

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

Planning Work Group Meeting Summary, January 22, 2020, Hathaway Pines, CA

Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute

Meeting Brief

- The Planning Work Group (WG) made progress refining the draft 2020 General Meeting Speaker Schedule and agreed to continue the discussion at the next WG meeting. Specifically, the WG will discuss plans for an herbicide and herbicide alternatives panel scheduled for June and will more clearly define the topic related to planning for future forests in the face of climate change that is currently scheduled for August.
- The group discussed the Planning Work Group's charge and functions and made suggested changes to be considered by the full ACCG as a part of the ACCG Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) revision process.
- The WG reviewed ACCG comments received on the draft project evaluation tool. The WG also explored concerns related to how the project development process and the tool specifically could address obstacles to increasing pace and scale, explicitly include social and economic benefits in the evaluation tool, and acknowledge the reality of grant deadlines and other time constraints.
- The WG formed an ad hoc committee that will meet by conference call to explore how ongoing concerns associated with the project evaluation tool could potentially be addressed.
- Overall, the WG's intent is to refine the project evaluation tool and streamline its packaging to the degree that is possible in the short term and to pilot implementation of the draft project development process as a way for the ACCG to evaluate its effectiveness and make refinements, as warranted.
- The WG discussed focal areas to advance landscape-scale project activities that were identified at the December 11, 2019 mapping workshop in response to the Forest Service Region 5 request following the MOTOR M2K October 21st meeting. Specifically, the WG discussed how a project focused on a strategic fuel break network across the ACCG landscape could create a big picture framework to increase pace and scale (**see Further Discussion on pages 2-3**).
- The WG agreed to draft a follow-up letter to the one submitted to Bernie Gyant, Deputy Regional Forester, on November 21, 2019 to inform the Forest Service of the ACCG's progress in identifying priorities and focal areas, the ACCG's anticipated next steps, and a request to commit Forest Service staff and resources to advance collaborative project development activities. (**see Further Discussion on pages 2-3**)

Action Items

Actions	Point Person(s)
Update Draft 2020 General Meeting Speaker Schedule and send to Regine Miller.	Tania Carlone
Confirm General Meeting locations with Regine Miller before the February General meeting.	Tania Carlone
Incorporate comments to the Planning WG charge and functions document.	Tania Carlone

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Actions	Point Person(s)
Schedule and participate in a pre-call to prepare for planning evaluation tool ad hoc group conference call.	Tania Carlone Rich Farrington
Schedule and participate in planning evaluation tool ad hoc group conference call and make refinements to the tool based on discussion.	Tania Carlone Rich Farrington Steve Wilensky Katherine Evatt John Buckley Greg Suba Robin Wall Joe Aragon
Draft follow up letter to the Forest Service Deputy Regional Forester for ACCG review and comment. Share with Rick Hopson and Ray Cablayan before sending to the Region.	Tania Carlone
Confirm meeting location for next Planning Work scheduled to occur on Wednesday, February 26, 2020.	Tania Carlone

Further Discussion

Follow-up with Forest Service to Initiate Strategic Fuel Break Landscape Project Activities

The WG agreed to send a letter as a follow-up to the one sent at the end of 2019 to give the Deputy Regional Forester an update on ACCG's progress in identifying focal areas for large projects and to advance project activities on the ACCG landscape that could increase the pace and scale of forest treatments. The WG agreed that it will be important to share the draft letter with Rick Hopson and Ray Cablayan before distributing more broadly and sending to the Region.

The WG articulated the following topics to include in the letter:

- Summarize outcomes from the December 11, 2019 mapping workshop.
- Note the range of participants, including NRCS and Cal Fire, highlighting the value of property owners' engagement adjacent to Forest Service lands in achieving an all-lands approach.
- Specify ACCG's progress in developing other tools (i.e., the project development process) to help identify priority/focal areas that represent the least controversial ways to increase pace and scale for successful implementation of large treatments within the ACCG's boundary.
- Request Forest Service fire staff and other key personnel and resources from the Amador and Calaveras Ranger Districts to engage with the ACCG to advance project activities to create a network of strategic fuel breaks across the landscape.

Why a strategic fuel break network across the landscape and how does it increase pace & scale?

The WG discussed the importance of communicating to Forest Service leadership how a network of connected fuel breaks across the landscape could increase pace and scale.

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- A connected fuel break network would create a framework for project activities. Once the “frame” showing connected fuel breaks is established, that allows the Forest Service and adjacent landowners to work with stakeholder to fill-in treatments in the surrounding forest depending on the specific conditions of each section of fuel break and surrounding areas.
- The network of strategic fuel breaks allows everyone to see the big picture.
- By creating this framework and “filling in” surrounding areas, the Forest Service could work with the ACCG to identify possible controversial activities based on site-specific information.
- By creating a connected network of strategic fuel breaks, it allows the Forest Service, adjacent land managers/owners, and the ACCG to cooperate in putting the fuel breaks together and identifying “buffer areas” to extend the benefit of fuel breaks.
- This level of cooperation with adjacent land owners and other stakeholders within the ACCG would present an opportunity to develop multi-benefit/multi-jurisdictional projects that would allow partners to leverage resources and funding to overcome obstacles, such as the NEPA bottleneck, and give partners incentive to identify funding avenues and pursue funding opportunities jointly.

Next Steps

- Amador and Calaveras RD fire staff bring maps to Planning WG identifying existing and best places for fuel breaks.
- Get all relevant entities in addition to the Forest Service such as Fire Safe Councils, Cal Fire, Cal-Am, and others in the same room to compile information illustrating where the fuel breaks are, the opportunities, constraints and associated costs.
- Make a list of all critical resources at risk and where they are spatially located. Use this information to identify priorities in parallel with data gathering efforts.
- At the same time, ACCG would work with the Forest Service on processes for fuel break maintenance and coordinate to help seek funding for maintenance/re-entry activities.

Future Meetings

The next Planning Work Group meeting will be on Wednesday, February 26, 2020 at the Amador Ranger District in Pioneer or Jackson.

Meeting Participants

Name	Affiliation	Miles	Hours
John Osbourn	Calaveras County	16	4
Jarrod Clinkenbeard	Cal Fire	15	3.5
Rich Farrington	UMRWA	60	5
Sue Britting	Sierra Forest Legacy	250	8
Katherine Evatt	Foothill Conservancy	105	6
John Buckley	CSERC	70	5

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Name	Affiliation	Miles	Hours
Shane Dante	Foothill Conservancy	100	5
Mary Boblet	Resident	6	3.5
Greg Suba	Sierra Forest Legacy	250	8
John Heissenbuttel	Cal-Am Team	80	6
Gwen Starrett			
Joe Aragon	USFS	0	6
Robin Wall	USFS	120	8
Matt Hilden	USFS	0	3
Tania Carlone	CBI	240	10

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