

CHAPTER 16: OUTCOMES

I. INTRODUCTION

Overview

Outcomes of collaborative partnerships are often difficult to measure, and our ten collaborative partnerships were no different. Individuals interviewed for the case studies had various responses when asked about outcomes and achievements that resulted from their partnership.

In order to understand what participants felt were some of the most important outcomes of their partnership, we began by asking what they thought was their greatest achievement of their collaborative partnership. Other questions, such as what kind of projects the partnership accomplished were also asked to several members to gauge the nature of outcomes. For several cases we also used other sources such as videos and written documentation to learn about various outcomes. There are a wide variety of achievements possible from collaborative partnerships, many of which are not tangible using traditional measures. By analyzing these achievements, we hope to provide insight into the range and variation of outcomes that can result from a collaborative approach to resource management.

Outcomes: Summary of Core Findings

Outcomes from the ten collaborative partnerships analyzed in this report fell into four general categories:

- Ability to build relationships and community
- Capacity for increased education, awareness and information gathering and exchange
- Implementation of on-the-ground conservation achievements
- Development of policy-based advice and resource management plans

II. SPECIFIC FINDINGS: OUTCOMES

Ability to build relationships and community

Relationship and community building was mentioned in each of the case studies. This entails a variety of aspects including individuals coming together from diverse often adversarial positions to work together, being good neighbors, building trust, to coordination among stakeholders and sticking together as a group.

Individuals coming together from adversarial positions and competing interests to a point where they are working together to find common ground was mentioned as an outcome in the NW RAC, Owl Mountain Partnership, Scott River CRMP and Clark County HCP. Local

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gold miner Ann Schrieber, a member of Clark County HCP spoke about how competing interests have begun to work together: "This is going to sound crazy to you, but the most important achievement I saw was that a group of people walked into a room hating each other's guts and ready to slit each other's throats...and now if you were to come visit those meetings and say something against the plan we've come up with, you're apt to get eaten up by both sides." Don Peach, Mayor of Ranglely Colorado and member of the NW RAC, said the greatest achievement was, "Getting disparate groups together and appreciate other people's points of view." Similarly, Greg Sherman an environmental engineer and member of the Owl Mountain Partnership stated the most important achievement was, "that all members of the group can talk amongst one another openly. BLM can talk to USFS which is almost never heard of. Ranchers can talk to their BLM representative. It's trust."

Several partnerships spoke about the building of trust among members as an outcome. Darrell Sall, former participant in the Blackfoot Challenge, summarized the feelings of many participants when he stated, "[The group] has built a lot of trust with the people of the valley. It has taught us to work together and collaborate for the improvement of the land."

Members of the Blackfoot Challenge and Three-Quarter Circle Ranch spoke about the partnership and its connection to the immediate community. Roger Marshall, a Plum Creek Timber Company representative on the Blackfoot Challenge, stated, "The Blackfoot Challenge is an opportunity for Plum Creek to remain in contact with its neighbors...to work with them on projects that protect the environment, wildlife, and water resource." Tony Malmberg, landowner and participant in Three-Quarter Circle Ranch said similarly, "We've tried to align our management efforts with the forces of nature, and we reach out to our community to help us achieve those objectives. We also believe the best way we can be a good neighbor and practice sound environmental management is to maintain a profitable business."

Part of the relationship and community building that a member of Blackfoot Challenge highlighted was coordination amongst stakeholders. Rich Clough of Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks stated, "The Challenge has provided the opportunity to meet and keep in touch with lots of people and to coordinate with other agencies about some of the efforts necessary to maintain what we have in the valley."

Another form of relationship and community building mentioned by a participant as an outcome was the fact that the group has stuck together for so long. Marc Smith, of the Ohio EPA, a member of Darby Partnership since its inception in 1991, said the greatest achievement was, "sticking together and continuing to work at getting everybody at the table and the process."

Capacity for increased education, awareness and information gathering and exchange

Members of Owl Mountain Partnership, Nanticoke Watershed Alliance, Three-Quarter Circle Ranch, Blackfoot Challenge, Darby Partnership, McKenzie Watershed Council and Scott

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River CRMP all spoke of increased education, awareness of resource issues and information gathering as an outcome of their partnership.

Verl Brown, a ranching member of Owl Mountain Partnership, spoke in detail about how educational opportunities of the partnership allowed him to improve habitat on his land. "The main value to me which did not cost anything at all," Brown said, "was the education on grazing practices. I have changed my grazing practices over the last five years and it has worked so well. I have more grass for my cattle, more grass for the elk. That has been the biggest asset to me, the education." Kathy Smith, a NRCS representative on the Darby Partnership noted similarly, "The education of those in the watershed and even myself [has been a great benefit]. I have learned a lot going through the process."

The various techniques used by groups to educate members of the partnership and the community at large were mentioned by members as substantial outcomes themselves. Newsletters, brochures, booklets, field trips and workshops were some of the techniques mentioned by participants. McKenzie Watershed Council used a newspaper insert, a forum on water quality, and information booth at a county fair, while Darby Partnership produced *The Darby Book* and other brochures to educate the public in its watershed.

Participants in Blackfoot Challenge, Three-Quarter Circle Ranch and Darby Partnership spoke about three unique educational opportunities that resulted from the partnership. According to Greg Neudecker of USFWS, "Last year we [Blackfoot Challenge] put together a week long water education workshop for teachers. It has changed their lives in the way that they look at the valley and how they will teach their children about the valley's watershed." In Three-Quarter Circle Ranch a program was developed that brings 'city folk' to the property to ride the range and live the ways of the West. Furthermore, a grade school science class also uses the ranch as a laboratory for environmental experiments.

Members of the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance spoke of several educational events the group has implemented. In 1998, the Alliance conducted a series of public meetings to disseminate the highlights of a boat traffic study they helped assist with. They have also developed a web-site, *Conservation Directory*, lawn care educational pamphlets and a quarterly newsletter in order to educate the public within the watershed. In addition to those educational techniques and events, Nanticoke Watershed Alliance members host a two-week educational program called Diary of a River for gifted students that covers the issues that pertain to the watershed.

The Darby Partnership has used canoe trips in the Darby Creek as an educational opportunity. Canoe trips often paired a farmer or non-agency individual with an agency representative in order to build mutual understanding. Teri Devlin, The Nature Conservancy representative on Darby Partnership, spoke about the canoe trips: "At a very personal level to get a farmer in a canoe with a regional planner, normal relationships that would not normally occur happen on the canoe trip and it is happening in the habitat...it is very powerful."

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Implementation of on-the-ground conservation achievements

There was a wide-ranging list of on-the-ground achievements realized by partnerships. Participants in Three-Quarter Circle Ranch, Animas River Stakeholders Group, McKenzie Watershed Council, Blackfoot Challenge, Nanticoke Watershed Alliance, Scott River CRMP, Darby Partnership and Owl Mountain Partnership offer excellent examples.

Projects undertaken by several collaborative partnerships included: fencing of sensitive areas, planting to improve stream bank stabilization, clean-up days on the stream, bird inventories and other restoration and conservation events. Owl Mountain Partnership is an example of a partnership that has spent a good deal of time and effort on projects. Examples include: high tensile hay stacks, realigning fences, irrigation projects, soil studies, various bird inventories, reseeding projects and sagebrush treatment. Stephen Porter, member of Owl Mountain Partnership said, "We have done more projects in that community in the last five years of the partnership than in all the twenty years I've been there combined."

The Blackfoot Challenge has also been involved with a variety of projects. Projects undertaken by Blackfoot Challenge include: fencing stream banks to reduce erosion, cutting and planting willow shoots for bank stabilization, removal of fish passage barriers and protecting irrigation structures from erosion. One project highlighted by Land Linbergh was weed control: "Weed control got the group into the minds and hearts of landowners because it was easy for landowners to see the critical importance of a coordinated approach to taking on the problem." The McKenzie Watershed Council also implemented various projects including compiling a GIS database, establishing a water quality monitoring network in the valley as well as a fish and wildlife habitat evaluation. Furthermore, bank stabilization, joint data collection and water monitoring projects were all outcomes discussed by members of Scott River CRMP.

Similar to the McKenzie Watershed Council, the Animas River Stakeholders Group and Nanticoke Watershed Alliance have developed water quality monitoring programs. The Nanticoke Watershed Alliance has also assisted with a boat traffic study and several clean-up days that help to bring partnership members and the community at-large together. In addition to the water quality monitoring program, the Animas River Stakeholders Group has been involved with implementing and assisting with remediation activities.

The health of the ecosystem and/or economy were mentioned by participants in Darby Partnership and Three-Quarter Circle Ranch as outcomes of their partnership. In Three-Quarter Circle Ranch the economic benefits include an increased beef production and lowered cost of production while the ecological benefits have been an increase in biodiversity and protection of riparian habitat. Teri Devlin, member of Darby Partnership said, "The Darby is still very healthy, that is our greatest accomplishment. Now how you tie that to the partnership work becomes ephemeral in some areas because some of the things that keeps the Darby healthy would have occurred anyway. Although, I guarantee having that amount of resource expertise and focus going on helped to keep the Darby healthy."

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Development of policy-based advice and resource management plans

Members of NW RAC, Clark County HCP and McKenzie Watershed Council mentioned policy-based advice and plans as outcomes from their partnership. The NW RAC only deals with policy-based advice in its capacity as an advisory board to the BLM. They have worked on BLM Recreation and Fire Management Guidelines as well as providing input into wilderness reviews.

Comparatively, McKenzie Watershed Council has provided advice urging agency restoration projects and recommending specific testimony and comments for draft environmental impact statements. Another policy-based plan was the Clark County Multi-species HCP, currently in the final stages of approval.