

**AMERICAN RIVER WATERSHED GROUP**  
**Monthly Meeting**  
**April 17, 2008**

The meeting of the American River Watershed Group (ARWG) was called to order by Rich Gresham, at 9:10 a.m. at the Auburn Recreation District Canyon View Community Center located at 471 Maidu Drive, Auburn, California.

**Present:** Rich Gresham and Jane Keillor, Placer County Resource Conservation District (PCRCO); Sandra Scott, Director, Sierra College; Marie Davis, Consultant, Placer County Water Agency (PCWA); Leon Poitras, Colfax-Todds Valley Consolidated Tribe; George Alves, Placer County Fire Mitigation Coordinator; Matt Triggs, USFS, Foresthill.

**A. Fire Safe Projects- George Alves, Placer County Fire Safe Alliance:** George Alves distributed copies of a presentation about the new Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP) for the West Slope of the Sierra Nevada, Placer County. The Placer County Board of Supervisors approved the final CWPP document on March 25, 2008 and it may be viewed by the public at: <http://www.placerfirealliance.org>.

The CWPP must be consistent with the Healthy Forest Restoration Act for Federal agencies to support community projects. To accomplish the goals of this CWPP, four Fire Safe Councils in the area collaborate with local fire departments, CALFIRE and with local government.

The three elements needed to start a fire are fuel, oxygen and heat. By maintaining defensible space, you can take away the fuel. Homeowners, by law, are required to have a 100 foot defensible space around their homes. The local fire safe councils recently provided a "Firewise" workshop in Foresthill to educate the public about resources available to them.

Other measures are being taken in an effort to prevent fires. The Greater Auburn Fire Safe group will walk the Auburn shaded fuel break with the Bureau of Reclamation to determine a maintenance plan for the area. Additionally, George and Rich noted the chipper program in Placer County can assist homeowners in their fuel reduction efforts.

**B. Update on DOC Watershed Coordinator Grant Program:** Our group was not selected to be funded and some watershed groups received partial funding. However, this group will continue to meet to plan projects and to search and secure available grant funding.

Rich shared with us that Shelley Mathews is interested in continuing as the Watershed Coordinator. He will ask the RCD for some funding to write a grant. Ryan Bellanca is also working on locating funding sources.

A discussion was held about how to best write a grant. Sandra Scott explained she has a lot of background writing grants in a group and will assist us with our project. Marie suggested a partnership with Leon Poitras' tribe to accomplish mutual goals.

**C. Discussion of Education Subcommittee Proposal by Marie Davis (PCWA)** Marie is doing a presentation to the Board of Supervisors today on the importance of our watersheds. She stressed education will be a dimension to all of us working within the watershed groups.

Rich suggested we utilize the CWPP information for educational endeavors by super imposing maps that show invasive species and soil and sediment studies onto the maps showing defensible space projections. Rich asked for data to be referred to Ryan Bellanca for mapping. Matt Triggs may have Forest Service information to add about insects/disease. He will try to meet with Ryan to share that information.

Sandra Scott spoke of an educational outreach program to Senior Citizens at Sierra College. The college is one of three 2 year colleges in the U. S. able to offer such instruction. They are interested in adding some science topics to the curriculum this year. The program reaches over 2000 individuals and Sierra College is currently looking for people who are qualified and interested in teaching these classes.

Rich Gresham noted that Dr. Richard Harris is willing to conduct educational outreach for us but will not be able to do so right away because he is newly retired and must wait until he is rehired by UC Berkeley.

Leon said his group is interested in dam projects and park projects. However, their personnel and funds are limited. They have no one available to write grants. However, he believes educational outreach will be of the greatest importance to instill a "connection with nature" in the schools.

Sandra Scott suggested our next step should be to identify priorities, develop a list of grant opportunities and apply for them within the next 6 – 12 months. She stressed the importance of connecting science, math and technology into the educational curriculum. It was suggested that there could be an effort toward intergenerational outreach in our projects and Sandra, Marie and Dr. Harris could add this to the educational outreach plan.

**D. Update on State Funding:**

No new information is available about any State Funding.

**E. Announcements:** Mark your calendars for a Musk Thistle Eradication event at Boca Hill on June 26, 2008.

**Next Meeting and Adjournment:**

The regular meeting for May has been changed and will be held on Thursday, May 22, 2008. It will be at the 10 a.m. starting time in the same location at Canyon View Community Center, Sunset Room.

The May agenda will include a discussion on "Expansion of the Sediment Study Including Other Factors" and more on "Educational Outreach."

The next meeting will be on Thursday, April 17, 2008 at the same location beginning at 10 a.m. The meeting was adjourned at 11:30 a.m.