

Landowner Engagement Subcommittee Meeting
Monday, March 27th, 2023, 4 - 5 pm

Attendees:

Bella Bledsoe: Sierra Institute
Jason Tompkins: RCD of Tehama County
Jim Richardson: LAVO
Jo Cunningham: Baccala Ranch
Larry Rinehart: Mineral Homeowners Association
Leida Schoggen: Friends of Warner Valley
Michael Lee: Friends of Warner Valley
Phred Starkweather: Battle Creek Meadows Ranch
Patsy Korhuniak: Baccala Ranch
Sophie Castleton: Sierra Institute
Wendy Heaton: Battle Creek Meadows Ranch
Wil Kingori: Local Resident

Meeting Objectives:

- Hear quick updates from Sierra Institute about the progress of the West Lassen Headwaters Project.
- Hear from the RCD of Tehama County about their post-fire restoration landowner assistance program.
- Reflect on what types of content group members have enjoyed the most from 2022 LES meetings and what type of agenda items group members would like more of in 2023.

Introductions & Updates

- The meeting began with each attendee introducing themselves and identifying one current land management action they are focusing on (e.g., burned tree removal, forest thinning, meadow restoration, replanting, rebuilding).
- Wendy: Battle Creek Meadows Ranch is expanding stream restoration projects; we are putting new riparian fencing on creeks we haven't worked on previously. We are hoping for outside expertise, but at this point the work is being family led.
- Phred commented that Battle Creek Meadows Ranch is also focusing on forest health work. The ranch is continuing to pursue grant funding. The BCMR board is still interested in engaging on cross-boundary work, with the Forest Service. We want to engage with neighbors and agencies to develop a comprehensive plan for forest health and wildfire reduction work.
- Patsy: Baccala Ranch is looking at removing burned timber and meadow doing restoration. We are getting some support through the RCD of Tehama County for the Tehama side of the property to remove burned timber. Plumas County has been harder to work with to remove burned material.
- Larry commented that he is on the board of directors of the Mineral Homeowners Association. They are working on securing grants to take a lot of trees out and make Mineral more resilient to fire.

- Jim commented that as a Mineral resident and leader of the Firewise group with Larry, they are working with the RCD of Tehama County to remove trees in proximity to houses. In the Park, there are all sorts of post-Dixie projects, including removing burned timber along roadways. One of the biggest goals for the Park right now is to complete the planning for the West Lassen Headwaters Project (WLHP) so that we can expand fire resiliency.
- Will said that he is working with Circle S Ranch on the east side of the Mill Creek drainage, where some cabins were saved from the Dixie Fire. They are getting an understanding of the property lines and neighbors. They are working on doing fire restoration work; for now, that is mostly removing burned trees and tending to native plants recovering after the fire.
- Leida: In Warner Valley, the biggest concern in general is the watershed, and how the watershed will recover after the fire and this big precipitation year. This watershed feeds the North Fork of the Feather River and downstream users. Folks in the area are also concerned with rebuilding and are struggling with required building components (e.g., solar).
- Michael Lee: Can you help me understand what Sierra Institute does?
- Bella answered that Sierra Institute works on a bunch of different things, but the goal of this group is to bring together a collaborative group of landowners to strengthen the peer-to-peer landowner network, plan and implement fuel reduction projects and access existing landowner assistance programs, and to facilitate cross-boundary work between private landowners and agencies. The group has been hearing a lot about the West Lassen Headwaters Project (WLHP), which is a developing effort on public lands (Lassen National Forest and Lassen Volcanic National Park) in the Mineral and Mill Creek area. The project will be focused on forest health, watershed restoration, and fire management. Many landowners have been attending these meetings to hear more about the project and interface with agency partners.
- Sierra Institute is also having a community meeting in Mineral on June 10th to further discuss the WLHP with the local community. This will be an opportunity for people to ask questions about the project and learn more. How do you all think it would be best to communicate with folks that this meeting is happening?
- Jim has contact info for many Mineral residents; there are also tax records of addresses to mail info to. We could update the website MineralCalifornia.com, or also put a poster up at the Mineral post-office. Jim thinks fliers are the best option.
- Larry added that Mineral Homeowners Association has mailing address for all homeowners in Stringtown area.
- Bella also commented that beyond the community meeting on June 10th, the South Lassen Watersheds Group is having a field tour on Tuesday, June 13th to look at collaborative project work. Landowners from the subcommittee are welcome to join this tour as well as the public meeting. Bella encouraged participants to join one or both meetings; they will serve as the Landowner Engagement Subcommittee meeting for June.

Post-Fire Restoration Support in Tehama County (RCDTC)

- The RCD is seeking Jason landowners who have been affected by the August Complex and the Dixie Fire (2019 – 2021), who are interested in post fire restoration work. The RCD is trying to get list of landowners who would be interested in that type of work. The program will include burned tree removal in Tehama County. The Timber Smart program is already doing defensible space work, so this program would focus on burned private lands.

- Will - in areas where there are both burned and unburned trees, is there some overlap between this proposed program and the Timber Smart defensible space program?
- Patsy – are you looking at both agricultural and residential lots?
- Jason – yes, we’re trying to get a list of interested landowners so we can build the scope of work.

Reflections for 2023

- Wendy enjoyed the home hardening presentation from Yana in December.
- Michael would like to see more presentations on rebuilding, and specifically on the mandates required for rebuilding. He suggested Chuck White from the Plumas County Building Department.
- Leida wants to learn more about biomass removal in these meetings; how can landowners connect restoration projects to biomass utilization.
- Larry seconded that; transporting trees out of Mineral is a big expense/problem. Larry wants to be kept informed on biomass facilities developing in the area.
- Jim – wants agency land managers to be accessible in these meetings.
- Leida commented that she would love to hear more from CDFW or Sierra Pacific Industries.
- Other thought – presentation from rebuilding efforts in Greenville

Adjourn