

DRAFT REPORT

Community Scan 2011



The Sonoran Institute inspires and enables community decisions and public policy that respect the land and people of the West.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Small towns and cities throughout the Northern Rockies are addressing local concerns through local, community-based work. Activities like land use planning, transportation planning, conservation easements, habitat enhancement, water resource conservation, affordable housing and sustainable economic development, are building strong foundations for communities to thrive. The Sonoran Institute embarked on this community scan to learn more about these local and regional efforts in order to:

- ✓ Identify and share information about non-governmental groups working in the Northern Rockies Region on these issues.
- ✓ Learn about the focus of their work and their current capacity to achieve their mission and identify needed technical assistance.
- ✓ Assess the level of interest in bringing groups together in a meaningful way to learn, network and explore shared goals.

Survey questions were formulated by Sonoran Institute staff and the Community Scan project consultants. In October and November of 2011, an on-line survey was sent out to 48 non-profit organizations active in community-based work in Montana, Idaho and Wyoming. Twenty-five organizations responded to the on line survey (see attached spread sheet). Three organizations no longer existed. In addition, phone interviews were conducted with an additional five organizations. Interviewees were queried on a number of questions (see below) related to organizational and programmatic issues. The five organizations that participated in phone interviews included: *Valley Advocates for Responsible Development (VARD)*, and *Salmon Valley Stewardship* in Idaho, *Clark Fork Coalition* and *Citizens for a Better Flathead* in Montana, and the *Sheridan Community Land Trust* in Wyoming. All are considered to be high profile regional groups.

The authors of this report and the staff of the Sonoran Institute wish to thank all of those who participated in the on line surveys and phone interviews. Their candid and insightful response is evidence of their extraordinary dedication to conserving our outstanding quality of life – a hallmark of the Northern Rockies.

This report was prepared for the Sonoran Institute by Future West

January 2012



TABLE OF CONTENTS

Survey Summary Narrative - 4

Important Themes - 5

Keys to Success - 6

Recommendations to the Sonoran Institute - 7

APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SCAN SURVEY RESULTS IN CHARTS AND GRAPHS - 9

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY SCAN SUMMARY OF PERSONAL INTERVIEWS - 15

APPENDIX C: SPREAD SHEET OF ON-LINE SURVEY COMMUNITY SCAN RESPONSES (attached)

SURVEY SUMMARY NARRATIVE

Many of the organizations that responded to the on line survey, and all of those that participated in the phone survey, are active, dynamic and effective, though nearly all have diversified their programmatic focus in order to stay relevant to their communities or to changing economic conditions. *Citizens for a Better Flathead*, for example, now has programs that address energy planning and waste reduction, as well as a “buy local” campaign. With a glut of housing, the *Sheridan Community Land Trust* is working less on affordable housing and focusing more on conserving private land and providing public access to these protected parcels. And all of *Salmon Valley Stewardship’s* work is now framed as economic development. The downturn in the economy has made some of the core activities of these groups, such as land use planning, smart growth and growth management, less of a concern to their constituents and especially to local government leaders. It is sometimes even wrongly equated with an “anti-growth agenda.” While this slow down in development has created opportunities for more proactive rather than reactive work, as the Director of one organization stated, “Proactive work doesn’t have the cache’ of crisis work.”

Most of these groups once had a strong advocacy orientation. However, their expansion into more collaborative efforts such as the restoration work of the *Clark Fork Coalition*, has required a balance between advocacy and constituent building. These partnerships also allow for greater capacity as staff and resources have declined in recent years. All of these organizations now work primarily in partnership with a wide diversity of governmental and non-governmental entities, and in the case of *Salmon Valley Stewardship*, if a project is not in partnership with another organization, they ask, “why not?”

Interviewees all stated that they need assistance in strengthening their development efforts and building more sustainability into fundraising programs. The economy has impacted both their individual donors and their foundation supporters. Some noted that funders are now less interested in planning and growth management issues because of the dearth of new construction. While expansion into community sustainability issues has helped maintain local support, securing funds for these more subtle conservation efforts is a challenge.

Because groups interviewed are for the most part seasoned and technically savvy, they are less dependent on outside organizations for technical assistance. There does, though, seem to be a sense that there is a void in accessible sources of information on both technical and organizational issues. Use of social media varies between groups, but is of interest to all of them. Communications assistance – especially in regards to how to frame their issues in these economically challenging times -- is also of interest. It was noteworthy that there was less of a perceived need for assistance in campaign organizing. This could reflect the challenge of retooling programs from a primarily reactive mode to a more proactive stance. In general, regional non-profits are skilled at identifying challenges and building programs that address these challenges. They are less experienced at identifying opportunities and

launching campaigns that capitalize on these new circumstances, such as VARD's "Reshaping Development Patterns Project." This could also be a worthwhile topic to explore and address. In summary, these groups remain vital, but their financial sustainability continues to be a concern. They are in the process of adapting to changing economic conditions and community needs and interests, however, they are addressing these programmatic and organizational challenges with only modest outside assistance. Still, they remain extremely committed and are clearly "in it for the long haul."

Important Themes:

- ✓ Despite the economic downturn and its impact on NGO's, there is still a diversity of community NGOs in the Northern Rockies working to protect open lands, promote effective land use planning, smart growth and sustainable economies.
- ✓ In recent years, most of these groups have diversified their focus and activities beyond land use planning and growth management efforts, even those that were created with that specific mission. Issues such as the local food movement, safe routes to school, building "healthy" communities, planning for energy development, reducing wastes, expanding recreational opportunities, sustaining local agriculture, land and river restoration, are some of the activities that local groups are now featuring in their programs.
- ✓ While there have been successful local efforts to promote better planned and managed growth, few groups have had major successes in efforts to improve county wide growth policies and regulations. Recently, local leadership has become even more resistant to pursuing progressive growth management policies.
- ✓ Most groups recognize that local government leadership on growth management issues is a key to success, but they are not actively engaged in political campaign activities.
- ✓ Most of these groups now work in partnership with other organizations on nearly all of their projects, and while partnerships are common, organizations stressed that they still struggling to effectively coordinate collaborative efforts.
- ✓ Few of these groups are involved in litigation and if they are, it is only as a last resort.
- ✓ Most groups are struggling to make ends meet in this period of economic slowdown.
- ✓ Most groups are challenged by the perception among both their supporters and local government officials that growth management is no longer a front burner issue. As a result, some groups are now framing all of their projects in economic development terms and this has helped to insure that their missions and activities remain relevant to the public.
- ✓ Most groups, while adept at reactive strategies for "stopping bad things from happening", are less effective at identifying and promoting proactive strategies that put planning and land conservation on the offensive.
- ✓ The land trust community -- as compared to the growth management community -- is in a somewhat different circumstance than many of these other groups and their focus and strategies remain similar to those of the past. The current challenges for land trusts include reduced funding for the purchase of land and easements, and lower land appraisal values which has inhibited the sale of some easements.

- ✓ The capacity building needs of groups vary. The exception is the shared need for assistance in increasing fundraising success. Other identified needs include: campaign organization and management, grass roots organizing, strategic communications, and the use of social media.
- ✓ Capacity building needs that were cited by survey respondents include: building communications and social media competency, facilitation and organizing.
- ✓ There is only modest communication and networking between these groups. The Land Trust Alliance plays a role in networking the land trust community in particular, Montana Smart Growth is reenergizing their networking role, and Idaho Smart Growth engages in some networking activities though they are not very active in eastern Idaho. Still, there seems to be a gap in linking local groups on a regional scale.
- ✓ Few of these organizations are working on state or national policy reform, though they all recognize their success at the local level can be supported or hobbled by state statues and federal policies.

KEYS TO SUCCESS

The most successful NGOs interviewed often share common characteristics:

- ✓ Have (relatively) significant financial resources and a diversified funding base as well as staff dedicated to development related activities.
- ✓ Have diversified their program activities and retooled for proactive efforts rather than just reactive efforts, as well as programs that seem relevant to the public during this slow growth period. In the case of land trusts, organizations that can show tangible and significant land conservation successes continue to garner both local and national support.
- ✓ Are viewed as credible, constructive and collaborative, yet also viewed as wielding some political clout.
- ✓ Have reframed their activities and mission and are viewed as pro-economic development.
- ✓ Have a clear niche and clearly defined mission and their activities and projects reflect these goals.
- ✓ Have good relationships with decision makers (e.g. local government officials, rural landowners, the business community) and are seen as useful and credible sources of information and assistance.

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE SONORAN INSTITUTE

1. SI's programs and activities should be developed and implemented in partnership with other organizations – particularly organizations with a regional focus such as Montana Smart Growth Coalition, Idaho Smart Growth, Montana State University's Local Government Center and others, in order to leverage resources and talents, reach broader audiences, and build the capacity of other key players. For example, providing funding and organizing support for a Montana statewide gathering/conference of local groups in collaboration with the Montana

Smart Growth Coalition, could be a timely and valuable activity of mutual benefit for both organizations.

2. SI should monitor and engage in state-wide policy reform that would improve the chances of successful local initiatives. While these efforts might be best led by appropriate state NGO's such as Idaho Smart Growth and Montana Smart Growth Coalition, SI can help identify needed reforms and assist in mobilizing and preparing local NGO's to help insure success. Local groups are much more apt to participate in trainings, networking, and coordinating if the payoff is legislative reform that "levels the growth management playing field" at the community level.
3. SI activities and events should also reflect the thematic diversification of the growth management movement and the focus on stimulating local economic development. For example, improving land use planning and land use regulations per se, are not currently front burner issues in many places. However, fostering a local food movement, building healthy and walkable communities, revitalizing downtowns, promoting public transportation in town and regionally, restoring brownfields or degraded neighborhoods, reducing barriers to smart growth, making highways wildlife friendly, planning for energy development and transmission, disaster planning and preparation (e.g. wildland urban interface planning), increasing recreation opportunities, are perceived as relevant, popular issues and they could serve to further growth management goals. Climate change adaptation strategies, while relevant and of interest in a few more progressive communities, are still a hard sell in many places in this region.
4. SI should consider taking the current work in Teton County Idaho (both governmental and nongovernmental) and explore the replication of this model in other communities struggling with what to do about "zombie subdivisions." This case study could serve as the basis for workshops and outreach.
5. Small grants can catalyze local actions and, coupled with trainings, can inspire groups to implement skills and ideas gained through trainings. A small grants program coupled with training would be welcomed and appreciated.
6. SI should recognize that community dynamics and personal lifestyles have changed. People have less free time to devote to community activism and capacity building or training. Workshops, events etc. should be of shorter duration than they typically were in the past and demand less of people's scarce free time.
7. Public perception on growth related issues is changing. SI could invest in updating polling information on the current state of regional views on growth issues and use this information to hone messaging and outreach programs. The polling could also touch on energy development and transmission as an emerging issue.
8. SI research should focus on quantifying the economic benefits of planning and smart growth, as it has done in the past, and continue sharing the results in the context of the current economic climate.
9. SI should reach out to state associations of counties and state associations of planners to assess opportunities for collaboration. Is there, for example, an opportunity to resurrect a Western Community Stewardship Program for the 21st century that is relevant to changing socioeconomic conditions and needs?

10. Geographically, SI should be more visible outside of Gallatin County and through the above mentioned partnerships, reestablish its reputation as an organization with an active and valued regional program. For example, taking Dick Brooks to the Flathead Valley to meet with and training local activists would be preferable to requiring locals from the Flathead to travel to Bozeman.

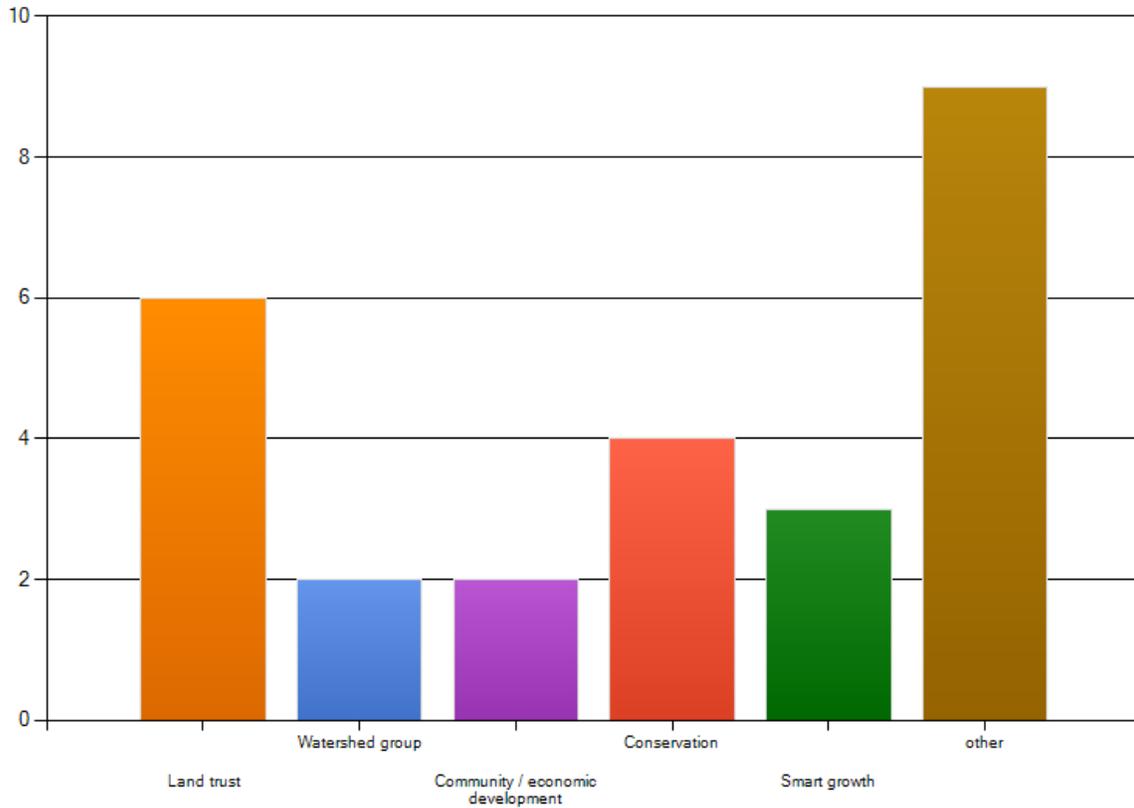
APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SCAN SURVEY RESULTS IN CHARTS AND GRAPHS

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY SCAN SUMMARY OF PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

APPENDIX C: SPREAD SHEET OF ON-LINE SURVEY COMMUNITY SCAN RESPONSES

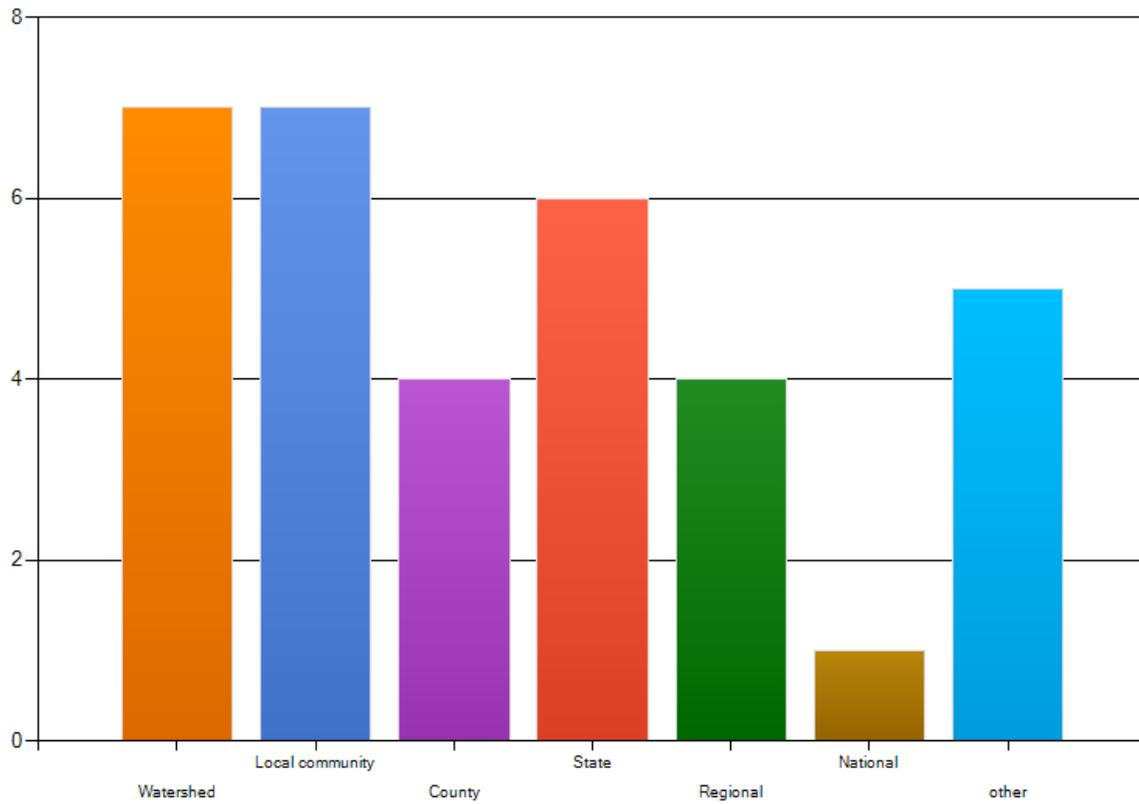
APPENDIX A: COMMUNITY SCAN SURVEY RESULTS IN CHARTS AND GRAPHS

What category best describes your organization?



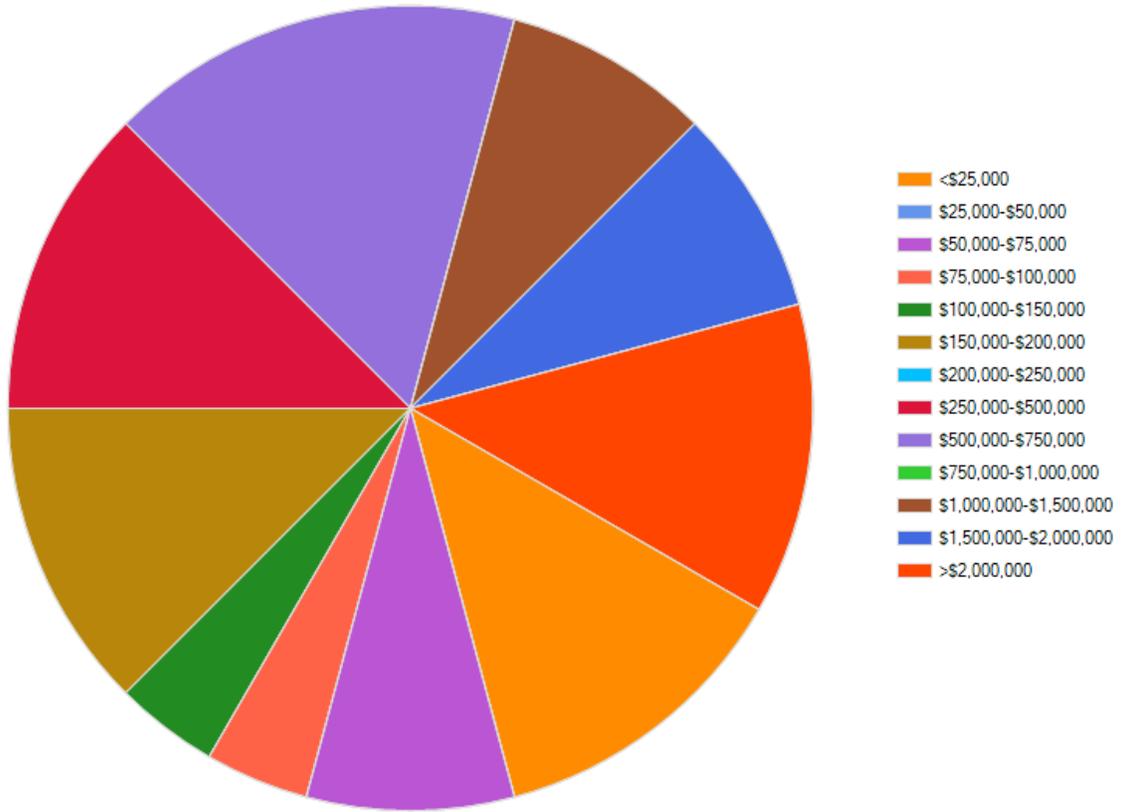
Other responses: Regional long term visioning process, Energy conservation and renewable energy, Sustainable agriculture outreach and advocacy, Sustainable Community Development, Local Government, Sustainable development, Ranching and community sustainability, University Transportation Center, A community volunteer group made up of community development, land trust, watershed, conservation and smart growth interests, Community Forum.

What geography do you do your work?

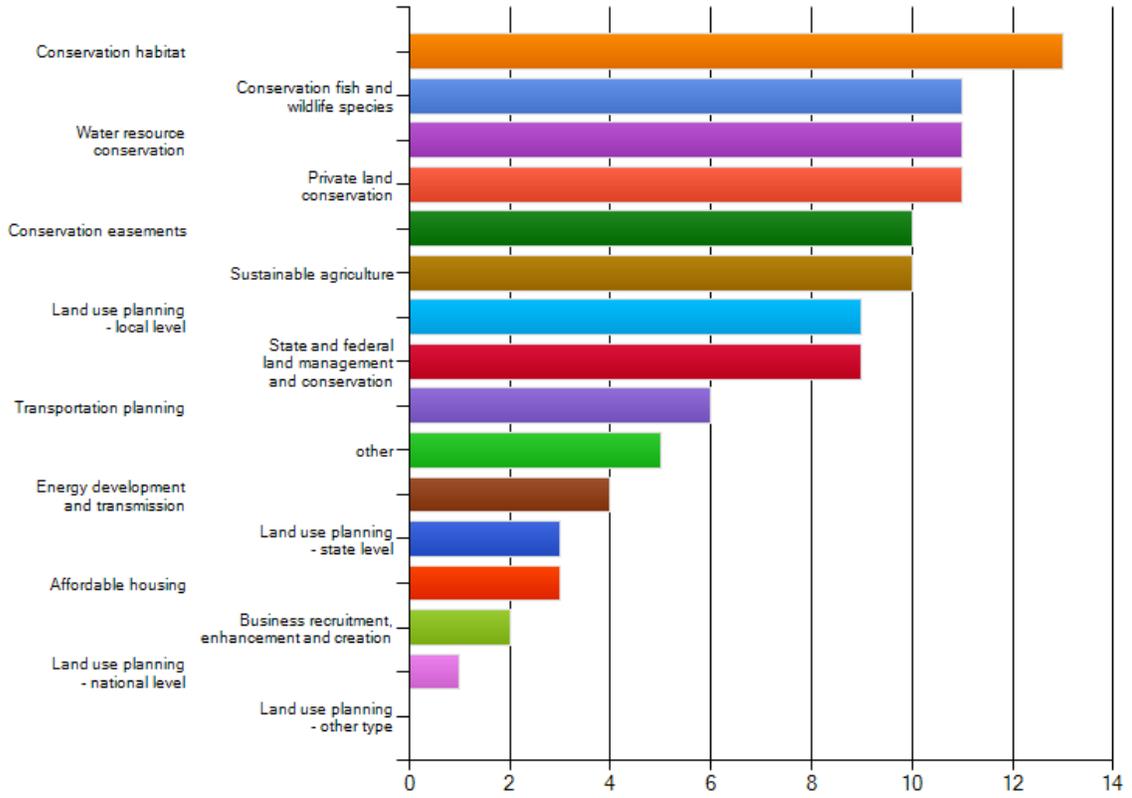


Other responses: Global, Greater Yellowstone ecoregion, Work internationally, Geographic area described as the Bearhooth Front, Lewis & Clark, Jefferson, Broadwater and Eastern Powell Counties.

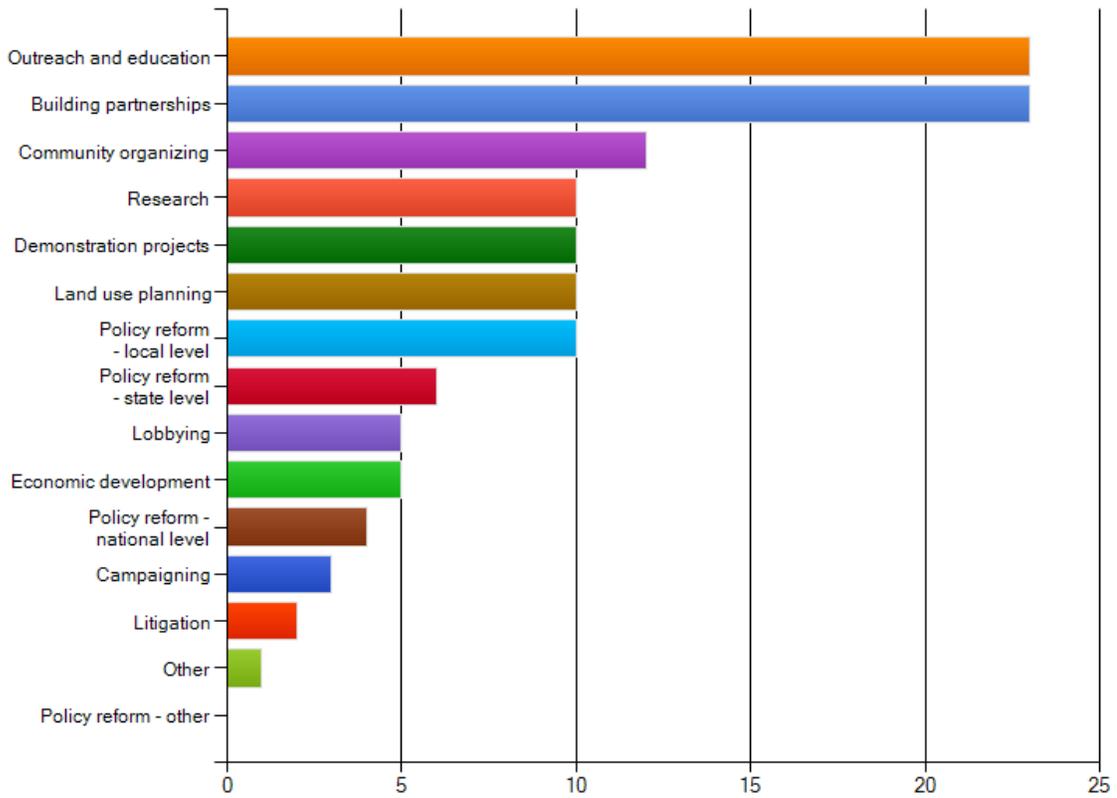
Organization's annual budget



Please select your current activities, choose all that apply.

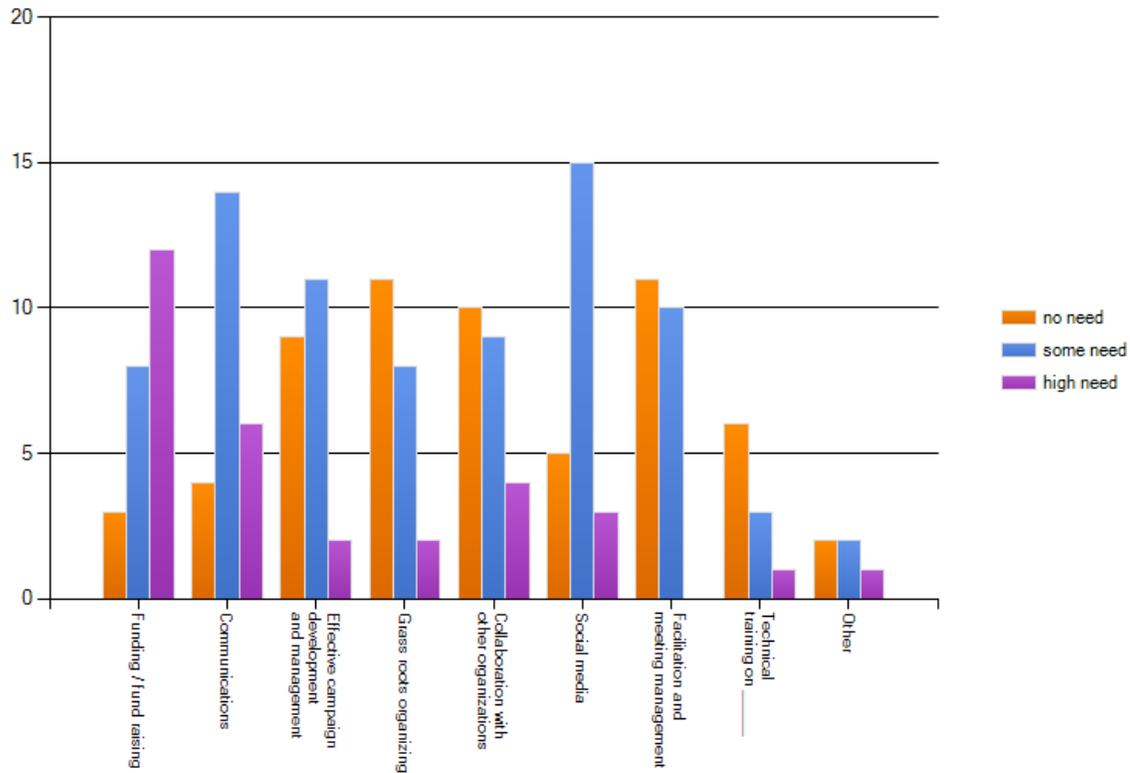


What are your current strategies? Choose all that apply.



Other response: Community-based conservation.

Please rate the following categories in terms of your organization's level of need for assistance.



Technical training on: local technical and professional assistance (preferably pro bono!), Currently switching to new database, need some technical training on website management and video editing, In particular, we need technical training on key strategies for grass roots organizing and effective advocacy tactics, Technical training on fundraising is also.

Other responses: coordinated communications, volunteer programs, and partnerships with universities, Operating capacity for community-base conservation, Assistance with case studies, we have a lot of support from para legals and attorneys, we have good GIS and office programming. Simply need time to keep on top of it.

APPENDIX B: COMMUNITY SCAN SUMMARY OF PERSONAL INTERVIEWS

Citizens for a Better Flathead – Mayre Flowers

P.O.Box 771

35 4th Street West

Kalispell, MT 59903

www.flatheadcitizens.org

406 756 8993

Citizens for a Better Flathead was formed in 1992. The nonprofit organization focuses their work on community / economic development, conservation , smart growth, and waste reduction. The mission is:

To foster informed and active participation in the decisions shaping the Flathead future, and championing democratic principles, sustainable solutions, and shared vision necessary to keep the Flathead special forever.

Paid staff include two full time and one temporary full time.

The annual budget is \$150,000 – \$200,000.

The geography of their work is at the county level, Flathead County, MT

Current Activities.

Land use planning locally and state

Transportation planning

Energy development and transmission - energy planning

Conservation fish and wildlife

Conservation habitat

Affordable housing

Sustainable agriculture

Water resource conservation (well issues)

Private land conservation (supporting cluster developments)

State and federal land management / conservation (some state land related issues)

Citizens for a Better Flathead promotes sound land use planning in the county through the following programs: the core program is land use planning, but they also have programs for waste reduction, a buy local campaign and energy planning. These activities attempt to balance proactive work on energy and waste reduction with reactive work on land use planning.

Current Strategies:

Outreach and education	Demonstration projects	Economic development
Community organizing	Lobbying	Land use planning at local
Research	Campaigning	and state levels
Building partnerships	Litigation	

Our biggest challenge is over-coming apathy and intimidation. Many people feel like their voice doesn't make a difference. A lack of leadership in local government is also a struggle as we have a constant uphill battle to get local officials to apply existing regulations. To some extent the development community is well-funded for opposition which can put our position at a disadvantage. We also have difficulty expressing smart growth to the public since they equate smart growth with "anti-growth."

Category of Need	0 = no need	1 = some need	2= high need
Funding / Fundraising			X
Communications			X
Effective campaign development and management		X	
Grass roots organizing		X	
Collaboration with other organizations		X	
Social media			X
Facilitation and meeting management		X	
Technical training on: DATA BASE MANAGEMENT			
Other: WEB SITE UPGRADE			

We have attended trainings offered by TREC and the Policy Institute. Montana Conservation Voters has helped with campaign work.

We completed a resource guide of our own that identifies groups that are doing good work around the country (will eventually be on our website). In addition to the guide we developed, good work is being done by the Clark Fork Coalition (on water issues), Montana Environmental Information Center has institutional knowledge of MT land use efforts, Flathead Conservation Roundtable, Sightlines (Seattle), Community Matters (Orton Foundation), MT Smart Growth Coalition (historically), Headwaters Economics, individual planners and attorneys.

How has your focus or strategies shifted since the economic downturn?

Because there are not as many applications for on-the-ground projects, our efforts addressing these concerns has obviously declined. We are seeing efforts underway to make local and state policy changes that will undermine regulations and would grease the skids for development in the future. Our work on energy has utilized the frame of economic development / issues. We are embracing the

economy frame for all work. Our organization is experiencing tighter budgets due to economic downturn.

How much of your work is done through partnerships and collaboration?

Our energy program work had collaborative steering committee. "Go Local Flathead" project relies on local businesses as partners. Waste reduction project is collaboration between Flathead County Solid Waste District and Flathead Community College. On our land use programs, there are downtown associations and neighborhood groups that are partners, especially when there are hot burner issues. Conservation Roundtable and commitment with MSGC are also key collaborations.

How much peer – to – peer interaction do you have?

A lot of interaction with peers via telephone, internet, and in person.

How do you receive new information (grants, new programs, initiatives) and where is information lacking?

The Montana Non-Profit Association provides some info on grants that we find helpful. We LACK information on small, in state sources of funding. We find that competition between local smart growth groups and statewide smart growth groups can be a challenge.

Are you a member of state, regional or national organizations (i.e. smart growth America)?

We are a member of MSGC, and we try to stay somewhat involved with national transportation issues (not sure who the lead groups are). We subscribe to Community Matters which is a helpful aggregator.

What list serves / social media do you subscribe to?

We receive transportation info from a number of sources and we also subscribe to: Sightlines, *YES Magazine*, Community Matters List Serve, and Headwaters News.

Valley Advocates for Responsible Development (VARD) - Sandy Mason, ED

285 Little Avenue

Driggs, ID 83422

www.tetonvalleyadvocates.org

208 354 1717

VARD was formed in 2001. A nonprofit smart growth organization with the mission:

Advocate for the intelligent use and protection of land, water, wildlife and quality of life.

Paid staff include 3.5 full time.

The annual Budget is \$200,000 – \$250,000

The geography of their work is at the county level, Teton County, ID.

Current Activities.

- Land use planning – local
- Transportation planning
- Conservation easements
- Conservation fish and wildlife
- Conservation habitat
- Affordable housing
- Sustainable agriculture
- Water resource conservation
- Private land conservation

VARD exercises a variety of tactics and activities in their work:

- Education of community issues
- Support and adding resources for local decision makers
- Working with planning department
- Research on growth issues
- Extensive web page for community use
- Issue newsletters, and weekly e mail alerts
- Litigation when necessary
- Networking with other regional groups
- Community organizing around growth issues
- Mentoring new growth management leaders

Current Strategies:

- | | |
|------------------------|--|
| Outreach and education | Campaigning (for issues yes, for candidates, no) |
| Community organizing | Litigation |
| Research | Economic development |
| Building partnerships | Land use planning |
| Demonstration projects | Policy reform - local |

Our biggest challenges lie in the political and economic arenas. There is a constant pressure to remain sustainable financially and therefore there is a consistent drain on work capacity by fundraising effort. Be able to survive the shifting political and cultural landscape over a long period of time is an on-going concern as changes in political makeup can reverse years of progress. In a stalled economy, it is more difficult to demonstrate that our work is still needed and relevant. Our strength is that we are a reliable source of trusted information and we work to continue being out front in people's minds as a non-biased resource for communities and decision makers which is challenging with a laissez faire view of planning. Often we find ourselves trying to triage and focus on most important issues, while maintaining day to day efforts.

Category of Need	0 = no need	1 = some need	2= high need
Funding / Fundraising			X
Communications		X	
Effective campaign development and management			X
Grass roots organizing		X	
Collaboration with other organizations		X	
Social media		X	
Facilitation and meeting management	X		
Technical training on: GIS, 3D Modeling, Visualizations of proposed development			
Other:			

Our assistance comes from a consultant for computer support. Teton Regional Land Trust has helped with maps as has Teton County GIS shop. The Sonoran Institute provides technical assistance on our projects.

Leaders in the region on smart growth and related work include: Sonoran Institute, Idaho Smart Growth, Greater Yellowstone Coalition, and Future West.

Since the economic downturn much of the work that we do is with the county as a resource for planning efforts. We are challenged to communicate to our members the importance of the proactive work which doesn't, unfortunately, have cache of crisis work.

How much of your work is done through partnerships and collaboration?

Much of what we do is collaborative with NGO's (Sonoran Institute, Teton Regional Land Trust) and working closely with the county and the cities of Victor and Driggs, ID Fish and Game, and Intermountain Aquatics (private firm).

How much peer – to – peer interaction do you have?

We have a lot – almost daily - communication (via phone and internet) with a wide variety of NGOs, government agencies, private consultants etc.

How do you receive new information (grants, new programs, initiatives) and where is information lacking?

Our primary go-to sources are internet alerts, like New West and American Planning Association. However, we need more general information on sources of general funding.

Are you a member of state, regional or national organizations (i.e. smart growth America)?

We maintain membership with Idaho Smart Growth and American Planning Association.

What list serves / social media do you subscribe to?

Facebook, APA Listserve, Google Analytics monitors our website for user characteristics.

Clark Fork Coalition, Brianna Randall

140 4th St. W., Unit #1

Missoula, MT 59801

PO Box 7593

Missoula, MT 59807

info@clarkfork.org

www.clarkfork.org

406-542-0539

CFC was formed in 1985. Anonprofit watershed organization that is also involved in conservation and smart growth. CFC Mission:

To protect and restore the Clark Fork river basin.

Currently the CFC has 11 FTE.

The annual Budget \$1,000,000 – \$1,500,000

The geography is watershed and regional. The work is focused in the Clark Fork watershed including Northern ID (work goes beyond watershed boundaries).

Current Activities.

- Land use planning Local - some at county level
- Conservation easements
- Conservation fish and wildlife
- Conservation habitat
- Business recruitment / enhancement and creation - in Deerlodge valley
- Sustainable agriculture
- Water resource conservation (stream flow and water rights / water quality)
- Private land conservation
- State and federal land management / conservation

There are 6 program areas where CFC does their work:

- 1) Water Watch is dedicated to prevent watershed degradation and clean up past messes
- 2) River Smart Growth program is for addressing land use and development in order to protect water
- 3) Climate Action program works to identify how to buffer the watershed from climate change
- 4) Ranchlands program is based in Deerlodge and is engaged in sustainable agriculture
- 5) Vital rivers, which is 1/2 of our work, focuses on watershed restoration and stream flow on private and public lands
- 6) River Affinity is our outreach and education program.

Current strategies:

Outreach and education – includes events
 Community organizing
 Research
 Building partnerships
 Demonstration projects
 Lobbying
 Campaigning – issues ballots bonds (not candidates)

Litigation
 Economic development (job training – small)
 Land use planning (a little as a technical advisor)
 Policy reform locally, state, (sometimes nationally when we partner with other groups)

Our challenges are varied, possibly corresponding to our different programs and roles. Like everyone, raising money can be a challenge particularly to raise money for cultivation relationships and partnerships. Building and maintaining trust with governments, landowners partners and citizen members takes tremendous effort and sustained work. The political and economic climate has affected our message and how we get work done. CFC started doing restoration 6 years ago which had a huge impact of the way we do our work. We now have to watch the line between advocacy and restoration as crossing it could hinder projects, some folks may decide not to partner with us if we are seen as too activist. Our staff doubled in last 2 years and management is more complicated and the skills of our staff cross over quite a bit, we have breadth not so much depth. Technically, our computer resources are slow to keep up, especially GIS.

Category of Need	0 = no need	1 = some need	2= high need
Funding / Fundraising			X
Communications		X	
Effective campaign development and management			X
Grass roots organizing		X	
Collaboration with other organizations	X		
Social media	X		
Facilitation and meeting management			X
Technical training on: GIS, data base management			
Other: list of associates with different skills that we can access even get at a lower rate			

We have a nice network of assistance including:

- A technical advisory committee
- Attorney
- Watershed scientist
- One technical support staff
- Membership base we can tap for assistance

Andy Robinson – strategic planning and fundraising
Graphic designer
We have also used media consultants.

Outside of our watershed we admire the work of the Montana Smart Growth Coalition, Citizens for a Better Flathead, Bitterrooters for Planning and Audubon Society (Janet Ellis).

How has your focus or strategies shifted since the economic downturn?

We took on restoration during the downturn but the compensation for the restoration has been an opportunity. We can help with private land conservation by bringing money to the table. We have devoted a little less to land use planning with the slow down but have done more education with realtors and developers.

How much of your work is done through partnerships and collaboration?

80% of our work is done in some form of partnership. Partners include landowners, other groups, agencies and governments. We will occasionally create MOUs and contracts to formalize the partnerships , give the relationship more structure. Litigation work also has partners.

How much peer – to – peer interaction do you have?

We have a tremendous amount of peer to peer because of our size and number of partnerships. We try and get to conferences and workshops for our staff. CFC is supportive of our involvement in conferences outside of Montana.

How do you receive new information (grants, new programs, initiatives) and where is information lacking?

Email and listserves are the most used. Would be nice to have a land use planning listserve for the state.

Are you a member of state, regional or national organizations (i.e. smart growth America)?

We are involved in many listserves and professional networks. Some of the most important for our work include: Clean Water Network, River Network, Montana Smart Growth Coalition, Montana Nonprofit Association, Downtown Association. Our website has a list of our partner organizations and groups are collaborate with. <http://www.clarkfork.org/about-us/our-partners.html>

What list serves / social media do you subscribe to?

Facebook, Twitter, we update our website regularly, You Tube, WASHED listserve, Missoula Community, State media advisories.

Salmon Valley Stewardship - Gina Knudson
513 Main Street, Salmon, ID. 83467
www.salmonvalley.org
(208) 756 1686

SVS was formed in 2004, they are a nonprofit conservation organization describing themselves as a “Community-Based Conservation Organization”. Their mission:

Promote a sustainable economy and help the environment in the Salmon River region.

Paid staff include 4 people working part-time + 2 interns in the summer (2 FTEs)

The annual budget is \$100,000 – \$150,000

The geography of their work is watershed based, Salmon River Watershed

Current Activities.

Land use planning – local and state

Energy development and transmission

Conservation fish and wildlife

Conservation habitat

Business recruitment / enhancement and creation

Sustainable agriculture

Water resource conservation

Private land conservation

State and federal land management / conservation

Our work focuses on the following fields: forest restoration, sustainable agriculture, and resilient communities. These areas are where we focus our project and program work.

Current Strategies:

Outreach and education

Community organizing

Research

Building partnerships

Demonstration projects

Lobbying

Economic development

Land use planning

Policy reform – local, state and national levels.

International through the Forest Stewardship

Council.

Our challenge in being a community-based organization is that we really do have to reinvent the wheel – every community is different. There is no “model” for what makes a sustainable, functional organization. The uniqueness of each community is terrific, but a terrific challenge regarding how you build a sustainable community. Sustaining adequate funding is also a challenge. Success takes patience and not many funders have it.

Category of Need	0 = no need	1 = some need	2= high need
Funding / Fundraising			X

Communications			X
Effective campaign development and management			X
Grass roots organizing			X
Collaboration with other organizations			X
Social media			X
Facilitation and meeting management		X	
Technical training on: GIS, NEPA, Accounting			
Other:			

Assistance is currently being received from: Sustainable Northwest providing capacity training, National Forest Foundation PEER Learning Network, and Orton Foundation Community Matters Program.

Additional organizations that are making a difference include: Sonoran Institute for land use planning work, Western Sustainability Exchange for community and agricultural sustainability issues.

How has your focus or strategies shifted since the economic downturn?

Our messaging has shifted, SVS staff emphasize job creation in all projects and presentations.

How much of your work is done through partnerships and collaboration?

Everything SVS does is a partnership or a collaboration. If it is not a partnership, we ask ourselves why not? We didn't use to work this way but realized how much more effective partnerships make our projects. More formally, we hold monthly meetings with other area non-profits in the area to explore opportunities for working in partnership.

How much peer – to – peer interaction do you have?

We have a ton of peer – to – peer contact. The National Forest Foundation and the Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition provide regular forums for interaction ranging from in-person conferences, webinars, working groups, list serves.

How do you receive new information (grants, new programs, initiatives) and where is information lacking?

This is challenging, we really don't have a good source. SVS makes use of *Grantseekers*, and the Idaho Department of Commerce does monthly fundraising newsletters but information often arrives too late to apply to grant opportunities.

Are you a member of state, regional or national organizations (i.e. Smart growth America)?

We are members of the Rural Voices for Conservation Coalition, and mostly inactive members of Partners for Idaho's Future (Idaho Smart Growth).

What list serves / social media do you subscribe to?

Headwaters News, Idaho Nonprofit Center and SVS actually generates quite a bit of information through a Google Group. We struggle with finding a way to better filter information, Email can be a time sink.

Sheridan Community Land Trust – Colin Betzler

306 N. Main, Box 7185, Sheridan, WY. 82801

www.sheridanclt.org

(307) 673-4702

SCLT was formed in 2005 and received 501c3 status in 2007. The nonprofit organization serves as a land trust that also engages in watershed issues, community / economic development, conservation, smart growth and historic preservation and interpretation. The mission is:

We work to preserve and conserve the best of Sheridan County for this and future generations.

We have 1 FTE.

The annual budget is \$100,000 – \$150,000

The geography of their work is at the watershed level, including the local community.

Current Activities.

Land use planning at the local and state levels

Transportation planning

Conservation easements

Conservation fish and wildlife

Conservation habitat

Affordable housing

Sustainable agriculture

Private land conservation

State and federal land management / conservation

Historic preservation and interpretation

Enhanced public recreation opportunities and access

Our work has focused on securing conservation easements and some of these are historic preservation easements. Our efforts also work to open private land to public access and enhancing access to public lands.

Current Strategies:

Outreach and education

Community organizing

Research

Building partnerships

Demonstration projects

Economic development

Land use planning

Policy reform - local level

Our biggest challenge has been the growth pains associated with being a young non-profit land trust. The current economic situation has made it a tough go for land trusts like ours to get work done on the ground. We need projects that demonstrate what can be done with a small, professional staff. Educating the public to recognize the value of private land conservation that does not include public access is also a challenge.

Category of Need	0 = no need	1 = some need	2= high need
Funding / Fundraising		X	
Communications	X		
Effective campaign development and management		X	
Grass roots organizing	X		
Collaboration with other organizations		X	
Social media	X		
Facilitation and meeting management	X		
Technical training on: landscape scale conservation planning			
Other:			

For assistance we use a paid accountant. The Land Trust Alliance provides on line resources – both organizational and technical which we also use.

The Sonoran Institute (John Heyneman), the Clark Group (consulting group in Sheridan i.e. Brian Keil), and the Powder River Resource Council are the organizations where we find the most stimulating work being done in our region.

How has your focus or strategies shifted since the economic downturn?

The economic downturn did not stop the Board from hiring staff. Despite the economy, our focus has remained on growing the organization knowing that they need additional professional staff. If anything has changed its focusing priorities on projects that demonstrate the value of the organization to the general public (e.g. providing access to private lands). Less emphasis on affordable housing and growth management related issues with the slow down in growth.

How much of your work is done through partnerships and collaboration?

All of our projects are done in collaboration with others. We have good project partnership with others, particularly local groups. For example, we are working on an historic mine by-way project with the historical society. 100% of projects cooperative efforts with partners.

How much peer – to – peer interaction do you have?

Our contact is frequent. We have one interaction with non-regional groups every two weeks or so in person by phone. And frequent communication via email with regional land trusts.

How do you receive new information (grants, new programs, initiatives) and where is information lacking?

We glean some information from the news. Often we hear about grants through word of mouth from other organizations. We would benefit from a clearing house for land trusts to help us find granting opportunities.

Are you a member of state, regional or national organizations (i.e. Smart Growth America)?

We are a member of the Land Trust Alliance and Wyoming Association of Land Trusts.

What list serves / social media do you subscribe to?

We focus our subscriptions on local stuff including the Chamber of Commerce, Center for a Vital Community, and some regional groups like the Land Trust Alliance and Sonoran Institute.

ATTACHMENT 3: SPREAD SHEETS OF ON-LINE SURVEY COMMUNITY SCAN RESPONSES (files attached)