

Mojave National Preserve Conservancy Board Meeting
January 17, 2024

In Attendance: Shaun Gonzales, Gary Spiers, Chris Clarke, Luke Basulto, Emily Buchi, Michael Gordon (scribe)

Shaun discussed the probability of the next Victor Valley school camping trip to the Preserve, potentially May 30, 2024.

Shaun also discussed the future storage of MNPC-owned camping gear (tents, sleeping bags, foam sleeping pads), six large storage crates in total, now that his parents have retired, and school storage is no longer possible. Luke suggested back-room storage at the NPCA office might be possible. He would measure and report back.

Shaun reported (unfortunately) that these are likely his last few months with MPNC.

The proposed *Rehabilitation of South Kelbaker and Kelso-Cima Road* project was discussed

(<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/projectHome.cfm?projectID=112970>). Shaun wrote a first draft letter representing MNPC views on the project.

Gary reported on a private mining interest attempting well drilling and lithium exploration of the Railroad Valley playa, where JPL has satellite calibration systems installed. Chris suggested speaking with Mason Voehl (Amargosa Conservancy) or Patrick Donnelly (Amargosa Conservancy) for insights to stopping this exploration.

Gary discussed the future of MNPC Star Parties. He suggests MNP staff has changed, MNP interest in the parties has waned, and Old Town Sidewalk Astronomers have been disappointed in unpredictable turnout at recent parties.

Shaun would connect Gary directly to Victor Valley school district officials to help facilitate student turnout at future parties.

Emily suggested that MNPC might try to connect with Wildlands Conservancy to create greater turnout (Black Canyon Group site can accommodate about 100 persons).

Discussion was had over whether Star Parties should be open to the public, and how to effectively control group size if so.

Luke said he would reach out to Native American Land Conservancy to see if there would be enough interest to generate large group turnout to a party.

The next BOD meeting was scheduled for February 15, 2024, at 7pm.

The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm.