

## Capacity Building Work Plan

**Objective:** *To advance the practice of collaborative conservation by building the collaborative capacity of current community-based collaborative conservation efforts and by engaging, inspiring and preparing future leaders.*

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### **Background:**

As our population grows, demand on natural resources increases, climate changes, and public management agencies have less capacity, sustaining both our lands and livelihoods becomes more complex. This complexity requires a collaborative approach to conservation, rooted in inclusion, innovation and deep partnerships. Enduring solutions must include voices that represent the diversity of communities involved and impacts by conservation efforts.

Historically we have trained conservation practitioners to provide the best technical natural resource tools and skills. Conservation practitioners include nonprofit organizations, public agencies, private landowners, business and industry interests, and many other citizens.

Taking a collaborative approach to conservation however, means that it is insufficient that conservation practitioners are only technically competent. Future practitioners must also be excellent collaborators; skilled at communication, facilitation, leadership, relationship building, fundraising, planning, problem-solving, critical thinking; and armed with the latest collaboration tools (like project management, organizational management, water funds, and new finance mechanisms).

Until recently, few practitioners were formerly trained in collaborative skills and tools during their academic training. Many learned once out of school by trial-and-error. Others were naturally talented or were mentored by their peers. We believe that by building collaborative skills and tools in the next generation of conservation practitioners during their academic learning, we will accelerate the success of their conservation efforts as the next generation hits the ground better prepared with collaboration skills and tools to match their natural resource competencies.

**Our Purpose:** Build the collaborative skills, tools and capacity in the CBCC practice community across the West by:

- a) increasing awareness of and access to existing collaboration learning opportunities and resources,
- b) making connections between CBCC groups and qualified service providers,
- c) identifying regional gaps in collaborative capacity,
- d) convening individuals and groups to provide high quality collaboration trainings,
- e) building a diverse pipeline of next generation collaboration leaders,
- f) creating more opportunities for embedded internship with CBCCs, and
- e) catalyzing the development of new collaboration tools to fill the collaborative capacity gaps.

### ***Existing Efforts and Challenges:***

1. Currently, there are a large and growing number of existing collaboration learning opportunities and resources for community members to build their skills and tools. We should not replicate these efforts, but build on and amplify them.
2. Finding these opportunities is challenging. Current opportunities do not exist in a centralized location, are offered by a variety of entities inside and outside the conservation community, and are often embedded in layers of disparate organizations. Organizations that offer these opportunities include: academic institutions, nonprofit conservation organizations, natural resource professional organizations, private consultants, public agencies, networks, for profit entities, and funding institutions.
3. Access to training and opportunities that focus on collaborative skill building is constrained by difficulties in finding opportunities, affordability, timing, location, and format.
4. The capacity of individuals and groups to advance collaborative practice could be improved by addressing recognized gaps in skills. These include: listening and communicating, relationship building, facilitation and decision-making, understanding others, catalyzing and managing effective collaborative processes and collaborative organizations, and facilitate leadership.
5. Key areas of focus that, while outside the purview of this group, could improve the ability of collaborative groups to function include finance and fundraising, legal/regulation/policy information, strategic and adaptive planning, situation assessment, and nonprofit management and organizational capacity. Significant opportunities already exist for trainings in these topics.
6. Many academic institutions offer classes on relevant topics as part of undergraduate courses. There are only a few majors or minors in this field and most of these programs are known by titles such as natural resources conflict resolution and dispute resolution. Some of these programs are located in colleges or departments of natural resources while others are located in Law Schools.
7. Many academic programs include internships or practicums.

## ***Critical Gaps/Needs:***

Through Colorado State University's Center for Collaborative Conservation Needs Assessment and Community-Based Collaborative Conservation Workshop, members of the conservation community of practice identified opportunities to advance the practice of collaborative conservation and prepare the next generation as follows.

### Advance the Practice of Collaborative Conservation within the Current CBCC Community

1. Create ways to easily find individuals and organizations who want to build collaboration capacity and link them to resources.
2. Create an efficient way to find existing offerings.
  - a. Easy, accessible, searchable, and up-to-date database of tools and trainings in a centralized location.
  - b. Create directories of low cost, high quality service providers to CBCCs.
3. Increase participation in trainings through incentives, like offering workshops at existing conferences, reduced prices for attendees, and attaching certification to workshop completion.
4. Create an organization to help build these skills and expertise.
5. Employ a variety of learning methods tailored to the audience acknowledging that different people learn differently. Match the right training to the right people. Use technology to reduce cost and provide access to remote places. Facilitate more in-person, peer-to-peer training and exchanges/problem-solving clinics/workshops. Use appropriate people already connected to communities. People learn best by doing.
6. Create a mentoring/coaching program.
7. Build the pipeline of next generation of collaborative conservation leaders. Provide meaningful internships; where Universities match students to CBCCs for hands-on real time experiences and skills building, or encourage programs like "Walk-a-Mile in Your Boots".
8. Establish a "collaboration travelling roadshow/circuit riders/cadre of trainers" that includes a toolbox/curriculum of cases studies, stories, and tools.

### Build a Next Generation Pipeline of Future Leaders

There is a need to address the generational turnover in current CBCCs. This involves the need to pass on to the next generation the history, knowledge, and relationships developed overtime through CBCC efforts. A pipeline of next generation practitioners needs to be built with collaboration skills and tools to match the level of technical knowledge.

Possible strategies:

- Mentoring and coaching programs to support next and early career practitioners.
- Change the culture and build awareness and support from communities, especially rural communities, and through programs for youth by engaging with rural groups like 4H, FFA, and building CBCC into these programs.
- Increase Cost-share and other programs with agencies to provide opportunities for youth and students working with CBCC groups during the academic portions of their careers increase programs (e.g., Americorps VISTA).

- Capacity to support imbedded internships as required parts of the education system.
- Expand internships/apprenticeships and create an internship/apprenticeship network.
- Develop and share college curricula on CBCC.
- Support young or beginning farmers.

**Strategies and Actions:** The following information on strategies and actions was derived from interviews with members of the community of practice.

***Strategies and Actions for Peer-to-Peer Learning/Training***

***1. Individuals are invited to observe and provide feedback by CBCC leaders or groups.***

- a. The Network could connect (match making) people together; those who need mentoring/coaching with those already qualified and willing to provide it. Then then allow them to design/organize what they need.
  - i. To accomplish this, you need to know who is qualified and who needs help and what kind of help.
  - ii. Create a directory that includes quality and experience of the trainer; use a rating system.
  - iii. Often professionals provide individual feedback pro bono as it is requested.
- b. Coaching/Mentoring.
  - i. Early career people benefit from structure and support in mentoring while those with more experience prefer a less formal/ ad hoc approach.
  - ii. Low cost coaching approach occurs when a CBCC group remains in the lead with support as needed from a qualified professional.
  - iii. Integrate coaching/mentoring into trainings, using a case clinic approach. Well-designed training events create opportunities for participants to apply learning and get direct help to solve self-identified problems. Intentional teams come together to problem solve, making progress on their projects in addition to learning.
  - iv. Coaching post training produces the biggest change in behavior; versus just training. Coaching enables people to process and apply training.
  - v. Mentoring/Coaching requires a special set of skills; few people have this.
  - vi. Provide virtual opportunities for peer and mentoring support as practitioners begin to apply new skills in their collaborative work.
- c. Internships and Mentoring.
  - i. Strategic way to build skills and develop a pipeline in the conservation community.
  - ii. Qualified organizations can take on interns, train them, mentor them or hire them.
  - iii. Need to put together best practices/guidelines on how to design and implement these programs.

- 2. *Training for new collaboratives/members of collaboratives. How collaboration works; how to manage and sustain a collaborative group.***
  - a. Sustained backbone support is critical.
  - b. Funding for this is also important.
  - c. Plenty of qualified people are already available
  - d. Problem-solving clinic approach is effective.
  - e. Need to create future generations to take over existing programs from current leaders.
  
- 3. *Conservation/natural resource community classes provide technical learning on topics-for example on how NEPA works.***
  - a. Topics emerge from the communities' interests.
  - b. Team up with well respected, objective expertise.
  - c. Use an open public space and process. Create an open community public dialogue.
  
- 4. *Field based problem solving exchanges/clinics-between collaborative groups-learning exchanges.***
  - a. The Network could:
    - i. Build off of existing networks.
    - ii. Encourage CBCC state/sub-regional organizations to do one clinic every year.
    - iii. Build a funding pool. There is a lack of human capacity to meet the peer-to-peer cross visits/exchanges/problem solving clinic needs. Also a lack of funding for peer-to-peer learning events.
    - iv. Play a connecting/match making role. There is a need to know who wants these activities, who could design and host them, and an application process with clear guidelines.

***Strategies and Actions for Training a Group of Trainers (cadre/strike team of trainers)***

- a. Create cohorts of trained community leaders.
  - i. Create a regional dialogue amongst community leaders and decision makers on the topic.
  - ii. Invite people to speak with skills and respect; peers to lead the dialogue. Hire a professional facilitator.
- b. Create strike teams/cadres.
  - i. The challenge is to train and then sustain them.
  - ii. Need to build credibility and establish a track record. Support existing individuals who could help with that lift.
  - iii. Do you train others to compete with existing trainers, or look at who is available and bring people together?
- c. Register of Trainers.
  - i. The Network could provide a register of known, qualified, trusted people and what they provide. Then look for gaps, identify the right people to train.
  - ii. Need a match making process between trainer and trainee.
  - iii. Paid members of Network, have access to reduced cost trainers/coaches.

***The Network could act as a connector, convener and catalyst; and advance the practice of CBCC by:***

- a. creating a database for connecting by:
  - i. increasing knowledge of and access to existing collaboration learning opportunities and resources,
  - ii. building a directory of qualified service providers at reduced cost for paying members of the Network
  - iii. building a directory of qualified mentors/coaches with support for paying members of the Network
- b. building collaborative capacity by:
  - i. building a funding pool to support more peer-to-peer learning opportunities
  - ii. match making between existing state and sub-regional groups who offer peer-to-peer learning opportunities (workshops, cross visits, clinics) and CBCC groups who wants these activities
  - iii. establish best practices for designing and delivering peer-to-peer learning opportunities, coaching and effective internship programs
  - iv. creating an internship program that identifies potential interns and matches them to potential CBCC groups
- c. catalyzing increased collaboration capacity:
  - i. by identifying critical collaboration tools and skills, and then convening existing/qualified people/groups to provide “training” in those skills and tools at the annual Network Gathering (often co-hosted with other CBCC events)
  - ii. mapping existing learning opportunities and resources and identifying gaps to catalyze the development of new trainings and tools by existing organizations/individuals for CBCCs.

***Strategies and Actions for Building a Pipeline of Future Leaders***

1. Transform the graduate degree in Natural Resources Conflict Resolution at University of Montana into a Regional Leadership program
2. Provide embedded and meaningful internships, practicum opportunities, and other hands-on learning opportunities; linking students to CBCC practitioners and groups across the region for experiential learning opportunities and at the same time provide capacity to CBCCs
3. Build on existing graduate programs
4. Market the region’s expertise in community-based collaboration; seek to attract students throughout the country (and around the world) to study CBCC in the Rocky Mountain region; with particular recognition of increasing diversity and engaging under-represented populations.
5. Pay close attention to under-represented communities and groups within communities and target for academic programs and internships.

**Objective Priority Strategies and Actions:** Highest priority actions underway are in green, high priority but no action yet in blue, medium priority actions in yellow, lowest priority actions in white. Level of priority is determined by cost, time, importance, and feasibility. Yellow indicates for another WCCN WG to accomplish.

Strategies	Actions	Leader for Strategy/Action	Partners &/or Resources Needed
<p>1. Gather and share existing collaboration tools, learning opportunities and resources</p>	<p>1. Launch and maintain CRAFT: a web-based searchable data base of existing collaboration learning opportunities and resources</p>	<p>Launched by CCC in February 2019. Maintained by CCC</p>	<p>CCC is maintaining and managing.</p>
	<p>2. Share &amp; promote the database with CBCCs throughout the region</p>	<p>CBCC Network Leadership Team and Capacity Building WG</p>	<p>Network needs to continue to promote and share the link to CRAFT; encourage additions.</p>
	<p>3. Create 1 minute YouTube video on CRAFT and or short piece in future WCCN newsletter highlighting a skill, tool, training</p>	<p>Capacity Building WG</p>	<p>Podcasts previously suggested not really a good match. Consider a student project to create a YouTube video on how CRAFT works. When WCCN creates a newsletter, the Working Group could write a short highlight of a tool or training for each issue.</p>
	<p>4. Create an application</p>	<p>Not a priority right now</p>	<p>CRAFT already deisgned to be user friendly on multiple devices; smart phones, tablets, computers, etc</p>
<p>2. Use a variety of methods to provide collaboration skills and tools to CBCC groups in the region.</p>	<p>1. Create a regional list of CBCCs and support organizations, create form to gather profiles of each group and translate that information into</p>	<p>Capacity Building WG: CCC working on list and with AZ, NM and CO on collaborative mapping project</p>	<p>CCC, NMFWR, C4C and Cross Watershed Network all working on story map idea and how to combine mapping efforts. CCC consulting with CSU Geospatial Centroid. Organizational profile being developed to feed into searchable database to support story map, create directories and or Finder mechanisms</p>

	an interactive story map		
	2. Create a Peer-to-Peer Learning Directory. Groups willing and qualified to design and host peer-to-peer trainings, and groups needing these trainings. Act as connector/match maker.	Capacity Building WG: CCC working on design options.	Local conservation organizations, state-wide offices of NGO's, and state-wide collaborative networks (eg Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership or the Montana Forest Collaboration Network) have data bases and directories which can be linked to regional resources.  CCC design a Google form to gather Network member organizational profiles, including this information, and feed into searchable database and connect to a Finder mechanism.
	3. Create a register of trusted and qualified mentors /coaches/ trainers. Act as connector between mentor and mentees, CBCCs and trainers/coaches.	Capacity Building WG: CCC working on design options	Current agency staff, extension officers, and county-level officials could offer insights into experiences with current trainers, facilitators, etc.  CCC design a Google form to gather Network member organizational profiles, including this information, and feed into searchable database and connect to a Finder mechanism; that is "Find a mentor, coach, or trainer"
	4. Develop best practice guidelines for a) designing and hosting peer-to-peer trainings, b) mentoring /coaching programs, and c) internship programs.	Capacity Building WG	Matter of identifying who has the best of these guidelines and then sharing them. Do not need to create these, collect and promote those that already exist. Work in conjunction with other Network LT members who have experience in this; such as Tahnee Robertson, Cross Watershed Network, etc.
	5. Determine the set of willing individuals in extension, watershed groups, etc. who desire engagement with CBCC groups (or wish	Capacity Building WG	This is a huge task and would require a lot of capacity, which is currently not available. Perhaps better to leave this up to individuals to discover on their own and the role of the Network is to provide ways to connect to others and resources/tools/learning opportunities. The Launch Event will have connecting sessions that will support this.

	<p>to create a new one) and make site visits to meetings of their organizations to discern relevant issues and discover joint projects.</p>		<p>The Story Map and CBCC list and organizational profiles will also support CBCCs to make connections.  No need to take more action on this – already supported by Actions 1, 2, 3 above and the upcoming launch event.  Future use of “circuit riders” for site visits/trainings</p>
	<p>6. Convene existing groups to develop new collaboration skills and tools trainings to fill gaps.</p>	<p>Capacity Building  WG: Steve Smutko</p>	<p>This requires some level of capacity. There are already lots of trainings available. Focus on gaps is good. Role of the Network is not to create trainings to fill gaps, but to share what the gaps are with those who have time, expertise and capacity to develop trainings to fill gaps.  Steve suggested actions he could take to support this:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Share existing sets of training materials, “how-to” of collaboration; share in written form or in person</li> <li>•Steve connected to Env Policy section of the Association for Conflict Resolution, many workshops and trainings at their annual conferences; connect the Network members to them</li> <li>•Steve is also connected to the University Network for Collaborative Governance which does teaching, training research, need-based training; ; connect the Network members to them</li> </ul> <p>Fill some gaps at upcoming Network Launch Event and future Network gatherings. Consider use of technology and social media to provide resources at lower costs, to more diverse audiences, at more places and to more remote locations.</p>
	<p>7. Assess the feasibility of a future “cadre” or “circuit rider” group of collaboration trainers. If feasible, find collaborators and design program including training.</p>	<p>Capacity Building  WG: Steve Smutko</p>	<p>This idea was founded on CBCCs requesting and preferring training and coaching etc. to happen in their communities on the ground, tailored to their place and group.  The idea of a trained group available to travel and train is great, but is a large commitment of time and capacity.  The better approach is to identify capacity that already exists and build more collaboration skills and tools capacity into those groups. Groups like extension, academic institutions, and conservation districts, for example. Train the trainer might work?</p>

			Steve suggested contacted the western branch of the National Association for Community Development Professionals (NACDEP) and or extension in WY and CO (Retta on our WG for CO)(western branch too) to determine what capacity extension and or others have to deliver collaboration support to groups in each state; from there gaps could be identified. Steve could work on this in August. Retta is back from maternity leave later in August.
3. Build organizational and collaborative capacity of CBCCs to increase conservation success.	1. Design a pilot program to assess organizational & collaborative capacity of a diverse set of CBCCs, and determine training, coaching and other resources that can strengthen capacity, apply over time and evaluate change in capacity and conservation success.	Capacity Building WG: initiate during working session at WCCN launch event.	Design a pilot program at WCCN launch event in March 2020 and if successful pilot after the event with funding support from Gates Family Foundation and others.
	2. Support the development of state and sub-regional networks for collaborative capacity building of CBCCs.	Capacity Building WG. Tahnee Robertson, Alan Barton, Shannon Wadas	Activity is occurring in CO, NM and AZ.
4. Develop new funding mechanisms to advance practice	1. Identify & create a list of service providers who will offer reduced costs to paying members of the Network.	Capacity Building WG. <b>Need someone to lead this effort.</b>	This list would be useful, build over time. Who gets on the list? Are they certified and if so by whom? Does WCCN have time to determine a certification process? Could include a recommendation section. If not, users need to be cautioned to do their own due diligence to find the right match for them and their CBCC. If no certification, then this is just a list of available people; these people are not assessed in terms of experience by the WCCN. Build from existing lists.

			<p>Include contact info and areas of expertise and or geography.</p> <p>Pilot with Deb Kleinman &amp; Tahnee Robertson.</p> <p>Patrick Crist has also offered reduced services \$60/hr PlanIt forward; see <a href="http://www.planitfwd.com">www.planitfwd.com</a></p>
	<p>2. Tell stories- create a persuasive message to get funding to support CBCC efforts, and increase awareness of the need to sustain these groups via funding.</p>	<p>Sustainable Funding WG and Awareness &amp; Engagement WG</p>	<p>For the Sustainable Funding Working Group in partnership with Increase Awareness WG. Describe what works. Communicate message to inform decision makers at a variety of levels. Design field visits around stories. Include testimonials, photos, videos.</p>
<p>5. Create new tools and skills trainings to add to a regional collaborative learning toolbox</p>	<p>1. Launch a virtual facilitated peer learning group; called Collaborative Mastermind Learning Group.</p>	<p>Deb Kleinman</p>	<p>Pilot around theme of collaborative leadership with Deb Kleinman in January</p>
	<p>2a. Gather and promote existing curriculum materials, resources, tools, and case studies together.</p>	<p>Capacity Building WG.</p>	<p>A lot of material exists at academic institutions, with professional trainers, and agency training programs. Gathering these materials is a big task and maybe a project for a student intern.</p>
	<p>2b. Identify gaps in curriculum materials, resources, tools, and case studies and ways to fill them.</p>	<p>Capacity Building Practice WG</p>	<p>Review existing materials gathered in action 2a, above and then identify gaps and ways to fill gaps with partners.</p>
<p>6. Support academic and internship programs that build a pipeline of skilled collaborative leaders</p>	<p>1. Support &amp; promote University of Montana regional leadership graduate</p>	<p>Capacity Building WG: Matt McKinney and Shawn Johnson</p>	<p>Matt McKinney and Shawn Johnson are adapting their existing University of Montana program to a be scaled up to the regional scale. The WCCN will support and promote via its website, social media and connections. Members of the WCCN may play a role in teaching, field visit or practicums.</p>

	certificate program		
	2. Inventory existing leadership programs and explore idea of developing an agency collaboration leadership program.	Capacity Building WG.	Karen Simms and Tom Sheridan have interest in this. Current analogous programs include Quivira Coalition's internship program, and CALP-Colorado Ag Leadership Programs.
	3a. Contact academic institutions and facilitators about the opportunity to promote internship programs and connect them to potential CBCC groups	Capacity Building WG.	This project requires time to create a directory and do the homework and make calls. Then design a web-based match making process. Remember not all interns are students-include others that have graduated and are looking for hands-on experience with CBCCs or facilitators and wish to be mentored and build skills.
3b. Create a list of CBCCs and facilitators that already offer internships and are willing to host interns.			
3c. Create a match making mechanism between CBCCs and facilitators and universities with internship programs.			
	4. Market the region's expertise in community-based collaboration; seek to attract students		

	<p>throughout the country (and around the world) to study CBCC in the Rocky Mountain region; with particular recognition of increasing diversity and engaging under-represented populations</p>		
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**Measuring Success of Strategies and Actions:**

Strategy: Gather and share existing collaboration tools, learning opportunities and resources.

- Launched Collaboration Learning & Resource Finder
- Number of new or edited records in the database
- Amount of people registered in the database

Strategy: Use a variety of methods to provide collaboration skills and tools to CBC groups in the region.

- Number of Peer-to-Peer learning opportunities designed, hosted and number of participants.
- Number of mentoring/coaching relationships created.
- Number of internships initiated.
- Number of qualified service providers registered.
- Guidelines for peer-to-peer training, mentoring/coaching programs, and internships.

Strategy: Create new tools and skills trainings to add to a regional collaborative learning toolbox

- Amount of reduced cost services offered to WCCN members.
- Launch/number of a new tools and or trainings created.
- Creation of a collaboration learning toolbox.

Strategy: Develop a regional leadership program

- Funding for the regional program
- Number of people in the first cohort

Strategy: Support academic and internship programs that build a pipeline of skilled collaborative leaders

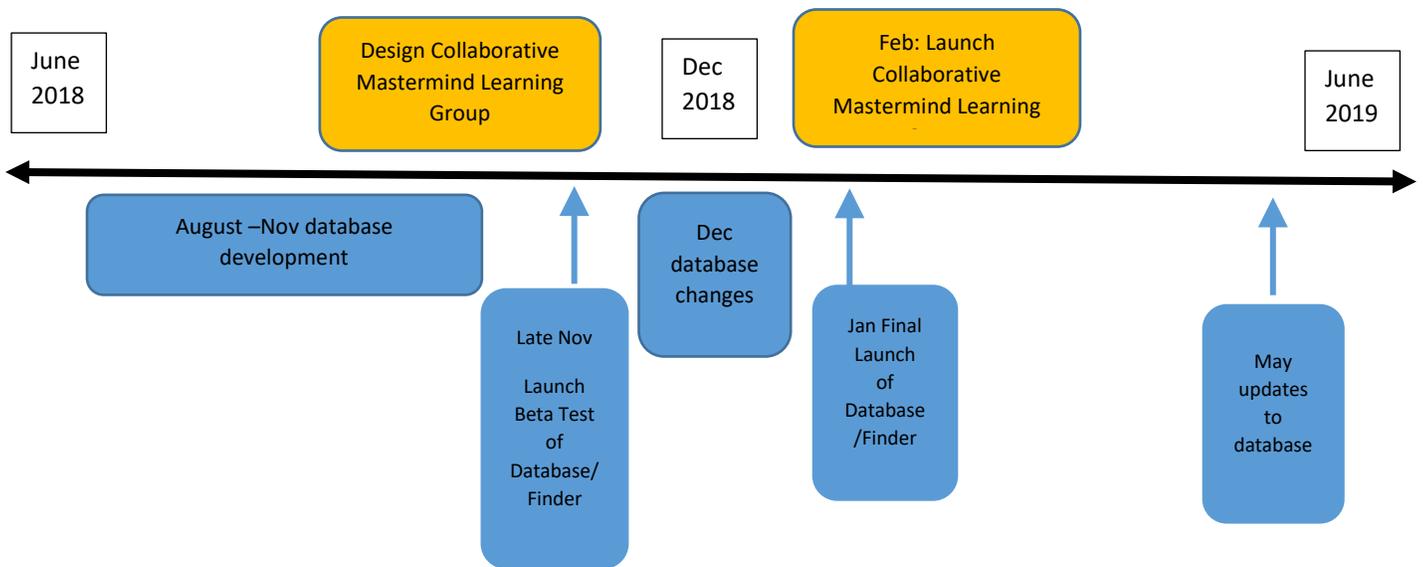
- Creation of an internship directory
- Creation of an internship match making mechanism

- Number of internships hosted by WCCN facilitators
- Number of WCCN CBCCs hosting interns

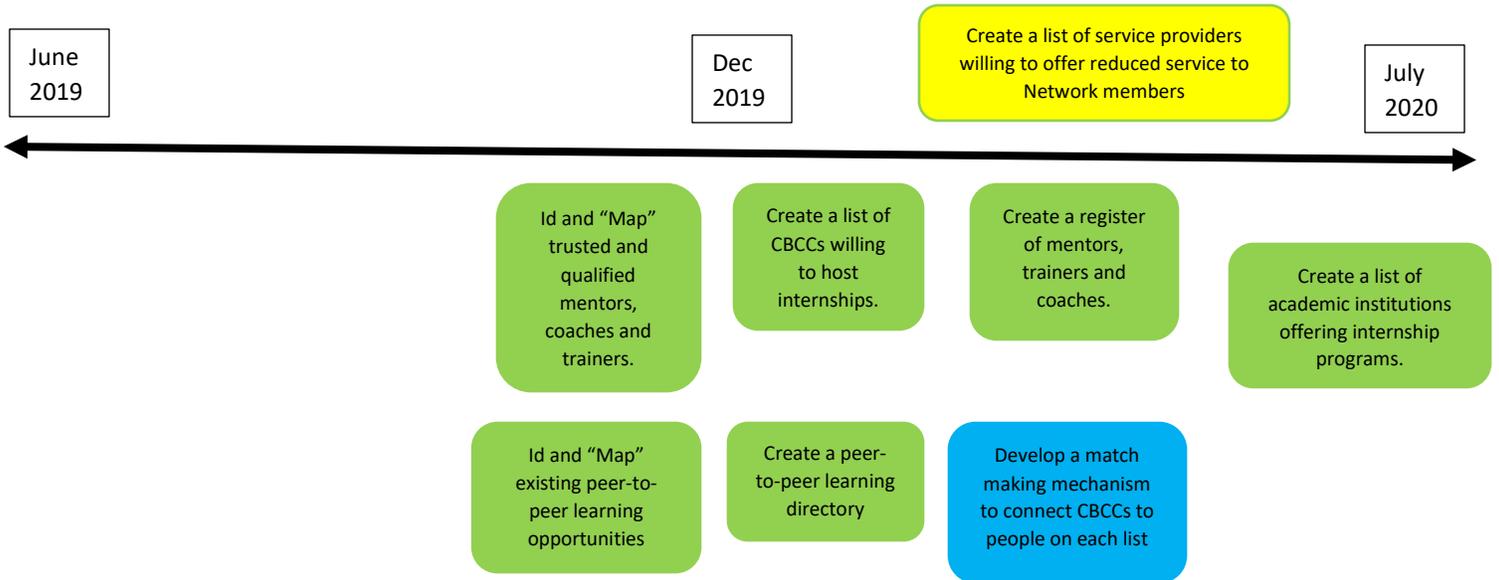
**Timeline:**

Timelines for strategies and actions will be developed as decisions are made on priority strategies and actions and resources are available.

*Timeline for priority actions in strategy 1 and 4:* Gather and share existing collaboration tools, learning opportunities and resources and start to create a regional learning toolbox.



Timeline for priority actions in strategy 2 and 3: Use a variety of methods to provide collaboration skills and tools to CBC groups in the region, and develop new funding mechanisms.



Timeline for priority actions in strategy 5: Support academic and internship programs that build a pipeline of skilled collaborative leaders

