

Bureau of Land Management
Quarterly Report
September 30, 2015

1. Route Monitoring and Compliance

a. Monitoring Compliance with Route Closures at a Statistically Significant Level – Update from June 2015 Quarterly Report

Pursuant to the Protocol Monitoring Plan, for Year 2 of the first 3-year monitoring cycle, commencing August 2014, BLM completed field inspection and data recordation on 117.43 miles of field sample routes, and 51.68 miles of aerial photo sample routes. Over the first two years of the 3-year monitoring cycle, BLM has completed field inspection and data recordation on a total of 231.58 miles of field sample routes out of the 333.5 miles in the field review sample set, and 106.69 miles of the aerial sample routes out of the 150 miles in the aerial review sample set.

A monitoring status memorandum for Year 2 of the first 3-year monitoring cycle is attached to this quarterly report (Attachment 1 -- Year 2 Monitoring Status Memo; Attachment 2 -- Year 2 Protocol Monitoring Map). The memo identifies which routes were monitored in the field and which routes were monitored via aerial photos, and includes a map of the routes that were monitored (color-coded for field versus aerial photo monitoring). The memo states when monitoring occurred, identifies issues encountered, and states that no deviation and/or changes in the protocol or variables were required. In accordance with Section 4.1 of the Protocol Monitoring Plan, no statistical or other analyses were conducted for Year 2 of the first 3-year monitoring cycle.

b. Summary of Monitoring/Enforcement Effort – Update from June 2015 Quarterly Report

BLM law enforcement (LE) Rangers conducted 411 compliance checks (*e.g.*, wilderness, Area of Critical Environmental Concern, cultural sites) and 80 enforcement contacts within the West Mojave planning area. Of these 80 enforcement contacts, 28 pertained directly to off-route (43 CFR 8341.1(b)), closed area (43 CFR 8341.1(c), CA VC 38301(b)), wilderness (43 CFR 6302.20(d)), National Scenic Trail (43 CFR 8351.1-1(a)), or other motor vehicle violations. Written reports were prepared for some of these violations as part of the Incident Management and Response System (IMARS) in support of pending investigations. Table 1 provides an overview of LE actions by patrol sector within the West Mojave planning area.

Table 1. Overview Of Law Enforcement Actions By Patrol Sector Within The West Mojave Planning Area Since June 2015 Quarterly Report

Patrol Sector	Compliance Checks	Federal Violation Notice	State/Local Citation	Written Warning	Written Report Filed
<i>Barstow</i>					
81	79	0	0	3	15
82	38	1	0	10	0
83	120	1	0	7	22
84	0	6	0	1	0
85	3	0	0	0	0
86	13	0	0	2	0
<i>Ridgecrest</i>					
1	4	0	0	0	0
2	0	0	0	0	0
3	16	1	0	1	0
4	35	0	0	0	1
5	35	0	0	3	0
6	32	0	0	2	2
7	7	0	0	0	0
<i>Needles</i>					
92	7	0	0	0	0
<i>Palm Springs</i>					
2	22	0	0	0	2
TOTAL	411	9	0	29	42

c. Maintenance and Restoration Actions – Update from June 2015 Quarterly Report

Heavy equipment route maintenance and repair was performed in the Red Mountain and Stoddard Valley Subregion to address storm damage, improve drainage and or improve access for the public.



Before



After

Limited Use Area signs were replaced in the Sierra, Darwin, North Searless, and South Searless Subregions.

Public safety issues were remediated (*e.g.*, fence installed) at numerous abandoned mine shafts located in the Red Mountain, South Searles, Rand Mountain and Stoddard Valley Subregions.



Before



After

BLM hosted two meetings of the Juniper Flats Working Group. This working group is comprised of 26 people, including representatives from the Friends of Juniper Flats and District 37 (motorcycle club). The Juniper Flats Working Group will provide assistance to BLM in the restoration of numerous sites in the Juniper Flats Subregion, and assist in education outreach and monitoring in the area. Meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month. The first two meetings resulted in the formation of three sub-groups: Education, Restoration, and Volunteers/Events. The Education sub-group has identified target audiences and resources for development; the Volunteer sub-group has planned a clean-up day on November 14, 2015 in specified areas to be restored; and the Restoration sub-group is in the process of identifying locations for installation of additional kiosks within the Juniper Flats Subregion.

2. Kiosks – Update from June 2015 Quarterly Report

BLM continued to perform regular and ongoing maintenance of the information kiosks in the Sierra, Darwin, North Searless, South Searless, Calico Mountains, Rattlesnake Canyon, and Johnson Valley Subregions during this last quarter. These efforts included the replacement of Subregion maps, posting of notices, painting, plexiglass replacement, and other structural repairs as needed.

3. Proper Functioning Condition – Seeps and Springs – Update from June 2015 Quarterly Report

Three Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) assessments were completed within the WEMO planning area since the June 2015 Quarterly Report. Table 2 shows the results of the PFC assessments.

Table 2. Proper Functioning Condition (PFC) Assessments Conducted Within the WEMO Planning Area Since June 2015 Quarterly Report				
WEMO Subregion	Unique Identifier and/or Name	Date	Finding	Notes
Newberry-Rodman	BAR15-05 Kane Spring	2015	Functioning At Risk- Stable	Developed water source for livestock/wildlife
Newberry-Rodman	BAR15-06 Sheep Spring	2015	PFC	No surface water
Morongo Valley	Pipes Canyon Preserve Springs	2015	Functioning At Risk- Upward Trend	Upper watershed was burned by wildfire and there is evidence that water was being diverted from the spring source by piping.

4. Status of Planning – Update from June 2015 Quarterly Report

BLM continued to work with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO), the Advisory Council on Historic Preservation (ACHP), Tribes, and other consulting parties on the development of the National Historic Preservation Act Section 106 Programmatic Agreement (PA). Between June and August 2015, BLM hosted two consulting party meetings. At the August 13, 2015 meeting, BLM requested consulting parties provide red-flag issue comments to the PA prior to it being finalized for signature. On September 3, the Final PA was circulated to consulting parties, with a request that those who wish to sign as concurring parties return signatures to BLM by September 25, 2015. The BLM, SHPO and ACHP will meet on September 30, 2015 in Sacramento to sign the PA.

To date, cultural resource inventory crews have surveyed 5,514 acres (159 miles) of previously unsurveyed routes and identified 439 occurrences of cultural resources, including 303 archaeological sites and 149 isolated artifacts. The crew continues to finalize paperwork and prepare for additional field work using the results of the first run of the Archaeological Sensitivity Model.

The public comment period for the West Mojave Route Network Project Draft Land Use Plan Amendment/Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement was reopened on September 25, 2015 for an additional 120-day period (Federal Register Notice: 2015-24437). Written comments must be received by the BLM on or before January 25, 2016.

5. Chronology of Management Actions – Update from June 2015 Quarterly Report

June 22, 2015: BLM transmitted by certified letter the final working draft of the Section 106 Agreement and invited the consulting parties to attend a Section 106 consulting party meeting for the final Agreement.

July 27, 2015: Consulting party meeting held in Ridgecrest, CA to review the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement.

July 27, 2015: Plaintiffs and BLM filed a Joint Motion for Modification and Enlargement of Schedule for Completing the WEMO Plan Revision.

August 10, 2015: Court granted the motion and ordered: (1) the reopening of the public comment period on the West Mojave Route Network Project Draft Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS) for 120-days, commencing at a date certain in September 2015; (2) publication of the Notice of Availability (NOA) of the Final SEIS and proposed travel management plans (TMP) by April 29, 2016; (3) publication of the Record of Decision (ROD) for the WEMO Plan Revision and the TMP RODs by November 30, 2016. The Court further provided that, if the NOA of the Final Environmental Impact Statement for the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP) is delayed beyond November 30, 2015, or if the DRECP ROD is delayed beyond February 29, 2016, BLM may seek additional time and present a proposed schedule for completing the WEMO Plan Revision to Plaintiffs and the Court within 60 days of notification of such delay. Finally, the Court ordered that BLM shall provide quarterly updates on the BLM's California Desert District website regarding planning process, and shall keep the Court and the parties apprised of the status of the planning process in its quarterly reports filed with the Court.

August 11, 2015: NOA package forwarded to the California State Office to reopen the comment period on the West Mojave Route Network Project Draft Land Use Plan Amendment (LUPA)/SEIS.

August 13, 2015: Consulting party conference call and WebEx to review the changes to the final draft of the Section 106 Programmatic Agreement.

September 3, 2015: BLM transmitted by certified letter the Final Section 106 Programmatic Agreement with all appendices and signature pages to the consulting parties, requesting those who wish to sign as concurring parties to provide signed pages to the BLM by September 25, 2015.

September 12, 2015: BLM briefed the California Desert Advisory Council on the reopening of the public comment period for the West Mojave Route Network Project Draft LUPA/SEIS.

September 25, 2015: Federal Register Notice: 2015-24437 reopened the public comment period for the West Mojave Route Network Project Draft LUPA/SEIS for 120-days. Written comments must be received by the BLM on or before January 25, 2016.

September 28, 2015: BLM held an interagency coordination meeting with Department of Defense (DoD), Fort Irwin National Training Center on the West Mojave Route Network Project and recent DoD acquisitions.