

2020 Shared Stewardship Peer Learning Sessions Lessons Learned: Measuring the Impact and Ensuring the Durability of Shared Stewardship & Science-based Tools to Implement Shared Stewardship

Summary

Land managers have limited resources to apply to landscape-scale problems, so efficient utilization of those resources is critical. To maximize impact of limited resources in Shared Stewardship, partners must consider the scale of their work and the underlying values they are trying to manage. Once identified, partners should find ways to map their values in order to convey that information to their partners and the public. Early on, partners should develop a strategy for measuring and demonstrating the impact of their work.

"It is important to recognize that we are hearing similar messages about forest management regardless of where we are from or what agency we are a part of. We are all managing for clean water, clean air, greenhouse gas emissions, and climate change."
- Cody Desautel, Natural Resources Director, Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation

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Scaling is key.

At every step of the Shared Stewardship process, partners should consider scale. This starts with the scale of the agreements, including the number of organizations involved and the geographic range of the agreements. Will the agreement span an entire region of the country and include multiple states, as is the case with the [Chesapeake Bay Program](#)? Or will it concentrate its effort in a few small communities, like the [Mohawk Trail Woodlands Partnership](#)? Scale is an important consideration for determining the possible outcomes of the agreement and communication networks necessary for success.

Partners also must consider the scale of an agreed-upon project. Shared Stewardship aims to enact landscape-scale change, but a single partnership might not be capable of producing change at that scale. Understanding the scale of the project should involve the mapping of available resources, priority areas, and shared goals among partners.

Finally, partners must decide at what scale they plan to build their data sets. A primary goal of Shared Stewardship agreements should be to facilitate data sharing and land managers would be wise not to duplicate already existing data. Instead, partners should identify new data needed for measuring the impact of the landscape-scale, cross-boundary project.

Peer Learning Session Recordings

- [Shared Stewardship Peer Learning Series, Session 5: "Measuring the Impact of Shared Stewardship: Tools for Measuring Success" \(December 3, 2020\)](#)
- [Shared Stewardship Peer Learning Series, Session 6: "Ensuring the Durability of Shared Stewardship Long-Term" \(December 7, 2020\)](#)
- [Shared Stewardship Peer Learning Series, Session 7: "Cross-Boundary Science-Based Tools to Implement Shared Stewardship" \(January 14, 2021\)](#)

Understand how partners value forests.

Each partner comes to the table with different goals. Those goals are rooted in a partner's values. Some partners may prioritize wildlife habitat or watershed health, and another might champion the economic value of timber production. It is important to consider whether tribes have an interest in a place and its resources.

The way land managers value forests can be described quantitatively or qualitatively. For instance, a forest's value could be represented monetarily when considering the value of the timber or the amount of drinking water it provides. Conversely, a forest's value can be explained by mapping the habitat it provides a culturally-significant species or the soil nutrient cycling it enables.

Values can and do change over time, so maintaining relationships and reassessing the values each partner holds is crucial for maintaining buy-in and ensuring the long-term durability of agreements.

Visualize the values.

To properly invest limited resources in managing the values of a forest, partners should consider finding a way to visualize their values, particularly through mapping. Plotting a species range in a forest or the stands of old growth versus second growth trees can provide partners with an understanding of the resources and tradeoffs involved in any particular management decision. Values mapping can allow partners to conceptualize a value they might not share and thus be more receptive to compromise.

Mapping also provides the network of organizations and individuals engaged in Shared Stewardship with a capacity-building tool. For example, the USDA Forest Service's New York City field station helped build a spatial database and mapped the organizations that manage or have a stake in particular land areas. This [mapping project](#) provides details about each organization with the goal of helping to build partnerships, avoid duplicative work, and facilitate large-scale urban forestry programs.

Case Study: Forests to Faucets 2.0

The Forest Service's [Forests to Faucets 2.0](#) map places the value of forested watersheds as sources of drinking water front and center. The map uses biophysical and demographic data to show the relative importance of watersheds for drinking water, and the potential threats to them. Among the mapped threats are fire, insect and disease, human development, and reduced runoff due to climate change.

For those organizations with a vested interest in the issue of drinking water supply, the map provides a visual assessment of watersheds that need the most attention and resources. Additionally, the map has a layer indicating land ownership, allowing for efficient coordination among partners.