

Field Manager's Report  
**Ridgecrest Field Office**  
California Desert District Advisory Council Meeting  
Continental Labor Hall, Desert Empire Fairgrounds  
Ridgecrest, June 24, 2006

This report updates some of our program accomplishments. This report includes a summary of monitoring efforts, which is included at the end of this report.

**Lands and Realty Program Updates**

- **Rights-of-Way (Linear Access for Geothermal Proposal):** In May 2005, Deep Rose, LLC (Deep Rose) submitted their Plan of Development to drill up to four exploratory geothermal wells on State land in Inyo County. Deep Rose proposes to construct a well pad, access road, water pipeline, and support facilities. The access road and pipeline will require a ROW from BLM. And Deep Rose has submitted to the State Lands Commission a Notice of Intent to drill and an application for a Geothermal Resources Prospecting Permit. The BLM has completed its review of the plan as the proposed action for the NEPA process. We provided comments and recommendations on the Plan of Development and mitigation measures for the NEPA process. A joint CEQA/NEPA document has been prepared by Epsilon Systems Solutions, Inc., for Deep Rose which was released for public review, December 2005, by the California Department of Conservation. A public meeting was held February 23, 2006; the comment period ended March 27, 2006. The BLM has completed the cultural resources review and Native American consultation. The Decision Record will be completed June 2006.
- **Rights-of-Way (Wind Energy):** The Pine Tree Wind Turbine project proposed by LADWP is moving forward. LADWP proposes to construct 80, 1.5 MW wind turbine generators, substation, transmission line and supporting infrastructure near Jawbone and Pine Tree Canyons, Kern County. The wind turbine farm is proposed to be developed on private lands in Pine Tree Canyon area, with the transmission lines (1.1 miles of transmission lines) and access roads (approximately 4.7 miles) located on BLM-administered lands. This project has been approved by the military for development in the R-2508 airspace complex. The NEPA/CEQA document was developed and made available for public review and comment. LADWP and BLM met with F&WS to review Migratory Bird Act concerns. The F&WS has issued the Biological Opinion (BO). A petition was filed against LADWP, with BLM named as a Real Party in Interest, by the Audubon Society. LADWP has developed additional mitigation measures in response to the BO. And the BLM has concluded the proposed action would result in no significant impacts to the quality of the human environment because minimal public lands will be used to support the project during construction and operation of the project. Copies of the FEIR/EA and decision record are available on line at [www.ca.blm.gov/ridgecrest](http://www.ca.blm.gov/ridgecrest). The BLM has prepared the ROW grants to be issued June 2006. Construction is expected to begin within six months.
- **Other Energy Related Proposals:** Several other energy related proposals are being reviewed and/or processed by the BLM Ridgecrest Field Office (RIFO):
  - **Oak Creek Energy** – has proposed to re-power two defunct wind turbine farms in the Tehachapi area, along Highway 58 in Kern County. Oak Creek Energy submitted a plan of development for an 180MW development. This proposal will affect approximately 160 acres, and will involve both private and public land. A joint CEQA/NEPA document will be necessary.
  - **Oak Creek Energy** – has proposed to re-apply for a ROW to development 80 acres which were previously relinquished in 1987. The site is within the current Oak Creek facility in the Tehachapi area.
  - **Power Partners SW LLC** – has expressed interest in developing an area for wind power in the Tehachapi Mountains, west of Rosamond, CA. An anemometer approval was granted in Jan.,

2006. The proposal would again involve private and public land triggering a CEQA/NEPA approach.

- **Florida Power and Light** – has proposed an expansion of the Sky River Ranch wind farm facility in the Southern Sierras west of Jawbone Canyon. The proposal involves about 3,680 acres with the Pacific Crest Trail in the middle of the area. The proposed expansion area is shared between the Ridgecrest and the Bakersfield Field Offices with the RIFO being the lead.
- **Potential Land Adjustments:** Kern County, The City of Ridgecrest, Indian Wells Water District, and the Sierra Sands Unified School District have initiated informal discussions with the BLM concerning land availability for future needs. The Ridgecrest community anticipates growth with the influx of new jobs related to BRAC decisions affecting China Lake Naval Weapons Station. The RIFO has identified lands that may be considered for disposal. We want to work with these parties in support of the communities needs. We have identified several potential opportunities for land sales, recreation and public purpose (R&PP) leases or sales, permits, and land use plan amendments to address potential recreation opportunities. The RIFO is developing a feasibility report for further consideration.

### Minerals Program Updates

- **Mining Operation Proposal:** Another mining operation proposal has been submitted to the BLM, Ridgecrest Field Office. A mining plan of operations was submitted by the Matcon Corporation (Matcon). Matcon plans to open a new quarry on about 9.5 acres of public land, about 1.5 miles west of Blue Point, in the Jawbone Canyon area, Kern County. The proposed action is to quarry and commercially develop a deposit of zeolite located on two mining claims. The BLM has released EA No. CA-650-2006-16 for public review and comment. Copies of the document are available online at [www.ca.blm.gov/ridgecrest](http://www.ca.blm.gov/ridgecrest). Contact the Ridgecrest Office at (760) 384-5400 to request a printed copy. The proposal and EA was reviewed with Ridgecrest Steering Committee. A public meeting to accept public comments was held Feb. 16, 2006, at the BLM Ridgecrest Field Office. For more information contact Linn Gum at (760) 384-5450.
- **Abandoned Mined Lands Reclamation:** The RIFO partnered with the State's Abandoned Mines Unit to remediate 47 mine hazards in the Spangler Open OHV area. The work involved backfilling dangerous pits and trenches near OHV riding areas. The RIFO is continuing to review other hazardous mine workings in the Rademachers and several major workings in the Red Mountain area. We are assessing wildlife, cultural and other resources identified in the field for the NEPA process. We plan to remediate many of these sites by fencing, signing, backfilling, or closing the shafts with foam plugs or copulas. Careful attention will be given to protecting bat habitat and conserving the historical attributes of some mines. Closing the hazardous mine workings will help provide public safety and protect desert wildlife including the desert tortoise.

### Resources/Grazing Program Update

- **Grazing Permit/Lease Renewal:** 27 grazing permits/leases were initially analyzed in September 2004 and all of the Proposed Decisions were protested by various interests. These initial Proposed Decisions were rescinded in March 2006. As a result of the protests and comments, the RIFO is revising the EAs to fully consider and analyze all identified issues that surfaced as a result of the initial comment and protest periods. The 27 grazing permits/leases are being analyzed under five amended Environmental Assessments (EAs) were released for public review and comment in April 2006, for 30 days. The BLM has received comments on all five grazing permit renewal EAs. We are in the process of analyzing the comments. If those comments require significant revisions of the EAs, the EAs will then be re-released to the public for an additional 15 days for review and comment. If comments are not significant, the BLM will be issuing proposed decisions later this summer. For more information contact David Sjaastad at (760) 384-5430.

- **Riparian Restoration:** Over the last 2-3 years several riparian restoration projects have been undertaken by the RIFO. Most of our riparian restoration efforts involve salt cedar removal and control. Recently, volunteers manually removed dense growths of salt cedar seedlings from several acres in Surprise Canyon. A previous effort in Surprise Canyon treated a 17 acre site, many more acres upstream from Chris Wicht Camp need to be treated. During FY'05, salt cedar was removed from a 20 acre site in Butterbredt Canyon. Also, salt cedar was removed from an 8 acre site in Grapevine Canyon. A 160 acre tamarisk infestation site at Warm Sulfur Springs in Panamint Valley has been periodically treated since 2003; it is estimated that tamarisk has been reduced by one third. In addition to these efforts, riparian enclosure projects were completed for a 1 and ½ mile segment of Kelso Creek and along a 0.6 mile stretch of Olancha Creek.

### Route Designation Updates

- **Surprise Canyon EIS:** An initial rough draft was extensively revised after staff reviews. A new internal draft of the Surprise Canyon EIS is under further review by BLM and DVNP staff and managers. Last year, BLM staff joined DVNP to conduct additional field work and gather more data. Other field trips were conducted by interested parties. After we complete our internal review and any necessary revisions, the BLM and DVNP will coordinate further review with the cooperators including the DAC TRT for Surprise canyon. We anticipate having an administrative draft of the EIS ready for review by cooperators this fall.
- **Furnace Creek EA:** In January 2005, the USFS and the BLM jointly released an EA for public comment. The EA evaluates 6 alternatives concerning access along Furnace Creek valley. The range of alternatives evaluated limiting access to allowing motorized access on both the FS and BLM segments. Two public meetings were held in February 2005. Over 2,500 comments have been received. The public comments were evaluated by the USFS and BLM. We also completed the assessment of the cultural resources, developed mitigation plans, and completed the consultation process with SHPO. The final EA incorporates responses to the public comments through an addendum to the joint EA. The BLM has initiated a Federal Register Notice to be published in July, notifying the public of the proposed plan amendment process to designate the Furnace Creek Road. Both the USFS and the BLM will prepare separate decision records upon completion of the plan amendment for route designation. For more information contact David Sjaastad at (760) 384-5430.

### Recreation/Wilderness/Maintenance Program Updates

- **OHV Grant:** The Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division and Commission have approved this years grant appropriations. The amount for the RIFO is about \$1.368 million in grant funding for FY-06. The grant will provide funds to help cover costs related to operations, trail maintenance, restoration, and law enforcement. This grant will also fund the operation of the Jawbone Visitor Station.
- **Status of Route Signing:** Maintenance Crews and Park Rangers have been busy maintaining and installing route markers primarily in the Jawbone ACEC, Rand Mountain/Fremont Valley management area, and the Red Mountain polygon. The RIFO has signed about 800 miles of open or limited use routes using the District's sign standards as recommended by the DAC TRT. In addition to route signing, the RIFO maintains Wilderness boundary signs and Kiosks, and closed route signing. Recently, 12 new information signs were installed in the Jawbone and Dove Springs open OHV areas and near Highway 14. These signs provide information to riders as to when they are entering or leaving the open areas. Additional information signs are planned for the Rand Mountain/Fremont Valley area. The RIFO also is coordinating with the Friend of Jawbone on their signing efforts for the Randsburg, Johannesburg, and Red Mountain communities. We have provided route information to identify designated and closed routes in an effort to help alleviate private property trespasses and trail proliferation.
- **OHV Restoration Projects:** Two Student Conservation Association (SCA) crews worked for about 8 months in Ridgcrest field area. These crews were tasked with continuing desert restoration efforts in the

Rand Mountains and Jawbone ACEC. To date the crews have achieved the following: 1. Jawbone ACEC – restored approximately 76 incursions; 2. Rand Mountains – restored about 146 incursions. The crews are using a combination of rice straw hay bales and vertical mulching to restore or block incursions. The crews are also attempting some re-vegetation efforts, using native plants, in the Jawbone ACEC. The crews undertook a hill climb restoration effort in the Kiavah Wilderness. The Friends of Jawbone and BLM held its annual Moose Anderson Days event at Jawbone. Approximately 200 volunteers removed 5 tons of trash from the public lands; performed trail maintenance of several miles of trail; removed salt cedar from approximately 5 acres of riparian area; and signed several trails.

- **SRPs:** Special recreation permit season is ongoing. We anticipate processing 25 to 30 SPRs this FY. To date, the RIFO has processed and approved about 20 Special Recreation Permits. Activities permitted included 4 endurance horseback rides, 1 Ultra Marathon, 8 AMA Motorcycle races, 2 dual sport motorcycle tours, 1 four-wheel drive tour event, 1 truck races, and 3 vending permits. An Inspector General review was recently conducted for both recreation and commercial permits.

### **Law Enforcement Program**

- **Law Enforcement Patrols:** During this period, we have maintained our law enforcement coverage during our peak weekends and heavy use period in the Rand Mountains and other busy areas. We coordinated with the Kern County Sheriff and other law enforcement agencies. We conducted several special holiday weekend law enforcement patrols, which include helicopter patrols. Approximately 200 citations have been issued and more than 8000 contacts have been made. We are in the process of filling 3 vacancies, of which one position is planned to be duty stationed in California City.
- **Special Operations:** Law Enforcement has conducted several weekend “sting” operations within Wilderness areas. Operations are designed to apprehend OHV users trespassing into wilderness. The operations have been very successful to date, more than doubling the number of citations written annually for vehicle intrusions into wilderness. The operations also appear to have had a deterrent effect in certain problem areas. Future operations may focus on off-route violations in restored areas.

### **Wild Horse and Burro Program – FY06**

- **Removal:** BLM, in coordination with the Mojave National Preserve, NAWS at China Lake, and Ft. Irwin have removed 43 horses and 22 burros so far this FY. Also, RIFO received 39 burros which were removed by NPS from the Mojave Preserve. BLM still plans to conduct water trapping efforts throughout the year with the goal of capturing an additional 150 burros. The trapping will be conducted within the Centennial Herd Management Area, and along the Colorado River within the Picacho State Park, west of Yuma. Currently we have approximately 450 animals at the corrals. We are focusing on reducing the number of animals we have in our corrals to make room for approximately 750 animals being removed from the Nevada deserts this fall.
- **Adoptions:** BLM continues to place a large emphasis on adoptions in FY06. The target for the State is 1,000 animals of which, 650 within the California Desert. To date over 550 animals have been adopted. Of those, 195 animals were adopted directly from the Ridgecrest corrals and the remaining animals were adopted from two satellite adoptions.
- **WH&B Monitoring:** BLM continues to monitor the habitat within the three remaining herd management areas, left on BLM lands, Chocolate – Mule Mountain, Chemehuevi, and Chicago Valley. Collected monitoring data indicates continued recovery of dry washes and riparian areas located within these HMAs. BLM installed a below ground water storage tank for West Well located within the southern portion of the Chemehuevi HMA. This 10,000 gallon water storage has been critically needed to maintain burros within the general region and delaying their migration to the river during the summer. This has greatly reduced the

previously observed impacts within the residence of Havasu Landing and the riparian areas along this reach of the Colorado River.

**Wildlife Resource Monitoring Conducted within the Field Office Area over the past three years includes:**

1. Invertebrate- In 2005 BLM biologists sampled the macro- invertebrates in Olancha Creek to determine what species were present. This is done to get an idea of what the water quality is like. At the same time biologist did water quality analysis. The samples were sent off to Mark Vinson, the BLM "Buglab" Director, at Utah State University at Logan, Utah. He found that we had some groups that indicated good water quality but some that didn't. The area does have cattle grazing and that is likely affecting the water quality. This funding came from multiyear CWWR source. Invertebrates were also collected in Surprise Canyon to help understand water quality there. Species found there indicated good water quality.
2. Tortoises- BLM coordinated with biologists doing relocation study in an area (non- BLM-managed land) south of the Rand Mountains/Fremont Valley Management Area. Biologists used the management area as control for the study. They marked and put transmitters on a number of tortoises to study movement and behavior of both the relocated tortoises and control tortoises. The tortoises were relocated from new Hyundai Test track near California City.
3. Small mammals and herptiles- BLM has been monitoring small mammals and reptiles in, and around the Dove Spring Open area for the past few years using pitfall trap arrays. The data has been collected and provided to the USGS but not analyzed. The study was discontinued in 2005 because of budget cuts that left the desert monitoring team short-handed. Funds were provided through the OHV "green sticker" program.
4. Snowy Plovers- As part of an agreement between CDFG, BLM and the mining operation at Searles Lake, the company agreed to fund the monitoring of nesting snowy plovers at a site at Searles Lake. The main concern was that vehicle traffic and other aspects of the operation might affect the species. To date the operation has not had an impact on nesting plovers. The company does modify its activities when needed.
5. Mohave ground squirrels- The desert monitoring team worked with Phil Leitner, an expert on this species to conduct a behavioral study in the Freeman Wash area, east of HWY 14. Using OHV "green sticker" funding, they put transmitters on a number of squirrels and were able to determine home ranges for many of these animals. They found that some young ones moved miles away from where they were born. The monitoring team also did trapping in areas not previously trapped and began a vegetative analysis to try to determine if the squirrels were tied to vegetative communities with specific attributes.
6. Mohave ground squirrels- Phil Leitner has been funded through various sources (Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, DFG, OHV green sticker, others) to conduct a variety of studies in the desert. He trapped the original sites that Jeff Aardahl trapped in the early 1980s and found that the sites still had squirrels on them. He has a long-term study in the Cosos as a result of mitigation from the development of the Coso Geothermal project. His results have been presented to BLM in a number of reports. Much of his data has been incorporated into planning documents such as the West Mojave Plan as well as NEPA documents.
7. Aerial raptor survey- In 2005, BLM contracted for an aerial raptor survey using OHV green sticker funding. A helicopter was used to survey old nest sites as well as look for new ones. Nest sites of prairie falcons, golden eagles, red-tailed hawks, and ravens were the ones primarily found. BLM biologists and volunteers were able to "ground truth" some of the sites. The biologist observed 35 birds of which 12 were nesting, including 4 prairie falcons, 2 red- tailed hawks, and 1 raven with 5 unknowns. One of these was a raven and the other a prairie falcon. BLM monitors the Robbers Roost site each year to check for reproduction as well as human disturbance. Each year biologists find young. The goal is to identify important raptor sites to help with the route designation process in the El Pasos.

8. Bird Surveys- Sand Canyon, Indian Wells Canyon- BLM has been conducting point count surveys of these two canyons for the past 10 years using volunteers from the local Audubon Society. Audubon has contributed a substantial number of volunteer hours, basically now surveying the two canyons every other year. Point counts involve staying at a point for 10 minutes recording all birds seen and heard, then walking to another point about 200- 300 yards away. The observer would observe for another 10 minutes and repeat this for a dozen or so points. The data was analyzed for the first 5 years but not for the last few years. We found fluctuations on the numbers and species of birds using the canyons. We also found special status birds such as the willow flycatcher and the yellow- billed cuckoo using the canyons.
9. Bird Surveys- Joshua Tree Point Counts- These surveys are done in the Jawbone Butterbrecht ACEC, at sites in and around Dove Spring Open Area, the Bird Spring Pass area and in the designated Wilderness in the Walker Pass area. These are done in the winter, between Thanksgiving and Christmas and then in the spring, usually in April or May. The routes are run at least twice, by different observers, to reduce errors. Data is compiled and sent to the State Ecologist Jim Weigand for analysis. We have 3 or 4 years worth of data now and it may be possible to analyze it to determine impacts on birds from human activity. The project is funded through OHV green sticker funds.
10. Tortoise- Jawbone/Butterbrecht ACEC one hectare plot surveys. Potential tortoise habitat was overlaid with a 500 x 500 meter grid and a random point placed in each grid. This point was then used as a starting point for the 100 x 100 meter plot (1 hectare plot). Each plot was surveyed for tortoises, tortoise sign, trash, cattle droppings, roads, trails, tracks, and anything else. A brief vegetation analysis was done at each plot. This survey took about 3 years to complete and a report received by our office. The researchers found a number of interesting things. There two “tortoise concentration areas”, one around Robbers Roost and the other near Red Rock Canyon State Park. They did find sign between the two areas so feel that there are tortoises elsewhere. The study was funded by OHV green sticker money and overseen by the USGS and the BLM state Ecologist.
11. El Mirage tortoise study- This study was done along the lines of the Jawbone study, using OHV funding as well. Biologists and volunteers with training from the Ridgecrest office participated in this study under a contract with USGS. We completed this study in one year. A draft report is available and the data will be available to the public when the Final report is put out by the USGS under a contract.
12. A similar study is proposed for the El Pasos and Rademachers using OHV funding with USGS supervision and a contract. This is to establish tortoise concentration areas in these areas and help with the route designation process.
13. Tortoise- Line Distance Sampling- In May of 2002 biologists from the Chambers Group conducted Line Distance Sampling studies in the Rand Mountain/Fremont Valley Management Area using OHV green sticker funding. They found only 10 live tortoises but 173 carcasses (18 intact, the remainder fragments in various states) in walking 220 kilometers. The study was done to see what the density of tortoises was in the management area under existing management (designated routes). This was a very dry year and the biologists felt that the drought was a major reason they didn't find many live tortoises.
14. Tortoise- DTNA Honda study plot- BLM acquired Challenge Cost Share funding for surveying Section 8 (the “Honda study Plot”) in 2003. BLM worked with the Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee to hire a contractor to survey the plot. The biologists used BLM's “60 day” study plot methodology in which they spend 60 “person days” on the plot. The plot is divided into 100 squares which are searched for all tortoises. This plot, which is about 600 acres, had about 50 live tortoises which would work out to over 50-60 tortoises per square mile, a density higher than outside the DTNA. In 2002 BLM provided Challenge Cost Share funding (or NFWF) to survey the 3 square mile study plot at the DTNA Interpretive Center and

the 1 square mile plot in the DTNA (Interior Plot). These studies further documented the low densities of tortoises around the boundaries of the DTNA.

15. Inyo California towhee- In 2004 received funding to survey towhee habitat in the Argus Range. Contract let to Denise LaBerteaux, the authority on this bird. She survey only BLM sites, many of which she did in 1998. She found 204 adults of which she estimated there were 99 breeding pairs. Not all the 93 sites occupied in 1998 were occupied in 2004. She concluded the population increased by 13.6% from 1998 to 2004 and estimated the population at 725 adults over the whole range. BLM also surveyed Surprise Canyon with expert bird observers and found a towhee using this canyon.
16. Least Bell's vireo and southwestern willow flycatcher- In 2001 and 2002 BLM issued contracts to various consultants to survey potential habitat over Ridgecrest's area of responsibility. The researchers found these birds in canyons such as Sand Canyon, Indian Wells Canyon, and others but could not document nesting of either species. BLM funding to support CBD lawsuit.
17. Bats- BLM has been monitoring bats in the Jawbone/Butterbrecht ACEC as well as specific shafts/adits/pits elsewhere to support the remediation of those features that are hazardous to people (and some species of animals). BLM biologists monitor specific entrances using night vision goggles, video cameras, and an "anabat", a device that records bat vocalizations. Experts can then identify the species from the recording. The monitoring was done under the oversight of Dr. Pat Brown-Berry, an expert in the field of bats. In 2005, in the Rademachers, BLM biologists saw large numbers of barn owls, with 2 of mines having 5 owls each. The data is used to decide whether to gate, backfill, or fence the shaft. In 2006 a large number of features hazardous to humans will be dealt with in a manner that protects bats and other wildlife.
18. Amphibian survey- In 2003 Laura Cunningham, under contract using OHV green sticker funds, searched potential habitat in the Jawbone/Butterbrecht ACEC for amphibian species. She searched 13 locations but found no salamanders. She searched during daylight hours, in leaf litter, downed logs, along surface water, and other likely places. It's possible the salamanders are deep underground and not observable except for certain days/nights during certain times of the year.
19. Panamint alligator lizard- In the late 1990s and early 2000s the lizards were trapped in Surprise Canyon using small pitfall trap arrays. In 2002 Peach Spring, in the Argus Range was selected as a site to trap for lizards, but none were caught. It should be noted, as above that 2002 was one of the driest years on record and this may have been a factor in the lack of lizards. Plans were made to trap at other sites in the Argus Range but sites further north were done instead. These studies were done with USFWS funds using contractors. BLM staff was involved in making sure the studies complied with NEPA.
20. Bighorn sheep- pellet counts were done by BLM biologists in Surprise Canyon to help determine the impacts of closing the canyon to vehicles. Biologists counted the number of pellet groups on the floor of the canyon at regular intervals throughout the year.
21. Special Status Plants- Ten species of special status plants were monitored, including the desert cymopterus, Mohave tarweed, Charlotte's phacelia, Kelso Monkeyflower, Nine-mile Canyon phacelia, etc. New information was obtained, for example, the desert cymopterus was found over a wider area than originally laid out.
22. Weed treatments- BLM has conducted weed treatments of tamarisk in the Panamint Valle (at two sites), Surprise Canyon, Butterbrecht Canyon, and some other locations. BLM monitors these treatments to ensure the treatment actually works. Work was done by the California Conservation Corps and the Los Angeles Conservation Corps. Up to a hundred acres have been treated in the three year period.

23. Photomonitoring- Photomonitoring has been done over the last 17 years in Surprise Canyon and for about 12 years at the burn in Sand Canyon. Photo monitoring allows one to visually see what the impacts of an activity or event are over time. Other Photo monitoring has been done in Pleasant Canyon, Happy Canyon, and the more recent burn in Sand Canyon, the Desert Tortoise Natural Area, and sites in the Field Office Area. The Photo monitoring showed, for example that the 1993 burn in Sand Canyon has been almost completely restored. The cottonwoods and willows are denser than in 1993 and as tall, thus providing good riparian habitat for bird species.

**Recreation Monitoring:**

1. Rand and Red Mountain Management Areas- Monthly compliance monitoring is performed by staff members driving a predetermined route checking consistent monitoring points to evaluate visitor compliance with area route designation. The staff member records if tracks are observed at monitoring points, all signs down are replaced, and all tracks are raked out. The courses followed are the same ones originally established by Anton contractors following the initial lawsuit by CBD in 2001.
2. Surprise Canyon- Surprise Canyon is visited on a monthly basis to ensure that the vehicle barrier is intact and that no vehicles have driven up the canyon past the closure point. Additionally, while on site staff collects visitor logs from the trail register box that is just a few yards up the hiking trail from the parking area near Chris Witch Camp.
3. Furnace Creek- Monitoring of the Furnace Creek location is conducted on a monthly basis. The monitoring efforts that take place at this location include confirming that the vehicle barrier is intact and recordation of the presence or absence of water in stream crossing along the closed route.