

Session 4: Panel Discussion
Moving Forward: Observations and Recommendations
Friday, January 6, 10:40-11:40 AM

Top tie together what has been covered at the conference and suggest ideas for how to best move forward.

Panel Members: Peg Gale, Greg Johnson, Bill Imbergamo, John Wiens
Moderator: Perry Brown
Recorder: Valerie Esposito

- **Peg Gale:**
 - **Summarize highlights of the summit: Ray Anderson – inspiring talk, 7 phases of the mountain from eliminating waste to redesigning commerce; Can model this approach in trying to reach a particular goal; One person at a time, one species at a time – need to take this into consideration – we usually balance a lot of balls and have to remember we will accomplish goals 1 step at a time**
 - **From Ross Whaley**
 - **Dan MacIntire: Trying to capture the imagination of the next generation; he is a fellow traveler in the woods, as we are trying to find the answers to questions**
 - **Don Gordon: Pro-activity is very important and needs to be done to obtain funding**
 - **Communication is an important point – need to communicate among ourselves and with other disciplines**
 - **Get science out to the practitioners with a common language: need to stop talking to each other and start talking to a lot of others**
 - **Margaret Meade: I personally measure success by contributions that an individual makes to fellow human beings**
 - **Will Rogers: even if you are on the right track, you will get run over if you just sit there**
 - **We need to continue to communicate with this group, with your peers and other people – get the message that we will move towards the future to improve QOL**
- **Greg Johnson:**
 - **FRAC – Forest Research Advisory Council – it is your friend – use us – potentially important council – need to have strong common understanding of what we do – eg. perhaps you don't know that FRAC was created as a way to determine funding allocation mechanism, so had an open relationship with universities – it is a legislatively created body to talk about new ideas, thoughts and progressive actions**
 - **Interesting session b/c if you are not an academic you aren't usually in the group, but it's a welcoming group –**

- **Times are Changing; industry is at the forefront of this change – it’s not necessarily a bad thing – from research perspective –research is a perspective – look at new landowners they are intensely interested in investments that yield good returns – if you couch your research in terms of an investment with returns – you will be successful –have to speak their industry language**
 - **Right team, the right package, doing the right thing, in the right place – covered a lot of projects – everyone can play a role inn being right**
 - **Precision forestry – understanding how to be right more often –**
 - **We see signs of drift in our own program – shouldn’t we be working on things that progress in some way? Working from a hard core allows you to do that**
 - **Hollens analogy: 5 wheel mechanism for storing energy – it’s difficult to store energy fast – in terms of research program that has high flying projects and rushing through priorities – it won’t build a program that has long-term success – need to focus on building up small changes that build up to a package that come together to move us forward for long-term success**
 - **One of the challenges that participating institutions have is to figure out how to do cross-institutional work – it is vital given the complex problems out there , as well as limited funds, faculty and participation from other agencies and institutions – must go to many places – need to figure out rewards system adequate and appropriate for this kind of collaboration**
 - **Problems seem bigger or is it because we know more? Our understanding has increased so we can tackle these problems in better ways**
- **Bill Imbergamo:**
 - **“The Seashell and Mountaintop” book – interested in learning that assistants did all the dissections - presumed that they did things improperly if it didn’t match the text book instead of thinking the textbook is wrong –**
 - **Can be similar to Washington politics – ie. Writing a farmbill in terms of surplus – by 2002 – WTO was kicking in, but fiscal situation was still relatively stable – not the world we live in now in Washington – need to think about this funding**
 - **Funding overall coming from Washington is flat at best – mandatory funding – as mandatory as can be until the next appropriations bill – despite best efforts funding has been flat for years as well as forest service research – in gross terms – has been affected by rising fixed-costs – has grown in the areas where there is a consensus among industry, environmentalist groups, government and university groups – funding for inventory analysis is important and that funding has grown**
 - **Overall the situation is not going to get better – lower expectations as far as possible – do not tell people that if they work together they will find the pot of gold at the end of the rainbow – it will get worse fast when the ANT tax**

- will reach the 50 % tax base – it will really start to bite – forestry research is probably perceived to be better funded than it is – many people in Congress feel that there is a bill for 3.5 million from one year to the next and we don't have a lot of constituents who are happy about what the forest service does
- Do look for new partnerships, you don't want to be like agriculture – it is the unsubsidized crop – we don't have the model of risk model funded by pay-off insurance
 - Do look to partner with the ag sector in terms of forestry research b/c if you don't the \$ will be taken away
 - Look for research in the energy sector
 - The traditional community that has supported forest products is small but is viewed as valuable
 - Forest products is a part of the economy – keeping it strong is seen as smart – using the existing knowledge and skill base – familiar with producing energy and selling it back to the grid
 - Do not expect Congress to be the silver bullet that funds basic research – don't come in with a different story – there is still a lot of conflict of what good forest management is and everyone claims that science is on their side – need to develop an agreement of what good management is to free you up to do a lot of innovative work
 - Research has to be sold as investment to private industry – how do you benefit the clientele and provide what they need
 - There is still money available, but you have to get results that bring results to your landowners – based on an economic return from an industry that is shrinking – challenging environment but with the talent in this room it should be successful
- **John Wiens:**
 - Wish I could end with cheery news but I can't
 - TNC is becoming the largest landowner of forested land in the US
 - TNC is about preserving biodiversity by protecting places
 - With on-going rapid changes in forest industry it is providing good opportunities and TNC is taking advantage of these – but what happens when these areas are protected?
 - Public's view is to put a fence around it and not allow any usage of the land
 - Protection requires form of active management – in the case of a conservation organization is maintained at retaining conservation value
 - “Bio bang for the buck” – advantages for putting financial return on investment – ecosystem valuation analysis
 - in order to gauge return on investment and what types of management is needed, we need research that will tell us how we measure conservation value – how to structure management practices for long-term investment – how do we evaluate compatibility of working forests and biodiversity protection – what is the balance of economic and aesthetic values
 - How do we conduct the valuations that aren't easily expressed? How do we consolidate this and develop markets

- **This is where the cutting edge of conservation science is - we need people who are trained to conduct the research that will move the cutting edge forward**
- **Multiple arrays of values in a market-based economy that has multiple dimensions**
- **Need skill sets that have technical expertise, need people who have adaptability, team players, communicators, leaders (good people skills, can relate to others and form good partnerships),**
- **TNC finances largely by eliciting donations from private donors – need wise management that is informed by scientific research that are cost effective – build in the importance of research – to buy lands and continue to manage and restore them to ensure that what changes will still be protected – importance of research as the underpinning of wise use and maintenance over the long- term**

Questions:

-Is there an opportunity for foresters to work with the ag community working on the upcoming farm bill?

BI: Time for this group to come to a consensus now, before the hearing committee is meeting

-One of the conversation points that we had is recognizing that funding sources are going down and we said we need to diversify funding troughs, is there strength in diversity or should we just good to other sources?

BI: Combination of things- other committees should be interested in funding stuff, and should use all of the angles possible – taking a non-traditional approach is necessary – can't look at federal government as a central part of this funding source.

Wrap-Up Comments

-Some of the most novel things said at this conference should be given serious consideration.

-Comment: Going to supply summary papers to OMB, for flow into the next outlook seminar in early March, plans for rolling out a number of items that NAUFRP has planned

-Engage in an on-going conversation with stakeholders; virtual centers of excellence; dialogue with Forest Service

-NAUFRP organization will be the guiding force of continued dialogue and communication of those members here – main conduit is through deans and department chairs

-Need to involve some players that we talked about to be part of this discussion to ground-truth research directions with what is needed

-Don DeHayes: Want a high-powered publication out of this