

## Charter: South Yuba River Public Safety Cohort

**Prepared by Project Manager:** Erika Seward, Sr. Management Analyst (Board of Supervisors)

**Project Sponsor:** Trisha Tillotson, Community Development Agency Director

### 1. BACKGROUND AND PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

The January 2024 Board of Supervisors Workshop included a discussion by the Board of Supervisors requesting a more concentrated focus on the South Yuba River Public Safety Cohort (“Cohort”) as part of the Recreation Board Objective.

This charter provides an overview of the Cohort and its alignment with the Recreation Board Objective *“to promote sustainable recreation in partnership with community providers and other jurisdictions to enhance recreational access, support public health and safety, realize economic opportunities, and preserve natural resource assets.”*

The Community Development Agency (CDA) is primarily responsible for advancing the Recreation Board Objective and serves as the lead facilitator of the Cohort, working in tandem with the Board of Supervisors Office and the Board Ad Hoc for the Cohort. Additional guidance is provided with the Board approved [Recreation & Resiliency Master Plan](#).

The Cohort was established seven years ago to identify and implement solutions to emerging and long-term challenges around outdoor recreation management and visitor safety at high-use and high-risk destinations along the 39-mile wild and scenic South Yuba River corridor. The Cohort is a multi-stakeholder working group of public land agencies, local and regional fire districts, law enforcement, NGOs, and community representatives, that address issues like access, parking, fire prevention, emergency response, waste mitigation, visitor education and sustainable recreation.

Since its inception, the Cohort has: (1) instituted a Burn Ban Ordinance prohibiting burning on private property within the 39-mile stretch of the South Yuba River; (2) installed 5 emergency call boxes where cell service is limited to non-existent; (3) bolstered support for Trail and River Ambassadors to pick up excessive trash, report incidents, help with first responder coordination and visitor safety education in English and Spanish; (4) increased parking fines, enforcement and signage to reduce hazards like blocking access or wildfire ignition risk; (5) distributed life jackets, maps, and safety information; and (6) secured toilets and waste collection on public and private lands at highly impacted recreation areas.

In 2023 – 2024, the Cohort was recognized with the California State Association of Counties Challenge Award and National Association of Counties (NACo) Best in Category – Parks & Recreation Award, only 1 in 18 nationwide.

## 2. PROJECT SCOPE AND TIMELINE

As part of the Recreation Board Objective, the following initiatives support the objectives of the South Yuba River Public Safety Cohort in 2024:

### 1. Implementation of the Nevada County Recreation and Resiliency Master Plan.

- A. Advocate, lead and/or support shovel-ready and priority projects within the *River Access Management* focus area.
- B. Coordinate between members to develop or advance priority projects.
- C. Actively solicit grants and secure funding to support implementation.

### 2. Coordinate and implement strategies to promote health and safety at river crossings, lakes, trailheads, and other high-use or high-risk areas.

- A. Provide guidance, input and support for Outdoor Visitor Safety Fund projects; support opportunities for securing leveraged or match funding to enhance projects.
- B. Facilitate and/or attend South Yuba River Public Safety Cohort (“Cohort”) collaborative working group meetings.
- C. Promote sustainable outdoor recreation within PSA and tourism marketing plans to include non-English speaking outreach; coordinate with the Economic Development Office and GoNevadaCounty tourism site for travel alerts and “Responsible Recreation” content.
- D. Update South Yuba River Comprehensive Management Plan to integrate adaptive use strategies like coordinated messaging, parking feasibility studies and dispersed use.

### 3. Collaborate with other organizations and jurisdictions to leverage resources and optimize efforts to drive outcomes of enhanced recreation access, health and safety, economic development, and resource conservation.

- A. Identify current and potential resource participation between stakeholders.
- B. Establish an MOU or joint governance framework between agency and community partners. Current agreements exist between:
  - A. California State Parks – SYRCL
  - B. Law Enforcement – CHP, NCSO, State Parks (citation and collection)

### 4. Develop and secure funding and strengthen case of support and advocacy for Cohort-related partners and activities.

- A. See legislative platform, to include Independence Trail advocacy, public lands management and capacity building, and more.
- B. Access and apply various metrics and tools to evaluate visitation and Outdoor Recreation economic impacts in Nevada County, contingent upon available funding and resources.
- C. Cultivate and solicit multi-benefit grant and funding opportunities focused on climate, resilience, transportation, economic development, and resource conservation.

### 3. WORKGROUP MEMBERS – ROLES & RESPONSIBILITIES

<b>Team Member Name</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b>Roles/Responsibility</b>
Trisha Tillotson	Community Development Agency Director	Project Sponsor
Supervisor Heidi Hall	Board Supervisor, D1	South Yuba River Public Safety Cohort Ad-Hoc Committee
Supervisor Sue Hoek	Board Supervisor, D4	South Yuba River Public Safety Cohort Ad-Hoc Committee
Erika Seward	Senior Management Analyst, BOS	Project Manager (interim); lead for weekly messaging distribution to stakeholders
Shavati Karki-Pearl	Senior Administrative Analyst, CDA - Rec	Incoming Project Manager
Taylor Wolfe	Public Information Officer	Communications lead for Nevada County media coordination, press release distribution
Vera DeFerrari	Senior Administrative Analyst, CDA -	Fiscal, PIO and contract support; outreach subcommittee
Ashley Quadros	Administrative Analyst II, NCSO	outreach subcommittee
Jesse Locks	Board President, Sierra Gold Parks Foundation	outreach subcommittee
Chief Pat Sullivan	Battalion Chief of Operations, NCCFD	outreach subcommittee
Dan Elkin	Outreach Director, SYRCL	outreach subcommittee

## Method of Operation:

Staff will convene and support monthly meetings with the multi-agency working group of federal, state, and community stakeholders to coordinate public safety and law enforcement in the South Yuba River and include topical discussions, tracking data and trends, project/program development and coordination.

- Monthly work group - Second Tuesday at 1:30-3pm from February to November
- Board Ad Hoc – One week prior to monthly meeting to set agenda
- Outreach Subcommittee – First Thursdays at 9am from January to April; during peak season, will shift to weekly meetings at 9am from May through September to coordinate public safety messaging.

The South Yuba River Public Safety Cohort Charter and working group is under the guidance of the Recreation Board Objective. Updates will be provided during Recreation Work Group meetings as these occur monthly or bi-monthly.

## 4. HIGH LEVEL REQUIREMENTS:

### Major Stakeholders:

1. US Forest Service – Tahoe National Forest
2. Bureau of Land Management
3. California State Parks
4. California Highway Patrol
5. CAL FIRE - NEU
6. Nevada County Consolidated Fire District
7. Local fire agencies – Town of Washington, North San Juan, Penn Valley
8. Bear Yuba Land Trust
9. Friends of Purdon Crossing
10. South Yuba River Citizens League
11. Schools
12. Various Nevada County departments, e.g. Econ Dev Office/Go Nevada County
13. Tourism industry: Chambers of Commerce, downtown associations and businesses, lodging/Hipcamp/AirBnB/short-term rentals, visitor centers, etc.
14. Out-of-Market neighboring counties and media outlets

### High Level Risks and Assumptions:

Ongoing, sustainable funding for maintaining existing or future programming may become a challenge in the future as program activities have mostly been supported by Nevada County ARPA funds. Additionally, resource participation by all Cohort members may be identified and potentially bound by an MOU or Joint Governance structure.

## 5. COMMUNICATIONS PLAN:

The South Yuba River Public Safety Cohort content strategy is developed annually and updated weekly during peak season as guided by the monthly work group and Outreach Subcommittee, in coordination with the Nevada County Public Information Office (PIO).

2024 Outreach, Campaigns, News and Events:

- a. May: South Yuba River Media Event
- b. June – September: Summer Peak Season Coordinated Safety Messaging
- c. September: National Public Lands Day Proclamation, Annual River Cleanup with Board Proclamation
- d. Throughout: Outdoor Visitor Safety Fund and grant projects underway or completed

A coordinated strategy is under development for 2024-2025 for targeting day users and non-English speaking visitors.

### Summary Budget:

The Recreation Budget is approximately \$400-425K in ongoing costs, including staffing, overhead, basic services, and supplies. Project-specific costs approved and carrying over from current budget allocations include Outdoor Visitor Safety Fund grants (\$844,050), and the ARPA-funded Yuba River access management, communications, Cohort coordination, and emergency response programs (\$113,840). Near-term projects of the Recreation & Resiliency Master Plan are supported by \$200,000 in ARPA funds to be obligated by December 2024 which may include River Access Management projects that support the South Yuba River.

Assets currently managed by the County of Nevada include:

- 5 emergency call boxes and related annual maintenance and monthly satellite subscription service
  - Locations include: Maybert Road, Edwards Crossing, Purdon Crossing, 49 Crossing, Bridgeport
- Changeable roadside message sign, maintained by County Fleet and deployed by County Facilities

Capital and Programmatic Investment needs are identified in the Recreation and Resiliency Master Plan “River Access Management” focus area.

**APPROVED**

Approved by (Project Sponsor):

*By Trisha Tillotson at 10:29 am, Aug 13, 2024*