

**Siskiyou County Planning Commission**  
**Regular Meeting**  
**May 21, 2025**

The Siskiyou County Planning Commission meeting of May 21, 2025, was called to order by Chair Fowle at approximately 9:00 a.m. in the Siskiyou County Meeting Chambers, 311 Fourth Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, Yreka, California.

**Present:** Commissioners Melo, Veale, and Fowle

**Absent:** Commissioner Hart and Lindler

**Also Present:** Rick Dean, Director, Community Development Department; Hailey Lang, Deputy Director of Planning; Dan Wessell, Deputy Director of Environmental Health; Rachel Jereb, Senior Planner; James Phelps, Senior Planner; Bernadette Cizin, Associate Planner; William Carroll, Assistant County Counsel; Janine Rowe, Commission Clerk

**Minutes:** It was moved by Commissioner Veale, seconded by Commissioner Melo, to approve the April 16, 2025, Planning Commission Minutes as presented.

**Voted** upon and the Chair declared the motion carried unanimously by those Commissioners present.

**Unscheduled Appearances:** None

**Conflict of Interest Declaration:** None

**Presentation of Documents; Availability of Public Records:** The Chair noted that the items are outlined in the Agenda.

**Public Hearing Protocol:** The Chair briefly reviewed the Public Hearing Protocol.

**Right of Appeal Statement:** The Chair read the Right of Appeal Statement.

**Changes to the Agenda:** None

**New Business:**

**Agenda Item 1: Emmerson Tentative Parcel Map (TPM-24-02) / Categorically Exempt**

The project site is located approximately 2.5 miles northwest of the unincorporated community of Gazelle, west of the intersection of Scarface Road and Cram Gulch Road; APNs: 022-221-290, 022-221-410, 022-250-070, 022-250-130, 022-250-350, 022-250-580, 022-250-600, 022-250-740, 022-250-760, 022-250-770, 022-250-780; Township 43N, Range 6W, Sections 20, 29, 30, and 32, MDB&M; 41.5465°N, -122.5689°W. This project proposes a tentative parcel map to reconfigure 1302.1 acres of land from eleven parcels into ten parcels.

**Categorically Exempt  
Tentative Parcel Map**

**Adopted  
Approved**

**Staff Report:**

The previously circulated Staff Report was reviewed by the Commission, and a presentation of the project was provided by Ms. Jereb.

Ms. Jereb told the Commission that the project proponent is seeking to reconfigure 11 existing parcels, ranging in size from 0.9 to 280 acres, into 10 parcels between 61 and 182.3 acres. She said there was an error in the agenda item description, which incorrectly stated 11 acres being divided into 9 parcels. Ms. Jereb said such a project would normally be handled through boundary line adjustments, but since those are limited to rearranging four parcels at a time, the applicants opted to process it as a single tentative parcel map instead of multiple BLAs.

Ms. Jereb told the Commission that the project site is about 2.5 miles northwest of Gazelle and consists of agricultural land within the AG-1 and AG-2 zoning districts. A private road between two parcels is proposed to be named Coleman Gulch Road which references the physical feature it lies within.

She said the project is consistent with the Subdivision Map Act, General Plan, and zoning regulations for the area. Most subject parcels are under Williamson Act contracts, and Condition of Approval 8 requires that the property owners rescind their existing contracts enter into new contracts to reflect the new property boundaries.

Ms. Jereb said Environmental Health commented on the project, and no public comments were received. She said because the site is already developed and poses no significant environmental impacts, staff recommends the project be exempt from CEQA under Section 15061(b)(3).

**Agency Input: None**

**Commission Questions:**

The Chair opened the Public Hearing.

**Public Comments:**

There being no comments, the Chair closed the Public Hearing.

**Commission Discussion:**

Chair Fowle raised concerns about the availability of detailed boundary maps for the newly adjusted parcels, noting that while total acreage was outlined, there was no delineation per APN. Ms. Jereb clarified that this might have been a printing issue and directed him to the correct exhibit. Chair Fowle also asked about ingress/egress access and potential easements and wanted to be sure none of the parcels were landlocked. Ms. Jereb confirmed that those details were included in additional pages of the packet, explaining that certain roads were depicted but partially obscured by boundary lines. Ms. Jereb demonstrated access routes on the maps, clarifying that Coleman Gulch Road would serve as a main access point for the parcels in question.

The discussion shifted to legal concerns regarding Condition 8 of the Williamson Act contract adjustments. Chair Fowle questioned whether the county had the authority to require landowners to amend existing contracts, arguing that the word "shall" implied a mandate that might exceed the

county's power. Assistant County Counsel William Carroll explained that while the county cannot unilaterally force contract amendments, the guidelines stipulate that landowners must mutually agree to rescind and reenter contracts to align with new parcel boundaries.

**Motion:** Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Veale, seconded by Commissioner Melo, to Adopt Resolution PC 2025-005, A Resolution of the Planning Commission of the County of Siskiyou, State of California, Determining the Project Exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act and Approving the Emmerson Tentative Parcel Map (TPM-24-02).

**Voted** upon and the Chair declared the motion carried unanimously by those Commissioners present on the following roll call vote:

**Ayes:** Commissioners Melo, Veale and Fowle

**Noes:**

**Absent:** Commissioners Hart and Lindler

**Abstain:**

**Agenda Item 2: General Plan – Safety Element Amendment (Local Hazard Mitigation Plan) (GPA-25-01) / Categorically Exempt**

Public hearing to consider a proposed amendment to incorporate the 2025 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) into the General Plan Seismic Safety and Safety Element.

**Categorically Exempt**

**Recommending Adoption**

**General Plan – Safety Element**

**Amendment (Local Hazard Mitigation Plan)**

**Recommending Approval**

**Staff Report:**

The previously circulated Staff Report was reviewed by the Commission, and a presentation of the project was provided by Mr. Phelps.

Mr. Phelps told the Commission that Siskiyou County OES is seeking an amendment to the county's General Plan safety element to restore eligibility for federal and state disaster funding. A current Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) is required, but the county's plan expired two years ago. A new plan has been created, and once adopted, federal funding access will be restored. He said historically, the federal government has covered 100 percent, but policies have been shifting—some states now receive only 90 percent—and the county wants to ensure eligibility for reimbursement should these changes affect future funding.

For state funding, Mr. Phelps said reimbursement depends on budget availability and the scale of the emergency. Due to Siskiyou County's geographic distance from Sacramento, receiving full compensation is uncertain unless the disaster gains significant media attention and legislative support. If the situation garners attention, the state can reimburse up to 25 percent, but it is not guaranteed.

Chair Fowle asked about the process for declaring a disaster for reimbursement. Mr. Carroll confirmed that a formal emergency declaration is required but was uncertain about specific statutory

limitations. Mr. Dean added that the Board of Supervisors has discretion over emergency declarations, citing a recent example involving dam removal and salmon recovery.

Mr. Owen Cabo Dal Molin, Disaster Services Coordinator for Siskiyou County OES, explained that AB 2140 relates to public assistance (PA) recovery. In Siskiyou County, a local disaster declaration alone does not guarantee state funding, and state reimbursement under the California Disaster Relief Act (CDAA) requires a formal state declaration explicitly including CDAA provisions.

He said if a disaster escalates to a federally declared emergency, the state will issue its own emergency declaration, and federal aid may be triggered through a presidential disaster declaration. The process follows the standard national disaster response framework: local emergency declarations lead to state-level ones and potentially federal designation.

Mr. Dal Molin clarified that public assistance recovery does not include individual assistance.

Mr. Phelps emphasized that for the county to receive funding, both the county and state must officially declare an emergency, and even if Siskiyou County considers an event such as wolves a disaster, funding would not be granted unless Sacramento agrees.

Chair Fowle noted that other northern counties such as Modoc, Plumas, Sierra, and Shasta have declared disasters related to large canids and suggested Siskiyou might do the same. Mr. Phelps proposed incorporating this issue into the county's safety element, noting that formal recognition would strengthen efforts to secure state funding.

Chair Fowle questioned whether the county's General Plan safety element should address wildlife-related hazards, such as bears, mountain lions, and wolves, given state protections that don't consider rural impacts. He suggested using broad "wildlife" language rather than specifying "predators." Mr. Phelps confirmed that Siskiyou County has flexibility in shaping its General Plan with natural hazard requirements but no restrictions against including other local dangers. He agreed with adding wildlife-related hazards to the safety element.

Chair Fowle then asked whether formal recognition of wildlife hazards in the General Plan would help justify maintaining a trapper program. Ms. Lang suggested that policies backing trappers could reinforce regional efforts. Chair Fowle proposed discussing the matter with the Board of Supervisors and believed they would support the idea.

Mr. Phelps told the Commission that staff is proposing that the amendment to the General Plan be determined to be exempt from CEQA under Section 15061, the common sense exemption. He said staff is asking the Planning Commission to recommend that the Board of Supervisors adopt the Local Hazard Mitigation Plan (LHMP) so federal requirements are met and that it be incorporated into the Safety Element to secure state funding. Mr. Phelps said the amendment is a temporary measure, as the county's current Safety Element dates back to 1975, and the goal is to complete an updated Safety Element within the next few months to ensure continued eligibility for funding.

Chair Fowle asked whether the county could make further amendments after this update without procedural delays. Mr. Phelps responded that this temporary incorporation of the LHMP into the existing Safety Element will provide coverage for the summer, with the updated Safety Element expected to be adopted after August. Ms. Lang added that agencies can make up to four General Plan amendments per year, and this update falls within allowable limits.

Commissioner Melo asked about financial recourse for upgrading flood mitigation measures, specifically a rock-lined drainage ditch that had become clogged with silt after heavy rain. Mr. Cabo Dal Molin explained that disaster declarations have a set timeframe for eligible expenses, and once that window closes, additional claims cannot be made. Mr. Phelps pointed out that if the disaster were to occur again, the county would have the opportunity to push for a different recovery strategy and recognized the need for better mitigation planning moving forward.

Chair Fowle inquired about whether disaster recovery contracts could include clauses requiring responsible parties to fix failed mitigation efforts beyond the disaster recovery window. He referenced a successful agreement with CDFW, the Yurok Tribe, and the Karuk Tribe for a separate project that ensures parties correct any post-completion issues. Mr. Cabo Dal Molin explained that this is largely managed by Cal OES, as disaster recovery protocols vary depending on the situation. While some long-term agreements exist, like the MOU for Mill Fire sheltering, he said each disaster response and recovery effort is handled differently. Pre-disaster mitigation grants require a clear hazard mitigation plan to qualify for funding.

Chair Fowle then asked whether failures of past treatments such as post-fire land stabilization would be considered a new disaster or a continuation of the original one. Mr. Cabo Dal Molin clarified that in cases like the McKinney Fire, subsequent flooding from atmospheric rivers would be categorized as a new disaster, even if the effects were worsened by prior damage.

Chair Fowle further questioned whether entities conducting stabilization efforts should be required to post a bond that ensures they correct failures unrelated to new disasters. Mr. Cabo Dal Molin responded that contracts for such work are handled through state and federal grants, making it more of a contractual issue rather than a standard requirement.

Chair Fowle raised concerns about protecting the county from financial responsibility for failed treatments. Mr. Carroll acknowledged the complexity, noting that risk management and insurance could play a role. Standard contract provisions may include short-term guarantees for repairs, typically covering a few years, but long-term assurances would likely be impractical for contractors. The discussion highlighted the need for strategic contractual planning in future disaster recovery efforts.

Commissioner Melo asked how state and federal disaster funding is allocated. Mr. Phelps explained that federal and state governments typically cover 75 percent of recovery costs, and the remaining 25 percent would fall on the county. He said the proposed amendment could make the county eligible for state reimbursement, potentially reducing its financial burden to zero.

Regarding the longevity of the General Plan, Mr. Phelps said the goal is for it to remain effective until 2050, with updates allowed up to four times a year. Mr. Cabo Dal Molin clarified that the LHMP operates on a five-year cycle and that the previous plan expired in August 2024, prompting an update through a hazard mitigation grant, with the next revision due five years later.

The Chair opened the Public Hearing.

**Public Comments:**

There being no comments, the Chair closed the Public Hearing.

**Motion:** Following discussion, it was moved by Commissioner Melo, seconded by Commissioner Veale, to Adopt Resolution PC 2025-010, a resolution of the Planning Commission of the County of Siskiyou, State of California, recommending that the Board of Supervisors Determine the Project to be exempt from CEQA, Adopt the 2025 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan, and Incorporate the 2025 Local Hazard Mitigation Plan into the Siskiyou County General Plan 1975 Seismic Safety and Safety Element.

**Voted** upon and the Chair declared the motion carried unanimously by those Commissioners present, on the following roll call vote:

**Ayes:** Commissioners Melo, Veale and Fowle

**Noes:**

**Absent:** Commissioners Hart and Lindler

**Abstain:**

**The Chair called for a break at approximately 10:08 a.m.**

**The Chair called the meeting back to order at approximately 10:15 a.m.**

**Agenda Item 3: General Plan – 2025 Safety Element Update (GPA-25-02) / Categorically Exempt**

Public Hearing to receive a report on a complete update of the Siskiyou County General Plan Safety Element. Once adopted, the 2025 Safety Element update will replace the 1975 Seismic Safety and Safety Element of the Siskiyou County General Plan.

**Staff Report:**

The previously circulated Staff Report was reviewed by the Commission, and a presentation of the project was provided by Mr. Phelps.

Mr. Phelps told the Commission that staff drafted an updated Safety Element to replace the outdated 1975 version, which focused heavily on earthquakes and dedicated little attention to wildfires. Recognizing the evolving threats, he said the new Safety Element identifies wildfire, flooding, and geologic hazards, such as landslides and mudslides, as the primary concerns. It also addresses hazardous material spills, emergency management, and the county's ability to recover from disasters.

Mr. Phelps said the plan incorporates demographic considerations for emergency response, noting that a little over 25 percent of residents are over 65, an age group disproportionately affected by the McKinney Fire. Additionally, about 18 percent of the population has a recognized disability, requiring additional support during evacuations, and another 16 percent have limited incomes, affecting their ability to afford fire hazard mitigation measures.

In an effort to improve emergency preparedness, Mr. Phelps told the Commission that the Safety Element seeks state funding for evacuation route maintenance and accessibility. It also considers the unhoused population, with a county point-in-time count identifying 507 individuals, though state data suggests the actual number exceeds 2,000. Given state agencies' broader access to data, Mr. Phelps thinks their estimate is likely more accurate. He said the plan aims to ensure that all residents, regardless of financial or physical limitations, have the resources needed to navigate emergencies effectively.

Discussion was held regarding how the number of unhoused individuals is validated and that the term "unhoused" includes those people staying with friends or relatives, living in a motel, etc.

Mr. Phelps told the Commission that Siskiyou County incorporated federal data from FEMA's national risk index into its safety element. This index assesses risk factors for counties across the United States which allows Siskiyou County to compare its risks to other counties within California or even other states. The general plan is a state requirement for all 58 California counties, and since the federal government mandates local hazard plans, all US counties must have some form of mitigation planning. He said if a county has a mitigation plan, it makes sense to also have a general plan, which is common practice for cities and regions under various names.

Mr. Phelps said the national risk index identifies 18 different types of hazards, though only certain ones apply to Siskiyou County. For example, the avalanche risk score is 10.1, indicating some risk. However, since avalanches in the county primarily occur on Mt. Shasta and away from populated areas, the overall danger to residents remains low and they don't pose a significant threat to the local community.

Chair Fowle asked how FEMA determined the national risk index scores, particularly for strong winds. He notes that despite significant acreage in the Butte and Shasta valleys, the score for strong wind risk seems low and wondered how gust strength is classified. Mr. Phelps said that FEMA's full analysis wasn't included in the report for brevity, but he recalled that FEMA's calculations consider factors such as population, potential property damage, and historical data. Chair Fowle suggested that since the Butte and Shasta valleys have relatively low population densities, even if strong winds occur frequently, their overall impact on people is minimal, and Mr. Phelps agreed.

Chair Fowle questioned Siskiyou County's high drought risk index score of 99.5, arguing that its relatively low population and moderate drought history make this designation seem excessive. While the high score could help secure funding, it also opens the door for state-imposed regulations that could impact private property owners.

Mr. Phelps explained that the county's high expected annual loss from drought—estimated at \$14 million—is largely due to agricultural activity, with losses surpassing those from wildfire. However, Chair Fowle pointed out that 80 percent of this figure comes from a small portion of land dedicated to high-value crops like strawberries, succulents, and a tree farm. Excluding these, the estimated loss drops to \$2 million, making river flooding a more comparable risk.

Chair Fowle further argued that the US Drought Monitor's classification is influenced by precipitation in southern Oregon, particularly affecting the Klamath River, rather than Siskiyou County's direct

conditions. He said he believes the county is more moderate in drought risk and suggests that separating its classification from broader regional influences could provide a fairer representation.

Finally, Chair Fowle warned that including the high drought designation in the county's general plan could justify stricter state regulations, potentially harming local economic health. He suggested that maintaining autonomy might be more beneficial than securing additional mitigation funds, even if it means forfeiting some financial support.

Ms. Lang noted that while hazard funding isn't directly affected, jurisdictions cannot access certain grants if their General Plan is outdated or noncompliant. She said ensuring the plan meets legal requirements helps staff secure planning funds beyond hazard-related grants.

Chair Fowle added that the county's drought classification could also impact property insurance availability. He speculated that if California attempts to stabilize its insurance market, drought designation might be used to determine premiums and coverage eligibility. He said a high drought risk in the General Plan could make Siskiyou County appear riskier to insurers potentially leading to unfavorable insurance outcomes and given those implications, he suggested that the county carefully consider whether it benefits from being labeled as high risk.

Mr. Phelps told the Commission that the safety element is designed to help Siskiyou County identify potential hazards and plan responses, rather than solely to secure funding. While a high drought classification could be used for funding opportunities, its primary purpose is to highlight drought as a serious hazard the county may face in the future and enable the county to outline steps to mitigate its effects. Mr. Phelps added that wildfires are a major concern, and the plan includes strategies to address their causes and reduce risks, such as forest stand reduction. He said the document serves as a reminder of past hazards and those likely to occur again, helping the community prepare proactively, such as considering additional water tanks for firefighting.

Mr. Phelps told the Commission that the county's score for social vulnerability is just under 75 percent. He said a lower score is better, and the county is more vulnerable than 50 percent of the state. The calculation is based on the types of hazards which is affected by the affluence or wealth of the community. Mr. Phelps said Siskiyou County also scored low on community resilience, with a high score being better, and 60 percent of California's counties are better able to bounce back after an emergency.

Discussion was held that the safety element serves as guidance for staff in helping to determine the necessary mitigation measures and conditions required for project approval based on location.

A discussion began about how the county can streamline processes for wildfire mitigation, particularly allowing water storage infrastructure in high-risk areas. Mr. Phelps said Chapter 9 of the Safety Element outlines relevant policies, including Policy 1.3 on water infrastructure. He said while the safety element sets policy guidelines, county departments can develop internal procedures to support implementation.

Chair Fowle referenced the county's response to the Mill Fire, where preapproved building plans helped residents rebuild quickly at lower costs. He suggested a similar approach for wildfire prevention, proposing pre-engineered and preapproved water storage facilities for high-risk areas. Mr. Dean added that the county already has mechanisms in place, such as allowing water tanks



under 5,000 gallons on flat grade without permits, which could help facilitate mitigation efforts. Chair Fowle emphasized the importance of making disaster prevention as accessible as recovery efforts, ensuring that property owners face fewer obstacles when trying to protect their land.

Mr. Phelps told the Commission that each chapter of the safety element focuses on a different hazard, providing a general assessment at the end. The fire hazard chapter examines risks to the population, property damage, infrastructure, and environmental impacts, considering factors like income and disability. The flood hazard chapter includes floodplain mapping and discusses dam hazards, noting that Box Canyon Dam poses the highest risk. Dunsmuir, with a population over 1,000, could be significantly affected in the event of a failure.

Mr. Phelps said the earthquake chapter highlights frequent but minor seismic activity in Siskiyou County, while landslides are generally not a major concern. It also covers volcano risks, including potential impacts from Mt. Shasta's eruption. He said hazardous materials are briefly addressed and lists recent incidents.

Mr. Phelps said the plan will be updated monthly until August, and he encouraged the Commissioners to continue reviewing the document and to suggest edits. He said the goal is to make the document accessible and practical for community planning.

A discussion was held regarding concerns about Caltrans prioritizing I-5 snow removal over Scott Valley, leaving rural areas vulnerable during snow events. Chair Fowle suggested including this issue in the General Plan to emphasize the risks posed by shifting state resources to ensure the county has flexibility to maintain road access for school buses and public safety. Mr. Phelps suggested that it could be included in the chapter on emergency management, outlining how resource reallocation affects rural safety.

Discussion also covered rising temperatures, with NOAA data suggesting a cooling trend in Siskiyou County. Chair Fowle emphasized that rather than focusing on temperature impact, the General Plan should reflect changes in the local growing season, which now extends later into fall.

Commissioner Veale asked about early warning systems, and Mr. Phelps pointed out that the county has an emergency alert system called Ready Siskiyou as well as an access and functional needs registry for individuals with disabilities. Chair Fowle pointed out that many rural areas lack cell service, making emergency alerts inaccessible, and Mr. Phelps agreed to include communication limitations in the next update. Commissioner Melo added that landline service remains crucial in areas without reliable mobile coverage.

**The Chair called for a break at approximately 11:30 a.m.**

**The Chair called the meeting back to order at approximately 11:35 a.m.**

Mr. Phelps advised the Commission that staff plans to continue the discussion on the General Plan safety element each month at the Planning Commission meetings through August in order to encourage more participation and feedback from the public as well as feedback from the Commission. Discussion was held regarding how staff should properly notice the project. At issue was whether the project would require a formal public hearing notice to be published each month, or

whether it can just be continued month to month. It was decided to simply continue the item to each successive meeting until the August Planning Commission meeting at which time staff will compile all the feedback and then present the project to the Board of Supervisors.

Mr. Phelps addressed Commissioner Melo's comment regarding the county not having cell service available in all areas of the county. He said it is the responsibility of local law enforcement to notify the public by going door to door, driving through neighborhoods with loudspeakers, etc.

Mr. Phelps said Chapter 8 addresses the importance of evacuation planning for pet owners and livestock owners. He said the goal is to establish policies ensuring people can safely evacuate with their animals. For commercial livestock owners, policies should provide designated locations for housing animals during disasters.

Chair Fowle emphasized the need to recognize a special permit system in Siskiyou County for livestock evacuation and suggested coordinating with personnel at UC Davis Cooperative Extension who work with OES during disasters.

Mr. Phelps outlined state requirements for identifying evacuation routes, focusing on major population centers. He said the process involves mapping each town and determining areas with only one escape route, which is a large task and is still in progress.

Mr. Phelps told the Commission that the final chapter includes goals, policies, and actions for addressing hazards. He said the policies remain broad to allow flexibility in adapting to evolving conditions. He said the first goal emphasizes fire hazard protection, ensuring strategies can be adjusted over time, and each hazard type is assigned a general goal to support county-wide improvements.

Mr. Phelps said the appendices contain detailed data, including a list of named fires in Siskiyou County over the past 20 years and were drawn from CAL FIRE and state databases. He said the wildfire distribution map highlights the concentration of forest fires in Klamath National Forest, while grass fires tend to occur in the eastern part of the county.

Chair Fowle pointed out missing fires in Appendix A and questioned why data starts in 2006. He said tracking trends back to the 70s or 80s could offer valuable insights and that wildfire occurrences increased significantly in the 1990s and early 2000s. Mr. Phelps explained that 2006 was the earliest data available in CAL FIRE's online system but acknowledged that older records might exist in hard copy files. Chair Fowle said the transition might be because the US Forest Service was the primary incident command for wildfires until summer 2005 and then CAL FIRE took over.

Mr. Phelps told the Commission that Appendix B contains fire hazard severity zone maps and provides residents with a visual representation of risk areas, particularly around major city centers. The Board of Supervisors is negotiating with the state fire marshal for potential modifications, including the possible addition of Tulelake.

He said Appendix C fulfills a CAL FIRE requirement by mapping the county's land use distribution relative to state responsibility areas and includes zoning classifications such as TPZ, prime agricultural, non-prime, and rural residential. Appendix D consists of FEMA flood maps corresponding to the same locations as fire hazard maps, Appendix E outlines the institutions and

regulatory frameworks managing various hazards, and Appendix F integrates the county's mitigation plan into this safety element update.

Mr. Phelps said Appendix G, the only section subject to ongoing updates, identifies residential areas with a single evacuation route, and the mapping process has begun with Dunsmuir, documenting latitude and longitude coordinates to help plan emergency access improvements. He said the goal is to expand this effort countywide and ensure that vulnerable areas have at least two evacuation routes. Mr. Phelps said Appendix G also serves as a public resource for residents to assess evacuation risks in their communities by simply plugging in their coordinates.

Chair Fowle proposed adding a new chapter on wildlife, moving the existing Chapter 6 to Chapter 7. The new chapter would address two main concerns, which are wildlife-related health risks and predation. He pointed out that growing elk herds carry Brucellosis and frequently intermingle with cattle, posing a risk of outbreaks. While Siskiyou County lacks large poultry operations, avian flu briefly appeared in Tulelake, highlighting the need for a plan to manage wildlife-livestock interactions and potential disease outbreaks in coordination with the state veterinarian.

Regarding predation, Chair Fowle suggested expanding the discussion beyond large canids to include bears and mountain lions, emphasizing the economic, safety, and health impacts on the county's population. He also raised concerns about chronic wasting disease in deer and similar risks for antelope in Butte Valley, which could affect sheep and goat producers through cross-species contamination.

Mr. Phelps agreed that this addition aligns with Siskiyou County's unique challenges. Chair Fowle further suggested securing funding for a local disposal facility to help manage wolf-related livestock deaths and potential disease outbreaks. Mr. Phelps confirmed that the new chapter would be included in the next update.

The Chair opened the Public Hearing.

#### **Public Comments:**

There being no comments, the Chair closed the Public Hearing.

Chair Fowle told those in attendance that this item will be continued on future agendas as it is amended and staff will provide monthly updates.

#### **Items for Discussion/Direction:**

##### **1. Ongoing Staff Update Regarding the General Plan Update**

Ms. Lang told the Commission that the zoning diagnostics report will be presented at the June Planning Commission meeting. The report will outline areas where the county is out of compliance with state requirements and will provide an opportunity for public input on potential zoning code updates before formal hearings begin. She said the consultants are currently reformatting Title 10, which is the county's planning and zoning code.

Chair Fowle asked for an example of noncompliance, and Ms. Lang cited housing element updates, particularly by-right uses for transitional housing and group care facilities. She explained that zoning

districts RES 1-4 must allow group care facilities for more than six people. Additional updates will be required for telecommunications, wireless infrastructure, and Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), which currently defer to state regulations instead of a localized ordinance.

**Miscellaneous:**

1. **Future Meetings:** The next regular meeting of the Planning Commission is scheduled for Wednesday, June 18, 2025, at 9:00 a.m.
2. **Correspondence:** None
3. **Staff Comments:** Mr. Dean thanked staff for their work on the safety element.
4. **Commission Comments:** Chair Fowle and Commissioner Melo also thanked staff for their work on the safety element.

**Adjournment:** The meeting was concluded at approximately 12:13 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Hailey Lang, Secretary

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