



**Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions
Collaborative General Membership
Meeting Summary
September 20, 2019**

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:

1. Develop 18-19 YSS accomplishments document.
2. Provide update on the status of all current grants.
3. Invite media to visit some project sites for purpose of authoring article on SNC & WCB projects and visiting first MSA project.
4. Organize a field trip to see the SNC and WCB projects and a field trip to revisit various planting method areas within the Rim.

MEETING GOALS:

- Discuss MOTOR M2K and consider YSS alternative
- Receive updates on ongoing activities

SUMMARY:

Meeting Opening, Welcome, Pledge and Introductions:

Chair Patrick Koepele led the pledge and asked for self-introductions. The chair introduced two new TRT employees. Mr. Jason Smith is providing project management for forest projects and Mr. Byron Kremplis helping with grant management, grant writing, planning, and project development.

MOTOR M2K – Summary and YSS Alternative:

Supervisor Kuiken provided a brief overview as many members have attended the MOTOR M2K workshops. Currently this plan is to cover the entire Stanislaus and Sierra forests. The FS is looking at NEPA as a condition-based document. The purpose is to increase pace and scale and move toward resiliency. Some of the aspects of the proposed plan have caused concerns with some stakeholders.

Chair Koepele said there were several issues identified by the Leadership Team (LT), other YSS members, and other collaboratives. There is concern about the expanse of two forests, condition-based NEPA, and the proposed length of the plan. He said YSS has built a track record of collaboration. The LT worked to refine the approach and diffuse concerns.

In so doing, the LT developed three alternatives to include a large scale, speedy NEPA document like what was done in the Rim footprint. Another approach was a programmatic NEPA document with tiered, project-specific NEPA documents.

The third, and recommended alternative, is like the already supported YSS Pilot Project. The MOTOR M2K as proposed covers 750,000 acres of treatment on the Stanislaus over 15 years. The YSS LT proposal is for 5 years and keeps the conditions-based approach. At the end of the 5-year period, if there is a positive response to what has been accomplished and the process, a new decision could be issued for a ten-year period. This alternative proposes an average of 40,000 ac/yr versus 50,000 ac/yr proposed within MOTOR M2K. The YSS proposal

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

defines categories and amounts of treatment rather than the nebulous amounts of treatment in MOTOR M2K.

Mr. Mike Albrecht identified the YSS LT (Mr. Koepele, Mr. Waylund, Mr. Albrecht, Mr. Buckley, and Mr. Trott). He said it represents Tuolumne County's top environmental and timber/forestry representatives, Ms. Carolyn Lott, the facilitator, and Mr. John Amodio who assists with Sacramento-based efforts. All members of the LT are in favor of the YSS alternative. YSS endorsement is critical. Mr. Albrecht thinks the USFS appreciates the efforts of YSS.

Mr. Rick Carter asked what the perceived objections are to the larger FS plan. Mr. John Buckley said for years the USFS has done projects and there is scoping, public input, plan development, studies, and public comments and for a targeted area. There is also an opportunity to appeal. Under the conditioned-based approach, 750,000 acres would be identified but the studies would not be done until after the decision. In this scenario, the public has no idea prior to the decision what the studies will find. There is not trust for a 15-year plan. The LT wanted to get past all this and minimize litigation and objections and support a plan that, if funded, could significantly increase pace and scale. This alternative provides a chance to test the concepts while limiting the number of years until the conditions-based approach are evaluated.

Mr. Chris Trott added the LT hopes this alternative can supplement the MSA.

Ms. Lott said the LT worked very hard on arriving at an alternative that all the interests on the LT could support.

Mr. Albrecht said the goals are big. The LT is not sure the USFS can accomplish this much work, but we must try. The USFS won't be able to do it without YSS behind it.

Mr. Jim Dambacher noted this is the first big plan he has seen in 40 years.

Mr. Randy Hanvelt said this is way ahead of anything proposed to date. It may not get us to all the way to our vision of success, but it is a good start.

Mr. Buckley asked if there is any YSS member here that cannot live with this plan.

Mr. Kevin Rice said he is not sure what others in the Sierra Club will think of the alternative.

Mr. Walt Kruse said he sees this as a draft document, and it is okay to float this. He can then start talking with the Audubon board. He would like to see more of a comparison of the condition-based approach versus the current process.

Mr. Buckley said the condition-based approach is a concept that will be developed through the public engagement process. Chair Koepele said at a minimum, with this alternative, there is a five-year lookback and the ability to determine whether to support another decision.

Supervisor Kuiken said the FS will be presenting a straw location that has some sample rules to help folks understand the condition-based concept, but this needs to be balanced with input from the collaborative process. He is pleased YSS has come together and brought forward an alternative. He is willing to move from the 15-year plan to help build trust.

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

Mr. Allen Johnson said he thinks there is value in considering the other YSS alternatives. Supervisor Kuiken said the FS is currently in pre-scoping and development of the proposal. Mr. Trott added the FS will still have to consider the YSS alternative and may suggest some modification.

Mr. Rice said there is support at the local chapter for increased pace and scale. However, there is a lack of trust and concern about monitoring.

Supervisor Kuiken said this project is his priority, the forest's priority, and so he will present and discuss it at any organization's meeting to help move the process along.

Mr. Michael Jow said he appreciates YSS putting the proposal together which is what a highly functioning collaborative does. He said this is so much more productive than just saying why the FS proposal will fail. There is still a lot to develop. YSS has developed some of what he has called sideboards, although they must be fleshed out more. The FS will refine the proposal before going out with full scoping in a formal process. They will have to look at issues raised in that process.

Mr. Dambacher asked if the FS is going to have the resources to get this moving if it is passed. Supervisor Kuiken noted on prescribed fire, the FS has accomplished 2,700 acres of burning which is significantly more than in the past, and second highest in the region. He said they can potentially do another 1,000-2,000 acres in the next few weeks. There are also increased opportunities for state funding.

Ms. Lott asked if the Stanislaus Forest plan can be separated from the Sierra Forest plan. The supervisor was non-committal.

Agreement: There was agreement by members present to support the YSS alternative as a draft alternative for discussion with their particular organizations. Central Sierra Audubon and Tuolumne Group of the Sierra Club "stood aside."

Master Stewardship Agreement Update:

Ms. Liz Peterson said projects are moving along. The current funding is from the FS and Cal FIRE. The FS project, Two Mile, for mastication on 350 acres southeast of Long Barn is done. South 108 mastication has started on 80 acres and will be completed in 1-2 weeks.

Cal FIRE funded projects include Granite reforestation, which is a little behind, but the operator has been hired. The County has hired an archeology firm on retainer. Flagging started today. The project is about 400 acres. Trees are to be ordered to plant in 2021.

The Granite thin is a couple thousand acres. The firm has been hired to do the layout and will start in February. There will be a timber bid in spring or early summer and some biomass removal.

The SPA Mod for the Strawberry Phase Two prep work has been approved and an RFP will be advertised soon.

LIDAR status is that 50% was flown 6 weeks ago. A contract has been submitted with a remote sensing lab and are just waiting for regional office approval.

Looney should be advertised in October or November.

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

Supervisor Kuiken said Cabbage is advertised on Highway 4. Black Springs is also on Highway 4. It is thought for quarter one there will be 20M board feet and 4,000 acres of treatment. There will be additional Highway 4 sales in fiscal year 2020.

Mr. Jim Phelan said Mule Deer's MSA project has started on 350 acres.

Regarding the WCB Reforestation proposal, in June a pre-proposal was sent out and YSS was invited back to submit a full proposal. A full proposal for up to an additional 2000 acres of reforestation in Rim was submitted. That makes a total of 6,400 acres when combined with other funds.

The preproposal by Tuolumne County to SNC for planning includes three potential projects: Beardsley, Big Hill/Cedar Ridge, and Mt Provo/Mt Lewis/N Fork Tuolumne. The grant is for up to \$100,000 which could fund one project at best. Mt Provo/Mt Lewis/N Fork Tuolumne tells a better story as a lot of communities there are at risk. It marries well with Big Hill and Cedar Ridge work where planning is in progress.

There is a new Cal FIRE grant opportunity coming out Monday.

TRT's Forest Health Program Manager is helping Ms. Peterson with grants.

NDRC Grant Update:

Supervisor Kuiken said a lawsuit has been filed against various project treatments in the Rim Fire funded through the NDRC grant and that he could provide no further information. There were many statements expressed by YSS members noting the targeted projects are broadly supported as positive restoration treatments by conservation groups, industry interests, and others. After lengthy discussion, YSS agreed that the Leadership Team should take actions on behalf of YSS to support the USFS regarding the lawsuit and to oppose any stay or restraining order that would delay the treatments. The representatives of the Tuolumne Group of the Sierra Club and Audubon stood aside on the vote due to not having previously discussed that action with their respective Board or Executive Committee members.

Agreement: Members agreed the Leadership Team should take actions on behalf of YSS to support the USFS regarding the lawsuit and to oppose any stay or restraining order that would delay the treatments. Representatives of the Tuolumne Group of the Sierra Club and Audubon stood aside on the vote.

Other Project Updates:

The WCB grant is about 95% complete. The DFW grant builds on the deer work on Jawbone Ridge. This project has reforestation, prescribed fire, and mastication as components and was awarded for deer units in Rim rehabilitation. A member noted it would be good to develop a clear focused report on what has been accomplished aside from USFS projects.

A previous Cal FIRE funding application included a Cedar Ridge project and it was not funded. (More information about this proposal was shared under MSA update.) A summary document was distributed. The ask is to treat 600-1200 acres. Work is just on FS land. The amount requested of SNC is \$1M. A YSS letter of support was requested and is needed prior to October 14th.

Forest Service Update:

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

The Rock Creek decision is signed. It will be two timber sales. Currently, they are submitting task orders for sale prep. One sale is 1,200 acres and the other is 1,600 acres. The first sale will be in FY2021. Mr. Buckley said the FS should have reported back to YSS and others who commented on the ROD.

Looney should be advertised in October or November. The amount of commercial volume is 7.5M board feet. Supervisor Kuiken will find out about biomass.

Donnell hazard tree work is nearing completion. The salvage CE was signed and awarded two weeks ago.

Prescribed fire is planned on 1000+ acres with pile and burn on the Summit and 600-900 acres of broadcast burning on Bear Mountain. Dry Meadow is another possible burn, as is the experimental forest, South 108, and Strawberry. The Rosasco burn area has smoke that keeps popping up since 2015, the so FS is burning out vegetation.

Other:

Ms. Lott reported YSS and the T-Stan IRWM jointly applied to be considered for a two-day climate change workshop sponsored through a federal grant awarded to EcoAdapt and University of Virginia. It is a national competition. UC Merced and UC Davis Extension agreed to be sponsors of the application. Tuolumne Band of Me-Wuk Indians offered to provide the venue for the event if awarded. Awards should be announced at the end of October.

Next YSS General Meeting:

The next regularly scheduled YSS General Membership meeting will be Friday, November 15th.

MEETING ATTENDANCE

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	
Steve Brink	CA Forestry Association	
Walt Kruse	Central Sierra Audubon Society	Present
Linda Millspaugh	CSAS/Alternate	
John Buckley	Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center	Present
	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	Present
Karl Dambacher	DC/Alternate	Present
Dwight Follien	Groveland Trail Heads	

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

Dusty Vaughn	GTH/Alternate	
Michael Damaso	Merced Dirt Riders/ Stanislaus Trail Bike Association/4x4 in Motion	
Dave Evans	Natural Resources Conservation Service	
Alisha Lomeli	Pacific Gas & Electric	
Rick Carter	Pacific Ultra Power Chinese Station	Present
Dennis Serpa	PUPCS/Alternate	
Stuart Crook	Permittee/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	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
Keith Martin	Sierra Club – Tuolumne Group	
Kevin Rice	SCTG/Alternate	Present
John Amodio	Tuolumne River Trust	
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	
Randi Jorgensen	SNC/Alternate	
Allen Johnson	South West Inter Face Team	Present
David Evans	USDA	
Jason Kuiken	USFS Stanislaus NF	Present
Michael Jow	USFS/Alternate	Present
Sarah LaPlante	USFS/Alternate	Present

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

Marty Gmelin	USFS/Alternate	Present
Maria Benech	USFS/Alternate	

COLLABORATIVE STAFF

Carolyn Lott	Carlton Consulting	Present
--------------	--------------------	---------

OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

Name	Organization
Randy Hanvelt	Consultant ACL
Kyle Rodgers	Sierra Institute
Tracy Hruska	SI
Liz Peterson	Tuolumne County
Lisa Evans	"
Liz Bransen	TRT
Marcus Long	TRT
Todd Newburgh	USFS
Beth Martinez	USFS