



Burney-Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed Group Full-Group Meeting Draft Minutes

10:00am-2:00pm Thursday, February 13, 2020
Tri-Counties Community Network, 37477 CA-299, Burney, CA 96013

Meeting Synopsis

BHCCFWG members met in the Tri-Counties Community Network's meeting room in Burney, California for Spatial Informatics Group's presentation of their plantation evaluation, 34 North's introduction to their data aggregation platform, and to share and discuss project and partner updates on ongoing collaborative projects.

Attendees

Andrew Fullerton Sierra Pacific
Kristy Hoffman Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Pete Johnson – Retired Forester
Alex Carter – The McConnell Foundation
Todd Sloat – Fall River RCD

Tami Taylor USFS
Sharmie Stevenson Fall River RCD
Jason Moghaddas Spatial Informatics Group
Brendan Palmieri 34 North
Amye Osti. 34 North

Doug Lindgren Tubit Enterprises
Greg Mayer USFS
Jim Richardson LVNP
Jonathan Kusel
Dov Weinman

Approvals and Modifications

Jonathan called the BHCCFWG meeting to order just after 10:00am. Before approving meeting minutes from November, Pete requested a change of the spelling of Manzanita Chutes (spelled incorrectly as Shoots). Pete moved to approve the minutes, Kristy seconded, and the group approved the minutes. The agenda subcommittee had back and forth with Dov and Jonathan prior to each meeting to develop the agenda. With a couple of small modifications Todd motioned to approve the agenda, Kristy seconded, and the group approved the meeting's agenda.

Communication and Outreach

Garrett shared results of the logo survey, where 50% of members chose one type of design. Garrett asked participants to vote between different variations of this preferred design, and the variation surrounded by a box was approved. The group also approved the design with color. Garrett will send Dov the chosen logo design to use as a header for BHCCFWG letters, meeting minutes, agendas, etc. Garrett has created a Facebook page for the collaborative – it can be found @BHCCFWG. Garrett and Dov will coordinate about potential posts and will also reach out to partner organizations such as LVNP, LNF, and others to potentially share partner posts across different social media pages. Amye mentioned that 34 North can also take social media posts and embed them on the platform they've been developing.

Spatial Informatics Group and 34 North

Jason and Scott shared Spatial Informatics Group's (SIG) Plantation Prioritization Analysis, and realize that for the 2020 CCI proposal they're generally more interested in plantations. Scott, communicating remotely, explained methodology and results with group members. Todd asked how much of the landscape was covered by LiDAR and Scott estimated it was about 40% covered. Jason mentioned they are now trying to optimize carbon sequestration based on looking at what plantations respond the best to thinning rather than looking at areas that end up carbon neutral or even negative. It has become extremely competitive with so many groups applying for CCI funding.

With regards to the HVRA analysis, Todd explained that because a broader effort from the forest has paused, they've decided to identify smaller areas. Jason said they got all their analysis for Region 5 but have had some difficulty finding the guidance to interpret it. Jason proposed the group could overlay his data with some of the NEPA from Lassen National Forest, and Greg commented that quite a bit of it may be covered by NEPA or at least in process already.

One goal is to try and estimate the amount of investment that needs to be made within the region so the senate can better understand the amount of financial need truly required to work toward a resilient landscape.

Amye and 34 North suggested a type of WebEx, or even an in-person workshop to discuss the tools, how to use the platform, and even to vet the tools and platform itself. It'll be critical for collaborative members to understand how to navigate the platform and know what to look for when discussing and developing projects. The platform is still password protected, with each person having their own account. When the group is ready and okays the data it can be made fully available. With regards to making the entire platform publicly available, Amye provided the cautionary note that insurance companies often look for and use risk maps so they can justify dropping residents from insurance programs.

Amye shared some of the platform's specific tools including Planning Maps, Build a Map, Saved Maps, and the GIS Library (where you can download the source GIS as well as add layers and imagery yourself). The platform stores all the BHCCFWG's projects and provides GIS layers and zonal analysis. The collaborative can provide 34 North with some direction to make the platform more usable for members with low bandwidth. Brendan shared a story-map he's created with for the Hat Creek Fire Restoration Project – it's public-focused and users can scroll through the story-map to find the scoping document, related statistics, and interactive data maps. These map narratives share the challenges of reforestation after burns and can explain the important crisis due to dramatic changes to the landscape. Greg suggested that we could utilize one of these story maps with folks outside of this collaborative. It could be especially useful to share with groups that have reservations about the use of herbicides.

Jonathan emphasized that this was a great opportunity to inform strategic planning and also develop some compact items so the group can share its work with the public. The group will plan a workstation training and mock-run where members can query the process of looking through 34 North's platform before bringing the full BHC group together. Jason advocated for a process where they can all work the data and information through an iterative process to see how the collaborative group will use the data to effectively plan and communicate projects across the landscape.

Alex offered The McConnell Foundation as an appropriate venue for this type of full-group training, and Dov will work with Amye and Alex to target dates in May and June. Meanwhile, a few collaborative members will plan a trail run with Amye. Collaborative members will send Todd any questions that they may need to explore during the trail run. After this first full-group training, the group will look into the possibility of a second meeting focused on story-mapping and how to develop projects for the next round of CCI/Fire Prevention grant opportunities.

[Updates on Bald and Eiler Replanting Projects](#)

Greg stated the FS has trees coming and they're working on site prep. An excavating team should be working in the next day is if the soil conditions allow and they're going to implement mechanical treatments in the interim so they can get some trees in the ground this year. Sharmie suggested members strategize to engage the Pit River Tribe, and suggested they schedule to meet with Barbara to better understand how the collaborative can gain more traction in cooperation and coordination within their Tribal system. Jonathan suggested they continue this conversation offline to deliberate how the group can serve the tribe and the collaborative for mutual benefit and toward developing a reciprocal relationship. Tami mentioned that they recently had a meeting with Orvie Danzuka to discuss better ways to communicate with the Tribe, and Orvie suggested that if the Forest Service could get boundary areas to him then he could speak with the specific Tribes the boundary pertains to. This strategy may minimize unnecessary conflicts. Greg ended by mentioning they hope to have a draft EA out by the end of May.

Backbone Project

Group members discussed new regulations that allow for treatments within PACs using mechanical equipment. Backbone will be moving from a CE to an EA which means members can grow the project area beyond 3,000 acres. Project leads will proceed ahead with the aforementioned data aggregation to define the boundary and develops map for May – they'll be using specialists over the summer to redefine that even more. Spring River will begin on surveys and has received PAC data the FS. They currently have a limitation of 35%, but may look into going up to 45% if determined appropriate along Jack's Backbone.

Hat Creek Fire Restoration Project

Project leads continue to make progress with the Badger Project. The FS had their IDT meeting last week and are trying to get more organized internally before bringing the project into the collaborative. The FS side of the project will include restoration of the Reading Fire. The new spotted owl strategy will allow them to treat through PACs which will in turn make the forest more resilient to fire and insects. Lastly, they will continue treatment of ungulate habitats – the Tehama deer herd has dramatically declined in recent years. Greg mentioned the small, 70-acre project called Black Ranch. Previously when the NRCS came in and worked around the creek they changed the hydrologic processes through the area and now they're seeing some flooded forests. The FS is changing some of those stands to allow for that flooding during winter. Todd asked if it was going to be released as a stewardship contract, but Greg responded that it'll actually be a Timber sale. It's been laid out and marked but they haven't cruised it yet. The group acknowledged that Tami has been a great person for the NEPA, and Sharmie mentioned Tami has done an excellent job of communicating with all necessary partners.

Project Updates

The Crossroads project is now signed. Cascade resources is laying out treatment areas and the FS is excited to see the project move forward. Todd mentioned that one outstanding item is the boundary surveys and that he will need the Forests help with marking crews. Needed to add funds to Mule deer for folks to mark the extra 1000 acres. The entire road system was rebuilt last year and Greg described the current acreage under mastication and that there are 12000 acres of plantations.

Northwest Gateway is a multi aspect project including timber harvest and Rx fire, in the Manzanita Lake area. The park received a CCI grant this work but project leads have struggled to figure out the contracting path regarding how to accept money and set up a contract. Currently there's an agreement with the RCD and they plan to get that contract out in May with the project work to be done in the fall. The RCD is trying to figure out how to develop the contract without someone needing to pay 10,000-20,000 extra as a project development fee. They hope to follow it up sometime in the future with a prescribed burn. Group discussed language used for preferencing local contracting. The RCD defined local as 60 miles from the RCD and getting a 10% preference. Jim emphasized that CalFire and SNC all look toward groups that complete projects – the next couple of years will be critical with regards to finish current CCI projects and showing the conviction to complete these projects in order to encourage those entities to continue awarding funds in the future.

CFLR and CCI Projects: Strategies and Next Steps

Members agree that Manzanita Chutes and Crossroads are two projects that need to actualize some progress. Money coming back from Manzanita Chutes should provide enough money to prep the next 1000 acres. Laying out acres for Crossroads has slowed down because money wasn't originally allocated for that. Greg mentioned that he's hoping to have an eight-person marking crew. Sample marking and then timber cruising is happening on a second sale for Wittington, which should be fairly easy according to Greg. The Cabin Project is mostly plantations with mostly sample marking and then about 100 acres of natural stands to be marked. After those projects are finished the FS plans on their last big sale – 49er – for the North 49 EIS. Doug added a comment about putting more confidence in the contractor, not all

these stands need to be fully marked. He suggested the samples can be marked and the contractor really just needs boundaries – in the end it will be cheaper and faster.

USFS "4-Corners" Project

Todd brought up the possibility of a project out at the old 4-corners EA. Greg suggested it might be possible if somebody came up with a proposal. They haven't done any goshawk surveys or kept up with the other wildlife surveys; it'd be necessary to develop updated assessments and reports and it'd be a District Ranger level decision. Todd mentioned he could work with Jason and Amye to look at the boundary and vegetation within the area before bringing it back up to the Forest Service. Greg emphasized that specific treatments that were relevant to homes would be the most appealing, and Tami mentioned that because it's a 20-year-old EA that there are potential vehicles such as a CE that they might look into.

Partner and Grant Updates

Garrett shared that SNC awarded them a recreation grant that is awaiting signatures. They're trying to identify potential collaborative members to help identify possible projects and who agree upon a vision for the area. He'll work toward putting together a website so communities know about the collaborative and hear about the recreation-oriented projects they'll put together. Their area goes up towards McCloud, includes LVNP, goes through Fall River Valley, and then toward Montgomery on the way to Redding. At the end of a two or three year period they want to have detailed projects.

Garrett also shared that the Burney Basin FireSafe Council will have a meeting at the Burney Veterans Hall on April 2nd. There will be a discussion about defensible space, Zalya Baker and Orvie Danzuka will come speak, and the Fire Chief will also be there to offer insight and expertise. Garrett is working to finalize the agenda and also coordinating with a Parks Committee for making local parks in Burney more resilient to fire.

Todd mentioned that The McConnell foundation came in and approved \$300,000 for the RCD for fuels treatment work that will most likely be done within a WUI area.

Kristy reminded members about the Sierra Nevada board meeting coming up on March 5th in Sacramento. She's expecting a long list of awards to be released at that meeting, and she shared that at least one or two of them from this general area will be recommended. The day before that is the WIP Summit where SNC will have some speakers. This will also be available via webinar. In September of 2020 Shasta County will be next on their circuit.

The Pit River Resource Conservation District brought on another consultant to interview and assess capacity issues within the region, coordinate contracting with SIG to continue to expand this project prioritization outside of this collaborative and into the northeast.

Climate Change Research Project

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy had introduced the idea of integrating mapping information and socioeconomic assessments to benefit rural, forested communities. Sierra Institute is in discussions with researchers at the University of Washington to prepare a proposal to integrate analysis of LiDAR information with identification of disadvantaged communities in the Sierra Nevada to promote better-informed strategic planning and project prioritization in order to mitigate catastrophic wildfire and the effects of climate change. Jonathan believes that this integration can be utilized by collaborative groups and will build off of the efforts of SCALE.