

# Conservation Collaboratives 101: Practical advice from your peers

## Peer-to-Peer Learning Session

Session Hosts: Tahnee Robertson, Southwest Decision Resources; Alan Barton, New Mexico Forest & Watershed Restoration Institute; Shawn Johnson, Center for Natural Resources & Environmental Policy, University of Montana

### Description of Session:

In this session, the hosts will provide a brief overview of types of collaborative groups and two initiatives: the Southwest Coalition of Collaboratives, a peer-to-peer project to share lessons and approaches for the design and support of place-based collaboratives, and an emerging conversation about developing a collaborative leadership curriculum for practitioners and partners. Participants will then dive deeper into their main interests through open space exchange of strategies and ideas to address key challenges.

### Outline:

- *10-15 minutes:* Introductions round robin - what are the main challenges you're facing in your collaborative (or related effort) and what are you hoping to gain from your peers in this session?
- *10 minutes:* Overview of types of collaborative groups, and two relevant support efforts:
  - Southwest Coalition of Collaboratives capacity building effort (Arizona, New Mexico, Colorado, Utah)
  - Emerging conversation about developing a Collaborative Leadership curriculum for practitioners and partners (Montana, California, Michigan)
- *30-35 minutes:* Open space, peer-to-peer experience/lessons/methods sharing based on key themes generated above. Connections to relevant resources will be encouraged.
- *5 minutes:* Session wrap up, follow up opportunities, and next steps, including potential roles for WCCN. Will also offer the follow up opportunity for case specific problem-solving discussions during the Open Space sessions at 4:15 pm.

Activity: Group discussion followed by open space peer-to-peer strategy sharing on topics identified by participants.

### Participant Questions, Comments/Discussion:

1. How is collaboration carried out in different contexts?
2. What information or advice do you most want to hear from your peers?
3. What issue or challenge is keeping you up at night?
4. What insights, lessons, and advice do you have to share with your peers?

### Technology & Materials:

Flip charts and pens: YES

PPT template slide: YES

Index cards and pens: YES

Bio of Hosts / Presenters:



**Alan Barton** is Collaboration Program Manager at the New Mexico Forest & Watershed Restoration Institute in Las Vegas, NM, and instructor of Natural Resource Law and Policy at New Mexico Highlands University. He works closely with several forestry collaboratives and watershed groups in New Mexico on capacity building and administration. His education is in rural sociology, law, and forest policy, and he has worked in conservation around the U.S. and Latin America.



**Tahnee Robertson** is the Director of Southwest Decision Resources, a facilitation and mediation group based in Arizona specializing in cross-boundary collaboration in the Southwestern US. For the past 20 years, her work has focused on designing and facilitating collaborative efforts related to watershed, forest, conservation, outdoor recreation, community planning, and engagement of underrepresented stakeholders. She and her team currently support several place-based collaboratives in AZ, NM and UT. She is also a founding member of the Cross-Watershed Network and WCCN.



**Shawn Johnson** is Managing Director at the Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy at the University of Montana. He is also Co-Chair of the University's Graduate Certificate Program in Natural Resources Conflict Resolution. Shawn works with diverse groups, including landowners, agencies, NGOs, funders, and the research community to improve natural resources policy and practice.