



**Burney-Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed Group
Full-Group Meeting**

Tuesday, September 17th, 2019
BHC Volunteer Fire Hall 10:00am-2:00pm

Meeting Synopsis

The Burney-Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed Group met on Tuesday September 17th, 2019 at the Hat Creek Volunteer Fire Hall. The group reviewed community maps for socioeconomic monitoring, discussed obstacles for restoration of the Bald and Eiler fire areas, and presented progress on data aggregation and project prioritization.

Attendees

Garrett Costello	Steve Buckley	Todd Sloat
Don Curtis	Jason Mateljak	Doug Lindgren
Jeff Oldson	Janine Cook	Amye Osti
Pete Johnson	Jim Richardson	Jonathan Kusel
Jason Moghaddas	Drew Mallinak	Dov Weinman
Michelle Coppeletta	Hilary Sanders	
Greg Mayer	Sharmie Stevenson	

Action Items

- Sierra Institute to redevelop census block maps to solicit feedback on block aggregation/breakdown for socioeconomic monitoring.
- Crossroads project partners to meet between now and November meeting. Sierra Institute will contact project partners.
- Sierra Institute to send Doodle Poll for next BHCCFWG meeting (November 12th or 19th).

Approvals and Modifications

- Group members approved meeting notes from July.
- Garrett Costello asked to move socioeconomic monitoring discussion earlier so Todd Sloat could speak about CCI funding and data aggregation.

Socioeconomic Monitoring

Drew Mallinak and Hilary Sanders conducted the first round of socioeconomic interviews for an October reporting deadline. They're currently finalizing which communities they'll analyze. Hilary presented maps of the community census blocks within the BHCCFWG boundary. The block groups, the smallest unit for which census data is collected, can be aggregated so analysis more truthfully captures how communities identify and function. This is critical for understanding the benefits local contractors input into local communities. Hilary solicited feedback from group members to discern if the census blocks represented communities appropriately. The group agreed the blocks on the west boundary could form one aggregate study area and the blocks along the east border could be similarly combined. While members agreed on these aggregations, the group also requested maps showing more jurisdictional lines, major roads, and towns to support their understanding of census block locations. The Sierra Institute was tasked with developing new maps for this purpose.

Project and Partner Updates

Todd Sloat provided CCI updates and mentioned they're waiting on project partners. Steve Buckley explained issues with contracting for Northwest Gateway, and Doug suggested partners take a field trip this fall when there aren't access issues. Greg Mayer mentioned roads put into the Manzanita Shoots plantation areas and upgrades to Eskimo Hill parking lot areas. Eventually the site will be gated and used for cross country ski trails, snowshoeing, hiking, and will only be open for non-motorized use. There will also be CFLR-funded improvements for wheel chair accessible trail.

Fruit Growers sold all their Shasta and Lassen county timber lands to SPI, 181,000 acres in total. Group members predicted the sale might smooth out some processes due to a greater emphasis on staffing, especially at the new mill. Fruit Growers played a major role in small business administrative sales, providing local entities under pressure a change to survive. It's important to identify issues related to maintaining small and local business still in operation. Pete Johnson offered another broader implication, suggesting that Fruit Growers, Beatty, and Landvest were the only non-industrial entities.

Group members provided a brief bioenergy update and project partners are looking at two more sites for interconnection studies and working to put financing packages together. Most sites will be transitioning to the BioRam2 requirements.

Bald and Eiler Fire Restoration

Todd explained competition for greenhouse gas funds and the challenges as they look ahead to next steps for the Bald and Eiler fire restoration projects. The current EA states a timeline of two years, but trees were only available seven years post-fire. Project partners intend to finish ground and site preparations using herbicides as a tool. Getting NEPA done soon is contingent on how much controversy the herbicide component might induce. With the polygons already identified, the analysis will be fairly quick, but timing is dependent on public pushback. Jeff Oldson didn't believe they could successfully reforest the sites with the current EA – there's significant snowbrush cover and over 60% tree mortality with current methods. The forest isn't adapted to high-severity fire and they've seen evidence of a forest type conversion. Mechanical options would leave considerable disturbance, so project planners will push for very limited herbicide use, applying non-controversial chemicals that aren't particularly mobile with a non-broadcast treatment. With regards to ground preparation, Doug Lindgren suggested using the private model for herbicide use. Project partners haven't discussed fire as a tool for site preparation, but Greg Mayer explained that brush isn't characteristically flammable until it's dead.

Sharmie Stevenson asked about the likelihood of the project progressing on time. Janine Cook suggested that the FS and partners meet to evaluate the timeline and start scoping before the end of the calendar year. If they can't use herbicides they will be obligated to treat less acres. Group members agreed the collaborative could conduct community outreach and be transparent about project treatment options. Two major challenges were identified – potential public opposition and getting seedlings in the ground, which is a critical part of the carbon benefit. Jason Moghaddas emphasized the importance of being intentional with the narrative of how the collaborative wants to manage the forest for their desired outcomes. Group members also discussed the lack of Tribal participation and inclusion with the collaborative and Jonathan pointed out the Tribe had participated in the past. It's a critical perspective missing in recent meetings and it might be time for the Sierra Institute to try and assist in bringing them back in.

Jonathan offered a friendly challenge to see if there might be additional opportunities to leverage grant funds or capacity building partnerships. The FS continues to develop relationships and grow through this collaborative process, but they are already at their capacity and spread across various projects. To provide an example of partners building each other's capacity, Jonathan pointed out the Sierra Institute employees working on an interdisciplinary team and supporting the FS for scoping and outreach for the West Shore Project. Janine Cook suggested the FS might be most interested in receiving support in areas of outreach and communication. With regards to their very short timeline, Todd suggested writing a strong EA and then seeing what happens within the flexibility of CCI. Garrett Costello offered the potential benefits of honing in on groups they predict might be opposed and focusing the EA on topics they know will be brought up. Transparency through the process may lead to less opposition and the plan could be presented as an exploratory and learning process to show the full spectrum of treatments options. Jonathan questioned if the group was ready to step forward with a recommendation for how to proceed. Group members agreed to engage the Tribe and other entities that may oppose and litigate, focus on writing a strong EA, and schedule a meeting to talk about how the FS and partners can support each other and build capacity moving forward. Todd extended a compliment to the FS for bringing in collaborative partners and emphasized that the project sets a positive precedent for future applications.

Crossroads Barriers

Todd mentioned the Crossroads project was scoped but still have soils/hydrology and botany reports looming. Janine mentioned their botanist is extremely busy and hoping to get the report done in early November. Janine received comments regarding the language used and suggested it's because Northwest Forest Plan projects utilize different language. Crossroads was billed as a collaborative project, and because collaborative components diminish at this juncture in the process Janine suggested it's time for the FS to re-engage collaborative members. They plan to schedule a meeting before the next BHCCFWG meeting in November.

34 North

Amye Osti provided current progress of 34 North's work building a data platform for the CFLR boundary. Their small team of engineers, ecologists, and GIS specialists have worked in natural resource management since 1999. They work with multi-stakeholder collaboratives to create baseline data everyone can agree on and utilize. They plan to have the platform ready in October, and collaborative partners will be able to access and download information following open data standards. Any sensitive information will be password protected. Amye mentioned they've been working closely with Michelle to prioritize WUI data using the Forest Service database. Data is currently available through a search tool but 34 North will package the data for easier use and access. Available resources will include LiDar data, project tracking, GIS data, and as much up to date information as possible to help serve the collaborative's pursuits toward future grant funding. Amye plans on talking with project leads to access additional data needs.

CCI Prioritization and Data Aggregation

The CCI Prioritization and Data Aggregation subcommittee held their first meeting. While prioritization can be really complex, group members find importance in focusing on initial priorities and what partners want to do first or within the first four or five years. There are various strategies for prioritization, but subcommittee members wanted to first acknowledge internal projects and then step back and consider the Burney Hat Creek landscape. Jason advocated starting with low-technology methods and taking advantage of the institutional knowledge within the collaborative. With regards to Amye's previous

presentation, 34 North's work can support future meetings in becoming more interactive – collaborative partners will be able to reference maps and data to better inform their prioritization process.

Outreach/Strategy/Public Events

Garrett Costello introduced concepts for a BHCCFWG logo and asked group members to mark their favorite. As the group collaborates on more projects, community outreach and engagement becomes more critical. Garrett proposed a larger presence on social media and suggested linking the group's media to other local pages and project partners to increase the collaborative's visibility in the community. He's seeking support for a communications and outreach subcommittee.

Closing Remarks

Jonathan gave a brief reminder about the SCALE meeting taking place November 5-6.

Strategic planning updates were tabled for the next meeting. Participants hope to return to the strategic planning discussion with the support of maps and additional data. Garrett requested 15-20 minutes at the November meeting for a conversation focused on recreation.