White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation  
Day 2 Breakout Session Compilation

**Topic:** Accelerating Cooperative Conservation as a way of Doing Business: Building Capacity, Skills, and Practices Across Organizations

**Session number:** 44  
**Facilitator:** Patrick Field  
**Afternoon**  
**Location:** 120

*This summary cannot be more than two pages; allocate space as needed among the categories.*

A. **Major Repeated Themes Raised in the Discussion.** A grouping of ideas repeated with some frequency in the session and brought up again during the group summation process. Also includes diverging views and/or questions about the topic.

- Align regulation, policy, and cooperative conservation
- Funding
- Education and Awareness
- Making It Real in agencies:
  - Capacity building
  - Training
  - Performance measures
- Continuity and Commitment
- Transparency and Inclusiveness
- Communication should happen early and often.
- Measurements for monitoring and evaluation
- National Commitment and local action
- Clearly stated and institutionalized policy that is implemented at all levels
- Reduce institutional impediments

*This document represents the views of the individual participants and does not reflect group consensus.*
B. **National-level Practical Actions** that could be taken by the Federal government, national NGO’s, and other national organizations. Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.

- Identify a Cooperative Conservation Czar
- “Renewed national commitment” to cooperative conservation
- Funding or incentives
  - Require local matches for federal funding. Local matches may include in-kind services
  - Create mechanisms for multi-year funding
  - Tie funding to agencies as well as public and stakeholders if they are collaborating
  - Find mechanisms to pool multiple sources of funding to support cooperative efforts
  - Budget for cooperative conservation more than compliance and litigation avoidance
- Encourage open, transparent processes.
- Reform or address FACA challenges to the cooperative conservation approach.
- Establish clear ground rules up front.
- Reevaluate Project Performance measurements to incorporate a diverse suite
- Integrating existing resources
  - Cooperative Conservation Hotline
  - Compilation of websites of collaborative approaches that ARE working
- Create cross-agency state Cooperative Conservation committees which would work similarly to NRCS
- Personnel performance measures need to be reevaluated
  - Reward risk taking
  - People should be judged based on diverse metrics (including relationship building, etc.) rather than bureaucratic metrics
  - Strategic plan to reinvigorate and align the personnel system
  - Reform performance based budgeting to align with cooperative conservation
- Visionary targets
- Avoid creation of new bureaucracy

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• Decentralize and devolve decision making while maintaining clear overarching vision, goals, and objectives
• Training in stewardship contracting, partnering, conflict resolution. Mentoring and exchange programs across sectors should be encouraged.
• Make case for the cost-benefit of cooperative conservation that is broad-minded and takes into account administrative costs, litigation risks, etc.
• Frame capacity building positively to encourage high level participation.

C. **Local-level Practical Actions** that could be taken at the local or community level by Tribes, state and local communities, private citizens, and local organizations. *Diverging views and/or questions are also noted.*

• Finding more and creative ways to leverage funds with private funds
• Share best practices that would help to use the successes and key techniques for other sites
• Integrating funding, priorities, and technical capabilities with cooperative conservation
• Businesses need to engage neighbors and their public
• Engage local universities as partners
• Incorporate indigenous knowledge
• Link rural development to cooperative conservation
  o Rich ecosystems, forested lands, and poor communities often overlap
• Train diverse groups to encourage participation of relevant stakeholders.

D. **Particularly insightful quotes from participants** that capture the essence of key points made during the group’s discussion.

“The federal government should be helping us do it not telling us what to do.”

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