

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes, April 21st, 2021, by Zoom

Meeting Brief

- ACCG Communications & Engagement Plan development update by Tania Carlone (CBI).
- ACCG Work Groups and meeting participants provided updates of their activities.

Action Items

Actions	Responsible Parties
Megan will make the March 17 th general meeting summary as final and add to the website.	Layhee
Add FS to MOA Signatory list on GM agendas and on the ACCG website.	Layhee
Add FSCs and RCDs at primary audience to the C&E Plan	Carlone
Add symposiums to C&E Plan as a way to invite the public to participate.	Carlone
Develop a draft press release for Dr. Coen's general meeting presentation for the Admin WG to review at the May Admin WG meeting.	Layhee

Summary

Modification and/or approval of agenda and November 2020 Meeting Summary.

There were no suggested changes to this month's agenda.

There were no suggested changes to the March 17th, 2021 General Meeting summary.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS

ACCG Communications & Engagement Plan Presentation by Tania Carlone

Tania reviewed the background and history of the development of the ACCG Communications and Engagement Plan with the ACCG. ACCG Admin worked with CBI to revise the Plan, and she noted that the plan is consistent with the updated ACCG Memorandum of Agreement (MOA), the principles and policies to guide operations described in the MOA, and ACCG's Strategic Plan.

Tania posed the following questions: What are the priorities? How do we begin to implement this Plan?

Tania then proceeded to go through the ppt slides. First to the Purpose and Goals of the Plan, which is to guide the communication, outreach and engagement and education activities of the ACCG. And there are seven specific goals:

1. Increase and broaden participation
2. Work with private and public entities to identify projects
3. Function as an active and welcome partner
4. Provide capacity building support to Partners
5. Refine project development and approval process
6. Develop consistent external messaging

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7. Conduct education and outreach to increase awareness and understanding

Tania then discussed the seven ACCG Communication Principles which are the foundations of the C&E Plan. See power point slide for more detail on these principles.

1. Ensure consistency with ACCG governance and policies.
2. Partner with and leverage the existing.
3. Develop and maintain communication, outreach and education relationships.
4. Encourage member partnerships to coordinate communications efforts.
5. Make it easy for people to find information.
6. Keep messages sharply focused and concise.
7. Use language and frame issues in ways that are appropriate and accessible.

Tania then went into what the primary audiences for communication and outreach, which are consistent with the MOA, ACCG footprint and neighboring counties. She stressed that the primary audiences that have been identified in the plan are diverse. She showed a slide with a schematic.

Rich Farrington noted that he didn't see the Fire Safe Councils and Resource Conservation Districts aren't on the slide.

- Tania replied to Rich's comment that she we will follow up on that. Added to action items.

Tania then described the Key Messages of the Plan, including goals and accomplishments, about the ACCG, focus areas, and how to get involved.

Several forums of engagement were identified in the Plan as well. Tania described these forums briefly. Forums to support communication, education, outreach and engagement with interested parties and the general public.

1. General meeting and WG meetings
2. Partnerships outside of ACCG
3. Regional and community events
4. ACCG workshops, field trips and public meetings
5. Regional Forest Collaboratives
6. Other – high use visitor areas, media venues, etc.

Tania went on to discuss the communication tools and materials and that there is also room for expansion. She listed these tools and materials, including the website (information hub), email list, research studies, educational videos, presentations and infographics, informational brochures and factsheets, surveys, and ACCG reports. Not used by the ACCG - social media. Tania noted that CBI has the capability to create fact sheets, presentations and other outreach material for the ACCG, and if that was an interest that is something they could develop for the ACCG during their time contracted with the ACCG.

Tania listed the following implementation actions to achieve the **C&E Plan first goal - participation expansion**:

1. Media – 1) news coverage at least 2x/year and 2) issue media releases for general meetings, field trips and other ACCG events.

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2. Standard ACCG ppt – develop and deploy to local groups (4x/year)
3. Develop ACCG logo – hold community contest
4. Maintain contact and distribution lists – 1) email distribution of interested parties, and 2) list of org contacts including emails and phone as stand-alone doc
5. Website highlight opportunities – id public participation opportunities on Home Page
6. Invite public to participate – field trips, volunteer event

Rich F. – suggested that they send out a media release about upcoming general meeting speakers.
Action item added - Megan will develop a draft press release for Dr. Coen’s presentation for the Admin WG to review at the May Admin WG meeting.

Implementation actions to achieve the Plan’s second goal – Projects. *Goal 2 entails working through public and private entities to identify and support projects on public and private lands. Expanding beyond Cornerstone Project has been identified as a critical goal for ACCG beyond the end of the CFLR program funding. (text from slide)*

Implementation actions to achieve the Plan’s third goal - Local Partner Implementation. *Goal 3 calls for the ACCG to enhance its function and role as an active and welcome partner in local forest management projects. Expansion beyond US Forest Service projects is key to ACCG Strategic Plan engagement, involvement, and outreach goals. Given that meeting attendance and MOA signatories can serve as a success indicator, efforts to increase and revitalize participation (Plan Goal 1) will support this goal as well.*

Rich F. suggested that strengthen partnerships with RCDs and FSCs is key to getting more work done at private lands.

Implementation actions to achieve the Plan’s fourth goal – Communications Capacity Support to Partners, including website as an information hub, communications materials and subject matter expertise.

It was reiterated that these things could be enhanced, like the website.

Implementation actions to achieve the Plan’s fifth goal – Zones of Agreement to increase understanding of the many perspectives represented by the group, help guide project development to support meaningful and effective ACCG engagement, and to use as a basis for project development and endorsement.

Tania noted that UMRWA is utilizing ACCG’s project development and submission process.

Implementation actions to achieve the Plan’s sixth goal – ACCG consistent messaging, to build awareness and support the process and its outcomes.

Implementation actions to achieve the Plan’s seventh goal – Broad awareness and understanding through multiple levels (statewide and among land management leaders, residents and businesses within the footprint).

Tania described how the various ACCG roles can play into communication

- Members: share info, assist in achieving collaborative goals, share experiences and expertise to advance common interests, educate others in the community, attend meetings regularly, inform

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leadership and constituents about ACCG, brief new rep when succession occurs, and provide mentorship for new members.

- ACCG Administrator: serve as primary contact, distribute information, provide oversight of Admin activities, support effective communication and networking among ACCG members and external parties.
- Work Groups:
 - Admin: track and support implementation of C&E Plan, development of outreach materials
 - Planning: support implementation of project development process, document key takeaways from info-sharing, utilize project mapping tools to support project development, expert presentations, host at least one field trip with broad public involvement
 - Monitoring: host science symposium, make research materials available for distribution, and present on findings as appropriate.
 - Funding Coordination: develop list of funding opportunities and potential interested partners, convene partners and joint proposals.

Implementation 2021-2022 (immediate) priorities. Admin WG suggested a list of priorities and Tania listed the following communication, outreach, engagement and education priorities support increasing pace and scale of land management projects that align with ACCG's triple bottom line:

- Support collaborative communication, outreach and engagement to develop the project mapping and prioritization tools and to refine and pilot the project development process
- Refine the website as needed
- Identify, conduct and document guest presentations and field tours
- Engage key entities typically absent from ACCG meetings

Regine Miller noted that these priorities are on target, especially the last priority concerning engaging with key entities that are usually absent from ACCG meeting.

Tania concluded with a slide that included questions for discussion pertaining to moving forward with the C&E Plan:

- What are the tasks outlined in the implementation plan that we should prioritize in the coming 1-2 years?
- What tasks in the implementation section are you really excited about? What are you interested in doing to contribute in advancing the C&E work?
- Questions and other feedback on the Plan.

ACCG Communications & Engagement Plan Discussion

Chuck Loffland suggested in the chat that Planning WG field trips with public to review some ACCG projects, maybe on an annual basis, similar to what other entities do?

- Regine Miller said that she liked the idea of an annual field tour to help showcase some of the work ACCG members do.

Rich F. suggested that ACCG needs to improve contacts with CAL FIRE, RCDs, FSCs, volunteer groups, and that ACCG needs to ask them if they need support and how we can enhance the relationship. Bringing

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the guest speakers and scientists to the public, is ACCG's big strength to communicate and educate the public, not so much ACCG informational materials.

Robin Wall suggested a general and a high-level informational material, so that they are tailored to different audiences.

John Heissenbuttal agreed with Rich F., that ACCG's greatest asset is the forum to hear from experts and that is something the ACCG can build on. Added that if ACCG can come up with a project that they can point to that increased pace and scale, will bring more people to the table.

- Randy Hanvelt agreed in the chat with what John H.'s comment about demonstrating collaborative success by pointing to a project that increases pace and scale.
- Carinna Robertson thanked John H. in the chat.

Richard Sykes added to the discussion that he looks at the ACCG to vet projects with a broader group, to create better projects than they would be without the ACCG, to create support and have the buy-in. ACCG isn't implementing the projects, it's the members.

Helen (in chat)- What about creating targeted 5-minute videos to share via social media or via email lists what we do, or on hot topics (value of prescribed fire, or implementation of fuel break projects). I think general public will prefer video over PowerPoint. Of course, it's going to take more skill and money to put together. My group had good response to a video earlier this month. I will try to share a link in chat.

- Chuck (in chat) - tagging on to the video/PowerPoint idea above... "Who is the ACCG..... maybe You Are ACCG, join us..." with some interview and project shots.
- Helen in chat: <https://www.birdpop.org/pages/blogPost.php?id=71>, scroll down on this page to see the video I mentioned.

Randy (in chat) - Until we get some really big, landscape scale projects which are multiyear with real impact, we will continue to be to process oriented. At some point we need to stop talking and make it happen.

UPDATES

Administrative Work Group Update

Megan Layhee reported that there was a pretty low turnout to the April Admin WG meeting, so it was decided to have the meeting but to carry over all of the April Admin WG agenda topics to the May Admin WG meeting to ensure a robust discussion with a larger group. At the April meeting, the Admin WG went over the upcoming general meeting guest speakers. The Admin WG also discussed future facilitation and administration needs for the ACCG post-2021 and will continue that discussion at the May Admin WG. At the April Admin WG meeting, participants did review and discuss the current facilitation and administration SOW and also discussed different potential scenarios for the future (e.g., self-facilitation, modified facilitation and administration SOW than the current model, continued professional facilitation and administration as the current model). Finally, the Admin WG heard about other work group updates.

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Funding Coordination Work Group Update

Regine Miller reported that the group met on April 13th and Michael Pickard provided a legislative update, specially that the governor passed the budget and that this allowed SNC to offer \$20 million in proposals for early action funding due by April 30th. SNC will hold a special board meeting in July to approve those early action applications and recommend them for funding. There is another \$50M available to the SNC and will be available in July and applications will be accepted on a rolling basis. Michael also shared that there is a significant amount of funding in governor's budget for WCB and CAL FIRE, but he didn't know the dollar amounts at the time of the meeting. Michael also shared that reauthorized SP 901, so project proponents can reuse this exemption.

Richard Sykes provided update to UMRWA's applications to SNC and CDFW Ecosystem Restoration Program for planning, application to SNC has been recommended for funding and will go before SNC board in June, and still waiting for word on CDFW application.

The work group then discussed funding opportunities under the CAL FIRE Fire Prevention Program and Forest Health Program, including UMRWA is considering submitting an application to the CAL FIRE Forest Health grant program with Amador RD and Calaveras RD. CCWD is also considering submitting an application to the CAL FIRE Fire Prevention Grant Program for FR in and around West Point, Wilseyville, and Hunter Dam. According to Regine and her conversations with Pat McGreevy, CAL AM team will be submitting two applications, including with Forest Meadow homeowner's association and then a FB maintenance project in Amador County.

In discussing potential applications under the development, the group discussed the possibility of the MWG incorporating a monitoring component to these projects. Regine sent entities the MWG Monitoring Strategy, CHIPS WCB Monitoring Plan and CHIPS language used in grant applications where they included a monitoring component. Next meeting is May 11th and focused on SNC Forest Health Grant Program.

Planning Work Group Update

Megan reported that the group met last on March 24th, including the debrief on the March Herbicide Panel and segued immediately into the upcoming Herbicide Alternatives Panel, and after much discussion during the meeting the Planning WG decided and agreed to postpone that panel to a later date to allow more time for additional panelists in expertise. There was strong agreement that Dan Macon and Sean Kruletich were great candidates and to secure these panelists for a future meeting. A fourth objective was proposed and added to the panel objectives list and that is: can project objectives be adjusted to avoid the use of herbicides. The group also briefly discussed other upcoming general meetings including Dr. Coen's presentation on Fire and Weather in the Sierra and also the Forest Resilience Initiative during the June 16th.

The Monitoring WG also asked the Planning WG during this month's meeting as to whether there was interest in having a fall field symposium in the Power Fire footprint and to send along top few topics of interest for a field symposium from the list of potential topics provided to the Planning work group. The

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Monitoring WG also asked the Planning WG what were some of those key monitoring questions. Megan sent along the monitoring strategy and monitoring questions to the Planning WG and asked the Planning WG to send along questions that are important to them and to also point out.

The group also discussed the upcoming Good Neighbor Authority presentation and discussion that will occur at the Planning WG. Megan is working with Rick Hopson to coordinate this presentation, and will be having a pre-presentation meeting with the guest speakers soon.

The group also discussed the need to continue the conversation about herbicides and maintain the momentum around this topic. So, the group agreed to have a future agenda topic, titled “Herbicides: Lessons learned” at the May Planning WG meeting from the perspective of the districts and YSS.

The group also discussed the upcoming presentation by UMRWA about their Forest Projects Plan and their corresponding ACCG revised project submission form packet, and talk about what they are bringing forward to the ACCG.

Several participants urged the need to continue the discussion on large landscape projects and increasing pace and scale and to keep this topic momentum going and will have a brief continuation of this topic at the April Planning WG.

There were project updates from the districts and CHIPS.

Next meeting is April 28th.

Rx Fire Ad Hoc

Sara Husby reported that their March 22nd meeting was focused on FS limitations and constraints to implementing Rx Fire on their landscapes. The Ad Hoc will have their next meeting on April 26th from 2-3:30pm continuing discussion on how ACCG can assist the FS in their constraints and talk about a recent publication about pyrosilviculture.

Monitoring Work Group Update

Robin Wall reported that the Monitoring WG met April 14th. Alissa Fogg facilitated a discussion about Point Blue’s research publication and management brief, titled “Fire and Mechanical Forest Treatments Support Different Portions of Bird Communities in Fire Suppressed Forests”. Talked about the CAL FIRE CCI Grants prospects and what the opportunities are for monitoring and the MWG. Discussed CHIPS CAL FIRE CCI monitoring plan. Discussed the Fall Power Fire Field Symposium and some interests for symposium topics, which included prescribed burning, variable density planting and effects of herbicides on wildlife. On May 4th there is a Caples fire webinar.

Roundtable

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Carinna Robertson – contract work is ongoing in the Arnold-Avery project area, but roads still closed in Hemlock project area. Campgrounds are set to open Memorial weekend, but depends on road conditions. FS offices are still closed.

Chuck Loffland – defer to Rick and Robin. Mentioned that there is a lot of blow down from the wind event, which will be more difficult to get projects done and the public in there. The district is working on assessing all of that.

Rick Hopson – ENF offices are still closed to the public. Operations are going on, including Scottiagio initiating cable logging operations in 2 units (Rick mentioned that the district worked with ACCG on these projects in the past, mentioned a field trip). Had a meeting with ENF and STF Forest Supervisors about the Forest Resilience Initiative and future relationship with ACCG (post-CFLR).

Robin Wall – This will be her last ACCG, transferring up to Lassen NF as Ranger District for the Burney Hat Creek RD. Also, Robin mentioned that the FS (ENF and STF) is not an ACCG MOA signatory. Will be part of the Burney Hat Creek collaborative. Still available by email and phone.

Helen Loffland – WCB monitoring doing pre-treatment monitoring before m. Bumblebee data from Power Fire reports/manuscripts should be out this Fall. Bumblebee monitoring at Foster meadow and three meadow projects.

John Heissenbuttal – Lots of grant money available, CAL Am team will be working with Amador FSC on a few projects, expanding work on Tiger Creek FR Project to incorporate more FBs and hand work. New money provides for FB maintenance, which has been hard to get funding for in the past, FSC will be submitting grant to maintenance Acres FB which was credited with stopping the Butte Fire from coming in to Amador County. Amador FSC and CHIPS linking the Tiger Creek FB with Lily Gap FB to modify grant

Michael Pickard – Megan gave Michael's update because they had to be on another call:

- SNC has received \$20M in early action funding to put into shovel-ready projects. Accepting applications now and until funding has been exhausted. Check SNC website for guidelines if curious.
- SNC still set to receive \$50M in next fiscal year (July 1) for forest and watershed health projects. Funding will most likely become available for proposals late summer.
- Also, an idea for some future presenters/attendants for ACCG: a short introduction presentation by the two regional USFS Shared Stewardship Advisors to explain their roles and synergies with the ACCG:
 - Jason Smith: Southern Sierra advisor (Stanislaus NF south)
 - Mike Vollmer: Central Sierra advisor (Eldorado NF north)

Randy Hanvelt – reshape thinking about long term projects and longer-term grants and rebuilding infrastructure to get more work done. Suggest we invite him to come to the ACCG soon. Greg Norton – Golden state natural resources, 20 pelletizing plants want to be built- first unit in Tuolumne County and we ought to know what is going on., they have preliminary plans.

Rich Farrington – UMRWA board meeting this Friday and open to the public, including report on Forest Projects Plan including consideration a signing an MOA with Forest Program Group for Forest Resilience Bond, and UMRWA's plan to have a strategic workshop in October about UMRWA's role in Forest

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Resilience program, and lots of looking at grants, discussion about expanding to broad landscape approach would be desirable.

Richard Sykes – will be also talking about UMRWA Forests Projects Plan. Gave well wishes to Robin. UMRWA anticipates that there will be a lot of grants and want folks to be poised for this funding.

Rich – difficult to get these grants, Rich is hoping that we will find a way to streamline approach so we can react to grant deadlines that are coming so quickly. It's difficult time frame for getting applications developed, approved by boards and ACCG before deadlines. Looking at a way to streamline their internal process.

Sue – says that Robin will be missed.

The next General Meeting will take place on May 19th from 9-noon.

Meeting Participants

Name	Affiliation	Time Committed to Meeting
Caitlynn Rich	CSERC	2.0
Carinna Robertson	Calaveras Ranger District	2.0
Chuck Loffland	Amador Ranger District	2.0
Gerald Schwartz	EBMUD	2.0
Greg Suba	SFL	2.0
Helen Loffland	Institute for Bird Populations	2.0
John Heissenbuttal	Heissenbuttal Natural Resource Consulting	2.0
Megan Layhee	CHIPS	2.0
Michael Pickard	SNC	2.0
Randy Hanvelt	ACL	2.0
Regine Miller	CHIPS	1.5
Rich Farrington	UMRWA	2.0
Richard Sykes	UMRWA	2.0
Rick Hopson	Amador Ranger District	2.0
Robin Wall	Amador Ranger District	2.0
Sara Husby	CSERC	2.0
Sue Holper	Private landowner	2.0
Tania Carlone	CBI	2.0