



YSS

Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions

American Forest Resource Council

American Motorcyclist Association, District 36

Blue Mountain Minerals

California Forestry Association

Central Sierra Audubon Society

Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center (CSERC)

CT Bioenergy Consulting

Dambacher Construction

Friends of Berkeley Tuolumne Camp

Groveland Trail Heads

Merced Dirt Riders, 4x4 in Motion

Mule Deer Foundation

Sierra Pacific Industries

Stanislaus Trail Bike

Tuolumne County

*Tuolumne County Alliance for
Resources and the Environment (TuCARE)*

Tuolumne County Farm Bureau

Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District

Tuolumne County Sportsmen, Inc.

Tuolumne Group Sierra Club

Tuolumne River Trust

Yosemite Deer Herd Advisory Council

Liaison Members

*Bureau of Land Management
CA Fish & Wildlife*

*National Park Service, Yosemite National Park
Sierra Nevada Conservancy
South West Interface Team
United States Forest Service*

February 12, 2016

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr
Governor of CA
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: Need for Bioenergy Plants to Promote Forest Health – Preserving Pacific Ultrapower Chinese Station Biomass Plant

Dear Governor Brown:

Your office clearly receives an overwhelming amount of mail advocating for political actions or requesting relief. It is our hope this letter rises above the norm to gain your attention and lead to pivotal action by the State.

Unlike most advocacy letters to the Governor, this letter reflects the broad, commonly shared consensus of a wide diversity of political and social interests. Our organization - the Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions (YSS) collaborative group - is composed of representatives of the timber industry, local county government, a diversity of environmental groups, business groups, agencies, the Farm Bureau, Fire Safe Council members, and many other interests. We range from Republicans to Democrats to Independents, and from tree-huggers to loggers to pro-use advocacy interests. But despite our political and philosophical differences, we share strong consensus support for improving the health and resiliency of the private and public forests of our vast forest region. To move towards this goal, it is essential for our region to have the tools and facilities needed to accomplish fuel reduction treatments that can reduce the risk of another devastating Rim Fire.

Pacific Ultrapower Chinese Station biomass facility is the largest, most productive biomass facility in the Sierra Nevada foothills. Because it takes in significant amounts of agricultural and forest waste products that would otherwise be open-burned, the Chinese Station facility helps reduce air pollution in the northern San Joaquin Valley and southern Mountain Counties. In these areas, particularly the northern San Joaquin Valley, asthma rates are high and air quality standards are not fully met. Without the Chinese Station facility, a significant amount of these materials (as well as landfill diverted wood materials) would not be burned cleanly at the Chinese Station plant.

But above and beyond that important role, the Chinese Station biomass facility is absolutely essential if our YSS collaborative group is going to be able to assist the U.S. Forest Service and private timberland owners in reducing decades of fuel build-up on forest lands. That fuel creates an unacceptably high risk for catastrophic fire conditions during hot summer fire seasons or drought conditions. Now the current massive conifer die-

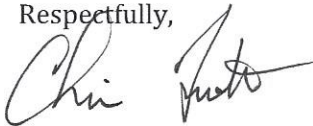
off caused by bark beetles has overwhelmed the capacity of our region to respond. Without a large capacity biomass facility to take some of the dead wood material, many property owners have no option for removing large numbers of dead trees on their properties. For this reason, it is also truly critical to the bark beetle response effort for the Chinese Camp biomass facility to be sustained.

Yet our YSS group has become aware that despite your Emergency Declaration, only minimal, very short-term adjustments in biomass power contracts are being offered. Without intervention by your office with PG&E, the Public Utilities Commission, and Pacific Ultrapower, there is a very high risk that the Chinese Station facility will have to close this year.

Our YSS collaborative group received national attention for building a strong, common consensus around a plan for managing fire salvage logging treatments in the Rim Fire area. The potential loss of Pacific Ultrapower's Chinese Station biomass facility will exacerbate the issues surrounding the removal of trees killed by bark beetles and drought. Over the long-term, it will undermine the majority of plans and programs designed to restore the health of our region's forest.

YSS respectfully asks you, and your staff, to do everything possible to directly support the critical role of Pacific Ultrapower Chinese Station biomass facility and plants like it. We desperately need to retain a working, profitable, sustainable Chinese Station facility in order to reduce open burning in the San Joaquin Valley, help respond to the bark beetle tree mortality crisis, and build cost effective programs to treat excess forest fuels and restore forests of the region to a higher resiliency in the face of climate change and mega-fires. Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Respectfully,



Chris Trott, Chairperson
Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions

cc:

Senator Tom Berryhill

Assembly Member Frank Bigelow

Honorable Michael Picker, Chair, California Public Utilities Commission

John Laird, Secretary, Natural Resources Agency

Matt Rodriguez, Secretary Cal-EPA

Karen Ross, Secretary, California Department of Food and Agriculture

Scott Smithline, CalRecycle

Mary Nichols, Chair, Air Resources Board

Mike Florio, California Public Utilities Commission

Carla Peterman, California Public Utilities Commission

Liane Randolph, California Public Utilities Commission

Catherin Sandoval, California Public Utilities Commission

Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors