



**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.
3. Consider incorporating Granite Thin and fuelbreaks into a tour in 2023

**MEETING GOALS:**

- Update on funding and project status
- Hear presentation on Golden State Natural Resources Activities
- USFS updates

**SUMMARY:**

**Meeting Opening, Welcome and Introductions:**

Chair Liz Peterson opened the meeting and introductions were made. She announced that John Buckley will serve as vice-chair.

**Project Updates:**

Mr. Ben Campbell reported on behalf of Tuolumne River Trust (TRT). TRT is subcontracted with the County and handles much of the contract management and some of the implementation of the contracts through the Master Stewardship Agreement. Julia Stephens is now the Forest and Meadow Health and Restoration Manager.

For Rim Fire restorations, there are 620,000 seedlings to get into the ground in the Rim footprint.

There will be 20,000 acres of botany surveys this spring in SERAL 1.0. This includes TRT and USFS projects in the western portion. Additional work includes unit delineation for fuelbreaks and overseeing a roads contract. They will be implementing treatment inside of archeological sites in cooperation with the FS. Piles will be moved outside of arch sites to prevent impacts from burning.

This spring they will be working around and potentially on private property. The County received a Cal FIRE grant to address fuelbreaks but also private property that intersects fuelbreaks. They must address both the federal and state prescriptions.

They are looking to contract SERAL 1.0 Phase 3 with the bulk of that work happening in 2024 (in the western area). Contracts for fuels reduction and fuelbreaks will be issued.

Phase One PODS 1-5 fuelbreaks will be done by the end of this year (through the SNC grant). They will wrap up Cedar Ridge by the end of spring.

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Mr. Campbell reported there is a contract for Cold Springs fuels reduction on approximately 700 acres. There is also a contract for Phase 2 work on 1,000 acres of fuelbreaks above Pinecrest. This is one of highest elevation sites so work will extend to the end of next year because of weather implications.

Mr. Michael Pickard mentioned the Intertribal Workforce Initiative. Through this initiative Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) is working with Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions (CHIPS) and Sierra Institute on an intertribal workforce program initiative. They will have 8-9 new tribal work crews. Arch sites are the perfect niche for tribal work crews.

Chair Peterson noted the county has a strong interest in utilizing local tribes and the local tribes are not part of the CHIPS efforts. They would like to utilize tribal hand crews for prescribed burning in SERAL 1.0.

Ms. Stephens said TRT is utilizing individuals from the National Civilian Community Corps. They will be working on trails and on a variety of other projects from April through August. The FS also plans to use the corps to augment burn crews and for firefighting.

TRT has applied for a California Climate Investment (CCI) grant for reforestation in the Rim Fire footprint. In addition, they applied for a meadow and reforestation grant in the Mi-Wok District. A Workforce Development grant will be applied for at the end of this month for heavy equipment training in conjunction with Motherlode Job Training, CA Loggers Association, and Columbia College. The county wants to expand on what is being done in field internship work and pay operators to operate equipment while teaching trainees, so the trainees get on-the-ground experience. There will be specific case managers from Columbia College who will identify support services such as housing.

TRT has hired five new staff members, three seasonal and two permanent. 251 West Jackson is the address for TRT's new office. TRT now has 13 staff members plus AmeriCorps volunteers.

Vice-Chair Buckley noted there is still an enormous amount of reforestation and restoration work to do in the Rim Fire footprint. YSS needs to identify funding for this area. A lot of it is just brush and non-native grasses where there used to be productive forest. The work needs to be done before the NEPA gets stale. The FS has met with NFF representatives regarding reforestation.

Mr. Mike Albrecht requested at the next meeting the FS share their plan for maintaining fuelbreaks. Supervisor Kuiken said they are developing a contract for maintenance on Cedar Ridge. Part of the Stanislaus Landscape plan is to demonstrate not only what it takes to get a large landscape to sustainable condition, but what the costs are to sustain this condition.

### **Forestry Challenge:**

Ms. Diane Dealey Neill said her goal for today's presentation is to get volunteers to sign up. She started this program 20 years ago. It is a four-day intensive forestry experience with a competition as the final event. They hold regional events all over CA. The goal of the program is to get young people out in the forest who wouldn't ordinarily have this experience. The final event is April 20-22 at Camp Sylvester. More information is available at:

[www.forestrychallenge.org](http://www.forestrychallenge.org)

### **Golden State Natural Resources Presentation:**

Mr. Chris Trott is the consultant helping GSNR develop the feedstock for their plant. Without a plant like this, there is only mastication and pile burning to get rid of the feedstock. The GSNR

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project is very bold and risky but has the potential to make a real difference. The Rural County Representatives of CA (RCRC) is the financial arm.

GSNR was created as a non-profit public benefit organization to create sustainable businesses in CA, resilient forests, and reduce wildfire risk. Pellets are the way they hope to address these needs. They have an MSA with all of Region 5. The goal is to export a million metric tons per year to replace coal in large energy plants overseas.

Two facilities are planned, one in Lassen County and one in Tuolumne County. From the plant, the pellets will travel by rail to a port facility. The plant in Tuolumne County is called Keystone and is located at J59/H108. The land has been purchased.

In calculating feedstock, they extracted all the areas that are unreasonable, ecologically sensitive, etc. and found there are approximately 2M acres of land accessible in the TC facility area. They will produce up to 300,000 metric tons of pellets. The demand for these pellets is tremendous in other countries and every month the price continues to rise. July is the target for the financial close and it is all private financing. Construction is slated to begin at the end of 2023. They plan to begin receiving feedstock next year and begin production in 2025.

### **USFS Updates:**

Mr. Brian McCrory said the solicitations are out to blanket contractors for the Boundary and Spillway project on 2,000 acres around Spring Gap. The solicitation for the Tunnel Project, towards Crandall Creek, will go out this June for 1,400 acres. The Cedar Ridge fuelbreak maintenance solicitation will also go out this spring. There is a solicitation for Mountain Knight for service work on 3,000 acres.

The SERAL G-Z solicitation for along the highway and Beardsley Rd and northeast will be out May 1. The difference between standard solicitations and G-Z solicitations is in standard solicitations, all the design work is completed, and the solicitation is for implementation. G-Z solicitations include design/prep work in the solicitation. POD 2 is focus for this year. POD 1 and 3 are being prepared for 2024. 2025/6 solicitations will be around Strawberry into Leland Meadow and Herring Creek. The hazard tree logging project is in conjunction with Calaveras County.

As a result of the atmospheric river and snowpack they are seeing avalanches up higher. There is damage to some roads, and they don't know the extent yet. Mr. McCrory asked if people see road damage, they note the location and take a photo and submit this to the FS. He noted Los Padres Forest has had over \$100MM worth of damage. The Sequoia Forest has had significant damage. Dollars will be directed to these forests to rehabilitate them. There is some structural damage to upper elevation facilities.

There are drought killed trees at the upper elevation. True firs had heavy die off. Some of these trees pose hazards and there is some mortality at lower elevations. The Forest staff is working on an Environmental Analysis (EA) forestwide for maintenance on level 2-5 roads (1,000 miles), recreation sites, and facilities. Hazard trees will be removed within 300' on either side of roads. They will also be analyzing for fire killed trees.

SERAL 2.0 will get started when the FS gets the Mapping and Remote Sensing MARS data. There are 160,000 acres in SERAL 2.0 with 120,000 acres being FS lands. The FS will be working with the YSS Leadership Team on SERAL 2.0.

Supervisor Kuiken noted within SERAL there are areas that are prescribed fire only. There are also other areas where there is an underpinning of fire. The National Incident Management

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Organization (NIMO) will help with prescribed fire. The hope is to have a demonstration project so people across the country can see how it is done properly.

### **Sacramento Update:**

Ms. Carolyn Lott reported on behalf of John Amodio. Currently there is approximately \$600 million that should be available next budget year for a wide array of wildfire investments. Director Patrick Wright indicated during hearings this week that continual funding will be essential. He added allocations of these funds should be changed in two ways: regional grantees such as SNC should have larger amounts to re-grant and block grants should become increasingly utilized. Finally, Mr. Amodio is assisting with a committee to identify potential dedicated revenue streams.

### **Final Comments and Next YSS General Meeting:**

Mr. Pickard said SNC will open the submittal period for concept proposals for the next Fire Restoration and Forest Resiliency Grant.

The next regularly scheduled YSS General Membership meeting will be Friday, May 19, 2023.

## MEETING ATTENDANCE

### Members

Name	Organization	Attendance
Jerry Jensen	American Forest Resource Council	
Jerry Fouts	American Motorcyclist Association, District 36	
Dave Pickett	AMA36/Alternate	
Mike Albrecht	Associated California Loggers	Present
Vicki Albrecht	ACL	
John Sulkowski	Blue Mountain Minerals	
Lauren Mitchell	BMM/Alternate	
Steve Brink	CA Forestry Association	
Walt Kruse	Central Sierra Audubon Society	
Linda Millspaugh	CSAS/Alternate	
John Buckley	Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center	Present
Stan Dodson	CSERC/Alternate	Present
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	
Scott Gelfand	Friends of Berkeley Tuolumne Camp	
Phil Coffin	FBTC/Alternate	
Gary Donnell	Friends of Pinecrest	
Douglas Wiele	FP/Alternate	
Dave Holland	FP/Alternate	
Greg Norton	Golden State Natural Resources	
Kevin Cann	GSNR/Alternate	

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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	
Karen Caldwell	H108FSC/Alternate	
Jeb Brooks	Left Coast Land Clearing	Present
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	
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	Present
Robert Wells	TBM-WTC/Alternate	Present
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	
Lindsay Mattos	Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District	
Patrick Koepele	Tuolumne River Trust	
John Amodio	TRT/Alternate	
	TRT/Alternate	
Kristina Rylands	Upper Merced River Watershed Council	
	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

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Jim Junette	USFS/Alternate	Present
Brian McCrory	USFS/Alternate	Present
Ray Cablayan	USFS/Alternate	Present

### 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
Aaron James	USFS
Diane Dealey Neill	Forestry Challenge
Craig Case	CHIPS
Gary Whitson	Cal FIRE
Joseph Hernandez	USFS
Ben Campbell	TRT
Jami Wolf	TRT
Catie Henry	Tuolumne County
Jason Brooke	TRT
Julia Stephens	TRT
Chelsea Lowandowski	CSERC
Byron Krempl	Krempl Consulting
Beck Johnson	USFS