Increase Awareness Work Plan

Action Plan Objective: Increase awareness and support of community based collaborative conservation (CBCC).

Action Plan Objective Tag Line: Communities collaborating for healthy landscapes and watersheds.

Definitions:

1) A community is a place-based sustainable social and ecological system.

2) Collaborative conservation is the process of creating a sustainable future for peoples and places by inviting diverse and inclusive groups of stakeholders to jointly solve problems through collective learning and action. (Reid et al., 2011)

3) CBCC develops partnerships for shared conservation values of natural resources, and community benefits derived from those resources.

4) Community members work together to improve a healthy watershed and landscape that it relies upon.

5) The goal of CBCC is to sustain access to the natural resources of the landscape and the watershed which support nearby communities. .

There is a need to articulate underlying values of CBCC and the work it does and what we mean by the terms used above. This will help the Network Leadership Team and the constituencies of CBCC gain greater clarity about what we mean and what we are doing.

Working Group members: Jay Olsen, Gary Burnett, Rich Alper

Working Group Resource people: Alan Barton, Tahnee Robertson, Stephanie Minnaert

Description of Objective:

Purpose/Objective: Rural and urban communities, including their leaders, partners and organizations in the Rocky Mountain West Region are aware of and supportive of CBCC approaches to healthy landscapes and watersheds.

Outcomes: local and county elected, nonprofit and business leaders, ranchers, farmers, conservation practitioners, government officials and recreational outfits understand, appreciate, raise and explore CBCC approaches to achieve, restore and preserve healthy landscapes in their communities.

Outputs: there are conferences, workshops, trainings, university classes, on- line certificated programs, conferences and festivals where CBCC approaches are part of, if not the principal element, of awareness building and/or skill building learning and activities.

Existing Efforts and Critical Gaps: *The following are representative examples to supplement those listed in the Action Plan.*

1.   Informal networks that provide peer-to-peer engagement, such as:
   - Intermountain West Joint Venture
   - Sage grouse implementation team Montana
   - Western Landowner Alliance peer to peer engagement
   - Partners for Conservation
   - Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition
   - CSU Colorado Water Institute CSU Water Leaders http://waterliterateleaders.colostate.edu/.
   - CCC atlas of collaborative conservation non profits

2.   Supporting resource organizations, like:
   - Headwaters Economics; that can help tell a broader story, and also
   - Conservation districts
   - County extension agencies, and
   - Federal agencies, State agencies, County governments; Utah; six county community recreation plan.
   - Recreational organizations
   - Trout Unlimited
   - Montana Washington Coordination Council
   - NRCS, state programs
   - Montana Watershed Coordination Council
   - Montana partners for fish and wildlife; Utah, Colorado
   - The Nature Conservancy state chapters in Utah, Colorado, Wyoming,
   - Audubon chapters in Utah Colorado Wyoming

3.   Other organizations that provide hands-on, on-the-ground peer-to-peer learning, including:
   - Watershed groups and CBCC initiatives
   - Land Trusts; small and large scale
   - Other colleges and universities
     - University of Montana collaborative conservation programs
     - University of Utah held a collaborative conservation meeting about the Great Salt Lake.
     - Colorado State University sponsor the Center for Collaborative Conservation
     - Ruckelshaus Institute, University of Wyoming
   - Agricultural community
   - Recreational community
   - Partners for Conservation: hands on learning; informal network and training
   - Western States Water Council - J*ay to check. Meets quarterly chaired by governor's water resources and environmental quality, water quantity and fire issues.*

Lack of awareness is important both from the perspective of CBCCs knowing what is available and what its quality is. Lack of awareness of the importance of the collaborative approach to community-based conservation also reduces support for providing these offerings to the conservation community.

Lack of support by leaders, organizations and partners may be due to lack of understanding the impact collaborative approaches can provide to achieving conservation and livelihood outcomes.

There is a lack of understanding and knowledge by leaders of watershed, landscape, conservation and natural resource management organizations of CBCC. We all get too siloed. Conservation folks cannot improve what they do if they do not know what CBCC delivers.

Similarly, many ranchers and farmers do not trust other groups due to past experience. We need to educate about the benefits of the CBCC approach, how to build partnerships, and how this helps their operations. We have to define the success of what this work does. The traditional science-only conservation does not build momentum or trust in communities. By this collaboration within a community we can build momentum and trust. It takes longer but if you build consensus and agreement on how to move forward everyone wants it to succeed. It is no longer project based but consensus based, so the community can continue to work together on other projects. ["Change happens at the speed of trust." Stephen Covey]. We have got to educate and show how by collaborating we can meet desired outcomes.

This is a partner centered approach vs. an ecosystem-contained approach. This approach resembles the philosophy behind resource management plans in that it is building partnerships with a focus on ecosystems but nested within the values of community and collaboration. This approach is more work up front but it keeps up momentum. Because everyone (community stakeholders) has ownership of the project they want it to happen; the attitude becomes "it is us"; this project reflects on us. "it is our decision, not somebody else's." It builds momentum and trust so the community can move on to the next project] together." Hence it is partner centered. The goal is to generate ideas to evoke discussion by other partners.

A CBCC story is a partner centered, ecosystem based approach to managing a challenge to the health of a landscape/watershed, which builds trust, ownership, momentum and economic resilience in a community from working together. This can occur in most or all steps in a CBCC process; from evidence gathering, to formulating an experimental strategy, to on the ground implementation to evaluation and monitoring through an iterative cycle of the same steps.

Objective Priority Strategies and Actions:

Awareness strategies

- Develop an education and outreach plan, including promotional tools, to fund, and implement We would educate decision-makers, funders, and to a lesser extent citizens about the issues and the role of CBCC.

    ○ Create an easily accessible and searchable database of existing resources and learning opportunities with recommendations from users on quality of offerings. To be of continuing value, the searchable database will require continual updating, which we acknowledge would require resources. Otherwise if not updated, it will lose value. This is similar to the CRAFT developed by the CCC Practitioner Program Advisory Team.
    ○ Develop a CBCC website part of which could be used to more efficiently receive, store and share stories about collaborative conservation.
    ○ Network across borders, sectors and disciplines to demonstrate the value of CBCC to all stakeholders in this region while minimizing duplication of comparable existing offerings and resources.
    o We need stories from public and private sources. Leveraging our existing projects through cell phone images, notes about field experiences and documented research and observation will lead to our developing new stories. These stories must be tied to metrics- to show we are delivering on the ground. We acknowledge the difficulty of collecting metrics. But agencies and natural resource groups need to show they are delivering to taxpayers and donors, so there may be some available metrics for example; acres treated or stream miles restored. Agencies get value from measuring benefits. We also need benchmark photos or data which show "before and after" conditions, to help buttress a success story, which is also supported by science: The images, metrics and. story could be up front for public audiences. Our goal should probably be a broad suite of stories from different stakeholders so that wider audiences can relate to them readily. This may be more useful for the goals of the Increase Awareness Work Group than in depth case studies which may be more relevant to future leaders or advancing the practice.

    o Piggybacking upon existing natural resource conferences and sponsoring short workshops to build cohorts "CBCC literate leaders" based on the template of water literate leaders taught by the CSU Colorado Water Institute.

Support Strategies:

The Work Group questioned whether this work is primarily part of Increasing Awareness, Advance the Practice, or developing Future Leaders. We believe the items below are consistent with the Increase Awareness purpose and should not fall off our radar, but are higher priority for these other groups.

- Coordinate with Advance Practice and Future Leaders Working Groups to tailor resources and trainings to different audiences to increase effectiveness of learning.
- Coordinate with the Advance Practice Working Group to build learning of collaboration skills and tools and problem-solving into all professional trainings.

- Provide incentives to increase support for participation; such as recognition awards and continuing education credit, to amplify value.
- Coordinate with the Future leaders Working Group to tie completion of skills and tools trainings to career development.
- Support the Public Policy Working Group to expand the collaborative culture of agencies with recommended skills and experience of employees.
- funding capacity discussion- radar
- Support Advance Practice Working Group to launch the searchable database help supporting CBCC.
- Gather success stories of CBCCs and use to increase awareness amongst key stakeholder and decision making groups that affect CBCC success..

Strategies	Actions	Leader for Strategy/Action	Partners &/or Resources Needed
1.Clearly describe CBCC to help increase awareness and to be able to identify the kinds of stories we want to collect	1. define CBCC		See WCCN charter
2.Create a template for additional CBCC success stories and invite others to produce or contribute success stories using the template also templates for metrics we look for.	1. check with Erin on their template and program.		Erin Farris-Olsen MT. Watershed Coordination council (Erin has template)
	2. support partnership with existing platform, or develop a new platform		
3.Solicit and collect CBCC success stories and (before and after) pics from asking groups for names of conservation leaders who want to push CBCC and may have success stories	1. develop guidelines for success stories		John Tubbs, Montana Director DNRC
	2. solicit success stories from the network, their associates, and ensure stories are local, regional and national		
	3. ask state local, ag and env groups for names of conservation leaders		
4. Distribute CBCC success stories to conservation leaders of healthy watersheds and landscapes and prospective leaders	1. use the new platform to distribute success stories		network member websites

5. Use existing events, conferences and workshops of different sub groups of the conservation community to tell and share success stories of CBCC	1. request notifications from the network on upcoming events 2. build a calendar of events on the platform		Network for Landscape Conservation, Western Landowners Alliance, MT Watershed Coordination Council see paragraph a) on page 2 "existing efforts and critical gaps."

Indicators to Measure Results:

1) number of stories collected
   1a) number of stories collected from each state. *the difference is an aggregate number across the region vs measuring state by state contributions of stories.*

2) number of stories told or distributed

3) types of templates produced

4) number of forums/venues stories are delivered to: ie websites, presentations, articles

5) collecting information from CBCC network and subsequently it's website, if any, about what organizations and persons read the stories and expressed interest to learn more.

For priority actions tied to timeline, see 2/17 word document sent to Jay, Heather, Gary and Rox.

Proposal by Increase Awareness Work Group as part of its Work Plan:

TIMELINE OF PRIORITY STRATEGIES AND ACTIONS

 April, 2019: Request entire CBCC to share existing templates for collaborative conservation (CC) stories with this Work Group. Fallback: same request to Erin Farris-Olsen.

 May, 2019; Review, collate, combine existing templates for future use.

 June, 2019: Request entire CBCC to collect existing CC stories and to suggest sources (state, county, federal agencies operating within region, nonprofits, conservation practitioners, universities) for additional CC stories. Establish a quick and easy repository for collected stories, possibly through google drive, drop-box or one drive. Stories may include images or be videos.

 July, 2019: Develop a broad suite of stories from different stakeholders so that wider audiences within the conservation practitioner domain can relate to them. Distribute stories to relevant audiences initially by email. In coordination with other activities of the CBCC, develop a section of a website where new stories can be "deposited".

 September to November, 2019: Identify and piggyback upon existing workshops/conferences for conservation (forestry, rangelands, watersheds) in the inner-mountain west[HR1] to say who we are, what we are doing and share some CC stories; Try to find and showcase existing video CC stories and explore feasibility of putting a few CC stories into video form.