



Owens Lakebed Planning

Issue Assessment and Recommendations

Gina Bartlett, Senior Mediator
Center for Collaborative Policy
California State University, Sacramento

March 2010



Method

- Impartial Facilitator Interviewed ~30 People
- Interests Represented
 - Air
 - Water
 - Habitat: Wildlife & Plants
 - Community
 - Economic / Local Business
 - Government: County, State & Tribal
 - Public Access
 - Public Trust
 - Ranching



Overview

Summary of Interviews Conducted



Visions for the Future

**Dust
Mitigation**

**Habitat in
Perpetuity**

**Water
Efficiency**

Eco-Tourism

**Solar:
Environmental &
Economic
Benefits**

**Public
Access**



Values of the Valley

- Aesthetics & Beauty
- Rural Quality of Life



Widespread Support

- Dust Mitigation
- Habitat Enhancement & Conservation
- Water Conservation
- Solar

WORK TOGETHER



Complex Policy Environment

Land Ownership
Regulatory Bodies
Multiple Legal Agreements & Plans
State Policy



Land Ownership

- State Lands Commission owns land under lakebed
- Multiple landowners around lake
 - California Department of Fish & Game
 - Inyo County
 - LA Department of Water & Power
 - Private Individuals



Regulatory Agencies

Great Basin Air Pollution Control District

- Regulates air quality
- Stipulates dust mitigation
- Appeals go to California Air Resources Board

State Lands Commission

- Public Trust
- Issues leases to conduct activities on its lands

California Department of Fish & Game

- Regulates the alteration of lake beds and banks



Owens Lake Legal Agreements & Plans

- Inyo-LA Long Term Water Agreement
- 1997 Memorandum of Understanding
- 1998: Memorandum of Agreement between the City of Los Angeles and the Great Basin Unified Air Pollution Control District
- 2005 Lower Owens River Decision Regarding Discharge on the Lakebed
- 2006 Settlement Agreement: DWP and Great Basin
- 2008 State Implementation Plan
- 2009 Lakebed Alteration Agreement (DFG & DWP)
- 2009 LADWP Board Policy on Water Use on Owens Lakebed
- Constitution (Article 10, Section 2)
- 2010 (forthcoming) Habitat Management Plan for dust mitigation areas
- Lower Owens River Project Post Implementation Agreement



State Policy

- Statewide Water Conservation Efforts:
Sacramento Delta / State Water Project
- Governor's Renewable Energy Target
33% by 2020



Planning Issues



Existing Lakebed

- Conservation Action Planning
- Dust Mitigation Mandatory
- Grazing
- Habitat Management Planning
- Native American Cultural Resources
- Private water bottling south of the lakebed
- Trona Mining



Planning ISSUES

- Air Quality and Dust Mitigation
- County Infrastructure to Support Lake Activities
- Grazing
- Habitat
 - Birds
 - Alkaline meadow cord grass community
- Public Access
- Tribal Cultural Resources



ISSUE: Water

- Support for water efficiency while achieving dust control
- Groundwater resources not well understood
- Potential groundwater pumping linkage to springs and seeps is a concern



ISSUE: Solar

- Potential is Exciting (renewables :: jobs)
- Issues & Concerns
 - Aesthetics related to solar panels
 - Transmission lines
 - Lakebed solar linkage to larger DWP solar proposal unclear
 - Required infrastructure (roads :: housing...)



ISSUE: DWP

- History
- Distrust of Agency
- Responsive to Legal Remedy
- Relations Improving
 - Individual staff appreciated
 - Honesty and transparency



ISSUE: State Lands Commission

- Ability to engage in planning process
- Public trust and water efficiency



ISSUE: Funding

- Funding for sustaining habitat in long term
- Funding for participation in planning effort, travel stipends



ISSUE: Implementation

- Define governance structure & decision making for implementation
- Make explicit action items
- Clarify entities responsible for implementation
- Define monitoring and compliance



Technical Information

- Abundant robust data exist
- Information needs
 - Groundwater resources
 - Plant community inventory
 - Invertebrate surveys
 - Economic impacts analysis
- Project could benefit from a restoration ecologist



Timing for Planning is Ripe

- Opportunity to shift from a regulatory struggle to a voluntary collaborative process
- Build on existing efforts and relationships



Process Recommendations

How

Who

When



Assumption

- Goal = Building Consensus
 - All interests groups represented
 - Local support
 - LADWP & City of Los Angeles support
 - State support



HOW: proposed process

CHARTER

- Collaborative Problem Solving Model
- Interest-Based Negotiation
- Diverse Interests Represented
- Different Levels of Participation
- Consensus Seeking



HOW: Structure

- Planning Committee
- Agency Forum
- Stakeholder Forum
- Coordinating Committee



Planning Committee

- Decision-Making Body
- Members Recommend Adoption by Implementing Agencies
- Representative, Yet Focused Participation
- Open Meetings



Planning Committee Interest Groups

- Air Quality
- Community
- Economic
- Energy / Solar
- Environmental: Bird and Native Plants
- Governmental: County, State, & Tribal
- Open Space
- Public Access
- Public Trust
- Landowners
- Ranchers
- Recreation
- Water



Agency Forum

- Coordinate Agency Policies
- Sacramento Meetings



Stakeholder Forum

- Stay Informed
- Provide Input
- Workshops or Briefings at Key Milestones
- Not Involved in **all** Planning Details & Meetings



WHEN: process

- December 2010
 - Goal: Plan Developed
 - Planning Committee Ratifies and Recommends Plan for Adoption
- Early 2011
 - Environmental Analysis Complete
 - Implementing Agencies Adopt Plan



Interviewed

| Name | Organization |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Dick Noles | Advocates for Access of Public Lands (AAPL) Owens Valley Hunters and Fishermen |
| Andrea Jones | Audubon |
| Pete Pumphrey | Audubon |
| Mark Drew | Cal Trout |
| Tom Noland | Cattleman's Association |
| Steve McLaughlin | CNPS-Bristlecone Chapter |
| Kevin Carunchio | County of Inyo |
| Brenda Johnson | DFG |
| Brad Henderson | DFG |
| Bruce Ivey | Ducks Unlimited |
| Karen Ferrell-Ingram Aaron John | Eastern Sierra Land Trust |
| Paul McFarland | Friends of the Inyo |
| Ted Schade | Great Basin Air Pollution Control District |
| Bob Herrington | Inyo County Water Department |
| Richard Cervantes | Inyo Supervisor |
| Linda Arcularius | Inyo Supervisor |
| Bill VanWagoner Brian Tillemans | LA DWP |

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Kathleen New | Lone Pine Chamber of Commerce |
| Kathy Bancroft | Lone Pine Tribe |
| Geoff McQuilkin | Mono Lake Committee |
| Mike Prather | Owens Valley Committee |
| Mark Bagley | Owens Valley Committee & Sierra Club |
| Scott Kemp | Rancher |
| Paul Lamos | Rio Tinto Minerals, Owens Valley Inyo County Water Commissioner |
| Allan Pietrasanta | Sierra Business Council |
| Malcolm Clark | Sierra Club, Range of Light |
| Julie Bear | Sierra Nevada Conservancy |
| Paul Thayer | State Lands |
| Sally Miller | Wilderness Society |
| | |