Collaborative Engagement with Scientists

(ecological/biophysical)

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What's to be gained by collaboratives engaging science?

1. New science and information
2. No lag time - findings can be applied in the present
3. Help stakeholders identify questions
4. Shared learning and equitable knowledge
5. Help identify context for social values
6. Provides local science specific to area of interest

What can science engagement look like?

It can take many forms – a full spectrum

- Collaborative member
- Academic researcher
- FS researcher
- Contractor/consultant
- FS area ecologist
- Student
- FS specialist
- Others

Products and Outcomes

- Science synthesis papers
- Ecological context during field trips
- Helping stakeholders ask the right questions
- Finding success stories in publications
- Reporting on adaptive management
- Interpreting findings and observations
- Highlighting implementation on private or public land
- Can engage with or without FS specialists

Role of Partners

Various partners and organizations can play a role in helping collaboratives engage science:

- Universities
- Forest Service
- The Nature Conservancy
- PNW Research Stations

Point person from collaborative to help make that happen

Principles for Science Engagement

- When, why, and how (and in what capacity)?
  - The right engagement with the right scientist

Strategies for success:

- Good facilitation
- Clearly outlined expectations
- Adequate time & compatibility with process
- Recognize science is information for the collaborative (not the answers)

Pitfalls to Avoid

- Know which type of science engagement you are wanting
- Scientists provide detailed information, not process
- Dueling science – avoid pitting scientists against one another
- Serve your needs – scientists who help you move forward (not defend their point or argue against another)
- Others?

What have we learned?

Real world examples:

1. Strong temptation to use science to support one social value over the other
2. Research: members & scientists on board and committed to the process (time, resources)
3. Trust between collaboratives & scientists crucial (transparency, uncertainties, limitations, honoring local information and observations)
4. Clear objectives, as questions lead to questions
5. Engagement works – it's mutually beneficial!

Thank you! Questions?