

NOTES: SOFAR Landscape Vision (LV) Committee

October 26, 2023

Action Items & Next Steps

- **CBI** will send regular attendees a calendar item for the monthly LV Meeting
- **Michelle Wolfgang** will put CBI in touch with the organizers of the USFS Conservation Finance Webinars, to share their announcements with SOFAR
- If **Pat Manley** joins the HELP data matrix calls in December, **Michelle** will work with her to incorporate the Crystal Basin Blueprint information.
- **Sophie** will reach out to Ken Pimlott at OWPR, who is intended the liaison between SOFAR and the FSCs.

The **next LV meeting** will be November 16 at 1 PM online.

The **next Collaborative meeting** will be December 13 from 1:30-3:30 online.

Updates & Announcements

- **Eldorado National Forest (ENF)** is seeking additional funding for the Crystal Basin **multi-jurisdictional projects**. Implementation is expected in 2024. The Wrights Lake NEPA is almost complete and ENF will seek letters of support for that work.
- **ENF** is working with **Tahoe Central Sierra Initiative (TCSI)** to identify quantifiable metrics for a resilient forest. They will need to incorporate the 2022 Crystal Basin Blueprint information.
- **ENF-wide**, a hazard tree removal National Environmental Protection Act (NEPA) compliance document was just signed and ENF has done several hundred acres of prescribed burning across all districts in the last few weeks due to agreeable weather.
- **Georgetown Ranger District** is working on the NEPA for the Mosquito fire area. It's been difficult to sell timber from the fire due to natural deterioration of the wood. It has not been a challenge to find mills to ship the timbers to, unlike the Caldor fire timbers.
- **California Native Plant Society** has been volunteering with ENF's Matt Brown monitoring sensitive and rare plants.
- **ENF** hosts reforestation volunteer events, such as cone collection.
- El Dorado County Resource Advisory Committee (RAC) is funding Caldor native plant restoration, headed up by the Shingle Springs Band of Miwok.

Caldor Field Tour Debrief & Next Steps Discussion

Broad comments on the October 12 field trip

- Exceeded expectations, had good attendance from different perspectives, and good discussion
- Valuable to hear from fire professionals; want to hear their perspective more
- Focused on scientific management; future conversations can also focus on bringing in community members and other stakeholders impacted by the Caldor and fire resiliency measures.

Workforce Development and Retention

The Landscape Vision Committee would like to create an ad hoc group to advance collaboration to meet work force needs in the SOFAR footprint. Possible outcomes could include a panel at a SOFAR meeting in 2024 or an in-person networking opportunity. Norma, Zach, and Michelle are interested in participating in the ad hoc group. Other suggested partners/participants include TCSI, OWPR, Chamber of Commerce, County and State workforce development agencies, and the Cone Corps manager at American Forests (Bridget Mulkerin).

Relevant topics would include:

- Training and education
- Housing and amenities to retain workforce
- Collaboration with Tribes
- Sustainable employment infrastructure

Private Landowner & Fire Safe Council (FSC) Engagement

Sierra Institute and ENF have been discussing engaging private landowners and FSCs. They want to coordinate between RCD, FSCs, and ENF, whose work sometimes overlaps substantially. There's a need to build trust and share resources with the public. RCD has a strong relationship with the public that could be positively leveraged. OWPR is the liaison between SOFAR and the FSCs. OWPR is currently updating the Western El Dorado County Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP).

After the Collaborative panels on catastrophic wildfires, perhaps there could be SOFAR conversations about building community resilience, with focus on Grizzly Flat and Hwy 50 communities. FSCs have a core role in community resilience.

Relevant topics include:

- Opportunities for agencies to share resources with the public (e.g., if public landowners are doing work nearby, might be able to coordinate for work on private land)
- Need to build trust with communities opposed to prescribed burning (Engaging the El Dorado/Amador Prescribed Burn Association (EAPBA) may be a valuable asset - Kestrel Grevatt kestrelgrevatt@berkeley.edu is the coordinator)
- People feel that if USFS land is not maintained then there's no point in maintaining their own property
- Insurance costs are making the cost of living untenable

Reforestation Practices

There was useful discussion in the tour about what combination of traditional and other approaches to replanting might be used for replanting. This will be a big topic in the Nov and Dec Collaborative meetings. Tribes are interested in helping with restoration and recovery efforts.

There may be opportunities in spring or early summer 2024 for field visits to areas replanted in different ways.

Lester is asking Becky Estes about a Pacific Southwest Research Station report on benefits and outcomes of prescribed burning. ACCG might have had a talk on that already. Facilitators for ACCG and SOFAR are beginning to be in touch to better coordinate across the groups on presentations and any other relevant topics.

Red Fir Strategy & Sensitive Species

In early 2024 LV may want to hold a meeting focused on red fir. New data is available and the USFS Zone entomologists have updated the 2019/2020 red fir white paper. Michelle suggested to the Forest Supervisor that he invite the entomologists to speak about stand conditions and mitigating disease and other impacts. Becky may be able to speak to regeneration statistics of red fir after the fire.

Merchantable Timber

There are large quantities of salvage timbers decked roadside in the Caldor burned area. The hauling costs associated with the removal of the excess trees substantially exceeds the prices being paid at local mills, but the wood is going to waste and emitting carbon just sitting there. ENF applied but did not receive a National Forest Foundation (NFF) grant for getting these timbers off the landscape. The Washoe Tribe's mill in Nevada is open to receiving logs if they can be delivered, but that is a different USFS region and also ENF doesn't want to subsidize private industry by donating the timber. ENF is using SNC rec and tourism grant for hazard tree removal, but it does not apply to already down timber.

Sierra Institute is working on something similar with Dixie Fire logs. They contracted TSS consultants for a feasibility study of biomass applicability for the number of available bone-dry tons per year. They're seeking a variety of venues to offload the logs and starting small. They don't have the same challenges with transportation of logs off the landscape.

The Biomass working group is looking into a number of biomass opportunities but doesn't have anything confirmed yet.

[Link](#) to All Meeting Materials