

BUILDING RURAL COMMUNITY COALITIONS - FOR TRAILS & MORE!

Questions and items to consider for leveraging public lands and natural resources to achieve:

- *community connectivity*
- *economic development*
- *human health and well-being*

Also consider:

- *intentional planning and design process*
- *inclusion of stewardship objectives and youth engagement in original plan development*
- *highlighting cultural and heritage resources as well as recreational opportunities in your area*

- ❖ How can you sponsor or strengthen public engagement for conversations about stewardship?
We recommend intentionally developing relationships among the range of stakeholders, so that you know one another and are planning together, *before difficult or urgent issues arise*.
 - Who are the champions of the project?
 - Does your community have existing coalitions that can host these conversations to begin?
 - What opportunities are there to bring diverse parties and interests to the table to discuss these topics and contribute to planning and implementation?
- ❖ What are the policy dimensions you need to consider in your plans?
 - Who are the active entities, organizations or agencies that may have policy obligations, constraints, and objectives that need to be included? *Ex: Colorado Parks and Wildlife, for wildlife considerations*
- ❖ What are your methods and means to connect with and include diverse populations in your community?
Can you include youth in the planning process?
- ❖ What is your community's existing structure to support volunteerism?
 - If you do not have an existing volunteer structure, which community members or organizations can help support this?
 - Consider existing resources and/or community organizations that could host and/or inform a planning process, so that you don't "reinvent the wheel" or duplicate efforts?
Examples: Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado's Stepping Up Stewardship Toolkit
SLV GO!'s Toolkits
- ❖ "Conservation without finance is just conversation." Jim Levitt, Harvard Forest
What avenues for funding does your community/coalition have available?
 - City, municipal, county, foundations, state or federal agencies with nearby public lands, etc.?
 - What are the timelines and requirements for various funding sources?
 - Be aware that some funding opportunities are only available intermittently.
 - Given the requirements, who in your coalition is the best situated to apply for the grant?
 - Consider collaborative, multi-party grant proposals. These tend to be stronger and can leverage more funds.

For more information about San Luis Valley projects, programs and coalitions, contact:

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