



Steering Committee Retreat Notes
Golden Gate National Recreation Area, Fort Cronkite
December 17 & 18, 2015

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Participants

Steering Committee Members

Michelle Selmon – Chair, CA. Dept. of Water Resources
Wayne Spencer – Vice Chair, Conservation Biology Institute
Ellie Cohen – Immediate Past Chair, Point Blue Conservation Science

John Andrew – CA. Dept. of Water Resources
Chris Bujalski – CA LCC Tribal Team Chair, Bureau of Indian Affairs
Caroline Enquist – Southwest Climate Science Center
Armand Gonzales – CA Dept. of Fish and Wildlife
Tom Hedt – Natural Resource Conservation Service
Todd Hopkins – US Fish and Wildlife Service, Great Basin LCC
Chrissy Howell – US Forest Service
Beth Huning – San Francisco Bay Joint Venture
Denise Louie – National Park Service
Ruth Ostroff – Central Valley Joint Venture
Pat Rutten – NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service
Laura Valoppi – US Geological Survey
Keith Miles – US Geological Survey

CA LCC Staff

Deanne DiPietro – Data Manager
Rebecca Fris – Science Coordinator
Andrea Graffis – Communication Coordinator
Amber Pairis – Climate Science Alliance – South Coast
Deb Schlafmann - Coordinator
Zhahai Stewart – Data Manager

Guests

Briana Abrams – Graduate Student, UC Berkeley
Darren Fong – Aquatic Ecologist, National Park Service
Nat Seavy – Research Director Pacific Coast & Central Valley, Point Blue Conservation Science
Ben Thatcher – Assistant National Coordinator, LCC Network
Sam Veloz – Director of Climate Adaptation Group, Point Blue Conservation Science
Greg Wathen – Coordinator, Gulf Coast Plains & Ozarks LCC

Meeting Objectives

- Share priorities and explore opportunities with fellow Steering Committee members
- Envision different funding support
- Celebrate 2015 accomplishments
- Hear about climate-smart conservation work in our area
- Define next steps for 2016 and beyond

Notes

Action Items (by Category)

3x3 Presentations

Action Item: CA LCC staff to synthesize the 3x3 presentations and cross reference to identify commonalities and needs. Share the synthesis with the Steering Committee. Common priorities could be another way to focus limited funding. **Complete and send to Steering Committee by Feb 15**

National Academy of Science (NAS) Review of LCCs

Action Item: CA LCC staff will continue to explore possible methods and timeline for engaging across all LCCs in state of California. **Ongoing**

Action Item: LCC staff will brief the Steering Committee on the work of the other LCCs in California. **Spring 2016 Steering Committee and subsequent meetings**

Action Item: If any Steering Committee members have possible metrics along the lines of what NAS recommends developing, send to CA LCC staff for input to metric development process. **Request in late winter 2016**

CA LCC Accomplishments to Date

Action Item: CA LCC staff will integrate need to track on-the-ground results of projects with metrics being developed as a results of NAS review. **2017**

Scenario Planning

Action Item: Nat and Sam will develop report out on the scenario planning exercise. **Jan/Feb 2016**

Action Item: Development Team will be formed and develop strategies and actions under future funding scenarios. Ellie, Chrissy, and Pat expressed interest in participating. Deb will also work from list of previous volunteers. **Jan/Feb 2016**

LCC Network Presentation

Action item: CA LCC staff will work with LCC Network to revise CA LCC map to extend into the ocean and down through Baja. **Initiated Jan 2016**

Action Item: CA LCC staff to continue discussion with both Steering Committee and Network staff on methods to communicate across LCC Steering Committees. **Ongoing**

Action Item: Ben Thatcher with help of CA LCC staff set up a meeting with John Mankowski (NP LCC Coordinator) to discuss adding agenda item about representation for next LCC Council meeting.

Initiated Jan 2016

Tribal Team Update

Action item – Andrea will remove Tribal map from CA LCC website. **Done**

Climate Summit Update

Action Item - CA LCC staff to develop a list of climate adaptation success stories on the CA LCC website.

Ongoing

Action Item - CA LCC staff to duplicate SWCSC Climate Summit webpage information on CA LCC website.

Feb 2016

Action Item - CA LCC staff to develop a standardized PowerPoint slide that Steering Committee members can use. **Feb 2016**

Action Item – Develop a tagline for the CA LCC. For example: “CA LCC conducting information exchange between scientists and managers”. **Work with Development Team on this for spring/summer 2016**

Central Valley Landscape Conservation Project Update

Action item – Deb to discuss with Ellie possibly having Point Blue detailing on CVLCP science management. **Jan/Feb 2016**

Action item – Deb to discuss with Laura possible detail on Science Coordinator position. **Jan/Feb 2016**

Action Item – Post all PowerPoints on the Steering Committee meeting webpage. **Done**

Assessing Vulnerability and Developing Adaptation Strategies for Key Southern California Habitats

Action item – Andrea to get Adaptation workshop flier from Sarah Sawyer and send to Steering Committee and newsletter. **Jan 2016**

Action item – Deanne to make sure project info that is available from US Forest Service Southern California project gets on the Commons. Consider creating a library for each Vulnerability Assessment project. **Jan-Mar 2016**

FY 2016 Planning

Action item – CA LCC Staff to set up meeting between Tribal Team and Science-Management Team to develop project selection criteria. **Feb/March 2016**

Action item - Tom – overlap with NRCS easements on place-based projects. Contact Dean Kwansy to be on project selection committee. **Jan/Feb 2016**

Action item – Pat Rutten add to project selection committee. **Done**

Action item – Amber Pairis add to project selection committee. **Done**

Plus/Delta on our Steering Committee Meetings

Action item – Development Team will develop list of potential funding sources and strategies for funding. **Spring 2016**

Action item – Steering Committee develop suggested metrics to address NAS report. **Spring/summer 2016**

Action item – Science Management Team make sure RFP criteria includes integration of other funding/planning efforts. **Spring 2016**

Action item – have list of unfunded projects ready for year-end \$\$ **Spring 2016**

Thursday, December 17, 2015

3x3 Presentations

Each Steering Committee member presented their top three priorities related to climate change and/or landscapes, what they need to succeed, and how the CA LCC can help through its members and partnerships.

National Academy of Science (NAS) Review of LCCs

- The purpose of the NAS review was to evaluate the purpose, goals, and scientific merits of LCCs within the context of similar programs, and whether the LCC program has resulted in measurable improvements in the health of fish, wildlife, and their habitats.
- Recommendations and conclusions from NAS review:
 - The nation needs to take a landscape approach to conservation and that the Department of the Interior is justified in addressing this need with the Landscape Conservation Cooperatives.
 - The LCC Network is unique in that no other federal program is designed to address landscape conservation needs at a national scale, for all natural and cultural resources, in a way that bridges research and management efforts.
 - The Department of the Interior should review the landscape and habitat conservation efforts, especially the Joint Ventures and the LCCs, to identify opportunities for improved coordination between these efforts. Special consideration should be given to the limited capacity of state agency partners to participate in multiple efforts simultaneously.
 - The LCC and CSC programs should be more clearly delineated. They should explicitly state how their research efforts differ and how they complement each other, identify and build on existing examples of coordination across the network, and make adjustments as appropriate. At the regional scale, LCC coordinators and CSC federal directors should coordinate their activities, including calls for proposals, as much as possible to avoid duplication of effort.
 - The individual LCCs can point to many early accomplishments.
 - The LCC Network should improve its evaluation process to better capture the contributions made by all partner agencies or groups toward common objectives.

- The FWS, in its next iteration of the SIAS, should (1) identify how and where the SIAS relates to elements of the LCC Network strategy; (2) identify the benchmarks associated with each activity area; and (3) begin the process of identifying, to the extent feasible and practicable, costs relative to returns on investment associated with achieving each benchmark.

CA LCC Accomplishments to Date

- CA LCC 2015 accomplishments include three new ecosystem projects, continued progress on the Central Valley Landscape Conservation Project, the Southwest Climate Summit, two Climate-Smart Conservation trainings, a Tribal Climate Adaptation Workshop, formal establishment of the Tribal Team, and formation of the Climate Science Alliance – South Coast.
- The Climate Commons now has over 450 data download accounts and had 44,000 pageviews in 2015. In 2015, 726 data layers were downloaded, over 150 new records were made, and over 40 articles about climate science were developed or maintained.
- The website had over 35,000 pageviews in 2015 and we regularly receive positive feedback from partners on the weekly newsletter that currently reaches over 1,300 emails.
- From 2010-2015, the CA LCC supported 37 projects with over \$10 million invested including partner matching funds. 24 projects are completed and 13 are still in progress. Over 400 deliverables are available on the Climate Commons from projects.
- Rebecca presented the progress towards meeting the CA LCCs five-year objectives, as established in 2013.
 - 4 ongoing or completed place-based projects. 10 are needed to fill 5-year objective.
 - 3 ongoing ecosystem projects. 2 are needed to fill 5-year objective.
 - 1 ongoing landscape conservation design. 2 are needed to fill 5-year objective.
 - The Climate Summit fills the once a year large affiliate workshop called for in the Charter.
 - 38 science delivery workshops have been completed as called for in the Communication Plan.

Review of 2016 LCC Budget

There was a potential for 50% cut in FY 2016. It does not look like the cut will be that drastic anymore. Concern about this potential budget cut prompted the scenario planning exercise for this meeting. This issue also brings to light the idea that LCCs were developed with the intention that DOI begin support but not remain the only funding source.

Scenario Planning

The Steering Committee broke up into 4 groups, each working on one of two scenarios to envision a CA LCC that is successful regardless of funding levels from US Fish & Wildlife Service.

Scenario 1: federal contribution to LCC budget increased. Starting in 2017, the CA LCC budget contribution from FWS increases from \$1.6 million to \$3.2 million over five years. Other DOI agencies receive funding to support LCCs. USGS supports CA LCC with one staff and project funds

and SWCSC supports CA LCC with one staff and project funds. NOAA and USDA each allocate \$10 million nationwide. Both agencies dedicate .5 staff to CA LCC and project funds that meet CA LCC goals and objectives on annual basis for next 5 years.

Scenario 2: federal contribution to LCC budget cut in half. Starting in 2017, CA LCC budget contribution from FWS decreases from \$1.6 million to \$800,000 and continues to decrease reaching \$525,000 in five years. Other DOI agency support is withdrawn. NOAA and USDA are not encouraged to coordinate with LCCs.

Report-outs and Dot Voting on Strategies from Scenario Planning

Groups reported on the strategies they came up with, then Steering Committee members placed sticky dots on the best strategy under each scenario and another dot on a strategy that works best under both scenarios.

“Federal contribution to LCC budget cut in half” scenario received the most votes for pursuing grants from other places, but we can’t do that with a small staff so it will need to be combined with staff contributions from partners. Alternatively we can craft a situation where no grant writing is needed through Steering Committee members either contribute staff for writing proposals or they just support the LCC with direct funding.

Friday, December 18, 2015

Recap from Steering Committee Chair on Day-1

- CA LCC needs to be more than a funding entity.
- We need to focus on initiatives that no-one else is: Climate-Smart Conservation across sectors, convening and bringing people together, communicating (Commons, newsletter, etc), and integration of agency planning efforts (i.e. SWAP with other Central Valley efforts like Water Action Plan).
- Common actions across scenarios: Proposition 1 coordination, partnering with foundations, increase Steering Committee partner roles (hosting workshops, ecoregional coordinators, staff, take over pieces of the LCC like Point Blue is doing with the Climate Commons).
- Needs in future: grant writing and politically savvy staff person.
- Ruth – added LCC staff development and training (professional development).
- Amber – in both scenarios staff capacity and skill sets are key.
- Wayne – sees two scenarios of LCC staff 1. In Modoc centralized 2. Staff dispersed among partners.
- Amber – California Adaptation Forum (CAF) could be leveraged to gather all the LCCs that are in California. The next is September 7-8, 2016 in Long Beach.

LCC Network Presentation

Presentation given by Ben Thatcher, LCC Network Assistant National Coordinator.

Compliments on the CA LCC trust and partnership!

280 plus agencies and organizations are in the LCC network as partners.

Described that the LCC Council is an interagency, tribal and non-governmental representation that provides national-level coordination and support for the LCC Network.

Reviewed the Network Strategic Plan as having four goals:

- An ecologically connected network of landscapes and seascapes adaptable to global change with the ability to sustain ecological integrity and health to meet the needs of society at multiple scales.
 - Facilitated alignment of partnership efforts within and amongst LCCs, including planning efforts and resources, that improves conservation outcomes across LCCs and the Network.
 - Natural and cultural resources are conserved at large scales guided by the collaborative application of science, experience, and cultural or traditional ecological knowledge and the generation of new conservation knowledge.
 - Advance the knowledge of, support for, and engagement in landscape-scale conservation across the LCC Network.
- Reviewed the Network Science Plan as having goals themed around landscape conservation planning, landscape conservation design, climate adaptation, data management, integration, and sharing, socioeconomic and cultural values, science communication and delivery, and monitoring and assessment.

Tribal Team Update

- Tribal Team interest and membership has increased substantially in 2015. There are now 39 members.
- Chris is the Tribal Team Chair and his goal is to have the Team driven by tribal members and chaired by a tribal member. There are also ecoregional leads in place for the Tribal Team.
- Tribal Climate Adaptation Training was organized and hosted by this team in San Diego in September 2015. This was a great success with a waiting list for participation and numerous resulting Climate-Smart Conservation partnerships and collaborations.

Tribal Team 2016 Recommendations

- Approval of Tribal Team Statement of Purpose and Charter.
- Limited use of LCC staff and resources (webinar/phone line; webpage host).
- Support for one in-person meeting for eco-regional leadership team.
- Extend current facilitator contract until leadership team has been fully developed (6 months maximum).
- Support a climate adaptation training in North Coast ecoregion. The Kashia Band of Pomo has BIA funding for this purpose and CA LCC can help coordinate and facilitate.
- The team recommends that half of the allocated 2016 CA LCC project funds be designated for tribal related projects and partnerships.
 - Potential issue with RFP deadline, extension recommended.

- Funding request for all CA LCC supported Tribal Team activities (not including staff support and funds for Tribal RFP) equals \$25k.
- Steering Committee tabled approval so as to gather whole picture of FY 2016 recommendations.

Climate Summit Update

- The 2015 Southwest Climate Summit held in Sacramento, CA on November 2 - 3, 2015 engaged over 250 participants from over 50 agencies and organizations across the Southwest in conversations about enabling bold decisions in the face of climate change, decision support for adaptation management, and how to navigate the complexity of climate science.
- A survey revealed that Summit participants were able to take back many lessons learned about how to better catalyze effective climate adaptation and take-to-work information. Information was collected about what attendees want to learn more about.

Central Valley Landscape Conservation Project Update

- Project Goal - In partnership with natural resource managers and scientists, identify climate-smart conservation actions that will maximize the adaptive capacity of priority species, habitats, and ecosystems to support an ecologically connected Central Valley landscape.
- Project seeks to align and support ongoing planning and programs.
- Answering management questions such as:
 - Considering vulnerability to future conditions, where do we invest in land protection, restoration?
 - What are critical areas for connectivity?
 - What type of resource management is necessary in the face of climate change?
- Project Objectives:
 - Conserve resilient and adaptable ecosystems that sustain future Central Valley biodiversity.
 - Promote landscape-scale connectivity and ecological and physical processes that function within current and future ranges of variability to support a diverse and thriving Central Valley.
 - Reduce the impacts of climate change and other co-occurring stressors to Central Valley ecosystems.
- Four workshops have been held to kick-off the meeting, develop Central Valley Future Scenarios, identify priority natural resources, and develop vulnerability assessments.

Assessing Vulnerability and Developing Adaptation Strategies for Key Southern California Habitats

- Presentation by Sarah Sawyer and Chrissy Howell, US Forest Service
- History of the project –
 - **Fall 2012:** EcoAdapt & partners start Sierra Nevada project with funding from California LCC
 - **Spring 2013:** EcoAdapt leads vulnerability & adaptation workshops
 - **Winter 2014:** EcoAdapt releases vulnerability and adaptation reports

- **Summer 2014:** EcoAdapt & partners awarded funds to start So Cal project
- These projects were all prompted by the US Forest Service Climate Score Cards, Forest Plan revisions, need to integrate climate into project planning and NEPA, and need for US Forest Service to develop relationships with outside experts.
- The Southern California project focuses on Angeles, San Bernardino, Cleveland, and Los Padres National Forests.
- Project methods summary:
 - Focal Resources workshop to identify focal resources and gather relevant data and info (completed Nov 2014).
 - Vulnerability assessment workshop (Completed Dec 2015).
 - Adaptation workshop #1 to apply assessment results in adaptation planning (Completed May 2015)
 - Adaptation workshop #2 to develop implementation plans for on-the-ground action (Planned for January 20-21, 2016 in Riverside).

Natural Areas Conference

- Presented by Chrissy Howell
- Save the Date! UC Davis October 18-20, 2016.
- Want to design this conference to build off of the Summit. Hoping for both applied science and management focus, sometimes combined, tailored for people who need to use the science for projects on the ground.
- There will be 18-20 half day sessions. 350-450 people expected to attend.
- Needs from the CA LCC:
 - Asking for topics for sessions that are useful for managers.
 - There is an extra day for working groups who want to meet. Have already talked with Koren Nydick and she is doing a workshop to follow up on their previously held Southern Sierra Climate-Smart workshop.
 - Inviting involvement by the LCC partners and staff.
 - Asking for money to reduce the registration fee. CalFire, BLM, FS have already made commitments. Request is for \$10-20k from CA LCC.

FY 2016 Planning

- Pat – would like to work with Tribe on on-the-ground project and take it to Prop 1 for matching funds.
- Tribal Team \$25k request is facilitation and in-person meeting.
- Project criteria of linking the proposal into a larger grant proposal ie Prop. 1.

Vote – Ellie motioned, Pat and Chrissy seconded, for vote to approve:

- Pink line on draft implementation plan,
- 25k tribal request,
- Support for Natural Areas Conference,
- Including Tribal engagement criteria for RFP process,
- 80% and 20% split of budget between projects and training/workshops, and

- All of these items be approved pending the budget coming in around only 5% less than FY'15. If budget is less Steering Committee will re-evaluate FY 2016 plan.
- Motion passed: favor – all, opposed – none, abstention – none

Plus/Delta on our Steering Committee Meetings

Good:

- Location, people, and topics. Very engaging the whole time.
- Great to have headquarters staff person here. Scenario planning extremely valuable and well structured.
- Good to invite other LCC Coordinators.
- Like the 3x3—do it every time.

Suggestions:

- Timing cards on short presentations
- Not Friday or week before holidays.
- Translation of implementation on the ground coming out of the efforts (i.e. from projects or workshops).
- Future venue for meeting where on the ground actions have occurred from CA LCC projects and information would be nice.
- We need brainstorm list on potential funding sources with strategies for funding. Focus on Proposition 1. We can then use that to identify Steering Committee members to work on those items.
- Next time NAS report suggestion of metrics, so we should develop them preemptive of Network office working on them in isolation.
- SWAP, BEGHU, Water Plan, etc. integration as a criteria in RFP. They need to list how the project will implement strategies in another large plan. Science-Management Team can consider this.
- A NAS recommendation is to clarify LCC vs CSC roles. We need to address this maybe with project selection committee.
- Encourage lower footprint in Steering Committee meetings: carpooling etc. Also do this for workshops and conferences we coordinate.
- Maybe set up a cooperative agreement to spend year-end dollars?