

Notes from November 2021 Caucus Meeting:

The big take away from our November 20, 2021 Rural Caucus meeting is that **Democrats deliver!** On clean drinking water, broadband, wildfire preparation, and climate action.

Here is a link to the recording of the meeting:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/180damkVJVEM3CdEbz7AeJGBF-TFhPI2d/view?usp=sharing>

Also attached is a recap of our **SWOT analysis** – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats ... plus Actionable Items.

One of the key opportunities to come to light in our brainstorming session is the need for heightened communication about Democrat led accomplishments – like Broadband for All, especially in rural areas, where mis and disinformation is rampant. We need to get out in front of this historic achievement and take credit for it, loudly.

Bay Area Regional Chair Renee Zeimer proposes a billboard campaign. North Coast Regional Chair Phil Grosse and Northern Regional Chair Elizabeth Betancourt suggest a letter writing campaign. (Special note: Phil is now our North Coast Regional Chair, as Debra Broner has moved out of state.)

The Caucus Officers will meet to discuss how we can move forward on these ideas, plus more from the membership. Your feedback and involvement are essential. We are asking for Caucus members to please add thoughts and recommendations.

The recording of the Zoom meeting is lightly edited. Each of the presentations provides content that we can use in positive, consistent messaging.

At the top is Phil Grosse's **update on the state's reservoirs** and the small, but good news story of the state bringing clean drinking water to Tooleville in Tulare County.

Then follows Asm. Cecilia Aguiar Curry's excellent explanation of the **preliminary 18 "middle mile" broadband projects** across the state. Her talk begins about 7:30 minutes in. You will see on the accompanying map that Northern California is notably left out, but all assurances are that additional projects will be announced later this month.

Nevada County Supervisor Heidi Hall gives a great presentation (starting at 18:38) on what counties and cities should be doing to plan for the influx of funding. This is so important. **Our local governments need to prepare strategic plans, maps, and RFP processes for "last mile" broadband deployment.**

Dean Rewerts provides a rundown of the additional dollars California will receive for Broadband from the **Infrastructure Bill**, beginning at the 23-minute mark.

State Sen. Mike McGuire, always a great speaker at our Caucus meetings, brings us up to date on the state's unprecedented **investments in wildfire resistance and response**. His remarks come at about 30 minutes into the tape.

Lieutenant Governor Eleni Kounalakis' excellent, firsthand account of leading the **California delegation to Glasgow** for the Climate Conference starts at 37:50. Her talk is really worth your time A, because she gives a real flavor to what it was like to be at COP 26, B, because she affirms California's leadership,

while cautioning how much work there is to be done and C, she is such a great supporter of our rural communities. I was particularly struck by her response to a very incisive question from Gold Country Regional Chair Amy Champ recognizing how tough it is for rural Californians to have an election car if there aren't enough charging stations.

Next is a concise PowerPoint on **Redistricting**, which has caused so much anxiety, presented by Michael Wagaman, final public meeting is tomorrow, December 6th at 1pm.
[https://www.wedrawthelinesca.org/meetings'](https://www.wedrawthelinesca.org/meetings)

Our brainstorming session with the resulting **SWOT analysis** begins at 1:15 into the meeting. It begins with videotaped comments from the **Governor, Senator Alex Padilla, and CDP Chair Rusty Hicks. And, significantly the Governor's commitment to support Rural California.**

The SWOT Matrix - a compilation of what we as a Caucus see as our greatest strengths (significantly support from leadership), our greatest weaknesses, best opportunities, and chief threats, will help us focus for 2022. A special thank you to Renee Zeimer and Inland Empire/Desert Regional Chair Christine Bubser for their collaboration.

Joy Sterling
joy@ironhorsevineyards.com