



**GREAT BASIN LANDSCAPE CONSERVATION COOPERATIVE
(Great Basin LCC)**

Steering Committee Meeting Summary

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT

Organization/Agency	Member
Inter-Tribal Council of Nevada	Bill Campbell, Chair
Great Basin Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit	Maureen McCarthy, Past Chair
Bureau of Land Management Idaho State Office	Joe Adamski
Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife	Shaun Clements
Friends of Nevada Wilderness	Larry Dwyer
The Wildlife Society	Rocky Guitierrez
Southwest Climate Science Center	Steve Jackson
The Nature Conservancy	Liz Munn
U.S. Geological Survey	Sue Phillips
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service	Carolyn Swed
Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition	Julie Thompson
Nevada Department of Wildlife	Chris Tomlinson (alternate for Jennifer Newmark)
Duckwater Shoshone Tribe	Kim Townsend
California Tahoe Conservancy	Patrick Wright

GREAT BASIN LCC STAFF AND FACILITATION TEAM

Rick Kearney, Coordinator
 Matt Germino, Research Ecologist
 John Tull, Science Coordinator
 Eric Jensen, Geospatial Data Specialist
 Sarah Sanborn, EnviroIssues
 Cory Baranski, EnviroIssues

WELCOME AND AGENDA OVERVIEW

Rick Kearney, Great Basin LCC Coordinator, welcomed everyone and reviewed the agenda. Bill Campbell, Steering Committee Chair, opened the meeting and announced the 2018 Great Basin Consortium will be held in Reno, NV, including a day-long science summit on February 1 and in-person Steering Committee meeting on February 2. This conference will take place at the same time as the Society for Range Management annual meeting.

STEERING COMMITTEE BUSINESS

New Member

The Steering Committee confirmed Dr. Rocky Gutiérrez from the Western Section of The Wildlife Society as a new member.

Action Item Review

Rick provided updates on action items from the February 2017 Steering Committee meeting:

- Rick will share an update on a Communication Working Group to discuss the relevance of the LCC and to develop a plan for future outreach.
- Staff continue to think about Steering Committee diversity, where meetings are held and potentially funding travel for in-person meetings.
- John Tull, Science Coordinator, is working to further develop the 2017 work plan based on input from the committee.
- Rick has reached out to the LCC Network to discuss messaging the value of LCCs. This conversation is ongoing.
- Rick will continue working with the Executive Committee to pursue new NGO members.
- Bill and Rick are working to connect with tribal representatives about partnerships. Rick attended the Southwestern Chapter, Native American Fish and Wildlife Society meeting in August which included a day-long summit on tribal climate change information needs.

Maureen McCarthy, Great Basin Cooperative Ecosystem Studies Unit and past Steering Committee Chair, noted that the Great Basin LCC may need to put more focus on what they are accomplishing and provide supporting documentation on their effectiveness.

COMMUNICATION WORKING GROUP

Rick introduced the proposal for a new Communication Working Group with the objective of connecting with new audiences and telling the Great Basin LCC story. This new working group is part of the Strategic Plan to communicate and facilitate a greater understanding about science, management and cultural resources. Members would participate in a monthly call to focus on the following responsibilities:

- Develop a communication strategy for reaching consumptive users and recreationalists
- Provide guidance on content for communication materials
- Develop key messages for the Great Basin LCC and products based on these messages
- Share relevant events and news with the group

Rick asked the Steering Committee if the Great Basin LCC should create a communications and outreach working group, and, if so, who should be involved?

Maureen expressed concern with forming a working group before knowing the communication and outreach strategies of other LCCs and cross-agency organizations, and what works most effectively.

Carolyn Swed, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, asked if the Great Basin LCC has sought input from the Steering Committee and other community members on the best advocacy partners. Rick reminded the group about a Great Basin LCC video produced, but the interviewees reflect a select group of people who already recognize the value of the Great Basin LCC. Rick recognized the value in looking for input outside the typical circle of partners.

Sarah Sanborn, EnviroIssues, shared that two videos were made from the interview footage. She reported that the first video provides a general overview about the LCC, and the second video targets decision makers to learn about the Great Basin LCC and what it does. Sarah added that one intention for the communication working group is to think about messaging next steps. She suggested using the existing and supplemented video footage to target consumptive users, ranchers, recreationalists, miners and others using the land. Sarah noted that this could make Great Basin LCC outreach more public-friendly, not just targeting scientists and resource managers.

Bill noted it would be helpful to frequently share information on the Great Basin LCC's work, taking advantage of various media to foster public involvement. Rick acknowledged the Great Basin LCC has Facebook and YouTube accounts to share news updates and other relevant information with the public that routinely have several hundred views per month. Bill also suggested National Public Radio as an outlet for Great Basin LCC recognition.

John mentioned the in-reach component of communications is also a challenge. He suggested that Great Basin LCC partners need to take time to communicate with their respective organizations about the LCC.

Shaun Clements, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, agreed that launching into communications activities is not always effective, and this strategic effort would be best informed by the actions of the National LCC Network. He noted that the LCC would benefit from demonstrating the value of the Great Basin LCC to decision makers.

Rick shared with the Steering Committee that a region-wide sagebrush communications network, called SageWest, has formed. This group involves all major conservation organizations that are supporting public communication. Rick will continue to look into their outreach efforts.

Liz Munn, the Nature Conservancy, will research how the Nature Conservancy goals can overlap with those of the Great Basin LCC.

Patrick Wright, California Tahoe Conservancy, recommended the Great Basin LCC evaluate how their work lines up with the specific programs and deliverables currently sought by decision-makers. He suggested clarifying how the LCC wants to target officials before moving forward with a strategic communications plan.

Liz clarified that Steering Committee members are encouraged to report back to their respective organizations and be a conduit for the information both in and out of the Great Basin LCC. It will be helpful to include using the relationships and networks within partner organizations in a strategic communications plan. Rick also encouraged members to regularly visit the website for news and recently-developed materials to share.

The Steering Committee agreed that Rick will first research the strategy of the National LCC and report back to the group before moving forward with a communication working group.

2018 SCIENCE FOCAL TOPICS

John Tull reviewed the two priority topics identified by the Science and Traditional Ecological Knowledge (S-TEK) strategic plan:

- Adaptation to changes in water availability, temperature, climate variability and extreme climatic events
- Adaptation to changes in ecosystem structure, processes, function and interactions

John reiterated the goal of selecting 2018 science topics that are achievable within the two-year timeframe of the program and have products available at the end of that period. John asked the Steering Committee if the Great Basin LCC should move forward with these themes or consider other options for 2018.

Maureen acknowledged the importance of responding quickly to the needs of people dealing with issues in real time. She gave an example about extreme climate-driven events such as flooding, invasive species and fires. Maureen stressed this should be taken into consideration when deciding on priorities.

Larry Dwyer, Friends of Nevada Wilderness, recognized the value of the S-TEK plan and recommended putting extra weight in the topics that happen to address extremes, rather than creating new topics. The Steering Committee agreed with the approach to maintain continuity with the strategy over time, but also be adaptive to urgent needs.

Shaun reported that other entities such as the Climate Science Center take similar approaches to their efforts. He suggested partnering science efforts in the future. John agreed to follow up with the Climate Science Center about potential collaboration. Shaun also suggested adding extra weight to the surface/groundwater interactions theme.

Sue Phillips, U.S. Geological Survey, suggested looking at the WAFWA Invasive Plant Management and Greater Sage-Grouse Conservation report for science priorities. John noted that the needs described in these reports were included.

John reminded the group that the LCC uses a request for proposals process every other year. He noted that the Great Basin LCC has funds from FY17 budget and added that the LCC staff would work on a proposal review process early next year with project selections made in April or May. Rick added that the LCC's large research support funds attract world-class scientists to work on LCC-selected topics.

Steering Committee members discussed the feasibility of continuing to fund both the Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) and science projects. The group recognized the amount allocated to each subject may change based on what proposals the Great Basin LCC receives.

Sue reflected on the development of the S-TEK plan and the number of stakeholders that collaborated on the science needs and distilled them into a succinct list. Sue suggested staying close to the S-TEK plan to help build the success story of the Great Basin LCC. Moving forward, it may be helpful to consider which themes in the plan are in line with the interests of current decision-makers.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR THE GBLCC

Rick asked the Steering Committee what actions the Great Basin LCC should take under the following funding scenarios:

- **Best case:** LCCs continue as a high priority, and Department of the Interior funding remains at current levels
- **Intermediate case:** LCCs continue as a lower priority, and Department of the Interior funding is reduced
- **Worst case:** The Department of the Interior withdraws support for the LCCs, and funding is eliminated

Under the best-case scenario, the Great Basin LCC would continue with its partnerships, emphasizing work on working lands across the Great Basin. There would be minor changes to business conduct.

Under the worst-case scenario, the Great Basin LCC could convert to a 501(c)3 non-profit. The Steering Committee agreed that, under this scenario, it would be best to reframe messaging and priorities to appeal to people who own and use the land as well as people who want to see conservation on a larger scale. The group agreed that funding science topics and maintaining relationships with stakeholders and partners should continue as high priorities.

Rick asked Julie Thompson, Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition, how the Great Basin LCC could help support her organization's work. Julie suggested that the LCC could help her organization communicate better with the Bureau of Land Management and other agencies as well as help them share science with those who implement the work. Rick commended the broad representation he observed within the Eastern Nevada Landscape Coalition. Rick plans to continue to look into the S-TEK plan and identify topics with a connection to communities the Great Basin LCC doesn't typically work with.

NEXT STEPS AND ACTION ITEMS

1. **Rick** will research the outreach done by the SageWest group and report back to the Steering Committee
2. **Liz Munn** will follow up on what The Nature Conservancy does in regard to communications
3. **Rick** will reach out to the National LCC to learn about their communication strategy and report back to the Steering Committee.
4. **John** will look into the Actionable Science Plan and S-TEK Strategic Plan to understand if its components could help or benefit communities the LCC does not normally work with
5. **John** will follow up with the Climate Science Center about potential collaboration and the RFP