

QUARTERLY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

JANUARY-MARCH 2018



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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.



Clockwise from top: Windmills; Browneyes; Silver cholla; and Yellow cups all found on the BCCE (Photos: C. Floyd)

BOULDER CITY CONSERVATION EASEMENT (BCCE)

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

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Provided oversight and project management for the interlocal agreement with Boulder City for Law Enforcement on the BCCE.
- Met with law enforcement during four site visits to plan patrols to cover areas where unauthorized uses were detected.
- Conducted thirty site visits to monitor use, disturbances, and related issues; to perform new signage installation, maintenance and upgrades; for restoration planning and monitoring; and in support of the Predation Study and the Desert Tortoise Occupancy Study.
- Completed repairs on desert tortoise fencing around the Energy Zone in twenty-five locations. The repairs were a follow-up to a survey for damage after a rain event.
- Completed a major clean-up of trash at an illegal target shooting site on the BCCE. Signage was installed in an effort to help prevent further illegal shooting.



Clockwise from top: Brittlebush; Desert palafox; Desert dandelion; and Pricklypear all found on the BCCE (Photos: C. Floyd)

BOULDER CITY CONSERVATION EASEMENT— CONTINUED

- A request for quotes (RFQ) was issued in January for bird surveys at the BCCE and has been awarded to SWCA Environmental Consultants. This project will begin in May.
- Continued coordination with utility companies based in the Energy Zone in order to meet desert conservation and restoration goals.
- Mapping and assessment of unauthorized roads and other disturbances is ongoing and will guide prioritization of restoration activities on the BCCE.
- A contract was awarded to NewFields for small mammal surveys on the BCCE. This project will begin in May.
- Spring surveys to document pre-restoration conditions for a large closed road on the BCCE began in late March as preparation for a restoration project that is scheduled to occur in the fall of next year.
- Baseline surveys for bats on both the BCCE and the riparian reserve units are in planning phase. Surveys will be conducted in summer of 2018.

A comprehensive list of BCCE management accomplishments for this quarter can be viewed here: <http://bit.ly/BCCE1stQTR2018>

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

- Eagle View Contractors began conducting maintenance on the properties in January.
- Planning efforts for the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 16 project to conduct habitat restoration on the Muddy River Reserve Unit continue.
- Monthly data collection on groundwater monitoring wells continues.
- The National Park Service's (NPS) Exotic Plant Management Team continues to conduct vegetation management and maintenance activities for enhancement of native riparian species.
- The Board of County Commissioners approved an interlocal agreement with NPS' Exotic Plant Management Team to conduct restoration on the Muddy River Reserve Unit. NPS began collecting plant species for propagation.

A comprehensive list of Riparian Reserve Units management accomplishments for this quarter can be viewed here: <http://bit.ly/Riparian1stQTR2018>

Virgin River Reserve Unit

- Continued photo-monitoring documentation of restored areas within Subunit 1.
- Attended the quarterly Virgin River Conservation Partnership meeting.
- Planning efforts for the SNPLMA Round 15 project to conduct 20 to 40 acres of habitat restoration on the Virgin River Reserve Unit continue.
- An interlocal agreement was approved with Nevada Division of Forestry (NDF) to masticate tamarisk at two sites on the Mormon Mesa and Riverside subunits. NDF encountered saturated soils so they will return in the fall to complete treatment.
- An RFQ was issued for point count and federally listed species surveys.
- Great Basin Institute applied herbicide following mastication treatment by NDF and installed a barrier to exclude cattle from the restoration site on Mormon Mesa.
- Attended two workshops this quarter with other stakeholders to discuss preliminary planning of a Lower Virgin River Integrated Watershed Management Plan.
- The Board of County Commissioners approved an interlocal agreement with NPS' Exotic Plant Management Team to conduct vegetation management and maintenance activities for enhancement of native riparian species.

Property Acquisition

- The Board of County Commissioners approved the DCP's request to purchase previously identified properties of interest along the Virgin River in Bunkerville, Nevada. Four parcels closed in Q1 of 2018 and now belong to Clark County.



Perkins Pond at the Muddy River Reserve Unit



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 (formerly Outside Las Vegas Foundation) for the Mojave Max Education Program.
- Gave a presentation on endangered species and conservation in southern Nevada to students at Brinley Middle School.
- Gave an interview at Springs Preserve for the Springs Elemental Show.
- Completed the 2017-2018 Mojave Max Assembly season in February.
- 51 Classroom Tortoise Talks were conducted during this reporting period.



UNLV Rebel Kids Club Day

Outreach Events and Mojave Max Appearances

The following outreach events were conducted during this reporting period:

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| • 2018 Girl Scout Cookie Rally | Girl Scout Council | January 13th |
| • Martin Luther King Parade | Downtown Las Vegas | January 15th |
| • UNLV Rebel Kids Club Day | Mendenhall Center | February 10th |
| • Las Vegas Fat Boy 5K | Bunker Park | February 17th |
| • Rogers ES Career Fair | Rogers Elementary | March 23rd |
| • Grace Baptist Eggstravaganza | Lewis Family Park | March 31st |

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.

- Two calls were received from the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line during this reporting period, and one wild desert tortoise was picked up.

Desert Tortoise Fencing

- Continued planning activities for the construction of post-and-cable and desert tortoise fencing along the boundary of the newly-designated Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument. Met with the new superintendent of the Monument to brief on the status of the project. Construction of this project is expected to begin in late 2018/early 2019.

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

- Attended meetings for the Desert Tortoise Recovery and Implementation Team and the Manager's Oversight Group.
- Participated in U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) meetings to identify a new regional translocation site on January 30th.
- Kicked-off predator prey relationship project looking at coyotes and kit foxes in the Mojave Desert on January 26th.
- Attended meeting on captive tortoise on February 20th.
- Conducted quarterly science advisor meeting on February 22nd.
- Presented a Clark County DCP progress report at the Desert Tortoise Council Symposium held Feb 23rd -25th.
- Hosted the Eastern Mojave Landscape Conservation Design Indicators workshop on February 25th.
- Held kickoff meeting for University of Nevada, Reno, for the Tortoise Connectivity Modeling project on March 1st.
- Trained Knight and Leavitt Associate's staff on occupancy field methods on March 6th – 7th for the upcoming season.
- Held the Tortoise Culvert Working Group meeting to discuss issues with roads and their effect on tortoise connectivity on March 21st.
- Helped train Great Basin Institute staff on proper tortoise handling techniques on March 22nd.
- Participated in soil and vegetation monitoring for the K-2 restoration project on the BCCE on March 27th – 30th.



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 meet with USFWS to discuss issues related to the proposed amendment.
- Continued to administer a contract with Southwest Ecology, LLC to provide covered species analysis support. This project will result in the development of 31 new species distribution models, review and assessment of 25 existing species distribution models, and development of species accounts for up to 56 species. Work under this contract will provide information necessary to support an analysis and revision of the covered species list and data necessary to conduct impact analyses to support an application for an amended MSHCP. This project is expected to be completed in next quarter.
- 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. WRA has begun synthesizing data provided by Southwest Ecology to develop a final list of species proposed for coverage. Met with Nevada Department of Wildlife and USFWS to discuss proposed covered species. Development of MSHCP Amendment chapters continued this quarter.
- Continued coordination with NDF to discuss development of a master permit for the take of state-listed plant species. This permit would provide the MSHCP Permittees with disturbance authorization from the State Forester Firewarden, in accordance with Nevada Revised Statutes, for state-listed plant species in Clark County.

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

- Continue to participate as a cooperating agency to the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Resource Management Plan revision process. Submitted cooperating agency comments on proposed alternatives for the re-initiation of the Resource Management Plan revision.
- Provided BLM with information and data on cattle grazing allotments purchased by the County.
- Attended BLM's Designated Leasing Area Siting Forum to provide comments on appropriate siting of renewable energy projects in southern Nevada.
- Provided GIS data to the United States Bureau of Reclamation.
- Provided GIS data to K2 Environmental Inc.
- Provided GIS data to the City of Henderson.



Spring Mountains Acastus Checkerspot butterfly

NEW, ONGOING, AND CLOSED PROJECTS

New projects started this quarter

- Parceling for Virgin River Properties, 917DE
- Phase I Env Site Assessment of Bunkerville Parcel, 917MC
- Muddy River Habitat Restoration, 1446D
- Desert Tortoise Connectivity Modeling, 1580A
- BCCE Maintenance, 1710C
- Virgin River Weed Management, 1720A
- Science Advisor Panel for the DCP, 1730A
- Viable Process for Surveying DT Using Drones, 1785B

Ongoing projects this quarter

- Hotline and Processing of Wild Desert Tortoises, 803E
- OHV Registration Program Marketing, 807F
- Covered Species Analysis Support, 901B
- Boundary Surveys and Parceling for Virgin River Properties, 917AC
- Parceling for Bunkerville Property, 917BD
- Parceling for Bunkerville Property, 917MB
- Desert Tortoise Occupancy Sampling, 1012D
- Legal Services for DCP, 1014J
- Science Advisor Panel for the DCP, 1410C
- BCCE DT Predation Study, 1421B
- Water Rights Consulting, 1445E
- Lower Virgin River Integrated Watershed Plan, 1445F
- Muddy River Habitat Restoration, 1446D
- HCP Consultant for the MSCHP, 1460A
- Joshua Tree Habitat Model, 1460D



Yellow-billed cuckoo

Ongoing projects this quarter Cont'd.

- Muddy River Weed Management, 1520B
- Riparian Rsv Units Prop Maint, 1520M
- Mormon Mesa Restoration Services, 1521C
- Mormon Mesa Restoration Project, 1521Z
- Desert Tortoise Monitoring Data Management, Year 2-5, 1541A
- Desert Tortoise Range-Wide Monitoring, 1541B
- Relict Leopard Frog Conservation Planning and Implementation, 1550A
- Muddy River Restoration Plan, 1570B
- BCCE Law Enforcement, 1710A
- BCCE Weed Survey, 1710B
- BCCE Maintenance, 1710C
- Mojave Max Education Program, 1715A
- Virgin River Weed Management, 1720A
- Desert Upland Baseline Bird Surveys, 1730C
- BCCE DT Telemetry, 1740A
- DCP Branding Project, 1770A
- LV Bearpoppy Fencing, Ramada & Trail, 1790A
- Desert Tortoise Predator-Prey Dynamics, 1795A

Projects closed this quarter

- BCCE Gabions Constructed, 910W
- Facilitate Climate Change Workshop, 1460C
- I-15 Exit 118 Improvements, 1500F
- VR Rest Plan—Mormon Mesa Ph 1, 1521B
- DT Telemetry on the BCCE (Yr 2&3), 1545A
- BPR Editing and Printing, 1700A
- Avian Species Photographs, 1770C
- Eval Drone-Based Auto DT Detectability, 1785A

Requests for proposals and quotes (RFPs / RFQs)

- An RFQ was issued to potential bidders to conduct point count and federally listed species surveys. A contractor will be selected in Q2 2018.
- An RFQ was issued to potential bidders for bird surveys at the BCCE. A contractor was selected and work will begin in May.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

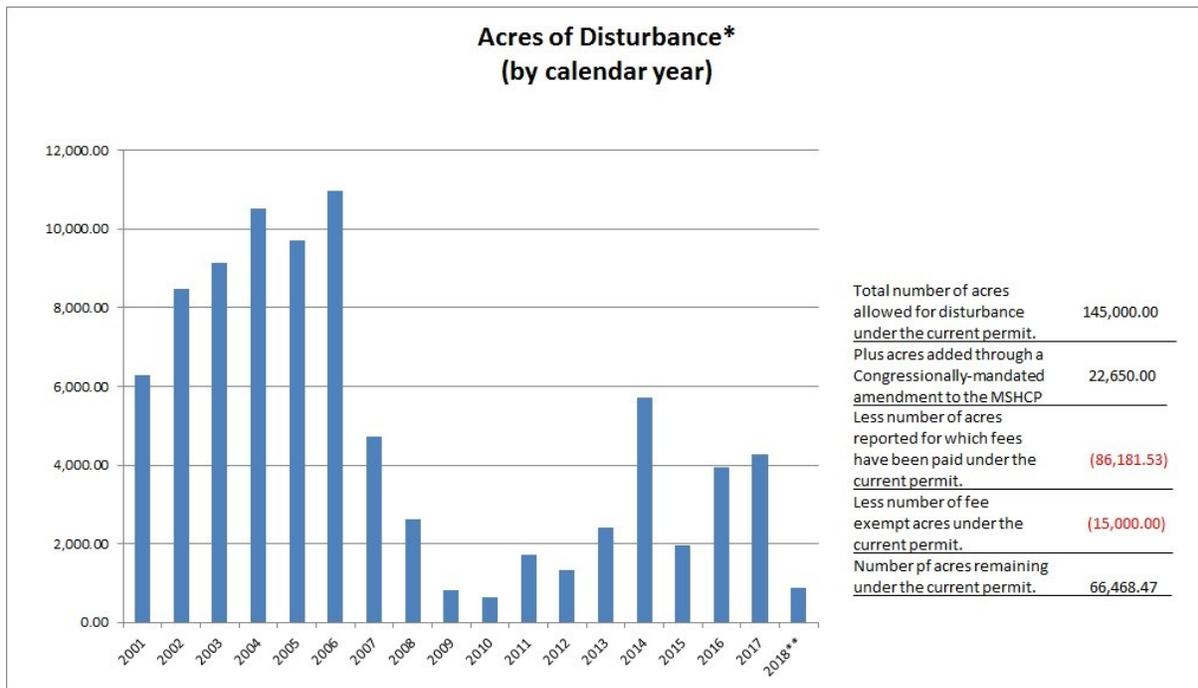
ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Processed vendor payments—67 invoices: 66 accepted (98%), 1 rejected (2%).
- Fiscal Year (FY) 18 Budgets are being reconciled to prepare for end of year close. Expenditures continue to be monitored regularly to ensure appropriate spending and reporting occur. The process of developing FY18 estimates and FY19 budget is completed and submitted to the County's Budget and Finance Office.
- Phase 1 of converting all existing credit card terminals to the new processor, Wells Fargo, has been completed.
- Phase 2 of converting the existing web and IVR systems has been completed. Phase 3 is in process to establish e-payment services for County departments that do not currently offer e-payments.
- Desert tortoise specialty license plate application and template design was approved by the Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV). Currently awaiting Nevada Highway Patrol (NHP) sign off on the plate design.
- Oversight of the SNPLMA R8-R16 projects totaling \$8,117,515 continues in the County's financial system. The projects continue to be monitored for progress and reimbursement.
- Received reimbursement for SNPLMA projects: R15-2 draw downs (\$61,048.47).
- DCP leadership attended training on Accelerating Change in the Regulated Community.
- Began development of the 2019-2021 Implementation Plan and Budget. A draft report will be released to the public for review and comment in October.



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 acres disturbed for the period 2001-2018.



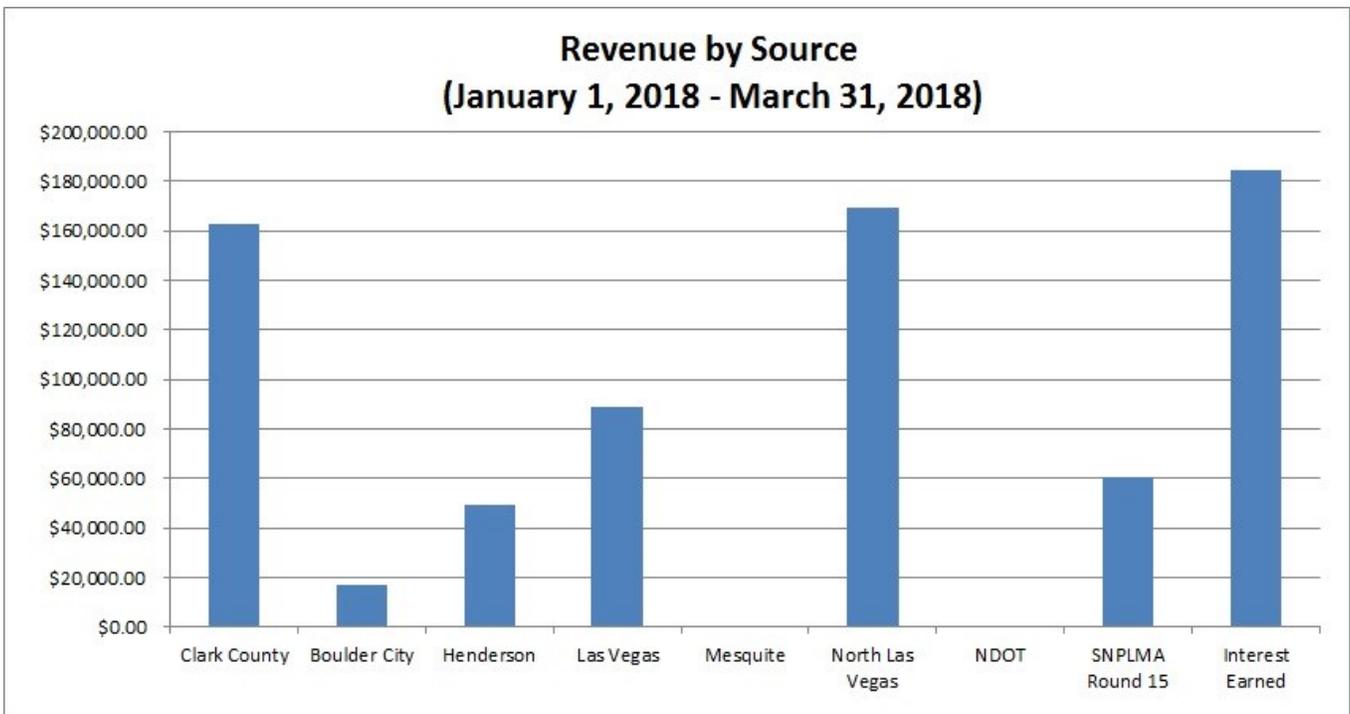
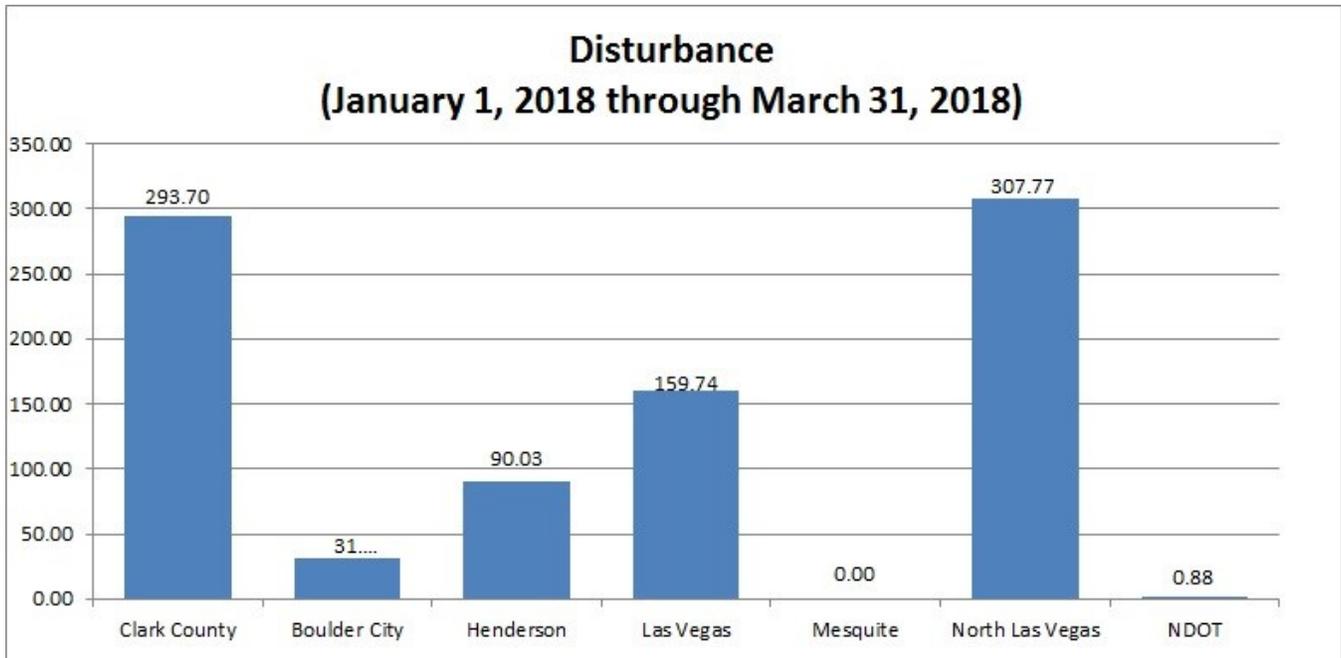
*Total acres reported in this chart do not include 15,000 acres of municipal development, which were exempt from the payment of mitigation fees through January 2010.

**2018 totals are subject to change.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE — CONTINUED



Western Burrowing Owl



OPPORTUNITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Brittlebush

We currently have no RFPs advertised for the Desert Conservation Program.

Interested parties are encouraged to sign up through Nevada Government EMarketplace ([NGEM](#)) in order to receive future RFP notifications.

Check the Clark County opportunities page regularly at <http://bit.ly/2bBOrvz> for new opportunities.

Employment opportunities:

There are currently no employment opportunities advertised for the Desert Conservation Program.

Employment opportunities can be viewed on this 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


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