



County of Placer

Fish and Game Commission

11477 E Avenue ▪ Auburn, CA 95603 ▪ (530) 889-7372

District 1 – Don Gould

District 5 – Alexia Retallack

District 2 – Mark Fowler

District 5 – Vacant

District 3 – Justin Gragg

District 5 – Frances Ragle

District 4 – Amber Beckler

REGULAR MEETING MINUTES

Wednesday, July 28, 6:00 P.M.

Placer County Planning Commission Hearing Room

11477 E Avenue, Auburn, CA

County Contact: Corrie Larsen

1. **Call to Order:** The meeting was called to order at 6:05 p.m. by Vice Chair, Alexia Retallack
2. **Roll Call**
Present: Amber Beckler, Mark Fowler, Don Gould, Justin Gragg, Frances Ragle, and Alexia Retallack.
Absent: None.
3. **Approval of July 28, 2021 Agenda & approval of June 23, 2021 Minutes**
Agenda: Motion by Fowler, second by Gragg, MPUV
Minutes: Motion by Gould, second by Beckler, MPUV
4. **Public Comment:** None
5. **Financial Report, Year-End Report for FY2021:** Corrie Larsen
 - Current balance: \$24,654.96
 - Court fines and penalties collected: \$344.92
 - General Fund Contributions: \$6,000
 - Charges for remote meetings: \$1568.00
 - Commissioners Fees: \$690.00
6. **Agency Reports**
 - **Commissioner Reports**
 - District 1, Don Gould: None
 - District 2, Mark Fowler: Reported for all districts that the Placer County HCCP was formerly signed on July 22, 2021, an almost 20-year project, focusing on protection of fish and wildlife habitat.
 - District 3, Justin Gragg: None
 - District 4, Amber Beckler: Reported attending meeting for the Granite Bay Municipal Advisory Committee (MAC), acts as Vice Chair, and they created an ad hoc committee called Natural Resources Open Space and Trails. The committee will look at opportunities in Granite Bay to look for open space and trail improvements working in concert with the Parks Department in Placer County. They are looking at the Cottonwood Dam Project and met onsite with Gregg McKenzie who manages the PCCP along with California Department of Fish and Wildlife, local HOA, and Supervisor Jones. Cottonwood Dam is located on Miner's Ravine, in the Hidden Valley Estate subdivision, with about a 60-acre open space area. The dam was built in the 1950s, has had multiple failures, most recently in 2009, and sediment has built up. If successful in receiving funding, the goal is to remove portions of the dam, clean up sediment, and restore the flow on Miner's Ravine. The committee is excited that all the stakeholders who are involved and Supervisor Jones wants to sponsor it. The project estimate is possibly \$500,000 to \$1,000,000 depending

The Fish & Game Commission is composed of appointed community members whose purpose is to advise the Board of Supervisors on matters regarding conservation and management of fish and wildlife. Residents are encouraged to attend and provide input. Placer County is committed to ensuring that persons with disabilities are provided the resources to participate fully in public meeting. If you require disability-related modifications or accommodations, including auxiliary aid or services, to attend or participate in this meeting, please contact the Placer County Agriculture Department at (530) 889-7372.



on level of restoration desired. Next steps: work with Gregg McKenzie and Placer County to identify potential grant opportunities at the State and Federal level. One option suggested by Retallack was to look at the Wildlife Conservation Board and one of the water bonds that included creek restoration, possibly Department of Water Resources. Another suggestion by Gragg was to reach out to CDFW who manages the FRGP, Fisheries Restoration and Grants Program, who provides opportunities to fund fish passage projects. Gould suggested finding volunteers to help with the projects such as fishing clubs. Fowler mentioned Granite Bay Fly Fisherman. Beckler works with Gary Flanagan, and others suggested checking with him about getting local club support. Retallack suggested looking for opportunities for matching funds. As the committee works toward feasibility and concept, more information may be shared with the Commission.

District 5, Alexia Retallack: None

District 5, Frances Ragle: None

General Discussion: As Commission Members are aware of potential projects and get closer to project concept and design, Retallack asked that the Commission share so the Commission may lend support by writing a letter or other options to give support.

- **State Fish & Game Commission Subcommittee:** Mark Fowler
Mark Fowler reported that the California State Fish and Game Commission is reminding big game hunters and reindeer hunters to keep Chronic Wasting Disease (CWD) out of California. There are checkpoints when bringing in game from out of state. Hunters can check the California Department Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) website for more information on how to prevent CWD as well as checking out of state websites about CWD to not bring CWD to California. Currently, there is no detection of CWD in California. CDFW is reminding dog owners to protect pets from Salmon Poisoning Disease, which is especially prevalent in the Feather River drainage. Be cautious when walking near a creek because there is a bacterial organism being transmitted by a parasitic flatworm, a rare occurrence. The disease is running from Sausalito to Chico. Symptoms similar to distemper. CDFW has successfully relocated 1.1 million hatchery salmon from the Iron Gate Fish Hatchery in Siskiyou County, moving them to a nearby facility into the Trinity County River Hatchery due to Klamath River drought conditions. CDFW has received a petition to list Southern California Steelhead as an endangered species. The process will take approximately a year to decide if it will be added to the California Endangered Species list.

Upcoming Events: Bat Talk and Walk, June to September, evening adventure, stand under Yolo Bypass to see thousands of bats. Free fishing day on September 4, 2021.

- **Land Use Subcommittee:** Don Gould – No report

Note: At 6:30pm, Chair, Frances Ragle, took over conducting the meeting

- **Department of Fish & Wildlife:** Lt. Brian Moore
Lt. Brian Moore reported the department is receiving calls about streams drying up. No violations found of people stealing water. Fishing activity is sporadic. Visitors are at Rollins Lake with lots of water, but people are swimming, not fishing. Staff working on required trainings. Two officers conducting interviews and background checks. Hoping for rain. Department hopes Sierra Pacific Industries (SPI) will keep lands open for hunting after shutting down last year due to fire concerns. Responding to hunters calling about refunds for deer tags if unable to hunt.

- **Questions & Answers:** Retallack asked if any hunting restrictions later in the season due to fire; will the season have restrictions or close early due to dry land conditions. Lt. Moore reported the department will most likely not shut down hunting. SPI is private property which allows for public use for hunting and fishing, but they closed last year due to fire concerns, and the hunters abided by request. This may be a possibility again this year due to existing fires. Restrictions on target practice is monitored by the Forest Service and by SPI as a private landowner. Concerns about public being notified were addressed and directed to contact the Forest Service. Fowler asked about checkpoints for CWD. Lt. Moore reported there are checkpoints that need to be published 48 hours in advance to notify the public in a local newspaper. Retallack asked how to support CDFW to notify the public regarding CDW and other news. In the past, printed publications were distributed to notify the public. It was discussed to contact the Communications Department, possibly doing social media posts and press releases. What is primary focus of CDFW in the Fall: drought management and diverting water from waterways. September is the beginning of hunting season: dove, quail, and archery.
- **Nevada Irrigation District:** Thor Larsen, as of July 21, 2021
 - Reservoir Storage = 171,295 AF
 - 76% of 8-year average
 - 63% capacity

With the precipitation year starting July 1st, there is no recorded precipitation at our Bowman Lake rain gage. As we continue to try and save water, our Board of Directors recently adopted stage 2 of our Drought Contingency Plan requiring a 20% conservation of water from our customers. Restrictions include no new or increased sales in agricultural water, no fall water sales, agricultural water used for landscapes is limited to three days a week as well as domestic outdoor use water being prohibited between the hours of 10 AM and 9 PM with no excessive runoff allowed.

- **Placer County Water Agency** – No report this month

General Discussion: Would like to invite NID and PCWA to speak at a future meeting. Further discussion regarding scheduling speakers

7. **Informational Items:** Ron Goode, Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and Cultural Burning
Mr. Goode is a member of the North Fork Mono Tribe (NFMT) and shared a video to demonstrate Cultural Burning. NFMT does Cultural Burning in Mariposa, Madera, Fresno, and Tulare Counties, and burns with the Sierra National Forest, Sequoia National Park, on tribal lands such as Cold Springs Rancheria, and his own family lands as well as private lands in Mariposa County, formerly with the Mariposa Miwok. Works with essential team and invites colleges, various tribes, multiple agencies such as the Governor's Office, Sierra Club, US Forest Service, CalFire, nature conservancies, national parks, state task forces, to gain an understanding of how to burn. Most of these entities are ignitors and suppression fighters, not burners. There is a different philosophy in how to burn the landscape of what to do and how to do it. As Native Americans, NFMT does Cultural Burning, a prescribed burn, makes a burn plan. A key element of Cultural Burning is the spirituality; we are related to everything. Several plants are resources for the Native American community for their healing properties, such as elderberry and manzanita. They view Cultural Burning as a tool, and the difference between a prescribed fire and cultural burn is they want and expect a return, meaning a return of good soil. After one month, the land is clean, and new growth returns since the roots were not burned. Within two months, all sorts of plants and medicines come back such as blood thinning ferns, sunflowers, tobacco, sourberry. Medicines are part of the land. Wildlife also needs and benefits from the seeds. One of the goals is to not leave

much biochar, which is a hot topic right now. Smoke is important because they have lots of mistletoe and California dodder, which are invasive and smoke helps with control. Cultural Burning helps with regrowth of plants which the tribal community uses for medicines. They burn because “It’s all about the water” – creation stories say when they put fires on the land, the water will rise. NFMT is helping the Forest Service assess the meadows.

Questions & Answers:

How do you handle invasive plants like star thistle? Invasive plants like star thistle need to be weeded or mowed so they do not come to seed, but the seed has been there for a few decades and the seed is buried in the ground. It takes time and eventually the seed is gone.

When can we do to bring back the process of Cultural Burning; our soils look scorched? When NFMT burns, they add nutrient to the topsoil with the ash. The objective is to create “the mitten” that once existed. Prescribed fires burn too hot and burn the root system. You want the fast return. The big wildfires are devastating. Looking at the edge of the fire, there isn’t high severity, so some of the charred trees and plants will grow new shoots. Looking at the creeks, the trees are still smoldering and burning. Instead of only the small stream, it has broadened 3-4 feet on each side, and you can see seed springs coming out of the mountain. Look outside the creek area, and you will see little yellow tips because they’re getting the moisture from the meadow nearby, getting new life.

Why is prescribed burning more detrimental? Cultural burning is better for the land because you do not burn the root system. Agencies do prescribed fires for economic reasons; however, cultural burning is done to return the growth, a freshness, and the land returns so it can hold the water, and it comes back thin and sporadic. Then, burning is not required again for another 6-8 years. New growth restores the land. Fire agencies are looking to burn 400, 500, 600 acres to burn at once, putting all the smoke in the air at once, and it creates bad air quality. Rather than burning in 4-6 days, agencies could burn over 30 days, lessen the smoke, and improve air quality. Cultural burning is not to stop wildfire but to act as a defense.

8. Action Item: 2021-22 Commission Grant Timeline, application, and budget update

- Review Mission Statement verbiage
- Applications: open to public, new and previous applicants invited, offer to present to Commission
- Timeline: Press release sent first week in September, deadline to submit app is 10/1, invite applicants to present at October meeting, Commission reviews applications and votes at October meeting, notify grant recipients post October meeting
- Public Information Office issues press release, social media posts, various other options
- Budgeted Amount to Distribute in 2021: \$3500
- Maximum Grant Amount Per Applicant: \$500
- Money dispersed in December
- Grant recipients invited to return to provide project update in June

Motion: Gragg moves to approve application grant application with a \$500 maximum per applicant with an option to grant less than \$500 per applicant based on the number of applications approved, timeline as discussed, maximum budget amount not to exceed \$3500, and make minor edits on application. Gould seconds.

Motion: To approve application and make minor edits to application

Motion: Gragg

Second: Gould

Vote: MPUV

9. **Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 8:13pm. Motion by Gould, seconded by Retallack, MPUV.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, August 25, 2021, 6pm
Planning Commission Hearing Room
3091 County Center Drive
Auburn, CA 95603