

Notes on Presentation by Frank Haggard on the
Desert View Conservation Area (Section 6) at the January 8, 2018
Morongo Basin Municipal Advisory Council meeting

- The project will be funded to \$400,000, coming from state and federal grants secured by Frank Haggard, District Services Coordinator County Service Area 20 – Joshua Tree.
- In response to a resident's question about the appropriate response to seeing campfires, a fire official said, "Call 9-1-1. We'll respond. That's our job."
- One resident advocated that locals take their own action in impairing vehicle access, and use their own tractors to pile up boulders to prevent vehicle entry.
- The same resident reported that he walks the section regularly, breaking up improvised fire rings left by campers.
- The planned project includes a sign 30 feet wide and 11 feet high.
- The planned project includes blocking vehicle access to the adjacent Section 5, which is administered by the BLM. According to Frank Haggard, the BLM is on board with this, in a departure from what was implied by the much-protested WEMO access plan.
- Other elements of the development plan for the Desert View Conservation Area (aka Section 6) include limited and confined parking, plus designated hiking trails, to discourage visitors from blazing their own "social trails".
- With regard to Haggard's acknowledgment that enforcement is a problem, he noted that he has a minimal maintenance staff, with no enforcement powers. He suggested local volunteers could help with closing the gate at sunset.
- Haggard said there has been a demographic change in miscreants. In earlier years, it was mainly locals, who liked to party there. More

recently, it has been out-of-area campers, who have learned from the Internet about free camping opportunities.

- A Sheriff's representative reported that deputies have visited the area twice in the last week, to "educate" campers.
- Haggard said that, in a departure from established practice, County Code Enforcement will supplement the Sheriff's Department in response to complaint calls.
- A resident on Onaga reported counting 400 cars visiting the area per day during the holiday week.
- A resident who walks the area with her dog reported the dog apparently ingested some cannabis product left by a camper. \$2000 in vet bills (and counting) resulted.
- Haggard acknowledged that the emergency placement of a port-a-potty, and the planned construction of a restroom, are problematic, in that it compromises the unspoiled nature of the area, and will also be inadequate to demand.
- A claim by a resident that "the Visitor Center" directed people to use Section 6 as a camping area was disputed by a local merchant.