

**Minutes of a Regular Meeting of the Board of Directors of
Bear Yuba Land Trust
Tuesday, April 26, 2016 5:00 p.m.
North Star House, 12075 Auburn Rd, Grass Valley, California**

Call to Order: A regular meeting of the Board of Directors of Bear Yuba Land Trust (“BYLT”) was held on Tuesday, April 26, 2016 at 5:00 p.m. PST. President Terry Hundemer called the meeting to order at 5:10 p.m. and verified the presence of a quorum.

1. **Roll Call:** The first item of business was the roll call of board members. Present and participating in the meeting were the following: Terry Hundemer, President; Fran Cole, Vice President; Art Thielen, Treasurer; Michael Smiley, Secretary; Andy Cassano, Brent Fraser, Letty Litchfield, Bill Trabucco, Bill Stewart. Members absent: Rebecca Coffman. Guests: Dennis Burbridge and Robin Milam. Also present were the following staff members: Marty Coleman-Hunt, Executive Director; Melony Vance, Development and Programs Manager; Shaun Clarke, Trails Coordinator; Erin Tarr, Stewardship Programs Manager; Mariah Simpson, Administrative Assistant and Official Clerk of the Board.
2. **Approval of Consent Agenda:**
Consent Agenda - The next item of business was the approval of the Consent Agenda, which consisted of the approval of the January minutes. **Upon motions duly made and seconded, the list of items in the consent agenda and the consent agenda were approved.**
3. **Staff Presentations on Quarter One:**
Marty stated that spring has been busy and that recent events have been phenomenal. Marty reported that the Rice’s Crossing Grand Openings for major donors and the general public went very well. Marty stated that Melony has been doing a fantastic job at coordinating these events with the help of Erin, Shaun, and Elias who got the site ready, and Laura who helped prepare the food for the major donor event. Marty reported that the BYLT has hired a new Bookkeeper, Lisa Hooper, as well as Treks Coordinator Annette Glabe, and Stewardship Assistant Chris Dudine.

Stewardship - Erin reported the status of several activities at various BYLT Preserves. At Burton Homestead Preserve, there has been a serious bark beetle infestation. Discussions have been held with Cal Fire and Sierra Streams Institute to discuss how best to deal with the dead standing trees, especially because of safety concerns. Jerry Ryberg was contracted to fall the sixty or seventy dead and dying trees at the top of the preserve. Erin would like to take this opportunity to write a grant for the clean-up, to do some burning, and to do some restoration. In response to a question from Letty, Erin responded that Jerry has a contract to ship the timber to China, since the lumber mills in California are full. Erin stated that this will be done at no cost to BYLT. Erin reported that some snags were marked to be left in strategic locations for habitat protection

purposes. At Sequoia Challenge Preserve, a grant application has been submitted to Sierra Nevada Conservancy to fund fuel reduction. The fuel reduction project will be strategically designed to protect wildlife habitat. At Mathis Pond, the spillway on the dam is failing due to beaver activity. Goats will be used to graze blackberry and clear off the dam in order to allow inspection of the dam. At Garden Bar Preserve, a holistic grazing management plan for the property was received from consultant, Owen Hablutzel. This plan includes guidelines for grazing, water use, potential measures to generate income from the property, as well as potential recreation opportunities. In order to implement the recommendations of the plan, Erin submitted a \$230,000 grant proposal for mitigating climate change, with carbon sequestration as the main focus, to the Wildlife Conservation Society Climate Adaptation Fund. Also at Garden Bar, Jim Gates and BYLT Stewardship Assistants, Chris and Elias, have finished installing rock jacks, which are hand-welded metal structures made by Jim Gates. The rock jacks are anchored into the rock, allowing fence to be installed across large rocky areas. At Rice's Crossing Preserve, the Sierra Nevada Alliance Partnership crew helped prepare for the two recent events and install signs. On June 2, staff members from the California Natural Resources Agency are scheduled to conduct a site visit at Rice's Crossing as part of their evaluation of the \$312,000 grant application prepared by John Thomson. Also at Rice's Crossing, Erin reported that a few schools are considering using Rice's Crossing South for restoration projects. Erin reported an exciting new project, the Bartolucci Pollinator Meadow that will be developed on Sherry Bartolucci's property by BYLT staff on a fee-for-service basis. The project will involve restoring the entire meadow after it has been grazed by Chris Dudine's livestock. Finally, Erin reported that the NCCC crew that had been assigned to work with BYLT had to leave to provide disaster relief elsewhere in the country, but a new crew arrived today. Cathy has been doing compliance monitoring with staff and Board members at several BYLT easement properties and that is going well.

Trails - Shaun reported the status of several BYLT trail projects. During the first quarter of 2016 the Rambler Trail was completed and received a trail adopter, Leslie Sancier. Trail work days are now regularly held on Thursdays and there has been an increase in the number of interested volunteers and in volunteer hours. The Trails Committee has been revived. Board President Terry Hundemer attended the recent first meeting of 2016. Shaun stated that his goal is to create a Committee that acts as an extension of the Trails Department. Burton Trail is mostly complete and proper signage is being created. Shaun will be leading a hike for EcoKids at Burton Homestead and will use the opportunity to discuss the bark beetle issue with participants. There is a new adopter for Black Swan Trail and the gates on the property are being modified to be more user-friendly and still keep the cattle in. At Litton Trail, the Trails Team has been doing a lot of blackberry removal and students from Bitney College Prep High School came out to help in the rain on Earth Day. Shaun is working with Bill Haire on the Upper Miner's Trail to adjust the alignment of the trail. The Trails Team is working on the Pines to Mines Trail, Bill has been working on the Berriman Ranch property, and Sugarloaf Trail. The Trails Team recently met with Grass Valley Police Department to discuss cleaning up the area

behind Raley's shopping center. BYLT volunteers will help to clean up the garbage left by homeless persons and a trail easement is being negotiated with Les Schwab. The intended trail will connect to the Wolf Creek cohousing neighborhood and, eventually, to Berriman Ranch. Marty has been working on the proposed trail hub along Sutton Way. Shaun and the Trails Team will be working to improve the Yuba Rim Trail to better serve equestrian users. The kiosk at Adam Ryan Preserve will also be improved.

Outreach and Fundraising - Melony gave a report regarding several fundraising and outreach activities. The Oak Tree Bash was very successful. BYLT staff made a presentation to the Kiwanis and will be presenting to Coldwell Banker soon. BYLT's social media presence has increased steadily this year, thanks to Mariah, and Laura continues to make sure BYLT is in the newspaper and on the radio frequently. BYLT now has a Wednesday morning slot on KNCO every week and BYLT staff continue to be invited to speak on various radio programs. The Union now has a regular trails column written by BYLT staff. In response to a question from Letty, Melony responded that there is an effort to outreach more in Yuba County, including events with Yuba Harvest and North Yuba Grown. Melony and Erin are coordinating with the Department of Environmental Sciences at William Jessop University in Rocklin for students to use BYLT's lands for projects. This program has the potential to establish a partnership for internships. Melony reported that memberships are a little behind but another appeal will go out next week. The Youth Appeal is at 62% of goal and Melony is also working on business sponsorships with the help of Brent Fraser.

4. **President's Report:**

Woodpecker Lawsuit – **Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board entered into Executive Session to discuss the Woodpecker Lawsuit at 5:43pm. Upon motion duly made and seconded the Board exited Executive Session at 6:09 pm.**

Board and Committee Recruitment – Terry stated that the Philanthropy Committee is in desperate need of members. Melony and Marty would like Committee members to act as ambassadors to the community, not necessarily for direct fundraising, and that the committee will be focused on reaching out to the public strategically. Michael has been attending the meetings and stressed the importance of having Board members on the Committee.

5. **Financial Report:**

Quarter One Results – Art gave a financial report on the first quarter of 2016. The first quarter net operating loss was \$96,000 compared to a budgeted loss of \$60,000. The \$30,000 actual loss greater than budget was primarily due to a shortfall in contributions, additional property taxes, and trail building costs.. BYLT sold \$79,000 in investments to cover the first quarter loss.

In response to a question from Robin Milam, Marty stated that the shortfall in donations was due to outstanding receivables from PG&E, not a donor related problem. She added

that PG&E is not on a regular payment schedule and therefore it is never certain when the money will come in.

Cascade Crossing - The \$49,000 in funds for Oak Tree mitigation was received from the Cascade Crossing developer. In response to a question from Andy, Marty stated that the money must be used to restore oak woodlands.

Nickel Trust – Marty, as trustee of the Nickel Trust, wrote a letter releasing Bear Yuba Land Trust from the obligation to repay the existing loan. Michael asked why we have been unable to repay the loan. Art replied that our expenditures have exceeded revenues. Marty also explained that the funds must be used for conservation projects or, up to 25%, can be used for Executive Director’s salary. Agreement to the terms of the loan forgiveness must be ratified by the full Board. **Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board approved the following resolution:**

RESOLVED THAT, agreement to the terms of the forgiveness of the Nickle Trust loan has been ratified.

Night Deposit - Art reported that for banking efficiency, it is desirable that Lisa Hooper, BYLT bookkeeper, obtain a key for the night deposit drop box at Tri Counties Bank in order to make after-hours deposits. This requires authorization from the BYLT Board. **Upon motion duly made and seconded the Board approved the following resolution:**

RESOLVED THAT, Lisa Hooper is authorized to obtain a key from Tri Counties Bank in order to make night deposits.

6. **Staff Report:**

Administration Update:

Volunteer Tracking – Marty reported that the 2015 financial audit will begin on May 24th. As part of the audit process, Mariah will be requesting and tracking the number of hours Board members spend working on BYLT projects and participating in meetings during 2015 and into the future. Mariah will also be recording all BYLT volunteer hours for grant writing purposes. She will also be using Volunteer Spot software to track volunteer crew hours. Board members will need to track their own hours, which Mariah will request quarterly. In response to a question from Andy, Marty stated that expenses and mileage for Board members should be tracked as well which can also be reported by Board members as a tax-deductible donation to BYLT for income tax purposes. This information can be added to the form. In response to a question from Fran, Marty stated that this will be documented quarterly. Art stated that quarterly reporting is sufficient.

Fundraising Update:

Summer Fundraiser – Marty reported that the summer fundraiser will be held on September 10th and will have a live and silent auction and gala at Linden Lea Ranch. The

evening will include local food, music, and dancing.

Sierra Nevada Consortium Agreement – Marty introduced a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that is being circulated among several land trusts in the Sierra Nevada and is seeking participation from BYLT. Land trusts in the Sierra Nevada are planning to hire a lobbyist in order to help increase awareness and secure funding from the State Legislature related to Sierra Nevada issues and projects. Doug Houston, the lobbyist who will be hired, is a member of the Placer Land Trust Board of Directors and has well-established relationships with several legislators. Marty presented the MOU to join the Consortium, stating that participation will likely help BYLT to be represented in Sacramento for acquisition and restoration projects. In accordance with the terms of the MOU, Marty proposed that BYLT offer to contribute \$2,500, for use in paying a portion of the lobbyist's salary. In response to a question from Terry, Marty responded that BYLT has never done this before but that California politics are changing. In response to a question from Terry, Marty stated that she will receive regular reports on the activities of the lobbyist and will have opportunities to provide direct input on where lobbying efforts should be focused. In addition, occasionally, the Consortium may need someone from BYLT to attend meetings in Sacramento to discuss BYLT's needs. In response to a question from Fran, Marty stated that BYLT is allowed by law to lobby in such circumstances but that she is unable to answer as to whether or not our constituents would approve of such activities. Andy stated that he has been going to Sacramento for Sierra Nevada Day for years, which helps to spread awareness of the Sierra Nevada and the watershed. Andy stated that it's astounding how little politicians know about the importance of the Sierra Nevada. Bill Stewart added that the statewide Water Bond did not help to tell the story of the watershed, and that groups in other areas who have been successful in securing funding had a very articulate story of the importance of the watershed and what needed to be done. Michael stated that BYLT should contribute and be part of the team. Andy agreed and stated that the more the overall Sierra Nevada is promoted and funded, the more BYLT projects will be considered for receiving funding. **Upon motion duly made and seconded, the Board adopted the following resolution:**

RESOLVED THAT, BYLT will join the MOU with the Sierra Nevada Consortium and contribute \$2500.

Project Updates:

PG&E – Marty summarized the status of several PG&E properties. Four of the PG&E Conservation Easement (CE) properties are entering into the escrow closing process and BYLT will be receiving about \$200,000 in stewardship funds. The Lindsey Lakes property CE is also in process. Adjacent landowner Richard Baker will accompany Marty to meetings with PG&E to participate in the discussion of Lindsey Lakes property. The CE agreement with NID for the Deer Creek Powerhouse site was submitted to the Stewardship Council but was rejected because they felt the agreement did not offer enough protections for conservation. Marty will meet with NID to work on a revised

agreement. Marty stated that NID would like to move forward on this project.

Marty also reported on activities related to PG&E's Bear River Planning Unit, an area of approximately 6,000 acres of land along the Bear River. A large portion of the land will be donated to UC Berkeley while the remainder will be retained by PG&E. BYLT is set to hold a CE on the Nevada County portion of the property. Placer Land Trust has stated that they don't want to manage the portion on Placer County side, so BYLT needs to consider taking on the entire property. Bill Stewart stated that although a portion of the property is technically in Placer County, topographically it is contiguous with the land BYLT will hold because it is part of the steep canyon of the Bear River. Therefore, he suggested it makes sense that it all be managed as a contiguous unit. Marty stated that acquiring this property will increase BYLT's footprint significantly. In response to a question from Robin, Marty stated that the property is located above the proposed Centennial Dam. She also stated that BYLT is not able to build a trail there at this time due to liability issues. In response to a question from Bill Trabucco, Marty responded that the property will be on both sides of Highway 20. In response to a question from Terry, Marty stated that the easements have public access listed as a permitted use but do not specifically mention trails. BYLT has presented a plan to improve the existing trail and potentially build a trail that is up to code. In response to a question from Art, Marty responded that BYLT is just beginning negotiations and that she will continue to report to the Board as to the funding of this project. Bill Stewart stated that the more PG&E property acquired, the more money will be received from PG&E.

7. **Strategic Plan Workshop: The Strategic Plan** Workshop ensued with much discussion. **See Exhibit A for a summary of key comments.**
8. **Adjournment:** There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 8:13 p.m. PST.

Respectfully submitted,
Michael Smiley, Secretary and Mariah Simpson, Official Clerk of the Board

**Bear Yuba Land Trust Board of Directors
Strategic Planning Brainstorm
4/26/16**

Exhibit A: Summary of Comments from Board and Staff Attendees

What have we accomplished in the past 25 years?

- 9,000 acres
- 35 miles of trails
- Range of partnerships, including agencies and other non-profits
- Strong, talented staff
- Accreditation
- Shift from NCLT to BYLT (watershed focus)
- Saved and then spun out the North Star House
- Broad, diverse geography: 9,000' to 300' elevation
- Incredible audience reach
- Land management for highest and best conservation values
- Youth nature education
- Board diversity expansion
- Next gen conservationists: AmeriCorps, NCCC

What are the major problems and issues we face currently as we look forward to the next 25 years?

- Board doesn't under what staff does.
- Dependence on few revenue streams for cash flow/lack of diversity
- Lack of capacity to meet commitments (# staff)
- Spending out of balance with income
- Balance sheet weakness
- Staff burnout
- Vulnerability of a loss of a major donor or donor loyalty
- Office space
- Too dependent on local community philanthropy
- Lack of planned giving program to generate future funds
- Lack of local government support; tax assessment for open space
- Spots and dots: random acts of conservation
- Consider selling our land

Who is our community? Who do we serve? Who benefits from what we do?

Who supports what we do?

- 30K people in the twin cities of GV and NC
- 20-mile donut ring around the watershed: Marysville, Yuba City, Truckee, Rocklin
- Sierra Nevada region
- All of the state

- Ag community that needs water
- Interest groups like mountain bikers
- Bay Area
- Sacramento legislators
- Who cares about the protection and restoration of these lands
- Agencies

What is our vision for this place in 25-50 years?

- Permanent conservation of the most important lands
- Healthy community: land and people; habitat, wildlife, recreation
- Defensible space (fire safe): private property
- Resilient landscape for catastrophic wildfire
- No more dams, rather invest in restoration for groundwater (the sponge): wetlands, etc.
- Continuous wildlife corridors
- All prime ag land protected
- Balance between good development and conservation
- Capture greenhouse gases in our trees, grasses and soil