

What are Collaborative Conservation Groups in New Mexico?

Restoration and management of forests, watersheds, and other natural resources in large landscapes are often more effective when interest-holders collaborate as a group to coordinate cross-boundary projects. Collaborative groups convene the diverse interests of landowners, managers, agencies, private citizens, and other interest-holders to share experiences and work together. Ultimately, collaboratives facilitate decision-making for consensus-based planning and implementation of projects that restore forest health and resiliency for the benefit of all.



Collaborative group visiting field site.

Who can be part of a collaborative?

Anyone with an interest in the local natural, cultural, and built environment!

Some examples include:

- Local, state, and federal governments and agencies
- Tribal members, communities, governments, and agencies
- Acequia owners and associations
- Land grant recipients and communities
- Academics and universities
- NGOs /501(c) groups
- Private citizens
- And more!

Why engage in the collaborative process?

Motivations to engage in the collaborative process are unique to each individual!

Some examples include:

- Reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfires
- Improve forest health
- Enhance wildlife habitat
- Protect water resources
- Enrich recreational opportunities
- Preserve culturally significant sites
- Enhance biodiversity
- And many more!

There are more than 50 collaborative conservation groups in New Mexico!

These groups are usually centered around general geographic areas without strict boundaries and may focus on specific or general themes, such as:

- Forest Management
- Adaptive Management
- Watershed Restoration
- Ecosystem Management
- Outdoor Recreation
- Monitoring & Evaluation
- Education
- Wildfire and Post-Fire Recovery
- Funding
- Community Development
- Pollution Remediation
- Land Use Planning
- Invasive Species Removal
- Networking
- Volunteerism



How are collaboratives organized?

Collaborative groups vary in how they are organized. A single collaborative can be created and assume any or all of the following structures throughout its existence:

- Formal
- Informal
- Ad hoc (as necessary)
- Standing (permanent)
- Geographic- or landscape-centric (although specific boundaries are often undefined, this can include watersheds, firesheds, state or national forest districts, other governmental jurisdictions of public land, and various ecological or landscape units)
- Grass roots
- Issue-focused
- Project-based
- Agency-centric

Formal collaborative groups generally create governing entity documents, often have budgets to fund projects, and can be structured to include delegates from local agencies and organizations. Alternatively, informal groups are generally organized as necessary and driven by specific events or projects. Nevertheless, formality, purpose, and involvement of a collaborative can shift over time.

What are collaborative networks?

Collaborative groups and practitioners can form and join collaborative networks to advocate for and advance collaborative conservation practices in their region of a state (e.g. Santa Fe), state (e.g. New Mexico), or greater U.S. region (e.g. Southwest).

Resources:



Map of Natural Resource Collaboratives and Support Organizations in New Mexico

- <https://storymaps.arcgis.com/stories/6e850677cdaf49c686b07ca4f173f6ff>

Collaboration – New Mexico Forest and Watershed Restoration Institute (NMFWR)

- <https://nmfwri.org/collaboration/>

Center for Collaborative Conservation (CCC)

- <https://collaborativeconservation.org/>



Western Collaborative Conservation Network (WCCN)

- <https://collaborativeconservation.org/western-collaborative-conservation-network/>