

Agenda

Conservation development: evaluating an emerging approach for sustaining biodiversity and human communities in rapidly changing landscapes

SoGES Global Challenges Research Team Meeting

Location: School of Global Environmental Sustainability (SoGES)
108 Johnson Hall
Colorado State University
Fort Collins, CO 80523
(970) 492-4215

Date: Thursday, October 14, 2010
12-5pm

Background:

The Conservation Development Global Challenges Research Team (GCRT) explores an approach to the site design and management of a property that combines land development and land conservation with a goal of providing functional protection for natural resources. Conservation development projects have been heralded as an environmentally friendly alternative to suburban and rural sprawl as well as a means to finance conservation, yet little is known about their ecological and economic outcomes. Our team brings together a diverse group of scholars and practitioners to synthesize information on existing conservation development practices, to develop rigorous indicators for evaluating the conservation effectiveness of these projects, and to advance an agenda for future research and monitoring of conservation development projects around the world.

Meeting goals:

- 1) Introduce Conservation Development GCRT participants
- 2) Discuss and refine GCRT research questions and goals
- 3) Establish an agenda for primary GCRT activities: literature review and case study analysis
- 4) Identify and review available datasets on CD
- 5) Agree upon GCRT logistics: online database and meeting calendar

Invited participants:

Liba Pejchar, Fish, Wildlife & Conservation Biology, Colorado State University (co-PI)
Sarah Reed, Human Dimensions of Natural Resources, Colorado State University (co-PI)
Lindsay Ex, Landscape Architecture, Utah State University (RA)
Jeff Milder, EcoAgriculture Partners and Cornell University
Steph Gripne, Leeds School of Business, University of Colorado
R. Patrick Bixler, Sociology, Colorado State University
Rick Knight, Human Dimensions of Natural Resources, Colorado State University
Steve Laposa, Finance & Real Estate, Colorado State University
Andy Seidl, Agriculture & Resource Economics, Colorado State University
Kelly Spokus, Horticulture & Landscape Architecture, Colorado State University
Dave Theobald, Human Dimensions of Natural Resources, Colorado State University

Introduction:

12:00 pm Welcome and brief introductions of GCRT participants

12:10 pm Catered lunch and time for casual interaction

Overview:

12:40 pm Background: definitions of CD and overview of CD activity in the United States
Jeff Milder

12:50 pm Review broad goals and timeline of Conservation Development GCRT and meeting agenda
Liba Pejchar or Sarah Reed

Discuss and refine research questions guiding GCRT activities:

- *To what extent have CD projects lived up to their goals of protecting and enhancing biodiversity, ecosystem services, and other natural resources?*
- *How do factors such as project scale, landscape context, site design, financing mechanisms, land management, and institutional context contribute to conservation outcomes?*
- *What factors drive the individual- and policy-level decisions to implement CD, and what are the financial risks and returns associated with CD projects?*
- *How can existing research on the ecological effects of land development be synthesized and applied to establish rigorous yet context-sensitive guidelines for CD practice?*

Discuss and refine goals for products resulting from GCRT activities:

- *Publish two academic research papers (literature review and case study)*
- *Develop a multi-year grant proposal (to be submitted in fall 2011)*
- *Host workshop for CD practitioners (May 2011), to share case study results and collaboratively refine CD criteria and indicators*

Literature Review:

1:30 pm Background: current knowledge of the impacts of land development on ecosystems, with specific examples from Colorado
Rick Knight

1:40 pm Review rationale and broad goals for literature review and synthesis
Liba Pejchar or Sarah Reed

Discuss and refine specific research questions to guide literature review

Identify key dimensions of land development and ecological responses to be synthesized from collected literature

Define a process for compiling additional literature contributed by GCRT participants and synthesizing information

2:30 pm *Break*

Case Study:

2:45 pm Review rationale and broad goals for case study analysis
Liba Pejchar or Sarah Reed

2:50 pm Review available datasets on CD activity and development patterns:

- Descriptive attributes of 700+ CD projects plus basic information on an additional 3,100+ projects (nationwide)
Jeff Milder
- Detailed review of conservation design standards in county development regulations (western U.S.)
Sarah Reed
- Spatially-explicit assessors' data on ranchland transactions of parcels >35 acres since 1990 (Colorado)
Steph Gripne
- Fine-scale spatial analysis of land use patterns in CD projects (Larimer Co.)
Dave Theobald
- Other datasets contributed by GCRT participants?

Discuss and refine specific research questions to guide case study analysis

Discuss and refine proposed indicators of the conservation success of CD projects (*please see attached list of indicators*)

Identify appropriate locations for case study analysis in Colorado

Identify next steps for data collection and pilot analyses

4:00 pm *Break*

GCRT Logistics:

4:15 pm Discuss structure for online database and communication among GCRT participants
Lindsay Ex

Set meeting calendar for fall semester

Review participant tasks and address remaining questions

5:00 pm *Adjourn*