

Tuolumne County
Administration Center
2 South Green Street
Sonora, California 95370
Phone (209) 533-5521
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Heather Ryan
*Clerk of the Board
of Supervisors*

**BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
COUNTY OF TUOLUMNE**

David Goldemberg, *First District*
Kathleen Haff, *Fourth District*

Ryan Campbell, *Second District*

Anaiah Kirk, *Third District*
Jaron Brandon, *Fifth District*

**Natural Resource Committee
Wednesday April 5, 2023 @ 10:00 am
Board of Supervisors Chambers
4th Floor of Administration Building.
2 S. Green Street
Sonora, 95370**

AGENDA

1. Call the meeting to order
2. Public Forum – The public may speak on any item not on the printed agenda. No action may be taken by the Committee. The amount of time allocated for the public forum is limited to 15 minutes.
3. Consideration of approving the minutes of the meeting held on February 1st, 2023.
4. Partner agencies updates
 - A. USFS updates
 - B. TUD updates
5. Committee Business
 - A. Staff reports and recommendations
 - B. Committee member reports
6. Discussion Items
 - A. Discussion and approval of next steps with recommendation to the BOS of a draft comment letter to the legislature on wildfire emissions being included in Climate Action Plan (CAP)
 - A. Discuss and approve next steps

In accordance with Government Section 54954.3(a), the public may comment on any item on the agenda. In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act, if you need special assistance (i.e., auxiliary aids or services) in order to participate in this public meeting, please contact the County Administrator's Office, (209-533-5511). Notification 48 hours prior to the start of the meeting will enable staff to make reasonable accommodations to ensure accessibility to this public meeting.

B. Discussion of California Spotted Owl ESA listing as threatened

A. Discuss and approve recommendation to the BOS of a draft comment letter

C. Discussion of Resolution in support of Columbia College BS Cooperative Land Management degree program

A. Discuss and approve recommendation to the BOS of a draft Resolution

7. Open Items

A. Open Carry-on County roads within public lands issue – Update

B. At Large member application process to fill vacancy.

8. Adjourn

Next Regular scheduled meeting will be May 3, 2023

Membership Roster

| Name | Position | Group |
|---------------|----------------------|--------------|
| Anaiah Kirk | Supervisor | County |
| Jaron Brandon | Supervisor | County |
| Kathleen Haff | Alternate Supervisor | County |
| Jim Phelan | Member | TC RCD |
| Jim Maddox | Member | F&G PFAC |
| Dick Gaiser | Member | Ag AC |
| At Large | Member | TBD |

Support Staff

| | | |
|--------------|-----------|--------|
| Eric Erhardt | CAO Staff | County |
| Dore Bietz | OES | County |

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MINUTES

Natural Resource Committee

February 1st, 2023 @ 10:00 a.m.

AN Francisco Building

480 Honey Ave, Sonora CA 95370

1. Call the meeting to order: Meeting called to order by Supervisor Haff @ 10:00 am. (Quorum reached).
 - A. In attendance:
 - A. Committee members (quorum met)
 1. Jim Phelan (Committee Member) Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District
 2. Dick Gaiser (Committee Member) Agricultural Advisory Committee
 3. Jim Marshall (Committee Member) Fish and Wildlife
 4. Supervisor Kirk (Committee Board Member)
 5. Supervisor Brandon (Committee Board Member)
 - B. Staff Present
 1. Andre Rivera (CAO Staff)
 - C. Partners
 1. USFS Staff: Benjamin Counsel
 2. TUD Staff: Don Perkins; Ron Engen
2. Public Forum – The public may speak on any item not on the printed agenda. No action may be taken by the Committee. The amount of time allocated for the public forum is limited to 15 minutes.
 - A. Public Comments – None.
3. Consideration of approving the minutes of the meeting held on November 2, 2022.
 - A. Jaron Brandon moved to approve. Dick Gaiser seconded. Motion passed 5-0.
 - B. Public Comment – None.
4. Partner Agencies
 - A. USFS Travel Management Plan Update
 1. Fresno hiring event was a success. Made 42 job offers for Stanislaus area. Total region 5 openings over 400. Overall hiring events are very successful with next one scheduled in Redding.
 2. Roads are inundated with snow. Unable to get to roads for maintenance and repair. Once snow melts off, road work can continue. It will take some time to repair damage from recent storms. There has been a request for federal funding sources for assistance with the damage.
 3. Forest service housing is an issue. Working with Columbia College to contract use of barracks for staff housing.
 - B. TUD Updates

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1. Main ditch canal was damaged during the storms. It has since been repaired. Was offline for 8-9 days. Falling trees are an issue for the ditch system. This was not included in planning and needs to be added to future planning as is fire safety tree work.
 2. TCWA mentioned as being reactivated and that is a good thing. Support is needed from TCWA concerning the southern portion of the Phoenix watershed.
 3. Phoenix Lake sediment issue in north pool area needs addressed to prevent wasted dredging work and other projects that are expensive.
 4. PG&E acquisition was mentioned as a sensitive negotiation and to allow the process to continue without any interference.
5. Committee Business
- A. Staff Reports and recommendations
 - Review of Tuolumne County of Tuolumne Board of Supervisors goals and priorities for 2023 to align with Natural Resources Committee (NRC) goals and priorities.
6. Discussion items
- A. Committee goals and priorities for 2023
 - A. Discussed and approved the following as NRC priorities for 2023:
 1. Farm Bill, support current language changes, advocate for county, work with partners more involved in Farm Bill appropriations to support county efforts. Academic pathways and partnerships; possibly with UC Merced to get more support in and for biomass products, career pathways, data and studies to support healthy forests. Bio brick, bio timber that is carbon neutral and wood waste by products are possible opportunities.
 3. Grazing as alternative land use to support healthy forests and environments.
 4. Motion to approve 2023 NRC goals and priorities by Jaron Brandon, second by Dick Kaiser, motion passed 5-0.
 - B. Climate Action Plan Emission Letter
 1. Discussion of draft letters to legislature. John Buckley mentioned that letter could be seen as obstacle if not carefully worded and should be sent to non-funding related audience. It was decided that letter was still desired to highlight obvious issue and to raise awareness of the importance of forest health projects in reducing wildfire emissions significantly. Final draft letter to be brought back for next meeting for approval.
 2. Andre introduced wildfire emissions inventory for County of Tuolumne. Will reach out for collaborative input and suggestions to improve the data.
 - C. Discussion of Farm Bill
 1. Discussion of the Farm Bill focused on how NRC can support any added language or efforts to include more support that impacts the County of Tuolumne. Andre to speak to USDA contact to find out how the Farm Bill can support County of Tuolumne efforts.
 - D. Discussion of Columbia College
 1. Discussed how Columbia College degree/certificate programs can support NRC goals of having more qualified candidates for forest health related jobs. Jaron will draft resolution for full board approval. Jim Phelan moved to approve resolution to board. Seconded by Jim Maddox. Motion passed 5-0.
 - E. Drought Declaration
 1. Discussion was tabled until next meeting

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F. Discussion of Biomass Topics

1. In context of SB 495 and AB 2446, having presentations by industry experts was discussed. Presentations will be scheduled at an upcoming meeting.

7. Open Items

A. Open Carry-on County roads within public lands issue

1. County of Tuolumne ordinance on firearms on public roads was discussed.

B. Committee member applications

1. All reappointment applications are submitted, as well the vacant position has applications submitted. Will bring to next meeting to vote on bringing to the board for approval.

8. Meeting Adjourned at 11:30 a.m.

A. Items for next meeting

1. Emissions final draft letter to be approved
2. PM 2.5 levels
3. Drought Declarations
4. Fee Bill
5. Open carry request

Next scheduled meeting March 1, 2013

DRAFT

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With SB 32, California has set targets to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions to 40% below 1990 levels by 2030 and to achieve an 80% reduction of GHGs below 1990 levels by 2050. By 2019, emissions only dropped by 2% in the 19 years since 1990. The state's goal is to reduce emissions by 38% in the 7 years between now and 2030. Furthermore, the State acknowledges there is a "Local Emissions Gap" of about 23.4% after state mandated 14.4% reductions by 2030. (See pages 2-9 and 2-10 in the CAP <https://www.tuolumnecounty.ca.gov/1332/Climate-Action-Plan>). As of 2020, 13.7% of energy consumed in California came from renewables, such as solar, wind and biomass, and excluding hydro (<https://www.eia.gov/state/?sid=CA#tabs-1>). To achieve the targets, the share of renewables needs to increase to about 33% by 2030 and about 70% by 2050.

California has set some of the most aggressive goals to reduce greenhouse gas (GHG) with SB 32. However, there are three key data gaps for climate strategy and policy that need to be addressed not outlined in current legislation: 1) emission increases from megafires as well as unhealthy forests, 2) emission reductions from managed and healthy forests, and 3) untracked environmental cost of inaction in forest health projects.

A study conducted by UC and the University of Chicago demonstrated that one year of megafire emissions effectively eliminated nearly two decades of reductions from other sources, emitting 127 million metric tons of carbon equivalent, or 34% of total CARB-tracked emissions.

The County of Tuolumne respectfully requests the Governor's office take lead to establish a clear, consistent data framework for the state to account for wildfire emissions, emission reductions from forest health projects, and the comparative environmental cost of not taking action. This will empower local government with the data to show strong correlation between healthy, managed forests and achieving state climate goals.

Capturing wildfire smoke and emissions is key for future understanding future health impacts. It is a top reason for school closures and AQI scores of 460 in the Bay Area and Sacramento that threaten pulmonary and respiratory health. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and other mental health impacts for adults and children are substantially increased from fire and disaster.

Governor Newsom, as proud local leaders on the cutting edge of forest stewardship agreements, biomass, timber production, and public-private forest partnerships, Tuolumne County recognizes that data is critical to private investment, public grants, policymaking, and good governance at all levels, and we need your advocacy to see this happen.

We respectfully request the Governor's office to work with the California Air Resources Board, California Board of Forestry, and State Legislature to develop and implement a clear, consistent standard to measure wildfire and forest management emissions to track, target, and reduce emissions while offering us the tools to keep people safe and economies on the rise.

<https://innovation.luskin.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/12/Wildfire-and-Water-Supply-in-California.pdf>

Comment Letter for FWS Docket ID No. FWS-R8-ES-2022-0166

Sent via Federal eRulemaking Portal:

Michael Fris, Field Supervisor
Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office
2800 Cottage Way
Sacramento, CA 95825
telephone 916-414-6700

Re: Comment Letter for Comment Letter for FWS Docket ID No. FWS-R8-ES-2022-0166. Federal Register Number 2023-03526. Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants: California Spotted Owl; Endangered Status for the Coastal-Southern California Distinct Population Segment and Threatened Status with Section 4(d) Rule for the Sierra Nevada Distinct Population Segment

Dear Michael Fris,

The County of Tuolumne appreciates the opportunity to comment on FWS Docket ID No. FWS-R8-ES-2022-0166 regarding the listing of the California Spotted Owl as threatened in the Sierra Nevada DPS. In particular the County of Tuolumne is especially interested in the 4(d) rule associated with the exemption for fuel treatments and forest health activities. The County of Tuolumne understands the importance of the Endangered Species Act and its importance in protecting our wildlife and the interconnected ecosystem.

With the County of Tuolumne having over 77% of land designated as public space, which includes parks and recreational facilities run by various state, federal, regional and local agencies, it is important for the County of Tuolumne to protect our environment, people and resources for generations to come.

The County of Tuolumne currently manages numerous forest health projects that benefit many areas of concern, including but not limited to, wildfire prevention, ecosystem health, and watershed health. The coordination with Sierra Pacific Industries, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the US Forest Service, to manage the areas inhabited by the California Spotted Owl in ways that support the continuity of forest health activities, and the health of the species is crucial in a balanced approach that considers the overall impacts as a whole and also benefit multiple parties.

This letter is to communicate the County of Tuolumne's support for the collaboration and coordinated efforts of Sierra Pacific Industries, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the US Forest Service in documenting and reporting the information related to the listing of the California Spotted Owl. The use of current data, best available information and methods, and any related conditions (weather, project type, species research, etc.) allows for the responsible continuation of forest health related projects that benefit the environment, species, and the public, while also assisting to meet regulatory requirements and protecting our wildlife and the interconnected environment.

Allowing for more flexibility and the use of best available information and methods produces a balanced approach in protecting the environment and the public, while also meeting compliance directives. This is a win for all stakeholders involved. The County of Tuolumne appreciates the consideration of these comments in support of the ESA listing of the California Spotted Owl in the Sierra Nevada DPS as threatened with a 4(d) rule exemption. Implementation of this recommendation will allow for the continuation of much needed forest health activities while also protecting the California Spotted Owl population. I am available for any questions relating to this matter at arivera@co.tuolumne.ca.us or 209-533-5554.

Sincerely,
Board of Supervisors
County of Tuolumne

DRAFT

No. _____

Filed _____

By _____

_____ Clerk of the Board of Supervisors



RESOLUTION
OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF TUOLUMNE

- WHEREAS,** Columbia College was established in 1968 offering a wide variety of transferable and career-driven associate degrees, certificates and awards;
- WHEREAS,** Columbia College is planning to offer a Bachelor of Science degree in Cooperative Land Stewardship that includes Natural Resources, Hydrology and Forest related courses;
- WHEREAS,** The County of Tuolumne is actively managing forest health projects that benefit the area by way of wildfire prevention, watershed health and beneficial use of ecological resources;
- WHEREAS,** The County of Tuolumne has prioritized protecting residents and natural resources from wildfires and related impacts;
- WHEREAS,** Graduates from the Columbia College Bachelor of Science degree program will benefit the County of Tuolumne by providing us with job ready candidates in the forest health fields;
- WHEREAS,** The County of Tuolumne Board of Supervisors supports Columbia College and its efforts to offer degree programs that help in a need for qualified candidates in the forest health field.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED Resolution Summary

ADOPTED BY THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS OF THE COUNTY OF TUOLUMNE ON _____

AYES: 1st Dist. _____
 2nd Dist. _____
 3rd Dist. _____
 4th Dist. _____
 5th Dist. _____

PRESENTS: _____ Dist.
 _____ Dist.
ABSENT: _____ Dist.
 _____ Dist.
ABSTAIN: _____ Dist.

CHAIR OF THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

ATTEST: _____

No. _____

Clerk of the Board of Supervisors