

ESSRP Meeting | 2/6/2022

John Wentworth, Rita Keil, Sintia Kawasaki-Yee, Stephanie Heller, Patrick Johnston, Lynda Salcido, Bob Gardner, David Griffith, Rosemarie Smallcombe, Kristen Gentilucci, Ben Downard, Cindy Duriscoe, CL Mason, Joe Meyer, Lawson Reif, Dan Holler, Rick Kattelmann, Craig Albright, AK, Lesley Yen, Kristy Williams, Nichole Andler, James Powell, Nick, Matt Driscoll, Neil Peacock, Adam Barnett, Danna Stroud, Jeff Griffiths, Tim Bevins, Janet Hatfield, John Pinckney, Andre Miller, Karen Schwartz, Elsa Jimenez, JT Chevallier, Steve Baule, Stacy Corless, Nate Bech, John Dayberry, Tyler Roos, Brian Hansen, Matthew, Elizabeth Macphail, Christopher, Nick Wobbrock, James Rusk

47 participants

Welcome

- Nichole Andler, Chief of Interpretation and Education at Death Valley National Park. Coming from Great Basin National Park.
 - Nichole Andler, nichole_andler@nps.gov, 760-786-3279
- Neil Peacock, Caltrans Regional Transportation Planning
 - Neil Peacock, Caltrans District 9 Transportation Planning Manager: 916-605-8034 / neil.peacock@dot.ca.gov
- Ben Downard, Regional Planning Liaison for Caltrans in Mono County. Lead person on EV and climate change planning for the whole district.
 - Ben Downard, ben.downard@dot.ca.gov, 760-874-8319

Moving On

- Colin Robertson has moved on from his post at the Nevada Division of Outdoor Recreation.
 - Matthew Weintraub, his deputy, may take his place.

Situational Awareness

Breaking News, Janet Hatfield

- On March 1, the SNC will host their annual WIP Summit. It's an opportunity to encourage California policymakers to continue making investments in this landscape. Janet will present with Lesley Yen.
- Stacy Corless: SBC will host a meet-up following this event.
 - And just in case it didn't get posted yet, here's a link to more information about the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Watershed Improvement Program Summit and the reception: <https://sierranevada.ca.gov/what-we-do/2023-wip-summit/>

ESSRP News, John Wentworth

- John will follow up with the tribal consultation subcommittee.
- John will follow up about the ESRP MOU. The document will appear on this week's ESCOG agenda for consideration, not a vote.
- The ESRP MOU sets up a relationship between the ESRP and the ESCOG for pursuing regional projects.

Regional News, John Wentworth

- We got through a series of strong and exceptional atmospheric rivers.
- The basin and range did not receive as much snow in these storms as it did in 2017.
- Negotiations are underway at the state and federal level about maintaining minimum water levels in the Colorado River.

CERF Update, Stacy Corless

- They are waiting on paperwork from the state before they can kick off the process.
- They continue to try to fill seats for the governing board of the CERF Eastern Sierra region. There are also opportunities to serve on subcommittees. Some people from this call should apply. They need engagement from federal land management agencies.
- Here is information about CERF in Alpine/Inyo/Mono and the central Sierra, and opportunities to get involved. There is also a link to an informational meeting about CERF funding that will go directly to tribes in California. <https://www.sierrabusiness.org/archives/cerf/>

CEDS Update, John Wentworth

- This is the federal economic development planning program.
- Air service will be a large topic of conversation. How does air service interact with the Epic and Ikon passes? What are Mono County's interests? What are Inyo County's interests? Mammoth and Bishop's interests?

National News, John Wentworth

- We are seeing new science showing the mental health and memory health benefits of time in nature.
- Virtual reality is increasingly taking over our world. We live in our illusions. What's in the minds of our visitors?
- We're seeing challenges with visitor numbers and behaviors. Mammoth lift lines were long. Vehicles were stuck. Human and dog feces abounded.

California Forestry Workforce Summit, Janet Hatfield

- It's a challenge to build a forestry workforce in a nature-deprived society.
- Other challenges include: pay disparities, career pathway planning, housing, etc.
 - https://www.scienceforconservation.org/assets/downloads/Building_CAs_Forest_Resilience_Workforce.pdf
- Many organizations from the Tahoe basin showed up at this conference. They could've used more representation from the Eastern Sierra.
- Stacy Corless: The EDA funded a program for California Community Colleges to develop careers in forestry. It's called the Resilient Careers in Forestry.
 - There is a really important effort underway thanks to a \$21 million grant from the EDA's Good Jobs Challenge called the California Resilient Careers in Forestry Partnership - Sierra Business Council is a partner in this effort and I can keep this group informed on progress. <https://www.eda.gov/funding/programs/american-rescue-plan/good-jobs-challenge/awardees/Foundation-for-California-Community-Colleges>

State News

State Budget, John Wentworth

- Next year's budget proposal includes cuts to environmental spending, especially along the coast.
- OPR is close to launching the ICARP grant program. John serves on the program's task force and has been sharing lessons learned from the Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force. There may be money coming out of this program for the Eastern Sierra to invest in climate adaptation.

Caltrans Sustainable Transportation Planning Grants, Neil Peacock

- Local agencies can partner with eligible applicants for planning grants that support local priorities. This program could support ESTA, EV infrastructure, or shuttle services.
- Please reach out to Neil or Ben for application support.

California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force Meeting

Stacy Corless

- 2/3 of the state's population lives in Southern California.
- The chaparral landscape burns too frequently, especially in areas close to human habitation.
- These are our visitors.
- There was a presentation by two members of the Chumash Tribe, based near Santa Barbara. They have a nonprofit that offers tribal engagement trainings.

Danna Stroud

- It was important for the leaders in Sacramento to learn about the differences in wildfire risk management needs in Southern California, compared to the Sierra Nevada. It was also important for them to hear that the public in Southern California is willing to drive long distances to access outdoor recreation.
- The next meeting will be on the Central Coast, which has a similar landscape to Southern California.

30x30 Update

- Make sure you get on Lisbet Oleart's listserv with the Sierra Nevada Alliance. She provides important state policy and budget updates.

Regional News

Vanlife Discussion, Dan Holler

- There is a large number of people living and working from their vans. It's a challenge in the winter when there are fewer legal and safe parking areas and major snowstorms arrive. The TOML is looking at different options, including employer parking lots, the airport, and the old substation. This is truly a factor for the local workforce, as well as visitors.

ESCOG Update

Towns to Trails, Tim Bevins, James Powell, and Kristy Williams

- The project is getting underway with a pre-production data development phase running through March.
- Alta Planning + Design and MLTPA are excited to work with all of us. ESCOG is the sponsoring agency. SNC funded this project. The project emerged from SRTI.
- The goal of the project is to plan a trail that connects the towns of the Eastern Sierra to the surrounding public lands. The project will also identify pilots that are ready to implement right away.
- There will be a stakeholder kick-off in April. There will also be one-on-one meetings with agency representatives.
- The project will continue through December of 2024.
- We are developing project branding, including a trail blaze. We'll involve this group in the blaze development.

ESCCRP, Janet Hatfield

- They are in the final phase of refining proposed actions under NEPA.
- They are developing RFPs and price estimates. They hope to get these out next week.

Regional Projects, John Wentworth

- ESCOG has many projects to be discussed at its meeting this week.

Regional Projects

- Presentation on Town of Mammoth Lakes "Housing Now!" Initiative
- Award Contract for Buttermilk Infrastructure and Recreation Planning Initiative
- Approve California Advanced Services Fund Grant Disbursement
- Approve Staffing Contract with Inyo County for Executive Director
- Consideration of Master Challenge Cost Share Agreement with U.S. Forest Service / Inyo National Forest
- Consideration of Memorandum of Understanding Between the Eastern Sustainable Recreation Partnership and ESCOG
- Appoint ESCOG Members to the Mono Inyo Working Air Group
- Discussion on Community Economic Development Strategy Submittal by ESCOG and California Economic Resiliency Fund
- Selection of Chair and Vice Chair

Innovative Finance for Campgrounds Update, Andre Miller

- The project team is working with Inyo NF and ESCOG to finalize agreements that will support the ESCOG's Sustainable Recreation and Ecosystem Management Program of Work.
- They are working with the Inyo NF on campground concessionaire agreements.
- They are working with MLTPA on campground renderings and high-level economic impact analysis. The renderings will be available to this group soon.
- They are developing a "playbook" for implementing recreation infrastructure projects using non-appropriated funding.

Partner Updates

Alpine County

JT Chevallier

- They released an RFP for electric vehicle chargers and received some responses.
- They are working with Mono and Inyo counties, Mammoth and Bishop, and a consultant on economic development planning associated with a CEDS. The ESSRP has been a big point of conversation in that group.
- They continue to work on their angler economic analysis with CDFW.
- They will soon launch an “Are You Alpine?” marketing campaign with their chamber of commerce.

David Griffith

- Applications are in for the Resource Advisory Committee, run by the USFS. The county sponsored an application to extend the Camp Like a Pro program into Alpine County. Almost all of the other applications have to do with upgrading USFS facilities.

Bureau of Land Management, Chris Mason

- Chris is typically a law enforcement officer with the BLM out of Bishop.
- Sherri Lisius is trying to hire a few supervisory positions. Chris is temporarily acting in a recreation supervisor role.

City of Bishop

- No updates.

Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest

Brian Hansen

- They submitted for funding to improve several campgrounds and toilets. They also submitted for funding for temporary staff positions to support visitor education.
- H-T NF was awarded \$40-50 million to the Carson District to do forest health projects.
- They are working to fill a seasonal recreation staffer.
- They hired a permanent dispersed camping staffer.

Nate Bech

- They hired an OHV manager, Tyler Roos, and a backcountry manager, Elizabeth Macphail.
- They are still working to fill temporary positions. They may pursue an agreement with Mono County to maintain restrooms.
- The winter trails initiative is working. It is a pilot program to boost the local economy.
- Nate took a detail in Region 1.

Inyo National Forest

Adam Barnett

- The state OHV grant meeting is coming up tomorrow.

Lesley Yen

- Kevin Kiley mentioned the meeting in his newsletter. They may have more attendees than usual.
- They are working to hire a forest engineer. The current engineering staff is covering the position.

Stephanie Heller

- They are doing permanent hiring in the Lee Vining district.
- They are looking at alternate ways to fill seasonal spots.
- They received a grant to decommission and maintain legacy trails around Saddlebag Lake. The DeChambeau Creek Foundation, Friends of the Inyo, and Mono County supported the application.

Mono County, Bob Gardner

- Marcella Rose is getting going on using the Camp Like a Pro grant funds. She requested a meeting with ESSRP members on February 22.
- The DeChambeau Creek Foundation created several taskforces to address multiple projects in the Mono Lake Basin and June Lake area. They are recruiting volunteers and funding for these projects.

National Park Service, Joe Meyer

- Thank you to the meeting organizers!
- The first comment period of the Yosemite National Park visitor access management plan ended on Friday. They will launch a second comment period later.
 - Learn more: <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/740d505858b4481ab78be809080d425b>

Town of Mammoth Lakes

Dan Holler

- Snow removal continues.
- TOML will be looking to engage with the CEDS/CERF.
- The Town is working to add non-Tesla vehicle chargers.
- TOML is working with ORMAT and the INF to ensure snowmobilers don't collide with the geothermal pipelines.
- The new transfer station is up and running. It's been interesting to start this up around heavy snowstorms.

Lawson Reif

- The TOML will re-hire for Joel Rathje's trail coordinator position as soon as possible.
- The TOML is recruiting town host positions on a rolling basis.

- The TOML is working to groom the winter trail network. It's been difficult in the deep snow with their small snowmobile.
- The TOML is looking over the timber harvest plan for the Mammoth Donut.
- The archeologist will start their record reviews for the Sherwins with the Inyo National Forest very soon.