

**SANTA ROSA AND SAN JACINTO MOUNTAINS  
NATIONAL MONUMENT**

**ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEETING  
SUMMARY  
October 1, 2005**

**United States Department of Agriculture United States Department of the Interior**

**MEETING LOCATION:** PALM DESERT CITY HALL  
73-510 Fred Waring Drive  
Palm Desert, CA 92260

**DATE AND TIME:** Saturday, February 5, 2004  
9:03 a.m. to 2:47 p.m.

**ATTENDING:**

***Monument Advisory Committee Members:***

**BUFORD CRITES**, Mayor, City of Palm Desert

**DANELLA GEORGE**, Designated Federal Official; Santa Rosa and San Jacinto  
Mountains National Monument Manager

**GARY WATTS**, District Superintendent, California Department of Parks and Recreation

**TERRY HENDERSON**, Councilmember, City of La Quinta

**JEFFREY MORGAN**, Sierra Club, Local Conservation Organization

**JIM WHITMORE**, for **Rob Parkins**, Palm Springs Aerial Tramway, Winter Park  
Authority

**BOB LYMAN**, Regional Office Manager, County of Riverside

**MARY ROCHE**, City of Indian Wells

**BILL HAVERT**, Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy

**ALLAN MUTH**, expertise in natural science and research, University of California,  
Riverside, Philip Boyd Deep Canyon Research Center

**BARBARA GONZALES-LYONS**, Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians

**Barbara Bergman**, alternate for Pinyon Communities Council

***Absence:***

**FRANK BOGERT**, former Mayor, City of Palm Springs

**KATHIE BRENNAN**, Building Industry

**ROBERT BROCKMAN**, City of Rancho Mirage

**BARY FREET**, Palm Springs Fire Chief

**ROB PARKINS**, General Manager, Winter Park Authority

**STAFF AND PRESENTERS:**

**GAIL ACHESON**, Bureau of Land Management Palm Springs-South Coast Office Field  
Manager

**LAURIE ROSENTHAL**, U.S. Forest Service, San Jacinto District Ranger

**STUART BREMNER**: Friend of the Desert Mountains, CEO

**NATHANIEL PICKET**: CALTRANS, Project Manager

**GENE HECK**, CALTRANS, Historian

**JOHN LADLEY**, U.S. Forest Service, Outdoor Recreation Officer

**JIM FOOTE**, BLM Outdoor Recreation Planner

**FRANK MOWY**, BLM, National Monument Writer-Editor

## **AGENDA**

Call To Order – Buford Crites, MAC Chair

Roll Call – Danella George, DFO

With a quorum present, the meeting continued.

Old Business – MAC members approved minutes from last meeting.

New Business – Election of Chair and Vice Chair

Per the MAC Charter, positions of Chair and Vice Chair are for one year only, and must be elected by members during the last meeting of the fiscal year. Gary Watts, representing California State Parks, was nominated by the representative for the Winter Park Authority, there were no other nominations, Mr. Watts was elected as Chair and accepted this responsibility from Mr. Crites, the former Chair, for the rest of this meeting. Terry Henderson, representing the City of La Quinta was nominated and elected as the Vice Chair.

Schedule of Advisory Committee meeting for fiscal year 2006. After some discussion regarding the length of meetings and frequency the decision was made to schedule meeting approximately every four months, with some adjustment for the weather and the Labor Day weekend. The schedule decided upon is as follows:

- December 3, 2005
- March 4, 2006
- June 3, 2006
- September 9, 2006
- December 2, 2006

Danella George, provided an update on the status of appointments and the MAC Re-charter. Appointment letters for Dawn Wellman and Barbara Bergman are pending the Secretary of the Interior's signature. The Re-charter has been approved and will be published in the Federal Register shortly [published October 13, 2005]. Appointments for five positions due to expire July 2006, have been forwarded to Washington, DC and are under review. Next group to expire will be in March 2007. There was some discussion as to when the nomination process should be started. A decision was made to defer this until the March meeting, which would allow for a 12-month lead.

Friends of the Desert Mountains – Mr. Bremner, the new CEO provided a brief presentation on how the Friends have been supporting the National Monument (see the full transcript for details and a PDF formatted version of this presentation).

CALTRANS presentation – Messrs. Pickett and Heck, provided a brief summary of some pending projects for California State Highway 74 and the general area. There was some discussion on trash at the Vista Point location and plans for additional improvements and safety.

Hang Gliding – The Work Group Chair, Allen Muth, provided a brief review of what has been done, then turned the update over to John Ladley, who advised the MAC of the results of the Hang Gliding groups meeting with USFS and review of some possible alternative sites, as stated in the National Monument Management Plan. Currently the

USFS is looking to put a possible location on Santa Rosa Mountain into their Plan of Work for fiscal year 2006, however funding will remain an issue with any such work. After a brief discussion with MAC members, a motion was made to have BLM consider an amendment to the Management Plan. Please Note: This was not a motion to do an amendment, only to consider an amendment. This will issue will be updated at the next MAC meeting.

Full transcription of Dr. Hurst's presentation is included in the complete version of the MAC minutes. Dr. Hurst's presentation included a brief history of hang gliding from Vista Point, discussing some of the fears and concerns about hang gliding and showing examples from other areas around California. He stressed how hang gliders were concerned citizens, interested in protecting the environment and endangers species. How the hang gliding associations are noted for working with other Federal agencies.

Dr. Hurst went on to explain how hang gliding does not have the same wildlife impacts as hikers, mountain bikers, or equestrians, due to their being at altitudes of 1,000 to 12,000-feet. There was also mention of the lack of noise caused by hang gliders, as opposed to the noise heard from a helicopter.

He completed his presentation with a proposal to work with the MAC in developing an amendment to the National Monument Plan, which would allow hang gliding launches from Vista Point.

After additional discussion, which included questions on jurisdictional responsibility, a work group was formed to conduct further research into the issue. Dr. Al Muth volunteered to be the chair. The group includes MAC members, agency personnel, hang gliders, and other concerned parties. The work group will be meeting and offer a report at the next meeting. [Work Group Schedule will be posted on National Monument Web pages at [w] <http://www.ca.blm.gov/palmsprings/santarosa/monumentworkinggroup.html>

Public Comment – Hang Gliding specific

Members of the public who also spoke to the hang gliding issue included:

Mike Harper, Dana Point, California

Bill Soderquist, Temecula, California

George Zelenz, Joshua Tree, California

Lawrence Chamblee, Sylmar Hang Gliding Association, Los Angeles

Kenneth Andrews, Pasadena, California

Jill Nephew, La Jolla, California

Scott Farnsworth, Coachella Valley

Michael Hilbreath, Mission Viejo, California

Ken Howells, San Bernardino, California

[Full text of comments may be found within full transcript of this meeting.]

Gary Watts, thanked everyone on behalf of the MAC and proceeded on with the MAC agenda.

Review of Minutes – MAC members  
Minutes from last meeting were approved.

Old/New Business – MAC members  
Old and new business, Danella George explained how due to the length of time it takes to get MAC nominations approved, we are beginning the process for the next five members who's terms will expire in November.

These include: Representatives for the cities of Cathedral City, and Indian Wells, the Coachella Valley Conservancy, Winter Park Authority, and Riverside County.

The Federal Registry Notice has already been issued upon publication there will be a 60-day window to receive applications. In the meantime, blank nomination packages were provided to above named representatives.

Brief discussion on situation with Pinyon Community Council representative/nomination, noted Frank Mowry would be attending Pinyon Community Council to discuss options and assist them with the nomination process. Nomination process briefly reviewed for MAC.

Briefly, business plan has is in final process of prioritization in order to comply with DOI, NLCS, BLM and Field Office needs.

New personal contact sheet is being circulated, please review and update your contact information.

Updates –  
BLM – Gail Acheson

Brief update on current work being done at the Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office, including issue revolving around relining canal work being done, which has temp. closed access from an Irrigation District access road to Dos Palmas and Bradshaw Trail. Reminder of OHV closures in Wilderness areas.

Inter-agency Cooperation – Acheson/Rosenthal  
Briefly they reviewed and covered some areas of cooperation within the National Monument, including some budget and staffing issues as well. Both agencies are working toward seamless management between two agencies.

USFS – Laurie Rosenthal with John Ladley  
MAC advised of current budget issues affecting Forest Service. Additional work caused and some delays due to winter snows and recent rain. Progress is being made on Forest Plan, and fuels reductions projects.

John Ladley, provided briefing on status of Recreation issues and funding within Forest Service parts of National Monument.

Discussing occurred surrounding the Adventure Pass [see transcript for full details]. It was noted, with the loss of recreation funds, there is a greater need for volunteers to step up and participate in some of the traditional operations and maintenance tasks for the Forest Service and National Monument. MAC has asked Ladley to provide further presentation funding and Adventure Pass at the next meeting.

Plans are moving forward for replacement of large billboard sign on Highway 74.

#### Public Comment

Ms Gail Kathy addressed the MAC regarding development being undertaken near the Martinez Mountains Slide, and how it is, and may affect public access.

#### What is Branding? – Frank Jones

Due to a time issue, decision made to alter agenda again and let Frank Jones from Palm Springs Life provided a briefing on what branding is and how to use it to better market the National Monument. [see completed details in full transcript notes] This is a very passionate issue and tends to create heated discussions.

Decision made to form Branding Work Group, Mary Roche volunteered to be chair, and do some further research into this subject. A report will be made at the next MAC meeting in June.

#### Updates (cont). –

##### National Monument – Danella George

In addition to earlier information already provided regarding MAC nominations, appointments, hang gliding, etc. The MAC was asked if they desired to renew their Charter. Decision made to have DFO take care of necessary paperwork to ensure Charter is renewed.

##### Interpretive Plan – Tracy Albrecht

Tracy Albrecht provided brief background on how Interpretive Plan was developed and advised MAC a copy of the Plan has been provided to all members today for their review and comments.

##### CVMSHCP – Bill Havert

Bill Havert reported the MSHCP comment period has been extended until 7 March. CVAG, working with Fish and Game is preparing to review comments and take necessary actions.

##### Sign Work Group – Jim Foote

Advised MAC, after consulting with Gary Watts, work group chair, and experiencing a number of no-shows at the last scheduled meeting, the idea is to move forward and develop a draft sign plan and circulate it for review.

#### Final Comments

Buford Crites reminded MAC members of the Henderson Trail Dedications taking place at the National Monument Visitor Center at 1 p.m. and inviting all to attend.

Question came up about people getting lost on the Guadeloupe Trail, would it be possible to do some signing along the trail.

Reviewing work accomplished:

Agreed to Re-Charter the MAC;

Established Hang Gliding Work Group – Al Muth as chair;

Established Branding Work Group – Mary Roche as chair;

Next meeting will have a presentation from John Ladley regarding Adventure Pass Fees;

MAC desires a 'laundry-type' list for what is / is not being funded in the National Monument for 2005;

Some kind of a table of organizations showing staffing for the National Monument, and how it is being funded.

Adjournment

Complete minutes and all submitted written comments are available for public review at the Palm Springs/south coast Field Office during business hours: P.O. box 581260, 690 West Garnet Avenue, North Palm Springs, CA 92258; 760-251-4800