



# Alpine Watershed Group

*Protecting the Headwaters of the California Alps*

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## **STAFF REPORT FOR OCTOBER 22, 2022–FEBRUARY 17, 2023 for Board of Directors Meeting on February 22, 2023**

*Note: This is the second Staff Report re-formatted according to the AWG Strategic Plan to better identify where growth within the organization needs to be developed.*

### **Goal 1: Protect, conserve, and restore Alpine County’s watersheds and the waters that flow through them**

#### **Watershed Assessment and Monitoring**

- \* November 17 – Rachel conducted Mesa groundwater well monitoring with Carson Water Subconservancy District staff.
- \* November 29 – Rachel conducted photo monitoring in Hope Valley at Sites 1 and 2. Due to the ground being covered in snow before staff were able to complete erosion surveys, they were not conducted in the fall, but will be completed in spring 2023. Work is funded by National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (Kirkwood settlement).
- \* February 8 – Rachel attended a webinar on “Environmental DNA 101 & the 2023 Molecular Methods.” This is the first in a six-part series hosted by the State Water Resources Control Board that goes through the beneficial uses of environmental DNA, or eDNA, for bioassessment, detecting HABs, species surveillance, human health, and data analysis.
- \* Winter 2022-2023 – Rachel submitted information to American Rivers for the Faith Valley Meadow Restoration Project interim programmatic report. Funding procured by American Rivers.
- \* Winter 2022-2023 – Hope Valley Restoration and Aquatic Habitat Enhancement Project: Kimra submitted the interim programmatic report and annual financial reports to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Rachel submitted the Annual Monitoring Report to the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board. Rachel submitted the quarterly progress reports for the Central Valley Regional Water Quality Control Board. Work is funded by National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (Kirkwood settlement).
- \* Winter 2022-2023 – Rachel organized the 2022 aspen monitoring data collected for the West Fork Carson Project and submitted it to the National Forest Foundation. Funding procured by National Forest Foundation (NFF).
- \* Winter 2022-2023 – Monitoring Impacts of Tamarack Fire for Meadow Recovery: Kimra submitted the interim programmatic report and annual financial reports to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Rachel organized the Early Detection Rapid Response and Common Stand Exams data collected at Grover Hot Springs State Park and reviewed the draft technical memo from The Institute for Bird Populations in preparation for submitting all 2022 data to California State Parks. Funded by National Fish & Wildlife Foundation — California Forests.
- \* Winter 2022-2023 – Rachel worked on the 2021 and 2022 Water Quality Objectives Reports based on AWG River Monitoring Program data.

## **Restoration**

- \* November 16 – Kimra and Rachel met with US Forest Service (USFS) Forester Annabelle Monti to discuss the Tamarack Restoration Project - Public Scoping.
- \* Markleeville Creek Floodplain Restoration Project – As documented in the quarterly progress reports submitted to grant administrator South Tahoe Public Utility District, numerous meetings were held involving various representatives from the AWG team (Kimra, Carl Ruschmeyer, and Hannah Bartholomew), the Alpine County team, and the Caltrans team, as well as between AWG and grant liaisons. It is anticipated that both the mitigation cooperative agreement and the abutment removal cooperative agreement will go to the Alpine County Board of Supervisors in May 2023. On December 8 Kimra and Bob Twiss attended the Markleeville Public Utility District Board Meeting. Funded in part by an Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Implementation Grant.

## **Goal 2: Increase community awareness and participation in watershed stewardship**

### **Partnership Development**

- \* October 26 – Kimra attended the Carson River Coalition Floodplain Management Working Group Meeting.
- \* October 31 – Kimra attended the tour of Ace Hereford Ranch hosted by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board.
- \* November 4 and January 20 – Kimra attended Create the Good lunches.
- \* November 16 – Kimra and Rachel met with Alpine County Public Health staff and Shelly Blair of California Department of Fish and Wildlife to discuss potential interpretive projects in Hope Valley.
- \* November 17 – Kimra attended the Lahontan Cutthroat Trout Carson Recovery Implementation Team (RIT) meeting.
- \* November 30 – Kimra attended the Carson River Coalition Education Working Group Meeting.
- \* December 6 and February 2 – Rachel attended the first two meetings of the Carson River Coalition Agricultural Producers Working Group. Related, Rachel is coordinating with Avery Hellman and Woollystar Ranch manager/lessee Ryan Morgan to present at the May 9 AWG meeting on his ranching practices and the ecological monitoring at the ranch. Carson Water Subconservancy District (CWSD) announced their Get on the Bus Tour would be happening in June 2023.
- \* December 12 – Rachel attended the Carson River Watershed Invasive Species Working Group Meeting. CWSD is aiming to have more regular meetings for this group again.
- \* December 13 – Rachel attended the Sierra Meadows Partnership bimonthly call. The presentation titled “High Resolution Hydrography Pilot in the Sierra Nevada Mountain Range” covered examples of using spatial data to identify meadow health in the Sierras. Matt Freitas of American Rivers presented one of the examples and how this technology helps in areas more difficult to access.
- \* December 15 and February 16 – Rachel attended Alpine County Interagency Meetings.
- \* January 11 – Kimra attended the Community Meeting to Review CALFIRE Fire Hazard Severity Zone and CWPP Planning Process.
- \* January 12 – Kimra met with USFS Recreation staff to discuss Alpine Resource Advisory Committee project proposals. As a follow up to this discussion, Kimra provided

draft content for a USFS application to the National Park Service Rivers, Trails and Conservation Assistance Program for technical assistance to engage stakeholders to begin development of an East Fork Carson River Hot Springs Management Plan.

- \* January 17 – Kimra attended Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (RFFCP) Subgrantee Workshop.
- \* January 19 – Kimra participated in a focus group on the Leviathan Mine Community Involvement Plan.
- \* January 24 – Rachel and Rich Harvey attended the Alpine Trails Association meeting.
- \* January 25 – Rachel attended the Carson River Coalition Floodplain Management Working Group Meeting and provided updates on the Markleeville Creek Floodplain Restoration, Hope Valley, and Faith Valley projects, and water quality monitoring. CWSD announced the Save the Date for their Spring Forum, April 18 and 19.
- \* February 7 – Kimra attended Alpine Biomass Collaborative meeting.

### **Community Outreach and Awareness**

- \* January 3 and 17 – Kimra attended Alpine County Board of Supervisors meeting to announce the January AWG meeting.
- \* January 17 – AWG hosted a virtual meeting with presentations by the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board on their post-Tamarack Fire water quality data and on water quality data collected by AWG volunteers and AWG volunteer accomplishments in 2022. Twenty-six people participated.
- \* January 25 – Rachel tabled at the Eagles & Agriculture Photography Reception. She interacted with twenty-two people and got three newsletter sign-ups.
- \* Articles in partners’ newsletters:
  - o [Alpine Threads Winter 2023](#) “Highlights from Markleeville Creek Day 2022”
  - o CWSD [Watershed Connections Winter 2022/2023](#) “Faith Valley Meadow Restore Gets Underway” and “Upper Watershed Heals Post-Fire”

### **Goal 3: Build organizational capacity and plan for sustainability**

#### **Regional Coordination and Collaboration**

- \* Organization and Local Capacity-building for Forest and Fire Resilience – Quarterly progress reports were provided to Whitebark Institute for subcontract from Sierra Nevada Conservancy – Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (SNC – RFFCP).
  - o November 14 – Kimra and Rachel met with Alpine County Fire Coordinator Clint Celio to strategize on building Alpine County capacity for wildfire resilience.
  - o November 18 – Rachel attended the California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force: Sierra and Eastside Regional Coordination Group meeting.
  - o February 16 – Kimra and Rachel met with Alpine County Fire Coordinator Clint Celio and USFS Forester Annabelle Monti to strategize on building Alpine County capacity for wildfire resilience.
- \* January 24 – Kimra attended the Take Care Sierra Working Group Meeting hosted by Sierra Nevada Alliance.

## **Organizational Management and Development**

- \* October 25 – The AWG Finance Committee met to introduce new AWG Bookkeeper Stacey Huber, to review Q4 financial reports, and to discuss updates to the AWG Financial Policies and Procedures.
- \* November 1, 8, and 15 – Kimra attended “Accidental Techie: How to Support your Nonprofit without an IT Background” workshop series. Opportunity sponsored by The Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment.
- \* January 24 – Kimra attended a “California Employment Law Update 2023” hosted by AWG’s general liability carrier.
- \* January 31 – Kimra, Bob Twiss, and January Riddle participated in the Strategic Planning Workshop hosted by the California Association of Resource Conservation Districts. Opportunity sponsored by SNC – RFFCP.
- \* February 7 and 9 – Kimra met with former bookkeeper Cami Chavez and new bookkeeper Stacey Huber to continue training.
- \* February 15 – Rachel attended a webinar on “ADA Overview and Basic Legal Obligations.” This is part of a free webinar series with one of the upcoming talks covering “Emergency Preparedness and the ADA.”
- \* AWG has received an extension on filing 2021 tax returns; the new due date is August 15, 2023.

## **Fundraising**

- \* November 16 – AWG Fundraising Meeting (Rich Harvey, Carl Ruschmeyer, Bob Twiss, and Kimra) to discuss 2022 fundraising priorities and ideas raised at the Fundraising Meeting on October 7. The group agreed on the goal to create a Fundraising Plan for AWG by February 2023.
- \* December 13 – Kimra and Rachel met with Avery Hellman to discuss AWG hosting a bar at the Woollystar Music and Film Festival in June 2023.
- \* *Received* – Bently Foundation: AWG received \$10,000 in funding for “Tamarack Fire Restoration, Year 2.”
- \* *Received* – Trout Unlimited Sagebrush Chapter Conservation Grant Program: AWG received \$18,000 in funding for the “Monitoring and Restoring for Upper Carson River Watershed Health: Working in the Post-Tamarack Fire Landscape to Improve Forest Resilience” project.
- \* *Pending* – Nonpoint Source Pollution Grant Program through the Clean Water Act 319(h) funding: Proposal requesting \$250,000 to complete a geomorphological assessment and sediment transport planning model and develop a project prioritization plan for the Upper West Fork Carson River watershed submitted on December 19.
- \* *Pending* – Carson Water Subconservancy District (CWSD): AWG submitted a funding request for \$30,000 for Upper Carson River Watershed Programs and a funding request for \$83,350 (319 grant required 25% match) for the West Fork Carson Prioritization Project. Kimra will present the proposals to the CWSD Finance Committee on February 27.
- \* *Pending* – California Action Corps Climate Fellowship: AWG submitted an application for a Fellow for summer 2023 and for September 2023-August 2024.
- \* *Pending* – The Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment Professional Development Grant: Application is due March 1.