

## Lee Vining, FERC Project No. 1388

### RECREATION AND LAND USE TWG 2 MEETING NOTES FEBRUARY 25, 2021; 10 AM - 11 PM PDT

*\*These meeting notes are documentation of general discussions from the meeting held on the above-noted date. These notes are not a verbatim account of proceedings, are not meeting minutes, and do not represent any final decisions or official documentation for the project or participating agencies.*

#### 1. Attendees

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##### Relicensing Team Members

Carissa Shoemaker, ERM  
Finlay Anderson, Kleinschmidt  
Kelly Larimer, Kleinschmidt  
Matthew Harper, Kleinschmidt  
Matthew Woodhall, SCE  
Martin Ostendorf, SCE  
Shannon Luoma, Kleinschmidt

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##### Agencies and Interested Stakeholders

Adam Barnett, USFS  
Bartshe Miller, Mono Lake Committee  
Katie Goodwin, Access Fund  
Monique Sanchez, USFS  
Nick Buckmaster, CDFW  
Sheila Irons, USFS  
Stephen Bowes, NPS

#### 2. Compiled Action Items

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- USFS and Mono Lake Committee will get the relicensing team their study requests as soon as possible.
  - Relicensing team to request ice climbing guide permit/usage information from USFS.

#### 3. Welcome, Introductions, Review of Notes and Other TWGs' Potential Studies

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- Matthew Woodhall provided a Safety moment
  - Introductions of team and participants via chat
  - Review of notes/comments from January
  - Finlay Anderson listed the potential studies / study requests that are being discussed in the other resource TWGs

#### 4. Discussion of Resource Management Objectives / Potential Study Requests

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- **Creel Census**
    - Comment: CDFW
      - To summarize this study request: we don't have a good estimate of fishing pressure at the project. The reservoirs/resources are essentially created by the project. We want to determine what the users would like to see, what fish they want to catch, etc. We want to use professional standards for a good robust creel survey, the industry standard.
      - Comment: Relicensing team – Where should this survey take place, lakes and creeks too?

- CDFW – We also want to include areas around campgrounds, but in general we are more concerned with the lakes. Consider doing a “roving creel” or “car creel” to estimate differential pressure between lakes and streams. The assumption is that fishermen using campground areas and creeks are also fishing in the lakes. We could get a rough count of creek fishers while doing the lake assessment.
- Relicensing team – We can fine tune methods the way we did with Bishop. This may be put into its own study or wrap it into the Recreation Use and Needs Evaluation.
- **Recreation Use and Needs Evaluation**
  - Comment: Relicensing team
    - This is one of the main studies that we perform. There was also an indirect request to look at trails/access; we will figure out where this should be assessed and how the resources are interconnected. We haven’t gotten any official requests with study areas and specific methods (except the Creel census). We can likely get the creel survey data collected during this Recreation Use survey. We are interested in quantitative and qualitative data on what people are doing and what they want, which involves person-to-person surveys, spot counters, traffic counters, etc. We’d suggest using the reservoirs as a starting point for a study area.
- **Condition Assessment of Existing Facilities**
  - Comment: Relicensing team
    - Most of the existing facilities are there adjacent to/on the lakes, e.g. trail that goes all the way around the Saddlebag reservoir. Landscape architects would assess the existing structures. Will put together draft study plans between now and the next meeting.
- Comment: USFS
  - Inyo National Forest is scheduling time with recreation specialists to address these questions. We haven’t responded yet to your homework assignment for study requests yet but plan to. We do want to capture any nexus with recreation facilities and activities in the area.
- Comment: Access Fund
  - Regarding recreation use at Saddlebag Lake, I use that trail a lot. I noticed last year that there is a ferry across Saddlebag Lake that cuts out about 2 miles of easy walking. There are impacts from people offloading from the ferry on Saddlebag Lake, folks scatter across the tundra grass there. There is degradation of trails and vegetation there from picnicking and offloading.
  - Response: Relicensing team – Dispersed activities like this are definitely going to be looked at, and we do want to figure out how to reduce these impacts. Have you seen camping there?
  - Access Fund – There is less camping, more backpacking, fishing, and picnicking happening. Wondering if it’s worth looking at since there are a lot of people using the area.

- Comment: Mono Lake Committee
  - We are putting together our study requests still. Possibility of focused recreation use at Saddlebag, at Ellery at pull out, and at north end of Tioga Lake in regards to vehicle density on dirt areas. There is the possibility of non-point source pollution and run off (dumping of coolers, pet waste, etc.) at these pullouts increasing due to recreation/vehicle use at these pull outs.
  - Relicensing team – California Department of Transportation owns and manages these pull outs; however, there is an Edison sign at the Ellery Lake pullout, adjacent to the project boundary. We can take a look at those.
  - Mono Lake Committee – Pulling off in these areas is due to the scenic views at the reservoirs, so they seem related to the project. Camping right at the shoreline of Saddlebag and Tioga Lakes is increasing, with no buffer between vehicles. This isn't happening at Ellery Lake because there is no direct driving access to the shoreline.
  - Relicensing team – There have been requests in Aquatics TWG for an erosion study and water quality study; these concerns might fit into these requests if we include the recreation areas in the study areas. We haven't started talking about vehicle runoff specifically yet, so Mono Lake Committee should submit this in a study request if you're interested in this.
- Comments: USFS
  - The road to Poole Powerhouse is a native (dirt) surface road and is only plowed because Edison needs to get access into the plant, and it is adjacent to the creek.
  - There is no overnight dispersed camping allowed here, only in wilderness areas and in developed campgrounds.
  - Comment: Access Fund – It is already well known, but this year especially this added camping pressure is a product of needing to have permits to enter Yosemite. There is a lot of dispersed camping anywhere you can fit a vehicle. The permit requirement was were reinstated for 2021, it was implemented as a response to Covid-19.
- Comment: Relicensing team
  - A question for USFS, regarding ice climbing, some guides lead groups out for climbing in the canyon and those require permits, can that permit information be compiled and shared with us to be included in our PAD/DLA. If guides have to report numbers, etc.
  - Response: USFS – Yes, we can get that for you if you send me a note I can ask the district permit administrator.
- Comment: Relicensing team
  - The question raised last TWG about trails/access will be assessed but we are not sure where yet.

## 5. Schedule & Next Steps

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- Relicensing team will review the requests in further detail, brainstorm, and come back for next TWG with some clearer outlines and questions for TWG.

- Provide the relicensing team your study requests as soon as possible; however, it is an iterative process so if they are not totally finished by the next meeting we will be okay.
- USFS and Mono Lake Committee are still working on study requests.
- Additional action items are underlined above

#### 6. Upcoming TWG Meetings

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Aquatics 3	March 29, 2021 10am
Terrestrial 3	March 31, 2021 10am
Cultural and Tribal 3	March 31, 2021 1:30pm
<b>Recreation and Land Use 3</b>	<b>April 1, 2021 10am</b>