

Carrizo Plain Monument Advisory Committee (MAC) Meeting  
May 5, 2007  
California Valley Community Services District office  
Meeting Notes

Attendees:

MAC members: Carl Twisselman, Bob Pavlik, Ellen Cypher, Jim Patterson, Neil Havlik (chair), Michael Khus-Zarate, Ray Watson, Dale Kuhnle, Ray Hatch.

Managing Partners: Patty Gradek, Johna Hurl, Kathy Sharum, Steve Larson, Larry Saslaw, David Christy, Gabe Garcia, Bob Wick, Denis Kearns, Nancy Dodson, Karen Doran, Duane Christian, BLM; Bob Stafford and Deb Hillyard, California Department of Fish and Game; Tom Maloney, The Nature Conservancy.

Public: Roger Gambs, S. McNeely, Diana Daughters, Chuck Pritchard, Sharee Washer, David Dennis, Terry Erickson, Steve Settle, Angela Davis, Michael Long, Pati Nolen, Bob Nolen, Cal French, John Edmisten, Sharmon Stambaugh, Debra Martin, Myra Douglass, Terry Frewin, Ryan Cooper, Coralee McMillen, Irv McMillen, Gordon Hayes, Colleen Hayes, Patrick Veesart, Lodema Hatch, Mary Fullwood, Patrick McGibney, Sutton Edlich, David Chipping, Ken Martin, Debra Martin, Alice Bond, Jeff Reschke, Tanya Reschke, Pilulaw Khus-Zarate.

Meeting was called to order at 1:10 pm. Committee members, staff, and visitors introduced themselves.

MAC Chair Neil Havlik opened the meeting by asking MAC members what attributes they see in the monument:

Neil Havlik: Solitude

Ellen Cypher: Night sky and ecosystem

Michael Khus-Zarate: Preservation and respect for Native American culture and history. A desire to preserve natural resources and bring back indigenous species.

Jim Patterson: Unique area with geological, paleo and natural resources bringing everyone together to work together.

Dale Kuhnle: Grazing is in the forefront of the management decisions. The Carrizo offers an opportunity for education by example, an opportunity to show the importance of grazing.

Ray Hatch: An opportunity for parties with overlapping areas of interest. BLM doesn't have the staff and financial resources it would like, so it is an opportunity for parties to think outside the box and do things differently.

Bob Pavlik: Carrizo is at the crossroads of California, with different cultures and many uses.

Carl Twisselman: The difficulty in developing a management plan is to provide what people want since there are groups with opposing views.

Ray Watson: The monument is public land, so the public should have maximum access without damaging the environment. Use education and docents to help market the monument without overrunning it. The interests of ranchers and those with mineral rights

will need to be reconciled. In discussing restoration, the question is restoring to what stage - pre-European settlement or some other period.

**Chimineas Ranch Matters.** Bob Stafford reported Fish and Game will interview a contract planner soon and plans to hold scoping meetings this summer to begin a management plan for the CDFG units in the Carrizo including the Chimineas.

**MAC Planning Objectives.** MAC members discussed planning objectives as an agenda item requested by Carl Twisselman. He said he has concerns about the length of time needed for the planning process. The proclamation says to protect resources, but doesn't say how. The MAC needs to decide if it will focus on broad goals or details. The MAC also should focus on doable things, he said. There are biological issues such as anthrax on the monument that limit management options. In addition, the plan must comply with the proclamation and other regulations.

Jim Patterson said the MAC was established to provide input to the managing partners and help set priorities. The MAC may need to establish its mission, goals and priorities.

Ray Watson said he would like the managing partners to share research on environmental issues with the MAC. He sees a role for the MAC in critiquing draft documents and providing input on policies.

Ray Hatch said he agreed with Carl Twisselman the MAC should discuss its goals and mission. Some things may not need to wait for the final plan and some goals may not be doable. BLM should try to buy or exchange mineral rights in the monument. Some initiatives such as the gateway communities and friends groups can move forward now.

Dale Kuhnle said there are examples of cooperative efforts with grazing and endangered species. The MAC should look outside the immediate area for successful projects. Managing grazing intensity and duration can lead to productive land, with productive flora and fauna.

Michael Khus-Zarate said the planning effort has a different feel, more open ended, than the previous effort. The MAC will continue after the plan is completed and it is important that it represent all the different parties such as Native Americans, cattlemen and environmental groups take a humble approach, but also be proactive and not just react to what BLM gives them.

Ellen Cypher said there needs to be flexibility in the plan to respond to new information. An implementation plan needs to be incorporated into the management plan and also have a structured monitoring plan. Mass transit such as van tours from gateway communities may be a way to reduce traffic and human impact to the monument.

Neil Havlik said there are conditions named in the proclamation, but national monuments continue to evolve. Some national parks such as Death Valley and the Grand Canyon started as monuments. While there are goals, planning criteria and objectives named in

the proclamation, there still is an opportunity to fine tune the management within the proclamation requirements. Grazing is a form of harvesting. There needs to be a straightforward objective study including traditional versus free use permits and the relative impacts of livestock and wildlife. Grazing does have a place in the monument, the question is where. The University of California has standards released in 2002 that, modified for certain species, could be used as criteria for livestock grazing decisions. Access to Native American sites should be limited, with allowed uses acceptable to Native Americans. Some roads should be closed or with restricted access; the monument doesn't need 600 miles of roads. Hunting has a place in the monument, but a distinction should be made between game and varmint hunting and the lead bullet issues needs to be addressed. Oil and gas leases in the monument should be sold or traded. Some farming that benefits wildlife should be allowed. Wilderness study areas should be managed to protect their wilderness characteristics. He believes the Caliente Wilderness Study Area qualifies as wilderness. Land ownership patterns need to be considered. There may be parcels on the monument boundary with unique characteristics that would benefit the monument. There should be an inventory of water sources. There are some developed springs that could be improved. There also should be more hiking trails.

Public comment. Mary Fullwood said there should be more trails and better access to the San Andreas fault line. In order to bring back the condors, lead bullets should be prohibited, along with coyote shooting.

Terry Erickson said he appreciates the solitude of the Carrizo. He will send in written comments.

Sharmon Stambaugh expressed concern that the meeting wasn't being recorded. (Patty Gradek responded David Christy is taking notes.) She has 20 years experience in environmental management. The primary planning focus now is threatened and endangered (T&E) species. The managing partners should step back from multiple use and manage the monument for wildlife values. An economic resource study should look at the value of the different resources such as tourism, grazing and mineral leases. Marketing the Carrizo should be evaluated if it meets the primary purposes of the monument and managers should look at outside efforts to promote the monument. The information contained in past management plans shouldn't be lost. Grazing impacts on habitat in recent years should be assessed. Planning should be expedient, professional and transparent. The BLM Inspector General's Office, not the state office, released the IG report. She hopes the planning effort will be more transparent.

Sutton Edlich noted May 2 was the anniversary date of the death of Marlene Braun, previous BLM monument manager. Nothing was done in the planning process for two years after her death. He is concerned that the conflicts are in the same place they were two years ago. Marlene was marginalized over the grazing issue and he is skeptical about what will come out of the current planning process. The Nature Conservancy has a management agreement with BLM that is different than the standard agreement. He is skeptical whether BLM will be a fair player in the process. In the future, TNC should deal with agencies other than BLM. A stipulation in the TNC contract states that

practices will benefit threatened and endangered species. He would like to see the original agreement broken down so the public can understand what TNC wanted; its vision. He would like to see the monument plan finished as Marlene proposed before Ron Huntsinger made changes. There should be a requirement for all three partners to approve the plan and put their logos on it. He expressed concern about a press blackout following Marlene's death. He had heard comments that people were told they should not talk to the press; it would be career suicide. There needs to be a new model of management. If it doesn't work, he wishes TNC had the authority to take the land back and do it right.

Pilulaw Khus-Zarate said the coyote was important to the original people of the area. Coyote was one of the first people and there needs to be balance with other animals. Marlene supported the Native Americans and the spirits of her and her dogs run on the land. People in the community remember her.

Bob Nolen, California Valley, said only the grazing leases should be those in effect when the monument was formed. Grazing should be phased out as those leases expire. He is glad to see Taft embrace the monument, since there San Luis Obispo County has failed to provide services. California Valley is an environmental disaster. There are outside impacts on the monument such as overgrazing and garbage on adjacent property that need to be addressed.

John Edmisten, California Valley, said the ecosystem includes more than the monument and there should be coordination to manage the entire area.

Michael Long, Taft, newspaper owner and Chamber of Commerce chairman, read a statement (see statement)

Chuck Pritchard said the management goal for the monument should be to maintain current desirable species, bring back T&E species and do it with a minimum of regulations. Grazing can enhance vernal pools if done properly. An area in San Luis Obispo County with 103,000 acres in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) is nothing but weeds after being set aside for 20 years. How to achieve goals needs to be decided on the ground, not in Washington, D.C., or Sacramento. He manages for all species on his ranch, for healthy water, vegetation and soil conditions, and has a healthy population of T&E species. A project in Austin, Nev., to manage at the watershed level, including grazing, brought back a stream that hadn't run in 20 years. The parties interested in the Carrizo need to decide if they want to form a team or sit and fight.

David Webb, California Valley, said he used to see many species including golden eagles, kangaroo rats, kit fox and blunt-nosed leopard lizards. The community has 300 miles of roads for 125 homes. He hopes the community will get involved in the planning effort.

Irv McMillan said a mosaic of different habitats is starting to evolve on the CRP land in San Luis Obispo County, so people should not make a snap judgment before the natural community has time to evolve. People also should be careful not to make a snap

judgment in planning on the monument; there are arid areas where it is questionable if grazing is appropriate.

Coralie McMillan said goals should be to build up wildlife and attract visitors. There should be thousands more quail. There should be a moratorium on quail hunting. The monument could be divided into three areas as demonstration projects. One could be managed with grazing, one with burning and one left unmanaged.

David Chipping said there should be an annual public review when managers could accept information from the public and make mid-course changes. The process might be handled through the MAC.

Patrick McGibney, a local resident, said he was glad to see some other local residents in attendance and thanked the MAC. There were similar comments from the three public meetings: increase threatened and endangered species and follow the planning criteria.

Michael Khus-Zarate asked BLM to consider rewording the planning criteria regarding Native Americans to make it sound less exclusive. Duane Christian said he would work with Michael on that wording.

Following the public comment period, Johna Hurl said the scoping period would end June 12. BLM would need a couple of weeks to review comments and would try to have a comment summary posted on the web in early July. A meeting was scheduled for July 21 to discuss scoping results and possibly a MAC mission statement. A field trip to look at vegetation management was scheduled for 9 a.m. on August 11. A September 22 meeting was tentatively set to discuss draft alternatives.