

# Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

Planning Work Group Hybrid Meeting Summary, 04/24/2024, [megan.layhee1@gmail.com](mailto:megan.layhee1@gmail.com)

## Meeting Brief

- UMRWA WCB Aspen Assessment and Restoration Project presentation and overview on project field-based aspen stand assessment, prioritization framework for restoration, and NEPA. Discussion on definition of treatable stands.
- Brief continued discussion on FPP Phase 2 potential herbicide uses.
- Upcoming General Meeting Topics.

## Action Items

Actions	Point Person(s)
Update March work group meeting summary to include Rich's comment on concern over potential herbicide uses in the FPP Phase 2 project to drinking water.	Lucke, Layhee
Post final versions of meeting agenda and last month's meeting summary after the above correction is made.	Lucke
UMRWA WCB Aspen Project team develop draft definitions for treatable stands, including buffers, and send to Planning work group in advance of the May work group meeting. Continue these discussions at the May Planning Work group meeting.	UMRWA WCB Aspen Team
Notify FPP Phase 2 team that Planning work group will host the June Stakeholder meeting	Layhee
FPP Phase 2 herbicide future work group discussions: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Potential impacts of herbicide application to drinking water supply</li><li>• Broadcast application specifications for fuelbreak maintenance: follow up with project team to provide more specificity on broadcast application, including for fuelbreak maintenance</li><li>• FPP Phase 2 fuelbreak network on a map, with acreages, and what proportion of the fuelbreak network would the ACCG support herbicide use for fuelbreak maintenance.</li></ul>	Layhee All

## Agenda Review, Meeting Summary Approval & Other Housekeeping

The Planning Work Group (WG) met via Zoom video-conference and in person at the Amador County Government Building in Jackson. The work group confirmed the April agenda. Modification of the March work group meeting summary will be made to include Rich's comments made during that meeting regarding his concerns of impacts of potential herbicide uses in FPP Phase 2 project on drinking water.

Group also heard a brief update on the Forest Plan Amendment (FPP Phase 2) Ad Hoc, including that they are continuing their discussions on developing draft recommendation for CSO territories for the FPP Phase 2 project and that the Ad Hoc has a special hybrid meeting this afternoon in the same in-person meeting location with Zoom option.

Group approved hosting the FPP Phase 2 Stakeholder meeting during their regularly scheduled June work group meeting on June 26<sup>th</sup> at 9am. More information to come on agenda topics.

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## UMRWA WCB Aspen Project

Key presentation and discussion topics:

- IBP field crew's work have mapped and delineated aspen stands 219 stands (861 acres) of aspen stands over the past years. A 100-foot distance between aspen stems to denote different stands, based on the established aspen protocol. And use of a rapid assessment and mapping protocol.
- Discussion on challenges associated with distinguishing between deer and livestock browse.
- Discussion on potential benefits of removing conifers for aspen stands and the importance of considering the size of the buffer around the aspen stands.
- Team provided overview of the prioritization framework for identifying stands for restoration using a suitability model following the framework established by SYRCL. Input from the ACCG will help further refine the prioritization framework. So, more to come on this.
- Overview of preliminary NEPA approach and propose actions:
  - Cover at least 300 acres for restoration.
  - Public scoping period anticipated for July 2024 and a final decision expected in November 2024.
- Discussion on definition of treatable stand:
  - Discussion on the approach of only adding buffers to the S south of stands for treatment. Also, discussion on example of including only stands that have a minimum number of trees/dbh, e.g., at least 3 trees with >6" dbh roughly in one tree length of each other.
  - Then suggestion was made to create a spectrum of buffer constraints based on aspen stand size (e.g., < 2-acre stand have perhaps a different buffer size than a stand that's large)
  - **Action item:** Project team will develop an initial draft treatable stand definitions (including buffers) in lieu of creating a new Ad Hoc, and will send this to the Planning work group to solicit feedback ahead of the May Planning work group meeting. Review feedback and continue discussions on defining treatable stands at the May Planning work group meeting.
- Discussion on nexus with FPP Phase 2 aspen restoration.
  - **Action item:** More discussion at future work group meeting on aspen stand restoration specs for WCB and FPP Phase 2 projects.

## Forest Projects Plan (FFP) Phase 2

Megan provided an overview of the project team changes to potential herbicide uses in the project based on the feedback received from the ACCG Planning work group so far, which

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includes removing herbicide use for reforestation, forest thinning maintenance, and broader roadside maintenance outside fuelbreak network.

Matt Brown provided context on how broadcast application would be used for invasive species management purposes under FPP Phase 2. Noted that a discussion would need to be had with Fires, Fuels Specialists on how broadcast application might be used for fuelbreak maintenance. Herbicide application for invasive species management would be for treatment of invasive plants at disturbed sites, including helipads, gravel landings, etc., via truck-mounted application with the applicator walking alongside truck and manual applying herbicide with a wand.

Concern was raised over boom spraying/industrial agriculture-type application methods.

Rich Farrington raised concerns about potential contamination of drinking water supply from use of herbicides in the project. Group agreed to continue this discussion on Rich's concern at a future Planning work group meeting.

**Action items:** Herbicides-specific topics to cover at future Planning work group meeting-

- Potential impacts of herbicide application to drinking water supply
- Broadcast application specifications for fuelbreak maintenance
- FPP Phase 2 fuelbreak network on a map, with acreages, and what proportion of the fuelbreak network would the ACCG support herbicide use for fuelbreak maintenance.

Marc Young raised a clarifying question about whether the FPP Phase 2 team is trying to get support from ACCG members, or from the larger environmental community. It was emphasized that the FPP Phase 2 team is looking to get support from the ACCG.

Group agreed to postpone their broader discussion on potential herbicide use alternatives for FPP Phase 2 with the full ACCG until the work group has had more time for discussions, and agreed to not go before the ACCG at the May general meeting, as originally planned.

## Other Topics

Group quickly reviewed upcoming general meeting guest presentations.

Next Planning work group meeting is May 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2024 via Zoom.

## Meeting Participants

#	Name	Affiliation
1	Lisa Lucke	ACCG Administrator
2	Megan Layhee	UMRWA, Meeting facilitator
3	Rich Farrington	UMRWA Board
4	John Buckley	CSERC
5	Chuck Loffland	ENF, Amador RD

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6	Stan Dodson	CSERC
7	Carinna Robertson	STF, Calaveras RD
8	Matt Brown	ENF
9	Helen Loffland	IBP
10	Regine Miller	UMRWA/Headwaters Environmental
11	Jason Kuiken	STF
12	Karen Quidachay	UMRWA/Landmark Environmental Inc.
13	Tom Hofstra	CSERC
14	Marc Young	ENF