

YUBA-BEAR WATERSHED COUNCIL (YBWC)

June 30, 2011

9:30 am to 12:00 pm

MEETING MINUTES

Attendees: Don Harkin, Joanne Drummond, Lesa Osterholm, Jason Rainey, John Rappahan, Kathy VanZuuk, Chris White, Chris Gee, Sarah Phillips, Cecily Mui, Gary Reedy, Miriam Limov, Juleah Cordi, Steve Allen, Lisa Lackey, Erin Tarr, Tania Carlone, Darlene Moberg, Aeron Miller, Jane Fellen, and Jerry Bloom.

Welcome, Self-Introductions and Information Exchange

- Jason Rainey welcomed everyone and asked for self-introductions.

Update on California State Parks

No CSP representative was able to attend. Miriam Limov, River People Coordinator at SYRCL, provided an update regarding local response to the proposed closure of the South Yuba River State Park and Malakoff Diggins State Park. The Nevada County Supervisors sent a letter to State Parks urging that the Parks remain open and cited the importance of our State Parks to the local economy. SYRCL convened two stakeholder meetings, which included representatives from SYRPA, Malakoff Diggins Association, Sequoia Challenge, State Parks, Supervisors Weston and Owens, and others. One outcome is a coordinated petition/letter writing campaign to keep all State Parks open. Groups, including SYRCL, will be “on the river” this summer gathering signatures. Beyond the advocacy, groups are working to determine local capacities for supporting some level of management of the State Parks should closure occur. The State is open to supporting 20 of the 70 parks slated for closure to enter into community-based MOU’s while the Park units are in “caretaker” status. Limov urged YBWC members interested in supporting the effort to contact her at Miriam@syrc.org or 530 265-5961, ext 201. (Miriam will be out on vacation until Aug 2.)

With volunteers unable to act as law enforcement, there is a one year period to be loud and support state parks. Rainey urged the invite for agencies to build partnerships with State Parks to support.

Yuba River Watershed Assessment

Rainey introduced the topic and a presentation given by Gary Reedy, River Science Director and Sarah Phillips, Watershed Coordinator Specialist from SYRCL. Reedy presented on the 21st Century Assessment of the Yuba River Watershed, a document available at SYRCL and one copy was given to each organization on the council. The presentation overviewed restoration priorities and information management (www.yubashed.org), then summarized current efforts to facilitate the formation of Watershed Guilds, which are tributary-scale organizations of people concerned about local issues and resources. SYRCL is facilitating the formation of guilds for ten subwatersheds in the South Yuba basin by providing watershed descriptions (including GIS-generated attributes), guidance material and example watershed assessments. The pilot areas are Scotchman Creek, Texas Creek and Rush Creek. Sarah summarized progress with the Rush

Creek watershed: stakeholder interviews, stream flow monitoring, and the process for a citizen-engaged watershed assessment document. The plan is to provide a citizen's restoration fund for watershed guilds that develop their own restoration project plans. Also, watershed guild representatives would come to YBWC meetings in the future.

Stakeholder Updates:

- *Joanne Hild, Sierra Streams Institute:* The organization is retaining 'Friends of Deer Creek' as a local organization and SSI for regional purposes. Currently expanding their education program including a home school science program starting in August 2011. Also expanding training programs, creating protocols for other watershed groups. Expanding a public health program testing bacteria and heavy metal contaminants with the number of breast cancer cases in proximity to local abandoned mines. SSI is also adding algae monitoring to their water quality monitoring program. The organization is also performing gravel augmentation this summer in addition to planting riparian vegetation. Answering Olsterholm's question of how the gravels are obtained: The gravels come from Lake Wildwood dredging, additional gravel purchased locally, from local gravel. Van Zuuk asked about permitting and spread of aquatic invasives: Yes, all permitting complete with a total of about 10 permits over 2 years of time including state, federal, and local permitting. Aquatic invasives limited due to local gravels being used. S. Allen asked about the size of the gravels: She answered to check online on their website has exact measurements, but that it was carefully studied to be the ideal size for spawning.
- *Joanne Drummond, Fire Safe Council:* Has created 5 Fire-Wise Communities, finished up the Scotch Broom Challenge in April for the year, been planning community defensible fuel breaks in numerous areas including Deer Creek by Morgan Ranch neighborhood, Truckee River at Alder Creek but awaiting bird nesting season to close. Awarded 2010 Fire Wise Leadership Award (Federally) for their Fire-Wise Communities Program.
- *Steve Allen, Gold Country Fly Fishing:* GCFE has hundreds of members and is involved in on-going educational youth programs. They currently have 6 tanks in classrooms with the Trout in the Classroom Program. The GCFE has been supervising the Malakoff Fishing Derby. They ARE ready to manage Malakoff SP if needed. They clean Parks Bar each year for the September River Clean-Up.
- *Jerry Bloom, Forest Issues Group:* Monitoring TNF. Performing public forest project, but recently lost their major researcher and need to rehire for the position. OHV is their biggest concern, and wish to reduce OHV usage on TNF lands. Wishing to perform fuel reduction programs instead of allowing profit from older trees.
- *Chris Gee, Nevada County Land Trust:* Currently changing their name to 'Bear-Yuba Land Trust' to encompass more. Been up to a lot of trail building, including the Tribute Trail, and on Kenny Ranch properties which will have public access. They are finishing trails on Banner Mountain by end of this summer, 2011. Seeking more easements. Currently working on conservation easements on Deer Creek, South Yuba, and Black Swan properties. Also engaged in youth educational nature programs.

- *Erin Tarr, Placer County Land Trust:* Continued land preserving. As of December they have acquired 1700 acre property fee title. Working on getting an easement on 526 acres. Also seeking a fee title on 650 acres for an overall of 3,000 continual acres, connecting land along the Bear River. To view this plan, see www.bear-yubapartnership.org. Currently working on a vegetation management plan. Suggested by Osterholm to map while monitoring vegetation (when they do) to show locations of invasives such as purple loosestrife that's taking over.
- *Chris White, Balance Hydrologists:* Focused on meadows, ground water monitoring. Sharing the main controversy of farmers concerned for their water going to the meadows. Water budgets based by monitoring water gages. Involved in a restoration project with Trout Unlimited on Little Truckee River. Involved in a water quality monitoring plan measuring TMDLs for Middle Truckee River, installing turbidity and stream gages. Currently conducting storm-water research. The first year of data collected on pebble counts, with two more years to follow. Contracted to do work on Perazzo Meadows by Truckee River Watershed Council, using the plug and pond method of hydro-restoration. Models and methods are available for public viewing in geomorphology literature. Noted that plug and pond method could invite more aquatic invasives such as creating bullfrog breeding habitats.
- *Lisa Lackey, Wolf Creek Community Alliance:* Shared about the alliance being a network of communities, sharing water, using the inter-connectedness to progress. Applied for grants in the past, without luck yet due to being only volunteer-based. Now they are taking the approach of going 'back to their roots' and re-doing their business plan including their goals. Currently doing outreach for monitoring at the Thursday nights Grass Valley market.
- *Darlene Moberg, Nevada County Farm Bureau:* Suggested to contact her about a dam planned to be built on the Bear River. With a focus on having water, a subwatershed group is to monitor water as a part of agricultural regulations.
- *Juleah Cordi, SCRC:* Currently cleaning contaminated sites in Sutter and Yuba counties. Recent collaborations with IPC (Invasive Plant Council), mapping 300 plants. USDA providing money to conduct outreach with landowners/producers for water conservation. VanZuuk asked who to contact about Yuba County dumping fill on TNF land that contained Yellow Star Thistle- Juleah answered with Ag Commissioners Office.
- *Tania Carlone, YWI:* Focused on North San Juan Ridge- within 20 years, 200 community-based educational programs implemented. One including a field study curriculum at the Twin Ridge Schools developed for K-8. Teichert Foundation supporting new project on 'Inimim Forest (2,000 acres of BLM and private lands under "community based management plan"). Concerned for harmful waste/degradation due to poor economy that's increasing mining land use, especially the headwaters of Shady Creek with dislodging settled mercury. Partnering with Forest Service in a grant to protect old growth forest, remove Scotch Broom, and set up 10 remote cameras on the ridge to monitor wildlife. Published a book last year Nature of this Place that includes 20 years of landscape monitoring.

- *Tania Carlone, CABY*: On behalf of Katie Burdick. They have received a lot of grant money recently; a \$650K toward planning and \$3.1 mil toward implementation with Nevada City as the lead in the project. 16 projects overall including Washington, Alta Sierra, Colfax, Nevada City, and more. www.Cabyregion.org watershed by watershed basis to establish regional goals and objectives then begin to implement projects. Asked how the YBWC council can facilitate CABY meetings. Reedy asked about CABY convening the next YBWC meeting, followed by a response from Tania stating it as a good idea, to check with Katie Burdick.
- *Lesla Osterholm, NID*: She is still involved in meadow restoration with private landowners with a Central-Northern Sierra survey & outreach event. CA Rangeland Coalition & CA Cattlemen's-in a recent survey, 80% of owners are not doing restoration on their private lands because of permitting- not knowing who to go to, and which permits to obtain. Also conducting stream-line permitting project with limited staff and funding to make permitting easier, such as a creating a clearing house for permitting. Involved in a Bear River mercury removal pilot project, permitting complete- awaiting grants. PGE/NID filed final applications about FERC \$15 mil spent by NID completing 100's of studies. Amongst water conservation programs for schools. Working on fish passage at Auburn Ravine. Mentioned an Irrigation Lands Program to form an upper watershed group other than central valley.
- *John Rapphahn, BLM*: Been working on the south side of the Tribute Trail, still needing to put in stairs and railing, & install kiosks at trailheads- almost completed. Recently cleaned up on North Bloomfield Rd, Davis Mill- installed gutters and fixed roof. Still no ranger or botanist for BLM but is being filled. Continued work on creating fire-safe lands.
- *Kathy Van Zuuk, TNF*: Conducting environmental assessment along North Yuba River on 49 (restricted use area) to get parking stretch designated to keep miners out of sight of roadway. Dredging still under moratorium. Prioritization of watershed assessments to identify 2 major watersheds to assess. American River & _?_. An immediate attention to aquatics, especially the reduction of aquatic invasive species. Current grant with NPS (Native Plant Society), the local Red Bud Chapter, working on a butterfly garden with native plants at Bullards Bar vista point. TNF has been very busy, 3.5 months until the end of their fiscal year with priority projects but limited funding.
- *Gary Reedy, SYRCL*: Aspen regeneration project in late August with TNF will involve volunteers and Meadows Field Training. Lower Yuba River monitoring and evaluating Symposium on July 11. SYRCL's educational salmon tours on LYR this fall. Yuba Salmon Forum is a multiparty group evaluating options for the reintroduction of salmon to the upper Yuba Rivers.

Adjourned at 12:05 pm