

# SUMMARY | JOINT STAKEHOLDER GROUPS MEETING

## LAKE TAHOE WEST RESTORATION PARTNERSHIP

Tuesday, February 7, 2017, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm

Parasol Community Foundation Building, Trepp Room, 948 Incline Way, Incline Village, NV

*All meeting materials are publicly available on the Lake Tahoe West website <http://nationalforests.org/laketahoewest>. For questions please contact the program manager/facilitator Dorian Fougères at [dfougeres@nationalforests.org](mailto:dfougeres@nationalforests.org) or (530) 902-8281.*

### Meeting Synopsis

The Lake Tahoe West Restoration Partnership (Lake Tahoe West) held its second Stakeholder Group meeting on February 7, 2017, at the Parasol Community Foundation Building in Incline Village. Executives from several of the organizing agencies provided opening remarks that explained the genesis and goals for Lake Tahoe West, including the need to fulfill multiple missions, update standards, and help direct future investment. The team then introduced stakeholders to the concept of scenario planning, which allows decision-makers to better anticipate and manage future uncertainty, and the structure for the day’s exercise. Split into four groups, stakeholders then spent the rest of the morning discussing how various social and ecological conditions on the landscape might look in four possible futures. After lunch they presented their initial ideas, received peer feedback, and completed a second round of small group discussion. The results from the day’s exercise will be refined over the next meetings, and then serve as guideposts for the landscape resilience assessment and landscape restoration strategy. The facilitator next walked invited stakeholders through the second half of the draft charter for Lake Tahoe West, noting revisions made since the inaugural meeting on November 30, and answered questions. Finally, the facilitator walked invited stakeholders through a draft Communication and Education plan, highlighting communication principles, audiences, messages, and select strategies, including an emphasis on homeowner outreach. The next Stakeholder Science Committee will occur on March 7, 2017, in South Lake Tahoe, and the next joint Stakeholder Science Committee and Stakeholder Community Committee will occur on April 4, 2017, in Tahoe City.

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*This meeting summary paraphrases individual comments and suggestions. Statements do not indicate consensus of the group unless they are preceded by the word "AGREEMENT". Statements are not attributed unless spoken by one of the organizing or participating agencies, or by a presenter.*

## Action Items

1. **All invited stakeholders** by close of business on Tuesday, February 28, to provide comments on the draft Communication and Education Plan, if interested.
2. **Dorian** to update draft Charter to include National Environmental Policy Act triangle from draft Communication and Education Plan.
3. **Dorian** to contact Toby O'Geen, UC Davis Cooperative Extension, about possible interest in filling Stakeholder Science Committee gap on soils expertise.
4. **Dorian** to finalize, post, and distribute November 30 stakeholder groups meeting summary.

## 1. Welcome and Opening Remarks

- Ms. Claudia Andersen, Chief Executive Officer of the Parasol Tahoe Community Foundation, welcomed participants to the building. She stated that the Foundation supports forest restoration and fuels management in the Tahoe Basin, and expressed her appreciation for all of the stakeholders participating in Lake Tahoe West.
- Ms. Marilyn Linkem, California State Parks Sierra District Superintendent, welcomed the group and expressed thanks for all of the public agencies and interest groups coming together to work toward a healthier forest. She stated that State Parks manages forests for multiple uses and that there has been a large increase of visitors to the Lake Tahoe Basin since the 1980s, which has increased the pressure for Stake Parks to manage wildlife, visitors, and recreationists.
- Ms. Teresa McClung, Deputy Forest Supervisor for the US Forest Service Lake Tahoe Basin Management Unit (LTBMU), stated that Lake Tahoe West is a very exciting project, but that collaborative efforts are not new to the Lake Tahoe Basin. She informed the group that the Lake Tahoe West Restoration Partnership (LTW) is a Forest Service priority project both nationally and within the LTBMU. She looks forward to all of the stakeholders developing a management strategy which meets all of their interests.
- Ms. Joanne Marchetta, Executive Director of Tahoe Regional Planning Agency (TRPA), briefed the stakeholders on the background of the TRPA, noting that they encompass all aspects of resource management. She informed the group that TRPA has not updated their Lake Tahoe Basin Management Plan in 30 years, but feels that Lake Tahoe West will aid TRPA in updating their standards and practices, and focusing their funding efforts.
- Ms. Jane Freeman, Deputy Director of California Tahoe Conservancy, expressed how she appreciates the amount of time and effort that the stakeholders are investing in LTW. She emphasized the scientific underpinning of the process, and is encouraged that it will drive how money will be spent not just for Lake Tahoe West, but for future planning efforts in other regions of the Lake Tahoe Basin.

- Mr. Dorian Fougères, California Program Manager for the National Forest Foundation, and meeting facilitator, welcomed the stakeholders. He reviewed the agenda items, scenario planning packet, and the meeting ground rules.

Each invited stakeholder and organizing agency member introduced themselves. Section 8 lists the stakeholders and interested party members that attended the meeting.

No questions or comments from interested parties from the public followed the introductions and opening remarks.

## 2. Scenario Planning Approach

Dorian Fougères, Jonathan Long and Patricia Manley (USFS Pacific Southwest Research Station), and Rob Scheller (Portland State University) presented the scenario planning handout. The handout defined scenario planning as *a structured approach to planning that allows decision makers to better anticipate and manage uncertainty, and thereby improve restoration outcomes*. Mr. Fougères noted that the exercise was not meant to be model-based and data driven, but qualitative and expert and local-knowledge based, and may require developing some supplemental quantitative estimates for certain parts of the process.

Comments and discussions followed, with responses below from the presenters.

- Is there any way to expand upon the idea of emergent property?
  - The concept is that these are dynamic attributes rather than fixed conditions.
  - One of the ideas of emergence is that there may be multiple drivers. Fire, for example, is driven by precipitation, lightning, fuel load, etc. In other words, the emphasis is on how a system functions and operates, not the outcomes or drivers.
- Several land use drivers are thresholds. Why is recreation separated out here? Why wouldn't you separate other examples of land use?
  - We considered the level of control when thinking of land use drivers. When we think of recreation as a driver, we cannot necessarily control the impacts of recreation from say, Bay Area visitors.
  - For the other land use drivers, we assumed there would be some kind of policy document for these topics. However, we purposely did not specify what standards or thresholds would be; you can discuss these in your groups.
- Where do "management responses" fit in exercise?
  - We are asking groups to think what the west shore of Lake Tahoe will look like in 2052-2057. We are not asking you to develop a model of management activities and responses and feedbacks, rather we are asking you to provide just a snapshot of what the landscape conditions will look like. We ask to not focus on management and responses, even though you may talk about it.
  - We had to make assumptions of forest stand structure and fuel loading but purposely left the rest open so that is part of conversation.
- Should extreme events be considered during scenario planning?

- You can also talk about that in scenarios by imagining the events.
- How does scenario planning fit in the Lake Tahoe West process?
  - Between now and end of July we are working on three products: essential management questions, scenario planning, and a landscape resilience assessment. Today’s conversation will help the Interagency Design Team (IADT) and stakeholders identify the essential management questions, as well as likely future conditions for use in the landscape resilience assessment.
- Should we take assumptions of climate into management?
  - We recognize that climate will shape management, and you can consider this in your scenario. However, we do not want you to change the fundamental climate assumptions in your scenario because of management.
- There may be drivers not in the list provided. Should we still consider these drivers?
  - We want the scenarios to be comparable so try not to add too many drivers outside of what is provided.
- What will the stakeholder groups do with the scenarios?
  - We will bring the scenario plans to IADT and they will review and possibly refine or add information to fill gaps. They will then review these drafts with the Stakeholder Science Committee, after the Stakeholder Community Committee will also review the write-ups, at the April meeting. The scenarios will then inform the landscape resilience assessment and also the subsequent landscape restoration strategy.
- In diagram one (Page 6, Introduction to Scenario Planning Document) it assumes that we will have reduced precipitation in climate change drivers. However, Lake Tahoe West models show more rain than snow.
  - Please cross out “reduced” precipitation, this is a relic of earlier versions of the documents that is updated in the actual starting scenario descriptions. Please follow those descriptions.
  - In addition, make sure on the top-right quadrant of the starting scenario descriptions (the last page of the handout), where it says “spent” it should say “aspen”, and also “shade-intolerant” trees on rather than “shade-tolerant”.
- Recreation will reasonably be assumed to increase, so it adds a third axis. The infrastructure available to process biomass and small trees is also another driver. If there’s another driver or axis we want to consider in certain scenarios, can we do this?
  - Again, if you feel another axis is critical to your conversation, you can add it and talk about what it will look like. However, we want to make sure the four scenarios are comparable at the end of the day, so we encourage you to stay with the framework as provided.
  - Similarly, at one point we had infrastructure as a landscape condition. Please add this to your list. As a reminder, though, please consider that as an outcome, not a driver.

Mr. Fougères reviews directions for the first part of scenario planning. Stakeholders were assigned to groups that had a mix of Stakeholder Community Committee and Stakeholder

Science Committee members and agency staff, and were asked to consider one of four potential future landscapes, 35-40 years from now. Discussion lasted approximately 45 minutes.

### 3. Scenario Development Round One Reports

#### **Group 1 Scenario (top-left) “Tale of Two Forests”**

- Group 1 had a scenario which was based on the management actions persisting as the status quo, while an increase in temperatures and variable precipitation is assumed to occur. The fuel management will continue unchanged, Homewood Mountain Resort redevelopment will occur, as well as an increase in recreationists. Overall forest structure and composition is a tale of two different forests. Forest treatments outside of the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI) have an increased stand density, higher rates of insect disease, possibly increase of fire intensity, and forest structure overall will look more heterogeneous. Riparian areas within the WUI will continue to persist but decline outside of the WUI. Overall, a decrease in carbon storage will occur due less capacity with larger trees and meadow degradation. Air quality will be impacted due to an increase in smoke during prescribed burns, wildfires, and potentially fires from neighboring forests. This could also have an adverse impact on public health. The recreational demands will also increase as well as a longer season for warm weather recreation due to warmer temperatures and drier weather. The quality of life for residents will be impacted by burning, but also have a decreased risk of fire due to treatments within WUI.

#### **Group 2 Scenario (top-right) “Utopia”**

- Group 2 planned for a 35-year timeline. They considered differences in landscapes by “embracing and managing change while promoting diversity.” Their management activities prioritized more active management of wetlands by actively managing tree encroachment. In addition, priority was placed on improving and maintaining wildlife corridors by taking into consideration the desire to maintain habitat types in a condition deemed appropriate. Sensitive and invasive species management were also a priority, and best conducted aggressively and through public education and outreach. Fuel treatments should be aggressive while still properly addressing air quality standards, especially during inversion periods. The Lake Tahoe Basin infrastructure must be improved in order to allow access to aid agencies in accessing resources and interior areas. All of the management activities should take into consideration the diversity of residents, and education is key within all of the management constraints.

#### **Group 3 Scenario (bottom-left) “Hot Mess – The world might be a hot mess but we are not”**

- Group 3 viewed their scenario as the worst case scenario. Only the WUI will be treated with forest succession continuing outside of the WUI. This will lead to an increase in beetle outbreaks and large fires. No new recreation access points will be created while “climate refugees” from warmer and drier areas will lead to an increase in visitors. Most of their recreation will focus on the lake due to a lack of access elsewhere. An increase in winter recreation areas will be seen due to a decrease in snowpack. Riparian areas will experience an increase in peak flows, sediment, and down-cutting within streams.

Wetlands will have less hydrophytic species and be less abundant due to conifer encroachment. Forest composition will be higher density and consist of more fir species which will increase susceptibility to large fire outbreaks and extinction rates. The WUI will be even aged, less resilient, and less productive.

#### **Group 4 Scenario (bottom-right) “Back to the future”**

- Group 4 extensively discussed the idea of population increase of visitors of all kinds, and residents, as a result of hotter temperatures in the Central Valley and the ability to work remotely. They focused on two concepts: maintaining and improving management action opportunities. These concepts should be applied to actions such as increasing smoke tolerance, clarifying what is considered natural, and education and outreach efforts. In addition, having the proper infrastructure is necessary for both visitor increase and using new forest products. Outreach efforts would provide people with a concept of what is natural within three viewpoints: wildlands, WUI, and forest boundary. The group emphasized the idea of “managing ourselves out of a job”, which in the broadest sense means having a more resilient landscape.

Comments and discussion followed:

#### **Group 1 (Top Left)**

- Treatments were limited to the WUI in Group 1’s scenario. Did they discuss beyond WUI?
  - Group 1 responded that there would be a decline in forest health beyond WUI, but they mainly focused on WUI.
- A commenter asked Group 1 to expand on their carbon storage issue.
  - The group clarified that there would be a decline of carbon storage outside of WUI. There would be larger dead trees and dead meadows leading to less carbon storage overall.

#### **Group 2 (Top Right)**

- Group 2 focused more on social realm than ecological realm.
  - Group 2 responded by saying that acceptance from the public must occur for all management actions to be implemented, which was a reason for the emphasis on social aspects.

#### **Group 3 (Bottom Left)**

- There is no water quality and quantity “landscape value”, in regard to stream erosion and down-cutting.
  - The facilitator noted that this was missing and all groups should make sure to consider this value in the second round of discussion.
- Groups 1 and 3 discussed climate change at different rates in the 35-year period. How can we differentiate slower pace of change in Group 1?

- One example is that if uncharacteristic fire re-occurs in a previously burned location, it could lead to a more degraded forest in a shorter period of time; this idea of “compounding fires” could be helpful to differentiate Groups 1 and 3.

#### **Group 4 (Bottom-Right)**

- Did you analyze increasing infrastructure?
  - Group 4 did not analyze increasing infrastructure, but one group member noted that as a transportation specialist, it is vital to implement these projects now due to increased visitor presence.
  - Another group member noted that burning also impacts climate change. They raised the question of how we build biomass infrastructure that provides an alternative to prescribed burning, and also creates economic opportunity for forest byproducts. They voiced a need to develop that infrastructure for long-term economic viability.

Round two of the scenario planning exercise continued after the questions and comments. There was no report out for round two, however, note-taking worksheets were collected and it was noted that they would provide the basis of the draft write-ups that the stakeholders would see again. It was noted that one group appreciated getting input after round 1 because it aided them in being consistent with other groups regarding the scope of the scenario plan.

#### **4. Completion of Initial Draft Charter Review**

Completing the review started on November 30, Mr. Fougères reviewed Sections 7 – 23 of the draft Agency and Stakeholder Charter. No stakeholders had questions or comments regarding these sections of the Draft Charter.

The facilitator informed the stakeholders that the stakeholder list has been updated since the November 30, 2016 meeting. The updates are as follows:

- Beth Kenna is participating as a dual representative of both North Tahoe Fire Protection District and Meeks Bay Fire Protection District.
- Brett Storey, Bruce Springsteen, Candice Thomas, Harold Singer, Jeff Brown, Molly Hurts, Matt Freitas, Maureen McCarthy, Patricia Maloney, and Sue Britting are Stakeholder Science Committee representatives.
- Jon Pang, Will Richardson, and Martin Goldberg may still apply for the Stakeholder Science Committee.

The facilitator noted that expertise in soils remained a gap. A stakeholder noted that Mr. Woody Loftis no longer lived in California, and suggested contacting Toby O’Geen from University of California at Davis’ Cooperative Extension.

- **ACTION ITEM: Dorian** to contact Toby O’Geen, UC Davis Cooperative Extension, about possible interest in filling Stakeholder Science Committee gap on soils expertise.

## 5. Overview of Draft Communication and Education Plan

The facilitator briefed the stakeholders on the draft Communication and Education Plan. The plan is largely based on stakeholder assessment interviews, as well as the management question survey. The goals of the plan are to help people understand the purpose and intent of Lake Tahoe West, gather feedback from the public, and have transparent dialogue between Lake Tahoe West and the public to increase public support for the partnership.

The facilitator noted that phases 1-3 of Lake Tahoe West occur prior to the formal National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) public review and comment processes. Combined with public outreach and education, this approach should hopefully reduce the amount of conflict during the NEPA/CEQA review processes. Appendix E list the best times to reach specific audiences for briefings, and the facilitator requested stakeholders to review Section E of the plan.

- **ACTION ITEM:** Dorian to update draft Charter to include National Environmental Policy Act triangle from draft Communication and Education Plan.

Questions and comments:

- Once we are done with the planning process, how do we continue to make sure the work is implemented and adapting?
  - The charter identifies 10-year period with phases four and five consisting of implementation and monitoring. The charter also speaks about stakeholder involvement continuing in some form after planning. The precise form of such continuing involvement will need to be further developed in the future.
- Have we addressed the need for thorough public outreach?
  - Forest imagery is the best tool and the best way to communicate what healthy forests look like.
  - To get buy-in from public and promote change, we need to focus on community outreach.
  - Mr. Fougères referenced Strategies 25 and 26, which emphasize working with partners and engaging the public on key education topics.

**ACTION ITEM:** All invited stakeholders by close of business on Tuesday, February 28, to provide comments on the draft Communication and Education Plan, if interested.

## 6. Action Items, Next Steps, and Closing Remarks

### Approval of November 30 Meeting Summary

- There were no comments on the draft November 30 meeting summary. The facilitator noted it would be marked final, distributed to stakeholders, and posted on the website.
- **ACTION ITEM:** Dorian to finalize, post, and distribute November 30 stakeholder groups meeting summary.

**Upcoming meeting dates**



- First Stakeholder **Science** Committee in-person meeting – March 7, 10 am to 3 pm, South Lake location TBD – management question survey results, scenarios, and landscape resilience assessment
- Stakeholder **Community** Committee 1.5-hour webinar update on Management Questions and Scenarios – mid-March, date and time TBD
- April 4 in-person meeting, location TBD
  - Stakeholder **Science** Committee – 9 am to 12 pm
  - Stakeholder **Community** Committee – 1 to 5 pm (includes 2-3 SSC representatives)
- Stakeholder **Science** Committee webinar – May 2, 9 am to 12 pm
- Mr. Fougères also noted the Core Team member biographies, and that they would provide additional biographies for other teams as well.

Ms. McClung closed the meeting by thanking participants again for their sustained work during the day.

## 7. Attendance

CTC – California Tahoe Conservancy  
 NFF – National Forest Foundation  
 RWQCB Lahontan - Lahontan Regional Water Quality Control Board  
 State Parks – California State Parks  
 TFFT – Tahoe Fire and Fuels Team  
 TRPA – Tahoe Regional Planning Agency  
 USFS – U.S. Forest Service

### Invited Stakeholders

- |                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| 1. Amy Berry                | 17. Karen Rasmussen                         |
| 2. Ben Fish                 | 18. Kim Boyd                                |
| 3. Beth Kenna               | 19. Kim Caringer, TRPA                      |
| 4. Brian Garrett, USFS      | 20. Marilyn Linkem, State Parks             |
| 5. Candice Thomas           | 21. Matt Freitas                            |
| 6. Carl Hasty               | 22. Mike Vollmer, TRPA                      |
| 7. Casey Blann              | 23. Mitch Markey, NFF                       |
| 8. David Reichel            | 24. Mollie Hurt                             |
| 9. Dorian Fougères, NFF     | 25. Pat Manley, USFS                        |
| 10. Forest Schafer, TFFT    | 26. Patricia Maloney                        |
| 11. Harold Singer           | 27. Peter Kraatz                            |
| 12. Jane Freeman, CTC       | 28. Randy Striplin, USFS                    |
| 13. Jeff Brown              | 29. Rick Kearney                            |
| 14. Joanne Marchetta, TRPA  | 30. Rita Mustatia, USFS                     |
| 15. Jonathan Long, USFS     | 31. Rob Scheller, Portland State University |
| 16. Juan Carlos Urizar, CTC | 32. Rob Weston                              |

- 33. Shana Gross, USFS
- 34. Stephanie Coppeto, USFS
- 35. Tamara Sasaki, State Parks
- 36. Tamara Wall, Desert Research Institute
- 37. Teresa McClung, USFS

38. Zack Bradford

**Interested Parties from the Public**

- 39. Danielle Hughes
- 40. Norma Santiago