

Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes April 20th, 2022, meeting in-person at Calaveras Ranger District office and via Zoom

Meeting Brief

- Meeting facilitator: John Heissenbuttel, Panel Facilitator/Moderator: Thurman Roberts
- ACCG hosted a Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) panel with Ali Meders-Knight, Meyo Marrufo, Irvin Jim, and Thurman Roberts (Moderator).
- Richard Sykes gave a brief update on UMRWA-Amador District's Forest Projects Plan (FPP).
- ACCG Work Groups and meeting participants provided updates on their activities.

Action Items

Actions	Responsible Parties
Remove "DRAFT" watermark from last month's meeting summary and post to the ACCG website.	Megan Layhee
Send out ACCG Administrator/Facilitation SOW to ACCG listserv asking for interest by May 4th	Richard Sykes Layhee
Follow up with ACCG on whether or not FPP Phase 1 public comments can become part of the public record.	Richard Sykes Chuck Loffland
Distribute draft ACCG Administrator Scope of Services to the full ACCG list serv.	Layhee Sykes
Discuss whether to approach county BOS for LOS for the FPP Phase 1	Sykes Loffland

Summary

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

John Heissenbuttel reviewed the meeting agenda with participants. There were no suggested modifications to the agenda. There were no suggested modifications to the March general meeting minutes. Megan will take the draft watermark off this meeting's agenda and the March meeting summary and post to the ACCG website.

PRESENTATIONS & DISCUSSIONS

Traditional Ecological Knowledge Guest Panel

Panelist: Ali Meders-Knight, Meyo Marrufo, Irvin Jim, and Thurman Roberts (Moderator)

Panelists Introductions

Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes April 20th, 2022, meeting in-person at Calaveras Ranger District office and via Zoom

Ali Meders-Knight is Mechoopda Tribal member and under a tribal resolution, Ali is a Master Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) Practitioner, and teaches and provide certifications throughout the tribal territory for workforce development. Ali has been working on outdoor education projects for 20 years and riparian restoration for the last 12 years. Working on several projects, including riparian restoration, riparian revegetation, making seed mixes. Just entered into an agreement with the Mendocino NF for seed banking, the first of its kind in the nation.

- Thurman added that CHIPS is working with Ali to develop training opportunities for TEK certification for CHIPS crews.

Irvin Jim is the Chairman of the Hung A Lel Ti community of the Washoe tribe. Irvin is also an EMT firefighter for Alpine County, and also District 3 Supervisor of Alpine County. Irvin is also the Board President of Intertribal Council of California, which allows him to bridge the tribal and U.S. government hats he wears to try to bring them more together. He added that he understands his tribal cultural practices and how his tribe took care of their land, and how that comes into play for TEK.

- Thurman added that Irvin and Thurman come from the same community and that Irvin has been an inspiration for Thurman.

Meyo Marrufo is from the Eastern Pomo from the Clear Lake basin (26 Pomo tribes in central CA), and is a tribal member with the Robinson Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians and Environmental Director for Guidiville Rancheria (central Pomo tribe located in Ukiah Basin). Central CA Regional Tribal Operations Committee Member for the US EPA Region 9 and the CA Representative on the US EPA Tribal Caucus. Works hands on for the projection of the tribes' cultural landscape and to impact restoration and protection of their tribal lifeways. Majority of her work now is policy work, but manages to get out into the land as part of her work as well.

- Thurman added that it is nice to have a nice representation of different Northern CA tribes on the panel today.

Thurman Roberts is a Workforce Development & Training Coordinator for CHIPS. He is currently in Lakeport meeting with Big Valley Rancheria, to establish crews and secure trainings.

Panel Question: What does TEK mean, what are the core values and traditional uses of forests, and how can individuals show respect for the forest

Meyo: TEK has five core values or facets of what the term originally meant are listed below, but today TEK is a cliché, it's an adjective. TEK is a verb, its tribal beneficial uses. The original intention of TEK was a lot more science driven from the tribal end, and intended to quantify the management systems that the tribes implemented. The tribal way of managing their lands was

Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes April 20th, 2022, meeting in-person at Calaveras Ranger District office and via Zoom

driven by in-place science and observation-based practices. TEK is all of the things that make up what tribal management systems are. TEK is about how tribes manage lands.

1. Past and current uses
2. Ethics and values
3. Factual observations
4. Culture and identity
5. Management systems

Ali: her TEK program work started with a focus on basket weaving and plant identification, and then went to CA Indian Manpower Consortium Training and there learned new terms, like TEK, originating from Haskell Indian Nations University – fact-based objectives and outcomes, and long-term relationship with the lands. Ali gave an example of the TEK work she does – mimicking ecosystem processes, like fire – which is science-based practices that mimic nature.

Irvin: TEK is the inherent connection to their homelands, and their reason for being here is to be caretakers of their homelands. Irvin added that he sees a connection that his ancestors had a connection to their homelands. He added that the Lake Tahoe Basin is his tribe's ancestral lake, and as Washoe people see themselves as being put here to be caretakers of the lake, and that every year at the first snow fall the tribe burned the basin. He added that the tribe gathered pine nuts from Pinyon pines, and that his people were very knowledgeable about the different shades of the pine shell, which indicated the type of beneficial use (e.g., certain shades of pine nuts were uses for medicinal uses). He also added that the tribe had to maintain ladder fuels and the understory in and around Pinyon trees used for seed harvest, to ensure continued harvest of the pine nuts. He added that fire is important for another one of their vital food sources,

Panel Question: What is the role of fire in forest ecology and what is cultural burning? What are impacts of the Tamarack Fire and what are restoration opportunities in the Tamarack burn?

Irvin: The Tamarack Fire ripped through Hung A Lel Ti community lands. He added that the Pinyon pine trees were wiped out by the fire and that it will take 20-30+ years for these trees to be at a place to harvest pine nuts again, which is concerning and makes it really difficult for the tribes to pass on traditional knowledge to younger generations about how to harvest pine nuts.

Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes April 20th, 2022, meeting in-person at Calaveras Ranger District office and via Zoom

Ali: there are a lot of wildfire restoration opportunities in her tribe's lands, including the Camp, Dixie and Bear Fires. She talked about the impact of fire line construction for these large fires, including through meadows and riparian areas, and their subsequent impacts to these ecosystems. The restoration and revegetation opportunities include, recovery from actual wildfire, recovery from collateral damage (e.g., fire lines), and watershed restoration. Some examples of developing TEK restoration:

- Hiring tribal restoration crews on tribal lands is important to ensure TEK practices are implemented, including increased biodiversity objectives are incorporated into restoration.
- Developing living seed banks by tribes is critical to continuing tribal-led restoration practices.
- Conducting TEK-focused restoration after other, non-TEK focused restoration activities have occurred to go back in and ensure biodiversity and other TEK objectives are met through restoration activities. She gave an example of Butte Creek restoration.

Panel Question: What are the challenges to implementing TEK?

Irvin: one of the biggest hurdles for tribes implementing TEK is getting access to perform TEK on public lands. He added that tribal allotment land disaster declaration for their food source – Pinyon pine trees. There new Environmental Director is very knowledgeable in plants and is opening doors for the tribe by helping with overcoming the hurdles to restore tribals lands.

Panel Question: What can be done to expand on TEK? And how can TEK help to reduce the risk of mega-wildfires?

Meyo: Emphasized that tribal fire management is not the answer to everything. It will take a lot of pre-work to get to a point where tribal fire management can be utilized. She used Irvin's comment about historical tribal fire management in the Lake Tahoe basin was fast, low temperature fire. Meyo continued on to say that current mega-wildfires is earth's way of saying to us that we need to clean up the forests up to get to a point where tribal fire management can be implemented. Unfortunately, since we've neglected the landscape for so long it will take a lot of money and resources to get to a point where tribal fire management can be implemented once again. Tribal people have become renters in their own lands and have not been able to practice tribal management on their own lands for a very long time, so many tribes are only beginning to implement tribal fire management on their reservation lands once again. Managing your landscape where you can light a fire every 3 years without devastation is where we need to get. Also of importance is that tribal fire management is not the same for every tribe and depends on the ecosystem and the landscape – so it's impossible to create a blanket fire policy using "tribal fire management". She also added that she's concerned and doesn't

Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes April 20th, 2022, meeting in-person at Calaveras Ranger District office and via Zoom

want to see tribal fire management as the next excuse when things go wrong. She also added that cultural burning is about understanding the system (e.g., plant species, natural fire barriers) and implementing common-sense practices.

In terms of restoration, Meyo added that looking at biodiversity, like tiered planting for restoration after wildfires, plant different ages – seeds, seedlings, larger saplings.

Meyo also added that “sweeping the forest” isn’t the answer, but that going in every 3 years to do low intensity fire is important to ensure

Panel Question: How do you think collaboratives, like ACCG, and non-profits, like CHIPS, should support TEK, and the revitalization of TEK, in different regions?

Meyo: Cooperate with the nearest tribes to the area you are trying to restore, and hire tribal people.

Irvin: Comes down to more money and more awareness. Open up doors to tribal people with these new funding streams, and expand the TEK knowledge that tribal people have into landscape restoration. None of us cannot live without mother earth. (He added that he appreciated the clarification that Meyo made about the tribal fire management that was done historically in the Lake Tahoe.)

Ali: She explained that they have a small TEK program (1) cultural monitoring and (2) TEK workforce development for landscape restoration. A huge support came through being awarded grant funding or securing other funding sources for supporting crew’s to get paid to get TEK-related training to perform their work.

Panel Discussion with Meeting Participants

John Buckley – To promote TEK and beneficial tribal uses, have any tribes created a list of priorities or best practices, that tribes could provide to the government agencies, non-profits or collaboratives?

- Meyo – yes, every tribe has a list of needs and priorities. But the problem is that is not true engagement with tribes.

Richard Sykes – prior to developing restoration plans, how do tribes want to collaborate and be involved in restoration and forest health projects?

- Meyo – currently, there are policies putting forth the federal legislation (e.g., Executive Order 13175), native Americans are going to be required within the agency consultation policy. What would behoove smaller groups and state agencies would be to start

Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes April 20th, 2022, meeting in-person at Calaveras Ranger District office and via Zoom

implementing this now – writing tribal beneficial uses as a priority into planning projects, and that Native Americans must be involved in landscape restoration and management, and true “C”onsultation with the tribal council or environmental team and put tribes into the restoration and forest health work plans.

- Ali – reminded that the state requires tribal consultation for environmental review and that is an opportunity for tribal engagement; working on Network for Landscape Conservation which is an indigenous partnership proposal for funding to build partnerships- building partnerships that are tribal-led for restoration projects (like Butte Creek restoration).

John Heissenbuttel – how do we know if we are consulting the correct tribes. CAL FIRE gives out a tribal list of tribes outside of the project area, who should project proponents be really consulting and collaborating with?

- Irvin noted that the Hung A Lel Ti community ancestral footprint extends down to Murphys and over to the higher elevations of Amador County. The Washoe Tribe Environmental Director, Riana Jones, can be reached at 775-400-6122.
- Thurman added that it is important that tribes get out there and engage with agencies that are doing work in tribe’s region. May 5th USFS R5 is having tribal relations strategic planning work group meeting in Rolling Hills Casino, and some of the topics mentioned today will be discussed – how to implement TEK, how to we have shared stewardship, and benefit local tribal and non-tribal communities, and have overall positive impacts to the environment.

Thurman also brought up some additional TEK-related discussion topics that we didn’t have enough time to get into, but discussed with Meyo single matter expert, cultural monitor, and TEK practitioner, and how do all of these ties together? TEK is science based, but when you move into proving that science and knowledge and then apply it through the academic system, Ali has done that with Don Hankins and CSU Chico – how do you quantify this TEK, generational knowledge?

George Dondero – how can non-profits like CHIPS learn how to integrate TEK practices into projects faster? Realizing that there are obstacles at the federal and state level.

- Ali said that incorporating tribes into developing the project scope of work is key and ensuring that the project aligns with tribal crew skill set. Example - East Sands Slough Project – with 80% survival rate of revegetation. Ishi Wilderness Project is another example of the tribe being at the table in the development and scoping of the project. Madrone Lake Project is another example.
- Meyo wanted to emphasize that tribal consultation is more than just cultural monitors of historical sites, but also current projects. She emphasized that TEK practitioners and

Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes April 20th, 2022, meeting in-person at Calaveras Ranger District office and via Zoom

other tribal members should be involved in the entirety of restoration and forest health projects.

- Irvin added that there's the issue of tribe capacity when talking about being involved and integrated into projects. He added if tribes can discuss the same conversation with federal and state entities on how TEK can be done and how tribes can be involved. And emphasized that one size does not fit all, in terms of how TEK practices should be implemented, but also emphasized that we all have the same goal of being stewards of the environment. He sees that the role of the tribes Environmental Director is to connect with TEK practitioners. He also added that if tribes came together with one voice, tribal voices would be heard with the federal and state agencies.

Forest Projects Plan (FPP) Update

Presenter: Richard Sykes, Chuck Loffland

Update highlights:

- Phase 1 went into public scoping starting April 15, and the full ACCG received an email notice about the scoping
- Phase 1 is about 25,000 acres with generally mutually agreeable proposed treatment activities - mechanical fuels reduction, hand thinning, prescribed fire and aspen restoration.
- Next steps are for folks to send comments to the FS and the team will respond and address the comments, expect the project to change somewhat based on comments.
- Already received CSERC's comments and waiting to receive more.
- The hope is to have the Phase 1 planning effort finalized by then end of the calendar year. Phase 1 planning is contingent grant application to CAL FIRE (environmental review)
- Chuck - cc to the comment box when submitting scoping comments, also happy to refine the project and happy to move forward with this project, and thinks this will be a good project for both the ACCG and the FS.
- FPP Phase 1 scoping comments are due May 15th.
- UMRWA and FS is starting up FPP Phase 2 – will include all of Moke watershed and buffer areas and may include much of Amador and Calaveras RDs. TAC is being assembled.
- Plan for the FPP team to provide monthly updates to the ACCG.

Meredith asked if the FS would share other people's comments. Richard said to reach out to him and Chuck added that sometimes FS will develop a consolidated comment list. Richard and Chuck will work with FS and UMRWA NEPA Coordinators on this.

Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes April 20th, 2022, meeting in-person at Calaveras Ranger District office and via Zoom

UPDATES

Administrative Work Group Update

Megan Layhee gave the Admin WG update. The Admin WG met virtually last on April 11th. The WG finalized and confirmed the April general meeting agenda packet. The WG continued discussions on moving forward to find a new Administrator, including developing the scope of services for the Administrator position.

- Question on how many hours and what the specific duties are – Megan listed them and added that Richard and her would share that draft list with the ACCG after this meeting, requesting folks get back by May 4th. The next step would be to do a more formal process. Funding is looking to come through the SNC grant next month.
- Process (Sykes) : The Admin WG will propose a candidate recommendation and draft contract to ACCG and no contract will be signed until approved by the ACCG.

Planning Work Group Update

Megan Layhee gave the Planning WG update. The Planning WG met last on 3/23 and special meeting on 4/5. Special meeting was solely to continue discussions with UMRWA and Amador RD on FPP Phase 1 in preparation for going to scoping. 17 participants at the special meeting and generally supportive of Phase 1 scale and proposed treatments. There was the acknowledgement that the FPP team had updated the project to reflect the work group. Plan is to see what comes out of scoping and then go from there. Planning WG

Monitoring Work Group Update

Chuck Loffland gave the Monitoring WG update. The work group met last on.... The Monitoring WG continued their discussions and planning for the 2022 Monitoring Symposium, including reaching out to symposium speakers.

Funding Coordination Work Group Update

Michael Pickard was not on the meeting, so the Rich Farrington gave the update. CAL FIRE will be running solicitation in October, but SNC not until the end of the year.

Roundtable

Rich Farrington – Really happy with how the TEK panel UMRWA Board meets this Friday via Zoom at 10am.

Nathaniel Ferneti - Detailed on FS Fuels 21 Division and just here to listen.

Ray Cablayan-

Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes April 20th, 2022, meeting in-person at Calaveras Ranger District office and via Zoom

- pre-bid tour recently for Arnold-Avery contracts for mastication;
- at forest level million awarded to STF from infrastructure bill; continuing hiring effort including on the district 15-18 positions (which doesn't include fire) some will close tomorrow;
- also changes at the forest level in leadership- Jason is on a temp assignment, so Beth Martinez is acting Forest Supervisor and Jeremiah Zomara (from Region 8) will be acting Deputy Forest Supervisor behind Beth, not starting until May;
- changes at regional level - Tony Scardina is leaving as Deputy Regional Forester for Chief of Staff, and will go and work in DC;
- fire and fuels staff hiring is occurring right now, and a few folks within the last month have resigned, so trying to fill vacancies and there might be several "unable to fill" positions - hopefully have one full module on the district – on engine 322 there are 2 permanents and trying to fill at least 5 positions on the engine

John Buckley – (1) great news about hiring more staff on Calaveras District and question becomes will there be qualified candidates; (2) presentation about SERAL and YSS at June 15th general meeting – this will be when we can talk about the funding coming in to the STF; (3) Big Trees SP meeting protective prescribed burning treatments are not planned in the South Grove yet, but will be a huge benefit to protect those old growth trees, but will be either later in April or in May and there may be partnership opportunities for these burn events; (4) Caitlyn Rich, former CSERC biologist, left for a new position in CO and CSERC's new Conservation Director, Tatiana Altman is starting next week and will be CSERC's key contact for ACCG and will be the key CSERC participant at ACCG meetings.

- Rich asked about a potential partnership between Calaveras RD and Big Trees SP. John added that it's still a conceptual idea, and that Ben Jacobs is probably a key contact for that. Ray's going to follow up with BGSP.

Megan Layhee - added whether BGSP is needing volunteers to help with tree prep for treatments – John added that they are not looking for volunteers at this time.

Richard Sykes – UMRWA supporting Plumas Corporation on WCB funded Mattley Meadows Project restoration, UMRWA is assisting with cost-share, that will be happening this summer. UMRWA's bigger effort right now is FPP. Still waiting to hear about the CAL FIRE Forest Health grant that UMRWA applied for.

Chuck Loffland – reiterated that there is a lot of hiring on the district for fire and recreation; positive comments are also really helpful for FPP – it does make a difference when we are looking to revise the project; FS is developing a plan for working back in the office, expectation of functioning district office this summer.

- John H. asked Chuck if FPP team has approached the Amador County BOS for a letter of support for the project?

Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes April 20th, 2022, meeting in-person at Calaveras Ranger District office and via Zoom

- Chuck said they were scoped, but not a direct conversation about get a LOS. Chuck and Richard will follow up.

Meredith Sierra – engaging on proposed Moke water battery project/pump storage project and formulating comments on that.

Sue Holper – asked if the panel was recorded. Megan said it was not.

George Dondero – became CHIPS’ Board Chair in January 2022 (Steve Wilensky is retiring from his CHIPS role) and CHIPS is losing a couple board members this year, so he asked to reach out to him if anyone was interested in filling that role (gdondero2@gmail.com)

Liz Meyer-Shields – largely back to BLM folks in the office, but most staff are still doing hybrid work format; public room will be open this summer; in terms of hiring, in the midst of seasonal hiring for fire, recreation and natural resources, but finding small candidate pools and not clear if they will fill all of the positions; new permanent Fuels Tech, starting this month, his name is Jorje Pachanka; Liz will be out this summer on maternity leave through mid-September, still working on identifying an acting Field Manager and will get that info to the ACCG once they know.

John Heissenbuttel – Amador FSC \$1.4 million SNC grant has been recommended called, Amador Stewardship Project, including BLM properties scattered throughout the county as anchor points for expanding to private lands; Cal Am Team/Calaveras RCD’s Bummerville project in Calaveras County is recommended for approval for SNC funding for over \$1 million for mastication work.

Meeting Participants

Count	Name	Affiliation	Time Committed to Meeting
1	Megan Layhee	ACCG Administrator (co-Meeting Facilitator) – in-person	3.0
2	Richard Sykes	UMRWA	3.0
3	Ray Cablayan	USFS STF, Calaveras RD– in-person	3.0
4	Meredith Sierra	Foothill Conservancy	3.0
5	Nathan Ferneti	USFS STF, Calaveras RD– in-person	3.0
6	John Heissenbuttel	Cal Am Team (Meeting Facilitator)	3.0
7	Rich Farrington	UMRWA Board– in-person	3.0
8	Megan Fiske	Foothill Conservancy	2.0
9	Linda Diesem	Private citizen	3.0
10	Liz Meyer-Shields	BLM Motherlode Field Office	3.0
11	Sue Holper	ACCG member	3.0

Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Notes April 20th, 2022, meeting in-person at Calaveras Ranger District office and via Zoom

12	Marcie Powers	CA Big Trees Association	2.0
13	Regine Miller	UMRWA, Landmark Environmental– in-person	3.0
14	John Buckley	CSERC – in person	2.5
15	Thurman Roberts	CHIPS, Guest Panelist and Panel Moderator	1.25
16	Ali Meyers-Knight	Guest panelist, Mechoopda Tribal member, Master TEK Practitioner	1.5
17	Meyo Marrufo	Guest panelist, tribal member with the Robinson Rancheria Band of Pomo Indians, Environmental Director for Guidiville Rancheria, Central CA Regional Tribal Operations Committee Member for the US EPA Region 9, CA Representative on the US EPA Tribal Caucus	1.5
18	Irvin Jim	Guest panelist, Chairman of the Hung A Lel Ti community of the Washoe tribe, EMT Firefighter for Alpine County, and District 3 Supervisor of Alpine County	1.5
19	George Dondero	CHIPS Board Chair	3.0
20	Gerald Schwartz	EBMUD	3.0
21	Matt Sjöholm	Blue Forest Conservation	1.5
22	Frank Axe	Amador County BOS District 4	1.5
23	Bud Hoekstra	Private citizen	1.5
24	Helen Loffland	Institute for Bird Populations	1.5
25	Hannah Hepner	CA State Parks	1.5
26	Alissa Fogg	Point Blue	1.5
27	Annapurna Holtzapple	Blue Forest Conservation	1.5
28	Jill Micheau	CHIPS	1.5