

Mono Basin RPAC
Regional Planning Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, February 12, 2020, 6:30 pm, Lee Vining Community Center

Members present: Duncan King, Lisa Cutting, Ilene Mandelbaum, Bartshe Miller, and Kristie Nelson

Public Attendees and Presenters: Bob Gardner, Wayne Beaver, Justin Nalder, Elin Ljung, Dave Marquart, Wendy Sugimura, Bentley Regehr, Margaret Eisler, Ray Pok

1. **Call to Order and Pledge of Allegiance:** 6:34 pm.
2. **Public Comment: Justin Nalder,** Solid Waste Superintendent for Mono Co. provided an update on the Conway Ranch RFP and operations. Only one grazing application was submitted, and it did not satisfactorily meet all the required environmental standards, so the county will re-fly the RFP (request for proposals). He also reported a community garden may be developed in the old hatchery area as well as a nature trail. Restoration of the historic buildings is planned, with priorities 1) stabilization for winter snow loads, and 2) long-term stabilization of the buildings
3. **Approve Minutes: January 8, 2020.** No changes were needed. Ilene motioned and Lisa seconded that the minutes be approved – Motion approved unanimously.
4. **Supervisor Gardner report:** Bob attended the tribal council meeting in LV on Friday. The annual tribal walk from Long Valley to Mono Lake is scheduled for July 22. Also the perusal of federal tribal recognition for the local Kutzadika tribe was discussed. This has been a long-term issue and developments are proceeding, though further information and advice are being sought. This issue is being brought to the attention of Representative Paul Cook, and those with expertise of how to prioritize and advance Kutzadika's federal recognition within Washington DC are sought. Bob spoke about the recent Board of Supervisors meeting in Walker in which 80 to 90 community members attended, mostly to voice displeasure with the proposed cannabis farm in Walker. The BOS ultimately rejected that permit application. A list of Mono Basin projects and goals was compiled for sharing with the Inyo National Forest.
Bob gave a briefing on the Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership: there is a meeting in Lee Vining for May 21, and other meetings throughout the ES region. The ESSRP will provide grants for planning (but not necessarily implementing) improvements for campgrounds, etc. and it is dedicated to raising funds and coordination between the county, towns, agencies for needed work in fields such as fire prevention and recreation management. Community member Wayne Beaver asked Bob about any developments in meetings/communications with Yosemite park staff to coordinate & share information about Tioga Pass opening. Bob responded how plans for regular meetings had been planned last fall, but following staffing turnover in the park, these plans fell through and subsequent requests to have such meetings have been met with no response. Finally, there was confirmation the Lee Vining "Avalanche Road" has made it to an official capital project priority list. There will be a meeting to discuss this and other escape routes throughout the county that are in need of attention.
5. **Chairperson Report:** Duncan – voiced the need for additional members, and especially diversity, on the Mono Basin RPAC.

6. Members reports:

- a. Ilene – complained about the brightness of the motion activated light in the parking lot of the Community Center (though others didn't necessarily agree after checking it). She was told the facilities manager would be the one to contact. Though it is nice having a motion-sensor light instead of one on all night.
- b. Lisa – nothing to report
- c. Bartshe – Announced the Mono Lake Committee's ongoing project in coordination with the Inyo NF to remove and burn the invasive *Bassia* weed which has engulfed the Negit Islets and imposes a significant threat to the vitality of the California Gull nesting colony. In a pro-active triage, weeds will be removed manually and/or burned off, and the ground sprayed with lake water to increase the soil salinity which may decrease future germination.
- d. Kristie – nothing to report
- e.

7. Fire Safe Council Update: A surplus old fire truck will be purchased and used to hold a fire-prevention message banner, which should be up by early summer. Fliers for campgrounds and firewood vendors are planned, and a home hardening seminar is scheduled for spring. Additional chipper days were discussed for Mono City – these are always popular and green waste dumpsters always fill quickly and can be dumped many times. So the council is contemplating whether to continue renting, or simply buy a green waste dumpster. Lisa explained the way Twin Lakes above Bridgeport have handled private property brush clearing and green waste management: There, property owners cut brush at their discretion/time availability, and pile it curbside. Then the chipper machine comes and chips & hauls. It works great.

8. Inyo National Forest Updates: No USFS personnel were present. Bob Gardner mentioned he received word that INF funding and staffing levels for 2020 were planned to be about the same as they were in 2019, but then later was informed a South Tufa position was being dropped. Bob will follow up to find out more. Duncan said he would re-invite Inyo NF for March RPAC

9. Housing sub-committee report: The sub-committee had met again in a productive meeting. They evaluated parcels which could potentially be available for a housing project. These are owned by DWP and the school board. Wendy discussed other housing options besides building a multi-residence housing project. These options include incentives for local residents to construct an accessory unit on a local home parcel for rental, or potentially having the county purchase units and resell them with deed restrictions for workforce housing.

10. SCE substation: Ray Pok addresses the previous questions that arose regarding rehab and restoration plans on the substation project. He reported that SCE will partner with CalTrans on vegetative and other rehab at the site, and details on that will be available later or from Caltrans. Efforts should be completed by October 2020. An 8' metal fence will also surround some of the central infrastructure, and there will be some color/aesthetic options for the fence. He also clarified that although there wasn't a formal "public comment period" before the onset of the substation upgrade project, there was a "protest period", which had a similar function.

11. Information Items: The June Lake Brewery has proposed an expansion project which will probably take place in June. The property owner of the Tioga Inn project has agreed to fund another community meeting following the completion of the final EIR report. That public meeting will happen on March 3. Although it is voting day, for a number of logistical reasons including

the bookings at the Community Center, this was the most optimal day. Being that the region is mostly vote by mail and this is an evening meeting, interference with voting should be minimal or nonexistent.

13. Future agenda Items: Mono Basin Fire Safe update, Conway Ranch update, Inyo National Forest

Adjourned 8:00pm until next meeting 11 March 2020

Respectfully submitted – Kristie Nelson