

Dinkey Collaborative
MEETING SUMMARY – JANUARY 18, 2011
Dinkey Landscape Restoration Project, Sierra National Forest

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1. Overview

The Dinkey Collaborative held its second meeting on January 18, 2011. Sierra National Forest (SNF) leadership welcomed the group and introduced the new Dinkey Collaborative Project Lead Mosé Jones-Yellin, Natural Resource Specialist and President Management Fellow.

The group reviewed and discussed revisions to their charter based on feedback from the December 1 meeting. Members suggested that projects may need to define general terms, that the vision should be augmented, that the decision-making reference to fundamental value differences should be removed, and that clarification added to the intent of the signature section.

SNF staff then clarified their anticipated roles in the different projects, including a review of the legislatively required Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program work plan and annual report. Members reiterated strong concerns about the Snowy Patterson project having already begun the NEPA process, and the Soaproot project being on the cusp of this, without having had the involvement or input of the group. Several members emphasized that involvement in NEPA did not constitute collaboration, and did not feel that helping to develop an additional alternative would address their concerns. SNF leadership explained that these projects were initiated before the Collaborative was convened due to proposal deadlines needed to obtain funding, and also explained their desire to engage the Collaborative at the start of future projects.

The facilitator reviewed the outcomes of the monitoring teleconference held on January 11, 2011, including a list of resources, potential plan elements, and proposed sub-committee process. The group supported the idea of forming a monitoring sub-committee that could meet regularly. All members are welcome to participate and were asked to contact Mr. Jones-Yellin.

During the next agenda item Ramiro Rojas, District Silviculturalist, SNF, presented an overview on the reconnaissance work completed by staff to date on the Soaproot project. Following initial discussion, the Collaborative agreed that SNF should send out detailed information, including the

powerpoint information, on each project. After members had time to then review the information, staff will host a teleconference to answer questions and address issues of concern.

Lastly, the group briefly reviewed options for web development for the Collaborative, including a static SNF webpage for posting materials, and a partner site that would allow for downloading and posting files, and discussion among members. The group agreed to revisit the topic as needed at their next meeting on Tuesday, February 22, 2011.

2. Action Items

1. All members are invited to submit additional comments on the charter and vision, and CFLRP work plan. Comments should be sent to the facilitator Dorian Fougères at fougeres@gmail.com. Comments on the work plan will be compiled and redistributed for people's records.
2. Volunteers for either the proposed Steering Committee or the Monitoring Committee should contact the facilitator at fougeres@gmail.com
3. SNF will make the Soaproot presentation and its color maps available to members.
4. For Snowy Patterson and Soaproot, Mr. Jones-Yellin will serve as the point of contact for the two projects. Staff will send out information on the Snowy Patterson and Soaproot projects to members. Members will have a reasonable amount of time to review the materials, and be asked to then submit their questions to staff. Staff will then hold a conference call and webinar to respond to questions and begin to address issues.

3. Revised Charter

Cindy Whelan, Forest Planner, Sierra National Forest (SNF), welcomed participants to the meeting. Dorian Fougères, Facilitator, CSUS, Center for Collaborative Policy, explained that the facilitation team revised the charter based on the feedback provided during the inaugural meeting of the collaborative.

REVISIONS TO DATE AND DISCUSSION

Page 1: Language from the CFLR Act (Act) was added to the introduction (section 2) describing the purpose of the Collaborative outlined within the Act.

Comments:

- The group discussed the inclusion of some of the terms from the Act such as “uncharacteristic wildfires.” One member suggested they needed to be defined in the charter, and another suggested that the group could develop a glossary.
- The facilitator clarified that the purpose of quoting the Act was to have it as a reference point for the group's work, not to advance technical debates. At the same time the facilitator invited participants to send in proposed definitions for terms, and noted that the group could work further on definitions if it felt these were needed to be clear on projects.

Page 2: Vision for the Dinkey Forest Landscape (section 3) was added; the language was modeled after other charters and was kept general.

Comment:

- The vision should be written to be future oriented. For example “through our collaborative efforts we are moving forward to...”
- One member suggested restructuring the vision in a bulleted format to be more explicit and clear.
- Another member expressed a general concern about perspective and ensuring that the vision is coming from the perspective of all those around the table.
- It was suggested to adding the following language:
 - Include all species not just sensitive species
 - Add component addressing roads and the transportation system
- The facilitator invited members to send in suggested text.

Page 4: Joint Fact Finding (within section 5) language was added to describe the detailed process of using scientific information to inform decision making. The facilitator explained that this section is based on published literature.

Page 7: The New Members (within section 7) section as added to explain that while membership is open, new members must commit to understanding information being analyzed by the collaborative to participate in decision making.

Page 8: Steering Committee (within section 9) has been added to the revised Charter. The proposal is that a small steering committee (of 2-5 members) be formed to assist in planning agendas and preparing materials prior to collaborative meetings. This steering committee would not be making substantive decisions.

- The facilitator pointed out that anyone who volunteers for any subcommittee should ensure that they have the time, resources and the passion to participate. He suggested caucusing with colleagues or those with a similar perspective to decide who might be best suited for the steering committee.
- Volunteers are welcome, and should contact the facilitator.

Page 10: Decision Making (section 10) language was added within the section to describe guidelines for when one member of the group holds fundamental value differences with a recommendation being proposed by the rest of the group. The facilitator explained that the intent was to ensure that the Collaborative could still move forward in developing proposals even if one member could not support this based on their fundamental value difference.

Comments:

- It was questioned whether it would be consistent with the Act to have this section in the charter. Another member suggested changing the previous section to include a “group or individual” to prevent isolating one person.
- Several members expressed concern about keeping this in the charter, and felt existing language was sufficient to allow disagreements to be documented and the group to move forward.

- One member clarified that this is suggested for a situation where the group cannot craft a recommendation base on agreed upon facts that includes other interests, rather than because of a possible disagreement on the process.

Last Page: Proposed Charter Signatory. The facilitator that the Collaborative has a larger roster, and some of these people want just to be kept informed of progress rather than participate in decision making. The signature page would signal active involvement and commitment to the spirit of the charter and Collaborative.

Comments:

- It was suggested to add an annual review of signatories to make sure the list is current.
- The Forest Service would be represented by the Sierra National Forest Supervisor.
- It was agreed that signing the Charter signals support of the processes and procedures in the Charter, not agreement with specific project decisions or recommendations made by the group.
- Several members of the group felt that the signature option was valuable in that it would indicate a serious commitment to the group and process.

Additional comments on the Charter:

Page 13: Section 13 refers to a “Work Plan”. SNF staff suggested this be changed to avoid confusion with the Forest’s work plan and the CFLRP work plan.

Page 4: Multi-Party Monitoring (within section 5) one member suggested:

- The first bullet should be amended to say “the Collaborative will assist in the development of monitoring plans...” rather than review and provide input.
- The second bullet should be amended to say “monitoring occurs with stakeholder involvement.”

Page 10: Timeframe: One member cautioned to be realistic and reasonable about the timeframe outlined.

4. The Collaborative’s Role in Different Projects

Mosé Jones-Yellin, SNF, outlined the foundation of the Collaborative:

- Omnibus Public Land Management Act of 2009.
- CFLR Proposal & Dinkey Collaborative Landscape Strategy.
- Reporting requirements for the line officers, which are largely shaped by the Act.

Mr. Jones-Yellin reviewed the funding request summary and noted this was the request; they did not receive all that they requested. He noted that monitoring was 10% of the requested funding. He also spent time explaining that the mill infrastructure was listed under matching funds. To remove the mill, he explained, would result in \$4 million of extra costs to move material (as the next closest mill is north of Sacramento), so keeping the infrastructure open saves the forest \$4 million in avoided costs.

Mr. Jones-Yellin then reviewed the different reporting requirements including the CFLRP Work Plan and the CFRLP Annual Report. Ms. Cindy Whelan, Forest Planner, SNF, explained that the Collaborative is competing for funding with 10 other projects and will be evaluated based on these reporting requirements, which are set by the Washington Office (not the CFLR Act). She explained the work plan is due February 4th, while the annual report is not due for a year.

- People expressed concerns that the work plan template is not comprehensive and does not include all elements from the Act, the DLRP Strategy and budget, and should be expanded.
 - Specific suggestions included adding snag creation, acres of wildland fire, acres of prescribed fire, riparian work, and road decommissioning.
 - Mr. Jones-Yellin explained that while the reports are based on a required template, staff is willing to submit more than what is required and he mentioned the monitoring subcommittee might have some additions to make.
 - Members were asked to send in suggestions, which would be compiled and re-distributed.
- Members added that volunteers could take on projects.
 - A member noted that the California Department of Fish and Game was absent and needs to be at the table.
 - Youth engagement also needs to be emphasized. Restoration work on Jackass Meadow involved 100 kids. This could increase available labor by a factor of 10.
 - Hands on the Land is another resource.
 - Carolyn Ballard, Fuels Officer, SNF, mentioned that volunteers are a major component of the fire suppression force and she believes they should be considered under matching funds. She suggested this could be an area where the group can petition Washington for reconsideration.
- One member noted that many of the performance measures are long-term and short-term measures are needed from the first and second projects over the next 2-3 years, with specific metrics, for example, snag creation.

Mr. Jones-Yellin showed a graphic outlining the public involvement for timeline for SNF projects in queue. The “NEPA Triangle” outlined where in the NEPA timeline projects are corresponding to different levels and processes for public involvement.

- Several members expressed grave concern that the Snowy Patterson and Soaproot projects were already in the NEPA process, when the Forest Service had agreed to hold off on such treatments until more was known about the effects of Dinkey North and South.
 - Members emphasized that NEPA review was not a collaborative process, and that providing alternatives was not a productive way to be involved.
 - The group did not agree what “not moving forward with treatments” meant – whether this meant just avoiding commercial large trees, or also avoiding brush and small trees.
- Mr. Rojas noted that for Soaproot their analysis showed the treatment would not alter habitat for fishers.
 - Others members commented that this might not be true and that the impact to fisheries is unknown at this time.

- One member requested that a list of all potential projects be provided to the group. This member noted that the December discussion did not include specific proposal information for these projects. The member felt that Snowy Patterson was more variable than the project description, and the group needed specific information about the fisher den site overlap.
 - The member also expressed strong concern about the appearance that this project was also seeking exemption of fisher units, like had been done with the Kings River Experimental Watershed proposal.
- One member reiterated that the Dinkey North and South process was a good example of how members were brought into planning from the start, and looked at maps and developed actions together, and should be reexamined.
- One member stated that the Forest Service got money for the work so needs to move, but on the other hand nobody has been consulted. The group needs to figure out how to move together and put more people to work. The funding provides opportunities to do new things.
 - Several members expressed concern about SNF spending CFLRA money on projects not developed with genuine input by the Collaborative.
 - Another member acknowledged the tension, and noted that in Dinkey North and South staff had also done initial work and then brought it to the Collaborative for discussion and refinement. The timeline is tight, but if deadlines are not met the Collaborative will lose its funding.
- Ms. Whelan commented that staff would like feedback on these projects from the Collaborative, and unfortunately the Collaborative is only meeting for the second time today. In order to receive funding for these sites the plans have to be in place. She assured the group that final decisions have not been made.
- One member expressed frustration that members are now being asked to participate in several calls and meetings, which includes significant travel. The member suggested that meetings could be held in different locations, and teleconference technology used.

Action Items

- Mr. Jones-Yellin will serve as the point of contact for the two projects.
- Staff will send out information on the Snowy Patterson and Soaproot projects to members.
- Members will have a reasonable amount of time to review the materials, and be asked to then submit their questions to staff.
- Staff will then hold a conference call and webinar to respond to questions and begin to address issues.

5. Initial Planning for Soaproot

Ramiro Rojas, SNF, presented an overview of the Soaproot restoration project, explaining the need for action and the proposed approach. This presentation was intended to be an introduction of the staff work drafted in advance of the Collaborative meeting, and Mr. Rojas encouraged people to discuss and assist in further development. His presentation explained the strategy considerations such as fire history, wildland urban interface, habitat and vegetation types, spotted

owl nesting, incidental fisher us or denning fisher, deer holding and winter range, noxious weeds, and red legged frog and WP turtle, along with associated maps.

- Action Item: Make all maps available in full color, and develop better way to share information than just email.
- It was emphasized that the group needs as much detail on the treatments as possible, including GIS overlays and an appropriate venue for discussion, including maps on the walls and information on vegetation, fire risks, wildlife, roads, etc. The group also needed budgeting information to develop appropriate timelines.
 - One member expressed concern about the interaction between plantations, shrubs, and female fisher denning. Another emphasized the need to include fire of variable intensity.
- Mr. Rojas noted that the Strategy identifies a series of projects. Historically Dinkey North and South has been the only project to involve collaboration. Projects that were identified before the Collaborative was created were included in the Strategy.
 - In addition to the Strategy, the Forest also conducts many other activities involving things like recreation, hazard tree sales, road decommissioning.
 - Ms. Ballard, SNF, noted that Soaproot was on a schedule for the end of March, and East Fork a month behind that.
 - Other projects could come forward through the Collaborative.
- One member asked whether SNF would continue to take this approach of proposing actions without the Collaborative's involvement.
 - Mr. Rojas explained that initial data gathering had been done and project locations identified for the purposes of the proposal, and initial ideas on proposed actions had been developed by staff. However Mr. Rojas emphasized that these were open for discussion and revision.
 - Mr. Jones-Yellin stated that the timeline was not ideal, and that SNF planned to start working with the Collaborative much earlier in future projects, including looking at boundaries and activities together.
 - Ms. Ballard, SNF, and another member suggested that a five-year schedule of activities was needed, so the group would have time to shape the project and how it develops. Site visits would help to address issues, once the group can access those areas.
 - A few members noted that the preliminary staff work done had helped SNF get CFLRA funding, and now timelines had to be met. Otherwise the entire community will lose 8 or 9 more years of significant funding to do good work.
 - Another member noted that good work had been done but SNF forgot to bring the stakeholders in. The presentation was just homework, now a real work session was needed. There are 179 different cultural resources on the Dinkey Landscape, for example, and these are not included in the initial information.
- A few members echoed the need for very active sub-committee work over the next six weeks, like had been done with Dinkey North & South.
- Several members reiterated that this kind of involvement did not seem consistent with the Act, which calls for collaboration, and that the short timeline would exclude members. It was asked whether CFLRA money would be spent on such projects.
 - Mr. Rojas explained that this is not something that has been discussed or decided, and the Forest hoped that such a situation could be avoided.

- Several members emphasized strongly that CFLRA funding should not be applied to projects not developed by the Collaborative.

The group agreed that the information and preliminary staff work that has been done for both Soaproot and Snowy Patterson will be provided to the group. The group will then be given time to review this in preparation for a conference call to discuss questions and issues, and then a report-back to the full Collaborative.

6. Multi-Party Monitoring Plan Development

The facilitator explained that a conference call was held on January 11 to discuss available monitoring references, potential plan elements and a proposed development process. The outline was revised based on the discussion and further refinement is invited.

- Members were encouraged to review the monitoring reports listed on the first page of the draft proposal because they provide a lot of guidance.
- It was emphasized that community and economic aspects must be included in the monitoring plan, including biomass.
- Chad Hanson volunteered to be on the subcommittee. He note that wildland fires at various intensities should be included.
- A member from one of the other CFLRs that is further along could speak to the subcommittee and provide guidance and lessons learned. Two are hiring coordinators, and it was not clear whether this group had the budget for this or would require volunteers.
 - Ms. Whelan noted that other CFLR collaboratives have contracted out the ecological aspects of their monitoring efforts.
 - It was noted that Cal Poly San Luis Obispo has a good forestry program and may want to help develop the socioeconomic monitoring elements or other aspects of the plan.
 - A member involved with the Sierra Nevada Conservancy noted that it was unlikely that the Conservancy had grants for monitoring.
 - The facilitator noted that the Collaborative could explore writing letters as a Collaborative once their charter was adopted.
- Marc Meyer, USDA Forest Service, emphasized that the Collaborative would need to prioritize and conduct cost-benefit analyses for what it monitors, including items and indicators for specific topics, as well as the scale at which monitoring occurs.
 - Additionally, the USFS Pacific Southwest Region Remote Sensing Lab (RSL) is interested in helping the Collaborative with data analyses and development of ecological monitoring metrics. Malcolm North, Pacific Southwest Research Station in Davis, is also interested in helping to identify LiDAR-based metrics that evaluate treatment effectiveness related to GTR-220 principles. Marc is also developing a proposal to use the Dinkey LiDAR-based metrics for evaluating/monitoring forest resiliency to wildfire.
- One member noted that the monitoring plan will have a common framework but also need some project-specific items. This might apply to Snowy Patterson and plantations.
 - Another member requested to see current density and size characteristics, information on fisher presence, and anything else that might be relevant.

- Craig Thompson, SNF, noted that monitoring information is available for the past three years, 2008-2010, and that he could present on the Dinkey North & South monitoring efforts.
- Another member replied that monitoring needed to be developed to assess specific treatments and their effects.

7. Update on Web Development

With limited time left in the meeting, the facilitator explained that staff investigated different options for a project website. One element is a static Forest Service webpage for the posting of key documents and materials. A second element would be a more interactive site, where members can download files, post new files, create threads of discussion, and comment on existing threads. The Forest Service could not host this because of security restrictions on their servers. A member of the Collaborative would be needed to host such a site. Members were asked to think more about this and it was noted that the group would revisit this at the next meeting.

8. Attendance

#	NAME	ORGANIZATION
1	Richard Bagley	Hwy 186 Firesafe Council
2	Susan Britting	Sierra Forest Legacy
3	Kent Duysen	Terra Bella Mill
4	Larry Duysen	Terra Bella Mill
5	Patrick Emmert	Southern California Edison
6	Pamela Flick	Defenders of Wildlife
7	Ron Goode	Chairman, North Fork Mono Tribe
8	Chad Hanson	John Muir Project
9	Ray Laclergue	Intermountain Nursery
10	Robert Marquez	Chairman, Cold Springs Rancheria
11	John Mount	Southern California Edison
12	Mark Smith	Interested Forester
13	Craig Thomas	Sierra Forest Legacy
14	Mandy Vance	Sierra Nevada Conservancy
15	Stan Van Velsor	The Wilderness Society
16	Frank Aebly	Sierra National Forest
17	Carolyn Ballard	Sierra National Forest
18	Pam Bierce	Sierra National Forest
19	Dirk Charley	Sierra National Forest
20	Rebecca Garcia	Sierra National Forest
21	Tomas Gonzales	Sierra National Forest
22	Julie Gott	Sierra National Forest
23	Dean Gould	Sierra National Forest
24	Penn Gould	Sierra National Forest
25	Andy Hosford	Sierra National Forest
26	Mosé Jones-Yellin	Sierra National Forest
27	Tome Lowe	Sierra National Forest
28	Marc Meyer	US Forest Service
29	Ramiro Rojas	Sierra National Forest

#	NAME	ORGANIZATION
30	Greg Schroer	Sierra National Forest
31	Craig Thompson	Sierra National Forest
32	Cindy Whelan	Sierra National Forest
33	Charlotte Chorneau	Center for Collaborative Policy, CSUS
34	Dorian Fougères	Center for Collaborative Policy, CSUS