

Meeting Synopsis

The Burney Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed Group (BHCCFWG) met in July to advance strategic planning discussions, which explored different mechanisms on how to most effectively advance projects while considering pace, scale, money, and people. Members provided project updates, including news that planning for Crossroads and implementation at Manzanita Chutes will move forward under a Stewardship Agreement with the Mule Deer Foundation. A Truckee-based GIS firm, 34 North, presented on GIS services that could help BHCCFWG think through ways GIS could benefit strategic planning and advance the group's desire to increase GIS capacity. Garrett Costello provided information and ideas about current and possible recreation projects. The group approved an update to the CFLR ecological monitoring plan, and Michelle Coppoletta provided a socioeconomic monitoring update regarding the new agreement with the Sierra Institute. Strategic Planning discussions will continue with a newly formed strategic planning subcommittee, to meet prior to the next full group meeting.

Attendees

Janine Book
Kaily Bourg
Michelle Coppoletta
Garret Costello
Max Haney
Pete Johnson (phone attendee)

Jonathan Kusel
Trish Ladd
Andrew Lee
Greg Mayer
Jeff Oldson
Amye Osti (phone attendee)

Dave Osti (guest presenter)
Brendan Palmieri (phone attendee)
Nate Rezeau
Mary Rickert
Hilary Sanders
Todd Sloat

Action Items

- **M. Coppoletta** to send **K. Bourg** corrected number regarding the moonlight fire on the May 2018 meeting notes. **Done**
- **T. Ladd** to share map of work completed north of the park on 89.
- **M. Rickert** to bring 'fire extinguisher in cars' idea to the county fire chief.
- **T. Sloat** to send memo to **J. Kusel**. **Done**
- **K. Bourg** to schedule a Strategic Planning Subcommittee conference call before the next full group meeting. **Done**
- **M. Coppoletta** to pass ecological monitoring plan to **J. Book** for approval. **Done**
- **J. Book** to send invite to the spotted owl meeting between the Forest Service and SPI to **M. Coppoletta**.
- **M. Coppoletta** to notify the BHC group of the date of the tour at Whittington on managing different species in the face of high severity fire. **Done**
- **K. Bourg** to add Beatty to the partners list on the Sierra Institute website. **Done**
- **M. Coppoletta** to develop a map for the next meeting to aid in strategic planning.
- **K. Bourg** to send out a query to group for data to be displayed on map. **Done**
- **All** to begin gathering items to send to **G. Mayer** for the CFLR Annual Report before November.
- **K. Bourg** to send a doodle poll to schedule the next full group meeting. **Done**

Meeting Notes

Introduction/Approvals

- All provided introductions, including a few new faces in the room: Nate Rezeau, acting Forest Supervisor on the Lassen National Forest; Mary Rickert, Shasta County Supervisor; Max Haney, new representative Sierra Pacific Industries; David Osti, presenter from 34 North; and Hilary Sanders, Sierra Institute staff.
- The July 2018 agenda was approved.
- March 2018 meeting notes were approved.
- May 2018 meeting notes were approved with modifications. **Action Item:** K. Bourg to follow up with M. Coppoletta regarding the May meeting notes modification.

Project and Partner Updates

J. Kusel opened the meeting by proposing to spend time on strategic planning before and after lunch starting at landscape level and moving to the project level, but first proceeded with project and partner updates.

Crossroads and Manzanita Chutes Update

- G. Mayer said the Mule Deer Foundation was signed to move forward with a Stewardship Agreement (SA) for planning at Crossroads and implementation at Manzanita Chutes. He did not get a big game grant and is looking for ways to leverage the couple hundred thousand dollars already available.
- T. Sloat said that the Crossroads PAPN is tasked for September with effects analysis, either CE or EA, in winter and release to public in 2019. The Forest Service added Forest Health dollars to SNC for planning with the exception of the Forest Service doing PAPN.
- G. Mayer added that an engineer is starting on a level 1 Forest Service road open for project work only. It is a big project so he is hoping to get more money. The plantations on the west side are against SPI land and include part of the Tehama deer herd area.
- J. Book pointed out that the archaeological survey remains outstanding work, but the Forest Service may have the capacity to do it by moving personnel over from Plum project when finished. She also commented that the spring report may not be final but was optimistic a draft would be done.
- G. Mayer confirmed the bird surveys were completed.

Plum Project Update

- G. Mayer said Plum is moving forward. Specialist reports should be done by September and he is hoping to have NEPA completed in the spring. They are starting to lay out the service work for the project, looking at water data and hand thinning work, and what is needed to put out contracts in the spring. The scoping document had been stalled but once that got out things started moving again. The public was fairly supportive. He is hoping to spend \$800,000 on service work next year. If CFLR dollars are spent to get expensive work done then Stewardship Contract timber sales can be used for more Stewardship Contracts.
- J. Kusel asked if there were barriers to a signature on this project. J. Book replied that it may depend on public reaction, and that going through the collaborative process has helped. She expressed concern that streamlining NEPA will initially slow the process down because they will need consensus on what the report will look like, but agreed that they are in good shape to sign off on the project in early spring.

BURNEY-HAT CREEK COMMUNITY FOREST & WATERSHED GROUP
MEETING NOTES; THURSDAY, JULY 26, 2018; 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

- The Sierra Nevada framework allows trees up to 30 inches and 20 in certain areas and there is some disagreement about what size should be kept. There is also some disagreement over buffer zones around PACs. G. Mayer said that PACs are already buffer zones around nest sites and expressed concerns that the untreated areas of PACs pose a fire risk. G. Mayer added that Trish is on board for the most part.
- G. Mayer explained that thinning is expensive because many acres must be hand thinned. In one area they could not thin so they did burn prep cutting ladder fuels. This year it was \$700 per acre whereas last year it was \$300. At Big Lake the contractors wanted \$2000 per acre so the Forest Service is planning to use its own crews.
- T. Sloat asked if Plum is using Stewardship Contracts or Stewardship Agreements and G. Mayer clarified that it is using Integrated Resource Timber Contracts (IRTCs) with the goal to use retained receipts across the district.
- M. Coppoletta said that Big Lake salamander monitoring partners are depending on this 35-acre block being treated so Melanie and others are working on getting it hand thinned. She said they are hoping to do it internally and asked for any innovative ideas to implement this fall.
- J. Book said they have \$25,000 which is enough if someone would do it on a budget but not enough to meet the going rate. T. Sloat added that the time sensitivity (by November) is driving the price up. G. Mayer added that there is less competition because they cannot pull crews off of fires.
- J. Kusel shifted the conversation to partner opportunities with Caltrans. As a result of a SCALE meeting, a high-ranking official began a conversation about thinning on road corridors at the Lassen Volcanic National Park. Steve Buckley is the contact.
- T. Ladd said Caltrans is starting August 20. Caltrans wants to drop and leave trees so she is working on utilizing the material. In response to questions about the width of the strip, she said it will be determined by whether a tree can hit the highway.
- G. Mayer asked about a particular dying tree at the PCT trailhead. He said the USFS bought a mill and now that they are getting requests for lumber from other places they need to figure out how to haul. He said that an agreement is in place from when Jerry Bird signed an MOU with Caltrans.

Presentation by 34 North

D. Osti of 34 North gave a presentation of the Open NRM online data platform. Open NRM compiles data, and displays it on an online dashboard. It can aggregate data and pull from other databases, and can also host data if necessary. The website display is not hard coded but is dynamic so it can be easily used and changed. All data is geocoded and searchable, graphs are interactive, and GIS layers have captions that link to information elsewhere on the website. Everything is downloadable.

- The purpose of the program is to bring data together to tell a story. The technology allows users to dig into the local level. 34 North has worked with the Fish and Wildlife Service to disseminate real time information on fish trawls and helped develop Bay Delta Live as a central platform for agencies to easily use and understand water dynamics and other data in the delta.
- The USBR uses the platform to collect warmth and salinity monitoring data from sensors, model on a desktop, and then upload to the online dashboard. It can collect remote sensor data for LiDar, forest health, and more and combine with current GIS inventory or add to inventory.
- Websites can be open to private parties or the public. Often websites will be completely password protected so data can be uploaded and shared within the group, then published to a dashboard on

another website. The company is planning the release of iPhone and Android apps in the near future.

- M. Coppoletta asked if people can upload their own data. D. Osti replied that 34 North would upload large amounts of data, such as the initial upload of past years' data, and they could set it up so that small pieces of data could be added.
- A. Osti explained the process for setting up Open NRM for Butte County. She said they already have most of the data. The next step is to add metadata. Then project prioritization criteria and geoprocessing for project prioritization will be added. The phase after that is to create a public safety template that shows areas, treatment info, and more.
- M. Coppoletta inquired about the business model of the company. D. Osti and A. Osti explained that the process is front loaded to get all the data uploaded and set up. After that, many clients can become independent depending on their capacity to manage the platform based on templates and workflows developed. There is a monthly fee for hosting, but no cost for access or use so the benefit of added data is distributed.
- J. Kusel asked for an informal estimate. A. Osti said that having BHC as a subdomain of the Sacramento River would be \$30,000-\$50,000 for set up and \$500-\$1,500 monthly. T. Sloat suggested discussing the option in the strategic planning section of the meeting and prompted the group to think about whether they want to wait and see how it works in Butte County where it is being implemented or just dive in and try it.

Recreation Projects

G. Costello updated the group on recreation project progress.

- G. Costello is working to gather trail information and compile pictures, difficulty descriptions, and complete a map started for RCD to put on the Forest Service website.
- G. Costello is working with Janine, Tammy, and CalTrans for vista point interpretive signs and a kiosk.
- Homeless camps and bacteria in the water are creating challenges in the Burney Creek area. Collaboration with tribe to start a trail system would get people out in the area and help discourage homeless camps.
 - M. Rickert found out that the California Water Quality Control Board, not the county, has jurisdiction over bacterial contamination in the creek. Shasta County is working on a jail diversion facility as an alternative to jail and traditional homeless shelters so that law enforcement will have somewhere to direct the homeless.
 - G. Costello added that the homeless are associated with fire and water issues. Leave No Trace education could address the impacts of homeless camps.
- Heart Lake, a National Scenic Trail, needs thinning, brush work, trail work, and signage.
- There is an idea to go after money for a recreation plan to lay out projects and strategies and assemble a technical team.
- Shasta County Waste Management may provide half the money for recycling bins in Lassen Volcanic National Park.
- People driving on the Great Shasta Rail Trail due to construction. Once the Stand By Me Bridge is open the whole trail will be open.
- GSRT vision is to have mountain bike trails.
- Local stewardship: adopting PCT miles through PCTA, promoting fire extinguishers in every vehicle
 - G. Costello and his wife have adopted 10 miles of the PCT

- G. Mayer emphasized need to clear brush, especially around conifers along trails.

Strategic Planning: Thinking at a Landscape Level

J. Kusel mentioned the group's previous strategic planning conversations, including various dotting exercises to identify guiding principles and practice priorities. More coherence to the strategic plan is needed.

- The group looked at a map (developed by Danny Cluck) displaying areas of high risk for beetle mortality, representing high priority areas for stand reduction treatments, and a map of the CFLR landscape displaying project boundaries and fire footprints through 2014. G. Mayer noted that 25% of the Hat Creek District burned in the last 15-16 years. J. book recognized that the CFLR projects closely match with the high-risk beetle mortality areas.
- The group recognized the need to continuously respond at an increased pace and scale, as the current work does not come close to addressing the need that is out there.
- J. Kusel posed the questions: Is there sufficient coverage with the projects? Do timing challenges influence the desired project coverage?
- G. Mayer remarked that the group is in a better place now than two years ago, considering the stewardship agreement with Mule Deer foundation and new hires on the Hat Creek Ranger District. Plum looks good; there will be funding for silviculture for Badger next year; North 49 is getting close; NEPA is getting closer to being done for Four Corners; and there is possibility to use money from Plum to do Backbone.
- J. Kusel acknowledged there is general consensus in the group to get pace and scale moving, and there are a couple different strategies being discussed.
- J. Book suggested that the group might consider a strategic plan focused on process and the "how" component rather than a broad approach tied to a map.

The group discussed two mechanisms in moving projects with timber sales forward: 1) through an SA and 2) through an IRCT. T. Sloat asked about IRCTs and acknowledged that if we want more pace, we need more money and more people. T. Sloat suggested the mechanism moving projects forward through an SA. G. Mayer discussed using both an SA and IRCT.

Mechanism I: Move all projects with a timber sale through an SA to generate more nonfederal money.

- SAs have the potential to attract more money from nonfederal entities (e.g., private entities and/or NGOs). If using green sales in an SA, funding will likely be maximized. Partners working with an SA can distribute money differently than the FS.
- Some view this mechanism as having the potential to be exclusionary of Forest Service personnel.
- T. Sloat explained how non-federal dollars are attracted in utilizing an SA: If you attach future value (i.e., green timber sales) to the SA, that value can be leveraged. For example, a partner or consultant might complete NEPA if the cost is promised reimbursement from the future green sale value.

Mechanism II: Move multiple projects forward through both SA and IRTC. Utilize all the resources available.

- Receipts from a sale through an IRTC can be used anywhere on the district and can be put into an SA then into another project.

BURNEY-HAT CREEK COMMUNITY FOREST & WATERSHED GROUP
MEETING NOTES; THURSDAY, JULY 26, 2018; 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

- G. Mayer is concerned with how to most effectively leverage FS employees. To his understanding, using an SA cuts out the Forest Service personnel. Under an SA, the Forest Service hands the work off to the partner.
 - G. Mayer clarified that the Forest Service doesn't have to hand off the work, but is typically more inclined to do so. The district will not hire new staff if there are no projects in the queue that utilize Forest Service staff.
- Using both an SA for one project and an IRTC for another would utilize both sets of people to work toward the common goal.
- For example: Under an IRTC (e.g., Sluice Box), the Forest Service would plant a timber sale, which would provide funding for another project (e.g., Backbone). If collaborative partners are doing a sale under an SA and the Forest Service is doing one under an IRTC, the money from the two sales can go into another project.

G. Mayer points out the need to see how the process works by piloting simple projects through these different mechanisms (i.e., Crossroads is simple NEPA, Manzanita Chutes is simple implementation). If the process works, it can be replicated, and the money from sales can be put into Backbone.

The group expressed some confusion over the limitations of pursuing the SA regarding limitations.

- G. Mayer clarified the SA's implications on environmental planning for the Forest Service. The Forest Service has to retain active projects in a queue in order to maintain staff and personnel.
- T. Sloat reassured that in an SA, the only thing changes is how the money flows—staff will continue to do the work. T. Sloat re-emphasized that adding projects to an SA attracts private or NGO dollars for another project, noting that it is risky to attract federal dollars.
- N. Rezeau discussed the Forest Service's challenge with capacity and acknowledged the ownership that Forest Service staff and specialists can have over projects. N. Rezeau noted that a culture shift in the agency is needed in order to most effectively leverage planning dollars and third-party capacity.
- J. Book added that once the agency gains experience and familiarity with executing a sale through an SA, the district would not be opposed to replicating the process.
- The group discussed how the Plum project might fit into an SA, but determined that further conversation is needed. **Future Meeting Topic**

Climate Change Initiative (CCI) Update

- J. Oldson asked about the CCI proposal status. T. Sloat provided an update: The Fall River RCD was requested to take next steps, but were unable to submit the application. There was too little time to complete the necessary modeling components.
- T. Sloat and J. Kusel discussed the CCI program's interest in involving private land and industry in the spending or benefit of funds. It's necessary to involve industry in the planning process.

Strategic Planning: Operating at a Project Level

The group looked over a list of CFLR projects. The list, pieced together by K. Bourg, is incomplete, but reflects NEPA decisions, proposed dates, and timelines.

- From a strategic planning standpoint, the list can aid with prioritization.

BURNEY-HAT CREEK COMMUNITY FOREST & WATERSHED GROUP
MEETING NOTES; THURSDAY, JULY 26, 2018; 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

- Someone clarified that “award” means that Forest Service has awarded the contract.
- If an NGO, for example, has money to advance a project, the group should identify a project that can move forward with a CE.
 - A larger project might be Backbone. A smaller project might be the Black Ranch Meadow Restoration. Burney Creek (2.5 miles of stream) could be a small CE.
 - J. Oldson mentioned that land owners are concerned with Black Ranch Forest Lands.
- Someone raised the point that where people live should be the group’s concentration. Someone asked about Soldier Meadows.
- The goal for Crossroads is to be done by next spring. The group might consider next steps to look for another Farm Bill CE (perhaps Backbone?). Whittington and Backbone both have challenges associated. Some asked, can we do a CE on Black Ranch?
- What is an area that doesn’t need a landscape level project – strictly insect and disease?
- Backbone could utilize Good Neighbor Authority (GNA). Forest Service is hoping to bring on another partner with Backbone.
- Burney Gardens has good but not final news.
- J. Kusel posed the question, is there strategic reason for looking at other project areas regardless of capacity? The group has to recognize capacity, but the larger things—e.g., fire, fuel breaks, etc.—do those things loom larger?
- The group has previously expressed they want to do Backbone and Snow Mountain. Burney Gardens is right in the middle. The area near Montgomery Creek is flammable. Plantations are super flammable. Backbone and Snow Mountain could be CEs. Badger is a project that the Forest Service wanted to get involved with.
- In thinking about priorities, the group determined that surveys are key, that is step one.
 - T. Soat referred to the surveys on the Modoc in the Cove project.
 - M. Haney mentioned that SPI has done surveys on the plot SPI bought.
 - **Action Item:** T. Sloat to send a memo to J. Kusel.
- In terms of the Backbone project, surveys require money, and there are two approaches in how to acquire that money:
 - Find a grant or donation to fund it, or
 - Find third party money that can be refunded with a green sale.
 - G. Mayer discussed the Forest Service’s willingness to add Backbone into the SA. The green sale can be any sale that has value. J. Book asked if Whittington would be the green sale. G. Mayer and J. Book decided to discuss the details at a later time.
- There are two levels of prioritization: the process and the projects themselves. Forest Service still needs to line out projects to keep the forest service staff full. Then look for mechanisms to move it along.
- The group agreed to form a strategic planning subcommittee. Volunteers to join the committee included: M. Coppoletta, G. Costello, J. Book, G. Mayer, T. Sloat, and M. Haney. Someone suggested inviting Danny Cluck to join the conversation.
- G. Mayer mentioned a focus of the group might be to explore ways to pair projects (e.g., pair backbone to sleusebox).
- The group discussed NEPA and its “myriad of hoops to jump through.” NEPA is typically 300 pages. N. Rezeau mentioned that the U.S. Department of Interior has instituted page limits, and Forest Service is looking at the streamlining process. G. Mayer mentioned that TNE species are the bulk of NEPA, and that starting left surveys should be a priority in strategic planning.

Socioeconomic Monitoring, Ecological Monitoring, and other announcements

- M. Coppoletta reported the monitoring subcommittee selected Sierra Institute to conduct the CFLR socioeconomic monitoring. The contract is done and currently in grants and agreements. The process will begin in the fall and winter and is an 18-month process.
- M. Coppoletta presented the updated multi-party plan for ecological monitoring. The plan update was approved by the group. **Action Item:** M. Coppoletta to pass ecological plan to J. Book for approval.
- Dean Loftus shared with M. Coppoletta an RFP from the State Board of Forestry Effectiveness Monitoring Program. The RFP calls for monitoring initiatives on private lands. Private timber lands offer great opportunities for learning. Proposals are due September 7th, 2018.
- M. Haney reported that SPI has been monitoring spotted owls. SPI is in conversation with the Forest Service about spotted owls and will be meeting soon. **Action Item:** J. Book to send invite to the spotted owl meeting between the Forest Service and SPI to M. Coppoletta.
- The regional ecologist, Hugh Safford, will do a field trip in Whittington of how to manage different species in the face of high severity fire, including those reliant on the high severity for species survival (e.g., Baker cypress). **Action Item:** M. Coppoletta to notify the BHC group of the date of the tour.

Communication and Information Sharing

- K. Bourg asked the group about the Partner Updates document that is issued bimonthly. The group appreciates the updates and agreed to keep the process.
- K. Bourg asked about the Google Drive for internal information. Many group members appreciated the links to receive materials in emails as opposed to several attachments. K. Bourg will continue to include the google drive link in emails and check in with the group in the future on the usefulness of the drive.
- The group reviewed the Fall River and Sierra Institute websites highlighting the Burney Hat Creek group. In viewing the Fall River RCD website, G. Costello explained where he secured some of the information and requested feedback from the group. K. Bourg presented the Sierra Institute webpage and asked the group if there are any ways to improve. J. Oldson suggested to include Beatty to the list of partners. **Action Item:** K. Bourg to add Beatty to the partners list.
- The group suggested developing a subgroup to review content. **Action Item:** K. Bourg to coordinate the development of a website review subgroup.
- There are some outreach materials that can be included on the webpage including: a newsletter from CA State Parks last summer and a CalTrout video of the area, available on the RCD website.
- G. Costello pointed out that the group can have its own website.

GIS Capacity

Individual partners shared their GIS capabilities.

- Lassen National Forest has constraints in terms of GIS capacity. State Parks is very lacking. NRCS has the technology, however staff is lacking GIS training.
- M. Coppoletta stated that is unclear what people are looking for (i.e., what types of data would be most beneficial for the group's planning?)

BURNEY-HAT CREEK COMMUNITY FOREST & WATERSHED GROUP
MEETING NOTES; THURSDAY, JULY 26, 2018; 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

- D. Osti provided that there is a lot of data available – it's a matter of how to utilize it and maintain the expertise. It would be helpful to determine what is attainable to the group and how it can help make decisions.
- Someone posed the question, "Is there anyone on the district that can be GIS support for the CFLR?"
- J. Book discussed a challenge with hiring someone to do GIS on the district. There is often a learning curve for even skilled GIS professionals to learn how the Forest Service uses data to make decisions. An outside individual could really help with this.
- In the short term, M. Coppoletta will commit to building a map for the next meeting. **Action Item:** M. Coppoletta to build a map for the next meeting. **Action Item:** K. Bourg to send query for map data.

Closing Remarks, Future Meeting Items

- Someone suggested the group ask the region for a pilot project to do strategic planning with, and 34 North could potentially help the group down that path and help define what is needed. **Future Meeting Topic**
 - A way past the GIS capacity bottleneck is to utilize an outside entity.
 - J. Book brought it to attention that contracting through the forest service would most likely require a competitive bidding process.
 - N. Rezeau recommended directing the ask through information management, as Dave Hays is currently in the position acting.
- A. Lee announced that NRCS has a request for proposals out for working with landowners, and anyone interested could follow up with him afterwards.
- G. Mayer asked the group to begin gathering and sending any points or milestones to be included in the CFLR annual report in November.
- **Action Item:** K. Bourg will send a doodle poll to schedule the next meeting.