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WARNER COLLEGE  
OF NATURAL RESOURCES  
COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY

## February 2024



### A Note from the CCC Director

The scale and complexity of issues involving land, water, and biodiversity—not to mention economic health of rural communities and giving voice to people historically left out of conservation—require collaboration. Here are a few recent resources on collaborative capacity that I have found worth reading.

In [Increasing Collaborative Capacity and Infrastructure for Landscape Stewardship](#), deSilva, Farrell, and Knoblock present a “Collaborative Capacity Framework” that includes both “structural” and “binding” elements. Structural elements include those pieces that need funding. At the most basic level, this means funding people to coordinate, organize, communicate, and play other roles essential to any organization. Binding elements are the threads that make

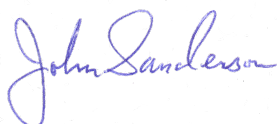
collaboration different from more independent or transactional work. There is a lot to learn in this paper, but among my favorite are their ten specific recommendations, including, “Explore how collaborative networks could serve as ‘hubs’ to connect agencies to communities.”

For its combination of conciseness and clarity, I recommend [\*What Does Collaborative Capacity Make Possible?\*](#) The authors—Baxter and Land—distill ideas, observations, and experiences from practitioners and funders across the US into a description of what collaborative capacity is and how it leads to better outcomes. Building on the “Collaborative Capacity Framework,” the authors describe the importance of geography, history, power dynamics, and other dimensions of context. In this report, too, I like the actionable recommendations.

I also recommend [\*Preparing Landscapes and Communities to Receive and Recover from Wildfire through Collaborative Readiness\*](#). In this paper, Huayhuaca and co-authors describe how the elements of capacity that need focus and funding change over time. Although centered on forest collaboratives, much of this paper’s content applies to any conservation collaborative. One key point about change over time can easily go unrecognized: in the early stages of development, collaboratives may not be in a place where they can get tangible projects done yet they still need capacity investments. Like the two above, this paper includes a lot of actionable specificity.

All three papers mention how essential it is to invest in building peer-to-peer connections and growing individual and organizational skills, practices, and understanding of collaboration. One opportunity to follow this recommendation is the Western Collaborative Conservation Network’s [\*Confluence 2024\*](#), which is just six weeks away. I recently sat in on an event planning meeting and found myself excited about the many opportunities there will be to learn from old and new friends about success in collaboration, building bridges across differences, and funding. There will be a suite of exceptional field trips, too. I hope to see you there!

Be well,



John Sanderson

**News from the CCC**



***Branching Out: CUSP Recreation Agreements and Amenities***

Coalition for the Upper South Platte ([CUSP](#)) Executive Director, John Geerdes, will discuss **CUSP's ongoing projects with federal, state, and local agencies to improve recreation amenities as it relates to improving watershed health**. John will discuss what types of agreements CUSP has signed to improve recreation, as well as take a look at a half a dozen projects they have completed in the last couple of years.

This Branching Out session will take place **TOMORROW Thursday, February 22nd** from 1:30 to 3:00pm on zoom.

Register today by clicking [HERE!](#)



# WCCN's Quarterly Newsletter

## *Valentine's Day Edition*

In the spirit of the season, check out what **passionate collaborative conservationists are getting engaged** in across the West in the Western Collaborative Conservation Network's (WCCN) quarterly newsletter, Collaborative Voices! In it, you'll find news from the WCCN as well as updates from the states within our network.

Read Collaborative Voices [HERE](#).





WESTERN COLLABORATIVE  
CONSERVATION NETWORK

## BRING YOUR VALENTINE TO CONFLUENCE!



WESTERN COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION NETWORK  
CONNECT INSPIRE CATALYZE  
**Confluence**  
COMMUNITY COLLABORATION CONSERVATION 2024

April 2-4, 2024  
Tucson, AZ



***Confluence is for lovers (of collaborative conservation)***

Do you want to meet the **passionate conservationists** featured in this newsletter in person? Come to Confluence to **get engaged** with collaborative efforts in scenic Tucson, Arizona. Learn more about the **romance of collaboration** in conservation by checking our our Confluence registration page [HERE](#).

Learn more about participating in the WCCN network on [our website](#). And help us grow the network by sharing this newsletter with your colleagues and friends!

# Fellows Program

## **Welcoming our newest Fellows – Cohort 14!**

Each year, the CCC engages in a competitive process to select participants for our Fellows program. We recently accepted a total of five Fellows projects to

make up Cohort 14, which includes a combination of **graduate students, faculty members, and conservation practitioners from across the globe.**

We are excited to partner with the [CSU Center for Human Carnivore Coexistence](#) and an anonymous donor to support three of these projects, whose work will focus on different aspects of human-carnivore coexistence. One of these projects will engage communities in shared decision-making to create a conservation plan to **promote co-existence with four carnivore species in southern Brazil**: the jaguar, mountain lion, hoary fox, and maned wolf. Another project will seek to **reduce conflict between gray wolves and herders adjacent to Hustai National Park in Mongolia**, among other activities. And the third project will **engage livestock producers in Colorado** to learn about their experience with tools to deter livestock predators, including the gray wolf.

A fourth project is focused on building the capacity of the Northeast Mexico Agave Restoration Network to **restore and protect agave and the bats that pollinate them** - agave are a keystone species for natural and human systems on the borderlands of the US and Mexico. And our fifth project will explore using the school system in Mongolia as a mechanism for the **intergenerational transfer of Traditional Ecological Knowledge** and conservation actions.

**Even though these five projects are occurring in three different continents and four countries, the challenges of collaboration and coexistence are similar** – and through the CCC Fellowship we'll be sharing learnings, effective practices, and cross-cultural experiences.

Learn more about the Fellows Program, including past and present cohorts, [HERE](#).

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## Storyteller's Circle

Join us on the last Thursday of the month for Storyteller's Circle! We're a **community of practice for conservation communicators looking to build our skills together**, hosted by the [Center for Collaborative Conservation](#) and [Intermountain West Joint Venture](#).

***This year, we're trying a new format.*** Our February, April, June, August, and October [Storyteller's Circle Presenter Sessions](#) will consist of a **presentation and discussion** on building our capacity to tell better stories! In March, May, July, September, and November at our [Storyteller's Circle Feedback Sessions](#), we will **share our challenges and projects, and give/receive feedback** on each other's work. Bring your questions, works-in-progress, or challenges that you'd like support with to these feedback sessions, and be ready to provide support to others in our community too!

Let's all participate in brainstorming and problem-solving and help us improve our communication efforts as a network! Our first Presenter Session of the year will take place this month on **February 29**. Register [HERE](#).

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## Asking Atti About Love!

In the spirit of Valentine's Day, Rox asked Atti and you, ***"What do you love about collaboration?"***

Atti, the Peach-faced Lovebird, studiously gathered responses from Western Collaborative Conservation Network (WCCN) partners to support Rox, and [this is what he found](#), just in time for Valentine's Day!

**The things Atti loves about collaboration are many; it's hard to pick just one favorite!** He loves how energetic and passionate people and meetings can get when we are working together- it really makes him chirp. Atti also loves how new perspectives, when given a collaborative platform, can generate creative solutions to complex conservation problems. As one WCCN member said, *"we care, we want to do good work, and we want to do good work together"*.

Read what your friends in the WCCN had to say about their love for collaboration [HERE](#).

**Get to Know the CCC**



## Meet our CFCN Network Advisors: Ch'aska Huayhuaca-Frye

Coordinating the [Colorado Forest Collaboratives Network](#) takes a village, and we are so grateful to our team of advisors for supporting us behind-the-scenes with information, ideas, and feedback to help the CFCN reach its full potential. In the next few months, we will be introducing you to our fabulous team of advisors in our [CCC](#) and [CFCN](#) newsletters.

Meet Ch'aska:

Ch'aska (she/her/hers) is a collaborative decision support specialist at the [Colorado Forest Restoration Institute](#), where **she contributes to and leads collaborative adaptive management processes with forestry, fire and watershed collaborative groups**. She applies social science expertise to evaluate the readiness, effectiveness, resilience, and adaptiveness of collaborative processes and performance, as well as the application of spatial and non-spatial decision support tools in collaborative settings. She previously led the CCC's [Colorado Atlas of Collaborative Conservation](#) project, and her dissertation focused on the origins, form, and function of collaborative conservation initiatives across the state. She continues to be a liaison to the CCC and is delighted to serve on the CFCN advisory committee. Ch'aska received her Ph.D. from CSU's Graduate Degree Program in Ecology, her M.S. in Human Dimensions of Natural Resources at CSU, and her B.S. in Natural

Resources at Cornell University.

We are so grateful for Ch'aska's support of the CFCN since the very beginning!

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## Meet our WCCN Emerging Leadership Coordinator: Paula Short

Paula Short is the new Emerging Leadership Coordinator, a shared position between [Crowd Conservation](#) and the [Western Collaborative Conservation Network](#). **Over the next year, Paula will be working closely with the WCCN Emerging Leadership Working Group to develop a toolkit for emerging leaders.**

Paula has worked in natural resources for state, federal and non-profit organizations in Wyoming, Alaska and Montana. Originally from Wyoming, she has lived in the rural west for most of her life and has worked to preserve, protect and enhance critical landscapes.

Paula has a BS in Forestry from the University of Montana and an MA in Organizational Leadership from Gonzaga University. In her free time, she enjoys her home in Montana's Bitterroot Valley, spending time in nearby federal and state forests, staying in fire lookouts and trying to keep up with a busy family that includes her husband, two middle-schoolers, several horses and a feisty border collie-corgie cross.

Paula is most excited about engaging with the WCCN and our partners to learn more about collaborative conservation, capacity-building and developing resources to empower emerging leaders.

Contact [Paula](#) if you are interested in joining the [Emerging Leadership Initiative](#) and supporting our work in developing mentorship best practices!

The graphic features a brown background with white organic shapes. At the top left is the Center for Collaborative Conservation logo, which consists of four quadrants: a green circle with a tree, a brown circle with a bird, a red circle with a hand, and a green circle with mountains. Below it is the text "CENTER FOR COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION". To the right is the Warner College of Natural Resources logo, which includes a circular emblem with a bird and the text "WARNER COLLEGE OF NATURAL RESOURCES COLORADO STATE UNIVERSITY". Further right, the text "4th Tuesday of the Month 5 pm" is displayed in green. The central text "Happy Hour!" is in large white font. Below it, "Avogadro's Number" and "Fort Collins, CO" are written in green. On the left side, there are stylized trees in green and brown.

## Join Us for Happy Hour!

Come get to know the people behind the CCC at our monthly happy hour! We meet the fourth Tuesday of every month at 5pm to hang out, have a drink, and build collaborative relationships. **Everyone is welcome**, and we want to especially invite our Partners and our friends and students at Colorado State University.

It takes place this month on **Tuesday, February 27th at 5:00 pm** at Avogadro's Number in Fort Collins, CO.

We hope to see you there!

## Scholarly and Applied Impact

**Here we review research to guide our practice. Please reach out with suggestions for what we should cover! CCC Fellows and staff are indicated by bold font.**

**Dr. Brett Bruyere** ([Fellows Cohort 2](#)) is Academic Director for the Conservation Leadership through Learning Master's ([CLTL](#)) program at Warner College of Natural Resources, CSU. As part of a team of CSU faculty and researchers that are supporting the multi-agency Kawuneeche Valley Restoration Collaborative ([KVRC](#)), here he describes the work of the collaborative.

This collaborative is governed by a steering committee of eight organizations including federal agencies, local government, public utilities, and non-governmental conservation organizations. It first convened in early 2020 with a focus on water quality of the Colorado River but several months later, the massive East Troublesome fire swept through the valley, and KVRC's focus quickly broadened to include post-fire restoration. Later in 2020, the CSU team successfully bid on KVRC's request for technical expertise in restoration planning as well as supporting the group in identifying and assessing stakeholders in the region in terms of values attached to restoration and capacity to participate in the group's future restoration activity. Following several years of analysis, site visits and collaborative meetings, initial restoration plans were developed in 2023, and activity is scheduled to begin after the snow melts in 2024. In addition, the CSU team continues to support KVRC's stakeholder outreach planning and implementation, and will conduct an evaluation of the group's efforts and its collaborative conservation structure and performance.

The CSU team includes faculty and research scientists with expertise in geomorphology, riparian restoration, watershed science, and collaborative conservation. Collectively they illustrate the value and importance of a multi-disciplinary approach to planning and problem-solving, as they balance ecological and social science approaches to develop recommendations to

KVRC. With several successful recent grants received by KVRC to fund actual restoration activity, *the CSU team will remain involved with this project for the foreseeable future and further demonstrate how collaboration supports decision-making and positive outcomes.*

## Other News and Opportunities

**Center for Environmental Justice Film Screening** | CSU's Center for Environmental Justice (CEJ), in participation with CSU's Thematic Year of Democracy and filmmaker Brian Hedden, are excited to present a political thriller documentary from the front lines of climate justice activism in Colorado: "Fracking the System- Colorado's Oil and Gas Wars". [Register in advance for the free screening](#) on February 20th at CSU's campus.

**Join a WCCN Working Group** | In order to [catalyze](#) resources and expertise to solve and reduce barriers to collaboration, fill critical gaps in collaborative capacity, and share best practices, the Western Collaborative Conservation Network hosts Working Groups **free for anyone to join**. Working Groups include the Awareness & Engagement Working Group, the Capacity Building Working Group, the Emerging Leadership Working Group, and the GIS Working Group. Learn more about Working Groups [HERE](#), and find links to upcoming meetings on our Calendar [HERE](#).

**2024 Riparian Restoration Conference by RiversEdge West** | This conference brings together students, scientists, restoration practitioners, governments, nonprofits, and more stakeholders to collaborate and share knowledge about riparian restoration. The theme for this year's conference is: Restoration for the Future: Promoting resilience in our rivers and communities. [View the draft agenda and register here.](#)

**CSFS Wildfire Mitigation Outreach Grant Program** | The Colorado State Forest Service has funds available for outreach to Colorado residents in high wildfire hazard areas. CSFS has \$300,000 available for grant awards through this program. [Learn more and apply here.](#)

**What Collaborative Capacity Makes Possible - A Study** | The California Landscape Stewardship Network ([CLSN](#)) recently published a study on the

relationship between collaborative capacity and landscape stewardship outcomes. The call from practitioners is clear. This study contributes to a growing body of experience and evidence that points to the need for, and value of, collaborative capacity and makes the case for the ways strategically targeted support can help us meet the challenges before us. [Read the study here.](#)

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## Jobs

**Check out the CCC's [Job Board](#) for a list of jobs focused on natural resources and collaborative conservation!**

Here are just a few postings shared through our board:

**Coordinator & Facilitator at Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership |** Idaho Forest Restoration Partnership is looking for a coordinator with facilitation experience to assist a diverse group of stakeholders seeking to help strengthen collaborative forest restoration efforts in Idaho by making sure local collaboratives have the resources and information they need to succeed. [Apply here.](#)

**Mitigation Specialist/Program Manager for the Grand County Wildfire Council |** The Grand County Wildfire Council (GCWC) is recruiting for an energetic, creative, and well-organized Mitigation Specialist/Program Manager to manage mitigation programs and provide technical expertise in their nonprofit, community-based education and mitigation program for the residents and visitors of Grand County, Colorado. [Apply here.](#)

**WY Red Canyon Ranch Stewardship Manager (TNC) |** As the WY Red Canyon Ranch Stewardship Manager, you will spearhead land management projects and strategies to foster and maintain biological diversity. Working collaboratively with our team, you will extend your influence beyond Ranch boundaries by testing new ideas, capturing valuable lessons, and sharing insights with fellow land managers, landowners, and natural resources professionals. [Apply here.](#)

**Peer Learning Facilitator for the National Center for Appropriate Technology |** The National Center for Appropriate Technology (NCAT) is

seeking a contractor to organize and lead a pilot peer-to-peer learning program for Colorado farmers and ranchers. The main objectives of this pilot program are to (1) encourage adoption of climate-smart agricultural practices in Colorado, (2) expand the CDA STAR and STAR Plus Programs, and (3) evaluate the effectiveness of peer-to-peer learning as a strategy for achieving the first two objectives. [Apply here.](#)

*If you have job openings that are aligned with our work on collaborative conservation and you want us to share them, submit them to our [job board](#).*

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If you feel moved to support our work supporting conservation, please consider [supporting the CCC with a donation](#).

Questions? Ideas? Opportunities? Please email the CCC Director [John Sanderson](#).

Be well.



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