

# COUNTY OF INYO NATURAL RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

## MINUTES OF AUGUST 19, 2015 MEETING

**MEMBERS:**

DAVID GERMAN (VICE-CHAIR)  
DOUG THOMPSON  
TOM NOLAND  
DANA JEFFRIES  
WALTER SHARER (CHAIR)

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**ALTERNATES:**

JAEL HOFFMAN  
EARL WILSON

**STAFF:**

JOSHUA HART, AICP  
DIANE FORTNEY

PLANNING DIRECTOR  
PROJECT COORDINATOR

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The Inyo County Natural Resource Advisory Committee (NRAC) met on Wednesday August 19, 2015, at the Inyo County Board of Supervisors Room in the County Administrative Center in Independence, CA.

WALTER SHARER, Chair opened the meeting at 5:05 p.m.

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**ITEM 1:**     **ROLL CALL** – Members in attendance: David German, Walter Sharer, Tom Noland (5:10 pm), Alternate Jael Hoffman and Alternate Earl Wilson. Ms. Hoffman and Mr. Wilson participated on the Committee as there were absences.

Also present was Joshua Hart, Planning Director; Courtney Smith, Transportation Planner; and Diane Fortney, Project Coordinator.

Mr. Joshua Hart introduced new Alternate Committee Member Earl Wilson.

**ITEM 2:**     **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**

**ITEM 3:**     **PUBLIC COMMENT** – This was the opportunity for anyone in the audience to address the Committee on any related subject that was not scheduled on the Agenda.

There was no one from the public wishing to address the Committee.

**ITEM 4:**     **APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Approval of Minutes from December 18, 2014.

**MOTION:**    Moved by Committee-Vice Chair German to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Committee-member Noland.

The Motion passed 3-0-2, with Committee-members Doug Thompson and Dana Jeffries Absent, Committee-members Walter Sharer & Earl Wilson abstained.

**ITEM 5: OWENS VALLEY STUDY AREA (OVSES) –**

As part of the Renewable Energy General Plan Amendment (REGPA) process the Owens Valley was separated out from the rest of the Solar Energy Development Areas (SEDAs) and re-designated the Owens Valley Study Area (OVSA) to be evaluated with criteria in addition to what was used in identifying the SEDAs. During this time staff applied for a grant from the California Energy Commission (CEC) to conduct the additional evaluation on the OVSA. The County was awarded this grant in June of 2014. This effort is expected to result in a more in depth analysis of the appropriateness of renewable energy solar development in the Owens Valley.

Mr. Joshua Hart, Planning Director present the Staff Report and encouraged members to attend one of the September public meetings in Bishop or Lone Pine.

Committee Member German requested additional information concerning the Geospatial Analysis of Vegetation Community Type. What baseline vegetation mapping was used? What Pixel size? Mr. Hart noted Mr. German's questions and will provided requested information.

Committee Member Hoffman asked if a Wildlife Study would be included. Mr. Hart stated that a Wildlife Study would be included.

Committee Member Wilson requested larger mapping with color choices that provided better definition. He also stated concerns of areas with ground slope. He did not identify the area.

Committee discussed various solar projects.

**ITEM 6: ATV ADVENTURE TRAILS OF THE EASTERN SIERRA PROJECT UPDATE –** The committee received a presentation regarding the project, Trail openings, Monitoring and Reporting.

Mr. Courtney Smith, Transportation Planner provided the update. Maps of the three open routes and signage were provided. Assembly Bill 628 establishing a pilot program allowed Inyo County to designate specific County highways (streets and roads) as combined-use routes for use by Off-Highway Vehicles (OHV). A website has been created for the collection of public and public agency comments and complaints on the combined use routes.

Mr. Smith confirmed that only designated routes allowed for the use of OHV's on County paved and dirt roads.

Committee Member Sharer asked when the other approved routes would be opened. Mr. Smith explained the other routes started from Inyo County Campgrounds and are located on Los Angeles Department of Water and Power (LADWP) land. An agreement between the County of Inyo and LADWP has not been reached.

Committee Member German requested the website for comments be published to inform the public. He questioned the County's risk and how traffic counts would be collected. Mr. Smith stated an article concerning the Combined Use Route Grand Opening was published in the local paper that included the website information. Addition publishing could be provided for the

public. The County Risk Manager and CAO had reviewed the risk and approved moving forward with the project. Traffic counts will be collected electronically over a 72 hour period and will include a least on weekday and weekend day.

Committee Member Hoffman asked who was responsible to enforce speed limits on the designated routes. Mr. Smith stated Inyo County Sheriff's Department was responsible for enforcement.

Committee Member Wilson asked about the speed limits on dirt roads. Mr. Smith stated the OHV speed limits are posted on all designated dirt roads. No other speed limits are posted on County dirt roads.

**ITEM 7: PLANNING DIRECTORS REPORT**

Mr. Joshua Hart informed Committee Members that some of their terms end in October 2015 and encouraged all those interested in continuing to serve provide a letter of interest.

**ITEM 8: COMMITTEE MEMBER'S REPORT/COMMENTS**

Committee Member German asked if the committee needed to take any action concerning the Forest Plan Update. Mr. Hart responded that the Draft EIS may be available by the next Committee Meeting. The Forest Plan Update will be agendaized for discussion.

**ITEM 9: SCHEDULE NEXT MEETING**

The committee discussed meeting in December, will poll for meeting date.

The meeting adjourned at 5:55 p.m

Prepared by:  
Diane Fortney  
Staff to Natural Resource Advisory Committee

**APPROVAL OF MINUTES** – Approval of Minutes from August 19, 2015.

**MOTION:** Moved by Committee-Vice Chair German to approve the minutes as presented, seconded by Committee-member Sharer.

The Motion passed 3-1-2, with Committee-member Jeffries abstaining and Committee-members Doug Thompson and Tom Nolan, absent.