



## Community Development Department

**Housing Authority** – At Tuesday’s Housing Authority meeting Associate Analyst Brent Calloway reviewed annual housing permit statistics, highlighting a minimal increase in housing-related permits in the last year. He also reviewed the update of the Mono County General Plan Housing Element, which will soon be ready to submit for State review. Other matters considered included the status of a suspended Housing Mitigation Ordinance and the ongoing management of the County’s three housing units.

Thanks to **Brent** for staffing the Housing Authority and for his consistent presence at the permit counter. Thanks also to Brent for assisting in Mono’s response to the proposed listing of sage grouse, frogs, and toads, including mapping services and use of his contacts at Gov. Brown’s office and connections with Sen. Harry Reid in promoting a legislative solution.

**Long Valley RPAC** – At its meeting Wednesday the RPAC, with the assistance of Associate Planner Courtney Weiche, concluded its update of the Long Valley Area Plan. Supervisor Fred Stump reported on County matters, including County Service Area 1’s intent to add a concessionaire stand at the Crowley Lake ball field.

CONTACT: CD Ritter, (760) 924-1804

## County Administrator’s Office

**Impacts of Endangered species listings already starting to be seen** – Supervisor Tim Fesko received the following pictures from Tuolumne County Supervisor Randy Hanvelt. This road closure has occurred and is prior to the full listing. It demonstrates the impacts Mono County could have if we are not effective in our advocacy efforts.

Attached are two pictures of the result of critical habitat designations in the past. Location is said to be along Highway 2 in the southern Sierra. As our County continues to advocate for limiting the impacts of this listing, we need to be prepared for possible impacts.

CONTACT: Jim Leddy, (707) 529-4510

**Inyo County Redesign Session – Part Two** – On January 23<sup>rd</sup>, Inyo County hosted its second session with staff and invited some departments from Mono and the City of Bishop to continue looking for ways to reduce costs while sharing services.

Kathy Peterson, Marshall Rudolph, Jeff Walters, Leslie Chapman, Scott Burns and I attended and additional ideas which could save Mono County money while maintaining or improving services are being explored. This type of cross jurisdictional cooperation is key to providing services for all residents.

CONTACT: Jim Leddy, (707) 529-4510



**Strategic Planning Steering Committee grows** – A thank you to Christine Caro, Sandra Villalpando and Renee Christ who joined the Steering Committee on Thursday! The Strategic Planning process will be one that will ask everyone to play a role in shaping the future of the organization so as we begin to put together both important yet fun ways to host that conversation, we appreciate all of those that are excited to make this happen.

We had a great meeting at Lee Vining and are getting closer to launching an effort that will provide employees the opportunity to help shape Mono's future.

CONTACT: Jim Leddy, (707) 529-4510

## **Economic Development**

**Mono County Tourism/Film Commission Meeting of TUESDAY January 28th, 2014 at 9:30am.** Meeting will be at the Sierra Center Mall, Board of Supervisors Room, 452 Old Mammoth Rd. -3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Mammoth Lakes. Agenda is below!

1. Call to Order.
2. Introductions and announcements.
3. Opportunity for the Public to Address the Commission on items of interest of the public which are within the subject matter jurisdiction of the Commission. (Speakers may be limited in speaking time depending upon the press of business and number of persons wishing to address the Commission.)
4. Community Event Marketing Fund  
ACTION: Review Applications and Approve Funding
5. Approval of the Minutes of November 20th, 2013 regular meeting.
6. Commissioner Reports.
7. Monthly Financial/Budget Report – Alicia Vennos.

CONTACT: Jeff Simpson, (760) 924-4634

**Sunset Magazine has chosen McGee Creek Canyon and Pack Station for its annual "Best of the West" February issue, on newsstands now.** McGee also scored the cover photo for the California section title page – congrats!

**Two Mono County location photos submitted by staff secured prominent placement** in the new, 96-page, super high-gloss, large format "*Location California*" film industry publication, just released. A breathtaking image of Mammoth Mountain/Minarets/Ritter and Banner is the double-page center spread, and a spectacular sunset on Mono Lake is a double-truck spread. This publication is the California Film Commission's primary lure piece and will be distributed at all major film industry events, including the Sundance Film Festival, Berlin International Film Festival, Cannes International Film Festival, and many more. Mono County Film Commission also purchased a half-page ad. Check out pages 48/49, 54/55, and 30 –

[http://issuu.com/lionsdailynews/docs/location\\_california\\_pt/1?e=0/6372882](http://issuu.com/lionsdailynews/docs/location_california_pt/1?e=0/6372882)

**Mono County Tourism is exhibiting at the Bay Area Travel and Adventure Show in Santa Clara** this weekend, part of the Yosemite Experience Pavilion -- complete with climbing wall!

**The Mono County Tourism & Film Commission will be reviewing 13 grant applications** for the Community Event Marketing Fund program at its regular meeting on January 28, Mammoth BOS Conference Room, 9:30am. All are welcome.

**Economic Development Staff is touring key French Tour Operators** and Travel Professionals to Bodie, Mono Lake and June Lake on January 30th. The familiarization trip is coordinated through the High Sierra Visitors Council, of which Mono County Tourism is an active member.

CONTACT: Alicia Vennos, (760) 924-1743

## **Public Health**

**January is National Radon Action Month** - Through a grant from the California Public Health Dept, Environmental Health ran a Radon Awareness Campaign in print and on the radio. Over 20 radon testing kits were picked up in Mammoth/June and 2 in North County, more have been ordered. Most all takers said they had heard the Radon ad on the radio. Ads ran on KSRW, KMMT and KIBS. Radon is a radioactive gas found in nearly all soils. Radon may migrate from the ground and enter into your home. You cannot see, smell or taste radon gas. Radon is the second leading cause of lung cancer after smoking. If discovered, home radon leaks can be repaired. Radon testing is recommended for all Mono County homes, including those of Mono County employees.



**Public Health**  
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

CONTACT: Nancy Mahannah, (760) 924-4621

**Flu Deaths Increase in California** - At this time last year, there were 5 laboratory confirmed deaths from influenza. This year, there are 45, with 50 more likely to be confirmed shortly. Who are they?

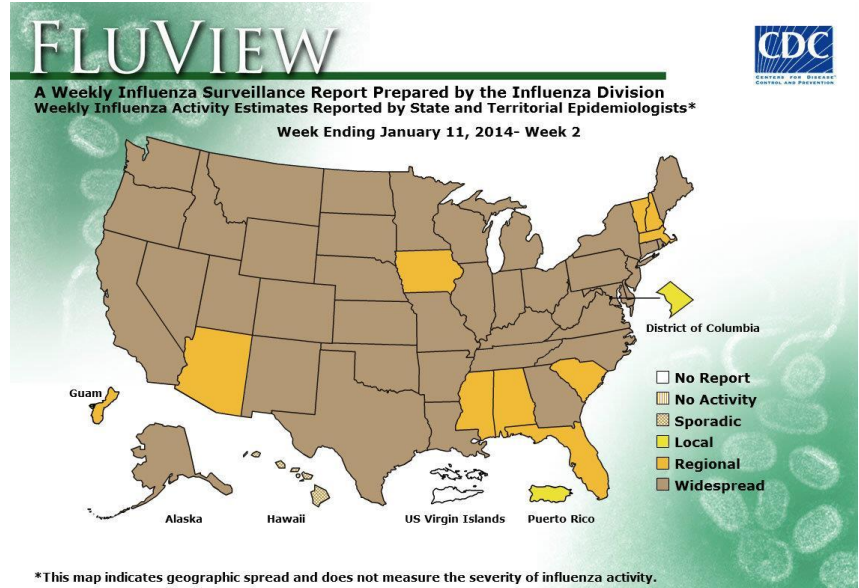
- Under age 65, including children
- Largely unvaccinated
- Many had chronic medical conditions, especially obesity, high blood pressure, and heart disease.
- However, about 10% were previously healthy with no risk factors!

In California, flu activity continues to increase, including reports of hospitalizations, severe disease and the number of deaths. We are clearly in the midst of what appears to be an earlier peaking, severe flu season. Flu is considered widespread throughout California, as it is in 39 other states, with the deaths being reported from 20 California counties. We are not able to predict when the peak will be; however, it is safe to assume that there will be flu activity around for the next several months.

In the Eastern Sierra, we have been fortunate. There has been only one hospitalization due to influenza, no ICU patients, and no deaths. However, clinics in Mammoth have documented epidemic levels of visits with influenza-like illness for the last 3 weeks, so the flu is certainly here!

The majority of currently circulating influenza viruses are influenza Type A, in particular H1N1, which has been around for 4 years, and is also known as the “2009 swine flu”. All strains tested to date are in the current vaccine, and there has been no resistance detected thus far to the usual antiviral medications.

What is the significance of the fact that the predominant strain is the Flu A H1N1 2009? H1N1 does not discriminate across the age spectrum, and as we are seeing, disease is often seen in younger adults that are otherwise healthy, in addition to those more typically affected; the very young, very old, and those with underlying medical conditions. Furthermore, the young adult age group is least likely to be vaccinated. After all, they are invincible!



There is no shortage of influenza vaccine. Vaccination remains the single most effective means of preventing illness, hospitalization, and death. Providers, pharmacies, and the health department have vaccine.

In addition to getting vaccinated, it's important to practice good hand washing and other good health habits. People who are ill should take actions to stop the spread of germs such as:

- ☑ While you are sick, limit contact with others – Please stay home from school or work until you are fever free for at least 24 hours without the help of medication.
- ☑ Cover your nose and mouth when coughing or sneezing with your elbow or sleeve.
- ☑ Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water, or use an alcohol-based rub.
- ☑ Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

Those at highest risk - the elderly, pregnant women, infants, or those with other health conditions - who show flu symptoms should contact their healthcare provider immediately in order to get the most effective treatment. Symptoms include fever, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches and fatigue.

Many have asked about illnesses that are probably not “the flu”. For instance, there is a gastrointestinal illness “going around” with vomiting and diarrhea. This is most likely what is known as norovirus, or the “winter vomiting disease”. True influenza does not present with this picture.

There are also other respiratory diseases in circulation, characterized by prolonged coughing, without much fever or the body aches that are part of the influenza picture. This is most likely what is known as the metapneumovirus. Fortunately, there is very little respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) in circulation so far this winter, which is dangerous for the very young. We have not recognized any whooping cough in the local area.

CONTACT: Dr. Richard O. Johnson, M.D., MPH, (760) 914-0496

## Sheriff's Office

1. Dispatch upgrade continues to move forward. Carpet and furniture have been installed, with work being done this week as well as next on the electronics upgrade.
2. I attended a 2<sup>nd</sup> retirement party for my mother, Bernie Obenberger, as she retired from her volunteer work for the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office - Norwalk Station. She volunteered for a total of 17 years and worked over 5,400 hours during that time. Her retirement gathering included family, friends along with many members of the Los Angeles County Sheriff's Office ranging from Deputy Sheriff all the way to Chief.
3. Sergeant Beard attended the Long Valley RPAC meeting.
4. I will be attending a fundraising dance for the Lee Vining Schools this Saturday. 80's is the theme.....and no I do not have any 1980's clothing..!!

CONTACT: Sheriff Ralph "OB" Obenberger, (760) 932-7549

**Inmate Worker Program** - Lately, you might have seen local inmates around various areas and communities of Mono County performing community service work. The increased community service the inmates of the Mono County Jail are performing is part of the implementation of the Inmate Worker Program.

In 2011, Governor Jerry Brown signed Assembly Bill (AB) 109, a historic legislation that has, in so far, helped California "close the revolving door" of low-level inmates that cycle through the State prison system. This legislation has been California's solution to reducing the number of inmates in State prison.

With the recent implementation of AB 109, the impact to the Mono County Jail has been significant. The low-level inmates once being sent to State prison are now staying housed and serving their sentence in local county jails. The challenge that the Mono County Jail faces, as a small jail that only houses 44 beds, is how to keep these long-term inmates motivated and engage them in constructive activities.

With funding from the AB109 realignment and the Community Corrections Partnership (CCP), comprising of local agencies including the Mono County Sheriff's Office; Mono County Probation; Mono County Superior Court; Mammoth Lakes Police Department; Mono County District Attorney's Office; Mono County Public Defenders; Mono County Department of Social Services; Mono County Office of Education; Mono County Department of Behavioral Health; Mono County Board of Supervisors; and Wild Iris, the Mono County Jail has aggressively implemented an Inmate Worker Program.



This program allows our locally housed inmates, who have not been charged with a violent or sexual crime, to engage in providing community service throughout Mono County. This program includes work details such as: washing Mono County Sheriff's Office patrol and jail vehicles; washing county-wide fire protection districts fire engines and equipment; weed removal at local fire stations, county parks, cemeteries, and along local sidewalks and roadways; litter and trash removal along county roadways; snow removal along local community sidewalks; painting projects of county-wide facilities and offices; preparation and cleanup for large localized county-wide events; and snow removal around fire hydrants within the Town of Mammoth Lakes. Funding has allowed for the department to purchase a work trailer with tools and other necessary equipment for the inmates to perform these varied tasks.

The Inmate Worker Program has already shown positive results around Mono County and its communities. Citizens benefit from the hard work the inmates put in to keep their local communities clean. Local agencies benefit from the hard work the inmates put in that allow their staff to focus on other projects. This program also benefits the inmates by getting them outside and helping to build camaraderie amongst themselves which allows for a better living environment for the inmates and jail staff.

In addition to the Inmate Worker Program, the CCP group is actively working on additional programming opportunities for the locally housed inmates in the Mono County Jail. These additional programs are in the works to begin later this year.

CONTACT: Jennifer M. Hansen, (760) 932-5279

**The Mono County Narcotics Enforcement Team (MONET)**, along with the assistance of the Mono County Sheriff's Office, the Mammoth Lakes Police Department, and the Inyo County Narcotics Enforcement Team (INET), concluded a narcotics investigation in the Town of Mammoth Lakes.

During the past couple of weeks, as part of a continuous narcotics investigation, MONET agents, along with the Mono County Sheriff's Office, were following leads regarding a local methamphetamine distributor around the Town of Mammoth Lakes. With information of a pending narcotics sale, MONET agents observed Juan Manuel Vargas Gutierrez, age 21, of Bishop, CA, meet with a female, in his parked vehicle, in a parking lot. The female purchased one ounce of methamphetamine from Mr. Gutierrez and his mother, Maria Socorro Vargas Gomez, age 39, also of Bishop, CA. The transaction was completed and Mr. Gutierrez drove away.

Mr. Gutierrez then met with a juvenile in another parking lot, outside of his vehicle, and exchanged six (6) bindles of methamphetamine to the juvenile. Mr. Gutierrez returned to his vehicle and drove away. Mammoth Lakes Police Officers conducted a traffic stop on his vehicle. Mr. Gutierrez and Ms. Gomez were placed under arrest and transported to the Mammoth Lakes Police Department without incident.

Upon questioning of Mr. Gutierrez, he stated he and his mother had driven to Mammoth Lakes from Bishop with the intent to sell and distribute methamphetamine. He stated he had provided methamphetamine to the juvenile before, as the juvenile helped Mr. Gutierrez distribute the methamphetamine. A search warrant was obtained for the residence of the juvenile where the six (6) bindles of methamphetamine were discovered and recovered from inside the handle bars of

the juvenile's scooter. Juvenile probation was contacted and took the juvenile into custody without incident. A second search warrant was obtained by the Inyo County Narcotics Enforcement Team (INET), for Mr. Gutierrez's resident in Bishop. INET agents discovered and recovered additional methamphetamine, a digital scale, and additional packing materials from the residence. The total methamphetamine recovered from this incident was approximately thirty (30) ounces. Mr. Gutierrez and Ms. Gomez were transported and booked into the Mono County Jail in Bridgeport without incident.

Juan Manuel Vargas Gutierrez, age 21, of Bishop, CA, was arrested for possession of a controlled substance; possession of a controlled substance for sale; transportation of a controlled substance; using a minor as a selling agent; and conspiracy to commit a crime. Mr. Gutierrez is currently in custody.

Maria Socorro Vargas Gomez, age 39, of Bishop, CA, was arrested for possession of a controlled substance; possession of a controlled substance for sale; transportation of a controlled substance; and conspiracy to commit a crime.

The juvenile was arrested for possession of a controlled substance; possession of a controlled substance for sale; and transportation of a controlled substance.

All charges for this incident are pending with the Mono County District Attorney's Office.

CONTACT: Jennifer M. Hansen, (760) 932-5279