

Minutes Big Sur Multi-Agency Advisory Council

Big Sur Multi-Agency Advisory Council Meeting

Friday, August 26, 2022

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Big Sur Lodge, 47225 Highway One, Big Sur, CA 93920

Congressman Jimmy Panetta and Supervisor Mary Adams, Co-Chairs

FINAL MINUTES

I. Call to Order by Chair Panetta at 10:04am

II. Roll Call and Introductions

- a. Big Sur Resident, North Coast - Martha Karstens
- b. Big Sur Resident, South Coast - Tom Collins
- c. Big Sur Chamber of Commerce - Rick Aldinger
- d. Community Association of Big Sur - Ryne Leuzinger
- e. Monterey County Planning Department - Erik Lundquist
- f. Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District - Rafael Payan
- g. California Coastal Commission - Sean Drake
- h. Caltrans - Kelly McClain
- i. California State Parks and Recreation - Marcos Ortega
- j. Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary - Absent
- k. United States Forest Service - Fin Eifert
- l. 5th District, Monterey County Board of Supervisors – Sarah Hardgrave
- m. 30th District, California State Assembly - Absent
- n. 17th District, California State Senate - Angela Chesnut
- o. 20th District, United States Congress – Jimmy Panetta

III. Approval of the June 3, 2022 Draft Minutes

Martha Karstens made a correction to the minutes that in the North Coast Member Report, the thanks for State Parks comment should be underneath the Historical Society part of the report and there is a typo in the CABS report where Plaskett was spelled incorrectly.

Motion by Martha Karstens, Second by Rick Aldinger, all in favor. Minutes are approved with the corrections.

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

Marcus Foster – thank you for increasing the fine for illegal roadside camping to \$1,000. We need more signs that indicate location of no camping is all along the highway and not just the turnout. Keep Big Sur Wild is a local organization who would like to see the Big Sur Land Use Plan, the certified document with strict policies, used more. The County is not enforcing STRs in the Coastal Zone of unincorporated part of the county. The Land Use Plan has a plan that says this area doesn't have capacity for visitor serving units and the county needs to follow the coastal plan.

Heather Chappellet-Lanier with Sander Koning: Sander walked from Nepenthe to the BSMAAC meeting and collected trash which was brought to the BSMAAC meeting in a bucket. As an

observer of this area for the last 55 years, trash and litter in Big Sur has increased. The other issue is we have constant construction along the highway and the construction companies don't seem to adhere to the trash collection. Orange cones have proliferated and make the highway look horrible. There needs to be a concerted effort to make this the best-looking highway in the world.

Mary Trotter: Two topics, the first is a situation on top of sycamore canyon. If you require people to NOT make a left turn, you're asking them to make a U-turn on Highway 1. Signs were put up by Parks Management, but everyone ignores the sign. Something needs to be done. The other topic, it has been more than a year since the LUAC land use advisory committee gave it to the county and the ad hoc committee took over. 20-year project. Many have been involved and it is a disservice to let this drag on. STR let this drag on. We have written letters, participated in workshops, it is time to decide.

Steve Beck: Volunteerism, came to Big Sur in mid-70s. Many volunteer organizations were not here then. I joined the Big Sur Ambulance, Fire Brigade, and many orgs. At the time, about 60% of Big Sur was public land. Now, Big Sur has expanded to about 75% as public land. There are less people in the area to volunteer to help. 300 miles of trail in Big Sur. There are 0 people in the agencies that monitor those trails. We need to rely on citizen volunteerism to protect the south coast. Big Sur Fire spends most of its time to respond to tourist accidents. Agencies respond to tourists, and volunteers are needed.

Martha Diehl: First is to piggyback on Heather's remarks. We must preserve the wild and scenic character of Highway 1. Biggest built structures that intrudes are utility poles. There isn't any representation of utility companies on the BSMAAC. I think we need to ask PG&E and AT&T to be more involved, especially with the threat of wildfire. I ask to agendaize fire and emergency management on a future BSMAAC meeting that would help with the facilitation and coordination of wildfire and emergency services in Big Sur.

Tim Green: The recent order allowing illegal operation of STRs is against the Big Sur Land Use Plan. STRs convert housing for community members into visitor serving units. This order must be lifted for the Big Sur Planning Area. We have engaged Monterey County and the California Coastal Commission (CCC). We have written letters, white papers, and comments. We have never heard the County or the CCC why they won't enforce illegal STRs. We are working with a new generation of staff and limited historical knowledge to no resolution. The County has created a simple legal path to operate STRs. Big Sur facilities and highways are overcrowded. Big Sur is at build out. STRs will bring more overuse.

Dawn Addis: Introduced herself as Dawn Addis, running for State Assembly. Councilmember of Morro Bay, which is the end Highway 1 along the coast. Many of the issues are so familiar. Vacation rentals, trash, protect natural spaces, fire protection. I see Big Sur as a unique and incredibly special place. The new district is 4 hours of coastline and Big Sur is an important part of it. I will promote and protect the things we love about this area. I feel right at home here at

this meeting where real government happens, and I appreciate you for showing up and participating today.

Rick Aldinger: In theory, we have a resident deputy sheriff in Big Sur. Jesse is a great guy and we are lucky to have him. A lot of the issues that have been brought up so far are negative behaviors, and historically have been mitigated by many agencies working together. Jesse often needs to leave Big Sur and head north to other parts of the County. We have had a few close calls this summer, we were very lucky. If we don't continue to talk about his absence, it will become normal, and we do not want this to be normal. I encourage people to be vocal so we can change. On a different note, announcement to invite folks to a meet and greet with Congressman Panetta at the River Inn this afternoon at 4:00pm.

V. New Business - none

VI. Old Business - none

VII. Reports from Member Agencies

a. Big Sur Resident, North Coast – Martha Karstens

Grange: Softball Champions! Floor being refinished this week; the Grange is closed until September 2. A matching grant from the state grange and donation from a Big Sur resident is being used to pay for the work. Harvest craft fair Thanksgiving weekend, Friday, Saturday and Sunday. Total of 87 members. Kitchen almost complete, painting and overhead lights are all that still need doing. Basement, in progress. Stage curtains in progress. Please visit us at www.bigsurgrange.org.

Historical Society: "Soft" opening, we've had 179 visitors so far for the month of July. Work is continuing on our new cookbook, but we need photos and stories!!! You may send them to bigsur.cookbook@gmail.com. Please visit us at www.bigsurhistory.org.

Big Sur CERT: Thanks to the Big Sur Lodge for letting use the conference room for our CPR class this month. Had 2 refreshers and 2 CPR classes so far, one more of each to have. Please visit us at www.bigsurcert.org

I have received questions from residents:

- #1) What is being done about repairing the 4 call boxes between Molera and the Highlands?
- #2) Why isn't PG&E doing any underground wiring in Monterey County?
- #3) Cell towers south of Gorda and by Radio rock. They were supposed to be temporary for Mud Creek, when will they be removed?
- #4) Two trailers in the scenic viewshed. South of Lucia, north of the tunnel on the East side of the highway.

b. Big Sur Resident, South Coast – Tom Collins

Member of the CABS and on committee for visitor use management with Chair Fin Eifert. Thanks to Tim Short of the Forest Service and congratulations on the promotion. We've teamed

up with CABS and Ventana Wilderness Alliance to help with community projects. One project is creating a campsite inventory. Which sites are real campsites compared to some that have been created by visitors. Residents have noted 500 vehicles visiting in a 24-hour period up Plaskett ridge road and only 60 camp sites. Data collection continues to go on South Camp. Happy to see an increase in propane fires, which are legal. Plaskett is going to see 30,000 vehicles and Los Burros is going to see 20,000. Destruction of roads. Residents are concerned about the safety. Emergency service vehicles may have less access to these roads. Asking County to have an engineer evaluate roads. Another data point: Three gates on Nacimiento-Fergusson Road. We want to keep fire fighters on fires, and not these daily tasks.

c. Big Sur Chamber of Commerce - Rick Aldinger

Business levels have been good this summer. The industry continues to face labor challenges and supply chain challenges.

d. Community Association of Big Sur - Ryne Leuzinger

First new program, fire adaptive coordinator position. Program is securing grant funding for fuel reduction projects. Looking at water storage and help to prepare Big Sur for the threat of wildfire. Data collection is expanding to Bixby Bridge and Old Coast Road to help create actionable solutions. Regarding the larger fuel reduction project with the Forest Service, CABS is concerned about the lack of details on the EIR. We are pro fuel reduction and glad the comment period has been extended. Happy to report the Upper Rocky Creek Road repair project has been resolved. After 5 years, community can access their homes. Appreciate Supervisor Adams and the Monterey County Board of Supervisors to increase the fine for illegal roadside camping. Appreciate support for policy change.

e. Monterey County Planning Department – Erik Lundquist

The County General Plan Update is coming, and the County's Housing Element is due to the state at the end of 2023. The public is encouraged to participate in these plans/updates. The Outdoor Pilot Program for cannabis cultivation will be discussed to help streamline outdoor cannabis applications. California Coastal Commission (CCC) has not yet certified ordinance in 2021, although the ordinance was adopted in 2019. Another item in front of the Board of Supervisors (BoS) is to request an extension.

Short Term Rental (STR) ordinance, sending out notice of preparation of EIR, public participation to inform scope. One is specific to Inland Zones, and one is specific to the Coastal Zone. September 6th is the public meeting. 1986 plan in place, currently in revision. Bring back from ad hoc committee, then bring back to Planning Commission, there have been 53 meetings with ad hoc committee. Time and effort of ad hoc members are going to result in a very comprehensive plan.

On Short Term Rental (STR) enforcement: Estoppel letter doesn't prohibit enforcement of STR. The issue is a resource issue. HCD doesn't have staff to manage illegal STRs. 22 are permitted in the inland areas, and 600 are unauthorized. A vendor helps mine data of 7 different websites to identify unauthorized units. We have 600 unauthorized rentals and only 3 staff. The BoS directed HCD to hire new staff. We are currently hiring for a code compliance officer for the County. The Big Sur coastal plan has suggested that STR shall not be allowed. This will come out in public

hearings. If they are disallowed, we will begin enforcement. BoS will decide on an increase fee of penalties to operator.

Mr. Beck: question update for land use plan. Do you have a guess for when it might come back out to the public?

Ad hoc member here, Martha Diehl: Protecting the highway experience and housing in Big Sur, and fire and fuel management justify changes to the plan. Elegantly and minimally changed. We have been working on this within a short timeline and in phases. We are internally consistent. My personal guess is several more months before coming back with a full report. CCC had things to say, other people have had things to say. I think we don't want to sacrifice the outcome for speed.

f. Monterey Peninsula Regional Park District - Rafael Payan

Fire and fuel management. ParkIT! Initiative. Conversation of Rancho Canada golf course. Fire and fuel load management: Working on two individual plans. Palo Corona Regional Park looked at the development of an Incident Command Center. Partnered with OES and Calfire to develop IC. Looking to partner with the SPCA and have corrals that could be used to temporarily hold evacuated animals in these pens. Banquet rooms could be converted in emergency use for emergency response teams. ParkIt! Partnership with state parks. Rancho Canada acquisition allowed for public input over the last two years. Over 300 people made over 1,000 comments. We asked the public for their "Wish list". What do people want to see? Three things that we needed to look at. 1, water: no longer in golf business. Retired 186 Acre Feet of water per year back into Carmel River. 2. Conversation of portion Rancho Canada unit in upland habitat. What could be done to partner with organizations to restore the river channel to native flows. Remove engineering embankments to flow naturally. We are trying to make sure our science speaks to the CRFREE science. California Coastal Conservancy is the project manager. We hired an organization/private business, McBaine Associates, who are habitat rehabilitation specialists. Planning process to be complete in the next 18-20 months. In the next 4-5 years, it will look different than it does now.

g. California Coastal Commission – Sean Drake

Staff member, Alexandra McCoy, has moved on for the Commission. I will continue to represent BSMAAC. As soon as the new staff person is hired, I'll share contact info. The CRFREE permit was approved. Phase 1 of construction set to begin later this year. Concerning permit items in Big Sur, there are none coming before the commission soon.

h. Caltrans – Kelly McClain

Regarding litter, Caltrans is committed to litter abatement with the Clean California effort. I will bring up this area for the maintenance station and help address the comment about the littered construction site. They are required to keep the site clean, and I will reiterate that requirement. Illegal signs have been placed. Working with Mo County on encroachment permit. There are no "No Camping" signs. The California Traffic Control Device Committee is committed to championing the effort to get the message out with it being consistent for state approved signage. Location will be brought back to Sara von Schwind.

i. California State Parks and Recreation – Marcos Ortega

I have been so encouraged to see the engagement of our local elected officials. There is a lot of behind the scenes that you don't always get to see. This meeting is SO important and a big part of keeping Big Sur the way it is.

Steve Beck: How many hours and resources are being allocated to the Big Sur Coast, particularly in the hurricane point area for spraying. Staff participate in invasive species committee. Momentum and progress have been made.

Sam Farr: Noticed Bixby Bridge has Pampas Grass. I remember when Caltrans had to do eradication, outside of the right of way, it is difficult to get permission to go on other land. We need to find extra money.

Steve Beck: that is exactly what the Big Sur Byway is trying to do.

Barbara Woyt: All the work that all expenditure off the easement is meaningless until we deal with the South Coast easement. Latest arrival is fennel/perennial and I never understood what they were going for. Create policy and funding to address this fully.

Marcus' comments, signs for ordinance on highway 1 no camping signs. Please participate in the Big Sur Byway Organization subcommittee to work on the signage for this ordinance. Invasive species subcommittee (USFS, State Parks, and Caltrans), we are looking for volunteerism to join this committee. Parks updates: Andrew Molera – we are addressing riverbank stabilization to protect the campground that is open. It will be closed for six months starting at the end of October. In preliminary phases. Julia Pfeiffer Burns and Limekiln, continued trail repairs and bridges to be. Receive permitting for removal of Limekiln Bride. Picked up work on the Oak Grove trail. Mt. Manual connection Pfeiffer Falls trail. Garrapata, geotech work have been completed and contract approval for chemical bathrooms.

j. Monterey Bay National Marine Sanctuary – Absent, this report prepared by Lisa Wooninck was read out loud during the meeting.

This year is the 30th anniversary for MBNMS and the 50th anniversary for the Office of National Marine Sanctuaries. We have several fun events planned to celebrate on September 18th:

1. Alongside our partners City of Santa Cruz and Pu Pu'O Hawai'i Outrigger Canoe Club, experience the annual Aloha Races starting off the wharf at 9:00 a.m, and beginning at 10:00 a.m., enjoy numerous, FREE family-friendly activities including ocean paddleboarding, kayaking, guided wildlife tours (pre-registration required), and virtual scavenger hunt and partner exhibitor fair.
2. The Exploration Center will host science talks, art activities, and feature short ocean films. Free event, visit <https://montereybay.noaa.gov/> for more information.

Research ecologists from our office dove off the RV FULMAR along the Big Sur coast between Yankee Point and Ragged Point August 15-19, 2022. The Big Sur Nearshore Characterization (BSNC) is a long-term project that captures biodiversity data for algae, invertebrates, and fishes in nearshore kelp forests along the Big Sur coastline. To learn more, visit our web site at: <https://sanctuarysimon.org/dbtools/project-database/index.php?ID=100312>

The Resource Protection team coordinated with the West Coast Regional Office and NOAA Fisheries on a comment letter to BOEM regarding the proposed Morro Bay wind farm leases and activities related to site characterization surveys. One of the three leases abutts to the southern border of MBNMS.

k. United States Forest Service – Fin Eifert

Chivine Simmons was introduced as the new District Recreation Officer. Jonathan Aries is the Law Enforcement Officer. We are looking to grow our team and have a need to hire for an assistant and technicians, and a forester and biologist. We held a public workshop in Big Sur on June 8th about visitor use management. There was a great turnout. Finalize it on September 6th and available for comment through Oct 6th. Location for physical space to post and comment on document with intention to receive as much input as we possibly can. Part 2 defining visitor use. How we move forward with management actions. Great American Outdoors Act, South Coast Ridge Road, Plaskett, and Los Burros Road, obtaining funds and include Cone Peak Road. Nacimiento-Fergusson federal highways project is long, but it is on schedule. Strategic Community Fuel Break: we can get back to implementing the project. Contractor to focus on north coast road lines and will finalize dates. Shortly after that, continue next set of lines on Mt. Manuel, and implemented about mid-November. Secure funding through joint chiefs' opportunity and through the state and with Natural Resources Conservation District. Nacimiento-Fergusson Station burned down, thank you Congressman for your help, in development of scope of work, and looking at location for placement of station and award contract in 45 – 60 days. Coordinating fire with emergency resources, will ensure Peter Harris Fire Manager here, I'll ensure his presence is here. Pre-season look out and post-season report.

l. 5th District, Monterey County Board of Supervisors – Sarah Hardgrave

Our office following the Colorado Fire, has had constructive conversations with Mid-Coast Fire, Big Sur Fire, and Calfire on communication systems, and transition Mid-Coast to be on the County 911 system. Will coordinate with fire agencies to add to future agenda. Byway: the D5 office continues to support the group. County staff are starting to provide support. Engaged with illegal camping fine increase issue and working with Marcos. Thank you, Marcos and Marcus, for your support, it was passed as an urgency ordinance. Signage in place, added to existing signage and the discussion will continue. STR, really high priority for Supervisor Adams as this has dragged out for a very long time. We greatly appreciate the work of Erik Lundquist and Kelly Donlon. Please consider commenting on the initial study and the CEQA review process. And requirements to analyze land use consistency. September 6th community meeting. Construction contract for first phase of restoration at meeting next week, hopeful for \$25 million pending grant for construction of the causeway, awarded in January. Board of Supervisors (BoS) adopted fiscal year budget at end of June. Happy to report the full BoS increased funding of enforcement of STR enforcement efforts, pilot bonding project for county roads, \$100 million in funding above and beyond what we normally have for repaving. Support for Office of Emergency of Services to a standalone department. Palo Colorado Canyon is a county road, the repairs are in engineering in design. FEMA funding for permitting portion of the plan. At least a

\$10 million repair. Funding to the work will be competing with other demands. Review will be out by the calendar year.

m. 30th District, California State Assembly – Absent but report was prepared by Dominic Dursa and read out loud during the meeting.

The legislative session is wrapping up in the next week. Assemblymember Rivas is working to get several bills out of the legislature and to the Governor's desk. These bills include legislation that ensures a reliable source of funding for new affordable farmworker housing equitable representation on the state and regional water boards and in the water permitting process and modernization of California's tracking of extreme heat's impacts on workers, businesses, and the economy. This year's budget was passed back in June and was a record \$308 billion dollars. The budget included \$9.5 billion dollars that will be returned in tax rebates Those rebates are expected to be issued between October of this year and January 2023 Visit the Franchise Tax Board website to get more details or feel free to contact our office.

n. 17th District, California State Senate – Angela Chesnut

Thank you for being here in person. Senator Laird is working hard in the last stretch. Appointed to pro-tem select committee on Monkey Pox. He will ensure lifesaving drugs are not held in bureaucratic red tape. Next week, the Watsonville Hospital will be back in the hands of the community. \$25 million from state budget and SB 418/718 Pajarao Valley Healthcare District. Consumed with negotiations with the administration. Extension of Ca's last nuclear power plant has been set for a date for another 5-10 years. Senator Laird is wanting to make sure that he has been framing the issue before legislation can proceed. Workshop hosted by California Energy Commission. \$60 million from budget went to Central Coast including City of Monterey for the Shuman Heart House for unsheltered, Big Sur Land Trust flood project, restore veteran's hall, road safety, MST for construction SURF Busway, Monterey Peninsula water upgrades, and M1W upgrades, and Nacimiento Damn.

o. 20th District, United States Congress – Jimmy Panetta

Bimonthly calls for Nacimiento Ferguson road meetings. Wildfire Response and Drought Resiliency Act, sitting in the Senate. Hazardous Fuels Reduction and Land Restoration and the National Community Capacity and Land Stewardship Act. We are getting things done in Washington D.C. including investment in CHIPS act, IJA, Safer Communities Act which is bipartisan Gun Violence legislation, including background checks and red flag laws, PACT – Veterans exposed to burn pits can get benefits. Reduce cost of drugs and reduce prices for seniors, reduce prices of affordable care act, go after large corporations, investment in reduction of carbon output. Tax credits on ways and means committee. Water: \$30 million in grants for Soquel Water Creek, \$10 million for Pure Water Monterey. \$4 billion for drought response and mitigation. Working towards New NOAA building at CSUMB. Held a Farm Bill listening session for the House Agriculture Committee. Site of offshore wind farm is not located in this district, but watching, to protect the National Monterey Bay Marine Sanctuary. New 19th Congressional district will be all the way down Monterey Coast, including parts of SLO, Santa Cruz, and Santa Clara Counties. Big and diverse district. Most beautiful congressional district in the nation.

VIII. Report from Non-Member Agencies on Issues Pertinent to Big Sur

a. California Highway Patrol - Jessica Madueno Public Information Officer

We currently have 2 resident post officers in Big Sur. One is still serving and the other is on military leave. We will push enforcement of illegal camping.

b. Monterey County Sheriff's Office – No report

c. Big Sur Fire – Fire Chief Matt Harris

Thank you for the informative reports and how nice it is to be here in person. Public safety has had over 184 calls, 65% are for visiting public. 18 members spend an enormous amount of time training. BSF enjoys relations with USFS and State Parks, CHP. Fully support suggestion of a fire preparedness and response plan. Visitor use management plan concept, where we do something similar, what are the desired conditions. I noticed the fine increase (which is awesome) tagged on to increased fire risk, if some of the increased cost could go back to funding BSF, it would be very helpful. Community Fire Adaptive Coordinator. Working with Forest Service, as would like a BS South Coast fire station at the Pacific Valley School site. Acknowledge Monterey County, as result of our meeting, repeater equipment went down and Monterey County department has been responsive to it. Hurricane Point to Soberanes. Trying to create a microwave project Piedras Blancas.

d. Big Sur Byway Organization - Martha Diehl

Resources to have a 2-hour meeting every quarter, there has been great information sharing and collaboration. As Jimmy said, as we get those questions, how do we follow through. Accomplishments; No parking efforts on east side parking by Point Lobos. Coordinating no camping sign issues to bring together all concerns. We want to enforce without cluttering viewshed. Invasive species committee is hosted by Byway, Byways may provide an opportunity to identify and coordinate additional funding. On-going issues: infinite number. Bridge railings. north section has deterioration of bridges. Next meeting on September 7, 9a-11a. Items with Caltrans presenting on Limekiln bridge project, Bixby Bridge data collection to move action forward. Overview and discussion of issues on the South Coast. Clarify Byway with the BSMAAC. Actively help coordinate all the different interests that protect Big Sur. It is exceedingly complicated with a lot of players and a lot of priorities. Byway is related with the trip down the Highway. I don't know how to best put this forward, we have the same people, I don't want to duplicate efforts, how would be best organize the new Byway Organization.

IX. Adjournment – 1:00 p.m.

Motion by Sarah Hardgrave, Seconded by Angela Chesnut, All in Favor, meeting adjourned at 12:33pm

Next meeting scheduled for Friday, December 9 at 10:00am

~Thank you to the Big Sur Lodge for your hospitality and for the use of the conference room at the Big Sur Lodge~