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COALITION

How Do We Accomplish All-Lands Management?

Direct Insights from a Survey of Practitioners

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ABOUT RVCC

The Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition (RVCC) promotes healthy landscapes and vibrant rural communities throughout the American West. Our mission is to develop an engaged and diverse network of community leaders who advance policy solutions that align public and private land stewardship with community benefit.

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Executive Summary

Despite significant interest in all-lands management (ALM) of natural resources, there is a lack of research and information about how these projects actually function. ALM is a general concept rather than a specific directive or program, and there is no single method, required path, or clear guidance to achieve it. Diverse skills and activities may be required for ALM to occur, such as collaboration, outreach, technical analysis, needs evaluation, contracting, or monitoring.

Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition (RVCC) partners have observed a need to gather the experiences and lessons learned from ALM practitioners in order to improve practice, foster peer learning, and inform supportive policy. We designed and distributed a survey in May-June 2017 to various networks of organizations, agencies, and entities engaged in all-lands natural resource management projects. A total of 96 respondents completed this survey, primarily representing the US Forest Service (USFS) (44 percent); survey findings should be considered in light of this. More outreach is necessary to capture the perspectives of more diverse types of entities participating in ALM.

Survey Findings

Familiarity with and use of US Forest Service programs/tools/authorities for ALM, particularly for fire/fuels/forest health issues, was more common than knowledge of other agency, nonprofit, or private resources. There was strong interest in learning more about Good Neighbor Authority. *(pp. 5-6)*

- Several barriers to ALM were relatively equal in importance: identifying programs/tools/authorities, lack of funding flexibility, agency unwillingness to take risks, policies or regulations, organizational differences, outreach and engagement, and time to collaborate. These are diverse types of barriers and would need to be addressed through different strategies at different scales, from building practitioner capacity and peer learning to encouraging policy, program, and cultural changes. *(pp. 7-8)*

- The most popular sources for identifying how to use a program/authority were partner colleagues at other organizations, trying things out and learning from them, and internal colleagues. This suggests that peer communication and learning, and learning-by-doing, are important keys to initiating ALM projects. Formal resources such as webinars or research projects were less commonly used. *(pp. 9-11)*

- Keys to implementing ALM projects *internally* (within one's organization) included being willing to take risks, administering contracts and agreements, "stepping up as a leader", and making a case for how and why ALM projects would help their organization meet its goals. *(p. 11)*

- Keys to implementing ALM projects *externally* also included risk taking, as well as building new relationships with other organizations and identifying specific roles and responsibilities for different partners. *(pp. 11-12)*

- A majority of respondents said they were somewhat or very comfortable taking risks to achieve ALM projects. Factors encouraging risk-taking included support from supervisors, colleagues, and partners; willingness of their supervisors/leadership to take the risk and set the tone; collaboration and finding social agreement; and flexibility in funding sources. *(pp. 12-14)*

- Specific key lessons learned were very diverse, including: collaborate to build social agreement, find an experienced person and learn what they did, find the right motivated and willing partners, establish an effective partnership structure, engage an intermediary organization, engage district rangers, and attend to personal dimensions such as pre-conceived assumptions and tensions. *(pp. 14-15)*

- Since ALM is not an official mandate or program, actual action on ALM projects appears to rely on the motivation and discretion of key leaders within agencies and nonprofit organizations, who choose to attempt new approaches. Interpretations of programs/tools/authorities varies. As a result, some processes for ALM projects may work in one place but not another, depending on organizational capacity present and the choices that key individuals make.

Image credit: Emily Jane Davis

Implications for Practice and Learning

The skills and activities required to conduct ALM projects appear to be diverse, from the individual to partnership scales. They may include:

- Identifying and figuring out how to use and/or "stitch together" available programs, tools, and authorities, which can be a matter of different interpretations and risks rather than just clear guidelines; and implementing and administering them.
- Obtaining internal support and approval to take risks, try something new, or deviate from usual workplans.
- Building social/stakeholder agreement about project goals, outcomes, and management approaches through collaboration and outreach; and balancing the need to collaborate with the need to take action.
- Making the case for action through data collection, analysis, and relevant science.
- Finding the right set of core partners who have complementary resources and abilities, and who are willing to invest time and energy; and developing the right structures and frameworks for partnering.

- Finding willing private landowners.
- Monitoring and sharing results and outcomes.

The relative importance of and need for these activities and skills may vary by the project's location, size, scope, and phase. A combination of leadership/ risk-taking/organizational culture qualities and technical and administrative skills are likely necessary capacities that organizations, particularly government agencies, need to undertake all-lands work. How to create the time and capacity for relationship building, navigating respective organizational roles, and identifying suitable partnership models also appears important. These activities and skills also likely require rather different types of peer learning and training approaches. Some may be more technical in nature, lending themselves to trainings and templates. Others, such as taking risks or building leadership, require more soft skill development among individuals as well as deeper system change. These are better addressed through a combination of actions such as leadership development, organizational culture changes, and peer influence.

Implications for Policy

Successful practice of ALM also requires higher-level policy and programmatic support. This support could be developed by sharing specific requests and needs with decision makers and higher administrative levels. Potential approaches could include:

- Encourage increased flexibility, particularly around use of funding, in the rules, deadlines, and procedures required for ALM programs/tools/authorities. This could include flexibility on matching requirements for partner organizations.
- Seek opportunities to encourage adoption of successful state or regional programs to new areas where they may also be applicable.
- Encourage agencies and decision makers to provide funding sources for capacity-building, partnership training, facilitation, coordination, leadership development, and other key components of ALM projects that are not always supported through traditional funding sources.
- Advocate that agency units have dedicated partnership coordinators or similar positions, and that engagement in ALM projects be incorporated in their job descriptions.
- Encourage agencies to review and better align their respective policies and processes for ALM-related programs/tools/authorities for better inter-agency cooperation on ALM projects.
- Continue to support appropriate use of tools for efficiencies (e.g., Farm Bill Categorical Exclusions) where socially appropriate; these may reduce delays in ALM projects due to agency timeline, which can frustrate partners and landowners.
- Encourage more efficient processes for administering agency grants and agreements with cooperators and partners on ALM projects.

Other Implications

This study provided insight into projects primarily focused on fuels reduction and forest restoration. More work would be needed to explore other types of ALM projects (e.g., on watershed restoration, wildlife conservation, environmental remediation, cooperative multi-landowner timber supply). These projects may engage different types of entities, resources, and tools than forest-focused projects. Survey findings also likely reflected an agency-centric perspective on all-lands (specifically, the US Forest Service), and our questions focused primarily on earlier (planning) stages of such projects.

Further questions to ask to delve deeper into the broader meaning and utility of ALM could include:

- How is the term ALM similar to or different from other cross-boundary activities such as public-private partnerships or landscape-scale restoration?
- What does ALM mean in practice? How often are management actions actually crossing ownership boundaries?
- What is needed to implement all-lands work after the initial planning is completed?
- What tangible outcomes are occurring?
- Does the term ALM have value for other entities such as private landowners, tribes, contractors/businesses, nonprofit/intermediary organizations, or private foundations? What are their interests and skills relative to ALM?

Detailed open ended responses to survey questions are provided in two appendices, available on RVCC's website: **www.ruralvoicescoalition.org/publications**

Introduction

Since the late 2000s, there has been an increase in use of the term "all lands" among natural resource managers, practitioners, and policy makers in the U.S. West. All-lands management (ALM) refers to planning and implementation of activities across landownership boundaries and through engagement of multiple partners and landowners. Motivations for ALM include the cross-boundary nature of many natural resource management issues, and the potential to leverage resources to achieve collective desired outcomes. Programs, tools, and authorities exist within some agencies and organizations to encourage and support ALM. Despite the significant interest in this approach, there is a lack of research and information about how ALM projects are actually being operationalized. ALM is a general concept rather than a specific directive or program, and represents a new way to manage resources. As such, there is no single method, required path, or clear guidance to achieve it. Diverse skills and activities may be required for ALM, such as collaboration, outreach, technical analysis, needs evaluation, contracting, or monitoring.

Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition (RVCC) partners have observed a need to gather the experiences, insights, and lessons learned from ALM practitioners in order to improve practice, foster peer learning, and inform supportive policy. We designed and distributed a survey to organizations, agencies, and entities that are potentially engaged in all-lands natural resource management projects. The purpose was to gather information about what was making these projects possible—the *who* and *how* of taking risks, obtaining information, and piecing together necessary partnerships. We also acknowledged the universal importance of time and funding as barriers, but sought to understand what other surmountable barriers might exist.

Survey Approach

The online survey was designed in Survey Monkey and sent out via email by the RVCC Director to several listserves and contact lists selected as generally representative of participants in all-lands projects within different agencies and organizations. It was open for two weeks in late May-early June 2017. The definition of all lands used in this survey was *projects involving more than one landownership and more than one agency/manager that seek to meet mutual goals across boundaries.* A total of 96 respondents completed the survey, with varying response rates by question. Survey data were downloaded, cleaned, and analyzed in Microsoft Excel using basic descriptive statistics. Responses to open-ended questions were coded for recurring themes where possible to count incidences of these themes, as well as coded qualitatively for tangible insights.

The survey's strengths are that it offers detail, much of it in open-ended form, on the specific keys that experienced practitioners suggest for all-lands projects. A high degree of similar taxonomy and topics discussed was evident in open-ended responses, suggesting that we did access a population with similar experiences. The limitations are that the method of distribution was indirect and not uniform, so it is likely that not all all-lands practitioners were reached. Also, we did not inquire about location, so distribution of responses across the West is not known. Forty-five percent of respondents were from the US Forest Service; other federal and state agencies and non-governmental entities were not as well represented (Table 1). No respondents from USDA Rural Development or the US Fish and Wildlife Service were reached, and there were only three landowners and two business respondents. Thus, all results shared in this report should be considered in light of the survey population, which is significantly composed of Forest Service respondents.

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[1] Charnley, S., Kelly, E.C. and Wendel, K.L., 2017. All Lands Approaches to Fire Management in the Pacific West: A Typology. *Journal of Forestry*, *115*(1), pp.16-25.

[2] Tidwell, T. 2010. An agenda for conservation in the 21st century. Speech to the National Association of State Foresters, Orlando, FL. Available online at www.fs.fed.us/speeches/agendaconservation-21st-century.

[3] Lists included RVCC's newsletter (over 500 individual contacts); all Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program and Joint Chiefs project coordinators with the Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service; the Western Forestry Leadership Coalition and National Association of State Foresters; and Western Governors Association. The survey was also shared within several departments and programs in the Forest Service, including State and Private Forestry and Acquisitions and Management.

To understand the perspectives of private landowners, businesses, citizens, and other entities, different forms of outreach and information gathering would be needed. Their experiences, lessons learned, and insights could provide better knowledge of topics such as nuts-and-bolts of implementation, economic viability of ALM projects, or what motivates private individuals to participate in partnerships with other landowners and agencies.

Affiliation	%	#
US Forest Service	45%	41
State agency	18%	16
Community-based organization	12%	11
Regional nonprofit organization	7%	6
Natural Resource Conservation Service	4%	4
Environmental advocacy group	3%	3
Private landowner	3%	3
Bureau of Land Management	2%	2
Business	2%	2
Academic institution	2%	2
Foundation or charitable trust	1%	1
USDA Rural Development	0%	0
US Fish and Wildlife Service	0%	0
Private citizen	0%	0
Other (please specify)		7

Table 1. Respondent affiliations, n=91

Familiarity with All Lands Programs, Tools, and Authorities

We asked respondents about their familiarity with known programs, tools, and authorities for ALM (Table 2). A majority (over 50%) reported that they had used the USFS/Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Joint Chiefs Initiative, Cohesive Wildfire Strategy, stewardship authorities, and Hazardous Fuels Reduction grants. This likely reflected the number of

US Forest Service individuals that took the survey. It also suggested that ALM projects involving wildfire risk reduction and fuels management may be common. There was less knowledge of non-US Forest Service related programs. Fifty percent of respondents were not familiar with Rural Development programs, and over 40 percent were not familiar with the Tribal Forest Protection Act or Landscape Scale Restoration grants. Over 20 additional programs/tools/authorities not listed in the survey were written in, including state-level programs, other types of NRCS programs, US Fish and Wildlife funds, and non-profit and foundation grants (Appendix 1, p. 1). Finally, nearly 50 percent of respondents were aware of and wished to use the Good Neighbor Authority, a relatively newer US Forest Service authority, in the future.

Taken together, responses to this question indicate some wealth of experience and lessons learned from Forest Service and fire/fuels-related programs. The pool of individuals who are experienced with these programs could be a valuable asset in peer learning networks and other activities focused on these specific issues. Further, the interest in using the Good Neighbor Authority appears to be a specific topic where there is interest in building more knowledge. However, more could be done to identify the types of programs/authorities/tools used by other agencies and organizations that focus on areas such as watershed, water quality, wildlife conservation, renewable energy, or tribal partnerships. It is likely that the survey distribution did not reach a population with more experience in these areas.

Affiliation	I have used this in my work.	I am aware, and would like to use it, but have not yet.	I am aware, but it is not applicable to my area.	I am aware, but not interested in using it.	I am not aware at all, or know very little about it.
USFS Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP)	44%	30%	18%	2%	6%
USFS/NRCS Joint Chiefs Initiative	53%	27%	8%	0%	13%
NRCS Conservation Innovation Grants (CIG)	19%	34%	7%	2%	39%
NRCS Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP)	25%	19%	14%	5%	37%
Rural Development Rural Business Development Grant (RBDG) – formerly two separate programs known as RBOG and RBEG	11%	16%	15%	2%	58%
Rural Development Rural Energy for America Program (REAP)	4%	21%	10%	3%	62%
Cohesive Wildfire Strategy	60%	16%	4%	1%	18%
Good Neighbor Authority	38%	45%	5%	5%	6%
Tribal Forest Protection Act	16%	21%	20%	3%	41%
Wyden Authority	41%	31%	1%	0%	27%
Stewardship authorities	55%	22%	9%	0%	14%
Western States/ Wildland Urban Interface grants	38%	20%	15%	1%	27%
Hazardous Fuels Reduction grants (formerly Stephens funds)	50%	16%	11%	0%	24%
Landscape Scale Restoration grants (LaSR)	26%	22%	5%	1%	46%
NRCS EQIP (Environmental Quality Incentives Program)	47%	23%	10%	2%	18%
NRCS CSP (Conservation Stewardship Program)	18%	31%	14%	2%	34%
Other: note name(s) in text box below	79%	0%	0%	0%	21%

Table 2. Respondent familiarity with various all-lands programs, tools, and authorities; n=97
% may not total precisely 100% due to rounding

Barriers

We asked respondents about the challenging barriers to ALM projects, in addition to the fairly well-known general obstacles of funding and time (Table 3). Many of the most challenging barriers received roughly the same amount of responses. Several barriers were selected by approximately 40 percent of respondents: identifying programs/tools/authorities, lack of flexibility, policies or regulations, organizational differences, outreach and engagement, and making time to collaborate. Only 12 percent said that identifying management needs was a challenging barrier. Other barriers written in included staff capacity, specific US Forest Service authority and program issues, lack of support for staff to perform this work within the US Forest Service, and lack of continuity when staff and partners transition away or are on professional details (see Appendix 1, pp. 1-4 for complete list).

We also asked respondents to identify their single most challenging barrier through an open-ended question. Seventy-seven responses were provided. Eighteen percent of these were about funding, often about flexibility in finding available, and 13 percent were about difficulties in coordinating partners. Some examples of responses included (for a complete list of responses, see Appendix 2, pp. 7-11):

"Understanding different agency and organization initiatives, how they do/don't apply to current work and how we align them spatially and temporally. Lots of different initiatives across the agencies and we are not always in sync on our collective efforts."

"By far the largest barriers, which act as an inter-related set, has been the combination of finding time to collaborate and project development, due to the point that collaboration is necessary to effective project design. Leveraging or layering funds is also inter-related--without the capacity to collaborate in a deeper way leveraging funds across boundaries becomes more challenging."

Responses	%
Making the time to collaborate	45%
Leveraging different funding sources at the right time to meet the project's cross boundary goals	45%
Regulatory or policy barriers	41%
Overcoming differences in organizational structures between partners	40%
Identifying which programs and authorities are applicable to which activities and jurisdictions	39%
Lack of flexibility in the programs and authorities available	39%
Outreach and engagement with the larger community and/or private landowners	39%
Other (please specify)	34%
Figuring out organizational roles and responsibilities between partners	31%
Writing grants for specific projects	26%
Finding willing partners	24%
Availability of qualified contractors with necessary technical expertise	22%
Reconciling all-lands projects with your internal performance measures or incentives	22%
Establishing monitoring plans	21%
Finding willing landowners	21%
Individual personalities	21%
Project development—identifying specific activities and locations	20%
Identifying management/restoration needs	12%

Table 3. Barriers to ALM projects; check all that apply, n=96

Image credit: Emily Jane Davis

"The single most challenging issues ARE funding and capacity limitations. They directly impact the ability to do long-term, science-based planning at the same time as conducting (and monitoring) on-the-ground projects, dealing with institutional barriers, and doing outreach needed to garner public support and participation."

"Figuring out the roles and responsibility of the partners. People can find time to come to meetings but assignments are hardly given and no one follows through."

"Finding willing partners and projects ripe for implementation on the federal side is our biggest challenge. We can almost always drum up landowner interest and activity in a short timeframe; the long planning horizon and uncertainty of cross-boundary projects with a federal component is frustrating to us at the state agency level and to landowners."

Responses to these questions suggest that the challenges to all-lands management are multiple, and multi-dimensional/multi-scalar. They do not just lie with one organizational level or issue. They also involve how to form and utilize working partnerships between different organizations. This may bear some similarities to stakeholder collaboration, but also requires other types of capacity building, particularly around partnership governance tools and models.

Use of ALM Programs, Tools, Authorities

The most popular sources for figuring how to use a program/authority were partner colleagues at other organizations (74 percent), trying things out and learning from them (65 percent), and internal colleagues (60 percent) (Table 4). This suggests that peer communication and learning, and learning-by-doing are important keys to starting an ALM project. This was further reinforced by the question of "who helped you?", wherein a large majority of respondents selected external colleagues (81 percent) and internal colleagues (76 percent) (Table 5). Program personnel designated to help with a particular tool or authority were also a top resource (69 percent). Less common means of figuring out what to do (but still used by over a quarter of respondents) were more structured opportunities—webinars, field tours, and training workshops; and less common types of people who helped were university researchers, professional associations, and other landowners. Several additional written-in responses were provided (Appendix 1, p. 4).

To further delve into this topic, we asked the open-ended question "what single person or resource was the single most helpful?" and received 75 responses. Forty-four percent of these responses mentioned agency personnel or agency resources such as websites and guidance. Thirty-six percent mentioned colleagues and peers. The US Forest Service, state forestry agencies, NRCS, and The Nature Conservancy were mentioned by name in many instances.

Responses	%
Asked partner colleagues at other organizations	74%
Went ahead, tried things out, and learned from them	65%
Asked colleagues within your organization	60%
Taught yourself using guidebooks, program documents, or other materials	56%
Asked those working on other all-lands projects outside of your organization/location to learn from their example	45%
Attended webinar	31%
Attended a field tour	27%
Attended a training workshop	27%
Other (please specify)	13%

Table 4. Respondent sources for figuring out <u>how</u> to use ALM programs/tools authorities; check all that apply, n=94

Responses	%
External colleagues at other organizations	81%
Internal colleagues in your organization	76%
Program personnel	69%
University researchers or Extension personnel	26%
Neighbors or other landowners nearby	21%
Professional associations	14%
Other (please specify)	13%

Table 5. Respondent sources for <u>who</u> helped them figure out how to use ALM programs/tools/authorities, n=92

Image credit: Salmon Valley Stewardship

The comments provided suggest that agency personnel have been very important in laying out guidance and possibilities as well as sideboards. Less than 10 percent of the comments indicated that collaborative groups or researchers/analysts were the single most helpful source. These sources may not rise to the top as the best means of figuring out how to use a program/tool/authority, but may be important for other aspects of ALM, such as building agreement or obtaining necessary information and data. Some of the open-ended comments about the single most helpful person/people included (for a complete list of responses, see Appendix 2, pp. 11-12)

"I also study the enabling authorities very closely. Having clearly written legislative guidance is the biggest help to me."

"Just got Joint Chiefs money, but in the planning stage, the two agency leads were crucial in setting realistic goals."

"It's not a single person or resource, it's a cohesive effort."

"The one who brings the cookies to the meeting (that person that provides the warm personal connection that breaks down barriers and gets people to work together)."

"Agency employees that are willing to try new things and work outside the bounds of their basic position description."

Given that a majority of respondents were agency personnel, responses to these questions suggest that these individuals find other, similar agency personnel and colleagues in other organizations to be most helpful, but in an informal fashion, because talking with colleagues and peers was considered much more helpful than more formal venues such as webinars or workshops. However, this type of informal exchange is less visible and more difficult to organize. Methods that can foster informal peer learning yet fit busy schedules such as digital happy hours, matchup/mentorships, and building a directory of key contacts, might help serve these needs. More time, resources, and commitment would be required to consistently offer accessible in-person modes such as workshops and field tours, which allow for valuable face time.

Necessary Capacities

When asked what was necessary *internally* (within their organization) to be able to implement all-lands projects, respondents most frequently selected "I had to be willing to take some risks" (58 percent) and "I had to arrange contracts or agreements" (57 percent) (Table 6). Half said they had to step up as a leader, and 48 percent reported that they had to make a case for how and why ALM projects would help their organization meet its goals. This suggests that a

combination of leadership/risk-taking/organizational culture qualities and the ability to administer contracts and agreements are likely necessary capacities that organizations, particularly government agencies, need to undertake all-lands work.

Creating new internal capacities or hiring new people were less common choices, which likely reflects the inability of organizations to add new resources for doing ALM projects, and that ALM is being added to existing workloads. However, 48 percent of respondents indicated that they were willing and able to reallocate their time or staff time to do this. Further responses were also written in (Appendix 1, pp. 5-6).

When asked what they had to do externally to be able to implement all-lands projects, risk taking became slightly even more significant than it was for internal ability to do ALM (62 percent) (Table 7). But building new relationships with other organizations (87 percent) was more commonly selected, followed by "We had to identify specific roles and responsibilities for different partners" (63 percent). This suggests that the partnership aspects of ALM have been important to these respondents. These may include how to create the time and capacity for relationship building, navigate respective organizational roles, and identify suitable partnership models. These topics constitute many "soft skills" that can be personality-driven, easier

Responses	%
I had to be willing to take some risks	58%
I had to arrange contract(s) or agreement(s)	57%
I had to step up as a leader	50%
I had to explain and show how this work helped us achieve our goals	48%
I was willing and/or able to reallocate time/staff time away from my other efforts	48%
I had to build agreement within my organization that this was a priority	33%
I did not need to ask for permission and was able to act as I needed without authorization from others	29%
I had to ask for permission to do something new or different	28%
Other (please specify)	27%
I set up a pilot or first stage to test things out	26%
We had to create new internal capacity	26%
I hired someone new to help	14%

Table 6. Actions taken <u>internally</u> to be able to do ALM projects; check all that apply, n=91

for certain learning styles and personality types than others, and not easily or quickly taught.

Other activities that a majority of respondents had undertaken were building new relationships with landowners, stitching together and leveraging different funding sources, and having some individuals step up as leaders. Further responses were written in (Appendix 1, p. 6). Each of these represents a distinct type of capacity or skill, including the ability to engage landowner populations respectfully, knowledge of funding and the wherewithal to navigate it creatively; and individual leadership qualities that could include willingness to take risks, strategic decision-making, and coordination. Entities such as Cooperative Extension or nonprofit organizations experienced in landowner outreach might be ideal leaders to engage landowners on ALM. Leadership development programs are common within and outside of agencies, and participation in these could be encouraged; or they could be tailored or adapted to ALM contexts. Understanding funding sources is complex and would require specialized knowledge, as well as more work to learn about when and where certain creative combinations and approaches are possible, and when they are more challenging.

Finally, many open-ended responses indicated that obtaining Joint Chiefs funding or other resources was a necessary catalyst to truly work across public-private boundaries. In the case of Joint Chiefs, formally engaging NRCS was the key to incorporating private landowners and programs into what had previously been Forest Service-focused projects. This suggests that specific programs and resources for both public and private ownerships are important.

Risk-Taking

We asked respondents to report their comfort with taking risk, which we described as "for example, making decisions in the face of uncertainty, trying something new, stepping out of your usual role, or trying something that not everyone may agree with." A majority of respondents said they were somewhat comfortable taking risks (61 percent), while 14 percent were very comfortable. Only 13 percent were somewhat or very uncomfortable. This may reflect the self-selected population that chose to take this survey and is highly engaged in all-lands projects. More work could be done to understand who (personality type, organizational affiliation, type of position) is most willing to take risks, what types of risk they may be more or less comfortable with, and how their risk-taking may affect overall capacity to undertake ALM projects.

We also asked about risk as an open-ended question: "What enables you to take risks"? About twenty percent reported some variation of support from their supervisors, colleagues, and partners. Eighteen percent

Responses	%
I built new relationships with other organizations	87%
We had to identify specific roles and responsibilities for different partners	63%
I had to be willing to take some risks	62%
I built new relationships with landowners	57%
We had to stitch together and leverage funding resources	57%
Someone/some people stepped up as leaders	53%
I spent a lot of time on the ground in project development	38%
We had to develop new rules or processes for collaborating (e.g., new policies, charters, formal inter-organizational MOUs or other structures)	30%
Other (please specify)	13%
I did not need to seek agreement and was able to act as I needed without getting social license	10%

Table 7. Actions taken _externally_ to be able to do ALM projects; check all that apply, n=91

Image credit: Emily Jane Davis

said the willingness of their supervisors/leadership to take the risk and set the tone. Seventeen percent said that it was collaboration and finding social agreement. Several comments referred to the need for flexibility in funding sources and how they can be used. Some sample responses included (for a complete list of responses, see Appendix 2, pp. 12-14):

"Support of leadership is #1. Support by the members of the collaborative is a very close second."

"Knowing others are willing to take the risk with me."

"High level agency buy-in and support. Understanding and support from political leaders in intent and concepts."

"Knowing the results, lessons learned, etc., from other projects."

This suggests that no single ingredient enables risk taking, but that the organizational environment—supportive, visionary supervisors and colleagues that create the space—may be fairly important. Flexibility in funding and deliverables when attempting something new with unknown results, and the opportunity to observe another example that has offered evidence and/or lessons learned may also be useful. The creation of peer learning networks could provide practitioners with a source of social support when taking risks. Specifically, peer exchanges that match experienced risk-takers with interested but less experienced individuals, particularly within agency leadership, could help foster a culture wherein more risks are attempted. Increasing funding flexibility could also improve the ability to take risks, while simultaneously addressing what was identified as a major barrier in previous questions.

"Flexible and sufficient funding to absorb costs associated with risks, and good relationships with partners and landowners."

Lessons Learned

Responses to the open-ended question "what single lesson learned would you share with others attempting all-lands projects?" were extremely diverse and not well captured by percentages. Eighteen percent did mention the need to collaborate and build social agreement. Other common themes were "find an experienced person and learn what they did", "find the right motivated and willing partners", and "be willing to take risks". Some sample responses included the following (for a complete list of responses, see Appendix 2, pp. 14-17). First, on the topic of agency engagement, district rangers were mentioned several times. For example:

"Get to know district rangers. Some will be helpful; others will not be and there is no point in trying to recruit them. Focus on the helpful ones - they are the key to getting things done."

"Did I mention how important it is that district rangers know what's going on with adjacent ownerships and understand the 'lay of the land' with respect to potential for cross-boundary projects?"

Other responses mentioned the need to have agency expertise on authorities:

"Someone needs to be able to answer questions about any funding sources or authorities in use. Designate a lead for each authority/funding source."

Numerous responses concerned logistics, process, and how to have an effective partnership model, mentioning the need for structure, as well as intermediary and boundary-type organizations. Several comments were also made about the need to find core partners, versus "over-collaboration."

"Match. You mention leverage, but arranging match can be painful on large- scale all-lands projects."

"Do what you said you were going to do. Share both success and failure. Monitor as you implement."

"People need to focus on the results and develop a process that gets to those results. Work within the spirit of the law to achieve results and look for partners who do the same."

"Collaboratively writing [a grant proposal] was the first most helpful thing we did. Developing a formal structure of collaboration, including clearly described responsibilities and regularly scheduled meetings, came next. We are needing a new most helpful thing to help with shifting to implementation focus."

"Share "ownership" in the project with your partners and funding agencies. It may not be exactly as you expect, but if you get close enough, good stuff will happen, and then you can go from there. The unsuccessful projects I saw were usually unwilling to bend towards agency rules, or various funding requirements."

"Be patient. The process is complicated, and staff time is short. Advocacy for cross-boundary projects must include some acknowledgement that there needs to be an outside entity helping to bridge the gaps between the agency people in their silos."

"Find or nurture partners whose mission and operating structure embraces all-lands management who can bridge agencies and landowners with narrower authorities, responsibilities or focus."

"Find the allies and core team you can work with and move the initiative forward. Over processing collaboration and attempting to involve representatives from various stakeholder groups of the will create paralysis. Use your core team, make it happen, then engage others building upon the success."

"The biggest key to successful cross-boundary management or projects in my opinion is the combination of federal/private money and the crucial role of the conservation or local stewardship NGO to be the 'hub of the wheel' to which all the spokes (agencies, funders, landowners) are attached.

Finally, other observations were offered on the social and interpersonal aspects of ALM work.

"Emotions run high on these projects… need to find and cultivate people who can lead, manage relationships and tension and who are comfortable taking risks. This is not something most organizations are hiring for, directly."

"Let everything from the past go…some of your partners may have sued you or were purchasers or commented positive and negative on projects formerly, but this is about our future."

Implications for Fostering All Lands Management

Conducting ALM projects appears to require several different types of activities and skills, such as:

- Identifying and figuring out how to use and/or "stitch together" available programs, tools, and authorities, which can be a matter of different interpretations and risks rather than just clear guidelines; and implementing and administering them.
- Obtaining internal support and approval to take risks, try something new, or deviate from usual workplans.
- Building social/stakeholder agreement about project goals, outcomes, and management approaches

through collaboration and outreach; and balancing the need to collaborate with the need to take action.
- Making the case for action through data collection, analysis, and relevant science.
- Finding the right set of core partners who have complementary resources and abilities, and who are willing to invest time and energy; and developing the right structures and frameworks for partnering.
- Finding willing private landowners.
- Monitoring and sharing results and outcomes.

Practitioner Development and Learning

The relative importance of and need for these skills may vary by the project's location, size, scope, and phase; not all ALM partners may need these skills equally at all times. These activities and skills can be taught/built, but given their diversity, they likely require rather different types of peer learning and training approaches to aid practitioners. Some may be more technical in nature—e.g., specifics of implementing and using different authorities, or developing monitoring protocols. These activities may lend themselves to trainings and templates. Others, such as taking risks or building leadership, require more soft skill development among individuals as well as deeper system change. These do not lend themselves well to traditional information-sharing formats and are best addressed through a combination of actions such as leadership development, organizational culture changes, and peer influence. Supporting ALM practitioners and providing technical assistance might include the following actions:

- Create case studies of ALM projects: Map out the roles, authorities, resources, responsibilities of different actors in each arrangement and what they each can do, to better understand who can do what—with awareness that the ingredients and roles possible in one place may not look the same elsewhere.
- Develop checklists of considerations for different stages/phases of ALM projects.
- Develop a guide to understanding what match is, different types of match to consider, where to find it, how to document it, and what it means to commit match.

Image credit: Emily Jane Davis

- Collate questions from grant proposals that ask applicants to describe partnership process, structure, etc., so that examples are available, as well as types of questions grantors ask.
- Explore social science research on successful partnership models, methods for mapping organizational networks, or other topics relevant to ALM partnerships; and work to distill relevant concepts or tools for practice.
- Develop templates that can be used in job descriptions and employee evaluations to articulate specific partnership and collaboration capacities.
- Build a set of willing people with experience who would participate in peer learning networks and activities. Seek means to compensate or recognize them for their time or otherwise reduce the burden on their capacity.
- Use a range of in-person and technological formats, including but not limited to digital happy hours, mentorship matchups, workshops, presentations, or webinars. Consider convening diverse entities working across given regions, or convening peers with similar professional positions or interests regardless of location.

- Connect key leaders, supervisors, and other personnel whose ability to act on ALM makes a difference—and encourage peer learning and influence among them. These could include line officers, contracting officers, and grants and agreements staff.
- Provide resources, trainings, and networking opportunities specific to federal agency personnel to increase their capacity for effective partnership. This could include trainings on partnership principles, models, and case study examples to help build capacity to work with external entities.

Policy

Since ALM is not an official mandate or program, actual action on ALM projects likely relies on the motivation and discretion of key leaders within agencies and nonprofit organizations, who choose to attempt new approaches. It is also likely that interpretations of what is possible through various programs/tools/authorities varies. As a result, some processes for ALM projects may work in one place but not another, depending on the organizational capacity present and the choices that key individuals make.

Successful practice of ALM more broadly beyond isolated examples may require higher-level policy and programmatic change. This change could be effected through policy education and direct work with agencies and partners at higher administrative levels and with decision-makers. This could include the following actions:

- Share lessons learned and insights from the ground to higher levels within federal and state agencies that offer ALM programs/tools/authorities.
- Encourage increased flexibility, particularly around use of funding, in the rules, deadlines, and procedures required for ALM programs/ tools/authorities. This could include flexibility on matching requirements for partner organizations.
- Seek opportunities to encourage adoption of successful state or regional programs to new areas where they may also be applicable.
- Encourage agencies and decision makers to provide funding sources for capacity-building, partnership training, facilitation, coordination, leadership development, and other key components of ALM projects that are not always supported through traditional funding sources.
- Advocate that agency units have a coordinator position dedicated to leading all lands initiatives and that engagement in ALM projects be incorporated in their job descriptions as opposed to a collateral duty.
- Encourage agencies to review and better align their respective policies and processes for ALM-related programs/tools/authorities for better inter-agency cooperation on ALM projects.
- Explore opportunities for cost-share or jointly funded positions between agencies and organizations; often these positions can improve organizational understanding and break down cultural barriers.
- Continue to support appropriate use of tools for efficiencies where socially appropriate; these may reduce delays in ALM projects due to agency timeline, which can frustrate partners and landowners.
- Encourage more efficient processes for administering agency grants and agreements with cooperators and partners on ALM projects.

Finally, as noted throughout this report, this survey was successful at capturing US Forest Service perspectives, and information primarily about ALM in fire/fuels/forest restoration contexts. More research and outreach would be necessary to learn about ALM projects focused on watershed restoration, wildlife conservation, environmental remediation, or other natural resource issues. These projects may not explicitly use the term "all-lands management", but may offer insights. More work could also be done to access other types of entities participating in ALM, such as private landowners, tribes, contractors/ businesses, nonprofit/intermediary organizations, or private foundations. Issues important for successful ALM from their perspectives may include cultural resource management, partnering across different cultures, economic viability of projects, landowner motivations and how to reach landowners, how to find/develop intermediary organizations, and how to reach private foundation funding that may flexibly leverage other resources in ALM projects.

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