

Front Range Roundtable

Detailed Interview Notes

July—August, 2009

CONFIDENTIAL



Interview Questions and Results Categories

Questions

What's Working?

- Your organization's participation in the Roundtable: Why did your organization join the Roundtable? What benefits did it hope to receive from participation? Have these benefits been realized? Which ones? Why or why not?

Strategy

- Past activities: Overall, how satisfied are you with the progress made by the Roundtable? What activities were the most beneficial to you, your organization, and/or the Roundtable? Which did not result the way you had hoped?
- Roundtable priorities: What are the top priorities you see for the Roundtable over the next year?

Organization

- Roundtable organization: How would you describe the roles of the Executive Committee, the Core Team, and other members? What is the ideal frequency for each of these groups to meet? Do you see the need for any other/different groups to convene?
- If you could make any organizational changes, what would they be?

Operations

- What do you like about the way the Roundtable is currently operates? What would you like to see changed?
- How would you describe the the current relationships between the Roundtable and the **Front Range Fuels Treatment Partnership (FRFTP)**, **Front Range Watershed Wildfire Protection Working Group (FRWWPWG)** and the **Northern Front Range Mountain Pine Beetle Working Group (NFRMPBWG)**? Is there anything you would change about the way these groups operate and interact with the Roundtable? What would be your preferred relationships?

Partnerships

- FRFTP
- FRWWPWG
- NFRMPBWG

Results Categories

- Accomplishments
- Consensus Building
- Awareness, Information Sharing, and Satisfaction
- Re-Define Purpose: Focused / Broad?
- Monitoring
- Outreach
- Demonstration Project II
- Science
- Mapping
- Biomass Utilization and Slash Sites
- Re-Define Executive Team
- Re-Define Core Team
- Re-Define Membership Structure
- Expand Diversity
- Non-Profit Status
- Decision-Making
- Governance and Accountability
- Meetings Structure
- Meetings Frequency and Location

This is the order of the interview notes



What's Working? Accomplishments

Interview quotes

- Many Roundtable recommendations have been realized. The USFS has been awarded a long-term stewardship contract, for 10 years at 4,000 acres per year, half from the AR, half from PSI. Colorado Springs Utilities will convert to co-firing with biomass and use 100k tons per year.
- The 2006 recommendations of 10 initiatives were great and a lot of them have been implemented, resolved, or progress has been made: 1. New funding bills have been enacted, 2. There's a senate bill in the state legislature for a \$2500 tax deduction for private landowners doing treatments on their own land, 3. [Our county] has been fortunate with stimulus funding, [skipped 4] ,5. The USFS region is getting a stewardship contract which will help Colorado Spring Utilities use 130k tons of biomass per year, 6. Larger contract sizes and durations are happening, 7. WUI is a local control issue, and 8. Senator Dan Gibbs [Summit County] has introduced Senate Bill 1 and keeps lobbying for funding from the state legislature. We've received \$3 million in competitive grants.
- We accomplished setting the recommendations, we accomplished Woodland Park, we are accomplishing a forest service stewardship contract. We've done a lot of things.
- The watershed assessments are valuable, it's good to know where the bad places [for a catastrophic fire] are. It's another tool in the toolbox.
- The Roundtable can ripen a political issue. There were very few forest health bills previously and in 2008, there were half a dozen, and then more of them in 2009.
- The Roundtable has had success making things happen.
- The Roundtable can be an effective tool to get something done.



What's Working? Consensus Building

Interview quotes

- There's a whole host of benefits we get out of the Roundtable. Participating in it increases the chances of success of our programs. Roundtable consensus reduces risk to our business, projects, and programs. We know what kind of projects have a broad consensus behind them, so there are less risks.
- In the earliest days of the Roundtable, there was a genuine effort to form the scientific basis for current forest conditions, historic conditions, and need for change. A lengthy and painful social process involving leading forest scientists arrived at a consensus document laying out the need for restoration and prescribing, in general, actions needed to achieve restoration as well as community protection from wildfire goals.
- It's a wonderful organization in which to try to gain understanding and agreement on where we can treat.
- The Roundtable has maintained the balance of different concerns with ecology which give us strength [with some frustrations].
- The Roundtable was able to reach agreement that thinning is needed in Ponderosa Pine forests.
- We have our voices heard in the planning by federal agencies.
- At the Roundtable, we get to run ideas by people. [Our county] was the first to have a county-wide CWPP, and the Roundtable helped get consensus, set goals in 2006, and lightened the political issues. We all got on the same page that fire risk mitigation and forest restoration is a real problem. We got consensus that this is an issue that needs to be addressed.
- The Roundtable is a place to vet ideas.



What's Working? Awareness, Information, and Satisfaction

Interview quotes

Awareness

- I've used the 2006 report [on Roundtable priorities and recommendations] as justification for grant funding.
- The Roundtable has been effective at increasing awareness of needs for fuel treatments.
- The Roundtable is valuable because of its political perspectives.
- The Roundtable has good name recognition.

Information

- There is frankness and candor that is provided throughout each group meeting. That's all good. What's working well is the amount of information that is shared. We don't want for information. That's a plus. Also relationships are established. There are strong connections and alignment of purpose.
- I get a science education. I like the people, the diversity of knowledge.
- The Roundtable is one of many opportunities to stay engaged with our agency partners so we can be aggressive and progressive with fuels treatments. We're learning a lot. We used to be like lost deer in the headlights.
- The biomass workshops in Gilpin were valuable. The [field trips and workshop] offerings are always good.
- It's a good group for sharing because there is a lot of activity and funding in the state. We need to keep sharing information.
- The documents in 2006 and the annual report in 2007 were very good sources of information.
- The Roundtable is more of an information exchange device than a genuine collaboration -- if this is everyone's understanding, then that's fine. But it is not my understanding that this is the purpose of the Roundtable.

Satisfaction

- The Roundtable should continue on with supporting state and federal agencies to reduce risk and restore landscapes. It should be a model for communities and counties, a laboratory for how collaboration is done.
- I'm real happy. I'm pleased with the process. I'm glad we stuck together as long as we have.
- The Roundtable is a really great group that has a lot of support. It's important to keep it in place.
- The Roundtable members are still committed, that is its strength.
- Overall, my experience in the Roundtable is in the high 8's (out of 10).



Proposed Roundtable Priority?—Re-Define Purpose

Interview quotes

Yes

- Our top priority should be to redefine the mission. The Roundtable hasn't figured out what it wants to be when it grows up. We kick the ball around the circle again and again. It should be something. It shouldn't fade away. Our original goal was to understand fuel conditions and needs for treatment. We did that pretty well. Ever since, we've struggled with what the Roundtable should be, how to implement the report [of recommendations]. We need a clarified mission. It's like you're watching a soap opera and you're gone for a year, but its only like missing a year's worth of soap opera, and you can pick it up again. If we don't decide on a mission, we will lose senior leaders. They'll start delegating the meetings down.
- The Roundtable has suffered from a loss of energy level. It's not that it's not organized efficiently, but that there was a lack of purpose after the report came out in 2006. We worked earnestly on recommendations for the first year. Then we lost a focused purpose. The Executive Team is diligent, but the Roundtable is just chatty. It needs a new purpose.

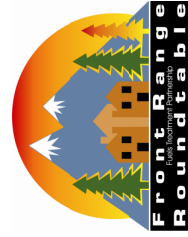
No

(none)

- We need to set goals and priorities, get continuity.
- The Roundtable needs to redefine itself.
- The Roundtable was very successful when we had a goal to work towards. We've been struggling for a few years in getting our hands around something to show progress.
- There were growing pains, but alignment of purpose [in publishing the report of recommendations] got us through. Then the Roundtable reached a plateau.
- Too often a report sits on a shelf and nothing happens. We were big, then we got lean, then we got a second wind. The Mountain Pine Beetle threw us for a curve.
- The Roundtable lacks ... bylaws, a charter, a mission statement.
- We have agendas and meeting dates but need to bring more focus back to the Roundtable.

Source: Information interviews with 18 Roundtable members, Summer 2009

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Should the Roundtable Stay Focused or Go Broad? —Focused

Interview quotes

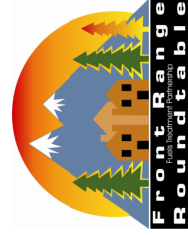
Focused

- There were growing pains, but alignment of purpose got us through. Then the Roundtable reached a plateau. It seemed to run its course on the area of alignment and then splintered off into looking at other areas to get a toe hold, cast a bigger net on what the partnership was about. It went down blind alleys. Some people got disillusioned and said sharing information just isn't enough. Then we turned a corner and entered a transitional stage.
- Where do we go from here? Is it information sharing, is it inclusiveness of communities? We never defined an end point. We felt compelled to continue to work together but didn't know what the work should be. We've accomplished a lot. There is more federal funding now. There's a heightened awareness of the WUI. There's acceptance to treating the landscape. But we never defined the end point. There's a stigma around collaborative groups dissolving, but that shouldn't be so. Some run their course. The group should be for more than gathering for networking and information sharing. What's our purpose? We have a compulsion to do more. There's a lack of agreement on what to do in the Upper Montane.
- New problems are being defined by Roundtable participants without collective agreement on the problem -- there is a lack of consensus on the science pertaining to these problems and there is an appearance that personal and/or organizational agendas are driving these issues through the Roundtable process in order to legitimize these issues. A good example is the issue of treating high elevation watersheds to minimize impacts from severe wildfire that some on the Roundtable are pushing.
- We went off on tangents. We solved the easy stuff. Some issues don't seem resolvable and the time is not spent to resolve them.
- There are big questions out there, outside the Lower Montane, where we can't get consensus. We need help identifying the activities for which there is consensus.
- The organization needs some focus brought back to the Roundtable.

Broad



See next slide



Should the Roundtable Stay Focused or Go Broad? — Broad

Interview quotes

Focused Broad

- I'm struck by the three different groups [Roundtable, Watershed, Mountain Pine Beetle]. It's the same people, and the same issues. The Roundtable is established. It seems like the other groups should be underneath the umbrella.
- We should have coordinated messaging with the other groups [watershed and mountain pine beetle].
- The Roundtable focuses on Ponderosa Pine, which the environmental groups could agree to. The Roundtable's focus on Ponderosa Pine created a gap in member's needs. Some members have lands in the Upper Montane, and we needed to find help elsewhere.
- I would like the Roundtable to add the southern Front Range. [Our agency] manages land there.
- Regional approaches are always better. I'm hoping that we can get to one voice on prioritization of how we spend money statewide and get Colorado's share of national funding. I'd rather see us all work together as a confederation with a common goal. We could be a coalition just for certain activities. We need to use messages about pine beetles and forest health, because that brings notoriety. We don't have any fires brining us notoriety, not since 2002. We need to leverage the hot topic, the beetle. We need to work with the state and federal government on funding issues and make sure recovery funding ends up in the right place. We have to make sure it doesn't all go to California."
- Ponderosa Pine was the low hanging fruit. There was a let-down after the big [2006] report. There weren't enough accomplishments. We need to address the other ecosystems [but the environmental groups] wouldn't allow it to be discussed. We had good national name recognition, but we lost it. The Roundtable could have worked to find other areas where treatment is needed. The lack of leadership to do this has spawned the other groups [watershed and beetle]. The Roundtable lost a big share of its influence. Other groups became more place-based. We seem to be working through these issues.
- In DC it takes on average 3 to 4 years to complete legislation. We need a consolidated effort to advocate for Colorado State. It's not in our best interest to lobby DC as 4 or 5 different groups. We're competing against each other. The groups should remain separate, we need to corral it all.
- The Roundtable has not accepted anything beyond the Lower Montane into the Lodgepole Pine. The Bark Beetle has become dominant, coming over on the east side, but the Roundtable hasn't wanted to change the report to include Lodgepole Pine or watersheds.
- The CBBC is afraid of competition with the Front Range. They call their structure "place-based conservation. I don't want to get into a situation where all the funding goes to the Front Range. We've started doing assessments on the western slope. I would like to see a statewide assessment. We don't want to fight with anyone, we just want to come to agreement."



Proposed Roundtable Priority?—Monitoring

Interview quotes

Yes		No (none)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> We need better tracking, monitoring, and verification. What percent of treatments have been in priority areas? We also need to inventory accomplishments against the 10 goals. We have an effort underway to account for all acres treated. We can use more GIS to clarify where treatments have been vs. where they need to be. We should also do an inventorying of overall progress against all the 2006 recommendations. We need to account for past treatments. We should reassess and inventory the goals we set in 2006 and accomplishments since then. I support tracking and monitoring. How much money was spent, where did it come from, where was it spent and why? What criteria was used to decide where to spend the money? Do we have any? I would like the Roundtable to propose a standard screening criteria to align prioritization processes for deciding where to spend money. What are the current processes? We should do an accounting of what goals have been met. I worry what federal or state funding comes to the Front Range will all go to state and federal lands. We need to find out whether the money is going to Roundtable priorities. Since the scientific consensus [on Roundtable priorities in 2006], there has been no effort to collaboratively monitor if/how forest treatments in the Front Range are, in fact, consistent with the scientific prescriptions. This is despite the fact there is tremendous amount of treatments going on -- many thousands of acres per year. There is no collective verification process, leading to questions whether the participating agencies are in fact putting Front Range forests on a path to restoration and resilience. This has led to an erosion of trust and faith that this is a genuine collaborative process -- or merely a platform for agencies to say they are involved in a "collaborative process" without participating in good faith. When I mean participating in good faith, I mean that there is a genuine interest in dialogue where assumptions are questioned, the problem is "re-framed" according to the collective understanding and interests of all participants, and there is collective assessment and monitoring of progress along the way. Is work done in the WUI? We need more private property involved, but whose responsibility is it to make that happen? The scholarly article by Tania Schoennagel raised hackles because it found that most of the work is done in the non-WUI. All three groups [the Roundtable, the watershed group, the mountain pine beetle group] have each decided to try to figure out what's been done but they're each working independently. We should have coordinated analysis on what's been done. We need to account for progress made. We should assess accomplishments from the 2006 report. We should focus on recommendations from the 2006 report and what we need to do to accomplish those. We have drifted away. Monitoring should not be threatening at all to anyone, it should be done. We still have to keep an eye on the 10 recommendations. It's the basics, we need to follow through and get them done. We've tried to keep them alive, none are getting neglected, but they need more highlighting. 		



Proposed Roundtable Priority?—Outreach

Interview quotes

Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Roundtable should do more outreach, especially to CCI and getting more County Commissioners on board. We could involve CSU extension agents in our outreach. We should push more legislation as a cohesive group. We can't take a lot of time to help on CWPPs, but we can create a coordinated front on media outreach CWPPs are open ended. No one's taken ownership. It's not clear if the county or the CSFS is responsible for private land involvement. The Open Space department can't work on private land. What exactly is the CSFS role on private land? Is private land a priority for the CSFS, meaning with HOAs? In [this county], USFS looks to the county folks to lead, and we're involved with [industry], but not HOAs. We need to decide how to communicate the successes that we've had to the congressional delegation. We should work together to advocate for the Flame Act, federal legislation which would give separate appropriations for fire response. Currently agencies have to pay for fires off the top of the budget, so big fires can soak up all the budget for the agency. This should be a talking point for us to provide our delegation. We should to a stewardship contract field trip by October, go the forest first, then to a biomass facility, to energize the Roundtable for more biomass utilization. There are energy grants available to communities for bioheating and biopower projects. Attention to ripening political issues is always going to be needed, we have to keep this on the front burner. We need continued effort to lobby the state legislature, to create incentives without being over regulatory. The Roundtable prevents lawsuits by reaching consensus. We should find out who are the landowners in the yellow areas [overlap zone] and start engaging with them and finding funding for them. Has the CSFS done this? [My agency] needs help doing outreach and educating non-WUI residents to understand and hopefully not oppose the efforts needed by the WUI residents (e.g., temporary slash sites on open space land). You need industrial zoning for slash sites in Jefferson County. We can only use agricultural lands as slash sites temporarily when mitigating on that property. The County doesn't own any land zoned industrial. We need a policy change to allow private landowners to run slash sites, and the County could help fund them. There's only one permanent slash site in Jefferson county. County commissioners wouldn't come to the Roundtable, you have to go to them. But I'm not in favor of sending Roundtable representatives to DC, our representatives live here, we should see them when they're in town. I'd like the Roundtable to hold a field trip to see the air curtain burner in Estes Park that burns slash and logs. We should also see a pellet plant. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I think we should wait to do outreach until we have something new to say.



Proposed Roundtable Priority?— Demonstration Project II

Interview quotes

Yes

- We should be getting more cash, spending it on pilots and help for local governments, and getting industry involved.
- We should try to get more funding for private land owners. We need another Teller / Woodland Park type project, a second demonstration project, as many as we can do up and down the Front Range.
- I would like to see continued focus on work like the Woodland Park project. We should establish another one or two projects like that across the landscape and work with the FLRA framework.
- We should start chipping away at the acres. We already decided where to work. We should identify projects, and hand them off—like Woodland Park.
- We should form a subgroup around private lands, pull together for a grant, develop a process for pulling together a lot of private landowners for a grant.
- A Woodland Park type project is an appropriate role for the Roundtable; they should do more of this [get grants but not implement them].
- We failed to identify any significant projects. Woodland Park, in the short term, got it off the ground, but didn't engage many Roundtable members. I was disappointed and frustrated.
- We should do more projects like Woodland Park, but in a different county.
- Our top priority should be to identify a large landscape.
- We need to get more work done on the ground, like at Woodland Park.
- Woodland Park is our only example of implementation.
- We should pick 3 priority communities and help them to a Woodland Park type project. We should go after funding from the FRLA.
- Woodland Park is 30k acres and funded by the HFI. It's a wonderful collaborative subset of groups working together. It's and so successful that we should do an even larger landscape, like a watershed of up to 100k acres. We should find an overlap between the three Front Range groups. We want to apply for funding through FLRA. We have letters [through the channels] to Congress.

No

- Combined funding opportunities are not a huge need right now. We [communities/agencies] can apply on our own. It's more complicated to work with so many entities. The Roundtable can provide higher level advocacy for more federal and state funding without being the implementer or applicant. The Roundtable should not get grants and implement projects.



Proposed Roundtable Priority?—Science

Interview quotes

Yes

- The ecology workgroup reached consensus on Lodgepole ecology. Fact sheets were published with talking points and guidelines that the team could agree on.
- The Roundtable should put out more fact sheets, such as on Mountain Pine Beetles in Ponderosa Pine: what's known, predictions.
- [My agency] comes to the Roundtable to learn what the conservation community thinks of forest treatments. We also want to learn from other groups are doing.
- The Roundtable needs to assert more leadership advocating not only to get acres treated, but using current science and genuine collaboration to treat the right acres in the right places using the right prescriptions. What is "right" needs to be collaboratively agreed-upon. [Our organization] stands at the ready to help with this component, but the conditions aren't conducive at this point. I am in favor of management that is informed by science, based on collective understanding of the need, recognizes uncertainty, and values experimentation, monitoring, and adaptation. From the scientific consensus on lower elevation Front Range Ponderosa pine, there is a huge need for management. The Roundtable can be an awesome model for making this happen.
- Bureaucrats need to be knowledgeable on a scientific level to make good policy and be articulate in persuading others. They need the science information to be able to deliver the message. The Roundtable has less science information than the [Watershed] and [Mountain Pine Beetle] meetings. The other two groups are all about science. The other groups are more focused and valuable that way. They feed research to the Roundtable.
- Openness to learning, monitoring, and frank discussions about what is working and what needs to change is key. Getting the appropriate level of scientific information -- no matter how conflicting -- is also key to success.

No

- Scientists don't want to conjecture. They're afraid they'll be thrown under the bus. We need to take more risks so we can take action before it's too late. We want "informed consent" but the Roundtable is too cautious. We need more trust so everyone can speak openly and know they will be respected. People are afraid to say what they are thinking. The trust level needs to be higher.
- The Ecology group was asked to set management guidelines for Lodgepole Pine, but they couldn't get to agreement and disbanded.



Proposed Roundtable Priority?—Mapping

Interview quotes

Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We should add the CWPP boundaries to our maps. • We should update the maps. This is vital work and the power we have together. • I support the GIS effort. • I want to see what the overlap is with the watershed and mountain pine beetle groups. • If we're re-looking at acres, that's OK. • We need to take out roadless, wildness, and steep areas. Then we'll get more consensus. I agree with mapping the overlapping three Front Range groups. • I agree with the effort to take out inoperable areas, add in CWPPs, and watershed and beetle group priorities. But do not take out areas where we could use prescribed fire or wildland fire use after the 1st tier of mechanical work has been done. Those areas should be labeled as future fire treatment areas. Its not that some areas don't need treatment, its that we can't do mechanical treatment. We also need to add wildlife, riparian, plant habitat, and critical recreation areas. • We have a team active to figure out the inoperable areas, such as steep slopes maybe >45% slope. • We need a big meeting to figure out new mapping. • That would be the GIS nirvana to map the Beetles vs. the WUI vs. the watersheds. I'd also like to see slash sites added to the maps so we know which communities have the infrastructure when we're making biomass project site decisions. The maps could also help us identify communities to focus on. • I support the 3 tasks of the GIS effort: taking out inoperable, overlaying other Front Range groups, overlaying CWPPs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We don't need more GIS. We can do [another Woodland Park] RFP again without new GIS. • I think we need to keep in mind that additional prioritization leads to a busier map. I have hesitated saying this, but from my viewpoint there is little value in this additional prioritization, because, at least from the Forest Service standpoint, it happens when we are doing our project planning anyway. However, it is not my decision, the RT as a whole and the executive team want additional prioritization and I'm going to try to assist that effort, but more priorities lead to more colors. • At the May 2009 Roundtable meeting, I did not get the impressions that there was that much support for re-doing priority areas, but rather providing guidance to project planners. • Will [the agencies] consider the Roundtable priorities in their planning process? If not, why go through this exercise? • We need to solve the problem of translating the map into process in the field. The results are not trickling down to the field. We need to decide what we're going to use the map for.



Proposed Roundtable Priority?—Biomass Utilization and Slash Sites

Interview quotes

Yes

- The Jefferson County DOE project to site a pellet plan is still active in site development. The site does not necessarily have to be in Jefferson County although [it] would like it to be.
- I'd like to see more biomass utilization, such as a pellet plan or portable sawmills.

No

- Isn't the pellet plant [that Jefferson County is trying to site] dead in the water? It has no economic viability.
- Colorado Spring Utilities is 14 miles downhill from Teller County, and it's going to do a [co-firing] retrofit that will use 130k tons of biomass per year, and they want to have 4 days of storage onsite. That has always been the obstacle to biomass utilization, is not having a long term supply guarantee. This stewardship contract sets the stage. Now it's up to the counties to take it to the next step.

Biomass Utilization

Slash Sites

- Peak to Peak Wood has a grant to create sort yards, led by Craig Jones, funded by the Colorado State Parks.
- [The NFRMPB group] is working on community forestry sort yards. It has a JV with Larimer County in Allens Park. We're hoping to start a 2nd slash site in Nederland or Boulder County.
- Land use codes can be modified to allow sort yards on County land.
- Jefferson County should be able to open slash sites if they wanted. County Commissioners are allowed to approve any "special use permit" they want to. Each county should be able to figure out the slash site issue on their own. It's not as obvious that working on opening new slash sites would be a Roundtable priority of broad benefit for everyone.
- If we get some markets for slash, sites will identify themselves. Colorado Springs Utilities expects to need 100k tons of slash each year. They'll drive to where ever the slash sites are. Until we have something to do with the slash, the slash sites are not the top priority. Each county and local community should make these decisions.
- I don't know if communities need help with slash sites. We need to ask them.
- It's premature to start a lot of slash sites when we don't have a market for the biomass yet.



Proposed Roundtable Priority? Re-Define Organization—Executive Team

Interview quotes

Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Roundtable should make a concerted effort to share leadership responsibilities across the participating organizations to avoid any one organization dominating the agenda. The steering team might need to be bigger. The official structure should be documented—that's the most important thing. We should expand the executive team. There's a lack of clear communication regarding the executive team. What are they saying? We don't hear it. The executive team is stacked with federal agencies and conservation groups. The steering committee needs better representation. It appears that the US Forest Service has largely co-opted the process and drives the agenda -- what issues get discussed and how they are discussed. There appears to be little room for questioning assumptions, challenging how problems are being framed, and jointly assessing the situation, drawing on current science, and searching for opportunities for experimenting with different approaches, monitoring, learning, and adapting. Even in [the Woodlands Park] situation, the USFS is doing its own thing—treatments are being applied without consideration to trying out alternative approaches, monitoring them, and learning which ones worked, didn't work, and why. Federal people seem to be driving this thing. There's a lot of USFS, BLM money tied up in this. They are major players; there's nothing cohesive on the local level. The Roundtable has been hijacked by the environmental groups. The Executive Team needs to recruit another member from SRCA or another environmental group. The Roundtable should be more like the CBBC steering group is clearly identified and has regular, public quarterly meetings, with rules about public participation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Executive Team is working well. I like the Executive Team small. It can make decisions in a short amount of time. The Executive Team is fine as it is. I'm concerned about opening up the Executive Team. Can new members devote the time that is required? Do they represent the interests they're there for, [rather than participate as individuals]? Each County can only represent themselves, not the other Counties. But we don't want a black box on the Executive Team; I'm game for change. I don't want the Executive Team to have a clandestine perception, as if there is plotting to it. It's good to have a small executive leadership, it shouldn't be more than 15 people, but it could be more than 6 or 7. Rotating terms would be OK. It would be good to add people to the executive team if a segment of the Roundtable is not represented.



Proposed Roundtable Priority?— Re-Define Organization—Core Team / Working Teams

Interview quotes

Yes

- Is the core team defined? It's not a huge priority.
- There is a Core Team of people that have stayed with the Roundtable a long time. The level of commitment is there, but the team is not really used a lot. It was always the people who planned the meetings.
- We had working teams but the core team did most of the work, helping the coordinator. Roundtable members get involved in the work groups but they're not energized.
- The communication team of the Roundtable doesn't meet anymore. Communications have been through the core team.
- We need to tighten up the roles of working groups vs. the core team.

No

- The core team is a broader team than the executive team. It's responsible for staffing out projects. It's the implementation team. It provides alternatives. We could set up more specific working groups if they're needed.
- The Core Team is fine as it is
- 20% of the people do 80% of the work—normal.
- The working groups are fine.
- The CBCB has an implementation team that meets each month, like the Roundtable's Core Team.



Proposed Roundtable Priority?— Re-Define Organization—Membership Structure

Interview quotes

Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The organization could use some tightening up a little bit. It's loosey-goosey. Let's firm up the membership.• The strength is in the authorities represented when the Roundtable speaks.• The Roundtable needs more consistency in its membership. Are people just representing themselves or their organizations?• We're a minor player. We want to be involved but making the meetings has not been a priority. Membership got delegated down because the [senior member from our organization]got crazy busy.• We need to have official members from each organization. The Roundtable is whoever shows up. We need to be clear about who the members are. We need to get membership back in place.• There's been lots of change in membership, and people. There's been a lull. We're getting organized, asking what is our purpose?• We need to clarify who's actually part of the Roundtable. Would [this professor] be a representative of [the university], for example, or just representing himself/herself and his/her own research interests?	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• More formality in structure is not necessary. I don't like when things get bogged down in committees.• I'm for the most part happy with the Roundtable structure• The structure is pretty consistent with other partnerships.



Proposed Roundtable Priority?—Re-Define Organization—Expand Diversity

Interview quotes

Yes

- The purpose is to get all voices at the table. What's missing is elected officials [other than Ben Perlman, Jim Ignatius, and Jeanne Nicholson]. If we had commissioners involved from the other 7 counties, that would help counties coordinate instead of compete. Some of the other counties send their staff sometimes. I'm not sure how realistic it is to get more high level involvement. It's more important that the Roundtable go to them rather than expect them to come to the Roundtable, such as when experts come to CCI to speak and give an educational presentation. December is the next opportunity.
- We should talk about how to reach out to each County and ask them to identify a representative. We could also ask them to designate a lead Commissioner and a lead staff person just so we can be sure a Commissioner is at least seeing the meeting announcements
- The Roundtable should be more like the CBCB, which is more effective at getting lots of local government participation.
- County commissioners aren't active. They have no ties.
- We should fill in the county gaps in our membership.
- We need to get more county open space departments involved.
- We need loggers, large landowners at the table.
- We need to expand our diversity again to include more industry, recreation, wildlife, and local government.
- We should identify other collaborative working groups to get the job done. We should define the benefits that other groups bring and why we need them involved.

No

- The County Commissioners are starting to come on board, they're coming along.



Roundtable Organization?—Nonprofit Status

Interview quotes

Yes

- We need a nonprofit status. We need a way to accept funding.
- We'd need to become a nonprofit before we can collect any money.
- A nonprofit can accept federal funding, so that is not a limiting factor.
- Organizing as a nonprofit would be beneficial but we need to make sure that it wouldn't be against FACA (Federal Advisory Committee Act)—can federal agencies by members of a nonprofit? I have no problem with the status but want to be sure it doesn't impact how we deal with federal partners.
- Our top priority should be to decide between two options. Are we an informal sharing / learning network, a loose collaborative? Or are we a formal entity with groups and resources, that finds funding and allocates funding.?

No

- If we formalize, I worry about competing for resources for administration that could otherwise go into on the ground implementation. Also, we'd be dependent on federal grants, and then the Federal agencies couldn't be on the Board. Federal agencies can't give donations to 501(c)(3)s [Interviewee note: this is not true, can be done through a financial assistance agreement, have a sample from the Owl Mountain Partnership]. Federal agencies could still play a role as an advisor, with non-voting, ex-officio members. I would like to know about other regional collaborations.



Proposed Roundtable Priority?—Re-Define Operations—Decision-Making

Interview quotes

Yes

- I don't get a sense for how decisions are made but it takes a while. I favor a structure that allows for discretion but has a decision-making mechanism. If we try for 100% consensus, things might not happen.
- A voting structure should be established.
- I have no idea on how to decide the priorities, but a large organization like this benefits from someone doing some analysis and making recommendations.
- There should be a voting membership.

No

- More formality in operations is not necessary. I see the coordinator as the action person.
- I don't think consensus groups make a lot of decisions. The Roundtable hasn't made many decisions in the past. But the Roundtable will disintegrate if it becomes a voting body. It has always been about consensus, informed consent. We're not looking for 100% consensus but 100% consent. I've never seen it as a voting body. I could see taking some informal polls as an option.



Proposed Roundtable Priority?—Re-Define Operations—Governance and Accountability

Interview quotes

Yes

- The Ecology Group did good work on coming to some level of agreement on Lodgepole Pine, and were instructed to stand down. We didn't give them a clear charter with roles, deadlines, and deliverables. We have to be more rigorous in the governance of working groups.

No

- Projects are the most problematic. We need some authority.
- In 2007, the Roundtable languished. The Core Team started meeting at the end of 2007 and decided to create the ecology working group and re-engage the watershed working group. In 2008, we tried to establish working groups. The watershed group kept growing. The communications working group had no goals. There was a lack of continuity from meeting to meeting. The CWPP working group never got off the ground. The overlay of maps never happened, although we tried.
- I'm for the most part happy with the Roundtable ... operations.



Proposed Roundtable Priority?—Re-Define Operations—Meetings Structure

Interview quotes

Yes	No
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Roundtable meetings seem longer than they need to be. The Roundtable is not good at summarizing what we do. Speakers should be asked to write down what they're going to present before they present it. Presentations are too chatty. We need more pearls. There's too much description of the process.• I like the structured agendas. They got less structured toward the end. I'd like to receive the agenda about two weeks in advance.• We need more of an agenda driven meeting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• We should keep having: (1) an informational topic, (2) a discussion about any decisions that need to be made, and (3) updates and announcements.• Keep on the agenda when everyone asks for updates.



Proposed Roundtable Priority?—Re-Define Operations— Meetings Frequency, Duration, and Location

Interview quotes

Yes

- It's enough to have quarterly meetings [no more frequent than that], but we need to do more in between. It's just updates now.
- County Commissioner meetings are usually on Thursday's so it would be good if the Roundtable meetings weren't always on a Thursday.
- The Roundtable should meet only 2 or 3 times per year. We should set the core team meeting, like for the 1st Thursday of the month, and not move it. The steering committee meetings should be set up in advance, the full Roundtable meetings should be set up in advance and not moved.
- The Executive meetings have gone well. They're ad hoc, I like that it's not every month. But we need to define what triggers an executive team meeting.
- Roundtable meetings could be shorter even than from 10am to 2pm.

Frequency / Duration

No

- Quarterly meetings are fine.
- We need to be aware that people have other jobs.
- We should keep the Roundtable frequency the same. Any more frequent, and leaders will start delegating it to staff.

Location

- I like the location at Simms. It's easy access, a big room, tech support, the room is set up so that it's almost like a Roundtable.
- I'd like to have the Roundtable meetings at the same place each time. It would be easier for planning and travel. Going to a new place each team adds more time for mapping where to go and arriving early because you don't know what parking will be like.



Is the FRFTP Separate From the Roundtable?

Interview quotes

Separate from the Roundtable

- We don't expect to get the Roundtable to approve everything. It identifies boundaries of broad agreement. It's mistaken to view it as an approval body, instead it's more of an opinion giver.
- Each agency has its final decision but we try to align with the suggestions.
- The Partnership takes actions that would not have 100% consensus on the Roundtable. For example, the Roundtable never reached agreement on how far to treat around communities. The analyses were based on 1/2 mile, but the FRFTP implements treatments further than that, if for instance CWPPs indicate treating broader areas than the Roundtable recommended.
- The Woodland Park Healthy Forest Initiative presents an opportunity to do [science-based management], but even in this situation, the USFS is doing its own thing -- treatments are being applied without consideration to trying out alternative approaches, monitoring them, and learning which ones worked, didn't work, and why.
- Some Roundtable members want 100% of actions in the [yellow] area of the map (intersection of goals), but we can't do it all there. Maybe 50-70% of past treatments were in [yellow]. That's where the costs are highest. The agencies get a target number of acres to treat each year at a given cost. We can't reach those targets all in the Lower Montane where the costs are the highest. In the LM, it's all pay-for-service work, there is no extraction value. In the Upper Montane, we can use prescribed burn which lowers costs, and we can salvage dead trees, which has economic benefit. This means clear cutting in some areas. We screen out wilderness and roadless areas, and don't get a lot of push back.
- The FRFTP doesn't meet as often as it used to. It has its own steering / executive committee.
- We do consider the RT priorities at the project planning level.
- The FRFTP most certainly still meets.
- The FRFTP still meets once per year but I get the sense its not really connected to the Roundtable anymore. It's still focused on the USP area.

A part of the Roundtable

- There has been a morphing of the FRFTP and the Roundtable
- The FRFTP has melded into the Roundtable. It's still there, but it doesn't meet outside the Roundtable.
- The FRFTP is rolled into the Roundtable and the Executive Team. It doesn't meet separately.



What is the Role of the NFRMPBWG?

Interview quotes

- The NFRMPB group is its own groups, with its own mission and coordination. It is more independent than the watershed group but appreciate more the value of the Roundtable. They recognize the value of consensus. It's made up largely of local governments.
- It's a staff-level exchange of information so that there will be a common message to the public. They recently requested an executive level to the group. They had approached the CBBC to ask to join that group, but the CBBC decided to remain a place-based group rather than become an issue-based group.
- We're modeling ourselves after the CBBC. We asked them if we could be a subgroup of the CBBC, but they said no, that we were at different stages of the beetle outbreak, and that they didn't want to expand their scope.
- The NFRMPB group is an interagency coordinating group to exchange ideas, learn, and maybe apply for stimulus grants together. It includes only agencies and land managers, no other types of members. We didn't want to duplicate the Roundtable. It includes the USFS, CSFS, 5 Counties and several municipalities. The Roundtable could act as the overriding larger picture of Front Range fuels and be an advocacy group. We were hoping to fit in under the Roundtable umbrella like a working group. That stalled. The Roundtable couldn't make a decision. Originally, we asked and they said yes but then they said no. I think it was due to their focus on Ponderosa Pine. At this point, we would have a hard time letting the Roundtable make decisions for us. We have done a lot of communications, a brochure, with fast turnaround. We wouldn't want to have to wait for Roundtable approval [more than a one week turnaround]. We don't want another layer of bureaucracy. We're pretty agile.
- The NFRMPB group agreed to affiliate itself with the Roundtable [now clear how]. The NFRMPB group gathered good GIS data that the Roundtable should leverage. We have some common goals because restoration could help Ponderosa Pine resist the pine beetle. The NFRMPB group should designate participants to the Roundtable to solidify the link. We have common agencies. Some people come to both meetings. We should coordinate outreach. The NFRMPB group has good connections to local government.
- The NFRMPB group is still forming and storming.
- The NFRMPB group is still figuring out what they're doing. They have the structure and the messaging.
- The NFRMPB group held a one day "MPB 101" workshop to gather information from 125 participants.
- Steering committee meetings are open meetings. Anyone can participate in the discussion but only the members can vote. There's an annual public meeting and the implementation team meets monthly.



What Motivates the FRWWPWG?

Interview quotes

Watersheds as a focal point for communities (even non-WUI)

- We're doing watershed assessments, to prevent a Hayman or a Buffalo Creek from occurring again.
- The watersheds are key pieces that affect everyone downstream and should be included in outreach.
- We learned after Hayman that we need watershed management and to engage people on how best to move forward. Both the fire problem and the beetle problem are watershed problems.
- The watersheds are a big question. Community protection is important to everyone, but what defines communities? Water systems, roads, power lines in and out of the community. Knowing these would inform the watershed wildfire risk assessment process, which is not wholly outside of the Roundtable. They come and report but as an outside group. I don't feel they are part of the Roundtable. I'd love to see resolution to this. The Roundtable is concerned that the risk assessment is dominated by water providers, the CSFS, and the USFS, who primarily own and manage land. The watershed group meets irregularly; they're out doing pilot assessments.
- We want communities to consider watersheds in their CWPPs. We want to establish priorities for watersheds that have water diversions, reservoirs, in-takes, other infrastructure notes, so that these and other areas can be protected. There is precedent that communities can influence up to 5 miles upslope. There is legal precedence in state statute for this. At Buffalo Creek, 11 miles downstream were impacted. We want to show that when different communities share the same zones of concern, there should be coordinated planning.



What are the FRWWPWG's Goals and Activities?

Interview quotes

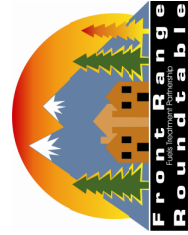
Goals and activities of the FRWWPWG

Accomplishments

- We met with the water providers and developed three subcommittees: communications, (CWP)², and data refinement.
- We have already prioritized the 6th level watersheds and are now mapping the zones of concern.
- We have finished mapping the USP, the Blue River (Summit County), and the Upper Colorado (Grand). We're near completion on Pikes Peak. We're starting on St. Vrain, with pulling stakeholders together.
- Our priority should be to complete the watershed assessments.
- The Upper South Platte is a test area. We're running through the watershed assessment models before we can get to what type of action is needed. We're not going to implement anything that's not warranted, but it's worth exploring what the models show. Next, we'll take it down to the next level: site specifically, what do you do within areas of concern? The (CWP)² is the next piece of laying down all the specifics of what treatments look like.
- We'd like to accomplish pre-permitting for sediment traps which would provide emergency supply as an alternative to forest treatment. In a wilderness area it costs \$850k to build a trap and \$300k per year to keep it clean. It took a year to build one at Cheesman. We should have the permits in place before a catastrophic fire so that we're ready to install the traps immediately after the fire is out before hydrophobic soils cause debris flow.

Support from other groups

- [Senior CSFS] leaders have endorsed the (CWP)². Summit and Grand Counties have embraced it. Each group is tackling its own. Summit has a CWPP. It will revisit it, fold in watershed priorities, and will have only a CWPP at the end, not a (CWP)² too.
- The CBBC endorsed the watershed assessment methodology. The CBBC has not yet endorsed the (CWP)² process, but the watershed group hopes it will.
- The watershed groups has begun working more closely with water providers. We brought in new stakeholders.



Some Roundtable Members' Concerns with the FRWWPWG—On the Ground Implications

Interview quotes

Concerns about on the ground implications from the work of the FRWWPWG

- I fear that the water providers will take action not supported by the Roundtable.
- The Hayman Fire was a perfect storm, but less than 2% of fires can be like that.
- I don't agree with the way they're going about their work. Lack of fire got us into this mess. The watershed group behaves like all fire is bad. They have to change the wording. The sky isn't falling. Watersheds need fire too. [My department] would not do fuel treatment in pristine watersheds. We would use wildland fire use. There is no way you can do enough thinning. Colorado doesn't have a culture of wildland fire use. Our messaging needs to embrace management of natural fire. We put most fires out at a single tree. We could manage natural starts. We need to stop suppression. We're playing catch up and starting from scratch. We should do wildland fire use in wet years like this year and suppress it in dry years.
- Treating high elevation watersheds to minimize impacts from severe wildfire is something that some on the Roundtable are pushing. To my knowledge, the science on wildfire impacts on high elevation impacts suggests that: 1) these high elevation systems have evolved with severe wildfire -- this is the natural fire regime -- and that the systems are resilient to such disturbances; 2) extrapolating watershed impacts from lower elevation forest fires, such as the Hayman Fire (which really did cause damage to the Cheeseman Reservoir and Denver Water systems), to higher elevation forest watersheds is scientifically inappropriate at this time; 3) it may be desirable to put in place protective mechanisms for water intake systems to reduce sediments and other chemical infusions into domestic water supplies, but this should not be mistaken for doing forest treatments in the whole watershed, which could mean building roads -- the single most damaging land use to a watershed over the long-term.
- There will never be consensus on treatments in the Upper Montane, and if it is done, it should not be called restoration. In the UM, we should do limited treatments in key spots, but we need to use prescribed fire or wildland fire use.
- There was some consternation over defining what is an appropriate treatment area. Some groups don't want to treat in the Upper Montane in the same way as the Lower Montane. There's tension around: will the treatments used in the LM also work in the UM for fire risk mitigation? And if they work for risk mitigation, is it restoration? Thinning is not an option for the UM. It needs stand replacement. Lodgepole Pine has shallow roots and susceptible to wind. We need to treat it through clear cuts, not thinning, while maintaining its roadless character. The Roundtable is not at the point of agreeing on treatments in the UM. Some members buy into identifying priority watersheds but that's it. There's no agreement on what treatment looks like.
- I don't support the (CWP)². It's like separating a community from its watershed. We need to expand CWPPs to include watersheds. It's hard enough to do the CWPP alone. Will we ever get the communities together to work on it or will it be done by water providers and academics? The Roundtable members were divided on the (CWP)² but the watershed group went ahead anyway.
- I don't know enough about (CWP)². It takes a lot of effort to get a CWPP done. Getting the same folks together for a (CWP)² would be a challenge.



Some Roundtable Members' Concerns with the FRWWPWG—Process and Representation

Interview quotes

Concerns about the process and representation in the FRWWPWG's work

- Several agencies are working together to conduct their own assessments and prioritization of high elevation watersheds -- this is great except that there is no active dialogue about the assumptions and data being used to run the predictive models. They may or may not be based on current science -- we just don't know because this dialogue has not occurred to bring all the stakeholders along. It simply taken-for-granted that they are the "experts" and the model should be trusted. This may work for some participants, but not for others.
- New problems are being defined by Roundtable participants without collective agreement on the problem—there is a lack of consensus on the science pertaining to these problems.
- The watershed group's agenda is pushed by [one provider] under the banner of clean water.
- There is an appearance that personal and/or organizational agendas are driving these [watershed] issues through the Roundtable process in order to legitimize these issues.
- The process is driven by [one water provider] which holds the contract with the consultant, although the other members contributed to the contract too.



Is the FRWWPWG Part of the Roundtable?— Yes

Interview quotes

Yes

No / unclear

FRWWPWG members:

- Yes and no. [We] started out as a subgroup of the Roundtable. Funding came from CSFS, USFS, and water providers. I would like the Roundtable to support the recommended actions, but if they don't, we may move forward anyway. We desire to have Roundtable consensus, but may act anyway.
- I would embrace joining the Roundtable. The geographic scope is harder to solve

Non-FRWWPWG members:

- I see the watershed group as a working group of the Roundtable. The watershed is a good common ground to tie together counties that don't have forests but depend on the watershed.
- I have no issues with the watershed group except how to balance the WUI vs. the watershed.
- The watershed group was absorbed by the Roundtable.



See
next
slide



Is the FRWWPWG Part of the Roundtable?— No

Interview quotes

Yes



See previous slide

No / unclear (from FRWWPWG members)

- I originally thought the watershed group was part of the Roundtable. The last 6 months, it's been working as a separate group because of a lack of acceptance on the Roundtable of the watershed group's efforts. The watershed groups has begun working more closely with water providers. We brought in new stakeholders. There was opposition by environmental groups to include Lodgepole Pine and Bark Beetle. The environmental groups were invited to the working group but they didn't come, except for the first meeting in August of 2007. The work groups are open to anyone to participate.
- I would prefer that [the watershed group] be a working group of the Roundtable, but it didn't support us. Is it even possible to reverse the trend of different groups now? We invited the other organizations that expressed discord to join the work group, but they didn't want to get involved, so we kept going on our own.
- The Roundtable says they support the watershed assessments. We looked for support earlier. We formed the working group to have discussions necessary to get the Roundtable to officially decide whether to support the watershed assessments or not.
- It would be hard for the Roundtable to focus on what the watershed group is doing. It would be like us [the watershed group] trying to help create CWPPs [too far down in the weeds]. We've got to have some kind of separation. The larger the group, the less the work get's done. You could think of our group as a working group of the Roundtable. We've always shared products and have wanted buy-in from the Roundtable. They've been standoffish. I do think of us more of a working group. There should be more of a connection. It would be good to consider us a working group. We have a small executive committee. Our group has recommendations that the Roundtable can't support. The majority do accept our recommendations except for the environmental groups.
- We wanted to be sure the Roundtable know what steps we were taking. There was resistance about that. The Executive Team was afraid that we would identify acres through a different process than was used before, but that's not the case.
- We should decide about the [the role of the] watershed group only after we decide what the Roundtable wants to be when it grows up. For example, are we including the west slope?

No / unclear (from non-FRWWPWG members)

- The FRWWPWG is separate. They say they're part of the Roundtable, but they're not.
- The watershed group is beginning to be a problem in my mind. I had hoped it would be a working group, but it pulled away more and more. It wants to be independent. The watershed group leadership told me they didn't want it to be reported out they are a subset of the Roundtable. They rewrote the [outreach piece] to write 'auspices' instead. Having three Front Range groups is going to confuse congress and the state legislature. We need to have a serious discussion about that. The Roundtable ought to be the encompassing group and ought to be able to give its opinion. We're a consensus based group and we include the environmental groups. They can go their own way if they want to.
- I have frustrations with the watershed group. The Pinchot Study was flawed, and they keep referring to it anyway. They were successful in bringing in more water providers but they don't want to be told what to do by the Roundtable. We need to know the treatment priorities for water quality. The watershed group should help bring water providers to the Roundtable, integrate their work into the Roundtable's, identify large landscapes.
- The group started as a working group of the Roundtable. We should decide about the watershed group after we decide what the Roundtable wants to be when it grows up. For example, are we including the west slope?