

Post-Confluence 2020 Survey Results Summary

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“The Western Collaborative Conservation Network (WCCN) was launched during an inaugural event held at Colorado State University, March 10th – 12th at the event Confluence 2020. Members of collaborative conservation groups and their support organizations gathered from across the West to CONNECT to peers, CONVENE to learn new collaboration skills and practice new tools, and CATALZE action on issues that limit conservation success.”

The WCCN Steering Committee conducted a survey immediately following Confluence 2020, which are shared in these [Poll Everywhere Results](#). Four months later, we conducted another post-conference survey in order to capture the value added and improved capacity of Confluence participants to deliver results over time.

Feedback collected from this second survey provides insights of how the WCCN are building capacity to deliver conservation, tell the story of our network, and will contribute to planning future WCCN events such as Confluence 2021.

The Covid-19 pandemic has dealt a massive blow to collaborative efforts worldwide with detrimental effects on communication, safety, and funding; However, the results of our survey show that our participants haven't given up on collaboration, and are continuing to determine how to move forward despite this new challenge. WCCN strives to provide support for their endeavors through continued collaborative engagement.

In the first survey, 63% of participants rated their overall conference experience as Excellent and 35% as Good, indicating a high level of initial satisfaction after Confluence 2020. Responses have remained consistent based on the results from the second post-Confluence survey, as over half of participants agreed that they had applied insights, skills or tools they learned from the event (Q3), and in response to another question of the second survey, over 70% of participants benefited from connections made at Confluence 2020 (Q5).

83% of the first survey participants expressed that they learned new skills and were exposed to new tools, and in the second survey the majority of participants who applied that knowledge shared how they applied what they learned (Q4). There was overlap in participants' responses between the two surveys, indicating that DEI, stakeholder and community engagement, and funding were all topics that continued to provide value to participants after the event. Participants in both surveys also shared that they valued learning about the different collaborative efforts that are working in our landscape that they didn't know about before the Confluence. Connecting to a network of peers continues to be a highly valuable contribution for conservation practitioners.

The full results from the 4 month post-Confluence survey can be found at https://collaborativeconservation.org/confluence_2020/ and the highlights are shared below.

Over half of survey participants agreed with the following statement: **"I have applied insights, skills or tools I learned at Confluence 2020."**

Most survey participants shared insights specific to an improved understanding or thinking more strategically about topics discussed during the Confluence, such as various types of collaborative efforts and creative funding opportunities for collaboratives, following up on conservation finance ideas, and DEI. One participant highlighted that the poster session helped them practice public speaking and meet attendees. Overall, the responses suggested a desire to connect with others from the Confluence for more collaboration, engagement with the WCCN working groups, and an inspiration to apply the WCCN's co-creation philosophy to their work.

Over 70% of survey participants agreed with the following statement: **"Since leaving Confluence 2020, I have benefited from connections with new people and organizations I met at the event."**

Eight participants explicitly stated that they made many connections that continue to engage with after the Confluence. Five expressed that Covid-19 had impacted their ability to connect. Others shared how they connected to the WCCN leadership team, with private landowners, with leaders of organizations doing similar work & fellow practitioners, or with researchers working on relevant research. Connecting to funding opportunities and experts for DEI was also appreciated. Not only new connections, but reconnecting with existing connections to deepen those relationships was also expressed as valuable. One participant shared that it led to a new initiative with a colleague I met for the first time.

Almost half of survey participants felt that attending Confluence 2020 increased their capacity to achieve results. Seven survey participants mentioned networking and connecting with colleagues as an aspect of increased capacity, and one participant looked forward to connecting with other WCCN members. Responses included practiced soft skills such as facilitation and networking, and learned more about fundraising. However, remote attendance limited participation capacity, and one participant shared honestly that their capacity had not increased.

Over 50% of survey participants shared that they transferred some of their learning and new connections to others in their organization or network. Fundraising applications, DEI concepts, and increasing my network for mutual benefit were highlighted as topics and connections that have transferred from the Confluence, however four responses indicated that the pandemic disrupted their follow-up efforts.