



# Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Membership Collaborative Meeting

**DRAFT** Meeting Summary for Friday, June 21, 2019

**MEETING LOCATION: 19777 Greenley Rd, Sonora**

## **MEETING PURPOSE:**

To further develop the work of YSS to support recovery, restoration, and protection treatments that will affect ecosystem resiliency within the collaborative focus area.

## **MEETING GOALS:**

- **Affirmation of new vice-chair**
- **Presentations by the USFS**

Chair Patrick Koepele welcomed those attending and led the group in the Pledge and in following with self-introductions.

### **• Consideration of New Vice-Chair**

Members of the Leadership Team asked the general membership to approve Brian Wayland to be the new Vice-Chair of YSS. Brian was unanimously endorsed and thanked for his willingness to serve.

### **• TRT Financial Report**

Patrick covered a range of fiscal reporting, starting with the **RAC grant program**. Funding from the existing grant will expire in the fall, but there is still money from Ultrapower's generous donation to continue to fund facilitation expenses. The **NFF grant** is nearly used up, and Patrick has submitted for renewal. The **WCB grant** that has funded work for meadows, deer improvement projects, wildlife guzzlers, and aspen restoration work has \$500,000-\$800,000 still left, but work continues toward wrapping up that grant by next June. The **SNC grant** is completed. As shared previously, YSS/TRT was awarded a **grant for a watershed coordinator position**, and Patrick is awaiting the grant agreement.

Patrick reported that there is a new WCB grant opportunity tied to reforestation and post-fire recovery. He would like to submit for continuing reforestation and for "planning" for fuel treatment projects in the North Fork Tuolumne canyon, in the Fraser to Beardsley area north of Highway 108, and for a project in the Bill Hill area.

Michael P. of SNC noted that a SNC Forest Health grant opens on Monday; awards will be made in one year.

### **• MSA Update**

Liz and Patrick combined to share update information. Jason Smith was hired by TRT to be project coordinator to oversee MSA projects. There have been projects funded through CAL FIRE. **A Granite Thinning** project for 2,400 acres is having a cruise package put together and is hoped to be ready to

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sell by fall. **Granite Reforestation** prep work to start getting a SPA modification is going through the FS process. The County hired a consultant to resolve archeological issues tied to the Strawberry Phase II prescribed fire project, where YSS is handling the prep work for the actual burning.

- **LiDAR**

There was a lengthy discussion of Lidar, that there are two flights being done, that Liz is working on a contract with the Remote Sensing Lab, and that there are many hoped for uses for the data. Michael P. asks for the Sensing Lab to write up what the products will be so that he and others can understand. Time of availability of Lidar products is not expected until next year. Michael also offered to coordinate a meeting to discuss where the data might be stored.

- **Additional MSA projects**

There was considerable discussion of **South 108**, where plans had been focused on 80 acres of pile burning. Patrick will represent YSS in discussions with the County and FS as to whether there will be mastication rather than machine pile and burn. For **Looney** after lots of talk there was consensus for Liz/Patrick/USFS to coordinate to determine whether to just have the FS sell Looney through a stewardship contract rather than struggling to get grant agreement modifications rushed through administratively, which appears not feasible. Chris and John B. supported doing whatever was needed to get the project implemented. YSS members collectively gave consensus support for that approach.

- **Summary of SNC Field Tour**

Many YSS members participated with SNC, state officials, USFS staff, and a number of critics of Rim reforestation and fuel projects. It was a long day of extensive discussions. Elliot felt it had value for the SNC Board, which was the actual intention when it was being planned. The discussion of the tour led to the topic of reforestation.

- **Jerry supports re-visiting the matter of reforestation monitoring**

Jerry reminded the group of the original intent to assess the different strategies for outcomes for comparison. Patrick noted that Mike A. had suggested contacting Columbia College. Other ideas were put forward. John B. and Chris agreed to send Elliot and Patrick questions that had originally been discussed as ones that could be possibly looked at by reforestation monitoring. Jerry suggested that a Committee be formed to consider steps to acquire funding for the monitoring. Seth had ideas as to how SNA grant support could be one option as well as other staff associated with TRT. The topic is one that will be re-visited.

- **Update on HUD grant**

Elliot introduced Lindsay Raber who SNC has hired to coordinate and oversee HUD grant work. At this time over \$9,000,000 of contract work is moving forward this field season. Elliot described the various field projects. There was mention that the State approved two community centers to be built in Tuolumne County, and work to acquire properties and complete design work is moving forward. Elliot also discussed the Biomass Wood Product Campus. SNC will be looking at proposals and hoping to then get agreement on performing loans, which as they are re-paid, will make money available to be put to use for other work. There was discussion of the challenge of getting to the needed deadline conclusion with appropriate targets met and funding utilized.

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- **Jason introduced his Large Landscape Plan idea to YSS**

Jason provided “his story” as background to underscore why he sees such a strong need for large scale restoration treatments to respond to threats such as wildfire, bark beetles, unhealthy forests, WUI risks for communities, etc. In particular, Jason spent time explaining how insufficient actual work accomplishments have been in terms of acreage treated.

He apologized to the group for possibly causing confusion for bringing to YSS back in January the 5-year program of work plan he envisions as needed to prioritize which specific HUC6 sub-watersheds need to be treated. He explained that analysis will feed into his Large Landscape “Two Forest” 15-year plan that he refers to as MOTOR M2K (Moving Toward Resiliency within the Mokelumne to Kings Landscape).

Basically, between now and the fall of 2020, Jason and Dean (Forest Supervisor of the Sierra Forest) will hold meetings with ACCG, YSS, the Dinkey collaborative groups, and other interests to help define criteria, an implementation plan, and how “conditional” NEPA will work for a large-scale two-forest plan. As he envisions, the two forests will use the prioritization process to guide up to 15 years of project work. A single NEPA decision could approve up to 500,000 acres (as an example) of logging, burning, mastication, etc. that would then be done over the following 15 years. Jason referred to a similar conditional NEPA that is moving forward on the Medicine Bow N.F. and another project called the Bear Mountain large landscape plan.

YSS members expressed a wide range of responses ranging from support to concerns, uncertainty, enthusiasm, caution, ideas for possible alternatives, and many other comments. Jason emphasized that he intends to move this forward to a decision in the next 18 months because he believes delays are unacceptable. A repeated concern was shared that there could be divisive controversy over approving 500,000 acres of projects for the next 15 years which would eliminate the normal opportunities for public engagement once a single decision approves all logging and other treatments for 15 years. Some members suggested starting with a smaller “large project” such as 25-30,000 acres to build trust and acceptance. Others shared their views that it’s time to get away from project NEPA and whatever is needed to get trees cut will benefit the local mills, the local economy, and avoid a large, catastrophic wildfire.

**A beginning meeting to discuss this MOTOR M2K plan will be held on July 11<sup>th</sup> from 1-5 p.m. at the Supervisors Office.** Jason encouraged YSS members with questions to contact Michal Jow or Katie Wilkinson

**Jason also announced plans to hold a field trip to the Experimental Forest on July 22<sup>nd</sup> to look at issues there that the FS believes will help inform the Large Landscape Plan discussion.**

- **NEXT MEETING**

**The next YSS general meeting is scheduled for September 20<sup>th</sup> at the Supervisors Office. MEETING ATTENDANCE Members**

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<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Attendance</b>
Jerry Jensen	American Forest Resource Council	Present
Jerry Fouts	American Motorcyclist Association, District 36	
Dave Pickett	AMA36/Alternate	
Jeff Redoutey	Blue Mountain Minerals	
Steve Brink	CA Forestry Association	Present
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	
Rick Carter	Pacific Ultra Power Chinese Station	
Dennis Serpa	PUPCS/Alternate	
Stuart Crook	Permitee/Landowner	
Bob Brennan	PL/Alternate	
Michael Vroman	San Francisco PUC-Hetch Hetchy	
Peter Dean	PUC/HH Alternate	
Brian Wayland	Sierra Pacific Industries	Present
Jeb Brooks	SPI Alternate	Present
Dore Bietz	Tuolumne Band Me-Wuk Tribal Council	
	TBM-WTC/Alternate	
Sherri Brennan	Tuolumne County	
John Gray	TC/Alternate	
Mike Albrecht	Tuolumne County Alliance for Resources & Environment	
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	
Keith Martin	Sierra Club – Tuolumne Group	Present
Kevin Rice	SCTG/Alternate	Present

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John Amodio	Tuolumne River Trust	Present
Patrick Koepele	TRT/Alternate	Present
Seth Connolly	TRT/Alternate	Present
Jim Maddox	Yosemite Deer Herd Advisory Council	Present

**LIASON MEMBERS**

Bill Haigh	Bureau of Land Management	
	CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	
Joe Meyer	NPS, Yosemite National Park	
Rob Grasso	NPSYNP/Alternate	
Michael Pickard	Sierra Nevada Conservancy	Present
Randi Jorgensen	SNC/Alternate	
Allen Johnson	South West InterFace Team	
David Evans	USDA	
Jason Kuiken	USFS Stanislaus NF	Present
Scott Tangenberg	USFS/Alternate	
Michael Jow	USFS/Alternate	Present
Marty Gmelin	USFS/Alternate	
Maria Benech	USFS/Alternate	
Sarah LaPlante	USFS/Alternate	Present

**COLLABORATIVE STAFF**

Carolyn Lott	Carlton Consulting	
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**OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Elliott Vanderkolk	SNC
Liz Peterson	Tuolumne County
Marcus Long	TRT
John Carter	Visitor
Lindsay Raber	SNC
Todd Newberger	USFS
Thomas Templeton	NFS
Jad Kurdi	Tuolumne County