



Meeting Highlights: April 20, 2011 Owens Lake Planning Committee

Prepared by the Center for Collaborative Policy

Meeting in Brief

The Planning Committee will hold its meeting dates and meet when materials are ready for refinement and improvement.

Members have conducted numerous briefings throughout the area to solicit input on the plan. Stakeholders expressed an interest in how the Master Plan can benefit the local economy and the role of non-governmental organizations in implementation. Others report that stakeholders are impressed by the scope of this effort.

The Master Plan writing team developed a project description to further define the plan's purpose and goals in anticipation of the California Environmental Quality Act review process.

The Planning Committee continues to explore implementation. The Master Plan will have an annual report and work plan to organize annual activities for implementing the plan. Planning Committee review or approval of actions already in the Master Plan is unnecessary. The Planning Committee will receive notice of these actions moving forward in the annual work plan.

Next Meeting: May 18, 2011, 9:30-3:30

Location: Cerro Coso Community College, Eastern Sierra College Center
4090 W. Line Street, Bishop, CA 93514

Web site: <https://owenslakebed.pubspvr.com>

Action Items

Who	Action Item
DWP	Identify emergency measures process
SLC	Commission may need to act for "OL Conservation Area" naming
Lisa	Attend May 16 th GBUAPCD Board workshop on funding air quality public information programs

Karen and Andrea	Develop budget for start-up funding
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Master Plan

Project Description

The Master Plan writing team developed a project description to further define the plan's purpose and goals in anticipation of the California Environmental Quality Act review process. The goal is to minimize any confusion about the Master Plan when initiating the CEQA process.

Include in the Master Plan: The Delta is within the 3600-foot lake-elevation level (this is the project boundary); however, the Delta is excluded from the Master Plan. The Delta is under jurisdiction of the Lower Owens River Project (LORP). The Master Plan will document that coordination between the two planning efforts will take place.

Implementation

The Planning Committee continues to explore implementation. The Master Plan will have an annual report and work plan to organize annual activities for implementing the plan. Planning Committee review or approval of actions already in the Master Plan is unnecessary. The Planning Committee will receive notice of these actions moving forward in the annual work plan.

NGO Roles

Non-governmental organizations will coordinate phase 1 of access and provide technical review during plan implementation. Funding NGO involvement will require start-up funding to solicit grants, develop an endowment or seek matching grants. Eastern Sierra Land Trust would be willing to coordinate Phase 1 of access. ESIA would be willing to contribute its interpretive expertise. Other NGOs in the region discussed their existing work as resources to the Master Plan. The Owens Valley Committee is involved in monitoring and the Lower Owens River Project. Friends of the Inyo does on-the-ground trail work. Audubon conducts bird tours and organized the CAP process.

Cultural Resources Section 6.3.1

Recommendation for Master Plan:

- Describe that cultural resources protection will be part of the lake public education program
- Lease conditions require consideration of cultural resources.
- Notice tribes for activities that occur
- Monitoring compensation for required monitoring. Other monitoring that is not required would be contributed as an in-kind service provided by tribe.

Groundwater

Gene Coufal, from LADWP, provided an overview of the groundwater study underway. As part of the study, DWP has identified sensitive elements and resources that would be

carefully monitoring if groundwater pumping would occur. These criteria would focus on resources areas, including wells, seeps, vegetation, river delta and brine pools. The criteria would have triggers to identify if any resources would be affected, with more sensitive areas having more stringent criteria.

At this point, it is unclear how groundwater resources will be included in the Master Plan because the County and LADWP disagree over the applicability of the Long Term Water Agreement to the lake. DWP recommends that the option of using groundwater for dust control be included in the plan contingent on study outcomes. The group did not conclude this conversation and will discuss again once some of the other groundwater issues are resolved.

Science Panel

The Science Panel, enlisted to review the habitat suitability model, briefly presented their reviews to the Planning Committee. The scientists were having a detailed meeting the following day with the habitat work group. [The scientists' reports are available on the web site under work groups / habitat.](#) Key points:

Don Sada, desert and aquatic specialist: Suitability index works well, but should not be applied to springs.

Bart O'Brien, botanist: Scale is appropriate. Presence of invasive species is not favorable.

Gary Page, bird specialist: Likes 2010 as baseline. Water depth is most important and should be modified for the species.

Green Sticker Vehicles / Off-Highway Vehicles

Recommendation for Master Plan: Green sticker vehicles can be used consistent with public access in the Master Plan. Create a special category in implementation for these vehicles.

Existing green sticker vehicle use is available on trails in the Olancha Dunes on BLM land.

The lake has safety issues and conflicting uses, such as mining trucks, possible sink holes, cultural resources sites, and nesting birds. Given these constraints, active trail recreation would be directed to the Olancha Dunes. However, green sticker vehicle use that is consistent with the public access plan is suitable. For example, hunters might use green sticker vehicles on the roads when hunting.

Metabolic Studio Proposal

Lauren Bonn, Metabolic Studio, presented a potential project for creating dust cups to be used as dust control. This regenerative process would use soil from the lake combined with concrete to form dust cups produced locally, and then place them back on the lake in a spiral to control dust. Young people would help create the dust cups. The project would be a public-private partnership that provides economic development.

Outreach

Briefings Conducted

Members have conducted briefings to inform interested groups and individuals and solicit input on the master plan.

- Audubon, Long Beach, by Mike Prather
- Audubon by Mike Prather
- Tree People by Mike Prather
- Lone Pine Chamber by Richard Cervantes
- Lone Pine Lyons Club by Richard Cervantes
- Independence Chamber by Jim Stroh
- State Lands Commission by Colin Connor
- Eastern Sierra Land Trust by Karen Ferrell Ingram
- Lone Pine Tribe General Counsel
- Ranchers by George Milovich
- Mono County staff by George Milovich
- Rio Tinto Corporate & Consultants by Paul Lamos
- BLM by Lisa Isaacs
- Sierra Range of Light by Lisa Isaacs

Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District Interpretive Plan

Great Basin is holding a meeting May 16 in Bridgeport to hear and discuss ideas for an interpretive plan using the \$5 million received from LADWP for dust control related issues. Lisa Isaacs from the Planning Committee will attend and report back about potential opportunities.