



# Alpine Watershed Group

*Protecting the Headwaters of the California Alps*

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## STAFF REPORT FOR FEBRUARY 19, 2022–APRIL 22, 2022 for Board of Directors Meeting on April 27, 2022

### GRANTS AND CONTRACTS UPDATES

#### **Carson Water Subconservancy District (CWSD):**

On March 24, Rachel attended the Carson River Permit Workshop.

On March 29 and 30, Kimra, Rachel, and Sierra attended the Carson River Watershed Forum. For the AWG presentation on March 30, Kimra gave an overview of AWG and presented on the Markleeville Creek Restoration Project; Rachel gave an update on the Hope Valley Restoration and Aquatic Habitat Enhancement Project; and Sierra presented on the Musser and Jarvis Restoration Weekend outcomes.

AWG has been working to help amplify CWSD's Watershed Moments public service announcement series. Check out all of the videos released on the [I Am Carson River Watershed website](#) (scroll down; released videos have a red "PLAY" button).

#### **Markleeville Creek Restoration Project — Tahoe Sierra Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) Implementation Grant and Caltrans Mitigation Funding for the Floodplain Restoration Project and Markleeville Public Utility District (MPUD) State Revolving Fund Planning Grant for the Sewer Pump Station Relocation Project:**

On March 3, Kimra, Jeff Schwein of Green DOT, Caltrans staff, and California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) staff met to discuss responses to CDFW comments on Caltrans' draft *Habitat Restoration and Mitigation Plan*.

On March 10, Kimra attended the MPUD Board Meeting.

On March 30, Kimra and Rachel hosted an informational booth on the Markleeville Creek Restoration Project at the Markleeville Community Meeting Open Forum on upcoming projects in Markleeville. MPUD's engineer had a booth on the sewer project, and Caltrans had a booth on the Markleeville Bridge replacement project. Kimra also participated in the walking tour that preceded the open house to represent the restoration project.

Kimra drafted a scope of work for final design services by Cardno Entrix and received comments from Carl Ruschmeyer and Hannah Bartholomew that she incorporated into a draft for Green DOT's review. On April 21, Jeff Schwein of Green DOT presented AWG with a draft restoration design agreement based on Alpine County's contract language and incorporating AWG's draft scope of work. The next step is to have Cardno Entrix update the scope of work and provide a cost estimate for final design services.

#### **National Fish & Wildlife Foundation — California Forests:**

The grant agreement was fully executed on April 8, with a Period of Performance of November 1, 2021, to October 31, 2023, and final reports due January 31, 2024.

On March 11, Kimra and Rachel met with Courtney Rowe of California State Parks to discuss how monitoring data collected under this grant could assist CSP staff. CSP could use help monitoring invasive species presence in repaired and burned areas, and natural regeneration in high burn severity areas; Courtney can assist AWG with developing protocols. Rachel and Kimra are working with Helen Loffland of The Institute for Bird Populations to refine the work plan for both vegetation and bird surveys, and our team is coordinating with Courtney on at least two monitoring days between May 20 and June 30. Ongoing discussions include the involvement

of volunteers in the vegetation monitoring; collaboration with the Washoe Tribe; and possibly monitoring some of the tree seedlings planted on April 9 and May 1 on US Forest Service (USFS) land adjacent to Grover Hot Springs State Park.

**South Tahoe Public Utility District (STPUD, Alpine County):**

The *Summary Report for Constituents of Emerging Concern: South Lake Tahoe Wastewater Effluent Monitoring, Alpine County, CA, April 2018 – October 2021* is available on Alpine Watershed Group’s website, [www.alpinewatershedgroup.org/monitoring](http://www.alpinewatershedgroup.org/monitoring) under “PPCP and CEC Monitoring.”

Rich Harvey will give a presentation to the Board of Supervisors on May 3 summarizing the sampling events completed and results determined from the 4-year program.

**West Fork Carson Project – National Forest Foundation (NFF) Partnership:**

AWG staff are scheduled to receive training on the aspen monitoring protocol and conduct baseline monitoring on June 10.

We are working with NFF to coordinate a public field tour of the project area for the July 12 watershed group meeting.

**RESTORATION & MONITORING PROGRAMS**

**Tamarack Fire:**

Restoration:

Between March 23 and March 25, more than 3,000 trees were planted in the Musser and Jarvis watershed by CAL FIRE CCC crews under the leadership of Mary and Bill Young and in partnership with the US Forest Service. Sierra helped plant trees on the March 24 workday.

AWG staff coordinated with Alpine Trails Association and Annabelle Monti of the USFS to host the April 9 Tree Planting Workday, and they continue to coordinate on the May 1 Tree Planting Workday. On April 9, 50 volunteers planted 2,000 trees at three sites. AWG has already received the maximum number of sign-ups for the May 1 workday (70), but we will continue to add new sign-ups to the wait list. To help ensure volunteer safety, we need to limit volunteers to 20 people at the family-friendly site and a total of 50 people at the other two work sites.

On March 23, Kimra, Rachel, and Sierra attended the USFS Carson Ranger District’s Tamarack Restoration Project Public Meeting.

Monitoring:

On February 28, Rachel joined the Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board for their monthly post-fire water quality sampling. Due to Regional Board funding issues for lab analysis of the monthly and storm water sampling events outlined in the *Tamarack Post-fire Monitoring Plan 2021*, AWG tentatively agreed to use available grant funds so that these sampling events could continue for the remainder of the first year post-fire. Storm water samples were collected by Regional Board staff on April 7 based on anticipated peak spring flows.

Sierra continues to work with Rachel on the Musser and Jarvis Monitoring Plan and the documents for the monitoring binder. The draft plan will be submitted to Markleeville Water Company and then the USFS for review in mid-May. Monitoring will be done in June.

Interpretation:

The Carson Ranger District did not receive the funding for the Tamarack restoration interpretive project proposal (two interpretive panels and a brochure) that Annabelle Monti had approached AWG to partner on.

Brian Hansen (USFS) reported at the March 30 Alpine Trails Association meeting that the priority is to replace signage that deals with boundaries, etc., to thwart off-trail, unauthorized use, and that he has requested federal funding of \$20,000 for new signage. ATA has permission to replace kiosks.

### **Creek Day:**

On March 8, Rachel and Sierra attended the Coastal Cleanup Day Meeting hosted by California Coastal Commission. This year Sierra Nevada Alliance (SNA) will be serving as the coordinator for the Great Sierra River Cleanup, and Sierra will be assisting with coordinating all sites, so they attended with their SNA hat on; Rachel attended in preparation for Creek Day again being part of the Great Sierra River Cleanup.

### **Monitoring:**

On March 10, 11, and 12, Rachel coordinated the March River Monitoring Program, including preparing supplies, running turbidity samples, and participating in the monitoring with volunteers. Sierra also helped to run turbidity samples and participate in monitoring with volunteers.

Rachel and Sierra will lead a River Monitor Training on Saturday, May 21, between 11 a.m. and 1 p.m. Anyone interested in becoming a monitor is encouraged to attend, and returning monitors are welcome to refresh their skills.

## **COMMUNITY OUTREACH & EDUCATION PROGRAMS**

### **Outreach:**

On March 1 and April 5, Sierra attended the SLT Earth Day Planning Meetings.

On March 1, Kimra announced the March Watershed Group Meeting at the Alpine County Board of Supervisors Meeting.

On March 8, Kimra, Rachel, and Sierra led the March Alpine Watershed Group Meeting in partnership with the Regional Board. This was the fourth and final forum as part of the West Fork Carson River Vision Project process, and it was focused on ranching. Twenty-five people attended in person and 16 people attended via Zoom. Danny McClure of the Regional Board presented an “Overview of the West Fork Carson River Vision Project & Its Connection to Efforts to Reduce Potential Water Quality Impacts from Grazing in the Watershed,” Valerie Gordon and Devere Dressler of Ace Hereford Ranch gave a presentation on the work done under the 2016 Rivers and Ranches project, and Jessica Gwerder with the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) presented on NRCS funding and project opportunities.

On March 15, Kimra announced the Tree Planting Workdays and Markleeville Creek Restoration Project Forum at the Alpine County Board of Supervisors meeting.

Kimra submitted an article for the *Alpine Threads* spring newsletter on the Tree Planting Workdays.

On April 5, Rachel announced the Tree Planting Workdays at the Alpine County Board of Supervisors meeting.

On April 19, Kimra announced the April 9 Tree Planting Workday outcomes at the Alpine County Board of Supervisors Meeting.

On April 22, Sierra tabled at the SNA Wild & Scenic Film Festival.

## **Partnerships:**

On February 24, Kimra attended the Health and Wellness Coalition Meeting.

On March 1, Rachel and Sierra attended the Alpine Biomass Collaborative Meeting. CAL FIRE's Chief Jim McDougald presented on *CalFire's Home and Community Hardening Program*. Rachel and Sierra arrived early to learn from David Griffith how to run a Zoom hybrid meeting, and Sierra assisted with IT during the meeting.

On March 3, Kimra, Rachel, and Sierra met with Kris Hartnett of Alpine Fire Safe Council (AFSC) to catch up on AFSC projects and to continue the discussion on how AWG can assist AFSC with outreach efforts.

On March 17, Kimra and Sierra attended the virtual LCT Carson Recovery Implementation Team (RIT) Meeting. The attendees provided updates on their timeline with outreach efforts.

On March 17, Kimra attended the Alpine County Interagency Meeting.

On March 22, Kimra and Rachel met with Becky DeForest (Alpine County Chamber of Commerce), Erica Forzley (Alpine County Health Department), and Debbi Waldear (Friends of Hope Valley) to discuss how the Aspen Festival could look in 2022 and who might be able to assist. The next planning meeting is set for April 26.

On March 23, Kimra and Rachel attended the Health and Wellness Coalition Meeting.

On March 28, Kimra attended a meeting "Exploratory Discussion on Starting a Tree Nursery in Alpine County." This meeting was coordinated by Dan Kaffer at the request of David Griffith so that attendees, which also included JT Chevallier, could learn about nursery development from Ed Kleiner (Comstock Seed) and Dan Greytak (retired from Washoe State Tree Nursery). Subsequently, JT and David invited Kimra to join them to visit the L.A. Moran Reforestation Center commercial nursery in Davis, and Kimra suggested that a tour of the USFS nursery in Placerville be combined with this trip. The field trip has been postponed due to Community Development being shorthanded.

On March 31, Kimra attended the Alpine Mental Health Annual Stakeholder Planning meeting; AWG was requested to participate in one of the focus groups as an Alpine County partner.

## **Trainings:**

On February 24, Kimra attended the presentation by California Employers Association at the SNA quarterly meeting to learn about labor law updates in 2022.

On March 2, Kimra, Rachel, and Sierra attended the Sierra Nevada Watershed Improvement Program (WIP) Summit, which focused on wildfire recovery and what can be done to restore forests and rebuild communities.

On April 19, Rachel attended the webinar "Spotlight on Wisconsin – Integrating Volunteer Monitoring Data into Clean Water Act Monitoring, Assessment, Reporting, and Management."

## **FUNDRAISING**

### **Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (RFFCP)**

#### **Early Action (EA) Funding:**

On February 22, Rachel and Kimra attended the RFFCP Subgrantee Workshop on Capacity Building, and on March 29 Kimra attended the RFFCP Subgrantee Workshop on Capacity Building #2. The purpose of these workshops is to help Sierra Nevada Conservancy gather information so they plan the best possible capacity-building programs to assist grantees.

Whitebark Institute and AWG received a draft Project Scope and Activities for Whitebark Institute's agreement with SNC; it included a section on the anticipated Whitebark

subcontract with AWG and associated activities. Kimra, Rachel, and Whitebark coordinated to get all questions and comments resolved with SNC. That agreement is moving along at SNC, and once in place Whitebark and AWG can work on the subcontract.

## **ADMINISTRATION**

### **Staffing:**

Kimra and Rich Harvey conducted Rachel's 3-month review on March 3.

On March 24, SNAP Program Director Seth Connolly visited AWG for the SNAP Host Site Visit. After meeting with Kimra and Rachel, Kimra and Seth visited Sierra who was helping plant tree seedlings in the Musser and Jarvis watershed.

Kimra received her written annual review from Rich on April 6.

With Rich's approval, Kimra signed the letter of engagement with CPA Nicole Sachse to prepare the 2020 tax returns (for October 1, 2020-September 30, 2021). Kimra has provided Nicole with our QuickBooks files and the requested additional information for tax return preparation.

Kimra will forward bookkeeper applications to the Finance Committee and Rich Harvey.