

Mono Basin RPAC
Regional Planning Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 13, 2014, 6:30 pm, Lee Vining Community Center

Members present: Katie Bellomo, Lisa Cutting, Tim Hansen, Duncan King, Chris Lizza, Mark Logan, Paul McFarland, and Bartshe Miller. **Absent:** Zane Davis, Ilene Mandelbaum.

Public Attendees and Presenters: Tim Alpers, John Boynton, Scott Burns, Sue Farley, Tom Strazdins, Sarah Tomsy, Margy Verba, and Courtney Weiche.

1. **Call to order:** 6:39 pm.
2. **Public comment:** John Boynton: John expressed concern related to the groundwater pumping component that is currently in the Conway Ranch draft conservation easement. He will be expressing his concerns in writing directly to the granting agencies.
3. **Review Minutes:** June 11, 2014 (no July meeting): Motion by Lizza; second by Hansen; passes unanimously. Abstaining: Bellomo.
4. **Supervisor's report:**
 - a. Tim Alpers reported on the motorcycle accident (fatality) that occurred at the Old Marina intersection with Highway 395. He has contacted Caltrans to see if turn pockets can be incorporated into the Rockfall Project.
 - b. The update on the Conway Ranch conservation easement is that Caltrans is requesting an extension until November or December 1st in order to clear up property line discrepancies. The conservation easement is still in draft form and both Eastern Sierra Land Trust and Mono County are continuing to work on refinements.
 - c. Mono County has established a legislative platform to guide the County on legislative matters.
 - d. The Mammoth Mountain land exchange is still stuck in committee in D.C.
 - e. The utility corridor project that was before the Board recently was not supported by the supervisors. The power and gas lines would have visual and sage grouse habitat effects on lands in eastern Mono County.
 - f. Tim attended the Digital 395 ceremony and plans to have Nate Greenberg attend a future RPAC meeting to provide an update to the group.
 - g. Mono City Fire Road paperwork has been finalized with the BLM and work will begin soon.
 - h. Tim is still conducting interviews for the open RPAC position.
5. **Chairman's report:** Bartshe reported on the SCE power pole explosion fire that occurred on July 27. Luckily he and Kelly heard it and were able to extinguish it immediately before it spread. In the past several years there have been at least six events in this one stretch of utility overhead line. The RPAC may want to take this up as an issue since it relates to community safety. Bartshe reminded everyone to listen and respect others during the meeting and not to have side conversations as these are disruptive to the group.
6. **Member's reports:**
 - a. Katie Bellomo: Would like to see the Conway Ranch conservation easement issue stay on the RPAC agenda so that the RPAC can continue to get updates. There is still concern with groundwater pumping and visual impacts. Katie plans to communicate directly with the grant funders.

- b. Lisa Cutting: Expressed concern about D395 survey stakes that have been left adjacent to the project route. These have been observed up in Jordan Basin area but they may be in other locations along the route as well.
 - c. Zane Davis: Absent.
 - d. Tim Hansen: Reported that SCE had evaluated his business needs and made some changes free of charge that have really helped him reduce his energy use.
 - e. Duncan King: Lundy Mutual is also planning on submitting an additional letter to Mono County regarding the groundwater pumping language in the conservation easement. The Historical Society's Ghost of the Sagebrush Tour is August 22 and 23 and will focus on historic ranches in the north Mono Basin.
 - f. Chris Lizza: Chris added that the Mono Basin Historical Society has programs the first Monday of every month. Planning Commission meeting tomorrow includes final approval of a parcel map in Chalfant; Bridgeport firewood operation; and General Plan development standards. Sarah Adams is looking for someone to run the Mono Inn next season as Jim and Mario will not be returning.
 - g. Mark Logan: Nothing to report.
 - h. Ilene Mandelbaum: Absent.
 - i. Paul McFarland: Conducted trail work at Panum Crater and the Mono Basin Scenic Area Visitor Center with a group of 100 Boy Scouts.
7. **Lee Vining Fire Protection District potential fire station location (Tom Strazdins)** Tom introduced the concept of relocating the Lee Vining Fire Station to a new location that is currently owned by LADWP and leased by Mono County (Gus Hess Park near the tennis courts). The current fire station is old and not safe nor is it functional because of the low doorway. The goal would be to have LADWP donate the land and then get seed money to construct a new facility. The entrance/exit would be through the Mono County yard to Highway 395. Members discussed exploring other parcel options in town before reducing the current size of the park.
8. **Fuels reduction, forest health treatments and wildfire defensible space (Sue Farley, Inyo National Forest)** The Inyo introduced preliminary analysis related to Wildlife Defensible Space and Fuels Reduction for the Lee Vining area. This process prioritizes areas to focus on by identifying high values that would be at risk from wildfires. This process includes public and private lands surrounding Lee Vining. The Inyo is looking to partner with landowners and the community to make the town of Lee Vining more fire safe. The process will begin next year and will include public involvement through meetings and field trips. Actual fuels reduction work will begin in 2016. Lee Vining Canyon and lands adjacent to the town of Lee Vining are the priority right now.
9. **Mono – Yosemite Trail draft project report – status update (Courtney Weiche)** The status of the Mono – Yosemite Trail is that a draft report has been completed but the working group needs to provide feedback on the report. There may be a way to leverage the fuels reduction work and the trail work if the community supports that approach.
10. **Information items and provide direction to staff: (Planning)**
- a. Report of development activities in Mono Basin.
 - b. Other: USFWS reopened the sage grouse comment period so that a USGS study favorable to the sage grouse could be included in the analysis. The BLM is giving Mono County \$50,000 annually for 5 years to help implement components of the Bi-State Action Plan. The Mono City Fire Road right of way documents have been signed and the decision is final. Construction to begin immediately. Mono County is sponsoring an energy workshop and will highlight the new PACE Program which provides for loans for residential energy efficiencies. Supervisors authorized another wood stove replacement

program through funding from GBAQCD. Lee Vining and Bridgeport pedestrian projects were rejected from grant funding. The antiquated Conway Ranch specific plan will be repealed by the Board of Supervisors and replaced with an open space designation consistent with the conservation easement. The County wants to make improvements to the County Yard in Lee Vining.

11. **Upcoming agenda items:** Caltrans Rockfall Project Traffic Management update (Cedrik Zemitis)
12. **Schedule next regular meeting:** September 10, 2014
13. **Adjourn:** 8:50 pm.