

San Miguel County Open Space Commission
Meeting Minutes

Monday, January 27th, 2025, 4:00 PM

Attendance:

OSC Members Present: Joanna Kanow, Susie St. Onge, Jason Merritt, Angela Dye

OSC Members Absent: Yvette Henson, Laura Kudo, Sefra Maples

SMC Staff Liaison Present: Janet Kask, Greg Pollio

Presentation by: Dr. Jason Sibold

Call to Order: 4:03 p.m. by Chairperson Susie St. Onge

Approval of 12/16/24 Meeting Minutes: Motion to Approve: Joanna Kanow

Seconded by: Angela Dye, Approved Unanimously

Forest Health Report - Dr. Jason Sibold

- Dr. Sibold presented his findings on the topic of forest management and the impact of climate change on the landscape.
- He used the Bear Creek area as microcosm of area wide forest health
 - Like Bear Creek, the surrounding area is experiencing aspen and conifer death
- Drought in the area is forecast to worsen in the next 10 years, which erodes the resilience of the trees to withstand infestation and fire
- He went into detail on how the models he uses to map forest health are developed
- His conclusion is that forest mortality is widespread in the upper San Miguel Basin
- Severity is higher in conifer stands and lower in aspen stands
- He would like to see an effort to map forest regrowth to see if there is regeneration occurring
- It is hard to track forest health over long periods of time because reliable data from the past is hard to come by
- Facilitating landscape transition is more involved than just planting trees. Trees to be planted should be sourced locally so the same trees growing in the area are selected

Noxious Weed Management Update

- NWM has released a survey for county residents to gather information about NWM services
- They are also offering free homesite assessments for noxious weeds

Land Use Code Update

- A letter containing comments regarding the updated land use code has been submitted to the Planning Department on behalf of the Open Space Commission

Skyway Corridor Management Plan

- The management plan has been submitted to CDOT
- There will be a presentation on Feb 5th to the Colorado Byways Committee

The meeting adjourned at 6:00 p.m.
Next County OSC meeting - Mon., 2/24/25 at 4:00 p.m.