

Collaborative Restoration Workshop

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Monitoring | Socio-Economic Monitoring: Methods to Measure and Tell the Story

Speakers

- **Jonathan Kusel**, Executive Director, Sierra Institute for Community and Environment
- **Gina Knudson**, Executive Director, Salmon Valley Stewardship
- **Matt Piccarello**, Community Forestry Coordinator, Forest Stewards Guild
- **Cassandra Moseley**, Associate Vice President for Research, Research Professor & Director, Institute for a Sustainable Environment, Director, Ecosystem Workforce Program, University of Oregon

Overview

This session reviewed current efforts to monitor the socioeconomic impact of forest restoration projects.

Jonathan Kusel – Research and Development on Socioeconomic Monitoring

The Sierra Institute is creating a long term socioeconomic monitoring methodology for the Dinkey Creek Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP). The Institute has also recently released a study on the status of socioeconomic monitoring on CFLRP project sites across the country.

Compared to ecological monitoring, there is less agreement regarding socioeconomic monitoring indicators and protocols. Consensus regarding how to best monitor socioeconomic conditions within the context of forest restoration projects does not exist, but studies of current programs are leading to the identification and dissemination of best practices for socioeconomic monitoring.

Sierra Institute reports on socioeconomic processes are listed below under Resources.

Gina Knudson – Getting the Whole Story

The Lemhi Forest Restoration Group has been tracking social and economic measurements for 10 years. The group has found that in rural communities which are dependent upon public lands, economic impacts greatly influence social measures. Collecting quantitative data is important, but understanding the social context for the findings is just as important.

Gina Knudson of Salmon Valley Stewardship described the significant social benefits that accompanied a relatively minor economic benefit on a Central Idaho collaborative project, including:

- Cross-training turned seasonal workers into nearly year-round employees.
- Gaining knowledge on the benefits of the project motivated community members to become ambassadors for forest restoration.

Socioeconomic monitoring can also play a role in adaptive management. Regular check-ups on economic and social measures help ensure that project outcomes are in alignment with collaborative objectives. When designing a socioeconomic monitoring plan, list clear objectives and define ways of monitoring progress and correcting management processes.



Explore more: nationalforests.org/crw

Matt Piccarello – Monitoring in New Mexico

Matt Piccarello introduced the socioeconomic monitoring programs for two CFLRP projects in New Mexico, the Southwest Jemez Mountains and Zuni Mountains. Both projects are striving to improve both ecological and socioeconomic resiliency. Matt introduced a series of questions that help managers and partners form a vision of building resiliency. By defining what socioeconomic resiliency is for a given landscape, a monitoring plan can set clear objectives and identify options for adapting management practices along the way.

1. Defining the focal system
 - E.g., “How do we define the Zuni Mountain Landscape?”
2. The resilience of what?
 - Natural resource uses – economic, cultural, recreational, etc.
 - Helps answer question #1
3. The resilience to what?
 - Natural and socio-economic disturbance
4. Identifying thresholds
 - Consistent supply of timber
 - Transportation costs
5. Governance systems
 - Flexible, adaptive?
 - How is conflict resolved?
 - Bottlenecks impacting decision making?

Lessons

- Defining “local” is critical
- Include measures of social conditions and impact
- Engage in integrated monitoring early in the process
- Pitfalls of monitoring are a lack of clarity about what people want to monitor, starting too late, and collecting data that doesn’t answer the questions about which people want to learn

Resources

- [Tracking the Economic Impacts of Restoration data collection form](#)
- [Quick Guides on Assessing, Planning, and Monitoring to Increase Local Economic Opportunities From Restoration and many other topics](#)
- [Monitoring Socioeconomics within Collaborative Forestry Projects](#)
- [The Burney Creek – Hat Creek Community Forestry Project](#)
- [The Dinkey Forest Landscape Restoration Project](#)
- [Zuni Mountain CFLRP](#)
- [Southwest Jemez Mountains Landscape Collaborative Monitoring Portal](#)

