

Western Collaborative Conservation Network (WCCN): Recommended Approaches to Enhance Community-Based Collaborative Conservation (CBCC) for Land Management Issues in the West

Who We Are

The WCCN promotes and supports CBCC efforts that strengthen and sustain healthy landscapes, thriving economies, and vibrant communities.

Keys to Success in the West

1. Establish a Culture of Collaborative Problem-Solving

- Local communities help drive process
- Enhance resiliency
- Built on respect for different values and sets of knowledge
- Agencies create successional plans to ensure consistent participation in collaboratives following leadership changes
- Prioritize employees who live where they work and have vested interest in issues/solutions

2. Incentivize Employees to Embrace CBCC Culture

- Give employees the tools they need to collaborate competently
- Evaluate and reward employees who engage in collaborative processes
- Maintain consistency in agency collaboration incentives

Potpourri

- Encourage by leading
- Proactively seek out opposing views
- Give space to use adaptive management, assuming failures are possible
- Balance conservation and production

Rationale

People depend on public lands in the West for their livelihoods, for recreation, for food, water and fuel, and they care deeply about how they are managed. CBCC emphasizes bottom-up land management approaches and has been proven to be successful when the ability to include collaboration with the general public has been incorporated into land management policies. Long term, sustainable decisions require full, open and transparent exchanges for effective and efficient implementation.

3. Implement Training and Mentoring Programs to Build Competency in Collaborative Decision Making Practices and Land Management Approaches

- Provide collaborative problem-solving, on the job training, and mentoring
- Use existing partners and resources
- **Important to note:** not every situation requires, or will benefit from CBCC, though its overall capacity needs to be supported

4. Provide Sustained Funding

- Provide diverse funding capacity to enable CBCC efforts
- Provide information to funding appropriators on the value of CBCC
- Leverage non-agency funding opportunities
- **Important to note:** Industry may not be a conflicting funding interest

6. Standards and Guidelines for Agency Practitioners

- Federal employees represent the national interest and act as a resource, stakeholder, or convener in collaboratives
- Decision makers must be flexible and use collaborative input
- Articulate compatible values and benefits of working lands and economic interests
- Agencies should provide appropriate guidance regarding resource use and engage accordingly in CBCC processes

What is Community-Based Collaborative Conservation?

Definition:

Community-based collaborative conservation includes natural resources management, by, for, and with the local community, using a 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.

5. Revise Policies to Enable CBCC Problem Solving

- Streamline the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) to efficiently facilitate collaborative problem-solving by obtaining approval at a regional or state level
- Encourage non-federal and federal agency partnerships
- Enable collaborative problem-solving to efficiently implement National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) decisions; community engagement should occur both within and beyond the NEPA process
- Ensure that regulatory and public policy do not result in unintended hinderances to CBCC efforts.