

**Lake Almanor Watershed Group Meeting**  
**Wednesday, March 9th, 2021, 1:00 - 2:30 pm**

**Attendees**

Bella Bledsoe  
Bridie Johnston  
Charlie Plopper  
Gina Johnston  
Jacie Cordova

Kevin Trutna  
Peggy Fulder  
Phil Datner  
Susan Padilla  
Tom Tisch.

**Approval of Agenda and February Minutes**

There is a motion to approve the agenda and the February minutes. The agenda and minutes are approved.

**Financials**

The total balance is \$17,944.70. There were no changes in income. Expenses were up because LAWG purchased a new computer (\$503.37) and paid Gina for 2021 Water Quality Monitoring (\$4040). Allocated monies still include \$1,000.00 for the Maidu Plant Project and \$278.76 for Sierra Institute coordination. The working balance is \$16,665.94.

Bella will send LAWG a proposal for funding Virginia's staff time so that she can assist with water quality monitoring this coming field season.

**Member Updates and Announcements**

**Water Quality Monitoring**

- Tom gave the group an article about post-fire bacteria becoming an issue in coastal areas along the California coast. Tom asked the group whether LAWG should be expanding the parameters we are monitoring in the lake to pick up changes in bacteria post-fire.
- Phil informed the group that mega-fires like the Dixie Fire make the soil hydrophobic in some areas, meaning that the soil repels water. With no vegetation and hydrophobic soils, there is increased runoff.
- Gina described that essentially the soil gets baked, and it becomes hardened because of the fire. The fire changes the soil structure, and it takes months for the organic composition to come back and the chemical composition to be restored. Gina does not see the group being able to monitor for bacteria. For LAWG to monitor coliform bacteria would require a lot. In the past, LAWG has hired a contractor to monitor coliform at recreation areas around the lake. The contractors monitored after July 4th and after Labor Day. However, Gina does not think that effort gave LAWG that much information.
- Phil will keep looking at the satellite imagery he can find online to see if he can see any turbidity plumes. He assumes the satellite resolution is not good enough for that, though. If a lot of mud or other sediment was deposited into the lake, he does not know if he would see it on the satellite imagery.
- Tom responded that everyone's points were well taken. He just saw the article and thought it was valuable to bring it up to the group.
- Gina said that Tom is correct; there will be effects of the Dixie Fire on the Lake, just like there were on the coast.
- Susan said that LAWG should continue pursuing funding for water quality monitoring. Potentially the Plumas County Environmental Health Department would provide funding for some of this work. In

the past, the Citizen Committee paid the Plumas County Environmental Health Department to do some monitoring because people were swimming and complaining of itching.

- Gina mentioned that the county should be the one covering the cost of protecting public health; LAWG should not have to do that.
- Charlie added that the Dixie Fire can generate funding for this area. If LAWG wants to expand funding, this is a good time. People in LA drink this water, and we should be looking for sources to fund expanded water quality monitoring because this source is essential to the whole state.
- The group discussed Gina's 2022 WQ monitoring proposal. Gina is proposing that we do what we have always done. She is not looking to expand the scope of work unless we get more funding. Right now, all we can do is what we are doing.
- Everyone voted in favor of Gina's proposal for \$4,025, and the group accepted it.
- Bella added that she will circulate a proposal for Virginia's staff time to support water quality monitoring to the group as well, which the group can vote on in April.
- Bella mentioned hosting an FRC intern to help with water quality monitoring and asked LAWG members if they are interested in doing that. Bella added that an intern would require a supervisor and asked if LAWG has the capacity to provide that. The group is not ready to commit to supervising an intern.
- Bella also mentioned that she circulated information on the LAWG water quality monitoring program to Dana Flett, the Environmental Studies Program Coordinator at FRC, to try and generate some student volunteers. Dana said she will circulate information to students.
- Gina will write a short article about the 2021 Water Quality Report and submit it to Plumas News and Chico Enterprise. The group would like to circulate the article to the Chamber, Chester Chatter, and a local Sacramento Paper.

### **Final Version of the Motion to Intervene: FERC Relicensing**

- Bella circulated the final version of the Motion to Intervene to LAWG. The group will continue to stay up to date on the lawsuit.
- Local residents are already expressing that if the Motion to Intervene is denied, the community will try and pull together a large community gathering to give this issue some attention. They intend to have speakers and discuss how local needs are being ignored in order to create a significant community presence.

### **Fundraising/Donations**

- Bella sent Thank You cards to the two recent LAWG donors. She is also hoping for LAWG members to look at the website language and propose changes.

### **Carlos España:**

- Charlie updated the group that Carlos España recently passed away. Carlos was key in the community; he did extensive recreation and community improvement work.
- Charlie and others are working on setting up a memorial fund for him that will allow for the maintenance of all the projects that he helped catalyze.
- A recent article came out about Carlos' work, included here:
  - "It is with great sadness that I must inform you that Carlos España passed away last week from cancer. His battle was blessedly brief. He is at peace, and free from pain. All of you know how passionate Carlos was in pursuing his vision of a trail around Lake Almanor that will eventually connect to a regional trail system. To say he worked tirelessly on this project is a huge understatement. I saw firsthand the enormous amount of time he spent while utilizing

his engineering background and his tenacity to make this happen. Over the past five years, we would celebrate the milestones he helped to bring about: the negotiations with Collins Pine for the Rail Trail land acquisition; all the planning and mapping of the trail segments; securing match funds so that we could move forward with securing public grant funds; the awarding of the SNC due diligence grant; and most recently the decision by Cal Trans to fund and build the Hwy 89 section of the Trail. On Jan 19th, just one day after his second chemo treatment, I watched Carlos hit the SUBMIT button on the State Parks 2.6 million dollar grant proposal he worked on with considerable help from a number of you. He used every ounce of his remaining energy to move one more step toward achieving this ambitious vision. Although Carlos knew that completion would not take place in his lifetime, it's heartbreaking to me that he will not be here to celebrate the completion of the first stages. But he knew at the end that those of you who are as committed to this project as he was, will pick up the ball and make this happen. His contributions to ARPD as a volunteer were enormous - it was Carlos who identified and pursued the Per Capita grant, guided the design process, and secured the required matching funds that allowed us to move forward with our exciting new recreation center. He worked with Charlie to rewrite the Complete Streets grant for the Cal Trans Main Street project. He spent years on the LACC FireWise Committee in pursuit of improvements in defensible space for our community. He was proud to be part of so many organizations dedicated to the benefit of the Almanor Basin. His passing has left a huge hole in the hearts of his family, and his dedication to our community will be missed. As a fitting tribute and in support of our local community, we are in the process of establishing a memorial fund for the Rail Trail project through the Community Foundation. Contributions will be dedicated to the development of the Rail Trail and fully tax-deductible. If interested, you can access the fund by going to [nvcf.org](http://nvcf.org) and scrolling down to *New Funds*."

### **Lake Almanor West Association**

- Susan asked if Jonathan can perhaps speak before the Lake Almanor West Association board. Bella will see if Jonathan is available to do that.

### **Others?**

- Tom talked with Aaron about the history of LACC donations to LAWG. Tom will continue working on an organized effort to get LACC more involved and hopefully get in front of the LACC board to talk about how important water quality monitoring is.
- Tom will keep the group updated on this work.

### **Action Items**

- Bella will send LAWG a proposal for funding Virginia's staff time so that she can assist with water quality monitoring this coming field season.
- LAWG members will look at the LAWG website language and propose changes.

### **Adjourn**

**Next Meeting:** April 13th