

Big Sur Multi-Agency Advisory Council

Meeting Minutes

Congressman Jimmy Panetta and Supervisor Mary Adams, Co-Chairs

**In-person meeting
Big Sur Lodge
47225 Highway One,
Big Sur, CA 93920**

Friday, June 3, 2022
10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

MINUTES

I. Call to Order -

Supervisor Adams called the meeting to order at 10:10am.

Chair Supervisor Mary Adams requested to add a new discussion item to the agenda, following Reports from Member Agencies, to discuss how members of BSMAAC and community members would prefer to meet in the future, remotely or in-person.

Motion to approve adding to agenda:

Motion by Sara von Schwind

Second by Kirk Gafill

Motion passes unanimously

II. Roll Call and Introductions

- a. Big Sur Resident, North Coast – Martha Karstens
- b. Big Sur Resident, South Coast – Bree Harlan
- c. Big Sur Chamber of Commerce - Kirk Gafill
- d. Community Association of Big Sur – Ryne Leuzinger
- e. Monterey County Planning Department – Jamie Scott Guthrie
- f. Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District – Caine Camarillo
- g. California Coastal Commission – Sean Drake
- h. Caltrans – Sara von Schwind
- i. California State Parks and Recreation - Absent
- j. Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary - Absent
- k. United States Forest Service – Tim Short
- l. 5th District, Monterey County Board of Supervisors – Mary Adams
- m. 30th District, California State Assembly – Dominic Dursa
- n. 17th District, California State Senate – John Laird
- o. 20th District, United States Congress – Jimmy Panetta

III. Approval of the March 25, 2022 Minutes

Draft minutes were accepted and approved.

Motion by Kirk Gafill

Second by Bree Harlan

Motion passes unanimously

IV. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items – limited to 3 minutes

- **Marcus Foster:** Introduced KeepBigSurWild.org, a group of concerned residents formed to protect Big Sur from the threat of overuse, and to make everyone aware of the solid land use plan approved by the Coastal Commission. Please visit our website at keepbigsurwild.org for more information.
- **Joel DePola** from the south coast: Visitors Use Management meeting next Wednesday. Because Nacimiento-Fergusson Road is closed, visitors are venturing onto the dirt roads. Before we make decisions to put mechanical arms on residential dirt roads, we need more enforcement.
- **Lindsay Romanow:** Uncontrolled visitor access is no longer viable; it's both unsafe and unsanitary. Develop a reservation system and close the road to those without reservations. Asking CA elected officials to figure out how to restrict access to the state highway.
- **Joe Moses** introduced himself to share that he is running for M.C. Sheriff.
- **Rosanna Leighton**, VP of Operations of SPCA: Recommends remembering your animals when preparing for disasters. She can come out and do a presentation about preparedness. She has connected with the CERT team. rleighton@spcamc.org
- **Constance McCoy:** Shared the results of citizen patrols over the holiday weekend. They- advised campers of regulations, including the prohibition against fires. Dismantled more than 30 campfire rings. Prevented fires from getting out of control. In some cases, they were verbally abused. No USFS personnel were present. They are doing the job that USFS enforcement should be doing. (Full transcript of Ms. McCoy's letter available upon request.)
- **Jon Wizard** introduced himself to share that he is running for the Assembly seat.
- **Rep. Jimmy Panetta** introduced his new staff: Susie Brusa, District Director, and Xochitl Guerrero, who works on Veterans issues as well as Big Sur area.
- **Matt Glazer**, GM of Deetjen's Inn, provided a message of hope. Very grateful for this community and this place.

V. New Business

No New Business was proposed.

VI. Old Business

- Big Sur Byway Organization Report from Martha Diehl, read by Colleen Courtney. "BSBO now has a home base in and official support from Monterey County HCD. Eric Lundquist has assigned planner Craig Patton to take on managing the administrative support that Sarah Hardgrave has been so ably providing to date, and that transition is underway. Besides providing a way to keep records, make information available, and allowing us to operate within the Brown Act requirements this change also provides a pathway for us to apply for and manage grant funding." Eligible and planning to apply for grant from FHWA. Signage to remind of the prohibition on roadside camping will be provided by Public Works, with input from the ByWays committee, balancing signage need (to enforce the law) with limiting signage (to maintain beauty). Other discussion topics included committee updates on invasive species, landslide disposal sites, and bridge railings, as well as congestion and garbage. There is still one vacant position on the ByWays for a Big Sur Resident. Please apply with Sarah Hardgrave if you are

interested. The next BSBO meeting is coming up on Wednesday June 15th, 2022, 1-3PM via Zoom. If you would like to participate, please contact Craig Patton, Sarah Hardgrave and/or me to be sure you are on the distribution list.

- Matt Glazer had question about how ByWays Organization is different/going to be working in parallel with BSMAAC. Mary Adams suggested putting it on the next agenda, and said the ByWays would get back to him. Sara von Schwind added that the ByWays can get into the detail of the issues, where BSMAAC doesn't get into the detail. ByWays is the Working Group, to report out to BSMAAC. CHMP vision execution group. (Full report available upon request.)

VI. Reports from Member Agencies

a. Big Sur Resident, North Coast – Martha Karstens:

- Grange support is good. Rentals picking up. No longer a voting location. Voting mobile unit coming to the library. Kitchen project almost complete. www.bigsurgrange.org.
- Subscribe to the "Round Up" for \$11/year. Good publication to stay informed.
- Regarding the Historical Society: Historical Society is archiving relevant articles. Work continues on our new cookbook, but we need recipes, photos and stories! You may send them to bigsur.cookbook@gmail.com. Thank you to State Parks for repairing the handicapped ramp.
- Gave brief CERT report. www.bigsurcert.org. Gave Friends of the Library Book and Bake sale report. To benefit Big Sur Fire Muster/BBQ July 9th, noon to 3:00.

b. Big Sur Resident, South Coast – Bree Harlan: Nacimiento-Fergusson Road is closed, but visitors frequently cut the chain, and residents now keep chains in their car. Fires were averted over the holiday weekend by citizen patrols. Recommends increasing signage, as many of the visitors encountered reported ignorance about the campfire prohibition. She hopes that USFS can have two law enforcement officers to enforce the regulations between Memorial Day and Labor Day between Plaskett and Los Burros. Likes the big flashing sign that says NO CAMP FIRES.

c. Big Sur Chamber of Commerce – Kurt Gafill: Save the Date October 22, 2022 for Big Sur River Run fundraiser for BS Health Center and Big Sur Fire. State Parks is a great partner for this event. BS Visitation has been strong. Many businesses are operating on modified schedules due to tight labor market. Business is much improved from the pandemic.

d. Community Association of Big Sur – Ryne Leuzinger: Forest Service Fire Prep meeting this Wednesday from 10-3. Data Collection efforts around illegal camping. 200 vehicles in 24 hours on Los Burros. Law enforcement was present on Plaskett and in the back country. Recommending signage at Point Lobos coming south and at the southern access stating "no fires allowed." We are hiring a Fire Adaptive Community Coordinator, underwritten for the first year by Nepenthe, Ventana, Post Ranch and River Inn. Duties include community wildfire plans, workshops, risk assessment, and evacuation planning. Securing grant funding for landscape fuel reduction. FACC position is with CABS, but in coordination with BSF. Key future goal: to work with each neighborhood to obtain Firewise status.

- e. **Monterey County Planning Department – Jamie Scott Gutherie**
Big Sur Land Use Plan is going through an update. The Ad Hoc Committee continues to meet. Master Permit proposal to streamline the permitting process for conservation projects. Working with Resource Conservation District of Monterey County and others, for projects beneficial to the environment, to make getting a permit easier. (Written report of current permits available upon request.)
- f. **Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District – Caine Camarillo:** Parks remained open during the pandemic, testing capacity. Reviewed some improvements made during pandemic. Bringing back Mill Creek caretaker. Remains closed due to Palo Colorado Road closure. Working with BS Marathon Foundation on a cross county course at local schools that can also be used as hiking trail. MP Regional Parks turning 50 this year.
- g. **California Coastal Commission – Sean Drake:** To replace Mike Watson, he is sharing staffing BSMAAC with Alex McCoy, who attended last meeting. Conservation projects are a delicate balance to preserve nature with maintaining defensible space. There will be a hearing on Carmel River Free project at the Commission’s June meeting 8, 9, 10th. We believe that the project will be approved. The meeting can be attended via zoom.
- h. **Caltrans – Sara von Schwind:** The flashing red light at Granite Creek Bridge means stop, look, proceed when clear. Caltrans is in between construction projects and needs to maintain the construction signage in place. Marcus Foster suggested a “slow” sign, rather than the flashing red. Another resident supported a “10 mph” sign. “The flashing red light makes the residents crazy.” “Just start the red light when construction is active.” Ms. Von Schwind shared that CalTrans is required to follow many rules that complicate the situation. She doesn’t disagree with the suggestions, but they would be out of compliance. She reminded the group that this is temporary; that hopefully construction will be complete by the next BSMAAC meeting. Also spoke about Point Lobos trail with a dilapidated bridge that directed pedestrians off the highway. Met with State Parks, Sen. Laird’s office and Point Lobos to work on a solution to re-establish this unofficial trail for pedestrian safety.
- i. **California State Parks and Recreation – Marcos Ortega** – could not attend. Extends apologies.
- j. **Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary – Karen Grimmer-** not present.
- k. **United States Forest Service – Tim Short:** Nationally the Forest Service is preparing for what is expected to be another busy fire year. Our agency is ramping up efforts to accelerate the pace and scale of landscape treatments to reduce hazardous fuels and support fire adapted communities. Locally this includes continued work to establish and maintain our Strategic Community Fuelbreaks. We are using both California Climate Investment in coordination with Monterey County RCD (\$4.5 Million) and Forest Service Funding (\$ 1.2 Million). Work is planned along the NCRR, Mt. Manuel and Botchers Gap/Skinner Ridge/Devils Peak areas with implementation scheduled this fall/early winter. Typically, this work will involve mastication and hand thinning followed by pile burning.

- o Thanked Rep. Panetta for securing funding to rebuild the Nacimiento-Fergusson USFS fire station.
- o Fire restrictions went into effect May 27.
- o Hopes to install more flashing light signage. Supports more signage.
- o Had three officers on duty during the holiday weekend. Were primarily at Plaskett and in the back country. We want to acknowledge and thank our partner agencies such as the Sheriff, Highway Patrol, Big Sur Fire Brigade and other cooperators for the support they provide.
- o Wednesday's mtg is important about fire planning. We continue to address visitor use management issues.
 - A Visitor Use Management Planning effort is underway with a public workshop scheduled next Wednesday, June 8th from 10 AM to 3 PM here at the Big Sur Lodge to discuss related concerns and opportunities. Parking will be limited, so we ask attendees to park at the bottom and walk up.
 - Surveys in support of this planning effort have been developed and are available through CABS and VWA to provide your input.
 - An online story board has also been developed that is accessible on our forest website for anyone to provide comments.
- o We are expecting an increase in staffing by two for the summer. The MRD is anticipated to be increasing staffing levels through this year. We recently hired Chevene Simmons as our new Recreation officer and will be adding an additional law enforcement officer.
- o Nacimiento-Fergusson Road repair is being planned by FHWA, currently on schedule.
- o Other roads related work includes development of a contract for maintenance of the South Coast Roads network including Cone Peak with work anticipated this fall. We are also currently addressing road maintenance issues on Sycamore Canyon Road working with our engineers seeking funding for both short- and long-term repairs.
- l. **5th District, Monterey County Board of Supervisors – Mary Adams:** The Monterey County Board of Supervisors held budget hearings for the 2022-2023 FY Budget this past week. The proposed budget will be finalized in about two weeks. The budget is a whopping \$1.8 billion. My office took place in a 2022 Wildfire Season Coordination meeting this week. Those present included Monterey County Office of Emergency Services, Calfire, Monterey County Regional Fire District, Big Sur Fire, among others. I look forward to attending the United States Forest Service Future of Big Sur Land Management meeting next week. Asked Frank Pinney to come forward and she presented him a resolution, as did Sen. Laird's office.
- m. **30th District, California State Assembly – Dominic Dursa:** Introduced AB 2242 climate change bill intended to make wildfire prevention work reimbursable, as well as make other climate change mitigation measures eligible for funding. Reminder that his office is there to help you with state agency problems.
- n. **17th District, California State Senate – John Laird:** Budget surplus size is misleading, as much must go into reserves, \$20B off the top to schools, and some

goes to paying back prior debts. This is a one-time surplus. Looking to fund one-time expenses, like deferred maintenance, fire prevention, water resiliency, sea level rise mitigation.

- Much success on climate change funding; Climate Equity Trust to lower electrical bills for all Californians; got bills out of the Senate and into the Assembly. Working on Water Resiliency for the Central Coast, as we don't import water. Working closely with Rep. Panetta and ASM Rivas on these projects.
 - Working with the new CA Sec of Transportation to work on the CalTrans/BS Fire location on the BS South Coast.
 - He chairs the Education Subcommittee, which is half of the budget. Proposed 16% year over year increase for education, hope to catch things up, additional grants, infrastructure repairs. Brought awareness regarding students experiencing homelessness. Interestingly, Pacific Valley School must continue to apply for a waiver to operate. We have added language in the budget that removes the waiver requirement to continue Pacific Valley School over time
- o. **20th District, United States Congress – Jimmy Panetta:** At Federal level, essential role is to get Federal funding to our local area, including
- Nacimiento-Fergusson Road and Nacimiento-Fergusson USFS Fire Station.
 - For Federal lands, we need more bodies on the ground. The Save Our Forests Act will provide more funding for this, intended for inclusion in the 2023 Farm Bill.
 - Rural Broadband – IJA – Internet for All Act.
 - Hospitality/Restaurants have not all recovered from the pandemic in addition to what we passed through the American Rescue Plan.
 - Regarding Gun Violence – The House already acted on universal background checks, which if enacted, would have prevented the Tulsa shootings. But now, Senate Dems and Reps are coming together to negotiate red-flag laws and universal background checks.
 - BS will be part of the new 19th District, from South San Jose, down the coastline to Cambria, and then east to the SLO county line, still the most beautiful congressional district in the nation.

VII. Report from Other Agencies on Issues Pertinent to Big Sur

- a. CHP – no report
- b. Sheriff – no report
- c. Big Sur Fire – Barbara Sexton is Chair of the Board of BSF. Thanks to a donation from Big Sur Food & Wine, BSF was able to have an Academy, and welcome three new brigade members. She gave a huge thank you to BSF&W. Thank you to Frank Pinney for remaining on the board. Hope to see you at our Fundraising event July 9. Kids 12 and under free.
- d. California Fish & Wildlife – no report.

VIII. ADDITIONAL ITEM: Supervisor Adams took a poll of BSMAAC members and guests about their preference for virtual v. in person meetings.

- All members and some guests weighed in. By the Numbers, In-Person is the winner, with a recording available if possible. 2nd preference is hybrid (serious concern about the available internet reliability); zoom last option.

IX. Adjournment – 12:50 p.m

Motion to adjourn by Mary Adams, Second by Bree Harlan, motion passes unanimously.

****DATE CHANGE****

Next Meeting – Friday, August 26

In Person

Thank you to the Big Sur Lodge for hosting.