

## Burney-Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed Group

### Full-Group Meeting Draft Agenda

10:00am-1:40 pm Thursday, April 23, 2020

Zoom

#### Meeting Synopsis

BHCCFWG members met virtually via Zoom to discuss socioeconomic monitoring and collaborative accomplishments, share and discuss 34 North's progress, and provide updates on current Forest Service Projects.

#### Attendees

|                     |                               |                  |                                  |
|---------------------|-------------------------------|------------------|----------------------------------|
| Pete Johnson        | Retired Forester              | Todd Sloat       | Fall River RCD                   |
| Amye Osti           | 34 North                      | Trish Puterbaugh | Lassen Forest Preservation Group |
| Jason Mateljak      | Lassen Volcanic National Park | Greg Wolfen      | Pit River                        |
| Brendan Palmieri    | 34 North                      | Jim Richardson   | Lassen Volcanic National Park    |
| Sarah Oldson        | CRC                           | Steve Buckley    | Lassen Volcanic National Park    |
| Michelle Copolletta | Lassen National Forest        | Chris O'Brien    | Lassen National Forest           |
| Greg Mayer          | Lassen National Forest        | Hilary Sanders   | Sierra Institute                 |
| Alex Carter         | The McConnell Foundation      | Austin Schuver   | Sierra Institute                 |
| Tami Taylor         | Lassen National Forest        | Jonathan Kusel   | Sierra Institute                 |
| Natalie Perez       | Pit River                     | Dov Weinman      | Sierra Institute                 |

#### Approvals and Modifications

Pete found a few misspellings and mistakes in the February meetings notes – he will pass these on to Dov to make corrections. 34 North will move earlier in the agenda to accommodate schedules. Jim moved to approve the agenda, Pete seconded, and the group approved the agenda.

#### Socioeconomic Monitoring

Hilary shared several months of data collection that includes census information and data from stakeholders and workshops that followed up on a 2010 baseline assessment. Taken from the Defining Local study from a few years ago, the census block groups (the smallest area available) have been combined to form community units within the larger study area. Trish asked about the map's boundaries, and Hilary responded that it's an imperfect system because they're somewhat limited by block groups and school district boundaries.

Various questions remain:

- How do we keep contracts and agreements local?
- How do we provide consistent supply for local co-gens and mills? The Ranger Districts and Forest decide, and it can sometimes be frustrating when you're trying to keep plants running. Todd and Greg have been working on contract-like language for agreements, it's a work in progress.
- How does the collaborative involve youth in ecosystem restoration? There was some success within Hat Creel and the local high school helping with ecosystem improvements. They've also used the Tribe's thinning crews as well as the CA Conservation Corps and SI's PCREW – they're looking for ways to continue to involve youth.

BHCCFWG members were the divided into three breakout groups with different themes.

In the **Additional Funding and Leveraging Resource** group, Todd mentioned that without the collaborative there isn't a common voice and interest shown. A rough estimate shows that, not counting CFLR dollars, between \$12-13 million are the result of partners working together on projects. Keith brought up that the strength of the collaborative created good positioning to take advantage of funding opportunities.

For the Changes in Policies and Practices group, Chris emphasized the importance of messaging and expectations – we can't expect USFS personnel to be on the ground doing all the work. This is the route of the future and we can't be slow to embrace partnerships. Sarah mentioned there's more local contracting from a perspective of working across different landowners on the landscape. Now, if and when there's litigation, the collaborative is in it together. The NPS has a similar view of considering adjacent landowners and communities. SNC has also filled in with planning bottlenecks and additional funding. Jonathan added that there's a greater notion of the community dimension, and with more emphasis on communities being a part of the work.

For the group focusing on **Direct or Indirect Projects or Outcomes**, Michelle felt that more partnerships have developed through monitoring, including the Pit River Tribe's involvement with stream monitoring along Hat Creek and increased engagement with schools and universities. These have indirect impacts on local communities, and local monitoring crews employ local people. The CFLR calls out monitoring as a requirement, and Michelle emphasized the requirement for multi-party monitoring to leverage community and partner resources to design and implement. It's rare to have a budget explicitly for monitoring. Trish mentioned that it's complicated to take on USFS projects now, so it's invaluable for the collaborative can sort through those things alongside the FS. The collaborative provides continuity during a complex program of work and keeps momentum for projects through different staff and personnel. Jason mentioned the collaborative may push the work of agencies like the NPS forward more, and Amye mentioned a strong commitment from stakeholders to participate, engage and implement projects.

### Badger Project

Greg described the status of road systems for the two large plantations (Badger and Table Mountain). These plantations from the 1960's are currently exhibiting areas that are overstocked, extremely flammable, and infested. They hope to reduce basal area for more resilience. They used LiDAR to look for old roads, and are waiting for permission to go in the woods and look at roads with issues to take data. They're working on some with not all the roads being mapped. They did get permission from the Washington Office to relocate two roads which will be included in the Proposed Action. With regards to treatments, Greg explained the 2019 spotted owl strategy to take PACs to 3000 acres. There's an established corridor for pine martens and fishers, and they're looking at different options for treatments in those areas as well as other areas to add ungulate habitat for the Tehama deer herd. They're looking at watershed restoration for Lost Creek as well as some additional camping capacity – the question is how to limit and give opportunities where it makes sense, but overall they're not sure how much recreation will be included in the project. If any BHCCFWG members have comments, they can be sent to the Hat Creek Ranger District or Greg directly at PO Box 220 Fall River Mills. Comments can also be sent to Greg's email (greg.mayer@usda.gov).

Pete asked if Greg was concerned recreation might hold up the project? Greg answered that it will take more time, and they don't want to push the timeline to 3-4 years. At the same time, it needs to be done, and they could potentially do concurrent NEPA to look at all recreation issues holistically. Greg plans on conducting field trips and public meetings to work on this issue, and hopes to move some ideas with the collaborative.

### Other Project Discussions

Todd mentioned that they'll finish boundary lines and layout the **Crossroads** area by early summer before the appraisal, appendices, and prepping bid packages. He expressed optimism as long as Sarah's group can continue to work. Greg mentioned the small pine market is dead, but Sarah added that there is a lot of biomass and saw logs and local industry is supportive.

Todd said they've completed carnivore surveys and will soon work on survey design for goshawk and owls. The **Backbone** project map is still broad but being refined. Greg will write that they will introduce

the project to the public after they've got agreement over the project boundary. Trish asked if the public might have more time to look at the project – this conversation will be continued. Todd mentioned that collaborative partners are getting better at knowing where they're going for treatments. Greg said they plan to use the 2019 spotted owl strategy on this project.

The biomass is mostly completed at the **Tamarack Fuel Break**. Progress is going well on mastication and treatments look good. This will allow access for residents and firefighters but will not slow down a large fire.

SPI picked up the **Jackrabbit** project and it's not being review by CalFire. They're hopeful to get approved to start treating dense areas of high risk near Burney.

Steve mentioned that with **Northwest Gateway** they're in a process of detailing money issues with the RCD and they'll proceed with the cooperative agreement. There's now Tribal consultation for some of the other units. Everything is a bit halted during COVID.

Greg and Mule Deer Foundation are working on the appraisal for the **Manzanita Chutes** project. Appendices are completed, and once approved it will go to bid and implementation. The small pine market hurts this plantation, it's worth questioning how to get the trees to mills when Shasta Green and SPI don't want these small diameter plantation trees. There will be over 1200 acres of thinning and 300-400 acres of standalone mastication.

For the **Bald and Eiler Reforestation** project, partners are hoping to plant now and improve survivability of standing trees. It's slow with safety precautions and Covid-19 logistics, but the soil moisture is changing and they need to get trees into the ground. Greg has been putting maps together, and they'll see where NEPA goes with regards to using herbicides.

The McConnell Foundation supported **Soldier Mountain** work by leveraging planning funds to provide more safety on western side of Fall River Valley (off western side of CFLR area). Todd mentioned that it's part of the Pitt River ancestral territory.

Several years ago Greg was approached for work in the stream adjacent to **Black Branch**. The NRCS has opened up traditional flood plains for Burney Creek, and the FS is revisiting the project to change those affected stands, open up the natural floodplain, and add wood duck habitat in flooded pine stands. It's a small project that needs more in-channel work and riparian plantings.

### 34 North Workshop Planning

Amye mentioned they've made a lot of progress on the data platform and are looking at key projects in the area. On the project page, each project has key maps and documents which consolidate key information. They've been working with the FS on North 49; it's an extensive and ongoing data set with the goal of reversing engineer workflow of timber sales to include collaborative process and to help with the processes for treating public land against private land. They've been digitizing old plantation maps to catalog and inventory, identifying native timber stands, and working with Garrett on project monitoring images. They've had new data coming in daily, including: WUI work, critical habitat, veg data, fire return intervals, stand density index, and project-related LiDAR. They have the goal to support better mapping of roads in and around projects, adding high resolution imagery for projects on regular basis, supporting 2019 spotted owl strategy, and Burney base map to facilitate identifying non-controversial and easily permitted projects.

Amye mentioned that they've met members individually to compile stakeholder data needs, questions, and how to use data in daily workflows. The June 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting will be rescheduled at McConnel

Foundation building if possible. In the interim, she'll make sure everyone has an account and can meet with small groups of two to three people for tutorials. Michelle pointed out this could be a tool for FS resource specialist doing planning. Greg and Michelle will come up with a list of FS staff to set up accounts for. Michelle asked about the possibility incorporating monitoring data and briefs, and Amye responded by saying that anyone can go in and create their own project. Amye would like to train group on this and get feedback.

#### Partner and Grant Updates

Fall River RCD was awarded a two-year recreation planning grant, which was signed a month ago. Garrett is engaging stakeholders, and BHCCFWG members are encouraged to participate. The deliverables are to inventory and prioritize critical recreation projects and get at least three with environmental compliance completed and funding obtained.

There's an SNC planning grant for defensible space and watershed work for **Cohasset Ridge**. It's complimented by CCI funds for work on evacuation routes. Implementation funds will be needed.

Todd mentioned that the WCB Forest Conservation Program grant opportunity, which highlights meadows, excludes some of the BHCCFWG region but if anyone has ideas please get in contact.