

FINAL Meeting Notes

California Landscape Conservation Cooperative Interim Steering Committee Meeting September 16, 2010 PRBO Conservation Science Petaluma, California

Attendees

Ellie Cohen, PRBO
Diana Craig, US Forest Service (USFS)
Kim Delfino, Defenders of Wildlife
Rebecca Fris, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
Dave Graber, National Parks Service
Beth Huning, San Francisco Bay Joint Venture
Rick Kearney, USFWS
Mark Kramer, The Nature Conservancy
Deb Schlafmann, USFWS
Michelle Selman, California Department of Water Resources
Karl Stein, US Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
Tom Suchanek, US Geological Survey
Erik Vink, Trust for Public Lands

Facilitation Staff

Dave Ceppos, Center for Collaborative Policy (CCP)
Lora Barrett, CCP

Action Items

1. A Goals Subcommittee was formed consisting of Ellie Cohen, Beth Huning, Deb Schlafmann, Diana Craig, and Tom Suchanek. The Subcommittee will meet by the first week in October and will aim to have proposed new Goals to the ISC by late October.
2. CCP will distribute the DRAFT meeting notes by Friday, September 24, 2010.
3. Rick Kearney will investigate the status of / feasibility of preparing an Memorandum of Understanding or Agreement (MOU or MOA) that might define and commit consistent participation from throughout the Department of the Interior agencies as well as potentially other Federal Departments (e.g. Agriculture, Commerce).
4. A Structure Subcommittee was formed to discuss and proposed final recommendations about the organizational structure of the California Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC), and to refine and recommend the proposed decision making methods the CA LCC use. The Subcommittee will include Rick Kearney and Michelle Selman. Deb will contact Kim Delfino to see if she is also willing to participate in this Subcommittee.

5. Deb will send out a message to the Interim Steering Committee requesting contact information for Southern and Central California potential partners, and information about feasible venues to hold the workshop.
6. A Science Subcommittee was formed to discuss project priorities and decisions for fiscal year 10-11. Beth Huning suggested the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture Science Coordinator Christina Sloop. Ellie recommended Grant Ballard from PRBO. Dave Graber volunteered to participate and Diana Craig will recommend someone from the USFS, Deb will approach Tom to see if either he or one of his staff will participate.
7. USFWS and CCP staff will continue to build the CA LCC website

Introduction

Deb Schlafmann thanked everyone for coming. She described that the participants are on a journey to work together as an ISC. There are important tasks to get the CA LCC launched throughout the State. The objectives of today's meeting are to develop goals so we have common understanding of what CA LCC wants to achieve. Goals will define priorities for the LCC. "Priorities" means the path we are on to move forward. Priorities feed into what we develop as our goals. Deb then reviewed the general agenda for the day (see Attachment A).

Survey of ISC

Dave Ceppos introduced himself as the meeting facilitator. He recapped the agenda in the context of the interview survey he'd conducted with several ISC members. He described where there might be more emphasis placed on certain agenda topics than had been expected when the agenda had been sent out.

Dave described the text of the email sent on September 8th that included the proposed CA LCC Goals and Objectives, proposed Charter, and a solicitation to members to participate in a phone interview process before today's meeting. He described that through interviews and input sent to him (and others) he had compiled insights from nine ISC members including Federal and State agencies, and non-governmental organizations (see Attachment B).

Dave reviewed the Preliminary Findings, describing that the conclusions are relative in nature and are not intended to be statistical aggregates of ISC member perspectives. Chief among the ISC member feedback is that while the proposed Goals generally capture expectations about what the CA LCC will do, they focus too much on process and organization and not enough on science and outcomes. There was also consistent confusion about why objectives were presented as they were and whether the objectives are getting too specific at this point in time.

Of particular note was that several ISC members are unclear about what is meant by "priorities" and where different planning terms (e.g. priorities, goals, objectives, etc) stem from. This led to several comments being provided by members that they are unclear whether the CA LCC purpose is adequate as written in the proposed Charter and whether it provides enough guidance as to where the CA LCC focuses resources and attention.

Dave referred to the current proposed Purpose Statement which reads:

The CA LCC will provide applied scientific information and technical assistance to better understand landscape scale species and habitat responses to climate change and other ecological process changes (e.g. invasive species), and to support integrated, landscape level conservation.

He suggested that before the ISC begin work on refining the Goals, the group should focus some attention on refining and agreeing on an overall Purpose Statement.

CA LCC Purpose Statement

The ISC discussed the proposed Purpose Statement at length. Dave Graber stated concern that as written, it seems the current Purpose makes supporting conservation a secondary focus. Several members agreed with this concern. They affirmed that the LCC's "reason for being" is to support on the ground, informed conservation efforts.

Kim Delfino stated that the purpose as written is too narrow. She posed two issues / questions. 1) Is the only way to be supportive through science and technical assistance? and 2) the purpose is missing the concept of coordinating, bringing together, and integrating management. This is an iterative process. Data informs conservation. Conservation informs future data. Ellie Cohen stressed that the LCC's role is to integrate information, not just support finding and distributing it.

The group spent time reviewing input provided via email from Ted Meyers, an ISC member from the National Marine Fisheries Service. Through this next part of the discussion, several key themes emerged as being important components of an appropriate Purpose Statement for the CA LCC. These themes included the following:

- Coordination
- Supporting and promoting the integration of information (and people creating information) with people on the ground. Particularly at a landscape scale. The LCC offers what other efforts to date have been challenged by – the ability to cross geographic and jurisdictional boundaries that have previously had limited ability to share and learn and implement.
- Avoiding duplication and redundancy
- Improving efficiency
- Assessing ecosystem status

Ellie Cohen suggested that the ISC split into small groups and try to develop revised examples of Purpose Statements. The ISC supported this suggestion and they joined into three groups. Following this work and a short break, the groups presented their results for comparison and discussion.

Purpose Statement #1

Promote conservation of biodiversity in the face of rapid ecological change, through effective and efficient coordination among partners to understand and address environmental challenges at an appropriate scale.

Purpose Statement #2

To acquire, synthesize, and transfer data/information to partners to inform and promote landscape-level sustainability of natural and cultural resources and ecosystem function.

Purpose Statement #3

The CALCC will coordinate the scientific and natural resource conservation communities to identify, prioritize, guide, and assess development and implementation measures to conserve ecosystems and reduce negative impacts of landscape scale environmental change.

The group discussed the benefits and drawbacks of the various approaches to the three statements. After some discussion, Richard Kearney suggested that he'd recently reviewed purpose language that is posted on the USFWS national LCC website. The facilitator pulled this text up from the web and the ISC reviewed it.

The ISC was generally supportive about this revised text. However, some members raised a question about the intended role of cultural resources in the LCC process. They noted that their organizations' missions include a proactive responsibility to address cultural resources management as co-equal to natural resources. This led to a robust discussion by the ISC about the benefits and drawbacks of including specific reference to cultural resources as a part of the LCC purpose. After considerable discussion during which a range of alternative terms were considered, the members referred back to general support of a Purpose Statement focus on natural resource management and conservation, with a caveat that some member's agencies may eventually need to return to this definition and seek a revision. The ISC prepared the following statement that by straw poll, indicated unanimous support / acceptance:

The CA LCC is a management-science partnership informing and promoting integrated science, natural resource management and conservation to address impacts of climate change and other stressors within and across ecosystems

Problem Statements

After a break, the group revisited the issues they believe need to be addressed by the LCC. Mark Kramer characterized the LCC's work as having to be successful at addressing some key problems, and also illustrating to future decision-makers how the LCC is achieving goals and proving success. In this context, he urged the group to consider more time spent on articulating the specific problems the LCC seeks to solve, as a means to inform the Goals the LCC seeks to achieve. Karl Stein suggested that the ISC can self-sort problems by checking them against the

Purpose Statement they just prepared and seeing if there is a logical connection between them. The ISC supported having this focused this discussion about problem statements.

The ISC spent time brainstorming and discussing problems they and other resource management specialists face. They developed the following initial list:

1. Lack coordination of science and resource managers within and across agencies and organizations.
2. Resource management is limited within organizations, missions and values, and jurisdictional boundaries.
3. There is a lack of a landscape – scale perspective regarding conservation actions that will address climate change and related stressors.
4. We lack solutions / tools, and the access to solutions and tools to respond to climate change.
5. There is a duplication of resources and a related loss of cost/time efficiency.
6. Resource managers are overwhelmed with the volume and relevance of specific science information. There is little time to find, review, select and implement information.
7. There is a lack of methods to direct organizational missions towards science to address climate change stressors.
8. There is a lack of meaningful and long-time baseline information . managers also don't have a common definition of what is "baseline"?
9. We don't know the right questions to ask.
10. There is a lack of data gathering standards.
11. There is a lack of appropriate monitoring programs with appropriate locations, data quality objectives, indicators, targets, etc.
12. There is a lack of a communication network to coordinate and exchange information.
13. There are unknown consequences of climate change stressors, especially the increase of extreme climate weather events.
14. There is a lack of a unified, consistent adaptive management decision-making framework given data gaps and uncertainty.
15. Many resource organizations have an institutional focus on single endangered invasive species, rather than on a suite of species and or ecosystem.

Further discussion lead to general agreement that while these are legitimate problems to be addressed by the LCC, the list is too large and will overwhelm key audiences. The ISC also discussed and agreed that while the LCC should address these problems, the LCC is not uniquely responsible to solve these problems. Regarding more simplified methods to communicate this list, Mark suggested that all these problems fall ultimately into four related categories. The CA LCC problems include:

1. Organizational "Silos". - closed thinking beyond jurisdictional and geographic boundaries)
2. Ignorance. A lack of awareness about information
3. Accessibility. A lack of availability of information, or conversely being overwhelmed by too much information.

4. Scale. An inability for managers to grasp and work with the geographic magnitude of landscape-level climate change.

Goals

The facilitator returned the ISC to the discussion of the Goals and whether the proposed list was sufficient. He drew the ISC's attention to a revised set of Goals already prepared by Rebecca Fris based on initial feedback to the goals after they were sent out on September 8th. The ISC engaged in focused discussion about the effectiveness of the two sets of goals as currently written. Mark suggested that the point of goals is to steer you towards filling gaps. Regarding the role of LCC in supporting and integrating science, this could be considered "Find it. Apply It. Fill it. Use it." Karl proposed that the "need it" part is the Science side and the "apply it" part is the management side. Beth Huning pointed out however that such thinking perpetuates the "silos" and that the LCC should be trying to erase the lines between science and management. Ellie suggested additional time for the group to brainstorm. The facilitator suggested taking quiet time to write down a specific goal as currently written and to then describe what works and what's missing.

After the members returned to the full group discussion, they started posing various perspectives about the goals as written, and more fundamentally what is meant by the terms "goal" and "objective". Ellie suggested that Goals are broad concepts, oftentimes something to be achieved. Objectives are measurable things we can point to and prove were done. Some ISC members agreed with this but others described "goals" as tasks to be completed.

To expedite the discussion and get past differences in definitions, the ISC decided to focus on themes they want to see addressed in future Goals and to use their Purpose Statement as a guide for these themes. The group brainstormed the following potential themes:

- Partnership
- Information
- Linking Management and Science
- Climate Change and Stressors
- Relevant Ecosystem Scale
- Coordinating Natures Management and Conservation
- Adaptive Management
- Communication / Education / Outreach

The members spent additional time discussing whether the themes identified are really goals rather than methods to achieve goals. An example voiced by Kim was whether communication is a goal or a strategy. Ellie described communication as having to be a goal; it being like a leg of a chair. Always a part of the work. Significant discussion ensued with members working to craft appropriate and mutually acceptable text of Goals. Among the several dilemmas discussed were the following topics:

- What do we do with themes that seem universal to all aspects of the CA LCC (e.g. communication and partnership)? Do we create specific goals about those themes or do

we make some overarching statements that embed them into everything? Is that the benefit of the Purpose Statement?

- Related to the first bullet, do we take an approach writing Goals that are “lumped” or “split”? Is there a point of having too many Goals? Conversely, if Goals are written to be all inclusive, does it make the statements of what is to be achieved, too complex and uneasy to follow / support by decision makers?
- What do we do with qualifying terms like “appropriate” or “effective” used in Goal statements? How do we ensure shared meaning on such terms?
- What is the difference between a Goal and a task? Should Goals describe something to be done, or do they define outcomes (e.g. conservation outcomes)?
- What is the difference between a Goal and a “vision”?
- What language can be used in a Goal such that it is meaningful to the partners guided by them, and meaningful to decision makers that will decide whether LCCs are funded and whether they are providing beneficial outcomes? Do phrases that have been “tested” in public perception surveys have a role in Goal statements (e.g. “manage natural resources” versus “secure nature’s benefits”)?

After significant discussion Beth suggested that the ISC might best be served from a smaller number of members forming a subcommittee to discuss the Goal themes, review previous versions of the Goals, and develop next iterations of the Goals for full ISC consideration. A Goals Subcommittee was formed consisting of Ellie Cohen, Beth Huning, Deb Schlafmann, Diana Craig, and Tom Suchanek. The Subcommittee will meet by the first week in October and will aim to have proposed new Goals to the ISC by late October. The group’s task is to prepare proposed new Goals. It is also to do an additional review of the Purpose Statement and address a question raised by Dave Graber regarding “to what end a purpose is for?”. What is to be achieved?

Organizational Structure

Dave Ceppos brought the member’s attention back to the Preliminary Findings summary (Attachment B). Dave identified the general split in perspective between different members regarding whether a Steering Committee of the CA LCC should be responsible for making a large range of decisions and rely on its own membership to do so, or whether a Steering Committee should rely on delegating decisions to LCC staff and partner staff working in subgroups of some type and elevating only key decisions to a steering body. He explained that while the decision is not quite that binary, these differing perspectives were the prevailing ones provided by members that responded to the interview questions.

Several members did not feel that the organization of the LCC needs to be an either / or scenario as described in the Findings summary. Rather, they need to strike a balance of relying on staff for some work, and relying on leaders for other work. Tom explained that USGS will have

another person to be significantly involved in the process. A second new staff coming onboard will be technical. He said that his vision is that one of the staff will coordinate with the Southwest Climate Science Center. That person should have collaborative and cooperative roles. The point being that the CA LCC will have assistance soon for some of the heavy lifting.

Regarding the relationship between different federal agencies regarding supplying staff and resources to the LCC process, Karl Stein asked if there is an existing MOU or MOA that dedicates certain roles. Such a document might help to ensure balanced and consistent support by different agencies. Rick said that he had not seen such a formal approach but that he would be willing to investigate whether an MOU or MOA is being prepared and/or could be prepared. Karl pointed out that he is the fourth person to represent the BLM during the short time span of the CA LCC and that is not effective. An MOU could ensure greater continuity.

Regarding addressing LCC workload, Beth said it would help her to see and /or create a 5-year work plan to get a sense of what the work will be for LCC. Others stated that they don't know where to "plug in" yet. Some other members countered that this is why developing the Goals is an important first step to determining what is to be done.

In an effort to expedite the discussion, the facilitator suggested creating another subcommittee to address LCC organizational structure questions. A Structure Subcommittee was formed to discuss and propose final recommendations about the organizational structure of the CA LCC, and to refine and recommend the proposed decision making methods the CA LCC will use (as per proposed methods in the DRAFT Charter). The Structure Subcommittee will include Rick Kearney and Michelle Selman. Deb will contact Kim Delfino to see if she is also willing to participate in this Subcommittee. This Subcommittee will meet after the Goals Subcommittee has met so that they can use recommendations regarding specific Goals. Regarding the work of the subcommittee, Ellie stated that making all decisions by consensus will be very difficult and that the LCC needs realistic methods to make decisions and then move on. She also suggested that for all future Subcommittees, it is very important to have scientists and managers on each group so that the integration and breaking down of barriers is happening immediately and at all levels of the CA LCC.

Near Term Science Activities

Rebecca Fris described that members need to be talking about priorities for next year's project dollars. She would like to create a subcommittee to start this work. The process would be similar to what was conducted for FY 09-10 funding. Beth Huning suggested the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture Science Coordinator Christina Sloop. Ellie recommended Grant Ballard from PRBO. Dave Graber volunteered to participate and Diana Craig will recommend someone from the USFS, Deb will approach Tom to see if either he or one of his staff will participate. Rebecca asked the ISC how they feel about engaging non-ISC groups such as other NGOs. Some members felt it will be great to get such other groups involved but that there will be benefit to still hold off a little while longer while the ISC is still getting the CA LCC basic process started. Deb pointed out however that the CA LCC needs to find methods soon to plug organizations and people in so they maintain their enthusiasm.

Southern / Central California Phase II LCC Launch

Deb described the initial ideas about a Southern and Central California Phase II launch. She reiterated that everything in the LCC is temporary / interim until we get all our partners. We don't want to wait and alienate them. We need to put on a workshop in the same manner as in northern California, both informational and to get feedback and input . This workshop will likely happen between mid December and mid January 2011. The general approach will be slightly different than the March since we have already started. Also, partners in the Phase II subunits are expected to be more localized. Beth reminded Deb and everyone that it took the San Francisco Bay Joint Venture a year to build the basic structure of their organization and that the current partners shouldn't feel discouraged by the time it takes to launch the LCC.

Deb will send out a message to the ISC requesting contact information for Southern and Central California potential partners, and information about feasible venues to hold the workshop.

ATTACHMENT A

Proposed Agenda California LCC Interim Steering Committee Meeting

**Point Reyes Bird Observatory Office
3820 Cypress Drive #11
Petaluma, CA 94954
September 16, 2010
10:00 am – 4:30 pm**

Meeting Goals

- Finalize Goals and Objectives
- Establish an approved interim organizational structure
- Review and Discuss the Proposed Interim Charter
- Initiate Discussion about the Southern California / Central Coast Subunit launch effort

- 1. 10:00 Welcome and Introductions**
- 2. 10:10 Review agenda and previous action items**
- 3. 10: 20 Review Proposed CA LCC Goals and Objectives**
- 4. 12:00 Working Lunch – Break**
- 5. 12:30 Continued - Review Proposed CA LCC Goals and Objectives**
- 6. 1:30 Discuss Proposed Interim Organizational Structure**
- 7. 2:30 Review and Discuss Proposed CA LCC Interim Charter**
- 8. 4:00 Discuss Southern / Central CA LCC Launch**
- 9. 4:20 Next Steps / Action Items**
- 10. 4:30 Adjourn**

ATTACHMENT B

Preliminary Findings California Landscape Conservation Cooperative Interim Steering Committee Goals and Organizational Structure Interviews

The following presents preliminary findings from interviews conducted with a cross section of California (CA) Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) Interim Steering Committee (ISC) members. Nine members were interviewed and/or provided written feedback for consideration. The nine members included a Non Governmental Organization, a Joint Venture, and several Federal agency representatives. Attempts were made to speak with a State agency representative but scheduling challenges prohibited that discussion.

The findings are not binding or statistical in nature. They are provided to help expedite ISC discussion by illustrating common and different perspectives about the Goals of the CA LCC and how the LCC should do work, make decisions, and be governed.

PROPOSED GOALS

Common Perspectives

The direction of the proposed Goals is sufficient. They generally capture what Members expect the LCC will do and how it will be organized. However.....

1. Several people feel that there is too much emphasis on the organization aspects.
2. Several people feel there is not enough emphasis on what the LCC will do. What will success look like.
 - In particular, there is a lack of connection to the science role LCC will play and the way in which LCC is supposed to be a conduit between:

researchers / best science ←————→ on-the-ground conservation
managers
3. Most people feel there is not clarity on priorities:
 - What is a “priority”
 - What will the LCC focus on / prioritize,
 - What is the basis for priorities (e.g. self-guided VS guided by Washington DC)
 - All participants had different perspectives on the sequence and priority of the goals statements. Which is most important?
4. Several people are confused by the introduction of “objectives” at this level / stage.

- Too much detail / incomplete detail
 - Wrong location to describe “what and how” LCC will achieve goals
5. About half the people are concerned that LCC will be too big, too cumbersome, too time consuming and that it won't / can't deliver on its intended outcomes.
- There is concern that the LCC will try to be all things to all people and will fail. A few people support using priorities to select pilot efforts, preferably with existing projects / partners as starting place for its work. Start someplace where there is existing success and support / augment it. Gain from that and then expand.

Specific Perspectives

1. A few people feel there is not enough emphasis on existing partnerships and existing efforts.
2. A few people think there is insufficient focus on ecosystems. The current focus is on natural resources which may lead to “silo thinking”.
3. One person thinks that Goals 3, 4, and 5 are too similar.

PROPOSED ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

All questions and perspectives about:

- How should the LCC be structured
- Who should make decisions
- How will decisions be made

Come down to one fundamental question: **Who will do the work?**

About half the people feel that the CA LCC must rely on current and future staff to do much of the work.

- Need to limit the use / structure of many subcommittees and teams, etc
 - Too many people
 - Not enough accountability
 - Not enough partner resources to support this
- Limited structure means limiting the decision process and roles.
 - Staff does major work and delivers results to a Steering Committee
 - Steering Committee makes decisions

About half the people feel that CA LCC must rely on partners to do the work.

- Need to delegate work and decisions to the most appropriate level.
 - Need to figure out who will be the dedicated “heavy-lifters” and rely on them.
- Broader structure means diffuse decision process and roles.
 - Have a Steering Committee to make certain key decisions
 - Let Subgroups handle other decisions. Delegate authorities.

Perspectives – Membership

1. Most people think a Steering Committee must rely on interest –based representatives; there can't be a seat at the table for everyone.
 - However, most people don't know how that can be done because the interests are too varied. Some people are concerned about “giving up a seat”. Agencies are also not able to defer their responsibilities to another agency / organization
2. Several people think that a North / South membership and participation option of some type will be needed to accommodate the differences and numbers of potential partners from across the State

Perspectives – Decision-Making

1. Several people are generally supportive of the proposed decision making ideas but are concerned that the overall size of a LCC decision body will make things unwieldy at best / incapable to make decisions / reach consensus at worst
2. Some people think that everyone that is on a decision group should be a voting member to ensure accountability
3. General support for the different decision approaches regarding Administrative Decisions and Technical / Policy Decisions and Recommendations
4. Some people are concerned that delegated decision-making will allow people to “sluff off” work and have no accountability
5. Some people think that centralized decision-making puts too much burden on a small number of leadership level people that are already too busy.
6. A few people think that there is a pending circumstance that the first time the CA LCC makes a decision that is inconsistent with DOI and/or USFWS intentions, the CA LCC will be reined in.
7. Some people think that the most important value / responsibility of the LCC is not to make decisions but to provide the conduits / venues for parties to build relationships / make connections and create networks.

Perspectives – Organizational Structure

1. Most people support creating Chairs or some other form of Executive leadership to help steer things, act as spokespersons, etc.

2. A few people suggest creating a Northern Steering Committee and a Southern Steering Committee and an overarching Executive Decision Committee that takes recommendations from North and South groups and makes final decisions