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Cooperative Conservation: Increasing Capacity through Community Partnerships - Interagency Volunteer Program: Quarterly Progress Report, Period Ending September 30, 2006

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QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT

University of Nevada, Las Vegas
Period Ending September 30, 2006

Cooperative Agreement Number H8R07010001

Task Agreement Number J8R07040006

Cooperative Conservation: Increasing Capacity through Community Partnerships --
Interagency Volunteer Program

Executive Summary

- Volunteer database increased 9.5% over last quarter. Database now contains 2,698 records.
- Website activity decreased, recording an average of 42,488 hits per month, with an average of 4,435 pages viewed per month (3.6% decrease in pages viewed).
- Volunteer recognition ceremony scheduled for November 4 at the Renaissance Hotel, Las Vegas.
- Fall 2006 volunteer training schedule finalized.
- National Public Lands Day volunteer projects successfully executed at Red Rock Canyon NCA and Lake Mead NRA, with a total of 232 community volunteers contributing more than 1,000 hours toward clean-up and restoration of Southern Nevada's public lands.
- Team charter presented to the federal managers.
- The Southern Nevada Interagency Volunteer Program received the Take Pride in America Award for best federal volunteer program. This is the second consecutive year the program was recognized.

Summary of Attachments

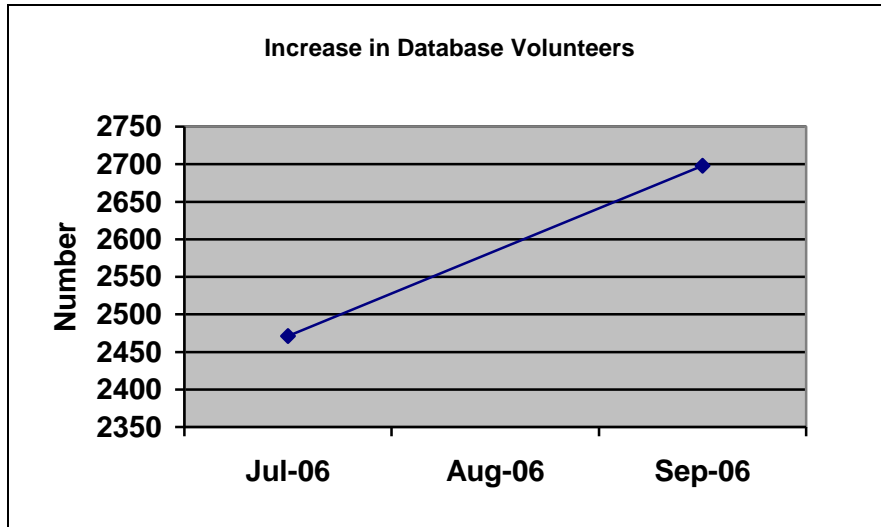
- Press release for Take Pride In America national award – Best Federal Program
- Samples of event publicity
- Volunteer awards criteria and forms
- Fall 2006 Volunteer Training Schedule

Collaboration with Interagency Team

The Interagency Volunteer Team (IVP) met several times during the quarter. These work sessions were designed to complete a list of program "to do" items. Topics included fall volunteer training and events, team charter, development of Standard Operating Procedures, Round 6 deliverables, and revision of the award criteria for the annual volunteer recognition ceremony. Each meeting concluded with an updated document and no additional action items, therefore minutes were not recorded and are not included as an attachment to this report.

Volunteer Database

The volunteer database is now populated with 2,698 records, an increase of 227 over last quarter (see chart below). The majority of new records include e-mail addresses, thus enhancing our ability to efficiently reach and recruit community volunteers.



Testing and evaluation of a new database feature, Volunteer Information Center (VIC), is underway at Red Rock Canyon NCA Visitor Center to determine if productivity gains can be achieved by providing volunteers and coordinators with access to select information on the Volgistics database application. If implemented, selected volunteers would have the ability to update their personal information, schedule themselves for an assigned task, and log volunteer hours. Assignment coordinators would be able to schedule assigned volunteers. Longer term, Assignment Coordinators may be provided the ability to log volunteer hours for the volunteers they have been assigned. Upon completion of testing, Database Manager Chuck Williams will provide a final report, including recommendations.

Public Relations and Outreach

Public relations and outreach activities for the quarter include the following:

Take Pride in America Award

IVP team representatives traveled to Washington, D.C., in mid-September to participate in the 2006 Take Pride in America National Awards Ceremony. Twenty-eight individuals and groups were presented with awards in 11 different categories. The interagency program received the award for best federal volunteer program. This is the second consecutive year the interagency volunteer program was recognized in this category (see attached press release).

Program Publicity & Outreach

The program was promoted at the following community events this quarter:

- September 2, Harvest Fest at Red Rock Canyon NCA
- September 7, Earthwatch Fair at HSBC

- September 21, Community Service Fair at UNLV

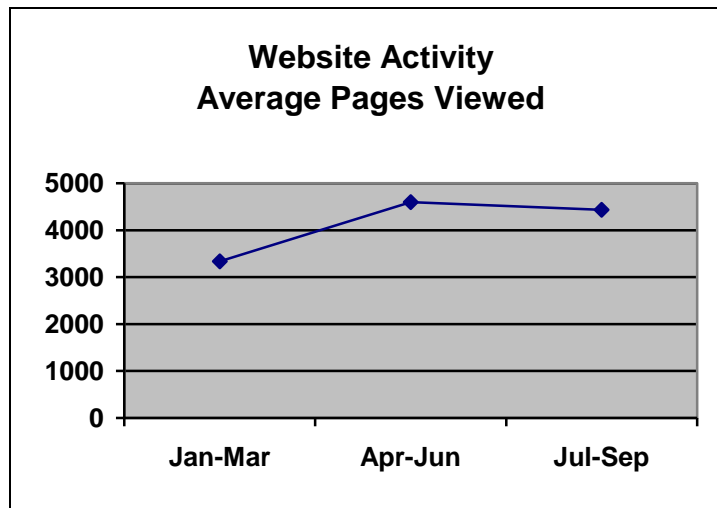
Event Publicity

The following advertising, public relations, and outreach activities promoted two National Public Lands Day events:

- Promotional e-mail was sent to more than 1,100 database volunteers.
- Promotional flyer was developed, distributed by e-mail, and posted on community bulletin boards (*see attached*).
- Print ad was developed and published in the *Las Vegas Review-Journal* September 12 & 19 (*see attached*).
- News release was created and distributed to the general media and weekly newspapers (*see attached*).
- Media advisory was developed and distributed to daily/weekly newspapers and local TV affiliates (*see attached*).
- Radio spots were written and submitted to KNPR Radio. The 15-second promotional spots ran 84 times from September 11 through 23.
- Event details were posted to www.getoutdoorsnevada.org.

Website

Website activity for this reporting period decreased slightly, recording an average of 42,488 hits per month, with an average of 4,596 pages viewed per month (*see chart below*). More than 150 volunteers visited the website to register for a National Public Lands Day event. Several group representatives viewed event details on the website and called to register more than 50 members. To identify trends and continue to draw community volunteers and sponsors to the website, monthly tracking of website activity continues.



Volunteer Recruitment, Recognition, and Training

Recruitment

The IVP website, www.getoutdoorsnevada.org, in combination with the Volgistics volunteer database, continues to be a highly effective tool for recruiting and pre-registering volunteers

needed for conservation events. As noted in our last quarterly report, an analysis of no-show rates was conducted to determine how to maximize event participation. This analysis reflected a higher participation rate for those volunteers registering within 30 days of an event than for those registering 60-90 days out. To test the validity of this observation, registration for two National Public Lands Day events was not opened until 30-days prior to the event. Early analysis of attendance figures indicates that the no-show rate was reduced to approximately 15% for the two September events, a significant improvement.

Recognition Ceremony

The second annual Volunteer Recognition Awards Ceremony will be held in Las Vegas on Saturday, November 4, from 9:00-11:00 a.m. at the Renaissance Hotel. The theme, “Our volunteers are gems. Thank you for saving our natural treasures,” was developed by the interagency team. Project Manager Donna Grady is working with 15 undergraduate students in a senior capstone course in the College of Hotel Administration to plan and execute the logistics for this event. Doing so will provide a valuable learning process for the students as well as built-in staffing for the event.

The Interagency Volunteer Team reviewed and revised the volunteer award criteria and added two new categories: “Supervisor of the Year” and “Volunteer Group of the Year” (*see attached*). During the next quarter, the team will place a call for nominations and select recipients for the annual awards, which will be presented at the November 4 banquet.

Training Schedule

The following classes will be delivered to active volunteers throughout October and November 2006:

Volunteer Orientation	Personal Safety
Archaeology	Map/Compass/GPS
First Aid/CPR	Spanish Trail
Wild Horse and Burro	Rock Climbing
Native American Culture	Geology
Reptiles	Defensive Driving
European Cultural Resources	Endangered Species
Leave No Trace	Bloodborne Pathogens
Astronomy	Winter Trails
Birds	

The training schedule (*see attached*) is posted at www.getoutdoorsnevada.org and volunteers are encouraged to register online. An e-mail announcing the training was sent to database volunteers. Similar training programs will be delivered to volunteers in the winter and spring of 2007. Planning for these programs will begin shortly.

Volunteer Events

Two volunteer events were held in celebration of 2006 National Public Lands Day. A total of 232 volunteers participated during these events and contributed more than 1,000 hours to improving Southern Nevada’s public lands.

National Public Lands Day – September 23, 2006 – Red Rock Canyon NCA

This event included litter removal and restoration and closure of two unauthorized roads.

A total of 80 volunteers contributed 320 hours and produced the following results:

- Closed and restored ¼ mile of unauthorized roadway
- Manually ripped roadway and collected dead and down for camouflage
- Cleared 10 acres of land of 14 cubic yards of litter and debris
- Closed three shooting ranges
- Removed illegal campsites
- Installed one t-bar, four military posts, and four carsonite posts
- Installed nine signs at roadway head to inform public of road closure and restoration.
- Planted twelve Yuccas, one Joshua Tree, one creosote, and nine cactus

National Public Lands Day – September 30, 2006 – Lake Mead NRA

A total of 152 volunteers contributed more than 700 hours to remove 6,000 pounds of debris and litter and 300 pounds of broken glass from the Boulder Beach area, a heavily used area by locals and visitors alike. Volunteers covered a one-square-mile area.

LIST OF ATTACHMENTS

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Press release for Take Pride In America national award – Best Federal Program▪ Samples of event publicity▪ Volunteer awards criteria and forms▪ Fall 2006 Volunteer Training Schedule |
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Submitted by: _____

Margaret N. Rees
Principal Investigator

Date: September 30, 2006