

**White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation  
Day 2 Breakout Session Compilation**

**Topic:** Reaching Across Boundaries to Promote Shared Governance

**Session number:** 51

**Afternoon**

**Facilitator:** Marlon Sherman

**Location:** 223

*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.*

- How can tomorrow's governance be better if current efforts fall short?
  - May be issue of priorities?
  - Need commitment from agencies to step forward/accountability
  - Increased citizen involvement
- Shared governance: more of an ecosystem approach to conservation.
- Impediments to SG can occur at local levels.... Lack of trust
- Education process is the key to encourage SG.
- Seek common definitions (and databases) for conservation issues.
- Understanding roles of each agency/participant important to SG.
- SG may begin with/focus on easier aspects of an issue – from there partnerships may grow and expand to new challenges.
- Entities must share costs and benefits for conservation success.
- Identify issues/needs locally and then seek appropriate partners.
  - Recognizing that benefits may be clear to some, with others not seeing the same thing.
- Incentives: “if you succeed, fine, but if you fail, you're finished” – We need risk takers and how do we create incentives for risk taking that is sometimes necessary for conservation success?
- Success relies on relationships.
- Lack of continuity of staff at all levels can disrupt/distract from SG.
- Communities need to create a vision: then expectations follow. Members need to ask: “What do I want and what am I willing to do?”
- What does it take for Conservation to really occur (on the ground)? We need to focus on people that are on or work on the landscape.
- We need to look for nexus that provides on-the-ground coordination and delivery of conservation products.
- Seek one stop shopping opportunities for citizens looking for govt services.
- We need watershed type forums, much like we have with species specific venues, like the flyway councils. Identify catalysts that bring parties together and outside of statutory mandates.
- SG should anticipate need for maintenance.

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- As progress will not occur overnight, we need to seek venues to report on progress, or lack of progress, as well as barriers, and initial successes.
- As for accountability, federal agencies and other participants that participate with SG must be accountable.
- It will take time to develop trust.... This will lead to committed participants and easily shared information.

**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.*

- Seek ways to encourage risk taking at federal agency level.
- Establish policy supporting SG, perhaps via an ecosystem approach.
- Reemphasize agreed upon/consistent ecological zones and watersheds for federal level efforts to encourage shared governance.
- Ensure grass roots funding.
- Need consistency within and between federal agencies.
- Create model for encouraging cooperative conservation at the local level.
- Recognition from those controlling the purse strings that funding for relationship building and development can achieve greater conservation results than project dollars.

**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.*

- Create expectations – bring various interests together to begin process of collaborative conservation.
- Provide range of incentives to encourage cooperative process. This can be as simple as having assurance of a place at the table. Or it can be a simple recognition that the law can provide the incentive.
- Establish shared/streamlined permitting.
- Create forums for watershed level work, similar to what we have for species.
- Encourage citizen/community led initiatives that create incentives for conservation – make the job of agencies easier.

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

“Conservation does not happen in the office – it happens on the ground.”

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