

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

Topic: Measuring Success of Cooperative Conservation Efforts

Session number: 50

Facilitator: Michael Elliott

Afternoon

Location: 231

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.*

Bring in stakeholders early in collaborative processes to establish goals. There were strong feelings about the necessity of using collaborative processes to change regulations that seem onerous or arbitrary, while others felt that collaboratives should be working within the existing regulatory environment.

Develop clear and measurable goals. The collaborative needs to have a clearly articulated purpose. The collaborative should have a sponsor and stable source of resources for long-term monitoring and measuring of success, incorporating this workplan into a charter or other establishing document.

Need to develop a planned monitoring effort. Monitoring will not be successful if it is done on ad hoc basis. Need to share tools, and recognize the long term commitment of resources to ensure monitoring is done well.

Develop relevant and achievable measures of success. "Stretch goals" are useful and should be included in the process.

Success should be measured based both on outcome and process measures. Process measures relate to a change of behavior, both within the partnership (eg by improved communication) and changes in the behavior of the community that is impacted by the collaborative (i.e., community at large becomes better stewards, etc.). Need to be able to identify and measure the intangibles as well.

Need to communicate success and results. It's important not only to measure these things, but to share what we learned from successes and failures and to show the value of the collaborative processes. Need to have face-to-face regional summits.

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.*

Develop protocols by which local collaboratives may use volunteers to monitor and measure success. The protocols should be affordable in design, based on good biological process data, be specific to particular environments (eg, river systems) but general enough for many collaboratives to use.

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Build a database of case studies, resources, and lessons learned that help collaboratives define and measure success.

Build physical theoretical models that help collaboratives be more proactive in assessing emerging problems and provide base funding for early initial investigations.

Convene regional cooperative conservation conferences to follow-up on results from this conference.

Identify and utilized resources to share information and monitor progress, particularly using web-based databases.

Develop “key point models” such as the USDA food safety program uses (models which identify key points in processes where things might go wrong, and perform continual improvement).

Provide collaboratives opportunities to give feedback to government officials about how the collaborative is doing and how the government officials are doing (like the 360 degree evaluation process).

Develop guidelines for using science in cooperative conservation processes.

Convene a participatory panel to review regulatory requirements coming from outdated statutes.

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.*

Collaboratives should evaluate changes in behavior on the part of the community, which includes compliance with regulations, use of program elements, acceptance by the community, and constituency satisfaction.

Increase emphasis on communicating the success of the program (similar to programs developed by USDA Extension Service).

Establish precise workplans for monitoring and measuring success that keep people focused on the evaluation function.

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

“Use workplans to keep eyes on the prize.”

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