



Community Development

Bridgeport Valley RPAC (Regional Planning Advisory Committee) - In addition to welcoming Jeff Ulrich, USFS/Humboldt-Toiyabe's new district ranger, and reviewing several other matters, analyst Wendy Sugimura reported significant interest at Thursday's RPAC meeting in the US Fish & Wildlife sage grouse listing proposal.

US Fish & Wildlife/BOS workshop - The US Fish & Wildlife Service will conduct a workshop **Dec. 3 from 2 to 4 p.m.** at the Mono Supervisors meeting to review proposed listing of sage grouse as a threatened species, with critical habitat affecting about 82% of private lands in Mono County (see attached map). County residents are urged to attend and request an extension of the comment period.

RPAC mailing costs - In ongoing efforts to reduce costs of mailing RPAC notifications, beginning in January 2014 meeting agendas will be sent via website "newsletters" rather than postal mail. The exceptions are attendees who specifically request postal mailing. To continue receiving print mailings, send written request to PO Box 347, Mammoth Lakes, CA 93546 or call 760-924-1804. Subscribe via email by going to monocounty.ca.gov / email subscriptions / select RPAC.

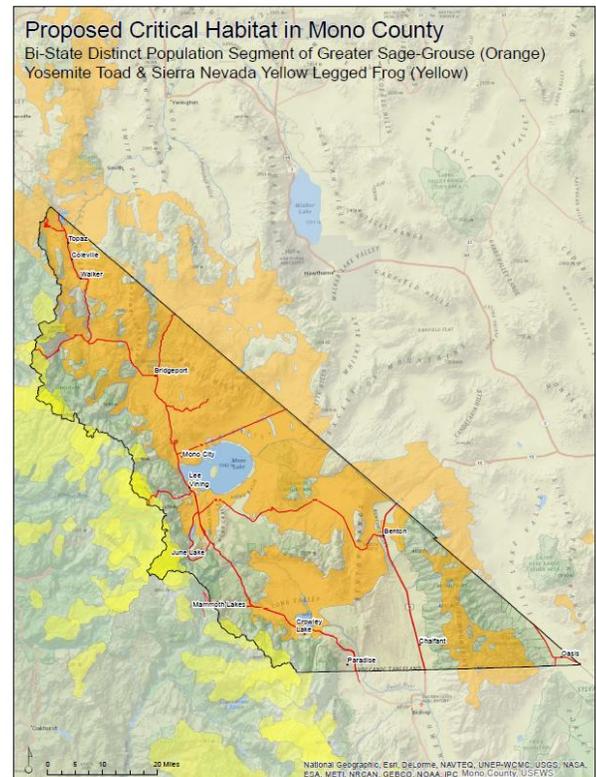
CONTACT: CD Ritter, (760) 924-1800

County Administrator's Office

California State Association of Counties holds Annual Conference – Along with Chairman Byng Hunt, Vice Chair Larry Johnston (CSAC's Board of Director representative for Mono County), Supervisor Tim Fesko (CSAC Board of Director's Alternate and Rural County Representatives of California Alternate), Clerk of the Board Lynda Roberts and I attended the annual conference of California Counties. The four day conference brings together several hundred representatives of counties from across the state and holds several classes, presentations and opportunities for County Supervisors and staff to receive updates on state and federal policy issues which will impact county services.

Supervisor Fesko was in four separate trainings offered to members of the Board and Vice Chair Johnston attended the Board of Director's meeting where county representatives received updates from the state on a number of new issues coming forward in 2014. The presentation by economist, Dr. David Berson provided an overview showing strong coastal growth but weakened valley county growth and the jury being out on Sierra. Caution advised.

Realignment remains biggest topic - One of the ongoing largest discussions is the future of Realignment, a state program put in place to shaft state prisoners to counties in exchange for limited



funding. After a year and a half the funding formula is again being reviewed. Rural Counties have begun to advocate for stronger consideration for those counties, such as Mono, which lack facility, programmatic and staffing challenges. The County Administrator's have a statewide Allocation Committee which will be developing a new set of proposed guidelines to help the state Department of Finance adjust this program in all counties favor.

CONTACT: Jim Leddy, (707) 529-4510

Water is on everyone's minds and not in anyone's reservoirs – There was an afternoon meeting of supervisors from across the state discussing the growing drought issues facing all of California. Representatives from the different regions of the state shared ongoing challenges in ground waters, water supply and storage and the impacts of endangered species.

CSAC will be continuing this dialogue as the winter unfolds to influence the next statewide Water Bond which is supposed to be on the November 2014 ballot and could have as much as \$9 Billion in funding for water projects across the state.

CONTACT: Jim Leddy (707) 529-4510

Economic Development

Economic Development Staff attended the Booking.com reception and presentation on Wednesday evening. Numerous lodging properties throughout the county are listed on Booking.com (similar to Travelocity and Hotels.com), and are seeing significant increases in business, particularly from international bookings.

The Mono County Tourism & Film Commission was pleased to award five grants this week from the "Community Marketing Event Fund" to the following local non-profits to help extend their marketing reach and drive incremental overnight visitation:

- ✓ Northern Mono Chamber of Commerce – "Size Doesn't Matter" Fishing Derby and "Hike the Valley" Event
- ✓ June Lake Chamber of Commerce – "June Lake Winter Festival & Triple Threat Triathlon" and "June Lake Snowmobile Poker Rally"
- ✓ Bridgeport Fish Enhancement Foundation – "Bridgeport Trout Tournament"

Two other events that applied will be considered in the second and final phase of the grant allocations – applications for the second round are being received by the Commission before January 13, 2014.

Jeff Simpson and Bob Peters from Bridgeport Economic Development Corporation (BEDC) travelled to Sacramento this week to meet with Community Block Development (CDBG) staff to discuss the Economic Development Block Grant (EDBG) Technical Assistance Grant. This EDBG grant is designed to help build capacity for the BEDC in the event that micro-enterprise loans are successfully obtained to assist small businesses in Bridgeport and Northern Mono County.

Tourism Public Relations efforts continue to net terrific results! Bridgeport and Benton were listed among the 9 Best "Mind-blowing Stargazing Sites in California's High Desert" by KCET's Social Wanderer:

http://www.kcet.org/living/travel/socal_wanderer/night-sky/stargazing/9-best-dark-sky-sites-in-californias-high-desert.html

Thanks to the staff at the **Walker River Lodge** and to the owners of **the Inn at Benton Hot Springs** for making the writer feel so welcome.

A recent press release touting Mono County as an ideal Cross-country Skiing destination resulted in several articles, including Ski Trax (Nordic Ski magazine) -- <http://skitrax.com/64814/?c> -- and NBC Bay Area's "Worth the Trip": <http://www.nbcbayarea.com/blogs/worth-the-trip/Going-Cross-Country-in-the-Eastern-Sierra-232413431.html>.

On Saturday morning at 7:30am, Alicia Vennos will be interviewed on Travel Planners Radio Show which has over 2 million listeners and is broadcast on 28 stations, primarily in Colorado and the west. The 9-minute live interview will cover cross-country skiing and other things to do and see in Mono County.

June Lake Strategic Plan Leadership Group met on Thursday - Supervisor Tim Alpers, Alicia and Jeff and attended a meeting of the June Lake Strategic Plan Leadership Group on Thursday where more details of June Mountain's new programs and activities for the upcoming winter were presented. Opening Day is Friday, December 13th (snow permitting), with a \$10 lift ticket and all proceeds from ticket sales being donated to the June Lake Chamber of Commerce to assist with the community's winter events. Everyone is welcome to help kick off the ski season with June and support the Chamber.

CONTACT: Alicia Vennos, (760) 924-1743

Information Technology

Chalfant Cell Tower dialogue continues – Supervisor Fred Stump has been working with IT and AT&T on the ongoing issues facing AT&T's commitment to provide cell service to Chalfant. On November 21st, there was a follow up conference call between the County staff and AT&T to look at next steps to placing a cell tower in the Chalfant area.

The County has already supplied AT&T with two potential sites for them to consider both on private land. During the call AT&T presented three additional sites, all located on City of Los Angeles Department of Water and Power land, in Chalfant. AT&T said they were working with DWP to lease one of these sites. None of these sites are on the Fire District parcel.

AT&T stated that after securing commitment from DWP on one of these sites they will initiate the planning approval process with the County. Approval of one of these sites will go to the Planning Commission. County Staff is aware of the need for service in the Chalfant area and will process AT&T's application as quickly as the process allows. Site one is near the intersection of Chalfant Road and Hwy 6 on the west side of the Community. Site two is east of the private land on the northeast side of Chalfant. Site three is on the east side of Hwy 6 on the first DWP parcel south of Chalfant. As I hear more I will pass it along

CONTACT: Supervisor Fred Stump and Nate Greenberg, (760) 924-1819

Public Health

On Thursday morning, Nov 21, 2013, Mono County Public Health sponsored the 2013 Statewide Medical and Health Exercise involving a food-borne outbreak. Over 100 people participated from many agency partners. Emergency operations centers were opened by Mammoth Hospital, Town of Mammoth Lakes, and Public Health/Environmental Health. Communication included situation reports and resource requests with Inyo County, Inland Counties Emergency Medical Agency (ICEMA), Region VI, California Emergency Medical Services Authority (EMSA), and the California Department of Public Health (CDPH). A highlight was the enthusiastic participation of the Bishop Amateur Radio Club, with communication sites set up at Mammoth Hospital, outside Suite Z (for the Town of Mammoth Lakes and Public Health), Northern and Southern Inyo Hospitals, and Inyo County Public Health. Special kudos to Mammoth Lakes Fire Chief Brent Harper, who has recently conducted ICS 300/400 training for many local staff, and to Interim Town Manager Dan Holler, who closed the town offices to allow all staff to participate in the EOC.

Hotwashes (debriefings) were held immediately following, and Public Health will produce an After Action Report/Improvement Plan according to Homeland Security Exercise Evaluation Program requirements within 60 days. Once completed, a detailed summary will be presented to the Board of Supervisors.

Thanks to all who contributed their time and energy to improving our ability to respond to the inevitable future emergencies/disasters.

CONTACT: Richard O. Johnson, M.D., MPH, (760) 914-0496

Social Services

State Health Benefits Exchange Upholds Original Deadline for Ending Health Plans That Don't Meet Law's Standards - The Covered California Board decided yesterday **not** to extend the enrollment deadline for residents with health plans set to expire at the end of this year that don't meet the Affordable Care Act standards. The Covered California Board unanimously voted to uphold its Dec. 31, 2013 deadline for health insurance companies to discontinue plans that don't meet basic standards. This decision comes after President Obama's decision to allow state insurance exchanges flexibility on when policies that were not grandfathered and are not compliant with the Affordable Care Act could be ended.

The Covered California Board cited that extending the deadline offers no benefit to the consumer and may create confusion about accessing affordable health care coverage through Covered California. The decision to maintain the original deadline also confirms the state exchange's commitment to transitioning Californians into plans that are compliant with the reforms of the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act, protecting consumers from double deductibles and stabilizing the risk pool to control costs for consumers beginning in 2014.

Covered California is implementing the following strategies to help affected consumers:

- Extending the deadline for enrollment for coverage taking effect on Jan. 1, 2014, from Dec. 15, 2013, to Dec. 23, 2013, and extending the deadline for payments due from Dec. 26, 2013, to Jan. 5, 2014.
- Establishing a telephone hotline for consumers to resolve enrollment questions. The hotline, [\(855\) 857-0445](tel:8558570445), will be available beginning Monday, Nov. 25.
- Sending information directly to nearly 1.13 million affected individuals statewide that provides clear options for coverage. The information will be sent from Covered California and the individual's current insurance provider.

CONTACT: Kathy Peterson, 760/924-1763

Eastern Sierra CASA program and Wild Iris are working together to create a healthier community for children and young adults - CASA stands for **Court Appointed Special Advocates** for children. A CASA volunteer is an ordinary person performing extraordinary duties. Each Court Appointed Special Advocate is a person who chooses to help a child navigate the difficulties of the Juvenile Court system.



As a sworn officer of the Court, with the relevant rights and responsibilities that pertain to that role, each CASA volunteer is appointed by the Juvenile Court to investigate and report back to the Court about the needs of an individual child.

CASAs spend time with the child, talk with them about the case and talk to everyone involved. Then, they report the facts to the Judge and tell the Court their opinion about what they feel is best for the child. Simply put CASA volunteers get to know the child and their circumstances and then speaks on the behalf to ensure that the child gets what he or she needs.

Mono County's Social Services Child Welfare staff work closely with Wild Iris and CASA volunteers in the implementation of this important program. To learn more about the program, please call Lisa Reel, Wild Iris at (760) 873-6601.

Contact: Kathy Peterson, 760/924-1763

Sheriff's Office



REMINDER! -- New home for Mono County Search and Rescue to be dedicated on November 23rd! - On Saturday, November 23rd, 2013, the SAR Team would like to extend a welcome invitation to all of their generous donors, and all the members of the Mono County communities, to join them in their building dedication and open house from **11:00am to 3:00pm at 1315 Meridian Blvd in Mammoth Lakes.**

CONTACT: Jennifer Hansen, (760) 932-5279