

Creating Monumental Visibility

Let's Be Friends

Goal / Vision

Develop new networks and improve the quality of existing networks with a focus on expanding Monument awareness and visibility in order to highlight recreational and educational opportunities, enhance citizen stewardship, and leverage external funding to support a variety of programs.

Network Objectives

1. Increase exposure in printed and electronic media.
2. Expand on-the-ground signing incorporating Monument name and/or logo across multiple jurisdictions.
3. Continue to expand role of Friends' organization in outreach and education with increased volunteer leadership and participation.
4. Utilize communications plan (a.k.a. business plan/outreach strategy) to promote external support in achieving overall Monument goals and objectives.

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Network Partners

National Monument Co-Manager (legislated)

- U.S. Forest Service, San Bernardino National Forest

Primary Nonprofit Support Organization

- Friends of the Desert Mountains

Intra/Inter Agency Partners

- National Landscape Conservation System
- BLM Palm Springs-South Coast Field Office
- USFS San Jacinto Ranger District
- Agua Caliente Band of Cahuilla Indians
- Mt. San Jacinto State Park
- Cities of Palm Springs, Cathedral City, Rancho Mirage, Palm Desert, Indian Wells, La Quinta
- County of Riverside
- Coachella Valley Mountains Conservancy
- Pinyon Community Council
- Winter Park Authority
- Coachella Valley Association of Governments
- Coachella Valley Conservation Commission

Other Formal Partners

- University of California, Riverside
- Sierra Club
- National Conservation System Foundation
- Conservation System Alliance
- California Department of Fish & Game

Informal Partnerships

- Palm Springs Life Magazine
- Desert Trails Coalition
- Coachella Valley Community Trails Alliance
- Southern California Edison
- The Wilderness Society
- California Department of Transportation
- Bighorn Institute
- Backcountry Horsemen of America

Potential Partners

- The Desert Sun (local newspaper)
- Palm Springs Bureau of Tourism
- Palm Springs Desert Resorts, Convention & Visitors Authority
- The Living Desert
- U.S. Golf Association
- American Hiking Society
- Equestrian Land Conservation Resource
- Foundation for North American Wild Sheep
- Outward Bound Los Angeles

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Stages of Network Development

November 1, 2008:

- Published new Monument brochure and new Monument trail map, a collaboration of 11 partners—no federal funding involved.
- Published electronic version of new Monument brochure, a collaboration with Palm Springs Life Magazine—no federal funding involved.
- New Monument brochure included as an insert in the October issue of Palm Springs Life Magazine, along with a full-page promotion for Friends of the Desert Mountains: “Nature Puts Us in Our Place. Discover Yours. Walk. Hike. Explore. Connect. Let’s be Friends.”
- New Monument electronic brochure incorporated on WebPages for the cities of Rancho Mirage and Indian Wells, San Bernardino National Forest, and Friends of the Desert Mountains.
- Continued development of communications/outreach strategy for the Monument.
- Expanded interpretive programs through Friends of the Desert Mountains.
- Friends of the Desert Mountains staffing a booth at Thursday night street fair in downtown Palm Springs.

July 1, 2009:

- Publication of Spanish language version of Monument brochure.
- Installation of Monument “welcome” signs at trailheads.
- Monument hiking opportunities published as a standing feature of *The Desert Sun’s* online newspaper.
- Use of communications/outreach strategy by Monument partners to leverage funding.
- Distribution of short Monument DVD for continuous play at retail and hotel venues; encourages membership with and participation through Friends of the Desert Mountains.
- Development of iPod downloads about resources of the Monument.
- Development of cellular telephone links about the Monument, its resources, and its recreational opportunities.
- Inclusion of link to electronic Monument brochure on all partner WebPages.

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Bottom Line: Benefits of the Network

Present

- Increasing awareness of the Monument, its resource values, and its recreational opportunities.
- Expanding outreach programs through Friends of the Desert Mountains.
- Expanding environmental education programs.
- Increasing volunteerism through Friends of the Desert Mountains.
- Enhanced external shared funding.

Future

- Broadened awareness of the Monument and its place in the National Landscape Conservation System.
- Expanding interest in volunteerism and stewardship, especially by young individuals who participated in the Monument's environmental education programs.
- Growing external funding.

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	Evaluation Criteria	Comments
1	Advance strategic priorities	Enhances community partnerships, and expands visitor services, particularly with regards to recreation and environmental education.
2	Leverage BLM funding	Friends of the Desert Mountains embarked on a \$3M in 3 years fundraising campaign for land acquisition and Monument program support.
3	Demonstrate big-picture thinking	Targeting broad-based community support as the basis for resource stewardship, increased volunteerism, and financial well-being.
4	Demonstrate entrepreneurship	Developed new Monument brochure and new trail map through partnerships with no federal funding involved.
5	Management of volunteer and assistant agreements and contracts	Friends of the Desert Mountains employs a Director of Programming that develops and implements numerous Monument programs, including management of the related volunteer force.
6	Demonstrate effective external and internal communication	Staff and volunteers for the Monument and Friends of the Desert Mountains regularly coordinate roles and responsibilities. Program schedules are published in various media on a monthly basis.
7	Actions promoting sustainability of the network	Monument Manager and staff frequently communicate with partners through formal and informal channels to maintain connectivity.
8	Potential as a network model	Good, though networks are often informal and initiated by and between third parties.

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Lessons Learned in Network Management

- The future is one of collaborative management with considerable external funding and volunteerism.
- Survival is possible without networks, but why survive as a skin-and-bones organization?
- Why would anyone want to do it all him/herself?

Challenges to Network Management

- Devoting sufficient time for the care and feeding of partners and volunteers—program growth necessitates a fundamental level of attention be paid to each player.
- Sustainable funding and staffing levels are always a challenge.