

NOTES: SOFAR Landscape Vision Committee

June 22, 2023

Action Items & Next Steps

- **Kyle** will reach out to Michelle to coordinate between HELP and EDCWA's programmatic watershed plan and project database.
- **Sophie** will send Michelle and Julie the expanded SOFAR boundary.
- **Sophie** will introduce coordination between SOFAR's and HELP's work to the Steering Committee.
- **CBI** will update the focus area fact sheets over the summer based on information the LV group provided in the March and May meetings and will reach out to specific partners for document review.

The **next LV meeting** will be August 24 at 1 PM online.

The **next Collaborative meeting** will be October 11 from 1:30-3:00 online.

Introducing Healthy Eldorado Landscape Partnership (HELP)

Julie Fair, American Rivers; Michelle Wolfgang, Eldorado National Forest (ENF); and Jonas Epstein, US Forest Service (USFS), introduced HELP. HELP is a partnership between ENF and partner entities doing landscape work within the forest boundaries, implementing the Forest Resilience Strategy together. HELP partners include: American Rivers, Great Basin Institute, Blue Forest, Fresh Water Trust, American Forests, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, El Dorado County Resource Conservation District, and others.

HELP has been internal to ENF until this year and is interested sharing their work and partnership opportunities within SOFAR. HELP does not have an online presence, which may be an opportunity for SOFAR to provide support. HELP's focus areas are similar to SOFAR's and include Crystal Basin, Georgetown, the King Fire footprint, and the Caldor fire footprint. HELP currently has a \$10 million investment for work in Crystal Basin through 2028.

They are employing the Potential Operational Delineations (PODs) concept to develop treatment blocks and working toward larger landscape planning. The group wants to leverage federal funding with non-Forest Service funding to support operational capacity of local partners and increase pace and scale of local programs. Jonas Epstein shared USFS's Conservation Finance Framework that HELP is employing. His presentation is linked here [\[LINK\]](#).

Eventually HELP will support four categories of activities that SOFAR member groups can participate in: funding, data and reporting, vetting/suggesting/elevating projects, and workforce development for wood products. There could also be focal areas working groups. HELP's data management committee is developing a database to track the tools that different groups are developing on for management on the landscape.

Discussion

- There's added value to HELP and SOFAR partners communicating more closely, sharing their work, and identifying what grants are available.
- SOFAR and HELP can be avenues to match implementation partners with fiscal agents. Blue Forest would be interested in co-developing appropriate processes for identifying implementation partners for debt-based financing.
- El Dorado County Water Agency (EDCWA) has a Global Information System (GIS) portal for on the ground projects in the watershed, and is working with the County Office of Wildfire Protection and Resilience (OWPR) to incorporate their projects – this aligns with the interests of the HELP data management committee.
- EDCWA is conducting an ecosystem service analysis for the County right now, which is a key component of the natural working landscapes that Jonas mentioned.
- All partners on the landscape need to coordinate on biomass infrastructure that doesn't compete for feedstock. SOFAR can be a coordination venue.
- There's a suite of multi stakeholder efforts and project loads can get unwieldy. SOFAR can be a venue for projects to be vetted and evaluated and a conduit to ensure implementation partners help ENF meet it's priorities.
- SOFAR is a venue to help inform the public about what work is happening across the entire landscape.

Updates & Announcements

- July 11, August 1 **Forest Business Alliance Workshops**
- July 17-18 In-Person **SCALE meeting**
- Round 2 of **Community Wildfire Defense Grants** - expected to be released in June

[Link](#) to All Meeting Materials