

COLLABORATIVE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN WESTERN COLORADO

“I felt like I got more than I have gotten from any other course I’ve taken.”

COLLABORATION: A STRATEGY FOR SUCCESS

In December 2004, a group of 45 resource managers from across Western Colorado gathered in Grand Junction, Colorado for a week-long course on Collaborative Resource Management. Participants came from federal, state, and county governments.

In western Colorado, a number of collaborative efforts are underway and others are proposed; yet there has been little opportunity for groups to learn from each other's experiences or to collaborate with national experts on ways to optimize their efforts.

What brought this myriad group together was a desire to discover a new way to approach the



management of Western Colorado's natural resources.

Participants left the course with the tools and enthusiasm to return to their agencies and to begin making changes to the status quo.

The inter-agency/inter-government nature of the course also allowed participants the unique opportunity to make connections as the foundation for future collaboration.

“I’ll be a much more effective participant in collaborative (and sub-collaborative) efforts and will be able to improve chances for positive, sustainable results in those processes.”

BRING COLLABORATION TO YOUR ECOREGION



Participants enjoy a meal together on their last night.

This five-day course on collaborative resource management can be held in your ecoregion! Please contact us to find out more.

Our website, which highlights the Western Colorado course outline is a good place to start.

You can also contact Colleen Giordano at 734/615-6431.

www.snre.umich.edu/emi/collaboration/cc.htm

What is this course all about?	2
Who attended the course?	2
Sustaining success	3
Featured case studies	3
Collaborative course a success	4
How was this course funded?	4

WHAT IS THIS COURSE ALL ABOUT? (A BRIEF DESCRIPTION)

The collaborative resource management course takes participants through the stages of a collaborative process. From assessing whether the situation is right for collaboration to evaluating and managing adaptively, this course uses a series of case studies, exercises, and simulations to engage participants in learning about what makes collaboration work. This week-long course allows participants to learn from six



Trainer Mary Margaret Golten facilitates a strategy clinic in which course participants generated ideas to increase public support for the Colorado Canyons NCA.

trainers, including conflict management and dispute resolution experts, on-the-ground managers, and researchers.

Participants have the opportunity to learn from each other and to discuss issues pertinent to the region. A series of "strategy clinics" are designed to give participants the opportunity to use course material and experience to trouble-shoot current attempts at collaboration and to think about how to move forward.

The two field trips were a high point of the Western Colorado course. Participants enjoyed a visit to Colorado Canyons National Conservation Area highlighting collaborative efforts at managing all the federal lands surrounding the NCA. A visit to the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program .



Course participants working on a group exercise on the Glen Canyon Dam.

A visioning exercise the final morning gathered images of the future and gave participants the opportunity to imagine ways that the information learned in the class can be implemented at home.

"The instruction was superb. The instructors brought to the table a broad range of experiences and a strong ability to teach the material effectively and efficiently."

WHO ATTENDED THE COURSE?

45 people attended the Collaborative Resource Management from:

Federal Agencies

Bureau of Reclamation
Bureau of Land Management
Environmental Protection Agency
Fish & Wildlife Service
Forest Service
Geological Survey
National Park Service
Western Area Power Association

State Agencies

Colorado Division of Wildlife
Colorado State Forest Service
Colorado State University Cooperative Extension Service

County Governments

Delta County
Mesa County
Pitkin County



Sunset over the NCA

CASE STUDIES & FIELD TRIPS

Participants in the Western Colorado workshop learned about collaboration through various training methods. Case studies were used to explore the strategies and challenges associated with real-world collaborative processes. These cases were presented by individuals who had been actively involved in developing and managing these collaborations.

- **Nisqually River Council**, a diverse group of agency staff, tribal leaders and private citizens who worked to develop a shared management plan for the Nisqually River corridor located in southeastern Puget Sound in Washington State. Their efforts have included establishment of an open community forum to deal with conflict, and a land trust to acquire and protect key properties.
- **Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program**, an ongoing collaborative effort between 25 stakeholders (including federal and state agencies, Indian Tribes, and power, recreation, and environmental groups) to restore the ecological health of the Colorado River ecosystem through the Grand Canyon, while maintaining water and power services provided by the Glen Canyon Dam. Barry Gold, former Chief of the Grand Canyon Monitoring and Research Center, led this discussion.
- **Uncompahgre Plateau Project**, an effort to restore and sustain the ecological, social, cultural and economic values of this western Colorado region. The partners coordinate and facilitate restoration activities on the Plateau, arrange public meetings and field trips for community members, and produce an annual report to keep community members informed of Partnership activities. Bruce Watkins, a Colorado state employee, analyzed his experiences with the partnership.



After working together throughout the week, participants were able to articulate factors that would lead to successful collaborative efforts.



Barry Gold describes his experiences coordinating the Glen Canyon Dam Adaptive Management Program.



Taking a walk at sunset through the NCA was one of the highlights of the week.

Participants also attended two field trips which allowed people to discuss the potentials and pitfalls of collaboration while walking a landscape together.

- **Colorado National Monument and National Conservation Area**, where participants listened to presentations by the Bureau of Land Management, the National Park Service, and the local government about how this 20,000 acre area is being managed collaboratively.
- **Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program**, where participants toured a hatchery, fish ladders, and ponds used to restore endangered fish populations and discussed the challenges of building and maintaining collaboration in the recovery program.

“The course had an excellent balance of tools/methodology/understanding and use of breakout sessions to engage in bringing the learning to bear on real problems. It covered the multitude of issues (institutional/societal/psychological) that factor into the success of collaboratives. The component on science was extremely helpful; often lacking in other courses.”

COLLABORATIVE COURSE A SUCCESS

The combination of trainers, topics, and exercises produced a rich and varied course that gave participants a broad understanding of the challenges and strategies of collaborative resource management.

Since completion of the course, several collaborative efforts have



Participants examine endangered fish hatcheries on the field trip to the Upper Colorado River Endangered Fish Recovery Program.

been improved by course participants with the continuing support of course facilitators.

While change continues in Western Colorado, it appears that this course educated and inspired participants to find ways to continue to make a difference.

To find out about how to bring this course to *your* ecoregion, contact Colleen Giordano at 734/615-6431.



Participants enjoy a view of the Colorado River as they learn about the collaborative efforts to protect endangered fish.

“The opportunities to build relationships with agency personnel was very important (meals, breaks, exercises). I did learn A LOT about collaboration, about working with people, negotiation, and adaptive management that will benefit my work.”

HOW WAS THIS COURSE FUNDED?

The Western Colorado course was funded jointly by the Department of Interior, the USDA Forest Service, and the University of Michigan’s Ecosystem Management Initiative.

Future courses will also be funded collaboratively, making it possible for a broad array of resource managers to jointly learn the principles of collaborative resource management.

I found the course content valuable with much to take away to my job. I felt like this was a true “work”shop.”



Group exercises supplemented the lectures and encouraged participants from different agencies to work together and build relationships.



For more information, contact:

Ecosystem Management Initiative
School of Natural Resources and Environment
The University of Michigan
Dana Building
430 E University
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1115

Phone: 734/615-6431
Email: collgio@umich.edu



Course website: www.snre.umich.edu/emi/collaboration/