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For Immediate Release

Monday, October 2, 2023

Media Invited to the Release of Wild Desert Tortoises

Clark County's **Desert Conservation Program**, in conjunction with United States Geological Survey (USGS), **will be releasing 51 desert tortoises into the wild on Wednesday, October 4, 2023.** The tortoises, which are a threatened species protected by the Endangered Species Act, will be released in the Boulder City Conservation Easement, south of Boulder City. Several of these tortoises were recovered from construction sites earlier this year, thanks to a program made possible through the Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Program (MSHCP). The other tortoises were surrendered as hatchlings and are part of a HeadStart program managed by USGS. The hatchlings have been raised in captivity but are not considered pets. All tortoises scheduled for release have been medically cleared and deemed capable of surviving once being released into the wild. **NOTE:** The general public is *not* invited to participate. Those handling the tortoises have training which allows them to do so properly.

To date, the MSHCP has invested more than \$162 million in more than 600 conservation projects to minimize and mitigate the unintended negative impacts of growth and development on native sensitive species and habitats.

Who: Clark County Desert Conservation Program and USGS

What: Desert Tortoise Release

When: 9 a.m., Wednesday, October 4, 2023

Where: Boulder City Conservation Easement, south of Boulder City. Media may meet DCP staff at a kiosk at the corner of US95 and NV165 (Nelson Road). Coordinates: 35.82766, -114.93625

INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES

- Scott Cambrin, Senior Biologist, Desert Conservation Program
- Staff and Volunteers participating in the release of tortoises

PHOTO OPPORTUNITIES

- Tortoises being reintroduced to their natural environs
- Desert Conservation Program staff and volunteers handling the tortoises and releasing them

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About the Boulder City Conservation Easement

The Boulder City Conservation easement (BCCE) was established in 1995 by a partnership between Clark County and the City of Boulder City. Managed by the Clark County Desert Conservation Program, the BCCE was created to protect habitat for desert tortoises and other species covered by the Clark County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Program (MSHCP). The BCCE conserves 87,268 acres of desert tortoise habitat and serves as mitigation for impacts to desert tortoises resulting from private-land development activities within the County.

About the Department of Environment and Sustainability

The Department of Environment and Sustainability is the air pollution control agency, regional Endangered Species Act compliance program, and sustainability office for all of Clark County, Nevada. Established as the Department of Air Quality by the Clark County Commission in 2001, it was renamed in 2020 and is comprised of two divisions: Air Quality and Desert Conservation Program. Through these two divisions, DES is ensuring the air we share meets healthful, regulatory standards, administering the County's Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan and addressing climate change through the All-In Clark County initiative.

Clark County is a dynamic and innovative organization dedicated to providing top-quality service with integrity, respect, accountability, leadership and excellence. With jurisdiction over the world-famous Las Vegas Strip and covering an area the size of New Jersey, Clark is the nation's 11th-largest county and provides extensive regional services to 2.3 million citizens and 45.6 million visitors a year (2022). Included are the nation's 8th-busiest airport, air quality compliance, social services and the state's largest public hospital, University Medical Center. The County also provides municipal services that are traditionally provided by cities to 1 million residents in the unincorporated area. Those include fire protection, roads and other public works, parks and recreation, and planning and development.