

# Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act Funding and the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan

## Introduction

Throughout the 1990s and into the 2000s, the Las Vegas metropolitan area was one of the fastest growing urban areas in the United States. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has extensive land ownership in Clark County, Nevada. In order to promote responsible and orderly development in the Las Vegas Valley, 74,000 acres of Federal lands were flagged as eligible to be sold based on recommendations made by local government and the public under legislation passed by Congress in 1998, referred to as the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA). This legislation also provides BLM with the authority and guidance on how proceeds and interest from these land sales should be used and distributed. Several categories of projects may be funded from these dollars.

The Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP), administered by the Clark County Desert Conservation Program (DCP), is one of the original categories eligible for funding under the SNPLMA. The BLM significantly streamlines its National Environmental Policy Act requirements and Endangered Species Act Section 7 consultations for disposal of this land by referencing the MSHCP as the instrument for mitigating the impacts of that disposal. Because of this, SNPLMA efforts and the MSHCP are inextricably linked as it pertains to land disposal, development and compliance with the Endangered Species Act.

Ten years after this legislation was passed, the BLM had collected nearly \$3 billion from the sale of land in the Las Vegas Valley, and through investments had collected more than \$290 million in interest. For the first six rounds of funding, the majority was provided to projects within Clark County, but subsequent rounds have favored projects outside of Clark County. In 2009, the Las Vegas Valley experienced a dramatic decline in growth and demand for housing, which has caused a significant decrease in land sales and revenues available for projects, making less funding available for all eligible agencies.

For more information visit BLM's SNPLMA website at:  
<http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/content/nv/en/snplma.html>

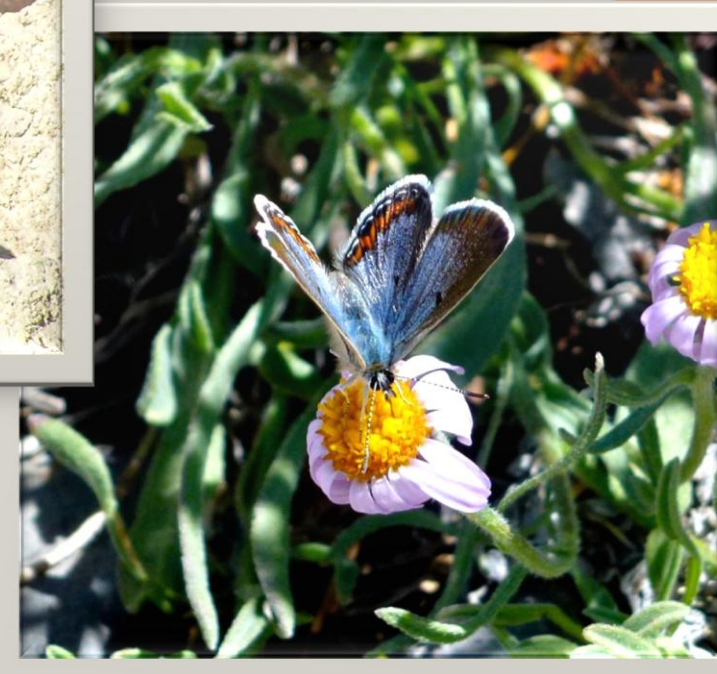
## SNPLMA Funding for the MSHCP

The DCP has been fortunate to receive over \$47 million in funding from SNPLMA to develop and implement the MSHCP. Initially, the DCP submitted nominations for funding in every other round up through Round 12, although the DCP was unable to submit nominations in Round 10, as the MSHCP category was mistakenly eliminated from the call for nominations.

### Status on SNPLMA-funded projects

- Round 2
  - 14 projects
  - \$4.6 million awarded
  - 100% complete
- Round 4
  - 44 projects
  - \$13 million awarded
  - 100% complete
- Round 6
  - 39 projects
  - \$25.5 million awarded, \$3.9 de-obligated
  - 98% complete
- Round 8
  - Three projects
  - \$4.1 million awarded
  - 49% complete
- Round 12
  - Two projects
  - \$92,000 approved
  - Projects have not started

Desert Tortoise, Peregrine Falcon, Mt. Charleston Blue Butterfly, and Relict Leopard Frog are just four of the many species that have benefited from SNPLMA funding through the MSHCP



## Future SNPLMA Funding

Going forward, it is likely that the DCP will submit nominations for each future Round, as mitigations fees have decreased due to the current economic climate facing southern Nevada.

The SNPLMA Executive Committee announced in July 2012 that there may possibly be only five more rounds of funding made available. The Committee stated it would proceed with Round 14 in 2012, but would be postponing Round 15 to allow for those agencies with funding from previous rounds to make further progress on those projects. The Committee also announced the following three priorities for funding projects in Round 14:

- Human health and safety
- Recreational opportunities for underserved communities
- Landscape level projects for sensitive species

These priorities may eliminate the MSHCP category from being eligible for funding, as the first two do not pertain to the development and implementation of the MSHCP, and the scope and scale of MSHCP conservation projects are more focused than a "landscape" scale. In addition, landscape scale projects are not feasible nominations given the significant cost and recent SNPLMA statements that projects over \$500,000 will not be favorably considered. Despite the discouragement in receiving future funds, the DCP intends to continue to make a case for the importance of its projects for mitigating the impact of disposing of federal lands and the resultant development in southern Nevada.

## What Can SNPLMA Funds Be Used For?

Per Public Law 105-263, proceeds from SNPLMA land sales to be disposed of as follows:

1. 5% paid directly to the State of Nevada for the general education program
2. 10% paid directly to the Southern Nevada Water Authority for infrastructure in Clark County, Nevada
3. Remainder deposited into a Special Account to be expended by the Secretary of Interior for -
  - When originally enacted, the following was the list for Special Account Availability:
    - Acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands in Nevada, with priority given to lands within Clark County
    - Capital improvements at the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, the Desert National Wildlife Refuge, the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area and other areas managed by Bureau of Land Management (BLM) in Clark County, and the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area
    - Development of a Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) in Clark County, Nevada
    - Development of parks, trails, and natural areas in Clark County, Nevada
    - Reimbursement of costs incurred by BLM in arranging sales or exchanges of land under the Act
  - Seven amendments have been made to the original Act (shown in blue). The following is the current list for Special Account availability:
    - Acquisition of environmentally sensitive lands in Nevada, with priority given to lands within Clark County
    - Capital improvements at the Lake Mead National Recreation Area, the Desert National Wildlife Refuge, the Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area, the Great Basin National Park and other areas managed by BLM and the U.S. Forest Service in Clark, Lincoln, and White Pine Counties, and the Spring Mountains National Recreation Area
    - Development and implementation of a Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) in Clark County, Nevada
    - Development of parks, trails, and natural areas in Clark, Lincoln, and White Pine Counties, and Washoe County\* and Carson City\*\* Nevada
    - Up to 10% of amounts available for conservation initiatives on Federal land in Clark, Lincoln, and White Pine Counties and Carson City\*\*, Nevada, administered by the Department of Interior or the Department of Agriculture
    - Lake Tahoe restoration projects (in both California and Nevada)
    - Development of a water study for Lincoln and White Pine Counties, Nevada (not to exceed \$6,000,000)
    - Reimbursement to BLM to clear debris from and protect land that is located in the disposal boundary and reserved for affordable housing
    - Development and implementation of hazardous fuels reduction and wildfire prevention plans for Lake Tahoe basin, the Carson Range in Douglas and Washoe Counties and Carson City, and Spring Mountains
    - Carry out the Eastern Nevada Landscape Restoration Project in White Pine and Lincoln County, Nevada
    - Reimbursement of costs incurred by BLM in arranging sales or exchanges of land under the Act

\*Limited in nominations until December 31, 2015

\*\*Limited in nominations by location (must be adjacent to, or within the floodplain of, the Carson River)

## How Have SNPLMA Funds Been Distributed?

	Round 01	Round 02	Round 03	Round 04	Round 05	Round 06	Round 07	Round 08	Round 09	Round 10	Round 11	Round 12	Round 13 (proposed)
Approximate amount awarded	\$ 65,400,301	\$ 60,707,025	\$ 88,323,342	\$ 344,081,035	\$ 579,209,749	\$ 949,224,665	\$ 118,277,637	\$ 148,802,357	\$ 93,009,524	\$ 80,291,382	\$ 64,886,126	\$ 43,635,865	\$ 6,649,864
% awarded in Clark County	59.0%	89.0%	98.0%	78.0%	93.0%	85.0%	49.0%	15.0%	27.0%	23.0%	48.0%	4.0%	47.0%
% to local govts in Clark County	8.0%	21.0%	50.0%	31.0%	65.0%	47.0%	32.0%	11.0%	16.0%	8.0%	4.0%	2.0%	17.0%
% to federal agencies overall	92.0%	79.0%	50.0%	69.0%	35.0%	51.0%	68.0%	74.0%	73.0%	84.0%	89.0%	96.0%	60.0%
% per category													
Capital Improvements	11.0%	9.0%	23.0%	37.0%	15.0%	19.0%	17.0%	10.0%	29.0%	9.0%	15.0%	3.0%	21.0%
Conservation Initiatives	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	9.0%	10.0%	4.0%	6.0%	5.0%	10.0%	2.0%	4.0%	13.0%
E NV Landscape Rest Project	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	1.0%	4.0%	2.0%	2.0%	1.0%	0.0%
Env Sensitive Lands	13.0%	53.0%	26.0%	22.0%	4.0%	7.0%	8.0%	3.0%	8.0%	15.0%	14.0%	2.0%	5.0%
Hazardous Fuels	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	10.0%	13.0%	15.0%	6.0%	3.0%	25.0%
Lake Tahoe	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	6.0%	4.0%	40.0%	51.0%	19.0%	22.0%	38.0%	56.0%	0.0%
PTNA	8.0%	14.0%	50.0%	27.0%	65.0%	46.0%	32.0%	17.0%	21.0%	12.0%	9.0%	3.0%	26.0%
Santini-Burton	52.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	8.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.4%	15.0%	13.0%	28.0%	0.0%
VR HCP	16.0%	16.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Ivanpah Airport	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
MSHCP	0.0%	7.0%	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%	2.0%	0.0%	3.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.2%	0.0%

Note: Funding distribution information was compiled from the BLM's SNPLMA website, but may not be the most up-to-date data available. Data should be checked against BLM records before citing.