

# Upper Feather River IRWM Regional Water Management Group

## FINAL SUMMARY MINUTES

May 29, 2025

### CALL TO ORDER AND ROLL CALL

Paul Roen called the meeting to order on March 29, 2024 at 1:05 pm at the Plumas County Planning Conference Room, 555 Main Street, Quincy, California.

#### Members Present:

Paul Roen, Chair, Sierra County Board of Supervisors  
Trina Cunningham, Vice Chair, Maidu Summit Consortium  
Dwight Ceresola, Plumas County Board of Supervisors  
Russell Reid, Feather River Resource Conservation District  
Rick Roberti, Sierra Valley Resource Conservation District  
Doug Teeter, Butte County Board of Supervisors  
Rob Thorman, Plumas County Flood Control and Water Conservation District  
Leigh Johnson, Plumas National Forest (Advisory)

#### Members Absent:

Matt Kilmurray, Sierra Valley Groundwater Management District  
Cindy Ramsey, Plumas County Community Development Commission  
Rachel Hutchinson, Tahoe National Forest (Advisory)  
Russel Nickerson, Lassen National Forest (Advisory)

#### Staff Present:

Tracey Ferguson, Plumas County Planning Director  
Uma Hinman, UFR RWMG Coordinator, Hinman and Associates Consulting, Inc.

### PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

### ADDITIONS OR DELETIONS FROM THE AGENDA

None

Upon motion by Dwight Ceresola and second by Doug Teeter, the agenda was unanimously approved as presented.
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### PUBLIC COMMENT OPPORTUNITY

None

### ACTION AGENDA

#### **1. WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS**

##### a. Upper Feather River Regional Water Management Group

Introductions by the Upper Feather River (UFR) Integrated Regional Water Management Group (RWMG) members and staff.

b. Blue Forest

Introductions by Nick Wobbrock, Co-founder and CCO, and Amber Moore, Project Development Manager. Blue Forest is a non-profit conservation finance organization focused on advancing forest restoration through scientific research, financial innovation, and collaborative partnerships.

Blue Forest is currently working on a forest resilience project in the UFR called the North Feather Forest Resilience Bond with Plumas National Forest, under the North Fork Forest Recovery Project. See Section 2 below for more information.

c. Metropolitan Water District of Southern California

Jennifer Nevills, Principal Resource Specialist, with the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California was unable to attend and introduced herself by way of a pre-recorded video. The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a regional wholesaler and the largest supplier of treated water in the United States. It is a cooperative of fourteen cities, eleven municipal water districts, and one county water authority, that provides water to 19 million people in a 5,200-square-mile service area.

d. Watershed Solutions Network

Introductions by Debbie Franco, CEO, and Joan Clayburgh, Chief Development and Programs Officer. Watershed Solutions Network (WSN) is a network of land and water stewards building persistent relationships and networks among a diverse cross-culture of leaders committed to expanding their individual and collaborative capacity solve California's most pressing land and water challenges.

e. Sierra Institute for Community and Environment

Introduction by Jonathan Kusel, Executive Director for Sierra Institute for Community and Environment.

## **2. FOREST RESILIENCE BOND INFORMATIONAL INTRODUCTION**

Nick Wobbrock and Amber Moore, with Blue Forest, provided an overview of Blue Forest and its Forest Resilience Bond (FRB), including describing the North Feather FRB project on the Plumas National Forest within the North Fork Forest Recovery Project, an area deeply impacted by the 2021 Dixie Fire. The North Fork FRB supports critically important vegetation management activities in the remaining green forest around the community of Taylorsville (approximately 800-1,000 acres), with the goal to increase forest and watershed resilience and to increase safety for nearby communities. Project partners include Plumas National Forest, Sierra Institute for Community and Environment, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Pacific Gas & Electric (PG&E), California Department of Water Resources (DWR), Greenville Rancheria, CAL FIRE, and Sierra Nevada Conservancy. The anticipated outcomes of the project will be protected water supply, reduction in sediment and erosion risk in drinking water, and fuels modifications to encourage surface and underburn. The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and DWR are each providing \$400,000 in funding and PG&E is contributing \$200,000 in funding to the project.

Blue Forest is also exploring the feasibility of FRB projects within the Plumas National Forest Community Protection Project lands around the Feather River Watershed. These projects would include forest health treatments such as thinning, prescribed fire, and meadow and aspen restoration. The Upper Butte Creek Forest Health project (restoration) would restore nearly 20,000 acres within the watershed, including treatments such as thinning, prescribed burning, meadow and aspen restoration, and trail development. Additionally, a portion of the project area would include reforestation and other post-fire restoration treatments in the footprint of the 2021 Dixie Fire. The Metropolitan Water District of Southern California is a partner in both of these pipeline projects.

RWMG members recommended agriculture be added to forest and restoration benefits.

- Staff directed to review the UFR IRWM Plan project list and shift priorities to fire and climate resilience.

### **3. UPPER FEATHER/LOS ANGELES WATERSHED FRAMEWORK TEST DRIVE UPDATE**

Debbie Franco, Watershed Solutions Network (WSN), provided an overview of the WSN and work in the region, which began in March 2024 with an initial gathering in the UFR region. The “Upper Feather/LA (Los Angeles) Watershed Framework Test Drive” was introduced as an effort to connect the Upper Feather River watershed to Southern California end users. The goal of this pilot project, or test-drive, is to amplify the impact of local efforts by bridging sectors and regions, coordinating across the watershed to enhance climate resilience, increase adaptability, and deliver greater collective benefits from the headwaters to the end users. One of the goals of fostering these relationships is to build understanding of the nexus between headwaters’ health and the needs of the end users to connect funding from end users with projects in the headwaters. WSN and Blue Forest bring tools, relationships, and outside resources to the region, creating opportunity to support watershed projects that increase forest and climate resiliency.

### **4. NORTH FORK FOREST RECOVERY PROJECTS SITE VISIT (JUNE 11, 2025) AND SIERRA VALLEY REGION PROJECTS SITE VISIT (JUNE 12, 2025)**

WSN and Blue Forest staff summarized the site visit schedule and logistics for the June 11-12, 2025 site visits. June 11 will be hosted by Blue Forest, Sierra Institute, and PNF staff and will be focused on the North Fork FRB project sites around Taylorsville and Greenville. Participants will include representatives from Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, DWR, PG&E, UFR RWMG, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, Plumas County Fire Safe Council, Greenville Rancheria, and the University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE), among others. RWMG members Dwight Ceresola, Trina Cunningham, Paul Roen, and Rick Roberti are planning to attend.

June 12 will be hosted by WSN and UFR RWMG members and focused on projects in the Sierra Valley region of the UFR Watershed. Attendees will include Metropolitan Water District of Southern California, Blue Forest, and UFR RWMG members Dwight Ceresola, Trina Cunningham, Paul Roen, Rick Roberti, and Rob Thorman.

### **ADJOURNMENT**

The meeting was adjourned at 3:02 p.m.

#### Other Attendees:

Debbie Franco, Watershed Solutions Network  
Nick Wobbrock, Blue Forest  
Amber Moore, Blue Forest  
Jonathan Kusel, Sierra Institute  
Greg Hinds, Hinds Engineering  
Kevin Johnson, PG&E  
Kane Russell, UCCE