



Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions Collaborative General Membership Meeting Summary March 16, 2018

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:

1. Invite media to visit some project sites for purpose of authoring article on SNC & WCB projects and visiting first MSA project.
2. Organize a field trip to see the SNC and WCB projects
3. Invite Mr. VanderKolk to a LT meeting to discuss his ideas about how to deal with the biomass deadline.
4. LT to look at LLP wording and determine if it is feasible to use as a guide for MSA.
5. SPA Team to describe a project/projects for subsequent SPAs.
6. Supervisor Kuiken requested agendaing a discussion about his idea of a ten-year plan.
7. FS to provide update on beetle infestation and continued damage.

MEETING GOALS:

- To further discuss the YSS involvement in a Master Stewardship Agreement
- To hear updates from the USFS
- To learn about SNC's 2018 workplan for the NDRC

SUMMARY:

Meeting Opening, Welcome, Pledge and Introductions:

Mr. Chris Trott led the pledge. Chair Graveline asked for self-introductions. New member, Mr. David Evans, representing NRCS was welcomed.

Financial Report:

Mr. Seth Connolly, TRT, provided the report. He noted facilitation is being paid through a RAC grant and contributions from Pacific Ultrapower and CT Bioenergy. NFF continues to fund community efforts with AmeriCorps for planting and weed removal. SNC implementation projects will close this summer. Work funded through the WCB is ramping up.

Review of YSS Accomplishments:

The 16-17 list of accomplishments was sent out electronically.

Agreement: There was consensus to accept the list of accomplishments for posting to the website.

Review of Draft YSS Goals and Objectives:

Agreement: There was consensus to accept the Goals and Objectives, with some minor edits, for use and posting to the website.

NDRC 2018 Workplan and Biomass Facility:

Ms. Maria Benech gave the report for SNC. She said there are still some parties who are asking HCD for more information. HUD denied an objection filed by them. The FS is getting contracts signed. CAL FIRE hired annuitants to work at getting permission to go onto private land to install fuel breaks. A biomass consulting group begins next week focusing on the biomass facility. CT Bioenergy is subcontracting for technical support and TRT is subcontracting for public engagement.

There is currently no clarity as to what the biomass facility will look like. Mr. Trott said, for example, it could be a post and pole operation combined with production of firewood and

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

landscape materials or pallets or it could be a small biomass energy facility that would support those activities. Whatever is decided upon, it must be completed by September of 2022. The consulting contract is with the Beck Group. The first phase is a feedstock assessment and then they will focus on what type of businesses would be feasible to compliment the facility. This will take 10 months. The biomass facility planning is overseen by SNC with a steering committee.

Opposition still exists for dead biomass removal. Ms. Benech said the FS process is clear, but someone can always sue. Supervisor Jason Kuiken said this does not mean opponents can get an injunction and they would have to prove they have standing. The FS is not waiting on the outcome of the opposition. Ms. Benech said the FS has already won in court, so she does not think further action will be successful.

It was noted YSS should be ready to support the FS if opposition moves forward. Mr. John Buckley said YSS has already been unanimous in supporting the HUD grant, so this could be done by the LT if needed.

Agreement: There was consensus that YSS can intervene if any part of the HUD grant is challenged by any opposition.

Mr. Mike Albrecht suggested sending a letter indicating the timeframe is not realistic. Ms. Benech said she will pass the YSS concern about the timeframe along to the steering committee. Mr. Trott suggested attendance at the public meeting in April by YSS representatives.

Mr. Michael Pickard said Mr. Elliot VanderKolk has some creative ideas about how to support existing infrastructure. He suggested having Mr. VanderKolk speak to the LT about his ideas.

Introductions of AmeriCorps:

Mr. Connolly introduced the fifth team of AmeriCorps volunteers to represent YSS in the field through TRT. TRT is sharing the team with the Detweiler Fire and Butte Fire and for trail extensions, school presentations, and fuel break constructions. To date, TRT has had 115 AmeriCorps volunteers supporting YSS projects.

Update on Current Master Stewardship Agreement (MSA):

Chair Graveline shared the Leadership Team (LT) sees the MSA is a way to achieve the Large Landscape Plan (LLP). There is FS work going on outside the MSA.

Mr. John Buckley said the goal of both the LLP and MSA is to add to what the FS is already doing. In a presentation he attended, Mr. Bernie Gyant said there is limited funding and capacity for forest projects. Mr. Gyant announced that the Forest has a 30,000 MBF board feet timber target for 2018 which will increase each of the next 2 years. The LT is hoping to find additional funding and capacity to ramp up pace and scale. Mr. Buckley added he is not sure the LLP is feasible at this point. The Chair said the LT will look at the LLP wording at the next LT meeting.

The Chair shared that Tuolumne County partnered with the FS on the MSA. The MSA is signed. YSS is not a legal partner but is an advisory-type board. The LT wanted to be sure YSS would maintain this position throughout the ten-year agreement. The MSA covers the entire area that YSS boundaries.

The Supplemental Project Agreements (SPA) is where implementation projects are described. TRT, the LT, and the FS developed an application for \$14.7M of funds through the Climate

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

Change Investment Fund. A proposal was also submitted by the county to CAL FIRE. If funded, the money must be spent by March 2022. Mr. Marti Gmelin helped developed specific locations for projects within the proposals. Notification will be made regarding whether the concept proposal is invited to make a full proposal. CAL FIRE received 75 apps requesting over \$300M. Ms. Lott will send out a copy of the proposal. There is \$220M available for the three different funding silos. It will be very competitive as only about 30% of the applications will be invited back for a full proposal. YSS is seen as a positive component of the application. LIDAR acquisition is also a component to help determine how land can be protected downstream.

Mr. Chris Trott asked how to proceed if this funding does not come through. Mr. Pickard said there is possibly more funding through Prop 68, if it passes, as it includes \$55M for the SNC grant program. The Department of Fish and Wildlife is another funding option. Supervisor Jason Kuiken also requested funds from the FS. He would like, with the support of YSS, to initiate work on a SPA. It can be amended based on the funding source. The Supervisor said he can use prior retained receipts to augment project costs to work on this at about \$100K.

Chair Graveline said he and VC Koepele had a conversation with Mr. Kevin Zeman and Mr. Zeman mentioned March 31st as the deadline for this FS queue for funding. He said there must be dedicated money to get the SPA signed so using retained receipts helps and adding identified timber sales can be cited as additional funding. Sup. Kuiken offered to speak with his timber staff.

Mr. Mike Albrecht said this is the best thing he has heard from the FS in years. He voiced appreciation for the Supervisor's commitment. He said seems to be a lot of support within the FS for the MSA.

Chair Graveline said timber receipts created through a SPA can now be used for the next SPA. Sup. Kuiken said the proposal is to use FS match for CAL FIRE funding. Mr. Tim Tate suggested using a Farm Bill CE to construct a long and wide fuelbreak.

Chair Graveline said YSS needs a SPA team. Ms. Liz Peterson said she has templates for writing a SPA. Sup. Kuiken said the SPA should be written with enough looseness that it can be amended. Ms. Peterson said the county will contract with TRT to write the SPA. The SPA Team will identify future projects to recommend to the YSS General Membership which will then be proposed to the county and to the FS. This will be a pipeline for the future that prioritizes projects.

The Chair asked for volunteers. The volunteers include Mr. Albrecht, Mr. Trott, Mr. Brian Wayland, Mr. Rick Carter, Chair Graveline, VC Koepele, Mr. Jim Maddox. Mr. Trott will chair the team.

Sup. Kuiken said he would like YSS and the FS to hold a field trip when the first SPA is completed.

Agreement: There was consensus to have Sup. Kuiken and staff pick from YSS supported projects within the grant application and work with the county and TRT to get the SPA written.

Update from Supervisor Hanvelt:

Supervisor Hanvelt said there is no certainty of leadership at the national level. He said Chief Ken Pimlott is concerned about which proposal submitters will really deliver. He is personally reviewing each concept proposal and asking that people come in and defend their proposal. Ms. Peterson will set up a meeting with individuals who can help craft the language for the

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

meeting with the Chief. The Governor wants to speak to Dr. Malcolm North and others and then have the Chief set up a task force.

USFS Reports:

Sup. Kuiken reported USFS Chief Toney Took resigned in light of harassment within agency and acquisitions against him. The Chief said his resignation does not mean every accusation is accurate, but some incidents did occur. Chief Vicky Christensen is interim chief. The desire is to continue with the interim until there is a permanent undersecretary. She has experience with wildland fire. Supervisor Kuiken said he will continue to hold his staff accountable and will set the tone for interacting with the community.

The Supervisor said he is proposing, on the Stanislaus, to take a big step back and look at the landscape considering what it is and what it will be over the next 15 years. He wants to make a big impact on the landscape health through burning and harvesting. His initial thought is to look at all the manageable acres, take out some special acres, and then decide what acres are desired to be treated with pre-commercial thinning, commercial thinning, and prescribed fire over the next 15 years. He is aiming at resiliency as the first big step toward restoration. He said he wants to make sure the forest can withstand fire. He wants to use GTR-220 and collaborative approaches in treating landscape. He said he has visited about half of the forest and has observed treatment is just on small areas in pockets. He wants to make the argument for treatment in one document and he is not proposing to survey every acre prior to a decision. He wants to do the necessary surveys prior to implementation. He would like YSS and forest employees to be thoughtful and not constrained by how business has always been done.

Mr. Kevin Rice asked if there is concern about how climate change will affect management. Supervisor Kuiken said there is and that is another reason for looking at the forest as a landscape. He said, on his prior unit, he developed a model for how to rank and prioritize watersheds. He wants to develop a ten-year plan. Mr. Allen Johnson said there needs to be balance with a maintenance program instead of walking away from projects. Supervisor Kuiken said there are 898,000 acres on Stanislaus. 40,000 acres of the lower elevation area should be treated every year to include natural fire.

Mr. Albrecht said he sees four things are in the way of designing and implementing a ten-year plan: money, personnel, policy, and litigation. Sup. Kuiken said the top two things in the way are money and personnel. On the policy side, he believes he has essentially what is needed, everyone just needs to collectively understand how the policies work. He said he is educating the line officers in the "rules of the road". On the litigation side, he said a vision and implementation steps can collectively be set. He believes working together will improve favorable decisions in any litigation. On the money side, he said relying on grants is not workable. However, funds can be leveraged if it is clear what the work is and what it will cost. On personnel side, he said there has been a 39% decrease in vegetation reduction employees. However, he believes the FS can use non-FS people to fill some of the gaps. The CEs are to set the forest up for the big plan.

Illegal Grows: Sup. Kuiken said he does not have stats on how many grows have been found over last five years. He said they try to find all of them, but there are more than the FS knows about. Illegal grows are not good for the landscape. Rodenticides and herbicides are harmful. Trees are felled, water gets diverted, and fuel is spilled on the ground. The FS must clean up the mess. The Stanislaus is not as bad as some neighboring forests. He said if someone sees an illegal grow, they should back out and then notify the FS.

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

CEs: One is the Arnold/Avery CE and the other three will likely be on the 108 Corridor. There is one in the Rock Creek area and one above Reynolds up to Borland.

Survival Rates: Ms. Benech distributed a spreadsheet of statistics. The spreadsheet noted if the planting was contract planted or volunteer planted. The timing of plant and release probably affected the survival stats. In the Rim, there were about 25,000 acres estimated that need reforestation and about 10% naturally regenerated. There is a non-Rim backlog of 40,000 acres. The FS has no reforestation budget. About 17,000 acres are still not funded in the Rim. Members said funding for this should be a priority. There will be 400-500 acres planted this year and again next year. The FS is using HUD funds to prep about 500 acres for planting next year.

Sup. Kuiken said access to 5N14 has been approved to restore. The two major failures that affected the planting schedules are being worked on.

Budget Status: Sup. Kuiken said they are still under continuing resolution until next week. Summit/Mi-Wok Districts have been filled by a single person. There are no front desk employees at Mi-Wok so the public cannot access information there.

Volunteer Day: Ms. Benech announced Volunteer Day and distributed a flyer. Sup. Kuiken said the FS wants volunteers and he wants to break down barriers to make the process easier. He asked if anyone in YSS has suggestions to let Ms. Benech, Mr. Scott Tangenberg, or himself know.

Yosemite National Park Update:

Mr. Joe Meyer said YNP has a permanent superintendent. Mr. Michael Reynolds was named as the superintendent. He was the Deputy Director in DC. However, he grew up in Yosemite and wanted to return.

There is an organization called Yosemite Gateway Partners which is open to people who have an interest in what is going on in the park. They hold quarterly meetings.

The Mariposa Grove Restoration project was a \$40M project. It will open in June after three years of closure.

The park is still seeing 3% mortality. It was noted, in the YSS area, there are still sightings of individual pine and cedar mortality, but not huge pockets like before. It was requested the FS provide an update at the next meeting. Mr. Meyer said if there is a desire for a specific agenda item about YNP, let him know.

Next YSS General Meeting:

The next regularly scheduled YSS General Membership meeting will be Friday, May 18th.

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

Members

Name	Organization	Attendance
Jerry Jensen	American Forest Resource Council	Present
Jerry Fouts	American Motorcyclist Association, District 36	
Dave Pickett	AMA36/Alternate	
Jeff Redoutey	Blue Mountain Minerals	Present
Steve Brink	CA Forestry Association	
Walt Kruse	Central Sierra Audubon Society	Present
Linda Millspaugh	CSAS/Alternate	
John Buckley	Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center	Present
Julia Stephens	CSERC/Alternate	
	Chicken Ranch Rancheria of Me-Wuk Indians	
Chris Trott	CT Bioenergy Consulting	Present
Jody Trott	CTBC/Alternate	
Scott Gelfand	Friends of Berkeley Tuolumne Camp	
Phil Coffin	FBTC/Alternate	
Jim Dambacher	Dambacher Construction/Landowner	
Karl Dambacher	DC/Alternate	
Dwight Follien	Groveland Trail Heads	
Dusty Vaughn	GTH/Alternate	
Michael Damaso	Merced Dirt Riders/ Stanislaus Trail Bike Association/4x4 in Motion	Present
Dave Evans	Natural Resources Conservation Service	Present
Alisha Lomeli	Pacific Gas & Electric	
Stuart Crook	Permitee/Landowner	
Bob Brennan	PL/Alternate	
Michael Vroman	San Francisco PUC-Hetch Hetchy	
Peter Dean	PUC/HH Alternate	
Keith Martin	Sierra Club – Tuolumne Group	
Kevin Rice	SCTG/Alternate	Present
Brian Wayland	Sierra Pacific Industries	Present
Jeb Brooks	SPI Alternate	Present
Bailey Hunter	Tuolumne Band Me-Wuk Tribal Council	
Willie Dutra	TBM-WTC/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	
Lindsay Mattos	Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District	
Jim Phelan	Tuolumne County Sportsmen	Present
John Amodio	Tuolumne River Trust	
Patrick Koepele	TRT/Alternate	

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

Seth Connolly	TRT/Alternate	Present
Jim Maddox	Yosemite Deer Herd Advisory Council	Present

LIASON MEMBERS

Bill Haigh	Bureau of Land Management	
Nathan Graveline	CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	Present
Joe Meyer	NPS, Yosemite National Park	Present
Jim Roche	NPSYNP/Alternate	
Michael Pickard	Sierra Nevada Conservancy	Present
Randi Jorgensen	SNC/Alternate	
Allen Johnson	SouthWest InterFace Team	Present
Jason Kuiken	USFS Stanislaus NF	Present
Scott Tangenberg	USFS/Alternate	Present
Ann Denton	USFS/Alternate	
Marty Gmelin	USFS/Alternate	Present
Maria Benech	USFS/Alternate	Present

COLLABORATIVE STAFF

Carolyn Lott	Carlson Consulting	Present
--------------	--------------------	---------

OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

Name	Organization
Randy Hanvelt	TC BOS
Liz Peterson	TC CAO
Liz Gregg	CSERC