

**PLUMAS COUNTY FLOOD CONTROL AND WATER CONSERVATION DISTRICT
PLUMAS WATERSHED FORUM
COUNTY OF PLUMAS, STATE OF CALIFORNIA**

**MEETING OF THE PLUMAS WATERSHED FORUM
HELD IN QUINCY ON MAY 28, 2008**

1. Introductions

The Plumas Watershed Forum meeting convenes at 9:00 a.m. with Plumas County Flood Control and Water Conservation District board members Robert Meacher and Bill Powers. Members from the Department of Water Resources include Dwight Russell. Members from the State Water Contractors include David Okita and Tom Hurlbutt. Forum members' staff attending the meeting or participating via teleconference included:

Plumas County Flood Control District: Brian Morris

Department of Water Resources: Todd Hillaire, Fraser Sime, Nancy Quan, Katie Spanos

State Water Contractors: Allison Dvorak

2. Public Comment

Phil Noya, a member of the Feather River Resource Conservation District, addressed the Forum regarding the previous day's tour. Mr. Noya stated that he would have liked to have shown Forum members some of the projects that the Feather River RCD had completed with the support of Forum funding. Brian Morris stated that the Feather River RCD projects had been included in information provided to tour participants and that projects had been pointed out during the driving tour.

3. Approval of Minutes

Upon a motion made by Dwight Russell, seconded by Bill Powers, and unanimously approved, the minutes from the Forum meetings of October 23, 2007, and April 8, 2008, were approved as presented.

4. California Watershed Program

Robert Meacher reported that he and Martha Davis were co-chairing an advisory board created by the Secretary of the Resources Agency to develop a statewide watershed program that would go beyond the scope of the Cal-Fed watershed program. Public meetings were conducted around the state, and hundreds of comments had been received and were being compiled into a report. The most common comment was to support expanding the scope of the Cal-Fed program. A program proposal will be presented to the Resources Secretary, following by more public vetting and state agency input, with the goal of moving legislation to authorize the program before the end of the Legislature's session.

Mr. Russell asked whether the watershed initiative had produced any pearls of wisdom that the Forum should review. Mr. Meacher stated that the Forum was the pearl and was the example of the direction the state should go in the future.

5. Watershed Tour

Mr. Morris reviewed the itinerary of the previous day's tour. The tour included driving by projects in Genesee Valley carried out by the Feather River CRM and Feather River RCD; a Forest Service presentation at the State Water Project's Antelope Lake in the aftermath of the severe forest fires in 2007; a return visit to Red Clover Valley to view a large Cal-Fed pond-and-plug project that had been completed by the Feather River CRM since the last tour; and a stop at the State Water Project's Lake Davis to view preventative forest fuels management projects. The tour outline is attached to these minutes as Exhibit A.

Mr. Okita stated that he appreciated the forest perspective that had been included in the tour.

6. Monterey Plus EIR

Katie Spanos reported that the comment period on the draft EIR closed in January and that between 20 and 30 letters and about 1,000 comments had been received. Ms. Spanos stated that DWR was working on responses to the comments and that an administrative draft should be done in mid-July. The draft will then go to the EIR committee for review to provide an opportunity for any dispute issues to be referred to the mediatory. If there are no complications or issues for the mediatory, the final EIR could be issued in late September.

Mr. Russell asked about the timing of any legal challenges that may be brought against the new EIR.

Ms. Spanos stated that the deadline to file a lawsuit was 30 days after the notice of determination was filed, so it should be known by the end of the year whether there will be further litigation.

7. Plumas Watershed Forum Program Review

Ken Casaday from Jones & Stokes presented the final Program Review to the Forum. The recommendations from Jones & Stokes are attached to these minutes as Exhibit B, and the full report is posted on the Forum's website.

Mr. Russell asked a question about the proportion of funds used for various activities. Mr. Casaday stated that the breakdown was a reasonable balance of direct intervention and research. The one project that was an anomaly was the Lake Davis water treatment plant, which did not directly support the goals of the settlement agreement or the Feather River Watershed Management Strategy. Mr. Casaday reviewed the funding allocations that had been recommended by Jones & Stokes, including an increased emphasis on upland areas.

Angie Dillingham from the Plumas National Forest asked whether the review included any long-term analysis of operation and maintenance costs. Mr. Casaday stated that the risk to stream and meadow restoration projects was that a large storm event would blow out the project and require repair. Mr. Casaday stated that the pond and plug projects had been very stable and successful compared to some earlier in-channel restoration projects that had been blown out by high flows.

John Sheen from Plumas Corporation stated that upland and forest management projects did have a long-term need for period maintenance.

Mr. Russell stated that the report was a shining example of what was needed to assess the program, which was an unbiased assessment of the program and an independent assessment.

Mr. Casaday said that Jones & Stokes appreciated the independence they were given to conduct the assessment.

Mr. Okita stated that the report presented two levels of recommendations. The nuts and bolts recommendation should be referred to staff, and the policy level recommendations needed to be discussed. Mr. Okita stated that the water supply analysis needed to be refined and carried further to determine whether the water actually gets to the contractors after it reaches Oroville. That analysis needed to be done before asking for more than the \$8 million provided in the settlement agreement, and when the second series of payments commences some of that funding could be used to answer the questions. There should be a statistical analysis of the 80-year history of operations to determine what water is deliverable depending on wet or dry water year conditions, timing of flows, and Delta conditions.

Mr. Meacher stated that stable funding was needed to support the upper watershed program, such as a voluntary \$1-per-month check-off on water bills. In 1995, it was calculated that a charge of 25 cents per acre foot would support an upper watershed program.

Mr. Okita stated that in response to AB32 DWR was working on a paper to meet the Governor's direction on climate change, and he requested that Mr. Russell go back to DWR for information about watershed work and carbon.

Mr. Okita suggested that a subcommittee be formed to look at the research that would be required to justify the water contractors' continued support of the Forum. In addition to reviewing the 80-year operations history and considering climate change issues, the economic analysis from Jones & Stokes should be refined.

Mr. Morris suggested that the Forum staff review the Jones & Stokes recommendations regarding administration and operation of the Forum and return to the Forum with any proposals that would update or augment existing policies and procedures. Mr. Morris agreed with the subcommittee proposed by Mr. Okita, which would work on a long-term analysis to develop information that would support continuation of the Forum program beyond the settlement.

Mr. Russell stated that a subcommittee's work would apply both to a short-term decision by DWR and the contractors to voluntarily resume funding under the settlement agreement and to any long-term decision on supporting the Forum.

Mr. Okita and Mr. Hurlbutt had spoken with the other contractors, and they reported there was not much interest in deviating from the requirements of the settlement agreement unless the benefits could be demonstrated.

8. Budget for 2008-09

Mr. Morris presented the budget report as of May 28. Based on estimated expenditures for the remainder of 2007-08, Mr. Morris stated that there was \$50,000 that the Forum has set aside for program administration in 2008-09, \$246,112 in Majority/A funds that had been committed to projects but not yet expended, and a balance of \$42,658 in uncommitted Majority/A funds.

Upon a motion made by Mr. Russell, seconded by Mr. Powers, and unanimously approved, the Forum agreed that any uncommitted Forum funds could be used to further refine the Jones & Stokes analysis and answer questions regarding water supply deliveries as determined by the subcommittee noted above.

9. Next Meeting

The next meeting is scheduled for October 28, 2008.

10. Adjournment

The Forum adjourns at 11:50 p.m. to meet again on October 28, 2008.

Exhibit A

Plumas Watershed Forum Tour

May 27, 2008

Outline

10:00 a.m. - Depart Plumas County Public Works – 1834 E. Main Street, Quincy

10:45 - Genesee Valley

- Feather River CRM – Hosselkus Creek (Forum Project A-5) and Ward Creek Restoration Projects
- Feather River Land Trust – Heart K Ranch
- Feather River Resource Conservation District – Capacity Building (Forum Project B-6)

11:30 - Antelope Lake

- State Water Project Facility
- Antelope Complex/Wheeler Fire – July 2007 – 23,000 acres
- Moonlight Fire – September 2007 – 65,000 acres

Lunch – Boulder Creek Amphitheatre

2:00 - Red Clover Valley

- Feather River CRM - Cal-Fed Restoration Project
- Plumas Geohydrology Monitoring Project (Forum Project A-10)

3:30 - Lake Davis

- State Water Project Facility
- Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group Pilot Project - Freeman Project

4:00 – Depart Lake Davis

5:00 p.m. - Arrive in Quincy

Genesee Valley Projects

Hosselkus Creek Restoration Project (Forum Project A-5)

In 2002, a pond and plug project on Hosselkus Creek restored 1,500 feet of gully, including 25 acres of meadow and remnant channel, and improved meadow flood drainage with multiple culverts. Proposition 204 provided \$170,000 in funding, and the major partners were Plumas County, Neff Ranch, Plumas National Forest, and the Regional Water Quality Control Board. A second phase of restoration was completed in 2006, continuing efforts immediately upstream of the first phase along 1,600 feet of gullied channel. The Plumas Watershed Forum provided \$80,000 in funding for the second phase of the project.



Feather River Land Trust – Heart K Ranch

The 884-acre Heart K Ranch and 80-acre Taylor Lake are recently protected lands in the Feather River watershed. The Nature Conservancy and Feather River Land Trust joined forces to protect this very special property that contains alluvial bottomlands and surrounding uplands that include black oak woodland, aquatic, riparian and wet meadow habitats. These habitats support a rich assemblage of rare wildlife and plant species, including four threatened or endangered species and twenty-two species of special concern. The Heart K Ranch also contains spectacular scenery, provides important wintering and breeding habitat for the Sloat mule deer herd, and provides a migratory corridor for numerous other wildlife. Taylor Lake, one of three sacred Maidu Indian lakes, is one of the few natural lakes in this area of the northern Sierra Nevadas.

One component of the Prop. 50 IRWM grant awarded for the Upper Feather region is to implement stream restoration, grazing management, and infrastructure repairs on the Heart K ranch. The project will install 25,000 feet of permanent riparian fencing, creating a 1/3-mile wide, 2.5-mile long riparian buffer strip between irrigated pasture and Indian Creek to accelerate the development of riparian vegetative stream cover. The buffer strip will reduce erosion and water temperatures. Also, a badly leaking 16,000-foot diversion ditch will be replaced with pipeline, and 200 acre-feet-annually of conserved water will be dedicated to instream flow in Indian



Creek. Prop. 50 will provide \$555,000 for this project, with another \$1 million from the Feather River Land Trust.

Feather River Resource Conservation District (Forum Project B-6)

The Feather River Resource Conservation District has worked with private landowners in many locations in Indian Valley and Genesee Valley to install riparian fencing and carry out fuel reduction projects. Forum funding has supported the RCD in these efforts, as well as with its ongoing education and outreach programs.



Ward Creek Restoration Project

Ward Creek is a tributary to Indian Creek in Genesee Valley. The objective of the project was to re-water the meadow adjacent to the downcut creek channel using the pond and plug technique. A 4,000 foot new channel was constructed at meadow elevation, and the gully was obliterated. The project was completed in 1999 with funding from Proposition 204.



USDA Forest Service Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group Pilot Project Implementation

April 2007



- ✓ The Lassen and Plumas National Forests and the Sierraville Ranger District of the Tahoe National Forest are implementing the Herger-Feinstein Quincy Library Group (HFQLG) Forest Recovery Act across approximately 1.53 million acres in the northern Sierra.
- ✓ In 1993, the Quincy Library Group, a grassroots citizen group interested in collaborative management of national forest lands, developed the “Community Stability Proposal,” eventually lobbying for passage of the Forest Recovery Act in October 1998 directing the implementation of a Pilot Project in the northern Sierra.
- ✓ The primary purpose of the Pilot Project is to implement and demonstrate the effectiveness of resource management activities proposed by the Quincy Library Group to promote local economic stability; create healthy, fire-resilient forests that maintain ecological integrity; and construct a strategic network of fuelbreaks (Defensible Fuel Profile Zones or DFPZs) that provides for safe and effective fire suppression.
- ✓ Numerous documents and forest plan amendments were developed to facilitate implementing the Act across the Pilot Project. A combination of litigation and limitations in the documents delayed full implementation. The Act was extended an additional 5 years in 2003 and is scheduled to conclude in September 2009.
- ✓ About 50 percent of the DFPZ network is in place.
- ✓ More than 700 forest employees serve the three forests in the Pilot Project area, working for the overall health and sustainability of the forests in the northern Sierra. This includes providing assistance, technical programs and support to individuals, state agencies and other partners to continue improving forest health.
- ✓ The Pacific Southwest Research Station is studying the effects of HFQLG treatments on wildlife populations, watershed health and wildland fire threat reduction as part of an Administrative Study. The project is committed to sharing the results of this innovative research.
- ✓ The HFQLG Pilot Project forests are committed to supporting local communities, not only through project implementation, but also through volunteering for community projects and encouraging employees to personally make a difference in their community.



Contact Information:
HFQLG Implementation Team
P.O. Box 11500
159 Lawrence Street
Quincy, CA 95971
Phone: (530) 283-2050



Photos, from left: California spotted owl; Aspen restoration project on Eagle Lake Ranger District, Lassen National Forest; Firefighter on a prescribed burn on Mt. Hough Ranger District, Plumas National Forest; Logging truck on U.S. Highway 70 near Quincy.

Interesting HFQLG Pilot Project Facts:

A DFPZ is a ¼ to ½ mile wide fuel break utilizing thinning and other vegetation management methods. Over 156,356 acres of DFPZs are complete.



Signal DFPZ on the Eagle Lake Ranger District of the Lassen National Forest.

The Quincy Library Group (QLG), established in 1992, is a pioneering grassroots citizen organization committed to enforcing responsible management of the National Forests.



Members of the Quincy Library Group before a meeting.

Water is a critical resource in the West. As part of this, riparian restoration is restoring stream channels, improving watershed health and helping retain water for release downstream later in the summer. More than 3,999 acres of riparian restoration are completed.



Knuthson Meadow Riparian Restoration project on the Sierraville Ranger District of the Tahoe National Forest.

A Group Selection is an area between ½ and 2 acres that is cleared of trees up to a maximum diameter. These areas create an opening for increasing ecological diversity and improve community stability. More than 6,830 acres of Group Selection are in place.



Meadow Valley Group Selection Unit on the Mt. Hough Ranger District of the Plumas National Forest.

Individual Tree Selection (ITS) is a method used to thin the canopy. Typically smaller diameter trees and thick areas of brush are removed to help open the forest floor. Desirable trees with potential are selected to remain and given room to grow into strong, fire-resilient trees. Across the Pilot Project more than 4,318 acres have been treated using ITS.



Unit 43 after treatment on the Hat Creek Ranger District of the Lassen National Forest.

Budget Information

Fiscal Year 2006: \$26.2 million
Fiscal Year 2005: \$31 million
Fiscal Year 2004: \$30.8 million

HFQLG Pilot Project Fast Facts:

Ranger Districts Involved: Lassen – Almanor, Eagle Lake & Hat Creek; Plumas – Beckwourth, Feather River & Mt. Hough; Tahoe - Sierraville

Total Acres Accomplished: 171,503 acres

Total Sawlog Volume: 577,605 CCF

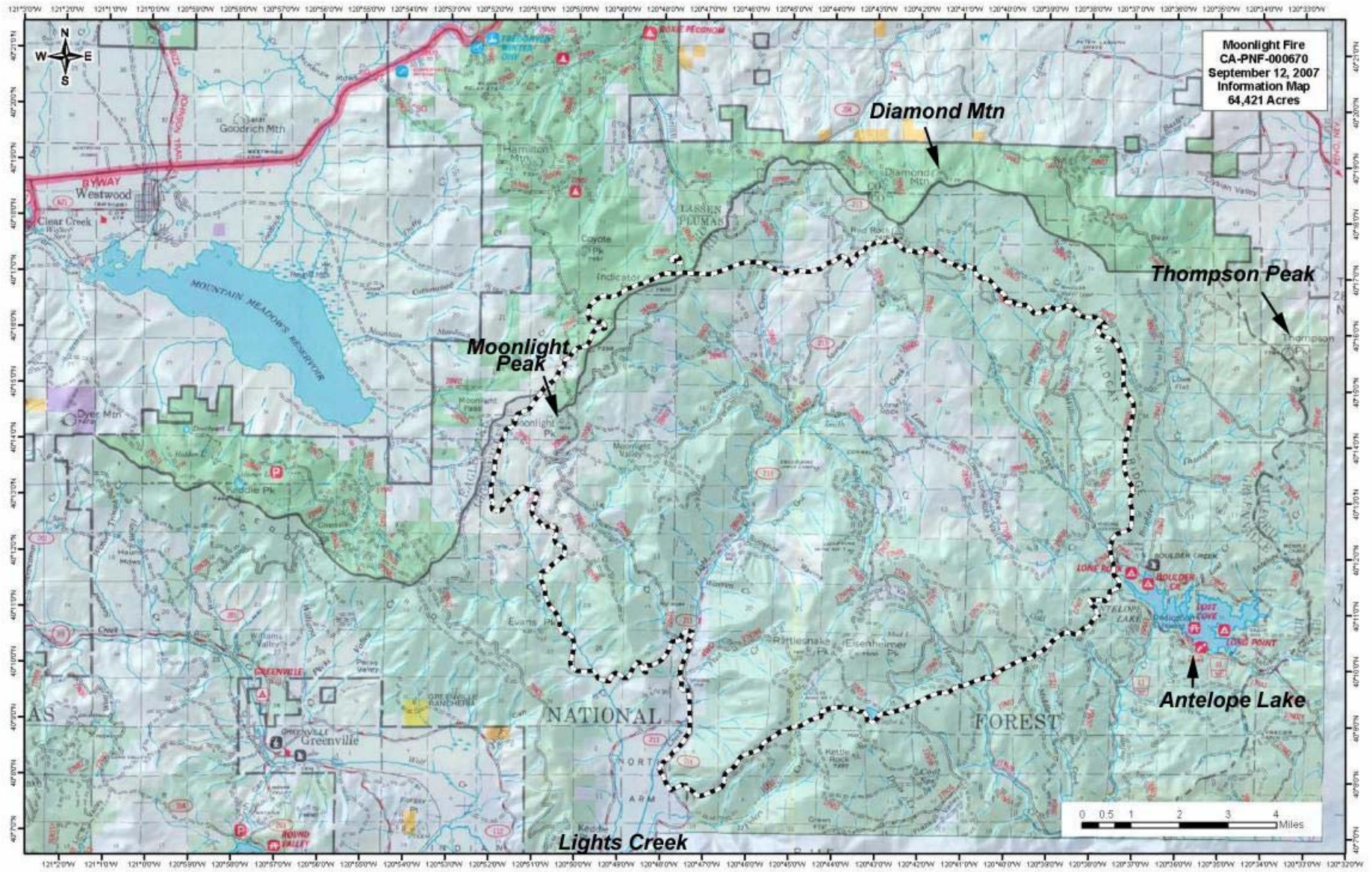
Total Biomass Volume: 640,818 CCF

Projects Completed: 221

*Note: Data is through September 30, 2006.

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Moonlight Fire – 2007



Red Clover Valley Restoration

Starting in 1985, the Feather River CRM's first project in Red Clover Valley constructed four rock check dams on a highly eroded section of Red Clover Creek, which flows into Indian Creek. The dams created ponds and raised the water table on privately owned land used for cattle grazing. Willows and grasses were planted in areas affected by construction. Monitoring information has shown a 657% increase in waterfowl in the area, with nesting and usage indicators up for all indicator species.

In 2006, 3.3 miles of gullied stream channel immediately downstream of the 1985 project was eliminated. Stream flows were returned to remnant channels at original meadow/channel elevations utilizing the "pond and plug" technique, restoring the functionality of 400 acres of effected floodplain within Red Clover Valley, along Red Clover and McReynolds Creeks on both private and public lands. The primary project goal was to improve the water and sediment retention functions of the watershed, with objectives focusing on reduced bank erosion, improved water quality, improved fish and wildlife habitat, reduced flood flows, and increased base flows. Post-project monitoring completed in 2007 documented sediment retention, increases in vegetative and waterfowl production, and groundwater levels, and decreases in water temperatures. Project monitoring will continue in 2008. Primary funding (\$1,101,000) was provided through the State Water Resources Control Board Proposition 13 CALFED Watershed Program, with contributions from the Department of Water Resources, Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Forest Service-Plumas National Forest, the landowner, and volunteers.



Red Clover Monitoring Project (Forum Project A-10)

In conjunction with the 2006 restoration project, the Forum funded a monitoring project to assess baseflow augmentation related to the restoration work. Following project construction, beaver dams prevented data collection in 2007 until the month of December, but further efforts will be made to collect useful data during the summer of 2008.

Exhibit B

Recommendations from Jones & Stokes Program Review

Relationship of Funded Projects to Forum Goals and Policies

- **Focus Future Forum Funding.** Funding of direct intervention should be increased so as to accelerate the restoration of basin storage capacity, augment base flow, and reduce bank erosion. Other funding levels should be increased as needed to ensure that local watershed education/awareness, landowner outreach, and fuel-reduction activities in the watershed are functionally compatible. Funding among project types according to Table 2-4 would be beneficial.

Table 2-4. Recommended Funding Levels

<u>Type of Forum-Funded Project</u>	<u>Percent of Forum Project Funding</u>	
	2003–2007	Recommended
Planning Expenditures	1.2	3
Stream Intervention Projects (includes planning and monitoring by interveners)	46.8	67
Upland Watershed Intervention	8.3	15
Research	10.1	5
Landowner Outreach (including landowner intervention support)	4.4	5
Public Outreach	3.0	5
Other	26.2	0

- **Document Funding Rationale.** The Forum make written findings documenting how each proposed project is expected to further the goals of the Agreement and is consistent with the Forum’s strategies and other policies. The Forum should establish a project record and funding agreement for all projects, even for projects sponsored by one of its members.
- **Amend the Feather River Watershed Management Strategy.** The WMS should be amended in several ways:
 - The maps and list of priority watersheds should be reconciled since they are not in agreement (see maps on WMS page 12 and 18 and the list on WMS page 18); for example, Sulphur Creek is listed, but its watershed is not shown on the maps.
 - The tier-type descriptions of projects need to be improved, others added, and all prioritized. Tier types are needed for upland vegetation management projects, for example. The first-tier Type 1 description should be clarified to include pond-and-plug or, more generally, stream profile restoration.
 - The strategy of “increasing upland vegetation cover” in upland areas of the watershed should be refocused to manage natural fuels and reduce the extent and severity of wildland fire while maintaining continuous vegetation cover.
 - Project selection criteria should be expanded to include a focus on each of the four goals of the Agreement: improved groundwater storage, augmented base flow, improved upland vegetation management, and reduced bank erosion

- **Allow Project Development Projects.** If the project is the development of direct intervention projects, the Forum’s funding agreement should require submittal of the resultant project proposal(s). A reimbursement reservation may be used for this purpose.
- **Ensure Goal-Attainment Focus of Proposals.** Proposals to the Forum should continue to be organized around the goals of the Agreement that are to be addressed. Proposed monitoring and evaluation (i.e., identification of monitoring indicators and evaluation criteria) should be designed to document the degree to which the goals of the Agreement will be advanced.
- **Revise Monitoring Provisions of RFPs.** Distinguish monitoring of project performance/success from monitoring of project implementation. Both types of “monitoring” are important but are confused in the project proposal process.
 - **Project Implementation Verification.** Project proposals should continue to specify project implementation milestones and performance criteria for them, and the Forum should establish a tracking system to ensure that all elements of the funded project are implemented.
 - **Project Success Monitoring.** Proposal guidelines should be revised to ensure that proposed project performance monitoring is focused on performance indicators that measure success in advancing the four goals of the Agreement.
- **Verify Post-Project Land Management Plans.** The Forum should require and fund development and submittal of post-project land management plans or agreements so that it can ensure that a long-term benefit at each site is likely. A reimbursement reservation may be used to ensure plan completion.
- **Establish a Monitoring Plan.** A scientific panel of the Forum TAC should be convened to establish a monitoring plan for direct intervention projects funded by the Forum. The plan should identify issues to be addressed through monitoring, feasible monitoring indicators, and types of monitoring data analyses to be conducted. The Forum should provide funding to the Feather River CRM, and perhaps other organizations if coordinated with the CRM, to conduct the monitoring work. (See also recommendation for a monitoring plan in Section 5.)
- **Establish a Research Plan.** A scientific panel of the Forum TAC should be convened to establish a research plan germane to the goals of the Agreement to guide funding of research proposals. Rather than responding only to proposals, the Forum should proactively establish scientific issues regarding the restoration program that cannot be addressed through project monitoring alone but require other scientific analysis. (See also recommendation for a research plan in Section 5.)
- **Define Leveraging.** In achieving the strategy of leveraging other funding with Forum funds, the Forum should consider construing this as applicable when Forum funds are used to restore a river segment adjacent to a segment restored with funds from other sources.

Uses of Forum B Funds

- **Redefine Majority/Minority Funds.** The Agreement requires that the “majority” of the funds shall be spent for watershed restoration purposes. Rather than the 50.1% to 49.9% split currently assumed, this provision should be interpreted to mean that at least 60% of the funds should be spent on direct watershed restoration and support of watershed restoration, with a target of 75%.

The recommended minimum is about the actual amount for the 4-year funding period (61.5%) if administrative funds are included. The higher target is important if alluvial basin storage is to be increased and base flow augmented, as described in Section 5 of this report. This would leave 25%–40% of Forum funding usable by Plumas County at its discretion.

- **Continue Use of a Portion of B Funds for Plumas County Flood Control and Water Conservation District Purposes at the County’s Sole Discretion.** Plumas County should be able to continue using a portion of the B Funds for district-related purposes at its discretion, limiting such funding to water resource protection, watershed restoration, and existing public health and safety issues related to water resources. Of the independent expenditures to date (Table 3-1), repayment of loans to the district, some of the activities of the district’s consultants, and the monitoring of state legislative activity may not have met this suggested criteria fully, but review of Table 3-1 clearly indicates that Plumas County limited use of its discretionary funds to projects related to the purposes of the Plumas County Flood Control and Water Conservation District. Accordingly, the Forum does not have an interest in the specific uses of the discretionary funds for district purposes once its needs have been given due consideration (such as per the first recommendation above).
- **Accelerate Direct Intervention.** The most effective way for the county to use B Funds to further its long-term interests is to help accelerate the direct watershed intervention program led by the Feather River CRM and the U.S. Forest Service so that a substantial level of watershed-wide restoration is attained, as described in Section 5. To this end, Plumas County should strive to commit one-half of its discretionary funds to B-Fund projects that the Forum approves to advance the goals of the Agreement.
- **Reassess Local Organization Capacity When Funding Becomes Available.** If new funding becomes available, the Forum should determine at that time the capacity of the CRM, Plumas Corporation, the Feather River and Sierra Valley RCDs, and the Plumas Unified School District to continue to support watershed restoration. It may be that additional capacity building of the RCDs and schools may not be needed since the organizations successfully leveraged Forum funding to attract other funding. The CRM capacity would need to be increased commensurate with an increase in restoration activity; this capacity increase might be met through more project-development funding. Capacity of the Plumas Corporation to continue to improve upland vegetation management may need to be sustained with Forum funding if other funding for administrative purposes has not been acquired.
- **Improve Local Practices Affecting Water Quality.** New uses for discretionary funds should involve improving local government and public utility best management practices for water resource protection in furtherance of the water quality goal of the Agreement.

Review of Program Administration

- **Focus Annual Reports on Goal Advancement.** Improve the Forum’s annual reports and thereby focus the achievements of the Forum by adding a section that analyzes how annual funding advanced the goals of the Agreement. Quantify results to the degree possible, using parameters described in Section 5 of this report.
- **Establish Guidelines or Fund Allocations.** Definitions should be articulated about the types of projects that are A-Fund expenditures, B-Fund expenditures approved by the Forum, or independent B-Fund expenditures by Plumas County. Guidelines should be established to help

determine if an expenditure from the B Fund should be approved by the Forum or designated as a truly independent expenditure of Plumas County.

- **Use a Proposal Evaluation Process Similar to but Improved Upon the Process Specified in the Feather River Watershed Management Strategy.** The adopted Feather River Watershed Management Strategy appears to call for an objective proposal scoring system, which would inject a high level of transparency and objectivity into the funding process. However, scoring, using specified scoring system, does not produce a funding decision. The process should also involve identifying and documenting, in addition to criteria-based scores, any special circumstances or special considerations that would justify overriding the scoring results. This approach would set forth objective data and explain in writing the subjective judgments that confirmed or overrode the objective data.
- **Establish Reimbursement Reservation.** The Forum should withhold a certain percentage of project funding (e.g., 5%–10%, depending upon the funded amount) until the required final project report and other required documents are submitted by the project sponsor. Where projects are planned for implementation for more than a 1-year period, similar reservations should be made to ensure submittal of required annual reports.
- **Improve Project Implementation Tracking.** Forum files in the Plumas County courthouse should be better organized and more complete. A central tracking system should be established that lists funded projects, funded amounts, and approval dates and indicates whether project funding agreements have been executed, whether annual and final project reports have been submitted, the status of invoicing and payments; and whether reserved funds (see item above) have been released.
- **Improve Project Success Tracking.** Final invoices should not be paid unless required annual and final reports and ancillary documents have been submitted and compared to provisions of the funding agreement. These reports should each contain all of the elements in Standard Contract Section 16 – Annual Progress and Final Report, including the five items listed in the Project Evaluation Process section above.
- **Separate Files for Successive Grants.** Separate project files should be maintained for each separate Forum-approved project, i.e., documentation of subsequent funding for continuation of earlier projects should not be combined with original project documents.
- **Separate Projects.** Disparate projects conducted by a particular sponsor should not be combined in proposals to the Forum or in Forum funding agreements (e.g., Plumas Corporation’s administrative support of the Plumas County Fire Safe Council and the Quincy Library Group should be separated into distinct proposals and funding agreements) since they are separate activities and meet the goals of the Agreement differently.

Assessment of Program Effectiveness

- **Recognize Cost Effectiveness.** Recognize that the upper Feather River watershed restoration program—in the aggregate, including intervention and intervention-support efforts of several organizations—is likely cost effective in augmenting base flow and improving water quality and watershed condition, even considering only some market values (i.e., power generation benefits of augmented baseflow were not assessed in this analysis).

- **Increase Intervention Funding.** Increase funding of direct intervention to accelerate the restoration of basin storage capacity and augmentation of base flow but maintain other funding levels as needed to ensure that education/outreach and fuel-reduction activities in the watershed are maintained.
- **Seek Long-Term Restoration Funding for the Upper Feather River Watershed.** Use initial new Forum funding to develop a long-term funding arrangement involving water users and state and federal agencies such that a multi-decade restoration effort can be sustained.
- **Assume Mitigation Credits and Benefits.** Recognize that ancillary benefits of watershed restoration, especially benefits to biological resources, are significant, and seek to use these benefits to offset impacts of other DWR water-supply and flood-control enhancement actions in the state.
- **Empower CRM Leadership.** Empower the Feather River CRM to lead the watershed restoration program locally, and ensure that Forum funds are sufficient to maintain the organization's functions. The CRM is ideally suited to develop projects involving multiple ownerships and track restoration progress in meeting the goals of the Agreement through watershed-wide monitoring. It is also ideally suited as a funding recipient, being composed of a number of federal, state, and local agencies.
- **Develop Research Plan.** Develop a Forum-sponsored research plan to improve understanding of actual benefits of a long-term restoration program. The plan should focus attention on water-supply parameters in watershed restoration to expand and make more cost effective the restoration of usable water resources. The plan, developed by an expanded TAC of the Forum, would specify important technical/scientific issues/questions that warrant research. Future research funding by the Forum would be in response to proposals addressing those specified issues. The expanded TAC would comprise in-watershed technical experts, agency and water user technical experts, and water-supply, watershed restoration, and water-resource experts from academia and the consulting community.
- **Develop Monitoring Plan.** Develop a monitoring plan focused upon parameters of interest to water user's and the DWR's/ State Water Resources Control Board's needs regarding the watershed intervention program, coordinated with the current monitoring program of the Feather River CRM and delegated to the CRM for implementation via a new funding agreement.
- **Increase School Program Funding.** Increase funding of schools' watershed awareness programs to increase support for regional watershed restoration.
- **Maintain Landowner Outreach Capacity.** Fund additional landowner outreach activities as needed to ensure landowner education/outreach/ cooperation with projects of the various sponsors.
- **Continue Advancing Upland Vegetation Management Goal.** Continue funding upland vegetation management actions focused on reduced ladder and canopy fuels at a level similar to the initial funding period.
- **Examine Water Rights Implications.** Commission an examination of the relationship between base flow augmentation resulting from the watershed restoration program and existing and future water rights.

- **Amend the FRWMS.** Amend the Feather River Watershed Management Strategy to improve the focus of Forum expenditures, as described in Section 2.
- **Improve Project Results/Success Tracking.** Improve the tracking of project success in meeting the goals of the Agreement and the strategies of the Forum, as also described in Section 2.