



## Steering Committee Meeting

August 27, 2015

Meeting Notes

### Attendees

Ellie Cohen - Chair, Point Blue Conservation Science  
Michelle Selmon - Vice Chair, CA Dept. of Water Resources

Sarah Allen - National Park Service  
Carol Beardmore – Sonoran Joint Venture  
Jennifer Cavanaugh – Natural Resources Conservation Service  
Michelle Denning – Bureau of Reclamation  
Carolyn Enquist – Southwest Climate Science Center  
Beth Huning – San Francisco Bay Joint Venture  
Kevin Hunting – CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife  
Steve Jackson – Southwest Climate Science Center  
Rodd Kelsey – The Nature Conservancy  
Mark Kramer – The Nature Conservancy  
Javier Linares – US Fish & Wildlife Service  
Ruth Ostroff – Central Valley Joint Venture  
Nadine Peterson – State Coastal Conservancy  
Pat Rutten – NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service  
Sarah Sawyer – US Forest Service  
Wayne Spencer – Conservation Biology Institute  
Laura Valoppi – US Geological Survey  
Polly Wheeler – US Fish & Wildlife Service

Helen Birss – CA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife  
Miriam Morrill – Bureau of Land Management

### CA LCC Staff

Deb Schlafmann - Coordinator  
Rebecca Fris – Science Coordinator  
Andrea Graffis – Communication Coordinator  
Deanne DiPietro – Data Manager  
Amber Pairis – San Diego Climate Science Alliance Coordinator  
Karen Thorne – USGS Science Advisor

## Summary of Action Items

- Send the message on the benefits of LCCs - **Everyone**
- Request from CA LCC staff any outreach material helpful for messaging - **Everyone**
- Discuss LCCs with Ren - **Kevin**
  
- Send Comments on wording of Team descriptions to Deb - **Everyone**
- Inform Deb if you or any others on your staff want - **Everyone**
  
- Forward more info on CalFire contact person to staff – **Wayne**
- Discuss Natural Areas Association Conference at next Steering Committee meeting – **Sarah S.**
  
- Send URL for further info on Prop. 1 and Cap and Trade and her contact info – **Helen**
  
- **Register for the SW Climate Summit - Everyone**
  
- Email info out to group on National Habitat Conservation Planning meeting on east coast – **Wayne**

## Budget Update and Discussion

“Update on LCC FY16 Budget Situation” reference talking points document.

The President’s budget increased LCC funding, but house and senate cut by 50%. Congress suggests only successful LCC only are funded. Interior western states and tribal engagement is identified as an issue. There is probably going to be a Continuing Resolution through at least December in which means LCCs will work off last year’s budget.

The Practitioners Network for Large Landscape Conservation has a LCC support sign-on letter to Congress.

The National Academy of Science review will come out in October. That may provide some helpful recommendations on LCCs. We don’t know how that will influence the budget.

What are the criticisms? If they don’t know what is being done, or don’t like it. Feedback has come mostly from interior states. Issue with interior western states started with them not feeling engaged with roll out of LCCs. Old news—the states are now highly engaged, tribes are engaged.

In Kevin’s WAFWA experiences he still sees them having negative perception about LCCs. Reality in western states is there is good work being done at a staff level, but state leadership are not recognizing it.

Alaska may be a source, but has changed in its leadership.

Ellie says we need non-federal employees to reach out to congress. Not just on LCCs, but on climate change in general and the impacts we are seeing. Climate deniers in Congress are a problem; they just want to cut anything associated with climate change. Consider how we message drought, wildfires, etc., possibly de-emphasize climate change.

Sarah—Remember the name of our group! Cooperating to streamline and work on common issues—a way of saving funds and responding to challenges.

Nadine—who in Congress can we influence that is not in the California delegation (who are not the problem)?

Ken Calvert is on appropriations committee for the House.

Has this been brought up in the context of AFWA or WAFWA? Not on the lobbying list; majority of WAFWA don't support LCC.

FWS ARDs are working on outreach; there is a session at AFWA coming up on the LCCs; and another WAFWA meeting in January that they are hoping to get on.

Message will be heard more if it's coming from NGOs and states.

Ellie; shared outreach pages. We need to take action; get it out there about the value of the LCCs.

Mark: Focus on the common-sense reasons for working together.

Nadine: how important is it to increase support in the DOI? We had a bigger fan with the last Deputy Sec. but he retired. Dan Ash needs to hear about the LCCs and their benefit to partners. We need the Region 8 Director to hear it; we struggle internally with understanding of what is the benefit of LCCs

Impression that the LCC is taking funding away from other programs (JVs), need to show that there is not competition, but rather benefits.

CA LCC staff can put together information like shown in the outreach sheet, just ask us.

Mark: Could look like we're self-serving, good for internal conversations but could undermine message to the legislators because they think NGOs just want to keep their funding coming in. Useful for increasing support and convincing headquarter people to ramp up messaging.

Secretary Laird has added LCCs to his emphasis areas sent to Congress this year.

### **Talking Points on Value of LCCs**

- NIDIS (drought.gov) focused messaging coupled with wildfire messaging. Deemphasize climate change.
- Emphasize cooperation as a way of saving funds to focus our efforts on the challenges of wildfire and drought.
- Chair of House Interior Committee, Ken Calvert, is important to reach. He had positive experiences in Alaska with LCCs.
- Science Applications Assistant Regional Directors from USFWS are speaking at AFWA soon. There is a WAFWA meeting in January that ARD's are trying to get on agenda.

- Talk to Dan Ashe and Ren Lohoefer to support the work of the LCCs.
- Note LCCs are supported by new funding, not reallocation from other USFWS programs.

## Action Items

Conduct outreach - **Everyone**

Tell CA LCC staff any outreach material we can provide - **Everyone**

Discuss LCCs with Ren - **Kevin**

## Advancing LCC Objectives

The staff and chairs identified areas that can advance the LCC. Three Teams came out of this discussion to address these needs.

**Development Team** – The role of the Development Team is to strengthen multi-organizational support for the CA LCC with the goal of expanding the capacity by conveying the relevance of the CA LCC. The Team will provide recommendations to the Steering Committee on the best methods to grow the CA LCC and lead fundraising efforts.

- This is the next step in development of the LCC business model and how partners collaborate.

**Review Team** – The role of the Review Team is to develop metrics and methods, and conduct reviews of the accomplishments and performance of the CA LCC and provide recommendations to the Steering Committee to ensure the CA LCC meets the goals outlined in the Strategic Plan and Science-Management Framework.

**Delivery Team** – The role of the Delivery Team is to develop and help implement methods to expand the use of LCC products that include tools, webinars, workshops, and project results and research of the CA LCC with the goal of expanding the use of LCC products. The Team will provide the Steering Committee with recommended practices for the CA LCC information delivery.

- The Communication Team is more on a task by task function. They are currently working on Climate Summit. We would have to reconsider the Communication Team composition if they begin to serve Delivery Team function.

Kevin: Not sure he understands the Development Team. Ellie clarified: finding other funding sources for the LCC.

Rebecca: this is taking the next step forward in the development of the partnership at this 5-year point. There's more that can be done, in particular on the delivery side.

How does the Delivery Team work with the Communications Team? May need to reconsider the Communications Team.

Kevin has comments on the wording of the Development Team. Could work on the descriptions later after approving the concept.

## **Volunteers**

Miriam – Delivery Team

Whitney – Delivery Team

Kevin - Development Team

Mark – Development Team

Rodd – Review Team and Delivery Team

Ellie – Development Team, other Point Blue staffers can join other teams.

Nadine – would like to talk with Deb on this to discuss SCC participation.

Vote – to approve the concepts of the Teams, but work on the specifics of the teams functions.

Kevin motions and Rodd seconds motion

Yes – all, Abstentions – none, No – none

## **Action Items**

Send Comments on wording of team descriptions to Deb - **Everyone**

Inform Deb if you or any others on your staff want team membership - **Everyone**

## **Round Robin**

Share climate change and/or natural resources actions/projects that you have been working on over the last six months and how might the LCC help?

**Michelle** – Watershed Group has formed to expand on Integrated Regional Water Management (IRWM) groups that release grant funds and support updating of water plans. New Watershed Group in the Tulare Basin is trying to connect upper and lower watershed users. The Tulare Basin connecting with Sierra Nevada using LCC project info from “Vulnerability Assessment and Adaptation Strategies for Focal Resources of the Sierra Nevada” and “Central Valley Landscape Conservation Project”. Info on climate risks/vulnerabilities/strategies are feeding into headwater project funding decisions and plan updates. Brings the water issue into the climate change arena, also the human environment, for an integrated approach.

**Kevin** – Several projects that touch what the LCC is doing or directly use the products, but big one is the State Wildlife Action Plan (SWAP). Final report will be out in January. SWAP is an assessment of threats, opportunities, and conservation needs across the state. LCC vulnerability assessments have been an integral part and are being used in the document. Climate change is the backbone of the update to SWAP. CDFW will use this climate structure to integrate these issues into the CDFW. Intended as a template for how we emphasize funding and effort on a statewide basis. Every product that has come from the LCC partnership has had a direct positive result on the work of the department.

**Sarah A.** – Chief Climate Scientist for NPS, Patrick Gonzales, is moving to UC Berkeley in fall. He will be writing up each National Parks’ climate change issues. We should plug CA LCC info into this.

**Pat** – Russian River Forecast Informed Reservoir Plan almost complete and will operate Lake Mendocino and Coyote Dam based on science. Science integrated includes atmosphere patterns and weather forecasting for the reservoir operations. Trying to move this science to Central Valley dams. USACE involved and this could be a point of functional change there; partnership with County agencies. Planning to consider doing additional storage, using science to manage water; Sonoma Co Water Agency will use it to leverage funds from Prop 1, will be a model/ “rule curve” for the rim dams of the Central Valley.

**Nadine** – Examples in bay and on coast. One is the update of the wetlands strategy in Southern California. LCC funding important science that will inform management action.

CA LCC provided funding to incorporate climate into the Bayland Goals update. Will be released in the Fall. Next targeting audiences to implement strategies.

**Beth** – Baylands Goals Update incorporation of climate information. Communication strategy for Update coming out soon with trainings, network building, and other outreach.

**Laura** – South Bay Salt Ponds Restoration EIR/EIS out for public comment currently. Actions on wetland restoration are based on models of SLR and are taking actions based on that. Trying to incorporate upland transition zones and use of dredge sediment. Value from LCC is from partnership building, trainings, workshops, etc.

**Steve** – Benefits from network LCC brings together. We need institutions that are charged with making these landscape networking connections. Brings a new perspective to the work that the agencies working traditionally in the trenches are unable to do. Makes sure the conversations that need to happen do happen.

**Ellie** – Conducted SLR modeling on tidal marsh in SF Bay and coast through LCC and others support. Funding from multiple partners has enabled leveraging more funding to hire a Coastal Program Adaptation Leader, a kind of “data ambassador” to help jump-start the adaptation process. We have the tools like OCOF and the Future Tidal Marsh tools, and when we talk to the donors they become excited about it.

**Ellie** – Also starting rangeland monitoring network connect drivers of climate change across rangeland landscapes. Will obtain a landscape-scale picture ecological function as effected by different management strategies. Looking at how we can have metrics that can be used across areas to see how ecological function is improved through better practices Water, carbon, and biodiversity being monitored. Hope to connect AB32 and carbon sequestering with this. Nature-based solutions are rising to the top now as part of mitigation but really need to be able to monitor.

**Rodd** – Coastal Resilience Team in Ventura modeling SLR and impacts. Working with military, county and cities to design assisted retreat of dunes and tidal marsh. Marine Team analyzing coastline of California 100 years out and finding places where managed retreat can happen successfully. Developing an agriculture strategy (biodiversity and ecosystem service benefits) for California and this will use CVLCP info and maybe other project products too. Water Team working on models of water storage and water delivery systems and how ecological flows can be improved. Hired a climate science fellow post-doc to work with Dick Cameron on analysis of investment opportunities for rangeland water funds and benefits to downstream users. Using USGS modeling of rangelands and agricultural fallowing.

**Wayne** – CalFire developing statewide vegetation treatment plan. California Fire Science Consortium peer reviewed this. CalFire needs help working with scientists or others. Dan Silvers suggested CalFire contact the LCC on developing a more collaborative process.

**Jennifer** – New rangeland compost application program for sequestration. Developing toolkit of techniques for ranchers to implement. Developing strategies for conifer restoration in burned areas and understory thinning for avoiding wildfire. LCC can help identify priority regions for these new climate-smart techniques. Need to make sure actions are coordinated with others across the landscape.

**Miriam** – Partnered with USFS and EcoAdapt for Northern California vulnerability assessment in three National Forests and 2.5 BLM resource areas to update management plans. Could work with LCC to identify experts to participate in VA workshops or leverage other resources.

**Sarah S.** – Same project with Miriam and another similar Southern California project already supported by LCC. Webinar coming up soon for Southern California project through the LCC. Natural Areas Association Conference 2016 in Davis focusing on management for climate adaptation.

**Nadine** – San Diego Climate Science Alliance network starting a SLR resiliency planning with San Diego County and **ICLEE???** The Alliance is high value to SCC. We are avoiding gray infrastructure with this project.

## **Action Items**

Forward more info on CalFire contact person to staff – **Wayne**

Discuss Natural Areas Association Conference at next Steering Committee meeting – **Sarah S.**

### **Prop. 1 - Helen Birss**

CDFW developed a new branch to manage Prop. 1 and Cap and Trade funds “Watershed Restoration Grant Branch”. Prop. 1 provides funding for CA Water Action Plan which is a response to drought and climate change. Two pieces of funding \$285 M for watershed restoration and \$87.5 M for delta water quality and ecosystem restoration. 10 years for implementation gives \$31 M per year total. \$24 M state wide funds and \$7 M delta focused

funds per year. Public utilities, tribes, NGO, public agencies, eligible for funds. Federal agencies not eligible applicants, but can partner on application.

Statewide there are five different sub-programs: headwaters management, coastal wetlands, fish migration, mountain meadows, and general restoration. Delta has three sub-programs: water quality improvements, habitat restoration conservation or enhancement for special status species, research (drought, effectiveness in implementation of actions, and management of estuarine and marine species) to support Delta Plan.

**Cap and Trade** - \$25 M last year from ARB for wetland restoration on coast, delta, and mountain meadows. 27 proposals that requested more than double available funds. Funded 12 projects that are ongoing. Drafting net round of solicitation right now.

### **Action Item**

Send URL for further info on Prop. 1 and Cap and Trade and her contact info - **Helen**

### **Calendar Updates**

**September 1-2, 2015:** Tribal Climate Adaptation Workshop – happening next week in San Diego 55 people registered.

**Sept 23, 2015:** Climate-Smart round table coming up in San Diego. Webinar for participation.

**Oct. 8-9, 2015** Central Valley Landscape Conservation Project – Vulnerability Assessment workshop

**November 2-3.** Climate Summit – Registration open!!

**November 4 & 6,** Climate-Smart Training, Sacramento and San Diego.

**December 17-18** Next Steering Committee Meeting Retreat. Sarah Allen looking for NPS location in San Francisco.

### **Feedback on meeting**

Liked hearing what people are doing

### **Action Item**

Email info out to group on National Habitat Conservation Planning meeting on east coast –  
**Wayne**