

**Western Region Town Hall
Presentation to the Lake County Board of Supervisors
September 23, 2025**

Background of the Western Region Town Hall (WRTH)

Tim Chiara - Vice Chair, WRTH

Western Region Town Hall was formed in 2017. Supervisor Jim Steele saw the MAC as a necessary component to the office of County Supervisor, providing information concerning local issues and needs that might otherwise be Overlooked.

Since that time Western Region Town Hall has continued being a "squeaky wheel" on various subjects, from Upper Lake levee maintenance to the recent Biochar installation and the need for Law enforcement and Code enforcement efforts in Nice.

To say that this has been an educational opportunity would be an understatement. As one of the most basic components of local government Western Region Town Hall has shown that timely citizen input is possible and should be encouraged in every way available.

MAC members serve at their own expense from a desire to increase participation by local communities in the affairs of governance. Western Region Town Hall has had the privilege of inspirational models to that end.

Our first Chairman Gene Paleno and Council member Melinda Wright both gave of their time and resources to further the successful operation of Western Region Town Hall. We celebrate their example and seek to continue along the path they travelled with us.

We commend the Board of Supervisors for continuing to utilize the MAC's as an unparalleled resource of local expertise and knowledge concerning matters of public health, safety, welfare, public works, and planning.

We look forward to a productive future for all the residents of Lake County.

Pyle Road Clean-up Committee

David Hendrick - Subcommittee Lead

The Pyle road cleanup subcommittee has been working on actively cleaning up the area around Pyle road for about 2 years. Before that, we have been independently trying to clean up and stop squatters from moving onto the roughly 6000 lots in the Clearlake Gardens Subdivision.

The Committee comprised of four members of the community, we have been diligently reporting to WRTH about progress and problems involved.

This year we have seen a major effort by the County Code compliance and since the implementation of the COPTER program, there has been much achievement toward our goals.

County Code enforcement officers Norman “Joey” Valdez and Logan Smith has been extremely helpful, and aggressively worked to clean up many sites.

Between the free dump days, and code enforcement’s contracted cleanup efforts, close to half of the dump sites have been mostly cleaned up. Logan’s continued pressure on dumpers has resulted in the dumpers going back and cleaning up their own messes.

The continued pressure on the squatters living on various parcels has helped to keep others from moving in.

The results are clear that if the area looks cleaner there is less likelihood of people dumping, and less likelihood of squatters deciding they will move in if the word is out that they won’t be allowed to simply camp forever on land they don’t even own.

The present issue is that several of the squatters have moved onto Reservation land and neither the county sheriff or CHP is willing to stop the unregistered uninsured vehicles, and code enforcement is unable to do anything. So once again we face the daunting challenge of getting no assistance in getting anything done.

Julia Carrera - Subcommittee Lead
Walt Christianson - Member
John LaBoyteaux - Member

It is an imperfect system. We are glad Lake County Water Resources continues to look at the issues, and, the discussion needs to be expanded. Sediment and gravel washed down from the mountains is trapped between the levees which is a forever maintenance problem. In some areas, like Alley Creek near Pitney Lane and at the diversion structure, the initial engineering was poor.

- Levee patrolling especially during and after high water events.

- Emergency flood fights as needed.
- Mowing of grasses.
- Control of weeds with herbicides.
- Removal of excess woody growth (trees and bushes) within the levee easements.
- Maintenance of levee roads.
- Removal and trimming of trees and brush within the creek's active channel area.
- Periodic removal of sediment deposits.

Some of these items have not been done in recent years or have been done in a poor and incomplete manner as compared to earlier County efforts.

To the best of our knowledge based on research and prior county employee interviews, in 60 plus years there has never been any attempt to return the system to its original design capacity through major removal of accumulated sediment.

Of immediate urgency is the very large growth of vegetation, including some trees over 40 feet tall, growing directly in the flood control channel.

DIVERSION CHANNEL



Over the last 10-12 years, there have been at least 5 different directors of the Water Resources Department and Watershed Protection District and many new employees. In our view, this has resulted in serious loss of institutional memory as well as shifting priorities. There also seems to have been a loss of practical know how in carrying out the maintenance functions.

SCOUR (Red Line)

We, the people of Upper Lake, would like to have an ongoing dialogue with the County Watershed Protection District and its staff about permits, funding and performance of maintenance activities, including the possibility the existing scour will continue to advance into the Levee itself.

Please take advantage of the knowledge and skill of persons in the Upper Lake community who have observed the levee system for many years.



Upper Lake School Traffic Safety Committee

Claudine Pedroncelli - Upper Lake Representative, WRTH;

Mary Friedrich - Member

Ray Friedrich - Member

I have been on the WRTH since its inception in 2017. I proudly serve.

The School Traffic Safety Committee includes myself and Mary & Ray Friedrich.

Goals:

1. To work at providing traffic safety to all students at Upper Lake Unified School District.
2. To work towards crosswalks that ensure safety while crossing roads. AB413 is a law that prohibits parking within 20 feet of crosswalks. We need to work toward that.
3. CHP drive bys are in place at drop off and pick up times at Upper Lake Elementary. 8:00am and 2:00pm. Call in complaints of reckless driving.
4. Success - On Private School Property.
Placed Stop Sign and No Left Turn at Upper Lake Elementary to create safety awareness.

5. We are working on placing speed bumps on Second Street, Upper Lake to slow down speed. A donation is available. Discussion with Lake County Public Works.
6. School Zone Safety –
 - a. Slow Down
 - b. Stay Alert
 - c. Never Block Crosswalks
 - d. No Distractions – Texting
 - e. No Double Parking
 - f. Teach your Children to Look Both Ways
7. Ongoing request to County to secure a much needed stop sign at Middle Creek and Second Street in Upper Lake. Accidents occur here regularly. 3

Our Traffic Safety Committee will continue to make Upper Lake a safe place for students and the community. It takes all of us to work together to achieve this life saving end result.

WRTH Communication Needs

Lisa Marie Benavides - Upper Lake Representative, WRTH

One of our responsibilities as the Municipal Advisory Committee is to act as a bridge between the community and the Board of Supervisors. To effectively fulfill that duty, timely and effective communication is paramount. Supervisor Crandell's availability has been appreciated, and we look forward to continued relationship building and responding to community asks, like the Upper Lake Dump Day that Supervisor Crandell coordinated and assisted with on September 13th. Our hope today is that that availability and responsiveness can be cultivated across all county officials.

Unfortunately, multiple community members have reported non-responses to public information requests and formal requests from our WRTH chair for county officials to attend meetings or present during our public monthly meeting have frequently gone unresponded to. We understand that there are many projects in the air, and multiple priorities can result in our officials being stretched thin and do not wish to add to that burden. However, our success is fundamentally attached to our ability to communicate within reasonable timelines and through various methods with our leaders. We hope that through relationship building and from presentations such as this we are able to connect more effectively to continue to serve the WRTH constituents proudly and efficiently. We are an asset to your work and together we can accomplish so much more.

Closing - Thanks and WRTH Successes

Thomas Aceves - Chairman, WRTH

I want to thank Chairman Crandell for inviting our Western Region Townhall Council for letting us share our presentations, which included celebrating **our** successes and voicing our concerns in our communities.

As you have heard today from this great group of people , I feel this Municipal Advisory Council is filled with insightful solutions and knowledge from a vast spectrum of experiences , including past vocations, life experiences, and education. In fact with this experience we believe we can continue to help our Supervisor and The BOS find better solutions and outcomes for all of the North Shore Communities!

Therefore, we are excited to announce for the first time in our county a joint venture between the three Macs. Fairly soon. You will see the launch of our first District 3 Combination (Supermac) meeting focusing directly on issues that the whole north shore feels that need to be addressed. In fact we have sent out a survey in the last few weeks asking for our north shore communities highest priorities that need to be addressed. We hope to launch the first meeting in the fourth quarter.

Also we acknowledge with the recent explosion and subsequent fire of a red-tagged house on Hudson St in Nice, The Western Region Town hall Council feels there may be a disconnect between the Lake County Sheriff Dpt and Code enforcement on lawful occupation within red tagged dwellings. Therefore, we are happy that Supervisor Crandell has committed to organizing a town hall including the Lake County Sheriff Dpt , and Code Enforcement to help clarify their obligations to the law on red-tagged occupancy, and to help them understand our communities needs on overall Code enforcement issues that still plague our communities. In fact we have created a new COPTR Oversight Subcommittee on WRTH to focus on these very concerns.

We do celebrate the recent outcomes like trash dump days that accepted 1.4 mil tons, the focus of Community Oriented Policing Targeted Relief (COPTR) on aggressively handling code enforcement issues including The Pyle Rd dump areas. The Western Region Town hall Council and our community want to thank all of the county staff and leadership that make these outcomes happen.

However, it is with the utmost decency that we ask all departments to show transparency and hold them accountable for their outcomes and deliverables. Moreover, as Lisa has presented ,

we ask for reasonable timely feedback and responses to our emails and phone calls from the departments we reach out to.

With all the presentations today , we encourage The Board to work with Supervisor Crandell on creating policies to help find solutions to our concerns that still plague our Communities. We hope that this presentation helps you understand with clarity our accomplishments and continued concerns.

Thank You