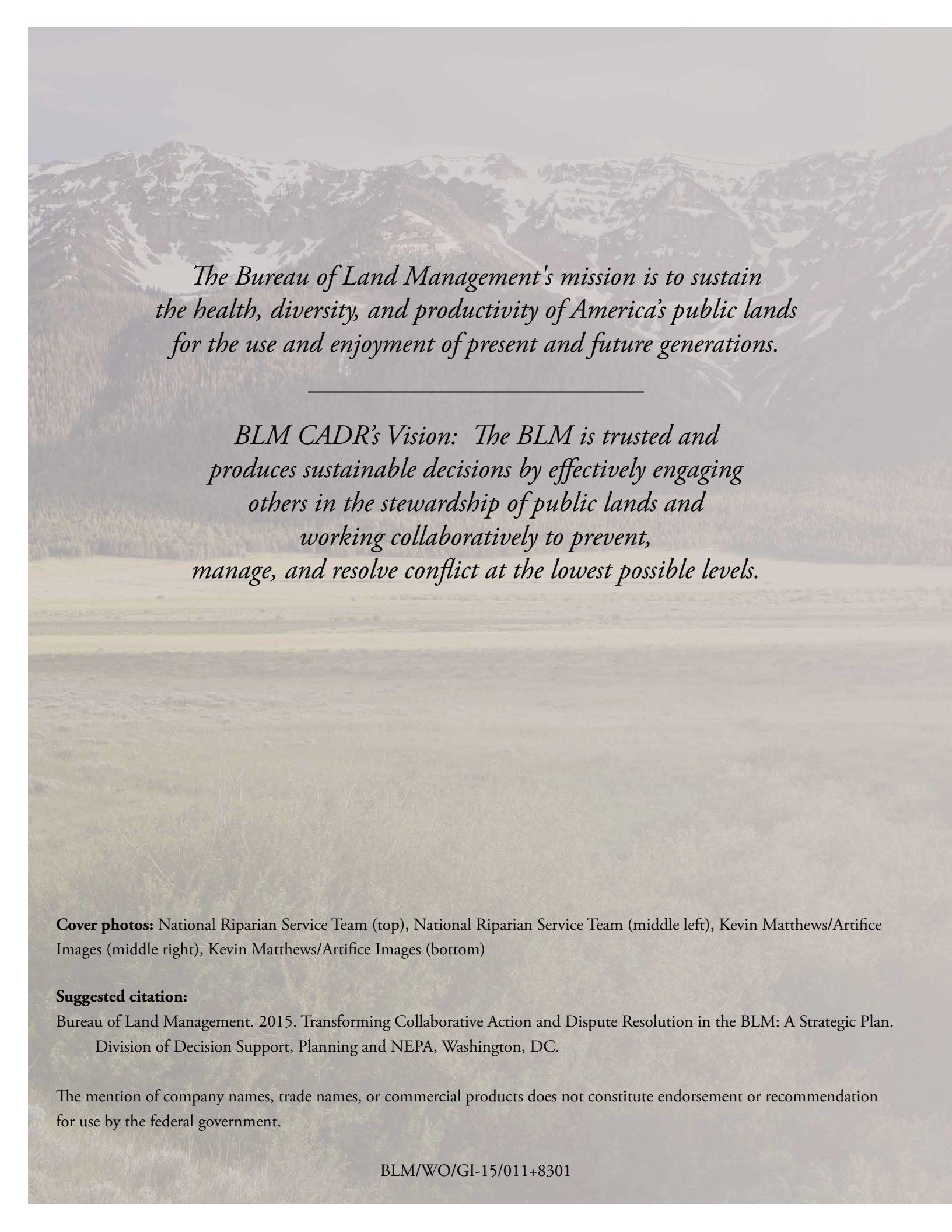**Bureau of Land Management**

Transforming Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution in the BLM: A Strategic Plan

November 2015

The Bureau of Land Management's mission is to sustain the health, diversity, and productivity of America's public lands for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

BLM CADR's Vision: The BLM is trusted and produces sustainable decisions by effectively engaging others in the stewardship of public lands and working collaboratively to prevent, manage, and resolve conflict at the lowest possible levels.

Message from the Deputy Director to BLM Employees

In more than three decades of working at the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) and the U.S. Forest Service, I have seen a broad range of outcomes when engaging our stakeholders in natural resource management issues. Today, we are witnessing rapid social and technological change. As budgets and capacity shrink, I believe now more than ever that the BLM needs to pool its resources with others to solve challenging natural resource problems. The resource values that the BLM has traditionally managed are changing, and we need to be adaptable to new paradigms where many communities are trying to preserve their values, way of life, or economy. We need different ways of thinking about how we manage public lands when we want different things out of the same land base. We need a strategy for managing public lands that will encourage people to work together to seek shared solutions with broad support.

The BLM's Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution Program (BLM CADR) strategic plan seeks to meet these challenges by responding to the practical, field-level needs that you identified in 2013 through the CADR employee survey. Training, mentoring, third-party facilitation, and a network for supporting landscape-scale efforts will all factor strongly in our efforts to develop a broader base of collaborative practices and skills. In this way, we will continue to develop a workforce that is competent in using collaborative approaches to resolve complex and difficult situations, and able to identify opportunities that are ripe for cooperation.

BLM leadership will continue to rely on the experiences and innovative thinking of our employees on the "frontlines" of resource management and collaborative action to find new ways to bring people together, share information, and build transparency. It is from among you, the heavy-lifters, working with people who don't always see eye-to-eye, that we will discover answers to problems that we can't solve alone.

Our expectations are shared—just as I expect you to do your best to understand diverse perspectives on challenging issues and to explore shared solutions, you can expect BLM leadership to provide the support, tools, and resources needed to facilitate success on the ground. I ask you to join me in engaging in a conversation on how we can, together, establish and sustain durable and long-lasting collaborative relationships in our communities.

Steve Ellis

The Circle

If you:
Listen with respect
    Understanding,
      TRUST,
        Learning,
A new perspective
    Growing
      Resolving
        Adapting
          Will Result.

Photos: David Pritchett, BLM

Bureau of Land Management

Transforming Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution in the BLM:
A Strategic Plan

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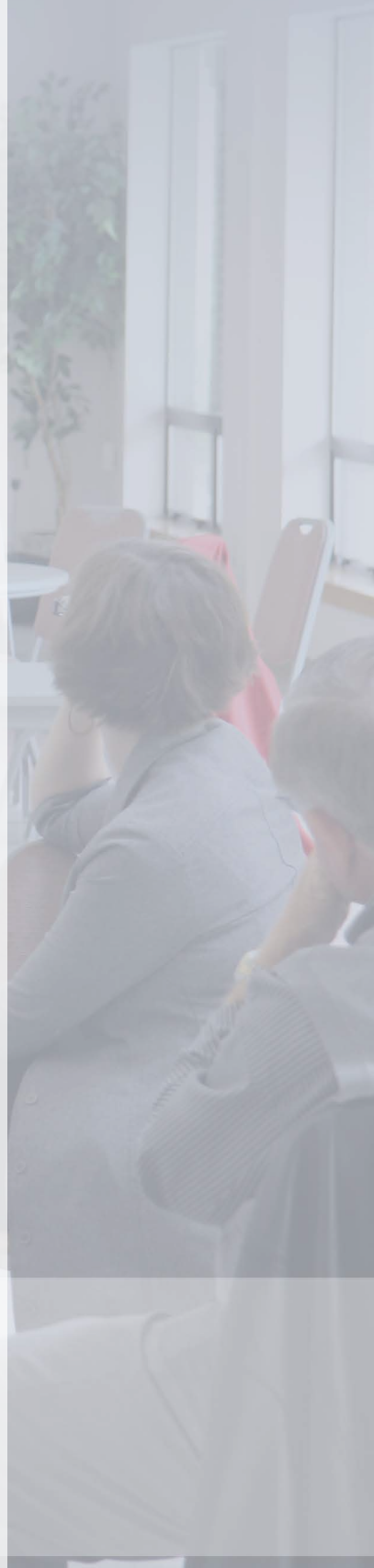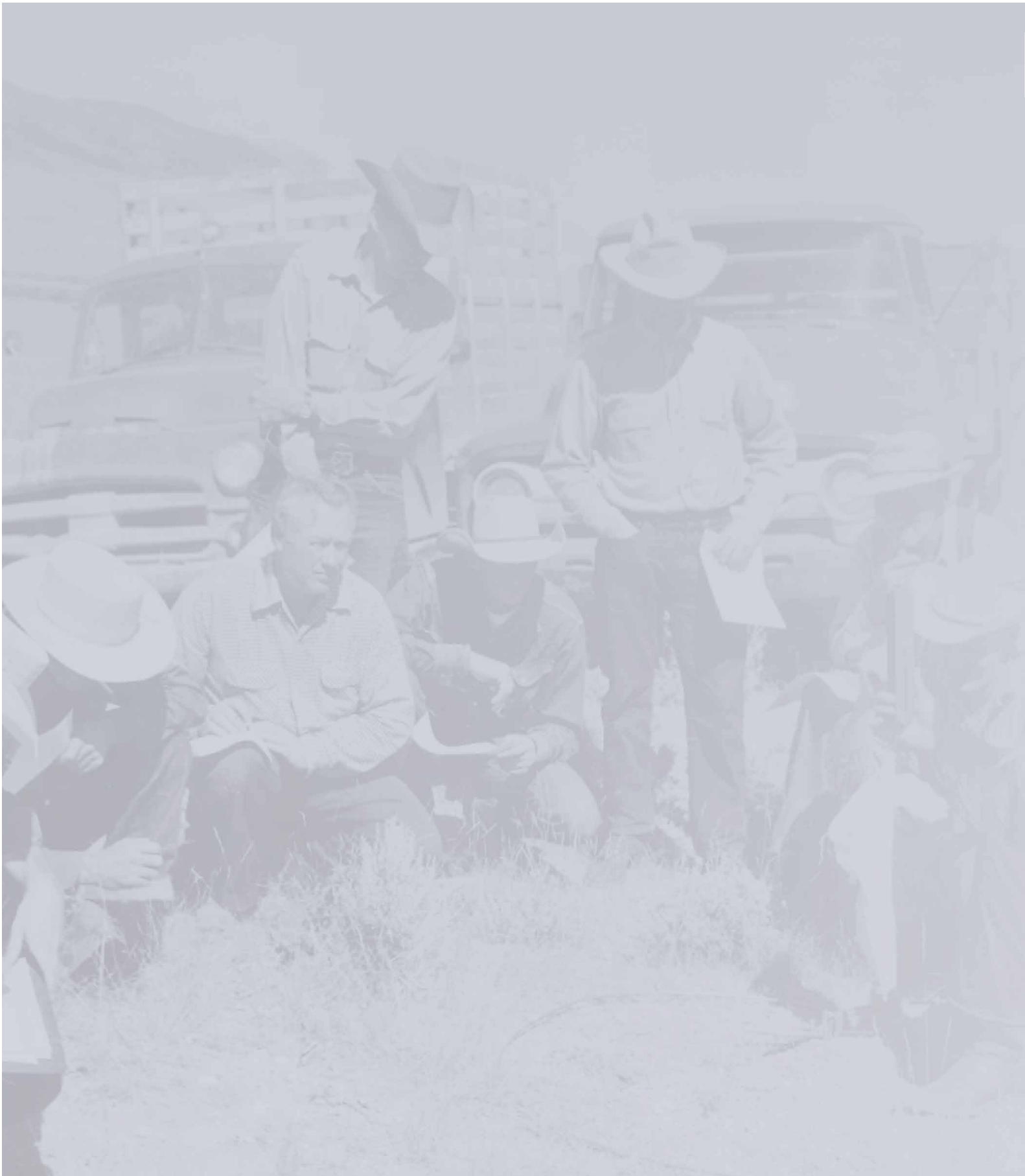
Historical photos are taken from the BLM archive. This strategic plan builds on a legacy of working together with other agencies, governments, stakeholders, and the public, and supports increasingly effective engagement into the future as we confront broader, landscape-scale issues and challenges.

Contents

Executive Summary

Collaborative action refers to a suite of processes that facilitate two or more parties working together to solve commonly held issues that neither c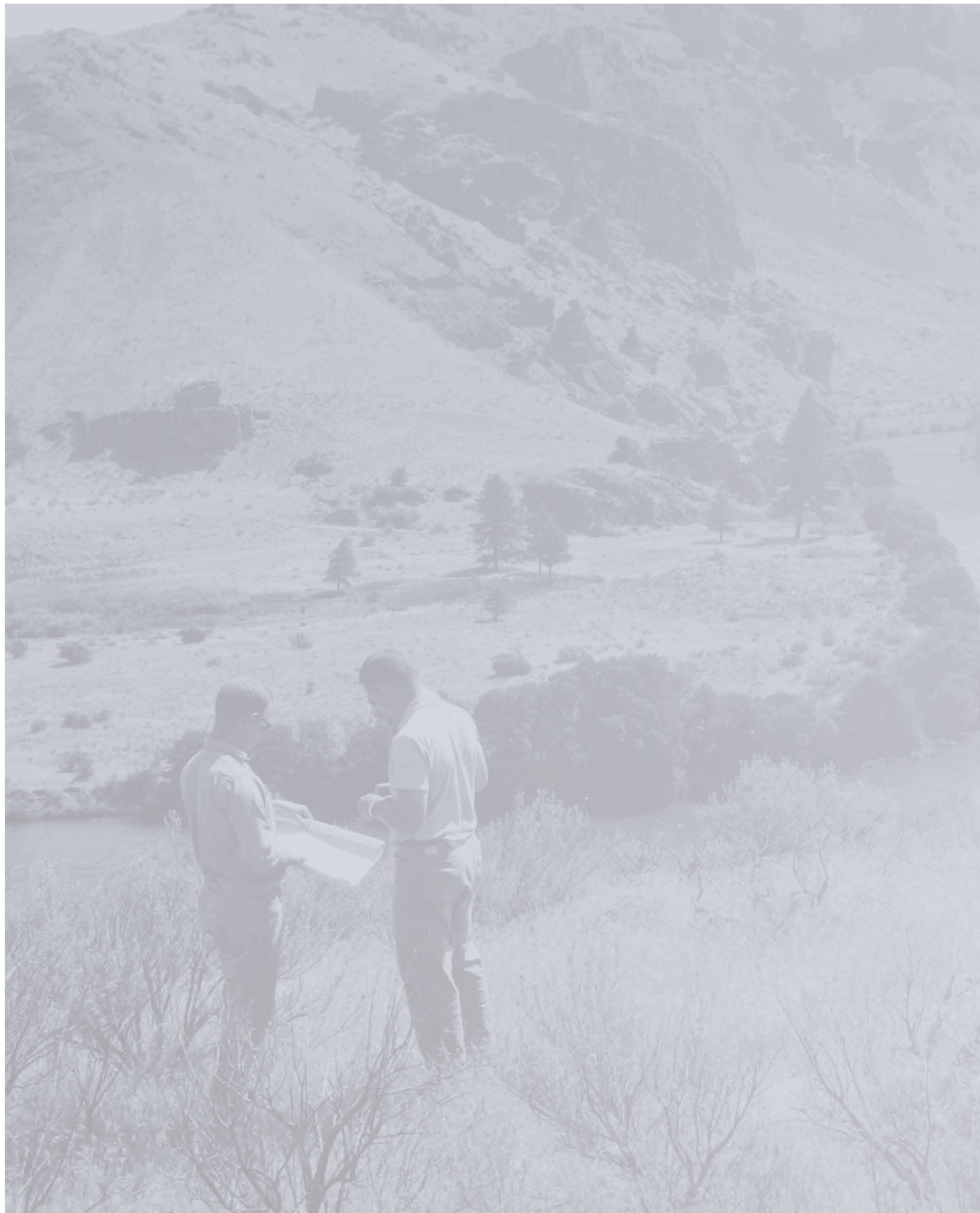an solve individually. The commitment of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) to collaborative action reflects a belief that this approach will yield more informed and implementable decisions, that it will improve relationships, and that it will result in more sustainable communities and landscapes.

The BLM's Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution Program (BLM CADR) builds upon the Bureau's history of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) by taking a more comprehensive approach. By inviting collaborative action on land management issues, instead of simply addressing after-the-fact conflicts over those decisions, BLM CADR moves our values in partnership further in line with modern economic and social realities. In BLM CADR's vision, the BLM is trusted and produces sustainable decisions by effectively engaging others in the stewardship of public lands and working collaboratively to prevent, manage, and resolve conflict at the lowest possible levels.

Toward this end, the BLM CADR Program provides leadership, guidance, and assistance in collaborative efforts to accomplish the BLM's mission. The program's support network extends from leadership at all levels, through CADR coordinators in each state and center, to a community of practice that advises peers throughout the organization. The strategic plan presented here is designed to broaden employees' awareness of available processes for collaborative action and dispute resolution and to support the practical application of these processes at the field level.

The BLM's greatest resource is its employees, and in 2013–14 the BLM reached out for employee input during the strategic planning process. Specifically, the BLM partnered with the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS), Social and Economic Analysis Branch, to design and administer a:

- **Quantitative survey of BLM employees** in job series likely to have collaboration experience or likely to gain such experience. A total of 6,734 BLM employees received the survey, and 45 percent responded. The survey examined employees' knowledge and perceptions about conflict/dispute resolution and collaboration, and it asked what information and resources employees use and need.

- **Qualitative interviews of BLM field managers** representing decision makers who are closest to our mission on the ground. The USGS invited 22 randomly selected field managers for interviews and received 100 percent cooperation. The interviews further explored the keys and challenges to collaborative success, stakeholder opportunities, and needs for training, networking, and support.

Survey results showed that BLM managers and staff, across the board, believe that collaborative action is worthwhile for many BLM program activities. For many employees, it is, or will likely be, a significant part of their duties. Findings also confirmed, however, that situational and organizational barriers often hamper employees' ability to participate effectively in collaborative efforts. Survey respondents consistently responded that they need both formal and informal training, networks for peer learning and mentoring, and broad support throughout the leadership chain of command.

The BLM CADR strategic plan seeks to address the program needs identified in these surveys, and to support the attainment of the program's vision, by pursuing four goals to:

- Champion a collaborative culture
- Create a common understanding
- Build collaborative capacity
- Foster accountability and assess outcomes

Collaborative action is integral to the BLM's fulfillment of its multiple-use mission. Many environmental challenges facing the Bureau—including climate change, sage grouse habitat, and the recovery of threatened and endangered species—demand broadscale solutions and call out for the BLM to work across boundaries. By implementing the BLM CADR strategic plan, the BLM will transform the Bureau into a partner that is well able to engage in both collaborative action and dispute resolution for the benefit of America's public lands.

Photo: Kevin Matthews/Artifice Images

Section 1:
The Changing Role of Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution in Land Management

Background

The scope and focus of natural resource and public land management has changed over time and now often requires increased use of collaborative processes.[1] Traditionally, federal land management agencies focused on a utilitarian-centered public good; in-house experts generally made the decisions and often focused on single issues divorced from the larger ecological and social context. By the 1960s, however, a strong challenge to this perspective emerged from a public that showed an increasing distrust in governmental agencies, demanded a greater role in natural resource decision-making, and expressed a desire to see a broader range of societal values addressed in natural resource policy and planning. These public challenges led to significant, legislatively mandated changes in agency planning policies through the passage of such statutes as The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969.

Traditional natural resource decision-making and management characteristics:	Emerging natural resource management (post-1990s) characteristics:
- minimum communication and integration across disciplines and programs - a focus on attaining short-term outcomes linked to specific values - minimum coordinated management across jurisdictional boundaries - an environment shaped by lawsuits and regulatory approaches that typically left out the people who were most affected by these natural resource decisions and/or who were responsible for implementing them	- a reliance on interdisciplinary communication and problem solving - a focus on attaining long-term goals and objectives related to ecosystem health - a preference for landscape-scale, cross-boundary planning - a preference for collaborative action and processes that allow for ongoing discussion and deliberation with and among experts and stakeholders

A key goal of these policy changes was to reduce public conflict and controversy through increased opportunities for public input and consideration of social and economic values.

The way in which these policies were implemented, however, typically provided for after-the-fact public review. Public engagement processes were not designed to build sufficient understanding of underlying values or to create opportunities for true participation in the discussion and deliberation required to reach a decision that would meet the needs of all parties. As a consequence, there was often widespread public dissatisfaction with both the decision-making process and its outcomes. This resulted in gridlock on the ground and limited resources for the development and implementation of creative solutions to natural resource problems.

In response to the problems with expert-based and NEPA-based decision-making and management, the use of collaborative and other dispute resolution processes gained popularity in the mid-1990s.

> When multiple ways of life are dependent upon [the] same resource—and that resource is threatened—and all wish to sustain their ways of life—then the manner in which they all relate to the resource and to each other must be transformed, such that both the resource is restored and the ways of life are sustained.
>
> (Messier 2012) [2]

These types of approaches are grounded in the belief that if you bring together the right people, in constructive ways, with good information, they will produce better decisions (more informed, effective, sustainable, and popular). These processes will also produce improved relationships and more sustainable communities and landscapes.

Collaborative action rests on the premise that it is through the use of reason and the development of reciprocal understanding, shared knowledge, and mutual trust and accord among individuals that they work to advance the common interest.

Some of the most controversial and politicized environmental debates in the United States today concern the appropriate management of natural resources and public lands. The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) administers more public lands (over 245 million acres) than any other federal agency. As a result of the BLM's multiple-use mission—to balance in a sustainable way the health, diversity, and productivity of the public lands—the BLM is at the heart of many controversial issues. Issues facing the agency vary widely in terms of scientific, legal, and social complexity (and the information available to understand them), as well as in their public contentiousness.

Many of today's natural resource and public land management problems are characterized by high levels of scientific and regulatory complexity, limited information for understanding the issue, and diverse and often competing values. They are interdependent or interrelated problems that cannot be solved in relative isolation from one another; and they have a range of alternative solutions, each with different implications for people and natural resources/public lands. See Figure 1 for a graphical representation of how the complexity of issues and competing values require different levels of stakeholder and public review.

(High) scientific and regulatory complexity	Expert deliberation, periodic stakeholder/ public review	Expert and stakeholder/public deliberation
(Low) scientific and regulatory complexity	Periodic review by all	Public deliberation, periodic review by experts
	(Low) competing values	(High) competing values

Figure 1: Recommended balance of expert and public engagement, depending on issue complexity and competing values [3]

The successful negotiation of these problems requires a new approach. It requires ongoing dialogue and deliberation among experts and stakeholders to build familiarity with the issues, the diversity of viewpoints, and the complexity of ecological and social systems. When this type of engagement is not an event, but rather a continuous activity, it can build trust and legitimacy for public action and decisions.

The BLM's Role

In 1997 the BLM's Executive Leadership Team established the Natural Resource Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) Program within the BLM Director's office to strengthen and increase BLM employees' skill with and use of collaborative engagement, public involvement, and dispute resolution. Also in 1997, the BLM articulated a strategic plan for incorporating collaboration and alternative dispute resolution into the Bureau's land management practices. "In the spirit of collaboration and partnership building, it is BLM's goal to incorporate and improve upon existing dispute resolution techniques to create more communicative and cooperative and less adversarial partnerships in our public and land user relationships."[4]

The plan noted that the BLM had "historically used alternative dispute resolution as a means to resolve differences internally, particularly related to EEO [Equal Employment Opportunity] complaints."[5] The strategic plan strove to further its application, encouraging its use as a way to address the "conflicts and confrontations that arise as a result of BLM's complex, multiple-use mission" (for example, wild horses and burros, rangelands, solid minerals, recreation, and land use planning). The hope was that alternative dispute resolution would result in "improved relationships, better decisions, a better climate for resolution, expedited procedures, reduced costs, enhanced flexibility…and an increased probability that decisions will hold up."[6]

Today it is clear that many of the environmental challenges that the BLM faces cross administrative boundaries and demand broadscale, integrated solutions. Climate change, sage grouse habitat, and the recovery of threatened and endangered species are all landscape-scale issues that are moving our agency from managing a land base bound by our administrative authority to one that compels us to work across boundaries.

Consequently, BLM policy is increasingly embracing collaborative processes as alternatives to conventional, adversarial processes whenever appropriate for BLM projects, plans, and decision-making. (See Appendix B.) Adversarial processes frequently leave few stakeholders truly satisfied, and the high costs of litigation can divert resources from more productive functions. Parties with strong legal expertise have been able to extend and "ride out" court delays, giving these parties an advantage in negotiations. Moreover, although court decisions may settle a particular conflict, the problems that created the conflict often continue to exist. By contrast, the effective use of collaborative action and dispute resolution offers a way forward to genuine solutions. Future generations will judge the Bureau's current success in this regard based on progress made under the leadership of the BLM's Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution Program (BLM CADR), discussed in Section 2.

> Collaboration: A process in which interested parties, often with widely varied interests, work together to seek solutions with broad support. [7]

Legal Mandates

Multiple laws and executive branch directives have mandated or encouraged the federal government's use of dispute resolution, conflict prevention, and collaborative action in appropriate circumstances. In addition to the BLM's central precepts, such as stakeholder involvement and the consideration of public values in the Federal Land Policy and Management Act and NEPA, many other legal and regulatory mandates are relevant to the BLM's mission:

Contract Disputes Act of 1978, as amended – Allows contractors and federal agencies to use mutually agreeable ADR techniques to resolve contracting disputes.

> Collaborative action refers to a suite of processes and arrangements that facilitate two or more parties working together to solve a set of resource issues that they cannot solve individually. The BLM CADR strategic plan does not replace other special relationships, such as cooperative or coordination status for state and local governments, or the government-to-government relationship and consultation with tribes. The collaborative and dispute resolution processes and support championed by this strategic plan are designed to complement these existing relationships.

Negotiated Rulemaking Act of 1990 – Codifies that collaborative or negotiated rulemaking is legal and encourages federal agencies to use negotiated rulemaking when appropriate to enhance the informal rulemaking process. (Reauthorized in and incorporated into the Administrative Procedure Act; further encouraged by Executive Order 12866, "Regulatory Planning and Review.")

Administrative Dispute Resolution Act of 1996 – Requires all federal agencies to establish policy concerning ADR processes, encourage the use of ADR, designate a dispute resolution specialist, and provide related training.

Executive Order 12988, "Civil Justice Reform" (1996) – Requires federal litigation counsel to consider ADR processes and encourage use of ADR when it would "materially contribute to prompt, fair, and efficient resolution of the claims."

Alternative Dispute Resolution Act of 1998 – Authorizes the use of ADR techniques in federal court cases.

Environmental Policy and Conflict Resolution Act of 1998 – Establishes the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (USIECR) within the Morris K. Udall Foundation to help parties resolve environmental, public lands, and natural resources conflicts that involve federal agencies or interests. (The act amends the Morris K. Udall Scholarship and Excellence in National Environmental and Native American Public Policy Act of 1992.)

Presidential Memorandum, "Designation of Interagency Committee[s] to Facilitate and Encourage Agency Use of Alternate Means of Dispute Resolution and Negotiated Rulemaking" (1998) – Directs agencies with a "significant interest in dispute resolution" to form an interagency committee to promote ADR and negotiated rulemaking.

Department of the Interior Secretarial Order on Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution (2001) – Establishes the Office of Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution (CADR) with

the Department of the Interior (DOI) to promote a culture and climate where appropriate dispute resolution mechanisms and collaborative and consensus-building processes are used effectively to assess, prevent, manage, and resolve conflicts. (DOI's dispute resolution specialist and the director of the CADR Office are one and the same; each bureau's dispute resolution specialist sits on the Interior Dispute Resolution Council along with the DOI CADR Office.)

Environmental Policy and Conflict Resolution Advancement Act of 2003 – Provided $4 million in funding for USIECR during 2004–2008 to support resolution of environmental conflicts.

Executive Order 13352, "Facilitation of Cooperative Conservation" (2004) – Directs various departments (Interior, Agriculture, Commerce, and Defense) and the Environmental Protection Agency to implement environmental and natural resources laws that encourage cooperative conservation and that include local participation in federal decision-making when appropriate. The order also directs the same agencies to convene a conference for sharing relevant information and advice. (DOI's response included publication of "A Common Sense Approach to Collaboration and Partnering at the U.S. Department of the Interior: A Plan of Action for the Years 2006–2010" and a list of collaborative competencies based on the Office of Personnel Management's "Proficiency Levels for Leadership Competencies.")

Office of Management and Budget and President's Council on Environmental Quality, Memorandum on Environmental Conflict Resolution (2005) – Directs federal agencies to increase capacity for and use of environmental conflict resolution and collaborative problem solving by adopting mechanisms and strategies such as those described in the memorandum. The memorandum requires agencies to report annually on their progress to the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ).

Presidential Memorandum, "Transparency and Open Government" (2009) – Calls for agencies to make information about their activities and decisions more available to the

public; to provide the public with more opportunities for input into policy-making; and to seek out opportunities and new methodologies for collaboration within and across the federal government and with the private sector. It also requires an Open Government Directive from OMB's director, specifying implementation actions for federal agencies.

Office of Management and Budget Memorandum, "Open Government Directive" (2009) – Pursuant to the President's "Transparency and Open Government" memorandum, this memorandum instructs federal agencies to improve information and publish online, promote a collaborative culture, and create enabling policy for using new and emerging technologies to further the principles expressed in the President's memorandum.

Presidential Memorandum, "Tribal Consultation" (2009) – Directs all departments and independent agencies to develop a detailed plan of action implementing Executive Order 13175 "Consultation and Coordination with Indian Tribal Governments," and to improve government-to-government coordination and consultation with tribes. (DOI responded with a new "Policy on Consultation with Indian Tribes" for bringing more issues under consultation, encouraging early tribal participation, involving the appropriate level of decision makers, and creating a Department-wide tribal governance officer.)

Office of Management and Budget and President's Council on Environmental Quality, Memorandum on Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution (2012) – Expands on the 2005 memo by encouraging "upstream" collaborative activities and the use of assisted (and unassisted) collaborative processes where appropriate. The memorandum calls for increased commitment to using Environmental Collaboration and Conflict Resolution and continues to require annual progress reports to OMB and the CEQ (which DOI and the BLM include in various reports).

Photo: Diane Groves

Section 2:
The BLM CADR Program

Background

Through its policies, programs, and training, the BLM has encouraged the use of collaborative and dispute resolution processes since the early 1980s. Collaborative action has received increasing emphasis in recent years, evidenced in part by the establishment of the BLM CADR Program. BLM CADR encompasses a broad spectrum of "upstream" and "downstream" processes for preventing, managing, or resolving disputes. (See Figure 2.) Processes are flexible and will often include a mixture of techniques, but generally: upstream collaborative processes are designed to address conflict early and build working relationships, while downstream dispute resolution processes seek to resolve an existing dispute, often with the assistance of a third-party neutral. Both upstream and downstream processes can produce agreements and resolutions that are more cooperative, creative, satisfying, and enduring than those imposed through conventional systems of conflict resolution.[8]

Collaborative Activities

Dispute Resolution

"Upstream" Process
(e.g., NEPA scoping or
pre-scoping workshops)

"Downstream" Process
(e.g., protest resolution
negotiations)
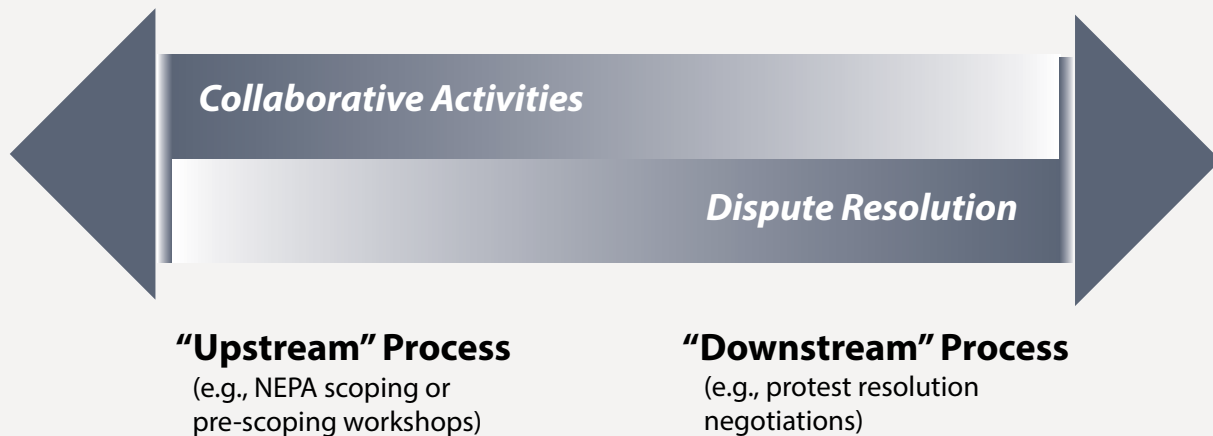
Figure 2: Continuum of collaborative action and dispute resolution processes. The sooner a conflict is addressed, such as through early, "upstream" processes, the greater the potential for improved relationships, increased ownership and buy-in for implementation, and possibly reduced or narrowed protests, appeals, and litigation later in the process.

BLM CADR's purpose is to provide leadership, guidance, and assistance for collaborative action that furthers the BLM's mission. By offering nationwide support—including relevant publications, training, facilitation of third-party assistance, and a community of practice network—the program strives to help the BLM engage with other federal, state, and local governments and agencies, nonprofits and other private organizations, tribal entities, stakeholders, and the public. The aim is to use collaborative processes, internally and externally, through all stages of planning, decision-making, and resolution of any subsequent challenges. By empowering future BLM leaders with the necessary skill sets and tools, the BLM CADR Program seeks to optimize the Bureau's investment in the planning process overall.

BLM CADR Program Structure

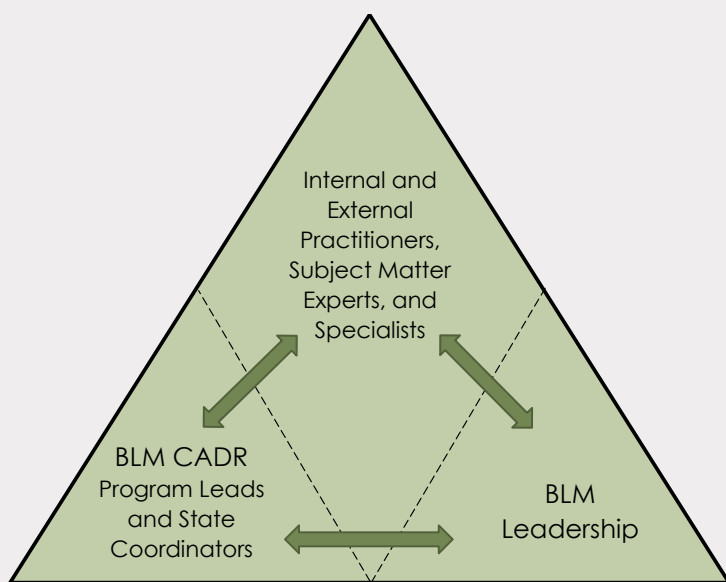The *BLM CADR Program* resides within the Division of Decision Support, Planning and NEPA. The program plans to pair a field lead position with the existing Washington Office (WO) program lead to support the strategic plan's goals. The WO lead will be responsible for policy, guidance, national program coordination and integration, reporting, and analysis. In addition the WO lead will serve as the bureau dispute resolution specialist for the BLM for the Department's Interior Dispute Resolution Council. As such, the WO lead will be the primary lead for Goal 1

(Champion a Collaborative Culture) and Goal 4 (Foster Accountability and Assess Outcomes). The remotely located field lead also reports to the Washington Office and provides on-the-ground support, including communication, outreach, and capacity building, and will serve as the primary lead for Goal 2 (Create a Common Understanding) and Goal 3 (Build Collaborative Capacity). Additional BLM CADR Program staff will support these efforts and direct services to the BLM field.

The *BLM CADR coordinators* (formerly members of the ADR Advisory Council) include leads for each state and center. These are subject matter experts in collaborative action and dispute resolution who serve as a point of contact for BLM CADR. CADR coordinators represent their offices to provide input and feedback for national policy and guidance, and, in their coordinator role, report to their representative on the BLM Field Committee (e.g., assistant state director). They advise field units to help connect them to resources such as the DOI In-house Facilitator Roster; the DOI CADR IDIQ (indefinite delivery, indefinite quantity) contract for external service providers; incentive funding: and training. In addition, they serve as organizers within the community of practice and report annual successes and lessons learned in the annual OMB-CEQ report.

The *BLM CADR community of practice* includes the BLM CADR Program (program leads and state CADR coordinators); other self-identified, interested individuals, experts, and practitioners; and key BLM leaders who support the use of collaborative action and dispute resolution within the Bureau. (See Figure 3.) The members of this group share a common passion for collaborative action and work to benefit the Bureau by leveraging resources, fostering learning, sharing best practices and lessons learned, and connecting across organizational and geographic boundaries. The BLM relies on work with external groups and partners to create leverage and increase capacity for achieving broadscale outcomes and healthy landscapes across administrative boundaries.

BLM CADR and Community of Practice

Figure 3: BLM CADR community of practice

BLM CADR Program Accomplishments

Guidance – These publications inform staff, partners, and stakeholders about CADR policies:

- Natural Resource ADR Initiative - Strategic Plan and Toolkit
- "Collaboration Desk Guide" [9]
- "Collaborative Stakeholder Engagement and Appropriate Dispute Resolution"(policy document) [10]
- "Negotiation Strategies" (field guide) [11]
- Procedures for using dispute resolution in cases before the Interior Board of Land Appeals [12]
- "Federal Advisory Committee Act" (policy document) [13]
- "A Desk Guide to Cooperating Agency Relationships and Coordination with Intergovernmental Partners" [14]

Guidance and policy documents may provide either specific directions (such as requiring each state and center to nominate CADR coordinators) or general guidance and interpretive materials to help navigate various authorities or situations. See also relevant sections of BLM Handbook H-1601-1, Land Use Planning,[15] and BLM Handbook H-8342, Travel and Transportation.[16] BLM Handbook H-1601-1 describes a number of public involvement methods: coordination, cooperation, consultation, and collaboration. It defines collaboration as a process in which interested parties, often with widely varied interests, work together to seek solutions with broad support for managing public and other lands. Collaboration mandates methods, not outcomes, and does not imply that parties will reach consensus.

Training – BLM CADR sponsors trainings and workshops for employees of the BLM and other agencies, partners, and stakeholders. Early training focused on collaborative skills and included the 1982 course, Natural Resource Conflict Management. More recent offerings include collaborative and consensus-building courses with the National Policy Consensus Center; Consensus Associates and the National Riparian Service Team; and the U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution.

BLM CADR, working with other organizations, has helped to support various trainings and workshops, such as the "Managing by Network" series and various workshops with the University of Montana, Washington State University, the University of Arizona, Collaborative Decision Resources Associates, Triangle Associates, the International Association for Public Participation, and others. The BLM also participates in DOI training and workshops, including DOI CADR's "Getting to the CORE of Conflict" series, which provides broadly applicable communication and conflict management skills.

Direct Support – BLM CADR directly supports the field and BLM offices through advice, coaching, and process design. The BLM CADR Incentives Fund has funded third-party services for emergent collaborative projects since 2006. During the last 5 years, the Incentives Fund has provided an average of $80,000 in collaborative support per year, and as much as $140,000 in a single year. BLM CADR also helps staff find and hire facilitators for collaborative processes, offering both the DOI In-house Facilitator Roster and a DOI CADR IDIQ contract for third-party services.

Reporting – Since 2006 the BLM has collected and consolidated data on dispute resolution processes each year (both third-party assisted and unassisted) for the annual OMB-CEQ progress report.

Section 3:
Staff Input about the BLM's Emerging Collaborative Action Needs

An internal, broadly representative Oversight Committee informed the development of the BLM CADR strategic plan. Between 2013 and 2014, committee members were facilitated through a virtual strategic visioning process. The intent was for this group to explore past efforts, learn about the current environment (both internal and external), and envision what success would look like as it evolves over time. (See Section 4, Figure 7.) In addition, the committee investigated what processes would allow the program and this strategic plan to be responsive to internal and external events. (See Appendix A for committee membership, comprising BLM managers, leaders, and program staff.)

The committee also guided the development of an internal needs assessment survey, along with the Social and Economic Analysis Branch of the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). In 2013 the USGS Social and Economic Analysis Branch sent this quantitative survey to 6,734 BLM employees in job series likely to have experience with collaboration or likely to gain such experience.

The survey achieved a 45 percent response rate. As reported by the USGS:

> The survey confirmed that participation in collaborative and ADR processes is likely to be a significant part of many BLM employees' duties and identified opportunities to support the growth of the BLM's collaborative and ADR capabilities. Except for higher-level decision makers, however, these collaborative responsibilities are generally not reflected in performance plans. The survey also showed that training, as well as hands-on experience, plays a major role in employees' skill at collaboration and ADR, and identified areas where additional skills and resources—such as training and assistance with negotiation, Tribal relations, and feasibility assessments—would be especially helpful in increasing the BLM's capacity for effective collaboration. While many field respondents rated a moderate to high level of support for collaboration in their Field Office, the level of support perceived by staff was generally not as high as the levels rated by Field Managers. Furthermore, many field respondents indicated that they did not know the level of support in their State Office or in the Washington Office, suggesting a potential lack of leadership message or lack of communication of a message to the field. The survey also confirmed that the ability of respondents to effectively participate in collaborative efforts is often hampered by situational barriers (including entrenched positions and political visibility) and organizational barriers (including travel ceilings and time constraints), however, both staff and leadership still considered collaboration to be worthwhile for a broad range of BLM activities. [17]

For an executive summary of the USGS report, see Appendix C. The figures and tables that follow in this section capture a snapshot of how respondents rated the frequency and impact of situational (Figure 4) and organizational (Figure 5) barriers to collaboration in the BLM. Feedback describing obstacles to relevant training (Table 1) and linking skill levels to training (Table 2) follows. These figures and tables are taken from the USGS report. (Some data may not total to 100 percent as a result of rounding.)

Photo: National Riparian Service Team

Figure 4: Respondents' ratings of the frequency of situational barriers to collaboration in the BLM

Legend:
- Never or Seldom
- Sometimes
- Often or Always

Categories (top to bottom):
- Some participants have entrenched positions
- There are knowledge imbalances among participants
- The political visibility is high
- There are power imbalances among participants
- Some participants prefer the status quo
- Litigation seems likely regardless of attempts to collaborate
- Turnover is high among participants
- Win-lose situations appear unavoidable
- Collaborations are not assisted by dispute resolution professionals
- Litigation is already ongoing
- Collaborations are not undertaken voluntarily
- Collaborations are perceived as leading to poor quality decisions

Figure 5: Respondents' ratings of the frequency of organizational barriers to collaboration in the BLM

Legend:
- Never or Seldom
- Sometimes
- Often or Always

Categories (left axis):
- Travel ceilings
- Other BLM duties take priority over collaboration
- Lack of collaborative skills among BLM employees
- The BLM cannot cede decision-making authority to collaborative groups
- The BLM does not have enough social science capacity
- The NEPA process
- The BLM's land use planning process
- Field personnel lack authority to conduct collaborations
- Lack of support from other agencies
- Lack of support in the BLM
- The BLM does not implement agreements made by collaborative groups
- Lack of support from one's supervisor

Scale: 0%, 10%, 20%, 30%, 40%, 50%, 60%, 70%, 80%, 90%, 100%

Table 1. Respondents' Experience with Obstacles to Taking Training in Collaboration

Obstacles to Taking Training in Collaboration	Personally Encountered This Obstacle*		
	n	Yes (%)	No (%)
Travel ceiling constraints	2,679	79	21
I lack the budget for training	2,681	72	28
I lack the time for training	2,674	52	48
I was unaware that training in collaboration was available	2,667	45	55
Training courses are offered at bad times of the year	2,547	26	74
I lack interest in learning any more about collaboration	2,665	18	82
Collaboration is unlikely to be part of my job	2,671	16	84
My supervisor(s) discouraged me from taking further training	2,663	11	89
I avoid situations with potential conflict, therefore, I have not sought training	2,672	10	90
I do not think that training is an effective way to improve peoples' skill at collaboration	2,664	8	92
My personality is not suited for collaboration	2,664	6	94

*The proportion of respondents who had experienced each obstacle to taking training significantly differed among one or more of the obstacles.

Table 2. Respondents' Skill Levels, Past Training, and Interest in Future Training

Collaboration and Alternative Dispute Resolution Skill Items	Skill Level						Have You Had Training in This? * (%)		Do You Want Training/ More Training in This? † (%)	
	No Experience (%)	Beginner (%)	Intermediate (%)	Advanced (%)	Expert (%)	Median	No	Yes	No	Yes
Communication and active listening	3	9	40	39	9	Intermediate	36	64	44	56
Participating in public meetings	10	18	34	27	10	Intermediate	68	32	49	51
Internal team-building	9	17	41	27	6	Intermediate	39	61	45	55
Partnering with non-BLM government agencies	11	19	35	28	8	Intermediate	74	26	44	56
Partnering with non-governmental organizations, communities, and/or interest groups	14	21	34	24	7	Intermediate	70	30	43	57
Facilitation of a meeting or working group	14	21	37	22	6	Intermediate	57	43	44	56
Identifying when collaboration is needed	18	23	36	20	4	Intermediate	78	22	49	51
Negotiation and conflict resolution	17	26	36	17	4	Intermediate	54	46	37	63
Creating and drafting agreements	24	25	31	16	4	Intermediate	71	30	42	58
Mediation of a dispute or conflict	28	27	31	11	2	Beginner	67	33	42	58
Building tribal and government-to-government relationships	34	23	26	13	4	Beginner	79	21	48	52
Terminating collaborative efforts or partnerships when necessary	51	21	20	7	1	No Experience	90	10	53	47
Feasibility assessments	66	20	11	3	1	No Experience	93	7	50	50

*The proportion of respondents with training significantly differs among one or more skill items.
†The proportion of respondents who want future training significantly differs among one or more skill items.

The USGS performed a complementary set of qualitative interviews among field-level decision makers, seeking input about what ADR and collaboration training they had received, how their experiences with collaboration had fared, and what training and support they believed the field needed to be more successful. Twenty-two randomly selected field managers, geographically distributed throughout the BLM's jurisdiction, participated in these 60–90 minute conversations. Discussions were candid and heartfelt, revealing much about the challenges that frontline managers face when seeking community collaboration and making decisions that affect people's way of life and their values as these relate to the public lands. Figure 6 represents a Wordle depiction of the key words and the frequency in which they arose during field manager interviews.

> According to BLM field managers, the Bureau should increase support for collaboration at all levels of the agency—through training, third-party assistance, a community of practice network, and recognition of collaborative efforts regardless of outcomes.

Based on the resulting report,[18] field managers' input may be grouped into the following categories:

1. Keys to Collaborative Success:
- Inclusion of all the appropriate stakeholders from the beginning of the process.
- Trust, built by using high-level communication skills, with a focus on deep listening to stakeholders' interests and concerns.
- Development of collaborative skills through both training and experience; assessment of interest and abilities in collaborative processes during hiring processes.

2. Challenges:
- Parties coming to the table with entrenched positions.
- The agency culture, including lack of high-level support, lack of capacity and resources, and lack of a mechanism to transmit lessons learned within the BLM. High-level support may be particularly important in highly contentious situations. Transmission of lessons learned is hampered by lack of succession planning and the resulting lack of institutional memory.
- Lack of collaborative groups' skill and readiness to engage productively.

3. Opportunities:
- Building effective communication tools to convey practical considerations about BLM/federal processes, regulations, timelines, and organizational capacity.
- Finding mutually beneficial solutions when dealing with highly positional stakeholder groups.
- Engaging stakeholders who have limitations on time, travel, and funding.

4. Training and Networking Needs:
- "Hands-on" training conducted by someone who has actually been through the collaborative process.
- The opportunity to learn from peers and to receive training that provides opportunities for developing professional networks. (Distance learning was not favored, since it does not enhance networks of support, which were considered highly valuable.)
- Formal training in collaboration and/or ADR for most field managers.

5. Support Needs:
- High interest in an accessible mechanism (website, publications, other) for passing along lessons learned.
- A need for the agency to communicate a clear, public message about the rationale for decisions on the ground, so field managers may communicate more openly with stakeholders.
- Enhanced, targeted support from the agency for those involved in contentious, complex issues. (Many stressed that, while successes are inspiring and instructive, learning about pitfalls and disappointments is also important.)

During the field manager interview process, USGS researchers noted that managers who appeared more adept at collaboration also talked about collaboration with greater optimism than did others. Based on a review of the transcripts, the researchers generated a list of "super collaborator characteristics":

- A focus on deep listening and two-way communication
- Willingness to admit mistakes (humility)
- Empathy
- A deliberate and intentional approach to coaching and mentoring
- Tendency to work toward mutually beneficial solutions
- Tendency to discuss one's own learning about collaborative action and dispute resolution, and the role of feedback in that development
- An innate passion to understand partners (personalities, values, interests) and using that information to assist problem solving in diverse groups
- Tendency to lean heavily on one's professional peer networks when seeking advice
- Tendency to face conflict directly rather than to avoid conflict

Photo: National Riparian Service Team

Figure 6: "Wordle" depiction of the frequency of words that arose in the field manager interviews

BLM Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution Program (CADR)

Purpose   BLM CADR provides leadership, guidance, and assistance in collaborative implementation of the BLM's mission.

Vision   The BLM is trusted and produces sustainable decisions by effectively engaging others in the stewardship of public lands and working collaboratively to prevent, manage, and resolve conflict at the lowest possible levels.

Mission   BLM CADR empowers a broad support network, working collectively to establish and implement bureau-wide direction; communicate the value of collaboration and available resources; enhance internal and external capabilities; and track and evaluate results for continuous improvement.

Core Values   BLM CADR values a culture that:
- Nurtures engagement and inclusiveness
- Integrates work across disciplines, ownerships, and interests in an honest, respectful, and transparent manner
- Builds trust and strong working relationships
- Promotes creativity and adaptability
- Seeks solutions that benefit all parties
- Encourages and rewards collaborative behavior and practice
- Communicates clearly and consistently about the benefits and challenges of collaborative natural resource management
- Fosters accountability

Photo: Patricia Johnston

Section 4:
Adapting to the Future: Vision and Strategy

Vision

BLM CADR envisions a future where *the BLM is trusted and produces sustainable decisions by effectively engaging others in the stewardship of public lands and working collaboratively to prevent, manage, and resolve conflict at the lowest possible levels.*

The list of controversial issues that the BLM faces is considerable. Sage grouse habitat, wild horse and burro population growth, oil and gas development, grazing and forest management, conservation efforts, recreation use, and our response to climate change are some of the more notable. As BLM leadership continues to shape policies on these issues, we will be seeking innovative solutions from field staff and stakeholders who can provide day-to-day operational insight from the frontlines. The BLM CADR strategic plan is intended to create opportunities for helping the BLM find that new ground when working with communities defined by place or interest.
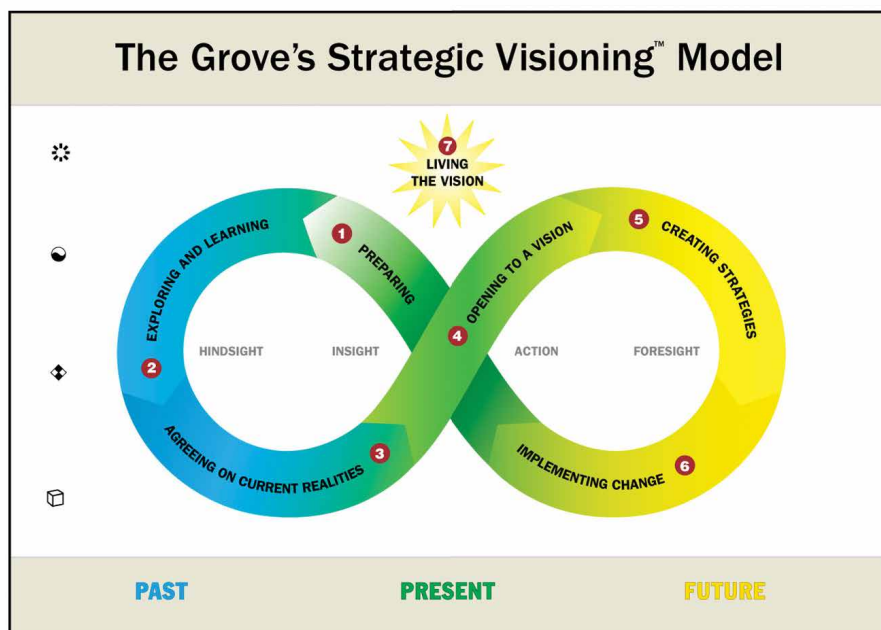
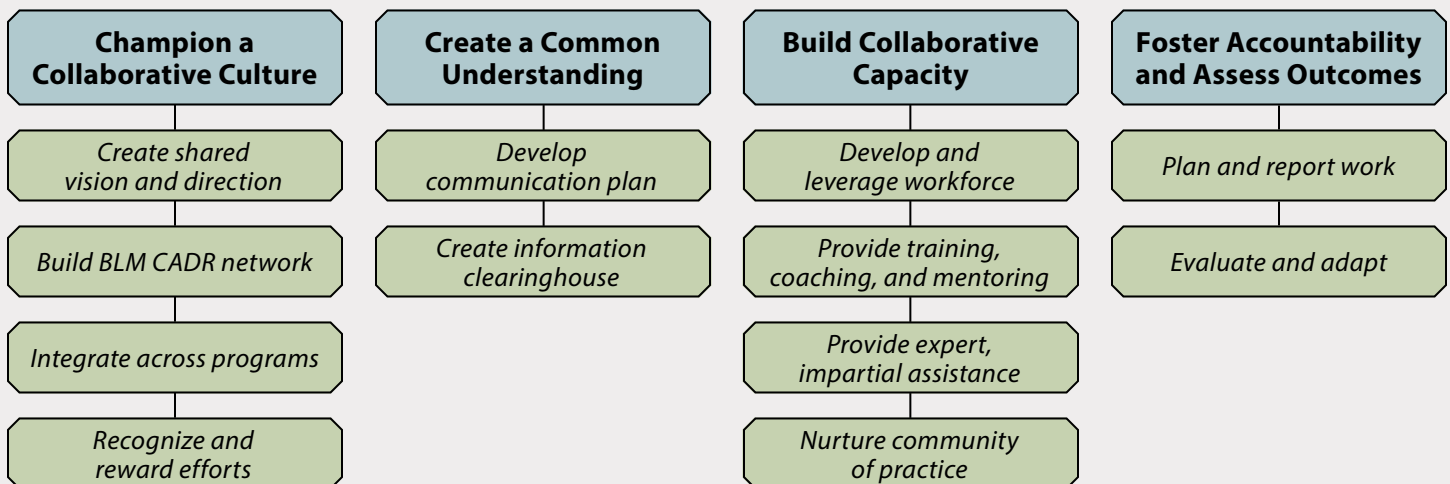**Figure 7:** Strategic visioning process (Grove Consultants)

Strategy

The BLM CADR strategic plan draws substantially on the input provided by managers and line employees in the 2013–14 surveys. The plan is similar to other recently issued BLM strategic plans in that it focuses on the practical field application of the processes it also describes. By emphasizing transparency and collaboration that considers diverse perspectives, the plan reinforces and supports the actions described in:

- "Advancing Science-Informed Land Management in the BLM: An Implementation Strategy" (March 2015) to ensure effective and consistent science integration into the BLM's core work processes[19]

- "The BLM's National Strategy and Implementation Plan To Support and Enhance Partnerships 2014–2018" to advance, strengthen, and support the use of partnerships nationwide in order to improve continuously the management, stewardship, and public enjoyment of the nation's public lands [20]

- "Socioeconomics Strategic Plan 2012–2022" to build external relationships to complement the BLM's internal socioeconomic capabilities[21]

- "Creeks and Communities Network Strategic Plan: 2014–2024," which relies on the National Riparian Service Team (NRST) to help address issues related to the management of riparian resources on public and private lands [22]

The BLM CADR strategic plan also invests in employee knowledge and skills through formal and informal training opportunities, consistent with the BLM's national strategy, "Winning the Challenges of the Future: A Road Map for Success in 2016."[23] As envisioned in that strategy, "the BLM is successfully recruiting from a diverse range of well-trained potential employees and retaining those employees through well-crafted, consistently applied orientation efforts. Incoming employees are being fully trained in both BLM-specific technical skills and in the social/managerial skills needed to flourish in an agency dedicated to collaboration-driven land management." Finally, the BLM CADR strategic plan complements and will be coordinated with the DOI Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution Strategic Balanced Scorecard Framework (2014), as depicted graphically in Appendix D.

This strategic plan for collaborative action within the BLM will be in effect for the foreseeable future. Guided by its framework, the BLM CADR Program will develop priorities and plan implementation actions annually. In addition to reporting results, the BLM will periodically evaluate whether strategic goals are being met, both in the short and long term, and adjust as necessary.

Champion a Collaborative Culture
- Create shared vision and direction
- Build BLM CADR network
- Integrate across programs
- Recognize and reward efforts

Create a Common Understanding
- Develop communication plan
- Create information clearinghouse

Build Collaborative Capacity
- Develop and leverage workforce
- Provide training, coaching, and mentoring
- Provide expert, impartial assistance
- Nurture community of practice

Foster Accountability and Assess Outcomes
- Plan and report work
- Evaluate and adapt

Figure 8: BLM CADR goals and strategies

Section 5:
Goals and Strategies

GOAL 1: Champion a Collaborative Culture

Institutionalize and support effective collaborative action and dispute resolution within all levels of the BLM and for all of the BLM's work (both internally and externally).

STRATEGY 1.1 Create a shared organizational vision, clear and consistent messages, and direction for collaborative action and dispute resolution within the BLM.

- **ACTION 1.1a:** Solicit input from different BLM organizational levels and geographies and engage key, experienced representatives in articulating the BLM's vision and support for collaborative action and dispute resolution within the BLM and externally.

- **ACTION 1.1b:** Clearly communicate the program's vision (and the collaborative process from which it emerged), and support and encourage staff through leadership involvement.

- **ACTION 1.1c:** Integrate consistent definitions and descriptions of collaborative action and dispute resolution into BLM policy documents broadly and into other programs' strategies (both current and new, as well as future revisions) to foster common usage and consistent practices; widely distribute policies and guidance throughout the BLM. (See Appendix D.)

STRATEGY 1.2 Establish, manage, and maintain the BLM CADR Program and associated network.

- **ACTION 1.2a:** Define roles, responsibilities, resource commitments, and performance measures for various entities.

- **ACTION 1.2b:** Develop recruitment and retention plan for the BLM CADR Program.

- **ACTION 1.2c:** Coordinate with related programs within the BLM and DOI to articulate the interrelationships and distinguish responsibilities among the programs.
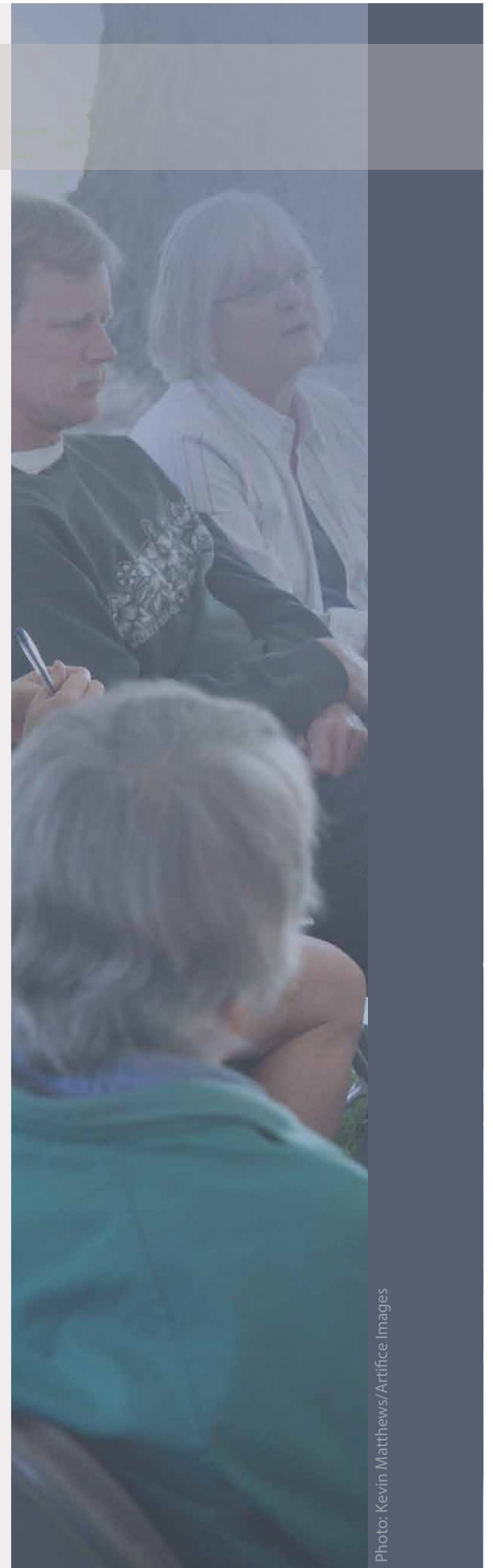
Photo: Kevin Matthews/Artifice Images

STRATEGY 1.3 Integrate collaborative action across programs and business practices.

- **ACTION 1.3a:** Identify and support internal opportunities for working collaboratively across offices, programs, hierarchical levels, disciplines/perspectives, and landscapes.

- **ACTION 1.3b:** Identify and support opportunities for working collaboratively with external partners, state, local, and tribal governments, stakeholders, and the public.

- **ACTION 1.3c:** Identify and support opportunities to establish standards, principles, competencies, and practices for collaborative action and dispute resolution within the procedures and processes of the BLM's offices and programs.

- **ACTION 1.3d:** Recognize and encourage through policy, practice, and messaging that we in the BLM accomplish our work by using collaborative action and dispute resolution strategies and methods, and that doing so is part of our regular work.

STRATEGY 1.4 Recognize and reward collaborative efforts and learning, and celebrate the effort as well as the successes.

- **ACTION 1.4a:** Document examples of collaborative action and dispute resolution, and provide leadership with information to showcase examples within their purview.

- **ACTION 1.4b:** Develop mechanisms for rewarding collaborative successes and efforts, innovation, and learning from experiences.

GOAL 2: Create a Common Understanding

Use broad outreach and consistent, targeted messaging to build awareness and understanding of collaborative action and dispute resolution across a wide range of individuals both within and outside the BLM.

STRATEGY 2.1 Identify internal and external audiences and deliver clear, consistent, targeted messages through various outlets.

- **ACTION 2.1a:** Develop general outreach materials and strategies, as well as those tailored to specific audiences.

- **ACTION 2.1b:** Develop plain-language packages of information on the BLM CADR Program's purpose, vision, mission, and core values to increase understanding of the program's role and available services and resources.

- **ACTION 2.1c:** Identify appropriate outlets to reach target audiences effectively, and design a range of products suitable for different outlets.

STRATEGY 2.2 Create a clearinghouse or central location where all key information related to collaborative action and dispute resolution is gathered, kept, and distributed.

- **ACTION 2.2a:** Identify current sources of information on collaborative efforts and projects.

- **ACTION 2.2b:** Identify gaps in sources of information on collaborative efforts, and create or improve means to collect needed information easily.

- **ACTION 2.2c:** Develop, populate, and promote a searchable collection of case studies, best practices, tools and techniques, and lessons learned from past collaborative efforts.

- **ACTION 2.2d:** Identify useful tools and information from survey results and field requests; collect existing information or build new tools responsive to needs; share these tools and information and advertise their availability.

Photo: Patricia Johnston

GOAL 3: Build Collaborative Capacity
Develop skills both within and outside the BLM necessary to implement collaborative action effectively at all organizational levels.

STRATEGY 3.1 Develop and maintain a workforce able to engage effectively in collaborative action and dispute resolution.

- **ACTION 3.1a:** Develop and maintain a collaborative workforce through competency-based hiring, employee development, and performance management.

STRATEGY 3.2 Provide training, coaching, and mentoring to build internal and external awareness and collaborative competencies.

- **ACTION 3.2a:** Articulate competencies that are related to collaborative action.

- **ACTION 3.2b:** Include collaborative action and dispute resolution in established BLM trainings throughout the span of employee career development programs (from Pathways to executive leadership training), along with external training opportunities, to develop the needed competencies.

- A**CTION 3.2c:** Identify and communicate training, experience-based learning, and specialized coaching/mentoring opportunities related to collaborative action and dispute resolution theory, practices, and skills. Modify existing training or develop new opportunities as appropriate.

STRATEGY 3.3 Provide collaborative action and dispute resolution assistance onsite (working with people in their location and addressing their issues) on a request basis.

- **ACTION 3.3a:** Identify and provide access to qualified practitioners to assist the BLM with collaborative action and dispute resolution services.

- **ACTION 3.3b:** Provide assistance (process design, third-party neutral selection, etc.) and resources (funding, contracting, etc.) to the field for expert, impartial assistance in appropriate situations.

STRATEGY 3.4 Develop and maintain a community of practice related to collaborative action and dispute resolution on BLM-managed lands.

- **ACTION 3.4a:** Develop and support the framework for a robust CADR network and community of practice.

- **ACTION 3.4b:** Provide information sharing, peer-to-peer learning opportunities, and networking opportunities to the BLM CADR network and associated practitioners (internal and external).

Photo: National Policy Consensus Center

GOAL 4: Foster Accountability and Assess Outcomes

Demonstrate a commitment to accountability and ensure program effectiveness.

STRATEGY 4.1 Foster employee accountability through individual work plans that articulate expectations and require accomplishment reporting on an annual basis.

- **ACTION 4.1a:** Engage WO BLM CADR staff, state/center CADR coordinators, and the community of practice in developing annual work plans that articulate expectations and require accomplishment reporting and that continue to meet the needs of BLM staff and leadership.

STRATEGY 4.2 Ensure program effectiveness through ongoing evaluation and adaptation.

- **ACTION 4.2a:** Develop evaluation plan using appropriate instruments, including but not limited to informal and formal program review, short- and long-term surveys, or OMB-approved surveys as needed.

- **ACTION 4.2b:** Develop or use existing assessment tools for evaluations by external parties.

- **ACTION 4.2c:** Disseminate results of evaluations and reviews to share key findings, best practices, and lessons learned; adapt implementation strategies and work plans as necessary.

Photo: National Riparian Service Team

Members are listed with the positions they held during their participation on the BLM CADR Strategic Plan Oversight Committee.

BLM Washington Office and Centers	
Matt Magee	Dispute Resolution Specialist – Decision Support, Planning and NEPA (BLM CADR)
Patricia Johnston	Dispute Resolution Specialist – Decision Support, Planning and NEPA (detail)
Kerry Rodgers	Senior NEPA Specialist – Decision Support, Planning and NEPA
Rob Winthrop	Senior Social Scientist – Decision Support, Planning and NEPA
Anthony Bobo	Senior Outdoor Recreation Specialist – Recreation and Visitor Services
Karen Prentice	National Healthy Landscapes Coordinator – Resources and Planning
Jerry Cordova	Tribal Liaison Officer – Cultural, Paleontological Resources and Tribal Consultation
Ben Nussdorf	Fluid Minerals Specialist – Energy, Minerals, and Realty
Mary Linda Ponticelli	Solid Minerals Specialist – Energy, Minerals, and Realty
Doug Herrema	Program Lead – National Monuments and Conservation Areas – National Landscape Conservation System and Community Partnerships
Trevor Needham	National Partnerships Program Lead – National Landscape Conservation System and Community Partnerships
Cynthia Moses-Nedd	Liaison to State & Local Government – Communications
Jamie Sellar-Baker	Branch Chief, Program Operations – National Operations Center
Tessa Teems	Training Coordinator – National Training Center
Laura Van Riper	Social Scientist – National Riparian Service Team
BLM Field	
Steve Ellis	Deputy Director (previously State Director – Idaho State Office)
Jerome Perez	State Director – Oregon State Office
Buddy Green	Deputy State Director, Resource Policy and Management – Wyoming State Office
Steve Cohn	Deputy State Director, Resources – Alaska State Office
Bill Haigh	Field Manager – Mother Lode Field Office, California
Rene Berkhoudt	Monument Manager – Grand Staircase-Escalante National Monument, Utah
Karen Simms	Assistant Field Manager – Tucson Field Office, Arizona
Samantha Staley	Resource Advisor – Southwest District Office, Colorado
Anita Bilbao	Forest Management Advisor – Oregon State Office
Christina Reed	Planning and Environmental Coordinator – Colorado State Office
Patty Rowett-Matlock	Litigation Coordinator – Idaho State Office
Sandra McGinnis	Planning and Environmental Coordinator – California State Office
Department of the Interior	
Elena Gonzalez	Director – Office of Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution
Robert Fisher	Senior Program Manager – Office of Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution
Nina Burkardt	Research Social Scientist – USGS, Social and Economic Analysis Branch

Appendix B: Spectrum of Collaborative Action Processes in the BLM [24]

Approach	Inform	Consult	Engage	Collaborate
Goal	Provide balanced and accurate information to public and stakeholders	Obtain stakeholder feedback on analysis, alternatives, or decisions	Work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure concerns are consistently understood and considered	Partner with stakeholders on each aspect of the decision-making, including developing and identifying preferred solutions
Primary Strategy	Education and awareness	Education, awareness, and limited information exchange	Education, awareness, and on-going information exchange	Shared decision-making (BLM retains ultimate authority, but can seek consensus on what BLM's final decision will be)
BLM Promise to Stakeholders	To keep stakeholders informed and allay concerns due to misinformation and rumors	To keep stakeholders informed, to listen to and acknowledge concerns, and to give feedback on how stakeholder input influenced agency decisions	To ensure stakeholder concerns are directly reflected in alternatives and to give feedback on how stakeholder input influenced decisions	To incorporate stakeholders in formulating solutions and decision-making
Examples	Fact sheets, websites, open houses, media	Public comment, focus groups, surveys, web tools	Workshops, deliberative polling, advisory committees	Consensus groups, shared decision-making on recommendations
Use When	Stakeholder acceptance is unnecessary, but desired; agreement is fairly certain	Stakeholder acceptance is unnecessary, but desired, AND stakeholder opinion is not well understood	Stakeholder acceptance is desirable for successful implementation	Stakeholder commitment is desirable or necessary for successful implementation

Increasing level of issue complexity, public impact, stakeholder acceptance and commitment needed →

Adapted from the International Association for Public Participation and the National Policy Consensus Center

Appendix C: Executive Summary - A Survey of Bureau of Land Management Employees on Collaboration and Alternative Dispute Resolution

The Bureau of Land Management (BLM) has been actively expanding its capacity to work cooperatively with other agencies, Tribes, the public, and other stakeholders using collaborative and alternative dispute resolution (ADR) approaches.[25] In 1997, the BLM created the BLM's Collaboration and Alternative Dispute Resolution Program (Collaboration/ADR Program) to centralize, strengthen, and coordinate these efforts.[26] Specifically, the Collaboration/ADR Program is charged with developing ADR policies; ensuring that statutory and regulatory requirements are met; and providing training, resources, and direct support for collaboration and ADR in the BLM. At the request of the Collaboration/ADR Program, the Social and Economic Analysis Branch of the U.S. Geological Survey, located in the Fort Collins Science Center, conducted an online survey of BLM employees in early 2013 to address four overarching questions:

1. What information sources and assistance resources are BLM employees currently accessing to fill their conflict/dispute resolution and collaboration needs?

2. What are the perceived information and resource needs of BLM employees associated with conflict/dispute resolution and collaboration? What information and resources can the BLM Collaboration/ADR Program provide to fill BLM employee needs?

3. What is the BLM employee level of knowledge associated with conflict/dispute resolution and collaboration?

4. What are the attitudes and perceptions of BLM employees toward conflict/dispute resolution and collaboration?

This report describes the findings of this online survey and will assist the BLM's Collaboration and ADR Oversight Committee in developing the Strategic Plan for the Collaboration/ADR Program. The purpose of the Strategic Plan is to advance collaboration in the BLM and to increase the capacity of the Collaboration/ADR Program to support collaborative efforts on the ground.

In March 2013, a user-specific link to the online survey was sent via email to all current BLM employees (n = 6,734) that could potentially have had experience in collaboration and conflict resolution based on their job series. The links took the respondents to a webpage where the survey was administered. Email reminders were sent at weekly intervals thereafter. When the survey closed in May 2013, the response rate was 45 percent (3,161 employees). Of these, only 14 percent (427 respondents) indicated that they did not have direct experience with collaboration or ADR, and were unlikely to gain experience in the future. Because these respondents were not the target population of this survey, they were branched to the demographic questions at the end of the survey and were not included in any further analyses. The remaining 86 percent (2,734 respondents) indicated that either they did have direct experience with collaboration and(or) ADR, or that they might gain experience with one or both in the future. Below we highlight some of the key findings from their survey responses (refer to the Results section for a comprehensive report of the survey findings).

Greater Experience with Collaboration than Alternative Dispute Resolution

- Fifty-nine percent of the 2,734 respondents had direct experience with collaboration and not ADR; 1 percent had direct experience with ADR and not collaboration; 25 percent had direct experience with both collaboration and ADR. The remaining 15 percent did not have direct experience with either collaboration or ADR, but might gain experience in the future. Of note, respondents in high-level decision-making positions (Field Manager level or higher) were more than twice as likely as other respondents to have experience with both collaboration and ADR; a little less than 5 percent of these decision-makers did not have experience with either collaboration or ADR.

- When asked to characterize their experience with collaboration and ADR, 18 percent of respondents indicated that they had been involved in a single collaboration or ADR process, 59 percent had been involved in 2–10 collaborations and ADR processes, and 23 percent had been involved in more than 10 collaborations and ADR processes. The majority (57 percent) of respondents had been involved in a collaboration or ADR process that lasted longer than one year. In addition, the majority (60 percent) had been involved in a collaboration or ADR process that involved a National Environmental Policy Act process. When describing the role of collaboration and(or) ADR in their position responsibilities, 59 percent of respondents with direct experience spent less than 10 percent of their time on these processes. Only 3 percent spent more than 60 percent of their time on these processes. However, participation in collaborations and(or) ADR processes was included in only 39 percent of respondents' performance plans.

Generally Low Level of Training and Skills; Higher for Decision-Makers

- The only two collaboration and ADR skills in which the majority of respondents had received formal training were "communication and active listening" (64 percent) and "internal team building" (61 percent). Not surprisingly, respondents also rated themselves as being more proficient at these skills compared to the other 11 collaborative and ADR skills listed in the survey, for which a majority of respondents (54−93 percent) had not received training. Of note, over three-quarters of respondents had not received training in four of the skills that are most specific to collaboration: "identifying when collaboration is needed," "building tribal and Government-to-Government relationships," "terminating collaborative efforts or partnerships when necessary," and "feasibility assessments." Respondents expressed the most interest in receiving future training in "negotiation and conflict resolution."

- In general, decision-makers had received much more formal training (median = 7 of the 13 skills listed in the survey) than the other respondents (median = 3 of the 13 skills). When asked which professional and personal obstacles had prevented them from taking training in the past, 79 percent of respondents indicated they had encountered "travel ceiling constraints." In addition, 72 percent of respondents had encountered budgetary constraints, and 52 percent indicated that they had lacked the time for training. Surprisingly, almost half of respondents (45 percent) indicated that they had not been aware that training in collaboration was available to them.

- The average respondent rated their own skill at collaboration and ADR as being somewhere between "beginner" and "intermediate." However, the average decision-maker rated themselves as being much more skilled (between "intermediate" and "advanced") than

other respondents. This corresponded with the finding that decision-makers had received more training in collaboration and ADR than other respondents, because how much training respondents had received was strongly positively correlated with how they rated their skill level at collaboration and ADR.

- Respondents credited "hands on experience" as contributing 44 percent of their skill on average. This was followed by "innate skill" (20 percent on average), then "mentors and coaches" (15 percent on average), then "formal training" (11 percent on average), and last of all by "reading about collaboration" (9 percent on average).

- Although the majority of respondents indicated that they were interested in receiving some future training in collaboration and ADR skills (median = 8 out of 13 skills listed in the survey), the distribution of responses was U-shaped, with 20 percent of respondents indicating that they had zero interest in future training and 24 percent indicating that they wanted future training in all of the collaborative and ADR skills listed in the survey. Of note, respondents' overall interest in future training decreased the longer they had worked for the BLM.

Awareness of Resources Increases Their Use

- When comparing among a list of currently available resources for collaboration and ADR, respondents indicated that they were most likely to use "a mentor or coach" in the future, followed by BLM guides and handbooks, and "an online or media search." Respondents were split on whether or not they were likely to use "formal training in collaboration or dispute resolution," "a professional facilitator or mediator," or the "BLM Collaboration and Dispute Resolution SharePoint site." With the exception of the SharePoint site, over three-quarters of respondents (75–91 percent) had been aware of these resources prior to the survey.

Only half of respondents (49 percent) had been previously aware of the SharePoint site. The resources that respondents were less likely to use in the future were professional collaboration or ADR specialists and the BLM's Washington Office of Collaboration and Alternative Dispute Resolution. However, smaller majorities (55–64 percent of respondents) had been aware of these resources prior to the survey. Respondents were particularly unlikely to use the Udall Foundation's U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution in the future. However, only 36 percent had been aware of this resource prior to the survey. Of note, decision-makers were typically aware of more of these resources than other respondents, and respondents' general level of awareness of these resources and overall likelihood to use these resources in the future were positively correlated with their overall level of training and overall self-rated skill level in collaboration and ADR.

- From those respondents with direct experience with collaboration and(or) ADR, 59 percent indicated that they had been involved in a collaboration or ADR process that used a facilitator, while only 37 percent had been involved in a collaboration or ADR process that used a mediator. The respondents with direct experience indicated that both facilitators and mediators were very useful for these processes.

- In contrast, a large majority of the respondents that had direct experience with collaboration and(or) ADR either (1) did not know about feasibility assessments (60 percent) or (2) had heard of them, but did not have experience with a collaboration or ADR process that had used a feasibility assessment (27 percent). However, the respondents that did have direct experience with feasibility assessments (13 percent) rated feasibility assessments as being very useful for collaborations.

High Priority Resource Needs

- When asked to rate the priority level of a list of potential resources that BLM could provide them in the future, respondents indicated that "in-person training on collaboration and dispute resolution," "support for building collaborative Government-to-Government relationships and Tribal consultation," "additional funding resources for collaborative efforts," and "assistance or coaching in planning for collaboration and setting expectations with the public" should be given the highest priority.

- Even though as a group respondents rated "assistance finding and hiring facilitators" as having lowest priority relative to the other potential resources listed in the survey, respondents with direct experience with the use of a facilitator and those that indicated that they were likely to use one in the future indicated that "assistance finding and hiring facilitators" should be given higher priority than did the rest of the respondents. Similarly, although respondents as a group rated "training in feasibility assessments" and "support for conducting feasibility assessments" as having relatively low priority, those with direct experience with feasibility assessments and a higher self-rated skill level in feasibility assessments rated the priority level of these potential resources much higher than other respondents.

All BLM Issue Areas Considered to be Suitable for Collaboration

- All BLM issue areas were considered to be at least "somewhat suitable" by over 70 percent of respondents, with "recreation," "land use planning/NEPA," "range management," and "fish and wildlife" rated as "suitable" by the largest majorities (55–66 percent).

Collaboration in BLM Encounters Situational and Organizational Barriers

- Respondents were asked to rate how frequently they thought collaboration in the BLM encountered a list of 12 political and social situational barriers and then to rate the magnitude of effect of each barrier when it was encountered. The situational barrier that was rated by respondents as occurring most frequently and having the greatest effect was that "some participants in collaborations have entrenched positions." Almost two-thirds of respondents (62 percent) indicated that collaborations were "often" or "always" hindered by this barrier, and 88 percent indicated that this was a "moderate" or "major" barrier to collaborations (table 9). Other situational barriers that respondents thought occurred frequently and were of "moderate" to "major" effect were "knowledge imbalances between participants," "high political visibility," and "power imbalances among participants." The three barriers rated the least frequent were "litigation was already ongoing," "collaborations are not undertaken voluntarily by the BLM," and "a perception that collaboration leads to poor quality decisions." Of these three, only "litigation was already ongoing" was considered to be of "moderate" or "major" effect by the majority of respondents (70 percent). In general, respondents' ratings of the overall frequency of situational barriers were positively correlated with how they rated the overall magnitude of effect of situational barriers.

- Respondents were also asked to rate how frequently they thought that collaborations in the BLM encountered each of a list of 12 different organizational barriers and then rate the magnitude of the effect of each barrier to collaboration when it was encountered (table 10). The organizational barrier that was rated as being the most frequent and of greatest effect by respondents was "travel ceilings." Almost two thirds of respondents

(61 percent) indicated that collaborations were "often" or "always" hindered by travel ceilings, and 79 percent indicated that this was a "moderate" or "major" barrier to collaboration. The other organizational barrier that the majority of respondents (54 percent) thought occurred "often" or "always" and that 74 percent thought was of "moderate" or "major" effect was "other BLM duties take priority over collaboration." The three organizational barriers rated as occurring the least frequently were "lack of support in the BLM," "the BLM does not implement agreements made by collaborative groups," and "lack of support from your supervisor." All three were rated by over one-third (43–69 percent) of respondents as occurring "seldom" or "never," and the majority of respondents (53–73 percent) rated them as having a "minor" effect when they do occur. Of note, decision-makers typically rated the organizational barriers as occurring less frequently and having a smaller effect than other respondents. In addition, respondents' ratings of the overall frequency of organizational barriers were positively correlated with how they rated the overall magnitude of effect of organizational barriers.
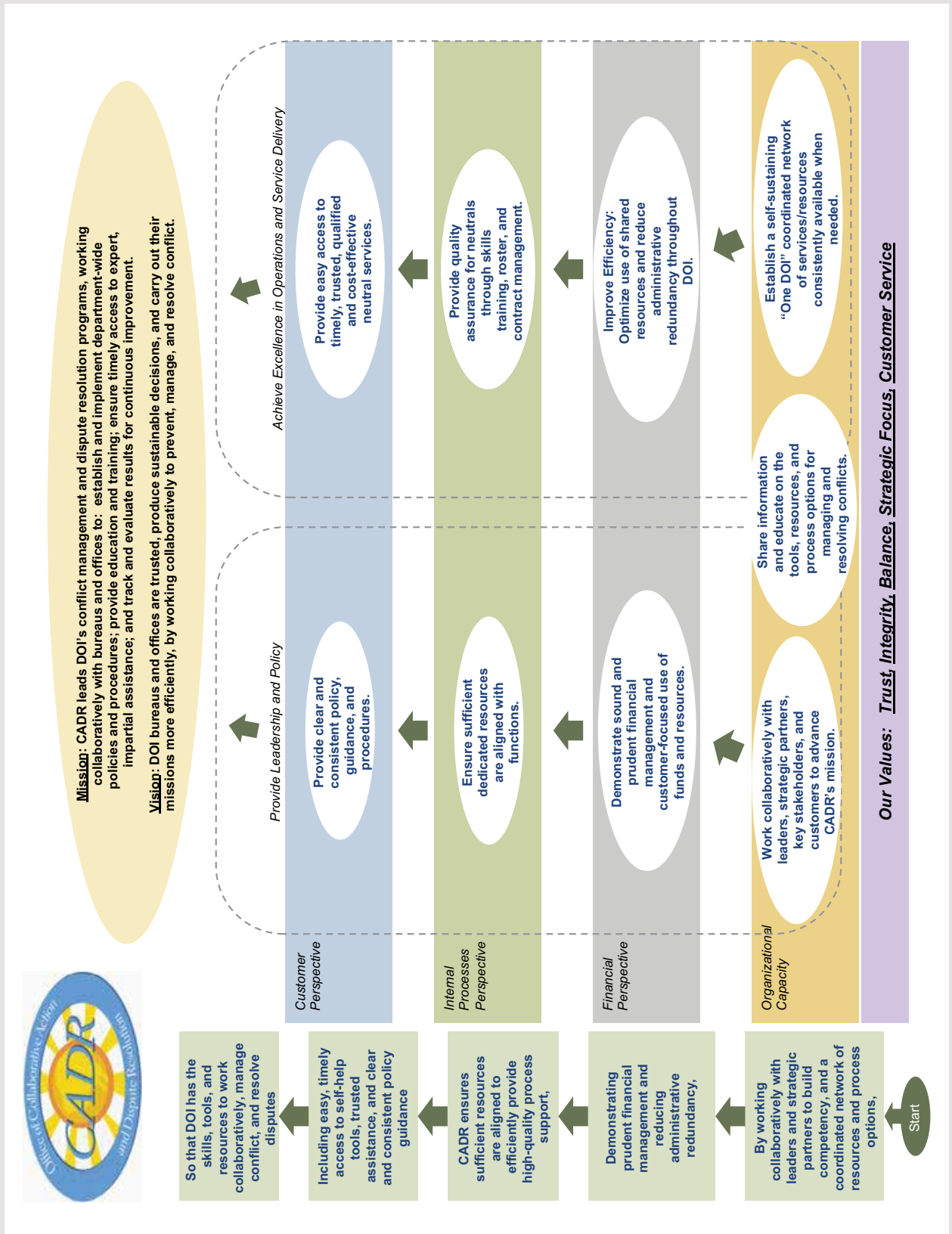
Level of Support for Collaboration from Higher Organizational Levels is Often "Unknown"

- Field personnel generally rated the level of support for collaboration in their field office, their State Office, and the Washington D.C. office as being "moderate" to "high." However, almost 40 percent of respondents indicated that they did not know the level of support in their State Office. Furthermore, almost 50 percent did not know the level of support in the Washington Office. Of note, Field Managers generally rated the level of support in their field office and their State Office as much higher than other field personnel.

Generally Positive Attitudes toward the Outcomes of Collaboration

- Respondents were consistent in rating the effect of collaboration on a list of social and political outcomes as between "somewhat improves" to "greatly improves," with "communication among different parties" given the most positive ratings among the list of potential outcomes.

- Finally, respondents generally thought that although collaboration "somewhat increased" short-term costs, it "somewhat reduced" long-term costs.

- In conclusion, the survey confirmed that participation in collaborative and ADR processes is or is likely to be a significant part of many BLM employees' duties. The survey further identified opportunities to increase the BLM's collaborative and dispute-resolution capabilities. Although direct experience appeared to play a major role in how respondents rated their own skill at collaboration and ADR, training was also an important contributor to respondents' skill in collaboration and ADR. One set of skills in which respondents were particularly interested in receiving further training was "negotiation and conflict resolution." In addition, training also appeared to increase respondents' awareness of and likelihood to use the resources that are currently available to assist them in collaborative and ADR processes.

- Finally, the survey confirmed that respondents' access to training and collaborative efforts were oftentimes hampered by organizational or occupational constraints, such as travel ceilings, time, and budgetary constraints. These logistical obstacles could potentially be mitigated or reduced in the future. However, it is important to highlight the fact that even though respondents agreed that attempts at collaboration were often impeded by numerous organizational, social, and political factors, they still considered collaboration to be a worthwhile endeavor for a broad range of BLM activities.

Mission: CADR leads DOI's conflict management and dispute resolution programs, working collaboratively with bureaus and offices to: establish and implement department-wide policies and procedures; provide education and training; ensure timely access to expert, impartial assistance; and track and evaluate results for continuous improvement.

Vision: DOI bureaus and offices are trusted, produce sustainable decisions, and carry out their missions more efficiently, by working collaboratively to prevent, manage, and resolve conflict.

Our Values: Trust, Integrity, Balance, Strategic Focus, Customer Service

Achieve Excellence in Operations and Service Delivery

- Provide easy access to timely, trusted, qualified and cost-effective neutral services.
- Provide quality assurance for neutrals through skills training, roster, and contract management.
- Improve Efficiency: Optimize use of shared resources and reduce administrative redundancy throughout DOI.
- Establish a self-sustaining "One DOI" coordinated network of services/resources consistently available when needed.

Provide Leadership and Policy

- Provide clear and consistent policy, guidance, and procedures.
- Ensure sufficient dedicated resources are aligned with functions.
- Demonstrate sound and prudent financial management and customer-focused use of funds and resources.
- Share information and educate on the tools, resources, and process options for managing and resolving conflicts.
- Work collaboratively with leaders, strategic partners, key stakeholders, and customers to advance CADR's mission.

Customer Perspective

Internal Processes Perspective

Financial Perspective

Organizational Capacity

Start — By working collaboratively with leaders and strategic partners to build competency, and a coordinated network of resources and process options,

Demonstrating prudent financial management and reducing administrative redundancy,

CADR ensures sufficient resources are aligned to efficiently provide high-quality process support,

Including easy, timely access to self-help tools, trusted assistance, and clear and consistent policy guidance

So that DOI has the skills, tools, and resources to work collaboratively, manage conflict, and resolve disputes

Notes

[1]Text in the "Background" part of Section 1 is largely based on Laura Van Riper, "Can Agency-Led Initiatives Conform to Collaborative Principles? Evaluating and Reshaping an Interagency Program Through Participatory Research" (PhD diss., University of Montana, 2003).

This section draws on the following references cited in Van Riper's PhD dissertation:

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Paul R. Lachapelle, Stephen F. McCool, and Michael E. Patterson, "Barriers to Effective Natural Resource Planning in a 'Messy' World," *Society and Natural Resources* 16, no. 6 (2003): 473–90.

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Bob Pepperman Taylor, *Our Limits Transgressed: Environmental Political Thought in America* (Lawrence, KS: University Press of Kansas, 1992).

Julia M. Wondolleck and Steven L. Yaffee, *Making Collaboration Work: Lessons for Innovation in Natural Resource Management* (Washington, DC: Island Press, 2000).

Steven L. Yaffee, Julia M. Wondolleck, and Steven Lippman, "Factors that Promote and Constrain Bridging: A Summary and Analysis of the Literature," Pacific Northwest Research Station (USFS), Technical Report, 1997.

[2] Judith Messier, "Conflict in the Klamath Watershed and a Relationship-Building Framework for Conflict Transformation" (PhD diss., George Mason University, 2012).

[3] Figure was adapted from Committee of Scientists, *Sustaining the People's Lands: Recommendations for Stewardship of the National Forests and Grasslands into the Next Century* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Agriculture, 1999), 131.

[4] Bureau of Land Management (BLM), "Alternative Dispute Resolution Strategic Plan" (Washington, DC: BLM, Natural Resource Alternative Dispute Resolution Initiative, 1997). https://archive.org/details/naturalresourcea00schu

[5] Although the BLM has used ADR processes since the 1980s, the CORE PLUS system in particular (described in 370 DM 770) has been used since 2006 to resolve all Equal Employment Opportunity, human resources, and workplace disputes in the BLM. Employees have access to dispute resolution, coaching, and other services for any workplace issue under this program. Many of the resources and skills that stem from the successful implementation of CORE PLUS are integral to the success of the BLM CADR strategic plan. As the BLM's "bureau dispute resolution specialist," the BLM CADR program lead has oversight responsibilities for CORE PLUS; however, the focus of the BLM CADR Program and this strategic plan is on externally facing and mission-based opportunities for collaborative action and dispute resolution. BLM assistant directors have signed a Service Level Agreement placing most CORE PLUS implementation responsibilities with the Human Capital Management Directorate.

[6] BLM, "Alternative Dispute Resolution Strategic Plan."

[7] BLM Handbook H-1601-1, Land Use Planning (Washington, DC: BLM, 2005). http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/wo/Information_Resources_Management/policy/blm_handbook.Par.38665.File.dat/h1601-1.pdf

[8] BLM, "Collaborative Stakeholder Engagement and Appropriate Dispute Resolution: What BLM, Communities, and the Public Need to Know for Preventing Conflict and Resolving Disputes Involving Public Lands and Resources," policy document (Washington, DC: BLM, Collaborative Stakeholder Engagement and Appropriate Dispute Resolution Program, 2009). http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/wo/Planning_and_Renewable_Resources/adr_conflict_prevention.Par.69360.File.dat/BLM%20Field%20Guide%20-%20Collaboration%20and%20ADR%20Field%20Guide%20-%202009-11-12.pdf

[9] "Collaboration Desk Guide," BLM internal document, 2007. http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/wo/Planning_and_Renewable_Resources/adr_conflict_prevention.Par.27391.File.dat/2007%20Collaboration%20Deskguide.pdf

[10] BLM, "Collaborative Stakeholder Engagement and Appropriate Dispute Resolution."

[11]BLM, "Negotiation Strategies: What BLM, Communities, and the Public Need to Know for Successful Negotiations Involving Public Lands and Resources," field guide (Washington, DC: BLM, Collaborative Stakeholder Engagement and Appropriate Dispute Resolution Program, 2009).
http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/wo/Planning_and_Renewable_Resources/adr_conflict_prevention.Par.65732.File.dat/
BLM%20Field%20Guide%20-%20Negotiation%20-%202009-12-09.pdf

[12]"Managing Alternative Dispute Resolution in the Bureau of Land Management: Cases Before the Interior Board of Land Appeals" (Washington, DC: BLM, Collaborative Stakeholder Engagement and Appropriate Dispute Resolution Program, undated).
http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/wo/Planning_and_Renewable_Resources/adr_conflict_prevention.Par.57745.File.dat/
IBLA%20-%20ADR%20Guidance.pdf

[13]BLM, "Federal Advisory Committee Act: What BLM Staff Need to Know When Working with ADR-Based Collaborative Community Working Groups," policy document (Washington, DC: BLM, Alternative Dispute Resolution and Conflict Prevention Program, 2005.)
http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/wo/Planning_and_Renewable_Resources/adr_conflict_prevention.Par.24269.File.dat/
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[14]BLM, "A Desk Guide to Cooperating Agency Relationships and Coordination with Intergovernmental Partners" (Washington, DC: BLM, Division of Decision Support, Planning and NEPA, 2012).
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dat/2007%20Collaboration%20Deskguide.pdf

[15]BLM Handbook H-1601-1, Land Use Planning (Washington, DC: BLM, 2005).
http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/wo/Information_Resources_Management/policy/blm_handbook.Par.38665.File.dat/
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[16]BLM Handbook H-8342, Travel and Transportation (Washington, DC: BLM, 2012).
http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/wo/Information_Resources_Management/policy/blm_handbook.Par.34786.File.
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[17]Emily W. Ruell, Nina Burkardt, and Ryan M. Donovan, "A Survey of BLM Employees on Collaboration and Alternative Dispute Resolution," Open-File Report 2015-1015 (Denver, CO: U.S. Geological Survey, 2014).
http://dx.doi.org/10.3133/ofr20151015

[18]Nina Burkardt et al., "An Assessment of Capacity for Collaboration and Alternative Dispute Resolution among Bureau of Land Management Field Office Managers, 2014" (Denver, CO: U.S. Geological Survey, Social and Economic Analysis Branch, forthcoming).

[19]Katherine Kitchell et al., "Advancing Science in the BLM: An Implementation Strategy" (Washington, DC: BLM, March 2015).
http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/wo/blm_library/BLM_pubs.Par.38337.File.dat/BLMAdvScilmpStrat
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[20]BLM, "The BLM's National Strategy and Implementation Plan To Support and Enhance Partnerships 2014–2018" (Washington, DC: BLM, BLM Division of Education, Interpretation, and Partnerships, 2014). http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/wo/Law_Enforcement/nlcs/partnerships/strategy.Par.18701.File.dat/BLM_Partnership_Program_Strategy_and_Plan.pdf

[21]BLM, "Socioeconomics Strategic Plan 2012–2022" (Washington, DC: BLM, Division of Decision Support, Planning, and NEPA, 2013). http://www.blm.gov/style/medialib/blm/wo/blm_library/BLM_pubs.Par.40827.File.dat/BLMSocioeconomicStrategicPlan2012-2022.pdf

[22]Laura Van Riper, "Creeks and Communities Network Strategic Plan: 2014–2024" (Denver, CO: BLM, Creeks and Communities Network, 2014). The National Riparian Service Team and the associated Creeks and Communities Network emerged as a model for successfully implementing cooperative stewardship for riparian issues by exploring both the technical and social aspects of the problem. This model could be modified to suite a host of natural resource and public land management issues, with the BLM integrating the insight of technical and scientific teams, on the one hand, and the understanding of social and community values offered by BLM CADR Program staff, on the other.

See the following evaluation reports for additional information:
> Robyn N. Paulekas, "Fostering Social-Ecological Resilience in the Upper Klamath Basin: The National Riparian Service Team's Creeks & Communities Strategy as an Emerging Model for Government in Adaptive Co-Management" (master's thesis, Oregon State University, 2010).
> Jill Smedstad, "Exploring Pathways to Adaptive Collaborative Management: A Multi-Case Study of the National Riparian Service Team's Place-Based Riparian Assistance" (master's thesis, Oregon State University, 2012).
> Laura Van Riper, "Can Agency-Led Initiatives Conform to Collaborative Principles?"
> Jill A. Smedstad and Hannah Gosnell, "Do Adaptive Comanagement Processes Lead to Adaptive Comanagement Outcomes? A Multicase Study of Long-term Outcomes Associated with the National Riparian Service Team's Place-based Riparian Assistance," *Ecology and Society* 18, no. 4 (2013): 8.

[23]BLM, "Winning the Challenges of the Future: A Road Map for Success in 2016" (Washington, DC: BLM, 2011). http://www.blm.gov/pgdata/etc/medialib/blm/wo/Communications_Directorate/public_affairs/socialmedia.Par.99057.File.dat/2016_report_lowres.pdf.

[24]The BLM CADR strategic plan does not replace other special relationships, such as cooperative or coordination status for state and local governments, or the government-to-government relationship and consultation with tribes. The collaborative and dispute resolution processes and support championed by this strategic plan are designed to complement these existing relationships.

[25]Ruell, Burkardt, and Donovan, "A Survey of BLM Employees on Collaboration and Alternative Dispute Resolution." This appendix includes only the executive summary of the full report.

[26] USGS survey report and executive summary references to the Collaboration/ADR Program and Collaboration/ADR Oversight Committee reflect a previous program name, which was in place at the time of publication for the survey report. While the subsequent change to Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution reflects a broader focus for program support, the descriptions used in the survey nevertheless apply to the concepts and names used elsewhere throughout this strategic plan.
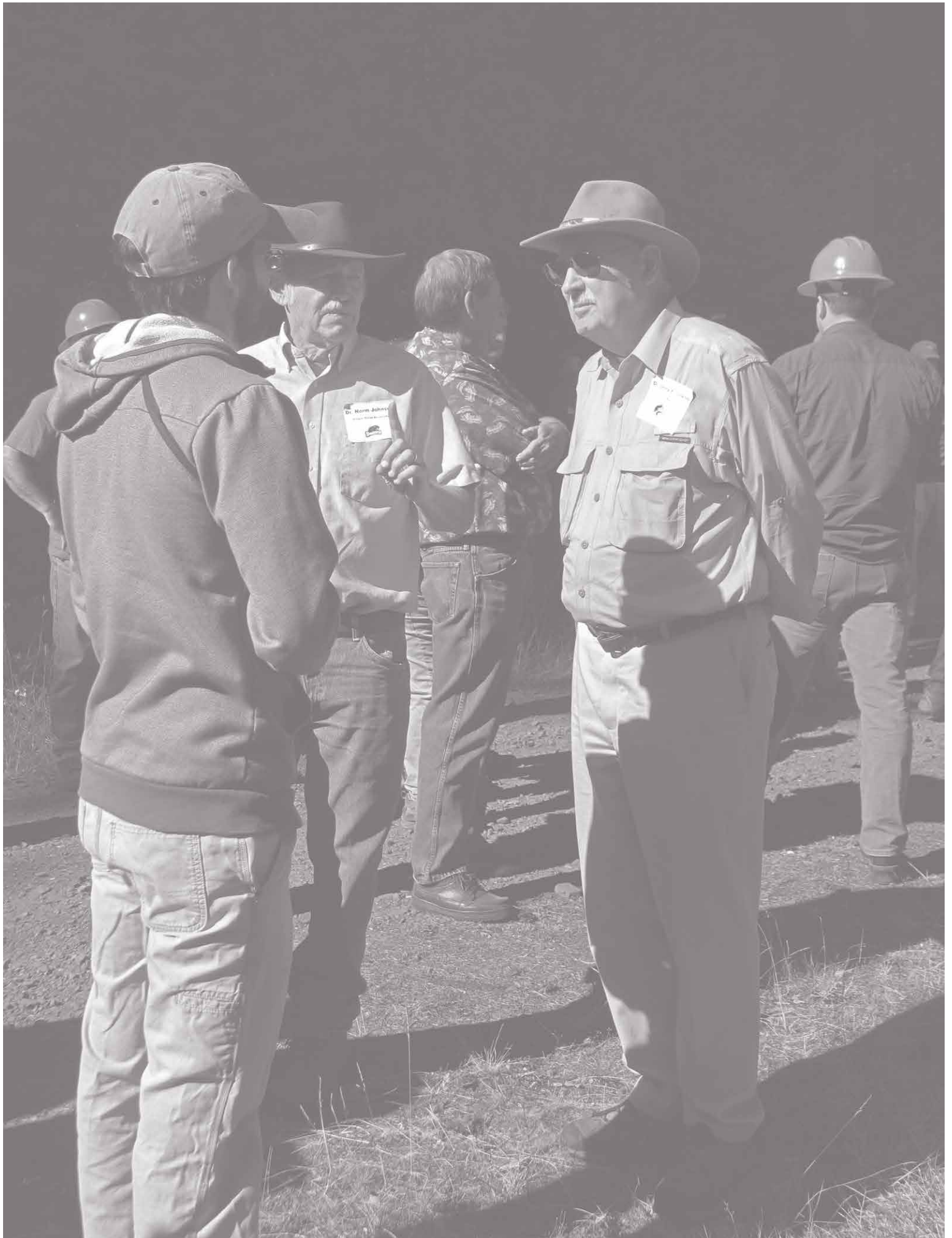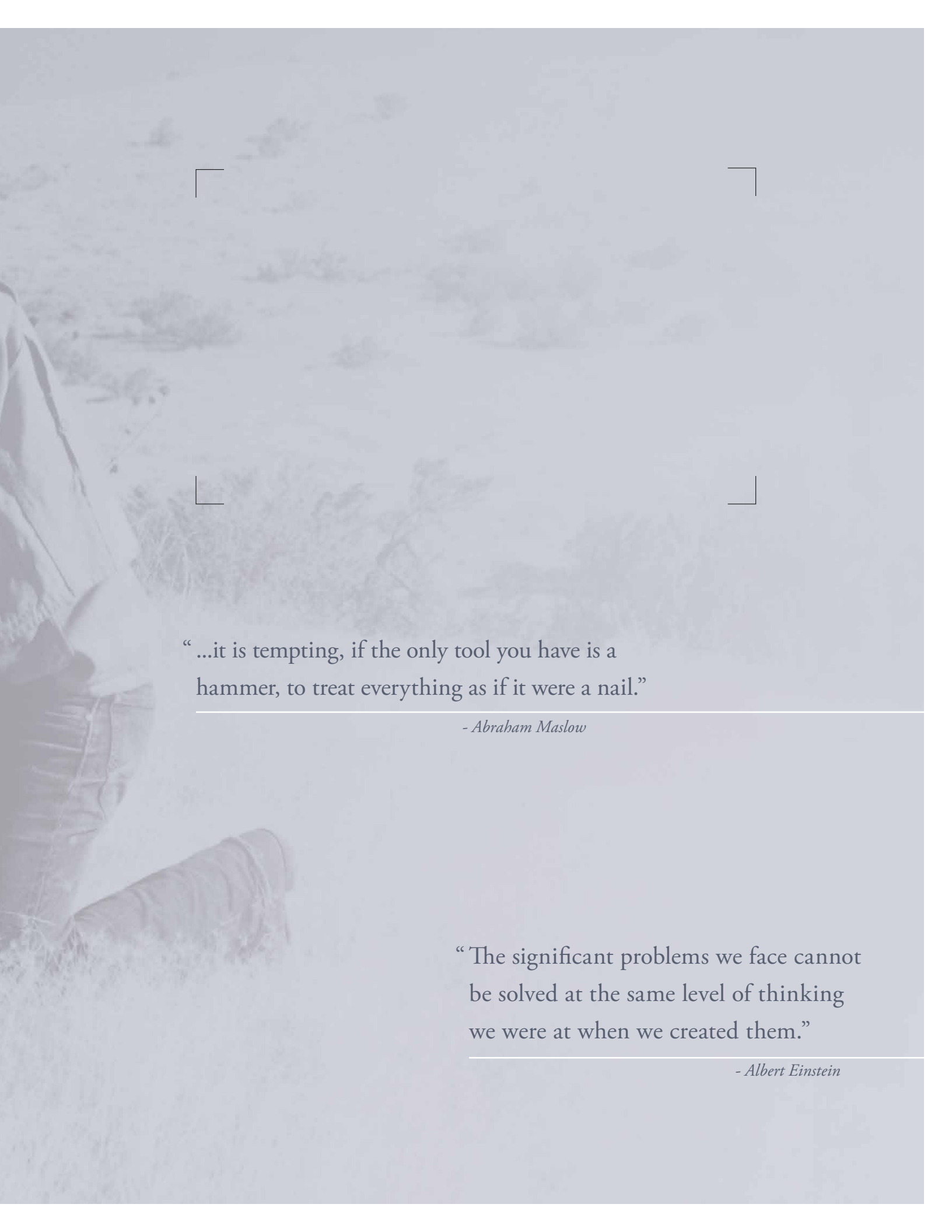
" ...it is tempting, if the only tool you have is a hammer, to treat everything as if it were a nail."

- Abraham Maslow

" The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them."

- Albert Einstein