


2005

## Oliver Ranch Science School Complex & Wild Horse and Burro Facility: Quarterly Progress Report, Period Ending September 30, 2005

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## **QUARTERLY PROGRESS REPORT**

**University of Nevada, Las Vegas  
Period Ending September 30, 2005**

**Assistance Agreement Number FAA010017**

**Task Order Number FAF040019**

**Oliver Ranch Science School Complex & Wild Horse and Burro Facility**

### **Executive Summary**

Activity highlights during the first quarter of Year Two include the following actions toward task agreement deliverables:

- Agenda and minutes prepared and distributed for three core group meetings
- Wild horse and burro curriculum completed and vetted through local, regional, and national levels
- Historical curriculum completed and ready for review by core group
- Two RRDLC PowerPoint presentations coordinated, written, and illustrated by Public Lands Institute staff for BLM presentations to the Clark County School District Executive Cabinet and the Board of Trustees.
- RRDLC informational handouts provided to community members, teachers, and students at Joshua Jubilee community event and Clark County Farm Festival
- RRDLC brochure written and designed
- Interim RRDLC website created

### **Task 1: Project Coordination**

*Deliverables: The project coordinator will meet regularly with the Oliver Ranch committees, the Line and Space design team and NEPA team to assure modifications in design or curriculum that are necessary and appropriate are incorporated throughout the process of developing the facility. These activities will be recorded and provided to BLM in quarterly reports.*

### **PROGRESS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2005**

Over the past quarter, the Red Rock Desert Learning Center Core Group has met three times: July 18, August 16, and September 20, 2005. For each of these meetings, the university assembled and distributed the agenda, handouts, and minutes. For those persons who are unable to attend the Core Group meetings, electronic copies of the minutes and handouts are provided via e-mail.

In addition to the Core Group meetings, Public Lands Institute Director Nancy Flagg also attends the monthly meetings of the RRDLC Committee Chairs. At these meetings, which are typically held 5 days' prior to the Core Group, the participants share new information and prepare for the

Core Group meeting. The Committee Chairs met on July 14, 2005, and August 11, 2005. The September meeting was postponed.

The majority of the core group committees – with the exception of the Building Committee – are not actively meeting at this time while design development continues. The Building Committee has been active during this period and met on May 17, July 19, August 16-17, and September 20, 2005. The Educational Programs Committee met informally via email during this period to review the wild horse and burro curriculum, which is explained in more detail under Task 2.

During the past quarter, BLM Project Coordinator Michael Reiland completed a project matrix of concerns and resolutions related to the RRDLC project. The matrix – which was developed in response to core group concerns about the need for a formal record of project decision points – was distributed at the August 2005 core group meeting and will be updated by the BLM on a regular basis.

### **Task 2: Educational Curricular Coordination**

***Deliverables:** The Educational Curricular Coordinator will provide educational themes and activities for 5<sup>th</sup> grade outdoor environmental curriculum appropriate for the School in quarterly progress reports. The coordinator will collate the curricular contributions of the stakeholders identified for this subtask and attempt to synthesize these into an overall curriculum for 5<sup>th</sup> grade environmental sciences to be based at the school. Visitation to other similar outdoor schools will be included and their curriculum incorporated into the reports as appropriate.*

### **PROGRESS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2005**

#### **Core Curriculum**

In our last quarterly report we noted that Curriculum Coordinator Jeanne Klockow had begun forming small working groups, composed of agency personnel and community members, to begin developing core curriculum strands in 5 areas:

- Wild Horse & Burro
- Historical
- Cultural
- Night Sky
- Green Building Technology

The Wild Horse and Burro Curriculum was completed during the last quarter and went through several revisions and reviews at both the state and national level. The final draft curriculum was shared with the Core Group on August 16, 2005, and was then forwarded to the Educational Programs Committee and the UNLV Curriculum Advisory Team for feedback by Clark County School District teachers and other constituencies. No substantive changes have been made to the curriculum as proposed. The curriculum received an enthusiastic response from national wild horse and burro advocates.

Also during the last quarter, Dr. Klockow began meeting with a working group to develop the Historical Curriculum. Five “essential questions” that form the basis of the proposed curriculum were shared with the core group on August 16, 2005. The working group has completed drafts of lesson plans, or strands, for each essential question. Overall, the work on the historical

curriculum is 98% complete to date and the strands will be presented to the Educational Programs Committee and to the core group at the next meeting on October 18, 2005.

At the same time as this work has been taking place, Dr. Klockow began assembling another working group to develop the Cultural curriculum. That group began meeting September 14, 2005, to brainstorm essential questions. Further meetings will take place during the next quarter to finalize the essential questions and begin work on the lesson plans. All told, the development of RRDLC curriculum is on schedule with the timeline provided in March 2005. The final two segments of the core curriculum – Night Sky and Green Building – are on target for completion before the end of 2005.

### **Task 3: Operational Analysis**

***Deliverables:** The tasked coordination will be developed as the curriculum and design evolves. These plans will include estimated operational and maintenance costs and projected revenues. Progress on these business plans will be submitted in quarterly reports to BLM and will be prepared at least in part by university faculty, staff and graduate and undergraduate students.*

#### **PROGRESS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2005**

As reported in prior quarterly reports, the university is taking no formal action on Task #3 at this time per the request of the BLM project coordinator. We have, nevertheless, begun some very preliminary work with a UNLV faculty member to draft estimated expenditures and revenues based on currently available information regarding facilities, curriculum, and infrastructure. However, many critical details about the project that affect the bottom line are not currently known, making it difficult to proceed with any detailed analysis.

### **Task 4: Community Coordination**

***Deliverables:** Community outreach activities will be recorded and reported quarterly. These may include over the two years public Web page development, printed brochures, public forums, radio and television spots, school visitations, and establishing a mechanism for accepting donations.*

#### **PROGRESS AS OF SEPTEMBER 30, 2005**

##### **Interim Project Website**

The official RRDLC project website the university developed in 2004 that links through the Las Vegas Bureau of Land Management website has been inaccessible for most of the calendar year due to legal challenges at the national level. This has prevented the university from uploading new information and improving the site overall as we had hoped to do on a monthly basis.

At the August 16, 2005, core group meeting, participants suggested that the university develop an interim site through its own server to allow some form of ongoing public information about the project. The university was cautioned that only publicly released or university-authored documents could be loaded onto the site. Since that meeting, the university has created Discover Mojave, an overarching domain name purchased by the Public Lands Institute that contains

individual websites for several interrelated SNPLMA-funded education initiatives. Thus, this web location seemed to be an appropriate place to house an interim RRDLC site, which may be found at [http://discovermojave.org/redrock\\_center](http://discovermojave.org/redrock_center). The site is housed on the university's supercomputer, which already has the highest level federal security clearance. The new RRDLC pages currently contain basic information about the project and its history, architectural drawings of the proposed facilities, and the minutes of Core Group meetings. The new website is not intended to replace the official BLM website but will provide the public with access to information about the project on an interim basis.

Because of the sensitivities involved, the university does not currently plan to advertise the new website in a high profile manner, but rather intends to circulate the availability of the site through word-of-mouth and some mention in outreach materials. If and when the official BLM website for the project is again active, it will remain the primary website communicated through marketing materials.

#### Public Relations and Outreach

The university spent much of the last quarter completing additional drafts of a community outreach plan that met the desires of the agency's public affairs officer. After submitting an initial draft in February 2005, we received approval for the plan in June 2005 and began implementing it soon thereafter. On August 1, 2005, the Institute hired a full-time marketing specialist who will focus a portion of her efforts on RRDLC outreach. The university also established a contractual relationship with a respected local public relations agency, Aztec Communication, to advise and assist with the design and production of RRDLC collateral materials. Both the marketing specialist and the PR agency have reviewed the outreach plan and have recommended initial priorities. The university will meet with BLM representatives in the very near future to secure agreement on the next steps.

Work on the following outreach activities was commenced and/or completed during the past quarter:

- **Informational Brochure**

One of the first items called for in the outreach plan was a basic information piece about the project. Once schematic drawings became available in May, the university began working on an RRDLC brochure – intended as a handout at public presentations and community events. Drafts of the text were provided to the BLM project coordinator and public affairs officer on July 15, 2005. Despite several follow-up contacts, the university was unable to secure any feedback from BLM staff. As several public presentations were planned in the immediate future, the university continued work on the graphic design for the piece so as not to lose additional time.

Unfortunately, the brochure has not been available as a handout for August 2005 events and presentations, as we had planned, because of the delays in agency review. The timing is becoming ever more critical as more public outreach activities are scheduled.

On September 15, 2005, another copy of the draft publication was again forwarded to the project coordinator and public affairs officer for review and approval. At the September 2005 core group meeting, the university reminded the project coordinator that an agency response was needed very soon if the brochure was to be printed and ready for other Fall outreach events. We are still awaiting a response.

## ▪ **Public Presentations**

As the first in a series of public outreach activities, the university worked with the Clark County School District to schedule two presentations about the RRDLC project to school district administrators. One was presented to the CCSD Executive Cabinet Officers on August 19, 2005, and the second was a formal presentation to the CCSD Board of Trustees on September 8, 2005. The Public Lands Institute created the PowerPoint presentations for remarks by BLM Associate Field Office Manager Angie Lara and BLM Project Coordinator Michael Reiland.

Both presentations were very well received, which sets a positive tone for future interactions with school district personnel, parents, and students. The CCSD Cabinet agreed to consider a resolution of support for the project, which the BLM anticipates presenting to the Board of Trustees at an appropriate future date. The trustees requested periodic updates on the project at six-month intervals and asked for tours of the site to be arranged. Those arrangements are currently in progress. The trustees agreed to allow RRDLC materials to be provided through established school-district channels and also agreed to work with the BLM and the future operator on transportation and scholarships. The interim superintendent informed the Trustees that he intends to work with BLM to develop a transportation plan and cost estimates, which will be presented at a future trustees meeting.

The university assembled packets of information for distribution to participants at each presentation, to allow them to learn more about the project than could be presented in the limited time available. The packets included

- Copy of the PowerPoint remarks
- Project fact sheet
- Project FAQ
- A “typical visit” display
- Core curriculum concepts
- Architectural renderings
- Background information on the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act

## ▪ **Community Events**

The Public Lands Institute participated in two community events during the past quarter and distributed RRDLC materials at each. The first event was Joshua Jubilee held September 3, 2005, at Red Rock Canyon National Conservation Area. Institute staff distributed an informational flyer about the RRDLC to community residents who attended the festival, answered questions about the project, and displayed copies of the architectural drawings. More than 200 people visited the Institute’s booth during the 5-hour event.

On September 20-22, Public Lands Institute educational personnel worked with local wild horse and burro advocates to staff a booth and interactive activities for children at the Clark County Farm Fest. More than 350 packets of information were distributed to local schoolteachers at the event, reaching more than 8,000 K-4 students. The teacher packets contained information about RRDLC curriculum and facility plans.

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Margaret Rees, Ph.D., Principal Investigator