

Overheard at the Eighth Western Annual Policy Meeting...

"The actions that you've taken over the last decade are unparalleled. I witness a lot of groups in action and you've got something special going for you, a formula that works. Sometimes it is hard to see ourselves as others see us, so let me describe for you how you are perceived by us, and many others for that matter. The formula consists of two parts: noise and action. The voices inside this room are loud and are being heard. And you step into that noise with concrete actions. A lot of people complain about what they don't like, and frankly there is a lot of stuff to complain about, but very few people decide 'enough already', and put muscle behind the words. And that's what I love about RVCC-- it's the voices combined with the action. It has pushed agencies like the Forest Service so we are often racing to keep up with you. You've forced us out of our comfort zone, forced us to take some riskier positions, and forced us to try some things we didn't invent ourselves. And not only are we growing, but we are becoming more effective and relevant because of it. I thank you for that."

~ Sally Collins, Associate Chief, USDA Forest Service (Extracted from remarks given at the Eighth Annual Policy Meeting, December 10th, 2008)

"Why are you here? What are you doing here? Enviros are always asking me why I keep coming to these things. It's important to show up and be heard, but that's just a first step obviously. What I have found and learned from coming to these meetings is how to go beyond that first step and how to be a much better advocate. I remember back a long time ago, that I had access to certain people because of notoriety and now I feel that has grown into credibility. And I learned that from you all. I think that the RVCC and the work that everybody has done and the people in this room are just amazing. There are some words that I wrote down which may be hyperbole, but I don't think so: visionary, committed, consistent and persistent, well informed, organized, dedicated, well presented, and fearless. Those are things that I have learned how to do better. I think bottom line, this group probably does this stuff better than anybody. I'm proud to be here."

~ Todd Schulke, The Center for Biological Diversity (Extracted from remarks given at the Eighth Annual Policy Meeting, December 12th, 2008)