

Appendix F

MULTI-SPECIES HABITAT CONSERVATION PLAN CRITERIA

Funding for a Clark County MSHCP: In the section on availability of the SNPLMA Special Account, the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act of 1998 states:

“Amounts deposited in the special account may be expended for ... development of a multi-species habitat conservation plan in Clark County, Nevada.”

Funding for a Virgin River MSHCP: Section 901 of the Clark County Conservation of Public Land and Natural Resources Act of 2002 (P.L. 107-282) amends the Mesquite Lands Act by providing that the proceeds of sale of certain land to the City of Mesquite shall be:

“deposited in the special account established under section 4(e)(1)(C) of the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act of 1998 (112 Stat. 2345); and shall be available for use by the Secretary –

“(A) to reimburse costs incurred by the local offices of the Bureau of Land Management in arranging the land conveyances directed by this section;

“(B) for the development of a multispecies habitat conservation plan for the Virgin River in Clark County, Nevada, including any associated groundwater monitoring plan; and

“(C) as provided in section 4(e)(3) of that Act (112 Stat. 2346).”

Section 4(e)(3) of the SNPLMA (112 Stat. 2346) establishes the expenditure categories addressed in this document. In accordance with P.L. 107-282, funds from the Mesquite land sale will not be utilized for those categories until after development of the Virgin River Multi-Species Conservation Plan and Groundwater Monitoring Plan is complete.

The term “MSHCP Development Project” includes projects and proposals specifically designed to improve and conserve the status of species and habitats on both federal and non-federal lands within Clark County, and shall include, but not be limited to, programs and proposals approved by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service that involve data collection, monitoring, basic and applied research, field manipulations and other experimentation, adaptive management efforts, development and redevelopment of management plans for all species, habitats and the ecosystems that support them, conservation initiatives, mapping, interagency GIS capacity coordination and enhancement, development of ecosystem conservation strategies, proposals to enhance land management efficiency and effectiveness, and development of public education and outreach strategies, including programs and documentation designed to improve public awareness of the importance of habitat and species conservation within Clark County.

Development of the MSHCP also includes some portion of the expense required to participate in and administer the MSHCP, including but not limited to NEPA compliance necessary for the development of the MSHCP.

As stated in the section dealing with allocations for the development of parks, trails and natural areas, MSHCP development projects which may be eligible for funding under this provision should show a positive benefit to the Federal estate or mission from the sale of a Federal asset.

Eligibility

BLM, FWS, FS, NPS, and Clark County may submit nominations in this category in Clark County. FWS is eligible to receive funding for projects to develop a Virgin River MSHCP, but nominations for Secretarial approval are not required since Congress designated the Mesquite Land Sale funds for this purpose.

Strategic Goal - Development of a MSHCP for Clark County or the Virgin River

- Support the continuing development of a MSHCP for Clark County or the Virgin River as applicable.

Minimum Criteria

- The proposed initiative furthers the goal of development of the MSHCP;
- Clark County and the FWS confirm their ability to carry out their project management responsibilities under their Assistance Agreements or Intra-Agency Agreement with BLM for the proposed initiative; and
- The proposed initiative has a positive benefit to the federal estate or mission.
- The Federal Agency impacted by the proposed initiative confirms its support of the proposal and ability to carry out its responsibilities associated with the proposal.

Ranking Criteria

(The Rating System used for ranking is defined in the existing MSHCP process, and not in this document)

1. The proposal addresses an issue that is of concern to the MSHCP and furthers the goals, development, or implementation of the MSHCP or a related Conservation Strategy, and maintenance of the incidental take permit.
2. Consequences of not doing the project at this time.
3. Proposal is scientifically and technically adequate.
4. Project goals and objectives are clearly defined.
5. Project evaluation process is clearly defined.
6. Data management process is clearly defined with milestones and deliverables.