6-30-2006


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QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT
University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Period Ending June 30, 2006

Cooperative Agreement Number H8R07010001
Task Agreement Number J8R070050004
Interagency Science & Research Strategy

Executive Summary

- The Desert Research Institute has completed one of two information collection (Vital Signs) workshops scheduled for May and August 2006.
- The Science and Research Team charter was approved by the SNAP Board
- A short-term (Phase I) science and research strategy has been completed, with the initial beta-test scheduled for Round 7 proposals.
- Productive relationships with Clark County are being developed.
- Interagency Science and Research Team meetings are conducted approximately once per month.

Program Activities

Interagency Team Meetings
Project Manager Debra Dandridge has continued to organize and facilitate meetings for the Interagency Science and Research Team (S&R Team) in coordination with Team Leader Kent Turner (NPS). Three meetings with the S&R Team were coordinated and facilitated on April 5, May 11, and June 20, 2006 (see attached agendas and meeting notes). The S&R Team Vision and Mission Statements and a working charter have been drafted as directed by the Southern Nevada Agency Partnership Board (SNAP). Two meetings with the SNAP Board were held for review of these documents. Subsequent to the meeting with SNAP Board members on May 19, 2006, suggested revisions to the Vision, Mission Statement, and Charter were accepted by the S&R Team. The revised documents (see attached) were then approved by the SNAP Board on June 30, 2006.

Mojave Ecosystem Health Assessment Workshops
Dr. Dandridge has been instrumental in facilitating meetings between the S&R Team and the Desert Research Institute's (DRI) workshop team. The Desert Research Institute has completed the first of two rounds of Mojave Ecosystem Health Assessment workshops (i.e., Vital Signs workshops) designed to evaluate the state-of-knowledge of the Mojave Ecosystem research relative to management needs of the SNAP cooperating agencies. A two-day workshop designed to assess partner agency management concerns and ecosystem maintenance needs was conducted on May 3 and 4, 2006. DRI submitted a draft summary of the first workshop and is proceeding
with the logistics, planning, and implementation of a second, more in-depth workshop which is currently scheduled for mid-August of 2006.

**Interim Phase I Strategy**
The S&R Team finalized in this quarter an interim (Phase I) science and research strategy (*attached*). The short-term strategy is targeted to be beta-tested in Round 7 on a voluntary basis by project proponents who are interested in having research project nominations subjected to science peer review. Dr. Dandridge is currently researching the best means of locating suitable candidates for the peer review panel. Members of the science peer review panel could potentially serve on the Steering Committee at a later date. The mission and composition of the proposed Science and Research Steering Committee, comprised of academic and agency professionals, is also under development by the S&R Team.

**Research on Multi-Agency Initiatives**
An important element of the Science and Research task order is to conduct evaluative research of multi-agency planning initiatives undertaken in other parts of the country, with the goal of ascertaining what works and did not work in developing planning initiatives on a landscape scale. Programs developed by the USDA Forest Service in the northwestern U.S. and the National Park Service in the southeastern U.S. are currently being researched. Additional agency approaches (e.g., U.S. Geological Survey) are also being addressed. This effort is pursuant to the SNAP Board members’ interest in a productive science and research strategy that does not duplicate past or current efforts within Southern Nevada. The ultimate goal is to engender a global model addressing the Mojave Desert Ecosystem with shared research results, which will aid in advancing knowledge and management practices.

**Partnerships**
A foundational relationship with the Clark County science management analyst has been established through a series of meetings with Clark County Air Quality staff. Productive communication is being facilitated by Dr. Dandridge between the federal agencies and the County regarding science objectives for the Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP). Sue Wainscott, the Clark County Science Management Analyst, was invited to the S&R Team meeting on June 20, 2006, to update the team on revisions to the MSHCP compliance and research program. The goal is to foster communication and cooperation with Clark County as well as reduce duplicative efforts that target research relating to endangered species on public lands in Southern Nevada.

Water initiatives are expected to be an important aspect of comprehensive science and research programs in Southern Nevada in the future. To prepare for this need, Public Lands Institute (PLI) representatives, at the request of Science and Research Team Leader Kent Turner, attended two monthly Water 2025 inter-agency meetings. Dr. Dandridge was present on May 25 and Dr. Jef Jaeger was present on June 20, 2006. The intent of PLI participation is to become more familiar with the objectives of the initiative and to become acquainted with the key partners on water issues.

**Summary**
The Science and Research Strategy Interagency Team remains committed to developing a process and delivery strategy that is forward looking and provides value for public lands management. The Team conducts productive meetings on a regular basis. Using Round 4 and Round 5 nominations as guiding documents, progress is being made towards developing a workable
science and research strategy for the Southern Nevada Mojave Ecosystem that will be a dynamic and productive model.

Submitted by:

________________________________________
Margaret N. Rees, Principal Investigator       Date
Meeting Schedule
April-June 2006
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Subject – Primary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Prog. Perspective – J. Haley</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>S&amp;R Team meeting – S&amp;R Team</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Discussion re: Science review panel – P. Rees</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Meeting between Clark County and F&amp;WS</td>
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<tr>
<td>18-19</td>
<td>Mohave Symposium</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>S&amp;R charter progress – K. Turner</td>
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<tr>
<td>May</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Meeting with CR Team and research specialist R. Ahlstrom, Tucson, AZ</td>
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<tr>
<td>3-4</td>
<td>DRI Workshop</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Landscape scale research models – M. Hoversten (UNLV)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>S&amp;R Team charter – J. Haley</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>S&amp;R Team meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>USGS research – M. Brooks</td>
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<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>SNAP Board Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>Water 2025 Meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>31</td>
<td>Science Review Panel – C. Maples</td>
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<tr>
<td>June</td>
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<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>DRI workshop review meeting – J. Haley, K. Turner, DRI</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Proj. Managers Meeting – J. Haley</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Landscape characterization model – M. Hoversten (UNLV)</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>MSHCP update – S. Wainscott</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>S&amp;R Team meeting</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>Water 2025 meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>SNAP Board Meeting (K. Turner)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Agendas and Meeting Notes
**AGENDA 4.5.06**

**Science & Research Team Meeting**
Interagency Building, 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive

**Date:** Wednesday April 5, 2006  
**Time:** 9:00 to 4:00

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
<th>Desired Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 – 10:00</td>
<td>Update on May Workshops and detailed narrative of daily workshop agenda.</td>
<td>DRI</td>
<td>Team will be aware of the status of the workshops and how the outcome will be documented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 – 12:00</td>
<td>Finalize Team Charter</td>
<td>Kent and Debra</td>
<td>Approval on Team working documents, i.e., Vision Statement, Mission, and Charter</td>
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<td>(break around 10:45 for 10 minutes)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 – 1:45</td>
<td>Interim S&amp;R strategy for Round 7 proposals – Call for proposals, evaluation criteria, time lines, Team and peer review of proposals.</td>
<td>Kent &amp; Debra</td>
<td>Team will agree to the process that will be used to consider Science and Research conservation initiative proposals for Round 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2:00 – 3:30</td>
<td>continue Interim strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td>3:30 – 4:00</td>
<td>Round-up loose ends if needed</td>
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**Additional Instructions:**  
Bring your calendars for the scheduling phase of our agenda
Science & Research Strategy Team
Meeting Summary
4.05.06

Participants: S&R Team:
Kent Turner, NPS, Team Lead
Cynthia Martinez, FWS, National Refuges
Cristine Murphy, BLM
Debra Dandridge, PLI, Project Manager

Guests: None

Upcoming Meetings:
Wednesday - May 11, 2006 9:30 – 4:00
April 18-19, 2006 – Mohave Desert Symposium, Las Vegas
May 3-4, 2006 – Mojave Ecosystem Health Assessment Work Shop, Desert Research Institute

ACTION ITEMS:

Workshops May 3-4:

1. 04.17/06 – Close-of-business, all team members will provide initial prioritization (high, medium, low) of questions/issues already submitted to DRI and eliminate any policy type questions.
2. DRI will send more detailed description of what will actually be discussed in the 2 hours allotted to each agency for day 1 of the May 3-4 workshop. This will be included in the workshop agenda that will be mailed to each agency. A room number and a DRI location map will be included in the workshop agenda.
3. DRI will organize a social hour for Wednesday night to which the S&R Team and agency personnel are invited. (A Tuesday night icebreaker for the resource experts will also be organized to which the agencies are also invited).

S&R Strategy:

1. A placeholder statement needs to be added to the implementation agreements. It will include verbiage to the effect that science proposals will be subject to S&RT review, outside review, and if not reviewed as outlined they will not be considered and due to the review process, they must adhere to a submission deadline schedule.
2. Kent will have NPS graphics draft his conceptualization of how the various Southern Nevada habitat conservation programs work together.
3. At the next meeting the S&R Team will develop a “crediting plan” for science proposal review criteria.
4. 05.01.06 - Deb will finalize the charter and send to the S&R Team for yes or no vote
5. 05.20.06 - S&R Team will send responses to Deb regarding yes or no vote for finalized charter.
6. Deb will identify a process for an open solicitation for volunteer reviewers for science proposals (and also touch base with Jennifer concerning details of review panel).
**Discussion Summary:**

The team focused on details of the May 3-4 workshop; finalized the Team charter with changes; agreed to the need for an outside science proposal review panel; agreed on preliminary evaluation criteria for science proposals; and discussed how the Science and Research Strategy works with existing habitat conservation programs.
**AGENDA**

**Science & Research Team Meeting**

**Interagency Building, 4701 N. Torrey Pines Drive**

**Date:** Thursday, May 11, 2006

**Attendees:** S&R Team members, Pat Hicks (representing the SNAP Cultural Resources Team); (Kent Turner, NPS, will lead discussions; Debra Dandridge, PLI, will facilitate)

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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
<th>Desired Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 – 10:00</td>
<td>TEAM CHARTER</td>
<td>Kent Turner</td>
<td>Finalize document for presentation to SNAP Board (tentatively 5/19)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 – 10:30</td>
<td>DRI Ecosystem Health Assessment Workshops</td>
<td>Deb Dandridge &amp; Kent Turner</td>
<td>Apprise Team of May 3&amp;4 progress of DRI Workshops</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10:00 – 12:00</td>
<td>Interim Strategy</td>
<td>Tentatively – Deb Dandridge</td>
<td>Team will be familiar with a method used by large funding organizations to evaluate &amp; fund research proposals (e.g. NSF).</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:00 – 1:00</td>
<td>LUNCH</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 – 4:00</td>
<td>Interim Strategy</td>
<td>Team Discussion</td>
<td>Finalize a process to present to SNAP Board (tentatively 6/3)</td>
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**Additional Instructions:**

Bring your calendars for scheduling Team meetings in June, July, and August
Participants: S&R Team:
   Kent Turner, NPS, Team Lead
   Susan Barrow, USFS
   Gerry Hickman, BLM
   Cynthia Martinez, FWS, National Refuges (afternoon)
   Debra Dandridge, PLI, Project Manager

   Guests:
   Pat Hicks, Bureau of Reclamation (representing Cultural Resources Team)

Upcoming Meetings: June 20, 2006  9:30 – 4:00

SUMMARY:

The S&R Team discussed additional revisions to the Vision, Mission Statement and Charter for SNAP Board review on 5/19/06.

A detailed methodology for a Phase I (interim strategy) was developed also for SNAP review on 5/19/06.

ACTION ITEMS:

Deb will send revised documents to S&R Team for review and comment prior to 5/19 SNAP Board meeting; Team members will review and if needed provide additional comment; no comments will be considered as concurrence.
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<th>Time</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Presenter</th>
<th>Desired Outcome</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9:00 – 9:30</td>
<td><strong>Summary of Clark County BAMR and process innovations</strong>&lt;br&gt;** Presenter:** Sue Wainscott, Clark County&lt;br&gt;<strong>Desired Outcome:</strong> S&amp;R Team is aware of County’s progress on revamping MSHCP process and coordination opportunities with S&amp;R strategy.</td>
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<td>9:30 – 10:30</td>
<td><strong>DRI Workshop in May</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenter:</strong> David Mouat/Judith Lancaster&lt;br&gt;<strong>Desired Outcome:</strong> Agreement on outcomes of May Workshop #1: Mojave Desert Ecosystem Health Assessment Workshops</td>
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<td>10:30 – 10:45</td>
<td><strong>BREAK</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenter:</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Desired Outcome:</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>10:45 – 12:00</td>
<td><strong>DRI Workshop in August</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenter:</strong> David Mouat/Judith Lancaster&lt;br&gt;<strong>Outcome:</strong> Agreement on outcomes of August Workshop #2: Mojave Desert Ecosystem Health Assessment Workshops</td>
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<td>12:00 – 1:00</td>
<td><strong>LUNCH</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenter:</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Desired Outcome:</strong></td>
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<td>1:00 – 1:45</td>
<td><strong>Conceptual model for consideration</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenter:</strong> Mark Hoversten (UNLV)&lt;br&gt;<strong>Desired Outcome:</strong> Consideration of concept to help inform S&amp;R Strategy</td>
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<td>1:45 – 2:30</td>
<td><strong>Round 7 &amp; 8 Expectations and S&amp;R Nominations</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenter:</strong> Kent Turner&lt;br&gt;<strong>Desired Outcome:</strong> Discussion of Round 7 and 8 processes and anticipated number of science proposals for Round 7</td>
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<td>2:30 – 2:45</td>
<td><strong>BREAK</strong></td>
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<td>2:45 – 3:30</td>
<td><strong>Phase II Strategy (i.e. Long term process)</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenter:</strong> Kent&lt;br&gt;<strong>Desired Outcome:</strong> Team will discuss building upon short-term process to devise a long-term process that can stand the test of time and be continually relevant to Science &amp; Research needs of Southern Nevada public lands</td>
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<td>3:30 – 4:00</td>
<td><strong>Loose ends</strong>&lt;br&gt;<strong>Presenter:</strong> All&lt;br&gt;<strong>Desired Outcome:</strong> Ensure all issues have been addressed</td>
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Science & Research Team
Meeting Minutes

Date: June 20, 2006
Time: 9:00 a.m.
Location: Interagency Building

Minutes

Agenda item: Summary of Clark County BAMR and process

Presenter:
Attendees:

Presenters: Sue Wainscott and Lee Bice, Clark County
Attendees: Kent Turner, Susan Barrow, Gerald Hickman, Cynthia Martinez, Bob Williams (FWS), Randy Sharp, Humboldt Toiyabe Nat’l Forest

Discussion:

Sue Wainscott from Clark County gave an update on the Adaptive Management Plan, including a brief history of the program from 2003 to date. A more detailed presentation will be made on June 28 to the advisory committee. In order to implement the AMP, the county must have all datasets on file. To date, the federal agencies have been reluctant to release the data because of its sensitivity. Sue noted that a request has been made by the county to the SNAP Board for each federal land-management agency to provide the county a letter that documents the confidentiality of datasets on sensitive species per applicable agency regulations and policies. This will allow the county to be provided the datasets while providing it the authority to shield them from public-information requests.

Sue described the AMP report and noted it may be accessed on the web. Chapter 7 contains 96 recommendations. Based on data at hand, the county could not develop a solid list of needed projects for the next biennium. Instead, it has recommended staying the course and maintaining the relative proportion of funding to each category used in the prior biennium. The county needs the data in hand in order to make better decisions, but Sue was confident that the next biennial report will contain much more data.

The AM Science Team must now focus on the findings of the Kirchhoff audit. The focus of the Science Team will now be to review the work of the new science advisor (still to be hired). The advisor will not sit on the AM Science Team. Sue discussed the newly established, strict conflict of interest policy. Bob Williams expressed concerns that not having agency representatives on the AM Science Team was a major departure that had not been fully discussed with the agencies. He thought there would be more discussion with the Interagency Team to ensure a unified approach for good science, good adaptive management, and priority setting. He worried the presentation on June 28 would be considered a done deal. Sue noted that the proposal had been presented at a public meeting at the County Government Center, and the county believes some of the audit recommendations have to be implemented in order to be responsive to the audit findings. The 2008 report must be as independently based as possible. The Interagency Team agreed more discussion is needed on this issue. The agencies believed the initial county briefing was just the first step and had thought recommended changes would be proposed back to FWS for approval.

Kent said there is no inherent conflict of interest for the agencies to talk about science that needs to occur on public lands. Sue said agency representatives can participate in and inform the discussion of the Science Team. She described the role of the AM Science Team as focusing primarily on the work of the science advisor and reviewing the design of the analyses contained in the Adaptive Management Report. The Science Team will have a programmatic focus, not on lower level details. Panels that review the work completed will include broad expertise of subject-matter experts. Kent argued for a very focused and close interaction with the science advisors and the agencies that play into what goes in the BAMR.

Kent said there can be no framework where the agencies are lower in the process. Sue apologized and said it had not been her intent to create such an impression. She noted the need to look at agency input that is apart from the programmatic/policy level. Sue said she would ask her supervisor if the June 28 presentation might be adapted to address the team’s concerns.
Conclusions:  Sue will come back to the SRS Team for additional updates when deemed necessary or desirable.

Action items

- County has requested letters from each agency addressing confidentiality concerns about releasing sensitive species’ datasets

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<tr>
<th>Person responsible</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<tr>
<td>SNAP Board/Jennifer Haley</td>
<td>None stated</td>
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Agenda item:  DRI Workshop in May

Presenters:  David Mouat / Judith Lancaster – Desert Research Institute
Attendees:  Kent Turner, Susan Barrow, Gerald Hickman, Cynthia Martinez, Randy Sharp

Discussion:

David Mouat and Judith Lancaster from the Desert Research Institute presented a report on the ecosystem health workshop held in May. Copies of DRI’s draft report were provided to the team, which contains a summary of the expert-panel discussions and conclusions. David asked what the team thought of the workshop. Susan Barrow said there were no discussions with the expert panel while she was there; rather it was agency employees presenting to the experts. David noted the workshop was not intended to feature presentations from the experts but there was a fair amount of give and take over the 2 days, although it varied among groups. He suggested in may have been better for the experts to have been more responsive. Susan asked why the agencies were scheduled for different presentations. The NPS had huge representation, while other agencies had fairly limited number of staff there to represent their agency’s interests.

Randy Sharp asked if DRI has an adequate data set to proceed. David said some needs could be further stated between now and August, but the experts have been remarkably thorough in the initial report. The August workshop will fill in gaps and prioritize the needs. Randy said USFS wasn’t prepared going into the workshop, and he thought the questions could have been structured differently. He expressed concern about going into the next workshop without checking back with the agencies.

Jerry Hickman said BLM had too many people there and they didn’t have a good idea of what DRI was looking for. He thought the experts were looking at pie-in-the-sky research that met their needs, but the agencies want basic research applicable to Southern Nevada lands. David said DRI is highly sensitive to this concern and it must continue to be stressed and addressed. The interim product needs to reflect that agency concerns are being filtered through the sieve of experts’ opinions. In August, the experts need to pinpoint gaps that might not have been addressed by the agencies.

Cynthia Martinez said she received feedback from her agency that the experts were too interested in Ash Meadows instead of broadening it to the entire Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex, as FWS would have liked.

Kent Turner thought the agencies needed another opportunity to input stressors and questions prior to the August workshop. Cynthia agreed and thought the questions should be prioritized. Kent noted the draft report does some synthesis, analysis and prioritization. David said DRI needs to make sure the final report and recommendations address what is needed by agencies while being in some part guided by the experts, but with substantial interactions between the two groups.

The team agreed to send agency comments on the draft report back to DRI by July 17, with a team meeting set for July 20. Each agency should include a list of key stressors. Kent pointed out DRI provided the report ahead of schedule, but across the sections there seems to be a range of depth in treatment. The final product needs to keep an eye on holding the contributors to covering the existing knowledge base. Judith noted that each expert was asked to keep their section to no more than 2 pages. Randy noted little emphasis in the report on restoration, air quality, and limits of species distribution. David agreed that basic data and inventory are often ignored, with more focus on process. He asked the agencies to press DRI to make sure these kinds of issues come through and to prioritize them, where necessary, as a high-need research focus.
Conclusions:

Kent will send draft report electronically to team members. Team will meet with DRI on July 20 to review feedback on the draft report. The previously scheduled July 13 team meeting is cancelled. Agencies are to send feedback directly to Judith at DRI by close of business July 17.

Action items

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<th>Person responsible</th>
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<tr>
<td>Kent will send out “homework” memo</td>
<td>July 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kent / Debra</td>
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<tr>
<td>Each team member</td>
<td>June 30</td>
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Agenda item: DRI Workshop in August

Presenters/ Attendees: Presenters: David Mouat / Judith Lancaster – Desert Research Institute
Attendees: Kent Turner, Susan Barrow, Gerald Hickman, Cynthia Martinez, Randy Sharp

Discussion:
The team discussed an outline for the August workshop. DRI would like to see about 100 people attend. Approximately 30 have confirmed thus far. Judith Lancaster thought the breakout groups should have the same list of topics used in May. The experts who took the leads on writing the draft report will lead the breakout groups. David and Judith will monitor each breakout group to make sure they do what is expected. Kent said the topics need to address agency needs, but the team is looking for outside expertise to serve as a check-and-balance. This could be addressed in a role and function statement for each group. Cynthia Martinez agreed each group needed to have ground rules, especially for the agency employees to understand their role in the breakout groups. Susan Barrow agreed it will be helpful for everyone to know their role going in. Randy Sharp said each facilitator also needs to understand those roles so they can keep things on track. DRI hopes to use Mary Orton as the overall facilitator.

Susan asked how federal agency employees will be involved in the breakout groups. Sign-up sheets for each group are planned, with no more than 11-12 per group. The agencies can put someone on each group. Each group stays together throughout the event. One person will be assigned to complete a PowerPoint summary for each group. Each group will be provided a handout with expected outcomes. The team will discuss this with DRI at the July 20 meeting. Kent suggested it would be unrealistic for each agency to have someone at each group. He proposed having each agency determine who it wants to cover the breakout groups.

Cynthia clarified that outside experts would be in each group. Judith agreed and said DRI is in the process of inviting experts now. They hope to have 4-5 other scientists plus representatives from Clark County and city representation. Each group would get a brief summary of the May workshop outcomes but then would move into more defined questions.

Randy suggested that the groups get back together at end of day one to see if there are overarching themes among groups, rather than waiting until the start of day two. Kent suggested everyone in the breakout groups be provided with the interim report in advance of the workshop. David also suggested having the group lead provide a brief summary of the May report at the start of each breakout session.

Judith and David asked about use of the SNAP logo plus individual agency logos on the workshop brochure. The team agreed the SNAP logo is sufficient. The team discussed various people who should be invited to the August workshop, including representatives from UNR, NDF, NDOW, and others. The team was asked to provide additional invitees to Judith by June 30.

The DRI team will meet with the SNAP Board on June 30 to discuss the plans for the August workshop. Kent will
confirm the time and location with DRI. Anyone from the interagency team may attend.

Kent noted that the workshop agenda currently doesn’t include an introductory overview of each agency. David agreed it could be helpful to provide a 1-2 page summary to each participant, plus a map of the lands managed by each agency. The team suggested using a PowerPoint overview that was prepared for another team and then adding bullets to it. UNLV will provide a copy for review. The introduction could include a summary of the science/research issues each agency struggles with.

Kent asked how wildlife issues would be covered at the workshop. It was agreed that at the July 20 meeting the team will need to give guidance to DRI on how to ensure that this and other topics are covered in appropriate breakout groups. Kent reiterated the need to invite wildlife biologists and to assign them to the proper group.

Conclusions:
Team meets with DRI on July 20 for further discussion of August workshop agenda, participants, and process.

Action items
- DRI provides draft of expected outcomes and defined questions for breakout groups to team for discussion on July 20.
- Team provides feedback on the breakout group topics to DRI
- Team brings list of proposed agency participants to July 20 meeting
- Kent will contact DRI with time and location for SNAP Board meeting on June 30.
- PLI provides agency summary from existing PowerPoint – team adds issues to the slides prior to July 20 meeting.

Agenda item: **Conceptual model for consideration**

**Attendees:**
Presenter: Mark Hoversten – UNLV School of Architecture
Attendees: Kent Turner, Susan Barrow, Gerald Hickman, Cynthia Martinez

**Discussion:**
Mark Hoversten of UNLV’s School of Architecture presented a proposal for a landscape-scale approach to science and research that allows jurisdictional boundaries to be crossed. He noted almost every project characterizes the landscape in a particular way.

Kent said the interagency team is charged with conducting a science needs assessment, including stressors and impacts affecting the resources, identifying gaps and actions to be taken, and determining common measures for assessing ecosystem health. The August workshop is a start at achieving these goals. Another goal is common data collection and/or a common database. All of this needs to be done in a way that complements or enhances the MSHCP process. Over time, he foresees the team will be interested in exploring other frameworks for planning, data management, etc.

Mark said that researchers typically find they must translate data because each agency collects it differently. Randy Sharp said the first step is determining the question to be answered in order to figure out what you want to answer through landscape planning. Mark would like to look at how the agencies work together and how they manage their missions in the face of intense growth. He described a process that David Mouat uses, wherein approximately 8 people determine the question to be answered during an intense, 3-4 day workshop. Kent pointed out that the interagency team struggles to have its recommendations followed across the 4 agencies with equivalent buy-in, stability, and commitment. Mark said Nevada now has great talent and folks are talking to each other, which is a resource the state has not previously had and bodes well for both ends of the state. Kent asked if there were any studies that contrast or evaluate different processes. Mark said the bible is “Ecological Planning,” and he offered to provide a summary to the team at some future time, if desired.
Kent said he struggles with the fact that the team isn’t charged with developing a conservation strategy to go with the science strategy, or that the science strategy fit into a broader conservation strategy. He would like to get the SNAP Board to agree to this, not necessarily as a formal document as much as mutual objectives among the agencies for conservation, what measures are important to manage, and how can the objectives be better informed through research and mutually shared data. The issue will be determining a framework that is acceptable to all of the agencies. Typically, other plans have focused upon a single problem that multiple agencies needed to address. Southern Nevada has multiple issues across multiple agencies.

Mark suggested that perhaps several approaches would be needed by topical area, not a single approach.

**Conclusions:** None required.

**Action items**

- None

**Agenda item:**

### Round 7 & 8 Expectations and S&R Nominations

**Attendees:** Kent Turner, Susan Barrow, Gerald Hickman, Cynthia Martinez

**Discussion:**
Round 7 nominations are now open through August 10. Although the team hoped to implement the interim review process for this round, it would require proposals to be submitted by July 15. Another option might be to ask the SNAP Board for permission to allow peer review/team review concurrently with the working group’s review after August 10.

The team discussed known science proposals for Round 7. These include Jeff Herrick’s soils proposal from Round 6, a Moapa dace proposal, a fire-related proposal from Matt Brooks, and a proposal from Lloyd Stark. A fifth potential nomination may be related to Lake Mead water quality, but Kent was going to check whether it included a research component. These nominations may be well enough developed to allow review by July 15 if the authors are willing to allow their nominations to be beta-tested.

Cynthia Martinez was asked to talk to the Moapa dace folks, Kent will talk to Jeff and Matt and Lloyd. Kent will also check with the SNAP Board about whether the beta-test could be conducted concurrently with other local reviews. He added that he hopes to use workshop outcomes to inform Round 8, and move toward seeking proposals in particular areas rather than just accepting proposals.

**Conclusions:** Team will work toward having 4-5 Round 7 nominations go through the interim review process.

**Action Items**

- Kent will contact 3 known proposal writers about going through the interim strategy
- Cynthia will contact 1 known proposal writer about going through the interim strategy.
- Kent with ask SNAP Board about concurrent review of proposals after August 10.

**Agenda item:** Phase II Strategy (i.e., long term process)

**Attendees:** Kent Turner, Susan Barrow, Gerald Hickman, Cynthia Martinez

**Discussion:**
Kent reviewed 3 flowcharts with the team and asked the team to start talking about a framework for the longer term strategy. One is a broad flowchart, one focuses on the conservation database and how it works, and one explains the SNAP conservation strategy and its purpose.
Randy Sharp suggested using the term “conservation framework,” not strategy. Susan Barrow pointed out that everything keys off having a consolidated database, and the team agreed that it should be at the center of the broad flowchart. Kent thinks the county is becoming more open to a shared database, as the lack of consolidated after 12 years is the greatest area of vulnerability about the value and outcomes of the MSHCP.

The team agreed with a conservation framework that feeds into proposals and action strategies that feed BAMR and database, leading to reports, assessments, and actions. The team suggested Kent present the framework to the SNAP Board to 1) get their support for the team to develop a conservation framework (possible round 8 nomination), 2) to reinforce the importance of the GIS program/data management and 3) to inform them about how the agencies interface with the MSHCP, how to augment and not be redundant. If he can finish changes to the flowcharts in time, he’ll present them at the June 30 SNAP Board meeting.

**Conclusions:** A conservation framework would be useful for the team.

**Action items**

- Kent will make changes to the framework and present to SNAP Board.
Team Charter
SNAP
Science & Research Strategy Team

CHARTER
(Approved June 2006)

I. Background and Purpose of the Science and Research Strategy Team

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM), National Park Service (NPS), US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), and USDA Forest Service (USFS) work with numerous research agencies to obtain scientific information needed to effectively manage Federal lands in southern Nevada. Under the initial round of the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Conservation Initiative Program a proposal was funded to develop a comprehensive, interagency science and research program for Southern Nevada. The purpose of this program is to coordinate scientific-research efforts being conducted on Federal lands in Southern Nevada and to ensure efficient delivery of scientific information needed by the land-management agencies to improve understanding and management of areas such as ecosystem health, wildlife, physical resources, natural and cultural resources, anthropology, and social sciences. The program goals are to strategically identify and prioritize research needs of the land management agencies, determine what research will best meet these needs, and communicate these needs to science and research organizations.

The Southern Nevada Agency Partnership (SNAP) Board directed that a team comprised of partner agency personnel be convened. The purpose of the Science and Research Team (S&RT) is to provide assurances to the Southern Nevada Agency Partners relative to science and research; ensure consistency in landscape scale management objectives; and reduce redundant efforts. The S&RT provides mechanisms for SNAP team proposals and projects to be reviewed for scientific merit.

II. Vision and Mission of the Science and Research Strategy Team

VISION:

The cooperating Federal agencies work collaboratively towards the holistic management of Southern Nevada public lands through a comprehensive science and research program. Successful management of natural and cultural resources on public lands meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The mission of the Science and Research Team is to develop and implement an interagency science program that creates a consistent scientific approach across agency boundaries. An interagency science program is intended to complement individual
agency science and research activities and is not intended to supplant agency efforts. The science and research program will provide a clear understanding of the health and trends relating to the Southern Nevada ecosystem and will result in uniform informed management decisions for natural resources, cultural resources, and human use of public lands for the continuing benefit of Southern Nevada.

III. Goals and Objectives of the Science and Research Strategy Team
(see Appendix A for current FY goals):

- Clearly identify and fully implement a long-term strategy to characterize key science needs for the partner agencies and enhance and protect public lands in Southern Nevada;
- The partner agencies will cooperatively establish and implement tools that incorporate individual agency standards intended to measure ecosystem health across agency partner lands in Southern Nevada;
- Common methodologies assess effectiveness of Southern Nevada Agency Partner (SNAP) conservation actions on the landscape;
- Compatible database methods are applied across partner agency lands to enhance regional ecosystem management;
- Develop sound and transparent processes (which are beta-tested prior to full implementation) to insure fair, efficient, and effective expenditure of funds; On-going synthesis of interagency needs and review of research efforts; Publications are produced that relate to science and research initiatives – publications are written for general public consumption along with technical documents that relate to needs assessments and agency management; The results of various science and research initiatives and projects are showcased through appropriate forums including recurring symposia sponsored by the Southern Nevada Agency Partners (SNAP); In response to single agency and/or interagency conservation plans the Science and Research Team (S&R Team) interacts with other teams to help identify science standards, coordinate data management planning, and reduce duplication of efforts.

A short-term (phase I) strategy will identify an interim science and research review process that is fair and transparent to fund valid SNAP science and research proposals. Results from a phase I or interim process will help to identify the strengths and weaknesses of a longer-term process. From this information a more formal and widely applicable process will be developed for a long-term (phase II) strategy.

IV. Who are the other teams that will interact with the S&R Team?

The Science and Research Team interacts with other teams to help identify science standards, coordinate data management planning, and reduce duplication of effort responsive to single agency and/or inter-agency Adaptive Management Plans.
V. The team sponsor is:

Southern Nevada Agency Partnership Board (SNAP) of Directors.

VI. Team Members

Team membership shall be comprised of personnel from each partner agency and other cooperators as may be identified and/or approved by the SNAP Board. Currently designated team members are found in Appendix B.

VII. Roles

The primary role of the SNAP Science and Research Team is to focus on science and research relative to natural resources and ecosystem health while recognizing the important role of past and present human use of the landscape.

The team leader position may rotate on an annual basis among the agency team membership.

Team members are expected to attend and participate at all team meetings and be prepared to discuss any review material sent prior to a meeting. The team may delegate roles to other individuals within their agency as occasions may arise. Agencies may invite subject specialists to meetings, unless specifically restricted by the team. Team members and/or invited guests are expected to participate in team discussions. For purposes of decision making, no agency may have more than one vote at any given time regardless of how many agency personnel may be present at any meeting of the team.

Team members represent their agency. It is expected that when there is a question or problem that requires resolution by an agency, the designated agency S&R Team member will take the problem to their agency chain of authority for recommendations. The S&R Team member will then present the agency viewpoint to the S&R Team for discussion.

The team will meet regularly to discuss current issues and evaluate the status of team goals and objectives. The team leader and the project manager will meet regularly to review agendas and assess needs and topics for future meetings. The team leader will be the primary contact for dissemination of team informational needs though this duty may be delegated to other team members as the need arises.

The project manager may facilitate team meetings to ensure that all agenda items are addressed, that meeting objectives are met, and that there is consensus among the team. Other duties may be delegated as the need arises.

A team member may be assigned duties of recorder with the responsibility of recording all pertinent discussions and transcribing a summary for dissemination to the team and
posting on GroveSite. This responsibility may be rotated among the team members or other staff may be engaged to assist with this responsibility.

Specific subject experts may be invited to participate in team discussions to provide information the team may need to evaluate questions or decision points. The subject expert does not have a decision making vote on the team.

VIII. Decision-making Authority of the Team

- Reviews interagency science and research proposals and provides recommendations to the agency managers for funding;
- Provides oversight and recommendations for extraordinary funding opportunities such as emergency funds that may occur outside of the Southern Nevada Public Lands Management Act (SNPLMA) proposal funding process;
- Establishes goals and priorities recommending types of projects to be funded to ensure that science objectives are responsive to practical agency objectives and with the intent of reducing redundant efforts recognizing that the SNAP Board and Executive Managers have final approval authority;
- The Science and Research Team considers the geographic boundary for the science and research strategy to be the lands managed by the SNAP partners. However, there are other programs in neighboring political jurisdictions that encompass the Southern Nevada Ecosystem for which it is prudent to coordinate similarly related efforts.

The team is chartered by the SNAP Board to make recommendations regarding the scope of science and research goals and objectives for the partner agencies of the Southern Nevada area. The Science and Research Team will utilize such documentation and enlist such expertise as the team deems necessary to make valid recommendations regarding the development of a science and research strategy(ies).
APPENDIX A

FY 2006-2007 GOALS

- Ecosystem Health Assessment workshops completed with information sufficient to describe a working model for future proposal efforts.
- Develop a short-term strategy proposal to implement for Round 7 proposals. Lessons learned from the short-term or interim (phase I) strategy will inform a longer term (phase II) strategy.
- Assess and modify previously defined focus areas.
- Define what constitutes a “science/research” proposal for the focus areas, recognizing that this definition may change for a longer term strategy.
- Initiate the identification of membership and role of a Science and Research Strategy Steering Committee.
- The S&R Steering Committee is assembled for the beta-test of the long-term/phase II proposal process.
APPENDIX B

CURRENT SCIENCE & RESEARCH
TEAM MEMBERSHIP
May 2006

Team Lead – Kent Turner, National Park Service
Member - Susan Barrow, USDA Forest Service
Member - Gerald Hickman, Bureau of Land Management
Member - Cynthia Martinez, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Project Manager – Debra Dandridge, Public Lands Institute
Interim Phase I Strategy
I. Call for Nominations

A. Science & Research proposals must meet Implementation Agreement criteria.

B. S&R proposals will be evaluated against additional Science & Research criteria (see attached Appendices A & B for tentative evaluation criteria for Science and Research proposals; Appendix C are the elements that define a Science and Research proposal).

1. Evaluation criteria will be announced in the call for nominations and posted on PLI website and other agency websites as needed with links as appropriate.

2. Due to need for peer review of proposals, a deadline schedule for submittals will be adhered to. If the call for nominations is issued in mid-June with a deadline of final submission 60 days later, then Science and Research proposals must be received by mid-July to allow minimal time to navigate through the peer review process.

3. A Science & Research Peer Evaluation Review Panel will be organized based on responses from a paid or non-paid solicitation for volunteers. For the interim, consensus reviews from the entire panel will not be a requirement.

4. The SNAP Science & Research Team will conduct an additional evaluation based on management criteria. This evaluation will be a two part process in which individual S&R team members will independently review proposals and score them based on the evaluation criteria in Appendix B. The team will then discuss each Science and Research proposal as a team to determine a final score.

5. All Science & Research Proposals will have a form cover sheet (available on a website) that will, at a minimum, have a self-identification check box (i.e. Is this a Science or Research proposal?* Yes ____ No____). Other identifying information may also be requested.

*A definition for Science and Research proposals will be provided in the call for nominations and on websites (see Appendix C).

II. Receipt of Nominations

A. Nominations will be reviewed by SNAP Board (or delegated group) to ensure that Implementation Agreement criteria are met.

B. SNAP Board will forward Science and Research proposals to Science and Research Team (S&R Team).
1. The S&R Team will determine if proposals meet criteria for Science & Research proposals (see Appendix C).

2. S&R Team (or delegated group) will post proposals to secure website and notify Peer Review Panel members that the proposals are available for review (evaluation criteria will also be posted for Panel use). When the reviewer has completed the evaluation, it will be uploaded to the website and the reviewer will notify the S&R Team via e-mail or auto-notification from the website.

3. Proposals will be evaluated by no less than three outside peer reviewers.

III. Peer Review Panel Process

A. A minimum set of criteria, drafted by the S&R Team, will be used for evaluations (see Appendix A). A summary narrative will be part of the evaluation format.

B. Peer review panel members will evaluate proposals and post their individual evaluation(s) on website for retrieval.

C. When completed, the Peer Reviewer's completed evaluation(s) will be uploaded to website for retrieval by the S&R Team.

IV. SNAP Science & Review Team Process

A. Science & Review Team will evaluate proposals according to established criteria and assigned point values then tallied (see Appendix B). Scores from the Peer Review Panel and Science & Research Team evaluations will be summed. Numerical points from the combined reviews will be tallied and proposals will be initially ranked based on a total point score. Reviewer narratives will be given consideration and may affect a proposal's overall recommendation.

B. Scored proposals with the S&R Team recommendation, explanatory notes, and all supporting documentation attached, will be forwarded to the SNAP Board for their review and for forwarding to the Executive Committee for approval.

C. If time allows, proposals that do not rank well in initial overall scoring, but that appear to have merit, will be returned to the appropriate submitting unit with suggestions to improve the proposal.
APPENDIX A

Science Peer Review Evaluation Criteria
(tentative and in NO order of priority)

Please score the proposal on a scale of 1-5 with 1 being poor and 5 excellent; total maximum points possible = 35.

1) Is the proposal technically sound (i.e. is the project plan well thought out and achievable - is the proposal cost effective and is a planning schedule included; and, how will the data collected be handled - such as are the most current data collection/storage/retrieval technology and standards being used; are letters of commitment from appropriate analytical facilities included?)

2) Is the problem well defined?

3) What are the qualifications of the Principle Investigator(s) to complete the project?
   a. Is a nationally recognized scientist/researcher involved in developing the proposal (i.e., who is doing the implementation?)
   b. What are the qualifications of the Principal Investigator(s) relative to the proposed research?
   c. What is the past performance and current capability of the principal investigator(s) to complete the research proposed?
   d. Is a letter of commitment by the principal investigator included?

4) Is the research team qualified to accomplish the research identified?

5) Is the proposal creative and does it display original thought (i.e. Is it re-inventing the wheel or does it push the boundaries of science?)
   a. Does the proposal employ a current literature review?
   b. Are current or new methodologies utilized?
   c. Does the proposal advance management knowledge or objectives?

6) Are provisions to publish or share results clearly specified?
   a. How will the public know results are available?
   b. How will the data and results be made available?

7) Are there provisions for education and/or public outreach?

TOTAL SCORE __________

A brief summary narrative of the reviewer's overall opinion of the proposal will be included as part of the evaluation process.

RECOMMENDATION FOR FUNDING:
APPENDIX B

SNAP Science and Review Team Evaluation Criteria
(tentative and in NO order of priority).

Any redundancy to the peer review evaluation is intentional. Each criteria will receive a numerical score on a scale of 1-10; with 1 is lowest and 10 is highest; total maximum points = 35.

In addition to Appendix G of the Implementation Agreement, proposals will be evaluated by:

Does the proposal all or most of the defined elements for a Science Proposal?
Yes ___ No ___

1) Significance of Results (10 points maximum possible)
   a. Does it answer inter-jurisdictional questions relative to Southern Nevada ecosystem productivity and sustainability (i.e., does it meet the SNAP Science & Research Team sustainability mission and what is the significance of the resource proposed for investigation?).

   b. Does the proposal address any key vital sign of a healthy ecosystem; how can the results be applied to management practices; and, how would the Southern Nevada ecosystem be better as a result of the research?

2) How does the proposal address management of SNAP federal lands in Southern Nevada? (5 points maximum)
   a. Does the proposal address the SNAP S&R Team Charter of sustainable and enhanced management of federal lands?

   b. Will the project result in improved management of partner agency lands or result in the improved conservation of key resources?

3) Technology transfer (1 point maximum)
   a. Are results/methodologies exportable or applicable to all SNAP partners?

   b. Are results/methodologies exportable or applicable to other geographic or technological areas?

4) Scientific Relevance of the Proposal (3 points maximum)
   a. Is the proposal relevant within the Southern Nevada Ecosystem to one or more of the partner agencies?
5) Effective Collaboration and Partnerships for Science (1 point will be awarded for each partner identified to a maximum of 3 points)
   
   a. Are there multiple research partners with well defined roles?

6) Urgency of the issue (8 points maximum)

   a. Does the proposal address current threats to a resource?
   b. Does the timing for implementation of this proposal affect the implementation of some other project?
   c. Does this proposal complement other funded initiatives?

7) Is the proposal cost effective and is a planning schedule included? (5 points maximum)

TOTAL SCORE _________

A brief summary narrative of the reviewer's overall opinion of the proposal will be included as part of the evaluation process.

RECOMMENDATION FOR FUNDING:
APPENDIX C

Defined Elements of a SNAP Science and Research Proposal

A SNAP Science and Research Proposal shall display all or most of the following elements:

1. A testable hypothesis, question, or problem is clearly articulated.
2. There is a clearly defined and systematic method(s) of collecting data.
3. Methodology(ies) are clearly articulated, valid and up-to-date, as appropriate, for sampling designs, analytical standards, statistical modeling, etc. and appropriate for the scope of research proposed.
4. The proposal answers questions that relate to the conservation management of natural and cultural resources found on Southern Nevada ecosystem partner lands.