Quick recap

The meeting began with discussions about email communication efficiency and concerns about the AI technology bubble, followed by introductions from various regional organizations and a preview of an upcoming Eastern Sierra meeting focused on sustainable recreation and tourism initiatives. Sarah presented an overview of the Sierra San Joaquin region's agricultural production and economic challenges, highlighting various initiatives including F3, agritourism programs, and branding campaigns aimed at promoting the region's food and agricultural culture. The conversation ended with presentations about technology's role in nature education and tourism, including discussions about Explore LOCAL Nature's platform and the positive developments regarding AB518 and SB105 funding allocations for tourism initiatives.

Summary

Field Notes by John Wentworth

The Eastern Sierra Sustainable Recreation Partnership meeting will be held on Monday at 3:30 PM via Zoom, covering seven counties in the Sierra region. The discussion will focus on federal government activities, including China's plans for snow tourism, international visitation trends, and potential federal layoffs affecting national forests and parks. The meeting will also cover a $9 million infusion for recreation and tourism projects, updates on Proposition 4 and wildfire initiatives, and the adoption of a joint strategy for sustainable outdoor recreational wildfire resilience, with Nevada County recently adopting it. Participants interested in joining the meeting can email MLTPA for the Zoom link.

Sierra San Joaquin Agritourism Presentation by Sarah Masterson

Sarah presented an overview of the Sierra San Joaquin region, highlighting its significant agricultural production and economic challenges. She discussed the F3 initiative, which aims to drive economic resilience and opportunity in the region through various components including technological innovation, food hubs, and workforce education. Sarah also shared data on the economic impact of travel and tourism in the region, noting an increase in direct earnings and employment. She emphasized that tourism, including agritourism, plays a crucial role in driving economic activity in the region, particularly as a gateway to national parks and through events like the World Ag Expo.

Central Valley Agritourism Initiatives

Sarah presented various initiatives and opportunities in the Central Valley region related to outdoor recreation and tourism, including a branding campaign by CAF, F3, and Honey to

promote the region's food and agricultural culture, an agritourism education program by SIREP, and efforts to develop a centralized agritourism strategy. She also mentioned the Riverlands restoration project, which aims to create attractive outdoor spaces for tourism, and the existence of several maps highlighting food and farm experiences in the region.

Regional Food Branding and Collaboration

Sarah introduced various partners involved in regional food branding, mapping, and restoration efforts, emphasizing the importance of collaboration. She highlighted the work of the CAF team, Sequoia Riverlands Trust, and other organizations in these initiatives. Calder shared insights about the intersection of agritourism, arts, and culture in the Redwoods region, noting similarities with other projects. John inquired about resources and connections related to recreation and tourism in the Sierra region, and Sarah provided information about the core four-county region involved in these initiatives.

Explore Local Nature by Mike Kahn

Mike Kahn presented on Explore LOCAL Nature, emphasizing the role of technology in tourism, including the challenges posed by AI-generated travel information. The group also discussed the importance of ecosystem support and county regulations in expanding these markets.

Nature Education Through Tech Innovation

Mike discussed his journey into environmental sustainability and technology, highlighting his passion for using tech for nature education. He explained the challenges of fragmented information about outdoor activities and events, and how Explore LOCAL Nature aims to create a comprehensive, easy-to-use platform for connecting people to nature in a sustainable way. Mike also explored the potential of AI in improving customer service, personalizing recommendations, and enhancing the user experience on the platform, while acknowledging the need to address ethical concerns and misinformation.

Nature Tech Startup and Funding

Mike presented his startup Explore Local Nature, which aims to connect people to nature through technology and data, focusing initially on San Mateo County. He discussed challenges in curating and updating information, as well as potential competition from larger players like AllTrails. The group discussed the importance of accurate local data and the potential for partnerships and scaling. Calder announced positive news about AB518 being signed and SB105 allocating $20 million to Visit California. The conversation ended with discussions about branding challenges and the need for community input on data accuracy.