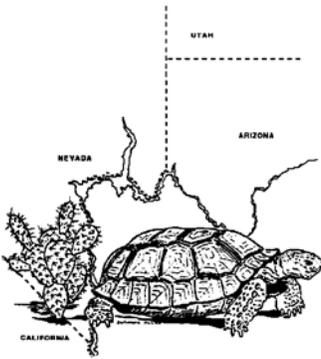


THE DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL NEWSLETTER

Summer 2010-OUR 35th YEAR

Our Goal: To assure the continued survival of viable populations of the desert tortoise throughout its range



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THE MASSIVE PROJECT PROPOSAL:

Response to the Response to the Desert Tortoise Council Position Paper on the Massive Project Proposal

DTC thanks the authors (Juvik, Kiester & Nagy) for coming forth with your opinions concerning the “Massive Project” and the DTC position statement about it. We appreciate your candor and your civility. However we have serious concerns about such a project that are both specific and general and want to state them clearly and briefly here. We will not repeat the previous statements and include them by reference (DTC Newsletters, Winter 2009, Spring 2010; www.deserttortoise.org/newsletter.html). Hopefully in the future we can provide a forum for discussion of the core issues.

In specific terms, including those previously stated, we are concerned about issues of following federal and state laws, genetic mixing and compatibility (in terms of adaptive gene complexes), demographic disruption, the effects of subsidized predators on released and native animals, increases in the risk of disease to wild populations (not only the Mycoplasma caused URTDs but especially diseases which have not yet been identified and have no established and reliable tests), and capricious loss of animals to ill-conceived placements where habitats may be in poor condition, land ownership may be in



Photo Credit: Kerry Lee Holcomb

More photos from this year’s contest will be printed in subsequent newsletters.

question, and which may become too arid in the near future with climate change. We are especially concerned about encouraging the release of captive animals, many of which carry infectious diseases, by well-meaning people who have no other solution to the problem of having tortoises and not knowing what to do with them nor understanding the issues involved. The issues of relocation, translocation and release of captive animals are very complex and a maxim of “do no harm” should be applied to any such project. Risks should be taken more seriously than in the current proposal. From the short-term studies done to date and contrary to the beliefs of some, we do not know enough to assure long-term success and sustainability of desert tortoise populations in a context of released animals.

We are especially concerned with the prioritization and implementation of actions that can be taken to protect *Gopherus agassizii* in the wild. Too many times we have seen short-term solutions that do not address long-term protection of the species in the wild. Even if many tortoises are released and some survive in the wild, the issue of long-term sustainability of populations and habitat will remain. We believe that any short-term success will eventually fail due to losses from subsidized predators, disease and especially habitat degradation and loss.

We believe that time, energy, and attention should be directed toward effective protection of those animals still living in the wild and to their habitats to assure sustainability in the long-term. Perhaps a more conservative experiment should be considered to further our knowledge of survival rates of released animals over time, effects of released animals on resident populations, and carrying capacity of habitats.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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FROM THE EDITOR

Since most of the newsletters are being received electronically, we would like to invite everyone to send us your photos. Have really great pictures of tortoises or other wildlife? Send them to us and we will put a few of them in the newsletter each issue. Any other updates or news items are welcome as well.

Please make sure you update your mailing and email addresses.

In an effort to conserve time, money, and paper, we strongly encourage all of our members to receive the newsletter electronically rather than hardcopy.

Send your photos and any other updates to sdaly@burnsmcd.com.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Address Updates!!!

Please renew your addresses, including e-mail. Every time we e-mail newsletters, 10 to 20 percent of the e-mail addresses we have are bad.

SAVE THE DATE!!!

The 36th Annual Symposium of the Desert Tortoise Council will be held February 18-20, 2011 at Sam's Town in Las Vegas, NV. The DTC has secured GREAT room rates at Sam's Town. The room rate for Thursday and Sunday night is \$34.99 and the rate for Friday and Saturday night is \$69.99 (not including taxes).

Registration and hotel booking information will be available in our Fall 2010 newsletter and on our website in October. We look forward to seeing you there!

TORTOISES THROUGH THE LENS: A VISUAL EXPLORATION OF A MOJAVE DESERT ICON

Written by: David Lamfrom & Rana Knighten
Forward By: Michael Cipra
Published By: Sunbelt Publications

Students exploring the wild Mojave, cameras in hand, meeting wildflowers and wildlife face-to-face, while gaining a deeper understanding of the value of these lands--this is the Tortoises Through the Lens Program. This beautiful, full-color book is the product of their eighteen-month adventure to seek out, photograph, and learn about the desert tortoises and the harsh land that they inhabit. See this amazing creature through the eyes of these students, as they explore the starkly beautiful Mojave Desert landscape. The adventure is yours to share; by purchasing this book, you are helping to save this important species, as all proceeds will be used to further desert tortoise conservation efforts.

More details, as well as reviews and ordering information can be found at the Sunbelt Publications website:

<http://www.sunbeltbook.com/BookDetails.asp?id=264>

WORKSHOP UPDATE!

19th ANNUAL "INTRODUCTION TO DESERT TORTOISE SURVEYING, MONITORING, AND HANDLING TECHNIQUES WORKSHOP"

At this time we do not have the numbers to justify a second workshop. We are currently working our way through the waiting list and will continue to do so until we fill the workshop with 110 people. We will keep the people on the waiting list updated as to what is happening. If anyone is not already on the waiting list and is interested in attending the workshop, please contact Maggie at tortoiseorg@gmail.com.

The DTC coordinates these workshops because we believe that well-trained, knowledgeable biologists and monitors for projects play essential roles in the conservation of tortoises and their habitats. We hope that you will be able to join us!

NEWS

RECYCLING LAND FOR GREEN ENERGY IDEAS

LEMOORE, Calif. — Thousands of acres of farmland here in the San Joaquin Valley have been removed from agricultural production, largely because the once fertile land is contaminated by salt buildup from years of irrigation.

But large swaths of those dry fields could have a valuable new use in their future — making electricity.

Farmers and officials at Westlands Water District, a public agency that supplies water to farms in the

www.deserttortoise.org

valley, have agreed to provide land for what would be one of the world's largest solar energy complexes, to be built on 30,000 acres.

At peak output, the proposed Westlands Solar Park would generate as much electricity as several big nuclear power plants.

Unlike some renewable energy projects blocked by objections that they would despoil the landscape, this one has the support of environmentalists.

The San Joaquin initiative is in the vanguard of a new approach to locating renewable energy projects: putting them on polluted or previously used land. The Westlands project has won the backing of groups that have opposed building big solar projects in the Mojave Desert and have fought Westlands for decades over the district's water use. Landowners and regulators are on board, too.

"It's about as perfect a place as you're going to find in the state of California for a solar project like this," said Carl Zichella, who until late July was the Sierra Club's Western renewable programs director. "There's virtually zero wildlife impact here because the land has been farmed continuously for such a long time and you have proximity to transmission, infrastructure and markets."

Recycling contaminated or otherwise disturbed land into green energy projects could help avoid disputes when developers seek to build sprawling arrays of solar collectors and wind turbines in pristine areas, where they can affect wildlife and water supplies. The United States Environmental Protection Agency and the National Renewable Energy Laboratory, for instance, are evaluating a dozen landfills and toxic waste sites for wind farms or solar power plants. In Arizona, the Bureau of Land Management has begun a program to repurpose landfills and abandoned mines for renewable energy.

In Southern California, the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power has proposed building a 5,000-megawatt solar array complex, part of which would cover portions of the dry bed of Owens Lake, which was drained when the city began diverting water

from the Owens Valley in 1913. Having already spent more than \$500 million to control the intense dust storms that sweep off the lake, the agency hopes solar panels can hold down the dust while generating clean electricity for the utility. A small pilot project will help determine if solar panels can withstand high winds and dust.

To see the rest of the original article, see:

http://www.nytimes.com/2010/08/11/business/energy-environment/11solar.html?_r=2

SIDE EFFECTS OF FORECLOSURES

People aren't the only ones who lost their homes during foreclosures, Desert Tortoises did too.

They went to an adoption program at Tucson's Desert Museum and now they need a place to stay.

Since they belong to the State of Arizona, you could never really own one, so I guess you would say Sandy Beecher is a tortoise caretaker.

Beecher said, "I have had mine for 14 years his name is Mejo."

She'll be the first to tell you, this living rock is good company.

"They're fun and they have a lot of personality," Beecher said.

Stephane Poulin is part of the Desert Tortoise Adoption Program at the Desert Museum and he says right now there's an over abundance of these slow walkers.

Poulin said, "The economy does seem to be a factor on these numbers."

He says when people started losing their homes because of foreclosures, these reptiles starting showing up at adoption agencies across Southern Arizona, now theres more than 40 that need homes.

Poulin said, "Right now we're in some what of a crunch, we have a lot more Tortoises than we have people willing to adopt."

If you happen to already have a Desert Tortoise that you just can't care for anymore, experts say, give it to an adoption agency because it's illegal to put a captive one out in the desert.

"A lot of tortoises will either get predated upon, they'll get run over by cars, or they'll just perish to the environment," Poulin said.

That's why some people say the best thing you can do is adopt a homeless Tortoise, like sandy did.

Beecher said, "I think that they're probably the easiest animal to maintain in your home."

If you would like to adopt, just go to www.desertmuseum.org

To see the original article, and accompanying video, click here:

<http://www.kvoa.com/news/side-effects-of-foreclosures/>



Photo Credit: Scott Hillard

**SECRETARY SALAZAR, SENATOR REID
ANNOUNCE 'FAST-TRACK' INITIATIVES
FOR SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT ON
WESTERN LANDS**

LAS VEGAS, Nevada – Under initiatives announced today by Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar and U.S. Senator Harry Reid (D-NV), federal agencies will work with western leaders to designate tracts of U.S. public lands in the West as prime zones for utility-scale solar energy development, fund environmental studies, open new solar energy permitting offices and speed reviews of industry proposals. [Link to maps of Solar Energy Study Areas.](#)

“President Obama’s comprehensive energy strategy calls for rapid development of renewable energy, especially on America’s public lands,” said Secretary Salazar. “This environmentally-sensitive plan will identify appropriate Interior-managed lands that have excellent solar energy potential and limited conflicts with wildlife, other natural resources or land users. The two dozen areas we are evaluating could generate nearly 100,000 megawatts of solar electricity. With coordinated environmental studies, good land-use planning and zoning and priority processing, we can accelerate responsible solar energy production that will help build a clean-energy economy for the 21st century.”

“I want to thank Secretary Salazar for his commitment to renewable energy, and for being here in Nevada today,” said Reid. “This is the Secretary's second visit to Nevada to announce key renewable energy initiatives that will help make Nevada the blueprint for everything that’s right about the future of our nation’s energy policy. We’ve got sunny skies, strong winds, and land that when used properly, will allow us to lead the nation’s children into a cleaner, more efficient, and more profitable tomorrow.”

Under one initiative, 24 tracts of Bureau of Land Management-administered land located in six western states, known as Solar Energy Study Areas, would be fully evaluated for their environmental and resource suitability for large-scale solar energy production. The objective is to provide landscape-scale planning and zoning for solar projects on BLM lands in the West, allowing a more efficient process for permitting and siting responsible solar development.

Those areas selected would be available for projects capable of producing 10 or more megawatts of electricity for distribution to customers through the transmission grid system. Companies that propose projects on that scale in areas already approved for this type of development would be eligible for priority processing. The BLM may also decide to use alternative competitive or non-competitive procedures in processing new solar applications for these areas.

Secretary Salazar and Senator Reid also announced the opening of a new Interior renewable energy coordination office (RECO) in Nevada, the first of four, with the others located in Arizona, California, and Wyoming. The offices will help to expedite processing of the increased number of applications for renewable energy projects on U.S. lands.

Currently BLM has received about 470 renewable energy project applications. Those include 158 active solar applications, covering 1.8 million acres, with a projected capacity to generate 97,000 megawatts of electricity. That's enough to power 29 million homes, the equivalent of 29 percent of the nation's household electrical consumption. The BLM will continue to process existing renewable energy applications, both within and outside of the solar energy study areas.

To see the full BLM press release, see:
http://www.blm.gov/wo/st/en/info/newsroom/2009/june/NR_0629_2009.html

HELPING DESERT TORTOISES THE RIGHT WAY DURING MONSOON SEASON

Monsoon season brings one of the southwest desert's most iconic creatures out of their burrows and out-and-about across the state. Desert tortoises are now in their most active season, and Arizona's increased human population creates more risks for these slow-moving symbols of the Sonoran desert.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department asks the public to follow these important guidelines if they encounter a desert tortoise:

Do not remove a tortoise from its habitat. Taking a wild tortoise home is illegal in Arizona. Additionally, most tortoises stay in the same small area their entire lives, so if you move a tortoise to a new location it will not know where to find food and shelter and will likely die.

Do not release a captive tortoise into the wild. Captive desert tortoises cannot be released into the wild as they can pass diseases to wild populations and displace wild tortoises. It is also illegal to release captive animals into the wild.

Keep dogs away from both captive and wild desert tortoises. Even the most gentle dog can pose a serious threat to a tortoise.

If you come across a desert tortoise crossing a busy road, if traffic safely permits it, pick the tortoise up and gently move it to the other side of the road. Carry the animal so that it is level to the ground, and move it in the same direction it was headed.

People think they are doing the tortoise a favor by taking it home, but it is actually harmful to the tortoise and the tortoise population," says Cristina Jones, Game and Fish's turtles project coordinator. "Tortoises should not be handled for any length of time or brought home or into captivity. The best thing anyone can do is to leave tortoises in the wild."

Tortoise conservation partners include Saguaro National Park, Friends of Saguaro National Park, Arizona Game and Fish Department, Arizona-Sonora Desert Museum and Phoenix Herpetological Society.

"Properly caring for a legally-adopted tortoise takes a lot of knowledge and we cannot stress enough how detrimental it is for both the captive and wild tortoises to let a captive tortoise go free in the wild," said Jones.

Anyone interested in legally sharing their yard with a desert tortoise may adopt a tortoise if they are from Bullhead City, Kingman, Lake Havasu, Phoenix, Tucson and Yuma. For more information on the Arizona Game and Fish Department's Tortoise Adoption Program and enclosure requirements, visit www.azgfd.gov/tortoise.

There are two populations of desert tortoise: the federally-listed Mojave desert tortoise found north and west of the Colorado River and the Sonoran desert tortoise, which is protected by Game and Fish.

Desert tortoises in Arizona are considered a species of greatest conservation need; those north and west of the Colorado River are among the threatened Mojave population.

Through its partnerships with other public agencies, non-profit organizations and the science community, Game and Fish's wildlife recovery program aims to keep common species common and prevent species from becoming listed as threatened or endangered allowing for conservation in a more cost-effective manner. State-level involvement provides closer oversight of wildlife species on a day-to-day basis. Specific emphasis is placed on identifying and managing the wildlife and habitat of greatest conservation need, or those species that are no longer abundant and facing increasing threats from habitat degradation, disease, introduction of non-native species and climate change.

Adaptive management of these species helps ensure their continued presence in Arizona and protects the delicate balance of the ecosystem for future generations.

Tortoise conservation in Arizona is supported by the Heritage Fund, a voter-passed initiative that was started in 1990 to further wildlife conservation efforts in the state through Arizona Lottery ticket sales.

To see the original article, click here:
http://www.sonorannews.com/archives/2010/100728/petnews_Tortoises.html

CALIFORNIA HERP CHECKLIST ONLINE

Made available as a gratis service by CNAH, the herpetofaunal checklist of the state of California is done and has been uploaded. Based on the CNAH

North American list, this state checklist will be updated daily and simultaneously with the CNAH list when new discoveries are published that change the higher taxonomy (genus and family) of these creatures. Species-level changes will also be posted daily, but will not change on the California web site until evaluated by systematists and published in the print version of the next edition of the CNAH common and scientific names list; these proposed changes (and their citations) will, however, be immediately accessible through the California checklist, just as they are for the CNAH main list.

Most importantly, California joins the other provinces and states of North America in having available standardized common names, eliminating the confusion and mistakes that can occur when these names are not uniform. Of special interest, the completion of the California list demonstrates the substantial value of having standardized common names for the entire Pacific coast of North America, from Alaska in the north to the sunny Golden Bear state in the south. This, coupled with scientific names that are updated daily as researchers publish their newest discoveries, makes the CNAH North American herpetofaunal checklists the single most valuable resource for government wildlife agencies, natural heritage programs, land managers, refuge managers and biologists, museums, universities, and zoological parks.

It is very important to use standardized common names for amphibians, reptiles, turtles, and crocodylians; doing so not only creates an historical trail through time, but also maintains a stability in the present as we embrace the turbulent taxonomic changes that are occurring now and will occur in the future. The CNAH checklist program is the only authoritative coordinated herpetofaunal listing for the provinces and states of North America (north of Mexico), and brings stability to the taxonomy of these creatures across the continent.

To see the list, see:
http://www.cnah.org/state_nameslist.asp?state_id=5

Also available are the state lists for Utah, Nevada, Arizona and others at:
http://www.cnah.org/state_list.asp

SCIENCE REPORT ADVOCATES USING 'DISTURBED' LAND FOR SOLAR PLANTS

Just as the first wave of large-scale solar power plants proposed in the U.S. Southwest is about to arrive at a decision point, a new science report could throw cold water on some of the plans.

A draft report of recommendations from the Independent Science Advisors for the California Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan urges that new renewable energy developments – whether solar, wind or geothermal – be located whenever possible on already disturbed land.

"Every effort should be made to avoid and minimize any new disturbance of soil surfaces in the siting, design, construction and maintenance of any and all project features," says the draft report by the group of a dozen specialists in desert ecology, plants, animals and water resources.

At least seven large solar power plant projects proposed in the Mojave and Colorado deserts of Southern California are in the final stages of review by state and federal officials. Several more are also nearing decisions.

The science group was convened to advise authorities under laws requiring that state and federal conservation plans be informed by "the best available science," the draft's introduction notes. The science advisors operate independently of plan applicants, consultants and other involved parties. The recommendations are not legally binding, however, on agencies or individuals involved in planning or carrying out the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan, the draft says.

"The advisors strongly agree that increasing the U.S. and California supply of renewable energy can yield numerous environmental and societal benefits, and that California's deserts have great potential for wind, solar and geothermal energy production," the draft report says. "However, siting and developing renewable energy [projects] must be done carefully,

guided by best available science, to avoid undue damage to fragile desert ecosystems."

Although some of the proposed solar power plants would be located on or adjacent to previously disturbed land, and most if not all would be close to existing roads, power lines or other non-natural features, the sheer size of many proposed projects means that at least parts of their footprints would extend to previously undisturbed land.

Some proposed solar plants would cover thousands of acres of public land and would generate electricity at peak capacity rivaling the peak output from a nuclear or large coal-fired power plant. The largest proposal now nearing a decision is seeking a right of way from the federal Bureau of Land Management for a 1,000-megawatt plant on 9,400 acres near the city of Blythe, Calif. The actual fenced area, which would contain all the developed elements of the project, would be 5,950 acres.

The largest existing nuclear power plant complex in the nation, the Palo Verde Nuclear Generating Station in the Sonoran Desert near Wintersburg, Ariz., is said to occupy about 4,100 acres. The site is very intensively developed, with multiple reactor structures, paved roads and buildings, and security fencing that extends well beyond the developed portion of the property. As with other U.S. nuclear plants, a permanent waste storage site is still to be determined.

The Navajo coal-fired power plant near Page, Ariz., one of the nation's largest coal power plants, which is owned by a consortium of Western utilities, is reported to occupy a site of about 1,800 acres. The property is intensively built up, and the mining of coal to fuel the plant takes up additional significant acreage not included in the plant's developed footprint.

To see the full article, click here:

<http://sunpluggers.com/news/science-report-advocates-using-disturbed-land-for-solar-plants-0840>

SIMPSON KILLS BUYOUT FOR GRAZING PERMITS

MOVE SEEN AS CONTRADICTORY TO CIEDRA LANGUAGE

A potential federal grazing permit buyout program was killed by amendment last Thursday as Congressman Mike Simpson, R-Idaho, defended national public lands grazing during a subcommittee markup.

The stricken language, which was attached to the Interior and Environment Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2011, would have created a national pilot program to allow buyers to purchase and retire grazing permits from willing sellers.

"In the West, we know that if you don't graze on public lands, you don't graze at all," Simpson said.

Simpson has previously been engaged with the public grazing issue through his work on the Central Idaho Economic Development and Recreation Act, or CIEDRA. CIEDRA proposes to designate some 330,000 acres of land in central Idaho as federal wilderness.

However, CIEDRA specifically provides for voluntary donation and retirement of grazing permits, which some see as contradictory to Simpson's latest move.

"Strange only begins to describe it," said Jon Marvel, executive director of the Hailey-based Western Watersheds Project, a nonprofit environmental group. "If you support grazing buyouts on one hand, but detest them on the other, something odd is going on."

Marvel and Western Watersheds have been involved in orchestrating the buyout of grazing permits, and Marvel said he doesn't understand Simpson's position on the issue.

The two programs, however, differ according to Simpson's staff.

"It's one thing to look at buyouts on a case-by-case basis," said Simpson spokesman John Revier. "It's quite another to look at a nationwide program that allows the highest bidder to retire perfectly good grazing lands."

According to Simpson's staff, when a rancher wishes to sell a grazing permit, there is an official bidding process in which interested parties, normally ranchers with neighboring land, compete for the permit.

A news release from Nikki Watts, Simpson's communication director, states that the proposed language would have allowed "environmental activist groups" to outbid such ranchers, obtain permits, and permanently retire them.

The U.S. Bureau of Land Management currently reserves the right to terminate or cancel grazing permits on lands that have been severely impacted by heavy grazing.

Revier said it has become "virtually impossible" for ranchers in Idaho to graze on public land due to environmental regulations and lawsuits. The language in CIEDRA is aimed at providing compensation to ranchers with essentially useless permits, he said.

To see the full article, click here:

<http://www.mtexpress.com/index2.php?ID=2005132596>

SOLAR MILLENNIUM WITHDRAWS REQUEST FOR SUSPENSION

Solar Millennium formally withdrew its request for a suspension of the application for certification for a solar-power plant near Ridgecrest and requested a modification of the application-for-certification and plan-of-development milestones to allow for the intensive biological study for the site.

In a letter to the California Energy Commission, Solar Millennium President James Caldwell said

people have interpreted the word “suspension” to mean a complete halt to all activities.

“That is not our intent,” he stated. “Solar Millennium will continue a selected number of actions, principally the Mojave ground squirrel biology-connectivity study.”

Caldwell wrote the project has met a number of approval milestones, and the agencies have undertaken considerable analysis and produced draft environmental documents.

“Our request and plan is to continue to achieve POD and AFC milestones and maintain an active application as the biological data becomes available,” he stated.

Solar Millennium announced last month that it has voluntarily suspended its application for the solar power plant project pending completion of further studies related to potential impacts of the project on the Mojave ground squirrel.

Solar Millennium, LLC has a total of nine 250-megawatt projects in advance stages of development in

California and Nevada.

Solar Millennium LLC is proposing to construct a utility-scale solar thermal electric power generating facility named the Ridgecrest Solar Power Project. The project will have a nominal output of 250 megawatts, consisting of a single power plant utilizing two solar fields.

The proposed location is approximately five miles southwest of Ridgecrest.

The applicant is seeking a right-of-way from the Bureau of Land Management that will extend across approximately 3,920 acres of federal public lands.

The project facilities will occupy 1,440 acres of the 3,920-acre site, and there will be a total disturbance area (including areas outside the facility fence line), of approximately 1,760 acres.

To see the original article, click here:
<http://www.ridgecrestca.com/news/x2092800182/Solar-Millennium-withdraws-request-for-suspension>

To see the original July 2010 article of the suspension, click here:
<http://www.ridgecrestca.com/news/x1849228905/Solar-Millennium-project-on-hold>

RELATED MEETINGS

The Wildlife Society 17th Annual Conference
October 2 - 6, 2010
Snowbird, Utah

*Early bird registration deadline is September 3

By registering for the conference you will have access to the following:

- The Plenary: “There’s More to Diversity Than Just the Wildlife”
- 17 different Symposia Topics
- More than 330 Contributed Papers and 110 Posters
- Access to the Trade Show and Career Fair
- Opening Night Reception/Dinner
- Student-Professional Mixer
- Quiz Bowl
- New for this year, FREE recorded sessions!

When you register for the Annual Conference you receive access to audio synched to PowerPoint presentations and handouts through The Wildlife Society Live Learning Center. This virtual library will allow you to review the sessions you attended and attend the sessions you couldn’t because of scheduling conflicts... and it’s FREE!

Nonmembers who register will receive 12 months of TWS membership with their conference registration.

In these critical times, achieving effective results demands a paradigm shift that can only be realized with exposure to new thoughts and ideas. The Wildlife Society Annual Conference will help you discover and implement ideas that deliver results. It

will train your mind to search for innovative solutions. It will provide opportunities to make valuable connections with other association professionals and suppliers who have solutions you need. And, it will prepare you for the long road ahead.

Below is some helpful information to show the value of attending the Annual Conference:

General Tips

Many travel budgets and training budgets have been slashed, and some agencies and organizations are experiencing severe financial problems. Which means that regardless of the merits of a conference, you'll probably need to justify the expense - so here are some things you might want to consider:

- Focus on what you will specifically bring back to the organization as return for the investment.
- Offer to prepare and deliver a short presentation and Q&A to your colleagues to share what you learned. This way others in your unit can also benefit from your attendance.
- Share the syllabus and speaker handouts with your colleagues. As an attendee, you have unlimited access to materials posted by speakers.
- Be ready with a plan that shows who will cover for you while you are attending the conference.
- Offer to share a room to reduce hotel expenses by finding a roommate on the [Share a Room group](#) on the [TWS Annual Conference Facebook Group](#).

Registration Website:

http://www.wildlifesociety.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=section&layout=blog&id=9&Itemid=84

JOB OPPORTUNITIES

EVOLUTION, DIVERSITY, AND CONSERVATION OF HERPETOFAUNA

The California Academy of Sciences seeks an outstanding scientist to conduct an innovative, externally funded research program in the phylogeny, diversity, and conservation of herpetofauna. We are particularly interested in individuals conducting rigorous field and laboratory based analyses of key questions in evolution and conservation science, using molecular, morphological, developmental, and biodiversity informatics approaches in the context of phylogeny and global environmental change. Candidates should have a strong commitment to the curation, use and development of museum collections as a complement to their research and to participation in the Academy's public engagement programs. Relationships with local universities provide opportunities to participate in graduate and undergraduate teaching and training. Hires may be made at any level.

Applicants should submit online a curriculum vitae, statement of research goals, up to three publications, and contact information for three references by 15 October 2010 to

casvert@calacademy.org

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ON-CALL ENVIRONMENTAL COMPLIANCE BIOLOGISTS

Primary duties include environmental compliance monitoring for linear construction projects, habitat assessments and biological resource evaluations, avian nest searches and monitoring, and preparation of monitoring logs and reports.

The ideal candidate will possess a Bachelors Degree or higher in Biology, Ecology, Wildlife

www.deserttortoise.org

Management or related field; 1 to 5 years of biological field experience including construction and environmental compliance monitoring; and, knowledge of Migratory Bird Treaty Act, Endangered Species Act, and Clean Water Act compliance. Excellent written and verbal communication skills are essential. Salary is negotiable based on experience.

EPG is a multidisciplinary team of more than 125 individuals. Our team includes professionals from the fields of archaeology, biology, land use planning, landscape architecture, visual simulation, geographic information systems, graphic arts, public information and administration. We are a leader in environmental compliance for utilities with headquarters in Phoenix, Arizona and offices in Tucson, Salt Lake City, Boise, Las Vegas, Reno, Cheyenne and Bozeman.

EPG offers a competitive pay package and we are an Equal Opportunity Employer. Please visit our website at: www.epgaz.com. **Applicants should send** a cover letter, current CV and three references to jobs@epgaz.com or fax them to (602) 956-4374.

SENIOR BIOLOGIST WITH DESERT TORTOISE EXPERIENCE - IRVINE, CA

Seeking a motivated senior-level biologist, team leader, and Project Manager (PM) in our office, which is primarily focused on work in the renewable and traditional energy arenas (wind, solar, hydropower, and transmission lines). Extensive experience implementing requirements under both the California Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the federal ESA are also a must. This experience must include management of CEQA and NEPA permitting projects. Feel free to call me at 303-223-4304 or send me an email fordn@enscicon.com.

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

Conservation Maven (an online hub for the conservation community)

The Conservation Funding board profiles government and foundation grants for restoration, land preservation, stewardship, environmental education, research, fellowships, volunteers, outreach, clean-up, training, and more. We also list funding opportunities for work related to birds, fish, forests, oceans, watersheds, wildlife, & wetlands.

Please check out the numerous resources available at their website, <http://www.conservationmaven.com/>

SCHOLARSHIPS / AWARDS

www.deserttortoise.org

ANNOUNCEMENT

DAVID J. MORAFKA MEMORIAL RESEARCH AWARD

2011

In honor and memory of Dr. David J. Morafka, distinguished herpetologist and authority on North American gopher tortoises, the Desert Tortoise Council, with the aid of several donors, has established a monetary award to help support research that contributes to the understanding, management and conservation of tortoises of the genus *Gopherus* in the southwestern United States and/or Mexico: *G. agassizii*, *G. berlandieri* and/or *G. flavomarginatus*.

Award Amount: \$2,000 to be awarded at the Desert Tortoise Council's Annual Symposium, depending on the availability of funding and an appropriate recipient.

Eligibility: Applicants must be associated with a recognized institution (e.g., university, museum, government agency, non-governmental organization) and may be graduate students, post-doctoral students or other researchers. They must agree to present a report on the results of the research in which award funds were used at a future symposium of the Desert Tortoise Council.

Evaluation Criteria: Applications will be evaluated on the basis of the potential of the research to contribute to the biological knowledge of one or more of the above gopher tortoise species, and to their management and conservation. Important considerations are the significance and originality of the research problem, design of sampling and analysis, preliminary data supporting the feasibility of the research, and the likelihood of successful completion and publication.

Application Procedure:

1. Obtain an application form from the Desert Tortoise Council's website (www.deserttortoise.org) or print out the form from an e-mail notification.
2. Provide all information requested on the application, including a description of the research project in no more than 1,200 words.
3. Applications must be accompanied by three letters of recommendation, one of which must be from the applicant's research advisor, supervisor or a knowledgeable colleague. The letters must be in sealed envelopes addressed to the "Morafka Research Award Selection Committee" with the recommenders' signatures across the flaps.
4. Completed application materials must be submitted by **December 3, 2010** to the **Desert Tortoise Council, P. O. Box 3273, Beaumont, CA 92223**.
5. A research award recipient will be selected by a committee of gopher tortoise biologists appointed by the Desert Tortoise Council Board of Directors.
6. The research award recipient will be notified of his/her selection by **January 21, 2011** and the award will be presented at the 2011 Desert Tortoise Council Symposium, February 18-20, 2011.

DESERT TORTOISE COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP
619 Pinon Ct.
Ridgecrest, CA 93555

Check one: _____ MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL _____ CHANGE OF ADDRESS

DATE: _____ EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

(Please Print)

(Include Area Code)

ADDRESS: _____

CITY: _____ STATE: _____ ZIP CODE: _____

_____ Regular (**\$30.00** per year) _____ Organization (**\$125.00** per year)

_____ Contributing (**\$100.00** per year) _____ Lifetime (**\$300.00** or more)

_____ Student (**\$20.00** per year- Requires endorsement of student's advisor or Major Professor)

NEWSLETTER FORMAT:

_____ Pdf file via e-mail _____ E-mail notice for web page viewing _____ Hardcopy

Make check or money order payable to the Desert Tortoise Council
and **send** with this application

to: **Desert Tortoise Council, P.O. Box 3273**

Beaumont, CA 92223

The Desert Tortoise Council does not release its membership list