continues in the County's financial system. The projects continue to be monitored for progress and reimbursement.

Received reimbursement for SNPLMA projects: R8—2 draw downs (\$110,780.15) and R14—2 draw downs

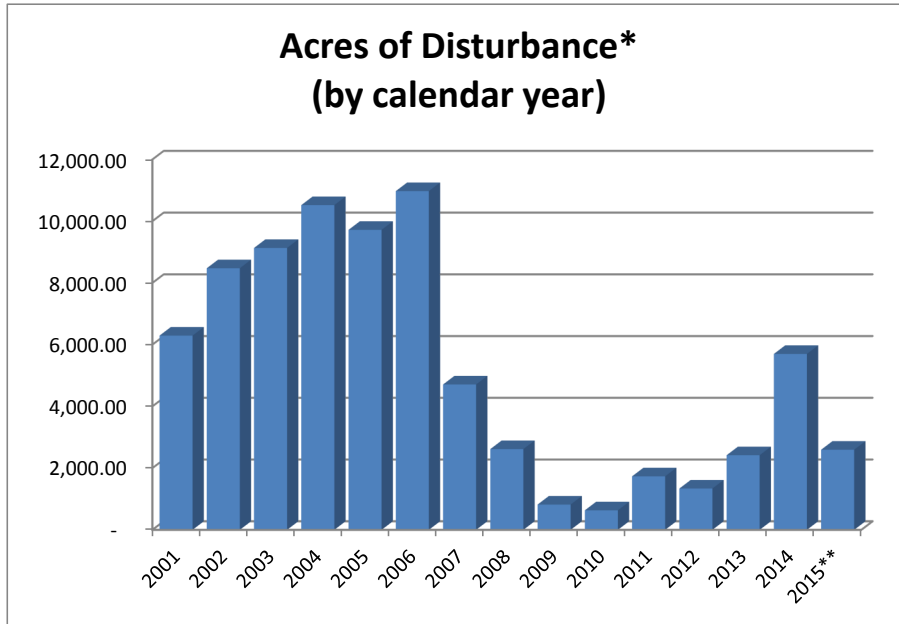


Revenue (by Source)



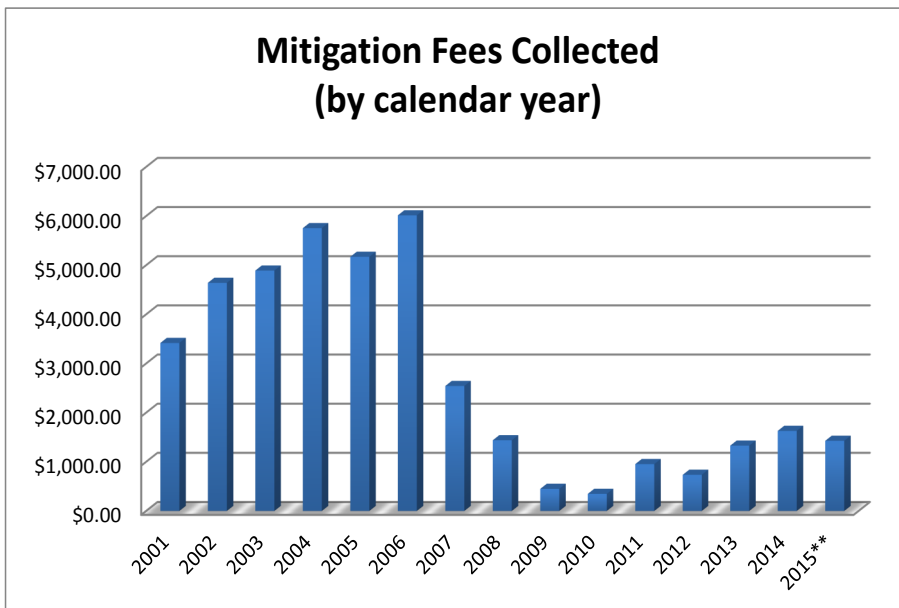
Administration and Finance Cont'd.

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 2001-2015.



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

** Partial year data.



** Partial year data.

OPPORTUNITIES and ANNOUNCEMENTS



Congratulations Marci!

Effective October 6, 2015 Marci Henson was promoted to the position of Director of the Department of Air Quality.

We have moved...

The DCP is now a division within the Department of Air Quality and, as such, has moved to 4701 W. Russell Road, Suite 200, Las Vegas, NV 89118 effective October 26, 2015.

OPPORTUNITIES

There are currently no open requests for proposals / quotes.

RFP opportunities can be viewed on this webpage:

[RFP](#)

Check the Clark County opportunities page regularly for new opportunities.

Employment opportunities:

There are currently no employment opportunities in the Desert Conservation Program.

Employment opportunities can be viewed on this webpage:

[HR](#)

Please check the Clark County recruitment page regularly for new opportunities.

Desert Conservation Program

Clark County Department of Air Quality
Desert Conservation Program
4701 W. Russell Road, Suite 200
Las Vegas, NV 89118



Streamlining development, protecting species, and preserving our future.

www.clarkcountynv.gov/dcp