

The Bureau of Land Management
Desert Advisory Council Meeting Transcript

December 9, 2023 – Palm Desert, CA

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>> SHELLY LYNCH, District Manager: Good morning, everyone. I want to thank our partners yesterday for an outstanding field trip. Those are places I haven't been. So, it was neat to see that we ever appreciate the organized field trip yesterday we had a great time. So, thank you for that.

I would also like to welcome our California State Director. She is joining us today I will introduce her more formally in a minute. I would like to introduce our new members. (Audio Cut Out) so that's very exciting. So, we have Terry McGlynn, Ann Kulikoff, Ed Stovin. Desirea Haggard and Dawn Rowe. Thank you for that. With that, Kate, if you could give a brief overview of Zoom and in person protocols.

>>KATE MIYAMOTO, Public Affairs Specialist: Good morning, everybody. Thank you for joining us for information for the public comment. At 1:45. Members of the public will have three minutes and if there is additional time at the end, we can give another three minutes but please limit your comments to three minutes and please remember-- the public is only allowed to comment during the public comment time and not during the meeting. So only at 1:45 time. Back to you, Shelly.

>> SHELLY LYNCH: We will do introductions and we will start with our state director, Karen, she started with BLM California. Karen, do you want to say a few words before we do introductions?

>>KAREN MOURITSEN, BLM California State Director: Oh. Okay. Well, thank you, Shelly. I am glad to be here. I wish I could have gone on the trip yesterday. (Speaker Away from Mic) and enjoyed the dinner with everyone. I just wanted to say I am so glad that we are able to have the advisory committee and our resource advisory committees. (Speaker Away from Mic) and the central and northern part of the state and we are all- at BLM California excited to have improved the process a bit to get these committees up and running. We are so excited have all the committees and have them up and running since I started here. We worked in Alaska where we had an advisory and it was so, so helpful. And I think he participated two. So, I am so glad we're doing that here and I want to welcome you all.

>> SHELLY LYNCH: I will start. I am Shelly, the District Manager and I've been here a year

and half.

>>BLM STAFF INTRODUCES THEMSELVES

>>SHELLY LYNCH: We will move on to DAC members. We will say that this is Greg's last DAC meeting, and the state director is retiring. We have new faces coming up in the next year. So, Hans is our new chairperson. I will let Hans introduce DAC members.

>> HANS HAAS, DAC Chairperson: Thank you so much, everyone. Let's start with Randy.

>> RANDY BANIS: Mike had just started with the BLM team. That was his assignment and Mike is the one who had to drive with me and be terrorized and disturbed that I was a good enough driver to join the team. Then he got me back. And not long after when he got to do the driving down Iron Mountain Road and I was running the GPS, and he went way too fast for what that Jeep was forced to be doing. He was scared to death.

I worked closely with Mike over the years. With the subgroup, the Mojave Trails National subgroup. Sorry to keep on going, but these are things I really would like to say. I especially want to thank and congratulate Shelly as well as Karen and how they prioritize the desert advisory Council for the first year and 1/2-year. This is the first time we've had a full staff in many years and the first time we've had a quorum. Some of us have been sitting three years of meetings without a quorum are itching to vote on something.

When the seven of us were reappointed, when the seven of us were reappointed, it was January 2020. And there was a lot of people in turmoil at the time. It would take a grasp of the nation and the world. We were entering a new administration. To illustrate how great a job that Shelly has done in pulling the DAC together like this, from 2016 until 2020, that's five years, the DAC only met six times. And in the last two years, we received that in just the last two years we've met seven times.

And so, when I rejoined the DAC in 2020, my dream was to see this that we have here today. A full quorum subgroup that is working and operating. You know, we've gone through crawling to walking and I think we're ready to break into that- I'm not going to say a full run- but I hope the DAC or new members to the DAC recognize that you are here in a very exciting time for the DAC. Essentially, a rebirth at the Desert Advisory Council and I am turning the keys over to the new members. I'm sure they're going to try this DAC right down to the middle of the highway, serve the public and all the stakeholders that they represent.

They will serve well and provide the BLM with the very best advice you are capable of doing. Most of portly, don't forget about the members of the public. This is one of the only quorums to discuss in detail matters at the Bureau of Land Management. They loved the desert just as much as we all do. And we always appreciate the public taking time to participate with the DAC. So, thank you for letting me have a few minutes and put it in context.

>> Thanks so much but let's move on.

>> NATHAN FRANCIS: My name is Nathan Francis. I represent the energy and minerals department of the Council. My daily job is asset manager. I oversee the legacy sites in California for the last 12 years. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Thank you.

>> DESIREA HAGGARD: Hi everyone, good morning. My name is Desirea Haggard. Similar to Nathan, my day job is working in industry for the licensing of mining (Speaker Away from Mic) yeah, I'm happy to be here. Thank you so much.

>> Next is vice chair.

>> JENNIFER HENNING: My name is Jennifer. I represent (Speaker Away from Mic) I want to say thank you to all the members (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> DICK HOLLIDAY: My name is Dick Holliday. I serve as the (Speaker Away from Mic) virtually. My day job is (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> ANN KULIKOFF: Good morning, everyone. I am an Ann Kulikoff. I hate to say this, but it was over 25 years ago when I first represented the utility interest. I have worked, played, and loved the California desert for all these years I've been doing it for over 40 years. We own property in Johnson Valley and it's critical to be representing the public at large. And one of the best times I had working with the BLM and all the other agencies in my former capacity. This just feels like home.

>> Thank you (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> TERRY McGLYNN: I am currently the faculty director of the desert studies Center which is a facility operated by the CSU system. Which isn't the national preserve. So as an initiative that I am representing include engaged science, research capacity of public lands, biodiversity protection and climate resilience.

>> Next is Paul (name)

>> Paul you are on mute.

>> PAUL MARTIN: This is Paul Martin. Just want to welcome the new DAC members I am a public at large a retired mining engineer. I am looking for to today's meeting. Thank you.

>> Thank you. Next that's been all the attendance. Next, we go to Bob Robinson.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) I've been able to learn a lot. If they wanted to see (Speaker Away from Mic) BLM (Speaker Away from Mic) I do appreciate the opportunity that we could have our input. Thank you, Bob.

>> DAWN ROWE: Good morning. I am an elected official. I represent San Bernardino County as the district supervisor. I moved to the desert in 2023. My district I serve covers needles all the way down to Big River along the Colorado. I come out to Barstow; I drop down to Johnson Valley the Morongo Basin. I serve our mountain residents and I dropped down into a little bit of the valley for pickup population in the grand? area. Happy to be a new member of the DAC and love the desert.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> ED STOVIN: My name is Ed Stovin. desert basin and for San Diego off-road (Speaker Away from Mic) we still don't know how much we pay for our user fee. (Speaker Away from Mic) an area where people can use recreationally off-road and gather (Speaker Away from Mic) the turbine foundation is a 503C and (Speaker Away from Mic) BLM interested in more routes in an open area that can be used. You can see all the blue lines on here. Those are routes looked at by archaeologists even though it looks like a lot of lines there is a square here that marks a

mile admixed to it there is two lines across that whole square mile. So, I'd like to see more on the mat. And also give the route (Speaker Away from Mic) there's a lot of loops out there. (Speaker Away from Mic) army trail national monument and an update (Speaker Away from Mic) we have employee lobbyists, and we hired a new one last week. And we were talking about running a ROP or off-road vehicle. The Celt- (Speaker Away from Mic)

>>HANS HAAS: Thanks, Ed. Finally, Mr. Jack Thompson.

>> JACK THOMPSON: I'm the Wildlands Conservancy's Desert Regional Director, (Speaker Away from Mic) Whitewater Canyon conservation efforts. In the desert (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> SHELLY LYNCH: So, Karen our state director was appointed as California State Director in October 2019. During Karen's 32 years of public service, she served as state director for BLM's Eastern state office and the deputy assistant director for energy, minerals and Realty management. Karen is retiring in December, so Karen generously spent time with us before she retires. She is going to talk about new recreation strategies, and we may touch on the process. Or establishments. I know there are a variety of questions from a variety of DAC members. So, we wanted to talk a little bit about monument establishment processes and opportunities. So, with that I will hand it over to you.

>>KAREN MOURITSEN, California State Director: Okay. Can you hear me those of you online?

>>MATTHEW (Zoom tech): We can hear you, Karen, as long as you speak up like you are doing.

>>KAREN MOURITSEN: I will try to keep talking loudly. I will try not to talk forever. I will look at the clock here. (Speaker Away from Mic) I want to talk about we have three different plans I can talk about. If you want to put that one you just had there, that is the second one I'm going to talk about. Real fast, I wanted to touch on about two years ago, the BLM California state office recreation leads and some other people, looked at some of the BLM earlier strategic plans for recreation. And it was called connecting with unity. So, they put together a plan for an internal strategic plan for BLM California on how to keep making progress in our recreation program. And that plan was increasing training, and the training that dropped off a bit because of the pandemic stuff like that. And so, they had training sessions, in person training sessions that were great. And focusing on another big thing that plan laid out and they've been doing is focusing on the business plans which is where the field offices look at the developed sides and tried to figure out kind of the business of what improvements need to be made, should we charge, how much and it's kind of complicated.

Those are the business plans that are resource Council looks at when they are complete. And you all have to discuss and debate those before we can institute or raise fees. And so, in BLM California we've been doing a lot of that. I don't know if you've all had a discussion about the business plan.

So that's part of our BLM California strategic plan. And then, the summer, the BLM national office, released a strategic plan and this is the cover of it. It's called blueprint for the 21st century

recreation.

And they got a lot of input from people and a lot of input from within BLM and a lot of thinking about this. A lot of this came out of the issues of the fact that during the recreation on BLM lands dramatically increased. That document discusses it. It was like what are we going to do about this? I was one of the state directors working on this during the pandemic. I would tell them I tried to go hiking and I can't even get a parking place. On any of these BLM places.

So, and I sent the links for these documents to Kate, and I guess if you're putting events you want to look at these. But the BLM strategic plan, this really, they call it a blueprint. It is really setting out some kind of series that we want to try to think about as we plan recreation. It's not telling us perfectly to do a certain thing. And it's not making choices for certain types of recreation. But the strategic pillars listed there I will rattle through them quick. Grow and diversify resources we have for recreation. And that would be thinking about the partners, the technology, and figure out ways to grow and get more resources.

The next one would be to prioritize and embrace partnerships. All kinds of partnerships. The next one would be expanding our outreach to people and all kinds of people, even people who are traditional users or people who don't necessarily use public lands now. People who don't know how to use public lands. We found out a lot. Rescuing people is all hands-on deck to help people out there.

And so, we want to establish a culture of inclusion. And then the last one was to figure out ways to meet the demands. People are wanting to come. There's impact to the resources. We need to protect the resources and while we are doing that improve assets- access to the resources. So, this plan sets out the strategic pillars. And our strategic plan we put together; our state office people put together ours was before this, but it is- it meshes together. So, we need to look at the state office to alter our plan, but this is just setting out things for us to think about as we go forward.

A lot of the real issues that everyone talks about when they talk about these things is we just flat don't have a funding resource to help us do all the stuff. These are wonderful strategic ideas, but it all cost money. And we are not going to get it all by just raising fees. In the fees, you know, these are important, and they have their place, but the fees can't do it all. And in fact, we can't even collect fees unless we provide a certain number and certain kind of amenities. So, if he isn't the whole answer. We need appropriated funds. And so, everyone recognizes that. I just wanted to say that because sometimes I get frustrated with strategic plans. But we recognize that.

And then the third thing and I had a link for this one too. I sent a link to the strategy on the executive summary, but Congress authorized and establishment of a foundation of charitable foundation the National Park Service wildlife service and for service can have these charitable foundations for years like 20 or 30 years. The biggest one is NPT. And BLM has never had a charitable partner- foundation partner in a few years ago, Congress authorized that.

So, this administration has taken care of some of the stuff they had to do. When they establish a foundation and it's called a foundation for the betterment of public lands. And so, this summer they hired an executive director and now they have 2 or 3 board members and are

developing recruiting, so this foundation is just getting started. So, the first thing they've done they've already done is the blueprint foundation. There are several failings of program that BLM needs help with. Recreation, (Speaker Away from Mic) they are really trying to focus on the existing BLM- assisting the BLM and reaching out ways the BLM cannot. And one Primary Way is going to Congress and saying look Congress (Speaker Away from Mic). We are limited in how we do that. We can't go outside of the process.

So, they really started thinking about recreation and the pressures from the increased recreation. They host a public listening session. In person and virtual. Public listening sessions. And they have come out with a plan called opportunities for action. And this is a summary of that. Of course, they have already published this plan and some of the high-level points they are making here is this country needs to invest in the people and the systems both to help partnerships but also help the BLM. In other words, make more money.

So, they've said one of their things they are going to do is really assist in articulating the dates of BLM. (Speaker Away from Mic) so we are pleased that the foundation is really trying to hook into that. I realize this will take some time. It's not like we are going to get a whole bunch of money, but we really think there is a potential for them to really help us.

Another thing they are going to take on is (Speaker Away from Mic). There are things that we are constrained by the law they can say whatever they want about that program. So, we were talking about this at dinner last night about this program. But those are plans that are swirling around about recreation. I guess right now we hear in California at the field offices are still focusing on some of the things we can do such as the business plans. We been doing that all over the state. And just working on what we can as a resource.

>> SHELLY LYNCH: There are a couple things. Here in California a lot of times we are ahead of a lot of things that the state just put together a national conservation lands brochure. So, one way that we are already kind of ahead of the game and some of those pillars is the blueprint strategy. As another way we are including more barcodes so people can scan for information and if necessary, also be able to translate it on their phone and it's in another language. Those are some things are already implementing. With our partners as well as funds we get through headquarters at the state office level. We are starting to implement those things in our blueprint strategy.

>> Good. Thank you. We just got a contract for inflation.

>> This foundation do they have anything to do with the grant (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> I don't think so. I think that something else. For everyone else, we just put out the whole (Speaker Away from Mic) obviously, you will know but you have to apply for it. If you don't apply for this process, you have to wait for the next time around.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) expand services program. Is that the BLM program?

>> That is what this program is called. We call it the recreation visitor services program. Not just recreation program and so, we have a program lead, a lead person who works out of the state office. This is part of the bipartisan infrastructure law. Or maybe it's just appropriated.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> KAREN MOURITSEN: Other questions? Shelly and I had talked about the process for monuments. And there's two ways monument designation can happen. By Congress and by the president. The congressional usually it starts in Congress even if it ends of the president starts doing it. And what'll happen is the representatives or the Senators will introduce the proposal for a monument, and it might be different in the house or the Senate. But they will have a proposal and introduce these bills. And if the bills go to committee, there will be hearings. But once the congressman introduces their proposals, the public comments are any time. There is the congressman, and we talk to them. And for the DAC, you all can write a letter supporting, not supporting whatever you want. You all can, on a proposal that is in front of Congress. We don't comment until they have hearings. So, they might have hearings ones that go far they usually have hearings. And the hearings they usually have members of the public, they usually have NGOs, and they will usually ask the administrations. And that is when the BLM or the Department of Interior and we circulate this throughout the government so that is when the testimony or state would need to give the official administration about this. We don't take a look at this until the official process. But this council could take a position under your letterhead. And type it up.

So, we would justify, usually, if both the House and Senate approved the same BIL and they sent it to the president (Speaker Away from Mic) sometimes, these things- sometimes that can take years and if Congress doesn't start again, it will (Speaker Away from Mic). Sometimes it goes through, and it doesn't get in active so I guess I should say there's no-- process for this. But usually what we've seen is a Congress man or want more than one congressman will ask the president would you use the antiquities act to designate this. And then the president would typically ask one or more of the cabinet agencies to look at this. So, they would have interior and usually, the agency would say we need to think about this. Are there tribes. Are there industries. What are the impacts?

[Captioner Troubleshooting]

And the fact the Department of Interior listed a public meeting last Tuesday on that, I think it's Tuesday or Wednesday something like that. That is pertinent to the process. But we don't have- like the president doesn't just say should I do it or not. Because they want to see what everyone else and they want to weigh everything. So, if we were ever to get to a process like that some proposals in Southern California. There would be multiple opportunities for input so there would be articles to see what they were doing and most likely (Speaker Away from Mic)

>>SHELLY LYNCH: I think the thing (Speaker Away from Mic) these are grassroots proposals and because of that we don't go through a public input process like we would for an assessment decision for BLM. So, it's a different process. So, folks get confused about that they say why are we having these were having public meetings because it's not our proposal. It's not our decision. What is the other one. So, because it's not a BLM proposal, a grassroots organization or proposal isn't required to come to the DAC to get that feedback. It might be a good idea, but they don't have to. If they want backing, they may choose to do that. Also, there is

a process. So, if a grassroots organization or individual wanted to propose this obviously it would be in their best interest for a variety of stakeholders, so they are putting the best proposal forward based on input, but it's not required. So, if one someone wants to do a proposal based on what they wanted there's no requirement for that. But like Karen said, to it gets either to committee where they start doing those public meetings to get input. But certainly, if the DAC wants to be on something like that, the DAC similar to Mojave Trails National Monument in the DAC voting on it that's something I wanted to talk about. So, folks are clear on that. Because it can be confusing. Anybody have any questions in the DAC? Or comments?

>>RANDY BANIS: The Desert Advisory Council operates under a charter; it was just renewed recently. Thanks to the team for getting that done quickly and on time because without a charter in place, the desert advisory counter- counsel needs that. The charter touches on a number of subjects. Some of them I wanted to bring up at some point during the day but the one I would like to focus on is it's a very clear charter. I think it's really the best charter that we've seen. Because it provides answers that we didn't see clarity on before. One of the things the charter does, is explains to us exactly what our role is. And it's very simple. It's one of the shortest statements of the charter that is "to advise the designated federal officer to advise the DFO land on resource management plans."

So, I would advise I'm not a lawyer, I don't even play one on TV. I would advise if the DAC were to take a position on a monument proposal, that it should do so in the context of advising the BLM and how it will formulate any response it may be asked to provide either to the legislature during hearings or to the executive during conversations.

So, we wouldn't write our letter, per se, to a congressman, we are charter- are charter doesn't say we advise Congress. But I would advise to be strongest and most powerful would be to have that addressed to the BLM and the DFO as to how we feel on those kinds of proposals. That is just my recommendation for the group going forward.

>> ED STOVIN: (Speaker Away from Mic) I'm a little fuzzy on what we are talking about, for the proposal to expand.

>> KAREN MOURITSEN: There have been proposals out there. This is just one Chuckwalla. a new one and another new one in Amargosa and so yeah. I think that's why people were asking questions. And I was just using Berryessa National Monument as an example because there's a nice article that explains what they are doing.

>> So, they propose (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Yes.

>> Congressman or senator (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> SHELLY LYNCH: (Speaker Away from Mic) I don't know where Amargosa is in the process. I don't know that anybody's backed it yet.

>> RANDY BANIS: The Amargosa proposal is out of the Shoshone region seeking presidential proclamation they don't have a targeted senator to endorse it. The Chuckwalla, proposed Chuckwalla monument does have language in it, bill language that has been written outlining some of those provisions one big difference between- that I see between a

congressionally designated monument and a proclamation is that often time the build for congressionally designated monuments reflects specific accommodations or actions or will state what kinds of activities can be allowed in that monument. And often reflects the handshakes or agreements or understandings that stakeholders have coalesced around having conversations on the bill. For example, this is how Mojave Trails [National Monument] came about. When it specifically says in the bill it will allow rockhounding. They can do that in a bill. They can say what it can or can't do.

When a president writes a proclamation, it's a different kind of document. It's a document that expresses the cultural scientific values within that propose monument and specifies resources and objects and values that are to be protected. It doesn't say how it's going to be protected. It simply just describes those items and leaves it up to the land management agency to detail how those projections will be put into place in the land management and planning process. That is the case for example for Mojave Trails National Monument. It was part of a bigger package. Of a bill that had national recreation areas, wilderness study areas being converted to wilderness, wilderness study areas being released. Off-highway vehicle areas being designated by Congress. Lands given to National Park Service. It was a very comprehensive bill of 20 or so different components. And in that bill, the Mojave Trails National Monument was in there and it had rock hounding in there as allowed this will be your advisory committee because the committee will be made out of these interests. It went a long way in, again, detailing the stakeholder conversations and agreements and handshakes that were done during the crafting of the bill.

But toward the end of that administration's term in office, the president then acted on request by the California Senator, to pull that national monument designation out of the bill and designate Mojave Trails National Monument under a proclamation. When it did that it put all of those activity level planning conversations reflected in the bill, it kicked them all down the road into a management plan. So, you can't really predict as well. What a monument is going to look like or a management plan for a monument what it's going to look like out of a proclamation. You have more clarity of what it's going to look like if it goes through an act of Congress. So those stakeholders who propose national monuments, some of them choose to have a bill introduced but also have a second avenue asking the president to designated as well. And those are the two monument proposals. That can be designated.

>>HANS HAAS: Thank you. If there's nothing else, I think we need to move on to the next item. So, thanks for that great information.

Related to this, we have a presentation from Greg regarding DRECP.

>>GREG MILLER, Associate District Manager: I will try to stand up here and see what I can do. (Speaker Away from Mic) we've already had some planning (Speaker Away from Mic) hundreds of smaller environments (Speaker Away from Mic) and then there was solar development in the area that was on private junctions and solar utilities there they have since been taken away and then there's some dry lakes. Are you advancing the slides, Kate?

This starts with the renewable energy transmission initiative in 2007. What it did, a group of-

it was by the state of California and they decided they were going to look into areas because there was so much interest in more renewable energy and more power being brought to the basin and San Francisco there was interest in identifying paths where those transmission lines were going to be put to be able to support more development in the desert landscape. So, they were identifying where transmission projects would go and look at a way of using those designation of those future transition lines and expediting permanent site permitting.

So, what they came up with was what is called the competitive real energy zones. Or see our EZ's. Those were supposed to be to hold the capacity of 80,000 MW potentially statewide was 66,000 MW in the desert. You can go to the next slide. And this might be hard to see but it shows the planning that they were proposing. There is solar in the yellow lines those transmission corridors were proposing planning for transmission corridors. They were identifying hubs across the state that would kind of support transmission and also new energy development. The way to the hatch piece and then solar out in the desert center and applies the area. Next slide please.

>> Who did this?

>> GREG MILLER: The state of California. State- BLM got involved as well to provide guidance. During this time, there was some interest in energy being propose long everywhere and people were looking to place applications in the desert. So, the idea was an action team would get together and they started working on what they thought was going to be an inner agency plan across the entire state of California and into mostly the lower portion and ended up being down in the Southern California area. And those were the four agencies. And while the state was getting ready for 1.0, the real energy action team started working on the development of and including state and public lands.

So, during that time, also, there was a flood of rural energy proposals on BLM lands. There was 300 applications of utility scale wind and solar primarily solar people were coming out of garages, out of the woodwork to put in applications where they thought they control the land with applications and what they do is sell their application later to somebody else. So, with all the tax incentives and everything that came out for people to start developing renewable energy there was a flood of applications for federal lands. They were stacked in the same place 4 and 5 deep in some places because they were wanting a piece of this pie. They wanted a place where they could say hey, I've got this renewable energy project and how are you- how much are you going to pay me to take the energy off it. So, a lot of those folks I called them two guys in a garage because they were thinking about how we make money.

So, they would say hey let's do it this way will put an application down. We weren't requiring fees at that time. We were serializing and recording these applications left and right.

What that did, is it started the new initiation for the BLM and actually, when I came on board in 2008 here, we started as the tip of the spear for renewable energy development across the BLM. So as policy started, and we learned here in the desert about how to handle these applications we were to spell it- we were developing policy for headquarters. And that's when the coordination offices were established. So, Palm Springs was the first co-coordination office

established by then Sec. Salazar or maybe there was 1/2 a dozen of them one in Vegas, one in Phoenix, Palm Springs and maybe a couple other areas in Wyoming, Utah, and Colorado.

This is where we started getting teams put together to really kind of work on those applications. Next slide, please.

At the same time, the BLM said now we have these applications and they're going right away to the regulations; how do we plan for this onslaught of solar. So, the BLM and the Department of Energy, decided let's put together a programmatic solar development EIS. And that is what is referred to as the (name) solar plan. So, during 2008, 9, 10, 11 they made a plan together and started establish what is called the renewable energy zones. There were several proposed across Southern California, maybe 8 or 10 and ended up getting whittled down to the two that you have right now. What the idea was to assess the environmental impacts it only applied to those six Western states. All the ones you can read there in the bottom.

So, the solar energy BIAS identified 17 solar energy zones across the states. So, of course, we are in the Southern California at Riverside East, and these are those. That is the Riverside as it was published in the Western solar plan back in 2012 showing areas that are potential high visual sensitivity areas areas that are developable areas that are developable. There are some solar projects already in place like Genesis solar and Genesis sunlight those are already authorized and identify some areas that are something to look at. And then the solar energy zone which is now between Interstate 80 and 98 I think down by the border. Those are the two that are DFA's that we have right now that are more attractive.

So, in 2015, the state of California saw there was more interest in renewable energy. So, they increase their portfolio standard goal so when that happened, they developed 2.0. And it was more of a high level nonregulatory review in reviewing environmental issues and questions like what if we had this amount of energy developed in this hub. And it was based on more existing data in studies and use to inform regulatory processes and this is what 2.0 came up with. It was transition assessment. And they had hypothetical study ranges or how many megawatts you can get out of those focus areas.

So, it identified larger scale, larger looking more landscape looking planning and said here's how many megawatts we might be able to get out of this area and how many megawatts we can get out of this area.

It was getting more to identifying or guessing, really, where those renewable energy elements were coming and how much energy was going to come out of those areas to the public or to the cities. Next.

The TAF a like it says here, geographic areas with a mix of renewable energy. Assigned hypothetical study ranges for the potential of renewable energy development. They are assessed individually. So that is an assessment this is individually. In their use by environmental issues. And we are identifying with the Western solar plan which was coming up at the same time or at already been developed. We Artie had identification of resources and environmental impacts associated with that already. So, we will be able to help with those better and help them with more information. This is what this looks like. This is Section 368 core door of the energy policy

act of 2005. And it helped identify where those transmission projects are going to be happening across Southern California and up north. And those Section 368 core door still exist today. And the amendment to those is a plan.

All this, as you can see our RETI 1.0 and 2007 our team started developing a large-scale plan for the entire state of Southern California and a solar plant can help inform a lot of that. The REA team and then RETI 2.0 and 2015 all fed into what we have now so why the DRECP? There was significant energy and climate change goals both in the state and the federal government. We saw that we wanted to have rural development and conservation altogether in the plan because we didn't just want to say the Western solar plan and the wind plan. We wanted to look at where in the whole area wetlands were for what. Next. So, the DRECP had two goals. One was the ecosystem function and the other was to provide areas with streamlined site removals real energy products and it covered 22.5 million acres and that's the outline you can see on the right there. Mostly, in the California desert conservation area it also included Bishop and Bakersfield BLM.

There was 10 million acres of BLM land in those areas being considered for this. During this time, and prior to the publication in 2016, the state agencies both the California commission and the California Department of Fish and Wildlife dropped out. So, in end up being a plan just for federal lands. In the special wildlife service was involved. And everything now was just for federal lands, BLM lands and state lands did not have any designations put on those. There was a lot of things going on at the time. We were working with seven different counties in the counties what an input on what areas of the county wanted to be designated as what. There also going through their general plans, the counties were so they wanted to make sure that was in line so in 2008 it was a good way to be having everyone involved. And then it looks like we are going to match up all at once. So, when the state agencies dropped out and the counties dropped out, the BLM was almost there so we decided to push ahead. And just really quick the DRECP amended three plans. The California conservation area and we always have to remind folks that the California desert conservation area plan is our plan and we amended that. So, there are still layers upon layers upon layers and California does the conservation area plan like hundred and 69 times since 1980. And this was one of the latest ones here.

And then the amendment was the energy and resource conservation. So, things that are outside the scope grazing, mineral development, OHV recreation areas and wild horse and burro. We look at managing those areas where those issues in the DRECP, so they continue to be managed on existing plans or amended. Then we have three renewable area designations in the desert.

Development focus areas those are areas for where we want folks to concentrate where the BLM to concentrate and we incentivize that to make it, so they are more streamlined when we go through the process. So normally there's not a plan for that so there's not a lot of distance for what they must do. And the various process lands there some streamlining but whatever the streamlined is it follows the Western solar plants in various process. And the Western solar plan had the same designation. And solar energy zones. The various process lands were designated

somewhere those out in the desert and anytime renewable energy application goes on that we go to the Western solar plan to follow that process. And then general public lands. The only thing about the variance process lands is sometimes it requires-- and sometimes it doesn't. It just depends on what's being cited. The general public lands are available for renewable energy there's no streamlining. There's always land use. So, for the BLM and Brandon will talk about this later too. We are working on focus areas first then the general public lands. So, if anyone comes in with general public lands, we say here's our priorities and when we get to you, we will get you next.

The other thing that keys land allocations were done is we identified what's called the California desert allocation lands. Those are outside wilderness areas outside of wilderness study areas outside of rivers. So, we identified other lands in the desert that are national conservation lands for the desert. We have areas of critical environmental concern. We have wildlife allocations and that does not need the ACE criteria. Then we have extensive recreation management areas to protect a variety of uses out there. And generally, renewable energy to make those as close as possible.

This gives you an idea of how many acres were set aside for each of those. So, we have in development, there's about 400 and what? 428,000 acres or something like that? And in natural conservation lands there's 320. That's why it's called the desert renewable energy conservation plan. Next.

Along those lines, there's a bunch of what's called conservation management actions. That avoid, minimize and compensate for those development policies. There are several of them. There is the amendment wide CMA, ecological and cultural, recreation and renewable energy.

So, every time an individual or government wants to cite renewable energy development on BLM lands, they have to look at what these CMAs are, and they have to meet those. They have to be in compliance with CMA's or tell us why they can't and make a justification why they aren't able to, or it just doesn't go anywhere. And there's layers, upon layers, upon layers of CMA's. Eight DFA and a CMA might have different CMA's they might have cultural, might have all those. So, they have to make sure they are meeting all those conservation managements. Next. That's it. We are still working on it. We're still getting some things. Like you said, that was 15 minutes? And the document was like 50,000 pages long. It's big. Yeah. It's like 12 pounds. Or more. So, we're still getting applications. People are becoming more interested in general public lands. I think there is still a push to get more renewable energy out more carbon free not just in the future. We are working with states on a be 100 which is their attempt to cite renewable energy development on private, public and state lands and stuff like that. So, we are working with them on best places to do that. They have to meet their goal. California has to be 100% of goals by 2045 I think it is. So, the BLM is working to do that with them as well. Trying to help them meet those goals at the same time. At the same time the federal government has to come up with 25,000- how many, Brandon?

>> I don't remember.

>> But we have to come up with it to but it's like 20 or 25,000 MW within the next 10 or

20 years. Any questions from the DAC?

>> HANS HAAS: I have a question for you (Speaker Away from Mic) I'm curious if the DRECP faced legal challenges?

>>GREG MILLER: I don't recall that we've had any real legal challenges. This was a plan that was developed, and I have to say a lot of our organizational groups actually helped us with this. Helped us with the state develop it. And they were involved a lot and what we could put where. So, a lot of those groups that would challenge BLM public planning or something like that were on board. Which was really nice to hear. It was nice to see. As a matter fact, we were going to- there was a plan in the previous administration, to amend the DRECP or do another plan, called the Desert Plan Amendment, and that's when we started seeing some trouble. Because people were saying we spent six years or 7 years on this. We spent a lot of time working on this and we like it. Why are you changing it?

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> That's another thing.

>> SHELLY LYNCH: Everyone was against it. (Speaker Away from Mic) I've never seen stakeholders so united. (Speaker Away from Mic) with missions so united as they were in that. In fact, they said don't mess with the DRECP and they heard us and did not include the DRECP in the solar plan. (Speaker Away from Mic) just phenomenal the way stakeholders came together for plans.

>>GREG MILLER: It helped to have I think the impetus was started by the Department of California Fish and Wildlife and they were the individuals who were actually kind of kickstarting this and moving it through the process. BLM jumped on. And then after a while BLM took over and we ended up with this.

>> KAREN MOURITSEN: Did you have any public meetings? 60?

>>GREG MILLER: The state director at the time went around to the entire state with commissioners from the energy commission promoting the plan saying this is what's going to happen. And that was a huge turnout at every one of those public meetings. It was really good. Really good public input across the entire state. I think there was one up in Joshua tree- not Joshua tree- there was a big one up there and would port by Pioneer city, Pioneer Town. There was one close to there. So, they were hitting everyplace they could.

>> Thank you. (Speaker Away from Mic) I'm curious about the (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> It's my understanding that if Congress doesn't take precedence over the DRECP than that monument takes precedence.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> GREG MILLER: Yeah. Am I right, Karen? Does that make sense?

>> KAREN MOURITSEN: That is correct. (Speaker Away from Mic) I would say I want to protect these scientific interests. That's why these monument proposals take so much discussion to get to the part where I don't know we want to do that. (Speaker Away from Mic) how much we want to mash or not mesh and then how to list the objects and values.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> If the proclamation for the wilderness it pretty much stays the same.

>> BRANDON ANDERSON: It really depends on how the proclamation overlaps if the proclamation or bill says you can't do solar here BLM will then have to do land planning
(Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Yeah.

>> GREG MILLER: Any other questions from DAC members? All right. Thank you much.

>> HANS HAAS: We are a little bit early. We have a break coming up so let's go to our break and continue at 10:45.

>> Testing, testing, testing.

>> Can everyone wrap up the conversation we are going to get started in a bit. Sorry, to folks on the phone for yelling.

>> You are fine. It wasn't too bad. Brandon, do you want to test your screen share?

>> Yes. Sorry. You should be seeing a picture of a map.

>> Yes.

>> Good deal.

>> All right, everybody. Thank you and welcome back.

>> BRANDON ANDERSON: Good morning, everybody. I am Brandon Anderson I am acting manager for the Palm Springs field office my day job when I am not in the detail, I am the assistant district manager for project support team and that is built up of project managers and other team members that work on major projects including renewable energy.

I'm going to do a quick overview of the projects in the area we have renewable energy interest currently within Palm Springs. If you have questions in other field offices, I will do my best to answer but I might rely on other field managers for that.

To kind of dive in, the area that you see in pink in here, this is Riverside County. To the east is the Arizona border and this is all within Riverside. So, this is daughter and center. All the pink is a development focus and as Greg was talking about these are areas that BLM through the land-use planning project that's land where we want to build our renewable energy portfolio.

There have been quite a few applications that have been permitted that BLM is currently working on. This will give you a quick staff. There are currently nine projects, nine solar projects that were permitted prior to the DR EPT coming into effect or our legacy product where we had substantial work done before the DRECP was signed.

Most of those are the projects you see in green here. I will go quickly through them. We had desert sunlight, desert harvest, Genesis, Arlington, McCoy, Weiss, desert quartzite and Crimson. Those are the projects that BLM had permitted prior to the DRECP coming into effect. There are three projects we've done so far in palm springs that have been done. That would be your (name) solar project and Erika and victory pass those are the three that we have under DRECP. That is a total of 12 projects. They produce about 4100 MW of wind. They are complete in construction. There are four projects under construction. There is close to being complete. At the end of the year what they are targeting for their commercial operation dates and the other to his Crimson

solar project and the desert quartzite project.

So, we started permitting a lot of these projects back in 2008 or 2009 timeframe. And reaching the most recent decisions there in 2021. So, most of those projects are coming online and are producing power.

So, in terms of projects in the queue, what we have targeted there are four projects that we are active working on. Primarily, it's within the desert center area. We have the Sapphire project. There's a mix of public and private lands. And then we have the lichen solar project south of I ten. And the Redondo project north of I ten. Maybe a bit of context on why we are seeing so much development in this area versus other places in the desert. Largely, due to one, the availability of land suitable for solar so it has fairly flat topography we have transmission lines capable of taking on renewable energy.

There are two substations permitted back in the 2009 or 2011 timeframe that were geared toward bringing large-scale solar projects online. So, you have the red substation near the center and on the Colorado River substation near white.

Getting towards BLM, the DRECP says BLM you will work on BFA projects ahead of any other land-use identification whether it be the variance process lands or general public lands.

So that is another reason why we are seeing so much development and concentration in this area. Because we have a high concentration of DFA land that are altogether that has the transmission.

So, in terms of total megawatts what we currently have in the future projects there's about 7700 MW of renewable energy that can come out of the area that's under the application right now. We have five more projects waiting for BLM to put into the queue. It's in terms of staffing capacity and ability to dedicate resources to those projects we don't have the time, at least right now.

I will stop there to see if there's questions before I start.

>> Can you repeat this 7700 MW house for what? (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> So, the 7700 is everything we could rudely have proposed for under application. So that's everything that's built were being proposed to be built. So, there's a lot- there's areas within the DFA that are being developed for various reasons- I apologize- so using the three projects that we have recently permitted under the DRECP you can see the green areas are the fence lines of these projects. You will see gaps between the fence line and that was a product of the DRECP we have woodland that the project needed to avoid. The application was much larger and through the DRECP we worked with applicant to narrow down where there's project could be cited so resources that the DRECP says we have to avoid. Micro Phil is one and we see circular cutouts here in the northern part of Erika. Those were the sensitive plants that the project had to do a quarter-mile setback for to avoid those plants.

So not all of the areas within the pink will be developed because of the implementation of the DRECP itself. And there are areas prohibited from renewable energy in that vicinity including this kind of spotty land status appear. That is our national scenic landscapes which don't allow renewable energy.

So, we had a project that had a proposal that overlapped that. We worked with these as suitable for renewable energy. They had to revise it before BLM would even consider it.

I guess another topic the DRECP also excluded a lot of areas from renewable energy and consideration in the plan. That is included in the Coachella Valley. That is the Western Valley part it was not included in the DRECP. We have interest in proposed projects, but we've determined they are in conformance with the Coachella Valley land use plan amendment, so they've subsequently moved and modified their proposals. Any other questions?

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> According to SCE, right now people are doing the 500 KB lines because it has a larger capacity. A lot of projects when they interconnect into the substation maybe background on that the power is distributed the California Edison's utility systems. They have substations which you can think of as a plug. So, a project is plugging into the utility network itself. Most of the projects have used a 230 so the smaller KB lines. There is capacity on the 500 KB, so we are seeing more projects interconnect because they are open based, and that infrastructure is available. Estimating they have capacity for the rest of the projects within the DFA without the need for expansion.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Yes. That's part of our national scenic landscape's lands. So, the (name) Mountains it's the splotchy. You see on the screen that is all part of that system which prohibits renewable energy from being developed. Greg alluded to us have a 3608/4 for utility that overlaps those two and there are transmission lines that go through. But for the most part renewable energy isn't allowed except south of I tend you have the solar project on DFA land.

>> Other questions?

>> Hey, Brandon. Could you do us a favor on the virtual side and repeat questions you get.

>> Sure. The last question was is their renewable energy development allowed south of I-10 such as in the chuckwalla mountains and the answer is no because the DRECP says we can't do renewable energy on those types of land. Are there other questions in the chat I'm missing?

>> If there's no more questions thank you very much.

>> Appreciate it. Thank you, everyone.

>> We are a little bit ahead of schedule at this point. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) national Monument. So, when the national monument is- those things in the polygon become NLCS lands. So, one thing I look at when I see the proposed national monuments on the table, is what are they seeking to protect and is that already protected?

You may have heard of the administration's goal is called 30 x 30 its conservation by 2030. So, when I see a proposed national monument that is by and large already covered by an LCS designation for the DRECP it's not going to add that much extra acreage to that goal.

And so, what it could do though is there are other polygons on the map that overlap the LCS. For example, the recreation destinations. A lot of those designations was alluded to before. They were crafted to compromise agreements among the stakeholders. So those of us were deeply

involved in that process, feel that we already have these arguments and deals, and these are the lands that are protected.

And some of the proposals seem to be rehashing those discussions and arguments again. But in ways that won't take into consideration for example, the recreation destinations. So that's what I look at carefully is the DRECP, the way I look at it is different sauces slathered over the map. An interesting exercise is to look at the DRECP area and take one of the designations and see where that is. Then you click the ACEC, and you see that overlapping much of the and CLS. And there's a whole bunch of other spots.

Then you click on the two recreation designations, and you see those going on top of the NLCS and the ACEC and filling out everything else that was not covered. And so, what I saw DRECP as was, essentially, a giant zoning blind you might see in your city or community this is residential this is mixed-use.

And so, there are a lot of those layers on top of each other. But the one that is the most restricted his conservation efforts trump the other layers below it. Not all of the conservation but just the specific management actions. Because an NLCS will have the set of management actions recreational have another set and so it's only with a specific management of those zones conflicts with another do we go with the most restrictive.

So, it's really, in some ways, I thought it was a brilliant way of putting it down and layering it down. It's like a light bulb goes off and sometimes if there's going to be a proposal for a national monument one of the beauties of DRECP is many of the resources, objects and values that might be pointed out are already protected by the DRECP. It's not like the agency doesn't know these things exist. They know they are there. It would just be those resource objects of value that need extra help or protection. So, it's excellent that the bureau has to make in management plan for a monument nominated by the president they don't really start with an empty whiteboard. They can fall back already on decisions that have been made for the DRECP layers. So, when I evaluate a conservation proposal, the simple claim is it's to protect the desert.

I don't think there's anyone here that disagrees with that. With that desire to protect the desert. But it's very important that if you're going to protect something, you should know what it is you are protecting. Just saying I want to protect my house. What are you protecting it from? Flood? Wind? Thieves? Each one of those has a different set of restrictions for how you're going to protect it.

So, I like to drill down deeper and challenge the proponents of some of these monument proposals and find out what is it exactly or wanting to protect and from what and see if a monument designation will even provide that. If someone is going to claim the national monument designation over a law enforcement presence is to address off-road travel by OHD, that's a very large hammer to be using to protect lands from off-road travel. It will really result in more law enforcement in the field office as the positions filled and that's all they've got.

And on your big weekends and Thanksgiving may be down in the Imperial sand dunes, you can see or heal the hammers for example. All the law enforcement from the desert district and either other district or states on detail to watch over those hundreds of thousands of people that

are there for those events.

You're really probably not going to see a Ranger in the deep dark backcountry looking for people who are crossing into wilderness when they should be.

So, the practical side of what one is trying to accomplish, and a monument proposal is what I focus on the most in evaluating my support on.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) the different things they're taking into account.

>> I believe so. I don't think the blueprint for recreation is going to push aside the DR and PC. I think the blueprint is going to go over goals and objectives that they really have to go back to the DRECP in the conservation management acts of those and evaluate those proposals against what the plan says you can and can't do.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) what ought to be looked at individually or equally.

>> Exactly. And that is why our national monument one of the things we did was try to visit as many of the stated resource values as we could. There were 34 or 36 dots on the map that directly pulled from the president's proclamation. These are 35 or 36 dots on the map called out and we saw 30 of them. And that is a lot. It's more field trips. Because those are the ones that really the focus is going to be on and go to the drawing board and create management actions for.

That's really a focus. I think it's good the agency has these individual management plans to fall back on, so they don't always have to start with a blank piece of paper when they are going to write a management plan or management actions.

>> Sorry about the early lunch.

>> Any other comments on this? All right. I think we are on lunch, and we will reconvene at 12:30.

Testing testing testing. This is a test of closed captions.

>>SHELLY LYNCH: Welcome back, everybody, from lunch. There are some logistics from this morning. The restrooms are all the way down to the right. So, if you go all the way down this hall to the right. Okay. So, so just some state director of dates and we will go around to the field offices for updates. I wanted to cover some personal stuff that's going on. We did mention earlier Mike is retiring at the year Greg is retiring at the end of the year. Some other key positions. So right now, there's the Palm Springs - South Coast field office. Those are open right now-- for El Centro we have Sal Nieblas he is one of normally our state law enforcement rangers from Sacramento. We are hoping that will be after the first of the year.

What else. The deputy district manager behind Greg again we made a selection, and we are in the approval process and that person will be starting after the first of the year as well. We did lose Noel, our Mojave Trails National Monument Manager. She got a job in the Nevada state office.

>>SHELLY LYNCH: It is on the street. Too many. (Speaker Away from Mic) so that position is open. Okay. That is updates on a personal front. So, I'm going to hit highlights from the state director's report year. Bear with me as a scroll down to my notes. Regarding

infrastructure updates the 2022 PLM capital has received 22 million for projects. BLM California received an additional 6 million infrastructure funding in 2023. That is statewide. We do usually get a share of that money. BLM also has a structure project in California including a broadband initiative to spread broadband access across the state. The Burlington Northern San Francisco railway project in Los Angeles and Long Beach-- and the bright line project in Los Angeles and Las Vegas.

I'm not going to talk about renewable energy because Brandon covered a lot of that what's going on. The 60th anniversary of the Wilderness Act is next year so that's exciting. So, we have a recognition planning team has been established so there will be a variety next year to celebrate that. 2021 is officially the official anniversary of the protection act. So as Brandon mentioned this morning, we will probably have celebration activities on that as well.

We talked about the public lands rule last time. That is geared to be finalized in the spring. I can't remember. It's in the spring. And just to go over that proposal is consistent with other strategies used by state land management agencies to ensure the federal government has tools to identify areas in need of restoration or conservation as well as the ability to help balance development by increasing access to outdoor recreation and putting (Speaker Away From Mic) other uses consistent with the BLM's mission and building on historic investments of public lands and energy provided by the infrastructure law to prioritize lands and waters for habitat restoration for species we are proposing a rule for conservation leasing also for the federal land policy to facilitate restoration work on public lands in cooperation with partners.

The proposed rule includes other land management agencies such as U.S. Forest Service and ensure their agency is accessible to help plans with forest and wildlife habitat.

I think that was it for the state level. So, with that we will move to the field office for field office updates and less people have questions on the state. Okay. We will start with Barstow.

>>MARC STAMER, Barstow Field Manager: Good afternoon. So, on a personal front we have additional turnover (Speaker Away from Mic) so with that we also have supervised law enforcement position some of you all met Julie yesterday, our assistant manager for lands and resources. We are glad she's here and working and the good news is our assistant manager for recreation started on our team so excited to have that.

Doc is retiring so that's going to be huge change in leadership. Across the Barstow field office. So sad to see him go. And (name) is detailed behind him to fill that leadership, if you will, and has already started the transition this last week. So, trying to plug the holes as we can. So, we are currently working trying to get positions filled. We are currently focused on (Speaker Away from Mic). One other thing you heard about is our chief ranger. He was recognized this last week so that was a big thing that happened. So, it was really cool to see him recognized (Speaker Away from Mic) operations planning being able to get you this time around a business plan. I just wasn't able to get the plan done in time for everything else. So that's on me. I apologize. But it's something were still working toward. We've had several- it's a crazy season (Speaker Away from Mic) interests have been because of the state highway closure. We've had a thousand plus people over the holiday, and we had maybe seven, so it was a big change that also

impacts our future. So that is another unintended- I would say consequence, but they are escorting on (Speaker Away from Mic) folks that don't want to continue to go down south so we are thinking Christmas, and it might be bigger to have restrictions. So, we are on the increase for the Christmas holidays.

Johnson Valley shared use is going to go into effect February 15th through the 27th and August 15th-26. Those are out and (Speaker Away from Mic) 40 days out we started out in January and February. So, the planning for that is ongoing now. The other thing we are focusing on is (Speaker Away from Mic) so that's one of the big things (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> To have your areas are (Speaker Away from Mic)? I understand that she is not had the expenditure before. I know that (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> I will be catching up. I apologize I haven't done that.

>> I understand you have staff issues for particular offices. You can turn over people and you don't know why you're picking up speed and it's a challenge. So yeah.

>> Just to give you guys a bigger picture of what Barstow's been dealing with they've had a field manager and three assistant field managers underneath, so the deputy field manager and the two assistants are vacant. So, Mark has to fill all the leadership. Since June. At least for the last six months is the only leadership. In addition, he's had no Realty specialists except (name) who is doing her best so just to give you a flavor of the challenges that Barstow is dealing with. So, if things have been slower you don't have to make excuses (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Any other questions for Mark? Okay. Carrie?

>>CARRIE SAHAGUN, El Centro Field Manager: I feel your pain, Mark. I wasn't going to go into gory details but maybe I will share we have a lot of vacancies and leadership. We are hoping a field manager will be filled soon. (Speaker Away from Mic) and also covering our recreation chief has gone to our field manager for quite a while. We also have no outdoor recreation planners at this point. We have one person covering our (Speaker Away from Mic) it's been challenging. These are real struggles that we do with down here. But yes. Making progress. Working with HR and state office facilities. It's in better shape I wanted to talk about a couple things.

We didn't put in the docket. One is the front plan at the southern end of the Salton Sea. That's been in the works for about three years. The last few years are fully under construction and it's about 4000 acres. (Speaker Away from Mic) deal with the recession on the shoreline so it will be habitat for fish, (Speaker Away from Mic) and a series of ponds (Speaker Away from Mic) so we can take advantage of each of those and about 4000 acres and BLM has 500, 600 acres out there. A lot of private land and Army Corps of Engineers is on that. We are working really closely with the state of California who is a project proponent and is getting in on that. They're getting to fill up all those (Speaker Away from Mic) a mix of the water that they're going to put into those ponds, and they did the correct solidity in the habitat for all of those (Speaker Away from Mic) in the Salton Sea as well as (Speaker Away from Mic).

So then on Thursday, they just had a ceremony out there because under the Biden administration they just put 170 million out there so there's (Speaker Away from Mic) acres for

the project (Speaker Away from Mic) that is really exciting. There will be another several thousand acres so we will be there every step of the way. Let's see. We also are representing the Salton Sea for the 10-year management plan (Speaker Away from Mic), so we have about 2000 acres so very exciting.

The other thing I wanted to mention is national Park trail. The Park Service has put out a series of meetings starting in January for public input. So that is (name), and (name), that was designated in January 2023. And it's writing a contract to get (Speaker Away from Mic) from the Missouri area out West. Anyway, they just designated this, and they are working on a management plan for the trail. Because it's over 50,000 miles long. But anyway, these public meetings are coming up. And (Speaker Away from Mic) one in Arizona in January and further up in California. (Speaker Away from Mic) so for our office we have about (Speaker Away from Mic) but our little piece of the national park trails. That will be a second national-- (Speaker Away from Mic) lastly, there is an invitation from the highway closure issues at Dumont on visitation (Speaker Away from Mic) Thanksgiving wasn't as much. It was about 15%. So, we are expecting quite a bit and it's been a struggle. We are all hands-on deck out there in the dunes so lots of people to come out, 150,000. So that's a challenge. (Speaker Away from Mic) the invitation.

>> We have a present for you.

>> That would be good. That is, it for my report out.

>> Hi, (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> There is on the National Park website. A lot of our park overlaps with the Bautista trail.

>> If you are reporting on the (Speaker Away from Mic) the list (Speaker Away from Mic) agency protecting the lizard on the list and the (Speaker Away from Mic) I would appreciate that. Third, is there any progress on the get go for the station?

>> CARRIE SAHAGUN: Probably not. Yes. We did go out to look at construction earlier this year and it was significantly higher than our intervention would allow us to accept.

(Speaker Away from Mic) we've reevaluated a few things so it might already be out and check. (Speaker Away from Mic) if it's not out already we are going to put out data and hopefully, they will come in. (Speaker Away from Mic) we are excited to get that budget started.

>> All right. (Speaker Away from Mic) if you need any help (Speaker Away from Mic) on the weekend it's a mad house. (Speaker Away from Mic) a challenge for finding out some of the time and then (Speaker Away from Mic) so to be able to not have people standing around is huge. (Speaker Away from Mic) I think you for that.

>> Any other questions?

>> Sometimes, the agency is under orders to cut expenses and there's been issue sometimes with filling positions. Is there anything right now with your positions? To get your candidates is that what it is?

>>SHELLY LYNCH: There's a number of issues or challenges. We have everything from HR does the best they can to get those announcements as fast as they can. But just the list is so long we have a special group of HR people that look at vacancies because there's so many.

So, we prioritize those on a weekly basis. Because they are changing. But there's also the challenges that by the time we get the announcement out to the time we get the certs; a lot of times candidates have gotten other jobs, so it reduces our candidate pool.

There are folks that have to go through a background check and if they don't make it to the background check sometimes just people don't want to work in certain locations, we get that a lot. So, we are trying to get creative with HR to look at other hiring mechanisms that they have hiring fairs. There's going to be one in San Diego either this month or next- next month. I can't remember where it is to try and get folks on a more streamlined hiring on those certain positions so we can get some of those vacancies filled faster. And boost routes. Hiring is big priority events for they get to talk to hundreds of people and interview them right there and processes applications, so you are condensing those steps into one event.

We are looking at doing that. I've talked to HR about having hiring in San Diego to try and fill some of the things in central. So, we are trying really hard with different things available to us to fill those faster to get folks in those positions.

>> Thank you.

>> So, with all these vacant staff positions that's a lot of might not- a lot of money not being spent. (Speaker Away from Mic) does the state recover some of those funds for people who are unemployed? Is at least for your budget if you don't have the staff?

>> SHELLY LYNCH: It does in that regard. Greg is the budget guy. So, correct me if I say anything wrong.

I think the trickier thing is (Speaker Away from Mic) we don't have a budget. So, when we get the budget, either the state is saying or sometimes the budget we get is reduced. We have to take that into consideration. There's also the thing that that we want more money in our federal paychecks on the other hand now we have to turn around and figure out how were going to manage so we have a 4% increase in our salaries which is great, and I think there was an increase on top of that. So, if you're looking at 70% increase in people's paychecks although I loved taking them an additional 7% it creates a headache for me for budgeting for our staff because now, I have an instant 7% reduction. I have to account for additional 7%. So those are some of the challenges we have to balance between agencies, the budget the projected budget and we have to try to balance all of that. And that's on top of everything else. And it includes that kind of thing. So, it is a challenge trying to figure that out.

>> You did well. The only other thing I can say is (Speaker Away from Mic) certain individuals (Speaker Away from Mic) that we don't support so the permitting side of things (Speaker Away from Mic) that's only a three-year time and then the district absorbs into that. So how are we going to replace who are not going to hire to make sure (Speaker Away from Mic), so we have that position filling that spot all the time.

>> Yeah, short term.

>> SHELLY LYNCH: I have one thing for Carrie. Just received the director's service award. (Speaker Away from Mic) those are for recognizing employees with outstanding stewardship and conservation restoration. [APPLAUSE] It's a pretty big deal.

>> She's representing nationally. Thanks. Any other questions for Carrie? Okay. Needles.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) really (Speaker Away from Mic) get to the bottom. With our arrangements. (Speaker Away from Mic) additionally, we were asked to host a minerals geologist position. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Mike there are people struggling to hear you if you could speak up louder.

>> Okay. So,

>> Mike is getting a mic.

>> MIKE AHRENS: Yeah, that is a critical minerals positions where we work on various mineral actions on the critical mineral list. We arty have the MP minerals which is a mind up a mountain pass and there actually anticipating-- that will be his initial bread and butter and we are sure what the zone is. I expect faulty state and (Speaker Away from Mic) in this area itself. We just made a selection, or an offer anyway for our second Realty person which is also our current Realty person current geologist are oversubscribed. So, we will be adding to that a little bit. See those guys that backlogged workload will start to go faster and hopefully, there will be less stress on those positions too. So pretty excited about that.

Wanted to talk about two projects that are actually in report. First regarding the (name) project. And specifically, what I would like to talk about is what we are and are not doing. That name and the project specifically there were water project always gets (Speaker Away from Mic) concerned about what that's about. So that's not what we are working on. We don't have an application for that project. So that's not what we are doing.

What we are working to do, and you'll probably see a decision here maybe in a month is to assign the existing rights that oil and natural gas has to the new owners of that piece of pipe. That piece of pipe they refer to is an organ pipe, 217 miles about 71 miles is on public land. It's actually capped on both ends and has been out of commission for ten years. So, what they're really looking for is the ability to continue the Phonic protection on that and didn't make an asset of functional asset. So, we will give them the ability to do that. We will also make it more than just encouraging them in the next year's for the purpose of the pipe because we have the mineral leasing act assignment. So that means they should be finding a business venture to deliver natural gas or oil or some other mineral product. Utilizing that pipeline. You will see that coming here soon, I think. And when you do that is what that's about. Okay. Fairly administrative action actually but there's a lot of it catching just because of the other project.

Want to talk a little bit about Mojave Trails National Monument plan leaving that was a bit of a shock. But what actually worked out quite well because those positions were announced we will have a manager soon but also, we were able to get to project managers from Brandon's group there to actually help us get some of their time folks on that plan. They are doing a great job splitting up that workload it's a much better model than have that dumped on one person.

And so, the plan is actually moving pretty well right now. We've gotten all of our contracting done the contractors are fully engaged and we have a more complete analysis of a manager situation in the next few weeks, and we have that document there which is foundational in the plan that's the current management for those on the same piece of land. It will be fundamental

when they move into the development of the alternatives which are scheduled to start in early February.

We also have an outline science strategy so that is underway.

It seemed like there was one other- which escapes me right now. Oh. Also, we have the culture resource surveys. That contract is buttoned up and going. We had our kickoff meeting with that two weeks ago, so I think the plan is in good hands and moving smartly along.

Not sure, I think we are hoping to start with- we are talking about summer for an initial either draft or at least- I think we talked about going around the alternatives to get feedback on that. Before we get things finalized in the draft plan still. Otherwise, that is all I really have.

>> Questions?

>> ED STOVIN: I'm really sad to see Noel leaving. I was part of the Mojave Trails National Monument subgroup, and I rode in the car with her to look at the various objects of value that we looked at. I don't know. I thought she had her head on her shoulders and knew what she was doing. This kind of loss. If you need any help with your alternatives, I am happy to read stuff and give feedback.

>> Okay. Thank you.

>> BRANDON ANDERSON: (Speaker Away from Mic) we are at a 15% vacancy rate. Shelly mentioned the manager is currently vacant but the other two we've been really trying to fill is our environmental planning coordinator to help orchestrate all of our projects as well as one of the ability specialists we are working on hiring (Speaker Away from Mic) on that position. At Santa Rosa San Jacinto Mountains National Monument, there's a couple things going on there. One is we are anticipating going out on notice. For those on the field visit yesterday we talked about no entry and the constructions. So that notice is on its way, and we are hoping that gets published soon. Essentially, it's a continuation on the no dogs and public entry for that one segment in the wetlands.

It's been in effect since the monument started. It's not necessarily changing anything is just a continuation. BLM, so all of the mountains Highway 74 runs through it. We have quite a bit, unfortunately, car crashes that can't be recovered. But we are working on we completed a survey of the debris (Speaker Away from Mic), and the next step is to go out using that information and get a contractor to pull out that debris that should be happening next year assuming we have the funding to go along with that.

On a happier note, we are starting the 25th anniversary planning for the monument. We missed the 20th anniversary due to COVID, so we are planning for the 2025. What did make it into the report we have the river plan for (Speaker Away from Mic) that just closed on December 3rd. BLM and Forest Service are looking at public comments and will go through the forest service rejection. Mac and make decisions. Hopefully, sometime in the second or third quarter of 2024.

In Morongo we have the Morongo communication tower. We initiated scoping in July 2022. That period is closed. BLM has been going through those comments and we just received an updated EA as well as the biological technical report. We are waiting for funding from the

company that is funded, and we are waiting for initial funding, but we will continue review on that. And then in terms of the OHV area, we have the scoping completed in July 2022. We are working on baseline surveys and information that goes into development. One of the things we are struggling with is we've had no preparation planner in the office for some time. But we just hired two of them, so they are getting up to speed. We are working on right now soil surveys for the EA, and we are developing alternatives. So as staff and funding come along, we are working on that.

On the solar front there's a really high-level overview I wanted to touch base on two projects that we are going to have public input on. So, we just completed public scoping on Ely, and we are developing alternatives and preparing the environmental assessment. We should have a draft of that sometime in the first or second quarter of next year.

And then the solar project in the same general area they are preparing to do scoping for the next week or two we are working through the final approvals for that. And then to projects we have (Speaker Away from Mic) we are looking for more information on them. One is mainstage which is, essentially, when the authorization for the border wall was revoked, they had outstanding projects that hadn't been completed. So, what we are working on both the border patrol is to shore up some of the work they had to halt which includes erosion and also working on things or have completed. In the surveillance of the border patrol is interested in putting up, essentially, sights on wheels. They bring ATVs and other vehicles out. We are anticipating any ground disturbance, but they want to have those out at the California and Mexico border, so we are working with them on that. We just had a meeting with them to talk about logistics. And that is the report.

>> ED STOVIN: Thank you for that. (Speaker Away from Mic) what they're talking about is at (Speaker Away from Mic) the county there's no open area it's a large area. And there's an area on (name) Hills which is just northeast of this office. That is a little area with some open areas. I'm supportive of that. (Speaker Away from Mic) Dick Holliday showed me a drawing of (Speaker Away from Mic) and I'm not sure how to address that may be go to the Congressman's office and asked. I don't know. At a minimum, pull that out of the bed. (Speaker Away from Mic) this area (Speaker Away from Mic) for those who don't know the branch office we have a portion in South San Diego closer to the ocean and right on the border. It's the wilderness growth across it. So, they struggle. They have struggles with people across the border and border patrol. There is a dirt road that goes out that homeland security is having a gate close them.

Efforts, we were mad at BLM, but it wasn't BLM's fault. (Speaker Away from Mic) we were mad at BLM only to learn that some outside force because it. So, my apologies. For the staff over here. So now we are met homeland security.

>> Any other questions for Brandon? Okay. Ridgecrest.

>> TOM BICKAUKUS: At Ridgecrest we peaked at staffing we seem to be having in our staffing right now we peaked at 86% and in the last month I've had one retirement one transfer a biologist transfer and I've got three other employees that are leaving in January. I have a geothermal person who serves two districts. Who's moving to the Colorado state office. My

second and last geologist moving across the country for different federal job. And I have a budget analyst is also moving across the country to a bigger and better job. So, in that way happy for them. For providing training and experience they needed to grow.

But I should forget they have a partner worker (name) who is also leaving and getting a new and exciting job. So, we do rely on our partner geologists to be able to keep working.

We have some (Speaker Away from Mic) in looking at our report we (Speaker Away from Mic) the exploratory Mesa project. It's the environmental statement impact. We have a company that's planning integration and they previously had a helicopter (Speaker Away from Mic) they've come back, and they would like to increase the roads and drill to put four holes directly (Speaker Away from Mic), so we are at the point where public discussion is closed. In October it closed. We have the public comment report. That was our alternatives for the environmental impact statement. And also, our first consultation meeting to begin the conversation with some tribes about their concerns.

So, our next step is consultations, finalize alternatives, and have the contractor complete the draft. So, we will have that in the late spring would be my best guesstimate right now based on pieces moving that I know about. Other concerns, our visitation. The San Bernardino area (Speaker Away from Mic) so we are experiencing a higher amount of use this year probably, because of decent weather. Also, perhaps people are coming to our area because they can't get to the San Bernardino Park's office. For various reasons, we are seeing higher use this year the visitation over Thanksgiving was about 40,000 over our three open areas. We do have Cabell Canyon, the Springs, a relatively small open areas with about 7 or 9000 acres each. Then we have the (name) Hills that is 92,000 acres. And it has adjacent bridge works.

Let's see. I did receive (Speaker Away from Mic) question about gold Discovery group. His question was about a drilling exploration project in a totally area which is south of Ridgecrest about 30-30 miles south of a small mining town. The decision that we approved was for 293 manageable (Speaker Away from Mic) to a depth of about 30 or 40 feet. So, it's relatively shallow. The important part of that, is they previously drilled their mining plan (Speaker Away from Mic) they did that after notice they successfully claimed the holes. It's the same process to be approved. However, this new 293 holes is imported from areas. It's not withdrawn from the entry so we will get applications we need to respond to. So, the question is how's that going? And what are you saying for success in the restoration of those sites because the drill rating the company uses is not tracked.

They use the existing road system. They drive open routes that the use. Close routes that are restored yet as their second choice to get their selected (Speaker Away from Mic) and then if that doesn't work, they take the shortest distance across country. So, the answer to the question is they have not started yet. They are on the bio monitors that have been selected and then they begin their work out there. So, we can't report on results because we haven't started anything yet. But I will say this there has been an amount of disturbance in the previous operation where they drilled under notice outside of the AC/DC within two rainy seasons it was hard to find the disturbance. They filled the whole they recovered the soil off the spot where they use the auger

they put in a bucket and set it aside. So, we are going to continue to watch that.

And those are the updates I had.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> We have a lot of them.

>> Very quickly.

>> We did help the Navy over Thanksgiving on the Navy base. (Speaker Away from Mic) we are about 750 right now. They were just pretty difficult. We are at a collection point for animals and the surrounding states. There are two corrals in California we are the southernmost corral. The other is the field office. So, did that answer your question?

>> Do you work with Arizona?

>> We can. Our headquarters the (name) office they are steering on that. They move animals to the corrals and hepatic. It's usually what's closest to them. There are about 7 or 8 corrals around the country. They say 75% of animals get shipped to the Eastern states. It's a pretty good network that happens this way.

>> There's a whole concept that there's wild horses and too many in their taken out I'm glad I don't have to manage that. So, thank you for that.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Right. That always precedes requesting a mine. There's planning there.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) mining

>> So, under the mining law they can put in a mine there. If that is what they would like to do. They don't have to disclose everything with us. But as far as the methods if they did want to extract it, they would have to disclose to us.

>> I understand in the park (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> We would have to do another round of an EPA critical habitat. There are consultations and another public process. I would say the NEPA would be an impact statement. I don't know at this point what it would be. But certainly, would have to happen.

>> We would have to go through the same process. So, we would have to take a look at a range of alternatives on what that is and how they do that along with any of our decisions. We have resources and endangered species and all of that would have an alternative for those resources. So, there would be that NEPA process and some of those discussions and actions.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) and very broad security (Speaker Away from Mic) on top of that. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> We are not that far and the processing of that application. But I am aware of geologists and the site that you are talking about. And it will certainly be a discussion of how to accomplish their objectives because we've already made one decision to check the site when they constructed the road. So how we did that.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) those are the people that are the same people (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Any questions? We have one quicker one.

>> PAUL GIBBS: Updates on the report on the day I put the report together. And it's been

over a month that it's out. I think it was out for 4 or 5 days. But that was one in the West Riverside County. As far as fieldwork goes. (Speaker Away from Mic) Lake Matthews. That was our first entry into this. Since then, we went in and finished up (Speaker Away from Mic) about 100 acres or so and it's done till next spring. Someone mentioned earlier about the burn. We had about 45 positions we are looking to fill in permanent positions. Those will be going on May through October during the peak of the fire season. So, we had about hundred 17 folks that showed up and we did in person interviews during the job fair. And then there were key people that did phone interviews who could make it. So, we consider that very successful. I think we will make offers for all of our positions, and we will have a few people during the I 40 process and we are very happy with the turnout and hopefully, we see some good results with that. So yeah. I think that's all I had and less there's any questions.

>> No questions.

>> We are at the point where it is time for public comments. We will first go with in person comments and then add online. First, Kate is going to be going over procedures.

>> Yes. So as stated this morning the public has three minutes and (Speaker Away from Mic) keep in mind time as you are speaking, and we will go in the order they are received. If there are comments, we don't have time to address you are always welcome to email me and I can put my email in the chat and if you are in person and you don't get to your comment, I can leave my email with you or if you have time to do it, please submit after that with my email address.

>> You want folks to come up front?

>> Yes. That would probably be good.

>> In person.

>> Please if you come to the podium when it's your turn to speak that would be great.

>> All right. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> GREG HERRING, Member of the public: Hello. I spoke at the last DAC meeting, and I was the one that brought up about the (name) national monument proposal. I am a small-scale minor, off-road or rock counter, so obviously, this monument is a problem for me and those I represent. Since our last meeting, a lot has taken place.

I've got an online petition opposing this monument that's got nearly a thousand signatures now. I have attended several group functions around the area. Mining, off-road and, historical and we've gotten hardcopy signatures. All these I've turned into Congressman releases office. Obviously, this is still ongoing. And there will be more signatures coming. On board with this effort as well, is Margo sure in I call her the matriarch of the summit where the pack Museum's. Her family has owned land there for generations. She is opposed to this as well. She is working one side I am working another. And like you said, we've got off roaders, miners against this thing. We've got rockhounds. That are against it. I also recently spoke at the growers of Coachella Valley a few weeks ago. It seems like at that time, they had not made their official position but the questions and comments I was getting I think they are leaning in opposition to this. I also heard, at that meeting, both water districts for the Coachella Valley have sent in their

letters with concerns about this monument saying this is not the right time for this to happen.

There is just a multitude of reasons. I also went to Congressman releases press conference in September over at Spotlight 29 Casino. And heard him talk about the process which we heard today. There's two ways to get it. Congressional and executive order and how he had already submitted the week prior to that press conference the BIL that the coalition had put together for him. It's already submitted to Congress at the national resource committee. He kind of alluded to he did not expect that to occur, this monument to occur in that manner. So, he said this is going to tell the president the Congressman's resolve for this and he anticipates getting Pres. Biden to use the antiquities act to make this happen. So, I anticipate that's going to happen in the next year. Because they want Biden to do it. They are only assured one more year with him in office.

>> You write your three minutes.

>> Last communal say is I urge the DAC to formulate their position on this and write the letter we heard about earlier today. Thank you.

>> All right next member the public is Stephen (name)

>> STEVE GJERSTAD, Member of the public: Hello my name is Steve and I own 65 acres out near Fremont peak in the Mojave. It is in the are so district. There are problems in the area and it's so broadly in the area that are depicted in the Barstow area. There are approximately 265,000 acres of private property that are just crossed with off-road routes. On private property. We know the BLM cannot designate routes on private property, but it has done so with the assistance of the friends of jawbone in the assistance of transition habitat Conservancy and other organizations. I've sent letters that show the routes on the private property. Just to give some context, in more specifically narrowing down to the Township where my property is located, there are 23,040 acres that's a typical Township 36×640. 11,400 of those acres are private in 1720 of them are BLM. We have no say. We are the landowners, and we own more land in the area than the BLM, but we can't do anything about it. I've been writing letters ten months ago. I haven't had a response yet. I am looking for a response.

There are a number of issues involved here. One is an important one is public safety. Given that nearly half, 49.5% of the land in that Township is private, having routes passing through this area is a serious public safety concern. You know, people don't know. They haven't been told that they are going in and out repeatedly on private property. So that is a serious public safety issue. There are property rights issues, the takings clause of the Fifth Amendment of the Constitution says the government cannot take private property for public service without compensation. There is also the code of regulations Title 43 Section 8342.1 which only gives BLM the right to put these routes on BLM property. Two final points one is I think there is an organizational coupling with the messages people come with these messages they need to be heard and another one is I think the DAC meet somebody who represents property owners.

>> Thanks, Stephen. Our next speaker.

>> ANDREW SILVA, Member of the public: I don't have anything major substantive to say with all the discussion of the national monuments there is a book that came out called this contested land. This chapter is on bears (name) would you all know about and there was nothing

on Mojave trails. It's more of a travelogue I haven't got all the way through yet. So national monuments are on everyone's mind right now. I thought I was about to go to the sand dune in the sky listening to Mike and Mark and Greg talk about renewable energy is that pretty much encapsulate the last ten years of my career life flashes before your eyes but with all the retirements, with Mike Mike goes back to my newspaper days and has always been wonderful. And in 2007 I was working for the county supervisor who represented the desert at the time, and I want to go out of my way to supervisor wrote for picking up the seat. It's hard to get elected and she's great with public lands. So, in 2007 we had a meeting at needles that's when I first heard about the bright source project. And that sort of was the opening gate to the land rush we had starting in 2008 and Greg was always my go to guy, a county guy so I want to thank him for all his support and help. During that time of my policy life. Randy's always been wonderful. So, God bless him. So, I want to thank all the new members that have come on board. I want to thank all the members who have served who are stepping back right now. This is a really important-- I wasn't very far into my newspaper career when I became fascinated with democracy. As a participant in a contact sport. I've always enjoyed interacting with the BLM in my career is because everyone hated you guys which always made it interesting and substantive. So, you are stepping back just thank you for your public service and I think that's it. Thank you. I appreciate the relationship I've had with the guys over the years. I serve as an unofficial mascot. So, I like belly rubs and beef jerky.

[LAUGHTER]

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) the next speaker we have is (name)

>>ANITRA KASS: Good afternoon, everyone. I am the Southern California regional representative for the Pacific Crest Trail Association. I just have some PCT updates for everyone. First, tropical storm Hilary, you know, August 20th it seems like forever ago, maybe not for Jack. But we are still assessing damage from that tropical storm. The trail has been slow, but we are going to be able to get on that here soon with some good news we been getting about road access. So that's great. If you do happen have Intel or pictures or you've hiked back, there or GPS points or mileage and you have info please go ahead and forward that to me. We would love to get that. Additionally, there is funding that has been provided to our AmeriCorps crew partners for PCG trail work on BLM lands and funding for PCT to provide technical oversight for those crews. So that is exciting. Don't worry, I will coordinate with the local offices. We are just going to go out and do trail work. We will coordinate on specifics, logistics, making sure we have appropriate clearances, but we hope to get work done to repair some of that damage, hopefully, the spring.

Staffing updates. We have had some gaps in staffing. I've been covering a thousand miles of the PCT since August of last year. And starting on Monday, I will be back down to 512 miles because Alyssa Brush will be starting as a southern seer regional representative. So, my colleague and although I love our friends at Ridgecrest, sometimes when you love something you have to let it go. So, I will be letting that go to Melissa and also our friends in Bay. She will be the main contact for the PCT is that of myself or Michelle to Magglio who is currently our

regional trail coordinator for the southern Sierra. Good news for Michelle if she actually got the North Cascades regional job so she is going to be moving up north and she and I will be around to answer questions and I will let Melissa get her feet under her.

Additionally, there is funding for work on the PCT and BLM lands in Ridgecrest and/or Bakersfield. Again, we will coordinate with the office. Alyssa will coordinate the offices. But that's not really penciled in until the fall that way she gets a chance to get her feet under her and do coordination. So that is all I have for you. Thank you so much. Happy trails.

>> Now it's time for (Speaker Away from Mic) if you have (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> If you are a member of the public online and would like to provide comment, please raise your hand. Right now, we have Ileene Anderson. You are up.

>> ILLEENE ANDERSON, Member of the public: Good afternoon. Can you hear me, okay?

>> Yes.

>> Great. Thank you. I am Ileene Anderson I'm a senior scientist for the Center for Biological Diversity. I wanted to complement Greg Miller on his presentation on a complicated timeline that led to the DRECP. I would also like to confirm that no litigation was filed on the DRECP, so it shows the value of good public outreach and inclusion.

That I would like to ask Tom in my remaining time would you give a short update on the Ridgecrest pipeline from the Indian wells management authority?

>>TOM BICKAUKUS: (Speaker Away from Mic) their office hours. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Okay. Thank you. That's all my comments today.

>> Okay. Next, we have Kayla Brown.

>> Hello, can everyone hear me, okay? Hello?

>> We can hear you.

>>KAYLA BROWN, Member of the public: Great. Thank you. My name is Kayla Brown. I am with (name) in the eastern area. I am a member of the Public Lands Roundtable in Ridgecrest. I wanted to bring to the DAC attention that at our public lands Roundtable meeting this last Thursday, we had Anthony Marguerite, the CEO of K2 Golden Mojave came and did a presentation on their Mojave project at Mesa. Some things that were interesting that you said that I hadn't heard before was that K2 Gold after things to which is currently in the EIS process, they are planning on doing a phase three which will be larger and include their claims on the west side of the Inyo mountains in that same area. Also, when the members of the public lands Roundtable asked if the company would do reclamation after roads were approved for the phase two project with the reclaim between phase II and phase three? Anthony's response was why would we reclaim if we wanted to use the same roads for phase three and again someone asked after phase three and you intend to sell to a mining company after your exploration is done, which you reclaim the roads he said why would we reclaim the roads when a mining company will want to use them to build in line. I just wanted to bring those items to the DAC's attention, and I hope you will think about that as you consider conglomerate Mesa and the EIS project. Thank you.

>> Okay we have Mark Carrington.

>> Hello, can you hear me?

>> Yes.

>> Am I on? Hello?

>> Mark there's a bit of an echo.

>> Oh no. About now is that better?

>> Yes

>> MARC CARRINGTON, Member of the public: We been working with Brandon and the other authorities in the BLM. I would like to just present that to you folks. That respect desert communities. The recent article by Sammy Roth in the Los Angeles times saying solving climate change will have side effects. Matt gets over it. Discuss the enormity of climate change on our world. Included in the article with the following statement much as I simplified with the rural towns that do not want to live with industrial wind turbines as their neighbors, I empathize more with my neighbors here in Los Angeles who can't afford air conditioning and who don't want to die of heat stroke the next time thermostats hit 121. This easily translates to include desert communities being surrounded by landscape scale solar installations. The urgency described in this article is real. But it can create public panic hysteria and loss of perspective. Utility scale solar projects previously known as landscape scale projects indicating their massive impact are part of the solution to carbon in missions to reduce them. We could spend a great deal of time describing the desert environment's role in carbon and cleaning carbon from the atmosphere. The unclean part to scale solar energy production as well as viable alternatives. But for now, utility scale solar energy production is here to stay as at least a partial solution. Here however is where the perspective is lost. You will hear those- those who provide thousands of air-conditioned homes those figures should be used for us. What follows is an example of general example surrounding the desert community of Lake cameras there are several thousand acres currently in the permitting process for two landscape scale solar projects. The combined total energy of these projects would be 500 MW. This power this could power many air-conditioners and obviously, sacrifice the community. So, get over it. The data missing in this opinion is the actual impact on both energy production and carbon emissions that those 500 MW have. In relation to the total renewable energy production objectives set aside in the Valley for 25,000 MW by 2025's. There are no other human communities standing in the way of these objectives as you can now see,

>> Mark

>> The impact on carbon emissions and carbon change

>> KATE MIYAMOTO: Mark, your three minutes are up. If there's no one else, we can allow you another three minutes, but we need to make sure we can reach everybody that would like to comment. So is there anyone else on Zoom that would like to comment. Seeing no one else we will add- allow mark another three minutes.

>> Mark, you can go ahead and unmute yourself.

>> MARK CARRINGTON: Sorry. This is all new to me. As you can see now, the impact of carbon emissions and climate change of these two projects is negligible in relationship to the regions slated renewable energy production. Energy companies such as intersect power with

false all truisms will tell you that they are saving the world for you. They will not tell you that there merely riding the wave of climate change and make enormous profits using taxpayer funded initiative programs and cheap federal loans to build their projects. Intersect tower has stated many times to us and quoted by Bloomberg news this week, they have no intentions to modify the site plans for the solar project to provide even a minimal setback of one mile to save the community's identity and future. Even though the setback would only produce power production by 100 MW. 100/25,000. Corporate greed trumps moral character. Thus, the BLM is left with the necessity and responsibility to control the impact of that. The DRECP neglected to consider the community of Lake tamarisk when they designated the development focus energy-area for renewable energy to be 25 feet from its borders. See the attached map. It's coming.

Even the community such as the desert dry wash were given to hundreds of setbacks. This lack of respect is unreasonable. Through the and EPA submitting process the BLM is responsible for all impacts on surrounding public lands. The Council for environmental quality in May 2022 revised regulations to place environmental needs over industrial corporate desires. Including renewable energy. Additionally, human communities are prioritized over industry. Please see the attached rules. You will see that in our scoping documents which I forwarded to you.

The community of Lake tamarisk supports renewable energy, but it is not necessary to destroy the purpose and lifestyle choices of an entire community in order to meet both our planets energy and carbon emission goals. Thank you. I appreciate listening and I enjoyed listening to your presentations as well. Thank you.

>> HANS HAAS: Anyone else (Speaker Away from Mic) so we are a little bit ahead, but we will keep going. Next, we have Jihadda Govan from Sand to Snow National Monument.

>> JIHADDA GOVAN, Sand to Snow National Monument Manager: All right. Good afternoon. I am and its incognito BLM person. I work for the Sand to Snow National Monument which is why I'm in uniform. So, I'm going- the presentation I'm going to be providing today is a modification that some folks may have seen recently from the information sections related to sand and snow planning or preplanning that we just had last month in November and late October of this year. Next slide.

So, just to recap. The Sand to Snow national Monument designated by presidential proclamation under the authority of the 1906 antiquities act that was the first U.S. law to provide general protection of cultural and natural resources and historic and scientific interest sites on federal lands.

What a national monument is designated folks or where it is done due to the importance or significance in that case of the sand and snow national monument the significance of items of cultural and historic values and wetlands and economic and diversity and geographic importance. I mentioned the monument is managed by Forest Service in the San Bernardino National Forest. Folks may not know, but the monument does line 2 different district areas. The front country being the balance of it and a smaller, maybe about 10,000-acre area in the Ranger District on the San Bernardino. It also lies in field office. Addictions with about 10,000 acres being in the Barstow management area. Next slide.

So, this slide provides very good visual reference of the hundred and 54,000 acres of the monument. All those lands within the purple boundary are the designated area of the sand and snow monument. To the left are the U.S. for service the green on the right side managed by the BLM is on the eastern side all the way to the sharing of the Eastern or Western boundary. Next slide. So, we are working to develop a monument management plan. And I will mention that the Bureau of Land Management is planning the monument management plan where Forest Service is kind of a participating agency in this planning effort.

Even though there's no management plan yet we are still in the planning stages. We do have guidance that helps us manage the monument right now. The first of which is the higher importance of the residential proclamation. A specific direction policy loss and regulation. We do have a scenic river within the sand and snow monument. The Whitewater River the headlands of which are in the forest and the BLM managed lands, and it actually is managed through wildlife Conservancy and the recreational section of that. In the Wilderness Act. And that is kind of both agencies BLM specific is the California Conservation Area Plan. The Coachella Valley amendment, DRECP manual 6220 which provides guidance on natural conservation land areas and the West Mojave project. Which are the major overarching guidances for the plan. Next.

So, you may have noticed on the map that the largest area land designation on the monument is wilderness. The wilderness comprises over 108,000 acres and is located on BLM and Forest Service managed areas. The second major designated areas are areas of critical environmental concern. The largest designation of that is about 51,000 acres and we also have California desert conservation lands all talked about 40,000 acres and other designations are not on this particular list here are special recreation management areas two of which are Sand to Snow National recreation management area as well as (name). Do keep in mind none of these- a lot of these areas overlap. Quite a few actually. Next slide. So, some folks mentioned and alluded to the resources objects and values or are of these that are to believe called out in the proclamation and for the sand and snow monument this is kind of a snapshot of some of the more important I won't say important but overarching, I guess, are objects and values that were called out. Resources we got cultural, historic geologic and recreational. Specific objects. Native American heritage sites the Pacific Crest Trail. Migratory birds the mountains highest peak in Southern California, other things like the Washington marker being on the San Bernardino- San Bernardino peaks and have a cultural value. You're looking at the concept of Santa snow. You're going from the desert floor to the higher peaks of California. There's a lot of richness there and a lot of important connectivity. Lots of great recreation and historic history that is pretty important for the monument and that is called out in the proclamation. Next slide.

The monument managed as it is managed by the Bureau of Land Management and Forest Service there are two different multiple use agencies. These continue to be hunting, hiking, horseback riding and I still get calls from people thinking hunting is not allowed. Well, it is. Provided that folks are adhering to specific, you know, fish and game laws and regulations concerning hunting.

We also have horseback riding. We have off-highway exploration. Not necessarily specific

areas like Johnson Valley but we have off-road expiration because we have open roads people like to traverse. We just want to keep those routes and not creating hill climbs and stuff like that. I have a couple interns on right now that are going to be doing mapping just kind of checking areas and seeing how we are doing as far as any resource damage outside of those designated routes. But for the most part people do pretty good. Lots of nature exploration. And we do have some rock hounding. Not nearly what Mojave has or other areas because I don't think there's the geologic or geomorphology, I guess I should say is it really conducive to that kind of activity. But designations do allow people to go check things out. Next slide.

And of course, not allowable use will be new mineral entry renewable energy operations and things like that. The exceptions would be pre-existing and preauthorized related uses. Next slide. I mentioned some folks probably not just from this particular preplanning but for just in general, information sessions and community involvement, the first round of preplanning in 2016 was right after the monument was designated in the summer of 2016 where the forest sought to understand what people were doing with the monument and what they thought were important. Things like that. In a more detailed summary, we will provide- is provided through a link or actually, that link has a more detailed summary of the 2016- the 2016 gathering of information and I will make sure folks in the room are participating in this have that link so you can review that information.

Next slide. So, we had mentioned earlier just this year BLM contracted a facilitator and we held a series of two virtual information sessions and one in person information session. And that workshop focused pretty much on the same thing of what people were doing, where they were doing it within the monument and one of the major- the main points of that was we wanted to see if there's any new information any other ways people were utilizing the monument and we had heard from some folks, you know, that they did want a new round of information sessions to find out what was going on but also have another opportunity to provide input into what they love about the area or about management of the monument.

So, the information sessions are being drafted for 2023. And that will be provided to the public to look at that. So that's a good thing. So, the contractor is currently doing that right now. Next.

So as far as tribal engagement, the groups in the area have been sent consultation letters and given background information or proclamations just as a recap and ongoing consultation is ongoing. And right now, the main point of contact for folks I mentioned even though BLM is the planning lead for the effort the overarching tribal relations point of contact is Spencer McLeod. He is actually a Forest Service employee, and he is our regional or not regional, but Southern California's own contact for monument planning. He also provides support, travel relations support to the Southern California forest. So, the Cleveland, the San Bernardino, the los Padres and there's another one I can't remember what it is. But he's pretty darn busy that guy. But if you did everyone to get a hold of him it would be wise, I think to do it next week because it's just-- both agencies are looking forward to continuing that involvement with tribes. So that's good. Next.

Before I want talk about this one, I slipped and information I wanted to provide to folks. Both information sessions did result in similar concerns as 2016 to now. The biggest difference in things we are hearing his other BLM offices might be hearing is that tribes do want to look for more opportunities to engage with BLM in land management planning. So that is something I have to reach out to talk to the state office folks and also to extend to move forward and look at what strategy we will have and to make sure we are providing meaningful opportunities for tribal engagement so I thought I would mention that.

So, to identify the best planning approach for the monument national plan BLM and for service have reviewed and are still reviewing our current management direction. That being the proclamation and anything specifically with the resource office to identify production and restoration and also a socio-bull allowable and unallowable uses. Some input received earlier in recent public involvement from the information sessions. We are also looking at that professional designation along the Scenic River and conservation lands. We are looking at any existing protection that might be needed. The current management direction for Forest Service the force plan looking at the CDC a plan and also the DRECP. In this review up to this point, we did determine that the existing BLM and Forest Service plan and also it provides clear and overarching management direction that is consistent with managing the national monument for production again, looking at resource values and because of that there's no major changes, there's no road closures, there's not any specific major, I guess, planning issues that have come up. And so, the direction we are looking at right now is focusing on activity management plan as opposed to a national amendment from the CDCA or the force plan. Next slide. So, in this process, we are considering a wide range of alternatives for management direction of the monument. That will be identified through plea- preplanning sessions and helping process communications with tribes and overall, we want to provide some clear direction for how the monument is going to be managed for the protection of the landscape. So, some of the anticipated areas of activity we have planned that might be going to an activity management plan as an alternative are based on feedback, we've gotten from partners for things like restoration plan not necessarily plans of restoration projects or targeted areas we do have OHV areas where there is resource degradation those areas need to be restored. We have major invasive species issues going on for planning and strategy. Monitoring strategy partnership strategy there's just a lot of areas again, from feedback we've gotten from folks where we feel like, okay, we have a pretty good handle on how that activity planning effort might look. Next slide.

I also want to mention if folks want to see an example of an activity management plan and are looking at the Bishop Field Office there is-- management planning effort it is an activity management plan for the most part. There's nothing- at least not for the river planning but for Whitewater we've identified areas that are needed to protect. For the river planning it will be outstanding River values.

So, let's see. So again, the BLM reviews alternatives under consideration of the water management plan that would inform the decision to be made on approval of the management plan. The process will be shared publicly as well as a draft to inform comments on the plan with

potential effects. I also want to mention at this point because it is an activity management plan, a letter of notice will not be required to initiate the planning process whereas I will mention because the river planning is ongoing and Brandon mentioned scoping is finalize there will be a federal notice for the corridor and that has to go through the federal register for the final feedback of people to give input on that. Next slide. So, at this point I mentioned we are still in preplanning. So, we didn't put any dates on here. So, I apologize for that. But we do anticipate scoping being around March or April. But again, at this time, we are still in preplanning. Sorry about that. Let me check my notes here.

In the preplanning effort we are providing agency updates and information sessions. We are sharing that directly- that direction we anticipate taking in the planning process but should something come up in scoping that might change that, then we would have to back up and go okay. We are looking at an amendment to the CDCA or maybe not necessarily the force plan but on the BLM side of things there's a lot more going on. So more than likely it will be an amendment if again, should something arise in scoping. And again, preplanning we have provided preliminary areas and share things related to monument management and the overall anticipated process for this would be 1-2 years overall. But we are looking to initiate against scoping and the next year. And spring. Next slide.

Just to let folks know, there is going to be a lot of opportunities for public involvement for the planning process and then for every box that's highlighted in red those are those opportunities for folks to provide that input.

Right now, as far as scoping what we don't necessarily have a draft activity management plan, we are also in the process of working on our analysis of the situation. We are not as far ahead as Mojave Trails, but that process is taking place right now with Forest Service reviewing their areas or portions and then BLM we are dealing with the balance of it because a lot of the activity in action is going on the BLM side of things. Next slide.

So where to access the maps and other document. This is the national monument page. It is BLM state office. So, folks will again we will provide that link for folks to check things out. I get maps. There are interactive maps to look at. There's also links to some of our bigger partners on that project page. In addition, I will work with Kate to get you there is a link to a YouTube page that has one of the recordings of the virtual session's information sessions. So that is available for folks as well. Next slide.

I would take questions, I guess.

>> So yesterday, you talked about assets. And how (Speaker Away from Mic) partnerships. Is that something we will be addressing in the recreation plan strategy aspect?

>>JIHADDA GOVAN: I think it would be something that would be addressed as far as potential opportunities. Correct. And I had mentioned you know I tried to put a bug in folks' years, our partners ears like maybe if you know a landowner that has some property in a specific area let's talk like the Coachella Valley conservation area where I've had this issue in some conversations with them. We talked about one of their more disturbed areas of property that they own that's on the southern end of the ACEC unit. And maybe this would work out. We could

take this into a parking area to allow access for people to park they would have to wait a whole year to see what plant species came up. So, we kind of asked that out so they are restoring that area for that particular species. But again, any opportunities like that that come up or access if there's any funds through the mingle act. That is one of the areas of funding that could potentially come up.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Yeah. And I've been working with Erin and Christina to look at some properties for the Pacific Crest Trail recently so yeah. It's a process. So hopefully something comes up that would be great.

>> I have a question.

>> Yes.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) project resource I guess (Speaker Away from Mic) very popular (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> First-come first-served picnic bench and fire ring.

>>JIHADDA GOVAN: (Speaker Away from Mic) any opportunity (Speaker Away from Mic) the majority of camping that would take place on BLM land is more dispersed camping unless people are camping on right water preserve or Mission Creek. I guess that would be something we would have to look at. And that would be an alternative to be looked at and addressed in the plan because that is- and I did mention this I'm glad you brought this up. That is a concern people have brought up and asked. I get questions from people hiking PCT like can I stop what's a good campsite between these two spots and I'm like you know. I'm like it's not really a campsite because it's wilderness for the most part. But again, I'm directing them to if there driving and doing a short 50-mile loop hike or something there's private campsites I should say that. Curse me for saying that. But there are private crews. That's deftly a concern. And it is something I have talked with some of our partners and also with Desert hot Springs to a certain extent. They also recognize that is a concern. And they would like to be more of a kind of go to community for people that are accessing the monument.

>> So (Speaker Away from Mic) on the BLM side (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> The others vehicle opportunities provided, and it depends on the time of the season you may not be able to have a campfire or do anything weird like that. Not just hikers could be camping.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) overwhelming majority of the public (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Yes. Yes, it is. Any other questions? All right. Thank you.

>>HANS HAAS: All right. We are right on schedule here. We are a little bit ahead (Speaker Away from Mic)

Testing testing testing. This is a test of closed captions.

>> Welcome back, everyone. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> I'm interested in (Speaker Away from Mic) national monument I don't know if you can talk about that more today if we have time (Speaker Away from Mic) but also (Speaker Away

from Mic)

>> My question is, I'm just trying to get a better picture of what we want to discuss about it.

>> I looked at it and it looks like is probably (Speaker Away from Mic) objects I was wondering if we could possibly go to the Bureau of Land Management and ask your opinion (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> So, I considered the fire code (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> I realize that would be a potential discussion member of the public had asked us to provide a mission statement and I feel like that's (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> We have been asked.

>> Yeah.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) that something that would definitely take some effort. At this point (Speaker Away from Mic) the BLM and letters to send to a congressperson.

>> Actually, the letter would go to BLM.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> RANDY BANIS: Or reaching out to proponents and having a conversation and they are more than happy to talk. I was granted 90 minutes last week with one of the proponents. So, you are more than welcome to stick with that.

>> My thoughts were to reach out (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Is there any involvement of projects?

>> The western end (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Is that a whole different issue?

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) eventually looking at what they have and so I don't know. If that's in the area.

>> The influence of that too.

>> I guess to piggyback on that being new to DAC I'm not sure about BLM's role in this particular body with lithium resources and I know they were talking about the panel and most recently we talked about the DOE analysis. So, we don't know what our role would be with that particular project that's being looked at. Does anybody?

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) because that is the office (Speaker Away from Mic) our point of content and other people doing that.

>> It felt like a great topic for several agencies. I know BLM is part of that.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

[LAUGHTER]

>> Keep in mind if the county is (Speaker Away from Mic) and we can be associated with that as well. So, we can look at that. But as far as things to talk about. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> We would be interested (Speaker Away from Mic) and have an activity which is appropriate. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) for quite a while. We had talked about it. What we like better is around (Speaker Away from Mic) we thought that was pretty interesting.

>> JACK THOMPSON: (Speaker Away from Mic) for the agenda give it a little bit of time today. But I just wanted to spend some time and that is close enough (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> The timeline of what do you think a timeline would be for that?

>> Two months before the meeting until we start, and we take time to present those. I'm good with presenting that. We are meeting in April.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> I'm sorry if we had a little bit more time with that plan because of information especially, if we are looking at info meeting and so putting together and knowing what the DAC wants to focus on and have more time.

>> And having that term as well.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) when that comes around things might change.

[CROSSTALK]

>>HANS HAAS: Does anyone else have a suggestion? Okay. So, our next item here we have been asked to consider how does the public comment period is the current time program beneficial to the beginning of the meetings for a lot of it it's (Speaker Away from Mic) to make the comment.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> We haven't identified a comment period so Kate, were you looking for a decision today? I don't think we can wait on that because we have to be able to put that to let people know about that timeslot.

We've got comments from all over the board so it would be nicer to have it in the morning or after or presentation or after the public comment period to get folks in earlier in the day. And then folks don't have an opportunity to provide a comment on that last presentation period I think the one thing we probably would not refer to as having public comments after each presentation because that extends the meeting. We'd be here till 8 o'clock tonight. So that's the only concern about potential proposals in doing it that way.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) based on my limited experience here so far with public comments having them not necessarily respond to specific item on the agenda so it may be able to frontload (Speaker Away from Mic) because that gives them an opportunity to respond what else happens there.

>> In the past we've done them at the end of the meeting, but people were stuck having to wait so it was a challenge there. It was right at the beginning of the openings.

>> The agenda is the agenda, right?

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) if they have ideas that would influence our decision-making process. So, let's say we are making decisions and recommendations and how that happens.

>> And then a conversation we have (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Maybe some of you will remember the day that DAC was expected to take action items on the item agenda we listen to the public before we took votes on that specific item and then

later there would be a public comment period.

>> That's a salient point the purpose of the comment period is for the public to advise instead of just a general comment of anything goes. (Speaker Away from Mic) again members of the public (Speaker Away from Mic) so folks have the issue, but some people actually have thoughts related to what we are discussing that day.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) we could have a public, on items that are on the agenda and see the issues we are going to be taking action on or items on the agenda topic that perhaps before closing during the public can comment on items on the agenda. There are some commenting just on the items of the agenda heard early on and (Speaker Away from Mic).

>> That could be a possibility.

>> We have not historically done that. I'm not saying we could not do it but typically they do the public comment because we don't want the public to be limited to speak about one thing. So having to distinguish which one do I attend is confusing to the public so that is why we stay on the agenda. You may address items on the agenda or not. So is open to anything they would like to share publicly. And the public is always open to send comments to me and those will always be provided to the DAC. So, if I get a public comment, throughout any time, that is the other option. If I get a personal public comment, I will send that public comment. So, the public does have access to provide information to you all for me. And that always gets to you. Just to reiterate that.

>> I think that's good to know.

>> There is an agenda item for Mac agenda items (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Another way it was done in the old days was we got three things on new issues and topics, and we didn't take actions on those topics they were for digestion. And then the beginning of the next meeting is where we had a follow-up and an agenda on what we talk about. The public would have opportunity to make public comment on action item early on and DAC could take action early on and the rest the day to learn. But again, this is again where we knew the next weeks where we are carefully planning with timeliness and decisions, so we are looking at places at the right time to have those presentations. So sometimes you have to wait you read a nine-inning ballgame to do things like that. Again, at the end of the day we go way and let her head still on it and then if you're going to take action and actually issue something it's done at the next meeting.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) they were engineers. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> You said it was mixed feedback in the public whether they were at the beginning or end, correct?

>> Yes.

>> So just throwing it out there, since were heading in that direction, if we have it at the beginning, for public comment, and we also reiterate it sounds like they can also submit their comments if they find they have something to say after. The meeting. And then again, they get that opportunity at the next meeting, right? It almost sounds like you kind of cover it all that way. And make sure the public feels they're getting an opportunity and not being thrown off to the

side. I mean, if I want to tell you something. I want to be done at the beginning to speak about it if I'm only coming for that thing. That seems like a fair thing. Some people would like to stay for the whole thing they would have an option to do that.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) be able to get them in for all of us.

>> That was my thought. Because we have in some of our meetings, we have (Speaker Away from Mic) which is great. Providing public comment. It does save time to get through the public comment and allow the public to make those comments. Right? So that is the other consideration.

>> One time in Victorville we had 200 people show up and we had to go down to one minute comment sessions. That was after the Johnson Valley OHV the racing and the future of OHV racing was in question, we had 200 people total. We had to get chairs, but the public was very good about it. And they sort of raise their hand with leadership and there was a presentation but at the end we were going down to one minute. But those are rare moments. You know, I am obviously not advocating for one way or the other I just had some thoughts. We now in the virtual rule- have the virtual world which adds another element to it. So, there's no reason to do things the way we use to other than to maybe take into consideration a new style.

>> I think also bearing in mind that all this information we covered is available to the public. It's not specific (Speaker Away from Mic) but I'm approving of the earlier window and giving this a try. (Speaker Away from Mic) early in the meeting comments section and kind of limitations.

>> With the protocol of the meeting agenda we can accept (Speaker Away from Mic) and then we have so many comments that go beyond that we can push them to the end and that way we could get this done.

>> We can't do that. The problem is is we have to advertise the public comment period in the *Federal Register*. We can't have one and then have another because we have to advertise that. We can certainly let the public know that if they continue to have comments, maybe we make an hour. And then if there's less people, we can adjust our agenda. But regarding how many people attend for public comments, but yeah, that is the problem we run into with doing that. We can certainly remind folks they can send comments at any time if they didn't get a chance like people will show up to identify this opportunity in the next public comment for the protocol meeting.

>> That's we can have the group narrow down (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> We can create silence to say we did it we have an hour long public and then anything additional could be provided in writing. And it's just as valid (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) and there is a lot of tension to emphasize (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Yeah. We could take a look at the agenda. We went to Needles to talk about Mojave Trails National Monument we had people talking. Granted a lot of comments were similar about the national monument which is valuable. There was a lot more people at that meeting but sometimes it's hard to know.

>> We also used to sometimes require a speaker card prior to the public comment. We

would have to sometimes say due to the number of comments we have we have to go to two minutes for each person. It's hard to do that with the online side of that we take a comment first and they say okay everybody raise your hand but it would give us a way to indicate if you wanted to participate in public comment we have to convince you before the public comment period starts to engage and do that. People just jump in.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) and could cut it off.

>> So, in the Zoom registration we could go through that portal is there a way to have a checklist box.

>> No, there's no way to do that in Zoom. Because it's a webinar, the only time they are open to chat, usually, to chatter speak is if our tech allows them to otherwise, they are just viewing the meeting without being able to comment.

>> Okay. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> That's a good idea because if we lose that it's not a big deal.

>> So, what time would you like 9:30? 10 o'clock?

[CROSSTALK]

>> Yeah. I think after introductions but before items are done. I don't think anyone is expecting a massive turnout.

>> We have the lowest attendance. But you never know.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> I don't think there's public, on the actual (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Things have changed on the required federal notice, and we have to advertise the public comment period. Things have changed and have to follow that rule now.

>> I think part of it to is there have been enough people to make decisions so today and will talk about that but yeah that's part of the challenge too. Is making those decisions.

>> Can we agree were going to try it out having a comment period of half an hour and see how it goes?

>> Yeah.

>> It will be for the rest of the year though. Once we do the *Federal Register* notice it will be the morning. So, it will be a test year for next year for 2024.

>> There's only one *Federal Register* notice.

>> We have thought about moving these staff meetings to weekdays as they could be more compatible or do we want to continue with Saturday's. I definitely (Speaker Away from Mic) so I emphasize what is the most accessible (Speaker Away from Mic) and how much would it be to participate on a Wednesday or Saturday. We could try it out.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> I'm with you.

[CROSSTALK]

>> We've always done it a Thursday Friday. Me, personally, I don't care. Whatever time I have to be here. And flexibility that's not a big deal for me. I'm going to stay out of that conversation. Sometimes you can make a lot of conversations in public, but you may also cause

stagnant result. And I tend to feel that because they have the Friday work meeting the members of the public tend to be special interest leaders or representatives who participate I hate to call them lobbyists, but they still get lobbyists. I lust of the regular folks. But I don't know. My experiences you don't know it till you try it.

>> Don?

>> A quick question are we logged into the same Thursday Friday or say, Friday Saturday for the rest of the year? Do we have to publish them? I'm wondering if we could do some of each for the meetings. I know Desiree and I talked yesterday that it's probably easier for both of us but may be again for the public a Saturday here and there.

>> You can choose we could do one meeting on a Saturday and one under to say it doesn't really matter. It's once you choose the thing, we are locked in, but we aren't locked into a certain meeting day. So that's to be decided today.

>> So, the issue is the length of time it takes for the register if we were to change that we would have enough time to run another *Federal Register*. So, we can think whatever it is we want but we can't change it once it's picked and posted.

>> I guess to John's point if you take that and say almost like a test. You take two of those and do a combination. And then the other two weekday and then just, you know like you said as long as you have dates.

>> My concern is just for the public in the BLM. This is really the only in person and it's on a Saturday. (Speaker Away from Mic) it has always been on a Saturday. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Yeah, I think the Saturday availability (Speaker Away from Mic) that's what I hear.

>> Just for context, (Speaker Away from Mic) Wednesday and Thursday.

>> Personally, I'm okay with whatever you choose for the public and everyone here. Kate, (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) so it's a Saturday. I know there's

>> I know there's other districts in California that doing during the week too. So, it would be up to all of you.

>> Well, (Speaker Away from Mic) at least for whatever next week is going to be is not like the *Federal Register* (Speaker Away from Mic) but what we think about sticking to a Saturday (Speaker Away from Mic) we can always revisit this again. We are not really committed to one thing.

[CROSSTALK]

>> It sounds like there's, so we have a date in January for us to have our meeting in April because it takes several months. So, if there's interest to do one meeting during the week and the other two on the weekends so that way you have the one test and see how that goes and then you have others throughout the year and those weekends as an option. It doesn't have to be all or nothing. So would be one during the week and both others on the weekend or you can do all on the weekend so that part doesn't matter. It's more like the exact date that we choose today is what matters. And we have to stay. The dates will not change.

[CROSSTALK]

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> This is the most populous area, right? (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) there was like one person that showed up. We had a lot of people show it because of the National Monument. They wanted to provide a comment. That was actually in Nevada. That was in Nevada.

>> And the fact that we provide virtual options allows people to Zoom in from anywhere. They don't have to be in California.

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> I feel like that even if we do have people showing up it would be a question of how accommodating. What they have to take vacation hours? Or find childcare? So, if we are doing it by design to be accommodating Saturday would make sense. Maybe a decision to not do that that would be, I think less accommodating which is how much less accommodating it is for our priority.

>> So, in the interest of time and what we've had do we take an unofficial vote your what would like to do?

>> Does anybody have a motion they want to point out?

>> I would put out a motion of keeping it on Saturdays.

>> I second the motion.

>> All in favor? (Speaker Away from Mic) so the motion passes. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> So, the second week of April is a total solar eclipse. (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> It says Easter is March 31st.

[CROSSTALK]

(Speaker Away from Mic)

>> Face-to-face Thursday Friday Saturday.

>> So, the following week 26 and 27th?

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> (Speaker Away from Mic) with the BLM staff the 26th and the 27th.

>> I was thinking about chiming in earlier (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> So, we are proposing (Speaker Away from Mic) 26 and 27th.

>> What would be the following date would that be August?

>> August. It'll be cool out there.

>> That's what I was gonna say. There's really no- nowhere is cool but August.

[LAUGHTER]

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> I'm throwing it out there August 5th. Is that doable for everybody?

>> (Speaker Away from Mic)

>> For the entire year we have our meeting which would be in Barstow right?

>> I couldn't hear if we decided on dates in August for needles.

>> We set August 9th and 10th.

>> Thank you.

>> Next year in December doing want to go with the first week in- weekend in December? Not hearing any protesting, we will go with December 6th and seventh. At this point I will hit it back to Shelly.

>>SHELLY LYNCH: Yes. Okay. So, as we talked about before, we have seven- in January we have seven members terms that will expire. So, I really want to thank folks Nathan, Billy, Paul, Jayne Powell, Bob, Dick Holliday, Randy so I want to thank you all for your participation and your contributions over the last four years. We are processing applications (Speaker Away from Mic) early next year. Based off past timelines it is unlikely it will be by the April meeting, but fingers crossed. So anyway, went to thank you guys for your participation. Kate, anything to add on foundations are where we are with that?

>> KATE MIYAMOTO: We are getting close to presenting them to Shelly and then on to the state director and then they go off to the White House. So, they historically have taken a little bit of time but there is new leadership reviewing them in the White House. So, we are hoping the timeline is swifter. But we aren't sure on the appointment of the timeline. I am working on that. So, know that. And for those that reapply, thank you and we are working to process those. And hopefully we have news for you in early 2024.

>> Any last comments or questions?

>> Let's hear it for a new chairman.

[APPLAUSE]

>> Very well done.

>> Anything else? Any other comments? Questions? Okay. Meeting adjourned. Bye everybody.