

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

Planning Work Group Meeting Summary, March 25, 2020, On-line Meeting

Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute (CBI)

Meeting Brief

- The Planning Work Group (WG) made progress adjusting the draft 2020 General Meeting Speaker Schedule to accommodate the current circumstances associated with the coronavirus.
- The Planning WG socio-economic ad hoc group reported their progress drafting guidance on how to incorporate socio-economic benefits into the project development process.
- Megan Layhee presented the overall goals and project components of the RFFCP grant project and the Planning WG identified next steps to collaborate on the development of the mapping tools.

Action Items

Actions	Point Person(s)
Post final Planning Work Group February 26, 2020 meeting summary on the ACCG website.	CBI
Prepare the progress update letter to the USFS Region for review and consensus approval at the April General Meeting.	Tania Carlone
follow up with Dr. Paul Ullrich, UCD Regional and Climate Change Group, regarding his availability to present at the June 17 th General Meeting. If not available, inquire about his availability for the August 19 th or September 16 th meetings.	Rich Farrington
Reach out Caples Restoration Project presenters regarding their availability to present at the May 20 th General Meeting.	Regine Miller
Report back progress on socio-economic ad hoc group guidance.	Shane Dante Katherine Evatt Rich Farrington Steve Wilensky
Prepare Forest Treatment Guidance Document comment summary and send to ad hoc working group and then place on April Planning WG agenda.	Stephanie Horii Tania Carlone

Summary

Agenda Review and February Meeting Summary Approval

The Planning WG (WG) met via Zoom video-conference. There weren't any adjustments to the agenda. However, the WG clarified that the progress update letter to Bernie Gyant, USFS Deputy Regional Forester, would be placed on the agenda for the April General Meeting. The WG finalized the February 26, 2020 meeting summary without revision.

2020 General Meeting Speaker Schedule

The Planning WG (WG) discussed the General Meeting speaker schedule and considered some options to adjust the schedule based on the current situation caused by the Covid-19 pandemic.

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In the short-term, the WG suggested moving more complex panel presentations later in the schedule with the hope that in-person meetings would resume within a few months. The WG suggested that on-line presentations should be recorded and posted to the ACCG website and encouraged all presenters to include visual presentations that would be posted to the website prior to the meeting for the benefit of those who may not be able to join the video-conference because of limited internet capabilities. The WG made the following recommended changes to the speaker schedule.

Meeting Date	Presenter(s)	Topic	WG Input/Actions
4/15	Steve Wilensky & Karen Quidachay	Lessons learned from project implementation in the field: contracting methods, vendors, and outcomes	1) Any lessons learned related to stewardship contracts : Have they been used? Can they be used outside of federal lands? Are there other ways stewardship contracts can be used as a tool moving forward? 2) How can CEQA/NEPA be streamlined and expedited , particularly on National Forest lands when the Forest Service needs to coordinate with another entity to complete CEQA? How can this be done in an efficient manner? 3) WG members are interested in organizing field trips to some of the sites to extend the conversation about lessons learned . In particular, Bureau of Land Management (BLM) sites previously discussed.
5/20	Becky Estes, Shana Gross & Sue Britting	Caples Ecological Restoration Project	Regine ask presenters if they are available on this date.
6/17	Dr. Paul Ullrich, UC Davis	Planning for future forests in the face of climate change. Climate adaptation and how to move forward.	Rich Farrington follow-up with presenter to gauge availability on 6/17 and to gain further clarity and detail on presentation focus.

Project Development & Approval Process

- **Socio-economic ad hoc working group update:** The ad hoc group reported that after their initial meeting on February 19th, Steve Wilensky prepared a draft document focusing on how to incorporate social and economic benefits into ACCG project

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development activities. The ad hoc group continues to have internal discussions about how to effectively incorporate these components to add value instead of creating another layer in the process. The ad hoc will continue to meet and regularly report back to the Planning WG.

- **Forest Treatment Guidance Document Comments:** Consistent with the guidance the Planning WG gave CBI at the February meeting, CBI prepared a spreadsheet cataloging written comments received on the Forest Treatment Guidance Document. CBI is currently preparing a comment summary as a companion document to aid the WG in its ongoing discussions. The WG will review the comment summary at their April meeting. WG members provided feedback on the organization of the comment spreadsheet stating that it was well organized but questioned whether this significant level of effort was warranted. The facilitator suggested that the comment summary would likely be a more effective tool for the WG's ongoing deliberations but that the full ACCG requested individual comments to be tracked. Rich Farrington asked if the ad hoc group could get a draft of the comment summary before their next meeting to use as a reference.

Large Landscape Project Initiation

- **Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions (YSS) Update:** John Buckley gave an update on YSS' landscape-scale Bridge Project. The YSS Leadership Team met with the Stanislaus National Forest (NF) and the large landscape ID Team to discuss the project. "In the process, the Stanislaus NF informed YSS that an additional \$2 million had been allocated to the Stanislaus NF to increase the pace and scale of forest management activities within the proposed YSS large landscape project area and within additional surrounding acres that do not overlap with that YSS project area. YSS learned at that meeting that the FS estimates it will take approximately 2 years to prepare a programmatic environmental document for the large landscape project activities under consideration. John suggested that given this anticipated timeline for environmental analysis, the ACCG shouldn't feel a tremendous amount of pressure to initiate a large landscape project before having the necessary information and tools in place. Dawn Coultrap clarified that the FS intends to continue developing other projects in the interim and is committed to working with the ACCG.
- **Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (RFFCP) Grant:** Megan Layhee, project consultant, reported that UMRWA, in collaboration with the ACCG, was awarded funding from the Sierra Nevada Conservancy's Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (RFFCP) to enhance the collaborative and planning activities of the ACCG through the development of a project mapper and prioritization tool. The development of this tool is to be completed by December 2020. Megan Layhee confirmed that she would regularly attend the Planning WG meetings through the end of the year to work closely with the WG as well as the Strategic Landscape Assessment Work Group (SLAWG) to develop the project's components, including:

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1. **Component 1:** The development of a **project mapper** that will visually display completed, in-progress and NEPA/CEQA-ready fuels reduction projects within the ACCG boundary, maintained within a project database and displayed on a clickable, interactive map on ACCG's website. Fuels reduction within the context of this project refers to the full suite of forest management activities that aim to reduce catastrophic fire.
2. **Component 2:** The development of a landscape prioritization tool that will integrate landscape features with the project mapper in order **to generate an initial list of priority areas for future fuels reduction projects.**
3. **Component 3:** To ensure this tool is usable into the future, through the development of a handbook and a series of workshops in late summer/fall of 2020, which will enable individuals within the ACCG to learn to maintain and update the project database and mapper, and to learn how to use the prioritization tool to define and locate priority areas.

Megan clarified that she has a lot of project information for the areas in the ACCG boundary that are within the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). She still needs to get information from the FS. Dawn encouraged Megan to reach out directly for information from the Calaveras RD including LiDar which should be available soon. The Planning WG highlighted that at the last Regional meeting the FS shared that the FS is working with CAL Fire and industry to produce a regional map. It will be important for Megan to be aware of that effort and to ensure that that information is captured in ACCG's project mapping tool development process.

Next Steps:

- Megan aims to prepare a preliminary draft of the project mapper for the May Planning WG meeting to receive input from the WG.
- She will make a presentation to the full ACCG at the June General Meeting and seek input from the full group.
- The SLAWG with Megan will convene a mapping workshop in the summer to engage a broader group of stakeholders, similar to what occurred at the December 2019 mapping workshop.

Future Meetings

The next Planning Work Group meeting will be on Wednesday, April 22, 2020. The meeting will take place on-line via Zoom.

Meeting Participants

Name	Affiliation	Miles (N/A-videoconference)	Hours
Gwen Starrett			2
Rich Farrington	UMRWA		2
John Buckley	CSERC		2
Shane Dante	Foothill Conservancy		2
Greg Suba	Sierra Forest Legacy		2

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Name	Affiliation	Miles (N/A-videoconference)	Hours
Dawn Coultrap	USFS		2
Megan Layhee	GIS Consultant (RFFCP)		2
Stephanie Horii	CBI		2
Tania Carlone	CBI		2

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