

Mono Basin Regional Planning Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 9, 2021, 6:30pm
remote/virtual meeting via Zoom/conference call

Members present: Kevin Brown, Lisa Cutting, Ronda Kauk, Duncan King, Elin Ljung

Public attendees & presenters: Mono County: Bob Gardner, Wendy Sugimura, Bentley Regehr, Justin Nalder. Public: Paul Ashby, Lynn Boulton, Margaret Eissler, Patrick Johnston (NPS), Connie Millar, Amy Lewis, Mike Light, Chris Lizza, John Ljung, Jason Small, Jake Suppa, Dean Tonenna (Kootzaduka'a Tribe), Margy Verba

1. Call to order & pledge of allegiance: 6:31pm

2. Public comment: none

3. Review minutes from May 12, 2021: Elin moved to approve the minutes, Duncan seconded, motion passed unanimously.

4. Supervisor Gardner's report: Mono County budget is nearly complete; one notable item is that Matt Paruolo will be full-time with County as of October 1st. A permanent Mono Lake District Ranger, Stephanie Heller, has been hired to start at the beginning of August; acting ranger Megan Mullowney will be here through July. Last Tuesday Representative Obernolte finally reintroduced bill for Tribal federal recognition; he visited on May 29 and spoke with Tribal Council and elders; [LA Times covered the visit](#) and quoted Ronda's daughter Larissa; Bob asked when it the bill will be passed and Rep. Obernolte was optimistic. During Memorial Day Weekend there was quite a backup at the east gate to Yosemite with frustrated travelers; Bob has been in contact with Yosemite Superintendent and NPS staff to ease that situation in future; 60% of people in line were planning to just pass through; hoping to increase messaging/signage at the bottom of pass so people have a better idea of the wait up top. Dispersed camping: Placing dumpsters and portable restrooms at 15–20 sites in Mono County including Conway Summit; print material is being finished up and circulated; ESRI is making an app for the map so it will work on mobile devices; "no fires" signs are going up along Highway 120 West but not sure about "no camping" signs. Grant Lake camping closure is not in effect yet; during Memorial Day Weekend there were 3 fires on Friday night, 27 campers and 5 fires on Saturday night, and 30 campers and 10 fires on Sunday night; last weekend there were 10 campers and no fires on Friday night and 12 campers and 2 fires on Saturday night; during the week before Memorial Day DWP removed 80 fire rings and Bob and crew took out 8 rings last week; observers are out there on the weekends and are keeping a record and enforcement is in place.

5. Chair's report: Attended the Fire Safe Council meeting. Continuing to work with dispersed camping group. Mono Basin Visitor Center is open and volunteers have been helping to staff it. Lee Vining pedestrian crossings: Crossing between Nicely's and Beaver's has flashing lights now; northernmost crossing has flashing lights; middle crossing is the only one with orange flags. Welcome to Ronda – really pleased to see you here. Kevin Brown will also hopefully join us if his firefighting duties allow.

6. Members' reports:

Lisa: Attended dispersed camping Town Hall meeting at end of May; thanks to Bob for leading that

charge. Welcome, Ronda – thank you for giving your time to be part of the RPAC.

Elin: Continuing to work with the dispersed camping group. Glad the bill for Tribal federal recognition has been reintroduced. Welcome to Ronda – thank you for joining the RPAC.

Ronda: Thanks for letting me join the team to help the community to grow, thanks for the welcome. As a resident near Horse Meadows see people leaving the area early in the morning, presumably campers.

Kevin: Not in attendance at the time of members' reports.

Bartshe: Not in attendance.

7. Inyo National Forest update (Megan Mullowney): No update this month.

8. Mono Basin Fire Safe Council: Have revised fire information flyers that will get passed around at campgrounds and stuffed into bundles of wood for sale. Will have information for homeowners on home hardening. Working on possible grants and fuels reduction opportunities. Next meeting is June 16 at 5:00pm.

9. Presentation on proposed interpretive trail and heritage park (Dean Tonenna): Tribe has been thinking for a few years about a Kootzaduka'a Heritage Park and Interpretive Trail because the Tribe is not yet federally recognized and does not have a land base, members have been dispersed and don't have a place to call home in their home. Park and interpretive trail would be a way to allow Tribal members to carry out traditions and share aspects of culture with community and visitors. Have shared the map of the proposed park and trail at Tribal Council meeting, at Mono Basin Partners meeting, and with various County staff. The park would include a camping area, amphitheater, area for dances, and reconstructed traditional houses would be within BLM lands north of Highway 167 and east of Highway 395. Trail would be a loop trail of about ten miles if various land management agencies support the trail; if they aren't supportive the trail would be more of a segment trail; trail crossings at Highway 395 may need to be adjusted to avoid crossing the busy highway. Don't anticipate graders or machinery to construct trail; would be entirely non-motorized, open to foot and horse travel; dogs would probably be allowed; would need to talk with the ATV community to make sure the trail remains a pedestrian and non-motorized trail. Interpretive elements could involve people along the trail explaining aspects of culture but also looking at information people could access themselves; wouldn't be large kiosks or signs. Would have places for garbage disposal that Tribe would contract out the trash pickup. Could be a place to send people for more organized and less dispersed camping options. Applied for a National Park Service partnership opportunity and will be working with NPS and County to get something to present to BLM. Next steps are to meet with County, DWP, other agencies about the trail route.

10. Review of the Brown Act (Wendy Sugimura): RPAC is subject to the Brown Act through state law to ensure that the public can participate fully in decision making process.

11. Mono Basin Community Plan first workshop: Plan was developed through inclusive workshops with robust community participation in 2010 and 2011 and finalized in 2012. Plan offers a guide for proactive action to achieve community goals according to our values, as well as a guide for reacting to community development issues. Community would like to know more about how the plan actually functions when the County is evaluating projects. County has heard feedback that plan is not being used as it could be when County plans projects; it *is* used for every project that comes before the County; even though people disagree with the findings doesn't mean the plan wasn't used. Would be good to go through the plan's action items to see which have been completed and see what things are important to people at this point. No wholesale revision of the plan. Homework for RPAC members: get a hold of a copy of the

plan (Bentley can provide hard copies if you send him your mailing address), highlight and mark what you want to talk about.

12. Information items (Planning staff): See the project updates chart here:

<https://monocounty.ca.gov/rpac-mono-basin/page/mono-basin-rpac-meeting>. Reminder: RPAC is not a public comment forum; these updates are for informational purposes only.

- Hip Camp: Getting closer to a finalized CEQA document; no meeting date yet for when it goes to the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors. The owner was given a notice of violation in February 2020 but operated until May 2021 when Mono County Code Compliance staff issued a citation. Listing online is no longer taking reservations because owner had to cease operations until he was properly permitted.
- Pumice Valley Landfill: None of the proposals that the County received in May proposed using Pumice Valley. The County doesn't have to accept any of those bids, and could instead operate the site as a County-owned and run facility, or opt for a combination of these options.

13. Upcoming agenda items:

- Mono Basin Community Plan – review it in small bites each month
- Streetlights – Bob will email Kevin Julian about an update from SCE
- Housing subcommittee
- Conway Ranch – fall 2021
- ATVs in the Mono Basin – Bob has a dispersed-camping-like effort in mind for fall 2021

14. Adjourned: 8:30pm