

# Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

*Collaboration and Environmental  
Conflict Resolution Facilitation  
Services*

ACCG General Meeting  
February 20, 2019

Tania Carlone, Senior Mediator

# Presentation Outline



- Introduction & Background
- Meeting Ground Rules & Open Discussion
- Stakeholder Assessment Progress & Updated Timeline
- Preliminary Assessment Findings

# Consensus Building Institute

## *Introduction*



- Founded in 1993
- Nationally and internationally recognized non-profit organization
- Improves way leaders collaborate to make decisions, achieve agreements, and manage multi-party conflicts and planning efforts

# Facilitation Services

## *Introduction & Background*



- Facilitation services contracted through U.S. Institute of Environmental Conflict Resolution
- Contract ends September 15, 2019
- Tania Carlone, Senior Mediator, has 13 years experience facilitating water and natural resources planning efforts in Northern California and the Sierra Nevada. She is based in Nevada City, CA.

# Meeting Ground Rules

*Offer Feedback on proposed ground rules*



- **Commit to Learning:** Attempt to approach discussions with curiosity. Ask how, why, what and offer open- ended questions
- **Listen Actively:** without interrupting & with an ear towards understanding; avoid side conversations that make it difficult to maintain attention and focus
- **Participate:** in ways that encourage ALL VOICES to be heard (“step-up/step-back”)
- **Seek Clarification:** Suspending judgement while clarifying meaning & intent
- **Offer Alternatives/Options:** that strive for mutual gain (meet your interests while keeping the interests of others in mind)

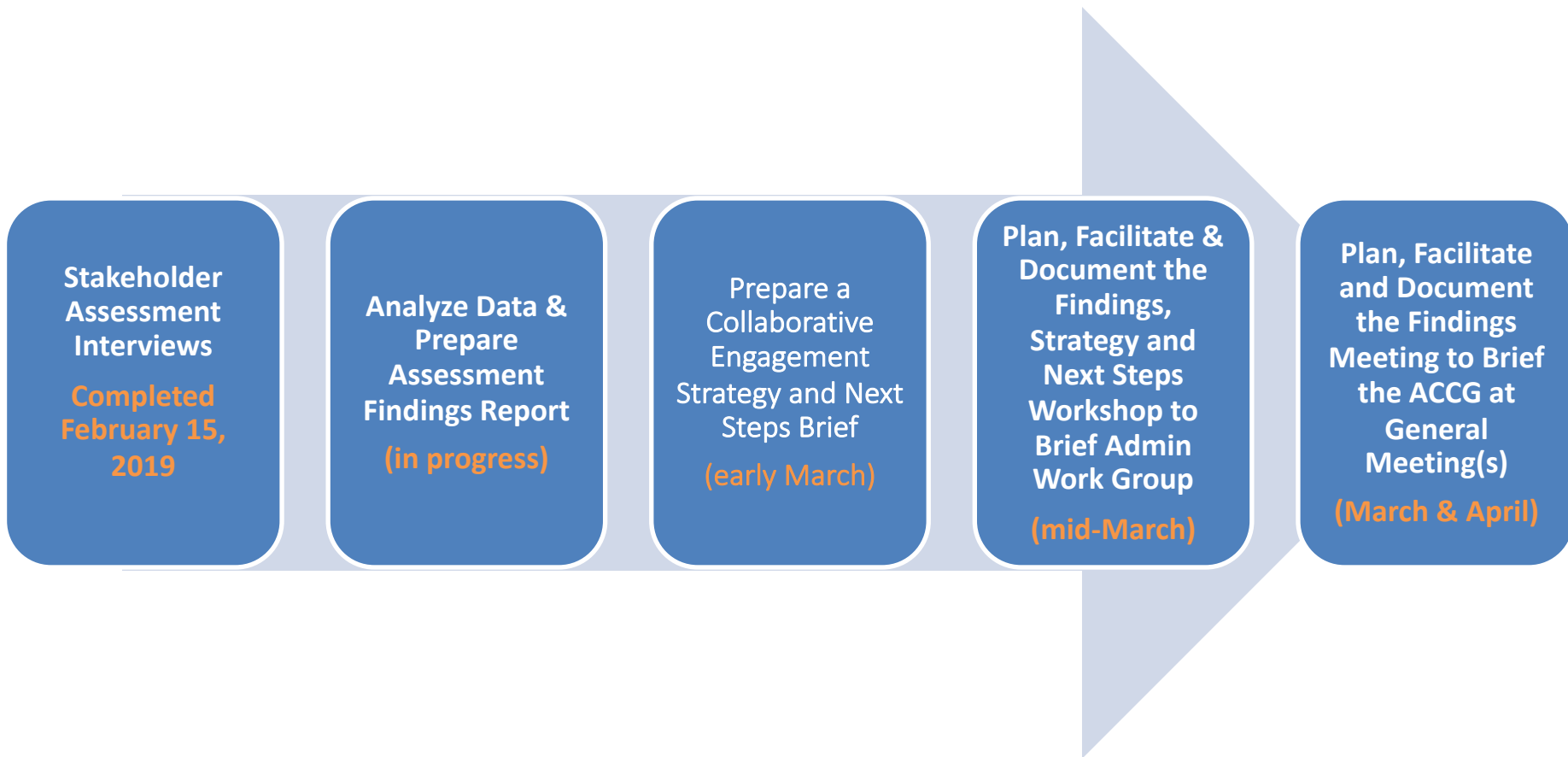
# Facilitation Services

## *Goals*

- Assist members of the ACCG in developing an effective collaborative engagement strategy and ACCG meeting process approach through a **situational assessment**
- Aid in the implementation of the Collaborative Engagement Strategy through ACCG convenings over the next 8 months, including helping the collaborative identify and resolve differences in order to reach agreement on topics where consensus has been difficult to achieve

# Situational Assessment

## *Steps and Updated Timeline*



# Stakeholder Assessment Interviews

## *Overview*



- Conducted 19 individual and small group interviews by phone
- 29 total participants
- Interviews occurred in December and February (completion delayed as a result of government shutdown)
- Completed interviews on February 15, 2019
- A few non-respondents with multiple outreach attempts
- Distilled findings without attribution (note about pull quotes)



# Stakeholder Assessment Interviews

## *Participants*



### US Forest Service, Stanislaus

- Joe Aragon
- Ray Cablayan
- Scott Tangenberg
- Kendal Young

### US Forest Service, Eldorado

- Rick Hopson, USFS, Eldorado
- Robin Wall, USFS, Eldorado
- Marc Young, USFS, Eldorado

### US Forest Service, Monitoring

- Becky Estes
- Shana Gross

# Stakeholder Assessment Interviews

## *Participants*



### Central Sierra Environmental Resource Center (CSERC)

- Heidi Beswick
- Liz Gregg

### Foothill Conservancy

- Katherine Evatt

### California Department of Fish and Wildlife

- Eric Kleinfelter

# Stakeholder Assessment Interviews

## *Participants*



### Cal Fauna, Calaveras RCD, Amador County RCD, Cal-Am Forestry Team

- Gordon Long
- John Heissenbuttal
- Pat McGreevy

### Sierra Forest Legacy

- Ben Solvesky

### Sierra Pacific Industries

- Tim Tate

### CHIPS

- Steve Wilensky

### Sierra Nevada Conservancy

- Michael Pickard

# Stakeholder Assessment Interviews

## *Participants*



### Alpine County, Calaveras Foothill Fire Safe Council, Alpine Biomass Committee

- Terry Woodrow
- David Griffith

### Upper Mokelumne River Water Authority and EBMUD

- Rich Farrington
- Gerald Schwartz

### Non-Affiliated Member

- Gwen Starrett

### Non-Affiliated Member

- Sue Holper

### Blue Mountain Community Renewal

- Susan McMorris

### Motherlode Job Training

- Trisha Frazier

### ACCG Administrator

- Jill Micheau

# Stakeholder Assessment

## *Interview Topics*



- ACCG Purpose and Goals
- Strengths & Accomplishments
- Issues
- Priorities
- Role of the Facilitator

# Preliminary High Level Findings

## *Purpose & Goals*



Nearly all participants expressed a **shared understanding** and commonly held and celebrated **commitment to the triple bottom line** purpose of the ACCG—Healthy forests/watersheds, sustaining local economies, fire safe communities.

Many stated a primary goal of the ACCG is to bring together **diverse stakeholders** to share information, work together and to **limit controversy** and future litigation

# Assessment Preliminary Findings

## *Accomplishments*



- The creation of the ACCG reduced legal disputes and improved coordination and communication
- Empowered citizens to take a more active role in getting funding to do on the ground projects

*“This multi-disciplinary collaborative has brought many people together who wouldn’t have been able to accomplish what they have if they were in their own corners.”*

# Assessment Preliminary Findings

## *Accomplishments*



*“The brain power is exceptional and the knowledge and enthusiasm of the group is energizing.”*

- Bringing together a broad spectrum of people to collaborate; diversity of perspectives seen as a strength
- Created a forum for learning, networking, and information sharing



# Assessment Preliminary Findings

## *Issues*



- All participants identified **conflict, incivility** and **the lack of trust** between and among some members as the most significant barrier to collaboration and the group's ability to achieve the ACCG's triple bottom line purpose
- Many expressed concern about the group's **capacity** to sustain itself beyond the Cornerstone CFLR funding and with reduced support from Forest Service staff.
- Several participants described **organizational, procedural** and **structural barriers** that prevent the ACCG from working effectively and efficiently.

# Assessment Preliminary Findings



*“I have seen the difference  
it can make when people  
can put their agendas aside  
and put themselves in  
another person’s shoes.”*

# Assessment Preliminary Findings

## *Priorities*



- Work towards a **Landscape-scale Vision/ All Lands Approach**
- Increase **pace** and **scale** for on-the-ground forest management and forest resiliency, particularly in the WUI
- Improve **capacity and agility** to access funding/available resources
- Need to update Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) to **clarify procedures, agreements, and processes**, namely the **conflict resolution** process

# Assessment Preliminary Findings

## *Priorities*



- Define and expand on **zones of agreement**
- Focus on **community outreach and engagement** to ensure that there is **balanced representation** of the triple bottomline within the ACCG membership
- Create a more welcoming environment that **invites diverse voices to participate**

# Assessment Preliminary Findings

## Priorities



*“Why doesn’t the community know about the ACCG and what it is doing?”*

- Improve **communications** and engagement **with communities** within the ACCG landscape
- The Strategic Plan is a good start but we need to get to an **operational/action plan**
- Take time for more **celebrations** when something goes well and for what the ACCG has accomplished in its first decade

# Role of the Facilitator



- ✓ Help the group follow **collaboration best practices**: communicating more effectively; listening actively for understanding; establishing meeting protocols & ground rules and ensuring adherence to them; structuring discussions with clear objectives; helping everyone feel that they are welcome and heard
- ✓ Create conditions to **assist the rebuilding of trust, restoration of civility and patience in communications**
- ✓ Get the group **beyond impasse/intractability/positional views**

# Role of the Facilitator



- ✓ Structure discussions to **negotiate some zones of agreement** so projects can move ahead without opposition
- ✓ Develop a process to help discuss more **controversial topics** outside of the zones of agreement
- ✓ Analyze and **make recommendations regarding governance systems and organizational structure** (including committee structure) and procedures for optimal functioning; balancing need for process-orientation in decision-making and need for efficiency and urgent action

# Role of the Facilitator



- ✓ Define the role of the ACCG in project development-- **Clarifying roles and responsibilities and extent of participation in project development** (What are the side boards—When is how is the ACCG involved in FS projects, for example?)
- ✓ Ensure that participants **have the information** necessary **to move forward discussions and to reach agreement**
- ✓ Provide **education/training for more effective collaboration and communication**



# Facilitator Contact Information



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## About CBI

CBI is a nonprofit organization with decades of experience helping leaders collaborate to solve complex problems.

Our staff are experts in facilitation, mediation, capacity building, citizen engagement, and organizational strategy and development. We are committed to using our skills to build collaboration on today's most significant social, environmental, and economic challenges. We work within and across organizations, sectors, and stakeholder groups.

FOR MORE INFORMATION: [CBI.ORG](http://CBI.ORG)

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