



**United States Department of the Interior**  
**BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT**

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September 14, 2021

*In Reply Refer To:*  
6500 (P)

Edward L. LaRue, Jr., M.S.  
Ecosystems Advisory Committee,  
Desert Tortoise Council  
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[eac@deserttortoise.org](mailto:eac@deserttortoise.org)

Jeff Aardahl  
Chairperson Senior California Representative  
Defenders of Wildlife  
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Dear Mr. Aardahl and Mr. LaRue:

Thank you for your letter inquiring about status of the Desert Renewable Energy Conservation Plan's (DRECP) North of Edwards Development Focus Area (DFA) and the implementation of the Conservation Management Actions (CMAs) DFA-BIO-IFS-4 and DFA-BIO-IFS-5.

We agree that the planning criteria in DFA-BIO-IFS-5 will not be completed by the 5-year deadline, September 15, 2021, making the CMA immaterial. As a result, we have pulled together a team of BLM staff to evaluate new, available information regarding the status and distribution of the Mohave ground squirrel (MGS). The team has been reviewing documents the last several weeks and have a series of meetings scheduled to discuss the latest studies and information. Once this internal evaluation is complete, we will begin our coordination with the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) as outlined in DFA-BIO-IFS-4. Until this coordination is complete, the North of Edwards DFA will remain closed to renewable energy applications or other impacting activities as directed by DFA-BIO-IFS-4.

Thank you for providing information regarding MGS you have acquired since the signing of the DRECP and recommendations of management options for the BLM to consider. Once we have completed our internal review and coordination with CDFW, we will work to ensure public involvement for any plan amendments that may be proposed.

Sincerely,



Andrew Archuleta,  
District Manager

Cc:

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