

Appendix E

Community Engagement Summary

Tuolumne County Climate Action Plan (CAP)

Summary Report of Recommendations from Community Engagement Activities

July 30, 2021

Overview of Engagement Activities

The Tuolumne County CAP engagement process aimed to educate the community and actively engage a cross section of stakeholders in the development and prioritization of greenhouse gas reduction (GHG) reduction and climate adaptation measures.

To achieve this goal, the Tuolumne County CAP Project Team, led by Ascent Environmental with support from Kearns & West, identified the following public participation outcomes or stakeholder engagement objectives:

- Educate and engage a wide range of Tuolumne County stakeholders on the project to build a broad understanding of the CAP's purpose and scope, and why their input is critical to the process.
- Provide stakeholders with multiple, meaningful opportunities to participate in the CAP development process and provide input.
- Align engagement opportunities with key project milestones and deliverables to ensure that stakeholder input can be incorporated to the extent feasible.

Between January and May 2021, the Project Team conducted the following community engagement activities:

- Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors Planning Committee Presentations:
 - January 28
 - March 18
 - May 20
- Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors Natural Resource Committee Presentations:
 - February 10
 - March 10
 - May 12
- Virtual Community Workshops:
 - February 25
 - April 8
 - May 25

The Board of Supervisor Committee meetings served as an opportunity for the Project Team to present and solicit input on CAP developments prior to sharing with the broader community. The content was largely similar for both the Committee meetings and community workshops with the workshops including a variety of virtual tools to help facilitate discussion and encourage input. The virtual tools included polling questions, breakout rooms, and Miro – a virtual whiteboard platform.

The three rounds of Committee meetings and workshops had the following objectives:

Round 1

- Provide an overview of the Tuolumne County CAP process.
- Share findings from the County’s GHG Inventory.
- Solicit participant input on the CAP process and on community vulnerabilities and strengths.

Round 2

- Provide an overview of the Vulnerability Assessment Findings.
- Present and solicit participant input on potential impacts and adaptation strategies.

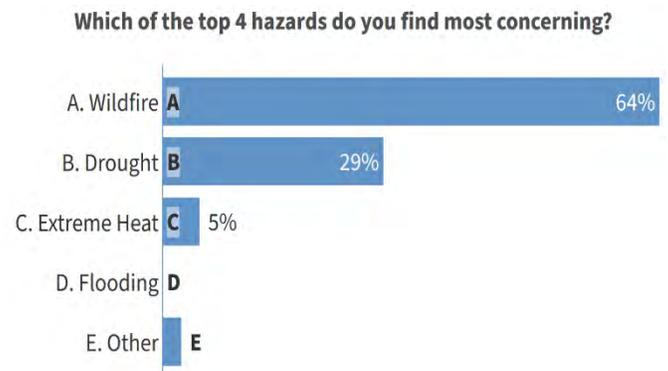
Round 3

- Provide an overview of the GHG Emissions Inventory/Forecasts and discuss draft GHG Reduction Measures.
- Solicit participant input on potential GHG emissions reduction strategies.

Key Concerns and Recommendations

In the first public workshop, the Tuolumne CAP Project Team asked the stakeholders present to identify various community strengths and vulnerabilities. In the second workshop, stakeholders provided input on potential adaptation strategies to ensure the community’s resiliency. Through these discussions in the first two public workshops, following key themes were identified:

- **Wildfires, Extreme Weather Events, Public Safety**
 - **Community Concerns**
 - Catastrophic wildfires are becoming increasingly frequent and emit large amounts of carbon. Much of the infrastructure in Tuolumne County is built of wood, increasing the potential danger of wildfires.
 - Many community members shared the concern for the lack of funding and limited forest management opportunities.
 - Public safety, wildfire resilience and preparedness, and forest management were identified as a few of the most important community functions to prioritize for adaptation strategies in the CAP. Proposed methods include public education, an emergency alert system, and financial assistance.
 - Seeing forestry noted as a large emitter could give the impression that timber harvest is bad, but the lack of timber harvesting in recent decades is a reason behind some of the recent fires.



Poll question results from the first Workshop

- **Emission Reduction Suggestions**
 - Updated fire models and fire management plans are needed – important to develop, practice and regularly update management plans to reduce fire risk.
 - During last year’s required emergency evacuations due to wildfires, there was a lack of evacuation routes. The public would benefit from early detection efforts and more information explaining what to do in case of a wildfire.
- **Water Supply Security**
 - **Community Concerns**
 - Water supply security is needed for economy and growth. Because Tuolumne County doesn’t have any carry-over water storage, snowpack monitoring is critical for predicting annual water supply.
 - Because snowpack will reduce due to the effects of climate change, finding ways to store water through the year will be increasingly important. Water storage presents other concerns though, because the use of dams or other storage facilities will incur large costs and will need to comply with regulations.
- **Vulnerable Populations and Collaboration**
 - **Community Concerns**
 - Community members expressed the importance of considering vulnerable populations in the Tuolumne County CAP’s adaptation strategies. Populations include: churches, indigenous communities, the unhoused or address-less community, communities of color, elderly, disabled, and Amish community.
 - Community members also recommended that the CAP not be done in a silo and encouraged collaboration with the Sonora Energy Action Plan and the Tribe’s General Assistance Program.
- **Transportation and Tourism**
 - **Community Concerns**
 - The majority of GHG emissions in Tuolumne County come from transportation. Community members expressed interest in learning how to decrease GHG emissions without curtailing tourism.
 - **Emission Reduction Suggestions**
 - Diversity in efficient and safe transportation for residents is needed. An increase in options for transportation, like walking, biking, and public transit, would be helpful in addressing transportation emissions.
 - What can the County do to encourage use of electric vehicles?

GHG Emission Reduction Strategies – Prioritizing Exercise

During the third workshop, participants performed a sorting exercise, placing GHG emissions reduction strategies onto a graph based on the strategy’s urgency and importance. The strategies fell into the following categories: building energy, on-road transportation, off-road transportation, agriculture, water, and solid waste. The participants were moved into three separate groups and the discussion was recorded on the Miro program.

The groups were split on whether the building energy strategies were urgent or important, and one group noted with making the grid more reliable, the community would have to rely on propane and other non-renewable energy sources. They expressed that while these strategies may be important, they weren't urgent. The groups agreed that installing electric vehicle charging stations was both urgent and important to encourage reduction in transportation emissions. Participants also added their own strategies, including reducing food waste, providing education, establishing a community choice aggregator, improving active transportation options, and providing preferential parking or other incentives for electric vehicles. The groups generally agreed that implementing the agricultural and water strategies were urgent and important.

