



Photo: BLM Nevada

Great Basin Landscape Conservation Cooperative

2016 Virtual Public Forum Summary Report



Great Basin LCC Virtual Public Forum Overview

The Great Basin Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) hosted an online Public Forum from Jan. 25 – Feb. 8, 2016. The Public Forum began with a kickoff webinar which provided an overview of the Great Basin LCC and an introduction to the online discussion tools. Within the seven sections of the virtual Public Forum, members of the public were encouraged to submit responses to specific questions as well as provide general comments on other topics. Visitors were encouraged to return to the site multiple times to engage in conversation with other Public Forum participants. The purpose of the Public Forum was to:

- Inform and engage the Great Basin conservation community in the work of the Great Basin LCC
- Provide members of the conservation community an opportunity to collaborate on important landscape-scale issues
- Receive input on integrating traditional knowledge and contemporary science
- Collect suggestions for new Steering Committee members
- Gather feedback on future webinar speakers and topics
- Collect feedback on the Great Basin LCC strategic plan

Public Forum Welcome Page

PUBLIC FORUM: Jan. 25 – Feb. 8, 2016

Great Basin Landscape Conservation Cooperative

Welcome | Setting a Vision | Landscape Focus | Collaboration | Leadership | Traditional Knowledge | Information Sharing | Next Steps

Welcome

Welcome to the Great Basin Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC) Public Forum. We want you and other members of the Great Basin conservation community to use this site to collaborate on important issues.

On this site, you can provide your feedback on:

- Landscape-scale issues and challenges
- Collaboration in the Great Basin
- Great Basin LCC leadership vacancies
- Traditional knowledge and contemporary science integration
- Information sharing through webinars

Continue to the next page to learn how to share your ideas or [watch the kickoff webinar](#) to learn more about this event.

We invite you to visit this site multiple times from Jan. 25 through Feb. 8 to participate in the growing discussions. Share this link with your friends and colleagues so they can join the conversation!

This site will close the evening of Monday, Feb. 8. A summary of the key findings will be made available soon after. Thanks for visiting!

[Next page](#)


Stay in touch

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Sign up to stay informed

Enter your email below to receive our newsletter to stay informed about the Great Basin LCC. * indicates required.

First Name *	Last Name *	Email Address *	Affiliation *
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Public Forum Participation by the numbers



Photo: BLM Nevada

Mt. Irish Petroglyph Park

Public Feedback

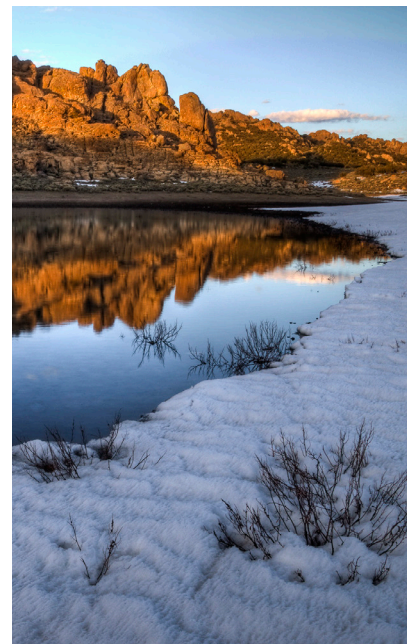
The following are key takeaways from responses collected during the Public Forum. These are meant to summarize key ideas, not provide a verbatim recount of all comments. The views represented may have been stated once or multiple times.

The feedback collected during the Public Forum will inform future strategic planning efforts of the Great Basin LCC. The Steering Committee will also consider the recommendations and input received from Public Forum participants as it establishes the direction and priorities of the Great Basin LCC.

Landscape focus

Recommendations for tackling conservation challenges at the landscape-scale:

- Frequent communication is vital to encourage participation and spread awareness of the work of the Great Basin LCC. This is particularly important given the physical distance between stakeholders and groups in the Great Basin.
- Availability of high quality data (including GIS and mapping data) is very important in addressing landscape-scale challenges. Access to detailed datasets, particularly across jurisdictional boundaries, allows for more targeted intervention.
- Access to long-term, sustainable funding mechanisms is needed.
- An emphasis should be placed on sharing best practices and learning from successes of other projects.
- A focus on fewer outcomes can help the Great Basin LCC build on success and stimulate continual impact.
- Integration of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK) with contemporary science allows for more innovative, informed strategies of resource management and protection. Funding these initiatives should be prioritized.
- Inter-agency collaboration and engagement of a broader stakeholder base—both geographically and in terms of expertise—can improve efficiency through knowledge and resource sharing and partnership building.
- Where possible, efforts should aim to reduce overlap, maximize funding impacts and align priorities with those of other organizations.
- When addressing climate change effects, stakeholders and partners should assess and prioritize vulnerabilities, then evaluate how existing and new actions can be integrated to address these vulnerabilities. In situations when tackling these problems on a regional scale is too difficult, assessment and intervention could be conducted at a lower scale (e.g., the watershed level).
- Outreach to California agencies and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in the eastern part of the Great Basin, which are currently underrepresented, should be expanded.



photos courtesy of Brian Beffort

Barriers identified related to addressing these challenges:

- Remoteness of the Great Basin and large physical distances between populations, which creates communications challenges
- Multiple states involved
- Balancing time and commitment with other priorities
- Staffing and funding limitations
- Mismatch between government annual funding cycles and optimal timescales needed for effective intervention
- Legacy of many years of mismanagement of natural resources
- Perceived lack of value of research and conservation efforts in the Great Basin, particularly compared to other landscape areas
- Competing and varied stakeholder priorities
- Lack of access to high quality data across jurisdictional boundaries
- Partner projects and organizations sometimes span multiple LCCs, requiring additional coordination
- Many communities in the region are struggling economically

Landscape-scale issues of interest:

- Addressing the impacts of livestock grazing on sensitive areas
- Improving riparian corridors and wetlands throughout the area, including the Humboldt River
- Recognizing the importance of water to native ecology and drought mitigation
- Recognizing the importance of beaver across the landscape
- Maintaining healthy sage brush steppe
- Addressing the impacts of climate change
- Addressing the impacts of the wild horse population on land and water systems
- Promoting traditional food sources and indigenous health
- Utilizing proactive mitigation to improve fire resilience, for example thinning overstocked pinyon-juniper woodlands
- Filling in gaps on current Great Basin GIS and data layers concerning habitat, specifically the location of aspen



Photo: BLM Nevada

Archeologist at Diana's Punchbowl, Battle Mountain

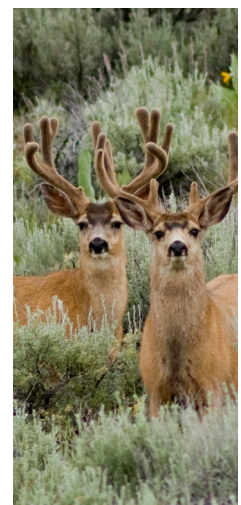
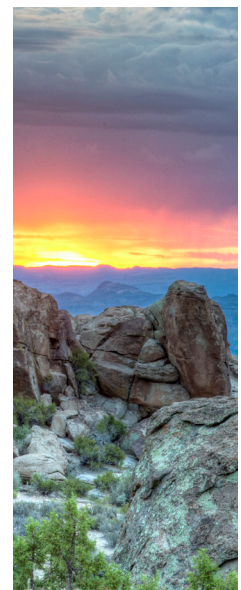
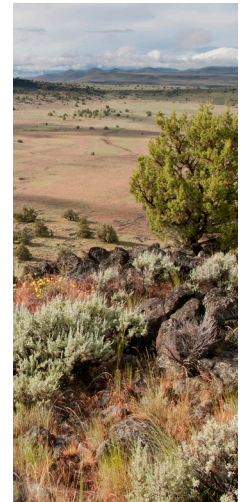
Collaboration

Recommendations and opportunities to increase collaboration:

- Expand the list of engaged stakeholders, both in terms of geography and skills.
- Utilize the experience of engineers, scientists and economists to develop efficient methods and markets for tackling challenges. Examples provided included the Nevada Pinyon-Juniper partnership, which engaged private enterprise to establish cost-saving mechanisms such as Stewardship Contracting.
- Increase opportunities for crowdsourcing data and making data more accessible across boundaries.
- Encourage stakeholders to share best practices and identify successes.
- Identify shared goals and areas of overlap where resources could be pooled to better tackle monitoring, restoration and other goals
- Foster trust between parties. Impartial third-party mediators can be effective in facilitating collaboration between groups where there is a lack of trust.
- Stakeholders must work to respect the different viewpoints of others when there are disagreements in order to promote trust and collaboration.
- Increase collaboration around long-term funding mechanisms.
- Consider expanding Great Basin LCC communication outlets (e.g., increasing use of social media) and using these outlets as a tool to facilitate more collaboration and partnership working.
- Provide travel funding to facilitate more in-person collaboration.

Recommendations for a shared vision for the Great Basin LCC:

- The Great Basin LCC should facilitate information sharing and spread awareness of available programs and opportunities.
- The vision should be “broad and simple,” allowing it to be tailored to fit the scale and focus of different projects (e.g., when relevant, to the watershed level).
- The Great Basin LCC should provide opportunities and resources for collaboration between agencies, communities, landowners and diverse stakeholders.
- Great Basin LCC programs and activities should facilitate trust and networking among stakeholders and members of the scientific community, recognizing this is a key step before knowledge sharing can begin.
- The Great Basin LCC should relate scientific work to broader social values and goals.
- The vision should acknowledge the diversity of perspectives of stakeholders in the Great Basin region and should prioritize overcoming differences to promote collaboration.
- The Great Basin LCC vision should support all steps of the conservation process, from planning to implementation, contracting and monitoring. The vision should acknowledge the importance of adequate and sustainable funding to project success.



Photos courtesy of
BLM Nevada

The Great Basin LCC seeks to develop a shared vision to inform conservation efforts in the Great Basin. A shared vision can inspire collaboration and improve information sharing to address common goals. Public Forum participants were asked to provide suggestions for who they believe should be involved in developing this shared vision.

Suggestions for who to involve in the creation of a shared vision:

- Academic institutions
- Agricultural groups (e.g., Nevada Cattlemen's Association)
- Bureau of Land Management
- Bureau of Reclamation
- California Resource Conservation Districts
- Groups that span the Great Basin (e.g., Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, the Western Governors' Association)
- Land user groups (e.g., Friends of Nevada Wilderness)
- National Monuments
- National Parks
- National Wildlife Refuges
- Natural Resource Conservation Service
- Nevada Department of Wildlife
- Nevada Division of Mines
- Nevada Division of Water Resources
- Silver Jackets program
- Soil and water conservation districts
- Tribes and other minority groups
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service



Photo courtesy of Patrick Alexander

Schell Creek Range, Nevada

Traditional Ecological Knowledge

Six individuals participated in a survey about the integration of TEK and contemporary science. Half of these commenters had experience with this work, while the other three did not.



Experience and examples of integrating TEK and contemporary science:

- One participant had collected TEK from Native Alaskans and applied this knowledge to inventory and monitoring programs on a wildlife refuge.
- One commenter helped organize a tribal climate change subgroup within a state water resources department; collaborated with tribes on water plan updates; worked with a tribal policy advisor to facilitate communication and collaboration; hosted workshops about water resources and climate change for agencies, tribes and local educators; and developed materials with tribal representatives.
- Another had mapped traditional use areas to understand the impacts of infrastructure on traditional places.
- One person suggested researching examples from Australia, South Africa and South America of projects that engaged TEK to address the severity of wildfires.



Ideas and recommendations for future integration of TEK and contemporary science:

- Pursue opportunities to involve traditional knowledge holders early and utilize their expertise in research and project design.
- Explore how tribes traditionally used fire to manage vegetation within the Great Basin
- Seek opportunities to articulate the benefits and need for conservation projects in the face of challenges like climate change and invasive species. Engage well-respected tribal members in these efforts.
- Work with tribes to create a searchable database of TEK. This would only include information that the tribes deem appropriate to share.
- Identify limitations and constraints related to coordinating with federally and non-federally recognized tribes, including understanding what information tribes can and cannot share.
- Take time to build trust and engage higher-level agency management in collaboration.
- Implement smaller-scale pilot projects to physically demonstrate the potential impacts and benefits of possible larger-scale efforts.



Feedback collected during the 2016 Public Forum indicates several lessons and recommendations for the Great Basin LCC to consider. Participants believe that communication, collaboration, access to high-quality data and coordinated efforts are key to tackling conservation challenges at a landscape-scale. These ideas and more should be considered as the Great Basin LCC develops a common vision for informing conservation. Barriers such as funding constraints, competing priorities and the vast area of the Great Basin must be considered. Moving forward, the Great Basin LCC Steering Committee will use this feedback as it refines the draft strategic plan and establishes future priorities. The Great Basin LCC appreciates all of the insights shared during the Public Forum and encourages the public to stay involved.

