

QUARTERLY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

OCTOBER – DECEMBER 2019



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DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM

The Desert Conservation Program (DCP) manages Endangered Species Act compliance on behalf of Clark County and the cities of Boulder City, Henderson, Las Vegas, North Las Vegas, Mesquite and the Nevada Department of Transportation (NDOT) (collectively, the Permittees) through implementation of the Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (MSHCP) and associated Section 10(a)(1)(B) incidental take permit. The MSHCP and permit allow private landowners to develop land in Clark County without the need for individual project-by-project consultations and negotiation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife (USFWS) to comply with the Endangered Species Act, providing a streamlined process for compliance. In exchange for this permit, the DCP implements actions to mitigate impacts from development. These actions include research, acquisition of sensitive habitats, habitat restoration, public information and education, the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line, and installation and maintenance of fencing along roadways to reduce tortoise mortality.



Clockwise from top: Windmills; Browneyes; Silver cholla; and Yellow cups all found on the BCCE (Photos: C. Floyd)

BOULDER CITY CONSERVATION EASEMENT (BCCE)

The incidental take permit requires the establishment of a conservation easement in the Eldorado Valley to be managed and protected for the benefit of the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*) as partial mitigation for the take of desert tortoise and its habitat. The BCCE was established between Clark County and Boulder City in July of 1995 to fulfill this requirement.

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Provided oversight and project management for the interlocal agreement with Boulder City for Law Enforcement on the BCCE.
- Conducted fourteen site visits to monitor use, disturbances and related issues; and to perform new signage installation, maintenance and infrastructure upgrades.
- Met with law enforcement during four site visits to plan patrols to cover areas where violations had occurred.
- Initiated project with Boulder City Police Department for drone patrols to detect vehicles in unauthorized areas.
- Continued coordination with utility companies based in the Energy Zone in order to meet desert conservation and restoration goals.
- Continued mapping and assessment of unauthorized roads and other disturbances to guide prioritization of restoration activities on the BCCE.
- SWCA Environmental Consultants completed the final draft of the BCCE cultural surveys and submitted the report to the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) for approval.
- Continued weed surveys and treatment through an interlocal agreement with the National Park Service's (NPS') Exotic Plant Management Team (EPMT).

Click on the link for a comprehensive list of [BCCE](#) management accomplishments for this quarter.

RIPARIAN RESERVE UNITS

The incidental take permit stipulates that take of covered avian species is conditioned upon the acquisition of private lands in desert riparian habitats along the Muddy and Virgin rivers and the Meadow Valley wash. To comply with this permit condition, the DCP has acquired properties with riparian habitat along the Muddy and Virgin rivers in Clark County. These properties serve to mitigate impacts to covered species and conserve habitats and important connectivity corridors.

Muddy River Reserve Unit

- Continued planning efforts for the Southern Nevada Public Land Management Act (SNPLMA) Round 16 project to conduct habitat restoration on the Muddy River Reserve Unit. A Request for Proposals (RFP) was prepared to complete the restoration design. The top selections were evaluated and the contract was approved by the Board of County Commissioners last quarter. The selected consultant, Natural Channel Design, began data collection to inform preliminary design.
- Continued monthly data collection on groundwater monitoring wells.
- NPS' EPMT continued to conduct vegetation management and maintenance activities for enhancement of native riparian species on the Muddy and Virgin River Reserves.



Perkins Pond at the Muddy River Reserve Unit

Click on the link for a comprehensive list of [Riparian Reserve Units](#) management accomplishments for this quarter.

Virgin River Reserve Unit

- Continued planning efforts for a SNPLMA Round 15 project to conduct 20 to 40 acres of habitat restoration on the Virgin River Reserve. Staff continues monitoring of masticated area for non-native plant species.
- NPS' EPMT continued vegetation management and maintenance activities for enhancement of native riparian species.
- Continued photo-monitoring documentation of restored areas within the Mormon Mesa site.
- Continued coordination to execute a non-exclusive lease agreement for agricultural use of a portion of the Bunkerville site.

Property Acquisition

- The Public Works Map Team finalized subdivision of parcels identified for future acquisition.
- A separate parcel map was processed by the Clark County Assessor's Office.
- Awarded a contract with Summitt Forests, Inc. for tamarisk treatment on the Mormon Mesa.



Photos of property at the Virgin River Reserve Unit



PUBLIC INFORMATION AND EDUCATION

One of the requirements of the MSHCP is to provide public information and education and to complete outreach projects that support messages of the DCP.

Mojave Max Education Program

- Continued to provide oversight and project management for the contract with Get Outdoors Nevada (formerly Outside Las Vegas Foundation) for the Mojave Max Education Program.
- Forty-Four Tortoise Talks were conducted during this reporting period.
- Thirteen outreach events were conducted during this reporting period.



Nat'l Night Out

Outreach Events and Mojave Max Appearances

The following outreach events were conducted during this reporting period:

• Nat'l Night Out	MLK Park; Doolittle Comm Ctr; Mtns Edge	Oct 1st
• Summerlin Festival of the Arts	Downtown Summerlin	Oct 12th and 13th
• Junior Refuge Ranger Day	Desert Nat'l Wildlife Refuge	Oct 20th
• Bark & Winston's Bow Wow Hoedown	Downtown Summerlin	Oct 20th
• Trunk or Treat	Whitney Rec Ctr	Oct 24th
• Comm. Safe Night Halloween	Doolittle Comm Ctr	Oct 31st
• Downtown Summerlin's Treat Street	Downtown Summerlin	Oct 31st
• Friends of NV Wilderness Film Festival	Zappos Campus	Nov 2nd
• Opportunity Village Pawliday Boxes	Opportunity Village	Dec 11th
• Opportunity Village Mascot Night	Opportunity Village	Dec 30th

FOLLOW MOJAVE MAX

Get information about Mojave Max, who he is and why he's an important mascot for the Desert Conservation Program. Also check out his website at MojaveMax.com. Follow him on social media too!



Mojave Max



Mojave_Max



@MojaveMax





ATTENTION CONSTRUCTION PERSONNEL

If you see a wild desert tortoise on a construction site, please call the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance line at 702-593-9027. The tortoise will be picked up free of charge.

CONSTRUCTION SITE TRAINING

Please contact the DCP if you would like to schedule a desert tortoise training session for your construction staff. The DCP will explain what to do if you find a wild desert tortoise on your construction site and the training will be provided free of charge. Please contact the DCP at 702-455-3536 if you're interested.

WILD DESERT TORTOISE ASSISTANCE

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line

The 1995 Desert Conservation Plan and the 2001 MSHCP require that the DCP provide a hotline and pick up service to deal with wild desert tortoises which are displaced by development or appear to be in harm's way due to construction activity. The DCP operates the wild desert tortoise assistance line to meet this requirement.

- Three calls were received from the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line during this reporting period. No wild desert tortoises were picked up.

Desert Tortoise Fencing

- Continued planning activities for the construction of post-and-cable and desert tortoise fencing along the boundary of the Tule Springs Fossil Beds National Monument. This project will go out for bid once the BLM has completed their cadastral survey of the monument.

OTHER WORK

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Nevada Division of Minerals completed installation of bat compatible closures in the Goodsprings Mining District.

ADAPTIVE MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

As a requirement of the incidental take permit, the DCP is required to have an Adaptive Management Program (AMP) in order to gauge the effectiveness of existing conservation measures, propose alternative conservation measures as the need arises and to deal with changed or unforeseen circumstances.

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Presented a paper at the National Wildlife Society Conference on Desert Tortoise Occupancy on October 2nd.
- Translocated five tortoise that were removed from construction sites to the BCCE on October 15th.
- Published a paper entitled "Identifying habitat correlates of latent occupancy when apparent annual occupancy is confounded with availability for detection" In [Biological Conservation](#) on October 16th.
- Attended the Management Oversight Group meeting at the Springs Preserve on October 29th.
- Attended an Ivanpah desert tortoise connectivity meeting at the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) office on October 30th.
- Participated in the quarterly science advisor meeting on November 5th.
- Attended the Mojave Desert network science symposium at Lake Mead National Recreation Area on November 6th and 7th.
- Attended the Eastern Mojave Conservation Collaborative workshop on November 10th.
- Published a paper entitled "Using incidental mark-encounter data to improve survival estimation" in the journal [Ecology and Evolution](#) on December 8th.



Mount Charleston Blue Butterfly

Permit Amendment

The DCP continues to pursue a major amendment to the MSHCP and incidental take permit. This amendment would allow for additional take authorization in Clark County while providing long-term assurances to the Clark County community for continued economic growth.

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Continued to coordinate with the USFWS to discuss issues related to the proposed MSHCP amendment.
- Continued to work with Permittees on a proposed federal lands bill that will support efforts to obtain an amended MSHCP; continue to coordinate with elected officials and other stakeholders on the development of the lands bill; continue responding to public records requests related to the proposed lands bill.
- Continued to administer a contract with Ebbin, Moser + Skaggs, LLP to provide legal counsel services in support of the permit amendment effort.
- Continued to administer a contract with WRA Environmental Consultants to assist with the preparation of documents and analyses that will support development of the MSHCP amendment; draft habitat functionality methods were developed this quarter and will continue next quarter.
- Continued to administer an interlocal agreement with University of Nevada, Reno for the development of an additional 17 species distribution models. The models will be used in the development of the habitat functionality analysis and to estimate and track impacts to species.
- Completed an interlocal agreement with University of Nevada, Reno for the development of a golden eagle species habitat model.

External Agency Coordination and Assistance

In order to keep well informed on the current and future land use impacts to Clark County, the DCP will review and potentially provide comments on issues relevant to Clark County. As a public agency, the DCP also provides data as requested to interested parties.

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Provided GIS data to Olympia Companies.
- Provided GIS data to the City of Henderson.
- Provided GIS data to the USWFS.
- Provided GIS data and maps to Senator Cortez Masto.
- Provided Maps to Congresswoman Lee.
- Provided Maps to Clark County Real Property Management Department.
- Met with renewable energy developers to review proposed project siting and discuss potential land use conflicts.
- Served as a cooperating agency to the BLM's Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Gemini Solar Project.
- Continued to coordinate with the Clark County Regional Flood Control District on the development of a new in-lieu fee mitigation program for projects that require a permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act; the Draft Prospectus has been accepted by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and has been made available for public review and comment for a 30-day period.
- Provided interview assistance to the Department for recruitment purposes.



Spring Mountains Acastus Checkerspot butterfly

NEW, ONGOING, AND CLOSED PROJECTS

New projects started this quarter

- BCCE Drone Project, 1510C
- Virgin River Restoration Treatment, 1521H
- DT Connectivity Across Roadways, 1580B
- Avian Surveys, 1920D
- BCCE DT Telemetry & Health Assessments, 1930A
- Gila Monsters Spatial Ecology and Habitat, 1997B

Ongoing projects this quarter

- DT Health Assess and Pickup Svc Support, 803F
- BCCE Cultural Resource Survey, 809M
- Parceling for Bunkerville Property, 917BD
- Legal Services for DCP, 1014J
- BCCE DT Telemetry & Health Assessments, 1412D
- HCP Consultant for the MSCHP, 1460A
- Species Distribution Modeling, 1460E
- Muddy River Flood Inundation, 1521G
- Desert Tortoise Range-Wide Monitoring, 1541B
- Relict Leopard Frog Conservation Planning and Implementation, 1550A
- Muddy River Habitat Restoration, 1570C
- BCCE Weed Survey, 1710B
- Virgin River Weed Management, 1720A
- Water Rights Consulting, 1720E

Ongoing projects this quarter Cont'd.

- Riparian Reserves Maintenance, 1720F
- Science Advisor Panel for the DCP, 1730A
- Effects of Exotic Forage on Mojave DT, 1730J
- VR Coalition Project Planning, 1750B
- Desert Tortoise Predator-Prey Dynamics, 1795A
- Law Enforcement for the BCCE, 1905B
- Mojave Max Education Program, 1915A
- DT Monitoring Data Mgmt, 1920C
- Road Warrior DT Mortality Survey, 1955A

Projects closed this quarter

- DT Aware & Invasive Spec Ed for OHV Comm, 807H
- Water Rights Consulting, 1445E
- Muddy River Habitat Restoration, 1446D
- Desert Tortoise Monitoring Data Management, Year 2-5, 1541A
- Virgin River Riparian Restoration, 1521E
- Desert Tortoise Connectivity, 1580A
- BCCE Law Enforcement, 1710A
- Desert Upland Small Mammal Surveys II, 1730M

Requests for proposals and quotes (RFPs / RFQs)

- An RFQ was issued for development of an Environmental Assessment for herbicide research which will target reduction of invasive annual grasses in desert tortoise habitat.
- An RFQ was issued for analysis of bat recordings collected at all DCP-managed properties.
- An RFQ was issued for county-wide rare plant surveys.
- An RFQ was issued for Virgin River restoration treatment.



Yellow-billed cuckoo

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

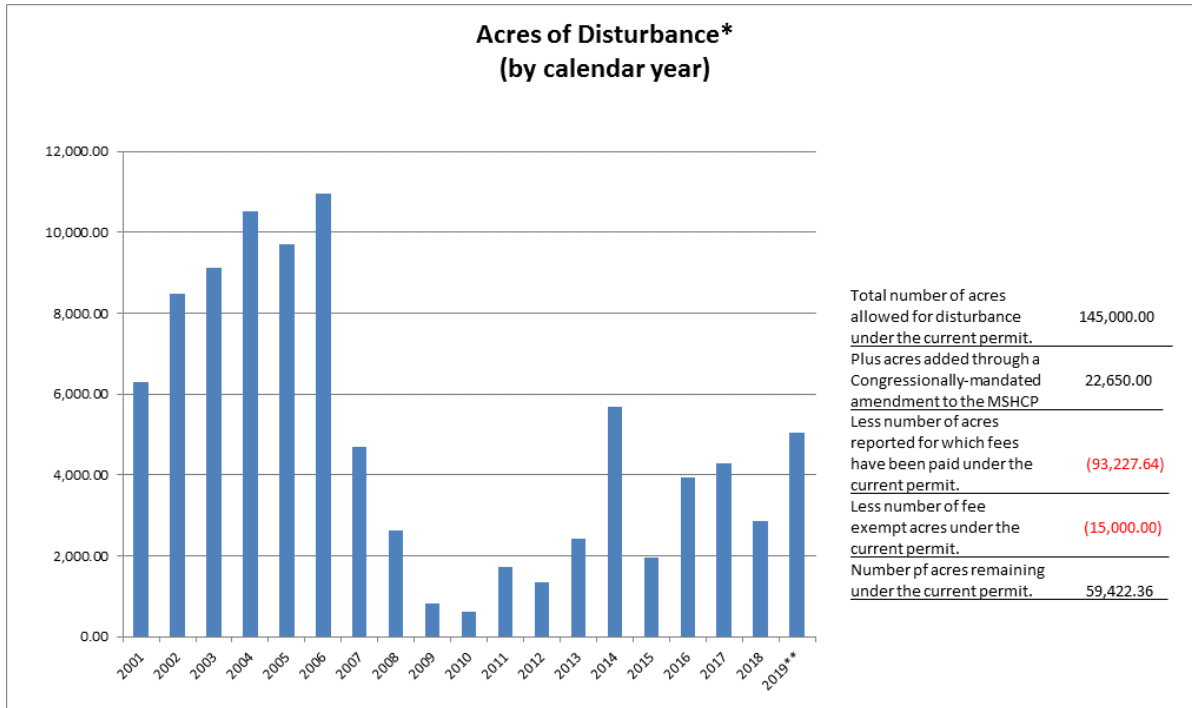
ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Processed vendor payments 64 invoices: 64 accepted (100%), 0 rejected (0%).
- Fiscal Year (FY) 19 budgets and expenditures continue to be monitored regularly to ensure appropriate spending and reporting occur. Initiated process of developing FY20 estimates and FY21 budget.
- Completed Phase 1 of converting all the existing credit card terminals to the new processor, Wells Fargo. Phase 2 of converting the existing web and IVR systems has been completed. Phase 3 is in process to establish e-payments services for County departments that do not currently offer e-payments.
- Continued production of the desert tortoise specialty license plate and plates are being distributed at Nevada Department of Motor Vehicles (DMVs). Active plates are currently exceeding the 1,000 minimum threshold.
- Continued oversight of the SNPLMA Round 14 – Round 17 projects totaling \$7,790,244 in the County's financial system. The projects continue to be monitored for progress and reimbursement.
- Received reimbursement for SNPLMA projects: Round 14 – one draw down (\$38,000.00), Round 15 – four draw downs (\$324,049.13), Round 16 – one draw down (\$23,000.00).
- Completed the 2017-2019 Biennium Progress Report; the report can be viewed [here](#).



Red Rock Canyon, NCA

DCP staff is responsible for ensuring that land disturbed pursuant to the MSHCP is accounted for and monies are collected and deposited in the Section 10 special reserve fund established under the MSHCP. Below are charts which outline the total amount of fees collected and acres disturbed for the period 2001-2019.



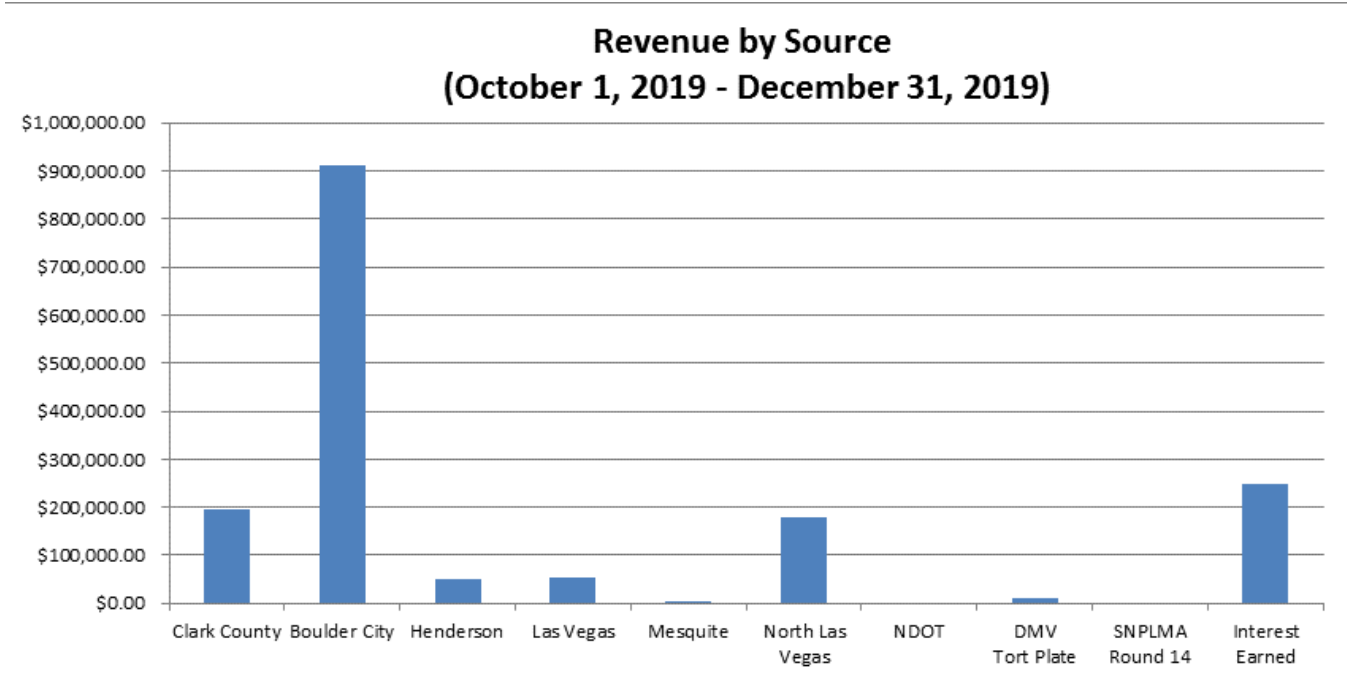
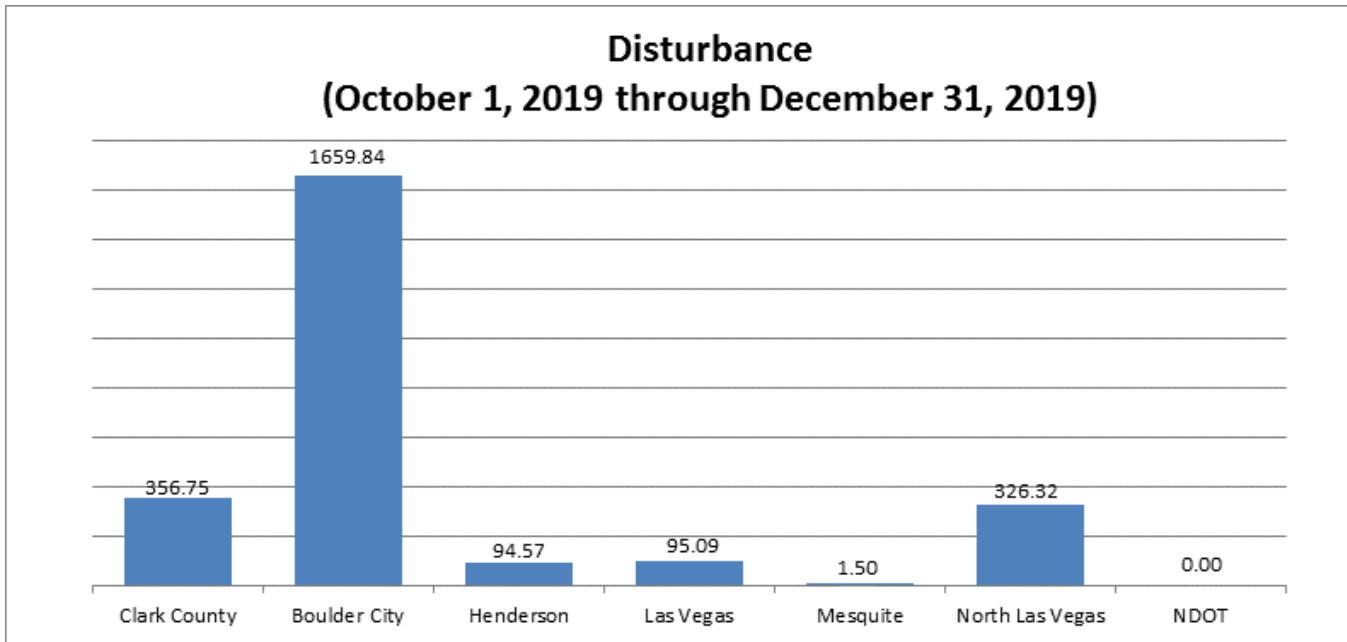
*Total acres reported in this chart do not include 15,000 acres of municipal development, which were exempt from the payment of mitigation fees through January 2010.

**2019 totals are subject to change.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE — CONTINUED



Western Burrowing Owl



OPPORTUNITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Desert Tortoise License Plate

The DCP's Desert Tortoise License Plate is available at Nevada Department of Motor Vehicle offices across the state. Click here for more information about the [plate](#).

Those interested in viewing any RFPs that are advertised for the DCP, are encouraged to sign up through Nevada Government EMarketplace ([NGEM](#)) to receive RFP notifications. Please check the Clark County opportunities page regularly at <http://bit.ly/2bBOrvz> for RFP opportunities.

Employment opportunities:

DCP will be recruiting in the next quarter.

Please check for employment opportunities within other County departments, by visiting Clark County's Human Resources webpage: [HR](#)

DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM

**CLARK COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF AIR QUALITY
DESERT CONSERVATION PROGRAM
4701 WEST RUSSELL ROAD, SUITE 200
LAS VEGAS, NV 89118**

WWW.CLARKCOUNTYNV.GOV/DCP


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