

## **South Lassen Watersheds Group Meeting**

**Tuesday July 28th, 1:00 - 4:00pm**  
**Zoom Meeting**

### **Meeting Synopsis**

The South Lassen Watersheds Group met virtually to present the draft Strategic Plan, review fall funding opportunities, and discuss potential project proposals.

### **Attendees**

Jason Mateljak – Lassen Volcanic National Park  
Lorena Gorbet – Maidu Summit Consortium  
Alisha Wilson – Maidu Summit Consortium  
Ken Roby – Trout Unlimited  
Laura Corral – Lassen National Forest  
Rob Rianda – Tehama County RCD  
Kyle Rodgers – Sierra Institute  
Trish Puterbaugh – Lassen Forest Preservation Group  
Mila Bock – Sierra Institute

Gabe Schultz – CalFire  
Kristy Hoffman – Sierra Nevada Conservancy  
Russell Nickerson – Lassen National Forest  
Deb Bumpas – Lassen National Forest  
Wolfy Rougle – Butte County RCD  
Ryan Burnett – Point Blue Conservation Science  
Ron Lunder – Mountain Meadows Conservancy  
Michael Hall – Feather River RCD  
Zeke Lunder – Deer Creek Resources

### **Meeting Opening**

Jonathan opened the meeting and asked if there were any modifications from the meeting minutes in May. Trish made a motion to approve the minutes, Lorena seconded, and the group approved the minutes. Kristy motioned to approve the agenda and Alisha seconded. Group members approved the day’s agenda.

### **West Shore and Robbers Creek Updates**

Kyle and Russell explained that both projects are closing in on completed EAs; the West Shore is getting very close and the Robbers Creek is only a couple weeks behind. They’re in an exciting part of the environmental planning process that includes opportunities to think about cross boundary treatments and other innovative, outside-the-box options. Delays were in part due to needed communication with the Regional Office about certain authorities the Forest plans to use, namely the use of prescribed fire across boundaries which is an exciting and big step towards utilizing these authorities in future projects. Kyle and Ryan also shared the Wildlife Conservation Board (WCB) proposal that was just submitted to conduct thinning in upland areas and meadow restoration around Swain Meadow and Robbers Creek. Lynn offered SNC’s services hosting a training about NEPA/CEQA if that would be of interest to the Group. Ryan said it would be good to build redundancy into the group to ensure multiple SLWG members know the process. Dov will follow up with Lynn to explore this possibility.

### **Draft Strategic Plan**

Dov sent the draft Strategic Plan my email list on July 21<sup>st</sup>, and subcommittee members re-emphasized the plan’s draft status. The Strategic Planning Subcommittee are still revising and editing sections and Dov continues to work on editing and formatting.

Subcommittee members provided SLWG members with short presentations on the five main “resource areas” within the plan.

- **Sustainable Economics**

Jonathan described the plans focus on triple bottom line objectives (economics, environmental, and community) and the emphasis of supplying ecologically-based jobs to local community members and the subsequent contribution to a more robust and sustainable economy.

- **Forest, Fuels, and Fires**

Russell explained that the section writers focused on fire ecology broadly and not just fuels reduction. The group recognizes the natural presence of fire on the landscape and the need to prepare the landscape for the return of fire in a sustainable way through the use of prescribed fire and adequate thinning projects

- **Water Resources**

Ken put specific emphasis on building resilience back into the system and using data collected from the subwatersheds assessment to generate a better understanding of watershed health and direct prioritization process.

- **Species and Habitats**

Ryan and other subcommittee members divided this section into three primary groups including: aquatic, upland and forests, and wetlands. Subcommittee members developed each of these sections but now need to make them more cohesive and must weave certain parts into the water resources section. A consistent theme within these sections are that some additional assessments will be needed.

- **Community**

Dov highlighted Sierra Institute's close collaboration with MSC, specifically Lorena and Alisha, for the sections of TEK and Cultural and Historical Values. The main implications for the plan are that this section contains pieces such as the integration of Maidu TEK and prioritizing work that benefits disadvantaged communities, that cultivate a community-based feel to our projects. So although there's still determination to increase pace and scale, this section roots our projects in people and communities. Alisha added that this section also describes important holistic approaches that incorporate traditional burning, gathering, etc.

Group members agreed that the draft Strategic Plan will be open for comments and inputs from all collaborative members through the month of August. Strategic Planning Subcommittee members will reconvene in September to review comments and edit these sections as appropriate. Timeline and window for input and comment. Subcommittee members also recommended that the group provisionally approve the draft Strategic Plan so that subcommittee members could draw upon the plan when developing grant proposals this fall. Collaborative members plan to approve a final draft of the plan at the November meeting.

### [Funding Opportunities and Landscape Values](#)

Kyle shared that there would likely be only limited funding for planning through the California Climate Investment source. They are waiting for the budget to be finalized and, theoretically, a new portal will open for applications this fall. Kristy mentioned that there is not a lot of money available this year through the Sierra Nevada Conservancy so proposed project must be especially stellar.

Dov provided a brief summary of the Western Forest Leadership Coalition opportunity due at the end of October. The maximum request amount is \$300,000 and proposal should focus primarily on non-industrial, private lands that show replicability, scale, and meaningful collaboration and community engagement. Sierra Institute staff have been considering the options to develop a proposal focused on community outreach for private landowners within the West Lassen Headwaters Area.

Collaborative members divided into four breakout groups to discuss resource sections and provide feedback. Below are some of the main takeaways from the breakout session.

- How to **weave together sections** such as the Water Resources and Species and Habitat? In the objectives – how to integrate this in the separate sections – it’s necessary to think about it consciously and intentionally and make it part of the process.
- It’s necessary to have a more **detailed discussion of the issues and projects with climate change** that might be included in the appendix.
- There are many inferences to institutional barriers that prevent us from working as fast as we want. **Do we need a section on NEPA/CEQA?**
- We **must make the document usable**. What kind of brevity can be useful – a document for quick reference and use. Do we need a 5-6 page executive summary?
- Must be cautionary about the **language we use with regards to fire**. We don’t want to create a culture where we encourage fear of fire, mosaic of fire between low and high intensity, ecological benefits of fire and acknowledge the WUI.
- With regard to **sustainable economics**, how do we pull in community into the work. How do we engage younger populations? Can SLWG devise a training program to set the hook early, maintain connection through school, and connect individuals with community colleges and beyond?
- Similar to how we’ve integrated TEK into various sections, how do we **build in community capacity** and professional development?
- There’s desire to **balance the need for information with the need for work done on the ground**. How are we creating the processes and mechanisms? There’s interest in ensuring that more information doesn't lead to paralysis with regards to getting work done.

### Strategic Planning for Fall Proposals

Kyle presented a menu of proposal options with other members of the Strategic Planning Subcommittee. Wolfy discussed the Colby Meadows area with regards to a planning grant focused on trails and other recreation-focused pieces. Jonathan asked if collaborative members are still comfortable with the current process of communication and leadership from the Strategic Planning Subcommittee. The Subcommittee will continue to try and solicit opinions from SLWG members about where to prioritize proposals for funding opportunities. Alisha made another suggestion that if there’s anyone wanting to join the subcommittee they be allowed to participate. It was generally acknowledged that the subcommittee functions as a working group that is open participation from SLWG members.

Before concluding the meeting, Kyle provided a brief update about the Rock Creek project and about recent funding from Collins Pine to develop a workforce development project focused on training modules for local community members. What critical skillsets does the group suggest these modules cover? How can the collaborative consider opportunities for providing work from the forest to the office?

The next full-group meeting will be held virtually on Tuesday, September 29<sup>th</sup>.