**Location:   Veterans’ Memorial Hall, Hwy 26,West Point, CA
Meeting Facilitator: John Heissenbuttel  Minutes: Jill Micheau**

**Attendees***: Heidi Beswick; Gwen Starrett; Liz Gregg; Laurence Crabtree; Rick Hopson; Susan McMorris; Steve Wilensky; Jeff Blewett; Monte Kawahara; John Buckley; Joe Aragon; Robin Wall; Jay Francis; Gerald Schwartz; Kevin Vella; Ben Solvesky; Reuben Childress; Katherine Evatt; John Heissenbuttel; Sue Holper; Jill Micheau*

| **Item #** | **Agenda Item** |
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| 1 | Call to order (Heissenbuttel) |
| 2 | Participants introductions (all) |
| 3 | Modification and/or approval of agenda and April minutes – Minutes were approved |
| **Presentations and Business** |
| 5  | Image result for national wild turkey federation logo**Presentation by Kevin Vella, District Biologist, California/Nevada, NWTF** **Partnering for Success:** *The National Wild Turkey Federation has entered into a 10-year stewardship agreement with the Eldorado National Forest. Within this agreement, the NWTF is able to assist the ENF in increasing the pace and scale of fuels reduction projects that aid in wildlife habitat enhancement. We will be taking a look at how things are going so far and how this agreement will impact the future of or forests.**Kevin’s presentation is posted to the ACCG web here:* [*http://acconsensus.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/NWTF-presention-05-16-18.pdf*](http://acconsensus.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/NWTF-presention-05-16-18.pdf) |
| 6 | **Laurence Crabtree** -- Forests not really healthy now. There is money coming in to address forest health. There is enthusiasm in the FS Executive Branch. The Supervisor is into what he’s doing, committed to the job; he is a 1st generation bureaucrat; he listens to collaboratives and others to get a broad view. He is looking for places to come to agreement. “Zones of agreement.” Timber harvest is one of those areas. ElDorado NF is selling 15M board feet this year. Treating lots of land in a good way; focus is on thinning; expanding acres. 12-13K acres of fuel treatment. These are now flagship targets. This will be done. Some burning, some mastication, some of both. Of our 300 employees, about half are fire, 1/3 of the other half are vacant. We need botanists, wildlife biologists; Kevin’s presentation models how we will have to work going forward – partnerships; It will not be all FS personnel on all projects. Stewardship agreements are really easy. Governor Brown is looking at biomass energy generation, prescribed burns, etc.; Oregon senators are looking at thinning. People are starting to see the downside of overstocked stands. Regarding managed fire, we think we found a way to do more burning; we are working with California Fish and Wildlife; we want to get away from mandatory putting out of fires. Looking at what we can do down to 6,000 feet on managed fire; if contained, let it burn, manage it.**Q: This is being done on the Stanislaus, why does LC feel the ElDorado can’t manage wildfire over here?** Lots of discussion about this at the Agency. Need to involve the public; there are risks to firefighters with managed fire. Containment strategy; involve other agencies too. We can get through it.**Q: What does 150M bf look like?** We’ve done about 25M/year in past years; about 20M/year is a good number. Represents about 20-25% of what we’re growing. Plenty of safeguards in place; NEPA and spotted owl and archeological surveys will be done. **Comment: Studies show that there is a deficit of >24” diameter trees.** A: That’s what we’re taking out. **Disagreement… asks that LC provide the data to back up this claim.** **Q: Where will the trees come from? Does that include log kill and fires?** No… these are crude numbers. Burn didn’t affect that much. Just a comparison number. Biomass plant would be neat. There is a new NFWF/SPI/CalFire/FS agreement to look at spotted owl habitat. Risk from fire; working together to avoid getting the owl listed. Went out with CFWL to look at habitat. New approach. Shifting some priorities, looking at projects for a cohesive fuel break across landscape. Connect and prioritize because of owl habitat. Collaboratives are not able to act quickly…**Comment: appreciate concerns; restoration projects should not be delayed because that balloons the overall project budget.** |
| 7 | **Requests for Letters of Support:*** (Micheau) – Request for ACCG letter of support for Murphys Forest Health and Fuels Reduction Project; Calaveras RCD is fiscal agent/sponsor. Would like letter to support grant proposal due 6/6/18 (very short turnaround; no time to route through Planning WG). Provided 1-page description of project and proposed LOS. Documents can be found here: <http://acconsensus.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Murphys-FB-Request-for-LOS.pdf>**Outcome: The LOS was approved** after discussing the need for a better process to allow members to better understand projects that are being proposed. ***Jill will prepare and send final letter on ACCG letterhead.***
* (Wilensky, speaking for Pat McGreevy) – Requesting LOS for a new project; phases 1 &2 already approved by ACCG; connects existing fuel breaks; east of communities; restorative; makes Shaded Fuel Breaks across 52 parcels linked to BLM and FS lands. Tough. Implementation of CWPP. Cal Fire map shows this area as highly susceptible to fire; CWPPs reflect these parcels as priority; MACA properties became matter of focus; Steve circulated a map showing cohesion; asking for 3rd Letter of Support. Pat has presented to ACCG 3x; money going through CHIPS as Fiscal Agent. There was some discussion about whether this was BLM land and how it fits with their strategies; Pat presented those maps in a recent ElDorado Hills meeting. NEPA is done; Steve says its mostly on private land. **Outcome: The LOS was approved;** ***Pat to send content of letter to Jill and she will put on ACCG letterhead and return to him.***
* Discussion on process: when asking for support from the Collaborative, it is important to provide adequate documentation and back up materials (before the meeting with ample time to review) so that members can make informed decisions. We should develop a boilerplate prescription for this action so we don’t need to go through this every time. The Strategic Planning WG has discussed this; should this be handled by the SPWG or the Planning WG?
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| 8 | **Presentation to ACWA about ACCG (Starrett):** *Roles of the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC), the Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG), the Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority (UMRWA), and the US Forest Service (USFS) in protecting the Mokelumne Watershed by accelerating improvement of forest health and watershed conditions using Proposition 1 funds. SNC’s ability to deliver these funds has enabled UMRWA to accelerate the pace and scale of forest and watershed improvement projects using a 10 year Master Stewardship Agreement with the USFS (Rich Farrington, Director, Amador Water Agency, Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority; Michael Pickard, Area Representative, Sierra Nevada Conservancy)* – There will be an important meeting on June 22nd; Michael Pickard (SNC) and and Rich Farrington (ABC) will make a presentation about 3 Master Stewardship Agreement efforts; UMWRA is the statewide leader in these projects; They have 60 minutes on the agenda! Wants to hear from ACCG for input to the presentation; will they be speaking on behalf of ACCG or just for their own organizations? Comment: They wanted to ask ACCG if they wanted to do a presentation. Took too much time so we are not in. But they are reaching out to us. Can Pickard and Farrington float a draft for us to review? Meeting will be at Pardee. ***Picard and Farrington to send a draft for review.*** Evatt has things that need to be part of the presentation; nice success story – ACCG connected FS with UMWRA. **Comment:** It would be great to have them represent us. **Comment:** historic breakthrough; ACCG made it happen; have group help them build the presentation. Every water agency in CA will be present at the meeting. Embrace it fully; give them the content. **Comment**: Could Steve and Katherine look at outlines? Not enough time; KE will provide photos, etc. maps are available on line**Comment**: Seems like a win-win; let us contribute; grateful to Pickard and Farrington; we ask that ***they set up a conference call or meeting with Steve and Katherine to plan the outline***. Report at next meeting, no changes will be made, as next ACCG meeting is just a few days before 6/22.***Gwen will tell them***; **Comment**: water agencies have sensitivities. Consider carefully how we present our group; regarding funding, new LAO report is asking for $10M contribution; connection between users and upstream watershed; consider how we present ourselves and benefits we are providing; needs to be vetted. ***If you have photos before and after in watershed, send to KE.*** Convey wise investments for water agencies. They will work out representation in the details. ***Jill will facilitate.*** |
| 9 | **Update on SCALE meeting** (Childress)– Big takeaway: lots of money coming to Forest restoration now; scrambling to figure out how to get and use money; MSAs, Stewardship contracting; examples of how used; Lakeview won a collaborative award; LAO gave recommendations for cost avoidance; report available on line Link: [http://acconsensus.org/2018/04/19/new-report-improving-californias-forest-and-watershed-management/](http://acconsensus.org/2018/04/19/new-report-improving-californias-forest-and-watershed-management/%20%20)  Money used for wildfire costs; forest carbon plan; MACA study was discussed; cost avoidance being more recognized and used. CalFire trying to work on shifting liability for prescribed fire to ??? The idea of acquiring LIDAR for whole state has been floated; Barney talked about it; different agencies and organizations could all pitch in for cost; cool ideaRobin brought 5 copies of report, and it is available on the web. **Comment**: Government just added $96M to implement this. More money than capacity. **Comment**: places with infrastructure are in much better shape to gear up and build capacity and sustain after money comes in. Those that don’t are in tougher situation – loans, CalFire, Forest Service, NWTF folks; not one could answer if money can be given to areas without adequate infrastructure. This is a huge missing piece. What to do with biomass? To create a sustained economy -- not being addressed at all. Leaving it in yards is not OK. Where to take all the stuff we take out of the forest? What is the economic equation? No one is addressing this. PG&E still has not signed our power purchase agreement. There will be a meeting in Quincy on 5/31… check with Steve if you’d like to come. Also, to prepare for the onslaught of grants and funding, think about getting CEQA and state wildlife species figured out early. CEQA projects sometimes need to do both CEQA and NEPA. Takes lots of time. Archeological stuff too. **Comment**: Barney challenged groups to do a whole project “soup to nuts.” **Comment**: Three years ago, forest health was not a priority; Now it is, and the LAO report is making it a priority, which creates a huge opportunity. The tone has changed. Can we capitalize on this? Show that we do good stuff with money; Align our concerns; NEPA, partnerships; now is the time… ready to step up? Brown also last week made the Forest Health Task Force official – this used to be the Tree Mortality Task Force. **Comment**: Maybe we should write letter to Bigelow to make sure money moves to his constituents. **Comment**: lots of money available now – could be gone in a few years. Must take advantage of it now; **Comment**: infrastructure comes from creativity; the ABC speaker next month is a Canadian home builder. Innovative; has patents on implementation. Won’t consume a bunch of money, but it’s a start. Attend the ABC meeting, 1st Tuesday at Turtlerock Park; Tuolumne received a HUD grant for biomass, now might be an opportunity for someone to work with Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors to start something on a campus.  |
| **Updates**  |
| 10 | **Forest Service Updates:** * Stanislaus (Aragon) – Recent update of old burn plan in Irish O’Manuel; same footprint as Arnold Avery Project; some archeological work done isn’t meeting standards, but are piggybacking on Arnold Avery plan; comments are coming in; discussed comments, are drawing up a response and decision for Ray Cablayan; yesterday McClintock and FS Chief visited Stanislaus, we didn’t take part in that.
* ElDorado (Hopson) – Busy time of year; timber sale operationss on the ground; Projects:
* Power research burn 2 units done 2 weeks ago 1300 acres 2 days with helicopters; done safely with fewer people than usually needed.
* Panther timber sale will sell this year; some FS employees working on fuel break now; wants to partner with someone on goat grazing. If anyone is interested in partnering with the FS for next few years for grazing maintenance, contact Rick.
* Power reforestation: will do field trip soon;
* Place name change to Hondaleltie Ridge means So Washoe. Got full support from Board of Supervisors. Finalized. Symbolic and important.
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| 10 | **Admin Work Group updates:*** Professional Facilitation Update (Wall) – Existing interagency agreement can be used, so we can begin this very soon – several phone calls with Consensus Building Institute (CBI); they will draw up a proposal for us to consider; should be able to begin using facilitators soon.
* Strategic Plan update (Micheau) – SPWG has drafted a semi-final strategic plan… a living document that will be presented next month
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| 11 | **Planning Work Group updates:****ElDorado (Wall)** – Thanks to EBMUD and SPI for an excellent Planning WG field trip last week; learned tons; SPI and BLM were great. Next meeting will be 5/23 at Amador; Agenda can be viewed here: <http://acconsensus.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/ACCG-Planning-Agenda-05232018.pdf>Scottiago field trip; after today’s meeting, there will be a discussion about Scottiago. **Stanislaus (Aragon)** – The June Planning WG meeting will be 6/27 in Hathaway Pines; field trip to Last Chance Fuel Break; hoping to see implementation.  |
| 12 | **Monitoring Work Group update*** Socioeconomic monitoring WG status (Wall) – Agreement with Sierra Institute has been signed; moving forward with the subgroup; next steps soon. Will plan a face-to-face meeting will all SEWG members and SI as a first step. Stay tuned.
* Summer monitoring activities (Starrett) – All this week Shana has been monitoring Panther; 5/24 Thurs Power Fire look at monitoring sites; 9/10-13 looking at effectiveness monitoring of conifer removal in meadows; Bear River Reserved group site. Shana will train us; 4WD enthusiasts may help; asked for signups and should send in service agreement; send to Gwen; other projects will come online; willow planting on October; conifer removal Sept. will send out job hazard analysis;
* Rick: doing minor NEPA for this; review; will get it done. Coordinate with road crews.
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| 13 | **Agency/organization updates (round table)** * **David Griffith, ABC** – Feinstein got us a Good Neighbor Authority Agreement
* **Jay Francis, SPI** -- great field trip! Thanks for coming. Continuing burn on Shake Fiddle on Friday with this great weather, may go through weekend; Smoke; also logging 4 crews Panther to Blue Mountain Road; wildlife crews are surveying; finding owls, Kevin will update us in Oct when he presents to the group; botany crews are also out surveying.
* **Joe Aragon, Stanislaus RS** – found owls in Arnold-Avery line; We have a new detailed Fuels Tech, Jason Sandoval; we have lots of work to push onto him; if you see him, welcome him.
* **Sue McMorris, BMCRC…** – 2new writers; Tommy Taylor Ranch in Railroad Flat has been sold; woman who bought it is amenable to returning it to community activity. Getting a lease in return for sweat equity so community group can take over the baseball park. Kids will have a place to play again. Located in front of where the buffalo roamed.
* **Steve Wilensky, CHIPS** – finished S212 training; Motherlode job training working with us for basic 32 training; 18 of 32 staff members are getting this. Certifies them to serve interests in off season. Prepare for fire on landscape in late fall or early spring. TREX still scheduled for late November; hoping FS or BLM will participate; Friday conference call about this. If you need a burn boss or someone to work with your burn boss, contact CHIPS. Working in Yosemite again; Tuolumne Meadows decommissioning trains, taking out parking lots, making into meadows; completing Mariposa Grove work; road is becoming a trail; first woman foreman! Well respected member of Piute tribe. PUC issued another instruction to litigation to PG&E; PPA money on hold; going to Tennessee to see new technology for biomass production, products. New industry from biomass; also making diesel.
* **Katherine Evatt, Foothill Conservancy** – Raft trips 6/3 and 6/10 – guided trip on Mokulumne. Web sign up; agreement language to designate Mokulumne as a California Wild and Scenic. Calaveras BOS will vote on 5/27. Excited.
* **Monte Kawahara, BLM** – All burn plan mostly done with Lilligap; burn plan for Lilligap 1 is this year; will need to cut ; *Note: I could not hear most of this…*
* **Bill Haigh, BLM** – next month .5M to CHIPS for South Mokulumne; Phase 3 grant would complete it. Bummerville parcel may be next project.
* **Kevin Vella, NWTF** – starting opeations with timber sale next week
* **Robin Wall, ElDorado RS** – blood drive 6/4
* **John Heissenbuttel, CalAm** – 5/22 will make a presentation to Amador Board of Supervisors regarding ingress and egress in Amador; presentation was given to Calaveras BOS a few weeks ago. Group of agencies, private sector, CalAm, coordinate fuel breaks and ingress and egress. Coordination of fuel breaks. BLM, SP,I FS, PG&E. Happening soon. Amador Sups meeting.
* **Jill Micheau, ACCG** – Thanked Steve Wilensky/CHIPS for working with the Stanislaus FS to remove about 200 bags of biochar that was left over from an experiment. The bags were on local hiking routes and needed to be moved before the bag material deteriorated. Steve is storing it at the Wilseyville plant and will mix it with turkey poop and pixie dust to make a super fertilizer product.
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| 14 | **Wrap up*** Lunch after the meeting at the **Cozy Cabin** – continue conversations and networking there!
* Next meeting June 20, 2018**Location:** 12200 Airport Road, Sutter Creek
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| **Meeting Adjourns at Noon** |

Members: Please review these minutes prior to next month’s meeting. Red items require action; yellow highlighted items require clarification.

# 2018 Meeting Schedule:

| **Meeting Date and Location** | **Presentor** | **Topic** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **June 20**Sutter CreekFacilitator: **G. Starrett** | Tom Black, SW Research Center | Power Fire Roads Assessment Using the GRAIP Road Inventory and Model. Note that Tom’s bio and links to his research are posted to the ACCG web calendar for this date. |
| **July 18**West PointFacilitator: **R. Hopson** | Steve BrinkVP, Public ResourcesCalifornia Forestry Assn. | Forest-related legislation; “Forest Forum” legislative update. |
| **August 15**Sutter CreekFacilitator: **R. Wall** | Dr. Hugh Safford | Natural Range of Variation for Yellow Pine and Mixed Conifer Forests in the Sierra Nevada |
| **September 19**West PointFacilitator: **K. Evatt** |  |  |
| **October 17**Sutter CreekFacilitator: **Deb Phillips** | Kevin RobertsBiologists, SPI | Spotted owl research |
| **November 21**West PointFacilitator: **Gordon Long** |  |  |

*If you have recommendations for speakers, please email contact info to* *JillMicheau@gmail.com*