

Confluence 2020 Open Space Session Notes

Bridging Forests and Water

General Session Notes:

- Water quantity:
 - Is the connection between forest health and management and water availability
 - Less canopy cover affects snow pack, climate change affects severity of storm events and solar radiation which affects runoff, infiltration, evaporation and runoff.
- Forest Action Plans
 - Include water supply and protecting communities
 - Municipalities are funding forest management treatments versus historically responding to impacts by dredging reservoirs
 - Denver Water spending \$30M on forest management projects in the watershed that supplies their water sources.
- Data on water yield needs to be based on local variables.
- Forest to Faucet project (includes Denver Water, USFS, CSFS, nonprofits, etc.)
 - hard to convince private landowners and private sector to participate
- Forest Stewardship Program
 - Funding to Colorado for outreach to landowners
 - Budget is shrinking due to cost of treatments per acre
- Stewardship Plans
 - are working but we have to invest
 - water supply is more reliable if land is managed responsibly
- Linking projects and planning is needed for the big picture
- Best projects are designed as a package ; include
 - funding for state and private lands
 - pace and scale
 - legislation
- Carbon sequestration – rangeland counterpart to forests
- New forest products
- Recreation

Key Points of Discussion:

- Better people skills within agencies
- Communication Barriers - Silos
- Partnerships in Flight-agreements were already in place
- Saving Species on Private Lands book
- Break the inertia
- Government mandates-what is currently going on should continue, based on long standing relationships
- Decline in state funding; need to secure funding
- Hire the right people; turnover is a problem

Key Next Steps:

- Enhance collaboration between agencies
- Path way is through communities
- Push to state and local levels
- Collaboration needs to include industry and NGOs
- Provide good templates- e.g., Malpai Borderlands Group, WWNRT, California Rangeland Trust

- Create combinations that include economic sustainability
- Design to the county level-fence post conversations
 - Can't ram programs down their throats
 - Provide full spectrum of incentives
 - Work from the bottom up
- Demonstrate what conservation success looks like
 - Transmit success stories
 - LandCAN-private landowners are desperate for a 1-stop shop
 - WCCN Public Policy Working Group White Paper includes success stories and transferability
- Have audiences together
- Lack of communication between state and private landowners