

Notes UCST-MOUP conference call

June 17, 2008 1-3pm

PARTICIPANTS:

MOUP: From USFS: Mike Chapel, Beth Pendleton, Peter Stine, Dave Martin, and Jan Cutts; Cay Goode (US FWS)

UCST: Sheila Whitmore, Doug Tempel, Rocky Gutierrez, Kim Rodrigues, Susie Kocher, Brandon Collins, Adriana Sulak, Lynn Huntsinger, John Battles, Ann Huber

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SUMMARY OF KEY OUTCOMES, AGREEMENTS, AND ACTION ITEMS

OUTCOMES

1. Year 2 water and spatial team funding is delayed. To keep SNAMP going & UCST integrated, funding needs to arrive by August at the latest.
2. Funding delay's existing impact on SNAMP - Work on hydrologic modeling postponed.
3. Funding delay's potential impact on Water Team / SNAMP - If there is a gap in funding for Water, they will not be able to acquire the upcoming water year's pretreatment data, and may become too out of sync with other teams for UCST/SNAMP to remain integrated.
4. Funding delay's potential impact on Spatial Team / SNAMP - Lidar flight for Last Chance this year will most likely be delayed until next year. Spatial also needs continued funding to keep staff on board and research going, and to acquire other needed high resolution imagery.
5. Owl team needs SWIG grant to be executed by August to continue operating with full funding.
6. For planning purposes, everyone should expect a 2-3 month processing time by UCB once grants are submitted to UCB.
7. Year 3 is about \$100-145,000 short. This is assuming we get another year of SNC funding; that we do not receive another SWIG grant from DFG; and that UCST budgets do not change.
8. Grants Team still needs to look at additional sources of funding to cover anticipated \$100-145k shortfall in YR3.
9. Sugar Pine treatments still on track to begin spring 2009.
10. Fish Camp treatments still on track to begin 2010.
11. There is some miscommunication between UCST and American River Ranger District about when Last Chance treatments will begin. Last Chance currently scheduled for burning in fall 2008 and logging July 2009, and Water Team catchments only delayed until 2010. UCST thought all treatments would be delayed until 2010. *Note added June 23rd: Karen Jones confirmed that the treatment schedule was moved up from the 2010 date to begin fall 2008. Treatments in Water team's catchment will not begin until 2010.*

12. USFS does not currently believe the 9th Circuit Court judgment will have any impact on SNAMP projects.
13. Bass Lake Ranger District is working with the original authors of the 2004 ROD and the USFS Regional Office to interpret the guideline that only fuel reduction operations can occur within fisher den buffers. It will be addressed in EIS scheduled to come out in September.

AGREEMENTS

- 1.
2. Jan is committed to aiding the transition to her replacement. There should be enough time between new district ranger being on board and Last Chance Project new ID team leader coming on in January.
3. November 5 meeting planning and agenda development will be conducted by Ann, Kim, Susie, Mike, and members from MOUP Core Support Team.
4. The following should be added to the invite list for November 5 meeting: Resources Law Legacy Foundation, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, and new DFG director.
5. We should make sure to acknowledge all the funders/participants at November 5 meeting.

SUMMARY OF ACTION ITEMS / NEXT STEPS

1. John will follow up with regarding progress for expediting Water and Spatial teams' contract processing.
2. UCST needs to discuss scientific ramifications to delaying Lidar flight until next year.
3. John will confirm with Michi that SWIG grant is waiting at DFG (with Esther Burkett) and let Mike and Cay know.
4. Mike will contact Esther to check on progress and communicate the urgency of the SWIG grant processing.
5. UCST will submit adjusted YR3 budgets to MOUP in late summer/early fall (September 18 at the latest).
6. Lynn will share co-management paper with rest of MOUP.
7. Jan will check with Karen if July 25 is a good date for an IT meeting focusing on the Owl team research.
8. Ann will send MOUP some dates to spend day in field with each science team this summer.
9. Anne Lombardo will look into how to improve field trip announcements to MOUP.
10. Ann will send CBI report to MOUP.
11. Ann and Mike will communicate after the call about the lack of aerial support for Fisher.
12. Jan will check with Karen on Last Chance implementation timeline.
13. John will talk to Crawford to see if he can help arrange a briefing with the new DFG director to brief him on SNAMP.
14. Beth will coordinate with Mike and John to be available for a briefing with new DFG director.
15. Cay will keep all posted when new FWS director is found.
16. Ann will work with Mike, Susie, and Kim to schedule dates in July with MOUP Core Support Team for November 5 meeting planning.
17. Susie / Kim will invite Dan Dooley (new VP ANR) to November 5 meeting.

1. UCST UPDATE

1.1 SNAMP FUNDING UPDATE (John)

1.1.1 FUNDING DELAY THREATENS UCST INTEGRATION

John explained that YR2 funding to Water and Spatial Teams has not come through yet, and the obstacles involved. It was thought that last year's delays might be avoided by having the contract passed through to USFS Regional Office and then to UCB since agreements between the three are already set up. However, the process has still been slow, and it turns out the contract with the USFS has to be amended, which will delay it even longer.

July 1 was the deadline to get Yr2 funds to Water and Spatial teams. The Water team (Roger and Martha) can cover UCM Spatial and Water staff for an extra month (July). Equipment purchasing for Water has also been delayed, but seems to be progressing. Deputy Director types have become involved to try to help.

ACTION ITEM: John will follow up with personnel regarding progress for expediting contract processing.

John explained the impacts of the delay to UCST research:

Existing impact: *Work on hydrologic modeling postponed*; Water staff scaled back to essential field work personnel. Modeling results will be delayed and integration with other science teams.

Potential impacts for Water: *If there is a gap in funding for Water, they will not be able to acquire the upcoming water year's pretreatment data, and may become too out of sync with other teams for UCST/SNAMP to remain integrated.* If there is a gap in funding Water cannot keep staff on in order to complete equipment installation in time to capture the upcoming water year data. September is too late for YR2 funding to come through. Would put Water another year behind other teams, weakens UCST scientific credibility of integration, and leaves Water only 1 year of pretreatment data.

Potential impacts for Spatial: *Lidar flight for Last Chance this year will most likely be delayed until next year. Spatial also needs continued funding to keep staff on board and research going, and to acquire other needed high resolution imagery.* Qinghua needs to tell NCALM (the company that will conduct the Lidar flight) this week if funding can be committed in order to attain Lidar for Last Chance this year.

ACTION ITEM: UCST needs to discuss scientific ramifications to delaying Lidar flight until next year.

To keep SNAMP going / UCST integrated, 2008 Water and Spatial funding needs to arrive by August at the latest.

USFWS/CA DFG SWIG GRANT TO OWL TEAM STILL DELAYED

John explains that the YR1 grant still has not been executed. Complicated cost sharing took a while to get approved but UCB sent it to DFG in late May. They only needed to change the start and end dates.

Rocky says that Owl team has about a month or so of enough funding. *Owl needs this funding by ~ August 1.* Esther is consumed with the fisher listing.

ACTION ITEMS:

- John will confirm with Michi that SWIG grant is waiting at DFG (with Esther Burkett) and let Mike and Cay know.
- Mike will contact Esther to check on progress and communicate the urgency of the situation.

OTHER YR2 FUNDING UPDATES

- Sierra Nevada Conservancy (SNC) Grant. John explains that UCB was slow to process SNC grant because SNC is a new agency and had never worked with UC before but this now looks like it will be processed in time. John met with Dean Welter (UCB's College of Natural Resources) and the College Assistant Dean of Budget and Finance to build capacity for UCB to act more quickly on grants and contracts processing in the future.
- USFS YR2 money is at UCB
- Resources Law grant processing seems to be in order

1.1.2 CHALLENGES INVOLVED WITH SNAMP CONTRACTS AND GRANTS ADMINISTRATION (John)

For planning purposes, everyone should expect a 2-3 month processing time by UCB once grants are submitted to UCB. The numerous and various SNAMP grants all have separate quirks and reporting requirements. USFS grants to UCB are the model of efficiency. Even Resources Law had 10 items that needed to be met to process. John needs to back off on how fast UCB can process grants – we going to have 2-3 month processing time once they are submitted. UCB's Sponsored Projects Office is backlogged and understaffed.

1.1.3 OUTLOOK FOR YR3 SNAMP FUNDING

John – *Year 3 is about \$150,000 short. This is assuming we get another year of SNC funding; that we do not receive another SWIG grant from DFG; and that UCST budgets do not change.* The Resources Law straddles YR2 and YR3, and we can probably use ~\$50,000 of that in YR3 – so total shortfall if Resources Law comes through would be about \$100k. This estimate also does not include the likelihood that many UCST teams will ask for more money for Year 3 due to increased expenses - gas, staff, and pending results of public participation team's assessment this summer (if the PPT budget needs augmentation beyond YR2). Mid-July quarterly report to MOUP will give a better idea of where current spending is going. In late summer John will ask UCST to rebudget for YR3.

Grants Team still needs to look at additional sources of funding to cover anticipated \$100-145k shortfall in YR3.

Kim – Asks if it is reasonable to ask grants team or core support team to look at immediate as well as long term picture, in order to keep integrated project on schedule?

Mike – The sooner you could get YR3 adjusted budget the better for the Grant's team, before September.

John – Cannot ask UCST to spend time on re-budgeting now, but will shoot for Sept 18 date at the latest. Grants team can know now that we anticipate being \$100,000 short YR3 without changing anyone's budget around, assuming caveats mentioned earlier. UCST will have heart to heart about actual expenses – there have been some cost savings in housing. We need to know where current spending is going; will know in July.

ACTION ITEM: In late summer/early fall (September 18 at the latest), UCST will submit a detailed YR3 adjusted budget request to MOUP.

Mike - Some hopeful things on Grants front – Keith Gillless still believes there is potential with his help to reach other foundations; and Brannon (SNC) indicated they might be able to help next year.

1.2 SUMMARY OF UCST RESEARCH HIGHLIGHTS

1.2.1 EMERGING ROLE OF INTEGRATION TEAM (Kim)

Kim explains that the Integration Team (IT) has emerged as an opportunity to allow engaged public, MOU partners, and science team to begin the in depth mutual learning that will help inform the adaptive management process. IT is addressing the public's request since December of 2005 about how to close the loop between science team findings and how they will create changes in forest management practices. For now IT is focusing on hosting meetings with each science team to communicate baseline data and other information UCST is collecting now. Another main purpose of the IT group will be to tackle potential triggers and thresholds once UCST research is far enough along to be able to start informing these discussions with their results. IT meeting was recently held with a focus on the Forest team (FFEH) research. Next one this summer will be with Fisher team and Owl team. Planning for a meeting with the Public Participation Team (PPT) in winter and the Water team.

Lynn and Adriana have written a co-management white paper sent to UCST, IT team, and Mike Chapel.

Peter – Metadata work with Dave Saah is an initial inquiry of what results/data can be mined from 5 other studies in Sierra that have research questions related to SNAMP. Peter is optimistic it will be fruitful.

Mike – The IT work continues to be the most important SNAMP work. Mike encourages all to come to these meetings if they have not yet.

Susie and Dave discuss potential dates for IT meeting focusing on Fisher team's research. Earlier September dates work for Dave. Susie and Jan discuss dates for an Owl meeting.

Mike indicates that UCST teams should organize some dates in the summer when MOUP members can spend a day in the field with them.

MOUP members on the call were not aware that there is a Forest Team public field trip this Saturday.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Lynn will share co-management paper with rest of MOUP.
- Jan will check with Karen if July 25 is a good date for an IT meeting focusing on the Owl team research.
- Ann will send MOUP some dates to spend day in field with each science team this summer.
- Anne Lombardo will look into how to improve field trip announcements to MOUP.

1.2.2 BRIEF UPDATE FROM EACH SCIENCE TEAM (Ann)

Ann notes that list is not comprehensive; these are main highlights.

Spatial Team

- Working on Lidar and high resolution imagery acquisition for Last Chance this summer (may be postponed as discussed earlier)
- Developed SNAMP data server
- Field ground truthing for Lidar data for Sugar Pine

Water Team

- Installed pressure transducers and are taking flow measurements at all sites.
- While waiting for other equipment they will survey and lay out sediment basin locations, and will install solar panels and batteries when mounting posts arrive.

- Working to get help from Tahoe N.F. fire crews to help install basins at northern site. CalFire CCC crews are going to help with southern site basin installation.
- Modeling on hold due to funding delay
- Current funding to keep rest of staff on until July 31.

Project Integration and Management Team

- Held science integration workshops with Spatial, Forest, Owl, and Fisher teams. Planning to hold one with Water and Forest in the fall but this will likely have to be delayed due to funding delay to Water.
- Planning November 5 Annual SNAMP meeting
- Ann going on maternity leave in September.

Fisher Team

- 11 fisher collared; 5 mortalities total; all awaiting autopsy reports from UC Davis.
- Fisher has been without aerial support for over a week, anticipate 2-3 weeks total, due to plane being down for maintenance and other work.
- Fisher is having trouble attaining permits from Yosemite N.P. to work in the park. They know Wawona is a fisher hotspot. John asks if anyone has any suggestions. Mike suggests we invite YNP biologists to spend a day in the field with Fisher and invite them to collaborate on the research.
- UCST is reading CBI (Conservation Biology Institute) report which recently came out with reported status of Fisher populations in the Sierra. Reg encouraged all UCST to read and understand the report.

Peter - Reg removed his name from CBI advisory board; he had problems with it.

John – Not sure if he had problems with it but may also be partly due to UCST neutrality statement. Within minutes after the 9th circuit court judgement came out, reporters had made phone calls to science teams PIs, and nothing was said. Reg and other PIs have shown commitment to the neutrality statement.

ACTION ITEMS:

- Ann will send CBI report to MOUP.
- Ann and Mike will communicate after the call about the lack of aerial support.

Public Participation Team

- Leading Integration Team efforts
- New SNAMP website will be launched soon.
- Adriana and Lynn beginning interviews now that human subjects protocol has been approved.

Fire and Forest Ecosystem Health Team (FFEH / Forest Team)

- Will complete inventory of plots in treatment areas this summer.
- Also collecting data on fire history (fire scar plots) and tree cores for forest health research.
- Sponsored training session for UCST and stakeholders in ArcFuels module (fire modeling).

Owl Team

- Found 3 nests this year, which could not do last year because of late start.
- So far found birds at 8 of the 10 territories that were occupied last year.
- Have a good start on their blanket surveys of the entire owl SNAMP area.

2. USFS UPDATE

2.1 UPDATE ON PROJECT TIMELINES

2.1.1 SUGAR PINE AND FISH CAMP PROJECTS (Dave)

They are working to address the fisher den buffer zones in the upcoming EIS for Sugar Pine Project (see 2.3 below).

On Sugar Pine, they are having some internal contract issues with outside sources they are using for some of reports will be using. September 16 date for the EIS will likely be pushed back a couple of weeks, but it should not impact implementation plans for next spring.

Fish Camp Project still on track for 2010 implementation.

2.1.2 LAST CHANCE PROJECT (Jan)

Jan explains that Last Chance Project is on track per the timeline they handed out at the last IT meeting. French Meadows is having a water problem. Still on track for barracks to be ready at end of July.

Ann – Noticed that Last Chance timeline has burning scheduled this fall and logging beginning July 2009 but UCST understanding was that Last Chance would be delayed until 2010, per her conversations with Karen Jones and the timeline that was presented in the January MOUP meeting and the Quarterly Meeting in February.

Jan – Believes the 2010 delay only applied to Water team catchment.

John – Not as worried about understory burning but need to know for sure when logging is scheduled to begin. Has implications for Lidar flight; cannot have canopy manipulations before Lidar.

ACTION ITEM: Jan will check with Karen on Last Chance implementation timeline.

Cay – Suggests Beth, John, Crawford, and other UCST researchers ask for a briefing with the new DFG director. Now that SNAMP has foundation funding it might help get DFG more enthusiastic. Better to do it soon. Crawford may be able to help arrange it.

ACTION ITEMS:

- John will talk to Crawford to see if he can help arrange a briefing with the new DFG director to brief him on SNAMP.
- Beth will coordinate with Mike and John to be available for a briefing with new DFG director.
- Cay will keep all posted when new FWS director is found.

Cay – Responds to questions about a FWS person at the briefing; there is too much turnover at high levels of FWS. Steve Thompson leaving Aug 2. Ken McDermitt is the acting director. FWS could go too but Cay wouldn't be able to get anybody higher, everyone is leaving these days.

2.2 UPDATE ON 9TH CIRCUIT COURT JUDGEMENT (Mike)

USFS does not currently believe the judgement will have any impact on SNAMP projects. Mike gives background to judgement (reversed decision to allow USFS to implement 2004 ROD while case is being decided). The USFS is taking the position that the ruling only applies to the three projects identified in

the case which are in Plumas N.F. USFS has not decided if they will appeal the decision. Randy Moore and others in USFS (including Mike) are working with the attorney generals and Craig Thomas to negotiate a settlement; a way to move forward that works for everyone. There is a potential that it could impact SNAMP but USFS does not think it will. Mike may have more information in the next month or so.

2.3 CURRENT UNDERSTANDING OF FISHER DEN IMPLICATIONS FOR SUGAR PINE PROJECT (Dave)

The Limited Operating Period restriction is clear in the 2004 ROD but the other guideline that the ROD includes is that treatments within buffer zones can only be for fuel hazard. *Bass Lake is working with the original authors of the 2004 ROD and the USFS Regional Office to interpret this guideline.*

The process of ROD's is problematic. No guarantees regarding responses of individual groups. Cannot anticipate all possible responses from individuals.

Kim – Suggests they engage as many people as possible in ROD. Make naysayers outliers.

Dave - Being very careful with NEPA in Sugar Pine so not to create liabilities. Slower approach.

2.4 HOW TO ENSURE SUPPORT FOR SNAMP WITH UPCOMING KEY USFS PERSONNEL CHANGE

Jan Cutts is leaving in August; Karen Jones retiring in January; new Tahoe Forest Supervisor.

Jan – She is committed to aiding the transition to her replacement. There should be enough time between new district ranger being on board and Last Chance Project new ID team leader coming on in January.

3. PLANNING FOR NOVEMBER 5 MEETING (Ann)

Ann – Who will be involved in agenda development and planning? Ann suggests herself, Kim, Susie, Mike, and someone from MOUP Core Support Team. She would like draft agenda by August, which means planning needs to start in July. Suggests second week of July.

AGREEMENT: November 5 meeting planning and agenda development will be conducted by Ann, Kim, Susie, Mike, and members from MOUP Core Support Team.

Discussion about which agency leaders will attend and should be invited. Standiford is confirmed. It is on the calendars of the following:

Randy Moore (USFS Region 5 Regional Forester),
Mike Christman (Resources Agency),
USFS PSW chief (to be named),

The following should be invited:

Resources Law Legacy Foundation, Sierra Nevada Conservancy, DFG director

Beth – We should make sure to acknowledge all the funders/participants.

ACTION ITEM:

- Ann will work with Mike, Susie, and Kim to schedule dates in July with MOUP Core Support Team for meeting planning.

- Susie / Kim will invite Dan Dooley (new VP ANR)