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BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT
CALIFORNIA DESERT DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS
SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2018

JOB NO. 3188509
REPORTED BY: DIANE CARVER MANN, CLR, CSR NO. 6008

1 MEETING OF THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT CALIFORNIA
2 DESERT DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL AT
3 901 NORTH CHINA LAKE BOULEVARD, RIDGECREST, CALIFORNIA,
4 COMMENCING AT 8:05 A.M., ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2018,
5 BEFORE DIANE CARVER MANN, CSR NO. 6008.

6

7 APPEARANCES

8 MICHELLE LONG - TRANSPORTATION/RIGHTS OF WAY

9 WILLIAM "BILLY" MITCHELL - RENEWABLE RESOURCES

10 PAUL MARTIN - NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES

11 AL MUTH - WILDLIFE

12 ROBERT ROBINSON - TRIBAL INTERESTS

13 ROBERT BURKE - PUBLIC-AT-LARGE

14 RANDY BANIS - RECREATION

15 BETH RANSEL - DISTRICT MANAGER

16 NATHAN FRANCIS - NON-RENEWABLE RESOURCES

17 FRAZIER HANEY - ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION

18 JAMES KENNEY - PUBLIC-AT-LARGE

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20 STEPHEN RAZO, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR, CDD

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RIDGECREST, CALIFORNIA; SATURDAY, DECEMBER 15, 2018

8:05 A.M.

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CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Good morning, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for coming to the DAC meeting today. We're going to be beginning and starting with the Pledge of Allegiance. I'd like to ask DAC member James Kenney to help us with the -- oh, no one calls him "James" except his mother -- sorry -- with the Pledge of Allegiance.

(The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you. My name is Randy Banis from Leona Valley, representing recreation. I'd like to go around the table and have the rest of our members introduce themselves. Let's start at the left with Jim.

MEMBER KENNEY: Jim Kenney. I represent the public, and I live here in downtown beautiful Ridgecrest.

MEMBER HANEY: Frazier Haney. I'm from Joshua Tree, California, and I am in the environmental protection business.

1 MEMBER FRANCIS: I'm Nathan Francis. I'm from
2 Palmdale area, and I represent nonrenewable resources.

3 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: I'm Beth Ransel. I'm
4 the district manager for the California Desert District,
5 and I'm the designated federal official for the meeting.

6 MEMBER BURKE: Bob Burke from Barstow. I
7 represent the public at large and bighorn sheep.

8 MEMBER ROBINSON: My name is Bob Robinson. I
9 represent the interests of the tribes.

10 MEMBER MUTH: Al Muth representing wildlife,
11 recently retired from the desert, living in Truckee,
12 California.

13 MEMBER MARTIN: Paul Martin. I represent
14 nonrenewable resources, and I'm from Azusa, California.

15 MEMBER MITCHELL: Billy Mitchell,
16 fourth-generation rancher. My wife and I currently have
17 a house in Rattlesnake Canyon. Been serving as chairman
18 of the REACT for 15 years. We reside in the
19 Johnson Valley.

20 MEMBER LONG: Shelly Long. I represent
21 right-of-way and transportation.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you. And now a
23 special thank you to all of you for coming today on a
24 Saturday day to give up your weekend to participate in
25 this public process and to let your opinions be heard to

1 not only the Desert Advisory Council but to the BLM.
2 It's a wonderful thing that you're doing this on this
3 Saturday. And there's some beautiful things outdoors
4 you could be doing and other family and holiday things,
5 but you chose to come here and participate and join us
6 on this -- we'll really call it a momentous occasion to
7 have the DAC being back. And thank you all for giving
8 up your Saturday to do that.

9 A couple of quick notes. A chance to turn off
10 your phones if you'd like, just a reminder. Restrooms
11 are out and to the left. Also I know it's a little
12 chilly in here, but the heater is running, it's going,
13 and I think it will be better pretty soon.

14 I'd like to call out a special recognition and
15 thank you for the members of the Public Lands Roundtable
16 of Ridgecrest that are here today. They've been very,
17 very supportive of the DAC. They've written letters of
18 support on behalf of the DAC, and I'm pleased to have so
19 many of them here today to give us some support and also
20 to hear from them and their comments.

21 Before I close the introductions and move on to
22 the transcripts, agenda and the like, I'd like to call
23 for a moment of silence because we've lost a member of
24 our DAC family, one of our earliest and most regular
25 participants of the Desert Advisory Council,

1 Marie Brashear. We miss her very much, and you'll see a
2 speaker card for her up at the podium today, and I hope
3 when you come up to speak, you can take a minute and put
4 Marie in your thoughts. We miss her very much, so a
5 moment of silence, please.

6 (A Moment of silence was taken
7 in memory of Marie Brashear.)

8 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, everybody. We
9 miss her very much.

10 Next item of business is the approval of the
11 transcripts, the March 20th transcripts. That was a
12 special meeting of the Desert Advisory Council to
13 consider the matter of re-scoping the Desert Renewable
14 Energy Conservation Plan. Did everybody have a chance
15 to take a look at that? Do we have questions or
16 comments?

17 Billy?

18 MEMBER MITCHELL: Yeah. At the last meeting we
19 had a motion that at our next meeting this problem with
20 Jay Moon would be resolved. Does Mike Ahrens have to
21 mediate it? Also it's not even on the agenda. So what
22 happened to, when you make a motion like that, where
23 does this go? I mean, who's responsible for the agenda?
24 In the county we have a secretary that pretty much puts
25 on exactly what we're supposed to have. So could you

1 please explain to me where this motion went.

2 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: So I can address
3 that. So we took to heart Jay Moon's concerns and the
4 concerns of the DAC related to the materials that you
5 submitted. We have since met with Jay, and then we also
6 connected with him after the REACT meeting, the recent
7 REACT meeting. And I believe that Mike has sent him
8 some materials as well. So we continue to work with Jay
9 on his concerns, and we are following up with him on
10 that.

11 MEMBER MITCHELL: Well, I just got this this
12 morning, and I thought Jay would be here, but I guess
13 he's not. I know he's quite busy. As far as the
14 e-mail, I think maybe, Julie, you can help me with this.
15 Mike hasn't got back with any of the information we
16 asked for, including the last meeting that Jay had that
17 everybody was present due to, I guess, the holidays. Is
18 that what it says?

19 MRS. MITCHELL: Yeah.

20 MEMBER MITCHELL: Yeah. So I mean, you know,
21 just because there's only six ranchers left here and all
22 this stuff that the secretary sent out and mining and
23 user groups, which I have no problem with because I've
24 been in this desert probably longer than -- maybe Jim
25 has got two years on me. I don't see anything mentioned

1 about the ranching industry.

2 I know in our budget meeting -- I'll try to
3 keep this short -- we decided that, if there was nothing
4 for an area manager to -- for him to be here in order to
5 save money, that they didn't have to show up. But I
6 don't know why Mike's not here, because this is very
7 important to our community, our six people.

8 So I hope that I don't -- do we have to
9 entertain another motion for the next meeting that this
10 is going to be resolved or the paperwork is going to
11 be -- Mr. Chairman, can you please advise me on that, or
12 Beth?

13 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: First I want to
14 mention one other thing on this topic is that we did
15 take Jay's materials, and we did submit those as a
16 comment related to the consideration of the Desert Plan
17 Amendment, and so those are being considered as part of
18 that scoping process.

19 So I just wanted to note that as well that
20 we're working with Jay on his concerns, and his concerns
21 have also been put fort as part of the scoping comments
22 for the potential for the Desert Plan Amendment. But I
23 think Randy wanted to say something as well.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: First I thought there was a
25 specific question about the transcripts. I thought you

1 didn't receive or there's some issue with that. That's
2 why we were calling on you with respect to the meeting
3 transcripts issue. This part about Jay, we'll do that
4 in the -- that could be in your report next.

5 MEMBER MITCHELL: I didn't know that.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: So I just wanted to make
7 sure, because I understand you didn't see or get them or
8 something, and I just wanted a chance for you to put
9 that on the record for this part about the transcripts.

10 MEMBER MITCHELL: We got them this morning.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Did everyone else have a
12 chance to look at the transcripts? And do we have a
13 motion with respect to the transcripts, approving the
14 transcripts?

15 MEMBER BURKE: So moved.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Moved by Bob. Second?

17 MEMBER MITCHELL: Second.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I have a second from Billy.
19 Any opposition to approving the transcripts?

20 (A vote was taken.)

21 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Hearing and seeing none,
22 the transcripts are approved.

23 You have in front of you an agenda for today.
24 This will be another place to bite this, Billy. You
25 have an agenda in front of you today. We'll be hearing

1 our reports and then public comments on items not on the
2 agenda, moving into BLM reports. We'll have the council
3 discussion on the DAC charter today. After a break
4 we'll be moving into the West Mojave Route Network
5 Project. We'll have a short lunch and move into mining
6 issues in the afternoon, and then we'll close the
7 afternoon with the DAC housekeeping issues of subgroups.
8 And throughout the agenda you'll see sprinkled in public
9 comments.

10 Any questions or comments about the agenda,
11 aside from what you mentioned, the absence of that item?

12 MEMBER MITCHELL: I think you've pretty well
13 resolved it right now.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Very good. Having no other
15 comments on the agenda, public comment will appear
16 frequently today. We're very interested in what you
17 say. We have a number of public comment opportunities,
18 and because of the frequency and the number of guests,
19 we'll be having our public comments limited to three
20 minutes. We have a little clock on the side that we'll
21 do our best to have you take a look at and hear the ding
22 when your three minutes is up.

23 We have speaker cards in the back of the room,
24 and we ask that you do fill out a speaker card and you
25 would turn that in to the side table to Steve. Steve

1 will gather them together and then shuffle them up here
2 to me in time for the comment period. So there should
3 be plenty of cards for you. And that's it.

4 If there's no objections, I'd like to move into
5 advisory council member reports. And this time I'm
6 going to start on the right.

7 Michelle, anything to add today for member
8 reports?

9 MEMBER LONG: Nope.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Bill?

11 MEMBER MITCHELL: I said this. That's the only
12 thing.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: You did good? Okay. Thank
14 you, Bill. Very good.

15 MEMBER MARTIN: No, nothing.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Going to you, Al.

17 MEMBER MUTH: Good. Gives me plenty of time.

18 A number of things that I'd like to comment on. Deputy
19 State Director Martha Michelle -- is that --

20 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Maciel.

21 MEMBER MUTH: Maciel was here. She discussed
22 components of the five-year strategic plan for BLM, said
23 it was completed and that she would give us a link to
24 that report before the meeting was over. I think
25 Mr. Stewart also requested that information. We didn't

1 get it. I looked online. I found a draft report but
2 not a final plan. So I'd still like to see that link so
3 that we can read the plan.

4 Also, Beth, you were going to send out a packet
5 of federal registry notices and press releases with all
6 of the materials in the packet addressing the DRECP land
7 withdrawals, the dates, and whatever documentation went
8 with them. If you look Line 22 on Page 22 of the
9 meeting transcripts, that's where all that is located.
10 Either way, I don't recall receiving that information.
11 I'd appreciate it if you would send it out to the group.

12 And then the DRECP discussion took up hours at
13 the last meeting. It's not on today's agenda, and given
14 all the time and angst that went into that discussion, I
15 think we should get a report on what happened to the
16 motion we passed. What's been implemented? I think we
17 advised slow, cautious implementation. And what's
18 happened with that?

19 So also Russ Scofield in his discussion said
20 the DRECP is still in effect, it's actually going away
21 because it's part of the Desert Plan, and that the
22 scoping that's been opened up is to result in a scoping
23 report. Is that scoping report completed? Is it
24 available to the public? What is the status? And I'd
25 sure like to see it when it's done.

1 That will keep me quiet for right now.

2 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Al.

3 MEMBER ROBINSON: I've got nothing.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Hi, Bob. Good to see you.

5 And Bob Burke.

6 MEMBER BURKE: I'm echoing Al.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Nathan, good morning.

8 MEMBER FRANCIS: Good morning. I don't have
9 anything to report.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Very good.

11 Frazier.

12 MEMBER HANEY: Good morning. I'd like to echo
13 Al on the DRECP and get an update if we could today on
14 anything we've heard or what the process might look like
15 from here.

16 But also I want to bring up that at my first
17 meeting at the DAC almost two years ago now BLM asked us
18 to talk about forming a subgroup for advising on
19 management in the Mojave Trails National Monument, and
20 I'd like to get an update on where that's at.

21 As the monument was designated, there was
22 promise of integration with the small business
23 community, and in the meantime Barstow and 29 Palms and
24 Needles have moved forward with designating themselves
25 and working with BLM as gateway cities, but I think that

1 we're stuck in the mud on being able to plan activities
2 in the monument, and I think a subgroup would really
3 help to inform that process. And so I'd like to get
4 that show back on the road if we're able.

5 And that is it.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Frazier.

7 Jim.

8 MEMBER KENNEY: I really don't have anything
9 other than I'd like to hear what the DRECP progress has
10 been, just like everybody else. We fought about it a
11 little, we talked about it a lot, and let's hope some
12 action happens. I also want to welcome everybody to
13 Ridgecrest.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I'd like to review a little
15 bit of yesterday's field trip, first of all to thank
16 Carl and his associates at the Ridgecrest Field Office
17 for putting together such a really great trip yesterday.
18 Could have been a little warmer, but I guess I won't
19 hold that against him.

20 It was neat. We stopped first at the
21 Rademacher Hills up by College Heights and looked at the
22 different multiple use recreation opportunities that
23 occur there, and we discussed briefly some of the
24 conflicts that can occur with the different types of
25 users in these areas that are so close to town. The

1 urban interface zones is what it was introduced to us
2 as.

3 It was a very nice conversation, and I
4 appreciate Ridgecrest Police Department for appealing
5 their sergeant to come out and talk to us also about the
6 local enforcement concerns. So that was a very nice
7 stop and beautiful views from that College Heights area.

8 The Kelly Mine stop was really neat. What a
9 huge project that is turning out to be. The earth
10 movers, combined with very ingenious engineering and
11 sculpting on the ground and creative use of different
12 kinds of materials are contributing to really mitigate
13 and rehabilitate that place very well.

14 And so for those of you who weren't there, when
15 you drive by 395 and Red Mountain, you'll know that's
16 what all the earth movers are doing on the west side of
17 the highway at Red Mountain.

18 We also stopped at Randsburg, great little
19 town. On a Friday, though, it was quiet and calm and
20 peaceful. We had to show a picture of what it looks
21 like during the busy season for people to understand
22 really what goes on in that town. It was very
23 interesting to hear about the economic impacts, the
24 positive economic impact that recreation is providing
25 for that community. Money is hard to come by in small

1 towns like that, and they really welcome, and I think
2 they do a good job with hosting OHV.

3 I think the reason for us stopping there is
4 really to show that, yeah, this is a good news story
5 about how recreation is being managed and being received
6 in that community.

7 And we also visited the El Paso Mountains to
8 talk about the impacts of how mitigation lands --
9 private property that's purchased as mitigation lands,
10 when that's fenced off, that could impact access to not
11 only recreation but other kinds of uses out in the
12 desert. And we just wanted to bring that up to show how
13 well the Ridgecrest Field Office works with private
14 property owners, the mitigation banks, the counties.
15 And we were able to work out a solution to restore
16 access across most of that fenced land. So that was a
17 neat stop.

18 And lastly, the best stop of the day always,
19 with the Ridgecrest wild horse and burro corral. And
20 that was just a terrific, terrific time. They let us go
21 over and look at the baby burros and feed them and pet
22 them. I think one ended up with a bow. And I watched
23 carefully to make sure none got loaded into anybody's
24 truck without permission. They were awfully tempting,
25 gorgeous. We started calling them by their four-digit

1 names.

2 And then we returned back to the hotel on them.
3 So thanks, Carl, for doing a great job keeping us on
4 schedule and not doing one thing too many. So I
5 appreciate that.

6 Also the last thing I have is, DAC members, you
7 have a stack of CTUC Friends of Jawbone maps in front of
8 you courtesy of Ed Waldheim. These are newest, latest
9 and greatest. Always new changes coming out, so I
10 always like to make sure you have a set of that.

11 Other than that, I'd like to just say thank you
12 to the BLM Desert District for working with us, working
13 with me throughout the last year to try to get these --
14 to try to get this rolling again to the get a meeting on
15 the table. And we've had a few tries, we've had a few
16 stalls.

17 And something about this one we kind of had a
18 funny feeling from the beginning that this was the one
19 that was going to roll, and it sure did. And every
20 piece of it came together, and I'm really glad that our
21 hiatus is over and that we have an opportunity to meet
22 on general topics here in 2018. So welcome back from
23 our break, and it's time to go to work.

24 So that said, that's my report, and I'd like to
25 turn the agenda over to -- let's see. What time do we

1 have? 8:25. We're just a tad ahead of schedule. If
2 there's no objections, I may have caused
3 misunderstanding with respect to a start time of this
4 meeting. And my apologies. The only consequence, I
5 think, of that is, if folks are looking for a 9:00 start
6 time to be able to comment on items not on the agenda, I
7 think if they drive all the way to Ridgecrest and not
8 have that opportunity, they would be disappointed.

9 So what I'd like to do, if there's no
10 objections from the council members, is to postpone
11 public comment on items not on the agenda until after
12 the 9:00 hour. Any objection? Very well.

13 Next item on the agenda is the District
14 Manager's Report. Beth Ransel, it's yours.

15 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Thank you. Good
16 morning. I am really excited to be having a DAC meeting
17 here, especially in Ridgecrest, because I know there's
18 been a lot of interest in coming to Ridgecrest, and I
19 think that the timing is really ripe with a lot of the
20 things that we have going on here, including WEMO, which
21 is on the agenda for today.

22 I want to echo Randy in saying thank you to all
23 the DAC members for giving up your Saturday and for
24 coming here to help advise the BLM on really important
25 matters. And I also want to echo Randy in thanking all

1 the members of the public that have given up their
2 Saturday to come be cold. I see Julie putting on a
3 jacket. We have the heat kicking. Hopefully it will
4 warm up soon. But thank you all for coming and being
5 interested in the management of the Public Lands here in
6 the desert. I appreciate it.

7 I do want to take a couple of minutes just to
8 point out some of the BLM folks that we have in
9 attendance here today. First, most folks already
10 probably know Carl Symons, the field manager for the
11 Ridgecrest office, but he's there in the back of the
12 room, and he's actually hosting us here.

13 We also have Katrina Symons here as well. If
14 you would just wave. She's the field manager for the
15 Barstow Field Office, and both of them will be doing
16 presentations today.

17 We are honored to have Tom Zale. He's going to
18 be retiring at the end of the year. But, Tom, if you
19 could wave or stand up. He's the field manager for the
20 El Centro Field Office. If you haven't had an
21 opportunity to read a report for the field office for
22 ECFO, he has a really nice note at the end of the report
23 that is really well put together. Thank you for your 40
24 years of service, Tom.

25 We also have Nathan Morris here today. He's

1 been on detail here in the desert helping us out as the
2 assistant district manager for our resources group, but
3 his normal job is in the Washington office in the
4 planning in NEPA shop, and so we're excited to have him
5 here today to see how the DAC operates and how important
6 issues are to the DAC and members of the public. So
7 thank you for traveling all the way up from
8 Moreno Valley today. His detail assignment is going to
9 be ending next week, so we're really excited he was able
10 to take this in and be here today.

11 We have Carrie Woods here as well from the
12 Ridgecrest Field Office. A lot of folks probably know
13 Carrie, but thank you for coming today to help out,
14 Carrie.

15 We have Julie Watson here as well. We
16 appreciate Julie coming to help. Where is she? There
17 she is. Julie Watson is here --

18 MS. WATSON: Hi.

19 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: -- from the
20 Ridgecrest Field Office helping us out today. We have
21 Jim Watson as well from the Ridgecrest Field Office. We
22 have Sarah Webster from our California state office
23 Public Affairs Office. Sarah is going to be helping us
24 out in the desert with our public affairs workload. And
25 so many thanks to Sarah. So you'll probably be seeing

1 her name on a number of things coming out of the desert.

2 And the reason Sarah is going to be helping us
3 out is because Steve Razo is going to be retiring on
4 Friday of next week, so less than a week away, yeah.
5 And Steve has been with the DAC for -- how many years,
6 Steve?

7 MR. RAZO: Seventeen.

8 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: -- seventeen years,
9 so he's been a fixture with the DAC. And I know Randy
10 wanted to say a few things and present something to
11 Steve.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I've worked with Steve
13 since really my first time coming to the DAC meetings
14 maybe 18 years ago, and I've always had good
15 conversations. And over the years Steve has been able
16 to help me hone my navigational skills and help me
17 better read the weather. And I think he's really helped
18 me very much in being able to steer the ship on these
19 opportunities that I've had in the years to be able to
20 do so. And I couldn't have done it as effectively
21 without Steve.

22 But those conversations we've had, I'm not
23 going to recount them. Those are old. They're done.
24 They're private. But there is one conversation that I
25 am going to share. You may not know, but Steve and I

1 also have something in common, that music is very
2 important to our hearts. You may not know this. Steve
3 is actually the conductor of the Moreno Valley Wind
4 Ensemble. They play regularly in Moreno Valley every
5 year.

6 Christmas show coming up, or is it done.

7 MR. RAZO: That one is done.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I did it a couple of years
9 ago. Mark Algazy has gone to several shows. It is
10 terrific. There's nothing like it. And to see him come
11 onto the podium, the long tux and the tails and the
12 beautiful baton, gets ready to tap that, and everyone,
13 the whole orchestra, just ready to go. It's remarkable.

14 And so when I started writing music, I said
15 sent him one of my songs. I was pretty darn proud of
16 it, pretty cool song. I said, "Hey, Steve, what do you
17 think of this?"

18 He writes back, and he says, "Hey, it's pretty
19 good, but it's not going anywhere." And I got to tell
20 you, everything I do from there on forward, I look at my
21 piece, and I say, "Where is this thing going?" And if
22 it's not going anywhere, I'm going to take it somewhere.
23 So I have to thank Steve not only for educating me and
24 helping me in my work here as advisor to the BLM, but
25 thanks for helping me to be a better songwriter. I

1 don't have to give you an honor for that.

2 If the members of the DAC wouldn't mind, Steve,
3 would you join me for a moment. You might want to take
4 a photo.

5 MR. RAZO: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: On behalf of the Desert
7 Advisory Council, it's my pleasure to present you with a
8 token of our appreciation for 18 years of dedication and
9 service to the DAC. Couldn't have done it without you.
10 Thank you, Steve.

11 (Applause.)

12 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: All right. Thank
13 you, Randy. That was really nice. And thanks, Steve,
14 for your many, many years of service.

15 MR. RAZO: My honor.

16 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: So I have State
17 Director's Report. So I'll read through that.

18 First and foremost, the president announced
19 this morning that Secretary Zinke will be stepping down
20 at the end of the year. We also have Brian Steed, who
21 is acting -- he is the Deputy Director for Policy and
22 Programs, and he's currently exercising the authority of
23 the director. And we also have Margaret Schneider,
24 who's acting as the Deputy Director for Operations. So
25 that's our leadership back in Washington.

1 Our leadership here in California, our
2 State Director, Jerry Perez, has taken a different
3 position. He's actually now at the Forest Service at
4 the Angeles National Forest. So our Associate
5 State Director stepped up into the acting State Director
6 position, and that is Joe Stout. And that's been since
7 October, when Jerry left. And so we're really fortunate
8 to have Joe in there because he's really familiar with
9 California and with the issues that are important here
10 in California.

11 We also have Frederica Lee, who recently was
12 selected as the Acting Associate State Director, and her
13 normal job was as the Deputy State Director for Support
14 Services at our California state office, so she is also
15 familiar with many of the issues and topics that are
16 near and dear to the hearts of folks here in California.
17 So we're fortunate for that selection as well.

18 And then the leadership here in the
19 California Desert. Of course, Beth Ransel, I'm the
20 District Manager here in the California Desert for BLM.
21 We have Ben Gruber. He's the Associate District
22 Manager. He's basically my right hand, and so things
23 would not operate without Ben. So thanks, Ben.

24 We mentioned Katrina Symons. She's the Barstow
25 Field Manager. We have Mike Ahrens, the Needles Field

1 Manager. He's not in attendance today, as was noted by
2 Billy, but he's our Needles Field Manager. We have
3 Doug Herrema, the Palm Springs Field Manager; Tom Zale,
4 the El Centro Field Manager, who's retiring at the end
5 of the year.

6 We're actively seeking a temporary-assignment
7 individual to come in to help out in the field office
8 manager role upon Tom's departure, and we are seeking
9 approval to fill permanently the field manager job as
10 well. So we'll keep folks posted as we move through
11 that process.

12 Carl Symons is our Ridgecrest Field Manager.
13 And we also have Ashley Adams. She's the Santa Rosa and
14 San Jacinto Mountains National Monument Manager. That's
15 a Service First Monument, so she fulfills that role as
16 the Monument Manager for both BLM and Forest Service,
17 and she's stationed in the Palm Springs South Coast
18 Field Office.

19 And then we have Jihadda Govan for the
20 Sand to Snow National Monument. She's the manager
21 there. That's also a Service First Monument, and she's
22 stationed at the Forest Supervisor's office in
23 San Bernardino. And we have Kyle Sullivan, the
24 Mojave Trails National Monument Manager, who's stationed
25 out at the District Office in Moreno Valley but falls

1 under the umbrella of the Needles Field Office.

2 In terms of budget there's currently a
3 continuing resolution that will expire next Friday. And
4 I guess we'll see after that where we go. We are
5 currently in the 115th Congress, so the 115th Congress
6 concludes at the end of the year, and the 116th Congress
7 begins January 3rd.

8 A number of legislative proposals of interest
9 to the California Desert District include the California
10 Desert Protection and Recreation Act, which is S. 32.
11 It includes Senator Feinstein's proposal for the desert,
12 including designating wilderness, national off-highway
13 vehicle areas, wild and scenic rivers, et cetera, and
14 the status is that it was reported out of committee on
15 December 6, 2018.

16 There's also the California Off-Road Recreation
17 and Conservation Act, which is H.R. 857, and that
18 includes Congressman Cook's proposal for the desert,
19 including designating wilderness, national off-highway
20 vehicle areas, wild and scenic rivers, et cetera. And
21 the status of that bill is that it passed the House in
22 June, 2018, and it's been referred to the Senate.

23 There's also the Imperial Valley Desert
24 Conservation and Recreation Act, H.R. 827. It was
25 introduced by Congressman Vargas, and it includes lands

1 transfers and designates a special management area. And
2 no hearings have been scheduled for that one.

3 There's the Santa Ana River Wash Plan Land
4 Exchange Act, S. 357. It was introduced by
5 Senator Feinstein, and no hearings have been scheduled.

6 And then there's the Santa Ana River Wash Plan
7 Land Exchange Act, the companion bill to
8 Senator Feinstein's. It's H.R. 497, and it was
9 introduced by Congressman Cook, and it passed the House
10 in June of 2017 and has been referred to the Senate.

11 Issues, the priorities statewide. Energy
12 independence, which is highlighted in Secretarial Order
13 3358. The BLM is a key contributor to the nation's
14 energy independence, which is all of the above plan that
15 includes oil and gas, strategic minerals and renewable
16 resources, such as wind, geothermal and solar, all of
17 which can be developed on Public Lands.

18 Throughout the state they're currently
19 processing nine renewable energy projects, most of them
20 here in the desert, including Crimson Solar and Desert
21 Quartzite, among others. There's also oil and gas
22 projects in Central California District, primarily
23 Bakersfield and Central Coast Field Offices that are a
24 priority for the state. So there's energy independence,
25 which is all those items.

1 Another priority is NEPA streamlining, which is
2 highlighted in Secretarial Order 3355. Here in the
3 desert that one is something that we've had to put a lot
4 of energy and focus on. The secretary issued this order
5 to enhance and modernize the department's NEPA processes
6 with focus on bringing greater discipline to the
7 documentation of the department's analysis and
8 identifying opportunities to further increase
9 efficiencies.

10 Important to note is that the Secretarial Order
11 lays out time and page limits for EIS-level documents.
12 So for an EIS, the limit for pages is 150, but for
13 complex Environmental Impact Statements we could get
14 waivers and be able to go up to 300 pages.

15 And the EIS -- in terms of time limit, the EIS
16 has to be completed in one year from issuance of a
17 Notice of Intent for an Environmental Impact Statement,
18 or for those projects that were issued where there was a
19 Notice of Intent issued prior to the Secretarial Order,
20 it had to be completed within one year of the
21 Secretarial Order.

22 Another priority statewide is the
23 reorganization and regionalization effort that's being
24 undertaken at the departmental level. There's actually
25 a website, a departmental website where there's a lot of

1 really good information related to the efforts. And it
2 may do better to either get it into the minutes rather
3 than reading it out or send it out and have our members
4 of the DAC help to disseminate that as well. So we'll
5 do that.

6 But what I can share in terms of
7 regionalization is that the regional boundaries have
8 been approved, and so technically we are regionalized.
9 The California Desert District falls within two regions,
10 Region 8 and Region 10. And it seems to follow
11 primarily along county boundaries. So a portion of
12 Ridgecrest and a small portion of Barstow are in
13 Region 10, and the rest of the desert is in Region 8.

14 And the secretary and his staff has been
15 meeting with key leadership in all the Department of
16 Interior agencies in terms of implementation of the
17 regions and their efforts continue. So we are waiting
18 to see what comes of that as well, but technically the
19 boundaries are in place, and we are regionalized.

20 The Acting State Director, Joe Stout, wanted me
21 to include in his State Director Report that he wants to
22 express sincere appreciation and thanks to the DAC
23 members for their willingness to serve and provide
24 advice and recommendations on important public land
25 issues in the Desert District, and he certainly wanted

1 to thank everyone on the DAC for their feedback and
2 assistance with the West Mojave Route Network Project as
3 we near completion of the final environmental review.

4 We have that on the agenda today, and so
5 certainly if there's advisement, you know, we would
6 definitely welcome that from the DAC members. And so
7 thank you in advance for your individual engagement on
8 that process and the efforts that were undertaken
9 throughout the WEMO process, because I know it's been a
10 long road and going forward.

11 Oh, there's a little chuckle, I think. But
12 with it being to agenda today, we certainly welcome
13 feedback on that.

14 Also, as you're well aware, because it was the
15 main topic of our last meeting, the BLM is considering
16 amending the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan,
17 which is really amending our CDCA Plan, because the
18 Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan was an
19 amendment to our CDCA Plan to seek greater opportunities
20 for renewable energy generation and multiple use.

21 And in February, 2018 BLM issued the Notice of
22 Intent that initiated the 45-day public scoping period
23 to consider amending the three land use plans that
24 underlie the DRECP Amendment. And BLM also held a
25 series of public meetings in February, 2018. And in

1 regards to the status update on that, BLM is currently
2 working on evaluating those public comments, developing
3 that scoping report that's going to be releasable to the
4 public and then identifying next steps based on all the
5 feedback that was received.

6 There was also inquiry related to monument
7 planning, several inquiries. And I will address that at
8 the local level. I guess I'll start out with the CDD
9 report related to that. I'm going to talk a little bit
10 about the workload that we have currently in relation to
11 the Secretarial Order 3355 to meet the secretary's
12 expectations on mainly the time limits related to NEPA
13 EIS-level projects and planning efforts that had already
14 been in the works. We are dedicating a huge amount of
15 most of our efforts here in the desert to meeting those
16 commitments on the projects that are already in process.

17 And in terms of the monument planning, both
18 Sand to Snow and Mojave Trails, at this time we just are
19 not having the capacity to initiate a new effort, but
20 there's been a significant amount of work, preplanning
21 work, that's been done on both of those efforts. And we
22 hope that, once we are able to clear some of these other
23 things off the plate, like carry them across the finish
24 line, which should happen pretty rapidly, given the
25 secretary's timeframes, that we may be able to turn some

1 attention to those planning efforts. But we just at
2 this point are not able to take on too much more of that
3 type of work.

4 So I don't know if I threw out the numbers, but
5 right now in the Desert District we have 11 active
6 EIS-level projects and planning efforts with timeframe
7 mandates of one year based on that
8 Secretarial Order 3355, and we've been heavily focused
9 on those.

10 I want to mention staffing as well. We are
11 currently -- I'm happy, happy to report, and I know my
12 field managers are excited as well -- that we're on the
13 tail end of a hiring surge. We're replacing and
14 backfilling key vacancies, including Carl's associate
15 field manager.

16 So, yeah, I see the smile. And we're also
17 filling positions to be responsive to priority workloads
18 in our recreation energy, mining and range programs in
19 addition to other programs. But part of that is looking
20 at those programs and how we can create efficiencies as
21 well.

22 So at like the REACT meeting recently, we
23 announced that we're looking at the range workload and
24 staffing with a lead in the Ridgecrest office then
25 having folks to assist with that workload in both the

1 Barstow office as well as the Needles office. So we're
2 excited to be getting those individuals in place and
3 actually having some staff to help be responsive to that
4 program.

5 And then I want to also provide an update on
6 DAC business. So there are five positions where the
7 seat was either vacated or the term expired. And we
8 sent those recommendations forward after doing the Call
9 for Nominations. And actually on Wednesday we were
10 notified of one person being seated. The San Bernardino
11 County Supervisor Lovingood has been officially seated
12 as of Wednesday, so we were able to fill one seat. He
13 was unable to make the meeting, given the short notice,
14 because that's pretty short notice. But we're excited
15 to have him as a member of the DAC, and at the next
16 meeting hopefully we'll have him engaged.

17 And then we expect selections for the other
18 four vacancies to be trickling out as the packages are
19 vetted with the Department of Interior as well as the
20 White House. So we might not see them come right away,
21 but we might see them kind of trickle out. But I
22 personally am excited to see them whenever they come.
23 There will be six terms expiring in February, so we're
24 working on a Call for Nominations for those seats as
25 well.

1 In terms of groups, we have the Imperial Sand
2 Dunes Recreation Subgroup. We're currently working on
3 the Federal Register Notice package for 2019 meetings,
4 and we're hoping to follow the model that we did for
5 Dumont Dunes Subgroup for 2018 meetings, where we had
6 both meetings announced in one notice. So we're going
7 to be hopefully sending that forward in January and
8 getting that to publish in time for those meetings, or
9 in time for those target dates for those meetings.

10 We're also at the meeting today going to be
11 working on identifying a DAC representative. So thank
12 you, all, for having that on the agenda. And there's a
13 press release requesting applications for the group, and
14 those applications are due January 21st, and they should
15 be submitted to Neil Hamada in El Centro Field Office.

16 The SRP group, we had done a Call for
17 Nominations previously for that, and we got some
18 interest, but we think there could be more interest out
19 there. And that group hasn't been official seated yet,
20 so we went ahead and went out with a press release
21 requesting applications for that as well. And those
22 nominations for that are due January 21st and should be
23 sent to in care of the District Manager at the District
24 Office, so send them to me.

25 And I want to encourage anyone that has

1 interest in SRPs, the topic of Special Recreation
2 Permits for recreation, to please submit your interest
3 because we would love to have a well-rounded subgroup to
4 assist with that.

5 And then Dumont Dunes Subgroup, we are working
6 on the Federal Register Notice for the 2019 meetings for
7 that as well, and we're also working on a Call for
8 Applications for that subgroup as well. So we hope to
9 be getting all that stuff sort of forwarded up and in
10 January timeframe, and then we'll hopefully be seeing
11 that stuff come out sometime after that.

12 And then in terms of the Desert Advisory
13 Committee, so this council, we're working on a Federal
14 Register Notice for the 2019 meetings as well. And, you
15 know, we're thinking that we may be able to group them
16 together like it was done for Dumont, but we will have
17 to see how that goes and how that's received.

18 End of report.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Beth. If
20 there's no objections, let's move into public comment.
21 Actually first DAC comments, DAC questions and comments
22 on the Desert Manager Report.

23 So let's start with Michelle. You're on.

24 MEMBER LONG: Yeah. You mentioned the DRECP
25 Public Scoping Report. Did we have an approximate date

1 for the release of that?

2 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: I don't at this time.
3 I know they're actively working on pulling that
4 together, but I don't know when it will be available.

5 MEMBER LONG: Okay.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Hi, Al. You're next.

7 MEMBER MUTH: Beth, you kept referencing
8 Secretary Order 3355. I seemed to have missed that.
9 Was that in any of our packets? If I just missed it,
10 it's my own fault, but it would have been nice to review
11 that thing before you went over it. Did anybody get it?

12 MEMBER MITCHELL: I don't think I have it.

13 MR. RAZO: It's in your packet.

14 MEMBER MUTH: Oh, it is?

15 MR. RAZO: Yeah. In your folder, but I think
16 that's a wrong number.

17 MEMBER MUTH: I'm not seeing it, Steve. It
18 skips over it in my packet. So anyway, I guess we could
19 look it up.

20 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Yeah. I'm sorry that
21 got missed, and it appears that it was not included in
22 the packet, but we will make sure that gets e-mailed out
23 to the group.

24 MEMBER MUTH: Some of the other EOs and SOs
25 made for some interesting reading, and I hate to go bed

1 without reading another chapter of one of those
2 Secretary Orders.

3 So I have some comments on new charters.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We have that on our agenda,
5 specific discussion on our upcoming charter.

6 Paul?

7 MEMBER MARTIN: I have a question on
8 S.O. 3355. I'm pleased to hear that the BLM is
9 following the expected time limits. But does that also
10 apply to the state level? Are they also required to
11 turn around EIRs in the same timeframe? I know a lot of
12 times the BLM and the state work together on these EIRs,
13 especially when they're dealing on Federal Lands. But
14 say a project is on private lands, do these limits apply
15 to the state-level EIRs?

16 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Good question. No,
17 the Secretarial Order does not apply to the state level,
18 and so we have been having some good discussions,
19 coordination discussions, with the state and others that
20 would be preparing an EIR on how to coordinate those
21 efforts and whether the timing will work for us to do
22 joint documents or whether -- I mean, there's been a
23 number of cases where the state is going to be doing
24 their own document. But we'll be coordinating very
25 closely.

1 MEMBER MARTIN: Because -- correct me if I'm
2 wrong -- in California any EIR on federal land also has
3 to be prepared in conjunction with the state Surface
4 Mining and Reclamation Act rules as well, so it's a
5 combined document. So if they have no time limits,
6 would that affect the BLM's time limits for the EIR?

7 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: So the state often
8 prepares an EIR, whereas the BLM and the
9 Federal Government has to comply with the National
10 Environmental Policy Act. And so, you know, if an EIS,
11 an Environmental Impact Statement, is required for
12 compliance with that, then the BLM has been assessing,
13 along with their partners that would be preparing the
14 EIR, on whether the documents could be prepared in
15 conjunction together or whether they need to follow
16 separate but similar tracks because of the timing.
17 Oftentimes what's been the difficult piece has been the
18 page limits.

19 MEMBER MARTIN: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Bob?

21 MEMBER BURKE: I'm going to beat you to this
22 one. The Mojave Trails National Monument and the Sand
23 to Snow National Monument and the Castle Mountain
24 Monument, the Executive Order that was signed into law
25 said that within three years there had to be a

1 management plan. Where is the management plan, because
2 it's been almost three years now. And in that
3 management plan it was supposed to encompass subgroups
4 for the Mojave Trails, the Sand to Snow and the
5 Castle Mountain.

6 And probably not so much the Castle Mountain,
7 because that's Park Service now, but there are those of
8 us that actually live adjacent to the monuments that are
9 really interested in that management plan. So how soon
10 are we going to have the management plan?

11 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: So right now BLM, we
12 don't have the resources at the moment to turn attention
13 to focus resources on the planning for the Mojave Trails
14 or Sand to Snow Monuments. However we do have
15 Kyle Sullivan, the Monument Manager, and
16 Jihadda Govan for Sand to Snow, and they're working, as
17 was noted earlier, on outreach with partners, with the
18 gateway communities and working on efforts, you know, in
19 the interim period to assist with the management of
20 those areas. And so we're definitely motivated to
21 coordinate those coordination efforts.

22 Like I mentioned, there's some preplanning
23 things that are happening so that we'll be well prepared
24 when we do get to the point where we will be poised to
25 issue that Notice of Intent. But at this time we don't

1 have the resources to do it.

2 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Frazier, you're up.

3 MEMBER HANEY: Thank you, Bob. I'll add to
4 what Bob mentioned and just say that in 2017 BLM led an
5 envisioning process, and those comments and that
6 envisioning materials for the national monuments still
7 haven't been publicly released. I don't see a reason
8 why we couldn't do that. Is there a reason why we
9 couldn't release those envisioning comments?

10 And also is there a reason why we couldn't go
11 ahead and form a subgroup that has nominations and have
12 them start doing regular meetings? So those are two
13 just clarifying questions about the envisioning comments
14 and moving ahead with the subgroup.

15 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: So I made a note of
16 your comment. I will look into the envisioning
17 comments, the comments that were collected at those
18 meetings. And I can look into whether those are
19 available to be released or what the timing of that
20 could be. So I'll look at that.

21 And I am aware that we did do a Call for
22 Nominations for a subgroup for Mojave Trails. However
23 with us not having a lot of staffing to help be
24 responsive to work of any subgroup and not be ripe and
25 ready to do planning, I'm not sure if the timing would

1 be good for standing that subgroup up if we can't be
2 responsive to what they're working on. So that would be
3 my concern. So I'll just share that openly.

4 MEMBER HANEY: I have one more.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Please. You've got the
6 floor.

7 MEMBER HANEY: Also, Beth, you mentioned the
8 DRECP. Thank you for that update. You mentioned that
9 BLM would be releasing a scoping report for the public
10 comments that were gathered earlier this year. I assume
11 that the scoping report is not the Plan Amendment
12 itself.

13 So just to clarify, we're going to get a
14 scoping report that will outline what public comments
15 were received and maybe how BLM is considering those,
16 and then after that somewhere in the future there will
17 be a Plan Amendment proposed for DRECP; is that right?

18 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: So, yes, in some
19 regard. So the scoping comments are being formulated
20 into a scoping report that will be released at some
21 point. I'm not sure exactly what the timing of that is
22 right at this moment. But I know that they're working
23 on it and they are intending to release that.

24 And then in terms of the Plan Amendment, the
25 thought is that a Plan Amendment would probably be

1 required, but we don't have a firm direction on exactly
2 where we're headed. So yeah, at some point there would
3 be more information about that as well, about where the
4 BLM is headed with that.

5 MEMBER HANEY: Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Questions? Al?

7 MEMBER MUTH: Yeah. I'm really going to get
8 out into the leagues on this one. Secretary's Order
9 3356 -- I mean, Hunting, Fishing, Recreational Shooting,
10 and Wildlife Conservation Opportunities and Coordination
11 with States, Tribes, and Territories -- that was
12 September 15th, 2017. You go down through all of this,
13 and by the time you get down to Section 4.2.d.5 -- I'm
14 sure you have that memorized, Beth -- Item 5, "within
15 180 days, a proposed categorical exclusion for proposed
16 projects that utilize common practices solely intended
17 to enhance or restore habitat for species such as
18 sage-grouse grouse and/or mule deer."

19 I have no idea what the -- categorical
20 exclusions from what? It leaves me -- I'm baffled by
21 why that's in there and what it means.

22 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: So I'm glad you asked
23 that question. So a categorical exclusion is a term
24 related to compliance with the National Environmental
25 Policy Act. And at the departmental level, Department

1 of Interior, they identify certain types of actions that
2 they determine would have negligible impact on the
3 environment and thus can be excluded from needing to do
4 NEPA, National Environmental Policy Act, compliance.

5 And so if that was developed, then it would
6 streamline the ability to be responsive to those types
7 of actions in terms of the requirements for compliance
8 with the National Environmental Policy Act.

9 And there are a bunch of different categorical
10 exclusions that are available for you use in various
11 programs that BLM has, and so if they were to develop
12 that one, that would be another one related to wildlife.

13 MEMBER MUTH: So it's a moving target to go
14 through each individual project as you go?

15 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Not necessarily.
16 Well, the documentation is, but a categorical exclusion,
17 what they're referring to is actually the authority to
18 use a categorical exclusion documentation for that type
19 of project. So it's authorization at the departmental
20 level that you could streamline the compliance with the
21 National Environmental Policy Act. I don't know if
22 that's clear as mud.

23 MEMBER MUTH: It is. At the department level,
24 you say you can have brush files for enhanced habitat
25 for quail, and, and so further on down when you actually

1 do the EIR/EIS, you don't have to justify that? You
2 could just assume it's going to be a mitigating
3 activity? I still am --

4 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Where this fits in
5 that you wouldn't be -- so when you have an action and
6 you're determining compliance with the National
7 Environmental Policy Act, you determine the appropriate
8 level of documentation needed for that. That could be
9 at the categorical exclusion level, if there's one that
10 applies and fits or if there's one that fits what you're
11 doing, or it could be at the Environmental Assessment
12 level or at the Environmental Impact Statement level.

13 So if you had a categorical exclusion you're
14 using and it was applicable, you would not prepare an EA
15 or an EIS for that action. So you would document use of
16 that categorical exclusion saying that it applies to
17 that action, and then your compliance with the law would
18 be done.

19 Is that helping?

20 MEMBER MUTH: It's still murky.

21 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Okay. I'm giving you
22 a NEPA 101. So we could talk more, if that will help
23 you, for sure. And we also have Nathan here from our
24 planning and environmental shop that would help as well.

25 MEMBER BURKE: I'll explain it to you.

1 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Any other questions or
2 comments on the Desert Manager Report? Good.

3 Let's open it up, if we may, to the public for
4 comment on the Desert Manager Reports. I have speaker
5 cards from John Stewart, Linda Castro, Sam Merk,
6 Ed Waldheim. This is for comments on the DM report.

7 John Stewart, three minutes is yours.

8 MR. STEWART: Good morning, DAC. The
9 State Director's Report provided a lot of good
10 information. Is there a copy of that that can be
11 obtained or can be sent out, because generally in the
12 past there's been a copy of the report on the table, and
13 I did not see one. So I would like to have a copy of
14 that, please.

15 The Mojave Trails is an interesting issue here,
16 is that, like he pointed out, there's a three-year time
17 limit in order to get the planning effort moving
18 forward. And because I'm representing California
19 Four-Wheel Drive Association, a lot of our members
20 recreate in that area, and whatever happens to the
21 Mojave Trails and that surrounding area is very
22 important to its potential impact to the recreation
23 opportunity out there.

24 And seeing how the scoping comments are
25 collected and being worked on, I would like to express a

1 concern from the Cal Four-Wheel's position that steps
2 may be taken to manage the area and the actions out
3 there that may be done without having a valid plan in
4 place of which then you're actually implementing actions
5 without public comment. And I do not believe that's
6 appropriate action and what should be done.

7 I understand that there is a shortage of
8 personnel and man-hours to accomplish things within a
9 workload, but it's mandated by law that these steps be
10 done. Somehow they should provide some kind of a
11 prioritization so that the public-at-large and the
12 recreationists at large and people who use that area are
13 not adversely impacted by management actions that go
14 ahead, you know, without the proper public review.
15 Thank you.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, John.

17 Linda Castro is next. And as she makes her way
18 to the podium, those who put on their card to comment on
19 on the subject of Mojave Trails National Monument
20 Subgroup, I put that into items not on the agenda, and
21 that's coming right after this. Hang on. You'll come
22 up next. Linda, followed by Sam Merk, Ed Waldheim.

23 Welcome, Linda. Three minutes on the
24 Desert Manager Report.

25 MS. CASTRO: Okay. Just on that part I want to

1 verify.

2 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Of course.

3 MS. CASTRO: Okay. So my first question is,
4 you had mentioned that -- talking about the scoping
5 report on the DRECP, I was also wondering if you had any
6 new information on what the content of the Plan
7 Amendment might include, or is it just we're still
8 waiting to find out from the scoping comments? That's
9 all you know? Okay.

10 Just wondering if you have any information on
11 when they might fill the California State Director
12 position. Any information whether they're looking for
13 somebody or anything at this point?

14 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: They did put out an
15 announcement requesting applications for the position.
16 But it does take a period of time for them to work
17 through that process, so I don't have a sense yet for
18 how long it will be.

19 MS. CASTRO: My other comment was with regard
20 to Mojave Trails, so I guess that's all I have on this.
21 Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Linda. Sam and
23 then Ed.

24 MS. MERK: I would like to recognize
25 Marie Brashear also. She was a great lady and a

1 cornerstone of the desert.

2 In regards to the manager's report, the field
3 managers are required to give us little papers in
4 regards to what's happening in their field office. I
5 would like to see the Desert Manager Report in writing.
6 And I would also like to include budgetary items for the
7 district. I've said this before on numerous times.

8 Is my time up?

9 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: No. Go ahead, Sam.

10 MS. MERK: As far as the agenda items, I would
11 like to see them listed No. 1, 2, 3, 4 in this. And I
12 mention it here because I know it's under your
13 advisement. And I would also like to see all the
14 pertinent information, like Executive Order 13555
15 (as spoken), included in this report too.

16 It would also be wonderful at this time to have
17 the state have a paper in regards, and it would also be
18 nice for the district to have, since we are moving
19 people so quickly anymore, we don't know who's in charge
20 of that. So it would be nice for transparency for the
21 public. Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Sam.

23 Ed Waldheim. Welcome, Ed.

24 MR. WALDHEIM: Thank you. Council members,
25 Ed Waldheim, Friends of Jawbone.

1 I'm so glad that you're getting to meet again
2 two years after this crazy. Nice seeing you too
3 (addressing the court reporter). I'll slow down.

4 Beth, on your report, I concur one hundred
5 percent with Sam. We'd like to have reports. As
6 Marie Brashear would also say, give me the reports, show
7 me the paperwork. And we sure will miss the girl when
8 she's not here.

9 But the one thing that I would love to see in
10 your report on the financial side of it -- nobody is
11 talking about the OHV program. It brings millions and
12 millions of dollars to you. It's not appropriated
13 dollars. It's money that you're getting to provide
14 opportunities for the off-road vehicle people and the
15 general public to get accesses to their area that they
16 want to visit. We have a little bit said in El Centro
17 report, but nobody is saying anything about the money.

18 We have a Friends meeting coming up January 7th
19 and 8th. I hope everybody participates in that. We
20 have plenty of money available. Governor Brown put it
21 in there, and I hope the new governor will authorize
22 that also. But the participation needs to be within the
23 OHV program.

24 And just as Sam said, the written report from
25 you, and what impact is -- have you added all the

1 tallies and how many millions of dollars is the OHV
2 program contributing to your activity here plus on the
3 statewide? It's millions of dollars. Yet we don't even
4 acknowledge it. We don't even talk about it. That
5 needs to be rectified. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Ed. Thank you,
7 everybody, for the comments on the Desert Manager
8 Report.

9 All set, Beth? Any other comments, questions?
10 DAC members? Good. If there are no objections, I'd
11 like to now move into public comment for items not on
12 the agenda. And we have a handful of cards,
13 approximately eight cards, and again these cards I have
14 in the order that they were received. So forgive me if
15 this becomes sort of a permanent order for today's
16 speaking schedule. But John Stewart is up first,
17 followed by Linda Castro, followed by
18 Linda Wucherpfennig.

19 John.

20 MR. STEWART: Good morning. John Stewart with
21 California Four-Wheel Drive Association.

22 At the last meeting there was -- and it was
23 mentioned earlier about the five-year strategic plan.
24 Various information was provided, and yet there was
25 supposedly a link going to be mailed out. I'm still

1 waiting for that information, please.

2 I appreciate some of the information about the
3 pending reorganization, but it's scant as to what it is,
4 and I would like to see that as a major agenda item at
5 some point in the future. That's very important to what
6 happens.

7 And as to the council meetings have dealt in
8 depth with the desert tortoise, but it's been a couple
9 of years since we've heard about what is happening with
10 the desert tortoise and with the Recovery Implementation
11 Plan that is supposedly in the works. So I would like
12 to see an agenda item come up to address the desert
13 tortoise and the progress on the Recovery Implementation
14 Plans. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, John. Next
16 speaker, Linda Castro, please. These are the items not
17 on the agenda.

18 MS. CASTRO: I have -- okay.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: This is for items not on
20 the agenda, including the Mojave National Trails Plan.

21 MS. CASTRO: Can I go last on that category?

22 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Certainly.

23 Linda Wucherpfennig, followed by Sam Merk.

24 MS. WUCHERPFENNIG: Good morning, Desert
25 Advisory Council. My name is Linda Wucherpfennig.

1 Everybody just refer to me as "Linda." That last name
2 is a mouthful.

3 I wanted to take this opportunity to introduce
4 to the Desert Advisory Committee and the public-at-large
5 a new grass-roots effort out of the Little Rock area
6 near Palmdale, California. We are the Friends of Little
7 Rock Dam and working collaboratively with Los Angeles
8 National Forest, Palmdale Water District and the
9 community at large on getting that dam reopen for all
10 forms of recreation.

11 The Little Rock Dam Recreation Area resides in
12 the San Gabriel Mountains National Monument on the north
13 side. It is within the community of Little Rock,
14 California. And one of the things that we are doing is
15 that this dam recreation area has been closed since 2015
16 on the front part, and on the back part, which was
17 primarily camping and OHV opportunities, has been closed
18 since the 1990s due to Arroyo Toad habitat. So we are
19 now working to get all of these areas open, primarily
20 concentrating at this time on the front part of the dam.

21 We had two very successful weekends in June of
22 2018, where we had people come out with OHV being the
23 dominant recreation at that time called mud bogging. If
24 you've never seen mud bogging, it is a very amusing and
25 amazing sport to watch. It puts a whole new spin on

1 OHV.

2 We wanted to take this opportunity, like I
3 said, to introduce ourselves to you to let you know that
4 we're here. This is our first step in very, very needed
5 recreation opportunities in the southeast
6 Antelope Valley. Please don't forget us. We're out
7 there. We're part of the desert. And we really need
8 your recognition and your help. And thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Terrific. Thank you,
10 Linda.

11 Al, question for Linda.

12 MEMBER MUTH: Linda.

13 MS. WUCHERPFENNIG: Yes, sir.

14 MEMBER MUTH: I've got to ask, what's changed
15 with the Arroyo Toad that would allow this to open up
16 again?

17 MS. WUCHERPFENNIG: At this point in time
18 nothing has changed. The Palmdale Water District is
19 currently working on a project where they have the dam
20 closed and have a biologist involved, because there was
21 an EIR that went out to get this work accomplished.
22 They are doing a construction project where they are
23 building a levy that will slow the sedimentation rate
24 into the dam but also to protect the Arroyo Toad
25 habitat.

1 At this point we don't know the count of the
2 Arroyo Toad is. We don't know when that's going to come
3 out, but our expectation is that the Palmdale Water
4 District biologist and company they hired are going to
5 conduct this toad count after that's done.

6 So we will probably approach this project of
7 reopening the back campgrounds and OHV trail that leads
8 back to the Angeles Forest in about two years, but we're
9 starting to build a foundation for that by going
10 ahead -- and we are now part of the CTAC family. We'll
11 be able to in 2020, apply for grants that will assist
12 the Forest Service with education operations and so
13 forth and also work with the Center for Biological
14 Diversity on what we can do to mitigate the habitat and
15 protect it and at the same time getting the road open
16 for recreation and camping. There was a beautiful
17 campground they closed down.

18 MEMBER MUTH: So I'm assuming you would then
19 need some sort of recovery statement from the U.S. Fish
20 and Wildlife Service --

21 MS. WUCHERPFENNIG: Absolutely.

22 MEMBER MUTH: -- or Department of Fish and
23 Wildlife --

24 MS. WUCHERPFENNIG: Absolutely.

25 MEMBER MUTH: -- so their biologists will make

1 the determination?

2 MS. WUCHERPFENNIG: I think, yes, to the best
3 of my knowledge at this time, but also in collaboration
4 with the Angeles National Forest.

5 MEMBER MUTH: Could be a long process.

6 MS. WUCHERPFENNIG: We understand that, but if
7 we reach that goal of getting that part of recreation
8 back up there, it's well worth the effort and the time.

9 MEMBER MUTH: Okay.

10 MS. WUCHERPFENNIG: Thank you. Anyone else?

11 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Linda. Any
12 questions? Very good.

13 Sam Merk, you're up next, followed by
14 Ed Waldheim, followed by Nicholas. Very good. Thank
15 you.

16 MS. MERK: Sam Merk. I would like for some
17 future agenda items to be placed, and I understand this
18 is the moment to talk about it.

19 We have a problem. The problem is, sometimes
20 we need things to be put in the Federal Register. And
21 due to the bureaucracy's huge back load, sometimes these
22 Federal Register notices don't go up when they should go
23 up, and everybody's -- the public is waiting and waiting
24 and waiting. I would like for the DAC to put it onto
25 their future agenda items a discussion on how to

1 streamline the Federal Register notices, because this is
2 for the public. And the public makes up the DAC, and
3 the DAC makes up suggestions to the BLM. I'd like for
4 that to be on there.

5 Another thing I would like to be placed on the
6 agenda items is in 2016 there was a Groundwater
7 Sustainability Act that was passed by the State of
8 California. How is this going to impact the seeps and
9 the springs and actually the vegetation that is on the
10 desert? It's going to impact a lot of other things too.
11 And I think we need to put -- take off the blinders and
12 take a good look at this. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Sam.

14 Ed Waldheim.

15 MR. WALDHEIM: Ed Waldheim, Friends of Jawbone
16 CTUC, California Trail Users Coalition.

17 As Randy pointed out, in front of you you have
18 a stack of maps. California Department of Parks and
19 Recreation OHV program has pretty much funded that whole
20 program. There are now 20 maps covering from
21 Oceano Dunes all the way to Needles to Colorado River
22 all the way to Inyo National Forest Sierra National
23 Forest and all the way down to the Colorado River.
24 Incredible.

25 Anything that you see that is green, that is

1 good for OHV, light blue, street legal. And the whole
2 purpose of this, we want people to understand where you
3 can recreate and where you than can't recreate and what
4 type of vehicle can recreate. It's all going to be on
5 OwlsheadGPS.com. You can download it. You can also get
6 it on the e-mail, or you can put it on your phone and
7 you find out with a dot where you actually are. Once
8 you load it down on your machine, you don't have to pick
9 it up on the internet because it's already in there.

10 In the packet you have a little sheet of paper
11 we put on there. It's an order form, and we encourage
12 you to send that into the Friends of Jawbone station.
13 Bob has it there. If you want to pick up the maps, they
14 are all in the Jawbone station.

15 You go to Jawbone station between nine and five
16 seven days a week, and the staff there can give you any
17 boxes if you want. Cisco Fernandez wants to make sure
18 they are free. We have a price tag on it because, if a
19 price tag isn't on it, people think it's not worth
20 anything. But he wants to make sure the public gets it
21 into their hands. So, field managers, please order the
22 forms. Get the maps out there, because they don't do
23 any good sitting there at the Jawbone station. And we
24 keep on doing updating, updating, and updating.

25 When the WEMO comes out, we're going to have a

1 big job to try to update them again, so please make
2 yourself available. Send in the order form, and we'll
3 try to get them to you or take them to you, or you can
4 pick them up. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Terrific. Thank you, Ed.
6 Nicholas, followed by Mark Algazy, followed by
7 Rex Nishimora.

8 And forgive me, Nicholas. I didn't get the
9 last name. Is this your first DAC meeting?

10 MR. RAJEN: Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Welcome. What's your full
12 name, please?

13 MR. RAJEN: Thank you. So my name is
14 Nicholas Rajen.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you.

16 MR. RAJEN: And I'm with the Native American
17 Land Conservancy.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: The floor is yours.

19 MR. RAJEN: Good morning, and thank you for
20 holding this meeting and for also holding the regular
21 forum for public and focus sessions on matters affecting
22 the desert ecosystem.

23 I'm here on behalf of Native American Land
24 Conservancy and the intertribal non-profit organization
25 located in the Coachella Valley, also serving as storers

1 of the Old Woman Mountain Preserve, which is located
2 48 miles west of the Colorado River in the expanse of
3 the --

4 THE REPORTER: Can you slow down.

5 MR. RAJEN: Okay. Sorry.

6 And we're also the storers of Coyote Hole, a
7 newly acquired parcel located in the town of Joshua Tree
8 just outside of the national park. Our mission is to
9 protect the cultural environmental resources of the
10 desert landscape and to educate tribal youth and public
11 communities on the cultural heritage and traditional
12 knowledge of the landscape and the cosmos.

13 We are here asking the DAC to formally initiate
14 Mojave Trails National Monument group, as every day that
15 the BLM waits to engage in a formal planning process, it
16 loses another chance for sacred sites, countless
17 cultural resources and a delicate ecosystem already
18 stressed by development industrial activities to lose
19 protected status instated by National Monument
20 Proclamation.

21 I am currently member of a tribal community
22 subcommittee for the monument and request that the DAC
23 establish a tribal coalition so that the BLM can
24 respectfully and legally interact with native nations on
25 a government-to-government basis and at a community

1 level as well.

2 Formation of such a coalition will serve as a
3 model for rest of the country, not only as act of
4 goodwill, but also an opportunity to share in the
5 knowledge and the narratives of diverse tribal
6 communities, sharing the knowledge and narratives that
7 diverse tribal communities have developed over centuries
8 and millennia, leading to a world view that recognizes
9 the land, the flora and fauna, the soil, the water and
10 the air as sacred and deserving of as much respect as I
11 would give to my mother or my brother and anything else
12 on this planet.

13 Yeah, so thank you very much for your time and,
14 yeah, just want to form that coalition. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Nicholas, thanks for coming
16 to the DAC meeting. I appreciate it. Hope to see you
17 more often.

18 MR. RAJEN: Yeah. Also looking forward to the
19 rest of the day.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Good. Questions?
21 Comments? Thank you.

22 Mark, followed by Rex, followed by
23 Ruth Hidalgo.

24 MR. ALGAZY: Hi. I don't have a prepared
25 statement, but I'd like to talk about three different

1 things. Hopefully I can get through them in three
2 minutes.

3 The first has to do with my own special
4 acknowledgment for Steve Razo. In every organization
5 there is a go-to person, and in my experience in the ten
6 years I've been involved with the BLM and the
7 Desert District, I've come to know Steve as the
8 Wizard of Oz, the machine behind the curtain. You get a
9 lot of people that do a fancy song and dance, but if you
10 wanted a straight answer, you went to Steve.

11 I didn't always like what he had to say. I
12 didn't always agree with what he had to say. But I knew
13 if I wanted to get a straight answer on what the BLM's
14 position was, I could go to Steve and I would get that
15 answer. And I don't know how we're going to replace
16 somebody like that. We've got a whole bunch of
17 song-and-dance people, many this government, and people
18 like Steve are a precious commodity.

19 So I want to give you my own special thanks for
20 your service, Steve. I've sure appreciated it.

21 The second thing I want to talk about was
22 Marie. Marie was one of my four cornerstones in the
23 land-use world. I have leaned heavily on Marie and
24 Ed Waldheim and Ron Schiller and Sam for my education.
25 Marie -- there aren't enough words. There just aren't

1 enough words.

2 I was fortunate to go to law school, and law
3 was my specialty. That was one of the things Marie had
4 that I thought I had an edge on her. On the other hand
5 people skills weren't necessarily my strong suit. I
6 look to somebody like Ed for a big education on people
7 skills. I look to Sam for the NEPA cornerstone. But
8 Marie, she had them all. She had an edge on politics as
9 well. And Randy can attest to how much information, how
10 much education that she passed on to him.

11 I was probably her last pupil, and I'm
12 extremely grateful for everything that she gave me. And
13 I know she was so happy when I took my seat on the
14 council, that she felt some small part that what she had
15 to share was being carried forward. And I was proud to
16 take my seat and carry that torch for her. So I wanted
17 that to be part of the record.

18 The last thing I wanted to talk about was this
19 concept when two words do not belong together. We call
20 it an oxymoron. We like to make fun of most oxymorons,
21 something like "military intelligence." People laugh
22 about that. They say, "Those things don't belong
23 together." But in the case of the Secretarial
24 Order 3355 having to do with streamlining NEPA, that's
25 not just an oxymoron. That's dangerous.

1 Democracy, it's been said, is a messy process.
2 Due process is even messier than democracy. And when
3 you talk about something like streamlining NEPA, you're
4 talking about cutting the public potentially out of
5 meaningful access to this land use process. And I'm
6 extremely concerned about this 3355, and I look forward
7 with my good friend and mentor Sam Merk to being hawks
8 when it comes to watching how 3355 is implemented.
9 Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Mark, for
11 recounting all of the history for us and helping us
12 remember Marie's contribution.

13 Next is Rex, followed by Ruth, followed by
14 Gerry Hillier.

15 Hi, Rex. Welcome to the Desert Advisory
16 Council. The floor is yours for three minutes.

17 MR. NISHIMORA: I'm an amateur rockhound. I
18 don't really represent any group. But our family has
19 been using the desert for the past five years or more,
20 and I would hate to think that restricting our access
21 would prevent us from all the wonderful experiences
22 we've had out there. And with all these people that are
23 willing to come to the desert, the off-roaders, the
24 ranchers, they deserve that access because they have an
25 interest in the desert.

1 And I think we should consider maintaining
2 four-wheel drive access into the desert so people like
3 this can continue to use this and preserve and conserve
4 its resources. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Of course. Thank you.

6 Any comments? Questions from the DAC?

7 MEMBER MITCHELL: Yeah, Randy. You sure you
8 got the heater on, or you got the air-conditioner on?

9 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I see the door is propped
10 open to get a little heat in. Is that it? I wonder if
11 it is entirely out. It started getting better, but
12 maybe that was the body heat of everybody. Let's get
13 into some more contentious issues, and maybe we'll raise
14 the heat up a little.

15 Ruth, followed by Gerry, then followed by
16 Julie Mitchell.

17 So Ruth Hidalgo. Hi, Ruth.

18 MS. HIDALGO: Hi. Ruth Hidalgo, recreational
19 rockhound.

20 I had put a comment on the Mojave Trails
21 National Monument Subgroup. I recognize that the BLM is
22 inundated in seeing all these Executive Orders and how
23 to comply with those. However I'm also hearing that we
24 have partnerships that we're working with that are
25 taking direction with the monument and we have groups

1 that we're working with.

2 Well, how do rockhounds get in there? How do
3 we become part of that if it's not part of the subgroup?

4 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: I would encourage you
5 to reach out to Kyle Sullivan or Mike Ahrens. Right now
6 we have a staff of one dedicated to the monument, but
7 he's pretty committed, and he's really engaged in trying
8 to develop partnerships in those gateway communities and
9 that kind of thing.

10 MS. HIDALGO: I have reached out to Kyle. He
11 is very responsive. He actually asked me to contact
12 you, Frazier, which I did via e-mail, and I didn't get
13 any response.

14 But rockhounds have some valid and valuable
15 input as to the monument. The idea that our hobby could
16 get allowed is a big deal to us, and we want to be
17 included, and we don't want the monument to start taking
18 direction in planning without our input. And so we
19 would really like find a way to get involved in that if
20 we're not going to have the DAC subgroup take action.

21 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: As I've noted
22 before -- so I'm just going to respond. As I noted
23 before, is that right now we really don't have the
24 capacity to really undertake a planning effort. So
25 we're definitely not running off without engaging. We

1 just aren't there yet. But we can engage in the interim
2 period.

3 You know, I encourage you to work with Kyle on,
4 you know, what your needs are, what your thoughts are
5 and things like that. But the planning effort isn't
6 moving very fast right now. So we're not leaving you
7 behind. We definitely know that the rockhounding is an
8 important use in Mojave Trails, and when we do get to
9 planning, you're definitely going to have a seat at the
10 table.

11 MS. HIDALGO: Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: And I recall that shortly
13 following the president's proclamation designating the
14 national monument, Secretary Jewell issued a letter
15 specifically allowing gem and mineral collecting in the
16 monument during that interim period. So until that
17 process has begun, gem and mineral collecting will
18 continue to be allowed in the monument, is my
19 understanding. And so that should be of some welcome to
20 rockhounds in the interim.

21 But I do understand getting comfortable and
22 then not seeing the notices go by and finding that a
23 planning process may have eluded your interests. So I
24 appreciate that, and we want to keep everybody informed
25 on where we go with this and when we are ready to move

1 forward on it so that we could get everyone's input.

2 Thank you.

3 Next is Gerry Hillier, followed by
4 Julie Mitchell and then Linda for items not on the
5 agenda.

6 MR. HILLIER: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And
7 good morning to the council. I messed up there on the
8 card. I should have probably submitted two or three
9 cards, but I'll try to get through within the allotted
10 time.

11 First off I would be remiss if I didn't say a
12 word about Marie. Her activity with the desert
13 certainly has coincided with my 40-plus years, and she
14 was a regular attendee at these meetings. And I can
15 tell you that 30 days before she died, she was on the
16 phone to me asking questions about policy and programs,
17 and she remained engaged to the very, very end. And I
18 think it reflects her concern over the desert issues.
19 And her memory will last a long time, certainly with all
20 of us who dealt with her. So she was a very special
21 lady.

22 A couple of things on the District Manager
23 Report. Which six seats are coming up? You didn't
24 indicate the disciplines.

25 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I have it. It's Billy,

1 Nathan, Al.

2 MR. HILLIER: Would you go by discipline.

3 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Of course. Billy is range
4 lands. Nathan is mining and minerals, or nonrenewable
5 resources, we call it. Al, biology/wildlife
6 representative. Bob Robinson is public at large.
7 Bob Burke represents public at large, and myself,
8 recreation representative. And those terms will expire
9 on February 19, 2019.

10 MR. HILLIER: Thank you.

11 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: One thing to note is
12 that with the charter -- I think we're going to talk
13 about the charter a little bit later, but some of those
14 disciplines were characterized just a little bit
15 differently in the revised charter. So I would
16 encourage folks that have an interest in that to take a
17 look at the way they're characterized in the new charter
18 and consider that when they do go ahead and submit
19 nominations in response to our Federal Register Notice
20 in the future.

21 MR. HILLIER: Thank you. Second thing, mention
22 was made of the subgroup. And I serve on the
23 Dumont Subgroup. And you said you were going out for
24 applications. Will there be a necessity to reapply for
25 those seats, because San Bernardino County has a

1 representative. I serve as general public
2 representative. I just wanted to know if we need to
3 reapply for those two seats.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Are we filling only empty
5 seats?

6 MS. SYMONS: I would recommend coordinating
7 with Steve to make sure we're square with that. Stay
8 tuned, Gerry. I'll get back with you.

9 MR. HILLIER: Thank you. One thing that is not
10 on the agenda -- two things that are not on the agenda
11 that I definitely wanted to mention. First off I want
12 to echo John Stewart's comments on having something on
13 desert tortoise. There's been a lot going on. The
14 Recovery Implementation Teams are functional, coming up
15 with projects. Management oversight group has set
16 priorities. And I think certainly the bureau needs to
17 share the status of the ongoing efforts with the council
18 and seek their input.

19 The second thing I'd like to touch on is the
20 Desert Landscape Conservation Cooperatives. These
21 things still exist. There's 22 of them nationally, and
22 the main one of interest here is the Desert Landscape
23 Conservation Quorum Relief being run by a lady from
24 Bureau of Reclamation out of Boulder City but covers all
25 of the area from foot of Tehachapi Mountains to the

1 Pecos River in Texas.

2 There are three pilot programs going on, and
3 one of them involves this district. It's called the
4 East Mojave. There's a longer name. The East Mojave
5 Conservation Partnership, I think, is the current name
6 that they're going under. And they're gathering data
7 and developing all kinds of information on indicator
8 species.

9 And it basically is a group of biologists. It
10 does not include the public at this point, and one of
11 the things that I have been encouraging through the
12 coordinating committee and --

13 (Buzzer sounded.)

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Continue, please.

15 MR. HILLIER: -- through the coordinating
16 committee and also from the seat on the steering
17 committee that I was appointed to last year -- and
18 John Stewart also serves on the steering committee -- is
19 that it involves Southeastern Inyo County and
20 Northeastern San Bernardino County and extends on into
21 Nevada.

22 Somebody mentioned groundwater resources. And
23 I think groundwater will prove to be one of the major
24 topics of concern and controversy as that proceeds.
25 Whether that's going to provide just simply data that

1 can be used by the agencies and the public or whether
2 they will get into providing land use recommendations I
3 don't know, and that's one of the things that is
4 unknown.

5 But I think the council would be remiss and the
6 bureau would be remiss in not bringing the efforts of
7 that group forward and sharing them with the council.
8 It appears to be something there that they certainly --
9 again, it's a tied to the Secretarial Order that
10 predated this administration but still seems to be in
11 effect, and they're moving forward, so I would encourage
12 you to stay tuned with that project.

13 And I think for right now I think that's all I
14 have. But thank you very much for meeting at
15 Ridgecrest. I'm glad to see the council is back
16 functioning again.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Gerry. And
18 happy birthday.

19 MR. HILLIER: Thank you very much.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We had the privilege of
21 celebrating with Gerry very much Thursday at the
22 Roundtable meeting. It was nice to see you come up to
23 that.

24 MR. HILLIER: Well, thank you very much. Most
25 former BLM district managers put on the saddlebags and

1 ride off into the sunset, and I made a mistake of
2 sticking around too damn long, probably. Somebody will
3 be glad when I ride off into the sunset. But in the
4 meantime I've managed to stay engaged through several
5 consulting jobs. And frankly I would miss you.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We would miss you too, and
7 we've learned a lot as well.

8 Any questions for the birthday boy? Very good.
9 Thank you.

10 MR. HILLIER: I won't admit how many years that
11 is.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We won't guess.

13 Julie, followed by Linda, and last will be
14 Lisbet Thoresen.

15 Hi, Julie.

16 MRS. MITCHELL: Hi. Good morning. I'm going
17 to have to read because I just put this together right
18 now.

19 Okay. So at the last meeting in Victorville
20 there was a motion made by -- there was a motion made to
21 put on the agenda for this meeting the answer to the
22 question of how the BLM retired grazing leases for the
23 DRECP. And these leases did not just affect Jay Moon.
24 They affected other applicants and our family. We still
25 have not had this answered, and we've been waiting for a

1 very long time.

2 We requested the minutes for this meeting, and
3 I know Steve tried to send them. They didn't go
4 through. So we would like to have a copy if that would
5 be possible.

6 Another thing we'd like to address is the help
7 we've been receiving for the OHV traffic on our ranch
8 from Katrina and Mark. We need to continue to work on
9 this issue, and we need to be able to come up with a
10 solution for the main weekends when we work cattle when
11 our family is available and our friends are available to
12 come. They happen to be the same five weekends that are
13 the busiest time for OHV. So I know it's an issue, but
14 we are going to have to keep working for solutions,
15 because we make money -- we pay money too also, just
16 like the OHV, for our rights and for our ranch.

17 I'm going to take a minute to tell you thank
18 you for honoring Marie. I'm sorry. We had the
19 opportunity this year -- I can't remember what month it
20 was, but she got appointed to the board in Lucerne, and
21 it was just really endearing to see that. And also
22 congratulations to Steve on his retirement. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Julie. Great to
24 see you at the microphone.

25 Billy?

1 MEMBER MITCHELL: Yeah.

2 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Activism here. Wow. Good
3 family.

4 Linda, and last would be Lisbet.

5 MS. CASTRO: Linda Castro, CalWild.

6 Most of my comments -- actually all of my
7 comments are related to Mojave Trails. First of all,
8 Beth, one of the things that you mentioned earlier is
9 that there are a lot of preplanning things going on, and
10 I'd kind of like to have a little more information on
11 what that is. But I would like to propose that
12 convening a monument subgroup for Mojave Trails should
13 be one of those preplanning things.

14 I understand you don't have the resources to go
15 ahead with planning, but it takes a while for those
16 people to be vetted. Maybe some of the people that
17 applied two years ago are no longer even available or
18 interested. It's going to take a while to get that
19 process even going. So I agree with some of the other
20 people who mentioned they would like to see that process
21 start.

22 And then secondly I would like to make sure
23 that, when that process does move forward, that BLM
24 makes the space for tribal engagement and not just
25 checking off the box that says they've complied with

1 Section 106.

2 I'd like to see BLM do at least a couple of
3 things: Invite tribes to take part in a tribal
4 commission that provides input regarding cultural
5 resources, like what was supposed to happen with
6 Bears Ears and/or do a separate Cultural Resources
7 Management Plan, like they are apparently going to be
8 doing with Grand Staircase and Bears Ears, invite tribes
9 into formally inventorying and informing the management
10 of the monument.

11 Yeah, so if you could maybe expand upon your
12 comment about preplanning things going on, I'd like to
13 know a bit more about that.

14 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: So there was work
15 being done on gathering existing data as well as
16 developing the analysis of management situations, so the
17 existing condition on a number of fronts. And I know
18 there's been continuous work on that, although, you
19 know, it's slowed dramatically since we haven't had a
20 lot of staffing to work on it lately. But that's the
21 piece, would be the stuff that would be necessary for us
22 to gather in order to even start looking forward, is to
23 figure out what we currently have in place. So that's
24 what I was referring to.

25 And I definitely appreciate your comment on the

1 tribal engagement, and think that it's a critical
2 component. And that will definitely be something, once
3 we get to the point where we would be initiating
4 planning, to think about the best way to make sure we
5 are engaging with the tribes in fulfilling the
6 requirements but also a wholehearted engagement so that
7 we're getting their feedback.

8 MS. CASTRO: Well, I definitely would strongly
9 encourage you to think about convening the monument
10 subgroup. I would also propose that tribal engagement
11 in the national monument processes be included as an
12 agenda item for a future DAC meeting. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Linda.

14 Comments, questions on what we've heard?

15 Just in general, if I may, I'm happy to know
16 that there are allowances in place for gem and mineral
17 collecting in the national monument in the interim
18 period until planning is put in place. I'm also
19 grateful that the NLCS, Nation Landscape Conservation
20 Lands, and the ACECs that were put into place by the
21 Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan provide a
22 level of protection for those lands, a level of
23 protection that didn't exist before, especially with
24 respect to what many consider one of the bigger
25 developers in the desert, and that's the renewable

1 energy development. So that is not going to be
2 occurring there.

3 And so I'm just wanting to say that those lands
4 within that space are -- have at least some levels of
5 protection against some of the things that the public
6 has issued concerns with today. And it may not be the
7 level of protection that you're looking to see in the
8 end, but we are in a better place than we were a couple
9 of years ago with respect to protecting those resources
10 with having had the DRECP.

11 So I'm not saying that it takes any -- that the
12 planning process is not important. But I am recognizing
13 that we've had some benefits put into place for the
14 landscape and for recreation because parts of the lands
15 within the monument were designated as Recreation
16 Management Areas. And I'm glad that those were also
17 somewhat in place.

18 I feel that we have some kind of a detente, at
19 least in the interim here, that blends in with the next
20 concern of what Beth says. And that is, remember,
21 subgroups exist to advise us. And the subgroup is
22 meeting and requesting us to issue advice to the BLM.
23 And the BLM does not have a vehicle for processing that
24 advice and taking that advice and implementing that
25 advice.

1 It feels to me like what we used to do at times
2 at the DAC by commenting on projects that hadn't even
3 been proposed yet or hadn't come up. We weren't there
4 yet, and we weren't -- we were looking to issue advice,
5 but the BLM wasn't in a position to act on it or take
6 it. So I was greatly frustrated by the false start of
7 the previous subgroup process. It was frustrating.

8 Most of my frustration came from essentially
9 somewhat my being the face of the DAC in our processes,
10 and I was called out regularly and repeatedly --
11 congressional offices, members of the public, interest
12 groups -- as to, "What did you do to screw this thing
13 up?" I may have done something. I don't know.

14 But what I'm saying is, it was very
15 frustrating, and it was very hard for me. And I feel a
16 little gun shy. I want to make sure we get this next
17 process through, we have our nominations for the
18 subgroup, we form that subgroup, we set it out, and we
19 get it going on the bus down the road and gets its job
20 done, no false starts, no roadblocks, no hesitation. I
21 just don't feel that the wheels are greased yet, and I'm
22 afraid we're just going to have another one of those
23 false starts.

24 And I just want to take Beth's comments at
25 heart with respect to the capacity and what we want to

1 do there. That's all I'm saying.

2 Rebuttals? Rhetorics? It's earned. Well,
3 thank you.

4 Go ahead, Frazier. I really would like to hear
5 the other side of this. It has to be said, so somebody
6 do it, whether they believe it or not.

7 MEMBER HANEY: I hear you, Randy. I think I
8 understand. I think what I continue to hear across the
9 desert is people from a variety of different stakeholder
10 groups want a way to engage on the national monuments
11 with BLM directly. It's not enough to have silence on
12 how the monuments are going to be managed.

13 I think that what Mike and Kyle have done with
14 29 Palms and holding those listening sessions with the
15 newly formed business improvement district is brilliant,
16 and I think that people are looking for ways to engage.
17 I think that's what's at the root of it. The subgroup
18 seems like a really good vehicle to do so.

19 If there are other ways that the public can
20 engage to get the planning efforts started, to collect
21 ideas, to collect information about how Mojave Trails
22 might look in five or ten years, I think that would
23 satisfy a lot of folks.

24 Just as an example to Ruth's point, there is a
25 planning process going on in southeast Utah, and I think

1 maybe for the first time casual collection has come up
2 as an allowable use in a national monument for rocks.
3 Well, I think we can start to think about what that
4 looks like for Mojave Trails, because it will come up at
5 some point, and I think people are open to that
6 conversation to these variety of different uses out
7 there.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you. Thank you very
9 much.

10 Billy?

11 MEMBER MITCHELL: You know, we have renewable
12 resources, which obviously is ranching industry. We've
13 got mining. The rockhounds -- I mean, wouldn't they
14 come under the representative of mining?

15 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: No. Recreation.

16 MEMBER MITCHELL: Oh, just recreation? Is that
17 what it is? That's what I didn't get. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Of course. Thank you,
19 everybody.

20 Oh, please, Michelle.

21 MEMBER LONG: Yeah. I just wanted to follow up
22 with what Frazier was saying. As far as the subgroup is
23 concerned, I don't feel it's necessary to have immediate
24 action per se from the BLM. But having a subgroup in
25 place just to get the ideas out there in a very

1 preliminary preplanning phase, I think, would be useful
2 just to get the ideas out there, so even if the BLM is
3 not immediately available to respond and act because
4 they're not quite at that point yet, just getting that
5 out there, I think.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: And remember that
7 conversation that a subgroup would have would come to
8 us, and then we would discuss and adapt or adopt, revise
9 or not the recommendation as we pass forward. So it
10 would be an engagement.

11 But the subgroup is not a direct engagement
12 with the BLM in terms of direct advisory nature. They
13 do certainly work closely with the BLM and staff and
14 questions and answers and concerns on the subgroup
15 meetings, but any advice that's generated at the
16 subgroup level comes back to us. Then it's up to us to
17 formulate that advice to the BLM.

18 Did I see someone? Bob.

19 MEMBER BURKE: All that being said, if we have
20 a national monument, we're supposed to have a management
21 plan. We don't have a management plan. How is it being
22 managed without any input from the public through the
23 subgroup to the DAC to the bureau? No management plan,
24 no management. Thank you.

25 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Very good. Any further

1 last questions, comments? Thank you, everybody. Thank
2 you for the members of the public.

3 Oh, wait. Did I miss you, Lisbet? Sorry about
4 that. Thank you, Lisbet, please. You got it. You're
5 on.

6 MS. THORESEN: I actually appreciate your
7 comments before mine.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: You can give me a rebuttal
9 now, please.

10 MS. THORESEN: Lisbet Thoresen. I'm the
11 Public Lands representative for the San Diego Mineral
12 Gems Society.

13 First I want to say how much Marie is a loss to
14 our community in what she contributes and draws people
15 together in a very proactive way.

16 I want to say I'm sorry for us that Steve is
17 leaving, and you'll be missed. And I personally, being
18 such layperson and such a newbie, to have been guided
19 with a lot of consideration, I appreciate it.

20 I would like to reiterate most strongly the
21 concerns that Ruth Hidalgo raised and what Bob Burke has
22 raised about needing a management plan. I think it was
23 a year ago and a day there was a meeting about the
24 Grand Staircase, about remembering Bears Ears, about
25 recreational and different kinds of uses. The decision

1 came at the end of 2017. In eight months the BLM has
2 had a management plan put out. In August the comment
3 period just closed on a resource management plan.

4 My concern is, now Secretary Zinke is stepping
5 down. His number two is taking over; is that correct?
6 Okay. Well, his number two used to be an officer of
7 Hadiz Corporation, the largest private landowner, which
8 is now surrounded completely by the monument.

9 And in the lack of a management plan, our
10 subgroups aren't getting any input to BLM, as Michelle
11 has suggested, that we can start that process going, so
12 when you're ready to receive it, that we're not playing
13 catchup, because rockhounds have that experience of
14 feeling like we're always playing catchup, that we're
15 behind the curve, not even with the curve or ahead of
16 the curve a little bit.

17 And what concerns me with priorities of
18 possibly this huge private company overdrafting the
19 aquifer there and changing that landscape, changing what
20 it means for the conservation values, all of the other
21 stakeholder values, the recreation economy, which,
22 Frazier, I really look forward to hearing some report
23 that balances out that there are other economies than
24 only exploitive drilling and resource exploitation. So
25 I'd really like to see that we find that balance.

1 It is so hard when we're all fighting over the
2 same millimeters of land that we all care deeply about,
3 tribal values, recreation values, conservation values,
4 and then the needs for renewable energy and all of that.
5 I really feel like commercial considerations are going
6 to take the floor, because those are going to move
7 forward, and it seems then all the other stakeholder
8 values are going to take whatever is left and their
9 contours will be defined by what's left. And that seems
10 an unreasonable, unfair thing. And I find that a
11 cynical thing.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Lisbet. Thank
13 you.

14 We're a few minutes behind. We're 15 minutes
15 behind, but I don't mind. We've picked up some comments
16 that we would have received this afternoon. So we're
17 staying ahead of schedule on the whole of the day. But
18 that said, we do have a break coming up shortly.

19 We have another public comment coming. We have
20 another public comment coming, but I really do have to
21 introduce this agenda item. This is very important.
22 It's really much of the meat and potatoes of why we're
23 here today, and that is the updated DAC charter. It is
24 very important.

25 To refresh everyone's memory, earlier this year

1 the Desert Advisory Council had a charter renewed by
2 Secretary of the Interior. And the charter has changes
3 in the seats that we fill and has changes -- or, let's
4 say, has assignments in terms of requests for input that
5 the secretary would like to see from the DAC.

6 My questions to you are, knowing that what our
7 charge is, the approximately eight or so Executive
8 Orders that we've been asked to respond to and comment
9 on, how do we do that? When do we do that? In what
10 size bites and chunks do we do it? How would you like
11 to approach this? What's your thoughts on how we move
12 forward with respect to our new charge in our new
13 charter?

14 MEMBER MITCHELL: What timeframe do we have on
15 this just getting there?

16 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: That's up to us too. I
17 mean, more or less it's up to us. Let me recount, if I
18 can. Just to start, let me recount an opinion that I
19 gave to Beth. And that is that, number one, I think
20 we're anxious, happy, willing to provide advice when
21 asked on whatever subject it may be, and this is an
22 opportunity for us to be heard, and the ears are open.
23 Good thing.

24 But number two, I also think that it's going to
25 be difficult for us to bite them all off all at the same

1 time. I don't see us having a meeting to review a -- I
2 don't think we have -- with our things we have going in
3 our lives, you know, with all the steer that you have to
4 brand and all the wilderness -- I'm just kidding. You
5 know, we still have to do. But maybe we can take some
6 in bites and chunks.

7 Are there some of those Secretarial Orders that
8 you feel are more relevant to the Desert District and
9 not as relevant, because many of these Secretarial
10 Orders apply to Public Lands across the west and across
11 the country.

12 So given that, that was my point is, how do we
13 want to do that? What size bites and chunks? Are there
14 some of these orders you want to jump on first? I have
15 one I think should be up front, but I'll let you guys
16 know first, and let know me know what you think. How
17 would you like to handle this? How do you think we
18 should move forward on providing Secretary of Interior
19 the advice he's requested?

20 Frazier, you're on.

21 MEMBER HANEY: I'll start with just a simple
22 request. That is, I wonder if there's a summary of the
23 changes in our charter that we could talk through right
24 now. I think that might be at the top of the list for
25 me.

1 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Any objections?

2 MEMBER MITCHELL: No.

3 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: May I call upon Steve.
4 You've probably reviewed it more than any of us. I
5 think Steve would probably be the best to be able to
6 summarize the changes for us. And, if it's appropriate,
7 I'd love to have that.

8 Thank you, Steve. See, we still need you.

9 MR. RAZO: Thank you.

10 MEMBER MITCHELL: Time limit, Steve.

11 MR. RAZO: I can give you some general. The
12 first big change is in your description of duties on
13 No. 4. This is where the discussion goes into the
14 Secretarial Orders and the suggestions given on how you
15 might approach discussion on these. You would have to
16 read through those. There's a lot of information there.
17 But they each begin with "Provide recommendations." And
18 as Randy says, you decide which are relative.

19 We've had discussions on this between Beth and
20 Randy and I on possible approaches. And one might be
21 whatever the agenda items are, if there's a nexus to a
22 Secretarial Order, you can include that in the
23 discussion on whatever the subject matter is. Or in
24 case you decide you would like to tackle one or discuss
25 one -- as Randy says, he has one in mind -- certainly

1 put that on the agenda.

2 What the administration is looking for is that
3 there is some sort of discussion on these so that they
4 are happening so that they see that your Resource
5 Advisory Committees are looking at these, because they
6 want input from you on how these orders can be
7 implemented into your discussions and providing input
8 into the management process.

9 The other big change is in No. 12, Membership
10 and Designation. The DAC being, as you know, the only
11 congressionally mandated council, came with 12 -- I
12 think it's 12 -- categories that over the years have
13 been the disciplines that have been put out for
14 nomination as they say on your nametags. Those are from
15 the original 12.

16 What has happened now is that they have
17 provided a vehicle to have consistency amongst all the
18 charters in the RACs. There were several or numerous
19 RACs that had different membership designations. What
20 has happened now is that they have inputted the group
21 Group 1, 2, and 3 categories into the charters.

22 What that did was took away your 12 and
23 reinsert them into one of these groups. So what you're
24 going on to see on the next Call for Nominations is not
25 we have a vacancy for this or that particular

1 discipline. We're going to indicate that we have
2 vacancies in Subgroup 1, 2, and 3 and have the folks --
3 or actually going to list, I believe, the complete list
4 of what's under these groups in the news release when it
5 goes out. It will be in the Federal Register Notice so
6 people can see this has expanded, and there will be more
7 opportunity for different disciplines to be involved.

8 The interesting thing is, if you notice that,
9 when you would apply for the DAC on that nomination
10 form, you would check a box on what your discipline was.
11 And you saw all those others that you didn't see in the
12 charter. Well, actually that's what is down in the
13 charter, what you would see on your nomination form. So
14 it's just a matter of making these consistent across the
15 board.

16 Those are the two big changes. How to address
17 the Secretarial and Executive Orders and how the
18 membership designation is being approached.

19 MEMBER HANEY: Just to understand it better,
20 Steve -- thank you -- so are the appointments going to
21 be done just simply by the three groupings from now on?
22 It seems to me that, when we have the 12 separate
23 disciplines that would be specific, that there always
24 had to be somebody for nonrenewable resources and
25 environmental protection. But does that change now?

1 For instance, if we're just in three groups, could there
2 be a DAC that didn't have somebody appointed for
3 environmental protection?

4 MR. RAZO: You always were in three groups.
5 Those 12 disciplines did come from the three groups.
6 And I guess I could put it behind the scenes. Maybe you
7 didn't realize, but as we vetted nominations and we
8 looked at putting together the potential how the next
9 DAC was going to look, we had to consider all three
10 groups. So that really doesn't change.

11 MEMBER HANEY: Thank you.

12 MEMBER MITCHELL: This Group 1 instead of
13 renewable resource, then, are you saying that -- I guess
14 it used to be -- and I represent, you know, the grazing
15 district. So somebody would have to have a lease in
16 order to sit in my position? Am I reading this right?
17 Right now I think I'm renewable resources. And it's
18 saying right here, "leases in the area."

19 MR. RAZO: Right.

20 MEMBER MITCHELL: That means a person that's
21 going to take this position would have to be one of the
22 six ranchers in the district, Mojave district? Is that
23 what I'm seeing?

24 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: That would be one of
25 the categories. We always try and have a balanced DAC,

1 and so we look for some balancing between the different
2 groups. But I don't know that that would be essential
3 to have representation from every single -- right,
4 Steve?

5 MR. RAZO: Correct.

6 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: You don't always have
7 every single representation. It is kind of exciting,
8 though, that the grazing is a specifically called-out
9 category.

10 MEMBER MITCHELL: Yeah, it is. That's the
11 first time in a long time. It used to be that way years
12 and years ago. Actually there was two positions that we
13 held -- I don't know -- probably 30 years ago.

14 MR. RAZO: So you won't see nonrenewable again.
15 It's vetted out.

16 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: There was also a
17 couple other specifically called-out categories that
18 were in the previous charter, such as archaeological and
19 historical interests. And then also it says, "or
20 nationally recognized wild horse and burro interest
21 groups." So there's some interesting changes, and we
22 look forward to recruiting with the changed categories.

23 MEMBER MITCHELL: This takes effect -- this is
24 in effect now?

25 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: It is, yes.

1 MEMBER LONG: Actually Billy just covered my
2 question. I was going to ask when this takes effect.

3 But I did have a question. First of all I
4 wanted to say thank you for adding archaeological and
5 historical interests. That's fantastic that that's
6 finally on there.

7 I had a question about the applications you
8 received this year that you guys are currently
9 reviewing. Will those applications be looked at how the
10 current system is set up, or is it going to be following
11 the new charter?

12 MR. RAZO: That actually is under discussion.
13 That's why the four that are still being vetted, because
14 some of those -- for instance, renewable energy
15 industry -- is no longer there. But they're trying to
16 figure out how they're going to address that. So that's
17 part of why we haven't gotten all -- so, yeah, they're
18 trying to recategorize our 12, because wildlife you
19 don't see, for instance, on A1 where would you put him
20 in one of these groups, because we haven't specifically
21 had wildlife or something like that. They're working
22 through that on how that's going to happen.

23 I guess you could kind of take ownership or be
24 proud that those first 12 categories that you have lived
25 with for all these years, no one else has them or had

1 them, and now that they're trying to get everything
2 consistent. It's like, what's with that DAC? Where did
3 you get that? And why is that there? Well, that's how
4 we were created, so you're causing some discussion back
5 east to figure out how.

6 MEMBER MITCHELL: We are the only one like that
7 in this district; right?

8 MR. RAZO: Right.

9 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: But we're making it
10 work, so we've taken the nominations that we received
11 during the last round, and we're working with the
12 Washington office on sort of helping it to bridge the
13 gap between the previous charter and the new one, given
14 the nominations we've received. And those did go
15 forward, and we're just working with the Washington
16 office on those.

17 MEMBER MITCHELL: Excuse me, Mr. Chairman, but
18 the nominations, the ones that are our seats that are
19 coming up, so we've got to be renominated, I guess?

20 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: For the six of us whose
21 terms will expire in February, the BLM will put out a
22 call for nomination, and we have the option to reapply.

23 MEMBER MITCHELL: Okay. All right. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: This is the first time in a
25 long time I remember a really detailed conversation on

1 the charter. Most of the time it's been a quick
2 announcement by Steve, "Hey, your charter was signed.
3 Here's a copy in your packet," and we have who. This is
4 the first time we have really dug right into it, so it's
5 really kind of interesting.

6 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: One thing to add on
7 the charter is with the new charge to provide advisement
8 on Secretarial Orders, Executive Orders and the like, it
9 is forward-looking as well. So it does say that, "All
10 current and future Executive Orders, Secretarial Orders
11 and Secretarial Memos."

12 So there is a listing within the charter, but
13 it does look forward as well, so things that have come
14 out since the charter or will come out in the future,
15 that it's all fair game for the DAC to consider whether
16 they would like to provide advisement on how we might
17 best implement it here in the desert if it's something
18 that you feel is important for you to provide advisement
19 on.

20 MEMBER MUTH: Mr. Chairman.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Yes, please. Al Muth.

22 MEMBER MUTH: Before Steve sits down and fades
23 away into the sunset, just a couple of more questions
24 there. Under Group 1, persons who represent the
25 commercial timber industry, do we have a commercial

1 timber industry within the Desert District?

2 MR. RAZO: Some of these will not apply. Again
3 it's just being consistent across all RACs. Some RACs
4 will have that discipline needed. We don't, so we doubt
5 someone will come forward to want to be on the DAC and
6 represent something that we don't deal with.

7 MEMBER MUTH: You never know.

8 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: It does say more
9 after that. So it says, the commercial timber industry
10 or represent energy and mineral development, which is
11 probably more likely that we would receive nominations
12 for that.

13 MEMBER MUTH: Group 2D, "Disperse recreational
14 activities including, for example, hunting and shooting
15 sports."

16 Isn't rockhounding a dispersed recreational
17 activity?

18 MEMBER BURKE: Yes, it is.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Very much so.

20 MEMBER MUTH: That could be under that heading.

21 MEMBER MITCHELL: So you could have a person
22 who's a rock representative.

23 MEMBER MUTH: Okay. Finally under Group 3E,
24 "represent the affected public at large including, for
25 example, sportsmen and sportswomen communities."

1 Wouldn't that be covered back up under hunting
2 and shooting? Are they thinking sportswomen and men in
3 a broader context than what they covers?

4 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Bob, go ahead.

5 MEMBER BURKE: I think that's a broader concept
6 such as the mountain bike people and so forth.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Equestrians, perhaps.

8 MEMBER MUTH: Normally when you talk about
9 sportsmen, you talk about hunting and shooting sorts of
10 things.

11 MEMBER BURKE: Right. What I would consider
12 hunting, fishing, that kind of stuff.

13 MEMBER ROBINSON: It says, "Dispersed
14 recreation activities, including."

15 MEMBER MUTH: Okay.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Keep going. Anyone else?

17 And if we were to consider the question of
18 looking at the Secretarial Orders, does anybody have any
19 comments on a process as to how we would do that? What
20 would you like to see?

21 Go ahead, please, Paul. You got it.

22 MEMBER MARTIN: Possibly we look at each one of
23 the orders and then see which group the order
24 specifically -- or pertains to. You know, of the three
25 groups which does the order pertain to mostly? And then

1 the members of those groups, that group present some
2 kind of plan or response to both the designated officer
3 and the chairman of the DAC.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I like it. I like it. It
5 sounds sort of committee-like without having to go
6 through the bureaucracy of the committee, because by
7 having our groups, we essentially have built-in
8 committees. Like that.

9 Comments? That's a neat way to do it. So
10 perhaps, then, rather than us looking and saying, okay.
11 Let's do this one and this one next month, what we
12 should do is look at this as homework within our groups
13 and see which of those orders and follow what Paul said
14 and see which might fly and at our next meeting present
15 a formal plan?

16 MEMBER MARTIN: Yes.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Al?

18 MEMBER MITCHELL: Well, when is our next
19 meeting, or do we know yet? Well, that sounds like a
20 good idea to me. Gives me plenty of time to study.

21 MEMBER MARTIN: Also I think it's important
22 that we know what group we belong to. I mean, that
23 hasn't really been established yet, although it's
24 described pretty clearly here, but I think it would be a
25 good idea to just list who's involved with each group.

1 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: As Steve alluded, or
2 mentioned flat out, we've always had the groups. It's
3 just they've kind of been transparent. The only time
4 the groups really came into play is in the technical
5 manner in which the DAC issues advise. Although we take
6 a majority vote on things like approving an agenda or a
7 meeting or what we want to do for lunch or something
8 like that, if we're issuing advice on a topic, the votes
9 are supposed to be recorded within each group.

10 And advice is only issued if there is a
11 majority within each of those groups. That's a little
12 weird, but that is how the public law has put it out.
13 We just really have not had to go there because we tend
14 to have votes that are rather based on consensus, or we
15 may have only a minimal dissension that does not cause
16 an entire group to be in the "nays."

17 And so we've looked at that in the back end to
18 make sure that we have a majority of Group 1, Group 2
19 and Group 3, they're all majority. That's advice. Move
20 it forward. But it's been a little transparent in the
21 background. I think this charter brings it a little
22 more up front and makes those lines more obvious for us.

23 Steve?

24 MR. RAZO: Yeah. I'll help you. Right now in
25 Group 1 are Randy, Billy, Nathan, Michelle, and Paul.

1 We put Leslie in there under energy and mineral
2 development, but they're still trying to figure out what
3 they're going to call the renewable energy industry.
4 Group 2 is Frances and Frazier. Group three is now
5 Supervisor Lovingood. Elected officials fall under
6 Group 3, Bob Burke, Mariana Maguire, Bob Robinson,
7 James Kenney. That's who's in it, just so you know
8 where you are.

9 MEMBER MUTH: Thanks.

10 MEMBER MITCHELL: Man, that helped.

11 MEMBER MARTIN: So, Randy, on these Executive
12 Orders, we should assign them to one or two or all three
13 groups.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Want to do it right now?

15 MEMBER MITCHELL: Like this 3354, I mean I
16 don't know nothing about this. It seems to me like
17 Nate, he's a mining expert here. So I mean, we would
18 probably have to -- you know, it says, support the
19 offshore drilling? This is what I'm not getting. I
20 mean, would we even be able to advise on that? It's
21 3354.

22 MEMBER MUTH: Let me interrupt you, Billy.
23 That's the burr under my saddle too. We don't know a
24 darn thing about most of these, and how are we supposed
25 to make intelligent comment on policy that at our pay

1 level nobody is going to listen to? I mean, this
2 emphasis on these orders seems to me some sort of a red
3 herring just to keep us busy. I just don't understand
4 it.

5 MEMBER MITCHELL: Amen.

6 MEMBER MUTH: And I'm the dullest knife in the
7 drawer, I guess, but I have no idea what's going on in
8 these orders.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I'm not opposed to passing
10 on some. I'm not opposed to that at all. I really like
11 Paul's idea, but mine is a little different, kind of
12 more cherry picking and then working our way through,
13 but as we get through at the end, we refine some. We
14 maybe don't have a dog in that fight.

15 MEMBER MITCHELL: Can we do that, Mr. Chairman?

16 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Another thought we had, if
17 we wanted to follow through with Paul's suggestion --
18 we're about to hit a break. I wonder if anybody might
19 have a few minutes within our group to sit down and go
20 through real quick and just kind of make a proposal for
21 us to consider when we come back from break rather than
22 us all coming back to the table throwing them out, or if
23 we had to table this for lunch break. Come up with a
24 plan over lunch and make this motion after lunch.

25 So I'm willing to work on it with this. I'd

1 like to get as much done as we can do today, put off as
2 little as we have to for the next meeting, since we
3 don't know when that is.

4 MEMBER MITCHELL: We have expertise on the
5 3347, I guess, stewardship, recreation. We can just do
6 that one there. I'm confused with this offshore mining,
7 3354. I mean, I wouldn't know. Nate, knowing his
8 mining background, would be the only one you could even
9 take advice from. I have no idea about mining.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: And Paul.

11 MEMBER MITCHELL: I'm sorry. I guess we could
12 follow you.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We have a couple. We have
14 a couple. Go ahead.

15 MEMBER HANEY: As I read through the charter
16 and the request to review the Executive Orders, the
17 Secretarial Orders, that seems fine to me. But I hope
18 that it doesn't displace us bringing issues to the floor
19 that we know to be true in the desert. I hope this
20 doesn't turn into an exercise of us taking our marching
21 orders from above, reviewing these orders and becoming a
22 body that helps the implementation or that -- how do we
23 just carry these things out? I don't want that to be
24 our only job in this world.

25 I'm fine reviewing them and saying what we

1 believe to be true about them, but I also don't want
2 that to displace our issues that are desert based
3 bubbling up, because I think that's a real primary work
4 role of the council here. So just a comment.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: That's good. What do you
6 think? Do you want to take a break? It's 10:30. Let's
7 go ahead and take that break. We'll think about this.
8 We'll take the public comments that we have on this. We
9 have -- looks like five or six cards on this. Some of
10 the former DAC members may have some advice for us. So
11 let's do that break right now, and we'll be back
12 at 10:45 in this room.

13 (A morning break was taken.)

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I'm going to start by
15 bringing us back up to speed on this issue of the DAC
16 charter, specifically the Secretarial Orders. A few of
17 us met outside and met in the hall and threw out an
18 idea, and we found that sort of all of us threw out the
19 same idea at the same time. We just said it a little
20 different.

21 If I may characterize what we talked about,
22 before I characterize what we talk about, I want to do a
23 quick reminder. Number one, our charge is only to
24 review the implementation of these orders -- okay? --
25 only the implementation. That's limited. It's a

1 smaller job, a smaller bite, a smaller thing to look at,
2 but it's reasonable; okay?

3 Number two, we don't have to do all and all of
4 it. We do not have to. We can do what we can do. But
5 we do not have to do all of it. So that said, being
6 that we're looking at implementation and that we do get
7 to, you know, look at this, the one thing that we did
8 find is there is a commonality among many of these
9 orders and that we could perhaps take up a subject
10 matter.

11 For example if we look at -- and I'm going to
12 call these out by title, not necessarily by number. We
13 have a 3355 about NEPA, streamlining NEPA. Put that in
14 a pile. Take the one that says, "enforcing regulatory
15 reform, regulatory planning and review, improving
16 regulation regulatory." You'll see that there's
17 essentially four of these orders that deal with NEPA
18 regulatory review. Some of us that discussed this see
19 this as one assignment, one chunk. These four go
20 together. They can be reviewed hand in hand.

21 Also Jim Kenney pointed out to me that some of
22 these Executive Orders are from previous
23 administrations, so these aren't all current
24 administration orders. So, you know, so anyways I think
25 those four go together well. We also found that there

1 were two others that seemed to go together well,
2 conservation stewardship and outdoor recreation, and the
3 hunting, fishing, shooting, wildlife conservation
4 opportunities and coordination with state tribes and
5 territories. I would like to kind of see these two come
6 together or suggest these two go together as an
7 assignment.

8 MEMBER MUTH: What was the No. 3? 3354?

9 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I'm looking at 3347 and
10 3356. I see those in a pile.

11 And lastly I see two items that have what I
12 would consider broad -- what I would consider have an
13 interest of all of us, these two. And these could be
14 considered at the same meeting. They're not necessarily
15 related together, but they're two separate chunks. And
16 that would be the federal solid mineral leasing program
17 all the federal onshore oil. But I don't think we're
18 going to deal with that. That second line about federal
19 solid leasing program then the fire one, these two are
20 sort of individuals and I think could be considered at
21 the same point in time. Or if we didn't have time
22 consider one, then consider another at another meeting.

23 I'm also looking at this perhaps over the next
24 few years. To follow up also with Paul's suggestion and
25 with those who kind of thought about this, we would

1 still ask that the groups, the groups that we talked
2 about, take the leads on these packets.

3 Paul, you had one. Can you read your
4 suggestion.

5 MEMBER MARTIN: Yeah. Say, Group 1 could take
6 a good, hard look at 3354, the federal offshore oil and
7 gas leasing program, but very importantly for
8 nonrenewable resource is the federal solid mineral and
9 leasing programs. You know, that's very important. So
10 Group 1 can look through that. And all groups are
11 involved obviously in all of them, but Group 1 in
12 particular for this 3354.

13 And I think Group 2 for the conservation
14 stewardship outdoor recreation and the hunting, fishing
15 and recreational shooting, wildlife coordination with
16 state, tribes and territories. And with Lovingood on
17 board with Group 3, I think that's a real added backbone
18 to everything we're doing, and I think that will be
19 great.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: So before we have a motion,
21 let's hear from the public that has ideas for us as well
22 and see if we can hone this in some more. But again I
23 just want to remind all of us this isn't like the one
24 thing that we're going to do. This is just something
25 that we're doing in addition to everything else we're

1 going to do, all the rest of the issues that we're going
2 to do. This is just something, and we have time to do
3 this. This isn't like we have to drop everything we are
4 doing and do this stuff.

5 Billy, you got the floor.

6 MEMBER MITCHELL: If it doesn't pertain to the
7 desert directly, do we have to comment on it?

8 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: No.

9 MEMBER MITCHELL: All right.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Absolutely. And only
11 implementation level, and it may be -- I'll be honest --
12 I could end up reading this stuff and go, I don't know.
13 Maybe just have a couple of public meetings. That's all
14 I got. That's all I got. It may only be that.

15 MEMBER MITCHELL: Looks like the honeymoon's
16 over.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: It's about implementation.
18 That's all.

19 What I've got -- if I can, if there's no
20 objection, I'm going to close the cards for this topic.
21 Now that we're starting the public comment on it, I have
22 about a handful of cards. Let's start with Mark Algazy,
23 former DAC member, followed by Barbara Bane, followed by
24 John Stewart.

25 MR. ALGAZY: Thank you. My first comment is

1 that I was surprised and a little disappointed that the
2 DAC is just sitting here on the receiving end of this
3 new charter and is looking about going forward, because
4 I think that you shouldn't give up so easily, that you
5 should consider the charter a two-way street and the DAC
6 should also be prepared to consider sending comments
7 back to Washington saying, "This is how we would like
8 our charter to be." I think the DAC has an opportunity
9 and it should take that opportunity to send a message
10 back to Washington, "This is what we would like to do."

11 It's been a unilateral, top-down kind of thing,
12 but it doesn't always have to be that way, and you
13 shouldn't just discuss that so easily.

14 The second thing I would like to do is applaud
15 Al for using the words "red herring." Those are my
16 exact thoughts about these other Executive Orders and
17 Secretarial Orders. You have a limited amount of time
18 and a limited amount of energy, and I have a very strong
19 bias, and I'm willing to admit that bias.

20 When Tom Acuna asked me to join the council in
21 2010, I was not impressed with what the council's agenda
22 was at that point because Randy was the only one that
23 seemed to be focused on renewable energy, and it was my
24 opinion at that time and continues to be my opinion that
25 renewable energy is the locomotive that drives the train

1 for land use in the desert, and so I was extremely
2 excited, even though I was scared to death when the
3 DRECP came out. And I said, now it's time for me to get
4 involved.

5 And the DAC did a high ladder mark in its
6 participation in commenting on the DRECP. For the only
7 time, I think, known in memory, eleven out of the
8 15 members were all on the subgroup rather than just one
9 or two people, because it meant so much to everybody.
10 And you will never see that kind of coalescing of the
11 energy of the DAC.

12 And this has an enormous potential, dividing it
13 up into three different groups. Look at the way you're
14 already trying to figure out how to manage this beast.
15 Where will all of that energy go? Your energy, I'm
16 talking about.

17 I think that alternative energy is still the
18 engine, and I don't want to see the DAC's energy just
19 torn apart and dragged here and then when you guys --
20 you all have lives, and you need to be able to
21 concentrate on what I think is the most important thing,
22 because all of your interests were wrapped up in the
23 DRECP. Don't let them drag you off with red herrings.

24 The third thing is my concern about this,
25 quote, unquote, consistency trying to make the DAC like

1 every other RAC, and so you end up with a charter that
2 looks like everybody else's charter. The DAC isn't
3 another RAC. It never will be, and you acknowledge that
4 there's things on that list that you have no real
5 knowledge about, neither the time or the inclination to
6 become knowledgeable about. So you shouldn't just take
7 it lying down that you have to accept a charter that's
8 just trying to make you like everybody else. Why try to
9 be a square peg in a round hole? Thank you.

10 MEMBER MITCHELL: Thank you, Mark.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Mark. We have
12 Barbara Bane, John, and Linda Castro.

13 Three minutes, Barbara. Go ahead.

14 MS. BANE: I'm Barbara Bane. I represent
15 Desert Survivors, which is a desert hiking and
16 conservation group. This is my first DAC meeting, so
17 glad to be here. I basically had a couple of questions,
18 and you'll pardon me because I am a newbie.

19 So to what extent is the DAC's work dictated by
20 these Executive Orders? And maybe Beth could answer
21 this. Like, if, for example, you don't get to these
22 because you're busy with other things, is that going to
23 reflect poorly on the DAC, or is there going to be
24 pressure, we want you to prioritize these first? Or how
25 exactly does that work?

1 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: So the DAC is going
2 to have to decide on how they would like to tackle that
3 charge, but I'll share that from my perspective I don't
4 know that they need to advise on all things right away,
5 or I think there's room for them to look at these items
6 and decide what things resonate with them that they
7 would like to provide advisement to the secretary about
8 how we could implement here in the desert.

9 So I think there's room for the DAC to look at
10 that and see what makes sense and what resonates with
11 them where they feel they would like to be providing
12 advisement on how we implement that stuff here.

13 MS. BANE: Okay. So essentially there's no
14 requirement that you do that list and, if it doesn't get
15 done or only a couple get done, it's not going to
16 reflect poorly on the DAC later in the eyes of
17 Washington?

18 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: I don't think so. I
19 think we should talk about it, like Randy is talking
20 about it with the DAC members right now. And if it
21 seems like there are some things that resonate where
22 they would like to provide advisement, you know, I think
23 that would be good to look at that and to consider that
24 as being a good thing to work on.

25 But I don't think that the DAC needs to tackle

1 all these items. I don't even think they need to tackle
2 all of them even over an extended period. I think they
3 should maybe pick and choose which things they'd like
4 too look at.

5 MS. BANE: I'm trying to get a sense of what
6 are Washington's expectations for the DAC. Thank you.

7 Then secondly I'm curious, so you've got this
8 broken down into these description of duties, fees,
9 fire, hunting and fishing, regulatory reform, et cetera.
10 So where does the generic input about recreation,
11 hiking, ORV use, the environmental things -- which of
12 these duties does that kind of general advice fall
13 under?

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Well, that would fall under
15 one of the recreation representatives, from what I hear.
16 Hiking, shooting, gem and mineral collecting,
17 off-highway vehicle use, camping. That is done on a
18 non-commercial basis as our dispersed public
19 recreational activity. But I think also recreation
20 representative also assists with permitted recreational
21 events, Special Recreation Permits and the like.

22 MS. BANE: So would that kind of fall under
23 No. 1, under "Description of Duties"?

24 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: There's probably two areas
25 it could fall under. And again what I see -- what I see

1 happening here is that the applications will be received
2 for the groups, and the nominations as they're processed
3 by the BLM will be placed into the pigeonholes as to
4 what's available. I expect that the BLM is going to
5 want to try to keep the groups somewhat balanced. I'm
6 sorry for the use of our time, but I think the BLM will
7 want to keep the groups balanced. I don't think they'll
8 want to stack everybody into Group 3 and leave nothing
9 for Group 2 or vice versa or whatever. But they have
10 that flexibility, but it will be one of those two
11 recreations, from what I read.

12 MS. BANE: I'm not the asking about nominees as
13 much as general duties of the DAC as a group.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: As a group the Desert
15 Advisory Council's charge is to advise the
16 Desert District manager on the BLM's activities. That's
17 our number one charge.

18 MS. BANE: Right. Would things like camping,
19 gem and mineral, that would fall under duty No. 1?

20 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We do that all the time in
21 a regular part of our agenda. In fact some folks on the
22 DAC would say we talk a little too much about some of
23 the OHV recreation. But it is true, we do discuss it
24 regularly.

25 MS. BANE: Thank you very much.

1 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you for coming. It's
2 good to see you as part of the DAC family. Come on
3 back.

4 John Stewart, Linda, and Sam Merk.

5 MR. STEWART: John Stewart, California
6 Four-Wheel Drive Association.

7 As I look at this revised charter, I see a
8 couple of things, and one of the points it says, "where
9 applicable." And I'd like to point out that the DAC
10 received life as a commission or a council in FLPMA back
11 in 1976 with a singular charter to provide an advisory
12 capacity to BLM and within that advisory capacity
13 offered the public an opportunity to comment and provide
14 comment on BLM's actions or what was proposed for any
15 planning efforts in the desert.

16 Throwing in these Executive Orders and
17 compliance or implementation of those, I don't see where
18 that is something that the DAC is directly involved in.
19 The BLM, the agencies involved are the ones directly
20 required by the Executive Order by direction from their
21 bosses in order to begin implementing.

22 Now, to an extent I like to see the fact that
23 they are mentioned in here, because now this starts
24 bringing as to how these Executive Orders are going to
25 impact the management activities of the desert and of

1 the management plans and how they will impact the
2 management plans, and at that point it then becomes a
3 direct responsibility for the DAC to take into account
4 the impacts of these Executive Orders on how the desert
5 is managed and in turn roll back and then put it out as
6 an agenda item or agendize it -- here, this is what is
7 happening to Public Lands to the management plans.

8 Public, we want your input. And this is where
9 I would choose different wording on some of these and
10 maybe a different structure of how they're put in, you
11 know, because the implementation of the Executive Orders
12 are not part of the DAC's responsibility. That's the
13 BLM.

14 But because whatever BLM does implement will
15 impact the desert management, now it is incumbent upon
16 the DAC to begin looking at the impacts there and begin
17 collecting information and advising BLM of how these
18 impacts are either good or adverse in light of the
19 public and in light of their original charter to
20 actually advise the BLM of actions.

21 Now -- and as far as the different groups, my
22 concern with the different groups comes to a point is
23 that making sure that there is a balance. There are too
24 many subjective definitions of words that can be skewed
25 based on somebody else's bias, and they can be slanted.

1 And it's something that we can't solve it now, but it's
2 something that I would caution you to look at and to pay
3 very close to attention to when you do strive for
4 balance of representatives. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, John.

6 Linda?

7 MS. CASTRO: I'd like to transfer my three
8 minutes to Jora Fogg.

9 MS. FOGG: My card didn't make it up, I don't
10 think.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Your name?

12 MS. FOGG: Jora Fogg.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Any objection? Linda is
14 passing. Please.

15 MS. FOGG: I apologize.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I will make sure we get a
17 card from you before you leave so I have your name.
18 Thank you, Linda.

19 MS. FOGG: I think Steve said he brought it up
20 to you.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Go ahead, please.

22 MS. FOGG: Hi. I'm Jora Fogg, policy director
23 for Friends of the Inyo in Bishop, and this is my first
24 DAC meeting. So thank you for hosting it in Ridgecrest,
25 because I wouldn't be able to come if it was anywhere

1 else in the California Desert probably. And thank you
2 for your diligence and work in resuming these DAC
3 meetings as well.

4 I wanted to first mention that I share
5 Frazier's and others' concerns about equal
6 representation of all uses in the desert as you choose
7 positions moving forward for the DAC. And I wanted to
8 follow up with a question about that and maybe get a
9 little bit more clarification on how selections are
10 being made and how BLM is collaborating with the
11 Washington office, and it maybe even sounds like the
12 White House was selecting these positions.

13 Do you have any thoughts on that, Beth?

14 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Sure. So the
15 nominations come in, and we review those, and we do
16 eventually make recommendations to our state office, and
17 those recommendations are generally forwarded to the
18 Washington office. And from the Washington office they
19 go to the department, and then they also go to the
20 White House. And this is a changed practice. This is
21 the standard practice for appointing RAC members,
22 including the DAC.

23 MS. FOGG: Okay. So veto power at that level?

24 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: What we do is, we
25 strive to try and get representation from all the

1 categories listed, not just in the groups, but, you
2 know, there's different, like, interests that are
3 represented here, and we strive to get folks from all
4 the different interests to the extent that we can, and
5 then we start there, and then we look and try and
6 balance between the different groups -- Group 1, 2, and
7 3 -- to the extent we can. And some of that depends a
8 lot on who nominates and what kind of interest we get.
9 And I shouldn't say "some." A lot of it does, because
10 you can only recommend folks that have actually
11 nominated in what category they happen to be in.

12 MS. FOGG: That makes a lot of sense. I think
13 I was a little bit troubled by the wildlife position
14 and, you know, how they reallocated those. We have
15 hunting, which also encompasses wildlife obviously.
16 Then we have non-native species, like burros and wild
17 horses, which is also wildlife. But there isn't a lot
18 of room in the charter as it is now for other wildlife.
19 So I just raise that to the DAC.

20 And then I wanted to also mention really quick
21 with 50 seconds, Secretarial Order 3362, and I would
22 bring that to the DAC for consideration if you're going
23 to be looking at other Secretarial Orders. This is from
24 July, 2017. It's the wildlife corridors, and I have
25 three examples from the California Desert.

1 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Could I have that number
2 again, please.

3 MS. FOGG: 3362. So I think wildlife corridors
4 is front and center to what the desert should be
5 considering. We've got the Piute deer herd at
6 Middle Knob, which is just outside town the Mojave, the
7 mule deer herd in Southern Inyo County then very
8 preliminary discussions at the introduction of proghorn,
9 chuckwalla bench. That's three examples of wildlife
10 corridor at work that DAC could be considering under
11 that Secretarial Order. Thank you.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: For those of you looking
13 for it, that would fall under the "and other" option.
14 It wasn't one of the specific eight that were mentioned,
15 but you see that our charter does provide us the
16 authority to also advise on additional Executive Orders,
17 not only the eight that it provided in front of us. And
18 Jora is suggesting another Executive Order we could
19 perhaps take a look at. It's not in our packet. Thank
20 you.

21 Sam, you're up next, followed by Ed and
22 Earl Wilson.

23 MS. MERK: Sam Merk. I would like to thank
24 everybody's participation, but again I would like to
25 tell you something. The Desert Advisory Committee is

1 different from a RAC. We are not really a RAC. We are
2 put into that category, but we're not. We were
3 designated under FLPMA 1976 94-579. I wrote a four-page
4 letter. I'm very familiar with FLPMA. I've been going
5 to DAC meetings for a long time. What makes us special
6 is that we have the ability to write our own. We don't
7 have to comply with everything. There are things in
8 here that we here in the desert we're not going to have
9 anything to do with. So we can't say we're going to
10 comply with everything.

11 Another thing, too, we can talk all about
12 delegating delegations and putting people on, you know,
13 one, two, three category. But if you remember
14 correctly, we have not had a DAC meeting in 18 months,
15 18 months. It has frustrated a lot of you sitting up
16 there. And it will continue that way because it is
17 discretionary. It is discretionary by the district
18 manager. We could have called something. We didn't.

19 We need to have the public in advisement of
20 this. We need to be able to submit comments to the DAC,
21 and if you take a look at what our comments are, you
22 need to have time to look at it. So far we have not
23 heard where the public can really send a structured
24 letter to the DAC in regards to this.

25 And I think that 36 seconds is not going to

1 give me time to tell you what I really think about this,
2 but allocating \$130,000 and then having a meeting on a
3 Tuesday is not going to do it for the public. This is
4 so wrong. Please think about it. And you can say no,
5 and you can rewrite this, and that's what you need to do
6 as representatives of the public. This is so wrong.
7 Thank you.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you.

9 Ed, you're up next then followed by Earl Wilson
10 and Gerry Hillier.

11 MR. WALDHEIM: Ed Waldheim, Friends of Jawbone.

12 The date of this document is June 14th, 2008
13 (as spoken) and July 5th. Am I to read this as this is
14 a done deal, or is this a document in progress?

15 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: An Executive Order is
16 always a done deal from the second he signs it. It's an
17 Executive Order.

18 MR. WALDHEIM: This is a done deal?

19 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: All done deals. Executive
20 Orders are all done deals.

21 MR. WALDHEIM: So any changes -- the changes --
22 there's no changes --

23 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We are not going to be
24 asking for changes. We are going to be suggesting
25 implementation. That's what we're being asked to do

1 specifically in the charter, is to offer opinions on
2 implementation. And that's all. That's it.

3 MR. WALDHEIM: Okay. So there's things that,
4 like, for example, the rockhounds. It doesn't
5 specifically talk about the rockhounds. It's a
6 generality. There's no opportunity to include them
7 into, I mean, even --

8 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: There certainly would be.
9 I don't want to speak for us, but a possibility would be
10 for us to issue an implementation request that gem and
11 mineral collecting be considered, incorporated. That
12 could be absolutely one of our implementation comments.

13 MR. WALDHEIM: If Ruth comes with a letter
14 making a suggestion or recommendation, it would be
15 appropriate for you guys to look at it?

16 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Hugely, and welcomed.

17 MR. WALDHEIM: Okay, Ruth, you got your job.

18 The other issue I have, partners. We don't
19 talk about partners. I mean everybody makes it we got
20 partners, we've got to get partners involved, but nobody
21 gives any lip service to partners. I was just talking
22 about Carl. Where is the partners in these reports?
23 They're no place. We don't even exist, not that we want
24 the recognition, because our recognition is to make sure
25 we have the access to our Public Lands. That is the

1 only thing. But it would be nice to have a little
2 paragraph or something inside of it.

3 But in here there's nothing about partners in
4 this whole document. And I think we should have
5 something in here that the partners are very important
6 to the federal land and to the public land use, because
7 without partners you can't do it all. Government
8 doesn't solve everything. The partners are the ones
9 that help you solve these issues. So somehow we need to
10 figure out how to include that into participation or
11 into the implementation portion of it.

12 Last thing, I'll save it for later.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Ed. Earl and
14 then Gerry.

15 MR. WILSON: Earl Wilson, president of
16 China Lake Astronomical Society and member of the
17 Ridgecrest Roundtable. And I recognize Marie here. I
18 didn't know her for many years, like many of you, but I
19 did know her for probably the last five or six years and
20 had occasional meetings. Anyway I don't want to waste
21 my time here.

22 I would be very careful how you deal with your
23 charter. And John already mentioned it, and Mark was up
24 here and said some things, and I agree with the red
25 herring. This whole thing about presidential

1 ultimatums, if you want to call them that, and your
2 other paperwork that you're going to probably be getting
3 in a continuous flow in the near future, now that we
4 have a change in leadership at DOI.

5 Pick your battles cautiously. And balance.
6 You need balance in the desert. It's one of the most
7 important things. We stopped the overflow of the solar
8 energy, and we're lucky that we don't just have one
9 great big solar field out there. And the desert isn't
10 the same here in Ridgecrest as it is over in Arizona or
11 up in Inyo County or what the people back east call
12 desert. They don't even know what desert is.

13 So we have to be careful about the directives
14 that come down about the desert in particular. Balance.
15 We need balance. That means the environment. That
16 means the people. It means business, which is the big
17 directive that we have pushing everything that's going
18 on right now. One person's view of the desert and gets
19 people to think like he does, and it's not good. You
20 need to push back.

21 And as far as the astronomy part of it -- I
22 have 20 seconds -- we're the people that are out there
23 in the middle of the night, and we're astronomers,
24 astrophotographers, stuff like that. Nobody ever sees
25 us. We don't have a rep, but we do have a voice. Thank

1 you.

2 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thanks for coming, Earl. I
3 appreciate that.

4 Gerry.

5 MR. HILLIER: Thank you very much. You have my
6 card, don't you? You know me. A couple of things on
7 the charter that I wanted to point out. One thing --
8 and I think several people have alluded at least
9 indirectly to it -- the charter really has been drawn to
10 make the DAC like the rest of the RACs. The listing of
11 the representation and all is fairly consistent with
12 other RACs that I'm familiar with throughout the west.
13 And so the distinction of the DAC from others has been
14 minimized.

15 The one thing that is missing is a general
16 public category where you could reach out and pick the
17 astronomers and appoint one just for the hell of it,
18 even though they don't fit into these pigeonholes. And
19 I would like to see if you were to make a
20 recommendation, add a general public representation so
21 you could reach out for some of these unique disciplines
22 there that aren't always available.

23 The general public seat has been used in a
24 variety of ways over the years, and one thing, at least
25 twice that I could -- no -- three times that I can

1 recall has included Native American representation, and
2 that now is specifically provided for amongst the
3 membership and probably a good thing.

4 Second one of the things that jumped out at me
5 is in Group 1, Item E, "Represent energy and mineral
6 development," I think there the authors of this were
7 thinking of petroleum fossil fuels. I really think for
8 this DAC, if you're going to make a recommendation that
9 those need to be split. And so renewable energy is so
10 ubiquitous throughout the desert that you really do have
11 a need for renewable energy representation on here and
12 it would not be duplicated with mineral development and
13 mining.

14 A third aspect -- and it's one I think the DAC
15 should weigh in on fairly quickly, and it will be
16 entirely appropriate -- is if the department is going to
17 go ahead with the regional organization, the district
18 manager pointed out that the CDCA has been split between
19 two of these regions down the county line and the north
20 boundary of San Bernardino County and Kern County.

21 I think it's important that the DAC weigh in
22 and provide direction that there should be no difference
23 in administration with the CDCA, even though it is split
24 between two regions, that there needs to be a continuum
25 of management regardless of how those regional

1 boundaries go. I think that needs to be emphasized as
2 being an important local issue.

3 And, oh, last rockhounds. From time to time
4 there has been a rockhound representation on here under
5 the general heading of recreation, and so it's entirely
6 appropriate that they be included and not lumped in with
7 mineral development, because they're entirely different
8 aspects. And so gem and mineral collecting is entirely
9 appropriate under that recreation category, and it
10 doesn't really fit with hunting and fishing, and it
11 doesn't really fit with mining, but they are an
12 important user group whose interest has not been
13 diminished, and they need to be represented from time to
14 time. Thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Gerry. Okay.
16 That's it.

17 Any objections to proceeding as we've
18 discussed?

19 MEMBER BURKE: Please.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: You good?

21 MEMBER BURKE: Proceed.

22 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I have a motion to proceed
23 as we discussed.

24 MEMBER MITCHELL: Second.

25 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We have a second. Further

1 discussion? Any objections? Hearing and seeing none,
2 passed unanimously. Oh, you have an objection. Do you
3 have a comment?

4 MEMBER MUTH: Comment.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Comment, please.

6 MEMBER MUTH: What exactly did we discuss?

7 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We discussed that we are
8 going to group the orders into a Group 1 emphasis, a
9 Group 2 emphasis. We are also going to group the items
10 regarding regulatory review and NEPA and that we would
11 consider these prioritized and consider them over the
12 next two-year period as we have time available.

13 MEMBER HANEY: Could I just raise something. I
14 think Gerry brought up a really good point that we might
15 consider in this part of the agenda, which is in
16 recognition that the CDCA is going to get supplied
17 between two regions, just to emphasize that continuum of
18 management, that it's important that that not get lost.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I am at the end of the day
20 going to propose regionalization as an agenda item. I
21 think it's big enough to talk about. I think it's
22 something that's going to be huge and could change the
23 face of things like we haven't seen in some time. I
24 think it's big enough to have its own digging.

25 However, that said, if we roll through this

1 motion of this assignment, I would then offer a
2 follow-up that we should take a discussion and taking
3 into consideration what the public said, that we may
4 want to issue a -- maybe issue a response to the
5 charter. We've never done that before. And I'm going
6 to say -- this is going to make some people mad
7 probably. But you got four hours to play a Monopoly
8 game. You can spend those four hours getting
9 Parker Brothers to change the rules, or you can read the
10 rules really well and play that game the very best that
11 you can and win that game.

12 And I think maybe where we are right now we can
13 spend -- Al has a saying that -- two years ago he turned
14 me on to something I never heard. We can go and take
15 and fight for two years to get our charter changed. Is
16 that the hill we want to die on? Or do we want to do
17 renewable energy? Do we want to do the national
18 monuments? Do we want to do grazing? Is that what we
19 would rather do? I would rather do those issues.

20 But that said, that said, this charter expires
21 in a year and a half. There will be another charter
22 issued. We've never, ever had a motion to say, hey,
23 next time you guys do the charter, maybe try this and
24 maybe try that. We've never done that. And I find that
25 intriguing.

1 So that said, if we move through this and take
2 this assignment as we discussed, I'm going to then ask
3 that we consider making recommendations -- not right
4 here now today -- but let's take what was given to us by
5 the public at heart and make some recommendations to our
6 next charter.

7 All right. Any objections? The question has
8 been called on our assignment for the Executive Orders
9 and such. Any objections to how we decided that? Good.

10 And then lastly any objections to my working
11 with you all to garner comments and ideas and
12 suggestions for a possible letter from us about things
13 that we would like to see in the next charter? Any
14 objections to that? That's something I would be happy
15 to help with, then. Any last comments? Well, the
16 motion is done. No objections.

17 MEMBER BURKE: Do we vote?

18 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: You wanted to vote or no
19 objections?

20 MEMBER MUTH: Vote.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I understand that. It's up
22 to you if you want to take a vote. I usually call for
23 objections. If there's no objection, I don't take a
24 vote. Still I'll take a vote. Those in favor. Please
25 raise their hand. And those opposed. We do have an

1 objection.

2 (Vote was taken.)

3 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We do have an objection.
4 He didn't say that. We have an objection, but motion
5 passes, and we have our marching order on these items.
6 Or we have our decision on how we will respond to the
7 request of the secretary.

8 Next item on the agenda -- it's in here.
9 There's more pages on our desk than we usually have
10 today, folks. This is a great topic, the West Mojave
11 Route Network Project. We have an overview presentation
12 from BLM today; right?

13 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Yes.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Is it that?

15 MS. SYMONS: Just a status update, Randy.

16 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Do we have a PowerPoint
17 too?

18 MS. SYMONS: Yes.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Do you need a moment to get
20 it going, or can you stall, Katrina, while he sets it
21 up?

22 MS. SYMONS: The West Mojave Network Project,
23 as you all know, is on four field offices but primarily
24 located on Barstow and Ridgecrest Field Offices. So the
25 Ridgecrest manager and myself are colleagues. As

1 typical, whenever we talk about the West Mojave, we kind
2 of do the dance between the two of us. So if I don't
3 have an immediate response to you, Carl is going to jump
4 in there. Or if I miss something in there, Carl is
5 going to jump in there. Or if you have questions, you
6 can direct all your questions to Carl; okay?

7 All right. So since it's been a while, we know
8 that the DAC has a high interest in the West Mojave,
9 hence the reason for giving you a status update, since
10 you haven't met for awhile.

11 Thank you very much, Steve, for the clicker.

12 (A PowerPoint presentation titled "West Mojave Route
13 Network Project Land Use Plan Amendment and Supplemental
14 Environmental Impact Statement" was presented by
15 Katrina Symons.)

16 MS. SYMONS: Carl, do you have anything to add?
17 Did I miss anything?

18 MR. SYMONS: No.

19 MS. SYMONS: It's open to you. What questions
20 do you have of me?

21 MR. LIEBSCHER: Good job, Katrina.

22 MS. SYMONS: Remember, direct your comments to
23 Carl.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: All right. Pretty good.
25 Hey, DAC members, questions? Any thoughts?

1 Michelle, knock it out.

2 MEMBER LONG: Yeah. I think this is
3 fascinating that you guys are implementing 3355. I
4 think this is a good exercise to see how that's going to
5 roll out, because I've been very curious to see who's
6 going to be the first to try to get that down to 300
7 pages. And I think you have made a valiant effort with
8 that, it sounds like.

9 I did have a question, though. As far as the
10 appendix, is there a page limit for what we can include
11 in the appendices for that sort of document?

12 MS. SYMONS: So not at this time. But it's
13 going to be interesting that, as we are producing
14 documents, how the appendices are being viewed, because
15 we don't -- I mean, we're being very strategic in not
16 utilizing the appendices to dump information to just to
17 avoid pages in the document.

18 The whole idea behind the Secretarial Order is
19 making documents easier for the public to review. And
20 so we tried very hard in our appendices as well to
21 reduce the page length in there only down to the minimal
22 necessary to support the decision that we had before us.

23 MEMBER LONG: Makes sense.

24 And then I had a quick question about your
25 Programmatic Agreement for the Section 106. I saw that

1 you had identified -- I don't know what the number
2 was -- a-hundred-and-something resources in 2017 and
3 then you said you evaluated those in 2018. When you
4 guys do your evaluations, do you evaluate just the
5 resources where there could be a potential impact in
6 2018, or did you evaluate all 100-plus resources?

7 MS. SYMONS: So the eligibility determinations
8 that are made -- so we did have -- in the 114 newly
9 recorded sites we did eligibility determinations on
10 that. That's eligibility for the National Register, and
11 then that report is then forwarded, number one, to the
12 consulting parties for review per the Programmatic
13 Agreement. And once we get those comments back, it is
14 then forwarded on to the State Historic Preservation
15 Office, and then it's ultimately with them to decide
16 whether or not they agree with BLM's determinations.

17 MEMBER LONG: Okay. Thank you.

18 MS. SYMONS: Okay.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Comments? Other questions?
20 One might think I would have many, but given we've been
21 blessed in the Ridgecrest area to have monthly
22 Roundtable meetings and monthly Friends of Jawbone
23 meetings, and so we receive these updates regularly, and
24 I also receive the invitations to participate in the
25 conference calls for the consulting, and so we've done

1 that as much as we can. But if there are others, don't
2 wait for me. Any other comments or questions?

3 Therefore let's move right into public comment,
4 then. Do you have any more you want to close with
5 before I go to public comment?

6 MS. SYMONS: Yes. So just to tell you the
7 heavy lift that the bureau has taken on, when we
8 committed to do the five-percent survey of the area in
9 order to develop a predictive model, the result in how
10 we had managed to get that done is to the tune -- it's
11 cost taxpayers, all of you, about a million dollars;
12 okay? And that includes the crew necessary to get that
13 last one percent done for this fiscal year.

14 So think about it. Only five percent of the
15 planning area, and our planning area for what would
16 actually be designated for routes is 2.35 million acres,
17 2.35 million acres. We're only doing five percent of
18 the survey, and it's about a million dollars; okay?

19 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Okay. Hey, Ron, you
20 filling out a card? Okay. I'm going to close the cards
21 for this comment session. With Ron's card, that's ten
22 cards. That's 30 minutes, and that will take us to
23 lunch, which will put us back on schedule.

24 So first up is going to be John Stewart,
25 followed by Linda Castro, followed by Ruth Hidalgo.

1 MR. STEWART: John Stewart, California
2 Four-Wheel Drive Association.

3 Thank you for the update, Katrina. Is there a
4 copy of that presentation that can be provided?

5 MS. SYMONS: Absolutely.

6 MR. STEWART: Okay, because I would like a copy
7 of that presentation, please. Thank you.

8 I appreciate the work that has been put into
9 this, and I know it's been a long process, three-plus
10 years since the last formal meeting and release of a
11 plan to get to this place. I noted that you did take
12 seriously the connectivity issues across land
13 jurisdictions. Thank you. I appreciate that. That's a
14 very important comment point of mine.

15 I have one other concern, is that you are now
16 balancing for consistency against the DRECP of which
17 there is not a final DRECP released yet that would amend
18 the Land Use Plan Amendment. So that's going to be a
19 future point of concern and maybe potential point of
20 conflict in the future.

21 But it's hard to make a determination now
22 because we are still working somewhat in a vacuum
23 without adequate information as to what is -- or how the
24 DRECP will impact the Land Use Plan Amendment for the
25 Desert District and within that what kind of changes

1 would be applied within the WEMO Travel Management Plan
2 that the public is not privy to at this time.

3 So this is a concern that I hope is not a real
4 bad concern, but it's something that I will be looking
5 at specifically when the DRECP is released. Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Go ahead.

7 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Just to provide a
8 clarification, I know with all these different processes
9 sometimes it's hard to navigate exactly what's
10 happening. So when the Record of Decision for the DRECP
11 was approved in September of 2016, it did amend our
12 plan, the CDCA. So right now that amended plan is our
13 plan, and so there was a Notice of Intent that was
14 published to consider if changes needed to be made to
15 the CDCA or basically the things that were considered as
16 part of the DRECP Amendment.

17 But we haven't determined a path for yet on
18 what those changes will be or could be. And until that
19 process would be completed, we're still operating under
20 the CDCA Plan as amended by DRECP. Oh, I used up all
21 your time. Sorry.

22 MR. STEWART: I understand that. But that new
23 release and working in a vacuum without knowing what
24 that is, that is my concern with how any impact or
25 changes there could impact this WEMO. Thank you.

1 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Yep, yeah, and we're
2 definitely tracking. I know Carl and Katrina are kind
3 of tracking that as well. So it's definitely something
4 that we're watching.

5 MR. STEWART: Thank you.

6 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Yep.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you. Linda, followed
8 by Ruth and Sam Merk.

9 MS. CASTRO: Linda Castro, California
10 Wilderness Coalition.

11 A couple of questions. First of all you
12 mentioned the court deadlines. I guess I wanted
13 clarification if you currently foresee meeting those
14 court deadlines. Then the other question I have is,
15 does BLM still plan to keep the overlap of Mojave Trails
16 and WEMO? The monument proclamation was specific. It
17 provided that the monument management plan would be done
18 within three years and part of that planning process
19 would involve a Travel Management Plan that would be
20 specific for the monument. And obviously the reason for
21 this is so that you wouldn't have resource conflicts
22 with monument objects and the routes for the roads that
23 were within the monument.

24 And obviously the problem with the overlap with
25 the monument and WEMO is that the proclamation also

1 specifically says that only existing roads would be
2 allowed in the monument. But the draft supplemental EIS
3 did designate more new routes in the monument. So I
4 know that was kind of long. But, anyway, two general
5 questions there.

6 MS. SYMONS: Okay. So the answer to the first
7 question is, do we anticipate meeting the court
8 deadlines? The answer is, absolutely. We're taking
9 that extremely serious, so in relationship to the
10 Mojave Trails National Monument as stated in the draft
11 supplemental, one of the ways to specifically be able to
12 cover that little sliver of the Mojave Trails that falls
13 within the West Mojave Planning Area is, we had proposed
14 to make it its own subregion to be embedded within its
15 own Travel Management Area so that we would be able to
16 specifically address any routes and its impacts on the
17 values for which the monument was designated.

18 The intent is because we are not -- since we
19 are still underneath the purview of the U.S. District
20 Court, BLM did not feel that it had the ability to pull
21 that sliver of the monument outside that planning area,
22 and so we've kept it in as it was stated there in the
23 draft, Linda.

24 The other thing to consider is what's being
25 proposed for the Land Use Plan Amendment is to do a

1 change to the existing California Desert Conservation
2 Area plan language that basically said that, you know --
3 or the expectation was route designation was a Land Use
4 Plan Amendment. What's being proposed now is the
5 recognition of bringing this forward to today's standard
6 for the Bureau of Land Management, and route designation
7 is considered an implementation-level decision, not
8 requiring a Plan Amendment.

9 So when we fast forward to October, issuing a
10 Record of Decision on a designated route system, letting
11 it go through its administrative review process of a
12 30-day appeal period, that, if there are some additional
13 concerns expressed by the public, if there is a special
14 route that maybe we missed that the public
15 overwhelmingly wants to add to our system, or on the
16 opposite, if there is a route that we designated that
17 the public overwhelmingly says they want closed, we have
18 the ability at that time to go site specific, do the
19 appropriate localized environmental document, and issue
20 a decision. And it can be as simple as a decision on
21 one route or multiple routes within an area; right? So
22 one subregion or within a particular Travel Management
23 Area.

24 It provides a lot more flexibility at the local
25 level to be working directly with citizens that are

1 impacted in that area or those citizens that utilize
2 that area to enter into some very site-specific
3 decisions. Okay?

4 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Does the language change
5 that allowed for WEMO route designation to become
6 implementation-level decision? That's WEMO only.
7 That's not northern and eastern, western and eastern and
8 so forth; right? Or will it carry over to the other --

9 MS. SYMONS: No. It's for the West Mojave
10 Planning Area.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: So the other areas still
12 have to go through the Desert Plan to do route
13 designation theoretically? Yeah. We don't want to go
14 there.

15 MS. SYMONS: Yeah. So Linda, specifically --
16 so whenever, you know, so after October after we issued
17 that Record of Decision that, whenever the Mojave Trails
18 National Monument management planning process takes a
19 liftoff, we have the ability to relook at that subregion
20 that's within the WEMO planning area and take another
21 look at it. It's open. I mean, there is nothing final;
22 okay?

23 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you.

24 Ruth, Sam, followed by Ed Waldheim.

25 MS. HIDALGO: Thank you. First of all I want

1 to thank the individual DAC members that have answered
2 my trivial questions over the time that I have come to
3 know WEMO. I know a lot of people have been working
4 hard on it for a long time. I want to thank Katrina and
5 Carl for also being available to answer questions as I
6 try to figure it out.

7 That being said, can you please tell me what a
8 class is, what that means.

9 MS. SYMONS: So it has to do with the level of
10 cultural resource inventory that's conducted. So
11 actually we have a crew on whatever randomly selected
12 routes that we've got two to four individuals out there
13 on the ground doing -- utilizing cultural resource
14 protocol on their inventory and walking within five to
15 ten meters of each other surveying for cultural
16 resources and at the time that they wind up finding a
17 cultural resource, and if it turns out to be a site,
18 they will record that entire site even if it goes
19 outside the area that's being surveyed.

20 MS. HIDALGO: And that's how it gets to be a
21 class?

22 MS. SYMONS: Like, Class 1 is just a search of
23 existing records. A Class 3 is boots on the ground.

24 MS. HIDALGO: Okay. It's how you do it. I got
25 it. Thank you. And then the other question is, is this

1 it? I mean, because it's already been litigated. Once
2 this comes out, is that going to be done, or is that a
3 joke?

4 MS. SYMONS: So as with any decision that's
5 made, it is open to the administrative reprocess as well
6 as litigation.

7 MS. HIDALGO: Again? It can be litigated
8 again?

9 MS. SYMONS: Absolutely. And we have to take
10 this back to the Court. The Court is requiring us to
11 bring that decision back to them.

12 MS. HIDALGO: Even if the Court OK's this, it
13 could still be sued upon again?

14 MR. SYMONS: Yeah. Anything is a possibility.

15 MS. HIDALGO: I guess we got a long haul ahead
16 of us.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thanks, Ruth. Those are
18 good questions.

19 Sam, followed by Ed and Gerry Hillier.

20 MS. MERK: Sam Merk.

21 I would like to compliment Katrina and Carl for
22 doing an outstanding job. I would also like to
23 compliment the DAC members in how much they have done
24 and how much they have participated in the planning
25 process.

1 I do have great concerns about going forward
2 with WEMO without getting the final decision in regards
3 to the DRECP because it's going to do some impacting.
4 And I also have some concerns in regards to doing one
5 thing with WEMO and not doing the same thing with NEMO
6 and NECO in the road decisions. You know, the
7 California Desert was put together as one unit, and if
8 we're going to make a rule for one, I have concerns.
9 I'm not a lawyer, but I do have concerns in regards to
10 that. Thank you.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Sam.

12 Ed, followed by Gerry and Jora Fogg.

13 MR. WALDHEIM: Ed Waldheim, Friends of Jawbone.

14 When the California Desert Conservation Plan
15 started out at the Roundtable, I mentioned -- I told to
16 Gerry -- I said, "We have been doing this since '78,
17 '80, '83, going over the same routes."

18 MR. HILLIER: Actually going back to the ICNP
19 in 1972.

20 MR. WALDHEIM: 1972, reviewing the same land,
21 same routes, and so here we are now. I'm excited about
22 trying to decide, okay, where am I going to put the
23 signs on the ground? How is it going to change our
24 implementation, what we have already -- because we've
25 got thousands and thousands of signs out there that keep

1 the people on the trail. We've got CTUC maps and travel
2 maps that will have to be rechecked.

3 But now the thing about a protest coming on, we
4 could essentially not be able to do any implementation
5 until protests are finished.

6 MS. SYMONS: So the protests will occur after
7 the publication of the final. We can't issue a Record
8 of Decision on a Land Use Plan Amendment until the
9 protests are done. But what I'm thinking you meant is
10 the appeal. So in October of 2019 for the route
11 designation, that decision can be appealed. So it's
12 going through that appeal process.

13 MR. WALDHEIM: So we can't do anything on the
14 ground until that appeal is over?

15 MS. SYMONS: If we brought an appeal, it
16 depends on the scope of the appeal.

17 MR. WALDHEIM: Well, okay. To be continued.

18 I want to personally thank Carl and Katrina,
19 Craig Beck, who was an integral part of this program
20 getting it going and thousands and thousands of hours
21 that all their staff has put into this. It's been
22 incredible. I want to thank all the users who have met
23 on the meeting, off the meeting, route by route by
24 route, all the input we've put into that. It is
25 incredible, the participation that we've had to come to

1 this point that we are today. So it's a credit kudo to
2 everybody getting involved.

3 And thanks to these people and the staff of the
4 BLM Barstow and Ridgecrest office. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you.

6 Gerry, followed by Jora, followed by
7 Lisbet Thoresen.

8 MR. HILLIER: I didn't realize I had a card in
9 there waiting to comment there.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Surprise.

11 MR. HILLIER: I'm essentially going to pass
12 except for that -- this has been a complex issue that
13 has gone on and on and on, and we've been through
14 existing routes, designated routes and gotten into
15 details. And staff has done it, and then they've redone
16 it, and then they have redone it. And then they have
17 gone over.

18 And as pointed out on the field trip yesterday,
19 the transfer of private lands and the fencing of
20 mitigation lands has added complexities to it that
21 nobody ever dreamed of. And, my God, is it over? Is it
22 going to be over?

23 The one thing that I think we all need -- this
24 is going to have to go to the court, and the judge is
25 going to look at it with the plaintiffs in the lawsuit.

1 Are the plaintiffs going to get another bite of the
2 apple to protest if they don't get through the court
3 muster? And is this process -- and I don't know if this
4 is a rhetorical question. Don't even try to answer it.
5 What's going to happen if the plaintiffs decide to
6 protest and start over again? Thank you very much.

7 I'm going to have to leave you this afternoon,
8 but carry on.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you for coming,
10 Gerry. Thank you.

11 Jora, you're up next, followed by Lisbet,
12 followed by Barbara.

13 MS. FOGG: Hi. Jora Fogg, Friends of the Inyo.
14 I wanted to ask a couple of questions.

15 Consultants' meetings, are those open to the
16 public? And who are the parties?

17 MS. SYMONS: I can get you the whole list. We
18 have over 20 consulting party members, and I can get you
19 that list.

20 MS. FOGG: Thank you so much. And I'd also
21 love a copy of the presentation. I took a couple of
22 photos. It would be easier if I had a copy.

23 And then I was curious. I know a lot of groups
24 had route-specific comments, including our comments on
25 how in response to comments you're addressing the

1 route-specific, like that seems like a lot of work. So
2 thank you so much for doing that. But yeah, I'm super
3 curious how that process works.

4 MR. SYMONS: We took all the comments, and
5 literally we sat down with a map going through subregion
6 by subregion. And we bring up the comments because
7 sometimes there was one comment, sometimes there was
8 four or five comments on any one particular route. And
9 we went down, and we said what we did, looked at the
10 alternatives and everything that followed about the
11 route then made a decision then documented what the
12 decision was, why, and then whether or not it was in
13 response or not in response to public comment.

14 The only difficult part was when somebody said,
15 "I want it open," and, "I want it closed." Well, were
16 we responsive to public comment? Yes? No?

17 MS. FOGG: That was going to my next question,
18 is, there must be some conflicts in those comments, and
19 so --

20 MR. SYMONS: That's what we looked at, and
21 things like was it access to private property would be
22 coming into account, you know, what resources? Were
23 there cultural areas, or was it part of connectivity?
24 There was a lot of different things that went into it.
25 When we looked into public comment, we took all those

1 things in, including the criteria to make the final
2 decision, especially where we had conflicting public
3 comments as to what to do with the route.

4 MS. FOGG: Great. We're down -- it's about
5 15,000 routes, you said?

6 MS. SYMONS: Yeah, 15,235 miles.

7 MS. FOGG: Okay. Great.

8 MS. SYMONS: Give or take.

9 MS. FOGG: Thank you so much for that mapping
10 work, and I really look forward to reviewing that. And
11 I for one hope that we can move through with
12 implementation on this.

13 And I would say I'm probably not going to be
14 popular in saying this, but it's about the signage, and
15 it's also about the signage on the routes that are on
16 the ground but have not been legal and for whatever
17 reason we don't need those closure signs. So part of
18 implementation is closure as well again probably -- not
19 probably, but we're looking forward to the
20 implementation phase of this.

21 And then with regards to the cultural sites,
22 super impressive work. 114 new sites is incredible,
23 five percent. And I think \$1 million is actually not a
24 lot to spend on being able to document irreplaceable
25 cultural sites in the desert.

1 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Jora.

2 Lisbet, you're up next, followed by Barbara and
3 Ron Chile.

4 MS. THORESEN: Hi. Lisbet Thoresen, San Diego
5 Mineral and Gem.

6 First I want to say thank you for a fabulous
7 presentation. You do the best presentations, Katrina.
8 And thank you, Carl. Thank you for the meetings we had
9 where you answered a lot of questions. As we all
10 remember, there was a lot of confusion among a lot of
11 the rockhound community about how to respond, how to
12 give comments, how to actually comment on especially the
13 digital maps.

14 So with respect to that confusion, which still
15 lingers for us -- and we'd like some resolution, and I
16 expect that will be forthcoming. But maybe you could
17 give a little bit of a preview.

18 Oh, I must give thanks also on the WEMO on the
19 routes for rockhounds. First and foremost, Randy Banis,
20 you've been here forever, and you've supported us and
21 our community, and we can't thank you enough. It's just
22 thousands and thousands of hours, and I think we're ever
23 indebted to you.

24 Someone who's not here but had a big role also,
25 and that was the former DAC member Kim Campbell-Erb, who

1 spent hundreds, thousands of hours and time and money
2 and galvanized resources and people to go out and take
3 readings. Ruth Hidalgo, you know, who's just been here
4 forever, and doing all the hard legwork in order to make
5 sure that these routes get into the maps.

6 So now with my questions I have. You said that
7 you looked down to the one-to-500 scale level and you
8 found all kinds of interesting features or a lack of
9 features you expected to be there, the translinear
10 disturbances, for example, a route that was continuous
11 and suddenly broke and became a translinear disturbance;
12 for example, the Baxter Wash, part of the route through
13 there, and the Cady Mountains, which is now within the
14 Mojave Trails national footprint.

15 My first question is, how did you resolve that,
16 because, if those were retained as translinear
17 disturbances, effectively the route became an impassable
18 place.

19 My second question goes to your duplicate
20 routes which were in the digital maps. And in those
21 cases there was a concern from some rockhounds that, if
22 you clicked on a duplicate segment, what happened when
23 you consolidated the duplicates? Would you
24 inadvertently throw out a comment if a comment -- or
25 clicked on the wrong segment, or were you careful to

1 consolidate the comments so none of the comments would
2 be lost, intended as they were to be with the same route
3 segment? Thank you. Sorry.

4 MS. SYMONS: No, no, no. So that's good.

5 So as we stated in the public meetings that, if
6 we did find duplicates, because we had the data bases in
7 place, we would be able to associate the comment with
8 that, which is absolutely true. We were able to do
9 that. It took a little bit of extra legwork because we
10 were having to go back to two different sources or
11 sometimes three different sources. But we were able to
12 take that comment and put it to a piece on the ground.
13 And I say this with a caveat, because we also noted that
14 there were some typos from comments that got sent in
15 that.

16 The WEMO IDs, you know, if one had a 355 and
17 then the comment went on to talk about a specific place;
18 right? And we went back to that place, and it wasn't a
19 355. It turned out to be, like, a 535. So there was
20 some transposing.

21 MS. THORESEN: Number dyslexia?

22 MS. SYMONS: I can talk. We got Carrie back
23 there. Hey, Carrie. She was on the team that also
24 helped to go comment by comment and finding things like
25 the little transposition of numbers, and ultimately the

1 team dove in. They dug hard. They spent the time, and
2 when items were found that the commenter had transposed,
3 we didn't just kick that out. We came in, and we put
4 notes in there that said, "Hey, we believe this was an
5 error and is intended to be this number, and here's our
6 response to that comment." Okay?

7 MS. THORESEN: Thank you.

8 MS. SYMONS: Okay. And as far as if we had in
9 our route that was open on two ends and in the middle
10 was a translinear disturbance, the intent was for that
11 route to be open and that was the proposal to move
12 forward in a particular alternative, we connected them
13 because it was just an error. Anyone working in GIS
14 knows that errors like that can happen.

15 MS. THORESEN: And that's two further
16 thank-yous. Rob Waywood, who had a lot to do with
17 inputting rockhounding sites into the WEMO database, and
18 Peg Margosian, who just does a heroic work, unsung
19 heroine.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Lisbet.

21 Barbara, then -- then lunch.

22 MS. BANE: Barbara Bane, Desert Survivors.

23 I worked on these giant management plans, and I
24 know what a chore that is. My hats to you folks at BLM
25 for tackling this. I would have waked up and cried

1 every morning. Good job.

2 So I heard some guests in the audience when we
3 mentioned the \$1 million number for this modeling. Let
4 me say that what this kind of modeling does -- this is
5 state of the art. This brings cultural resources into
6 the 21st century. We're using it in mining, geology, in
7 hydrology, in natural resources. And I commend the BLM
8 for moving forward to use this.

9 I might also add at China Lake the Navy is
10 doing this at China Lake for considerably less acreage,
11 1.1 million acres. Their modeling is estimated to cost
12 ultimately about \$3 million, so you're doing a pretty
13 good job if you're coming in with one million.

14 And I have one question, and that's who's doing
15 the modeling? Is this inhouse, or are you having a
16 contractor doing it?

17 MS. SYMONS: It's inhouse, and it's being done
18 inhouse, but it is also undergoing review by the
19 consulting parties that we have as well as peer review.
20 Okay?

21 MS. BANE: Can we expect some qualifications on
22 this?

23 MS. SYMONS: I anticipate it.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Good. Thank you, Barbara.
25 Ron, you don't mind waiting until after lunch,

1 do you? I'm just kidding. Everybody, I introduce
2 Ron Schiller, former member of the Desert Advisory
3 Council, predecessor of mine.

4 Welcome to the mic, Ron.

5 MR. SCHILLER: How are you doing, Steve? I
6 thought you retired.

7 Well, I wish I had a dollar for every time I
8 spoke about WEMO. You know, WEMO started in the early
9 '90s with Alden Sievers, and I bet hardly anybody in
10 this room remembers Alden Sievers.

11 UNIDENTIFIED SPEAKER: Oh, I do.

12 MR. SCHILLER: He was the Barstow Field Office
13 manager in the early '90s. But what really bothers me
14 is that the way things have evolved from this and
15 promises made and not kept. There was a subgroup meeting
16 held in the Ridgecrest Field Office about setting up
17 routes for this West Mojave Plan. The public got wind
18 of it and showed up at the Ridgecrest Field Office in
19 the middle of the week in the middle of the day, filled
20 up the whole Ridgecrest Field Office and the parking
21 lot, well over 150 people.

22 Bill Hague decided that we better have a
23 Ridgecrest meeting. We had a meeting at the
24 Kerr McGee Center. We filled it over 300 people,
25 standing room only, including Ridgecrest City Council

1 members and Kern County representatives, including
2 John McQuiston, who was the Kern County supervisor for
3 the area.

4 Long story short, is as a result of that
5 Bill Hague made a commitment to the local community to
6 honor the requirement to involve local government in the
7 planning process. And if you are familiar with the
8 Record of Decision -- I can't remember what year that
9 was signed, but that Record of Decision currently states
10 that there would be a CAPA, which is the Collaborative
11 Access Planning Area, which involves the El Pasos and
12 the Ridgecrest area, which would be a collaborative
13 planning effort including representation by the City of
14 Ridgecrest and Kern County and local stakeholders within
15 three years.

16 What year was that Record of Decision?

17 MR. SYMONS: 2006.

18 MR. SCHILLER: 2006. 2006 is more than three
19 years ago, and nothing has ever happened. That
20 commitment was made, and it was accepted in good faith,
21 and I expect it to be honored. So what's happened?
22 Nothing. You know, we're losing opportunities.

23 I'm also the vice president of the local gem
24 and mineral society, and we're losing collecting
25 opportunities over and over and over. If you're

1 familiar with the so-called Cuddeback withdrawal, it's
2 not only the Cuddeback withdrawal. They kind of snuck
3 in the Christmas Canyon area, which is a limited-use
4 area and an ACEC.

5 That had a commercial travertine quarry in it
6 that was a big opportunity for the local gem and mineral
7 clubs, where we go out and get big pieces of travertine.
8 We make bookends and so on and so forth out of it.
9 We're losing that. The area adjacent to that we lost
10 access to because it wasn't really a closed area, but
11 the OHV commission decided that the motorcyclists were
12 violating an area and making a mess, so they closed that
13 with a big fence and locked us out of another area where
14 we had gem and mineral collecting. So we're losing more
15 and more and more recreational opportunities.

16 Another area is in the El Paso Mountains.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: One minute.

18 MR. SCHILLER: We have an area at
19 Sheep Springs. All of a sudden the BLM puts up closed
20 signs all over it. I go to the BLM and say, "Why did
21 you close this off?"

22 "Oh, it's part of WEMO, and that's private
23 property."

24 So I go look, and I said, "Yeah, it's not BLM
25 there." I start checking. It's in a state section. So

1 why should the BLM consider that as private property
2 when it's a state section? Why can't I -- shouldn't I
3 be able to access that area? I think that's very wrong.
4 That shouldn't be called private property and excluding
5 me from gem and mineral collecting there.

6 So the point is, I've lived here since 1957. I
7 came here when I was six. I've seen all of these
8 exclusions more and more and more. I was raised here
9 accessing public property with my grandparents. And I
10 can't access most of that with my grandchildren.

11 Unfortunately the last round of these WEMO
12 meetings I couldn't attend because I was undergoing
13 medical treatment, so I missed all of those and couldn't
14 attend. However I just want to say that I'm just tired
15 of all of these exclusions, and I don't think what's
16 going on here is right. That's enough. Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: You bet, Ron. Questions?
18 Comments? Thank you, Ron.

19 We did it. Time for another break. We'll
20 break for lunch for a period of one hour. I'll be back
21 here banging the gavel at 1:35. And enjoy your lunch.
22 Thank you, everybody.

23 (Lunch recess was taken.)

24 (Member Francis was absent for the remainder of the
25 meeting.)

1 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Okay. Thank you,
2 everybody, for coming back. And I call the meeting to
3 order at 1:41 p.m.

4 Before we carry on with the agenda, if there's
5 no objections, Billy would like to say something,
6 please.

7 Go ahead, Billy. Give you the floor.

8 MEMBER MITCHELL: At lunch I was approached by
9 the people of Ridgecrest. Someone asked me to mention,
10 you know, Marie and if there's any way possible that in
11 the meetings in the future in Ridgecrest that they could
12 be in honor of her. And also if the board approves and
13 the BLM doesn't mind, on donations, if they could have a
14 plaque maybe, a tree or whatever the people decide, if
15 we could work on that before our next meeting or in the
16 meantime.

17 I just thought I'd put it by the board here.
18 She's been here since the '80s, because I worked with
19 her back then. So if the board is okay. And, Beth, I
20 don't know if you guys can do that at the BLM, but I
21 think it would be more than appropriate to have a tree
22 and a small plaque.

23 MRS. MITCHELL: In fact somebody could maybe
24 donate a tree. You guys got the manure we saw
25 yesterday. Then we thought somebody could get a plaque

1 just with her name. They did it for a librarian in
2 Lucerne Valley. She was a librarian in Barstow. She
3 got killed on the highway. So they planted a tree at
4 the library. So I don't know if it would be at
5 Ridgecrest, maybe where the burros are, or main office,
6 just somewhere, small, something for Marie.

7 MEMBER MITCHELL: Whatever you think you could
8 do.

9 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Okay. I'll talk to
10 Carl and Katrina about that, and it seems like something
11 that we could probably find a way to accommodate. But
12 I'll have to talk about Carl and Katrina since it's
13 their offices. I don't know. Is Carl still here?

14 Carl, do you have anything you want to say
15 about that?

16 MR. SYMONS: We'll have to discuss where it
17 goes. The only issue is probably not the office. The
18 office is leased, and it's an older building, so that's
19 something we probably wouldn't do there. But something
20 we can look at is, we also have another plaque up at the
21 wild horse and burro facility for a person that passed
22 away. So there might be a possibility of doing that.

23 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: If there's no objection,
24 perhaps Billy and I can work off-line with the rest of
25 the DAC members and coordinate a program for us. If

1 perhaps Carl can work with his associates and see if
2 there's a way for that, and we'll find a juncture for
3 that. I'd be happy to work with you and get through to
4 all our members and find a way to do that.

5 MEMBER MITCHELL: I think we can use Sam as a
6 contact here in Ridgecrest, if she doesn't mind.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Mark, did you have a
8 comment?

9 MR. ALGAZY: I was just going to say the DAC is
10 an old and an austere enough organization that it maybe
11 is time for a hall of fame and that Marie is
12 well-deserving of being in the freshman class of that
13 hall of fame, and it would be a plaque in the district
14 office.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: And when I give it up, it
16 will be a hall of shame.

17 MEMBER MITCHELL: I'll be next to you. I don't
18 know where Sam went, but if that's what the people of
19 Ridgecrest would like to do, that's fine.

20 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: If it's a matter of
21 having a plaque on the wall, I'm sure we would be
22 honored to have one at the Desert District office. But
23 it was the tree thing that was a little different. I
24 wasn't sure if Carl was comfortable having a tree
25 planted.

1 MS. MERK: I think it's more appropriate for
2 the desert at the main office because of the fact she
3 fought so hard for the whole desert and not just for one
4 field office, but she loved it all.

5 MEMBER MITCHELL: Well, I guess according to
6 that we'll work together and try get something on
7 donations and put it in the main office for Sam and the
8 people of Ridgecrest.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Very good. And maybe
10 engage the Roundtable on this as well. Thank you. Very
11 well. Thank you, everybody.

12 MEMBER MITCHELL: Thank you for your time.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We do miss her very much.

14 We've had a great lunch, and now we're moving
15 on to a presentation that will be exciting, the Mining
16 Projects Overview Update. And who wants to make it
17 exciting?

18 Katrina, are you up or Carl?

19 MS. SYMONS: You get me first again.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: All right. You're on.
21 Thank you.

22 MS. SYMONS: You get to listen to my voice
23 again. We're here to talk about the OMYA direct sale.
24 It is here. On November 5th of '18 we issued a Draft
25 Land Use Plan Amendment and Environmental Assessment,

1 and it's currently open for a 60-day comment period. I
2 do want to orient you to the area that's the reason for
3 this first slide.

4 (A Powerpoint presentation titled "OMYA Direct Sale -
5 Draft Land Use Plan Amendment and Environmental
6 Assessment" was presented by Katrina Symons.)

7 MS. SYMONS: Are there any questions?

8 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Bob, go right ahead.

9 MEMBER ROBINSON: I've got a couple of
10 questions. Has anyone raised any concerns regarding the
11 wildlife area adjacent being impacted negatively by
12 additional projects in that area?

13 MS. SYMONS: The environmental document did not
14 identify a significant impact on wildlife.

15 MEMBER ROBINSON: And the other thing was, is
16 there going to be a sufficient bond, reclamation bond
17 for this to cover all the private property at the end of
18 this project so we won't end up with a situation where
19 the public happened to foot the bill, like at Kelly Mine
20 and Yellow Aster and Amerigo?

21 MS. SYMONS: So underneath the County of
22 San Bernardino County approved 2015 Amended Mining and
23 Reclamation Plan, the company has provided the
24 appropriate bonding for that action. In the case that
25 if -- you know, the proposal, the agency-preferred

1 alternative right now includes the sale of Public Lands
2 so that BLM would no longer have any tie to those lands,
3 so it would not include any liability on the
4 Federal Government. It would put all the liability on
5 the private company, and they would move forward with
6 the full implementation of that 2015 Amended Mining and
7 Reclamation Plan underneath all the bonding they have in
8 place with the county right now.

9 MEMBER ROBINSON: I guess my question was, when
10 the BLM doesn't even take that into account, then it
11 goes strictly on San Bernardino County?

12 MS. SYMONS: Yeah, because what's being
13 proposed would have that parcel of land no longer being
14 in federal ownership, so it would go back to the full
15 responsibility of the County of San Bernardino.

16 MEMBER ROBINSON: But like what happened down
17 here is, it would -- up even in even though it's private
18 property, at the Kelly Mine the Federal Government had
19 to step in because the Kelly Mine evidently doesn't
20 exist anymore, and the people operating it don't have
21 the capital or something, and it turned into basically a
22 Superfund site.

23 And I just wanted to make sure that these
24 projects -- that they're going to be making all the
25 money off of these projects, and they dissolve the LLC

1 or whatever they have, and there's nobody to go after,
2 and the bond is insufficient. Then it comes back on the
3 public to foot the bill again. It happens over and over
4 again.

5 MS. SYMONS: So, Carl, do you want to talk
6 about the Kelly Mine? Do you want to address that? So
7 is the Kelly Mine BLM, or is it private?

8 MR. SYMONS: BLM.

9 MEMBER ROBINSON: Oh, it is BLM?

10 MR. SYMONS: Yes.

11 MEMBER ROBINSON: Even if it was private and
12 the company that owned it or did own it didn't exist
13 anymore, it still would come back on the
14 Federal Government or Superfund site to reclaim it. And
15 they might take the property or whatever, but, you know,
16 at that point it is the property is not worth near as
17 much as it would cost to reclaim it.

18 MS. SYMONS: So you make a point on, at the end
19 of all of this, if BLM selects Alternative B, which is a
20 no-action alternative, and then BLM receives a plan of
21 operation to utilize the mill sites for the disposal of
22 the mining waste, then BLM would need to do the
23 additional environmental analysis.

24 And let's say that we approve the plan of
25 operation. Let's say that we do the appropriate

1 bonding, et cetera. It's not like that action is going
2 to get stopped, because underneath the 1872 Mining Law
3 that's a mill site.

4 MEMBER ROBINSON: I'm not talking about
5 stopping the action.

6 MS. SYMONS: Then it becomes the liability of
7 the Federal Government. So underneath Alternative B
8 potentially to utilize those mill sites for the mining
9 overburden waste disposal, then ultimately long-term
10 it's the Feds' responsibility.

11 MEMBER ROBINSON: It would be basically a
12 mining claim or a mill site like any other place like
13 Kelly Mine was or whatever?

14 MS. SYMONS: Correct. Underneath the preferred
15 alternative that liability gets placed upon OMYA as a
16 private company. BLM would no longer -- the
17 Federal Government, U.S. taxpayers would no longer be
18 liable for that waste material.

19 MEMBER ROBINSON: So BLM would transfer that
20 responsibility down to San Bernardino?

21 MS. SYMONS: It would go to the primary
22 company, who would have liability, and it would be
23 oversight by the County of San Bernardino per SMARA.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: You good? Come back at any
25 time.

1 I have Bob Burke, Billy and Al.

2 MEMBER MUTH: SMARA?

3 MEMBER BURKE: All I was going to say was I'm
4 very familiar with that mine. They actually work very
5 well with wildlife crews. They've got a couple of our
6 water sources there, and J and J Restoration is their
7 contracted company for reclamation. So they've got all
8 their ducks in a row, one of the few ones.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Billy?

10 MEMBER MITCHELL: Yeah. That's out of the
11 Round Mountain lease?

12 MS. SYMONS: Yes.

13 MEMBER MITCHELL: And that's not patented land,
14 then, that mill site?

15 MS. SYMONS: No. Right now it is BLM-managed
16 lands with the 14 mill sites overlapping.

17 MEMBER MITCHELL: It employs over 50 people?

18 MS. SYMONS: Right now OMYA employs over
19 50 individuals, yes, sir.

20 MEMBER MITCHELL: I'm pretty familiar with the
21 mine site. And without this obviously they're going to
22 have to shut down, I would assume.

23 MS. SYMONS: If this proposed lands deal does
24 not go through, OMYA is prepared to submit to BLM a plan
25 of operation for the utilization of those mill sites to

1 put their mining overburden waste on those.

2 MEMBER MITCHELL: And actually overburden
3 waste. It's just overburden waste?

4 MS. SYMONS: Yeah.

5 MEMBER MITCHELL: When you say waste, it sounds
6 like something contaminated, but it's not.

7 MS. SYMONS: No. Calcium carbonate.

8 MEMBER MITCHELL: It's just the land above the
9 ore, is what it is. All right. Thank you, Katrina.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Frazier. Oh, I'm sorry.
11 Al then Frazier. My mistake. I'm sorry.

12 Al, you were next.

13 MEMBER MUTH: Go ahead, Frazier.

14 MEMBER HANEY: Just a question, really. This
15 is all to solve a trespass issue originally with the
16 mine; is that right?

17 MS. SYMONS: Yeah. Back in 2005 it was a
18 trespass based upon the underlying plaster mining claim,
19 because plaster would not be utilized for mining
20 overburden.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Microphone, please.

22 MEMBER HANEY: Oh, yeah. Sorry. Just wasn't
23 on. On the 70 acres that you're considering selling
24 there are some creeks and other wetland resources. Have
25 those been catalogued?

1 MS. SYMONS: Yes, they are, and they're in
2 detail in the EIR and covered by the 2015 Amended Mining
3 and Reclamation Act, yes.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Al?

5 MEMBER MUTH: SMARA?

6 MS. SYMONS: Okay. I'll have to go to someone
7 else. I'm having a senior moment. It's an acronym.

8 MS. FOGG: State Mining and Reclamation Act.

9 MR. ZALE: Surface.

10 MS. FOGG: Surface Mining and Reclamation Act.

11 MS. SYMONS: Yep, that's good. Thank you,
12 help.

13 MEMBER KENNEY: I didn't hear what she said.

14 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Surface Mining and
15 Reclamation Act.

16 MEMBER MUTH: Then we're talking the sale of
17 70 acres. What is that going to cost? Is it under the
18 1872 Mining Act and pennies an acre or what?

19 MS. SYMONS: No, sir. The costs are being
20 borne by OMYA.

21 MEMBER MUTH: How much would that be?

22 MS. SYMONS: I have no idea because there would
23 be no movement to do the environmental site assessment
24 or the appraisal of that land until such time a decision
25 is rendered by the Bureau of Land Management, and so

1 without having that appraisal done, we don't know the
2 cost.

3 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Maybe I could add a
4 little something. Sales under 203 and 209 of FLPMA are
5 done at fair market value.

6 MEMBER MITCHELL: Yeah, fair market value.

7 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Determined by
8 appraisal.

9 MEMBER MUTH: Once you get the fair market
10 value in your hands, what happens to the money? Does it
11 go back to the --

12 MS. SYMONS: General treasury.

13 MEMBER MUTH: -- general treasury? It's a
14 black hole. In other words you have no idea where it
15 goes.

16 MEMBER MITCHELL: Can't put it 8100 money?

17 MS. SYMONS: Actually that would be a really
18 good idea.

19 MEMBER MITCHELL: Good job, Carl.

20 MEMBER MUTH: When you were talking about
21 impacts to wildlife, you heavily emphasized "substantial
22 impact."

23 MS. SYMONS: Significant.

24 MEMBER MUTH: Significant.

25 MS. SYMONS: Right, because of the fact that

1 this is being covered by an Environmental Assessment.
2 And if there were significant impacts, an environmental
3 assessment would not have been the appropriate
4 mechanism. It would have needed to be kicked back up to
5 environmental impact statement.

6 MEMBER MUTH: I presume by that there are no
7 threatened or endangered species in the way, nothing
8 that uniquely lives on that particular mineral deposit?

9 MS. SYMONS: From the flora and fauna -- so
10 there are carbonate endemic plant species, but they are
11 not impacted by this particular proposal. As far as,
12 you know, any other of the FR standpoint, no listed
13 species up there.

14 MEMBER ROBINSON: What about prehistoric
15 cultural resources?

16 MS. SYMONS: Cultural resource surveys were
17 conducted, and there are no sites that are impacted.

18 MEMBER MUTH: Any sort of mitigation for the
19 land removed from wildlife corridor?

20 MS. SYMONS: No.

21 MEMBER MUTH: So it would be 70 acres pulled
22 out with no replacement?

23 MS. SYMONS: Correct.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Just to repeat, not going
25 to affect the carbonate endemics?

1 MS. SYMONS: Affirmative.

2 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you. Very good. I
3 have no questions or comments of the DAC at this time.
4 I would be happy to move into public comment.

5 Is that okay, or do you have more things you
6 would like to share?

7 MS. SYMONS: No.

8 MEMBER BURKE: The Ridgecrest portion.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I'm sorry. Yeah, there's a
10 Ridgecrest part. So if you don't have questions now --

11 MR. SYMONS: I'll start this and try to keep us
12 on schedule for the kids with public comments. I'm
13 going to give a little bit of an overview of mining in
14 the Ridgecrest Field Office.

15 (A PowerPoint presentation titled "Ridgecrest Field
16 Office Mining" was presented by Carl Symons.)

17 MEMBER MITCHELL: Carl, with grazing there's
18 royalties the BLM receives off these mining claims?

19 MR. SYMONS: It depends on which it is. If
20 it's, like, for instance the locatables are not -- we do
21 not get a royalty. All they have to do is, they pay
22 their yearly fee for the mining claim, but on the
23 leases, yes, we do get royalties.

24 MEMBER MITCHELL: Okay.

25 MR. SYMONS: Or the sellables, like the clay,

1 if it's common clay, then they'll pay for that on a
2 volume basis, so it just depends on whether or not it's
3 locatable or not.

4 MEMBER MITCHELL: Okay. Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Frazier.

6 MEMBER HANEY: Yeah. A couple of questions and
7 a request too.

8 A few years back, when renewable energy started
9 to be a big deal in the California Desert, there were so
10 many projects across the desert that BLM at the district
11 level made a list of everything that was in process that
12 was, you know, either permitted or pending, and it made
13 it really easy for the general public and organizations
14 to keep up with what was happening.

15 I wonder if the same is possible with mining
16 projects, whether it was per field office or across the
17 district so that, as you describe these projects, the
18 general public would have an easy place to go to see
19 what is active in BLM's processing mine claims, claims
20 of operation.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Your mic.

22 MEMBER HANEY: Oh, do I have to repeat all
23 that?

24 MEMBER BURKE: Verbatim.

25 MEMBER HANEY: So can we make a list of active

1 mining claims that BLM is in process on across the
2 desert?

3 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Yes.

4 MR. SYMONS: Just so that I can help understand
5 your question, are you referring to active mining,
6 because, as I said, all 5700 of those are, for lack of a
7 better term, active. I mean, they can go out there. Or
8 are you talking about ones where we're processing a
9 notice or plan of operation or something like that?

10 MEMBER HANEY: The latter. And I know how to
11 use the LR2000, you know, to see what are in different
12 areas. But these ones that are active, Perdito and
13 Keystone and the other ones that you've described
14 desert-wide to have a list that was easier to navigate
15 than the LR2000. Is that something that BLM could put
16 together and help people access information on easier?

17 MR. SYMONS: Certainly possible. I mean, Beth,
18 that would be -- I don't want to commit the other field
19 managers and get myself in trouble.

20 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: So at what points
21 would we be disseminating such a list? It seems like a
22 good idea. I guess I would be a little concerned about
23 being able to maintain it so you have accurate,
24 up-to-date information. Or are you thinking that's
25 something you'd like as part of the DAC meeting or -- I

1 mean --

2 MEMBER HANEY: The way I thought of it before
3 the meeting was in the same way that BLM at the district
4 level maintained and still maintains a list of active
5 renewable energy applications that are in process that
6 was posted on the BLM website and searchable online that
7 anybody could find.

8 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: We can certainly look
9 at that and figure out how we would be able to do
10 something like that. We could have some conversations
11 about that.

12 MEMBER HANEY: I know it's a lot of
13 information, but that's the point, is that it's a lot of
14 information, so it's hard for people to really get their
15 hands around everything that's coming and going on plan
16 of operations that are being processed. So that's one
17 point.

18 Point two is that what I see consistently in
19 these projects are a couple of themes that emerge. One
20 is environmentally concerns about water, groundwater and
21 the supply of water for mining operation. Keystone is
22 an example. The Keystone operation is considering using
23 Sourdough Springs for mining operations, and
24 Sourdough Springs, the flow rate there is not well
25 established. And the range of water use for the project

1 could consume the entire discharge from the spring.

2 You know, coming at it environmentally, I think
3 we would like to see an alternative that calls for
4 delivery only and leaves Sourdough Spring alone. Or I
5 think the EA was approved in 1988, and so it's -- how
6 many? -- 20 years old now, and it's an amendment to that
7 1988 EA; is that right?

8 MR. SYMONS: It's not an amendment to the EA.
9 It's an amendment to plan of operation.

10 MEMBER HANEY: But from 1988?

11 MR. SYMONS: Yes, I think that was last. And
12 they've had three or four different ones that are
13 Keystone. But I believe, '88, because I think they
14 stopped operations for the most part in the early '90s.

15 MEMBER HANEY: Yeah. So I just think that
16 that's suspect. It's 20 years old, and it should be
17 updated and doesn't sufficiently address water use out
18 of Sourdough Spring, especially -- it's a joint BLM and
19 National Parks Service EA, so I think we're concerned
20 about water use from the environmental side and the
21 impact on the seeps and springs in the area, whether
22 it's Keystone or whether it's Conglomerate Mesa. That
23 was brought up in Conglomerate Mesa as well, so I just
24 want to voice that concern in general.

25 It also is true of the OMYA land sale. There's

1 water resources there on the property that could have
2 been catalogued in the EA, but then again, as Al pointed
3 out, it's just a loss of those resources for wildlife.

4 So those were the couple of major comments I
5 have on water use and trying to help the general public
6 get our arms around all of the mining plan of operations
7 that are coming and going across the desert right now.
8 Thank you.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Back to the list, aren't
10 those actions and proposed actions in the database, the
11 BLM database of the E-Planning? Would there be a way to
12 query the E-Planning tool with a category or to be able
13 to pull up those? Just wondering. That might be an
14 option.

15 MR. SYMONS: I'm not familiar enough with
16 queries for E-Planning. And the other question would be
17 some of these actions, depending on where they're at,
18 won't necessarily be in E-Planning yet because they're
19 not at that stage yet. We're still trying to figure
20 out, like, for instance when I talked about EMI, that we
21 need to figure out, is it common or is it uncommon
22 before we can even go down to how we're going to address
23 it NEPA-wise and the decisions that we have.

24 So it all depends on how early and how much of
25 a comprehensive list we're looking at it. If we're

1 looking at a putting it on the list when it goes to
2 E-Planning or whether or not we'll get applications or
3 requests in for mining and that's something we worked
4 on, is how the list would be developed, and how often.

5 But some requests actually come in, and they
6 might be done if you get a notice. We have a very short
7 window. We can either object or not. And, you know, it
8 comes in on the first, if it's the notice is not an
9 issue or anything, then it will already be done and they
10 might be starting by the end of the month.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Check the E-Planning tool
12 to see. They've got a lot of pull-down menus and stuff.

13 Paul, thank you for waiting.

14 MEMBER MARTIN: Yeah. No problem.

15 MS. SYMONS: Randy?

16 MEMBER MARTIN: Sorry.

17 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I'm sorry, Paul. Katrina
18 was going to follow up on something I said.

19 MS. SYMONS: So Carrie is Ridgecrest
20 environmental planner, and she stated that, yes, indeed
21 on E-Planning you can pull it down for mining.

22 MS. WOODS: You can pull it down for a couple
23 of different specifics, including location, field
24 office, mining. It has a couple of different resources
25 that you could pull for, dates, EAs, EISs.

1 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thanks.

2 I'm sorry, Paul. Back with you now.

3 MEMBER MARTIN: Yeah. And in addition the
4 Department of Conservation Office of Mine Reclamation
5 has a CAID number for every active mine within
6 California. So along with the BLM website, you can also
7 locate all active mining operations in the State of
8 California through the DOCOMR.

9 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: One more time. D-O- --

10 MEMBER MARTIN: Department of Conservation
11 Office of Mine Reclamation. They have a list of each
12 active mining operation, and each one of these mining
13 operations has a CAID number.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I've seen those. That's
15 where it is. Okay. That's neat.

16 Comments? How about public comment now? Good.
17 Thank you, Carl. Thank you, Katrina. We may have some
18 more questions from the public. I have cards from Linda
19 Castro, Sam Merk, Ed Waldheim and more to come.

20 So first three, Linda, Sam, and Ed.

21 MS. CASTRO: Yeah. I would just like to also
22 ask for some sort of spreadsheet or something on the
23 active mining claims. I think it's easier for the
24 public to have something to easily refer to rather than
25 trying to go on E-Planning and trying to figure out how

1 to navigate through all of that.

2 As Frazier said, we used to get quarterly
3 spreadsheets on the projects. It's not something that
4 we would expect to be updated on a daily basis or
5 whatever. I think that would be or quarterly or however
6 those could come out would be helpful for a larger
7 public understanding of what's going on.

8 I had a question. I didn't quite get the
9 location of the southwest pumice mine that involves the
10 NCL land and the Mohave Ground Squirrel ACEC.

11 MR. SYMONS: As you're going up 395, it's right
12 there in the Rose Valley. It's just north of Coso.

13 MS. CASTRO: Okay. Got it thank you.

14 Then the last thing I just wanted to say
15 regarding the OMYA sale, that sale would set a horribly
16 bad precedent. BLM would be sending a message to all
17 mining companies, basically all developers for that
18 matter, "Dump your trash. Dump your overburden. Dump
19 your toxic waste. Do whatever you want to destroy
20 adjacent BLM lands. And instead of punishing you, we're
21 going to reward you and sell you that land."

22 No. That's really bad policy and really bad
23 precedent. Thanks.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Next up is Sam, followed by
25 Ed and Nicholas.

1 MS. MERK: In regards to the OMYA land sale,
2 there's two schools of thought. Sure, we can sell it
3 outright, and then somebody else is going to inherit the
4 waste, or we can take care of the waste now. There's
5 review processes that has existed in the past for all
6 EAs that has not been for the last, oh, I'd say maybe 16
7 years that has not been followed. And I think it's time
8 maybe we ought to follow some of the review processes.

9 Every mining claim that has an EA goes through
10 a process. Sometimes there are new factors that happen.
11 For instance the spring will dry up. Sometimes a spring
12 will start. You know, nature is different. Sometimes,
13 because of wildlife, things happen. So again it needs
14 to be back to review processes.

15 So I am looking forward to looking at the
16 newest endeavor and evaluating it on my own and sending
17 my comments, as I should as a responsible person.

18 One of the things that I found interesting is
19 this new -- well, the new way of looking for lithium,
20 and it's hilarious because Searles Valley at one time
21 processed 14 short tons of lithium a year. But it was
22 in an old nephology that they used to do that.

23 So, like I said, we have to review it with
24 today's standards. We can't forget the past. We need
25 to evaluate each EA. And I want to thank Carl, and I

1 also want to thank Katrina for doing a good job.

2 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Sam.

3 Next up, Ed Waldheim, followed by Nicholas,
4 followed by Mark.

5 MR. WALDHEIM: Ed Waldheim, Friends of Jawbone.

6 Access to the Public Lands. Just like we have
7 the renewable resources for the solar, we make it very
8 clear that, if there's a trail going through an area, we
9 want to make sure it doesn't shut off our access to and
10 from the areas in the BLM. Have we checked all of these
11 mining claims that they don't impact the public from
12 going from Point "A" to Point "B," or have they done a
13 reroute on it? I just want to make sure that they've
14 covered those access issues.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thanks, Ed.

16 Nicholas, then Mark Algazy and Ron Schiller.

17 MR. RAJEN: So as a public comment and a
18 comment of mine, just a personal comment, I was
19 wondering if there's any public health sort of
20 assessment that's been made, because if you think about
21 the mining processes that have occurred, like on
22 Public Lands but also especially reservation lands, a
23 lot of the time these communities that live out in these
24 areas are neglected and people end up breathing really
25 poisonous gases. They end up being impacted by toxic

1 materials, and it ends up impacting the water in the
2 area. I was just wondering how much of assessment has
3 been made not only for the area but also regions that
4 may be outside of the purview of a standard assessment.

5 Yeah, from the Native American Land Conservancy
6 point, it's also prevalent to mention that sacred trails
7 and sacred sites are not always identified just by the
8 materials that are found there. They're also identified
9 by songs and by other cultural aspects to a certain
10 people, like, whoever they may be. So impacting that
11 site through, like, a mining operation doesn't take that
12 into account. So I just wanted to make that comment.
13 Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thanks again, Nicholas.
15 Mark, followed Byron, followed by Jora.

16 MR. ALGAZY: I'm extremely happy to say that
17 all of my questions and concerns were already addressed
18 by the very insightful questions and comments of the
19 DAC. Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Hi, Ron. You good?

21 MR. SCHILLER: Pass on this one. I'll get you
22 next time.

23 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thanks, Ron.

24 Hi, Jora. You're up next, followed by
25 Dave Matthews, Ruth Hidalgo then Sam. So, Jora, Dave,

1 Ruth, and Sam.

2 MS. FOGG: Hi again. I'm not last this time.
3 I always feel like I get my card in last.

4 So I just wanted to reiterate Frazier's
5 comments about the public and/or the DAC getting a
6 spreadsheet or list of proposed actions for the
7 Desert District or, you know, perhaps by field office if
8 we have to. I realize that would be a lot of
9 coordination between the Desert District and the field
10 offices.

11 And to clarify that it's not so much the active
12 projects that planning would show. I think some of us
13 are able to use E-Planning sufficiently, but it's the
14 projects down the pipeline and things coming and pending
15 that the field offices are working on. So just a
16 clarification there. Quarterly is common. That's what
17 the Forest Service does, I know.

18 Regarding Keystone, I would also like to
19 elaborate on Frazier's comment a little bit. The
20 Keystone Mine was last operational prior to the 1994
21 Desert Protection Act, which incorporated Death Valley
22 National Park into the Sourdough Springs. So just of
23 that land use change, this project does require a full
24 environmental analysis.

25 And we have not seen as much information as we

1 would need to understand that project, such as what
2 underground mining would mean in that area now. And I'd
3 also like to clarify that the park has not issued a
4 finding of no significant impact yet. We're still
5 waiting to see that.

6 There does seem to be a resurgence of mining
7 interests in the desert. Black Swan Advisors that have
8 purchased Keystone are publicly advertising wanting to
9 purchase closed mines across the desert. So this is
10 something that the conservation community is pretty
11 concerned about at this point.

12 I'll just wrap up with the Perdito project.
13 For those that don't know, Perdito is a location that
14 has car line (phonetic) gold, which is a very low-grade
15 ore that requires cyanide to process, so we'd be looking
16 at an open pit cyanide heap leach mine in this place,
17 which -- Montana banned cyanide. I don't think there's
18 an active one in California right now. But we need to
19 think ahead. It's not just an exploration, but what is
20 that exploration going to lead to?

21 You want to talk about access. Mines do close
22 access. It's large areas, and they also deplete the
23 recreational experience. We're talking about big trucks
24 hauling water, hauling materials, creating dust.

25 I'm up on my time. Anyway, I could talk a lot

1 about Conglomerate Mesa. It's a special place to me.
2 So happy to talk to anyone at the break.

3 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Jora.

4 Dave Matthews, Ruth Hidalgo, Sam Merk.

5 MR. MATTHEWS: Good afternoon, ladies and
6 gentlemen.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Hi, Dave.

8 MR. MATTHEWS: Merry Christmas, and happy
9 season's greetings to everyone.

10 In light of the season, you might consider me a
11 ghost from DAC meetings past, when I used to be able to
12 ride across a desert naked on the hood of my Jeep and so
13 on and so forth.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: That was funny. Long
15 story. A good story but a long story. I'll bring them
16 up to date on that.

17 MR. MATTHEWS: Okay. Thank you.

18 But what I would like to do for this afternoon
19 is really how important mining is to everybody, not just
20 those that are miners, not just those that are on the
21 BLM or impacted by the actual operations of mining but
22 in everyday use.

23 And I would like first of all to just point out
24 something else. Let's talk about the difference between
25 wealth and riches. There is a difference. A lot of

1 people kind of forget about it. But wealth means that
2 you have the resources that you need to exist. And I
3 don't have a lot of money coming in, but I consider
4 myself kind of a wealthy man because I have a piece of
5 property that I can live on and enjoy the rest of my
6 days, however short or long they may be.

7 With that in mind, the wealth that this country
8 has is involved in the resources that it has. And a lot
9 of those are in the mines, but some of it is also in the
10 agricultural and the food industry. So just because
11 there's a mine out there doesn't mean that it's bad.

12 And I want you to sometime when you get up in
13 the morning, just think about what you're using, the
14 products you're using, your toothpaste in the morning
15 when you brush your teeth, that has mining products in
16 it.

17 There's other things that we mine for out here,
18 like gold and silver. A lot of people think of that as
19 a stable -- as an investment. But it's more than that.
20 Gold is used in a lot of things, including electronics,
21 your cell phones probably that you're carrying around,
22 and some of the products in your vehicles.

23 Tungsten. Tungsten is very important. I think
24 that's more a hard rock mining than it is some of the
25 mining we have around here, but I'm not that close to

1 it. Anyways, my general point is that, as you go
2 through your day, just think about the products you're
3 using, your laundry detergent, your hand soaps. All of
4 those things have products from mines somewhere. So
5 don't just be negative about the mines. Think of them
6 as part of the wealth of this country.

7 I grew up in Western Pennsylvania, where there
8 was a lot of coal mines. That was my first introduction
9 to mines. And a lot of people don't realize that coal
10 is part of what produces steel. And we had steel mines
11 back there -- or steel mills. And if we did not have
12 those two items, do you think we would have won
13 World War II?

14 A lot of people don't realize what World War II
15 was because we're losing a lot of that Greatest
16 Generation, but I lived through it, and I remember what
17 happened and how things went. And coal at that time was
18 very important, and it still is. But anyway, we don't
19 have coal out here, but I just wanted to point that out.
20 Anyway, that's enough for now. Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thanks, Dave.

22 Okay. Y'all want to know, don't you? Okay.
23 About four years ago, five years ago the Desert Advisory
24 Council received presentation on proposed special rules
25 for OHV areas in developed public campgrounds, including

1 some speed control, no nudity in the developed
2 campsites, and shooting restrictions. And I remember
3 Dave came up and said, "You mean I can't ride on the
4 hood of my Jeep through the OHV area naked shooting my
5 gun anymore? What's this world coming to?"

6 MR. MATTHEWS: Even driven by my naked
7 girlfriend.

8 MR. WALDHEIM: That also's a true story. I was
9 there.

10 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: True story. Thank you.
11 Ruth and Sam.

12 MS. HIDALGO: Hi. Ruth Hidalgo, recreational
13 rockhound.

14 I appreciate the diverse comments that I've
15 heard with respect to mining here. It gives me a lot of
16 perspective and opens my mind to other concerns with
17 respect to mining on our Public Lands. With respect to
18 having mining claim data more readily available, I would
19 caution with respect to small claims, small
20 recreational -- not recreational claims but small miners
21 on the commercial side, I understand those that go
22 through a lot more on the environmental issues, but with
23 respect to the small claims people, they don't have a
24 way to protect their claims from other people coming out
25 just doing whatever, whether it be somebody with a small

1 claim for gems or minerals or something that they do
2 more as a recreational activity or a small side
3 business.

4 Rockhounds have been finding old documents
5 forever, trying to find out where we can collect rocks
6 to make sure we're not claim jumping. It takes
7 research; it does. But for the small claim owners, I
8 would caution in that regard.

9 With respect to OMYA, I'm not qualified as to
10 many of the others and not familiar with them.
11 OMYA Mine has hosted several recreational
12 rock-collecting trips to recreational rockhounds and gem
13 and mineral clubs. They mine a pharmaceutical-grade
14 material that is found there. It's not found anywhere
15 else. I think that's pretty significant. Boron also
16 hosts gem and mineral clubs. The Golden Claim has
17 hosted us. They come out and do presentations.

18 Mining does not necessarily -- it creates a
19 recreational opportunity for rockhounds. It gives us a
20 place where we can go and collect minerals and learn
21 about them and learn about the geology. So I just
22 wanted to share that perspective with you. Thank you.

23 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thanks, Ruth.

24 Sam?

25 MS. MERK: I'm going to pass this time around.

1 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Very good. Thank you, Sam.
2 That concludes our public comment and our
3 discussion of the mining projects. Are there any
4 further comments by the DAC? Any actions or things you
5 would like to take? Good?

6 MEMBER BURKE: Moving right along.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We're good. Thank you.
8 Next item that we have is to discuss the Imperial Sand
9 Dunes Recreation Area Subgroup and the need for a
10 Desert Advisory Council representative to that subgroup.
11 Just briefly recall that our practice is to ensure that
12 we have a Desert Advisory Council member as part of each
13 subgroup in order to provide the nexus to the DAC as
14 required by Federal Advisory Committee Act.

15 At the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area down
16 near the border of Arizona and the international border,
17 we haven't had a DAC member -- a seated DAC member from
18 that region in a while. We've been unsuccessful in
19 having a volunteer.

20 So given my role as responsibility of a
21 recreation representative, I'll do this interim job
22 until -- I would like to see what the new
23 appointments -- perhaps the new appointments that may
24 come out in the future may yield us a representative
25 from that geographic area that could take over for us.

1 But if you'll have me, I'm willing to attend
2 the meetings for a bit. Of course it's a little less of
3 a burden than sometimes it used to be, because we used
4 to be able to call meetings more frequently and more
5 quickly and so forth. But this time there will have to
6 be Federal Register notice, and I'll have a lot of
7 notice in advance, and I'll be able to pull it off. So
8 I'm volunteering if you'll let me.

9 No objections?

10 MEMBER MITCHELL: No objections. You've got
11 it.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: All right. We solved that
13 problem. We kicked that can down the road.

14 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Tom thanks you.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Of course, Tom. My
16 pleasure.

17 Looks like we're a little bit early on our
18 break. Would the DAC like to continue moving until 3:30
19 and take its break? Very well. That's what we're going
20 to do, folks.

21 The next item on the agenda is DAC subgroup
22 reports. Well, that's going to be easy.

23 MEMBER BURKE: There's been no meetings.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Exactly. There is
25 something I would like to point out. The second page of

1 the agenda at the bottom has a list of our subgroups.
2 That's something now -- or close to it. That's really
3 cool. Thank you. This was awesome. I turn the page,
4 and there they are. Those are our groups. This is what
5 we've acted on.

6 However the only groups that have been able to
7 actually meet that are fully constituted and meeting was
8 the Dumont Dunes Subgroup. The Dumont Dunes Subgroup
9 met twice this year. We met once in the spring and then
10 again in the fall. Both meetings were at the field
11 office. We had hoped to have one meeting at the dunes
12 and another at the field office, but sometimes I guess
13 the complexities of moving a notice through the process
14 that the notice was published as having both meetings at
15 the field office, and so that's what we did and didn't
16 have terribly good turnouts.

17 We used to have a little better turnout of
18 non-DAC member public participants. But we still were
19 able to achieve a quorum from our subgroup. We heard
20 plans regarding a change in the status of the
21 Dumont Dunes Road. And can you brief us again on that
22 just briefly, because I thought that was pretty exciting
23 and probably one of the bigger developments that we
24 talked about.

25 Sorry, Katrina. I appreciate that, though.

1 You'll have more of the details than I.

2 MS. SYMONS: So, gosh. Probably April, May,
3 June of 2018 I met with Washington office personnel and
4 some other California personnel for BLM in order to
5 develop a proposal for federal highway dollars in order
6 to pave the access road into Dumont Dunes. The proposal
7 would not only include the paving up until the
8 Amargosa crossing. There would be the expansion from
9 concrete pad within the Amargosa drainage itself and
10 then wind up putting another lift of rock there at the
11 fee site and then going on up into the command post
12 area.

13 The initial thought is that it would very
14 likely take about five years to go through the process,
15 so the proposal was submitted in fiscal year '18. Maybe
16 by 2022 we might be able to hear whether or not that
17 proposal has been funded. The cost estimate is over
18 \$2 million. And that's today's cost. And you just need
19 to think about that being inflated for 2022. Okay?

20 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you. It's been a
21 challenge for us. Ed and I have struggled in hoping to
22 get OHV funding money to assist with the maintenance of
23 the road, but because it's street legal only, the
24 OHV Division is unable to fund it through the grant
25 program. It's been a challenge. This is the way to get

1 through that. The access road is long and very, very
2 well used, and the visitors really are looking for help
3 on their equipment and their motorhomes and their
4 trailers with a well-maintained road to be able to get
5 in and out of the dunes. So this will help with that.

6 Aside from that, again we have an Imperial Sand
7 Dunes Recreation Area Subgroup that will be reconvening.
8 The Dumont Dunes group will be reconvening if the BLM
9 can put in some register notices and suggest some dates
10 for us.

11 The SRP Subgroup has had a Call for Nominations
12 put out. We've lost the interest of some of the
13 previous appointees, and we want to fill that and get
14 that group running forward because there's a pilot
15 program going forward to assist Special Recreation
16 Permittees to engage -- potentially engage independent
17 third-party monitors to assist them in controlling
18 costs, recovery costs, so that's a good topic for that
19 group to jump into.

20 Connecting People to the Desert hasn't met for
21 a bit. I'm not sure where that will roll to. Lastly
22 the Mojave Trails National Monument. I think the
23 subgroup is probably definitely the one that's closest
24 on the edge of the shelf that will need to be brought
25 down and discussed and talked about when the planning

1 processes start forming and moving forward.

2 Any other comments? That's all I have for you
3 from what I know and understand on the subgroups.

4 MEMBER HANEY: Yeah. I'm going to beat the
5 dead horse, Randy, and just say I think it would be
6 appropriate to convene that Mojave Trails Subgroup
7 before the formal planning process starts. I don't see
8 any reason why we can't do that.

9 And I think it would serve as a forum for
10 people to identify issues they want to see addressed in
11 the monument and have a dialogue about how we might take
12 care of the monument when the planning process does
13 start. I think we've got a lot of intelligence in the
14 group there and a lot of people to engage, so I'd
15 like --

16 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: There's also an option that
17 we could do that. We could do that under an agenda
18 item.

19 MEMBER HANEY: Is that something we could take
20 up at the moment?

21 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I would loathe to take up
22 at the moment that is not noticed for the public and
23 that folks wouldn't have the opportunity. But where do
24 we want to roll with that?

25 MEMBER HANEY: Just that we as a group could

1 vote to say, yes, we should meet as a subgroup. Even
2 ahead of the formal planning process, we should
3 incorporate that group or advise BLM to incorporate the
4 group and notice a public meeting and get it underway.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Which one are we talking
6 about us convening?

7 MEMBER HANEY: Mojave.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: To pull the whole subgroup
9 together?

10 MEMBER HANEY: Yes.

11 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Do I have a motion?

12 MEMBER HANEY: I would move.

13 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Second?

14 MEMBER LONG: I'll second.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We have a motion. We have
16 a second. Further discussion on the motion? Good.

17 I don't have -- I don't see the capacity for us
18 to do it, but I'm just speaking because nobody else is
19 commenting. But if there are any other opinions. But I
20 don't see the capacity here.

21 Before we take the vote, we need to have public
22 comment on this agenda item. So let's continue. We
23 have that motion. We have that second. We've had
24 discussion. Are there other discussions with regard to
25 subgroups so that we can finish our conversation on

1 subgroups, open it up for public comment, and then we
2 can come back and resume and take action should we
3 decide to?

4 Very good. No other comments. I'm going to
5 open up the public comment on the issue of the subgroups
6 and -- on the issue of subgroup reports. And I have
7 cards from Linda, Ed, Ron, and Sam. Linda, you're
8 first.

9 MS. CASTRO: Good thing I put in a card for
10 every single topic.

11 I'll just reiterate what I said earlier very
12 quickly. I would hope that you can convene the Mojave
13 Trails Subgroup sooner rather than later. It's going to
14 take a while to get it going, have discussions started.
15 And I don't see any reason why we couldn't do that
16 before the planning process starts so we'll be ready
17 when the planning starts.

18 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Ed, followed Byron.

19 MR. WALDHEIM: Ed Waldheim, Friends of Jawbone.

20 On the areas that you want to set up subgroups
21 I would suggest that those interested parties start
22 forming a friends group inside of those areas that you
23 want. What that does is, it starts working up a
24 constituency so that you could start working with them.

25 Friends of Jawbone has been meeting for 25

1 years. Friends of El Mirage has been also 25 years. We
2 just started meeting because we had an interest. BLM
3 came in afterwards. But we started going, and so I
4 would suggest that those people who are worried about
5 the plans, worried about when is's happening with the
6 monuments, get yourselves a friends group. Yes, I know
7 Ruth says it's way far away, but you can get it going.

8 Dumont Dunes Road, the special interest I have
9 in doing that, the two water trucks that friends of
10 El Mirage is leasing or renting for a very nominal fee,
11 I would like to get them back because we now have to
12 rent the water truck ourselves in El Mirage because our
13 two trucks are busy in Dumont Dunes. Also it will save
14 an awful lot of time on these vehicles traveling to get
15 water.

16 Amargosa River, it went dry last summer, so
17 they had to travel all the way to the other communities
18 to be able to get water. So the sooner we can get that
19 paved, the better off we'll be. It will be very good.
20 Thank you.

21 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Ron Schiller, followed by
22 Sam and then Mark.

23 MR. SCHILLER: I just have a question, not a
24 comment. What is a Connecting People to the Desert
25 Subgroup about? What's the scope of that? I'm just

1 curious.

2 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: The Connecting People to
3 the -- do you want to talk about it? It's your
4 subgroup.

5 MEMBER BURKE: You go ahead.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: It's your subgroup. You
7 can define it.

8 MEMBER BURKE: It was supposed to be like an
9 educational-type subgroup that was getting people
10 connected to come to the desert. Jane Brockhurst was
11 doing part of it through the Desert Discovery Center out
12 of Barstow, but everything fell by the wayside when the
13 government stopped everything there for a while. So to
14 answer your question, it's a subgroup that doesn't do
15 anything right at the moment.

16 MR. SCHILLER: Oh, okay. Well, that's kind of
17 interesting. I guess I'm connected to some of the
18 desert since 1957.

19 The other thing is, I see Mojave Trails
20 National Monument to be determined. I'd just say I'd
21 like to throw my name in the hat for that. So please
22 consider me when you pick your members for that. Thank
23 you.

24 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Ron.

25 Sam and then Mark.

1 MS. MERK: I'm deferring to Mark Algazy.

2 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Sam.

3 Mark, you're up.

4 MR. ALGAZY: I share Randy's concern about this
5 being a potential false start with the Mojave National
6 Monument Subgroup. We experienced a big problem when we
7 were working on the route network subgroup project in
8 terms of trying to get out the gate and trying to engage
9 the public and letting the public become involved. And
10 the public was raring like a racehorse to submit the
11 information to the government.

12 But we found out that, once we were actually
13 given marching orders, or once we sat down at as a
14 subgroup and worked out what we could do, that a lot of
15 that information didn't line up with the parameters that
16 we were choosing to move everything forward with. And
17 so then things had to be collected again, and they had
18 to be formatted, and it only increased the public's
19 frustration with the process. They're like, "How many
20 times do we have to submit this?"

21 And we tell them, "When we took it before, we
22 didn't have the right formatting. Can you please just
23 do it again?" And that makes the process more
24 frustrating, and that was our experience in the route
25 network subgroup project, and that's why I share Randy's

1 concerns about a false start and just ending up
2 frustrating the public in the long run.

3 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: That's the last of our
4 public comments. That's the end of the public comments
5 on the subgroups.

6 We're back to the issue of requesting the BLM
7 to begin the process to establish the subgroup. Just a
8 last comment I'm going to make to the recreation
9 enthusiasts here and the rockhounds. I'm going to
10 clarify my statement and put more on the table here.

11 I'm up to my ears in WEMO for route designation
12 for my recreation counterparts. And we have still quite
13 a ways to go. And this next WEMO process is going to be
14 even more difficult for me to -- the hundreds of hours
15 of analysis that I have to do on my own time, and I'm
16 not being paid by special interest groups here. I don't
17 belong to any group -- okay? -- anything paying me. I
18 have to do this stuff on my own, and I'm going to have
19 to do this for WEMO.

20 I am in no hurry to see rockhounds lose their
21 collecting abilities in the national monument. I am in
22 no hurry to see Green Sticker vehicles kicked out of the
23 monument. I am in no hurry to see roads and trails
24 closed in the monument. I'm sorry. I'm just in no
25 hurry to jump there right now.

1 And I don't have that capacity. And it sounds
2 selfish that I'm the representative of the recreation
3 community, and I have to -- I have to represent them the
4 very best that I can. And so that's just flat-out where
5 I'm going. I want to participate in management
6 processes, and I want to have all of the participation
7 that we can, but it's going to be hard for me to
8 continue to spread myself and do the job that needs to
9 be done.

10 That said, any further comment, and I'll be
11 more than happy to take a call for the question. Thank
12 you all for indulging. I appreciate that. I'm sorry.
13 Public comment is closed. I can't. So I appreciate it.

14 All those in favor of asking the BLM to begin
15 the process of starting up a subgroup, please raise
16 their hand.

17 (A vote was taken.)

18 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We have one, two, three,
19 four, five and six in favor. Those opposed, raise their
20 hand. We have one, two against. Do we have
21 abstentions?

22 Motion passes, six to two. Thank you. Thank
23 you, everybody, for working through this discussion.

24 Next item on the agenda we have --

25 MR. MATTHEWS: Can we take a break?

1 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: You want to keep rolling or
2 take a break? We're rolling. We're rolling until 3:30.
3 Thank you, all.

4 The next item on the agenda is council comments
5 and questions on the field office reports, one of our
6 favorite parts of the agenda. Everybody got the field
7 office reports well in advance, got to look at the
8 circles and arrows in all the pictures. Hopefully you
9 read them, too, and you've got a list of questions.

10 How would you like to proceed? Should we go
11 field office by field office or DAC member by DAC
12 member?

13 MEMBER BURKE: DAC member by DAC member.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I heard DAC member by DAC
15 member. That's what we'll do then. Very well. Who
16 would like to go first?

17 Go ahead, Frazier. You jump right in, any
18 questions you have for field office reports.

19 MEMBER HANEY: I'll go. Mine is quick, and
20 it's just to say thank you to Tom. I know that you're
21 retiring in January and you won't be with us in
22 February. So thank you for another excellent report.
23 It's been a pleasure working with you.

24 And also to Katrina and Carl who are in the
25 room, I appreciate the work that goes into these that

1 you come out ahead of the meeting for us to take a look
2 at. And I just want to take a moment to commend you
3 both for your professionalism and cool under pressure.
4 That's all.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Any other comments or
6 questions on the field office reports?

7 Bob, you got it.

8 MEMBER BURKE: I appreciate getting the field
9 reports as thorough as they were, even though they were
10 full of 18 months worth of work. Keep up the good work.
11 I'm sorry Mike's not here. Some of my constituents had
12 some issues in the Marble Clipper Mountains with hikers
13 and hunters interacting not so nicely. But the BLM took
14 care of that. And thank Carl for yesterday.

15 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Next? Bob, please.

16 MEMBER ROBINSON: Both Carl and Katrina's
17 reports were pretty thorough. And a lot of things we've
18 been discussing in going through the WEMO and through
19 the renewable energy stuff and all the meetings we've
20 been having and everything were all reflected really
21 well in the reports. And the information they gave us
22 today and yesterday were also reflected in the reports.
23 And I'd like to thank them very much for that and for
24 being so comprehensive.

25 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Any other? Oh, Jim.

1 MEMBER KENNEY: Okay. I want to thank Carl and
2 Katrina and their staffs for the work they've done on
3 WEMO. I also want to thank the hundreds of volunteers
4 who actually went out and ran routes and chose to make
5 comments on what they found on the ground, because I
6 know BLM couldn't run every single route forever. Thank
7 you.

8 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Once, twice. All righty.
9 My only question is, Carl, how come your report
10 was so late?

11 MR. SYMONS: You've got to ask Steve that.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: I'm sorry. Never mind.
13 All right. Thank you, everybody.

14 Do we have public comments and questions on the
15 field office reports? Apparently I have cards from
16 Linda, Ed, Ron, and Sam.

17 Linda?

18 MS. CASTRO: I'll withdraw mine.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Ed, you're up.

20 MR. WALDHEIM: Ed Waldheim, Friends of Jawbone,
21 Friends of El Mirage.

22 I made my comments earlier for Beth, district
23 manager, to have more information about the money that
24 the OHV program provides. On the reports -- I always
25 grade the reports, but this time Tom set the stage on

1 how to get reports done, and they all have followed
2 through right now. So they all get a passing grade.
3 They all get an "A" as far as I'm concerned this time.

4 The only thing that I have to do -- there's
5 always a "but." In the reports, we are not giving
6 credit to your partners in the reports. For example,
7 there's nothing in the report about El Mirage, nothing.
8 There's a little bit about Jawbone, but we have done
9 such an incredible jobs. We did completely redo EP15.
10 Over \$150,000 was spent to redo that road. We blocked
11 the Hart property to have access between the El Pasos
12 and the Dove Springs area so people get off the freeway
13 and they go straight across.

14 We negotiated with Caltrans to make sure, when
15 they widen Highway 14, that gets done. Hundreds of
16 miles of trail maintenance we've done in El Paso, the
17 Rands and the Dove Springs, so there's a lot of
18 restoration.

19 We have 20 full-time people working at Jawbone,
20 and ten of them are -- no -- 15 of them are working on
21 restoration, two full-time crews working on restoration.
22 You won't believe it. A trail that is not designated,
23 you will not see it anymore. It is gone, period, end of
24 discussion. The only thing you see is the existing
25 trail. So the art of hiding the non-used trails so

1 people stay on the designated trails.

2 So there's a lot of stories we could tell, and
3 we'd like to make sure it gets shared in the report as
4 part of the agency's report, because we're there at
5 their welcome in the first place. Anyway, "A's" for all
6 the reports. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thanks, Ed.

8 Comments on Field Manager Reports.

9 Ron Schiller and Sam Merk.

10 MR. SCHILLER: I guess I have a question. I
11 need to come up here and ask it.

12 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Come on up so we can hear
13 it.

14 MR. SCHILLER: I noticed in the field manager
15 report for the Ridgecrest resource area -- or field
16 office now, I guess we call it, for the LADWP around
17 Haiwee there's a couple of realignments around the
18 aqueduct. I just wonder, again the Lone Pine Gem and
19 Mineral Society has access in there to several gem and
20 mineral collecting sites on that back side of Haiwee.
21 Does that affect any of those areas back up in there on
22 the back side of the reservoir?

23 MR. SYMONS: The Cactus Flat Road will be
24 realigned, but it will still be there. They're moving
25 it. It goes down to where the new dam is going to be.

1 It goes across. They'll bring it in higher.

2 MR. SCHILLER: Okay. That one spot where they
3 come down where you can actually access down to the
4 reservoir, that's not going to close?

5 MR. SYMONS: We're not closing off any roads
6 that are open at this time.

7 MR. SCHILLER: Okay, because the DFG doesn't
8 seem to have any real problem with anybody going down
9 there and fishing, so I just wondered if there was going
10 to be any problem with that access down there. I
11 probably shouldn't say that publicly, but I hate to see
12 that closed, people going down there and just looking
13 around.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thanks, Ron.

15 Hi, Sam Merk. Last speaker today, Sam.

16 MS. MERK: I would like to thank Tom Zale,
17 Katrina, Carl, Mike Ahrens for their wonderful reports.
18 But again we need report from the district. It should
19 include money. It should talk about expenditures, and
20 we really need that.

21 This is a unit, the California Desert
22 Conservation Area. It was mandated by -- it's law.
23 It's not a presidential executive order that's going to
24 change in four years to another president or a past
25 president. It is law. It should be dealt with as a

1 unit. And I want to see a district report and a small
2 letter from the state. We still belong to the state.
3 Thank you.

4 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you, Sam.

5 If there's no objections, we'll move into the
6 next item on the agenda, which is discussion of the
7 theme and agenda topics for the next meeting. And I'd
8 like to read off what I heard today and then have you
9 folks chime in and see what I missed.

10 I heard today a suggestion for the Desert
11 Tortoise Recovery Program by John Stewart and
12 Gerry Hillier. I heard a suggestion for an item on
13 streamlining Federal Register Notice process from
14 Sam Merk. Interestingly that does coincide with what we
15 discussed today for how we would review Secretarial
16 Orders. We had a package of orders that dealt with that
17 exact item.

18 We also had a suggestion to discuss the
19 retiring of grazing leases from Julie Mitchell, a
20 suggestion for discussion on Secretarial Order 3362 of
21 the wildlife corridors, suggested by Jora Fogg. And I
22 suggested a presentation on the regionalization project,
23 or the regionalization process that would be splitting
24 the -- changing the agency's jurisdictional boundaries.

25 So what else did you hear, or what else would

1 you like to add to that list?

2 Michelle.

3 MEMBER LONG: If we have the DRECP scoping
4 report prior to the next meeting, I think that would be
5 a good thing to put on our agenda to discuss.

6 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you.

7 Billy?

8 MEMBER MITCHELL: Yeah, and the progress on
9 that Crescent Peak project with Jay Moon and China Lake
10 and also the Needle resource dude, from Mike, the
11 progress on the Section 4 permits and corrals that were
12 taken out on the Horse Thief Springs allotment, if we
13 could. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you. Everybody good
15 on the DAC? Very good.

16 Sam, is there a suggestion that we missed?

17 MS. MERK: Yes. Groundwater Sustainability
18 Act.

19 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: All right. Thanks, Sam.

20 All right. So I have a handful of topics for
21 the BLM to help us with, and we'll work with over the
22 time. I don't know exactly what dates the BLM will be
23 proposing for our next meeting, and hopefully it will be
24 a spring meeting, and we'll see how we can fill the
25 agenda.

1 Last chance for comments, questions on that
2 item. Otherwise we're moving into -- oh, pardon me,
3 yes, Billy.

4 MEMBER MITCHELL: Are we going to have just the
5 two meetings, or are there going to be three, or do we
6 know yet, or four, or we don't have any idea? I know
7 with the budget deal last year you were going to cut it
8 down to three, I think it was, and the mandate is two, I
9 thought was in the bylaws. But do you know what -- I
10 mean, do you have any idea what this year is going to be
11 like?

12 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: What we're planning
13 to be putting forward, given us kind of ramping back up
14 into meeting more regularly is, I was looking to put
15 forward a draft with a Federal Register Notice for two
16 meetings next year and see if we could get public notice
17 published for both meetings, if we could, probably late
18 spring. Then sometime earlier fall-ish is what we were
19 thinking in terms of getting us back and meeting again
20 on some sort of regular schedule.

21 MEMBER MITCHELL: So I guess it's up to you and
22 I between Barstow to coincide with the REACT.

23 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Oh, that's already on
24 my calendar, so I would say that is a no-go.

25 MEMBER MITCHELL: Set the one for next spring,

1 but it's the third Thursday in April. I'll get with
2 you.

3 DISTRICT MANAGER RANSEL: Yep.

4 MEMBER MITCHELL: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Very good. The last item
6 on the agenda is just a wrap-up and summary. And today
7 our action item includes a process for us to discuss and
8 comment on the Executive Orders that have been placed in
9 our charter. Thank you. We also took action appointing
10 me to help with the Imperial Sand Dunes Subgroup. We
11 also took action to request the BLM begin the process
12 for a Mojave Trails National Monument. So we had some
13 action items today.

14 We had some advice, and we had a really great
15 field trip yesterday. And I think today we had pretty
16 much about the best public comments I've heard pretty
17 much, ever. This was really, I think, the best day I've
18 heard from the public. This was fantastic, and I
19 appreciate it very much, each and every one of you. We
20 all listen intently, and we learned a lot from you
21 today. I hope we see you again at the meetings and hope
22 we continue to learn from you.

23 With that said and done, may I have a motion to
24 adjourn the meeting in recognition of the retirement of
25 Tom Zale and Steve Razo? Do I have a motion?

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MEMBER MITCHELL: I'll move.

CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Do we have a second?

MEMBER MUTH: Second.

CHAIRPERSON BANIS: We have a second from Al.
Those in favor, say aye. Opposed?

(A voice vote was taken.)

CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Meeting adjourned
3:28 p.m., just in time for our break.

(Whereupon, at 3:28 p.m.,
the proceedings were concluded.)

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M O T I O N S

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- A. Maker: Burke
 Seconder: Mitchell
 Motion: To accept the March 20th, 2018 meeting transcript
 Result: Carried
- B. Maker: Burke
 Seconder: Mitchell
 Motion: Regarding Updated DAC Charter, to have Group 1, 2, and 3 emphases; to group the items; and that the DAC would consider these prioritized and consider them over the next two-year period as time is available; and to have Randy Banis garner comments and ideas and suggestions for a possible letter from the DAC about things that the DAC would like to see in the next charter
 Result: Carried
- C. Maker: Haney
 Seconder: Long
 Motion: To form a Mojave Trails National Monument Subgroup before planning process starts
 Result: Carried
- D. Maker: Mitchell
 Seconder: Muth
 Motion: To adjourn the meeting
 Result: Carried

CERTIFICATE

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I, Diane Carver Mann, CSR No. 6008, in and for the State of California, do hereby certify:

That the foregoing pages were taken down by me in shorthand at the time and place stated herein and represent a true and correct transcript of said proceedings.

I further certify that I am not interested in the event of the action.

Witness my hand this 29th day of January, 2019.

Diane Carver Mann

Certified Shorthand
Reporter in and for the
State of California

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[arms - banis]

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[black - byron]

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