

QUARTERLY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

JULY – SEPTEMBER 2019



IN THIS ISSUE

Boulder City Conservation Easement (BCCE)	2
Riparian Reserve Units	3
Public Information & Education	4
Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance	5
Other Work	5
Adaptive Management	6
Permit Amendment	6
External Agency Coordination	7
Projects	8
Administration and Finance	9, 10
Opportunities & Announcements	11

DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM

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



Clockwise from top: Alkali mariposa lily; Las Vegas bearpoppy; Blue Diamond cholla; and Joshua tree. (Photos: S. Ferrazzano)

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 agassizzi*) 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 the interlocal agreement with Boulder City for Law Enforcement on the BCCE.
- Conducted 13 site visits to monitor use, disturbances and related issues; to perform new signage installation, and maintenance and infrastructure upgrades.
- Met with law enforcement during three site visits to plan patrols to cover areas where violations had occurred.
- Continued coordination with utility companies based in the Energy Zone in order to meet desert conservation and restoration goals.
- BEC Environmental, Inc. completed round two of small mammal surveys at the BCCE.
- SWCA Environmental Consultants completed cultural surveys and a draft report of the findings at future restoration areas.
- Began processing a Reserve Use Request from Southwest Gas for their System Replacement project.
- Continued mapping and assessment of unauthorized roads and other disturbances to guide prioritization of restoration activities on the BCCE.

A comprehensive list of BCCE management accomplishments for this quarter can be viewed here: <http://bit.ly/2xSXOSo>

RIPARIAN RESERVE UNITS

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

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

Muddy River Reserve Unit

- Continued planning efforts for the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 16 project to conduct habitat restoration on the Muddy River Reserve Unit. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was prepared to complete the restoration design. The proposals were evaluated and a contract was approved by the Board of County Commissioners last quarter. Data collection will begin in Q4 2019.
- The National Park Service's (NPS) Exotic Plant Management Team (EPMT) continued to conduct monitoring of restoration implementation for the SNPLMA Round 14 project. EPMT will continue monitoring the site through Q3 2019.
- NPS' EPMT continued to conduct vegetation management and maintenance activities for enhancement of native riparian species on the Muddy and Virgin River Reserves.
- Continued monthly data collection on groundwater monitoring wells.



EPMT Crews Work to Restore Habitat at the Muddy River Reserve Unit

A comprehensive list of Riparian Reserve Units management accomplishments for this quarter can be viewed here: <http://bit.ly/30A6UzJ>

Virgin River Reserve Unit

- Continued planning efforts for a SNPLMA Round 15 project to conduct 20 to 40 acres of habitat restoration on the Virgin River Reserve. Staff continued monitoring of masticated area for non-native plant species.
 - Participated in the Virgin River Coalition Steering Committee.
 - NPS' EPMT continued vegetation management and maintenance activities for enhancement of native riparian species.
 - Continued photo-monitoring documentation of restored areas within the Mormon Mesa site.
 - Continued coordination to execute a non-exclusive lease agreement for agricultural use of a portion of the Bunkerville site.
- ### Property Acquisition
- Continued coordination with Public Works Map Team to subdivide parcels identified for future acquisition.
 - Completed one parcel map in Q1 which was processed by the County Assessor's Office during this quarter.
 - Completed one parcel map this quarter which is currently being processed by the County Assessor's Office.



Photos of property at the Virgin River Reserve Unit



PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

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

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

Mojave Max Education Program

- Continued to provide oversight and project management for the contract with Get Outdoors Nevada for the Mojave Max Education Program.
- Conducted three Tortoise Talks during this reporting period.
- Conducted four outreach events during this reporting period.
- Mojave Max Assembly Applications went live on September 3rd.



Candlelighters 5K

Outreach Events and Mojave Max Appearances

Conducted the following outreach events during this reporting period:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|---------|
| • Discovery Day | Wetlands Park | July 6 |
| • Nat'l Assoc of Counties Conf | Paris Hotel & Casino | July 13 |
| • Candlelighters Superhero 5K | Exploration Peak Park | Sept 14 |
| • NV Public Lands Day | Mountains Edge Park | Sept 28 |



Public Lands Day

FOLLOW MOJAVE MAX

Get information about Mojave Max, who he is and why he's an important mascot for the Desert Conservation Program. Also check out his website at MojaveMax.com. Follow him on social media too!



Mojave Max



Mojave_Max



@MojaveMax



ATTENTION CONSTRUCTION PERSONNEL

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

CONSTRUCTION SITE TRAINING

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

WILD DESERT TORTOISE ASSISTANCE

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line

The 1995 Desert Conservation Plan and the 2001 MSHCP require that 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.

- Received three calls from the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line during this reporting period and all tortoises were picked up.

DCP in the News!

Staff relocated five wild desert tortoises displaced by construction activities to habitat south of Boulder City, NV. Details can be found in the following news articles: [Las Vegas Sun](#), [8 News Now](#).

Desert Tortoise Fencing

- Continued planning activities for the construction of post-and-cable and desert tortoise fencing along the boundary of the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument. This project will go out for bid once the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has completed their cadastral survey of the monument.

OTHER WORK

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Through an interlocal agreement with the Nevada Division of Minerals, six bat compatible closures are being installed in the Good-springs Mining District.
- SWCA Environmental Consultants completed this year's avian point count surveys and federally listed bird surveys at the BCCE and all riparian reserve units.
- Awarded a contract with Eagle View Contractors for on-call maintenance of the Riparian Reserves.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Held the DCP Annual Project Review Symposium on August 28th. Copies of the presentations can be viewed [here](#).
- Held the Quarterly Science Advisor meeting on August 29th.
- Published a paper in [Biological Conservation](#) (Harju and Cambrin 2019)



Mount Charleston Blue Butterfly

Permit Amendment

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

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Continued to coordinate with the USFWS to discuss issues related to the proposed MSHCP amendment.
- Continued to work with Permittees on a proposed federal lands bill that will support efforts to obtain an amended MSHCP; continued to coordinate with elected officials and other stakeholders on the development of the lands bill; began responding to several public records requests related to the proposed lands bill.
- Continued to administer a contract with Ebbin, Moser + Skaggs, LLP to provide legal counsel services in support of the permit amendment effort.
- Continued to administer a contract with WRA Environmental Consultants to assist with the preparation of documents and analyses that will support development of the MSHCP amendment; draft habitat functionality methods were developed this quarter and will continue next quarter.
- Continued to administer an interlocal agreement with University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) for the development of an additional 17 species distribution models. The models will be used in the development of the habitat functionality analysis and to estimate and track impacts to species.
- Executed an interlocal agreement with UNR for the development of a golden eagle species habitat model.

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 data to Panorama Environmental Inc.
- Provided GIS data to Defenders of Wildlife Organization.
- Provided GIS data to The Nature Conservancy.
- Provided GIS data to Olympia Companies.
- Provided GIS data to Slater Hanifan Group.
- Provided GIS to Southern California Edison Company.
- Provide Maps to the Clark County Off-Highway Vehicle Committee.
- Attended Environmental Systems Research Institute's (ESRI's) annual GIS Conference July 7th – July 10th.
- Met with renewable energy developers to review proposed project siting and discuss potential land use conflicts.
- Served as a cooperating agency to the BLM's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Gemini Solar Project.
- Provided assistance to the Clark County Wetlands Park regarding Endangered Species Act compliance during long-term operations.
- Continued to coordinate with the Clark County Regional Flood Control District on the development of a new in-lieu fee mitigation program for projects that require a permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act; the Draft Prospectus has been accepted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and has been made available for public review and comment for a 30-day period.
- Provided interview assistance to the Department for recruitment purposes; participated in paperless interview testing.



Spring Mountains Acastus Checkerspot butterfly

NEW, ONGOING, AND CLOSED PROJECTS

New projects started this quarter

- Golden Eagle Habitat Model, 1460F
- Muddy River Habitat Restoration, 1570C
- Water Rights Consulting, 1720E
- Riparian Reserves Maintenance, 1720F
- VR Coalition Project Planning, 1750B
- Road Warrior DT Mortality Survey, 1955A

Ongoing projects this quarter

- DT Health Assess & Pickup Svc Support, 803F
- DT Awareness & Invasive Spec Ed for OHV, 807H
- BCCE Cultural Resource Survey, 809M
- Parceling for Bunkerville Property, 917BD
- Legal Services for DCP, 1014J
- BCCE DT Telemetry & Health Assess, 1412D
- HCP Consultant for the MSCHP, 1460A
- Species Distribution Modeling, Phase II, 1460E
- Virgin River Riparian Restoration, 1521E
- Desert Tortoise Monitoring Data Management, Year 2-5, 1541A
- Desert Tortoise Range-Wide Monitoring, 1541B
- Relict Leopard Frog Conservation Planning and Implementation, 1550A



Yellow-billed cuckoo

Ongoing projects this quarter Cont'd.

- Desert Tortoise Connectivity, 1580A
- BCCE Weed Survey, 1710B
- BCCE Maintenance, 1710C
- Virgin River Weed Management, 1720A
- Science Advisor Panel for the DCP, 1730A
- Effects of Exotic Forage on Mojave DT, 1730J
- Avian Species Surveys, 1730K
- Gold Butte AML Closures, 1792C
- Desert Tortoise Predator-Prey Dynamics, 1795A
- BCCE Law Enforcement, 1905B
- Mojave Max Education Program, 1915A

Projects closed this quarter

- Parceling for Virgin River Properties, 917DE
- Parceling for Bunkerville Property, 917MB
- Riparian Reserve Units Property Maintenance, 1520M
- Mormon Mesa Restoration Project, 1521Z
- Virgin River Drone Imagery, 1750A
- OHV Marketing, 1775A

Requests for proposals and quotes (RFPs / RFQs)

The following RFPs / RFQs were advertised this quarter:

- Desert Tortoise Connectivity Across Roadways
- Science Advisor Panel
- Implementation of To The Max Campaign
- Desert Tortoise Occupancy on the BCCE
- Water Rights Consulting
- Riparian Reserves Maintenance
- Muddy River Habitat Restoration
- Virgin River Coalition Planning

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

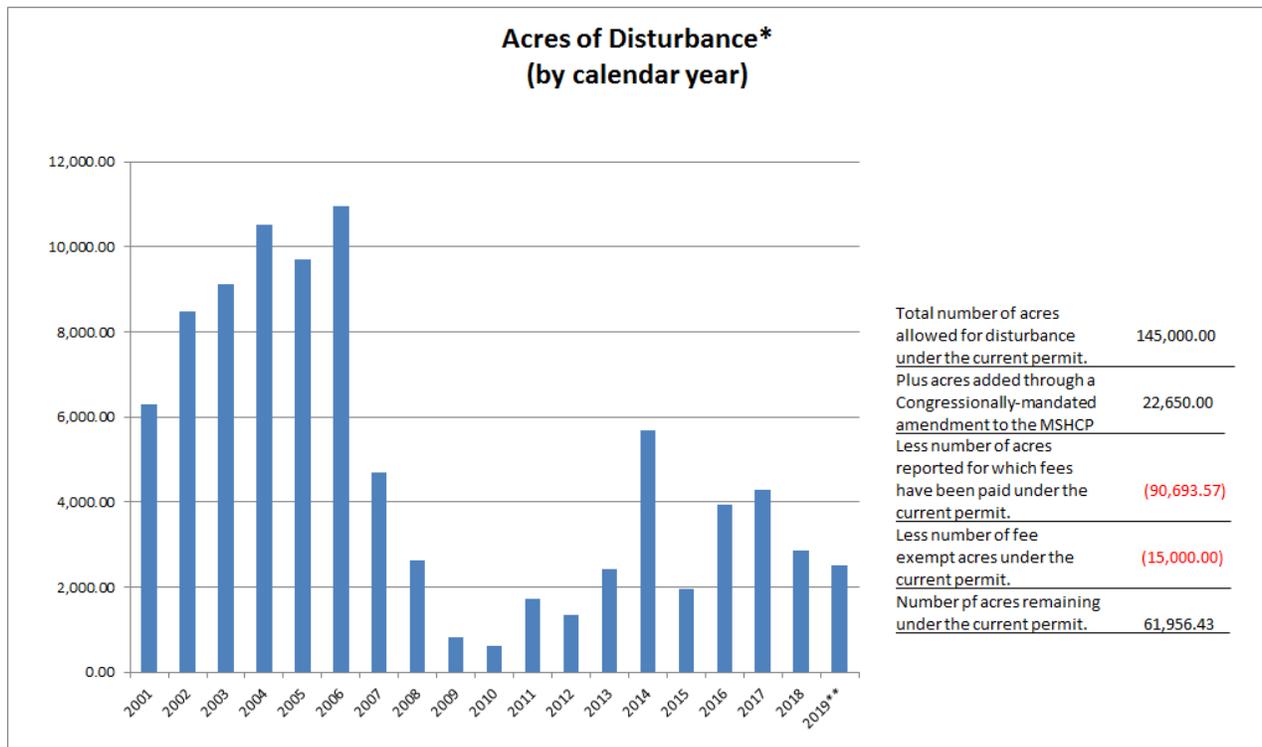
ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Processed vendor payments— 45 invoices: 45 accepted (100%), 0 rejected (0%).
- Fiscal Year (FY) 19 Budgets reconciled for end of year close and rolled into new fiscal year. Expenditures for FY20 continue to be monitored regularly to ensure appropriate spending and reporting occur.
- Completed Phase 1 of converting all the existing credit card terminals to the new processor, Wells Fargo. Phase 2 of converting the existing web and IVR systems has been completed. Phase 3 is in process to establish e-payments services for County departments that did not currently offer e-payments.
- Continued production of the desert tortoise specialty license plate and plates are being distributed at Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles (DMVs). Active plates are currently exceeding the 1,000 minimum threshold.
- Continued oversight of the SNPLMA Round 14 – Round 17 projects totaling \$7,790,244 in the County's financial system. The projects continue to be monitored for progress and reimbursement.
- Received reimbursement for SNPLMA projects: Round 14 – one draw down (\$13,536.00).
- Began development of the 2017-2019 Biennium Progress Report; the report will be completed next quarter and posted to the website.



Red Rock Canyon, NCA

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

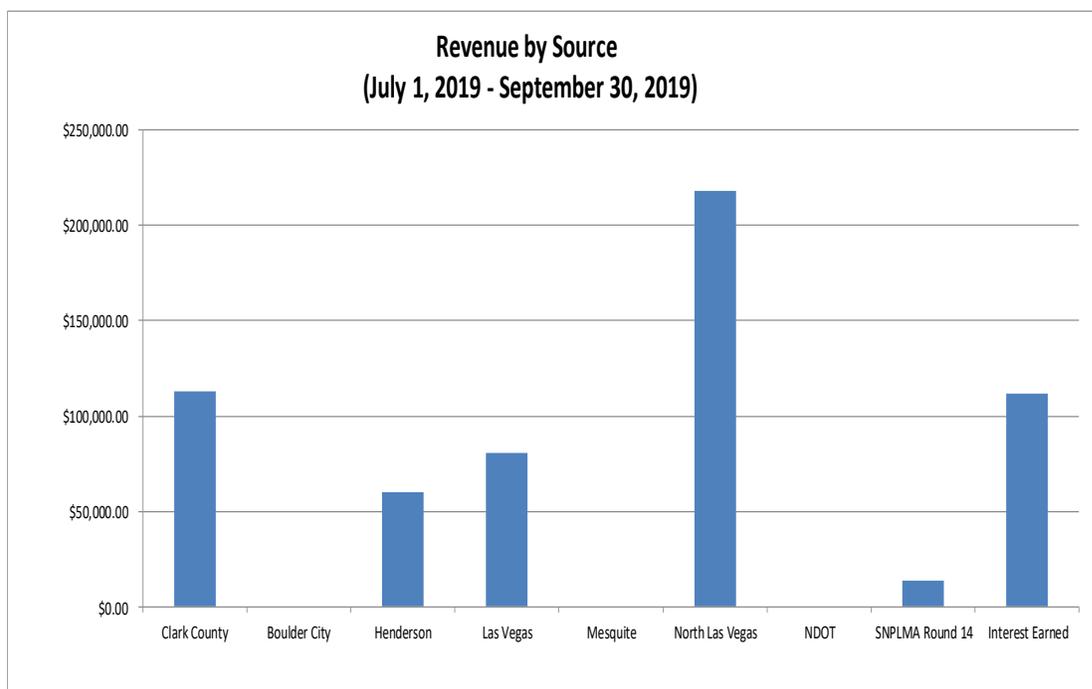
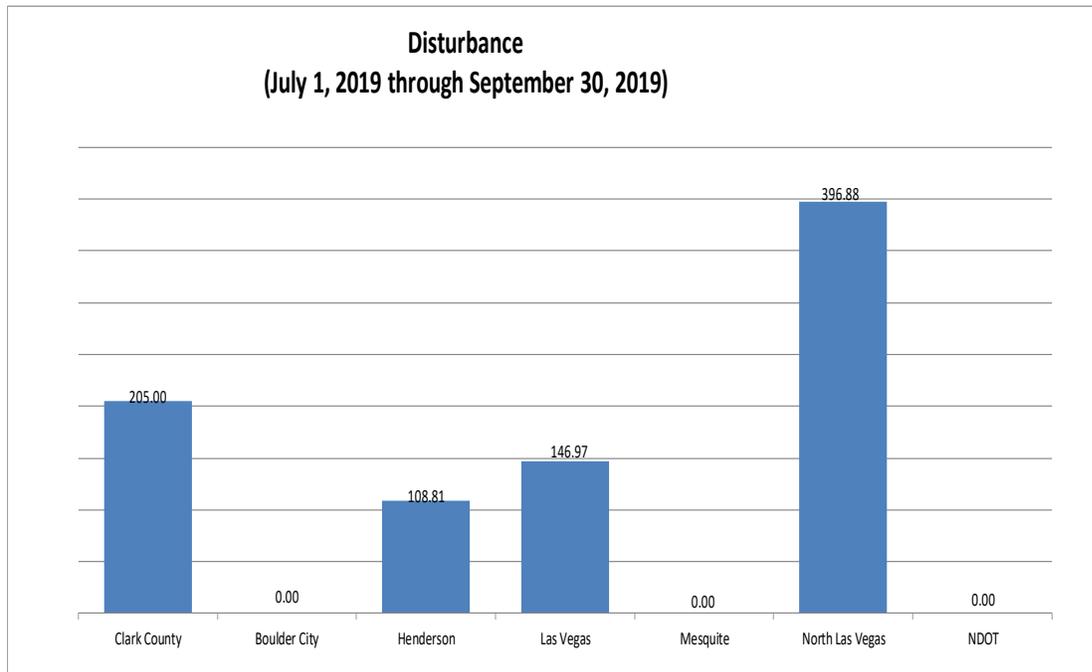


*Total acres reported in this chart do not include 15,000 acres of municipal development, which were exempt from the payment of mitigation fees through January 2010.

**2019 totals are subject to change.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE — CONTINUED

Western Burrowing Owl



OPPORTUNITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Desert Tortoise License Plate

The Desert Tortoise License Plate continues to be available at Nevada Department of Motor Vehicle offices across the state. Click here for more information about the [plate](#).

Those interested in viewing any RFPs that are advertised for the DCP, are encouraged to sign up through Nevada Government EMarketplace ([NGEM](#)) to receive RFP notifications. Please check the Clark County opportunities page regularly at <http://bit.ly/2bBOrvz> for RFP opportunities.

Employment opportunities:

Please check for employment opportunities within the DCP, as well as other County departments, by visiting Clark County's Human Resources webpage: [HR](#)

DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM

**CLARK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AIR QUALITY
DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM
4701 WEST RUSSELL ROAD, SUITE 200
LAS VEGAS, NV 89118**

WWW.CLARKCOUNTYNV.GOV/DCP

 MOJAVEMAX.COM

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