

U.S. Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management

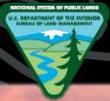
Seven Principles of Successful Collaboration

BLM Collaborative Action & Dispute Resolution

*Adapted from
A Desktop Reference Guide to Collaborative, Community-Based Planning
A collaborative project between
the Bureau of Land Management and the Sonoran Institute*

The BLM's Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution (CADR) program provides leadership, guidance, and assistance in collaborative implementation of the BLM's mission. Its vision is of an agency that is trusted and that produces sustainable decisions by efficiently engaging others in the stewardship of public lands and working collaboratively to prevent, manage, and resolve conflict.

Photos from BLM Flickr - mypubliclands



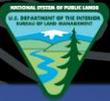
Principle of Successful Collaboration #1

Build Lasting Relationships

At its core, collaboration is about people

- Listen more, talk less – and show respect for people and ideas
- Separate people from problems – you can work with people whether you agree or disagree with their stances
- Use relaxed gatherings like cookouts, potlucks, or service events to break through divisions and build trust between stakeholders
- Celebrate successes – no matter how big or small – and build collaborative momentum
- Go to their turf – get on community event and local government agendas to present the BLM message and hear people's views
- Recognize and adapt to local customs and culture
- Develop a plan for transitions and turnover of staff and participants





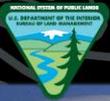
Principle of Successful Collaboration #2

Use Sideboards & Guidelines

Understand legal sideboards and agree on working guidelines early on

- A key part of how you collaborate is simply indicating what you can collaborate on
- Shaping the decision-making space early enables you to set expectations, guide the process, and find successes
- Outline when decisions will be made and update that schedule
- Clearly present legal and policy requirements to stakeholders including jurisdictional limitations and key federal statutes
- Relate sideboards and guidelines to the NEPA purpose and need
- Avoid unrealistic expectations that can lead to disappointment and loss of trust that can derail collaboration





Principle of Successful Collaboration #3

Encourage Diverse Viewpoints

Encourage diverse participation and communication

- In order to develop new and creative solutions, you need to find new and diverse voices
- Design meetings and workshops with activities such as breakout groups, audience polling, and listening sessions that allow all interested parties to share their input
- Always ask who else should be involved in collaboration
- Avoid having an imbalance of power or perceived bias toward a particular interest
- Work with a third-party facilitator for controversial issues
- Incorporate new views through online tools and social media
- Schedule meetings at times of day or year that allow more people to attend





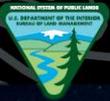
Principle of Successful Collaboration #4

Work at an Appropriate Scale

***Match the scale of the solution
to the scale of the challenge***

- When possible, start small to build collaborative momentum
- Collaboration often works best when it is place-based and tied to a shared area where people work, live, and recreate
- Maintain a clear and consistent message when working with multiple collaborative groups across a landscape or region
- Use GIS online tools to increase participation in large landscapes
- Coordinate with other agencies and private landowners to match plans across boundaries and align conservation objectives
- Work with trusted local staff or established working groups
- Consider connectivity between landscapes and communities





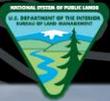
Principle of Successful Collaboration #5

Empower the Group

***When people believe in the process,
they'll believe in the outcomes***

- Empowering a group does not reduce the BLM's authority
- Collaborative groups with a formal structure should craft their own group charters or decision-making rules
- Comply with requirements of the Federal Advisory Committee Act
- Do not give and then take away power to a group – that can seriously affect trust in the BLM, the process, and the outcomes
- Make sure that sideboards and guidelines are clearly defined
- Use joint fact finding to build understanding of scientific data
- Remember that collaboration is a dynamic process
- Develop plans for continuing collaborative involvement such as through implementation and monitoring of a plan or project





Principle of Successful Collaboration #6

Share Resources and Rewards

Leverage new capacities for success

- Celebrate successes – no matter how big or small – and build collaborative momentum
- Each project builds on previous public involvement efforts Find opportunities to recognize those that you work with, and when possible reward those who take a collaborative approach
- Empower stakeholders in a collaborative process to be messengers to external audiences, agency leaders, and the community
- Highlight even interim stages or accomplishments in a process
- Share data and information to increase transparency in decision-making
- Respect the amount of time that it takes for stakeholders to participate in collaboration, including transportation time





Principle of Successful Collaboration #7

Build Internal Support

***If you can't collaborate internally,
you can't collaborate externally***

- Find ways to work across offices and programs to leverage resources and expertise
- Work with your state or program BLM-CADR Coordinator
- Keep Field, State, and Washington Office leadership updated on collaborative developments
- Include collaborative skills in position descriptions, evaluations, and training
- Brief all local staff on the collaborative process and its importance
- The BLM-CADR program is dedicated to building collaborative culture and capacity, including making the connection between collaborative work in the field and the Washington Office

