

Meeting Synopsis:

On Monday, November 14th, 2016 the Burney-Hat Creek Community Forest Group met for a full-group meeting. The group discussed the Washington Office review team visit from October, 2016 and how that experience may influence future project planning. The group began to outline specific next-steps to implement short and long term goals determined through a visioning exercise from a previous meeting. Monitoring questions were presented to the group for review. Alternative funding sources were discussed as they relate to ongoing projects and new planning efforts.

Meeting Attendees

Deb Cesmat	Dave Hays	John Owen
Michelle Coppoletta	Kristy Hoffman	Patricia Puterbaugh
Don Curtis	Peter Johnson	Todd Sloat
Linn Gassaway	Bobette Jones	Karol Thornton
Ann Grasso	Jonathan Kusel	Shawn Wheelock
Ryan Hadley	Dale Newby	

Action Items

- **J. Owen** to revise Washington Office Visit notes to accurately describe monitoring activities. **DONE**
- **Sierra Institute** to provide information to CFLR coalition for support of the fire funding sign-on letter to congress. **DONE**
- **K. Hoffman** to send out information on Federal Lands Access Program. **DONE**
- **D. Hays** to contact forest planner regarding attendance at BHC group meeting.

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Approval/Modifications

- The group approved the meeting notes from September 26, 2016.
- The Washington Office Visit notes from October 6, 2016 were approved with two modifications to the Eiler Fire monitoring section:
 - Monitoring activities include enhancing and monitoring the existing baker cypress and does not include planting as described in the notes.
 - Soil monitoring activities are utilizing aerial photography, not remote sensing as described in the notes.
 - **Action Item:** J. Owen to make revisions to the Washington Office Visit notes.
- The group approved the November agenda.

Washington Office Visit summary and next steps

- “Desired outcomes” was discussed extensively during the WO visit. Also, there was a general understanding amongst participants (collaborative and USFS) that underburning was an essential component to achieving desired outcomes.
- B. Jones discussed a new mapping tool that is being developed by Danny Cluck, USFS entomologist; it will be used for guiding restoration treatments in light of tree mortality. The tool is currently being ground truthed and calibrated.
- P. Puterbaugh mentioned a discussion of restocking guidelines. Are the guidelines outdated?
 - P. Johnson stated that stocking standards are subject to management and there is some flexibility. Stand Density Index (SDI) is a measurement used to guide stocking and planting. P. Johnson and others agreed that the ideal SDI in the Burney-Hat Creek CFLR should be lower (more open stands).
- It was noted that SDI is a valuable measurement in terms of private land stocking standards; it can be used to assess the amount and value of wood products. SDI is not used as heavily in restoration treatments but is an effective guideline.
- For reforestation activities, the planting and stocking standards will be addressed in the parent documents.
- M. Copolleta noted that the current SDI within the CFLR may be too high for the current climate. Also, SDI is not a “one size fits all measurement” and will not address a diverse range of forest functions.
- D. Curtis discussed prescribed fire. The USFS Washington representatives recognize its value; are there actions that can be taken to increase the use of this tool?
 - T. Puterbaugh mentioned Sierra Forest Legacy and their efforts to engage regional air quality boards on the issue of prescribed fire. This is something that the group could get involved with to address the barriers to implementing prescribed fire.
- D. Newby, USFS fuels officer, agreed that the current system for authorizing prescribed fires limits its effectiveness. The windows of opportunity are small and different counties have

different standards on any given day. That said, LNF has a good working relationship with the Air Quality Management District in Redding, CA.

- The group inquired about LNF leadership's perspective on the WO visit.
 - A. Grasso said that the review team was pleased with the direction of the CFLR. They were also impressed with the organization of the tour and presentations given by LNF staff and Collaborative members.
 - D. Hays agreed and added that the one WO representative who had visited previously (2014) was pleased with the direction of the CFLR.
- R. Hadley discussed a conversation regarding the complexity of landscape scale projects, particularly documentation (NEPA); the prospect of exploring alternative resources for NEPA services was discussed during the WO visit but no follow-up actions identified.
- It was noted that the Eiler Fire salvage plan was written by Eagle Lake District staff. B. Jones added that Eagle Lake District has moved to an all-forest approach over a district approach. However, crossing jurisdictional boundaries, even within the National Forest System, is difficult. Certain federal systems in place, grants and agreements for example, create challenges across boundaries.
- Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) was discussed as a way to accomplish work across boundaries. J. Kusel mentioned Burney Gardens as an example of how this type of work can be accomplished. The suggestion was made to look at a map of the CFLR and identify areas where GNA might be applied.
- R. Hadley discussed the Sluicebox project. Initially the project was going to be an integrated timber contract but it may not be a service contract. The group would like to know what influence they have on specifying the parameters for the Sluicebox project contract.

Outcomes from the SCALE Meeting

- Local contracting is Sierra Institute's initiative to understand and utilize the USFS contracting mechanisms to benefit local economies. Sierra Institute has been working directly with USFS Acquisitions Management (AQM) to advance these goals.
- At some point, Pierce Tucker, AQM Director for Region 5, will give a presentation to the BHC Collaborative regarding the rollout of the local contracting initiative.
- A group member mentioned that within the BHC CFLR, there are rarely crews (hand treatment crews) available for the work; they often come from a great distance to accomplish the required work.
 - J. Kusel replied that all contracted parties will still need to perform the work. The goal is to preference local contractors when they are available and capable of completing the necessary tasks.
- J. Kusel mentioned one of the key outcomes of the SCALE meeting. Sierra Institute has entered into a partnership with the National Forest Foundation to hold a multi-day meeting focusing on all-lands work. There will be SCALE funding available to support collaborative members participating in the meeting.
- T. Sloat is hoping that the issues that have come up in the Crossroads project may be discussed. Particularly the challenges of coordinating work on adjacent, non-USFS land.
- SCALE groups gave feedback on the topics they would like discussed at an all-lands meeting. Those results are available in a two-page synopsis. Action Item: J. Owen to send out the SCALE synopsis of next steps.

Monitoring Working Group Recommendations, Review of Monitoring Questions

- Last year, there was a webinar held for group members to present the monitoring activities planned or ongoing for the following year. The group decided that a similar webinar/presentation would be beneficial for FY 2017.
- Finalizing the monitoring questions is somewhat time sensitive. The monitoring plan needs to be in the budget for FY 2017
- B. Jones has been working with the Pacific Southwest Research Station (PSW) on planting strategies for the Eiler Fire restoration.
- There is NEPA documentation for the Big Lake project. There is some concern with Salamanders; D. Newby and his crew are required to burn piled material within seven days to avoid taking the animals. Part of the ongoing monitoring plan for Salamanders is the use of drift fence to deter their movement to hazardous areas.
- There is an ongoing issue with acquiring and managing labor for monitoring crews. This might be a good opportunity to utilize partnerships to form external monitoring crew. Once the 2017 monitoring plan is developed, there should be a plan to incorporate partnerships.
- University partnerships and citizen science efforts were mentioned as potential opportunities. The bottom line is there is a range of skills required depending on the monitoring requirements.

Group Visioning Overview

- Restoring the Hat Creek and Cave campgrounds, along with the Subway Cave entrance, are “big ticket” items in the FY 2017 Program of Work.
 - J. Kusel noted that it is really useful to talk about numbers when talking about short term goals.

1-2 Year Goals

- J. Kusel asked what is it going to take to get the Crossroads project finished; Crossroads is considered one of the most important 1-2 year goals for group members.
 - A. Grasso indicated that there are still time constraints for the project, particularly for wildlife surveys. The hope is that the documentation is signed between July and August, 2017.
 - Crossroads will utilize CFLR dollars, but there is a hope to find and leverage funds from other areas to implement the project.
- The question of the group’s role in Interdisciplinary Team (IDT) meetings was raised. Ideally, Collaborative members will be able to give input to the IDT team to develop treatments for Crossroads.
 - It was stated that the new Partnership Coordinator will be the IDT leader for Crossroads. The Partnership Coordinator will essentially be a direct line for Collaborative members to get involved with IDT planning.
 - When the Crossroads IDT team is selected, they will go out on a field tour and begin the scoping process.
 - T. Sloat recommended that the IDT meeting notes be made available to group members.
 - C. Danheiser will take a detail in the Almanor Ranger District and will not be serving on the IDT team. There is an individual hired to fill her position in the meantime.
- J. Kusel asked if there are any candidate projects that may address the group’s goal of incorporating heterogeneity and resilience into forest management.
 - There are two projects that may accomplish this goal – Crossroads and Big Lake.

- The group inquired about the planned and ongoing recreation projects. What is their status and are there any issues implementing them? A. Grasso indicated that even the anticipated “quick wins” seemed difficult in light of staffing levels. That said, USFS is moving ahead with restoring campsites and addressing parking issues to mitigate resource damage; these initiatives have a significant cost – approximately \$50k.
- Are there any steps towards increasing or defining a salvage program from beetle related tree mortality?
 - USFS has opened up certain areas for community members to salvage firewood. PG&E is also making a significant effort to salvage throughout their ownership.
- The group has expressed interest in collaborating on restoration with McArthur-Burney Falls Memorial State Park (State Park). L. Martin, State Park representative, mentioned that they are in conversations with the State Parks forester to focus on projects within the park, particularly Castle Crags.
- The group discussed getting youth involved in restoration projects. LNF had a small Youth Conservation Corps (YCC) crew previously, and there is interest to fund that initiative again. Sierra Institute also has a youth stewardship program currently operating in Plumas County; LNF expressed interest in extending that program to Lassen as well.

3-5 Year Goals

- J. Kusel inquired about biomass (i.e. wood utilization). Is there anything the group can do to influence wood utilization efforts?
 - It was stated that the local bioenergy plants have started to take biomass again; this comes after a near shut-down of the plants over the summer.
- T. Sloat updated the group on the Fall River Resource Conservation District RCD activities related to wood utilization. The RCD is advocating for 3-3.5 MW biomass facilities in the area. One of the proposed projects, Hat Creek, is CEQA approved and there is a vendor selected to provide the technology. There are two other proposed locations in McArthur and Burney. The Hat Creek Power Purchase Agreement (PPA) is expected to be signed in Fall 2017 – to be installed and operational within another two years. T. Sloat estimates the Hat Creek project will accept approximately 1,000 trucks/year of material.
- A question arose concerning the impact that small scale (3-5 MW) facilities will have on the biomass market; will the small facilities accept material outside of their internal forest products operations?
 - T. Sloat said that the small scale facilities will accept more material than is generated on site. The small scale facilities are more feasible, at this time, than large scale due to potential power purchase opportunities.
- Lassen and Modoc National Forests have hired a forest planner for the Forest Plan Revision. **Action Item: D. Hays** to contact Forest Planner regarding attendance at group meeting.
- The group discussed a watershed-scale monitoring approach. It was stated that national monitoring indicators require a watershed-scale analysis; although, it is a coarse analysis and sensitive to change.
 - For the CFLR, it would make sense to build on the Hat Creek and Burney Creek watershed analyses that have been completed.
- The group discussed projects outlined in the CFLR proposal, particularly Badger, Dutch, and Snow Mountain. A portion of the Badger area was impacted by the Reading fire in 2012 - Dutch was subject to wildfire as well. Is there an opportunity to revisit these projects collaboratively?

- T. Puterbaugh would like to start planning another large project and utilize the new mapping tool when it is available. There may be some tension due to the complexity of the projects mentioned but that should not dissuade the group.
 - J. Kusel alluded to the early stages of Crossroads, where the group said “let’s go” despite the perceived challenges.
- A Grasso mentioned “Lost Creek Plantation” as a potential area for a Categorical Exclusion (CE). The area is mostly within the Badger project boundaries.
- Recreation and improvement projects were discussed briefly. There are plans to restore a snowmobile are, but they are looking for further grant funds to subsidize the cost. There is vista point restoration that is also being planned.
- The group discussed implementing the goals outlined in the visioning. J Kusel asked if there is value in a subcommittee dedicated to pursue grant funding.
 - T. Sloat volunteered to participate in the subcommittee.

CFLR Annual Report

- The CFLR report is nearing completion but requires a description of work completed within the CFLR on non-federal lands. A. Grasso requested a description of acreage and dollar amount associated with any relevant project within the CFLR.
 - L. Martin asked if hazardous tree removal should be included in the report. The answer is yes.
- CAL FIRE had a significant project in Johnson Park. They had built piles in the spring and have been burning them this season.
- A. Grasso asked that project descriptions be forwarded to Greg Mayer or the Sierra Institute before November 23, 2016.

Fire Funding Sign-on Letter

- The CFLR Coalition has circulated a sign-on letter concerning fire funding and the negative impacts current policies have on land management programs.
- After a brief discussion, the group agreed to add the BHCCFWG to the list of organizations endorsing the letter.
- **Action Item:** **Sierra Institute** to provide information to CFLR coalition for support of the fire funding sign-on letter to congress.

Identification and Prioritization of Future Meeting Topics

- Tribal Consultation for grants
- Outreach Subgroup Update
- NRCS and CAL FIRE Funding Opportunities

- L. Martin announced an opportunity to contribute to the State Park newsletter in January 2017. The newsletter is distributed to all visitors. Lassen National Park has a newsletter as well, which would also be distributed to their visitors. **Future Meeting Topic**
- K. Hoffman discussed the Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Proposition 1 grants. There will be no solicitation in March 2017, but there is an opportunity to submit a proposal in September 2017; it is recommended to start the proposal process in June 2017
- K. Hoffman also discussed the Federal Lands Access Program. It is funding for rehabilitation/engineering of federal lands. There has been an announcement already made in

Arizona, and another is expected for California in January. **Action Item:** **K. Hoffman** to send out information on Federal Lands Access Program.

- P. Johnson mentioned a federal grant for community forests. The grant requires a fee land acquisition for a community forest; in other words, there needs to be property available for purchase.

Next Meeting, Closing Remarks

- Monday, January 9th was selected as the date for the next full-group meeting.
- The group expressed their appreciation for Ann Grasso's contributions to the Collaborative; she will no longer be serving as District Ranger for Hat Creek.