

Mono County Collaborative Planning Team

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DRAFT MEETING NOTES

January 28, 2016

Members present: Stacy Corless, Mono Supervisors; Deb Schweizer, USFS/Inyo; Ryan Dermody, Craig Holste, Caltrans; Joanne Lowden, USFS/Humboldt-Toiyabe; Larry Primosch & Dale Johnson, BLM; Jo Bacon, Mammoth Town Council; Alisa Ellsworth, CDFW; Erin Nordin, USFWS; Deanna Dulen, Devils Postpile National Monument; Doug Power, Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center; Clarence Martin, LADWP

Members absent: Justin Nalder, Bridgeport Indian Colony; Rana Saulque, Benton Paiutes; Mike Gautier, Yosemite National Park

Staff present: Garrett Higerd, Wendy Sugimura, Jake Suppa, CD Ritter

Guests present: Fred Stump, Mono Supervisors; Wendi Grasseschi, Mammoth Times; Danna Stroud, Sierra Nevada Conservancy;

1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/ATTENDEE INTRODUCTIONS: Acting Chair Stacy Corless called the meeting to order at 9:05 a.m. at the Town/County Conference Room at Minaret Village Mall in Mammoth Lakes. Attendees recited the pledge of allegiance and introduced themselves.

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: No items.

3. MEETING NOTES: Review/approve draft meeting notes from Oct. 29, 2015 (*Power/Schweizer. Abstain due to absence: Caltrans & Town.*)

4. AGENCY ROUNDTABLE: Agency planning issues & pending projects

5. EROSION CONTROL AT TRI-VALLEY & SWALL MEADOWS: Supervisor Stump described two flood events in Chalfant Valley last summer in isolated locations, impacted toward Hammil Valley in October. Varied land-management entities are involved: LADWP, Caltrans, BLM, and USFS. Looking for mitigation to control future events. Mono did large piles of sandbags so residents could access area. October event was not on Reno weather, but on Las Vegas. No warning to residents. Mono controls only one ditch, which performed its mission. Residents want something to be done.

Craig Holste worked on ditch for Caltrans.

Dale Johnson indicated BLM was looking to help improve situation in a collaborative way.

Clarence Martin, LADWP, stated its property surrounds Chalfant. Hard to catch/divert water, land starts to flatten out. Constructed berm after the fact. Left trash pumps. Not unique, but a recurring event. Need to plan for it. Now there's a berm to maintain, dust source. Bottom line, Martin contended, is it's Mono's responsibility to devise flood control plan, not agencies. Willing to help with easements, rights of way, but can't be left holding bag. Topo surveys could help with what's feasible. Not willing to take liability.

Funding around climate change? Sugimura: More related to hazard mitigation, Greenhouse Gas (GHG) projects.

Ryan Dermody indicated Caltrans may have funding through Planning, Programming & Monitoring (PPM) or Rural Planning Assistance (RPA) with Local Transportation Commission (LTC). Town of Mammoth Lakes has down stormwater planning.

Danna Stroud, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, cited Proposition 1 funding through Cal Fire, DWR, etc. She will do homework on it. Supervisor Corless stated Mono County is setting 2016-17 budget priorities.

Stump discussed issue with engineer Garrett Higerd. It would involve creating engineering, big liability concern. Get outside funding source, staff to do it.

Higerd provided background on Tri-Valley flooding. Some private landholdings as well as public exist. Soils better at bottom of valley for agriculture. Land was then being used for homes. Challenge because flooding occurs where homes are. In mid-'80s Mono got Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) floodplain maps, but very poor till 2009 with new study, effective in 2012. Lots more emphasis on flood risk in valley when maps indicate true risk. Much greater effort to produce mitigation, awareness of risk. Mono County's role is active, but primarily keeping people safe in new developments; e.g., build on raised pad or raised floor. Mono is proactive on mitigation. Flood control is actually low-flow channel. Little channel only small part of flood plain. Significant flood in 1989, minor floods last summer. Hammil Valley had similar activities, emergency berms formed. Not engineered, erosive sand, pushing water into different direction. Need to consider impacts of berm efforts.

Larry Primosch, BLM, suggested diverting, building structures, figure out where water's going to go.

Higerd cited funding through FEMA for mapping. Maybe none for flood control. Challenging to sandbag when flood occurs on flat, open floodplain. Maybe build individual moats around structures. Slab-on-grade is the worst in floodplain, exposed to flooding.

Primosch noted not all of Chalfant flooded; concentrated on five parcels at north end. Higerd acknowledged extent of flooding in northern part of eastern community. Primosch recalled 1989 event was huge, started in Benton.

Danna Stroud will gather information in search to meet needs. Supervisor Corless stated it's needed before mid-March strategic planning by Mono Supervisors.

Stump thought it sounded like a need for brainstorming on funding. Agencies would help in emergency. Maybe email agencies and set up dates.

Clarence Martin cited mutual aid in Inyo County. Lend resources. If reimbursed by FEMA, get paid.

Stump recalled sheriff declared state of emergency, ratified by Mono Supervisors in summer. Cost recovery for other entities. Clarence Martin thought it better to have structure in place regarding responsibilities.

Wendi Grasseschi, Mammoth Times, asked if someone had directed sandbag placement. Stump explained Fire Protection District (FPD) had sandbags, but no material till Public Works delivered road cinders. Someone sand-bagged middle of road, flooding the east side. People did what they thought best. USFS sent hotshot crew in summer. Planning sessions in October were held at FPD. Early-morning T-storm was probably a warning. Las Vegas news gave vague information on location. Cal Fire came out, but quicker response was needed.

Clarence Martin mentioned El Niño planning in Inyo made sand available at fire stations. Stump: Eight large piles of sand were available for this purpose. Martin: Loader available.

Primosch, driving to Bishop from Wilkerson, saw black/dark gray storm cell that looked ominous. Residents could see that.

Doug Power, MWTC, suggested contacting Army Corps of Engineers.

6. CALIFORNIA WILDLIFE ACTION PLAN: Alisa Ellsworth, CDFW, stated the plan would set framework for next 10 years. Plan is based on large conservation targets, identifying major threats and stresses such as development and climate change. Enhance public's opportunity to enjoy habitats around state. Find conservation strategies to benefit greatest number of species. Integrate climate change into program. Mono focus is on sagebrush habitat. Eradicate non-native species when possible. Note conservation easements, and collect data on pinyon/juniper encroachment. CDFW coordinated with Department of Water Resources, Cal Fire, Caltrans, USFS, BLM, and USFWS. Invasive species, plants, pollution were considered. Plan is available on web with updates as they occur. Companion plans address specific issues such as agriculture, energy development, land use planning, etc. USFWS would provide approval of plan to receive funding through grants. Update every decade.

7. FOREST PLAN REVISIONS & OFF-HIGHWAY/OVER-SNOW VEHICLE STAGING AREAS: Deb Schweizer, Inyo National Forest, spoke regarding snowmobiles on the forest. At end of three comment periods, species and conservation concerns; wild and scenic rivers (includes significant hydrological features); and second look at wilderness areas. Came up with 38,000 acres and four alternatives to recommend. Heavy critique on inadequate public outreach. USFS not for/against. Original maps horrible. Master map on webpage shows USFS vs. citizen proposals.

Plan refers to snowmobiles in general, not staging areas. Determine roads perhaps not needed anymore. Maybe need EA or go to EIS. Scoping document in March or April. User conflicts exist. Some want no snowmobiles at all, others want more access. Snowmobile postcards encourage participation.

8. MONO COUNTY SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE GRANT: Wendy Sugimura introduced intern Jake Suppa. Thanked agencies for support on \$100,000 grant from State.

Suppa presented a PowerPoint on holistic approach. Bi-State Sage Grouse cited. Properly managed land is mutually beneficial, especially compared to land fragmentation. CA wildlife protection plan. Average farmer reaches age 65 in Mono. Land can be passed down, protected in perpetuity, or leased. Maintaining agricultural practices prevents subdivision.

9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: 1) update on Devils Postpile (DEPO) Draft State of the Parks report; 2) Landownership Adjustment Subcommittee report; 3) Mill Canyon

ADJOURN TO NEXT MEETING: Thursday, April 28, 2016, at 9 a.m.

Prepared by CD Ritter, CPT secretary