

Mono Basin Regional Planning Advisory Committee
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, January 12, 2022, 6:30pm
remote/virtual meeting via Zoom/conference call

Members present: Kevin Brown, Lisa Cutting, Duncan King, Elin Ljung, Bartshe Miller. **Members absent:** Ronda Kauk.

Public attendees & presenters: Mono County: Jason Davenport, Bob Gardner, Bentley Regehr, Wendy Sugimura. Public: Lynn Boulton, Margaret Eissler, Stephanie Heller (USFS), Mike Light, John Ljung, Ilene Mandelbaum, Connie Millar, David Rosky, Nathan Taylor, Jeff Wyneken.

1. Call to order & pledge of allegiance: 6:31pm

2. Public comment: Connie Millar: Would be valuable to have members of relevant agencies (State Parks, BLM, DWP, NPS, etc.) attend RPAC at regular intervals; will be agendized for next month.

3. Review minutes from December 5, 2021: Kevin moved to approve minutes from December as presented, Lisa seconded, approved unanimously with Bartshe abstaining.

4. Supervisor Gardner's report: The Covid situation is not great: we had 189 cases two weeks ago and 350 last week; hoping that's the peak. Case numbers are higher because Omicron variant is much more transmissible than other variants. Hospitalization rate is just fine so far and transfers to Reno have been possible. Important to wear masks inside; KN95s or N95s are preferred. Mammoth schools shut down due to staffing issues. Yesterday's Covid presentation at the Board of Supervisors meeting is full of good info: <https://monocounty.ca.gov/bos/page/board-supervisors-139>.

Horses are roaming the south side of Mono Lake. June Lake Chamber had posted on social media promoting viewing the horses but took the post down after Bob asked them. Will be talking to Ranger Heller and USFS folks about horses soon. State Parks is working on CEQA for some fencing around springs but held up because of Covid/staging/CCC crews that are required.

Fire Safe Council interested in making ponds off Dobie Meadows Road (on Hunewill property) available for fire suppression. It's an opportunity for County to work with agencies and landowner to get ponds in better shape so they could be used to fight fires. If anyone has info or could volunteer to help please let Bob know.

5. Chair's report: Was in England for Christmas, where 1 in 15 people were testing positive for Covid. Last month we heard that SCE brush clearing could be near the Filosena Ranch house but SCE will not be working near the house; "structure clearing" refers to structures like poles or towers, not buildings.

6. Members' reports:

Lisa, Elin, Kevin: Attended the Housing Committee meeting. No other updates.

Bartshe: The Mono Lake Committee is in negotiations with CalRecycle to try to reach a settlement about the berm they destroyed at the Visitor Center; goal is to rebuild the berm and revegetate it with a plan that will actually be successful. Mono Lake Committee, CalTrout, California Department of Fish & Wildlife, and DWP had the first official meeting since the State Water Board's stream restoration order

from last fall; National Fish & Wildlife Foundation will be the fiscal administrator for DWP funds for monitoring activities and USFS applications for waterfowl habitat restoration in the north Mono Basin.

7. Inyo National Forest update (Stephanie Heller): Starting wild horse management planning; should be doing public outreach in the next couple of months but NEPA process won't start until late in the year after USFS develops proposed action; waiting for carrying capacity reports for the Montgomery Horse Area where this herd belongs. Would probably be 2025 before USFS is ready to take action under this process and so looking into short-term, emergency actions that could be taken sooner. The resource damage is considerable and horses are getting closer to Highway 395.

Starting the over-snow vehicle management plan; first public meetings coming up in the next month. Right now snowmobiling is allowed anywhere it's not prohibited and the new plan will switch that: snowmobiling will be prohibited unless specifically allowed. In most of the Mono Basin snowmobiles are prohibited already but if you want to give input there will be chances (if you commented a few years ago those comments are on file but please reengage).

USFS will be increasing staffing by up to 20% (12 positions). Three positions coming to the Mono Lake District; recreation folks in particular for OHV/OSV management, special uses management, Visitor Center management.

8. Mono Basin Fire Safe Council: Discussed fuel breaks; according to Ranger Heller the fuel break work is on the program for 2022. Going to get a new banner and relocate the fire truck to a new location (suggested locations welcome). Talked about a citizens' wildfire academy that would include briefings from agency partners, home hardening, insurance issues, etc.; would include virtual and in-person meetings each month between now and June. The goal would be to increase awareness and education to get past the panic and into better states of preparation (mental and physical) for wildfires. Working on a map of fire rings that need to be removed; map is on the FSC website: <https://www.eswildfirealliance.org/mono-basin-fsc>.

9. Mono Basin Housing Committee: Continuing to discuss a variety of housing options: acquiring/leasing land from neighboring agencies to build new housing, starting a revolving fund to encourage ADU construction, survey to quantify housing need, inventory of housing options in Lee Vining/Mono City. We're at the point where we need more brains, ideas, and focus, so this is an official invitation to join the Housing Committee if you'd like: please let Bob or Elin know if you'd like to participate. We meet roughly monthly for one hour.

10. Mono Basin Bear Committee (Margaret Eissler): Committee met in early December with staff from the California Department of Fish & Wildlife (DFW). Discussed how to report a wildlife incident; the phone number and online options for reporting are not well known. Call dispatch to report an urgent issue: (909) 484-0167. Fill out the online form for full documentation of the incident: <https://apps.wildlife.ca.gov/WIR>. CDFW is creating a wildlife conflict position that Dan Taylor will be filling. Lisa was collecting bear incidents in Mono City, which have tapered off now that it's winter. With DFW the Committee will put together an outline of all possible efforts going forward and how to prioritize them; will bring that to the RPAC. Will relate to what Dan's priorities will be in the wildlife conflict position. Bears are awake and roaming in the June Lake Loop so this is pretty urgent.

11. Nominate and elect officers for Chair, Vice-Chair, and Secretary: Lisa nominated Kevin for Chair (with the understanding the Vice-Chair would need to run multiple meetings while Kevin is away during fire season), Bartshe seconded, unanimously approved. Virtual gavel handed to new Chair Kevin Brown! Bartshe nominated Lisa for Vice-Chair, Duncan seconded, unanimously approved. Bartshe nominated Elin for Secretary, Lisa seconded, unanimously approved.

12. Accessory Dwelling Unit presentation (Bentley Regehr): Bentley ran through the prescriptive designs the County is considering for ADUs (<https://monocounty.ca.gov/rpac-mono-basin/page/mono-basin-rpac-7>). The goal is to eliminate one design in order to cover four designs using state funds that are available (if the RPACs want to keep all five, it would cost the County about \$12,000). Bentley then took questions from the group. ADUs have the potential for reduced setbacks down to four feet if safety (fire, snow shedding) conditions can be met. Interested people can get the designs straight from the County and County will work with people to make sure snow loads check out for different communities. No cost per square foot estimate; build costs are market rate. For lots zoned residential, could people put many ADUs on a large lot? For typical residential lot the limit is 2 detached units; for a multi-family lot the limit is 3 detached units. Attic storage is being discussed for the designs. Septic and water requirements would have to be checked out by Louis Molina at the County; determined on a per-bedroom basis. All designs must meet the wildland-urban interface fire resistance requirements. Bartshe moved that the smaller one-bedroom option be eliminated, Lisa seconded, unanimous approval.

13. Review and adopt resolution to meet virtually until February 9, 2022 (planning staff): Unanimous vote in favor of adopting the resolution.

14. Information items (planning staff): See the project updates chart here: <https://monocounty.ca.gov/rpac-mono-basin/page/mono-basin-rpac-meeting>.

D&S Waste: Looking at how this project will interface with Pumice Valley Landfill, may have a more robust update next month.

Hipcamp: Intend to process that application as a specific plan (specific plan would be the new land use designation) in order to fit in everything that's being proposed but not including all the permitted uses under a new LUD. For example, under the LUD Rural Resort they have more options than under a specific plan. Goal is to narrow the scope of the project so CEQA analysis of all possible uses can be narrowed too. There will be public hearings at the Planning Commission and Board of Supervisors.

Caltrans Lee Vining Rehab Project: Met with Caltrans today to hear about their plans; County encouraged Caltrans to come to RPAC and do outreach to business owners.

15. Upcoming agenda items: Quarterly appearance of all land management agencies; discussion about the role/function/viability of RPAC and the regular meeting schedule; Benton Crossing Landfill closure update; update about horses; Visitor Center berm update; Lee Vining skate park; Caltrans Lee Vining Rehab Project (March 2022); letter of support for Kutzadika'a Tribal recognition; Mono Basin Community Plan sixth review – develop list of prioritized connectivity/transportation projects; SCE Lee Vining hydro relicensing at next public input stage.

14. Adjourned to next meeting, February 9, 2022: 8:13pm