



From the National Monument staff, Greetings,

Well, Fall is here at last and the daytime temperatures throughout the National Monument and the Coachella Valley are beginning to cool off. It has been a long, hot summer, fortunately once again, we've been able to avoid any wildfires. Let's just hope it stays this way throughout the season.

Thanks to the cooler weather, we should soon be seeing some of our old friends on the hiking trails again. Moreover, things are getting better; the Draft Trails Plan is being printed, and should soon be released for public review. For further information, please contact the Coachella Valley Association of Governments at 760-346-1127. The Bureau of Land Management and the US Forest Service are cooperating agencies for the trails plan a part of the Coachella Valley Multi-Species Plan. Congratulations to all of our partners who have had a hand in developing this vital document for our National Monument and the Coachella Valley.

Fall has been designated as Wilderness Season for the National Monument, as we prepare to celebrate our fourth anniversary, Oct. 23. This year we have a day full of activities and events planned for the National Monument Visitor Center, 51-500 Highway 74, in Palm Desert.

Among all the many special activities and hands-on events will be the raising of a new National Monument banner. Some of the other activities being planned are Raven Longbow, playing his special brand of Native American flute music; special presentations from the Forest Service and Smokey Bear; displays and special guests from the Living Desert, some children's activities with the Scrap Gallery, and much more. Don't miss your chance to take part in some National Monument history, be sure to come out and join in the celebration, 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

In addition to our annual celebration, there is a variety of other programs being held throughout this Wilderness Season. On Oct. 19, there will be a Bald Eagle watch at Lake Hemet, with Forest Service biologist Deborah Guzman. Then in November there will be free lectures at the Mizell Senior Center, in Palm Springs (Nov. 4), and a special 'Weed' Art Show (Nov. 6-7), up at Twentynine Palms. Desert naturalist and National Monument volunteer Joe Migliore, will give his earth shaking 'Countdown to Earthquakes' presentation at the Palm Desert Library (Nov. 8). Then education outreach specialist Tracy



A rainbow arches over Palm Canyon, providing a splash of color to the National Monument mountain landscape.

Official BLM Photo by Tom Irachi

Albrecht, is going to be talking about the cuckoos of the desert, Roadrunners (Nov. 10). You can find out more about these programs, times, and locations by logging in to our Home Page at:[w] http://www.ca.blm.gov/palmsprings/santarosa/santa_rosa_national_monument.html.

The really special news is the National Monument's, "... recognition as a leader in improving air quality, strengthening the local economy and enhancing public awareness of alternative fuels ...," by the Secretary of Energy Spencer Abraham. This had come about because of the National Monument involvement with the Clean Cities Coachella Valley Region program. This ties directly into the National Monument legislation and Management Plan, as we seek to preserve and protect the National Monument for current and future generations.



The oasis in Palm Canyon, offers shade from the desert heat, as well as much needed cool water.

Official BLM Photo by Tom Irachi

We held our last Monument Advisory Committee meeting of 2004, on Oct. 2, during the meeting, new officers were elected for the coming year, Buford Crites was re-elected to the position of Chair, and Gary Watts, representing California State Parks, was elected to the role of Vice Chair. Additionally meetings were scheduled for the coming year: Feb. 5, 2005; June 4, 2005; and Oct. 1, 2005. All Monument Advisory Committee meetings are open to the public; they begin at 9 a.m. and are held in the Palm Desert City Council Conference Room.

Among the many topics discussed at this past meeting, we learned about the status of the Trails Plan, as I mentioned earlier. Jim Foote, BLM's Recreation Planner, provided a brief update to the Signage Work Group. The group is preparing to move into the next phase, how to work with the many entities on a sign plan to identify the National Monument. The next meeting is set for Nov. 8 at the BLM Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office, 690 W. Garnet Ave, N. Palm Springs (off Indian Ave., just before the I-10 interchange). During the briefing, Foote advised the MAC of the necessity to have representatives from all the local jurisdictions to join them. All meetings are open to the public, so if you wish to be a part of this or have any ideas please contact Jim Foote at 760-251-4800. [During the meeting, copies of the official National Monument logo will be made available.]

John Ladley, from the Forest Service filled in for Laurie Rosenthal and provided a brief update. Things are still busy in the Forest Service as they continue to refine their

community fire plans. The good news: The Forest Service has every intention on keeping the Forest open throughout the season, as it doesn't appear the threat of fire will force any new closures. Another issue brought up was the Hay Dude Ranch project, which will have some impact on campground utilization near the Pinyon Pines Community. More research is going into this proposal and Ladley will be attending the next Pinyon Pines Community meeting with additional details.

There were also updates from Pam Hansen, National Monument staff on the plans for this year's celebration, which I mentioned earlier. Frank Mowry, also with the National Monument staff, had just returned from a Denver workshop and provided a briefing on the status of the National Monument business plan. There is still much work to be done, as some of the goals, guidelines and deadlines for the plan were adjusted by the National Landscape Conservation System leads.

Finally, the MAC got to see four minutes of the National Monument High Definition Video, being put together by Frank Jones, of Palm Springs Life magazine. It was awesome, and everyone was impressed, current plans are for a grand premier of the film toward the end of this coming holiday season. As an added extra Jones premiered a new 1 min. Public Service Announcement about the National Monument, which will soon be seen on local television stations.

I'd like to remind everyone about the use of trails within the National Monument. We share the National Monument with a variety of wildlife, including the federally endangered and recovering Peninsular Ranges Bighorn Sheep. Therefore, it is important to remember, come Jan. 1, 2005, we will be entering into a trails avoidance program. The idea of course is to allow the bighorns their privacy while they mate and enter into their lambing season. Additional details will be posted to our Home Page and available at the Visitor Center, 760 862-9984. To learn more about the many programs, and events mentioned, as well as to see the minutes from the MAC meetings, visit our Home Page:
[w] http://www.ca.blm.gov/palmsprings/santarosa/santa_rosa_national_monument.html

Finally, we'd like to congratulate Tracy Liegler, who recently married and changed her name to Albrecht. May you have a long and happy life together Tracy.

From the Santa Rosa & San Jacinto Mountains National Monument staff,

Happy Trails!

Danella George
National Monument Manager

From desert oases to granite peaks, the Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument is a land of contrast with stories of adaptation.