

Yuba Forest Network Quarterly Meeting Notes

February 3, 2023

SYRCL Office, Nevada City

In-Person Attendees: Anne Marie Holt, Kat Perlman, Keri Rinne, Erika Seward, Cherilyn Ashmead, Jeff Lauder, Alex Keeble-Toll, Alessandra Zambrano, Eric Sweet, Landon Hack, Allison Thomson, Nick Clavell

Zoom: Michael Bagley, Rosie Gonzalez, Debie Rasmussen, Carson Clark, Dan Johnson, Chris Dallas, Laurie Oberholtzer, Reed Hamilton

Announcements

- 1) The Yuba Watershed Protection and Fire Safe Council was recently awarded funding from CAL FIRE and Yuba Water Agency for new project Forest Business Alliance: Capacity & Peer-learning for Yuba Forest Health. This funding will support capacity-building for grant-writing, business development, planning a peer-learning network, and funding for technical assistance for businesses applying for forest health grants. The Alliance project was designed by a team of experts in critical fields such as forestry, business development, and grant writing.
 - If you are interested in learning more, receiving technical assistance, or participating in workshops or the peer-learning network, contact Vance Russell or Keri Rinne:
 - Vance.Russell@outlook.com
 - Keri.Rinne@gmail.com
- 2) Nevada County: **Quarterly Stakeholder Meeting on March 3rd from 10 am – 12 pm** at Grass Valley Veteran's Hall
 - Meeting will involve navigating through the Fire Adapted Communities (FAC) Strategy Tool, and exploring overcoming community archetypes
 - Nevada County OES currently has three OFPs
 - Updates to different plans- are on Public Purchase until end of February
 - These are opportunities for engagement for local stakeholders
- 3) Yuba College: Yuba College is looking for organizations interested in aiding in their new natural resources certification management program. Contact Michael Bagley for more information:
 - mbagley@yccd.edu

Erika Seward, Nevada County

County Recreation and Resiliency Master Plan Presentation

- This initiative based in County interest in community strategy and conservation finance with various partners
- **County Recreation Overview: 2022-2023 Board Objective** to promote sustainable recreation in partnership with community providers and other jurisdictions to enhance recreational access, support public health and safety, realize economic opportunities, and preserve natural resources assets
 - Catalyst was trying to get disparate project and plans pulled together within the County
 - Planning Department focusing on General Plan and integrating climate adaptation strategies, executive team and community members expressing need for a cohesive plan
- Recreation Initiatives: this is the first time a collaborative has been formed focused on sustainable recreation objectives, using initiatives formed in Tahoe area as a model
 - Initiatives include Master Plan, strategies for health and safety, collaboration, and capacity
- Recent County Recreation highlights:

- Nevada County secured \$200k grant through SNC to amplify impact of future of Resiliency Plan; \$250K from County ARPA funds
- South Yuba River Public Safety Cohort- celebrated 5 year – meets monthly
- Dispersed 9 outdoor visitor safety fund grants, including SYRCL, BYLT
- Second round of grant applications being announced next week
- 7 community resilience grants
- County is zipping initiatives up into focus area on recreation, with efforts being leveraged and rolled up into Recreation Master Plan
 - Have convened over 200 stakeholders this year from public land managers, agricultural community, fire and law enforcement, road and transit
- County Board recognizes the importance of recreation: thinking about what outdoor recreation means, especially for rural communities, and the ability to invest in infrastructure, safety
- **Master Plan process:**
 - Design Workshop is the contractor brought on through RFP process panel with county staff and team
 - Their team behind first ever Recreation Resilience Master Plan in Mariposa County, and since that time have they moved into projects and implementation
 - Design Workshop Team working with Nevada County and community members over next 12 months, working with Sierra Business Council and Dudek as subcontractors and building a resilience framework
- **What is a Recreation and Resiliency Master Plan?**
 - County has never done work like this before
 - It is something that can guide County and community into broad vision, representing all voices
 - Goal is to capture spirit of Nevada County and identify recreation needs and opportunities and identify projects, and then align this with funding
 - What is unique to this plan is the Resilience layer- clarifying how community wants to define resiliency, planning for shocks and stressors, floods, human traffic, etc.
 - Moving through Stakeholder Engagement process- defining resiliency as “capacity of any entity to maintain essential function and identify while recovering from shocks and stressors”
 - Design Workshop projects: Trails Planning, concept designs, bike parks, working with public lands managers
 - Nevada County plan looking at day to day activities but also response and recovery to issues, disasters, etc. and providing opportunities and programming for community
 - Stressors Nevada County is facing: wildfire, flood, recreation, temperature increase, economic stressors, ecosystem degradation
- This planning process started in October, with four focus groups held since then bringing in agriculture and agrotourism, health and wellness, etc. and have facilitated conversations in standing meetings
- **YFN asked to participate in Survey going out on March 1**
 - **YFN can help disseminate this info, engage stakeholders to be involved in advisory community, etc.**
- Ideas shared so far in planning process:
 - What makes Nevada County special? An inventory of assets that makes County unique
 - Challenges: what has been coming forward? Crowding, loss of resources, trash, mobility gaps, lack of connection, overuse, etc.

- Risks: distrust in government, social isolation, water quality, soil contamination
- Opportunities- volunteerism, collaboration, skills building
- Next part of planning process: Corps Team meeting and Stakeholder Working Group coming together in next few weeks
 - Three different community engagement windows
- **There is an opportunity to showcase YFN work through this Plan (Stakeholder Map, Resilience Strategy)**
- Next step of inventory and mapping – how to bring projects forward (Resilience Strategy)
- Ways YFN can support: explore collaborative opportunities, participate in Master Plan Process
- **First public survey will go out March 1st, open to all- Anne Marie to send to group**

Future of YFN Discussion

- A year since Resilience Strategy completed by Strategy Subgroup- it's time to talk about what it is and what it can be moving forward
- **YFN goals:** collaborative community among practitioners, to develop consolidated resource sharing platform (YFN page, newsletters, Stakeholder map), ID need areas for forest health work (mapping tool), and increase forest health across the watershed (through Project ID)
- **Are YFNs existing resources beneficial? Could they be expanded upon and how?**

SWOT Exercise- Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats

- **Strengths:** participants that show up have a lot of passion and knowledge to bring to group itself, bringing a varied talent pool to the group, a location to learn together, builds face time and partnership
- **Weaknesses:** Redundancy, duplication, saturation of tools, networks, geographies within this space of forest and fire management- a lot of things happening that are very similar
- **Weakness and Opportunities:** tools themselves needing to be maintained and updated, being shared, general awareness of these tools – but also the capacity to keep these tools updated, roles and responsibilities
 - Cross-county engagement and collaboration: a lot of focus on Nevada County, so for example how to get more representation and engagement and cross-collab with Yuba County, and Sierra County
- **Opportunities:** building onto the mapping tool – how to best update this? How to track projects and returns on investment of dollars coming into projects, dollars coming into projects in the area, so expanding use and facets of this tool
 - Is YFN going to continue to own this mapping tool? Do we have the resources and capacity to keep this, and make it the primary tool for regional use?
 - Yuba County- has a mapping tool, but having trouble with stakeholder buy-in to use it, and want to integrate it with YFN tool potentially
 - CABY also has a tool, but also not maintained – but would be good to bring over water agency projects too
 - An annual central roadmap for YFN – to tell people when they need to be engaging and what they are engaging around
 - Sierra Meadows Partnership – part of engagement “requirement” is to help maintain and update the Stakeholder map, if it's being used within the project/grant application, etc.
 - **Return on Investment:** multi-benefit piece tied to economic development, community growth, etc. so goes beyond forest health (as piece of mapping tool)

- **Threats:** longevity and maintenance to the tools and resources provided by YFN

Questions to consider for future of YFN

- How can YFN help move the Stakeholder Mapping tool forward- support from County GIS departments? Potential there with Yuba County, maybe with Nevada County?
- Funding for effort, collaborative benefit of this group – what are next steps to get funding to this effort for the mapping tool?
- Some sort of MOU structure needed, or letter of support with logos on it
 - To help get stakeholders behind projects, and opportunities to show YFN support for projects and grant applications
- How can we be guided by action-oriented outcomes (to battle meeting and collaboration fatigue)
 - Discussion questions need to be action-oriented: GOAL is to have meeting attendees have something specific to take away from meetings
- Could YFN sit at place of broader meta-organization/place of integration and overlap of other groups/meetings/collaborations that do the same thing?
- High value to the fact that this is a watershed-level group – but how to align with other groups that are overlapping?
- Who are the other pillars and forums that YFN needs to be engaged with (a map or organizational chart)
 - Building this map/chart could be what we do at the next meeting
- **YFN could be the umbrella that brings all together, with goal of having not just non-profits attending**

YFN Goals and Timelines for next 6 months to a year:

- How to keep ball rolling and keep momentum between Quarterly Meetings- sub-groups?
- If anyone wants to join Strategy Sub-Group- open invitation, reach out to Anne Marie

Next Steps and Action Items:

1. Can plan other focused, more goal-oriented meetings as needed
2. If anyone wants to join Strategy Sub-Group- open invitation, reach out to Anne Marie
3. Build map/chart of stakeholders and regional organization and where are the other resources and mapping tools – Anne Marie to share this on a shared drive with YFN for entire Network to contribute to
 - a. For example, a Google Doc for all to start filling in
 - b. Includes pillars, stakeholders, meetings
 - c. For discussion at the next Quarterly Meeting
4. An Organizational Structure chart/map/tool
5. By the end of 2023, a Roadmap laid out with critical timelines for the Network, can be discussed at the last Quarterly Meeting of the year
 - a. It needs to be clear what YFN does and does not do- **clarifying this is a next step**
 - i. Do we DO projects? Or do we support groups doing projects?
 - ii. Better use of YFN time to create a framework that considers everybody/all stakeholders?
 - b. Refining YFN focus, mission, and goals

- i. Helping collaborative projects identify missing pieces or gaps within their projects – finding ways to support projects from stakeholders and collaborative groups within our region/Network
 - c. A collaborative forum with a lot of utility across multiple jurisdictions- YFN could help projects be appealing in the future to block grants, landscape grants, etc. because we have existing road map, collaborative communications
- 6. Funding through Governor’s Office of Planning and Research with deadline in July for Climate Risk and Resilience AND Planning and Land Use – could be a collaborative grant opportunity for the Network possibly?
- 7. **First public survey will go out March 1st, open to all- Anne Marie to send to group**