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Date: 8/30/16 10:01 PM (GMT-08:00)
To: la-rocks@yahooogroups.com
Subject: Report from Barstow

Rockhounds,

Disclaimer: The following information is not intended to start a flame war, so please take it with a grain of salt and a calm head.

The Barstow envisioning session for the Mojave Trails National Monument (MTNM) was well attended, with perhaps 30 rockhounds arriving promptly at 5PM. This group contained both dealers and hobbyists eager to share their view on the MTNM. I saw a few off road enthusiasts, but rockhounds were the vast majority. This was not a soapbox opportunity, but rather an informative meeting where interested parties were encouraged to write summaries of their positions on various topics.

I also met BLM officer Arthur Basulto from the Barstow office. He told me that the thing that bothers him the most when he is on patrols is trash, huge fire rings, and group campsites which result in damage to vegetation. He has a favorable opinion of rockhounds as they *tend* to be protective of the environment, rarely leaving a mess. This is something that we need to continue doing. When you drive in the desert, try to follow the roads as best as you can and DON'T RUN OVER FRAGILE PLANTS. It kills the plant and leaves a barren scar which takes years to regrow. Desert plants (not weeds) grow very slowly. Officer Basulto also told me that rockhounds would be looked favorably if they assisted the BLM in desert cleanup days. The next cleanup day is supposed to be at Owl Canyon Campground.

Please copy the questionnaires and fax or mail them to the BLM. It won't take very long and you won't have to drive to Barstow or Needles to deliver it. You might even be able to email the documents, but you'll have to call the BLM to be sure.

The subgroup rankings form below contains entities (like wildlife conservancy, conservation groups, natural resource agencies) that *might* want to lock us out of the desert, so I probably wouldn't put them anywhere near the top of your list. You'll have to decide which group is pro rockhound or not.

The Envisioning Questionnaire is long and tedious; you'll be glad you don't have to hand write this one.

Though dealers have more to lose than hobbyists, if we all don't make some noise, we will all be locked out of valuable rockhunting areas in the MTNM.

Sincerely,

Rex

Why a Desert Advisory Council Mojave Trails National Monument Subgroup?

The Mojave Trails National Monument Proclamation did not reference the establishment of a monument advisory council. In an effort to ensure that the public has a formalized way to actively participate and provide input into the creation of the monument management plan, the Desert Advisory Council will be establishing a Mojave Trails National Monument subgroup consisting of members of the public.

Qualifications for consideration will be based on the original Senator Feinstein monument legislation that did direct the formation of a monument advisory council. The legislation listed 14 categories that we have posted on a poster board and on a handout for you to review.

We are asking the public to rank in importance these categories in order for the DAC to determine the makeup of

the monument subgroup.

Once the BLM approves the DAC's suggested subgroup makeup, a public call for applications to the monument subgroup will be published in early September for a 30 day application period. Those applications will be reviewed with members being selected in collaboration with the BLM. At the October 15 meeting of the DAC in Palm Springs, the council will request that the BLM approve the subgroup.

The subgroup will advise and assist the BLM throughout the monument management plan process. The subgroup will meet as needed to provide reports and inputs to the BLM via the DAC.

Q and A's

What is a national monument?

A national monument preserves the unique natural, historic or cultural heritage of public lands. Congress may establish a national monument through legislation or President may proclaim a National Monument using the Antiquities Act of 1906.

Across the United States, the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration manage national monuments.

California has 15 national monuments. Other national monuments in southern California include the San Gabriel, Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains, the Sand to Snow, Cabrillo, and California Coastal national monuments.

What is the Antiquities Act?

The Antiquities Act of 1906 authorizes the President to designate "historic landmarks, historic and prehistoric structures and other objects of historic or scientific interest" as national monuments.

What is the difference between a national monument, a national park and other designations?

A national monument preserves at least one nationally significant resource, while a national park is usually larger and preserves multiple resources of national significance because of their historic, prehistoric, or scientific interest.

National reserves or preserves - like the Mojave National Preserve - may permit commercial mining activity and oil exploration. National recreation areas allow recreational opportunities that might be prohibited otherwise in a national park, such as hunting, motorized recreation, mountain biking, horseback riding and hiking or camping with a pet.

