



Cohesive Strategy Goals

- Resilient Landscapes •
- Safe & Effective Wildfire Response •

Collaborative Group - Meeting Key Outcomes

Meeting held October 14, 2020

Prepared by the Consensus Building Institute

Meeting in Brief

The El Dorado County Community Wildfire Protection Plan is under development building on existing efforts in the area. Fire Safe Councils are contributing projects and identifying priorities. The plan should be ready in 2021.

The SOFAR Landscape Vision Committee presented its Red Fir Strategy for consideration, and members should review in more detail prior to the Nov. 18 Collaborative meeting when the Collaborative will consider formally approving the strategy.

Partners shared updates on the many projects underway in SOFAR's four focus areas: Camino, Crystal Basin, Chili Bar to Georgetown, and Headwaters.

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

Meeting Overview

El Dorado County | Community Wildfire Protection Plan Update

[\[Refer to presentation slides\]](#)

Steve Graydon, Open Canopy LLC, (open.canopy.fp@gmail.com) is a contractor helping to update the County's Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP). Local Fire Safe Councils, fire districts, local agencies/land managers, and stakeholders are involved in setting priorities. The effort is building off existing projects and efforts. The work involves simulations of wildfire behavior. An overarching goal is to reduce wildfire intensity (e.g., bring reduce height of flame lengths) that pose high risk to communities. A draft plan should be available in May 2021.

A forester will be in touch with each Fire Safe Council to clarify projects and confirm priorities. Councils can shift priorities if needed and should notify Open Canopy before the forester visits.

Timeline

- + Define project prescriptions – quarterly 2020
- + Create project definition data sheets – Jan 2021
- + Complete draft plan – May 2021
- + Finalize plan – Dec 2021

Focus Area Updates

Camino to Pollock Pines | Mark Egbert, El Dorado & Georgetown Divide RCDs

[\[Refer to presentation slides\]](#)

working on properties of 2000 landowners. Due to the large number of rural residences, Camino-Pollock Pines became a focus area and links directly to Fire Adapted 50, an extensive project with three phases. The Focus Area also includes many Fire Safe Council projects in this same area.

Twelve projects have treated 9,553 acres with \$12,103,700 in funding. The funding sources have been diverse. Eleven projects are underway right now and will be completed by spring 2022. The RCD has many contractors carrying out the work. The RCD and its contractors are currently

Long-term maintenance will be critical to future success.

Chili Bar to Georgetown | Dana Walsh, USFS

[\[Refer to presentation slides\]](#)

- Tobacco: 400+ acres Force Account Mastication – more coming in October/Nov. This is in addition to the several hundred acres of mastication accomplished in previous years.
- Tobacco: 900 acres thinning through a partnership with NWTF, SNC, and CalFire.
- Kelsey Fuels Reduction Project: Moving forward with analysis of Kelsey Fuels Reduction Project -- 600 acres of mastication and hand thinning with follow-up maintenance treatments.
- Revenant (east of Kelsey) – 2500 acres thinning/fuels reduction with Mule Deer Foundation.

Crystal Basin | Dana Walsh, USFS

[\[Refer to presentation slides\]](#)

- Cleveland Icehouse: 300 acres follow-up maintenance.
- Threefer to NWTF agreement: 1000 acres thinning and 500 acres mastication.
- Reservoir: Working on finishing NEPA.
- Lots of projects with completed NEPA, but no funding or no market.

Headwaters | Dana Walsh, USFS

[\[Refer to presentation slides\]](#)

- Middle Creek: ~600 acres completed for Middle Creek thinning with Mule Deer Foundation. Planning on FS mastication in fall/spring.
- General Sherman: ~2600 acres put under contract in fall 2020 and operating until loggers pulled to go do fire salvage elsewhere.

Red Fir Strategy

The Collaborative learned about the [Red Fir Strategy](#) and will consider adopting at its November 18 meeting.

Background | Dana Walsh, USFS

The SOFAR collaborative prioritized the Caples Headwaters area. When working on Headwaters projects, discussion ensued on how to address red fir since the area had more red fir than most projects. Red fir treatment has been a point of debate or controversy in some projects, particularly around applying the natural range of variability. Since the Collaborative encompasses a number of organizations with different viewpoints and missions, developing the strategy is a proactive way to identify and document areas of agreements tied to action.

Proposed Strategy | Greg Suba, Sierra Forest Legacy

The purpose of the strategy is to provide guidance in response to conditions on the ground. It retains the decision-making authority of the Forest Service.

Section 2 – Process first outlines the attributes and factors that one would consider in developing an action. It is organized by the structure, function, and composition. Second, it considers socioeconomic and USFS factors. Then, it looks toward the future conditions, including climate.

Section 3 – Identifying and Prioritizing Areas looks at data layers that would inform priorities for areas that may need attention. The prioritization is tied to a departure from historical condition, is subject to fire hazard, and is relatively easy to access.

Section 4 – Goals and Objectives summarizes the types of treatments that might be considered. This section also outlines current projects that are underway.

Section 5 – Next Steps outlines steps toward Implementation.

Example Application | Beverly Buluan, USFS Region 5 Entomologist

Beverly presented how might one apply the red fir process strategy to develop projects, starting with GIS data to identify areas for treatment.

To develop a project, one would start with the GIS data to identify areas that depart from the reference condition and present fire hazard; this would be combined with the physical location (e.g., accessibility of the area).

Once those areas are identified, one would visit the site and verify conditions on the ground. During the field trip, a group could look at conditions on the ground and outline objectives to guide treatment choices. The work would then consider future climate condition to further assess whether an area needs management.

The strategy could be applied to areas outside of the USFS lands. The strategy is not meant to be prescriptive. The intent would be to go into the field and use this as a guide to interpret conditions.

USFS District Ranger Scot Rogers observed that one benefit of the strategy is to create common understanding and language. Having some common agreements and sideboards on red fir will be helpful moving forward. The flow chart also outlines the steps for engagement, including when the NEPA process would be initiated. This can help set expectations. The Eldorado National Forest anticipate applying the strategy for Pack Saddle and Forgotten Flat.

A Collaborative member observed that the examples are valuable and instructive. They demonstrate the variability in red fir. Atherton Flat near Rice Lake is another area that demonstrates these complications of diseased red fir and lots of Jeffrey pine.

Discuss Outreach to Policy Makers and Elected Officials

Ethan Koenigs, SMUD

Ethan suggested SOFAR advocate for policy issues tied to forest management. The goal would be to create additional support for controlled burns and potentially timber harvests. Ethan would propose that the Collaborative develop a set of talking points and then invite these policy makers to future meetings.

The SOFAR Steering Committee discussed that this probably wasn't the right time. Once policy makers are seated in their spots, then SOFAR members could go to them and make the case.

Discussion

One person suggested that after the election, invite staff from Congressman McClintock to attend SOFAR meetings and build support for the biomass plant. David Zelinsky is a member of the Republic Committee and offered to pursue involvement through the committee. In addition, the RAC has not been signed off on by the Agricultural Secretary, which can be an important source of funding.

SOFAR has been able to secure funding as demonstrated by the RCD's \$12 million in funding for more than 9,000 acres.

SOFAR has a lot of committed individuals who are engaging with policy makers.

The first step is to identify what SOFAR wishes to ask of policy makers. SOFAR could consider developing a set of principles. SOFAR has successfully avoided political divisiveness and instead has focused on projects, treatments, outreach and engagement, etc.

Advocacy work can take place if strongly tied to the goals and mission of SOFAR.

Consensus that the group would have to agree on the messaging and elements that the SOFAR Collaborative would support.

Talking points may need to consider the management strategies that the Collaborative can support. SOFAR has to look at management scenarios to protect resource values and increase productivity.

Next Steps

- + Wait until the new year, post-election before conducting outreach to policy makers.
- + Consider inviting staff to potentially attend the SOFAR meetings to be aware of the work and efforts underway.
- + Ethan will develop a set of principles or talking points that SOFAR could consider prior to inviting a policy maker.

Updates and Announcements

Upcoming Meetings

Collaborative	Landscape Vision Committee
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Nov 18 at 1:30• Jan 13 at 1:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Oct. 29, 1:00-3:00 <p><i>No meetings for remainder of 2020</i></p>
Always check sofarcohesivestrategy.org for meeting location and latest information.	