

# Mono County Collaborative Planning Team

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PO Box 347  
Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546  
760-924-1800 phone, 924-1801 fax

PO Box 8  
Bridgeport, CA 93517  
760-932-5420 phone, 932-5431 fax  
www.monocounty.ca.gov

## MEETING NOTES

April 24, 2014

(Adopted July 31, 2014)

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**Members Present:** Byng Hunt, Mono Supervisors; Jon Regelbrugge, USFS/Inyo; Gayle Rosander, Caltrans; Jen Daugherty, Town of Mammoth Lakes; Heidi Sickler, CDFW; Steve Nelson, BLM; Isaac Vaughan, Devils Postpile National Monument; Steve Abele, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service/Ventura (by phone)

**Members Absent:** Jeff Ulrich, USFS/Humboldt-Toiyabe; Doug Power, Marine Corps Mountain Warfare Training Center; Justin Nalder, Bridgeport Indian Colony; Chris Plakos, LADWP; Adora Saulque, Benton Paiutes

**Staff Present:** Scott Burns, C.D. Ritter

**Guests Present:** Stacy Corless & Kirk Stapp, District 5 supervisorial candidates

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1. CALL TO ORDER/PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE/INTRODUCTIONS:

2. PUBLIC COMMENT: None

3. MEETING NOTES:

*MOTION:* Approve draft meeting notes from February 28, 2014 as amended: Item 5, line 3: However, an inadvertently revealed affair brought that to a halt photo taking is no longer allowed due to privacy concerns, so that method was halted. (Rosander/Nelson. Ayes: 6-0.)

4. AGENCY ROUNDTABLE: Agencies discussed planning issues & pending projects

5. STATUS OF BI-STATE GROUSE LISTING. Steve Abele, USFWS, cited process toward ultimate decision or complete withdrawal. April 8 federal register NOA: opened comment period on both rules (critical habitat, species listing) for 60 days, and advertised dates of public hearings - Bishop April 30 and Minden April 29. Two days ago, however, these hearings were postponed.

How was cancellation of meetings announced? *Unsure of formal noticing, just working groups. Press release to BLM to publish. Byng Hunt suggested that hearings after June 8 be a formal process with court reporter, and FWS not saying anything. Economic analysis theoretically will occur June 8, reopening critical habitat comment for 30 days. Received multiple county comments, refined the critical habitat comments. New analyses from USGS are pending, perhaps a robust analysis of population. Maybe not have critical habitat now, but could later with treatments.*

**Grazing focus?** *On back burner. Any info to support intent of 4D to keep lands intact would be helpful. Could Bi-State step up to assist? Technical team of biologists on Bi-State. Understand vegetation trends, impacts of cattle grazing. Other data on landowner opinion welcome for evaluation.*

In federal register notice, was opportunity for 60-day extension mentioned to provide certainty/effectiveness of conservation plan? *Will follow up, can't recall specifically.* More details of plan, ability to fund, refine submittal, and funding documentation are needed. Acceptance of Bi-State as alternative to listing? *In precedent, only in limited instances does FWS step back at this stage. Happens very rarely. Firm up action plan, certainty of implementation. Serious chance, real possibility.* Steve Nelson noted Bi-State is committed to conserving grouse over long haul, with more certainty of implementation and effectiveness.

Frogs/toads? *No update.*

After Carl Benz retired, office of Ted Koch (pronounced *Cook*) will step in. Jurisdictional lines are being redrawn. Nevada state office extends to all of Inyo County, so will participate in CPT.

6. CUMULATIVE IMPACTS OF SPECIES LISTINGS. *Jeff Ulrich, USFS/Humboldt-Toiyabe (continued to July 31 meeting)*
7. MISCELLANEOUS REPORTS – LAND ADJUSTMENT SUBCOMMITTEE: Chair Steve Nelson, BLM, noted a 40-acre parcel at Green Creek designated for conservation easement by Eastern Sierra Land Trust. On to sage grouse... Compile accurate set of info to FWS on which lands are under some sort of conservation. Scott Burns noted \$30 million request by Rep. Paul Cook to see if Bi-State Plan could avoid listing. BLM, USFS, and other entities are listed as funding recipients. Connection to conservation easements might be a major tool. Nelson noted all involved agencies are committed to community process on sage grouse conservation in a collaborative way. Mono County Planning really stepped up to help out. Byng Hunt cited importance of conservation easement inventory.
8. STATUS OF MERCED RIVER & TUOLUMNE RIVER PLANS, & UPDATE ON TIOGA ROAD IMPROVEMENTS. *Kathleen Morse, Yosemite National Park (continued to July 31 meeting)*
9. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS: 1) Inyo Forest-wide Alternative Transportation Study; 2) Mammoth Main Street & Zoning Studies ; 3) update on frogs/toads; 4) request Ted Koch's attendance at CPT; 5) Bodie Conservation Partnership, values to conserve; 6) West-Wide Energy Corps
10. ADJOURN at 11:35 a.m. to next meeting Thursday, July 31, 2014, at 9 a.m.