



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

Collaborative Group - Meeting Summary

Meeting held September 11, 2019
Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute

Meeting in Brief

The Collaborative held its second Science Talk focused on creating fire-adapted communities. Dr. Stephen Quarles, UC Cooperative Extension Advisor Emeritus, presented best practices for reducing the vulnerability of buildings to wildfire as part of helping develop fire-adapted communities.

Effective communication is needed to ensure fire resilience for communities and the landscape. The group discussed the need for improving communication and coordination for consistent and accurate messaging ("speak with one voice") and avoid competition for the same funding. Suggested solutions included better coordination across the 20+ local fire safe councils (e.g., periodically meet together) and develop key messages customized to resonate with the communities and other target audiences. The SOFAR Communications Committee has been discussing how to strategically support these types of outreach and engagement; the committee invites Collaborative members and other interested parties to send information that will help inform the committee's discussions (e.g., misconceptions and information sources).

Attendees shared updates on funding awards and fuels treatment progress in the SOFAR focus areas and neighboring areas connected to the SOFAR watershed. Collaborative members have conducted several effective field tours to illuminate the severity of the fuels and biomass issues and great work accomplished and under way.

The Collaborative will next meet on **October 11, 1:30-4:00** at El Dorado Irrigation District.

NEW MEETING – DEC 11: Additional Collaborative meeting scheduled – Dec 11. Meeting will include Science Talk featuring Barbara Hayes, Rural County Representatives of California (RCRC), speaking on Biomass Economic Opportunities

Have an announcement you would like to share via the SOFAR list-serve / website?
Send information to Stephanie Horii, CBI (shorii@cbi.org)

Action Items

Who	What
All	Send Stephanie Horii, CBI (shorii@cbi.org) information related to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Fire / forest-related misconceptions you often face• What information sources do you most often use (e.g., Fire Learning Network, CA Fire Safe Council)
CBI	Confirm Susie Kocher is added to list of potential Science Talk presenters.

Meeting Summary

Presentation | Science Talks

Science Talk #2 | Fire-Adapted Communities, Dr. Stephen Quarles

([View Slides](#)) The Collaborative held its second Science Talk focused on creating fire-adapted communities. This is part of a series of presentations and discussions aimed to deepen understanding and inform SOFAR collaborative work drawing from the best available science on the Sierra Nevada.

Dr. Stephen Quarles, UC Cooperative Extension Advisor Emeritus, presented best practices for reducing the vulnerability of buildings to wildfire as part of helping develop fire-adapted communities.

Dr. Quarles explained there are three general ways of wildfire exposure that can impact a building – ember, radiant heat, and flame contact. He underscored that wind-blown embers are the most important factor that often results in fire ignitions due to their direct (embers directly contact combustible components) and indirect impacts (ember ignites debris that results in combustion adjacent to the home). Radiant heat can be a major contributor to home-to-home spreading, especially if homes or other built structures are in close proximity to one another (less than approximately 25-30 feet spacing).

Dr. Quarles recommended using a coupled approach for increasing home survival: 1) address the vegetation and other combustible material on the property (via selection, location, and maintenance), and 2) modify the home to be more resistant to ember exposure, radiant heat, and flame contact (via construction materials and design features).

Dr. Quarles also emphasized the need to evaluate a home's risk to fire by thinking beyond individual components (e.g., roof, porch, etc.); rather, homeowners should think of the whole system (the home, parcel, neighbors, community, etc.) to identify vulnerabilities. For example, fire-resistant roofing material is still vulnerable to fire if vegetation builds up in the tiling cracks, the neighbor has combustible materials close to your home, homes are built close together in the neighborhood, etc. Building codes (e.g., Chapter 7 of the CA Building Code) outline requirements for new or remodeled buildings, but usually do not address existing structures. People should rely on guidance

documents, which are usually more timely in incorporating the most updated research and information.

The costs for creating a fire-resistant home ranges; however, costs are generally less expensive in California where materials and technologies are more readily available.

Dr. Quarles and meeting participants recommended several related resources:

- [Protect Your Property from Wildfire \(IBHS\) guidance and walk-through](#)
- [Building a Wildfire-Resistant Home \(Codes and Costs\)](#)
- [Fire Adapted Communities Learning Network](#)
- [Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire \(CPAW\)](#)
- [UCANR Wildfire Preparation and Recovery](#)

Discussion

Effective communication is needed to ensure fire resilience for communities and the landscape. The group discussed the need for improving communication and coordination for consistent and accurate messaging ("speak with one voice") and avoid competition for the same funding.

With over 20 local FSCs, the FSCs struggle to effectively communicate and coordinate with each other. Suggested solutions included having the fire safe councils periodically meet to share information and coordinate applications for funding (although be aware of the risk of meeting burnout). BLM's Monte Kawahara also shared insights on different governance structures that BLM has observed across the region (e.g., representatives sent to a central meeting) and encouraged local FSCs to reach out to BLM for more information.

Outreach needs to help the public understand the difference between unwanted fire (e.g., catastrophic wildfires) and beneficial fire (e.g., appropriate applications of prescribed burning to reduce vegetation fuel loads).

Participants shared several challenges with access to accurate information (e.g., identifying which are trusted sources with the most up-to-date information). El Dorado County will be able to provide information and guidance for vegetation management as part of its Vegetation Management Ordinance outreach.

Homeowners should be aware of the limitations of products and technologies. For instance, paint coatings often may not last as long as advertised because product testing usually does not include "weathering." Technologies like gel application and auxiliary water assistance systems are most effective if implemented by trained professionals; the typical homeowner may want to consider other options for building their homes' resiliency.

Analyses of the Camp Fire and the Paradise Fire will offer informative lessons learned (Camp Fire report will likely take another year to finalize).

Retrofitting cost estimates vary widely. CAL FIRE is funding researchers who will analyze retrofitting costs. A SOFAR member reflected that people often assume retrofitting is too costly, which is not always accurate.

Planting trees for the shade benefits (e.g., to lower energy costs) is not always good from a fire-risk perspective. Homeowners can use different alternatives that align better with both energy efficiency and fire resiliency (e.g., pergolas).

Prioritizing fire-resilience strategies will vary depending on the scenario (e.g., if homes are close together, possibly prioritize tempered glass windows and fire-resistant siding; if windows are not a concern, consider the vulnerability of the vents; if ember ignitions are the greatest threat, focus on consistently clearing debris and other combustibles). No fire-resilient strategy is maintenance free.

Forest fuels management can help minimize fire spread into the communities; however, communities must conduct their own fuels treatments as well.

SOFAR Upcoming 2019 Science Talks

- **October 9** - Malcolm North speaking on Resilient Landscapes; meeting will be at the El Dorado Irrigation District
- **November 13** – Pat Manley speaking on the Tahoe Central Sierra Initiative Assessment
- **December 11** (Newly added meeting) – Barbara Hayes speaking on Biomass Economic Opportunities; meeting will be in the Supervisors Board Room.

CBI is keeping a running list of potential 2020 Speakers (e.g, Becky Estes, Steve Schwarzbach, etc.). A Collaborative member recommended Susie Kocher, a registered professional forester, for a future Science Talk.

Next Steps

CBI to confirm Susie Kocher is added to list of potential Science Talk presenters.

Updates

Communications and Engagement

The Communications Committee continues to develop a more focused strategy for SOFAR outreach and engagement. The committee invited SOFAR member organizations' public affairs officers to meet in early September to better understand existing communication activities related to SOFAR, identify the gaps and needs, discuss how can SOFAR leverage existing efforts, and identify what role SOFAR might play to advance the SOFAR Cohesive Strategy. The committee identified a strong need for targeted messaging that is customized to particular target audiences to be easily understandable and relatable. The group highlighted the continued challenge to rectify misperceptions of issues (e.g., vegetation management and prescribed fire) and lack of awareness of SOFAR's work. The group considered an array of tools and approaches, in particular supporting better utilizing videos and visuals. The group then identified several opportunities to dovetail on existing efforts (e.g., the county is developing its vegetation management ordinance outreach campaign; seven local fire safe councils received a few thousand dollars each for education and public

outreach) or outsource efforts to members/partners who have the funding and resources.

The committee plans to update the SOFAR Communication Plan that will document high-level objectives and potential strategies that the Collaborative and/or its members and partners can utilize to identify and prioritize outreach and engagement efforts.

Discussion

Major takeaways from discussion included:

- Key messaging should align and support the three SOFAR Cohesive Strategy goals (resilient landscapes, fire-adapted communities, safe and effective wildfire response).
- Participants shared several misconceptions they frequently face (e.g., all fire is bad, power line corridors increase wildfire risk, etc.). Key messaging should offer helpful “mythbusters.”
- Conveying what is at risk resonates with many people. It is also important to utilize positive messaging to convey what we have to gain, such as restoring beautiful and healthy forests and meadows.
- Key messaging for the general public needs to be concise and avoid jargon (e.g., many do not understand terms like “shaded fuel break”).
- Frame messaging within the issues that resonate with their interests (e.g., insurance and home safety). Encourage people to care about the issues, while empowering a shared responsibility and that we’re all in this together – *Your home. Your water. Your air. Your forest. Our responsibility.*
- Consider trends that go viral (e.g., animal connection).
- Videos should be short (<5min), and the key idea needs to be at the very beginning.
- Several new/smaller fire safe councils indicated they lack similar important resources (e.g., clear outreach strategies, informational materials, etc.) and requested information that comes out of the Communication Committee discussions.
- Utilize the SOFAR's network (e.g., connecting fire safe councils). Sharing misconceptions with the group can help identify what outreach needs to occur, such as connect people to others and/or provide information. Share resources like videos and pictures (e.g., National Wildlife Foundation has many pictures).
- Celebrate accomplishments and recognize individuals' work to raise awareness of the good work we do.

Next Steps

All are encouraged to send Stephanie Horii, CBI (shorii@cbi.org) information related to:

- Fire / forest-related misconceptions you often face
- What information sources do you most often use (e.g., Fire Learning Network, CA Fire Safe Council)

Focus Areas

Chili Bar to Georgetown

- (Focus Area Work Group Contact: Craig Thomas, Fire Restoration Group)

- Members of the Chili Bar to Georgetown Focus Area Work Group were awarded ~\$99,000 from the CA Fires Safe Council and match funding from four other entities to equal almost \$200,000 for fuels reduction (Kelsey Fire area in the southeast portion of the focus area) ([View award announcement](#)).
- The Focus Area Work Group also hosted a field trip in the focus area's Phase 1 area (Kelsey Fire area) with USFS, BLM, District IV Supervisor Lori Larlin, and local residents to experience back road conditions full of fire-risk fuels and narrow, one-lane roads that would not support safe and effective emergency ingress / egress. ([View presentation slides](#))
- Work Group members submitted a Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) forest health proposal for \$100,000 with several letters of support, including the former SNC Executive Director Jim Brannon, CAL FIRE's Ken Pimlock, and Supervisor Lori Parlin.
- [Kevin Vella, National Wild Turkey Federation] – NWFF is working with the USFS Georgetown District to conduct fuels treatment for >900 acres for Tobacco Gulch along Darling Ridge.

Camino Pollock Pines

- [Heather Campbell, Pollock Pines-Camino FSCs] - The Pollock Pines-Camino FSC issued a requests for proposals to treat >250 acres in the Weber Creek area. The project has evolved substantially due to local homeowners's involvement, which will result in a much broader and more robust product (e.g., treatments up to USFS border at the end of Lakes Trail and emergency road and fuel break area. Similarly, the Rancho Del Sol project has also evolved through the help of local homeowners (e.g., more strategic fuel breaks and safer roads for emergency response.
- [Scot Rogers, ENF, Placerville] - USFS is working on its environmental plan (expecting to be completed by December) for treatments in the Sly Park area on USFS lands. This work will tie into neighboring property treatments (e.g, El Dorado Irrigation District [EID] and Sierra Pacific Industries [SPI]).
- [Ben Sher, LBS Ranch] – SPI and CA Forestry Association toured the FA50 area with CA Natural Resources Agency Secretary Wade Crowfoot, Deputy Secretary of Forest Resources Management Jessica Morse, and Director of the Governor's Forest Management Task Force Jennifer Montgomery to demonstrate the fuel treatments progress and biomass challenges.
- [Pat Dwyer, EDC FSC] - Received \$400,000 project to treat approximately 100 acres near the SOFAR area (south of Diamond Springs, Patterson area).
- **Upcoming meeting:** October 10, Pollock Pines Community Center – Fire Adapted 50 (FA50) community meeting highlighting the Camino-Pollock Pines fuel break and Sly Park projects. (Contact: Mark Egbert, El Dorado County & Georgetown Divide Resource Conservation Districts)

Biomass

- **Upcoming meeting:** September 17-18 starting at 11a. Two-day seminar, Our Forest Futures. The seminar's theme will focus on how to get a regional biomass economy in California.

- **Upcoming meeting:** CA Licensed Foresters Association (CLFA), Nov 8-9, Anderson. CLFA will host in-depth discussions exploring alternatives for biomass removal (grazing alternatives, mechanical treatments, etc.)

Upcoming Funding

- **Upcoming meeting:** EDC Fire Safe Council hosting grant-writing workshop on September 30 in Pollock Pines focused on CAL FIRE Climate Change Investments (CCI) grants. (Contact: Pat Dwyer, EDC FSC)
- **Upcoming meeting:** CAL FIRE CCI grant workshops as part of its Forest Health & Fire Prevention Grant Programs, October 2, Placerville; October 3, Sacramento ([view workshop dates and locations](#))

Other Announcements and Updates

- SOFAR Administrative Update - [Jason Sieg, USFS ENF & SOFAR contact] - Extended USFS contract for CBI facilitation services (funding to last through approximately February 2020). USFS currently working on a new agreement for additional funding.
- USFS Staffing Updates - Michelle Havens returned to Eldorado National Forest office. Andrew Kennedy ('AK') is the new Pacific Ranger District on a term appointment (about 1 year). Dana Walsh, silviculturist, will be on temporary detail for approximately four months as the Tahoe National Forest Forest Vegetation Program Manager.
- **Upcoming meeting / webinar** – September 16. Tools for Sustainable Management of California's Fire-Prone Landscapes: Grazing for Fuel Reduction. Brandi Goss will speak on grazing alternatives and fuels reduction as part of the Range Management Advisory Committee (RMAC). Conference registration is closed, but people can still register for the webinar.

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"> • October 9, 1:30-4:00 	<p>Location: Placerville Supervisor's Office, 100 Forni Rd, Placerville, CA.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 24
<p>Always check sofarcohesivestrategy.org for meeting location and latest information.</p>	

Meeting Participants (who signed in)

John	Hess	Aukum Fairplay Fire Safe Council
Ann-Sheree	Brown	BLM
Josh	Sjostrom	BLM
Monte	Kawahara	BLM
Norma	Santiago	Catalytic Connections
Ken	Greenwood	Consultant

Jose	Crummett	EDC GIS
Kristine	Beltran	El Dorado County and Pleasant Valley Fire Safe Councils
Pat	Dwyer	El Dorado County Fire Safe Council
Steve	Willis	El Dorado County Fire Safe Council
Kyle	Ericson	El Dorado County Water Agency
Brian	Veerkamp	El Dorado County District 3 Supervisor
Lori	Parlin	El Dorado County District 4 Supervisor
Craig	Thomas	Fire Restoration Group
Ben	Sher	LBS Ranch
Chuck	Schnell	Mosquito Fire Safe Council
Kevin	Vella	National Wild Turkey Federation
Kathy	Lewin	Northern Sierra Summer Home Owner Associations
Linda	Azevedo	Oak Hill Area Fire Safe Council
Marian	Washburn	Placerville Fire Safe Council
Heather	Campbell	Pollock Pines Camino FSC
Barbara	Brydon	Sierra Club
Bob	Johnson	Sierra Club
David	Zelinsky	Sierra Club
Ben	Solvesky	Sierra Forest Legacy
Tim	Tate	Sierra Pacific Industries
Chris	Dow	Sierra Pacific Industries
Jennifer	Chapman	USFS - ENF
Jason	Sieg	USFS - ENF
Scot	Rogers	USFS - ENF - Placerville
Travis	Thane	USFS - ENF - Placerville