

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

Planning Work Group Meeting Summary, March 24, 2021, On-line Meeting

Prepared by Megan Layhee, CHIPS (meganl.chips@gmail.com)

Meeting Brief

- The Planning Work Group (WG) discussed and agreed to postpone the Herbicide Alternatives panel to the next available General Meeting date to allow for more time to find additional panelists who have expertise in alternatives practices to herbicide use. The WG also discussed some of the key takeaways from the March General Meeting Herbicide Panel, and these discussions added to the conversation of the Herbicide Alternatives Panel.
- Representatives of the Monitoring WG came to discuss and get feedback from the Planning WG on two topics related to the MWG monitoring questions and the proposed future Power Fire Field Symposium.
- In light of Herbicide Alternative Panel postponement, the WG discussed the importance of maintaining the momentum around the discussion of herbicides. To this end, the WG agreed to have a “Herbicides: Lessons learned” presentation/discussion at the May Planning WG (April meeting if we can postpone the GNA panel, see next item) that will focus on the YSS (John Buckley will present) and Amador RD’s experiences with the ACCG over projects with herbicide treatments.
- The WG discussed the Good Neighbor Authority Panel that is scheduled for the April 28th Planning WG meeting.
- The WG discussed the presentation and discussion that will occur at the April 28th Planning WG meeting by UMRWA regarding their planning project.
- The WG discussed the take-aways from the March Prescribed Fire ad hoc meeting.
- The WG heard about project updates from the Amador Ranger District and CHIPS.
- The WG agreed to have an agenda item on the April 28th Planning WG agenda immediately following UMRWA’s presentation to continue the discussion on increasing pace and scale, large landscape-scale projects and ACCG’s role in that (“Option C”).
- The WG also confirmed Dr. Coen as speaker at the May 19th general meeting, and also confirmed Jeff Morailis and Jason Kuiken as the guest speakers for the June 16th general meeting.
- Next WG meeting is Wednesday, April 28th, 9am-12pm.

Action Items

Actions	Point Person(s)
• Reach out to herbicide alternatives panelists about panel postponement.	Megan Layhee
• Reach out to Scott Oneto, Steve Wilensky and others to find potential panelists with published research on herbicide alternatives.	Megan Layhee

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Actions	Point Person(s)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send the Planning WG the MWG symposium topic and presenter list spreadsheet and also send MWG questions and ask Planning WG to send top few symposium topics and monitoring questions to Becky Estes. 	Megan Layhee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with Rick Hopson and Greg Suba to confirm GNA Panel date and panelists. 	Megan Layhee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Work with UMRWA to prepare their project submission form materials and get those out to the Planning WG as soon as possible before the April 28th Planning WG meeting. 	Megan Layhee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Send the ACCG project submission form and website link to supplemental materials to Rick Hopson. 	Megan Layhee
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create Rx Fire Ad Hoc meeting materials webpage on ACCG website. 	Megan Layhee

Summary

Agenda Review and May Meeting Summary Approval

The Planning Work Group (WG) met via Zoom video-conference. The WG confirmed the agenda and February meeting summary without revision.

General Meeting Speaker Series

March Herbicide Panel and Future Herbicide Alternatives Panel Discussion: The group proceeded to plan for the upcoming herbicide alternatives panel. After further discussion, the WG agreed to postpone the Herbicide Alternatives Panel until a later general meeting date where ideal panelists would be available to participate. Dan Macon and Sean Kriletich were identified as two panelists to follow up with and confirm their availability for a future panel date. It was agreed that the WG would find an additional panelist(s) with expertise and publications related to alternatives to herbicides. It was recommended to reach out to Scott Oneto and Steve Wilensky to ask for recommendations on potential herbicide alternative panelist(s). It was also decided to invite Joe Sherlock and Gary Fiddler to sit in on the discussion. Lastly, a fourth herbicide alternative panel objective was proposed to address the issue of whether project objectives can be adjusted to accommodate alternative treatments to herbicides (see table below).

Herbicide Alternatives Panel Presentation Planning
Proposed Date: July 21, 2021 general meeting
Suggested duration: 90-minutes
Objectives:

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- Define and discuss alternatives to herbicides.
- Conditions where alternatives to herbicides would apply.
- Discussion on some of the shortcomings of herbicide alternatives.
- **[New proposed objective]** Can project objectives be adjusted to avoid the proposed use of herbicide treatments?

Prospective Speakers: The WG recommended no more than 3-4 speakers for the panel.

List of Possible Panelists identified in by Planning Work Group Members:

- **Dan Macon**, UCCE in Placer Co. use of goats and sheep for veg management (confirmed for July 21st Panel as of COB 3/24)
- **Sean Krietich**, Agricultural Consultant and Producer/Owner of Paloma Pollinators) (confirmed for July 21st Panel as of COB 3/24)
- ...

Related Confirmed/Potential Future Presentations:

- **Dr. Janice Coen**, “Weather, Fire Behavior and Trends in the Central Sierra.” Confirmed for May 19th general meeting.
- **Jeff Marsolais and Jason Kuiken**, “Forest Resilience Initiative”. Confirmed for June 16th general meeting.
- **Herbicide Alternatives Panel**, July 21st general meeting.

Next steps:

- Reach out to herbicide alternatives panelists about panel postponement.
- Reach out to Scott Oneto, Steve Wilensky and others to find potential panelists with published research on herbicide alternatives.

Monitoring WG Power Fire Symposium & Monitoring Questions

The Planning WG heard from representatives of the Monitoring WG on two topics: a potential field symposium in the Power Fire footprint later in 2021, and revisiting the MWG monitoring questions to glean a better understanding on what the Planning WG priority monitoring questions are.

The WG discussed the topics, speakers, schedule and logistics of a potential Fall 2021 Power Fire Symposium. The Monitoring WG asked that the Planning WG to send their top topics they would like to see discussed at the symposium to Becky Estes (becky.estes@usda.gov).

The Monitoring WG also asked the Planning WG what were the key questions that the Planning Group would like to have monitoring information for, and preference for presentation of that information (i.e., at planning meeting presentation, emailed report, other)?

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The Monitoring WG also asked the Planning WG to review the existing monitoring questions in the context of:

- See what progress is being made to answer the questions
- Which projects are being used to answer the questions?
- Are the questions answerable at the scale and time frame we're working with
- Is what we're monitoring (metrics) adequate to answer the question being asked

The Monitoring WG also asked the Planning WG to consider new questions/relevancy of Existing questions related to ACCG interest:

- Have conditions changed or new situations evolved that generate new questions (beetle kill, wildfire size, climate change effects)? Asked this question of ACCG, had one response related to effectiveness of fuels treatments related to wildfire effects/forest resiliency.
- Looking at existing questions related to ACCG interest and changed conditions to assess relevancy, and energy that is or should be spent to answer them.

The WG discussed whether there was sufficient emphasis in the monitoring questions and indicators looking at fires and fuels management, and also whether the monitoring questions are meeting the FS's legislative responsibilities and requirements. Also, the WG discussed the reality that every monitoring questions is not going to be able to be addressed, which makes it crucial that the Planning WG help the Monitoring WG narrow the focus to key monitoring questions. It was agreed that the WG needed additional time to review the monitoring strategy and monitoring question lists. Megan Layhee will send the monitoring strategy out to the WG so participants can review the monitoring questions on their own time and send on their list of priority monitoring questions onto to the Monitoring WG, specifically Becky Estes (becky.estes@usda.gov).

Next steps:

- Megan Layhee will send the Planning WG the MWG symposium topic and presenter list spreadsheet and also send MWG questions to the WG, and ask Planning WG to send top few symposium topics and answers to MWG questions regarding monitoring questions to Becky Estes (becky.estes@usda.gov).

Planning WG Future Meeting Discussion Topics

Good Neighbor Authority Presentation & Discussion. The WG discussed the intention to have a 60-min presentation and discussion on the Good Neighbor Authority at an upcoming Planning WG meeting (April or May 2021) discussing what GNA is and discuss examples of GNA. Rick Hopson has already coordinated with the following potential guest speakers: Tom Tinsley (CAL FIRE), Jason Ko (FS R5, Shared Stewardship Coordinator), and Travis Thane (Eldorado NF, District Fire Management Officer). And, Genevieve Villemaire (FS G&A) and Dan Smith (FS, Timber Contracting) are also available to listen in. There will be follow up by Greg Suba to see if

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someone from The Nature Conservancy would also like to participate on the panel. Tentatively, the group has decided to hold the GNA presentation and discussion during the April 28th WG meeting, beginning shortly after 9 am. If postponement can occur to the May WG meeting, the WG said they would use that time during the April meeting to continue the herbicides discussion (see next section). Megan Layhee will coordinate with Rick Hopson and Greg Suba to prepare for the upcoming GNA presentation and discussion.

Herbicides: Lessons Learned. In light of this decision by the WG to postpone the Herbicide Alternative Panel to a later general meeting date, the WG discussed the importance of maintaining the momentum around the discussion of herbicides. The WG agreed to have a “Herbicides: Lessons learned” presentation and discussion at the May Planning WG meeting (April meeting if we can postpone the GNA panel) that will focus on the YSS experience (John Buckley will lead that discussion) and Amador RD’s experience (Rick Hopson will lead that discussion) with the ACCG over projects with herbicide treatments.

UMRWA’s Forest Projects Plan Presentation. The WG discussed the upcoming presentation at the April 28th Planning WG meeting by UMRWA on their “Forest Projects Plan”. UMRWA will be looking to gain a consensus recommendation from the Planning WG and ultimately a letter of support from the full ACCG on their planning project. The WG agreed that the UMRWA presentation would require an hour on the April WG meeting agenda and that it would immediately follow the GNA presentation. Megan Layhee will send out UMRWA’s project submission form materials as soon as they are available to the WG, in order to give the WG plenty of time to review UMRWA’s project submission packet in preparation for discussion at the April 28th WG meeting.

Large Landscape Projects. The WG agreed to have an agenda item on the April 28th Planning WG agenda immediately following UMRWA’s presentation to continue the discussion on increasing pace and scale, large landscape-scale projects and ACCG’s role in that (“Option C”). Both John Buckley and Rich Farrington offered to help kick-off this discussion.

Next Steps:

- Megan Layhee will work with Rick Hopson and Greg Suba to confirm GNA presenters, date and other logistics.
- Carinna Robertson will send the WG materials describing the various possible agreements out there including GNA.
- Megan Layhee will work with UMRWA to prepare their project submission form materials and get those out to the Planning WG as soon as possible before the April 28th Planning WG meeting.

Prescribed Fire Ad Hoc

Prescribed Fire ad hoc Meeting Update: The WG discussed the March 22nd Prescribed Fire ad hoc meeting. At the March Rx Fire meeting, the Amador and Calaveras Ranger Districts

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discussed with the group the challenges, constraints and opportunities related to implementing Rx Fire on the NF landscapes and accelerating pace and scale. The topic of pyrosilviculture was also discussed at the March ad hoc meeting. Public education and outreach related to Rx fire was also a challenge discussed at the March ad hoc meeting. The ad hoc group agreed that the March meeting discussions were a great launching-off point for discussions at future ad hoc meetings to discuss next steps on those barriers discussed and what the ACCG role in overcoming the barriers discussed. Megan Layhee will create a Rx Fire Ad Hoc group webpage on the ACCG website where the ad hoc meeting materials will be located. Next Rx Fire ad hoc meeting is scheduled for Monday, April 26th from 2:00-3:30 pm.

Next Steps:

- Megan Layhee will develop a Prescribed Fire ad hoc meetings materials webpage will be developed on the ACCG website.

Project Planning Discussion

Project Updates: Carinna Robertson mentioned that on the Calaveras Ranger District, fuels staff are continuing to burn when they can otherwise projects are a bit on hold due to snow and weather.

Rick Hopson mentioned that tree planting is close to implementation on the Amador Ranger District, in the next 2-3 weeks. As part of the Panther sale, decked logs will be pulled out, the Three Meadows work will occur this summer, and the NWF projects are moving forward as well. Rick also mentioned that the district will be bringing forward a planning effort soon to the ACCG for another fuelbreak maintenance project. Megan Layhee will follow up with Rick to ensure he has the materials related to the ACCG project submission form packet.

Megan Layhee briefly updated the WG on CHIPS' projects that are expected to begin implementation in 2021, including some of the thinning and planting work on the Amador RD as part of the Upper Mokelumne Restoration/WCB project, fuels reduction and fuelbreak maintenance work on the Calaveras RD as part of the Arnold-Avery HFR and FB Maintenance Project, and expected fuels reduction to get underway on the Amador RD along Highway 88 as part of the SNC-funded View 88 Project.

Next Steps

- Megan Layhee will reach out to herbicide alternatives panelists about panel postponement.
- Megan Layhee will reach out to Scott Oneto and Steve Wilensky and others to find potential panelists with published research on herbicide alternatives.
- Megan Layhee will send the Planning WG the MWG symposium topic and presenter list spreadsheet and also send MWG questions, and ask Planning WG to relay their top few symposium topics they would like to see focused on at the future symposium, and to

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also send monitoring questions they would like to see addressed or are most important to them to Becky Estes.

- Megan Layhee will work with Rick Hopson and Greg Suba to confirm the Good Neighbor Authority Panel date and panelists for an upcoming Planning WG meeting.
- Megan Layhee will work with UMRWA to prepare their project submission form materials and get those out to the Planning WG as soon as possible before the April 28th Planning WG meeting.
- Megan Layhee will send the ACCG project submission form and website link to supplemental materials to Rick Hopson.
- Megan Layhee will create an Rx Fire Ad Hoc meeting materials webpage on ACCG website.
- The next Planning Work Group meeting will be on Wednesday, April 28th, 2021. The meeting will take place on-line via Zoom.

Meeting Participants

#	Name	Affiliation	Miles (N/A-online)	Hours
1	Caitlyn Rich	CSERC		3
2	Carinna Robertson	USFS Calaveras RD		3
3	Chuck Loffland	USFS Amador RD		3
4	Gerald Schwartz	EBMUD		1
5	Greg Suba	SFL		3
6	John Buckley	CSERC		3
7	John Heissenbittal	Cal Am, Amador Fire Safe Council		3
8	Megan Layhee	CHIPS (facilitator)		3
9	Randy Hanvelt	Associated California Loggers		3
10	Ray Cablayan	USFS Calaveras RD		1
11	Rich Farrington	UMRWA		3
12	Rick Hopson	USFS Amador RD		3
13	Robin Wall	USFS Amador RD		3
14	Sandy Anderson			1
15	Sara Husby	CSERC		3
16	Shane Dante	Foothill Conservancy		3