

Collaborative Restoration Workshop

National Forest Foundation | April 2016

Future of Collaborative Stewardship | Collaborative Restoration: Local Implementation of the National Vision

Speakers

- **Jerry Ingersoll**, Forest Supervisor, Siuslaw National Forest, U.S. Forest Service
- **Cal Joyner**, Regional Forester, Region 3, U.S. Forest Service
- **Mark Stern**, Oregon Forest Restoration Program Director, The Nature Conservancy
- **Maureen Bookwalter**, U.S. Forest Service-Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation Liaison
- **Steve Andringa**, Forestry Program Manager, Yakama Nation

Overview

Forest Service and partner leaders shared their vision for collaborative restoration and resilience. Speakers also identified what's working well in implementing the national vision and gaps that currently exist. Dialogue focused on key lessons for how we can work together to deliver the outcome of resilient landscapes, as well as the following questions: Where are we trying to go? What is the role of national direction vs. the need for local flexibility in getting us there?

Summary

Jerry Ingersoll from the Siuslaw National Forest focused on recreation, restoration, and partnerships. The Siuslaw is a high fire frequency forest and a fire resilient forest – they're "singing a new song" that does not necessarily fit the mold of landscape restoration. The Forest Service enhances structural and species diversity *at the appropriate scale* by retaining receipts and working with stewardship groups and watershed councils. The Siuslaw may not have the same timber output as other forests, but they're thinking at multiple scales about conservation results. Not all restoration is active, and not every output is equal.

Maureen Bookwalter introduced the State of Montana's Forests in Focus program. Montana sees National Forest management as a "we problem" instead of a "they problem." The State of Montana partners with the Forest Service to invest on federal lands. Funds go to on-the-ground restoration and collaborative groups. There are challenges associated with a state and federal agency working together (and capacity issues), but relationships are growing. Those involved believe in the art of possibility.

Cal Joyner asked, "How does a multi-state region balance increasing pace and scale? Where do you invest? For what do we hold ourselves accountable?" Cal explained that Region 3 is responsible for providing water to large desert cities, and necessarily focuses on the balance between climate change resilience and natural resource dependency. In Region 3, many partners including the National Forest Foundation, are bringing funds to the table. The Region's challenge is to ensure there are enough projects ready to go. One way they've been able to address this challenge is by having each forest create a restoration plan that identifies the highest priority work.

Steve Andringa explained that the people of the Yakima Nation were among America's first stewards, and the Tribe has a history of natural resources management. For years, the Yakama Nation has



Explore more: nationalforests.org/crw

addressed restoration and resiliency with regulatory and technical tools, and looked for innovations within the legal frameworks of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), and others. Many federal lands are adjacent to tribal lands. The federal and tribal governments can create sustainable systems by focusing on social, economic, ecological, spiritual, and cultural balance.

Lessons

- The Forest Service is experiencing a paradigm shift in terms of the national vision for restoration. Not everyone is singing the same song. Quality of work is just as important as quantity. Communities may care about economic contributions and board feet or acres of fuel reduction and community protection.
- Though we're focusing on increasing the pace and scale of restoration, we're still trying to figure out how to quantify the ecological changes across a landscape. We should aim to have a broader conversation that includes water, species diversity, economic markets, and sustainability.
- Forest Service leadership and Congress have provided the agency with many new tools that will help increase the pace and scale of on-the-ground work.
- It's important that local communities know what a healthy forest looks like, and understand why we take certain management actions. Forests can share successes through field trips, community dialogues, showing people "before and after" pictures, and communicating the need for restoration and collaboration. We must improve how we tell our stories.
- Each speaker discussed the challenges and opportunities associated with cross boundary management. The lines among management jurisdictions are blurring as programs like Montana's Forests in Focus initiative gain traction.
- Many are wondering how to get a restoration economy going, feed it, and continue it over time. In the face of catastrophic fire and adversity, how do you maintain and expand a restoration economy? The Forest Service doesn't have a lot of practice at this yet, but the field of knowledge and experience is growing.
- Plans are great, but flexibility is necessary to have backup options when unexpected events like fires affect those plans. It's critical that we learn how to adapt.

