

CMR Community Working Group Meeting Summary

Where: Zoom Virtual Meeting

When: April 22, 2021 @ 1PM

Attendance: 27

Topic: Ranchers, Working Lands and the Grasslands Roadmap

Self-Introduction: Bill Milton, acting facilitator, had everyone introduce themselves and share why they were interested in the meeting topic.

Grasslands Roadmap

Tammy VerCauteren, Executive Director for Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, delivered a presentation on the Central Grasslands Roadmap. She described the Virtual Summit they hosted in August, which included 250 participants from 150 organizations/individuals. They held panel discussions and work sessions to discuss three key themes: partnerships and engagement, research and evaluation, and policy and funding. Following the Summit, the Roadmap's efforts have focused on surfacing more local level input and buy-in. Tammy noted that they seek to do this while following what they consider their "Criteria for Collaborative Action"...

- Sustain human populations – maintain producer way of life
- Sustainable grazing in a working lands context that supports large tracts of connected grassland habitats
- Research informed practices
- Respect and honor diverse local voices
- Improve land health
- Support ecosystem processes
- Improve biodiversity
- Conserve water
- Increase habitat and arrest population declines
- Meet needs of 8 sectors

She also outlined the Roadmap's Priorities...

- Increase support of collaborative initiatives and funding for what works
- Build legislative or Farm Bill-AG policy tools that create incentive-based programs and innovate existing tools
- Support training and speakers Bureau
- Create a public messaging campaign to garner support for grasslands and rural communities
- Prioritize knowledge gaps and layer in biological and social data, monitoring and evaluation

Tammy also referenced the new 30*30 policy and how participants might be able to view this new proposal as an opportunity rather than a threat.

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Lastly, the request for measures of success and what that might look like for landowners was mentioned. The Grassland Roadmap's large bucket measures point toward millions of acres being voluntarily enrolled and the funding to support such efforts to protect, enhance and restore this acreage.

Breakout Groups

Following Tammy's presentation, Matt Grey, the Grassland Summit Facilitator, posed a few questions for participants to consider within smaller breakout groups of 5-7 people...

1. Ranchers, landowners, and producers are at the core of the Working Lands strategy within the Roadmap, what will encourage you to be a partner and contributor in this effort?
2. What Red Flags come up for you?

Full Group Conversation

Following, participants reported the highlights from their individual breakout groups and considered the final prompt, "What is the best possible outcome from this work?"

A few points that came up during these conversations...

- What is the definition of protect? Easement or keeping ranchers on the ranch?
 - Additional discussion on the costs vs. benefits of perpetual easements
- Current ag policy can make it difficult for someone not to break-up their land.
- Finding the mutually beneficial land management changes is less difficult than those that require changes that could affect a landowner's bottom line, such as stocking rates.
- Capacity at the ranch-level could be a barrier to success.
- Individual relationships are critical; building trust and finding practices that add people to the landscape.
- Messaging is important; crafting the Roadmap in a way that happens **with** and **for** ranchers.

The meeting ended after a few final thoughts from Bill Milton and Liv Holt at 3:00PM.

All presentations mentioned in the meeting notes can be found on the meeting summaries page of our website.

Contact Information:

Matt Gray, Rocky Mountain Innovation Lab, Executive Director and Grassland Summit Facilitator,
info@grasslandsroadmap.org

Tammy VerCauteren, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, Executive Director
tammy.vercauteren@birdconservancy.org