Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Planning in the Southwestern Crown of the Continent: A Partner Perspective

Anne A. Carlson, Ph.D.
The Wilderness Society
The Forest Landscape Restoration Restoration Act (2009)

- New model of community forestry on our public lands
- Reduce fuels in Wildland Urban Interface (WUI); projects to use forest products to support local lumber mills; get fire back on the landscape
- Create jobs and improve economies in rural communities
- Increase resiliency of forests and watersheds
- Restore old growth forests
- Control/ eradicate invasive species
- Develop and implement large-scale monitoring programs to inventory current resource conditions and inform future management actions and strategies
Cooperative Forest Landscape Restoration Project

- Create ~170 full and part-time jobs/year
- Contribute approximately $9.1 million annually in direct labor income
- Produce up to 189 MMBF of sawlogs and biomass over 10 years.
- Restore 46,000 acres of forest land
- Reduce fire risk on 27,000 acres of high-risk lands within the wildland-urban interface
- Restore 937 miles of streams
- Mitigate noxious weeds on 81,000 acres
- Reduce distributions of non-native fish species in area lakes
- Improve 280 miles of trails
- Decommission 400 miles of roads
Challenges of large landscape aquatic management

- “Maintain or improve water quality and watershed function”
- Natural variability in climatic, biophysical, and disturbance-driven landscape characteristics
- Measurement error
- High costs of data collection
- Limited funding for CFLR projects
- Influence of roads on watershed processes and stream habitats are not well understood
- Belt geologies of the Crown
How do LCC’s add value?

- 2011 grant to develop and test methods for establishing the impacts of FS roads on streams and lakes, and to evaluate effectiveness of large-scale restoration projects
- Allows us to leverage funding between federal programs, and to leverage private funding with public funding
- Ability to leverage collaboration by staff from multiple agencies, NGO’s, and universities across the West to develop new model for management of aquatic systems
- Develop scientific tools, models, and datasets that link science with management across ecologically-similar regions
- Opportunities for networking and sharing of models
- Facilitates development of goals, strategies, and actions for conservation of large landscapes
Critically important tools and science

- Ability to use data, models, and tools developed through other LCC-funded projects on our project: incorporating streamflow and stream temperature models and datasets into our new model of watershed management (climate change)
- Landscape Conservation Management and Analysis Portal (developed by GNLCC as a portal to the USGS ScienceBase program)
- Access to a data repository, data cataloguing and search capabilities, and a shared work environment for updating GIS files
- SWCC will be using for internal cataloguing system and for exporting all data to our SWCC website
- These support tools are free
Southwestern Crown of the Continent CFLRP: Partners

- U.S. Forest Service: Northern Region; Helena, Lolo, and Flathead National Forests
- Montana Dept. of Natural Resources
- Blackfoot Challenge
- Clearwater Resource Council
- Pyramid Mountain Lumber
- University of Montana
- Missoula Country Rural Initiatives
- Northwest Connections
- The Nature Conservancy
- National Wildlife Federation
- Swan Ecosystem Center
- Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation
- Trust for Public Lands
- Forest Business Network

www.swcrown.org