

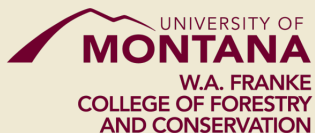
NATURAL RESOURCES CONFLICT RESOLUTION GRADUATE CERTIFICATE PROGRAM

2025 - 2026

Providing practical skills for future leaders



CENTER FOR NATURAL RESOURCES
& ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY



WHY EARN A CERTIFICATE IN NATURAL RESOURCES CONFLICT RESOLUTION?

Conflicts over natural resources and the environment are ubiquitous. Regardless of your chosen profession – law, policy, business, science, management, planning, advocacy, etc. – you most likely will be engaged in multi-party, public processes that have some element of conflict. The **Natural Resources Conflict Resolution Program** will prepare you to effectively catalyze, convene, and participate in collaboration and conflict resolution processes. It will also provide you with a Graduate Certificate, demonstrating to current and future employers your expertise in this subject while distinguishing you from your colleagues.

The Natural Resources Conflict Resolution Program is one of the only graduate-level certificate programs of its kind in North America. It was recognized in 2013 by *High Country News* as one of the best programs in the American West training future leaders.

As an interdisciplinary, university-wide program, it is co-sponsored by the Alexander Blewett III School of Law, W.A. Franke College of Forestry and Conservation, and the College of Humanities and Sciences. It regularly includes students from Anthropology, Communication Studies, Community Health, Environmental Studies, Forestry, Geography, International Conservation, Journalism, Law, Political Science, Resource Conservation and Society, Sociology, and Wildlife Biology.

For more information, contact one of the program Co-Chairs:

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THE PROGRAM

As citizens, advocates, and decision-makers struggle to integrate social, economic, and environmental interests with the intent of sustaining both communities and landscapes, the governance of natural resources is increasingly defined by an endless stream of disputes. These disputes are often characterized by multiple parties, competing values and interests, changing demographic and economic trends, complex scientific and technical information, fragmented political geography, conflicting legal mandates, historical injustices, the distribution of power, and concern over the fundamental question of who should decide how resources should be used.

Increasingly, people who care about the conservation, stewardship, and the use of natural resources are recognizing that one of the most effective ways to prevent and resolve these types of disputes is through collaboration and conflict resolution. These processes often foster greater engagement, facilitate more informed decisions, produce more durable and widely supported outcomes, improve relationships, and minimize the costs of disputing. They are

becoming more common throughout North America and around the world. And the success of these processes require that people involved possess the collaborative skills, knowledge, and experience needed to effectively and fairly address conflicts and work towards shared solutions to complex natural resource challenges.

In response to this growing need, the University of Montana created the **Natural Resources Conflict Resolution (NRCR) Program** in 2005. It is the only graduate-level certificate program in North America specifically designed to provide students a working knowledge of the theory and practice of collaboration and conflict resolution as they apply to land use, natural resources, and the environment. Students will learn about and practice approaches in:

- Public participation
- Community-based collaboration
- Collaborative conservation and stewardship
- Public policy dispute resolution
- Consensus building



Photo credit: Rick and Susie Groatz

- Multiparty negotiation
- Facilitation and mediation
- Cultural humility
- Collaborative leadership
- Collaborative governance
- Collaborative learning

More specific learning objectives and expected competencies are presented in this handbook.



THE LOCATION

The University of Montana provides an ideal location to study and practice natural resources collaboration and conflict resolution. According to Wallace Stegner, the West is the “native home of hope.” It is also the native home of conflict over natural resource issues. Federal lands and natural resources dominate the physical and political landscapes of the West as in no other quarter of the country. The region wrestles with economic, demographic, and cultural changes as it shifts from a reliance on agriculture, timber, and mining to a more diverse base that includes traditional natural resource industries as well as tourism, recreation, service-oriented businesses, and an emerging tech sector. In short, the West is rife with issues, challenges, and opportunities.

The University of Montana sits in the heart of this landscape and is emerging as a center of excellence for the study and practice of collaboration and conflict resolution around natural resources and environmental issues. The Center for Natural Resources & Environmental Policy helps people work together through complex problems and seek a shared vision for a mutually beneficial future by providing services in facilitation, multi-party negotiation, creative problem solving, collaborative governance, leadership development, strategic planning, and process design. The Alexander Blewett III School of Law regularly sponsors a Public Land Law Conference, and numerous faculty from law, forestry and conservation, environmental studies, communications, and political science conduct research and offer courses in various aspects of preventing, managing, and resolving disputes over natural resources and the environment. These are only some of the university-based resources available to students interested in natural resources policy and conflict resolution.

In addition to these resources, the Missoula area, Montana, and the Rocky Mountain West are home to myriad agencies, non-government organizations, Tribal Nations, private sector businesses, and communities involved in addressing natural resources conflicts and working together to steward communities and landscapes.



PHILOSOPHY AND APPROACH

Preventing and resolving natural resource disputes is not primarily a scientific or technical challenge, nor is it simply about managing natural resources more effectively and efficiently. At its core, this challenge is about integrating people's diverse needs, interests, visions, and cultures. Throughout the world, there is a growing recognition that the most effective way to promote livable communities, vibrant economies, and healthy landscapes is to create opportunities for people to come together with the best available information to address issues of common concern.

Building on this insight, the **NRCR Program** is designed to promote sustainable communities and landscapes through public processes that are inclusive, informed, and deliberative.

Building on this insight, the NRCR Program is designed to promote sustainable communities and landscapes through dialogue and deliberation that brings together the right group of people, useful and relevant knowledge, and a well-designed and facilitated process. This means discerning who the “right people” might be for any particular natural resource issue, which includes considering the roles of key interested parties as well as those of unaffiliated citizens, underserved and historically excluded communities, local and national interests, and decision makers, among others. It also suggests that participants are empowered by the presumption that their input and advice will be considered by the decision makers and will influence the outcome.

By inclusive participation, we mean that an effort is made to meaningfully engage all viewpoints and interests, including unaffiliated citizens, underserved and historically excluded communities, local and national interests, and decision makers. It also suggests that participants are empowered by the presumption that their input and advice will be considered by the decision makers and will influence the outcome.

A well-designed and facilitated process ensures that the necessary deliberation and dialogue occurs – people are listening to each other, considering the rationale or reason for competing view-



points (the interests that underlie the positions), and seeking solutions that integrate as many interests as possible.

Experience and a growing body of academic literature suggests that this approach to addressing natural resource conflicts:

- Results in decisions that are viewed as more fair and just and often receive broad public support;
- Saves time and money when compared to lobbying, litigation, and other ways of shaping public policy or resolving public disputes;
- Provides a direct and meaningful form of public participation;
- Fosters greater engagement and improves relationships and mutual understanding across divides;
- Effectively integrates social, political, and cultural values and knowledge with scientific and technical considerations;
- Makes implementation of decisions easier because the stakeholders have helped shape the proposed policy;
- Catalyzes multi-benefit solutions needed to address complex environmental challenges.



LEARNING OBJECTIVES

The NRCR Program inspires and equips future leaders with the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to prevent and resolve natural resources conflicts. It integrates theory, methods, and practice, and is organized around five major competencies.

ANALYTICAL COMPETENCY

The process of preventing and resolving natural resource conflicts revolves around multiple parties, interests, and values; complex issues; incomplete information and knowledge; and multiple approaches to engaging stakeholders, building agreements, and resolving conflicts. Analytical competencies help interested parties and process managers make sense of complex issues; manage information to solve problems; and design, manage, and adapt effective processes. More specific knowledge, skills, and abilities include:

History of Conflict Resolution Theory and Methods — Appreciate the history of alternative approaches to govern natural resources, engage citizens in public decisions, and resolve natural resource and environmental conflicts.

Stakeholder Analysis — Identify stakeholders and key issues; map the interests and concerns of stakeholders, including decision-makers; clarify options for citizen participation and public dispute resolution; determine if and when collaboration, consensus building, or conflict resolution is appropriate.

Social, Political, Legal, & Institutional Context — Analyze these contextual variables to clarify incentives and/or constraints to collaboration and conflict resolution; analyze the implications for public officials, public participation, delegation of authority, and disclosure and liability.

Decision Analysis for Negotiation and Agreement Seeking — Use analytical and strategic thinking to more clearly and explicitly define problems, generate creative options, evaluate the consequences and trade-offs of options, and maximize mutual gains.

Measuring Outcomes & Impacts of Conflict Resolution Processes — Apply alternative methods to evaluate the effectiveness of collaboration and other approaches to shape public policy and resolve natural resource disputes; develop evaluation criteria and indicators of success, including both process and outcome metrics.

Applications — Adapt theory and methods to public participation, community-based collaboration, partnerships, networks, administrative rulemaking, environmental impact assessment, resource planning, legislative policymaking, multi-jurisdictional issues, inter-agency coordination, court-connected disputes, intractable disputes, dispute systems design, collaborative governance, and international environmental issues.

PROCESS COMPETENCY

Collaboration and conflict resolution are, by definition, processes that engage people in face-to-face dialogue and deliberation. People with diverse interests and perspectives come together and

learn about each other and the issues at hand. They engage in formal negotiation and informal conversation. This process of engagement requires competency in communication, process design, teamwork, and negotiation. Through these competencies, interested parties and process managers jointly create the conditions required to build trust, facilitate communication, and seek understanding and agreement.

Communication — Listen actively, present ideas and information, and persuade or influence others; use different communication modes and media to reach different audiences; be sensitive with cross-cultural communication.

Process Design — Design public processes that are inclusive, informed, and deliberative; tailor the process to meet the needs and interests of stakeholders, and in a way that respects legal, political, biological, and other constraints

Teamwork — Manage group dynamics; build coalitions; work effectively in teams with diverse interests, knowledge, and skills; communicate within internal teams and in multiparty forums.

Negotiation — Participate effectively in multi-party public processes; work with others to find mutual gain solutions; create and claim value; sequence issues; package options; manage communication between representatives and their constituent groups.



LEADERSHIP & MANAGEMENT COMPETENCY

Natural resource conflict resolution, particularly through collaborative processes, requires special leadership and management competence to motivate and guide people. All interested participants are leaders in their own right, representing different jurisdictions or constituencies, interests, and perspectives -- as well as drawing on their own power and authority. Working across legal, institutional, cultural, knowledge, and other boundaries likewise requires a special type of “facilitative” or “collaborative” leadership.

Leadership Roles — Appreciate the different types of leadership needed in collaboration and conflict resolution – sponsors, conveners, facilitators, participants, experts, others; distinguish roles and responsibilities; avoid conflicts of interest.

Collaborative Leadership — Enable people with different viewpoints to accomplish a task that none of them could accomplish individually; lead as a peer, not a superior; encourage and facilitate cooperation, equity, trust, and group identity; foster commitment and team spirit; work with others to achieve common goals and realize a shared accomplishment; manage and resolve conflicts in a constructive manner; manage effective meetings.

Political & Entrepreneurial Skills — Inspire new ways of thinking, new perspectives on problems, and new approaches to shared decision making; develop the power of persuasion, ability to instill confidence and trust, and sensitivity to timing and flexibility of the decision-making arena to help other people overcome fear and resistance.

Facilitation and Mediation — Understand the value of impartial, nonpartisan facilitators and mediators in complex, multi-party natural resources issues; develop a working knowledge of the role of process managers in assessing situations, designing the right process, facilitating meetings, mediating disputes, drafting documents, and monitoring implementation; know when a facilitator or mediator is needed, what to look for in a qualified process manager, and how to select such a person or team.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT COMPETENCY

Managing knowledge — its generation, translation, and distribution – is critical to prevent and resolve natural resource conflicts. This skill set begins with the process of assembling all available information relevant to the problem or opportunity at hand, and then extends to assessing what participants know, don't know, and need to know to make informed decisions. It includes integrating scientific and technical information, Traditional Ecological Knowledge, cultural knowledge, and local experience and information. These objectives may be enhanced through the use of information and communication technology.

Joint Fact Finding — Assess information requirements for informed decision-making; embrace different ways of knowing and learning; apply joint fact-finding methods and standards to collect, analyze, and synthesize information; help people with diverse viewpoints build a common understanding of complex issues and resolve scientific and technical disputes.

Role of Experts — Clarify the role of scientific experts and technical information in providing baseline information, generating options, evaluating trade-offs, and invigorating the process of agreement building and dispute resolution.

Adaptive Management — Employ the principles and strategies of adaptive management during a collaborative or other conflict resolution process (i.e., adapt the process as needed), as well as during the process of implementation – as new ideas, information, and stakeholders emerge and other relevant variables change.

Technology — Appreciate the value and role of existing and emerging technology tools for decision support and spatial analysis; communications & social networking; understand the

merits of computing and communication technology in preventing and resolving natural resource conflicts.

PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY COMPETENCY

Engaging in negotiation, collaboration, and consensus-seeking processes to build agreement and resolve conflicts on natural resource issues implies a certain type of professional integrity and accountability (i.e., ethics) – one that places a premium on participating in good faith, being open and transparent, following-through on your commitments, and – in the case of process managers – separating personal values from the issues under consideration.

Code of Professional Conduct — Develop a working knowledge of one or more “codes of professional conduct” related to the field of collaboration and conflict resolution (e.g., Association for Conflict Resolution, International Association for Public Participation, and International Association of Facilitators) and acknowledging that professionalism varies across cultural contexts and communities.

Personal & Professional Development — Reflect on personal and professional effectiveness, seek feedback, and grow as a collaborative leader.



Photo credit: Tony Bynum

THE CURRICULUM

Students are required to take a total of 15 graduate-level credits from the courses provided below, including 9 required and 6 elective credits. Graduate students who complete the necessary requirements of the NRCR Program will be awarded a Certificate of Achievement in Natural Resources Conflict Resolution.

The NRCR Program can be embedded within a student's graduate program, or it may be completed as a stand-alone certificate. With proper planning, completion of the certificate program should not require any additional coursework or time for students seeking graduate or professional degrees.

REQUIRED COURSES (9 CREDITS TOTAL)

NATURAL RESOURCES CONFLICT RESOLUTION (LAW 613, 3 CREDITS)

This course examines the evolution of natural resources governance in the United States, particularly the American West. It focuses on alternative approaches to prevent and resolve natural resource and environmental conflicts, and emphasizes the history, theory, and methods of collaboration. By the end of the course, students will be able to identify the causes, dynamics, and consequences of natural resource and environmental conflicts; tailor collaboration and conflict resolution processes to the unique needs and interests of citizens, stakeholders, and decision-makers; participate effectively in multi-party public processes; understand the role and value of facilitators and mediators; and examine a number of issues such as clarifying the role of scientific and technical experts; engaging unaffiliated citizens; managing intractable environmental disputes; responding to regional, transboundary issues; and exploring alternative forms of governance. This course may also be taken for credit under NRSM 513 and ENST 513.

COLLABORATIVE SKILLS FOR NATURAL RESOURCE LEADERS (NRSM 515, 3 CREDITS)

Exceptional leaders share two important traits: the ability to negotiate effectively and the capacity to inspire and engage other people to solve problems. This course prepares future leaders to shape natural resources policy by developing and refining practical skills in negotiation, mediation, and leadership. Regardless of your interests and agenda, the ability to achieve short-term objectives and long-term goals depends on your capacity to communicate effectively, build coalitions of the unlike, forge agreements, and implement strategies to move from vision to action. This course may also be taken for credit under ENST 515 and COMX 515.

PRACTICUM IN COLLABORATIVE CONSERVATION (ENST 579, 3 CREDITS)

This three-credit practicum is the capstone experience of the NRCR Program. It provides students practical experience in stakeholder analysis, process design, multi-party negotiation, facilitation and mediation, and the examination of current issues related to collaboration and conflict reso-

lution. Students may design their own practicum in consultation with the Co-Chairs of the NRCR Program or participate in a practicum organized and convened by the Center for Natural Resources & Environmental Policy. Practicum projects may be conducted year-round. The practicum is available to students that are enrolled in the program and have completed LAW 613 and NRSM 515. In any given semester, students conducting a practicum meet on a regular basis to discuss progress, problems, and lessons learned. Students may also take the practicum for credit under NRSM 579.



ELECTIVE COURSES (6 CREDITS TOTAL)

NATURAL RESOURCES GOVERNANCE (SELECT 3 CREDITS)

In contrast to “government,” which refers to legal and institutional mandates and arrangements, “governance” refers to the style or method by which decisions are made and the way in which conflicts are resolved. It is about representation, style of interaction, authority, and decision rules. It also refers to processes that support governance: that is, fostering scientific and public learning and building civic and political will. The following menu of courses is representative of past and current course offerings that explore critical elements of natural resources governance. *Other courses may be considered and must be approved by the Co-Chairs of the NRCR Program.*

- Water Policy, NRSM 427 (3 credits)
- Natural Resources Policy and Administration, NRSM 422 (3 credits)
- Environmental Planning, GPHY 466 (3 credits)
- Planning Principles and Processes, GPHY 465 (3 credits)
- Environment and Development, NRSM 475/575 (3 credits)
- Political Ecology, NRSM 570 (3 credits)
- Perspectives in Human Dimensions, NRSM 574 (3 credits)
- Public Administration, PUAD 501 (3 credits)
- Policy Analysis, PUAD 503 (3 credits)

- Organization Theory, PUAD 504 (3 credits)
- Administrative Law, LAW 665/PUAD 523 (3 credits)
- American Indian Natural Resources Law, LAW 619 (3 credits)
- Climate and Society, NRSM 526 (3 credits)
- The Food-Energy-Water Nexus, NRSM 540 (3 credits)
- International Environmental Law, LAW 539 (3 credits)
- Intro. to Natural Resources-Environmental Law, LAW 650/ENST 563 (3 credits)
- Land Use Planning Law, LAW 687 (3 credits)
- Public Land & Resources Law, LAW 654 (3 credits)
- Renewable Energy Law, LAW 678/ credits)
- Sustainable Protected Area Management and Tourism, NRSM 584 (3 credits)
- Water Law, LAW 663 (3 credits)

BROADENING YOUR PERSPECTIVE

(SELECT 3 CREDITS FROM ANY CATEGORY)

Preventing, managing, and resolving natural resource conflicts requires a working knowledge of law, policy, science, history, culture, and many other disciplines. The following menu of courses are designed to broaden your perspective on natural resources policy, management, and conflict resolution. Other courses may be considered and must be approved by the Co-Chairs of the NRCR Program.

HISTORY AND PHILOSOPHY

- The American West, HSTA 566 (3 credits)
- Science and the Environment, PHL 523 (3 credits)
- Philosophy and Animals, PHL 548 (3 credits)
- Issues in the Anthropocene, PHL 515 (3 credits)
- Environmental Aesthetics, PHL (3 credits)

COLLABORATION AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Communication and Conflict, COMX 412 (3 credits)
- Risk, Crisis, and Communication, COMX 424 (3 credits)
- Rhetoric and Environmental Controversy, COMX 575 (3 credits)
- Alternative Dispute Resolution, LAW 614 (3 credits)
- Negotiations, LAW 641 (2 credits)
- Modern Political Theory, PSCI 553 (3 credits)

ECOLOGY

- International Conservation and Development, NRSM 571 (3 credits)
- Seminar in Planning, GPHY 560 (3 credits)

ECONOMICS

- ECONOMICS OF THE ENVIRONMENT, ECNS 433 (3 CREDITS)

JOURNALISM

- Journalism and Society Seminar, JRNL 505 (3 credits)
- Reporting Environmental Science and Natural Resources Issues, JRNL 570 (3 credits)

ALUMNI REFLECTIONS

“My participation in the NRCR program has been a highlight of my graduate school experience. The program offers unique, practical skills around collaboration, conflict management, and facilitation that are so crucial to both natural resource careers and any job or personal experience involving collaboration. The program is unique in its hands-on approach that allows students to practice actual skills in safe spaces in addition to discussing ideas and theory. The practicum project itself is a wonderful opportunity to be in service to an organization or collaborative that offers ample flexibility for students to foster and continue the growth of the skills they learn in the program. My particular practicum - designing and facilitating equity sessions and conducting needs assessments with local conservation organizations aided my skills in a real-world context that wonderfully complemented my Master’s thesis. The practicum class is further valuable in its collaborative nature that allows for students to workshop and troubleshoot their projects, in contrast to the siloed nature of many Master program projects. Shawn, Travis, and Nick are incredible resources, both to support students’ growth in collaborative skills, as well as to network and connect with folks in the larger industry. I can’t recommend this program enough! – *Ian Craighead (2024)*

“Participating in the NRCR Program has significantly broadened my perspective on collaborative processes and strengthened my skills in conflict resolution. This experience not only enriched my graduate studies in Wildlife Biology but also equipped me for my future career in wildlife habitat management and conservation. This certificate program provided me with the opportunity to take courses that are easily applicable to my future goals and allowed me hands-on experience in multi-party planning processes. I plan to apply these acquired skills in my professional career, where I am certain to encounter various natural resource conflicts. I now feel well-prepared to be someone who can effectively address these challenges.” — *Meg Euclide (2024)*

“The skills that I learned through the NRCR program were applicable throughout my graduate experience. Through the program, I found myself surrounded by other students that are invested in collaborative approaches and understanding relationships with place. The program also provided opportunities to network with alumni and practitioners, which proved invaluable as I transitioned from graduate school to the workforce.” — *Taylor Tewkesbury, Education Program Coordinator, Swan Valley Connections (2023)*

Graduating from the Natural Resources Conflict Resolution Program has been a highlight of my experience at the University of Montana. NRCR staff and classmates created a supportive and engaging classroom environment that built off my interest and experiences to provide a tailored learning experience that helped ground me in place, expand my knowledge beyond my primary field of study, and advance my career. The collaborative, alternative conflict resolution practice that I learned in the NRCR program quickly proved to be an essential skill set for my professional goals and a career in natural resource management. I feel so fortunate to have been a part of the NRCR community during my time at the University of Montana, and I look forward to continuing to engage with its resources and network.” — *Peter Whitney, Conservation Lands Program Specialist, City of Missoula (2023)*

The NRCR program was the reason I chose to attend the University of Montana. The Center for Natural Resources and Environmental Policy provided excellent instruction, mentorship, and access to professional opportunities, as well as continued support in my other academic and professional pursuits. My favorite part of the NRCR program was the interdisciplinary nature of the classes, drawing students from all disciplines to represent different perspectives on how to best resolve natural resource disputes. Upon completing the program, I have a much better understanding of how to build consensus while still advocating for my interests. — *Oliver Wood, Staff Attourney, Utah Legal Services (2019)*

“The NRCR program was a great option for me as a non-degree seeking graduate student. I didn’t have the time or money to get my masters, and this program allowed me access to a graduate-level education. My practicum also turned into full-time employment, and opened up doors for me that would not have existed without this program. In my current position, I lean heavily on the facilitation and process management skills I developed in the NRCR program. There is no doubt that this program launched my career down the path I had been trying to access unsuccessfully, for years.” — *Emily Harkness, High Divide Program Manager, Heart of the Rockies (2019)*

“The NRCR Program helped to better inform and compliment my career in journalism. It taught me to be a neutral party when in a place of conflict, and to lay biases aside when reporting or facilitating. It integrated a wide range of disciplines and emphasized the role of law, science, culture, politics, and history in understanding natural resource conflicts and seeking mutual gain solutions. I highly recommend this program to any graduate student interested in and passionate about people and the environment, regardless of your background or future path.” — *Madison Dapceovich, Science Journalist (2017)*

“The NRCR program provided me with a wide array of professional tools for following my interests in collaborative decision-making, watershed governance, and transboundary conflict resolution. The practicum project for this program even became the centerpiece for my environmental studies master’s portfolio. The program’s interdisciplinary format contributed to skills in building social capital and developing creative problem solving strategies. Ultimately, the strength of the NRCR program is that the faculty integrates in-depth theoretical knowledge with applied practices and approaches, allowing students to forge skills directly related to their interests and professional careers.” — *Dov Weinman, Executive Director, Middle Fork Willamette Watershed Council (2015)*

“As an incoming graduate student in the College of Forestry and Conservation, I sought to build an interdisciplinary program that fused my past experience in policy science with natural resource management. The NRCR Program’s strong foundation in theory, coupled with applied practice of the most cutting edge tools in collaboration and conflict resolution, provided a unique and effective framework for my research and professional career. I firmly believe that the collaborative, alternative dispute resolution skills taught in the NRCR Program are the future of natural resource decision-making. I’m thrilled to have a program like this as a resource and network.” — *Emily Olsen, Vice President for the Rocky Mountain Region, Trout Unlimited (2013)*

PROGRAM CO-CHAIRS

Travis Anklam is the Collaborative Learning Program Director at the Center for Natural Resources & Environmental Policy. Travis facilitates and coordinates many of the Center's projects and collaborative learning activities, connecting and empowering people to address complex challenges and realize better outcomes for their landscapes and communities. He serves as co-chair of the Center's Natural Resources Conflict Resolution Graduate Certificate Program, supporting emerging collaborative leaders from diverse backgrounds and disciplines. He also works with several regional networks that connect people to advance the practice of landscape stewardship, including the Western Collaborative Conservation Network.

Shawn Johnson is Director of the Center for Natural Resources & Environmental Policy at the University of Montana and Co-Chair of the Center's graduate certificate program in Natural Resources Conflict Resolution. Shawn enjoys working with the Center's talented team and partners to create spaces to reimagine and make meaningful progress on conflicts, challenges, and opportunities related to a wide range of complex, adaptive natural resource and environmental challenges. Shawn organizes and leads strategic planning and capacity building workshops for a wide variety of organizations focused on natural resource policy and management and has served as a facilitator and mediator on issues ranging from land use planning and forest management to conservation priority setting and regional collaboration.



GUIDELINES FOR STUDENTS

Current or admitted graduate students at the University of Montana can apply to the program by submitting a **Letter of Intent** to the program co-chairs that includes:

- A statement of interest outlining how the NRCR Program contributes to the student's academic and professional goals;
- A proposed list of courses — including both required and elective courses — to meet the required number of credits for the program as well as other courses for your graduate degree. Elective courses that are not listed on the suggested list of elective courses must be approved by the NRCR Program co-chairs; and a
- Current Professional Resume
- [See an example of a Letter of Intent](#)

Prospective students seeking to complete the program as a stand-alone graduate certificate can apply to the program through the [graduate school](#). Applications must include the following materials:

- A **Letter of Intent** including:
 1. A statement of interest outlining how the NRCR Program contributes to the student's academic and professional goals; and
 2. A proposed list of courses — including both required and elective courses — to meet the required number of credits for the program. Elective courses that are not listed on the suggested list of elective courses must be approved by the NRCR Program co-chairs.
 3. [See an example of a Letter of Intent](#)
- **One Letter of Reference** from someone who can speak to your professional and/or academic ability and potential.
- **Current Professional Resume.**
- **Official Transcripts** from completed undergraduate and (if applicable) graduate studies.

Upon admission to the program, students must complete the following to earn the NRCR graduate certificate:

- Meet with the program co-chairs to review learning goals, curriculum requirements, and practicum-related interests.
- Successfully complete the required and elective courses.
- Prepare a final self-evaluation of knowledge, skills, and abilities, and meet with the program co-chairs for an exit interview.

Upon completing the NRCR Program, students are encouraged to participate in the NRCR Program alumni network.

ENROLLMENT

Enrollment policies are dictated by the Graduate School and there are no additional departmental requirements. These are described in more detail on [Grad School Policies](#) website.

Graduate students must register for credits each Autumn and Spring semester to maintain continuous enrollment. Summer credits are not necessarily required if a student is enrolled in

Spring and will be enrolled again the following Autumn semester. If graduating during the summer (and therefore not intending to enroll during the Autumn semester) the student must enroll for at least 1 credit during the summer.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE & READMISSION

Students must petition for a leave of absence if they are not continuously registered. Continuous registration requires completing at least 3 credits per semester. Students who step out of their graduate programs without an approved leave-of-absence for more than two consecutive semester terms will be dropped from their program's roster and will need to petition the program Co-chairs and the Graduate School for readmission. The petition for readmission will require an evaluation of the student's progress and a plan for completing the degree. Not all students will be readmitted.

GRADUATE SCHOOL CATALOGUE

The UM Graduate Catalog is the sole source of information on approved curricula. Students will be held to the degree requirements found in the Graduate Catalog based on their admissions/catalog term. For information about course curricula, academic programs, transferring credits, academic probation and suspension, please review the [Graduate School Catalogue](#).

TRACKING ACADEMIC PROGRESS

Program instructors and Co-chairs will work with students to track academic progress, using Degree Works. If the information reflected is incorrect, contact the program Co-chairs with the necessary changes.

STUDENT CONDUCT CODE

All students are held to a high standard of academic integrity, in line with the [UM Student Conduct Code](#). While students in the program are encouraged to collaborate on assignments, study, and learn together, plagiarism and cheating are unacceptable and are not tolerated under any circumstances. Any plagiarism and cheating may result in a student's removal from the program and university.

UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA NON-DISCRIMINATION & TITLE IX STATEMENT

The University of Montana is committed to providing a learning and working environment that promotes respect, dignity, and equity for all individuals. In accordance with federal and state law, the University does not discriminate—and prohibits discrimination—on the basis of race, religion, color, national or ethnic origin, ancestry, creed, sex (including pregnancy, childbirth, lactation or related medical conditions), gender, (including gender identity, gender expression, and gender transition), sexual orientation, physical or mental disability (including having a history of a disability or being regarded as having a disability), marital or family status, genetic characteristics or information, age, veteran or military status, political ideas, or any other legally protected classification in its educational programs and activities, including admission and employment.

In accordance with Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 and its implementing regulations, the University of Montana does not discriminate on the basis of sex in any education program or activity that it operates. This requirement extends to admission and employment. Inquiries about the application of Title IX may be referred to the University's Title IX Coordinator.

The University of Montana has designated a Title IX Coordinator and Director of Equal Opportunity to coordinate its compliance with Title IX and other non-discrimination laws and policies. Their contact information is:

Title IX Coordinator and Director of Equal Opportunity

Office of Conflict, Resolution, & Policy

University Hall 004

University of Montana

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Phone: (406) 243-5710

Email: conflict@umontana.edu

Website: umt.edu/eo

[Submit a report online](#)

Individuals may also contact the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) with inquiries, questions, or complaints at:

Office for Civil Rights (OCR)

U.S. Department of Education

400 Maryland Avenue, SW

Washington, D.C. 20202-1100

Phone: 800-421-3481

TDD: 800-877-8339

Email: OCR@ed.gov

Website: <https://www.ed.gov/ocr>

Any person may report discrimination, harassment (including sexual harassment), or retaliation—by using the contact information listed above, or by any other means that results in the Title IX Coordinator or the Office of Conflict, Resolution, & Policy receiving the report. Reports may be submitted at any time, including during non-business hours.

The University has adopted and published grievance procedures providing for the prompt and equitable resolution of student and employee complaints of discrimination, harassment, retaliation, and sexual harassment, including formal complaints under Title IX. Information about how to file a report or formal complaint, and how the University will respond, is available from the Office of Conflict Resolution and Policy on the [Equal Opportunity and Title IX website](#), including:

- [Discrimination, Harassment, and Retaliation Policy and Procedures](#)
- [Sexual Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) (anticipated issuance in August 2025)

This non-discrimination statement is prominently displayed on the University of Montana's website and included in relevant publications, including handbooks and catalogs distributed to students, employees, applicants, and unions or professional organizations holding collective bargaining or professional agreements with the University.

WHAT YOU'LL LEARN

Public Participation

▪

Community-based Collaboration

▪

Collaborative Conservation

▪

Public Policy Dispute Resolution

▪

Consensus Building

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Multiparty Negotiation

▪

Facilitation and Mediation

▪

Collaborative Leadership Skills

▪

Collaborative Governance

▪

Cultural Humility



The University of Montana

32 Campus Drive • Missoula, MT 59812

www.naturalresourcespolicy.org