

Themes from August 30 Facilitated Discussions – Compiled by the Lead Facilitators

- Collaboration needs advocates and champions – collaborative leaders are needed at all levels.
- Build on existing models (informal networks, existing federal, state and tribal programs and international experiences).
- Share success stories and develop ways to celebrate successes to build motivation and sustain commitment.
- Provide generous federal support – need for funding and staff to support collaborative processes – recognize that these processes are long-term.
- Need funds to support planning, long term monitoring and measurement.
- Use funds in creative ways to encourage partnerships, support existing efforts, and leverage new funds and reward success.
- Collaborative work will not reduce resource needs – it may increase them.
- Strengthen the effective use, quality and credibility of information, with special emphasis on local knowledge—for goal setting, monitoring progress and evaluating success.
- Develop more accessible information and ways for citizens to access information, “one-stop shopping.”
- Starting at the local level is important in the development of trusting relationships – this may take considerable time.
- Work to develop trusting relationships at all levels and between the federal agencies and with state agencies.
- Transform organizational culture:
 - Making collaboration “at home” in the agencies (hire, train, align, reward, retire and dismiss where needed).
 - Make policies procedures, and rules related to collaborative conservation compatible across federal, state and local agencies to avoid unnecessary delay and frustration.
 - Review and revise/remove policies that impede collaborative conservation across and within agencies.
 - Change risk aversion in federal culture (protect and reward risk takers – don’t penalize people who try these processes if they do not work).
 - Articulate clear parameters about federal expectations, authorities, and abilities for cooperative conservation.

- Collaboration needs to recognize tribal sovereignty at the outset.
- Timelines and cycles of the federal government do not mesh well with collaborative projects (turnover, administrative deadlines, budget cycles, and election cycles).
- Sometimes even a well-designed cooperative conservation effort can be jeopardized by “late hits” (e.g., changing of the decision making framework, legal challenge).
- Need to recognize and manage the inevitable tension between national policies and local interests
 - Integrate representation of local and national constituencies in cooperative conservation
 - Goals should reflect both federal and local interests.
- Recognize that collaborations and partnerships that are initiated voluntarily are often most effective. Recognizing the importance of local initiation is vital.
- Projects should be developed and implemented in a holistic and sustainable manner – often at the ecosystem or landscape scale.
- Need to prepare for and address unintended consequences.
- Look for unlikely models and partners to develop multi-purpose projects.
- Initiate collaborative processes and partnerships early—before a crisis occurs.
- Full inclusion is important and it can be difficult to achieve – even a challenge at this conference.
- Need to involve people who are close to the land or resource in cooperative conservation efforts – land owners, recreationists, and sportsmen.
- There is a tension between the virtues of uniformity and flexibility – can cooperative conservation address this tension?
- One size does not fit all – collaborations need to be flexible and adaptable.
- Recognize the key role that states and tribes play in fostering and implementing partnerships and collaborations.