

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes, November 20, 2019, West Point, CA

Meeting Brief

- The ACCG discussed the draft project support evaluation tool and shared a range of perspectives expressing support and concern for the tool. Participants agreed to submit additional comments on the tool by December 6th and will continue refining the tool in early 2020.
- The ACCG discussed outcomes from the October 21st MOTOR M2K meeting convened by the Forest Service (Region 5). The ACCG agreed to submit a letter responding to the Forest Service's request for the collaborative to identify priorities and focal areas to increase the pace and scale of forest treatments.
- The ACCG confirmed that the Strategic Landscape Assessment Work Group (SLAWG) will convene a mapping workshop on December 11th to compile project data and to begin to identify priorities and focal areas.

Action Items

Actions	Responsible Parties
Finalize and post the October Meeting summary on the website.	Regine
Review the draft project evaluation tool document and provide detailed comments to Tania by December 6.	All
Distribute MOTORM2K YSS leadership team response letter to Bernie Gyant.	Regine
Draft and distribute for review an ACCG response letter to Bernie Gyant, then send to Bernie.	Tania and Regine All
Send shapefiles of project information to Michael Pickard for inclusion in mapping tool.	All

Summary

Modification and/or approval of agenda and October 2019 Meeting Summary.

There were no modifications to the agenda. The October General Meeting summary was adopted as final with no changes and is to be posted on website.

Presentations, Discussions and Business

Project development and approval process: discussion and approval of the [ACCG Project Support Evaluation Tool](#).

Tania Carlone explained that the project evaluation tool is one component of the draft project development and approval process package currently being developed. The Planning Work Group (WG) prepared the evaluation tool over several months and brought it to the full ACCG for discussion. The purpose of the document is to help project proponents create a roadmap for successful collaboration with the ACCG. It is also designed to clarify the anticipated level of potential controversy associated with particular proposed project activities. Tania went on to discuss the project support evaluation tool's structure. She reminded the group that the evaluation tool will not eliminate disagreement but will help clarify the areas of agreement and the extent of anticipated controversy for various activities. It is a tool to help the group find avenues for agreement during project deliberations. Tania then asked meeting participants for feedback on the tool's purpose and structure.

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes, November 20, 2019, West Point, CA

Discussion Summary

- Some participants characterized the tool as thorough and a valuable step in helping identify the ACCG's zones of agreement. Specifically, the Amador Ranger District expressed support for the tool, suggesting that it will help the Forest Service develop projects with the collaborative.
- One participant suggested that the purpose statement is cumbersome and needs to be more succinct.
- Some participants thought the tool is Forest Service-centric and does not adequately reflect the ACCG's all lands, triple-bottom line purpose. There was particular concern that the tool is singularly environmentally-focused and does not sufficiently represent the social and economic goals of the ACCG.
- A few participants pointed out that the ACCG principles and policies that were previously prepared and approved by the ACCG are another component of the package to ensure that tool does not conflict with other ACCG goals and to provide guidelines for the social and economic benefits.
- Another participant suggested that it may be difficult to separate out the triple bottom line approach from environmental considerations, and that the social and economic benefits could potentially be referenced in other elements of the project development and approval process.
- One participant pointed out that given the emphasis on increasing pace and scale of treatment, the tool needs to somehow consider obstacles to achieving that goal.
- One participant suggested that community fire prevention projects endorsed by Fire Safe Councils (FSC) and Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) should be expedited and that the tool, in its current form, will not help protect local communities from catastrophic wildfire nor will it protect the local economy.
- Another participant suggested that some of the terms used in the tool such as "legacy trees" need to be clarified.
- In light of some participants' concerns that more controversial projects ("orange light") would amount to a full stop in project development, one participant clarified that projects like Scottiago included "orange light" project activities that through Planning WG discussions and field visits, shifted the project to "green light" and ultimately moved forward. If the tool had been in place when Scottiago was being discussed, it most likely would have sped up the project development process.
- Some participants expressed that when applying for grants, the time to obtain letters of support is very limited and if the project development process takes months, it is a barrier that prevents project proponents from bringing their projects to the ACCG for endorsement.

Next Steps

- ACCG members review and send comments on the evaluation tool to Tania by December 6th.
- The ACCG will continue discussion of the tool in January 2020.

Discuss outcomes from the SCALE MOTORM2K collaborative group meeting & Present and discuss proposed approach to increasing pace and scale on the ACCG landscape.

Steve Wilensky shared that the October 21st SCALE MOTORM2K meeting was instructive and that ACCG was well represented as were the other two collaboratives. He stated that meeting participants agreed that: 1) there is a need to increase the pace and scale of forest treatments and that the region is falling behind; 2) there is a shared commitment to large and faster paced on-the-ground work; and, 3) several

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes, November 20, 2019, West Point, CA

stakeholders voiced concerns about the MOTOR M2K project approach, although there was a diversity of opinions about the project from those in support to those who wanted to stop the project from going forward.

At the meeting, Bernie Gyant said that MOTOR M2K would not proceed. He asked the collaboratives to identify topics, focal areas, and landscape priority needs that would help the Forest Service advance large-scale projects that could be implemented collaboratively and as quickly as possible. He asked for a response from the collaboratives within a month of the October 21st meeting.

On a November 8th call, the Admin WG discussed the outcomes from the MOTOR M2K October 21st meeting and scheduled an ad hoc in-person meeting on November 12th to outline a proposed response to the Forest Service, as requested by Bernie Gyant. At the November 12th meeting, participants developed the [Increasing Pace and Scale on the ACCG Landscape proposal](#) to present to the full ACCG to guide the ACCG's response to the Forest Service. The proposal expresses the ACCG's commitment towards increasing pace and scale. It states, "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."

The ad hoc group identified possible steps to increase pace and scale in the ACCG landscape as articulated in the proposal, including: 1) develop the project evaluation tool to help identify priority areas, a range of possible treatments, and minimize controversy; 2) conduct a mapping workshop to create a mapping tool to assist the ACCG prioritize actions, 3) consider refining the ACCG work group structure to increase the collaborative's effectiveness in coordinating and implementing on-the-ground work.

Discussion Summary

- Meeting participants agreed that the focus of large-scale project implementation should occur within the ACCG boundary. This is consistent with the Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions (YSS) preferred approach, as communicated to Bernie Gyant in YSS' response letter.
- Upon being asked about the Forest Service's impression of the October 21st meeting, Joe Aragon replied that he attended the meeting to gain a better understanding of everyone's perspectives and to gain an understanding of pathways that may exist to achieve a resilient landscape. He stated that the Forest Service acknowledged M2K was a bold step attempting to employ a new approach. He stated that Bernie wants the group to stay focused on the spirit of collaboration and that he himself is encouraged by the meeting results.
- Rick stated that the Laura Hierholzer (USFS Region 5) or David Edelson (The Nature Conservancy) could help the ACCG think through how to approach large landscape project implementation and may be good speakers for future ACCG meetings.

Next Steps

- Tania and Regine will draft a letter in response to Bernie Gyant stating that the ACCG is committed to: 1) increasing pace and scale across the ACCG landscape; 2) working collaboratively with the Forest Service within the ACCG landscape (Stanislaus and Eldorado NFs); 3) working with existing partners and others to expand its impact in jurisdictions beyond the

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes, November 20, 2019, West Point, CA

Forest Service, to the extent possible, and; 4) continuing work to identify focal areas and priority areas through the development of tools.

- Regine will send the draft letter via email to the ACCG providing five days to review and submission of high-level comments.

Mapping Workshop

Michael Pickard reminded the group that the ACCG has expressed interest in an in-person mapping exercise for some time to compile project information across the ACCG landscape. The mapping tool is intended to be used to aid coordination and prioritization for project implementation. The Strategic Landscape Assessment Work Group (SLAWG) has begun developing the mapping tool but needs more complete project data. The Admin WG proposed a half-day mapping workshop on December 11th, 9:00 to noon in Jackson. The proposed dual purpose of the workshop is to compile data and begin discussions about priorities and focal areas.

Discussion Summary

- One participant offered that the South Fork of the American River (SOFAR) Cohesive Strategy went through a similar exercise and developed three focus areas not based on data but rather the group's stated priorities.
- Another participant asserted that it will be important for CAL FIRE to attend the meeting as well as Fire Safe Councils and Resource Conservation Districts to help determine focal areas.
- Some participants questioned the value of the effort suggesting that the amount of time invested versus the benefit needs to be demonstrated to warrant participation.
- Others responded that if the group doesn't try to create tools that help develop a pipeline of vetted projects ready for implementation, the ACCG will never be able to achieve an all lands approach. A mapping tool could also help the ACCG respond to the Forest Service's request for ACCG to identify priorities and focus areas.
- A couple participants expressed concerns about sharing their project information in a tool that would be publicly available.
- One participant noted that the ACCG MOA signatories have agreed to share information and work collaboratively.
- Others encouraged the group to consider what level of data participants can share without jeopardy.
- Several meeting participants expressed that they intend to attend the proposed mapping workshop.

Next Steps

- The mapping workshop will take place on December 11th from 9-noon at the Amador County Administrative Building in Jackson, CA. Participants are encouraged to send shapefiles to Michael Pickard in advance of the workshop or bring information in either digital or paper formats to the event.

UPDATES

Admin Work Group Update

An Ad hoc committee met to discuss how the ACCG website is used and potential improvements. The next step is to meet with the web consultant to discuss possible changes and to articulate a plan to implement proposed changes.

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes, November 20, 2019, West Point, CA

Strategic Landscape Assessment Work Group (SLAWG)

Michael shared that he and Karen Quidachay are working to finalize the [Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program \(RFFCP\) grant proposal](#) to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy to increase the ACCG's capacity to develop a project mapping tool, and that any questions related to the proposal can be directed to him.

Monitoring Work Group Update

The Monitoring WG completed the final draft of the ecological indicator report.

Roundtable

Rick Hopson: The Power Fire culvert replacement decision memo is close to completion but not yet signed. Laurence Crabtree announced his retirement for January 23, 2020.

Tim Tate: The National Fish and Wildlife Service decided not to list the California Spotted Owl (CASPO) under the Endangered Species Act, and that the decision pertains to the group and the Cornerstone Project. He stated that by far and away, the biggest threat to CASPO are large fires. The Forest Service together with Cal Fire, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the forest industry established a Memorandum of Understanding that they will increase pace and scale and fuels treatments in a strategic and meaningful way. Through that process, they demonstrated that those efforts were meaningful in reducing risk of wildfire to the CASPO. If the bird had been listed, a lot of the activities the Forest Service does now, would not have been allowed.

David Griffith: The Alpine Biomass Collaborative's (ABC's) biomass utilization scoping study shows the best thing to do with the biomass is some form of conversion to energy, heat and/or electricity. The study's target completion date is March 2020. The ABC is proposing to Cal Fire's CCI grant program to improve evacuation routes. The Alpine fires Safe Council is also applying for funds to put fuel breaks around communities.

Ben Solvesky: Ben recently filled a NRCS forestry position that has been vacant for three years. Gordon Long has worked for NRCS for one year through the Amador and Calaveras RCD's. The NRCS has hired a third forester who will begin work this summer. Ben stated that he hopes to get through NRCS' backlog and build its capacity.

John Heissenbuttel: The Amador FSC (AFSC) has been working collaboratively with Cal Fire and Amador County Transportation Commission to identify all of the evacuation routes in the County, and that the AFSC is submitting a Cal Fire CCI Fire Prevention grant application to improve ingress and egress, and to conduct community outreach to improve understanding of primary and secondary routes. John stated the importance of maintaining the fuel breaks once they have been established and the need to help make communities Fire Wise.

Jay Francis: SPI is fully committed to the goals of ACCG to prevent catastrophic wildfire and to protecting communities. SPI's focus is on action and not process, so ACCG can sometimes be frustrating. SPI's focus has been on creating fuel breaks which have generated about 2,000 loads of logs and 600 biomass loads, equating to 65,000 green tons. Over 1,200 acres (54 tons/acre) of lands have been treated through shaded fuel breaks. All of the treated lands are within about 20 miles of West Point; drive up Winton Road about eight miles past Lily Valley circle, and along HWY 88 beginning at the Omo Ranch fuel break on the Amador District and Calaveras District.

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes, November 20, 2019, West Point, CA

Regine Miller: CHIPS is drafting a new agreement with the Big Sandy Rancheria Mono Tribe. Steve has been working in Butte County with the Federal Emergency Management Administration, Office of Emergency Services and Cal Trans, to explore the possibility of coordinating tree removal using tribal crews. CHIPS was awarded a \$1.9MM Wildlife Conservation Board Forest Conservation grant, which includes treating Eldorado NF lands within and adjacent to the Power Fire burn scar. CHIPS was also awarded a Sierra Nevada Alliance Forestry Fellowship, which begins in January 2020. CHIPS is exploring the possibility of applying to Cal Fire fire prevention grant for Arnold Avery fuel break in partnership with the Calaveras Ranger District.

Allison Thomson: She expressed appreciation for hosting her at the meeting and offered for anyone interested in the North Yuba project to contact her.

Gwen Starrett: The Three Meadows Project is on schedule. Gwen expects to apply for permits in January. She experienced a slight panic when the State Water Board was to potentially require a Waste Disposal Requirement for the meadow work but, as it turns out, the Board will not. Rich and Gwen have worked together to assess the roads in the project area.

Rich Farrington: The Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority (UMRWA) is interested in an all lands approach. He really appreciates what the Cal Am team has been doing for other land ownerships and thinks John Heissenbuttel's proposal to include community fire prevention projects approved by FSCs or RCD's as greenlight activities.

Joe Aragon: The Mattley Meadow ID team has met with landowners and is now moving forward with the NEPA. The Plumas Corporation has secured a funding extension. The Black Springs Campground, which is part of the Hemlock Project, is moving forward with the Mule Deer foundation. Joe believes work has already begun. The Prather Medusa project has gone out for scoping and is available on the website. The Shimkey area may be on the District's program of work for 2020 but more likely 2021.

Michael Pickard: UMRWA has finished work in Pumpkin Hollow and the areas treated look great. The Cabbage Patch project is looking great and should be finished this year. The \$1MM contract for Black Springs Project will just be getting underway.

Robin Wall: is finishing the draft of 2019 Cornerstone Report this week, and shared a certificate recognizing the collaborative.

Meeting Participants

Name	Affiliation
Katherine Evatt	Foothill Conservancy
John Heissenbuttel	Cal Am, Amador FSC
Michael Pickard	Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Rick Hopson	USFS Eldorado NF, Amador Ranger District
Sue Holper	ACCG Member
Steve Wilensky	Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions
Tania Carlone	Consensus Building Institute
Linda Diesem	Calaveras landowner
Jay Francis	Sierra Pacific Industries
Gwen Starrett	

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes, November 20, 2019, West Point, CA

Andy Lockwood?	East Bay Municipal Utility District
Ben Solvesky	NRCS
Rich Farrington	UMRWA
Terry Woodrow	Alpine County Board of Supervisors, Amador FSC
Joe Aragon	USFS Stanislaus NF, Calaveras Ranger District
Tim Tate	Sierra Pacific Industries
Shane Dante	Foothill Conservancy
Robin Wall	USFS Eldorado NF, Amador Ranger District
Randy Hanvelt	
Allison Thomson	South Yuba River Citizens League
Jan Bray	Cal Am Team