



Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions Steering Committee Meeting Summary April 18, 2014 1:00p.m. – 4:00p.m.

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:

1. The chair and vice-chair to work with Ms. Lott to draft YSS objectives and goals in relationship to what YSS hopes to accomplish to help inform development of workplan.
2. Mr. Griffith to continue work on a FS-hosted webinar related to release of the EIS.
3. If FS grants \$100,000 for Reynolds Creek and Two Mile meadow restoration projects, VC Buckley to work with SNC on matching funds.
4. Mr. Vroman to continue work on the Spinning Wheel Project development and other projects that may be matches for SNC funding.
5. Ms. Lott to prepare "attesting" letter for NFF amendments.
6. Chair Albrecht and VC Buckley to coordinate with Mr. Griffith on a request relating to unallocated regional funds and internal contracting deadlines.
7. VC Buckley to work with Mr. Dallas regarding the spring assessment project.
8. Mr. Dallas to discuss the spring assessment concept with SNC management.
9. Ms. Brennan to get link to TCRCD meadow restoration (Wilcox) report.
10. VC Buckley and Ms. Lott to send YSS Talk and Tour photos to Pam Baltimore for posting.
11. VC Buckley to coordinate with Mr. Griffith to determine if a letter from YSS can assist in securing a deadline extension for contracting the meadow restoration grant work.

FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS:

1. Objectives and Goals
2. Workplan
3. Website
4. TRT to Present Models from Research

MEETING GOALS:

1. To get final sign-off on litigation position letter and determine distribution
2. To discuss SNC project concepts and funding status
3. To discuss future YSS activities

SUMMARY:

Welcome and Introductions:

VC Buckley welcomed the group and asked for self-introductions. Of note was the introduction of Jim Junette, the new Groveland District Ranger, and the promotion of Marty Gmelin to forest silviculturist.

The VC asked for an update from Deputy Forest Supervisor Scott Tangenberg. Mr. Tangenberg said the FS is working diligently to get the recreational facilities safe and open. Several of the campsites are open now on the Groveland District. The existing Forest Order was modified earlier in the week. As roadside hazards are mitigated, more areas will be opened

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up. However, hazards away from developed sites have likely not been addressed and may never be fully addressed so caution is advised.

Process Items:

Ms. Lott asked if there were requested changes to the steering committee meeting summary of March 21, 2014. None were heard.

Agreement: There was agreement to accept the meeting summary as distributed.

Ms. Lott spoke to the group about the importance of developing trust and relationships within the collaborative. She stressed that while the collaborative has an identity, values, objectives and reputation of its own, the individual entities that make up the collaborative still retain their own specific purpose. Outside of the “collaborative room,” these entities have a responsibility to their constituencies to promote their own mission, beliefs, values, etc. However, out of respect for the collaborative, and in order to maintain trust and relationships within the collaborative, it is important that while promoting individual agendas this is done without ascribing motives to others and/or name-calling. Promoting views on issues is each member entity’s responsibility. But it is in the best interest of the collaborative for members to do so in a respectful way that focuses on issues.

Finalizing No Litigation Letter:

Ms. Lott provided a summary of which entities have provided documentation supporting the salvage position letter. The VC noted the letter provides a judge with tangible support, of endorsement from a diverse group, to move forward with salvage. He explained the inadvertent early release of a draft of the letter to Senator Feinstein’s office. He noted the Senator wishes to receive a copy of the signed letter as soon as YSS has approved it. He added a press release will be forthcoming to local media. The Senator’s office also said increased visible collaborative support of the Rim Fire efforts increase the chances for additional federal funding.

Agreement: There was agreement to distribute the letter as drafted to the noted parties. There was also agreement to support a press release to local media.

Webinar Status:

Ms. Ann Denton, USFS, shared the FS is still planning a webinar. The EIS release has been delayed because of a family emergency, but the FS does not anticipate a change in the decision date as a result of the delay. The FS is still tracking for early August unless there are substantial comments outside the realm they are expecting.

Update on Finances & Project Status:

Finance Officer John Amodio said he expects to have the amendments to the National Forest Foundation (NFF) grant completed by next month. He requested the chair sign a letter noting the changes had been approved by YSS. He is including a request for a 10% increase in the grant along with the request for the amendments. Ms. Denton stated she wished to be kept in the loop as she is working with NFF on incorporating USFS funds.

Mr. Chris Trott reported the \$8,400 proposal was submitted to the Resource Advisory Council (RAC). The in-person presentations are scheduled for May 19th. June 1st the recommendations are expected to be released. Mr. Trott will provide the presentation. It was noted Mariposa County is no longer funding the RAC.

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Mr. Tangenberg said there have been positive conversations regarding the USFS facilitation funding. Ms. Denton said they are working on the delivery vehicle. There is also a need for the RAC funds. Ms. Sherri Brennan said the RAC most often funds things “on the ground” and the amount may be problematic. Mr. Tangenberg offered to have a conversation with the RAC and Mr. Trott said the proposal made clear there was an ability to modify the amount.

Report on Project Development & Funding Status:

Ms. Denton reported it is encouraging that multiple entities are interested in funding Rim Fire recovery work. In regards to the Meadow Restoration Project (Reynolds Creek & Two Mile) a submission for funding was made to the Restoration Partnership, but there has been no word to date. These are the two areas where NEPA is complete. There has been an offer of \$216,000 from the regional office (Chris Nota), but the funds have to be obligated by September 30th with the money under contract even earlier. There is also \$80,000 under contract for Two Mile and Larger Fahey. The FS needs to speak with the hydrologist for Reynolds to determine if this project can get under contract quickly. VC Buckley added Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) though a matching amount might be a possibility, but it was for the federal \$110,000 and that award is still pending.

Separate from this are the regional office funds of \$216,000 that has to be submitted to the contracting office in May. Mr. Tangenberg said these deadlines are internal FS deadlines. The FS may be willing to be flexible on the due dates.

VC Buckley noted that he and Chair Albrecht believe it is unacceptable to have to turn down funds because contracting deadlines are not met. It was suggested retired FS personnel might be enlisted to help. Mr. Tangenberg said they would have to be contracted with, as well. He said the FS is committed to putting as many resources as possible into getting these contracts in place.

There was a suggestion that YSS formally request an extension on the dates and request that the FS make Rim Fire related contracts a priority. Mr. Rob Griffith said this can be handled internally. VC Buckley said he and Chair Albrecht will work with Mr. Griffith on wording for an internal FS request. Recommended elements of the request were to exempt these funds and future funds that are related to the Rim Fire from internally imposed deadlines and that any other unallocated regional funds be directed to Rim Fire efforts.

VC Buckley noted Project Chair Vroman would like to have attended the meeting, but was unavailable. Information was forwarded on his behalf.

The Spinning Wheel Erosion Control and Streambank Stabilization Project needs further coordination between the FS and the Tribe on what needs to be done on the landscape. Mr. Jim Roehl and Ms. Kathy Strain are working to identify specific tasks.

Regarding the Rim Fire Biomass Project, the EIS contains a significant portion of one area that needs to be treated in the Jawbone region. How it will be accomplished is yet to be determined. It is not expected that SNC will provide funds for biomass at this point.

Forest Supervisor Susan Skalski requested funds for the Watershed & Range Fencing Restoration and Improvement Project. \$525,000 will be allocated for fencing and repairing livestock infrastructure. These repairs need to be made before grazing can occur. The issue delaying implementation is hazard tree removal and salvage need to be done prior to reconstruction so repairs are not damaged by skidders and falling trees. The highest priority will be given to areas where there is no intention to do salvage work. Then they will move on to

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other areas over the next 18 months. These funds also need to be obligated prior to September 30th. The intention is to use much of the funds for supplies and supply labor in other ways.

As for the Bull Meadow Restoration Project, it was being considered by the American River Foundation and the site visit scored poorly. It needs a great deal of work and the amount of dollars needed per acre was seen as too expensive for them to fund.

Regarding the Aspen Grove Treatment Project at Reynolds Creek, part of the needed work consists of cutting down large conifer trees to release the aspens. Currently the mills are flooded with salvage trees so this may not be the best time to add green trees to the mix. It is suggested this project be reevaluated next year.

The Early Pilot Wildlife Habitat Enhancement Project is within the area that is contained in a settlement with the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission so it has its own funding source.

There is a project being considered to do a spring location assessment which would hopefully result in protecting and/or utilizing springs. Mr. Chris Dallas said this seems like a great project, but not one necessarily qualified under Prop 84. VC Buckley said many of these springs were previously buried under brush and are now visible. He noted Mr. Graveline, Mr. Vroman, and he will all coordinate with FS staff and Mr. Dallas to examine how much the FS supports such an assessment and how and when the assessment could be done most effectively. Mr. Graveline noted it is critically important to get an inventory so there is a foundation from which to propose projects to the Wildlife Conservation Board. There is a possibility of using department planes. Other ideas included using a spotter plane to identify green areas, reaching out to UC Davis as a possible student field project, and using World View Two. It was noted this process is time-sensitive as the brush will grow back obscuring the springs. It was also noted the FS had no comprehensive pre-fire spring inventory.

It was suggested YSS be the applicant for this project and the funds flow through TRT. Mr. Dallas asked regarding the uses of the springs other than for vegetation. A member noted the springs provide areas for wildlife and livestock to water. Mr. Dallas added the problem with assessments is projects need to be site-specific. However, if this is all FS land it is more viable as pre-project due diligence. He said he would discuss the assessment concept with his management.

VC Buckley said accessing NFF funds for a meadow assessment did not work out. However, while the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation application period was closed, a grantee in Plumas did not spend all their funds so those funds are being redirected to this assessment. FS Skalski has agreed to accept the funds. Mr. Jim Wilcox, an expert in the field, will assess what needs to be done for restoration and prioritize the efforts. It is hoped the highest priority meadows will be feasible to fund through SNC. NFF also has funding for meadows and the NFWF has \$4-5 million for meadow restoration in the Sierra Nevada. The FS will receive the meadow report for use with potential funders. Ms. Brennan said the TCRCD has worked with Mr. Wilcox and cautioned that any effort be very inclusive of interests and folks who will be impacted. She will get the link to the report to Ms. Lott for information.

Mr. Graveline reported CA Fish and Wildlife is looking at providing 12-15 satellite collars for deer that would communicate to a computer and then to the FS. It was noted YSS could provide a letter of support if needed by Mr. Graveline. The area of monitoring is the Clavey to Paper Canyon.

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Follow-up Items:

It was noted Mr. Butch Blazer will be visiting in late June and potentially wants to meet with YSS representatives or the full YSS Collaborative and also the Tribes. VC Buckley said he will ask the FS to include Chair Albrecht in any field meetings.

VC Buckley referenced the information sheet developed for FS Skalski's trip to DC. Ms. Lott noted Yosemite Park has sent in their member names in for YSS. Ms. Lott will add YSP to the letterhead and to the information sheet. It was noted the information sheet can be posted to the FS website. The VC suggested sending YSS Rim Fire Talk and Tour photos to Pam Baltimore for posting.

It was noted VC Buckley drafted potential YSS goals and objectives which are being fine-tuned by Chair Albrecht. They will be sent out to the membership soon. The two main goals are to enhance and strengthen the organizational capacity of YSS and to accomplish certain actions this year such as securing one additional major funding source in addition to SNC. There is also a goal of getting media focus to gain visibility for YSS.

In regards to website development, the officers are waiting for funding approval before advancing this concept.

Next Meetings:

The next YSS General meeting is scheduled at FS Headquarters on Friday, May 16th from 9:00a.m. – 12:00p.m.

The next YSS Steering Committee meeting is scheduled at FS Headquarters on Friday, June 13th, from 1:00 p.m. – 4:00 p.m.

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Members

Name	Organization	Attendance
Jerry Jensen	American Forest Resource Council	
Todd Miller	Blue Mountain Minerals	
Jeff Redoutey	BMM/Alternate	
Walter Kruse	Central Sierra Audubon	Present
Linda Millsbaugh	CSA/Alternate	
John Buckley	Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center	Present
Julia Stephens	CSERC/Alternate	
Jennifer Sorensen	Chicken Ranch Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians of CA	Present
Stephanie Suess	CRRMWIC/Alternate	
Chris Trott	CT Bioenergy Consulting	Present
Jody Trott	CTBC/Alternate	
Jim Dambacher	Dambacher Construction/Landowner	
Karl Dambacher	GoldRushNews.com	
Michael Vroman	San Francisco PUC-Hetch Hetchy	
Peter Dean	PUC/HH Alternate	
Allen Johnson	SouthWest InterFace Team	Present

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Kelly Bearden	SWIFT Alternate	
Sherri Brennan	Tuolumne County	Present
John Gray	TC/Alternate	
Mike Albrecht	TuCare	Present
Vicki Albrecht	TuCare/Alternate	
Jim Phelan	Tuolumne County Sportsmen, Inc.	Present
John Amodio	Tuolumne River Trust	Present
Patrick Koepele	TRT/Alternate	
Jim Maddox	Yosemite Deer Herd Advisory Council	Present

LIASON MEMBERS

Name	Organization	Attendance
Bill Haigh	Bureau of Land Management	Present
Nathan Graveline	CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	Present
Scott Tangenberg	US Forest Service	Present
Ann Denton	US Forest Service	Present

COLLABORATIVE STAFF

Name	Organization	Attendance
Carolyn Lott	Carlson Consulting/Facilitator	Present

OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

Name	Organization
Rob Griffith	US Forest Service
Chris Dallas	SNC
Marty Gmelin	US Forest Service
Jim Junette	US Forest Service
Matt Waverly	Sierra Pacific Industries
Jerry Fouts	American Motorcyclist Association