



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

Collaborative Group - Meeting Summary

Meeting held February 13, 2018
 Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute

Meeting in Brief

The Collaborative discussed desired activities for the SOFAR 2019 work plan, much of which seeks to build on the progress from 2018 (e.g., coordinated projects in focus areas). Collaborative members suggested other activities, include incorporating research learning and long-term thinking into project strategy and design (and not focus solely on shovel-ready projects).

Attendees identified several specific outreach and engagement needs, such as increasing local communities' understanding of the county ordinances and building local landowners' capacity to engage in fire management solutions.

El Dorado County is drafting the defensible space ordinance. Collaborative members support the intent of the ordinance, but wish to review the completed document once available. The Landscape Vision Committee will review and discuss the completed draft ordinance at its February 28th meeting.

The Collaborative continued to discuss a process and tools for demonstrating SOFAR support for projects. The group reviewed a list of actions that may be controversial / non-controversial intended to help project sponsors anticipate support / concern with projects and correspondingly streamline approval processes. Attendees also reviewed a template letter of support for projects that receive SOFAR Collaborative consensus endorsement.

The next Collaborative Group meeting will be on **March 13, 1:30-4:00**.

Action Items

Who	What
All	Send updates and meeting information to CBI to post to the SOFAR website.
All	Send CBI / Jason Sieg (suggested topics and/or speakers for future presentations.
CBI	Update the proposed work plan and draft a proposed 2019 meeting framework based on the Collaborative discussion.
El Dorado County	Send draft language to Jason Sieg and CBI for the Landscape Vision Committee Feb 28 th meeting.

Steering Committee	Discuss topics to address in 2019 and how to incorporate research learning into the discussion given the limited time in meetings; then outline a SOFAR 2019 meeting framework based on the Collaborative discussion.
Steering Committee	Confirm Letter of Support process given Collaborative's feedback.
Landscape Vision Committee	Discuss County defensible space draft ordinance.
Landscape Vision Committee	Discuss and update the list of actions based on Collaborative feedback.

Meeting Summary

El Dorado National Forest

US Forest Service Supervisor Lawrence Crabtree conveyed the Forest Service's vision for SOFAR involvement in 2019. He emphasized the Forest Service's commitment to support the SOFAR cohesive strategy collaborative process, which has brought together an impressively committed group with diverse perspectives. Future Forest Service efforts include protecting spotted owl habitat on Sierra Pacific Institute's property and considering viable timber opportunities as part of project components.

SOFAR 2019 Proposed Work Plan

[\(View Work Plan\)](#) The group reviewed the proposed 2019 work plan, which was based on suggestions Collaborative members expressed at the November Collaborative meeting. Members identified minor edits and additional topics / activities, including:

- Science talks for ongoing learning (e.g., historical conditions, fire interaction with the landscape, soil science post-fire regime, and thinning policy / effectiveness)
- Addressing other outreach and engagement needs (*see next sub-section*)
- Continued emphasis on activities in the focus areas
- Incorporating long-term thinking into project strategy and design (e.g., integrating the County Wildfire Protection Plan and defining stakeholders' understanding and vision for restoration)
- Transition plan discussion for spotted owl territories as the landscape changes

Members acknowledged the importance for the group to have shared understanding of the research and updated information, but the Collaborative may not have sufficient time for all of the proposed presentations. Attendees shared several suggestions to address this, including using informational videos and the Landscape Vision Committee meetings for learning forums.

Outreach and Engagement Needs

Throughout the meeting, attendees suggested specific activities for outreach and engagement:

- Engage other major stakeholders who do not regularly attend Collaborative meetings (e.g., PG&E)
- Help locals engage more in wildfire management and stay informed (e.g., participating in local Fire Safe Councils)

- Increase local communities' understanding of wildfire regulations and policies (e.g., CALFIRE may have helpful videos; insurance companies may have useful guidelines for vegetation clearing)
- Help local communities understand the need to access roadways for vegetation clearance (e.g., avoid getting trapped during emergencies)
- Increase Collaborative members' understanding of the [General Technical Report 220](#)

Next Steps

- Attendees are invited to send CBI / Jason Sieg (SOFAR contact and US Forest Service, Georgetown District Ranger) suggested topics and/or speakers for future presentations.
- CBI will update the proposed work plan and draft a proposed 2019 meeting framework based on the Collaborative discussion.
- Steering Committee will discuss topics to address in 2019 and how to incorporate research learning into the discussion given the limited time in meetings.
- Steering Committee will then outline a SOFAR 2019 meeting framework based on the Collaborative discussion.

County Draft Ordinance Update

El Dorado County Supervisors Veercamp and Hidahl have been pursuing a defensible space ordinance that would require landowners to create defensible space by managing vegetation around structures, or otherwise pay for someone else to do the work. The ordinance builds on Public Resources Code (PRC) 4291.¹ PRC 4291 does not cross property lines, but this ordinance will.

Several Collaborative members have provided feedback on various components of the draft ordinance; the County has also held several stakeholder meetings and public workshops. Next steps include holding an additional public meeting, then compiling the language for the draft ordinance.

Discussion

Attendees shared concerns that the 100-foot defensible space may not be enough in all cases and that the ordinance does not address unimproved parcels. Several attendees emphasized the ordinance is an important starting point.

The US Bureau of Land Management (BLM) is working on a Programmatic Environmental Assessment for landowners to pay and conduct the treatments themselves on BLM land; however, BLM does not have the funding for treatments or for landowners to go through the NEPA process. The County is seeking categorical

¹ **PRC 4291.** From [El Dorado County Fire district](#): Compliance to PRC 4291 is required by any person who owns, leases, controls, operates or maintains a building or structure in or adjoining any mountainous area, forest-covered lands, brush-covered lands, grass-covered lands or any land that is covered with flammable material and is within the State Responsibility Area. PRC 4291 requires 100 feet of Defensible Space (or to the property line if less than 100 feet) from every building or structure that is used for support or shelter of any use or occupancy. Owner, lessee or operator must also comply with all existing environmental protection laws and must obtain all necessary permits.

exclusion for activities under the new ordinance, especially because most treatment areas will be relatively small.

Collaborative members commended the Supervisors' leadership and progress in developing the ordinance. Members indicated they support the concept and intent of the ordinance, but want to review and discuss before giving their support. Supervisor Veercamp expects the County will have draft language ready that the Landscape Vision Committee can discuss at the February 28th meeting. Collaborative members acknowledged that the County can and should continue to move forward with the ordinance development.

Large landowners (e.g., El Dorado Irrigation District [EID]) plan to connect with Supervisor Veercamp to ensure the ordinance's proposed process considers large property logistical concerns (e.g., amount of time given to treat the entire property before being "fined").

Next Steps

- Supervisor Veercamp will send draft language to Jason Sieg and CBI for the Landscape Vision Committee Feb 28th meeting.

SOFAR Project Support

List of Actions

(View [proposed list of actions](#)) The Collaborative has been discussing what constitutes a SOFAR project (refer to previous 2018 Collaborative [meeting](#) summaries) and the process to obtain Collaborative support. Receiving a SOFAR Collaborative "stamp of approval" can especially help with grant applications, as it demonstrates collaboration and broad input. A project in the SOFAR area does not require Collaborative approval, but that approval bolsters the grant application's competitiveness.

The group reviewed a proposed list of actions that identifies non-controversial activities and which activities warrant further discussion with the Collaborative. The list does not represent how entities will conduct forest planning (e.g., would not develop a management strategy that includes solely non-controversial actions). Rather, the list is intended to help project sponsors anticipate support / concern with projects and outline project development and timing accordingly. Non-controversial projects can move forward more expeditiously, while controversial projects are given due review and discussion for potential Collaborative endorsement.

Scenario Process Examples - If all actions in a project proposal fell within the "Green Light – Non-controversial" category, then the proposal could move ahead after a brief check in with the Landscape Vision Committee or with the SOFAR contact, Jason Sieg. The project could move ahead without formal SOFAR Collaborative vetting. Conversely, any of the project actions that fall under "Yellow Light – Moderately Controversial" or "Red Light – Controversial" will signal to the project sponsor that SOFAR discussion is needed to seek Collaborative support. The sponsor should raise this proposed action to the Collaborative early on in the project design to sufficiently accommodate the discussion(s) necessary for potential Collaborative approval.

The group's feedback included:

- Consider giving the Collaborative “stamp of approval” for the County ordinance; however, the County may need to move forward without the formal “stamp” in order to establish the ordinance in time for the next fire season
- Add an item to consider opportunities to reduce fuel loads in the spotted owl Protected Activity Centers (PACs)
- Add road utilities easement work
- Define “modest improvements”
- Further elaborate regarding “tree marking does not overreach”
- Review and update this list, perhaps annually
- Ensure that reviewers are familiar with GTR 220

Next Steps

- Landscape Vision Committee will discuss and update the list of actions based on Collaborative feedback.

Draft Letter of Support

(View [letter of support](#))

The group then reviewed a template letter of support for projects that received SOFAR Collaborative consensus endorsement.² The Steering Committee proposed that only the SOFAR representative Jason Sieg needs to sign the support letter on behalf of the SOFAR Collaborative (to streamline the process). If a project does not receive Collaborative consensus support, the individual members have the freedom to submit their own endorsement letters.

The group generally supported Jason Sieg to serve as the SOFAR signatory. There was a suggestion that a Steering Committee member could serve as an alternate signatory in the case that US Forest Service cannot support the project.

Scenario Process Example - EID needed to develop and submit a project application under a short timeline in late 2018. Landscape Vision Committee reviewed and discussed the proposal at its December 12th meeting. Jason Sieg then asked Collaborative signatories to contact him if he/she did not support the application. As there were no objections, Jason Sieg issued a SOFAR letter of support.

Attendees shared concerns about projects that receive only 75% support and still qualify to receive a Collaborative letter of support. They stated that people likely do not know all of the charter signatories and will assume a letter from SOFAR represents all signatories. There was a suggestion to create a different letter for these circumstances and/or include sufficient disclaimer language if not all signatories supported the project. The Steering Committee can further discuss this scenario.

An attendee suggested providing some background on SOFAR in the letter. Other than that, for now, the group supported keeping the letter template as is for projects that

² **SOFAR Consensus Definition.** Only SOFAR Charter signatories are officially needed to support the project, and consensus is defined in the [Charter](#) as 75% or more of the signatories.

receive no objections. The Steering Committee can discuss a process for projects that receive 75% supermajority, but not unanimous support.

Next Steps

- The Steering Committee can confirm Letter of Support process given Collaborative's feedback.

Announcements and General Updates

- Dave Pereira is the new Acting District Ranger for the Pacific District.
- CA Department of Conservation issued a Request for Qualifications for a watershed coordinator, for which the County & Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation Districts will submit an application (due February 15). The timeline is too short to obtain a SOFAR letter of support. Jason Sieg will work with Mark Egbert to explore options.
- Headwaters projects are making good progress. For example, project planning and final decisions for General Sherman (National Forest lands) are expected in March 2019.
- Sierra Nevada Conservancy will have its annual Board and Watershed Improvement Program Summit, March 6-7.

Upcoming Meetings

Collaborative	Landscape Vision Committee
<p><i>The SOFAR Collaborative meets on the second Wednesday of each month, 1:30-4:00 pm.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • March 13 • May 8 • September 11 • October 9 • November 13 	<p>Location: Placerville Supervisor's Office, 100 Forni Rd, Placerville, CA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • February 28, 1:00-3:00 (@EID)
<p>Always check sofarcohesivestrategy.org for meeting location and latest information.</p>	

Meeting Participants (who signed in)

Phil	Saksa	Blue Forest Conservation
Norma	Santiago (phone)	Catalytic Connections
Lester	Lubetkin	CNPS, El Dorado Chapter
Pat	Dwyer	El Dorado County Fire Safe Council
Steve	Willis	El Dorado County Fire Safe Council
Heather	Campbell	El Dorado County & Pollock Pines Fire Safe Councils

Mark	Egbert	El Dorado County & Georgetown Divide RCDs
Dan	Corcoran	El Dorado Irrigation District
Brian	Deason	El Dorado Irrigation District
Craig	Thomas	Fire Restoration Group
Ben	Sher	LBS Ranch, Placerville
Chuck	Schnell	Mosquito Fire Safe Council
Ethan	Koenigs	Sacramento Municipal Utility District
David	Zelinsky	Sierra Club
Barbara	Brydon	Sierra Club, Maidu Group
Ben	Solvesky	Sierra Forest Legacy
Chris	Dallas	Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Andy	Fristensky	Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Rich	Wade	Sierra Pacific Industries
Brian	Veerkamp	Supervisor, District 3
Lori	Parlin	Supervisor, District 4
Stanley	Backlunds	Trout Unlimited
Duane	Nelson	Trout Unlimited; El Dorado, Fire Safe Council
Burns	Brimhall	US Bureau of Land Management
Monte	Kawahara	US Bureau of Land Management
Lawrence	Crabtree	USFS – ENF Supervisor
Jennifer	Chapman	USFS – ENF
Jason	Sieg	USFS – ENF, Georgetown; SOFAR Representative
Scot	Rogers	USFS – ENF, Placerville
Dana	Walsh	USFS – ENF, Norh Zone
Linda	Ray	
Vicki	Running	
Kathy	Smith	
Sue	Taylor	