



Assisting collaboration in forest and grassland restoration, conservation, and resource utilization — for the benefit of all

AGENDA

Montana Forest Collaboration Network
10th Annual Workshop

“Adapting Collaboration to a Changing Federal Landscape”

November 6-7, 2025

Hilton Garden Inn, Missoula Montana

(10-20-2025)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 6

- 10:00 - 12:00 **Optional Pre-Session: Creating Meaningful Collaborative Connections:** Steve Daniels, Gregg Walker
Interactive (not lecture-based) session viewing meaningful connections as a building block for the relevance of collaborative groups. Focuses on connections with each other, partners, agencies, and with the community. Participants will work on a “Connections Action Plan.”
- 12:00 – 1:00 **Lunch:** On Your Own
- 1:00 - 1:10 **Welcome and Introductions:** Jim Burchfield, Gordy Sanders, MFCN
- 1:10 – 1:20 **Comments from Montana Elected Officials**
- 1:20 – 1:40 **Amanda Kaster:** Director--Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation:
State Responses to Federal Changes
- 1:40 – 1:50 **Questions/Comments:** Conference Participants
- 1:50 – 3:15 **Case Studies** (10-15 min. each) Current Adaptations and Initiatives to Advance Locally Driven, Cross-Boundary Action:
- **Lincoln County Stewardship Agreement:** Mark Peck—Former Lincoln County Commissioner; Kate Stevens-- Director, Lincoln County Port Authority; Chad Benson—Supervisor, Kootenai National Forest, USDA Forest Service
 - **Blackfoot River/Bureau of Land Management/Private/Tribal Collaboration:** Mike Schaedel—The Nature Conservancy; Katie McDonald—Confederated Salish-Kootenai Tribe; Erin Carey—Missoula Field Office Manager, Bureau of Land Management
 - **DNRC/Forest Service Shared Stewardship Agreement:** Shawn Thomas —Administrator, Forestry & Trust Land Division, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation; Chad Benson-- Supervisor, Kootenai National Forest, USDA Forest Service
 - **Stewardship Research:** Chelsea Pennick, PhD—Assistant Professor of Natural Resources Policy, Administration and Governance & Assoc. Director of the Policy Analysis Group—University of Idaho
- 3:15 – 3:30 **Break**
- 3:30 - 4:15 **Panel of MFCN Participating Groups:** Response to the changing federal landscape (10 minutes each):
- Margaret Gorski – Ravalli County Collaborative
 - Vaia Errett – Beaverhead-Deerlodge Working Group
 - Sam Gilbert – Big Elk Divide Restoration Committee
- 4:15 – 4:45 **Response of Agency Regional Leaders:** USDA Forest Service; Montana Dept. of Natural Resources and Conservation; U.S. Bureau of Land Management; Natural Resources Conservation Service
- 4:45 - 5:00 **Open Discussion -- All Workshop Participants**
- 5:00 **Social – Appetizers/No-Host Bar (credit card only)**



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FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 7

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| 8:00 – 8:30 | Welcome and MFCN Business meeting: Jim Burchfield and Steve Kimball |
| 8:30 – 9:10 | Keynote Address: Kristin Sleeper, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Natural Resources, U.S. Department of Agriculture |
| 9:10 – 9:40 | Open Discussion: All Workshop Participants |
| 9:40 – 10:00 | Break |
| 10:00 – 10:20 | Status of Montana Wood Products Industry: Todd Morgan--Director of Forest Industry Research, Bureau of Business and Economic Research, University of Montana |
| 10:20 – 10:40 | NEPA Changes: Sara Gharfoury – Attorney, American Forest Resource Council |
| 10:40 – 10:50 | Open Discussion by Participants |
| 10:50 – 12:00 | Small Group Sessions -- Pathways to Action for Collaborative Groups: Discussions and examples of how groups can meet objectives and accomplish their group’s goals |
| 12:00 – 12:15 | Closing Remarks: Steve Kimball, Gordy Sanders -- MFCN |
| 12:15 | Adjourn |

