

# SNAMP QUARTERLY MEETING – Q2 2010

## Notes

**Date and time:** Monday, June 21, 2010 1:00- 2:00 pm

**Participants:**

UCST: John Battles, Susie Kocher, Adrianna Sulak, Ann Huber, Reg Barrett, Roger Bales  
MOUP: Kim Squires (FWS), Deb Whitman (USFS), Pat Flebbe (USFS), Mike Chapel (USFS),  
Chris Fischer (USFS), Kalie Crews (USFS), Victor Lyon (USFS)

### ***Summary of Main Outcomes, Agreements, and Next Steps***

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***Main Outcomes and Agreements:***

1. Last Chance and Sugar Pine Projects are still on track for implementation this year if unlitigated.
2. SNAMP YR3 budget on track. DWR task orders waiting to be signed by UC. Secretary Snow has expressed support to continue DWR funding for SNAMP. Forest Service has made YR4 contribution to budget and a small part of YR5.
3. Documenting agreements whenever possible is important.
4. Individual briefings to MOUP leaders are an effective way to keep MOUP leadership new to SNAMP knowledgeable about the project.
5. Annual meeting planning should include an evaluation of which MOUP member may not attend the meeting and should be briefed.
6. Besides MOUP, it is important to also make sure that we reach out to Sierra Nevada Conservancy to keep them engaged.

***Next Steps:***

1. Susie Kocher will send out a save-the-date email for the Annual Meeting to the SNAMP distribution list.
2. Kim Squires will try to get the USFWS field supervisor or deputy field supervisor to attend the Annual Meeting, since it will be located this year at the USFWS building in Sacramento.
3. Chris Fischer will contact Susie once they award the contract, and then he and Susie can talk to the purchaser for the field trip planning.
4. Susie Kocher will follow up on the suggestion to include Kings River Experimental Watershed Pacific fisher scientists to present at the next Fisher IT meeting.

### ***Notes***

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**1. Timeline and litigation updates on Sugar Pine and Last Chance Projects (Chris Fischer, Mike Chapel)**

Last Chance (Chris Fischer)

- Appeal period ending tomorrow. Still anticipating an appeal from John Muir Project.

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- Putting together contracts, still on track for implementation this year if unlitigated.

## Sugar Pine Project (Mike Chapel)

- Appeal upheld by Regional Office
- On track to implement as early as August if unlitigated.
- Likely bidder said treatments could be completed by end of 2011.

## Sierra Nevada Forest Plan Amendment (2004) litigation with Sierra Forest Legacy update (Chapel)

- Rob McWhorter indicated that Sugar Pine and Last Chance were removed from the list of projects considered by the request for an injunction. (Mike added via email June 24: “Like all projects planned under the 04 Record of Decision, settlement of the legal action against that decision could affect Sugarpine and Last Chance.”)
- Deb Whitman - the court date is set to begin on July 8, and whether Sugar Pine or Last Chance will be included will depend on the decision of the court. There is still a risk that Sugar Pine and Last Chance will be affected by the case until an agreement is finalized.

Kim Squires asked how the litigation is impacting the Forest Plan Revisions. Deb reported that USFS is moving forward with the revisions, but Lake Tahoe basin is the only forest that is currently working on revisions. Other forests will not begin for at least a couple of years. Work at Sequoia is only at the Sequoia National Monument.

## 2. Budget (Battles)

### a. Review current status

- John, Roger, Crawford Tuttle, Todd Ferrara, and Frank Gehrke met with Resources Secretary Lester Snow this morning to discuss DWR funding for SNAMP. John and Roger briefed him on SNAMP. Secretary Snow indicated he was supportive of SNAMP, and committed to fulfill the state’s promise to fund SNAMP at the original amount. He was interested in climate change links to SNAMP, supportive of this type of research (collaborative with state and fed partnerships), impressed that UC is still waiving its grant administration fees on SNAMP. Secretary Snow is also interested in a commitment from other MOUP members. John invited him to the Annual Meeting.
- They also discussed the need for a transition information package about SNAMP if there are changes in MOUP leadership, especially due to possible new appointments.
- Roger explained that the problem with the state funding this year is the DWR funding amount was disproportionately allocated between the Spatial and Water Teams, with not enough allocated to the Water Team. They have come up with a possible work-around plan to fix this. There will be zero-based budgeting with DWR from now on.

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- Umbrella agreement between UC and DWR in place. Task orders are waiting to be signed by UC.

Roger said that budget wise the Water Team is not even at YR2 funding levels yet, and needs to hire extra people to catch up. It will take another 1-2 years to catch up.

Mike pointed out to Pat and Deb that the state has committed to fund ~one-third of SNAMP, and with the budget problems with the state it has been a challenge for the state to keep its funding on track. The challenges have been great and it would have been easy for the state to jettison the project but they have not.

### **3. Continuity within MOU partner agencies (Battles)**

John seeks feedback on ideas to transfer knowledge about SNAMP with changes in MOUP staff. Some agreements are spoken but parties are not willing to put them in writing (such as State commitment to funding SNAMP, or UC agreement to waive grant overhead beyond the current year).

#### ***Agreements:***

- Documenting agreements whenever possible is important.
- Individual briefings to MOUP leaders are an effective way to keep MOUP leadership new to SNAMP knowledgeable about the project.
- Annual meeting planning should include an evaluation of which MOUP member may not attend the meeting and should get an individual briefing.
- Besides MOUP, it is important to also make sure that we reach out to Sierra Nevada Conservancy to keep them engaged.

#### ***Next Steps:***

- Susie will send out a save-the-date email for the Annual Meeting to the SNAMP distribution list.
- Kim Squires will try to get the USFWS field supervisor or deputy field supervisor to attend the Annual Meeting, since it will be located this year at the USFWS building in Sacramento.

### **4. UCST research updates (Huber)**

Ann gave a brief summary of work completed and new research findings since last reported in April (see attached).

Susie asked for feedback on how to track demographic information about SNAMP meeting participants (ethnicity and sex). Tom Contreras (USFS) had asked PPT whether SNAMP outreach was reaching a representative sample of Californians.

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Kim and Mike said that USFWS could not provide this type of information.

Mike and Deb agreed that it is a sensitive topic and that it may be better not to collect this type of data. Some people may be offended if these questions were put on sign-up sheets.

Mike suggested that Susie talk to Tom to ask whether he really wanted them to collect this type of data or whether he just wanted them to keep an eye out to make sure that under-represented communities were being addressed. He also recommended contacting the Forests' Public Affairs Officers for advice.

## **5. Plans for Integration Team (IT) meeting for 2010 (Susie Kocher)**

Fisher IT meeting – July 22

PPT IT meeting – fall 2010

Water IT meeting – early 2011

Spatial IT meeting – summer 2011

Water field trip – fall 2010

Project implementation field trips – fall 2010 or spring / summer 2011

End of July 2010 - Field trip at the southern site on Pat Manley's (USFS PSW) study of small mammals and birds at the Sugar Pine study site. This is not a SNAMP project, and not a SNAMP field trip, but something Susie is doing as part of her broader UCCE work.

Susie asked the USFS reps on how much lead time she can expect to begin the implementation field trip planning.

Chris and Mike agreed that next summer might be a good time to plan for the implementation field trips.

### **Next Steps:**

- Chris will contact Susie once they award the contract, and then he and Susie can talk to the purchaser for the field trip planning.
- Susie will follow up on Pete Stine's suggestion (passed on by Mike) to include Kings River Experimental Watershed Pacific fisher scientists to present at the next Fisher IT meeting.

## **UC Science Team Updates**

SNAMP 2010 Second Quarter, June 21, 2010

Main research findings and work accomplished since last reported to MOUP on April 26th, 2010

Prepared by Ann M. Huber

### **Project Integration and Management Team**

#### *Budget*

The task orders for Water and Spatial from the Department of Water Resources have been approved and are at the respective Universities for final signatures by Sponsored Projects.

We have submitted a rebudget request to the Sierra Nevada Conservancy. We overspent on salaries and underspent on S&E funds. The imbalance was caused by reshuffling made necessary by the Dec 18, 2008 suspension. We have every expectation that they will approve the rebudget. Potential loss is more than \$40,000 but this outcome is very unlikely.

#### *UCST Coordination*

- Logistical planning for UCST All Scientist Meeting / Retreat in September.
- Update UCST Statement of Neutrality to include expanded Owl and Fisher study areas.
- Investigate UC administrative policy on FOIA requests. There have not been any FOIA requests yet for SNAMP data but this question came up in a UCST meeting.
- Planned and lead monthly UCST conference calls; distribute monthly team updates.
- Review UCST draft manuscripts for consistency in acknowledgements, funding sources and SNAMP pub number.
- Online UCST document archival (manage bSpace site).

#### *Communication with MOUP and SNAMP stakeholders*

- MOUP quarterly meeting in April: agenda, notes, and follow-up on action items.
- Logistical planning and participation in SNAMP Information Sharing Meeting with USFS on May 27<sup>th</sup>, notes and follow-up on action items.
- Provided SNAMP briefing for Lester Snow, new Resources Secretary (June 21)
- Facilitating research projects that leverage SNAMP infrastructure.

#### *Other*

- Logistical planning for an introductory meeting with the SNAMP Oversight Committee.
- Field visit to Water Team study sites in Sugar Pine.

### **Spotted Owl Team**

- Access to the SNAMP study area is still very limited due to snow. We can reach only a handful of territories right now, and our ability to conduct night surveys is extremely limited.

- We have been able to visit most of the recently occupied territories that are on the Eldorado demography study area.
- We have found 17 nests, 2 of which are in the SNAMP study area.
- We have 3 field trips planned, one SNAMP public trip (June 15), one with local high school students (June 24), one with the Georgetown District wildlife crew (July 8).

### **Fisher Team**

We have just recently completed our 3<sup>rd</sup> denning season on the SNAMP Fisher Project. Overall, we identified 15 natal den trees and 15 maternal den trees for 15 different adult female fishers during late March to early June 2010. Three of the denning females died during the denning period and one ceased denning approximately 1 month into the denning season.

We documented mortalities on three radiocollared adult female fishers during the period; two of the deaths were from predation (bobcat), and one was a roadkill near Fisher Camp on Highway 41. We further documented bobcats visiting active den trees and killing fisher kits, something that was previously suspected based on photos of bobcats at den trees, but not confirmed.

For two of the denning females that were killed (F25 and F31) we knew the locations of their den trees, and the Fisher Team was able to climb the den trees and rescue the orphaned kits before they died of exposure/starvation. The 5 fisher kits that were rescued were transported to the Fresno Chaffee Zoo for assessing their health status, and to begin the process of hand rearing the animals in preparation for possible eventual release back into the Sierra National Forest at a location where their presence will not interfere with either the SNAMP Fisher Study or the Kings River Fisher Project. The Fisher Team is working with the Department of Fish and Game, the Fresno Chaffee Zoo, wildlife rehabilitators with Fresno Wildlife Care, and several veterinarians at UC Davis on a program to pen rear the fisher kits over the summer in preparation for their eventual release back into the Southern Sierra Nevada Fisher population.

Overall, 15 of 16 radiocollared adult female fishers on the SNAMP Fisher Study reproduced during spring 2010. Our preliminary estimate of fecundity for spring 2010 was 1.73 kits/female.

Project Leader Rick Sweitzer presented 3 different slide presentations on the SNAMP Fisher Project during the report period; one for a class and the teaching staff at Yosemite High School, one for the Mariposa Pilots Association, and one at the Annual Staff/Employee Orientation meeting of the Bass Lake Ranger District Office.

The denning season is now over and we have resumed trapping activities in different parts of the study area. Trapping during the summer period will be targeted/focused on recapturing/recollaring several fishers that dropped their radiocollars during the winter+spring

period, and on several noncollared fishers that were detected by survey cameras over the last 3 months.

At present, we are actively monitoring 24 different radiocollared fisher by daily/near daily aerial telemetry. Also, in addition to the targeted trapping described above, over the next 3 months we will be using cameras to survey remote parts of the study area for fishers. Finally, the Fisher Integration Meeting is scheduled for July 22 in Fresno. Project Leader Rick Sweitzer is working on a variety of data analyses in preparation for this event.

### **Fire and Forest Ecosystem Health**

- We continue to work on fuels modeling for the southern SNAMP site and the development of a succession of fuels models for existing and post-treatment conditions.
- Tree core processing continues for forest health pre-treatment conditions.

### **Water Quality and Quantity Team**

- We are continuing to collect bi-weekly stream grab samples for suspended sediment concentration, ionic content, and isotopic analysis. Sampling began Jan 2010. Grab samples will continue until we receive the automated ISCO water samplers. Snowpack ion and isotope samples were also collected during peak accumulation.
- A technical report on soil bulk density distribution from our soil moisture sensor installations has been completed by an undergraduate student. It will be available to SNAMP as soon as it undergoes some modification and refinement.
- Analysis of data from the various watershed sites is in progress.
- Soil samples from soil moisture sensor installations will be processed for texture analysis by the UC Davis ANR Lab as soon as this year's DWR funds become available.
- Model inputs are being compiled, for hydrologic modeling in the various basins.

### **Spatial Team**

- We continue to develop and refine the SNAMP data server.
- We are in the process of verifying LiDAR results from the southern site, where there are some very large trees.
- We are working on upscaling the northern site LiDAR data. We have finished the regression analysis on the plot level data, and have begun to map the vegetation parameters across the whole study area.
- We continue to extract the spatial distribution of fuels information from LiDAR according to Scott & Burgan's 2005 fuel models set.

## **Public Participation Team (PPT)**

### *PPT: Website*

- Continuing to maintain website.
- SNAMP newsletter Vol 4 No 1 published; focuses on the wildfire meta-analysis.
- Developing next SNAMP newsletter to focus on the Fisher team; expected publication in late Spring 2010.
- Sent out web updates to the full SNAMP distribution list in June 2010.

### *PPT: Research*

- Archiving SNAMP materials on SNAMP data server
- Conducting follow-up interviews – to be complete by June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2010
- Data analysis
- Working on next journal articles with PPT
- Creating web survey of entire SNAMP participant list with PPT
- Longer term: program evaluation matrix refinement

### *PPT: Outreach Whole Team Activities*

- Planning Fisher Team IT meeting in July
- Collecting and producing introductory SNAMP videos for posting the website
- Collecting and analyzing demographic data for SNAMP participation

### *PPT: Outreach at Northern Site - Kim Ingram*

Planning a Spotted Owl field trip June 15<sup>th</sup> with the owl team

### Presentations at the Northern Site:

- Sierra Foothills Audubon Society in Nevada City, Placer County – March 2010
- Yuba Watershed Protection & Fire Safe Council in Dobbins, Yuba County – March 2010
- The Amador County Fire Safe Council, Jackson, CA – April 2010
- Placer County Water Authority symposium – April 2010
- The Butte County Fire Safe Council, Paradise, CA – May 2010

### *PPT: Outreach at Southern Site – Anne Lombardo*

- Coordinated with the high school and the fisher team to have a high school student volunteer. Worked with the fisher team to set up the rescued fisher kit blog:  
<http://ucanr.org/blogs/Fisher/>
- Staffed a SNAMP table with information on pacific fishers at three earth day events.

### Presentations at the Southern Site:

- Tuolumne County Board of Supervisors