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April 2023



A Note from the CCC Director

Recently we welcomed our [13th cohort of CCC Fellows](#), who are working on projects in Colorado, Montana, Ecuador, Cameroon, and Botswana. During a 2.5-day training and networking retreat, we covered a lot of topics, including defining collaborative conservation, stakeholder engagement and managing conflict, theory of change, and evaluation.

During a session on meaningful engagement with Indigenous Peoples and communities that have been marginalized in conservation, we reflected on [Conflict Resolution for Holy Beings](#), a poem by 3-term US Poet Laureate and Muscogee (Creek) writer Joy Harjo. Here is an excerpt:

"The lands and waters they gave us did not belong to them to give. Under false pretenses we signed. After drugging by drink, we signed. With a mass of firepower pointed at us, we signed. With a flotilla of war ships at our shores, we signed. We are still signing. We have found no peace in this act of signing."

When we read this poem, Dr. Life Mashumba (*see Fellows Spotlight below*), who is from Botswana and is working with a community to figure out how to reduce conflict with elephants, said simply, “This is Africa.”

When I was a Peace Corps volunteer in Mali over three decades ago, I worked in a program designed to get villages to plant managed woodlots for wood supply to take pressure off forests. After my Bambara was sufficiently good, I toured my six assigned villages to introduce myself and explain what I hoped to accomplish. After finishing my introduction in Yorobougoula, a gentleman raised his hand and politely asked, “John, an be jiri turu muna?” (Why are we planting trees?)

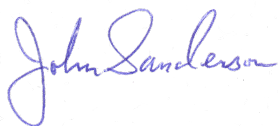
I replied with my own question, “You’ve been planting trees for five years. Why are you planting trees?”

“Because they tell us we must,” he replied.

This was, at the time, “development.” The stated intentions were good: battling deforestation that forced women to walk farther for fuel and desertification that turned fertile soil to dust. These days, most of us would recoil at that approach, thinking we are way beyond command-and-control approaches to conservation.

Yet, in her recent talk—[*Fish and Wildlife Conservation for Who? A Decolonial Feminist Perspective in Colorado*](#)—[Gemara Gifford](#) showed how the United States’ notion of manifest destiny still threads its way through conservation with some voices actively promoted and others excluded, intentionally or not. She also shared values and approaches for a healthier, more justice-oriented path forward. Ultimately, whether we are talking about an African farmer, an Indigenous water protector, or a western rancher, there is strong evidence that, as [Prakash Kashwan writes](#), “*conservation will succeed only if it can support the goal of a dignified life for all humans and nonhuman species.*” I recommend Gemara’s talk as one source of guidance on how we can succeed together.

Be well,



John Sanderson

News from the CCC



Introducing CCC Fellows Cohort 13!

We are excited to formally introduce our next cohort of [Fellows - Cohort 13](#) is made up of 12 Fellows pursuing five conservation projects working with communities in three different countries:

- In Botswana, addressing human-elephant conflict through adaptive management and collaborative decision-making.
- In Cameroon, understanding pangolin populations while creating more collaborative approaches for natural resource management in Takamanda National Park.
- In Colorado, USA, establishing a baseline for how educational messaging and community engagement can produce tangible, long-term conservation support that will directly and indirectly support waterfowl and associated habitats.

- In Ecuador, restoring watershed health in Pintag while protecting and enriching Mestizo culture and ancestral values of sustainability.
- In Montana, USA, facilitating a community dialogue about water in the Bitterroot through multimedia “pop-up” exhibits.

Welcome Life, Joy, Pije, Cini, Jerry, Courtney, Nicole, Hope, Rose, Daniel, Heidi, and Alex!



Next Solutions Lab: May 10

This past week, at the third session of the CCC Solutions Lab, we discussed integrating storytelling into conservation work and using stories to win the hearts and interest of funders via grant writing. We had some awesome conversations, shared ideas, and got inspired! Thanks so much for everyone who participated and shared their stories with the group!

Be sure to join us on May 10 at 4pm M.T. for our final edition of the CCC Solutions Lab! [Register here!](#)

COLORADO FOREST COLLABORATIVES NETWORK



Introducing a new learning opportunity!

Join the [Colorado Forest Collaboratives Network \(CFCN\)](#) for ***Branching Out*** a peer-learning series to provide a space for meaningful, relevant discussion amongst Network participants. Each monthly, virtual session will feature bite-sized stories of successes and failures from forest collaborative coordinators and partners, leaving you with the most relevant details and key takeaways, then offering ample time for small group networking, storytelling, and idea-workshopping. We invite you to come to the sessions that you think will provide the most benefit to you and your collaborative.

The first session focused on Collaboratives as a Platform for Community Conversations with speaker Danny Margoles, Coordinator of the [Dolores Watershed Resilient Forest Collaborative](#). Danny kicked us off with a story of his own experiences finding success with community conversations before diving into group reflection and discussion about successes, failures, and next steps for collaboratives who find themselves at the center of difficult community conversations.

Save the date for **our next session May 18 1:30-3pm MT!** Keep an eye on future [CFCN newsletters](#) for registration links and resources shared during these peer-learning sessions.



WESTERN COLLABORATIVE
CONSERVATION NETWORK

All Partners Meeting

*Join the conversation to help
inspire the future the WCCN*



Did You Miss the March WCCN All Partners Meeting?

If you missed the quarterly Western Collaborative Conservation Network's All Partners Meeting last month, don't fret. We've put together a short blog post with presentation information and recordings just for you!


[Check out the presentations](#) from Taylor Keys (Texan by Nature) on utilizing corporate funds for conservation and John Sanderson (CCC) and Tim Stevens (The Kendeda Fund) on conservation philanthropy.

Fish & Wildlife Conservation for Who?

A Decolonial Feminist Perspective in
Colorado

FWCB Dept Seminar

Gemara L. Gifford Apodaca
PhD Student, Human Dimensions of Natural Resources
Advisor, Dr. Anna Lavoie, CAPE Lab
March 24, 2023



Seminar from CCC Staff Gemara Gifford: *Fish & Wildlife Conservation for Who?*

Using a decolonial and multiracial feminist lens, Gemara addresses the current barriers and opportunities for fish and wildlife conservation to be more just and liberatory for Colorado's Native leaders, elders, and concerned community members.

Addressing the structural, political, and cultural challenges that remain in statewide fish and wildlife efforts is one way to heal from past harms. Another is to envision fish and wildlife conservation from the direction of over 48 Native Nations with long-held relationships to Colorado's lands.

Read our full blog post and access Gemara's presentation [here!](#)



***NEW* Collaboratives Behind the Scenes: Western Landowners Alliance**

The Western Collaborative Conservation Network's profile series [Collaboratives Behind-the-Scenes](#) features Q&As with conservation organizations to provide a view into what it takes to run a collaborative organization from challenges faced in building partnerships to tips for budding organizations.

Recently we spoke with Shaleas Harrison, Wyoming Resource Coordinator at [Western Landowners Alliance \(WLA\)](#), a membership-based organization working to advance policies and practices that sustain working lands, connected landscapes, and native species. WLA's work spans across the Western US. Shaleas grew up on a small farm in the Bighorn Basin of north-central Wyoming. In addition to maintaining her agricultural roots growing a variety of beans and barley, Shaleas recently started a job with WLA.

Shaleas told us, *"It's interesting coming from the conservation world because I was someone who really fought for designations like wild space and felt like it was really important. And it is; I don't mean to diminish the work people are doing in that area but it's also really easy for us to get stuck in our echo chambers and islands and not think about how a policy or land designation might affect a landowner who is a conservationist and providing something important. If you put that landowner out of business and that area becomes houses, we all lose. It's really hard to think about everybody's perspective."*

[Read our full profile with Shaleas](#) **about her work as the Wyoming Resource Coordinator at Western Landowners Alliance!**

Assessing How Fuel Treatments are Considered During Incident Response

Michelle Greiner, Katie McGrath Novak, and Courtney Schultz



Assessing How Fuel Treatments are Considered During Incident Response

Prior to working full-time as the coordinator of the [Colorado Forest Collaboratives Network](#), Katie McGrath Novak worked as a Research Associate with the wonderful team of researchers at Colorado State University's [Public Lands Policy Group](#).

I am pleased to share this report I worked on in my last few months with the Public Lands Policy Group, titled, “Assessing How Fuel Treatments are Considered During Incident Response.” This is a report from our research project about how United States Forest Service fuel treatments are considered during incident response.

Through interviews with fire and fuel personnel and case studies of seven wildfires where existing fuel treatments were considered in incident response, we learned about how people communicate about existing fuel treatments and the main treatment characteristics they look for. Our findings illustrate general perspectives on improving fuel treatments to support wildfire incident management.

You can find the [final report here](#) as well as a [2-page research brief here](#).

Get to Know the CCC



Meet our CCC Fellows: Dr Life Mashumba

Meet one of our new fellows of Cohort 13! **Dr Life Mashumba** was a Senior Research Scholar in Tsinghua University, China from 2012-2013. Senior Research Scholar in Duquesne University, USA from 2019-2020. PhD holder in Educational and Developmental Psychology in China in Shandong Normal University. PhD in Intercultural Studies USA. He is a Botswana Qualification Expert and an Assessor and Moderator. He is the Director of Lijoka International Seminary and Bible College (Lijoka Investment). He is also a counsellor and a marriage officer. He is an adjunct Professor of New Convent International University, Miami Florida USA. He is currently a Senior Lecturer at Tonota College of Education offering educational Psychology.



Best of Luck Audrey!

Congratulations to our Communications Intern Audrey Clavijo for her new position at [Collaborative Decisions Resources](#)! We are so proud of her efforts with the CCC & WCCN, how she applied what she learned during her [CLTL](#) masters project in Costa Rica, and know she will continue to build upon the values and skills she has developed here at the CCC.

Thank you Audrey for all of your hard work with our social media posts, newsletters, and blog articles! It's been a pleasure to work with you, and we wish you the best of luck in your next endeavor.

-- Nicole and the CCC Team

Scholarly and Applied Impact

Current and past CCC Fellows and staff publish impactful research on collaboration and conservation. Here is the latest. CCC Fellows and staff are indicated by bold font.

[Brottem, Leiff, **Matthew Luizza**, and Matthew Turner. 2023. Protected areas and pastoralists in West and Central Africa: Challenges and opportunities in the 21st century. Issue Brief: Transhumance and Conservation at a Crossroads Project](#)

[Steger, **Cara**, R. B. Boone, B. W. Dullo, P. Evangelista, S. Alemu, K Gebrehiwot, and J. Klein. 2022. Collaborative agent-based modeling for managing shrub encroachment in an Afroalpine grassland. Journal of Environmental Management: V. 316](#)

Recent frameworks for community engagement (e.g., the Asset-based Community Development methodology developed by John L. McKnight and John P. Kretzmann, Northwestern University) recommend linking micro-assets to the macro-environment. Rather than focusing on what a community needs or asking a professional for assistance to “fix” issues, the idea is to mobilize individuals and institutions to build on the assets that can already be found in the community. Empowering communities by leveraging existing assets is an approach that aligns well with collaborative conservation, as seen in two recent publications co-authored by CCC Fellow Alumni.

In this [Issue Brief](#), Matt Luizza (Fellows Cohort 4) and co-authors recommend that long-term wildlife protection in West and Central Africa must recognize pastoralists as assets and partners in conservation. By understanding landscape-level factors that influence where and when herders move their livestock, as well as learn to leverage TEK and historical practices, protected area managers can “harness the strengths and mitigate the weaknesses of their existing governance capacities. Strengthening pastoral governance through such engagement would reinforce customary pastoral leadership, enhance stewardship of pastoral resources, and strengthen conflict management mechanisms.”

Asset-based community engagement should also co-produce knowledge that can help with decision-making. This is the case in lead author Cara Steger’s (Fellows Cohort 9) recent [paper](#) on agent-based modeling of shrub encroachment in an Ethiopian grassland. Community members co-created the model, contributing knowledge that made the model more realistic. The collaborative process and resulting conversations added to participants’ knowledge of how the grassland works as an ecological system, and how it

might respond to different conditions. They also used the model to make unique and unexpected interpretations and applications. The authors found that community members wanted “highly technical, quantitative answers”, and that “these collaborative modeling processes can foster complex and long-term thinking, social learning, and collective action.”

Collaborative conservation works best when it uses an asset-based frame rather than a deficit one. In what ways can we discover and leverage the assets that our stakeholders bring to the table?

Other News and Opportunities

The [Wallace Stegner Center's Environmental Dispute Resolution Program](#) at the University of Utah is accepting applications for the [2023 Collaboration Certificate Course](#)! The 7-session online course teaches the "art and science" of collaborative problem-solving and is specifically designed for mid- and upper-level professionals working on environmental, natural resource, and public policy issues. **The 2023 course begins in September; applications are due April 30. Contact edrprogram@law.utah.edu for more information.**

The Network for Landscape Conservation is requesting proposals for the 2023 funding round of the [Catalyst Fund](#), funding to accelerate the pace and practice of landscape conservation and stewardship across the US. Review the [Request for Proposals here](#). **Proposals due today Friday, April 21.**

National Socio-Environmental Synthesis Center (SESYNC) at the University of Maryland is pleased to present a compilation of [Team Science, Interdisciplinary, and Transdisciplinary Resources](#). **Learn and explore now!**

[Network of Conservation Educators and Practitioners \(NCEP\)](#) is offering an interactive, virtual [Conservation Teaching and Learning Studio](#) course this **June for early-career faculty, practitioners, and graduate students teaching conservation or environmental science topics at the post-secondary level. [Apply today!](#)**

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:

Big Thompson Watershed Coalition is hiring a [Stream Restoration Project Manager](#) to organize local stakeholder meetings, implement project plans, and manage monitoring programs. **Apply by April 27!**

The Department of Forest and Rangeland Stewardship at Colorado State University is seeking a **Spanish-speaking CSU student to work part-time as the Research Assistant for the Climate Adaptation Learning project** directed by Dr. Courtney Schultz. Find more information to [apply here!](#)

Eagle Valley Land Trust, based in Edwards, Colorado, is looking to hire a [Community Engagement Manager](#). **Applications close May 1.**

Mountain Studies Institute in Durango, Colorado has **multiple seasonal and full-time positions** open! Find out more and 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](#).

If you think a colleague would find value in the resources and information we share through this newsletter, please forward this email to them. If you do not yet received our newsletter, you can sign up [here](#).

Do you have questions, suggestion, ideas, or opportunities?
Please email CCC Director [John Sanderson](#).





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