

South Fork American River Cohesive Strategy Collaborative Group - Meeting Summary

Meeting held May 25, 2017

Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute

Upcoming Meetings

June 14, 1:30-4:30, SOFAR Collaborative, Office of Emergency Services (OES) Meeting, Room, Building A (downstairs), **330 Fair Lane, Placerville, CA 95667.**

MEETING SUMMARY

The Collaborative reviewed and approved the draft meeting summary from the April 26 Collaborative meeting.

New Gasification Technology

Greg Stangl of Phoenix presented on new gasification technology.

Gasification is the heating of **biomass** without sufficient oxygen, thereby producing **energy, biochar, and heat**. Current plants use agricultural materials as fuel – such as orchard chips, peach pits, wood chips. Plants are commercially available at a very local scale, to allow for the local sourcing of materials. A North Fork plant is being built for forestry residue. **Fuel selection** is important. Fuels should be uncompacted, larger volume pieces (no needles).

Numerous factors have **changed the landscape** for small biomass: Market shifts, community choice aggregations, collapse of big biomass, tree mortality events, and legislation. The cost to connect to grid (referred to as **interconnection**) continues to prove a development challenge. **BioMAT** is the tariff that allows a gasification facility to sell electricity to PG&E or another utility. **Emission concerns** focus on CO₂, and require permits from the appropriate air quality district.

A 1 MW facility will have a 100' x 120' **footprint** for equipment. Access and storage requires additional space. 1 kg of bone-dry fuel (<15% water content) = 1 kW. A facility should have a minimum of 7,500 hours operating hours annually.

Phase I, to bring a new project to a financeable state, costs \$50k to do in-house or \$60k plus fees to hire Phoenix, for a total of \$72k.

Fire Safe Council Update

Heather Campbell provided an update on the Fire Safe Council

The El Dorado County Western Slope Wildfire Protection Plan is signed and will serve as the basis for all grant applications. The Plan is first implemented in the Sierra Ridge School. For fuel breaks to be effective, they need cooperation between private landowners and the US Forest Service, such as in the following locations:

- Patchwork of Eldorado National Forest along Weber Creek and Lynx Trail area
- Randolph Creek canyon (Pollock to Camino)
- Gilmore fuels reduction: old road/OHV trail along the Forest Service boundary from Sierra Express and Cable roads. This area has been hit by beetle kill, is being cleared by PG&E

Committee Updates

Steering Committee

Moving forward, the Collaborative will meet on the second Wednesday of each month. The Landscape Vision Committee will meet on the fourth Wednesday of each month.

The Collaborative Steering Committee aims for **July 12** as the date for the Collaborative **field trip**. Proposed field trip sites may include Caples, Long Fire, and the Silver Saddle area.

Landscape Vision Committee

The Landscape Vision Committee defined subgroups, which are working to establish a meeting schedules. The Research and Monitoring Committee is currently joined with the Landscape Vision Committee.

Communications Committee

The Communications Committee expects that the new SOFAR Cohesive Strategy website, www.sofarcohesivestrategy.com, will be live by the end of June.

Finance Committee

The Finance Committee is recruiting additional members, particularly from USFS, to diversify the group's ability to find and apply for funds.

Outreach to Potential Partners

Richard Thornburg has reached out to the **Shingle Springs Band of Miwok Indians**, which already has an agreement with the Eldorado National Forest. Duane Nelson is reaching out to the **Washoe Tribe**. Kendal Young is reaching out to the **Bureau of Land Management** to participate in the Collaborative. **CalFire** is being recruited to participate in the Fire Response Subcommittee and Funding Committee.

Charter

The Collaborative held the inaugural charter signing. Some participants signed, and other will sign in the future.

2017 Project News and Updates

- Norma Santiago requested a presentation on researching funding and partnership opportunities and grant-writing at the August Collaborative meeting.
- Sierra Pacific Industries replanted 2000 acres in the King Fire area this spring.
- El Dorado Irrigation District is preparing to implement the Caples project, and has an upcoming kickoff meeting.
- The National Wild Turkey Federation has entered into a 10-year stewardship agreement with the Eldorado National Forest, and will soon open a bid package for mastication.
- The Sierra Nevada Conservancy will submit an application for greenhouse gas funds. Because interconnection fees now start at \$5 million, they suggest finding a stand-alone biomass facility rather than connecting to the grid.
- Guidelines for Proposition 1 funding applications will be published in June, and the application period closes in September. The grant funding covers \$500k for implementation and \$75k planning, and can be used for biomass plants. Now is the time for Collaborative participants to develop funding concepts and pre-applications.
- Request to review Proposition 1 needs and potential at the June Collaborative meeting.

Next Steps

The Collaborative will next meet on June 14, 1:30-4:00 at Eldorado Irrigation District.