

Mono Basin Regional Planning Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, June 8, 2022, 6:30pm
remote/virtual meeting via Zoom/conference call

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

Public attendees & presenters: Mono County: Justin Nalder, Bentley Regehr, Wendy Sugimura. Public: Janet Barth, Lynn Boulton, Margaret Eissler, Forrest English, Cole Hawkins, Stephanie Heller (USFS), Amy Lewis, Nora Livingston, Deborah Lurie, Connie Millar, Gary Nelson, Jeff Wyneken.

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

2. Public comment: Wendy Sugimura: Bob Gardner will not be attending tonight; if anyone has questions or items for Bob, let Wendy or Bentley know.

3. Review minutes from May 11, 2022: Jake moved to approve the minutes as presented, Lisa seconded, unanimous approval.

4. Inyo National Forest update (Stephanie Heller): It has been a busy spring: most campgrounds are open, Visitor Center is open four days a week, pretty understaffed and working on hiring more people.

Haven't gotten any plans or schedules from CalRecycle about work that needs to be done.

Nationally, at some BLM wild horse facilities (not in California) there were fatalities of horses because people weren't following procedures; groups are trying to get a moratorium enacted on wild horse gathers which might affect us here.

Mono City fire breaks are scheduled to be treated next October (2023). Had a good discussion in Mono City yesterday with some fire safe council folks; talked about Mill Creek and a potential restoration project. Is there any option to deal with fuel buildup in Mill Creek and/or a "scratch line" between creek and community? No – that would require an entire environmental process, which is not on the docket. Citizens' Wildfire Academy will be giving info on defensible space and home hardening; Christmas Valley neighborhood in Tahoe survived the Caldor Fire because of those two things. Fire prevention must be a collective effort.

5. Update on Pumice Valley Landfill (Justin Nalder): Mono County is planning to modify Pumice Valley Landfill to handle waste streams that have been going to Benton Crossing Landfill, and is looking at what is required to be able to handle those; doing the CEQA documentation to determine whether the current solid waste facility permit will be adequate. Separately, there's the potential for a County-wide increase in tipping fees to make solid waste sites more self-sufficient.

6. Bodie Hills Conservation discussion (Forrest English): Forrest gave a summary: National Conservation Area designation for the Bodie Hills is what Friends of the Inyo is pursuing and would like a letter of support from the RPAC to the Board of Supervisors.

Comments from the public: FOI has determined the best way forward, most important is to protect the Bodie Hills with an NCA than it not be protected at all, NCA is potentially the most feasible way to get

the area protected, will be a compromise because there are lots of different viewpoints. Connie Millar has been working with archaeologist David Hurst Thomas; there is a record of historical human cultures in the Bodie Hills of about 2,000–6,000 years ago that is unique to this area, eruption history has buried most other evidence of this period of human history, these cultural resources require protection from disturbance.

RPAC is supportive of a designation that prohibits mining. A letter should call out economic importance, biodiversity, natural beauty, cultural resources, etc. as pieces that support a special designation; designation is a critically important path to pursue. Letter could call out the NCA designation as well as collective thoughts about what we'd like to see protected and what things threaten and damage those unique aspects of the Bodie Hills so that if an NCA morphs into a different designation idea our comments would still be relevant. Lisa will draft a letter for the July meeting.

7. Presentation on updates to the Mono County Resource Efficiency Plan and Vehicle Miles Traveled CEQA thresholds (Bentley Regehr): The plan can be viewed here: https://www.monocounty.ca.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/mono_basin_rpac/meeting/32310/mono-county-may-2022-rep.pdf. The plan was adopted in 2015; this is a required update to comply with State targets to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 80% of 1990 levels.

8. Mono Basin Fire Safe Council: Bentley will email the May meeting minutes out to RPAC list.

9. Mono Basin Housing Committee: At the meeting last night the group worked on the housing survey and discussed distribution methods for it. Looked at a letter Sanjay drafted to send to property owners about the County's ADU program. Next meeting is July 12, 2022 at 7:00pm.

10. Mono Basin Bear Committee: The DeChambeau Creek Foundation facilitated a meeting with USFS and CDFW staff; discussed paper reporting forms for camp host and front desks with info on reporting wildlife incidents, plus education efforts including signage. New bear-proof food pantry has been installed at the Presbyterian Church. Three bears were captured, collared, hazed, and released in the area; reports of incidents along lakeshore, in town, and at campgrounds in Lee Vining Canyon have decreased in the last few weeks. Bear Committee will meet in late June to determine next steps on helping folks secure bear-resistant trash cans and further outreach efforts. "Keep Me Wild" information posted at the Post Office. Need to train public on how to use bear boxes and trash containers. Please report all bear incidents to <https://apps.wildlife.ca.gov/wir>; these reports go straight to our local human-wildlife conflict biologist, Danny Taylor.

11. Supervisor Gardner's report: Not present.

12. Vice Chair's report: No report.

13. Member reports: Elin: No report. Jake: No report. Bartshe: Mono Basin Bird Chautauqua is making a comeback June 17–19 as a fully outdoor event.

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

15. Information items (planning staff): See the project updates chart here: https://www.monocounty.ca.gov/sites/default/files/fileattachments/mono_basin_rpac/meeting/32310/project_status_updates_6.8.22.pdf.

D&S Waste: Received a draft CEQA document from consultant, now having a third-party consultant reviewing it; no public hearing date yet.

No public hearing date yet for the HipCamp project.

Covid update: No dramatic increases, other variants are on public health's radar, no changes in policy expected. Presentation from the Board of Supervisors meeting here:

<https://monocounty.ca.gov/bos/page/board-supervisors-153>

16. Upcoming agenda items: Ray Pok with a general SCE update; Bodie Hills designation letter of support; Conway Ranch 2022 operation plan; 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.

17. Adjourned to next meeting, July 13, 2022: 7:39pm