

In the Matter of:

U.S. Department of the Interior Bureau of Land Management  
California Desert District Advisory Council

Reporter's Transcript of Proceedings

12/06/2014

Job #: 31060



(818)988-1900

1 U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
2 BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
3 CALIFORNIA DESERT DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14

15 REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT OF PROCEEDINGS  
16 SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2014  
17  
18  
19

20 FILE NO. 31060

21 REPORTED BY: DIANE CARVER MANN, CLR, CSR NO. 6008  
22  
23  
24  
25

Page 2

1 MEETING OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR BUREAU OF  
 2 LAND MANAGEMENT CALIFORNIA DESERT DISTRICT ADVISORY  
 3 COUNCIL AT, 1600 NORTH INDIAN CANYON DRIVE,  
 4 PALM SPRINGS, CALIFORNIA, COMMENCING AT 8:17 A.M., ON  
 5 SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2014, BEFORE  
 6 DIANE CARVER MANN, CSR NO. 6008.  
 7  
 8 APPEARANCES  
 9  
 10 MEMBERS PRESENT: REPRESENTING:  
 11 APRIL SALL, CHAIR PUBLIC AT LARGE  
 12 RANDY BANIS, VICE-CHAIR PUBLIC AT LARGE  
 13 SETH SHTEIR ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION  
 14 JAMES KENNEY PUBLIC AT LARGE  
 15 LESLIE BARRETT RENEWABLE RESOURCES  
 16 MARK ALGAZY PUBLIC AT LARGE  
 17 ROBERT BURKE PUBLIC AT LARGE  
 18 PAUL R. O'BOYLE TRANSPORTATION/RIGHTS OF WAY  
 19 DON HOUSTON NONRENEWABLE RESOURCES  
 20 KIM CAMPBELL-ERB RECREATION  
 21 TERI RAML DESIGNATED FEDERAL OFFICIAL  
 (DISTRICT MANAGER, CALIFORNIA  
 DESERT DISTRICT)  
 22  
 23 \\\  
 24 \\\  
 25 \\\

Page 3

1 APPEARANCES (CONTINUED)  
 2  
 3 BLM STAFF PRESENT:  
 4 STEPHEN RAZO, EXTERNAL AFFAIRS DIRECTOR  
 5 JENNIFER WOHLGEMUTH, DISTRICT MANAGER STAFF ASSISTANT  
 6 TIM WAKEFIELD, ASSOCIATE DISTRICT MANAGER (CDD)  
 7 KATRINA SYMONS, BARSTOW FIELD MANAGER  
 8 JOHN KALISH, PALM SPRINGS SOUTH COAST FIELD MANAGER  
 9 TOM ZALE, EL CENTRO FIELD MANAGER  
 10 CARL SYMONS, RIDGECREST FIELD MANAGER  
 11 MIKE AHRENS, NEEDLES FIELD MANAGER  
 12  
 13  
 14  
 15  
 16  
 17  
 18  
 19  
 20  
 21  
 22  
 23  
 24  
 25

Page 4

A G E N D A

1  
 2  
 3 Focus Topic - Desert Renewable Energy Conservation  
 Plan  
 4 AGENDA ITEM: PAGE:  
 5 Welcome/Pledge of Allegiance, introductions,  
 approval of September 2014 meeting transcript,  
 review of agenda and procedures for public  
 comment 6  
 6 CDD District Manager report 10  
 7  
 8 Advisory Council member reports and Chair  
 close-outs from previous meeting(s) 12  
 9  
 10 Public comment on items not on agenda, including  
 requests for DAC to consider items for future  
 agendas 27  
 11  
 12 Focus Topic: DRECP Discussion 39  
 13 Morning Break 66  
 14 DRECP continued discussion 66  
 15 Public comment on DRECP 75  
 16 DRECP continued discussion 105  
 17 Lunch 111  
 18 Desert Soils and Carbon Sequestration 112  
 19 Council questions on soils and sequestration 131  
 20 Public comments/questions on soils and  
 sequestration 139  
 21 Afternoon Break 148  
 22 2015 Work Plan 148  
 23 Report from SRP Subgroup 166  
 24 Report from ISDRA Subgroup 168  
 25

Page 5

1 AGENDA (CONTINUED)  
 2  
 3 AGENDA ITEM: PAGE:  
 4 Report from Connecting People to the Desert  
 Subgroup 165  
 5 Report from Dumont Dunes Subgroup 170  
 6  
 7 Council questions/comments on SO/DM/FO Subgroup  
 reports 172  
 8 Public questions/comments on SO/DM/FO Subgroup  
 reports 183  
 9  
 10 Wrap-up and summary, including discussion of theme  
 and agenda topics for next meeting 155  
 11 Adjournment 186  
 12 Motions 187  
 13  
 14 ATTACHMENTS  
 15  
 16 Letter from Alliance for Desert Preservation  
 dated December 5, 2014  
 17 "Rockhounds, Ghosts of the Desert," by Shirley Leeson  
 18 Letter from Eastern Kern County Resource Conservation  
 District dated December 3, 2014  
 19  
 20  
 21  
 22  
 23  
 24  
 25

Page 6

1 PALM SPRINGS; SATURDAY, DECEMBER 6, 2014  
 2 8:17 A.M.  
 3 P-R-O-C-E-E-D-I-N-G-S  
 4 ---000---

5  
 6 CHAIR SALL: Welcome. If everyone can please  
 7 take a seat. Good morning. Thank you all for joining  
 8 us for the DAC meeting. If we could go ahead and get  
 9 started with Pledge of Allegiance.

10 Seth, would you do the honors.  
 11 (The Pledge of Allegiance was recited.)

12 CHAIR SALL: Great. Thank you. Just a few  
 13 logistics real fast. If everyone could please be sure  
 14 to silence their cell phones at this point, and  
 15 restrooms are out the front on the right and the left.  
 16 And we're going to go ahead and get started  
 17 with introductions. I'm going to start with the left  
 18 side of the table again. Seth, would you like to  
 19 introduce yourself.

20 MEMBER SHTEIR: Good morning, everybody.  
 21 Seth Shteir, environmental representative for the Desert  
 22 Advisory Council, and in my daytime job I'm field rep  
 23 for a National Parks conservation association.

24 MEMBER HOUSTON: Don Houston representing  
 25 nonrenewable resources.

Page 7

1 MEMBER CAMPBELL-ERB: Kim Campbell-Erb  
 2 representing recreation, and I'm a rockhound.  
 3 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: Good morning. I'm  
 4 Randy Banis, resident of Leona Valley and a member of  
 5 the public at large.  
 6 MEMBER ALGAZY: Mark Algazy representing the  
 7 public at large.  
 8 MEMBER BARRETT: Leslie Barrett representing  
 9 renewable resources.  
 10 MR. KENNEY: Jim Kenney, public at large.  
 11 MEMBER O'BOYLE: Paul O'Boyle, right-of-way.  
 12 MEMBER BURKE: Bob Burke, public at large.  
 13 DIRECTOR RAML: I'm Teri Raml. I'm the  
 14 District Manager for the California Desert District.  
 15 I'm the designated federal official for this meeting.  
 16 CHAIRPERSON BANIS: Thank you. I'm April Sall,  
 17 public at large and chair of the DAC.  
 18 I would like to go ahead and start with our  
 19 approval of the transcript for the September meeting.  
 20 Do we have any comments, changes, or can I get a motion  
 21 to approve?  
 22 MEMBER BURKE: So moved.  
 23 CHAIR SALL: So moved.  
 24 MEMBER BARRETT: Second.  
 25 CHAIR SALL: Seconded by Leslie. All in favor?

Page 8

1 Any dissenting?  
 2 (A vote was taken.)  
 3 CHAIR SALL: All right. So moved. Thank you  
 4 very much.  
 5 Review of the agenda. We are going to have a  
 6 focus topic on the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation  
 7 Plan, and we will also have some presentations following  
 8 lunch about desert soils and carbon sequestration as  
 9 well as our reports listed on the agenda.  
 10 In terms of public comment for the DRECP, what  
 11 we're going to do at this point is go through our DAC  
 12 discussion on DRECP, and probably we'll need to take our  
 13 morning break. And then we will address how much time  
 14 we will have for public comments, and we will get those  
 15 in before lunch, and that will be the opportunity for  
 16 public comment on that agenda item.  
 17 I've got stacks going for the various public  
 18 comments, so if you have not turned yours in yet for  
 19 items not on the agenda, please do so very soon. Once  
 20 we begin a public comment period, I will not be  
 21 accepting any more comment cards.  
 22 Can I get an approval for the agenda.  
 23 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: Move.  
 24 MEMBER SHTEIR: Second.  
 25 MEMBER HOUSTON: I have a question. Are we

Page 9

1 going to discuss the work plan?  
 2 MEMBER SALL: Yes.  
 3 MEMBER HOUSTON: Is that on the agenda?  
 4 CHAIR SALL: That is in our DRECP discussion.  
 5 Oh, next year's work plan?  
 6 MEMBER HOUSTON: Next year's work plan.  
 7 DIRECTOR RAML: It's the last topic.  
 8 MEMBER HOUSTON: Okay.  
 9 CHAIR SALL: Correct, yes, at the end of the  
 10 day. Any other questions, comments?  
 11 Okay. So we had a motion to move the agenda --  
 12 correct? -- and accept it?  
 13 MEMBER SHTEIR: Second.  
 14 CHAIR SALL: Seconded. All in favor? Any  
 15 dissenting?  
 16 (A vote was taken.)  
 17 CHAIR SALL: Okay. Great. Let's move forward,  
 18 then, and begin with our Desert District Manager report.  
 19 Would you do the honors?  
 20 DIRECTOR RAML: Well, welcome to the meeting.  
 21 First off I'd like to have the BLM staff that's here,  
 22 managers and staff, introduce themselves, starting  
 23 with -- let's see -- that side, Katrina.  
 24 MS. SYMONS: Good morning. I'm Katrina Symons,  
 25 the Barstow Field Manager.

Page 10

1 DIRECTOR RAML: I think, John --

2 MR. KALISH: Good morning. John Kalish, Field  
3 Manager for BLM right here in Palm Springs.

4 DIRECTOR RAML: Vicki, go.

5 MS. WOOD: Vicki Wood, Acting Associate at  
6 Palm Springs, helping John out.

7 MR. WAKEFIELD: Good morning. Tim Wakefield,  
8 Associate District Manager for the California Desert  
9 District. Welcome.

10 DIRECTOR RAML: Mike. I forgot Mike.

11 MR. AHRENS: Mike Ahrens, Needles Field Office.

12 MR. SYMONS: Good morning. Carl Symons, Field  
13 Manager, Ridgecrest Field Office.

14 MR. ZALE: We're doing this alphabetically.  
15 Tom Zale. I'm Field Manager in El Centro.

16 MS. WOHLGEMUTH: I'm Jennifer Wohlgemuth, Staff  
17 Assistant to the District Manager and to the DAC.

18 MR. RAZO: Steve Razo, External Affairs, Desert  
19 District, BLM.

20 DIRECTOR RAML: I'll show my age. Look at me  
21 sitting up here like "What's My Line?" Yeah, so it's my  
22 age. So I'll make my report very brief. First of all I  
23 want to welcome all of you to this meeting. I was going  
24 to say it this way: I know what we've been doing, and I  
25 know what you've been doing because I've seen several of

Page 11

1 you in the last couple of months. All of us have been  
2 very busy, you and the BLM alike, working on the Desert  
3 Renewable Energy Conservation Plan.

4 In addition to that we've had a series of  
5 wonderful celebrations. We've celebrated the 50th  
6 anniversary of the Wilderness Act and an especially fine  
7 celebration for the 20th anniversary of the California  
8 Desert Protection Act. It was wonderful to get together  
9 to celebrate the desert. I attended and took part in a  
10 few of these at the same time people were getting  
11 together to try to sort out and figure their way through  
12 the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan.

13 I encourage you to take a look at the field  
14 manager reports. You'll get a good idea of what in the  
15 middle of while we're planning and going to public  
16 meetings, the hard work continues in field offices.  
17 That's really the meat of where the BLM does -- where  
18 the real work gets done, in the field offices. Read  
19 those reports. You can talk to field managers during  
20 breaks and also with the Q and A.

21 And with that, I think we'll just move on with  
22 this meeting.

23 CHAIR SALL: Thank you, Teri. We're going to  
24 go ahead and start our member reports, and I'm going to  
25 actually start on the right side of the table.

Page 12

1 Bob, do you have anything?

2 MEMBER BURKE: Nothing to report from the high  
3 desert.

4 CHAIR SALL: Okay. Thank you.

5 MEMBER O'BOYLE: No report.

6 MEMBER KENNEY: Just been reading the DRECP.  
7 That's been a long, drawn-out thing.

8 MEMBER BARRETT: No report.

9 CHAIR SALL: Mark?

10 MEMBER ALGAZY: I don't understand from the  
11 agenda as it's written up where we're supposed to make  
12 proposals for things that are not on the agenda, so I'm  
13 going to use this opportunity to say that I'd like to  
14 spend a little bit of time following up on the e-mails I  
15 sent out about who gets on the list as far as  
16 communications go; present nominees and former DAC  
17 members, if they're entitled to access to any of our  
18 communications.

19 Also at some point I'd like to talk about the  
20 Collaborative Access Planning Agreement for the El Paso  
21 and Ridgecrest area that has been a slow, slow, slow  
22 burner issue for 14 years now. That's it for me. Thank  
23 you.

24 CHAIR SALL: So we have a plan for addressing  
25 those. Thank you.

Page 13

1 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: Thank you. Good morning.  
2 I'd like to thank John Kalish and the folks from  
3 Palm Springs for putting together a terrific field trip  
4 yesterday. The order of our visits of each stop along  
5 the way was well done because, if we had gone to  
6 Dos Palmas first, I don't think we ever would have left.  
7 We got chased out because of darkness. It was  
8 spectacular.

9 What a beautiful, beautiful oasis. It's  
10 remarkable how you can walk ten steps off the gravel  
11 road into a grove of palms and feel like you've stepped  
12 on to Gilligan's Island. It is unbelievable, and I  
13 loved it very much. And the history of the farm, the  
14 old fish farm, and how the reserve came about and its  
15 place within the MultiSpecies Habitat Conservation Plan,  
16 all of that was very, very neat. We really enjoyed  
17 listening to that.

18 I'd like to segway. We spent much of our time  
19 at the Patton Museum and visiting another of the Desert  
20 Training Center Camps. Yesterday we went to Camp Young.  
21 We have previously visited Camp Ibis. And I think, to  
22 me, these visits have had an impact on me and an impact  
23 on how I view the role of our desert in past, present  
24 and in the future.

25 I'd like to take this opportunity, if I may,

1 to -- I understand that the BLM is hoping to seek a  
 2 listing for the -- I'm going to call them the Patton  
 3 Camps -- a listing for the Patton Camps in the  
 4 National Register of Historic Places, and I'd like to  
 5 offer a motion from the DAC to support the BLM's  
 6 application when that goes forward. I think the DAC has  
 7 seen these places and enjoyed them and witnessed the  
 8 ghosts of history and past, and I'd like us to support  
 9 this application. So I'm going to move that we support  
 10 the listing.

11 MEMBER SHTEIR: Second.

12 CHAIR SALL: Any discussion? Kim?

13 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: I would like to know how  
 14 it would affect access to the public use of the areas  
 15 before I would take a vote.

16 CHAIR SALL: Teri, can you help us with that?

17 DIRECTOR RAML: I'm looking out there to my  
 18 colleagues. So John, Mike, Tom, Tim, one of you could  
 19 address the listing process and the difference it may  
 20 make in people's ability to access the camps. Remember,  
 21 it's "What's My Line?"

22 MR. ZALE: Tom Zale. I don't believe it would  
 23 impact access in the sense of, you know, closing routes  
 24 or anything like that. The determination that the sites  
 25 that are eligible for and included on the

1 National Register of Historic Places affords a  
 2 distinction in terms of, you know, consultation  
 3 requirements and how sites are treated, but I don't  
 4 think it would impact access like you're concerned  
 5 about.

6 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: Or use in the areas where  
 7 they're located?

8 MR. ZALE: If there was a use proposed, you  
 9 know, that would potentially conflict with a  
 10 National Register site, there's a consultation process  
 11 that would be required, a determination of whether or  
 12 not the effects would be adverse or not and, if they  
 13 were adverse, whether there would be appropriate  
 14 mitigation to reduce those effects.

15 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: Okay.

16 MR. ZALE: And then ultimately a process of  
 17 determining with the State Historic Preservation Officer  
 18 and potentially the advisory council on historic  
 19 preservation, you know, and appropriate course of action  
 20 either through a Programmatic Agreement or Memorandum of  
 21 Agreement, if BLM proceeded with, I guess, authorizing  
 22 those effects.

23 MEMBER ALGAZY: Maybe it would be helpful to  
 24 give us a characterization of registry status and place  
 25 it closer to management like an ACEC or a National

1 Conservation Land, because we're just getting our heads  
 2 around how those kinds of lands are going to be managed  
 3 under the new classification system. So do you think it  
 4 would be more like an ACEC or a National Conservation?  
 5 MR. ZALE: I don't think it necessarily would  
 6 be like either. Listing a site on the National Register  
 7 affords it a status. I mean, it's a recognition of the  
 8 importance of that site or concentration of sites. It  
 9 requires following a certain set of regulations that an  
 10 advisory council and historic preservation promulgated.  
 11 It's 36 CFR 800, I mean, so there's a process for sites  
 12 that are on the register or eligible for the register to  
 13 be afforded that kind of consideration.

14 And so, yeah, I wouldn't necessarily say that  
 15 it's analogous to either ACEC or National Conservation  
 16 Lands system designation.

17 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: Would there be more  
 18 publicity of those places if they were on the register  
 19 by the federal government, because I think it would be  
 20 great to bring more people off the freeways and on the  
 21 ground in the desert to see what's offered there.

22 MR. ZALE: Yeah, there could be. And I mean,  
 23 you know, certain sites that are on the  
 24 National Register are highly publicized. Other sites  
 25 that are either on or eligible for the register are not

1 necessarily highly publicized because of the  
 2 sensitivity, so it depends.

3 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: Thank you.

4 MR. WAKEFIELD: Tim Wakefield. With Connecting  
 5 People to the Desert, an initiative that Teri has  
 6 brought forward --

7 CHAIR SALL: Tim, could you please join us at  
 8 the mic. Sorry. Some folks are having trouble hearing.

9 MR. WAKEFIELD: Okay.

10 CHAIR SALL: Thank you.

11 MR. WAKEFIELD: Never mind, then.

12 DIRECTOR RAML: Thanks, Tim.

13 MR. WAKEFIELD: Now, where was I?

14 MR. RAZO: Turn the mic on.

15 MR. WAKEFIELD: Do I need it?

16 DIRECTOR RAML: Yes, you do.

17 MR. WAKEFIELD: Okay. Can you hear me now?  
 18 With the Connecting People to the Desert initiative that  
 19 we're working on now -- and we also have -- part of that  
 20 is the Patton Camps, and we've already put together some  
 21 new kiosks and things like that that will identify  
 22 those. And also with the Connecting People to the  
 23 Desert, there's going to be more of a virtual  
 24 experience. So people who want access those areas will  
 25 be able to go on a website and get a virtual tour of

1 some of them.  
 2 There will be probably -- you know, collecting  
 3 is not allowed now there as far as artifacts and things  
 4 like that, and we've had some issues with people  
 5 removing things.  
 6 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: You mean the cultural  
 7 resources?  
 8 MR. WAKEFIELD: Cultural resources. And I know  
 9 you're interested in rock collecting. You know, some of  
 10 the quartz and stuff that was brought in there to outlay  
 11 or inlay the stars and things like that, we don't want  
 12 those things going away because we want people to enjoy  
 13 them. And we're in the process of the designation right  
 14 now, the review. And I really don't think it would  
 15 change much. It will just, as Tom was saying, bring  
 16 more awareness of the value of the area and give  
 17 different ways for people to experience it because of  
 18 the value that we put on it.  
 19 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: I hope that the BLM will  
 20 explain why collecting is not permitted there so that  
 21 people understand the significance of some of the rocks  
 22 that are in that area that we were fortunate to see in  
 23 one of the earlier field trips.  
 24 MR. WAKEFIELD: And maybe you can help us with  
 25 that and give us some ideas, being from the community of

1 collectors. Thank you.  
 2 CHAIR SALL: Question or comment?  
 3 MEMBER BARRETT: Yeah, just one additional  
 4 thing more on the procedural. And given that this is  
 5 probably widespread, I think it's important, though,  
 6 that we thoroughly analyze what this proposal is before  
 7 we have a vote on it. And I'm not so sure that it's  
 8 been presented to the committee. I know I'm somewhat  
 9 new, and perhaps it was presented before I got here.  
 10 But generally as a standard, I'd like to resist votes on  
 11 issues without giving us all an opportunity perhaps to  
 12 review it first.  
 13 MEMBER HOUSTON: I have similar thoughts too,  
 14 Leslie. I support the protection of cultural resources  
 15 when they have historical significance. My  
 16 understanding is the application for the listing is not  
 17 even filed yet; is that correct? So we don't know the  
 18 scope of the listing at this time, the full scope; is  
 19 that right?  
 20 DIRECTOR RAML: That's correct.  
 21 MEMBER HOUSTON: Okay. So I would like to wait  
 22 until we, as Leslie suggested, know more about the scope  
 23 of the listing. And I think I can support it at that  
 24 time, but I'm not going to vote with my eyes closed.  
 25 CHAIR SALL: Other comments? Randy?

1 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: I'd be more than happy to  
 2 leave this motion on the table for a time future, if  
 3 that's agreeable by the board. Very good. Thank you.  
 4 MEMBER SALL: I think so. Thank you. Thank  
 5 you, Randy.  
 6 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: Thank you kindly. I  
 7 appreciate it. And that's all I have, other than I was  
 8 going to encourage Seth to perhaps update the DAC on  
 9 developments in Silurian Valley. So hopefully that will  
 10 be part of your report. Thank you. Thank you,  
 11 everybody.  
 12 CHAIR SALL: Great. We're going to continue  
 13 our member reports. I'm going to skip over Kim at her  
 14 request and go to Don.  
 15 MEMBER HOUSTON: Yes. I want to echo Randy's  
 16 statements about the excellence of the field trip  
 17 yesterday. I think I got more information out of that  
 18 field trip than any field trip in the past. First the  
 19 Big Morongo Preserve presentation on biological soil  
 20 crusts was excellent. I think it was the first time  
 21 ever presented. Is that what I heard?  
 22 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: Right.  
 23 MEMBER HOUSTON: Excellent presentation. The  
 24 word "mycelia" is still ringing in my ears. And then,  
 25 of course, a trip to the Patton Museum, and

1 unfortunately we didn't -- you know, we could have  
 2 stayed there all day and seen that. So then, you know,  
 3 the culmination of the trip as the sun was setting at  
 4 Dos Palmas was spectacular. So John, thanks to you and  
 5 your staff for just a really terrific field trip.  
 6 Nothing else to report.  
 7 CHAIR SALL: Seth?  
 8 MEMBER SHTEIR: I'd like to echo the comments  
 9 about the field trip yesterday. I'm a firm believer in  
 10 hands-on learning, and getting out there and seeing the  
 11 resources in the California desert are really my  
 12 favorite parts of being on the DAC.  
 13 But I thought yesterday was so interesting in a  
 14 number of ways. You know, the amount of artifacts and  
 15 memorabilia at the Patton Museum was just incredible and  
 16 just a very emotional, moving experience. And  
 17 similarly, the trip to Dos Palmas was just impressive to  
 18 show the work that BLM does, you know, protecting  
 19 resources, protecting the environment. So I want to  
 20 thank you all again.  
 21 Also I'd like to thank Mr. Kenna, Teri, Katrina  
 22 and people who worked on the Silurian project  
 23 application. And for those people who don't know, this  
 24 was about a 7,000-acre proposed solar project up in the  
 25 Silurian Valley, and it was on variance lands identified

Page 22

1 by the solar PEIS. And the question before BLM was  
2 whether that process would move forward or whether it  
3 the variance would be denied, and it was recently  
4 denied.

5 I just want to say, you know, I've been around  
6 a little while now, and I've seen processes, you know,  
7 both go the way I wanted them to and not go the way I  
8 wanted them to. But I'm very, very heartened and very  
9 appreciative, and I think I speak on behalf of a lot of  
10 people that BLM the process worked in this case and they  
11 recognize the value of the Silurian Valley both for  
12 trust resources and visual resources and things like  
13 that. So thank you, and thank you again.

14 And the last thing I have to say, if I'm not  
15 going on too long here, is, I just wanted to let folks  
16 know that as part of my day job, I took a bunch of youth  
17 from the Coachella Valley on a tour of the three desert  
18 national parks but also some BLM lands recently. And  
19 the partnership was a little bit of an alliance between  
20 Hispanic Access Foundation, a Coachella Valley  
21 environmental group called Por la Creacion and PCA. And  
22 we visited Joshua Tree. We visited Mojave National  
23 Preserve.

24 But the last day we just had a fantastic day,  
25 and we visited Amboy Crater and climbed to the top of

Page 23

1 the crater. And those kids were absolutely awed from  
2 the view of the top of the crater. They had a wonderful  
3 end to their trip there. And I think a lot of those  
4 kids really feel the same way about those Public Lands  
5 that we do now. So that's my report, and thanks.

6 DIRECTOR RAML: Okay. Cool. Thanks.

7 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: I'd like to thank Seth for  
8 bringing to the DAC's attention the Silurian Valley  
9 project during the Needles meeting, and thank you for  
10 leading the DAC's discussions on that. And the DAC  
11 voted to oppose the variance application, and I'm hoping  
12 that perhaps that had a little bit of weight in the  
13 decision of the state director. So thank you, Seth.

14 CHAIR SALL: Kim.

15 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: I'm using this opportunity  
16 to announce that I'm not going to be seeking a second  
17 term, so this will be my final meeting as a DAC member.  
18 And I wanted to tell you what an honor it has been to  
19 represent the recreating public on the Desert Advisory  
20 Council. And I'm hoping that I will have made a lasting  
21 difference to all of you, to everyone.

22 And I'm hoping that you remember my theme,  
23 which is that motorized access is the key to developing  
24 love and respect for the desert. All members of the  
25 public deserve the right to appreciate remote areas of

Page 24

1 the desert, and in fact I believe that the public  
2 doesn't have an opportunity to fully appreciate the  
3 desert unless they can get to those remote areas. So  
4 motorized access is extremely important, and I hope you  
5 all appreciate that.

6 And the other thing I want you to come away  
7 with from my presence here is, shared use is extremely  
8 important. There are more and more areas that are set  
9 aside. Whether they're set aside for conservation, for  
10 wilderness, there are many uses that the land is set  
11 aside for that no longer allows people like myself, who  
12 likes to collect gems and minerals, rocks, the  
13 opportunity to go to some of the remote areas that we  
14 once were able to experience.

15 And so I'm hoping that there will be more of a  
16 focus on sharing the areas that we have that are still  
17 accessible to the public so that more of the public can  
18 enjoy them and appreciate them in the future. Thank  
19 you.

20 CHAIR SALL: Thank you, Kim. I would also like  
21 to thank the Palm Springs Field Office for the field  
22 trip yesterday. It was a really great trip. I  
23 unfortunately was not able to remain on the trip due to  
24 some hopefully temporary illness, but it was very  
25 informative, and I appreciate the staff for putting that

Page 25

1 together, and I know there is a lot on everyone's plate,  
2 given all of the events of this fall. So thank you  
3 again.

4 I would also like to thank Kim and Al and Bob,  
5 and we have several --

6 MEMBER ALGAZY: Dinah.

7 CHAIR SALL: -- Dinah, who is not able to join  
8 us today, recovering from surgery. But we do have  
9 several seats that are open on the Desert Advisory  
10 Council, and that announcement has been publicized, so I  
11 encourage all of you who are interested to consider that  
12 opportunity. And we will look forward to getting our  
13 new members named. And thank you again for all of your  
14 service, all of you that are existing DAC members and  
15 those of you who are leaving us. So thank you again.

16 I would also just like to give a brief comment  
17 about some of the events that have been going on over  
18 the last few months since our last meeting. As everyone  
19 is aware, the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan  
20 was released. And, as was mentioned earlier, many of  
21 you have, like us, been attending public meetings around  
22 the desert and making our comments known. And we were  
23 granted an extension for public comments, so I think  
24 that was welcomed, and we look forward to continuing the  
25 discussion on DRECP, as much as one can enjoy that.

Page 26

1 And I think that the California Desert  
 2 Protection Act and the wilderness celebrations that have  
 3 been held throughout the desert have been a great  
 4 opportunity to bring people together to honor this  
 5 amazing California desert in various ways, and so thank  
 6 you all for coming to our meeting and for your  
 7 participation.

8 I forgot to address some procedures for public  
 9 comment, so I want to take just a quick moment to do  
 10 that. We are collecting public comment cards for items  
 11 as stated in the agenda for public comment. Generally  
 12 we allow three minutes for public comment. If we  
 13 receive a large number on a particular topic, we may  
 14 change the amount of time on public comment, given the  
 15 agenda items. But if you could please keep your  
 16 comments to the topic as called out for public comment  
 17 and turn in your cards, again, before the comment period  
 18 starts.

19 And I believe we are ready to move on to public  
 20 comments for items not on the agenda. I have a stack  
 21 here. I'll be calling the first name and then the  
 22 second name who follows the first person so that you are  
 23 ready to come up. If you'll make sure that the  
 24 microphone is on and state your name for the court  
 25 reporter, that would be great.

Page 27

1 So the first name I have is Seth Rosenberg.  
 2 MR. ROSENBERG: Good morning. My name is  
 3 Seth Rosenberg. I am a cultural resources specialist  
 4 for Southern California Gas Company. First of all, I  
 5 would like to thank everyone for the opportunity to come  
 6 here and speak this morning. As the cultural resources  
 7 specialist for the gas company, I'm in charge of  
 8 ensuring that cultural resource issues are managed in  
 9 relation to how we operate and maintain our  
 10 right-of-ways, our easements and our facilities.

11 I wanted to come here and just indicate our  
 12 concern with the listing of Route 66 through the CMP  
 13 plan as a scenic byway and what potential impacts that  
 14 will have on operating and maintaining our easements and  
 15 our facilities. I do understand that one of our staff  
 16 members was here at the last quarterly meeting and  
 17 indicated the same, so I'm not going to spend a lot of  
 18 time going over specifics.

19 I would also like to say -- I'm happy to say as  
 20 a note on the Barstow Field Office report that was  
 21 indicated that they are aware of our concerns with the  
 22 listing. And I would just like to form a request that  
 23 after the draft CMP becomes available and comments  
 24 returned, that this topic get agendized on one of the  
 25 future DAC meetings.

Page 28

1 CHAIR SALL: Thank you.  
 2 MR. ROSENBERG: Thanks.  
 3 CHAIR SALL: Next I have Sophia Merk, followed  
 4 by Shirley Leeson.  
 5 MS. MERK: Thank you. Sophia Merk. Everybody  
 6 calls me "Sam." I would like to bring to the attention  
 7 of the DAC that in 1980, the Desert Plan came out. In  
 8 the Desert Plan, it talked about tribal communication.  
 9 And for years I have been coming to the DAC and asking  
 10 Teri, when will I see a tribal person on the DAC? And I  
 11 don't see anybody. It was supposed to be part of the  
 12 RMP. That's the Desert Plan, and so far I don't see it.  
 13 And especially with the DRECP and all the communication,  
 14 I don't see a member of the tribal people on this DAC.  
 15 Thank you.  
 16 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Shirley?  
 17 MS. LEESON: I'm Shirley Leeson. I'm a past  
 18 president of the California Federation of mineralogical  
 19 societies, and I'm speaking for them this morning.  
 20 I have two concerns. Each of you received what  
 21 is called a Memorandum of Understanding between the U.S.  
 22 Bureau of Land Management and the California federation.  
 23 This was done in 2000. My question is, is it still in  
 24 effect? And will the DRECP have any effect on this?  
 25 That's my first concern. I've already talked to the

Page 29

1 gentleman from El Centro, and he's going to look into it  
 2 for me.  
 3 My second concern -- and I want to show you  
 4 this. Can you see how thick it is (indicating)? Those  
 5 are rockhounds. Those are rockhounds. We are going to  
 6 call ourselves "Rockhounds, Ghosts of the Desert, the  
 7 Endangered Specie." Rockhounds are the forgotten people  
 8 of the desert. There are thousands of us. We leave  
 9 little behind to let you know we've been there. We  
 10 carry out others' trash as well as our own.  
 11 Many have been calling the desert our second  
 12 home since the 1960s, but you don't even know we're  
 13 there. We follow guidebooks and simple maps given to us  
 14 by earlier desert visitors. We are the modern-day  
 15 prospector with his burro. Many of us are from the war  
 16 eras and have found solace and peace in the desert.  
 17 Now we are threatened with extinction ourselves  
 18 and our future generations. Unlike the protected desert  
 19 tortoise and the other endangered species who have had  
 20 thousands of acres set aside, the rockhounds may be  
 21 entirely shut out of our beloved desert.  
 22 I am asking for your help in setting aside some  
 23 of our sacred places. Help us include rockhound areas  
 24 in the DRECP plan. I stand here today representing 95  
 25 gem and mineral societies within California with

Page 30

1 approximately 10,000 members, and I also represent  
 2 another 10,000 members of the American Lands Access from  
 3 throughout the U.S.  
 4 Did anyone do an economic impact on what will  
 5 happen to all the small towns within the DRECP when the  
 6 rockhounds are gone? A typical four-day weekend for a  
 7 couple gives the community well over \$550, and in this  
 8 case there were three couples on this particular trip  
 9 over this last Thanksgiving weekend.  
 10 We are asking for help in saving the following  
 11 locations: Wiley Wells, Houser Beds, Lavic Siding,  
 12 Broadwell Dry Lake and Ludlow area, all of the vicinity  
 13 of the Hector and Ludlow along Route 40, Cady Mountains,  
 14 Gem Hill, Lonely Butte, North Edwards Aerial Acres,  
 15 Mule Canyon, Marble Mountains near Cadiz and  
 16 Kramer Junction. Thank you.  
 17 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Next I have  
 18 John Stewart.  
 19 MR. STEWART: Good morning, council and  
 20 members. John Stewart, California Association of  
 21 Four-Wheel-Drive Clubs.  
 22 There are two items that are coming up of  
 23 interest, and one of them is on the national scale. The  
 24 Bureau of Land Management is entering into a planning  
 25 rule revision. I've attended a meeting on this put on

Page 31

1 by the national groups, the national BLM, and this is  
 2 something that -- I understand this is in the  
 3 preliminary stages, but this particular rule change will  
 4 fundamentally change some of the planning processes that  
 5 the BLM and the public are involved in. I would  
 6 encourage the BLM to make this an agenda item for a  
 7 future public meeting in order to introduce the public  
 8 to the changes coming down and how you will be  
 9 conducting your planning processes.  
 10 A second point of interest that I keep coming  
 11 across in continuous work with federal agencies -- this  
 12 extends from Fish and Wildlife, Forest Service and  
 13 BLM -- is, I'm under the belief now that you are basing  
 14 your concepts and perceptions of recreation on models  
 15 that are 15 to 20 years old. You are not up to what the  
 16 current changing demographics and desires of the  
 17 recreationist is. It is fine to have the high-intensity  
 18 OHV areas. There is a large contingent that want that,  
 19 want that type of recreation. There's also a growing  
 20 contingency of recreating public that are looking for  
 21 more of a solitary and more of a dispersed recreation  
 22 opportunity.  
 23 And some of you are looking -- and I'll touch  
 24 on this more under the DRECP comments, but in looking at  
 25 some of your recent planning efforts, you are creating

Page 32

1 an area where you may actually begin to lock the public  
 2 out, maybe unintentionally, because the future planning  
 3 will have not taken into account the changing of  
 4 recreation desires and wishes of the general public.  
 5 Thank you.  
 6 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. That is all the public  
 7 comment cards that I have for items not on the agenda.  
 8 MR. WALDHEIM: You've got mine. I gave it to  
 9 Katrina.  
 10 CHAIR SALL: Go ahead, Ed.  
 11 MR. WALDHEIM: Thank you. Ed Waldheim, Friends  
 12 of Jawbone, Friends of El Mirage and California Trail  
 13 Users Coalition.  
 14 I'd like to report that off-highway vehicle  
 15 recreation use for Public Lands is alive and well. This  
 16 last Thanksgiving we saw the influx of what we have not  
 17 seen in the last eight, almost ten years. There was no  
 18 site left open in Jawbone, Dove Springs. Spangler Hills  
 19 was completely full, Wagon Wheel. Teagle Wash was full.  
 20 California City was overrun with people. Barstow BLM  
 21 office was overrun. And Neil told me he had over 125  
 22 folks in the El Centro office. So we had about 30,000  
 23 Barstow, 35,000 Ridgecrest. So it was absolutely  
 24 fantastic.  
 25 With that, however, comes the issue that we

Page 33

1 need funding. We need resources. We need help in  
 2 making sure that these types of events or these type of  
 3 influences on the Public Lands is properly managed. And  
 4 this is just one call I'm going to be making to all of  
 5 you, that when we come to the topic of the DRECP, we are  
 6 making a lot of promises. We're making a lot of hopes.  
 7 We're putting a lot of effort into a plan that, unless  
 8 you do the proper funding, it's never going to happen.  
 9 And every single one of you in this audience,  
 10 be it federal government employee, state or private or  
 11 whatever it is, it is going to be incumbent on all of us  
 12 to figure out how are we going to get the funding to do  
 13 what we're saying we're promising to do?  
 14 Ridgecrest BLM office, four law enforcement,  
 15 four law enforcement. With 35,000 people, you know,  
 16 it's not going to happen. And you indicate DRECP right  
 17 behind it, and so you're going to make it more  
 18 difficult. So the message is from all of us in the  
 19 audience is that not only do we have to push the BLM,  
 20 but we definitely have to push our congressmen and our  
 21 elected officials to get the funding necessary to keep  
 22 the access to our Public Lands.  
 23 Remember, you will use an off-road vehicle to  
 24 go on your hike or on your camp or in your fishing  
 25 stream or whatever your wish is. You will be an

Page 34

1 off-roader. I don't care what you do, you will be an  
2 off-roader. The moment you leave your vehicle off the  
3 pavement, you have now become an off-roader. So I'm  
4 encompassing everything that takes place in the  
5 Public Lands.  
6 And so we really have to get serious with it.  
7 We could talk all we want, but when the rubber meets the  
8 road down on the ground, we have to have the funds to be  
9 able to manage it. So I'm going to pushing that  
10 envelope as much as I can both here and in Sacramento  
11 and at the Off-Highway Vehicle Commission meeting, which  
12 comes up next Friday up in Oceano Dunes. Thanks.  
13 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. I'm going to make one  
14 exception for one of our previous California Desert  
15 District managers, Gerry Hillier.  
16 MR. HILLIER: Thank you very much, madam  
17 chairman. I appreciate the opportunity to sneak in a  
18 card late. Somebody asked me as I came in this morning  
19 was I going to speak, and I said I didn't know, and so  
20 the idea was late. Thank you for a wonderful field trip  
21 yesterday. It was just super visiting some sites there  
22 that I hadn't been on to for quite a while. But that is  
23 not why I'm here.  
24 I've spoken before about the Desert Tortoise  
25 Recovery Implementation Teams and have urged BLM to

Page 35

1 acquaint the DAC and the public with this process that's  
2 going on, and it basically is going on behind the scenes  
3 led by Fish and Wildlife Service and over the entire  
4 Mojave Desert. So California is just a part of that.  
5 Recently Version 1 has been completed. The  
6 teams have met again and issued a series -- I believe  
7 there's about 40 projects that were submitted to Fish  
8 and Wildlife Service, and these are going to be moved  
9 forward to the management oversight group at their  
10 meeting. I think it's December 18th. So it's imminent,  
11 and a number of them were for small projects -- fencing,  
12 various roads and highways a number of education  
13 projects, predator control, disease.  
14 The fact of the matter is that probably  
15 90 percent of these projects are on Public Lands  
16 administered by BLM. And I believe that most of the BLM  
17 people, certainly the public and the DAC, are not aware  
18 of the details of this, and I urge BLM to certainly  
19 bring this forward. It wouldn't be possible at this  
20 meeting, but bring these forward.  
21 The DRECP is important and is going to have a  
22 profound effect on Public Lands. The work of the  
23 Recovery Implementation Teams relevant to desert  
24 tortoise and its general distribution throughout the  
25 desert is, I think, going to be profound potentially,

Page 36

1 and I think the DAC does need to be made aware not just  
2 of the concepts but of the details of this as it moves  
3 forward. Thank you.  
4 MEMBER HOUSTON: Gerry, I have a question just  
5 for clarification. When you say 40 projects, I mean,  
6 because we're talking about DRECP, I don't want anyone  
7 to think that's a renewable project. You're talking  
8 about desert tortoise enhancement projects.  
9 MR. HILLIER: Right. Habitat restoration,  
10 fencing of highways, both county roads and the state  
11 highways where there aren't currently tortoise-proof  
12 fences, a number of grazing management, both  
13 implementation of ranch management projects as well as  
14 removal of livestock. Many of the projects compete and  
15 are mutually exclusive with one another.  
16 What I'm saying is just simply there's a number  
17 of these projects that are out there, and they do  
18 involve Public Lands and public land management, and I  
19 just think the DAC should be aware of it.  
20 MEMBER HOUSTON: And all these projects are to  
21 support the recovery of the desert tortoise?  
22 MR. HILLIER: Yes. That's the backdrop there,  
23 is that the Fish and Wildlife has taken the approach  
24 that, rather than appoint a recovery team, which is kind  
25 of their traditional organizational thing, that the

Page 37

1 recovery plan was issued in 2011 provided for the  
2 establishment of these interdisciplinary teams, and  
3 they've pulled together anywhere from eight to 12 people  
4 for each one of the units. There's three units in  
5 California, three units, and they include state and  
6 wildlife, federal wildlife, local governments and a  
7 variety of citizen groups all the way from ranchers and  
8 miners to people from the tortoise biology community.  
9 And they are supposed to -- they got together  
10 here a couple of years ago, wrestled with a number of  
11 things. There's been a whole mass of correspondence  
12 that's gone on, but they finally just last summer  
13 decided to take all the priority ones and allow people  
14 to submit specific projects to move forward that could  
15 be implemented.  
16 And, like Ed Waldheim just said, all of them  
17 take money, and as many as of us can see, there's no  
18 money the pot, but that's why it's another issue. These  
19 projects are out there now and are going to take on a  
20 life of their on.  
21 MR. LIEBSCHER: What it is the date of the  
22 meeting?  
23 MR. HILLIER: The management oversight meeting  
24 is scheduled for December 18, and it's in Las Vegas, but  
25 I don't know the specific location.

Page 38

1 DIRECTOR RAML: I'm not sure. I think it's  
2 going to be -- I talked to -- this is Teri, obviously.  
3 I talked to Fish and Wildlife Service on Thursday to  
4 make sure the meeting was still going to be held, and  
5 they told me they got a place -- I think, the refuge,  
6 the Sand Creek. Anyway, Gerry, they got a location now.  
7 I wanted to kind of address this. I know Gerry  
8 brings this up, and we actually did really consider  
9 agendizing desert tortoise for this particular meeting,  
10 but DRECP kind of bumped it out of the way. The other  
11 thing that bumped it out of the way for this meeting is  
12 one of the people who wants the presentation on desert  
13 tortoise is Al Muth, and so Chris Otahal from Katrina's  
14 office, Larry LaPre, we were all getting ready to put  
15 together this presentation. But when we recognized Al  
16 wasn't going to be here and DRECP -- so I know Gerry has  
17 a sense that I'm just not ever going to put this topic  
18 on the table, but we will get on the table, and we  
19 strongly considered it for this particular meeting but  
20 didn't.  
21 MR. HILLIER: Thank you.  
22 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. At this time I would  
23 like to move into our DRECP discussion, our first focus  
24 topic. We're going to begin our discussion, and then  
25 we'll be taking our morning break at some point here

Page 39

1 during the discussion. So at this point I'm going to  
2 offer just a quick summary.  
3 Regarding the Desert Renewable Energy  
4 Conservation Plan, as many of you are aware, the DAC  
5 formed a subcommittee to address and consider comments  
6 for the DRECP for the DAC. Those comments are available  
7 in the back of the room, and they've been available to  
8 the DAC for consideration to submit to the BLM, and I  
9 would like to open up discussion at this time on both  
10 the topic of DRECP as well as the subcommittee work  
11 product.  
12 Would anyone like to start?  
13 MEMBER HOUSTON: I'll jump in. I'm not sure  
14 the audience knows what that work product is. It was  
15 posted on our web page; is that correct? No? Okay. So  
16 at our last meeting of the subcommittee we decided that  
17 the subcommittee would go through the DRECP as they were  
18 scheduled out and provide comments and, I think, came up  
19 with about 60 comments.  
20 Is that right, Randy?  
21 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: Yes.  
22 MEMBER HOUSTON: Yeah. And after we made the  
23 comments, then we went through a process, and this was a  
24 great idea of prioritizing those comments. And just  
25 last night I went through the priority one comments

Page 40

1 because I think definitely we should move forward with  
2 those. But I think we haven't decided yet what exactly  
3 is deliverable we're going to provide to the Bureau of  
4 Land Management. And given the extension, I'm not clear  
5 on what our next steps are, so I think that we need to  
6 discuss what our schedule is for our next steps.  
7 I've got some additional comments I want to  
8 make after I've heard the rest of the folks, but at  
9 least I want to get it kicked off.  
10 CHAIR SALL: Thank you, Don. I appreciate  
11 that. I also would like to jump in on that comment  
12 about the opportunity for the extension and how that may  
13 influence the subcommittee and the DAC's comments. I  
14 personally feel that, with the holidays and the  
15 deadlines that we imposed on ourselves to try and be  
16 prepared for this meeting and the help of Randy, we were  
17 able to compile those comments, but we did have some  
18 subcommittee members out of town and unable to  
19 participate. And I would like to entertain the  
20 possibility of providing additional comments from the  
21 DAC to supplement or continue on with the current work  
22 product that the subcommittee has proposed.  
23 Our next meeting we have not set a date yet  
24 for. We'll be doing that at the end of the meeting, but  
25 we are proposing a February date for our next meeting at

Page 41

1 either the beginning of February or end of February,  
2 depending on our DAC members' schedules.  
3 Seth.  
4 MEMBER SHTEIR: I would just encourage an early  
5 February meeting because, you know, I think it's going  
6 to take a while to analyze and compile the comments and  
7 do any proofreading or draft a letter to go with it,  
8 things like that.  
9 CHAIR SALL: Don, do you want to jump back in?  
10 MEMBER HOUSTON: Just a comment on scheduling  
11 the meeting. There is one thing that affects a couple  
12 of the DAC members. The Desert Tortoise Symposium is  
13 going to be held in February as well. I believe that's  
14 around the 20th, so that's three days that subcommittee  
15 members are going to be distracted.  
16 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Any other comments  
17 from the DAC regarding extending our own comments on  
18 DRECP?  
19 Seth. Sorry. And then Mark.  
20 MEMBER SHTEIR: Oh, Mark, you can go.  
21 MEMBER ALGAZY: I just got word when we were  
22 going into this from day one when we were working with  
23 Plan A and Plan B, Plan A was to have something on the  
24 table today in case there wasn't an extension, but if at  
25 all possible, we would prefer Plan B, which would be to

Page 42

1 go as long as we could to put the most comprehensive  
 2 thing on the table that we could develop.  
 3 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Agreed.  
 4 MEMBER SHTEIR: Just wanted to say that I'm  
 5 supportive of, you know, continuing work on this  
 6 important subject. And, Randy, I'm happy to help in any  
 7 way with compiling these or helping other people compile  
 8 them. So I think it's a good idea. I'd love to hear  
 9 more different types of comments that we may have not  
 10 had time to make.  
 11 CHAIR SALL: Randy?  
 12 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: I concur entirely with  
 13 what's been said by my fellow council members. What  
 14 we've produced, it was a good effort. It was a good  
 15 effort. It covered a lot of ground, but what we really  
 16 have is essentially, I'm just going to say, a wish list.  
 17 It's a list of smorgasbord, somewhat. And I think if we  
 18 have an opportunity to wrap this up into more of a  
 19 narrative or perhaps as specific as addressing the  
 20 alternatives directly and specifically, I think that  
 21 would be a great direction for us to go in.  
 22 I think this was a good step. It really got us  
 23 thinking a lot about this. But I think that some of us  
 24 yearn for us to have a punch line at the end, to have  
 25 something to deliver at the end. And I think we have

Page 43

1 the time to do that, and I'd be happy to continue  
 2 participating in the process and help the group along as  
 3 much as I can. So I agree.  
 4 CHAIR SALL: Thank you, Randy, and thank you  
 5 again for your help in compiling comments and organizing  
 6 the report. I also concur with what's been said, and  
 7 personally, you know, I was affected by work deadlines  
 8 and was limited in my participation for this deadline.  
 9 But one of the things in the structure that we set up  
 10 for compiling our initial comments that created the  
 11 worksheet that you see today was, there was, "A," not  
 12 obviously a lot of time to review the current draft  
 13 document, but also not time for us to as a group discuss  
 14 if there was a strategy to propose additional  
 15 alternatives or hybridize alternatives or create any  
 16 suggestions or proposals that did not basically comply  
 17 with, you know, what was laid out in the current  
 18 executive summary in terms of, should there be an  
 19 opportunity for the DAC to provide any additional  
 20 approach to DRECP that's not spelled out, for example,  
 21 in the executive summary?  
 22 Personally one of the approaches that I would  
 23 like the DRECP to consider is a phased approach that  
 24 gives the opportunity for both impacts and designations,  
 25 management objectives, et cetera, to tier depending on

Page 44

1 the amount of development that is actually approved and  
 2 occurring.  
 3 As many of you know, there is a desire to  
 4 address cumulative impacts in the DRECP, and that is  
 5 part of the -- hopefully the opportunity in a cumulative  
 6 impacts analysis is to look at all of the different  
 7 aspects of the DRECP and project impacts.  
 8 Unfortunately, given the umbrella structure of the plan,  
 9 I'm, for one, unclear on how cumulative impacts are  
 10 going to be addressed and how management prescriptions  
 11 will change as projects are approved and new impacts,  
 12 for example, are realized or acknowledged.  
 13 So I support spending more time on the DAC  
 14 considering how to wrap up, as Randy describes, a  
 15 narrative and potentially propose additional items that  
 16 are not in the current draft EISF.  
 17 MEMBER BARRETT: Thank you, April. And I also  
 18 support the additional time in order to pull more and  
 19 more comments together. And I actually reviewed and  
 20 read most of the document itself, which was marvelous.  
 21 And I apologize to my kids for missing them for a couple  
 22 of weeks. But in all of that, I'm led to believe that  
 23 ultimately there will be some type of land use plan that  
 24 will designate renewable energy in certain areas and/or  
 25 be allowed or supported and many other areas prohibited.

Page 45

1 But at the end of the day and I was drawn to  
 2 this whole concept of streamlining, and I think -- from  
 3 a renewable perspective I think there could be a lot  
 4 more work done on the streamlining part of this  
 5 document. It's not clear to me from a renewable  
 6 perspective that there's any streamlining in this  
 7 document, and, you know, with the comments that take  
 8 permanence would be considered, and that leaves this  
 9 whole document to what I anticipate will be a  
 10 significant legal challenge. And I would like to take  
 11 the opportunity, having great experience at this, to  
 12 work on some meaningful streamlining processes.  
 13 I must give BLM some credit, and I think they  
 14 were probably the only agency that came up with some  
 15 ideas of how to streamline projects within DFA's. But  
 16 overall the concept that there's going to be a benefit  
 17 to renewable energy from this document is a pourpart  
 18 foundation, and I suspect it will be challenged. Thank  
 19 you.  
 20 MEMBER ALGAZY: Another comment.  
 21 CHAIR SALL: Yes, Mark.  
 22 MEMBER ALGAZY: I just wanted to say that the  
 23 extension is not just about polishing what we have put  
 24 on the table, that there is still a significant amount  
 25 of information we're looking forward to getting other

Page 46

1 than the document itself that could substantially affect  
2 what we put on the table.  
3 We have a list of unanswered questions from the  
4 BLM, and we are also looking for a lot more public  
5 input. We still don't have access to all the public  
6 comments that were made at the workshops, and there are  
7 two upcoming Webinars that may also put more information  
8 on the table, and all of those things can profoundly  
9 affect what we ultimately deliver. So there is a reason  
10 that the report isn't as complete as it can be, and it's  
11 not just because of the size of the DRECP document  
12 itself.  
13 CHAIR SALL: Don?  
14 MEMBER HOUSTON: Yeah. I have a comment -- two  
15 comments, one on the cumulative impact analysis and,  
16 two, a strategic comment for moving forward.  
17 On the cumulative analysis, with a  
18 programmatic, you're really not analyzing a project.  
19 You're not analyzing nuts and bolts and structures. So  
20 it's really difficult. You're really analyzing a  
21 process. So a cumulative analysis really can only be  
22 done on a qualitative level. It can't be done on a  
23 quantitative level. And without that quantitative  
24 analysis, you really don't have a cumulative analysis.  
25 So really with the cumulative analysis the

Page 47

1 significance of determinations are very conclusory.  
2 They just say, "Therefore, it will not be significant."  
3 Well, how do you know that, you know? They don't hold  
4 water. So that's something definitely we'll speak to in  
5 our comments.  
6 Now, moving on to the strategic discussion  
7 about next steps. Renewable energy projects will  
8 continue to be built in the desert. Market forces may  
9 even make it likely that the pace of that development  
10 will increase because wind and solar power is becoming  
11 cheaper and cheaper and starting to compete with  
12 nonrenewable generation. So those market forces make it  
13 likely that we'll see a lot more development of  
14 renewable energy in the western United States.  
15 Therefore we need a Conservation Plan. We need  
16 a Land Use Plan Amendment. So, you know, I would like  
17 the DAC to recommend one of the alternatives or a hybrid  
18 of those alternatives to move this process forward.  
19 CHAIR SALL: Thank you, Don. In our previous  
20 discussions both in the subcommittee and in the DAC, one  
21 of the items that Teri had offered previously was  
22 potentially an opportunity for the DAC or a subcommittee  
23 to have an additional opportunity, after we can digest  
24 more of the document, to clarify our questions or raise  
25 substantive questions and have a better understanding of

Page 48

1 some of the information before we compiled our comments.  
2 Due to timing of the deadlines, as Mark also  
3 captured in trying to prepare something for this  
4 meeting, we were not able to coordinate any additional  
5 opportunities for that dialogue to occur, given the  
6 public meetings scheduled and the agency being tasked  
7 with that. So potentially an opportunity for the DAC  
8 subcommittee, the DRECP Subcommittee, or if the entire  
9 DAC wanted to participate, obviously, you're invited to  
10 with the subcommittee, anyway, maybe setting up a call  
11 or a meeting where we could address some of those  
12 questions and items of information that we are not clear  
13 on would be helpful sooner than later, maybe end of  
14 December or early January, obviously, depending on your  
15 schedule, Teri, but so that we could be more prepared  
16 for formalizing the comments and potentially, as Don  
17 suggests, creating a hybrid alternative so that we can  
18 move forward with a better set of recommendations and  
19 comments that is hopefully more helpful and appropriate  
20 to the BLM.  
21 Seth.  
22 MEMBER SHTEIR: I think all those are good  
23 ideas. I have a concern about endorsing an alternative  
24 just from an environmental perspective and concern about  
25 creating a hybrid alternative. I think creating a

Page 49

1 hybrid alternative sounds to me conceptually like a  
2 great idea, but it's also a tremendous amount of work,  
3 tremendous amount of work. As far as endorsing  
4 alternatives, my concerns really lie with -- my concern  
5 is, our strength also our diversity on the DAC, but, you  
6 know, can this group come to real agreement about which  
7 alternative they think is best? I'm not sure.  
8 And then that leads me to a second point, and  
9 that is that, you know, I looked at the monitoring and  
10 mitigation plan of the DRECP, and I was -- I thought  
11 that needed a lot of work. So I'm reluctant to endorse  
12 any particular alternative at this point. So that's  
13 just where I stand. I understand people are in  
14 different places. So thank you.  
15 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Paul?  
16 MEMBER O'BOYLE: Thank you. This is just more  
17 of a general comment on the DRECP. When I was reading  
18 through it, a couple of things hit me, and a lot of it  
19 depends on where you sit in the room. As has been  
20 mentioned, there's a lots of diversity on this board,  
21 and we all have prejudices and biases about what we care  
22 about and what we care less about.  
23 And the drive for the whole renewable energy, I  
24 think a big part of it is global warming and whether we  
25 believe it's going to happen or not. And I'll just tell

Page 50

1 you in a conversation with various people on the DAC,  
 2 there are some people that fully believe it's a hoax, it  
 3 doesn't exist. There are other people that believe it's  
 4 happening as we speak and has to be dealt with  
 5 immediately.

6 That being said, the issue about involvement  
 7 that has been issued is these renewable energy projects  
 8 are going to come at some point. And the idea of  
 9 development is you don't kill development, you just kind  
 10 of bleed it to death. That's how it's generally done.  
 11 You just string out the process as long as possible so  
 12 that the investors go elsewhere. And that may happen in  
 13 this particular case as well, where these projects may  
 14 fade away for a while, but it will come back.

15 And that being said, I think it's wise for  
 16 people to prioritize what's most important to them,  
 17 realize that it's going to take place and that, you  
 18 know, there's going to be some horse training that goes  
 19 on. The golden goose in all of this, as far as -- we  
 20 all love the desert. I mean, I've heard many people say  
 21 what the desert means to them. The golden goose in all  
 22 of this is, renewable energy people -- they have the  
 23 money. The off-road vehicle people have the money.  
 24 That's where most of the money comes from to do and  
 25 preserve what we want. So in order to make this thing

Page 51

1 work, there does need to be some streamlining to make  
 2 the renewable energy people want to buy into it instead  
 3 of litigate over it.

4 And, you know, my personal feeling about it is,  
 5 before we start tearing up the desert, I think there  
 6 should be building codes where all buildings need to  
 7 have -- or all structures need to have renewable energy  
 8 solar panels or something on the roof so that you're not  
 9 just tearing the desert for no reason. Now, even if you  
 10 were to do that -- and believe me, there's interests  
 11 that don't want that -- the utility companies, because  
 12 what it's going to cost them to create their networks  
 13 and everything else. So it needs to come from two  
 14 different directions.

15 But I do think that this plan has the ability  
 16 to lay a foundation for the way development will take  
 17 place in it next 30 years so, when the people in this  
 18 audience obviously take time out of their lives on a  
 19 Saturday to come in here and care enough do that, I hope  
 20 they put pen to paper and they prioritize what's  
 21 important to them and just have in mind that there are  
 22 other perspectives that need to be taken into  
 23 consideration but really being conscious about what's  
 24 important to you.

25 The woman who came up with the rockhounds

Page 52

1 identifying specific places that are very important to  
 2 her, that's exactly what he needs to be taking place so  
 3 you can say, "Rockhounds, this is important. Renewable  
 4 energy people, this is important. OHV people, this is  
 5 what's important to them," and we can identify them and  
 6 kind of -- again this is at this level. It's more  
 7 builder blobs, land use blobs. You can kind of identify  
 8 where those are and come up with a comprehensive plan.  
 9 The devil will be in the details. There's only a  
 10 programmatic document, and there will be site-specific  
 11 follow-up, but again I think it has to be comprehensive.  
 12 That's about it.

13 MEMBER SHTEIR: Madam chair?  
 14 CHAIR SALL: Seth?  
 15 MEMBER SHTEIR: I just wanted to clarify  
 16 comments quickly. You know, although I'm not for  
 17 endorsing a particular alternative, I'm not at all  
 18 opposed to the DRECP process, and I think, in fact,  
 19 landscape-level planning is very important. I guess  
 20 what I am thinking in this is that we might work as a  
 21 DAC to try to improve particular aspects of the plan in  
 22 general as opposed to endorsing a particular  
 23 alternative. Thank you.

24 CHAIR SALL: Thank you, Seth. One other thing,  
 25 I guess, that I wanted to raise at this opportunity is

Page 53

1 that one of the comments that you will see that was  
 2 prioritized and shook out as one of our commented,  
 3 agreed-upon concerns is the aspect that BLM will not  
 4 receive additional funding for implementation of the  
 5 DRECP.

6 And I would like to propose in that light,  
 7 Teri, that maybe there's an opportunity for the DAC to  
 8 better understand the staffing resources currently of  
 9 the BLM Desert District and maybe a historic point by  
 10 not to, you know, create any -- I'm a land manager in my  
 11 day job, and so I guess looking at resources and what is  
 12 realistic from a management standpoint is obviously  
 13 extremely important, especially given the weight of the  
 14 DRECP and the implementation and the management actions.

15 And I just feel like it's very hard for us to  
 16 understand both members of the public and certainly from  
 17 the DAC perspective how BLM is going to shoulder the  
 18 responsibilities of this plan. And I guess I would like  
 19 personally to better understand how BLM is hoping to  
 20 address that, other than the couple of lines that are in  
 21 the executive summary that say there will be no  
 22 increased appropriations and there will be opportunities  
 23 for private grants and additional things in the future,  
 24 which is obviously a hopeful but vague statement.

25 And I don't mean to, you know, continue to

Page 54	Page 56
<p>1 raise this, but I feel like it's one of the most 2 appropriate and important questions for the DAC's 3 comments and how BLM is going to address and approve a 4 LUPA, because I for one just don't see how this is 5 possible, I guess, to approve management.</p> <p>6 DIRECTOR RAML: Let me respond a little bit. I 7 think it's entirely an appropriate question for you to 8 say, okay, BLM, with your staffing and resources, what 9 do you think? And how in this time of limited resources 10 and shortage of staff -- because those of you who care 11 about BLM and care about the desert, you know how short 12 our staff is.</p> <p>13 I would like -- I can't respond to it very well 14 now, but I think I need to take some time to try to talk 15 about that. And particularly we know the situation in 16 terms of how we respond, you know, this is our response 17 to the question about what we need. We work with the 18 funding we receive, and we do the best we can with it, 19 and that's a pretty -- there's not much more we can say.</p> <p>20 But I think some of the questions that you 21 asked about how can we approach this, what are parts of 22 this are we going to implement? I think I should spend 23 some time trying to address that because that is a 24 question that comes up frequently. Ed brought it up in 25 terms of law enforcement. Like I said, those of you</p>	<p>1 DIRECTOR RAML: I don't even know how to frame 2 a response, but let me think about it.</p> <p>3 MEMBER HOUSTON: Let's talk in February.</p> <p>4 DIRECTOR RAML: Yeah.</p> <p>5 MEMBER ALGAZY: One of the suggestions that I 6 put forward in our group comments was that perhaps the 7 BLM should consider tiering actual approval of projects 8 directly to funding and that some target of money should 9 be made and that, if that target has a shortfall, all 10 future projects be put on hold until that target is met. 11 And that would ensure that the government is truly 12 committed to moving renewable energy forward rather than 13 just throwing another unfunded mandate on the BLM's 14 shoulders.</p> <p>15 Have Washington put their money where their 16 mouth is, so to speak, by throwing this back and 17 Washington saying, look, if there's not enough money in 18 the pot for monitoring and adaptive management, that all 19 future project approvals will be put on hold. And that 20 will put a little bit more back on Washington to make 21 sure that the DRECP is properly funded.</p> <p>22 DIRECTOR RAML: So when you're talking about 23 projects, you're talking about renewable energy 24 projects; right?</p> <p>25 MEMBER ALGAZY: Yes.</p>
Page 55	Page 57
<p>1 that care about Public Lands and care about BLM are 2 concerned about our staffing.</p> <p>3 CHAIR SALL: Thank you, Teri. Mark and then 4 Don.</p> <p>5 MEMBER ALGAZY: Following up on what Seth said 6 and thinking about it just a little bit, I think that 7 the reality is that most of the comments that we have 8 made could be used in an overlay form to be supplemented 9 to any one of the alternatives without necessarily 10 endorsing any of them directly. So I think that we do 11 have the ability to continue moving forward and 12 developing our own input on the plan without it 13 necessarily endorsing any particular alternative. It's 14 a very good point.</p> <p>15 MEMBER HOUSTON: I have a follow-up question 16 for Teri regarding that. You know, this concern over 17 funding, I've heard a chorus over the last two months 18 regarding this concern. So when you have limited 19 resources, what gets done and what doesn't get done is a 20 matter of priorities.</p> <p>21 Teri, what can you tell us to give us 22 confidence that the management actions that will come 23 out of the LUPA will be given a priority relative to the 24 other obligations the BLM has to manage the 25 Public Lands?</p>	<p>1 DIRECTOR RAML: So we can have the discussion 2 about renewable energy projects and the cost-recovery 3 process and how BLM -- what our opportunities are and 4 what we do in terms of mitigation and some monitoring. 5 That kind of discussion we can have. So now I 6 understand that we need to provide information about how 7 that actually works.</p> <p>8 But the part where I kind of stalled out when 9 Don asked me is our challenge is the conservation 10 actions not associated with projects. That's what's 11 making me pause. It's not how -- if a project gets 12 built, what's involved in mitigation and monitoring? 13 There's mechanisms in place, and it actually is on the 14 part of the proponent and the developer to do a lot of 15 work with us.</p> <p>16 But the problem is, some of the things that are 17 coming out that are conservation related, that 18 discussion of what does it mean when we designate a new 19 areas in the ACEC, does it have a plan -- an action plan 20 and that sort of stuff? That's the sort of stuff I need 21 to think about. The implementation planning piece of 22 the DRECP has been challenging.</p> <p>23 MEMBER ALGAZY: The irony in that is that 24 Washington itself has forced that issue by putting 25 renewable energy and conservation on the table at the</p>

Page 58

1 same time in the same plan. So now they would be  
 2 forced, in order to move the whole plan forward, to  
 3 provide funding from both sides of the equation, not  
 4 just the renewable energy but the conservation. They  
 5 had the choice to do these separately, but they those  
 6 chose to throw the LUPA process amendment in at the same  
 7 time.

8 And as Leslie correctly pointed out in private  
 9 discussions, you can't just throw all the costs on the  
 10 backs of the developers because, when it's not  
 11 physically sound anymore, they're just going to build  
 12 somewhere else. So truly a lot of this funding has to  
 13 come from Washington, and we do have the ability in our  
 14 comments to try and make that point clear.

15 MEMBER SHTEIR: I just wanted to say two  
 16 things. I think what Don brought up about  
 17 prioritization is important, but I guess I'm thinking of  
 18 it in a different way. I'm not sure I'd like commitment  
 19 from you that you prioritize those funds because, to me,  
 20 that would mean perhaps de-prioritizing other important  
 21 agency actions. And you guys do a lot of things, like  
 22 monitoring wilderness. You work on endangered species.  
 23 You do Route 66 and the Young Camps. And so I think  
 24 we're living in a world of small budgets. But I am a  
 25 little bit wary of just saying, you know, the solution

Page 59

1 to this is to prioritize funding for DRECP, because I  
 2 think that will result in other things.

3 And I just wanted to bring up the other point.  
 4 A secondary point is that the document is clear that,  
 5 you know, the monitoring implementation would be funded  
 6 and primarily by companies, but there still is an  
 7 oversight and enforcement component that would need to  
 8 be undertaken by the agency and an evaluation and  
 9 analysis component too. So that's not clearly addressed  
 10 in there, from my reading of it, and that's one thing  
 11 that concerns me. Thank you.

12 CHAIR SALL: Teri, I would like to propose that  
 13 we create a meeting or a date where we can get some of  
 14 this answered, and at that time I guess I would also  
 15 like to consider a report being available to the DAC  
 16 about staffing levels currently and at a historic point  
 17 in time, if the DAC feels that that is appropriate,  
 18 because again I'm trying to understand with my knowledge  
 19 mostly anecdotally talking to field managers, as all of  
 20 the cuts that everyone is experiencing and, you know,  
 21 not trying to think about this from a standpoint that's  
 22 perceived as whining but just trying to understand from  
 23 a realistic standpoint how is BLM going to not only  
 24 implement the management actions that are already on the  
 25 table from the CDCA plan but moving forward?

Page 60

1 So potentially a snapshot in time of maybe ten  
 2 years ago and a comparison from today, whatever, you  
 3 know, you feel is appropriate, but again trying to  
 4 understand from a realistic standpoint how we can even  
 5 have the discussion about prioritization or not.

6 MEMBER ALGAZY: I would acknowledge there's  
 7 some utility in having that information, but as the  
 8 DRECP is drafted, it's supposed to be a joint effort as  
 9 it moves forward. But when you're all kind of looking  
 10 at the reality based on the past, and the majority of  
 11 the heavy work ends up being done by the BLM, it's  
 12 anticipated it's supposed to be a group effort moving  
 13 forward amongst the other agencies, but it would still  
 14 be useful to know what BLM staffing levels are.

15 CHAIR SALL: Correct, it is a joint effort.  
 16 But again, as our charge here at the DAC focusing on the  
 17 LUPA and the BLM perspective, I guess I would like to  
 18 propose that the DAC gets some more information about  
 19 historic and current staffing levels at a snapshot that  
 20 you feel is appropriate for us to be able to make some  
 21 of these comparisons.

22 Do we have any additional comments? I realize  
 23 I forgot to look this way in a while.

24 Okay. Bob?

25 MEMBER BURKE: I've listened. I've read. I've

Page 61

1 read e-mails. I have listened. I am prejudiced against  
 2 this. I'll say that right up front. But I also know  
 3 that I've seen the handwriting on the wall. So we need  
 4 to come together to come up with something that's going  
 5 to work. I, for one, from Barstow, am surrounded by  
 6 ongoing solar plants, Areas of Critical Concern,  
 7 Wilderness, Wilderness Study Areas and so forth.

8 Coming from Barstow headed north and east,  
 9 depending upon which freeway you take, all the way to  
 10 Kelbaker Road, is said set aside for renewable energy.  
 11 That's my backyard, literally my backyard. Imperial  
 12 County is overrun with the Desert Focus Areas.

13 I've worked very hard in my other realm as the  
 14 vice president for the Society for Conservation of  
 15 Bighorn Sheep. I was part of the Silurian thing, trying  
 16 to get it to go away. I was part of Calico Solar in the  
 17 Cady Mountains to keep that. I was part of stopping  
 18 Broadwell Dry Lake from BrightSource using, along with  
 19 some other folks that sit on this panel. I do know that  
 20 we've got to do something. It's like prisons. We need  
 21 them but just not in my backyard.

22 So whatever we come up with, I don't want it in  
 23 my backyard, as most of my constituents from the public  
 24 at large are saying. But we do have to come up with  
 25 something, and we have to provide a united front, so I

Page 62

1 would like everybody to remember that. Thank you.  
2 MEMBER BARRETT: Thank you, Bob, for that.  
3 And, you know, it's amazing. From renewable's  
4 perspective, I agree with so many of the comments  
5 already that have been stated. I think from when I  
6 reviewed the DRECP, the thing that kind of struck me  
7 most was that this proposal to move so much of the  
8 Development Focus Areas onto private lands.  
9 And, you know, my first question was, well, how  
10 much has that been coordinated with counties? I know  
11 the counties have gotten various grants and so forth,  
12 but in reality the counties are coming up with their own  
13 land use plans. And San Bernardino specifically has  
14 made tremendous efforts to come up with a land use plan  
15 that sets aside areas potentially for development of  
16 solar projects.  
17 But that doesn't seem to match what's in the  
18 DRECP. And so I think it's very easy to come up and  
19 say, oh, my gosh. Look at all the DFA's that are being  
20 shown in Imperial County or in San Bernardino County,  
21 and yet fail to acknowledge that the decisions that will  
22 be made as to whether a solar project goes in or not  
23 won't be made by this executive group up in Sacramento  
24 but will be made by the local people in San Bernardino  
25 County and Imperial County, your local representatives,

Page 63

1 at such time as the DRECP begins to acknowledge the  
2 local land use plans for these areas.  
3 And it's -- I don't know what it is, to be  
4 honest. I mean, is it this idea that developers are  
5 going to pay for conservation when local districts are  
6 going to decide themselves as to where developers are  
7 going to go? And I don't know. I think there's just so  
8 much smoke and mirrors with respect to this.  
9 It's unfair on everyone. It's unfair on those  
10 who seek to protect the desert. It's unfair on those  
11 that seek funding for conservation areas. It's unfair  
12 on everyone to basically come up with a plan that is  
13 quite different than what the local entities are doing,  
14 and the local entities make the decisions.  
15 I support funding for recreational. I support  
16 funding for conservation. The renewable energy industry  
17 does quite a lot of this already as mitigation for some  
18 of the projects. I support good siting for renewable  
19 projects. Some in the past have not been sited well,  
20 but in the end of the day, unless we actually show the  
21 land use plan the local counties are working on, we're  
22 just making it up. And that's unfortunate.  
23 CHAIR SALL: I would like to have the DAC DRECP  
24 Subcommittee regroup on the topic of our additional  
25 comments, but I would just like to ask the rest of the

Page 64

1 DAC to consider if you would like to be included in that  
2 additional discussion, and, if so, if you don't answer  
3 today, if you let us know via e-mail so that, once we  
4 start to amongst ourselves organize dates, I have a  
5 clearer understanding and Teri does on who wants to be  
6 included in the next round. I have a sense that  
7 everyone has pretty much agreed that we would like to  
8 spend more time on this.  
9 Is there anyone that has a different opinion  
10 about the current work product? All right. So my sense  
11 is that we are going to continue to work on this  
12 product, and we will organize on how to do that.  
13 Don, did you have a comment right now?  
14 MEMBER HOUSTON: Yeah. The comment was with  
15 your phrase "rest of the DAC." Given the fact that  
16 several members are terming out, I mean, what does that  
17 look like come January?  
18 MEMBER ALGAZY: It goes back to my agenda item  
19 on implementation.  
20 CHAIR SALL: Steve, the question was --  
21 DIRECTOR RAML: Come to the microphone,  
22 Mr. Razo.  
23 CHAIR SALL: Yeah, please come to the  
24 microphone. We would like to understand, as DAC members  
25 term out, how we are going to look at a council and how

Page 65

1 that's going to affect us with potential voting and  
2 moving comments forward.  
3 MR. RAZO: You will still have a quorum, but  
4 those who are renominating themselves and want to  
5 continue, we encourage you to continue. You just won't  
6 have the opportunity to have a vote.  
7 MEMBER HOUSTON: But, Steve, a subcommittee  
8 must be comprised of DAC members; right? So that's  
9 really -- my question is, what constitutes the  
10 subcommittee come January?  
11 MR. RAZO: We'll have to look at that roster  
12 and see who's falling off or who's going to continue. I  
13 don't have those names right off.  
14 DIRECTOR RAML: So the clarification. So our  
15 practice is for the members who are terming out, they  
16 continue to participate until new members are seated?  
17 MR. RAZO: Correct.  
18 DIRECTOR RAML: Right. And so for -- and I was  
19 actually -- I was going to talk to you off-line, and we  
20 can talk off-line. When you announce that you're not  
21 resubmitting your nomination, what does that mean for  
22 her continued seating?  
23 MR. RAZO: She's done.  
24 DIRECTOR RAML: She's done. Okay.  
25 MEMBER HOUSTON: But for those folks who are

Page 66

1 submitting to be renominated, can they continue to  
 2 participate on the subcommittee?  
 3 MR. RAZO: Yes.  
 4 CHAIR SALL: Okay. If we don't have any other  
 5 further comments or questions from the DAC on this  
 6 topic, at the moment I'm going to propose we take our  
 7 break just a little bit early, give the court reporter a  
 8 break. And it is currently 9:50. We will come back at  
 9 10:05.  
 10 (Morning break.)  
 11 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. We're going to go  
 12 ahead and resume our discussion. I understand we have  
 13 an announcement from Steve.  
 14 DIRECTOR RAML: He's going to help us with the  
 15 dates of the Webinar.  
 16 CHAIR SALL: Regarding DRECP Webinar dates.  
 17 MR. RAZO: Yeah. There are two additional  
 18 Webinars that will be presented for the public,  
 19 everybody, to get involved in. They will be on  
 20 December 15th. Concentration on that one will be  
 21 renewable, and then December 17th, concentration on that  
 22 will be conservation. It will be like the previous  
 23 Webinars, where you can go to a local field office and  
 24 be able to listen in and watch the presentation there in  
 25 the local field office. The times, I believe, are --

Page 67

1 MS. SYMONS: I think I have that.  
 2 MS. WOOD: 10:00 on the 15th and 1:00 on the  
 3 17th.  
 4 MR. RAZO: Thank you. 10:00 on the 15th and  
 5 1:00 on the 17th. I knew they were different. Okay?  
 6 DIRECTOR RAML: Thank you, Steve.  
 7 CHAIR SALL: Thank you, Steve. Do we have any  
 8 additional comments from the DAC on our DRECP discussion  
 9 before we move into public comment?  
 10 Randy.  
 11 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: Thank you. I don't know  
 12 that I'm really going anywhere with this but just a  
 13 couple of loose items on my notes. First of all, I  
 14 consider the report that we did on behalf of the  
 15 subcommittee as an interim report, essentially. You  
 16 know, we met several times. Many, many, many members of  
 17 the public participated, and I wanted to show -- I was  
 18 hoping that we could show the other DAC members and the  
 19 public that we worked, we discussed, and we're on a  
 20 path.  
 21 And that's what I look at that report as, as an  
 22 interim report, essentially. I didn't really see it as  
 23 a finished, final, end-all deliverable. But I just  
 24 wanted everybody to see that we are working, and we're  
 25 trying to get through the thing and to let you know what

Page 68

1 some of us were thinking.  
 2 The second thing is, you're lucky that internet  
 3 access is slow and my iPad as well, because you just  
 4 saved yourself a long presentation from me on DRECP's  
 5 Data Basin. But I do want to really emphasize to  
 6 people, first of all to DAC members, that if you're  
 7 looking to concentrate on the LUPA, the Land Use  
 8 Planning Amendment, that the DRECP Data Basin product is  
 9 really where you want to go. And you just go to  
 10 DRECP.databasin.org, and you get a welcome screen with a  
 11 button on the bottom that says, "View maps." And what  
 12 you're going to see is a list of all of the maps that  
 13 are in the DRECP's executive summary and throughout the  
 14 document.  
 15 And you'll see each time -- if you look at the  
 16 DRECP document and you see that eight-and-a-half-by-11  
 17 map of the entire planning area and you can't tell the  
 18 reds from the blues from the left hashmarks to the right  
 19 hashmarks to the double crosshair hashmarks, if you  
 20 can't see what's going on on that map -- honestly, you  
 21 can't.  
 22 But you can go to that specific map on that  
 23 Data Basin website and pull that map up in a way that  
 24 lets you do two really great things. One, you can turn  
 25 the layers on and off. On the sidebar you can get rid

Page 69

1 of the stuff that you don't want to see or the stuff  
 2 that's in the way or the stuff that's clouding up what  
 3 you're trying to look at.  
 4 A second thing that you can do is, you can drag  
 5 those layers from the top to the bottom, because the  
 6 layers show up in order of their list on the side of the  
 7 online map. And if something is on top of something  
 8 else and you want to bring that bottom thing to the  
 9 front, go down, drag that layer from the bottom and move  
 10 it up to the top, and now it becomes the top layer.  
 11 So use that tool so that you can isolate and  
 12 look at the information you want, because it's so hard  
 13 to see just one thing from it. So, to me, when you get  
 14 to the DRECP maps, it's the layers tab, the layers of  
 15 the map. That is where you find all of your real tools.  
 16 That's really where you'll find to be most helpful.  
 17 And I would further suggest that, for our  
 18 purposes, the map you look at is the LUPA map. It's the  
 19 fourth or the fifth one in. Look at the LUPA map first.  
 20 Get yourself around it. Look at just that portion of  
 21 it, and then you can get a little adventuresome and  
 22 start looking at the overall. The parts that relate to  
 23 the NCCP, the parts that relate to the GCP, you can look  
 24 at that stuff later. But for us focusing on the LUPA,  
 25 start with that LUPA map. And I really think it's a

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 70</p> <p>1 terrific tool for that. It helps you isolate and see  2 what you want, what you really want to try to focus on.  3 Now, there's another thing I want to point out.  4 In that layers tab at the very top it says, "Add a  5 dataset." What that means is, all of those maps that it  6 provides you is made up of different layers. You may  7 want to have a layer from this map and a layer from this  8 map and a layer from that map. That's where you can do  9 it.  10 So if you go, for example -- for example, if  11 you want to see existing ACEC's and proposed ACEC's and  12 actually see them on a layer one on top of the other,  13 turning one on, turning one off, turning it on, turning  14 it off and seeing where the new ones are going to be or  15 where the existing ones are, you can go up and see "Add  16 a dataset" and type in the name of that layer from the  17 other map, and it will come up in the search, and you  18 can add it, and -- boom -- now it's on there as well.  19 If, by chance, the roads -- the designated  20 roads and trails are of interest to you, it now has a  21 layer of the roads and trails database. And just type  22 "off-highway" into the search. That's all you need to  23 do. Go to "off-highway." Type that in good, and it  24 will be the first result that comes up. And you click  25 that dataset, and -- boom -- it's added on top, and you</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 72</p> <p>1 acres that will be bladed over. That isn't so; okay?  2 Two million acres are identified as potential siting,  3 but 177,000 acres will be the footprint. That's less  4 than ten percent of that two million acres. I'm not  5 saying that's insignificant. That's a lot of acres. If  6 we had a 177,000-acre OHV open area somewhere, it would  7 be pretty gigantic. It would be big. So 177,000 acres  8 is a lot. But look at that with the perspective of  9 where the overall Focus Development Areas are.  10 But look at it the map. It isn't exact, but if  11 19 percent -- or let's say 20. Let's round it up. If  12 20 percent of the Development Focus Areas are on  13 Public Lands, then 20 percent of 177,000 acres is the  14 approximation of a midway of possibility of what you're  15 going to see on the ground. That doesn't bear out  16 entirely true.  17 It is possible -- unlikely. It's unlikely, but  18 it's possible the whole 177,000 acres could come out of  19 the 80 percent that's on private. It could. And the  20 reverse could be true too. Very unlikely, but it could  21 be that the 177,000 acres could come out of the  22 20 percent that's going to be on federal.  23 But my guess is it's going to be something in  24 between. It's going to be somewhere in the middle. And  25 I just want to point that out to put that perspective on</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 71</p> <p>1 see it going across all the different polygons and all  2 the different colors. And so that's what I would  3 advise.  4 I'd love to show you, but the iPad is too old,  5 and it just chokes with all the datasets, another reason  6 for a new one for Christmas. And the internet is rather  7 slow, too, here. So I'm sorry. Data Basin tool is  8 really great, and that will help you focus on the Land  9 Use Planning Amendment. And then that's where you're  10 going to see that, of all of the magenta Development  11 Focus Area that's on the main map, you'll see that only  12 19 percent of it is in the LUPA, and you'll see where  13 that is, and you'll see how much of that has already  14 been previously identified in the solar PEIS.  15 And so when people are talking about all of our  16 Public Lands being plowed over for renewable energy,  17 that's not in the plan. That isn't in the plan. And  18 we've been saying this for years now. Ever since we  19 first heard the DRECP term, many of us have said, "We  20 don't want our Public Lands covered with these  21 projects." That's what many of us said. And I want to  22 show you that that bears out. If you look at the LUPA  23 and you look at those maps and get your layers, you will  24 find that out.  25 And the other thing is about the millions of</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 73</p> <p>1 it that, now that the document is out, now is a chance  2 for us to move beyond the rhetoric and look into the  3 facts and analyze things accordingly. And I think you  4 will find that DRECP Data Basin product helpful for  5 that.  6 And the last point I want to say -- and it  7 echoes what's kind of already been said. Just because  8 you see a pink color on the map doesn't mean that it's a  9 green light for a project. The counties and the cities  10 still hold the cards with regard to the siting on  11 private property, and the cities and the counties have  12 plans, are developing plans, are working on plans.  13 So if your local representatives -- the people  14 that you elect to be your city council members, the  15 people that you elect to be your county supervisors --  16 determine through their planning processes that a  17 particular patch of land is good and appropriate for a  18 project, the DRECP will simply streamline their take  19 permit.  20 And even that's arguable about streamlining,  21 point taken. Point taken. But that is really what the  22 gist of it is. So the counties still have a huge role  23 in this. Your cities still have a huge role in this.  24 And I don't look at this as a top-down dictation of  25 where things have to be sited.</p>

Page 74

1 Thank you for just letting me put that bid out  
 2 there. That's what I'm wrapping my head around right  
 3 now, and that's what's guiding me in how I move forward  
 4 on my role as a DAC member looking at the LUPA. As a  
 5 citizen who's going to meet the NEPA deadline, the  
 6 comment deadline on a personal basis of what I think is  
 7 best, I'm going to look outside the LUPA, and I'm going  
 8 to look at the whole plan, because I'm a person who  
 9 lives, works and recreates in the desert, and I want my  
 10 opinion on this whole big shebang to be heard. And I  
 11 will take part in that process, just as I hope each and  
 12 every one of us here in the room will do.

13 But from a perspective of a DAC member, it will  
 14 help you focus on the LUPA if you see what the LUPA is.  
 15 So thanks for letting me do that. I appreciate it.

16 CHAIR SALL: Thank you, Randy. And I think  
 17 that's a good segway into our public comment. I just  
 18 wanted to add one little caveat to that, in that I  
 19 understand the 177,000-acre footprint approximation to  
 20 be only, on the wind estimate, include the footprint of  
 21 the turbine and the roads and not necessarily the entire  
 22 wind project. So I just wanted to throw that out as  
 23 something for further clarification or analysis.

24 Moving ahead to public comment, I have a fairly  
 25 large stack of public comments for this topic. I want

Page 75

1 to, please, remind folks that the comment period for  
 2 this is going to be three minutes. We're going to go  
 3 ahead and allow the three minutes. Please keep your  
 4 comments to three minutes. And you can certainly finish  
 5 the sentence that wraps up your comments, but please be  
 6 respectful of the large stack here that wants to  
 7 participate in this item and also that this is for the  
 8 DAC, obviously, on DRECP, and so this is not on the  
 9 entire plan.

10 And I would encourage you to not restate  
 11 comments that you've made already that are on the record  
 12 here and that these are not the DRECP public meetings.  
 13 And so if you have, again, made these comments already,  
 14 please realize those are already on the record and  
 15 submitted. So thank you.

16 I'd like to call the first one, being  
 17 John Zemanek, followed by Sophia Merk. If you'll come  
 18 to the microphone, give your name, and we'll get  
 19 started.

20 MR. ZEMANEK: Yes. John Zemanek. Good  
 21 morning, madam chairman and other members of the  
 22 council. I want to begin by commending the council for  
 23 having given as much personal effort and energy and  
 24 intelligence as you already have to this difficult, if  
 25 not daunting, DRECP. You are to be commended for that,

Page 76

1 and I think I speak for a lot of people when I say that  
 2 we're grateful for it.

3 I'm going to jump right from that into a couple  
 4 of observations that have been prompted by what I heard  
 5 this morning. Yes, we do understand that this is a DAC  
 6 meeting and that the BLM aspect of the DRECP is the  
 7 central focus. However at the same time the BLM would  
 8 be signing off on the entire DRECP, assuming it is  
 9 adopted pursuant to an ROD, and you can't separate one  
 10 part out from another. And I think that needs to be  
 11 kept in mind by the DAC.

12 A comment about the DRECP process as a whole.  
 13 I detect a tremendous momentum in favor of getting a  
 14 DRECP through and approved has been in process for a  
 15 number of years. There are strong forces both at the  
 16 governmental and industry level which are pushing to get  
 17 a DRECP approved and in place. And there's also a  
 18 perception which I've actually heard articulated this  
 19 morning along the lines of that there's a lot of --  
 20 renewable energy in the desert is inevitable, and so  
 21 this DRECP is as good as anything to try to manage it,  
 22 which is something that I think could be challenged and  
 23 should be examined.

24 Notwithstanding all this pressure to get it  
 25 approved, it's very important that your critical

Page 77

1 faculties don't get suspended. I don't detect that they  
 2 are, but as you go forward in the process, I encourage  
 3 you to be as alert and incisive as you can, because  
 4 there's a lot to be alert and incisive about.

5 I have attended meetings of the DAC and of the  
 6 DRECP Subcommittee this year, where I have heard very  
 7 probing and provocative questions asked about the  
 8 various assumptions of the DRECP. And I have heard a  
 9 total absence of answers, and even today.

10 So far as I can detect, there are no answers to  
 11 some very basic questions about why it is that 20,000  
 12 megawatts of utility-scale renewable energy has to go in  
 13 the desert. And unless you get a good answer to that  
 14 question, the entire DRECP gets called under question.  
 15 That needs to be kept in mind.

16 And I think I've heard my time. So in closing,  
 17 please take a close look as you move forward. I'm happy  
 18 to you're going to continue to be looking at this. Take  
 19 a close look at those underlying assumptions. I have  
 20 not seen any reference to any questions about those  
 21 assumptions in what Council Member Banis calls an  
 22 interim set of comments. I think that either you need  
 23 to get good answers to those questions regarding the  
 24 assumptions, or they have to be addressed in a very  
 25 incisive way in your final recommendation to the BLM.

	Page 78		Page 80
<p>1 Thank you very much.</p> <p>2 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Sophia Merk, followed</p> <p>3 by Saber Chili.</p> <p>4 MS. MERK: My name is Sophia Merk. I'm a board</p> <p>5 member of the Eastern Kern County RCD, Resource</p> <p>6 Conservation District. I just handed the person that's</p> <p>7 doing all the hard labor here a copy of our letter, and</p> <p>8 I'd like to present it to the DAC committee. I also</p> <p>9 would like to read two paragraphs.</p> <p>10 We are asking for another round of meetings for</p> <p>11 the public with a valid explanation of why the</p> <p>12 distributed energy alternative was not fully analyzed,</p> <p>13 why there is not sufficient water basin analysis, why</p> <p>14 there is not cumulative effect of soil disturbance, why</p> <p>15 BLM's purpose and need overly narrow, and why is there</p> <p>16 missing information in regards to tribal consultation</p> <p>17 and cultural resources?</p> <p>18 We believe that this missing information leads</p> <p>19 to a flawed analysis that could substantially change</p> <p>20 conclusions. We therefore are asking for an extension</p> <p>21 of time to clear up the problems of improper</p> <p>22 distribution of literature, insuring that all libraries</p> <p>23 within the DRECP have a copy of the DRECP, that</p> <p>24 newspapers be notified of this endeavor and city</p> <p>25 councils, counties and tribes be apprised of what is</p>		<p>1 in information. There are probably gaps in what we know</p> <p>2 about about what local governments are producing in</p> <p>3 renewables, and especially rooftops. But I know the</p> <p>4 goal of the governor's office and the Office of Planning</p> <p>5 and Research is to try to go and find the best ways to</p> <p>6 try and assemble the information."</p> <p>7 What happened? I discovered the governor's</p> <p>8 office and the Office of Planning and Research could</p> <p>9 provide no hard data on the subject, no hard data on the</p> <p>10 topic, despite Terry Watt's statements of last March.</p> <p>11 The DRECP has no decent data on rooftop solar. It only</p> <p>12 has a few pretty low predictions of the contradiction</p> <p>13 that D.G. might have in the next coming 25 years.</p> <p>14 And the DRECP does not even identify this</p> <p>15 information gap as an issue to work on. The DRECP</p> <p>16 simply treats this very important variable as a</p> <p>17 non-issue. This is simply unacceptable in a planning</p> <p>18 document. It is doubly unacceptable when the policies</p> <p>19 being implemented are irreversible as they are here.</p> <p>20 Once the desert gets parceled out for utility-scale</p> <p>21 development, it cannot simply revert back to nature when</p> <p>22 the development proves unnecessary. Deserts don't do</p> <p>23 that. The Mojave Desert in particular does not bounce</p> <p>24 back.</p> <p>25 The DAC members have asked good questions about</p>	
<p>1 happening in their area.</p> <p>2 Thank you. This is written by Donna Thomas,</p> <p>3 our president.</p> <p>4 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Saber Chili next,</p> <p>5 followed by Sue Marks.</p> <p>6 MS. CHILI: Hello. I'm Saber Chili, and I'm</p> <p>7 very happy that you'll be continuing your comments as</p> <p>8 you decide what to do about the DRECP. I ask you to</p> <p>9 look seriously at what it does with distributed</p> <p>10 generation -- actually, what it doesn't do. Frankly</p> <p>11 there should be a thorough discussion of D.G. throughout</p> <p>12 the document. Instead we have almost a complete void.</p> <p>13 I ask you to not be resigned to the fact that you are</p> <p>14 stuck with the alternatives so far or the inevitability</p> <p>15 of utility scale solar.</p> <p>16 The frustrating thing is that D.G. has been</p> <p>17 front and center for a long time and supported by the</p> <p>18 public, so it's not like the REAT agencies forgot about</p> <p>19 it. For example, at the DAC meeting on March 15th of</p> <p>20 this year, Chairperson Sall urged that the REAT agencies</p> <p>21 come forward regarding how much renewable energy was</p> <p>22 already being generated by such means as rooftop solar</p> <p>23 throughout the entire state.</p> <p>24 At that time Terry Watt, speaking for the</p> <p>25 governor's office, replied, "There are definitely gaps</p>	Page 79	<p>1 critical assumptions in the DRECP, and they have not</p> <p>2 gotten answers. The DAC now has two choices: to advise</p> <p>3 the district manager that the DRECP should be revised in</p> <p>4 a way which answers these questions and considers the</p> <p>5 implications of the answers or to shrug its shoulders</p> <p>6 and let it go. The California desert and we as its</p> <p>7 residents and stewards deserve far better treatment and</p> <p>8 planning in a document of this magnitude. Thank you.</p> <p>9 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. I have Sue Marks</p> <p>10 followed by Reza Hadaegh.</p> <p>11 MS. MARKS: Good morning. I'm Sue Marks.</p> <p>12 First I'd like to start by saying I totally agree with</p> <p>13 Mr. Houston's comment earlier this morning that the</p> <p>14 conclusions in the DRECP totally lack any basis or</p> <p>15 foundation to support those conclusions. As an example</p> <p>16 I'd like to talk specifically this morning about</p> <p>17 groundwater.</p> <p>18 In its executive summary the DRECP concludes</p> <p>19 that the preferred alternative will have a less than</p> <p>20 significant impact on groundwater. Now, this conclusion</p> <p>21 caught my attention immediately because groundwater is</p> <p>22 so critical to the desert. I couldn't locate any</p> <p>23 information in the DRECP to support this reassuring</p> <p>24 conclusion, and so I wasn't buying the conclusion. And</p> <p>25 at the September 27th meeting with the DAC in Pahrump,</p>	Page 81

Page 82

1 several of you DAC members also weren't buying that  
2 conclusion.  
3 You posted comments and questions that went  
4 like this: Where is real data on whether all of this  
5 new demand on groundwater by new utility scale renewable  
6 energy will simply overwhelm our stressed aquifers?  
7 These were good questions. And I heard BLM's water  
8 specialist, Peter Godfrey, reply that the necessary time  
9 horizon for collecting this data is as much as 30 years,  
10 longer than the lifespan of the DRECP. In other words  
11 Mr. Godfrey was saying, "We don't know. We don't even  
12 have a basis for comparison."  
13 Now, how does the DRECP go from "We don't know"  
14 to a conclusion that there is less than significant  
15 impact on groundwater? How can you know that the impact  
16 is less than significant if you don't have the data?  
17 Mr. Godfrey's response was, "Don't worry. The DRECP is  
18 simply a planning document."  
19 But this is not true. The whole purpose of the  
20 DRECP is to incentivize and encourage the siting of  
21 20,000 megawatts of renewable energy projects in desert  
22 DFA's, and nothing can be more encouraging than this  
23 statement in the master planning document that there  
24 will be less than significant impact on groundwater.  
25 It's not just that the DRECP totally dropped

Page 83

1 the ball on its groundwater analysis. It's that it  
2 pretends that it has a basis for this conclusion, when  
3 in fact it has no basis whatsoever. The first is  
4 negligence, but the second is downright dishonest. I  
5 don't see how the BLM can possibly in good faith put its  
6 seal of approval on the DRECP, when its approach to such  
7 a critical issue is so disingenuous and when it very  
8 well may commit us to a path where our groundwater  
9 basins are simply overexhausted. Thank you.  
10 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Reza, followed by  
11 Nancy Haddoux -- Haddoux (phonetic)?  
12 MR. HADAEGH: Good morning, madam chair,  
13 committee members. Good to see you all again. I  
14 appreciate the chance to be back here.  
15 You know, I first want to react to a couple of  
16 comments that were related. We are aware, and we are  
17 watching the public policy at the committee level.  
18 However, let's not kid ourselves. DRECP is an  
19 instrument of policy. It may not be referred to as  
20 such, but the fact that it gives incentives to certain  
21 developments in certain areas absolutely, positively  
22 impacts policy at county level and regional level.  
23 So, you know, I mentioned this in our last  
24 meeting in Nevada. At this time you are our  
25 self-employment representatives. Your voice of

Page 84

1 judiciousness makes an impact. So I appreciate the  
2 discussion that is taking place here, but let's not kid  
3 ourselves. It is not just at county level. It happens  
4 right here.  
5 And speaking of judiciousness, here's a couple  
6 of examples of gross lack of environmental justice and  
7 judiciousness in placing development sites, DFA's  
8 specifically in the high desert cities of Adelanto,  
9 Victorville, Apple Valley, Hesperia, Lucerne. These are  
10 communities of people living in the rural zones rural  
11 setting.  
12 The DRECP-preferred sites grossly and unfairly  
13 facilitates and incentivizes placing large  
14 industrial-scale renewable energy in those areas. These  
15 are areas where people live, and by targeting those we  
16 basically are targeting the residents for special injury  
17 disadvantage in the areas of health, welfare and  
18 economic well-being. So industrializing these areas  
19 essentially is rendering our communities undesirable.  
20 It plummets our property values. These are very basic,  
21 simple equations, and it really needs to be looked at.  
22 There was a discussion currently whether this  
23 committee -- whether DAC should put forward its own  
24 proposal, a preferred plan. I think one really viable  
25 thing would be to ask the DRECP why it initially

Page 85

1 considered a possible alternative of placing renewable  
2 energy on brownfields and then totally discarded that.  
3 I think the fact that it has done that, the fact that it  
4 doesn't look at distributed energy on top of already  
5 disturbed land, you know, just the mega Targets and  
6 Walmarts alone would save probably hundreds of --  
7 probably thousands of acres of deserts from having to be  
8 raised.  
9 So the fact that these have not been introduced  
10 as alternatives are big flaws in the DRECP. Please  
11 bring your judiciousness, and have DRECP examine these  
12 and include these as alternatives. Thank you very much.  
13 CHAIR SALL: Nancy followed by Neil Nadler.  
14 MS. HADDOUX (phonetic): Good morning. I'm  
15 Nancy Haddoux. Every Californian, every American shares  
16 an interest in devising and implementing a sound energy  
17 plan. We know that the future of our environment, our  
18 economy and our children depends on it. So why does a  
19 purported planning document elicit such strong and  
20 conflicting responses from various sectors of the  
21 community?  
22 The answer is that the DRECP is not a planning  
23 document. It's a policy document. Many informed and  
24 intelligent people don't like the DRECP's policies and  
25 in fact believe that the policies are misconceived and

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 86</p> <p>1 lead to entirely unnecessary damage and disruption on  2 the ecology, the economy and the social fabric of the  3 desert. We're concerned, and the DAC should share our  4 concern that a policy document should not be hoisted on  5 the public under the guise of a planning manual.</p> <p>6       There's a certain intellectual sleight of hand  7 happening here, and if as the DRECP agencies apparently  8 believe 20,000 megawatts of utility-scale renewable  9 energy in the California desert is a desirable goal  10 preferable to many other alternative energy policies,  11 then it should be stated honestly, and the DRECP should  12 look at other alternatives and explain the detail by its  13 chosen role. Only then should it turn to planning the  14 best way to implement that goal while preserving the  15 environment.</p> <p>16       The DRECP doesn't do this. As a result  17 adoption of the DRECP, regardless of which alternative  18 is used, other than the no-action alternative, would  19 implement and expedite a plan to put 20,000 megawatts of  20 utility-scale renewable energy in the California desert,  21 regardless of whether this is a sound policy or a  22 terrible policy. And no one will ever really know  23 whether the policy is sound or terrible because the  24 DRECP never bothers to examine that question.</p> <p>25       The DAC, in discharging its role as advisor to</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 88</p> <p>1 500kV lines alone, as shown on Appendix A of the DRECP,  2 would amount to between ten and \$22 billion according to  3 an analysis undertaken for the Alliance for Desert  4 Preservation by Flynn Resources Consultants,  5 Incorporated.</p> <p>6       Even this estimate is too low because it does  7 not include the cost of 220, 230, 34.5 and 66kV lines  8 shown in Appendix K. Nor does it include the cost of  9 constructing the proposed 19 new electrical substations,  10 super collector substations, mitigation, monitoring or  11 obtaining of additional required rights-of-way.</p> <p>12       Factoring in a rate of return, once the  13 \$22 billion in capital costs is passed on to the rate  14 payers over time it will balloon to between 30 and  15 \$66 billion. That is just for the 500kV lines. This  16 leaves aside the environmental impact of these new  17 transmission facilities, another question the DRECP  18 fails to address, and simply kicks the can down the  19 road, like they have with all of the other issues.</p> <p>20       An omission of this magnitude renders the DRECP  21 dangerously misleading as a planning tool. Consider  22 this analogy. If the Navy drew up a master plan to  23 build a new fleet of carriers and chose to place the  24 shipbuilding facilities in Nebraska, one would naturally  25 expect an intelligent discussion of why a facility so</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 87</p> <p>1 the district manager regarding the DRECP, should exam  2 closely whether the DRECP is a sound way to decide on  3 and implement an important, far-reaching and in many  4 ways irrevocable public policy. Please do this  5 examination thoroughly and conscientiously. Thank you.</p> <p>6       CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Neil, followed by  7 John Smith.</p> <p>8       MR. NADLER: Good morning, madam chair. My  9 name is Neil Nadler. The DRECP chooses to plan for  10 20,000 megawatts of utility-scale renewable energy  11 projects in the California desert with no consideration  12 of alternative methods of generating, delivering and  13 consuming renewable energy.</p> <p>14       One of the many terrible results of this  15 failure of analysis is the fact that the DRECP takes as  16 a given the need for construction of thousands of miles  17 of new transmission facilities needed to get  18 utility-scale projects output to the grid. What would  19 it cost to construct these transmission facilities in  20 terms of money and damage to the environment? The DRECP  21 treats this as a non-issue, whereas in fact it is an  22 enormous one.</p> <p>23       More than 1,000 miles of new expensive  24 transmission lines, substations, both inside and outside  25 of the DRECP plan area, the initial cost of the proposed</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 89</p> <p>1 far inland was preferable to one at a deep-water ocean  2 port. This discussion would include a study of an added  3 cost of delivering the finished ships to their distant  4 destination. If the plan lacked any such analysis, it  5 would be dismissed out of hand. This is exactly what  6 the DRECP has done. Thank you.</p> <p>7       CHAIR SALL: Thank you. John Smith, followed  8 by Rich Ravana.</p> <p>9       MR. SMITH: Hi. I'm still unclear about the  10 driving forces and the interests behind the DRECP. Is  11 it the mitigation of anthropogenic global warming? Is  12 it -- which is now called climate change, or is it the  13 promotion of a technology, a political agenda, a  14 business interest? I'm still not sure what's driving  15 this.</p> <p>16       But climb with me for just a moment up to  17 50,000 feet, and look at what you're dealing with. You  18 are going to administer the leasing of Public -- that  19 would be us -- Public Lands to turn it over to a private  20 business interest and expend very good lease rates, and  21 they're going to generate a product to be transmitted  22 over transmission lines that are paid for by the rate  23 payer -- that would be us -- and that product is going  24 to be sold to a consumer -- that would be us -- and we  25 don't have anything to say about it.</p>

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 90</p> <p>1 In fact what this is doing is actually  2 codifying electric systems generating as they are today,  3 even though it is including a renewable energy element.  4 You are placing the people in the hands of  5 power-generating companies, taking away their option for  6 renewable energy generated by D.G. at their own home or  7 business site, and you're sticking us into the hand of  8 those business interests. That is not liberty. That is  9 not allowing people to make their own choices.  10 And by the way, if you think they're going to  11 allow that, the CEC has already been approached about  12 making the consumers who want to get off the grid pay a  13 fee to the power companies, so you're not going to be  14 able to win. The consumer is lost in this whole  15 process. Thank you.  16 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Rich, followed by  17 Will Liebscher.  18 MR. RAVANA: Hello. My name is  19 Rich Ravana, property owner in Lucerne Valley and  20 president for the Alliance of Desert Preservation. I'd  21 like to offer these comments for public record. Thank  22 you.  23 The DRECP neglects to deal with the fact that  24 the 33-percent RPS goal basically has already been  25 reached. It's only a slight exaggeration that say the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 92</p> <p>1 stated reason for being in existence is now in question.  2 This is simply not the way to go about planning the  3 management, the use, the development and the protection  4 of the Public Lands within the CDCA.  5 I would respectfully submit that the DAC, the  6 BLM and the other REAT agencies correct this deficiency  7 in the DRECP before enormous public and private  8 resources are spent on environmental review processes  9 which may not be necessary. Thank you.  10 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Will, followed by  11 Bob Howells.  12 MR. LIEBSCHER: Hi. My name is Will Liebscher.  13 I live in Red Mountain. I represent the public.  14 At the last DAC meeting out of his own pocket  15 Mr. Waldheim gave some of you a book written by  16 Glenn Beck called "Broke." Please read it. It relates  17 to how our founding fathers saw thrift as related to  18 freedom, and we've lost our way. And he gives about ten  19 examples of how we can change things so we have enough  20 money to run this country.  21 Second of all, Randy, I would like you to have  22 a motion with the DAC for a representative of someone  23 council of our indigenous peoples. Actually our  24 indigenous peoples on this earth were the first  25 conservationists, and they've lost the first round in</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 91</p> <p>1 DRECP's 8,000 pages hang on a single thread, which is  2 California's 33-percent RPS goal. This thread branches  3 out into the assumption that we must find a place in the  4 desert to place 20,000 megawatts of utility-size  5 renewable energy projects. And from this branch  6 blossoms 8,000 pages of how to make this happen.  7 But California has already reached its goal.  8 At the August 5th, 2014 CEC workshop on integrating  9 environmental information in the renewable energy  10 planning process, Ed Randolph, the Chief of the Energy  11 Division of the CPUC said, and I quote, "We are by and  12 large at the 33-percent goal in terms of procurable."  13 And at the March 15th DAC meeting, Terry Watt of the  14 governor's office basically reiterated this fact.  15 Since the entire DRECP depends so heavily on  16 the supposed need to plan for a way to meet California's  17 33-percent goal, what happens when that goal has already  18 been met? An intelligent plan would inquire into  19 whether there's any other justification for the plan or  20 whether the plan should just be scrapped.  21 The DRECP makes no such inquiry. It barely  22 acknowledges that the 33-percent goal is being met, and  23 it makes no attempt to analyze whether it should change  24 its course or abandon it altogether. In short, the  25 DRECP fails to come to grips with the fact that its own</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 93</p> <p>1 both Australia and America by genocide, and now they're  2 not even represented here. If you had a title on your  3 table or a slot for these people, they would come, and  4 they would express their opinions. Please, the DAC  5 needs representation for our indigenous people.  6 Third, I happened to be a military vehicle  7 collector, a bona fide military vehicle collector since  8 we formed a club here in Los Angeles in mid early to mid  9 '70s. I was involved at Fort Mac Arthur Military  10 Museum, the development of that, and the assessment of  11 Osgood Farley artillery batteries in San Pedro at  12 Fort Mac Arthur to become a historic site -- on  13 the historic registry as a historic site. And I saw  14 that evolve.  15 And I would suggest to the BLM and to Tim to  16 look towards that as a precedent as this military base  17 becomes a historic site. It would give them maybe some  18 insight as to what they should do, what they shouldn't  19 do. I spent a lot of time out there, numerous trips out  20 there in the '70s and '80s, and we actually supported  21 the first opening of the Chiriaco Summit Museum, the  22 Patton Museum, in our group. So I have background in  23 that, and there's plenty of information out there for  24 you. That's all. Thank you.  25 CHAIR SALL: Bob Howells, followed by</p>

Page 94

1 Steve Mills.  
2 MR. HOWELLS: Good morning. I'm Bob Howells.  
3 I'm board member of the Alliance for Desert  
4 Preservation. One of the most controversial aspects in  
5 the DRECP, of course, is the enormous two million acres  
6 of DFA's it creates where 20,000-megawatt renewable  
7 energy projects would be streamlined and incentivized.  
8 In that regard I wanted to address something  
9 that Randy Banis said about the actual footprint of the  
10 renewable energy projects. If you lived next door to a  
11 300 or 3,000-acre development or you look down on it  
12 from a height in Mojave National Preserve or if you're a  
13 bighorn sheep trying to get across it, that sanguine  
14 view of its only being 177,000 acres evaporates pretty  
15 quickly. You have to take into account view, habitat,  
16 contiguity. And when you do, 177,000 acres has a vast  
17 and monumental impact.  
18 I would also add and echo what April Sall said,  
19 that if you're only counting the actual footprint of  
20 wood turbines, the actual foundation footprint, that's  
21 downright deceptive and unacceptable.  
22 Anyway, this brings me to my main point. We  
23 contend that the whole notion of DFA's should be  
24 scrapped entirely. Why? Because the DRECP lacks data  
25 driven, forward-looking analysis of the effects of

Page 95

1 projects that will obviously alter the face of the  
2 California desert. It fails to offer a planned  
3 assessment of the impact that such an enormous surge of  
4 development would impose on a fragile landscape.  
5 Also, as Mr. Ravana said, why should we usher  
6 in a flood tide of industrial-scale energy projects when  
7 public officials have stated we have already met our 33  
8 percent RPS goal?  
9 Now, back to the subject of elimination of  
10 DFA's. We urge the DAC to urge the revision of the  
11 DRECP as follows: first, as renewable energy projects  
12 are proposed, allow the relevant permitting agency --  
13 whether it's BLM, county, city -- to use the trove of  
14 science that was laboriously gathered during the DRECP  
15 process. This science, this data is a valuable resource  
16 that can inform all of their critical decisions.  
17 Second -- this may be another way of stating  
18 this -- eliminate the DFA's, but retain the DRECP's  
19 conservation element. It's the product of rigorous,  
20 far-reaching, collaborative scientific analysis.  
21 Developers could benefit from knowing exactly where the  
22 environmentally sensitive areas are and from knowing the  
23 specific environmental concerns that their proposed  
24 project would trigger.  
25 In conclusion I just wanted to say that we

Page 96

1 don't want a red light on sensitive lands,  
2 Conservation Lands, ACEC's, et cetera to dictate a green  
3 light on these enormous DFA's. Thank you.  
4 CHAIR SALL: Steve Mills, followed by  
5 Gerry Hillier.  
6 MR. MILLS: Good morning. My name is  
7 Steve Mills. I want to talk about a few legal issues  
8 that could be incorporated into the DAC's comments.  
9 Under the Federal Land Policy and Planning Act of 1976,  
10 the BLM has been managing its lands to create multiple  
11 uses and sustained yields. The BLM has typically used a  
12 gradual case-by-case approach in doing that.  
13 The BLM has assigned multiple use classes to  
14 its lands, but the DRECP by contrast uses a programmatic  
15 streamlining of two million acres of land for renewable  
16 energy development. This would stop the BLM from  
17 bringing its judgment discretion and flexibility to land  
18 use planning in any of the DFA's for the 25-year life of  
19 the DRECP. I have a real concern that on a legal level  
20 the BLM will be able to fulfill its mandate to create  
21 multiple uses under the FLPMA, under that DRECP regime.  
22 There are also problems with the DRECP's  
23 approach to Conservation Lands, ACEC designations,  
24 Special Recreation Management Areas and Extensive  
25 Recreation Management Areas. Under the DRECP these land

Page 97

1 management groupers wear kind of strange programmatic  
2 masks, and it's at odds with the BLM's case-by-case  
3 approach. Again on a legal level I have I am concerned  
4 whether all that works.  
5 The BLM and the California Department of Fish  
6 and Wildlife have a Memorandum of Understanding  
7 regarding the mutual cooperation and coordination in  
8 implementing the DRECP. It allows Fish and Wildlife to  
9 shift to the BLM some of the responsibilities under the  
10 Natural Community Conservation Planning Act and Native  
11 Planning Protection Act. The BLM in turn promises to  
12 consult with Fish and Wildlife before changing any of  
13 its land use designations or CMA's.  
14 This would either lock the BLM into the new  
15 proposed programmatic DRECP designations with all the  
16 problems I mentioned before or allow the BLM to revert  
17 to its traditional case-by-case approach, gradually  
18 relaxing the conservation designations, all of which  
19 would gradually defeat the conservation values  
20 supposedly built into the DRECP. And maybe that process  
21 would not be so gradual in light of the fact that, in  
22 terms of conservation, there is not funding under the  
23 DRECP.  
24 The DRECP's macro-level programmatic  
25 designations don't work very well, and they appear to

Page 98	Page 100
<p>1 legally conflict with the BLM's duties under the FLPMA.  2 We would urge the DAC committee members to incorporate  3 this analysis into its comments. Thank you very much.  4 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Gerry Hillier,  5 followed by Shirley Leeson.  6 MR. HILLIER: Good morning again, madam  7 chairman, and thank you very much for an opportunity to  8 speak. I didn't organize my remarks into a formal  9 statement, but they are some random thoughts that I  10 have. And I speak these really from more of a personal  11 opinion rather than representing any of the  12 organizations that I normally speak for.  13 First off, a couple of people have mentioned  14 the funding and staffing shortfalls. And I want to  15 address that specifically. There is an old saying about  16 those that don't know history are doomed to repeat it.  17 And having been around in 1980 when the Desert Plan was  18 adopted, which had a very optimistic staffing future  19 forecast in it to implement the plan -- and I can tell  20 you that within five years, the public was already  21 highly critical of the Desert Plan and the BLM's failure  22 to implement it because the staffing, the rangers, the  23 other things that were supposed to be added to the staff  24 never occurred.  25 And there was a number of things that evolved,</p>	<p>1 eliminating the remaining grazing, you're talking about  2 restriction of public access to rockhounding areas or  3 any other number of opportunities that may exist. And  4 we don't know that. The plan, the DRECP, just doesn't  5 address that level of detail, and so potentially there's  6 a huge amount of mischief and a further erosion of BLM's  7 multiple-use mandate.  8 And I have some other things, but I'll save  9 those for another time. Thank you.  10 CHAIR SALL: Thank you, Gerry. Shirley,  11 followed by John Stewart.  12 MS. LEESON: My follow-up is about the DRECP.  13 Very slick presentations that they -- they show pictures  14 of wind turbines. They show pictures of solar panels.  15 They show pictures of the desert tortoise. There were  16 two pictures of the empty desert. What it didn't show  17 was people. That's enough.  18 CHAIR SALL: John Stewart, followed by  19 Ed Waldheim.  20 MR. STEWART: Good morning, council.  21 John Stewart with the Blue Ribbon Coalition and the  22 California Association of Four-Wheel-Drive Clubs.  23 I look at this DRECP, and it's billed as an  24 EIS, slash, EIR, an environmental document that is  25 complex in nature. I'd like to point out that</p>
Page 99	Page 101
<p>1 but one of the fundamental roots that drove adoption  2 ultimately of the Desert Protection Act in 1994 was the  3 fact that BLM had never been able to implement the  4 Desert Plan that it was committed to implement, and that  5 was one of the driving things. And so, you know,  6 without a direct funding and not an authorization but  7 literally an appropriation that goes along with this, a  8 source of funding to carry out the conservation  9 programs, this thing is doomed to failure.  10 The next thing I'd like to mention, of course,  11 is the Conservation Act. It appears to me, from what  12 I've been able to discern so far, that the ACEC's in the  13 conservation areas are front-end loaded. They will be  14 established in anticipation of the permitting that will  15 subsequently follow. Again BLM doesn't have the funding  16 to do these. The devil is in the details in terms of  17 how these ACEC's will be managed and what uses will be  18 restricted from them to carry out a conservation or  19 protection program, and therein lies, really, a very  20 fundamental problem.  21 The gentleman in front of me just spoke of  22 BLM's multiple-use management. I see this has a  23 potential tremendous erosion of multiple use because,  24 when you get into ACEC planning and the details, you're  25 talking about mining withdrawal, you're talking about</p>	<p>1 complexity reads litigation. What you have here is  2 three separate plans rolled into one comment period,  3 three separate plans that by themselves will create  4 three different outcomes. And yet you are now asking  5 the public to guess at what the outcome is, ultimately.  6 This is a sure prescription for litigation.  7 Now, for example, the Habitat Conservation Plan  8 itself is considered a programmatic document and is  9 billed overall -- it's said this whole thing is a  10 programmatic document. No. The habitat conservation  11 portion is a programmatic document, and as such it makes  12 no decision. And yet within the habitat conservation  13 portion, there are decisions being made, which is a  14 skewing of the process.  15 The second is Natural Communities Conservation  16 Plan. Again this is a -- this could be construed as  17 either a habitat conservation continuation or a  18 decision-making document, and it recreates the ACEC's  19 that Mr. Hillier alluded to. These are actions that  20 should, by all reason and all rational processes, be  21 subject to scrutiny and close public scrutiny and  22 reviewed in public under a full NEPA process. They are  23 being rolled into one big process and not giving them  24 due process.  25 Number three, you look at the Land Use Plan</p>

Page 102

1 Amendment. The Land Use Plan Amendment comes around,  
 2 and that is a decision-making document. Again what is  
 3 rolled out on the Land Use Management Plan will change  
 4 depending upon what is created out of the Habitat  
 5 Conservation Plan and rolled down under the Natural  
 6 Communities Conservation Plan. And yet within the land  
 7 use plan, which is a basic fundamental -- BLM's  
 8 management for the desert affects the public directly.  
 9 The public will not have the ability to comment  
 10 adequately on that.

11 Now, overall any EIS or EIR just puts it on the  
 12 agency to disclose and analyze the impact of managed  
 13 environment, manage the impact on the environment. It  
 14 also includes a component of doing a full socioeconomic  
 15 analysis. The socioeconomic analysis is missing from  
 16 the entire documents throughout or is very sketchy in  
 17 areas. And by socioeconomic, it is not just how much is  
 18 it going to cost the agency to implement? It is what is  
 19 the impact of this in cost on the social fabric of the  
 20 desert community?

21 These are issues that are sorely missing and  
 22 really need to be looked at disclosed and analyzed.  
 23 This document is not ready for prime time. Thank you.

24 CHAIR SALL: Ed?  
 25 MR. WALDHEIM: Thank you, madam chairman.

Page 103

1 Twenty thousand megawatts. Mr. Mark Algazy in his  
 2 report stated that over 25 years' timeframe we need to  
 3 reach 33-percent goal. Pretty much we've already  
 4 reached that goal, so why are we even here talking about  
 5 it?

6 I put on your table a calendar from  
 7 J's Maintenance Service so you know how the heck I make  
 8 my living. That's from my business. I make my living  
 9 in the janitorial business. Shop Home Depot, please,  
 10 because I clean those. Just to show you what I do in my  
 11 office, my bill is \$4,000 a month in electricity. I pay  
 12 zero. I covered my entire roof with solar panels, and I  
 13 don't pay anything. I have installed solar panels on my  
 14 house in California City. I will be paying nothing.  
 15 Why am I taking Public Lands when me, as just one guy, I  
 16 don't need the public utilities? Sorry, guys who sell  
 17 public utilities stuff. But if I can do that, what in  
 18 the earth am I doing here taking away 22 million acres  
 19 and trying to give it a zoning? It makes absolutely no  
 20 sense.

21 I think you as DAC members need to accept the  
 22 report that has been done by those of you who worked on  
 23 the committee. This report that Mr. Banis and everybody  
 24 got, accept this as a working document so it goes on  
 25 record as having done something. If you don't accept

Page 104

1 this report, it could be said, well, it doesn't exist;  
 2 it's gone. I hate to see that happen with all the work  
 3 that's been done. Yes, Ms. April, you have a lot more  
 4 to do to finish this document, but I think that that  
 5 needs to be recognized in the part.

6 The funding part, Teri I agree with a hundred  
 7 percent. The big guerilla is the conservation plans.  
 8 That one also scares me to death. Yes, the two million,  
 9 177,000 acres, it probably will be taken care of with  
 10 funding and whatever it is. But the utilization of the  
 11 millions of acres in the Conservation Plan that now all  
 12 of a sudden are saddled on the BLM side of it with  
 13 having to manage, and there's no money.

14 What scares me is, yes, I want my trails. I  
 15 want my access protected. Unless the Bureau of Land  
 16 Management has the money to manage and protect the  
 17 access on those routes, we are doomed because every  
 18 federal agent manager has a right to close an area if  
 19 they find it is not properly managed.

20 I know because the West Ranch was done just  
 21 because of that, and I'm still fighting it under WEMO to  
 22 make sure I can open it up with a fenced corridor. So  
 23 I've been there. I've done that. So I would strongly  
 24 urge you guys to really, really strongly work on those.  
 25 One, do we really need this. Number two,

Page 105

1 where's the funding going to come from so we can  
 2 continue managing the Public Lands the way we want to do  
 3 it in the plan the way it is? So the task is great, but  
 4 please start zeroing down on it so we can get it done.  
 5 Thank you.

6 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Those are all the  
 7 public comment cards I have at this point. Do we have  
 8 any comments or questions on the public comment session?  
 9 Randy, Mark.

10 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: I just want to say I think  
 11 that's the best round of public comments I've heard as a  
 12 DAC member.

13 CHAIR SALL: Thank you.

14 MEMBER ALGAZY: My comments are going to be  
 15 quite a bit longer. I really want to spend a little  
 16 time just really fleshing out Gerry Hillier's comment  
 17 that those that don't learn from history are destined to  
 18 repeat it.

19 I joined the DAC because I wanted to be part of  
 20 the solution, not part of the problem, and you've got  
 21 two choices, really. If you're not involved, you're  
 22 part of the problem, in my opinion. We have a very  
 23 specific charge as members of the DAC. We can't solve  
 24 everything. We're here to provide advice to one agency,  
 25 the BLM. And we're here to provide the best advice we

Page 106

1 can based on the information that we have.  
 2 And every one of us that's on the DAC has this  
 3 ongoing frustration about lack of funding there is to do  
 4 the current jobs that are on the table. Never mind the  
 5 jobs that are on the potential horizon here.  
 6 And I have proposed, you know, in an individual  
 7 comment letter that the BLM consider actually all the  
 8 REAT agencies consider phasing the designation of DFA's  
 9 as part of moving the DRECP environmental impact  
 10 statement forward. And I'd like to take a minute to go  
 11 through a little history and yet another way to come  
 12 back to that same conclusion.  
 13 In 2000 the BLM released their West Mojave  
 14 Plan, and they started working on it and finally came to  
 15 a Record of Decision that was promptly challenged in  
 16 court. And we found out as a result of the Court's  
 17 decision that there had not been sufficient homework  
 18 done. They went through an initial round of analysis to  
 19 designate routes in the desert using a process called a  
 20 decision treaty, and, after all of that analysis was  
 21 done, they submitted their WEMO documents.  
 22 And the Court basically said, you know, that's  
 23 not the end of the analysis. Just because you've  
 24 designated routes doesn't mean you're done. You have  
 25 subsequent analyses to be done on whether there has been

Page 107

1 appropriate and sufficient mitigation, minimization  
 2 criteria applied to the routes that you have now  
 3 designated.  
 4 So here we are five years later, and we have  
 5 DRECP in front of us, and we find that the REAT agencies  
 6 have spent five years doing a bunch of homework to  
 7 define DFA's, Development Focus Areas. But the question  
 8 is, is that really under the analysis again, or is the  
 9 BLM just to be challenged because they've only made one  
 10 step in the analysis to get us to the point of  
 11 designating DFA's without making the additional step of  
 12 whether that could be additional minimization criteria  
 13 applied to the DFA's in order to minimize environmental  
 14 impacts?  
 15 That is a very strong legal argument that the  
 16 BLM has lost in court before. And by not applying  
 17 additional minimization strategy to the DFA's, I believe  
 18 that the BLM is opening themselves up to a whole nother  
 19 round of litigation that's already pre-determined  
 20 they're going to lose. It's my understanding they lost  
 21 close to two million dollars in legal fees in the WEMO  
 22 process, and I've got a lot of heartburn about that  
 23 because I want to see that money hit the ground and not  
 24 get tied up in court.  
 25 And I want to do what I can as a member of the

Page 108

1 council to try to help the BLM develop the strongest  
 2 plan, the one that's the most likely to survive a legal  
 3 challenge. And I think that, if there isn't additional  
 4 minimization criteria applied with ideas, like fading a  
 5 roll-out of the DFA's so that you don't have two million  
 6 acres designated all at one time for development, you  
 7 could also as a minimization criteria do something that  
 8 Ed Waldheim suggested, which is to integrate into the  
 9 plan a component that would release the remainder of the  
 10 undeveloped lands into another designation category  
 11 rather than leaving them in limbo. And those are both  
 12 appropriate minimization strategies, in my opinion.  
 13 CHAIR SALL: Don?  
 14 MEMBER HOUSTON: Yes. I just wanted to thank  
 15 the audience for their comments, as Randy said. I  
 16 thought they were exceedingly well considered, and I  
 17 found them to be quite thought provoking. And they're  
 18 going to help me do my job better in terms of what my  
 19 comments are going to look like. So thank you for your  
 20 comments.  
 21 CHAIR SALL: All right. Thank you. I also  
 22 would like to thank the public for the public comments.  
 23 At this point we're a little ahead of schedule, and so  
 24 our proposal is to take lunch early, and then we will  
 25 come back -- let's see -- in an hour and 15 minutes from

Page 109

1 now.  
 2 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: April, I'm sorry.  
 3 CHAIR SALL: Randy?  
 4 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: Since we're done with the  
 5 comments from the public, I do want to offer a motion  
 6 for the DAC to accept a retitled interim report of the  
 7 DRECP Subcommittee.  
 8 CHAIR SALL: I'll second that. All in favor?  
 9 Don, discussion?  
 10 MEMBER HOUSTON: I'm not quite sure why we need  
 11 this motion, if could you explain, Randy.  
 12 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: It's my experience that  
 13 reports that are provided to bodies and boards are  
 14 generally received and acknowledged and accepted in some  
 15 way, that that's really it. I'm following up on the  
 16 comment. And also I'm just curious of those who aren't  
 17 part of the subcommittee in hoping that they view this  
 18 information as something that's helpful to them as being  
 19 accepted as part of the record. That's all.  
 20 Acknowledge the work.  
 21 DIRECTOR RAML: One thing. By making the  
 22 motion and passing it, it would allow me to use the  
 23 information in it. Otherwise it's your product, it's  
 24 under review, so -- because I haven't even read it  
 25 because it's your working product. So if you pass a

Page 110

1 motion, it's an interim product, and then I get to  
 2 recognize that you're doing more work on it. At least I  
 3 will read it. Other than that, it's not my product to  
 4 review yet. It's your unfinished business. So that  
 5 would be a good reason for the motion.  
 6 MR. WALDHEIM: Brilliant. Brilliant.  
 7 MEMBER BURKE: So the document that we worked  
 8 on -- and some of us worked harder than others. I'm one  
 9 of them that didn't work so hard on them, but I did  
 10 indicate in the rankings of what I thought was  
 11 important -- was the comments and that that were made.  
 12 I think it will constantly be under review. And I think  
 13 making a motion and then having a vote and giving it to  
 14 Teri could possibly end that process. My two cents.  
 15 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: The only reason -- that's  
 16 why I'm retitling it as interim report.  
 17 CHAIR SALL: I would agree, and with my  
 18 seconding of it, I would -- I mean, my position is that  
 19 we are going to continue our comments and still have  
 20 another submission. So --  
 21 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: Should we amend the motion  
 22 to say, "Accept the retitled interim report and direct  
 23 the committee to continue its work"? And that shows  
 24 that it will be worked on.  
 25 CHAIR SALL: I second it.

Page 111

1 MEMBER HOUSTON: I'll second it.  
 2 CHAIR SALL: Any other discussion?  
 3 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: I'd offer that as a friendly  
 4 amendment.  
 5 CHAIR SALL: I accepted that already. Thank  
 6 you. Accepted the amendment. All right. Those in  
 7 favor? Dissenting?  
 8 (A voice vote was taken.)  
 9 CHAIR SALL: At this point, then, I would like  
 10 to go back to the agenda. Our current time is 11:40.  
 11 So we will come back at five till; correct? All right.  
 12 We will come back at five till.  
 13 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: Five till what?  
 14 CHAIR SALL: Sorry. Till one, not five till  
 15 12. This is a great opportunity to hear about desert  
 16 soils from Dr. Michael Allen. So we will see everyone  
 17 back here at 12:55. Thank you.  
 18 (A lunch recess was taken.)  
 19 CHAIR SALL: Please take a seat. Great. Thank  
 20 you all for returning.  
 21 We are beginning to launch into sort of the  
 22 second part of our discussion following the field trip  
 23 yesterday about desert soils, and we have  
 24 Dr. Michael Allen from University of California  
 25 Riverside here to give us a talk and presentation with a

Page 112

1 PowerPoint here about that topic.  
 2 So, Steve, any other announcements? We're  
 3 ready? Great.  
 4 DR. ALLEN: See if I can figure out how to do  
 5 this to keep out of the trouble with one half of the  
 6 audience or the other half.  
 7 Well, thanks for the opportunity. What I'd  
 8 like to do is present some of the work that we're doing  
 9 on carbon and carbon cycling, particularly in desert  
 10 ecosystems, specifically this region of the desert. And  
 11 what you're going to get is very much a project that's  
 12 in the middle, so you can see what we know, which is a  
 13 little bit, what we don't know, which is a lot, but the  
 14 complexities of how we try to put these together.  
 15 Most of the talk that I'll give today is  
 16 actually based upon a peer report that is on the web,  
 17 and the website is up there. But I'll be happy to talk  
 18 more about that later. So most of the information that  
 19 we're presenting is available.  
 20 I kind of want to preface this by saying that  
 21 luckily I only have to come up with the data and the  
 22 models. You all have to come up with the decisions.  
 23 And that makes my job much easier, and I recognize that.  
 24 But some aspects that are important to me as an  
 25 ecologist is to look at the changing environment that

Page 113

1 we're in. What are the factors that influence that  
 2 environment? And specifically one thing that is going  
 3 on is a rapid increase in atmospheric CO2, and there's a  
 4 lot of ramifications that come from that. But there's  
 5 no question that atmospheric CO2 is going up, and that  
 6 has direct effects, such as ocean acidification, and it  
 7 has indirect effects that we need to begin thinking  
 8 about how we deal with. But the deserts are one of the  
 9 resources that we all depend upon for virtually all of  
 10 our different types of materials.  
 11 One thing that has been striking me in the last  
 12 few years is the solar installations. I'm all for solar  
 13 power, wind power, so don't get me wrong. But one thing  
 14 that we noticed when we started looking is the fact that  
 15 in many of these deployments, the vegetation is removed  
 16 from underneath the structures, and that has  
 17 implications for our ecosystems.  
 18 Basically the earth four billion years ago --  
 19 three to four billion years ago was largely carbon  
 20 dioxide in the atmosphere. The ocean, ocean microbes,  
 21 plants have been reducing that carbon dioxide to our  
 22 present condition for really about four billion years.  
 23 So it's biological processes that have drawn down that  
 24 excess CO2 and made the world livable for citizens like  
 25 us. And so it's really important to look at what the

Page 114

1 total global carbon balance is, mostly oceans, but  
2 that's where the limestone that turns into marble and  
3 the other sources of buried geologic carbon have come  
4 from.

5 But if we look at terrestrial systems, except  
6 for the oceans, one of the things to notice is that the  
7 atmosphere is around 750 petagrams of carbon or ten to  
8 the 15th grams of carbon. But there's another factor in  
9 here, and that's calcium carbonates in arid lands, and  
10 there's almost as much. And given the variation in  
11 measurements, there's as much carbon at a global scale  
12 tied up in calcium carbonates as there is in the  
13 atmosphere. So what happens in our desert soils makes  
14 an important difference in terms of the overall  
15 atmospheric carbon budget.

16 Now, one of the things that makes terrestrial  
17 ecology so difficult is that lots of things go on  
18 simultaneously. No one process is really all that  
19 difficult, but all of them together create the  
20 complexity that we have to deal with. And I point out  
21 that it's not rocket science. In my view it's far more  
22 complicated than rocket science because you have  
23 multiple factors all interfacing. And again, coming  
24 back to what your job is, you not only have to take my  
25 part, but you have to integrate it with everybody else's

Page 115

1 too.

2 But a few things to point out. Carbon dioxide  
3 in the atmosphere is fixed by plants. And not a big  
4 surprise there. And then it's allocated to roots and to  
5 dead leaves and to microbes, and that produces what we  
6 call recalcitrant -- some recalcitrant carbon in the  
7 surface soils and then also carbon dioxide that goes  
8 back into the atmosphere, the respiration part of the  
9 cycle.

10 This is the process that occurs mostly in the  
11 tropical rain forests that people worry about. Lots and  
12 lots of carbon is fixed, but lots and lots of carbon is  
13 released back into the atmosphere. In the deserts, arid  
14 lands -- in the deserts in particular we're sending a  
15 lot of that -- plants are water limited, so they put  
16 their roots down very deep. I don't think this is a  
17 surprise to anybody in this room, but it is a surprise  
18 to some people. And when they go down very, very  
19 deep -- sometimes three, four or five meters -- we know  
20 that the deepest root system that I know of is around  
21 25 meters deep, 25 yards deep. So there's a lot of  
22 carbon that's going way down there. And that again  
23 decomposes.

24 There's microbes that are associated,  
25 mini-symbiotic, that pick up water and nutrients for the

Page 116

1 plants, transport them into that so we get this organic  
2 carbon that is buried very, very deep in desert systems.  
3 And it slowly decomposes and comes back out. But, as  
4 you can see, it very slowly does. So what that means is  
5 there's a storage pool of very deep carbon. We do not  
6 know how much carbon that is. We simply don't know at  
7 this stage.

8 But then there's a second process that I want  
9 to talk a little bit about today. We focused as  
10 ecologists mostly on the organic portion of how carbon  
11 is cycling, but in particular -- particularly in  
12 deserts, where there's a lot of calcium, calcium is not  
13 leached out of the system because it doesn't rain that  
14 much. If you go to the tropical rain forest, that  
15 calcium has been leached out and lost some time ago.  
16 But in deserts it's just sitting there.

17 Every time it rains, what happens is that  
18 calcium binds with this carbon dioxide, and that forms  
19 calcium carbonate, and that calcium carbonate is that  
20 caliche layer that we have. So that's the calcium  
21 carbonate. And through the aeons of history, that has  
22 been building up, and to the point where again today  
23 there's about as much carbon buried in this form in  
24 deserts as exists in the atmosphere.

25 Slowly, then, the assumption under equilibrium

Page 117

1 thermodynamics is that this process basically goes in  
2 this direction. And so many people, geologists and many  
3 soil scientists, have said we don't have to worry about  
4 calcium carbonate because the thermodynamics tells us it  
5 goes in one direction. But it doesn't just go in one  
6 direction. The whole process of life is disequilibrium,  
7 is pushing things back out of equilibrium.

8 And I did have to have my one marine pictures  
9 in here. One of the places we've done a lot of work is  
10 in the Yucatan Peninsula. It's a chunk of limestone  
11 gradually uplifting. But how many mountains do we have  
12 in the Yucatan Peninsula? None. And that's because  
13 that is eroding away. That calcium is bound up by  
14 microbes and then released and eventually rebound,  
15 rereleased. And with all the rainfall that they have in  
16 the Yucatan Peninsula, it washes that calcium out in  
17 underground rivers. And that's what leads to all the  
18 coral reefs that we talk about off the southern coast  
19 off the Yucatan Peninsula. Those corral reefs are fixed  
20 with the calcium that is buildup from leaching and the  
21 activity that goes on in the Yucatan Peninsula. So we  
22 know it is more dynamic, that this carbon is dynamic,  
23 and the calcium is dynamic.

24 Okay. What do we know about deserts and  
25 nutrient cycling? Actually very little. We've measured

Page 118

1 bits and pieces of it, but we don't have a good total  
2 picture. A couple of things we do know, again, as I  
3 mentioned, that many of these desert plants have very  
4 deep roots. They can fix as much as carbon per unit  
5 leaf area as a rain forest. It's exactly the same  
6 physiological process as a rain forest. And some of the  
7 rates may be two-thirds of the rate of rain forest of  
8 fixation.

9 But, unlike the rain forest, much of that  
10 carbon, when it's wet, will be fixed and shipped down  
11 deep as opposed to coming back up. Some of it does come  
12 out, and you'll see these little white coatings of  
13 rocks. And I'm sure everybody has kicked over a rock  
14 and seen that white coating on the bottom. That's  
15 calcium carbonate that has been eroded. The calcium has  
16 been eroded out of the mountains into the soil, fixed  
17 and then dissolved, fixed and dissolved.

18 Okay. So there are two issues that we're  
19 concerned about in terms of the carbon balance of desert  
20 ecosystems. One is, of course, carbon. The other is  
21 water, because the reason our deserts fix carbon and put  
22 it down deep is to get more water. It has been tapped  
23 by much of that ground water.

24 So I did just want to briefly touch on the  
25 point that groundwater is actually very, very important,

Page 119

1 and any process that changes the level of groundwater is  
2 not only important for water use for ourselves but also  
3 very important to the plant communities that exist in  
4 our desert systems.

5 And there's two sorts where it becomes  
6 especially important. One is surface water. Surface  
7 water does matter. In these years in which we get a  
8 high rainfall and we get standing water floods and on  
9 the surface water, many of the plants that are native  
10 plants are actually dependent on that surface water.

11 This is some work we did a few years ago on the  
12 Amargosa niterwort and what we were able to show looking  
13 at the water that actually came out of the leaves and  
14 the water process looking at stable isotopes. I can  
15 talk about that in a little bit. But we determined that  
16 basically 60 and in the dry part 70 percent of the water  
17 for these plants is surface water. So anything that  
18 takes away the surface water will lead to the extinction  
19 of these plants.

20 So this is some of them. Many other plants  
21 actually depend upon the deep water, that  
22 groundwater, that water that's recharged. And many of  
23 those species -- and we can tell -- this is what we call  
24 the natural abundance isotope ratio of deuterium to  
25 hydrogen and oxygen 18 to oxygen 16. By looking at the

Page 120

1 ratios of those elements, we can actually tell what --  
2 because rainfall comes in. If it's warm rain, say, from  
3 the south Pacific, from the Pineapple Express, it has  
4 one signature. If it's from the north, it has a  
5 different signature. So we can distinguish almost every  
6 storm now that comes across.

7 Further we can distinguish -- once it starts  
8 evaporating out of the soil, what happens is the lighter  
9 isotopes come out first, and the heavier isotopes  
10 remain. So we can actually look at the plants and see  
11 whether they're using the remaining isotopes following  
12 evaporation or they're using that direct water input  
13 that went into the groundwater. And from that we  
14 actually can see that there are several species -- for  
15 example, the fin palms, the salt bushes and the  
16 mesquite -- that are actually dependent on the  
17 groundwater. That is, they are forced back up through  
18 geologic processes, or it's the deeper water in the  
19 groundwater on something like the mesquite.

20 So anything that changes the water balance is  
21 going to impact the vegetation. So that's one point to  
22 keep in mind as we go through. If you change the water  
23 balance, you change the plant community.

24 Now, then there's all of these series of  
25 equations. As I mentioned, ecology is really taking a

Page 121

1 whole bunch of simple processes and throwing them all  
2 together, and each one of these processes affects each  
3 of the other processes. But there's a couple of  
4 important ones. One is carbon dioxide and water yields  
5 bicarbonate plus extra hydrogen, hydrogen ions. Most of  
6 the calcium is calcium phosphate. When it's leached out  
7 of the limestone, it binds with the calcium carbonate.

8 And how do plants get their phosphorus? Well,  
9 this is how we actually got started in this. The way  
10 plants got most of their phosphorus was because what  
11 they did was secrete an organic acid that bound the  
12 phosphate, and then this calcium oxalate found the  
13 calcium that allowed the phosphorus to be taken up by  
14 microbes, so a fairly effective little trick that  
15 microbes and plants actually use to get their phosphorus  
16 out of the soil.

17 Well, the other process is that we have --  
18 calcium plus bicarbonate yields the calcium carbonate.  
19 That's the caliche layer plus hydrogen ions. So all of  
20 the CO<sub>2</sub> that was both atmospheric and respired CO<sub>2</sub> from  
21 these microbes went to form this calcium carbonate in  
22 the soil. And we've been able to look, and so we know  
23 it's actually much more dynamic than it is often  
24 given credit for.

25 You've probably all walked out and seen caliche

Page 122

1 layers, and you see holes that it's weathering in and  
 2 out of, and you can stick your hand into those, if you  
 3 really want to encounter a rattlesnake. But erosion is  
 4 a constant process. Calcium carbonates are continually  
 5 formed and weathered and formed and weathered. We're  
 6 able to identify some of these are calcium oxalate  
 7 crystals. We can tell because they're prismatic, a long  
 8 hyphae. And these are actually calcium carbonate  
 9 crystals that are in the soil. That's going to become  
 10 important in just a minute.

11 Okay. Most of the modeling that is done is  
 12 done looking at the ability of calcite to precipitate.  
 13 So that's when you actually begin to form calcium  
 14 carbonates in the presence of CO2 and in the presence of  
 15 water. And most modeling is done using the atmosphere  
 16 as the base. And you can see that it's actually -- this  
 17 is a negative, so it's a very low amount of the calcium  
 18 that could be fixed by bicarbonate.

19 But what we found when we started working on  
 20 this -- we knew that soils was going to be higher than  
 21 the atmosphere, but how much higher? Well, you know our  
 22 atmosphere, we worry about it because it's 400 part  
 23 per million -- it has just hit 400 part per million  
 24 atmospheric CO2. Well, in the soil it's between five  
 25 and 8,000 parts per million. In other words the roots

Page 123

1 are down there. Microbes are down there. They're  
 2 respiring CO2, and it's not coming out. It's coming out  
 3 very slowly. So after a rainstorm, every rainstorm,  
 4 what we see is this incredibly high concentration of  
 5 CO2.

6 So this is the amount of CO2 that's actually  
 7 fixed into the soil. This is the concentrations, and so  
 8 we see then these very, very high levels of CO2 that are  
 9 biologically derived, not chemically derived.

10 So what we've done is, as we're going back with  
 11 a whole series of different kinds of instrumentation we  
 12 can measure the total amount of flux of carbon. This  
 13 little thing right up here actually measures the carbon  
 14 coming into the vegetation versus the respiratory carbon  
 15 that's going back out of the vegetation.

16 That little guy there measures CO2 and wind  
 17 direction at ten times per second, and think about the  
 18 way in which -- how many of you are fly fishermen?  
 19 Anybody out there? There we go. You know when you cast  
 20 that fly, it never goes straight. It goes like this  
 21 (indicating). Well, that's turbulence. And so what you  
 22 have is an eddy that's going like this through the  
 23 atmosphere. And so when it comes down this way, when it  
 24 comes down, it's pulling the carbon in the atmosphere --  
 25 the carbon from the atmosphere, CO2 from the atmosphere,

Page 124

1 but then that eddy passes, and it goes up. And that's  
 2 getting carbon, and it's released out of the soil and  
 3 the vegetation. And by doing these very rapidly, we can  
 4 get the total carbon balance of that system.

5 Then we look at what's going on down below the  
 6 ground. So we have sensors that are buried that measure  
 7 CO2, temperature, moisture every five minutes, and we  
 8 have a camera system that goes down -- this is images --  
 9 so that we can actually begin to look at microbes  
 10 growing, crystals forming and roots growing and dying at  
 11 the same time we can measure the two on two. So that  
 12 allows us to begin measuring then the dynamics of carbon  
 13 exchange between the atmosphere, the plants and the soil  
 14 biota.

15 This is one of the images. You can see.  
 16 Here's a root. This is actually a fungal hypha. This  
 17 is a mutualistic fungus in which the fungus takes up  
 18 nutrients and water, transports that to the plant in  
 19 exchange for carbon that comes back out. But also  
 20 notice there is these little bumps along this. These  
 21 are not smooth. Those are calcium carbonate crystals  
 22 that are formed along the surface. And you can see all  
 23 along that surface is calcium carbonate.

24 And going back to that chemistry, they're  
 25 releasing high concentrations of CO2. And those high

Page 125

1 concentrations of CO2 and the organic acids they're  
 2 producing is binding the calcium to allow it to take up  
 3 phosphorus but at the same time forming a sink for  
 4 calcium carbonate.

5 And we can look at that as we back out a little  
 6 bit. Here's those same hyphae coming across a little  
 7 soil particle, and you can see little layers of these  
 8 calcium carbonate crystals forming along wherever hyphae  
 9 are. And eventually then they'll coalesce into these  
 10 small, little microscopic caliche patches.

11 But what happens is these things tend to be  
 12 formed in the surface soils, they're formed, and then a  
 13 rainstorm comes along. The rain comes along, and then  
 14 they dissolve. And then water carries that calcium down  
 15 deeper, the CO2 goes off, and it goes down deeper, where  
 16 it's then -- as it dries out, you get new formations.

17 So what we can see is this little line where  
 18 the calcium carbonate crystals were formed and then  
 19 broken down. You can see that's tied to the  
 20 precipitation events, and it's a period in which a lot  
 21 of CO2 is being produced. We can measure that. But  
 22 very little has actually escaped out of the soil, so  
 23 it's staying down there. And that's what binding up  
 24 much of this carbon. It's the microbes, the microbes  
 25 and the roots down there respiring.

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 126</p> <p>1 But that CO2 doesn't necessarily turn around  2 and come back out. It's fixed into these calcium  3 carbonate. And then next rainstorm comes along,  4 dissolves it, pushes it farther down. That's when the  5 caliche layer is formed and about the depth at which  6 precipitation can go in our biggest storms. So that's  7 why we can predict the depth.</p> <p>8 And so we've actually done some more work. We  9 looked at these same time periods. And this is actually  10 a model of calcium carbonate. And one of the things  11 that really surprised us when we started modeling is, it  12 looked like just our data. Rarely do models and data  13 actually look the same.</p> <p>14 But you can see here. Here's calcium carbonate  15 produced, and then it breaks, and then it's produced,  16 and then it dissolves away, produced, dissolves. So  17 it's dynamic. And anything that's dynamic means that  18 that increases the potential for loss.</p> <p>19 So in our desert soils, this is an  20 undisturbed -- this is a deep canyon natural reserve.  21 Where the vegetation is there, we're constantly fixing  22 this carbon and putting it down deep, constantly fixing  23 it and putting it down deep. Well, we wanted to check  24 on that.</p> <p>25 So one of the places we went was the</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 128</p> <p>1 tell you for certain that this is where the carbon comes  2 from. So stay tuned. But our modeling again shows  3 again here is the calcium carbonate, and it's dynamic.  4 It's turning over. And since there's no carbon coming  5 into this system, the only way we can generate that  6 carbon is from the calcium carbonate that is left over  7 from the system. So eliminating the vegetation means  8 that carbon is still coming out of these systems, and  9 it's coming out from the calcium carbonate forms.</p> <p>10 We've done a little bit more work where again,  11 as I mentioned, we look a lot at natural abundance  12 isotopes. And in this case I'm going to be talking  13 about carbon. There's a small proportion -- most of the  14 carbon is carbon 12, and of course you have all heard of  15 carbon 14, which is the radioactive form.</p> <p>16 Well, we're looking at non-radioactive. I  17 don't want to get nailed with the health people that we  18 have to deal with for C-14, but if we look at the carbon  19 13 to carbon 12, very small fraction is carbon 13, but  20 we have the instrumentation to measure the difference of  21 those. And that carbon 13 is actually interesting  22 because, when we look at the Paleozoic limestone, we've  23 set that value so these are all -- it's what's called  24 parts per mil. But there it is against the standard.  25 So the limestone itself has a delta what we call a delta</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 127</p> <p>1 Coachella Valley Agricultural Research Station down near  2 Thermal. And this is a site, with the help of our  3 colleagues there, that has had no vegetation for five  4 years. So there's no plants. It's basically the way a  5 system would look if you removed all the vegetation for  6 many, many years.</p> <p>7 And this is an image using the same thing that  8 we saw all those hyphae and roots and organisms before  9 in the deep canyon. Here it's almost sterile. You  10 almost cannot find a piece of organic matter. You can't  11 find a fungal hypha. And if you actually -- when we  12 actually did the soil analysis, about 78 to 85 percent  13 of the carbon in that soil across that system is in the  14 form of calcium carbonate, so that most of the carbon is  15 calcium carbonate.</p> <p>16 But what's interesting to us is that it's still  17 dynamic, even though there's nothing now to really put  18 the plants to fix carbon and put it down in there.  19 These are surface soils. They're dynamic. And every  20 time we get a rainstorm, what we're getting is an efflux  21 of carbon. That carbon is coming back out. The only  22 source of that carbon that we know of is the calcium  23 carbonate.</p> <p>24 And if I'm lucky, by this time next week I will  25 actually have the isotopic composition to be able to</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 129</p> <p>1 13 C ratio of zero.</p> <p>2 That limestone then, as it weathers, releases  3 CO2 back into the atmosphere and releases its carbon  4 into the soil, which is then dissolved and flows  5 downhill. In the atmosphere itself it has a signature  6 of minus eight. Now, it's -- actually preindustrial was  7 minus 6.5, so that gives us an idea of it. That's one  8 of the ways people can figure out how much carbon  9 dioxide has been actually burned and released back to  10 the atmosphere.</p> <p>11 The important thing is there are two things  12 that are going on here. One is this carbon then is  13 fixed by the plants and transferred to the roots. That  14 value is minus 25, and it has to do with the  15 photosynthetic process. So the photosynthesis of the  16 plants that's fixing carbon actually preferentially  17 fixes carbon 12 as opposed to carbon 13, the lighter  18 isotope, and that gives it the more negative ratio.</p> <p>19 And then there's another process that I want  20 you to remember, and that is, if we take and CO2 through  21 a calcium solution and it's fixed, it will again -- it  22 will preferentially fix, and the C-12 will be  23 preferentially lost, and the C-13 will preferentially be  24 fixed. So if it was only atmospheric carbon that was  25 used to fix that calcium into calcium carbonates, that</p>

Page 130

1 value would be a plus 9.6. But if it's respired carbon  
2 dioxide from microbes, that value then is added in. So  
3 the soil organic matter, the carbon and microbes, that  
4 would give us a value of between minus 15 to minus 20.  
5 The actual value is minus five.  
6 So that tells us that the calcium carbonate is  
7 a mix of biological and physical processes. So those  
8 two going on simultaneously are what's so important to  
9 understand. And what we're trying to do is get a handle  
10 on what that relative amount is. And that's where we  
11 are, in the middle of that research right now.  
12 So I'd kind of like to just wrap up things here  
13 by saying really what we're talking about, like  
14 everything else in real state or development or land  
15 management, is location, location, location. Where are  
16 these caliche deposits very thick? And we're trying to  
17 come up with methods to do that because, if we knew  
18 something about that, we wouldn't put a major  
19 development across a riparian woodland that contains a  
20 lot of caliche. And I think everybody would be --  
21 there's really no opposition to that, I don't think,  
22 from anybody. So I think what we're really thinking  
23 about is not whether we do or don't.  
24 We obviously need renewables. We obviously  
25 need -- we need our other forms of resources from the

Page 131

1 desert. But which locations and which communities that  
2 we actually begin to utilize become important. And then  
3 it's kind of how far? What's the boundary? What's the  
4 border? So these are the complex questions that I think  
5 we're trying to address. And when I know that, you'll  
6 be interested, and you'll have to address them even  
7 after we produce some of the science. Thank you.  
8 CHAIR SALL: Thank you so much. That was  
9 really informative. I think we're going to have lots of  
10 questions, but where are you focused on your caliche  
11 sort of mapping, I guess, or, you know, understanding  
12 where these impacts might be greater than others?  
13 DR. ALLEN: That actually turns out to be  
14 almost harder than defining the mechanism. I think  
15 we're getting pretty close to being able to define all  
16 of these pathways and mechanisms. But actually figuring  
17 out exactly where the caliche is turns out to be a  
18 pretty big problem.  
19 One of the things we've been working on is  
20 ground-penetrating radar, and what that does is actually  
21 gives us layering in soil. Our problem is at this it  
22 stage we don't know what causes the layering, for  
23 example, but it may be -- what hopefully is that we can  
24 actually begin to drill a small hole or dig a small hole  
25 and figure out what's causing the layering. And it may

Page 132

1 have to be calibrated for each region.  
2 But if we see the layering, there's a layer of  
3 something that might be a caliche, and then if we can  
4 figure out how those are layered. And there's multiple  
5 layers, so that turns out to be a trick. One thing that  
6 does stand out is that most of the caliche is in bajadas  
7 down below mountain systems that have limestone, marble  
8 and any of these calcium-containing substrates. There's  
9 also a lot of calcium in some of the salts. So if we  
10 knew more about those ties, then I think we could make  
11 some predictions about where to look.  
12 And one thing that we did see is a lot of  
13 riparian washes, and those same riparian washes that are  
14 important for wildlife corridors and other things that  
15 people have talked about are probably the same areas  
16 that, because we have these deep-rooted shrubs that we  
17 know are continually turning over, that's where it's  
18 concentrated. Yeah.  
19 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: As a rock collector we're  
20 used to identifying caliche because it seems to glow  
21 orange under a UV lamp, so we see caliche.  
22 DR. ALLEN: Good.  
23 MEMBER CAMPBELL-ERB: Because we often use a UV  
24 lamp when we come out on our rocks to see if they happen  
25 to be fluorescent.

Page 133

1 DR. ALLEN: I'll try that.  
2 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: What I want to know from  
3 you is if you want to know from us where we find  
4 caliche, because we find caliche.  
5 DR. ALLEN: Yes, I would love to have any  
6 locations. And then we can go out, and people like  
7 Bill Schlesinger do a few rounds to try to figure out  
8 how layered that is, and every road cut you can see  
9 different layers. So knowing where those are would be  
10 fantastic.  
11 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: Why does it glow orange  
12 under a UV light?  
13 DR. ALLEN: I don't know. Now you're outside  
14 my experience of expertise.  
15 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: For your information I  
16 typically soak things that have caliche on it in vinegar  
17 to remove it.  
18 DR. ALLEN: That's exactly right.  
19 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: Interesting. Well, if  
20 you'll give me your business card, I might consider  
21 distributing your information to the rockhound  
22 community, and we can help you out.  
23 DR. ALLEN: I can do that. Thanks.  
24 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: Thank you. And excuse me.  
25 Great presentation. I thoroughly enjoyed it.

Page 134

1 DR. ALLEN: Thank you.

2 MEMBER HOUSTON: Thank you for coming here

3 today and giving us this presentation. Very

4 informative. I want to make sure I'm getting the logic

5 flow here right. So we have a renewable generation

6 project. It goes out and removes all the vegetation

7 from the project site. So that eliminates the desert's

8 ability to allocate carbon to these deep soils which are

9 in caliche.

10 Every document that analyzes a project has a

11 greenhouse gas section in it. To your knowledge are

12 those documents analyzing this loss of the desert's

13 ability to sequester carbon?

14 DR. ALLEN: What they might be addressing is

15 just the surface loss when you do vegetation, which is

16 that organic pool but not the inorganic.

17 bill Schlesinger published on that work back in the mid

18 1980s, and then it's kind of laid around. Some people

19 have done it, but to my knowledge it's not been

20 addressed. It's not been specifically addressed.

21 Now, I think some of the companies have moved

22 to keeping a layer of vegetation and just trimming as

23 opposed to eliminating it. And my assumption was --

24 I've seen that in Europe a lot. When we were in Spain,

25 that was kind of standard. And, you know, you're still

Page 135

1 then maybe changing it a little bit. I don't know. You

2 know, that's a good question.

3 MEMBER HOUSTON: And then a follow-up to that

4 is, in a project where all the vegetation is removed and

5 there remains barren ground, what is timeline for the

6 loss of the carbon that's in the caliche to the

7 atmosphere? Is it years, decades, centuries?

8 DR. ALLEN: It's probably years to decades, and

9 you know, we really don't know. And part of that would

10 be dependent on whether the soil is ripped and some of

11 these caliche chunks laid on the surface and then

12 whether they're -- big chunks would weather slower than

13 a bunch of small chunks, and so everything that -- that

14 is a function of the accessibility.

15 We did a preliminary run, which seems to fit

16 with what's in the literature that, if you just take and

17 kind of make a very small almost powder, it will lose

18 about five percent per year, which is then 20 years, so

19 two decades. But it's probably much longer than that.

20 MEMBER HOUSTON: Given that the life of these

21 projects is usually 25 to 75 years, you would assume,

22 then, that during the life of the project, most if not

23 all of the carbon sequestered in that caliche would be

24 lost in the atmosphere?

25 DR. ALLEN: We would assume that at least a

Page 136

1 fairly large fraction of that.

2 MEMBER HOUSTON: Thank you.

3 MEMBER SHTEIR: Hi, Dr. Allen. Thanks so much

4 for a good presentation. I liked the fly-fishing

5 analogy.

6 I had a quick question I wanted to confirm from

7 one of the earlier slides, and I think you said in the

8 slide show that the amount of carbon in the atmosphere

9 is close to the amount of carbon in desert soils. Can

10 you confirm that?

11 DR. ALLEN: That's correct. At a global level,

12 if we look in these arid zones, the amount of carbon

13 that's bound up in calcium carbonate is approximately

14 the same amount as exists in the atmosphere. So it's a

15 large fraction.

16 MEMBER SHTEIR: Yeah, that's a lot. Thank you.

17 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: I've got one more

18 question. Did you say how deep you bore to check for

19 the caliche?

20 DR. ALLEN: We haven't gone down terribly deep,

21 and in fact others have. I think there is some old

22 literature, so we really don't know how deep that is,

23 and most of the caliche that we have were probably laid

24 down, most people think, in the Pleistocene, so however

25 fast, and who knows below that? So I just don't think

Page 137

1 we really have a good idea.

2 MEMBER BURKE: If you would indulge me, because

3 I'm not a scientist-type person. Do you take elevation

4 and ground temperature into any of this? Does that

5 affect it in any way, shape or form?

6 DR. ALLEN: Yes. In fact it all goes into

7 those, that number of CO2 that comes out. So we're

8 measuring CO2, temperature, moisture. And then at that

9 stage we do the partial pressure, every parameter that

10 you can think of that goes into those equations, yeah.

11 MEMBER BURKE: So if your study was done in the

12 Coachella Valley area, the results there would be

13 different than, say, at Ivanpah or up on the high desert

14 itself?

15 DR. ALLEN: No, probably not, because the

16 difference is really -- it's not a vapor pressure, and

17 even the temperature -- so we've measured. For example,

18 we measure in the James Reserve. We measure at high

19 elevations, so the processes are going to be the same,

20 but the rates may be a tiny bit different but probably

21 not measurably different.

22 MEMBER BURKE: Thank you. Great slide show.

23 CHAIR SALL: Another question I had, just to

24 summarize and be sure I'm clear on this. So potentially

25 the more ground disturbance in an area that had high

Page 138	Page 140
<p>1 caliche and the depth of that ground disturbance and  2 thus the more caliche that may or may not be exposed,  3 the faster rate that that stored carbon is being  4 released. And so for example, with a renewable energy  5 project, the carbon calculation of a renewable project  6 saving us CO2 emissions, for example, that math may not  7 cancel out in a 20- to 25- or 30-year project, depending  8 on the location.</p> <p>9 DR. ALLEN: It's depending upon the location,  10 how much caliche is, how much disturbance, how deep.  11 You know, all of those factors would go into that  12 calculation. And we're still trying to get a handle on  13 that again, that release back out.</p> <p>14 Yes?</p> <p>15 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: So would you recommend,  16 then, when they're doing a study before they do a  17 project, that they do a caliche study?</p> <p>18 DR. ALLEN: Sure. Not all these detailed  19 carbon budgets, but they could go in and say this is a  20 an area with very deep, very heavy or a lot of surface  21 caliche. Let's try to minimize the disturbance to the  22 vegetation and the soils. This area over here, there's  23 no caliche.</p> <p>24 There's other rationale, biologic values,  25 things like that that you want to consider. But those</p>	<p>1 more of a summer as opposed to the California deserts,  2 where these studies were done. Is there any difference  3 there?</p> <p>4 DR. ALLEN: Thanks for the question. We don't  5 know because nobody has done this kind of study. There  6 is one study that we don't really understand, which was  7 done in Nevada, which suggests a large amount of carbon  8 is directly fixed inorganically, but that's pretty  9 controversial at this stage. But while we know this  10 mechanism is going on, the rates haven't been studied  11 anywhere.</p> <p>12 MR. STEWART: I have one final question. When  13 you look at the concept of possibly doing shrub trimming  14 rather than removal, does that in itself, that trimming,  15 have an impact on the ability to complete this carbon  16 cycle?</p> <p>17 DR. ALLEN: It would reduce the fixation just  18 because you reduce the leaf area, but it shouldn't  19 change the overall pattern so that I'm not sure -- you  20 know, obviously if you took it way down, you would have  21 an impact. But if you just did a surface trimming, how  22 much -- you know, you should still be able to still fix  23 carbon, and you still have an intact root system.</p> <p>24 MR. STEWART: That would be assuming the  25 resulting trims were not put under a shade canopy that</p>
Page 139	Page 141
<p>1 are things that could be looked at fairly quickly, I  2 think.</p> <p>3 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: So that should probably be  4 a requirement every time there is a project.</p> <p>5 DR. ALLEN: Just take a look, uh-huh.</p> <p>6 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. We are going to have  7 some public comments and thus public questions as well,  8 if there are no other DAC questions at this time.</p> <p>9 All right. Seeing none, then we're going to  10 move into -- if you'll stick around with us, Mike, we  11 are going to stick in our public comments. And if folks  12 would go ahead and fill out a card real quick if they  13 have not yet, because we're addressing questions in this  14 way, that would be great.</p> <p>15 The first one I have is John Stewart, followed  16 by Ed Waldheim.</p> <p>17 MR. WALDHEIM: Pass.</p> <p>18 CHAIRPERSON SALL: Okay. Pass, Ed.</p> <p>19 MR. STEWART: John Stewart, California  20 Association of Four-Wheel-Drive Clubs and the Blue  21 Ribbon Coalition.</p> <p>22 Interesting presentation. I'm kind of curious  23 as to how or if there is correlation studies done in  24 other areas of other desert environs, such as Arizona,  25 where you have a higher monsoonal flow with, you know,</p>	<p>1 would actually ultimately lead to its decay and  2 destruction?</p> <p>3 DR. ALLEN: You know, one of the things to keep  4 in mind is that our deserts have such high radiation  5 intensity. Obviously every one of us know when we go  6 out there and each photon is bouncing off the top of  7 your head some days. Basically plants -- these plants  8 will maximize their photosynthesis about a third full  9 sunlight so that anything above that is actually not  10 detrimental to photosynthesis. So it's unlikely that  11 you would have such a cover of at least of any of the  12 solar facilities I've seen that would reduce --  13 dramatically reduce that carbon fixation.</p> <p>14 MR. STEWART: Thank you for the information.</p> <p>15 CHAIR SALL: Next I have Neil Nadler, followed  16 by Jay Erb.</p> <p>17 MR. NADLER: Thank you for the great  18 presentation. You mentioned -- when you were talking  19 about areas that you know for sure, you mentioned  20 riparian woodlands, and you mentioned bajadas down below  21 mountains that have large limestone deposits. And I do  22 live right below that, and I can promise you there is  23 lots of caliche, and I have to use a jackhammer  24 sometimes just to make a hole for a small plant or a  25 tractor with rippers.</p>

	Page 142		Page 144
<p>1 My question to you is, how far down below the</p> <p>2 foothills of the mountains does that, you know -- is</p> <p>3 that area where -- and I know you can go out with UV and</p> <p>4 things like that. But typically speaking, what is the</p> <p>5 range from the foothill on the mountain on out would you</p> <p>6 say that that occurs?</p> <p>7 DR. ALLEN: That's a really good question. And</p> <p>8 one of the advantages of being a scientist is, I can say</p> <p>9 I don't know. And one of the difficulties of the job</p> <p>10 with folks sitting at this table is that they're going</p> <p>11 to have to make some decisions with an absence.</p> <p>12 But that's one of the things that we really</p> <p>13 need some good survey information from and just some</p> <p>14 baseline surveys as to how far that goes. And I really</p> <p>15 just don't know the answer to that.</p> <p>16 MR. NADLER: Thank you.</p> <p>17 DR. ALLEN: Good question.</p> <p>18 CHAIR SALL: Jay?</p> <p>19 MR. ERB: Hello. I'm Jay Erb. I'm a</p> <p>20 rockhound.</p> <p>21 DR. ALLEN: Good.</p> <p>22 MR. ERB: Okay. From a previous DAC field trip</p> <p>23 to a solar project, we had found that after the soil had</p> <p>24 been bladed and leveled, they mix a fixative into the</p> <p>25 soil. How does that affect what's down below the</p>		<p>1 DR. ALLEN: What we use is, at UCR all of our</p> <p>2 sensors were originally part of HP WREN. And we've</p> <p>3 developed other networks, so some of them are near HP</p> <p>4 WREN; others are away from the HP WREN specifically.</p> <p>5 And some of them, like CVARS, we just -- there's a</p> <p>6 telephone download, so we're just grabbing, you know,</p> <p>7 whatever we can, whatever method of getting, and we send</p> <p>8 graduate students out to download data.</p> <p>9 So some of it's automated. All of the data</p> <p>10 collection is automated locally. Some of it's</p> <p>11 transmitted. Some of it is downloaded and analyzed</p> <p>12 later.</p> <p>13 MR. LIEBSCHER: How about higher altitudes from</p> <p>14 NOAH locating CO2?</p> <p>15 DR. ALLEN: What we've been doing -- I don't</p> <p>16 specifically, but I have colleagues that use the NASA</p> <p>17 overflights and NOAH overflights, NOAH satellite data so</p> <p>18 that, looking at the total fluxes on a very large area.</p> <p>19 So my measurements are more at the mechanisms of change,</p> <p>20 so I'm trying to do these small-scale changes, but</p> <p>21 they're trying to scale up to very large changes, yeah.</p> <p>22 So there are people at UCR doing all of those different</p> <p>23 scales.</p> <p>24 MR. LIEBSCHER: Cool. Thank you.</p> <p>25 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. I have John Smith,</p>	
<p>1 surface, because I guess they've removed the plants at</p> <p>2 that point and --</p> <p>3 DR. ALLEN: I have really no idea, and I don't</p> <p>4 know that there's any data one way or the other.</p> <p>5 What I would -- the fixatives, what they're</p> <p>6 going to do is stabilize that soil surface. But they're</p> <p>7 not going to fix carbon so that if -- as rainfall goes</p> <p>8 through there, you're still going to have a loss of</p> <p>9 calcium carbonate and no new fixation.</p> <p>10 MR. ERB: Okay. So if rainfall does go through</p> <p>11 the fixative, I was under the impression that the</p> <p>12 fixative sort of repelled the rain and would cause it to</p> <p>13 go somewhere else.</p> <p>14 DR. ALLEN: I'm sure it would repel some of it</p> <p>15 but not all of it, and so there would still be some, I</p> <p>16 would guess. You probably know as much about that</p> <p>17 particular topic as I do. That's the scary part.</p> <p>18 MR. ERB: All right. Thank you. Great</p> <p>19 presentation.</p> <p>20 CHAIR SALL: I have Shirley Leeson, followed by</p> <p>21 Will Liebscher. Shirley, no? Okay. Will Liebscher.</p> <p>22 MR. LIEBSCHER: Dr. Allen, I wanted to ask you</p> <p>23 if you have sensors along the HP WREN and fiberoptic</p> <p>24 backbone here in Southern California and, secondly,</p> <p>25 anything through NOAH high altitude?</p>	Page 143	<p>1 followed by Sophia Merk.</p> <p>2 MR. SMITH: Can I ask the question from here?</p> <p>3 CHAIR SALL: If you would join us at the mic,</p> <p>4 please, that's easier for our court reporter. Thank</p> <p>5 you.</p> <p>6 MR. SMITH: Okay. Visual clues. Is there</p> <p>7 any -- if you went to a location, say, just as you were</p> <p>8 passing through, is there any surface visual clues that</p> <p>9 might give you an idea that that might be a site that</p> <p>10 really needs to be looked at, you know, or you go like</p> <p>11 "Oh, wow," you know?</p> <p>12 DR. ALLEN: Sometimes. Obviously if you see</p> <p>13 caliche on a road cut. And the other thing is to look</p> <p>14 at the mountains up above and see whether they're</p> <p>15 limestone, marble, those sorts of things.</p> <p>16 MR. SMITH: Second question. Assessing, say,</p> <p>17 existing P.V. wind sites, okay? If you were to -- say,</p> <p>18 if there was a mechanism to go assess those existing</p> <p>19 sites and you found out that those sites were actually</p> <p>20 releasing more carbon -- in other words, they were</p> <p>21 carbon negative -- what would you -- would there be any</p> <p>22 thought of perhaps remediating that in some way? I</p> <p>23 mean, just saying, oh, this is devastating, this is</p> <p>24 probably not a place to put this, because a lot of these</p> <p>25 sites in the counties are putting in are CUP's; okay?</p>	Page 145

<p style="text-align: right;">Page 146</p> <p>1 And that, I would think, might be a point where 2 the county might say, wait a minute. We have your 3 environmental studies passed to us, but they don't 4 measure up to what's actually happening. And they do 5 have the right to go at that particular point and ask 6 for remediation. 7 Would that be a logical thing to at least 8 question? 9 DR. ALLEN: Sure. You know, one of the 10 advantages again about being a university professor is, 11 I don't have to take a stand, and I would redirect your 12 question towards April. 13 MR. SMITH: Well as a non-scientist, I can say 14 I don't know. 15 DR. ALLEN: What I can say that is important 16 is, we do have the capacity to do these measurements 17 now, and ten years ago, five years ago we did not. I 18 mean, our instrument capability is so much better and 19 changes so fast now that we do have the capacity to 20 measure things that we never used to be able to. 21 MR. SMITH: Just a third question. I like the 22 presentation. But it just crossed my mind, being who I 23 am, does cow dung have any effect on -- 24 DR. ALLEN: If you have enough of it. 25 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Sophia Merk?</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 148</p> <p>1 (Afternoon break.) 2 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. We are going to 3 reconvene for the rest of our DAC session here. And 4 we're going to have just a little change in the agenda 5 here. And at this point move into our next year's work 6 plan for the DAC. We have some members that have to 7 depart us a little bit early, so I'm going to turn it 8 over to Teri to walk us through this. 9 DIRECTOR RAML: So one of the things that we 10 had done kind of behind the scenes is, Steve and I had 11 met with Randy and April and had drafted a proposed work 12 plan for 2015 for the DAC. And there were a couple of 13 e-mails that were exchanged, and it made me recognize 14 that I needed to start a little bit at the beginning of 15 how we have planned our work and maybe review the 2014 16 strategic work plan and talk a little about it for the 17 new members and then kind of refresh the existing 18 members. And so I'm going to go through just a few 19 little slides. 20 In -- I think it was 2010, probably shortly 21 after I got here -- and I was working closely with 22 Tom Acuna at that time -- we were trying to figure out 23 how to make sure that the DAC was effective and was 24 also -- well, and that the BLM was effective, and that 25 we were working on the most important issues.</p>
<p style="text-align: right;">Page 147</p> <p>1 MS. MERK: Just wanted to say great 2 presentation. 3 DR. ALLEN: Thank you. 4 CHAIR SALL: And Gerry Hillier, did you have 5 questions or comments at this point? 6 MR. HILLIER: No. 7 CHAIR SALL: All right. At this point we 8 are -- Seth. 9 MEMBER SHTEIR: Can I ask one more question. 10 CHAIR SALL: Yes. 11 MEMBER SHTEIR: I just had a question. And 12 that is, are all caliche deposits created equal, or are 13 there certain qualitative aspects that make them better 14 for retaining carbon? 15 DR. ALLEN: I think pretty much all are created 16 pretty close to equal, if not equal. It's not like a -- 17 it's just calcium carbonate. 18 CHAIR SALL: So just the depth would be the -- 19 DR. ALLEN: The depth is and what covers it are 20 the real critical variables. 21 CHAIR SALL: Great. Any other DAC questions? 22 All right. At this point let's take a break. 23 And if folks have a few more questions after Allen is 24 packing up, then now is the opportunity. Let's come 25 back in 15 minutes.</p>	<p style="text-align: right;">Page 149</p> <p>1 We were also grappling with the fact that there 2 were renewable energy projects, and the DAC was trying 3 to figure out how to comment and be kind of engaged in 4 renewable projects. And that was somewhat of a 5 frustrating exercise because of the timelines of the 6 projects and the DAC meetings. 7 So we kind of came together, and we invited 8 Don Maruska to work with us in terms of working out a 9 strategic planning network for DAC meetings. And this 10 slide here, I carry it forward every year, and we 11 brainstorm, what is important for the DAC? What is the 12 primary reason there is an advisory council? It is to 13 provide us advice. 14 The second is for the DAC to be a vehicle for 15 public input, and we're witnessing that today. And the 16 other is also, in addition to having public provide 17 input at meetings, also to be a communication link with 18 the constituencies. And I think I'm very proud to be 19 associated with these advisory council members because 20 they do that. And Kim is a good example, Dinah. All of 21 those people talk about their interests and their work 22 with their interest groups. So that's kind of the 23 important roles for the DAC. 24 The second thing is, we tried to figure out why 25 should something come to the DAC's attention? And I</p>

	Page 150		Page 152
<p>1 think the members, even without seeing this little 2 PowerPoint, agree with those, and they've expressed it 3 several times. They want their input to be effective, 4 they want it to be timely, and they want it to be of 5 significance. So those are the underlying principles 6 for how we work together.</p> <p>7 All right. Let's see if I can -- okay. So the 8 way we approached our planning for meetings in 2010 is, 9 we decided to establish a key theme for meetings then 10 look for specific issues for the DAC to provide input 11 on, engage the subgroups and the BLM staff to prepare in 12 advance. And that continues to be a challenge for us, 13 as busy as everybody is. But we are all trying to do 14 our best to be prepared to make the -- to do our work to 15 make the DAC successful.</p> <p>16 And the other for me is, one of my 17 responsibilities is to provide back to the DAC how their 18 work has made a difference. And, you know, I'm not 19 sure -- I'm not meeting that bar. Let's put it that 20 way. And it's something that stays on my mind. So 21 that's a commitment I'd still like to do a better job on 22 is saying, yes, your input makes a difference, and what 23 you do makes a difference.</p> <p>24 Okay. So the structure for the meetings is to 25 receive updates from BLM and other agencies on what's</p>		<p>1 times I do it and get it to you advanced, sometimes not 2 so good. So that was like similar for recreation, user 3 fees, working landscapes, cultural resources, renewable 4 energy.</p> <p>5 Okay. So these were things, public engagement. 6 So what we determined was key factors for our success 7 together was shared understanding and direction, clear 8 requests from me to you, plenty of lead time for 9 reviewing major topics. And then part of what one of 10 the concerns was expressed early on with this format was 11 not to be rigid and to be flexible so, when something 12 came up that deviated from this year worth of meetings 13 in advance, that we would tackle that, you know.</p> <p>14 And so "outside of the box," to me, meant two 15 things. One is outside of the box of this structured 16 sort of approach to viewing things. But the other is to 17 make sure that we provided quality time, whether it was 18 field trips or subgroup meetings. And I think for this 19 particular DAC and the pattern staying true, the social 20 time to get to know each other to do that sort of 21 freewheeling discussion that provides for an opportunity 22 to think outside the box. We do the targeted tours. 23 And then, like I said, clear feedback from BLM when you 24 give us advice.</p> <p>25 All right. That's the end of it. So why don't</p>	
<p>1 going on and then the topics that we selected to focus 2 on, and then at every meeting to talk about the next 3 meeting. And then in addition, while we're working, is 4 to gain input from, you know -- and our agendas really 5 follow this process -- is to gain the input from the DAC 6 members and from the public about other things that 7 we're talking about in addition to the focus topics.</p> <p>8 So I'm just going to go through these real 9 quick, and I know you can read. But so starting back, I 10 think 2010 was probably similar. So renewable energy, 11 recreation, user fees and larger desert landscape. That 12 was our themes for 2010. Okay. So '10 and '11, really. 13 So for 2012 renewable energy, travel management, 14 including WEMO, the youth initiative, and then the 15 cultural resources. '13, guess what? Renewable energy, 16 travel management, fee proposals, working landscapes, 17 volunteer partnerships.</p> <p>18 And let me go fast. So that's just the format 19 that we started with. I have not been as consistent in 20 providing that format as we would kind of want with 21 DRECP and some other topics, but that was what kind 22 of -- we started out with, okay. If the topic is 23 renewable energy, what are the issues? How should we be 24 prepared? Where is the meeting location and date? And 25 I think I've done that inconsistently. A couple of</p>	Page 151	<p>1 you get out real quickly your calendar year 2015 draft. 2 I hope you have your little matrix. So I view that one 3 of my our goals is -- so at the terms are three years 4 and how we look at it is, during the three years that a 5 person serves on the DAC, we hope when their term has 6 ended, that they've had an opportunity to get a broad 7 perspective about BLM, about the landscapes we manage 8 and, you know, see a lot of it and leave their time with 9 a broad exposure. So that's why you see we keep track 10 of, you know, where we've been and what we've seen, and 11 I'm thinking in a three-year cycle, you know.</p> <p>12 And what the challenge has been for us with the 13 onset of the DRECP and WEMO is that those topics 14 continue to kind drive how we're moving forward. So in 15 the past we have had a more open meeting, more open 16 planning meeting. But when I looked at the calendar, 17 where we've been, what we have to do and then the fact 18 that renewable energy, landscape-level planning and WEMO 19 are all on our agenda, that's one of the reasons that I 20 did this kind of compressed thing with Randy and April.</p> <p>21 So what we came up with is what's on the top 22 there, and there is flexibility for us to talk about it 23 and to deviate from it a bit, but that was the list we 24 came up with, was that we had wanted to tackle climate 25 change. And I think that was something that Al Muth was</p>	Page 153

Page 154

1 very interested in helping us with. That was actually  
2 going to be the focus for this meeting instead of the  
3 DRECP. We still want to do that. I think Paul brought  
4 up how climate change is really kind of one of the  
5 underpinnings for the DRECP, so we still want to tackle  
6 that. The WEMO plan will come out in February.  
7 February?

8 MS. SYMONS: End of January or February.

9 DIRECTOR RAML: So at the April meeting we want  
10 to tackle that. Gerry may not see this. We also have  
11 tortoise recovery, and I think Randy put the cabins from  
12 Ridgecrest on there. And then on the third meeting  
13 we're going to talk about South Coast. We have a South  
14 Coast Resource Management Plan that should be, knock on  
15 wood, maybe even out by then. But still for me that's  
16 the opportunity to make sure at the end of people's  
17 tenure that they have not only just an understanding of  
18 the California Desert Conservation Area part of CDD, but  
19 they also know that there's South Coast and Eastern  
20 San Diego County and other areas that are not part of  
21 the CDCA.

22 And again we wanted to talk about in December  
23 is continue to look at renewable energy and make sure  
24 that we got a trip in to El Centro, and I think for  
25 me -- and Salton Sea is on there. So Salton Sea,

Page 155

1 geothermal. The other thing about the December meeting  
2 is, I think Imperial County would be worth a visit for  
3 renewable energy because of the amount of development on  
4 private land.

5 So I think by that time, if you kind of think  
6 about the cycle of the DRECP, I think that for all of us  
7 to understand the nexus between a county that has a very  
8 aggressive interest in renewable energy and private land  
9 development and the intersection of BLM. So that was  
10 kind of what we came up with.

11 We put some dates on the calendar because of  
12 the quarterly, kind of our quarterly plan. There is  
13 some flexibility in there but not as much as you would  
14 think. So with that I will, April, turn it back to you  
15 for discussion.

16 CHAIR SALL: Great. Thank you, Teri, for that  
17 summary. So I'd like to have some discussion. And,  
18 Kim, did you have something you wanted to say here, or  
19 no?

20 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: No.

21 CHAIR SALL: All right. Seth.

22 MEMBER SHTEIR: Well, thanks for doing that  
23 work. It looks like a good line-up. Two of the other  
24 things I'm thinking about that I'd love to see included  
25 in this if it were possible is, you know, BLM's work

Page 156

1 with tribes, you know, and not only from the standpoint  
2 of a project-by-project basis, you know, for renewable  
3 energy but just the broader perspective of how you work  
4 with tribes in the California Desert District and also  
5 the tribal consultation process as well.

6 And the other thing -- I've been thinking a lot  
7 about this, too, particularly with the subgroup  
8 Connecting People to the Desert. I'd love to have a  
9 discussion or a speaker maybe here at some point about  
10 what could be a system for collecting more user data,  
11 because I think -- I think from -- and I don't know all  
12 the stuff that's being done for off-road vehicle areas,  
13 but I know for Wilderness Areas there's very little, and  
14 for other areas of the desert you don't know a whole lot  
15 about our users.

16 So that would really help our initiatives, like  
17 the one I'm working on of Connecting People With the  
18 Desert. Are there youth? Are there older folks? That  
19 sort of thing, and what are they doing out there? So  
20 that's it for me. Thanks.

21 CHAIR SALL: Seth, I want to thank you because  
22 we had your e-mail in front of us as we did this  
23 planning, so you provided some really good input  
24 already.

25 MEMBER O'BOYLE: I'd like to talk about water

Page 157

1 in general, groundwater, the California aqueduct systems  
2 and canals. More or less without water none of this is  
3 possible for anything or anyone and, I think, just flows  
4 through everything. No pun intended.

5 Also I think it would be helpful, at least at  
6 each one of these meetings, if we could have different  
7 constituents come forward and kind of talk to us about  
8 it, whether it be like the Sierra Club or the OHV  
9 people. Give them designated time to come talk to us  
10 about their issues that are important to them that might  
11 be important, especially as we talk about the DRECP,  
12 identifying what their pressure points are, what their  
13 key points are.

14 And then -- I know we talked about this  
15 before -- permitting and processing. Most of these  
16 renewable energy projects come in through right-of-way  
17 permit, and I know we talked about talking about that,  
18 but we really haven't had a presentation on the  
19 permitting process of the BLM and how that would  
20 actually work. I know that Dinah, when she was here, at  
21 one point we were going to use a particular project as a  
22 test case or a model, and I don't know. I don't think  
23 that we really actually had that presentation. That's  
24 it for me.

25 DIRECTOR RAML: Okay. Another thing I wanted

Page 158

1 to mention is one of Seth's suggestions that will  
2 probably be reflected in the agendas but we didn't put  
3 it in, was a real topic -- Seth had mentioned that he  
4 thought it would be interesting if BLM resource  
5 specialists came and talked about what they do. And I  
6 really liked that as a suggestion because whenever --  
7 and, you know, this is something, again being very  
8 proud, one of the things that has always so gratifying I  
9 know, for me, and I know for field managers out there,  
10 is how much respect people have for power resource  
11 specialists.

12 And whenever our resource specialists get up  
13 and talk and make a presentation, they do such a superb  
14 job, and we get so much positive feedback. So, you  
15 know, we feature them on field trips. But I think Seth  
16 had made a suggestion that we kind of look across the  
17 resource spectrum, and that would probably be good to  
18 tie in. Particularly with the DAC's interest in  
19 staffing, is to kind of bring people forward when we're  
20 meeting and ask about their jobs and what they do. And  
21 I think that was a really good session, so I think we  
22 were going to build that into the agenda, not really  
23 call it a focus topic, so we'll keep hold of that.

24 And I'm going to -- let me keep thing here. So  
25 the thing about the volunteer reports, that's something

Page 159

1 that we needed to kind of address also. So this was  
2 really, I think, a lot from April, too, is there is a  
3 lot of -- so we talk a lot about volunteers and, again,  
4 on field trips. And when we make presentations, it's  
5 really evident how much we rely on people, other people  
6 to help us get our jobs done.

7 And what April had suggested is that we do  
8 something a little bit more global about it. So in  
9 other words, rather than just talk about all of Ed's  
10 friends' groups, that we would actually try to put  
11 something together that addressed really the role of  
12 volunteers for the CDD and kind of the volume, the  
13 breadth and depth of how much we rely on others. So  
14 that's why it says, "Volunteers." We probably could  
15 have left the "s" off.

16 So one of the things we were trying to build  
17 into the agenda -- and Steve does this and has to do it  
18 annually, so it's kind of easy for him. We've got the  
19 bases of -- it is to make a presentation about  
20 volunteers and how many volunteers we utilize. And  
21 then, when we feature volunteers out on the field trips  
22 and stuff, everybody would kind of have it in context,  
23 because there's a lot of people that don't really get  
24 highlighted necessarily when we do this sort of stuff.  
25 But we really want to do a shout-out for them. So that

Page 160

1 was the that volunteer part.

2 MEMBER ALGAZY: That was my number one thing.

3 DIRECTOR RAML: Yea.

4 CHAIR SALL: Bob.

5 MEMBER BURKE: The first meeting of 2015 I'm  
6 unavailable. Is there any way we can move that back a  
7 week or ahead a week?

8 CHAIR SALL: So the February 28th date doesn't  
9 work; is that what you're saying?

10 MEMBER BURKE: It doesn't work for me.

11 CHAIR SALL: Okay. So I did want to have a  
12 little quick discussion about dates.

13 MEMBER BURKE: I wasn't done.

14 CHAIR SALL: Before we do that, I wanted to see  
15 if there was any other comments. Okay. Go ahead.

16 MEMBER BURKE: Steve, Teri, do either one of  
17 you get the semi-annual reports from the society in  
18 reference to our inspections of the water sources,  
19 because you should be. If you're not, let me know, and  
20 I will determine to try and make that happen.

21 The other thing is, I'm part of a strong  
22 volunteer force that goes out there, and anyone that  
23 would like to learn about the majestic bighorn sheep, I  
24 do have a couple of presentations that I do. My  
25 camera -- while we brought them, and they were only

Page 161

1 supposed to take pictures of bighorn sheep, they have  
2 taken pictures of rattlesnakes going into sources and  
3 drinking other stuff like that, badgers, coyote, kit  
4 foxes mountain lions. The only thing I don't have is  
5 burros.

6 DIRECTOR RAML: Well, we can fix that.

7 MEMBER KENNEY: Do you need some?

8 MEMBER BURKE: But I will throw that out to  
9 you. If you want a presentation like that, I have over  
10 400,000 photos of critters since 2009.

11 DIRECTOR RAML: That would be a long  
12 presentation.

13 MEMBER BURKE: So that is something that is  
14 available that I'm willing to do.

15 CHAIR SALL: Thank you, Bob.

16 MEMBER BURKE: Thank you.

17 CHAIR SALL: Don?

18 MEMBER HOUSTON: I also wanted to talk about  
19 the February date. The time for public comments on the  
20 DRECP closes February 23rd, as I understand it. We have  
21 our task in front of us. I would think we'd want to  
22 meet, you know, prior to that. But I just want to hear  
23 what it is you're thinking, April, on the schedule for,  
24 you know, our comments and finalizing that.

25 CHAIR SALL: Great. Thank you for the setup.

Page 162

1 So looking at various conflicts, one of them being the  
2 Desert Tortoise Symposium, as you brought up, Don.  
3 That, by the way, is in Las Vegas on the 20th through  
4 the 22nd. There were some other conflicts with the  
5 weekend before that, the 12th, 13th, 14th. I got the  
6 dates. Yes, the 13th, 14th being Valentine's holiday.  
7 So my proposal would be to move the February meeting up  
8 to February 6th and 7th.  
9 How would that work for folks? So far, so  
10 good?  
11 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: I'm okay with that, but I  
12 did want to butt in and answer Don's question to April.  
13 MEMBER HOUSTON: Sure.  
14 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: Just that I didn't  
15 necessarily -- I didn't think it was necessarily bad  
16 that we met after the DRECP comment period closed  
17 because I think we would be the beneficiaries of a more  
18 focused -- a continually more focused and more and more  
19 thoughtful comments by the public because they would  
20 have already written their letters by then, and I think  
21 they would have had a chance as a public to get through  
22 it all, to digest it all, come up with their big  
23 concepts. And I think we could have benefited from  
24 that, so I didn't think it was necessarily a bad thing  
25 that we met after. But I'm okay on that weekend, and

Page 163

1 I'm available and happy to meet with the board who can  
2 vote.  
3 CHAIR SALL: That's a good point.  
4 MEMBER BARRETT: I think also that there's a  
5 gap now between that meeting and the following meeting,  
6 which is in early April. Otherwise there would have  
7 only been five weeks.  
8 CHAIR SALL: So then really the discussion is  
9 if there's any preference to moving it to the beginning  
10 of February versus the end.  
11 MEMBER ALGAZY: I like the end because it ties  
12 in with going to Steve's concert.  
13 CHAIR SALL: Steve's concert. Okay. So if  
14 it's at the end, that is a conflict for you; correct?  
15 MEMBER BURKE: Yes.  
16 CHAIR SALL: Okay. So that's our challenge.  
17 DIRECTOR RAML: And our real focus. I mean, we  
18 did want to do climate change, and so that date was  
19 placeholder for AI Muth because he offered to help us  
20 with that. And in terms of the timing of your meeting  
21 relating to the DRECP, you know, early when we met there  
22 was really an urge of the DAC to be kind of completed --  
23 to complete their work so we were in some ways ready to  
24 move on to the next set of topics. So yeah.  
25 CHAIR SALL: I agree. That's right. We were

Page 164

1 waiting to touch base with AI when he got back from  
2 Africa for which February date for him. So we'll have  
3 to send out probably a decided date or a decision of two  
4 dates once we talk to AI, so we're going to have to  
5 table this one.  
6 DIRECTOR RAML: What have you got, Gerry?  
7 MR. HILLIER: I just wanted to get on the  
8 record that technically you're supposed to have a local  
9 government representative present for your meetings, and  
10 I want to point out that the last weekend in February is  
11 the National Association of Counties Legislative  
12 Conference, and I believe that probably your county  
13 representatives will likely be involved in Washington,  
14 D.C. that weekend. So I just wanted you to be aware of  
15 that potential conflict for what's supposed to be a  
16 required membership attendance.  
17 CHAIR SALL: Right. Thank you.  
18 MEMBER SHTEIR: April, I just wanted to mention  
19 that even if you -- if you look at the spacing between  
20 the February 6th and April 4th, it's still quarterly.  
21 It's still three months, so it would probably be okay.  
22 CHAIR SALL: Sure. Okay. Well, then we will  
23 check in with AI and talk about our climate change  
24 topics and get back to the DAC and then the public  
25 noticing on the February date. So any other date

Page 165

1 changes proposed at this point of dates that did not  
2 work?  
3 Seeing none, we'll move this forward as kind of  
4 our proposed schedule at this point. And Teri will  
5 think about a few of the additions that have been  
6 proposed, and we'll figure out if we can mix some of  
7 those in.  
8 And at this point let's move into our subgroup  
9 reports. And Seth, since you have to leave early, would  
10 you like to start with the Connecting People to the  
11 Desert group report.  
12 (Member Burke left the meeting room.)  
13 MEMBER SHTEIR: I just got a really quick  
14 report. We're scheduling a meeting for January and  
15 talked with Teri, and we're going to be focusing on the  
16 intersection between BLM lands and the arts. And so  
17 planning to have a panel that can talk a little bit  
18 about the arts and artists in residency program and  
19 maybe offer some advice to BLM about setting up such a  
20 program for BLM. So that's it.  
21 And then we're also going to plan -- Steve has  
22 been really great about getting us some BLM materials  
23 each time to review and to provide critical feedback on.  
24 So that's it for me. Thanks.  
25 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Kim, would you like to

Page 166

1 give the SRP Subgroup report.

2 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: I don't have a report. We

3 haven't had a meeting since before the last DAC meeting.

4 And it was cancelled. It was a conflict with the DRECP

5 meeting.

6 But I would like to say I'm about to leave. I

7 need to leave early. Again it has been an honor and

8 privilege to serve on the DAC, and I've enjoyed the

9 friendship of all of you and the support of the public.

10 Ed, Gerry, Steve, Jennifer, Diane, all of you, you've

11 been wonderful, and it's been a wonderful three years.

12 Thank you.

13 (Applause.)

14 DIRECTOR RAML: I want to say publicly what

15 I've said to Kim in public is -- so we've got some

16 people whose terms are ending and are not planning on

17 coming back. And one is Dinah Shumway, and the other is

18 Kim. And both Kim and Dinah have been incredibly active

19 and vocal in the best possible way members of the DAC.

20 They do their work. They do extra work. They have been

21 so critical in terms of just keeping us an active and

22 informed DAC.

23 And they make such an impression on all of us

24 that, when they're not with us, we know what they're

25 going to say. We kind of have an idea, well, if Dinah

Page 167

1 were here we would hear this perspective; if Kim were

2 here, she would offer this perspective. And what I want

3 to assure Kim is her perspective and the way she has

4 spoken up for rockhounds, which has brought a whole

5 new constituency in the DAC, and the fact that she would

6 frequently bring up access issues will stay with us long

7 after. You know, we're going to hold on to that. And

8 you should come back to the meetings and make sure that

9 we do and that that voice continues to be heard. And I

10 feel the same way about Dinah.

11 So, Kim, you've been a tremendous member. And

12 I'm sorry you are so pressed for time, but thank you so

13 much for your service to the BLM.

14 (Applause.)

15 (Members Shteir, Barrett and Erb-Campbell

16 left the meeting room.)

17 CHAIR SALL: Kim, thank you again for your

18 service on the DAC.

19 MEMBER CAMPELL-ERB: I do take it, or I don't?

20 Leave it?

21 DIRECTOR RAML: Let her take it. You can take

22 it.

23 CHAIR SALL: Thank you, Kim, and safe travels.

24 And we really enjoyed having you.

25 For the ISDRA Subgroup report, Tom has agreed

Page 168

1 to give us a little update.

2 MR. ZALE: Thank you. So our subgroup will

3 meet again on the 11th of December. We meet from nine

4 to 12 in the El Centro Field Office. We're always

5 hopeful for DAC member participants. We'd love to see

6 your smiling face, any of you, so please join us.

7 We'll be talking about implementation of the

8 new closures protecting Peirson's Milk-Vetch Critical

9 Habitat and our program of education outreach and

10 enforcement with respect to those closures. One thing

11 we'll talk about is, if you have a smart phone, we'll

12 talk about an app called Avenza PDF Maps. It's a free

13 app. You can download that app and through that app

14 download a map that shows the closures. Your smart

15 phone will work even without a cell signal in the dunes

16 with this georeference map so that you can tell where

17 you are on your phone relative to the closure

18 boundaries.

19 Speaking of smart phones, if you have a

20 Facebook account, get in there and like us. Imperial

21 Sand Dunes' Facebook page is 19 short of 5,000 likes.

22 So like us.

23 CHAIR SALL: Wow. Would you give us the date

24 one more time of the next meeting.

25 MR. ZALE: Yeah. So it's December 11th in our

Page 169

1 office in El Centro from nine to 12.

2 CHAIR SALL: Great. Thank you, Tom.

3 MR. ZALE: Thank you.

4 CHAIR SALL: Randy?

5 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: I'd like to encourage April

6 to maybe consult with a Supervisor Castillo and see if

7 we can't encourage him to participate on the ISDRA

8 Subgroup as the DAC's representative, where we've been

9 lacking that nexus to the ISDRA Subgroup, the formal

10 nexus for a while. We've been very, very fortunate to

11 have former DAC chairman Tom Acuna serve as chair of

12 that subgroup, but it would be great to have one of our

13 current members participating.

14 And I don't mean to cry, but we don't have many

15 DAC members that live in the far southern region to be

16 able to regularly participate, and perhaps the

17 supervisor might find that more convenient for his

18 travel than us. So we'd love to have that.

19 CHAIR SALL: Good suggestion. Thank you.

20 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: And before I launch into

21 Dumont Dunes' comment, I think there's somewhat of a

22 nexus to the BLM's Discover the Desert website. I'm

23 trying to get to it here, get to the URL, yeah. I

24 encourage everybody, especially our DAC members, if you

25 haven't done it yet, go to the BLM web page, and click

Page 170

1 on the link right on the home page that says "Discover  
 2 the Desert," and it's a really neat website that the BLM  
 3 has put together to help further its efforts to connect  
 4 people with the desert, and it has a really neat GIS  
 5 mapping component to it that's linked in with  
 6 information about places to go in the desert, what to do  
 7 in the desert. And it's a great variety of places and  
 8 things to see but not only a variety necessarily in  
 9 geography or landscape but also a variety in the  
 10 emphasis of what that area is used for, for filming or  
 11 for arts or for OHV recreation, for hiking and so forth.

12 So please take a look at this "Discover the  
 13 Desert" website. I think it's very, very well done, and  
 14 I'm quite proud of the GIS effort. It is most  
 15 impressive. Thank you.

16 With that, if you don't mind, the Dumont Dunes  
 17 Subgroup met last week in Barstow. We had one formal  
 18 recommendation to the Desert Advisory Council, and it's  
 19 with regard to the DRECP. The subgroup voted to  
 20 recommend that the DAC include among its comments on  
 21 DRECP that it recommends that access roads to OHV open  
 22 areas that are -- that have an overlapping SRMA, Special  
 23 Recreation Management Area, that that SRMA also include  
 24 the access road.

25 What I mean by that is, if you look at the

Page 171

1 DRECP closely and you look at the Special Recreation  
 2 Management Areas that are being proposed, some of those  
 3 SRMA's essentially overlap the exact boundaries of some  
 4 of the OHV open areas. And that's good. It provides  
 5 additional guidance to the BLM for managing that area  
 6 with an emphasis on recreation, but we feel that the  
 7 SRMA should be expanded to include the access road to  
 8 also protect the necessity of the access roads with  
 9 regard to accessing that recreational component that the  
 10 SRMA is trying to protect.

11 And there are two such OHV areas that have  
 12 overlapping SRMA's that come to mind. One is Dumont,  
 13 obviously, so this comes from the subgroup. And the  
 14 second would be Rasor OHV area. It is another that has  
 15 a long access roads. Generally the other OHV areas can  
 16 be reached from a highway or don't involve a long road  
 17 in. But we should look at that and see if that's  
 18 something.

19 So I do want to -- I bring this up not only  
 20 because the subgroup voted this recommendation to us and  
 21 we should consider it, but I also bring it up because  
 22 I'm proud of the subgroup for having taken on a piece of  
 23 the DRECP. Thanks to Katrina's help we broke open the  
 24 Dumont Dunes Special Recreation Management Area  
 25 worksheet from the DRECP, and we reviewed it closely and

Page 172

1 had questions and answers. And so I'm very proud of the  
 2 group for tackling that issue. And perhaps some of the  
 3 other recreation subgroups can look at their overlapping  
 4 to see if there is something in the DRECP that they  
 5 would like to advise us on as well. So thank you, and  
 6 we also set our meeting schedule for next year, and  
 7 we're looking forward to continuing to trudge along.

8 A last point that was brought up is that the  
 9 Friends of Dumont Dunes is undergoing a leadership  
 10 transfer, and this is an opportunity for the Friends of  
 11 Dumont Dunes and Katrina and the BLM Barstow Field  
 12 Office to connect and set a new course for cooperative  
 13 work together in the dunes and find a strategy for how  
 14 the friends-of group can best serve the shared goals  
 15 that we have of managing Dumont Dunes for off-highway  
 16 vehicle recreation. So thank you, Katrina, for being  
 17 open for that. Thanks.

18 CHAIR SALL: Thank you, Randy. Do we have any  
 19 council questions or comments on the various reports,  
 20 subgroup and district manager and field office reports?

21 MEMBER HOUSTON: I do.

22 CHAIR SALL: Don.

23 MEMBER HOUSTON: Just two questions, one for  
 24 Katrina and one for Mike. This is easy.

25 CHAIR SALL: Go for it.

Page 173

1 MEMBER HOUSTON: This pertains to the Silurian  
 2 project. There was a variance determination made by  
 3 State Director Kenna.

4 MS. SYMONS: Correct.

5 MEMBER HOUSTON: Is that available publicly,  
 6 that variance determination? I can just Google it, and  
 7 I can find it on the web?

8 MS. SYMONS: Yes, it is. It's on the web.

9 MEMBER HOUSTON: Okay. That's all.

10 MS. SYMONS: Yeah. So what you need to do is,  
 11 you need to go to the Barstow web page. And underneath  
 12 the spotlight section -- it's in the right-hand side of  
 13 that web page -- it will say "Silurian." Just click on  
 14 that, and you get the documents.

15 MEMBER HOUSTON: Great. Thank you.

16 Mike, the last section of the field office  
 17 report had what was called "Benchmarking Achievements,"  
 18 I believe, and there were bullet points. One of those  
 19 bullet points was -- I'm paraphrasing here -- a USGS  
 20 proposed common gardens study that is going to provide  
 21 guidance for future restoration projects.

22 MR. AHRENS: That is correct.

23 MEMBER HOUSTON: Sometimes I am responsible for  
 24 restoration projects in the desert, so if there's some  
 25 new guidance coming out, I certainly want to get a copy

Page 174

1 of it.

2 MR. AHRENS: I think not at this point. My

3 understanding is this is one of the -- this is the

4 proposal I'm the weakest on. Apparently it's a research

5 proposal to establish a garden, if you will, of native

6 plants from various regions, as I'm understanding it,

7 and use that as a tool to understanding how plants come

8 together and grow and make them available.

9 MEMBER HOUSTON: That's something I would like

10 to track.

11 MR. AHRENS: As it comes along, I will keep you

12 informed of that.

13 MEMBER HOUSTON: Okay. Thanks.

14 MR. AHRENS: You're welcome.

15 CHAIR SALL: Bob?

16 MEMBER BURKE: I appreciate all the reports. I

17 especially appreciate that Barstow and the Ridgecrest

18 seem to be very, very detailed reports, and it was easy

19 to understand. So thank you. It was a great report,

20 both of you. I know you did the work, but --

21 CHAIR SALL: Mark?

22 MEMBER ALGAZY: Would this be the appropriate

23 time to talk about the CAPA?

24 CHAIR SALL: Yes.

25 MEMBER ALGAZY: It was the cluing in on the

Page 175

1 Ridgecrest field report to the progress in two of the

2 mining projects within the resource area on Ridgecrest

3 that reminded me once again that there has been no sort

4 of consultation with the community that was anticipated

5 with the CAPA process.

6 And for those of you that aren't familiar with

7 the CAPA process, the CDD and all the plans for the

8 California desert have been developing slowly in bits

9 and spurts since 1980, and the West Mojave Plan is the

10 last. That's often the case in life that we put off the

11 hardest things for last. And so the WEMO seems to be

12 the last one out of the gate, so to speak. And

13 obviously one of the reasons for that is, it's the most

14 contentious and still tied up in litigation to this day.

15 And one of the core problems within the

16 West Mojave is the El Paso Mountains in and Ridgecrest

17 area, which were subject to a lot of public outcry about

18 how those areas were going to be managed. And in the

19 2000 the BLM made a commitment to the local citizens

20 that those two years in the El Paso Mountains and

21 immediate adjacent areas to Ridgecrest would be handled

22 through a collaborative process known to the local

23 people as the CAPA.

24 And from 2000 to this day virtually nothing has

25 been done to move the CAPA process forward. And it

Page 176

1 actually became a minor stumbling block in the WEMO

2 litigation, reminding the judge in the lawsuit that

3 there had been no final determination of that in those

4 particular areas because of the CAPA so that there

5 couldn't have been any mistakes made because there had

6 been no formal designations made. So we're still

7 looking as the locally interested parties to get some

8 sort of commitment from the BLM to finally move this

9 process forward.

10 And, as I say, there are mining applications

11 that are still being submitted, and those mining

12 interests are affecting the routes of travel in those

13 areas, which makes it appropriate to have some community

14 involvement. And that's the context in which I'm

15 addressing my question to Carl.

16 MR. SYMONS: Okay. First of all, as you said,

17 the CAPA was part of the original WEMO decision. And,

18 you know, I'm not going to speculate before I got here

19 as to why or why not. I could speculate to all sorts of

20 stuff, but to suffice that the CAPA didn't go forward.

21 Right now the CAPA process, as I've explained

22 in some of our open WEMO meetings, is -- the CAPA

23 process, it's another planning process. It's a guiding

24 plan for how we're going to handle projects within those

25 areas. That plan is going to have to be -- the

Page 177

1 sideboards for that are going to be determined by WEMO

2 and DRECP. That will set the sideboards of what I will

3 be able to do within the CAPA plan.

4 Now, as far as going forward for individual

5 project, it's not an individual project per se plan.

6 Like I said, it's an overall plan, just as DRECP doesn't

7 address individual project. It's an overall plan. And

8 the WEMO has got an overall structure and containment.

9 So the CAPA process will bear down even more so where we

10 can determine areas of what type of activities that we

11 want in there. But until that's in place, I still have

12 to go and evaluate proposals on any particular projects

13 that go forward.

14 I can't tell people we're not going to process

15 it, we're not going to analyze your project because I

16 want to wait until I do another plan. There are certain

17 mandatory rights that go with that. But that doesn't

18 mean there isn't the public process. The mining

19 projects -- if and when mining projects are proposed,

20 those will go through the NEPA process, the exploratory

21 process such as the Dragon Fly drilling project, the

22 Conglomerate Mesa, those will all go through the public

23 processes and will go through public involvement and the

24 process of NEPA for each individual project, as they

25 will, even after CAPA.

Page 178

1 If we have CAPA, any project will go forward.  
2 That wouldn't exempt me from going through the whole  
3 process for each project again because the CAPA wouldn't  
4 exclude me from doing that on particular project.  
5 So to make it short is that the actual planning  
6 document, we don't have the sideboards to go forward  
7 with that planning document until the others are set,  
8 because that's what's going to give me the parameters.  
9 If I go into a CAPA process now and I go outside of  
10 those sideboards, it's going to negate the CAPA process.  
11 So I could say that I don't have staff, and that's all  
12 well and good and doing stuff, but the fact of the  
13 matter is, there's still that obligation to do it, and  
14 it's not that reason that we won't go forward  
15 necessarily right now but because we didn't get those  
16 sideboards in place so that I know what my decision's  
17 base is and where we can go with the discussions in  
18 order to make it a meaningful plan and not have it  
19 negated by plans that are in the --  
20 Does that make sense?  
21 MEMBER ALGAZY: I understand what you're  
22 saying. I don't necessarily agree with your  
23 conclusions. I believe that, number one, this problem  
24 is another can that's just being kicked down the road.  
25 We could have the CAPA process on the table today that

Page 179

1 would actually establish precedent for the area and then  
2 become integrated into WEMO, integrated into DRECP.  
3 It's a question of which came first, the  
4 chicken or the egg? And the CAPA in my opinion provides  
5 an opportunity to set a high watermark for collaboration  
6 between the BLM and the public and serve as an example  
7 that could be used in other parts of the WEMO and could  
8 be used in the DRECP.  
9 And I've offered my services in that regard to  
10 help establish a higher watermark for cooperation  
11 between the public and the agency, so it's not a matter  
12 of figuring out what the lowest common denominator is  
13 based on what comes up with WEMO and DRECP when there's  
14 definitely an opportunity to set a much higher mark.  
15 MR. SYMONS: I recognize and acknowledge your  
16 position. But, like I said, as a decision-maker, what  
17 I'm looking at is -- that's just where I come from, is  
18 that I'm involved in two planning processes that for me  
19 is going to set the sideboards for all future  
20 activities, at least until the plans are altered or  
21 amended as we go forward. And from my experience and my  
22 going forward, to have those sideboards is the most  
23 efficient way for me to go forward. You know,  
24 everybody, I recognize, could have different positions,  
25 different philosophies, but that's where I come from.

Page 180

1 MEMBER ALGAZY: The only thing is that CAPA  
2 doesn't need to hit the ground running as a fully  
3 fleshed-out plan. You're really smart with the idea  
4 that the public expects the decisions that are made for  
5 those areas just to be a little bit more public so that  
6 either can trickle down. Mining projects are going to  
7 have some public meetings. So it's a matter of raising  
8 a very small bar in terms of NEPA to just put a little  
9 bit more information out there.  
10 I don't think ultimately that anybody expects  
11 the land use decisions to be different. They just  
12 expect a little bit more opportunity for engagement than  
13 what's involved in the current BLM paradigm, because the  
14 FONSI doesn't really require any public involvement, and  
15 it pretty much precludes anything along the lines of  
16 what CAPA had in mind.  
17 CHAIR SALL: All right. Thank you. Any other  
18 DAC member questions? Then I've got some for John.  
19 MR. KALISH: Hello.  
20 CHAIRPERSON SALL: Hi. Thank you. I was  
21 looking at the Palm Springs report and had some  
22 questions about the riparian restoration. It says that  
23 you guys are able to treat about 250 acres annually of  
24 riparian restoration, including species removal from  
25 things like salt cedar. And I'm wondering, is that work

Page 181

1 still a pretty consistent number of 250 acres each year,  
2 even given the workload, for example, of this current  
3 year?  
4 MR. KALISH: Given the Dos Palmas project, much  
5 of that is centered in Dos Palmas. In years past we've  
6 had Fuels money, and that Fuels money went into doing  
7 tamarisk and other exotic species eradication efforts,  
8 Mission Creek, Whitewater, the Tributary Canyons all up  
9 into the National Monument. Some of those projects have  
10 diminished just because of the diminishing Fuels  
11 funding. But overall from a standpoint of efforts  
12 within the Dos Palmas Preserve and to some degree also  
13 within Big Morongo Canyon Preserve, under those, that  
14 acreage is accurate.  
15 CHAIR SALL: Great. And then on the wind, your  
16 update on the wind energy, you mention the 21 existing  
17 rights-of-way grants. Could I get some sort of  
18 spreadsheet on the lifespan, the active sort of lifespan  
19 left of each of those right-of-way applications.  
20 MR. KALISH: We do have those records readily  
21 available.  
22 CHAIR SALL: Okay.  
23 MR. KALISH: So we do have a spreadsheet, along  
24 with a map that shows the location of each one of the  
25 leases. So certainly that would be available, and I can

Page 182

1 send that out.

2 CHAIR SALL: Great. Thank you. And one quick

3 question for Katrina. On the Soda Mountain project

4 update, which has been, as you well know, another fairly

5 controversial project, has there been any additional

6 update on the EIR/EIS release?

7 MS. SYMONS: We're looking at the end of

8 January or into early February. That's the best

9 projection right now.

10 CHAIR SALL: Okay. Great. Thank you. Randy?

11 VICE-CHAIR BANIS: I just want to acknowledge

12 the El Centro Field Office's use of georeference maps

13 for mobile devices and want to encourage, if it's not

14 too late and it's still an opportunity to do so, to

15 encourage the West Mojave WEMO planning team to adopt

16 georeference maps for the field maps or the maps that

17 are released in the draft document so that users can use

18 that same application, PDF maps, and be able to field

19 check the routes in that manner. It would be very

20 helpful to them. So kudos, and thank you. That's it.

21 Thank you.

22 CHAIR SALL: Great. Thank you. All right. We

23 are all wrapped up for the DAC comments and questions.

24 I'm going to move into public comments and questions on

25 the field reports. The first speaker is John Stewart.

Page 183

1 Gone. All right. Ed Waldheim, you're up.

2 MR. WALDHEIM: Thank you very much. Two

3 topics. Ed Waldheim. Two topics to add for the

4 consideration of the DAC is funding. I think you don't

5 talk about funding. Where is the money coming from?

6 How we are going to do the things that we do?

7 And I think part of that the OHV program,

8 somebody should come from the division and talk to us

9 about what the OHV program is. We have the workshops

10 coming up. The first and second weekend of January we

11 start all over again.

12 And the other topic would be law enforcement.

13 I think we need to hear from the law enforcement people

14 the challenges and issues they are faced with. I don't

15 recall us ever really having somebody give us a report

16 on law enforcement efforts in the desert and the

17 programs.

18 Okay. Going over the reports. I always love

19 this the most. I started with the last first and the

20 best to the last. Palm Springs. They only brought in

21 one OHV stuff in there, and it was really sad to see.

22 We fought very hard for Dry Lake to keep it as an OHV

23 area, and darn it if they don't turn it into another

24 renewable resource project. Unbelievable. They

25 wouldn't let us have it, but they turned it into a

Page 184

1 renewable resource project.

2 Needles office mentioned us only once in the

3 report. That's all I have on that. Barstow BLM office

4 moved up.

5 MS. SYMONS: I was last last time, Ed so where

6 else did I have to go?

7 MR. WALDHEIM: You get two points on this one

8 here, and I got to brag. Friends of El Mirage, the work

9 that those folks have done. In November we sold \$53,000

10 worth of passes in November alone. The lake bed, we're

11 working like crazy on trying to get that under

12 condition. The staff keeps a visitor center open 365

13 days a week and we're continuing working on the fence

14 that was stolen three years ago. That's an addition I

15 want to put in there.

16 Ridgecrest came in number two. Three times

17 they mentioned the OHV program, and I am I sure

18 appreciate that and everything that we're doing out

19 there. And El Centro gets the number from me because --

20 it's actually Ridgecrest and El Centro were both the

21 same ranking. However El Centro did an incredible job,

22 and they put pictures in there.

23 (Applause.)

24 MR. WALDHEIM: So it's probably Neil Hamada who

25 did that. So it's a beautiful fast-captioned way of

Page 185

1 showing what's going on out there. Especially with all

2 the dumpsters and the stuff we do, I would love to see

3 more pictures so we really could say the story of what's

4 happening. Thanks.

5 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. Last public comment

6 from Sophia Merk.

7 MS. MERK: Everybody is so tall. Sophia Merk.

8 I just wanted to bring up a couple interesting facts.

9 The Desert Plan, when it was originally, it was funded.

10 The implementation was not. The WEMO plan was funded.

11 Then the implementation really was not until the

12 lawsuits started. Then it got funded.

13 The DRECP plan, everybody is working hard on

14 it. That part of it is funded. The implementation part

15 of it is unfunded. And little-known CAPA, which was

16 promised to the people in Ridgecrest, is unfunded. And

17 I guess we do kick the can down the road some more.

18 CHAIR SALL: Thank you. At this point we are

19 at the wrap-up and summary and sort of next meeting

20 discussion. So if there are any other DAC comments on

21 this, we addressed some of this in your work plan

22 discussion.

23 Nothing else? Okay. Well, then at this point

24 I would like to adjourn. Thank you all for attending

25 and for bearing with us today. And thank you again to

1 the BLM for all your work and for hosting us. I  
2 appreciate it.

3 (Applause.)

4  
5 (The meeting was adjourned at 3:32 p.m.)

6  
7 ---o0o---

8  
9  
10  
11  
12  
13  
14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

1 CERTIFICATE

2  
3  
4 I, Diane Carver Mann, C.S.R. No. 6008, in and  
5 for the State of California, do hereby certify:

6 That the foregoing \_\_\_\_-pages were taken down by me  
7 in shorthand at the time and place stated herein and  
8 represent a true and correct transcript of said  
9 proceedings.

10 I further certify that I am not interested in  
11 the event of the action.

12 Witness my hand this \_\_\_\_\_ day of

13 \_\_\_\_\_, 20\_\_\_\_.

14  
15  
16  
17  
18  
19  
20  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25

\_\_\_\_\_  
Certified Shorthand  
Reporter in and for the  
State of California

1 MOTIONS

2  
3 A. Maker: Burke  
4 Seconder: Barrett  
5 Motion: To approve transcript from the  
6 September meeting  
7 Result: Carried

8 B. Maker: Banis  
9 Seconder: Shteir  
10 Motion: To accept the agenda  
11 Result: Carried

12 C. Maker: Banis  
13 Seconder: Shteir  
14 Motion: To support listing of  
15 Patton Camps in the National Registry  
16 Result: Tabled

17 D. Maker: Banis  
18 Seconder: Sall  
19 Motion: To accept the retitled interim  
20 report of the DRECP Subcommittee and  
21 direct the committee to continue its  
22 work  
23 Result: Carried  
24  
25