



AMERICAN LANDS ACCESS ASSOCIATION, INC.

# NEWSLETTER

Protecting the Public Lands for the Public  
<http://www.amlands.org/>

April-May-June 2016

TOM BURCHARD - EDITOR  
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OGDEN UT 84403-2931

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Seems like I was just at Quartzsite, and look it is June already. We spent 4 months in Quartzsite, Arizona and now back in Montana, and leaving for Spain in the morning.

I think it is important as members of the ALAA to look at everything that comes our way and evaluate them. So much of what we see is blown out of proportion. Many times I have received calls that this area has been closed and no longer have access, only to find out that a bridge was out, or because of hunting this area, it would be closed.

There are many reasons to get nervous or excited when an area is closed or restricted, BUT PLEASE GET YOUR FACTS STRAIGHT FIRST.

In many cases just talking things out will produce an answer or solution, other times we need to work as a group and join others to get the results we are looking for. As a group we can make a difference and working together we can accomplish our goals.

Remember nothing that is good comes easy, we need to work for what we want.

I hope to see many of you in Albany for the AFMS show the end of July and the field trips in Prineville, Oregon August 2-7, 2016.

Have a great summer.

Doug

## MY APOLOGY

I apologize for getting this 2nd Quarter Newsletter to you so late. Some of you may know that I had some serious health problems starting way back in February. I won't go into the list of things that have gone wrong, just to say there were more than just a couple. My age finally caught up with me. As I guess it does with all of us, sometime.

In addition to my physical ailments I fell into a depression and didn't realize what was happening for too long. Usually when I have these occasional spells, the realization is what pulls me out of the pit I'd fallen into. And I thought that would be the case this time as well, and told people I was getting better and made promises that I did not keep. But, it took me a lot longer to climb out of the much deeper pit this time. But, here I am, and here is your 2nd Quarter Newsletter. I completely understand that I may have broken the trust of the people are responsible for keeping this organization running and if they feel they can no longer depend on me, then they should find someone who they can trust. If I haven't broken the trust completely I would like to continue as your Editor.

Tom Burchard  
ALAA Newsletter Editor

*Rex Vobiscum*

**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

PRESIDENTS MESSAGE .....	1	DESERT DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING - REPORT - CONTINUED ..	9
TABLE OF CONTENTS .....	2	DESERT DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING - REPORT - CONTINUED ..	10
WELCOME NEW MEMBERS .....	2	DESERT DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING - REPORT - CONTINUED ..	11
SHOW DATES .....	3	TO ALL RECREATIONAL ROCKHOUNDS .....	12
BLACK HILL FOREST ISSUE TO FIGHT .....	4	ROCKHOONDING THE MOJAVE TRAILS N. M. ....	13
BLM FIELD TRIP TOUR .....	5	SENATOR FEINSTEIN LETTER TO D.O.I. ....	14
<i>BLM FIELD TRIP TOUR - CONTINUED</i> .....	6	<i>SENATOR FEINSTEIN LETTER TO D.O.I. - CONTINUED</i> .....	15
HER CONTRIBUTION RECOGNIZED .....	7	COLLECTING IN MOJAVE TRAILS N. M. ....	16
<i>HER CONTRIBUTION RECOGNIZED - CONTINUED</i> .....	8	OFFICERS & DIRECTORS ROSTER .....	17
HAUSER GEODE BEDS O.M.U. - SIGNED .....	8	APPLICATION / RENEWAL FORM .....	18
DESERT DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL MEETING - REPORT .....	9		

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

**GROUP**

Feather River Lapidary & Mineral Society of Oroville, California

**INDIVIDUAL**

- Al & Kathy Bolshazy of Reno, Nevada
- Dennis & Pat Phelps of Reno, Nevada
- Charles Snider of New York, New York
- Lisbet Thoresen of Temecula, California

**NEWSLETTER DEADLINE**

Articles for the NEWSLETTER are DUE to the Editor by the 1<sup>st</sup> of The Month - PRIOR - to the Month of Publication!

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ROX VOBISCUM

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**SHOW DATES FOR GEM AND MINERAL SHOWS  
SPONSORED BY MEMBER CLUBS AND SOCIETIES OF ALAA, INC.**

**YOUR ALAA AFFILIATED CLUB COULD HAVE ITS SHOW LISTED HERE.**

**Send suggestions or problems to [webmaster](#)**

**October 1 - 2**

Central Arkansas Gem, Min. & Geology Society  
Jacksonville Community Center, 5 Municipal Dr  
Jacksonville, Arkansas  
Contact: [Thom61847@yahoo.com](mailto:Thom61847@yahoo.com)

**October 1 - 2**

Lincoln Orbit Earth Science Society  
Orr Building (New Location) State Fairgrounds,  
Springfield, Illinois  
Contact: [loesseditor@gmail.com](mailto:loesseditor@gmail.com)

**October 8 - 9**

Nevada County Gem & Mineral Society  
Nevada Co. Fairgrounds, Main Bldg.  
11228 McCourtney Rd., Grass Valley, CA  
Contact: [webmaster@ncgms.org](mailto:webmaster@ncgms.org)

**October 15 - 16**

Minnesota Mineral Club  
National Guard Training & Community Center  
8180 Belden Blvd., Cottage Grove, Minnesota  
Contact: [mascaglia@comcast.net](mailto:mascaglia@comcast.net)

**October 22 - 23**

Clackamette Mineral & Gem Club  
Clackamas County Fairgrounds  
694 NE 4th Ave., Canby, Oregon  
Contact: Beth Heesacker, [heesacker@coho.net](mailto:heesacker@coho.net)

**November 12 - 13**

Skagit Rock & Gem Club  
Sedro Woolley Comm. Center, 703 Pacific St.,  
Sedro Woolley, Washington  
Contact: [skagitrockandgem@gmail.com](mailto:skagitrockandgem@gmail.com)

**November 19 - 20**

Oxnard Gem & Mineral Society  
Oxnard Performing Arts Center,  
800 Hobson Way, Oxnard, California  
Contact: [johndianedaisy@yahoo.com](mailto:johndianedaisy@yahoo.com)

Lincoln Orbit Earth Science Society (LOESS)  
Presents the **2016**  
**Gem, Mineral & Fossil Show**  
the **Dinosaurs are coming!**

Orr Building  
New location  
this year

Sat. Oct. 1<sup>st</sup> • 10 A.M. - 6 P.M.  
Sun. Oct. 2<sup>nd</sup> • 10 A.M. - 5 P.M.  
Illinois State Fairgrounds • Gate 9  
Admission: \$2 Adults • \$1 Seniors 65+  
FREE Kids Under 12

Exhibits include

- Full-Size Triceratops Skeleton
- Complete Deinonychus Skeleton
- Full-Size T-Rex Skull
- Allosaurus Skull, Foot, and Arm

And Much More

Fun Stuff!

- Kids Activities
- Vendors
- Demonstrations
- Silent Auction

Co-Sponsors:

ANDREWS  
Strobe Farm Services  
ILLINOIS STATE FAIRGROUNDS  
PEPSI  
Taylor Made Fossils

THE MINNESOTA MINERAL CLUB  
13th Annual  
**GREAT LAKES, GREAT ROCKS!**  
2016  
THE LAND OF 10,000 LAKERS...

Exhibits Tailgate Sales  
Dealers Programs  
"Kid's Corner" Demonstrations

Agates - Rocks - Gems - Minerals - Fossils - Jewelry - Beads

**October 17 - 18, 2016**  
Sat. -- 10:00 A.M. to 5:00 P.M. Sun. -- 10:00 A.M. to 4:00 P.M.

National Guard Training and Community Center  
8180 Belden Blvd.  
Cottage Grove, Minnesota 55016  
(nine miles SE of downtown St. Paul on U.S. Hwy. 61 - take the Grange Blvd. exit)  
ADMISSION: \$1 per Child \* \$2 per Adult \* \$5 for the whole Family

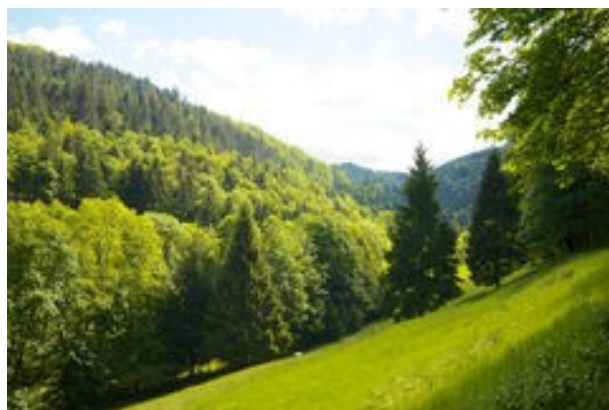
For More Information: info@rock-biz.biz or 763-717-1641  
www.minnesotamineralclub.org



## **BLACK HILLS FOREST ISSUE TO FIGHT**

**By JAN BAUMEISTER, RMFMS PLAC/ALAA SD**

There is an issue of conflict over the usage of our forest, some people are interested in the flora-grass, flowers and natural ecosystem and other like to pan gold and mineral specimens. Their differing visions have now brought them into conflict over a Forest Service proposal to ban new mining claims at 11 sites totaling 17,487 acres. While the proposal, known as a mineral withdrawal, covers only about 2 percent of the Black Hills National Forest's total area, amateur prospectors contend that the targeted sites contain more than half of the promising mining areas that remain unclaimed in the Black Hills. Some think the proposal is part of a broader effort by the Forest Service and other federal agencies to restrict access to public land.



Some think the proposal is part of a broader effort by the Forest Service and other federal agencies to restrict access to public land.

Their competing opinions about the mining ban will ultimately be weighed by the U.S. Secretary of Interior, who is tentatively scheduled to decide the proposal's fate by the end of September 2016. \* We still have two weeks to call or write letters.

Written public comments on the proposal will be accepted to the Forest supervisor, Black Hills National Forest, 1019 N. Fifth St., Custer, SD, 57730.

Note: If someone is interested in replacing Jan on these two positions for the next year beginning November 2016-17-retiring due to illness and many years of devotion to keeping our "used to be " public lands free to hunt on. The FS has closed thousands of acres where our main trails used to be, by stating "due to Ferret habitat" that some of us cannot hike miles to our favorite rock beds.

Let your WDG&M officers know that you are interested!. Duties including looking for any type of Forest Service management closures monthly- (example: Blue Ribbon coalition website, etc.,) especially concerns of our Buffalo Gap Grasslands, Black Hills forest, write up articles, send copies to WDG&M bulletin editor, officers/ club members and Chairman of both RMFM PLAC and ALAA, to Tom Troxel, and WDG&M Multiple Use Coalition Representative.

\*I am sending this to all because of the proposed date by US Secretary of Interior. My correct e-mail is: [jb-rockhound@hotmail.com](mailto:jb-rockhound@hotmail.com).

San Diego Mineral &amp; Gem Society, Inc.

The Pocket Pegmatite - June 2016

**REPORT: BLM FIELD TRIP TOUR (LAVIC SIDING) - May 20, 2016**

By LISBET THORESEN - JUNE 1, 2016

**KATRINA SYMONS** is the **BARSTOW BLM FIELD MANAGER** who organized the progressive orientation tour of the newly created Mojave Trails National Monument (MTNM) on May 20th. Each stop focused on a different featured topic. The participants included the eleven Desert District Advisory Council (DAC) members and BLM field officers from Barstow, Needles, Palm Springs-South Coast, El Centro, Moreno Valley, and Ridgecrest. Kris Rowe organized a two-day rockhound round-up to coincide with the tour. In the afternoon, about 35 Rockhounds greeted the BLM led contingent with placards and signs when they arrived at the main Lavic Siding site. Many of the signs were made courtesy of Janelle Palmer and Dower Gervais of the Culver City Gem & Mineral Society.

All told, 66 participants gathered to hear Kim Campbell Erb make the Rockhound presentation. Kim is an enthusiastic rockhound and former DAC member. BLM acting District Director Tom Zale presented Kim with an award in recognition of her service as a past DAC member and valued partner with the BLM. She has worked tirelessly on behalf of Rockhounds, and her collegial spirit working with the BLM has made her a respected and effective advocate.

During the presentation at Lavic, Kim introduced past presidents of the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies (CFMS), Jennifer Haley and Richard Pankey, and past president of the American Federation of Mineralogical Societies (AFMS), Shirley Leeson. Shirley, who is also CFMS historian and incoming SDMG president (2016–2018), explained for the benefit of the non-rockhound attendees what AFMS is and what it does. It is a nationwide organization with a scholarship program for graduate students in earth sciences. To date, AFMS has given scholarships totaling more than a \$ 1.5 million to students.

Randy Banis, who is the DAC Recreation Representative, exhorted rockhounds to write comment letters to the BLM about the MTNM Management Plan, so that rockhounding will continue to be a permissible recreational activity within the new monument. To be effective, comments need to be very

**TOP**

*Rockhounds begin to assemble at Lavic with placards.*

**BOTTOM**

*Shirley Leeson (center) addresses the crowd. Gathered around her are Tom Zale (far left), John Stewart (left), Kim Erb (center left), Jennifer Haley (center right), and Richard Pankey (right, looking down).*

PHOTOS BY LISBET THORESEN

Continued on Page 6

**“BLM Field Trip Tour” - Continued from Page 5**

specific. Travel ways and collecting areas should be identified with landmarks, coordinates, and annotated maps will be critical for preserving access to collecting areas. Both Randy and Kim Erb urged rockhounds to submit the AFMS and CFMS Code of Ethics into the record at the DAC meeting to be held in Barstow the next day.

There were posters, picture albums, and rough and cut specimens available to examine at Lavic, many courtesy of Adam Dean, aka the Agate Hunter, and his wife Teresa. Perhaps, nothing communicated quite so effectively why rockhounds are so passionate about their hobby than being able to see and to handle the beautiful material unearthed from the areas where the tour group was standing. For half the group, hearing the speakers talk about the material where it is collected and having the opportunity to see it and pick it up was a revelation.

Adam is a past Field Trip Co-Chair of the CFMS and Orange Belt Mineralogical Society (OBMS) Federation Director. He has led field trips to the California desert for 35 years. With great depth of feeling, he spoke about his lifelong love of the desert and collecting. He talked about the values of the rockhound community and the importance of preserving those values for the next generation. He also drew attention to the significance of the unique material found at the collecting areas that are now part of the MTMN, noting that it has brought rockhounds from throughout the world to the Mojave Desert for many decades. It is the equivalent of a world heritage site for rockhounds. Thank you to the tour organizers and everyone who came out to show their support of rockhounding.



**TOP**  
*Bill Depue has been rockhounding in the Mojave Desert for 75 years. He brings some of the fine Cady jasp-agates he has collected to the display table.*  
**BOTTOM**  
*The tour group looks at pictures and examples of rough and cut specimens which made the collecting areas in the Mojave Trails National Monument world famous.*  
 PHOTOS BY LISBET THORESEN



**TOP**  
*Kim Erb addresses the crowd.*  
 PHOTO BY JOHN MARTIN  
**BOTTOM**  
*Adam Dean brought pictures and specimens to share with the tour group. Here, he stands to the side to talk with Mike Ahrens, acting Field Manager of the BLM field office in Needles.*  
 PHOTO BY LISBET THORESEN

San Diego Mineral &amp; Gem Society, Inc.

The Pocket Pegmatite – June 2016

**HER CONTRIBUTION RECOGNIZED**BY SHIRLEY LEESON  
MAY 29, 2016

**KIM CAMPBELL ERB** burst onto the scene in 2010 asking what she could do to help stop the land grab of our Southern California Desert. She was a fresh breath of air and full of excitement, digging right in and attending the BLM's Desert Advisory Council meetings. These meetings, especially in 2010, were not for the faint of heart, but she continued going, asking questions, button-holing DAC members and BLM advisors and learning what the DAC was all about and their role in giving their opinions on all matters pertaining to the way the Desert was managed.

Let me go back and explain DAC – Desert Advisory Council. To make the public happy, the government decided to create a public forum, getting people from all walks of life who were interested in the desert together to speak on the issues surrounding the public lands in this Desert of ours. Those applying for a position had to be vetted and approved at the Department of Interior level in Washington, D.C. before being seated on the Council. The DAC includes: Recreation, Wildlife, two Elected Officials (usually from the surrounding counties), Renewable Resources, Non-Renewable Resources, Tribal Interests, Renewable Energy Industry, Public-at-Large (three current members). Environmental Protection, Transportation/Rights of Way, Non-Renewable Resources, and an additional Public-at-Large position *are all vacant*.

There hadn't been anyone for some time representing rockhounds. We usually came under 'Recreation' and that was dominated by the off-road people, who had been doing this for years and were very good at getting heard and their proposals accepted. Randy Banis, an off road supporter was on the Council as a 'Member-at-Large'. He supported Kim's desire to be appointed. The length of time was surprisingly fast in government time (or you might say 'desert time'). After calling in favors from rockhounds all over to write letters of support, and from the off-road people, Kim was appointed on December 20th, 2011.

Kim served her time and was well-liked by her peers on the Council and the people



*Acting Desert District Director Tom Zales presents Kim Campbell Erb an award for her dedication and service to the DAC.*

PHOTO BY JOHN MARTIN

she worked with at the various BLM offices. Because of personal reasons, Kim decided not to ask for a second term and resigned from the Council in 2015. But she stayed in touch with many of the people she had met during her tenure on the Council. (Note: with Kim gone, Randy Banis, our off-road friend took over as 'recreation' member). Kim set the tone on how the BLM and the DAC people perceive rockhounds. Because of her, we have a golden opportunity to be a part of the writing of the management of the three new National Monuments in our Desert, and we intend to play a part in that implementation that will include rockhounding for the first time at any National Monuments.

April, 2016. Things were happening so fast, a reporter from the Los Angeles Times wrote an article about the Aging Rockhounds not being allowed to collect in the desert because of the new Monument Status. But Senator Dianne Feinstein earlier had asked for our support of her desert bills, because she wasn't getting cooperation from the environmental community. After the article in the LA Times, a letter from Senator Diane Feinstein

*Continued on Page 8*

**“Contribution Recognized” - Continued from Page 7**

was sent to Sally Jewell, Secretary of the Interior, supporting rockhounding within the Monuments. And a letter came down from the California State BLM Director, Jerome Perez, stating that rockhounding would continue while a management plan for each Monument was being created and rockhounding would be included in the plan.

Kim was called to give a “rockhound” presentation to the DAC committee by Katrina Symons, Barstow Field Manager, at their field tour on May 20th. The tour group visited different areas within the Barstow office perimeter of the Mojave Trails National Monument prior to the DAC meeting in Barstow, California, on May 21st. Kim’s presentation was made at Lavic Siding, a

popular collecting site. Word went out to rockhounds throughout Southern California. There was a huge turn out, which blew everyone away. At the Lavic site, after Kim had spoken about Rockhounds, who and what we we’re about, she was presented a special plaque by the acting Desert District Manager, Tom Zale, and Katrina Symons. It was a total surprise to Kim and well-deserved. Showing the BLM’s recognition of Kim’s efforts on behalf of Rockhounds.

All of us at American Lands Access Association (ALAA) can’t thank Kim enough and also her husband Jay, who totally supports her efforts, for going the long mile for all of us who love the desert and don’t want to be “locked out”.  
**Thanks, Kim Campbell Erb.**

San Diego Mineral & Gem Society, Inc.

The Pocket Pegmatite – June 2016

### HAUSER GEODE BEDS M.O.U. SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED

**MUCH TO THE SURPRISE** and delight of the Rockhounds present, the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for the Hauser Geode Beds was signed and received into the minutes during the DAC business meeting held in Barstow, California, on May 21, 2016. The MOU had been lingering since 2000. Meanwhile, the Hauser Beds were in jeopardy of being swallowed up in **Senator Feinstein’s** wilderness bills. (The bills did not pass, so **Senator Feinstein** importuned **President Obama** to designate three National Monuments in the California deserts by proclamation, which he did on February 12, 2016.)

The MOU will keep Hauser Beds safe, for the moment. **John Martin, President of the California Federation of Mineralogical Societies (CFMS)**, and **Shirley Leeson**, Director and Ambassador for **American Lands Access Association (ALAA)**, signed the MOU on behalf of the Rockhounds. **Carrie Simmons** signed for El Centro BLM as **Tom Zale**, the El Centro Field Manager, looked on. There are conditions that we will have to meet to keep the MOU in force. View the final draft version of the MOU on the **SDMG** website at:

<http://goo.gl/sR6qyl> (short url)





San Diego Mineral &amp; Gem Society, Inc.

The Pocket Pegmatite – June 2016

## REPORT: DESERT DISTRICT ADVISORY COUNCIL BUSINESS MEETING – MAY 21, 2016

BY LISBET THORESEN

JUNE 1, 2016

### THE MEETING

**THE DAY LONG MEETING** on May 21<sup>st</sup> was chaired by Leslie Barrett, who administered the agenda efficiently and with an equanimity that fostered a collegial atmosphere. Approximately 34 attendees were present, including BLM field officers. The BLM field offices in Barstow, Needles, Palm Springs-South Coast, and El Centro submitted reports, available online at: <http://goo.gl/cC3x48> (short url).

Discussions stayed on topic and the presentations engaged much interest and follow up discussion. They included the Historic Route 66 Corridor Management Plan, the Palen Solar Project, and Bighorn Sheep.

Because the eleven DAC members represent different, sometimes competing interests in the California deserts, past meetings have sometimes been contentious. Several attendees on this day observed not only an absence of rancorous exchange, but also a notable degree of mutual expansiveness and civility. The most spirited comments related to three land use management plans on the agenda: the West Mojave Supplemental Environmental Impact

Statement (WEMO SEIS); the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan (DRECP); and the Mojave Trails National Monument (MTNM) Management Plan.

Rockhounding in general, and in relation to the Management Plan for the MTNM, specifically, was not a scheduled agenda topic. However, Rockhounds were provided opportunity to speak during the morning session. Several Rockhound advocates had their comments entered into the official meeting record, including Kim Campbell Erb, Susy Martin, Jennifer Haley, Ruth Hidalgo, Shirley Leeson, and Lisbet Thoresen.

### LAND USE MANAGEMENT PLANS

Several DAC members, notably Mark Algazy, public-at-large representative, and Randy Banis, Recreation representative, were critical of the timelines and procedures for drafting management plans. They criticized arbitrary timeframes for public comment on documents of increasingly voluminous size and complexity. Mr. Algazy noted that BLM documents are written in turgid or technical language difficult for the average person to understand, which directly



The DAC members at the business meeting held in Barstow, California, May 21, 2016:  
(left to right) Mark Algazy, Nathan Francis, James Kenny, Dr. Al Muth, Randy Banis, Leslie Barrett, Tom Zale,  
John Benoit, Robert Burke, William “Billy” Mitchell, and Robert Robinson.

PHOTO BY JOHN MARTIN

**“Advisory Council Meeting” - Continued from Page 9**

conflicts with the provision stipulated in the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment. Mr. Algazy elaborated at length these points and difficulty of access to documents and relevant reports. Several DAC members excoriated BLM’s habitual practice of contriving asynchronous timelines for drafting and reviewing management plans. Frequently, completion of studies or other reports needed to prepare a management plan post-dates the comment period deadline for the parent plan under review. In effect, it puts the cart before the horse.

The Council confronted precisely this problem when it contemplated creation of a MTNM Management Plan sub-group at the May 21st meeting. Barstow and Needles are the two principal offices responsible for administering the MTNM. A team has been assembled from the staff in the two offices to coordinate activities related to the new monument, with Mike Ahrens chairing temporarily until a Manager is designated. The sub group reports to DAC, which in turn advises BLM. The activities of a sub group must comport with BLM’s Planning 2.0 initiative, which is still under development and perhaps months away from being finalized. Therefore, to avoid potential conflicts, some of which are semantic, the Council agreed to form an informal ad hoc committee. We hope an applicant steps up to represent the rockhounding interests. This topic segued into discussion about Planning 2.0 itself.

The putative objective of Planning 2.0 is supposed to draw upon the most current datasets available and to invite more public involvement in land use planning. Mr. Algazy pointed out that top-down administration from the Federal level contravenes its own mandate concerning the DAC’s role in land management planning. Planning 2.0 does not appear to be a vessel for comity with the public when decision-making at all stages of the process by-passes local level input and instead arrogates it to Federal level authority. If anything, Planning 2.0 appears to dilute and discourage public participation, public scrutiny, or accountability to the public. If this gloomy impression, in fact, transpires in the coming months, it should surprise no one that the conflicting values produced by overlaying Planning 2.0 and the WEMO SEIS onto the MTNM Management Plan may coalesce into a perfect storm of administrative dysfunction and public ire.

To head off a prospective bureaucratic squall, Mr. Banis proposed separating the WEMO Route Network Project (RNP) and Plan Amendment from the Management Plan for MTNM. The Council supported his motion. It is not clear whether or not it will survive a gauntlet of procedural conflicts. Both Stephen Razo, BLM Field Officer, and John Stewart, BlueRibbon Coalition Board Member, cautioned the Council on how it structured a dependent advisory panel and how it drafted recommendations.

**RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS**

No fewer than ten renewable energy projects (solar, wind) are under development in the Desert District counties. Palm Springs Acting Field Manager Douglas Herrema presented a positive status update on the Palen Solar Project, which covers 4,000 acres located 60 miles east of Indio, near Joshua Tree National Park. The beleaguered utility has been under management of three successive owners. Each has gone bankrupt. The Palen design has undergone significant technological revisions of the mirror arrays and high-profile solar tower (s) to mollify critics who have challenged the project’s deleterious impacts on the environment, the high cost of operation, and lower than expected generating capacity.

Palen’s history repeats a familiar pattern for industrial-scale utility projects, particularly ones sited in the desert. To date, utility-scale projects in the desert have consistently over-promised and under delivered. In its current incarnation, the solar panels at Palen will be curved “parabolic troughs” that concentrate sunlight on boilers mounted on a solar tower. The panels are touted as being less visually obtrusive and deleterious for birds that are maimed or killed when they dive into the flat panels (mistaking them for bodies of water). It is more difficult to put a positive spin on the profile of the proposed 750-ft. tower against the desert landscape. The heat irradiation produced by both the panels and the tower are also a problem. Reflected light is blindingly intense and panel temperatures reach 900 degrees. The heat emitted from towers at other facilities kill thousands of birds annually, including golden eagles; although, the exact numbers are disputed by the industry, which is charged with self-monitoring and reporting avian fatalities. On May 19th, a fire erupted due to misaligned mirrors at the Ivanpah

*Continued on Page 11*

**“Advisory Council Meeting” - Continued from Page 10**

photovoltaic solar plant located at the Nevada-California border near Primm. The plant was off-line for several days. This latest problem is not encouraging for Palen. Like other plants, Palen’s footprint on the desert floor will be scraped flat and the soil will be impregnated with consolidant so nothing can grow and rainwater cannot recharge the water table.

The responses to the Palen presentation were mostly sanguine. Leslie Barrett remarked that renewable energy technologies were continuously evolving. His comment prompted the author (LT) to comment for the record that the Palen project represented nearly 10-year old technology, while distributed energy has been gaining traction in preference to building industrial scale projects and power links in the desert. The author (LT) asked why, given the technological progress in recent years, the BLM had not entertained distributed energy generation solutions (rooftop solar/point-of-use energy generation) in the DRECP, especially in light of the scathing comment letters it received for excluding them.

DAC member Dr. Al Muth, who is a biologist, responded, saying he agreed about Palen, specifically, and distributed energy, in general. He observed that the Palen plant could not be sited at a worse location, because it blocks a critical sand transport corridor which affects not only local fauna, but also the desert ecosystem over a much wider area many miles away. He pointed out that the DAC was not given the option to recommend or comment about alternative plans not already included in the DRECP. He would have liked to, but financial opportunity values successfully drove the decision to exclude distributed energy options.

Rockhounds had the chance to comment in both the morning session and in the afternoon session, when WEMO SEIS and DRECP were discussed. Kim Erb thanked the BLM for the clear accommodation of rockhounding in the MTNM, which was published on the BLM website on May 13th. She asked the BLM to include in the final Management Plan clear language that guarantees it in the future. She cautioned that the

accommodation is currently discretionary, so it can be revoked at any time. Similar comments by other speakers reiterated appreciation for the actions of the BLM during the interim period, and they all called for explicit language to protect rockhounding in the final Plan. The AFMS and CFMS Code of Ethics were entered into record.

Susy Martin recited a limerick by John Martin, a fitting comment on the solar energy presentation:

***“Rooftop solar in the city  
keeps the desert clean and pretty.”***

The author (LT) submitted a comment letter on the MTNM on behalf of the San Diego Mineral & Gem Society. A copy of the letter is available on the SDMG website at:

<http://goo.gl/t7urKB> (short url)

\* \* \* \* \*

Many of the members of the DAC and attendees at the May 21st meeting represent disparate constituencies with different concerns and priorities about land use rights. Historically, different values have been perceived as irreconcilable conflicting values, and they have been debated vigorously, the OHV group or rockhounds at odds with the environmentalists, for example. However, industrialization of the desert now looms as an existential threat to what desert preservation means to just about anyone who loves the desert. And just about everyone seems to recognize it.

It is fortuitous timing that the Council’s present composition of temperamentally compatible and mutually respectful personalities, as well as that of some meeting participants, perhaps will ease some longstanding tensions. Several Rockhounds remarked on the palpable warmth and supportive tone they sensed during the DAC Field Tour and business meeting. It may make for unlikely bedfellows, but Rockhounds stand to benefit, especially if they are willing to reciprocate the same spirit of mutual regard they were shown at the DAC meeting in Barstow.

## TO ALL RECREATIONAL ROCKHOUNDS

The creation of the three new National Monuments in the Southern California Desert has created a large dilemma for Recreational Rockhounds. The wording in the Presidential Proclamations did in fact eliminate all Recreational Rockhounding within the boundaries of the monuments. This outraged some Rock Hunters and a few took action and contacted the BLM, Elected House and Senate members and even the Department of the Interior. With the help of a Los Angeles Times article, our plight was elevated to a level that we were able to get some temporary resolution. California Senator, Diane Feinstein sent a letter to DOI Secretary Sally Jewell asking for consideration of Recreational Rockhounding to be allowed in the three National Monuments and to include Recreational Rockhounding in the Monuments Management Plans. The BLM has complied with the senator's request and a statement of allowable Recreational Rockhounding has been published and is available on the Mojave Trails National Monument Website and can also be found on the ALAA Website:

<http://www.amlands.org/6652/67112.html>

See: **MOJAVE TRAILS NATIONAL MONUMENT**

This Rockhound success is only temporary and the final ruling must be included in the Monument Management Plan. This is going to be a long and difficult process which may take several years to be finalized and published. Though we have been given the right to continue to collect rocks and minerals this is only an interim policy. The blanket collecting in the monuments will not be allowed as it has been in the past. The rules and regulations are changing. The collecting areas within the monument will be specific to each of the monuments and will require the identifying the exact areas, and what is collected in those areas and the designated BLM numbered Routes to get from the last public road to the actual collecting site. If this detailed information is not provided to the BLM the chances are great that the particular site will be excluded from the Management Plan where collecting and access will not be allowed. This will require the work of many Rockhounds and Collectors to keep the known collecting sites open and accessible and most important, published in the National Monument Management Plans.

As Rockhounds ALAA and CFMS-PLAC is asking when you write letters and comments to the BLM or any elected official, that you provide a copy of your letter to ALAA so a record of the amount of contacts can be accumulated in one location. You can also send your maps and collecting sites data so it can be reviewed, compiled and put into the proper format for delivery to the BLM for inclusion in the Mojave Trails National Monument Management Plan.

ALAA has created an e-mail box to which the letters and data may be sent as a cc: or Bcc: of your correspondence. That mail box is [calnatmonuments@amlands.org](mailto:calnatmonuments@amlands.org)

So please send or cc: or Bcc: to the E-mail address set up just to handle the California Monument letters.

For those who will send in paper letters an ALAA Address has been established and you are ask to send a copy of you letter to:

**ALAA**  
**2012 West Ave. K #528**  
**Lancaster, CA. 93536-5229**

As always, thank you for supporting this monumental task. We can not succeed without your continued help and support.

**American Lands Access Association and**  
**California Federation of Mineralogical Societies–Public Lands Advisory Committee**

## RECREATIONAL ROCKHOULDING IN THE MOJAVE TRAIL NATIONAL MONUMENT

By Ruth Hidalgo - ALAA Membership Chair

Rockhounds united Friday 5/20/16, to meet and greet the BLM/Desert Advisory Council (DAC) at Lavic Siding. The BLM had actually included a stop to Lavic to discuss Recreational Rockhounding in the New Mojave Trails National Monument on their agenda for the DAC Field tour. That, in and of itself, is a big deal and we responded in a big way. The BLM requested Kim Campbell Erb, a dedicated Rockhound who had served on the DAC, to speak about our hobby to other DAC and BLM attendees at a popular collecting site. Thank you Kim for doing so.

Many Rockhounds did the entire day tour with the DAC and BLM while others waited for them to arrive at the Lavic meeting spot with signs, photos, samples of material, flags and much, much enthusiasm. According to the BLM, over 40 Rockhounds attended. Members from many of the Southern California Clubs were in attendance, as well as, some that traveled a long way from Northern CA. Thank you to everyone that helped spread the word and/or attended.

For those of you that do not know, The Desert Advisory Council (DAC) is a group of individuals that represent various public interest and make suggestions to the BLM. Their time is not compensated, they are volunteers. They have quarterly two day meetings with the BLM Field office and District Office managers, which the public is welcome to attend. See <http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/info/rac/dac.html> for everything DAC.

I attended my first DAC meeting in March with two purposes:

(1) To get it on the record that collecting rocks was still allowed in the MTNM until a management plan was made. Not only did we get it on the record that day, but thanks to the insistence and efforts of some Rockhounds with much more experience than I doing this sort of thing, we now have written directive from the District Field Managers office. See it here: [http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/prog/nlcs/Mojave\\_Trails/recreation.html](http://www.blm.gov/ca/st/en/prog/nlcs/Mojave_Trails/recreation.html)

(2) To see if there was any chance of getting Rockhounding allowed in the Management Plan for the MTNM. Surprisingly, they did NOT laugh. They said it might be possible, IF we participate in the Management Plan process.

Katrina Symons, the Field Manager for the Barstow Field office, among other things, suggested we get a letter from Senator Feinstein's office in support, since her bill included Recreational Rockhounding as a continued allowed use. We now have that letter. We have Randy Banis to thank for that. Randy has served on the DAC for many years and has been a great resource for Rockhounds when it comes to access issues in the past. He reached out to his contacts at Senator Feinstein's office and got us a letter we can use during the Management Plan process. So a big THANK YOU to you, Randy Banis.

As to the other things, right now, they need input on the sites at which you collect out there. All the information you need to submit a place on the ALAA website. John Martin has put all the trail maps for the Cady's up for your convenience. You can also email the BLM directly with your honey spots. Send them to [ChristopherDal@cdalu@blm.gov](mailto:ChristopherDal@cdalu@blm.gov) or Katrina Symons [atksymons@blm.gov](mailto:atksymons@blm.gov). There are no promises or guarantees we can keep all our favorite spots open. The BLM is tasked with protecting the resources for which the monument was made, including artifacts and fossils. Protecting those and allowing rock collecting is delicate balance. However, it is a big monument with room for both and they are willing to try.

There will be many more opportunities to take part in making the MTNM the first National Monument in California, if not the United States, where you can pick up a rock and take it home. This just may happen. Don't miss out. Keep an eye on the ALAA website and participate.

DIANNE FEINSTEIN  
CALIFORNIA



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## United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0504

<http://feinstein.senate.gov>

May 12, 2016

The Honorable Sally Jewell  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of the Interior  
1849 C Street, N.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Secretary Jewell:

I write today to ask your Department to make appropriate accommodation for continued rockhounding and other rock collecting by hobbyists in any interim and final management plans for Mojave Trails, Sand to Snow, and Castle Mountains National Monuments. The Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service have long recognized rockhounding as a legitimate recreational pursuit. I deeply appreciate your work in support of the President's proclamations, and I trust that the management planning process will thoroughly examine this issue.

The California desert is a geological wonder: Jagged mountain backdrops jutting up from the expansive alluvial fans, bajadas, and stunning playas that dot the landscape, all of which reveal a pre-historic landscape as old as 2.7 billion years. And this landscape is filled with agate, jasper, opal, chalcedony and quartz crystals. The recreational collection of these items by rockhounds and other enthusiasts not only enriches the public's ability to enjoy and explore the desert, but also serves as a valuable educational tool.

Having heard from the highly dedicated and enthusiastic rockhounding community on this issue, I worked to accommodate their interests in the California Desert Conservation and Recreation Act (S. 414)—the impetus for the President's recent designation of the three aforementioned national monuments. That bill made clear that the Secretary shall continue to authorize rockhounding (*see* Sec. 101).

It is my understanding that the President's proclamations do not prohibit the type of recreational collecting that rockhounds have long enjoyed in this area. Because of

*Continued on Page 15*

*“Letter from Senator Feinstein” - Continued from Page 14*

the recent confusion surrounding the authorized uses within these new national monuments, I ask that you confirm the following points in writing:

- Does the President’s recent proclamations designating the Mojave Trails National Monument prohibit rockhounding?
- Prior to issuance of the BLM’s final management plan for the Mojave Trails and Sand to Snow National Monuments, will the BLM’s interim guidance provide for continued rockhounding?

I am confident that the BLM, Forest Service, and National Park Service will continue to support public access and recreation in their management of these national monuments. And I hope that your Department will consider the benefits of allowing continued rockhounding and hobbyist collecting, where suitable.

Sincerely,

  
Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

CC: Director Neil Kornze, Bureau of Land Management  
Chief Thomas L. Tidwell, U.S. Forest Service  
Director Jon Jarvis, National Park Service

DF/kr/ih



PHOTO BY JOHN MARTIN

## ROCK COLLECTING IN THE MOJAVE TRAILS NATIONAL MONUMENT

On May 17, 2016, at 5:33 PM, J. R. Martin <webmaster@amlands.org> wrote:  
Thanks Randy

I posted the link to the BLM Monument page on the California Page of the ALAA Website. See you Friday. We are going there on Thursday afternoon through Saturday after the DAC meeting. We are probably going to Idle Spurs for dinner Friday night.

Where is the off ramp for Lavic Siding?

John 'Rockhound' Martin

---

From: Randy Banis [mailto:RBanis@DeathValley.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, May 17, 2016 5:19 PM  
To: John Martin  
Subject: Fwd: Rock collecting

FYI

Here is the direction from the State Director for rock collecting in the Mojave Trails National Monument.

FYI. The statement below has been posted on the BLM Mojave Trails National Monument webpage and also on Facebook/Twitter etc..

“The Mojave Trails National Monument is a stunning mosaic of rugged mountain ranges, ancient lava flows, and spectacular sand dunes. Protection of this area will preserve its natural, cultural and historic legacy while preserving traditional uses of the area.

The Presidential proclamation that designated the Monument provides latitude for existing uses and activities and does not limit or prohibit rock hunting. Rockhounds are welcome to continue collecting limited amounts of rocks, minerals, and gemstones in the Monument in accordance with the Bureau of Land Management's rock collecting guidelines.

Over the coming months, the Bureau of Land Management will be developing a management plan to help guide the uses and activities that occur in the Monument. We are committed to an open and transparent process with the public as we move forward in developing this plan.”

Jerome E. Perez

State Director, Bureau of Land Management

Carl Symons  
Field Manager  
Ridgecrest Field Office  
760-384-5400



PHOTO BY JOHN MARTIN



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