

Collaborative Restoration Workshop

National Forest Foundation | April 2016

Collaboration & Engagement | Problem Resolving and Preventing: Working Together Effectively

Key Topics: Collaborative Process

Speakers

- **Jerry Ingersoll**, Forest Supervisor, Siuslaw National Forest, USFS
- **Nolan Colegrove**, District Ranger, Six Rivers National Forest, USFS
- **William Butler**, Assistant Professor, Florida State University
- **Alan Harper**, Resource Manager, Idaho Forest Group

Overview

This session provided examples of the challenges and successes of collaboration from the U.S. Forest Service and partner perspectives.

Jerry Ingersoll – The Siuslaw National Forest, Oregon

For more than twenty years the Siuslaw National Forest in western Oregon has been known for collaboration and restoration. The story of collaboration on the Siuslaw has its origins in the spotted owl crisis of the early 1990s and the Northwest Forest Plan. In the face of dramatic changes in forest management, including a drastic decrease in timber sold, the collaborative came together to negotiate a way forward that aligned with new management ideals and benefited local economies. The resulting collaborative efforts reflect the unique ecosystem, human communities, economy, and management history of the Coast Range.

In 2016 collaboration is rapidly becoming an expectation across the Forest Service. The Siuslaw story provides insight on sustaining and nurturing a mature collaborative over time, as players and expectations change and relationships are tested.

Lessons from Sustaining Collaboration

- Trust is precious, can be lost, and sustaining trust can't be taken for granted.
- Collaboration is enduring work, and requires community and institutional capacity to sustain.
- Collaboration is founded on personal relationships, but sustainability requires grounding those relationships in institutions.
- Sharing leadership and credit is essential.
- There must be work to do and something to keep people engaged once the crisis is past.
- There must continue to be something in it for everyone.
- Initiation may be about courageous leadership, but sustainability is about articulating culture and vision.
- In the end, it's about sustaining a brand – a recognizable ideal of what collaboration is and what the group stands for.

Nolan Colegrove – Western Klamath Restoration Partnership

This planning effort explores a path toward collaborative fire management in the Western Klamath landscape. It arose from a desire by the Karuk Tribe, the Mid Klamath Watershed Council, Forest



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Service, area Fire Safe Councils, environmental groups, and other community-based stakeholders to explore what fire management could be like using a collaborative paradigm.

The WKRP utilized a two-pronged approach to shape the planning effort: GIS-based fire modeling and an open and interactive planning process. Each prong engaged multiple stakeholders and multiple ecological and social values. Cash and in-kind funding for the effort included multiple local, regional, and national sources. Ultimately, the combination of approaches led the group to envision three integrated fire management projects that occur at the landscape- scale.

A hallmark of this effort was the intensive participation by individuals and organizations with diverse and sometimes conflicting perspectives about how to shape fire management. Partners had to work to overcome a long history of unsatisfactory wildfire events, mistrust, and failed attempts to work together. Three things that helped foster a new level of trust and partnership include:

- Facilitated meetings, which brought diverse stakeholders together to listen to each other.
- Transparency and inclusiveness at every step of the planning process.
- A teachable attitude, realizing that the Forest Service does not have all the answers and can really benefit from stakeholder input.

Alan Harper – Panhandle Forest Collaborative

When the Panhandle Forest Collaborative (PFC) first met in northern Idaho, most of the conflict was between the environmental community as one group and the Forest Service and industry together as another. Over time, the environmental community and industry started to trust one another by finding compromises that both parties could live with. Conflict then shifted, and the environmental community and industry started working together as one, often in conflict with the Forest service.

After several years of meetings and countless trips to the woods the group completed its first project, a 10,000 mbf Stewardship sale. At some point during the development of that first project all parties involved started listening and trusting one another. Key elements of that first project have now been used in several other projects on the forest. It is important to know that none of these projects have met 100% of the goals of any one group, but each group found acceptable compromises.

Three lessons from this successful collaboration:

- Bring in all stakeholders possible and listen to their interests.
- Strengthen relationships with the conservation community and leverage their political capital for mutually beneficial outcomes.
- Show how retaining infrastructure adds value as a tool for forest restoration.

William Butler – 10 CFLRPs

Although Forest Service personnel have experience engaging in collaborative planning, the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration (CFLR) program requires collaboration throughout implementation and multi-party monitoring. Through a series of qualitative interviews with participants in the first ten landscapes enrolled in the CFLR program, William Butler sought to identify the ways in which collaborative participants and agency personnel conceptualize how stakeholders can contribute to implementation on landscape-scale restoration projects. Butler found that groups can collaborate during implementation by conducting field reviews, providing ongoing prioritization, and other activities.

These interviews found that collaborative implementation in the context of CFLRP,

- Leads to largely indirect influence on agency implementation of projects,
- Creates opportunities for expanded accountability through informal and relational means, and,



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- Creates feedback loops for robust opportunities to engage in adaptive management across time and space.

Lessons

- Don't let the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) scare you. Let it be your guide.
- Match your collaborative structure to expectations in terms of outcomes, meeting frequency, topics of discussion, etc.
- As trust builds, projects may be able to grow in size. Collaboratives that focus on larger scale work tend to involve more agencies.
- Sometimes new leadership on a National Forest results in the brakes going on. Other times turnover leads to a new vision and fresh perspective. Embrace turnover – it's not always the worst thing! *In some places, collaborative groups interview candidates for leadership position. Participants thought this sounded like an idea worth pursuing in more places.*
- Collaborative groups fund operations in different ways:
 - Each group may contribute funds so that one person can attend who wouldn't otherwise.
 - Members may pay annual dues to serve as seed money for larger grants.
 - Forest Service provides funds in some cases.
- Mature collaborative groups may choose to dissolve interest-based labels, so that the "label" boils down to people who care about management. This system does not always work for tribes, who have been treated differently historically, but for some people it works well.

Resources

- [Siuslaw Collaborative webpage](#)
- [Western Klamath Restoration Partnership – history and plan](#)
- [Western Klamath Restoration Partnership – Facebook Page with history and updates](#)
- [Panhandle Forest Collaborative webpage](#)
- William Butler article of CFLRPs: "Responding to a policy mandate to collaborate: structuring collaboration in the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program," *Journal of Environmental Planning and Management*. Volume 59, Issue 6, 2016. Pages 1054-1072

