

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

Planning Work Group Meeting Summary, May 27, 2020, On-line Meeting

Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute (CBI)

Meeting Brief

- The Planning Work Group (WG) confirmed Paul Ullrich and Malcolm North as speakers for the June and July ACCG general meeting.
- The Amador Ranger District (RD) and Calaveras RD gave project updates to the WG. UMRWA and the Forest Service will work to confirm projects on UMRWA's project list that could potentially receive stimulus funding through the Sierra Nevada Conservancy and/or pursue other potential funding sources.
- The Planning WG Socio-Economic Ad Hoc Group presented a recommendation on how to incorporate community and economic benefits into the ACCG project development and review process and received input from the Planning WG. The discussion will continue at the June Planning WG.
- Megan Layhee, project consultant, gave an interactive web map presentation using ArcGIS Story Maps. She walked through the components of the ACCG's draft Fuels Reduction Project Mapper including data structure and symbology for which the WG provided input that will be further discussed at the upcoming SLAWG meeting on June 2nd and presented to the full ACCG at the June general meeting. The WG expressed support for the overall framework and direction of the development of the tool.

Action Items

Actions	Point Person(s)
Revise the April 22, 2020 Planning WG summary to reflect the corrections made by the WG.	Tania Carlone
Contact general meeting speakers, Paul Ullrich (June) and Malcom North (July) to confirm details and logistics.	Tania Carlone Regine Miller
Send UMRWA project list to Amador and Calaveras Ranger Districts to confirm projects for SNC stimulus and other possible funding.	Rich Farrington
Follow up with Steve Wilensky and Regine Miller regarding how CHIPS defines living wages and "local" contractors to inform Community and Economic Benefits Ad hoc group's efforts and bring back to the Planning WG for further discussion.	Tania Carlone
Present Mapping Tool overview and conceptual framework to the full ACCG at June general meeting.	Megan Layhee

Summary

Agenda Review and April Meeting Summary Approval

The Planning WG (WG) met via Zoom video-conference. There weren't any adjustments to the agenda. Rich Farrington requested a revision to the April 22, 2020 Planning WG meeting summary, namely in the last bullet on page 4 of the summary to list the proposed ACCG forest restoration goals to be included in a "preamble" to the Forest Treatment Guidance document revision for ACCG consideration. The proposed six goals include: 1) Support the "Triple Bottom

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Line” of the ACCG Principles and Policies to Guide Operations: Sustainable Environmental, Community, and Economic benefits; 2) Achieve the ACCG Strategic Plan Goal of “Getting More Done on the Ground;” 3) Overcome “obstacles” to increasing Pace & Scale including lack of sustainable funding and complex NEPA; 4) Adapt to Climate Change, particularly the increasing threat of Mega Fires and Drought Mortality (GTR 220 & GTR 237 recommend creating forest heterogeneity to provide ecological flexibility to withstand environmental stresses.); 5) Re-establish the natural fire regime, where possible; 6) Thin vegetation and create heterogeneity in fuel breaks to help protect communities and forest resources. The Planning WG will revisit the document at the June Planning WG meeting.

2020 General Meeting Speaker Schedule

Rich confirmed presenters Dr. Paul Ullrich for the June general meeting and Dr. Malcolm North for the July general meeting. He will follow up with Dr. Scott Stephens to confirm him as a speaker for the August general meeting. The Planning WG suggested reserving 75 minutes for each speaker, if possible, and also encouraged the ACCG to expand its outreach for these presentations, given the presenters’ level of expertise. Tania and Regine Miller will coordinate logistics with confirmed speakers.

Forest Service Updates

- **Amador Ranger District:** The Amador Ranger District (RD) informed that WG that the planting program for this year has been cancelled as a result of Covid-19 and Chuck Loffland has been assigned to the Covid incident management team. Robin Wall is expected to return from her detail in late June. Therefore, Marc Young will be plugging into the ACCG to provide coverage, where possible. The RD is also doing some herbicide work on the Panther fuel breaks. There are some questions about whether they will be resuming survey work on Cole Creek. Gwen Starrett requested information about the time frame for risk assessment completion to give her an idea for planning volunteer work for the 3 Meadows Project. The RD shared that CHIPS will begin roadside treatments in the Power Fire Area.
- **Calaveras Ranger District:** The Calaveras RD reported that the RD is working with CHIPS on their California Climate Investment (CCI) Forest Health Grant Program grant. They will be meeting on June 11th and are eager to get to work. In response to a Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) request for priority projects that could be candidates for stimulus funding, The RD identified the Arnold Avery project since it fit the criteria of shuttle-ready, completed NEPA, and hazardous fuels reduction. The RD specified that projects are being initiated in the old Schimke area and McKey Hill. The FS is also working with Sierra Pacific Industries and CalFire on fuels breaks. Matt Hilden reported that almost 50% of prescribed pile burning over 370 acres have been completed. UMRWA has started mastication on the Fore and Black Springs projects. Cabbage and Thompson stewardship will create traffic in the area over the field season. High

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elevation roads will be closed until 6/30 but could be modified based on conditions. Ray Cablayan is expected to return from his detail on June 1st.

- **UMWRA Coordination with Forest Service:** As a follow-up from last month's Planning WG meeting, Rich Farrington reported that UMRWA had coordinated with the Forest Service (FS) to identify possible projects that could be candidates to receive stimulus funding through SNC. Through that effort, the following projects were identified on the Calaveras: The Fore Project, West Calaveras, Whitten Fuel Break, Hemlock Planting, WUI fuel breaks, Mokelumne 5-year Strategy; and on the Amador: Cole Timber, Power Fire Road, Power Fire Restoration, Power Fire Nexus Tree Removal, Mokelumne 5-year Strategy. Rich further confirmed that UMRWA sent the SNC this draft list of projects with the following requested information: 1) project name; 2) county; 3) budget request; 4) one sentence description; 5) amount of budget requested for planning. UMRWA would like to confirm the list with the Ranger Districts. SNC confirmed that they are primarily looking for shovel-ready projects but that they are accepting others that include a planning component. Additionally, UMRWA would like to firm-up the project list in order to begin searching for funding to help implement projects under its Stewardship Agreement with the FS.

Project Development & Approval Process

- **Socio-economic ad hoc working group update:** The ad hoc group met several times to discuss how to effectively incorporate community and economic benefits into the project development process. The ad hoc group presented its recommendation to the WG to streamline the inclusion of these components by adding a checklist to the project submission form that would support and give greater definition to the ACCG Principles & Policies related to community and economic benefits. The ad hoc gave an overview of the checklist and requested WG input. The WG voiced support for the overall approach with some questions for possible refinement.
 - John Heissenbuttel requested clarification on how the ad hoc is defining living wages, "local" contractors, and under-utilized forest products. Other participants felt it would be valuable to have a broader discussion clarifying what the ACCG means by local. In terms of under-utilized forest projects, Shane Dante noted that there could be a benefit in leaving the term undefined because it keeps the door open for others to innovate. John Heissenbuttel suggested that asking Steve Wilensky how CHIPS defines living wages and local contractors would be a good place to start. Rich Farrington raised his interest in maintaining the term sustainable when referring to creating more permanent ("sustainable") jobs and wanted to make sure that concept and term was maintained in the checklist. One WG member shared the following link to aid in the discussion about defining living wage: <https://livingwage.mit.edu>.
 - John Buckley reminded the WG that the checklist, as with other components of the project development process, is not intended to be a project screen but to

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provide some indication for consideration. He encouraged the WG to accept it and test it.

- Sue Holper offered that the checklist is intended to invite conversation and that maybe adding examples to help define terms could be helpful. There was some discussion about possibly adding a glossary of terms to help define what are otherwise subjective terms.
- Gwen Starrett suggested that the socio-economic assessment work from the Sierra Institute may help inform some of the terminology. This raised a broader topic about the Planning WG's responsibility to synthesize information from speakers, monitoring and assessments, etc. and incorporate it into the ACCG's planning efforts.

The Community and Economic benefits discussion will continue at the June Planning WG meeting.

Mapping Tool Development & Next Steps

- **Regional Forest and Fire Capacity Program (RFFCP) Grant:** Megan Layhee, project consultant, gave an interactive web map presentation using ArcGIS Story Maps. She walked through the components of the ACCG's draft Fuels Reduction Project Mapper including data structure and symbology. Megan informed the WG that the next SLAWG meeting would take place via Zoom on Tuesday, 6/2 from 1-2:30. Megan invited interested Planning WG members to attend the SLAWG meeting and to contact her if they wished to be included on the SLAWG's email distribution list or wished to further discuss the mapping tool or presentation (megan.layhee1@gmail.com). Megan gave an overview of the conceptual framework for the mapping tool. She noted that she is still working with the BLM to get data. She clarified that data currently in the tool includes any activity that alters vegetation. It's possible to modify these activities, including removing some of the activities if it is too much information and detail. For each project, the tool currently includes: 1) year; 2) status; 3) activity type; 4) organization; 5) method of activity; 6) acres; 7) NEPA/CEQA name. Megan asked some questions for the WG's consideration: **What information is most helpful or valuable to include for individual projects? What is the right timeframe for projects?** The tool includes projects that were implemented within the last 20 years. **Is this the right timeframe?** In making the determination about timeframe, it's important to realize that information can always be filtered but it's harder to add baseline data. In considering these questions, WG participants offered the following input:
 - John Buckley asked how the ACCG expects to use this information. Is it to identify gaps and opportunities and for what work the ACCG would like to do on the ground?
 - Rich suggested that what the ACCG is trying to do is to reduce megafires and associated impacts. The reduction of risk from megafires makes risk the key.

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Somehow, the ACCG will have to know the project inventory, assets, and risks which ultimately leads to being able to prioritize projects.

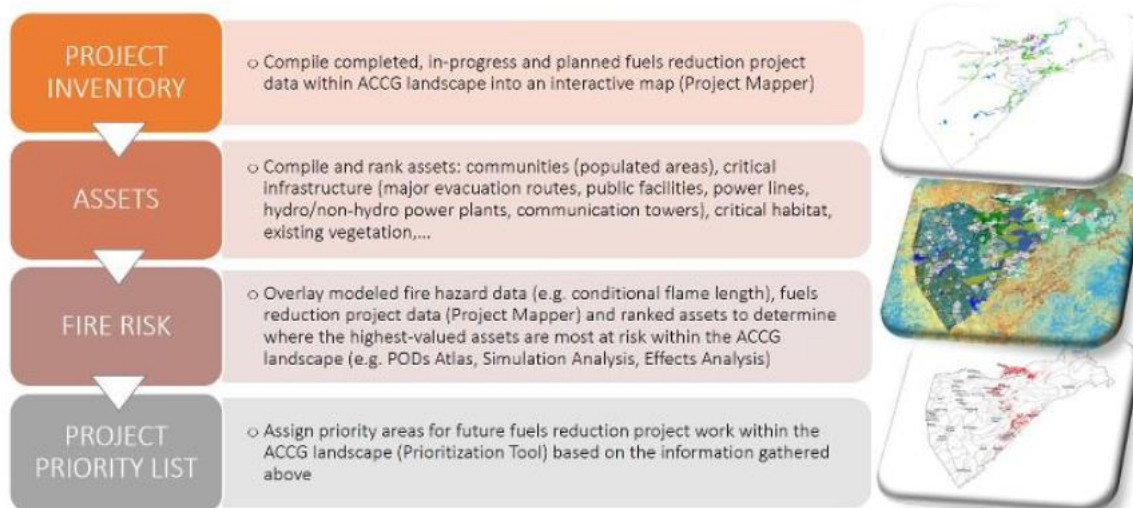
- WG members suggested that it may be beneficial to create an overlay for projects less than 5/7/10 years old, for example.
- Greg Suba suggested that it's better to have information in front of us, noting that there is a shelf life for how long a treatment will remain effective. He emphasized what will drive how the ACCG uses this tool depends on the questions posed. Questions like: How have these treatments affected the fuel scape? What have we done and where can we go next?
- Rich asked the group if anything was missing from the overall structure. He asked if the framework (see below graphic) accurately describes what the ACCG is attempting to do and asked if the WG supports the overall framework. He also suggested that we need to clearly define the questions we are attempting to answer with this tool.
- John Buckley offered that the framework makes sense but he cautioned the group that the process needs to be taken one step at a time.
- Greg voiced support for the framework and suggested that we'll need to get ready to have a healthy discussion regarding assets and fire risk.
- Randy Hanvelt asked how would we assign priority areas, noting that we are going to find resources capability as an obstacle.
- Joe Aragon expressed that the collaborative can really help within the assets and fire risk parts of the framework.

The WG expressed that the tool is moving in the right direction and that it's on the road to being a useful tool for ACCG planning activities. The WG suggested that at that general meeting it would be important to seek support from the full ACCG for the below 4-step framework.

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ACCG FUELS REDUCTION PROJECT MAPPER & LANDSCAPE PRIORITIZATION TOOL FRAMEWORK



Next Steps:

- SLAWG Meeting on 6/2, 1-2:30
- Presentation to the full ACCG at the June general meeting and seek input from the full group, particularly on the framework.

The next Planning Work Group meeting will be on Wednesday, June 24, 2020. The meeting will take place on-line via Zoom.

Meeting Participants

Name	Affiliation	Miles (N/A-videoconference)	Hours
Tania Carlone (facilitator)	Consensus Building Institute (CBI)		3
Dawn Coultrap	USFS- Calaveras		3
Shane Dante	Foothill Conservancy		3
Rich Farrington	UMRWA		3
Randy Hanvelt			3
John Heissenbuttel	Cal-am Team		3
Megan Layhee	GIS Consultant (RFFCP)		3
Marc Young	USFS- Amador		3
Ben Solvesky	NRCS		3
Greg Suba	Sierra Forest Legacy		3

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Name	Affiliation	Miles (N/A-videoconference)	Hours
Gwen Starrett			
Joe Aragon	USFS- Calaveras		3
Kellin Brown	USFS- Calaveras		3
Matt Hilden	USFS- Calaveras		3
Sue Holper			3

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