



desert conservation
PROGRAM

DRAFT

**2013-2015 IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AND BUDGET
FOR THE
DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM**

August 1, 2012

Please provide comments to jbechtel@ClarkCountyNV.gov
By 5:00 p.m. on August 20, 2012.

MSHCP Implementation Plan and Budget Process

The Desert Conservation Program (DCP) oversees mandated regional compliance with the federal Endangered Species Act through implementation of the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) and Section 10(a)(1)(B) Incidental Take Permit #TE034927-0. The United States Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) provides regulatory oversight and monitors compliance.

Per section 2.8.3.3 of the MSHCP, Clark County is responsible for providing management and administration of the MSHCP, through a Plan Administrator. The MSHCP is administered on behalf of Clark County, the cities of Henderson, Mesquite, Boulder City, North Las Vegas, and Las Vegas, and the Nevada Department of Transportation (collectively referred to as Permittees).

Funding to implement the permit conditions and conservation actions in the MSHCP is derived from the \$550 per acre mitigation fee (also referred to as Section 10 funding) collected by the Permittees. This funding is enterprise funding and can only be used for the purposes of implementing the DCP. Additional funding is available from the sale of federal land in Clark County as authorized by the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA). This funding is awarded on a competitive basis and is not guaranteed.

Guidance for the development of biennial implementation plans and budgets can be found in Section 2.1.12 of the MSHCP. This Section of the MSHCP has consistently been used as a guide for the Plan Administrator and the Permittees, Implementing Agencies, and USFWS when developing a budget process. Since inception of the MSHCP, the prescriptive calendar and budget process outlined in Section 2.1.12 have served as general guidance to the parties along with recommendations from the MSHCP's Adaptive Management Program, advisory committees and a Program Management Analysis (Kirchoff 2005). Necessary adjustments have been made to arrive at implementation plans and budgets, all of which have been approved by the USFWS.

Next Steps

After the close of the public comment period, DCP staff will address comments received, develop a finalized recommended budget after consideration of all comments received, and present it to the Clark County Board of County Commission for approval before submitting it to the USFWS.

MULTIPLE SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN
2013-2015 Conservation Measures Funding
Budget Principles

The following budget principles were developed to help guide the development of project concepts, specifically those that are considered discretionary, not required, actions. Project concepts are expected be responsive to these principles.

1. Fulfills explicit permit conditions outlined in the current permit
2. Focuses on mitigation and minimization actions that appropriately relate to the level and impact of take that is occurring and those species impacted (over the last ~2.5 years around 1,557 acres of habitat was disturbed on private land and over 80% of those acres were in Mojave Desert scrub ecosystem)
3. Provides for continued funding of ongoing and effective conservation measures
4. Responds to the most recent Adaptive Management Report and Science Advisor recommendations
5. Focuses on projects with measurable outcomes that are pertinent to the MSHCP
6. Advances the amendment of the MSHCP and its conservation strategy

**2013-2015 Implementation Plan and Budget
Budget Summary**

Project Title	Budget Amount for Approval	Fund
<i>Required Projects (Baseline Activities)</i>		
Administration - Operations* (\$2,563,671 to \$2,759,690)	\$ 2,759,690.00	S10
Administration - Projects* (\$1,445,912 to \$2,223,100)	\$ 2,223,100.00	S10
Adaptive Management Program	\$ 374,800.00	S10
Boulder City Conservation Easement Management	\$ 330,000.00	S10
Information, Education and Outreach	\$ 256,100.00	S10
Fencing	\$ 100,000.00	S10
Other Property Management	\$ 10,000.00	S10
Riparian Properties Management	\$ 103,000.00	S10
Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance	\$ 78,100.00	S10
Subtotal	\$ 6,234,790.00	
<i>Discretionary Projects</i>		
Administration - Fee Consolidation	\$ 300,000.00	S10 or SNPLMA
AMP - DT Habitat Modeling	\$ 5,000.00	S10 or SNPLMA
AMP - DT Habitat Monitoring	\$ 83,350.00	S10 or SNPLMA
Boulder City Conservation Easement - Restoration	\$ 250,000.00	S10 or SNPLMA
Permit Amendment	\$ 836,000.00	S10 or SNPLMA
Riparian Properties - Restoration Phase II	\$ 88,650.00	S10 or SNPLMA
USFWS - DTCC Operational Support**	\$ 500,446.00	S10 or SNPLMA
USFWS - DT Population Augmentation/Translocation**	\$ 769,133.00	S10 or SNPLMA
Subtotal	\$ 2,832,579.00	
TOTAL	\$ 9,067,369.00	

**Administration costs are dependant upon how many discretionary projects are selected for funding. The high range amount is used here.*

***USFWS submitted two and three year budgets. The two year budget amount is used here.*

Required Projects (Baseline Activities)

Certain actions are required to maintain compliance with conditions of the Incidental Take Permit and Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, and are therefore considered required activities. Desert Conservation Program staff has developed the following concepts based on what would be needed to meet these required actions at a *baseline* level.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
Desert Conservation Program

Project Name:
Administration

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:
Clark County, NV

Project Goal:

The goal of the administration of the DCP is to implement the MSHCP in a manner that minimizes and mitigates the impacts of take to the maximum extent practicable and to ensure compliance with its associated Incidental Take Permit (TE 034927-0).

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:

Administration of the DCP encompasses all aspects of implementing the MSHCP. The County intends to ensure the staffing capacity and skill sets necessary are available to responsibly implement and comply with the MSHCP. In response to the Program Management Analysis (Kirchoff 2005), which found that the County, as Plan Administrator, was inadequately staffed for the scope, scale and complexity of the MSHCP, the County acquired additional staffing resources necessary to enhance its administration. At its current staffing level, the DCP was able to address all concerns outlined in the Program Management Analysis.

The County employs a staff of seven (7) full time and two (2) part-time permanent positions, and a number of full time temporary positions as needed, organized into the following operational units: permit and plan compliance, finance/administration, adaptive management, and project/contract management.

- The Program maintains a position dedicated to ensure compliance with state and federal permits associated with state and federally-listed species. This area of work focuses on compliance tracking and reporting as outlined in the MSHCP. This position also manages efforts toward amending the MSHCP.
- The finance and administrative work consists of overseeing the assessment, collection and reporting of mitigation fees collected by the permittees; overseeing the reporting of land disturbance and exempt acres; overseeing the budgeting, accounting, and accounts payable areas of operation; and coordinating Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act assistance agreements and compliance therewith.
- The Adaptive Management Program team provides the following:
 - Oversight and project management of Science Advisor, peer reviews, and spatial and statistical analysis contracts;
 - Maintenance and administration of the database containing MSHCP-generated and related spatial and aspatial data;
 - Analysis of land use trends, habitat loss by ecosystem, species and habitat monitoring data, and implementation status;
 - Production of periodic status reports on the Adaptive Management Program;

- Participation in regional GIS coordination teams and recovery implementation teams;
- Ensuring availability of MSHCP technical reports to partners and public as appropriate; and
- Acquisition of best available scientific and commercial data from DCP staff efforts, agencies, consultants and commercial sources to address the above analyses.
- The project/contract management team is responsible for overseeing the procurement, contract and agreement management for the Program, and for providing project management and oversight for all projects, including but not limited to:
 - Boulder City Conservation Easement management
 - Wild desert tortoise assistance
 - Fencing (for wildlife and habitat protection)
 - Riparian property management
 - Other property management (including water rights)
 - Information, outreach and education
 The project management team is also responsible for communication with related project stakeholders and for identifying, resolving or escalating important project-related issues, and managing the risks and contingencies related to all projects.

The District Attorney - Civil Division's Office provides legal counsel to the DCP in the areas of open meeting law, contracting and procurement law, real estate law, and compliance with Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act. The Department of Finance provides procurement support to the Program. Clark County levies an overhead charge against the program for Department of Finance, IT support, and various other services. Currently, the Department of Comprehensive Planning does not levy an overhead charge against the Program.

Project Approach / Methods:

Administration of the Program will be done in accordance with the MSHCP, Incidental Take Permit and Clark County policy, procedure and practice. In the past, the DCP outsourced the majority of the work related to implementation of the MSHCP. Over the last two biennia, there has been a shift towards DCP staff taking a much more active role in performing the work necessary to comply with plan and permit requirements. The DCP will continue to use a combination of outsourcing and conducting work in-house to meet program requirements.

Because of the potential changes to programmatic requirements that may occur due to the MSHCP permit and plan amendment being pursued, the exact goal(s), description, benefits and approach/methods to this project may change to reflect new requirements or direction.

Estimated Project Cost:

\$4,982,790 (see attached budget)

Estimated Project Term:

July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

Permit Condition H and Section 2.1.8.2 of the MSHCP, require the Permittees to carry out the minimization, mitigation, and monitoring measures specified in Section 2.8 of the MSHCP.

DCP Administration Project Concept Budget	
2013-2015 Biennium	
Item	Amount Budgeted
Salaries & Benefits* - Operations (\$1,757,391 to \$1,953,410)	\$1,953,410
R&M Facilities	\$1,030
R&M Equipment	\$1,030
Other Rental Expenses	\$0
Temporary Personnel	\$10,300
Training/Travel	\$16,400
Shredding/Recycling	\$210
Office Supplies	\$10,250
Computer Software	\$8,230
Staff Uniforms	\$2,460
Minor Equipment	\$3,120
Computer & Supplies	\$13,400
Dues & subscriptions	\$1,020
Refunds	\$41,000
Postage	\$3,240
R&M Vehicles	\$14,350
Other Insurance	\$33,380
Telephone/Cell Phone	\$7,360
Printing & Reproduction	\$31,400
ERP Billings	\$36,300
Overhead-County	\$347,500
IT Support Services	\$224,300
SUBTOTAL ADMIN - OPERATIONS	\$2,759,690
Salaries & Benefits* - Projects (\$1,445,912 to \$2,223,100)	\$2,223,100
TOTAL ADMIN - OPERATIONS & PROJECTS	\$4,982,790

*Salaries and benefits are dependant upon how many discretionary projects are selected for funding. The high range is used here.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
Desert Conservation Program

Project Name:
Adaptive Management Program

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:
Clark County, NV

Project Goal:
The Adaptive Management Program (AMP) provides for the use of the best available scientific and technical data to make sound management recommendations for MSHCP implementation, as required by the Section 10 Incidental Take Permit.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:
An AMP is a required element of the MSHCP. The Program reviews past, current, and ongoing MSHCP activities, makes recommendations for potential projects that would meet MSHCP needs, may identify projects that do not meet MSHCP needs, provides designs for scientifically-sound monitoring protocols that are tailored to MSHCP questions, and assists in the continuation of effective MSHCP implementation projects. To meet the requirements of this program, Clark County must seek out well qualified scientists and experts who can provide independent technical review of all MSHCP activities.

The AMP is managed by an Adaptive Management Coordinator, who oversees all aspects of the program and works closely with other DCP staff and contracted scientists and experts to conduct the program's assessment and evaluation activities.

This funding will provide for:

- An independent, Science Advisor contractor who will:
 - Review DCP Staff analyses of land use trends, habitat loss by ecosystem and implementation status;
 - Use available data to analyze MSHCP implementation projects' effectiveness and efficiency in meeting MSHCP goals and objectives;
 - Provide advanced spatial (GIS) and statistical analyses; and
 - Provide science-based recommendations on future implementation of MSHCP.
- Contractor(s) who will provide peer review of technical products of Science Advisor and MSHCP projects. This includes reviewing a variety of technical reports and other products produced by DCP staff and contractors as part of the implementation of the MSHCP.

Project Approach / Methods:
Staff and contractors will be used to perform the above functions using the best available scientific and commercial data.

Because of the potential changes to programmatic requirements that may occur due to the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan permit and plan amendment being pursued, the exact goal(s), description, benefits and approach/methods to this project may change to reflect new requirements or direction.

Estimated Project Cost:

\$374,800

Estimated Project Term:

July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015

(Note: Funding from previous biennia may extend into 2013-2015, and funding from this biennium may extend into future biennia.)

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

Principle #1 - Fulfills explicit permit conditions outlined in the current MSHCP plan and permit. This project fulfills permit condition I and requirements outlined in MSHCP sections 2.1.8.1 and 2.8.2.2.

Principle #2 - Focuses on mitigation and minimization actions that appropriately relate to the level and impact of take that is occurring and those species impacted. This project produces the data, analyses and resulting recommendations for actions that are commensurate with the level and impact of take and impacts to covered species.

Principle #4 - Responds to the most recent Adaptive Management Report and Science Advisor recommendations. This project funds the Science Advisor to produce recommendations for future MSHCP funding.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
Desert Conservation Program

Project Name:
Boulder City Conservation Easement (BCCE) Management

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:

BCCE (86,423 acres in Boulder City, NV)

Project Goal:

The work conducted in this project will address elements in the Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) consistent with the conservation easement agreement as amended in 2010.

The project goals are:

- Assist in increasing the effectiveness of conservation actions within the BCCE.
- Protect and preserve the desert habitat for the benefit of the native plants and animals.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:

This project provides for the baseline management of the BCCE including managing law enforcement activities, maintaining signage and monitoring all the activities. This requires regular and consistent visits to the BCCE.

The project activities are:

- Provide for and manage the law enforcement contract and any other property maintenance contracts taking place on the BCCE.
- Maintain all signage on the BCCE, monitor desert tortoise exclusion fencing, notify Nevada Department of Transportation of needed repairs, and monitor for new damage to the BCCE.
- Review and analyze consistency with BCCE agreement (as amended in 2010), comment on, and provide approval recommendations to Plan Administrator on all applications for activities that may affect the BCCE. These include Rights-of-Way (ROWs) projects, events, research and monitoring, and other activities allowable by written permission of County. Coordinate application reviews with Boulder City and the USFWS as required by the BCCE agreement. Monitor permitted project activities and restoration required by Exhibit D of the BCCE agreement.
- Review and update the BCCE Reserve Management Plan to reflect current conditions and direction.
- Respond to Permittees questions regarding the BCCE and allowable activities, coordinate with Boulder City, neighbors, and other easement holders (ROWs, BLM, etc.).
- Produce and update BCCE brochures, DCP website content for BCCE, and provide outreach to groups interested in or using the BCCE.

The anticipated benefit of this project is the protection and preservation of desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) habitat and partial mitigation for the incidental take of desert tortoises and disturbance of its habitat in Clark County.

Project Approach / Methods:

Staff and contractors will be used to perform the above functions using the best available scientific and commercial data. Appropriately certified peace officers personnel will conduct law enforcement activities with possible assistance from other parties.

Because of the potential changes to programmatic requirements that may occur due to the MSHCP permit and plan amendment being pursued, the exact goal(s), description, benefits and approach/methods to this project may change to reflect new requirements or direction.

Estimated Project Cost:

\$330,000

(Note: If DCP receives funding requested under Southern Nevada Public Lands Act Round 13, project costs may be reduced.)

Estimated Project Term:

July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015

(Note: Funding from previous biennia may extend into 2013-2015, and funding from this biennium may extend into future biennia.)

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

This project addresses the following budget principles:

Principle #1 - Fulfills explicit permit conditions outlined in the current permit. This project fulfills permit condition P, which requires the management of the BCCE to protect and manage the desert tortoise and its habitat.

Principle #2 - Focuses on mitigation and minimization actions that are commensurate with the level and impact of take that is currently occurring and those species impacted. The BCCE consists of Mojave Desert Scrub habitat, in which ~3,414 acres of this type of habitat were disturbed in Clark County over the last two years.

Principle #3 - Provides for continued funding of ongoing and effective conservation measures. This project provides for ongoing management of the BCCE by funding law enforcement and restoration activities.

Principle #4 - Responds to the most recent Adaptive Management Report and Science Advisor recommendations. The 2010 report recommended developing a local-scale desert tortoise occupancy, habitat, threats, and management action monitoring program, which has been initiated and will occur on the BCCE. Management actions on the BCCE will affect and must be responsive to that project.

Principle #5 - Focuses on projects with measurable outcomes that are pertinent to the MSHCP. This project is pertinent to the MSHCP because it is an explicit permit condition that result in measurable outcomes such as number of patrol hours, number of visitors encountered and number of warning and citations. This information can be compared across months and years to get a picture of activities on the BCCE.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
Desert Conservation Program

Project Name:
Fencing (for wildlife and habitat protection)

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:
Clark County, NV

Project Goal:
This project will provide emergency assistance to the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) or other pertinent partners for fencing installation, monitoring, maintenance and repair in areas throughout Clark County to protect wildlife from roadway hazards, enhance habitats and stabilize and secure roadways.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:
Highway fencing to prevent desert tortoise mortalities was identified as a priority conservation action in the Desert Tortoise Recovery Plan (1994). Clark County places a high priority on fencing or barriers to protect desert tortoises as well as other wildlife species roadway hazards.

NDOT is responsible for all fencing within their state rights-of-way. Clark County may provide fencing support for segments needing imminent maintenance to protect species. This project will also purchase fencing supplies and equipment as necessary.

Project Approach / Methods:
Clark County will continue to contract with Nevada Division of Forestry, or other pertinent contractors, to provide fencing installation, monitoring, maintenance and repair. Clark County will also purchase additional fencing materials as needed, following Clark County purchasing guidelines.

Estimated Project Cost:
\$100,000

Estimated Project Term:
July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015
(Note: Funding from previous biennia may extend into 2013-2015, and funding from this biennium may extend into future biennia.)

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):
Principle #1 - Fulfills explicit permit conditions outlined in the current permit. Monitoring and maintenance of fencing along roads fulfills explicit permit conditions (Permit Condition N and Section 2.8.3.7 of the MSHCP) outlined in the current permit, which requires the Desert Conservation Program to continue to retrofit, repair and construct desert tortoise proof

fencing along highways and roads in Clark County to protect the desert tortoise and other wildlife.

Principle #2 - Focuses on mitigation and minimization actions that are commensurate with the level and impact of take that is currently occurring and those species impacted. Construction and modifications of roadways as well as and high levels of traffic on these roadways continue throughout Clark County.

Principle #5 - Focuses on projects with measurable outcomes that are pertinent to the MSHCP. This project is pertinent to the MSHCP because it is an explicit permit condition and DCP staff can create measurable outcomes such as miles of roadway protected by barriers and reducing harm and mortality to species.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
Desert Conservation Program

Project Name:
Information, Education and Outreach

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:
Clark County, NV

Project Goal:
This project will provide for education and information efforts to encourage respect, protection and enjoyment of natural ecosystems in Clark County, to increase public understanding and awareness of the value of Clark County's natural ecosystems, and to support other conservation activities and the administration of the Desert Conservation Program.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:
This project will implement baseline outreach efforts, including the Mojave Max Education Program and additional conservation message advertising for the Desert Conservation Program. The Mojave Max Education Program will direct environmental messages to children through fun and engaging activities. Teaching children these messages has wide-reaching and long-term effects since they share the messages with their friends and families and remember the messages throughout their lives. Other efforts include development and printing of advertisements and materials encouraging people to respect, protect and enjoy natural ecosystems in Clark County, proper use of the desert, improving public awareness of the value of Clark County's natural ecosystems, and understanding and supporting the purposes and administration of the Desert Conservation Program.

Efforts during the 2013-2015 biennium will include:

- Mojave Max Emergence Contest and Education Program. Provide funding for the Mojave Max Education Program and administration of the contract with Red Rock Canyon Interpretive Association for implementation of educational components and support of the emergence contest and winner's field trip. Support the emergence contest and education program through supplemental Mojave Max mascot appearances, printed materials, products, website administration and advertising.
- Wild Desert Tortoise and Construction Worker information and education. Develop, produce and distribute printed materials, products and advertising informing the public of what to do if they find a desert tortoise in the wild or on a construction site, and other related messaging.
- Additional Desert Conservation Program Support. Provide additional public information and education support as needed for other projects such as administration, desert tortoise monitoring and reserve area management.

Project Approach / Methods:

Historically, Clark County has contracted with various agencies and companies to complete projects that fall within the Public Information and Education Program, as well as conducted some of the work with County staff. It is the County's intent to continue this process to successfully develop and implement this program. Educational efforts target specific interest groups, children and the general public.

Because of the potential changes to programmatic requirements that may occur due to the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan permit and plan amendment being pursued, the exact goal(s), description, benefits and approach/methods to this project may change to reflect new requirements or direction.

Estimated Project Cost:

\$256,100

(Note: If DCP receives funding requested under Southern Nevada Public Lands Act Round 13, project costs may be reduced.)

Estimated Project Term:

July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015

(Note: Funding from previous biennia may extend into 2013-2015, and funding from this biennium may extend into future biennia.)

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

Principle #1 - Fulfills explicit permit conditions outlined in the current permit. This project fulfills permit conditions H and Section 2.8.3.4 of the MSHCP, which requires the Desert Conservation Program (DCP) to focus on appropriate methods to implement public outreach activities.

Principle #2 - Focuses on mitigation and minimization actions that are commensurate with the level and impact of take that is currently occurring and those species impacted. While growth in Clark County has slowed, human activities such as construction and recreation continue to occur. Providing program information and responsible use messages continues to be an important mitigation measure.

Principle #3 - Provides for continued funding of ongoing and effective conservation measures. This project provides for ongoing public information and education to inform the public of the terms of the Section 10(a) Permits; encourage respect, protection and enjoyment of natural ecosystems in Clark County and through education, increase the public understanding and awareness of the value of Clark County's ecosystems.

Principle #5 - Focuses on projects with measurable outcomes that are pertinent to the MSHCP. This project measures number of students and teachers educated each year as well as number of people reached through outreach activities.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
Desert Conservation Program

Project Name:
Other Property Management

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:
Clark County, NV

Project Goal:
To provide for ongoing protection, maintenance and management of acquired property and rights to ensure their value as mitigation for species covered by the MSHCP does not diminish.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:
This project will provide for management of all grazing allotments, surface and ground water rights, options and mining claims acquired by Clark County or others on the DCP's behalf within the northeastern Mojave Desert, primarily within but not limited to Clark County, NV. Area of focus includes riparian systems and desert tortoise habitat. Staff and consultants will conduct monitoring and records research to document status of properties and water rights. Administrative and legal action to maintain grazing and water rights will be conducted, and payment of fees will be made, as appropriate.

Project Approach / Methods:
Staff and contractors will be used to perform these activities.

Because of the potential changes to programmatic requirements that may occur due to the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan permit and plan amendment being pursued, the exact goal(s), description, benefits and approach/methods to this project may change to reflect new requirements or direction.

Estimated Project Cost:
\$10,000

Estimated Project Term:
July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015
(Note: Funding from previous biennia may extend into 2013-2015, and funding from this biennium may extend into future biennia.)

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):
Principle #1 - Fulfills requirements of the MSHCP associated with the current permit. The acquisition of grazing allotments and associated water rights was a requirement of the current MSHCP and prior HCPs. Completing the updating owner of record and manner of use to wildlife fulfills the current and prior HCPs.

Principle #2 - Focuses on mitigation and minimization actions that are commensurate with the level and impact of take that is currently occurring and those species impacted. Over the past two years, approximately 290 acres of desert salt scrub, 3,414 acres of Mojave desert scrub and 20 acres of mesquite/acacia has been impacted in Clark County.

Principle #3 - Provides for continued funding of ongoing and effective conservation measures. This project provides for the continued completion of updating owner of record and manner of use to wildlife.

Principle #5 - Focuses on projects with measurable outcomes that are pertinent to the MSHCP. This project is pertinent to the MSCHP because it is an explicit permit condition and DCP staff can create measurable outcomes such as number of water rights acquired, permits, certificates issued in Clark County's name with a wildlife manner of use designation.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
Desert Conservation Program

Project Name:
Riparian Property Management

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:
Activities will occur on the Muddy and Virgin River Reserve properties in the northeastern Mojave Desert, Clark County.

Project Goal:
To provide for ongoing protection, maintenance and management of acquired properties to ensure their value as mitigation for species covered by the MSHCP does not diminish.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:
This project will provide baseline management for all DCP riparian properties, including continuance of existing protection, maintenance and management activities to protect the existing resources and values to the MSHCP covered species.

Activities will include regularly scheduled property site visits including inspection and repair of property improvements such as fencing, gates, groundwater pump, irrigation canal and pond and municipal water hookup, targeted weed control and fuel management and maintenance.

Regular Monitoring and Maintenance

Clark County will continue to contract for regular maintenance and monitoring of Muddy River properties, which includes site visits to inspect and repair property improvements, inspection of stream banks for animal damage or bank degradation, removal of weeds as directed, cleaning off of the swimming dock, inspection and turning on the groundwater pump, and maintaining roads and fire breaks with handtools.

Fuel Management and Site Maintenance

Dedicated field crews provided by Nevada Division of Forestry, or others as necessary, will be used to maintain large scale fuel reduction measures on the Muddy River properties including palm tree trimming, vegetation clearing, chipping and spreading mulch material, as needed.

Work on the Virgin River properties will remain at the current level, with minimal site visits anticipated. Activities for the Virgin River properties, such as the Virgin River Cadastral Survey, watershed assessment, tamarisk leaf beetle monitoring and Virgin River Habitat Conservation and Recovery Program will continue as needed. Clark County will continue participation and collaboration with interagency groups to support the Virgin, and Muddy Rivers and Meadow Valley Wash.

Project Approach / Methods:

Clark County will continue to conduct maintenance and management activities for the Muddy River properties through a combination of staff, consultants and/or field crews.

Because of the potential changes to programmatic requirements that may occur due to the MSHCP permit and plan amendment being pursued, the exact goals(s), description, benefits and approach/methods to this project may change to reflect new requirements or direction.

Estimated Project Cost:

\$103,000

Estimated Project Term:

July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015

(Note: Funding from previous biennia may extend into 2013-2015, and funding from this biennium may extend into future biennia.)

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

Principle #1 - Fulfills explicit permit conditions outlined in the current permit. The continued management of these properties fulfills explicit permit condition K outlined in the current permit, which requires the Desert Conservation Program (DCP) to acquire riparian lands in desert riparian habitats on the Virgin River, Muddy River and Meadow Valley Wash to preserve as habitat for riparian birds covered by the MSHCP.

Principle #2 - Focuses on mitigation and minimization actions that are commensurate with the level and impact of take that is currently occurring and those species impacted. Over the past two years, approximately 81 acres of riparian property and 20 acres of mesquite/acacia has been impacted in Clark County.

Principle #3 - Provides for continued funding of ongoing and effective conservation measures. This project provides for ongoing management of riparian habitat.

Principle #5 - Focuses on projects with measurable outcomes that are pertinent to the MSHCP. This project is pertinent to the MSCHP because it is an explicit permit condition and DCP staff can create measurable outcomes such as number of site visits, type/extent of weeds removed, etc.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
Desert Conservation Program

Project Name:
Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:
Clark County, Nevada

Project Goal:
The goal of this project is to provide a wild tortoise assistance line to educate construction workers and developers on what they are to do if they find a desert tortoise on their construction site, and to provide for pickup and management of these tortoises.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:
The County provides a voicemail service to provide construction workers and developers with information on wild desert tortoises and provide a pickup service for those tortoises found on active construction sites. This service is currently free of charge and is provided to developers who do voluntary surveys of their property prior to disturbance and to workers who find a wild tortoise in harm's way on their site.

Tortoises collected by this service are taken to a transfer and holding facility, currently the Desert Tortoise Conservation Center (DTCC), for management and disposition. The DTCC is currently managed by the San Diego Zoo under the oversight of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS). Upon negotiating a fee, the County will provide funding to the FWS to provide care and management of these tortoises for a limited period of time, after which the FWS assumes responsibility for care if the tortoise has not been placed.

This project also includes maintaining the 383-TORT phone line, which is a recorded information line updated as-needed, and participation in the Pet Tortoise Working Group.

Project Approach / Methods:
This project includes maintaining the Wild Tortoise Assistance Line, a voicemail service for construction workers who find tortoises on their project site. Staff managing this line staff check the messages at least once daily and make every attempt to pick up the tortoises within 24 to 48 hours. If the call originated outside the Las Vegas Valley or Boulder City, the response time may take longer. The Program currently outsources this service, but it may be conducted in-house, depending on staffing resources and capacity.

It is anticipated that the County will continue to enter into agreements with the FWS, or other entity/contractor, for the management of Clark County tortoises at the DTCC.

Because of the potential changes to programmatic requirements that may occur due to the MSHCP permit and plan amendment being pursued, the exact goal(s), description, benefits and approach/methods to this project may change to reflect new requirements or direction.

Estimated Project Cost:

\$78,100

(This budget does not include funding for the care and holding of tortoises, as there is funding remaining from previous biennium budgets. If previous funding is not obligated for the purposes of this project before 7/1/13, which is the conclusion of the 2011-2013 Biennium, the DCP will seek approval of an appropriate amount through the Board of County Commissioners at the time it is needed.)

Estimated Project Term:

July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015

(Note: Funding from previous biennia may extend into 2013-2015, and funding from this biennium may extend into future biennia.)

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

Principle #1 - Fulfills explicit permit conditions outlined in the current permit. Clark County's responsibilities regarding desert tortoise pickup were established in the 1995 Desert Conservation Plan (DCP) and 2001 Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) and Section 10 Permit #TE034927-0. The 2001 MSHCP cites the pick-up service as an important feature in the DCP in section 2.2.4.2 and lists a pick-up service for unwanted pet tortoises as a potential conservation action to address unauthorized release of captive tortoises under section 2.4.2.6, Threat 1704.

Principle #2 - Focuses on mitigation and minimization actions that appropriately relate to the level and impact of take that is occurring and those species impacted. This project provides for the collection of wild tortoises found in harm's way on any land disturbed in Clark County.

Principle #3 - Provides for continued funding of ongoing and effective conservation measures. This project provides for ongoing management of the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line and for temporary care and holding of wild desert tortoises found in harm's way on construction sites.

Principle #5 - Focuses on projects with measurable outcomes that are pertinent to the MSHCP. The number of calls to the Assistance Line, the number of tortoises collected, and the disposition of those tortoises are measurable outcomes of this project.

Discretionary Projects

The following project concepts are considered discretionary. They may further the goals and objectives of the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan, but are not required to remain in compliance.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
Desert Conservation Program

Project Name:
Administration - Fee Consolidation

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:
Clark County, NV

Project Goal:
The goal of this project is to address issues with mitigation fee collection and disturbed acres tracking among all Permittees under the MSHCP by developing a consolidated fee collection system.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:
In response to a comprehensive audit of the exempt acres permitted under the MSHCP, which found that the current practice of Permittee self-tracking and reporting of the exempt acres has resulted in inconsistent and unverifiable reporting of all disturbed acres, the DCP will work with the Permittees to develop a centralized, automated reporting and collection system for all mitigation fee payment and for verifying appropriate application of acres that are determined to be exempt from fee collection.

This effort will provide the DCP with control over the accuracy and timeliness of disturbed acres tracking and mitigation fee collection. The Program's guiding documents will be reviewed and amended, as appropriate, to address compliance and reporting issues as necessary. In addition, the DCP will explore the development of a Memorandum of Agreement among the Permittees to provide more formal standards and procedures for collecting, verifying and reporting disturbance and fee collection pursuant to the MSHCP.

Project Approach / Methods:
Clark County will conduct this project through a combination of staff and/or consultants, and will coordinate closely with Permittees and appropriate Clark County departments.

Because of the potential changes to programmatic requirements that may occur due to the MSHCP permit and plan amendment being pursued, the exact goal(s), description, benefits and approach/methods to this project may change to reflect new requirements or direction.

Estimated Project Cost:
\$300,000

Estimated Project Term:
July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

This project addresses the following budget principles:

Principle #1 - Fulfills explicit permit conditions outlined in the current permit. Although this project is not an explicit permit condition, it does enhance administration of the program (Permit Condition H and Section 2.1.8.2 of the MSHCP) and is responsive to the recent exempt acres audit findings, which highlighted issues with mitigation fee collection and tracking.

Principle #5 - Focuses on projects with measurable outcomes that are pertinent to the MSHCP. This project will respond to recent exempt acres audit findings and will provide for a consolidated and streamlined mitigation fee collection and tracking system.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
Desert Conservation Program

Project Name:
Desert Tortoise and Habitat Covariates Monitoring on the Boulder City Conservation Easement (BCCE)

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:
BCCE

Project Goal:
The project will test and implement a monitoring program for desert tortoise occupancy, habitat quality, and management effectiveness in the BCCE. The goal of the project is to provide timely and local data for adaptive management of the BCCE reserve area.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:
This project is related to and enhances the Desert Tortoise Monitoring project initiated in the 2011-2013 biennium. DCP staff has begun the habitat covariate monitoring and analysis work that is proposed to continue under this concept.

Funding for this project will provide for a pilot test of the two monitoring protocols for desert tortoise occupancy and habitat covariates. Expected work includes:

- Contractor to collect field data (first and second years) for certain habitat covariates.
- Contractor(s) who will provide advanced spatial analyses to generate certain other habitat covariates.
- Contractor/statistician to analyze all data, generate tortoise occupancy values for the BCCE, and test for correlations with the habitat covariates data.

DCP staff will provide:

- Oversight and project management of the above contractors, including procurement time;
- Spatial analyses for remaining habitat covariates;
- Quality control, quality assurance, and coordination for data that will come from a variety of sources;
- Data archiving;
- Annual reports on the data analysis outcomes to Science Advisor and USFWS;
- Coordination with Science Advisor to interpret results; and
- Coordination with Science Advisor and USFWS Desert Tortoise Recovery Office to update protocol and recommendations for adaptive management of the BCCE.

The outcome of this project will be a pilot test of a monitoring protocol for the BCCE and recommendations for adaptive management of the BCCE.

Project Approach / Methods:

Staff and contractors will be used to perform the above functions using the best available scientific and commercial data. Two peer-reviewed protocol documents describe the methods for data collection, management, archiving, and analysis in greater detail:

- *Testing the use of occupancy sampling to detect status and trends of Mojave Desert Tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) in the Boulder City Conservation Easement (October 2011).*
- *(DRAFT) Assessing the environmental variables that influence the status and trends of Mojave Desert Tortoise (Gopherus agassizii) in the Boulder City Conservation Easement (May 2012).*

Estimated Project Cost:

\$87,350

Estimated Project Term:

July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

Principle #2 - Focuses on mitigation and minimization activities that appropriately relate to the level and impact of take that is occurring and those species impacted. This project will produce the data and analyses that will be used by the Science Advisor and Adaptive Management Program to make recommendations for actions that are commensurate with the level and impact of take. This project will collect and analyze data about desert tortoise and its habitat in Mojave Desert Scrub, the ecosystem where the most acres of take under this permit have occurred.

Principle #3 - Provides for continued funding of ongoing and effective conservation measures. This project will continue work begun in the 2011-2013 biennium to implement a pilot desert tortoise monitoring program on the BCCE.

Principle #4 - Responds to the most recent Adaptive Management Report and Science Advisor recommendations. This project responds to a recommendation in the 2010 Adaptive Management Report to develop a local-scale desert tortoise occupancy, habitat, threats, and management action monitoring program.

Principle #5 - Focuses on projects with measurable outcomes that are pertinent to the MSHCP. This project collects and generates measurements of BCCE management action outcomes and is designed to answer MSHCP-specific questions relating to implementation effectiveness and status of tortoise use of the BCCE.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
Desert Conservation Program

Project Name:
Desert Tortoise Habitat Model for the Boulder City Conservation Easement (BCCE)

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:
BCCE

Project Goal:
The goal for this project is to generate a predictive desert tortoise habitat model for the BCCE at a finer resolution than is currently available.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:
This project is related to and enhances the Desert Tortoise Monitoring project initiated in the 2011-2013 biennium.

This funding will provide for:

- Use of MAXENT or other software to build and test a spatial predictive habitat model
- Consultant to generate raster-type datasets from shapefile datasets

DCP staff will:

- Build and test the model,
- Write a report describing the method to generate the model and document its strengths and weaknesses.

Project Approach / Methods:

Staff and/or contractors will be used to perform the above functions using the best available scientific and commercial data.

Estimated Project Cost:
\$5,000

Estimated Project Term:
January 1, 2015 through June 30, 2015 (anticipated)

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

Principle #3 - Provides for continued funding of ongoing and effective conservation measures. This project will continue work begun in the 2011-2013 biennium to implement a pilot desert tortoise monitoring program on the BCCE, and will enhance that project.

Principle #4 - Responds to the most recent Adaptive Management Report and Science Advisor recommendations. This project responds to a recommendation in 2009 BCCE management plan to better inventory and understand the natural resources (and tortoise habitat quality) of

the BCCE. This model will help with prioritization of areas within the BCCE for additional management activities.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
Desert Conservation Program

Project Name:
Boulder City Conservation Easement (BCCE) Restoration

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:
BCCE (86,423 acres in Boulder City, NV); alternatively activities may occur on Boulder City or Bureau of Land Management land in and around the BCCE.

Project Goal:
To protect, conserve and restore the habitat for the indigenous flora and fauna that occur on the easement.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:
Restoration, enhancement and maintenance of habitat and structures within the BCCE is an ongoing need and falls outside the purview of baseline management required in the easement agreement. Depending upon need, this project may provide for:

- Population enhancement of native species
- Restoration of areas affected by fire, dumping, shooting, wastewater discharge, illegal/unauthorized vehicle use, camping, etc.
- Maintenance and/or replacement of kiosks, signage, tortoise guards, or other structures.

Project Approach / Methods:
The DCP maintains a management plan for the BCCE, which is updated periodically to address management needs, adaptive management program input, and unforeseen circumstances. Specific project needs will be determined through plan review and updates. Staff and/or contractors will be used to perform the necessary activities. Volunteers may also be utilized.

Estimated Project Cost:
\$250,000

Estimated Project Term:
July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

This project addresses the following budget principles:
Principle #1 - Fulfills explicit permit conditions outlined in the current permit. Although this project is not an explicit permit condition, it does enhance permit condition P, which requires the management of the BCCE to protect and manage the desert tortoise and its habitat.

Principle #4 - Responds to the most recent Adaptive Management Report and Science Advisor recommendations. Although this project may not address previous reports or science advice, it is intended to be responsive to current programmatic needs at the time of funding.

Principle #5 - Focuses on projects with measurable outcomes that are pertinent to the MSHCP. This project will respond to current management needs and will result in measurable outcomes such as number of acres restored, items maintained, etc.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Project Name:
Desert Tortoise Conservation Center (DTCC) - Operational Support

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:
Desert Tortoise Conservation Center, 11795 S. Rainbow Blvd., Las Vegas, NV ; land is managed by the Bureau of Land Management

Project Goal:
Assist in recovery efforts for the Mojave desert tortoise by supporting applied research, training programs, and education occurring at the DTCC.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:
The DTCC assists in conservation and recovery of the Mojave desert tortoise through applied research (by both hosting and conducting), by serving as a venue for training programs (*e.g.*, range-wide monitoring and health assessments), and by doing public outreach and education about the desert tortoise and Mojave Desert ecosystem. The applied conservation science conducted at and through the DTCC informs the DTRO and other groups about disease risk and treatment, suitability of individuals for population augmentation efforts, and other key topics that help to guide recovery strategies. Through continuation of these programs at the DTCC, we expect to gain critical information needed for recovery.

Project Approach / Methods: The DTCC accomplishes its recovery mission through the planned implementation of the following goals focused on the recovery the Mojave desert tortoise:

1. **Applied Research:** Study the fundamental biology, behavior, and disease ecology of desert tortoises, including conducting standardized health and post-mortem examinations which will identify potential health or disease issues among tortoises at the center and may identify critical health threats to free-living tortoises.
2. **Tortoise Husbandry:** Provide professional care and treatment for a living collection of tortoises held at the facility.
3. **Teaching and Training Biologists:** Train professional biologists and the current and next generation of desert conservation scientists, building capacity through college and university education programs and professional training courses that emphasize science-based approaches to desert tortoise conservation locally and range-wide.
4. **Education and Engaging the Community:** Create new extension/outreach opportunities that enable everyone (school children, the public, special interest groups, other organizations) to gain access to information about the conservation needs of desert tortoises, reduce the intake of unwanted pet tortoises, and encourage people to take action to care for the desert ecosystem.

Estimated Project Cost (see budget template):

We are working towards reducing the number of tortoises in the collection and the total operating costs of the facility. The requested budget is based on current costs, but actual costs are expected to be reduced over the course of the next several years. 2 yr: \$500,446 (~1/3 total operating budget for 2 yrs) (3yr: 750,573)

Estimated Project Term:

The project consists of 3 years of a long-term program.

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

1. Fulfills explicit permit conditions outlined in the current permit.

The proposed project would provide operational support to the facility used for the proposed augmentation/translocation research that responds to and addresses measures listed in section 2.1.8.2 of the MSHCP, and permit conditions H and M.

2. Focuses on mitigation and minimization actions that are commensurate with the level and impact of take that is currently occurring and those species impacted.

The proposed project would provide operational support to the facility used for the augmentation/translocation research that would identify potential release sites for desert tortoises that are currently being held at the DTCC, which will promote repatriating tortoises back into the wild and reducing tortoise numbers at the DTCC.

3. Provides for continued funding of ongoing and effective conservation measures.

The proposed project would provide operational support to the facility used for the augmentation/translocation research that would improve effectiveness of past and current translocation of tortoises displaced by MSHCP covered activities.

5. Focuses on projects with measurable outcomes that are pertinent to the MSHCP.

The proposed project would provide operational support to the facility used for the augmentation/translocation research that would contribute to the biological goal of the MSHCP to maintain stable or increasing population numbers (MSHCP section 2.6, page 2-172 and Table 2-5, Measurable Biological Goals for the desert tortoise) by implementing a scientifically-supported translocation program that should result in measurable outcomes, both in the wild and at the DTCC.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Project Name:
Population Augmentation/Translocation

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:

Translocations will occur at sites to be selected within Clark County, NV in coordination with land and wildlife management agencies; land may be managed by the Bureau of Land Management or other entities agreeing to the translocations.

Project Goal:
Assist in recovery efforts for the Mojave desert tortoise by supporting applied research pertaining to the augmentation of wild desert tortoise populations.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:
Augmenting depleted populations through a strategic program is one of the seven strategic elements in the 2011 Recovery Plan for the Mojave desert tortoise. This project will support that key element through on-the-ground work to select release sites in Clark County that are connected to wild populations (expanding beyond the LSTS) and conduct associated research and monitoring. The expected benefit is to move closer to using population augmentation as a tool in recovery and to make good use of some of the many tortoises that reside at the DTCC.

Project Approach / Methods:
Funds provided would go to the Zoological Society of San Diego for continued support of their desert tortoise translocation research coordinator and potentially to additional third parties for on-the-ground assessments of potential release sites (to include evaluation of habitat and resident population density and health status). Evaluation of recipient sites includes density surveys and health assessments of the resident tortoise population.

Estimated Project Cost (see budget template):
2 yr: \$769,133 (\$934,673 = 3 yr)

Estimated Project Term:
The project consists of 2 years of a longer-term program.

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

1. Fulfills explicit permit conditions outlined in the current permit.

Responds to and addresses measures listed in section 2.1.8.2 of the MSHCP, and permit conditions H and M.

2. Focuses on mitigation and minimization actions that are commensurate with the level and impact of take that is currently occurring and those species impacted.

The MSHCP's covered activities primarily impact desert tortoises and their habitat. The proposed project will be used to identify potential release sites for desert tortoises that are currently being held at the DTCC, which will promote repatriating tortoises back into the wild and reducing tortoise numbers at the DTCC.

3. Provides for continued funding of ongoing and effective conservation measures.

The proposed project will result in improving effectiveness of past and current translocation activities so that tortoises displaced by development and housed at the DTCC can be used in population augmentation efforts that will contribute to recovery.

5. Focuses on projects with measurable outcomes that are pertinent to the MSHCP.

The proposed research would contribute to the biological goal of the MSHCP to maintain stable or increasing population numbers (MSHCP section 2.6, page 2-172 and Table 2-5, Measurable Biological Goals for the desert tortoise) by implementing a scientifically-supported translocation program that should result in measurable outcomes, both in the wild and at the DTCC.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Prepared by:
Desert Conservation Program

Project Name:
MSHCP Permit Amendment Development and Transition

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:
Clark County, NV

Project Goal:
The goal of this project is to complete, plan and transition administration of the program from the current MSHCP to the amended plan and permit.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:
The DCP is currently pursuing a formal amendment to the Clark County MSHCP and Section 10 Incidental Take Permit. The DCP has been working with stakeholders and a community advisory committee to develop new or updated minimization, mitigation and conservation strategies to be implemented under the amended permit and plan. As work on the amended plan continues, revisions to the final document will be necessary and updates to biological and regulatory analyses will be needed. This concept is based on proposals currently under discussion that may or may not be included in the final plan. Some of the elements currently under development include:

- Management of reserve lands for conservation purposes
- Mandatory pre-construction clearances of certain covered species
- Construction worker education
- Seed collection for covered plants

Project Approach / Methods:
Adjustments to the infrastructure and administration of the DCP will need to be considered to address new or updated minimization, mitigation and conservation strategies to ensure smooth and efficient compliance with the amended MSHCP. This could include conducting management analyses, developing business and management plans, establishing new programs, software development, preparing the legal property boundary and description of the reserves, purchasing insurance, resolving any issues with real estate transactions, public outreach, hiring additional temporary and/or permanent staff, hiring technical experts, providing staff training and development, coordinating the establishment of new contracts and interlocal agreements, purchasing equipment and supplies, and addressing any legal needs.

Because of the uncertainty of the amended MSHCP requirements given the date of the development of this concept and finalization of the amended MSHCP, the exact transition activities to be implemented are unknown and will be based on the new requirements and direction established in the final amended plan and permit.

Estimated Project Cost:

\$836,000 project costs

Estimated Project Term:

July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015

(Note: Funding from previous biennia may extend into 2013-2015, and funding from this biennium may extend into future biennia.)

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

Principle #5 - Advances the amendment of the MSHCP and its conservation strategy. The purpose of this project is to advance the MSHCP amendment by providing for all necessary actions.

**Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP)
Desert Conservation Program (DCP)
Project Concept Summary Form: 2013-2015 Biennium**

Project Name:

Muddy River Restoration Phase II

Location of activities, MSHCP Management Area (IMA/LIMA/MUMA/UMA) and land manager/owner:

Activities will occur on the Muddy River Reserve properties in the northeastern Mojave Desert, Clark County.

Project Goal:

The goal of the project is to conduct restoration and enhancement of riparian habitat for the benefit of covered MSHCP riparian species.

Project Description and Anticipated Benefit:

This is a continuation of restoration work being performed in the 2011-2013 biennium. Activities may include but are not limited to: plant collection/propagation/acquisition, nursery development, active revegetation, irrigation installation and maintenance, plant monitoring, planting area preparation, and municipal water use. Water is anticipated to be needed for up to three years of initial planting.

Project Approach / Methods:

Clark County will continue to conduct restoration and enhancement activities for the Muddy River properties through a combination of staff, consultants and/or field crews.

Estimated Project Cost:

\$88,650

Estimated Project Term:

July 1, 2013 through June 30, 2015

Specific 13-15 Budget Principles Addressed by this Concept (include specific Incidental Take Permit Condition(s) addressed):

This project addresses the following budget principles:

Principle #2 - Focuses on mitigation and minimization actions that are commensurate with the level and impact of take that is currently occurring and those species impacted. Restoration on the property focuses on mitigation actions that are commensurate with the level and impact of take that is currently occurring and those species impacted. Over the past two years, approximately 81 acres of riparian property has been impacted in Clark County.

Principle #3 - Provides for continued funding of ongoing and effective conservation measures. This project is a continuation of restoration activities begun in the 2011-2013 biennium and contributes to ongoing management of the Muddy River riparian properties.

Principle #5 - Focuses on projects with measurable outcomes that are pertinent to the MSHCP. DCP staff can create measurable outcomes such as number of site visits, type/extent of weeds removed, number of plants planted, etc.