

TUOLUMNE COUNTY NATURAL RESOURCES ADVISORY COMMITTEE

REGULAR MEETING AGENDA

2025 Strategic Priorities

- Support our local water utility partners in their effort to modernize and improve water supply infrastructure and mitigate risk.
- Maintain awareness of pertinent State and Federal legislation regarding natural resources, land use, water, and water rights.
- Maintain awareness of Tuolumne County Federal land use policy, planning, and implementation and provide recommendations and advocacy as appropriate.
- Promote landscape and watershed resilience through innovative solutions and capacity building.

Date/Time: Wednesday, February 4, 2026, at 10:00 AM

Location: A.N. Francisco Bldg. 48 Yaney Ave. 3rd Floor Committees & Commissions Rm., Sonora, 95370

Contact: Sean Hembree at shembree@co.tuolumne.ca.us (209)533-5554

Chair/Vice Chair

Supervisor Anaiah Kirk

Supervisor Mike Holland

Agency Representatives

Tuolumne Me Wuk

Diana Beasley

Chicken Ranch Me Wuk

Stephanie Suess

Tuolumne Utilities District

Don Perkins

Groveland CSD

Pete Kampa

Hetch Hetchy

Joy Meller

Fish and Game Preserve Fund

Jim Maddox

Agricultural Advisor

Dick Gaiser

Tuolumne Co. RCD

Jim Phelan

At Large Member

Chris Trott

Staff

Water & Natural Resource

Analyst (CAO)

Sean Hembree

I. CALL TO ORDER

II. ROLL CALL (5 minutes)

Introductions during roll call

Confirm quorum requirements are met (Quorum = 6 members)

III. PUBLIC FORUM (15 minutes)

The public may speak on any item, not on the agenda. No action may be taken by the Committee

Public Comment (limited to 3 minutes per person)

IV. APPROVAL OF MINUTES FOR MEETING ON NOVEMBER 5, 2025

V. CONSIDERATION OF LETTER REGARDING AB 35 TO STATE SENATE

VI. COMMITTEE BUSINESS:

a. Staff Reports and Recommendations

i. California Wildfire and Forest Resilience Taskforce Sierra Nevada Regional Meeting event

ii. UCCE, UC Rangeland Study Outcomes Summary (Pending)

iii. MSA Update

b. Committee Member Reports

II. ADJOURNMENT

The Next meeting is scheduled for March 4, 2026



Tuolumne County Natural Resources Advisory Committee Minutes For the Meeting on November 5, 2025

2025 Natural Resource Members (or assigned delegates)	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Anaiah Kirk		✓	✓		✓		✓	E		E	E	
Mike Holland		✓	✓		E		✓	✓		✓	✓	
Don Perkins		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	
Pete Kampa		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓	✓	
Joy Meller		E	✓		E		✓			✓	E	
Dianna Beasley		✓	✓		✓		✓	✓			✓	
Dick Gaiser		✓	✓		✓		✓				✓	
Chris Trott		E	✓		E					✓		
Jim Maddox		✓	✓		✓			✓		✓		
Jim Phelan		E	✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	
Present = ✓ Absent = A Excused = E												

- CALL TO ORDER:** Vice Chair Holland called the meeting to order at 10:06 A.M. and confirmed a quorum was present.
- MEMBERS PRESENT:** Vice Chair Mike Holland, Don Perkins, Pete Kampa, Diana Beasley, Dick Gaiser, and Jim Phelan, and Sean Hembree, Caitlin Henry, and Sara Daniel (staff)
- PUBLIC FORUM:** *(The public may speak on any item not on the printed agenda. No action may be taken by the Committee. The amount of time allocated for the public forum is limited to 15 minutes.)*
None
- APPROVAL OF MINUTES:** In Consideration of approving the minutes of the October 1, meeting. Vice Chair Holland made a motion to approve the minutes. The motion was seconded by Jim Phelan. The motion was approved unanimously.
- PARTNER AGENCY UPDATES:**

6. CONSIDERATION OF A DEPARTMENT OF WATER RESOURCES PUBLIC COMMENT LETTER REGARDING BULLETIN 118

Staff (Sean Hembree) reported on the historical context of the California Water Board Bulletin 118 function in informing interpretation of the Sustainable Ground Water Management Act and the opportunity for public comment. Hembree recommended a letter advocating for:

- The inclusion of a provision that permits jurisdictions to waive GSP development and management requirements if said GSA has no production-scale extraction and thereby no need for management actions.
- Provide a pathway for petitioning for a basin boundary modification.

Jim Phelan made a motion to approve create the letter as described. Dick Gaiser seconded the motion. The motion was approved unanimously.

Note: Staff submitted this letter (attached) administratively on 11/24/25 as no open Board of Supervisors meetings were available prior to the comment period deadline.

7. COMMITTEE BUSINESS:

- a. Staff Reports and Recommendations: - Postponed
- b. Committee Member Reports: - None

8. ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 10:16 by Vice Chair Holland.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 3, 2025

Stanislaus National Forest – Eagle Meadows Allotment Virtual Fence Project

Year 1 Progress Report

January 30, 2026

Project Collaborators

Brennan Ranch, University of California Cooperative Extension (Dr. Leslie Roche and Dan Macon), U.S. Forest Service (Crispin Holland and Kegan Richards), Natural Resources Conservation Service (Fletcher Nelson), and County of Tuolumne (Sean Hembree).

Project Overview

Virtual fencing technology provides the potential for using cattle for targeted grazing in extensive grazing systems. This project will evaluate a number of research questions related to virtual fencing on the Eagle Meadows Allotment of the Stanislaus National Forest. The Eagle Meadows Allotment is comprised of approximately 19,000 acres ranging in elevation from 6,000 to over 9,000 feet above sea level. Currently, the allotment is permitted for 150 cow-calf pairs from early July through late September. Portions of the allotment were impacted by the Donnell's Fire in 2018. Resource management concerns include upland forage utilization and fuel loading, as well as meadow utilization and conifer encroachment. The County of Tuolumne and the Stanislaus National Forest split the cost of purchasing 8 towers. The Brennan's leased 150 collars. UC Cooperative Extension provided project support and end-of-season vegetation monitoring.

Research/Demonstration Questions

- Will better distribution and upland utilization support increase in permitted numbers (while protecting meadows and other key resources)? This replicates a project on the Modoc National Forest.
- Will better distribution provide opportunities to manage conifer encroachment in meadows?
- Does VF technology provide permittees/USFS with the ability to manage to Standards and Guidelines while addressing fuel management?
- Does VF technology facilitate better (immediate?) post fire management (note: this would be an opportunity if a fire occurs during the project).
- Does VF offer opportunities for detecting/managing predator impacts? Mountain lions, black bears, and gray wolves are predator species of concern.
- Are replacement heifers from cows that are trained to VF easier to train?
- Does VF require other changes in management (e.g., culling strategies, drought management, etc.)?
- Does VF technology provide opportunities for addressing year-to-year variability, extending/adding to season of use, permitted numbers, etc. within the existing allotment system?

Year 1 Observations and Results

Cattle were turned out on the allotment in mid-July and were gathered in early October. UCCE conducted effectiveness monitoring in October.

- Training cattle to VF at the home ranch did not seem to impact collar compliance in a new environment (post turn-out).
- Approximately 14,000 acres of the allotment were treated with prescribed grazing.
- Base station locations were often difficult to access, especially in rugged, mountainous terrain. Off-allotment locations may provide better coverage. Several proposed locations were infeasible, which resulted in approximately 25% of the 19,000 acres within the allotment being untreated in 2025.
- Allotment quadrants (associated with base stations) were created arbitrarily based on aerial photos rather than on-the-ground conditions. This created isolated challenges for livestock distribution and movement.
- In August, 4 pair left the allotment traveling 2.5-3 mph (going south and abruptly turning west). Permittees would not have known they were off the allotment without virtual fence.
- Permittees were able to gather approximately 33% of the cattle into their gathering pasture using virtual fencing alone.
- Gathering was significantly less labor intensive compared to previous years.
- Effectiveness monitoring demonstrated both the ability to manage to USFS Standards and Guides in key areas while increasing utilization of fine fuels in upland areas.
- Year One results were summarized in a poster presented at the California Cattlemen's Association annual conference in December 2025 and at a workshop in Tuolumne in January 2026.

Year 2 Objectives

- Create quadrants and pasture boundaries that better reflect on-the-ground conditions.
- Locate optimal base station locations to increase allotment coverage.
- Increase upland monitoring (add 3 additional monitoring locations).
- Establish additional meadow monitoring locations.