

South Lassen Watersheds Group Meeting

Tuesday May 26, 1:00 - 3:40pm
Zoom Meeting

Meeting Synopsis

The South Lassen Watersheds Group met virtually to review and discuss the prospective West Lassen Headwaters Area Project, to deliberate on the various options for more collaborative involvement, and to share and discuss work and modeling by Deer Creek Resources.

Attendees

Lorena Gorbet – Maidu Summit Consortium
Jim Richardson – Lassen Volcanic National Park
Zeke Lunder – Deer Creek Resources
Tom McCubbins – Tehama County RCD
Lynn Campbell – Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Dawn Peterson – CalFire Tehama-Glenn Unit
Sheli Wingo – US Fish and Wildlife Service
Nick Bunch – Lassen National Forest
Wolfy Rougle – Butte County RCD
Mila Bock – Sierra Institute
Ken Roby – Trout Unlimited
Kristy Hoffman – Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Ryan Burnett – Point Blue Conservation Science
Trish Puterbaugh – Lassen Forest Preservation Group

Dan Martyyn – Natural Resources Conservation Science
Russell Nickerson – Lassen National Forest
Michael Hall – Feather River RCD
Paul Lackovic – Deer Creek Resources
Laura Corral – Lassen National Forest
Kyle Rodgers – Sierra Institute
Andrea Craig – The Nature Conservancy
Dave Osti – 34 North
Ron Lunder – Mountain Meadows Conservancy
Steve Buckley – Lassen. Volcanic National Park
Rob Rianda – Tehama County RCD
Jonathan Kusel – Sierra Institute
Dov Weinman – Sierra Institute

Action Items

- Strategic planning subcommittee to complete draft of strategic plan by end of July.
- Sierra Institute to distribute draft strategic plan.
- Subcommittee members to provide updates on grant proposals at July meeting.

Meeting Opening

Jonathan opened the meeting and asked if there were any modifications to the previous meeting's minutes? Hearing none, Jim motioned to approve the minutes and Kristy seconded. The group approved the minutes from March. Ken moved to approve to meeting's agenda, Lorena seconded, and the agenda was approved.

Strategic Planning Processes

Jonathan introduced the process that the strategic planning subcommittee has committed to in order to complete the Strategic Plan. Dov provided a summary of the subcommittee's leads for each respective resource section, and Ken mentioned their goals to complete a draft plan by the next meeting at the end of July. Ken described his work with Noah on the Water Resources section, Ryan talked briefly about the biodiversity and habitat, and Dov and Lorena spoke about the community section that came together through a collaboration between MSC and Sierra Institute.

West Lassen Headwaters Project

- Overview of Project

- Review of WLH Development
- Collaborative Involvement

Dov reminded collaborative members about the one-pager WLH overview emailed before the meeting, and Jonathan spoke to the project's development through the strategic planning subcommittee. The concept for the West Lassen Headwaters Project was built off other SLWG projects, specifically Childs Meadow, and Kyle mentioned the progress they'd made in conceptualizing the project even though the group's proposal for planning didn't get funded through the last round of CalFire's CCI grant. The collaborative has made more connections within the project area for future cross-boundary opportunities in addition to connections and partners that staff at Lassen Volcanic National park have already made. It was noted that in the case of the community of Mineral, there may be challenges to engage stakeholders through terms and treatments that are important to them. Lassen National Forest had actually encouraged collaborative members to think larger, and Nick made arguments to extend the area out for certain values and risks while also suggesting that it be balanced with operational feasibility, and physical characteristics such as stand composition, density, and desired conditions.

Jim emphasized the need to continue monitoring programs associated with SLWG projects in order to acknowledge funding partners by showing evidence that the projects are moving forward and producing results. Sierra Institute's specialists continue to go through a learning process to that partners with the SLWG can develop a better understanding for how the group can plan and treat larger parts of the landscape. Ryan mentioned that if each project is going to take four years to get a signed decision, the group should acknowledge that project timeline in the interim, especially with regards to local economic considerations.

Ken mentioned that the strategic planning subcommittee has been discussing how to better incorporate collaborative members into planning processes and project design. When there is a looking proposal deadline this can be quite difficult, but in these cases the subcommittee moves forward with a focus on the fundamental shared values developed within the full SLWG. One of the initial questions, the strategic planning group putting this together and then bringing this to the full collaborative. It's important that the collaborative feel okay with this process in the future if the subcommittee must meet a funding deadline. If not, there should be more discussion on how the collaborative can handle this issue.

[Deer Creek Resources](#)

Jonathan introduced Zeke and Paul from Deer Creek Resources, and Zeke began by introducing the SLWG to the complicated land management history within the collaborative's boundary area. They're using their GIS tools to help tell a narrative about fire planning to better inform planning processes and highlight high risk areas for possible future treatments. Collaborative members took special interest in the area to the east of the WLH boundary, and Russell was in favor of pushing the project boundary further east as well as a little to the northwest and southwest. Additionally, Zeke toured collaborative members through some of the management history in the front country, especially land owned by Sierra Pacific Industries, and planted the suggestion that the SLWG boundary might be amended there to include some extra acres to potentially open up more opportunity for public/private cross-boundary work.

Paul shared an overlay analysis to look at very resource-specific data such as deer migration routes, aspen restoration project areas, and other specialist data. It's important to note that they plan to run multiple overall analyses to support the determination of mechanical treatment areas as compared to prescribed fire only areas. Nick added that there are meaningful points to be found for how previous fire and project history can meet factors from the present and future (i.e. climate change). He offered the idea of building concentric circles around WUI areas and also the need to address fires that have a trajectory. Jim reminded the group of the importance integrating indigenous perspective as well as Maidu-specific Traditional Ecological Knowledge into these processes. Jonathan asked for an additional ten minutes from participants and thanked Deer Creek Resources for their work and presentation.

Partner Updates

Kristy shared that the Sierra Nevada Conservancy quarterly board meeting planned for Shasta County in September will most likely be going virtual. As state employees they're all under travel restrictions and she wasn't certain when that will end. They're getting a renewed pot of funding for Prop 68 – about 5 million in total (three million for forest health, one million for recreation and tourism, and one million for resilient communities).

Andrea Craig mentioned that The Nature Conservancy is conducting upwards of 2,000 acres of prescribed burns on the north end of Butte County this June.

Collaborative members mentioned they wanted to get some feedback on grant applications around the end of July. The next SLWG meeting will again be virtual and is set for Tuesday, July 28th.