



**Lake Almanor Watershed Group Meeting**  
**Wednesday, October 12th, 2022, 1:00 - 2:30 pm**

**Attendees**

Che Rubalcava-Cunan  
Corey Pargee  
Bella Bledsoe  
Bridie Johnston  
Gina Johnston

Jacquie Cordova  
Lorena Gorbet  
Peggy Fulder  
Phil Datner  
Susan Padilla

**Call to Order, Approval of Agenda and September Minutes**

The group approved both the agenda and the September minutes. Gina requested to add Doug Coffman's last name and title to the September minutes. LAWG also did a round of introductions for the new members (Che and Corey) joining the meeting.

**Financials**

The working balance is \$10,116.59. LAWG has received a \$2,000.00 donation from LACC. September expenses include approximately \$400 for Che's work doing water quality monitoring in September; this is an estimate. Allocated monies still include \$1,000.00 for the Maidu Plant Project, \$4025 for Gina's 2022 water quality work, and ~\$2,600 remaining for Sierra Institute field staff. The new working balance will be approximately \$11,700.

The group will have more specific figures next month.

**Member Updates and Announcements**

**Water Quality Monitoring**

- Gina said thank you to Phil and Che for going out on the 26th to collect Lake data. Che did the stream data collection later that day. A copy of the September data spreadsheet was circulated before this meeting. The primary message from September monitoring is that there is essentially no oxygen below 12 meters at LA1 and no oxygen below 9 meters at LA2. Hamilton Branch continues to be a fish refuge because of the consistently low temperatures during this time of year compared to the rest of the lake.
- There is no date set up yet for November monitoring. Gina said she remembered that LAWG needs to do the monitoring before Thanksgiving. During the last lake measurements that Virginia did, she found that one battery for a dissolved oxygen meter is only good till about Thanksgiving. Potentially, Che and Phil should shoot for doing monitoring at the beginning of November.
- Che can also order a new battery. He can pull the dissolved oxygen data logger out of the water and send it in. It is a factory-replaceable battery.
- Gina said she can take care of the monitoring equipment between November and April if Che is too busy.
- Phil added that the lake levels are almost at a historic low.
- Gina also added that algae was fairly low in the samples from September. There was very little blue-green algae.
- Phil said he looks at the Harmful Algal Bloom viewer online every day. Things look to be holding steady. We are seeing basically the same pattern as two years ago. Harmful algae never really got bad. It

remained low to moderate. Last year, there was quite a bit of harmful algae. That is because last October, we got a lot of rain, and that's when the algae bloom took off. This was likely from the runoff from the Dixie Fire.

- Gina said she is anxious to see what happens this year once we start getting some rain. It will be interesting to see if the rains spark another increase in algae.

### **FERC Updates?**

- The group does not know of any new updates about FERC. Bella will reach out to Jeffrey Janus to see if he has any updates. The group suggested that we reach out to Tom McGowan, the new District 3 Supervisor, as well as the attorney from LACC, to see if they can join LAWG meetings as well.

### **Great Sierra River Cleanup**

- Peggy provided an update to LAWG about the Cleanup. The event was hosted by Sierra Institute and LAWG on September 17th, and the Westwood Area Chamber of Commerce sponsored the event. The two huge trash dumpsters that were provided by Lassen County via the Supervisor Chris Gallagher, were filled to the brim (and beyond) with trash that the local residents brought and dumped.
- By the time our cleanup volunteers returned with the trash that they had found in the woods, along the roads and Robbers Creek, and at the Indian Ole Dam site on Walker Lake, the bins were completely full.
- Our volunteers dumped their carloads of trash between the bins and were treated to a free lunch at the Chilli Cookoff that was also happening that day. The Chamber picked up the tab for the lunches. We had 16 volunteers and they really did a terrific job.
- On the following Monday, Peggy went past the Westwood Visitors Center to check the dumping site. One of the local Community Services District employees was there with a bucket loader cleaning up a bit. He said that the county had taken all of the big stuff and that he was just "fine tuning." Peggy got to help him to do that with her picker-upper and trash bags.
- Coinciding the River Cleanup with the town cleanup and the dumpsters was a great idea. It took coordination, and it brought our town agencies closer together in a very successful morning!

### **Feather River Land Trust**

- Corey provided an update to the group on the FRLT. The FRLT's goal is local land protection and conservation. The FRLT has lands that they have purchased outright to manage for public benefits, such as the Olson Barn property, which is about 107 acres. They also own the Mountain Meadows Gateway property in Westwood, which is about a 7-acre parcel. The FRLT is working to make public access improvements to those properties, such as a new parking area at the Mountain Meadow Gateway property. They are also improving trails there and will eventually be putting in signage. At Olson Barn, they are working on expanding the ADA trail to get to the barn.
- FRLT also manages easements. For example, they are partnered with MSC to protect and conserve their lands. They are also partnering with PG&E to permanently protect Lake Almanor with a conservation easement. That project is scheduled to be completed by the end of this year and includes an easement on almost 30,000 acres, most of which is the Lake. Some marshy wetlands owned by PG&E are also included in the easement. The easement would prohibit future subdivisions, and will also hopefully help uphold some conservation values, such as wildlife habitat and public access. Corey reiterated that the easement only covers PG&E lands, not other private lands, and also has no bearing on PG&E's water release. PG&E retains the right to deliver water downstream and manage lake levels.
- Lorena asked, what about the few parcels under the lake that are not owned by PG&E? Are those under the easement too?

- Corey is going to have to ask Shelton because she is not sure.
- Lorena commented that because PG&E does not own those parcels, they are supposed to pay a fee each year for each parcel to the federal government because they are federal parcels. She said no one is really tracking whether PG&E does this.

### **Supervisor's Report**

- Sherrie is not present to provide an update.

### **Lake Almanor West Association**

- Susan has nothing to report from Lake Almanor West Association.

### **Maidu Summit Consortium (Lorena)**

- MSC is working on cutting the first unit in Humbug. Much of the timber went to SPI in Quincy. The second unit is up for comment right now. MSC divided the units up because of the large number of cultural resources in the area. They are smaller emergency timber harvest plans. Only about half of the burnt timber will go to the sawmill. The other half will have to be chipped and used for firewood. Just like everyone else, MSC is struggling to find places for biomass and timber.
- The campground is still closed because of the hazardous trees. They are planning to just open it up to the Native community, so folks can come and cut firewood. Many people are really in need of firewood.

### **Adjourn**

**Next Meeting:** November 9th