

FEATHER RIVER STEWARDSHIP COALITION

www.featherriversc.org



Meeting Notes

November 16th, 2017

Plumas National Forest Supervisors Office

159 Lawrence Street, Quincy

Introductions

The Feather River Stewardship Coalition last met in March. Since then, the group conducted a field trip to Plumas National Forest's Empire underburn, hosted a Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) grant writing workshop, submitted two SNC grant applications (for Hazardous Fuel Reduction for Butterfly Twain and Little Grass Valley Reservoir), and participated in the Sierra To California All-Lands Enhancement meeting.

Partner Updates

Plumas National Forest

Nancy Francine

- Introduced the concept of "One Region, One Program of Work" whereby forests share resources to increase productivity, with emphasis on timber and fuels.
- The Forest is looking at partnership opportunities, including Good Neighbor Authority agreements.
- Closely tracking the flow of biomass. They are often able to get the material to a landing for burning, but not out of the forest for utilization.
- Working on getting additional acres designated as Tier II hazardous watersheds.

Ryan Bauer

- Applied unsuccessfully to a grant program to support the Butterfly Twain project. No big partners came to the table.
- Completed their first managed fire project this year, the Eureka Fire, which burned 450 acres.
- Completed 750 acres of burning during the fall burn season.

David Kinateder

- The original FRSC grants are underway. There is time lapse photography of the work being done on the Wolf/Grizzly project. The Forest Service is leveraging funds to get the project completed. The Bucks contract package is complete. Evaluating ways to contract locally for the work.

Jim Belsher-Howe

- Has a botany project to propose for Mt. Hough

Joe Hoffman

- Would like to incorporate NEPA ready meadow restoration work into the project we are proposing for Butterfly Twain.

Sierra Institute

Kyle Rodgers

- Sierra to California All-Lands Enhancement working to address issues across California.

Ashley Bomar

- P-Crew – groups of 12 rural and urban high school students working on trails and landscape restoration – has been operating 2 crews for five weeks each. Next year they are expanding to 4 crews and will need additional resources to support them.

Plumas Audubon Society - Brad Graevs

- Working on CEQA/NEPA for the Genesee Valley Watershed Improvement project and determining project partners.

Gold Mountain Firewise - Mike Callaghan

- The community has Forest Service Stevens funds to treat 70 acres. Would like to see the Beckworth District undertake work in the surrounding area.

Mooretown Rancheria - Greg Osborn, Eric Hatcher

- The Rancheria purchased a masticator this year
- They employ 23 people on their field crews - 15 from Quincy and Greenville
- Considering taking on road contracts
- Have completed the Keddie Ridge project (900+ acres).
- Currently working on the Wildcat project and Meadow Valley Storrie Goshawk PAC.

Graeagle Firewise - Chuck Bowman

- Undertaking a second thinning project in the Whitehawk community

Office of Emergency Services - Sue McCourt

- Coordinates wildfire preparedness, evacuation plans, and Firewise communities

USDA NRCS - Dan Martynn

- Working on fuel reduction on properties around Clarks Creek and Meadow Valley. Has done significant work around Butterfly Valley.
- There are several projects in Sierra County, planning to masticate over 300 acres.

Greenville Rancheria - Danny Manning

- Manages a fire and fuels crew and is a fire prevention specialist
- Participated in the Eureka fire
- Also a language teacher and practitioner of Traditional Ecological Knowledge
- There has been a lot of sharing of resources between Rancherias

Sierra Buttes Trail Stewardship - Mandy Beatty

- Works to build trails and keep them open
- Runs the youth crews

Notes from Sierra to California All-Lands Enhancement (SCALE) Meeting

The SCALE meeting was held in Sacramento at the beginning of November. It is essentially a collaborative of collaboratives, managed by Sierra Institute. The [official meeting notes](#) capture the content well.

Points of interest shared from meeting attendees:

- Several of the groups mentioned utilizing professional facilitators. *It was asked if that is something that FRSC might want to consider, particularly while Ryan Tompkins is on detail. Discussion determined that, no, we will continue as we are.*
- It was mentioned that collaborative groups need to find a way to incorporate the interests of those who cannot attend meetings.
- Hugh Safford's presentation about [General Technical Report 256](#) summarized historic forest conditions. His take away points were that the forest has dramatically changed with the exclusion of fire, restoration efforts should focus on restoring processes rather than replicating historical conditions, and that an experimental approach will expedite the learning process.
- Funding was cited as an obstacle when grant recipients end up doing what the funders want rather than what needs to be done.
- The [Prescribed Fire Training Exchange \(TRES\)](#) program was discussed. *Plumas National Forest has a contract to utilize TRES in Butte County. They were not able to burn this year because of conditions. Danny Manning is also looking at working with them.*
- There was a comment by the Six Rivers National Forest Supervisor that tribal relationships have been compromised because groups have been denigrated as partners and not made to feel that they share project ownership. *How do we validate project ownership locally for all stakeholders?*
- Heard about workforce development initiatives of the Calaveras Healthy Impact Product Solutions (CHIPS) and Sierra Institute's P-Crew. *How do we retain a workforce that don't deploy to fires?*
- Sierra Pacific Industries was identified as a barrier to smaller operators entering the market, particularly considering the outlays needed for infrastructure and equipment. *Nancy Francine noted that SPI's mill in Quincy takes the logs, but they don't often buy the timber sales.*
- GHG reduction funds have been increased to \$220 million. *When the money comes, we need to be ready. We are in a position to provide feedback early in the process.*
- There are likely to be additional funds from the State and they are interested in investing in upper watersheds.

Socioeconomic Monitoring in Collaborative Forestry Projects – Kyle Rodgers

Rural areas are considering how to rebuild lost capacity and asking how to provide consistency needed to maintain these resources – an issue discussed in the High Country News article "[The Changing Politics of Woods Work.](#)"

Sierra Institute did a review of 18 of the 20 Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) groups to find out what they are monitoring and who is conducting the monitoring. Common indicators were jobs created, income generated, contractor location, type of work offered, and biomass utilization. Less consistently monitored indicators included recreation and workforce training, which are factors in social wellbeing. There is a lack of social science background in collaborative groups, which impacts monitoring.

An additional challenge is the unit of analysis. Is the definition of “local” a scale for which meaningful data can be collected? It is difficult to collect data for small populations, however the county scale may not be relevant for the collaborative. The Sierra Institute has resources to identify units for analysis.

Sierra Institute is working with the Forest Service at the Regional level to develop a pathway diagram to determine the role of collaboratives in their processes.

There is a need to think holistically about local capacity – not just infrastructure, but also workforce and consistent supply.

Contracting Discussion

Kyle Rodgers displayed an example clause that can be used to prioritize utilization of local workforce.

Nancy Francine said that contracts go out of the Regional office and, therefore, anyone can bid from anywhere. The awards are based on best value. Ryan Bauer added that there are contracting clauses in the Forest Service’s agreements that projects must be openly bid. There is an 8A contracting program that allows for contract negotiation with minority owned contractors.

Greg Osborn from Mooretown Rancheria explained that if contracts go through the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA), the associated funds can’t be pulled for fire suppression and it earns interest for future projects. They have the capacity to sub-contract local operators. Danny Manning said there is potential for the Greenville Rancheria to sub-contract local operators as well. Greenville Rancheria hires locally for their crews. He said that working with the tribes “takes a lot of the red tape out.” Greg Osborn explained that working with the BIA is an interagency agreement with very little paperwork involved.

Meredith Hackleman noted that the Mountain Maidu were managing these forests for thousands of years and that we should be looking to them to implement projects. Danny Manning said that Plumas National Forest has uniquely incorporated the tribes as partners, for example with Bear grass management on the Butterfly project.

Nancy Francine mentioned the Tribal Resource Protection Act as a tool similar to the NRCS program for private lands. There may be other local resources that we haven’t tapped into, or that we might not know about, that we need to bring together. She suggested a workshop to determine who has equipment and who can do the work.

Other potential resources are Pamela Crespin, the Director for Adult Education at Feather River College, who is interested in being a resource for workforce development, as well as the Alliance for Workforce Development, which Greg Osborn uses to recruit employees.

Nancy Francine pointed out that stewardship contracts don’t create receipts that go back to the county for roads and schools. Those revenues are a community benefit that are not tied to who gets the contract. However, while only one out of the three districts have access to biomass, more and more packages are going to stewardship contracts.

Additionally, there needs to be partnership capacity to undertake implementation. For example, marking and cruising for Forest Service projects. This could be a tribal agreement, which Greg Osborn said he would be very interested in.

Funding Opportunities

National Forest Foundation [Matching Awards Program](#). Proposal deadlines are January 23 and June 13, 2018. Must be on federal land, but PNF cannot be the applicant. If interested, now is the time to develop the partnership.

Jim Belsher-Howe introduced the NEPA-complete Butterfly boardwalk as a potential project. It will create a route for people to enjoy the Butterfly Botanical Area in a plant-friendly manner. The work could be undertaken by P-crew or SBTS. Additionally, there is a historic pond built in the late 1800s that has a leak in it – threatening the unique habitat of the area. The pond is about an acre in size and no more than 5 feet deep. A pond liner has been engineered, but requires funding.

Ryan Bauer mentioned a private trails funding source that can be investigated for the project.

Nancy Francine suggested that moving forward we should identify projects in the back-log. Dave Kinatader added that the Feather River District has the most outstanding acres and has been working on a list of projects with them. HFQLG projects had their planning done more than five years ago and the projects should be completed before those planning documents are irrelevant.

The group agreed that the Greenhouse Gas Reduction funds should also be investigated.

Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Strategic Planning Comments

The Sierra Nevada Conservancy is requesting comments for their strategic planning. Written comments can be submitted online. An in-person workshop will take place January 10th from 9:30-11:00am in Paradise.

Next meeting: February – date and time TBD