

# Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes January 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022, by Zoom

## Meeting Brief

- UMRWA update on Forest Projects Plan (FPP) and future ACCG administration and facilitation services.
- Discussion on ACCG 2022 Priorities List and further suggested modifications at today's meeting.
- ACCG Work Groups and meeting participants provided updates of their activities.

## Action Items

Actions	Responsible Parties
Revise ACCG Priorities List based on feedback from meeting participants and then circulate via email to the ACCG listserv for comments.	Layhee
Work on doing outreach to potential guest TEK guest speakers/panelists for possibly the April or May 2022 general meeting.	Layhee Farrington
Send out links to postfire restoration and management publications that were mentioned at the meeting.	Layhee

## Summary

### Modification and/or approval of agenda and last month's meeting summary.

Tania reminded the group that ACCG general meeting is changing - CBI is stepping back as of January 2022. A pool of volunteer facilitators will be on a rotation, facilitating the general meetings in 2022. CBI hosted a virtual facilitation training workshop in early January 2022 for these volunteer facilitators.

Megan updated the names listed for CSERC and CHIPS in the MOA signatories list on the general meeting agenda. Also corrected the spelling of John Heissenbuttel's last name. No suggested modifications for the Nov. 17<sup>th</sup> meeting summary.

Megan and Rich discussed before the meeting started about continuing to conduct outreach for the TEK panel.

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## PRESENTATIONS & DISCUSSIONS

### **UMRWA: Forest Projects Plan update & future ACCG facilitation and administration services**

Richard gave a brief update on UMRWA's Forest Projects Plan (FPP) Phase 1 – 10,000 acres+ on the Amador Ranger District, and proposing mutually agreeable activities. Anticipate to complete Phase 1 by later this calendar year. UMRWA anticipates that they will be bringing forward proposed Phase 1 activities, project boundaries and maps to the ACCG Planning Work Group at their February meeting.

#### Discussion

John Buckley showed support for UMRWA's FPP. But he did recommend UMRWA to stick to the idea of low-hanging fruit, and to use Phase 1 as a means to complete planning as quickly as possible, so that fuels reduction implementation can begin as quickly as possible. He went on to urge UMRWA to not go for a SERAL-like process for Phase 2, since this will take additional time to complete. Recommends that UMRWA and the ACCG come up with a clear, coherent large-landscape project in Phase 2 that will get through the planning process as quickly as possible.

Rick Hopson added that this work will be extremely valuable for fire staff, and working closely with planning and Arc staff to get this done as quickly as possible with as much acreage included as possible. He noted that this work does make a difference, he noted the Caldor Fire and the recent treatments that helped slow the fire spread. Rick is also excited that UMRWA will assist with implementation of this work, as well.

Ray Cablayan noted that UMRWA and STF staff, including Jason Kuiken, had a meeting in January 2022 and discussed FPP Phase 2 and Jason is supportive of the project. Both parties are interested to see how FPP Phase 1 and the SERAL project unfold in the next couple of months. Ray added that other entities are excited about the project, including Calaveras County and Lake Alpine.

Rich Farrington mentioned the Wildfire Crisis Strategy that just came out (link: <https://www.fs.usda.gov/sites/default/files/Confronting-Wildfire-Crisis.pdf>). Rich added that he hoped everyone would agree that the wildfire threat is the threat we need to address, and that this can be accomplished by removing and eliminating hazardous fuels, and if that is the goal the effort should be focused and simple (not a huge NEPA document or EIS). This could help to address this threat that is outlined in the strategy.

### **Future ACCG Administration and Facilitation Services**

Richard gave an update on UMRWA's proposal to the SNC under the RFFCP program for (1) additional funding for the FPP, and also (2) funding for ACCG administration and facilitation services after the current funding for these services ends (3/31/2022). This SNC funding is

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anticipated to be awarded in spring. The Administration work group will continue to work to develop the administration and facilitation scope of work.

Tania also reminded participants that current funding will go through 3/31/2022. She also added that CBI hosted a facilitation training workshop to train the volunteer pool of facilitators that will begin facilitating GMs beginning in February. She also added that CBI will continue to work with the Administrator through March behind the scenes, and will also finalize and update key documents before the end of March.

Michael Pickard added that the SNC is still developing a contract with the Department of Conservation to get the funding from them.

John Heissenbuttel noted that the Cal Am Team has some pause about SNC early action funding is stipends for engaging tribal entities, and hopes to see as much funding go toward on-the-ground work as much as possible.

John Buckley added that continuity between Administration and Facilitation continue, and that future funding proposals from ACCG participants should include administration services for the ACCG. Also added that he sees that there is a need for growth and capacity building in the ACCG. He noted the MSA between Tuolumne County, TRT and YSS. Both the county and TRT are growing staff and hiring full-time positions to administer and manage these large projects. And notes that this model makes a big impact on getting things done on the ground.

## **ACCG 2022 Priorities Discussion**

Participants reviewed the draft ACCG 2022 Priority List that was compiled based on feedback heard from participants at the November 2021 general meeting. See the revised priority list document for revisions to the list.

## **Action Items**

- Megan will revise the ACCG Priorities List based on feedback from meeting participants and then circulate via email to the ACCG listserv for comments.

## **UPDATES**

### **Administrative Work Group Update**

Megan Layhee gave the Admin WG update. The Admin WG met virtually last on Jan. 10<sup>th</sup>, 2022. They confirmed the January general meeting agenda, discussed future general meeting format and the current covid situation, also discussed Richard's update to the full ACCG.

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## **Planning Work Group Update**

Megan Layhee gave the Planning WG update. The Planning WG met last on October 27. The group is planning to meet next on Jan. 26<sup>th</sup>.

## **Monitoring Work Group Update**

Chuck Loffland gave the Monitoring WG update. They met last on Jan. 12<sup>th</sup> and will meet next on Feb. 9<sup>th</sup>. Group transitioned to a Microsoft Teams format. Discussed goals for 2022 for work group: (1) conduct monitoring symposium – discussed topics and format (July or October), (2) landscape-scale monitoring using the SLAWG tool and LiDAR, and (3) 2022 monitoring prioritization. Also discussed Monitoring WG website updates and incorporating monitoring database on SLAWG database. Can get the local economy topic on a future agenda.

Rich asked about the claims from Chad Hansen about forest fuel treatment efficacy. Megan will follow up on resending some articles that discuss fuel treatment efficacy and also a Sac Bee article. Others discussed the importance of understanding how different types of treatments. Chuck added that treatments on the edges of the fire perimeter helped flank the Caldor Fire, but that right out in the head of the fire it is very difficult to have a treatment that is going to stop a fire of that size and intensity.

## **Funding Coordination Work Group Update**

Michael Pickard gave the Funding Coordination WG update. Group met on Jan. 11<sup>th</sup> discussed the CAL FIRE Forest Health and Fire Prevention programs and the SNC grant that is open currently. Coordination between UMRWA, BLM and USFS. Calaveras FSC had some project ideas in the Lake Alpine area. Jason Smith (Shared Stewardship Coordinator) attended as well.

## **Roundtable**

Carinna Robertson – In regards to the McKay FB Project, the STF staff decided to do a new CE for this project instead of trying to use the Brown Darby EIS. She added that the STF heard John Buckley's comments about the Brown Darby and moved forward accordingly.

Rick Hopson – Hoping to look for some presentations on the Wildfire Crisis Strategy. He also mentioned that the FS is looking internally about the Forest Resilience Strategy, expect to see that as a possible agenda item in about 2 months. It is being worked on pretty actively and getting partner input, and within that strategy is the Caldor Fire and focusing on a staffing plan for that. Also, federal funding will come down and increase in staffing in general. Rick will be on detail starting in 2 weeks as the Deputy Director for the Ecosystem Management Program in R5, no replacement for Rick yet and closes Thursday. He will be on detail through May 2022.

Helen Loffland – continuing vegetation monitoring for CHIPS under the WCB Upper Mokelumne Project and continuing wildlife monitoring for the Foster Meadow Project, and hoping this summer in cooperation with UMRWA if their WCB Aspen Project gets funded.

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John Heissenbuttel – Cal Am Team will be submitting 3 grant proposals soon, including (1) an implementation grant to SNC on the Calaveras side 450 acres to be treated for FR, (2) implementation grant to SNC for Amador Co. Stewardship Project on 9 parcels and 400 acres of FR as anchor points for future FBs, and (3) Amador Community FBs Project to the CAL FIRE Fire Prevention Grant Program of 500 acres of FBs as an extension of the CAL FIRE grant awarded called the ingress/egress and community outreach grant, and now have engaged Firewise communities to help the team secure ROEs on private lands adjacent to the Firewise communities to build FBs (River Pines area).

Michael Pickard – SNC grant program is still open until Jan. 31<sup>st</sup>. Upcoming SNC Board meeting is March 3<sup>rd</sup>. SNC WIP Summit on fire recovery via Zoom on March 2<sup>nd</sup> (link will be available on SNC website). Movement on Blue Mountain Electric Company and SNC is most likely going to fund a small resilient communities grant to Sierra Business Council who will implement and build the electric company on the CHIPS Wilseyville site. Lastly, Michael attended a cultural burn training hosted by CAL FIRE (Len Nielson, Rx Fire Coordinator for the state) in partnership with North Fork band of the Mono Indians and the Southern Sierra MiWok Nation in Mariposa County. Michael added Len's contact info in the chat ([len.nielson@fire.ca.gov](mailto:len.nielson@fire.ca.gov)).

Sue Holper – mentioned that she attended the Motherlode PBA meeting for Tuolumne and Calaveras Counties.

Ray Cablayan – SERAL decision is coming out soon. New OSV map out on the STF website. Continue to do pile burning on the district. In terms of hiring, there are several positions that will be flown soon. Thanked Tania for her work with the ACCG.

Rich Farrington – UMRWA Board Meeting on Jan 28<sup>th</sup> at 10 am via Zoom. SB 901 expires at the end of this year, which has helped UMRWA move faster at a lower cost, and believes this exemption needs to be extended permanently for wildfire reduction projects. UMRWA is following Michael's advice and opening channels of communication with the state – Richard and Rich have a conference call with the state, Wildfire and Forest Resilience Task Force and SNC this afternoon.

Richard Sykes – UMRWA Board Meeting is a week from Friday and they will discuss and determine proposals for the DWR programs focused on water use, efficiency and infrastructure, and Regional Participants Committee IRWMP have met a few times in the past month and half and recommend a couple projects in Amador and Calaveras Counties for Amador Water Agency, Foothill Conservancy and Calaveras Public Utilities District.

Thurman Roberts – Busy with CHIPS. Lots of changes at CHIPS. Tribal outreach and workforce development with High Roads Training Program Sierra Institute and ISWI SNC grant – currently coordinating meetings including Bishop Paiutes, Lone Pine and several on western slope of SN, to see if tribes have capacity to support a field crew and have the tribes be employer of records. Thurman is also doing coordination training of CHIPS crews in Yosemite, Woodfords and Chico. Currently have wildland saw training for crews. Also working with trainers to get Washoe crew

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certified for sawyer and felling. Jan 11<sup>th</sup> group of CHIPS went to speak to the Calaveras Board at their meeting to address the law firm that the new Wilseyville site is not enough and more studies needed to be done. Board voted to move the project forward. Lastly, Thurman has been giving support to the new Field Operation Manager. Will also help coordinate the TEK panel for the ACCG with Megan and Rich. Citizens for Responsible Industry challenging Wilseyville Biosite – Calaveras Board website has the full documents of appeals.

## Meeting Participants

Count	Name	Affiliation	Time Committed to Meeting
1	Megan Layhee	ACCG Administrator	2.5
2	Tania Carlone	ACCG Facilitator, CBI	2.5
3	Richard Sykes	UMRWA	2.5
4	Chuck Loffland	USFS ENF, Amador RD	2.5
5	Michael Pickard	SNC	2.5
6	John Buckley	CSERC	1.5
7	Nancy Nordensten	ENF	2.5
8	Randy Hanvelt	ACL	1.0
9	Carinna Robertson	USFS STF, Calaveras RD	2.5
10	Bud Hoekstra	Landowner	1.0
11	Rick Hopson	USFS ENF, Amador RD	2.5
12	Ray Cablayan	USFS STF, Calaveras RD	2.5
13	Meredith Sierra	FC	2.5
14	Gerald Schwartz	EBMUD	2.5
15	John Heissenbittal	Cal Am Team	2.5
16	Sue Holper	ACCG member, private citizen	2.5
17	Rich Farrington	UMRWA Board	2.5
18	Thurman Roberts	CHIPS	2.5
19	Kettja Bennett	CHIPS	2.5
20	Frank ?	?	2.5
21	Regine Miller	Headwaters Environmental	1.5
22	Caitlyn Rich	CSERC	2.5
23	Helen Loffland	IBP	2.5