

COUNTY OF INYO NATURAL RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF DECEMBER 16, 2010 MEETING

MEMBERS:

DOUG HICKS
CARL HOELSCHER
JIM SCOTT
DAVID TANKSLEY
GREG WEIRICK

VICE-CHAIR

CHAIR

Inyo County Planning Department
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ALTERNATES:

DAVID BEAVER
TYSON SPARROW

STAFF:

JOSHUA HART
DAN STEWART

PLANNING DIRECTOR

PLANNING COMMISSION SECRETARY

The Inyo County Natural Resource Advisory Committee met on Thursday, December 16, 2010, at 300 Mandich (Department of Water and Power) Bishop, CA 93514.

Chair Tanksley called the meeting to order at 6:00 p.m.

Chair Tanksley led the Pledge of Allegiance.

ITEM 1: ROLL CALL - Members: David Tanksley, Doug Hicks, Carl Hoelscher and Jim Scott, and alternate David Beaver.

Also present were: Josh Hart, Planning Director; Dr. Bob Harrington, Inyo County Water Department Director; Dan Stewart, Planning Coordinator; Bernadette Lovato, BLM; Steve Cupp, Local Building Contractor.

ITEM 2: PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE- The pledge of Allegiance was led by Chair Tanksley.

ITEM 3: PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD – This is the opportunity for anyone in the audience to address the Committee on any related subject that is not scheduled on the Agenda.

There were none.

ITEM 4: APPROVAL OF MINUTES (Action) – Approval of Minutes from October 16, 2010.

MOTION: Moved by Mr. Tanksley and seconded by Mr. Hoelscher to approve the Minutes from October 16, 2010.

The Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 5: OFF HIGHWAY VEHICLE (OHV) GRANT PROGRESS – Mr. Doug Hicks presented an update on the State of California Off-Highway Motor Vehicle Recreation Grant application process. Mr. Hicks stated that there is \$27 million dollars available in grant funding from the Green Sticker revenue, which is geared toward OHV projects. Mr. Hicks gave

an overview of the upcoming grant deadlines, and suggestions on proceeding to apply for the OHV grant funding. He also stated that there were two upcoming meetings, one in Northern California and one in Southern California on January 10, 2011.

MOTION: Moved by Mr. Tanksley and seconded by Mr. Scott to request funding to attend one of the January 10, 2011 meetings, with the understanding that the NRAC would support perusing the grant for the purpose of mapping routes in Inyo County.

The Motion passed unanimously.

ITEM 6: **BIG PINE MITIGATION** – Dr. Bob Harrington, Inyo County Water Department Director, provided the Committee an update on the Big Pine Regreening Project just northeast of town. Mr. Harrington stated this project is overseen by the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) and is a mitigation project under the Inyo/LA Long Term Water Agreement. He further stated that the project involves the use of 150 acre-feet of water annually to re-establish vegetation in the Owens Valley. Dr. Harrington stated that the amount water used by this project is negligible in the overall picture of the water use in the Owens Valley. Dr. Harrington gave a brief overview of the DWP water pumping in the area.

Mr. Scott asked for a map of the proposed site of the Big Pine Regreening Project. Dr. Harrington provided a couple of maps depicting the area of the proposed projects.

The Committee thanked Dr. Harrington for providing a summarization of the Big Pine Regreening Project.

ITEM 7: **ALABAMA HILLS DESIGNATION** – Bernadette Lovato from Bureau of Land Management provided a summary about mineral resources in the Alabama Hills and issues related to a potential federal land use designation in the Alabama Hills, which included a move through aerial analysis. There was some discussion about the origination of Senator Feinstein's Alabama Hills Designation.

Mr. Tanksley voiced his disappointment, at length, about the lack of influence that the public's comments had on the Board of Supervisors decision to issue a letter of support for the Alabama Hills National Scenic Area Designation at their December 14, 2010 meeting in Independence. Mr. Scott also stated his disappointment in the Board's decision to issue a letter of support.

The Committee thanked Ms. Lavato for her time.

ITEM 8: **CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT SEMINAR** – Joshua Hart, Planning Director, gave a brief presentation regarding the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) process.

ITEM 9: **WILDERNESS** – After a brief discussion the Committee considered postponing action until the next scheduled NRAC meeting.

MOTION: Moved by Mr. Tanksley and seconded by Mr. Beaver to further evaluate and discuss wilderness issues and consider recommending to the Board of Supervisors a draft resolution opposing new wilderness designations in Inyo County at the next NRAC meeting.

ITEM 10: **CR BRIGGS** – The Committee received a presentation from Mr. Beaver regarding his attendance at a special Board of Supervisors meeting at the CR Briggs Gold Mine

in the Panamint Valley. The Board of Supervisors and all in attendance received a tour of the gold mine. Mr. Beaver indicated that the Briggs operation stated that for every ton of material processed 0.2 ounces of gold is realized, at a cost of \$800.00 per ounce. Mr. Beaver stated that the mine life at current gold prices is only four to five years, if Briggs is able to expand their operations northward.

The Committee requested updates regarding mining operations in the County from staff.

ITEM 11: OTHER UPDATES FROM COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND PLANNING STAFF – Mr. Hoelscher inquired about the recent road closures in the Coyote area. Mr. Stewart replied that he noticed some of the spur roads had been closed for public access during a recent trip to the area.

Mr. Hart provided a brief summarization of the recent activity for proposed General Plan Amendment that would encourage commercial scale solar and wind energy development in appropriate areas in Inyo County. He stated that the Comment Period starts tomorrow. Mr. Tanksley commented that he supports solar energy development.

ITEM 11: SCHEDULING OF NEXT MEETING – After a discussion of availability, it was determined that the next meeting would be held on January 27, 2011.

Chair Tanksley adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m. to reconvene on January 27, 2011.

Prepared by:

Dan Stewart,
Staff To
Natural Resource Advisory Committee