



**Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions
Collaborative General Membership
Meeting Summary
September 17, 2021
Video Conference**

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:

(The following were brought up as possible options for field trips if the pandemic situation improves sufficiently and field trip opportunities end up being timely.)

1. Invite media to visit some project sites for purpose of raising public awareness about projects that have been funded by SNC & WCB projects and perhaps visit a MSA project site.
2. Schedule a YSS field trip to see Cedar Ridge area prior to see status prior to all the treatments.
3. Consider if there is sufficient interest for organizing a YSS field trip to see the SNC and WCB project sites when timing is positive.

MEETING GOALS:

- Share project and funding updates
- Accept a new member
- Receive USFS updates

SUMMARY:

Meeting Opening, Welcome, Pledge and Introductions:

Chair Brian Wayland opened the Zoom video meeting and roll was taken.

Consideration of New Member:

Ms. Carolyn Lott shared that Left Coast Land Clearing had submitted a new member form and qualified to be considered for membership.

Agreement: There was agreement to accept Left Coast Land Clearing as a new member.

Project Update:

Mr. Byron Krempf reported on ongoing projects. Some highlights include that they will begin the largest replantation in the Rim in 2023. The average survival rate in the few areas sampled is around 50% because of the drought. They will visit the Granite Reforestation project soon and are hoping for a 70% survival as it is at a higher elevation.

The Complex Thin is ongoing within the footprint of the Rim Fire. Handlines are ongoing for the Strawberry Burn landscape. There will be about 1,000 acres ready to burn. The Cedar Ridge Project started today with fuel reduction and fuelbreaks and integrates well with the SERAL project. The Cold Springs Project is essentially like Cedar Ridge and also integrates well with planned SERAL treatments.

For more specific information, one can visit the Tuolumne River Trust website and use the interactive map. There is also information available in spreadsheet form here:

<https://yosemitestanislausolutions.com/meetings-events/collaborative-documents/>

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Ms. Liz Peterson shared the county ended up rejecting bids on the Granite Thin timber sale due initially to an appeal and then for reasons tied to excessively high bids and the short time frame for completing the work. The LT suggested holding on reoffering the Granite Thin treatments and using the funds to do additional prep work in the Rim footprint.

Ms. Peterson said funding has been granted from the FS for Cold Springs. Mr. Patrick Koepele will arrange a field trip for local folks to the Cedar Ridge project.

Surveys are ongoing in the SERAL area. Some fire management funds are secured, and implementation will begin when the FS environmental processes are completed. Funding has been tentatively awarded for common stand exam surveys for pods 1-3. Integrated Management will be on retainer to do this work. The wildlife surveys will be done by the Institute for Bird Populations. SERAL implementation projects should be ready to go in early spring if a NEPA decision is signed.

Potential Funding:

Mr. Koepele noted YSS has been successful in attracting approximately \$31 million (M). There is approximately \$26M in active grants. \$5M was received from Cal FIRE. In the spring, the state approved \$500M for forest and fire health and that is the source of the \$5M.

SNC has invited YSS to submit a proposal for capacity building and the proposal may include funding for facilitation, partner development, outreach and public education, assistance with managing GIS information, support for grant writing, project development and administration, and workforce development in coordination with Columbia College. It was suggested funding should also be added for hiring of a project consultant.

The State approved about \$1 billion in their budget process and state agencies are working on how to get this distributed. YSS submitted a proposal that identifies \$100M in Rim work and \$100M in SERAL work. This represents work that is either ready to go or could shortly be ready. The process in the past has been to apply to multiple agencies and compete against other areas of the state with the same problems. YSS is encouraging the block grant approach which is much more efficient. Mr. Patrick Wright and others are considering this at the state level.

Mr. Steve Brink said there is supposed to be \$5.6B in the next few years in the FS budget above the current budget level through the infrastructure bill. A lot of positive discussion to double the FS budget in appropriations has taken place. Mr. Brink thinks the FS would want to talk to the county and other partners about what projects they would be willing and ready to take on and submit this to the RO.

Supervisor Jason Kuiken said we are better positioned than most forests across the nation as the infrastructure bill requires modeling efforts and we have ForSys. The money is not for doubling or tripling staff. Most of the funds are discretionary for stewardship agreements and contracting.

Mr. Brink spoke with the new Regional Forester about a strategic plan for workforce development. He thinks there is the potential for \$200M per year coming to Region 5.

American Forest Foundation Presentation:

Mr. Chantz Joyce stated the AFF project will be focused on private lands located within the Martinez Fireshed. About half the acreage is oak woodland and half is conifer. The Foundation received a Cal FIRE grant for \$5M and AFF hopes to leverage these funds.

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The project will start by aiming to treat 5,000 acres. The grant is for outreach and actual treatment. They will hire a local coordinator, initiate a working group, and identify sparkplugs (local landowners who are enthusiastic early adopters). They will get work done through outside foresters who are working in the area and contracted foresters from local firms. If interested, there is some information at: <https://www.mysierawoods.org/>

ForSys Update:

Ms. Katie Wilkinson said ForSys is a scenario planning tool which processes a suite of landscape condition metrics and enables the user to identify priority objectives, set acreage targets, and apply specific thresholds and constraints to inform treatment area selection across a landscape. Several landscape condition metrics have been developed by experts. ForSys has updated acreage targets based on the Natural Range of Variation.

The next steps include selecting treatment areas for each alternative by the end of September. The team will complete the DEIS analysis by the end of October. They will then move into the 45-day Opportunity to Comment period and host virtual public meetings in early December. Late January they will go through comments and develop the Final EIS. They will also find out if the Emergency Situation Declaration (ESD) has been granted. If so, the ESD ROD could be signed in late February and in mid-May, the ROD for the remainder of the SERAL project area should be signed.

Other USFS Updates:

Supervisor Kuiken asked for a "Moment of Silence" for Allen Johnson. He said on the 26th a FS plane will bring Mr. Johnson's remains from Bakersfield to the Columbia Airport. There will be a procession and then a memorial. Cards can be sent to the Forest Supervisor's office and will be delivered to Allen's wife.

Kuiken 2021 Fire Year –

Supervisor Kuiken said 2021 has been another significant fire year. About 32% of FS land in the Sierras, at the SERAL elevation band, have burned in the last ten years. It is the severity of the burns that makes this so significant. The FS had to close the Stanislaus National Forest for two weeks because there were no resources to address fire or get people out in case of fire. They have just opened the forest but still have fire restrictions which will be unpopular with deer season opening. There are also proposed fee increases at campgrounds. A press release will be out on Monday.

Funding Summary –

Mr. Michael Jow said the Black Springs contract on about 1,000 acres went to SPI. Two more stewardship timber sales will close next week. There should be at about 43M board feet for the fiscal year if those two sales sell.

Fuels treatment has been accomplished on about 18,000 acres. As a zone, over 50,000 acres have been accomplished. One of the projects to get out contains the HUD fuelbreaks. They will probably be advertising the federal piece in this calendar year. They have some fuel reduction work going on in the Rim, under HUD, on about 1,200 acres. For the next fiscal year, they are looking at about 18,000 acres of treatment and about 43M board feet in sales.

Rock Creek, Prather-Medusa, and SERAL will be the three main vegetation management projects coming up next year. They have a \$1.4M SNC grant for plantation thinning on 600-700 acres in the '87 Complex and 120 corridor and hopefully will be removing some of the biomass.

Vice-Chair John Buckley asked, understanding the amount of salvage coming from fires will likely overwhelm the capacity of mills, how does the FS see dealing with the glut of competing

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wood. Mr. Jow said as far as the green program, they recognize they must proactively prepare but also are aware of the balance with salvage. They will continue to monitor other forests.

Great American Outdoors Act –

Supervisor Kuiken said some of the projects were delayed because of lack of workers. Cherry Lake has some work going on. The Amphitheater and Rainbow Pools work will begin next year. Work has been ongoing in Calaveras with new picnic tables and bear boxes. They are aiming for some bigger packages in 2023 and beyond.

Other:

VC Buckley acknowledged the work of Mr. John Amodio in raising awareness of YSS in Sacramento and through his contact with state leaders. He also recognized Mr. Michael Pickard and his partnership with YSS.

Mr. Randy Hanvelt announced the TuCARE Summit and Tour. The theme is “Making our Communities Safe.”

Next YSS General Meeting:

The next regularly scheduled YSS General Membership meeting will be Friday, November 17, 2021.

MEETING ATTENDANCE

Members

Name	Organization	Attendance
Jerry Jensen	American Forest Resource Council	Present
Jerry Fouts	American Motorcyclist Association, District 36	
Dave Pickett	AMA36/Alternate	
Randy Hanvelt	Associated California Loggers	Present
Jeff Redoutey	Blue Mountain Minerals	
Steve Brink	CA Forestry Association	Present
Walt Kruse	Central Sierra Audubon Society	
Linda Millspaugh	CSAS/Alternate	
John Buckley	Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center	Present
Catilyn Rich	CSERC/Alternate	
Stephanie Suess	Chicken Ranch Rancheria of MeWuk Indians	
Chris Trott	CT Bioenergy Consulting	Present
Jody Trott	CTBC/Alternate	
James Maddox	Fish and Game Preservation Committee	
Scott Gelfand	Friends of Berkeley Tuolumne Camp	
Phil Coffin	FBTC/Alternate	
Dwight Follien	Groveland Trail Heads	Present
Dusty Vaughn	GTH/Alternate	
Ethan Billigmeier	Hetch Hetchy Water and Power	
Michael Esposito	HHWP/Alternate	
Glenn Gottschall	Highway 108 Fire Safe Council	Present
Karen Caldwell	H108FSC/Alternate	
Jim Dambacher	Dambacher Construction/Landowner	

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Karl Dambacher	DC/Alternate	
Jeb Brooks	Left Coast Land Clearing	Present
Sasha Farkas	LCLC/Alternate	
Michael Beckman	Friends of Pinecrest	
Douglas Wiele	FOP/Alternate	
Dave Holland	FOP/Alternate	
Mike Damaso	Merced Dirt Riders/Stanislaus Trail Bike Association, 4x4 in Motion	
Jim Phelan	Mule Deer Foundation	
Dave Evans	Natural Resources Conservation Service	
Matthew Waverly	Pacific Gas & Electric	
Rick Carter	Pacific Ultra Power Chinese Station	
Dennis Serpa	PUPCS/Alternate	Present
Rees Warne	Sierra Outdoor School – Clovis Unified School District	Present
Brandy Lively	SOS – CUSD/Alternate	
Brian Wayland	Sierra Pacific Industries	Present
Hannah Grabowski	SPI Alternate	
Diana Beasley	Tuolumne Band Me-Wuk Tribal Council	
Eric Juncker	TBM-WTC/Alternate	
David Goldemberg	Tuolumne County	Present
Kathleen Haff	TC/Alternate	
Mike Albrecht	Tuolumne County Alliance for Resources & Environment	
Vicki Albrecht	TuCARE/Alternate	
Lindsay Mattos	Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District	
Patrick Koepele	Tuolumne River Trust	Present
John Amodio	TRT/Alternate	Present
Byron Krempf	TRT/Alternate	Present

LIASON MEMBERS

Bill Haigh	Bureau of Land Management	
Mark Abraham	CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	
Nathan Graveline	CDFW/Alternate	
Joe Meyer	NPS, Yosemite National Park	
Rob Grasso	NPSYNP/Alternate	
Michael Pickard	Sierra Nevada Conservancy	Present
Jason Kuiken	USFS Stanislaus NF	Present
Beth Martinez	USFS/Alternate	
Michael Jow	USFS/Alternate	Present
Jim Junette	USFS/Alternate	
Sarah LaPlante	USFS/Alternate	
Ray Cablayan	USFS/Alternate	Present

PARTICIPANTS

Keith Martin	Tuolumne Group Sierra Club	Present
Kevin Rice	TGSC	Present

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COLLABORATIVE STAFF

Carolyn Lott	Carlton Consulting	Present
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OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

Name	Organization
Liz Peterson	Tuolumne County
Chantz Joyce	National Forest Foundation
Katie Wilkinson	USFS