

Lake Almanor Watershed Group Meeting

Wednesday, September 11, 2019 1:00pm

Location: Maidu Summit Consortium

289 Main Street Stover Creek Center # 7, Chester, CA

Attendees

Peggy Fulder

Lorena Gorbet

Bridie Johnston

Gina Johnston

Jacqui Cordova

Susan Riney

Dov Weinman

Moorea Stout (call in)

Approval of Agenda and Minutes from August

The meeting was called to order at 1:05pm. Susan previously asked if we could talk about the Shoreline Gardens after the meeting, but Peggy suggested incorporating it into the meeting's agenda. Group members approved the agenda and adopted the minutes from August. Jacqui Cordova was officially approved to become a member of the Lake Almanor Watershed Group.

Financials

Bridie made two comments regarding the financials provided by the Sierra Institute. Sierra Institute reviewed expenses in the last month and clarified what funds were used to cover costs. There were also questions about how income coming from advocates is handled, which is not something that has been included in the financial excel document.

Member Updates and Announcements

Peggy shared her experience from the Chester Town Talks over Labor Day Weekend. She shared a flyer regarding Wildfire Smoke and copies of the Lake Almanor Water Quality Report. Group members also discussed the Sage Creek booth, where insurance agent Rachelle Labosky discussed homeowners having difficulty insuring their homes within the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI). Group members agreed it might be worth exploring this topic in a future meeting. Peggy attended a fire safe meeting in Westwood where the fire department chief mentioned he could provide a reference for fire coverage for homes in the WUI.

Peggy provided Dov and the Sierra Institute with a Great Sierra River Cleanup binder from past years or organizing. Jacquie and Peggy won't be available the day of the cleanup but Moorea will be in contact with LAWG members with regards to the location of the Lake Almanor Cleanup.

Carl previously sent Dov a message that the grebe count was so low this year that they cancelled the second outing. Lorena explained that when they took the water level down last year there was almost a 90% fatality rate for their offspring, so they didn't really expect to see many grebes this year. The Plumas Audubon Society is talking with PG&E about being transparent with notifications for when they plan to lower water levels. In other years they've been intractable but there is more optimism that they may be more amenable this year. Group

members wondered if the Sierra Institute would support or collaborate with Plumas Audubon Society in their discussions with PG&E. Dov will follow up.

Water Quality Monitoring

Gina reported that they will be able to collect data and report to the group by next meeting – she plans to write an article for spring about what’s going on with water quality in the lake. The plan is to have the article prepared in spring. Gina explained ways to observe algae, based on blue-green colors (brown or yellow when it dies) and how it can be moved by the wind and settle into shallow areas or bays. When blue-green algae is visible, lake-users must be careful with their dogs and little children.

Partnership with Keith Bouma-Gregson Update

Dov shared Keith’s short write-up about his sampling day on Lake Almanor. He was supported by John Crotty and the Almanor Fishing Association. He’ll be getting back to LAWG members soon with a more complete picture of his work, but he wrote that they did not find high levels of cyanobacteria at the three sites they tested.

Watershed and Woodlands Weekend

Group members recapped and shared experiences from the Watershed and Woodlands Weekend. Bridie mentioned that the Trees, Trout, and Stout night must have been well attended because she heard it was sold out. Susan was very appreciative of everyone’s various efforts in organizing. Jacqui felt the town talk was enjoyable and emphasized how important it was to get LAWG information out to the community at every chance possible. Group members agreed the location and signage made for somewhat low attendance; there must be a stronger effort to advertise for future community-based events.

Moorea mentioned the Chamber’s desire to make this an annual event, and group members discussed the benefits and challenges to hosting events over Labor Day Weekend. Other options may be explored for next year. She added that the advocate program is a good way to grow a volunteer base and LAWG should encourage interested people to volunteer at events.

Moorea asked group members to help spread the word for Indian Valley’s Great Sierra River Cleanup that Sierra Institute is promoting and organizing. Group members agreed to inform family or friends living near the lake about the cleanup day. Moorea was reminded to contact local waste and recycling stations to see if they will be willing to accept the materials the trucks bring in. Susan will contact people at Lake Almanor West with regards to the cleanup event and she will pursue information about who has been cleaning up along Hwy 89.

Shoreline Gardens Field Tour

Susan shared that multiple LAWG members had a great tour looking at parcels to be acquired by the Maidu Summit Consortium on September 4th with Ben Cunningham and Lorena Gorbet. They discussed potential locations for a shoreline gardens project, and Susan has contacted people in Tahoe who have established similar projects. The Maidu Summit Consortium will have more internal discussions, but a logical follow-up is to plan a field tour with the groups working

on shoreline garden projects in Tahoe. Susan will work to attain project planning documentation from them. Lorena mentioned that MSC is continuing to plan what they will do with their newly acquired lands at Benner Creek, Mud Creek, and Goose Bay. There are two other parcels as well, making about 600 acres in total being transferred from PG&E. Lorena explained the barriers and obstacles to finalizing the transfer and she emphasized planning for implementing Maidu TEK and developing educational projects. The MSC will have their ribbon cutting ceremony for Tásmam Kojóm Maidu Cultural Park on Friday, September 20th.

The group will revisit having a meeting every other month at a subsequent meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, October 9th.