

Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act of 1998, as Amended

Conservation Initiatives - Project Summary

Round 11

Project Name: Cultural Site Stewardship for Clark County, Nevada

Round: 11 **Tab #:** 2 **Priority #:** 1

County: Clark

Location: Federal land throughout Clark County

Nominating Agency/Entity: BLM

Funding Requested: \$300,000

Recommended Funding: \$300,000

Project Description:

The Cultural Site Stewardship Program (CSSP) is a Round 4 and Round 6 Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA)-funded project implemented in cooperation with five Federal agencies. A major feature of Round 6 initiative is that it provided funding to increase the number of at-risk sites being monitored and to preserve archaeological resources. The present proposal is in keeping with the intent of the Round 6 initiative to enhance the BLM's protection of cultural resources and generate the information necessary for the BLM to more effectively administer the site stewardship program. The additional funding requested will be used to sustain the Southern Nevada Agency Partnership (SNAP) CSSP for the next two years until 2012, when State Historic Preservation Office's (SHPOs) program may be ready to assume the same level of service, as conceived under the Round 6 Preserve America project. Tasks that will relate to how the existing cultural site stewardship program will be administered by SHPO have been broadly outlined in the Preserve America project, but are not identified as tasks in this proposal.

Specific objectives of the Cultural Site Stewardship project will be to:

- Maintain/increase the number of at-risk cultural sites being monitored.
- Maintain/increase the number of trained cultural site steward volunteers to meet the needs of the agencies.
- Maintain the existing relational database to maintain and track data for agencies.
- Continue to report and evaluate trends in site condition based on stewardship reports.
- Provide both mandatory and optional training workshops for site steward volunteers.
- Enlist site steward volunteers to participate in community outreach/public education projects.

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Round 11

Project Name: Growth and Survival of Moapa Dace in the Muddy River System: Response to Variable Temperatures, Flows, and Habitat Changes

Round: 11 **Tab #:** 5 **Priority #:** 2

County: Clark

Location: Muddy River within Clark County, NV

Nominating Agency/Entity: FWS

Funding Requested: \$884,836

Recommended Funding: \$884,836

Project Description:

The Moapa dace (*Moapa coriacea*) is a small minnow found only in the Muddy River in southern Nevada near Las Vegas. This unique fish is thermophilic, meaning it is generally restricted to water temperatures between about 26 and 32°C (about 80 to 90°F) and is thus restricted to the upper 2 km of the Muddy River including several small tributaries fed by warm springs. The general area where Moapa dace occur is known as the Warm Springs area. No other members of the genus *Moapa* exist anywhere on earth.

The goal of this study is to quantify potential effects of thermal and hydrologic change in the Warm Springs area on several members of the aquatic community. A contractor will observe and model responses of periphyton, aquatic macroinvertebrates, and two species of fish (Moapa dace and Moapa White River springfish [*Crenichthys baileyi moapae*]) to changes in water temperature and flow. The contractor will use ecosystem measurements, field and laboratory experiments, experimental mesocosms, and simulation models to describe the behavior, physiology, and population dynamics of Moapa dace under varied thermal and hydrologic conditions.

This request is a continuation and conclusion of the Moapa dace study of the same title funded in previous Rounds under the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA).

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Round 11

Project Name: Habitat Restoration - Path to the Future

Round: 11 **Tab #:** 6 **Priority #:** 3

County: Clark

Location: Federal land within Clark County, NV

Nominating Agency/Entity: FWS

Funding Requested: \$1,016,000

Recommended Funding: \$0

Project Description:

The federal land management agencies in Southern Nevada (Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service) continue to work collaboratively on interagency restoration projects under the Southern Nevada Restoration Team (SNRT). This team has built a solid restoration program primarily through funding from the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA). However, the future of the SNRT's restoration program will depend on using other mechanisms to accomplish work. The proposal, Habitat Restoration – Path to the Future, transitions the existing program from a largely SNPLMA-funded effort to a diversified program that augments SNPLMA dollars with additional funding sources, existing agreements, and expands capacity to implement restoration projects through volunteers. The goal during this transition is to retain institutional knowledge, continue to implement high priority restoration projects, and leverage remaining and future funds. The team believes this model will ensure program longevity and future productivity.

The interagency restoration program has improved habitat for sensitive species, reduced the spread of noxious weeds, and protected cultural sites and springs throughout southern Nevada. Using SNPLMA, Conservation Initiative funding from rounds 4, 5, and 6, SNRT has planted nearly 9,000 native plants, collected more than 220 pounds of native seed, seeded approximately 500 acres, and restored 1,845 acres. Additionally, SNRT has installed approximately 72,000 linear feet of barrier to protect habitat, eradicated invasive species on 17,300 infested acres removed, 4,263 cubic yards of trash, and cleaned 1,790 square feet of graffiti.

This two-year proposal assists SNRT with transitioning into a long-term strategy for restoring high priority areas that includes: (1) retaining existing personnel and funds, (2) diversifying funding sources, (3) utilizing volunteers, (4) developing partnerships, and (5) leveraging funding from other agency programs. The basic proposal focuses on completing 40 total projects (10 projects per agency per year), maintaining existing restoration specialists and conservation crew programs.

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Round 11

Project Name: Interagency Law Enforcement Team

Round: 11 **Tab #:** 7 **Priority #:** 4

County: Clark

Location: Federal land within Clark County, NV

Nominating Agency/Entity: NPS

Funding Requested: \$3,263,620

Recommended Funding: \$0

Project Description:

Southern Nevada public lands are managed by four federal land managing agencies: Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), U.S. Forest Service (USFS), and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). As a result of the SNPLMA and P.L. 107-282 the four federal agencies agreed to work together and submit interagency supported Conservation Initiatives. Three year funding requested through Round 4, 5, 6, and 7 initiatives provided a total of 27 positions to the SNAP Law Enforcement Team. . These positions included 21 law enforcement personnel, 3 Special Agents, 2 public safety dispatchers, and 1 attorney. This Round 11 Initiative will ensure sustainability for a proven Resource Protection/Law Enforcement program that continues to meet identified deliverables.

This proposal is intended to sustain the funding of 27 positions of the SNAP Law Enforcement Team, in its' entirety, for one additional year. As these positions are in the public safety and resource protection field and many times the only contact with visitors and recreationists utilizing public lands we believe continuation of funding is essential for public safety and satisfaction as well protection of the natural and cultural resources we are entrusted to take care of.

Major Deliverables:

1. Continuation of saturation patrols (2 per agency). Saturation patrols are cooperative enforcement activities targeting areas in need of protection due to human contact. In addition to the protection of the resource through detection of criminal behavior, saturation patrols increase perception of risk by enhancing the public's expectation that those who commit crimes on public lands are likely to encounter a federal officer and suffer the consequences of a legal sanction. Saturation patrols demonstrate the powerful enforcement capabilities of combining several strengths to focus on identified problems such as speed enforcement, DUI enforcement, illegal hunting, off road driving, dumping, removal of artifacts, etc.
2. Increased employee and visitor safety and satisfaction, as measured by staffing models and visitor feedback, through full time dedicated Public Safety dispatching.
3. Increased visitor safety and satisfaction with dedicated land management attorney who provides consistent representation and successful prosecution on behalf of the four federal agencies.
4. Increased resource crime prosecutions, conviction and restitution as a result of dedicated investigations conducted by Special Agents.
5. Increased coordination and collaboration with existing Conservation Initiative Teams (OHV/Recreation, Anti-Litter, Wilderness, Volunteer, Education) that rely heavily on the Law Enforcement Team for successful outcomes of their deliverables.

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Round 11

Project Name: Bighorn Sheep Restoration in the South Snake Range

Round: 11 **Tab #:** 1 **Priority #:** 5

County: White Pine

Location: Great Basin National Park

Nominating Agency/Entity: NPS

Funding Requested: \$598,886

Recommended Funding: \$0

Project Description:

Bighorn sheep while native to the South Snake Range and Great Basin National Park are in serious decline and nonviable population numbers. Despite bighorn past reintroductions efforts to the South Snake Range, the population remains below levels generally considered viable by most wildlife biologists. The failure of the initial reintroduced bighorn herd to establish a viable population likely resulted from very small initial translocations, inadequate habitat, and deleterious interactions with domestic sheep.

Conditions have changed since the initial reintroduction thirty years ago. The establishment of Great Basin National Park and several wilderness areas have protected large areas of alpine habitat from anthropogenic disturbances. Several recent large fires have greatly improved bighorn habitat suitability in the South Snake Range and these areas now form the core of the remaining bighorn ewe home ranges. Additionally, all grazing allotments in Great Basin National Park have been retired. These conditions and the success of a recent augmentation on the North Snake Range suggest that restoration of a viable bighorn herd in the South Snake Range is now an attainable goal.

Under this proposal Great Basin National Park and the Nevada Department of Wildlife would work cooperatively and follow published standard protocols in the restoration of bighorn sheep. Deliverables under this proposal include: translocation of 40 or more bighorn from the East Humboldt and Ruby Ranges to the South Snake Range; effectiveness monitoring of translocated bighorns to determine survival and habitat utilization; graduate thesis, GIS model and peer reviewed publication.

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Round 11

Project Name: Ely Ranger District Watershed and Road Restoration Project

Round: 11 **Tab #:** 4 **Priority #:** 6

County: White Pine

Location: Ely Ranger District - Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

Nominating Agency/Entity: USDA FS

Funding Requested: \$715,050

Recommended Funding: \$0

Project Description:

The Ely District proposes to close and rehabilitate approximately 400 miles of unauthorized motorized routes that were recently closed in accordance with the Ely Travel Management Plan Decision which was approved in February of 2009. This project will also involve the full implementation of the Ely Travel Management Plan decision and will include signing of approved routes and other actions involving information, education and enforcement. Closure of unauthorized routes will be accomplished through a variety of methods to restore watershed function, reduce soil erosion and sedimentation, restore wildlife and fishery habitats, and reduce the risk of wildfires associated with unauthorized vehicle use. Routes that will not be closed will be signed according to the Travel Management Decision and numbered accordingly. Travel Management Maps will be printed and available to the public free of charge. Maps will also be available on the web.

The purpose of this project is to improve watershed conditions and water quality; reduce soil erosion and sedimentation; restore wildlife and fishery habitats; and reduce the risk of wildfires resulting from unauthorized or unmanaged motor vehicle use across the Ely Ranger District. To assist in accomplishing these objectives this project will implement the following actions:

- Approximately 400 miles of unauthorized roads and motorized trails will be closed and rehabilitated through a variety of methods.
- Provide maps and educate the public regarding the Ely Travel Management Plan and where vehicles and motorized equipment are allowed.
- Appropriately sign all open routes and install information and educational signing at primary entry points to notify the public they are entering travel restricted areas.
- Appropriate enforcement to prevent unauthorized motorized use off designated routes that may result in adverse resource impacts.
- Monitoring of project effectiveness.

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Round 11

Project Name: BLM Ely District ACEC Management Plan for Desert Tortoise and other Special Status Species Habitat

Round: 11 **Tab #:** 3 **Priority #:** 7

County: Lincoln

Location: Caliente Field Office

Nominating Agency/Entity: BLM

Funding Requested: \$518,805

Recommended Funding: \$0

Project Description:

The goal of this project is to create an Area of Critical Environmental Concern (ACEC) Management Plan for watersheds in desert tortoise habitat within Caliente Field Office. This plan promotes conservation of threatened and endangered (T&E) species habitat by implementing multiple-use land management actions, best management practices, use restrictions, stipulations, and conservation actions brought forward from the Ely District Resource Management Plan (RMP), biological opinion, and recovery plans for these species. Further, the ACEC Management Plan would step down the broad RMP decisions and identify site-specific locations where such actions would occur on the ground. The ACEC Plan would include a detailed travel management section to address route designations as open, limited administrative access, or closed due to resource concerns. The ACEC Management plan is critical to protecting and sustaining natural and cultural resources in Nevada, particularly the threatened desert tortoise and the endangered southwestern willow flycatcher.

The Ely RMP focuses on treatments and projects at the watershed level. Therefore, the ACEC Management Plan area includes all watersheds containing Mojave desert tortoise and southwestern willow flycatcher habitats, resulting in a total planning area of approximately 1.4 million acres. The plan affords protection to five ACECs, which were designated for locally significant qualities giving them special worth and cause for concern compared to similar resources. Kane Springs, Mormon Mesa, and Beaver Dam Slope ACECs were designated for the conservation and recovery of the threatened Mojave desert tortoise. Lower Meadow Valley Wash ACEC was designated for the conservation and recovery of the endangered southwestern willow flycatcher, and Shooting Gallery ACEC protects prehistoric archaeological sites. These areas contain resources that are fragile, sensitive, and irreplaceable.

The overall goals of this proposal are to:

- Develop and begin implementation of a management plan for the Kane Springs, Mormon Mesa, Beaver Dam Slope, Lower Meadow Valley Wash, and Shooting Gallery ACECs. Identify priority conservation and management actions, best management practices, use restrictions, stipulations, and conservation and recovery actions for each of the ACECs.
- Identify and prioritize areas for restoration and/or protection of important natural and cultural resources in the ACECs.
- Designate a route network for public use that balances transportation with resource conservation.
- Develop and distribute maps showing approved routes, restricted areas, and closed areas.
- Conduct public outreach and education efforts about resource values and the need for increased management focus.
- Implement the plan by installing signs and kiosks.