

**BLM California Desert Advisory  
Council MEETING MINUTES  
April 27, 2024 – Virtual Meeting**

*For complete meeting discussion, please see meeting transcript*

**Desert Advisory Council Members:** Randy Banis, Nathan Francis, Hans Haas (Chairperson), Jennifer Henning, Richard Holliday, Robert Robinson, Ann Kulikoff, Dawn Rowe, Joshua Martelli, Steve Reyes, Terry McGlynn, Desirea Haggard, Ed Stovin, Jack Thompson

**BLM Attendees:** Shelly Lynch, Nancy Schmidt, Gordon Toevs, Julie Donnell, Paul Gibbs, Tom Bickauskas, Brandon Anderson, Carrie Sahagun, Ron Nuckles, Matt Lohr, Kate Miyamoto, Tristan Riddell, Mayra Martinez, Mike Carpenter, TJ Friend

**Guests:** Matthew Gibbs (Zoom tech), Chris Ales (captioner), Anitra Kass, Greg Herring, Steven Gjerstad, Luke Basulto, Zeynep Graves, Lisbet Thoresen, Sendy Hernandez Orellana Barrows, Kayla Browne, Ileene Anderson, Thomas Hyatt, Barbara Bane, Cassandra Pino, Chris Petersen, Conrad Nelson, Brian Derheim, David Kuskie, Katie Barrows, Roger Dale, Brenda Ortiz, Ashley Lee, Elizabeth Paige, Seth Shteir, Adamari Cota, Stephanie Dashiell, Frazier Henry, Colin Barrows, Jose Manzo, Dawn Gill, Alicia Thomas, Tracy Popiel, Josh Epstein, Anthony Orsak, Cara Breite

**Opening and Introductions:**

District Manager Shelly Lynch opened the meeting and welcomed everyone. Kate Miyamoto, CDD Public Affairs Specialist, went over Zoom, public comment period protocols, and housekeeping for the meeting. Shelly introduced Gordon Toevs, BLM California Acting State Director and BLM employees and turned it over to Hans Haas, DAC Chairperson, to introduce Desert Advisory Council members.

Gordon Toevs gave remarks on his recent visit to the California Desert District, DAC appointments, recreation, DAC letter, role and responsibilities of the DAC, public lands rule, geothermal exploration, waste prevention rule, and oil and gas leasing rule.

**Public comment period at 9:30 a.m. PT**

*(Public comments given orally during the meeting have been condensed and summarized. For full public comments, see meeting transcript)*

- Hans Haas, DAC Chairperson opened the public comment period. Kate Miyamoto, Public Affairs Specialist went over public comment period protocols. There were 15 public comments during the virtual meeting and the BLM received nine written public comments via email.
- Roger Dale, President of the Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, spoke about the Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee and gave support for the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument and how the proposal will protect the ecosystems that support desert tortoise and other threatened and endangered species.
- Lisbet Thoresen, Public lands representative for San Diego Mineral and Gem

Society, shared info on the San Diego Mineral and Gem Society, asked about the status of the Mojave Trails National Monument management plan and the monument manager position that is now vacant.

- Cassandra Pino, Policy Manager for the Native American Land Conservancy Intertribal Organization, commented on the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument and how it would help Tribal nations create new stewardship agreements with the Federal Government, and how important it is to involve Tribes in land management processes.
- Steven Gjerstad, property owner in the West Mojave Route Network Project, commented on BLM designated routes he has identified on private land in the Jawbone Canyon in Ridgecrest, signage in the area, and maps showing designated off-highway motor vehicle routes on private property.
- Anitra Kass, Southern California representative for Pacific Crest Trail Association, gave a status on the Pacific Crest Trail and work to reestablish access on damaged areas of the trail in Whitewater Canyon and Mission Creek in coordination with the BLM. The rehab will be a multi-year process. Anitra also wanted updates and continued involvement in the Whitewater River CRMP and Sand to Snow National Monument planning process.
- Stephanie Dashiell, owner of tour operator company called Joshua Tree Adventures, commented on her business depending on tourism and support for the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument. Expressed appreciation for BLM-managed land and asked about the new policy related to rockhounding in national monuments.
- Brenda Ortiz, youth resident of Mecca, expressed appreciation for open and wild spaces, importance of protection of land, and support for the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument.
- Frazier Henry, Executive Director for The Wildlands Conservancy, commented on the DAC letter on the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument and support for the proposed monument.
- Sendy Hernández Orellana Barrows, resident of La Quinta, expressed support for the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument.
- Elizabeth Paige, member of the Torres Martinez Band of Cahuilla Indians and Education and Stewardship Program for American Native Land Conservancy, gave comments on the importance of including Tribal perspectives and expressed support for the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument.
- Ashley Lee, President of the Amargosa Conservancy, expressed appreciation for outdoor adventure including off-roading; the importance of access, accountability and protection in the desert; and support for the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument.
- Seth Shteir, resident of Helmville, Montana and former DAC member 2013-2016, expressed support for the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument and talked about the benefits of the proposed monument.
- Colin Barrows, Chuckwalla resident and hiker, expressed support for the proposed

Chuckwalla National Monument and appreciation for national monument designations.

- Jose Manzo, community member from Mecca, expressed support for the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument and the benefits of the proposed monument.
- Luke Basulto expressed support for the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument.

**The nine public comments below were sent via email:**

**1. Frank Ruiz, California Desert and Salton Sea Programs Director**

My name is Frank Ruiz and I am a citizen of the Coachella Valley within the Congressional District of Congressman Dr. Raul Ruiz. I'm proud of our Congressman for championing the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument. I am excited that Congressman Ruiz, Senator Padilla, Senator Butler, and 23 Congressional Members are asking President Biden to use the Antiquities Act to designate Chuckwalla National Monument through proclamation.

One thing I particularly like about this proposal is the balance it strikes between conservation and renewable energy development in Eastern Riverside County. Congressman Ruiz has always ensured that the Chuckwalla National Monument is independent of the designations that result from the DRECP. This progressive land use planning process balanced conservation with development. This proposal does not alter, in any way, any of the designations for renewable energy development, transmission expansion, or conservation that resulted from that plan. What this proposal does is add a layer of protection to the lands that were set aside for conservation in the DRECP. Most importantly, a monument designation would withdraw the proposed lands from mineral extraction activities.

Congressman Ruiz and Senators Padilla and Butler all understand the critical need to transition away from fossil fuels to clean energy sources, which is why their proposal ensures that renewable energy development will not impede solar facility development in the Development Focus Areas adjacent to the National Monument proposal. Their proposal is essential for transmission expansion to bring renewable energy to population centers. While these assurances for renewable energy and electric utilities shrink the original monument proposal introduced by Congressman Ruiz by 40,000 acres, it does not increase the area in which solar can be sited, nor does it allow for any transmission outside of already approved transmission corridors.

With gratitude,

Frank Ruiz

California Desert and Salton Sea Programs Director, Audubon California

**2. Lisbet Thoresen, Public lands representative for San Diego Mineral & Gem Society (SDMG)**

For the next DAC meeting agenda (preferably an IN-PERSON meeting), please include a status update on the project timeline and drafting of management plan for Mojave Trails National Monument (MTNM). Please address the following questions:

1. Who is drafting the plan since Noelle Glines-Bovio departed as monument manager?
2. What is the status of the monument manager position?
3. What is the updated timeline for the Mojave Trails MMP?

4. May we please look forward to a 60-day comment period on the proposed draft plans?
5. How many comment letters on MTNM were submitted by the comment period deadline on July 5, 2023? Can you provide a breakdown of stakeholders groups represented among those letters?
6. How are DRECP and WMRNP being reconciled into the drafting of the MMP?
7. What explicit emendations are being proposed or drafted for the CDCA as they relate to recreational activities to make it more congruent with FLPMA's mandate? Are definitions being made more clear for low impact versus high impact activities? What about casual collecting (aka rockhounding) specifically?
8. The final rule on the Paleontological Resources Preservation Act (PRPA) is a top level authority that provides useful reference on casual collecting of common invertebrate fossils. It has application to common collectable minerals as well (e.g., agate, fluorite and other gem-minerals). Please discuss how the final rule on PRPA and/or other regulations under 43 CFR 8365.1-5(b)(2) are being incorporated into the Mojave Trails MMP.

### **3. Greg Herring**

I am Greg Herring; I am one of those spearheading the Opposition to the Chuckwalla National Monument and JTNP Expansion. I am also a disabled Veteran and Small-Scale Gold Miner. First, I applaud the DAC for sending the Letter of Concern and Opposition to the Secretary of the Interior. I want to express my gratitude to the DAC for this. I thought it was totally inappropriate for Gordon to reprimand the DAC for the letter in a public forum.

The Monument will not improve access as many on the proponent side said it would. The land is already protected with several designations and a monument designation provides No Additional protection, as we heard at the last DAC meeting by Greg Miller, Assistant District Director.

Many of us disabled Veterans use mining as our form of mental and physical therapy and that will be taken from us. Small-Scale mining will cease under a monument designation due to costly National Park Service regulations. And we disabled Vets will lose our most precious grounds, the Expansion area, that we use to help cope with our disabilities.

The Proponents are misleading the public on what the Monument will do. There are many that do not want this Monument and Expansion. The DAC understands this and their letter needs to be allowed.

### **4. Steven Gjerstad**

Liability for Accidents on Private Property in Limited Use Areas  
April 27, 2024, BACKGROUND

On the "Jawbone Canyon and Ridgecrest Area" map produced and distributed by Friends of Jawbone I have identified 115 BLM designated routes on approximately 96,000 acres of private property. I have carefully examined two sections shown on that map, photographed the signs, noted their locations, and created a map that locates the photographed signs on the map. I have also driven around dozens of other sections and observed hundreds of BLM/OHMVR route markers: they are ubiquitous on private property throughout the WMRNP. The BLM estimates that there are 1370 miles of off-highway motor vehicle routes on private property in the

WMRNP. (This estimate is provided by the BLM on page 4-115 of its 2019 FSEIS for the WMRNP.) Based on the density of signs that I have observed in a sample of 2 sections of private property, I estimate that there are approximately 7 signs per linear mile of BLM route, so an estimate of 9,600 BLM route markers on private property in the WMRNP is reasonable.

The back of the FoJ map states that "[t]his map is produced through a partnership between the Bureau of Land Management Ridgecrest Field Office, the State of California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division, and Friends of Jawbone. This map is just one example of how working together improves the trail experience for all."

In addition to the route markers and the FoJ maps, the BLM has joined with OHMVR, FoJ, and the Transition Habitat Conservancy (THC) to place kiosks with large format maps that promote BLM OHV recreation routes on private property in the area. With thousands of BLM/OHMVR signs on private property, FoJ maps that show routes on private property, an iPhone app that shows routes on private property, and kiosks with large format maps that show routes on private property, the BLM has designated OHV routes across hundreds of thousands of acres of private property and has extensively promoted off-highway motor vehicle recreation on private property. Obviously, that implies that the BLM, OHMVR, FoJ, and THC bear responsibility for the suitability of private property for OHV activity.

## LIABILITY OF FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

Courts have provided guidance on the extent of and limits to liability of government agencies to people who are engaged in recreational activities. I limit my discussion to two cases that bear on the issue of liability for the consequences of the designation of off-highway motor vehicle routes on private property.

*Termini v. United States of America*, 963 F.2d 1264 covers several important issues. I quote from the decision to cover some of the essential points. First, "the Federal Tort Claims Act ... 28 U.S.C. §1346(b) ... renders the United States liable in tort to the same extent as a private individual under the law of the place where an injury occurs."

Two statutes are available to landowners and government agencies when OHV riders have accidents on their property. PRC §5090.38 states that "[n]o owner or other person having legal control of property in the vicinity of any lands in the system is liable for any actions of any type resulting from, or caused by, the user of an off-highway motor vehicle." This statute does not protect the BLM where it has designated off-highway motor vehicle routes on private property, because it only protects the property owner. The BLM is not an "other person having legal control" of private property.

In *Termini v. United States of America* the USFS based its defense on Cal. Civil Code §846. That statute states that a landowner "owes no duty of care to keep the premises safe for entry or use by others for any recreational purpose or to give any warning of hazardous conditions, uses of, structures, or activities on such premises to persons entering for such purpose, except as provided in this section." This statute has been used frequently by government agencies to protect the agencies against liability claims by recreational users of government land. Most often,

the defense is successful. As with PRC §5090.38, this defense will be unavailable to the BLM for accidents that occur on private property, where the BLM has designated that private property for off-highway motor vehicle recreation, since the BLM is not the landowner, and the statute only immunizes the landowner.

## LIABILITY OF TRESPASSING RIDERS

Federal regulation 43 CFR §8341.1 requires riders to abide by the designation order, including staying on designated routes. Cal. Penal Code §602(n) states that "[d]riving any vehicle ... upon real property belonging to ... another and known not to be open to the general public, without the consent of the owner" is a misdemeanor.

Cal. Evidence Code 669(a) states that "[t]he failure of a person to exercise due care is presumed if: (1) He violated a statute, ordinance, or regulation of a public entity; (2) The violation proximately caused death or injury to person or property; (3) The death or injury resulted from an occurrence of the nature which the statute, ordinance, or regulation was designed to prevent."

The regulations and statutes that prohibit driving on private property and Cal. Evidence Code §669 indicate that trespassing that leads to an accident is a negligent act.

It might seem that per se negligence of trespassing OHV riders would protect the BLM from liability, and it does, but only partially. In *von Tagen v. United States*, 557 F. Supp. 256 (N.D. Cal. 1983), *von Tagen* sued the federal government "for injuries suffered in an automobile accident which occurred on federal property while plaintiff was engaged in a recreational use. Plaintiff alleges that the accident resulted from the government's failure to erect a guardrail or warning sign at a dangerously sharp curve on Conzelman Road in the Golden Gate National Recreation Area, located in Marin County, California." The court in this case wrote that "while four of the prior accidents occurred when the driver was exceeding the posted speed limit, as was the plaintiff in this action, the contributory negligence of those drivers is no defense to the charge of willful misconduct on the part of the government." The court went on to state that "the government had knowledge of the hazard and of the probability of injury and ... that failure to provide greater protections was so far below accepted highway safety engineering practice as to amount to a conscious failure." The most important points from *von Tagen v. United States* are (1) that contributory negligence of the plaintiff "is no defense to the charge of willful misconduct on the part of the government" and (2) that the government has a duty to warn of hazardous conditions. Moreover, the defense in Cal. Civil Code §846 is only available to the owner of the property and those who have a legal interest in the property.

The BLM has not provided adequate warning regarding the presence of private property in the WMRNP and therefore is likely to be found negligent for accidents that occur on private property; the government cannot avail itself of landowner immunity statutes that protect property owners when it designates route on private property and promotes their use to the public.

## LANDOWNER IMMUNITY FROM LIABILITY:

Cal. PRC §5090.38 states in relevant part that "[n]o owner or other person having legal control of property in the vicinity of any lands in the system is liable for any actions of any type resulting from, or caused by, the user of an off-highway motor vehicle."

Definition of 'the system' is in PRC §5090.09: "'System' means the state vehicular recreation areas, the California Statewide Motorized Trail, areas and trails within the state park system, and areas supported by the grant program." Since OHMVR grant funds have been used throughout this area, the area is a part of 'the system'.

Based on the definition of 'the system', the use of OHMVR grant funds in the WMRNP, and the content of PRC §5090.38 it is clear that property owners are not liable for the consequences of trespass by off-highway motor vehicles in the WMRNP.

Thank you for providing me with an opportunity to present my concerns.

#### List of Routes on Private Property Shown on the JAWBONE CANYON AND RIDGECREST AREA Map

##### Black Mountain district:

BM6233, BM6237, BM6241, BM6245, BM6256, BM6257, BM6260, BM6265, BM6319, BM6321, BM6322, BM6325, BM6332, BM6344, BM6346, BM6349, BM6355, BM6357, BM6361, BM6362, BM6363, BM6364, BM6365, BM6366, BM6368, BM6370, BM6375, BM6377, BM6381, BM6383, BM6387

##### Fremont Peak district:

FP5165, FP5215, FP5229, FP5261, FP5314, FP5316, FP5320, FP5334, FP5340, FP5342, FP5344, FP5346, FP5350, FP5356, FP5357, FP5358, FP5359, FP5367, FP5373, FP5381, FP5383, FP5385, FP5386, FP5387, FP5388, FP5391, FP5395, FP5396, FP5398, FP5402, FP5406, FP5410, FP5430, FP6115, FP6200, FP6202, FP6209, FP6215, FP6231, FP6300, FP6304, FP6305, FP6306, FP6307, FP6322, FP6417, FP6380, FP7159

##### Harper Lake district:

HL6253, HL6255, HL6265, HL6290, HL6454

##### Red Mountain district:

RM4, RM18, RM28, RM29, RM30, RM32, RM34, RM44, RM41, RM62, RM68, RM70, RM76, RM86, RM89A, RM91, RM98, RM101, RM107, RM151, RM155, RM177, RM199, RM216, RM273, RM323, RM329, RM335, RM407, RM1180, RM5155

#### 5. **Frazier Henry**, Executive Director, The Wildlands Conservancy

A letter was recently sent to Congress on Council letterhead which is troubling to me as a former DAC member. I have addressed my concerns in more detail in a written comment which was sent earlier this morning to be included in the meeting minutes.

The letter's basic point is that there is no need to designate a National Monument since the Chuckwalla area is largely California Desert National Conservation Lands. But there is much

more to the story which the letter omits, which I expect we'll learn more about during the Council's final agenda item.

I believe a common thread among the members of the Council, public participants, and agency staff present at today's meeting is that we all deeply care about the California desert's wide open spaces and freedom they bring, as well as the various resources they protect. It used to be that this common ground was mostly designated by the Bureau as "Limited Use". We've all seen how these kinds of designation held up against new policies and plan amendments.

I support the designation of a Chuckwalla National Monument for this reason, the same basic reason that the recreation community felt the need for Congressional designation for off-road vehicle areas to enshrine their use for recreation is continued in the future. I also stand by and am ready to act to support the commitment which was made during the designation of Mojave Trails - that non-commercial Rockhounding for personal or academic pursuits is a use that be allowed in the new National Monument, and vehicle travel on well-managed designated routes.

Thank you.  
Frazier Haney

#### **6. Anthony Martin**

Greetings, Thank you for the opportunity to provide input as a resident trail user and cyclist.

It has been encouraging to see the efforts that have already taken place with educational seminars on bikes/ebikes, and various associations having open dialogue regarding the future of our trails.

I would like the BLM and all other stakeholders in our surrounding open spaces to consider a more inclusive policy regarding the use of Class 1 ebikes on current multi-use trails open to bicycles.

While ebikes have been a hotly debated topic, I hope that our regional Officers/Managers can adopt the stance of the Department of the Interior, and other CA regions defining class 1 pedal assist bicycles as equal to bicycles.

Ultimately, I understand that may take some time. However, I would hope to see some progress for those who need the electric pedal assistance of a class 1 ebike to access these trails at all. Namely our Senior riders and physically limited trail users.

I myself have submitted a "Request for Reasonable Modification" over 4.5 months ago, and have still not received a decision. This seems like an unreasonable amount of time to expect a response.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Anthony Martin

#### **7. Neil Johnson**

Hello, I would like the BLM to approve the use of class 1, pedal assist, bicycles on bike approved trails. Several local bikers submitted a request for reasonable modification and we have



not heard back. The BLM policy states that we will get a reply in a reasonable amount of time. I haven't received any response of any kind. A friend submitted 4.5 months ago and has not received an answer. This does not seem like a reasonable amount of time. The process could be eliminated if e-bikes are approved and allow officers to tend to more important issues. Thank you for the work you do. We have an incredible amount of fun on our public lands and appreciate you.

Happy Trails,  
Neil Johnson

#### **8. Steve Kerr**

I would like to comment on recreational opportunities for mountain biking in the Coachella Valley and specifically the San Jacinto and Santa Rosa monument.

I am primarily a hiker and trail runner, but also mountain bike for cross training due to knee issues.

There are myriad recreational opportunities on foot around the Monument and Coachella Valley. There are much less opportunities available to mountain bikes as they are not allowed in Wilderness, the PCT, Agua Caliente Tribal Lands, City of Palm Springs Trails, and any of the Valley Nature Preserves.

Some legal trails such as Bump and Grind and the Cross are too busy most of the year and most mountain bikers choose not to ride there.

There is a need for more Mountain Bike opportunities in the area as this recreation is growing quickly. Demand has already caused the unfortunate building of unofficial trails in some areas. The mission of the Monument is conservation, species protection and recreation. It would be beneficial to both BLM and local trail users to work together at promoting a more responsible approach to meeting the demand for mountain bike opportunities in the area.

The other issue emerging with Mountain Bikes is the increasing use of Class 1 e-bikes. This has become a very contentious issue with a few outspoken individuals making a case against their use. I would ask BLM to consider NEBA studies done recently around Lake Tahoe on their use and effects on trail erosion etc.

These bikes allow access to areas for older riders and those with physical limitations. There is no difference in downhill speed versus a regular bike.

I think it would be great if BLM could consider looking at evidence based NEBA studies in consideration of a change in policy for e-bike access.

High density trail use does not make for ideal mountain biking. Mountain Bikes allow longer distances to be covered and a trail network that allows mountain bikers to recreate away from high use trails is ideal.

I have family in Scotland and visit frequently. It is so uplifting to see a government embrace

cycling as well as all other outdoor pursuits. Recreation policy includes freedom to roam, long distance cycle paths and mapped routes, bike use allowed on all trails, specific single track bike trails throughout forest service land, mountain bike centers throughout Scotland. This exists peacefully alongside a large hiking and climbing culture.

I think recreation and outdoor access is a necessary component of human mental and physical health. I would love to see BLM form partnerships with recreational groups as well as conservation groups to help promote this aspect of the Monument.

Sincerely,  
Steve Kerr.

**9. Greg Smith**

To whom it may concern,  
I will be out of town this weekend, but would like to register the following comments in conjunction with the subject meeting.

There is a large contingent of mountain bike riders in the Coachella Valley (including a rapidly growing sector of EMtb riders with age and/or physical limitations) that are VERY interested in encouraging the BLM to move forward with plans for Mtb/EMtb usage of its recreational areas. In the case of EMtb's, I am referring to Class I eBikes that are pedal assist ONLY (no throttle) and have a maximum assisted speed of 20mph. I am 79 years old with back, knee and shoulder injuries that would not be able to participate in this form of recreation without a Class I EMtb.

Thank you in advance for your consideration,  
Greg Smith

-----**end of written public comments**-----

DAC members were invited to provide a brief update. Members Jack Thompson, Dawn Rowe, Terry McGlynn, Steven Reyes, Ed Stovin, Dick Holliday and Robert Robinson provided updates and comments.

**First presentation: Salton Sea Restoration Projects**

- BLM Realty Specialist Tristan Riddell presented on Salton Sea restoration projects and included an overview of the creation of Salton Sea, details about ecology focused on bird and fish, a map discussing current land ownership in and around the Salton Sea, followed by the Salton Sea habitat project in Phase 1 10-year plan.

Questions: What will keep water levels from going down and if the salinity of the sea is increasing. Full presentation and questions are in the meeting transcript.

**Morning break**

**Second presentation: Geothermal Permitting Process**

- BLM geologist Mayra Martinez presented on three topics, geothermal leasing,

geothermal development, and brief information about lithium.

Questions: If an area on the map near East Mesa was open to the public, which it was determined it was a limited use area. Received a question on drilling, if a proponent drills and leaves the boundaries of state land subsurface to BLM-managed land, does BLM have jurisdiction? Response emailed to DAC members “It would be allowed, and they would need a lease from the BLM. There would probably have to be a unit agreement with a participating area. A unit agreement is where each agency gets a royalty payment based on the proportion of land involved i.e. 70/30, 80/20, etc.” Last question was if there are any new applications in the Ocotillo Wells area, which was no. Full presentation and questions in meeting transcript.

### **Third presentation: Presentation on Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area - Reconfiguration of Osborne Overlook and Ghost Camping on Gecko Road**

- Acting Law Enforcement Chief Mike Carpenter, presented on ghost camping on Gecko Road in the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area. He defined the term ghost camping, how law enforcement is trying to prevent ghost camping.
- El Centro Field Manager Matt Lohr went over possible solutions to ghost camping including a reservation or permit system, public outreach, and starting a business plan.
- Mike Carpenter discussed Osborne Overlook, its popularity, and short-term and long-term goals including adding parking and area for a helicopter to land.

Discussion on DAC members wanting to be involved in the business plan, and thoughts on ghost camping and reservation and permit system. Full questions and discussion in meeting transcript.

### **Lunch Break**

#### **District, Field Office, and Fire Overviews**

- Shelly Lynch, District Manager, presented things from the State Director’s Report including the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of California Desert Protection Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act projects and funding. She discussed the U.S. Forest Service’s request for the DAC to review, provide recommendations on, and vote on recreation fee proposals for three National Forests – Angeles, Cleveland, San Bernardino – which is authorized in the DAC’s charter. The Forest Service will likely attend the August and December 2024 DAC meetings to present their fee proposals and ask for a vote. Shelly mentioned the Rockhounding on Public Lands website resource <https://www.blm.gov/programs/recreation/rockhounding> and highlighted the Frequently Asked Questions portion.
- Discussed new field managers in the District and positions in the hiring process.
- Field Managers from each of the five field offices reported on issues and projects. Full reports and discussion included in meeting transcript.

### **Afternoon Break**

#### **Fourth presentation: Completed Projects on California Desert National Conservation Lands Designated in 2016**

- Acting Palm Springs-South Coast Field Manager Brandon Anderson presented on California Desert National Conservation Lands and how the designation was created, the management of the lands, and BLM's projects in national conservation lands. He also showed a few data systems online.

Questions: Clarification on how California Desert national conservation lands are identified, conservation management actions, etc. Full questions and discussion in the meeting transcript.

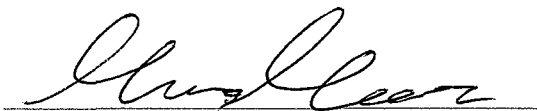
#### **Discussion on Future Agenda Topics**

- The DAC suggested several topics for the August DAC meeting including how California Independent System Operator handles curtailment and how that affects solar and wind energy, how large battery projects are managed, what the rule change from Department of Interior that environmental and cultural resources are now being considered on equal basis with all other considerations means and how it will be implemented, how the public lands rule will be implemented, more discussion on the proposed Chuckwalla National Monument, education on Tribal lands in the area that are federally acknowledged, and an update on the Mojave Trails National Monument planning process.
- The DAC had quorum but did not make any official recommendations.

#### **Wrap up and closing**

- Shelly Lynch spoke about why this DAC meeting was virtual due to terms ending for about half of the DAC and not having the new nominations approved and appointed with enough time to plan for an in-person meeting.
- The next DAC meeting will be in-person on August 10 in Needles.

**Meeting adjourned at approximately 2:35 p.m.**



Hans Haas, Chair  
Desert Advisory Council