

Bureau of Land Management
Quarterly Report
December 30, 2016

1. Route Monitoring and Compliance

a. Monitoring Compliance with Route Closures at a Statistically Significant Level – Update from September 2016 Quarterly Report

In accordance with Section 4.2 of the West Mojave (WEMO) Off-Highway Vehicle Monitoring Protocol, the results from the first 3-year monitoring cycle are contained in the Year Three Monitoring Results Report which was filed with the Court on December 6, 2016. Based on the Quality Assurance/Quality Control review and analysis conducted prior to filing, BLM is implementing data collection recommendations discussed in the Year Three Monitoring Results Report to improve the robustness of the results for the second 3-year cycle. BLM is also reviewing data collected on the routes sampled in the first 3-year cycle to make adjustments in its identification of routes with incursions and routes without incursions prior to drawing the samples for the second cycle of monitoring. Field sampling for the second 3-year cycle will commence in the second quarter of fiscal year 2017.

b. Summary of Monitoring/Enforcement Effort – Update from September 2016 Quarterly Report

BLM law enforcement (LE) Rangers conducted 142 compliance checks (*e.g.*, wilderness, Area of Critical Environmental Concern, cultural sites) and 105 enforcement contacts within the West Mojave (WEMO) planning area. Of these 105 enforcement contacts, 75 pertained directly to off-route (43 CFR 8341.1(b)), closed area (43 CFR 8341.1(c), CA VC 38301(b)), wilderness (43 CFR 6302.20(d)), National Scenic Trail (43 CFR 8351.1-1(a)), or other motor vehicle violations. Written reports were prepared for some of these violations as part of the Incident Management and Response System (IMARS) in support of pending investigations. Table 1 provides an overview of LE actions by patrol sector within the WEMO planning area.

Table 1. Overview Of Law Enforcement Actions By Patrol Sector Within The West Mojave Planning Area Since September 2016 Quarterly Report					
Patrol Sector	Compliance Checks	Federal Violation Notice	State/Local Citation	Written Warning	Written Report Filed
<i>Barstow</i>					
81	22	1	0	5	0
82	4	2	0	1	0
83	3	0	0	0	0
84	1	2	0	3	0
85	0	0	0	0	1
86	0	0	0	0	0

Table 1. Overview Of Law Enforcement Actions By Patrol Sector Within The West Mojave Planning Area Since September 2016 Quarterly Report					
Patrol Sector	Compliance Checks	Federal Violation Notice	State/Local Citation	Written Warning	Written Report Filed
<i>Ridgecrest</i>					
1	0	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0
3	23	2	2	7	9
4	14	0	0	0	1
5	16	0	1	7	5
6	37	7	4	30	13
7	12	0	0	0	2
<i>Needles</i>					
92	0	0	0	0	0
<i>Palm Springs</i>					
2	10	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	142	14	7	53	31

c. Maintenance and Restoration Actions – Update from September 2016 Quarterly Report

Heavy equipment route maintenance was completed within the Ridgecrest Subregion (*i.e.*, RC 21 and RC 10) and the Stoddard Valley Subregion (*i.e.*, SV 2642).

BLM staff repaired management area fence within the Rand Mountains, Cronese Lake and Juniper Flats Subregions; installed route signs in the Ridgecrest, South Searles, Coolgardie, Iron Mountain, Mitchell Mountains, Calico Mountains, Pisgah Crater, Broadwell Lake, Juniper Flats, Harper Lake, and Afton Canyon Subregions; and installed Limited Use Area signs in the Juniper Flats, Ord Mountains, Harper Lake and Calico Mountains Subregions.

Cultural resource inventories were completed in the Jawbone and Coolgardie Subregions at proposed restoration and fire rehabilitation sites.

This past quarter, two American Conservation Experience (ACE) desert restoration crews reported to the Ridgecrest Field Office and will spend the next six months completing restoration projects within the Rand Mountains and Red Mountain Subregions. To date, the crews have treated 35 incursions, restoring 13,000 square meters of land. Additionally, over the Thanksgiving weekend these crews along with BLM staff conducted public outreach within the Rand Mountains and Red Mountain Subregions providing designated route information to off-highway vehicle enthusiasts.

In November 2016, BLM staff, along with partner groups (*e.g.*, Forest Service, Southern California Mountains Association, Transition Habitat Conservancy and Friends of Juniper Flats),

hosted Outreach Events in Juniper Flats and Fremont Peak Subregions to educate the public on responsible recreation and resource protection.

During this last quarter, a volunteer subgroup of the Juniper Flats Working Group held two work-days. The work completed included installation of route signs, barrier fence repair, informational sign maintenance, light raking and vertical mulching, and trash cleanup within the Juniper Flats Subregion.

The Friends of Jawbone staff continued to perform daily monitoring and rehabilitation of unauthorized routes on BLM-managed lands within the Jawbone Subregion, as well as ground operation and maintenance work, including signing, grading roads, and repairing structures that have been vandalized.

2. Kiosks – Update from September 2016 Quarterly Report

BLM continued to perform regular and ongoing maintenance of the information kiosks in the Red Mountain, Rand Mountains, El Paso, Jawbone, Ridgecrest, North Searles, South Searles, Mitchell Mountains and Juniper Flats Subregions during this last quarter. These efforts included the replacement of Subregion maps, posting of notices, painting, plexiglass replacement, and placement of “You Are Here” stickers on the Subregion maps.

3. Proper Functioning Condition – Seeps and Springs – Update from September 2016 Quarterly Report

On November 11, 2016, a report of the Results of the 2015-2016 Mojave Desert Spring Survey was issued. Data in the report includes flow levels, pH, salinity and other spring health factors of known springs in the Mojave Desert, including the West Mojave Planning Area. The report is available upon request to the Barstow Field Office of the California Desert District of BLM: 2601 Barstow Road, Barstow, CA 92311; Telephone – 760 252-6000; Telefax – 760 252-6099.

4. Status of Planning – Update from September 2016 Quarterly Report

BLM is conducting follow-up field review of specific incursions based on their potential effects to sensitive resources, to determine the need for and develop site-specific strategies as appropriate. This data will be incorporated into travel management plans.

BLM continues Phase I analysis (aerial map GIS review) for establishment of the ground-disturbance baseline for the WEMO planning area as described in the Record of Decision for the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan issued on September 14, 2016. Phase I is expected to be completed by June 2017. Phase II analysis (field verification) for establishment of the ground-disturbance baseline commenced in August 2016 and is also anticipated to be completed by June 2017.

In October 2016, BLM initiated its Phase I records review and annotated bibliography of cultural resources data required under the terms of the Programmatic Agreement signed in September 2015. This review is anticipated to be completed by June 2017.

In October 2016, BLM met with the United States Forest Service to review valid existing rights on approximately 30 routes on public lands granted under 44LD513 in order to determine their current status, identify possible relinquishments, and continue ongoing coordination and discussion of other route designation issues.

In November 2016 as part of its update to valid existing rights, BLM commenced a review of patent records to verify parcels granted under the Small Tracts Act legislation. This review is anticipated to be completed by June 2017.

BLM continues field-testing of the archaeological resources Sensitivity Model using field crews to gather on-the-ground inventory data to cycle back into the model. Field work and data compilation and analysis to test and improve this Sensitivity Model will continue through Fiscal Year 2020.

5. Chronology of Management Actions – Update from September 2016 Quarterly Report

October 17, 2016: BLM received a letter of concurrence from the State Historic Preservation Officer on its Historic Properties Management Plan.

October 17, 2016: Pursuant to Stipulation IV.A (iv) of the West Mojave Programmatic Agreement, BLM distributed the West Mojave Route Network Project Historic Properties Management Plan to tribal entities and other Consulting Parties, outlining the specific processes to implement the Programmatic Agreement, and addressing the identification, evaluation, assessment and resolution of adverse effects to cultural resources within the West Mojave Planning Area.

October 20, 2016: BLM held a formal meeting to consult with the Twentynine Palms Band of Mission Indians as a follow-up to its submission of the Historic Properties Management Plan.

November 23, 2016: A joint request to continue the briefing deadline and hearing date was filed with the Court.

November 29, 2016: The Court set a new hearing date of January 11, 2017.

December 1, 2016: BLM hosted a meeting with Friends of Juniper Flats to discuss the status of the California State Parks, Off Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division grant.

December 6, 2016: Pursuant to Section 4.2 of the 2013 West Mojave Off-Highway Vehicle Monitoring Protocol (Doc. 332-3), BLM filed with the Court the first Year Three Monitoring Results Report (2013-2016).

December 12, 2016: Pursuant to Stipulation IV.E (iv) of the West Mojave Programmatic Agreement and Section II.E of the Historic Properties Management Plan, BLM distributed the West Mojave Route Network Project Annual Report to tribal entities and other Consulting Parties, summarizing project activities carried out during fiscal year 2016 to implement the West Mojave Programmatic Agreement.

December 20, 2016: A second joint request to continue the briefing deadline and hearing date was filed with the Court.

December 21, 2016: The Court continued the briefing deadline and set a new hearing date on BLM's motion for enlargement and Plaintiffs' motions for interim protective measures for February 21, 2017 at 10:00 AM in the Eureka Courthouse.