

Mono Basin Regional Planning Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, October 13, 2021, 6:30pm
remote/virtual meeting via Zoom/conference call

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

Public attendees & presenters: Mono County: Bob Gardner, Gerry LeFrancois, Bentley Regehr. Public: Paul Ashby, Lynn Boulton, Dennis Domaille, Margaret Eissler, Stephanie Heller (USFS), Ilene Mandelbaum, Paul McFarland, John Ljung, David Rosky.

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

2. Public comment:

Bartshe Miller: CalRecycle has been remediating old dump site at the Mono Basin Scenic Area Visitor Center. Other than the press release saying work had begun they solicited no public comment; old dump sites don't involve public comment because it's a regulatory action/enforcement that is for public health and safety. CalRecycle has removed a berm that was intentionally built to screen parking lot when the Visitor Center was built. Project is either a Category 8 exemption or CEQA hasn't been done yet (not sure which is true); have requested CEQA documents from CalRecycle. Moving forward we'd like to work with all stakeholders in getting the berm replaced/restored/revegetated so scenic values and public safety can be restored.

David Rosky, June Lake CAC member: The Rush Creek Project relicensing is now underway and SCE is hosting a webinar on October 19, [more information here](#).

3. Review minutes from September 8, 2021: Bartshe moved to approve the minutes, Lisa seconded, motion passed unanimously.

4. Supervisor Gardner's report: Redistricting process is underway: Districts need to be less than 10% different in population (about 2,630 residents in each). Have had some hearings and a community conversation was recorded and is on the County website; there's also a tool on County website to draw your own districts, see existing ones, move population blocks around, see examples of redistricted models. A couple proposed models shift Lee Vining north into the 4th district out of the 3rd. Take a look and design some districts yourself. The Board of Supervisors will consider different district alternatives in November; must make a decision by December 15.

Dispersed camping: Picking up some dumpsters and port-o-potties to wind down for the season but Inyo County's season is still going strong; 90 fire rings taken out in Alabama Hills. Will seek out grants for the future to continue this year's work next year; will do fundraising again if needed; cost of infrastructure is the main one; some costs to outreach/printing; Sierra Nevada Conservancy may help with infrastructure and maybe Clean California (Caltrans initiative).

There will be a motorized recreation meeting October 26 at 5:30pm. In the Mono Basin north of Highway 167 there have been concerns about motorized recreation over the summer and into the fall. Meeting to begin a conversation similar to the dispersed camping effort; see what existing laws and

regulations are, see what can be done about signage, enforcement, have a dialogue about it. It's a discussion about north Mono Basin specifically, not Eastern Sierra generally. Send Bob an email if you want to take part in that meeting.

Visitor Center dump project: It's unfortunate. Important to focus on mitigation and revegetation. A form of mitigation could be addressing the road that goes downhill right next to the dump that has been washed out for years.

5. Chair's report: Got Covid booster shot last weekend; the County's system at Mammoth High School was well organized. Has seen the work at the Visitor Center and second Bob's and Bartshe's comments. Glad to hear about the motorized recreation discussion.

6. Members' reports:

Elin: No report.

Bartshe: The California State Water Resources Control Board amended DWP's water licenses to incorporate the Stream Restoration Agreement from 2013 through a voluntary agreement. It includes a project at Grant to put an outlet in Grant Dam; may see construction at Grant next year possibly; allows for streamlined and cooperative management of Grant for the fishery in Rush Creek; there are threshold levels that Grant can't go below; ends diversion of Parker and Walker Creeks altogether; gives the creeks a new leg up in achieving restoration and giving them resilience against climate change. Partners in management are DWP, California Department of Fish & Wildlife, CalTrout, and Mono Lake Committee. This does not include the restoration of Mono Lake and future lake levels; that's a separate issue that will be addressed in the future. Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District is holding a workshop with their board in Lee Vining on November 4; open to the public; will be looking specifically at Mono Lake and PM-10 air pollution violations occurring at Mono Lake; Great Basin sent a letter last summer asking DWP to curtail diversions to allow Mono to rise so Mono would no longer be the biggest PM-10 pollution source in the country.

Lisa: Thanks to Bob for convening the motorized recreation meeting. Kudos to the Mono Lake Committee for helping to finalize the amendments to DWP's water rights.

7. Inyo National Forest update (Stephanie Heller): End of the season: winding things down; Visitor Center is closed for the season, campgrounds are closing, went back to Stage 1 fire restrictions (campfires are allowed in developed campgrounds). Hoping to make an announcement about the new Mammoth District Ranger soon, will have a full complement of permanent district rangers. Over-snow winter sports planning process will be starting this winter: will involve groomed sites, snowmobiling routes, an intensive planning effort with a lot of opportunities for public involvement. Visitor Center dump site cleanup: unfortunate circumstance that the project was all planned before Stephanie and Megan Mallowney were here; these projects don't get public comment and are usually not as visible as this one; better outreach would have helped address these issues before project started; USFS has no documentation about berm being left for a purpose (if anyone has any please send to Stephanie; Bartshe will). Stephanie did discuss the road with people last week but it's not a USFS road; Bob reminded us that DWP says it's not their road either so that's why it's on the County's list to repair.

8. Mono Basin Fire Safe Council: The Board of Supervisors got a letter from several Mono County Fire Safe Councils, including the Mono Basin one. County has applied for a state wildfire coordinator

position; 28 counties will get a person for 18 months to do wildfire prevention/etc. Struggling to find a new location for the fire truck with the banner for next summer. Talked about grants and website. Next Fire Safe Council meeting is Wednesday, October 20 at 5:00pm. Contact Robbie or Duncan if you want to be invited to those meetings.

9. Housing subcommittee: No report this month.

10. Mono City bear concerns (Margaret Eissler): Bears have discovered Lee Vining and Mono City as sources of human food (trash cans, dumpsters, fruit trees, bee hives, breaking into screen doors, etc.). Once bears discover human food they don't go back to natural food sources for their immense calorie needs; mother bears teach cubs to go after human food and the cycle continues. Have seen this issue in Yosemite, June Lake, Mammoth Lakes, Lake Tahoe; can't ignore it here now. How are other Mono County communities dealing with bears and are they successful? Is the County involved at all? Need requirements, education, and enforcement for bear-proof trash cans and dumpsters, trash storage, how to protect fruit trees and bee hives. Important that visitors understand how to live with wildlife as well. Lynn: a bear or two have broken into five of the 8 units at the Mobil housing, in part because only screens were closed instead of doors. Bob: Mammoth has a long history of bear problems that continue so there may be guidance there; June has had issues as well; County can get involved with an ordinance; could get an RPAC subcommittee together for actionable items. If anyone's interested in working on this issue, contact Paul and he can bring back a report in a couple of months after researching options (Margaret, Duncan, Lisa will join Paul).

11. Mono Basin Community Plan Fifth Workshop: Defer to next month.

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. No updates this month.

13. Upcoming agenda items:

- Mono Basin Community Plan – sixth review to take place next month – quick items, transportation, Kutzadika'a
- Housing subcommittee (each month)
- Visitor Center berm work
- Develop list of prioritized connectivity/transportation projects
- Caltrans: Lee Vining Rehab Project (March 2022)
- SCE: Lee Vining hydro relicensing at next public input stage
- Possible Lee Vining skate park (November 2021)

14. Adjourned to next meeting, November 10, 2021: 7:41pm