



**DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND GAME**

Eastern Sierra - Inland Deserts Region (ESIDR)

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August 30, 2004

Mary G. Martin, Superintendent  
Mojave National Preserve  
222 East Main Street, Suite 202  
Barstow, CA 92311

Re: Retrofit of 12 Pre-existing Well sites as Wildlife Guzzlers within the Eastern Section of the Mojave National Preserve.

Dear Ms. Martin,

The Department of Fish and Game (Department) proposes to retrofit 12 pre-existing wells as wildlife guzzlers within the Mojave National Preserve (Preserve) to enable wildlife populations to return to pre-well removal and/or shutoff conditions and numbers. These retrofits are especially important now because of the drought conditions that have prevailed over the past decade.

The Department believes that the removal of both burro and cattle grazing within the Preserve has been very beneficial to wildlife. Unfortunately, many of the water sources that historically were available to both livestock and wildlife prior to removal of grazing, have been recently either shut-off or have had essential equipment removed from the site. The Department believes it is critical to wildlife conservation within the Preserve to have many of these historical water sources reactivated by utilizing more appropriate technology in the form of wildlife guzzlers. The Department, along with the cooperation and assistance of such organizations as Safari Club International, Quail Unlimited, the California Deer Association, the Mule Deer Foundation, Desert Wildlife Unlimited, the Foundation for North American Wild Sheep, and the Society for the Conservation of Bighorn Sheep, is committed to ensuring that these waters be preserved and maintained for wildlife in the Preserve. These organizations already have offered to help in any way they can, both with financial and volunteer assistance. The Department also would commit time and funds to this project to make sure that water remains available to all wildlife. This effort also should be acceptable because none of the proposed sites for retrofit are located within wilderness or desert tortoise habitat.

These wells include: Caruthers Canyon Well, Watson's Well, Barnwell Well, Payne's Well, Vontrigger Well, Lecyr Well, Lanfair Well, Ivanpah Well, Holliman Well, Government Hole, Granite Well and possibly Eagle Well (depending on depth). Latitudes and longitudes are available for each of the proposed well retrofits. The proposal is to contract a professional well company to install a submersible pump, wiring to the pump and weld a locking cap on the well, while disturbing as little area as possible. Volunteers will install a 500-1000 gallon tank, pipeline and float valve operated drinker at each site (these could be buried if deemed necessary for tank and drinker safety or visual impacts to Preserve visitors). Following installation, a single vehicle will be used to access each site, unlock each well, use a generator to refill the tank and monitor water use at each well.

Mary G. Martin, MNP

Following retrofitting, wells will be filled on an as needed basis, dependent upon first year monitoring; ensuring water is available for wildlife needs. Wildlife viewing opportunities provided at these sites will add to the enjoyment of Preserve visitors, as quail, dove, deer, non-game birds and even an occasional bighorn sheep might be seen.

The Department has already secured \$39,000.00 in funding from our Dedicated Deer Program to complete approximately four (4) well retrofits over each of three years, unless work can be completed sooner. I have enclosed a copy of the Deer Herd Management Plan Project Proposal, along with some site photographs, for your review.

The Department looks forward to working with you and Preserve staff as soon as possible to complete any additional coordination and paperwork required to begin these retrofits in an effort to make sure these water sites remain available to all wildlife within the Preserve. The Department would also like to initiate coordination and planning to develop the necessary monitoring plan for these well-retrofit wildlife guzzlers in the near future. Please give me a call, or have your staff contact either Bruce Kinney at (760) 872-1129 or Andy Pauli at (760) 240-1372, at your earliest convenience to discuss our next step for these projects.

Sincerely,

Curt Taucher, Regional Manager  
Eastern Sierra-Inland Deserts Region

Cc: L. Whalon, MNP, Barstow  
D. Hughson, MNP, Barstow  
  
S. Mastrup, CDFG, Sacramento  
M. Haynie, CDFG, Bishop  
B. Kinney, CDFG, Bishop  
A. Pauli, CDFG, Apple Valley