

University Science in a Third Party Role in Participatory Adaptive Management

Adriana Sulak¹, Maggi Kelly¹, Kim Rodrigues², and Lynn Huntsinger¹

¹University of California, Berkeley, Department of Environmental Science, Policy, & Management

²University of California Cooperative Extension, Div. of Agriculture and Natural Resources

SIERRA NEVADA
ADAPTIVE
MANAGEMENT
PROJECT
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SNAMP Highlights

WATER TEAM ADDED. At the beginning of SNAMP, after suggestions from the public, Forest Service agreed to add a water component to the university's research workplan. Therefore, SNAMP will provide important hydrological information that will directly inform Forest Service management and policy at the local and regional scales.

FISHER TEAM ADDED. At the start of the project, also due to public request, the Forest Service agreed to add a UC research focus on the fisher – this will directly impact Forest Service management in the future. Very little is currently known on this elusive animal. One of the most exciting outcomes to date for the project is the collaring and tracking of over 30 fisher.

INTEGRATION TEAM DEVELOPED. Scientist, stakeholder, and manager meetings are facilitated by UCCE to create a mutual learning situation dedicated to focusing on particular issues, incoming data, or areas where better communication is needed. Eventually the Team will help turn UC research results into ideas for improved Forest Service management that are socially as well as ecologically sustainable.

INCREASED PUBLIC INTERACTION. For the duration of the project, the Forest Service is committed to working with the UCST to encourage participation and gather information and feedback. The Forest Service is committed to respond to the feedback directly, and to interacting directly with scientists and the public. These are tangible changes in Forest Service practice.

FISHER RESULTS AFFECTING IMPLEMENTATION. UC's focus on the fisher has already produced novel information on the location of fisher dens that has immediately resulted in changes: this information has caused alterations to proposed treatments and could allow the Forest Service to test their own standards for conducting vegetation treatments around fisher dens.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION CHANGES IN FOREST SERVICE PROCESSES. Results from UC's interviews and observations, and the experience of working with Cooperative Extension, has contributed to a Forest Service initiative to change the way the Forest Service shares information and interacts with the public. This might include a more prominent role for Forest Service public affairs in key NEPA processes, an increased role for the internet for USFS document sharing and meeting information distribution, documenting oral comments, and an interest in extending pre-NEPA work with the public.



Abstract

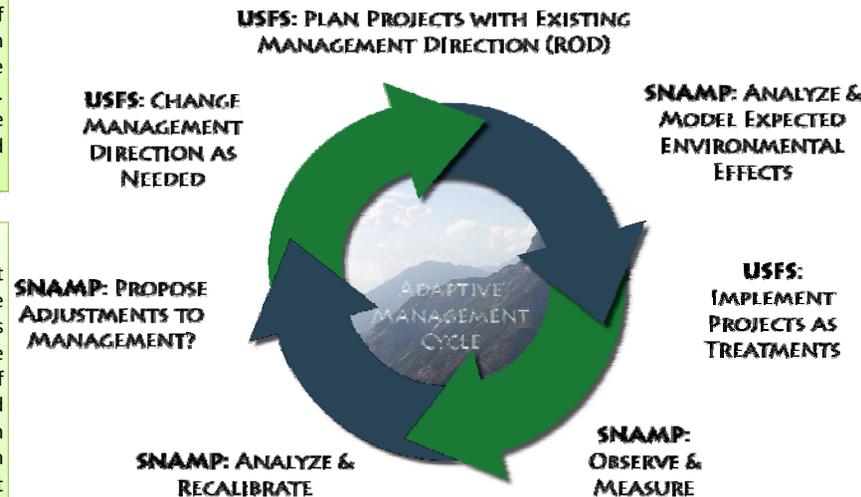
The Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project (SNAMP) is uniquely structured to incorporate a university acting as a "neutral" third party. The role of the University of California Science Team is to study the effects of the controversial 2004 Sierra-wide mandated US Forest Service fuels treatment strategy (Strategically Placed Landscape Area Treatments) on fire behavior, forest ecology, water, wildlife (California spotted owl, Pacific fisher), and public participation. University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE), as part of the science team, is working with stakeholders, scientists, and agencies to encourage mutual learning and participation as part of adaptive management. An interactive website allows widespread participation. This three party approach is hoped to improve transparency in forest management, allow the incorporation of stakeholder, managerial, and scientific knowledge and experience, learn about the effects of fuels treatments, and help prevent or reduce the conflicts over management that have brought many projects to a standstill. This paper will discuss the basic structure of the project and share preliminary results from the first few years of university participation and observation.

Basic Structure of SNAMP

A Memorandum of Understanding encouraging cooperation in forest management was signed in February of 2005 by the US Forest Service, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, and the California Resources Agency. It directs the University of California to study the Forest Service's adaptive management cycle as it implements the US Forest Service's 2004 Record of Decision. The 2004 decision dictates the use of Strategically Placed Landscape Treatments (SPLATs) as the Forest Service's vegetation management strategy throughout the Sierra Nevada. The memorandum describes the university as an independent third party, while the Forest Service is responsible for implementing treatments in two study areas on the Tahoe and the Sierra National Forests.

Can We Close the Adaptive Management Cycle?

From the beginning SNAMP has worked with the public, including sharing peer reviews of the Science Team workplan and getting input to the workplan through public meetings and the interactive website. The website posts all project records and allows visitors to share ideas and ask questions. Now the "Integration Team" of stakeholders, managers, and scientists, has been added to work on specific topics in greater depth. Cooperative Extension program representatives encourage local participation in each study area. We have found that one critical question from public participants is: **How can we know that the research results from the project will be used in future Forest Service management?**



the SIERRA NEVADA
Adaptive Management Project

