April xx, 2020

Barnie Gyant, Deputy Regional Forester

USDA Forest Service

Pacific Southwest Region

1323 Club Drive

Vallejo, CA 94592

Dear Barnie,

The Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG) is writing to update you on our progress since the letter we sent on November 21, 2019. As is stated in that letter, the ACCG is committed to collaborate with the Amador Ranger District on the Eldorado National Forest and Calaveras Ranger District on the Stanislaus National Forest to identify priority areas and approaches that represent the least controversial ways to increase pace and scale for the successful implementation of large-scale management activities within the ACCG’s boundaries. For your reference, find attached the original letter from the ACCG.

To begin to fulfill this commitment, last November the ACCG identified two important, immediate next steps. We’d like to remind you of those steps and let you know what progress we’ve made on them thus far.

1. **New Project Development Process:** Since the summer of 2019, the ACCG has been developing [guidance documents](https://acconsensus.org/projects-2/project-development-support-process/) to help clarify its project development process in order to guide collaborative project development between the ACCG and Forest Service and others. One of the draft guidance tools in the process aims to help identify anticipated levels of agreement associated with a range of proposed forest treatments. Within the context of increasing pace and scale, these tools can be used to initiate discussions between the ACCG and the Forest Service beginning with approaches where there is the greatest level of agreement as a starting point.ACCG members have already begun utilizing this process to develop multi-benefit projects, some that have received funding for implementation in the ACCG boundary.
2. **Mapping and Project Prioritization Tools:** The ACCG convened its first mapping workshop on December 11, 2019 to begin identifying and mapping focal areas that can then be prioritized. The Amador and Calaveras Ranger Districts as well as Cal Fire, the Sierra Nevada Conservancy, Resource Conservation Districts, the Natural Resources Conservation Service, the Upper Mokelumne River Watershed Authority (UMRWA), East Bay Municipal Utility District, Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions (CHIPS), environmental organizations, and other ACCG member organizations and individuals attended.

The diverse workshop participants confirmed the value of the ACCG proceeding with its effort to create a repository of landscape mapping information and they unanimously supported holding future workshops. Some felt that such a mapping repository could serve as a key for collaboration across the ACCG landscape and with adjacent jurisdictions.

To accomplish this goal, 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 and has three main components:

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.

**What’s Next?**

The ACCG respectfully requests that the Forest Service commit fire staff and other key specialists and resources from the Amador and Calaveras Ranger Districts to consistently participate in Planning Work Group, at the ACCG General Meeting, and other meetings, as warranted. The Forest Service’s participation is key over the course of 2020 to ensure that these tools incorporate the relevant information and capabilities to increase the capacity of the ACCG to strategically plan and develop multi-benefit projects.

The ACCG appreciates your ongoing efforts to support Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration activities on National Forest Lands in the ACCG Cornerstone Area and with adjacent jurisdictions. The ACCG looks forward to working with the Amador and Calaveras Ranger Districts and the Region to increase pace and scale to achieve greater resiliency on the landscape.

On Behalf of the ACCG,

Regine Miller

ACCG Administrator