

How to build capacity through mentoring, coaching and internship programs

Session Host(s): Kim Skyelander, Center for Collaborative Conservation, CSU
Ben Irej, National Forest Foundation

Description of Session:

In this session, participants will learn about, and interact with, three mentoring and internship programs that are building practitioner capacity. Participants will also share and discuss information about other existing mentoring, coaching and internship programs, kinds of capacity building programs that may be most effective for their organizations, and needed resources and training for implementing these kinds of programs.

Participants will learn:

- Why having a mentoring, coaching or internship program is important for cultivating future collaborative conservation leaders
- How these types of programs build capacity for both the host organizations and the participants
- How different programs are designed and what makes them work
- The successes, challenges and lessons learned from running mentoring and internship programs

Outline the session:

Framing of the topic and introduction of the panelists – 10 minutes

Presentation of 3 mentoring and internship program case studies– 30 minutes

Participant questions and comments/discussion – 15 minutes

Session wrap up and instructions for index cards and display of flip charts- 5 minutes

Case Study Panel:

1. CSU's Extension Internship Program

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John Starinieri, CSU Extension Intern

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2. Quivira Coalition's New Agrarian Program

Sarah Wentzel-Fischer

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3. National Forest Foundation Conservation Connect Fellowship Program

Ben Ireys
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Adam Snitker
Conservation Connect Fellowship Alumni
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Activity:

Panel Presentation and Discussion about the importance, nuts and bolts, and challenges and successes of running mentoring, coaching or internship programs.

Participant Questions, Comments/Discussion:

- 1) Are you familiar with other successful mentoring/coaching/internship programs that are building practitioner capacity? Please describe them.
- 2) What do you see as the pros and cons of having a mentoring/coaching/internship program in your organization? What type of capacity building program would be most effective for your organization?
- 3) What resources do you know about that can help practitioners create these kinds of programs?
- 4) What else do you want to know about this topic? (Funding, Design templates, etc).

Technology & Materials:

Flip charts and pens

PPT template slide

Index cards and pens

Bio of Host(s) and Case Study Presenters:



Kim Skyelander has degrees in wildlife biology, environmental studies and natural resource management. She worked professionally for the U.S. Forest Service for 16 years as a wildlife biologist and natural resource manager. Kim taught environmental science classes at the Salish Kootenai College on the Flathead Indian Reservation in Montana and at the University of Idaho. She was also the executive director of Wolf Ridge Environmental Learning Center, a large residential outdoor environmental school in northeastern Minnesota. Kim is currently the Associate Director of the Center for Collaborative Conservation at Colorado State University.



Ben Irey joined NFF in April of 2017. He is the Conservation Connect Program Manager, the NFF's learning network serving community-based groups and Forest Service employees involved in collaborative stewardship. Ben conducts web-based peer learning sessions, maintains an online library of best practices and tools, convenes in-person workshops, and facilitates collaborative groups. Ben has over 15 years of experience in engaging stakeholders in public land conservation. Before joining the NFF, he worked as a social scientist for Ecosystem Research Group, where he facilitated collaborative groups and performed socioeconomic assessments for public land stakeholders.



Rebecca Hill is a research scientist with a joint appointment between the Department of Ag and Resource Economics and the Office of Community and Economic Development at CSU. Rebecca received her Ph.D in Agricultural Economics in 2012 and since that time she has taught many classes at CSU including: Agricultural Law, Agricultural Marketing, Agricultural Economics, Water Law, and Agritourism Enterprise Management. Rebecca also mentors' students outside of classes through the extension internship program, advising the Premier Farm Credit Student Board of Directors and serving as the superintendent for the Future Farmers of America agricultural sales career development event.



Sarah Wentzel-Fischer has worked in food and agriculture planning for the past seven years with a focus on supporting young and beginning farmers and ranchers. She was the editor of Edible Santa Fe from 2011 to 2017. From 2013 to 2015 she worked for the National Young Farmers Coalition as an organizer and is currently the board president of the Rio Grande Agricultural Land Trust. She also worked with La Montanita Co-op, New Mexico's longest running and largest member Co-op, co-founded the Albuquerque Grower's Alliance, and championed the local food movement through her graduate research in small-scale agriculture in the region.



John Starinieri has lived in Colorado for the past 5 years and attended Colorado State University for the past 2 years. John is a student at CSU, majoring in conservation biology with a minor in entomology. His field of interest is entomology, specifically invasive insects. He has research experience in entomology working with multiple species. This includes studying the digestive fitness of house flies, cognitive ability of honeybees, and his most recent work with codling moth control with CSU Extension.



Adam Snitker is a recent graduate from the University of Montana's College of Forestry and Conservation where he received a Master's of Science in Resource Conservation. His graduate research focused on the intersection of social and natural systems; specifically, how agricultural producers make decisions during times of drought. These research interests were further explored while he served as a Conservation Connect Fellow with the National Forest Foundation and a trainee within the University of Montana's BRIDGES program. Since graduating in December 2019, Adam has relocated to Denver, Colorado and now works for the Colorado Parks & Wildlife within the Department of Natural Resources.