**ACCG Planning Group Meeting, 7/9/14 -- Amador Ranger District**

Addie Jacobsen (teleconference till 10:30); Kendal Young; KatherineEvatt; Chuck Loffland; Jeff \_\_\_\_\_; John Heissenbuttel, Reuben Childress; Bob Carroll; Pat McGreevy; Cathy Koos Breazeal

1. Discuss Low or No Herbicide on Power and ACCG Response to EA on Foster Firs
2. Foster Firs comments: due date today.
3. POWER FIRE: ACCG submitted letter regarding development of a low/no herbicide alternative. Turn over to Bob:
   1. BOB: received 6 comment letters : ACCG, Amador BOS, SPI, EPA, John Muir Project/Center Bio Div; SFL/CNPS; Mike Taylor, former ENF Botanist. Letters reviewed as follows:
   2. SPI supported;
   3. BOS – support with add’l questions;
   4. John Muir – support no action alternative;
   5. EPA – reminded USFS of items to cover when doing analysis including climate change and species;
   6. Mike Taylor – focused on invasives and annual grasses – cause and effect of increased growth
   7. SFL/CNPS – 26 page letter requesting an ecological integrity alternative and a part that discusses specific herbicides, timing of application, possible hormonal disruption, and cumulative effect on watershed. Included a model using towards on ACCG goals – have educational and fully encompassing program – take as opportunity and with forest plan amendment. Discussion regarding Yellow-legged, Mountain, and Foothill frogs. REUBEN – definite discrepancy on what the no effect level is; distance on labeling of herbicide on how far it moves; while FS may term no harm, to others may not be so. KENDAL – recommended tabling issue and have Jan, Aq biologist to come and speak on buffer and exclusion zones. To summarize – range of variability within science; recognize some divergence in where we view that science; find where we can come together. Important to include effects to amphibians as an indicator and have Jan come and discuss analysis and determine if it is sufficient. CL – we do look and balance; not a lot of area being treated; and analyze throughout process. KKE – having it mapped be very helpful so we can see what is meant by “lots left.” RC – does not address early seral growth so presents a trigger – language used would greatly help improve comfort level with those charged with making a decision for their organization in looking at early seral as a resource. CL – should have been a bullet point for early seral? KKE – early seral needs to be acknowledged and amount of acreage not treated. State that changing seral stage here will not have effects. CL – shows in Cumulative Effects part of document. RC – we don’t have that document yet, we only have the Proposed Action document. KY – directed to write simple and to the point. Could a couple sentences be put in background information and the details come out in Cumulative Effects. Set tone up front. would be in Chapter 3. RC – suggest put in Proposed Action or Purpose and Need. KY – take back to team and see if you can change the tone and enhance. Then FHC can review with EIS. KKE - Nobody is monitoring water for herbicide. KY – ACCG could do. KKE citizen monitoring is not being funded now. Only PGE and EBMUD do limited testing. KY– how well does no herb/handwork only meet Purpose and Need. RC – Can we bring in fuels folks to discuss where we could introduce fire treatment. Could be a good demo and educational element. Can we design some treatment areas? Include Craig with meeting with fuels people. KKE – Craig’s letter says establish a cadre of people to work out there on an ongoing basis. Is cost the most important criteria. Craig sets out that a goal is to establish an intentional workforce cadre. Social/econ piece of employment between alternatives could be used as an indicator. Then don’t need to change Purpose and Need. Building community work capacity as one part of indicator. JH – like to know how many and type of job each alternative would generate.
   8. KY – let’s look at some parameters. Bullet 1, page 21 Craig’s letter. We have Becky Estes and others. KY - Ties level of science to analysis. Not part of new alternative. KKE – is small livestock out? Could be looked at carefully managed small livestock in places too steep for people. KY - fraught with difficulty with current permittees. CL – some would have to been pretreated before livestock comes in. KY maybe better for maintenance later. KKE – cut back, burn, and graze for maintenance. JH any areas that can’t be treated by hands rather than chemicals? BC – effectiveness of tree growth response – slower – want trees to grow faster to withstand effects of fire; higher fire risk. JH – you are leading yourself to herbicide use only; okay implications for hand treatments, but could be part of low/no herb treatment. BC - would be good to have indicators in place to analyze for tree growth and other markers. Whatever alternatives ACCG puts together must meet Forest plan and purpose/need of project. KY - one potential alternative might be to designation one area for hand treatment then adaptive management. RC – maybe we can have hand treatment and run small ls through after, then fire. CKB – timing seasonally and length of graze time is key to controlling small livestock impact. KY – need to meet purpose and need for every alternative for decision. KE – say we propose multi-phase plan --who actually looks at that to prevent biases? Concerns on narrowness of purpose and need. KY - ACCG can invite FS to another meeting to discuss. KKE issues/concerns with this current process – not very collaborative. BC how would we determine what the final treatment would be? Need a dichotomous key. KKE is there a way to map the current veg? i.e. 4’ tall brush on 40% slope, or bear clover? PM – FS doesn’t seem to use much image source for analysis. . KKE what does it look like? REUBEN vet with 2013 Google earth. KKE do you have a GIS veg layer? JEFF does have systematic surveys, latest layer is post fire 2005. Probably not what we are looking for. CL - have aerial photos; JEFF – can get general veg impression. Take sample plots and collect stat data. Could probably characterize, but not level of data. Ecology crew has more widely spaced sampling data. CL we do believe we know what we have. JEFF - This is a subset of the power fire restoration. This is a reforestation project to get trees growing. Due to tribe conversations dropped a lot of units and dropped Rx fire within the Arch District. . KY range person would be key for livestock discussions.
   9. KY – what strategy needs to be done next. ACCG can request information from FS in advance of regrouping. What is time frame for EIS. BC – as soon as alternative done, this year. Jeff – implementation as early as March next year desired. BC – decision by mid-Jan/Feb to go through objection process (90 days). EIS comment 45 days; 45 days to object; FS 45 days to respond; can request addtl 30 days on top of 45 days for response. 165 days possible. Recognize that some topics will have no agreement. KKE wise to address early on. Request the following FS Staff: Rick, wildlife Chuck, ecology Becky, Tina Garcia range person, aquatics Jan Williams; RC – do we want to design a modified proposed action or whole new alternative? Take what is done and try to modify herbicide areas into some other action? JH – latter approach. KY – yes, could be some boundary shifts.
   10. ACTION ITEM – have Rick come to future meeting to discuss interaction of this EIS to overall. Intent to use this money as part of match for CFLN. Keep within the planning bounds and footprint or slightly modified footprint proposed for action. JEFF – some urgency due to conditions on the ground; continued growth of competing veg and probability of success. BC – what do we need from FS to help develop alternatives: maps, GIS surveys, talking to staff listed in item i. REUBEN – field trip to re-look. Vegetation, Biological concerns, images. Will livestock eat bear clover? Oak mortality, regen impacts?
   11. KY – 7/22 Power fire field trip or Hemlock issues 7/31 (potential proposal for OHV trail across Flagpole Point (across Mattley mdw) PM – BLM has received funds to do environmentals for projects on shelf, but not implementation. Would like to hear from Bill on his list of environmental projects. Can we do some on Amador side to get shovel ready; implementation money; CKB have shovel ready projects offers, but no planning oppotunities.
   12. PM – other people joining us on Mattley - Costello and Marvin – arch and history have grant to study on transhumanance – study Del Orto family. KY Jim Wilcox will be at Mattley tomorrow to study and then can come back to Mattley to discuss findings. Probably late August/early Sept. West Calaveras Thin – received 6 comment letters on EA including 3 from Calaveras BOS, supporting alternate 1. CL – out on Foster Meadow on data gathering; variety of options and trtmnts. Potential walk through before snow. KKE water bond money tight weigh-in time for SNC support.
   13. Remove references to IDT and call FS. Add design indicators for evaulation alternatives and social-economic piece.

Meeting adjourned 12:15 p.m.