

Success in a Nutshell

**Contribution posted at NCW Community Success Summit—November 18, 2009
Douglas Okanogan Fire District #15 Hall in Pateros**

Name:

Craig Nelson, Okanogan Conservation District

Describe the success:

Developed the Okanogan Watershed Plan in a collaborative process with local residents and water users.

What steps lead to the success?

Nearly 100 meetings of participants learning about resources and working together to come up with ideas to manage water. Also learned how each other values and appreciates resources differently.

Who was involved and how did those individuals collaborate?

Local watershed residents met and had open dialog about reports, studies, and local knowledge of natural resources.

What was the biggest challenge you overcame?

Getting to learn how to appreciate each other's viewpoints.

What has this success meant to our community?

Given community a voice into how resources should be managed and used.

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Name:

Joan Qazi and Nadine Lehrer, EAT local

Describe the success:

We have helped initiate, organize and facilitate a series of Farm to Table workshops that bring regional food producers and food buyers together to make direct connections while providing topical information and resources.

What steps led to this success?

Initial research on food systems and community forum to return results. Partnerships with WSU Small Farms, WSDA Direct Marketing, Cascade Harvest Coalition, CFC, CFFA and others (Steps, Heifer) and mostly enthusiastic volunteer hours and effort. Lost of meetings, calls and hitting the pavement to spread the word.

Who was involved and how did those individuals collaborate?

See partners listed above plus EAT members and many local farmers, local restaurateurs, chefs, retailers, educators, and food service. Collaboration on planning, funding, donating food for an excellent local foods lunch, and presenting information and follow-up.

What was the biggest challenge you overcame?

Being an all-volunteer based organization stretches our capacity in terms of volunteer time and energy. The fact that we have several successful projects speaks to the enthusiasm around local food/farms issues.

What has this success meant to our community?

We have recorded success stories in our Farm to Table conferences and they document that individual farmers have been able to increase their institutional food sales (keep farms here!) and that food buyers have found regionally grown sources, meaning NCW eaters have more access to local food. On a community-building level, EAT has raised awareness of the importance of supporting local farms and food and these workshops give hope (inspiration) to farmers, buyers, and eaters involved in this movement.

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Name:

Jay Kehne, Conservation Northwest

Describe the success:

Twisp (150 people) and Tonasket November 20th showings of Lords of Nature film highlighting the importance of predators and habitat to sustainable landscapes and communities including ranch and wolf tours.

What steps led to the success?

Partnerships and volunteers

Who was involved and how did those individuals collaborate?

Conservation NW, Defenders of Wildlife, Methow ranchers, Twisp River Pub, WDFW, USDA Wildlife Services, Idaho Fish & Game

What was the biggest challenge you overcame?

Getting the word out.

What has this success meant to our community?

More informed community members realizing the importance of predators, including wolves, to the local ecosystem. Ranches getting sound information on non-lethal tools, process and ways to live with wolves.

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Name:

Christine Mallon, Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center

Describe the success:

Learning, appreciating and documenting Entiat people's experience with fire.

What steps led to the success?

Participating with the Columbia Breaks Fire Interpretive Center board then getting connected to the IRIS Gathering Our Voice project.

Who was involved and how did those individuals collaborate?

The Columbia Breaks FIC Board, Nancy Warner (IRIS), Mike Wyant (Entiat Schools superintendent) linked us to students.

What was the biggest challenge you overcame?

Time and people to do the transcribing.

What has this success meant to our community?

It will eventually enable CBFIC to share the stories at an interactive/media concept at the Entiat site.

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Name:

Carey Hunter, Pinestump Farm

Describe the success:

1st Annual Okanogan Local Feast

What steps led to the success:

Community meetings, staying focused, being organized.

Who was involved and how did those individuals collaborate?

Farmer's markets, grassroots involved community members

What was the biggest challenge you overcame?

Losing the original cook then not knowing how many people would come.

What has this success meant to our community?

Realizing how much support there is for the local food movement

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Name:

Marilyn Lynn, Rama Farm

Describe the success:

Transitioning our fruit sales from 100% wholesale marketing to 100% direct marketing

What steps led to the success:

Learning from our farmer market customers what they wanted and adapting our picking, packing, transporting and displaying accordingly.

Who was involved and how did those individuals collaborate?

Our farm crew – family & friends – had to hope that all the mistakes we made would be worth it in the end and appreciate what we were trying to do to bring the highest quality fruit we could grow directly to our customers. Our customers learned what it meant to grow and bring to market tree ripe fruit and were willing to grow and learn with us.

What was the biggest challenge you overcame?

Developing the infrastructure we needed to direct market (coolers, shop, packing supplies, trucks, market set-ups, etc)

What has this success meant to our community?

Increased the understanding of the food-farm connection and appreciation for sustainably grown food.