

NOTES LV30: SOFAR Landscape Vision Committee

Held Jan. 23, 2020

Meeting in Brief

Region 5's Beverly Buluan and Martin MacKenzie developed a white paper on red fir to help inform the group's work. CBI has [posted the SOFAR web site](#), and the committee will discuss in more detail at its February meeting.

A small group will delve into the GIS to identify potential risk areas and priority areas for treatment considering some of the questions that the group has framed related to roads, snow pack, climate, etc.

At the next meeting, the group will discuss the white paper and the GIS analysis and begin to concur on either priority areas or a set of strategies.

The group supports the idea of Crystal Basin being a focus area and recommends that CBI work with others to develop a written description.

NEXT STEPS ON RED FIR

All -- Read the [White Paper](#)

GIS subgroup: Becky, Brian, Dana, Greg

- + Identify the data layers. Do the analysis. Integrate layers that demonstrate risk areas. Prepare a presentation on why we are doing this and what does this mean?
- + Review the boundary for Pack Saddle and Forgotten Flat; discuss priority areas.

Scott and Gina will follow up with Traci about ability to work on the external facing strategy (because she is going on detail in February).

Next Meeting, Feb 27, 1:00-3:00 @ EID

Discuss Red Fir White Paper

Explore Red Fir GIS Outputs

General Comments

One person raised the question, are we going to collaborate on project development and implementation rather than developing a strategy and telling the ENF to implement? The group is open to collaborating on project implementation and will continue discussing with the SOFAR Steering Committee.

Red Fir Strategy

Reason for External Facing Document

The Field-Trip Report was a helpful document to characterize potential conditions and possible treatments. However, the group felt that creating an external-facing document that could better characterize treatment priorities would be helpful.

Having a useful geographic scale and recommendations from the collaborative would be helpful for the ENF project managers to be able to do work. And, because the ENF is short

staffed, if there are any activities that collaborative partners could carry forward, that would also be helpful.

Feedback on External-Facing Document Outline

- Consider adding a section, "priority areas for action." Does not have to be at specific scale.
- Include area north of Highway 50.
- Consider adding Social Economic Considerations to address timber, local economic value, and jobs.
- Consider adding implementation either within the Social Economic Considerations or as a separate topic.
- Reconsider or moderate the considerations bullet: "insect and disease mortality and prevention." The intent from a pathologist's perspective was to reduce fuels and increase resiliency at the strategy level. Trees will die. Sofar is not trying to prevent mortality. Sofar is trying to keep it within the range of variability. When Sofar gets to the project level, that's when managers can identify the specific tools for how to address and achieve the range that resource specialists would like to see. (Martin)
- Another option suggested to serve this purpose was to strike "insect and disease mortality and prevention;" however, everyone concurred that the author could make the final decision.

Staff reminded the group that the ENF Forest Plan that doesn't allow a timber harvest project solely for economic purposes. The project must have another benefit.

The Field Trip Report captures potential conditions post-treatment, which would help inform where and how to consider and manage the condition of the landscape after the project. The intent of developing this work is define criteria and potential action.

White Paper, Beverly Bulosan and Martin MacKenzie

Forest Service Region 5, State and Private Forestry, Forest Health Protection, South Sierra Shared Service Area.
2020. Common Damage Agents of True Firs: Background, Biology, and Management

Beverly and Martin are developing a white paper so the group has captured key issues, (native insects, pests, and diseases) that would need to be considered in the Red Fir Strategy. The White Paper would provide all the information in one place as a reference. It includes management recommendations. Once the group decides on the specific geography, the appropriate tools would be presented. It also considers no action. Meyers and North in the last GTR says that we are within the natural range of variation; however, one drought could shift the range.

Martin MacKenzie provided a few highlights on the biology. For example, Red Fir share roots so cutting a tree with another in close distance (average 2.25 ft, with range of 0-8 ft), the tree left behind will die as well because the roots are connected.

Mistletoes are not a bad thing. Mistletoe has intensified primarily because of the lack of fire. The goal for mistletoe is to stop its lateral spread; fire is the best method. Larger mistletoe is vertical, and wildlife love it. Mistletoe is currently within the natural range of variability so keeping it there is key.

In the most southern Sierra, insects and diseases were able to move beyond treated areas because the area of treatment wasn't large enough. The treatment area was managed, but

the insects and disease were able to move beyond the treated area into areas that were overly dense and probably had some root disease.

Discussion

When focusing on a specific site, the project proponent will have to agree on desired conditions and the appropriate tools to achieve those desired conditions.

The white paper includes aerial data of areas of mortality. The group discussed that it might be able to identify areas that might need work by looking at the aerial data, snow pack, and climate. Risk maps under development could also be useful.

The group would like to fine tune the analysis to help with planning future projects. For example, looking at fire effects.

Brian Deason is thinking about how to analyze the conditions to identify priority areas and needs to identify potential criteria for that purpose. The ENF is going to start laying out treatments and surveys this summer in the areas known as Pack Saddle and Forgotten Flat. As part of that process, the ENF will consider density or areas where other issues are present, including where red fir is and is not likely to exist in future; where treatment is possible; what type of treatment; and time.

NOTE: Pack Saddle and Forgotten Flat are part of headwaters.

The group could consider and use data to think about the fire management in areas. Where would fire management need to occur on the land?

GIS Analysis

The goal of the analysis would be to identify areas that might need treatment and areas that could likely go untreated. The group began to frame some questions that might inform the identification of priority areas:

- Where does Red Fir exist?
- Tree density
- Where is there Red Fir mortality?
- Where are areas of risk (via risk maps)?
- Where are existing roads?
- What can fire effects explain?
- Where are the best places for strategic placement of managed fire?

A subgroup will meet to outline the analysis.

Next Steps

- Read the White Paper
- GIS subgroup: Becky, Brian, Dana, Greg
 - Identify the data layers. Do the analysis. Integrate layers that demonstrate risk areas. Prepare a presentation, why we are doing this, and what this means?
- Bring the boundary for Pack Saddle and Forgotten Flat; discuss priority areas.
- Scott and Gina will follow up with Traci about ability to work on the external facing strategy (because she is going on detail in February).

ENF Project in Scoping: Reservoir Project in Crystal Basin

The ENF just released the Reservoir Project for scoping. ENF would like to receive comments by Feb. 12. The project includes forest health and fuels reduction, including 12,000 acres for burning.

Crystal Basin

When starting SOFAR, most of the work was organized around Crystal Basin. When SOFAR identified its initial focus area, a lot of partners were working that area. The collaborative hasn't really captured this work. The Wildlife Turkey Federation and Blue Waters have been active in this area.

Focus Area Process

Land managers identify focus areas, and then the full collaborative essentially approves the focus area. Some focus areas convene formal work groups. Others have met formally initially, and then scaled back to ongoing informal conversations and meetings.

The Landscape Vision Work Group would recommend that the Crystal Basin be highlighted as a focus area given that so many partners are active there. CBI will work with everyone to develop a description.

[Link to All Meeting Materials](#)

Background Work

1. Meeting notes @ <http://sofarcohesivestrategy.org/meetings/>
2. Link to [Project Priorities Development List](#) (on Google Drive)
3. Link [Desired Conditions Zone Table](#) (on Google Drive)

Attendees: Beverly Bulcan, Sue Britting, Lester Lubetin, David Zelinsky, Brian Deason, Jan Wolf, Traci Allen, Becky Estes, Nancy Nordensten, Scot Rogers, Facilitator Gina Bartlett