CFLRP Collaborative Governance Assessment Report
FOR THE RIO CHAMA CFLRP

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Document Development: In FY21, the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (Forest Service) led a collaborative process to develop a CFLRP Common Monitoring Strategy that will be required for all newly authorized and reauthorized projects under the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP). The Forest Service Washington Office requested assistance from the Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI) in developing and deploying an assessment tool to track collaborative governance within and across CFLRP projects through time. The collaborative assessment is intended to assess whether CFLRP is encouraging an effective and meaningful collaborative approach, a component within the CFLRP Common Monitoring Strategy. We developed an online, confidential survey that was administered to CFLRP project participants. With support from the Forest Service Forest Management, Range Management, and Vegetation Ecology program, SWERI conducted regional webinars to introduce the assessment and identify project-level points of contact, which were followed by in-depth engagement with key contacts to determine recruitment strategies, administration timing, and project-specific questions. In FY22 and FY23, SWERI will be collecting baseline information for all newly authorized and reauthorized projects. SWERI will continue to engage in assessing collaborative health and performance of CFLRP projects. The Ecological Restoration Institute at Northern Arizona University funded survey administration using state funding (Arizona Board of Regents through the Technology, Research and Innovation Fund), which was used as a match to annual federal appropriations to the SWERI.

Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI)
The Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes include three university-based restoration institutes: the New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute (NMFWRI), the Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI), and the Ecological Restoration Institute (ERI) in Arizona. These institutes were congressionally appointed in 2004 by the Southwest Forest Health and Wildfire Prevention Act (PL 108-317), and the Institutes work together to develop a program of applied research and service to help create healthy forests, prevent uncharacteristic wildfires, sustain the resiliency of water supplies to wildfires, and create jobs. The SWERI receive funding from five primary sources: 1) federal appropriations; 2) additional federal funding (e.g., the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act); 3) state appropriations; 4) in-kind support from host universities; and 5) extramural funding such as grants and agreements. The Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes receive federal appropriations under the Southwest Forest Health and Wildfire Prevention Act administered through the Forest Service. In accordance with Federal law and USDA policy, these institutions are prohibited from discriminating on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability. To file a complaint of discrimination, write: USDA, Director, Office of Civil Rights Room 326-A, Whitten Building 1400 Independence Avenue, SW Washington, DC, 20250-9410 or call (202) 720-5964 (voice & TDD).

Ecological Restoration Institute (ERI), Northern Arizona University (NAU)
The Ecological Restoration Institute is nationally recognized for mobilizing the unique assets of a university to help solve the problem of unnaturally severe wildfire and degraded forest health throughout the American West. ERI serves diverse audiences with objective science and implementation strategies that support ecological restoration and climate adaptation on Western-forest landscapes.

Colorado Forest Restoration Institute (CFRI), Colorado State University (CSU)
The Colorado Forest Restoration Institute is a science-based outreach and engagement organization hosted by the Department of Forest and Rangeland Stewardship and the Warner College of Natural Resources at Colorado State University. Colorado State University (CSU) is a land-grant university with a mission to provide teaching, research, public service, and engagement that CFRI strives to uphold. CFRI was established by Congress as part of the Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes to serve as a bridge between researchers, managers, and stakeholders working to restore and enhance the resilience of forest ecosystems to wildfires in Colorado, the Southern Rocky Mountains, and the Intermountain West. CFRI leads collaborations between researchers, managers, and stakeholders to generate and apply locally relevant, actionable knowledge to inform forest management strategies. CFRI's work informs forest conditions assessments, management goals and objectives, monitoring plans, and adaptive management processes.

NAU Land Acknowledgment: Northern Arizona University sits at the base of the San Francisco Peaks, on homelands sacred to Native Americans. We honor their past, present, and future generations, who have lived here for millennia and will forever call this place home.

CSU Land Acknowledgment: Colorado State University acknowledges, with respect, that the land we are on today is the traditional and ancestral homelands of the Arapaho, Cheyenne, and Ute Nations and peoples. This was also a site of trade, gathering, and healing for numerous other Native tribes. We recognize the Indigenous peoples as original stewards of this land and all the relatives within it. As these words of acknowledgment are spoken and heard, the ties Nations have to their traditional homelands are renewed and reaffirmed. CSU is founded as a land-grant institution, and we accept that our mission must encompass access to education and inclusion. And, significantly, that our founding came at a dire cost to Native Nations and peoples whose land this University was built upon. This acknowledgment is the education and inclusion we must practice in recognizing our institutional history, responsibility, and commitment.

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Table of Contents

2-3-2 Partnership field trip to Banded Peaks Ranch, August 10, 2022 (Source: Dana Guinn).

Executive summary

The Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI) developed a collaboration assessment as part of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) Common Monitoring Strategy. The collaboration assessment was designed to assess the following questions:

1. What are the structural and functional dynamics of the collaborative? Does the collaborative exhibit characteristics generally associated with healthy, well-functioning, and resilient collaboratives?
2. What do participants need or recommend to improve the process?
3. To what extent do participants feel the project is meeting process, socio-economic, and ecological goals?
4. What challenges or disruptions affect collaborative performance and durability?

The SWERI administered an online survey to members of the Two Watersheds – Three Rivers – Two States Cohesive Strategy Partnership (2-3-2 Partnership), the official collaborative for the Rio Chama CFLRP, in the winter of 2022.

The majority of respondents indicated that they agreed about the key problems that have impacted their landscape, strategies to solve those problems, and the purpose and intent of the Rio Chama CFLRP. Respondents felt that the collaborative process provided adequate venues to identify shared interests and concerns, and a neutral space to discuss controversial issues. Also, respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the process has helped build trust, relationships, internal legitimacy, and mutual respect of others' positions and interests even when they are different from their own. A majority agreed that they themselves, other organizations, and the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (Forest Service hereafter) were all committed to the

process. Survey respondents emphasized there were strong leaders who worked well across organizations and entities, communicated a collaborative vision, and motivated others to work together. Respondents felt the project had adequate technical expertise and facilitation skills to carry out tasks and accomplish their work. A majority of respondents indicated that knowledge and information were co-produced and shared equitably, and that participants were committed and had the flexibility to adaptively manage resources and actions through social learning.

However, there were several areas for improvement. These included the need for enhanced stakeholder participation, engagement, and outreach; increased resource capacity (funding and personnel); the development of collaborative roles and responsibilities, protocols, and accountability; and opportunities to further enhance cross-boundary planning and prioritization.

The Rio Chama CFLRP has started to make progress on a number of process, socio-economic, and ecological goals of the CFLRP. A majority of respondents reported enhanced communication and decision-making, and increased opportunities for landscape-scale and cross-boundary planning. Most respondents also reported moderate to substantial progress on reducing fuel hazards, improving or maintaining watershed function, supporting local employment or training, and accomplishing more work on Forest Service adjacent lands. Many of the desired outcomes of the CFLRP may take years to realize.

A number of disruptions have impacted collaborative progress and performance. Biophysical disruptions (e.g., Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire) and personnel turnover/vacancies drew resources and attention away from collaborative activities and diminished the ability to get work done. Other disruptions included limited funding and limited industry capacity. The SWERI will continue to engage in assessing collaborative health and performance of CFLRP projects.

Introduction

The Forest Landscape Restoration Act (FLRA) was passed in 2009 and established the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP). The purpose of the CFLRP was to "encourage the collaborative, science-based ecosystem restoration of priority forest landscapes"[1] through a competitive funding program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (Forest Service hereafter) In 2021, CFLRP coordinators, Forest Service personnel, and partners led a collaborative process to develop the CFLRP Common Monitoring Strategy, a set of ecological and socio-economic monitoring questions and indicators that will supplement local project multi-party monitoring plans and will be required for all newly authorized and reauthorized projects.[2]

One core component of the CFLRP Common Monitoring Strategy relates to monitoring collaborative governance.[3] While the CFLRP requires projects to collaborate throughout planning, implementation, and monitoring, 'collaboration' was not defined in the FLRA or CFLRP requirements, nor did the CFLRP provide specific guidelines by which collaborative groups convened and engaged in collaborative restoration throughout the life of the CFLRP project. This has resulted in a multitude of collaborative structures, processes, and practices implemented in diverse social and ecological contexts across the country. Also, collaborative groups are nested within and impacted by changes that occur within their group, external changes in social and ecological conditions, and a fluid institutional environment, all of which require groups to adjust and evolve their structures, practices, and processes (Beeton et al., 2022; Ulibarri et al., 2020). Yet, a systematic approach to monitoring and evaluating attributes of collaborative governance and resilience is lacking. Systemic evaluation could lead to better understanding of what factors promote or challenge collaboration across different contexts, help target what kinds of investments are needed, and where to maintain and enhance collaborative capacity.

To address this need, the Forest Service Washington Office requested assistance from the Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI) in developing and deploying an assessment tool to track collaborative governance.[3] During the development of the CFLRP Common Monitoring Strategy, CFLRP coordinators from the Washington Office elicited feedback from CFLRP practitioners, CFLRP coordinators, and subject matter experts to identify monitoring questions, indicators, and available data sources. With respect to collaborative governance, partners wanted to address the question, how well is the CFLRP encouraging an effective and meaningful collaborative approach? CFLRP practitioners, coordinators, and subject-matter experts expressed interest in documenting collaborative health, function, and resilience, as well as performance (perceived outcomes). CFLRP practitioners, coordinators, and subject matter experts also emphasized the need for a tool that is straightforward, not time-consuming, easy to administer, and longitudinal.

We incorporated stakeholder feedback and questions of interest developed while drafting the CFLRP Common Monitoring Strategy to directly inform the components of the collaborative governance assessment. Our objectives were as follows:

1. Develop a rigorous, systematic, and longitudinal assessment of collaborative governance that is grounded in the science and practice of landscape-scale collaborative forest restoration.
2. Support program-wide evaluation of collaborative progress and performance, and report on findings to Forest Service staff and Congress.
3. Facilitate project-level engagement, reporting, and peer-learning to inform local collaborative work and adaptive management.
4. Contribute to the theory and practice of collaborative governance through the synthesis of findings and lessons learned.

The SWERI administered the collaborative governance assessment—an online survey— to the Two Watersheds – Three Rivers – Two States Cohesive Strategy Partnership (2-3-2 Partnership), the official collaborative for the Rio Chama CFLRP, in the winter of 2022. The report herein summarizes findings from the collaboration assessment. We have also integrated, where appropriate, feedback received during our final presentation and open discussion with the Partnership. See Appendix 1 for a report brief summarizing our findings, and Appendix 2 for a presentation of findings we led with the Partnership. We briefly highlight the approach, followed by a baseline assessment of findings and document recommendations from respondents to improve the collaborative process.

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[1] PL 111-11 CFLRP Authorizing legislation - https://www.congress.gov/congressional-report/110th-congress/senate-report/370/1
[2] CFLRP National Core Monitoring Strategy - https://www.fs.usda.gov/restoration/documents/cflrp/CMS-Fact-Sheet-final-20221013.pdf
[3] Here, we define governance as "the system of institutions, including rules, laws, regulations, policies, and social norms, and organizations involved in governing environmental resource use and/or protection" (Chaffin et al. 2014).

Approach

We developed an online survey to assess:

1. What are the structural and functional dynamics of the collaborative? Does the collaborative exhibit characteristics generally associated with healthy, well-functioning, and resilient collaboratives?
2. What do participants need or recommend to improve the process?
3. To what extent do participants feel the project is meeting process, socio-economic, and ecological goals?
4. What challenges or disruptions affect collaborative performance and durability?

Framework

The survey was structured using concepts from an integrative collaborative governance framework (Emerson et al., 2012), resilience and adaptability literature (Emerson and Gerlak, 2014; Folke et al., 2005; Gupta et al., 2010), and empirical findings from the first 10 years of the CFLRP (Beeton et al., 2022; Butler and Schultz, 2019; McIntyre and Schultz, 2020; Schultz et al., 2018).

Collaboration dynamics – To assess collaboration dynamics, we operationalized the Integrative Framework for Collaborative Governance (Emerson et al., 2012). The framework incorporates multiple components of collaborative governance that are grounded in collaborative practice, link collaboration dynamics to socio-economic and ecological outcomes, and promote assessment of collaboratives across settings and time. The components include principled engagement, shared motivation, and capacity for joint action (Emerson et al., 2012).

Principled engagement refers to ensuring the right people are involved, i.e., a representative cross-section of people and entities who have a stake in the issue participate. Principled engagement also emphasizes the principles of open and inclusive communication and negotiation, where individuals with diverse perspectives and knowledge work together to identify shared problems, agree on strategies to solve those problems, and agree on the purpose or scope of the collaborative.

Shared motivation refers to the interpersonal and relational elements of collaborative dynamics. Shared motivation includes the sub-components mutual trust, understanding, and commitment. It is often referred to as social capital, or the "glue" that holds groups together through networks, norms, rules, and trust that promote collective action (Pelling and High, 2005). This glue is crucial for effective collaboration; social capital is built through investments in social relationships and can be expressed through mutual commitment of individuals and groups to common collaborative goals.

Capacity for joint action comprises four sub-components: leadership, knowledge and learning, resources, and institutional arrangements (Emerson and Gerlak, 2014). Leadership is essential for managing collaboratives, and leaders can fill many roles including convener, sponsor, public advocate, facilitator, and others. They are important for: building trust; sensemaking; bringing people together; initiating partnerships; motivating people to work together; compiling, generating, and disseminating knowledge; developing visions of and support for change; and managing conflict (Folke et al., 2005).

In a collaborative setting, participants should work together to co-create and co-develop shared understanding and knowledge through social learning; knowledge and information should be equally accessible to all members of the collaborative; and learning and knowledge should be used to inform flexible, adaptive management (Emerson and Gerlak, 2014). Social learning occurs through repeated interactions and joint problem solving among participants. It emphasizes testing, monitoring, and reevaluating participants' assumptions and understanding of ecosystem responses and feedbacks to learn and adapt management actions (Folke et al., 2005; Lebel et al., 2010; Sharma-Wallace et al., 2018). Collaboratives often pool and share resources to accomplish tasks and get work done, including funding, personnel, science and technical expertise, facilitation, and coordination.

Institutional arrangements are the processes, protocols, and structures needed to manage collaboration over time, i.e., the rules of the game. Collaborative structures, processes, and protocols should be clearly understood, transparent, perceived as fair and equitable, and include mechanisms of accountability (Emerson et al., 2012; Gupta et al., 2010; Stern and Coleman, 2015). Capacity needs change through time, and the relative amount of these four capacity types is contingent upon the local context – e.g., history of conflict, people involved, purpose and objectives of the group, among others (Imperial et al., 2016).

Perceived outcomes – Our assessment focuses both on perceived "process" outcomes (e.g., did the collaborative process reduce conflict, or increase the ability to plan at a landscape scale?) and socio-economic and ecological outcomes. The outcome metrics chosen for evaluation were derived from several sources: the intent of the FLRA of 2009 and the CFLRP; project proposals; and conversations with local, regional, and national

CFLRP coordinators while developing the Common Monitoring Strategy.

Challenges or disruptions that affect collaborative performance and durability – Disruptions—i.e., personnel turnover, legal or policy changes, and biophysical disturbances like wildfires or insect outbreaks—can happen at any time. These disruptions may impact collaborative progress and performance, and/or force groups to adapt. We developed a list of common challenges that CFLRP projects and other landscape scale forest collaboratives reported in: 1) breakout group discussions and focus group sessions at the 2020 SWERI Cross-boundary landscape restoration workshop (SWERI, 2020) and the 2020 Idaho forest collaborative shared stewardship workshops; 2) the 2020 CFLRP Collaboration Indicator Survey administered by the National Forest Foundation[4]; and 3) a survey administered to Forest Service staff engaged in 2010 and 2012 CFLRP projects (Schultz et al., 2018). Identifying current challenges or disruptions that CFLRP projects are grappling with can support strategic investment towards solutions to maintain collaborative performance and durability.

Needs or recommendations to improve the process – We captured respondents' perspectives on needs and recommendations to improve the collaborative process by including an open-ended survey question.

Data collection and analysis

We developed a standardized survey in the online survey tool Qualtrics that consisted of 21, mostly closed-ended statements using a Likert scale. SWERI piloted the assessment with and elicited feedback from the Northern Blues All-Lands Restoration Partnership and Northern Blues CFLRP project participants (n=37), as well as participants of the Colorado Front Range CFLRP (n=3) in FY21 (Beeton et al. 2022).

In FY22, SWERI and the Forest Service held regionally-focused webinars to introduce the assessment and identify key points of contact for each newly authorized and reauthorized project to help with recruiting participants, scheduling the assessment, and identifying project-specific questions of interest that were appended to the standardized survey, which is outlined in our standard operating procedures document.[5]

The 2-3-2 Partnership coordinator, Rio Chama CFLRP coordinators, and other members of the 2-3-2 executive committee provided support in recruiting participants and administering the survey to the 2-3-2 Partnership listserv in December 2022. The survey was sent to all members of the 2-3-2 Partnership listserv, which included private landowners, tribes, federal, state, and local agencies, non-governmental organizations, and research and support organizations affiliated with the Rio Chama CFLRP. The survey was open for 8 weeks. We received 49 usable responses, representing 24% of the population. We used the statistical software program Statistical Software for Social Sciences (SPSS) to summarize survey responses. Open-ended questions were analyzed using a thematic analysis (Ryan and Bernard, 2003). Small sample sizes prohibited further statistical analyses, though this will be possible when more data have been collected.

Findings

Our results are organized as follows. The first section includes responses related to respondents' affiliations, motivations for being involved in the CFLRP project, level of engagement, and the degree to which respondents felt the project was collaborative. We then provide a description of findings related to collaboration dynamics (i.e., **principled engagement, shared motivation, and**
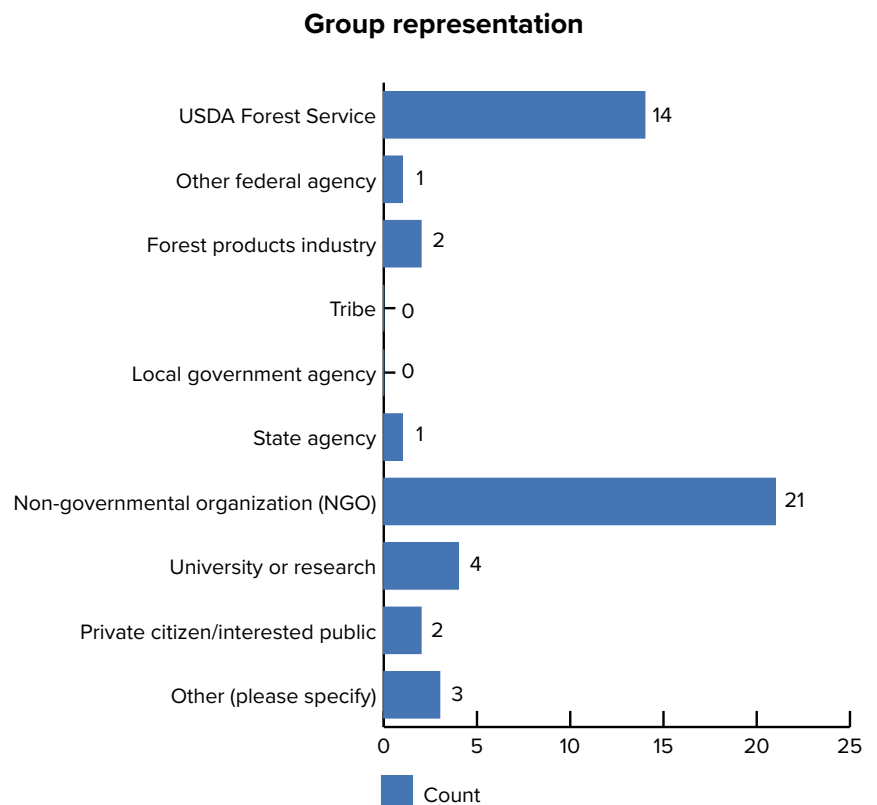
Group representation

Figure 1: Respondents' self-identified representation with associated organizations (n=49).

capacity for joint action). We provide a short description of each collaboration dynamic construct in italics to orient the reader. We follow with findings on perceived outcomes, disruptions that are challenging collaborative progress and performance, and recommendations to improve the process. Results from the appended questions developed in coordination with key points of contact affiliated with the Rio Chama CFLRP are presented in Appendix 3. For scale items (e.g., strongly disagree to strongly agree, progress scales), figures depict the percentage of survey participants that somewhat agree to strongly agree. This was done for consistency in visualization and ease of interpretation. For clarity, we describe majority or strong majority results as greater than or equal to 60% agreement and slight majority as greater than 50% agreement.

Introductory questions

The majority of participants represented non-governmental organizations and the Forest Service. Notably, no respondents were affiliated with tribes or local government agencies (Figure 1). The most frequently reported motivations for being involved in the CFLRP project were to restore forest resiliency (63%), protect or restore water resources (51%), reduce wildfire risk to communities (41%), and increase the pace and scale of restoration (31%) (Figure 2). The level of engagement in the CFLRP project during the past 12 months varied among participants – 77% reported that they were moderately to highly engaged, while 23% reported low engagement (Figure 3).
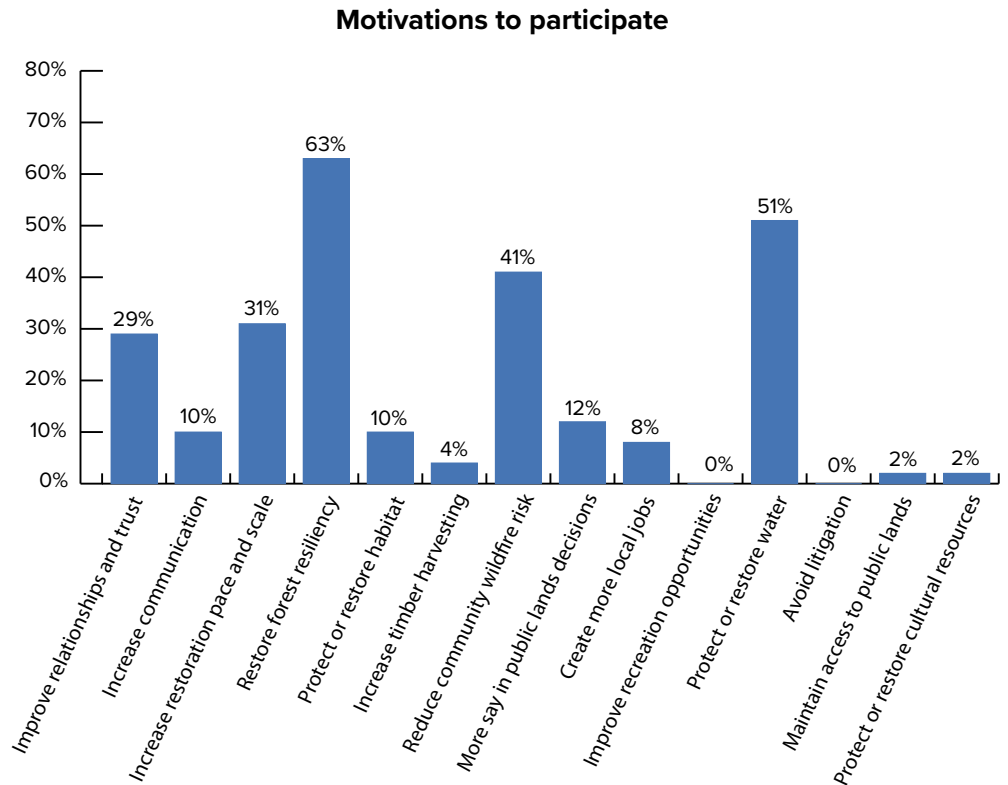
Motivations to participate

Figure 2: Percentage of respondents who identified the associated motive as reason for their participation in the collaborative. Note - respondents were able to select multiple motives (up to three).
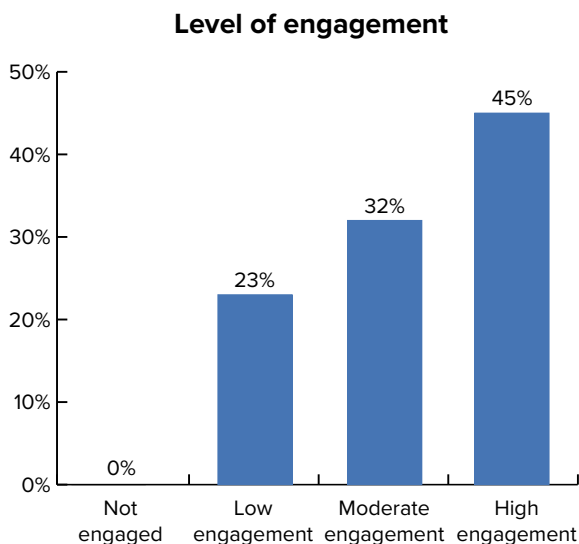
Level of engagement

Figure 3: Percent of respondents who rated their involvement in this project as "Not engaged," "Low engagement," "Moderate engagement" or "High engagement."
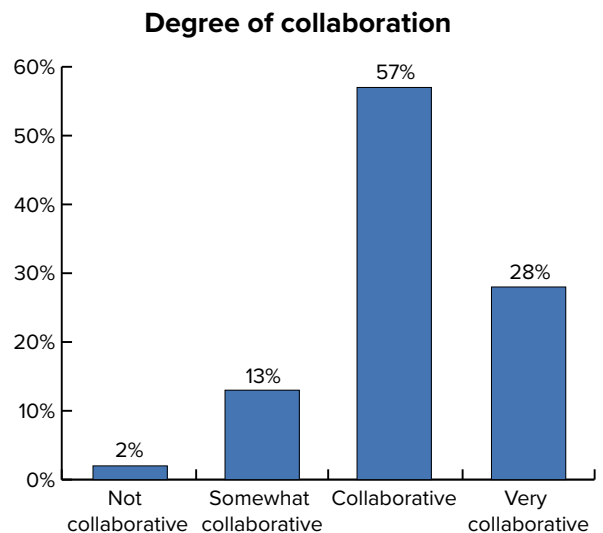
Degree of collaboration

Figure 4: Percentage of respondents who reported this project to be "Not collaborative," "Somewhat collaborative," "Collaborative" or "Very collaborative".

We asked respondents to reflect on the degree to which they thought the CFLRP project was collaborative (on a scale from not collaborative at all to very collaborative). We defined collaboration in the survey as follows: "collaboration occurs when multiple parties come together to address problems that could not be achieved by acting alone. Effective collaboration should typically include: inclusive and diverse stakeholder interaction throughout the process; venues for open communication and negotiation about values, interests, and appropriate management actions; and opportunities for social learning." A majority of respondents (85%) indicated the CFLRP project has been collaborative to very collaborative (Figure 4).

Principled engagement

Principled engagement refers to having the right people involved in iterative and inclusive dialogue to determine shared problems, identify shared strategies to solve problems, and agree to the shared purpose of the project.

A majority of respondents (76%) agreed to strongly agreed that a representative cross-section of individuals who have a stake in the issues and outcomes of the project are involved (Figure 5). Open-ended responses to the question indicated the need for more participation and engagement with Tribes, land grants, traditional forestry and ranching communities, other underserved communities, and private landowners. Participants suggested additional engagement with the biomass and biofuels sectors as well. Others suggested that participation was skewed towards forest products interests. A majority of respondents (93%) agreed to strongly agreed that participants worked together to identify shared interests and concerns, and a majority (83%) felt the collaborative process created a neutral space for CFLRP participants to openly discuss controversial issues (Figure 5).

Likewise, a strong majority of respondents indicated that participants had a shared understanding of the problems that impact their landscape (90%), the strategies to solve those problems (87%), and the purpose of the CFLRP project (88%) (Figure 6).

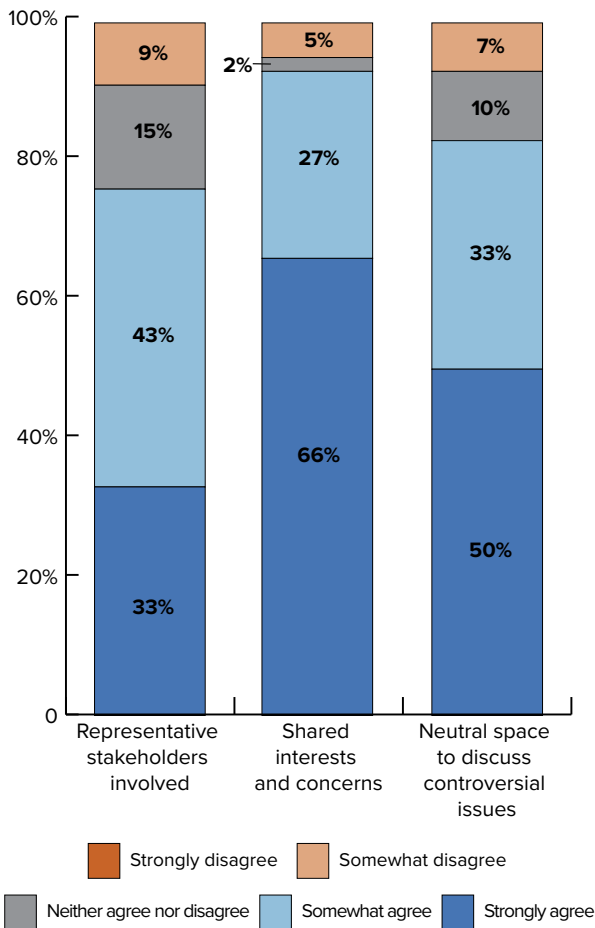**Principled engagement: collaborative environment**

Figure 5: Percentage of respondents who either "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that representative stakeholders are involved, stakeholders have shared interests and concerns, and the collaborative is a neutral space to discuss controversial issues.

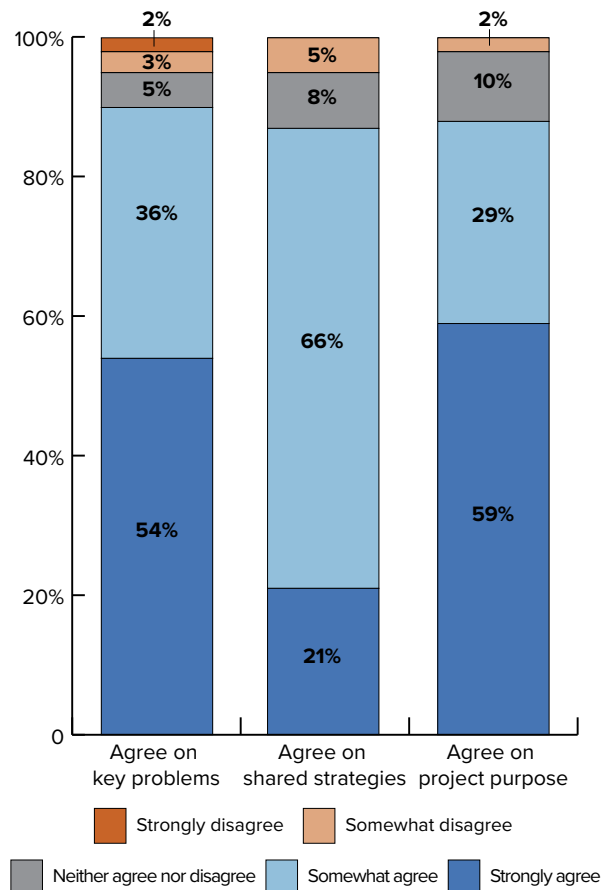**Principled engagement: agreement**

Figure 6: Percentage of respondents who either "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that participants agree on the key problems that impact the landscape, strategies to solve problems, and purpose of the collaborative.

Seventy percent of respondents felt that the level of collaboration between the Rio Chama CFLRP and the Forest Service met their expectations during planning (Figure 7). A strong majority indicated that collaboration between project participants and the Forest Service met their expectations during implementation and monitoring (66% and 63%, respectively).

Shared motivation

Shared motivation refers to trust, mutual understanding, relationship-building, and commitment to the collaborative process.

A strong majority of participants agreed the collaborative process helped build trust in each other (98%), relationships (95%), and mutual respect of others' positions and interests (98%; Figure 8). Also, a strong majority (95%) of participants trusted in the group's ability to achieve desired actions and outcomes (Figure 8). Respondents indicated that they, the Forest Service staff, and other project participants were committed to the collaborative process (Figure 9).

Capacity for joint action

Capacity for joint action includes four components: collaborative leadership, knowledge and learning, resources, and institutional arrangements that support fair governance.

Leadership

Leadership is a critical component for collaborative governance. Leaders are needed to convene partners, communicate a shared vision, and motivate people to work together.

A strong majority of respondents agreed that the Rio Chama CFLRP had leaders who work well with other people (98%), maintain and communicate a common vision and direction (92%), and motivate others to work together (95%, Figure 10).

Knowledge and learning

Collaboratives should engage in a knowledge generation and social learning process for joint action. Knowledge should be co-produced, equally available to all partners, and be used to implement adaptive management.
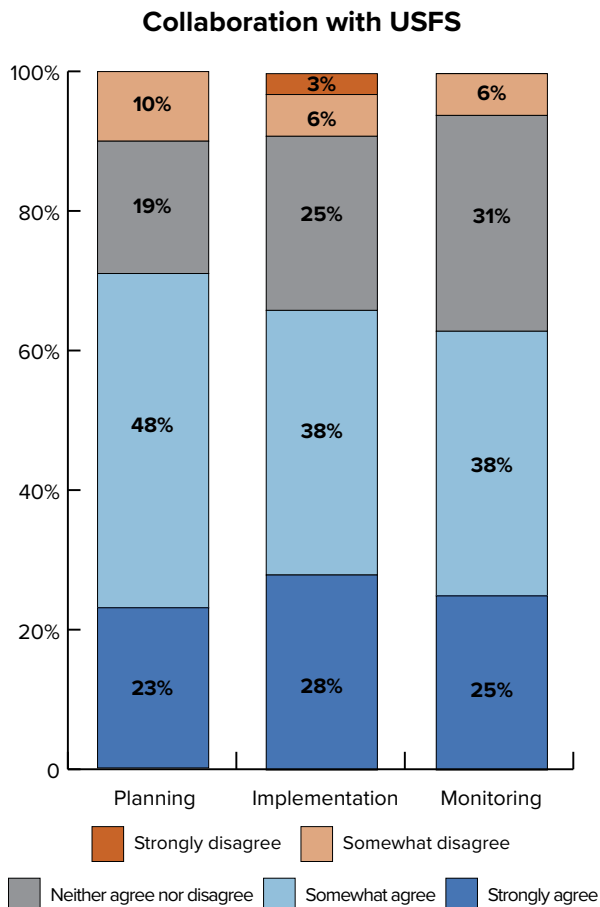
Collaboration with USFS

Figure 7: Percent of respondents who either "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that the Forest Service met their expectations for collaboration during planning, implementation, and monitoring.
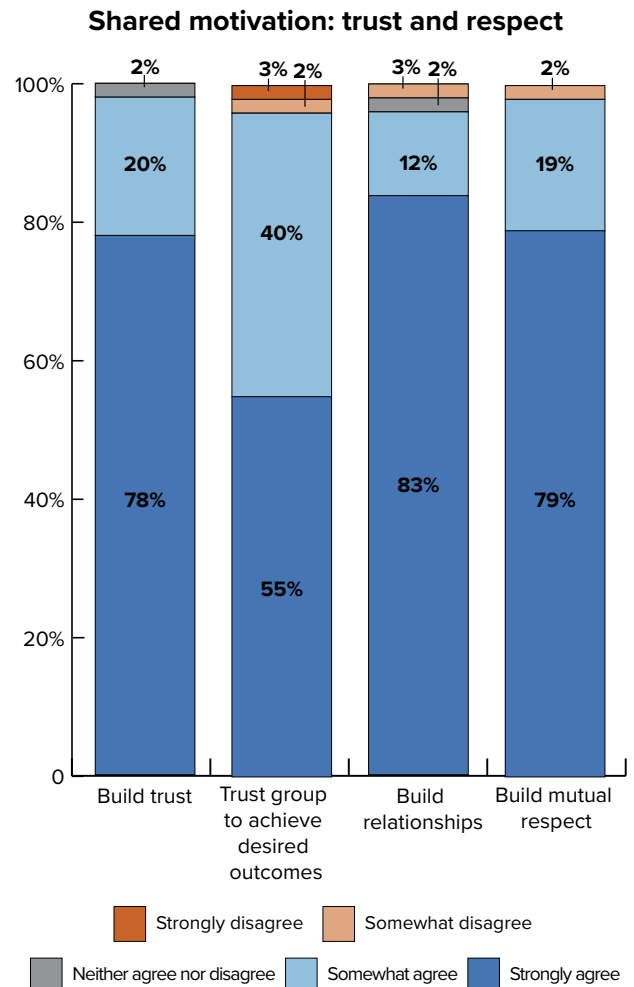
Shared motivation: trust and respect

Figure 8: Percentage of respondents who either "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that the collaborative process has helped build trust, relationships, and mutual respect, as well as the extent to which participants trust the group to achieve desired outcomes.

A strong majority of respondents somewhat agreed to strongly agreed that the CFLRP process provided opportunities to co-generate knowledge to learn and solve problems together (88%), and that knowledge and information was shared equally among participants (84%). Additionally, strong majorities agreed that participants are committed to adjusting management practices based on learning and feedback (i.e., adaptive management, 83%), they had the flexibility to alter course when landscape conditions change (e.g., wildfire affects a planning unit, 75%) and when the collaborative changes (e.g., new faces or priorities, 72%) (Figure 11).

Resources

To accomplish tasks and get work done, collaboratives often pool and share resources, including funding, personnel time, technical expertise, and facilitation, which, in turn, can support buy-in.

Only a slight majority agreed the project had adequate access to funds and time to carry out tasks and accomplish their work (51% and 54%, respectively). Meanwhile, a strong majority of participants agreed to strongly

agreed they had the appropriate technical expertise (84%) and facilitation skills (89%) to accomplish their work (Figure 12).

Institutional arrangements

Institutional arrangements are the rules of the game. They include processes, protocols, and structures needed to manage collaboration over time. They should be clearly understood, perceived as fair and equitable, used appropriately, and include accountability mechanisms within and between entities.

A strong majority of survey respondents somewhat to strongly agreed there were protocols in place that promote accountability among CFLRP participants (81%) and between the Forest Service and CFLRP project participants (e.g., decision rules, charters, memoranda of understanding, 76%) (Figure 13). Similarly, a strong majority agreed those protocols were clearly understood among participants (81%), fair and equitable (81%), and used appropriately (88%, Figure 13).

A strong majority of respondents felt that project participants understood when and what collaborative
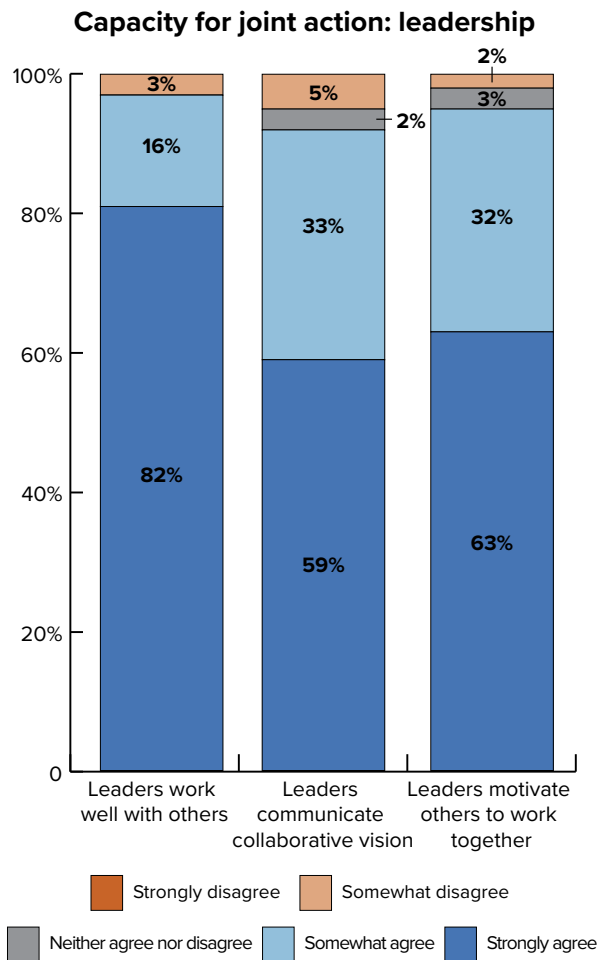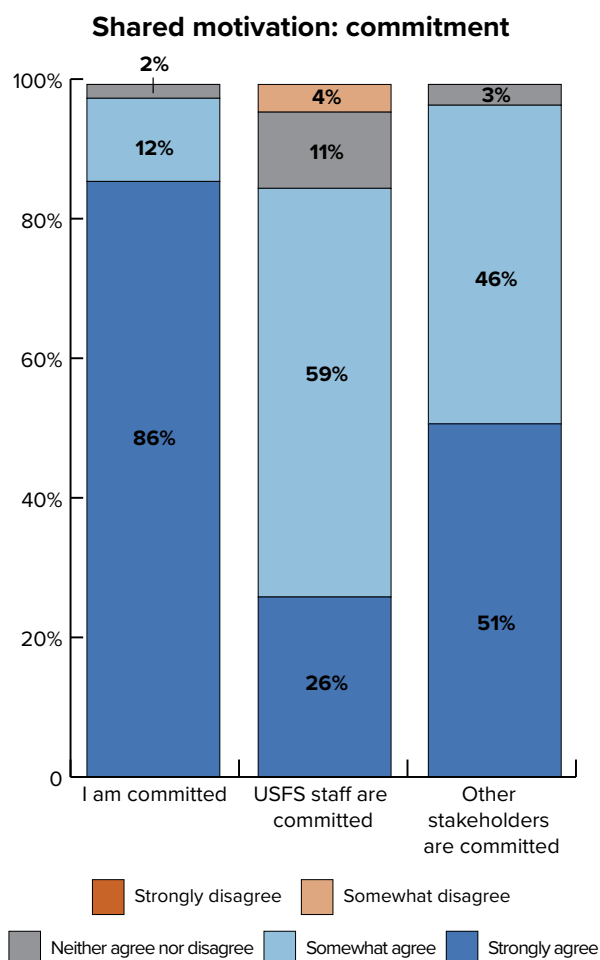

Figure 9: Percentage of respondents who either "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that they, the Forest Service, and other stakeholders are committed to the process.

Figure 10: Percent of respondents who either "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that the leaders work well with others, communicate a common vision and direction, and motivate others to work together.

input was useful to inform Forest Service decisions (67%). Further, a strong majority reported the Forest Service was responsive to collaborative input (72%) and somewhat agreed to strongly agreed the agency was clear with CFLRP project participants about the decisions they make and why they make them (64%, Figure 14).

Outcomes

We assessed perceived progress on process, socio-economic, and ecological outcomes for the Rio Chama CFLRP. These outcomes largely mirror the intent and goals of the Forest Landscape Restoration Act of 2009 and the CFLRP. Notably, the assessment was administered during the first year the Rio Chama CFLRP project was authorized and funded under the CFLRP, and thus several socio-economic and ecological outcomes may not be realized for several years.

According to respondents, the Rio Chama CFLRP has supported a number of positive process-related outcomes. Those outcomes with the most agreement among

respondents included enhanced communication (94%), enhanced decision-making (94%), landscape-scale planning (89%), and cross-boundary planning (89%, Figure 15). A strong majority reported moderate to substantial progress in meeting the ecological goals of reducing fuel hazards (86%) and improving or maintaining watershed function (67%, Figure 16). Also, a strong majority of participants felt the project had made moderate to substantial progress on the socio-economic goals of supporting local employment or training (69%) and accomplishing more work on adjacent lands (67%, Figure 17).

Disruptions

We developed a list of common challenges that CFLRP projects and other landscape scale forest collaboratives reported in: 1) breakout group discussions and focus group sessions at the 2020 SWERI Cross-boundary landscape restoration workshop (SWERI, 2020) and the 2020 Idaho forest collaborative shared stewardship workshops; 2) the 2020 CFLRP Collaboration Indicator Survey administered by the National Forest Foundation[4]; and 3) a survey administered to Forest Service staff engaged in 2010 and 2012 CFLRP projects (Schultz et al., 2018). Based on that
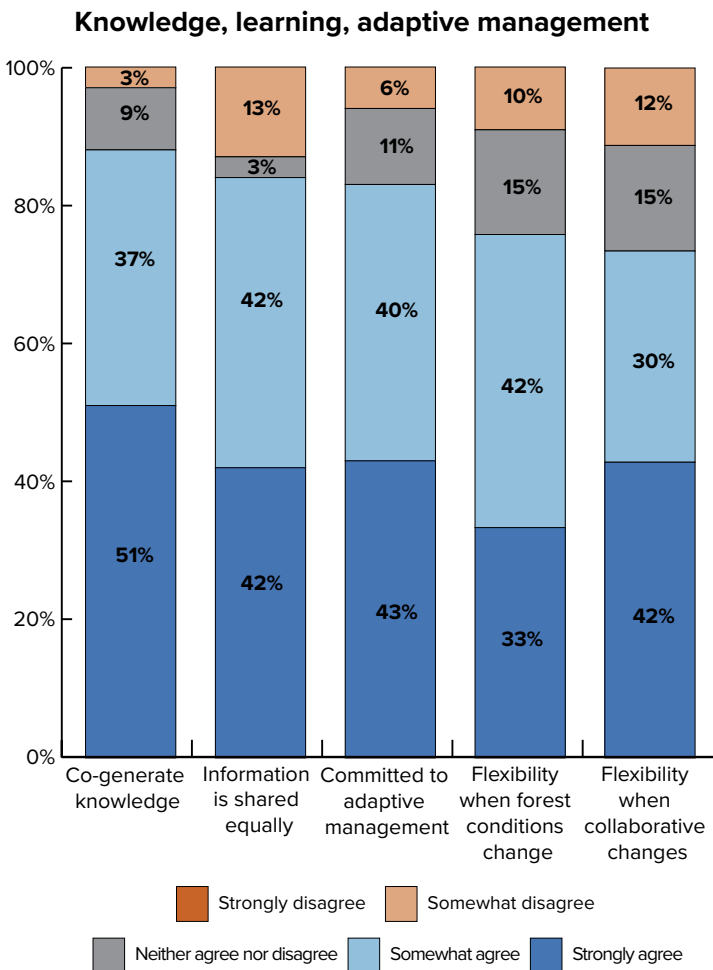

Figure 11: Percent of respondents who either "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that knowledge and information is co-generated by participants and shared equally, that participants are committed to adaptive management, and have the flexibility to adapt when conditions change..
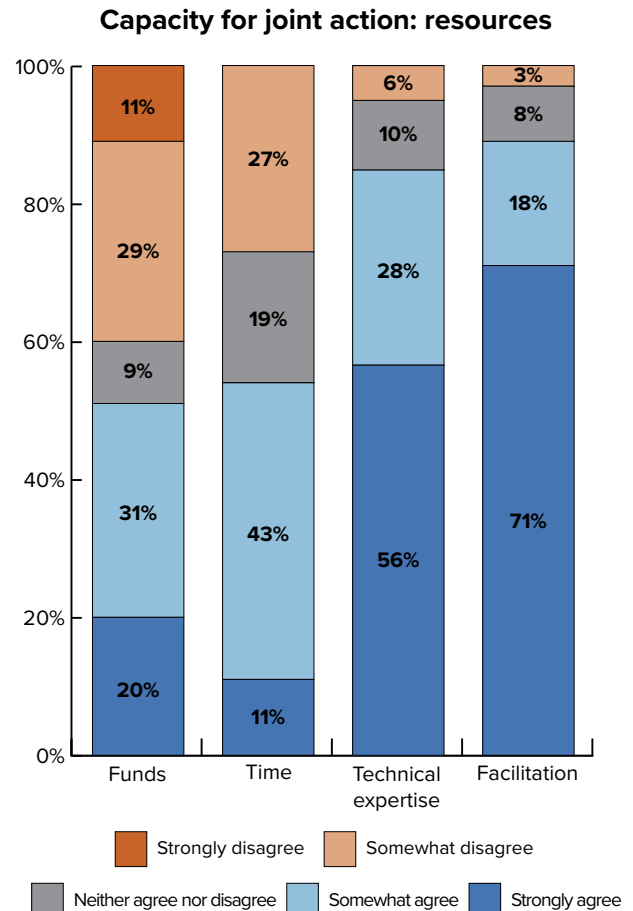

Figure 12: Percent of respondents who either "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that the collaborative has adequate: funds, time, technical expertise, and facilitation skills to accomplish work.

list, limited available funds (65%), personnel turnover (72%), biophysical disruptions (75%), and limited industry capacity (84%) were the most significant challenges noted by respondents at the time of this survey (Figure 18). Open-ended responses add some context to these perceptions.

Participants lamented that funds should be allocated earlier in the year to enhance planning capacity and overcome delays in project implementation. Others reported that turnover and vacancies in the Forest Service system were key challenges. Participants reported slow processes for hiring permanent staff in the Forest Service, which leads to temporary "acting" positions and vacancies. Participants also reported that the types of hires made by the Forest Service did not support implementation—the Forest Service has reportedly focused on adding capacity in the administrative, coordination, and partnership staff, but has done little to add capacity among vegetation

management staff positions, who support project implementation. One respondent noted the challenges of virtual and hybrid meetings – while virtual meetings provide opportunities for broader participation, the virtual approach falls short in facilitating relationship-building and mutual understanding of differing values and opinions:

Virtual meetings have both been a blessing and created new challenges to our collaborative. Because the landscape is so large, it opens the door to broader participation, but the rapport building that happens at in person meetings just isn't there for hybrid/ online participants. Building relationships is really what helps generate creative solutions and enables
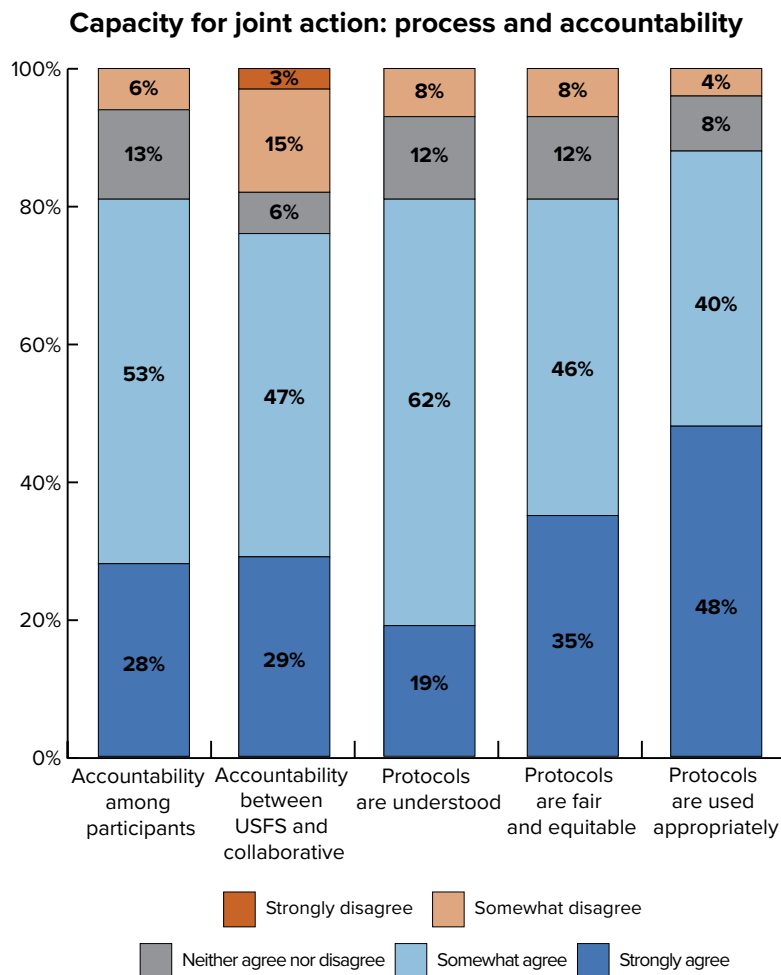
Capacity for joint action: process and accountability

Figure 13: Percent of respondents who either "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that protocols promote accountability among participants, between Forest Service and the collaborative, and that protocols are understood, fair and equitable, and are used appropriately.

Capacity for joint action: USFS responsiveness and transparency
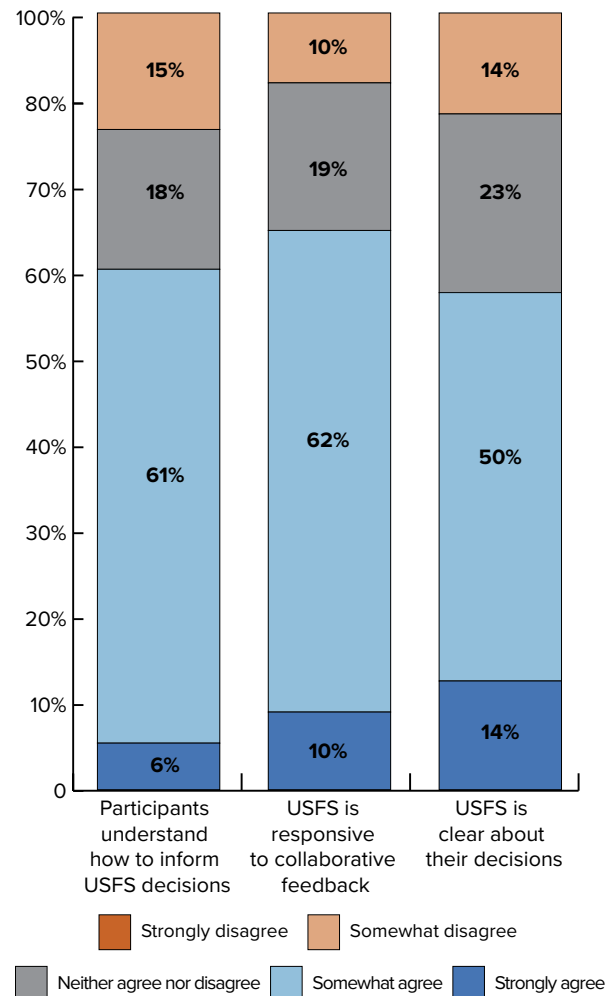

Figure 14: Percent of respondents who either "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that they understand how to inform Forest Service decisions, the Forest Service is responsive to feedback, and the Forest Service is clear about their decisions.

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[6] The Forest Stewards Guild is a non-governmental organization which "practices and promotes responsible forestry as a means of sustaining the integrity of forest ecosystems and the human communities dependent upon them." (Source: https://foreststewardsguild.org/vision-mission-principles/)
[7] Mountain Studies Institute (MSI) is "an independent not-for-profit mountain research and education center established in 2002 in Silverton, Colorado. MSI develops science that people can use to address environmental issues facing the San Juan Mountains." (Source: https://www.mountainstudies.org/)

stakeholders to identify and understand differences in opinion and values.

Participants noted a number of ways in which the group has responded to these disruptions. To address lags in the dispersal of funds, the San Juan National Forest, Forest Stewards Guild[6], and Mountain Studies Institute[7] agreed on a gap funding agreement to support ongoing collaborative activities until CFLRP funds were in hand. Turnover is inevitable, yet it can diminish trust and challenge progress. To address this issue, participants reported the Forest Service has maintained consistency in leadership and worked diligently to fill vacancies with permanent or detailed (temporary) positions, while other entities (e.g., NGOs) have started to build redundancy into their teams so they are not overly reliant on one person to engage in collaborative activities.

Compounding disturbances of drought and large wildfires adjacent to the CFLRP have reportedly drawn resources and attention away from the Rio Chama CFLRP work. In the aftermath of the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire, there were new challenges to building collective understanding and dialogue about the importance of fire as a tool for getting more work done while supporting more resilient ecosystems. The fires caused cascading downstream impacts to Rio Chama's program of work, communication strategies, and partners. For example, prescribed fires planned in the near term were scaled back, and partners shifted their focus to more mechanical fuels work while the Forest Service and partners worked to rebuild trust and address the lasting trauma the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire had on local residents and communities. The fires highlighted the disproportionate vulnerabilities of underserved communities to wildfire. Rio Chama CFLRP participants reported potential increased interest in considering environmental justice and equity as lenses for project planning and monitoring. The collaborative group has also shifted focus to post-fire recovery, impacts to water resources, and brought in new partners, as described here:

> *This event has shifted collaborative discussion focus heavily towards pre-planning for post-fire impacts, especially related to water resources and both natural and engineered water infrastructure. This prompt has increased participation of downstream water managers in the collaborative space and interest in the Rio Chama CFLR.*
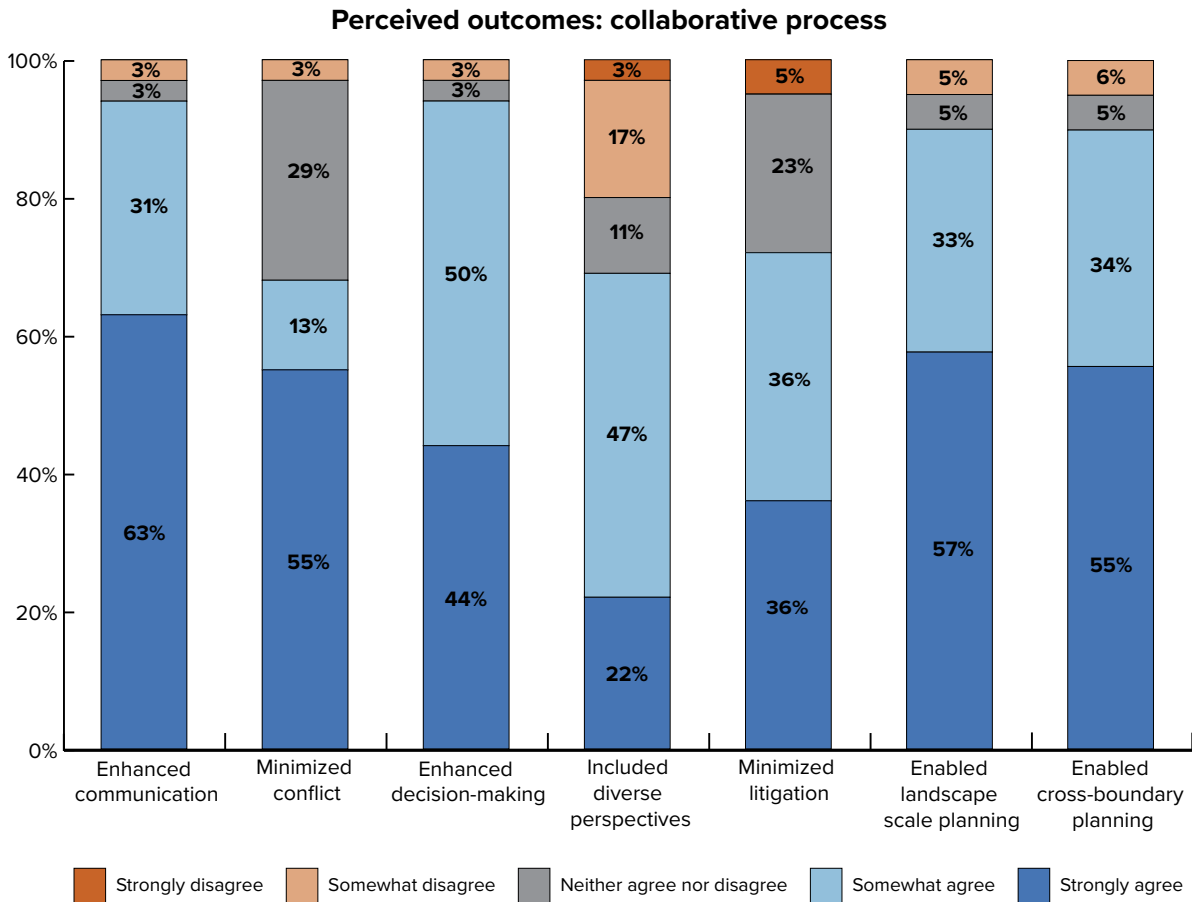
Perceived outcomes: collaborative process

Figure 15: Percent of respondents who either "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that the collaborative process has impacted the function and capacity of the collaborative.

Recommendations to improve the collaborative process

We asked participants to suggest recommendations to improve collaborative process, durability, and performance. Based on open-ended responses and the quantitative data reported herein, we identified four key themes for improvement. These included: 1) stakeholder participation, engagement, and outreach; 2) resource capacity; 3) roles, protocols, and accountability; and 4) cross-boundary planning and prioritization.

Stakeholder participation, engagement, and outreach

Several survey respondents recommended that the Rio Chama CFLRP increase communication and engagement with Tribes, land grants[8], traditional forestry and ranching communities, other underserved communities, and private landowners. Some participants recommended the Rio Chama CFLRP reach out to past partners of the 2-3-2 Partnership to gauge interest in future participation, and increase local community engagement with these groups.

Participants also suggested additional engagement with the biomass and biofuels sectors. In this vein, participants noted the need for local champions to serve as a bridge connecting information from the Rio Chama CFLRP to local communities, and tailoring that information in locally-appropriate and context-specific ways:

> *More consistent communication and use of various communication forums and tools is also a need. A clear communication plan is under development and very much needed, as is an engagement strategy for Tribal and underserved communities in our landscape.*

Resource capacity

Survey respondents suggested the need for increased funding and personnel capacity to support inclusive collaborative engagement, planning, and implementation. In particular, respondents recommended funding for collaborative participants to travel to full Partnership meetings and field trips, more funding to pay personnel to get work accomplished, and increased funds to support implementation on the ground, as noted here:
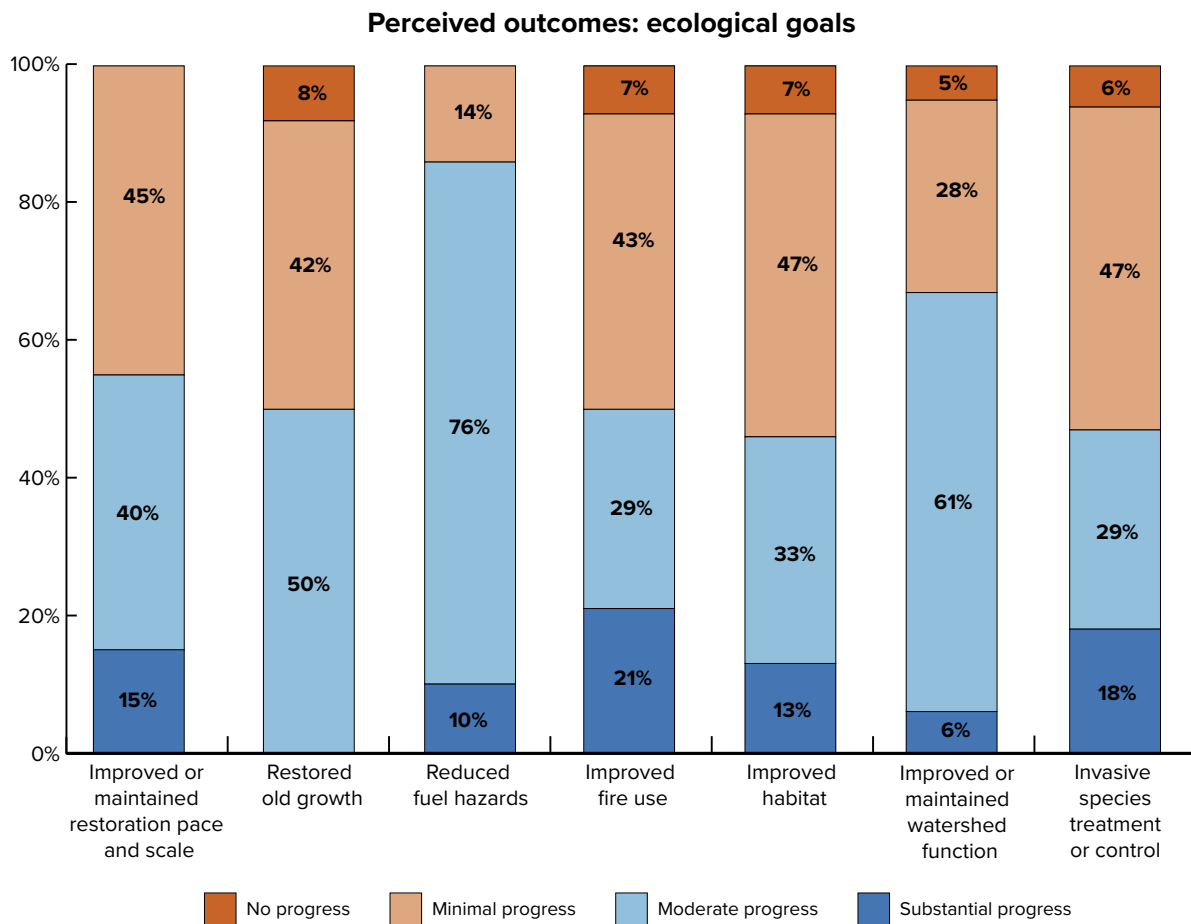
Perceived outcomes: ecological goals

Figure 16: Percent of respondents who reported "Moderate progress" or "Substantial progress" towards ecological goals. Note - several participants did not respond to these questions or chose the option "Don't' know/not applicable," and thus were removed from this analysis.

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[8] Land grants – In New Mexico and Colorado, land grants were made to individuals and communities, including a number of Pueblos, by the Spanish and Mexican governments to promote settlement and protect rights to land. Source: https://www.srca.nm.gov/land-grants/.

...the 5 most important projects aren't necessarily completed each year; instead it's still the #1 or 2 projects in each of the sub-geographies that get done based on available funding.

Roles, protocols, and accountability

Respondents mentioned that some of the collaborative protocols were in development—one respondent suggested that existing protocols were seemingly effective. Others provided recommendations to increase accountability and opportunities for informing decisions between collaborative members, NGOs, and the Forest Service. One respondent recommended a two-way flow of accountability between the Forest Service on one hand and participating NGOs and collaborative on the other:

[We need] mechanisms to document accountability to the collaborative process from the Forest Service to the collaborative. The accountability seems to only flow in the direction from the collaborative and NGOs to the Forest Service.

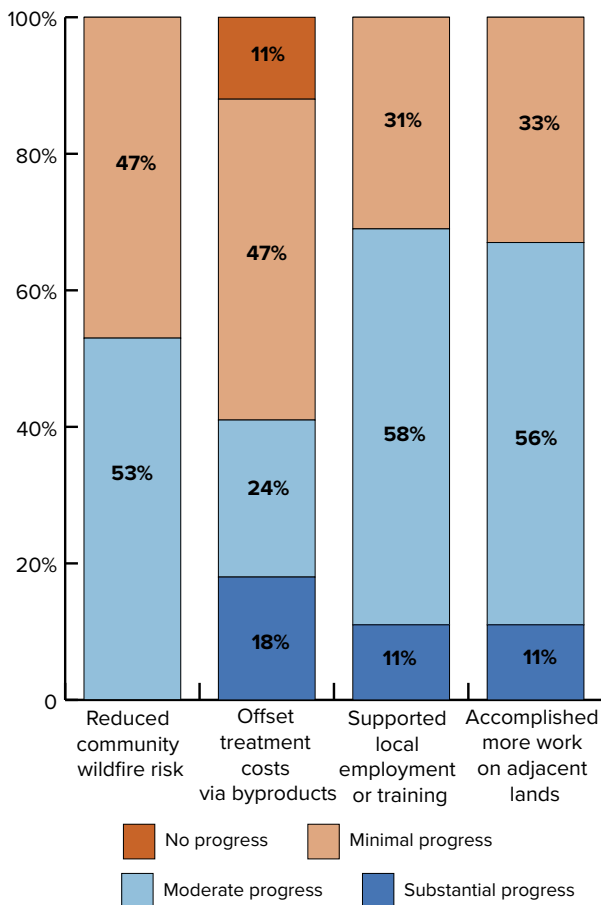**Perceived outcomes: socio-economic goals**

Figure 17: Percent of respondents who reported "Moderate progress" or "Substantial progress" towards socio-economic goals. Note - several participants did not respond to these questions or chose the option "Don't know/not applicable," and thus were removed from this analysis.

Others reported that the decision-making process was too concentrated in the Forest Service or NGO/Forest Service sphere. They suggested the need for more "co-working [decision] space":

NGOs and Agencies seem to just "do the work", the rest of us feel like passengers pulled along.

One specific recommendation was to open up dialogue between collaborative members and the Forest Service regarding perspectives and expectations for collaboration during planning and implementation:

Engage Forest Service staff to discuss their perspectives on stakeholder collaborations and their views of the benefits of collaboration in forest management overall and to provide them tools to apply collaborative best practices in their day-to-day work in operations and NEPA planning.

Cross-boundary planning and prioritization

One respondent suggested increasing efforts to engage in cross-boundary planning and prioritization across the Rio Chama landscape:

There needs to be more broad-scale planning that spans boundaries. Almost all planning thus far has been on individual units. [It's] hard to see where there are common, highly specific goals across the landscape. [I] don't see where there has been much prioritization across the landscape.

Discussion and conclusions

The Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI) deployed an online survey to the 2-3-2 Partnership listserv, the official collaborative of the Rio Chama CFLRP, in the winter of 2022 to assess collaborative health, function, and resilience, as well as perceived outcomes of collaborative work. Specifically, we assessed: whether the Rio Chama CFLRP project exhibited characteristics generally associated with healthy, well-functioning, and resilient collaboratives; the extent to which the Rio Chama CFLRP has made progress on meeting process, socio-economic, and ecological outcomes; what challenges or disruptions affected collaborative performance and durability; and actionable recommendations to improve the collaborative process from respondents' perspectives. The assessment serves as the collaboration assessment for the CFLRP Common Monitoring Strategy (question #12).

The majority of respondents indicated that they agreed about key problems that have impacted their landscape, strategies to solve problems, and the purpose and intent of the Rio Chama CFLRP. Respondents felt that

the collaborative process provided adequate venues to identify shared interests and concerns, and a neutral space to discuss controversial issues. Also, respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the process has helped build trust, relationships, internal legitimacy, and mutual respect of others' positions and interests even when they are different from their own. A majority agreed that they themselves, other organizations, and the Forest Service were all committed to the collaborative process. These findings have positive implications for the Rio Chama CFLRP. Mutual commitment, especially among those with decision-making authority, is critical for collaborative durability. The Forest Service retains decision-making authority in treatment planning and implementation on Forest Service-managed land. The agency also gives substantial discretion in decision-making to local units; thus, it is often up to Forest Service unit-level line officers to make collaboration a priority by providing staff and resources in the CFLRP context (Beeton et al., 2022).

Survey respondents emphasized there were strong leaders who worked well across organizations and entities, communicated a collaborative vision, and motivated others to work together. Reponses to open ended questions specifically called out members of the

Mountain Studies Institute and Forest Stewards Guild as collaborative leaders. Often, groups benefit from multiple collaborative leaders who represent a diversity of interests across organizational and institutional levels, and provide a variety of functions (e.g., coordination, expertise/experience) (Emerson and Gerlak, 2014; Ryan and Urgenson, 2019). Having diversity and redundancy in leadership roles is critical for continuity through personnel turnover. Respondents reported the Forest Service worked diligently to maintain consistency in leadership and fill vacancies with detailed, temporary positions, while other entities (e.g., NGOs) worked to build redundancy into their teams so they are not overly reliant on one person to engage in collaborative activities.

Respondents felt the Rio Chama CFLRP had adequate technical expertise and facilitation skills to carry out tasks and accomplish their work. A majority of respondents indicated that knowledge and information were co-produced and shared equitably, and that participants had the flexibility to adaptively manage resources and actions through social learning. A number of activities can be used by collaboratives to support social learning and co-development of knowledge, including field trips, multi-party monitoring, and joint fact-finding missions. Rio
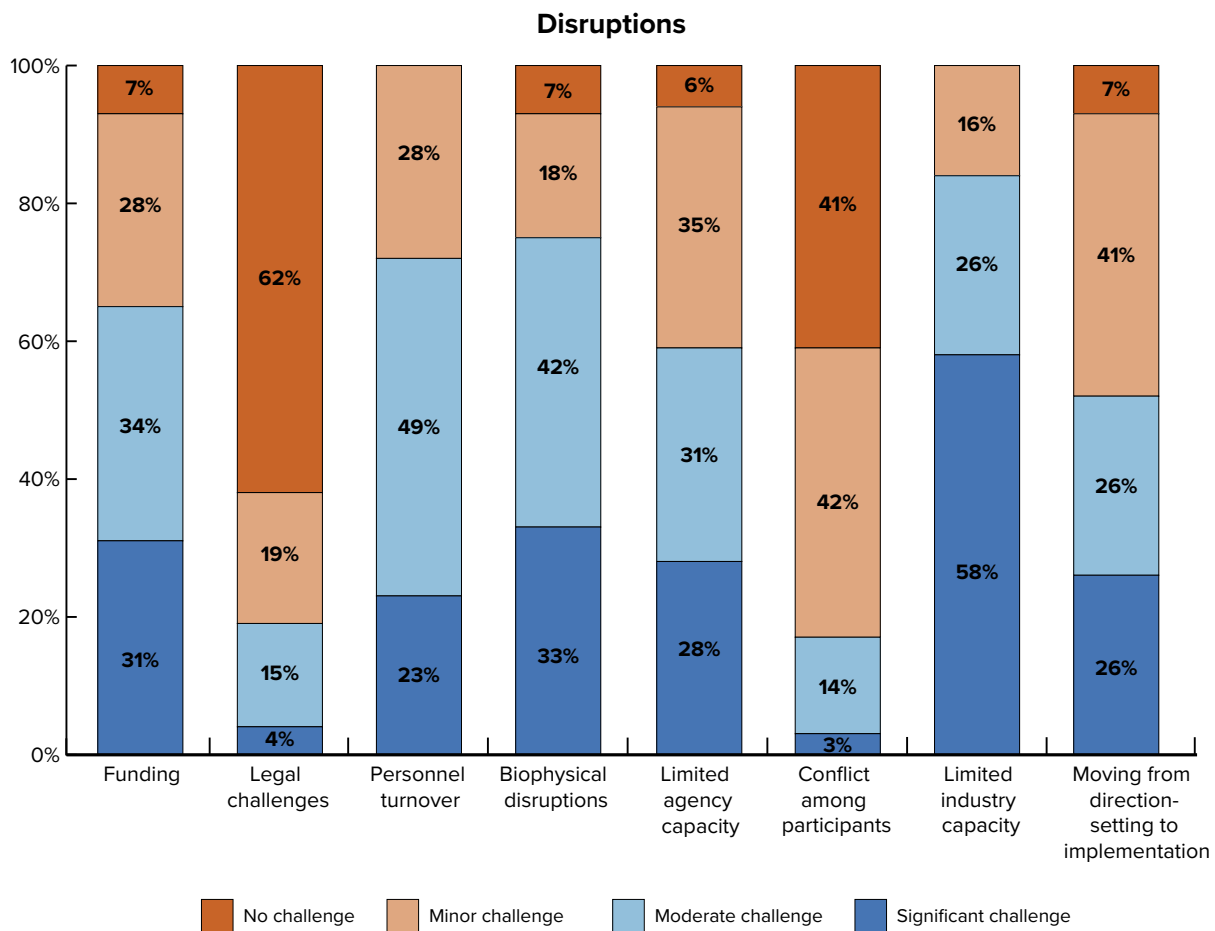

Disruptions

Figure 18: Percent of respondents who reported disruptions posed "Moderate challenges" or "Substantial challenges" to collaborative performance and durability.

Chama CFLRP respondents indicated field trips were the best use of their time with respect to collaboration and engagement activities (see Figure A5 in Appendix 3). Field trips are a critical component of social learning because they provide opportunities for groups to let their guard down and come to common understandings. Field trips can help illustrate how restoration principles translate to operations on the ground and allow collaborative groups to provide feedback on restoration treatments. Joint fact-finding—where stakeholders work together to co-generate local knowledge and translate it into decision-making—provides opportunities to develop contextual understanding of local landscapes to support decisions. Documenting this learning and knowledge exchange is critical to maintaining transparency, equity, and institutional knowledge (Beeton et al., 2022; Cheng et al., 2015).

However, there were several areas for improvement in collaborative function. These included the need for enhanced stakeholder participation, engagement, and outreach; increased resource capacity (funding and personnel); development of collaborative roles and responsibilities, protocols, and accountability; and enhanced cross-boundary planning and prioritization. Responses suggested the need for more engagement with and formalized communication and outreach plans for Tribes, land grants, other underserved communities, and private landowners. None of the survey respondents indicated they were affiliated with Tribes. Respondents reported inadequate funding, personnel, and time to accomplish tasks; in particular, they recommended additional funding to pay for participants' travel fees to engage in collaborative activities. A majority of respondents indicated in the quantitative portion of the survey that there is adequate accountability within the 2-3-2 Partnership and between the Partnership and the Forest Service; most respondents also agreed that collaboration between the Forest Service and the Partnership met their expectations during planning, implementation, and monitoring. Yet, some open-ended responses indicated room for improvement in developing accountability between the Forest Service and 2-3-2 Partnership, setting expectations for collaborative engagement opportunities, and clarifying the ways in which the Partnership can inform decisions on Forest Service lands.

Survey results also indicated that the Rio Chama CFLRP has started to make progress on a number of process, socio-economic, and ecological goals of the CFLRP. A majority of respondents reported enhanced communication and decision-making, and increased opportunities for landscape-scale and cross-boundary planning due to the CFLRP project. A majority of respondents also reported moderate to substantial progress on reducing fuel hazards, improving or maintaining watershed function, supporting local employment or training, and accomplishing more work on adjacent lands. However, many of the desired outcomes (e.g., increasing fire use, enhancing habitat) of the CFLRP may take years to realize.

A number of disruptions have impacted collaborative progress and performance. Turnover and vacancies in vegetation management positions needed to scale up implementation diminished the collaborative's ability to achieve restoration objectives. Turnover can undermine relationships and trust, slow progress, and lead to lost institutional knowledge (Beeton et al., 2022; Coleman et al., 2020). Collaborative engagement is often not part of primary job duties for agency staff; when combined with vacant positions and multiple, sometimes conflicting mandates and priorities, agency staff may not have the capacity to engage to the extent that stakeholders expect or desire (Beeton et al. 2022). Participants did note that the Forest Service has worked diligently to fill vacancies with permanent or detailed (temporary) positions as possible. Biophysical disruptions (e.g., Hermit's Peak/ Calf Canyon Fire) also drew resources and attention away from collaborative activities. Wildfires can open up policy windows and spur action to increase risk mitigation efforts (Mockrin et al., 2018); however, the unlikely event of an escaped prescribed fire can do the opposite and halt activities, sometimes for an extended period of time.[9] For the 2-3-2 Partnership and Rio Chama CFLRP, the Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire shifted focus from prescribed fire to mechanical treatments (at least temporarily), post-fire recovery planning, and impacts to water resources, and led to the engagement with new partners. Other disruptions included limited funding and limited industry capacity.

This report provided a baseline assessment of collaborative health and performance among the Rio Chama CFLRP. Collaboratives are dynamic—they continue to adapt and evolve as needs or priorities change, and in response to internal and external disruptions (Imperial et al., 2016). Thus, it is important to continue to self-assess collaborative progress, durability, and resilience, so that groups can identify what is working well, what may need some work, and what support and/or guidance is needed to address challenges and maintain performance. The SWERI will continue to engage in assessing collaborative health and performance of CFLRP projects. There will be multiple opportunities locally, regionally, and nationally for peer-networking and peer-learning events to share successes and challenges and learn together about how to encourage healthy, durable, and resilient collaboration.

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Appendix 1: CFLRP Brief

CFLRP collaborative governance assessment:
Summary of findings for the Two Watersheds – Three Rivers – Two States Cohesive Strategy Partnership and Rio Chama CFLRP

The Southwest Ecological Restoration Institutes (SWERI) developed a collaborative governance assessment as part of the U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service (Forest Service) Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP) Common Monitoring Strategy[1]. The collaborative governance assessment was designed to evaluate collaborative health, function, resilience, and perceived outcomes of collaborative work. The SWERI administered an online questionnaire to members of the Two Watersheds – Three Rivers – Two States Cohesive Strategy Partnership (2-3-2 Partnership), the official collaborative of the Rio Chama CFLRP, in the winter of 2022. We received 49 usable responses (24% response rate). Figure 1 illustrates what groups were represented in the questionnaire. The purpose of this brief is to:

- summarize high-level findings from the collaborative governance assessment; and
- document participants' recommendations to improve collaborative performance and progress.
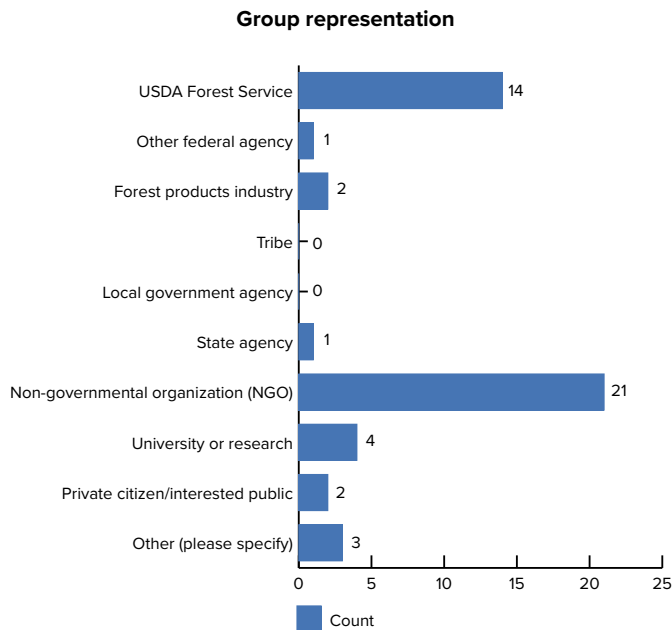
Findings

What is working well for the Rio Chama CFLRP?

Respondents felt that the collaborative process provided adequate venues to identify shared interests and concerns, and a neutral space to discuss controversial issues. Also, respondents overwhelmingly agreed that the process has helped build trust, relationships, internal legitimacy, and mutual respect of others' positions (Figure 2). Most respondents also agreed that participants were committed to the process. These findings have positive implications for the Rio Chama CFLRP. Mutual commitment, especially among those with decision-making authority, is critical for collaborative durability. Survey respondents also emphasized there were leaders who were effective in working across organizations, communicating a collaborative vision, and motivating others to work together. There was some evidence of consistency and redundancy in leadership so that participants weren't
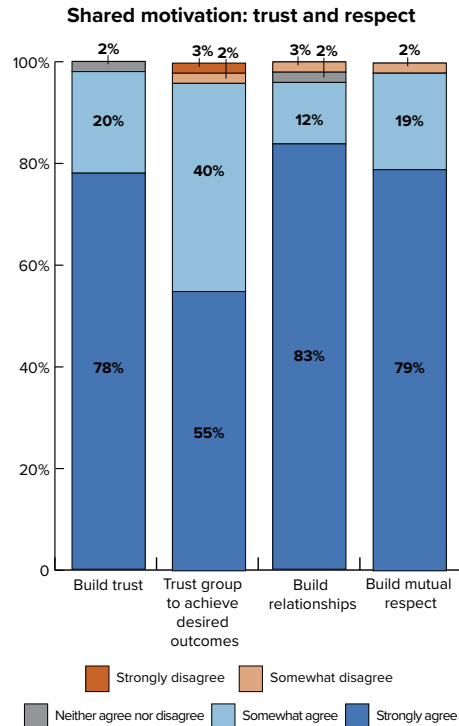

Figure 1: Respondents' self-identified representation with associated organizations (n=49).

Figure 2: Percentage of respondents who either "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that the collaborative process has helped build trust, relationships, and mutual respect, as well as the extent to which participants trust the group to achieve desired outcomes.

[1]USDA Forest Service Common Monitoring Strategy - https://www.fs.usda.gov/restoration/documents/cflrp/CMS-Fact-Sheet-final-20221013.pdf

dependent on any one person. A majority of respondents also reported that knowledge and information were shared equally and that participants were committed, and had the flexibility, to adapt to changing conditions.

What disruptions have affected collaborative progress and performance?

Turnover and vacancies in positions needed to scale up implementation reportedly diminished the collaborative's capacity to achieve restoration objectives. Turnover can undermine trust, slow progress, and lead to lost institutional knowledge. Participants stated, however, that the Forest Service has worked to fill vacancies with permanent or detailed positions as possible. The Hermit's Peak/Calf Canyon Fire also drew resources and attention away from collaborative activities. The fire shifted focus temporarily away from prescribed fire, and led to more interest in post-fire recovery planning, water resources impacts, and engagement with new partners. Other disruptions included limited funding and industry capacity.

Progress towards desired process, socio-economic, and ecological outcomes

Respondents reported progress on collaborative process, socio-economic, and ecological outcomes, including:

- enhanced communication and decision-making, and increased opportunities for landscape-scale and cross-boundary planning (Figure 3); and
- reduced fuel hazards, improved watershed function, support for local employment or training, and more work on adjacent lands.

It is important to note that many of the desired outcomes of the Rio Chama CFLRP (e.g., increasing fire use, enhancing habitat) may take years to realize.

Recommendations to improve the collaborative process and performance

Respondents provided a number of recommendations to improve the collaborative process and performance, including:

- increase engagement with, and formalized communication and outreach plans for, Tribes, land
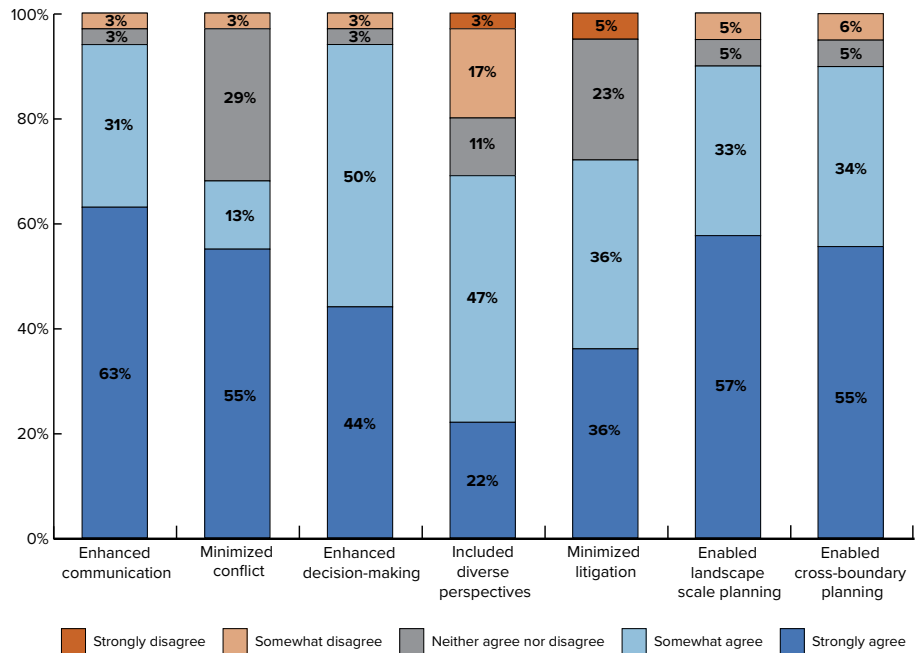

Figure 3: Percent of respondents who either "Somewhat Agree" or "Strongly Agree" that the collaborative process has impacted the function and capacity of the collaborative.

grants, other underserved communities, and private landowners. Respondents emphasized the need for local champions to facilitate communication transfer to local communities and tailoring communication and engagement in ways that are locally-appropriate.
- increase funding and personnel capacity to support inclusive collaborative engagement, planning, and implementation. For example, participants suggested the need for stipends for participants to travel and engage in 2-3-2 Partnership meetings and committees.
- enhance accountability between the Forest Service and 2-3-2 Partnership, document expectations for collaborative engagement opportunities, and clarify how the 2-3-2 Partnership can inform decisions on Forest Service-managed lands.
- formalize efforts to engage in cross-boundary planning and prioritization across the 2-3-2 and Rio Chama CFLRP landscape.

Next steps

Results from this questionnaire provided a baseline assessment of collaborative governance among the Rio Chama CFLRP and 2-3-2 Partnership. The SWERI will continue to engage in assessing collaborative health and performance of CFLRP projects, the goal of which is to identify where capacities lie and areas for improvement to target investments and activities that support resilient and durable collaboration.

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July 2023 · Contact: Tyler.Beeton@colostate.edu

SWERI
SOUTHWEST ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION INSTITUTES
Northern Arizona University | Colorado State University | New Mexico Highlands University

Appendix 2: SWERI presentation to Rio Chama CFLRP and 2-3-2 Partnership

The document can be found online at: https://cfri.box.com/s/4yapf19pwqfn8t9isvz5pnmdmk07t4cx

CFLRP Collaborative Governance Assessment: Summary of findings for the Rio Chama CFLRP and 2-3-2 Partnership

Tyler Beeton, Ch'aska Huayhuaca

Colorado Forest Restoration Institute, Colorado State University, tyler.Beeton@colostate.edu;

May, 10, 2023 – 2-3-2 Partnership Meeting

Objectives for Today

1. Brief reminder of what we are monitoring and why

2. Document what is working well

3. Document current challenges impacting progress and performance

4. Identify recommendations to improve the collaborative process and performance

5. Next steps and deliverables

6. Discuss if/how results resonate you and how to operationalize recommendations

Objectives for Today

1. Brief reminder of what we are monitoring and why

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3. Document current challenges impacting progress and performance

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5. Discuss if/how results resonate you

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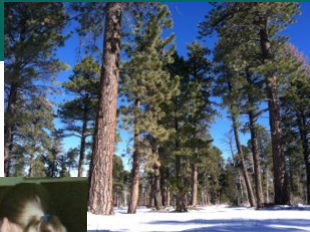
Background and Context
CFLRP Common Monitoring Strategy

- 2021 – USFS led a collaborative process to develop national common monitoring strategy

- Core set of social, ecological, and economic indicators

- Meant to:
  - supplement but not replace local multi-party monitoring plans
  - Provide standardization across projects

- This survey addresses core monitoring indicator question 12: *How well is CFLRP encouraging an effective and meaningful collaborative approach?*

CFLRP Governance Assessment - Approach

Online Confidential Survey

- Survey: ~20 minutes to answer
  - Collaboration dynamics – theory and practice of collaboration
  - Collaboration outcomes
  - Recommendations to improve collaborative process
- Distributed to 2-3-2 Partnership in November-December 2022
- 49 usable responses – 24% of contact list
- Results inform:
  - Program-wide evaluation
  - Project-level progress and performance
- Confidential, longitudinal, and standardized
- GOAL - Understand what is working well, what needs improvement, and how to maintain collaborative progress and performance through time
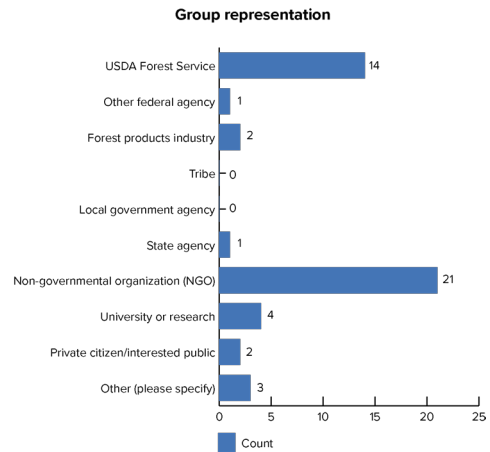
Group representation

Group	Count
USDA Forest Service	14
Other federal agency	1
Forest products industry	2
Tribe	0
Local government agency	0
State agency	1
Non-governmental organization (NGO)	21
University or research	4
Private citizen/interested public	2
Other (please specify)	3

Figure 1: Respondents' self-identified representation with associated organizations.

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Objectives for Today

1. Brief reminder of what we are monitoring and why

2. **Document what is working well**

3. Document current challenges impacting progress and performance

4. Identify recommendations to improve the process

5. Discuss if/how results resonate you

6. Next steps and deliverables

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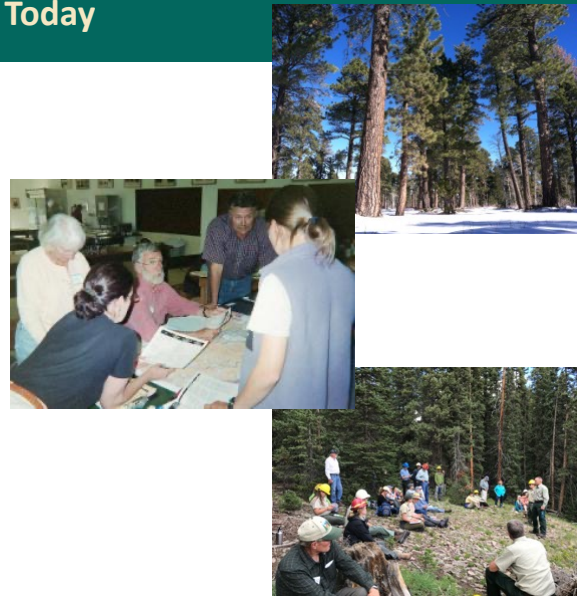
Collaboration dynamics – Principled engagement
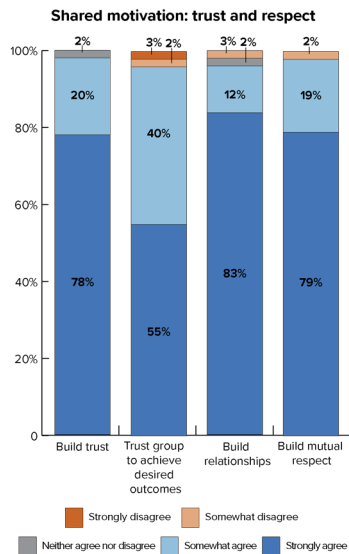
Principled engagement: agreement
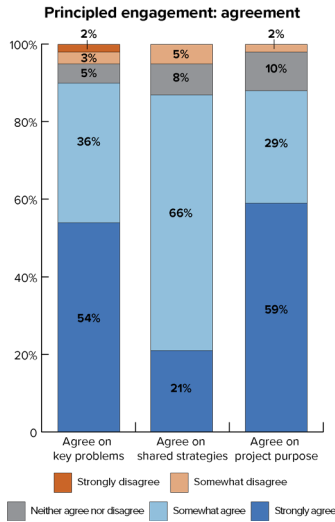
Strong majority of respondents
- Shared understanding of the problems that impact your landscape

- Shared understanding of what to do about it

- Shared agreement on purpose and intent of the Rio Chama CFLRP

Collaboration dynamics – Shared motivation

Shared motivation: trust and respect

- Social capital – the "glue" that holds groups together
- Survey respondents
  - Process has built trust, relationships, and respect
  - Trust in ability to achieve desired outcomes

Collaboration dynamics – Knowledge, learning, and adaptive management


Knowledge, learning, adaptive management
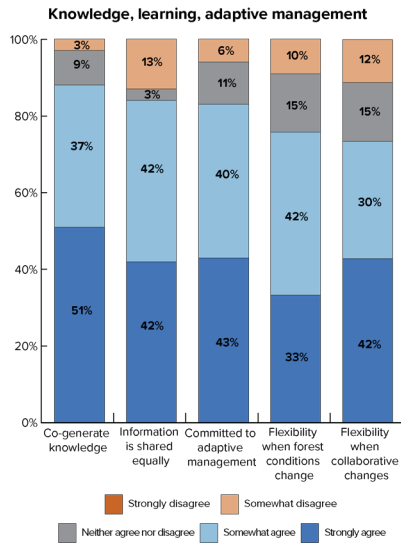
- Social learning occurs through repeated interactions among participants
- Can reduce conflict, increase understanding, action, and trust
- 4 Criteria
  - Participants work together to co-develop knowledge
  - Knowledge and information is accessible to all members
  - Commitment to adaptive management
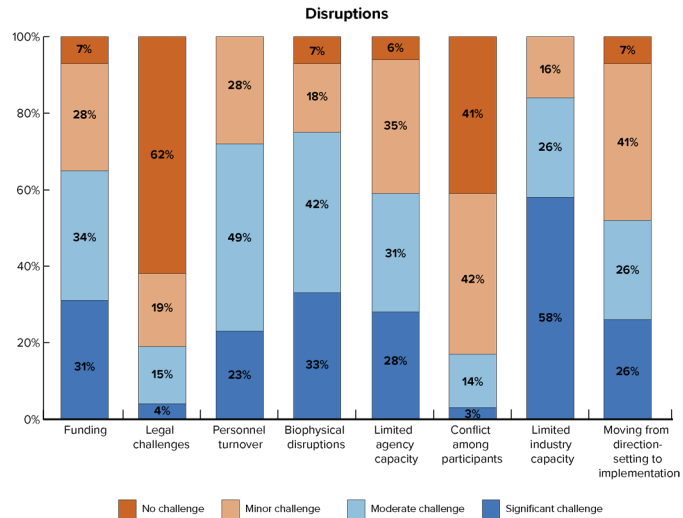 - Flexibility to adaptively manage resources and actions

Objectives for Today

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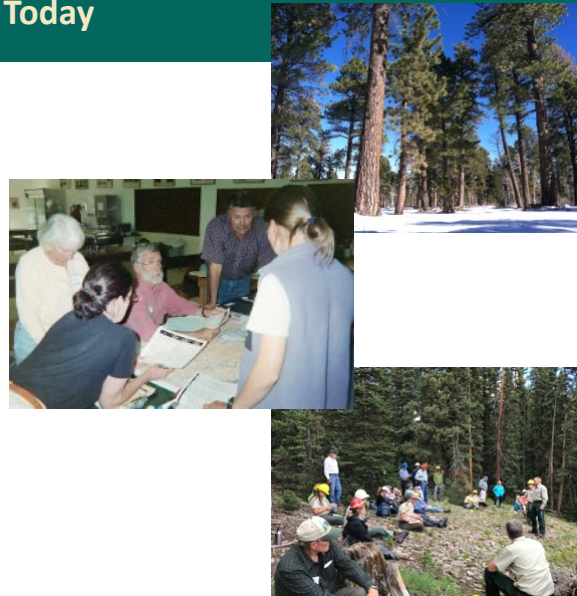6. Next steps and deliverables
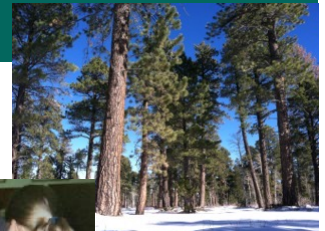
Challenges or disruptions

- Limited industrial capacity

- Wildfires that take attention, resources, and options away from group

- Turnover, vacancies/acting positions

- Timing and amount of funding

Disruptions

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Recommendations to improve the collaborative process

- Cross-boundary planning
- Stakeholder participation, engagement, and outreach
- Roles, protocols, and accountability
- Resource capacity

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Recommendations to improve the collaborative process

Stakeholder participation, engagement, and outreach

Increased engagement with:
- Tribes, Land Grants, Hispanic forestry and ranching communities, private landowners
- Biomass and biofuel sectors

Local champions as connectors to other groups, sectors

Formal communication plan and tribal engagement strategy

More consistent communication and use of various communication forums and tools is also a need. A clear communication plan is under development and very much needed, as is an engagement strategy for Tribal and underserved communities in our landscape.

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Recommendations to improve the collaborative process

Resource capacity
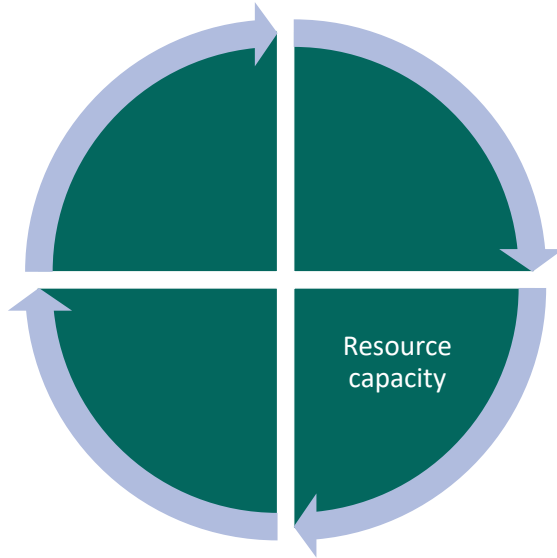
Increased funds and personnel capacity
- Funding opportunities for travel to Partnership meetings and field trips
- Funding to support volunteers
- Increased funds to support implementation

the 5 most important projects aren't necessarily completed each year; instead it's still the #1 or 2 projects in each of the sub-geographies that get done based on available funding.
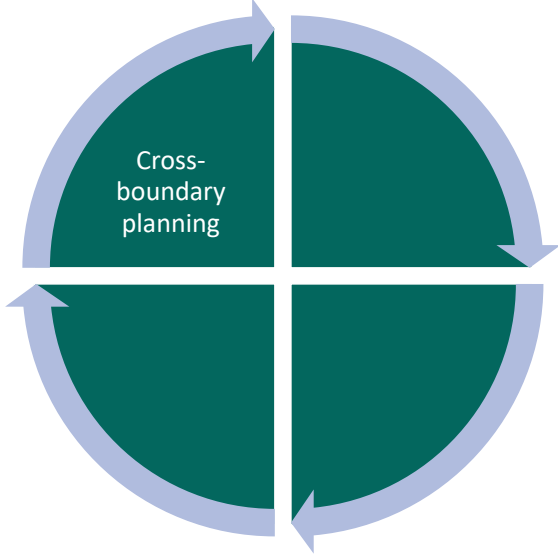
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Recommendations to improve the collaborative process

Roles, protocols, and accountability

Aligning expectations for collaborative engagement and involvement
- Two-way flow of accountability
- More "co-working" space
- Discuss decision-space sideboards and best practices for collaboration between Agency and broader partnership

[We need] mechanisms to document accountability to the collaborative process from the Forest Service to the collaborative. The accountability seems to only flow in the direction of from the collaborative and NGOs to the Forest Service.

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Recommendations to improve the collaborative process

Cross-
boundary
planning

Cross boundary planning and prioritization across
2-3-2 landscape

There needs to be more broad scale planning that spans boundaries. Almost all planning thus far has been on individual units. [It's] hard to see where there are common, highly specific goals across the landscape. [I] don't see where there has been much prioritization across the landscape.

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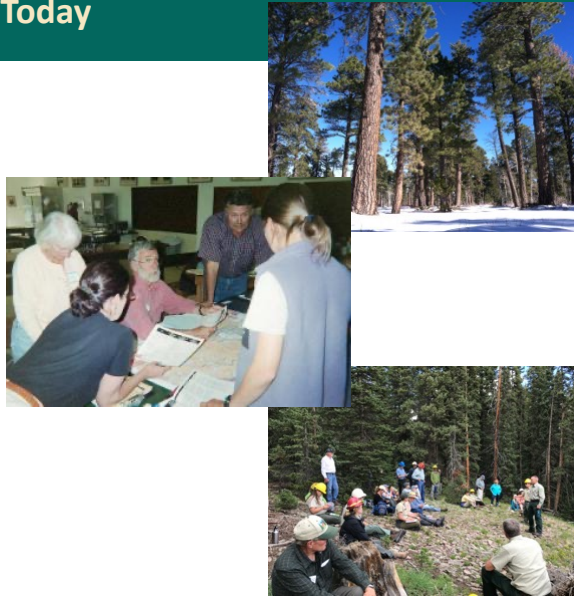
What should you expect next

Short-term – for collaborative discussion and annual reporting

- Presentation slide deck
- Larger technical report
- 1-2 page brief on survey findings and discussion today

Longer-term

- Peer-learning sessions with new CFLRP cohort!

Happy to engage in follow-up conversations and/or provide support if/when needed!

Iterative process – needs, capacities will change – periodically take stock and we will reassess in 2026!

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Objectives for Today

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6. Discuss if/how results resonate you and how to operationalize recommendations
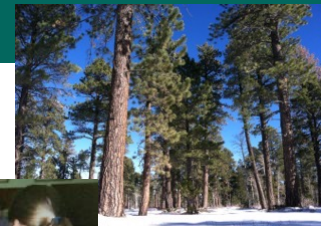
Discussion Time

- Do these results resonate with you? What might we be missing?

  - What else is working well, you want to highlight???

  - Other challenges??

- Which of recommendations are actionable? Which are feasible and desirable?

  - What changes might you make in light of these results and how might you go about implementing them?

  - Where might you need help implementing these recommendations?

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Appendix 3: Appended questions

The results to the following questions reported here were developed in coordination with the Rio Chama CFLRP project coordinator and manager, 2-3-2 Partnership coordinator, and partners affiliated with the Rio Chama CFLRP and 2-3-2 Partnership. These questions are not part of the CFLRP Common Monitoring Strategy.

We asked participants to indicate which, if any, place-based collaborative or groups they were actively engaged with in the 2-3-2 landscape (Figure A1). More respondents

were engaged with the San Juan Chama Watershed Partnership, San Juan Headwaters Forest Health Partnership, and Chama Peak Land Alliance, relative to other groups in the pre-identified response options (e.g., Wildfire Adapted Partnership, Upper San Juan Watershed Enhancement Partnership, Cerro Negro Forest Council). Respondents had the option of adding other groups not listed in the survey. Other groups mentioned by respondents included the Rio Grande Water Fund, Burned Area Learning Network, Southwest Colorado CFLRP, Southwest Colorado Rocky Mountain Restoration
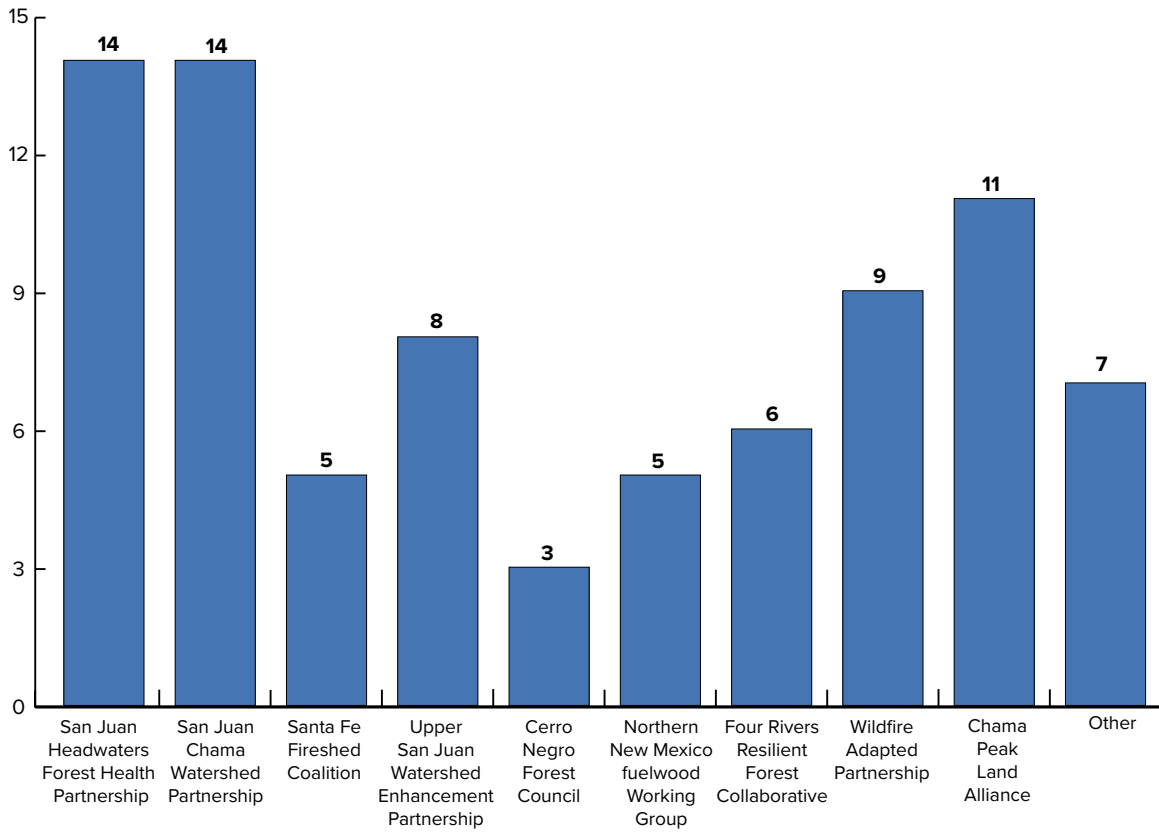
Local group representation

Figure A1: Number of respondents affiliated with each group. Respondents could select multiple groups.
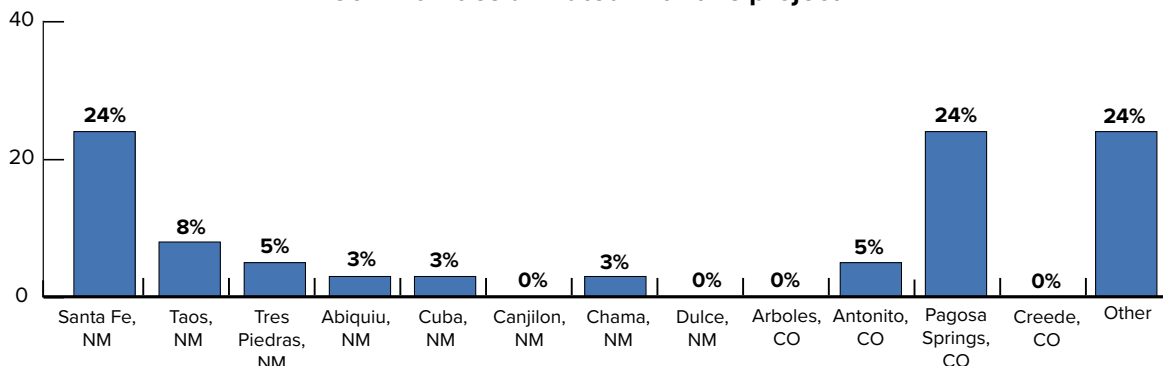
Communities affiliated with this project

Figure A2: Respondents, or the organizations they represent, primary work location within the Rio Chama CFLRP and 2-3-2 Partnership landscape. The list was a fixed response. The survey was sent to participants who live or work in these landscapes, however some potential respondents did not fill out the survey.

Initiative (RMRI), Rio Trampas Forest Council, Taos Valley Watershed Coalition, and the Western Landowners Alliance.

Similarly, we asked respondents to indicate geographically where they, or the organization they represent, primarily work (Figure A2). Respondents most frequently operated in the Santa Fe, NM (24%) and Pagosa Springs, CO (24%) areas, though respondents represented many other locations.

A large percentage (43%) of respondents indicated that they started engaging with the Partnership recently, in 2021 or 2022. Still, a strong cohort of individuals have been engaged since the early days of the Partnership (Figure A3).

A majority of participants (82%) indicated the frequency of collaborative engagement opportunities is adequate and met their expectations or needs (Figure A4). Participants felt that communication and outreach activities like field trips, monthly virtual meetings and quarterly in-person meetings, and multi-day workshops were the best use of their time (Figure A5).

When asked what specific resources and capacity respondents or their organization could contribute to the Rio Chama CFLRP, the majority indicated they could contribute personnel time, followed by financial contributions (Figure A6). Other in-kind contributions included technical expertise, such as geospatial support, science support, and opportunities to treat forests on private lands. Other contributions respondents suggested they could provide included grant opportunities, and connections to Forest Service Regional Office and Washington Office programs and staff.

Respondents were overwhelmingly accepting of various forest management strategies: respondents indicated they were moderately to very accepting of prescribed fire (90%), strategic removal of trees to reduce hazardous fuels (97%), fuel breaks (90%), and managing lighting-ignited fires for forest health objectives (92%, Figure A7).
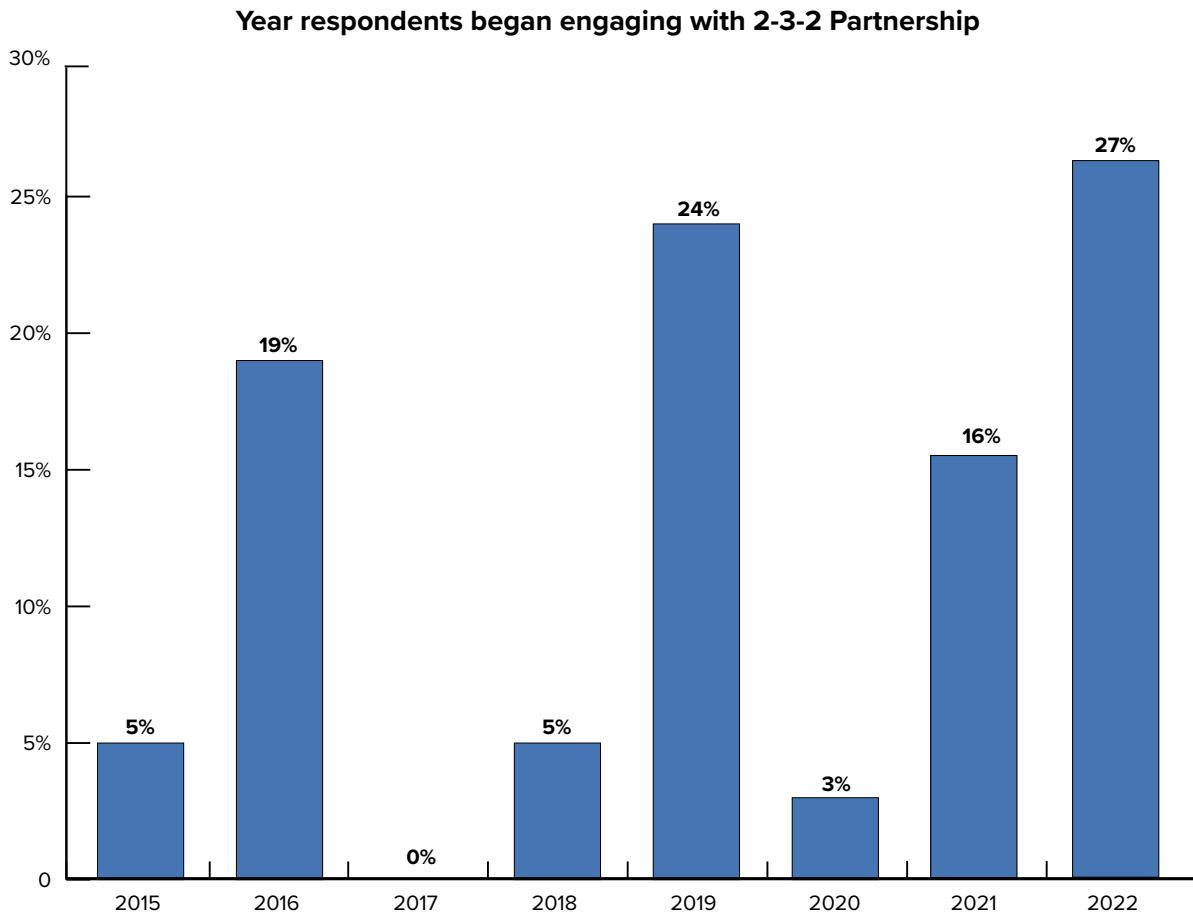
Year respondents began engaging with 2-3-2 Partnership

Figure A3: Percent of respondents who reported when they began to engage in the Partnership by year.
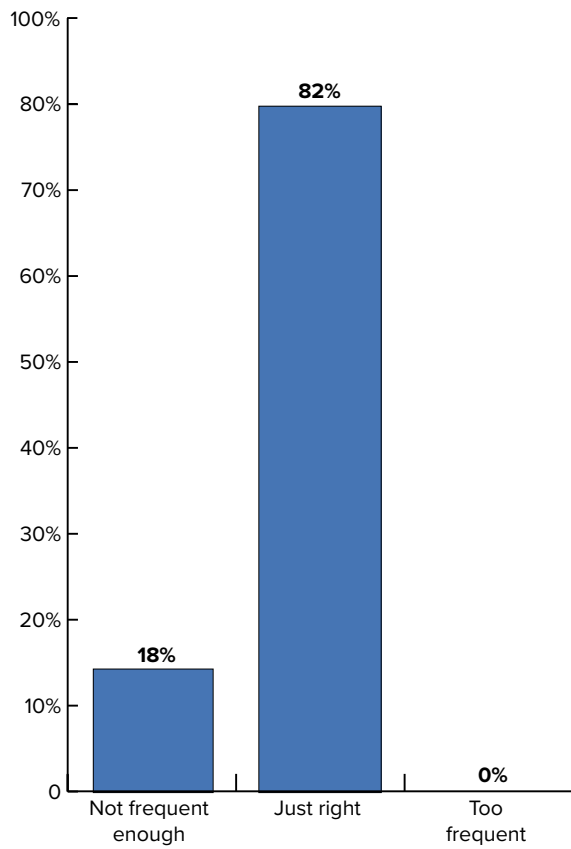
Frequency of engagement opportunities

Figure A4: Percent of respondents who reported this project has "Not frequent enough," "Just right," or "Too frequent" engagement opportunities.

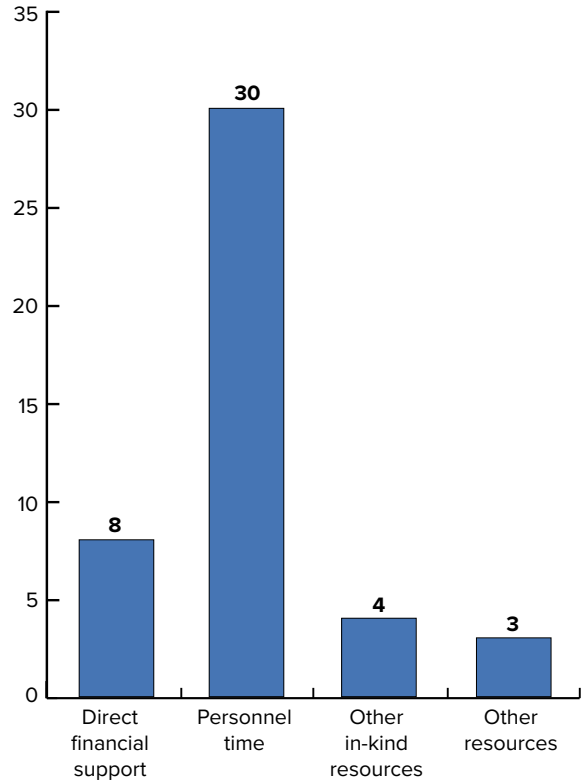## Available resources to contribute

Figure A6: Number of respondents who reported they, or their organization, could contribute "Direct financial support," "Personnel time," "Other in-kind" resources, or "Other" resources to this CLFRP project.

Preferred forms of communication and engagement
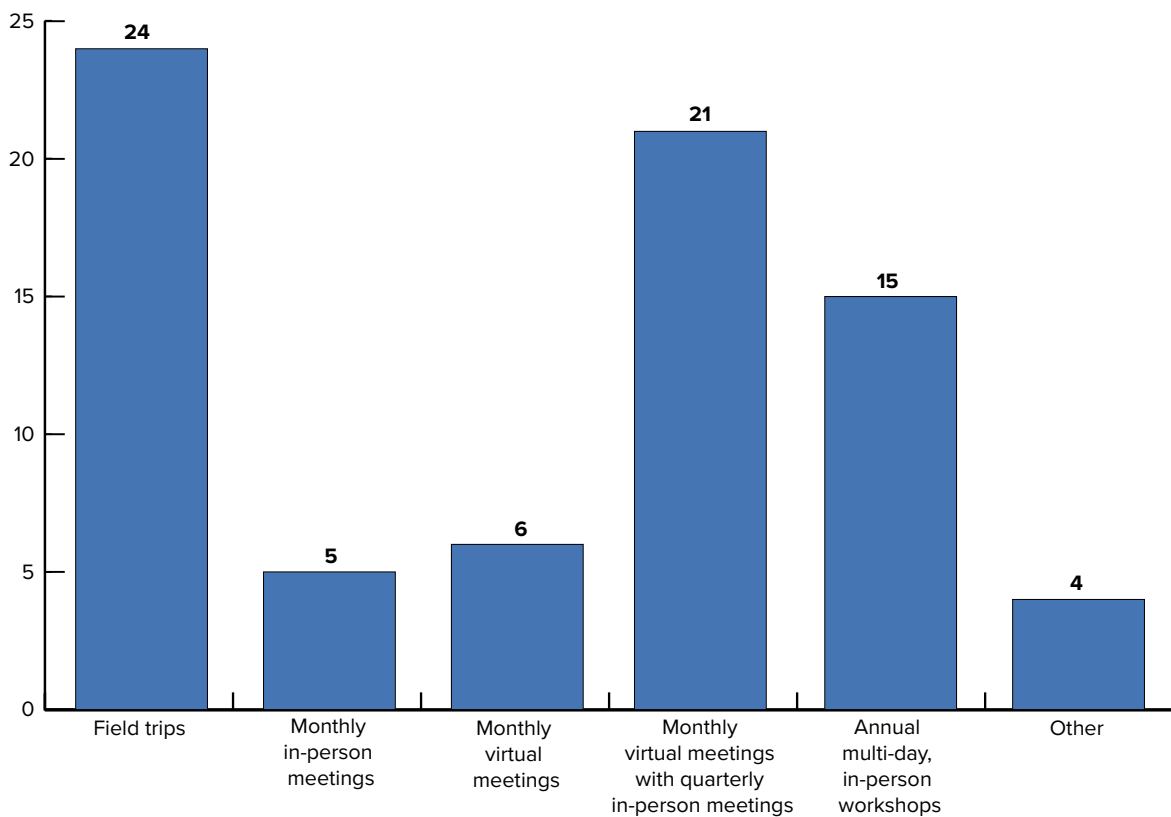
Figure A5: Number of respondents who reported they preferred a specific type of communication and engagement for this CLFRP project.
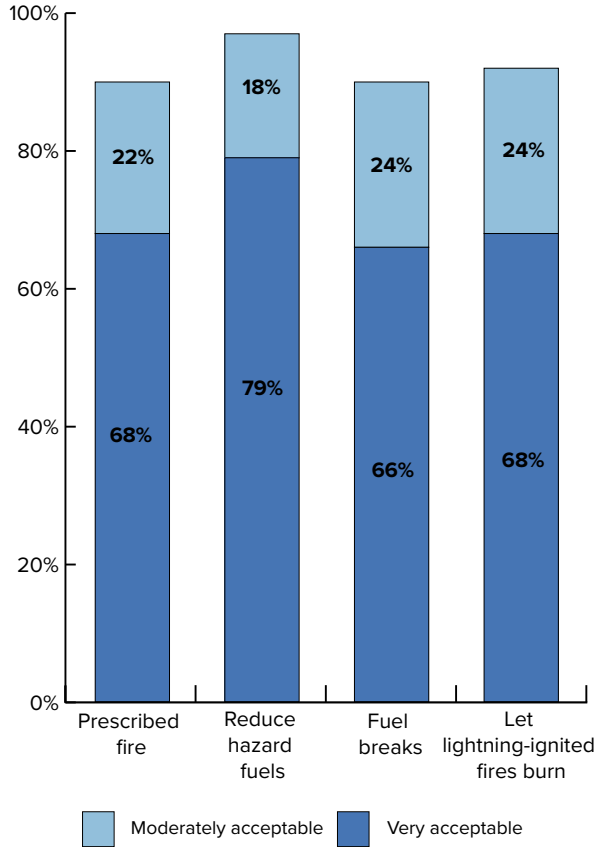
Acceptance of forest management practices

Figure A7: Percent of respondents who reported that certain forest management practices were either "Moderately acceptable" or "Very acceptable."