

STATEMENT OF QUALIFICATIONS

James R Brobeck

Watershed Environmental Policy Activist

Water Policy Analyst, AquAlliance

Professional Experience:

1981-present: I live in the Big Chico Creek Watershed, a tributary of the Sacramento River Watershed. I manage 40 acres of mixed conifer/black oak forest land in the watershed.

1981-1995: Wildland fire management as a member of Butte County Fire Department. Butte County Fire Department is the largest fire department north of Sacramento, California to Eugene, Oregon. BCFD is a combination of career and citizen volunteer firefighters.

My professional engagement as a resource policy analyst began early this century when I learned to navigate the NEPA process as it pertained to projects in the Lassen National Forest. I worked with the Lassen Forest Preservation Group and the Sierra Forest Legacy to help devise vegetation management programs that improved public safety and forest health by steering taxpayer funds and individual efforts into areas that would most efficiently use scant money most effectively.

2000-2010: Served on the executive committee of the Butte County Firesafe Council, a non-profit, public-benefit corporation that provides safety in Butte County through wildfire hazard education and mitigation

The mission is accomplished through a variety of free fire prevention programs, projects, educational materials, and community outreach which includes:

- The Chipper Program—A brush-chipping service available to residents throughout Butte County.
- Fire Safe Home Visit Program—A voluntary opportunity for residents of Butte County to receive one-on-one wildfire prevention and preparedness training tailored specifically to each home.
- Resident's Assistance Program—A program that provides defensible-space assistance for qualifying low income, senior, and physically disabled residents in Butte County.
- Fuels Reduction Projects—Assisting in or carrying out fuels reduction projects in which roads are made safer for evacuation and fire-fighting access.
- Sixth Grade Education Program—Provides wildfire education for sixth-grade students.
- Home Owners' Guide to Fire-Wise Landscaping—Brochures illustrating how defensible space can be created in grassland, brushland, and timberland environments.
- Community Evacuation Plans—Provide critical information to residents for emergency evacuation.
- Weed Wrench Lending Program-Encouraging homeowners and members of the community to eradicate Spanish and French Broom infestations.

2002: Began working as a water policy analyst at Butte Environmental Council under the direction of Executive Director Barbara Vlamis. I submitted comments on the Chico Municipal

Airport Master Plan Environmental Assessment/ Draft Environmental Impact Report. The NEED FOR THE ACTION (to extend the runway) as presented on page 1-5 combines the need to reduce existing noise impacts on the densely populated urban areas south of the airport by extending the runway to the north with the need to allow use by larger commercial passenger, cargo, and business aircraft. The proposed action would involve filling approximately 3000' of Mud Creek and relocating the creek northward. The Modified Action would have either realigned the creek or run the creek through a pipe for 3000 feet. The DEIR claimed that destruction of biological values associated with the Mud Creek corridor would be mitigated. The DEIR gave very little information about the existing conditions of the section of Mud Creek that would be destroyed by this project. On June 21, 2002 I arranged a field trip to the section of Mud Creek that would be destroyed by this project. Dr. Paul E. Maslin from the Biology Department of California State University, Chico accompanied me. Dr. Maslin is an expert in aquatic ecology, especially the community ecology of streams. Dr. Maslin is the primary author of a study of nonnatal rearing of juvenile chinook salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*) that were found in several intermittent tributaries to the Sacramento River including the stretch of creek destined for destruction under the runway expansion. Condition factors and length measurements of juvenile chinook captured in the intermittent tributaries were compared with those captured in the mainstem Sacramento River. The data suggests that juvenile chinook rearing in the tributaries grew faster and were heavier for their length than those rearing in the mainstem. Faster growing fish smolt earlier, and may enter the delta earlier in the year, before low water and pumping degrade rearing habitat. The runway expansion did not occur after recognizing that Dr. Maslin's research clearly indicated that Mud Creek is an important component in the preservation of Endangered chinook salmon species.

2003: As the BEC forest policy analyst I wrote on behalf of the Butte Environmental Council to object to the approval of Timber Harvest Plan 2-03-155-BUT(1). THP-155 failed to consider the need to conduct forestry using modern techniques designed to reduce the threat of catastrophic wildfire to watersheds and to surrounding properties. In addition, THP-155 failed to address adequately the foreseeable cumulative impacts (habitat fragmentation, increased fire danger associated with plantations and invasive exotic plant infestations) within the watershed assessment area from harvest, site preparation and herbicide applications, and failed to adequately consider a reasonable range of feasible less intrusive alternatives to the proposed operations.

2003: As the BEC forest policy analyst I submitted comments on behalf of the Butte Environmental Council pertaining to the USFS Robbers Fuels Reduction DFPZ project. The comments supported the plan to retain valuable Black Oak trees and made suggestions to improve water quality in streams coursing through Lassen National Forest.

2006-present: Worked as the Water Policy Analyst for AquAlliance under the direction of Executive Director Barbara Vlamis.

2009-2012: Appointed by Butte County Supervisor Kim Yamaguchi to the Butte County Water Advisory Committee.

2009-present: Advisor and participant in the Chico Urban Area sub-inventory unit Basin Management Objective committee to establish groundwater elevation alert stages and groundwater quality objectives.

Projects include:

1981-present: Ecosystem enhancement vegetation management on 40 acres of mixed conifer Sacramento River Watershed land in Butte County. The activities include removal of small diameter ladder fuels, thinning excessive conifer saplings, fire use for fuel management, experimental mechanical mastication of dense shrub understory, and nutrient recycling and removal of exotic invasive plant species. Received funding from the USDA to accomplish portions of the work.

2005-2006: Design and oversee a 7.5 mile roadside fuel reduction project funded through the Butte Firesafe Council.

2011-2013: Participated in the formation and project proposal activities of the Northern Sacramento Valley IRWMP.

Award:

2007: The Rose Foundation Anthony Grassroots Prize: For many years, Mr. Brobeck has been at the forefront of community environmental stewardship in Lassen, Tehama and Butte Counties. As a volunteer with the Lassen Forest Preservation Group, he has donated countless hours helping to lead community participation in environmental reviews of forestry projects. As a former firefighter in Butte County, he has brought his unique perspective to help disparate groups achieve consensus on difficult issues, especially around environmentally sustainable solutions to fire safety issues that impact rural communities.