



# Alpine Watershed Group

*Protecting the Headwaters of the California Alps*

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## **STAFF REPORT FOR AUGUST 20, 2022–OCTOBER 21, 2022 for Board of Directors Meeting on October 26, 2022**

*Note: Staff Report re-formatted according to Strategic Plan to better identify where growth within 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**

- \* August 25 – Early Detection Rapid Response Survey at Grover Hot Springs State Park to identify vegetation growing in areas impacted by fire suppression tactics. Funded by National Fish & Wildlife Foundation — California Forests.
- \* August 29-September 1 – Common Stand Exam Surveys with California State Parks staff. Rachel and Sierra were trained on the first two days, and Rachel continued to help monitor with State Parks staff the third and fourth days. Funded by National Fish & Wildlife Foundation - California Forests.
- \* September 8 through 10 – River Monitoring. Rachel coordinated scheduling before the event, and Sierra continued coordination during the event. Sierra also prepped all materials, ran turbidity samples, and went out to a couple of the sites with volunteers. Data was inputted at a later date by Rachel.
- \* September 20 – Harmful algal bloom (HAB) monitoring conducted by Rachel, Sierra, and Carl Ruschmeyer at Red Lake. Lab results came back negative for HABs.
- \* September 22 – Sierra and Rachel completed the second round of monitoring in the Musser and Jarvis drainage. Sierra also drafted the first draft of the first-year report before their term ended. The report is anticipated to be released winter 2022/2023.
- \* October 5-7 – Rachel assisted Julie Fair with American Rivers in conducting stream flow measurements and beaver surveys for Faith Valley Meadow Restoration Project. Funding procured by American Rivers.
- \* October 13 – Kimra and Rachel completed half of West Fork Carson Project aspen monitoring in Hope Valley. Funding procured by National Forest Foundation (NFF).
- \* October 17 – Rachel completed second half of West Fork Carson Project aspen monitoring. Funded by NFF.
- \* October 18 – Rachel, Carl Ruschmeyer, and Roger Funston of the California Alpine Club Foundation conducted HAB monitoring at Red Lake. Due to visual observations of a HAB, caution signs will be placed out at Red Lake. Updates will be made when lab results come back.

#### **Restoration**

- \* August 22 – Rachel and Kimra met in Hope Valley at Sites 1 and 2 with project designer Matt Weld and contractor Loren Roach. The group toured the project sites to determine next steps and discuss overall project success. Due to recent beaver activity directly downstream of Site 2 causing pooling, sod plugs and some willow stakes are doing much better than anticipated. More willow stakes were put in the ground

around the project site during Markleeville Creek Day 2022. Matt and Loren felt the vegetation at Site 1 was looking really great. This includes the sod plugs put in by volunteers during Markleeville Creek Day 2021. The green exclusionary fence around Site 1 was removed during this year's Creek Day, and discussions will begin with project partners on whether there is a need or desire to have the exclusionary fence up one more year. Work is funded by National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (Kirkwood settlement) as part of the Hope Valley Restoration and Aquatic Habitat Enhancement Project.

- \* August 22 – Kimra and Rachel attended the Faith Valley Meadow Restoration Project Pre-Construction Meeting. Rachel also toured some of the proposed beaver dam analog (BDA) sites with the project BDA specialist and BDA contractor Great Basin Institute (GBI). Construction started on August 22 and was wrapped up mid-September. GBI crews were out until early October constructing BDA structures. Funding procured by American Rivers.
- \* September 13 – Rachel held Creek Day team leaders meeting with Rich Harvey, Andy Lovell, and Mark Schwartz. The group discussed logistics of the day, project needs, and outreach.
- \* September 17 – Markleeville Creek Day was successful in bringing in over 50 volunteers and completing work at eight project sites. Please see the attached Creek Day Outcomes form or click [here](#).
- \* October 20 – Kimra and Carl Rushchmeyer met with Jeff Schwein of Green DOT and Caltrans regarding Cardno's updated total project cost estimate for the Markleeville Creek Floodplain Restoration Project of \$2,239,500. Caltrans agreed to increase the amount of the mitigation cooperative agreement from \$900,000 to their maximum available of \$1,653,000. This leaves a \$198,978 funding shortfall. Kimra will get an updated cost estimate from Cardno for a project with a total budget of \$2,040,522 (\$1,653,000 from Caltrans; \$387,522 from Integrated Regional Water Management grant) that satisfies all Caltrans mitigation requirements. 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 January 2023.

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

### **Partnership Development**

- \* August 24 – Rachel attended the Carson River Coalition Education Working Group.
- \* August 29 – Kimra participated in a West Fork Carson Project site visit with Annabelle Monti of US Forest Service (USFS), Alpine County Wildfire Project Coordinator Clint Celio, California Fire Safe Council staff, and CAL FIRE.
- \* August 29 – Kimra attended the virtual meeting on the “History and Current Status of the Leviathan Mine Superfund Site in Alpine County.”
- \* September 1 and October 18 – Kimra attended Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (RFFCP) Subgrantee Workshops.
- \* September 6 – Rachel attended Great Sierra River Cleanup Site Captain Meeting.
- \* September 6 – Kimra attended Alpine Biomass Collaborative meeting.
- \* September 9 – Kimra and Bob Twiss attended Markleeville Public Utility District Board Meeting.

- \* September 12 and October 20 – Kimra attended Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (RFFCP) - East Side Meetings.
- \* September 14 – Kimra attended Health and Wellness Coalition meeting.
- \* September 15 and October 20 – Rachel attended Interagency Meetings.
- \* September 22 – Kimra submitted a letter of support for Carson Water Subconservancy District's NDEP 319(h) grant submittal for the Carson River Coalition Watershed Coordination Program.
- \* September 28 – Rich Harvey attended the South Tahoe Public Utility District (STPUD) Recycled Water Strategic Plan Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAG) meeting.
- \* October 1 – Rich Harvey attended the Alpine Trails Association meeting.
- \* October 4 – Rachel attended webinar on “How to Engage People with Disabilities in Emergencies.”
- \* October 11 – Rachel attended Alpine County ParkRx Meeting.
- \* October 11 – Danny McClure of Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board and Kimra spoke about upcoming grazing ranch tour for ranchers.
- \* October 12 – Rachel submitted volunteer data for the year to Brian Hansen with USFS.
- \* October 13 – Andy Lovell gave Rachel and Kimra a tour of the proposed new disc golf course.
- \* October 17 – Rachel recorded voiceover for Carson Watershed Subconservancy District’s November Watershed Moments PSA.
- \* October 20 – Kimra and Rich Harvey attended Herman Fillmore’s presentation on “Washoe History: Precontact to 1960.”

### **Community Outreach and Awareness**

- \* September 20 – Kimra attended Alpine County Board of Supervisors meeting to announce Creek Day successes.
- \* September 14-16 – Sierra attended Sierra Nevada Alliance Conference and presented on Alpine Watershed Group.
- \* October 4 – Kimra attended Alpine County Board of Supervisors meeting to announce Creek Day with full list of sponsors and distribute Creek Day Outcomes sheet.
- \* October 21 – AWG volunteers helped with Snapshot Day, organized by River Wranglers.

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

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

- \* August 30, September 13, September 20, and October 4 – Kimra met with partners for the proposed Amador-Alpine-Calaveras-Tuolumne (AACT) Natural and Working Lands (NWL) Collaborative to finalize application for the Strategic Growth Council Regional Climate Collaboratives Program. Lead Amador Resource Conservation District submitted the application for a \$1,744,709 grant that included a budget of up to \$91,615 for AWG.

### **Organizational Management and Development**

- \* September 6, 13, 20, and 27; October 4, 11, and 14 – Rachel attended the California Post-Fire Forest Resilience Workshop hosted by University of California Cooperative Extension. Participation funded by Sierra Nevada Conservancy RFFCP grant.
- \* September 21 – Board and Staff Retreat

### **Fundraising**

- \* Creek Day sponsorships: Six \$250 sponsorships totaling \$1,500
- \* AACT NWL Collaborative proposal (see above)
- \* Alpine County Chamber of Commerce made a \$1,250 contribution to AWG for Death Ride 2022 on August 31.
- \* The Keith Campbell Foundation for the Environment: AWG received \$5,000 for general support on September 7.
- \* Trout Unlimited Sagebrush Chapter Conservation Grant Program: Application is due November 1. Kimra will present the application to the Conservation Committee on December 6.



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**Markleeville Creek Day**  
Saturday, September 17, 2022

*52 volunteers worked at eight project sites  
72 bags of trash removed and 25 bags of invasive weeds removed*

## **Projects & Outcomes**

### Hope Valley Willow Stakes

- 102 willow stakes installed
- Prepared site for winter by removing approximately 600 feet of public exclusionary fence

### Invasive Weed Removal at Grover Hot Springs State Park

- 25 bags of invasive tumble mustard removed from ½ acre in the meadow

### Beaver Dam Analogs at Faith Valley

- 1 Beaver Dam Analog installed

### River and Dispersed Camping Areas Cleanup

- 54 bags of trash (~ 500 lbs.) and approximately 50 lbs. of recyclables collected along a 1-mile stretch in Woodfords Canyon

### Adopt-A-Highway

- 10 bags of trash (~ 60 lbs.) collected along 7 miles of Highways 88 and 89 through Hope Valley
- 5 bags of trash (~20 lbs.) and approximately 12 lbs. of recyclables collected along a 4-mile stretch of Highway 89 from Markleeville Campground to Monitor Pass junction
- 3 bags of trash and 1 bag of recycling collected along a 3.5-mile stretch of Highway 89 from Markleeville Campground to Turtle Rock Park

### Event Partners

Alpine Trails Association  
American Rivers  
California Alps Cycling  
California Coastal Commission  
California Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Department of Agriculture, Alpine County  
Friends of Hope Valley  
Grover Hot Springs State Park  
Markleeville Enhancement Club  
Sierra Nevada Alliance  
Sierra Nevada AmeriCorps Partnership  
US Forest Service  
Wylder Hotel Hope Valley

### Sponsors

Alpine County Chamber of Commerce  
Alpine County Health and Human Services  
Carson Water Subconservancy District  
Liberty Utilities  
Lumos & Associates  
Resource Concepts, Inc.  
Sninkelletti Art  
Wildscape Engineering

### Refreshments and Lunch for Volunteers

Costco  
Grocery Outlet (Gardnerville)  
Safeway  
Starbucks