

**National Landscape Conservation System Summit**  
November 16, 2010 Focus Group Sessions

**Focus Group 6: Connecting with Local Communities**

Note: This document summarizes comments from both BLM employees and non-BLM stakeholders during three focus group sessions held on November 16, 2010. These comments represent neither the consensus opinions of the group attending the session nor the official positions of the BLM.

Make Connections to Local Communities

- Include local stakeholders (counties, states, communities, and tribes) in the management of the NLCS.
- In order to create better connectivity, the BLM should be involved in local planning efforts as well as the planning and management efforts of other governmental entities engaging in natural resource management in the geographic area.
- Establish an online desk guide of Best Management Practices for working with local communities.
- Offer training focused on building partnerships, both internally and externally.
- Utilize local businesses and organizations as information centers in gateway communities.

Build trust

- Work to increase the local community's level of trust in the BLM.
- Be inclusive and foster engagement: Create consistency in working with diverse viewpoints, talk with those that agree with you and those that don't, actively seek out all views related to issues (even those that don't agree and may be harder to find).
- Provide information, training, coaching and mentoring, access to specific skill sets, funding, etc. to increase engagement opportunities.
- Find ways to build working relationships on an ongoing basis, not just in relation to a project or in response to a crisis.
- Understand and honor the local way of life.

Communicate

- Each unit should collaboratively create a communication strategy for consistent messaging to:
  - Create a culture of two-way communication with both internal and external audiences.
  - Create a shared vision for the relationship with NLCS and local community.
  - Clarify expectations between the NLCS and the community.
  - Identify all audiences and design specific ways for communicating clear, consistent messages at all levels.

Develop Sustainability

- Develop capabilities and work collaboratively to define economic opportunities associated with NLCS units.
- Work with commerce and tourism boards and related businesses.

- Collaborate with communities by sharing information on recreation and visitor uses compatible with the resources.
- Share our network resources, ex. other agency programs, National Geographic, tourism, academic.
- Act to preserve and promote the local story.