



## Maintenance & Resources Management Committee

### WATERSHED & GRANT PROGRAM ACTIVITIES

October 23, 2020 – January 21, 2020



#### **English Meadow/Upper Yuba Headwaters Forest Management**

*Dense forest conditions characterize the conifer forests that surround English Meadow within the Middle Yuba River watershed. NID's watershed program completed forest plots as part of the 3<sup>rd</sup> field season to provide pre-treatment data to characterize the existing forest community. Post-treatment data will be collected at these plots to compare forest density, species composition, and guide long-term management of this sub-watershed. Forest thinning will increase snow accumulation, runoff, and overall forest health while reducing risks associated with high-intensity wildfire in this important source watershed. This is a project in partnership with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, CSU Sacramento, Plumas Corps, USFS and other experts.*

#### **Watershed Division Overview:**

Since October 2019, watershed activities have included completion of the 3<sup>rd</sup> field season at English Meadow, continued forest management planning, completion of the Magnolia Fire Fuel Break on the edge of the Bear River canyon near Lake of the Pines, initiation of Scotts Flat Phase 4 mastication at Scotts Flat Reservoir, mastication at Peninsula Campground, and grant research. Cameron Townsend, Watershed Program Assistant, continues to bring critical capacity to the Watershed Program, assisting with pre-project data collection for forestry projects adjacent to English Meadow, Scotts Flat Reservoir, and project closure for the Magnolia Rd. fuel break. He is also assisting with CMMS development for the watershed and forested lands, including system development, reporting, and collaboration with USFS to acquire landscape-scale data.

## **GENERAL WATERSHED AND HEALTHY FORESTS PROGRAM UPDATE:**

- **Fire Fuels Reduction & Forestry-** Forest thinning continues as grant funding is utilized to masticate dense ladder fuels at Scotts Flat Reservoir. THP implementation is on hold due to winter conditions; the next treatment area is the island at Scotts Flat Dam
- **Community Fire Fuels Concerns-** The shaded fuel break on District lands off Magnolia Rd. is completed. This project creates a critical and strategic fuel break between the Bear River canyon's steep and densely vegetated slopes, and communities along Magnolia Rd. and Lake of the Pines. The final step is a CAL-FIRE site inspection
- **Forest Management Plan for District-owned lands-** Under development.
- **English Meadow-** Fieldwork is completed for 2019 and a Technical Team Meeting will occur in Q1 2020

## **GRANTS UPDATE:**

- **CABY Drought Grant-** This grant has been closed and final retention invoices are being reviewed. Uma Hinman provided valuable support to wrap up the six projects with our partners
- **Sierra Nevada Conservancy Grant, Yuba Headwaters/English Meadow Grant-** the Forest Management Plan is under development. Neysa King, Cameron Townsend, and Kevin Whitlock installed a second set of plots to characterize the surrounding forest community
- **CAL FIRE CFIP Grant for Rollins and Scotts Flat-** Final ten acres are contracted and when weather allows, Don Prairie will be completing fire fuels and hazard tree treatment at Peninsula Campground
- **SNC Fuels Treatment at Scotts Flat Phase 4-** The first 150-acres were released with a call for proposals; contracts have been executed with Black Dog and Robinson Enterprises to complete mastication on approximately 120 acres. Mastication was initiated and operations are stopped temporarily due to winter conditions. This grant agreement is executed with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy for \$981,000 at Scotts Flat Reservoir to masticate fire fuels and improve forest health by creating a multi-species, multi-aged, properly spaced community. This project will improve watershed health while protecting the water system infrastructure and surrounding communities from elevated fire risk. In total, the District will treat 300 acres by Jan. 1, 2022
- **Sierra Nevada Conservancy grant application for the Watershed Improvement Program was submitted on 10/17/2019-** \$560,000 request to complete 185 acres of fire fuels reduction/hazard tree removal at Rollins Reservoir (Long Ravine, Greenhorn and Orchard Springs Campgrounds) and at the Rollins Hydro Powerhouse

## OUTREACH, COLLABORATION & EDUCATION:

- **CABY-** The CABY IRWM Plan update will continue through 2020
- **Education & Outreach** – Activities for 2020 are being preliminarily planned and may include: support and participation for the Nevada County STEAM Expo in March; summer camp at the Ditch Tender’s House; Watershed Open House for the community; project signage
- **NID’s Quagga/Zebra Aquatic Invasive Species Monitoring and Prevention Plan Implementation-** November 18-20<sup>th</sup>, 2019 Watershed Program Assistant Cameron Townsend attended a 16-hour training course for the inspection and decontamination of watercraft infested with aquatic invasive species. This training increases the District’s internal capacity by supporting the current Quagga/Zebra Mussel Prevention and Monitoring Program. The training took place at the Lake Mead Water Safety Center in Boulder City, Nevada, and focused on identification of aquatic invasive species, inspection of watercraft before entrance and after exit of a reservoir, and decontamination protocols should aquatic invasive species be detected. The most prevalent concern in the western United States is Quagga and Zebra mussels. Due to the risk to District facilities, and the associated risk of closure for recreational use if either species is found within our reservoirs, the District has developed a Prevention and Monitoring Plan as part of a grant-funded effort (completed in 2018). This Plan aims to assess our current vulnerability and prevent the introduction of quagga and zebra mussels (dreissenid mussels) into three lower-elevation storage facilities: Scotts Flat, Rollins and Combie Reservoirs (see: <https://nidwater.com/western-nevada-county-qz-prevention-monitoring-plan-2018-low-res/>). This program is important to the long-term watershed health, water supply and the integrity of our water system infrastructure. These rapidly breeding and destructive species can alter water chemistry, degrade water quality, disrupt fisheries, and damage water conveyance and treatment infrastructure.

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