



Assessor

Property Tax Inflation Factor Announced - The California State Board of Equalization has released the inflation factor for the 2014/2015 tax year. In accordance with Proposition 13, which was passed by the California voters in 1978, this increase is limited to a maximum of 2% annually. This year's increase is 0.454%, based on the change in the Consumer Price Index from October of 2012 through October of 2013.

The 2014/2015 factor is the smallest increase since Proposition 13 was enacted since 1978 (for 2010/2011 the factor was actually negative). As a result, the annual secured assessment roll will be more than \$75 million lower than it would have been with a full 2% increase. **Property tax revenue to Mono County will be reduced by more than \$227,000.** Please note that the roll is not yet complete, and there will be other additions and subtractions. This figure only represents the change due to the inflation factor. A full presentation will be brought before the Board as part of the Midyear Budget discussion.

CONTACT: Bob Musil, (760) 932-5510

Behavioral Health

Bridgeport Community Social - On Wednesday, December 18, 2013, the Behavioral Health Department hosted a "Community Social" in Bridgeport with great success. Over 70 community members attended; they enjoyed a homemade spaghetti dinner, games and the pleasure of each others company.

We have taken the model we built with our "Dinner and a Movie" in Benton to the Bridgeport residents and it was a very successful outing! We will be hosting the Community Social once a month--on the third Wednesday--and invite you to come on by to volunteer, join in the fun or just take a peek at Mono County residents building a healthy community.

January 15th, 4-6:30PM is our next soiree and everyone is invited. And, we'd like to give a special shout out to Debra Stewart, Bertha Jimenez, and Anita Reeve who put together and hosted this wonderful event. They are another example of the hardworking, dedicated staff of Mono County.

CONTACT: Robin Roberts, (760) 924-1729

County Administrator's Office

VIP Skate Passes now available - The Town of Mammoth Lakes Parks & Recreation Department has kindly supplied Mono County with two transferable VIP Skate Passes that provide free admission and skate rental at the Mammoth Ice Rink this winter season. They are laminated passes on lanyards so would have to be signed out and returned by staff. Please contact Sarah Messerlian if you are interested in using the passes.

Also, county employees who show their county ID at the rink can receive \$10 off an Adult or Youth "Five Skate Pass."

Mammoth Ice Rink Hours:

Monday – Wednesday: 2:30pm – 6pm

Thursday – Sunday: 11:30am – 9pm

Regular Admission including Skate Rental:

Adults: \$10.50

Youth: \$8.50

MUSD Students with ID: \$2.00

CONTACT: Sarah Messerlian, (760) 932-5409

Christmas Lunch at the Landfill – Thank you to Tony Dublino and the guys at the Benton Crossing Landfill for a great Holiday luncheon. Although cold, not snowy, we had a great mini-celebration of the season and talked about how operations are going at the Landfill.

We are going to continue to come out and have lunches with the crew. I invite anyone to attend as it is a tremendous chance to connect with those providing the service to the community who often are unable to attend our employee events. Also, people should see where their garbage ends up.

CONTACT: Jim Leddy, (707) 529-4510

County Re-Design Work Shop – Nate Greenberg, Kathy Peterson, Robin Roberts, Leslie Chapman, Jeff Walters, Scott Burns, Marshall Rudolph and I attended a county service redesign workshop hosted by Inyo County and led by Frank Benest, ICMA Consultant and retired Palo Alto City Manager. The all day workshop had approximately 50 attendees which included City of Bishop staff.

The focus was addressing Inyo County's dire budget forecasts. They have a structural deficit that will balloon to nearly \$10.2 million over the next couple of years unless they find new, more efficient ways to deliver services. Although the event was focused on the budget issues, the day provided Mono County the opportunity to find new partners in possibly delivering services. Teams around issues areas, such as children's services, were created and they will be meeting between now and the whole group meeting on January 23rd.

The group was very energized and committed to exploring possible new ways to work together to save all taxpayers funds while strengthening services across geographic and political jurisdictions. My thanks to Inyo County Administrator Kevin Carunchio for the invitation.

CONTACT: Jim Leddy, (707) 529-4510

County presents Solid Waste information at Town Council Meeting – Tony Dublin and I attended the Town of Mammoth Lakes December 18th Council meeting. Tony presented historical background information on landfill issues and the Council and staff were discussing a process for the two jurisdictions to continue the needed dialogue to address both the Town's goals around meeting state diversion targets and the County's need to ensure the responsible closure and post-closure monitoring of Benton Crossing landfill. Kudos to Tony Dublino for an excellent presentation. Also, my appreciation to Town staff for ensuring our inclusion in the presentation before the Council.

CONTACT: Jim Leddy, (707) 529-4510

Antelope Valley enjoys more Christmas lights! – Thanks to Supervisor Fesko for the 411 on this one. There are a few places to enjoy peoples Yuletide spirit. In addition to Assessor Bob Musil’s (who received the coveted **Clark Griswold Award** last week) there is another location in north county worth seeing.

On Western drive in Walker make a turn on Hackney like you are going the Antelope Valley Community Center but instead of turning right on Mule Deer, take a left, then your first right onto Western. Make sure you turn into the driveway and drive slowly. There are a lot of decorations to see.

Now come on, the rest of you must have some Christmas and Holiday lights worth seeing! Send them in!

CONTACT: Jim Leddy, (707) 529-4510

Assessor gets into the Spirit! - The 2013 Musil Christmas Light Show is up and running! It will be showing nightly through New Year’s Day, starting at 4:30 each evening in Assessor Musil’s neighborhood. For those that have not seen the Christmas lightshow, head on up!

From Bridgeport:

Right on Eastside Lane
 Right on Camp Antelope
 Right on Burcham Flat Road, then look for all the flashing lights!

Be sure to tune your car radio to FM 94.1. There are displays all around the house, so don’t be shy about driving in. Bring your friends, family and neighbors, and enjoy the show!

CONTACT: Jim Leddy (707) 529-4510

Clerks’ Office

Clerk’s Office - Effective January 1, 2014, the Clerk’s Office will be implementing mandated fee increases for the vital records listed below. A notice was published in the Public Notice section of both the Mammoth Times and The Sheet last week. This notice will be published again in the December 20th and December 27th issues of both papers.

The Clerk’s Office has posted this notice in public places in Bridgeport and Mammoth, and has posted the information online: <http://monocounty.ca.gov/clerk>. These fee increases were mandated pursuant to Assembly Bill (AB) 1053 (Gordon, Chapter 402, Statutes of 2011) and AB 110 (Blumenfield, Chapter 20, Statutes of 2013). Due to the mandate, these new fees must be implemented on January 1st; however, they will be included in the revised fee schedule that is considered annually by the Board of Supervisors.

Name of Fee	Current Fee	January 1, 2014
Birth—General Public	\$20.00	\$25.00
Birth—Gov’t Agency	\$14.00	\$19.00
Death—Gov’t Agency/Gen Public	\$16.00	\$21.00
Fetal Death—Gov’t Agency/Gen Public	\$13.00	\$18.00

Marriage—Certified Copy Gen Public	\$14.00	\$15.00
Marriage—Certified Copy Gov't Agency	\$10.00	\$11.00
Permit: Disposition of Human Remains	\$11.00	\$12.00

Clerk-Recorder-Registrar and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors - Lynda Roberts attended a New Law workshop in Sacramento the week of December 9-13. The purpose of the week-long workshop is to meet with colleagues from the other counties and review the new laws that impact the duties of the Clerk-Recorder-Registrar and Clerk of the Board of Supervisors, and discuss related issues and upcoming legislation.

In 2013, there were a total of 53 new laws passed pertaining to duties of clerks, recorders, registrars and clerks of the board. On first reading, it appears that 31 of the new laws will have minimal to no impact on the Mono County Office; however, all laws will be reviewed more thoroughly to ensure compliance as required. Outlined below is the breakdown of the new laws.

2013 Chaptered Legislation

Division	New Laws	Minimal or No Impact
Clerk	10	5
Clerk of the Board	6	5
Elections	27	12
Recorder	10	9

Elections Office - On occasion people inquire as to what the Elections Office does when there is no election. **In one word—plenty!** When not actively preparing for a specific election, we are always planning ahead for the next election cycle. Linda Romero, Assistant Clerk-Recorder-Registrar and Clerk of the Board, is the *de facto* elections manager so during the course of a year, whether we have an election or not, Linda implements the new laws, revises forms, enters new voter registration forms, attends training and conferences, updates software, conducts voter outreach, verifies petition signatures, provides election data, and maintains the voter registration database.

At the end of 2012, we had 26 new laws to review, 9 of which required significant action prior to the 2014 election cycle. Maintaining the Election Information Management System (EIMS) is also a big responsibility. In order to keep the voter records current, Linda works daily with the Secretary of State's office via CalVoter (computer system), contacts other counties as needed, documents undeliverable mail, updates addresses, enters new voter registrations, runs duplicate checks, prepares for countywide mailings to update voter address information, and checks obituaries every week so registrations of deceased voters can be cancelled. A particularly big project this year involved researching registration forms for missing unit/apartment numbers, cross checking on GPS, and then updating those records in EIMS.

The 2014 election cycle will start on December 27 when the Signature-in-lieu-of-Filing-Fee form will be available for potential candidates. The date of the primary election is June 3 and the general election is November 4. It isn't too early to make sure you are registered to vote or provide corrected information to the Registrar so you are ready for Election Day.

CONTACT: Lynda Roberts, (760) 932-5538

Community Development

Sage grouse comment period extended to Feb. 10, 2014 – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) has extended the public comment period for 45 days on the proposal to protect a segment of greater sage-grouse along the California-Nevada border as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act. The proposal includes a special rule that would provide increased flexibility for land management practices intended to benefit the sage-grouse. The extension will also apply to a proposal to designate approximately 1.86 million acres of critical habitat for the species, which includes 82% of privately owned land in the unincorporated area of Mono County.

Frogs & Toads – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will conduct a regional meeting on the proposed listing of mountain yellow-legged frog and Yosemite toad as threatened and/or endangered species. The meeting will be held Jan. 8, 2014, at 1 p.m. in the board chambers, Bridgeport courthouse, with teleconferencing to the board chambers at Sierra Center Mall, Mammoth Lakes. The discussion will include a draft economic analysis, which should include an assessment of impacts to Mono County.

Resource Efficiency Plan – Based upon work with Joe Blanchard, Tony Dublino, Gerald Frank, Megan Mahaffey, Louis Molina, Tom Perry, Jeff Walters, Vianey White and Jim Leddy, Associate Analyst Wendy Sugimura reviewed resource efficiency policies and strategies Tuesday with the BOS. This strategy, which is a part of the General Plan update, promotes a goal of reduction of fuel use and greenhouse gas emissions to 15% below 2010 levels. Further refinements of the policy and implementing actions will be considered at future BOS meetings.

CONTACT: CD Ritter, 760-924-1804

Service Announces Public Meetings for Sierra Amphibian Proposals - The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) will hold two public meetings in January 2014 on the proposals to list and designate critical habitat for the Sierra Nevada yellow-legged frog, the northern distinct population segment of the mountain yellow-legged frog, and the Yosemite toad.

The first public meeting is planned to be held in Mono County on Wednesday, January 8, 2014 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Mono County Board of Supervisors Chambers at the Mono County Courthouse (upstairs); State Highway 395 North; Bridgeport, CA 93517. This meeting is planned to be broadcasted to the Mono County Board of Supervisors Meeting Room on the 3rd Floor of the Sierra Center Mall; 452 Old Mammoth Road; Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546. After the meeting, there will be informal breakout sessions held in Bridgeport.

The second public meeting is planned to be held in Fresno County on Monday, January 13, 2014 from 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. at the Fresno County Board of Supervisors Chambers; Hall of Records, Room 301; 2281 Tulare Street; Fresno, CA 93721. Service personnel will be available after the meeting for further discussion.

The Service will present information and address questions and concerns at the public meetings about the proposals as well as a draft economic analysis on the proposed critical habitat rule. The draft economic analysis is expected to be available to the public later this month. Written public comments about the proposed rules and the draft economic analysis can be collected at these public meetings for the record.

On April 25, 2014, the Service proposed to list the two frogs as Endangered Species and the toad as a Threatened Species. At the same time, the Service proposed to designate 1,831,820 acres critical habitat for the three amphibians in California; 97% of the proposed designation is located on federal lands.

All three amphibian species are threatened by habitat degradation, predation, climate change, and inadequate regulatory protection.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service.

For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov/cno. Connect with our Facebook page at <http://www.facebook.com/usfwspacificsouthwest>, follow our tweets at <http://twitter.com/USFWSPacSWest>, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfws_pacificsw/.

CONTACT: Scott Burns, (760) 932-5423

Press Release confirms Comment Period Extended for Bi-State Distinct Population Segment of Greater Sage-Grouse – “RENO, Nev. – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today announced the extension of the public comment period for 45 days on the proposal to protect the Bi-State Distinct Population Segment (DPS) of greater sage-grouse along the California-Nevada border as a threatened species under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The proposal includes a special rule that would provide increased flexibility for land management practices that are intended to benefit the sage-grouse. The extension will also add 45 days to the comment period on a proposal to designate approximately 1.86 million acres of critical habitat for the species.

Scientific information regarding these proposals will now be accepted until February 10, 2014, and may be submitted by one of the following methods:

(1) Electronically: Go to the Federal eRulemaking Portal: <http://www.regulations.gov>. In the Search box, enter FWS–R8–ES–2013–0042 and FWS-R8-ES-2013-0072, which are the docket numbers for these rulemakings. Then, in the Search panel on the left side of the screen, under the Document Type heading, click on the Proposed Rules link to locate this document. You may submit a comment by clicking on “Comment Now!”

(2) By hard copy: Submit by U.S. mail or hand-delivery to: Public Comments Processing, Attn: FWS–R8–ES–2013–0042 and FWS-R8-ES-2013-0072; Division of Policy and Directives Management; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS 2042–PDM; Arlington, VA 22203.

A copy of the proposed rules published on October 28, 2013, and other information about the Bi-State DPS of the greater sage-grouse is available at <http://www.fws.gov/nevada> or at <http://www.regulations.gov> or by contacting the Nevada Fish and Wildlife Office at 775-861-6300.

The Endangered Species Act provides a critical safety net for America's native fish, wildlife and plants. This landmark conservation law has prevented the extinction of hundreds of imperiled species across the nation and promoted the recovery of many others.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov/cno>. Connect with our Facebook page, follow our tweets, watch our YouTube Channel, and download photos from our Flickr page.

-FWS-

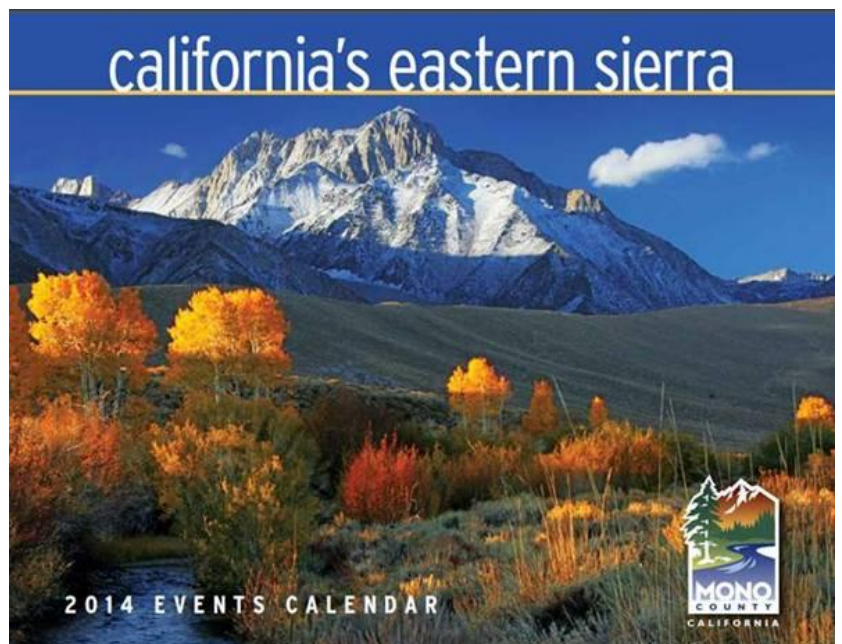
Editors: photos to support this story are available on our Flickr page at http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfws_pacificsw.

CONTACT: Stephanie Weagley, Ventura Fish & Wildlife Office, (805) 644-1766

Economic Development

Every year we design and print the **Mono County Scenic Events Calendar** which we distribute as a free promotional item at all the consumer travel/fishing trade shows we attend beginning in January.

Some of you have mentioned that you would like enough copies of the Calendar to send to your key clients, but unfortunately we don't have a budget large enough to provide more than what we distribute at the tradeshows. If you would like to purchase calendars to give to your guests and clients, (not for resale), you are welcome to buy them in **packages of 10 for \$30/package**, plus sales tax. (This covers our printing and handling costs, but shipping to your business would be an additional fee). This offer is available strictly to you, our partners in tourism.



Please provide us with your order by Thursday, December 26th. The calendars will be available for pick up next week. This year's cover features fall colors at Mt. Morrison in Crowley Lake – a wonderful photo by Mono County's own, Greg Newbry.

CONTACT: Jeff Simpson, (760) 924-4634

information Technology

Santa visits Mammoth ... early.. – IT's own Greg Newbry finally revealed his moonlighting gig as St. Nicholas. Greg is an annual visitor in the res suit and this year visited families at the County Head Start offices.

Neil Pieterse was the photographer extraordinaire and went with Greg (ahem) Santa to Head Start for Santa Pics. These kids are all 4 to 6; perfect age. The pictures have been printed at Rite Aid and then given to Head Start to give to the families. Supervisor Stump and CAO Leddy appreciated the visit but resisted any lap sitting requests. Thank you to Greg and Neil for bringing a bit of Christmas early.

CONTACT: Greg
Newbry, (760) 924-1685



Sheriff's Office

1. A search warrant was conducted in the Mammoth area with (4) arrests being made relating to possession, possession for sale, transportation, and being under the influence of narcotics. Various narcotics were recovered such as cocaine, cannabis, and various prescription medications.

- The Deputy Sheriff's Association put on a wonderful Christmas party at the Double Eagle Resort with a great attendance from staff, family and friends.

CONTACT: Sheriff Ralph "OB" Obenberger, (760) 932-7549

Mono County Sheriff Search and Rescue Team Annual Awards Dinner 2013 - The Mono County Sheriff Search and Rescue Team is a non-profit organization of volunteers dedicated to saving lives. They do searches and rescues at any time, in any weather, for as long as it takes, for free. Each year, the Team honors members for their individual excellence and public service.

The Team's highest honor, election to status as a Lifetime Member, is only rarely conferred by the Team to a Rescue Member who has made unusual, faithful, and regular contributions to the Team and to the welfare of victims over a significant number of years.

Steve Case received this high honor at the Team's annual awards dinner on December 14, 2013.

Steve joined the Team in 1992, and has the longest tenure of any current member. Since 1995, records show that Steve has participated in 175 search or rescue missions, 161 trainings, and 175 meetings, for a total of 508 Team events. This is an enormous voluntary commitment of time and talent to the County and the Team.

Steve Case has faithfully served the Team in a wide variety of roles, including Board member and as trainer for new members. He is very versatile and dependable, and has consistently been eager to accept difficult field assignments in any weather.

Two awards are given by the Team each year to honor members who have excelled.



The team's primary honor for achievement is the Pete Schoerner Rescue Member of the Year award. The award is named in memory of a beloved teammate who was killed in an ice climbing accident in 1996.

The Pete Schoerner Rescue Member of the Year for 2013 is Heidi Vetter. Heidi serves the Team as a member of the Board of Directors and as an Operations Leader. She participated in 35 Team events in 2013. Since 2008, Heidi has served the Team and Mono County on 177 Team

events, including 48 rescues and searches. She has a wide variety of leading and organizing skills, and is a key player in everything the Team does.

New members in training are called Candidate Members, and must undergo training, practice, and testing in eighteen skill categories before being considered for advancement to Rescue Member. Examples of these skills include first aid and victim care, tracking, technical rescue, mountain navigation, helicopter operations, and skill with electronic aids such as computers, radios, avalanche transceivers, and GPS receivers. Completion of all requirements takes a lot of dedication and faithfulness over a period that is typically a year or more.

The team honors one candidate member each year with the Rick Mosher Candidate Member of the Year Award. Rick Mosher is the only team member to have died in the line of duty and was killed while searching in a small airplane that crashed during an operation on August 15, 1979.

This year the team selected Glenn Goryl as the Rick Mosher Candidate Member of the Year. Glenn has been very active and faithful in his training and rescue operations, and has devoted a lot of personal time to Team projects and public awareness. He completed all his training requirements for Rescue Member in less than the minimum time. Since beginning his training in April of 2013, he has participated in 53 Team events and 19 rescues and searches. The 2013 honorees were presented with laser engraved plaques at an awards dinner in the Team's new building.



CONTACT: Jennifer M. Hansen, (760) 932-5279