

# Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

Planning Work Group Meeting Summary, June 23, 2021, On-line Meeting

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## Meeting Brief

- June General Meeting debrief on the Forest Resilience Initiative (FRI) and R5 Shared Stewardship Advisor Program.
- Continued discussion on large landscape projects and how it ties into the FRI, expansion of the SLAWG tools, and need for development of immediate-term project proposal (since funding will be becoming available very soon).
- Discussion on Planning WG's preferred model for facilitation post-2021, which will be taken to the Admin WG for incorporation into the Admin WG's recommendations for future facilitation and administration support to the full ACCG.
- Update from Rx Fire Ad Hoc group on the shared vision statement they are developing.
- Participant project-related updates and other updates.
- Next WG meeting is Wednesday, July 28th, 9am-12pm.

## Action Items

Actions	Point Person(s)
Post final May meeting summary and June agenda to website.	Layhee
Reach out to district staff to come to the Planning WG with priority treatment areas/single block of identified priority treatment areas.	Layhee
Reconnect with FS staff about PWG question related to managed wildfire and where they are permitted and not permitted on NF lands.	Layhee
Conduct outreach to folks involved with large landscape analysis and modeling to come speak to the PWG.	Layhee
Send Megan Fiske SLAWG link.	Layhee
Send invite to all SLAWG members to Planning WG meeting to look over treatment areas identified.	Layhee
Continue developing Shared Vision Statement	Rx Fire Ad Hoc
Take PWG recommendations for their preferred facilitation model – "moderate level" to Admin WG.	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 May 2021 meeting summary without revision.

### June General Meeting Debrief on Forest Resilience Initiative (FRI)/Shared Stewardship Advisor Program & Continued Discussion on Large Landscape Projects

Megan provided a slide of some of the take-aways from the FRI discussion.

## Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

*Planning Work Group Meeting Summary, June 23, 2021, On-line Meeting*

The discussion started with clarification on the conversation related to the need for forest plan amendments under the FRI, and what are the specific reasons for that to occur would be. FS staff added that nothing is decided yet, but the thinking of potential forest plan amendments would be potentially related to CSO and/or forest wide NEPA. Greg Suba added that the FS would need to get more specific about anything related to CSO-related forest plan amendments, and what needs to be done that can't be done under the current forest plan. FS staff requested that Megan make clear notes about Greg's specific comments so the FS can consider those in their decisions. Three things were posed: keeping CSO PACs from burning up, preventing million-acre fires, and preventing extreme wind events. Greg noted that these are three different variables, and may or may not be related. Greg then posed the following questions: 1) How are CSO contributing to increased rate of wildfire spread? 2) What are the other factors related to increased rate of fire spread and fire suppression difficulty – the lack of (or not enough) forest structure heterogeneity? Or is there too much forest structure homogeneity that is contributing to increased rate of wildfire spread and suppression difficulty? Greg added that he is glad to have the conversation, about CSO-related forest plan amendments, but there needs to be specific reasons for doing this.

Greg also noted in the chat that SFL provided comments regarding the SERAL scoping proposal for CSO plan amendments related to CSO Conservation Strategy. And those comments were offered to be shared by SFL with anyone wishing to read through them in order to understand SFL's perspective.

There was mention of the SERAL Project, and what the specifics where related to CSO-related forest plan amendment, in order to be consistent with the 2019 CSO Conservation Strategy. CSO-related forest plan amendments for STF for SERAL included up to 100 acres of mechanical treatments in CSO PACs (YSS interpreted as 20" dbh limit for treatments), timing of CSO PAC retirement (consistent with CSO CS 2019), and clarification of tree retention (tree size) within and outside of CSO territories. It was posed that this information may be helpful for future discussions between the FS and ACCG.

Other participants also highlighted the importance of using the best available science for these decisions.

Others mentioned that the focus of forest plan amendments may be where the CSO conservation strategy deviates from the forest plan, and what actions will the FS want to take.

Also was noted that at least from the STF side, Jason is going to look to the ACCG to guide how we move forward with FRI. As a follow up it was asked if the FS will provide results or data of landscape analyses and modeling, they've done, that the ACCCG can use? It's not clear that the STF or ENF have forest-wide PODS/FORSYS-like products that the ACCG can use. From the ENF perspective, this forest knows that they need to do something different and to "change our own model", and want to hear from the ACCG on how they would like to participate with the ENF (and probably STF) and what the ACCG's role would be in that process.

## Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

*Planning Work Group Meeting Summary, June 23, 2021, On-line Meeting*

John Buckley reiterated what he thinks the forest supervisors are looking for from the ACCG, and that is what does ACCG propose to do to get to large landscape forest resilience? And there was three points John raised: 1) FS has limited capacity; 2) ACCG, thanks to UMRWA, has implementation and planning in the works, so in addition to UMRWA, what more should the ACCG we doing? – SNC Capacity Building funding for collaboratives and Block grant awards (collaborative building of projects); and 3) What the next step for STF after SERAL - modify program treatments so we can do massive treatments.

Greg Suba noted our current pace is not working, and that everyone agrees on that. He also noted that on the Dinkey field trip touring the Creek Fire on the Sierra NF, and that similar message is down there, that we are all in a fork in the road to get to forest resilience – status quo vs. new strategy. Greg then stressed that we need to be clear about what we are proposing to do with this new strategy, proposed the following: 1) Be specific about plan amendments; 2) Don't get distracted away from the importance of treating surface and ladder fuels – realizing you need to pay for that work (through timber); 3) Capacity issue (when we get NEPA done, then what, who's doing the work?) – Partnerships with FS is key; and 4) more objective analyses, values are brought forward, and generates project prioritization - what kind of process do you want to do to bring together all of our interests and values together?

Participants noted several things. A draft EIS will be coming out soon that will include the SERAL PODS/FORSYS analyses, noted that Carol Ewell and Katie Wilkinson are the contacts for the SERAL work. Other participants asked what we can do with the current SLAWG tools. Another participant asked how we can combine the PODS/FORSYS model with the pyrosilviculture concept at a large landscape scale, and that from his perspective the ball is in the Planning WG's court. Another participant recommended that the SERAL/YSS model (unified front and the PODS/FORSYS) is something the ACCG Planning WG should consider.

It was added that there are many tools out there (Land Tender, SERAL, TSCI, ...) that have essentially three steps: 1) identify what we want the forest to look like (input- data and values); 2) "Funnel" – FORSYS, Land Tender, etc.; and 3) project scenarios (cost, ecological benefits, where and what type of treatment to do). Proposed at a future meeting, bring people to talk about all of the different options to help the ACCG come up landscape prioritization model, and take to the FS with a shared vision for FRI.

Another participant asked that we should be incorporating the pyrosilviculture concepts, and get going with what we have and come up with a proposal. Another participant added that within the district, identify large (tens of thousands of acres) connected priority areas for treatment (to ask for planning grant, or capacity building grant for planning, implementation and effectiveness monitoring).

Ray Cablayan added that as SERAL decision comes closer, there may be opportunity for post-SERAL planning assistance. If ACCG has a planning project proposal on Calaveras RD (and Amador RD) the planning team from SERAL may be available to help, if ACCG has something ready to go (project proposal).

# Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

*Planning Work Group Meeting Summary, June 23, 2021, On-line Meeting*

Randy – YSS leadership came up with the alternative, this group needs to sit down with the SLAWG tool and put together a plan or area, highest priority, to get it moving and implementing. Shouldn't worry about getting something 100% and then adapt.

Megan Layhee emphasized that there are two different paths folks are wanting to take: 1) explore next steps for further landscape analyses and modeling (FORSYS, Land Tender TSCI) to continue developing the SLAWG tools, and 2) come up with a planning/capacity building proposal for 30-40K priority treatment acres for Rx fire readiness work and or Rx fire work across each district. There was general support for identifying FS priority treatment areas now, and to continue to have presenters in terms of PODs, or alternative modeling.

## **Next steps:**

- Megan Layhee will reach out to district staff to come to the Planning WG with large, single block of identified priority treatment areas for Rx fire readiness work and or Rx fire work across each district for a planning/capacity building proposal.
- Megan Layhee will do outreach to folks involved with large landscape analysis and modeling to come speak to the PWG.
- Send Megan Fiske SLAWG info
- Formally invite SLAWG members to Planning WG meeting to look over treatment areas identified once this is on the Planning WG agenda.

## **Future Planning WG Facilitation and Administration Support Discussion**

Megan Layhee gave an overview and showcased the document developed by CBI with considerations and proposed recommendations for future facilitation and administrative support services for the ACCG. Megan asked the PWG participants to provide feedback on their preferred model for the future and that she would relay this to the Admin WG at their July meeting to inform their recommendations. It was also noted that, as stated in the document, at this time it is important to separate the service from the person currently doing the work. The meeting participants voiced that they agreed with the proposed “moderate level” of facilitation support for the Planning WG, outlined in the document, including:

- The ACCG Administrator serves as the regular facilitator for the Planning WG.
- The ACCG Administrator and professional facilitator hold monthly planning meetings to discuss strategy, anticipate issues and concerns, and prepare meeting materials to support effective dialogue.
- When necessary, a professional facilitator could attend Planning WG meeting to co-facilitate with the ACCG Administrator, as needed, and could help mediate conflicts by facilitating the conflict resolution process, consistent with the ACCG MOA, as needed.
  - This “moderate” level of professional facilitation support might look like:  
monthly planning sessions (2hr/mo); on-call facilitation and mediation as needed

# Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

*Planning Work Group Meeting Summary, June 23, 2021, On-line Meeting*

(controversial and/or complex topics); 1-2 hours for unexpected contingency support; help develop/revise key documents as needed.

## Next steps:

- Megan will take the Planning WG participant feedback to the Admin WG.

## Prescribed Fire Ad Hoc Meeting Update

Next meeting is June 28<sup>th</sup> from 2-3:30pm. Rich sent out draft shared vision statement to the group and got some comments. Will send that out to the group before the meeting. There the group will continue discussions on a pyrosilviculture shared vision statement. The Ad Hoc will bring the shared vision statement to the Planning WG once they have finalized the document.

## Meeting Participant Updates, Project Updates & Other Meeting Updates

### Project Updates

Calaveras RD – Arnold-Avery Project is still happening, looks like they are going to try to do an additional 500 acres on SNC Mule Deer.

Amador RD – Foster Fir Timber sale, to negotiate with them to deal with the blow down. Power Fire work including brush cutting, mastication and pruning going on as well on the district.

CHIPS – work continues to finalize the contracts for the CAL FIRE CCI Arnold-Avery project. Like Mark mentioned, CHIPS crews finished the aspen stand fencing and continues roadside thinning on the Amador District.

Reminder about Tuolumne County Prescribed Burn Association (PBA) zoom call on July 1<sup>st</sup>. Contact Susie Kocher ([sdkocher@ucanr.edu](mailto:sdkocher@ucanr.edu)).

## Upcoming General Meeting and Planning WG Meeting Presenters

<b>Herbicide Alternatives Panel Presentation Planning</b>
<b>Date:</b> July 21, 2021 general meeting
<b>Suggested duration:</b> 90-minutes
<b>Objectives:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Define and discuss alternatives to herbicides.</li><li>• Conditions where alternatives to herbicides would apply.</li><li>• Discussion on some of the shortcomings of herbicide alternatives.</li><li>• Can project objectives be adjusted to avoid the proposed use of herbicide treatments?</li></ul>

# Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

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**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 21<sup>st</sup> Panel as of COB 3/24)
- **Sean Kriletich**, Agricultural Consultant and Producer/Owner of Paloma Pollinators) (confirmed for July 21<sup>st</sup> Panel as of COB 3/24)
- **Dr. Robert York**, UCCE Specialist, UCB-CNR Research Stations Advisor, Adjunct Associate Professor of Forestry (Note: Dr. York was confirmed after the May 26<sup>th</sup> Planning WG meeting.)

**Related Confirmed/Potential Future Presentations:**

- **July 21<sup>st</sup> general meeting:** Herbicide Alternatives Panel and presentation by Alissa Fogg (Point Blue), on indirect effects of herbicides on birds.
- **August 18<sup>th</sup> general meeting:** Dr. Malcom North (by video conference), Pyrosilviculture Needed for Landscape Resilience of Dry Western U.S. Forests.
- **September 15<sup>th</sup> general meeting:** Dr. Janice Coen, Weather, Fire Behavior and Trends in the Central Sierra.

**Next steps:**

- Megan Layhee will perform outreach to potential speakers for an upcoming Planning WG meeting to speak to all-lands, large landscape analyses and modeling efforts.

**Next Steps**

- The next Planning Work Group meeting will be on Wednesday, July 28th, 2021. The meeting will take place on-line via Zoom.

**Meeting Participants**

#	Name	Affiliation	Miles (N/A-online)	Hours
1	Charles Beckman	EBMUD		2.5
2	Chuck Loffland	ENF, Amador RD		1.25
3	Greg Suba	SFL		2.5
4	Gerald Schwartz	EBMUD		2.5
5	Kellin Brown	STF, Calaveras RD		2.5
6	John Buckley	CSERC		2.5
7	Marc Young	ENF, Amador RD		2.5
8	Megan Fiske	FC		2.5
9	Megan Layhee	CHIPS (facilitator)		2.5
10	Ray Cablayan	STF, Calaveras RD		2
11	Randy Hanvelt	ACL		2
12	Rich Farrington	UMRWA		2.5
13	Rick Hopson	ENF, Amador RD		1.25
14	Sara Husby	CSERC		2.5