NFWF Regional Collaborative Spotlight Series

Regional Collaborative Partnerships: Raising the Bar for Improving Bay Water Quality

Session 1: Jake Reilly, NFWF; Kristina Weaver, UVA IEN; Mike Foreman, UVA IEN; Jennifer Miller Herzog, LTA



Today's Agenda

- Introduce yourself and your organization in the Chat Box.
- You'll be invited to participate in a couple of polling Qs.
- Our speakers will present and then convene as a panel to discuss your Qs.
- We invite your comments and Qs at any time in the Chat Box.
- During the panel discussion our Chat Hosts Katie O and
 Stephanie will pool your Qs and direct them to the panelists.
- At the close of today's program we'll give a preview of the next session in the Regional Collaborative Spotlight Series.
- Don't forget to check your Chat Box for resource postings!



Taking Stock – NFWF's Role in Bay Restoration

- Core partner to EPA and CBP in delivering competitive grants, technical assistance, and information-sharing for Bay restoration
- Member of the Chesapeake Bay Funders Network and associated pooled and coordinated funding efforts
- Venue for advancing innovation, partnerships, and education across the restoration effort



Taking Stock – What We Know

- From 2018-2025, Bay TMDL will require 2x the N reduction achieved from 2010-2018 (EPA/CBP)
- Investments to scale BMP delivery through partnerships and networks are our most impactful in reducing loads (UMD EFC)
- Dissemination across individuals and organizations is essential in expanding proven models for BMP scale up (NFWF)
- Building complementary capacities across organizations, esp. with community-based partners, can transform place-based restoration efforts (CBFN)

NFWF's Goals for the Series

- Strengthen understanding and application of collaborative models for Bay restoration
- Support development, growth, and sustainability of local and regional collaboratives
 - Seed future NFWF INSR project opportunities
- Identify leaders and practitioners of successful collaborative models to share their knowledge and expertise
- Advance the practice of collaborative conservation for Bay restoration

Factors of Success for Bay Restoration Collaboratives





Summary of Recommendations and Methods of the Model Ecosystem
Restoration and Conservation Collaboratives Project

Institute for Engagement & Negotiation (IEN), University of Virginia



INSTITUTE for ENGAGEMENT & NEGOTIATION Shaping Our World Together

- qualitative & participatory action research
- community engagement
- public policy facilitation & mediation
- capacity building for collaboration

What Drives Success?

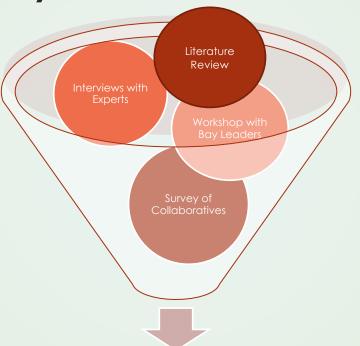
What makes collaboratives, rather than organizations, strong?

What characteristics of ecosystem collaboratives contribute to success "on the ground"?

How can we strengthen collaboratives towards desired outcomes.

Metrics of Success

Distilling Data about "Success Factors" for Ecosystem Collaboratives



More focused understanding of Metrics of Success for Bay Collaboratives

Research Phase 1: Emerging Characteristics

The Literature Review helped us generate **9 Categories** of "Emerging Characteristics" we thought might be important factors of success for ecosystem collaboratives.

- Communication
- Culture & Values
- Learning & Development
- Conflict Management
- Use of Data and Science
- Extent of Collaboration
- Collaborative Process
- Collaborative Outcomes
- Funding



Research Phase 2: Interviews with National Experts

The Interviews helped us simplify the 9 "Emerging Characteristics" into 4 "Factors of Success" more specifically linked to collaboratives.



Research Phase 3: Workshop with Bay Leaders

Preliminary analysis was presented for input to a workshop of Chesapeake Bay ecosystem funders and practitioners.

Workshop participants gave recommendations of which ecosystem collaboratives to survey.

Research Phase 4: Survey Model Collaboratives

 41 representatives of distinct collaboratives in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed and beyond

77 responses recorded!

Research Phase 4: Survey Model Collaboratives

Respondents ranked metric categories in order of importance to collaborative success:



Final Recommendations: Metrics of Success

Motivation: Factors that Inspire and Sustain Engagement

Capacity: Factors that Empower Collaboratives

Effective Process: Factors that Facilitate Collaboration

Evaluation: Factors that Advance Effectiveness and Impact Over Time

Top Metrics: Motivation

Vision / Mission: Collaborative has articulated a strong Vision and Mission.

Relationships: Collaborative prioritizes building strong relationships among members and stakeholders.

Legdership: Collaborative has effective and dynamic leaders.

Communications: Collaborative actively communicates benefits of collaboration, success stories, and lessons learned.

Strategic Planning: Collaborative undertakes strategic planning.

Most Promising Funder Strategies: Motivation

Provide funding to assist collaboratives in hosting meetings, outreach events, and/or networking events that **build relationships** and sustain momentum.

Fund a Collaborative Coordinator staff position to absorb day-to-day responsibilities and ensure forward progress.

Provide "pass through" funding that collaboratives can manage themselves to incentivize and reward members and stakeholders to participate.

Provide long-term and **flexible operations funding** to give collaboratives time to establish a strong foundation according to evolving needs and opportunities.

Top Metrics: Capacity

Coordinator Staff: Collaborative has at least one paid staff position dedicated to coordination (could be full or part-time depending on scope of collaborative's work).

Operating Resources: Collaborative has resources to support coordination, meetings, communications, fundraising, and other core operating activities.

Technical Staff: Collaborative has at least one paid staff position that provides technical expertise that fills a gap and does not duplicate resources provided by other organizations in the region served (could be full or part-time depending on scope).

Fundraising Strategy: Collaborative has a diversified fundraising strategy that is not solely reliant on grants from one sponsor, or which outlines a path towards greater sustainability over time.

Most Promising Funder Strategies: Capacity

Fund a Collaborative Coordinator staff position to absorb day-to-day responsibilities and ensure forward progress; as a secondary priority fund a technical position.

Provide support for staff and leaders to undertake professional development and around managing collaboration (e.g. facilitation, evaluation, fundraising).

Provide long-term, stable, and flexible operations funding in recognition that it takes time to build capacity and develop talent in response to evolving needs and opportunities.

Provide pilot / innovation funding to allow collaboratives to test new ideas.

Top Metrics: Effective Process

Effective Meetings: Collaborative conducts regular, effective meetings, including face-to-face meetings. Note that *frequency* of meeting depends on particular needs of stakeholders, but consistency and quality of meetings are important.

Decision-Making Protocol: Collaborative has defined and conveyed to members / stakeholders a clear approach to decision-making (e.g. consensus, Robert's Rules of Order).

Governance Structure: Collaborative has defined a clear governance structure.

Defined Policies: Collaborative has codified policies / protocols that guide operations.

Communications Plan: Collaborative has a communications plan.

Most Promising Funder Strategies: Effective Process

Develop and share recommendations, tools, case studies, replicable models, and best practices in effective process, management, fundraising, etc.

Provide funding for collaboratives to **retain facilitators and consultants** to assist at key points, as well as linking collaboratives to vetted resources around collaborative process.

Provide or fund trainings for collaborative leaders and staff to gain **key** organizational and process skills (e.g. facilitation, communications, evaluation, fundraising).

Assist with **strategic planning** by funding retreats, providing hands on technical assistance around goal setting and implementation planning.

Require evidence of strategic and operational planning in funding applications.

Top Metrics: Evaluation

Programmatic Evaluation: The collaborative has defined indicators, goals, and ecological outcomes for its on-the-ground projects and programs.

Process Evaluation: The collaborative has defined indicators, milestones, and goals for the development of its capacity and effective processes.

Evaluation Plan: The collaborative has developed a system / plan for evaluation that includes both programmatic and process metrics. This system / plan could involve using internal capacity to undertake self-evaluation, a plan for developing this capacity, and/or a plan for engaging an outside evaluator.

Most Promising Funder Strategies: Evaluation

Provide or fund **training** for collaborative leaders and staff to learn why and how to undertake better evaluation of processes and programs.

Develop and provide free, easy-to-use templates, models, guides, and tools to support collaboratives in undertaking **self-evaluation** and associated planning.

Require grant applicants to include an **evaluation plan** – including both programmatic and process indicators – in grant applications. Be available as a resource to help less experienced applicants design / refine their evaluation plans during the application process and / or post-award.



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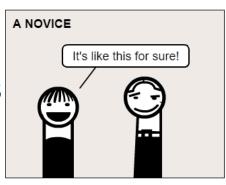




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In practice: some caveats

- Framework info is descriptive, not prescriptive
- There <u>are</u> some best practices
- Generalized information can be helpful, but no substitute for context
- You can save time on some things, not others
- It's complex
- It's hard
- It's worth it
- It's not always the right approach





In practice: how is it different?

"Traditional" Organization Mindset	Network Mindset
Controlled and planned	Loosely controlled and emergent
Individual expertise and effort	Connections and trust
Programs and services	Experiments and platforms
Top down	Decentralized decision-making, bottom- up flow of ideas
Positional leadership	Leadership through active participation
Broadcast communications	Networked communications
Individual action	Collective action
Proprietary	Open and shared

(n.b.: it is possible for organizations to have a network structure.)

In practice: why would you do it?

1

Access to more resources

2

Coordinate existing resources, over a larger landscape

3

Ambition, creativity, innovation

In practice: why would you do it?

CONNECTIVITY

increasing the quality and quantity of connections for partnership members, partner organizations, and community stakeholder groups

TRUST

increasing trust between partnership members, partner organizations, and community stakeholder groups

One Tam's Partnership Impact Model™







Excerpted from Mickel, A. E., & Goldberg, L. (2018). *Generating, Scaling Up, and Sustaining Partnership Impact: One Tam's First Four Years.*

Stages of regional-scale collaboratives



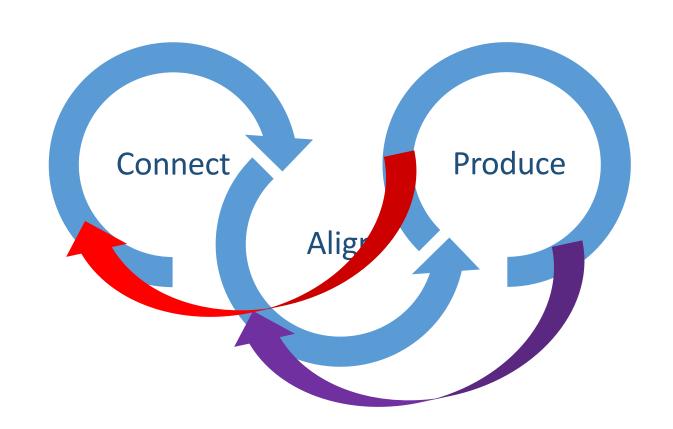
Stages of regional-scale collaboratives

Key Elements of a Collaborative Landscape Conservation Initiative

These are common but not universal steps to success; each initiative must find a path that works for the people, place, and priorities involved.

PHASES	ANTICIPATE	ARTICULATE	ANCHOR/ASSESS	ACHIEVE	ADVANCE/SUSTAIN
EMPHASIS	Define Landscape Boundary and Need or Opportunity	Identify Shared Vision and Goals	Undertake Spatial Design and Strategic Plan	Fund and Implement Strategies	Evaluate Progress, Update Plan, and Adapt Over Time
FOCAL TASKS	Convene and galvanize core group of partners. Identify shared geography and initial list of shared interests, concerns, and goals.	Articulate shared vision and associated goals and strategies. Explore how landscape vision is connected to efforts at different scales. Agree on plan for moving towards goals and strategies.	Map ecological and other resources of concern, identifying values, threats, trends, and opportunities. Craft conservation/management plan based on prioritization. Identify knowledge gaps. Develop strategic action plan.	Identify and secure funding sources. Implement activities identified in the strategic action plan. Monitor appropriate indicators and measures of success.	Celebrate successes. Evaluate progress and effectiveness of action plan. Recalibrate strategies and activities to reflect lessons learned. Adapt, re-invent, and re-energize over time as necessary.
PARTNER	Start to build relationships and trust with core stakeholders and identify who else should be at the table. Weave authentic engagement and	Continue trust-building; add stakeholders as timely. Build upon/celebrate individual partner contributions while building shared activities and	external (2018). A		Give credit to all, showcasing successes and progress through storytelling K for Landscape Courd: Progress and I

In practice: the cycle of collaboration



Discussion

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What's Next?

August 18 - NOON

Interstate Regional Collaboratives: Grazing and Wetlands – Mission and Evaluation

Beth McGee, Chesapeake Bay Foundation Mark Bryer, The Nature Conservancy

What do we know about these two regional collaboratives?

- These are organizations operating across the Bay region and effectively working to protect and enhance ecosystems.
- They have well defined missions and approaches towards specific practices of interest that have high impact and are proven partners.
- They also recognize that evaluation is not their current area of strength but rather an opportunity area.