## Background

On October 21st, the Forest Service Regional Office convened the three collaboratives (Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG), Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions (YSS), and Dinkey) that operate within the footprint of the proposed large landscape project (MOTOR M2K) on the Stanislaus and Sierra National Forests. After determining that MOTOR M2K would not go forward, the Forest Service tasked each collaborative to identify geographic and issue focal areas with a range treatments and balanced approaches that would dramatically increase treatment areas and be implemented faster than the average large landscape NEPA process. The Forest Service requested that the collaboratives report back to the Forest Supervisors. The Forest Service clarified that iterative feedback between the collaboratives and the Forest Service remained on a somewhat flexible schedule, but there was general agreement that a key next step was the need for each collaborative to identify focal areas to address priorities at landscape scale. As described, "focal areas" could be geographic or issue focused, for example, they could include fuel reduction near communities, road repair, meadow restoration, habitat protection, etc.

## ACCG Response

On November 8th, the ACCG Admin Work Group held its regularly scheduled meeting via conference call to prepare for the November 20th General Meeting. On that call, Steve Wilensky encouraged the ACCG Admin Work Group to propose recommendations to the full ACCG to guide its next steps to respond to the Forest Service’s request. The Admin WG subsequently held an in-person working session on November 12th to prepare this draft proposal to help structure the full ACCG’s discussion about how the ACCG intends to move forward. The below proposal outlines the primary goal and a suggested approach to increase the pace and scale of treatments on the ACCG landscape.

## Goal Statement

The ACCG will identify priority areas and strategies/approaches that represent the least controversial ways to increase pace and scale for the successful implementation of landscape-scale treatments across jurisdictions within the ACCG’s boundaries.

## Approach

The Admin WG articulated a stepwise approach to achieving this goal.

* **STEP 1:** **Develop essential tools for identifying priority areas, a range of possible treatments, and minimizing controversy**
	1. **Project Support Evaluation Tool:** The Planning Work Group will complete the draft Project Support Evaluation Tool describing and distinguishing among categories of project activities proposed in the ACCG landscape to help project proponents anticipate the level of potential controversy associated with proposed projects and aid project planning. The Project Support Evaluation Tool also specifies protocols to help expedite project implementation.
		+ **Anticipated Completion:** The Planning Work Group will bring the Project Support Evaluation Tool to the full ACCG for discussion and refinement at the November 20th General Meeting. The tool will be finalized in December following that meeting. At the January ACCG General Meeting, the ACCG will discuss and refine the complete project development and approval process package.
	2. **Mapping Workshop:** Hold a **half day mapping workshop on Wednesday, December 11th** jointly convened by the Monitoring Work Group and the SLAWG, inviting ACCG members to map completed projects, NEPA and CEQA ready projects, funded projects, and proposed projects within the ACCG boundaries that identify ACCG member priorities, as well as areas of concern such as critical wildlife habitat, areas of special cultural resource sensitivity, areas with special designations/protections (wilderness, roadless areas, archaeological districts, wild and scenic rivers, vulnerable communities and infrastructure, etc), and work toward the above goal and the ACCG’s triple bottom-line mission. **Holiday refreshments included☺!**

Additionally, the SLAWG is in the process of submitting a proposal to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to support the development of a mapping tool.

* + - **Key Mapping Workshop Participants in addition to regular ACCG participants:**
			* CalFire
			* NRCS
			* Resource Conservation Districts
			* Fire Safe Councils
			* BLM
			* Cal-Am Team
			* County Ag Commissioners
			* PG&E
			* Sierra Nevada Conservancy
			* El Dorado Irrigation District
			* Sgt. John Silva (Amador County OES)
			* Amador County Transportation Commission
			* Calaveras County GIS specialist
			* Alpine Watershed Council
			* Calaveras County Water District
			* Calaveras Council of Governments
		- **Anticipated Completion:** The December 11th meeting will be a first step toward identifying priority areas. It is anticipated that there will be subsequent meetings and targeted outreach to receive input from the full range of ACCG stakeholders and to understand the adequacy of the data available. If awarded, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy grant could fund a GIS specialist who could conduct some of the necessary targeted outreach to gather information or the work could be carried out by an ACCG member/partner with mapping capabilities.
* **STEP 2: Refine ACCG Work Group Structure:** Landscape-scale work requires an organizational structure that facilitates cross-jurisdictional efforts to support the increase of pace and scale and efficient and effective coordination among ACCG members. The ACCG Admin WG recommends refining the ACCG work group structure in the following ways. If approved by the full ACCG, these refinements would be incorporated into the revision of the ACCG MOA by January 2020.
	1. **Planning Work Group** would continue its project planning efforts with a broadened focus on an all-lands approach emphasizing work across jurisdictional boundaries more effectively.
	2. **Monitoring Work Group** would take a more active role in post-project monitoring to ensure an essential feedback loop. This may foster a willingness among ACCG members for greater experimentation. It would emphasize the monitoring of results in order to extract lessons learned and apply them to future project activities. In order for this to occur, ACCG-supported projects would need to explicitly include a monitoring component.
	3. **Grant/Funding Coordination Work Group** would be a new ACCG work group that would promote more collaboration and less competition in seeking funding in order to maximize the ACCG’s funding potential and capacity to pursue grants. This proposed work group would assist the ACCG to leverage the members’ resources and identify priorities which enable the collaborative to be more opportunistic in pursuing funding. This would also help the ACCG work toward financial sustainability after Cornerstone funding ends. The Admin WG proposes that the Funding WG would meet quarterly beginning in early 2020.
		+ **Possible Funding WG Participants:**
			- CHIPS
			- UMRWA
			- Forest Service
			- BLM
			- Cal-Am Team
			- Resource Conservation Districts
			- Fire Safe Councils
			- Sierra Pacific Industries
			- PG&E
			- Regional Water Management Groups (MAC IRWMP, Tuolumne-Stanislaus IRWMP)
	4. Other considerations for working group structure refinement: The Admin WG identified several obstacles to increasing pace and scale. It will be important to consider how the existing/proposed working groups could help address some of these constraints. Some noted that the proposed Funding WG could help address some of these obstacles.
		+ Lack of forest products infrastructure
		+ Limited Forest Service and BLM capacity
		+ Limited funding
		+ Lack of adequate, current LIDAR and other condition data
		+ CEQA/NEPA
		+ Contracting challenges
* **Step 3:** **Build the ACCG’s Capacity:** The formation of a Funding WG is one mechanism to assist the ACCG build its capacity. However, there are several stakeholders within the boundaries of the ACCG that are not active members of the collaborative. The ACCG needs to bring more stakeholders into the collaborative to leverage resources and to increase pace and scale across the landscape. The mapping workshop and funding work group provide opportunities to conduct targeted outreach to key stakeholders. The ACCG is currently developing a Stakeholder Outreach & Engagement Plan that should be finished to assist strategic outreach efforts in early 2020.