

Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent Retreat

July 20-21, 2009
Glacier National Park, Montana

Participants

Erin Sexton, Bill Dolan, Steve Thompson, Lisa Flowers, Gloria Flora, Racene Friede, Corlene Martin, Clayton Matt, Rich Moy, Mary Sexton, Ken Wall, John Dibari, Nina Chambers, Diane Conradi, Steve Frisch, Ted Smith, Armando Carbonell, Peter Pollock, Daisy Patterson, and Matt McKinney.

For more information on the Roundtable, go to www.crownroundtable.org.

Update on Who is Doing What

National Landscape Conservation Initiative

Matt McKinney presented the outline of the above initiative and distributed copies of the May 29 concept paper. The Crown of the Continent plays an important role in this project since it is an exemplar of the type of treasured landscape deserving of conservation and also the collaborative approach being undertaken to protect it.

Comments from the participants included:

- Make continental - North America. Start as trans-boundary initiative.
- The framework should be enabling, empowering, and flexible.
- Inclusive of state/non-profit organizations and the private sector. Should demonstrate the efficient use of resources.
- Harness market-based conservation. Go beyond philanthropy. Identify and utilize ecosystem services.
- Make accessible to small communities.
- Define measurable outcomes. Build in monitoring.
- Should be built around the concept of sustainability - environment, economy, community. Spirituality should be a component too.
- Tribes already function border to border - something to draw upon.

The participants discussed what it is that may be needed from the federal government.

- Funding.
- Flexibility.
- Acknowledgement that this is a “quality” process that gives permission/encouragement for agency involvement. Empowerment for coordination at large landscape level.
- Inter- and intra- agency coordination.
- What is it not: a federal mandate

The group brainstormed ideas on how best to bring a landscape conservation initiative to fruition:

- Tie into the Western Governors Association efforts such as the identification of wildlife corridors and renewable energy infrastructure needs.
- The state and provincial leaders of Montana, Alberta, and British Columbia should declare the Crown as a living laboratory to better understand and react to climate change.
- The Crown could be a learning laboratory and a template and model for other regions. We need to answer how existing efforts add up. What's the picture/map? Rather than a national competition, should be national recognition. This effort will require a "remarkable" level of coordination. Identify regional values first, and then establish benchmarks for measuring success.
- Clarify how we can best invest limited resources/increase resources.
- Why would individual organizations get involved? The cost of coordination is time. Must demonstrate that effort will enhance mission effectiveness. While organizational priorities may be local, interests can be broad.
- The community aspects of this are essential - can't just be about protecting the environment - Must include working landscapes, e.g., biomass production.
- We must make the case that the Crown is worth conserving, e.g., a regional capacity analysis: Includes geography, organizations, and values. Short/long term goals. Addresses significance: regionally (water, tourism), nationally, and internationally.
- Use social networking. The Crown means something different to the younger generation. Using these networks is a way to ensure longevity of information.

For more information on this project, go to www.cnrep.org/projects.

National Parks Conservation Association

Steve Thompson reported that the NPCA is embarking on a climate change conservation initiative: identifying and compiling climate science, identifying mitigation and adaptation strategies, and raising public awareness. This is a 10- year plan that will result in (1) a science network on climate change issues in the Crown; (2) organizing conservation organizations as an informal network around this issue; and (3) increasing public communications and awareness. Rich Moy is under contract to NPCA to help coordinate this initiative.

Ecosystem Markets/Services

Diane Conradi presented an evolving proposal to evaluate the use of ecosystem markets to further conservation goals. These markets could be driven by demand created through regulatory requirements for mitigation; quasi-regulatory programs like the National Environmental Policy act, or voluntary efforts, such as the dedication of conservation easements. In order to proceed, a project would need to identify conservation values, the stressors, ecosystem services, and opportunities to enhance conservation values through market mechanisms.

Within the Crown, approximately a half million acres are in state ownership; much of this is in scattered ownership. Would likely need a partnership with Federal land managers, and tribes to evaluate the suitability of using land in this way.

Steve Frisch offered an example from the Sierra Business Council. They identified land that could be used for biomass production to sequester climate change gases and valued the services based on the difference between the value of the land based on current regulations and the value that would be present if best management practices were employed. Land would be certified and an endowment created for long term management. The combination of conservation easements, plus sustained yield harvest, minus maintenance, plus tax credits, plus carbon sequestration credit would return adequate returns. Bill Dolan indicated that work being done for the Alberta land use framework is also looking at market mechanisms.

Ecological Health Indicators - Crown Management Partnership

Erin Sexton reported that the CMP is undertaking this indicator project at the Crown scale. They are identifying the status of the baseline, measuring trends/change over time, in order to guide management decisions. The indicators being used are:

1. Landscape with large carnivores, e.g., grizzlies
2. Biodiversity
3. Climate change
4. Other ???

The Coalition to Protect the Rocky Mountain Front

Gloria Flora reported that progress was being made around the following topics:

Weed management and funding.

Conservation management area - maintain status quo

Wilderness designation - defacto wilderness becomes wilderness

Inventory of Who is Doing What

After the update, the participants decided it would be useful to create a quick inventory of who is involved in shaping the future of the Crown, and what are the most common strategies or initiatives. Here is the summary of that conversation:

Who is involved?

Tribes
Place-based groups
Crown Managers Partnership
COCEEC
Geotourism effort
Transboundary Initiative
National Parks Conservation Association
The Nature Conservancy
University of Montana Initiatives
Yellowstone to Yukon
Crown Roundtable

What are they doing?

Land conservation
Public information and education
Science coordination
Higher education
Ecological health indicators
Ecosystem service markets
Climate change research and education
Resource conservation and management
Land uses
Community/Economies

The participants also discussed the opportunities and/or assets facing the region, including:

- Passion/commitment
- Existing networks
- Western Governors Association
- Political framework - Provinces of Alberta and British Columbia/ State of Montana
- National policy framework
- UNESCO designation/assessment
- Lincoln Institute of Land Policy/Sonoran Institute resources
- Regional/National tribal governments

The group discussed the nature of the organization that could be built around this framework:

- Is this a network; a coherent understanding/agreement; or a coordinated effort?
- Build capacity for the who's to do the what's. Network better!
- Connect with local groups.
- Do an annual conference in different parts of the Crown. Agenda setting builds capacity, vision gets created through expanding contact, brings people in.
- Web pages e.g., www.crownofthecontinent.net
- Should include ways to organize data about the Crown, e.g., www.databasin.org

Ted Smith offered these cautions: clarify issues around authority, how resources are shared, who gets the credit. Deal with the inequality of US/Canadian participation. Armando Carbonell posed the challenge as one of creating more functional networks.

Strategic Priorities For The Year (and Beyond)

After enjoying a wonderful evening in Glacier National Park, the participants reconvened on day two and agreed to the following strategic priorities for the year (i.e., between now and July 1, 2010).

1. Convene the Crown Roundtable as a “network of networks.”

The participants agreed that the Roundtable on the Crown of the Continent is a “network of networks.” It recognizes and builds on the reality that many people from multiple sectors are working to promote livable communities, vibrant economies, and a healthy landscape in the Crown. The Roundtable is designed to be a forum where representatives from the different networks can share information, build relationships, and explore opportunities to work together.

Although the Roundtable focuses on people that are committed to thinking and acting regionally, it is also designed to be inclusive of all viewpoints and sectors. Each

network is encouraged to have a consistent representative to help build relationships and knowledge.

Along these lines, Clayton Matt and Matt McKinney agreed to continue building the network of tribes and First Nations in the Crown. Additional work needs to be done to engage the business community, local governments, and other sectors.

Based on advice from the participants, a revised picture of the Roundtable is attached to this document. ***Please review the picture and the associated list of major initiatives by network and let us know if you have additions and/or corrections.***

The participants also discussed the need to expand participation by Canadians, and slightly revised the Steering Committee - which now includes the following people:

Evan Berger, Alberta
Bill Dolan, Crown Manager's Partnership
Gloria Flora, consultant
Racene Friede, Glacier Country
Corlene Martin, Sonoran Institute
Clayton Matt, Confederated Salish and Kootenai
Rich Moy, consultant
Erin Sexton, Crown Manager's Partnership (tentative)
Mary Sexton, Montana DNRC
Ted Smith, resource person
Jerry Sorenson, Plum Creek Timber
Edwin Small Legs -- Canadian Tribes

2. Organize and Convene an Annual Conference (or Council or Assembly)

The participants agreed that another important building block in terms of facilitating regional identity, shared values, and a common sense of purpose is to organize and convene an annual conference. The overarching objectives of the annual conference would be to (1) clarify and reinforce values; (2) inspire, inform, and engage new people to think and act regionally (and to thereby broaden the Crown constituency); and (3) learn from each other and other regions. The conference would include presentations, dialogue, plenary and breakout sessions, storytelling, music, and art - all designed to help build a sense of place.

The participants agreed that it would be best to make a commitment to convene such an annual conference over a set period of time (e.g., 4-5 years) so people can expect an ongoing effort around the region.

The results of the conference would be captured in an annual publication.

The Crown Roundtable Steering Committee would guide the organizing and convening of the conference.

3. Develop a Prospectus

To shape the future of the Crown of the Continent, the participants agreed that it would be valuable to create a publication that communicates the story of the Crown of the Continent in a compelling way that both (1) informs, educates, and engages other people; and (2) focuses on the key policy/strategic issues in the region and how to best address them.

To this end, the participants agreed that the Roundtable should prepare a “prospectus.” This prospectus will not only serve the two objectives presented above, but also potentially serve as a model for the national framework on landscape conservation.

As currently envisioned, the prospectus will be developed based on existing information and will simultaneously provide a “state of the region,” an “indicators report” in terms of what is important to the region and how to monitor progress, and a “regional agenda” - that is, a menu of recommendations on how to address the various issues and interests in the region.

The development of the prospectus will be guided by the Crown Roundtable Steering Committee, which will help facilitate ownership and commitment to the final product. The document itself will be prepared by staff from the Sonoran Institute and the Center for Natural Resources & Environmental Policy. The final document should probably be in the neighborhood of about 24 pages, and may take the form of newsprint (for mass distribution), glossy publication (to share with policymakers and funders), and a web-based publication (for easy access). The prospectus may be periodically updated and treated as a living document.

Based on discussions to date (including direction provided by the concept paper based on the National Policy Dialogue on Landscape Conservation), staff offer the following preliminary outline for the prospectus:

I. The Region

- What is unique and significant about the Crown?
 - Tribal homeland
 - International transboundary region
 - Special designations
 - National laboratory for climate change
- Shared values - see shared values statement by Roundtable
- Regional assets - individual and collective efforts, including the Roundtable

II. Issues

- Community Economic Vitality - traditional industries, geotourism, green economic opportunities, etc.
- Land Use (country land-use patterns, state trust lands, federal land management, wilderness protection, private land conservation?)
- Wildlife -- critical habitats and corridors
- Energy Independence -- traditional, wind, biomass, etc.

- Climate Change—mitigation and adaptation strategies; reflect ongoing work in the region
- Water Security - quantity, quality, and other ecosystem services
- Ecological Restoration -- needs, opportunities, and ongoing efforts

III. A Regional Agenda

- This section will identify regional priorities as determined by the Roundtable
- It should be inspirational and provide recommendations for policy and practice, but not too specific or prescriptive
- It should also demonstrate the civic, political, and organizational capacity of the region to work together

4. Community Building Tools

The participants discussed the possibility of developing one or more tools to build the capacity of communities in the Crown. Most of the discussion focused on developing a geographic information system (GIS) and web-based tools to develop an interactive way for groups to take advantage of the work of the networks; further work on the definition of ecosystem services and market opportunities to further conservation goals. The participants discussed the possibility of building on the geotourism web site that allows people to tell stories about the Crown.

The participants also discussed the need for leadership development and funding opportunities (including monitoring of federal grant opportunities).

Some participants suggested that it may be valuable to think in terms of a 2-3 year strategy to build the capacity of communities.

A number of participants agreed to participate in a conference call to further develop and clarify this set of tasks and products (Daisy, Diane, Erin, Steve, Ken, and Peter).

5. Recognition Strategy

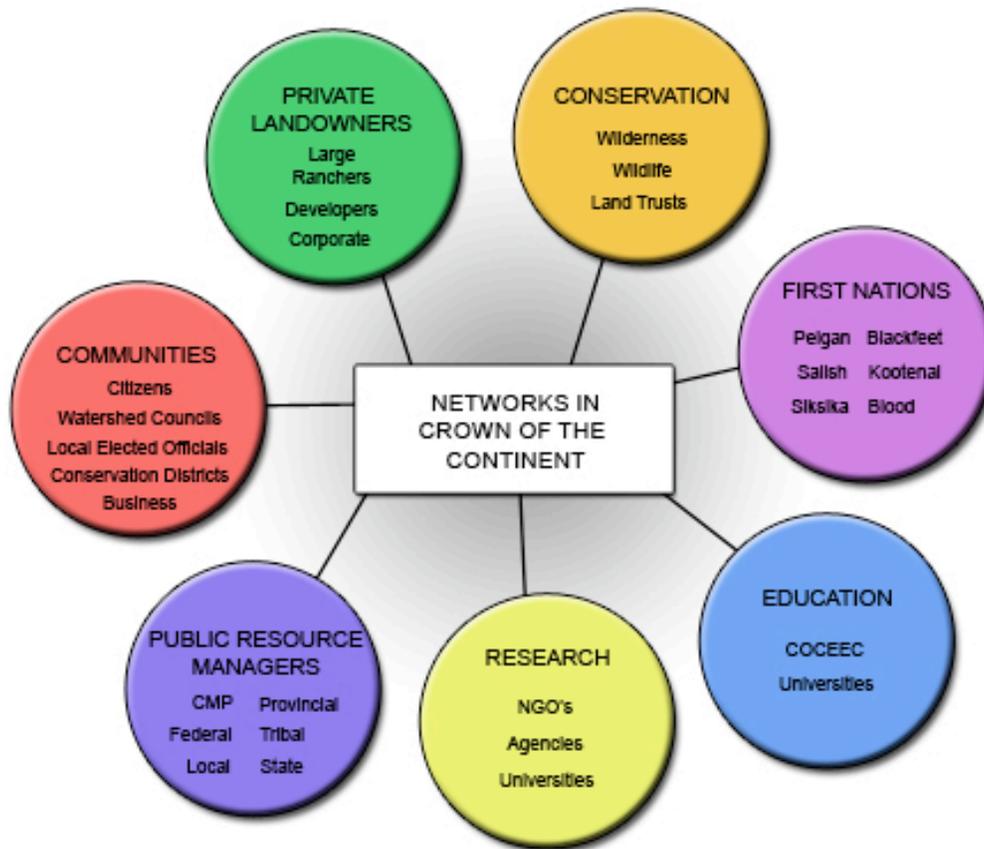
The participants agreed that we should continue to link the significance of the Crown of the Continent to efforts at the national and even international scale.

Next Steps

The Sonoran Institute, Lincoln Institute of Land Policy, and the Center for Natural Resources & Environmental Policy will discuss how to allocate existing resources to the strategic priorities.

They will then convene a conference call with the Steering Committee to affirm priorities, staffing, and next steps.

**Roundtable on the
Crown of the Continent:**
Shaping the Future of the Crown



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Major Initiatives by Network

Communities

- Chambers of Commerce network
- Geotourism MapGuide (and associated stewardship council)

Public Resource Managers

- Crown Manager's Partnership

Research

- Climate science network (NPCA)
- Ecological health indicators (CMP)
- UM initiative to integrate tribal and scientific ways of knowing

Education

- COCEEC
- UM Crown of the Continent Initiative
- UM/University of Calgary graduate program in Transboundary Management

First Nations

Conservation

- Organize the conservation network (NPCA)
- Legacy Project

Private Landowners