

The National Landscape Conservation System and The National Riparian Service Team

~ 2010 OUTREACH ~

The National Landscape Conservation System (NLCS) is committed to engaging in collaborative, community-based stewardship both within and outside government. To accomplish this goal, the NLCS has partnered with the interagency National Riparian Service Team (NRST) to provide services aimed at improving the ability of land managers and stakeholders to collaboratively address riparian-wetland resource issues within NLCS. This is an opportunity for training and mentoring in the general principles and practices of collaborative problem solving as well as riparian assessment, management and monitoring. The NRST and their Creeks and Communities Strategy have been selected as the servicing venue because of their expertise in applying this approach across the western United States over the past decade.



DO YOU HAVE A RIPARIAN-WETLAND ISSUE THAT COULD BENEFIT FROM A COLLABORATIVE PROBLEM SOLVING APPROACH?

This outreach notice is being sent to all NLCS units in order to identify those that would be interested in NRST assistance. The objective is to facilitate focused, place-based problem solving around riparian-wetland issues while, at the same time, offering an opportunity for training and mentoring in the general principles and practices of collaborative problem solving. Consider NRST assistance for:

- Addressing difficult or controversial riparian issues
- Developing a collaborative effort to meet a variety of objectives
- Building field office and community capacity for adaptive strategies through training, coaching and mentoring involving assessment, management, monitoring and managing conflict
- Providing expertise on riparian restoration efforts
- Developing or implementing RMP objectives and strategies related to riparian-wetland resources

If faced with a riparian-wetland issue that would benefit from this type of an approach, please complete the attached request form and send it to Helene Aarons at Helene_Aarons@blm.gov by **December 1, 2009**.

The NRST leads implementation of an interagency effort titled Creeks and Communities: A Continuing Strategy for Accelerating Cooperative Riparian Restoration and Management. The strategy is designed to:

- Substantially increase the number of people working collaboratively to improve the management of riparian resources at the landscape scale;
- Outline a way of working with diverse groups to create a common vision for productive and sustainable riparian conditions;
- Address riparian related concerns through specific, case-by-case design applying a blend of both resource and social science principles and practices; and
- Provide a model for managing conflict and promoting joint fact finding in support of community-based decision-making.

Primary activities are typically a combination of technical training and place-based problem solving among diverse stakeholders. Recognizing that a 'silver bullet' or one-size-fits-all approach to collaborative, community-based resource management does not exist, the Creeks and Communities strategy relies on a set of principles and practices for engaging in such efforts. Assistance is often multi-phased beginning with a situation assessment. Based on assessment findings, each phase is customized (designed and staffed) to provide specific activities to meet particular biophysical and socioeconomic needs and objectives. A critical component is building the capacity of local communities, including agencies, so that long-term success is not dependent upon a specific person or entity. Considerable attention is paid to ensuring participation of key individuals and organizations.

The approach used is specifically designed to address the technical dimensions of riparian issues while as the same time recognizing and addressing the social context within which these issues exist. Concepts and methods for integrating science into collaborative decision-making are utilized throughout. Activities result in equalizing stakeholder knowledge and increasing overall understanding and acceptance of the relevance of science and its application to community problem solving

Participants will be able to experience on-the-ground, community-based problem solving through:

- ✓ Working side-by-side with an experienced, *interdisciplinary* team of practitioners.
- ✓ Learning to put collaborative problem solving principles into practice by applying social science to natural resource issues.
- ✓ Advancing technical knowledge and skills for assessment, management and monitoring of riparian resources.
- ✓ Building individual skills and core competencies for engaging in collaborative, community-based stewardship both within and outside government.
- ✓ Discovering techniques (i.e. joint fact finding and facilitated dialogue) for leveling the playing field, developing a common understanding of current riparian conditions, shaping a shared future vision and outlining practical solutions for achieving that vision.
- ✓ Understanding the importance of building a common vocabulary recognizing that functioning ecological systems are what provide a range of values over time.



For further information:

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