



**Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions
Collaborative General Membership
Meeting Summary
May 16, 2025
Forest Supervisor's Conference Rooms**

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:

- Prescribed Fire and Quarry Fire Field Trip
- Presentation by CHIPS

MEETING GOALS:

- Forestry Challenge Champions' Presentation
- BURNBOT Presentation
- Beaver Integration Group Update
- USFS Updates

SUMMARY:

Meeting Opening, Welcome and Introductions:

YSS Chair Liz Petersen welcomed those attending and led the group through introductions. Mr. John Buckley noted the importance of Ms. Carolyn Lott to the group and asked for prayers and support for her and her husband, Lonnie, by the very receptive YSS group.

2025 Forestry Challenge Champions' Project Presentation:

Ms. Diana Dealey Neill introduced the winning group of students for this year's Forestry Challenge and thanked those who participated and assisted. There were 109 students, 23 teachers, 28 teams, and 18 schools engaged in the Challenge.

The winning team from the Mariposa FFA consisted of four students. Collectively they described how they approached the challenge of identifying "what to do with everything but the sawlog." They explained how they divided up the project into work done onsite, offsite, and products produced from treatments.

They carefully detailed cost projections and then shared how they combined all their judgments and data information to produce a final plan for how to best treat the 44-acre plot. At the end of their presentation, they received enthusiastic praise from YSS. More information about Forestry Challenge is available here: [Forestry Challenge Website](#)

Projects Update:

Mr. Ben Campbell of TRT gave a detailed update on accomplishments. There was **Rim Reforestation** work, with 400,000 seedlings planted across roughly 1,800 acres. Work has transitioned into the release phase, with hand grubbing being done on units with no chemical treatment. TRT was able to take over some reforestation acres from the Forest Service when the agency faced some challenges and constraints.

Phase III work is being done in the SERAL project to include approximately 6,000 acres of fuel breaks and associated work such as along Italian Bar Road and in the American Camp area.

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SERAL 2.0 fuelbreaks will be worked on this summer up to perhaps 4,000 acres or so, in the vicinity of Tuolumne City, Mi-Wuk Village, and all the way up to Dodge Ridge. The priority focus is to treat areas close to or within Wildland-Urban Interfaces (WUIs).

Botanical surveys have started this spring, utilizing botanists and GIS staff. **Roadwork** should begin soon in SERAL, especially work to at least maintain road conditions affected by heavy equipment working in areas. **Archeological surveys** are also beginning shortly, along with **landline surveys** in SERAL 2.0 where TRT, the County, and the FS are defining roles and responsibilities to do proactive landline delineations before they are needed.

BEAVER REINTRODUCTION UPDATE

Ms. Lindsay Mattos shared briefly about how various interests are collectively brainstorming as to how and where beaver reintroduction may be appropriate.

BURNBOT PRESENTATION

The BURNBOT team collectively presented about the history of BURNBOT, their goals and mission, their strategic efforts to date, and how they are adapting to challenges. They have assembled scientists, engineers, foresters, and firefighters to aim to provide “halos of protection” – nested fuel breaks to protect communities and at-risk values.

BURNBOT has completed roughly 2,600 acres in the Eldorado Forest and is focused on beginning work on 11,000 acres in SERAL. Masticators and feller bunchers will be working this season.

BURNBOT features a new, impressive controlled-burning machine that can produce precise burning, with almost no smoke, and almost zero risk of fire spreading from the fireline. There will be a field demonstration of the equipment at Jordon Meadow on the Groveland District on Thursday, May 22nd. You can find the presentation here: [BURNBOT Presentation](#)

USFS Updates:

Mr. Brian McCrory gave the **Forest Service report**. The Region awarded the Regional Award, on behalf of YSS, to Chair Liz Peterson, Vice-Chair Patrick Koepele, Mr. Mike Albrecht, and Ms. Lott.

He reminded the group that Mr. Jason Kuiken is now acting Regional Forester and that Mr. Jim Junette is Acting Forest Supervisor. He shared that Stanislaus Forest staffing is roughly 70% for fire personnel. Active timber sale projects operating this season should include Lyons Creek, Bald Mountain, Trout Creek, Rock Creek, G to Z, and Horseman-Rushing.

The key NEPA planning focus for the year is to finalize the MAC Project for the Calaveras District of the Stanislaus Forest and Amador District of the Eldorado Forest.

Mr. McCrory shared that the USFS Chief came to the Tahoe Forest and visited the Yuba Project and the Eldorado Forest. The Forest Service is in the process of identifying critical positions that are needed for “active management” which includes timber production, fuel treatments, and firefighting.

He noted that the SPI Fuelbreaks Plan is moving forward to enable SPI to conduct surveys where needed and to move to implementation to create fuelbreak son USFS lands. There will be roughly 7,000 acres so treated on the Stanislaus Forest.

In response to a question as to whether the Forest still cannot hire seasonal employees except for fire positions, Mr. McCrory confirmed that and noted that for services at sites where there are

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no contractors, the goal will be to keep the sites open but with a lower level of services than normal.

Adjournment:

The meeting ended with Liz thanking everyone for attending.
(Attendance was not recorded.)

Next YSS Meeting: July 18, 2025