

Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes, August 18th, 2021, by Zoom

Meeting Brief

- Presentation by and discussion with Dr. Malcom North.
- Pyrosilviculture/Rx Fire Ad Hoc group presentation on their Pyrosilviculture Shared Vision Statement.
- UCB, UCSB and Blue Forest Conservation Survey.
- ACCG Work Groups and meeting participants provided updates of their activities.

Action Items

Actions	Responsible Parties
Make the July 21st general meeting summary as final and add to the website.	Layhee
Shared vision statement: 1. Update “in combination with thinning treatments” in paragraph 2. 2. Make PODs implicit in desired action #1, could add the following language, “for example PODs analysis”.	Pyrosilviculture/Rx Fire Ad Hoc
Use shared vision statement in future planning efforts.	Planning Work Group
Post shared vision statement to ACCG website.	Layhee
Send out UCB, UCSB and Blue Forest Conservation survey out to full ACCG listserv.	Layhee
Continue discussions on preferred future facilitation and administration services.	Admin WG

Summary

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

There were no suggested changes to the July 21st, 2021 General Meeting summary.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS: Dr. Malcolm North, “Pyrosilviculture: The Need for a New Approach to Increasing the Pace and Scale of Forest Treatments”

Dr. North gave an overview of the paper he and others published in 2021 in the Journal of Forestry titled, “Pyrosilviculture needed for landscape resilience of dry western U.S. forests.”

The three main take homes from this analysis were:

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1. Wildfire is having the largest impact – leverage the beneficial work done in some parts of wildfires.
2. Identifying Managed Wildfire Zones.
3. Treated areas are too small and dispersed to increase fire use or modify burn severity beyond the treated unit – coordinated fuels treatments to form a large-scale (>5,000 ac) box for applying fire.
 - a. How 3 proposed forest treatments (anchors, ecosystem assets and revenue) be placed to provide a “boundary box”.
 - i. Anchor thinning treatments – hard, safe zone
 - ii. Ecosystem asset thinning treatments – habitat protection by manipulating fuels so when a fire goes through, the fire severity will be lessened.
 - iii. Revenue treatments – finance other treatment types

Large-scale application of fire isn't possible without relaxing how we use and evaluate it:

- Large-scale fire should have silvicultural and ecological objectives, and be oriented toward increasing pace and scale. Merchantable trees may get damaged, but overall:
 - Density reduction – that sometimes kills some overstory trees
 - Tree spatial heterogeneity – individual trees, clumps of trees and openings
 - Fire-tolerant species – left in hotter drier and fire-sensitive species left in wet locations. Fire selecting for individual with phenotypes including thicker bark, earlier branch abscission.
- But, large-scale fire's “relaxed” targets can't meet the specific structures of sensitive species, riparian setbacks, etc.

Changes needed:

1. Will need a western US prescribed fire training center to develop crews dedicated to using fire for resource benefit and to coordinate equipment and resources across agencies.
2. Will need longer duration permits to carry out large burns.
3. Could employ a push/pull Yosemite strategy: under poor weather and smoke dispersal, fire is pushed into low fuel areas and then pulled across landscape when conditions are favorable.

Go to the ACCG website to view Dr. North's presentation and discussion:

<https://acconsensus.org/resources/videos/>

Discussion with Dr. North

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Is large-scale planning needed to achieve this concept, and how would we do it? Coordinating treatments and having a large-scale plan ahead of time. That is the first step – breaking up the landscape and finding the strategic locations. Dr. North hopes that the new forest plans will incorporate these large-landscape planning will be part of it.

Do we need to develop a template or is there a programmatic plan to help managers develop managed wildfires criteria? There should be a plan with identified anchors and before identifying managed wildfire zones – as an example, WDSS protocol.

What is the mortality rate for different fire severities? If we are managing for sensitive species (e.g., CSO), how do we protect the rest of the forest?

- Consensus does not always happen, but a majority agreement can make progress happen.
- Fortunately, the environmental groups engaged in ACCG and YSS are strong advocates for using all the tools in the toolbox that are science-based and of value. Groups have joined in getting huge amounts of grant funding for thinning logging, fuel breaks, biomass removal, and prescribed burning. So, applying criticism to “hard core” environmentalists is actually not applicable to any of the conservation groups that participate in ACCG or YSS. John – CSERC

PODs approach? Can be developed pretty quickly, and Dr. North thinks it’s a great approach for until you can develop a collaborative plan (that will take many years).

Managed wildfire plans would require environmental review. If we are going to increase pace and scale, we need more managed wildfire, and if plans are developed through collaboratives, then the consequences.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS: Pyrosilviculture Ad Hoc, “Pyrosilviculture Shared Vision Statement”

Rich Farrington and Greg Suba gave an overview of the shared vision statement, and stressed that with the FS, the ACCG should develop the “boxes” (e.g., PODs), identify the anchor treatments and eventually identify the constraints to managed wildfires. And also build off the risk assessment already completed by the ACCG SLAWG, which identified both areas that are at high-risk to predicted wildfire, but also identified areas that would benefit from low-intensity wildfire.

ACCG’s next steps:

1. Dr. North recommended having Dr. York come back and present about his 2021 paper.
2. Come up with the landscape level plan and identify where the “boxes” should be put.

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3. Identify what treatments go in which “box”, and where the treatments should be located in each “box”.

Question to ad hoc group - whether it was implied in the first desired actions to utilize the best available analysis. Ad Hoc group said, yes, it is implied, but the intent was to stay more general, but would happy to add language to suggest the PODs analysis is one option for this work.

Objections to moving the shared vision statement forward – no.

Take this vision statement to the Planning WG for use in planning efforts.

Action Items

- Pyrosilviculture/Rx Fire Ad Hoc group – update “in combination with thinning treatments” in paragraph 2.
- Pyrosilviculture/Rx Fire Ad Hoc group - make PODs implicit in desired action #1, could add the following language, “for example PODs analysis”.
- Planning Work Group - Take this vision statement to the Planning WG for use in planning efforts.
- Megan Layhee – get shared vision statement up on ACCG website.

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS: UCB, UCSB & Blue Forest Conservation Survey

Phil Saksa with Blue Forest Conservation gave a brief information of a survey they are conducting and interest in forest work and forest management.

Link to survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/TKWMJJH>

Please email us with any questions related to our research project: gp-forestfolks@bren.ucsb.edu

Action Items

- Megan Layhee will send out the survey informational sheet and link to survey to the full email listserv.

UPDATES

Administrative Work Group Update

Megan Layhee gave the Admin WG update. The Admin WG met on Monday, August 9th. Attendance was relatively low, so the meeting was brief and it was decided that the Administrator was to outreach to the Admin WG to get input on the agenda topics. At the meeting we did give a brief update on upcoming general meeting speakers and topics. The

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group also discussed future hybrid meetings for ACCG general meetings and discussed the importance of high-quality/reliable AV capabilities to support virtual participation. And also briefly touched on the status and next step for ACCG future facilitation and administrative services post-2021.

Planning Work Group Update

Megan Layhee gave the Planning WG update. The Planning WG met last on July 28th, 2021. The group had a debrief on July general meeting herbicide alternatives panel and postponement of Dr. Robert York's presentation related to this panel. The group also continued discussions on large landscape planning, and also short-term need to get work done on the ground. Next steps were to perform a mapping exercise during the August Planning WG meeting to look at the SLAWG GIS Tools (risk assessment outputs, project mapper), with USFS R5 first-iteration PODs layer to assess potential priority PODs to identify for future funding opportunities. Participants also provided project-related updates. Next WG meeting is Wednesday, August 25th, 9am-12pm via Zoom.

Monitoring Work Group Update

There were no August Monitoring WG attendees present at the general meeting to provide the WG update. As a surrogate, Megan Layhee briefly read through the Monitoring WG August meeting summary. The Monitoring WG had monitoring-related updates, evaluated website additions, and briefly discussed the Power Fire symposium. The next Monitoring WG meeting is scheduled for September 8th starting at 9 am.

Funding Coordination Work Group Update

Richard Sykes and Rich Farrington gave the Funding Coordination Work Group update. SNC funding has been postponed to at least December 2021. Group will follow up on how often they will meet into the future.

Roundtable

Greg Suba – thanked everyone for the meeting.

John Buckley – didn't have a round-table update, but wanted to provide clarification regarding the comment made earlier in the meeting about the focus on small diameter trees projects, like UMRWA's FFP. John added that this focus is because low-risk treatments minimize controversy and help the collaborative reach consensus, and also these projects eliminate the need for 2-

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year site studies beforehand and can expedite projects getting done on the ground. He also added that into the future this does not necessarily mean that the ACCG won't collectively propose projects that include larger diameter trees.

John Heissenbuttal – Cal Am team has started work on the Bummerville project, which was funded by SNC. On the Amador side, the team has completed environmental review for Amador Stewardship Project on 9-10 BLM parcels which will act as anchor points for FBs throughout the county, also funded by SNC. Also, Amador RCD has been advised that they will receive a \$3M grant under CAL FIRE CCI Forest Health Program for constructing a shaded FB using animal grazing and mechanical thinning treatments, and will tie together the FB that the FSC constructed in the Mitchell Mine area, all the way down to Jackson, and will tie into another FB established on the Kennedy Mine site.

Rich Farrington – Three Meadow Restoration Project is being run by ARCD and has been under construction for the last 2 months. Rich added that the Caldor Fire behavior is currently unpredictable, and has been comparing the Caldor Fire maps to the Scottiigo project maps, and he's curious about Scottiigo Decision Memo and where that is in relation to the Caldor Fire, and if work has been underway. Mentioned that he sent a note to Rick Hopson yesterday, and added that Rick is on a fire detail, and that Marc Young is the acting district ranger. Rick communicated to Rich that the ENF is under resourced.

- John Heissenbuttal followed up on the Scottiigo comment from Rich, and that it would be worth while to look at the Caldor Fire impacts to this planning area.
 - Rich added that there were a lot of CSO PACs in the Scottiigo area.
 - Greg Suba added that postfire monitoring in the Caldor Fire will be helpful. That a lot of the Grizzly Flats area was thinned but not have the follow up Rx fire, and investigate what we've done, what the results of the fire was and what we need to do into the future.
- Richard – gave an FYI that there will be an UMRWA workshop before the next board meeting about UMRWA's role in forest healthy, specifically about both planning and implementation.

Sue – appreciated the uplifting and grounding presentations today.

Liz Meyer-Shields (could not make meeting, but sent updates to Administrator)- We're continuing to work with Amador FSC on the Tiger Creek project and the CalAm team on several of the planning grants. We also have the statewide BLM foresters meeting this week in Jackson, among other things, they're out working on Bummerville this week as a training exercise. So, we should get some good info out of their efforts.

Regine Miller – helping CHIPS with the transition since her departure from the organization. She added that CHIPS crews are continuing roadside thinning work on View 88 and WCB project,

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and mechanical operations over 300 acres on WCB project. Crews are continuing federal partners, but have been impacted by multiple fires in terms of access and smoke.

Megan Layhee – Let the group know that she turned down the Executive Director position at CHIPS, but that through the remainder of 2021 she will be under contract with CHIPS to perform various duties. CHIPS has just hired a new Finance Director, and also as you know, recently hired Jill Micheau as the organization’s Project Manager for their various grants. CHIPS’ board is planning to re-fly the ED position this fall. Through the remainder of 2021, Megan will be administering CHIPS federal agreements and doing various other services, including continuing to administer the ACCG and continue my other ACCG-related services including facilitating the Planning WG and managing the SLAWG GIS tools. And she will also be continuing working with UMRWA on the Forest Projects Plan.

The next General Meeting will take place on September 15th via Zoom from 9-noon.

Meeting Participants.

Count	Name	Affiliation	Time Committed to Meeting
1	Caitlyn Rich	CSERC	3.0
2	Brian Oneto	Amador County BOS	3.0
3	George Dondero	CHIPS Board	3.0
4	Greg Suba	SFL	3.0
5	Jesse Fowler	Calaveras County Agricultural Commissioner	2.5
6	John Buckley	CSERC	3.0
7	John Heissenbittal	Heissenbittal Natural Resource Consulting	3.0
8	Linda Diesem	Private land steward	3.0
9	Megan Layhee	ACCG Administrator	3.0
10	Melinda Benton	STF, Calaveras RD	3.0
11	Michael Pickard	SNC	1.25
12	Regine Miller	Consultant	3.0
13	Rich Farrington	UMRWA Board	3.0
14	Richard Sykes	UMRWA	3.0
15	Sandy Anderson	CSEDD	3.0
16	Tania Carlone	CBI	3.0
17	Hannah Hepner	Plumas County Fire Safe Council	2.0
18	Marie Davis	PCWA	2.0
19	Sara Husby	CSERC	1.5
20	Sue Britting	SFL	2.5
21	Sue Holper	Private citizen	2.5
22	Sue (?)	Northern CA Foothills	2.0
24	Malcolm North	USFS R5 (presenter)	2.25

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25	Phil Saksa	Blue Forest Conservation and others from UCSB and UCB	<0.25
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