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SANTA ROSA & SAN JACINTO MOUNTAINS  
NATIONAL MONUMENT  
MONUMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING

REPORTER'S TRANSCRIPT  
OF  
PROCEEDINGS

LOCATION: PALM DESERT CITY HALL  
73-510 Fred Waring Drive  
Palm Desert, California

DATE  
AND TIME: SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 2004  
9:09 A.M. - 2:18 P.M.

REPORTED BY: SONJA CHAPMAN  
CSR No. 11504

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MONUMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (MAC):

CHAIRMAN CRITES, Councilmember and current Mayor, City of Palm Desert

DANELLA GEORGE, National Monument (BLM/FOREST SERVICE) - National Monument Manager

MARY ROCHE, Mayor, City of Indian Wells

RUTH WATLING, Chair, Pinyon Community Council

KATHIE BRENNAN, Building Industry

ROBERT BROCKMAN, Director of Community Development, City of Rancho Mirage

BARRY FREET, Palm Springs Fire Chief

BOB LYMAN, Regional Office Manager, County of Riverside

JEFFREY MORGAN, Sierra Club

ALLAN MUTH, University of California, Riverside, Deep Canyon Research Center

ROB PARKINS, General Manager, Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, Winter Park Authority

GARY WATTS, District Superintendent, California Department of Parks & Recreation

MELISSA DREW, BLM Community Planner

EDDY KONNO, California Fish & Game

TRACY LEIGLER, Interpretive and Outreach Program

LAURIE ROSENTHAL, Forest Service, San Jacinto District of the San Bernardino National Forest, District Ranger

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2 9:09 A.M.

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5 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Are there additions and  
6 corrections to the minutes that have been distributed  
7 and perused by members of the council? There being  
8 none, they will then stand as distributed.

9 Monument manager update.

10 MS. GEORGE: Good morning, Monument Advisory  
11 Committee. I'm glad to see you're here. We have some  
12 introductions of some new folks. One is a new member of  
13 the Advisory Committee. That is Kathie Brennan. She is  
14 the individual that will represent the building industry  
15 on the committee. So welcome, Kathie.

16 (Discussion off the record.)

17 CHAIRMAN CRITES: All right. Anything else  
18 under updates?

19 MS. GEORGE: To assist the court reporter,  
20 those with excused absences today would be . . .

21 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Frank Bogert, who is hosting  
22 a group of people who were on the last Mexico ride that  
23 they did from ranch to ranch. Terry Henderson is  
24 attending a League of California Cities meeting, and  
25 Bill Havert is ill.

1 MS. GEORGE: Okay. With further introductions  
2 of new folks, we have Frank Morwry, M-o-w-r-y.  
3 Frank Mowry is here. Frank, would you like to stand up,  
4 wave, whatever?

5 Then we have -- Gary, you wanted to introduce  
6 someone new?

7 MR. WATTS: Yeah. I wanted to take the time to  
8 introduce the brand-new park superintendent for Mt. San  
9 Jacinto State Park Eddie Guaracha. He started about a  
10 month or so ago.

11 He's worked in my district before. So he got a  
12 promotion, transferred from Silverwood Lake to Mt. San  
13 Jacinto. So at the break if you get a chance, introduce  
14 yourself and get to know our on-site manager up on the  
15 mountain.

16 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Welcome.

17 MS. GEORGE: Eddy Konno is here for California  
18 Department of Fish & Game. Thank you for being here,  
19 Eddy.

20 Okay. Onward. Basically I was going to go  
21 over the handouts you have in the packets in front of  
22 you today. You actually have the last meeting's  
23 minutes, which we will need to review to get approved.

24 CHAIRMAN CRITES: We did already.

25 MS. GEORGE: Okay. I apologize. Then we also

1 have a copy of the Record of Decision of the Monument  
2 Plan. It's signed. It's done. Press releases went out  
3 yesterday. So the Record of Decision is completed. I  
4 want to thank everybody for that.

5 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Congratulations for you.

6 MS. GEORGE: Thank you. Also Melissa. Folks,  
7 Connell called yesterday to tell everybody "Hi." She's  
8 missing us.

9 Okay. We also have in the packet that was  
10 mailed to you February/March events for the National  
11 Monument. We have a Memorandum of Understanding, an  
12 MOU, its draft that was prepared by the National  
13 Resource Conservation Service to initiate a soil  
14 resource inventory to get us into moving to get that  
15 accomplished, which was one of the actions in the  
16 Monument Plan.

17 So that was mailed out. I think the folks that  
18 most need to look at that would be the Forest Service,  
19 Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, State of  
20 California Department of Parks & Recreation, Department  
21 of Fish & Game, and UC Riverside. Al, you for them, for  
22 Deep Canyon, to initiate moving to get our soil resource  
23 inventory done.

24 That will go well with the high intensity  
25 resolution mapping that's been done. You guys saw that

1 a couple of years ago. That is moving forward. That's  
2 happening.

3 Okay. The other item that I need to go over  
4 are the reappointments. The last five are still in a  
5 holding pattern at the Executive Secretary's office.  
6 Hopefully in the next week or two, that will be done,  
7 and letters will be forthcoming with your appointments.

8 I was going to ask the chair and the group what  
9 you thought about initiating the next five appointments,  
10 seeing how slow this process is. The next five would be  
11 Pinyon Pines, Rancho Mirage, Palm Springs Tramway, Agua  
12 Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians, and Palm Desert.

13 So at the end of the day, maybe you can give me  
14 some directions.

15 CHAIRMAN CRITES: There any objections to  
16 beginning that process at this point? There being one,  
17 that's the direction.

18 MS. GEORGE: Okay. With that, today's focus is  
19 going to be how to do a nonprofit for the National  
20 Monument. That is the focus of today's meeting. We  
21 have guest Gene House who is going to speak about what  
22 we can do at the local level.

23 We have a visitor, Anne Rheams who is the  
24 deputy director for the Lake Pontchartrain Basin  
25 Foundation. And we have a gal coming, Kris Assel, who

1 works with --

2 MS. ROSENTHAL: It's pronounced "Assel."

3 MS. GEORGE: Assel. A-s-s-e-l. Kris will be  
4 coming to discuss what San Bernardino has done with her  
5 nonprofit. So in tying with that, we just got news this  
6 week from our Washington office folks with the Bureau of  
7 Land Management that they have started a project for  
8 business plans of national monuments.

9 We have been selected to be a pilot for that,  
10 building a business plan, which was one of our follow-up  
11 actions of getting the plan done. They're going to be  
12 out here the week of May 3rd.

13 They would like to come sooner, but what we  
14 asked was they wait until the Trails Plan is out there,  
15 because the Trails Plan is going to need a detailed  
16 business plan with all the entities -- the cities, the  
17 other jurisdictions besides the Bureau of Land  
18 Management.

19 So the week of May 3rd. I guess I would ask  
20 the cities to think about folks that you have on your  
21 staff, the county, for dealing with trails. CVAG,  
22 Trails Plan, I need to talk to Katie about Mountains  
23 Conservancy folks.

24 And then Forest Service, we'll talk about that,  
25 Laurie, February 19th at our budget meeting about this.

1 This will be a very integral part of how we'll get our  
2 funding for the next three to five years.

3 We're looking at the focus of that being the  
4 Trails Plan, Tamarisk, eradication of noxious weeds, the  
5 land exchange program, and of course cultural resources,  
6 which has a very thick component within the Monument  
7 Plan.

8 The other update I wanted to give folks is we  
9 have signed -- leaving the Bureau of Land Management  
10 part, the Monument has signed as Memorandum of  
11 Understanding with the Resource Conservation Development  
12 & Economic Group with the lower southern desert, just to  
13 start working together and talking about how we can  
14 treat noxious weeds and Tamarisk on a global scale and  
15 letting them perhaps being the lead organization.

16 We're going to need to have a follow-up. I'd  
17 like to have them do a presentation at the next Advisory  
18 meeting. It's a good model of what's being done in  
19 other places where there's a lot of different land  
20 ownership of allowing them to take the lead to do the  
21 treatment, inventory, and monitoring. But we need to  
22 bring all of our partners along. So that's out there.

23 Then the only other item of business, MAC and  
24 Chair, is you wanted me to talk about the budget. I  
25 don't know if this is the time that you want to talk

1 about it.

2 Okay. We have a tentative budget for the  
3 Monument. Our Monument budget is down about \$600,000.  
4 It's looking at about a little under \$1 million. On top  
5 of that we did get a quarter of a million dollars for  
6 land, water, and conservation funds. Excuse me.  
7 \$750,000 for land, water, and conservation funds for the  
8 Monument. And then under \$1 million dollars for the  
9 Monument itself.

10 There is pass-through money this year that will  
11 go to the Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians. That  
12 is \$2 million for their cultural museum. We're down  
13 significantly from places like Carrizo, Head Waters.

14 UNKNOWN: Do you have a sheet of comparison?

15 MR. MORGAN: I gave you one, Danella

16 MS. GEORGE: Oh, the funding?

17 MR. MORGAN: If you go up to page 1 of the  
18 stuff that I gave you.

19 MS. GEORGE: Page 1?

20 MR. MORGAN: Is it in there, or did I leave it  
21 at home?

22 MS. GEORGE: The chart?

23 MR. MORGAN: The chart. Is it there?

24 MS. GEORGE: These are 2005. I'm talking 2004.

25 MR. MORGAN: Oh, okay.

1 MS. GEORGE: I'm talking 2004 dollars. I do  
2 have a chart. It is graphed. I will give it to you,  
3 Mr. Chair. It's still not final.

4 CHAIRMAN CRITES: That will be useful for folks  
5 to have to see how we compare to the rest of the  
6 monuments in the southwest.

7 MS. GEORGE: Then the last item of business for  
8 me would be the March 4th field trip to Anza Borrego  
9 State Park. Frank is going to attend. Mary wants to  
10 attend. What I need to finalize that is I'm going to  
11 send out a sign-up sheet to see who wants to attend.  
12 And then I'll follow up with folks.

13 I've talked to Buford about some of the things  
14 we want to see on that field trip. We'll get the  
15 logistics tied up and get that out to you all.

16 I've sent out the number -- the hotel room  
17 number. But if folks need that again for the hotel to  
18 make reservations because you need to, it's  
19 1-800-242-0044. It's the Palm Canyon Resort. It would  
20 be the evening of the 4th.

21 It's National Monument Manager/State Parks is  
22 what they labeled it under. We can work on the  
23 logistics. If you choose not to spend the night that  
24 evening, we can see what we need to do to shuttle people  
25 back and how we can do transportation. So we need to

1 just get a list and get that finalized.

2           Probably, Gary, I'll ask you to help me to work  
3 with Mark to set up a visit with their staff at the Sate  
4 Parks. We'll look at the visitor's center, the  
5 Interpretive Center, which is actually in the city. So  
6 any other needs people have or want to see out there.

7           We included today as a handout something that  
8 Terry sent to me via fax, which is an article by  
9 James Cornet regarding State Parkins Visitor Center.

10           With that, I'm going to turn it over to  
11 Laurie Rosenthal to give us an agency --

12           CHAIRMAN CRITES: We have a question, Danella.

13           MS. GEORGE: Oh, I'm sorry.

14           MR. BROCKMAN: You were going so fast I didn't  
15 want to stop your flow.

16           MS. GEORGE: That's because Buford has me on  
17 the abbreviated schedule.

18           MR. BROCKMAN: A quick question on the Record  
19 of Decision. I haven't had a chance to look at it. I  
20 noticed that there were some decisions which amended the  
21 BLM's CDCA Plan.

22           Were there any substantive changes to the plan  
23 other than that that we need to be aware of?

24           MS. GEORGE: No. You guys have all been  
25 briefed on all those kinds of changes. It would be the

1 things like no hang gliding and no paintball. You've  
2 all been briefed through the process of what those were.

3 MR. BROCKMAN: So there's nothing else?

4 MS. GEORGE: We had no change from the draft to  
5 the final.

6 MR. FREET: Mr. Chair? Bary Freet. If this  
7 isn't an appropriate place to ask a question, please let  
8 me know. We were sent a copy of a press release dated  
9 January the 28th, which implied that the signs were  
10 being installed. And a few days shortly thereafter, I  
11 had difficulty finding anything but a few cones on the  
12 ground.

13 Can you comment?

14 MS. GEORGE: I can comment. The signs are  
15 still not in the ground, Bary. We didn't send that  
16 press release out yet. We're waiting to send the press  
17 release out. I guess we probably should have noted  
18 that.

19 MR. FREET: It's a draft, then?

20 MS. GEORGE: Yeah, it's a draft. It's not  
21 going out until the signs are in the ground. The new  
22 date for that, I believe, is scheduled for this Tuesday.

23 MR. FREET: Okay.

24 MS. GEORGE: My apologies.

25 MR. FREET: Thank you.

1 MS. GEORGE: Uh-huh.

2 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Other questions on Danella's  
3 report? There being none, Laurie.

4 MS. ROSENTHAL: Good morning. I'm  
5 Laurie Rosenthal, district Ranger for the San Jacinto  
6 Ranger District up on the hill. We've been up to our  
7 eyeballs in dead tree projects, as one would imagine.

8 The good news is that the San Bernardino  
9 National Forest is receiving \$31 million. Now, that  
10 sounds like a huge amount of money. It is If it was in  
11 my personal bank account.

12 However, what we are talking about is high cost  
13 acres to be treated. This isn't like the northwest  
14 where you have a timber sale that pretty much pays for  
15 itself. You have a situation with dead trees that are  
16 barely worthless.

17 Then you have a situation where we're going to  
18 be taking out slash as well. So the contractors are  
19 going to be doing that, and the government is going to  
20 have to pay them to do it all because there is not much  
21 profit in it.

22 So we need about \$300 million to do what we  
23 need to do, but \$30 million is a great start. Some of  
24 the projects that we're going to be working on is -- we  
25 have like eight projects, plus hazard trees, which are

1 the dead trees along the side of the road and the ones  
2 that fall at the campsites.

3 We have eight other projects in various stages  
4 of development. The one that is related to the monument  
5 is the area of Pinyon. This is in the initial stages.  
6 We've gone to several community meetings already.

7 This is a cooperative effort between BLM,  
8 Forest Service, CDF, and the private landowners.  
9 Without the private landowners, this fuel reduction  
10 project will not work.

11 Ray Barmore, who is the head of the chapter for  
12 the fire safe council is starting to get pretty active  
13 now. We've gotten some momentum there.

14 Then just going up the road, we are scheduled  
15 for a prescribed burn for Garner Valley for protection  
16 of the area of Morris Ranch Road and one for Bonita  
17 Vista. They're all community protection areas.

18 We're hoping this week -- we tried a couple  
19 weeks ago -- to have a prescribed burn off of  
20 Highway 74. It's called the Baldy prescribed burn.  
21 It's the protection of the Mountain Center area and the  
22 Baldy Trailer Park area.

23 That's also community protection for Idyllwild,  
24 because that's oftentimes where the fire comes from --  
25 where the wind comes from.

1                   Then we have two thinning projects that are  
2 going to hopefully take place this year. One is called  
3 Idyllwild West. That is protection for the Idyllwild  
4 arts area, the western part of Idyllwild. And then  
5 Southridge, which is protection for the Idyllwild  
6 community to the southeast.

7                   We are going to have a public field trip to  
8 look at these two sites. Nothing has been done. We  
9 don't have a decision. That will be March 6th. That's  
10 a Saturday. If you're interested in attending that, it  
11 will be around 9:00. Call the office. We don't have  
12 fliers out quite yet.

13                  And then moving up 243, we have the community  
14 of Pine Wood, which you may not have even heard of it.  
15 It's kind of in the back. It's really a community at  
16 risk. We're talking about a fuel break around Pine  
17 Wood.

18                  Then we have the big enchilada, which is North  
19 Fork. That's the whole northern area of 243. If you  
20 drive up from Banning you see a sea of red.

21                  By the way, Edison -- I don't know if you've  
22 heard down here, but Edison has been unbelievably  
23 fantastic regarding taking out just thousands of dead  
24 trees that are jeopardizing power lines. So they've  
25 been a huge partner. So that's it for that.

1 Does anybody have any questions about this big  
2 program of work we have? Yes.

3 MR. WATTS: Laurie, you said \$31 million. Are  
4 there restrictions on where you can spend that as to in  
5 forest land or out of forest land?

6 MS. ROSENTHAL: That is for the forest.  
7 There's also money coming that is going directly to the  
8 communities. A lot of that is going to be matching.  
9 But that will get funneled through CDF and through the  
10 Fire Safe Council. They're asking for grants as well.

11 MR. WATTS: Then a second question. I saw  
12 you're contracting out for the taking down and removal  
13 of slash and the trees. We're in the same boat except  
14 on the opposite side of the San Bernardino mountains.

15 Where are they going to take that?

16 MS. ROSENTHAL: Well, we have a grinding site  
17 up in Idyllwild. It's just set up for commercial  
18 grinding. It used to be the dump. You can imagine. We  
19 just are getting piles. So now there's a commercial  
20 grinding site we have up there.

21 There are a lot of other things that we're  
22 looking at to actually do something -- you know, other  
23 commercial types of enterprises to take that off.  
24 Nothing really has been set up yet besides the grinding  
25 site.

1                   Yeah.

2                   MR. MORGAN: Yeah. Do you have any plans for  
3 the northern part of Fern Valley, that area?

4                   MS. ROSENTHAL: Southridge.

5                   MR. MORGAN: Well, it's a couple of miles north  
6 of Southridge. Where Devil Slide Trail starts.

7                   MS. ROSENTHAL: Well, one is against the  
8 wilderness.

9                   MR. MORGAN: Well, you've got a big buffer  
10 between.

11                   MS. ROSENTHAL: Let's talk about that  
12 afterwards.

13                   MR. MORGAN: Okay.

14                   CHAIRMAN CRITES: Other questions? What are  
15 you doing on Santa Rosa?

16                   MS. ROSENTHAL: At this point nothing. This  
17 money is specifically for community protection. Pinyon  
18 is the closest area that we're looking at at this point.  
19 The money that is coming down for us is specifically for  
20 community protection. That's what congress wants us to  
21 spend it on.

22                   CHAIRMAN CRITES: So zero, then?

23                   MS. ROSENTHAL: At this point. That doesn't  
24 mean down the road.

25                   CHAIRMAN CRITES: All right. Thanks.

1 MS. ROSENTHAL: And then if anybody has driven  
2 by on 243, we have renovated our district office. The  
3 actual renovations are complete. We are waiting for the  
4 furniture, which unfortunately will be probably at six  
5 to eight weeks at this point.

6 I don't even want to go there. It's quite  
7 possible in the next few weeks that we will at least be  
8 opening the visitor area.

9 Once we're all moved in, we will have an open  
10 house. You'll all get an invitation for that. We don't  
11 have any money for exhibits. There is a little bit of  
12 room for exhibits.

13 One exhibit we want to have is a Monument  
14 exhibit in there. But we have to work and try to raise  
15 money, do some panhandling or whatever, to try to get  
16 money for exhibits.

17 That is one that we have in mind. So it would  
18 be nice if maybe some of you could have some input into  
19 that exhibit when we get to that point.

20 Any questions about that?

21 MS. GEORGE: I would ask that it be consistent  
22 with the Monument exhibit with Palm Springs life and the  
23 kiosks.

24 MS. ROSENTHAL: Absolutely.

25 MS. GEORGE: Good.

1 MS. ROSENTHAL: We want to do good  
2 communication and not just go off on our own.

3 Anything else?

4 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Thank you.

5 MS. ROSENTHAL: Thank you.

6 MS. GEORGE: Danella George here for the BLM  
7 agency update. Basically, the BLM's focus in our field  
8 office of late has been the Trails Plan. We're working  
9 with Katie and Jim Sullivan to get the Trails Plan done.

10 Another area of the field office, burn area,  
11 rehab emergency work on Otai Mountain. Those have been  
12 the key focus areas.

13 We are still waiting to find out who our new  
14 field manager will be. The position closed on  
15 January 17th. For those of you that don't know,  
16 Jim Kenna has been selected to be the associate state  
17 director for Oregon. That's about it.

18 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Okay. Any questions? If  
19 not, Mr. House.

20 MR. HOUSE: Actually, Mr. House will be  
21 preceded by Katie Barrows, who will speak to this. Then  
22 I'll follow up with some details.

23 CHAIRMAN CRITES: All right.

24 MS. BARROWS: Good morning members of the  
25 Advisory Committee. My name is Katie Barrows, and I'm a

1 board member of the Friends of the Desert Mountains.

2 I just want to give you a brief introduction to  
3 what Gene is going to talk to you about. As I think  
4 you're aware, we've been working over the last couple of  
5 months at least with Danella and with the Friends board  
6 and others to try to work together to develop a program  
7 for expanding the fund-raising capabilities that would  
8 support the Monument and that would support specific  
9 projects within the Monument.

10 Just recently we've gotten to the point of  
11 agreeing on the terms of a cooperative relationship  
12 between the Friends of the Desert Mountains and the  
13 Monument.

14 And in part, one of the focuses of that effort  
15 has been to look at the capacity building for the  
16 Friends as an organization to support a larger  
17 fund-raising program. Gene House is going to speak with  
18 you a little bit more about that.

19 I want to give you a brief history of Friends  
20 for those of you that are not familiar, and a little bit  
21 about what we're working on in terms of an agreement.

22 The Friends of the Desert Mountains been around  
23 since 1987 when they were first incorporated. At that  
24 time the focus of their efforts was -- it was under a  
25 different name -- to work to provide some way of

1 preserving acreage in the mountains. It was at that  
2 time called the Coachella Mountains Trust, and a lot of  
3 the folks here today were probably on that original  
4 board.

5 That group worked to create the Coachella  
6 Valley Mountains Conservancy and then later on evolved  
7 to become the Friends of the Desert Mountains.

8 Actually, there's been a relationship with the  
9 Santa Rosa and the San Jacinto mountains really since  
10 the inception of Friends. Friends has been involved in  
11 a lot of ways in working with what was previously the  
12 national scenic area and now the National Monument.

13 As you might know Friends of the Desert  
14 Mountains has been a support organization. We operate  
15 the bookstore at the National Monument Visitor Center.

16 The Friends has a very active program of land  
17 acquisition working closely in partnership with BLM,  
18 with Forest Service, with the Coachella Valley Mountains  
19 Conservancy, and all the other entities that are  
20 acquiring land in the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto  
21 mountains.

22 We've been very actively acquiring lands in the  
23 National Monument and also other wilderness areas. So  
24 there's really kind of a history, if you will, of that  
25 level of cooperation.

1                   When we started talking further with Danella  
2                   about the need for a greater fund-raising support and  
3                   support organizations for the Monument, it seemed to  
4                   make sense that we could make this work as a  
5                   relationship with the Friends.

6                   Basically what we are looking at is formalizing  
7                   that relationship and probably just expanding on the  
8                   agreement that we already have in place.

9                   As you may be aware, the Friends at the present  
10                  time has worked in the Monument in some of the special  
11                  projects helping to provide funding and also just  
12                  support in terms of the Monument celebration and a  
13                  variety of the projects that have been underway already.  
14                  So we're really just probably expanding the relationship  
15                  that's already in place.

16                  Essentially, what that will involve is one, a  
17                  expansion of the Friends board of directors. Right now  
18                  there are 12 members of the board. I should point out  
19                  that Ruth Watling here and Buford Crites, and actually  
20                  Ed Kibbey, who is no longer with your board, I  
21                  understand --

22                  CHAIRMAN CRITES: And Kay Hazen.

23                  MS. BARROWS: And Kay Hazen, who is here, are  
24                  members of our board as well. We have agreed that we  
25                  will add new members. Gene's going to talk with you

1 further about that. But there would be three members  
2 representing the National Monument.

3 The Monument manager will become an exofficio  
4 member of the board. We are looking at a cooperative  
5 funding partnership to provide for some fund-raising and  
6 fund development program, a greater volunteer support  
7 program, and really helping to build the capacity in  
8 terms of fund-raising. And then the opportunity for the  
9 Friends to provide support for specific Monument  
10 projects, whatever those might be.

11 We're very excited about this relationship. We  
12 already have a significant investment, obviously, in the  
13 Santa Rosas and San Jacintos. And we're looking forward  
14 to expanding the opportunities to make this a much  
15 larger benefit to the community.

16 So with that I'm going to turn over to Gene  
17 who is going to give you a little more background on  
18 what we foresee.

19 MR. HOUSE: Why don't you stay up there in case  
20 somebody asks a question. Good morning.

21 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Good morning. If you would  
22 take your time in your comments so that they can be  
23 recorded.

24 MR. HOUSE: All right. I'm not sure I've got  
25 my information down that pat that I could talk that fast

1 anyway. I admire Katie. She's really got this down  
2 cold.

3 It really is a pleasure to be here with you. I  
4 was asked last summer by the Friends of the Monument to  
5 do a brief kind of study into what it might take to  
6 expand and evolve the fund development capacity of the  
7 Friends. That kind of first initial look led to a more  
8 in-depth analysis with that.

9 I filed that report with Friends and the  
10 Monument manager the first of last October. It contains  
11 a number of alternatives that the Monument might want to  
12 look at in terms of how to go forward with its desire to  
13 raise private funds to augment government support.

14 Amongst those alternatives certainly were a  
15 couple that involved Friends, because the Friends would  
16 be the obvious, I would say, organization of first  
17 choice. It's here. It's committed.

18 Why go out and start another nonprofit  
19 organization in the conservation field and further kind  
20 of muddy the water, and try to explain to the public why  
21 we've got yet one more when we have a preserve, and we  
22 have a conservancy, and we have the Friends, and we have  
23 the Monument, and we have the Bighorn Research  
24 Institute. And on and on it goes.

25 Following on my report, the Friends board and

1 Monument staff got together, and as Katie has very well  
2 reported, came to an agreement. The Friends board  
3 decided to make the commitment -- the personal  
4 commitment of the individual board members to go forward  
5 and sort of change the way they've been doing business  
6 in order to broaden their mission to include support for  
7 the realization of the Monument master plan, as well as  
8 continuing their objective of acquiring land from  
9 willing sellers for conservation purposes and doing the  
10 other expediting activities that are so important in  
11 relation to the conservancy and other governmental  
12 entities.

13           So I've been retained by the Friends to provide  
14 facilitation and training services to the Friends board  
15 of directors to hopefully help it achieve what could be  
16 a quantum leap.

17           That's certainly the vision and that's  
18 certainly what we're hoping for -- a quantum leap in the  
19 public awareness and support of the mission of the  
20 Monument and desert conservation and the amount of money  
21 that's being raised to further those ends.

22           So to kick that off, hopefully we're going to  
23 have our first Friends board strategic planning session  
24 later this month. There will be a series of three or  
25 four sessions over the next three months.

1                   Initially we'll focus on board expansion. The  
2                   current board is aware that it needs to expand its  
3                   numbers along very carefully prescribed lines. I have a  
4                   structured approach to expansion that we will spend  
5                   three or four hours with at that first session, so we're  
6                   not running out and asking people if they're interested  
7                   in being on the board.

8                   We're going to go through a very careful  
9                   processes of identifying the resources that are  
10                  necessary to achieve our ideal board.

11                  Then we'll brainstorm confidentially lists of  
12                  names of people that might fit each of these spots on  
13                  the matrix that we'll be developing. Then those persons  
14                  will be invited to a discussion to explore their  
15                  interests, to explore what they're willing to bring to  
16                  the table.

17                  We'll tell them what we need from them  
18                  personally if they would choose to come on the board.  
19                  So it's going to be a very careful process. We're not  
20                  looking for yes answers. We're looking for top-notch  
21                  board members.

22                  We're going to do a careful screening process.  
23                  It's going to honor and respect the process of board  
24                  development, and it's going to respect the meaning of  
25                  board membership.

1                   So we have high expectations for the kinds of  
2 folks we need to get on there. And admittedly our  
3 primary objective is raising money. So that's what  
4 we're really going to be about. And then the board will  
5 go out and following a prescribed method, as I said, of  
6 board recruitment and screening. Hopefully we'll get  
7 some initial new members on quickly within the next 30  
8 to 60 days.

9                   We can get a few of them hopefully so that we  
10 can then move on to doing some strategic planning in  
11 terms of refining and articulating exactly what our  
12 goals and objectives are -- numerical objectives for  
13 money, infrastructure objectives in terms of what has to  
14 be done to perhaps grow the internal capacity of the  
15 Friends a little bit.

16                   Does it need a another half-time secretary,  
17 does it need a professional education and volunteer  
18 coordinator for the visitor center, school education.  
19 You know, special event coordination. All that kind of  
20 thing.

21                   Then we'll go into board training where we will  
22 focus at least one of the four-hour sessions on actually  
23 training the board in how to ask for money without  
24 having a heart attack.

25                   We have lots of fun ways to do that. We'll

1 look at all the possible ways of raising money and so on  
2 and so forth.

3 Then we'll get into once the goals and  
4 objectives have been identified how much money we want  
5 to raise, what's our objective in terms of that money  
6 going to the Monument and also going to land acquisition  
7 within and without the Monument.

8 We will get into the creation of our fund  
9 development plan. The fund development plan is a  
10 specific detailed work plan for how the money is going  
11 to be raised -- how much, how it's going to be raised.

12 Projections of income by source -- how much do  
13 we think can come from private foundations, from  
14 government, from individual gifts, from the community in  
15 terms of membership and things like that. How much we  
16 think might come from special events.

17 I'll be talking to the board about what I call  
18 the right mix -- the mix of fund-raising strategies  
19 that's the most cost efficient, that's the least labor  
20 intensive, that historically has the greatest return on  
21 investment of manpower and staffing and money.

22 With an eye also, of course, to a marketing  
23 plan so that while we're going to be looking for as many  
24 major donors as we can, there's obvious value and a real  
25 necessity to excite more of the general public about the

1 Monument and about the necessity of land conservation  
2 here in the desert and the mountains.

3           So the marking plan and this fund development  
4 plan, it will flush out who is going to do what, when,  
5 the time tables, all the assignments for the board and  
6 with the staff.

7           With that in hand we then move to the next  
8 step, which is what I call Phase I of a campaign. It's  
9 not going to be just "Okay. We're going to crank up our  
10 fund-raising capacity and then keep working on what  
11 we're working on."

12           Yeah. We'll work on what we're working on --  
13 adopt an acre, membership, grants. Things like that.  
14 But it will be done with a sense of urgency. It will be  
15 done with a sense of timeliness. It will be done with a  
16 sense of identity.

17           There will be a campaign. It will have a name.  
18 It will have a goal. It will have a high profile. It  
19 will have a beginning, middle, and an end. A sense of  
20 urgency.

21           We are going to package this thing and try to  
22 sell it as never before. And the first phase of doing  
23 that is doing that Phase I. It's the silent phase.  
24 That's where we will be researching major donor  
25 prospects, identifying them, taking a look at them,

1 deciding who knows who, who is going to make that ask,  
2 bringing those people in the fold.

3           We'll start with the people we already know,  
4 obviously. You start with your present supporters and  
5 donors, and then you go on out like that. Your best  
6 prospect for donations, obviously, is someone who has  
7 already given you money.

8           We start with a family, and then we do a lot of  
9 kind of structured research and take folks to lunch,  
10 take folks to the Visitor Center, take folks out on the  
11 trail, meet with them in their office for coffee.  
12 Whatever works for them.

13           Try to get them excited about it, build on the  
14 relationship that so many you of already have with good  
15 people that care about this, and get commitments  
16 primarily at that stage for major gifts from  
17 individuals. \$5000, \$10,000, \$20,000, \$50,000,  
18 \$100,000, \$1 million. Whatever we're lucky enough to  
19 get.

20           When we have I would say 25 to 30 percent of  
21 the money we've made as our goal for this initial  
22 campaign pledged or donated during this Phase I, then  
23 we'll call the news conference. Then we'll have the big  
24 public kickoff of the campaign, which is the onset of  
25 Phase II, the phase which comes after the silent phase.

1                   We have everybody assembled. We have a big do,  
2                   and we've got something to say, folks. Laurie, Danella,  
3                   Kay, Ted, Katie and everybody can get up there and all  
4                   the big visual displays and talk about this grand plan  
5                   for this beautiful, beautiful area and be able to  
6                   present major donors who will stand up and be counted  
7                   and say why they're committed to this and why they  
8                   pledged \$50,000 or \$10,000 and really have momentum  
9                   there. Have the public in attendance and have the press  
10                  in attendance.

11                  We hit the ground then running. There's  
12                  something newsworthy. It's hard news. The press is  
13                  there reporting this thing has happened, this campaign  
14                  has launched, this vision has been implemented.  
15                  \$200,000 has already been raised.

16                  It has credibility. People know it's real.  
17                  It's not pie in the sky, as would be the case if we  
18                  skipped the silent phase and had a press conference and  
19                  called everyone and said, "Yeah. We're doing all this.  
20                  Rah, rah, rah."

21                  And some reporter in the back raises his hand  
22                  and says, "How much have you raised so far?"

23                  "Well, nothing. But, you know, we're really  
24                  excited about this." You see the difference? It's a  
25                  fatal flaw. So that's the plan in general terms.

1                   The timeliness for initial board recruitment,  
2     like I said, takes about 60 days. That will continue to  
3     go on as we try to fill these identified slots. Then  
4     we'll go into the strategic planning and the board  
5     training, and fund development plan creation.

6                   And then hopefully the implementation of the  
7     fund development plan, Phase I, at least starting in the  
8     fall. And it would certainly be my hope and expectation  
9     if we keep our head of steam going and are successful in  
10    these stages as we go along that sometime during next  
11    season, if you will, here the desert we would kickoff  
12    Phase II, the public phase.

13                  But even if that doesn't happen, I'm not real  
14    concerned about it because Phase I is a serious  
15    fund-raising activity where we're going one-on-one  
16    behind the scenes with these people and organizations  
17    and grants.

18                  Phase I we'll be chasing grants like crazy.  
19    They already are. We're just going to crank this up in  
20    a more comprehensive way. So that's the deal.

21                  This costs about. \$80,000 or so. I would  
22    guesstimate \$80,000 to \$100,000 between now and the end  
23    of this calendar year as an additional cost for my  
24    services, for some additional part-time secretarial work  
25    that the Friends have to have to crank this up.

1                   There might be a volunteer coordinator in the  
2 mix. There's a lot of campaign material and printing  
3 costs that go into it. A moderate investment certainly  
4 with our sights set where we are. Our goal really here,  
5 you know, is to go absolutely to the next level.

6                   I'm real thrilled about being a part of that.  
7 I've lived in Palm Springs for three years and was  
8 working with the Desert Protective Council to raise  
9 money in the early '80' to buy little in-holdings for  
10 the Coachella Valley. Thank God big brother came to  
11 town and the nature conservancy took that over and has  
12 done such a wonderful job in those early days.

13                   I've served on the Desert Protective Council  
14 board. I've real passion for this. I hope you don't  
15 think I'm blowing my horn. I'm sharing with you a  
16 little bit of my passion and feel for this.

17                   I'm not just a consultant who rode into town to  
18 do a fund-raising hit on the community. So I feel a  
19 part of this. I feel really good about it.

20                   Are there any comments or questions? By the  
21 way, I should mention this. Both the Monument and the  
22 Friends board need to be committing \$50,000 to this  
23 joint effort to pay for those additional costs for  
24 taking the organization to the next level.

25                   The Friends board has committed to that. I

1 know that Danella and her group are in the process of --  
2 they've already requested those funds, I believe. But I  
3 think it would be quite useful. I think Katie was going  
4 to mention this, so I'll mention it for both of us, that  
5 a motion here this morning, now or later in your  
6 discussion period -- we'll be talking about this again  
7 after lunch. It's on the agenda.

8 A motion urging BLM to agree with status  
9 recommendation to provide \$50,000 for this fiscal year  
10 to support the development on behalf of the Monument.

11 Comments or questions, please.

12 CHAIRMAN CRITES: I'd also note that Gene House  
13 spent a good number of years across the street at the  
14 College of the Desert as director of their foundation.  
15 The college has the best-funded community college  
16 foundation in the state of California. Certainly a good  
17 chunk of that is due to the insight and direction that  
18 he provided to that organization.

19 Thank you, Mr. House.

20 Other questions this morning?

21 MR. HOUSE: Kay, would you mind? Kay has been  
22 in integral part.

23 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Rather than waiting for later  
24 in the day, it could be appropriate if someone so wishes  
25 to look at the issue of recommending to the National

1 Monument participation in this process. That's listed  
2 as happening this afternoon. But we're here and we're  
3 on this topic.

4 So is there discussion on this matter? Yes,  
5 ma'am.

6 MS. WATLING: Ruth Watling. I think it's a  
7 natural synergy for the two groups. Our focus and goals  
8 are quite the same.

9 CHAIRMAN CRITES: That is a motion, then, of  
10 support?

11 MS. WATLING: Yes.

12 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Okay. Is there a second?

13 MR. MUTH: Second.

14 CHAIRMAN CRITES: There is a second. At this  
15 point is there discussion on the matter?

16 MS. ROCHE: Mary Roche. Having had the budget  
17 brought up, where is this \$50,000 coming from?

18 MS. GEORGE: Danella George. BLM meets  
19 internally on the 17th and 18th of this month, February,  
20 to talk about the budget. I cannot make a guarantee,  
21 but I've been asking for this for the last three to four  
22 months.

23 We have folks coming from the Washington office  
24 this week from Service First Group to provide support  
25 and carry the flag back to Washington for support.

1 Laurie and her staff are meeting with the BLM  
2 staff on the 19th of February. We can talk and see if  
3 Forest Service might have a few nickels to contribute  
4 there. That is where we are.

5 MS. ROCHE: So the motion needs to be  
6 conditioned on support for these other entities?

7 CHAIRMAN CRITES: That's what it's asking for,  
8 is support from those.

9 MS. GEORGE: You folks advise the secretaries  
10 of where you want to see this Monument. That is your  
11 charter for the implementation of the plan.

12 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Parkins.

13 MR. PARKINS: Rob Parkins. Having been on the  
14 receiving end of Gene House's efforts when I was with  
15 the city, I would encourage his support. He is very  
16 effective.

17 CHAIRMAN CRITES: There were no budget problems  
18 when Gene was helping?

19 MR. PARKINS: We had to find it in the budget.  
20 We did.

21 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Okay. Any other comments?  
22 Then those in favor, signify with an "aye." Are there  
23 those in opposition? It will be recorded as unanimous.

24 Thank you both for being here.

25 MR. HOUSE: Thank you, sir.

1                   CHAIRMAN CRITES: That takes us then to the  
2 Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation. Why don't we take  
3 a five-minute break while we prepare for  
4 Lake Pontchartrain and probably initiation to the Mardi  
5 Gras season. We will take five minutes.

6                   (Off the record.)

7                   (Brief recess taken.)

8                   CHAIRMAN CRITES: Okay. Gene, we're not  
9 charging for this. We're back in session with pleasure  
10 to hear what's going on in another part of our country.

11                  MS. RHEAMS: Thank you very much. Thanks for  
12 allowing me to be here. Again, I'm Anne Rheams. I'm  
13 the deputy director of the Lake Pontchartrain Basin  
14 Foundation, a nonprofit that started out a long time  
15 ago. I feel like it's aged me about 20 extra years.  
16 It's been worth the effort.

17                  I'm here to just share with you all our  
18 inception, our evolution, what happens when you have  
19 such a wonderful cause as you do. These mountains are  
20 just phenomenal.

21                  I come from below sea level. So I'm still in  
22 awe. If you take those mountains and you invert them,  
23 that's what we live in. We really do have alligators  
24 the size of this table and all the things that you've  
25 heard about.

1                   There's one thing I have to do today. I'm  
2                   sorry. Danella brought me here. I love Danella. We  
3                   worked together when she was at EPA. She was our grant  
4                   officer in the Texas region. They get all the money and  
5                   we beg still.

6                   Anyway, today really begins our Mardi Gras  
7                   season. For me to be here instead of my favorite  
8                   parade, you know she rates. So with that in mind, I  
9                   brought Mardi Gras here. So please bear with me. Every  
10                  Mardi Gras you have to have a king and a queen. So the  
11                  queen is Ms. Danella. The king is Mr. Buford.

12                  CHAIRMAN CRITES: Got it.

13                  MS. RHEAMS: You don't have to beg me. I've  
14                  seen it all. I'm from New Orleans. Anybody that wants  
15                  beads, please raise your hands. You have to yell,  
16                  "Throw me something, Honey." You're welcome to wear  
17                  these proudly today.

18                  Let me tell you, in New Orleans they'll be  
19                  killing you for these beads right now. They will step  
20                  on your hands. They will take old ladies and shove them  
21                  into the street over little trinkets. Anyway, These are  
22                  up for grabs. I always wanted to be on a float. An  
23                  Easy toss. Thank you for indulging me.

24                  Anyway, I hope some of you all can come visit  
25                  our wonderful town. This is a resort area. I'm amazed

1 by all the golfing I see around here.

2 We rely heavy on tourism. So one of our  
3 biggest draws is our wetlands. How many of you all have  
4 ever been to New Orleans or around there to a swamp?  
5 How many of you have eaten a bowl of crawfish? Pinched  
6 the tail, sucked the heads? Okay. It is a good crowd.

7 Our resource, which I'm going to go through  
8 with you right now, is an estuary. It's very unlike  
9 this. We have more water than we know what to do with.  
10 If I could figure out a way to ship it to you, I would.

11 We are actually surrounded. New Orleans is an  
12 island surrounded by water below sea level. We're in a  
13 bowl. We have to pump every drop of water. If you're  
14 hosing your car down to wash it, that water gets pumped  
15 out. We have the largest pumping station in the word.

16 It's crazy. Only the French would have done  
17 that. I can say that because I'm part French. But it's  
18 crazy for us to be there. However, we are.

19 We have an incredible natural system that I  
20 hope to share with you today so you can get an idea. If  
21 I can do this correctly. Oh, please work. Yes.

22 So where the hell is Lake Pontchartrain? I  
23 figured I better get the whole country in here. What  
24 familiar feature would you recognize at the bottom of  
25 this? What is the most important thing that has defined

1 this country?

2           The Mississippi River. We are at the mouth of  
3 the mighty Mississippi. That is why New Orleans is  
4 there. That's not why New Orleans is there. New  
5 Orleans got there because of Lake Pontchartrain.

6           The Native Americans knew what they were doing.  
7 They could actually traverse this whole area by coming  
8 up into these lakes into this estuary, come back down  
9 the Mississippi River.

10           There was no power -- no boats with power at  
11 the time. So the native persons helped the settlers  
12 figure out how to do that. That's really why New  
13 Orleans is there. Now it's there because it's one of  
14 the biggest ports in the country.

15           This is our water shed. We deal with -- while  
16 you have your mountain ranges, we work from water sheds.  
17 Here's the state of Louisiana. We are still thinking  
18 French. We don't have counties. We have parishes.  
19 They're the same thing, only we call them different.  
20 We're still under the Neapolianic code for law. You  
21 don't want to be a lawyer unless you want to learn some  
22 of that.

23           Our topography is very varied. This is the  
24 Gulf of Mexico. This is a big part of the Sound. It's  
25 called the Mississippi Sound, Chandler Islands. Here's

1 the Mississippi River down here.

2 This is the big Lake Pontchartrain.

3 1.5 million people live around that lake. You have a  
4 lot of sprawl issues. I'm going to show you some of  
5 ours. But at the time that I was growing up -- well,  
6 not really. I wasn't even around, but it was close.  
7 I'm not going to say.

8 But anyway, the lake was our recreational  
9 source. Not only that, it's where we got our food from.  
10 We will eat anything that swims. I'm serious. We can  
11 put it in a gumbo. We can fry it, and we can eat it.  
12 So this lake is critically important to the whole region  
13 for recreational commercial fishing.

14 And like you all, I've sensed such a passion  
15 here for your mountains. Without that passion, we  
16 wouldn't have been able to do what we have done for this  
17 lake. That's what it takes to actually have a nonprofit  
18 and to make it successful.

19 But over the years, we have a highly urbanized  
20 area on the south shore of the lake. This area has been  
21 completely sprawled over. It's beautiful. It's  
22 wonderful, but it's being killed because it's so  
23 beautiful.

24 We have all these factors -- pollution, habitat  
25 destruction, salt water intrusion. We've got all these

1 wetland issues that are affecting our lake. So I want  
2 to just run through these quickly. I want to just give  
3 you an idea of what we were facing like kind of what  
4 you're facing. I really see the sprawl issue here as  
5 one of your biggest issues.

6 This is kind of gross, but our water table is  
7 like about three to five feet. It's not very, very  
8 deep. So we have a problem with sewage runoff. I'm  
9 sick of looking at it. But we have to deal with a lot  
10 of pollution.

11 Antiquated system. It's an old city. If  
12 you've ever been there, you know how old it is. We've  
13 got some very antiquated systems infrastructure that  
14 leak a lot of sewage. All of this contributed to making  
15 the lake unsafe for human contact recreation. Urban  
16 runoff. I know you have an issue of that around here.  
17 I know you probably know what that is.

18 This is one of our pumping stations. We're  
19 like the Venice of the United States. We crisscross  
20 over with canals. We have water everywhere. We have to  
21 pump that water out. It goes directly to Lake  
22 Pontchartrain with no treatment. Everything that goes  
23 into the city is pumped directly into the lake. It's a  
24 huge issue.

25 Sprawl. We have a beautiful forest being cut

1 down. Unplanned growth. You can develop sustainably.  
2 It's being done in other places. You need to get  
3 involved in that. Your public needs to get involved in  
4 that. Agricultural runoff.

5 Dredging of canals. Our wetlands not only  
6 provide the nursery grounds for our fish industry, which  
7 we lose when we dredge all these canals, but it also is  
8 a buffer for hurricanes.

9 Believe me, when you live below sea level in a  
10 bowl surrounded by water, you worry about hurricanes a  
11 lot. We need those wetlands for buffers, but we're  
12 losing them. In fact, we're calling them "America's  
13 Wetlands."

14 Has anybody seen that on television, the  
15 campaign? It's a United States issue. We have more  
16 wetlands than any other place, except maybe parts of  
17 Alaska. That's where your seafood comes from, a lot of  
18 it.

19 Anyway, impacts. Algae. This is the infamous  
20 longest bridge in the world that spans the lake for  
21 24 miles. Too much nutrients getting into the system.  
22 We've had fish killed because of the dead zones and the  
23 nitrate problems.

24 Polluted rivers. Beautiful, beautiful rivers.  
25 Again, we have more water than we know what to do with.

1 Loss of habitat. This was a gorgeous Cypress swamp.

2 Cypress trees are incredible.

3 The lake was then written off. In 1960 it was  
4 written off by the health department. The entire  
5 community was in depression because of this, because we  
6 used this lake so much. What are we going to do?

7 Well, we were created -- actually, we're  
8 unique. There was such a public outcry. This is where  
9 we get into who are we. There was such a public outcry  
10 that actually a study was done -- what do we need to  
11 save this lake. We need a group, a watch dog group to  
12 help organize this.

13 We were created by an act of the state  
14 legislature, which is very odd for a nonprofit. So we  
15 have a little bit of authority -- not authority. But we  
16 have a little bit -- of what's the word?

17 MS. ROCHE: Teeth.

18 MS. RHEAMS: Yeah, teeth in a way. They can't  
19 get rid of us. Our mission as the Lake Pontchartrain  
20 Basin Foundation, we are a membership-based citizen's  
21 organization. We are the public's independent voice  
22 dedicated to restoring and preserving the Lake  
23 Pontchartrain Basin. That's quite a mission. We  
24 represent the public.

25 I'm going to go into how we're put together. I

1 know it's a little different from you guys. We did it  
2 from the bottom up. We did a grass roots effort because  
3 it was the people who asked us to be born.

4 We did a comprehensive management plan. There  
5 were 98 entities in that water shed that were going  
6 helter-skelter all over the place, not knowing how to  
7 pull all this together. We got them all together in a  
8 series of meetings. It took us a lot of planning with  
9 all these different groups.

10 But now we have our Comprehensive Management  
11 Plan with really basically four goals -- water quality,  
12 restore it, protect essential habitat, education, and  
13 outreach.

14 Do you know this was the number one thing that  
15 the public wanted? They wanted to know what is this  
16 resource all about and how can I help. Public access.  
17 That's a big issue for you guys, I know.

18 So here are some of our programs. We have a  
19 tremendous relationship with our media. We have friends  
20 at all of our local television stations and news  
21 stations. We have built a great relationship with the  
22 newspapers, the radio stations. They come to us looking  
23 for stories. They come to us as the official  
24 environmental group.

25 We are voted the best environmental group in

1 the state every year. We have done the homework. We  
2 have done the work to make ourselves the authority for  
3 environmental issues.

4 This is one of the ways we do it. We educate  
5 people. If I have to say we do anything well, that is  
6 it. We monitor for water quality around the lake. A  
7 lot more sites than this. We give out to the public  
8 every week -- fecal coliform bacteria is the indicator  
9 for the health advisories.

10 We monitor that every week. We report to the  
11 paper in the weather page every week. Now, with all the  
12 efforts that we've done and our programs, you can now  
13 swim in the lake again. We are catching trophy-size  
14 fish again.

15 I'm saying "we." I'm saying we the citizens,  
16 all the groups, all of our partners have worked together  
17 for. We do a lot of pollution-related work. We get  
18 government grants.

19 We go out and we help these small communities  
20 with their sewage treatment issues. We try to get them  
21 on line. We put in livestock waste retention lagoons.  
22 We do a lot of on the ground project besides the  
23 education.

24 Habitat protection. This is a beautiful  
25 Cypress swamp that if you ever come here I can take you

1 canoeing through. It's beautiful. I'm actually  
2 learning a lot from you guys on land acquisition and  
3 land conservation. That's the only way we're going to  
4 protect our areas -- somehow getting it out of  
5 development. That's our biggest issue right now is to  
6 do that.

7 Education outreach. We do a lot of this.  
8 We're in the field all the time working with students,  
9 training them to hopefully be the next scientists that  
10 take over from us.

11 Tracy, I've been working with her a little bit.  
12 She's got some great ideas for education. I can't  
13 stress it enough to get the young people -- you have a  
14 captive audience in the schools -- to get them to fall a  
15 in love with this area.

16 Get them away from the video games, away from  
17 the television. They have to continue the efforts that  
18 you started. If you don't start now, you're really  
19 screwing up. That has to be a real focus.

20 Public access. It looks like Florida, you  
21 know. I wish it was. That's actually one of our  
22 beaches that has been off limits to swimming.

23 Do you remember one of the first photos that I  
24 showed you with all the people in the water and the  
25 rides? That's it. It's been off limits. The

1 amusements parks pulled out. Finally we got it back.  
2 We're still working on planning to have something out  
3 there.

4 We have other beaches. I don't know if I'm in  
5 anybody's way. We have beautiful rivers, sandy river  
6 beaches that we're also working towards. Bike trails,  
7 bike paths. We're doing a lot of that recreation.

8 We've actually tried to reestablish the old  
9 reefs that were in the lake for fishing. We get grants  
10 for all this stuff. We work very hard at securing  
11 funds. I'm going to show you how.

12 But basically, we go out and we put in these  
13 reef balls. People are catching fish again in the  
14 middle of the lake.

15 So today, this is our famous sea wall that is  
16 supposed to protect us from hurricanes. Anyway, the  
17 Brown Pelican is our state bird. It was on the  
18 endangered species list forever. That's a real success  
19 story.

20 We have more back in the lake because there's  
21 stuff to eat now in the lake. That's a success story.  
22 Their numbers are actually higher than historic numbers.

23 The water clarity. You can see a little blue  
24 crab right there. Where it used to be a muddy mess from  
25 people coming in and dredging, we got the dredgers out

1 of the lake.

2           Where have you heard of anybody getting oil and  
3 gas rigs out of a lake? California, I think, has tried.  
4 I don't know if you've been successful. Florida,  
5 because it's tourism.

6           We had some very bad oil and gas structures in  
7 our lake that we asked them to get rid of. Now there's  
8 a moratorium where this is a recreational body of water.  
9 We have very important habitat.

10           I guess your major indicator might be the  
11 Bighorn Sheep that everybody is kind of focused on. For  
12 us it's these little grass beds that grow underwater.  
13 That is the ultimate nursery ground for our seafood  
14 industry. They're growing back.

15           We have manatees. I don't know if you can see  
16 this picture. This was so thrilling. I had never seen  
17 one of these in the lake. It was unbelievable for us to  
18 see these guys coming back. Mothers with their calves.  
19 It was just fantastic. There's something for them to  
20 eat now.

21           This is a building back here. This is a  
22 dolphin coming back into the lake now. So I'm pretty  
23 excited about that. Kids are swimming again. Now  
24 that's kind of a quickie. This is so quick, but I just  
25 wanted to share the overall picture with you.

1                   How the hell have we done this? I'm going to  
2 show you little bits and pieces of how we've done it.  
3 I'm very impressed with Gene. In fact, I'd love to  
4 steal him. But I don't know if he could handle -- he'd  
5 have to grow gills if he came. He's got you all on a  
6 great track.

7                   I'm impressed with everyone, actually, that  
8 I've met here. There's no doubt that you all are going  
9 to be successful.

10                  Fund-raising. I can't stress enough. You have  
11 incredible resources. She got the Monument done for  
12 you. If I had a Mary Bono, I'd be on my knees to her  
13 every day. You're in great shape.

14                  One of the best things we ever did was the  
15 people wanted this lake back. They pressured the  
16 congressionals. We walked in and said, "Here we are.  
17 What are you going to do about it?"

18                  The people wanted it. The more ground swell  
19 you can get, the more you can pressure them to get you  
20 money out of congress. That's how we did it. That's  
21 how I met Danella. She managed our grants. We had a  
22 line item in the congressional budget right to us.

23                  Unfortunately politics change and it's not as  
24 great as it used to be. All of our politicians keep  
25 getting caught doing things, and then they leave to go

1 take bigger jobs. Anyway, that's too bad. We also get  
2 other grants. Gulf of Mexico program. We get a lot of  
3 state grants. I do a lot of the grant-writing.

4 We get corporate funding. We've got all these  
5 industry people. Monsanto and Exxon. It's not my  
6 favorite thing to do, but money is green and we need it.

7 You have so much money here. I hate to be that  
8 blunt about it, but I'm like, "My God." We have like one  
9 Fortune 500 company left in New Orleans. You guys can  
10 tap a resource that I wish we had. I might even move  
11 here.

12 New Orleans, as you can tell, loves to throw a  
13 party. We have what's called "Back to the Beach." We  
14 have a "Back to the Beach" festival that we throw every  
15 year. It's huge, labor-intensive. I am too old for  
16 this, but I've been doing this for 11 years. I can't  
17 pick up things like I used to be able to pick up.

18 We have 1,000 volunteers every year that help  
19 us put this on from coming to help set up tents to --  
20 beer sales are the best thing you can do in New Orleans.  
21 From beer sales we get major sponsors, donors.

22 We get it either donated or we get a major  
23 percentage of the sales. We get thousands and thousands  
24 of people. You have to have music. I know you guys can  
25 get musicians. I looked in your entertainment guide.

1 We get great people to donate their time.

2 It's a three-day festival every year. Does it  
3 make money? That's the bottom line. Does it make a lot  
4 of money? No, it doesn't. But what it does is we get  
5 out of the media \$100,000 worth of free media for this  
6 thing. You cannot buy that. It's a public event that  
7 people want to come to. We've set up education areas.

8 We get people to come to us so that we can make  
9 them love this resource. That is what it's all about.  
10 Is it labor-intensive and it kills us? Yes. But you  
11 cannot buy the outreach. I'm telling you.

12 It becomes an event for people. We have  
13 fishing rodeos. Golf tournaments, I know that's not a  
14 problem for you all. We have parties. We do all that  
15 sort of stuff. We do anything it takes.

16 We have membership. There are 1400 current  
17 members. Some of that 1400 is actually other groups.  
18 So if you multiply by the group, it will be more than  
19 that. We do mail-out solicitations. We do Web stuff.  
20 Our renewal request at the end of the year this past  
21 year was phenomenal.

22 We said, "Our funding was cut by congress.  
23 Please help." People we didn't even know said, "I love  
24 this lake. Here's some money."

25 We've gotten -- Gene knows what he's talking

1 about. You've got to be trained in this money asking  
2 thing. You don't even actually ask for money at some  
3 point. You make them love what you're doing. That's  
4 what we try to do.

5 Another thing we do is we have a lot of  
6 merchandise stuff. I don't know if you do that. I  
7 think you have your bookstore. We also partnered with  
8 banks. We've got a little Visa card. If you use it, we  
9 get a percentage of that. There's a lot of different  
10 things.

11 We do memorial gifts. We have an endowment,  
12 which I know is something that you guys are very  
13 interested in doing again. That's another thing.

14 We will do anything to get your attention. The  
15 staff, I can't even say enough about. Danella can say  
16 that too. We have eight full-time people. We have  
17 eight part-time people.

18 Six of us have Master's degrees. We're not  
19 just bayou folk. I could go anywhere in the world if I  
20 wanted to. I'm not kidding. I actually am a bayou  
21 folk. I went to school. My daddy made me.

22 Among us we have 20 years of administrative  
23 experience. I've been there 11 years. We have a staff  
24 member who has been there 15 years, 12 years, 13 years.  
25 We have people who have dedicated literally their

1 careers to it. You have to have staff. A nonprofit has  
2 to have paid staff. If you want success, you're going  
3 to have to pay for staff.

4 And the board -- I'm going to be honest. My  
5 board loves me. We do what they ask, but they let us do  
6 our job. A board gets money. You've got to get money.  
7 You can help direct, but you've got to let the staff do  
8 their job. I've been on boards too.

9 So that's how we've been successful. We do a  
10 plan. We implement the plan as we're supposed to. We  
11 report to the board, and we get things accomplished.  
12 We're very organized, believe it or not, even with all  
13 the parties we have.

14 But this is our board. They'll do anything  
15 too. This is "Back to the beach." They moved  
16 Port-o-lets, which I didn't even want to touch. But the  
17 board puts up or shuts up. That's the way it has to be.

18 Partnerships. Everybody knows partnerships.  
19 But we could not do what we do without all the groups  
20 and the individuals. The media I can't say enough  
21 about. Universities, agencies, corporations. We get  
22 in-kind and financial donations from all of these  
23 people.

24 We had to tally it one year. It's thousands  
25 and thousands of dollars that we get in in-kind

1 services.

2 This is my last slide. I have to put this up  
3 here so I can project into the future. This is where  
4 I've got to get. We don't have a facility. When I was  
5 education director, I went to schools. I went all over  
6 creation literally with school groups, with kids, with  
7 parents, with adults in canoes.

8 You can't get to everybody that way. You need  
9 them to come to you. You have a visitor center. I  
10 don't know what plans you have for that. We are going  
11 to get a light house. That's perfect for us. I might  
12 be calling you, Gene. It's perfect for us because we  
13 are the watch dog.

14 My grandmother used to crab right off here.  
15 The staff, again, we have a passion for this that we're  
16 going to restore this light house and have it be a  
17 museum. We get tour busses by this thing every day. So  
18 it's going to be our next big challenge. Wish us luck.

19 I hope this has helped. I really enjoyed being  
20 here. I would like to pass around these materials. One  
21 other thing I forgot. We put a lot of money in our  
22 budget for outreach materials, but not just any little  
23 flyers.

24 If you do a flyer or a brochure, you're wasting  
25 your money if you don't hand it to somebody and talk to

1 them. If you don't interact with people or have group  
2 meetings or something, people are going to look at it  
3 and they're not going to read it.

4 We have a curriculum guide that again I cannot  
5 stress enough. This is a national award curriculum  
6 guide. We put a lot of money, a lot of time, a lot of  
7 effort into this.

8 We went into the schools. We do teacher  
9 workshops because this resource is the children's  
10 resource. I can't stress enough doing something like  
11 this. It's important. You have a great teacher who I  
12 know can do it.

13 I'm plugging you.

14 We do outreach materials. We have tours. We  
15 did a tour guide for paddling and hiking in the  
16 Lake Pontchartrain Basin. We have a recreational map  
17 that we're printing now.

18 This bumper sticker is all over the place.  
19 You've got "Save our mountains". I saw that. It's  
20 cool. People will want that on their Porches and  
21 Audies. I'm sorry.

22 MS. GEORGE: Don't forget the Rolls.

23 MS. RHEAMS: Please pass them around, but I  
24 would like for them to end up with Tracy. Thank you.

25 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Questions from anyone in the

1 room or comments?

2 MS. ROCHE: Will you come to the Salton Sea and  
3 save that lake when you're done with Lake Pontchartrain?  
4 Mary Bono and we need you there.

5 MS. RHEAMS: That one is in bad shape. I've  
6 read about it. I don't know. It's kind of dry out  
7 here. I think I would shrivel. I don't know. I just  
8 like helping. So I'll help any way I can. Danella  
9 knows how to find me. Thanks.

10 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Are you going to stay for  
11 lunch today?

12 MS. RHEAMS: yes.

13 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Great. So we can sit and  
14 visit. Okay. Thank you.

15 Al?

16 MR. MUTH: No. It wasn't a question.

17 CHAIRMAN CRITES: A comment?

18 MR. MUTH: What happened to that sign-up sheet  
19 that was passed around for the trip?

20 MS. GEORGE: We haven't started it yet. Maybe  
21 I should start that, Al.

22 MR. MUTH: What are you waiting for?

23 MS. GEORGE: Well, I was going to wait, but why  
24 don't we do that.

25 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Any questions? Can we go to

1 the top of the mountain and plan our Master's?

2 MR. PARKINS: Sure.

3 CHAIRMAN CRITES: If there is no objection, why  
4 don't we go to the update on the Palm Springs Tramway  
5 Master Plan.

6 MR. PARKINS: Let me pass this around. This  
7 was, as you may recall, a request by Jeff Morgan at the  
8 last meeting. I wouldn't raise this as to the master  
9 plan yet, but I appreciate that.

10 It was a proposal outlined in a letter that I'm  
11 sending around to you to District Superintendent  
12 Gary Watts. When we were working on the general plan,  
13 we talked about several projects that would enhance the  
14 experience of visitors to the State Park with emphasis  
15 on those who have limited physical abilities.

16 We wanted to provide protection for sensitive  
17 areas, and we wanted to allow for a method of metering  
18 crowd management purposes and allow for additional forms  
19 of recreation.

20 As it relates first to the experience for those  
21 who have limited physical ability, there's a people  
22 mover system they call a Monorack that would take folks  
23 with limited physical abilities up and down what we  
24 attack "Heart Attack Hill."

25 You'll see on a map that's attached where those

1 are identified. If you've been up and down that  
2 concrete path, you know why we call it Heart Attack  
3 Hill.

4 This system that's designed by Doppelmayr is  
5 used in the vineyards. In this particular instance it  
6 shows it only carrying one individual. But it would  
7 have an opportunity to carry three plus a wheelchair up  
8 and down a pipe rack system that they use currently in  
9 vineyards.

10 It would be electrically driven. It would be  
11 much like an elevator. You push the bottom. It comes  
12 down and gets you. So it would not require additional  
13 operation costs as it relates to staffing beyond that  
14 which we currently have.

15 Second was the elevated walkways that we wanted  
16 to put first around the meadow itself. Running from the  
17 new proposed hiking center, it would go around the  
18 meadow and would tie into what is currently the  
19 Adventure Center where the sledding and so on occur.

20 If we are able to get a new ranger center, we  
21 would want to eliminate the adventure structure itself.  
22 The building is frankly reaching a point where it needs  
23 substantial repair. We only use it during the  
24 wintertime. I think we're better off to get rid of that  
25 building. The elevated walkways would tie into that.

1                   We'll have offset posts where you can get off  
2                   and sit down and read a plaque about the meadow and its  
3                   value. Currently what we have is signs that say "Please  
4                   don't trample in the meadow," and they put their picnic  
5                   blankets over them and go off in the meadow.

6                   We've looked at a synthetic material, a  
7                   polyresin type of material, that has a tremendously long  
8                   life and would withstand the abuses of the weather up on  
9                   the mountain.

10                  The Long Valley Ranger and Hiking Center would  
11                  do a couple of things. It would modernize the ranger  
12                  center to start with. That building that they're in  
13                  right now is relatively old. It also has above-grade  
14                  piping which freezes during the wintertime. It is not  
15                  tied into the central electrical emergency system. So  
16                  if there's a power outage, they're out.

17                  We want to try to underground the current  
18                  utility lines that are unsightly. When you come out of  
19                  the back the building, you see poles and wires running  
20                  down.

21                  We want to try to provide for at-grade at best,  
22                  underground if possible. It's pretty hard to go  
23                  underground under rock. So that would be below grade  
24                  and would tie into our two 125 KW generators we just  
25                  recently installed on the mountain so we have an

1 independent power source. It could feed off of that as  
2 well.

3 We want to move Ellen's interpretive program  
4 down into an office or an area in this center so that  
5 she could actually start hiking out of there. We  
6 propose to meter folks in the direction they would go.

7 They would have to go through this building  
8 before they could do out into the trails so we could  
9 have a good valid count. We don't have that right now  
10 on where they're going.

11 We also are looking at the prospect of coming  
12 up with a transmitter receiver on top of the new  
13 building and renting combination GPS/radios. So that  
14 when we have lost hikers and the rangers have to go out  
15 and try to find them, we'd have a better ability to  
16 locate where they are.

17 All of this I'm telling you is in the context  
18 of proposals because nothing has been caste in concrete.  
19 We're not even mixing the concrete yet. In fact, we  
20 haven't even priced it out.

21 We had at one time looked at a slide when  
22 Dave Van Cleve was the district superintendent over in  
23 the mule ride area. I was never really hot on that idea  
24 to start with. We were looking for something that we  
25 could provide for a recreational experience.

1                   We instead are focusing, if you look on the  
2 map, in the area where the mule barns and mule riding  
3 area used to be. Interesting enough, there used to be a  
4 skating pond in that area.

5                   This looks a little larger than I thought it  
6 should, Gary. That is the way she drew it in.

7                   I guess in the early years they carved out a  
8 basin, put some tarp down, put water in. It would  
9 freeze overnight. The problem, of course, was that it  
10 would thaw during the day. That lasted two years.

11                  Then they decided to do mule rides. We have  
12 all the residue that is still remnants of that exercise  
13 that we're having to deal with as well. Mule poop is  
14 what happens.

15                  That would be a synthetic ice skating surface.  
16 It does not require any refrigeration or any special  
17 type of environment or building. It is used in Canada  
18 in the hockey training center. The picture that is  
19 attached shows an illustration of how it was used to  
20 recreate the Rockefeller Center at Christmas.

21                  Essentially, you clean the area the first thing  
22 in the morning. You put a silicone material on it. And  
23 it's just like ice, except it doesn't thaw.

24                  Now, having said all of that, we can't even  
25 begin to approach what this ultimately will be until we

1 get enough funding from the state in order to provide  
2 Gary for the resources he needs to do the Management  
3 Plan.

4 The general plan is in place. We participated  
5 through that exercise -- public hearings and public  
6 comment and so on. The Management Plan, my  
7 understanding is, will be much the same.

8 But there is no staff dedicated to that  
9 purpose. We're having to work with Gary and see if  
10 there are ways to provide for that opportunity so that  
11 we could accomplish some, if not all, of the things that  
12 we propose.

13 This letter essentially outlined to the  
14 district superintendent that which my board had  
15 indicated they would like to see us pursue. Actually, I  
16 modified it substantially. The hockey rink and stadiums  
17 I vetoed.

18 I have an excellent city manager type contract  
19 that allows me to do that stuff. We instead changed it  
20 to a passive recreation experience. So that's the  
21 proposal.

22 It's waiting for the management process to  
23 begin. I know there will be a lot of public input on  
24 that. What the end result will be, we have to wait to  
25 see. It's not a master plan. It's simply a proposal at

1 this stage.

2 MR. WATTS: Just for some background for the  
3 committee members and the audience, the general plan for  
4 the park was redone and adopted here in Palm Springs or  
5 up the road in Palm Springs in April of 2002.

6 That genral plan was very general. It called  
7 for some specific what we call management plans to deal  
8 with issues up on the mountain. In that plan we  
9 designated certain specified areas that would be zoned,  
10 if you will, for development of some type without  
11 specifying what that development would be.

12 The Long Valley area, because of the fact that  
13 we have to share that area with the Winter Park  
14 Authority by statute, which is kind of a unique  
15 situation when you have shared territory and  
16 responsibilities, called for us to develop basically the  
17 management plan for that area as the first plan that's  
18 kicked off from that general plan, which included some  
19 things as wilderness management, exotic species removal,  
20 fire plan. Things of that nature.

21 So meanwhile, the state went and got itself  
22 deeply in the hole for some reason. I can't imagine how  
23 or why. I'm certainly not in favor of that. But our  
24 department has faced cuts that specifically have been  
25 targeted in areas that would deal with those types of

1 plans.

2           So we have been sort of stymied at this point  
3 on how we can find the resources necessary to fund and  
4 produce the type of management plans that are called for  
5 in the general plan itself.

6           So we have not proceeded any further with Rob's  
7 request through the Winter Park Authority until we are  
8 capable of putting together the resources and the team  
9 necessary to produce the management plan.

10           At this point, and it's been stated to interest  
11 groups and through the newspapers itself, it's my  
12 intention to convene somewhat of a public board, if you  
13 will, interest board that can take part in that process.

14           They won't produce the management plan for Long  
15 Valley, but they will listen very carefully to what  
16 their needs are. I expect it to be fully balanced from  
17 all interested groups, including such interest groups as  
18 the Sierra Club, the Winter Park Authority, and any  
19 others that may have interest on what goes on up on the  
20 mountain.

21           Without a doubt, it is very controversial to  
22 some folks, this proposal that has come forth as any  
23 kind of development up on the mountain would be. So  
24 we're going to have to very carefully see what that  
25 management plan will allow and will not allow.

1                   We intend to make it a public process from day  
2 one hopefully so we can end up with a product that  
3 everybody feels is fair and was done with full  
4 disclosure.

5                   So whatever we end up with in that plan will  
6 then have the meat behind it to justify whether  
7 something goes forward or not.

8                   Once we get the management plan done, it's not  
9 the end of the story. Such proposals as Rob spells out  
10 in here, we would have to undergo the thorough  
11 environmental process.

12                   It's going to be a complicated long, drawn-out  
13 process at this point in time. There is no time frame.  
14 We are trying to scramble for the resources because we  
15 did make a public commitment when we adopted the general  
16 plan that we would follow through with the other  
17 components of that general plan. Certainly, it's State  
18 Parks intention to live up to that agreement.

19                   MR. PARKINS: Mr. Chairman, if I learned  
20 anything from a little more than 30 years in government,  
21 you have to be very patient before you're ever going to  
22 accomplish anything.

23                   But you don't accomplish anything at all if you  
24 don't set out at least what you believe would make  
25 sense. So we're working closely with State Parks and

1 hope to move forward before I die.

2 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Any questions from members of  
3 the committee?

4 One quick one. I've read a couple of things  
5 and heard a couple of comments.

6 Are you guys working on an issue having to do  
7 with bird strikes on your building windows and stuff  
8 like that?

9 MR. PARKINS: Yeah. We have a couple of ravens  
10 who -- believe it or not, this is the way it was  
11 explained to me. I watched it, and apparently it is  
12 true -- who are able to kind of corral birds and cause  
13 them to hit the window in the mountain station --  
14 occasionally it has happened in the valley -- and then  
15 eat them.

16 One of the NHA members was asking us to do a  
17 shrink wrap on the building. We did not pursue that.  
18 We tried ribbons that rotate with the wind and so on.  
19 That seems to have reduced somewhat the bird strikes.  
20 Those ravens are very clever.

21 CHAIRMAN CRITES: It is 11:00. That is the  
22 noted hour for public comment and input.

23 Are there folks in the community who wish to  
24 offer comment or input to the Monument Advisory  
25 Committee at this point?

1                   Having attended to that within the hour set  
2                   aside, what about fire protection, Danella?

3                   MS. GEORGE: Well, Ron and Norm -- Ron was to  
4                   talk to Norm Walker. We have them down at 2:30. I  
5                   guess they're coming a bit later.

6                   CHAIRMAN CRITES: If they're here at 2:30, I  
7                   expect they will have a smaller audience. I do believe  
8                   that CVAG will be here at about 12:15 or something like  
9                   that to set up for their talk. Although, maybe we can  
10                  call them and see if they can come over a little sooner  
11                  than that.

12                  MS. GEORGE: That might be good.

13                  CHAIRMAN CRITES: Do that. Perhaps a call to  
14                  Katie Barrows might be in order for that right now.  
15                  Kris is not here, I don't think.

16                  Curiosity. While we have a moment, Anne?

17                  MS. RHEAMS: Yes.

18                  CHAIRMAN CRITES: If you had to go back and  
19                  reflect as you've gone through your process, what were  
20                  some of the most unexpected lessons that you had to  
21                  learn in terms of "Saving the lake?"

22                  MS. RHEAMS: That's a very good question. I  
23                  guess, you know, when you have a passion, you're a  
24                  little naive too because you're sort of just rushing at  
25                  it because you know you're right and you know you need

1 to do this.

2 I think I underestimated what we did the  
3 slowness of some agencies. You know, we really -- I  
4 think for a nonprofit, the thing that made us successful  
5 was that we just went on without. If you didn't get on  
6 board, we were going without you.

7 Initially, we had those 98 entities pulled in.  
8 We went through this whole planning process. Some of  
9 the plans take five years. We did it in a year because  
10 we knew we had to roll.

11 I think it's more educating agencies, that, you  
12 know, your nonprofit is your best friend. We can do  
13 things that you can't do.

14 So my philosophy now is a nonprofit is what  
15 government and private industry can't do. That's the  
16 niche you have to fill. We even provide services now.  
17 I think the biggest lesson is we don't charge enough for  
18 those services.

19 We have an incredible science program that  
20 consultants call, universities call us. Everyone wants  
21 our data and our information, but we haven't really set  
22 up a good system -- because we don't want to be  
23 consultants -- of charging for that.

24 I guess plan for success I guess is really what  
25 that message is. Our success kind of outgrew us. We

1 actually outgrew ourselves and got very efficient and  
2 then very sought after. We're so busy we can't see  
3 straight.

4 So I don't know if any of that makes sense.  
5 But basically the nonprofit is running a lot faster than  
6 I think others can catch up.

7 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Al.

8 MR. MUTH: Al Muth. I gather you don't hold  
9 land. You hold conservation easements or some other  
10 tools of that nature?

11 MS. RHEAMS: Water quality was our biggest  
12 push. People wanted to fish again, and they wanted to  
13 swim in the lake, boat, et cetera. So we have put a lot  
14 of effort into water quality.

15 In terms of habitat protection, there are some  
16 federal regulations for wetland permitting essentially  
17 through the Corps of Engineers. You don't have as big  
18 an issue.

19 A lot of our development actually occurs in  
20 wetlands because there's not a whole lot else to build  
21 in. So we were actually fighting as an advocacy group  
22 the permitting process. So we would fight developers.  
23 We would fight the Corps of Engineers essentially  
24 through public hearings.

25 We do a lot of public hearings. We have an

1 issue. We bring it to the public. We have a huge issue  
2 happening right now. Next week we're holding a huge  
3 public meeting about it.

4 So in terms of essential habitat protection, we  
5 have not actually implemented that land conservation  
6 idea. It wasn't even in the plan -- in the  
7 Comprehensive Management Plan actually. I think we  
8 didn't think sprawl was going to get us. I really think  
9 that's it.

10 So now we are definitely talking with folks all  
11 over, how can we set up a trust -- a land trust for the  
12 Lake Pontchartrain Basin.

13 With wetland development, the developer has to  
14 mitigate. The developer either has to put up money or  
15 recreate wetlands somehow that they've destroyed. It's  
16 not the best way to do it, but we're starting to realize  
17 that we could literally do a lot with that money or that  
18 mitigation to protect essential habitat. So we need to  
19 learn how to do that land conservation, honestly.

20 MR. SMITH: I have a question. My name is  
21 Jeffrey Smith. I'm with my colleague Muriel McElhinney.  
22 We're working with Forest Service in Cleveland.

23 I'm running the volunteer program for the fire  
24 response. She's the coordinating development of a  
25 Friends or association that supports the work of the

1 forest.

2 I am also working with the Desert Protective  
3 Council to manage a fund that they just came into and  
4 doing work in the desert area.

5 So in the sense of San Diego it's sounding like  
6 it's a little different because it's a pretty crowded  
7 playing field in terms of MGOs, a lot of land trusts,  
8 major conservancies moved in. In here it's probably not  
9 much different. So it's a kind of a crowded playing  
10 field.

11 How old did you say that your association is?

12 MS. RHEAMS: We're 15 years old.

13 MR. SMITH: So when you came in, was there a  
14 playing field? Was it kind of crowded?

15 MS. RHEAMS: There was nothing there. We're  
16 it. There's still not much there. It's very difficult  
17 for a nonprofit to exist in our environment.

18 MR. SMITH: That's one of the questions we  
19 have. We're talking about starting a Friends of the  
20 Forest. There are other Friends groups. As George  
21 mentioned, we don't want to create yet another entity.

22 How do you get acceptance from existing players  
23 and combine and work together on this new initiative?

24 MS. RHEAMS: yeah. Actually, we're the big  
25 kid on the block. I would actually encourage more like

1 a land trust because we don't have as many as you do.

2 We can't do all the work.

3 A nonprofit, it shouldn't be competitive.

4 Nonprofits by nature should not be competitive. But  
5 because you need money to survive, it is actually a  
6 quasi-private business.

7 So in your case, yeah. I would think it's very  
8 difficult. If your niche is that narrow, you're not  
9 going to get as much wide-spread support. For us we  
10 have a million something people living in this resource,  
11 and we're the ones -- really the only nonprofit doing  
12 something there.

13 I would encourage more in any water shed -- I'd  
14 love for a land trust to come in. I'd love for them to  
15 do it. We have enough on our plate.

16 I guess I would say that is there any way to  
17 coordinate all the nonprofits? Do you need a nonprofit  
18 to coordinate all the nonprofits? Yeah. You have an  
19 overabundance, I guess.

20 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Any other questions? If not,  
21 then we'll take about a five-minute break. In about  
22 five minutes lunch will be served. And we'll back at  
23 noon, if it's acceptable to the Committee, and we will  
24 have the update on the Trails planning effort, and we'll  
25 go from there. If that's acceptable, then so ordered.

1 (Off the record.)

2 (Lunch recess taken.)

3 CHAIRMAN CRITES: We'll begin. We've asked  
4 Jim Sullivan from Coachella Valley Association of  
5 Governments -- he's the director of all things good and  
6 wonderful and environmental -- and Katie Barrows the  
7 associate director of Coachella Valley Mountains  
8 Conservancy to come and make a presentation regarding  
9 the about to finally be released trails component of the  
10 Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation  
11 Plan. So they are both here.

12 Jim, welcome.

13 MR. SULLIVAN: Thank you.

14 CHAIRMAN CRITES: You're on.

15 MS. BARROWS: Okay. Thanks very much. We want  
16 to give you a brief update on the status of the trails  
17 planning efforts that's been underway for some time with  
18 regards to specifically focusing on the Santa Rosa and  
19 San Jacinto mountains.

20 Just briefly for those of you who haven't heard  
21 this a million times, we are in the midst, as Buford has  
22 indicated, of trying to complete in the very near future  
23 a Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation  
24 Plan.

25 As part of that effort we have developed a

1 Trails Plan that focuses on the Santa Rosa and San  
2 Jacinto mountains to create a management plan for trails  
3 that focuses on two things -- conservation of habitat  
4 for Bighorn sheep, and also recreational opportunities  
5 in terms of trails for the Santa Rosas and San Jacintos.

6 This shows you the entire area that is included  
7 in the multiple species area. It's an area of  
8 approximately 1.1 million acres. It does not actually  
9 include -- well, it includes approximately  
10 1.1 million acres. That's the area shown in white.

11 It does not address the Tribal lands that are  
12 within the white line area. So just for clarification  
13 and as we go along, Indian lands are not included in the  
14 plan. So they're not actually included in the Trails  
15 Plan either; although, we're coordinating closely with  
16 the Agua Caliente.

17 Within the Multiple Species Plan, there would  
18 be a series of conservation areas that would be  
19 established. This shows you those areas. Out of the  
20 approximately 1.1 million acres, we'll be targeting the  
21 acquisition or conservation of 740,000 of those acres.

22 As it turns out we already have a significant  
23 land ownership by various conservation organizations.  
24 The conservation program involves everything from the  
25 Cabazon area all the way out here.

1                   This shows you the existing conservation lands  
2 starting on the north side of this Joshua Tree National  
3 Park. We include the Colorado desert slopes of Joshua  
4 Tree all the way up to the ridge line here.

5                   Lands owned by BLM, which include the San  
6 Gorgonio wilderness and Big Morongo Canyon area up here.  
7 Also in the Indian Hills, the Coachella Valley preserve  
8 system. Other BLM lands out in this area. And also, of  
9 course, in the Santa Rosas, significant land ownership  
10 by the BLM. That is, of course, part of the National  
11 Monument.

12                  In addition to that, there is significant land  
13 ownership by the U.S. Forest Service in the Santa Rosas  
14 and San Jacintos. The southern boundary of the plan  
15 area goes up to the ridge line of the Santa Rosa and San  
16 Jacinto mountains and also includes the San Gorgonio  
17 wilderness area up here. This is under U.S. Forest  
18 Service ownership.

19                  Additional to that there are a fair number of  
20 state lands. We kind of lumped all the state lands  
21 together. Pardon that for those of you who are  
22 representing individual state entities today.

23                  But essentially within the Santa Rosas and San  
24 Jacintos, there's the San Jacinto State Parks and  
25 wilderness lands here. Significant ownership by

1 University of California at the UC Deep Canyon Preserve  
2 here.

3 Most of the remainder of these yellow lands are  
4 owned by either State Department of Fish & Game and  
5 Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy.

6 Okay. Let's focus on our discussion with  
7 regard to the Trails Plan. The trails planning process  
8 will develop very specific proposals for the Santa Rosa  
9 and San Jacinto mountains. What this shows you in the  
10 green here is the National Monument boundary.

11 So what we're going to do is in the context of  
12 the National Monument boundary -- okay. Okay. So  
13 basically the National Monument boundary and the  
14 conservation area fairly well overlap.

15 In terms of specifics, the planning for Bighorn  
16 sheep does not include the higher elevation lands, the  
17 Forest Service lands, because Bighorn sheep don't really  
18 utilize the habitat areas that go up above 4000 feet.

19 But in terms of the comprehensive plan, we're  
20 incorporating BLM lands, state lands, Forest Service  
21 lands in this Trails Plan.

22 We already have, as you might know, a fairly  
23 extensive system of existing trails. This whole area  
24 covers the existing trails system from Palm Springs,  
25 which is right here, to -- this is Highway 74 -- I

1 didn't have coffee. This is just natural.

2 This is Highway 74 right here. This would be  
3 the La Quinta area and Lake Cahuilla just to orient you.  
4 So obviously a very significant system of existing  
5 trails.

6 What we're looking at with regard to this  
7 Trails Plan is a program that focuses on several  
8 different elements. One of those elements is to provide  
9 some restrictions on the use of some trails in what we  
10 call seasonal trail areas.

11 So the plan will establish seasonal trails  
12 areas. Those areas are shown in purple. These areas  
13 were very carefully described by the wildlife biologist  
14 for BLM -- actually, Eddy Konno was extremely involved  
15 in that process -- and other biologists who looked at  
16 establishing these areas based on the known information  
17 that we have on the distribution of Bighorn sheep. In  
18 particular, the most sensitive habitat areas for the  
19 Bighorn sheep.

20 So within the seasonal trail areas, we're  
21 looking at some restrictions. But in general the limits  
22 would involve the lamb rearing for sheep, which is in  
23 the early spring months. For the purposes of the Trails  
24 Plan, that's January 15th through June 30th.

25 Then during the summer months we will have some

1 outright trail closures because we are trying to  
2 restrict access to water sources that are important to  
3 sheep during the summer months. That involves the  
4 period from July 1st to September 30th.

5 So in that regard we will have within the  
6 seasonal trail area some trails that will be subject to  
7 a permit program. Those are the trails shown here in  
8 red.

9 Buford, would you like me to go through those  
10 individual trails by name?

11 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Yeah. Quickly.

12 MS. BARROWS: Okay. We'll just quickly  
13 describe the trails that are affected by the permit  
14 program. Starting down here in the La Quinta area, this  
15 is the Boo Hoff Trail. Actually, I need to step back  
16 for just a minute.

17 Jim, could you also put up the trails that are  
18 open all year?

19 CHAIRMAN CRITES: People do have this. That  
20 lists all of them.

21 MS. BARROWS: Oh, great. Obviously, the focus  
22 of this effort was to try to create as many hiking  
23 opportunities as possible in areas that limit the  
24 potential impact on the Bighorn sheep.

25 So the trails that are shown in yellow are

1 those that could would be open all year. There would be  
2 no limits. As you can see, those trails are on the  
3 perimeter of, or in the case of the higher elevation  
4 trails, outside of the seasonal trail areas.

5 Okay. So in terms of the permitted trails down  
6 here in La Quinta, at least a portion of the Boo Hoff  
7 Trail, which is a very popular hiking and riding trail,  
8 will be subject to a permit.

9 The next trails that are affected by that are  
10 right here -- the Bear Creek Canyon and Bear Creek Oasis  
11 trails. And then the Art Smith Trail, which starts at  
12 Highway 74 and ultimately goes all the way over to Palm  
13 Springs. Cathedral Canyon Trail, which is located right  
14 here.

15 The lower Dunn Road, which is this right in  
16 here right about to there. Then the Clara Burgess  
17 Trail, which is this one right here which goes up to  
18 Murray Hill in the Palm Springs area. I'm sorry. My  
19 hand is not very stable.

20 And then up on the west side of Palm Springs  
21 over here near the Tram area, the North Lykken Trail.  
22 It's the north part of that trail from where the trail  
23 behind the Desert Museum goes up the hill. Then it goes  
24 north to Chino Canyon.

25 This is Chino Canyon right here where the

1 Tramway Road is located. The other trail that is  
2 affected by that permit program is the Skyline Trail,  
3 which starts in the valley floor and goes up to the Tram  
4 station.

5 So we have nine trails that would be subject to  
6 permits during the lamb rearing season. The way the  
7 permit system is going to work is we haven't actually at  
8 this time specified a lot of the details of that  
9 program.

10 We have set a limit of the number of permits  
11 that will be available for those nine trails of 2300.  
12 2300 permits during the course of that season.

13 Additional to that, we will have a number of  
14 group permits that would be available. That would be  
15 50. So we have 2300 individual permits and 50 permits  
16 for groups. A group constitutes 12 to 30 individuals.  
17 That would be any entity like the Hiking Club or Desert  
18 Riders.

19 The 2300 permits would be allocated in some  
20 way, but we haven't developed the details of that. We  
21 will be doing that over the next number of months with  
22 input from trail user groups, certainly from the MAC.  
23 We would be very interested in having that input. And  
24 from the agencies and all the various landowners.

25 The only details we know is we're going to try

1 to make the program as user friendly as possible --  
2 whether you can get a permit on the Internet. We're  
3 trying to make it so you don't have to drive to the BLM  
4 office in Palm Springs if you're in La Quinta or  
5 whatever it is.

6 So that is one element. The remainder of the  
7 trails that are in the seasonal trail areas, we're  
8 asking folks to continue what we've been doing for the  
9 last couple of years, which is a voluntary avoidance.  
10 That will be the trails shown the purple. This is the  
11 Guadalupe Trail. Several of the other trails in this  
12 area we would be asking folks to voluntarily avoid using  
13 those trails.

14 A couple of other elements that I think are  
15 quite important as part of this program. One of those  
16 is that partnered with the information about the trails,  
17 we want to have a very active public education and  
18 outreach program.

19 Obviously, that's going to be something that  
20 the Monument will be a significant -- will be really the  
21 focus of those efforts to try to create signage and  
22 brochures and whatever is necessary to help inform the  
23 public about the reasons for the trail restrictions and  
24 really to understand all of the program.

25 We're also going to have a monitoring program

1 where we'll have folks out on the trails basically  
2 keeping track of what kind of use levels there are.

3 BLM has been collecting data for about the last  
4 three years on trail use. This is the human side. But  
5 we still recognize that we need better information on  
6 exactly what levels of trail use is going on out there.  
7 So we will be monitoring trail use on these trails that  
8 are subject to the permit system.

9 The other side of that is a research program  
10 that will focus on what are the impacts of trail use on  
11 Bighorn sheep. This will be a research program that  
12 will be contracted through the Multiple Species Plan  
13 with university-affiliated or university-level  
14 researchers to really help us better understand.

15 One of the big issues in this whole process has  
16 been we have limited information on exactly what are the  
17 impacts of trail use on sheep, what are some of the more  
18 issues, what kinds of distances are involved in terms of  
19 disturbance and all of those things. We want to gather  
20 better data so that the managers can make more informed  
21 decisions.

22 So we've really got elements that involve the  
23 limitations on use and then the public education and  
24 monitoring program.

25 One other feature of that is there will be a

1 trails management subcommittee that will be established  
2 through this whole process. In terms of linking the  
3 Multiple Species Plan with the activities of the  
4 Monument, this is one of the important places where that  
5 happens.

6 The trails management subcommittee will be made  
7 up of representatives from all the cities that are  
8 involved that back up against the mountains from  
9 Palm Desert to La Quinta, members of the wildlife  
10 agencies and other land ownership agencies like BLM, and  
11 also members of the trail user community -- hikers,  
12 mountain bikers, et cetera -- who will on an annual  
13 basis look at this whole Trails Plan, look at the  
14 limitations, the monitoring data, all of the various  
15 elements on an annual basis to see what's going on and  
16 make recommendations to two different entities.

17 In the case of the Monument, to the MAC, the  
18 Monument Advisory Committee. And in the case of the  
19 multiple species program, CVAG, which is the lead agency  
20 on the plan will establish what we call the Coachella  
21 Valley Conservation Commission, the joint powers  
22 authority.

23 And ultimately the recommendations for the  
24 trails management program will go to that group.  
25 There's a whole structure of reserve management

1 committee. It works very similar to the way the  
2 Coachella Valley Fringe Toed Lizard Conserve has been  
3 carried out today.

4           So in terms of trails, as I say, the focus is  
5 with the limitations we are looking at having data on  
6 both human use and sheep impacts and sheep disturbance  
7 so we can really better understand what are the impacts  
8 of trail use and build an opportunity through what's  
9 called adaptive management to change, if that becomes  
10 appropriate.

11           If things are going very well with the sheep  
12 population and the research data suggests that some of  
13 the trail use activities may not have as much of an  
14 impact, the Trails Plan could be adapted in regard to  
15 that information.

16           Okay. A couple of other elements. In the  
17 seasonal trail areas, some of the trails will be closed  
18 during the hot season. Those are the trails shown here  
19 in white.

20           Several of the ones that are subject to permits  
21 are the Bear Creek Canyon Trail. This the Carrizo  
22 Canyon, which is a Fish & Game ecological reserve area  
23 which will be closed during the summer months. And the  
24 Art Smith Trail here, and the Schey Trail, which is a  
25 short trail right over here.

1                   Okay. The other probably exciting aspects of  
2 this is the proposal and the plan to develop some new  
3 trails. So recognizing that there will be more  
4 limitations on the use of the existing trail system,  
5 we've had a very active effort to try to develop some  
6 new trails.

7                   That includes a system of perimeter trails that  
8 start basically up in the west end. I know, actually  
9 going way back to before the Monument was established  
10 and the Santa Rosa's and San Jacintos were designated a  
11 national scenic area, there was a lot of discussion  
12 about the possibility of a trail that would be a sort of  
13 a rim of the mountains trail to get from one end to the  
14 other. We are going to get as much of that as we can in  
15 this process.

16                   What we've done is we've designated specific  
17 trail alignment. In some areas like up here, this is  
18 the Snow Creek Area, we haven't exactly figured out  
19 where the trail would go. So we're calling it a trail  
20 corridor.

21                   So this would be approved as part of this whole  
22 plan. So a possible connection between the Pacific  
23 Crest Trail around to Chino Canyon here.

24                   There's the effort to try to create an  
25 extension of the North Lykken Trail across Chino Canyon

1 right in this area. Then we've got existing trails  
2 here.

3 Then we come to the Cathedral City area where  
4 there would be a new perimeter trail that goes right  
5 around the edge of Cathedral City Cove.

6 It's designed to give folks a nice variable  
7 topography up and down options in terms of trails, but  
8 it keeps us right on the edge of the sheep habitat. So  
9 we're giving folks a trail that would be open all year  
10 and not create conditions with regard to sheep  
11 disturbance.

12 Okay. Then in this area between Cathedral City  
13 and Rancho Mirage, we haven't really been able to look  
14 at a trail that would connect there. So the neck point  
15 comes into this area. This is the existing what's  
16 called the Mirage Trail or more affectionately known as  
17 the Bump and Grind.

18 How many people is it, Bob? It's an extremely  
19 popular trail. Hundreds?

20 MR. BROCKMAN: At least.

21 MS. BARROWS: Hundreds per day are using that  
22 trail. It's partly on private land, partly on Coachella  
23 Valley Water District land, and California Department of  
24 Fish & Game land.

25 What we've done is worked out a plan where the

1 lower part of the Bump and Grind will stay open all  
2 year. The upper piece right in here, which is --  
3 actually the ecological reserve boundary is right in  
4 there.

5 But the upper part would ultimately be closed  
6 and removed. But a new trail would be connecting from  
7 the Bump and Grind right here all the way in the  
8 Cahuilla Hills area in Palm Desert down ultimately to  
9 Highway 74. So it adds significantly to the trail  
10 opportunities in this area.

11 You might know the city of Palm Desert has  
12 already developed and last weekend dedicated a trail  
13 system in their Homey Adams Cahuilla Hills Park area  
14 right here. This part that is already in place will be  
15 called the Hopalong Cassidy Trail. I don't know whose  
16 idea that was.

17 The Hopalong Cassidy Trail, which connects from  
18 the Bump and Grind down to the Cahuilla Hills area and  
19 ultimately down to 74, which is the Art Smith Trails  
20 head. That's about eight miles.

21 Then taking off from there, there is another  
22 trail that's been approved. This is the visitor center  
23 right in that area. There's a loop trail the City of  
24 Palm Desert is putting in on their trail. They've been  
25 working with the Monument and BLM on that trail. That's

1 in the process of being constructed.

2 Then the effort has been to create a trail that  
3 would connect from Palm Desert over to La Quinta.

4 Actually what this shows you is in blue the proposed  
5 Palm Desert to La Quinta trail that will be proposed in  
6 the Trails Plan. And then a couple of the alternatives  
7 that are being described will be described and analyzed  
8 in our Environmental Impact Report.

9 Essentially, that new trail takes off from the  
10 visitor center loop trail. It comes up over the ridge  
11 line here and drops down into -- this is Deep Canyon.  
12 This is the university property starting from back in  
13 here all through here.

14 It drops into Deep Canyon. This is Ironwood  
15 Golf Club. It comes along the boundary of Ironwood.  
16 And then it goes back up into the mountains on the other  
17 side and ultimately over another ridge and down into the  
18 La Quinta Cove. It drops down into the La Quinta Cove.

19 This particular trail has been the subject of  
20 considerable effort on the part of the wildlife  
21 biologists and all the folks -- Perimeter Trails  
22 Committee that has been working with us on this effort.

23 I'll call on Eddy for this. I think Eddy has  
24 hiked more miles in terms of trying to find the best  
25 route between this Deep Canyon area and La Quinta that

1 would minimize impacts to Bighorn sheep and provide a  
2 good trail opportunity.

3           It also turns out that the Living Desert has  
4 been working with the City of Palm Desert to provide  
5 what would be a potential alternative trail coming in  
6 through their property. They already have an existing  
7 trail that goes out to Eisenhower Mountain. We're  
8 looking at a trail that would allow one to go through  
9 the Living Desert and connect up to this trail as well.

10           I should mention that the University of  
11 California has been very involved in this effort and has  
12 agreed to allow at one spot right about here the trail  
13 to come across the corner of their property.

14           As you might recognize, their use of the area  
15 as a research station is not necessarily compatible with  
16 trail use. They have concerns about that, but Al has  
17 been very helpful in allowing a little bit of the trail  
18 to bump into UC property here.

19           This is showing you the land ownership. The  
20 brown color is BLM. This is Fish & Game, these yellow  
21 sections here. And the City of Indian Wells is right  
22 here.

23           So then additional perimeter trails in the  
24 La Quinta area, we have a short trail that's meant to be  
25 a cardiac exercise for folks in the cove. Then down on

1 the Lake Cahuilla area an option of the perimeter trail  
2 that would go from the southern area.

3 The Coachella Valley Recreation & Parks  
4 District is developing a new regional park right at the  
5 eastern end of Lake Cahuilla.

6 We're looking at a trail along the levee area  
7 that would provide for equestrian use that would link up  
8 to Martinez Canyon. Martinez Canyon is one of the  
9 trails that will be open all year. It provides a nice  
10 link to that area.

11 So briefly I'll let you know about the schedule  
12 for this whole process. At this time CVAG is working  
13 diligently to ensure the release of the Multiple Species  
14 Plan which includes the Trails Plan. And the EIR and  
15 EIS at this stage of the game by probably late March,  
16 early April will be released to the public. That will  
17 be the time that folks can make comments. There will be  
18 about a 90-day comment period.

19 During that time we will be having some public  
20 workshops to give folks background on the Trails Plan  
21 and give them the opportunity to ask questions and get  
22 whatever additional information they need.

23 And hopefully the final plan will be released  
24 if we're lucky in late 2004. More likely 2005. Late  
25 2004, early 2005. That doesn't mean we have to wait

1 until that time to do a lot of the sort of  
2 behind-the-scenes work.

3 We're kind of hoping that we can continue  
4 working on things like how do we pay for the trails, how  
5 do we get the easements if those are necessary across  
6 private lands in that period. We want to hit the ground  
7 running when we get the permit to construct those  
8 trails.

9 I'll be happy to answer any questions.

10 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Any questions for Katie?

11 MR. PARKINS: I have a quick question as it  
12 relates to the Sky Line Trail. We lost one hiker just a  
13 little bit ago. I was telling Gary that I was listening  
14 to the radio that we have two more that are heading up  
15 today. 7800-foot level is -- I think it's solid ice.  
16 That's post January 1st. So it's in that period of time  
17 that it should be closed.

18 How is enforcement going to be managed?

19 CHAIRMAN CRITES: It's not closed.

20 MS. BARROWS: Permit.

21 MR. PARKINS: Yeah, permit. Actually, it says  
22 request is to refrain from use.

23 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Voluntary closures.

24 MR. PARKINS: Correct.

25 MR. SULLIVAN: That's the current regulations.

1 MR. PARKINS: How will that be enforced?

2 MS. BARROWS: As part of the Multiple Species  
3 Plan, we will have some funding for enforcement. It's  
4 fair to recognize that that's always a challenge. We  
5 are looking at funding enforcement with the option of a  
6 penalty for someone who is on a trail without a permit.  
7 We're looking at some kind of a fee structure that would  
8 be basically a penalty for being on a trail without a  
9 permit.

10 But I think the other maybe that goes to your  
11 question is at least the permit program provides the  
12 opportunity on a trail like Sky Line to give some  
13 education and some input in terms of what the use of  
14 that trail involves.

15 Quite honestly, the reason we don't map the  
16 whole trail is because we don't know exactly where it  
17 goes. But at the same time we're looking at not mapping  
18 it for the reason that we don't really want folks who  
19 aren't prepared to go look on the map and drive into the  
20 Chamber of Commerce and say, "I'll go ahead and hike  
21 this trail."

22 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Gary.

23 MR. WATTS: When you mentioned permitted  
24 activity on these trails, you're referring to permits  
25 relating to the Bighorn sheep; correct?

1 MS. BARROWS: Yes. The purpose of the permit  
2 program is to limit the number of people that would use  
3 the trail during the lamb season.

4 MS. WATLING: The upper trails in the  
5 wilderness areas are already permitted.

6 MS. BARROWS: Right. The Sky Line Trail is the  
7 only one that might be affected by that. What we're  
8 hoping to do is something like you have in the  
9 wilderness where it's an easy option to get a permit,  
10 but it's not affecting -- it doesn't relate to or  
11 oversee any other permit.

12 I think actually all the trails that are  
13 affected here are not within an area that has any other  
14 kind of permit restriction.

15 CHAIRMAN CRITES: It's probably appropriate to  
16 note that the permit system and the number of permits is  
17 an issue that's now in a draft. It goes out to the  
18 public and every organization and everyone gets to  
19 comment.

20 There are certainly people in the agencies who  
21 were very favorable to having no people on most of these  
22 permitted trails during lamb season.

23 There are other people who are equally  
24 convinced that there biologically are no data to justify  
25 any restrictions on hiking use.

1                   So folks are going to get to weigh in on  
2                   perceptions that they have and the kinds of requests for  
3                   data that they think are appropriate and justifications  
4                   for lower numbers, higher numbers, shorter seasons,  
5                   longer seasons.

6                   And that has to be commented on or reacted to.  
7                   Then a final proposal which may have perhaps more  
8                   stringent restrictions, fewer restrictions, no  
9                   restrictions, different ways of attending to permitting,  
10                  educational issues that go with permitting. And  
11                  everything else then will flow from that process.

12                  So it's really darn important that people  
13                  respond and that people are specific in terms of what  
14                  they do and don't like and why they think something  
15                  ought to be different if they think it ought to be in  
16                  whichever direction that happens to be.

17                  Jim.

18                  MR. SULLIVAN: One of the things I'd like to  
19                  give some area of our thought process that went into  
20                  this, what's currently the volunteer avoidance system.

21                  We had originally been thinking along the lines  
22                  of voluntary avoidance and then going to permits later.  
23                  Really one of the things that struck me is the voluntary  
24                  avoidance system as it is now basically bans everyone  
25                  who wants to be a good citizen from going on the trails.

1                   We met with the hiking clubs. The policy at  
2 the big hiking clubs are never to go on a trail that  
3 there's a voluntary avoidance. So it seems to me on one  
4 hand, I guess it makes it easier for us, because we  
5 don't have to be in any kind of enforcement mode.

6                   But it's really I think bad public policy in  
7 saying anyone who wants to break the rules can go ahead  
8 and do this, but anybody who wants to be a responsible  
9 citizen is banned.

10                  I think that made a big impact on Desert Trails  
11 and Coachella Valley Hiking Club. They will now have  
12 the opportunity to go out on those trails legally with a  
13 permit. I would say those are the most responsible  
14 group of hikers.

15                  If anybody should have the right to use the  
16 trails, it certainly was them. That was a big part of  
17 our process was trying to make this simple and also  
18 fair. I really think it's very unfair right now to say  
19 that we don't want you to, but we're not going to do  
20 anything. You either do something or you don't have the  
21 rules.

22                  CHAIRMAN CRITES: Yes.

23                  MR. BROCKMAN: Also I think as I remember  
24 there's some phasing out of trails as new trails are  
25 built to replace them. I think the monitoring program

1 that is proposed for the plan allows for some transition  
2 science to occur between the phasing in and phasing out  
3 wherein you may have some situations of further  
4 evaluations after a year or two of use of trails under  
5 the permit system to restudy and reevaluate the affect  
6 of the hiking community.

7 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Other questions or comments?

8 MS. ROSENTHAL: Before Rachelle, the BLM  
9 biologist left, she had mentioned the possibility of  
10 bringing in a peer review of other scientists that are  
11 not from this area that might not be emotionally  
12 charged. I'm wondering if anybody knows whatever  
13 happened with that.

14 MR. SULLIVAN: What we're doing is the EIR/EIS  
15 has had a great deal of input from John Wehausen, who is  
16 a UC professor. We have not finished the EIR/EIS, but I  
17 think when you read that, it's a pretty good evaluation  
18 of the science and a great deal of input from  
19 John Wehausen, who I think has -- he's not quite  
20 possibly as emotionally involved in this issue.

21 But it does come down to there really isn't any  
22 absolute evidence that you can point out one way or the  
23 other.

24 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Jim, along with that, the  
25 state director of Fish & Wildlife has noted that they

1 intend to reconstitute the recovery team for Bighorn  
2 sheep and finally take a look at whether or not some of  
3 the things that were done were done on the basis of  
4 point of view, science, both, neither, and so on and so  
5 forth.

6 I think that's widely seen as a  
7 confidence-building effort with a lot of folks in the  
8 community, whatever the conclusions happen to be. So  
9 yes.

10 MS. BARROWS: If I could just add to that  
11 briefly, Laurie. Once the plan goes out, it's our  
12 intention to bring in independent Bighorn sheep  
13 biologist to comment as well.

14 But also once the plan goes into place, the  
15 research element and those various elements will have  
16 independent scientists who will be participating in the  
17 selection of or development of the research program.  
18 We're really trying to maximize the opportunity for  
19 that.

20 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Other questions or comments?  
21 One last comment. We did have the dedication of both  
22 the little loop trail in Palm Desert, it's in the  
23 National Monument, and the first link of the Hopalong  
24 Cassidy Trail last Saturday.

25 MS. GEORGE: The visitor center loop trail?

1                   CHAIRMAN CRITES: No. The loop trail that  
2 comes out of Adam Park that goes to Cassidy. Anyhow,  
3 there were over 400 people there. A friend of mine took  
4 some photos. It shows all the equestrian units that  
5 were there, which there were a multitude, mountain  
6 bikers and hiking clubs and all the rest of that.

7                   I think that's pretty darn good evidence of the  
8 interest that is here in our valley both by residents  
9 and tourists and so on and so forth for outside  
10 recreation opportunities.

11                   I think the perimeter trails program will have  
12 a very strong constituency from the folks that live in  
13 our valley.

14                   Jim, thank you. Katie. Any last comments from  
15 either of you?

16                   MS. BARROWS: No.

17                   MR. SULLIVAN: Covered.

18                   CHAIRMAN CRITES: It should be on the street  
19 very soon. So comment away with whatever things you  
20 think are appropriate.

21                   MS. GEORGE: I do have a comment.

22                   CHAIRMAN CRITES: Yes, ma'am.

23                   MS. GEORGE: One thing as we move along with  
24 signage, with theme, branding of the Monument logo, I'm  
25 to carry the message from BLM folks like Jim Foote and

1 some other folks, Greg Hill, if the cities would just  
2 contact myself or Melissa, we will make sure you are put  
3 in contact with Foote to know if signs are going in and  
4 things are happening so we can serve as a resource at  
5 the BLM to review materials.

6 Something recently came out that talked about  
7 the BLM adventure pass. Well, the BLM has never had an  
8 adventure pass. The Monument plan, we're not going to  
9 have the Forest Service adventure pass.

10 So we're a resource, a tool. We'd like to make  
11 sure the logo at least gets on to rebuild that signage  
12 work group -- the signage work group that we talked  
13 about in the monument notes of the meeting in October.

14 So I've been asked by various staff to carry  
15 this message forward to the Advisory Committee. If  
16 anybody has any questions, I'm glad to answer them.

17 MS. WATLING: I have one because it comes up  
18 locally. The Forest Adventure pass, is that passe now  
19 for residents?

20 MS. GEORGE: Within the Monument boundary. We  
21 covered that.

22 MS. WATLING: That's what I thought. I didn't  
23 know if I could tell people, "Yeah. You don't need  
24 one."

25 MS. GEORGE: It's signed now. We have a Record

1 of Decision.

2 MS. ROSENTHAL: If you have a Record of  
3 Decision, then that's the way it is. So be it.

4 CHAIRMAN CRITES: We might want to post that on  
5 Santa Rosa Mountain Road and a couple of those places  
6 that such is the case.

7 MR. MORGAN: Or just take the existing signs  
8 down.

9 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Oh, they're already -- local  
10 residents have already helped in that part of it.

11 MR. WATTS: Speaking along the lines of a sign  
12 program and also the trail program, with the amount of  
13 wood that's coming out of the forest, I would encourage  
14 you to at least maybe give some thought to recycle or  
15 utilize that wood to update and maybe enhance sign  
16 programs.

17 At the higher elevations, we've typically used  
18 wooden signs. It's just something for the Forest  
19 Service and BLM to consider.

20 MS. GEORGE: That's a good idea.

21 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Any other comments? If not,  
22 thanks to the conservancy and to CVAG this afternoon.  
23 Thanks for coming a little early. We appreciate that.

24 MS. BARROWS: Sure.

25 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Danella, would you like -- I

1 guess Laurie, would you like to do the introductions?

2 MS. ROSENTHAL: Danella can do it.

3 MS. GEORGE: We are introducing Kris --

4 MS. ASSEL: Assel.

5 MS. GEORGE: Thank you. We don't want to get  
6 that wrong. It must have been fun growing up.

7 MS. ASSEL: It was a blast. It really was.

8 MS. GEORGE: I had the opportunity to go to  
9 Kris' discovery center. She works with the San  
10 Bernardino Nonprofit Foundation. It's pretty amazing.  
11 We hope to put together a field trip this summer maybe  
12 in July for the Advisory Committee.

13 Gary, you went and saw that.

14 Kris is highly respected by Gene Zimmerman,  
15 many people in the Forest Service, as well as the  
16 community of Big Bear and the greater community of  
17 Southern California. We asked her to show the group  
18 what you have been up to for about the last how many  
19 years?

20 MS. ASSEL: The organization since 1994. I've  
21 been there four and a half.

22 MS. GEORGE: I'll give it to you.

23 MS. ASSEL: Okay. While it's doing that, I'll  
24 start going. When Danella asked me to be here, she  
25 asked me to talk about our nonprofit and kind of give an

1 overview on how we came to be, what we do now, what we  
2 see for the future and kind of some lessons learned.

3 I think in talking to other organizations, you  
4 probably learn more about the things that we do that  
5 haven't succeeded more than you will the things that  
6 have succeeded.

7 So In terms of talking about our nonprofit, I'm  
8 probably going to be focused a little more on the  
9 administrative details.

10 By nature of all you being here, you're  
11 involved active people. So telling you what a wonderful  
12 resource volunteers are is probably something that this  
13 group is intimately familiar with.

14 MS. GEORGE: We may need to take a two or three  
15 minute break.

16 (Discussion off the record.)

17 MS. GEORGE: Okay. Good.

18 MS. ASSEL: There we go. I'm the executive  
19 director of the San Bernardino National Forest  
20 Association. I came to the organization almost five  
21 years ago as a volunteer myself. About half my staff is  
22 made up of volunteers.

23 We threaten volunteers with that. We say, "If  
24 you do a really good job, we'll make you work for us."  
25 Some like that idea. Some don't. But I think it shows

1 a passion to the organization, though, that people come  
2 in, they get acquainted, and end up becoming part of us  
3 in a bigger way.

4 I want to talk about our mission, which is to  
5 assist the Forest Service in achieving its mission and  
6 also to bring new resources to the forest. That being  
7 people resources, interest resources, money resources.  
8 All different kinds of resources.

9 We kind of use a working goal that we want to  
10 make sure every visitor and resident of the forest  
11 becomes a good steward of the land. It's pretty simple.  
12 That's what we want to get to.

13 We started in 1994. A woman named Chris Comar,  
14 who was my predecessor, actually founded the  
15 organization. She had been hiking in the forest and  
16 just noticed some things that were in disrepair and  
17 could use some help.

18 She had experience in partnering private and  
19 public entities together and thought there was a great  
20 opportunity in the National Forest. So she went  
21 knocking on the door of the SO.

22 Fortunately, she found somebody who was as  
23 passionate as she was. It's really easy to say no.  
24 "We've never done that before. It must be impossible to  
25 do. There's regulations against it," or whatever.

1                   So she fortunately found a person who said, "We  
2                   can figure out a way to do this." Those two worked hard  
3                   together. That was Gail Vanderbe.

4                   I think one thing that makes us a little  
5                   different from some groups that ask me to talk about how  
6                   to create a nonprofit is a lot of them are special  
7                   interest groups that want to partner with an agency  
8                   because they're not getting what they want.

9                   They don't have equestrian trails or whatever.  
10                  They see partnering as really not even a tool but a  
11                  hammer to get what they want out of the agency.

12                  We started differently. It really was the  
13                  agency that identified the need that it had, that it  
14                  wasn't meeting it's own expectation for recreation  
15                  resources and public information. So we were created to  
16                  help fill that void or to help bridge the gap a little  
17                  bit.

18                  In looking at our board of directors, we  
19                  started with some strong corporate partners. Some of  
20                  the first board members was the heads of the motorcycle  
21                  division at Honda. We also started with a guy that was  
22                  the western regional manager of Arrowhead Water.

23                  That raised a lot of eyebrows. A lot of people  
24                  thought if these folks are sitting on the board of  
25                  directors, there must be corruption, favors being

1 bought. I understand we went through several audits.  
2 Gene Zimmerman got grilled many times and proved it was  
3 on the up and up.

4 One thing people forget is that somebody wants  
5 to be on the board of directors because they have an  
6 interest. You're not going to go out and pluck somebody  
7 off the street who has no interest in what you're doing.

8 Whether it's motivated by personal passion or  
9 their jobs, I don't care. As long as they're willing to  
10 play in our organization, bring us positive outcome and  
11 play by the rules, what's wrong with that? There's  
12 nothing wrong with that.

13 We got start-up funds from the corporate  
14 partners. Honda kicked in some money, Ducks Unlimited,  
15 and the Forest Service. That's who the early partners  
16 were.

17 I have a hard copy of the presentation. I have  
18 four or five copies, if anybody wants those.

19 MS. GEORGE: Why don't I grab them and hand  
20 them out for you.

21 MS. ASSEL: Yeah. There's like five or six of  
22 them.

23 MR. SMITH: We'll just share one of them over  
24 here.

25 MS. ASSEL: Okay. Today we have five programs.

1 What's a little different about us than other friends  
2 organizations that I see is we aren't just there to  
3 maintain a specific trail or just for money raising.

4 We are literally integrated into the forest  
5 program. There are programs that exist solely because  
6 we're there. If we go away, the program probably goes  
7 away. The only reason the program exists is because  
8 there was a public need for it.

9 We run the Big Bear Discovery Center which is  
10 the Visitor Center up in Big Bear. We get 170,000  
11 visitors a year. That's a huge number. We benchmarked  
12 against a bunch up in Oregon. The one that had the most  
13 visitation was half of what we got. So for a small  
14 community, that's phenomenal.

15 Fire Lookout Hosts. We have seven active fire  
16 lookouts. There's three of them over here, which are  
17 volunteer. They maintain and they staff. That program  
18 initially started as more just a heritage preservation  
19 program. It's grown into an active part of the fire  
20 program.

21 These folks called in seven first reports of  
22 smoke this year. They helped in over 30 smoke checks.  
23 In other words, dispatch calling them and saying "Hey,  
24 we have a report of smoke. Can you confirm that?"

25 So they're really an active role. This year

1 they helped -- they were the only ones who could see and  
2 locate a downed air tanker that went down earlier this  
3 fall. They're playing a pretty significant role.

4 There's about 240 volunteers in that group.  
5 They staffed the lookouts from May to Thanksgiving. I  
6 think anybody who lives in the mountain communities owes  
7 these folks a debt of gratitude.

8 We started a new program this year called Fire  
9 Education Volunteers. It's a small group. In the fall  
10 fires, one active role they played is they've been  
11 trained as information officers. They helped answer the  
12 phones, help in the community.

13 We can place these people at chambers of  
14 commerce to help the incoming calls they get. We also  
15 have a fire education exhibit, a traveling one, which  
16 actually debuts next week. That will be out on the road  
17 staffed by volunteers probably beginning of March.

18 Children's Forest is an area outside of Running  
19 Springs that we educate about 6000 kids there. We  
20 also have 70 -- we doubled our number this year -- 70  
21 youth volunteers. They help run a small visitor center  
22 there. They lead guided hikes.

23 In the summer they do slide programs four times  
24 a week at one of the local resorts. They do it at the  
25 campgrounds.

1                   Special events, special programs. We had a  
2 group of motivated Forest Service people who are the  
3 archeologists up in the district. With them we've  
4 created a group of about 10 junior archeologist. These  
5 kids are helping with the cataloging. These kids are  
6 going to have a work assignment, and that's yours to  
7 complete. It's pretty cool.

8                   OHV volunteers. Those are the Off Highway  
9 Vehicle volunteers. They're on the motorcycles.  
10 They're out on four by fours and ATVs. Patrols mostly.  
11 Just out being greeters, seeing whose having problems.

12                   A lot of times people are on illegal trails  
13 because they don't know they're on illegal trails. They  
14 can help them find their way on the right path.

15                   They also do trail projects, signing projects.  
16 They repair fences and all that. We have volunteers get  
17 called on by the Forest Service frequently to say "Gee,  
18 we can't send enough people. Do you have some  
19 volunteers that can help us out?"

20                   Our fire lookout volunteers for four years in a  
21 row have been a core part of the staff up at the State  
22 Fair. We send about 11 or 12 there. That's like a perk  
23 for them. That's like the biggest compliment they can  
24 get, to be representing the Forest Service. That's hard  
25 work. That's all day long standing there, but they

1 adore it.

2 That's how many volunteers we had last year.  
3 We had over 45,000 hours of work. That's the equivalent  
4 of 38 full-time people. That's a lot of capacity we  
5 built there.

6 Our prime purpose is to provide information to  
7 the public. All of these programs, even including the  
8 OHV, is talking to and educating the people. There's  
9 such huge demand in this area for recreation. There's  
10 more and more people. There's less and less resources  
11 to help educate people.

12 The people that we're getting are more and more  
13 urban people. They don't break the rules on purpose.  
14 Just nobody has had the opportunity to tell them any  
15 differently.

16 This is our organization. The gray boxes are  
17 people who are Forest Service employees who are plugged  
18 into our organization chart showing that we really do  
19 work together.

20 Our board of directors. Then there's me. We  
21 have the Discovery Center. We have the Discovery Center  
22 expansion. We're in the middle of an over \$4 million  
23 expansion. We're adding a whole new amphitheater.

24 New Fire Ed. Program and what we're calling our  
25 field program -- Children's Forest, Fire Lookout, OHV

1 Volunteers. Except for the boxes that say "Number of  
2 Volunteers," these are staff people who work for me.  
3 That's our organization.

4 So in addition to the volunteer resources, this  
5 is about eight full-time equivalents that we bring to  
6 the Forest Service in that capacity.

7 Revenue streams. I'm going to get into the  
8 nuts and bolts. We look at our earned and contributed  
9 revenue. This might look like a real hideous trend here  
10 on the earned income, but it's not.

11 For these three years we were incubating  
12 anywhere from two to four employees for the Bureau of  
13 Land Management and a partnership program they were  
14 doing at their training headquarters in Phoenix.

15 So kind of like the incremental drop is exactly  
16 what you get, income and money going back out to them  
17 was. What I do like is we do have a growing line on the  
18 contributed income. This gives some idea of our  
19 capacity to raise money and bring money in.

20 This is our financials looking at the source of  
21 income. I took out our retail sales because that  
22 inflates the picture of what you're looking at. So this  
23 is really what we have and where the money comes from  
24 for operations.

25 "FS" is Forest Service Participating Agreement.

1 That's the overriding agreement that we have with the  
2 Forest Service that allows us to do business, bring  
3 funds in.

4 Forest Service grants. Sometimes there are  
5 national grant programs that we can compete. Or in  
6 essence, we compete for them, but the Forest Service  
7 submits the grant on our behalf. So we have different  
8 grant programs.

9 Corporate sponsors. Just outright donations.  
10 Fee-based are we have tours. Our science programs and  
11 Children's Forest cost something. If it's a value and I  
12 have to pay people for it, we have to charge them it.

13 We have some offsetting income from a sponsor  
14 that does it. And then just some other grants that we  
15 have from other sources. This total pie, looking at it  
16 is about a \$600,000 pie.

17 We like to be accountable to our Forest Service  
18 partner because they do invest in us. So we calculate  
19 every year what we're bringing to them. Outside of  
20 hours and people who do good works, we've got to measure  
21 up on the dollar and cent side too.

22 So we valued as \$10 an hour for volunteers.  
23 This is higher than what I quoted earlier because I have  
24 folks who volunteer, board of directors who donate legal  
25 services, all different sorts of things. We value

1 those.

2           So over \$500,000 in volunteer contribution.  
3 This is the cost of my staff right there. We have this  
4 asterisk here because we said, "Okay. What would it  
5 cost the Forest Service to do the work that my staff  
6 does?" They have a much higher cost. They're a bigger  
7 organization. They pay better. They have retirement  
8 plans.

9           This is roughly what the cost of government  
10 would be for replacing my whole staff, except for the  
11 people who work the store.

12           Project funds is outside the grants that we  
13 brought in that are just going on the ground. A lot of  
14 this is we wanted a grant to pay for all the exhibit  
15 designs and the discovery expansion of that's almost a  
16 half million dollar grant.

17           So the total value is over \$1 million dollars.  
18 If you look at it in Forest Service dollars, \$1.2  
19 million. Here's how much money the Forest Service  
20 invested in us last year. \$152,000. A lot of people  
21 choke over that number. Good God. That much money  
22 going to a nonprofit.

23           I've got to tell you, in the corporate world if  
24 you could return this on that investment, you would get  
25 huge bonuses. There would be a statue of you outside.

1 It would be phenomenal.

2 A lot of money that we get comes from an  
3 adventure pass. I'm a huge fan of the adventure pass.  
4 For the people who are against the adventure pass, every  
5 dollar that we pay for an adventure pass in our program,  
6 we're returning over six times the value. So it's a  
7 good multiplication of people's money.

8 Any questions on this? No.

9 Talking about using our volunteers as a public  
10 interface, there's in a lot of places the volunteers  
11 aren't on the front line. It's staff people. We figure  
12 that our volunteers have more face time with the public  
13 than Forest Service staff do.

14 Up in the fire lookouts they get about 16,000  
15 visitors a year up there. That's an opportunity for  
16 education and interface. What we really like about it  
17 is, obviously we're adding capacity there.

18 We bring to the Forest Service a bunch of new  
19 skills. One thing that made me we want to work for this  
20 organization, I said "I'll volunteer for you full-time  
21 for three months." I was in between jobs. I was at the  
22 Discovery Center primarily.

23 The volunteers just blew me away. They're the  
24 ones who talked me into staying. By and large, retired  
25 people there. Out of our 400 volunteers, I would say

1 over half of them are retired.

2 These are retired people who don't know how to  
3 stop working. They don't know what to do. I am stunned  
4 by their motivation, the wisdom they bring, the skills  
5 they bring.

6 We have a guy answering phones at the visitor  
7 center who was a VP at a university. We have a woman in  
8 our fire lookout program who literally was a rocket  
9 scientist.

10 We have a lot of retired teachers. They're  
11 drawn to our program. It's just their customer service  
12 skills, their knowledge, their ways of dealing with the  
13 public are enormous. It's not just that we're bringing  
14 bodies and time. We're bringing a lot of wisdom and  
15 skills.

16 Two years ago we got a grant to restore one of  
17 the fire lookouts in Big Bear that was in danger of  
18 being shut down. It was the most visited one. The rail  
19 was about this high on it. That was the first big red  
20 flag. How somebody didn't fall over that, I never knew.  
21 And was just rotting, quite frankly.

22 So we got a grant to do a bunch of rebuilding.  
23 We thought we need somebody to project manage this. We  
24 sent a call out. A guy's hand goes up, somebody who was  
25 a volunteer in our fire lookout program. He's is a shop

1 teacher at Long Beach High School and spends his summers  
2 at Big Bear.

3 He said, "I'll do it." It's like, you know, we  
4 couldn't afford to buy that talent, but here's a guy who  
5 says, "Yeah. I'm there. Count me in."

6 I'm not sure all the Forest Service people  
7 appreciate that, but we sure do. I think the public  
8 gets a lot out of it too.

9 Using the volunteers as hosts. One thing that  
10 we find is it's a peer-to-peer conversation. You see  
11 somebody coming up in a green uniform, you tend to think  
12 oh, God. What did I do wrong now? It's just ingrained  
13 in us, flashing lights. Stuff like that.

14 Our volunteers do not wear a Forest Service  
15 uniform. We do that on purpose. We want them to be  
16 very approachable to the public.

17 We want them to be role models that it isn't  
18 just paid employees who are needed to care for the  
19 forest, but it's public citizens too.

20 So right there because they're in a different  
21 outfit, it sends the message. They do have the Forest  
22 Service shield on one side, but then they have their  
23 name badge which says "Volunteer" on it. And on the  
24 back of their shirt is the program logo.

25 It really does set up a nice way to converse

1 with the public. Our volunteers are the best tool to  
2 recruit more volunteers. People say, "I want to do  
3 that." Here they come.

4 If somebody is a volunteer in one organization,  
5 chances are they're volunteering somewhere else too.  
6 They're active somewhere else too. These folks are  
7 awesome.

8 That knowledge -- we train. Our volunteers  
9 usually get about 20 to 30 hours of training before they  
10 start their jobs. They get job descriptions. So  
11 they're knowledgeable.

12 Obviously, they're passionate or they wouldn't  
13 be volunteering with us. When they go to the rotary  
14 meetings or whatever, they now have knowledge they can  
15 share. We're seeing it in Big Bear. We're starting to  
16 see it in Lake Arrowhead. It's really building a bridge  
17 between the agency and the local community.

18 I don't know how you put a dollar value on  
19 that. I don't think you can. I think it's been a great  
20 side effect to the work we do.

21 Value added. We can get grants the federal  
22 government can't compete for. Sometimes they're to fund  
23 our projects. One woman who is a biologist will come to  
24 me a lot and she says, "I found out about this grant,  
25 but we can't compete."

1                   Literally, we'll write the grant together. We  
2 get the money in. Through a collection agreement, most  
3 of the money goes back to her because she has the  
4 capability to do it and we don't. So we just like  
5 increased money coming into the agency in that way.

6                   We also help the Forest Service win grants.  
7 Because there are many of them both internal to the  
8 Forest Service and other ones that require a partnering  
9 component or a volunteer component. So we bring our  
10 resources to give that competitive edge there.

11                   Cultivating corporate interest. I've got to  
12 tell you, after the fires this was incredible. We go  
13 out and bring money in. Part of our science education  
14 program at Children's Forest is funded by something  
15 called Molly Corp.

16                   They're a mining company. They said, "It's  
17 important to educate kids, and we'd like to support your  
18 program." So that's about \$25,000 or \$30,000 every year  
19 that comes in to help us do that.

20                   But after the fires, it was incredible. There  
21 were corporations calling us or the Forest Service and  
22 they kick it over to us. You've got to react fast to  
23 those.

24                   You've got to have something compelling.  
25 That's where a lot of federal agencies fall down in

1 bringing corporate money in. They see what the  
2 corporate money can do for them and the public they  
3 serve, but don't think about what am I giving back to  
4 the corporate interest. These people are in business  
5 for a reason and want some recognition.

6 An example. Two or three years ago we hooked  
7 up -- we developed a partnership with Porsche. They had  
8 been planning to launch their SUV called the Cayenne.  
9 The marketing people did their job, got out there and  
10 created some buzz. The folks from Germany called and  
11 said, "We're delayed by about a year."

12 So it's like how do I sustain this interest?  
13 So with their PR agency, they did all the work. It was  
14 called the Cayenne Crossing, which was a nationwide  
15 network of historic interesting valuable roads and  
16 trails that they would support and get PR value, and  
17 when the cars came, they would drive across.

18 So we found out about that. We submitted a  
19 proposal for a historic road in our forest that was in  
20 danger of being closed down. It just didn't have the  
21 maintenance. It was also a fire road.

22 We submitted a proposal to them, got the money.  
23 Because we're close to L.A. as opposed to somewhere in  
24 the middle of Iowa, we get a lot more press interest.

25 We helped them host two press events on our

1 forest. They developed such confidence in us that if  
2 the writer wanted to come out, they felt comfortable to  
3 say, "Just talk to so and so. She'll take you on this  
4 trip."

5 We got front of section in the Orange County  
6 paper, twice in the L.A. Times, the Riverside Press  
7 Enterprise, San Bernardino Sun. It serves Porsche's  
8 interest. It serves our interest. It serves the Forest  
9 Service's interest.

10 Here's a good corporate citizen investing in  
11 us. They got a lot out of it. They were doing a  
12 project on the George Washington National Forest at the  
13 same time, a road that was going to be closed down.

14 The Forest Service didn't have money, so  
15 Porsche brought that. In talking to the marketing  
16 manager, he said it was so frustrating because the  
17 forest folks he was dealing with refused to cooperate  
18 with them on any type of press events.

19 They wouldn't give them the permits to go back  
20 there and do press events. So that's something that  
21 didn't work for them. Corporate money won't keep coming  
22 in without giving something good back to the entity.  
23 But it doesn't mean it's not good for the forest.

24 We talked about reaching to the community.  
25 Marketing and public relations. I know all you agencies

1 have public affairs officers and public information  
2 officers. But if you think about what they primarily do  
3 is they have to tell the public when something opens or  
4 closes or when there's a big incident. All important  
5 stuff, but it's not marketing.

6 I trade public relations from public  
7 information. We get to do the fun stuff. We had the  
8 L.A. Times writer out on a project that kids did. They  
9 spent a week out there learning how to design a trail,  
10 learning how to use a GPS system, learning how to  
11 measure slope, deciding where a trail should go.

12 We had a writer spend a day with us, and we got  
13 a great article out of it. Our tours get covered all  
14 the time. We get to tell the public the fun and  
15 interesting things about the forest. It entices them to  
16 come visit it in a responsible way. So we do a lot of  
17 that for the forest. And then events.

18 I have three or four slides on key issues.  
19 This is kind of like my points of pain in managing our  
20 organization. If I can help any organization not have  
21 those points of pain, I will be successful.

22 There's a low recognition of need to  
23 fund-raise, amongst our volunteers especially. We can  
24 say it, but I don't know why. We recruited our  
25 volunteers to do work. The need to fund-raise just

1 wasn't integrated in part of that training.

2           We're changing that. There's a heightened  
3 awareness of that. But earlier on, there was no  
4 recognition that the organization needed money. So that  
5 was a big mistake.

6           We struggled with building sustainable  
7 returning revenue base. I deal painfully with small  
8 business issues. Workmans' comp, huge. You've read  
9 about it in the papers. Cost of health insurance,  
10 competitive pay. I put in here satisfaction for those  
11 to fund-raise.

12           An issue that ties back to workmans' comp, my  
13 staff went from \$1800 to \$5200 per month. So that's  
14 \$4000 more. So that means for every month we're in  
15 operation, I have to raise an additional \$4000. For  
16 folks, either volunteers, board members, staff who help  
17 me fund-raise that's a dissatisfier for them.

18           The feel like, "I'm going out and getting this  
19 money. We should be seeing something new, fun in  
20 return." But I've got to cover our base of operations  
21 first. So that's a dissatisfier, you know, that just  
22 our cost of doing business keeps going up.

23           Project funds versus administration funds and  
24 grants. There are a lot of grant programs that will  
25 give you money to pay the staff, but nothing beyond

1 that. An organization of any size doesn't get anywhere  
2 without a bookkeeper and without paying insurance,  
3 having a boss sometimes.

4 We also have dealt with grant programs where  
5 they won't give us money to pay for the staff. They'll  
6 buy whatever, but we have to raise the money somewhere  
7 else to pay for the staff person to administer the  
8 project.

9 That frustrates volunteers because they're  
10 like, "Didn't we get that grant to do this or that?"  
11 It's like, "Yeah, we did, but there's other stuff that  
12 needs to go with it."

13 Staff issues -- retention and pay. My staff,  
14 we sit -- most of us sit in Forest Service offices. We  
15 use the Forest Service phone. We're allowed to use  
16 Forest Service vehicles. I drove one down here today.  
17 That's an enormous value to us. I know it's a cost to  
18 the Forest Service.

19 It started out that way because Gene Zimmerman  
20 said for every dollar we bring in, he'd like to see as  
21 much of it going back to the forest as it could versus  
22 our paying rent and phone bills and for copiers and  
23 stuff like that.

24 Frankly, if we had to pay for that, we wouldn't  
25 exist. So that's an invaluable service. There's a huge

1 intangible that goes with that. Think in your daily  
2 lives how many problems you solve by hallway  
3 conversations by being there and being part of a team.

4 We're struggling with -- new offices are being  
5 added on to the Discovery Center, which is going to pull  
6 most of my staff in Big Bear out of their co-office with  
7 the Forest Service. I think we'll really start losing  
8 out of something by being segregated in our offices.

9 Being in those offices does have some issues,  
10 though. My folks are paid less than their Forest  
11 Service peers. It's not a big issue, but people become  
12 aware of it over time. That's a motivation issue we  
13 have to deal with.

14 Also we haven't been able to keep pace with the  
15 cost of living, giving the people raises that are  
16 equivalent to the cost of living.

17 Cultural issues. Again, a lot of these issues  
18 are co-office. Again, the benefits outweigh the  
19 negative. One thing we deal with because of our name --  
20 do not pick a name that's this much like the agency that  
21 you're working with. People don't differentiate between  
22 us and Forest Service very easily.

23 In the community of Big Bear and Arrowhead,  
24 we've really sunk a lot of time into that. And it's  
25 starting to make a difference. But if you have the

1 opportunity to start off with a different name, go for  
2 it.

3           There's a little bit of an outsider-among-us  
4 mentality. There are some agency people that don't like  
5 seeing non-agency people in their offices -- getting  
6 offices, using phones. Things like that. I think that  
7 culture is changing quickly. But it's a thing. If  
8 you're going to be officed with the agency you're  
9 working with, it's just something to be aware of.

10           We get into some union issues sometimes. When  
11 the Discovery Center was first opened, there were big  
12 issues with the unions of these volunteer and agency  
13 people are taking away Forest Service jobs.

14           We maintained the same number of Forest Service  
15 jobs that were doing that when it was just a ranger  
16 station. We got over that hurdle, but it was an itch.  
17 We deal with it with a fire organization. The new fire  
18 education unit that we created has taken a long time to  
19 get started. A lot of it has been because of union  
20 issues. Folks are concerned that volunteers are  
21 infringing on their jobs.

22           Sometimes we go through a formal audit with the  
23 union and have to go through a negotiation process to  
24 prove measures that we're not taking jobs away. So  
25 depending on what you're doing with your nonprofit and

1 what their goal is, that's something to be aware of.

2           Some people are very concerned about  
3 corporation partnering, the indemnification of public  
4 lands. You set up guidelines. Here's how we're going  
5 to recognize partners. And get your Forest Service or  
6 agency people to buy off on it.

7           Some people continue to think, "Oh, wow. If  
8 they're paid money, there's something bad going on  
9 there." For us there's the risk of adventure pass funds  
10 going away. I don't know where the dollars that the  
11 Forest Service contribute to us will come from  
12 otherwise.

13           A quick understanding of our business model.  
14 We as partners work really hard to integrate into the  
15 Forest Service culture and understand how the Forest  
16 Service does business. We have to. They're kind of  
17 like our primary customer in a way. I have to know what  
18 their values are, know what's important to them. That's  
19 what's going to sell what we do.

20           Other than high-level people, there's some  
21 people who are my regular liaisons that have a very low  
22 understanding of our business model. I don't have the  
23 Federal Treasury behind me.

24           If I want to do a \$15,000 outlay of cash, I  
25 have to think about my cash flow. Things like that.

1                   Must have if you're your putting together a  
2 nonprofit organization. The first one where my  
3 organization fell down from the beginning is a dedicated  
4 fund-raising capability. Even today I don't have a  
5 development officer, which for an organization of our  
6 size it pretty much unheard of.

7                   The fund-raising is kind of dispersed over  
8 about three people, but nobody is concentrating on it  
9 full-time. I wouldn't even launch a nonprofit today  
10 without saying we have a fund-raiser. Here's how we're  
11 going to pay for them for at least a year.

12                   A motivated, active and accountable board.  
13 These are people who are willing to hold their own feet  
14 to the fire and say this is what we're going to deliver  
15 or create, whatever the promise is.

16                   Tied into the fund-raising I would build an  
17 endowment of some kind. I don't have an endowment  
18 behind my organization, which is a scary position to be  
19 in. Like everything, you're going to have cycles in  
20 your business. I don't have that bank account. We have  
21 a little bit of one, but I really don't have much  
22 backing me up there.

23                   I put balance of the chicken and the egg.  
24 That's why my organization doesn't have all of this. At  
25 the start up you say we have to have the product. We

1 have to be able to show the good works that we're doing  
2 or convince investors that we're really doing this.  
3 We're not just people with a good intentions. That we  
4 can really deliver what we promise.

5           How do you balance doing that start-up work and  
6 making yourself viable in terms of what you're  
7 delivering, but you've got to come back and add the  
8 fund-raising side to it? In my organization, we haven't  
9 established that balance of what comes first.

10           You have to have agency people who want you  
11 there and who are willing to swim against the tides in  
12 making things happen. Accountability, you've seen some  
13 of that. And absolutely the volunteer recognition.

14           Food, a huge thing. Just food. That alone.  
15 In the agency budgets, they're not allowed to buy food.  
16 So that's something we do. We come in and buy the food  
17 and do the good stuff. We recognize them any way we  
18 can. That's what I have.

19           What questions do you folks have?

20           CHAIRMAN CRITES: Questions? Yes.

21           MR. FREET: You focused on your organization in  
22 Running Springs and the Big Bear area.

23           What do you do for the San Jacintos?

24           MS. ASSEL: We have the three fire lookouts

25 over here. I think we reopened all three of them that

1 we staff and maintain. Then we also have our  
2 off-highway vehicles who are active over here. We're  
3 not as active over here. But those are the two programs  
4 that operate over here.

5 MS. GEORGE: The Discovery Center itself, how  
6 many folks have been there from the MAC in Big Bear?

7 Okay. You're building another facility as  
8 well; is that right?

9 MS. ASSEL: No. We're adding on to that one.

10 MS. GEORGE: Adding on. Okay. Can you tell us  
11 about that facility?

12 MS. ASSEL: If you go there right now -- the  
13 first time I walked into the building, I'm like "Nice  
14 building, but so what?" It's truly a visitor center  
15 right now where people go and get information.

16 We have some exhibit space. We have a store.  
17 We have a community room there that we can lock off from  
18 the rest of the place, and it has bathrooms attached to  
19 it. Almost every single night, that room is booked by  
20 some community group.

21 I've got to tell you, that is how so many  
22 people in our community have been introduced to the  
23 Discovery Center. It's just by "I've got a meeting over  
24 there. I'll go check it out."

25 I've recruited so many people onto committees

1 and as volunteers who wenever would have met without  
2 just letting them use a room. It sounds small. It's  
3 huge. That's basically all the Discovery Center has  
4 been.

5 Obviously, there's a huge need for information.  
6 We're adding about a 3600 square foot exhibit hall. The  
7 exhibits were concepted and initial design done back in  
8 1994 when the place was originally designed.

9 We've refined those some and are moving forward  
10 with that. There's construction happening right now.  
11 We have a roof over the exhibit hall.

12 MR. SMITH: Can I show a picture?

13 MS. ASSEL: Sure. Thank you. So we're more  
14 than doubling the space. We also added an amphitheater.  
15 We had a small amphitheater behind the building. We're  
16 adding a large amphitheater that will hold about 350  
17 people. If we bring additional chairs into an area that  
18 we built for that purpose, maybe up to 450 people.

19 That's a community link. We live in this  
20 beautiful place with sunny weather, and there's not an  
21 amphitheater in the whole town. So we built the  
22 amphitheater. We'll negotiate to let the community  
23 groups and special events to come and be hosted there.

24 We still have a fund-raising challenge to build  
25 the exhibits. We have all the money we need for the

1 design and for the construction of the facilities. We  
2 need to raise the money for the exhibits. So it's going  
3 to be a little while for those. Seeing the dirt moving  
4 and the building going up is motivating people.

5 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Other questions? Yes.

6 MS. WATLING: So all of your volunteers who  
7 work on trails and fire lookouts or whatever are covered  
8 under workers' comp?

9 MS. ASSEL: No. That's a good question. We  
10 manage the volunteers is probably a better way to say  
11 it. They're signed up as Forest Service volunteers. So  
12 the protection is according to your federal volunteers,  
13 and we manage them.

14 That probably wouldn't preclude somebody from  
15 trying to sue us if they were really hell bent on doing  
16 that. We looked at doing it the other way.

17 What you may or may not know is with the Forest  
18 Service, if one of my volunteers gets hurt performing  
19 their job, their volunteer agreement clearly states that  
20 they will be compensated for the immediate emergency  
21 care or whatever is determined immediate care. But it  
22 does not carry with them workmans' comp.

23 If you have a volunteer that's out of work for  
24 months because of an injury they sustained on the job,  
25 they're just shit out of luck basically.

1                   We looked at what it would cost my organization  
2 to fill that gap. It was so insane. We would be  
3 raising money to pay workmans' comp insurance and that  
4 is about it.

5                   Also liability issue. We looked at our  
6 liability. We carry at least \$1 million liability  
7 insurance. We looked at what would be the cost to carry  
8 liability insurance on the volunteers. The cost was  
9 astronomical. We won't have volunteers out there doing  
10 the work. So we manage them. They're technically  
11 Forest Service volunteers.

12                   Yeah.

13                   MS. LEIGLER: The presentation was really  
14 impressive.

15                   MS. ASSEL: Thank you.

16                   MS. LEIGLER: What do you do to encourage  
17 school groups in bussing? Do you get involved with  
18 helping them with money?

19                   MS. ASSEL: That is the biggest barrier to  
20 getting school groups to come. In Running Springs,  
21 that's the biggest barrier. It's weird. Here's Big  
22 Bear. Here's Running Springs. And there's roads like  
23 this that goes in between. It's only a half-hour drive.

24                   The Big Bear people don't go to Running Springs  
25 because they don't want to take the busses on the roads

1 that go like that. I really don't blame them.

2 Our corporate sponsor, Molly Corp., for  
3 Children's Forest, as portion of the money we use as  
4 bussing scholarships. So we do pay for some. I think  
5 we pay for about 15 trips a year for schools to come up.  
6 We get them from Rancho Cucamonga, Riverside, Yucaipa,  
7 bringing kids up to the mountain.

8 At the Discovery Center, we don't do any  
9 scholarship programs to bring schools in. If we had a  
10 donor that came to us and said, "I designate these funds  
11 specifically for that," we'd make good use of those.  
12 That is the bigger barrier.

13 People ask us why don't we have more L.A.  
14 schools come up. They can't put the kids on the bus,  
15 come up and do the program and get home by the end of  
16 the school day.

17 MR. SMITH: Do you want to talk about the  
18 pictures at all?

19 MS. ASSEL: Yeah. You've just been there.

20 MR. SMITH: Yeah.

21 MS. ASSEL: Wow. I don't even have these  
22 pictures. Go back to the first one you had. This is  
23 part of the front entrance. We have one of the most  
24 awesome views in the whole valley. I mean, it overlooks  
25 the lake. It overlooks the San Gorgonio area. It's

1 just incredible.

2           Around the front is called the observation  
3 deck. We get so much sun. Even in winter It's pretty  
4 much usually warm enough to sit out there with a vest  
5 on. People sit out there and eat lunch. It's the best  
6 view there is.

7           That's the inside of our store. The store is  
8 actually closed down right now because they're starting  
9 to do the interior construction work.

10           That's our front desk. The offices currently  
11 are behind that wall. We're bumping that wall out and  
12 the front desk back about six feet.

13           One of our biggest problem in the summer is you  
14 get people lined up here, and they're blocking the  
15 entrance for everybody. And we're just going to  
16 compound that by adding to the building. So we said  
17 let's not do this unless we can solve that problem.

18           MR. WOYCHAK: Were you affected by the fires at  
19 all?

20           MS. ASSEL: Oh, yeah.

21           MR. WOYCHAK: None of the building got burned,  
22 did it?

23           MS. ASSEL: It didn't burned in Big Bear.  
24 There you go. Big Bear is over here. Our community got  
25 evacuated. So that impacted us.

1 MR. SMITH: This is Arrowhead right here.

2 MS. ASSEL: Yeah. San Bernardino is right  
3 here. As a small business I had to decide do I pay my  
4 people or not pay my people while they were evacuated?

5 So many of these people evacuated through our  
6 community and thought that would be safe haven, and then  
7 three days later got booted off of our mountain.

8 We were only allowed to buy \$5 of gas at a time  
9 because everybody was filling up and they were running  
10 out of gas. I'm just like, "I'm glad other people in  
11 the community were thinking of this stuff, because I  
12 sure wouldn't have."

13 I have a lot of staff and volunteers over in  
14 Arrowhead in that community. We also do a lot of work  
15 down here. We had a couple volunteers lose homes. Just  
16 the communities were so hard hit.

17 One impact we think it's going to have on us is  
18 Children's Forest, which is right here. We do an annual  
19 campaign every year. We were about to do the mailing  
20 and do the kickoff of that when the fires hit.

21 We're going to watch it next month. We know  
22 our contributions will be down because people only have  
23 so many dollars to give. What's tugging at their heart  
24 strings right now are people who are homeless because of  
25 the fires. It's going to have long-range impacts on us.

1 Again, I think there's new money we can bring in because  
2 of it.

3 MR. SMITH: When did you decide that you wanted  
4 to build a building versus when you actually formed the  
5 organization? Did it all happen simultaneously?

6 MS. ASSEL: No. That's the computer room.  
7 That's part of the new amphitheater. That's the snack  
8 bar. There's a stage and the amphitheater. Wow, you  
9 toured the whole place.

10 MR. SMITH: We have the designs on this place.

11 MS. ASSEL: That's fine. I'll be happy to walk  
12 anybody through and explain what works with traffic  
13 patterns and stuff. We didn't decide to build a brick  
14 and mortar place. It was already in a recreation plan  
15 for the Big Bear area and the Forest Service. Kind of  
16 the whole north shore recreation corridor, which  
17 included a campground that was built, a picnic area.

18 Those 170,000 visitors that we get, all of  
19 those folks used to go the ranger station to get  
20 permits, if you can imagine. I've heard horror stories  
21 of lines so long going in and out.

22 So it was just a need that they had. So that's  
23 why with the money they had available, they built the  
24 visitor information aspect of it first. Then we're  
25 adding on the exhibit hall now.

1 MR. SMITH: You mentioned what your funding is  
2 from the Forest Service. I don't know if you can go  
3 there or not, but start-up funding from the Forest  
4 Service?

5 MS. ASSEL: I don't know exactly what it was.  
6 I wasn't there. I know Honda kicked in in the first two  
7 years \$100,000. Ducks Unlimited I think was about  
8 \$50,000. I don't know what the Forest Service  
9 contribution was the first couple of years.

10 I think it is important to recognize that Honda  
11 and others realized that without an administration,  
12 project funds are irrelevant. So they invested in that.  
13 Arrowhead gives me money every year just for our  
14 operations, because they recognize good stuff won't  
15 happen without that.

16 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Yes, Bary.

17 MR. FREET: You referenced Honda. Are you  
18 speak about Honda Corporation or a Honda Foundation?

19 MS. ASSEL: The corporation. We have gotten  
20 stuff from the foundation, but we compete on both sides  
21 of the fence. Sometimes it's marketing dollars. We  
22 just got a nice chunk of money from Allstate.

23 MR. FREET: Foundation or corporation?

24 MS. ASSEL: That's their foundation. They're  
25 partnering it with some marketing dollars. Molly Corp,

1 the mining company I mentioned, they have an internal  
2 corporate matching thing. So half of our money comes  
3 from Molly Corp. The other comes from Unocal  
4 Foundation.

5 MR. WATTS: Do you have guidelines on who you  
6 can accept money from and who you can't? You're  
7 starting to pick up Unocal and that kind of thing. Are  
8 you going to carry it all the way to Philip Morris and  
9 stuff like that?

10 MS. ASSEL: You know what? Molly Corp, we said  
11 what do we do here? The Forest Service is multiple use.  
12 There's mining in our forest. To say we're not going to  
13 play with a mining organization would really not support  
14 the forest mission at all, frankly.

15 In terms of looking at them as environmental  
16 offenders and things like that, I wish I could say I  
17 have a staff of research people to look at that. I  
18 don't. Me and my board look at them and do a little  
19 research.

20 Molly Corp has been a gross offender about four  
21 or five years ago. They have since made investments and  
22 meeting compliance and regulatory things. We looked at  
23 that and said here's a company making a good faith  
24 effort. They're viewing us as a way they can further  
25 that good faith effort.

1 MR. WATTS: Is that an independent call on your  
2 part, or does the Forest Service have veto power?

3 MS. ASSEL: Technically, the Forest Service  
4 cannot have veto power over us. But as a good partner,  
5 we would never do anything that they're uncomfortable  
6 with anyway. If there's something that seems  
7 questionable, we ask what they think about it.

8 There's some organization that Anheuser Busch  
9 wants to contribute to right now in Colorado. So  
10 there's a big debate of it's a beer company. It's like,  
11 "Yeah, it is."

12 Are we going do have inflatable Budweiser cans  
13 in the Discovery Center parking lot? No, we're not.  
14 When we brought in the Porsche sponsorship, the backlash  
15 was incredible. Why I don't know, because we had other  
16 corporate partners.

17 They thought it was going to be like welcome to  
18 Porsche Land and cars racing through. We gave them  
19 adopt-a-trail recognition and a driving brochure.  
20 That's a tough call.

21 I think some organizations do establish firmer  
22 guidelines than we do. We're enlisting corporate  
23 sponsors for the Discovery Center expansion.

24 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Gene?

25 MR. HOUSE: Yeah, thank you. Kris, I noticed

1 in the income pie chart 9percent was from donations and  
2 gifts. From my awareness of other nonprofit  
3 organizations in the Arrowhead and Big Bear area, that's  
4 pretty typical of the groups up there.

5 MS. ASSEL: Yeah.

6 MR. HOUSE: In the past I've wrestled with this  
7 myself. I'm just curious on what your thoughts might be  
8 on given whatever the number of well-to-do people up  
9 there on the mountain that are seasonal residents or  
10 have vacation homes that really do have significant  
11 discretionary income.

12 How have you wrestled with that, or do you have  
13 any thoughts on how to get more money in terms of major  
14 individual gifts from well-to-do individuals up there?

15 MS. ASSEL: I wish we did a lot better job of  
16 it. I know all the nonprofits look at that. Most of  
17 the those well-to-do people are second homeowners. In  
18 terms of their philanthropic time and dollars, most of  
19 those concentrate that in the community where they live.

20 We don't have huge corporate headquarters  
21 nearby us. You look at the big companies. They usually  
22 give a lot of their philanthropic dollars to the  
23 community where they live.

24 One place where the fires has helped us is it's  
25 helped people look at the forest as part of the bigger

1 Southern California community. I think that's going to  
2 help us with funding. We have a hard time with just  
3 exactly what you said. Everybody sees these dollar  
4 signs.

5 There are \$400,000 and \$500,000 second and  
6 third homes going up. There's obviously some money  
7 there. Most of these folks keep a low profile, don't  
8 get involved in community politics.

9 The best way we found is like the chairman of  
10 my board is a second homeowner right now. Very low-key.  
11 He has other friends who own second homes up there. His  
12 personal contact and networking is the best way to do  
13 it.

14 These people are getting hit up and hammered  
15 where they have their primary residence, and where they  
16 have a second or third residence. Some of them even  
17 have their own private foundation where it's like -- I  
18 don't deal with that. There's got to be a better way to  
19 do it. We haven't perfected that.

20 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Anyone else with a question?

21 Okay. Thank you.

22 MS. ASSEL: Thank you, folks.

23 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Thank you very much.

24 Okay. We'll have an official reporter's break.

25 Five minutes, it is. So at a quarter 'till, we will

1 come back and listen to fire issues.

2 (Off the record.)

3 (Brief recess taken.)

4 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Okay. We're back in session.

5 Ron, you are it.

6 MS. GEORGE: Mr. Chair, Ron Woychak has asked a  
7 question about the poster back there. Shall we explain  
8 them?

9 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Yes.

10 MS. GEORGE: Yes, they're available. They're  
11 for sale at the bookstore at the Friends of the Desert  
12 Mountains for \$8.95. Special, special friends. We had  
13 a limited amount printed.

14 That poster specifically is to go to the Lake  
15 Pontchartrain Basin Foundation's future lighthouse. We  
16 will take another one up to Kris Assel when we go on a  
17 field tour of the Discovery Center.

18 MR. WOYCHAK: My name is Ron Woychak. I'm the  
19 division chief out of BLM. I worked out of the San  
20 Diego office. I've now inherited the Monument. That's  
21 why I'm out here.

22 Just to give you an update -- well, first of  
23 all, I appreciate the opportunity to speak here to the  
24 group. This is my first chance to be here. I just  
25 wanted to give you a feel for what the fire management

1 folks have done with the Monument, what we're in the  
2 process of doing, what's being planned.

3 Bary Freet is here. Bary and I have talked  
4 about this. He knows some of the fire history before it  
5 was a Monument. It was just a big area on the side of a  
6 hill. It had a few fires from lightning. It has had  
7 some very costly large fires.

8 I work with Norm Walker, who is with the Forest  
9 Service. He's the division chief up on the San Jacinto  
10 district. We looked at the Monument itself. We have a  
11 pretty broad-based fire management plan for the whole  
12 area -- both of the Forest Service and the BLM to keep  
13 all fires at -- 90 percent of the fires at 10 acres or  
14 less.

15 What does that mean? Does that protect  
16 resources? That's the challenge we've got now, trying  
17 to make the fire management plan fit in with our  
18 resource management plan.

19 Bary, you can chime in anytime you want to.

20 He knows some of the problems we have in the  
21 past when we've had large fires in here. Currently, all  
22 of California has a giant direct protection area map.

23 This is one little corner of it. If you look  
24 closely it has a lot of cross-hatching. If I had a fire  
25 in there, trying to figure out who has physical

1 responsibility is a tremendous problem.

2           Everybody is checkerboarded. We have Forest  
3 Service up here. We have our local government up here.  
4 We have BLM. We have the City of Palm Springs in here.  
5 We have tribal governments in here. We have no idea  
6 what tribal governments -- what their fire management  
7 plan is.

8           So a lot of confusion as to who pays the  
9 suppression cost in a fire. So what we try to do is  
10 normally I try to address this problem by when the  
11 Monument was put together, we took a look at a way we  
12 could get federal -- make the entire Monument DPA, which  
13 we'd pay the bill on the thing.

14           We've contacted Riverside County, who CDF is a  
15 contractor. We've had discussions with them talking  
16 about how this would change their operations. A lot of  
17 area down here doesn't have a whole lot of fire history.  
18 This is Highway 74.

19           Everything south of here has just hundreds of  
20 small little lightning fires. I think the last big fire  
21 was probably in the '20s. Was it '23?

22           They had a good-sized fire that took out -- if  
23 any of you have been up Highway 74 lately and seen the  
24 bark beetle kill, it's another tinderbox. There's no  
25 difference than what's happening in Idyllwild right now.

1                   So Norm and I took a look at it. We made the  
2 change. Next Wednesday we're going to be making a  
3 proposal to the statewide DPA committee. I'm looking at  
4 taking over the entire Monument.

5                   Again, that means that doesn't change how we  
6 fight the fires. It won't really change our dispatch  
7 plans. It will change who writes the check for the fire  
8 suppression effort that's in there. That's what that  
9 does.

10                   You're happy.

11                   MR. PARKINS: Yes.

12                   MR. WOYCHAK: That will change. What we've  
13 done is we've put together a map. This map just came  
14 out last week. Shawn Reeder from the Forest Service put  
15 this together for us. It addresses outlines outside the  
16 Monument that makes it clear to every fire agency who  
17 comes in here who is going to pay the bill on this fire.

18                   We take it outside the Monument. We cleaned it  
19 up. Instead of Riverside County having taken a little  
20 sliver, what it does is it makes it clear that we've got  
21 everything from the base of the slope to the top of the  
22 mountain. It will be BLM or Forest Service  
23 responsibility.

24                   Norm and I did break out -- because it was all  
25 federal responsibility and we had two federal agencies

1 involved, we had to split that down even further. We  
2 said which side of the mountain is the Forest Service  
3 going to pay for, which side is the BLM going to pay  
4 for.

5 We took Highway 74 and everything south of  
6 there would be BLM responsibility. Which means if  
7 there's a fire, our dispatch plan will have a series of  
8 responses. It depends on the fire season.

9 I would be the incident commander until they  
10 got so big -- hopefully they won't be too big. If they  
11 do get very big, we'll call out a national fire team if  
12 we have to do that. This is mainly for small fires. So  
13 that would be BLM responsibility.

14 Everything north of Highway 74 would be US  
15 Forest Service responsibility. That's what we're  
16 looking at now.

17 Questions?

18 CHAIRMAN CRITES: So what you have done is go  
19 from elevation to simple geography?

20 MR. WOYCHAK: Yeah. When you make DPA changes  
21 within the state, you base them on fires -- that you can  
22 increase fire effectiveness and you can also delineate  
23 identifiable boundaries. That's some of the problems  
24 we've had in the past.

25 We've got so many agencies of responsibility,

1 nobody knew. Everything is checkerboard. When you look  
2 at the land, I don't see any checkerboards out there.  
3 It all looks the same to me. You can't tell where one  
4 square mile is versus another square mile.

5 This has been passed up to the state office of  
6 BLM. They approve of it. They like the way it is. So  
7 we're going to make this presentation next Wednesday at  
8 the statewide EPA meeting.

9 CHAIRMAN CRITES: So you as BLM would be  
10 responsible for incident command on top of Santa Rosa  
11 Mountain?

12 MR. WOYCHAK: Santa Rosa, yes.

13 CHAIRMAN CRITES: And the Forest Service would  
14 be responsible for the toe of the slope next to  
15 Cathedral City?

16 MR. WOYCHAK: Yeah. It makes it fairly simple.  
17 I've tried to lay out where the fire stations are  
18 located. Of course these are Palm Springs.

19 I don't know how many engines you have, Bary.

20 MR. FREET: Actually, none. We're not  
21 qualified for Type III.

22 MR. WOYCHAK: I tried to show where the fire  
23 engine stations are within the Monument. It's our third  
24 year, but I still call it a new five-person engine  
25 module up here. We've got a cooperative agreement with

1 Riverside County. We staff an engine there right now.

2 The key here is going to be Norm and I are  
3 developing a fire management strategy, what type of  
4 organization we need to staff up here for the Monument.

5 The BLM engine here, which is in our fire  
6 management plan that we need an engine here because of  
7 the Highway 74 potential fire start over here. I come  
8 over 74 several times a year. I'm amazed how much  
9 traffic comes over 74.

10 The number of rolls out of this station right  
11 now is increasing dramatically. They're getting a lot  
12 of vehicle fires. There's a lot of potential for fire  
13 starts. That's why the engine is placed there.

14 The other thing Norm and I are working on is  
15 right now we have a helicopter module, a  
16 light-performance helicopter. We'd like to upgrade that  
17 to a high-performance helicopter, which means you can  
18 fly at high elevations and make water drops.

19 And also the crew on that would be a repelling  
20 crew. So if you had lightning fires, you're not going  
21 to be driving into this thing with an engine. You'd  
22 have to fly in with a helicopter.

23 Again, I go back to we now have a Resource  
24 Management Plan. We're in the process of working on the  
25 Fire Management Plan to dovetail with that. We're going

1 to allow lightning fires to go for awhile. Can we  
2 afford to do that during certain months of the year?  
3 That's the thing we need to work out in the Fire  
4 Management Plan. That's what we need to address still.

5 I'm trying to think is there anything else. To  
6 follow up with this, now that we've got a footprint out  
7 here of what we want to do, there's some follow-up  
8 things that we need to do.

9 We need to get agreements with the City of Palm  
10 Springs, with Riverside County, with the local tribes as  
11 to when we go in there to suppress a fire, who are our  
12 lead contacts, what are things that we will and will not  
13 do, what things that we need help with.

14 Those agreements all need to be put into place  
15 to support this DPA change on the map in Southern  
16 California. In that Fire Management Plan, whatever  
17 resource objectives -- if we have a resource objective  
18 to protect Bighorn sheep habitat, maybe to protect the  
19 forage for them or the fire is good, we need to let that  
20 come out.

21 We need to do some Fire Management Plan  
22 meetings with some key players -- Fish & Game, US Fish &  
23 Wildlife Service. We need to find out what type of fire  
24 management strategy we need to develop for the Monument.  
25 So that's coming.

1                   We're supposed to have the first phase of our  
2 Fire Management Plan done by September 30th. We just  
3 found this out about two weeks ago. We'll get a start  
4 on it, but I don't think we'll be done by then. At  
5 least we'll make a shot at it.

6                   I know some of the fire history maps we had --  
7 that's one of the database layers we want to develop for  
8 the Monument is a nice fire history map.

9                   A lot of fires down on the south end are pretty  
10 much lightning fires. It's just hundreds of thousands.  
11 It gets hammered pretty good. It's usually accompanied  
12 by lots of rain. But it just takes one of those years,  
13 and we'll be off to the races.

14                  Forest Service, Norm is looking at the fact  
15 that most of those fires start in about this desert  
16 scrub transition zone. Lightning carries up to the  
17 Chaparral. Next thing we know, we've got a major fire  
18 on that north end of the Monument.

19                  Right now we're not proposing any new resources  
20 other than the helicopter module. Norm had mentioned  
21 the possibility of putting on one more engine module,  
22 but I don't know what his planning looks like right now.  
23 So these are some of the things we need to work out.

24                  Anyway, you can see by the color of the land  
25 we're dealing with a lot of different agencies down

1 there. CDF was okay with us taking over that. A lot of  
2 it doesn't have a fire history. But they have other  
3 needs in other places. We figured by the federal  
4 agencies taking over that whole responsibility is the  
5 best way to alleviate some of problems we've had in the  
6 past.

7 Any questions?

8 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Yes.

9 MR. WATTS: Just a comment, Ron. The  
10 management plan called for coordination amongst all the  
11 agencies that are involved up there as far as fire  
12 management.

13 Representing State Parks, you know, we've got  
14 two separate State Park units that have their own  
15 separate Fire Management Plan.

16 From day one our goal is to make sure we're all  
17 talking together, especially in wilderness fires, what  
18 the best way is to do that, because we don't want to see  
19 sensitive cultural resources hammered if they don't need  
20 to be and that type of thing.

21 I'm sure you're thinking of that along those  
22 lines, but you didn't mention us. So make sure you  
23 include us in those discussions.

24 MR. WOYCHAK: Yeah. Like I said, all the  
25 different agencies that are down in here, they all have

1 responsibility. What we want to do is make sure our  
2 Fire Management Plan -- it's going to be much different  
3 than the federal Fire Management Plans in the past.

4 We did them in a vacuum. We didn't look  
5 outside the box. We did figure that other people had  
6 other concerns out here.

7 We try to mesh them all together and make sure  
8 we all have the understanding as to how we're going to  
9 fight fire in there. Are there are special  
10 stipulations -- wilderness, ACEC versus Bighorn sheep  
11 habitat, endangered species habitat, cultural resources.  
12 All that comes into play.

13 MR. WATTS: It looks like in this case you'll  
14 get to deal with the Anza Borrego folks in your area,  
15 and Norm can deal with the San Jacinto folks.

16 MR. WOYCHAK: Right. Two subtle changes or  
17 things that didn't change in here was within the  
18 Monument boundary, there are some little pieces here,  
19 part of the Anza Borrego, that are going to stay CDF or  
20 state protection.

21 They wanted to keep those in there because the  
22 San Diego unit of CDF deals with that. So we kept that  
23 in there down in their sandbox. So it's just these  
24 little corners.

25 Also another area inside the Monument, Cabazon

1 south of I-10, there's a piece here they want to keep  
2 because it justifies their engine placement in Banning.  
3 We're okay with that. So it's little pieces.

4 But really we have a mutual-aid system. We  
5 always back each other up. The response into these  
6 areas will not change. Dispatch plans may change a  
7 little bit mainly because we all rely on each other. We  
8 don't want to mess with that. That's a good thing  
9 that's happening right now.

10 When we call in for the first engine to come  
11 in, we know where they're coming from. They'll be all  
12 colors and come from all different directions. We'll  
13 get all the help we need.

14 That's it in a nutshell. Any questions?

15 MS. WATLING: Ruth Watling from Pinyon Pines.  
16 Is there any thought in the future towards housing or a  
17 multi-agency building? I know the fire station is  
18 pretty much at capacity and people need to be there.

19 Is there a thought of putting together some  
20 joint facility?

21 MR. WOYCHAK: I'd hope we'd be there, yes. I  
22 don't know what the Monument itself -- what the future  
23 plans are for facilities. I know there are several  
24 parcels for sale up here.

25 I know my fire captain said, "Hey, Ron. If

1 there's something for sale up there, can we get it?" We  
2 need to put it in to the planning to work for the  
3 Monument to see if we can come up with funding for that.

4 MS. WATLING: I think there would be good  
5 support for that.

6 MR. WOYCHAK: In southern California there's a  
7 slew of fire stations that are interagency, state and  
8 federal working together all the time. We are kind of  
9 squeezed at Pinyon, but they are happy to have us there.

10 The crew there, everybody, we're doing a lot of  
11 work with fuels reduction. The crew is going out to  
12 work with the community and doing the chipping project  
13 last year.

14 We do a lot of work with the local community  
15 out here. We had a fire prevention person out there,  
16 BLM, to work closely with the Forest Service and make  
17 sure we get the word out.

18 We could probably use the volunteers we were  
19 talking about earlier. So I think we could put together  
20 something really good. I think it's a win-win situation  
21 up there.

22 MS. WATLING: I think so. And I think you'd  
23 have good local support.

24 MR. WOYCHAK: Yeah.

25 Any other questions?

1 MS. GEORGE: Just, Ron, on Wednesday with the  
2 Service First folks, we hope to be out to the Mission  
3 Inn somewhere around 12:30, 1:00.

4 MR. WOYCHAK: That may change. Talk to me. I  
5 just found out from Norm Walker that that date was  
6 changed.

7 MS. GEORGE: Okay. Well, let's figure that out  
8 before you leave. Let's get that done.

9 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Okay. Other questions?  
10 Anyone else?

11 If not, I think you bring us very good news.  
12 Bravo.

13 MR. WOYCHAK: I hope it cleans up the mess  
14 we've had in the past as far as who runs a fire out  
15 there. I don't think it will be run any differently,  
16 but I know there's been some problems in the past. So  
17 we'll alleviate that.

18 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Thank you. A thought  
19 occurred to me. For instance, University of California  
20 and Deep Canyon has areas adjacent or within it that are  
21 very sensitive for endangered species. As an example,  
22 one particular -- you know, areas in which less than  
23 100 acres is key.

24 MR. MUTH: We've got the salamander. We've got  
25 the sheep.

1                   CHAIRMAN CRITES: Yeah. Are those data all  
2 available to you now in terms of that as you're planning  
3 this process, or are those things that you need to  
4 really make sure that folks around this table are  
5 helping you with?

6                   MR. WOYCHAK: Well, I think the databases that  
7 exist out there, we use those extensively. When we put  
8 together the Fire Management Plan for the Monument  
9 itself as a fire management community, it stands alone  
10 by itself.

11                   I want to make sure everybody has a chance to  
12 get a feel for what our strategy is out there. I would  
13 think that the Bighorn sheep -- I worked as a biologist  
14 for Forest Service for about 10 years. I would imagine  
15 that -- most of the stuff that I read, some fire is good  
16 for the sheep.

17                   We're really at an urban interface area here.  
18 Hopefully we can use fire as a tool. Hopefully we can  
19 do that. I would hope that would be what we want to do.

20                   MS. GEORGE: If I may, Mr. Chair?

21                   CHAIRMAN CRITES: You will.

22                   MS. GEORGE: The salamander, is that data in  
23 the Multispecies Plan?

24                   MR. MUTH: I believe it is. It actually  
25 belongs to Eddy over there.

1 MS. GEORGE: What we need to do as we build the  
2 fire plan is to make sure the Multispecies data is  
3 incorporated into that fire plan for the species, just  
4 like the cultural resources.

5 MR. WOYCHAK: Yeah. Just like we developed the  
6 use of retardant. I'm sure you don't want to use that  
7 in riparian zones. You don't want helicopters dipping  
8 out of your water wells. We have that stuff on maps.  
9 We can develop a strategy for that.

10 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Obviously, we need to overlay  
11 the cultural resource map as well from the Monument.

12 MS. GEORGE: Just one last side in this. As we  
13 move towards the soil resource inventory, there will be  
14 some workshops with a soil science survey team where  
15 folks from fire would be important to come to build the  
16 interpretations that you need for some of the steps you  
17 ask for fire.

18 They can build those interpretations. They  
19 just need to know what it is you want answered -- the  
20 questions you want answered.

21 MR. FREET: Now I do have a comment. We  
22 brought up a discussion about water sources and riparian  
23 areas and guzzlers and the sensitivity of those. The  
24 sensitivity has also been there. Now we have the  
25 encroachment of urbanization into some of these areas.

1                   It becomes more and more difficult to find  
2 water sources. We still use water to put fire out. Our  
3 water sources are disappearing from our availability.

4                   Not that they're disappearing, it's just we  
5 can't use many of them anymore as firefighters. We're  
6 having to look at alternatives perhaps on the valley  
7 floor and to find ways for suppression.

8                   CHAIRMAN CRITES: They're also disappearing.

9                   MR. FREET: I know.

10                  CHAIRMAN CRITES: Yes.

11                  MR. MUTH: Just on that issue of water sources,  
12 aren't golf course ponds and reservoirs available?

13                  MR. FREET: Maybe.

14                  MR. MUTH: Maybe?

15                  MR. FREET: Well, the point is some of them  
16 never had homes around them. Now many of them do. It's  
17 not safe to fly over with helicopters in some cases as  
18 it might have been before.

19                  In south Palm Canyon of the Palm Springs area,  
20 we used to use many undeveloped cul-de-sacs for helipads  
21 and dip out of the ponds. Well, those cul-de-sacs that  
22 had been open and not built on for the last 10, 15 years  
23 now have homes on them. So the dynamics have changed.

24                  CHAIRMAN CRITES: Plus a number of those golf  
25 court lakes are home to the endangered American Coot.

1 MR. WOYCHAK: One of the strategies pertaining  
2 to water sources, especially for a helicopter if he's  
3 going to dip out of something, up here in Pinyon, we do  
4 have a 1000 gallon port-a-tank of water. We have a spot  
5 across the way. We used it last year a little bit.  
6 We're going to perfect it.

7 The crew is going to be trained on getting this  
8 port-a-tank set up, clearance for helicopter. That is  
9 going to be set up right away. If we get fires out  
10 here, obviously a fire engine crew ain't going to do any  
11 good. So those guys can go across the street and set up  
12 a portable watering point. So that type of stuff is set  
13 up.

14 MR. FREET: Exactly. We enforced that out of  
15 our spring meeting last year where we do a lot of  
16 discussion. It was identified -- this very issue. The  
17 Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians purchased a  
18 10,000 gallon portable tank. It's housed in Palm  
19 Springs, and it can be deployed at any time. It's  
20 available for all of us to use.

21 MR. WOYCHAK: That helps us out. That keeps us  
22 from dipping out of sensitive ponds. I've seen a lot of  
23 damage done to ponds before.

24 MS. GEORGE: Getting those swimmers out of  
25 there.

1 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Anything else?

2 Thank you.

3 MR. WOYCHAK: Sure. No problem. Let me take  
4 my maps.

5 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Okay. I believe this brings  
6 us to the tickling of the Monument manager.

7 MS. GEORGE: I'll do the update. All right.  
8 Wrap up of the meeting. Any comments from the group?  
9 Okay. Any items that folks would like to have on the  
10 agenda in June? Is there any specific item for the June  
11 agenda folks would like?

12 It will be the first Saturday of June. So it  
13 will be June the 5th. No items. Okay. Just curious.  
14 I know Buford mentioned a few things he wanted on about  
15 land acquisitions, the status and things. We'll work on  
16 getting that.

17 Let's see. I want to go over the list real  
18 quickly for who is going on the field trip. We've got  
19 Buford, Ruth, Al, Kathie Brennan, Bob Lyman,  
20 Jeff Morgan, Gary Watts. Terry Henderson is going to  
21 go. Frank Bogert.

22 MS. ROSENTHAL: It didn't come over here.

23 MS. GEORGE: Laurie, you would like to go?

24 MS. ROSENTHAL: Yes.

25 MS. GEORGE: That will be March 4th. We'll get

1 itinerary and all that good stuff. But a reminder. You  
2 all are responsible for making your hotel reservations  
3 and need to be doing that shortly.

4 CHAIRMAN CRITES: And a follow-up note to those  
5 folks who weren't with us today, Danella.

6 MS. GEORGE: Yes. I talked with them  
7 individually, but I'll follow up as well.

8 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Okay. Thank you.

9 MS. GEORGE: I also want to give an update  
10 quickly. I talked to Buford. He's aware of this. I  
11 Initiated a process to try to create a sister park with  
12 our National Monument.

13 We'd be the very first National Monument within  
14 the Bureau of Land Management to do that. It's with  
15 Geike Gorge, which is in western Australia, part of  
16 CALM, Conservation and Land Management, which has their  
17 national parks.

18 It's looking like we're moving ahead with that.  
19 A proclamation may be coming soon. So hopefully maybe  
20 at the next meeting we'll have our very first sister  
21 park. I shared with them we have a renound  
22 herpetologist who has spent a great deal of time in the  
23 northern territory named Dr. Muth.

24 MR. MUTH: We need a delegation.

25 MS. GEORGE: Yes. As long as we can get some

1 funding that's not BLM for that one. Okay. So this  
2 we're working on. I keep Buford informed. When I get  
3 good news, I call him and leave a voice-mail. So we're  
4 working on that.

5 The other thing we have is Tracy has something  
6 we would like to present to the City of Palm Desert.

7 Right, Tracy?

8 MS. LEIGLER: Uh-huh.

9 MS. GEORGE: I'm done.

10 MS. LEIGLER: This is something to model that  
11 we want to get the Monument recognition out to wherever  
12 we can. Mainly within the Monument, but outside as  
13 well. One way to do that is through signage. One way  
14 to do that is to tap onto other signs that are already  
15 in construction or are already assembled.

16 I'm not going to unwrap it, Buford, because  
17 there are screws and bolts. But this is a bronze  
18 plaque. It is quite versatile. It can go horizontal.  
19 It's quite heavy. It's graffiti resistant, cleanable.  
20 It can be mounted vertically.

21 It's already at the Palm Springs Desert Museum.  
22 I think it's already out at La Quinta as well.

23 MS. GEORGE: La Quinta has one. Indian Wells  
24 was presented with one. The Tram has one. We'd love to  
25 see that at Hopalong Cassidy.

1 CHAIRMAN CRITES: So you shall.

2 MS. LEIGLER: For those of you of who represent  
3 cities, when you're in the process of establishing trail  
4 heads and the nice features, please keep Danella in the  
5 loop.

6 We can very easily get the Monument logo  
7 designed into your sign, whether it's printed on the  
8 sign, whether it's a sticker, reflective, a bronze  
9 plaque. We're pretty flexible on how we're represented.

10 MS. WATLING: Maybe Vista Point.

11 MS. LEIGLER: That's been done.

12 MS. GEORGE: It's been done, Ruth.

13 MS. WATLING: Oh, has it?

14 MS. GEORGE: It's sitting and waiting. That's  
15 where we came up with the initial rounds. We're just  
16 waiting until they get their program together up there.

17 MS. WATLING: Okay. Great.

18 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Any further comments from  
19 members of the committee or from those in attendance?

20 With sincere tanks for the sacrifice of the day  
21 away from the Mardi Gras season.

22 MS. RHEAMS: It was worth it.

23 CHAIRMAN CRITES: Thanks to all of our  
24 presenters and to our guests and welcome to new folks in  
25 the area. We are adjourned.

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(The proceedings concluded at 2:18 p.m.)

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REPORTER'S CERTIFICATE

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STATE OF CALIFORNIA            )  
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COUNTY OF RIVERSIDE         )

I, Sonja Chapman, a certified shorthand reporter  
within and for the State of California, hereby certify:

That the said proceeding, taken down by me in  
stenotype at the time and place therein stated, was  
thereafter reduced to typewritten form by computer-aided  
transcription under my direction, and is an accurate  
transcription of the oral proceedings in this matter, to  
the best of my ability.

I further certify that I am not in any way  
interested in the event of this action and that I am not  
related to any of the parties thereto.

DATED THIS 27TH DAY OF FEBRUARY, 2004.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Sonja Chapman, CSR 11504

