

## How to Build Organizational Capacity & Effectiveness of Collaboratives Capacity Building Working Session

**Session Host(s):** Heather Knight, Associate Director of Practice-Center for Collaborative

**Session Facilitators/Note Takers:** Nicole Reese and Rox Hicks

**Session Design by:** Russ Schnitzer, Program Officer-Natural Resources, Gates Family Foundation and Heather Knight

### Session Description:

Success of collaborative conservation groups is equally dependent on two factors: technical expertise in conservation and natural resources, and the capacity and effectiveness of the conservation organization itself. The leadership of many collaborative conservation groups are highly skilled and resourced in the former, but need more support, training and coaching in the latter. Capacity building programs are limited, but report that investments that build stronger and more effective organizations and leaders, and result in more lasting conservation solutions and durable organizations. Funders are more inclined to support organizations that can achieve higher levels of impact and sustain these efforts over time.

This session will: a) review case studies that illustrate successful capacity building programs, including program components, lessons and impacts, b) discuss the idea of developing a pilot program to provide more support for more collaboratives and to create a framework and best practices for organizational capacity building, and c) start to design components of such a pilot program.

### Session Outline: (90 minutes)

5 minutes: Introductions and Framing the Topic-Heather

36 minutes: Presentation of 3 capacity building programs describing program components, lessons learned and impacts (12 minutes each) – Dennis Glick-High Divide Collaborative Capacity Building, Advancing Conservation Excellence Program- Amanda Hill and, Wilburforce Foundation & TREC capacity building & leadership services-Gary Burnett as grantee and alumni.

10 minutes: Whole Group-Question & Answers for Case Study presenters – Nicole Reese  
note taking

5 minutes: Introduce the idea for developing a capacity building pilot program-Heather

15 minutes: Small breakout group activity-start designing components of a pilot program (see below)

15 minutes: Breakout groups share results-Nicole Reese note taking

5 minutes: Session wrap up, summary of main outcomes and next steps and wants to be involved-TBD write up 2 final flip charts and summarizing PPT slide

### Case Study Panel:

1. Dennis Glick  
Executive Director, Future West  
[dglick@bresnan.net](mailto:dglick@bresnan.net)  
(406) 587-2974
2. Amanda Hill (connecting remotely)  
Southwest and California Program Manager, Land Trust Alliance  
[ahill@lta.org](mailto:ahill@lta.org)  
720-402-5842
3. Gary Burnett (connecting remotely)  
Executive Director, Heart of the Rockies  
[gary@heart-of-rockies.org](mailto:gary@heart-of-rockies.org)  
406-360-0254

### Small breakout group activity:

Starting to Design the Components of a Capacity Building Pilot Program

Attendees will divide into four groups. Each group will develop one of the components of the pilot program by addressing one of the four questions. Dennis Glick, Heather Knight, Nicole Reese and Rox Hicks will divide up amongst the 4 groups. Each groups records key discussion points and next steps for each group on flip charts.

1. How might we select collaboratives for a capacity building pilot program? (Dennis)
2. What criteria might be measured to assess the organizational capacity and effectiveness of each group and how often would it be measured? (Heather)
3. What conservation criteria might be measured to be able to assess the change in conservation impact of each group and how often would it be measured? (Nicole)
4. What organizations or resources could be identified to help provide training and or coaching for each collaborative in the pilot? (Rox)

## Technology & Materials:

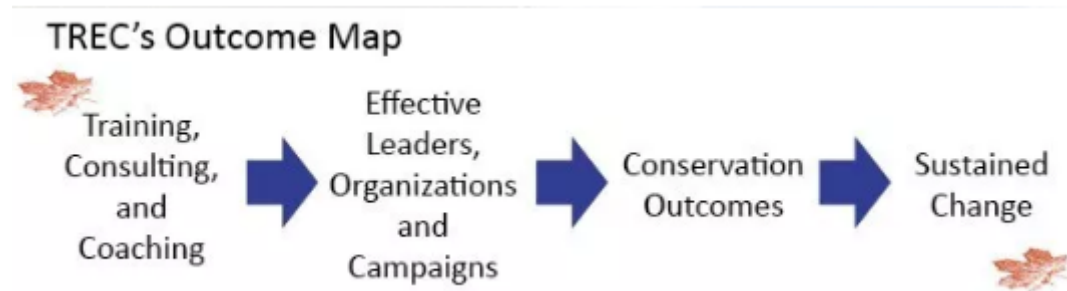
5 flip charts and 5 sets of pens

PPT template slide

Case study handouts

1. Organizational Ecology Model-Key Indicators of an Effective Organization-TREC
2. Partnership Impact Evaluation Guide-Amy Mickel and Leigh Goldberg
3. Organizational Capacity Assessment-Sustainable Northwest & High Divide Region
4. Wilburforce Capacity Building Program
5. Wilburforce Theory of Change
6. LTA ACE assessment tool and survey

Use TREC's and Wilburforce's Theory of Change as part of the introduction and framing



## Bio of Host(s) and Case Study Presenters:



Heather Knight hails from Australia, where she received her education in Ecology and Natural Resources Management and secondary teaching, followed by graduate research on human disturbance of wildlife on the Great Barrier Reef. Heather immigrated to the US in 1991 and for almost 25 years led a community-based conservation effort for The Nature Conservancy in northern Colorado. In 2016, Heather joined the Center for Collaborative Conservation at Colorado State University as the Associate Director of Practice. Heather is the co-facilitator and coordinator of the Western Collaborative Conservation Network. Heather and her husband, Rick, live and steward a place in Livermore, Colorado.



Russ Schnitzer is a Senior Program Officer for the Gates Family Foundation, overseeing the Foundation's Natural Resources strategy. Russ's career in nonprofit conservation has carried him from organizational development and strategic planning to large-scale project management, major gifts fundraising, and public policy. His primary conservation interests focus on finding mutually-beneficial solutions to the increasingly complex demands facing people, communities and their environment through creative collaboration and leading through innovation. He spent a decade with Trout Unlimited, most recently as the Agricultural Policy and Partnerships Advisor to TU's Western Water Project. Prior, he was with The Nature Conservancy as Director of External Affairs for its Wyoming office. Russ is a recipient of the Environmental Protection Agency's Environmental Achievement Award, and has co-authored a number of publications pertaining to the intersection of social values and the environment. He played a key role in the development and eventual reauthorization of the 2014 Farm Bill's conservation title, and was a founding steering committee member of the Western Agricultural and Conservation Collaborative. A former US Forest Service "smokejumper," he is a graduate of the University of Idaho, where he earned his M.S. in Environmental Studies and B.S. degrees in Conservation Social Sciences and Wildland Conservation.



Amanda Hill is the Southwest and California Program Manager at the Land Trust Alliance. She delivers Alliance services designed to enhance the capacity and effectiveness of land trusts across the 10-state region. Prior to joining the Land Trust Alliance in 2018, Amanda worked at Great Outdoors Colorado (GOCO) and was a Colorado Conservation Trust Future Conservation Leaders Fellow at Palmer Land Trust. Amanda holds a BA from Colorado College, an MS from the University of Montana, and a JD from the University of Montana School of Law. She is based in Denver, Colorado.



Dennis Glick is the Director and co-founder of Future West, a non-profit organization based in Bozeman that helps communities create the future that they want. Future West provides information, training, technical assistance and facilitation services to key land use decision makers in the Northern Rockies. Previously, Dennis was the Director of the Sonoran Institute's Bozeman Office, the Private Land Stewardship Director for the Greater Yellowstone Coalition, and the Co-Director of the Wildlands and Human Needs Program of the World Wildlife Fund. He has a BS from Oregon State University and a MS from the University of Michigan.



Gary Burnett is a long-time leader in the conservation field. Gary is executive director for the Heart of the Rockies Initiative, a network of 26 independent local, regional and national land trusts. He has 30 years of experience in natural resource management and nonprofit development – and has worked with and for public and private landowners/managers on land protection and stewardship; prescribed fire; and natural areas, wildlife and habitat management. Gary has developed and directed annual fund, major gift and planned giving programs for local, regional and national organizations.

Prior to his position with Heart of the Rockies, he served as executive director of the Blackfoot Challenge and development director with the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation. He holds an M.S. degree in Wildlife Biology from University of Montana.



Nicole Reese is a facilitator and conservationist, Nicole received her Masters of Science in the Human Dimensions of Natural Resources from CSU. During her research with stakeholders involved in an endangered species recovery effort, Nicole realized how vital facilitation can be in supporting the success of collaborative processes.

After she graduated, Nicole pursued facilitation training with the International Association for Public Participation. She founded the nonprofit Crowd Conservation to provide facilitation and community outreach services to research teams and collaborative conservation efforts. Past projects have ranged from western bird conservation to wildfire and watershed issues.



In 1981, **Rox Hicks** graduated in Wildlife Biology at CSU. Afterwards, she continued to work in reclamation for a surface mine and various consulting firms in Montana and Wyoming. In 1987, she began her career for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at the National Elk Refuge, Jackson, Wyoming. During her 32 years of employment she has served as a habitat and private lands biologist in Refuges, Montana Partners for Fish and Wildlife program, and is currently working with Wyoming Ecological Services as a Partnership Coordinator. Rox concentrates her work on collaborative conservation opportunities, building partnerships, acting as a coordinator for habitat improvement projects for public and private interests, and searches for external funding for project implementation. She resides and works in Baggs, Wyoming, along with her husband, Larry, dogs and horses.

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