

MARIPOSA COUNTY

Merced River Trail Community Working Group

MEETING MINUTES

DATE: December 16, 2021
TIME: 10:00 AM
LOCATION: TELECONFERENCE ONLY

1. CALL TO ORDER: Goralnik called the meeting to order at: 10:03 AM

Members Present: Jeff Gabe, Dean Bernacchi, Rosemarie Smallcombe, Michael Martin, Art Baggett, Wendy Brown, Tony McDaniel, Ralph Mendershausen, Jessica Thompson

Members Absent: Nick Ross-Rhudy

Excused Absences:

Visitors: Jeffrey Jenkins, Tom Sweeney, Molly Stephens

2. ADOPT A RESOLUTION IN ACCORDANCE WITH AB 361:

The group adopted a resolution in accordance with AB 361, authorizing them to meet virtually in compliance with the Brown Act.

3. APPROVE THE MINUTES FROM THE 8/19/21 AND THE 11/18/21 MEETING:

The minutes from the August meeting was unanimously passed. The minutes from the November meeting with modifications that Tony McDaniel was excused-absent and Art Baggett abstained from the vote on Agenda Item #3.

4. CONVERSATION WITH JEFFREY JENKINS:

The group received a presentation from Dr. Jeffrey Jenkins, assistant professor at UC-Merced. Dr. Jenkins provided an overview of his research in the Merced River Canyon which involves using non-obtrusive trail counters to quantify trail use activities. To summarize:

- The project uses eight human counters and four vehicle counters located between Bagby and Moss Creek.
- Counters will be deployed for the entirety of 2022
- Counters are not yet capable to distinguish between non-motorized trail users, eg hikers, bikers, or horseback riders. However, data can be aggregated with other data sources, especially Strava data, to distinguish between hikers and bikers. Additionally, e-bikes are likely not counted as vehicles, and individuals hiking next to each other are only counted as one person. Distinguishing between e-bikes and mountain bikes will likely require human observation, rather than remote sensing.
- Jeff underscored that the premise of the project is to use baseline data to inform trail planning and sustainable management practices
- Goralnik will share Dr. Jenkins' website with the committee members after the meeting

5. UPDATE ON PROJECT ACTIONS SUBCOMMITTEE:

Goralnik shared that the project actions subcommittee—Ralph, Art, and Michael—had received the results from the online project actions survey, and were working to synthesize the results into recommended revisions to the project actions which would be presented to the full membership to

adopt at a later date. He shared that the subcommittee would be working on this task throughout January.

6. ELECTION OF OFFICERS:

The group elected new officers to the following positions:

- Chair: Art Baggett
- Vice Chair: Ralph Mendershausen
- Secretary: none

7. SELECT 2022 MEETING DATES:

The group voted to select its meeting dates for the third Wednesday 4-5:30 of every month in 2022, excluding January 19, when staff will not be available. The February meeting was moved to February 9. These meetings are currently intended to be in person meetings, but this can change as the public health situation clarifies in the coming months.

8. PUBLIC COMMENT:

Goralnik indicated that the hope was for the Committee to be able to discuss the outcomes of the two recent EPA-supported technical assistance programs at the February meeting. He also shared that staff planned to present the contents of the vision plan—vision statement, goals, and project actions—to the Board of Supervisors in February. He also shared that the intention was for Supervisor Tom Sweeney to replace Ben Goger as the CWG's second ex officio member.

A discussion took place regarding Merced Irrigation District's participation in the committee. It was recommended that Art Baggett share the list of CWG questions previously passed on to MID staff, so that he could engage with personal contacts to solicit their participation in a future meeting.

9. ADJOURN: The meeting adjourned the meeting at 11:27 AM.

Minutes Prepared by: Mikey Goralnik