

**Kennedy Meadows Public Planning Workshop
Sonora Opera Hall - Sonora, CA
August 21, 2008 - 3:00 to 6:00pm**

A public planning workshop for the Kennedy Meadows pilot project was hosted by the Stewardship Council on August 21, 2008, in Sonora, California. A total of 62 individuals attended and participated in the workshop, representing a wide variety of interests, including local, state, federal, and tribal governments; community organizations; and local businesses. The primary purpose of this workshop was to solicit input from the public on the development of a Land Conservation and Conveyance Plan (LCCP) to preserve and enhance Kennedy Meadows. The Stewardship Council will consider all input received from the public.

During the meeting, a break-out session was held in which the workshop attendees were randomly divided into four groups consisting of 12-15 people. Discussions were guided by staff and focused on two topics: important qualifications of future land owners and conservation easements holders, and importance/priority of the 21 potential measures recommended for Kennedy Meadows. Notes from each group were recorded on flip-charts and key discussion points were reported back to the larger group at the end of the workshop by a community member. Below is a compilation of the notes from each group according to color assignments.

Yellow Group Breakout Session Notes

Topic #1: Qualifications of future landowners and conservation easement holders.

- Local accountability
- Ability and experience to balance 6 BPVs (done it before)
 - Experience – Timeframe (existence of 3 years, longevity)
- Transparent organization
- PG&E should have some oversight (leases also, including the Blooms).
- Financial accountability (financially strong for period in the past)
- Demonstrated best practices with regard to BPVs
- Ability to work collaboratively
- Membership in organization that takes fee/easement should be open to public.
- Familiarity with geographic region and history
- Long-term plans for operation in perpetuity
- Strategic plans with benchmarks in place
- Long standing
- Local ties and familiarity
- Experience in land management
- Inclusive of California public
- No personal agendas – shouldn't represent only one background or interest
- Ability/history to collaborate on assessments
- Ability to hire and retain the best technical advisors
- Ability to engage with county educational resources

Topic #2: Importance/priority of potential measures to preserve/enhance BPVs.

- Measures should address ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act)
- Resolve conflicts between BPVs
- Cultural activities for educational purposes by using County resources (i.e., Miwuk Tribe)
- Water quality as it applies to the habitat
- Active planning along river
- Concern over carrying capacity and how it is determined
 - If it is done – could be done by a coalition – make sure all concerns are addressed – multiple stakeholders
- Outdoor recreation very important
- Surveys and Management Plans for habitat very important
- Grazing important for historical values as well as cultural resources – but needs to value habitat resources
- Interpretive trail should be available to all, hikers and horse packers
- Hiker-only trail is important

Red Group Breakout Session Notes

Topic #1: Qualifications of future landowners and conservation easement holders.

- Should have an understanding of Kennedy Meadows history, place in community
- Should have paid staff, organizational capacity, able to manage land
- Donee should be politically independent – stable
- Local government preference (if tied to politics)
- Independent from economic conflict of interest
- Long-term stability
- Willingness to collaborate

Topic #2: Importance/priority of potential measures to preserve/enhance BPVs.

- Proper grazing/safety regarding water quality
- Tourism important
- Work with other facilities to expand access to youth
- Engage in awareness activities to encourage youth activity
- Balance between more use and wilderness/solitude
- Trail improvements

Blue Group Breakout Session Notes

Topic #1: Qualifications of future landowners and conservation easement holders.

NOTE: Group requested that we divide this section into two categories – desirable qualifications for fee title holders and conservation easement holders. The list below includes those desirable

qualifications for a fee-title holder, and an asterisk (*) follows those suggestions that are also applicable to conservation easement holders.

- Has experience with land management, specifically management of natural resources*
- Is cooperative*
- Has open communication*
- Can take care of the lands
- Can leave the land “as is” (this was important for more than one person)
- Has an organizational track record that is established
- Has been established for more than 2 years
- Has the financial ability/capacity*
- Is able to “handle it”
- Has local experience/oversight

Additional comments:

- One member of the group requested that the number of donees be kept to a minimum
- Many group members were in agreement that things should be “kept the same”

Topic #2: Importance/priority of potential measures to preserve/enhance BPVs.

- Preservation of historic values was of highest importance for some individuals – it was clarified that historic value referred to the pack station and historical nature of the site.
- Support of a Recreation Management Plan that recognizes and encourages existing recreation use
- Support of continued pass-through of cattle
- When drafting the Forest Management Plan, there is also a need to consider agricultural uses (i.e., thatch/fuel reduction)

Not as Important

- Public use of the pack station parking area was not important/necessary
- Forestry measures were not believed to be a prime priority

Additional comments:

- The fewer changes at Kennedy Meadows the better

Green Group Breakout Session Notes

Topic #1: Qualifications of future landowners and conservation easement holders

- Maintain as PG&E has done over the last 60 years
- Have local interest / respond to local concerns
- Complement existing uses and not bring new conflicts
- Not be subject to NEPA or loads of red tape to get projects completed
- Exhibit longevity and stability
- Have experience with or access to individuals with land management experience

- Should be a mix of small and large organizations
- Should possess enough resources to get through necessary permitting processes
- Should be responsive to local control and local interests
- Have enough local knowledge to understand what is currently enjoyable about the site
- Utilize revenues in improvements, NOT overhead – be financially prudent
- Respect historical use / not preclude existing uses
- Be responsive to public input and site history – interact with involved individuals
- Be able to support an open public process
- Be able to participate in collaborative efforts with personnel / funding
- Encourage existing use by youth groups and individuals
- Represent broad public interests, NOT political conflicts / non-threatening to public
- Good track record or a lack of political tactics

Topic #2: Importance/priority of potential measures to preserve/enhance BPVs.

- Stream bank stabilization – top of the list: very costly
- Noxious weeds – high priority
- Develop fuels management plan – contribute to the economics of Forestry
- Carefully review the necessity of any new studies where existing or close-by studies exist
- Follow up any studies with action
- Outdoor recreation
- Pass-through grazing
- Improvements should not conflict with open space – existing use should not be limited to enhance open space
- Interpretive trail – low priority, but certain locations where significant items exist are a possibility