

March 5, 2009

Steve Borchard, District Manager
Bureau of Land Management
Desert District Office
22835 Calle San Juan De Los Lagos
Moreno Valley, CA 92553

RE: Local Effort to Secure Federal Stimulus Funding for Wash Road

We are writing to you today to let you know a contingent from the County of Imperial will be traveling to Washington D.C. tomorrow and Saturday to meet with Bureau of Land Management officials to discuss the use of federal stimulus funds for projects in Imperial County that impact the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area.

As you are well aware, we have an issue with access to the camping areas on the east side of the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area (ISDRA). The camping areas have been traditionally accessed via Union Pacific (UP) Railroad right of way (ROW).

The UP recently began a project to fence this ROW and has given notice that complete closure of the ROW will take place May 31, 2009. This project will completely close access to most of the camping areas off Wash Road in Imperial County. If a new access road is not built on BLM land before the beginning of the next duning season, it is feared we will see a notable reduction in visitors to the ISDRA. As you are aware, this reduction in visitors will impact not only the ISDRA, through a reduction in fee revenue, but will affect local gateway businesses too.

To continue access to these public lands and to allow visitors to utilize these camping areas will require that a road, of some sort, be constructed on BLM land. This road will require a commitment from the El Centro Field Office to generate the required planning, permits and cost estimate for such a project. We believe that this commitment is in the best interests of the ISDRA visitors, BLM and the local community.

The issue of reduced availability of recreation access to these camping areas was discussed with Mr. Tom Zale, BLM El Centro Field Office Assistant Field Manager, at a recent Imperial County Board of Supervisors (BOS) meeting. The importance to the local community of the ISDRA visitors was stressed and the BOS requested the BLM make this a high priority endeavor to secure continued access to these camping areas. Mr. Zale agreed that this was an important issue.

We would like to request your assistance in communicating with your upper management that the community, the local ECFO and the Board of Supervisors has identified this project as a high priority and believes it qualifies for funding through available federal stimulus funds.

The ISDRA is one of the premier recreation areas in the United States and we believe it is deserving of federal stimulus funds that will be allocated to preserve the public's access to recreate on their lands. Please join us in supporting this effort to allocate funds to this project.

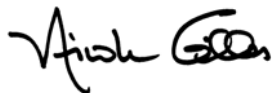
Sincerely,

Wally Leimgruber

Wally Leimgruber
Chairman of the Board
County of Imperial

Charla Teeters

Charla Teeters
Program Manager
United Desert Gateway



Nicole Gilles, CEO
Brawley Chamber of Commerce



Cathy Kennerson, CEO
EL Centro Chamber of Commerce & Visitors Bureau



Dick Holliday
Member Desert Advisory Council

Cc: Mike Pool, BLM, Acting National Director
Vicki Wood, BLM, ECFO Manager
Tom Zale, BLM, ECFO, Assistant Manager
Congressman Bob Filner