



- Cohesive Strategy Goals**
- Resilient Landscapes •
 - Safe & Effective Wildfire Response •
 - Fire Adapted Communities •

Collaborative Group - Meeting Summary

Meeting held May 8, 2019

Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute

Meeting in Brief

The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors recently adopted Ordinance No. 5101 on vegetation management and defensible space. Collaborative members have worked with the county to develop the ordinance and noted its important advancement for the community.

The Chili Bar to Georgetown Focus Area Work Group has been developing its landscape strategy and applying various criteria to identify potential high-priority project areas. The group divided the focus area into smaller, more manageable areas, particularly due to the many small-parcel landowners. The work group aims to identify its first set of project area(s) in June.

Not much advancement has occurred for biomass infrastructure policies at the state level; however, the new administration offers opportunities to raise awareness and interest. General interest in biomass infrastructure has increased; however, there is still a need to identify viable markets and help legislators understand its value as part of forest management and watershed restoration.

The Collaborative discussed communication and outreach priorities and activities for 2019, including developing focus area factsheets and conducting summer field visits in Pollack Pines and Georgetown. The group decided a summer public workshop was not necessary, as groups like local fire safe councils are already conducting this kind of outreach.

The Collaborative Group meetings will be on hiatus during the summer and will next meet on **September 11, 1:30-4:00**. Location is to be determined.

Action Items

Who	What
All	Send updates and meeting information to CBI to post to the SOFAR website.
CBI	Work with Heather Campbell to identify dates for the Pollack Pines field tour
CBI	Work with Collaborative members to finalize focus area factsheets

Meeting Summary

County Ordinance Update

[View [Ordinance](#)] The El Dorado County Board of Supervisors recently adopted Ordinance No. 5101 on vegetation management and defensible space. The ordinance will support removal of hazardous vegetation and combustible materials in unincorporated areas to reduce fire risks, including fire hazards that may endanger neighboring property. Landowners must create defensible space around structures, or otherwise pay for someone else to do the work.

The County plans to implement a “soft start” for the ordinance, focusing first on public outreach/awareness and identifying high-risk properties. County staff emphasized they want to work with property owners as much as possible through the abatement process, and only requiring the landowner to pay for someone else to do the work as a last resort. The County plans to work with neighboring property owners outside of county jurisdiction (e.g., US Bureau of Land Management and US Forest Service) to manage hazardous vegetation and combustible materials on those properties.

Discussion

Several Collaborative members have been working with the County to develop this ordinance. Collaborative members commended County leadership and receptiveness to discuss this controversial topic.

Under the ordinance's Good Neighbor and Neighborhood Protection Policy, improved parcels must have a 100-foot defensible space around its structures, even if that defensible space extends across neighboring property. In this case, the landowner of the improved parcel will need to work with the neighbor(s) to create a 100-foot defensible space. Collaborative members shared concerns that the ordinance does not require landowners of *unimproved* parcels to implement the same policy. However, attendees acknowledged the ordinance is an important starting point for fire resilience.

Attendees noted other local efforts to advance better fire management, including similar county ordinances (e.g., Sonoma County). On a statewide scale, AB 1516 (Friedman) is making its way through state committees and aims to require defensible space and fuels reduction management to reduce fire hazards.

Chili Bar to Georgetown Focus Area Planning Update

[View [presentation slides](#)]

The Chili Bar to Georgetown focus area represents a crucial opportunity to realize SOFAR goals in a large wildland-urban interface (WUI) with several small-parcel landowners. Coordinating with the numerous landowners and jurisdictions presents a major management challenge, highlighting the focus area work group's emphasis on community and stakeholder engagement.

The focus area work group has been meeting monthly to develop a landscape management strategy that balances the local community needs and watershed values. The group divided the focus area conceptual zone into management areas, then further divided those into quads. The group also mapped out other variables, like

federally identified fire risk areas, to identify major high-risk areas and understand management strategy parameters (e.g., map road systems to explore viability for ingress and egress opportunities). Narrowing down the area of these polygon units to just several hundreds of acres is crucial due to the number of landowners in the area (there can be more than a thousand landowners within a single quad).

Collaborative members discussed other funding opportunities / concerns, such as exploring what might be available through CAL FIRE's climate change grants.

Next steps for the work group include:

- Continue to develop its landscape strategy, including discussing whether to characterize projects as part of a vegetation management project or community wildfire protection strategy.
- In addition to mapping high fire-risk areas, map priority areas to protect valued natural resources (e.g., important sensitive species' habitat)
- Identify and engage potential community partners. Continue to build collaborative relationships with property owners and awareness among the communities (e.g., continue to conduct field trips).
- Develop/conduct fire modeling once the group better defines desired projects.
- Continue to seek funding support through a variety of sources (e.g., interagency agreements, grants, etc.)

The work group aims to have the first set of project area(s) identified and understand landowners and partners' participation level by June.

Next Steps for the Collaborative

Landscape Vision Committee could discuss the feasibility for a programmatic environmental document to help streamline projects in this focus area.

Biomass: State-Level Policy Updates

Norma Santiago, Catalytic Connections, reported that not much advancement has occurred for biomass infrastructure policies at the state level; however, the new administration offers opportunities to raise awareness and interest. She suggested the Collaborative should continue to monitor and engage the state's Director of the Governor's Forest Management Task Force (from Placerville), the task force's wood utilization working group, and the CA Natural Resources Agency Deputy Secretary of Forest Resources Management (from Pollock Pines).

Research continues to explore viable applications for bio char (e.g., All Power Labs working with UC Berkeley to identify a market niche). Some groups are considering repurposing mills to better utilize the timber market (current mills in the state are at capacity). Burning wood for electricity does not appear viable on a large scale, but could work at smaller scales.

State policies are fostering renewable energy and carbon sequestration activities, which may offer prospects for biomass infrastructure. The State has not invested money to build such an infrastructure; however, Collaborative members noted a general growing interest, particularly in the wake of the past year's wildfires. Collaborative

members emphasized the need to help legislators (particularly those downstream) understand the relationship between forest management and watershed restoration to see the value in investing in biomass infrastructure.

Communications and Engagement

The Collaborative confirmed communication and outreach priorities for 2019:

- **Focus Area factsheets** – Two factsheets completed; Sly Park is in progress.
- **Robust SOFAR website** – one-stop hub for SOFAR-related information. Link to existing information as much as possible rather than creating new resources (e.g., videos).
- **Partnerships / Networks** – Understand what outreach already occurs within each focus area; build upon existing efforts. Collaborate on new material if needed.
- **Timelines of major activities in focus areas** – Obtain or connect to sites that identify major dates of activities (like a major burn or clearing effort) ahead of time to notify the community of what's occurring and why; or document it in action (photos / videos) so folks understand and value the work being done.

The group decided a summer public workshop was not necessary, as groups like local fire safe councils (FSCs) are already conducting this kind of outreach. The group indicated that the communication and outreach priorities listed above are sufficient.

Planning Potential Summer Field Visits

The Collaborative supported holding field visits in Camino-Pollack Pines (Pollack Pines FSC planning a field visit) and Georgetown (expected week of June 24). Collaborative members stated that additional field visits in Headwaters do not appear necessary at this point (nothing particularly new to see in Headwaters).

Next Steps

Work with Heather Campbell to identify a good time for a field visit of Camino-Pollack Pines fuel breaks.

Announcements and General Updates

- May 11 @9:00 – Amador El Dorado Forest Forum field trip of fuel breaks at Amador Rangers Station.
- May 16 @6:00 – PG&E vegetation management meeting at the Best Western Placerville.
- Late June – Certified vegetation management workers will reduce fuels in Caples and off-highway vehicle trails.
- July – Potential volunteer opportunity for raking around big trees in Caples.
- Lessons Learned document developed on the French Meadows Forest Restoration Project planning process, a collaborative effort with diverse stakeholders, including federal and local entities and NGOs.
- US Forest Service Supervisor Crabtree commented on the Collaborative's continued commitment and progress. Updates included US Forest Service's continued project priorities (i.e., timber) and progress filling vacant positions.

- The next phase of the Tobacco Gulch Project will start soon (e.g., treating 900 acres along Darling Ridge).

Upcoming Meetings

Collaborative	Landscape Vision Committee
<p>The SOFAR Collaborative meets on the second Wednesday of each month.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • September 11, 1:30-4:00 	<p>Location: Placerville Supervisor's Office, 100 Forni Rd, Placerville, CA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May meeting TBD
<p>Always check sofarcohesivestrategy.org for meeting location and latest information.</p>	

Meeting Participants (who signed in)

Jeff	Blewett	Cal4 / RTF
Norma	Santiago	Catalytic Connections
Scott	Stephenson	Dudek
Mark	Egbert	El Dorado County & Georgetown Divide RCDs
Lori	Parlin	El Dorado County Supervisor
Rod	Pimental	El Dorado Northern
Dale	Pierce	El Dorado Resource Conservation District
Craig	Thomas	Fire Restoration Group
Chuck	Schnell	Mosquito Fire Safe Council
Kevin	Vella	National Wild Turkey Federation
Brandon	McClintic	Natural Resource Conservation Service
Ethan	Koenigs	Sacramento Municipal Utility District
David	Zelinsky	Sierra Club
Ben	Solvesky	Sierra Forest Legacy
Chris	Dallas	Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Jennifer	Chapman	USFS - ENF
Laurence	Crabtree	USFS - ENF
Jason	Sieg	USFS - ENF, Georgetown; SOFAR Representative
Dana	Walsh	USFS - ENF, North Zone
Scot	Rogers	USFS - ENF, Placerville
Travis	Thane	USFS - ENF, Placerville