

## Questions in the Chat Log – Webinar #3

### Introductions

- Laura Ryder from New Hampshire
- Veronica Del Bianco from New Orleans, Louisiana
- Jen Duffy from the Jane Goodall Institute of Canada (Alberta)
- Maria Parisi from US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Mags Hines from the Crissy Field Center - GGNPC in San Francisco, California
- Rebecca Minnick from Jefferson Memorial Forest/Louisville (KY) Metro Parks
- Kristi Masterson from Cincinnati Nature Center
- Kate Le Souef from the Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup at the Vancouver Aquarium in Canada
- Andrea Parker from Damariscotta, Maine from The Rejuvenation Grange
- Alexandra Brodka from the Hamilton-Burlington Trails Council in Ontario
- Duncan Whittick here from the Canadian Network for Environmental Education and Communication (British Columbia)
  - Michelle is joining me from Non-profit by Nature in British Columbia
- Malachite Wyld from Oregon Afterschool for Kids, in Portland
- Marian Miller from Belmont, Massachusetts
- Judy Geck from MN Valley NWR in Bloomington, Minnesota
- Carrie Scheick from Delaware Nature Society
- Emily Malick from The Virginia Living Museum
- Lisa Donahue from Toronto, Ontario, Canada
- David Cohen from the Intertwine Alliance in Portland, Oregon
- Cathy Jordan, U of MN faculty and the Research Director for C&NN
- Michelle Cugini at Longwood Gardens (Pennsylvania)
- Denise Iszczuk from Ausable Bayfield Conservation Authority Exeter, ON
- Barb McKean at Royal Botanical Gardens in Burlington, Ontario, home of the Back to Nature Network
- Hanna Pinneo from the Nebraska Forest Service
- Emily McKittrick from San Antonio Zoo in Texas
- Marilyn Wyzga at New Hampshire Children in Nature
- Kimberly Sorensen from Texas Parks and Wildlife in Houston, Texas

- Christina Pickles from Alberta
  - Duncan Whittick: Hi ACEE Canadian Neighbour!
- Tia Prostko from South Carolina, division of early care and education
- Janice Furchner in South River Ontario Canada with the District of Parry Sound Social Services Administration Board
- Matt Biggar from San Francisco Cities Connecting Children to Nature Collaborative
- Vicki Harber from Edmonton, Alberta
- Allison Hans from Forests Ontario and the Biodiversity Education Awareness Network

#### Discussion: Challenges (Relationships & Culture)

- **Veronica Del Bianco from LA:** Difficult to get people to come to meetings
- **Michelle Cugini from pa:** getting people to attend meetings
- **Robin Salthouse from AZ:** not enough people or energy
- **Anna DeMers from WI:** not a diverse group, and needs to embrace change more
- **Rachel Gurfinkel from CO:** Not a diverse group, needs to embrace change more
- **Avery Cleary from California:** getting people to attend meetings
- **Emily Malick from Virginia:** We're a small non-profit, we don't have a large number of employees
- **Marilyn Wyzga:** Network members don't understand network process
- **Kaara Kallen from IL:** not a diverse group
- **Laura Ryder from New Hampshire:** Getting people to attend meetings
- **Christina Pickles from Alberta:** large geographical area
- **Alexandra Brodka from Ontario:** we had issues getting people to our meetings and found that it helped when we moved meetings to the workday instead of evening and allowed those who couldn't attend in person to call in on conference call
- **Robin Salthouse from AZ:** Network is not very innovative or collaborative
- **Veronica Del Bianco from LA:** to embrace change - one on one talk to address concerns and teach people from where they are

- **Cathy Jordan from Minnesota:** the challenge of getting people to not be overly dependent on a central organizer

#### Discussion: Successes (Relationships & Culture)

- **Robin Salthouse from AZ:** We hold conference calls or virtual meetings to get people located over a relatively large geographic area to attend
- **Veronica Del Bianco from LA:** invite people in pairs
- **Cathy Jordan from Minnesota:** We pay the way of all members using grant funding to get people to annual in person meetings
- **Duncan Whittick from British Columbia:** Celebrating successes! We hold network celebrations on a regular basis
  - And sharing failure/challenges...always an important step that is often missed...
- **Kristi Masterson from Ohio:** Asked participants to share experiences with others and hold them accountable
- **Christina Pickles from Alberta:** Survey of members was very helpful. Helped with direction and events for the year. Also helped to identify people interested in getting more deeply involved
- **Vicki Harber from Alberta:** Meeting people "where they are at" helps to build trust and increases likelihood of more getting involved
- **Rachel Gurfinkel from CO:** To create a more collaborative network, have a meeting or email chain to identify strengths and weaknesses, and where we you can help each other out
- **Emily Malick from Virginia:** We acknowledge individual's hard work at monthly meetings to help increase trust
- **Liza Mindemann from NY:** organize events that bring in a new and different crowd. Create a draw
- **Marilyn Wyzga:** We are teaching the core leadership team about this NW process and hope to spread it to the rest of the network next
- **Kurt Moser from VA:** fun, unstructured events: i.e., happy hour
- **Veronica Del Bianco from LA:** I find people don't want to go to things alone so inviting two people per organization or identifying one but asking them to bring a second person

- Yes, different locations is helpful especially if the settings can be exciting or different
- **Emily McKittrick from Texas:** Taking turns hosting meetings at different locations keeps it interesting and fun
- **Judy Geck from MN:** social events with multiple partners and also special events with partner planning
- **Tia Prostko from SC:** My network is just getting started, a coalition actually, and we talk about the long-term relationships that we have from living in a small town for our whole lives
- **Cathy Jordan from Minnesota:** small group time has been really important to us for building trust and getting real work done
- **Alexandra Brodka from Ontario:** we have started holding monthly sub-committee meetings (smaller groups) and then have at large meetings only every other month [...]this has increased attendance and project engagement
- **Heidi Keuler from Wisconsin:** We went on a canoe trip and spoke about the issues they saw on the stream. We had farmers and biologists in the group!
- **Avery Cleary from California:** Great ideas about inviting pairs and having FUN be incorporated
- **Liza Mindemann from NY:** we took a field trip with others in the field to network and get to know each other- all centering around a common interest: native plants

#### Discussion: Challenges (Action)

- **Rebecca Minnick from KY:** I think a challenge we face is that we all want to partner but feel we are too busy to follow through on some of these great ideas
  - **Emily McKittrick from Texas:** I agree with Rebecca M!
- **Anna DeMers from WI:** Too much going on
- **Marilyn Wyzga:** Not clear at this point, 8 years into it, what action to take
- **Vicki Harber from Alberta:** Too much of this work is "off the side of the desk" so never enough time to get work done
- **Kurt Moser from VA:** work priorities and performance not strongly tied to collaborative outcomes

- **Laura Ryder from New Hampshire:** Maybe not enough people to spread out and support projects
- **Liza Mindemann from NY:** many people who have been involved are getting too old to participate so the challenge is connecting with younger network and bringing new people in

#### Discussion: Successes (Action)

- **Kaara Kallen from IL:** My network has an umbrella group that works with a variety of organizations and helps facilitate these partnerships
- **Alexandra Brodka from Ontario:** we have started posting opportunities for university students (often high level candidates in masters programs who do quality work) to work on projects under our partners in order to lighten the workload for partners
  - **Alexandra Brodka from Ontario:** the students work hard in exchange for credits!
  - **Rachel Gurfinkel from CO:** How do we get more young people involved?
- **Rebecca Minnick from KY:** I also second what Kurt M says--many orgs need to be willing to share the limelight or the credit
- **Bill Kilburn from Burlington, Ontario:** Choose project contributors for motivation, collaborative mindsets first!
- **Kaara Kallen from IL:** It seems to help a lot because it takes the administrative and operations work out of partnering (the umbrella group)
- **Kurt Moser from VA:** partner with universities on events
- **Matt Biggar from CA:** Governance structure with steering committee members leading work teams for collaborative
- **Liza Mindemann from NY:** we're opening up a free play nature area in our public park for younger kids and young families
- **Rachel Gurfinkel from CO:** I have had success with students through work programs, but I have not had success keeping those partners around long-term
- **Kaara Kallen from IL:** Working with local high schools to have kids do stewardship - my area has a service learning project they have to complete

- **Rebecca Minnick from KY:** Year ago I was paid by a grant to be a liaison between partners on a big project--a great role to consider
  - **Alexandra Brodka from Ontario:** yes, thanks for mentioning that Rebecca. That's how our trails council operates
- **Alexandra Brodka from Ontario:** our organization also presented at city council general issues committee to ask for a motion to direct municipal staff to contribute to our organization's projects [...]this has been helpful in obtaining funding
- **Janice Furchner from Ontario:** The various agencies within our District get together as the planning committee and then we distribute the information to the families that each of the agencies connect with. Connections are made where the families attend like family groups (Early Years groups, mental health groups, Health unit programs etc

#### Discussion: Challenges (Structure & Support)

- **Liza Mindemann from NY:** small staff and limited resources are our biggest impediment
- **Alexandra Brodka from Ontario:** yes, I am the only paid staff, which is why I have been very happy to take 3-4 coop students every couple of months
  - **Alexandra Brodka from Ontario:** sustainability of funding is our biggest challenge. we are trying to work on a financial sustainability model without having to charge membership fees to the organizations around our table
- **Marilyn Wyzga:** I'm not sure our network knows it's a network anymore. We haven't hosted an event or conference or sent out a newsletter in 18 months at least
- **Rebecca Minnick from KY:** Some of the orgs are well-funded and some aren't; this will be interesting to navigate as we move forward in our action steps

#### Discussion: Successes (Structure & Support)

- **Cathy Jordan from Minnesota:** celebrate a success of the group or of a member. Find a reason to be together

- **Alexandra Brodka from Ontario:** sometimes it is helpful to piggy back off of larger events (like instead of hosting a conference host a pre-conference activity or post conference workshop)
  - **Tia Prostko from SC:** I agree, we are also going to be piggy-backing off a larger group, who is willing to support more local smaller groups with PR resources
- **Liza Mindemann from NY:** I'm writing grants to try to bring in a little funding so that we can host some guest lectures and bring people together so it doesn't feel like we're only taking and not giving in return
- **Marilyn Wyzga:** We were very successful at the outset with creating a collaborative leadership style approach and getting training paid for by our state Charitable Foundation
- **Bill Kilburn from Burlington, Ontario:** We schedule "decision-making days" to make sure we keep moving all things forward and take stock of where we are
- **Kurt Moser from VA:** totally agree that a coordinator is essential
- **Marilyn Wyzga:** Our leadership team has operated effectively without a coordinator for the past 3 years, after 7 years of having one

Discussion: What area is your highest priority?

- **Heidi Keuler from Wisconsin:** Support and Structure – funding
- **Denise Iszczuk from Ontario:** Action: a lot of talk
- **Marilyn Wyzga:** Action
- **Veronica Del Bianco from LA:** I agree, we need to work on action so that people see the network as "worth their time"
- **Laura Ryder from New Hampshire:** Structure and Action
- **Liza Mindemann from NY:** structure and support
- **Tia Prostko from SC:** Action!
- **Alexandra Brodka from Ontario:** for one project, we are writing a letter customized to different agencies to indicate how the project aligns with their own agency goals/ objectives [...]when you copy the higher level decision makers from the agency, they end up following up and checking in on their staff's contribution to your project

## Broad Questions

- **Cathy Jordan from Minnesota:** When you provide some funds to have certain network members take on some coordination tasks, how do you help other members not feel resentful? How do you make this fair and transparent?
- **Hanna Pinneo from Nebraska:** After a time of dormancy, what have you done to try to re-engage stakeholders?
  - **Marilyn Wyzga:** Hanna - I can see these next steps really re-engaging stakeholders
  - **Avery Cleary from California:** Hanna, how about a Natural Leaders party! Great to see you on the call
  - **Hanna Pinneo from Nebraska:** Thanks Avery! I'd love it!
- **Kaara Kallen from IL:** What is a good way to talk to others in the network who are reluctant to, for example, share control of decisions?
- **Liza Mindemann from NY:** does anyone have experience creating an interactive outdoor nature play space in an urban setting?
  - **Avery Cleary from California:** Liza, if you email me [averycleary@gmail.com](mailto:averycleary@gmail.com) I can connect you with some folks who have. There will also be a couple of at the 2017 C&NN Conference in Vancouver
  - **Mary Roscoe from Bay Area:** Liza, please send me your email
  - **Carrie Scheick from Delaware:** Liza we are exploring the idea at our site in Wilmington DE - Dupont Environmental Education Center - after seeing an awesome natural play space at the Wild Center in NY this past summer
  - **Lisa Donahue:** Liza, check out [Evergreen.ca](http://Evergreen.ca) and their flagship site, Evergreen Brick Works. Their Children's Garden is an amazing showcase! Email me at [lpdonahue@gmail.com](mailto:lpdonahue@gmail.com) if you'd like more info
  - **Kaara Kallen from IL:** Liza, Chicago Wilderness might have some really great suggestions. There is a lot of great stuff happening in the Chicago area (see [chicagowilderness.org](http://chicagowilderness.org))



## 'Next Steps' After Today's Webinar

- **Marilyn Wyzga:** We have a meeting next Tuesday and already plan on some of these tasks
- **Veronica Del Bianco from LA:** I would like to engage with communities of practice
- **Robin Salthouse from AZ:** Suggest small group virtual meetings to accomplish specific tasks. Thanks for ZOOM resource!
  - **Robin Salthouse from AZ:** I've used Google Hangout in the past, so it will be interesting to compare with ZOOM
- **Avery Cleary from California:** In the Bay Area we need to bring everyone together - after the suggestions in this chat, will be thinking about what would be FUN!
  - **Avery Cleary from California:** After experiencing the quality of ZOOM we will think about including that as a way to connect and reconnect people here.
- **Liza Mindemann from NY:** consistent, regularly occurring events and/or meetings create consistency in addition to partnerships and special projects that people can plug in in areas that appeal to their specific skills and interests
- **Alexandra Brodka from Ontario:** Creating a project charter for your projects which includes how decisions will be made