

QUARTERLY ADMINISTRATOR UPDATE

July—September, 2022



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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.

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 U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Bureau of Land Management to discuss issues related to the proposed MSHCP amendment; held quarterly coordination meeting on August 3, 2022.

- Continued to work with Permittees on a proposed federal lands bill that will support efforts to obtain an amended MSHCP; draft legislation was introduced in March 2021.

- 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. This quarter, drafts were developed or revised for Chapter 6.4 (monitoring and adaptive management), the Bird Springs Valley cooperative management agreement, and the MSHCP implementing agreement.

- Continue to administer a contract with SWCA Environmental Consultants to conduct avian surveys to improve knowledge of ecology and distribution of proposed covered avian species. Year 2 surveys were completed in early June and a final project report data have been submitted.

- Continued to administer a contract with SWCA Environmental Consultants to conduct bat surveys to improve knowledge of ecology and distribution of proposed covered bat species. Acoustic surveys continued this quarter and roost surveys began in August, 2022.

- Completed a contract with Ventajas, LLC to conduct research on conflicts and encumbrances within the proposed Special Management Areas that will serve as the Reserve System under an amended MSHCP. The summary reports for the Stump Springs special management areas was completed this quarter.

- Continue to administer a contract with Ebbin, Moser + Skaggs, LLP to provide legal counsel services in support of the permit amendment effort.

- Selected a contractor to conduct a funding analysis for the MSHCP Amendment; a kick-off meeting will be held next quarter.

- Held the quarterly meeting of the Executive Committee to continue coordination with the Permittees on August 24, 2022.

- Continued to administer

a contract with Cogan Technology to prepare a County-wide fine-scale vegetation map.

- Completed the Coarse Level Mapping for 22 total completed out of 22 work zones.

- This quarter site visits were conducted for field verification of photo interpretations.

- Established accuracy assessment plots and began field preparations for collecting accuracy assessment points.

- An Amendment to the contract was approved to the Board of County Commissioners to reorganize the project for SNLMA funding of the Fine Scale mapping. SNPLMA funding the Fine Scale Mapping Project nomination is still pending but was recommended for funding by the working group.





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

- 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.
- Gothic Landscape, Inc. has completed scheduled maintenance of shrubs planted in late 2021 to restore a decommissioned road located in valuable desert tortoise habitat at the BCCE (2017-GOTHIC-1745A).
- The National Park Service completed spring/summer weed surveys and control at the BCCE through an interlocal agreement. They also presented at the annual MSHCP Progress Report Symposium in August. The presentation slides can be viewed on the DCP website (2021-NPS-2005D).



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.

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

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

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 - Natural Channel Design was selected to complete the restoration design. Their design is in its final stage and currently under review with FEMA and the Clark County Building Department for the remaining necessary construction



- permits. Continued coordination with adjacent landowners to request easements for future restoration implementation activities.
- Submitted applications to change the place of use for Muddy River water right permits in prior quarter. These applications will support future Muddy River Reserve revegetation efforts and are currently under review.
- Continued monthly data collection on groundwater monitoring wells.
- Attended monthly meetings with Muddy River Biological Advisory Committee.

Virgin River Reserve Unit

- Continued monitoring of Mormon Mesa parcel for browsing and trampling by trespass cattle, and non-native plant species.
- Continued management of NPS' Invasive Plant Management Team for survey of vegetation and maintenance activities for enhancement of native riparian species.
- Request to adjudicate hydrobasins 222, 223, and 224, was submitted in Q2 2020 to Nevada Division of Water Resources. Currently under review.
- Examined inventory of water rights and determined that fifty-eight (58) surface water rights and twelve (12) groundwater rights could be conveyed to the Nevada Division of Wildlife (NDOW). Board of County Commissioners approved proposed conveyance of water rights. The State approved the conveyance in Q2 2022. Staff will coordinate with NDOW to update the ownership of each water right with the State of Nevada Division of Water Resources.
- Collaborated with USFWS on project that is attempting to identify the decline of screwbean mesquite trees along the Virgin River. Preparing a scope of work to expand monitoring and identify mitigation options.
- Participated in Virgin River Coalition meeting.



Screwbean mesquite trees along Virgin River

Property Acquisition

- A willing seller contacted RPM with a parcel along the Virgin River they are interested in selling. DCP is currently evaluating the parcel to determine if an offer should be sent.

Other

- Continued management of contract with SWCA to evaluate archaeological resources.
- Continued management of contract with SWCA to conduct avian surveys on riparian properties. Surveys began in Q2, including point count surveys, southwestern willow flycatcher (SWFL) and yellow-billed cuckoo (YBCU) protocol surveys, and nest monitoring. The final report will be delivered in October 2022.
- Participated in meetings with Clark County Regional Flood District for development of an In Lieu Fee Program.



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.

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

Mojave Max Education Program

- Continued to provide oversight and project management of the contract with Get Outdoors Nevada (GON) for the Mojave Max Education Program, including:
 - 1-year renewal of GON contract
 - Updates to elementary school presentations based on feedback from program evaluation

Outreach Events and Mojave Max Appearances

- Coordinated schedule for Mojave Max school assemblies and Tortoise Talks for 2022-2023 school year.
- Participated in a variety of outreach events including Boy Scout "Parent's Night".

Other Outreach Efforts

- Continued to maintain social media accounts for Mojave Max and the Desert Conservation Program (DCP).
- Promoted and facilitated [2022 DCP Project Progress Symposium](#).
- Launched the first ever #BagTheBalloons Challenge to engage the community in desert clean-up and bring awareness to the dangers of celebratory mylar balloon releases.

FOLLOW MOJAVE MAX

Visit MojaveMax.com to get information about Mojave Max; who is he? where does he live? why he is an important mascot for the Desert Conservation Program?

Follow him on social media too!



Mojave Max



Mojave_Max



@MojaveMax



Mojave_Max



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

- Continued to serve as a cooperating agency to the Bureau of Land Management's Gold Butte Implementation Plan project.
- Continue to serve as a cooperating agency for the Bureau of Land Management's Logandale Trails Resource Management Plan Amendment; a cooperating agency meeting was held on August 2.
- Prepared letters documenting Endangered Species Act compliance for projects requiring the submittal of map revisions to the Federal Emergency Management Agency; 2 letters were prepared this quarter.
- Continue to meet with solar developers to conduct initial project reviews and identify concerns/issues; met with 3 companies this quarter.
- Continued to meet quarterly with the Department of Aviation to aid and support the development of the Southern Nevada Supplemental Airport.
- Serve as a cooperating agency to the Bureau of Land Management's Copper Rays Solar Project; a cooperating agency meeting was held on September 22, 2022.
- Continued mapping and GIS support on Southern Nevada Economic Development and Conservation Act
- Continued to participate in the Eastern Mojave Conservation Collaborative steering team.



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

The DCP implements numerous conservation actions to benefit the desert tortoise and to assist with recovery efforts. Two of the key projects implemented to reduce the impacts of development on wild desert tortoises include operation of the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line and the implementation of a translocation program, conducted in cooperation with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Desert Tortoise Recovery Office. Additional projects that benefit wild desert tortoise populations include the construction and maintenance of over 400 miles of desert tortoise exclusionary fencing, and a wide variety of desert tortoise monitoring and research projects (refer to report section on the Adaptive Management Program).

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line

- Continued to administer a contract with Eco-centric to provide support for the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line and in conducting health assessments for tortoises that are removed from construction sites.
- Performed health assessments on 8 tortoises.
- Treated 3 tortoises for Upper Respiratory Tract Disease
- One call was received from the Wild Desert Tortoise Assistance Line during this reporting period with 1 tortoise picked up from a construction site and placed into quarantine.

Translocation

- N/A

Connectivity

- Presented findings from our connectivity project at the Turtle Survival Alliance annual conference.



OTHER CONSERVATION WORK

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

- Ironwood Consulting completed their final project report and submitted final data for the Rare Plant Surveys project. They also presented at the annual MSHCP Progress Report Symposium in August. The presentation slides can be viewed on the [DCP website](#) (2017-IRONWOOD-1775A).
- U.S. Geological Survey continued to study rare plant propagation for this project through an interlocal agreement. Research activities included seed germination studies, seed longevity studies, collection of seed from plants grown as part of this project, and maintenance of plants propagated in previous seasons. Dr. Lesley DeFalco also presented at the annual MSHCP Progress Report Symposium in August. The presentation slides can be viewed on the [DCP website](#) (2019-USGS-1990A).
- U.S. Department of Agriculture – Agricultural Research Service continued to identify bees captured during the field season and assessed the viability of collected *Arctomecon californica* seeds. They also presented at the annual MSHCP Progress Report Symposium in August. The presentation slides can be viewed on the [DCP website](#) (2021-USDA_ARS-2085A).
- University of Nevada, Las Vegas continued field studies for Phase 2 of our Riparian Plan-Pollinator Ecology research. Activities included vegetations surveys, sweep netting, willow flower surveys, soil sampling, and soil property analyses. They also presented at the annual MSHCP Progress Report Symposium in August. The presentation slides can be viewed on the [DCP website](#) (2021-UNVL-2065A).
- SWCA completed this year's avian surveys at DCP's riparian reserve units and the BCCE. Annual data has been finalized, and the annual report is available on the DCP website. They also presented at the annual MSHCP Progress Report Symposium in August. The presentation slides can be viewed on the [DCP website](#) (2021-SWCA-2020E).
- DCP staff completed this year's annual acoustic bat monitoring at five riparian reserve sites. The data will be analyzed next quarter.
- Ironwood Consulting began preparations for county-wide autumn surveys of Blue Diamond cholla (2021-IRONWOOD-2080A).
- Initiated a contract for adding the Niles Herbarium Dataset to the NDNH database.
- Continued administering the contract for Reptile Monitoring and data collection



Silver Cholla (*Cylindropuntia echinocarpa*)

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

- Continued mapping and GIS support on Southern Nevada Economic Development and Conservation Act
- Continued to administer a contract with Alta Sciences to provide for an independent Science Advisor Panel; held the Quarterly Science Advisor meeting.
- Held the annual [DCP Project Progress Symposium](#)

LIST OF PROJECTS ADMINISTERED THIS QUARTER

Ongoing and active projects this quarter

| Proj. # | Title | Contractor |
|---------|---|--|
| 1521G | Muddy River Flood Inundation Project | US Geological Survey (USGS) -Western Eco Rsrch Ctr |
| 1570D | MR Habitat Restoration Implementation | American Conservation Experience |
| 1720E | Water Rights Consulting (w/1440D & 1520Q) | Farr West Engineering |
| 1745A | Restoration at the BCCE (W/809 & 1421) | Gothic Landscape, Inc |
| 1750D | Archeological Resource Evals on Rip Rsv Parcels | SWCA Environmental Consultants |
| 1750J | Riparian Reserves Plant Propagation | National Park Service (NPS) |
| 1750K | Avian Nest Monitoring on Riparian Properties | SWCA Environmental Consultants |
| 1755A | Rare Plant Surveys | Ironwood Consulting, Inc. |
| 1782B | Avian Surveys | SWCA Environmental Consultants |
| 1910C | Riparian Reserves Vegetation Management | National Park Service (NPS) |
| 1915F | Mojave Max Education Prg Eval (w/1715) | Inform Evaluation & Research |
| 1920A | Science Advisor Panel | Alta Sciences & Engineering, Inc. |
| 1920B | DT Occupancy on the BCCE | Bio Logical, LLC |
| 1965A | Vegetation Map for Clark County (w/1460G) | Cogan Technology Inc |
| 1970B | HCP Consultant for the MSHCP Amendment | WRA Environmental Consultants |
| 1970C | Legal Services for DCP | Ebbin, Moser + Skaggs, LLP |
| 1975A | Tule Springs Monument Fence (w/804, 1525, 1725, 1780) | JNJ Engineering Construction Inc |
| 1990A | Rare Plant Propagation Research (w/809) | US Geological Survey (USGS) -Western Eco Rsrch Ctr |
| 1997C | Gila Monster Habitat Modeling | University of Nevada Reno (UNR) - BRRC |
| 2005C | BCCE Law Enforcement | Boulder City Conservation Easement Law Enforcement |
| 2005D | BCCE Weed Survey | National Park Service (NPS) |
| 2005E | BCCE Maintenance | Gothic Landscape, Inc |
| 2020B | East Moj Cnsrv Collaborative Facilitation II | Southwest Decisions Resources, Inc |
| 2020C | Science Advisor Panel | Alta Sciences & Engineering, Inc. |
| 2020D | Desert Tortoise Occupancy | Bio Logical, LLC |
| 2020E | Avian Surveys | SWCA Environmental Consultants |
| 2025A | DT Range Wide Monitoring (w/1920, 1925, 2020) | Great Basin Institute |
| 2030A | BCCE DT Telemetry & Health Assess (w/1740C & 1930B) | Great Basin Institute |
| 2040B | Reptile Monitoring and Surveys | Great Basin Institute |
| 2042A | Road Warriors DT Mortality & Fence Survey | Tortoise Group |
| 2065A | Riparian Plant-Pollinator Ecology Phase 2 | University of Nevada (UNLV) - Board of Regents |
| 2085A | Mojave Poppy Bee Surveys | US Dept of Agriculture (USDA) -Agri Rsrch Service |
| 2095A | MSHCP Amendment Reserve System Research | VENTAJAS LLC |
| 2095C | Bat Surveys | SWCA Environmental Consultants |
| 803F | DT Health Assess and Pickup Svc Support | Ecocentric, LLC |

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE

ACTIVITIES FOR THIS QUARTER

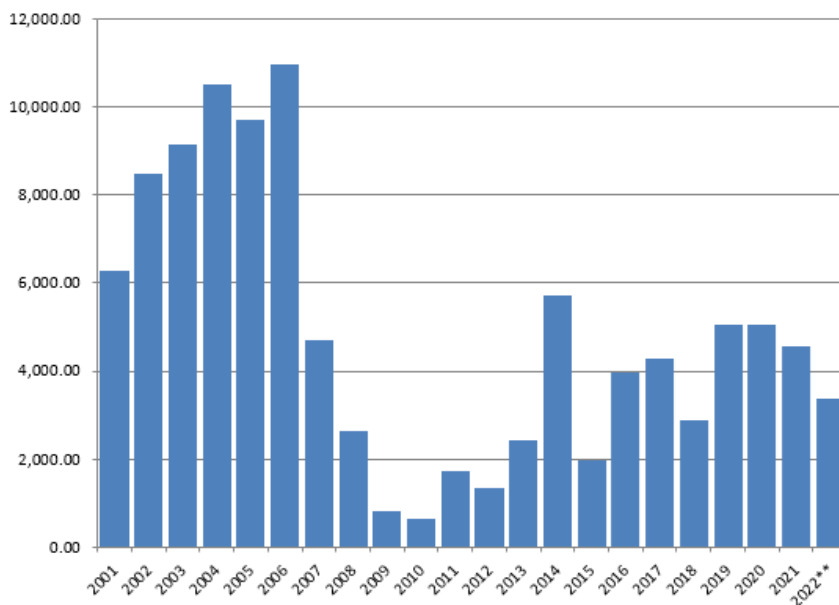
- Continued development of the 2023-2025 Implementation Plan and Budget process with stakeholders. A draft budget for non-discretionary projects has been prepared; additional recommendations for discretionary projects are due next quarter. A public draft report is expected to be available in November 2022.
- Processed vendor payments: 49 invoices, 45 accepted (92%), 4 rejected (8%).
- Fiscal Year (FY) 22 Budgets reconciled for end of year close and rolled into new fiscal year. Expenditures for FY23 continue to be monitored regularly to ensure appropriate spending and reporting occur.
- Phase 1 of converting all the existing credit card terminals to the new processor, Wells Fargo, is completed. 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 did 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 16 – Round 18 projects totaling \$16,509,396 in the County's financial system. The projects continue to be monitored for progress and reimbursement.
- Received reimbursement for SNPLMA projects: Round 16 – zero draw downs this quarter.



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 2001-2022.

**Acres of Disturbance*
(by calendar year)**



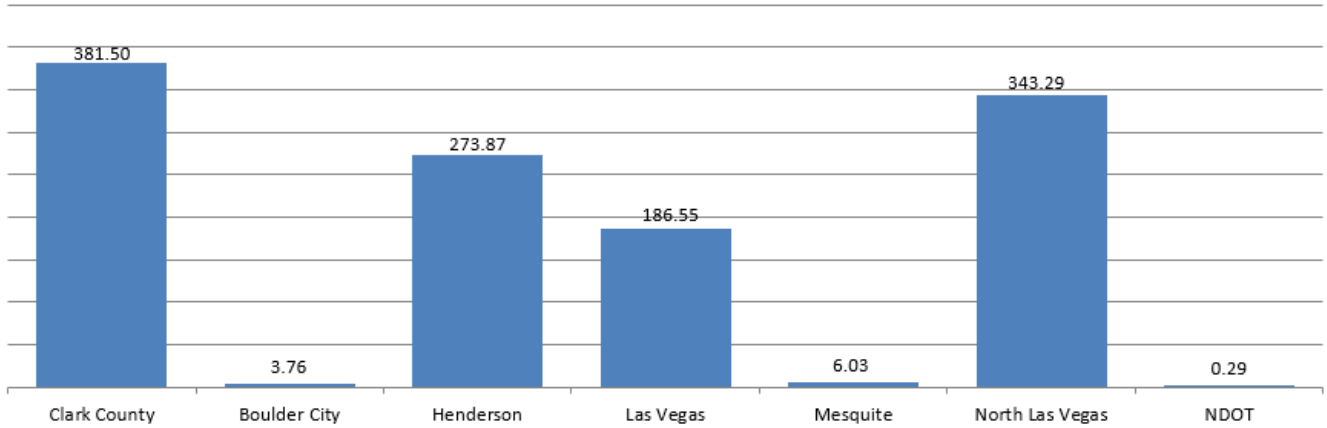
| | |
|---|--------------|
| Total number of acres allowed for disturbance under the current permit. | 145,000.00 |
| Plus acres added through a Congressionally-mandated amendment to the MSHCP | 22,650.00 |
| Less number of acres reported for which fees have been paid under the current permit. | (106,207.41) |
| Less number of fee exempt acres under the current permit. | (15,000.00) |
| Number of acres remaining under the current permit. | 46,442.59 |

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

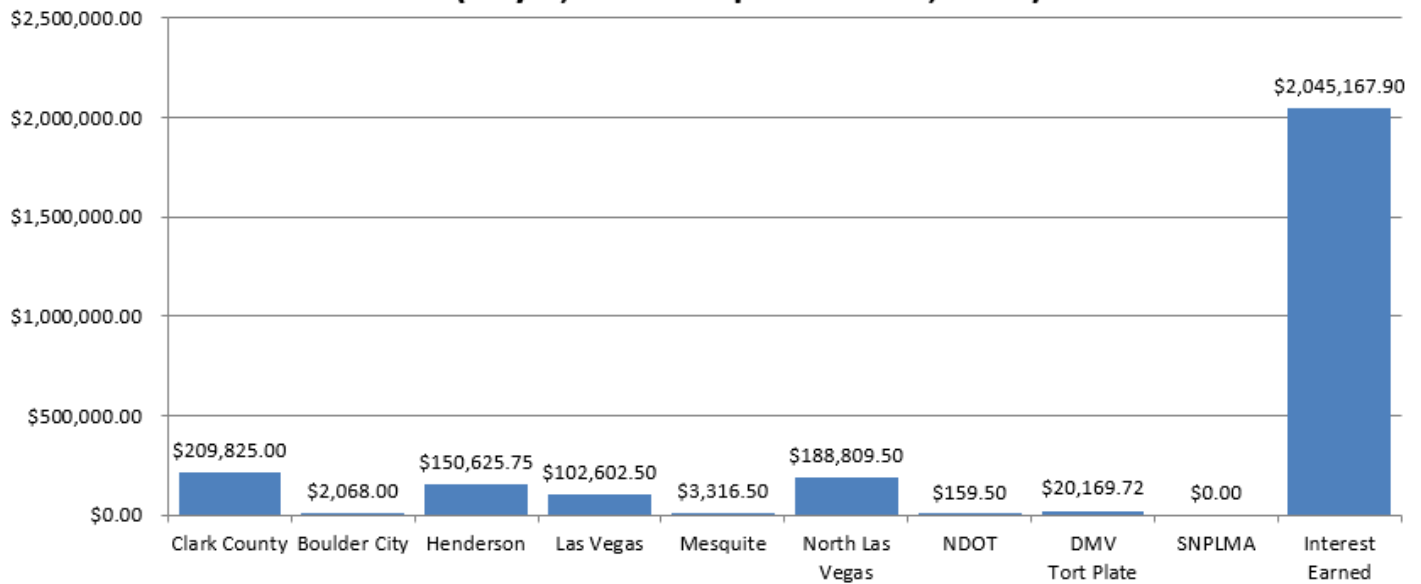
**2022 totals are subject to change.

ADMINISTRATION AND FINANCE — CONTINUED

**Disturbance
(July 1, 2022 through September 30, 2022)**



**Revenue by Source
(July 1, 2022 - September 30, 2022)**



OPPORTUNITIES AND ANNOUNCEMENTS



Desert Tortoise License Plate

Employment opportunities:

DCP currently has no active recruitment opportunities; please check for employment opportunities within the DCP and other County departments frequently by visiting Clark County's Human Resources [webpage](#).

- ◆ 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 Current Opportunities page](#) regularly for RFP opportunities.

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