



March 10, 2021

Andrew Archuleta
District Manager
California Desert District
Bureau of Land Management
22835 Calle San Juan De Los Lagos
Moreno Valley, CA 92553
Via email to: aarchule@blm.gov

Re: John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management, and Recreation Act (Dingell Act)

Dear Andrew:

The California Native Plant Society, Center for Biological Diversity, Defenders of Wildlife, Desert Tortoise Council and Sierra Club are seeking information about the current status of a provision in the Dingell Act regarding wildlife corridors (ref. Dingell Act, Part 5, Miscellaneous Provisions, Section 1452, Wildlife Corridors). The Dingell Act was enacted into law on March 12, 2019 as Public Law 116-9, and specified that the Wildlife Corridor study be completed within two years.

Section 1452 amended the 1994 California Desert Protection Act, Section 713, Wildlife Corridors, and required that the Secretary of Interior, through the Bureau of Land Management (BLM), complete the following tasks:

1. Assess the impacts of habitat fragmentation on wildlife in the California Desert Conservation Area.
2. Establish policies and procedures to ensure the preservation of wildlife corridors and facilitate species migration.
3. No later than March 12, 2021, complete a study regarding the impact of habitat fragmentation on wildlife in the California Desert Conservation Area.
4. The wildlife corridor impact study will include:
 - A. Identification of the species migrating, or likely to migrate in the California Desert Conservation Area;
 - B. Examination of the impacts and potential impacts of habitat fragmentation on:
 - plants, insects, and animals;
 - soil;
 - air quality;
 - water quality and quantity; and
 - species migration and survival;
 - C. Identify critical wildlife and species migration corridors recommended for preservation; and,
 - D. Include recommendations for ensuring the biological connectivity of public land managed by the Secretary (BLM) and the Secretary of Defense throughout the California Desert Conservation Area.
5. Determine individual and cumulative impacts of rights-of-way granted for projects in the California Desert Conservation Area using the information collected in the wildlife corridor study and in accordance with the following:
 - A. National Environmental Policy Act
 - B. Endangered Species Act; and
 - C. Any other applicable law.
6. All land management plans applicable to the California Desert Conservation Area will incorporate the findings and recommendations of the wildlife corridor study.

Our organizations would much appreciate an update from you on the status of the wildlife corridor component of the Dingell Act, and if BLM envisions amendments to the California Desert Conservation Area Plan based on the requirement that BLM will incorporate the findings and recommendations from the corridor study into all applicable land management plans. Lastly, due to the complexity and importance of the wildlife corridor study and plan in the overall management of the California Desert Conservation Area, our organizations recommend that the public be given an

opportunity to review and comment on a preliminary or draft version of the study and plan before it is finalized and adopted by BLM.

We look forward to your reply, preferably as an attachment to an email addressed to the undersigned representatives of our organizations .

Sincerely,



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