

Collaborative Restoration Workshop

National Forest Foundation | April 2016

Collaboration & Engagement | Tools to Collaborate Successfully & Build Capacity

Key Topics: Collaborative Process

Speakers

- **Emily Olsen**, Conservation Connect Associate, National Forest Foundation
- **Luna Latimer**, Director, Mid-Klamath Watershed Council

Overview

Speakers in this session shared tools and resources available to aid collaborative groups and build collaborative capacity. Through on-the-ground examples from the Mid-Klamath Watershed Council and National Forest Foundation, participants discussed how to work through capacity-related challenges.

Emily Olsen – NFF Tools to Build Collaborative Capacity

The National Forest Foundation (NFF) Conservation Connect program is a learning network for collaboration. Conservation Connect staff develop and share best practices, lessons, and other resources to build capacity in collaborative groups and community-based organizations. For example, tools include evaluation surveys to measure success, best practices to deal with transitions in the Forest Service and collaborative groups, examples of groups building credibility in their communities, and tips for collaborating before, during, and after the NEPA process. The NFF is always looking for new tools and examples as well. If your group or organization has created something innovative or new, the NFF would like to spread the word.

Lessons

- It's important to re-evaluate collaborative efforts often to measure success, identify priorities and gaps, and plan next steps.
- Embrace transitions in the Forest Service and collaborative groups. You'll set yourself up for success if you prepare for an assume change. Use in-person meetings, as well as memos and guides, to transfer institutional knowledge and rebuild relationships.
- There are several document templates (i.e., memos and guides) to aid staff and collaborators during transitions; however, in-person meetings are perhaps the most important tool to re-establish relationships after transitions.
- Presenting to and sharing project updates with local community organizations (Rotary Club, County Commissioners, School Board, etc.) can help build your organization's credibility.
- With good sideboards, pre-NEPA collaboration is a key element of collaborative project development.

Luna Latimer – Fire-Related Learning and Capacity in the Klamath River Watershed

The Mid-Klamath Watershed Council has been working to restore the threatened Klamath River in Northern California and the upslope habitats upon which the river depends. The Council manages a variety of programs that also build community capacity, including a fire and fuels program. Additionally, the Western Klamath Restoration Partnership is a new initiative designed to mitigate wildfire threats in the Watershed and improve understanding about fire. The fire and fuels program, part of the Fire Learning Network, focuses on collaborative capacity at a landscape level. Landscape-level work is



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critical, especially the Mid-Klamath Watershed, where 98% of the land is federally owned. As part of this work, the Council engages community members in restoration efforts and landscape planning, particularly those with a fire component. The Council provides training opportunities for local citizens to participate in prescribed fire activities with the Forest Service. Through training, community members receive the same fire qualifications as federal employees, adding valued capacity. Through the training and collaboration, local citizens understand the economic, environmental, and health reasons why prescribed fire and fire mitigation is important.

Lessons

- Prescribed burning can be contentious, with collaboration and local empowerment, understanding of the need for prescribed burning may grow, and eventually be carried out with local support.
- Shared learning and outside facilitation paves the way for better relationships and “honorable acts” within a local community. Honorable acts may create, for example, fire-related job opportunities and support for prescribed fire.

Resources

- [National Forest Foundation’s Tools Search and Learning Topics websites](#)
- NFF tools shared and discussed during this session:
 - [Factors Influencing Successful Collaboration](#)
 - [Best Practice: Building Local Support & Credibility](#)
 - [Dealing with Transitions](#) (peer learning session with discussion and sharing of multiple tools)
 - [A Roadmap for Collaboration Before, During and After the NEPA Process](#)
- [Mid-Klamath Restoration Partnership](#)
- [2015 Pocket Guide – Wisdom from the Field: Principles and Best Practices of the Fire Learning Network](#)

