



Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions Collaborative General Meeting Summary for November 21, 2014 9:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:

1. Consider scheduling Ms. Shelly Crook and Ms. Carol Ewell (FS) for an hour presentation later in the year when the full report on lessons learned regarding treated landscape vs untreated landscape is available.
2. Consider scheduling Mr. Meyer (YNP) for a longer, more detailed presentation later in the year and include more information on research projects.
3. Mr. Marty Gmelin to coordinate with Mr. Nathan Graveline on NEPA and EIS documents as they relate to the WCB proposal and projects.
4. Mr. Rob Griffith to coordinate with Mr. Graveline regarding possible CE determinations as they relate to the WCB proposal and projects.
5. Ms. Lott to send out project list to members noting it is a draft list and send out the governor's EO.
6. Ms. Lott to follow up with TRT regarding posting the NFF Collaborative Report.
7. Ms. Lott to work with VC Buckley on developing, and Ms. Lott posting, information about the Rim Fire on the YSS website.

AGENDIZE FOR STEERING COMMITTEE MEETING:

1. Update on YSS support funding opportunities
2. Chair Albrecht and VC Buckley to present ideas for YSS general membership field trips to include ideas from Mr. Brink.
3. Assuming success with the preliminary Cap and Trade proposal, agendize support letter for full application for January agenda.
4. Discuss possible speakers for future meetings.

MEETING GOALS:

- To consider recommendations from the Steering Committee (SC) regarding process moving forward
- To receive updates on Rim Fire activities
- To consider draft Goals and Objectives

SUMMARY:

I. Welcome and Introductions:

Chair Mike Albrecht welcomed the group and asked for self-introductions. He presented a gift to VC Buckley for all his work, especially the work on the declaration to support ongoing efforts to get salvage done.

II. Acceptance of February General Meeting Summary:

It was called to the members' attention that the Steering Committee had agreed to amend the charter to eliminate potential membership of individuals not representing a group or organization. It was noted "Follow-up Item" 4 should read "restoration" not "reforestation."

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Agreement: Members approved the meeting summary as amended.

III. USFS Reports:

Court Case: Ms. Barbara Drake reported plaintiffs in the salvage logging case appealed to the ninth circuit. The motion for injunction is pending appeal. The court denied the request for the injunction. The case has now gone back to the ninth circuit and opening briefs have been filed. The USFS has filed for an extension to reply to the motion as there is a huge amount of work to formulate the response. They have until January 23rd to get the answers to the complaint completed.

VC Buckley said the bottom line is the plaintiffs have continued to try to stop ongoing logging. The court has continued to deny the plaintiffs' requests and the plaintiffs have appealed to the ninth circuit and the USFS will know next week whether logging will have to stop until the final decision in January. He said the USFS and all intervenors have done outstanding jobs in providing the information that has been filed.

Rim Fire Recovery Update: Ms. Drake said the hazard tree removal is close to done. Some of the timber sale operations are occurring. There are two sales left in the EIS related to the salvage to attempt to award. On one of the sales, the USFS held their fourth offering and it went no bid. Another will have bidding close the end of the month. These sales are Femmons and Ridge. Reynolds was a green sale originally and will need some legal work prior to offering.

The FS is drafting a preliminary proposed action for reforestation and will hold an open house on December 16th. A spreadsheet of all the restoration work was made public last week and indicated high, medium and low priorities. The FS is seeking opportunities to get that work funded. They put together a restoration NEPA team to look at watershed restoration, recreation infrastructure, etc. For the open house, there will be two meetings, one in the morning from 9:00am – 2pm which will be geared to representatives in Sacramento. A technical workshop will be held at FS Headquarters and will include a map exercise. The portion from 4:00pm – 6:00pm will be geared toward folks without the same level of awareness and will focus on explaining reforestation and highlighting how interested parties can engage.

There has been coverage in *Union Democrat* about the road closure being lifted. However, Cottonwood Road is still closed as is Spinning Wheel. Ms. Drake said the FS did not lift the closure, but decided not to extend it. New closure orders were written for portions of Cottonwood Road.

Mr. Chris Trott said that under the salvage EIS, once the timber sale is done, the residual fuels were to be reduced to no more than a certain percentage per acre. Ms. Drake said the activities after the timber sales are done are to reduce the residual fuels to 20 tons per acre or less. This is addressed in the salvage EIR. However, the FS's ability to get it out is subject to funding. If not done when reforestation begins, it will be financially included in site prep. If there is no funding, then the FS cannot move ahead with the reforestation in those areas.

Mr. Trott asked for clarification regarding if Ms. Drake meant if the FS cannot get funding to EIS levels, then the FS will not be able to reforest. Ms. Drake replied that it becomes a safety issue and they cannot plant based on snag composition. If there are highly productive acres, and they are a high priority to plant, then the FS will have to transfer the cost to do the work to site prep. There will be a multitude of ways to try to address those issues. There is \$48 million worth of activities included on the spreadsheet. She said the FS is trying to increase education

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so people understand the suite of activities that are necessary. For reforestation it will cost 1/40 of \$48 million for NEPA.

Rim Fire Recovery: Ms. Clare Long provided an overview of the timeline and events of the Rim Fire which started on August 17th 2013. She noted that during the fire, trucks coming in and out of area had to be washed to prevent the spread of noxious weeds. It was not until this month that the fire was declared out as, up until a month ago, there were still 62 hot spots. Even though it is declared out, there are still some burning holes. 194 miles of trail work has to be done, much on the Groveland District. Some of the old archeological sites were lost, but the FS found 23 new archeological sites that they did not know were there.

The Student Conservation Corp (SCC) and the Yosemite Conservation Corp (YCC) have been helping to replace the 30 miles of fencing between the national forest and Yosemite National Park. Tuolumne Sheriff inmates also helped and Ms. Long said they were terrific. The FS is using GIS and lidar during their efforts.

New benches at Pinecrest were made with wood from the fire. Recovery is showing a host of species that take advantage of the landscape after a fire. There is still a lot of work to be done. Rainbow Pool is one of the most popular recreation sites and the path to get to the pool and look at the falls needs a tremendous amount of work.

Researchers from the Pacific Southwest Region are doing erosion studies. They are collecting samples at different times to understand the erosion. Sediment fences are also going in. Placerville Nursery collected cones and they check every seed prior to use for seedlings. The Wilkinson's project is underway and Tuolumne River Trust (TRT) has hired Mr. Seth Connolly as the project volunteer coordinator.

Mr. Scott Tangenberg added that the FS has broken out needs and interests. They are developing a Rim Fire Recovery Projects List. The FS wants to know how YSS would like to be involved. Some members have been involved in reforestation efforts by helping the FS craft what they will do with the open reforestation pallet. Some members have been helping to raise funds such as the National Forest Foundation grant in conjunction with TRT. Another way members can assist is by raising public awareness. The FS needs the public to understand that the forest does not come back by itself. There is an opportunity for individual members to expand their influence and use their networks. It is also important to mobilize volunteers such as through TRT with leadership from Mr. Connolly.

The Chair complimented Ms. Long's overview. A member asked that the wish list be posted on the website so the public knows which projects need funds raised in order to implement them. It was noted the list is not ready to go public as work is still being done to determine which projects match with which available funding. The list is currently just a rough idea of what is being considered. VC Buckley said the project workgroup will be looking at the list and come back with recommendations regarding where they think YSS should put funding. However, \$40 million for reforestation is not likely to be found. Raising awareness and mobilizing volunteers are things YSS members can certainly do.

Ms. Drake clarified that this is not a wish list, but rather identified needs developed through FS specialists that they say is needed and then the FS prioritized the needs. To get the landscape back to a resilient place and restore recreational activities to a level that will get people wanting to come back to recreate will take significant effort. Ms. Ann Denton said in order to start

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engaging volunteers the FS has to get through the NEPA efforts and they are hopeful that will be done by May or June.

Mr. Tangenberg referred to a chart that was distributed by the FS. He said where there are side-by-side costs there is some portion of funding identified. The \$40 million is for treating up to 30-40,000 acres of reforestation efforts. The reforestation runs approximately \$1200 per acre and includes implementation over years of work. The FS has secured the funds to do planning. These costs are just the physical costs per acre. Mr. Koepele mentioned it will likely to be difficult to get funding through the federal government. Ms. Drake said the whole region has averaged \$4 million for reforestation and there are other areas that will compete for that money.

Mr. Trott said the Restoration Workgroup and Project Workgroup can each work on some of the things Mr. Tangenberg mentioned. He asked for clarification regarding fuel reduction work that will be done. He said there is fuel reduction to be done on the areas covered by the EA and EIS, but there are there are other acres that were not covered in the EA or EIS that are going to need fuel reduction prior to reforestation. Mr. Tangenberg said that fuel reduction is averaged into the costs portrayed in the spreadsheet. Some acres might only cost \$400 per acre and others will need significant site prep and be maybe \$2000 per acre. However, there is a lot of forest not covered in the spreadsheet.

Mr. Allen Johnson asked if the salvage money is coming back to the forest or going into the USFS general fund. Mr. Tangenberg said the FS is retaining all the funds they are able to retain.

VC Buckley said it is not YSS's role to advocate everything the USFS puts forward. YSS's priorities may be somewhat different. YSS might choose to raise funds for specific things that are of specific concern to YSS. YSS needs to determine where they can best place their support. It is a different hat than the FS as the FS has to do what has to be done. YSS can look at it from a different perspective such as advocating what they think is most important, for example, protecting watersheds versus restoring trails. Ms. Lott is to send out the project list to members noting it is a draft list.

Mr. Tangenberg said he understands and wants to know what pieces resonate with YSS or which seem misguided or perhaps should not be such a high priority.

Ms. Denton said part of the FS approach in putting together the list and this goes back to NEPA. If people want to get funds, the funds may have to include contracting to complete NEPA. She said the FS has to determine what can be ready by this May or June so they can show funders things that are ready to implement.

VC Buckley noted the Project Subcommittee is trying to sort out which projects will be the best matches so USFS knows how to prioritize NEPA and figure out CEQA. Mr. Chris Dallas met recently with the USFS to determine how Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) and USFS can coordinate timing.

Mr. Scott Gelfand from Friends of Berkeley Tuolumne Camp (FBTC) said his response reflects his particular organization, but he would like to produce a Bay Area event to raise awareness there. He wondered if FBTC can fundraise for a specific targeted area denoting where it can be used and earmarking it for that purpose. Ms. Long said it has to be determined where funds can be accepted, but she can work on this. An MOU or some other agreement would have to be developed and Mr. Gelfand should work with her on this.

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Mr. Koepele said in terms of what VC Buckley mentioned regarding project focus, Ms. Tracy Waddle has identified a list of projects and some members have met with her and are analyzing and prioritizing. Some of the fundraising is opportunistic, meaning for example, if there is a recreational grant, then a recreational project/s needs to be identified. Mr. Jim Junette said the FS has to take the funds where and for what they can get.

VC Buckley said the reforestation process has a tentative start date of spring of 2016 so on-the-ground work may not start to 2017, but site prep will not start until 2016. Where NEPA is not required, volunteers can plant trees sooner than this. Mr. Tangenberg said the FS is looking at opportunities to do some planting this spring.

Mr. Jerry Jensen said not having the reforestation EIS complete until 2016 seems incredibly long. He noted the FS should take advantage of a Categorical Exemption (CE) for smaller sites and smaller projects. Mr. Tangenberg said the FS is considering this as up to 4500 acres can be covered under a CE.

IV. Project Update:

Ms. Denton reported there are three aquatic organism passage processes going on in conjunction with Reynolds. Many meadows in Reynolds require hand work. There is still about \$100,000 remaining for implementation. The work is NEPA ready, but it is not shovel ready. Permits will be ready by March of 2015. Two Mile is designed and permitted and was in contract and there was a problem. There were no contractors available and still no takers for next fall, so the money was sent back to the region. Range fencing on most of the critical fence line has been replaced. There are still some meadows to fence in the Jawbone area. There are ten troughs to install and the FS is working on how to get 5000 pound troughs into the area.

Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB): Nathan had a meeting with SNC, the WCB and the FS. There are NEPA and CEQA constraints and it is a long process. It has morphed into working on both funding sources at the same time to assure they are not working against one another. They have another meeting on the first at 2:30pm at FS Headquarters with the Project Workgroup. The money is not the only answer as there is a lot of coordination and there are very specific requirements which require responses.

Mr. Graveline said there are some smaller grants available through people he works with and he wondered if TRT is able to handle administration of multiple small grants. It would likely require TRT to be the applicant on behalf of YSS, but the funds would need to be used for specific projects. The money would go to TRT.

Mr. Koepele said TRT can track and restrict funds for specific projects. With grant programs like SNC and WCB it is additionally complicated as they will involve packaging together many projects, so it takes more effort for things such as cumulative impacts.

Mr. Graveline said SNC can cover CEQA within limits. However, it has not been determined if CEQA can be included in WCB funding. SNC and WCB took a field trip and it seems as if they are supportive.

Ms. Drake said she sees restoration as one large project. So, while individual components may not seem to fit in, they are integral to the overall project. There is a clearer path for how the FS can get a Negative Declaration (ND). There are very few CE categories that line up with ND categories. They are looking into the governor's Executive Order (EO) to see how it may help

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facilitate efforts. The document talks about when the FS might use NEPA for CEQA and CEQA for NEPA. The EO encourages not duplicating NEPA under specific conditions. Ms. Drake said there may be an opportunity to ask for an exemption. Ms. Drake was asked to provide a copy of the EO. Mr. Dallas said there are still some fine points to all of this such as it still has to go to Secretary of Resources Laird for approval.

Cap & Trade Funding: Mr. Trott said there is a fund that is paid into by plants that have to buy offsets to their CO₂ generation. CALFire was given approximately \$42 million from this fund for forest projects that would address one of eight categories. One of the categories is reforestation efforts after a large catastrophic wildfire and this fund is open to federal lands. A number of members got together and started thinking about this funding opportunity. It seems like an opportunity to submit a project to chip and remove all the large burn piles from the roadside hazard trees and all salvage sales piles. It fits into reducing greenhouse gas emissions as for every bone dry ton that is not open burned, but rather burned in biomass power plant, one megawatt hour is produced that offsets one megawatt hour by natural gas. For every bone dry ton burned in a biomass plant there is a reduction of 800 lbs. of fossil emissions. TRT will be the applicant and submit the application on behalf of the FS for 68,425 tons of biomass at \$22 for removal plus 15% for TRT administration. The biomass is to be chipped and removed. The proposal for \$1.8 million was submitted last night. It was a concept proposal. CALFire will now go through and determine what will fit and if an application makes the "fit" list a complete application has to be submitted by the end of February. The preliminary list is supposed to be out December 21st.

Mr. Dallas asked what assurance there is that a plant will take the materials. Mr. Trott said there are four plants that could take it and this is a small amount of what they use. The materials would be priced such that they can hardly refuse it.

Mr. Walt Kruse asked if the greenhouse gas numbers include trucking. Mr. Trott responded that the numbers includes the crew that drives to the pile, the excavator, machines at the power plant, and the trucks at power plant.

Mr. Graveline asked if there is a CEQA issue. Mr. Trott said he does not believe so if it is covered under NEPA. Ms. Drake said the greenhouse calculation needs to be signed by professional forester. She said if the proposal is successful, the FS would use the existing piles and the piles at the locations where they are expected to be. The piles are already decked or will they will be decked. The FS knows the magnitude of the piles they have already generated, but they are estimating future piles.

Mr. Trott said the logistics are that TRT will receive the money and will hold it. The FS will put out a service contract, and when awarded, TRT will pay it out per the contract. The only thing required from YSS is a support letter and will need to be on the January agenda, assuming preliminary application is successful.

National Forest Foundation: Mr. Koepele reported on behalf of Mr. John Amodio that NFF provided a grant last year that helped pay for some of Ms. Carolyn Lott's time. Now, NFF is offering a chance to apply for \$12,000 for new or early stage collaborative processes and up to \$24,000 for better established collaboratives. TRT wishes to submit an application for the higher amount to help pay for additional organizational staffing, help fund research into funding opportunities, and develop funding applications.

Agreement: Members agreed to support the NFF application for up to \$24,000.

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V. TRT Reports:

Mr. Koepele said Mr. Amodio was unable to attend because of illness. However, the volunteer stewardship grant through NFF, the Wilkinsons, and TRT to help implement restoration and recreation projects enabled TRT to hire Mr. Seth Connelly to lead that effort. Mr. Connelly was introduced and he shared that he has done work previously with volunteers and understands the limitations and opportunities of volunteer efforts. He has urban planning and GIS background, but worked on capacity building in SoCAL for the past several years. He is hoping to enlist the assistance of national service organizations, the faith based community, military organizations, and interns. He helped with post-fire recovery in three fire areas in SoCAL and found there are a lot of ways volunteers can plug in.

Research Efforts on Collaborative Models: Mr. Koepele reminded the group this was part of the NFF grant from last year. He said Mr. Amodio conducted interviews with people from around the western U.S. and developed a 20 page report. The overarching findings are that each collaborative is very unique based on the issues they had to face. Mr. Gary Severson said, "It is safe to say there is not a single collaboration model, yet there are common threads that run through the models." Ms. Lott was asked to follow up with Mr. Koepele regarding putting the report on the website.

Draft YSS Goals and Objectives:

VC Buckley introduced the item stating that if YSS has clear goals and objectives then YSS can measure if they are making progress and identify where there are gaps. He said he and Chair Albrecht looked at the coming year and developed the draft sent out in the meeting packet. The chair and vice-chair took turns reviewing each of the proposed goals and objectives. Some of the points include to raise awareness of GTR-220 principles and to have YSS learn more about the experimental forest so they can determine if they support this. They also suggest taking a field trip to the experimental forest and inviting Mr. Malcom North and Mr. Eric Knapp to provide an overview. They suggested opening this field trip up to others. They also focused a desire to continue a focus on the green forest. VC Buckley also mentioned the Hemlock Project within the Amador/Calaveras Collaborative focus area as a project to look to as the kind of project on which to focus. They said they would like YSS to support the leading edge of how you can manage forests to get multiple benefits. They also would like to identify what speakers would be useful to schedule for YSS meetings.

Restoration Workgroup Report:

Mr. Koepele said due to time constraints and communication challenges the workgroup has not yet reviewed the project list. The intention is to review the findings and report back to YSS. Reasonable balance of benefits will be the key.

The chair acknowledged the work FO Amodio has been doing. VC Buckley said he would also like input from YSS on managing green forests. He noted he would like to see the Restoration Workgroup come back to YSS with an educational process on restoration.

Other:

VC Buckley said there was an Integrated Regional Water Management Authority (IRWMA) meeting on Wednesday and Dr. Roger Bales gave a presentation on watersheds. It was quite a technical report, but basically there is a concept that if you can do good fuel treatment and open up the tree canopy to a certain opening it allows more snow to pack and incrementally adds to the watershed. Modeling of a small area shows if 50% of trees are removed it adds 10% to the watershed. But the FS cannot remove 50% of the trees. However, what is important is the modeling is showing both fuel and water benefits when forests are well managed.

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Mr. Mike Damaso said he was looking at the website and there is really no information on the website about the devastation of the Rim Fire. There should be information about the fire and links to USFS information. Ms. Lott said she would work with VC Buckley to develop and post photos and information.

Mr. Jerry Fouts said YSS needs to develop a description of why YSS is unique and what YSS is trying to accomplish.

Jim Maddox asked if there are photos available of the Stanislaus Forest 100 years ago.

Chair Albrecht noted that the number for restoration efforts being talked about is \$40 million and while that is a lot, YSS and the FS need to think big. He said people should look at what someone like Pablo Sandoval gets paid to play baseball - \$90 million. He continued that the talk here is about reforesting the gateway to Yosemite and watershed implications to Hetch Hetchy and other storage and recreational facilities. \$128 million was spent to put the fire out. He underscored that when YSS unites behind a goal, YSS has the ear of just about anyone. The money that is needed is really just a drop in the bucket compared to what is spent in this country. He said he believes \$40 million can be obtained, but YSS may need to lobby the big politicians.

The chair then spoke about the leadership of YSS. He said he and VC Buckley are not going to continue as the leadership of YSS forever. However, they are willing to lead YSS as co-chairs into next year. He said they want others to think about stepping up into a leadership role in the future. They want to co-chair and bring on a vice-chair who will be mentored for 2016. He asked that anyone interested in the vice-chair position notify Ms. Lott.

The Chair also mentioned that the SC could consider downsizing. He said normally only a portion of the SC attends each SC meeting. He suggested those no longer interested in participating in the SC let Ms. Lott know.

The FS stated that new protocol requires that visitors come in the front door and sign in and receive a pass. Then they need to leave by the front door and return the pass.

Next YSS Steering Committee Meeting:

Friday, January 23rd 1:00pm – 4:00pm

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Members

Name	Organization	Attendance
Jerry Jensen	American Forest Resource Council	Present
Jerry Fouts	American Motorcyclist Association, District 36	Present
Dave Pickett	AMA36/Alternate	
Todd Miller	Blue Mountain Minerals	
Jeff Redoutey	BMM/Alternate	
John Romena	Buena Vista Biomass Power	
Steve Brink	CA Forestry Association	
Walt Kruse	Central Sierra Audubon Society	Present
Linda Millsbaugh	CSAS/Alternate	

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John Buckley	Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center	Present
Lindsey Meyers	CSERC/Alternate	
Chris Trott	CT Bioenergy Consulting	Present
Jody Trott	CTBC/Alternate	
Scott Gelfand	Friends of Berkeley Tuolumne Camp	Present
Phil Coffin	FBTC/Alternate	
Karl Dambacher	DC Alternate	Present
Jim Dambacher	James R. Dambacher Construction	
Michael Damaso	Merced Dirt Riders/ Stanislaus Trail Bike Association	Present
Paul Maben	Pacific Gas & Electric	
Kamran Rasheed	PG&E Alternate	
Stuart Crook	Permittee/Landowner	
Bob Brennan	PL/Alternate	
Mike Horvath	SFPUC/Natural Resources	
Michael Vroman	San Francisco PUC-Hetch Hetchy	
Peter Dean	PUC/HH Alternate	
Brain Wayland	Sierra Pacific Industries	Present
Allen Johnson	SouthWest InterFace Team	Present
Kelly Bearden	SWIFT Alternate	
Sherri Brennan	Tuolumne County	
John Gray	TC/Alternate	
Mike Albrecht	Tuolumne County Alliance for Resources & Environment	Present
Vicki Albrecht	TuCARE/Alternate	
Shaun Crook	Tuolumne County Farm Bureau	
Sasha Farkas	TCFB/Alternate	
Stuart Crook	Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District	
Jim Phelan	Tuolumne County Sportsmen Club	Present
Jon Sturtevant	Tuolumne Group Sierra Club	Present
Rick Delvin	TCSC/Alternate	Present
John Amodio	Tuolumne River Trust	
Patrick Koepele	TRT/Alternate	Present
Jim Roehl	Tuolumne Me-Wuk Tribal Council	Present
Willie Dutra	TMWTC/Alternate	
Jim Maddox	Yosemite Deer Herd Advisory Council	Present

Bill Haigh	Bureau of Land Management	
Nathan Graveline	CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	Present
Greg Gerstenberg	CDFW/Alternate	
Joe Meyer	NPS, Yosemite National Park	
Linda Mazzu	NPSYNP/Alternate	
Julie Bear	Sierra Nevada Conservancy	
Chris Dallas	SNC/Alternate	Present

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Scott Tangenberg	USFS Stanislaus NF	Present
Ann Denton	USFS/Alternate	Present
Marty Gmelin	USFS/Alternate	
Barbara Drake	USFS/Alternate	Present

LIAISON MEMBERS

COLLABORATIVE STAFF

Carolyn Lott	Carlson Consulting	Present
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OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

Name	Organization
Clare Long	USFS
Louise Even	USFS
Jim Junette	USFS
Seth Connolly	Tuolumne River Trust