

# Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

*General Meeting Notes, January 15, 2020, Sutter Creek, CA*

## Action Items

Actions	Responsible Parties
Remove draft watermark from November meeting summary and post on website as final.	Regine
The Planning Work Group to review the project development and evaluation process.	Tania

### Modification and/or approval of agenda and November 2019 Meeting Summary.

There were no modifications to the agenda which was adopted as final.

There were no changes to the November meeting summary. The summary was adopted as final and is to be posted on website.

### Presentations, Discussions and Business

#### Presentation: [Strategic collaboration training module](#).

Consensus Building Institute facilitator, Tania Carlone, stated that the strategic collaboration training module could be useful framing as the ACCG works through the project development process. Several questions have arisen about how ACCG could be more strategic and create more value for participants. The training module was intended to help put those discussions into a framework of strategic collaboration.

Collaboration is strategic when it: 1) supports shared or complementary purposes of participants; 2) maximizes potential value, and; 3) creates a high likelihood of producing effective results, such as more work on the ground at a greater scale.

Tania went on to describe the key factors of strategic collaboration, including participation, structure, clear process, transparency, and trust building. Participation leads to diverse, balanced thinking and buy in, and also clearly defined roles, responsibilities and decision-making. Tania stated the ACCG's revised MOA should help the group clarify roles, responsibilities and decision-making, as well as to clarify opportunities for different levels of involvement (e.g., ACCG work groups and ad hocs) to achieve the focus needed to move the group forward. She also highlighted the importance of transparency for participants to stay informed and to understand the different opportunities for participation. ACCG has been working toward this through its website updates and by establishing consistent documentation for all work groups.

Finally, Tania discussed how collaboration needs to be sustained and adapt overtime. If participants feel like value is not being generated, it can create frustration. Tania reminded the group that strategic collaboration requires ongoing effort to maintain.

Tania asked the group to think about how the ACCG can continually maximize its value so that the group is strategic, and asked what areas should the ACCG work towards to become more strategic to achieve breakthroughs in the collaboration? Individual participants offered the following thoughts.

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- One participant suggested that project decision-making is a driver for the ACCG. This concept of strategic collaboration could enrich our ideas about what kind of dialogue is needed to enhance our connections to make strategic decisions about projects. It raises important questions such as: Are the right set of people in the room (diversity)? Are we inclusive? Do we have clarity about how we make decisions?
- Regarding participation, another participant offered that the ACCG is an inclusive group but the group's discussions and decisions depend on who is in the room. The ACCG needs to include more and different types of groups representing the full range of interests that participate on a consistent basis.
- One participant suggested it would be a breakthrough for the group to recognize that its focus is National Forest lands.
- Another participant responded, the ACCG's work of the past eight years through the Cornerstone Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration project brought in many resources which were concentrated on only part of the ACCG's focus area. Several ACCG participants are looking to bring in additional funding to work on other types of land jurisdictions. Some questions for the group's consideration are: What is the ACCG going to do with its original stated intent to be an all-lands group, coordinate across all lands? Does the ACCG need to overcome this focus, or is it already happening? Do we embrace the whole, or do we focus on a single jurisdictional boundary (referring to National Forest lands)?
- Irvin Jim suggested the importance for the ACCG to acknowledge Native Americans as the original caretakers of the land and to invite meaningful tribal participation. He described how the Washoe people have a documented history of being on top of the mountain 10,000 years ago. He stated that ACCG members and others look to the Washoe Tribe for letters of support because there is power behind the sovereignty of the tribal government. He asked for ACCG to increase transparency and communication, as tribes are most often brought into the process late.
- Another participant highlighted the essential importance of reciprocity, mutual aid and support over those things we can agree on between tribal and other interests. He also discussed the need for a conflict resolution process that helps the group get to the next phase when participants cannot agree.

Tania summarized the discussion by acknowledging there is work to be done to make ACCG's work more reciprocal and strategic, and for the group to achieve breakthroughs. She asked for people to consider key questions that need to be discussed in the future.

## **Discussion: Revised project development process.**

Following the November 2019 meeting, Tania suggested the importance of placing the project evaluation support tool within the broader context of the project development process. She described how she would provide an overview of the draft components of the process, then identify the next steps to refine the suite of documents making up the project development package. Tania stated that the November meeting was challenging because the people who expressed the greatest concern at the meeting hadn't participated in the Planning WG discussions to develop the project development and approval process.

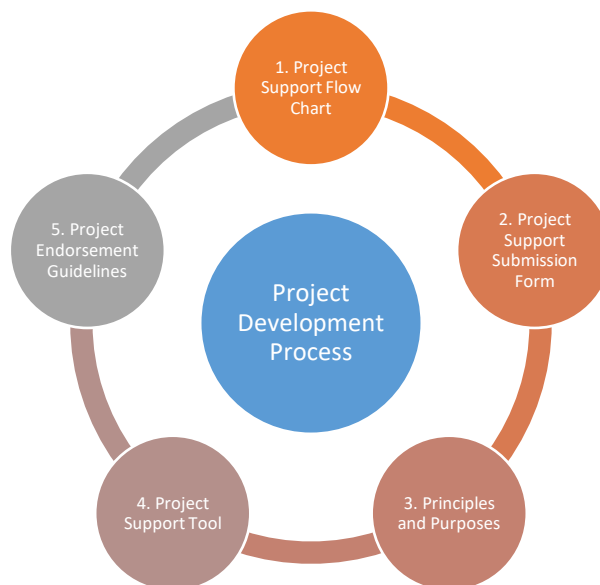
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Tania gave an overview of the categories of comments received on the project support tool and framed them within the context of needs or interests. Those who commented wanted the project development process to:

1. Acknowledge the reality of grant deadlines and externally-driven time constraints
2. Define and help anticipate differences and levels of potential controversy
3. Articulate a clear purpose that demonstrates value
4. Support multi-jurisdictional collaboration/partnership
5. Ensure that social, and local economic benefits are addressed
6. Take into consideration obstacles to increasing the pace and scale of on-the-ground work
7. Recognize the urgency of acting in the face of current conditions (particularly as it relates to community fire protection)

Tania oriented the group to the overall project development process, as depicted in the below graphic:



She explained that project development begins with a clarification of the process as illustrated in the (1) Project Support Flow Chart. A project proponent would then complete (2) the Project Support Submission Form, which includes an accounting of the social and economic benefits of a given project by addressing (3) Principles and Purposes, and identifying anticipated controversy and avenues to response to possible conflicts by referencing (4) the Project Support Tool (whose name needs to be more clearly defined). Tania stated that the evaluation tool describes actions that could potentially be controversial between and among members. The tool is meant to evaluate a proposed project against the ACCG's principles and policies, which may need to be revisited.

## Discussion:

- One participant stated that much of the work implemented on private forest lands would be considered controversial based on the project evaluation tool, underlying that the tool appears to be Forest Service centric.

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- Another participant stated that if the tool is based solely on the environment, then the ACCG is not evaluating projects' social and economic components.

Tania asked the group if this issue should be fleshed out in the Planning WG or an ad hoc committee? She emphasized if those who have the greatest concern cannot participate in the Planning WG, then we will likely continue to find it difficult to get to agreement.

After several comments, Tania summarized the discussion by saying the project development and evaluation process would be taken to the Planning Work Group before coming back to the full ACCG.

## **Presentation: Restoring forests and tribal communities.**

Guest speakers from the Big Sandy Rancheria described their work in tribal workforce development and work with trail building and maintenance crews. The new trails crew is going through a new series of trainings that were not previously available including cultural burning and S212 chainsaw. There are also upcoming opportunities to cross train with CHIPS' forest restoration crews. Trail building work has benefited the local Rancheria because the crew can bring knowledge back to the community and maintain the reservation and surrounding areas. The speakers shared that the work is meaningful and helps crew members get past personal struggles, develop a workforce and maintain a job. Crews are working with volunteers to build a trail along a portion of the San Joaquin River. They described how they built two 15-foot long rock walls two feet high, put in steps, many linear feet of new tread. Yesterday, the crew built 500 linear feet of new tread. The guest speakers shared how meaningful this work is for them personally and how impactful it is in creating workforce opportunities for tribal communities.

- Steve Wilensky: Steve shared that the Big Sandy Rancheria has a preeminent trail building crew and faces similar challenges to CHIPS on how to create year-round work in the Sierra for tribal communities. CHIPS established a cooperative agreement with the Big Sandy Rancheria and plans to conduct cross training. Yosemite National Park will be decommissioning social trails into ancestral grounds which is culturally significant because the Paiute and Mono tribes used to both occupy Yosemite. The goal of workforce program is to put people back to work, earn a decent wage, and improve their social and economic capacities.

Irvin Jim: Irv introduced himself as the Chairman of Woodfords Washoe community, and as representative of the California portion of the Washoe California Nevada community. He is also an EMT and President of the Intertribal Council. In a couple of weeks, Irv shared that he will be celebrating 10 years of sobriety and that he is an ex-felon.

Irv stated that the Washoe tribe has 10,000 years of documented history in the Sierra. The Washoe language sets their tribe apart from other tribes. Lake Tahoe was the Washoe tribe's ancestral lake, which they were kicked out 100 years ago. Irv described that in neighboring Gardnerville, there is a siren that sounds at 6pm each day that in the past sounded to remind the farmhands to go eat dinner, and to remind the Washoe people to not be in town beyond 6pm or they would be in danger of getting beaten or killed. Irv shared that there is a five member Council within the Hung A Lel Ti tribal community with the chair and vice chair serving at the tribal government. Five years ago, Irv stated that he was in a Council meeting and heard about CHIPS and its work on cultural site protection on the Upper Mokelumne River. His immediate thought was: who is protecting the cultural sites and why are they not

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reaching out to the Hung a Lel Ti? Through this, Irv met Steve Wilensky and formed a Washoe hand crew who worked in Calaveras. That crew now maintains 15 solid members, two of whom are from the original group, plus five to eight additional members all from their tribal community. Irv described how his community was at a 78% unemployment rate when it started working with CHIPS. He has seen his crew grow tremendously and move forward, and is now working with Steve to connect with other tribes.

Irv described how crew lead, Sam Simmons, was a quiet young man when first working for CHIPS, but has grown to be a tremendous leader. Sam has increased in his knowledge and confidence, and is a very hard worker. Irv, together with Steve, has met with Humboldt Toiyabe NF and is looking to become holding crews for prescribed burns. The tribal community has a working relationship with Alpine County, including Social Services, government to government. Irv is also working with Gerald Jones of the Bureau of Indian Affairs to put the forestry yield management act into play which circumvents the government bid process to allow for government to utilize tribes if they have a work force that can complete the work. Irv stated that he wants to get this information out to others, such as the ACCG, to provide work to tribal groups given there is a need for it.

Thurman Roberts: Thurman described how he has worked for CHIPS for two years on the Washoe crew. He described how one of their tribal elders maintains safety, keeps the crew in check, and praises the group to help instill a sense of pride. The elder, Thurman says, plays a pivotal role particularly for those who have struggled with addiction or those who do not have a relationship with their own fathers. Thurman described how the crew works hand in hand with the Forest Service, which has built trust and demonstrated that the crew is invested in taking care of the land. He described how the field work has afforded the crew the opportunity to learn a lot about the land, develop leadership skills, address family and inter-family issues, and improve communication within their community and others. Thurman stated that the work and crew is a source of empowerment. He hopes that potential future CHIPS work relating to fire will help strengthen relationships with the Forest Service, Alpine Biomass Collaborative, and others.

Thurman described how he grew up on Hung A Lel Ti, earned his AA from Lake Tahoe Community College, and worked toward a degree in education from CSU Humboldt but left partway through. At that time, CHIPS work was available, and through this Thurman reconnected with tribal members and working the land. Thurman feels that the differences between crew members fade as they work as a team, and that the leadership utilize crew members' strengths to build each other up. He is hoping to cross train with Big Sandy Rancheria to utilize each tribe's strengths and to further develop a tribal work force in each of their regions.

Irv: Irv shared that he refers to his home as all of the five Washoe communities. His vision is that the four other Washoe communities become part of the CHIPS work force. Irv described how this will be difficult, but wants for the crew to accept each other and to build confidence. Historical trauma including the Stuart Indian School was designed to break Native Americans down and bring them up as white people. Irv's family was part of this and, as a result, lost their language.

Irv expressed pride in his crew and their work, stating the work has given their tribal communities validation. It is his pleasure to see the crew mature and take care of their families and communities.

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Steve: Steve shared that the Washoe crew voted their foreman, Sam Simmons, a double share of CHIPS safety bonus. He also stated that having an elder as part of the crew has nearly doubled the productivity of the crew due to the elder's knowledge and counseling. CHIPS plans to participate in a cultural burning training in Yosemite National Park in February, and is partnering with other tribes to train more than 100 people in S212 to help to develop the workforce needed to increase pace and scale. CHIPS is working with FEMA and Cal OES to talk about different approaches to post fire recovery on the Camp Fire, and is invoking a 1944 act that was first used after Butte Fire. Steve described how he is proposing a tribal carve out for the Maidu tribe, who has a major forest restoration crew including Mooretown Rancheria. Steve reminded the group that they need to think about their responsibilities in terms of those who came before use, and that there are ways to provide local benefit in post fire situations. The native crews who are willing to invoke the 1944 law are also willing to hire local people who are non-native to help implement the work. Steve stated that tribal work will provide just and economically sound benefits.

## UPDATES

### Admin Work Group Update

The MOA revision is underway and currently under review by the work groups. MOA revisions, or fully revised copy, is expected to come back to full ACCG in February or March for further review. Regine also reported that website updates had been made and that additional updates to streamline the website's home page are forthcoming. She described the pilot plan to rotate Calaveras County general meeting locations between West Point and San Andreas, to be responsive to member feedback.

### SLAWG Update

#### Update on the Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (RFFCP) grant proposal.

Michael Pickard reported that he submitted a \$50K proposal to Sierra Nevada Conservancy's (SNC's) RFFCP to develop a mapping tool for project prioritization. He proposes to use funds to hire a GIS consultant to refine the SLAWG mapping tool. SNC requested more detail and provided positive feedback. It is unclear if the SNC will fund the full amount. Karen Quidachay is refining the budget and expects to submit it back to the SNC shortly.

#### Outcomes from the December 11 mapping session.

In response to the Forest Service Region 5's request, the ACCG's next steps are to identify focal areas within the ACCG landscape where it can develop short and long-term projects that could be implemented as quickly as possible. Tania briefly described the mapping session and the diversity and enthusiasm of its participants including CAL FIRE, Fire Safe Councils, Resource Conservation Districts, and the Natural Resource Conservation District, to name a few. There was unanimous support to hold future mapping workshops to advance the effort.

Tania relayed how the group identified overall priorities including to:

- Develop mapping tool and create a repository for landscape mapping information that serves as a key to collaboration across the landscape and with adjacent jurisdictions
- Identify geographies
- Strategic fuel breaks

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- Evacuation routes
- Define scope of infrastructure protection
- Community defense
- Focus on multi benefit/multi-jurisdiction projects that are fundable

Tania described how the priorities will help to get to a shared vision, and how strategic fuel breaks kept coming up throughout the meeting.

Tania shared that Matt Hilden from the Calaveras RD stated that each fuel break has a story and we need to tell the story to determine what approach makes sense for each place. She described the group's next steps which are to include:

- Assemble map players who weren't present.
- Complete zones of agreement work through project support and approval package development.
- Where controversy exists, attempt experimentation, monitoring, adaptive management.
- Create the mapping tool that will serve as a repository of information.
- Identify landscape scale fuel break projects that are non-controversial and moderately controversial to advance project discussions.

Sue Britting, Sierra Forest Legacy, affirmed that there was a lot of synergy in the room regarding promoting all lands approach. She stated that Sierra Forest Legacy bring concerns that are reflected in the project support evaluation tool. She emphasized that Sierra Forest Legacy's interest is to work with the ACCG to approach the landscape in a balanced way. If the group can identify strategic locations for fire management that that helps to put site specific project into context, and may help to unpack some of the areas where the ACCG has gotten hung up.

Tania stated that the Planning WG has discussed how to advance the concept of landscape scale projects on the Calaveras and Amador Districts in response to Region's request for the ACCG to come up with focal areas that increase pace and scale. She suggested a strategic fuel break might be an opportunity for a lived experience. She asked if there is anyone who objects to the Planning WG beginning discussions to plan for a strategic fuel break project(s). There were no objections.

Michael Pickard stated the SLAWG will work to move the mapping tool forward and determine future mapping workshops.

## **Monitoring Work Group Update**

The Monitoring WG is working to host a symposium planned for second week of June. The Monitoring WG's next meeting is February 12 in Jackson.

## **Roundtable**

Chuck Loffland: The Amador Ranger District has completed CEQA for Foster Meadow which has already gone through the ACCG. It's now in the implementation phase. The District is beginning its seasonal hiring for which it plans to go through Great Basin Institute and bring to ACCG when the time comes. Chuck clarified that the Power Fire Culvert Project has been signed and that eleven culverts will be added. The Forest Service intend to implement and prioritize culverts for treatment this summer.



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Michael Pickard: The SNC's Forest Health grant program ended in October 2019, with awards to be posted very soon. The ACCG should expect to receive funding for the region. Michael wanted to point out that Thurman Robert's (CHIPS Forestry Fellow) position is partially funded through a SNC grant.

John Heissenbuttel: The Mitchell Mine fuel break has been partially implemented. This project may be a good field trip for the Planning WG, and is a mix of BLM, private and State Park land. The project was the result of a collaborative effort between CAL FIRE and the Amador Fire Safe Council (FSC) to design a strategic fuel break. Over an eight month period, the FSC worked with CAL FIRE, Amador County Transportation Commission (ACTC) and local fire districts to identify strategic ingress and egress routes in the County which resulted in a grant request. They have also developed grant applications for a Highway 26 fuel break to Hams Station on BLM, Forest Service, Sierra Pacific Industries and Pacific Gas and Electric lands.

Tania: Reminded group that the next meeting is in San Andreas and that the Planning WG meeting is next Wednesday, January 22.

Robin Wall: Rick Hopson and Ray Cablayan are at the Ranger Academy meeting this week. Amador Ranger District timber activity is continuing on the Panther and Scottiago projects.

Rich Farrington: The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) granted the Mountain Counties Water Resources Association funds to establish a plan to treat fuels. He will ask the Executive Director to give briefing on the project. Rich also reminded the group to increase pace and scale of fuel reduction to avoid impacts of wildfire to wildlife, as has been observed in Australia.

Miranda Gevalis: A NFWF grant has been awarded to a company to plot and locate native plants on the Amador District that local tribes may want to gather. The project is intended to inform Forest Service management.

Irvin Jim: The Yurok tribe and others from the Ukiah area are interested in how to go about starting similar work.

Liz Myer-Shields: On the South Fork Mokelumne project with Cal Am team, there are 66 acres of hand piles within the Sandy Gulch unit that are ready to burn. The BLM is trying to determine the timing of burning and working with CHIPS to conduct burning over the next few months. The BLM expects to have a larger crew burn at the end.

Joe Aragon: With reference to the Big Sandy Rancheria's work, building rock walls on trails are back breaking work, and using lever bars is a fine art.

Regine Miller: CHIPS is beginning to work with the Amador Ranger District and with the Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority to plan for the Upper Mokelumne Forest Restoration project. She wished to welcome to Thurman Roberts, from CHIPS' Washoe crew, who is CHIPS' new Forestry Fellow funded by a Sierra Nevada Alliance grant.

## Meeting Participants

Name	Affiliation
John Heissenbuttel	Cal Am, Amador FSC
Michael Pickard	Sierra Nevada Conservancy



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Liz Berger	Eldorado NF Supervisor's Office
Sue Holper	ACCG Member
Steve Wilensky	Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions
Regine Miller	Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions
Tania Carlone	Consensus Building Institute
Linda Diesem	Calaveras landowner
Jay Francis	Sierra Pacific Industries
Sue Britting	Sierra Forest Legacy
Rich Farrington	UMRWA
Greg Suba	Sierra Forest Legacy
Joe Aragon	USFS Stanislaus NF, Calaveras Ranger District
Shane Dante	Foothill Conservancy
Robin Wall	USFS Eldorado NF, Amador Ranger District
Gerald Schwartz	East Bay Municipal Utility District
Miranda Gevalis	USFS Eldorado NF, Amador Ranger District
Chuck Loffland	USFS Eldorado NF, Amador Ranger District
Sid Beckman	Calaveras County RCD
Irvin Jim	Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions, Hung A Lele Ti Washoe tribe, Intertribal Council of California
Lori Beecher	Big Sandy Rancheria, Mono tribe
David	Big Sandy Rancheria, Cold Springs Tribe
Thurman Roberts	Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions, Hung A Lele Ti Washoe tribe, Sierra Nevada Alliance
Michelle Havens	Eldorado NF Supervisor's Office
Bob Dean	Calaveras County Resource Conservation District
Chris Swan	East Bay Municipal utility District, Acting Watershed and Rec Division Manager
Liz Meyer-Shields	Bureau of Land Management, Mother Lode Field Office