

Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee
Friday July 16, 3:00 - 5:00
Via ZOOM
Meeting Agenda

Here is your Zoom Meeting Invite:

Topic: Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee

Time: July 16, 2021 03:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

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1. Call to Order and Roll Call
2. Review of Agenda
3. Review and Approval of Minutes from May and June of 2021
4. Public Comment on Non-Agenda Items
5. Discuss how to support the Board of Supervisors Resolution in support of allocating \$4 mil of PG&E/COVID recovery funds to climate related projects.
6. Discuss and consider adoption of Resolution in Support of Designating JSDF as State Lands for Climate Mitigation & Adaptation, Ecological Resiliency and Equity part of California Resources Agency Effort Gavin's 30 by 30 executive order.
7. Discuss follow up activities from previous meetings.
8. Identify a Meeting Date for August
9. Adjournment

Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee
Friday May 21, 3:00 – 5:00 PT

1. Call to order and roll call
 - a. Present: John Nickerson, Michael Potts, Susan Sher, Randy MacDonald, Jessica Stull-Otto, Eileen Mitro, Cathy Monroe, Tess Albin-Smith, Ellen Drell
 - b. Not Present: Marie Jones
 - c. Members of the public present: Eleas Kostis, Richard Hubacek, George Reinhardt, Helen Sizemore
2. Review of Minutes- Reviewed with need to change the last name of Jessica. No other changes. MOTION to approve as amended by Nickerson and seconded by MacDonald. Passed UNANIMOUSLY.
3. Public Comment
 - a. Discussion about where this group is going with development of a county plan. The need for funds was raised. Reinhardt raised the work of [ICLEI](#).
 - b. Stull-Otto has been approved as a voting member and welcomed by the group.
 - c. MacDonald mentioned that Hubacek has applied to MCAAC. Hubacek confirmed and stated that he has not heard anything.
4.
 - a. Meeting with the County Executive (Sher)

Supervisor Gjerde at meeting and three additional from fleet department. Steve Dunicliff was not clear on his role. Per conversation with Supervisor Gjerde: money from PG&E coming, \$2m dedicated to climate change. Susan states there was a tentative attitude from county personnel. Dunicliff indicated that the county is not interested in grants.

Discussion continued to the issue of grants and that the county did not appear open to grants. General sentiment was to push-back. We need to get some work done. Eleas Kostis weighed in to support action and securing funding.

Potts felt the meeting helped to open doors. Stull-Otto suggested that we think strategically about who in the county we connect with. Helen Sizemore mentioned the Grassroots Initiative Recommendations which is the next item for discussion. Potts suggested that after the 'Comeback Funds' relieve the losses caused by COVID, most of the remainder be earmarked for a Greening Fund to initiate climate readiness expenses, such as air sourced heat pumps for the upcoming third phase of the Administration Building reroofing; he suggests at least \$4 million. Sher suggested inviting Supervisor Gjerde.

- b. Grassroots Institute (GRI) recommendations (Reinhardt)- three key things; charging stations, PV on government buildings, and electric vehicles for public transportation. GRI encourages coops for food distribution and climate action.

Monroe recommended that some of the comeback money be spent on charging stations. MacDonald mentioned there is support locally for the GRI proposal. MacDonald made a MOTION to support of the GRI proposal, Monroe seconded. Reinhardt offered additional support for action. Increasing the Greening Fund to \$4 million or more was mentioned again. Helen Sizemore mentioned the Inland Democratic Club endorses the GRI recommendations and is working with Willits and Ukiah. Call for vote. Vote is UNANIMOUS.

ACTION: advise BoS of our support of the GRI Recommendations

5. Oak Woodlands Ordinance and Letter.

Monroe brought up issue of Douglas Fir encroachment on oaks. Monroe described the need for more education needed on oaks. Some recommendations for some edits. Drell mentioned that we may want to add other issues, including prescribed fire and education to the letter, although these could be added later. Potts suggested that we would like to add our interest in supporting the county. ACTION: Approval unanimous to send to county.

6. Michelle Passero, in charge of climate issues for the Nature Conservancy, joined the meeting. She is the author of the presentation we were shown. The topic: working landscapes and their baseline contribution to carbon emissions. With a baseline, we can work with property owners to accomplish the policies and directives that come from governmental climate action efforts. California's goal is carbon neutrality by 2045. Without intervention, working lands will increasingly contribute to carbon emissions. Nickerson has been central to providing tools for estimating and monitoring changes in land use. There are advantages to moving the accounting to a larger scale entity, and this can be done without losing accuracy. This methodology goes beyond carbon benefits, but includes scenic, equity, and many other important metrics. Using the baseline, a trajectory can be plotted, and then the same tool and information sources are used to provide accurate monitoring, to see where actuality is in the context of the desired trajectory. The presentation offered a short "laundry list" of the many useful reduction activities that can be employed. Many of the co-benefits address water, habitat, and resilience issues. The tool enables predictions of future GHGs and also show co-benefits.

Discussion of what do we do with an accounting program. The group provided general support for the program. Lots of discussions regarding pros and cons of the approach. The group wanted to know:

- Who would work on it?
- How much would it cost?
- Funding sources?

ACTION: Nickerson will provide more information to the group.

7. Low hanging fruit

- a. Transportation adhoc committee report (Sher) recommends walking and biking, clean driving. Sher would love to see better bike lanes, bike sharing, rental racks, carpooling (especially with Ukiah High School). She suggested putting up shade structure with photovoltaics. Stull-Otto added that she invited MCOG; they will attend the next meeting. Albin-Smith mentioned she is a member of MCOG and that there is a desire to identify climate change priorities.

Potts asked why public transportation is not included and it was agreed that it is an omission. Hubacek brought up the issue of lack of public transportation to rural areas. Reinhardt pushed the group to be more active. MacDonald noted that there are additional items for low-hanging fruit that he would like to include. Stull-Otto suggested a push among government organizations to improve pedestrian and bicycle pathways. Safe Routes to School was raised as a campaign we should support.

ACTION: Sher would like to get the idea submitted to the BoS soon (get the items agreed to by our next meeting).

8. 18th of June is the next meeting. Members agree to meet through the summer.

9. Adjourned at 5:03 pm.

Meeting Minutes
Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee
Friday June 18, 3:00 – 5:00 PT

1. Call to order and roll call

- a. Present: Marie Jones, Susan Sher, Randy MacDonald, Jessica Stull-Otto, Eileen Mitro, Cathy Monroe, Tess Albin-Smith, Ellen Drell, Michael Potts, Richard Hubacek,
- b. Not Present: Sandy Marshall, John Nickerson
- c. Members of the public present: Mary Sneider, Mo Mulheren, Carrie Durkee, James Schoonover, Peter McNamee

2. Review of Minutes- The Minutes of May 21st were reviewed with the following recommended changes:

Minutes were not approved. The chair was directed to bring the minuted back with revisions for the next meeting.

3. Public Comment on Non Agenda Items

- a. Carrie Durkee asked for support from the MCCAC at the next BOS meeting regarding the \$2 million allocation from the BOS for climate improvements to public facilities.
- b. Michael Potts indicated that he was resigning from the post of vice chair due to conflicts that he was having with the County. His resignation was accepted with concern and many committee members expressed gratitude for his service and for the wisdom that he brought to the work. He left the meeting at this time.
- c. Richard Hubacek and Jessica Stull-Otto were welcomed as full new members of the committee.

4. MCOG Community Outreach regarding the Regional Transportation Plan.

<https://www.mendocinocog.org/2017-regional-transportation-plan-adopted>

- a. Nephel Barret, Executive Director of MCOG, provided a brief presentation regarding the update of the Regional Transportation Plan. The update is due in 2022 and the RTP guides the award of significant funding amounts for transportation projects in the County. Nephel encouraged members of the MCCAC to complete the on-line survey and use the interactive map to indicate transportation needs and problems in the County.
- b. In response to questions from Susan, Richard and Cathy, she further noted that:
 - ✓ the RTP will include a comprehensive list of transportation funding recommendations
 - ✓ Public comments will be accepted through the end of June.
- c. The following comments were provided by committee members:
 - ✓ Randy recommended that a subcommittee be formed to evaluate the Sonoma County Climate Mobility Plan to see if there are elements that should be adopted by Mendocino County.
 - ✓ Cathy noted that the conversion of the NCRA to the great redwood trail should be included in the RTP.

- ✓ Jessica asked that the plan look at jobs/housing balance especially for communities like Round Valley and Covelo.
 - ✓ Havier committed to working with MCOG on transportation issues related to the tribe.
- d. Loretta Ellard provided a presentation on the Local Road Safety Plan.

5. Discuss the proposed \$2 mil allocation of PG&E/COVID recovery funds to climate related projects.

Susan introduced this item by recommending that the County dedicate at least \$2 million of Covid recovery funds to Climate Change adaptation and mitigation. The Grass Roots Institute has lead the charge in requesting that some portion of the \$17 million coming to Mendocino County from the American Rescue Plan Act be dedicated to climate activities in Mendocino County. Their proposal is focused on: 1) increasing the number of electric vehicle charging stations, installing PV on County buildings, and funds for capital improvement projects.

The Committee approved the Grass Roots Institute recommendation to the Board of supervisors and directed Cathy and Marie to speak at the next BOS meeting in support of the effort. It was noted that Michael Potts had already submitted a letter of support for the initiative from the MCCAC. Cathy indicated that she would send an additional letter asking that the BOS identify a line item in the budget specific to this request for \$2 million for Climate mitigation and adaptation.

6. Discuss letter of Comment to California Resources Agency re Gavin's 30 by 30 executive order.

The committee directed Marie to bring this item back for discussion at our next meeting.

7. Discuss Progress on First Priorities Doc and RTP recommendation.

The committee discussed the draft recommendation for the RTP that was prepared by Jessica Stull-Otto and Cathy Monroe. There was disagreement within the committee about whether re-establishing rail connections in Mendocino County was the correct recommendation at this time. Susan moved that the transportation recommendations be adopted by the Committee as reworded during the meeting. This was seconded by Cathy. The recommendation was adopted with affirmative votes by: Cathy, Marie, Susan, Randy, Tess, Jessica and Richard. Havier voted against approval..

8. Discuss Drought Policy and MCCAAC Policy Goals with Regard to Adaptation to Drought.

There was a general discussion about drought with no recommendations or action taken. The general discussion included the following techniques to address the drought: rain catchment, gray water systems, conservation, create a County-wide water agency. Committee members also observed that droughts would be more common in the future.

9. July 16th at 3:00 is the next meeting.

10. Adjourned at 5:00 pm.

**Resolution of the
Mendocino County Climate Action & Advisory Committee
Recommending that Jackson Demonstration State Forest
Be included in CNRA's 30X30 strategy**

5

WHEREAS, [Executive Order N-82-20](#) established a state goal of conserving at least 30 percent of California's land and coastal waters by 2030 and directed CNRA to develop, by February 2022, a strategy to achieve 30x30 in a manner that:

1. Safeguards our State's economic sustainability and food security.
- 10 2. Protects and restores biodiversity.
3. Enables enduring conservation measures on a broad range of landscapes, including natural areas and working lands, in partnership with land managers and natural resource user groups.
- 15 4. Builds climate resilience, reduces risk from extreme climate events and contributes to the State's effort to combat climate change.
5. Expands equitable outdoor access and recreation for all Californians.

WHEREAS, the immediate reality of anthropogenic climate change is now accepted by all reputable scientists worldwide and presents an immense threat to humans and the natural world;

20 **WHEREAS**, forests are key to our ability to achieve the Paris Climate accord and Executive Order N-82-20 to build climate resilience and to re-absorb carbon from other economic sectors:

- 25 1. Forests are critically important in our fight against rising CO2 levels and concomitant climate change. Despite covering only 9% of the earth's surface, forests are responsible for sequestering 25% of anthropogenic carbon emissions, which is approximately equal to the carbon sequestered by the global oceans ([Pan et al., 2011](#)).
2. To achieve Paris goals, enhancement of forest-based carbon storage is critical to mitigate emissions in other sectors, especially as **no alternative carbon-sink technologies** have yet been proven at scale. (Houghton, et a, 2015).
- 30 3. Increasing forest protection is the lowest cost and the single most effective tool we have in meeting emission reduction targets ([Moomaw, et al., 2019](#)).

WHEREAS, Jackson Demonstration State Forest is well positioned to help implement Governor Newsom's October 7, 2020 executive order that directs state policymakers to conserve 30% of the state's land and coastal water by 2030.

35 **WHEREAS**, as the state's largest demonstration forest, Jackson State Demonstration Forest includes 48,652 acres of Mendocino's coastal Redwood (*Sequoia Sempervirens*) forest that provides a unique opportunity for the State to establish a state-owned forest dedicated to carbon sequestration. The benefits of the dedication of this forest to carbon sequestration are detailed below:

- 40 1. Redwood forests of the North Coast sequester more carbon than any other forest type in the world ([Hudiburg et al., 2011](#); [Sillett et al., 2020](#)). Redwood Forests are the best

carbon sequestration and climate change mitigation opportunity in California ([Jones and O'Hara, 2012](#)). Coast Redwood trees can sequester up to 250 times more carbon than the average tree during a typical tree lifetime. Jones and O'hara found in their analysis "Carbon Storage in Young Growth Coast Redwood Stands" that mature Redwood sequestered more carbon than young Redwood and that both sequestered more carbon than historical default values used in carbon budgeting.

2. "Over time old-growth forests store approximately twice as much carbon as forests managed on a 100-year rotation, and forests managed on a 50-year rotation store about 38% as much as old growth" ([Harmon et al., 1990](#)).
3. Studies show that trees continue to grow and absorb carbon throughout their lives ([Luyssaert et al., 2007](#); [Stephenson et al., 2014](#), [Lutz et al., 2018](#); [Mildrexler et al., 2020](#)), therefore premature mortality through harvesting is associated with both immediate carbon releases and decreased sequestration potential over time ([Battles et al., 2014](#)).
4. Some may argue that cutting down trees and converting them to wood products sequesters carbon, however the redwood products that become decks, fencing and trim in homes typically end up burned or in a landfill within 30 years ([O'Connor, 2004](#)). That time frame is a fraction of the sequestration potential of old-growth forests, particularly Redwoods that can sequester carbon for millennia ([Harmon et al., 1990](#); [Iberle et al., 2020](#); [Sillett et al., 2020](#)). Additionally a majority of the wood in a redwood tree ends up as waste products that release their CO2 to the air much more quickly.

WHEREAS, wildfire size and intensity are magnified by climate change, threatening homes, lives, our economy and the natural world, and state-of-the-scientific research has found that commercial logging practices do not reduce wildfire danger, but instead exacerbate it, that real wildfire risk reduction must be a publicly-funded effort focused first on mandating and creating defensible space on private properties as follows:

1. [Cruz et al., 2014](#) found that thinning in all scenarios increased fireline intensity and in the most likely scenario also increased in-stand wind speeds and the associated crowning potential of the fire. In a retrospective post-fire study of three management types, uncut (no treatment of natural fuels) and partial-cut stands (treated and untreated slash), the uncut forest had the least fire damage while the region's partial-cut stands with the untreated slash suffered the most severe damage ([Weatherspoon and Skinner, 1995](#)).
2. Weather and climate are the most important predictor of wildfire intensity with logging intensity being the second most important factor ([Zald and Dunn, 2018](#)).
3. Across the entire western U.S., fires burned with less intensity on lands that had the highest protections from logging ([Bradley et al., 2016](#)).
4. Logging the largest trees opens the forest canopy allowing more solar radiation to reach the forest floor thereby drying out the underbrush and soils creating hotter, drier, and more flammable understory microclimates ([Weatherspoon, 1996](#)). It results in greater in-canopy and in-stand wind speeds that fuel higher intensity fires ([Banerjee, 2020](#)). It also reduces summer fog drip which greatly decreases the vapor content and increases wildfire risk.

WHEREAS, the current logging activities in Jackson Demonstration State Forest are specifically problematic because:

1. The forested areas that are currently being logged include some of the largest remaining redwood groves of old second growth.

- 90
2. The eight areas currently slated for logging are close to hundreds of residences, border three State Parks and thereby increase fire risk in these areas.
 3. These areas currently offer miles of beautiful hiking and biking trails in Mendocino, Caspar, and Fort Bragg's back yards and are visited by tens of thousands of people annually.

95 **WHEREAS** the Climate Crisis has contributed directly and indirectly to the loss of biodiversity and the destruction of critical biomes and JDSF is uniquely positioned to help retain biodiversity in our region and the state as follows:

- 100
1. Under the 30x30 vision laid out in the Global Deal for Nature, lands are classified according to their GAP status code, which indicates the gap between their biodiversity and their current level of protection. Jackson Demonstration State forest, as GAP3 land, is recognized as having, "particular potential to advance biodiversity and climate protections more quickly through administrative mechanisms." [The Global Deal for Nature](#) notes that, to avoid an irreversible wave of mass extinction, 90% of biodiversity hot spots globally must have the highest level of protection by the year 2030.
 - 105 2. JDSF is home to a minimum of 1,266 species, not counting insects.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Mendocino County Climate Action Advisory Committee does hereby recommend that California Department of Natural Resources should:

- 110
- 1 Halt approval of new Timber Harvest Plans and/or the sale of timber harvests in Jackson Demonstration State Forest while a new Management Plan is formulated for JDSF;
 - 2 Include Jackson Demonstration State Forest in the CNRA 30X30 strategy to achieve 30x30 goals.
 - 3 Support the rights of Indigenous Pomo tribes to engage in Government-to-Government consultation regarding management of Jackson Demonstration State Forest.

115 This foregoing Resolution introduced by Committee Member _____, seconded by Committee Member _____, and carried this ____ day of _____, 2021 by the following vote:

AYES:

NOES:

120 ABSENT:

_____ Date _____