

Dumont Dunes TRT  
MINUTES OF MEETING  
July 18, 2006

The Desert Discovery Center  
831 Barstow Road  
Barstow, CA 92311  
(760) 252-6060

1. Call to Order

TRT Chairman Bill Presch called the meeting to order at 10:15 am.

A. Introductions

Members of the TRT and participating BLM staff introduced themselves:

TRT Members Present:

Dr. William Presch, member, California Desert District Advisory Council  
David Charlton, member, California Desert District Advisory Council  
Kathleen Stosuy, California OHV interests  
Gerry Hillier, San Bernardino County  
Ed Waldheim, California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Commission  
John Dagleish, Friends of Dumont Dunes  
Randy Banis, other motorized recreation

BLM Staff Present:

Roxie Trost, Manager, Barstow Field Office  
Mike Ahrens, Off Highway Vehicle Coordinator, Barstow Field Office  
Brad Mastin, Outdoor Recreation Planner, Barstow Field Office

TRT Members Absent:

Terry Allen, Nevada off-highway vehicle (OHV) interests  
Jim Bramham, OHV organizations  
Sheri Davis, commercial filming, member, California Desert District Advisory Council  
Ron Schiller, member, California Desert District Advisory Council

B. Agenda

Bill Presch opened the agenda to additions or changes. Roxie Trost requested the addition of two topics: Fee Structure, and TRT Logistics. John Dagleish requested a discussion about holding a weekend meeting.

C. Minutes

Randy Banis circulated copies of draft minutes for the TRT's May 16, 2006 meeting. John Dagleish clarified that the TRT subcommittee on Supplemental Rules met electronically. Randy and Roxie Trost clarified budget discussions regarding reported labor costs. The minutes were unanimously approved with corrections.

### 1. Old Business

#### A. Dunes Etiquette Campaign Update

John Dalglish reported that Friends of Dumont Dunes (FODD) may have found some funds and a possible printing source, and that perhaps the campaign could launch in October. He also reminded Randy Banis of his earlier offer to assist with fundraising. Ed Waldheim suggested that fee collection vendor be contacted about distributing the flyers, and that they should be submitted in time for BLM to review.

Bill Presch recapped the discussion from the previous meeting, and putting the flyer into the larger context of a visitor education campaign. Roxie Trost and Ed Waldheim discussed permitting the FODD to sell merchandise, i.e. the checkered flags. John Dalglish cautioned the TRT on the difficulties of regular volunteer staffing. Roxie Trost suggested purchasing banners to better identify the information areas.

The group discussed funding the education campaign from user fees. Roxie Trost suggested that partnerships might be most beneficial. John Dalglish suggested that a fee funded education campaign might help show that users are getting something for their fees.

Gerry Hillier cautioned that a fee funded brochure alone might be ineffective, and suggested visitor contact as a campaign component. John Dalglish suggested a series of "Burma Shave" style signs along the entrance road. Mike Ahrens cautioned against putting stock in any one thing, and offered that a multi-approach would be most successful. Roxie Trost pointed out that a brochure could help law enforcement by placing the rules in the possession of more visitors.

John Dalglish suggested that the brochure include a map of the dunes area, key points of interest, i.e. North Pole, restrooms, T&T bed, etc. Gerry Hillier agreed, supporting the concept of providing useful information in conjunction with the educational components of the campaign. He added that just providing a list of do's and don't's won't be enough.

Ed Waldheim and Mike Ahrens summarized the discussion. Bill Presch thanked the FODD Board of Directors and its members for their help. Ed closed by suggesting the need for BLM to enter into a memorandum of understanding with the FODD in order to open California RTP grant possibilities.

### 3. New Business

#### A. Report on Mojave Fringe-toed Lizard meeting

Roxie Trost and Bill Presch reported on a multi-agency meeting to share information on the Mojave Fringe-toed Lizard relative to a recent application for Dumont Dunes and neighboring sites to be declared critical habitat for the species.

When the application's study was discussed at the previous TRT meeting it was unpublished, but it possible that it will be published in the fall. The study may have

undergone substantial changes. The USFW might not meet the 90-day deadline for initial review.

Bill Presch emphasized the importance of the current data collection effort continuing, and suggested options for further studies.

#### B. Effects of H.R. 5149 on Dumont Dunes

Randy Banis briefed the TRT on the origin and status of H.R. 5149, which contains a provision that would grant Wild and Scenic River designations for portions of the Amargosa River.

Brad Mastin was engaged by the TRT in a detailed discussion of possible effect of the legislation on Dumont Dunes. The key concerns of the TRT was protecting the Sperry Wash OHV corridor, and preserving the opportunity to improve the crossing for the Dumont Dunes entrance road.

Although some members of the TRT found the segment boundary language confusion relative to the Sperry Wash OHV corridor, Brad recounted support from the bill's author that it remain fully intact due to its outstanding recreational features.

The TRT noted that two river crossings near Tecopa were excluded from the designated segments, and several members expressed support for seeking a similar exclusion for the crossing at Dumont Dunes.

Randy Banis moved that the TRT attempt to gain an amendment to H.R. 5149 relative to the Sperry Wash OHV corridor and the river crossing at Dumont Dunes. Following a brief discussion the TRT collectively concluded that their advisory capacity was focused toward the BLM, and that such a motion might not be within the scope of the TRT. Randy withdrew the motion.

Randy concluded in describing his frustration as a constituent of the bill's author, Congressman McKeon, over the lack of response to the multiple inquiries to his office about the bill.

#### C. Operations Center Project Proposal

Mike Ahrens explained a Barstow BLM proposal for a Operations Center at Dumont Dunes that was recently approved for funding at the Washington level. Mike reviewed a map and described the components of the center.

John Dalglish reported the concerns of users that the current operations center area was not welcoming. John suggested splitting the Visitor Contact Station component from the core of the main Operations Center, and that the camp host should not be among law enforcement. John also questioned where visitor parking would be located.

Gerry Hillier suggested moving the kiosk and Visitor Contact Station to outside the fence line. Bill Presch suggested re-arranging stations & parking, recognizing the necessity of the helipad being on flat land. Kathy Stousy suggested that the Visitor Center face south and offered that visitors aren't likely going to stop on the way in, but rather after they have parked and set up their campsites. Roxie Trost suggested moving the actual visitor contact functions to tables and EZ-Up's outside the trailer to encourage greater visitation.

Randy Banis asked about the on-going funding and personnel issues of complying with the Interagency Helicopter Operations Guide (IHOG). Staff did not have that information.

John Dagleish asked what the time line would be for the project, to which Roxie Trost replied it would be during Fiscal Year 2008.

Randy Banis cautioned against confusing visitors into thinking that the complex was built out of user fees, and offered that this misperception would cause further resentment toward paying the fee. Randy suggested the possibility of signs explaining how the complex is funded. Randy asked and received confirmation that fee money will be used to pay for ongoing operations and maintenance of the complex.

Members discussed what language would be most appropriate for signs. John Dagleish suggested developing a simple pie chart showing how fee money is used. Members also discussed possible improvements to the fee collection area.

Roxie Trost, answering a question by Randy Banis reported the estimated cost of the entire project to be \$434,000.

#### D. OHV Grant Request

Mike Ahrens reviewed in detail the BLM Barstow office's grant requests to the California State Parks Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Division. Ed Waldheim strongly recommended increasing the request for the Classroom OHV Education Project. Ed encouraged letters of support for the grant request from each member of the TRT by July 21<sup>st</sup>.

#### E. Fee Structure

Roxie Trost explained that the business plan for Dumont Dunes is old and that funding has been drastically cut since it was written. Roxie suggested that the TRT discuss the adequacy of the current fee structure. Ed Waldheim pointed out that Dumont Dunes is \$100,000 short of sustaining its operations. This he believes demonstrates the need to review fees.

Gerry Hillier observed that expenses grow gradually and annually, but fees are typically increased in larger increments and after years of current fees being in place. Gerry suggested indexing the fee, and implementing changes more frequently. Mike Ahrens cited the cumbersome logistics of making changes, particularly during times of heavy entrance traffic. Ed Waldheim echoed the concerns.

Randy Banis requested a future presentation on the Recreation Enhancement Act and how its provisions impact changes to the fee policy.

Roxie Trost asked the TRT's opinion on increasing fees for October 2006. Ed Waldheim suggested raising the weekly fee from \$20 to \$25, and the annual pass from \$60 to \$75. Bill Presch felt it was too late for this season and suggested that we start the process now yielding adequate time to publicize any increase for October 2007. There were no objections.

#### F. TRT Logistics

Roxie Trost reported that minutes and announcements of our meetings are not yet posted to the BLM Barstow web site. She encouraged Randy Banis to work with Lynnette Elser to start this.

#### G. Saturday Meeting

John Dalglish relayed the suggestion of some members of FODD for a Saturday meeting of the TRT. He offered that this might create public participation. Randy Banis suggested a special session during the peak duning season. John disagreed in stating that duners would be more likely to spend the day in the dunes then watching our meeting.

Ed Waldheim and Gerry Hillier argued that history shows that Saturday meetings do not increase participation, and that this might impose an unfair burden to staff and the budget. The group concluded by moving to the next item.

#### 4. Next Meeting

By consent, the TRT set the following date, time and location for its next public meeting:  
Tuesday, September 26, 2006, 10:00 AM  
BLM Barstow Field Office Conference Room

#### 5 Adjournment

By consent, the meeting was adjourned at 2:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted,  
Randy Banis  
Secretary, Dumont Dunes Technical Review Team

APPROVED on September 26, 2006

Bureau of Land Management, Dumont Dunes TRT  
July 18, 2006 Minutes

## SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS

### Recreation Fee Update

Roxie Trost agreed to update the TRT on how the Recreation Enhancement Act might affect fees.

### Next Meeting

By consent, the TRT set the following date, time and location for its next public meeting:  
Tuesday, September 26, 2006, 10:00 AM, BLM Barstow Field Office Conference Room