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For a tool I wanted to share I'm providing the Strategic Plan for the Sustainable Forests and Communities Collaborative. Although SFCC is not currently active, we were able to develop this planning and implementation plan to coordinate re-activation when appropriate, as well as the funding or resources that would be required to do so.

SFCC Strategic Plan

This strategic plan is intended to organize the activities and operation of the Sustainable Forests and Communities Collaborative in the 18+ months after May 2015.

Mission statement

The Sustainable Forests and Communities Collaborative (SFCC) initiates, encourages and supports efforts that promote a healthy sociological system of forests, watersheds and economies in the communities of the South Central Sierra through a transparent, collaborative and mutually supportive process within a diverse and committed stakeholder group.

Vision Statement

The vision of the SFCC is of a Central Sierra region in which the challenges presented by fire, forest and cultural resource stewardship have been transformed into a healthy sociological system of forests, watersheds and economies in communities that are thriving in a long-term, sustainable way. This healthy system will transcend its present boundaries, providing a home for future generations to enjoy and multifaceted benefits to all Californians.

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History

SFCC was formed in 2010 over fuels management concerns and a desire to do good work together to benefit Fresno, Madera, Mariposa, and Tulare Counties. At first finding common ground and building consensus seemed a daunting task, with so many different voices and perspectives at the table. Over the next four years we have been working on developing leadership in local communities and promoting bioenergy utilization, supporting other landscape planning efforts, and promoting cooperation and collaboration. We supported the activities of the Willow Creek Planning Collaborative, facilitated the initiation of the Midpines Demonstration project, and are currently assisting the Dinkey Collaborative with their outreach and education efforts. We hosted two successful symposia, one on volunteerism on public lands and the other discussing stewardship contracting with the US Forest Service. Currently SFCC is organized through an inter-agency agreement between Sierra Nevada Conservancy and Sierra Resource Conservation District. SFCC has proven to be a resource for outreach and event planning to local communities, promoting bioenergy and biomass utilization, driving community investment, and supporting local businesses through sustainable forest management.



Accomplishments

❖ **Core Leadership Training: Collaborative Development and Capacity Building – 2011**

SFCC hosted an eighteen-month training session for one dozen core SFCC leaders who learned new skills related to: meeting organization and facilitation, agenda development, note-taking, dealing with difficult people, and leadership.

❖ **Willow Creek Watershed Planning Collaborative 2011 – 2012**

Sierra National Forest was given regional and national direction to restore watersheds to normal function. Sierra NF brought the community and stakeholders together to collaboratively update the defunct Willow Creek Watershed Analysis and discuss their visions and priorities for this watershed. These efforts led to the development of a living, guiding document which directs future Forest Service actions in the Willow Creek watershed, as well as a growing public involvement in public lands management.

❖ **Whiskey Ridge Project Scoping Field Trips – 2012**

The Whiskey Ridge Project was the largest project area proposed in the Willow Creek Planning region at 18,000 acres, and was designed to enhance collaborative elements within the existing NEPA process. SFCC played a central role by coordinating the planning of two field trips, each one drawing over 50 people. Feedback was especially focused on timber development, roads maintenance, range, water developments and habitat restoration.

❖ **Dinkey Collaborative Communication Work Group – 2013 to present**

The strong reputation of the SFCC as a representative of community interests and the success of the Whiskey Ridge trips prompted the collaborative to request assistance from the SFCC in the planning of their first public engagement field trip. This trip was highly successful, and SFCC continues to work with the Dinkey Collaborative on their communication and outreach.

❖ **SFCC Symposium: Coordinating Volunteers on Our Public Lands – Feb 2014**

SFCC members organized a one day symposium to bring together public land managers, volunteer coordinators, and volunteer organizations to talk about the opportunities and solutions to increasing volunteerism on public lands. The symposium had over 80 attendees, and was well received. The symposium was planned by the Volunteer Symposium Work Group, which is continuing to look at opportunities to increase volunteerism and opportunities in foothill and mountain communities.

❖ **Midpines Demonstration Project – 2012**

The Midpines community was divided into different groups, struggling with a 312 acre county-owned, forested and overgrown parcel in the middle of the Midpines planning area. SFCC facilitated initial meetings with CalFire, the County, the Mariposa County Fire Safe Council and private landowners for a partial tour of the property. The positive community perception of the SFCC, facilitation from SFCC Core Leadership member Aimee Smith and Don Fox, and advisory support from the SNC allowed the initiation of this project, which is still in the development process.

Current Projects

Below are the current initiatives and activities that SFCC is involved in:

❖ **Local Contractor Support & Stewardship Contracting – 2013 to present**

SFCC has dedicated themselves to providing supporting to local contractors in obtaining contracts with the US Forest Service. In 2013 they held a workshop with local contractors to discuss potential hurdles, as well as contractor needs. Coordinated with this effort is supporting the recent efforts by the Bass Lake Ranger District of the Sierra National Forest to develop a long-term stewardship contract, the first in the Sierra. SFCC and the Bass Lake Ranger District hosted a Stewardship Contracting Symposium in May 2014 to promote initial discussions of this issue. A stewardship contract has support at the forest and to some extent at the regional level. The West Chiquito Restoration Project was being planned with a stewardship contract in mind, but fire recovery from the French Fire has delayed these efforts.

❖ **North Fork Bioenergy Facility – 2011 to present**

The collaborative is supportive of the proposed 1 MW bioenergy facility which would produce energy using primarily forest woody biomass. The stewardship contract initiative is related, as the Bass Lake Ranger District was identified as the primary source of feedstock for the facility. The North Fork Bioenergy Facility has requested support from SFCC for their public outreach as they move into finance and construction of the facility.

Who We Are

The SFCC is a diverse group of stakeholders—including land owners, public agencies, off-road vehicle groups, community organizations, non-profits, tribal groups, and volunteer organizations—dedicated to promoting healthy forests, clean watersheds, and strong economies in the Southern Central Sierra.

What We Do

This section illustrates the services we have provided in the past and can continue to provide to our communities.

- Environmental education – resource development, presentations
- Community outreach – communication plans, community relationships, brand recognition
- Event planning and coordination – logistics, attendees, volunteer coordination, agenda and materials development
- Grant writing – member grant writers, concept proposal and application development, outreach support
- Project planning - collaborative development of projects, design
- Informational resource development
- Natural resources consultation
- Facilitation – participants of our core leadership training are trained in facilitation, mediation, and other leadership training skills

Resources

This section describes the resources that SFCC has at their disposal.

- 200+ person mailing list
- Up to date local contractor contact list for our 4 county region
- Members with a wide variety of experience and expertise
- Existing relationships with public land managers, state and federal agencies, local and state government
- Templates for communication plans and event planning
- Website (<http://sierrasfcc.org>). Hosting and domain are paid through 2016.

Goals

These goals were collaboratively developed by the SFCC, and are intended to provide a framework for future activities.

- I. An incubator, using facilitated conversations to convene stakeholders in community driven planning processes.
- II. An event planning and community outreach coalition with a focus on natural resources.
- III. A visible, credible group that can speak on behalf of foothill and mountain communities.
- IV. Use public information sharing, education, and advocacy to help foothill and mountain communities influence public policies to benefit their local forest.
- V. Promote integration of community involvement in public agency planning processes related to land use or natural resources.

Strategies and Tactics

These are the strategies and tactics that we will use to achieve the previously mentioned goals.

Strategies are higher level plans to achieve 1 or more goals, involving operation patterns, activities, and decision making. Tactics are the activities and operation patterns used to gain an objective.

Strategy 1: Provide a space where partners can share updates, get information, and work collaboratively together

- **Tactic:** Host quarterly meetings where agenda includes space for partner updates and a project that needs collaborative work.
- **Tactic:** Quarterly updates posted to website with meeting notes and associated materials no more than two weeks after meeting.
- **Tactic:** Provide quarterly updates on at least three public planning processes members have identified as important, such as the Dinkey Collaborative and the Forest Plan Revision process.
- **Tactic:** Identify 5 projects with potential for community-based collaborative planning in the 4 county service area per year

Goals Addressed: 1, 4, 5

Strategy 2: Increase SFCC's ability to use advocacy

- **Tactic:** Create a steering committee and an internal decision-making process so SFCC can make comments on public processes as a group
- **Tactic:** Send out at least 2 support letters per year for activities related to SFCC goals
- **Tactic:** Work with Sierra Nevada Conservancy local legislative specialists to develop member updates on important legislation
- **Tactic:** Obtain participation at SFCC quarterly meetings or activities by all four Supervisors in Fresno, Mariposa, and Tulare that serve foothill and mountain communities
- **Tactic:** Create at least two different kinds of educational materials on ways to influence public policy on a state and national level, and distribute to foothill and mountain communities
- **Tactic:** Utilize social media and other forms of internet outreach

Goals Addressed: 1, 3, 4, 5

Strategy 3: Increase SFCC's visibility in the four county service area

- **Tactic:** Hold a community fundraiser to raise money for SFCC basic operations and showcase our event planning and outreach capabilities.
- **Tactic:** Develop SFCC logo, brochure, and other informational materials.

- **Tactic:** Maintain old and establish new relationships with key representatives from regional BLM, USFS, Department of Transportation, and other public land management agencies.
- **Tactic:** 10 news articles in local papers annually.
- **Tactic:** At least 3 hours/month of maintenance and updates to SFCC website.
- **Tactic:** Have a designated representative for at least 10 regional decision-making meetings.

Goals Addressed: 2, 3, 5

Strategy 4: Establish SFCC as a resource for community outreach, event planning, and facilitation

- **Tactic:** Provide event planning and outreach services for a reduced fee to at least 1 non-profit organization per year.
- **Tactic:** Propose a fee for services arrangement for ongoing support of Dinkey Collaborative’s Communication Work Group, including some implementation of socioeconomic monitoring goals
- **Tactic:** Create plan for outreach, event planning and facilitation services to propose to the Dinkey Collaborative for the November 2015 science symposium
- **Tactic:** Continue building a community outreach contact list – mailing list or newsletter

Goals Addressed: 1, 2, 3

Strategy 5: Provide information and education to foothill and mountain communities

- **Tactic:** Use DLRP socioeconomic survey to identify at least five key community issues to address
- **Tactic:** Hold at least 2 workshops per year on topics which could include, but are not limited to: job training, local contracting, job applications, grant writing, facilitation, leadership, volunteerism, stewardship, tribal ecological knowledge, fire and fuels reduction, bioenergy and biomass utilization
- **Tactic:** Work with partners and other local organizations to develop 2 different forms of educational materials per year on identified key issues.
Tactic: Have designated representatives attend local community meetings, including lions clubs, womens groups, and others, and provide information as appropriate.

Goals Addressed: 1, 3, 4

Budget

This section provides budget information, broken down into 2 sections, 1) basic operations and 2) outreach and event planning.

		Hours	Cost	
Basic Operations This is the minimal amount of funding required to continue the basic function of SFCC. These basic activities include meeting planning, travel to meetings, printing costs, email updates and website updates. This would also include fundraising to continue SFCC into the next year. This would be approximately 12 hrs/month	Quarterly meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meeting planning Meeting facilitation Meeting notes Travel Costs Printing costs	5 hrs* 5 hrs 2 hrs 12 hrs 48 hrs	\$ 100 \$ 100 \$ 40 \$ 50 \$ 100 \$ 390 <hr/> \$ 1560	
	Email Updates (one year) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 hrs/mo 	36 hrs	\$ 720	
	Website updates(one year) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 hrs/mo: changes to the calendar, updating meeting dates, adding meeting materials 	36 hrs	\$ 720	
	Fundraising (one year) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Grant writing Other forms of fundraising (events, foundations, etc) 	20 hrs 10 hrs	\$ 400 \$ 200	
	YEARLY TOTAL	150 hrs	\$ 3,600	
	*The rate used is \$20/hr			

		Hours	Cost	
<p>Outreach and Event Planning</p> <p>This is the breakdown of costs for outreach and event planning activities. This reflects only the value of these services. These costs could be met through fees for services, a volunteer committee for SFCC events, charging a participation fee, or some combination of the three.</p> <p>This is also a minimum amount, more complicated events require more time.</p> <p>2 events per year would be suggested, for a total of \$2,800.</p>	<p>Outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach plan • Materials – flyers, press releases, messaging <p>Printing Costs</p> <p style="text-align: right;">COST/OUTREACH</p>	<p>5 hrs*</p> <p>10 hrs</p> <p></p> <p>15 hrs</p>	<p>\$ 100</p> <p>\$ 200</p> <p>\$ 100</p> <p>\$ 400</p>	
	<p>Event Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Logistics – location, speakers, volunteers • Development of agenda, handouts, presentations • Event – facilitation, volunteers • Follow up <p>Travel Costs</p> <p>Printing Costs</p> <p style="text-align: right;">COST PER EVENT</p>	<p>10+ hrs</p> <p>10+ hrs</p> <p>10+ hrs</p> <p>5 hrs</p> <p></p> <p>35+ hrs</p>	<p>\$ 200</p> <p>\$ 200</p> <p>\$ 200</p> <p>\$ 100</p> <p>\$ 100</p> <p>\$ 200</p> <p>\$ 1,000</p>	
	TOTAL PER EVENT	50+ hrs	\$ 1,400	
	*The rate used is \$20/hr			

Potential Funding Sources

These are the potential sources of funding for the SFCC. This is not comprehensive, and multiple sources of funding should be employed and pursued.

An external living version of this document will be created and utilized for ongoing pursuit of funding. This document would be updated quarterly, and provided to the collaborative at each meeting.

Name of Source	Potential Amount	Type of funding	Deadline	Notes
Host Organization	\$3,000	In kind	N/A	Support provided by the host org for general services
Fees for services	\$1,500/event	Payment, in kind	N/A	Fees for providing outreach and event planning services
Membership fee	Varied	Fee	N/A	Members pay an annual fee. \$300 each for 10 member organizations
Community fundraiser	\$3,000	Donations	May 2015	Community fundraiser for baseline funding
Cliff Bar Family Foundation	~\$8,000	Grant	Feb 15, May 15, Aug 15, Nov 1	
North Fork Bioenergy Project	~\$700	In kind	N/A	Website support

Internal Organization

This section demonstrates how SFCC will be organized – specifying the roles and responsibilities for steering committee and host organization.

Structure

The structure of SFCC, including its leadership levels and decision making processes, is defined here.

- Create a charter that members sign on to, which can be used as a basis for providing support letters, though members could always request to not be included on specific support letters
 - Members would vote as a decision making body, requiring a general consensus
 - A distinction between collaborative members and members of the public
- Steering committee provides long term direction
- Working groups work on smaller tasks/issues and report to larger group
- Facilitator/staff person provides day-to-day/short-term direction

Host Organization

The purpose of the host organization would be to provide support to SFCC and its members, primarily as a fiscal agent, since SFCC does not have 501(c)3 status. The roles and responsibilities of the host organization should include:

- Act as a fiscal agent for SFCC when accepting donations or grants
- Provide administrative support for a part time SFCC facilitator/staff person

Additional support services could include:

- Provide a location/office space for SFCC staff person as needed.
- Provide contact phone number and mailing address, storage for documents and educational materials.
- Capacity for printing materials, and equipment for presentations
- Grant writing or pursuing funding sources for the SFCC, including yearly fundraiser

This arrangement would benefit a host organization by:

- Increasing organization's presence in outreach and awareness campaigns
- Have a pool of professional experts and member experience to draw from for project design, management, and implementation
- Logo on website, support mentioned in all promotional materials

Steering Committee

The purpose of the steering committee is to provide direction and long term oversight for the SFCC. The duties of the steering committee would include

- Meet quarterly and be comprised of interested members, should be between 4 and 8 members
- Provide long-term direction for SFCC
- Oversee activities of SFCC facilitator/staff person
- Increase the membership of SFCC through outreach or targeted invitation
- Provide reasonable in kind support to SFCC

Additional duties could also include

- Project design, implementation, and management
- Grant writing
- Facilitation services

Facilitator/Staff person

The facilitator/staff person would assist with SFCC basic operations. Their duties would include

- Organizing and facilitate quarterly meetings
- Management of the website and mailing list and responding to email inquiries
- Coordinate with host organization for request of additional support services
- Respond to direction from the SFCC steering committee
- Provide short term direction of SFCC based on identified strategies and tactics

Facilitator/staff person would be reimbursed for quarterly meeting travel expenses. They would also be reimbursed for incurred printing costs.

Members

Members of the SFCC would be involved in one of the following ways:

- Would attend quarterly meetings
- Provide feedback on all SFCC activities and the activities coordinated by the steering committee
- Willing to participate on a limited, as-needed basis to support operational staff fundraising committee, or steering committee as appropriate

Benefits for members would include

- Have a pool of professional experts and member experience to draw from for project design, management, and implementation
- Training opportunities
- Project development and planning
- Outreach assistance

Current Member Organizations

American Indian Council of Mariposa
Bureau of Land Management
CalFire – Madera/Mariposa
California Department of Fish and Wildlife
California Native Plant Society(CNPS)
Chowchilla Red Top RCD & Chowchilla/Fresno Rivers Watershed
Central Sierra Watershed Committee
Coarsegold Resource Conservation District(CRCD)
Mariposa County Board of Supervisors
Mariposa County Fire Department
Mariposa County Fire Safe Council
Mariposa County Resource Conservation District(MCRCD)
Mariposans for the Environment and Responsible Government(MERG)
Midpines Planning Advisory Committee
Mother Lode Job Training
National Park Service – Yosemite National Park
Natural Resources Conservation Service(NRCS)
North Fork Mono Tribe
North Fork Rancheria
Provost & Pritchard Consulting Group
San Joaquin Valley Leadership Forum
Sierra Club, Tehipite Chapter
Sierra Foothill Conservancy
Sierra Forest Products
Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project
Sierra Nevada Conservancy
Sierra Resource Conservation District (Sierra RCD)
Stewards of the Sierra National Forest
Upper Merced River Watershed Council
US Forest Service – Sierra National Forest
Yosemite/Sequoia Resource Conservation and Development Council

Implementation Plan

This section is to be used as an organizational “user’s guide” to the strategic plan.

Next steps:

- Utilize SRCD under the IAA to write grants and obtain funding for SFCC basic operations from various identified funding sources
- Form steering committee, which may be created from the strategic planning committee members
- Determine potential need for a fundraising event
- Develop an internal decision-making process for SFCC to utilize
- Develop SFCC logo, brochure, and other informational materials
- Create plan for outreach, workshop/field trip planning and facilitation services to propose to the Sierra RCD for the North Fork Bioenergy Project
- Propose a fee for services arrangement for ongoing support of Dinkey Collaborative’s Communication Work Group, including some implementation of socioeconomic monitoring goals
- Create plan for outreach, event planning and facilitation services to propose to the Dinkey Collaborative for the November 2015 science symposium
- Hold at least 2 workshops per year on topics which could include, but are not limited to: job training, local contracting, job applications, grant writing, facilitation, leadership, volunteerism, stewardship, tribal ecological knowledge, fire and fuels reduction, bioenergy and biomass utilization
- Have designated representatives attend local community meetings, including lions clubs, women’s groups, and others, and provide information as appropriate.

Ongoing:

- Continue holding SFCC Quarterly meetings
- Continue email updates
- Continue making updates to website
- Support efforts by partners to further key project areas identified by SFCC members

Additional tactics¹ to be implemented based on decisions made by the steering committee and collaborative members, with recommendations from the facilitator.

¹ found on pages 7 &8 of the SFCC Strategic Plan