



ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

UKIAH

860 N. Bush Street
Ukiah, CA 95482
(707) 234-6625

FORT BRAGG

752 S. Franklin St.
Fort Bragg, CA 95437
(707) 961-2714



January 27, 2026

LU STAKEHOLDER MEETING MINUTES

Attendees:

1. Dolores Johnson, Munselle Civil Eng.
2. Carl Rittiman, Rittiman & Assoc.
3. Andy Kawczak, Rittiman & Assoc.
4. Lee Howard
5. Amy Taglio, Redwood Valley Gravel Products
6. Tom Connell, Munselle Civil Eng.
7. Sup. Norvell, MC BOS
8. Sup. Mulheren, MC BOS
9. Sup. Cline, MC BOS
10. Amy Wynn, Wynn Coastal Planning
11. Megan Durban, Wynn Coastal Planning
12. Tony Crosetti, Crosetti Excavating
13. Vincent Crosetti, Crosetti Excavating
14. Jim Ronco, Ronco Consulting
15. Chris Stevens, Rittiman & Assoc.
16. Rich Estabrook
17. Tyler Pearson, Cornerstone Civil Design
18. Marlayna Bourbonnais Duley, EH
19. Melissa Hernandez-Gutierrez, EH
20. Roberto Quintero, EH
21. Robert Joseph, EH
22. Dr. Jenine Miller, HS/EH

EH staff shared the new webpage for stakeholder meeting documents. Participation in a survey to identify preferable days and times for future meetings was requested.

EH Digitizing Progress Report – 37 boxes out of 400 remain in process.

Stakeholders repeatedly stated that it was unacceptable for staff to provide the meeting agenda and documents at 4 pm the day before. EH staff acknowledge that moving forward the agenda and associated material will be provided no less than 2 weeks prior to next meeting.

There was discussion around the new Consultation form used to request staff on-site for pre-SER submittal and associated fee.

The NCRWQCB Russian River Total Maximum Daily Load was approved in Aug. 2025. EH staff rec reading because there may be changes that could affect both EH & QSEs. The topic will be brought back to future meeting for discussion.

The newly released construction plans for the Anderson Valley Sewer & Water systems were shared. Sites are currently on septic systems and will be transitioned over to the sewer at some point.

Staff revisited that a Cert of Completion, also known as a final inspection sign off, is reserved for County staff only. Stakeholders expressed the need for continued outreach from EH to the contractors to educate all involved.

Stakeholders shared concerns regarding the amount of time a septic report review is taking.

Recommendations to improve communication were made including but not limited to more advance notice of stakeholder meeting documents, a wider list of invites including more installers, and utilizing the current sign-in sheet contact information.

Staff offered increased meeting availability and various other approaches to better meet the stakeholder group's needs for increased communications. In addition to the semi-annual in person meetings monthly hour-long virtual meetings were agreed upon in order to discuss specific items more carefully.

The possibility of contracting for 3rd party inspections to conduct final approvals was discussed. Alternate approaches to County staff being present were suggested with questions around the legal aspects of requiring County staff to sign off a County permit. The inability to schedule timely site inspections is an ongoing concern for stakeholders. Staff agreed to further discuss these concerns and bring potential solutions back at a later meeting.

In order to have consistency staff requested the group agree to use only 1 of the 3 different soil rates currently being submitted by stakeholders.

Due to limited administrative staffing levels EH discontinued mailing out courtesy reminder letters to properties with open septic permits. These courtesy letters reminded property owners to either final or renew the septic permit they had already taken out and purchased. Questions regarding the potential impact on a property owner that forget to renew and then find that they may not be able to be developed were expressed.

Further discussion and review of the draft Assessment of Old Undocumented focused on the intent of the historically 1974 date references. Per last stakeholder meeting the 1974 date was removed from the policy outside of the background. Difference naming conventions such as "existing permitted residence" "legally non-conforming" were considered. The 1974 background regarding the BOS ordinance which created the requirement for permitting was discussed. The reasonable expectations of the County records systems from back then were also mentioned as a concern.

Staff shared the LU team metrics for 2025 YTD. Highlights included the average turnaround for SERs was 59 days & BUs was 29 days. It was noted that staff are taking college classes at their own expense resulting in 32-hour work weeks. Staff are also supporting other EH functions in Consumer Protection. Reassigning them back to only land use projects was suggested.

The idea of 3rd party reviewers at the applicant cost was suggested with the example of the City of FB implementing a similar approach. Concerns regarding the complexities and nuance of the septic regulations were voiced as a potential pitfall to a 3rd party reviewer.

Stakeholders requested data regarding the complaints the department receives. How many are received, how long they take, and what they are costing the County because they are done at no cost.

Stakeholders recommended management staff delegate all non-specialized projects to line staff or a 3rd party consultant. This would allow the specialized projects to receive a more timely and accurate review.

The expectation of and support for the EH Land Use fees to be at 100% cost recovery was voiced in order to increase staffing and decrease waiting times.

Questions regarding the regulations for Tiny homes on septic systems were answered. A permitted septic still required when a building permit is applied for. They have also been added to the Bedroom Definition policy to clarify this requirement.

Closing requests regarding improved communication internally & externally were made. Reasonable expectations for responses to requests of all levels of staff were also requested.

EH staff were requested to review and internally discuss whether a guest cottage would require proof of water because stakeholders have recently experienced inconsistency in the policy implementation.