

AI Meeting Summary for ACCG FPA Ad Hoc

Nov 06, 2023

Meeting Summary Revisions and Improvements

John requested several changes to the Sept. meeting summary, including alterations to the wording and removal of certain points. He also clarified his stance on the Stanislaus Forest Supervisor's intent and the inconsistencies in the meeting notes. Lisa and Megan agreed to implement John's suggested changes to the summary. Chuck added a point about a crosswalk between the strategy and forest plan, which was included in the revised summary. The team also discussed the need for more accurate meeting summaries, which is to be considered in future meetings.

Habitat Requirements vs Territories: A Discussion on Protection and Suitability

Sue and Megan discussed two different approaches to providing habitat for a species. The Habitat Requirements Area approach identifies the best available habitat within a certain distance and quality of the activity center, while the Territories approach doesn't necessarily capture the best available habitat but is less subjective in evaluating habitat conditions. The team also discussed the constraints and complexities of managing habitats within a specified area. John asked for clarification on the extent of protection provided by a territory, which Sue clarified. Furthermore, the team discussed the difference in canopy closure between territories and core areas, and the suitability of habitat. The team also raised concerns about delineating a circle territory, which might exclude areas that should be protected.

2019 Conservation Strategy Discussion

John discussed the rationale behind the 2019 conservation strategy with the science members and Coordinator, Sarah Sawyer. The strategy aimed to allow for more aggressive treatments to reduce the risk of high-severity fires that could damage the essential medium to large tree component. The team also discussed the lack of evidence or analysis to support the claim that reducing fuel levels would reduce fire risk. Sue expressed her concern that the region did not have a science-based rationale for some of their adopted strategies. The team also discussed the impact of the Specific Forest Plan amendments on managing mature forests and the need to consider the impact on old forest species like Fisher, Martin, and Goss. Chuck understood the points Sue raised.

Territory Delineation and Habitat Preservation Discussion

Megan raised questions about the delineation of the Fpp phase 2 project, considering if the territory could be larger than a thousand acres and incorporate all the HRca that used to be delineated in that location. There was no formal decision, but John confirmed that it's possible to include areas outside the initial circular territory delineation. Kelsey expressed her opinion that it would be better to start with a circular territory and then adjust, while Chuck and Sue

preferred the current framework policies, which include home range core areas and higher percentage of protection. John proposed a new approach to habitat preservation, suggesting that instead of focusing on a specific acreage, they should aim to retain all contiguous suitable habitat that extends beyond the 1,000-acre circular territory. Megan and John sought Chuck's input on these proposals and asked Chuck and Kelsey to develop a modified territory approach that would allow for the inclusion of amoeba-like habitats outside of the circular territory boundary, while maintaining a minimum of 40-60% suitable habitat overall within the total territory. Chuck and Kelsey agreed to work on this and planned to include Sue in the conversation.

Project Timeline and Owl Strategy Discussion

Chuck, Kelsey, Megan, and John discussed their project timeline and agreed to work on a solution before their next meeting. They also talked about a rumored consistent spotted owl strategy for the region, which John questioned would make their project obsolete, but Chuck reassured them that it wouldn't be finalized in time for their project. The team agreed that their discussions would be valuable regardless. John humorously noted that Chuck and Kelsey might be working over the holidays instead of spending time with their families, to which Chuck confirmed that they would have something to present at the next meeting. Megan and Chuck discussed the potential usefulness of mapping out the best available habitat within a 1,000-acre circular territory, and Megan proposed to work on it independently if necessary, which Chuck agreed to. They also highlighted the need to answer questions about the impact of their project on the local habitat. Finally, Megan discussed the definition of highly suitable habitat, indicating a need to frame this conversation with the territory.

Survey Language and Project Discussions

Chuck suggested involving Sue in the discussion about surveys, and John noted that surveys were a topic of consensus in previous meetings. The group debated whether to revisit their decision on final surveys before contract treatment in a project area. Chuck proposed bringing the issue to the phase 2 team as their work area was too large for traditional surveys. The team agreed to bring the survey language to the ACCG in a separate document at their next meeting for further clarification. Megan, Chuck, John, and Lisa also discussed the pack retirement document and the language related to surveys within it. John suggested that Megan send the final version to Chuck and Kelsey for review. Megan also planned to bring both the pack retirement document and the Survey language to the ID team meeting for showcasing. The team also briefly discussed the process with the ACCG/Phase 2 team and potential controversies related to the Phase 2 project of the Forest Plan Amendments. John expressed his concerns about the scope of the Ad Hoc Committee, and Chuck suggested that the Planning Work Group could assign tasks to the Ad Hoc Committee. Megan proposed that the conversation should continue in the Planning Work Group setting in January, with several action items outlined for their January 8th meeting.

Next Steps

- Megan will work with Lisa to get the latest version of the survey language document.
- Megan, Chuck, and Kelsey will work on a modified territory approach for the January 8th ad hoc meeting.
- Megan will facilitate the January 8th ad hoc meeting. Chuck will back her up if she can't make it.

Attendees

- Lisa Lucke, Admn
- John Buckley, CSERC
- Chuck Loffland, USFS
- Kelsey Retich, USFS
- Sue Britting, Sierra Forest Legacy
- Megan Layhee, Consultant
- Luke Wagner, SPI
- Carinna Robertson, USFS