

# CFLRP Collaborative Governance Assessment: Summary of findings for the Western Klamath Restoration Partnership 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.<sup>1</sup> 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 Western Klamath Restoration Partnership CFLRP, which includes the Western Klamath Restoration Partnership (WKRP), the Six Rivers National Forest and the Klamath National Forest (collectively, the Partnership), between April and June 2023. We received 28 usable responses (27% 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 has worked well for the Western Klamath Forest Partnership CFLRP?

Overall, a strong majority of respondents agreed on almost every indicator that the Partnership members worked well together and accomplished their goals. A strong majority agreed that a representative cross-section of individuals who had a stake in the issues were involved in the Partnership. There was, however, only one Forest respondent, and some respondents indicated their evaluations applied to the Six Rivers National Forest, which more actively collaborates than the Klamath National Forest. A strong majority of respondents thought their expectations were met in collaborating with the Forest Service in planning, implementation, and monitoring. Most participants also understood how to inform Forest Service decisions and thought that the agency was responsive to collaborative feedback and clear about their decision-making (Figure 2). Nearly all respondents also agreed that the collaborative process helped build trust and relationships. A strong majority perceived of leadership positively and agreed that there were opportunities to co-generate knowledge, work toward adaptive management, and be flexible in the face of

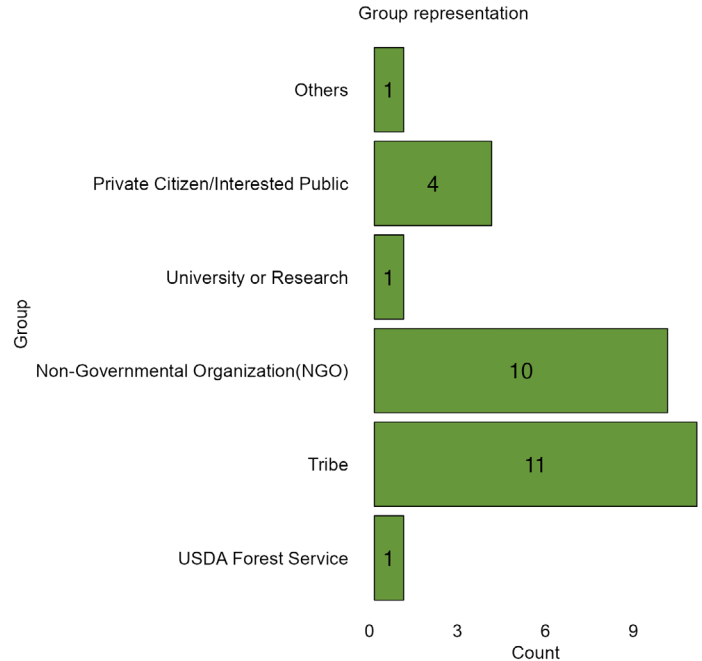


Figure 1: Respondents' self-identified representation with associated organizations.

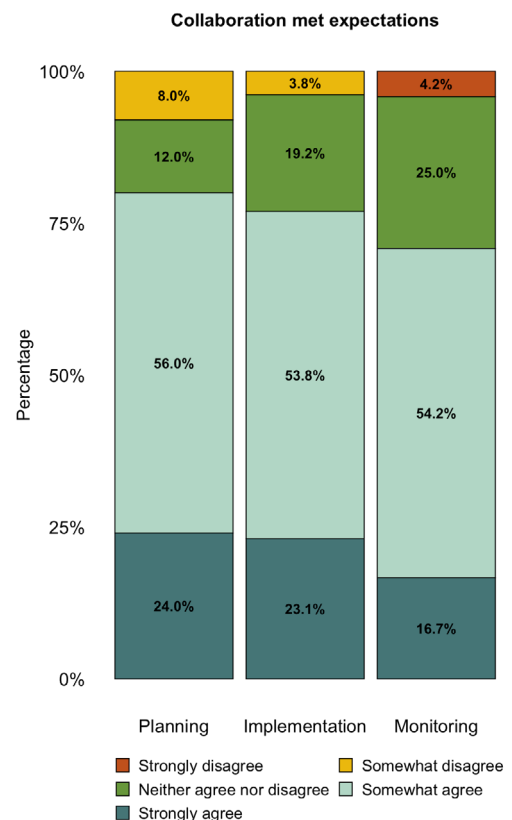


Figure 2: Percent of respondents who agreed or disagreed that they understand how to inform Forest Service decisions, the Forest Service is responsive to feedback, and the Forest Service is clear about decisions.

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

landscape or collaborative personnel changes. Respondents felt that the CFLRP project had adequate technical expertise, facilitation skills, and funds, but not sufficient time. There was also strong agreement that protocols were in place to promote accountability among CFLRP participants and that protocols were understood, fair, and used appropriately. Half of respondents, however, perceived that there were protocols in place that promoted accountability between the WKRFP and the Forest Service.

What disruptions and challenges have affected collaborative progress and performance?

The Partnership has dealt with several disruptions, particularly limited agency capacity, high personnel turnover, biophysical disruptions such as wildfire, and limited forest products industry capacity. Commenters also reiterated the connected challenges of high staff turnover, unfilled positions, a lack of capacity, and difficulty in finding workforce housing. Others mentioned delays in funding and pivoting to working in post-fire landscapes as challenges. Responses to these disruptions included building capacity through hiring and contracting, building in redundancies to ease turnover transitions, securing additional funding, continuing to work with dedicated and honest participants, and shifting to address post-wildfire landscapes.

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

A strong majority of respondents indicated that the CFLRP project was moving toward achieving a variety of desired collaborative (Figure 3), ecological, and socio-economic goals, including but not limited to:

- Enhancing communication, including diverse perspectives, and enabling landscape-scale planning.
- Improving or maintaining restoration pace and scale and watershed function and reducing fuel hazards.
- Supporting local employment or training and accomplishing more work on adjacent lands.

A majority, however, did not see the CFLRP as yet achieving offsetting the costs of treatment through byproducts. Several factors were identified as facilitating this forward movement: the dedication, commitment, and perseverance of collaborative members, the

creation of a safe space for sharing opinions, sufficient funding, and facilitation support.

Recommendations to improve the collaborative process and performance

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

- Increase Forest Service engagement in the collaborative process, particularly with the Klamath National Forest. Respondents noted the lack of incentives to collaborate within the agency.
- Enhance communication and engagement with participants, including local communities and tribes because the Forest Service has a trust responsibility to these sovereign nations, demonstrating consideration of their input in the collaborative process.
- Implement a systematic approach to curb the impacts of turnover, including increasing staffing capacity with overlapping job duties and creating redundancies.

### Next steps

Results from this questionnaire provided a baseline assessment of collaborative governance among the Western Klamath Restoration Partnership CFLRP. 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.

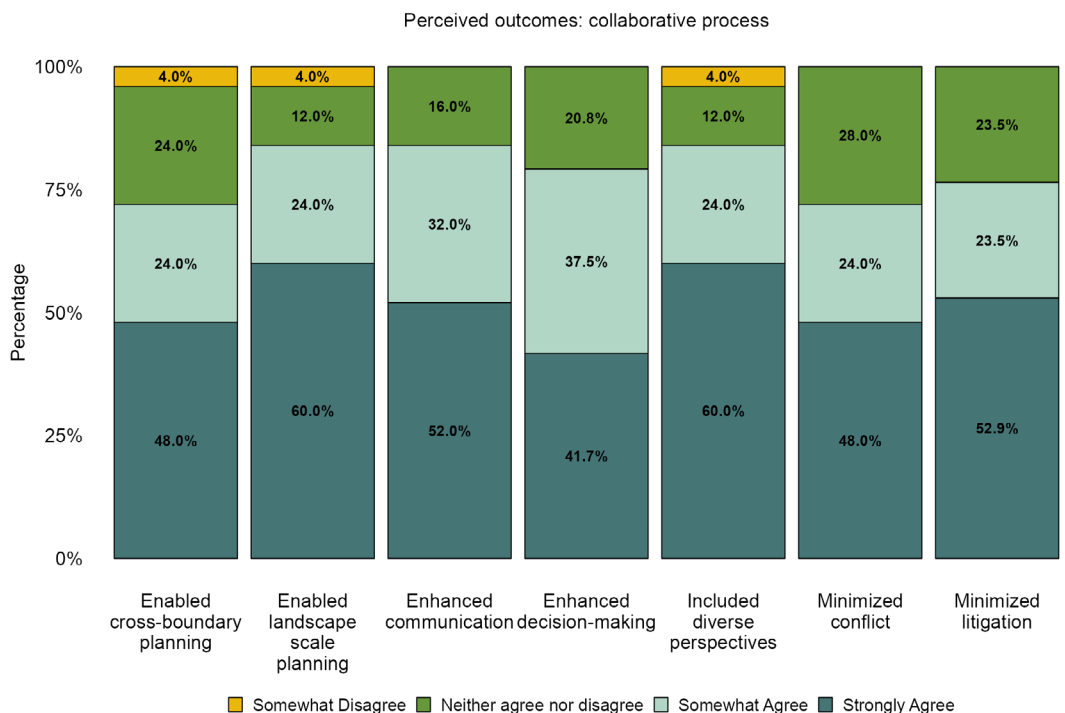


Figure 3: Percent of respondents who agree or disagree that the collaborative process has impacted the function and capacity of the collaborative.