

SNAMP Quarterly Meeting – Q2 2009

Notes

Conference Call
July 16, 2009

Participants:

UCST: Adriana Sulak, Kim Rodriguez, Reg Barrett, Rick Sweitzer, Maggi Kelly, John Battles, Ann Huber

MOUP: Mike Chapel, Kimberly Squires, Crawford Tuttle, Frank Gehrke

1. Reports from districts

Mike reported updates for both Bass Lake and American River Ranger Districts.

- Sugar Pine: expect final decision on Draft EIS in December. Public field trips planned for July 29th and Aug 1st (*note July 28: these dates since changed to Aug 5 and 8*)
- Last Chance: plan to sign draft EA next week. Still hopeful will receive bids and can start implementation this fall.

Next Steps:

- *Ann will follow up with Mark Smith for Sugar Pine field trip information.*
- *Mike will share with Crawford timing of the bids for Last Chance.*

2. 2009 Budget

a) Status of USFS bridge funding

John gives an update on what has been done on UC and USFS ends to advance Year 4 funds to SNAMP, to cover Yr 4 state funding delays.

- Bridge funding processing should be completed by end of July. Key to advanced funding is keeping Spatial team going
- SNC still has \$50k of SNAMP suspended funds, but looks like it will be released this year and we will be able to spend it backwards (ie for past work). Crawford believes may clear in early fall.

b) Status of DWR and SNC funding for SNAMP

Crawford Tuttle and Frank Gehrke share what they know about state funding situation.

- Crawford hopeful that revised CA budget may be voted on in July or August. It will determine this year's control measures (contract reductions, layoffs, etc.) Bond funds still there, but Dept. of Finance has not issued guidance on Prop 84 funds yet. Will have more knowledge on what it means to SNAMP within a number of weeks once revised budget is passed. New or amended contracts will have to be reviewed by Dept of General Services (DGS). It is possible that contracts may need to be reduced by 15%.
- John clarifies that the Yr3 DWR contract is being amended.

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- Frank adds that there is confusion at lower levels on how they are allowed to spend. Will take a while after things settle down to issue contracts. Recommends that would be prudent to get any amended contracts submitted to DGS as soon as possible.
- Crawford urges UCST to let MOUP know if they will need USFS to postpone any treatments. John says it is not necessary to hold off on treatments for the Water team.

Next Steps:

John will work with MOUP to submit Yr3 DWR amendment as soon as possible.

3. Fisher Integration Team Meeting July 15

- Kim reviews what was discussed at the meeting. Reg and Rick shared current results, study questions, study design, and potential management indicators to assess status of fisher. The meeting laid foundation for further dialogue to develop next steps to identify useful management indicators. Discussions included relevant scale of indicators to understand treatment effects. Need to evaluate risks of doing nothing (ie no treatments could negatively impact fisher). Full notes from meeting will be out soon.
- Reg says indicators they are proposing are geared to assess changes in fisher population. Rick adds that indicators should get at treatment effects as well. Fisher received a lot of input from scientists at meeting. Science team will continue discussions on Fisher indicators.
- Crawford, Reg, and Rick discuss mortality results. Reg is somewhat surprised at the role of disease. (So far suspected causes of death include 9 predation, 4 disease, 5 roadkill, 2 pending necropsy results, 1 starvation, 1 accidental drowning).
- Reg stresses that SNAMP is the only project providing rigorous data on cause of death. The air support on SNAMP allows them to get to animals quickly, which is especially important to determine the role of disease because it requires collection and preservation of fresh kills. So far mortalities are high even without any treatments occurring yet.

4. UCST research update 1:50 - 2:05pm (Ann Huber)

Ann gave a brief summary of work completed and new research findings since last reported in the quarterly meeting in April. Summary appended to these notes.

5. Other topics or questions from UCST or MOUP

- Mike says USFS Forest revision process should not affect SNAMP. Big challenge for SNAMP is to get the treatments done.
- John appreciates support from USFS on helping with advanced funding this year.

UC Science Team Updates for 2009 Q2 Meeting

Main research findings and work accomplished since last reported to MOUP on April 22, 2009
July 15, 2009

Project Integration and Management Team

- Working to secure committed YR3 funding.
- Meta-analysis of fire hazard assessments within the Sierra Nevada
 - Completed analysis for all sites (finished fire modeling simulations) and working on results.
 - Dave Saah will presenting results at the ESA meeting in August.
- Planning for UCST 2-day science integration meeting in September.

Fire and Forest Ecosystem Health Team

- Continue to make progress on the fire behavior and effects modeling for Last Chance. Manuscript is beginning to be developed.
- Lassen-Plumas fire behavior study first draft of manuscript should be done in 7 days. This will be submitted to a journal by early August, part of integration part of SNAMP.
- Forest health Integration Team meetings completed by John Battles this summer.

Spatial Team

- Organized and delivered two workshops on LiDAR in SNAMP: June 3 and 4, 2009.
- Preliminary processing of southern site LiDAR data completed.
 - Developed the algorithms for tree detection, tree height, DBH, crown size, and canopy cover, and we are now in the process of applying the algorithms to the whole Southern Site (wall to wall mapping). It is a very time consuming perspective because of the large amount of data size, but we expect it will be done by the end of the summer.
- Northern site LiDAR data assessed for vertical accuracy. Vertical accuracy = 7 cm.
- Field season has begun. We are collecting GPS information and LAI for plots in Northern site.

Water Quality and Quantity Team

- Installing soil moisture sensors, and collecting and processing soil samples.
- Planning weir construction on Big Sandy.
- Data clean-up (organizing files on the digital library and initial clean-up on raw data - running scripts for snow data).
- General instrument maintenance and troubleshooting.
- Data starting to come in for stage and stream chemistry.
- Strengthening and/or repositioning instruments from mid-winter installations.
- Continuing model parameterization and building input files.
- We had 2 weir experts come from Idaho and walk Big Creek with us last Friday. We are arranging for some geophysical surveys to determine depth to bedrock.

Public Participation Team (PPT)

PPT: Website

- Working on updating discussion section of the web to be secure.
- Continual postings to website <http://snamp.cnr.berkeley.edu/>
- Created FAQ site for web.

PPT: Research

- Reported to IT meeting on research and outreach May 19.
- Completing last phase of interviews, purchased and beginning analysis with NVivo software.
- Initiated local oral histories.
- Continued archiving and tracking of SNAMP products and interactions.
- Using IT input, literature review, Kim's dissertation work to develop evaluation matrix for SNAMP. working with all PPT and preparing to present and discuss with UCST.

PPT: Outreach

- Conducted local outreach in northern and southern sites through individual presentations to a variety of professional associations, conservation groups, business groups, high schools, and government agencies. A recent briefing was to an all staff meeting of the American River Ranger District (June 25th).
- Hosted or will host on site field trips /seminars with all other UC science teams:
 - Fisher Team (May 18th - Oakhurst)
 - Fire and Forest Ecosystem Health Team (May 29th - Oakhurst, August 6th - Foresthill)
 - Spatial team (June 3rd - Oakhurst, June 4th - Foresthill)
 - Spotted Owl Team (July 11th - Foresthill)
 - Water Quantity and Quality Team (August 25th - Oakhurst, September 1st - Foresthill)
- Developed list of Frequently Asked Questions for the website.
- Coordinated responses from UCST to comments on the SNAMP website.
- Trained our staff on facilitation skills (Davis - June 22nd).
- Organized PPT IT on May 19th in Davis - summarized timing and size of outreach over the life of the project.
- Organizing Fisher IT meeting on July 15th in Fresno.
- Organizing Owl IT for August or September 2009.
- Developing our capacity to produce outreach videos for SNAMP.
- Working with researchers to develop an evaluation strategy for SNAMP.

Fisher Team

We currently have 20 collared fishers in the Study Area. Two of these are missing/inaudible, likely due to technical problems with the radiocollars.

At the time of the last quarterly report we were at the start of the fisher denning season, which ended around June 10, 2009. Over the course of the denning season we tracked denning activities of 13 different adult female fishers, and were able to identify 12 natal den trees and 25 maternal den trees. Information on the locations of these den trees were provided to the Forest Service for designing buffer areas.

During the period from April 1, 2009 to present we documented 10 fisher mortalities including 8 collared study animals and 2 noncollared fishers in Yosemite National Park. Causes of death for these 10 animals included predation, vehicle strikes (roadkill), and disease.

We resumed trapping at the end of the denning period, and trapping will continue through the fall and early winter.

Camera surveys were completed in the Key Watershed areas and in the CBI Test regions of the study area in mid April. Cameras are now being used to monitor all females known to have produced kits during Spring 2009. We are assessing the utility of these "Kit Cams" for monitoring survival of kits until they become independent around October.

All members of the Fisher Science Team attended the Yosemite Region Fisher Workshop in Yosemite NP on May 13, 2009, and Project Leader Rick Sweitzer presented information on the SNAMP Fisher Project.

Efforts are continuing by John Litton of the Forest Service to acquire or assure access to a backup airplane to avoid unscheduled interruption of aircraft support for tracking collared fishers.

We are currently preparing for the Fisher Integration Meeting in Fresno, California on July 15, 2009.

Spotted Owl Team

We are currently finishing our fourth round of owl surveys in the SNAMP owl study area.

- We have assessed reproduction and resighted (or captured and banded) 10 owl pairs and 1 single bird.
- We have 6 nests, for a total of 10 fledglings, of which 3 still need to be captured and banded.
- We may begin post-treatment vegetation sampling on the Eldorado National Forest next week.
- On July 11, we conducted a public field trip to one of the owl sites in the American River Ranger District.
- We updated the Owl Workplan. It is posted on the SNAMP website.
<http://snamp.cnr.berkeley.edu/teams/owl>