



**Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions
General Membership Collaborative Meeting
Meeting Summary
November 21, 2025**

MEETING GOALS

- **Projects Update**
- **Earth Force presentation**
- **Stanislaus Landscape change metrics report**
- **USFS Updates**

FOLLOW-UP ITEMS:

- Quarry and Peak Fires Field Trip
- Presentation by CHIPS

Meeting Opening, Welcome, and Introductions

YSS Chair Liz Peterson welcomed those attending and led the group through introductions. She shared that facilitator Carolyn Lott was with her husband who is dealing with medical issues and asked for thoughts and prayers for both. Chair Peterson announced that Mr. Patrick Koepele would be the YSS Chair for 2026 with Ms. Hannah Grabowski serving as Vice Chair.

Mr. Koepele presented Chair Peterson with a commemorative gift from the Leadership Team to thank her for her service and support for YSS over the past year. Members echoed their thanks for Chair Peterson's service.

Projects Update

Ms. Caitlin Henry (representing Tuolumne County) gave a detailed update about FS projects being planned or implemented by the County and Yosemite Rivers Alliance (YRA). Two projects near Jupiter are nearing completion with 3,000 acres of national forest lands treated along with 300 acres of private property and some adjacent parcels of SPI lands. Phase III Prop. 2 treatments are just starting for an additional 3,000 acres.

The Excelsior Fuelbreak project is close to being awarded and resource surveys are being done for the Westside Fuel Reduction project near Tuolumne City. For Rim Reforestation, 2 of 3 site prep contracts are in development. The County received a BLM grant for fuelbreak work on Wagner Ridge. For workforce development, CAL FIRE has awarded a grant for heavy equipment operator training with support from Heartwood Biomass.

Earth Force Presentation

Mr. Jeff Thomashaw of Earth Force led a presentation that showed the advantages and beneficial outcomes of utilizing the Earth Force technology system. A 600-pound magnet

connects the receiving device to the cab of any piece of heavy equipment to put LIDAR and computer power on any machine to apply data to analyze the surrounding stand. The system has high accuracy based on real time spatial recognition. All is based on hexagons and assessing what needs to be removed to meet thinning logging objectives.

Instead of needing to have individual trees marked, the system calibrates which stems need to be removed to meet precise leave-tree objectives. The Earth Force system can ensure better compliance with avoidance of riparian or other avoidance areas and can eliminate the need for expensive lot line surveys. The system displays the diameter of trees and develops a tree map before and after treatment of an area to reduce the need for post-treatment assessments to ensure compliance.

Stanislaus Landscape Risk Reduction Performance Metrics

Supervisor Jason Kuiken presented a report that showed rather than measuring acres treated, the Forest Service is now assigning analysis of Wildfire Risk Reduction, Avoided Losses, and Landscape Conditions that result from fuel reduction/prescribed fire treatments.

Jason used as an example the broadcast burning and fuel reduction mechanical treatments in 2023 around Pinecrest and Strawberry to show the risk from wildfire for that area is now less by 50%. His report detailed benefits from treatments for 15 local communities

USFS Update

Supervisor Kuiken explained that because of the complexities tied to the agency's budget the Forest will depend on the County, YSS, Great Basin Institute (GBI), YRA, and IBE to play key roles in the coming year. There have been some key retirements and more may continue to result in loss of agency staff with high levels of experience.

Nationally, reorganization for the agency and for the Department of Agriculture continues to unfold with changes at the Regional Office level and new hubs being established for the Dept. of Agriculture around the country.

The Forest expects to meet a timber target of close to 40 million board feet in this year. In the SERAL project, the G to Z Project may treat 14,000 acres to produce 12 MMBF, the Bumblebee and Marble Mountain Project(s) may treat 3,000+ acres and produce between them up to 20 MMBF, and the Punch Bowl Project and optional Rose Creek add-on area may produce up to 20 MMBF. In out-year planning, the MAC Project will treat a large area on the Calaveras Ranger District.

In Rim Reforestation, the County/YRA have done or will do surveys for 3,600 acres, with initial planting of up to 1,000 acres, plus 2-3,000 acres of release, and 1-2,000 acres of site prep.

Other

Mr. Jerry Fouts shared his views about camping and the need for campfire rings in dispersed camping areas. He believes that fuel reduction projects at times are not adequately restoring motorized off-road-vehicle trail routes that are affected by heavy equipment and logging operations.

Adjournment

Chair Peterson thanked those attending for their participation and wished everyone happy holidays.

Next Meeting

January 16, 2026