

NOTES: SOFAR Landscape Vision Committee

Feb. 28, 2019

Meeting in Brief

The Committee refined the list of potential actions considering Collaborative feedback and will report back at the next Collaborative meeting.

The Committee outlined questions for the scientific talks that will take place at Collaborative meetings. Researcher Brandon Collins will give the first talk on March 28, at 1:30.

The Committee will continue to advance coordination and projects in the three focus areas for the next year. The Committee will also deepen its understanding of the Tahoe Central Sierra Initiative's (TCSI) scientific assessment to determine how it might be applied within SOFAR.

[Link to All Meeting Materials](#)

List of Potential Actions – Next Steps to Finalize

Materials

- [Feb 13 Collaborative Meeting Summary](#)
- [List of Potential Actions \(v. 12/18/18\)](#)

The full Collaborative discussed the list of potential actions. The Committee reviewed the meeting comments and made recommendations for next steps outlined below. The list of potential actions will return to the full Collaborative at the next meeting to ensure that everyone understands and supports the document and its intent.

The Committee recommends:

1. The first and foremost criterion is that projects cannot contradict any existing rules, laws and regulations.
2. The Collaborative may wish to review and update this list, perhaps annually.
3. **Green Light** – The Committee wants to keep the green light items since it articulates and provides guidance for SOFAR project approval.
4. **Collaborative feedback: add an item to consider opportunities to reduce fuel loads in the spotted owl Protected Activity Centers (PACs)** – Committee members are open to reducing fuel loads in PACs. However,

the Committee notes that PACS are tackled in the Red Light and additional language is not necessary.

5. **Collaborative feedback: add road utilities easement work** – The Committee would recommend adding “routine maintenance along utility easement” in green light.
6. **Collaborative feedback: Define “modest improvements” in “modest improvements to developed facilities.”** – The Committee recommends “improvements to developed facilities within the existing footprint.”
7. **Collaborative feedback: Further elaborate on marking overreaches regarding “roadside hazard tree logging when tree marking overreaches.”** The Committee recommends removing this item because roadside hazard logging must be consistent with established policy, such as the 2012 Regional Guidelines for Hazard Tree Marking.” CalFire is working from Harvest Plans and guidelines.

Science Talks Concept

The Steering Committee and Collaborative have been contemplating initiating a science talk series. The goal is to share information and learn about science on the Sierra Nevada to deepen understanding and inform SOFAR Collaborative work.

Approach: Three-four presentations would take place at full Collaborative meetings in 2019. SOFAR would identify questions and then ask scientists to share insights and information related to those questions.

Questions

- What is the current research?
- How can we address the issues identified in the research in our work together? (i.e. What should we do about it?)
- How do we burn with such heavy fuel loads?
- How can we prepare this spring to start lighting the prescribed burns?

Potential Topics

- Role of fire in the landscapes
- Historical conditions and fire regime
- Brandon Collins – forest structure at higher elevations; we need to burn after a fire; density at the ENF – no one would think that ENF density is possible.
- Malcolm North – Owl Paper 2017
- Why do we still need 300-acre PACs?
- **Post-Fire Practice:** Malcolm North et al - post-fire reforestation paper. SPI is tilling and having good luck with planting.

- **Community-protection expert** – what do you do in the half-mile around the community and in the community? *Some Fire Safe Councils'*
- **WUI** research and treatment.
- What is an effective shaded fuel break? *The FS models and treats to the 95th percentile.*
- UC Davis or Cal Academy of Science – Implications of 4 dry years followed by 3 wet years. What are the predictive models saying?

Other Ideas

SOFAR was going to be able analyze and make progress on the landscape scale design. One option is that the TCSI is conducting an assessment that includes SOFAR. It will be finished in the next 6 months. The resolution of the analysis are 50 hectares. **This work would help inform where to put work that would design long-term outcomes.** Either Ron Kelsy (1st choice) or Pat Manley could speak to the group about this.

Geronimo et al: Analysis of tree density objectives (reference conditions) that could **guide where are we most at risk**, what are the patterns that we want to support, where are our risks. Malcolm North is a co-author.

Lake Tahoe West is developing a model and approach, including a set of indicators for a similar landscape based on certain conditions. **What type of seral conditions are ideal on the landscape?** Becky Estes might be able to present.

SOFAR partners are working long term. Partners would also hope to guide or inform science by what partners are doing. Partners need to look at the modeling. SOFAR partners would hope to **establish and monitor the benefits of work underway** and be able to justify those actions and be able to leverage funding.

Mark Egbert explained that when he writes grants, he tries to articulate the standards and values of the landscape. He would like to have a **baseline condition**. Then the RCD would be able to better coordinate strategic priorities and feed into the project design. **Are we increasing productivity? Helping the health of PACs?** SOFAR could ask Sierra Business Council if they have nontraditional economic indicators. A **sociological / ecological baseline** that everyone could use would be very helpful.

Recommend organizing by scale

- Smaller-scale approaches
- Stand, local projects
- Patterns and processes – landscape wide. Lake Tahoe West Strategy, climatic conditions,

Questions for Brandon Collins (and consider inviting Scott Stephens)

- What are the historical conditions on the ENF, including the study area of General Sherman?
- Outline work on the Plumas NF comparing unlogged areas to current conditions.
- What is the role of community development and stand density around communities?
- How to integrate fire effectively? Brandon has also been looking at fire movement through the stand scale. He's been looking at the upper montane and aspen.

Future Meetings

- Continue to prepare the materials and elements for full collaborative discussion.
- Lake Tahoe West
- TCSI assessment – much more detailed understanding of that work. The TCSI assessment will feed into the CWPP.
- Discuss options that the FS is using to pursue scope and scale. More information sharing is critical, including Good Neighbor Authority agreements and Stewardship Agreements. A three-day workshop is underway at McClellan today.
- The group would like to establish a database to track these projects and feed into CAL Mapper (ran by CALFIRE). That way we can tie into the California Carbon Plan.

Background Work

1. Meeting notes @ <http://sofarcohesivestrategy.org/meetings/>
2. Link to [Project Priorities Development List](#) (on Google Drive)
3. Link [Desired Conditions Zone Table \(on Google Drive\)](#)

Participants

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