

# Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group (ACCG)

General Meeting Brief Summary 4/17/2024, via Zoom and at Calaveras RD Office

## Meeting Brief

- Meeting facilitator: John Heissenbuttel
- Guest presentation: Dr. Alan Taylor, Penn State University, Severity patterns of the 2021 Dixie Fire and the need to increase low-severity fire treatments in California’s forests
- Roundtable
- Consensus item: ACCG Communication & Engagement Plan Revision
- Forest Projects Plan Phase 1 and Phase 2 Update
- Work group updates

## Action Items

Actions	Responsible Parties
Post final versions of meeting agenda and last month’s meeting summary to the ACCG website.	Lucke
Finalize ACCG C&E Plan and post to website.	Layhee, Lucke

## PRESENTATIONS

### “Severity patterns of the 2021 Dixie Fire and the need to increase low-severity fire treatments in California’s forests”

Presenter: Dr. Alan Taylor, Penn State Univ

Dr. Taylor discussed the historical and current fire patterns in California, emphasizing the need for increased low severity fire treatments. He highlighted the significant impact of human population growth and climate trends on fire activity, particularly in Mediterranean regions like California. Dr. Taylor further elaborated on the historical changes in fire activity, including the impact of social changes and climate, and the use of fire records to understand long-term patterns. The decline of native American populations and the implementation of fire suppression with European settlement, have significantly altered fire regimes.

Discussed the relationship between vegetation, fire, and the severity of wildfires, using the Dixie fire as a case study. He highlighted the role of different factors such as fuel, weather, topography, and past fire occurrences in predicting fire severity. Also emphasized the importance of prescribed fires and other fire management operations in reducing wildfire activity and promoting forest regeneration. He presented data showing that previous low-severity fires could lead to lower severity in future fires.

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There was a discussion after Dr. Taylor's presentation on made about the effectiveness of low mortality fire and mechanical treatments, with the suggestion that a possible shortening of mechanical -retreatments maybe needed for similar effectiveness.

There was a discussion after the presentation on the size and historical context of the Dixie fire, the use of the natural range of variation (NRV) and stand density index (SDI) as planning tools, and the need for humility when addressing the variability of the landscape. Dr. Taylor emphasized the importance of using low severity fire to maintain desired conditions and mitigate challenges of climate change, while cautiously noting its limitations.

### ROUNDTABLE

Rich Farrington-UMRWA quarterly Board Meeting coming up on April 26<sup>th</sup>. Board will be approving grant execution of SNC 1636 (Phase 1B-Birch project) and SNC 146 grant (Phase 2 Planning).

Chuck Loffland- update on the status of the potential CA spotted owl listing and that the Forest is in the process of compiling data on projects that will go into the Batch 1 processing by FWS.

Carinna Robertson – provided a status update on a pre-application she submitted for FPP Phase 2 planning funds to the FS CWRRP RFP. Should know by next month if the team can submit a full application.

Steve Brink- Large (26 million board feet) timber sale soon on the Tahoe NF. Eli Alano had moved to the Washington Office.

Amanda Watson- joint project with the FS and NRCS to secure funding for provide property owners to conduct fuels reduction work within the WUI adjacent to FS lands.

### DISCUSSIONS

#### **Consensus item: ACCG Communication Engagement Plan Revision**

Presenters: Megan Layhee

Group reviewed the latest version of the draft revised ACCG Communication & Engagement Plan the Admin work group has been developing. There was track changes made to Section II under the Capacity Support to Partners. “/from” was added to the statement, along with “to/” in the next line. After the modification was made, the plan was approved by the ACCG.

#### **FPP Phase 1 and Phase 2 Update**

Presenters: Megan Layhee

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Megan provided updates on Phase 1 including continuing implementation of the Phase 1 88 project, contracted to Burnbot, which is expected to resume once snow melts off, about 2,056 acres left to complete. UMRWA just submitted a grant application to WCB for just under \$7M for the Phase 1C-Cedar project, which is just over 1,800 acres. RFPs for both Phase 1A-Arbor and Phase 1B-Birch projects, totaling just over 4,000 acres, are expected to be released at the end of May, and anticipate contracts to be awarded and work to start in August. For Phase 2, the NOI is currently in review by the Region and expected to go to the Washington Office by the end of the month. Public scoping is anticipated to begin late June 2024. Modeling is still ongoing.

## WORK GROUP UPDATES

- Planning work group: Megan Layhee provided the update. The work group is continuing discussions on FPP Phase 2 planning related topics in March, including herbicides. The group will be shifting discussions for their April meeting to hear from the UMRWA WCB Aspen project team on an update on the project and to get initial feedback on project topics.
- Forest Plan Amendments (FPP Phase 2) Ad Hoc: Megan provided the update. The Ad Hoc is continuing development of draft recommendations for CSO territories for the FPP Phase 2 project. The expect to bring those draft recommendations to the full ACCG soon for consensus support.
- Monitoring Work Group: Chuck Loffland gave the update. At their April meeting, the work group continued discussions on FPP Phase 1, Phase 2 Monitoring program, including provided final comments for the UMRWA CAL FIRE FHRP grant application that was submitted last week.

**Next general meeting:** May 15th hybrid via Zoom and in person at the Amador RD office in Pioneer.

## Meeting Participants

Count	Name	Affiliation
1	Lisa Lucke	ACCG Administrator (in person)
2	Tom Hofstra	CSERC (in person)
3	Stan Dodson	CSERC (in person)
4	Carinna Robertson	USFS, STF Calaveras RD (in person)
5	Megan Layhee	UMRWA (in person)
6	Chuck Loffland	USFS, ENF Amador RD (in person)

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7	Ray Cablayan	USFS, STF Calaveras RD (in person)
8	John Heissenbuttel	Heissenbuttel Natural Resource Consulting, Cal-Am Team
9	Rich Farrington	AWA, UMRWA Board Member
10	Steve Brink	California Forestry Association
11	Amanda Watson	Amador FSC/RCD
12	Zach Browning	Sierra Institute
13	Linda Diesem	Private citizen
14	Sue Holper	ACCG member, private citizen
15	Dr. Alan Talyor	Penn State University, Guest presenter