



CNHP 2014 Partner's Meeting Notes

1:00-1:05 Welcome from Joyce Berry, Dean of CSU's Warner College of Natural Resources
-Announced \$25,000 contribution in honor of 20 years at CSU

1:05-2:30 Partner Presentations

The Nature Conservancy (TNC):

Tim Sullivan – Values partnership and central to TNC's outlook on conservation; will be able to do a lot of work in the state.

Chris Prague – Honored Lee, Susan and Renee (original staff) and gave a history of TNC and CNHP up to the 90s. TNC started the methodology and then worked to get the states to support it. CSU is the best home for CNHP. Generations of change have made the Heritage programs independent and effective. TNC and counties use CNHP data to prioritize conservation/land preservation.

The National Park Service (NPS):

Carl Brown (Washington Office, National Group) – 1994: Goal to make vegetation maps for all the NPs. Worked with TNC to develop original vegetation classifications:

- 1) Boots on ground – taxonomy for classification (alliance level).
- 2) Image analysis with database – digital map.
- 3) On the ground accuracy assessment. Now about 70% complete with mapping.

Use SESU, IAA's and contracting to get work done. Use CNHP and CEMMYL to do much of this work. Also partner with USGS and Fort Collins Science Center and UMAS. 6-8 years out from completion. 1:24 K scale with 1 H minimum mapping unit. Vegetation maps turn into agency (BLM, USFS):

- 1) Fire/fuels maps
- 2) Habitat maps

Bureau of Land Management (BLM):

Bruce Rittenhouse- To address Greater sage grouse habitat management we had to use a landscape level approach. Developed Rapid Ecological Assessments (REAs) to look at several elements including management concern and change agents (fire, climate change). Colorado Plateau was one of the first to be completed. Now four REAs in Colorado. Others ongoing; Wyoming Basins, Southern Great Plains, Southern Rockies, San Luis Valley, northern New Mexico.



The agency is trying to get away from 'random acts of restoration', and has developed Healthy Lands Focus Areas; we prioritize projects within focus areas to effectively use resources and get more value from restoration work:

- Large landscapes – what are restoration needs
- Looking at Dolores River watershed with TNC and Tamarisk Coalition
- Gunnison Basin sage grouse focus area to restore habitats

Carol Dawson – charged with restoring landscapes. Seeds of Success one of the tools – goal 20,000 seeds per collection. Have 2 million+ seeds available now and want graduate students to look at what native species are best for restoration and can compete against grasses and weedy species.

8th International Wildlife Congress:

Del Benson – Talked about the wildlife congress; see brochure. Private lands are majority of lands. To be successful we need to engage private land owners. Invited partners to attend and participate at 8th congress this fall in Estes Park.

U.S. Forest Service (USFS):

Peter McDonald – T and E species manager for Region 2 (just the past year in this position). NHP's are providing the data through the studies that CNHP staff talked about. That information also feeds into informing the USFS sensitive species list. Annual data sharing agreement is important. CNHP has the best available data and USFS is required to use the best available information. Future collaboration's include:

- Annual data sharing
- Habitat modeling with CO & WY
- Climate change strategies for on the ground implementation, restoration
- Restoration, manage forests into future, especially after natural disasters
- 2012 planning rule implementation (last one done in 1982).
- Field surveys

Karen Lee – Research coordinator. USFS has a standardized data base in an ARC GIS/Oracle platform. USFS has set up challenge cost share so USFS gives us the GIS data yearly rather than providing paper field forms.

Steve Popovich – Talked about CNHP cooperation on the Rare Plant Symposium. Also mentioned partnership with of Rare Plant Conservation Initiative (RPCI). In the future other ways that NHPs can collaborate with additional organizations:

- get more/other universities involved
- get more collaboration with other NHPs
- role for Colorado Native Plant Society (CoNPs) to be more of a partner
- have USFWS engage more closely agencies in critical habitat designations



- seed production research
- get others to RPTC such as park service, industry

Colorado Parks and Wildlife (CPW):

Francie Pusateri- introduced CPW staff who were present. Talked about our collaboration in past and current projects.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS):

Brian Mihlbachler – worked with CNHP for many years. Examples of work we have done with them specifically, Preble’s work and habitat work. Initial Preble’s work in the 90s by TNC. Discussed riparian restoration and storm water advocacy needs to maintain functioning flood plains and riparian area – improved stream stabilization plans to maintain habitat for Preble’s. Noxious weeds – discussed CNHP mapping, 5 year surveys, and noxious weed monitoring. Noxious weed monitoring focuses on Potential Conservation Areas (PCA’s) and rare plant sites. Would like to use prescribed burns to improve habitat in some areas. Other on-going and future projects:

- Work with Texas Am on Biocontrol; want more Biocontrol so weeds can be controlled in sensitive plant habitat and PCA’s.
- Hops Blue azure work
- RMBO breeding bird surveys
- Herp Surveys
- Better website for base public education
- Interpretive display – CPW type diorama
- Ethnobotany – medicinal plants

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA):

Billy Bunch- discussed grant program and Wetland Program Plan. Much of funding has gone to monitoring and assessment efforts but now want to focus on the distribution of data/information.

Wetland Program Development:

- Grants available for Wetland Program Plans – Region 8 gets 1.8 million/year for the 6 states in its Region.
- Want more local governments to apply for and use the funds

Future directions:

- More collaboration with other partners
- Market data to Colorado Department of Health and Environment
 - They don’t include wetlands in their reporting
- Develop special management plans
- Watershed and wetland regional planning



- Development of 401 certification
- Reference wetland network
- Compensatory mitigation standards

Colorado State Land Board (SLB):

Mindy Gottsegen- provided background on SLB ownership; they own 4 million acres subsurface, 3.8 million acres of surface lands. Goal 2 of their strategic plan is to incorporate citizens' vision as reflected in Amendment 16. Realignment of the Stewardship Trust lands to be based on biodiversity, statewide significance and threats. Currently 300,000 acres in Stewardship Trust lands. 1996; been 15 years since Stewardship trust lands were designated SLB wants to enhance stewardship of trust lands and generate revenue. Looking to ways to generate income for conservation activities. SLB/CNHP analysis on parcels to determine conservative values.

Stewardship Trust Lands Criteria:

- Beauty, open space, natural value, and wildlife habitat
- Management must be sustainable and incorporate social, environmental and economic factors.

New areas to go into stewardship trust:

- Magic Forest fens – Park Cty
- Table Rock – Larimer Cty
- Agnes Lake – Jackson Cty
- Buffalo Drop – Freemont Cty
- Sand Draw – Moffat Cty
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Developing stewardship action plans for some species; rapid field assessments would accompany.

- Sage grouse
- Lesser Prairie chicken
- Mountain fens
- Riparian areas and wetlands
- Tall grass prairie
- Central short grass prairie
- Purtagorie River Canyons
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Mentioned how CNHP data used at Lowry to guide Oil and Gas development to previously disturbed areas via a system of credits.

Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative (SRLCC):



Kevin Johnson - coordinator for Southern Rockies Landscape Conservation Cooperative; has over 20 cooperators in the LCC. Talked about mission and protection of cultural resources. Use adaptive management planning.