

**Almanor Basin Watershed Advisory Committee Meeting Minutes**  
**Rose Quartz Inn - Best Western**  
**Wednesday, September 13, 2006**  
**6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.**

**1) Call to Order. 6:03**

**2) Review & approval of agenda.**

Carl Felts objected moving Committee member reports to the end of the agenda. Ken Wilson moved to change agenda item 10 to agenda item 4a. Peggy Fulder seconded the agenda as amended. The motion was unanimously approved

**3) Approval of meeting minutes- August 9, 2006.**

Mike Mitzel motioned to approve the minutes and Sherrie Thrall seconded. Motion was unanimously approved

**4) Public comment period** (each member of the public will have a max of 3 min).

One member of the public who attended the Eastern Tehama deer herd workshop thanked the Committee for letting members of the public share their opinions on the status and management of the Eastern Tehama deer herd.

**4a) Individual Committee member reports.**

Sherrie Thrall reported that she was approached by a Lake Front at Walker Ranch representative to have a meeting with her as the Supervisor elect. She expressed her concern to them about the stormwater management plan and timely completion of the sewage treatment plant. She agreed to organize a public discussion with the principals from Lake Front at Walker Ranch, about stormwater and sewage treatment concerns. She tentatively planned this discussion for October 2 at the Rose Quartz Inn. It is not a formal ABWAC meeting. The Committee discussed what kind of meeting this discussion would be and who would host it. The Committee felt it best that Sherrie Thrall host the meeting as supervisor elect and ABWAC members and Planning Commission members would attend as members of the public.

Aaron Seandel reported that the scheduled meeting between the Board of Supervisors of Lassen and Plumas Counties on September 19<sup>th</sup> was canceled.

**5) Subcommittee reports.** Water Quality, Wildlife and Land Use Subcommittees all met in the past month

Aaron Seandel, Chair of the Water Quality Subcommittee, reported on the results of the meeting held on August 24. A discussion took place concerning the subcommittee's budget and the results of the July 4<sup>th</sup> sampling completed by Plumas County Department of Environmental Health. The results of the sampling showed that water quality was good and did not exceed state and federal standards on any measure. Following a discussion, the subcommittee decided not to conduct the water sampling at high use beaches on Labor Day because the previous years' results did not indicate a problem. The California Regional

Water Quality Board encouraged the Subcommittee to change the July 4<sup>th</sup> beach sampling from fecal coliform analysis to e.coli testing, since e.coli was a better indicator. Even though e.coli testing is twice as expensive, the Water Quality Subcommittee decided to proceed with it for the July 4<sup>th</sup> sampling of next year. The Subcommittee then addressed the draft water quality monitoring plan that Maurice Hall had assembled for the Almanor Basin. The issue was raised about MTBE testing and the decision by DWR to stop the testing. The consensus is that with the annual turnover of the lake, it is not an issue. Also, there is no testing being done for hydrocarbons. Carl Felts made the point that collecting samples in the middle of the Lake for such tests may be inadequate. The issue of mercury was also raised and the possibility that its source may be the volcanic areas around Mount Lassen. Mike Derrig argued at the Water Quality Subcommittee Meeting that the monitoring plan needed to decide between focusing on trend or compliance monitoring.

Lorena Gorbet, Chair of the Wildlife, Fish and Critical Habitats Subcommittee, reported on the events that took place at the two previous meetings. The last meeting mostly consisted of a planning discussion for the upcoming public workshop on the trend and management of the Eastern Tehama deer herd. Dick Daniel then reported on the two fieldtrips that the Subcommittee had taken to Mountain Meadows Creek and Red Clover Creek. Dick Daniel commented that Mountain Meadows Creek was badly degraded. The cattle were supposed to be fenced out from grazing along the edge of the reservoir, but they were not. The Subcommittee identified Mountain Meadows Creek as a potential restoration site. At Red Clover Creek, the Wildlife Subcommittee was able to see the work that the Feather River Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) group had been doing on the restoration of an eroded and degraded creek. Dick Daniel reported that CRM now expect that the current sagebrush meadow will return to grasses and forbs for better grazing and wildlife habitat, along with the water resource benefits in terms of increased storage, decreased temperature, and decreased sediment load. Dick Daniel reported that CRM predicted that the stream will recover to the point that the average temperature will be 2-3 degrees Celsius cooler.

Mike Mitzel, Chair of the Land Use, Timber and Agriculture Subcommittee, reported that the subcommittee had addressed the Lake Front at Walker Ranch issue at the last meeting. The subcommittee also discussed county requirements for stormwater runoff mitigation and enforcement in the Basin.

**6) Staff Report (10 min)**

Staff reported that they were working on finalizing the watershed education brochures. Staff announced the next meeting of the Technical Advisory Group on Monday, September 25 to discuss the water quality monitoring plan with Maurice Hall. Staff reported that the BDAT (Bay Delta and Tributaries) database was going to be the format for the initial online database for the Almanor Basin. They stated that they were working on setting up the field tour with the Lassen US Forest Service, which will most likely take place at the end of October.

**7) Discussion of outcome of the September 11 public workshop on the status and management of the Eastern Tehama deer herd. Discussion Item.**

The workshop had a good turnout with about 40 people in attendance. Dave Walker, wildlife biologist with the California Department of Fish and Game (DFG), made the first presentation and indicated that the Eastern Tehama deer herd is in decline by about 25 percent. This problem is similar to the population declines other deer herds across the West are experiencing. A key issue is forest management, involving specifically fire suppression, which has resulted in a thick canopy cover.

Dick Daniel asked the question in the workshop of whether the Eastern Tehama deer herd is a valid indicator of too much development, but he mentioned that the question was largely not addressed. He reported that using an indicator that is not a listed species might be valuable, especially if it is something as big as a deer herd and something as obvious as the population number.

Jeff Finn, also a wildlife biologist with California DFG, made the second presentation, asserting that the responsibility for wildlife conservation goes back to the County General Plan and policy development around the issue, including the location of development. The committee discussed the next steps after the workshop, including working with land managers and the timber industry to better understand the deer herd's needs and how they interact with other basin issues. Public comments were received, indicating that they want ABWAC to put on more workshops about sensitive issues in the basin.

**8) Access to information on zoning change proposals and information to understand them. Discussion Item.**

Sherrie Thrall reported that she met with the Plumas County Director of Building & Planning, Jonathan Schnal, and she told him that she wants to know about developments early in the permitting process. Jonathan Schnal agreed and indicated that all supervisors should be informed about what is going on in their area. The committee discussed the status of active developments in the basin and how the public can find out about what is happening early enough in the process so that they can provide comment. Sherrie Thrall reported that the Planning Department is amenable to working with the community to improve public involvement. The Committee discussed the public concern that they want more information and a more open process.

**9) Storm water management: ways to improve monitoring and enforcement of Storm water Pollution Prevention Plans. Discussion Item.**

Aaron Seandel reported that the Water Quality subcommittee intended to invite Scott Zaitz (Regional Water Quality Control Board) to the next subcommittee meeting to discuss regulation and enforcement of stormwater management in the Basin. The committee discussed securing additional funding from basin developers for stormwater runoff monitoring.

**10) Change next meeting time: October 4, 2006 from 6:00-8:00 pm at Lake Almanor Inn, Hamilton Branch (CALFED Bay-Delta Watershed Partnership Seminar October 10-20)**

The November and December ABWAC meetings will remain at their regularly scheduled time: November 8 and December 13 from 6-8 PM. The October ABWAC meeting was set for October 4 from 6-8 PM at the Rose Quartz Inn.

Agenda items for the next meeting.

The committee decided to hold its annual selection of the Chairperson and Vice-chairperson at the October 4 ABWAC meeting and the election will proceed with open nominations from the floor. The committee was also interested in finalizing the Watershed Assessment so that a copy can be given to each of the Plumas County Supervisors.

**11) Adjournment. 7:45**

Carl Felts motioned to adjourn the meeting and Ken Wilson seconded the motion. The motion was unanimously approved.