

Cross-Watershed Network (XWN) Mini-Workshop

Albuquerque, NM February 11, 2015

Breakout Group: Dolores River Restoration Partnership - Daniel Oppenheimer

Note taker/facilitator: Risa Shimoda, Cross-Watershed Network Steering Committee

The topics the group prioritized

- **Strategic Communications**
- **Long-term Maintenance**
- Collective Learning
- Monitoring Protocols

Strategic Communications

Challenges Overcome

- To address poor awareness, the group 1) is aware of the need to share information; 2) distributes information in bite-sized pieces; and 3) identifies cases that will need to be made later
- Having the capacity to execute plans and programs
- Knowing the audience and tailoring responses to them appropriately
- Having diversity in its communications methods, media and messaging

Lessons Learned / Best Practices

- Remain 'visible' even during 'in-between' periods to keep the audience engaged and educate them about what happens behind the scenes.
- Establish a level of solid communications frequency
- Be 'personal' in communications: avoid sounding institutional
- Be specific about project objectives and goals: be clear who you are and who you are not.
- Communicate 'up' to legislators and agency leaders as well as out to professional peers, volunteers, etc. Consider 'in-person' experiences to bring a tactile and person/real element to the project for them.

Long-term Monitoring

Challenges Overcome

- Funding via Long Term Agreements (including knowledge about needs to match)
- Ability to change tactics with agreement flexibility

- History and experience help when projecting future costs

Lessons Learned

- Being clear about expectations, including knowing there will be needs to revisit and go through program transitions
- Using experts to advise, assist tactically and coach (e.g., IRS, Conservation Corps Strike Teams)
- Importance of developing shared goals (e.g, public safety, reduced fuel loads) so that parties buy into individual elements
- Importance of education for future project / shared ownership and engagement that involves classroom learning augmented by field sessions.

Gaps

- Capacity and funding needs are not always clear; providing for them therefore continues to be difficult from a timing and sourcing perspective.

Boom, boom, boom...

- 1) **Begin with the end in mind** for transitions, data collection and communications
- 2) **Identify key audiences** to learn to communicate with relevance
- 3) **Keep a diverse set of approaches** on hand to stay visible without the perception of 'overkill'