

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

ACCG Principles and Policies to Guide Operations

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Introduction

The Principles and Policies to Guide Operations detailed below are intended for the use of the ACCG in guiding projects the ACCG controls, manages, sponsors or is considering endorsing. The ACCG recognizes that not all of the principles and policies may be applicable or necessary on every project. Further, the ACCG recognizes that conforming with the principles and policies will require a balanced approach as projects will need to strike a balance between environmental, community and economic objectives. Entities seeking ACCG endorsement of projects should consider how their projects evaluate or integrate the principles and policies.

Principles:

- Design and implement activities that protect and restore forest ecosystem resiliency, structures, processes and functions within local watersheds.
- Seek forest and watershed planning solutions that benefit all three components of our vision: the local environment, community and economy.
- Use adaptive management best practices supported by the most appropriate peer-reviewed, ecology-based science available.
- Plan forest activities using the most comprehensive and current assessment of local watersheds and forests and the communities and economies they support.

Policies to Guide Operations:

Natural Environments

- Reduce the frequency and intensity of wildland fires that threaten life, property or important ecological resources.
- Protect watershed soil integrity and water quality and quantity.
- Promote the eradication of ecologically harmful invasive species.
- Identify, manage, and enhance wildlife and plant habitat and wildlife corridor connectivity.
- Plan and implement projects using a landscape perspective that recognizes their cumulative effects.
- Prioritize and strategically target projects and treatment areas using the best assessment and the most appropriate adaptive management techniques available.
- Reduce forest fuel loads to manageable, ecologically sustainable levels using site-appropriate methods: including but not limited to mechanical and/or prescribed burning methods.
- Establish and maintain monitoring and data collection activities that improve local knowledge of forest conditions from the stand to landscape and watershed levels.
- Promote the adaptation of management strategies and methods using the best available peer-reviewed science-based research.

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Communities

- Treat everyone with dignity and respect, being mindful of their respective roles and responsibilities.
- Reduce the potential for damage to life and property by:
- Promoting the creation and maintenance of fire-safe communities through community-endorsed fuel hazard reduction projects in the forests' interface with local communities and the built environment.
- Promoting the use of defensible space and fire-resistant building materials and design.
- Respect and be sensitive to Native American cultural sites, practices and resources.
- Respect and be sensitive to historical sites.
- Include area stakeholders in project planning and implementation.
- Foster cooperative partnerships that maximize effectiveness and regional competitiveness of the local workforce and businesses.
- As appropriate, provide community education and involvement opportunities to local communities.
- Protect scenic beauty and locally important sites.
- Enhance or do no harm to other healthy forest-based activities.

Economies

- Work to create local sustainable jobs with livable wages.
- Work to diversify the local economy with sustainable jobs and businesses.
- Implement and use adaptive management and sustainable practices in forest and watershed work.
- Practice continuous quality improvement in the work done to learn from it and improve future work.
- Mimic nature's circular process that recognizes "underutilized materials" as valuable feedstock for diverse sustainable, value-added products, services and infrastructure.
- Encourage local investment, purchasing and ownership of forest enterprises.

Use regional networks and markets to optimize local benefits.