

Tuolumne County
Administration Center
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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
2 S. Green St., 4th Floor
Sonora, 95370**

Minutes

Call the meeting to order

Chair Brandon called the meeting to order at 10 a.m. and confirmed a quorum was present. Members present: Jaron Brandon, Supervisor; Jim Phelan, Jim Maddox, Dick Gaiser

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 member of the public provided comment regarding an article in the newspaper addressing a Forest Service lawsuit jeopardizing the use of crucial wildfire retardant. He suggested bringing a discussion to the committee and Board of Supervisors in opposition.

Consideration of approving the minutes of the meeting held on February 1, 2023.

Jim Phalen noted an error, Supervisor Kirk chaired the meeting. Jim Phelan made a motion to approve the minutes of February 1, 2023, meeting with the correction noted. Jim Maddox seconded the motion. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Supervisor Brandon requested the membership roster be updated to reflect 2023 Board Member appointments of him and Supervisor Kirk to the Natural Resource Committee.

Partner agencies updates

A. USFS updates

Ben Cossel representing the US Forest Service provided an update on the roads and the USFS buildings after the big storms. He also spoke about the landscape and seral projects. He reported that the informational meeting last week in Groveland was successful.

Committee members provided comments.

A public member provided comment regarding the forest service roads and tracking the damage from one storm to another.

B. TUD updates

Don Perkins representing Tuolumne Utilities District (TUD) provided an update on the wastewater treatment plant project, with a completion date of March 2024. He spoke of a funding application for Sierra Pines regional treatment plant and spoke of a number of other TUD water treatment plants. He handed out the TUD newsletter for April-June 2023 and commented on the snowpack and end-of-spills on Lyons Dam.

Committee members provided comments.

A member of the public commented on the Ponderosa Water Treatment Plant.

Committee Business

A. Staff reports and recommendations

Eric Erhardt noted that Andre Rivera resigned and that the County is currently recruiting for the position if anyone knows individuals who might be interested.

B. Committee member reports

Supervisor Brandon provided updates on the recent Board of Supervisor activities including: a comment letter on the Fire Severity Zone; the appointment of Glen Jacobs, TUD Board member; mutual aid agreement with TUD; comment letter opposing AB338 and he requested everyone reach out to the County with identified legislative items they would like addressed. He also mentioned the Board's executive summary on their legislative platform. He announced a meeting in Jamestown today from 2-4 p.m. for a local meat processing program discussion.

A public member provided comment about meat processing options.

A public member provided comment regarding the bio-brick project.

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)

Discuss and approve next steps:

Eric Erhardt introduced a draft letter and Supervisor Brandon noted he and Supervisor Kirk had worked on the draft together. He was hoping for direction from committee members on the draft. It was suggested that staff can rework the draft documents provided and bring them back to the committee for discussion.

A member of the public provided comment regarding wildfire admissions.

A member of the public provided a comment regarding the need to be very direct in

the letter.

B. Discussion of California Spotted Owl ESA listing as threatened

Discuss and approve recommendation to the BOS of a draft comment letter
Liz Peterson spoke about the draft letter and provided a redlined draft for committee comment.

Discussion ensued.

Jim Phelan made a motion to approve sending the letter to include stronger and more clear language and data regarding lost owl PACs. Jim Maddox seconded the motion. It was unanimously approved to send the letter to include the added language.

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

Discuss and approve recommendation to the BOS of a draft Resolution

Eric Erhardt noted that the letter was already approved by the Board of Supervisors and sent off. Supervisor Brandon provided comment regarding other programs Columbia College is working on.

A member of the public provided comment that this program has potential as long as they stay relevant and are meeting the needs of employers.

Discussion ensued.

Liz Peterson reported on a grant that the County is applying for through CalFire to work directly with Columbia College and Mother Lode Training for on-the-job training for heavy equipment operators and employers.

Open Items

A. Open Carry-on County roads within public lands issue – Update
Jim Phelan provided an update on the purpose of the topic. Eric Erhardt will speak with County Counsel for clarification on the County ordinance and how the Sheriff enforces it in Tuolumne County and report back at the next meeting.

B. At Large member application process to fill vacancy.
Supervisor Brandon stated applications will go the Board of Supervisors to vote on filling the “At-Large” committee member seat.

A member of the public suggested a conversation regarding fire hazard clean-up. This item will be agendaized for discussion at the next meeting and it was suggested to invite a guest speaker from the Tuolumne County Resource Conservation District.

Adjourn

Supervisor Brandon adjourned the meeting at 11:29 a.m. and announced the next meeting scheduled for May 3, 2023.

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

Tuolumne County
Administration Center
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Board Clerk of the
Board Of Supervisors

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February 27th, 2023

Attn: Dr. Tom Hofstra
Columbia College
11600 Columbia College Drive
Sonora, CA 95370

To Whom It May Concern,

The County of Tuolumne Board of Supervisors would like to communicate support for the Forestry and Natural Resources Bachelor of Science degree program in Cooperative Land Stewardship that Columbia College is planning to offer its' students. The fact that the Bachelor of Science degree program builds upon currently offered Associates of Science degree programs makes this offering for students valuable, especially for those students who are planning on staying local. This program addresses many student concerns of obtaining a bachelor's degree without the need to travel long distances and allows students to work and study locally, making the goal of a bachelor's degree possible for many local residents.

There is a current shortage of qualified candidates in the fields of Forestry, Land Use Planning as well as Water. While funding is available for hiring of said candidates, qualified individuals with the required academic backgrounds and having any related work experience are in short supply. The County of Tuolumne currently manages large projects related to forest health and is interested in expanding forest health programs and related projects to include more related fields that include watersheds, interconnected ecosystems and continue to implement forest resiliency by way of fuel breaks, pile management (forest thinning, etc.), prescribed burning and reforestation activities that help with overall wildfire prevention, GHG emissions reductions and improved forest and ecosystem health that benefits wildlife, the public and the environment.

Review of the steps taken by Columbia College to ensure viability of the Cooperative Land Stewardship degree program, the interest in said program by potential candidates (survey was conducted of past related Associate of Science graduates, current students and those who currently work in related fields) and reaching out to partners, related industry stakeholders, local agencies, government and more, shows a thorough vested effort making sure a Bachelor of Science offering would be well sought and that there is sufficient interest in the program to project a number of graduates that would then be well suited to enter the workforce prepared for a career in related fields of work. Survey responses reflect a need for better degree program offerings that allow for entry level workers to be able to move up in their careers and this

Bachelor of Science program does just that. The Cooperative Land Stewardship Bachelor's degree program also includes job training or internship/cap stone project as a required element for graduation which better prepares students by providing work experience as part of the learning experience.

Due to the above due diligence in planning of this exciting and new Bachelor of Science degree program offering at Columbia College, the effort was made to ensure student interest, the need of local industries and the collaborative approach to fine tuning of course offerings and suggestions from all stakeholders, the County of Tuolumne Board of Supervisors supports Columbia College in better preparing our local talent to enter into this much needed field of work to address current issues facing the County of Tuolumne.

Sincerely,



Kathleen K. Haff
Chair, County of Tuolumne Board of Supervisors

I hereby certify that according to the provisions of Government Code Section 25103, delivery of this document has been made.

TANYA BRUCHACEK
Executive Clerk

By: Tanya Bruchacek