



YSS

YOSEMITE STANISLAUS SOLUTIONS

August 1, 2016

RE: Tuolumne Main Canal Fuels Reduction Project

Jim Branham
Executive Officer
Sierra Nevada Conservancy
11521 Blocker Dr., Ste 205
Auburn, CA 95603

Dear Jim:

At the last Yosemite-Stanislaus Solutions (YSS) general membership meeting, Mr. Michael Pickard and Mr. Matt Waverly presented an overview of the Tuolumne Main Canal Fuels Reduction Project. It was very well received by our membership.

As you are likely aware, the Tuolumne Main Canal is the primary water source for 90% of Tuolumne County residents. Many sections of the canal are wooden flumes which would likely be destroyed in the event of a fire, potentially leaving County residents without water for domestic or emergency use for up to 4 weeks. It should also be noted there is no redundancy built into the water delivery system.

One might think the answer to avoiding this threat to the system is to replace the wooden flume sections with a fire resistant material. However, the cost of implementing such a project is not likely to ever be feasible given the budgets of PG&E or the Tuolumne Utilities District. The next best way to protect the water conveyance system is to create a defensible shaded fuel break on either side of the Canal on the surrounding properties.

As explained to YSS, there are multiple landowners adjacent to the flumes to include PG&E, SPI, and the USFS. Coordination and implementation of fuel reduction among all parties is imperative. While SPI and PG&E are engaged in their own funding efforts for their part of the project, there are 201.2 acres of USFS land for which the USFS has no project funding. It is for this part of the effort that funds are being requested from SNC.

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209-694-4299

American Forest Resource Council

American Motorcyclist Association, District 36

Blue Mountain Minerals

California Forestry Association

Central Sierra Audubon Society

Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center

CT Bioenergy Consulting

Friends of Berkeley Tuolumne Camp

Jim Dambacher Construction

Groveland Trail Heads

Merced Dirt Riders, 4x4 in Motion

Mule Deer Foundation

Sierra Pacific Industries

Stanislaus Bike Trail

Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians

Tuolumne County

*Tuolumne County Alliance for
Resources and the Environment*

Tuolumne County Farm Bureau

Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District

Tuolumne County Sportsmen, Inc.

Tuolumne Group of the 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*

YSS is strongly supportive of this grant application. In addition to the overgrowth of natural fuels on the USFS land, the current tree mortality from the drought and bark beetle has exacerbated an already serious condition. The flume is the only water conveyance system for the County. While fire on this land would be devastating in and of itself, the toll on the human population in Tuolumne County who are dependent upon the flume for delivery of water would be extraordinary.

We respectfully ask that you award funding to this very important project. Remediating the problem through fuel reduction on the USFS land will complement the work done by PG&E and SPI and help protect water delivery to thousands of people.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Chris Trott". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Chris Trott
Chair, Yosemite-Stanislaus Solutions