

Bear River Watershed Group

Thursday, May 22, 2008

1:30 p.m.

Higgins/CDF Fire Station

Corner of Hwy. 49 and Combie Road

Auburn, CA 95602

The meeting was called to order by Lesa Osterholm at 1:43 p.m.

1. Welcome and Self-Introductions:

Present: Lesa Osterholm and Hilary Drucker, Nevada County, RCD; Jane Keillor, Placer County RCD; Mike Nichol, Placer County Water Agency; Chris White, Balance Hydrologics; David Brownstein, Noel Kroeplin, Lisa Lackey and Geri Stout, Wolf Creek Community Alliance; Pat Nelson and David Watkinson, Idaho-Maryland Mining Corporation; Joanne Drummond, Fire Safe Council of Nevada County; Katie Burdick, CABY; Tyrone Gorre, Meadow Vista Resident.

2. Watershed Coordinator Update- Lesa Osterholm:

The DOC has approved a grant and the RCD will be advertising for a Watershed Coordinator with the hope of having someone hired by the middle of June. The term will be for three years. The group may meet each month under a new coordinator.

A. Watershed Coordinator Grant Reports:

Bear River Signage- Hilary Drucker reported working with Elizabeth Bettencourt on the RCD portion of the Bear River Watershed Area. They are following a pilot project similar to the project completed by the San Diego Watershed Group. There will be seven signs. Wolf Creek will also have one on the Nevada County side. A grant has been submitted for the signage. A limited amount of money is available.

B. Watershed Projects Update:

Scotch Broom Challenge Update- The Fire Safe Council of Nevada County and the RCD combined efforts to involve volunteers in the removal of Scotch Broom from Wolf Creek. Each volunteer received an information packet. Local landowners are being encouraged to remove Scotch Broom from their property due to the fire hazard of this plant. At a CABY meeting recently, a discussion revolved around giving school groups a project to remove invasive species and to monitor the project. If anyone has ideas on how we can get this off the ground, please contact Joanne or Hillary with your input.

A group in Alta Sierra will have their first Scotch Broom challenge this weekend and the Scouts will be removing the species from areas belonging to private homeowners. Currently, Scotch Broom is not allowed to be sold in Nevada County and some discussion is currently going on with Placer County to prohibit its sale in Placer County.

Other Projects: Several projects currently in process include the Community Education Forest and the CABY Bridge Project. The goal is to connect schools and other agencies to create working partnerships.

The Forest Project seeks to educate the public in how to take care of the forests. This has been in the works for sometime.

The RCD has secured a grant to produce a video and to conduct ten workshops on "Working Landscapes." In coordination with Nevada, Placer and Yuba counties, the goal is to promote and treat invasive species.

C. Meeting Schedule for 2008- The group agreed to continue with the current meeting schedule and to meet every other month.

3. Speaker, Katie Burdick from CABY-

A. FERC Re-licensing update- Katie is happy to report that more Native American Tribes have become involved in this project.

B. Watershed projects for CABY consideration- (Integrated Water Management Plan, a 73 Million Dollar Grant under Proposition 84 with the Cosumnes, American, Bear and Yuba Rivers) They are putting together a new suite of projects. The initial plan is to have fewer projects. However, they would be larger projects comprised of more components. They also seek to establish a citizen stewardship project that would accomplish the task of providing citizen based solutions to perform functions the government cannot handle. This would include strategically linking people and services together.

Potential projects mentioned include working on invasive species, working landscapes, ground water recharge projects, multi-purpose flood control, watershed protection, overall ecosystems and fishery protection and fire management. All of these things require a large time commitment. Water districts will help with the funding for CABY with the end goal being to obtain money to work on the ground. Mercury studies will also continue.

4. Speaker- Patricia Nelson from Idaho/Maryland Mining Corporation-

A. Idaho/Maryland Mining Corporation Project Update- Ms. Nelson gave a comprehensive presentation about the development of the mine during the last five years. Located on the outskirts of Grass Valley, the site is currently in the environmental review process stage. The mine produces a specialized ceramic, gold and aggregate.

Ms. Nelson noted her organization has taken into consideration the community concerns including the worries about water quality, energy usage and the noise levels.

She explained the monitoring processes involved in making sure the ground water is safe including acid and metal degeneration testing along with the development of a special system to handle storm water runoff. She provided a question and answer period for us.

5. Stakeholder Update:

- *Fire Safe Council of Nevada County-* Joanne Drummond reported it is the 20th anniversary of the 49'er fire.
- *Placer Sierra Fire Safe Council-* Tyrone Gorre reported they are conducting outreach at Founder's Day at Meadow Vista on June 1. He is also working on the tribal FERC process.

Adjournment: The next meeting will be on **July 24, 2008 at 1:30 p.m. at the Higgins Lion CDF Station.** The meeting was adjourned at 3:09 p.m.