

Communications & Outreach Strategy

Progress Report: Outputs & Highlights

Oct 2011 – Sept 2013 (FY12 – 13)

This progress report addresses the outputs (e.g., products, events, etc.) and highlights of Great Northern Landscape Conservation Cooperative's Communications and Outreach Strategy (COS) tasks that were undertaken for FY12–13 (see tasks and timeline in the COS at greatnorthernlcc.org/business). The COS is designed to help achieve the broad outcome of the Strategic Conservation Framework: *Creating the conditions that enhance individual and collective partner implementation of landscape-level conservation*. Primary audiences identified in the COS include Steering Committee and Advisory Team members, Partner Forums (conservation partnerships), Resource Managers (unit-level managers, field staff), Scientists (federal, state, tribes, nongovernment, university), Program Managers (regional and national program managers), and Tribes and First Nations (council members, resource managers). The next phase for the COS includes the development of a logic model, which will identify inputs and activities for achieving program outcomes.

Strategic Conservation Framework

OUTCOME: Creating the conditions that enhance individual and collective partner implementation of landscape-level conservation

The four COS goals support the Strategic Conservation Framework:

Goal 1: Build and foster engagement in the GNLCC by increasing awareness and understanding of the role and value to collaborative landscape conservation

Goal 2: Improve the exchange of knowledge and dissemination of science-based information, tools, and products to advance collaborative landscape conservation

Goal 3: Increase opportunities to leverage funding and align existing programs and initiatives to enhance collaborative landscape conservation

Goal 4: Build and foster engagement with Tribes and First Nations in collaborative landscape conservation

Outputs and Highlights by Task

STEERING COMMITTEE – EVENTS

Since the GNLCC was formed in 2010, the Steering Committee has been instrumental in developing a multi-jurisdictional and transboundary partnership. Meeting in-person (twice annually) and attending bimonthly conference calls, the SC sets the direction for the GNLCC by aligning common goals and priorities of member organizations. These events provide a platform to not only conduct GNLCC business, but to facilitate the exchange of knowledge and science (through presentations and updates) among member agencies and organizations.

Attendance of SC members and other participants at in-person meetings and on calls by fiscal years.

	FY12–13	FY10–11
number in-person meetings	3	4
ave. number SC members	15 (range 14–15)	18 (range 12–24)
ave. number other participants	40 (range 31–49)	25 (range 17-41)
ave. number of all participants on bimonthly conference calls	29	23

ADVISORY TEAM – EVENTS

The Advisory Team plays a key role in strategic planning, developing foundational documents, reviewing proposals, and providing recommendations to the Steering Committee. The team began coalescing in FY10 and early FY11, in conjunction with Steering Committee conference calls and meetings, and at three AT meetings (MT, ID, WA). Since this time, the team has primarily communicated through 23 monthly conference calls, averaging 20 participants. Twenty-six participants known as the AT+, crafted the final draft of the Strategic Conservation Framework at a workshop in Pray, MT (Feb 2012). In May 2013, 12 AT members and 13 affiliated scientists and resource managers met in Leavenworth, WA, to begin developing the GNLCC Science Plan. The AT continues to provide expertise in analyses and strategic thinking as new opportunities and initiatives are brought forth.

PARTNER FORUMS – EVENTS

Four partner forums are working to identify priority conservation information and scientific needs that will inform and support an adaptive management approach to on-the-ground application of landscape conservation. Participation continues to increase as partner forums identify common goals and needs, and develop actions to achieve them.

Rocky Mountain Partner Forum

Events: 4 calls/webinars, average 20 participants

1 workshop, 50 participants (NGOs, federal and state agencies, tribe, tribal college, universities)

A project led by Wildlife Conservation Society and funded by the GNLCC, included a workshop, held in June 2013. The workshop brought together scientists, managers, and nonprofit organizations to discuss how management decisions can incorporate adaptation to climate change. The Rocky Mountain Partner Forum chose an initial focus on cold water systems and cold-water fisheries. Funding for this project was extended through FY13 funds. The forum has expressed an interest to continue to next steps for identifying adaptation strategies for cold-water fisheries. They also expressed an interest to move to an emphasis on connectivity, including integration across scales and application of tools and analyses. The forum will also work to expand participation from tribes and Canadian partners and is in the early stages of drafting a charter to clarify its role and direction.

Sage-Steppe Partner Forum

Events: 2 calls/webinars, average 20 participants (Federal and state agencies, NGOs, and universities)

The Sage-Steppe Partner Forum has identified the need to link the multiple sage-grouse and sage-steppe ecosystem initiatives across the species range, including within the GNLCC geography, and to provide a connection to the Inter-LCC Sage-grouse Project funded by the National LCC office of the US Fish and Wildlife Service. In response, GNLCC has launched an online collaborative workspace, which includes a database of initiatives, personnel, programs, and projects that can be expanded by collaborators. The forum has met by conference call to build coordination and understand needs, and is planning a webinar series to increase awareness about regional sage-grouse research and management initiatives. The forum met recently by webinar to explore an online collaborative workspace. Next steps include working with LCC Coordinators to better engage the LCC constituency in use of this workspace and for identification of priorities for GNLCC FY14 funding.

Columbia Basin Partner Forum

Events: Leadership team formed; 2 conference calls with 20 attendees representing 15 organizations

1 in-person meeting/call-in, 28 participants (federal and state agencies, NGOs, tribes)

The Columbia Basin Partner Forum is exploring its roles as a “market place” for sharing and collaborating on large-scale landscape conservation issues (stressors) such as climate change, invasive species, and land use changes. During a Sept 2013 in-person meeting, the forum discussed how they could:

- 1) Play a catalytic role by sponsoring and facilitating information sharing and coordination amongst the members of the forum in regards to their on-going efforts (e.g., using common definitions for

shared problems, identifying data gaps and research priorities, reducing redundancy among programs).

- 2) Guide and prioritize a portion of the GLNCC annual project funding to support actions that can “glue” the partners’ programs together in some meaningful way.
- 3) Administratively, the forum is organized as part of the GNLCC, but it will be a self-organizing group with an open membership. It will communicate with GNLCC staff and to the GNLCC Advisory Team, who in turn communicates to the GNLCC Steering Committee.
- 4) Encourage participation of liaisons from the existing forums within the Columbia River Basin that either address single landscape scale stressors, such as the Columbia Basin River Toxics Reduction Task Force or processes relevant to all of the stressors, such as the Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership.

Although the Columbia Basin Partner Forum is recently initiated, it hosts a community of expert practitioners who collectively share significant assets: long experience, historical perspectives, specialized expertise, and human and financial resources. The forum is currently scheduling their next meeting on Dec 3 in Portland, OR, as a 1-day workshop.

Cascadia Partner Forum

Events: 7 meetings, average 8 participants; 1 workshop, 60 participants

Formed by practitioners in Washington and British Columbia’s Cascade mountains in the summer of 2012, the Cascadia Partner Forum fosters a network of natural resource practitioners working with the Great Northern and North Pacific Landscape Conservation Cooperatives to build the adaptive capacity of the landscape and species living within it. The Cascade Mountains are divided at the crest by the current boundaries of the Great Northern and North Pacific Landscape Conservation Cooperatives. The Cascadia Partner Forum creates an opportunity to coordinate across the LCC boundaries as well as the international US-Canada boundary. The forum is operating under a one-year pilot effort, to ensure that it is value added to the practitioners on the ground and is run by a Pilot Council. The forum hosted a workshop in fall 2012, to hear from a diverse array of partners in this transboundary landscape, and hired three fellows to organize and synthesize information to guide Pilot Council discussions. A second workshop is planned for October 2013.

RESOURCE MANAGERS WORKSHOP

GNLCC had identified a workshop for resource managers in conjunction with the 2012 PNW Climate Conference in Boise, as one of the planned COS activities. An initial workshop for managers was held in September 2011. The workshop was postponed to focus on development of the Strategic Conservation Framework and Science Planning in order to improve effectiveness of future activities. GNLCC has been a sponsor of the PNW Climate Conference for two years

TRADITIONAL ECOLOGICAL KNOWLEDGE WORKSHOP

GNLCC had identified support to tribal members by hosting a workshop on Traditional Ecological Knowledge as an outreach activity for 2013. The workshop was postponed to focus on development of the Strategic Conservation Framework and Science Planning in order to improve effectiveness of future activities.

GNLCC has supported tribes in the following ways:

- Three Tribal capacity grants for participation in GNLCC meetings and forums (FY11–12, two grants)
- Funding support for development of the CSKT climate adaptation strategies
- Funding support for coordination with local tribal affiliations with fewer resources
- Funding support for the Crown of the Continent Roundtable in FY11 to support tribal participation
- Funding to Hopa Mountain (not-for-profit NGO) in FY12 to support tribal intern in Native Science Fellows Program (leveraging NSF funds) to work on TEK guidelines and Yellowstone cutthroat trout tribal conservation efforts in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem
- Coordination support (M McFadzen's time) for Northern Rockies Fire Science Network's 2012 Traditional Knowledge and Fire Workshop, Salish Kootenai College, MT

LEVERAGE FUNDING & ALIGN PROGRAMS

GNLCC is communicating with a variety of agencies and organizations to align efforts and increase efficiencies across jurisdictions and boundaries. Many of these efforts are described below.

- Lead and participated in effort to coordinate GNLCC activities with Western Governors' Association workgroups to develop the Westwide Crucial Habitat and Assessment Tool (CHAT) by 2013
- Attended Western Governors' Association Wildlife Council Meeting (Seattle, WA, Nov 2012)
- Acquired National LCC funding to support integration of Landscape Conservation Management & Analysis Portal (LC MAP) and WGA CHAT data programs (\$100K)
- Hosted DOI staff Sarah Peterson to discuss with the GNLCC Steering Committee the Collaborative Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) proposal process (Jackson, WY, Sept 2012) and updated the SC on the LWCF (Leavenworth, WA, SC meeting, May 2013)
- Support stated for the High Divide Collaborative: GNLCC Steering Committee member Michael Whitfield (Heart of the Rockies) developed a collaborative LWCF proposal for the Idaho-Montana High Divide to enhance connectivity and wildlife habitat from Yellowstone National Park to central Idaho wilderness areas

- Promoting discussions about Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) and Forest Restoration Analyses, and shared capacity with USFS Region 1 Forester Faye Krueger and staff (Missoula, MT, April 2013)
- Continued support to the USFS sponsored Southern Crown Cooperative Forest Land Restoration Project Pilot for second year
- Led the Great Northern Landscape Assessment Demonstration Project to improve inter-project coordination with USFS, BLM, Montana, Idaho, and Heart of the Rockies (FY11–12). Provided capacity grant for 2 years to Heart of the Rockies for on-the-ground technical assistance in use and application of large landscape tools.
- Led discussion on program alignment at GNLCC Steering Committee meetings (Whitefish, MT, April 2012; Jackson, WY, Sept 2012)
- Attended the National LCC Partners workshop, presented the NASA Landscape Climate Change Vulnerability Project poster, and provided slides for plenary session speaker Dr. David Theobald, CSU (Fort Collins, CO, March 2012)
- Engaged in discussions with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation about aligning programs supporting connectivity analysis and landscape scale conservation
- Served on the Assessment Management Teams of the BLM Rapid Ecoregional Assessments for the Middle Rockies (MT) and the Wyoming Basin (WY)
- Serve on the Advisory Board of the Northern Rockies Fire Science Network (NRFSN; funded by Joint Fire Science Program) and leveraged funding with NRFSN to hire Mary McFadzen as a joint Outreach Coordinator for GNLCC and NRFSN
- Served on Planning Team for the 11th Biennial Scientific Conference on the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem Greater Yellowstone in Transition: Linking Science and Decision Making (Yellowstone National Park, Oct 2012)
- Served on panel of Rocky Mountain Practitioners Network Conference (Salt Lake City, UT, Sept 2012)
- Served on the Greater Yellowstone Coordinating Committee's Climate Adaptation Subcommittee
- Served on panels at Crown of the Continent Roundtable conferences to promote alignment
- Co-led and supported the America's Great Outdoors Crown of the Continent Demonstration Landscape Interagency Working Group; Collated and edited America's Great Outdoors Crown of the Continent Demonstration Landscape, Interagency Strategic Plan FY13-18

COORDINATION WITH CLIMATE SCIENCE CENTERS

GNLCC staffs serve on the Stakeholder Advisory Group (SAC) for both the North Central and Northwest Climate Science Centers (CSC). Coordination efforts have included:

- Review of 107 statements of interest and proposals for both CSCs
- Outreach specialist assistance to the North Central CSC to discuss, write, and edit their 5-year strategic plan
- Participate in the North Central CSC Climate Adaptation Group

- Attended SAC meetings and conference calls, and coordinated joint funding

In 2012, the two CSCs committed more than \$500,000 to climate science projects directly benefiting GNLCC partners. In 2011, GNLCC funds were augmented by \$339,000 from the Northwest CSC for climate-focused projects deemed a high priority by the GNLCC Steering Committee and the CSCs.

SCIENCE OUTREACH & INFORMATION DISSEMINATION

Through a variety of activities, GNLCC has increased awareness of and fostered engagement in landscape-scale conservation, and has improved the exchange of knowledge and science. The results and highlights of these activities are listed in five categories: science webinars, products and support, technical assistance, event support and presentations, and e-communications analytics.

Science Webinars

Recipients of GNLCC science funding and invited speakers presented 27 webinars, averaging 44 attendees (range 15–113). Attendees represented US and Canadian federal, state, provincial, and county agencies, municipalities, tribes, tribal colleges, universities, nonprofit organizations, and consultants. Webinars are recorded and continue to be viewed on both the GNLCC website and the GNLCC YouTube channel.

Product Development & Support

- Landscape Conservation Management and Analysis Portal (LC MAP), implemented in FY11, is currently used for storing and delivering GNLCC supported science products (data, tools, reports, etc.) and partner products. LC MAP's cloud-based information system design, with dissemination and analysis tools, serves as a collaborative workspace for GNLCC partners and as an analysis platform. LC MAP is now used by 19 LCCs and CSCs and is part of the ScienceBase product that serves over 3 million searchable records.
- Five webinars were held to inform the first GNLCC Science Workshop (April 2013) where the development of a 5-year Science Plan was initiated. A core team is drafting the Science Plan (available Dec 2013)
- Developing a Project Tracking System for cataloging GNLCC funded science projects and products, auto-generate reports, interface with other information delivery systems, and automate project deliverable status notification (implementation Dec 2013)
- Coordinate with other LCCs/CSCs to develop a supported scalable science project tracking framework, implemented through LC MAP, for all LCCs and CSCs to contribute to national project tracking efforts
- Provided funding for WGA CHAT analyses for climate and aquatic integrity assessments
- Collaborated with Headwater Economics, using a grant from Kresge Foundation, to develop an Economic, Land use and Climate Atlas for the US portion of Great Northern region. The atlas generates county and regional-scale data summaries in easily interpretable formats.

- Since 2010, GNLCC has funded 32 science projects (\$4.55 million) as framed by partner-driven science priorities and approved by the Steering Committee. Funded science project outputs currently being used by resource managers include:
 - Statewide and Columbia Basin-scale connectivity models and spatial analysis tools (Washington Wildlife Habitat Connectivity Working Group)
 - NorWeST Stream Temperature profiles and projections for Pacific Northwest streams (USFS)
 - Flathead River aquatic ecosystem responses to climate change models (USGS)
 - Fine-scale linkage models for grizzly bear management in the Northern Rockies (USFWS)
 - Montana CAPS and Wyoming WISDOM online decision support tools: state-scale implementations of the WGA CHAT (MTFWP, WYGF)
 - Sage-grouse habitat connectivity models accounting for land use and climate change (USGS)

Technical Assistance Services

- Provided WGA/Yale Science Framework Four States Energy Design Workshop coordination and support for technical data collaboration (secure access, administration, presentation, etc.)
- Coordination and facilitation of data distribution by providing data, delivery options, methods, and GNLCC-created tools (CMIP5 climate data and query/data load tool; WGA CHAT/LCC LC MAP pilot multi source merge tool)
- Developing a free downloadable tool to consume GIS data from multiple locations (via internet connection), in multiple data formats, and update a single destination GIS layer. Intended to work for various projects, this work builds upon the WGA-CHAT LCC LC MAP pilot multi source merge tool project (expected in 2014).
- Ongoing expert consultation to the USFWS Sage-grouse Field Management Team in preparation for developing a Conservation Effects Database to assess conservation actions supporting sage-grouse

Event Support & Presentations

- Presented to and instructed Fellows at the Climate Science Center-sponsored Climate Boot Camp, McCall, ID (July 2013)
- Hosted the Flathead Basin Vulnerability Workshop, Hungry Horse, MT (Sept 2012)
- Hosted a USFWS-led Surrogate Species Workshop for state and federal stakeholders (Sept 2012)
- Presented Natural Resource and Human Responses to Climate Change in panel discussion at Greater Yellowstone in Transition: Linking Science to Decision Making, 11th Biennial Scientific Conference on the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (Oct 2012)
- Presented Connecting Connectivity: Using Landscape Conservation Cooperatives as a platform to connect projects across organizations and spatial scales; Abstract and invited presentation at The Wildlife Society Conference (Oct 2012)
- Supported the Climate Change Vulnerability Workshop for Greater Yellowstone National Parks (July 2012)
- Presented Working with Partners to Mitigate the Effects of Climate Change; Abstract and invited presentation at The Montana Native Plant Society Conference, Helena, MT (Feb 2012)

- Presented Developing priorities for the Great Northern LCC: State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAP) as one piece of information, Montana Chapter of the Wildlife Society
- Co-hosted the 2012 WildLinks Conference, which included the initial meeting of the Cascadia Partner Forum (jointly supported by North Pacific LCC)
- Supported* and/or participated in regional and national conferences and workshops to inform scientists and practitioners on GNLCC science products: Greater Yellowstone Conference*; National LCC Workshop; USFWS Region 1 Information Management System; State Wildlife Action Plan National Summit; Four States Conservation in Energy Design Workshop; Pacific Northwest Aquatic Monitoring Partnership Strategic Planning Session

E-Communications Analytics

GNLCC employs two e-communications tools: a website (launched Jan 2012) and newsletters / announcements sent through MailChimp, a free email marketing service (started Nov 2011). Prior to use of these tools, information was distributed through a USGS website and email account.

Website - Google Analytics (since Jan 2012)

Audience visits:

Number of page visits: 24,500 - 51% returning visitors, 49% new visitors

Number of unique visitors: 12,000

Number of page view: 73,000

Number of pages per visit: 3

Average visit duration: 4 minutes

Content Drilldown - Top 15 webpage subfolders by percentage viewed:

/home 26%

/event 8%

/supported-science-projects 6%

/supported-science 5%

/features (articles on funded science) 5%

/updates 4%

/lcmmap 4%

/overview 4 %

/document 3%

/partner-forums 2%

/handouts-and-maps 2%

/webinars 2%

/business 2 %

/contact 2%

/partners 2 %

Newsletters/Announcements - MailChimp Analytics

Subscribership:

Mailing list grew by 9% since the import of 891 emails into MailChimp. Current number of subscribers is 970: 78% are based in United States, 4% are based in Canada, and 18% are unknown.

Open rate:

Average open rate is 20% (range 17-35%) for four newsletters, monthly webinar and science funding announcements. MailChimp emails identified as spam/junk by Internet Service Providers could be contributing to low open rates. One solution is to ask subscribers to add the GNLCC email address to their address book.