White House Conference on Cooperative Conservation
Day 2 Breakout Session Compilation

Topic: Using Science and Technology to Reach Cooperative Conservation Goals
Session number: 43 **Morning**
Facilitator: Scott McCreary **Location: 225**
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.*

1. Taking stock of existing conditions and setting goals

- Interagency, multidisciplinary teams are a strength because down the road those assessments are much stronger than if you had only experts within a single agency. *Joint sponsorship and implementation of scientific assessments.*
- Engage the community in jointly framing questions to be addressed and information needs, in interpreting the resulting findings and their implication for management decisions
- Establish a clear baseline. Use internet based real-time data.
- Educate people about the process of scientific inquiry and the potential role of science in environmental policy making.
- Be clear about nomenclature. Draw a distinction between the process of scientific inquiry and the way scientific information enters regulatory processes.

2. Taking action

- Support science aimed at identifying emerging questions.
- Science needs to be used to verify the validity of technologies.
- Recognize strong financial drivers to bring in funds.
- Recognize that knowledge is power. It transforms power relationships.
- Support baseline data sets.
- Distinguish science's role as a support function but identifying alternatives is a policy role.
- There's a big difference between validation and invalidation of assumptions.

3. Meeting challenges

- Often we lack of overarching conceptual model.
- Each discipline takes their own approach and gives their own advice.
- Commuincation barriers need to be overcome.
- A comprehensive planning approach helps establish roles and develop trust, and can help resolve the financial issue.
- When environmental science gets to the local level, include social factors.

- The educational system today in the US does not produce good generalists. Communication has to be done at different levels to different audiences.

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 a national research strategy with steps to ensure objectivity.
- Create a national training program for science staffing, emphasize communication to multiple audiences.
- Establish a federal commitment to long term monitoring data
- *Carry out ecosystem based management from the standpoint of evenness in disciplinary representation.*
- We ought to try to achieve mutual understanding and appreciation for cultures of the landowner and scientific community and the rigor and authenticity of each.
- Invest in ongoing dialogue with groups like this to make these ideas operational.
- Support early public education.
- Reorganize higher education to focus on and make operational "interdisciplinary natural resource management.
- Fund monitoring and research as part of project implementation.

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.*

- Identify regional research agendas with multiple stakeholders.
- Use a joint approach to frame questions, identify expertise needs, collect data, and interpret results.
- Create broad coalitions to support the need to support science funding
- Build in *Independent scientific review.*

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

- "For years, our natural resource management has been victimized by our superb university system. We are so specialized that we generate a vast amount of information--more information than we are using. There is no organized effort to fill data. Information retrieval and integration is also a problem.
- "Though the buzzword is "ecosystem based management" this isn't really happening – we're not really putting the parts together."