

Public Lands Round Table

Minutes, 25 June 2026

The meeting was called to order at 6:05pm.

The pledge of allegiance was led by Barbara Bain. Charle Hattendorf was absent.

PLRT members in attendance: Barbara Bain, John Aubon, Will Liebscher, Mark Mason, Jaime Lopez Wolters, Phil DeSenze, Libby Vincent

Guests: Deneal Schiller, Ishkhan Karapetyon, and Vasgen Aloyon. Karapetyon and Aloyon represent A.S.P. Del Mar USA Inc., a mining company based in Glendale CA that's interested in mining in this area.

BLM updates: Phil DeSenze

Phil is taking a hard look at staffing and tasks, he has hired an archaeologist, needs to fill biologist and park ranger positions and bring on seasonals.

Phil has a clear picture of priorities: energy transmission, water transmission, mining, fire, fuels, and range.

Sheep were grazing south of Randsburg, are off the land now.

There was a fire at Neuralia.

OHVs re closures? Status quo for now.

New planning for WEMO. The Ridgecrest BLM office is backup to the Barstow office for WEMO.

Cattle take precedence over sheep in grazing.

Conglomerate Mesa: Drilling began May, 24x7 drilling starts 27 June. The county must be made aware of any drilling holes in the ground (might affect water). Mojave Precious Metals estimates a total of 20,000 gallons of water will be used over 10 months, the duration of the project. NEPA rules are changing. Tribal involvement remains the same.

There's focus now on the Haiwee area where a geothermal project is planned. If a company doesn't develop a project in ten years it has to start over. At the auction in November, companies take months to develop a proposal, they need groundwater studies and pay to attention to any protected species.

Question from the mining company representatives: What happens to the piles of tailings around Randsburg? If they're toxic they need to be cleaned. Nothing is done with the other piles.

Searles Valley Minerals has filed for bankruptcy. Phil was out in Searles Valley today, all the ponds are empty, pumps have been turned off. On BLM land, there are significant impacts on the environment. About 60 percent of Searles Valley is private land, about 40 percent is BLM land so the BLM is heavily involved.

The California City pipeline is moving along.

Barbara had a WEMO question about the president's executive order to open roadless areas. How will that affect WEMO? We'll need a new WEMO.

Jaime asked about the Mining Regularity Clarity Act that's working its way through Congress. This will expand the 1872 Mining Law.

Phil said bonds to clean up after mining have been increased. The Briggs Mine deposit won't begin to cover the cost of cleaning up its toxic site.

Barb said Charlie will advise us about July and August meetings.

Meeting adjourned at 7:40pm.