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September
2026



A Note from the CCC Director

Over the years, the CCC has supported many efforts focused on rangelands. Rangelands cover around half of the world's surface, and they support unique biodiversity and many people. They also face many threats. For example, a [World Wildlife Fund Plowprint report](#) estimated that, across the US and Canada, roughly 1.9 million acres of grasslands, one type of rangeland, were converted to croplands in 2022 alone. Grasslands also contain roughly 20% of the carbon stored in the world's soils. Half of this stored carbon is lost when intact grassland is plowed up, as we mentioned in a 2020 paper I co-authored titled [Cattle, conservation, and carbon in the western Great Plains](#).

Earlier this year, CCC was a proud supporter of the [Global Gathering of Pastoralist Women](#), which brought together pastoralist and ranching women from around the world to celebrate and support their initiatives and to amplify their voices. This event was held in the context of the [International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists 2026](#). This event has passed, but if you are interested in rangelands, here are a few upcoming opportunities that might interest you.

Right around the corner is Partnerscapes' [Private Lands Partners Day 2026](#) in central Minnesota. As the event website points out, one-third of Minnesota was once covered by grassland, but now little more than 1% remain. Even if you can't make Private Lands Partners Day, you can find summaries of these annual events [here](#). I also recommend Partnerscapes' newsletter, which is always packed with great information and opportunities. You can sign up for their newsletter at the bottom of [this page](#).

On November 10 - 12, the Central Grasslands Roadmap Initiative will convene their [2026 Summit](#) in Chihuahua City, Mexico. The Summit attracts ranchers, Indigenous people, conservationists, and more from across Canada, the US, and Mexico to align priorities, share best practices, and scale conservation strategies. I won't be able to attend, but I've been to the Summit in the past, and I can tell you it's a great event.

Geographically farther away but even closer to the CCC, on November 16 - 19 you can attend the [1st Brazilian Congress on One Health and Biodiversity Conservation: One Cerrado, One Health](#). One of the co-organizers of this event is the [Programa de Conservação Mamíferos do Cerrado](#) whose Fantastic Detectives were one of three teams focused on human-carnivore coexistence in the CCC's [14th cohort of Fellows](#). You can read more about this event farther down this newsletter.

Moving beyond events, if you are a rancher or work with ranchers, be sure to check out and share the new [Grassland Resilience and Conservation Initiative](#). As you'll read on this website, the Sand County Foundation is working with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation to provide technical assistance to cattle ranchers to accelerate the adoption of regenerative grazing practices across one million acres of grasslands in 15 states.

To all of you who also work to conserve rangelands across the globe for people and

wildlife—thank you!

John

News from the CCC

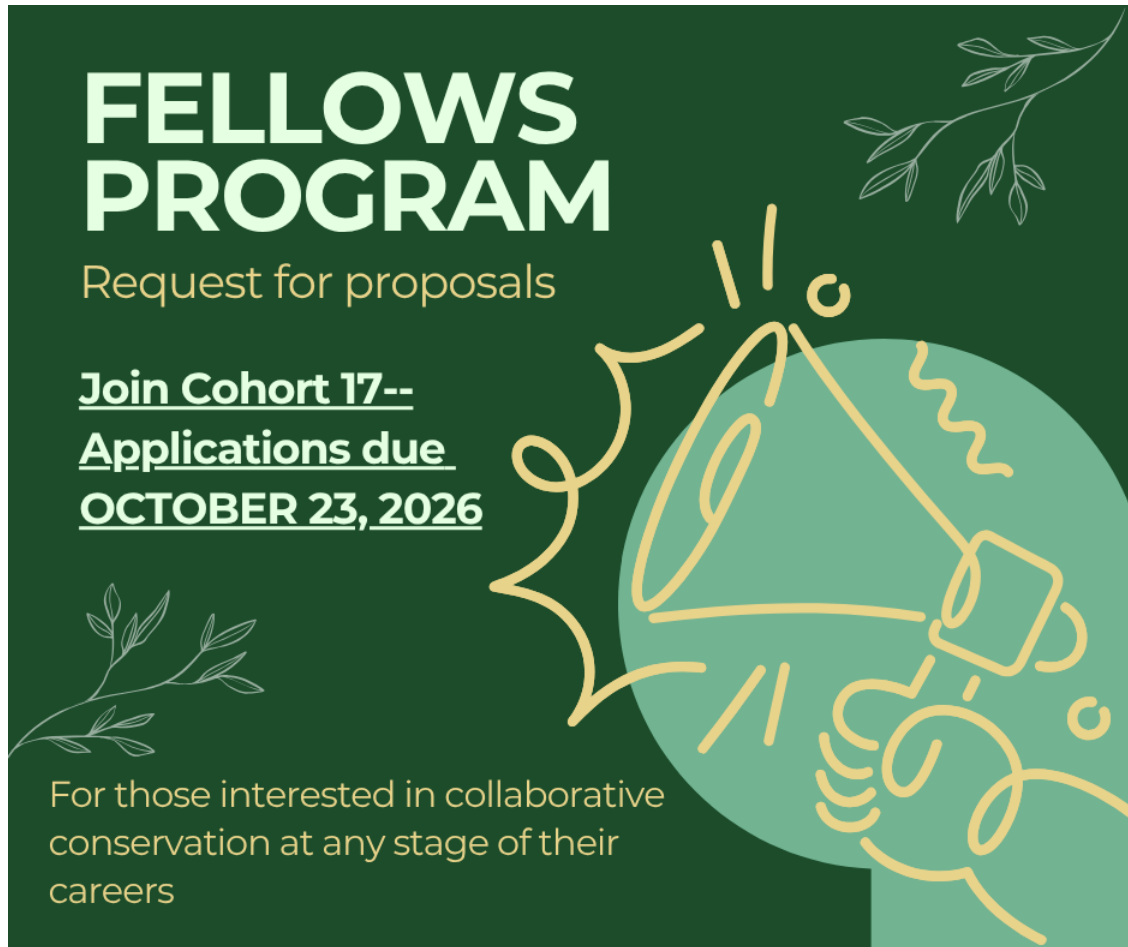


That's a wrap! The 2026 Colorado Forest Collaboratives Summit took place from

September 9-11 in Gunnison, CO. Nearly 100 collaborative professionals and partners gathered to connect and learn around the theme of moving collaboratively from planning to implementation.

There was a strong sense of community and inspiration in the room. One survey participant shared, "This Summit helps remind me why I do what I do."

Thanks to all who attended! A Summit summary will be released soon.



Join Cohort 17 of the Collaborative Conservation Fellows, 2027-2028!

[The Fellows Program](#) is for those interested in conservation at any stage of their careers— including graduate students, mid-career professionals, academics, or experienced practitioners. During the program, Fellows learn and apply the practices that are the hallmark of successful collaborative conservation.

Proposals are reviewed by a committee of CCC staff and partners with expertise in collaborative conservation.

Past Fellows projects have included:

- Working with a diverse group of stakeholders to do on-the-ground conservation, such as a restoration, social science, or citizen science project.
- Building the capacity of a group of stakeholders to collaboratively address a conservation issue. This type of project might include convening, training, planning, creating tools (such as an app, social network map, photovoice, etc.), doing outreach, or other activities.
- Co-produce research that contributes to new conservation management plans or sheds light on transferable and transformative collaborative conservation practices.

For all details, please [go here](#).

Interested applicants can learn more through virtual Information Sessions scheduled for

[9/23/2026 \(5:00-6:00 pm MDT\)](#) and [10/8/2026 \(9:00-10:00 am MDT\)](#).

Applicants can also schedule a 45-minute meeting to ask questions, discuss project ideas, review proposal format and content, and address other concerns. These proposal support meetings can be scheduled [here](#).

You may also reach out to CCC's Associate Director of Learning, Allison Brody, at allison.brody@colostate.edu

Other News and Opportunities



Paula Cepeda-Mahecha (Cohort 16) was working on her Fellows project on the Pacific coast of Colombia when a magnitude 7.5 earthquake struck the area on August 10.

Much of her Fellow's project revolves around understanding the systems of care between mangroves, clams, and women, analyzing the decisions that women make every day to maintain sustainable livelihoods and care for their communities and themselves. It is not surprising to any of us at CCC to learn that Paula has since pivoted to support this community in its earthquake recovery efforts.

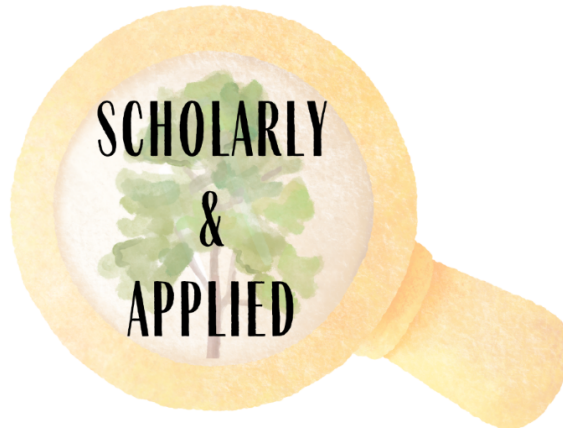
This includes a [GoFundMe campaign](#) that Paula started to help a local school recover, as schools are often the heartbeat of healthy communities.

Local children are currently unable to access the school because the damaged structure threatens the safety of both children and teachers. Recovering and rebuilding the school is a top priority for the community to restore safe, dignified learning spaces where children can continue their education.

The funds raised will primarily be used to purchase materials to repair the schools and the most severely affected homes in Bahía Málaga. Any remaining funds will be used to support rescue and relief teams in Buenaventura.

[Every contribution](#) makes a difference.

Scholarly and Applied Impact



The [Network for Landscape Conservation](#) is working on a new resource series in their Knowledge Center called [Making the Invisible Visible: The strategic role, leadership, and practice of collaborative conservation](#). The first article in the series explores what it actually takes to convene, coordinate, and lead collaborative partnerships – and what this means for how collaboratives are “designed, funded, and staffed.” The authors list specific tasks associated with “weaving” a network, ensuring alignment around a collective vision, and “translating a shared vision into shared accomplishments.” The authors note the surprising breadth of the knowledge and skills required for the role – a breadth that many collaboratives may not truly understand. Being prepared for what is truly needed will be helpful for collaborative partnerships to invest wisely in this critical role.

In other news, we’re excited to share that one of our CCC Fellows teams (the Fantastic Detectives of Cohort 14) is hosting the first Brazilian Congress on One Health and Biodiversity Conservation called *One Cerrado, One Health*, to be held from November 16 to 19, 2026, in the state of Goiás, Brazil. Dr. Frederico Gemesio Lemos explains that “the Congress will be hosted by the Federal University of Catalão (UFCAT), and will bring together students, researchers, professionals, decision-makers, and members of local communities to foster interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary dialogue at the intersection of One Health and biodiversity conservation.”

The [One Health Initiative](#) links human, animal, plant, and environmental health. The One Health approach can help reframe how we think about solving systemic issues such as food insecurity and biodiversity loss. Dr. Lemos reports that “this event is, in many ways, the result of [an initiative that the CCC Fellowship helped nurture](#).”

- Allison Brody, PhD*Our Associate Director of Learning*

Notes From the Field



Notes from the Field

Disability and Collaborative Conservation: Part Two of Two September 2026

Aireona Bonnie Raschke, Ph.D.

During Disability Pride Month, I started writing about disability in conservation, in particular, the barriers that disabled people (as a disabled person, I prefer identity-first language) face in the conservation field. And I made a plea for us to address those barriers. In this month's piece, I will be focusing on the value of disabled perspectives to the collaborative conservation field.

I ascribe to the social theory of disability, which teaches us that the state of being disabled is not the result of a health condition (or impairment). Rather, disability arises from how a society treats the people who are living with those impairments. This means that while we may not be able to "fix" a condition, we can improve the state of disability by changing systems and norms.

Not only is this the ethical thing to do, the right thing to do, but disabled people have much to offer collaborative conservation through the integration of "disabled ecologies" into our understandings of the natural world, utilization of disabled systems thinking, and what I term, collaborative intuition (among many other

things!).

Let's start with collaborative intuition. Based on my own experience, I posit that many disabled people develop collaborative intuition because of the kinds of leadership and innovation they need to navigate the world. The solutions and challenges will vary from person to person, but we can't hide from the importance of collaboration to our survival. Thus, disabled people can be highly equipped with many of Amy Mickel's [Four Cornerstones of Collaboration](#) – compassion, character, commitment, and courage.

Systems thinking has been defined by many scholars, but Arnold and Wade (2015) synthesize those definitions into: interconnections, wholes rather than parts, non-linear relationships, stock and flow relationships, dynamic behavior, feedback loops, acknowledging that systems are important, system as the cause of behavior, and delays.

Within collaborative work, systems thinking allows us to be more strategic, holistic, and understanding of the people we work with. I see that many disabled people have especially keen insights into systems thinking. This is evidenced by disabled theories which focus attention on the impacts of society's systems on the experience of disability. The interconnectedness of our lives is very clear from the disabled perspective.

Finally, I draw considerable inspiration from the writings of Sunaura Taylor, particularly *Disabled Ecologies: Lessons from a Wounded Desert*. I understand there to be an integral link between disabled people and disabled ecologies of the Anthropocene.

What this means for conservation is that disabled people can bring a nuanced and personal understanding of what the land is experiencing. There are many cases in which processes that disable and harm ecologies also disable and harm the people connected to those ecologies. What I find most inspiring, however, is that disability is not an end. Disability is a point of grief, of pain, and of immense change, but it is also a place of creativity, of discovering new pieces of yourself, and experiencing the full breadth of life. This kind of experience can help us see new solutions and keep hope.

This isn't meant to illustrate the inspirational strength of disabled people. It's an exploration of *some* of the essential perspectives that pursuing accessibility for disabled people in our field will afford us. It's time for leaders to pay attention to the

barriers that make that accessibility impossible, and use their power to bring about change.

And for any readers who, like me, are disabled, I hope you see this as one person's call to you. We need you. There is a place here for you. You bring something special, something needed. It might not be on this list – it might be something I've never thought of or imagined.



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 on the board:

Preserve Manager for Northern California - Center for Natural Lands Management

The Manager will practice on-the ground conservation of populations of rare and endangered species using science-based principles and adaptive management. This position integrates the full range of applied conservation activities: planning, implementing, budgeting, reporting, analyzing, interpreting, communicating, and problem solving! The Preserve Manager will play a lead role in the overall stewardship and management of a specific portfolio of preserves in northern California which have been permanently protected for conservation purposes.

Marine Reserves Ecologist - Oregon Fish and Wildlife

Marine Reserves Ecologist will work with the Marine Reserves Project Leader, Assistant Project Leader, and Quantitative Ecologist to carry out the ecological monitoring for Oregon's five marine reserve sites. Work tasks include assisting with sample design and planning, leading collection of data at-sea, data entry, database maintenance, data analysis, GIS mapping, presenting information in

public forums, and report writing.

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

If you think a colleague would find value in reading CCC news, please forward this email and invite them to subscribe using the form at the bottom of the [CCC home page](#).

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

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

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