

CAC Meeting Minutes, May 4, 2022

CAC meeting May 4, 18:00

start time: 18:02

Introductions: no new introductions

Public comment:

Ann Tozier: Positive comment on active radar speed sign in town

Review/accept minutes (March, 2022)

Motion: Kevin

second: Julie

Vote: 4-0 approved

Approve Minutes (April, 2022)

motion: Kevin

second: Janet

approved 4:0

Approve virtual meeting resolution:

Motion: Kevin

Second: Janet

Approved: 4-0

Supervisor Gardner report:

Grant Lake south end closed. Barriers placed.

Citizen's wildfire academy started, next one May 16, every Monday Night. Link at <https://www.eswildfirealliance.org/academy>

Sierra conservancy grant available, closes Friday night midnight. Trying to make the deadline.

Talked with Chargepoint – interest in supporting chargers along 158.

Wildfire outlook from FS pretty bleak. FS struggling with hiring.

Tioga Road status: scheduled to open ~ before Memorial Day weekend.

Chair: no report

Kevin: Chamber meeting May 15 9:30 AM June Lake

Janet: JLLOOPPAA June Lake arts association developing planned rendering for stage.
Janet is no longer on Chamber Board, helping Chamber with website revisions.

Planning staff: STR no applications, prior to that accepted three applications, one in June Lake on mixed use land but now subject to normal process. No other reports.

Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra (Laura Beardsley): presentation on adaptive recreation modifications to Fern Creek Lodge

Slide show (See attached presentation)

Rush Creek Relicensing update (David)

See attached presentation.

Community updates:

Janet (women's club) possible bake sale at BBQ

Kevin: Chamber of commerce

Fishing expo
Website rework

Covid update:

Supervisor Gardner: 12 cases in county in past few weeks (new strains)
Keeping an eye on hospitalizations (no hospitalized cases in Mono County)
Second boosters available at Vons
Mental health events occurring throughout the county, including June Lake at 5:30 Monday night.

Future agenda items:

FERC letter of support for comments

Janet, Julie, Supervisor Gardner: some discussion on unmet transit needs. Take offline. Not a future agenda item.

Motion to adjourn: Kevin, Julie second
Adjourn 19:34

Fern Creek Lodge

A retreat for DSES & veterans
in June Lake



Disabled Sports Eastern Sierra

- Adventure, Challenge & Success
 - Outdoor Recreation
 - Winter & Summer
- Community
 - Kids & Families
 - Veterans & Servicemembers
 - Volunteers
- Support
 - Virtual Engagement
 - Paralympic Training
 - Local Resources



Jack & Kathy Copeland Center at Fern Creek Lodge

- New home for DSES programs serving veterans and service members
- Opportunities for other adaptive recreation camps
- Preserve sense of place and rich history
- Renovation Project
 - 18 months to 2 years*
 - Establish accessibility
 - Modernize systems



FERN CREEK LODGE

EST. 1927



•Meacham's Intended•



•The Old Schoolhouse•



•Lee Wulff•



•BBQ / Picnic Area•



•John Muir•



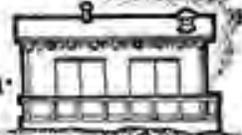
•Heart Tree•



•De Noon•



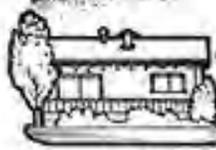
•Dutch Lady•



•Audubon•



•FERN CREEK LODGE•



•Ansel Adams•



•Dana•



•Dumpster•



•Fish Cleaning Station•



•Dump Station•

GUEST NAME _____
 CABIN NAME _____

•Ansel Adams• •Dana•
 Dinner tables are unstacked and under the lights and
 heat are on. If you have a problem with the lights
 call Jim at 726-3339-3422. Enjoy your stay and
 please - CHECK IN TOMORROW MORNING.



Copeland Center

- First Demolition/ Construction Phase in Process
- Prepping for Plan review w/ Mono Co
- Renovation Project Schedule – Subject to change
 - Summer-Fall 2022
 - Dana Building Complete
 - Ground Systems Work
 - Garage re-build
 - Exploration & Plans for Lodge
 - Spring-Fall 2023
 - Lodge build out
 - Other Cabins
 - Site work



Opportunities to thrive

- Short & long term programs emphasizing adaptive recreation, wellness, and education
- Emphasize connections to community and natural world
- Support personal goals for active, healthy lifestyles
- Develop connections with June Lake residents, businesses, and visitors





DISABLED
SPORTS
EASTERN
S·I·E·R·R·A



Rush Creek Relicensing Update

Rush Creek Relicensing update

- Brief project recap
- Process and milestone reached
- Project issues
- Comments to FERC

Brief Project Recap

Brief project recap

- SCE is asking for 50-year license
- SCE is proposing a modified project to address seismic concerns:
 - Decommission and remove Agnew and Rush Meadows Dams
 - Lower Gem Dam to current FERC restriction Level
 - Total system impoundment capacity will be reduced from ~24,000 AF to ~10,600 AF
- Most work will be done via helicopter flights

Relicensing Process and Milestones

Relicensing process

- Generally a 4- or 5-year process.
- Currently in the *scoping* phase
 - ✓ Licensee submits Pre-Application Document (PAD)
 - ✓ Licensee develops Technical Study Plans (TSPs)
 - ✓ (optional) Licensee holds Technical Working Group meetings (TWGs) with interested stakeholders (SCE has done this)
 - ✓ Pursuant to the PAD, FERC issues the first Scoping Document (SD1)
 - ✓ FERC accepts comments from stakeholders
 - FERC issues second Scoping Document, including any new requirements.

Pre-Application Document

- Submitted by SCE on Dec. 16, 2021. Begins the relicensing process
- For relicensing cases, the PAD contains description of existing site and project
- The PAD also contains description of the proposed project and changes
- The PAD contains Technical Study Plans necessary to define the project details.

Technical Working Groups (TWGs)

- Hosted by SCE
- Goal is to present proposed Technical Study Plans (TSPs) and collect input from stakeholders to guide and update the study plans.
- In general, each TWG corresponds to a specific proposed study plan
- Topics included ecological effects (hydrological geomorphological, biological, water quality, fish & wildlife, etc.), community effects (noise, aesthetic, recreation, flood potential, etc.), cultural effects (tribes, built environment, archaeological, etc.)

FERC Scoping Document (SD1)

- Issued by FERC pursuant to PAD
- Contains primarily a summary of the proposed project, and the proposed Technical Study Plans presented in the PAD

FERC scoping comment period

- Window of time after issuance of scoping document that FERC accepts stakeholder comments.
- Comments from all stakeholders – Government/managing agencies, NGOs, individuals.

Various stakeholders

- There have been a number of stakeholders present at the TWG meetings
 - A handful of individuals
 - Friends of the Inyo
 - Mono Lake Committee
 - CDFW
 - CA Sport Fishing Protection Alliance
 - Trout Unlimited
 - ESSLIA (Silver Lake)
 - USFS (FERC Coordinator)
 - American Rivers
 - Several individuals not at TWGs but contacting CAC through me

Current Milestone Reached

- End of scoping public comment period

Project issues

- Community concerns
- Elephant in the room: Wilderness issue, discovered through project scoping with American Rivers and FS.

Project issues (cont.)

- Community concerns
 - Flood potential / mitigation: Study plans include modeling of downstream flows under the following scenarios: Original config, current config, proposed config, full unimpaired flow. Study plans include study of possible modifications to culverts around Hwy 158
 - Recreation: Study plans will evaluate recreational usage within FERC boundary. Ice climbing area is not within FERC boundary and is being handled separately.
 - Silting of inlet to Silver Lake: Study plan will evaluate this, though it's not clear to what degree SCE will support mitigation.
 - Aesthetics (Horsetail falls, dam removal): Study plans will evaluate aesthetics at various flows. Dam removal stakeholder input inadequate – see FERC comments.
 - Noise (powerhouse, construction, helicopter) Study plans will monitor noise current noise levels and evaluate potential noise impacts of modifications and construction work.

Project issues (cont.)

- Wilderness issue
 - Project is partially located in designated wilderness (Ansel Adams)
 - Project constitutes a large non-conforming use
 - Forest Service has taken the position that they cannot approve the relicensing under current conditions due to incompatibility with the Wilderness Act and FPA part 4(e), recent legal precedents, and lack of a valid exception (non-discretionary private right, etc.)
 - Forest Service has outlined a possible path forward that has greater legal certainty.
 - SCE has rebuffed attempts to discuss this disagreement (kick the can down the road)
 - Process is proceeding with a large disagreement between the Forest Service and SCE about the path to relicensing.

FERC Comment Letter

Comment letter topics

- Wilderness issue
 - Due to such a large uncertainty and disagreements between the licensee and managing agency, request that the parties be required to settle this issue with all stakeholders as part of the scoping process
- Possible decommissioning study
 - Due to the possibility that disagreements over the process are large enough that they may not be resolved, FERC should require a study of full decommissioning. NOTE, this is not requesting full decommissioning, just requesting that it be studied as an option due to the large disagreements.

Comment letter topics

- Climate change, changing renewable energy landscape, Financial and aesthetic viability of project into future.
 - Due to major modifications and extensive helicopter usage, this project will be considerably more expensive to operate than other eastern Sierra projects of similar size.
 - Request that FERC require SCE to demonstrate long-term, independent financial viability of project and that it will not become a burden for ratepayers.

Comment letter topics

- Dam removal options – inadequate stakeholder involvement
 - SCE briefly outlined several dam removal options; however, there were no TWGs and no mechanism for stakeholder input regarding the details of these options. There was concern from the community that stakeholder involvement in this issue is inadequate. Request that FERC require SCE to create stakeholder input opportunities regarding details of dam removal options.

Comment letter topics

- Exposed lakebed and shoreline restoration – lack of detailed proposals and stakeholder input.
 - Removal of Waugh Lake and Agnew Lake, and lowering of Gem Dam will result in exposed lakebed and shoreline areas.
 - SCE has not put forward detailed proposals for the restoration of these areas. There has been community concern about the lack of details regarding restoration and lack of stakeholder input. Request that FERC require SCE to create restoration proposals, including involvement from stakeholders.

Forest Service Comments

- The Forest Service submitted a comment letter with some overlap
 - Described the wilderness issue, lack of standing to approve the relicensing in violation the Wilderness Act and legal precedents. Asks for quick resolution of the issue among stakeholders.
 - Requests SCE be required to study the full decommissioning option in light of the significant unresolved issues.
 - Requests additional information on various details of the PAD

Additional documentation

- Full-text Comment letter submitted to FERC based on individual scoping and input received from the community as point person on CAC
- Analysis of legal issues surrounding the Wilderness issue and implications of the Wilderness Act and Federal Power Act (FPA) section 4(e)
- Analysis of regional power resilience of the north end of Edison's grid (June Lake and Mono Basin) in the absence of power from Rush Creek.
- Analysis of ability of proposed modified system to control downstream flows in high water years relative to unimpaired flow