

Eastern Sierra Climate & Communities Resilience Project
January 14, 2020
Meeting Summary

1. Fun Fact 5- Biomass 101- (5 Min)

2. Introduction of Attendees:

1. Janet Hatfield-Plumas Corp, ESCCRP Project Manager
2. Holly Alpert- RFFCP Program Lead
3. Marlon Charneau-Sierra Corp Fellow
4. Rick Kattelmann- RFFCP & ESCCRP-Contracted Staff
5. Scott Kusumoto, Inyo NF
6. John Wentworth, Mammoth Lakes Town Councilman
7. Natalie Morrow, MLFPD
8. Danny Shugart, MLFPD
9. Frank Frievalt, MLFPD
10. Jeff Hinson, Inyo NF
11. Bob Gardner, Mono Co. Supervisor
12. Stacy Corless, Mono Co. Supervisor
13. Erin Noesser, Inyo NF
14. David Haas, CalFire
15. Matt Driscoll, SNC
16. Chance Traub, Inyo NF
17. Steve Baule, LADWP sustainability group
18. Kim Cooke, Mammoth Lakes planner
19. Taro Pusina, Inyo NF
20. Allan Pietrasanta, Sierra Business Council
21. Malcolm Clark, Sierra Club
22. David Page, Mammoth Lakes Trails Assoc.
23. Nathan Sill, Inyo NF
24. Marc Meyer, USFS
25. Betty Hylton, Mammoth Community Water District
26. Gordon Martin, Inyo NF
27. Lesley Yen, Inyo NF
28. Carol Blanchette, UC Natural Reserve System – Valentine & SNARL
29. Edith Martinez, CDFW
30. Elaine Kabala, ESCOG & City of Bishop
31. Andrew Mulford, MLTPA
32. Tom Schaniel, GBUAPCD
33. Ken Brengle, Mammoth Lakes Chamber of Commerce

3. Recap of Nov. 12, 2020 Meeting (Janet Hatfield)

a. Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance Website- Project Page

Sierra Corp fellow, Marlon Charneau, introduced the website and pointed out the project pages developed as a resource for stakeholders. All future meeting information as well as project progress will be housed on the Eastern Sierra Wildfire Alliance website.

<https://eswildfirealliance.org/escgrp>

b. Summary of Nov 12 Meeting

Janet Hatfield provided a brief overview of the Nov 12 meeting and reminded the group that mechanical treatment is a first step, but not a long-term strategy. The grant timeline and tasks were again reviewed to refresh stakeholders' memories.

c. Summary of Breakout Group discussions

Janet summarized breakout group conversations noting that the benefit of smaller groups is more participation, but the drawbacks are that the group misses out on a more comprehensive discussion. To make up for that shortcoming a series of slides were presented that outline the key points of those breakout group discussions from November. The slide presentation used that outlines key opportunities and challenges summarized from the breakout group discussions on Nov 12 will be posted to the website under the Jan 14 Meeting section.

LINK: [Jan 14 Meeting Presentation](#)

4. Project Boundary Discussion (45 Min)

a. Boundaries edit submissions overview.

Janet informed the Group that only one edit recommendation came in via the online comment form which indicated that we haven't spent the time necessary to talk about why adding parcels adjacent but currently not included in the project area might be worth considering and providing some background rationale for the next discussion.

b. Benefits & challenges to a multijurisdictional approach? (Nathan Sill)

CCI Multijurisdictional emphasis/ funding significance State of CA

Nathan Sill reviewed the project boundary and said that USFS now uses an "all land" approach and if we can help partners get the planning done on their lands so we can manage the land together, we can be more successful in responding to future land management challenges. For State CCI grants, joint efforts on lands of multiple ownerships are necessary to be competitive, and Fire Safe Councils that proposed projects on multiple ownerships and jurisdictions tend to succeed in the CCI grants.

David Haas of CalFire confirmed that projects with more than a single owner tend to be score higher. County Supervisor Stacy Corless said there are many good examples of multi-jurisdictional projects throughout the Sierra Nevada.

The addition of these small parcels in question offers future management efficiencies as well as provide for enhanced community and resource protection. The Group discussed various planning efforts on each of the respective lands to identify potential benefits from additional planning efforts via this project.

Also, part of the discussion included which lands in the discussion are most conducive to maximizing the effectiveness of the project? It was discussed that each entity must follow a unique process in order to sign on and that identifying exact areas will help facilitate that conversation.

The USFS Fire Management staff spoke of the logic that supports drawing the boundary to current man-made or natural features (roads, etc.) that support fire management and

containment efforts noting that it is typically cheaper, safer than building a containment line.

The Group acknowledges that fire doesn't respect administrative boundaries and notes that this decision will set up future land managers to more efficiently and safely protect the resource and the Town. It is agreed that further discussion is needed to identify differing management concerns, environmental planning needs, authorities and agreements needed to make this a reality.

The Group discussed several recommended additions from the Town of Mammoth Lakes that respond directly to the Community Planning Assistance for Wildfire ([Mammoth Lakes CPAW 2018](#)) report. This includes the land at Camp High Sierra owned by the City of Los Angeles Department of Parks and Recreation as well as several TOML owned parcels along Mammoth Creek, West of the Waterford Ave Bridge toward the Valentine Reserve. There is also mention of former fuels reduction efforts in the Old Mammoth area and the need to maintain and improve those areas as well.

Steve Baule stated that LADWP leases Camp High Sierra to Mammoth Mountain Ski Area, and would need to examine their lease agreement regarding responsibilities and approvals with respect to fuels treatments. John Wentworth also mentioned the need to better understand the permittee situation. Natalie Morrow said that reducing fuels at Camp High Sierra is a high priority for the MLFPD. Danny Shugart and Frank Frievalt mentioned that there has been a CCC crew working at Camp High Sierra intermittently over the past 18 months, funded through AB2126, and that MMSA has been highly supportive.

John Wentworth reminded the Group that the ski area is in the process of submitting a development application for the Main Lodge area now that the land swap is complete, and that could be an opportunity to influence some fuels reduction there if it's not already contained within the boundary?

Edith Martinez (CDFW) suggested looking at California's Vegetation Treatment Program (VTP) & its programmatic EIR suggesting that some of these lands may be able to use these documents to help streamline the process. <https://bof.fire.ca.gov/projects-and-programs/calvtp>

David Haas said the VTP EIR approach has been used for almost 20 years as a tool to help accelerate the environmental planning process and will be instruments in helping the State meet new goals of treating drastically increased acres to meet pace and scale needs.

Rick Kattelman suggested that The Parcel could be examined as a possible model/demonstration for wildfire resilient stand management/landscaping as well as fire-resistant architecture.

John Wentworth agreed there could be synergies for outside funding for multiple objectives regarding wildfire safety at a workforce housing project. Janet added that the [Flagstaff Watershed Protection Project](#). has created wildfire-safety demonstration projects on city-owned parcels and that was helpful in helping to gain public support for the project.

Others add that there are a multitude of other projects that we can look to learn how multi-jurisdictional projects were accomplished, and that we don't need to start from scratch.

There is also some potential to add LADWP owned lands in the Eastern part of the project boundary, but more discussion needs to take place to identify optimal acres so that we can present the information to the Aqueduct Manager for a decision.

Carol Blanchette from UC Valentine Reserve adds that maintenance of fuels work done at Valentine is a strong need.

The Inyo National forest also needs to take a closer look at some of the past NEPA to help make sense of some of the other boundary oddities as well as to clean up some basic GIS errors in the current boundary that were brought to our attention.

The consensus is that the multi-jurisdictional approach is the right one and the next step is to work through the more detailed mechanics of how to make it work. The goal will be to come back at the March meeting with prospective edits to the boundary for a final discussion.

Action Item: Janet will send out a Doodle to prospective landowners and any others who expressed interest in joining that conversation to identify a meeting time in late February where we can dive into a more detailed discussion on the topic and decide what parcels the project should add.

Edith, Rick, and John W, Jeff H would like to be involved in the follow-up discussion along with the various landowners.

5. Goals & Objectives

a. Review of National Cohesive Wildland Fire Management Strategy Goals (Janet Hatfield)

Janet provided an overview of these concepts sighting that we often adopt words that explain concepts that we don't take the time to fully understand. She thought it was important to revisit the definition of Fire Adapted Community definition as a first step so that the Group understands that it will take every single one of us working together to achieve that goal and the landscape fuels treatments are only one component of the work required, albeit an incredibly significant one in Mammoth's situation.

An excellent summary graphic and self-assessment tool are available under the **Resources Menu** at <https://www.fireadaptednetwork.org>. Janet thinks the Self-Assessment tool may be a good exercise for the Group to do as part of the Needs Assessment later this year and that likely the MLFD will be key to helping us understand where we are in that process.

b. ESCCRP Goals & Objectives (Erin Noesser)

Erin Noesser state that NEPA documents for USFS projects must meet established goals and objectives. The recently adopted Forest Plan for the Inyo NF lists broader goals and objectives but that there is a need to refine goals and objectives specific to this project. Erin shared current draft goals making a clear distinction that some of these goals are not project-specific but nevertheless important goals to consider in this conversation. She updated in real-time a draft goals document with input from the group. Stakeholders will be given an opportunity to further revise in advance of the next meeting.

DOWNLOADABLE FILE LINK: [Draft Goals Document](#)

Action Item: Review the draft Project Goals and Objectives and work with your organization to offer suggested revision changes. Please send suggested revisions to kelsey@plumascorporation.org by March 1, be ready to discuss at March 11 meeting.

Frank Frievalt and David Haas discussed how CalFire hazard severity mapping might affect the scoring of grant applications and upcoming changes from state responsibility areas to local responsibility areas expected in July 2021.

Taro Pusina mentioned that the high hazard mapping around Mammoth Lakes and June Lake by CalFire should be evaluated. David Haas said the CalFire hazard severity mapping involves many criteria in addition to vegetation. The Mammoth Lakes Community Wildfire Protection Plan was referenced, and it is available at <https://mlfd.ca.gov/wildland-urban-interface/community-wildfire-protection-plan/>

Janet and Frank Frievalt suggested that greater resolution and granularity from the CWPP should be used in the new mapping of wildfire hazard severity given know local factors as stated in that planning document.

Scott Kusumoto stated that fires won't stop at the Inyo NF / private land boundaries and that the TOML should be more involved in fuels work on private property.

Action Item: Review the draft Project Goals and Objectives and work with your organization to offer suggested revision changes. Please send suggested revisions to kelsey@plumascorporation.org by March 1, be ready to discuss at the March 11th meeting.

6. Upcoming Funding Opportunities (Janet)

- a. Janet shares with the group that an upcoming grant opportunity to secure NEPA/CEQA planning funds is quickly approaching. The program is CDFW Prop. 1 Opportunity- Watershed Restoration Grants Branch. Our project qualifies under Priority- #2 Managing Headwaters for Multiple Benefits
If awarded, this grant would provide seamless funding for additional planning needs and help keep the project on track. We will be holding a meeting tomorrow to confirm we are well-positioned to be competitive for this application. If we decide to move forward, we will be requesting Letters of Support as well as match funding documentation from those who can accommodate that request and have viable match for this project. Remember match can be in-kind or cash but the goal is to reach 30% match to maximize our chances for success.
- b. Next Meeting Date will be March 11, due to the funding application deadline that conflicts with the anticipated Feb meeting date. The 2021 meeting schedule is now available on the website.

LINK: [2021 Meeting Schedule](#)