

**Lee Vining, FERC Project No. 1388**

**INITIAL TWG MEETING AGENDA  
November 17, 2020; 8 AM - 12 PM PDT**

*\*These meeting notes are documentation of general discussions from the meeting held on the above-noted date. These notes are not a verbatim account of proceedings, are not meeting minutes, and do not represent any final decisions or official documentation for the project or participating agencies.*

1. Attendees

Relicensing Team Members

Martin Ostendorf, SCE  
 Matthew Woodhall, SCE  
 Audry Williams, SCE  
 Alan Partridge, SCE  
 Seth Carr, SCE  
 Lyle Laven, SCE  
 Finlay Anderson, Kleinschmidt  
 Kelly Larimer, Kleinschmidt  
 Shannon Luoma, Kleinschmidt  
 Carissa Shoemaker, ERM  
 Matthew Harper, Kleinschmidt  
 Heather Bowen Neff, SWS  
 Lynn Compas, HRA  
 Adam Cohen, SWS  
 Brad Blood, Psomas  
 Steve Norton, Psomas  
 Allison Rudalevige, Psomas  
 Edith Read, E Read Associates

Robert Di Paolo, Mono Lake Committee  
 Chris Shutes, California Sportfishing Alliance  
 Dean Tonenna, Mono Lake Kutzadikaa Tribe  
 Sheila Irons, USFS  
 Claire Landowski, Mono Lake Committee  
 Nora Gamino, USFS  
 Diana Pietrasanta, USFS  
 Blake Engelhardt, USFS  
 Ashley Blythe-Haverstock, USFS  
 Lawson Reif, USFS  
 Tristan Leong, USFS  
 Nathan Sill, USFS  
 Dan Yarborough, USFS  
 Gordon Martin, USFS  
 Thomas Torres, USFS  
 Brandy Wood, CDFW  
 Nick Buckmaster, CDFW  
 Alyssa Marquez, CDFW  
 Paul Pau, LADWP  
 Saeed Jorat, LADWP  
 Sue Burak, Snow Survey Associates  
 Jason Small, Mono Lake Committee  
 Heather Beeler, USFWS  
 Chad Mellison, USFWS  
 Charlotte Lange, Mono Lake Kutzadikaa Tribe (via phone)

Agencies & Interested Stakeholders

Chase Hildeburn, State Water Resources Control Board  
 Greg Reis, Mono Lake Committee  
 Justin Barrett, USFWS  
 Bartshe Miller, Mono Lake Committee  
 Steve Bowes, NPS  
 Brian Adkins, Bishop Paiute Tribe  
 Geoff McQuilkin, Mono Lake Committee

## 2. Welcome and Introductions

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- Matthew Woodhall welcomed everyone to the meeting and provided a safety minute
- Shannon Luoma reviewed meeting guidelines, how to ask a question and the meeting agenda. She then asked participants not part of the relicensing team to introduce themselves (see attendee list above).
- Matthew Woodhall and Finlay Anderson introduced the Relicensing Team
- Carissa Shoemaker reviewed the TWG meeting goals, objectives and expectations of participants.

## 3. Project overview/Relicensing Process

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- Matthew Woodhall reviewed the SCE relicensing process and the goals and objectives of relicensing the Lee Vining Project in addition to a brief Project Overview.
- Finlay Anderson provided an overview of the FERC Process, relicensing schedule and what the role of the TWG is in the relicensing process.
  - Question was asked for clarification on “maintaining current operations” and wondering if what is really meant is ‘maintaining conditions that contribute to current operations’
    - Response: Correct, what is meant by no changes to operations is that SCE currently does not anticipate making changes to operations as laid out the current FERC license.

## 4. Discussion of Existing Environment

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- Heather Neff presented Water Resources, Operations, Hydrology and Geology and Soils.
  - Operations and Water Management / Hydrology
    - Question: Can you describe the property damage component of Tioga operations in more detail? What's the concern there/past historical context?
      - Response: In heavier snow years there are occasionally ice dams across the reservoir and if they're not cut up by the time Tioga spills, it will back up into the Tioga Lodge area and potentially result in property damage.
      - Tristan: Just trying to understand limitations which we'll define later - appreciate the context.
    - Question: Will SCE be developing a hydrology dataset for the past ~30 years of project operations? Will SCE be developing an operations model for the project? How will any TWG interact with these developments?
      - Response: We likely have the dataset available, we have not confirmed that we'll be developing an Operations Model. This would be a study plan that should be discussed in context of FERC's study plan criteria; need to review the rationale. The current plan is to let the FERC/TWG process run its course and see if there is a need to developing a model.

- Tristan seconds the request and need as it relates to the USFS desire to reduce annual consultation on operations and have set schedule moving forward.
  - Fish and Aquatics
    - Question: Can resource agencies get a copy of the studies in an effort to not reinvent the wheel? Specifically, the fish instream flow studies; who wrote them and what were the methods?
      - Response: Conceptually there is no problem sharing data, it's more a matter of how to transport it. The relicensing team will review the instream flow studies we have and come up with a plan to get them over to Tristan.
  - Water Quality
    - Question: Was the Low DO in Tioga was confined to the hypolimnion?
      - Response: Great question, that's something we can discuss during a TWG meeting.
    - Question: Was fecal coliform measured in the upper watershed?
      - Response: Fecal coliform was measured upstream and downstream of the campgrounds in the lower Lee Vining canyon.
  - Participants were asked to state their interest in joining a TWG by typing it into the chat box. A detailed list of those who requested to join a TWG is provided at the end of this meeting summary.
- Steve Norton and Allison Rudalevige presented Terrestrial Resources, including wildlife, botanical, RTE and floodplains and wetlands.
  - Question: Are there opportunities to request additional surveys for golden eagles?
    - Response: Places where there are consultation requirements or regulatory guidelines such as ESA, Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, Incidental Take Permits, etc. The relicensing team plans to adhere to those requirements. There may be an opportunity, as the TWG and study plans develop, to request such a survey.
  - No additional comments or questions were raised for this resource area.
- Audry Williams presented Cultural and Tribal Resources
  - It was noted that regardless of involvement in the individual TWGs, the Tribal and Cultural Study Plans will be circulated to the interested tribes and tribal involvement in the execution of the plans is not limited to TWG members.
  - No additional comments or questions were raised for this resource area.
- Matt Harper presented Recreation and Land Use Resources
  - Project Boundary
    - USFS noted that the primary access roads to Poole PH and Saddlebag are not in currently in the project boundary.
      - Response: Correct. Neither Poole PH Rd nor Saddlebag Rd are currently within the project boundary.

- Question: Why isn't the stream gage below the Poole PH within the boundary?
  - Response: The map needs to be updated. SCE has recently amended the gaging plan and the gage below the Poole PH that was used to measure flow is has been relocated up near Ellery and is currently within the project boundary.
- Comment: The land at the Poole Powerhouse is National Forest System lands and not owned by SCE.
  - Response: Land ownership is one of the topics the relicensing team would like to discuss with the FS.
- Recreation
  - Question: Given the precipitous increase in day use, hiking, fishing and unregulated dispersed camping, and all associated impacts, are there opportunities for SCE to install more restrooms and provide assistance to INF to help sign/manage high level of use?
  - Response: This is a topic to be discussed during the TWG meetings. As part of the relicensing process we will assess what the current recreation usage is and use this information to help inform additional studies as well as any potential adjustments to future recreation plans.

## 5. Schedule & Next Steps

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- Finlay and Carissa discussed next steps and reviewed the TWG meeting calendar.
  - All meeting materials, including the PowerPoint presentation and tentative schedule for upcoming TWG meetings will be posted to the Relicensing Website (<https://www.sce.com/leevining>)
  - As of right now all meetings through early July 2021 are expected to be virtual meetings.
  - Question: Given that we've sort of gone through this exercise for Bishop Creek - is there the expectation we would use the same format? Similar study outlines etc? (Study plans, not process)
    - Response: Yes, we will post a link to the Bishop Creek Study Plans as examples for format and to use as templates. We may not be going as far with the study plan development on the same timeline as we did with Bishop.

## 6. TWG Participants

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Table 1 includes those who identified themselves as being interested in specific TWGs during the meeting. Agencies and interested stakeholders are encouraged to email [carissa.shoemaker@erm.com](mailto:carissa.shoemaker@erm.com) to be added to a TWG.

**Table 1. TWG Participant List (Updated as of January 12, 2021)**

TWG Name	Participant Name	Tentative meeting dates
Aquatic Resources*	Tristan Leong, USFS	Mondays:* January 25, 2021 February 22, 2021 March 29, 2021  <i>*Operations TWG is currently scheduled to be part of Aquatic Resources, but may be broken out separately as needed.</i>
	Todd Ellsworth, USFS	
	Chad Mellison, USFWS	
	Nathan Sill, USFS	
	Nick Buckmaster, CDFW	
	Sue Burak, Snow Survey Associates	
	Chris Shutes, CA Sportfishing Alliance	
	Sheila Irons, USFS	
	Chase Hildeburn, State WRCB	
	Paul Pau, LADWP	
	Saeed Jorat, LADWP	
	Geoff McQuilkin, Mono Lake Committee	
	Alyssa Marquez, CDFW	
	Adam Perez, LADWP	
	Eric Tillemans, LADWP	
	Ed Hancock, Lahontan Regional WQCB	
Gaye Mueller, Mono County Fish and Wildlife Commission		
Claire Landowski, Mono Lake Committee		
Greg Reis, Mono Lake Committee		
Terrestrial Resources (includes wildlife and Botany)	Brian Adkins, Bishop Paiute Tribe	Wednesday mornings: January 27, 2021 February 24, 2021 March 31, 2021
	Blake Engelhardt, USFS	
	Thomas Torres, USFS	
	Nathan Sill, USFS	
	Chad Mellison, USFWS	
	Heather Beeler, USFWS	
	Alyssa Marquez, CDFW	
	Bartshe Miller, Mono Lake Committee	
Sheila Irons, USFS		
Cultural/Tribal	Ashley Blythe-Haverstock, USFS	Wednesday afternoons: January 27, 2021 February 24, 2021 March 31, 2021
	Dean Tonenna, Mono Lake Kutzadikaa Tribe	
	Reba Fuller, Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians	
	Sheila Irons, USFS	
	Charlotte Lange Mono Lake Kutzadikaa Tribe	
	Brian Adkins, Bishop Paiute Tribe	
	Christina McDonald, North Fork Rancheria of Mono Indians of California	
	<b>Remainder of tribal/cultural list</b>	
Recreation/Land Use	Bartshe Miller, Mono Lake Committee	

TWG Name	Participant Name	Tentative meeting dates
Recreation/Land Use	Nick Buckmaster, CDFW	Thursdays: January 28, 2021 February 25, 2021 April 1, 2021
	Nora Gamino, USFS	
	Lawson Reif, USFS	
	Sheila Irons, USFS	
	Steve Bowes, NPS	
	Jora Fogg, Friends of the Inyo	
	Katie Goodwin, Access Fund	