

Lake Almanor Watershed Group Meeting
Wednesday, April 14, 2021 1:00-2:30pm
Zoom

Attendees

Bridie Johnston
Kevin Price
Lorena Gorbet
Susan Padilla
Tom Tisch
Charlie Plopper

Peggy Fulder
Scott McReynolds
Moorea Stout
Sophie Castleton
Gina Johnston

Introductions, Approval of Agenda and March minutes

Attendees introduced themselves to Sophie, the interim watershed coordinator at Sierra Institute. Following introductions, Peggy called the meeting to order at 1:14. Bridie proposed additional items for the agenda: an update from the Almanor Fishing Association, a relicensing update, and a follow-up on quarterly newsletter articles. Bridie motioned to approve the agenda as amended, Gina seconded. Bridie proposed some amendments to the March meeting minutes: to fix the three listings under the budget to reflect the updated financial excel sheet. She also requested that two sections be switched on the second page of the minutes for continuity.

Financials

There were no changes in the income since the last meeting. There were two changes in expenses: \$290 for field supplies for Kevin's youth education program and a \$4,040 payment for water quality testing (includes plankton net). There were no changes to the Sierra Institute pledge money, which remains at \$730. The listed balance is \$18,046. There is no dollar amount listed for the 2021 testing proposal; the actual balance is **\$16,306.64**.

Member Updates and Announcements

Water Quality Monitoring (Kevin, Gina)

- The Kevin and Scott are going out on 4/15 for Scott's last water quality run. He will transfer the equipment to Kevin for future use.
- Scott is planning to download the data from the previous run. He is planning on leaving the temperature loggers in stream sites. LAWG will need to keep an eye on the logger caps (last about a year) and batteries and replace when needed.

- Scott is getting new pH probes and giving 2 handhelds to group – so group can collect pH, temperature, and dissolved oxygen readings. pH probes have a short lifespan (lasts ~1 year) so Scott recommends LAWG consider investing in updating this equipment. Scott will share purchasing info; ~\$500/yr to keep pH equipment running.
- Scott is not donating a turbidity meter – can maybe lend one for the next run.
- Scott will also hand off plankton equipment to Kevin and send him the field sheet templates they've been using.
- Kevin will finish the volunteer manual and have it ready for the next LAWG meeting so it can be reviewed and approved to move ahead with the volunteer-based program.
- Gina announced that the water quality report is done, and Sierra Institute has been billed. She will send the final report to Sophie and Kevin.
- After Scott is not available, we need to line up somebody with a boat to go out with Kevin. Next sampling should be around first part of July. It will be a dry year, so will likely be a rough year, with oxygen levels dropping and the lake getting stratified early on. Would be good to sample summer conditions, then after Labor Day, and then again in November.
- Gina to send proposal and budget to Peggy for 2021, to be approved prior to the next meeting if possible.
- Gina will email the LACC manager and cc Tom to encourage them to set aside money (\$3/lot) for LAWG, as they have done in previous years.

Outreach & Engagement

- Jonathan Kusel and Moorea have been talking about reformatting the newsletter – to a monthly letter that's one story instead of a longer email quarterly. Moorea like to get feedback from the group about that change. It would make it easier on the group to produce good quality content, especially as Moorea is reducing her hours.
- Moorea would like to send the March newsletter out as a Spring newsletter instead.
- Moorea's suggestion is to send a survey out to the subscribers proposing the change, and see what their preference is. Peggy and Bridie agree. Susan agrees having a monthly newsletter will keep LAWG on people's minds more.

Water Quality Day with GHS

- LAWG allotted Kevin \$290 to purchase hobby grade probes and a test kit for the May 7th water quality testing day with Chester high school.

- Kevin also ran a water quality day with 13 Greenville High school students at Taylor's creek. They talked about pH, conductivity, dissolved oxygen, and he got a lot of good feedback from 9th and 10th graders. Lots of enthusiasm!
- Kevin speaking with Dallas this afternoon to plan the day in Chester with his chemistry class.
- Kevin feels LAWG's investment has already paid off, and is excited to continue to utilize this educational equipment.
- Susan is excited by this, and wonders if we could develop student interns? She mentioned Rob Wade, and pointed out this type of program could be used develop a skilled workforce. Susan would be willing to work on a committee to find funding for this type of work.
- Kevin has been in talks with Rob Wade, who originally came to area in '94 as an AmeriCorps volunteer. Kevin is in discussions with him about developing Lake Almanor Basin application for water quality data collection that could be used by students. Rob wants to develop a tool for teachers to use. He currently has outdoor leadership course.
- Bridie asked if Kevin is limited to Plumas County or if he could extend out to Westwood. Kevin is looking at being able to support other programs, but more resources are needed to make it happen.

Announcement of PG&E Sale: Mountain Meadows Reservoir, Hamilton Branch, HB Powerhouse & supporting infrastructure

- The announcement of the sale was made a couple weeks ago. There is speculation about what that means and who may acquire it. Peggy will keep the group informed of any updates. FRLT holds a conservation easement in perpetuity; the land needs to be managed for public beneficial uses, but the easement is not descriptive of what has to happen.

Lake Almanor Watershed Management Plan hard copies

- Sophie will send an email out to see who wants one and will print at least 4-5 extra copies.

Phil Datner's report on water storage level of Lake Almanor

- Low water storage compared to last 10 years

MSC Update

- Lorena announced that MSC obtained the deed to wetlands parcels last month (Benner creek and Mud creek) across the causeway. This is important for the development of the shoreline gardens.

- MSC has 150 oaks and 350 elderberry plants to plant in Tasmam Kojom (Humbug Valley) this spring, mainly where chips fire burned in NE side of valley. LAWG members would like to volunteer to help.
- Planning to open campground by memorial weekend- will have volunteer cleanup days prior to that. Also looking for a campground host.
- Mountain meadows sale – information is in the hands of MSC attorneys currently.
- MSC hired a new Executive Director: Trina Cunningham.

Conceptual Trails Plan (Charlie)

- Looking at submitting two grants, one for a portion of the Collins Pine Rail trail, the other for a trail along the N shore of Mountain Meadows reservoir. There is a large amount of work still to do to get it ready. Fits in well with conceptual plan – talk to Charlie for more info or to volunteer to write grants.

Lake Almanor West Association (Susan)

- Susan would like to organize a community cleanup along Hwy 89 and will update the group about it at the next LAWG meeting. (PUT ON AGENDA)

Additional Items

- **Almanor Fishing Association release at Hamilton branch this weekend:** They hope to tag 1,000 fish. Productive project on the lake for a number of years now.
- **Relicensing update:** Gina received an announcement from Mike Willhoit and will forward it to LAWG members. He's inviting community members this Friday at 4pm at Collins pines museum (and on Zoom) to an informational meeting to review 2105 and bring folks up to date with what's happening. The thermal curtain is still in our future because of way water board concluded the EIR – trying to inform community that things are not done.
- Gina reminded the group that LAWG wrote a letter in response to the regional water quality control board's statement saying if temperature conditions couldn't be met downstream, then a director could decide a thermal curtain would be necessary.
- Tom – North complex fire will likely result in warm water runoff in Feather River. This situation could get magnified because of issues that have occurred since. PG&E just wants to get relicensed; there are a lot of conflicting interests.

Next Meeting: May 12

LACC contacts:

Office manager Brenda Stoner: om@lacchoa.com

Steve Fleming smfleming46@gmail.com

Scott Devereaux gm@lacchoa.com