Desert Tortoise Council
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting

3 December 2022
Zoom Online Meeting

CALL TO ORDER

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson, Mari Quillman at 10:00 a.m. (PDT) Action items are in blue, with responsible parties in red. Motions made, seconded, and approved (or not) are shown in bold red font.

Attendees: Kristin Berry, Peter Woodman, Judy Hohman, Ken MacDonald, Maggie Fusari, Mari Quillman, Bruce Palmer, Michael Tuma, Becky Jones, Joe Probst, Ed LaRue, Michael Vamstad, Max Havelka. Absent: Cristina Jones and Halle Kohn. Guests: None.

A. Welcome/Announcements/Introductions: Mari Quillman welcomed Max Havelka to his first official Council Board meeting.

B. Review Agenda: New issues were incorporated as needed.

C. Approval of Meeting Minutes of 8 October 2022: Ed LaRue prepared draft minutes of the most recent virtual Board meeting, which were distributed, reviewed, and approved today as final. Motion made (Joe Probst), seconded (Ken MacDonald), and unanimously approved to accept the draft minutes as amended to be final.

D. Review of Board Actions since Last Board Meeting: No new issues were resolved since the October Board meeting.

E. Next Meeting Date: The next meeting of the Board of Directors will be in person in St. George, UT, beginning at 09:00 a.m. (Utah Time, which is 08:00 a.m. PDT) ending mid-afternoon, on 1/7/2023, which means most of us should travel on 1/6/2023 and coordinate arrival times with Joe Probst, Bruce Palmer, and Mari Quillman. We will visit the Dixie Center sometime during the day, likely after the Board meeting. Joe Probst will contact the Dixie Center and Hyatt to see if one or the other has a small room that can accommodate the Board meeting. Kristin Berry and Pete Woodman will not be able to attend in person but can attend on Zoom.

OFFICER/COMMITTEE REPORTS

F. Treasurer’s Report: In an electronic version of the Treasurer’s Report, Joe Probst shared that our income for 2022 through 11/30/2022 was $129,382.23, total expenses were $65,937.80, with total assets of $239,707.12. The total income after expenses (i.e., profit) for the 2022 Basic Course was $53,152.22. The total profit for the Symposium was $31,367.15. Mari Quillman asked that Joe Probst provide an accounting for income and expenses for the 2022 Symposium without regard
to 2021 versus 2022, and provide reports at more frequent intervals on activities of money market accounts. **Motion made (Ken MacDonald), seconded (Michael Vamstad), and unanimously approved to accept the Treasurer’s Report as final.** Joe also provided a spreadsheet for the 2022 actual versus budgeted expenses and income. Budgeted expenses were $106,250.00 compared to $65,937.80 actual. Budgeted income was $124,200.00 compared to $129,382.23 actual. The audit did not take place as planned in November 2022. Joe Probst and Ray Butler will plan to conduct an audit covering three fiscal years a few days before the 2023 Symposium or at another time, pending Ray’s plans to attend the Symposium.

**G. Corresponding Secretary’s Report:** Becky Jones reported we received a National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) document at our new post office box from the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) St. George office regarding the Red Cliffs/ Warner Valley Land Exchange. Emails included those on pet tortoises; when the next workshop would be; someone who wanted to volunteer for field work, who was referred to Joshua Tree National Park; and someone wanting to adopt a tortoise. Most emails were trying to sell us something.

**H. Membership Committee’s Report:** In an electronic version of her report, Halle Kohn reported there are a total of 687 regular members, of which 193 are active and 488 are overdue. Other membership categories include 53 student members, 25 retiree members, 74 lifetime members, and 16 organization members. Overall, there are 855 total members, including 305 active members and 550 members with overdue renewals. **Halle Kohn will schedule a committee meeting within the first quarter of 2023 to revisit 2022 committee goals and discuss 2023 action items.** Board members noted that none of us has been asked to renew our memberships, so **Mari Quillman will coordinate with Sky Esser to ensure renewed memberships are solicited, including members who are not planning to attend the Symposium.**

**I. Nominating Committee’s Report:** Ken MacDonald is chair of the Nominating Committee. We need to identify a Chairperson-elect to become Chairperson in 2024 when Mari Quillman steps down. Mari Quillman has indicated she is willing to be Chairperson-elect if no one else is willing to stand. **Ed LaRue will reach out to a past BLM employee to ascertain his interest in serving on the Board.** Judy Hohman and Ken MacDonald’s terms as Board Members will need to be renewed at the Annual Business Meeting. Cristina Jones told Mari Quillman that she plans to resign at the end of her term, and is still willing to help with Health Assessment Training. With her resignation, we need to fill the chair position for the Agency Coordination Committee. The Board positions due for re-election are Recording Secretary (Ed LaRue), Chairperson-elect, and Membership Coordinator (Halle Kohn). **Mari Quillman will follow-up with two biologists with whom she works to ask for letters of interest and resumes. • Michael Tuma will speak to a long-time member of the Council to see if he is willing to serve on the Board.**

**J. Ecosystems Advisory Committee’s (EAC) Report:** In an electronic version of his report (see attachment), Ed LaRue reported there were 20 projects identified and 13 reviewed and commented on by the Board in the reporting period between 10/8/2022 and 12/3/2022. Only one project (ICT Lake Mohave Communication Site) deadline was missed, and six are still outstanding with future comment deadlines. With Board input, Ed LaRue has provided a formal standing declaration to the Stanford Law School on the West Mojave Route Network lawsuit. **Bruce Palmer and Mari Quillman will revisit the policies and consider how they may be revised to document implementation methods rather than create user manual(s) for each of the committees.**
Judy Hohman shared about a Transportation Policy Inquiry, which she has been discussing with Flo Deffner, concerning an existing document that she may want us to review and comment on and perhaps help develop a peer-reviewed article.

**K. Media Committee’s Report:** Halle Kohn’s committee report dated 11/30/2022 indicated the following statistics since August 2022: Instagram followers: from 1,426 to 1,512 = 86 new followers; Facebook likes: from 2,658 to 2,774 = 116 new likes; Facebook followers: from 2,868 to 2,983 = 115 new followers; Twitter followers: from 330 to 339 = 9 new followers; and LinkedIn followers: from 147 to 175 = 28 new followers. Halle Kohn is scheduled to publish Issue 46(2) of the Newsletter on 12/9/2022. • Halle Kohn will ensure that both the Morafka Award and Allison Grant are announced in the December newsletter. Max Havelka indicated that he is willing to help Halle Kohn develop the newsletter, as needed.

**L. Strategic Planning Committee Report:** Is there a policy indicating how much time a given Board member is expected to contribute? Bruce Palmer will provide Mari Quillman with the time commitment portion of the policy for At Large Board Members.

**M. Grants Committee’s Report:** Michael Tuma indicated that the availability of the Morafka Award has been on the website for several months. Michael Tuma will work with Mary Jane Post and Halle Kohn to post announcements for both the Morafka Award and Allison Grant in eblasts and social media. • Pete Woodman will follow up with a couple entities to see if they would like to contribute to the Allison Grant. • Michael Tuma will contact Transitions Habitat Conservancy to see if they plan to present at the Symposium, reporting on the results of the Southern California Edison restoration grant. No one has been identified to take charge of this committee, so Michael Tuma will talk with Max Havelka about what the chair position entails. There are likely to be requests for student travel after announcements for the Symposium are posted on the website.

**N. Agency Coordinating Committee’s Report:** No report in Cristina Jones’ absence.

**O. Mexican Tortoise Coordination Committee (MTCC):** Michael Vamstad did not have anything to report.

**P. Training Program Committee Report:**

1. **Introductory Training Course Committee’s Report:** No new information to report.

2. **Advanced Training Courses Committee’s Report:** No report in Cristina Jones’ absence.

**Q. Education and Outreach Committee’s Report:** Ed LaRue and Joe Probst plan to attend the Western Chapter of The Wildlife Society meeting in Riverside, CA in February 2023.

**R. Annual Symposium Program Committee’s Report:** Mari Quillman, Bruce Palmer, Judy Hohman, and Kristin Berry are serving as the host committee. David Carr is working with David Hedrick of Turtle Survival Alliance (TSA) to oversee audio-visual needs. Bruce Palmer, Mari Quillman, Joe Probst, and Judy Hohman all visited the Dixie Center last month and were favorably impressed with the facility. The banquet hall is directly across from the main meeting room. There is a separate room for vendors. Posters and photos are likely to be posted in a foyer or vendor room. We have received a menu, with Joe selecting a few preliminary menu items to determine
the cost. We will not be serving breakfast because everyone will be offsite in hotels that serve breakfast. We do plan to serve buffet lunches on Thursday and Friday so attendees will not have to leave the facility. There are morning breaks on Friday and Saturday and afternoon breaks on Thursday and Friday. Southern Nevada Environmental Inc. (SNEI) will host the mixer on Wednesday night around 7 pm at the Dixie Center. A third party is trying to organize a Drink Beer, Save Tortoises event with a local brewery on Thursday night, which Mari Quillman will coordinate with help from Max Havelka. Michael Vamstad will serve as the onsite, virtual chair, working with David Hedrick and David Carr.

Pete Woodman is working with Ann McLuckie, Cameron Rogen, and Mike Schiff for field trips, including an afternoon field trip, which will be limited to 20 people, and a morning trip, beginning at either 08:30 or 09:30, to be determined.

There will continue to be Symposium planning committee meetings, excluding the one scheduled for next Tuesday because we are meeting today. Mari Quillman is working with Sky Esser to update the website, which includes removing the call for papers and adding new information as it becomes available. • Maggie Fusari will review the poster session on the website to see what needs to be changed to accommodate both the physical and virtual formats. Michael Tuma has already updated the information concerning the Morafka Award, which is under the Grants Program on the website, and will also have a blurb on the main page. Mari Quillman will see that the Linda J. Allison Grant is also posted in that section on the website. • Each Committee Chair needs to provide their annual reports to Mari Quillman by December 20 to facilitate her annual report and abstract for Kristin Berry. Abstracts are due to Kristin Berry by 12/20/2022. Mari Quillman will soon circulate a call for sponsors, so they can be included in the Program. • Ed LaRue will work with Kristin Berry to pick up both the printed programs and award plaques in Riverside and transport them to St. George.

Kristin Berry has already received a few abstracts and has a list of intended speakers. She expects that most of the abstracts will be last minute. There are government session papers, including National Park Service. Judy Hohman will contact the Management Oversight Group to see if they can report on their activities. There will be local Utah presenters, and presentations on Mojave, Sonoran, and Bolson tortoises. Hans Glassman has shortened his film from more than an hour to about 30 minutes. Maggie Fusari will work with Hans Glassman and preview his film for appropriate content. Kristin Berry is also looking at acknowledging individual’s “Power of Persistence” in their work, including a celebration of 50 years for the Desert Tortoise Preserve Committee, Ann McLuckie’s work in Utah, and Deborah Hughson’s work with road impacts in the East Mojave National Preserve. There will also be a session on cannabis grow houses and the effects of dust on various desert species.

Kristin plans to start the sessions at 8 a.m. to maximize available time. There will be a highway paper, two genetics papers, and three new technologies papers. Maggie Fusari will help facilitate a memorial statement for Linda Allison. The Annual Business Meeting will be scheduled from 8 to 9 am on Thursday morning, February 23rd. On the opening day, at 09:30, Mari Quillman will welcome everyone, Bruce Palmer, Ed LaRue, and Michael Vamstad as emcees will outline how the Symposium will run, then Mari will be invited back for her annual report on the Council’s function in 2022. Kristin Berry plans to turn over her Program Chair responsibilities in two years, coinciding with the Council’s 50-year anniversary.
On 11/28/2022, Mari Quillman circulated a table outlining rates recommended by the Symposium Committee for the 2023 Symposium in Utah, which was discussed and revised today as given below. Kristin Berry said we should expect 175 attendees. We should, as usual, seek both old and new sponsors to support the Symposium to keep the attendees’ cost as low as possible. In 2020, there were $12,000 in sponsorships. Our goal is to break even on costs. If we subsidize the Symposium at $25,000 for 175 people, it would cost about $375/attendee. Given this discussion, the rates in 2022 would be the same as in 2020, as tabulated below. There was general consensus that if your company pays for you to be there, Board members would NOT be reimbursed for travel. Joe Probst made the motion that all Board members have the right to be reimbursed for registration, travel, and hotel but not food costs, seconded by Maggie Fusari, and unanimously approved. These members would effectively be compensated, as “comped” attendees.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Registration Category</th>
<th>2020 Symposium Rates</th>
<th>Symposium Committee Suggested Rates</th>
<th>Symposium Committee Suggested Late Registration Rates</th>
<th>Final 2023 Symposium Rates</th>
<th>Final 2023 Symposium Late Registration Rates (After January 15)</th>
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</table>

*Organization Members receive two discounted rate registrations to the symposium

Joe Probst made the motion to adopt the Symposium rates given above, seconded by Judy Hohman, and unanimously approved by the 13 members present at the time of the vote.

S. Fundraising Committee Report: Ken MacDonald provided a job description for a Fundraising Director, which includes job responsibilities, position skills, and qualifications. Ken MacDonald would like all Board members to provide feedback on the Fundraising Director memorandum by no later than 12/10/2022. Judy Hohman noted the lack of a salary statement in Ken’s description, and further suggested that a percentage of the funds the director generates are paid to them in lieu of a salary. Ken found that standard rates may be $30-$50 per hour. Joe Probst had nothing to report on the GoFundMe program. Mari Quillman will contact Greer Dolby about the GoFundMe program. • Joe Probst will provide Mari Quillman a list of the current swag stock. The Fundraising Committee includes Ken MacDonald, Judy Hohman, and Mari Quillman (by default). Following feedback from the Board, Ken MacDonald will post the announcement, and the Fundraising Committee will interview the responders, then introduce prospective candidate(s) for a vote by the Board.

T. Awards Committee’s Reports: Kristin Berry has identified several recipients and would like to hear about any other candidates from all Board members.
U. Illegal Marijuana Grow Farm Ad Hoc Committee: Nothing new to report. Heidi Brannon will be presenting a session at the Symposium

V. COVID Public Safety Policy: On 12/2/2022, Mari Quillman provided the following suggested wording for this policy, which was based on a recent one developed by The Wildlife Society, to be applied at the 2023 Symposium in Utah:

Health and Wellness Protocol for the 48th Desert Tortoise Council Symposium
February 23-25, St. George, Utah

The Desert Tortoise Council wants to ensure that all persons attending the Symposium “in person” in St. George, Utah are safe and well. The infection rates for Covid (including the new BN.1 variant), influenza, and other infectious diseases (e.g., respiratory syncytial virus - RSV) are increasing this winter. Consequently, we are implementing the following protocol when you are in the Dixie Convention Center.

If you feel ill or have symptom(s) of Covid, influenza, RSV infection, or another infectious disease, please do not attend the Symposium in person. Change your registration from “in-person” to “virtual” attendance, or if you are unable to attend virtually, cancel your registration and request a refund of the registration fee. Please wear a mask, and when possible, practice social distancing. The exception to wearing a mask would be when presenting your talk, eating, or drinking. We encourage you to be fully vaccinated/boosted for Covid and vaccinated for influenza. Please bring and wear your own mask. It is possible that we will modify the protocol between now and February 25 if the infection rate changes. The Council will have surgical masks and hand sanitizer available for Symposium attendees to use.

NEW BUSINESS

W. Mentoring the New Mexico Herpetological Society: Bruce Palmer will work with Max Havelka to discuss our policies to help them develop their own structure.

Ed LaRue made a motion to provide swag to the New Mexico Herpetological Society, not to exceed $100 in value, seconded by Judy Hohman, and unanimously approved.

X. Master Calendar: Judy Hohman has been assembling this calendar with Board member input to serve as a planning document to help individual committees meet their recurring deadlines. The latest version of 10/6/2022 was recently shared in an email with the group.

Adjourn: The meeting was adjourned by Chairperson, Mari Quillman, at 2:30 p.m. (PDT)

Draft minutes were recorded and respectfully submitted for approval to all Board members on 4 December 2022 by Ed LaRue, Recording Secretary, and these final minutes encompass feedback from Board members.

Edward L. LaRue, Jr.
Desert Tortoise Council, Recording Secretary
Ecosystems Advisory Committee Report
DTC Board Meeting of 3 December 2022

Note: The table attached to this report on the last page follows the bold red numbered outline given below.

1. Legislative Environmental Impact Statement (LEIS) Regarding Proposed Public Land Withdrawal in Vicinity of Arizona State Route 95 (Yuma Proving Ground, AZ)
   6/29/2022 – The notice for this project was received from a third party on this date, with a due date of 12/8/2022. BLM must implement a land withdrawal process to “prepare” the land for the military withdrawal. BLM will produce an EA. The Army will produce a LEIS.

   8/24/2022 – The notice for this project was received from a third party on this date, with a due date of 9/23/2022. On 10/7/2022, we learn that the comment deadline has been extended to 10/28/2022. The final letter is submitted on 10/27/2022 with seven endorsements.

3. Draft Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Yahthumb Solar Project (Clark County, NV)
   9/12/2022 – The notice for this project was received from a third party on this date, distributed on 10/14/2022, with a due date of 10/24/2022. The draft letter is circulated on 10/20/2022, and submitted to the BIA on 10/24/2022 with five endorsements.

4. Redesign of a Phelan Civic Center Site (San Bernardino, CA)
   9/21/2022 – The notice for this project was received from San Bernardino County’s automated project notices on this date, distributed on 10/14/2022, with a due date of 10/24/2022. The draft letter is circulated on 10/22/2022, and submitted to the BIA on 10/24/2022 with seven endorsements.

5. Middle Gila South Transportation Plan (AZ)
   10/4/2022 – The notice for this project was received from the BLM on this date, distributed on 10/14/2022, with a due date of 11/17/2022. The final letter was submitted on 11/16/2022 with seven endorsements.

6. Logandale Trails Draft Environmental Assessment (Logandale and Overton, NV)
   9/29/2022 – The notice for this project was received from the BLM on this date, distributed on 10/14/2022, with a due date of 11/14/2022. The final comment letter is submitted to the BLM on 11/14/2022 with eight endorsements.

7. Desert Breeze Solar Project Draft Environmental Impact Report/Scoping Comments (San Bernardino, CA)
   9/30/2022 – The notice for this project was received from San Bernardino County’s automated project notices on this date, distributed on 10/14/2022, with a due date of 10/31/2022. The final letter was submitted on 10/27/2022 with seven endorsements.

8. Draft Staff Report, Land-Use Screens for Electric System Planning (CA)
   10/5/2022 – The notice for this project was received from the California Energy Commission on this date, distributed on 10/14/2022, with an unknown due date.

9. Draft EA and Finding of No Significant Impact for King of Hammers Event (San Bernardino, CA)
   10/12/2022 – The notice for this project was received from the BLM and Marine Corps on this date, distributed on 10/14/2022, with a due date of 11/11/2022. The draft letter is distributed to the Board on 11/8/2022, and submitted to the BLM on 11/11/2022 with eight endorsements.
10. Spring Mountain Raceway and Motor Resort (Nye County, NV)  
10/11/2022 – The notice for this project was received from a third party on this date, with a due date of 11/10/2022. The draft letter was distributed on 11/6/2022 and submitted on 11/10/2022 with 13 endorsements.

11. Endorse nomination for creation of Cactus Springs ACEC (Clark & Nye counties, NV)  
10/23/2022 – On this date, we receive a request from Basin and Range Watch to endorse their recent nomination of a 58,000-acre area in southern Nevada for the new Cactus Springs Area of Critical Environmental Concern. Ed circulates the draft letter on 10/25/2022, and with eight endorsements and one recusal, lets Kevin Emmerich know that we submitted the letter to BLM and USFWS on 10/27/2022.

12a. Red Rock Canyon General Plan and EIR (Kern Co, CA)  
10/18/2022 – The notice for this project was received directly from State Parks on this date, distributed on 10/27/2022, with a due date of 12/16/2022.

12b. Red Rock Canyon General Plan and EIR (Kern Co, CA)  
11/17/2022 – On this date, Jeff Aardahl of Defenders of Wildlife sends the Council a letter on this project asking if we want to sign on. I let him know yes on 11/22/2022 when six endorsements are received.

13. St. George Land Exchange (St George, UT)  
10/19/2022 – A hard copy of a notice for this project, dated 10/14/2022, was received from the BLM on 10/19/2022, distributed on 10/27/2022, with a due date of 11/27/2022. The draft letter is circulated on 11/21/2022 and submitted to BLM on 11/23/2022 with nine endorsements.

14. Rough Hat Clark County Solar Project (Pahrump Valley, NV)  
10/21/2022 – The notice for this project was received from the BLM on this date, distributed on 10/27/2022, with a due date 45 days later, on 12/5/2022. The draft letter is circulated on 11/28/2022 and submitted to BLM on 12/3/2022 with nine endorsements and one recusal.

15. ICT Lake Mohave Communication Site (Laughlin, NV)  
10/28/2022 – The notice for this project was received from the BLM on this date, with a due date of 11/28/2022. This deadline was missed due to Ed LaRue’s travel plans.

16. Ship Creek Desert Bighorn Sheep Guzzler (Riverside, CA)  
10/29/2022 – The notice for this project was received from a third party on this date, and although there was not a due date given, I assume it’s 30 days, with a due date of approximately 11/28/2022. With seven endorsements, the final letter was submitted to the BLM and CDFW on 11/4/2022.

17. Gold Butte National Monument Implementation Plan Public Scoping (Clark Co, NV)  
11/1/22 – The notice for this project was received from the BLM on this date, distributed on 11/16/2022, with a due date of 12/14/2022.

18. Copper Rays Solar Project (Nye Co, NV)  
11/14/2022 – The notice for this project was received directly from the BLM on this date, distributed on 11/16/2022, with a due date of 12/29/2022.

19. Oro Cruz Mineral Exploration Project (Imperial County, CA)  
11/16/2022 – The notice for this project was provided by BLM and Mari Quillman on this date, distributed on 11/16/2022, with a due date of 12/16/2022.
**Ecosystems Advisory Committee**

**Summary Table from 10/8/2022 to 12/3/2022**

Current date for this latest table revision is: **12/3/2022**

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<th>Title</th>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Oro Cruz Mineral Exploration</td>
<td>11/16, 11/16, 12/16</td>
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**Codes:**
- Y = Vote of Yes
- N = Vote of No
- PI = Provided input
- Blank = No Response
- R = Recused
- A = Authors/Lead Board member
- NA = Replied they were not able to respond by indicated date

**Notes:**
- No. 12 was not attended by SF or BP
- No. 13 was a discussion item
- No. 14 was a discussion item
- No. 15 was not attended by SF or BP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>BJ</th>
<th>BP</th>
<th>CJ</th>
<th>EL</th>
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<th>KB</th>
<th>KM</th>
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<th>MV</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Becky Jones</td>
<td>Bruce Palmer</td>
<td>Cristina Jones</td>
<td>Ed LaRue</td>
<td>Halle Kohn</td>
<td>Judy Hohman</td>
<td>Joe Probst</td>
<td>Kristin Berry</td>
<td>Ken MacDonald</td>
<td>Maggie Fusari</td>
<td>Max Havelka</td>
<td>Mari Quillman</td>
<td>Michael Tuma</td>
<td>Michel Vammstad</td>
<td>Pete Woodman</td>
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</tbody>
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