



ISSUE 2 - 2009

FOREST WATER COALITION UPDATE

On June 19th, TuCARE announced at the Community Forest Forum we would be gathering members for a water coalition. Our goal is to educate those who benefit from a healthy watershed with clean drinking water and an affordable, and reliable, supply of agricultural water. Since all water used downstream in the Central Valley and the urban areas of the coast originate in the Sierras, we believe California's water crisis needs to address the source of the water, namely the forests of the Sierras.

Our education campaign includes a message about healthy forests, forests that must maintain a balance between growth and removal. We use scientific data that explains how the reduction in the amount of vegetation on the forest increases the yield of water through the watershed. Furthermore, there is evidence that a thinned forest increases snowpack, thus increasing the amount of spring run-off in streams, rivers and dams.

In order to create a powerful coalition, we are attempting to align our coalition with currently established water coalitions in the valley and up and down the state. We need TuCARE members to help in this effort. We have established a list of individuals, businesses and organizations, including the Tuolumne County Farm Bureau, who are part of the Forest Water Coalition. If you would like to be a part of this effort, please return the blue sheet included in this newsletter. There is no cost to join, but donations are appreciated. The Forest Water Coalition committee is chaired by Chris Conrad, TuCARE Board Secretary. Coalition members will be given "Action Alerts" as we move forward with our efforts.

The PRESIDENT'S CORNER



As I see it, on a scale of 1 to 10, uncommon nonsense is at a 12.

Let's review our current situation. Locally, SPI has closed the Standard sawmill, and the Chinese Camp mill is running part time because it is about out of cedar logs. Our county is preparing to lose over 500 jobs as the timber industry winds down. Conversely, we are building a new Tractor Supply and Lowe's to sell the very products we can't produce.

On Wednesday, August 26th, the fire danger was so high that several timber operators cutting on the Stanislaus National Forest were required to stop work at 1:00 pm for fear their equipment might spark a fire. On the same day, one ridge over, the Yosemite Park Service purposely set a fire near a small community. The 91 acres that was supposed to burn was spared, at the expense of 7,200 other acres. *Sixteen million dollars* later, the "prescribed" wildfire was contained. In an admission that defies logic, common sense, science, and a desire to keep his job... when asked if he would do it all over again, Dave Uberuaga, the Acting Superintendent of Yosemite National Park said, "Yes." This gave real meaning to the "Acting" part of his job title.

On August 6th, the Sierra Forest Legacy took stock of the timber situation in California and decided it was a perfect time to deliver the final blow. It came in the form of a lawsuit to further restrict Forest Service timber sales. The Legacy group argues that it will suffer irreparable harm if the Forest Service goes ahead with its program of forest thinning. This is all on the heels of new research released by Dr. Tom Bonnicksen, Professor Emeritus of Forest Science at Texas A&M University, which documents findings indicating that all of California's 14 million cars would have to be garaged for over 3 1/2

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Spring and Summer Activities Kept Us Busy!

TuCARE didn't let a tight budget slow us down this spring and summer. In the month of May, our busiest school tour month, TuCARE toured more than 700 school kids from Tuolumne and neighboring counties. We had booths at both the Calaveras County Fair and the Mother Lode Fair. We facilitated "A Day on the Farm" with over 200 preschool and kindergarten students at Summerville High School with their FFA students. We also worked with Don and Laurel Rumsey of Mother Lode Ranch to help facilitate a ranch trip for close to 200 2nd and 3rd graders from Tuolumne County schools. (*Thanks Again, Don and Laurel!*)

We gave several presentations to adult service organizations, participated in Leadership Tuolumne County, conducted horseback fieldtrips into the Emigrant, attended the National Forest Counties and Schools Coalition Conference in Reno, Nevada, hosted "Senior Day in the Woods" with Modesto Junior College at Bob Kinsinger's Kinland Forest (*Thanks Again, Bob!*), hosted a Community Forest Forum and a Safety Net Faire, conducted a 2-day fieldtrip for the Tuolumne County Forestry Institute for Teachers, attended both the Tuolumne County Farm Bureau and the Calaveras County Farm Bureau annual dinners and auctions, coordinated and hosted a 2-day workshop for American Stewards of Liberty (formerly American Land Foundation and Stewards of Liberty) with regional county representatives, supervisors, and organization leaders, and we also made time to attend Tuolumne County Board of Supervisor meetings, held meetings with our elected officials, and planned for the upcoming school tour season.

YELLOW + BLUE = GREEN

Look for our new Education Campaign. We're teaching a simple message. **SUN** and **WATER** create **GROWTH**. But what happens when there's too much **GREEN** (overgrown forests)? What if there's not enough **YELLOW** (too much shade) or not enough **BLUE** (drought)?

Then **YELLOW + BLUE ≠ GREEN**

It makes **BROWN, BLACK and ORANGE!**



SAVE THE DATES!

October 29 & 30

**TuCARE's ANNUAL
NATURAL RESOURCE
TOUR & SUMMIT**

Calaveras Mule Packers Challenge 2009
Oct. 24th & 25th at Frogtown. Sponsors and
volunteers for the event are needed. Contact:
<http://calaverasmulepackerschallenge.com>

PRESIDENT'S CORNER CONT.

years to offset the emissions released by California's wildfires between 2001 and 2007.

And finally, yours truly just finished writing a 128 page Timber Harvest Plan costing thousands of dollars so that Columbia College could harvest one acre of trees averaging 8 inches in diameter to accommodate their new Science and Natural Resources building. CAL FIRE rejected the timber plan twice because it did not adequately address the impact the one acre tree removal job would have on climate change, specifically greenhouse gas effects (I am not making this up). In the end, the whole thing gave me more gas than the one acre of trees could ever have absorbed!

So, what to do... how can we ever recover from the hole in which we find ourselves?

Well, first pull out a penny or a \$100 bill, or anything in between, and read across the top, and never forget that message. Secondly, most of us are not "in the hole", but are instead watching our misguided fellow Americans dig. That's not so bad, but when they try and pull us down with them . . . well . . . we get angry. That's where we are right now. The grassroots (or "astroturf" as Speaker Pelosi calls us) are getting angry. Fortunately, our chance to take action is only a November away.

In the meantime, TuCARE will fight back for all of us. TuCARE is one of two interveners in the Sierra Forest Legacy lawsuit against the Forest Service. An October 1st hearing is scheduled. We will be there. TuCARE is doing any good reporter's job by trying to get access to the actual weather data at the fire line when the Yosemite prescribed fire was started. We will not rest until the truth is known.

TuCARE supports both existing and new home improvement stores. We want to help stock their shelves. We will continue to stay in the forefront of the effort to restart our sawmills. TuCARE is uniting with valley farmers to educate the public and politicians with a simple message... healthy forests = clean and abundant water. TuCARE believes that a 128 page timber harvest plan for 1 acre of small trees is 126 pages too long. We are working toward common sense reforms in our current "analysis paralysis" regulatory systems.

In the meantime . . . don't give up - keep the faith - pledge allegiance - read the penny.

A MUST READ FOR ALL CALIFORNIANS

"Impacts of California Wildfires on Climate and Forests," a study by Dr. Thomas M. Bonnicksen, Professor Emeritus of Forest Science at Texas A&M University, released recently chronicles how California wildfires from 2001 to 2007 seriously degraded the forests and contributed to global warming. Emissions from these wildfires are equivalent to adding an estimated 50 million more cars onto our highways for one year. To offset this damage, all 14 million cars in California would have to be locked in garages for 3 1/2 years.

Harvesting dead trees to prevent them from releasing CO2 from decay, storing the carbon they contain in long-lasting wood products, and using the money from the sale of the wood to replant a young forest that absorbs CO2, is the only way to restore deforested areas and recover this greenhouse gas from the atmosphere. The report emphasizes that every effort must be made to reduce the amount of fuel in public and private forests to prevent catastrophic wildfires. Major constraints to managing and thinning private forests are government regulations and the high cost of Timber Harvest Plans (THPs).

For a copy of the full report please visit <http://westinstenv.org/ffsci/2009/08/24/impacts-of-california-wildfires-on-climates-and-forests-a-study-of-seven-years-of-wildfires-2001-2007/>
Western Institute for Study of the Environment W.I.S.E.
Contact Dr. Thomas M. Bonnicksen at 407-831-3269.

BRIEFS:

Safe Harbor Agreement Program Act (SHAPA) SB 448, authored by Senator Fran Pavley (D-Agoura Hills), was approved unanimously by the Senate and is headed to the Governor. It creates a program that would encourage landowners to manage their lands voluntarily by means of state safe harbor agreements through Dept. of Fish & Game to benefit endangered species without being subject to additional regulatory restrictions.

Legislature Debates Delta Fix The legislature continues to debate a five bill package intended to address Delta water issues. Lack of action by the state and federal government has left most farmers on the West side of the Central Valley without water and has caused irreparable harm to valley businesses and communities. The five bill package proposed by a Conference Committee chaired by Senate Pro Tem Darrell Steinberg (D-Sacramento) and Assembly Speaker Karen Bass (D-Los Angeles) falls short of providing a comprehensive solution to California's water crisis. The bills only address water conservation and water use efficiency which will not fix the ongoing water crisis in the Central Valley.

Sunstein Confirmed to Top Regulatory Position Cass Sunstein is the new Administrator of the Office of Information and Regulatory Affairs (OIRA). He will review and approve or reject all regulations put forth by the administration, thus giving him great power to influence these regulations. Sunstein's earlier assertion that animals should have the right to bring suits against humans, with humans as their legal representatives has caused great concern. He now says he does not favor and would not support such a right, and that his primary concern would be to ensure that regulations are consistent with the Constitution, the law and the principles reflected in governing Executive Orders.

Cong. Radanovich and Shuler(D-N. Carolina) Launch Congressional Gateway Communities Caucus, a bipartisan effort focusing on Gateway Communities which include all cities, municipalities, counties, parishes, towns, villages, districts, wards, boroughs, and tribal lands that are geographically or economically linked with any federal public land or waterway and would be significantly impacted by decisions made by federal managers for these areas. "Gateway Communities provide access and infrastructure to America's greatest national treasures: our national parks, monuments, forests and other public lands and waterways," said Radanovich. These communities play an integral role in accomplishing the mission of federal land managers by providing necessary services, such as transportation infrastructure, search and rescue, emergency and medical support services, drinking water and sanitary systems.

H.R.2899 California Catastrophic Wildfire Prevention and Community Protection Act - Directs the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior to expedite eligible projects on National Forest System lands and public lands, respectively, in California which are within or adjacent to at-risk communities or watersheds if the project is consistent with the applicable community wildfire protection plan or county fire plan. It requires projects to be carried out in a cost-effective manner that focuses on surface, ladder, and canopy fuels reduction activities or implements forest restoration activities in response to extreme weather events or natural disasters.

Harris Sherman nominated as Under Secretary for Ag. Sec. Tom Vilsack. Sherman currently is the Executive Director of the Colorado Dept. of Natural Resources. He also serves as the Director of Compact Negotiations for the Interbasin Compact Commission, Chairman of the Oil and Gas Conservation Commission, and Co-chair of the Governor's Forest Health Advisory Council. He has been Chairman of the Water Quality Control Commission, Chair of the Mined Land Reclamation Board, Chair of the Denver Regional Air Quality Council, Commissioner of Mines and the Denver Water Board, and a Trustee of Colorado College. He's been active in land conservation efforts with the Nature Conservancy, Colorado Open Lands, and the Trust for Public Land.

TuCARE's Board of Directors Meet the 1st Tuesday of every month at 6:30 PM
Tuolumne County Chamber of Commerce
TuCARE Board of Directors 2009

Mike Albrecht, Sierra Resource Mgmt.
Mike Olenchak, Sierra Outdoor Ed.
Ken Kolp, CA Highway Patrol (Ret.)
Kayla Barnes, Talk About Trees
Roger Stevens, Sr., Roger Stevens Insurance
Ron Kopf, Community Development
Eloise Spence, Calaveras Grazing Permitees
Charlotte Hague, Planning Commission
Chris Conrad, Forestry
Mike Vroman, Forestry

Jeff Sargo, Central Heat & Air
Joseph Day, TUD Board
Mark Truppner, KVML/KZSQ
Frank Helm, Dodge Ridge Corp.
Gil Fryer, Ranching
Kay Crook, Crook Logging
Sherri Brennen, Farm Bureau
Jim Haughey, Blue Mtn. Minerals
Larry Jackson, Sierra Restoration
Glenn Gottschall, Forest Conslt.

Melinda Fleming, Executive Director
Stacey Dodge, RAC Tour Consultant

What can you do for Tuolumne County?

Hire a former mill worker, retail sales person or any other unemployed local citizen.

Encourage your elected officials to support laws and regulations that are business and family friendly. Ask for less regulation whenever possible.

Leadership is needed in all areas of our county. Step up and get involved.

Participate in local events, meetings and gatherings. Donate locally.
Volunteer your free time. Mentor others. Make "family" a priority.

Tuolumne County Alliance for Resources & Environment, Inc. Phone/FAX (209) 586-7816
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