

**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

Afternoon

Facilitator: John Jostes

Location: 123

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.*

Three main Areas:

1. Framing a platform to serve as a starting point for cooperative Conservation

- Values really matter!.
- Land users perspective was very strong. Two main perspectives:
 - o Indigenous
 - o Farming perspective
- There needs to be a reason for people to come together. Ensuring that local land users are involved brings their passion – Because it is personal.
- These efforts are more successful when you have the local leadership that holds it together. The peer pressure or the social structure that brings people to action, e.g. the Australian Model – has a social motivation to it, as opposed to an individual motivation. Consistent with the “You can’t do it by yourself” theme that we heard yesterday.,

2. Recognizing strategic opportunities as you embark on the practice of engaging communities in cooperative conservation.

- There is a need to have some structure, particularly a need to plug into a Pre-existing structure – such as family or community (in essence a “tribal” way)
Need to focus conservation efforts on problems people identify with. Problems that address basic needs of security, health and
- Need to change the approach from the “stovepipe” mentality to a cross-functional approach, so as to leverage a bigger picture perspective.
- Only when we use those to strategically achieve a “critical mass” does it appear worth investing time and resources of concerned communities.
- Need to shift from command and control mentality to an opportunistic or entrepreneurial mind-set at all levels of community and government.

3. How we get there:

- It’s all about relationships and building trust.
- Leveraging existing connections – vertically and horizontal, e.g. networking not only among neighbors, but up and down levels of governance.
- Focus on pragmatic incrementalism rather than seeking perfection at the expense of progress.

This document represents the views of the individual participants and does not reflect group consensus.

- People show up at the table for different reasons – it is crucial to clarify a common objective or desired outcome.
 - Change mindsets from avoiding risks to rewarding innovative behavior.
 - Build the skills from the ground up – including project planning, project management, evaluation, organization of people and projects. These are not usually the skills possessed by technical people at the federal level, but are new skills that need to be fostered through training.
 - Don't underestimate the level of commitment it will take to effect change, some things take a long time, and patience and persistence are needed.
 - Since this is a White House initiative, it would instill greater confidence if the President were here.
- 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.*
- Align more closely at the federal level how conservation projects are evaluated. Once identified at the federal level, make the criteria consistent for state and local levels as well. Conservation happens in a better way when there is consistent criteria for how projects are supported from the local level to the policy level. There needs to be less bureaucratic friction in getting from idea to implementation.
 - Align federal performance evaluation systems so that fostering cooperation and trust are rewarded, not only individual efforts.
 - Need to provide more coordinated federal assistance on projects. Local groups have to organize the piecemeal assistance they get from Federal agencies with different responsibilities.
- 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.*
- Incorporate indigenous knowledge into conservation projects. Much knowledge can be gained from indigenous populations, that we are currently missing.
 - Local leaders need to train leaders. Leadership training really pays off, and local communities can leverage resources, including personnel to train others. Developing a local land ethic is key. One of the key ingredients when I look back at our tribe is the boundary system. Any land development would be worth thousands of dollars. We banned development. Our tribe is one of the poorest in the state. If we allowed development along the river, we would be very very wealthy. But it is a system of values. I think that is what is needed in the larger society – is a system of values.
 - Need to train people on choices and consequences – decision sciences as a part of conservation planning and management.
- D. Particularly insightful quotes:**
- I don't want this to be a campaign slogan – I want this to be a real way to make conservation happen.
 - I don't want to be a bumper sticker, I want to be part of getting something done.
 - Cooperation is not an end in itself, we must ensure that we are clear about what we are cooperating for.

This document represents the views of the individual participants and does not reflect group consensus.

This document represents the views of the individual participants and does not reflect group consensus.