

Mono Basin Fire Safe Council Minutes

Prepared by John Warneke

16 February 2022 (via Zoom)

Attendees: Glenda Bayless, Eva Brown, Lisa Cutting, Robbie Di Paolo, Margaret Eissler, Santiago Escruceria, Bob Gardner, Duncan King, Paul McFarland, Connie Millar, Joe Moore, Tom Strazdins, Nathan Taylor, John Warneke

- Minutes of 19 January 2022 accepted without changes
 - RPAC would like to receive on a regular basis for wider dissemination (Duncan; Lisa)
- Public comment
 - After Kirkwood pond, look into cleaning out ponds at Goat Ranch (Glenda; Joe)
- Banner
 - 12' x 5' banner, \$330, with discount; Heavy-duty vinyl option, \$515
 - In this environment, would the heavier material last for 10 years? (Lisa)
 - Maybe have a banner that is less durable but adjust the image as needed and have multiple banners (Robbie)
 - "If you light it... be prepared to fight it!" draft
 - Message, image, logo draw attention to who is engaged and the risk (Robbie)
 - Last month, Holly Alpert's grant proposal suggested an Eastern Sierra-wide education program about fire safety, that could dovetail with Camp Like A Pro, and could be extended to FSC efforts in the Mono Basin (Robbie)
 - Email feedback: Is banner message inconsistent with Camp Like A Pro or future fire safety messaging?
 - Interpreted message as "If you light a fire that becomes like this [huge blaze], be prepared to fight it" (Margaret)
 - Branding of messaging / What is being messaged
 - Not able to be as flexible with messaging with a long-term banner; Explore options that satisfy situations of when you can or cannot have a campfire (Lisa)
 - Changing brands gets attention; Will messaging conflict with campfire prohibition? Having the same message across multiple signs makes people remember it more (Connie)
 - Another slogan with a charred landscape (Joe)
 - Not just campfires... should encompass care in this landscape (Margaret)
 - What are we trying to achieve with the banner message... Trying to motivate better behavior by humans regarding any possible risk for fire (Bob)
 - Location
 - Banner on fire truck, and maybe second banner on CalTrans fence where it angles towards the road (Robbie)
 - Will keep looking for images and think about messaging; Submit photos of burned landscapes/devastation of fire and feedback (Robbie)
- Google Earth campfire map (Robbie)
 - Possible stewardship day; Share info with land managers

- How transparent do we want information to be if hosting on website
- Easier to keep private as posted map looks like 'where to find a campfire ring'
- Reach out if you want to see the material
- From Holly's presentation last meeting
 - FSC submitted letter of support; 100 hours match for next 3 years (Robbie)
- Mono City fuel breaks
 - Stephanie Heller stated will be cleared this year
 - Unknown if areas both south, and north behind homes
 - Will follow up to clarify (Bob)
- East road from Mono City
 - Concerns that the dirt road is continuing to degrade, and is an important alternative escape route; Action item to check if Mono County Public Works can attend to (Robbie)
 - Problem area is a Forest Service road; BLM reports that in 2013, decision made for road to Hwy 167 because east road is not wide enough, in sage grouse habitat, and would require discussion with FS to maintain (Bob)
 - Quiet option is to go out with volunteers and improve problem section
 - Still need to talk with Forest Service
 - Will talk to Tony Dublino again regarding concerns and road width
 - Concern that because the road is there, people will be inclined to use it during an emergency situation regardless of its designation and may think it a better or the only other option; Use of it may be a potential liability in a chaotic situation (Robbie)
 - During 2013 discussion, east road seen as too long and too expensive to improve up to a standard, and no way to get agencies to do work; Would be good to improve road as we know people will use it if a fire is coming from the west (Connie)
 - From in-meeting chat: "It's Forest Road 02N22. As a designated road there can be minor maintenance within the existing roadbed. To reduce future erosion, the roadbed may need to be augmented with other materials." (Paul)
 - If a designated road and brush is encroaching, then trim it back... Widen it? Go out and do it... Changing the roadbed requires more effort
 - From in-meeting chat: "Since it would be a fire safety exit road maybe the USFS has some latitude with what they can do and how quickly. Public safety issue." (Lisa)
 - In 2013, the community assented to the choice of the north road but now if fire is coming from the northwest, the road might not be an option depending on the severity of the winds; Whether road is improved or not, people will use it or shelter in place if no access to the north or west road; Need to figure out what we want and work toward that goal
 - Long term project and goal may be interest in revisiting the road as an official fire escape; Insufficient before but maybe now engagement is needed (Robbie)
 - What is the need right now? Road will be used, and it requires annual maintenance; Responsibility and feasibility: (1) Engage land managers for

- something more permanent, (2) Advocate for road maintenance with minor grading and gravel, (3) Volunteer efforts, such as a stewardship day this year
 - Will talk to Stephanie Heller to address the concerns raised here, and ask if possible to have volunteers work on the problem area (Bob)
 - FS might want to put up signs on both ends, stating “Not an official road, Use at your risk” to keep from being sued
- Pre attack plan / Community Wildfire Protection Plan
 - Good info there; Set an action item or create focus group to pursue (Robbie)
 - For next meeting, review specifics for community recommendations and any action to take; Look into creating a plan for the Hwy 167 corridor; Attention to incorrect bits, e.g., Lundy Canyon is covered by Mono City plan (Paul)
- Updates from Bob Gardner
 - Citizens’ Wildfire Academy
 - Eastern Sierra Council of Governments as umbrella organization; Want for regional effort; Included in grant application Holly recently submitted; Lining up speakers for end of each month; Will use social & print media to garner attention
 - Will contact Jeff Hunewill regarding use of Kirkwood pond for wildfire suppression
 - Water storage funding available to utilize pickup trucks as temporary water tenders
 - Hawthorne explosions
 - Contact with Mineral County supervisor with knowledge of situation
 - Forest Service will put up new posters on bulletin boards this Spring
- Upcoming agenda items
 - Review pre attack plans for discussion
 - Banner draft & finalize to order
 - Plan for stewardship projects
 - Handout campfire fliers with wood bundles & at campsites
 - Funding for banner(s)
 - Discussion of cleaning ponds for water sources
- Next meeting to be held on 16 March 2022 at 5pm