

Cross-Watershed Network (XWN) Mini-Workshop

Albuquerque, NM February 11, 2015

Breakout Group: San Juan Watershed Group (SJWG) – Melissa May

Note taker/facilitator: Stacy Beagh, Cross-Watershed Network Steering Committee

Guiding Themes:

- Finding your Niche
- Watershed planning
- Using Science to fill gaps
- Diversifying funding
- Organizational Infrastructure

Challenges:

- Disconnect between agencies
 - Cross-over of missions not being capitalized upon
 - Flow work not necessarily being connected
 - NRCS isn't being utilized to the fullest potential
- Water quality issues related to river regulation

Opportunities/Existing Solutions:

- How can we better utilize Farm Bill programs?
 - Lots of opportunity to work with farmers on irrigation efficiency, but no projects yet
 - Cost share grants (e.g., EPA 319) are providing alternatives to working through Farm Bill programs
 - Riparian restoration is a vehicle for the end goal of water quality and native fish protection
 - NRCS conservation practices – “riparian forest buffer” and “forest stand improvement” are underutilized in New Mexico
 - The primary vehicle for tamarisk and Russian olive treatment is using fire mitigation
 - Traditional conservation practice for woody invasive removal is “invasive species” which isn't enough cost-share to incentivize landowners
 - Conservation districts are an important partner to implement Farm Bill programs – there were four funded Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCP) proposals in NM
- How do we link all of the players in a watershed?
 - Find the niche and motivations of the partners to find balance; make sure you are “looking outside” your own niche to find partnership opportunities
 - Assign liaisons from your group to other groups in the watershed to ensure communication
 - Look for opportunities to get diverse interests engaged
 - Coordinated communication is key

- Link mission to broader issues such as the endangered fish recovery programs which is a federal program
 - This link can provide access to state money that supports the federal program goals
 - For example, on the Dolores River state funding was funneled to the federal Partners for Fish and Wildlife program to then be used to fund private land projects; this is important because the state funding could be given directly to private landowners, there had to a “private lands” program that provided the oversight/administration and evaluation

- Is there a formula for the type of people (roles) that should be involved in a partnership?
 - One idea was the “Collective Impact” framework
 - This could be a GOOD forum topic on the XWN website

Take Away (reported to the larger group)

- 1. Finding your niche is important**
- 2. Take full advantage of resources**
- 3. Collaborate and sharing information is an important basis for leveraging funding and ensuring good communication**