

SIERRA CASCADES ALL-LAND ENHANCEMENT MEETING NOTES, NOVEMBER 12, 2015

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1. Meeting Synopsis

On November 12, 2015, the Sierra Cascades All-Land Enhancement group (SCALE) met in McClellan, CA. Four SCALE members presented updates from their collaborative groups, discussed shared barriers to success, and the Sierra Institute shared findings from their latest research projects. There were also presentations on policy items and relevant forest management and restoration topics.

2. Meeting Attendees

Jennifer Chapman
Sheri Elliott
Ann Grasso
Sherry Hazelhurst
John Heissenbuttel
Sarah LaPlante

Shawna Legarza
Teresa McClung
Joe Sherlock
Mary Sketch
Sheri Smith
Stan Van Velsor

Steve Wilensky
Genny Wilson
Kendal Young
Constance Zipperer

3. Action Items

- **A. Reeves-Jolley** to coordinate this SCALE language for the letter to CALFIRE around the importance of prescribed burning
- **A. Reeves-Jolley** to share the Dinkey collaborative FS staff transition plan with SCALE participants.
- **SCALE members** to send materials for social media promotion to **E. Hann** or **A. Reeves-Jolley**
- **SCALE members** are invited to participate in a webinar on social media strategies on December 8th from 10-11 a.m.
- **A. Reeves-Jolley** to invite groups to participate in NFF webinar on socioeconomic monitoring in CFLRs
- **S. Van Velsor** will distribute a document about the Memorandum of Understanding on Fire Management soon, **SCALE members** to identify barriers
- **S. Hazelhurst** will share meeting notes and action items from SLBMOD with SCALE members once finalized

4. Meeting Notes

I. Introductions and Reports

- All attendees introduced themselves and outlined what they hoped to gain from the SCALE meeting
- The agenda was reviewed
- The concept of triple bottom line (environment, economy, community) was reviewed

a) ACCG CFLR Update-S. Wilensky and K. Young

Progress: K. Young has been working on the annual report of the CFLR and distributed a summary document to the group. Participation has been consistently strong (60+members) throughout ACCG's lifespan, both before and after CFLR dollars. Meeting match requirements has always been a challenge; they did it this year through R1 dollars, fire settlement funds, and recreation activities in Calaveras district. Overall, on track with meeting the goals of their original proposals. Wilseyville power plant still on track, planned to be 2nd in PG&E queue. Alpine county has also formed a collaborative and gotten involved with ACCG. M. Sketch, a new Sierra Fellow, produced a [video](#) on the impacts and aftermath of Butte Fire.

Challenges: Rim, King, and Butte fires in last 3 years, and local mills have more black timber than they can use. 545 homes were destroyed by the fires, not counting hunting cabins and trailers where people live. Attention has dropped off now that fire is finished, but there are big remaining risks associated with erosion and flash flooding.

Next Steps: East Bay Municipal Utility District has put in \$1 million to restore the canyon, but it isn't enough. It is important to emphasize the connection between forest restoration and downstream users—CHIPS is pursuing the implementation of small (~\$0.02) water usage fee that will fund upstream forest thinning and restoration projects.

Questions/ Discussion:

Participant: What are the implications of the Butte fire for the fuel supply chain of biomass plant?

S. Wilensky: Minimal, fire burned outside of the plant's assessment area

T. McClung: FS has been trying to do local contracting, but not many qualified vendors in the area, and bids are coming in at twice the original estimate. Negotiating bids down with existing vendors has been successful.

S. Wilensky: It's also important to increase pace and scale of restoration and make collaboration work to avoid fires like this in the future

b) BHC CFLR update- A. Grasso

Progress: Signed an agreement with Sierra Institute as facilitators and the group is beginning to meet again after 9-month hiatus. Collaborative members include Lassen NP, Fire Safe councils, Fall River RCD, private landowners, Pit River tribe, NRCS.

Challenges: Getting back on track, involving ranchers, the market being saturated with blackwood, FS turnover

Next Steps: The group is going to prioritize CFLR projects at its January meeting. Some of these projects might occur as a Categorical Exclusion, others as new long term Environmental Impact Statements (EIS).

Additional points:

- Working with ranching community is a shared issue for SCALE groups.
- Having a group that took a break provides an opportunity to consider collaborative sustainability and resilience

c) South Fork of the American River Cohesive Wildfire Strategy Project-J. Chapman

- This is a [cohesive wildfire strategy](#) project, not a CFLR. "SOFAR" was approved in August of 2014, about ¾ of the South Fork of the American River watershed (410,000 acres) is involved
- Eldorado NF has completed an EIS for restoration in the King Fire footprint, drafted a strategic fire plan, had a YCC crew complete watershed protected projects, and prescribed burn for 10,000 acres about to be approved.
- Next steps are hiring a facilitator this month and establishing the collaborative

d) Dinkey CFLR Update- S. Van Velsor and S. LaPlante

Progress: Still meeting monthly and have a new working group focused on fire policy whose task is to lobby the air district to get more prescribed fire. They are presenting their first annual ecological monitoring report on November 19th and hosting a Science and Monitoring Symposium in February 2016 to examine relevant science and generate discussion.

Challenges: The collaborative moves at a fast pace, which makes it hard for FS to keep up. Bug kills have hit their area hard, changing their planning process. Getting more prescribed fire on the landscape continues to be a goal, but remains challenging. The group is also working to adapt a socioeconomic monitoring plan to be realistic about data gathering cost and implementation. Facilitator Dorian Fougères is moving out of state next month and will no longer be the group's facilitator.

Next steps: Transitioning to a new Center for Collaborative Problem Solving facilitator. Implementing SI's socioeconomic monitoring recommendations, via internal and contracted work.

Questions:

S. Wilensky: What are you planning to monitor for socioeconomic indicators?

S. Van Velsor: Economic benefits as they relate to local contracting, have baseline measurements on how much local contractors were benefiting from work within the CFLR

e) Synthesis of Key Barriers and Challenges- all groups

Common barriers to the collaboratives were identified. They are:

- 1) The challenge of match and how to document;
- 2) Carbon calculation challenges and air resources board collaboration;
- 3) How to delineate work of the agency vs. the collaborative (the big C vs. little c collaboration),
- 4) How to respond to issues like the Dinkey bug kill and Butte fire in a timely manner given NEPA timelines etc.;
- 5) How to carry out monitoring well and at a reasonable cost,
- 6) Building resiliency into the collaborative with agency turnover
- 7) Working with district air resources boards versus the state-level is an important distinction.

S. Hazelhurst: Region 5 is working with CALFIRE on carbon accounting including the importance of the value of prescribed burns

- **ACTION ITEM: A. Reeves-Jolley** to coordinate this SCALE language for the letter to CALFIRE around the importance of prescribed burning
- 8) Turnover: The Dinkey has a transition plan for FS staff, this seems like a really useful thing for all groups to learn from. **ACTION ITEM: A. Reeves-Jolley** to share the Dinkey collaborative FS staff transition plan with SCALE participants.

II. SCALE Initiatives

a) Social Media Strategies-E. Hann

- Sierra Institute wants to take advantage of social media tools to spread stories from SCALE
- Groups can use SI's social media platforms: Twitter, Facebook, website blog
- **ACTION ITEM: SCALE members** to send materials for social media promotion to [Erica](#) or [Allison](#)
- **ACTION ITEM: SCALE members** invited to attend a social media webinar which is taking place December 8th from 10-11 a.m.

b) Sierra Institute's Socioeconomic Review- A. Reeves-Jolley

Summary: Per the request of SCALE partners, Sierra Institute did a study of how the 20 original CFLRs are implementing socioeconomic monitoring plans. There have been a wide range of approaches, but most CFLRs have yet to begin socioeconomic monitoring as of May 2015. Most CFLRs are measuring primarily economic indicators, rather than social indicators, and primarily used counties as the units of measurement. Other trends observed include social science capacity needs, challenges with FS model TREAT, how to define local, getting survey approval from OMB, and compliance delays and needs. Final paper is forthcoming.

Discussion:

Participant: Only two social scientists working at the regional level, on forest planning, but additional opportunities might be coming.

S. Elliot: how can we bring the FS social scientists into SCALE?

S. Van Velsor: Have you seen the data these CFLRs have collected?

A. Reeves-Jolley: No we haven't, we just looked at how/what they are collecting/ planning to collect.

S. Elliot: Is this conversation happening at the national level?

Jonathan: It isn't, but we are doing an NFF webinar to bring it to the national level.

ACTION ITEM: A. Reeves-Jolley to invite groups to participate in NFF webinar

J. Sherlock: Does the national office know about problems with TREAT?

A. Reeves-Jolley: If they do, it is not as a result of this paper. We have not shared our findings with the National Office.

K. Young: TREAT is problematic but it does provide a trend analysis over time; even if the actual numbers are not accurate, the trend can still be useful.

c) Local Contracting- A. Reeves-Jolley

Summary: This paper explains FS acquisition management tools, additional examples of local preferencing in other agencies, and gives recommendations on how the FS could integrate a local preference (not a local guarantee, just a preference). Initial idea was to go the IDIQ route, but instead we recommend individual contracts because IDIQs are exclusionary and prevents capacity development. In our recommendation, the first step is a past performance and capacity screening, and then points are awarded to contractors that are a) located locally, b) employ local people c) source supplies locally and d) provide a narrative of other socioeconomic contributions. It's also important to consider legal restrictions, ensure competitive pricing, scale contracts appropriately and minimize bureaucratic burden. Final manuscript to come.

Discussion:

T. McClung: She has had mixed experience with IDIQs, sometimes they end up taking even longer to set up and implement.

A. Grasso: IDIQs have worked well for her.

S. Wilensky: Conditions of forests and communities are also variable, and you'd need a different approach depending on those conditions.

A. Reeves-Jolley: The reasons we are recommended to not go the IDIQ route are (1) legal concerns regarding fair and open competition; and (2) current capacity concerns (i.e. if a

contractor doesn't have the capacity to apply for an IDIQ initially, they will be excluded in the long term).

d) Defining Local- A. Reeves-Jolley

Summary: CFLR legislation mandates that projects should have social and economic benefit at the local level-but what is meant by local is unclear. This research was undertaken to 1) establish delineations of local for each case study and 2) understand replicable principles from these case studies. This paper is closely tied to the local contracting paper, as recommendations in that paper are based on definitions from this paper. Four case studies were the CFLRs and the Western Klamath Restoration Partnership (WKRK). SOFAR was originally intended to be included. SI conducted interviews in each project area to understand connections and capacity and formed tiers of local delineation accordingly in combination with an analysis of biophysical and jurisdictional boundaries. Continuing to seek input from tribal interests. Final manuscript expected by the end of the year.

Discussion:

J. Sherlock: It's strange that you weren't able to get information on which funds were designated for CFLR projects.

J. Heissenbuttel: How do companies with multiple headquarters, like SPI, get counted in the points system?

J. Kusel: Contractors are evaluated in terms of location by their primary headquarters. Note that being in the second, third, or no tier regarding location does not prevent the vendor from getting points from the other criteria.

S. Wilensky: important to have an overall economic strategy, not just creative contract tools

T. McClung: this should be presented to the case study collaboratives for feedback

ACTION ITEM: A. Reeves-Jolley to distribute Katherine Evatt's survey of stewardship contracting officers and the results

III. State and Federal Proclamations: Opportunities? J.Kusel

- Gov. Brown recently wrote to the Secretary of Agriculture to request a partnership to [redouble actions](#) on California's drought
- [Presidential memorandum](#) is focused on landscape-scale, calls out economic impacts
- Presidential policy of [ecosystem services](#) is also important, directs all agencies to incorporate ecosystem services
- Together, these three events represent an increased desire to work at the landscape scale on triple bottom line outcomes

Discussion

S. Hazelhurst: FS is thinking about how they can respond to the governor's proclamation

S. Elliot: The USFS chief released a report this week that emphasized the need to do more in funding fires

S. Legarza: How do we leverage all of these effectively without increasing the agency world load?

S. Wilensky: Will these proclamations actually be funded? Collaboratives need more information about what's happening behind the scenes to be effective

IV. All-Lands Management

a) Fire on the Landscape in the context of CFLRs- S. Van Velsor

- Memorandum of Understanding on fire has been finalized for CA, the purpose is to increase the use of fire to meet management objectives
- Once an initial meeting is held, anyone can participate

ACTION ITEM: S. Van Velsor will distribute a document soon, SCALE can identify barriers

b) Forest Health Update from USFS R5- S. Smith

- Drought conditions are exacerbating tree mortality from bark beetles
- 29 million dead trees this year, with highest mortality in mature trees
- Data from annual aerial surveys of national forests, plot-level data

Questions

S. Wilensky: have you looked at treated vs. un-treated lands?

S. Smith: We are looking at them side by side, but trees primarily dying from lack of water

S. Wilensky: Do woodpeckers reduce the amount of bark beetles?

S. Smith: Maybe, but there are too many beetles for woodpeckers to make a difference here

T. McClung: There are so many trees dead from beetles and that contributes to mill overload as well

c) USFS R5 Forest planning and Collaboratives: Updates and next steps- S. Hazelhurst

- Sustainable Landscape Management Board (SLMBOD) had a successful meeting in Oct.
- Top shelf items: agency commitment and institutionalization of collaboration, leadership committed to collaboration, enabling and encouraging innovation, policy barriers like air quality, need for ground truthing, using best available science to make decisions
- Three essential areas to focus on: policy and barriers in context, understanding limits of data, and building capacity to address risk

ACTION ITEM: Meeting notes and action items from SLBMOD can be shared with SCALE once finalized by S.Hazelhurst

d) Meeting Evaluation

Things that went well:

- Food, location
- A diverse summary of topics covered
- More collaboratives at the table
- Regional updates- helpful

Things that could be improved:

- More time or less content, or meeting more frequently
- More breaks/networking time
- More background information and preparatory resources, sent more in advance