

# QUARTERLY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

April—June, 2022



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## DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM

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

## Permit Amendment

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

### ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Continued to coordinate with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management to discuss issues related to the proposed MSHCP amendment; held the quarterly coordination meeting on May 4, 2022.
- Continued to work with Permittees on a proposed federal lands bill that will support efforts to obtain an amended MSHCP; draft legislation was introduced in March 2021; continued to coordinate with Bureau of Land Management to refine and finalize boundaries for various land use designations identified in the legislation.
- Continued to administer a contract with WRA Environmental Consultants to assist with the preparation of documents and analyses that will support development of the MSHCP amendment. This quarter, drafts were developed or revised for Chapter 2 (covered activities), Chapter 9 (implementation), and Appendix D (burrowing owl protocols).
- Continued to administer a contract with Cogan Technology to prepare a County-wide fine-scale vegetation map. This quarter site visits were conducted for field verification of photo interpretations; Coarse Level Mapping for 18 out of 22 work zones were completed; and the SNPLMA Partners Working Group recommended funding the Fine-Scale Mapping effort for Round 19.
- Continue to administer a contract with SWCA Environmental Consultants to conduct avian surveys to improve knowledge of ecology and distribution of proposed covered avian species. Year 2 surveys were completed in early June and a final project report is expected next quarter.
- Kicked off a new contract with SWCA Environmental Consultants to conduct bat surveys to improve knowledge of ecology and distribution of proposed covered bat species. Acoustic surveys were initiated in May and are ongoing; roost surveys will begin next quarter.
- Continued to administer a contract with Ventajas, LLC to conduct research on conflicts and encumbrances within the proposed Special Management Areas that will serve as the Reserve System under an amended MSHCP. Summary reports for the Desert Tortoise Protective Corridor, Muddy Mountains, and Bitter Springs special management areas were completed this quarter.
- Continue to administer a contract with Ebbin, Moser + Skaggs, LLP to provide legal counsel services in support of the permit amendment effort.
- Prepared a request for quotes to solicit a contractor to conduct a funding analysis for the MSHCP Amendment; a contractor will be selected next quarter.
- Submitted nominations to the Bureau of Land Management for 4 species to be designated as Sensitive in the Southern Nevada District Office.
- Re-initiated regular meetings of the Executive Committee to continue coordination with the Permittees on issues related to the permit amendment effort; the first meeting was held on May 25, 2022.



Burrowing Owls at Rainbow Owl Preserve



## BOULDER CITY CONSERVATION EASEMENT (BCCE)

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

### ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Continued to provide oversight and project management for the interlocal agreement with Boulder City for Law Enforcement on the BCCE. Law Enforcement officers are assisting in investigating the source of these dumpsites and unauthorized routes. Law Enforcement continues to engage in contacting those responsible and investigations are currently ongoing.
- The County is participating in patrol ride-alongs with Law Enforcement on the BCCE to work together in minimizing illegal road use, trash dumping, and other illegal activities; this quarter, there was a decrease in shooting areas, illegal dump sites and unauthorized routes observed on the BCCE. The County and Boulder City Police Department continue to focus on educating the public on the open road and usage of the Easement.
- Continued to administer a contract for ongoing maintenance of roads, fences, and other various maintenance needs.
- Continued coordination with utility companies based in the Energy Zone in order to meet desert conservation and restoration goals.
- Continued mapping and assessment of unauthorized roads and other disturbances to guide prioritization of restoration activities on the BCCE.
- Gothic Landscape, Inc. has continued maintenance and scheduled watering of shrubs planted in late 2021 to restore a decommissioned road located in valuable desert tortoise habitat at the BCCE.

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

# RIPARIAN RESERVE UNITS

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

## ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

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

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### Muddy River Reserve Unit

- Continued planning efforts for the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 16 project to conduct habitat restoration on the Muddy River Reserve Unit - Natural Channel Design was selected to complete the restoration design. Their design is in its final stage and currently under review with Public Works and Clark County Regional Flood Control District for the necessary construction permits.
- Continued coordination with adjacent landowners to request easements for future restoration implementation activities.
- American Conservation Experience continued tamarisk treatment.
- Submitted applications to change the place of use for Muddy River water right permits. These applications will support future Muddy River Reserve revegetation efforts.
- Continued monthly data collection on groundwater monitoring wells.
- Attended monthly meetings with Muddy River Biological Advisory Committee.



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### Virgin River Reserve Unit

- Continued monitoring of Mormon Mesa parcel for browsing and trampling by trespass cattle, and non-native plant species. Eagle View Contractors, Inc. installed fencing along southern property boundary to exclude unauthorized cattle.
- Continued management of NPS' Invasive Plant Management Team for survey of vegetation and maintenance activities for enhancement of native riparian species.
- Request to adjudicate hydrobasins 222, 223, and 224, was submitted in Q2 2020 to Nevada Division of Water Resources. Currently under review.
- Examined inventory of water rights and determined that fifty-eight (58) surface water rights and twelve (12) groundwater rights could be conveyed to the Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDOW). Board of County Commissioners approved proposed conveyance of water rights. The State approved the conveyance in Q2 2022. Staff will coordinate with NDOW to update the ownership of each water right with the State of Nevada Division of Water Resources.
- Participated in Virgin River Coalition meeting.



Cattle damage at Virgin River Reserve Unit

### Property Acquisition

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

### Other

- Continued management of contract with SWCA to evaluate archaeological resources. They evaluated resources for the newly acquired parcels on the Virgin River and submitted a final report. No resources were found within the parcels.
- Continued management of contract with SWCA to conduct avian surveys on riparian properties. Surveys began in Q2, including point count surveys, southwestern willow flycatcher (SWFL) and yellow-billed cuckoo (YBCU) protocol surveys, and nest monitoring.
- Participated in meetings with Clark County Regional Flood Control District for development of an In Lieu Fee Program.
- Attended Healthy Public Lands Conference.



Fencing at 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.
- Received preliminary report resulting from program evaluation performed by INFORM Evaluation and Research

### Outreach Events and Mojave Max Appearances

- Announced the emergence of Mojave Max via social media and a news release
- Hosted the Mojave Max Emergence Winner announcement
- Hosted the Mojave Max Emergence Winner field trip to Springs Preserve
- Participated in multiple Spring events throughout the valley
- Participated in Earth Day event at Springs Preserve

# FOLLOW MOJAVE MAX

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

Follow him on social media too!



Mojave Max



Mojave\_Max



@MojaveMax



Mojave\_Max



# CLARK COUNTY DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM



## ATTENTION CONSTRUCTION PERSONNEL

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

## CONSTRUCTION SITE TRAINING

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



## WILD DESERT TORTOISE ASSISTANCE

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

### ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

#### Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line

- Continued to administer a contract with Ecocentric to provide support for the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line and in conducting health assessments for tortoises that are removed from construction sites.
- One call was received from the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line during this reporting period with 1 tortoise picked up from a construction site and placed into quarantine.
- Performed health assessments on 6 tortoises.



#### Translocation

- N/A

#### Connectivity

- Completed a 5 year SNPLMA project relating to tortoise connectivity across roadways. these projects culminated in the development of a Connectivity Management Plan for Clark County.

#### Desert Tortoise Fencing

- Continued planning activities for the construction of post-and-cable and desert tortoise fencing along the boundary of the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument. A revised scope of work was sent out for bid. In March 2022, the contract was awarded to JNJ Engineering and construction is set to begin in September 2022.

## OTHER CONSERVATION WORK

### ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Natural Resource Conservation LLC produced a final synthesis report combining the findings of the literature review and discussions from our Mojave Desert Tortoise Habitat Restoration Workshop. The report is available on the DCP website (2017-NRC-1760A).
- Southwest Decisions Resources, Inc. organized post-workshop meetings and corresponded with participants of the Mojave Desert Tortoise Habitat Restoration Workshop. They developed a workshop summary report which is available on the DCP website (2017-SDR-1760B).
- Ironwood Consulting completed rare plant surveys at the end of 2021. A final project report is in development (2017-IRONWOOD-1775A).
- U.S. Geological Survey continued to study rare plant propagation for this project through an interlocal agreement. Research activities included seedbank emergence trials, greenhouse pollination trials, field pollination trials, multiple population site visits, and maintenance of plants propagated in previous seasons (2019-USGS-1990A).
- U.S. Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Research Service completed the first year of Las Vegas bear poppy and Mojave poppy bee surveys for this project through an interlocal agreement. Data for this season is currently being processed (2021-USDA\_ARS-2085A).
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas began field studies for Phase 2 of our Riparian Plan-Pollinator Ecology research. Activities included establishment of new surveys plots, resurveying of previous survey plots, sweep netting for potential pollinators, soil sampling, and soil property analysis (2021-UNVL-2065A).
- SWCA began this year’s avian surveys at DCP’s riparian reserve units and the BCCE. The surveys will continue into the next quarter (2021-SWCA-2020E).
- DCP staff began this year’s annual acoustic bat monitoring at five riparian reserve sites. The surveys will continue into next quarter.
- Continue to administer a contract with University of Nevada Reno to model Gila monster habitat. This quarter, an amendment was executed to the contract to be able to use updated climate data for the models which included a no cost extension with an extension to the contract.



Las Vegas Bear Poppy

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## ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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

### ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Continue to administer a contract with Alta Sciences to provide for an independent Science Advisor Panel; held the Quarterly Science Advisor meeting.

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## EXTERNAL AGENCY COORDINATION AND ASSISTANCE

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

### ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Continued to participate in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Desert Tortoise Transportation Ecology work group.
- Continued to participate in the Desert Tortoise Management Oversight Group meetings.
- Continued mapping and GIS support on Southern Nevada Economic Development and Conservation Act
- Continued to serve as a cooperating agency to the Bureau of Land Management’s Gold Butte Implementation Plan project.
- Continue to serve as a cooperating agency for the Bureau of Land Management’s Logandale Trails Resource Management Plan Amendment; a briefing meeting has been scheduled for August.
- Continue to serve as a cooperating agency to the Bureau of Land Management’s Piute –Eldorado Valley Area of Critical Environmental Concern Management Plan; submitted comments on the draft EA in April.
- Prepared letters documenting Endangered Species Act compliance for projects requiring the submittal of map revisions to the Federal Emergency Management Agency; 8 letters were prepared this quarter.
- Continue to participate in meetings related to the update of Title 30 and Clark County development code.
- Continue to meet with solar developers to conduct initial project reviews and identify concerns/issues; met with 2 companies this quarter.

# LIST OF PROJECTS ADMINISTERED THIS QUARTER

Ongoing and active projects this quarter

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

# ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

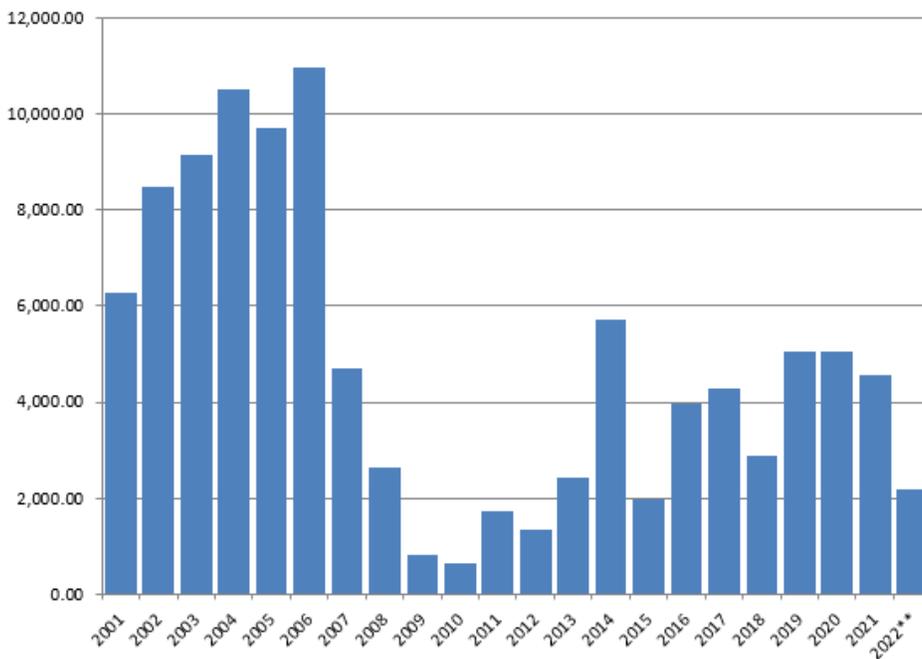
## ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Continued development of the 2023-2025 Implementation Plan and Budget process with stakeholders. A draft budget for non-discretionary projects has been prepared; additional recommendations for discretionary projects are due next quarter. A public draft report is expected to be available in October 2022.
- Processed vendor payments 74 invoices: 73 accepted (99%), 1 rejected (1%).
- Fiscal Year (FY) 22 Budgets continue to be reconciled for end of year close. Expenditures continue to be monitored regularly to ensure appropriate spending and reporting occur. The process of encumbering the FY23 budgets has begun.
- Received reimbursement for SNPLMA projects: Round 16 – twenty three draw downs (\$361,057.60) and Round 17 – eleven draw downs (\$126,573.00).
- Phase 1 of converting all the existing credit card terminals to the new processor, Wells Fargo, is completed. Phase 2 of converting the existing web and IVR systems has been completed. Phase 3 is in process to establish e-payments services for County departments that did not currently offer e-payments.
- Continued production of the desert tortoise specialty license plate and plates are being distributed at Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles (DMVs). Active plates are currently exceeding the 1,000 minimum threshold.
- Continued oversight of the SNPLMA Round 16 – Round 18 projects totaling \$16,509,396 in the County’s financial system. The projects continue to be monitored for progress and reimbursement.



Red Rock Canyon, NCA

**Acres of Disturbance\*  
(by calendar year)**



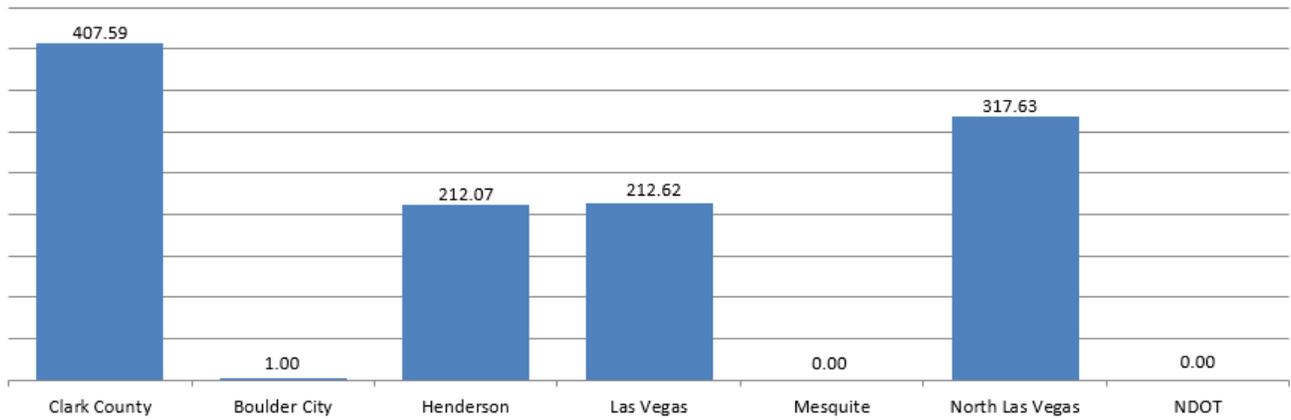
Total number of acres allowed for disturbance under the current permit.	145,000.00
Plus acres added through a Congressionally-mandated amendment to the MSHCP	22,650.00
Less number of acres reported for which fees have been paid under the current permit.	(105,012.12)
Less number of fee exempt acres under the current permit.	(15,000.00)
<b>Number of acres remaining under the current permit.</b>	<b>47,637.88</b>

\*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.

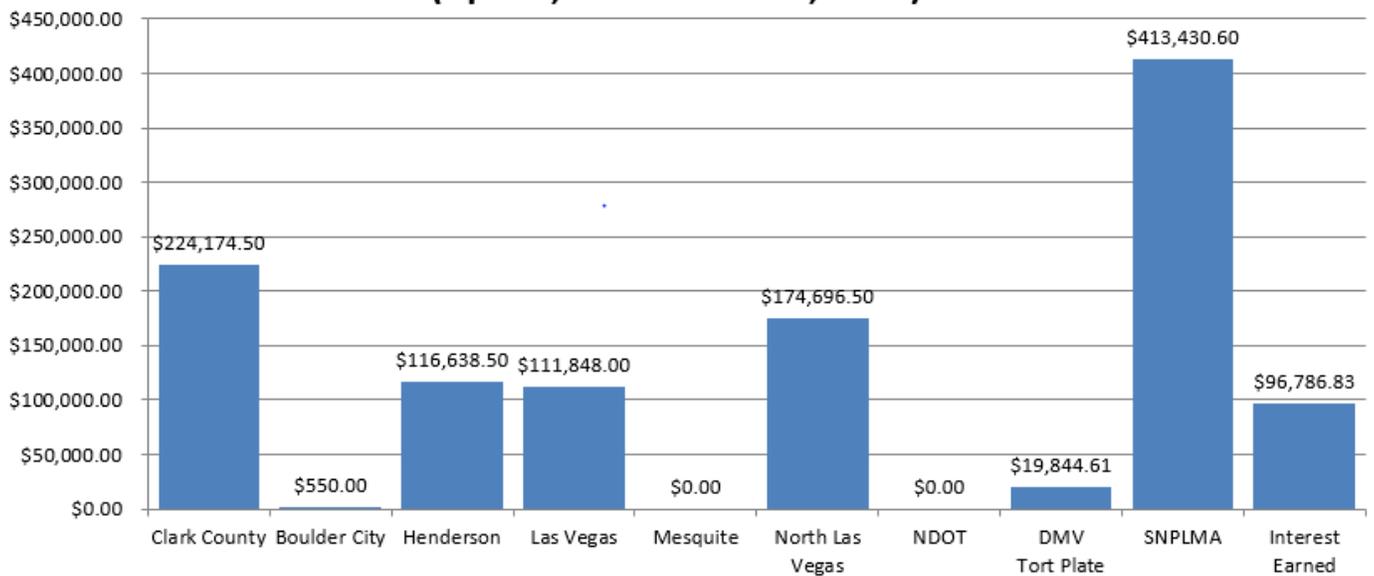
\*\*2022 totals are subject to change.

# ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE — CONTINUED

**Disturbance**  
(April 1, 2022 through June 30, 2022)



**Revenue by Source**  
(April 1, 2022 - June 30, 2022)



## OPPORTUNITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Desert Tortoise License Plate

### Employment opportunities:

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

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

**DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM**

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**DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM**  
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