

Friends of Banner Mountain Annual Meeting
Seaman's Lodge, Nevada City
September 6, 2023
7:00 - 9:00 pm

The Friends of Banner Mountain's (FBM) annual meeting was held in conjunction with an overview of the proposed Little Deer Creek Resilience Project. Ann Westling, FBM vice president, started the meeting by welcoming all the attendees and introducing Chris Friedel, executive director, of the Yuba Watershed Institute (YWI), the evening speaker.

Chris began his presentation by giving an overview of the Little Deer Creek Resilience Project that lasted about 45 minutes. He explained how the project would:

- Reduce the potential for catastrophic wildfires,
- Reduce the fuel loads along Gracie and Banner Lava Cap roads making evacuations a bit safer, and
- Enhance the forest health while maintaining wildlife habitat and watershed health.

He spent another 45 minutes answering attendees's questions.

Chris placed maps of the BLM area around the room. He provided cards so attendees could record any suggestions and additional questions. He was pleased with the specific suggestions and concerns the attendees provided. People were very receptive and really wanted more to be done but seemed to understand the constraints that YWI is facing; such as funding and limited time when work could be accomplished.

Some attendees expressed concerns about fuels along Gracie. Chris said that was within the county's right-of-way and that the county had more leeway to start work and to remove those fuels than this project would. The county representative present at the meeting said she would put Gracie Road on the county's list of places that need work.

YWI will be applying for grant funding to implement the project from Sierra Nevada Conservancy as they had funded the planning effort. The soonest they would know if they get the funding was in March.

It was a positive meeting. There were about 55 attendees which included representatives from Yuba Watershed Institute, Bureau of Land Management , Sierra Streams Institute, Bear Yuba Land Trust, Cal Fire and Nevada County. People seemed pleased that an actual project was close to being funded and hopefully implemented.

Ann Westling adjourned the meeting at 9:00 pm. She encouraged folks to stay longer if they wanted to talk with Chris.