



**Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions
Collaborative General Membership
Meeting Summary
January 20, 2023
Forest Supervisor's Conference Rooms**

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:

(The following were brought up as possible options for field trips.)

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. Consider if there is sufficient interest for organizing a YSS field trip to see the SNC and WCB project sites.

MEETING GOALS:

- Update on funding and project status
- Hear presentations on other forest-related activities
- USFS updates

SUMMARY:

Meeting Opening, Welcome and Introductions:

YSS Vice-Chair John Buckley opened the meeting, welcomed those attending, and introduced the new chair, Ms. Liz Peterson. Ms. Carolyn Lott thanked Mr. Buckley for his leadership and presented him with a gift of appreciation. Chair Peterson conducted introductions.

Project Updates:

Mr. Byron Kremple, TRT, offered project updates from TRT and the county on behalf of YSS.

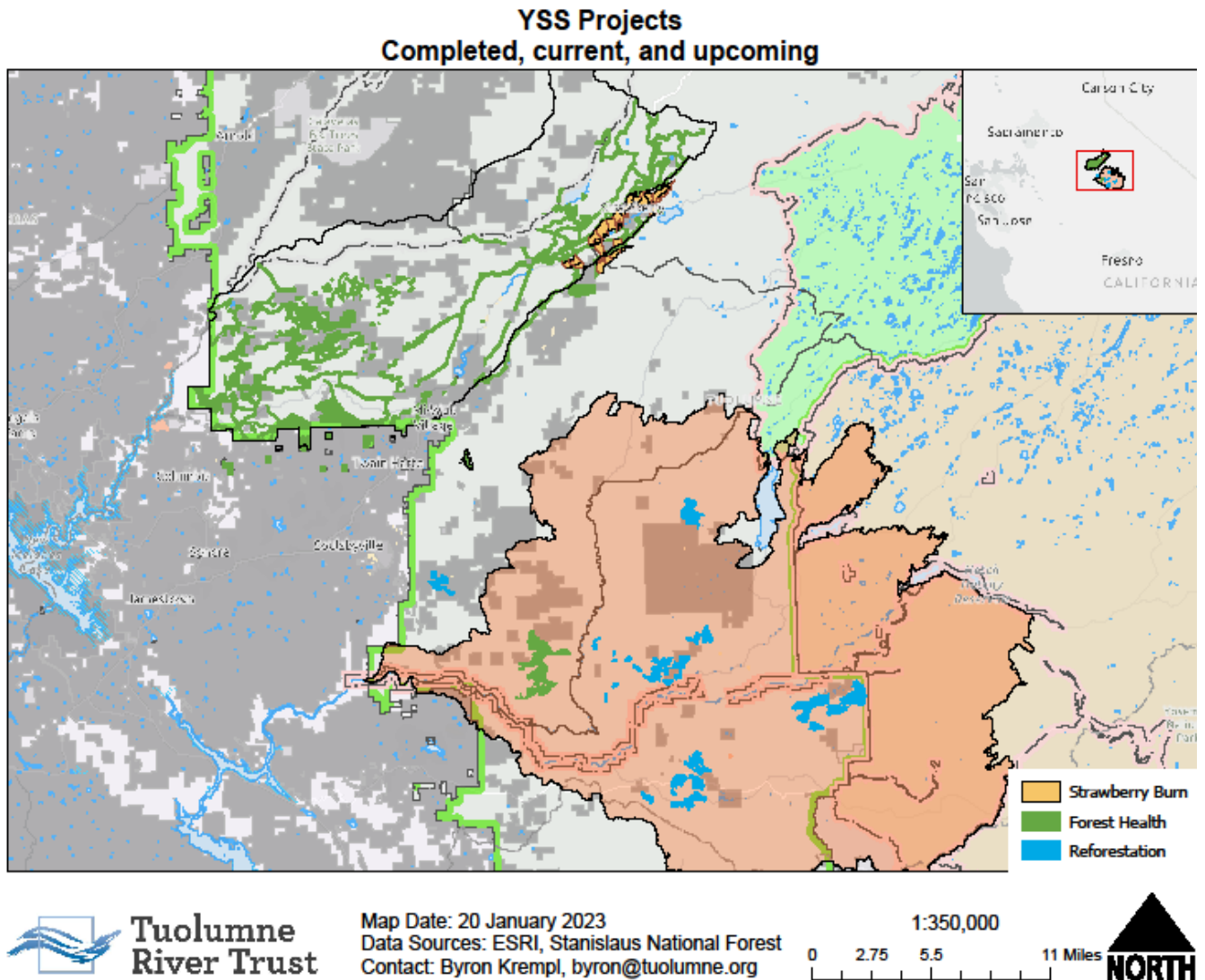
Rim Fire Footprint: Mr. Kremple said 300,000 trees have been planted in Rim, which was California's first megafire. TRT will be planting 630,000 trees this year on about 2,300 acres. The Groveland District will also be planting trees. Funding comes from federal and state dollars. The goal is to get funded for a million trees per year. There is approximately \$100M of projects remaining in Rim. YSS is attempting to get funding help from SNC, and others, to implement projects before the NEPA is stale.

SERAL Landscape: Last year 435 acres were treated with prescribed fire, after handline work, near Strawberry. Fuel reduction/fuelbreaks have been completed around Cedar Ridge. The matrix of fuelbreaks helps create opportunities to contain fire. After fuelbreaks are completed, interior treatments will begin. About 3,000 more acres are out for contract this year. There will be about 11,000 acres of fuelbreaks in SERAL 1.0 by the end of implementation. 5,000 acres of fuel reduction will be done in the western area soon. The county is starting to contact local landowners to see how fuelbreaks can be continued onto private lands. The fuelbreaks stop where private land begins. By 2024, all the county managed projects will be under contract.

Most of the piles left will be burned. The FS is working with the county and TRT to understand the status of the piles and move the information to the FS burn database. Supervisor Jason Kuiken said the FS is excited for new biomass plants to come online.

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

Chair Peterson added that the county's State grant dollars have been allocated and Federal dollars are about gone.



2020-2022 Accomplishments:

Ms. Lott thanked Mr. Kreml for his contributions to the report. She noted the purpose is to memorialize the major accomplishments of YSS and encouraged members to share the information with their constituents.

Updates on Funding Opportunities:

Mr. Patrick Koepele said they are considering submitting a \$5M application to Cal FIRE. They are exploring ideas to include more reforestation around Greeley Hill, but this would require an implementation partner as the area is outside Tuolumne County although within the YSS landscape. There are still about 12,000 acres that need reforestation.

There is also a Cal FIRE workforce development grant that the county is working on. This would build on what Columbia College is doing to help operators teach new people how to operate equipment. Ms. Julia Stephens, TRT, suggested contacting the Operating Engineers Union. In conversation with them, they told her they can work with non-union partners.

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

Chair Peterson said the county has a SERAL fuelbreak grant and they are exploring if it can be used on private land. The most time-consuming issue is getting permission from each landowner.

Ms. Stephens is looking into WCB and DFW funding for meadow restoration.

2023 Goals:

Mr. Buckley explained the current goals build on previous goals and objectives. These are overarching goals as YSS does not have authority over what happens on FS land.

Mr. Randy Hanvelt said the goals are just qualitative. Nothing quantitative is included.

Mr. Walt Kruse stated he appreciated the articulation of the goals as it helps him communicate the focus of YSS within his membership. He requested that “and increase forest ecosystem resiliency” be added to Goal 2.

Ms. Lot said she will take the comments back to the Leadership Team for consideration.

Presentation from Tuolumne County Fire Safe Council:

Mr. Glenn Gottschall and Mr. Michael Olencheck provided the presentation. The council started in 2003 with projects to improve fire safety in county along roads and within residential communities. Funding is limited to private lands. To work on private land a Right of Entry is required to be signed by the landowner. To create an effective fuelbreak, there needs to be 70-75% of landowners in agreement. All work, under each grant, must be completed within 3 years. Costs have increased from \$500 per acre in 2004 (had CDF crews) where mastication alone costs about \$2,500 per acre.

They are required to develop a Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). This process is already underway, and they are engaged in final negotiations with successful bidder to develop the plan. Public meetings will be held.

They are starting maintenance work on shaded fuelbreaks in Big Hill. Fuelbreaks can also provide egress such as from Cedar Ridge to Sierra Outdoor School and on. They intent to write a grant to connect the Sierra/Twain Harte mobile home park to Bellevue Elementary School and up to Big Hill. They are also looking for people to be paid project managers for fuelbreak projects.

USFS Updates:

Supervisor Kuiken said SERAL has a few timber sales going out with biomass components. The FS uses fuelbreaks as boundaries for broadcast burning. They are working with the FS Stewardship Branch to help with capacity. They have also begun discussions about the next large landscape area.

Mr. Jow and Mr. Brian McCrory reported. The Stanislaus Landscape is one of ten across the west of the nation that received federal Community Reinvestment Funds. The Stanislaus Landscape is over 300,000 acres with over half of the area covered within SERAL decision.

There is \$7M in fuelbreaks in SERAL, as well as surveys and prep work. The Integrated Resource Service Contract (IRSC) is used for work to be done on the ground and commercial timber harvests. Some work is under contract now and some is out for bids (in POD 2). IRSC work includes standing timber removal, biomass removal, road reconstruction and maintenance, mechanical thinning, and mastication. They are working on an updated funding request.

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

They are developing a big project which includes project prep and planning in PODs 6, 8, 10, and 11. It is a design and build called G-Z. This is a new tool and only one other forest is using it. (A-F is NEPA...G-Z is design and implement) There will be 10,000-12,000 acres under contract in 2023. G-Z will be in addition to those acres.

They are relying on the county to contract and oversee the western half of SERAL where there are more fuel treatments and less product removal.

Supervisor Kuiken said the district has hired people to include a new engineer, a number of vegetation management staff, fuels staff, public affairs personnel. Mr. Jim Juneau will be the acting district supervisor for the Mi Wok/Summit District

He added if people notice road issues on FS land, please inform the FS. He also said they are preparing the hazard tree NEPA for predominately Red Fir removal over the Sonora Pass. The ROD will be for the full forest, but the hazard trees are mostly 6,000 feet and above.

Sacramento Update:

Mr. Koepele noted Mr. John Amodio works for TRT and is the YSS Sacramento liaison. Mr. Koepele reported on his behalf.

He said what were budget surpluses during the last few years are now deficits. However, the Governor is not proposing paring back forest funds. Funding has been inadequate to treat 1M acres per year which is the state goal. 2.3M treated acres per year is recommended by the Air Board but there are not enough funds to achieve either goal.

A Google modeling tool, called PlanScape has been released. This tool can produce appropriate implementation plans and measure results.

There is broad state interest in forest health. There is a possibility the administration will support a climate bond. Key state leaders overseeing state funding are clear that it is not enough to use funds just to reduce fire risk. Projects must be multi-benefit.

Cooperative Landscape Stewardship:

Mr. Steve Amador said Columbia College is applying for a bachelor's degree in science program. The program will provide students with a thorough understanding of the principles and practices of sustainable land management, with a focus on cooperative and community-based approaches.

The advantages CC has is an excellent faculty, 240 acres on campus for applied learning, a great labor market need, and student interest. One of the qualifications is that the degree cannot be one offered by a state college or university.

Mr. Amador asked anyone with input to send comments to either Mr. Thomas Hofstra at thomashofstra1@gmail.com or Steve Amador at amadors@yosemite.edu. He also asked for a letter of support.

A comment was made that there isn't any coursework listed regarding Environmental Justice.

Mr. Amador said the presidents of CSUS, UC Merced, and CC are in conversation about whether this program would compete with something offered at another campus. He will provide a digital version of his handout to Ms. Lott for distribution.

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

Ms. Sherri Brennan noted Yosemite Clean Energy will have openings for about 75 staff members and hope CC can provide coursework that will build the skills such as operating high-tech equipment and truck driving competency for forest roads.

Forestry Challenge:

Ms. Diane Dealy Neil asked for input from YSS on projects that could be used for the championship round of Forestry Challenge.

As background, she said there were five events held across the state and the championship will be held in Tuolumne County. 427 high school students participated in the events that connect classroom math and science to the real world, connect coursework to careers, and explore recreation opportunities in the forest. She noted many of the students are from urban areas and have never been to a forest. Each event has a focus topic for which students collect data and arrive at conclusions. She had 117 students participate in the fall and 30 are coming to the championship at Camp Sylvester, April 20-22. She needs a project that is happening in real time, with data available, but for which the outcome is not determined yet. Summerville and Bret Harte schools will be in the competition.

Golden State Resources:

Mr. Chris Trott shared GSR is a non-profit company and a subsidiary of the regional Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC). RCRC was given the charge of finding a business that would help reduce fires and provide jobs. GSR's goal is to help replace coal across the globe. They are planning to build a large export pellet facility at J59/108. They are in the EIR process currently. They will use biomass thinnings from the forest. The product will go to the Port of Richmond or Stockton. They will employ about 50 people and haul about 80 truckloads per day. They have a 20-year MSA with Region 5 so they will work with forests other than the Stanislaus. Workforce and workforce housing issues are challenges.

Final Comments and Next YSS General Meeting:

Ms. Stephens asked for volunteers to serve as a resource to the Americorps folks.

Ms. Brennan said she is working with Sierra Clean Energy who received a \$1M grant split with \$500,000 for the Tuolumne location and the remainder for a location further north. The application was the highest-ranking application in the state. The project is carbon negative and produces hydrogen.

The NEPA/CEQA has just been completed for the Tuolumne Biomass project. This is the project funded through HUD and is located on Byrnes O'Ferry Road.

The next regularly scheduled YSS General Membership meeting will be Friday, March 17, 2023.

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	
Mike Albrecht	Associated California Loggers	
Vicki Albrecht	ACL	
John Sulkowski	Blue Mountain Minerals	Present
Lauren Mitchell	BMM/Alternate	

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

Steve Brink	CA Forestry Association	
Walt Kruse	Central Sierra Audubon Society	Present
Linda Millsbaugh	CSAS/Alternate	
John Buckley	Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center	Present
Stan Dodson	CSERC/Alternate	
Joanna Prtillo-HSU	Chicken Ranch Rancheria of MeWuk Indians	
Chris Trott	CT Bioenergy Consulting	Present
Jody Trott	CTBC/Alternate	
Jim Dambacher	Dambacher Construction/Landowner	
Karl Dambacher	DC/Alternate	
James Maddox	Fish and Game Preservation Commission	Present
Scott Gelfand	Friends of Berkeley Tuolumne Camp	
Phil Coffin	FBTC/Alternate	
Gary Donnell	Friends of Pinecrest	Present
Douglas Wiele	FP/Alternate	
Dave Holland	FP/Alternate	
Greg Norton	Golden State Natural Resources	
Kevin Cann	GSNR/Alternate	
Dwight Follien	Groveland Trail Heads	
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	
Jeb Brooks	Left Coast Land Clearing	
Sasha Farkas	LCLC/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	Present
Rick Carter	Pacific Ultra Power Chinese Station	
Dennis Serpa	PUPCS/Alternate	
Rees Warne	Sierra Outdoor School – Clovis Unified School District	Present
Brandy Lively	SOS – CUSD/Alternate	
Brian Wayland	Sierra Pacific Industries	
Hannah Grabowski	SPI Alternate	Present
Diana Beasley	Tuolumne Band Me-Wuk Tribal Council	
Erik Juncker	TBM-WTC/Alternate	
Etienne Patenaude	Tuolumne BioEnergy	
David Goldemberg	Tuolumne County	
Jaron Brandon	TC/Alternate	
Randy Hanvelt	Tuolumne County Alliance for Resources & Environment	Present
Shaun Crook	Tuolumne County Farm Bureau	Present
Lindsay Mattos	Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District	

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

Patrick Koepele	Tuolumne River Trust	Present
John Amodio	TRT/Alternate	
Byron Krempf	TRT/Alternate	Present
Kristina Rylands	Upper Merced River Watershed Council	Present
	UMRWC/Alternate	

LIASON MEMBERS

Jerry Martinez	Bureau of Land Management	
Jason Schroeder	BLM/Alternate	
Mark Abraham	CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	
Nathan Graveline	CDFW/Alternate	
Greg Gerstenberg	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	
	USFS/Alternate	
Ray Cablayan	USFS/Alternate	

PARTICIPANTS

Keith Martin	Tuolumne Group Sierra Club	
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COLLABORATIVE STAFF

Carolyn Lott	Carlson Consulting	Present
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OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES

Name	Organization
Liz Peterson	Tuolumne County
Carinna Roberson	USFS
Brian McCrory	USFS
Katie Wilkinson	USFS
Cailey Bauer	Americorps
Catie Henry	Americorps
Sean Hembree	Tuolumne County
JT McElrath	Americorps
Julia Stephens	TRT
Kathry Allenbern	Americorps
Hannah Blakely	"
Ellie Boye	"
Will Ergustolo	"
Caleb Johnson	"

Summary: Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions General Meeting

April McBride	“
Caroline Nersen	“
Samuel Jackson	“
Diane Dealey Neill	Forestry Challenge