



## Sierra to California All-Lands Enhancement Workshop

May 23, 2017 Sacramento State University Alumni Center

### Synopsis

On May 23, 2017, the Sierra to California All-Lands Enhancement (SCALE) workshop was held in Sacramento, CA. During the meeting, participants discussed challenges and solutions for successful implementation of all lands restoration projects. Updates and introductions were given by eleven collaborative groups working across California. Sessions were held on USFS tools and authorities, local contracting and workforce development, and new partnership opportunities. The day concluded with a small group workshop exercise to brainstorm solutions for a specific challenge faced by collaboratives in attendance and a discussion about the next steps for SCALE.

### Attendees

Ian Achimore	Kateri Harrison	Matthew Reischman
Frank Aebly	Steve Haze	Sherry Rekler
Victor Aguirre	Sherry Hazelhurst	Justine Reynolds
Mary Beth Najera	Stephanie Heller	Sam Roberts
Steve Buckley	Brooke Huffman	Chad Roberts
Lara Buluc	Monica Irvin	Kyle Rodgers
Lauren Burton	Casey Jardine	Viviana Ruiz
Ray Cablayan	Nick Kent	Andrei Rykoff
Jeremy Camara	Zach Knight	Jamie Sammut
Kim Carr	Jason Ko	Norma Santiago
Jennifer Chapman	Patrick Koepele	Todd Sloat
Alyson Cheney	David Konno	Danna Stroud
Reuben Childress	Jonathan Kusel	Charles Thomas Jr.
Laurence Crabtree	Trish Ladd	Donald Tinsley
Helge Eng	Adam Liljeblad	Pierce Tucker
John Exline	Chris Mallek	Elliott Vander Kolk
Rich Farrington	Luis Mayberry	Robin Wall
Chris Friedel	Jill Micheau	Steve Wilensky
Nick Goulette	Nick Mouthaan	Kendal Young
Rob Griffith	John Owen	Wendy Yun
Barnie Gyant	Patricia Puterbaugh	

# Contents

Synopsis .....	1
Attendees.....	1
Collaborative Updates .....	3
Trinity County Collaborative Group ( <i>Nick Goulette</i> ).....	3
FireScape Mendocino ( <i>Chad Roberts</i> ).....	3
Burney-Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed Group ( <i>Todd Sloat</i> ).....	4
South Lassen Watersheds Group ( <i>Nick Kent</i> ) .....	4
South Fork American River Cohesive Strategy Collaborative ( <i>Kendal Young</i> ).....	4
Tahoe West Partnership ( <i>Kim Carr</i> ) .....	4
Amador Calaveras Consensus Group ( <i>Steve Wilensky</i> ) .....	5
Alpine Biomass Committee ( <i>Alyson Cheney</i> ) .....	5
Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions ( <i>Patrick Koepele</i> ) .....	5
Dinkey Creek Collaborative ( <i>Steve Haze</i> ).....	5
Forest First Partnership ( <i>Mary Beth Najera</i> ) .....	6
U.S. Forest Service Tools and Authorities for Implementing All-Lands Work.....	6
Good Neighbor Authority ( <i>Jason Ko, USFS Region 5; Matthew Reischman, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection</i> ); One Pager.....	6
Wyden Authority ( <i>Rob Griffith and Wendy Yun, USFS Pacific Southwest Region</i> ); One-pager .....	7
Stewardship Contracts and Agreements ( <i>Andrei Rykoff, Monica Irvin and Donald Tinsley from USFS Pacific Southwest Region and Rich Farrington from Upper Mokelumne Watershed Authority</i> ); One Pager.....	8
Ensuring Local Benefit: Advancing Local Contracting and Innovative Approaches .....	9
Building Local Capacity for Integrated Forest and Wildfire Management: Lessons from around the West ( <i>Nick Goulette; The Watershed Research and Training Center</i> ) .....	9
Community-based Case Study ( <i>Steve Wilensky; Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions</i> ).....	10
Discussion .....	10
Opportunities for Partnership and Pursuit of Mutual Goals .....	11
Helge Eng ( <i>CALFIRE</i> ) Power Point .....	11
Barnie Gyant ( <i>USFS Pacific Southwest Region</i> ).....	11
Ian Achimore ( <i>Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority</i> ) Power Point .....	11
Zach Knight ( <i>Blue Forest Conservation</i> ) Power Point.....	11
Discussion .....	12

Project Implementation- Workshop Exercise .....	12
Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions ( <i>Patrick Koepfle</i> ) .....	12
Firescape Mendocino.....	14
Burney-Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed Group .....	14
Next Steps for SCALE, Meeting Wrap Up.....	15
Closing Remarks ( <i>Barnie Gyant; USFS Pacific Southwest Region</i> ) .....	16

## Collaborative Updates

### Trinity County Collaborative Group (*Nick Goulette*)

- Nick Goulette works with the Trinity County Collaborative Group; they have been meeting for close to four years.
- The TCCG is unique because its focus area is county-wide.
- TCCG priorities include the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI), managing roads, and managing plantations.
- Prioritizing roads and ridges is a way of managing fire on the landscape. Beyond human activity, there are frequent lightning strikes that can cause fires in Trinity County.
- The TCCG is working on a large pilot project to create a “break-even” roads and ridge strategy for fire management. This is known as the Trinity County Collaborative Pilot Project.
- Partnerships between the TCCG, CAL FIRE, USFS, volunteer fire crews, and the Watershed Center facilitate prescribed burning across public/private boundaries.
- Significant funding sources for this collaborative include a Joint Chief’s award and Stevens Act funds.
- The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (through NRCS) has provided funding for restoring oak woodlands.
- The TCCG has had success with stewardship contracts for work in plantations.

### FireScape Mendocino (*Chad Roberts*)

- FireScape Mendocino is a relatively young collaborative; the group has been working on defining objectives and goals.
- FireScape’s focus area includes all of Mendocino National Forest, BLM, and other lands. This area extends down to the north shore of Clear Lake.
- The Snow Mountain National Monument is included in FireScape’s purview. The current federal administration’s review of national monuments and the revision of the Northwest Forest Plan has created some uncertainty in the direction of landscape management.
- FireScape has prioritized WUI areas and climate change impacts.
- FireScape has developed strong relationships with recreation groups in the area including Blue Ribbon Coalition and Off-Highway Vehicle (OHV) groups.
- This collaborative is hoping to tap into SCALE resources and build their capacity for managing the landscape.

### **Burney-Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed Group (Todd Sloat)**

- The Burney-Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed Group formed approximately five years ago and is still meeting.
- One of the pioneering projects was a multi-party Timber Harvesting Plan (THP) that included meadow restoration. Private entities all worked together to develop the 2,500-acre “Burney Gardens THP”.
- The BHCCFWG was initially involved in [Quincy Library Group](#) projects, including a number of timber sales within Lassen National Forest.
- The group has learned lessons about leadership, and the importance of facilitation in moving things forward with diverse interests at the table.

### **South Lassen Watersheds Group (Nick Kent)**

- The South Lassen Watersheds Group (SLWG) formed within the last year. This group is an offshoot of the Lake Almanor Watershed Group (LAWG) which focused primarily on the Integrated Regional Watershed Management Program (IRWMP) process for Lake Almanor.
- Some of LAWG’s work included water quality studies in Lake Almanor.
- SLWG formed to seek grant funding for a broader approach to landscape management. The focus area expanded to include the North Fork of the Feather River, Upper Mill and Upper Deer Creeks. This focus area is just south of Lassen Volcanic National Park (LAVO).
- Some of the key partners thus far include LAVO, SPI, Red River Forest Management, W.M. Beaty, Maidu Consortium, and the Plumas County Board of Supervisors. Sierra Institute has also played a large role in organizing members and identifying funding opportunities.
- Proposed projects include building fuel breaks across public/private lands.
- Nick Kent is interested in learning more about Good Neighbor Authority and how it can be applied to SLWG initiatives.

### **South Fork American River Cohesive Strategy Collaborative (Kendal Young)**

- South Fork American River (SOFAR) Cohesive Strategy Collaborative was formed around 2014. The group had a slow start initially, however, there has been an uplift of activity since late last year.
- SOFAR has developed a “shared vision” approach. A charter was created with ground rules to inform conduct amongst group members.
- SOFAR has adopted a working group strategy; one of the most prominent being the Landscape Vision Working Group, which is responsible for “connecting the dots” between projects, funding, and group vision.
- The cohesive strategy element of the group relates to fire-safe communities, resilient landscapes, and effective wildfire response.
- SOFAR is looking for new partnerships on an ongoing basis.

### **Tahoe West Partnership (Kim Carr)**

- Kim Carr is the California Director for the National Forest Foundation (NFF).
- NFF has taken an active role in the Tahoe West Partnership (Tahoe West). Dorian Fougères of NFF is the facilitator of this collaborative.
- The Tahoe West focus area includes Tahoe National Forest and the south shore of the Tahoe Basin.
- Tahoe West incorporates “teams” to approach different aspects of landscape management including:

- Design Team – “visionaries” integrating all of the pieces of management (planning, research, funding, etc.)
- Coordinating Team
- Leadership Team
- Tahoe West’s participants represent a diversity of interests.
- There is an overarching goal to raise \$20 million for landscape management over the next ten years

### **Amador Calaveras Consensus Group (Steve Wilensky)**

- ACCG utilizes a modified consensus approach; no decisions are made without agreement. If there is disagreement, dissenting parties are engaged until agreement is reached.
- There is no facilitator for ACCG. Instead, every participant is required to facilitate on a rotating basis. This method has instilled sensitivity amongst members to the efficiency of meetings.
- ACCG has developed a community forest covering 18,000 acres of BLM land in the Mokelumne Watershed.
- The Prescribed Fire Training Exchange (TRES) is planning to do some work with ACCG. The California drought has put prescribed burns on hold for a while, but there is a renewed energy now.
- ACCG utilizes volunteers and retired professionals to build capacity.

### **Alpine Biomass Committee (Alyson Cheney)**

- The Alpine Biomass Committee (ABC) is a relatively new collaborative (1 year since formation). The group is in a learning and discussing phase; there are monthly meetings that are educational and oftentimes include speakers. Meetings include discussion on lessons learned and next steps.
- ABC is prioritizing sustainable economic development in Alpine County.
- Recently ABC has shifted from information sharing to start addressing biomass issues specifically.

### **Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions (Patrick Koepele)**

- Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions (YSS) intends to restore forest health through treatments, including thinning and prescribed fire.
- The Rim Fire (2013) prevented a lot of work from going forward; although, the publicity drew a lot of attention to issues in the forest.
- NFF has provided some financial support for facilitation services.
- YSS has secured grant funding (primarily through the state) to implement habitat restoration projects in summer 2017.
- YSS employs a volunteer coordinator; individuals come from all over to do volunteer work (e.g. tree planting, weed removal).

### **Dinkey Creek Collaborative (Steve Haze)**

- Dinkey Creek is situated outside of King’s Canyon; The Dinkey Creek Collaborative (Dinkey) has a focus area of approximately 130,000 acres, the majority of land ownership is Sierra National Forest (SNF).
- Dinkey is working on “ground zero” of the tree mortality crisis.
- There is a significant amount of private land ownership within the SNF. Dinkey is interested in integrating these lands to manage a broader landscape.
- The Good Neighbor Authority has been implemented with great success.

- Partners include Southern California Edison and UC Santa Barbara. In light of diminished funding, Dinkey is starting to expand their network to increase capacity.

### **Forest First Partnership** (*Mary Beth Najera*)

- At FFP's formation, there was a realization that 33% of the land base in the Santa Ana Watershed is USFS land, and 90% of rainfall lands on USFS land. With this information in mind, local water agencies created an MOU to start supporting forest management.
- The MOU made it possible for SBNF to start collaborating with local agencies in Santa Ana.
- Proposition 8 funding allowed for water quality and quantity assessments and hazardous fuel reductions.
- FFP "plans up" for climate change; in other words, they are looking at what types of trees/vegetation from lower elevations will be suitable for future conditions.

## U.S. Forest Service Tools and Authorities for Implementing All-Lands Work

In this session, attendees had the opportunity to rotate through two of three expert stations covering existing USFS tools and authorities. Each station had two or more experts who had experience using the tool to provide an introduction and answer questions.

### **Good Neighbor Authority** (*Jason Ko, USFS Region 5; Matthew Reischman, California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection*); [One Pager](#)

The objective of the Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) is to improve coordination across federal, state, and private boundaries during hazardous fuels, insect and disease, and watershed restoration projects. The Forest Service's primary intent of GNA is to provide flexibility for Forests to enter into agreements with state agencies to implement activities on federal lands using federal or state funding. (USFS Pacific Southwest Region, 2017)

#### **Key Points:**

- The USFS – Region 5 has signed a Master Agreement with the California Natural Resources Agency (CNRA) that allows forests to engage with CNRA and associated agencies (e.g. CAL FIRE) in Supplemental Project Agreements (SPAs) for restoration activities.
- A state agency must be a party to the agreement. Resource Conservation Districts (RCDs) are not eligible; however, the California Department of Conservation (DOC) has expressed willingness to act as a pass-through for RCDs.
- GNA effectively "blurs the boundaries", allowing state agencies to fund and perform work on federal land.
- State agency staff can be utilized for work on National Forests. For example, NEPA work can be done by the state up to the final decision.
- GNA agreements can be specific or general. In other words, there is flexibility to develop new projects under the agreement once established.
- There is an additive property to GNA that allows timber receipts to be reinvested in future planning. California has not signed an agreement including a timber sale to date.

- El Dorado National Forest signed an SPA with CAL FIRE to complete fuel breaks around forested communities. CAL FIRE crews will be working on both federal and non-federal land. A second SPA with CAL FIRE and Sierra National Forest is under final review.

**Discussion:**

- Q: What was the impetus for the GNA projects in California?
  - In short, the USFS had money. For the El Dorado SPA, \$908k was transferred from the USFS to CAL FIRE.
- Q: How does reinvestment work with GNA?
  - Wisconsin has GNA agreements that overlap to account for future work on the same land. The revenue generated in years 1-5 can be used under the new agreement in year 6 and beyond.
- Q: Is there a contracts and agreements specialist we [forests] can go to for information?
  - The recommendation is to start with the forest; once a project is identified, the region can assist in developing the project with appropriate tools.
- Q: Is there any funding associated with GNA?
  - GNA does not have a funding source.
- Q: What are the NEPA/CEQA requirements?
  - It is advisable to address both NEPA and CEQA at the same time. Some CEQA documentation (e.g. timber harvest plans) can act as functional equivalents for NEPA, however, NEPA will be required for most projects.

**Wyden Authority (*Rob Griffith and Wendy Yun, USFS Pacific Southwest Region*);  
One-pager**

The Wyden Amendment authorizes the Forest Service (FS) to enter into cooperative agreements with willing participants for the protection, restoration, and enhancement of fish and wildlife habitat and other resources on non-National Forest Service lands and for the reduction of risk from natural disaster where public safety is threatened. All agreements citing this authority must provide a benefit to natural or cultural resources on national forests lands within the watershed.

**Key Points:**

- Wyden authority is cited in an agreement; It is a “permission slip,” an avenue to use USFS funds on private lands. It is not a separate pool of money in the USFS budget.
- Collaboratives should work with their forest supervisor to articulate priority treatment areas.
- Projects using the Wyden authority must be consistent with USFS objectives, and provide a benefit to natural and cultural resources on NFS lands within the watershed.
- Wyden is used to allow federal funds to go on private lands. It isn’t the preferred tool to move private money onto federal lands.

**Discussion:**

- Q: Can the USFS do work on BLM land?
  - A: The USFS has different authorities and agreements with other federal agencies. Sometimes Wyden can be a part of it; each situation is different.

- Q: When you want to use the Wyden authority, how do you engage it?
  - A: Develop a project first and cite Wyden (procedural).
- Other specialists can be used/paid to carry out work on non-NFS lands in the watershed under the Wyden authority if it meets the required specifications.
- Q: Can Cal Fire or another organization provide burn bosses on private land using USFS funding?
  - A: Yes, funds could be used for this purpose.
- Q: Is there a limitation on working across state lines?
  - A: Not for NFS lands, but perhaps for state or private landowners.
- There are outstanding questions about how to do NEPA/CEQA for projects that span across federal/state/private lands.
- Q: Is there a requirement for oversight and analysis?
  - A: Yes, you still have to do analysis on private land because federal funds are being used.
- Q: Can USFS funds be used to help with planning process on private land?
  - A: Yes. USFS funds can be used to make sure private landowners are meeting requirements.

**Stewardship Contracts and Agreements (*Andrei Rykoff, Monica Irvin and Donald Tinsley from USFS Pacific Southwest Region and Rich Farrington from Upper Mokelumne Watershed Authority*); [One Pager](#)**

There are two types of contracting mechanisms. An IRTC (Integrated Resource Timber Contract) is used when the value of timber exceeds cost of service work. An IRSC (Integrated Resource Service Contract) is used when the cost of work exceeds timber value. An IRSC can be used for a number of projects, such as road repair or habitat restoration. Contracts are only for a few years and are used when you have the ability to do the work.

Agreements are different than contracts and are focused on collaboration and mutual benefit. They are appropriate for collaboratives who want to partner but don't want to compete for a contract. In an agreement, the partner provides about 20% of the resources (either in cash, equipment or time). Agreements can stand alone (as for a specific project) or have multiple projects under a Master Stewardship Agreement.

**Key Points:**

- A Master Stewardship Agreement (MSA) is up to ten years and describes the general work to be done. Supplemental Project Agreements (SPAs) fall under the MSA to focus on specific projects over a period of about 1-3 years. An MSA has a lot of flexibility.
- Last year the Upper Mokelumne Watershed Authority signed a ten year Master Stewardship Agreement. A request for proposals has been issued for a stewardship contract this summer under the MSA. They have matched USFS funds mostly with state funding.
- Tips: don't wait to be invited, sometimes you have to invite yourself; get to know your line officers; agreements can be made for planning
- Challenges: NEPA process and timelines, USFS turnover and loss of expertise, annual funding

**Discussion:**

- Q: What is the difference between timber contracts and stewardship contracts?



- Timber sale contracts are about money- the forest describes a project and contractors bid on it. Stewardship contracts are about the best value and local employment. There is still a need for both, dependent on the situation.
- Q: How do you ensure consistent supply/ delivery especially if they are reliant on USFS?
  - Matter of location and private land
- Q: What is the best mechanism?
  - Longer term contract: for example in Malheur in OR, they were about to lose a mill which would have hurt the community; USFS set up a service contract which the local mill got. Even though they did not have work planned for the whole ten years, they had a designated geographic area and had flexibility in the work.
    - Didn't need to have NEPA done, they could at least sign an agreement and get work started
- Q: Does this streamline NEPA?
  - Programmatic agreements made life easier and faster, but there is no way around NEPA timelines
- Q: Can planning be doing by outside groups?
  - We can make agreements for it
- Q: Is it stated in the agreement who will do the work?
  - Partner will be spelled out in SPA; master agreement has a lot of flexibility
  - Monica: contract- government procures service; agreement= mutual benefit, leverage funds, do it as an agreement and work together, master agreement has a lot of flexibility
- Q: What about work on private lands?
  - This mechanism is only for USFS lands
- Q: What prevents signing ten year contracts?
  - Can't guarantee anything because the Forest Service is funded annually; need a forest supervisor to get behind a ten year tool

## Ensuring Local Benefit: Advancing Local Contracting and Innovative Approaches

### Building Local Capacity for Integrated Forest and Wildfire Management: Lessons from around the West (*Nick Goulette; The Watershed Research and Training Center*)

- The Watershed Research and Training Center (Watershed Center) is trying to advance local contracting on USFS land.
- Part of the work is transitioning out of the "timber wars" and collaborate with the USFS to increase local employment.
- Part of the ecosystem management goals include utilizing small diameter wood. This resource meets restoration goals and provides new market opportunities for locals.
- Initial efforts to increase local contracting were met with certain barriers. For example, Indefinite Delivery/Indefinite Quantity (IDIQ) federal contracting mechanisms pushed contracting outside of local regions
- Stewardship agreements have presented an opportunity capture work on federal land in a non-competitive way. If there are matching funds, a stewardship agreement can be signed with local contractors and avoid a contracting/bidding process.

## Community-based Case Study (*Steve Wilensky; Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions*)

- Calaveras County had a difficult time adjusting to the decline of the timber industry. Environmental interests blamed corporations and vice versa, people blamed the spotted owl, and so on. Calaveras became one of the most litigated parts of the Sierra and nothing was getting accomplished.
- Community meetings were held that reinforced the blame game; however, Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions (CHIPS) was formed and brought together diverse interests to meet. The motto was “doing good with wood.” Diane Feinstein and Dan Lungren (U.S representatives) eventually co-sponsored \$500k in funds to increase job development and social services in the area.
- CHIPS survived through relationships built within the USFS. Small projects were set aside for CHIPS workers – like meadow restoration – and kept the organization afloat.
- The formation of ACCG was critical in maintaining CHIPS; this collaborative encouraged relationships between USFS, private parties, and locals.
- One of CHIPS’ accomplishments was a Native American memorial. This memorial symbolized a renewed interest in the history and culture of the community.
- One of the main challenges to sustain CHIPS has been USFS staff turnover. Collaboratives are based on personal relationships and trust; it was difficult to maintain these relationships with consistent turnover.
- Another challenge was a history of competition among small contractors. This prompted CHIPS to form a cooperative to bring small contractors together and bid for larger contracts. It was difficult to overcome the history of competition, but has been overall beneficial.
- Ultimately, local benefits are not always readily apparent but they do get better over time.

## Discussion

- Q: For Steve: You had stated that volunteers were involved in NEPA planning, how did this come about?
  - We utilize a strong volunteer base. Retired foresters, biologists, etc. who are willing to play a part in our mission. Internally, this is cause for concern in terms of sustainability but it is the only way fair wages can be paid to those who need it most.
  - N. Goulette added that the Watershed Center’s board put in volunteer time up front, but they put a high value on the work their employees are doing. There is an emphasis on professional work and wages/benefits reflect that.
- Q: Is the workforce development work eligible for federal funding? Is training based on USFS needs or a more comprehensive training?
  - S. Wilensky: There are federal funds available for this work. Training has ultimately steered towards forestry; initially there were some misfires in training for certain skills relative to demand.
  - The Watershed Center forecasted the Northwest Forest Plan to some extent; some things panned out and others did not. Determining what the sustainable jobs will be has been a moving target. The most consistent job may be firefighting.
  - S. Wilensky added that the failure rate is pretty high, but it has been lower than state and county programs that are working towards the same goals.
- Q: What is the most important value to instill in a new workforce?
  - A schedule and expectations. In addition, developing a crew with shared expectations. We have seen these values imparted into other areas of the individuals’ lives.
  - Ultimately, these initiatives are not anti-poverty programs, but community building programs.

- S. Wilensky added one further comment. There is a 1942 act of congress that allows for nation-to-nation transfer of funds. CHIPS invoked this act with the Bureau of Land Management to allow tribal crews to perform work on BLM land. The process was shaky, but the next one will be smoother.

## Opportunities for Partnership and Pursuit of Mutual Goals

### Helge Eng (*CALFIRE*) [Power Point](#)

- CALFIRE is the primary agency charged with regulating timber harvest. They work with forestry assistance (primarily with small landowners), conservation easements, vegetation management and prescribed fire, and have a nursery and seed bank.
- Opportunities to cooperate with CALFIRE include Good Neighbor Authority, Wyden Amendment, conservation easements and grants.

### Barnie Gyant (*USFS Pacific Southwest Region*)

- The no action alternative is not working for us. We have to be proactive about forest management. Collaboratives are the way forward; the USFS doesn't have money to do it alone, they need the people in this room. Collaboratives aren't designed to move fast, but they allow people to have a voice so we can make better decisions with our forests.
- We have money in California for restoration (cap and trade, water bond); we need to convince people that National Forests are theirs and worth investing in (why aren't we investing in our water sources?).

### Ian Achimore (*Santa Ana Watershed Project Authority*) [Power Point](#)

- Forest First is a partnership between a water agency and San Bernardino and Cleveland National Forests. They executed a Memorandum of Understanding in 2011 and another in 2017. Since then they have worked on a valuation of benefits and an IRWM Prop 84 grant.
- Some of the lessons learned include the importance of keeping agreements on water agencies' minds and showing the board their accomplishments, allow others to do the hard work such as valuation and quantification, quantification studies are useful especially if done up front, understanding the role of experimental forest, and knowing how to engage with water agencies (understand their priorities).

### Zach Knight (*Blue Forest Conservation*) [Power Point](#)

- The Forest Resilience Bond (FRB) is a new tool to allow private capital to fund restoration work. The goal is to bring new financial resources to collaboratives who have already identified projects. Partners include a mix of environmental groups, investors, researchers and lawyers.
- Advantages of private capital:
  - Vast resource (tens of billions of dollars); currently large amount of money investors can't find projects to invest in
  - Can also bring in other beneficiaries who want to see the benefits before investing; Colorado saw major impacts from fire and are people are willing to pay for half the forest restoration work
  - Not appropriate for every type of project
- The benefits of ecosystem services exceed the cost of doing the work, and many people understand that.

## Discussion

- Q: What kind of return on investment are investors looking at?
  - Mid- single digits, fixed income opportunity
- Q: Is there any interest in SB 11 22?
  - Zach: Not for us, but we work with a lot of investors who are interested
- Q: Where will we all be in 5-10 years?
  - Helge: healthier forest
  - Zach: in ten years hope to have a lot of new partners
  - Ian: outside funds and new partners downstream
  - Bernie: treating 350,000- 375,000 acres
- Q: What advice would you give elected officials to try to get the processes streamlined?
  - Bernie: See what the processes and barriers are to get the funds, identify the issues to focus on, a lot of processes are cumbersome but we're recognizing that it is preventing work getting done
- Q: Can you identify things CAL fire can do, what are the highest priorities?
  - Helge: Teamwork and collaboration, state and federal government need to be more streamlined and efficient
- Q: Have you had success in explaining costs and benefits to downstream utilities companies?
  - Zach: Yes. The water utilities understand, but we need to work on public education and teaching people where their water comes from.
- Zach: We want to make sure there's a strong firewall between investors and project planning and prescriptions.
- Q: What is the future for CFLRs now that funding is running out?
  - Bernie: Why do relationships have an end date? Moving forward we need to think together about where we go next and what our priorities are. There won't be more money, funding for programs comes from cutting the funding of other programs, and we should think about how make the most of what we have without competing with each other.
- Q: What advice do you have for Disadvantaged Communities Involvement (Prop 1 funding)?
  - Ian: Get involved with your IRWM; they are writing their grants right now for project planning.

## Project Implementation- Workshop Exercise

### Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions (*Patrick Koepfle*)

**Background:** Yosemite Stanislaus Solutions was formed before the Rim Fire and is now trying to prevent future large fires in that area. The YSS Forest Resiliency Pilot Project lays out the general concept of the collaborative and what they are trying to do, such as:

- Significantly increase mechanical treatments to at least 5000 acres a year
- Increase prescribed burn to at least 3000 acres per year
- Increase significantly habitat and watershed restoration (meadow, stream, deer habitat)

**Workshop Prompt:** YSS is having a hard time going from general concepts to an actual project. They have tried working with USFS as they define project area and write grants to do that work; applied for large rapid assessment for NEPA ready projects and did not get funded (they have since scaled back). YSS has had some successes with habitat restoration projects but not with thinning. Currently, they are stuck on prioritization

of projects- YSS reacts to the forest's lists of priorities and is looking for grant money to implement the projects identified. How have other collaboratives selected their projects?

#### Discussion:

- Q: Have you done any other projects with the agency and built up trust with USFS?
  - Received a grant from SNC and wildlife conservation board for meadow, stream and owl habitat restoration
- Q: Have you tried to work with other groups?
  - SPI to some extent, but mostly USFS
- Q: Is this primarily a funding problem or internal forest service capacity?
  - Maybe both? NEPA process is long and difficult
- Q: How would you rate the agency with respect to their involvement with the collaborative?
  - Has waxed and waned, USFS helped start YSS but after the Rim Fire they have been less involved
- Members of several other collaboratives encouraged YSS to hang in there- collaboration is a long slow process
- Start with a shared vision and the purpose and need of project; have a big vision and pick small NEPA ready projects that fit within that vision (think at large scale but implement at small scale); Continue to look at a larger landscape, and then narrow scope of work on that landscape
- Think about timing, duration, longer vision
- There is also an issue in Stanislaus of USFS staff turnover
  - If you're working with people who weren't part of creating the collaboration, someone at the forest might not be fully invested, so you need to get the new people excited, but also understand that people need time and there is a learning curve
  - Documentation conveys to group members what was discussed, and can be a record for new people to catch up
  - Sometimes helps to have an MOU to show formalized commitment and expectations for engagement for the newcomers
- Don't give up on habitat restoration; that is the carrot right now
- Focus on WUI and you can get a lot of support from the community
- Helps to have a good facilitator, especially when there is a lot of turnover
- Spend initial efforts engaging district ranger or forest supervisor- helps everyone else at the forest to know that the boss is behind the collaboration; get the line officers engaged!
  - At Burney-Hat Creek, the forest supervisor attended every meeting, and their presence showed the importance of collaboration to the collaborative and the agency both
- Q: How did other groups find their project areas?
  - ACCG- the USFS took the collaborative out to the field and asked them what they saw
- Get involved early in the forest plan update and work on a more integrated role
- If SPI is part of the collaborative, they might be a good resource (not just for funding, but they have good foresters with a lot of experience)
- Attend meetings of other collaboratives and use them as a resource

## Firescape Mendocino

**Background:** Working with Firescape Mendocino, the Mendocino NF carried out a combination of planting; noncommercial, pre-commercial, and commercial thinning; prescribed fire; hand and machine piling; and mastication on to restore fire resilient communities and reduce hazardous fuels as part of the Lakeview Hazardous Fuels Reduction project. The planning area encompassed approximately 10,800 acres of public and private land, and lies within the Upper Lake Wildland-Urban Interface Defense Zone near the cities of Lucerne, Clearlake Oaks, and Nice. However, treatments on private lands were not included within the Lakeview HFR proposed action. The group is now interested in re-visiting the private lands issue for the fuelbreak and prescribed fire.

**Workshop prompt:** Mendocino NF is working with the local firesafe council and CalFire now to try and educate the landowners about the importance and assist them in obtaining a grant for CalFire to do the fuelbreak work. The biggest obstacle here is the education component, as many of these landowners do not want to cut trees down for various reasons.

### Discussion:

- Contact has primarily been by mailing letters to landowners, but with very little response so far.
- Suggestion that using the tax assessment records to help track down accurate contact information for absentee landowners could be effective.
- Another idea was to continue to engage the local firesafe council, including by investing in their capacity so they can become an effective partner in this and other efforts.
- In response the discussion around this issue and the need to coordinate with multiple landowners to implement prescribed fire, there was a recognition of a need to figure out a way to do an agreement with many landowners in order to streamline the process.
- Steve W. shared that sometimes stories from other places can be powerful motivators, and offered to share the experience of ACCG if that would be useful.

## Burney-Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed Group

**Background:** The Burney Hat Creek Community Forest and Watershed Group (BHCCFWG) is a collaborative forestry effort founded in 2009. The purpose of the project is to improve social, environmental, and economic conditions in the Burney Creek and Hat Creek watersheds. These two watersheds include all of the land that drains into Burney Creek and Hat Creek, totaling 364,250 acres. Fifty-eight percent of this land is in the Lassen National Forest. Another 29 percent is owned by large private forestland owners and 4 percent by large ranches. The communities of Burney, Johnson Park, Hat Creek, Cassel, and Old Station lie within these two watersheds. Local communities suffer from high unemployment and face high risk of wildfire in many surrounding forests. There is a recognized need for a coordinated public-private effort to address these and other concerns.

**Workshop prompt:** Following an information session about Good Neighbor Authority (GNA) earlier in the day, Todd Sloat, a longtime member of the BHCCFWG, discussed the potential for a GNA pilot project involving a timber sale. The group is interested in overcoming complications and time delays that arise from NEPA document requirements.

## Discussion:

- Todd Sloat introduced the criteria for a GNA project that has the potential for reinvestment including:
  - USFS has a lack of capacity
  - An area that has value (timber, biomass) and high fire risk
- Funding would be the initial step in this process through grants most likely. If the project has enough value, the additional funds can be rolled over into future project planning.
- One of the main barriers is identifying an area and writing the planning documents (NEPA). Todd's vision includes harnessing local capacity to get this work done. Ultimately, the goal is to develop an integrated team of private/public staff to expedite the NEPA process.
- The question was asked about the authority to approve the NEPA document. Who will have the authority?
  - There would be an iterative review process up to the final decision. The USFS has the ultimate authority over the decision.
- What size landscape would this be?
  - Enough to ensure revenue is generated.
- The comment was made that to keep contracts local, smaller acreages are usually required. This may be an issue for this type of project that needs high volume/value.
- There is precedent for using contractors to complete NEPA work. It would be beneficial if there was a previous relationship and/or the contractor has experience with the landscape in focus.
- T. Sloat emphasized that before any funding is secured, it is essential to have the planning ducks in a row. If the USFS can work with an RCD to create a model to outsource NEPA work, this will greatly increase the pace of the project once funded.
- There is a concern about having enough value to roll over to the next project. Private land was mentioned as a potential avenue to increase the overall value. If non-industrial private forest landowners were brought into the fold, this may boost the overall value enough to reinvest.

## Next Steps for SCALE, Meeting Wrap Up

Jonathan Kusel (Sierra Institute) gave an overview of the meeting, and emphasized that there is a genuine interest among the groups and agencies that came together to advance landscape scale restoration through collaboration. Attendees then shared some of their key insights from the day (captured below).

**Tools/Authorities:** Many participants remarked on how much they learned about the three tools and authorities discussed, including learning about potential synergy between Good Neighbor and Wyden Authorities, hearing how these tools can be applied in practice, and how they connect to goals of collaboratives.

**Building New Partnerships:** Connecting to water agencies and other potential investors was another theme for attendees. In particular, a number of participants shared an interest in working with IRWMs and learning more about how to make the forest-water connection.

**Collaboration and Community:** Participants also emphasized the day helped them realize the importance and strengths of collaboration, as well as the usefulness in meeting and talking with other groups working on

similar issues. A number of folks also mentioned an appreciation for the work that collaboratives are doing to contribute to local communities

### **Closing Remarks (*Barnie Gyant; USFS Pacific Southwest Region*)**

Barnie closed the day-long workshop with remarks covering the importance of continued collaboration and the need for “changing how we do business.” This also means being patient with each other as we explore new opportunities. He also acknowledged the work that has been accomplished in recent years, including a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to increase the use of prescribed fire, as well as MOUs with a number of state agencies and a private timber company to advance forest restoration across California. Barnie encouraged collaboratives to build relationships with their local district rangers and forest supervisors, before concluding with a commitment to support collaboratives as they are critical to enabling the Forest Service to increase pace and scale of restoration.