MEETING SUMMARY | Dinkey Collaborative Full Group

September 19, 2013

Dinkey Landscape Restoration Project, Sierra National Forest

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This meeting summary paraphrases individual comments and suggestions from Dinkey Collaborative members. Statements do not indicate consensus of the group unless they are preceded by the words, "AGREEMENT:".

All materials are available to members on DataBasin.org, and general information is available on the Dinkey Collaborative website, www.fs.usda.gov/goto/sierra/dinkeycollaborative For *questions please contact the facilitator, Mr. Dorian Fougères, at dfougeres@ccp.csus.edu or (916) 531-3835.*

Action Items

1. **Ms. Sorini-Wilson and Ms. Ballard** to add a sentence clarifying that the small piles would be identified after treatment, not during marking.
2. **Mr. Rojas** to revise the section titles on pages 7 and 8 of the fisher marking guidelines.
3. **Ms. Sorini-Wilson** to send the facilitator a final copy of the guidelines and photographic field guide for distribution to the Collaborative.
4. **The facilitator** to draft letter to RO in support of PSW assistance with owl and fisher data for cumulative effects analysis, for full Collaborative review on October 17.
5. **All members** to send a revised biographical statement to Ms. Flick by October 11.
6. **All members** who desire to have their organization listed on public outreach materials to send representation letter to the facilitator ASAP.
7. **All members** to send Mr. Kusel comments regarding the presentation by close of business on Friday, September 27.
8. **The facilitator** to distribute Sierra Institute's revised draft report (typos corrected) and PowerPoint
9. **Mr. Van Velsor** to convene Socioeconomic Sub-Group to provide feedback on public workshop timing and design.

10. **The facilitator** to draft letters inviting the SJVAPCD, Kings River Conservation District, and Kings River Water Association to send a representative to the Collaborative meetings.

1. Welcome and Introductions

Mr. Ray Porter, District Ranger, represented the Forest Service and welcomed members to the full Collaborative meeting. Dorian Fougères, Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP) Facilitator, reviewed the agenda items, meeting ground rules, and conducted member introductions. There were no public comments.

2. Participation in the Dinkey Landscape Restoration Project

The facilitator explained that this agenda item concerned the process for commenting on the Monitoring Plan, and the process for participating in the Collaborative as a member.

- Mr. Hanson, who had not signed the charter in February when the full Collaborative adopted the revised version, supported Mr. Justin Augustine in explaining Mr. Augustine's comments on the plan by joining a call with the Monitoring Work Group Co-Lead Mr. Stan Van Velsor and the Monitoring Coordinator Ms. Susan Roberts, shortly after the Monitoring Work Group had had a webinar (where Mr. Hanson did not participate).
- The facilitator explained to Mr. Hanson that, going forward, he had two choices: he could sign the charter and become a member of the Collaborative, in which case the group would attempt with good faith to negotiate each of his comments; or he could submit his comments as a member of the public, in which case the Collaborative would review and take his comments under advice, but would not have to negotiate an agreement on how to address them.
- Mr. Hanson replied by sending an electronic signature and requiring that a statement be added to his signature, so that anyone who referenced the charter could see his interpretations of existing science.
- The facilitator told Mr. Hanson that he, the Steering Committee, and the District Ranger believed this would be unfair because to other members because it allowed Mr. Hanson to add additional language to a document that was designed to apply to every person equally, without qualification. There is no procedure enunciated in the charter for a person add a statement to their signature; this differs from the group's Letter of Support regarding projects, which purposely created a provision for people to submit written reservations with their letter.
- Mr. Hanson replied that the group could not exclude him from membership because he required that a statement be attached to his signature, and that such an effort would violate the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program and the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

The facilitator explained that currently he continued to disagree with Mr. Hanson, and reiterated that Mr. Hanson could either sign with no conditions and become a member of the Collaborative, or participate as a member of the general public. This was the current status of the issue.

Discussion followed.

- Steering Committee members expressed that they believed Mr. Fougères handled the situation appropriately and fairly. The Steering Committee does not support anyone adding a personal addendum to the charter.
- Several members expressed support for the response to Mr. Hanson's requests.
- Mr. Porter stated that he does not want to exclude any participation from an individual, and if Mr. Hanson wants to sign the current charter without condition, he would be welcome to participate as a member of the Collaborative.
- A member suggested that the group make a recommendation to the Forest to not accept Mr. Hanson's request to have a personal statement added as a condition of his signature. Other members agreed, and the facilitator helped the group draft the text of what they wanted to communicate.

AGREEMENT: Dinkey Collaborative Recommendation to Sierra National Forest on September 19, 2013: For the purpose of becoming a member of the Dinkey Collaborative, any signature to the Dinkey Collaborative Charter must be without conditions, including but not limited to any form of supplemental statement. Any person may participate in the Collaborative as one of the general public.

Members present: Mr. Chip Ashley, Mr. Kent Duysen, Mr. Larry Duysen, Ms. Pamela Flick, Mr. Stan Harger, Mr. John Mount, Ms. Justine Reynolds, Mr. Mark Smith, Mr. John Stewart, Mr. Craig Thomas, Mr. Stan Van Velsor.

Mr. Narvell Conner participates regularly but is not a member of the Collaborative.

Mr. Steve Haze joined the meeting later in the day, but was not present at this time.

3. Recommendations of Fisher Marking Guidelines and Photographic Field Guide

Ms. Kim Sorini-Wilson presented the members the updated fisher marking guidelines materials. She stated that the structure was similar to that developed when planning Dinkey North and South. The facilitator reviewed a list of revisions to individual photographs and table formatting from Ms. Rebecca Green, who prepared the photographic field guide.

Members followed with comments:

- Marking crews were to use the fisher photographic guide as a reference tool. The crews would be taught the material before going out into the field.

- Regarding shrub management, what does pine regeneration mean within the guidelines? Mr. Rojas stated that pine regeneration could occur if an assessment of the fire history, current shading, and current species composition showed the need for pine.
    - It was suggested that openings also be considered when determining if this was appropriate.
- Ms. Sorini-Wilson clarified that the passage regarding small piles adjacent to tree clumps remains in the text.
    - Ms. Ballard noted that implementing this came after treatment, and this should be clarified in the text because the main focus of the document is marking.
    - Another option would be to include the pile language in the Proposed Action's design criteria.
    - The group felt it was important to keep the topic in the marking document.
    - **ACTION ITEM: Ms. Sorini-Wilson and Ms. Ballard** to add a sentence clarifying that the small piles would be identified after treatment, not during marking.
- The language at the bottom of page 7 and top of page 8 looks similar.
    - Mr. Rojas explained that it refers to two different types of structures, and this could be clarified by revising the respective section titles. The language on page 7 focused on platform trees.
    - **ACTION ITEM: Mr. Rojas** to revise the section titles on pages 7 and 8 of the fisher marking guidelines.

AGREEMENT: Members to adopt the fisher marking guidelines and photographic field guidelines with the revisions from Ms. Green, sentence regarding small piles, and revised titles for the sections at the bottom of page 7 and top of page 8.

Members present: Mr. Kent Duysen, Mr. Larry Duysen, Ms. Pamela Flick, Mr. Stan Harger, Mr. John Mount, Ms. Justine Reynolds, Mr. Mark Smith, Mr. Craig Thomas, Mr. Stan Van Velsor, Mr. Chip Ashley.

Members who attended the meeting but were not present at this time: Mr. Steve Haze, Mr. John Stewart.

Mr. Narvell Conner participates regularly but is not a member of the Collaborative.

ACTION ITEM: Ms. Sorini-Wilson to send the facilitator a final copy of the guidelines and photographic field guide for distribution to the Collaborative.

4. General Updates

Project Updates

- Ms. Ballard reviewed the handout. Discussion followed.
- Mr. Van Velsor asked whether the Forest owns the fuels dozer. Ms. Ballard confirmed this. It was not part of the stewardship contract.

- "Mandatory" items in Soaproot referred to obligations based on the funding clauses. This included biomass thinning and focused on small trees.
- Bald Mountain went out for public comment. The US Department of Fish and Wildlife will review information regarding trout, toad, and frog; it is hoped this will be complete in a timely manner. After this there will be an objection period, and then implementation. Sales preparation would be next summer and the award would be in fall of 2014.
- The roadside hazard sale for the Aspen Fire will be done this autumn. The Environmental Assessment should be completed in the spring.

Landscape Planning: Cumulative Effects and Adaptive Management

- Regarding the landscape planning process, the work group had met and recommended starting to assess cumulative effects now rather than at the end of the process. The Forest was supportive and had started working with the group and requesting additional information from the Pacific Southwest Research Station.
    - This would include both owls and fisher.
    - This has to extend out over time, not just over the short-term.
    - Different Forests conduct the process differently.
    - Consider how projects impact recreation.
- Members asked about Craig Thompson's availability to support this work. The group suggested a letter be drafted to the Regional Forester stating support for the work done by PSW that is related to the Collaborative's planning.
    - The definition of matching funds has been broadened, and now could include PSW activities.
    - The work would also support regional efforts, including the owl meta-analysis and Forest Plan Revisions.
    - **ACTION ITEM: The facilitator** to draft letter to RO in support of PSW assistance with owl and fisher data for cumulative effects analysis, for full Collaborative review on October 17.
- Members of the work group had also started discussing how to formalize the adaptive management process. The group hoped to have material available for review in October.
    - The fisher marking guidelines were an example of one kind of adaptive management.
    - Clarifying the adaptive management process could help the Forest Plan Revisions.

Multi-Party Ecological Monitoring Plan

- Mr. Van Velsor stated that three sections in the ecological monitoring plan are being revised. A workshop is scheduled for the end of October to work on one section of desired conditions. The Work Group hopes the final plan will be available for review and adoption at the full Collaborative meeting in November.

- Sierra Institute would present later in the agenda. A public workshop will be scheduled for October or November. Further discussion will follow during Mr. Kusel's presentation.

Deputy District Ranger Consideration

- Mr. Dean Gould, Forest Supervisor, explained that budget issues are postponing the decision to fill the position of Deputy District Ranger, so there needs to be a prioritization of how to fill vacancies throughout the Forest Service.
- The members advocated for replacing Mr. Mosé Jones-Yellin and emphasized the importance of having an active Deputy District Ranger involved with the Collaborative. Comments followed:
    - It is important to have the direct contact with the Forest Service, a leader who overseas all aspects of the collaborative process, and a point of contact for members.
    - The Deputy District Ranger was essential for coordinating and managing the Forest Service staff, which provided members with important data and/or information and kept the process moving forward.
    - There needs to be a point of contact for the Forest Service, an individual who is dedicated to the Collaborative's efforts.
    - The Dinkey Collaborative is participating in ground breaking work within the Forest, and having the Deputy District Ranger is critical to the success of the group.
    - The Deputy District Ranger was involved with the overall management of the Collaborative's tasks, and knew the impact of each Forest Service staff members time. He was able to weigh tradeoffs between different tasks based on what the Collaborative needed.
    - The Collaborative cannot fail, and the Deputy District Ranger helped ensure its success.

Member Biographies and Communication Work Group

- Ms. Pamela Flick stated that members interested in submitting revised biographies should do so immediately.
- **ACTION ITEM: All members** to send a revised biographical statement to Ms. Flick by October 11.
- The Communication Work Group will meet on Thursday, September 26, 2013, from 1 to 3 pm. Topics will include how to work with smaller papers and the Fresno Bee, an overall PowerPoint presentation informing the public about the Collaborative, and working with the socioeconomic meeting.

Representative Letters

- Representative letters should be sent in on an organization's letterhead for those members interested in having their name listed on the Collaborative's brochure and other outreach material.
- **ACTION ITEM: All members** who desire to have their organization listed on public outreach materials to send representation letter to the facilitator ASAP.

Post Aspen Fire Report Out

- Ms. Ballard passed out information regarding a field trip that the Forest was organizing for members of the Highway 168 Fire Safe Council, Tribal Forum, and Collaborative, to the Aspen Fire site. This is outside the Dinkey Landscape and is not a Dinkey Collaborative event.
- Members are to RSVP to her directly, so transportation can be coordinated.
- Regrowth of the site has been positive. The group would be looking at the mortality rates of the different fire intensities and the overall fire response.

5. Discussion of Prescribed Fire Goals

Mr. Porter stated that the Forest has not met the targets identified in the Dinkey Strategy. This raised the question of whether the targets are too high, or there are other things the Forest can do to advance this work. Discussion followed.

- Ms. Ballard listed constraints to prescribed fires (air quality, available crews, and seasonality).
- The Forest was working closely with the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (SJVAPCD) to decrease restrictions and fines for prescribed fires.
- A published paper shared with the group describes Australia's solutions to fires and air pollution permits. Australia had interagency teams that worked together to mitigate any pollution issues, because they understand the value of fire on the landscape.
- Consider pushing harder for fire permits and working with the Willow Creek Planning Collaborative and the Firesafe Councils to promote more burned acres.
- Work with local representatives on laws to establish priority regarding prescribed fires. An example would be the Rim Fire, and how the severity could have been decreased through regular prescribed fire.
- Contracted fire crews have the same costs and restrictions as the Forest
- Education was needed to gain more support for prescribed fires. In this regard, the Southern Sierra Fire Safety Council is holding a public meeting on November 5th and 6th at the Veterans Hall in Clovis, CA.

6. Socioeconomic Assessment: Initial Findings and Discussion

Mr. Jonathan Kusel, Sierra Institute, presented his findings from phase one of the socioeconomic assessment. He reviewed the proposal's current status (finalizing stakeholder

reports, working with the advisory group, developing indicators), and next steps (phases II and III). He focused on objectives, which addressed the local economy and community. The main focus of the presentation was stakeholder assessment conducted by holding 18 structured interviews and participation at a tribal forum. Findings were listed in categories and recommendations were stated. Discussion followed.

- Regarding forest products, Mr. Kusel stated that individuals were interested in having product diversity.
- There was concern about the suggestion to have improved competition, which could allow companies who are not familiar with the landscape or the Forest and Collaborative's approach to treatments coming in to do the work.
- The local economy had been declining in productivity through the years. For example, there were seven mills in the area and now only one is operational. The Collaborative should review the economic benefits and impacts of its work, and try to bring more economic opportunities to the area.
- The importance of monitoring was understood by the public.
- Members expressed concern that the term "special access" suggested working around or avoiding existing restrictions.Mr. Kusel explained that term "special access" was undefined but should be linked to monitoring.
- Regarding the Native American community, increased work should be done with local tribes. Examples given were work around acorns, and other cultural issues.
    - More need to support cultural burns for acorn production. Note that the group previously had a presentation by Mr. Ron Goode regarding cultural burns for acorn production.
    - One of the Forest employees stated that they had worked with tribes for years, and were surprised at the criticism from tribes.
    - Mr. Kusel stated that tribes respond differently, and if asked to attend to public meetings, they may not show or comment. The effort to engage tribes needs to be consistent over time.
- Create more training opportunities with the Forest Service through contracting, expand the list of approved contractors, and reconsider how work is bundled in a contract.
    - It was stated that the request for expanding the list of contractors depends on who was asked in the interview. The Forest Service has had forums for contractors informing them on how to get involved with projects.
    - The Sustainable Forests and Community Collaborative is also interested in the best approaches to contracting.
    - Contracts are advertised nationwide, and locals need to be aware of the requests issued.
    - Consider that the entity who is awarded the contract should subcontract out to local people.
    - The best value may not be the lowest bid. For example, Soaproot contracted for the best value.

- Concern that the second houses and recreational visitors have not met expectations of the locals regarding the economy. Not enough of the visitors are buying local goods.
- It was stated that the community in Shaver Lake is well aware of the Collaborative's activities, and are monitoring the groups decisions.
- Water shortages are an issue within the community. Wells are going dry and the demand for water downstream effects the Dinkey Landscape.
    - Working with the Forest hydrologist and the community would be beneficial and reviewing the work done with the Kings River Experimental Watershed.
    - Consider the new representative from UC Merced to be involved with water issues.
- The Collaborative could support job creation by the use of adaptive management.
- Mr. Kusel stated that he would like to assess the capacity and socioeconomic well-being because they might not be closely related. For example, he stated that a community could have capacity, but not have socioeconomic well-being.
- Cultural burning has the opportunity to get more locals integrated
- Opportunities within a community could be used to measure beneficial impacts.

ACTION ITEM: All members to send Mr. Kusel comments regarding the presentation by close of business on Friday, September 27.

ACTION ITEM: The facilitator to distribute Sierra Institute's revised draft report (typos corrected) and PowerPoint.

Mr. Kusel stated that a public workshop for the socioeconomic assessment needed to be scheduled, and suggested dates at the end of October or November. The group discussed the public workshop:

- The workshop should be held where people could attend (e.g., Prather).
- The workshop would be 3 hours; if scheduled in the evening consider a shorter timeframe.
- Interaction from the public would be sought throughout the workshop.
- Consider having the workshop adjacent to another Dinkey meeting, so more members could attend.
- Hold two meetings, one in Shaver Lake (Museum) and one in Prather to include more individuals in the Dinkey area.
- Mr. Kusel stated that the presentation would be tailored to the public and focus on developing indicators.
- The Socioeconomic Advisory Group wanted to start thinking of how to advertise the event and what would be the hook.

ACTION ITEM: Mr. Van Velsor to convene Socioeconomic Sub-Group to provide feedback on public workshop timing and design.

7. Quarterly Trust Check-In

The facilitator noted that this was an opportunity for the group to reflect on and suggest improvements to the process. Trust within the group was low at the start of the year. Discussion followed.

- Progress had been made with trust since last year. The group had goals to gain trust, and creating work groups was beneficial for handling complex issues.
- Replacing Mr. Jones-Yellin position is crucial to the future trust between the group and the Forest.
- Professionalism was displayed by the facilitator and the Steering Committee when handling issues discussed previously about Mr. Hanson and the participation process.
- Mr. Porter suggested the group should consider prioritizing requests for information from the Forest, and develop reasonable timeframes to produce deliverables.
- PSW needs to provides information about fisher resiliency. It was stated that PSW should have an individual in the Fresno Lab attend the Collaborative meetings.
- The SJVAPCD should send a representative to the Collaborative. They had a representative in the past but the meeting dates conflicted with his schedule. **ACTION ITEM: The facilitator** to draft letters inviting the SJVAPCD, Kings River Conservation District, and Kings River Water Association to send a representative to the Collaborative meetings.
- Invite other influential organizations to the group, such as Fresno County, water districts, and Fresno Irrigation District.
- Joint fact-finding should be done for fire issues, to conclude this discussion and include it in the monitoring plan.
- Ms. Reynolds expressed that she is excited to be working with the group. She is with many organizations (ex: Sustainable Forest and Communities Collaborative) and is actively spreading the word about the Dinkey Collaborative's work, will be able to do outreach work for the Collaborative through Next September.

Mr. Porter thanked members for attending and participating, and closed the meeting.

8. Attendees

1. Chip Ashley
2. Carolyn Ballard, USFS
3. Narvell Conner
4. Kent Duysen
5. Larry Duysen
6. Dan Fidler
7. Pamela Flick
8. Dorian Fougères, CCP
9. Gabriella Golik, CCP
10. Dean Gould, USFS
11. Stan Harger
12. Steve Haze
13. Andy Hosford, USFS
14. John Mount
15. Ray Porter, USFS
16. Justine Reynolds
17. Ramiro Rojas, USFS
18. Mark Smith
19. Kim Sorini-Wilson, USFS
20. John Stewart
21. Craig Thomas
22. Stan Van Velsor