



Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership (ESSRP)

Monday January 8, 2024 – 3:30 PM

Via ZOOM: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88006162291?pwd=K2Y3REdyZkpTdHBYSiROVjF3MzZ4QT09>

Meeting ID: 880 0616 2291 Passcode: 495260

Items Highlighted in Yellow are attached to the agenda. Please also review the meeting presentation.

The Partnership Current Signatories: Alpine County*; BLM* City of Bishop*; Inyo County*; CALTRANS*; Mono County; Town of Mammoth Lakes; Inyo National Forest; Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, National Park Service*
*have voted or otherwise agreed to sign partnership agreement **Partners in Process:** NPS; LADWP

1. Land Acknowledgement

2. Welcome + Housekeeping

- a. Introductions / Farewells
 - i. Taro Pusina
 - 1. Mount Whitney District Ranger, Inyo National Forest
 - 2. White Mountain District Ranger (Acting), Inyo National Forest
 - ii. Aaron Wilcher - UC Cooperative Extension, Eastern Sierra Region
 - iii. Chelsea Taylor - MLTPA Project Specialist
- b. Hot Links
 - i. January 8, 2023

3. Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation: Overviews + Looking Forward to 2024

a. Regional: Overview + Opportunities

- i. Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership
 - 1. Formalizing the MOU and preparing for the next iteration of ESSRP
 - 2. ESSRP is still supported and funded by MLTPA
- ii. Buttermilk Infrastructure & Recreation Planning Initiative
 - 1. Completed. Managed by ESCOG. Beautiful toilet.
 - 2. Follow up coming from Inyo County – call for a workgroup
- iii. Towns to Trails
 - 1. Public meetings coming up
- iv. Inyo National Forest Campgrounds
 - 1. QV is done.
 - 2. Relationships and other good planning docs came out of effort
 - 3. Pilot programs in the works based out of Independence and Lee Vining
- v. California Jobs First (Community Economic Resilience Fund / CERF)
 - 1. Important work coming out of this. Initial list of projects reflect recreation priorities.
- vi. Eastern Sierra Council of Governments
 - 1. Institutional basis to bring these things together.

b. Regional + State of California: Overview + Opportunities

- i. Visit California / High Sierra Region / Strategic Tourism Plans
 - 1. Visit California: The Ultimate Playground
 - 2. Outdoors for All: Historic Plan to Increase Outdoor Access in California



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3. SRTI: Eastern Sierra Visitor Connection Program
- ii. California's Fifth Climate Assessment / Regional Synthesis Reports
 1. SRTI: "A Changing Climate | Vulnerability in California's Eastern Sierra"
 2. CALREC Vision: Sierra Nevada Region
- iii. California Wildfire & Forest Resilience Task Force – 2023 Year in Review
 1. Eastern Sierra Climate and Communities Resilience Project (ESCCRP)
 2. CALREC Vision: Joint Strategy for Sustainable Outdoor Recreation & Wildfire Resilience
- iv. CALREC Vision
 1. UC ANR: Institute for Sustainable Outdoor Recreation in California
- v. Recreate Responsibly California
- vi. California State Budget
- vii. California Climate Bond
- c. **Regional + Federal Government: Overview + Opportunities**
 - i. Government Shutdown Threats
 - ii. Federal Elections
4. **Heading up Tumanguya (Shoshone) / Mount Whitney – One Step at a Time**
 - a. Proposed ESSRP featured agenda Items for 2024
5. **Partner Insights and Updates in REVERSE Alphabetical Order**
 - a. Town of Mammoth Lakes – Lawson Reif
 - i. Snow – a little short on snow for grooming, coordinating with the FS. Tamarack opens today. Working out issues with partners related to parking in shady rest and lakes basin. Gate on Sherwin Creek Road – ready for snow events and plowing. Replacing signage broken from last winter with FEMA money. Ice rink is amazing. Looking into grant funding for interpretive signage near Mammoth Creek parcel to provide information to the public on the thinned-out area.
 - ii. Looking ahead in 2024– SHARP enviro analysis, contractor submitted a report to the FS and should have more information in 30-60 days after they have completed their review. Sherwin's Trail Head (after motocross event) to get updated with new bathrooms, signage – whole 9-yards at the. Also refining Black Bear Run, reroutes and some smaller projects.
 - b. National Park Service - Joe Meyer
 - i. YNP has announced plans for a reservation system – Peak Hours Plus. Little different than previous summers with variation on system during 6-week peak of summer. Beginning and end of summer reservations required over weekends and holidays. Height of summer it will be every day. Link: <https://www.nps.gov/yose/planyourvisit/reservations.htm>
 1. Locals will be able to pass without paying – need DL with proof of residence.



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- ii. Reservation system for Horsetail Falls Season – two weeks at the end of February.
- iii. Find this meeting very useful. Can't think of anything specific to ask for from this meeting. Will seek feedback.
- iv. One more NPS item: DEPO is currently hiring for several positions at the USAJobs.gov website. Please share this information with anyone who may be interested.
- c. Mono County
 - i. Marcella – Sus Rec Coordinator for Mono County. SOW for Rec Division for Mono County was approved, making some slight adjustments. Completed the Buckeye Gate project – improving public safety. Two kiosks adjustable to snow level – exciting for HTNF. Helped INF get winter rec signage ready for ski trails. need the snow. In admin mode, planning. Looking forward to expanded partnerships and looking for grants – camp like a pro and front country OHV projects – still working on Travertine HS Kiosk and gate installation in the spring. HTNF and Mono County are developing a winter (motorized and nonmotorized) connector trail through Twin Lakes Valley in Bridgeport. Just need snow.
 - ii. Bob Gardner & Lynda Salcido – first meeting tomorrow and no real updates. Outdoor Magazine article – talking about rec opportunities in Bridgeport
- d. Inyo National Forest, USFS –
 - i. Adam Barnett
 - 1. Comment analysis for over snow vehicle planning – info to come in a month or so. Campground renovation planning in reds meadow, Lower Lee Vining and one Independence CG. 3 major trail projects approved continuing from last year
 - 2. 50 TH kiosks with new signage coming this summer. New toilet replacements through GAOA. OHV – coyote OHV planning grant and starting to OHV planning for restoration
 - 3. Hiring again – seasonal and gaps in resource specialists dept.
 - ii. Fred
 - 1. Staffing - Stephanie Hellar Mono Lake Ranger District – Fred is acting in the short-term
 - 2. Not enough snow for grooming yet
 - 3. Sherwin – know it looks bad but, we're planning to sell logs – hauling it out is the hard part. Done here in the short term. Looking for alternative storage place. Motocross is still going on in this area
 - 4. 2024 vision – better communication with the public and partners regarding Red's Meadow closures. Almost ready to release new schedule. Public will have more restrictive access. Expect this to wrap up sooner with these restrictions. Hoping to be flexible based on snow.



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5. Question for Adam: GAOA – replacing HVAC in Mono Visitor Center, is there money for this?
 - a. Included in FY24 budget request but don't know if it's been funded
- iii. Taro –
 1. Calder Reed, is Mt Whitney District Rec Officer
 2. Dana Durgo White Mountain, working with Dan Rossier on Scoping Buttermilk Climbing Advisory Committee – more info coming. Thanks for the toilet.
 3. BBC filming natural history series related to climate change – buttermilks will be the backdrop in later winter early spring.
 4. Thankful for the partnerships and the work in Buttermilks and Coyote
- e. Inyo County – not present
- f. HT National Forest, USFS – Aaron Coogan
 - i. Marcella hit many of our updates. Nordic ski route. May close Buckeye Gate after snow. Bridgeport Rec Area has enough snow to open for OSV travel. Moving forward with Hoover Wilderness increased fee proposal. Going to CA "RAC" hoping to get this in place before the season starts. Staffing – limited with perm rec staff being three people. Missing a manager and wildlife biologist
 - ii. Mill Canyon pile burn are going. Continuing this week and into next week.
 - iii. 2024 in Bridgeport – "we'll see". Pretty light on snow so far.
- g. ESCOG – Elaine Kabala
 - i. Wrapped up Buttermilk Planning Initiative. Doc is available on the ESCOG website – going to board for acceptance in Feb. Happy the bathroom has been well received. Lots of positive feedback. Good ongoing public participation. Emotional attachment to this area and this was a successful effort.
 - ii. 2024 – we will be focusing on the towns-to-trails effort. Look for these public meetings to start in Q1 in 2024, will share feedback
 - iii. Working on CJFI and elevating the sustainable rec tourism opportunities from this group to community and make sure they are included in catalyst funding opportunities and policy docs.
 - iv. Focus on capacity building to continue to strengthen partnerships we have – especially with the INF
- h. City of Bishop – Not present
- i. CALTRANS – Andrew Besold
 - i. Shared chart from USDOT with many funding sources. Wanted to make sure you all had this info.
 - ii. USBR 85 – the people at Adventure Cycling are likely going to petition to designate this route this March. Seems like a good route – Walker Canyon section leaves me a little



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freaked out. Seems like it's the only way through. South of ML the route tries to get off of 395. Curious why it doesn't continue off of 395 in other areas. Seems like it would be wise to move it off between Bishop and Big Pine.

- iii. Working on repaving 190 in Furnace Creek area – bad water road, through furnace creek, almost to castle road. Would like to see shoulder – traffic volumes are warranting this. Been in contact with tour guides out here. Want to keep traffic stress low. Seeing how we might work with the NPS at Death Valley to talk about this shoulder expansion.
- iv. End of January – doing Active Transportation Grant process is being announced – Cycle 7. Having an open house Tuesday Feb 13th – Bishop office district 9. Active Transportation Workshop – if you're looking for a state ATV grant you can get more info at this meeting
 - 1. Grant Opps -
https://www.fhwa.dot.gov/environment/bicycle_pedestrian/funding/funding_opportunities.pdf
- v. Mid-March- Date TBD – complete streets planning workshop. Learn how to create active complete streets to use off the highway system. Primarily for Cal Trans employees but open to others interested.
- vi. Still learning my role as active transport and clean streets guy and what is possible. Aware that the best place to ride is not on a state highway but looking to work together to identify ways to support good experiences.
- vii. Available for questions!
- j. BLM – not present
- k. Alpine County
 - i. David Griffiths – monitor pass is half maintained by districts 9 and 10 (west side). If the pass is closed between storms, it really hurts our towns/business. District 10 is willing to do the extra work to clear it but wondering if District 9 could be talked into doing more to help keep the pass open and support local businesses. Great opportunity to open our community and support our businesses.
 - 1. Andrew will relay concerns -someone should advise
 - ii. Andy Lovell – Director of Alpine Trails Association
 - 1. Largest turnout of volunteers in our 10 years for EOY event. 2024 - Want to keep momentum to develop trail systems. Using the towns-to-trails project and county trails plan to develop first ever county trails plan. Want to connect Inyo, Mono, Alpine, Douglas counties.
 - 2. S Tahoe Public Utilities to connect Markleville. Picked up a trail behind desolation hotels. Multi-use trails hopefully coming. These areas have been impacted by Tamarack Fire – 100% tree mortality. Nothing but tobacco brush and manzanita etc.



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Volunteer turnout was great and we cleared 10/19 of destroyed trails. Took care of the worst.

3. Writing a proposal for a new disc golf course. Two new board members – glad to have them on board

6. Next Meeting - First Monday of the Month @ 3:30

- a. Monday February 5, 2024 @ 3:30 Via Zoom