

Mono Basin Regional Planning Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, March 9, 2022, 6:30pm
remote/virtual meeting via Zoom/conference call

Members present: Kevin Brown, Lisa Cutting, Ronda, Kauk, Elin Ljung, Bartshe Miller. **Members absent:** Duncan King.

Public attendees & presenters: Mono County: Michael Draper, Bob Gardner, Justin Nalder, Bentley Regehr, Chad Senior, Wendy Sugimura. Public: Grace Anderson, Lynn Boulton, Janet Carle, Margaret Eissler, Stephanie Heller (USFS), John Ljung, Ilene Mandelbaum, Mark, Dave Marquart, Connie Millar, Phil Moores (ESTA), David Rosky, Jake Suppa.

1. Call to order & pledge of allegiance: 6:32pm

2. Public comment: none

3. Review minutes from February 9 and February 17, 2022: Elin moved to approve minutes as presented, Lisa seconded, approved unanimously.

4. Supervisor Gardner's report: Looked into the dog leash law. Years ago animal control determined leash laws for each community. Leashes are required in Lee Vining, there is no leash requirement in Mono City. That can be changed. Contact Bob for more information.

Had a good meeting about wild horses on February 18; continuing to work on the issue.

Hawthorne Army Depot detonations: While in Washington, DC, Bob met a Mineral County Supervisor who lives in Hawthorne. She has invited Bob to meet with the Army contractors that do the detonations; it's a new contractor, which should be helpful in establishing communication. Bob will be meeting with her in a few weeks to talk about the schedule for detonations, the effects felt over here, alternatives for detonations, etc.

On Monday the new Mono County Housing Opportunities Manager started! Sanjay Choudhrie, who comes here from Gallup, NM with 20 years of housing experience.

Lots of activity going on about motorized recreation. USFS applying for grants; Matt Paruolo applying for grants for the County.

While in Washington met with the House committee on natural resources' subcommittee on Indigenous peoples to talk about Kutzadika'a Tribe's federal recognition bill, they also met with Charlotte Lange. Subcommittee recommended keeping Congressman Obernolte informed. Also met with Senator Padilla's staff about that bill.

First Citizens' Wildfire Academy is April 18; others will be the third Monday of each month for 5 or 6 virtual sessions total. Topics will include fire history, home hardening, defensible space, agency partners' roles, evacuation plans, etc.

5. Chair's report: It was wonderful to work last month on the Caltrans Lee Vining Pavement Rehab Project. It has a lot of potential to fulfill a number of Mono Basin Community Plan goals. Official

comments were due to Caltrans on March 4 but Caltrans staff still want feedback. Attended the housing committee meeting last night.

6. Members' reports:

Elin: Attended the Caltrans meetings; thanks to Kevin for drafting the RPAC letter.

Lisa: Attended the Caltrans meetings; thanks to Kevin for drafting the RPAC letter. Attended the Fire Safe Council meeting, Bear Committee meeting, Planning Commission meeting on February 17 about short-term rental moratorium, LDTAC meeting Monday, and Housing Committee meeting last night.

Bartshe: Mono Lake Committee submitted a comment letter to Caltrans about the Lee Vining Rehab Project highlighting complete streets elements, drainage issues, and potential problems since the plan is incomplete; requested a site visit with Caltrans before final document is approved; asked that PUD and business owners be invited to that site visit too. Grant Lake Outlet construction is ordered in the State Water Board order issued last October; DWP may not begin construction this year. Lee Vining Dump Rehab project: Still no resolution; latest CalRecycle error was not applying for a Department of Fish & Wildlife permit; MLC still pushing for full rehab and reveg of the site. A gull protection fence will not be put up on the landbridge this year because lake will stay above the low danger zone through nesting season; will be putting up cameras to monitor coyote activity, which has been approved by state.

Ronda: Will get in touch with Justin Nalder about Tribal monitors for the Pumice Valley project since it's near Rush Creek, an important cultural site.

7. Inyo National Forest update (Stephanie Heller): Still working on getting CalRecycle to propose a fix to the Lee Vining Dump Rehab project problems; meeting with them again April 7.

Horses: Still coordinating as-needed manure removal at South Tufa; horses may be starting to move away from South Tufa. Inyo National Forest Supervisor Lesley Yen is meeting with the Humboldt-Toiyabe, Sherri Lisius from BLM, and staff from the Carson National Forest to figure out steps and funding for actively managing the horses.

Pre-season fire prep: Discussing fire restrictions and what would trigger them; will kick in earlier rather than later. Will be similar to last year increasing from no fire restrictions, to no fires in dispersed areas, to no fires anywhere on forest. Will still allow propane fire pits and fuel shut-off fire pits.

Planning for what happens if there's another forest closure, which is likely to happen again this year. Inyo National Forest had no say last year; trying to convince the regional forester to let Inyo have some latitude locally.

Summer prep: Will open lower Lee Vining Canyon campgrounds in time for fishing opener. Visitor Center should be open mid-May.

8. Mono Basin Fire Safe Council: See the meeting minutes online here:

<https://monocounty.ca.gov/rpac-mono-basin/page/mono-basin-rpac-regular-meeting-31>.

9. Mono Basin Housing Committee: Committee met last night. Bob reported on new Housing Opportunities Coordinator. The short-term rental moratorium discussion was before the Board of Supervisors last week and will come back again. Continued discussing ways to expand housing in Lee

Vining and Mono City. Discussed survey to ask residents and businesses about housing availability, affordability, and needs. Next meeting is Tuesday, April 12, 7:00–8:00pm.

10. Mono Basin Bear Committee (Margaret Eissler): Committee met on February 28. Paul McFarland scheduling a meeting with Mono County, DFW, USFS to discuss wildlife training for camp hosts and seasonal staff; will also reach out to ESIA and Chambers. Looking into mailing to residents consisting of a letter, DFW brochure, and sticker; checking with Alicia Vennos about a sticker designer. Looked at DFW's wildlife incident reporting process and had ideas for improvements. Investigating ways to reduce hurdles for people and businesses to better store trash. Next meeting is Wednesday, March 16.

11. Mono County Local Road Safety Plan (Chad Senior): See the presentation online here: <https://monocounty.ca.gov/rpac-mono-basin/page/mono-basin-rpac-regular-meeting-31>. Please take this survey: <https://monocounty.ca.gov/roads>.

12. Update on Conway Ranch (Justin Nalder): Summary of last season's activity: Had cattle grazing for the first time. SCE updated diversion points and gates to measure water flow more accurately. Did sediment basin cleanup. Didn't do official noxious weed removal; just Justin with a machete. Justin saw quite a diversity of wildflowers but assessments were later than usual because grazing started later than normal. Butterflies were present and prolific, deer present, coyotes present. Will go over the draft report with ESLT to be in alignment with easement and grazing management plan. Plan for 2022: On Tuesday, March 15 Board of Supervisors will be deciding whether to open an additional 36 acres in the Bowl Meadow to grazing.

Members of the public are interested in more information about wildlife, flora, etc. and suggested a volunteer effort to conduct those assessments could be helpful. People are also interested in a stakeholder/working group so the public could be more involved in Conway Ranch decisions. Bob encouraged people to contact Justin with questions/ideas: jnalder@mono.ca.gov or (760) 932-5453.

Strong RPAC and public requests for a public meeting about Conway Ranch operations separate from an RPAC meeting.

13. Update on Pumice Valley Landfill (Justin Nalder): Because Benton Crossing Landfill is closing a majority of its construction and demolition waste will have to move to Pumice Valley. (Household waste will be staged and transferred, mostly to Nevada. D&S Waste transfer station proposal is before the County and that would be the primary transfer facility.) Gate house will need to be updated. Applying for grant funding for a permanent household hazardous waste facility. Will install concrete pads for mulch and green waste. Looking at costs of handling the waste in order to try and break even with this operation.

Consultant is reviewing 2015 environmental impact report to make sure it includes everything the County wants to do at Pumice Valley. It's likely that most of the activities are already covered and County won't have to do any additional environmental documentation; a possible addendum may be needed. Another CEQA doc was done 15–20 years ago so looking at that one for consistency too. A preliminary data crunch about emissions and traffic showed no increase; less methane involved when stuff is trucked vs. buried. County is assessing their emissions in Nevada where waste ends up.

Household hazardous waste collection event coming up April 23 in Lee Vining with LVFD. Free dump day at Benton Crossing the same day; free dump day at Pumice Valley will happen in June.

14. Unmet transit needs (Michael Draper): Each year County goes through a process with the Local Transportation Commission to identify unmet transit needs for possible funding. Best way to give feedback about unmet transit needs is at the LTC meetings (next one is Monday, April 11) so there's a record in the minutes. Can also send to Michael: mdraper@mono.ca.gov or 760-924-1805.

15. Review and adopt resolution to meet virtually until April 13, 2022 (planning staff): Kevin moved to approve, Elin seconded, unanimous vote in favor of adopting the resolution.

16. Information items (planning staff): See the project updates chart here: <https://monocounty.ca.gov/rpac-mono-basin/page/mono-basin-rpac-meeting>.

Hipcamp: Will come before the Planning Commission in May.

At next week's meeting the Planning Commission will be discussing a short-term rental in Twin Lakes. Board of Supervisors discussed short-term rental moratorium and directed staff to bring that back, probably at first Board meeting in April. May have Jake Suppa as a new RPAC member, hoping to get him approved by Board soon.

17. Upcoming agenda items: Conway Ranch 2022 operation plan; letter of support for Kutzadika'a Tribal recognition; quarterly appearance of all land management agencies; discussion about the role of RPAC/meeting schedule; Lee Vining skate park; Lee Vining hydro relicensing at next public input stage.

18. Adjourned to next meeting, April 13, 2022: 8:33pm