

# Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes, June 16<sup>th</sup>, 2021, by Zoom

## Meeting Brief

- Presentation by Jeff Marsolais and Jason Kuiken on the Forest Resilience Initiative.
- Presentation by Mike Vollmer (Central Sierra Advisor) on the USFS Shared Stewardship Advisor Program.
- Discussion on the upcoming CFLRP All Hands Meeting on June 24<sup>th</sup> and which ACCG participants would like.
- ACCG Work Groups and meeting participants provided updates of their activities.

## Action Items

Actions	Responsible Parties
Make the May 19th general meeting summary as final and add to the website.	Layhee
Add time on June and July Planning WG agendas for conversation about the Forest Resilience Initiative.	Layhee
At topic of discussing future in-person meetings on the July Admin WG meeting agenda. Discuss approach (e.g., hybrid), presenters' preferences to participate virtually/in-person, and potential meeting locations technology capabilities.	Layhee Admin WG
June 24 <sup>th</sup> CFLRP meeting: John Heissenbuttal will be the primary ACCG liaison, Megan Fiske will be the backup for John, Sara Husby will attend the June 24 <sup>th</sup> meeting as well and take notes, and Rick Hopson and Carinna Robertson will attend as FS reps.	Heissenbuttal, Fisk, Husby, Hopson, Robertson
Consider continuing engaging with R5 Shared Stewardship Advisors on the ENF (Mike Vollmer) and STF (Jason Smith) to assist ACCG partners seek future funding.	Funding Coordination WG

## Summary

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

There were no suggested changes to the May 19th, 2021 General Meeting summary.

## PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS

### Forest Resilience Initiative

Jeff Marsolais (Eldorado NF, Forest Supervisor) and Jason Kuiken (Stanislaus NF, Forest Supervisor) came to discuss the Forest Resilience Initiative as an all-lands, landscape-scale forest health and resilience concept, and generate possible ideas for how to do this

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collaboratively into the future, and start to discuss possible ways the ACCG can collaborate and be involved in this effort.

Jason and Jeff gave an overview of the Forest Resilience Initiative. They discussed the importance in the wake of current conditions of forest health, the need for accelerated treatments, including mechanical and Rx fire. Also mentioned the importance of landscape analyses and spatial data to inform planning and implementation. They added that this concept would be a partnership approach. They added that they had nothing specific to share yet in terms of how to move forward with the FRI concept, but that it would require a shift in strategy to effect change. Some of the key questions the Forest Supervisors raised to the ACCG in terms of the FRI concept:

1. How do we connect the dots among treated areas, at a scale to get to a bigger scale? Jeff added perhaps forest wide NEPAs (but concerned about delays).
2. In addition, how to bring Rx Fire to the landscape on a broad scale? – “Maintenance mode”.
3. Where does the ACCG want to fit in this conversation? Will help ENF when they develop their forest-wide strategy.

During discussions with the meeting participants, the following topics and suggestions were made:

- The SERAL Project (Stanislaus NF) could be a possible model for the FRI concept for the ACCG landscape, by extrapolating the PODs concept (and FORSYS). It was noted that the PODS/FORSYS model has not been conducted for the entire ENF and STF Forests.
- UMRWA’s Forest Projects Plan was also mentioned as a means for this FRI model already beginning to occur on the ACCG landscape. It was also added that it will be critical for the FS to engage with UMRWA and the ACCG in this large-scale planning effort.
- It was also mentioned that the ACCG is just wrapping up a 10-year CFLR program, and because of that the ACCG is currently poised to look at the future.
- It was also suggested that at a planning level, there is a need for a set of strategic fuelbreaks in conjunction with private lands, along with roadside hazard fuel reduction work along evacuation routes, and after that, work by compartments.
- It was also reiterated by Jason Kuiken, that the STF specifically is waiting to ACCG to propose something to STF, but STF is willing to move forward and fast. Jeff Marsolais asked the ACCG how they think they fit in helping the FS get to larger landscape level work and wants to see where ACCG wants to help drive this effort.
- There was also the question of what the ACCG can learn from the YSS – Jason answered that by suggesting that there needs to be a unified front and landscape-scale analysis and modeling (PODS, FORSYS).
- The topic of conducting a Forest Plan Amendment would be considered.

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- The idea of federal agencies working together on all-lands NEPA (FS, BLM) was suggested.
- It was also suggested that an all-lands approach when developing plans together would be necessary, and that. Landscape analyses and models can help that, and the PODs analysis can be done for all lands,
- Other partners suggested others ways to coordinate and work together - offering staff resources, like firefighters, to other agencies to help with all-lands landscape-scale projects.
- The concept of pyrosilviculture was also raised (e.g., anchor treatments – thinning, ecosystem asset treatments, and revenue treatments - to fund Rx Fire) and whether the FS ready for implementing this concept. Jason added that the STF is broadly supportive of this concept, and he added that using FORSYS to understand which treatments needs to occur, to ensure community safety, etc.
- It was also mentioned that there is concern about the fact that the FS is constrained by funding and staff capacity, and managing partnerships.

## Action Items

- Jeff and Jason added that the Forest Service plans to bring a more discrete concept forward to the ACCG in the next few months.
- Planning Work Group will continue this discussion and consider how ACCG can partner with the FS in the FRI concept and effort.

## USFS R5 Shared Stewardship Advisor Program

Mike Vollmer (Central Sierra Advisor) gave an overview of the USFS R5 Shared Stewardship Advisor Program, making connections with the ACCG and asked for feedback from the collaborative. Mike added that this is an evolving program and noted that there is a lot of cross-over between the Forest Resilience Initiative and this Shared Stewardship Program, and that this is program has an all-lands/cross-boundary project intent.

Mike added that part of this program is developing a list of cross-boundary projects within each of the advisor zones, and advising, coordinating and supporting funding opportunities for partners. And hold some trainings with FS, CAL FIRE and local partners.

Several meeting participants provided some comments to Mike:

- How this program can lead to more action not coordination – Mike addressed this by suggesting that this program is evolving and invited ACCG participants to give feedback to improve the program.
- Also suggested that the advisors could help develop templates for partners to navigate partnerships with the FS, like best practices, defined roles and responsibilities.

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- Also suggested that it would be great if this program could create a GIS clearinghouse and help increase partner staff capacity.

## **Action Items**

- Funding Coordination Work Group consider working with the R5 Shared Stewardship Advisors into the future.

## **CFLRP All Hands Meeting & Future CFLR Liaison**

The CFLRP is starting up routine meetings again, first one on June 24<sup>th</sup>, and asked that there be at least one FS representative and one partner representative. John Heissenbuttal said that he will continue to be the primary liaison. Megan Fiske volunteered as a backup for John, and that she can coordinate with Katherine Evatt (former CFLRP ACCG liaison). Sara Husby also added that she will be on the call and will be glad to take notes. Rick Hopson and Carinna Robertson will attend the upcoming meetings to represent the FS.

## **Action Items**

- John Heissenbuttal will be the primary liaison.
- Megan Fiske will be the backup for John.
- John, Megan, Sara Husby, Rick Hopson and Carinna Robertson will attend the June 24<sup>th</sup> CFLRP meeting.

## **UPDATES**

### **Administrative Work Group Update**

Megan Layhee gave the Admin WG update. The Admin WG met on June 8<sup>th</sup>. They reviewed the draft general meeting press release that the Administrator developed for this current meeting. The Admin WG also discussed the status of several revised MOA signatories who have not participated in general meeting for some time. It was decided that Megan would conduct outreach to these signatories to get a better understanding of why these signatories have not attended (e.g., virtual meeting format, COVID, etc.). It was also decided that there would be outreach to BOS outreach and interest in becoming signatories (and for CBI to add this topic to the C&E Plan implementation: explore strategies for engaging with county boards). It was also decided that there be a standard agenda item bi-annually (June and December) of every year for MOA signatory attendance check-ins. The Admin WG also continued discussing future facilitation and administrative support services and the results of the survey. CBI and CHIPS will draft recommendations/framework to help the work group id desired support and will circulate to the Admin WG and Planning WG for feedback prior to next meeting.

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## **Planning Work Group Update**

Megan Layhee gave the Planning WG update. The Rx Fire Ad Hoc group is working on developing a Shared Vision Statement for the use of pyrosilviculture use to ultimately get consensus support on this vision from the full ACCG, and ultimately the public at large, and also developing future actions with the FS as a secondary step. The Rx Fire Ad Hoc's next meeting is June 28<sup>th</sup> 2-3:30 pm. Next Planning WG meeting is June 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9am-12pm and the agenda materials will go out this Friday to the

## **Monitoring Work Group Update**

Chuck Loffland gave the Monitoring WG update. They met on June 9<sup>th</sup>. Continue evaluating the ACCG Monitoring Strategy, the Monitoring WG website. There will not be a July Monitoring WG meeting.

## **Funding Coordination Work Group Update**

Regine Miller gave the Funding Coordination WG meeting update. The group did not meet in June and tentatively meeting on Tuesday, July 13 from 3-4pm.

## **Roundtable**

Richard Sykes – UMRWA is executing the grant with SNC for the Forest Projects Plan.

Liz Meyer-Shields – Staffing updates. Phil Young, starts next week. Have made selections in fire program for Fuels Specialist, and for Mitigation and Education Specialist, and will help build capacity. BLM restrictions on in-person work or capacity in building has been lifted, but still offering max telework until DOI comes out with official reopening plan.

John Heissenbuttal – SNC approved an expansion to Tiger Creek grant, which will now link Amador and Calaveras Counties, it's a BLM piece on the Calaveras side of the river and will connect into the Lily Gap project. Mitchell Mine Project – received more funding to put in study plots for maintenance treatments (grazing, re-mastication, herbicides traditional, and herbicides organic, and no treatment). Put in a grant for Pine Acre FB Maintenance. Fiddletown Firewise meeting this Saturday.

Carinna Robertson – Office is open starting today, M-F 9:30a-3:30p. Logging operations and hand crews starting up in Hemlock, and several mastication operations ongoing on the district.

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Megan Fiske – FC looking for new Executive Director, willing to send out job announcement to ACCG.

Rick Hopson – ENF is still in max telework, office is not open to the public yet. Busy implementation year, though. Mentioned the meadow restoration projects, and work with CHIPS. Noted the CFLRP meeting you need to register. Megan added the link to the chat.

Chuck Loffland – Start work on 3 Meadows Project. CHIPS aspen fencing finishing up. Brush cutting ongoing, spraying is done, and other fuels work going on as well.

Steve Brink – interested to see all of the grants awarded to CAL FIRE CCI Grants, and federal appropriations later this year for the FS. Situation where there is a huge flush of money for partners.

Michael Pickard – SNC is going to receive \$50M on July 1, most likely opening up Forest Health Grant Program in September 2021. Those projects will be similar to those under the early action funding. Emergency board meeting on July 15th to award the early action funding (\$19M).

Regine Miller – CHIPS is working under participating NF and Yosemite, new is a Plumas County contract. Preparing and negotiating contracts for the CAL FIRE CCI Arnold-Avery. Crews are finishing erecting aspen stand and roadside thinning along Salt Springs Road. Working with BLM along SF Moke, surplus budget to identify additional lands for HFFR treatments and expect to plan that work in summer-fall and implement later in 2021. Working with AFSC and Cal Am team on Tiger Creek project. PG&E funds to do private land treatments. Regine announced that she will be resigning from CHIPS, and the organization is flying an Executive Director and Financial Director.

Tania asked the group to provide feedback and thoughts on timing for returning to in-person meeting format, and to gauge folks' comfort level. The Admin WG will discuss this topic at their July meeting.

- Megan – need to keep in mind that the next two general meeting has to have a virtual component since the guest panelists and speakers can only participate via Zoom and not in person.
- Rick – FS haven't had those discussions yet, and a little early for the FS. But curious for folks to consider hybrid option for folks that can't participate in-person yet.
- John Heissenbuttal – Suggested in-person meetings asap, the side conversations on the side are important, and all in person.
- Carinna – added clarification, FS office is not full blown open. FS to participate in in-person meetings will have to be made by the Forest Supervisor, and that hasn't been made yet.
- Liz – BLM is similar to the FS, still waiting for clarification on in-person meetings. Vote to wait to get guidance from the BLM and FS agencies before doing in-person meetings.

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- Caitlyn – Suggested all virtual or all in-person, hybrid meetings can be challenging. Caitlyn also sent a clarifying statement to the ACCG Administrator after the meeting saying that she wanted to clarify that she was not suggesting staying with the virtual meeting format indefinitely, but rather that she was acknowledging with her original comments the benefits of virtual, and that a hybrid meeting format would probably not be the best path forward, and that a meeting should be either entirely in-person or entirely virtual, especially for guest speakers that can only participate virtually, like Dr. North.
- Michael – suggested hybrid option to allow for at least partial in-person meetings, most benefit from these meetings is the side conversations.

The next General Meeting will take place on July 21<sup>st</sup> via Zoom from 9-noon.

## Meeting Participants.

Count	Name	Affiliation	Time Committed to Meeting
1	Caitlynn Rich	CSERC	3
2	Carinna Robertson	Calaveras Ranger District	3
3	Charles Beckman	EBMUD	3
4	Chuck Loffland	ENF, Amador Ranger District	3
5	Jason Kuiken	STF, Forest Supervisor	1.5
6	Jeff Marsolais	ENF, Forest Supervisor	1
7	John Heissenbittal	Heissenbittal Natural Resource Consulting	3
8	Kellin Brown	STF, Calaveras Ranger District	0.25
9	Linda Diesem	Private citizen	3
10	Liz Meyer-Shields	BLM	3
11	Marc Young	ENF, Amador RD	3
12	Matt Brown	ENF	3
13	Megan Fiske	Foothill Conservancy	3
14	Megan Layhee	CHIPS	3
15	Michael Pickard	SNC	3
16	Randy Hanvelt	ACL	2
17	Ray Cablayan	STF, Calaveras RD	3
18	Regine Miller	CHIPS	3
19	Rich Farrington	UMRWA	3
20	Richard Sykes	UMRWA	3
21	Rick Hopson	ENF, Amador Ranger District	3
22	Sara Husby	CSERC	3
23	Steve Brink	California Forestry Association	3
24	Sue Holper	Private landowner	3
25	Tania Carlone	CBI	3

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26	Terry Woodrow	Alpine County BOS/ Calaveras Foothills FSC Signatory	2
27	Tim Tate	SPI	2
28	Amye Osti	34 North	1.5
29	Jennifer Chapman	ENF	1.5
30	Mike Vollmer	USFS R5 Shared Stewardship Advisor	3