



Big Sky Watershed Corps Evaluation Project

Natural Resource Planning and Protection Survey Post-survey Results

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1. Introduction

The Big Sky Watershed Corps (BSWC) is an AmeriCorps program implemented through a partnership between the Montana Conservation Corps, the Montana Watershed Coordination Council, and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts of Montana. Individual Corps members are paired with water resource-related organizations and agencies, known as host-sites, to promote professional development and increase the operating capacity of host-sites to achieve their missions and/or purpose. The overarching purpose of the survey results presented here is to document how, if at all, Corps members influence their host-site's capacity to implement hands on restoration work as well as create new or deepen existing relationships with host-site partners and collaborators.

This project also seeks to understand the priorities and concerns of natural resource-related agencies and organizations throughout the state. We are interested in how water resource professionals perceive the importance of stakeholder group inclusion in decision-making, collaboration, and experimentation and monitoring. Finally, we are interested in what role, if any, Corps members play in assisting water resource organizations and agencies with these efforts.

We seek to understand these topics by collecting data via two rounds of surveys and semi-structured interviews to understand overall impact of Corps members on host-site capacity as compared with non-host sites. The pre-survey occurred during the first half of Corps members' tenure at their host-site, see Gilbert et al. (2021)¹ for a full report of the results. The post-survey was conducted after Corp members' term of service concluded. This report contains an overview of data collection methods and the data collected from the post-survey.

¹ Gilbert, A., Church, S.P., and Wilson, B. (2021). *Big Sky Watershed Corps Evaluation Project: Natural Resource Planning and Protection Survey, Pre-survey Results*. Bozeman: Montana State University.

2. Data Collection and Analysis

BSWC members typically serve with watershed groups, natural resource-oriented organizations and agencies, and Conservation Districts throughout the state. Our target audience for this survey was current BSWC site supervisors as well as senior employees and district administrators of every watershed group and Conservation District in the state of Montana. Contact information for these populations were gathered from three primary sources: 1) the Montana Conservation Corps host-site supervisor directory, 2) the Montana Watershed Coordination Council Watershed Directories¹, and 3) the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation's Conservation District Directory² (N=140).

We sent the pre-survey to this list of Montana natural resource professionals and received 79 responses during April-May 2021. We sent the post-survey to the 79 participants who had responded to the pre-survey in January-February 2022. The post-survey was developed by Montana State University researchers in collaboration with Montana Conservation Corps staff. We piloted the post-survey in January 2022 and made minor adjustments. The initial survey invitation and three survey reminders were sent via email using Qualtrics software.

This survey received approval from Montana State University's Institutional Review Board (AG033031-EX). Survey data was analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 26. In the following sections, we use descriptive statistics to report the post-survey data.

¹ *Watershed Directories*. (n.d.). Montana Watershed Coordination Council.
<https://www.mtwatersheds.org/watershed-directory/page/2/>

² *Conservation District Directory*. (2019). Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation.
<http://dnrc.mt.gov/divisions/cardd/docs/cd-new/2019CD.Directory.Less.pdf>

3. Results

We sent the survey to 79 email addresses and received 44 responses which gives us a response rate of 55%. We count all surveys with one or more complete questions as a response.

3.1 Respondent and Organization Demographics

TABLE 1 ORGANIZATION/AGENCY TYPE

“What type of organization/agency do you work for?” (n=44)		
	Frequency	Percent
Non-governmental organization	18	40.9%
Conservation district	12	27.2%
Local government	6	13.6%
Federal government	2	4.5%
State government	2	4.5%
Tribal government/agency/organization	1	2.2%
Private, for-profit organization	0	0
Other (please specify) *	3	6.8%

*See Table 2.

TABLE 2 ORGANIZATION/AGENCY TYPE - OTHER

“What type of organization/agency do you work for?” Other (please specify) write-in answers, (n=3)	
Forest collaborative	
Leader, Unpaid, Watershed	
Collaborative of watershed groups	

TABLE 3 JOB TITLE

“Which best describes your job title?” (n=44)		
	Frequency	Percent
Executive director	11	25%
District administrator	8	18.1%
Project or program manager	6	13.6%
Project or program coordinator	4	9.1%
Board chair	4	9.1%
Watershed coordinator	3	6.8%
Conservation/natural resource specialist	3	6.8%
Board member	1	2.2%
Water quality specialist	1	2.2%
President	0	0%
Secretary/treasurer	0	0%
Other (please specify) *	3	6.8%

*See Table 4.

TABLE 4 JOB TITLE - OTHER

“Which best describes your job title?” Other (please specify) write-in answers, (n=3)
Conservation programs manager
Co-chair of the members
Resource Conservationist/Department Head

TABLE 5 YEARS EMPLOYED/IN CURRENT ROLE

“Please indicate how many years you have been:” *			
	Mean	Range	n
At current place of employment	9.4	0.5-60	43
In current role	6.0	0.5-25	44

*Participants were asked to round to the nearest half-year.

TABLE 6 ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

“What is your organization/agency’s annual operating budget?” (n=44)		
	Frequency	Percent
\$0 - \$49,999	14	31.8%
\$50,000 - \$99,999	6	13.6%
\$100,000 - \$249,999	9	20.4%
\$250,000 - \$499,999	7	15.9%
\$500,000 - \$999,999	1	2.2%
\$1,000,000 - \$1,999,999	2	4.5%
\$2M+	2	4.5%
Unsure/don’t know	3	6.8%

TABLE 7 NUMBER OF STAFF

“Please indicate the number of staff currently employed at your organization/agency:”					
	Mean	Median	Mode	Range	n
Full-time (30+ hours per week)	6.5	1.0	1.0	0-200	44
Part-time (less than 30 hours per week)	1	1.0	0	0-5	42
Big Sky Watershed Corps member(s)	<1.0	0	0	0-3	43
Paid interns/temporary employees (not including BSWC members)	<1.0	0	0	0-5	42
Unpaid interns/temporary employees (not including BSWC members)	<1.0	0	0	0-9	42

TABLE 8 EVER HOSTED BSWC MEMBER

“Has your organization/agency ever hosted a Big Sky Watershed Corps member? (Not including 2021)” * (n=25)		
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	12	48.0%
No	10	40.0%
Unsure/don't know	3	12.0%

*Participants were offered this question if they indicated they do not currently host a BSWC member, see Table 7.

TABLE 9 YEARS AS HOST-SITE

“How many years did your organization/agency host a Big Sky Watershed Corps member?” * (n=10)	
Mean	3.3
Range	1-8

*Participants were offered this question only if they answered “yes” to ever hosting a BSWC member, see Table 8.

3.2 Contributions of 2021 BSWC Member

TABLE 10 HOST BSWC MEMBER IN 2021

“Did your organization/agency host a BSWC member in 2021?” * (n=42)		
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	16	38.1%
No	24	57.1%
Don't know/unsure	2	4.8%

*Participants who answered “yes” to this question were shown the questions represented in tables 2-4.

TABLE 11 HIRE BSWC MEMBER

“If you had an open position, would you consider hiring your 2021 Corps member as a staff member at your organization/agency?” * (n=16)		
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	11	68.8%
No	3	18.8%
Don't know/unsure	2	12.5%

TABLE 12 BSWC MEMBER AND CAPACITY

“Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements. <u>Hosting a BSWC member in 2021 increased my organization/agency's capacity to:</u> If your BSWC member did not participate in an activity listed below, please select not applicable.”									
	n	Not applicable (0)*	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)	Mean	Standard deviatio n
		Frequency %							
Engage in hands-on field projects (e.g., restoration, water quality monitoring)	14	0	0	0	0	42.9	57.1	4.57	0.51
Engage in collaborative work	16	0	0	0	18.8	37.5	43.8	4.25	0.77
Deliver educational programming	15	0	0	13.3	13.3	20.0	53.3	4.13	1.12
Rethink, redesign, or revamp existing programs or practices	15	0	0	6.7	20.0	46.7	26.7	3.93	0.88
Strengthen or build relationships with other BSWC host-sites	16	0	0	6.3	43.8	37.5	12.5	3.56	0.81

*Not applicable is excluded from the mean.

TABLE 13 LARGEST CONTRIBUTION

“In your opinion, what was the largest contribution your BSWC member made to your organization/agency in 2021?”

Participants were provided space to write in their answer to this question. Responses were coded into themes. The theme, definition of the theme, number of times the theme was coded, and an example quote that illustrates the theme are shown below. Some responses were coded for more than one theme. N=16.

Theme	Definition	n	Example Quote
Increase capacity	Participant indicates that their corps member(s) increased the capacity of their organization or agency to complete programs, initiatives, or activities. Must use the word “capacity.”	7	“We had two BSWC members last year and both excelled at expanding our capacity to deliver high quality programs and products. One in particular showed amazing initiative, drive and took our [name of organization] projects to the next level.”
Education and outreach	Corps member(s) managed, delivered, created, coordinated, or organized educational programming.	7	“Our BSWC member's largest contributions were to our Education Program. She really helped create virtual offerings that will be a resource for years to come.”
Idea generation/fresh perspective	Corps member(s) provided fresh perspective or brought new ideas to the participant’s organization or agency.	3	“The largest contribution our BSWC member made was coming up with various future fundraising ideas for the organization. Many were very creative and things we would have never thought of trying!”
Monitoring	Corps member assisted with or managed monitoring projects or efforts.	3	“Our member also contributed greatly to monitoring efforts, allowing us to extend our summer field season.”
Volunteer engagement	Corps member played a significant role in managing, coordinating, or engaging with volunteers.	2	“... [name of member] did a great job of creating relationships with our core group of volunteers.”
Fieldwork	Corps member managed or assisted with fieldwork.	1	“Allowing us to do targeted field investigations of groundwater contamination that had long been on our radar.”
Administrative support	Corps member provided administrative support to the participant’s organization or agency.	1	“The member provided support to the organization as we launched a new website in 2021.”

TABLE 14 HOSTING BSWC 2022

“Is your organization/agency hosting a BSWC member in 2022?”
(n=42)

	n	Percent
Yes	14	33.3%
No	24	57.1%
Don’t know/unsure	4	9.5%

3.3 Characteristics of a Successful Collaborative Effort

TABLE 15 COLLABORATIVE EFFORT PARTICIPATION

“For the next few questions, we would like you to think about a collaborative effort that your organization or agency has been a part of or is currently a part of that you feel is particularly successful or has the potential to be successful.”

“By collaborative effort, we mean any instance where your organization/agency worked with both government and non-government entities or people to achieve a shared mission or goal.” *

“On behalf of your organization/agency, have you been or are you currently a part of any collaborative efforts that meet this definition?”

	n	Percent
Yes	40	97.6%
No	0	0
Don't know/unsure	1	2.4%

*The instructions shown here were repeated for each question about collaboration shown in this section.

TABLE 16 OBJECTIVES OR GOALS

“In 2-3 sentences or less, please describe what the objectives or goals of this collaborative effort are or were:”

Participants were provided space to write in their answer to this question. Responses were coded into themes. The theme, definition of the theme, number of times the theme was coded, and an example quote that illustrates the theme are shown below. Many responses were coded for more than one theme (n=38).

Theme	Definition	n	Example Quote
Conservation/restoration planning or implementation	Goals or objectives involve planning conservation or restoration projects and/or implementing them.	18	“We are working with multiple private landowners, [name of partner], [name of partner], and [name of partner] to restore a section of stream that has been historically channelized and denuded of vegetation.”
Information dispersal or education	Collaborative effort disperses information or increases education about environmental issues among community members, stakeholder groups, actors, or other people or entities.	16	“The [name of partnership] is an example of collaborative work that encompasses many water quality focused partner organizations with a goal to increase coordination, share workloads, and increase consistent messaging about septic leachate and wastewater issues in the [name of basin].”
Obtain funding or resources	Combining or coordinating efforts to secure funding, additional staff or staff time, or other resources to implement goals or objectives.	10	“I work for [name of agency] and partner with the conservation district and BSWC to achieve watershed focused conservation benefits. For example, last year our BSWC member wrote a grant to fund a pollinator initiative that established pollinator gardens with perennial forbs and grasses.”
Monitoring, research, or data collection	Collaborative effort engages in monitoring efforts, conducting research, or collecting data.	9	“The [name of organization] works with [name of partner], [name of partner] to monitor water quality and macroinvertebrates on the [name of river]. This relationship meshes technical expertise, financial & laboratory support, and staff/volunteer field time to operate a monitoring program.”
Identify potential actions/form agenda	Collaborative identifies actions or creates agendas dictating what the group or actors involved plan to do around an issue or problem area.	4	“The goal of this collaboration was to develop a list of actions allow the organizations represented to work together to address impacts to water resources, maintain and enhance healthy river systems, maximize valuable and limited water assets, and improve the community’s understanding of the health of [name of area] water resources.”
Invasive species management	Collaborative works to mitigate or manage presence of invasive species, includes aquatic species and plant species.	3	“[Name of agency] collaborates with [name of partner] and [name of partner] in the fight against Aquatic Invasive species.”
Reduce wildlife conflict	Collaborative aims to reduce wildlife conflict in any area.	3	“We are working with landowners, NGOs and agencies to prevent bear conflicts on private property.”
Build relationships	Goal or initiative is to build or strengthen relationships among collaborative participants.	1	“The goal is always to strengthen relationships to build a foundation of trust that can be the launching point for more projects.”

TABLE 17 COLLABORATION CATALYST

“Which of the following events or opportunities, if any, were most influential for starting or inspiring this collaborative effort? Choose <u>up to 3</u> events/opportunities.”		
	Frequency	Percent
Issue proximity (e.g., desire to combine efforts around a similar issue)	21	50%
Ongoing environmental challenge	20	47.6%
Funding opportunity from government source	16	38.1%
Landowner interest	16	38.1%
Funding opportunity from a non-governmental source	11	26.2%
Geographic proximity (e.g., desire to combine efforts in a similar area)	11	26.2%
Regulations or threat of regulations (e.g., TMDL, Endangered Species Act)	5	11.9%
Not listed (please specify):*	5	11.9%
Industrial accident/major event effecting environmental quality	1	2.4%
New data/information	1	2.4%
Recommendation or mandate for a new group	1	2.4%
Don't know/unsure	1	2.4%
Natural disaster	0	0
Proposed construction project or one that happened	0	0

*See the events and opportunities that participants wrote in for this question in table 9.

TABLE 18 CATALYST WRITE-IN ANSWERS

“Which of the following events or opportunities, if any, were most influential for starting or inspiring this collaborative effort? Choose <u>up to 3</u> events/opportunities.”
Not listed (please specify) write-in answers
Bottom 13 boxes apply
FWP announcement re: single invasive fish detection in Placid Lake
Increased tourist/recreationist traffic
Initiative of partner to simply reach out to us for assistance
Need for qualified labor

TABLE 19 COLLABORATIVE OUTPUTS

“Thinking of the same collaborative effort, in your opinion, what are or will be the most important outputs from this collaboration? Choose up to 3 outputs.”

	Frequency	Percent
Development of relationships between collaborative participants (e.g., producers, state agencies, landowners etc.)	30	71.4%
Completion of a hands on project (e.g., restoration project)	18	42.9%
Dissemination of information to stakeholders	14	33.3%
Development of formal planning documents (e.g., watershed restoration plan)	10	23.8%
Creation of an environmental monitoring program	9	21.4%
Establishment of ongoing meetings between collaborative participants	8	19%
Empowerment of stakeholders to adapt natural resource management practices related to climate change risks	7	16.7%
Receipt of funding	7	16.7%
Not listed (please specify): *	3	7.1%

*See the most important outputs that participants wrote in for this question in table 11.

TABLE 20 OUTPUTS WRITE-IN ANSWERS

“Thinking of the same collaborative effort, in your opinion, what are or will be the most important outputs from this collaboration? Choose up to 3 outputs.”

Not listed (please specify) write-in answers

Empowerment of stakeholders to adapt natural resource management practices related to MT growth
Supporting our special needs community
Inspiring the next generation of scientists and engineers

TABLE 21 COLLABORATIVE OUTCOMES

“Thinking of the same collaborative effort, in your opinion, what are or will be the outcomes of this collaboration? Check all that apply.”

	Frequency	Percent
Increased public knowledge about natural resource issue(s)	28	66.7%
Increased implementation of conservation practices by landowners/farmers/ranchers	27	64.3%
Protected/restored habitat	26	61.9%
Improved water quality	24	57.1%
Increased landowner/farmer/rancher ability to adapt their natural resource management practices to respond to climate change risk	13	31%
Improved soil health	11	26.2%
Maintained/increased instream flows	11	26.2%
Not listed (please specify) *	4	9.5%

*See the most important outcomes that participants wrote in for this question in table 13.

TABLE 22 OUTCOMES WRITE-IN ANSWERS

“Thinking of the same collaborative effort, in your opinion, what are or will be the outcomes of this collaboration? Check <u>all</u> that apply.”
Not listed (please specify) write-in answers
Improved natural resources in the watershed improving the longevity and viability of area ag producers.
Policy to protect open spaces
Reduce threat to human life and increase acceptance of wildlife species
Sustained water quality; sustained partnerships and opportunities to collaborate on new projects

TABLE 23 IMPORTANT AGENCIES AND GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

“How important are/were the following <u>agencies and government entities</u> to the success of the collaborative effort you have been thinking of in the previous questions? If the agency/government entity listed is not relevant to this collaborative effort, please select not applicable.”							
	n	Not applicable (0) *	Not important (1)	Moderately important (2)	Very important (3)	Mean	Standard deviation
		Frequency %					
Conservation District(s)	33	0	9.1	30.3	60.6	2.52	0.66
Federal agencies (e.g., EPA, BLM)	33	0	6.1	45.5	48.5	2.42	0.61
Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation	33	0	12.1	33.3	54.5	2.42	0.70
Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks	33	0	9.1	42.4	48.5	2.39	0.65
Municipal or county governments	31	0	12.9	45.2	41.9	2.29	0.69
Water utilities (e.g., drinking water, waste and storm water management, etc.)	23	0	17.4	52.2	30.4	2.13	0.69
Montana Department of Environmental Quality	25	0	16.0	56.0	28.0	2.12	0.66
Tribal governments	15	0	26.7	46.7	26.7	2.0	0.75

*Not applicable is excluded from the mean.

TABLE 24 HOW AGENCIES AND GOVERNMENT ENTITIES CONTRIBUTE TO COLLABORATION

“In 1-2 sentences, please describe how each of the following agencies and/or government entities contribute (or contributed) to the success of the collaborative effort.”

Participants were provided space to write in their answer to this question. Responses were coded into themes. The theme, definition of the theme, number of times the theme was coded, and an example quote that illustrates the theme are shown below. Some responses were coded for more than one theme.

Theme	Conservation District(s) n=20	Federal agencies n=17	Montana Department of Natural Resources & Conservation n=18	Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks n=16	Municipal or county governments n=13	Water utilities n=7	Montana Department of Environmental Quality n=7	Tribal governments n=4
	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
Provided or secured resources	9	9	14	5	4	1	5	2
Initiated or leading project(s)	4	1	2	1	0	1	0	0
Outreach and engagement	4	0	1	5	3	1	0	1
Restoration or protection support or actions	4	2	0	4	0	1	2	0
Minimal contribution	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0
Guidance, analysis, review	0	4	4	5	4	1	3	2
Monitoring	0	0	1	3	0	1	0	0
Enforcement or authority	0	0	1	2	1	0	0	0
Impact assessment	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0

TABLE 25 IMPORTANT ENTITIES AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

“How important are each of the following entities and stakeholder groups to the success of the collaborative effort you have been thinking of in the previous questions? If the entity/stakeholder group listed is not relevant to this collaborative effort, please select not applicable.”

	n	Not applicable (0) *	Not important (1)	Moderately important (2)	Very important (3)	Mean	Standard deviation
		Frequency %					
Private landowners (not agricultural producers)	35	0	0	37.1	62.9	2.63	0.49
Agricultural producers (e.g., ranchers, farmers)	35	0	11.4	17.1	71.4	2.60	0.69
University partners (e.g., researchers, departments, extension)	27	0	11.1	40.7	48.1	2.37	0.68
Environmental related organizations (e.g., The Nature Conservancy)	31	0	16.1	41.9	41.9	2.26	0.72
Montana Conservation Corps (including Big Sky Watershed Corps program)	33	0	15.2	51.5	33.3	2.18	0.68
Private businesses	33	0	18.2	54.5	27.3	2.09	0.67
Recreation outfitters	27	0	22.2	55.6	22.2	2.00	0.67
Montana Association of Conservation Districts	29	0	24.1	51.7	24.1	2.00	0.70
Sportsperson related organizations (e.g., Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited)	29	0	31.0	44.8	24.1	1.93	0.75
Montana Watershed Coordination Council	29	0	17.2	75.9	6.9	1.90	0.48
Youth groups/clubs	19	0	42.1	42.1	15.8	1.74	0.73

*Not applicable is excluded from the mean.

TABLE 26 HOW ENTITIES AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS CONTRIBUTE TO COLLABORATION PART ONE

“In 1-2 sentences, please describe how each of the following entities or stakeholder groups contribute (or contributed) to the success of the collaborative effort.”

Participants were provided space to write in their answer to this question. Responses were coded into themes. The theme, definition of the theme, number of times the theme was coded, and an example quote that illustrates the theme are shown below. Some responses were coded for more than one theme. *

Theme	Private landowners n=21	Agricultural producers n=24	University partners n=12	Environmental related organizations n=12	Montana Conservation Corps n=11	Private businesses n=8	Recreation outfitters n=5	Montana Association of Conservation Districts n=6
	n	n	n	n	n	n	n	n
Provided or secured resources	11	10	8	6	9	2	0	6
General collaborative participation	7	5	7	5	3	5	4	2
Planning or plan implementation	0	1	1	2	0	0	0	0
Catalyst	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	1
Coordinate stakeholders	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Increase impact	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0
Conservation participation/practice	6	10	0	0	0	1	1	0

*Eight of the eleven entities and stakeholders are shown in this table. To see the remaining three entities/stakeholder groups, see Table 18.

TABLE 27 HOW ENTITIES AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS CONTRIBUTE TO COLLABORATION PART TWO

“In 1-2 sentences, please describe how each of the following entities or stakeholder groups contribute (or contributed) to the success of the collaborative effort.”

Participants were provided space to write in their answer to this question. Responses were coded into themes. The theme, definition of the theme, number of times the theme was coded, and an example quote that illustrates the theme are shown below. Some responses were coded for more than one theme.

Theme	Sportsperson related organizations n=6	Montana Watershed Coordination Council n=2	Youth groups/clubs n=3
	n	n	n
Provided or secured resources	1	2	1
General collaborative participation	4	0	2
Planning or plan implementation	1	0	0
Catalyst	0	0	0
Coordinate stakeholders	0	0	0
Increase impact	0	0	0
Conservation participation/practice	0	0	0

TABLE 28 LIFESPAN OF COLLABORATIVE EFFORT

“What is or was the intended lifespan of this collaborative effort?” (n=38)		
	Frequency	Percent
Ongoing, there is no foreseen end date for the collaboration	30	78.9%
Finite, the collaboration will end when the project or goal is completed	3	7.9%
Don't know/unsure	5	13.2%

TABLE 29 COLLABORATIVE EFFORT ADDRESS NEW OR UNFORESEEN ISSUES

“In your opinion, could the people and/or entities involved in this collaborative effort pivot to address new or unforeseen natural resource issues together?” (n=38)		
	Frequency	Percent
Yes	32	84.2%
No	0	0
Don't know/unsure	6	15.8%

TABLE 30 COMPONENTS OF SUCCESS

“From your perspective, how important are or were the following components to the success of the collaborative effort?”							
	n	Don't know/unsure (0)	Not important (1)	Moderately important (2)	Very important (3)	Mean	Standard deviation
		Frequency %					
Communication between collaborators	38	0	0	7.9	92.1	2.92	0.27
Commitment to the collaborative effort	38	0	2.6	7.9	89.5	2.87	0.41
Trust within the collaborative	38	0	0	18.4	81.6	2.82	0.39
Ability/flexibility to troubleshoot	37	0	2.7	16.2	81.1	2.78	0.47
Receiving feedback from stakeholders	38	0	0	26.3	73.7	2.74	0.44
Defining a mission early in the process	38	0	5.3	18.4	76.3	2.71	0.56
Early stakeholder involvement	37	0	0	29.7	70.3	2.70	0.46
Using adaptive management techniques	37	0	5.4	29.7	64.9	2.59	0.59
Defining data needs/objectives early in the process	37	0	2.7	43.2	54.1	2.51	0.55
Existing relationships between collaborators	38	0	5.3	44.7	50.0	2.45	0.60
Engaging in social activities with collaborators	38	0	39.5	39.5	21.1	1.82	0.76
Not listed (please specify):*	4	0	0	0	100.0	-	-

*See the not listed (please specify) write-in answers in table 22.

TABLE 31 COMPONENTS OF SUCCESS WRITE-IN ANSWERS

“From your perspective, how important are or were the following components to the success of the collaborative effort?”	
Not listed (please specify) write-in answers	
Consistent funding for convening and activities	
Having a coordinator leading and pushing the effort2	
Planning and implementation funding	
Willingness to accept new partners	

3.4 Working Relationships

TABLE 32 AGENCIES AND GOVERNMENT ENTITIES

“In general, how would you describe your organization/agency's overall working relationship with the following agencies and government entities?”

	n	Not applicable (0) *	Very poor (1)	Poor (2)	Neutral (3)	Good (4)	Very good (5)	Mean	Standard deviation
		Frequency %							
Conservation District(s)	38	0	0	0	10.5	23.7	65.8	4.55	0.68
Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation	36	0	0	0	11.1	30.6	58.3	4.47	0.69
Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks	35	0	0	2.9	8.6	34.3	54.3	4.40	0.77
Municipal or county governments	37	0	0	8.1	8.1	43.2	40.5	4.16	0.89
Montana Department of Environmental Quality	35	0	0	0	22.9	40.0	37.1	4.14	0.77
Federal agencies (e.g., EPA, BLM)	38	0	0	5.3	18.4	42.1	34.2	4.05	0.86
Water utilities (e.g., drinking water, waste and storm water management, etc.)	26	0	0	3.8	38.5	23.1	34.6	3.88	0.95
Tribal governments	23	0	0	4.3	52.2	26.1	17.4	3.57	0.84

*Not applicable is excluded from the mean.

TABLE 33 ENTITIES AND STAKEHOLDER GROUPS

“In general, how would you describe your organization/agency's overall working relationship with the following entities and stakeholder groups?”									
	n	Not applicable (0)*	Very poor (1)	Poor (2)	Neutral (3)	Good (4)	Very good (5)	Mean	Standard deviation
		Frequency %							
Montana Conservation Corps (including Big Sky Watershed Corps)	35	0	0	0	17.1	28.6	54.3	4.37	0.77
Environmental related organizations (e.g., The Nature Conservancy)	34	0	0	0	11.8	41.2	47.1	4.35	0.69
Montana Watershed Coordination Council	34	0	0	0	11.8	41.2	47.1	4.35	0.69
Agricultural producers (e.g., ranchers, farmers)	36	0	0	0	13.9	38.9	47.2	4.33	0.71
University partners (e.g., researchers, departments, extension)	37	0	0	0	10.8	51.4	37.8	4.27	0.65
Montana Association of Conservation Districts	31	0	0	3.2	16.1	35.5	45.2	4.23	0.84
Private landowners (not agricultural producers)	39	0	0	2.6	15.4	53.8	28.2	4.08	0.73
Youth groups/clubs	26	0	0	0	26.9	46.2	26.9	4.00	0.74
Sportsperson related organizations (e.g., Pheasants Forever, Ducks Unlimited)	34	0	0	2.9	23.5	47.1	26.5	3.97	0.79
Private businesses	36	0	0	2.8	30.6	41.7	25.0	3.89	0.82
Recreation outfitters	28	0	0	3.6	39.3	35.7	21.4	3.75	0.84

*Not applicable is excluded from the mean.

3.5 Water and Natural Resources Management

TABLE 34 LOCAL WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

**“Please rate your agreement with the following statements based on your professional experience and knowledge.
In my local watershed, we (natural resource users and managers, as well as the general public) are...”**

	n	Don't know/ Unsure (0)*	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)	Mean	Standard deviation
		Frequency %							
Good at working together on general natural resource issues	36	0	0	2.8	19.4	52.8	25.0	4.00	0.75
Good at working together on water quality issues	36	0	0	11.1	22.2	47.2	19.4	3.75	0.90
In agreement about what constitutes good water quality	34	0	0	23.5	20.6	44.1	11.8	3.44	0.99
Good at working together on water availability issues	36	0	2.8	22.2	38.9	22.2	13.9	3.22	1.04
In agreement about how water availability should be addressed	36	0	8.3	27.8	36.1	25.0	2.8	2.86	0.99
Well-positioned to handle severe flooding events	35	0	8.6	34.3	34.3	22.9	0	2.71	0.92
Well-positioned to meet our future water needs for most water uses (e.g., agricultural, municipal, recreational, environmental, etc.) under development/growth pressures	35	0	17.1	34.3	22.9	25.7	0	2.57	1.06
Well-positioned to meet our future water needs for most water uses (e.g., agricultural, municipal, recreational, environmental, etc.) in drought conditions	35	0	17.1	42.9	17.1	22.9	0	2.46	1.03

TABLE 35 STATE WATER MANAGEMENT

**“Please rate your agreement with the following statements based on your professional experience and knowledge.
As a state, we (natural resource users and managers, as well as the general public) are generally...”**

	n	Don't know/ Unsure (0)*	Strongly disagree (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)	Mean	Standard deviation
Frequency %									
Good at working together on general natural resource issues	36	0	0	25.0	19.4	44.4	11.1	3.42	0.99
In agreement about what constitutes good water quality	36	0	8.3	22.2	25.0	33.3	11.1	3.17	1.15
Good at working together on water quality issues	36	0	2.8	27.8	30.6	30.6	8.3	3.14	1.01
Good at working together on water availability issues	36	0	11.1	36.1	36.1	8.3	8.3	2.67	1.06
Well-positioned to handle severe flooding events	35	0	11.4	34.3	37.1	14.3	2.9	2.63	0.97
In agreement about how water availability should be addressed	36	0	13.9	38.9	27.8	16.7	2.8	2.56	1.02
Well-positioned to meet our future water needs for most water uses (e.g., agricultural, municipal, recreational, environmental, etc.) in drought conditions	36	0	16.7	63.9	8.3	11.1	0	2.14	0.83
Well-positioned to meet our future water needs for most water uses (e.g., agricultural, municipal, recreational, environmental, etc.) under development/growth pressures	37	0	27.0	48.6	8.1	16.2	0	2.14	1.00

*Don't know/unsure is excluded from the mean.

3.6 Information Use

TABLE 36 WATER INFORMATION USE

“In the past 12 months, did your organization/agency use any type of water monitoring information (e.g., gauge data, water quality, etc.) to accomplish the following activities?”						
	Don't know/unsure		Yes		No	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
Determine where and how to implement practices, programs, or projects	0	0	28	75.7%	9	24.3%
Evaluate the impact of your organization/agency's work	0	0	22	61.1%	14	38.9%
Inform planning documents (e.g., TMDL, watershed restoration plan, etc.)	0	0	21	55.3%	17	44.7%
Advise a landowner or land manager on management decisions	0	0	16	44.4%	20	55.6%

TABLE 37 IMPORTANCE OF TYPES OF INFORMATION

“Please rate the following sources of information for their importance to your organization/agency's planning processes when it comes to natural resource management or stewardship:”							
	n	Not applicable (0)*	Not important (1)	Moderately important (2)	Very important (3)	Mean	Standard deviation
	Frequency %						
Local knowledge (e.g., observations from community members, partners, or other stakeholders)	38	0	0	18.4	81.6	2.82	0.39
Scientist collected quantitative data (e.g., monitoring data)	38	0	0	23.7	76.3	2.76	0.43
Your personal observations and experiences	36	0	5.6	36.1	58.3	2.53	0.60
State government agency reports	36	0	5.6	41.7	52.8	2.47	0.60
Volunteer collected quantitative data (e.g., monitoring data)	30	0	3.3	60.0	36.7	2.33	0.54
Indigenous knowledge/practices	24	0	4.2	62.5	33.3	2.29	0.55
Federal government agency reports	35	0	8.6	54.3	37.1	2.29	0.62
Peer-reviewed journal article research	35	0	11.4	51.4	37.1	2.26	0.65
Not listed (please specify):*	2	0	0	0	100	-	-

*See the not listed (please specify) write-in answers in table 29.

TABLE 38 TYPES OF INFORMATION WRITE-IN ANSWERS

“Please rate the following sources of information for their importance to your organization/agency's planning processes when it comes to natural resource management or stewardship:”
Not listed (please specify) write-in answers*
Qualitative data (observations, opinions) from local fish biologists, hydrologists, engineers, etc.

*Although two people indicated that another source of information was very important to them, only one person wrote in an answer.

3.7 Organization/agency Metrics

TABLE 39 MILES OF RIPARIAN AREA MAINTAINED/RESTORED

“To the best of your knowledge, how many miles of riparian area were maintained or restored by your organization/agency in 2021? Please round to the nearest quarter mile.”

	n	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
Miles of riparian area	9	16.4	3.0	0.5*	0.5-70
Don't know/unsure	16	-	-	-	-
Not applicable	0	-	-	-	-

*Multiple modes exist, the smallest value is shown.

TABLE 40 IN-PERSON OR ONLINE EDUCATION EVENTS

“To the best of your knowledge, how many in-person or online education events did your organization/agency host in 2021? Please enter a whole number.”

	n	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
In-person or online education events	27	26.48	5	3	0-470
Don't know/unsure	5	-	-	-	-
Not applicable	0	-	-	-	-

TABLE 41 EDUCATION EVENT ATTENDEES

“To the best of your knowledge, how many total people attended your in-person or online education events in 2021? Please enter a whole number.”

	n	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
People attended	27	411.9	250	400	0-4000
Don't know/unsure	5	-	-	-	-
Not applicable	0	-	-	-	-

TABLE 42 VOLUNTEERS

“To the best of your knowledge, how many volunteers worked with your organization/agency in 2021? Please enter a whole number.”

	n	Mean	Median	Mode	Range
Number of volunteers	29	74.1	20	2*	1-600
Don't know/unsure	4	-	-	-	-
Not applicable	0	-	-	-	-

*Multiple modes exist, the smallest value is shown.

Appendix

Additional Comments

“Please utilize the space below to share any thoughts you have about the survey, natural resources in Montana, the Big Sky Watershed Corps program, collaboration, etc.”
It may be easier to report riparian area restored in acres rather than miles.
The BSWC program has certainly helped our organization achieve more. Pre 2022 we utilized our members for education programs and volunteer management. We are transitioning to have the member more involved with our restoration projects and continuing their volunteer management role. Being part of the program has increased our ability to collaborate with other entities.
I answered 'don't know' to education metrics as I don't collect that data. However, someone else does. During a normal year, we may have held more than 20 education events in a year. During covid19, many events were moved online and many more cancelled.
We have a multitude of efforts we have participated in and worked on so most of this survey only focused on one. Some we not so good but you didn't ask about those, too bad because there may be more to learn from them.
Thank you. Love this program. I have now hired 2/2 watershed corps members until they left us for bigger and better jobs!
I realize the importance of these surveys but it was tediously long and often times repetitive.
It is important to have all the partners involved in watershed issues and concerns. It is a great way to get information up and down our river system about what is working, what needs, etc.
Some survey questions are hard to answer since my experience is at a small, local operational unit, versus what happens across all offices in my organization across the state. If you only want to know the experience and opinions of the BSWC host-site facility, perhaps clarify. The MT BSWC program is outstanding, high caliber members and high caliber and dedicated management.
This is a good survey and I am interested in the results.
BSWC and associated MCC programs are highly valuable for our CD.
Very clear and concise survey. Yellowstone County is going to go through some serious growing pains as we adapt to the large development boom and how that will impact our natural resources. This provides us with a great opportunity to educate on the importance of conserving our resources (and the many ways that it can be done) to a larger audience that may not be familiar with the area. BSWC program is amazing, keep up the good work!
The BSWC program adds great value to natural resource focused organizations across the state. I am continually very impressed with the quality of applicants, MCC support and training, and individual initiative of individual members. Collaboration takes time. It cannot be rushed. The people involved are what make it go well, or not at all. Big Sky Watershed Corps is a great program, but it's not for everyone. The survey is quite long, and took more than 15 minutes. The health of the natural resources in Montana are critical to our identity, and our economy. The current administration is an assault on our natural resources, the collaborative efforts we've worked so hard for, and the identity of moderation that we've earned. It is up to nonprofits to maintain the health of our resources because of the decline in federal and state funding. And, "fuels reduction" is not the only tool for combating the effects of climate change and shouldn't be the top of funding for the USFS, and water quality isn't the top resource concern in our state.
None.
Survey responses may not be well representative of the bigger picture our BSWC member's impact as the member worked with many organizations or helped put on events not under our organizations name.
While individuals within state government agencies are resolute to fulfill stewardship obligations to our natural resources, the state government as a whole appears to be actively backtracking with regard to leaning on the expertise of those agency folks and the importance of using best-available science to guide management decisions. As the environmental challenges continue to grow - exacerbated by climate change, profit motive, and development - I sure hope that these "collaboratives" are strong enough to protect our constitutional right to a clean and healthful environment.