

**America's Great Outdoors
Notes from Listening Session**

Location: Pierre, SD

Date: August 4, 2010

President Obama launched a national conversation about conservation in America at the White House Conference on the Great Outdoors on April 16, 2010. The President understands that protecting and restoring the lands and waters that we love and reconnecting people to the outdoors must happen at the local level. Therefore, President Obama directed the principal leaders of the Initiative to travel across the country to listen and learn from people directly involved in finding grassroots solutions to conserve our lands, waterways, historical and cultural resources and to reconnect Americans with the Outdoors. The President indicated that the sessions should engage the full range of interested groups, including tribal leaders, farmers and ranchers, sportsmen, community park groups, foresters, youth groups, businesspeople, educators, State and local government, recreation and conservation groups and others. The President placed a special priority on engaging with America's youth. Below are notes from the breakout groups at the Listening Session sorted by Discussion Question. Please feel free to use the ideation tool at <http://ideas.usda.gov/ago/ideas.nsf/> if you would like to share your thoughts.

Discussion Questions

1. What works: Please share your thoughts and ideas on effective strategies for conservation, recreation and reconnecting people to the outdoors.
2. Challenges: What obstacles exist to achieve your goals for conservation, recreation, or reconnecting people to the outdoors?
3. Federal government role: How can the federal government be a more effective partner in helping to achieve conservation, recreation or reconnecting people to the outdoors?
4. What additional tools and resources would help your efforts be even more successful?

Comments	Question (1-4)
I have to compliment the partnerships. The partnerships both in the private and public sectors are the most effective. The development of partnerships has been very good.	1
Commented on federal legislature, funding and working with partnerships. In South Dakota, the main conservation opportunities exist from the Farm Bill. It's most beneficial to have incentives on the conservation and production side of the Farm Bill for private landowners. The Farm Bill in 1998, actually back to 95 gave conservation organizations land base programs that became available for landowners; providing conservation incentives. Without this possibility a huge opportunity to work with private landowners would be lost. No incentives exist on the conservation side for most people to go out and spray 5 acres of weeds in CRP with the low payments offered. Incentives need to be gained along with reasonable alternatives to cropping lands and turning over grasslands. Private land funds are critical. Proper funding is needed. Angela Ehlers works hard to find money to get projects on the ground. Without the ability to fund projects, conservation programs don't work. Trying to compete for funding is a challenge critical to SD. Look at the land mass in SD: 80% private, 10% tribal, and 10% public. Need to involve all the people to figure out how to do proper incentives.	1
I have been working with land managers; specifically with a local group in the Black Hills area. Volunteering to help with projects to improve areas is a good way to get people involved. Volunteering works. By employing those tactics people get to continue to use that	1

<p>area, which is incentive for them to help out and maintain that area. It's hard to get people involved by putting up fence and not allowing them to enter back in. By helping people maintain these areas people need to know that there is a benefit in doing such things. Needing a benefit is just human nature; local users need to see a benefit. Volunteering is a good way to do that. Local organizations have come to talk with me about doing projects through volunteering.</p>	
<p>Is there any consideration to redo water easement contracts from 20 plus years ago, through the FWS? The reason I bring it up is because a friend bought a quarter of land with a water easement. Originally his friend got \$600 for it, now he can't get anything. The land has been destroyed because of this. It could make very productive land with a very large wetland. I would like to have a contract redone.</p>	1
<p>I have seen what works as a rancher on my land. I've been involved with EQIP, the old Great Plains, working with NRCS with those programs; also GRP and CRP. Also, through the state connecting people to the outdoors, John Cooper started walk-in-areas. This program paid private landowners to have walk-in areas; which is another way to connect people to what we're (ranchers) doing. Public access is behind it; it goes beyond economics for us. It show off what we have and puts us on the map.</p>	1
<p>The very important roles of the private sector over last century, such as The Nature Conservancy, has been working with government partners to set aside groups like hunters, ranger ricks, etc., and conservationists in general, to understand the need for habitat protection. These organizations have helped in connecting people to the outdoors.</p>	1
<p>The programs are already there; need time for them to work. BLM people institutionalized and allow off roading to direct it and mange it to be very viable. Dirt biking is a large industry. The Travel Management Plan has done a great deal, and needs to continue to do so.</p>	1
<p>The Y has traditionally been supportive of outdoor recreation and education. The partnership side is already in place; it can piggy back. Need to get the word out about getting back to nature. The Y has had local partnerships. Last spring with a Pierre school they offered Kindergarten classes during the school schedule. The Y taught water safety lessons; so that the parents could feel comfortable knowing their child could swim safely. Safety is a very important issue. I enjoy what we have and do it safely. We want to do a district wide basis with the Pierre/Ft. Pierre schools. Little things like that work.</p>	1
<p>An important part of the programs is the benefit they provide for the rural communities. The walk-in program and hunting in general have filled up the motels and restaurants in rural communities and has brought about jobs. These strategies bring about quality of life. They strengthen the community.</p>	1
<p>Need to recognize that not only the farm bill but the Land and Water Conservation Fund need to be properly funded on both federal and state sides of ledger. It is needed for trails and parks. Another critical need is for the North American Wetland Act. This body works in Canada, the US, and Mexico on large landscape projects; which we would like to see it properly funded at 75 million like last year. We need to continue to have the money come directly to the ground. The increase in the duck stamp price is an option. 1992 was the last year the stamp increased in price. It is critical that the duck stamp be raised. People would step forward and pay the increase. The wetland loan act works, which would allow LWCF or FWS projects to happen, based on project revenue from duck stamps. A batch of revenue comes from people who are paying and dealing with local partnerships, which are all critical.</p>	1
<p>For those of you that don't know the mission of the SD Grasslands Coalition, it is to teach and educate farmers and ranchers how to properly manage their resources. The Coalition has</p>	1

been highly successful at doing so. The Coalition is in cooperation with several agencies on all levels. It is a voluntary organization for private land owners to properly manage their natural resources.	
In my opinion working with kids, they won't value land and nature unless you get out in nature. If you keep kids inside; they will not appreciate what they have outside. There are lots of projects and programs that the Discovery Center uses, like Project Wet, Project Wild, and becoming an outdoor woman and family programs, which have been effective. You let kids and families try a wide variety of things to do in nature, and you teach them how to do it. Some may not want to shoot a turkey, but they still can appreciate nature and sit in a blind and look around at the nature around them. Those kinds of things, and programs that are guided by national high quality resources, can be very effective.	1
On the visible side realize the importance of native grasses. Environmental, clean water, recreation, food security. What works – it could work better. Looking at the programs from the state – there are a variety of them – NRCS programs are great. One concern that some of the programs and demands for the funding for that this year was put in 5 counties and only limited to a number of persons. The statewide interest. Interest in willing landowners to habitat but not because of money. States should have more say to what the money goes into. Not good mgmt of the \$s.	1
Grassland program – help northern plains – work together!!!	1
Increase the funds. Grassland on the buffalo gap national wilderness – the league supports, grazing would continue. Increase CRP funding.	1
293 acres out there, 120m bring in to SD and ND for grass easements. Money is hard to raise, grass is working land and others think it is idle. It is cheaper today – put the money into their pockets and do the right things.	1
Protecting the resources defines – children exposing them to the outdoors. Having another generation following. This is taking our children out of the outdoors – computers etc. They worked on getting their match. 2 things that are unaffected. Funding has diminished about 10 fold. State side represents 10% now. States and locals are left with hardly anything. Do contemporary things to get the kids outdoors. Must get them out or there won't be anyone to enjoy it in the future.	1
Rotational grazing 6 generation on the ranch – tripled with NRCS and improved the grass. Grazing became very important, birds. Cattle – the best use of resources – grazers are important part of this. Funding programs - graze is the best use. Keep those programs in place. Best is not to kick out to recreate – but to graze. Represents herself and working hard with AG tour and show them what is the right way to use resources – grass is the best product. Some state and fed land. Always consider Private Landowners!!	1
Parks recreation – 98 have been impacted by land and water. – We really need to have it funded to the max. Everyone has probably been affected by this program LWCF. Not only to maintain but increase. Municipal recreation first responder – they interact with kids and that is where it starts – they need help to interact with them They will help get them interested through parks etc. Not enough mountain bikes – they need equipment, supplies and staff to get the kids out. The parks can do but need help.	1
Teacher training. Training them help the kids get outdoors.	1
We need think outside the box. Waterfowl in the spring – people should be staying as they come see this in the spring. The monthly media rule – everyone should see who runs your county paper?	1
Private partnerships – extremely important. Winter wheat initiative. Winter wheat moved	1

<p>into north Dakota – money for resource - inform the landowners about the program. The landowner needs the incentive to use - private, connected with other folks, used current funded program. Where we can partner!</p>	
<p>Partnering with non-profit who are already concerned about outdoors. Raise funds for it and they will give it their all.</p>	1
<p>Heritage tourism in our state is very important to draw them outdoors. 1-programs that could compliment historic preservation funds, save America’s Treasures grant promote and market them to draw people to them. Examples – dc booth fish hatch. Partners – used many to get that accomplished. Need to fully fund the programs.</p>	1
<p>The cost share of EQIP that has a funding mechanism is currently working for farmers and ranchers, but the problem is funding. The first CRP had 1,000 applicants and only 10 got funding. There is more demand for grassland easements, but not enough funding available for the demand of landowners that want to enroll in easement programs. There are many landowners that want easements. Just not enough funding. Locals started a Leopold reward to acknowledge local landowners in conservation. The reward is a crystal and \$10,000 for conservation, innovative practices, that recognizes local citizens. The award will announce the winner on Earth Day.</p>	1
<p>Gardens on the top of roof tops in urban areas are a great thing. Need to promote research on farmers markets and local grown food. Need to expand local food markets. Create local opportunities. Need to tax the X-box, play stations, and other digital technologies to get funding for local recreational programs. Discretionary funding from parents is not going to local parks but to x-box and other digital technologies. Wal-Mart should provide funding to expand opportunities for local recreation (soccer programs), why does it have to come from tax payer money? Private sector has a responsibility.</p>	1
<p>Multiple use approach works (range, wildlife, recreation) collaborating on decisions. Black Hill National Forest (user groups) gets good direction from the user groups. Federal goals should be from the local users and should have a bigger voice then someone from Washington D.C. Locals should have a bigger say in what happens at local forests. Social and economical sustainability is key. We don't need more wilderness areas or parks. Need to deal with what we got. NPS service is severely underfunded for what we already have. Most people don't understand what wilderness is. Can't just lock up land and set aside without managing. Schools should have more education on how well managed lands should be. There should be more after school programs to encourage kids to get involved in the outdoors. School sports compete with hunting and fishing.</p>	1
<p>It is important to keep native prairies intact. For bird watching and hiking. Birds banded in SD have been found in 30 other states. Need to keep grasslands intact. There is an accelerated loss of grasslands and wetlands from pressures of commodity agriculture. You can't raise nearly as many wildlife on crop land compared to grasslands. Grasslands are some of the most productive ecosystems in the world and we're losing it. Need to support ranchers to keep grasslands and wetlands intact. Need to support ranchers over commodity crop production. Increase funding for beef production on grasslands. Farm bill is critical for funding the Wetland Reserve Program and the CRP program. There is a need to increase funding of CRP acres. EQIP program is important. Use of easements is critical to pay private land owners to keep native grass. Easements are important as it keeps land in private ownership. Not enough easements for the hundreds of ranchers that want it. Need more funding for easements. Increase the value of the Duck stamps and have the duck stamp loan act to pay for easements to meet the demand for easements. Need to protect grasslands</p>	1

through ranchers.	
The grassland and wetland easement programs administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in cooperation with key partners like Ducks Unlimited has proven to be a resounding success with 880,000 acres perpetually protected to date.	1
These areas remain in private ownership, remain in cattle production and continue to provide critical breeding habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds and raptors.	1
Many of these landowners enroll in South Dakota's private land access program increasing opportunities for people to get outdoors.	1
The Prairie Pothole Region is the foundation of the outdoor heritage in South Dakota and is fundamental to migratory bird populations that travel the continent.	2
However, threats to the integrity of this vital landscape are great including the threat of conversion of grassland to cropland and the accompanying loss/degradation of the wetlands.	2
The sole limitation to protection of these important landscapes is funding. Fortunately, many of the remaining intact tracts of prairie and wetlands are owned by ranchers who are interested in protecting these areas through perpetual easements, but hundreds of willing landowners wait in line for funding of their easements.	2
I had a question about re-evaluating contracts/easements written 20 - 30 yrs ago. When sold to another party why can't the terms of the easements of the contract continue? What flexibilities are there available to change? Is there a way to change the contract to continue?	2
Programs can either work or be an obstacle. With these nationwide programs, one size does not fit all. The more flexibility we can provide, the more entities can utilize state programs, the more opportunity there is to be creative while meeting program requirements. We need flexibility on both the state and local levels. Choices are good. What are the needs of local people? NRCS is wonderful in our state to work with. There are very diverse issues across the state. All areas have different issues, different opportunities, so we need to adapt to the needs of the landowners. She lives within 15 miles west of the Missouri River and another producer lives the same distance away on the east side of the river, but she doesn't qualify for a lot of the programs, due to this. It frustrates her because her land produces the same number of ducks.	2
I am a 4th generation on my ranch, my son, the 5th generation. The real challenge will be figuring out how to pass the knowledge of managing a ranch, and the actual ranch, itself, due to huge taxes through the estate tax. More people are moving to cities because they can't afford the tax, so ranches are being broken up. The Federal Estate Tax is an issue and a real concern. It's an issue we need to deal with. We need to challenge the Federal Estate Tax.	2
One of the things that are very frustrating is the whole NEPA process. It's very cumbersome, it takes forever, and you don't see results for years. You're not sure what you're going to get. We need your vote to actually count, which the Forest Service is working on. The process needs to be upgraded to keep public interest. We need to streamline the process to fit the faster moving society. It's very frustrating for the lay person. Another issue is the struggle with the many different land agency boundaries. When off-roading, you need to pass different land agency boundaries. Do these agencies talk to each other? The meetings must be in secret, because I don't know about any such meetings. I would like to see and know about the different agencies talking to each other; need to at least witness what they are doing.	2
I was raised on a farm in eastern South Dakota and have been involved in conservation, and have been fortunate to utilize our precious natural resources, the grasses and wetlands. I am very concerned today witnessing the broad scale landscape changes through tile drainage	2

<p>and the impacts on semi permanent and permanent wetlands. The pressure to drain wetlands is increasing, along with converting grasslands to crop. The demand for alternative options is also increasing, such as easements through WRP, GRP, and the FWS. Through the farm bill all these programs are viable options. I suggest that we all need to work strongly to the best of our ability to achieve strong funding for LWCF funds to fund the high demand of easements. Critical benefits I have enjoyed from wetlands and grassland include flood control, improved water quality, reduction in soil erosion, and providing wildlife habitat. These things are being taken away from our children. It is serious. We need to continue the things we know work and are successful. LWCF funds are needed to provide land owners options. We need to reconnect people to the land. If we can't continue programs, we can't provide opportunity for people to stay connected to the land. The challenges faced are very real. It's not a matter of competition of the programs; it's just a matter of funding. The demand is there. There is a tremendous demand for GRP and easement programs; this holds the same for FWS-they have a very long waiting list for their programs. Interested in these programs continue to promote the part. The pressures to drain and convert are real. We all have our own financial realities. We need to make management decisions so we can improve upon funding. Expand partnerships is critical for landowner to have an option to stay on land.</p>	
<p>There are between 800 - 820 landowners on the list that are interested in services in grass or wetland easements. They would like to have options available. Issues landowners are looking at are other way to optimize and manage their land. There are lots of people who value grass. It's out there more so than ever and stewardship is happening, not because it's mandatory, but because it's voluntary.</p>	2
<p>To follow up on Dan's comment, I'm involved in Missouri River work groups and issues. There are lots of things happening. The government spends lots of money to process things. The funding needs to be reprioritized for on the ground projects. More dollars need to go to program delivery.</p>	2
<p>If this (pertaining to Jim's comment) was carried and manifested, you would gain a lot of public confidence in the government agencies. The public sees the USDA agencies as cumbersome, out of touch; it takes them too long to get anything done. People lose interest. This is perilous. Losing interest and public land stewardship, the land starts deteriorating. There are lots of obstacles, lots of laws to follow; it's too cumbersome and broken and we're losing public confidence.</p>	2
<p>Farmers and ranchers have changed for the better. They are no-tilling, leaving residue on the cropland; there's less erosion and more cover. Farmers are doing a better job than in the past. It's a business, so when the regulations come more and more it becomes more difficult to pass the farm/ranch onto others. Someone has to be out there doing the farming.</p>	2
<p>There are a couple of challenges to point out. There is a nature deficit disorder. The last report stated that the average American child spends 7.45 minutes less than 1 hour outdoors, and less than 5 minutes in a non-structured play environment. If kids are not outdoors where does our conservation leadership come from? I live on the Missouri River. The way it is managed there is no natural system to form. Regulation reform with the Corps is giving higher weight to wildlife. I've worked in conservation for 40 years and believe there is a strong need to get a hold of climate change, carbon emission caps, and we need funding to help address adaptability for wildlife. Addressing climate change is the biggest environmental Issue that our generation faces today.</p>	2
<p>If you look at the pressures over the last 8 to 10 years in the public schools, if you go into the</p>	2

<p>school and look at the schedule for the day, it is very much just reading and math. There is a lot less science and social studies. So, the Department of Education needs to be a partner. We are not teaching values, nor teaching science. We need to teach them to value what we have. Nationally we want to see support for environmental education programs. Also need state environmental education standards. I grew up in a farm community. Not even once did we talk about the value of wetlands, what happens if plowed over? We should know about local things. A lot of them (kids she went to school with) grew up to be farmers. I didn't hear about our local resources in school; we learned about oceans. I taught in Minneapolis; there the children learned information on oceans, they didn't learn much about the Mississippi, right in their own backyard, or the 10,000 lakes that were there. We need to put priority on standards, by communicating with the schools, allowing them to do that. Schools have pressures to delete science and environmental studies. Financially and time wise, schools don't take kids outdoors anymore. They can't do that anymore because of other demands put on them. Being outdoors in nature teaching science and environmental studies is the most effective tool that we have.</p>	
<p>Problem – no one to help, B&B by badlands. Training is needed – no jobs.</p>	2
<p>Making sure we continue to listen and more often. Respect others rec passion. Maybe they don't have a passion but help them to get outdoors. Monetary support - if we have something they will come. Common good – don't hear very often anymore. Gov't employees are supposed to be taking care of us.</p>	2
<p>Obstacles – blinders on because we have got our nose to the grindstone. How do we connect the different Gov't and state agencies? We provide for most of the kids – how do we connect to the Gov't agencies. Awesome thing to work for.</p>	2
<p>Children not getting outdoors – get the active again and if they are it will help with the bigger problem with health.</p>	2
<p>Respect – all have to respect others perspective. WE can show kids a lot on their ranch – to respect what the beef industry. Respect those agencies but hope to continue to respect the private lands as well and resolve that.</p>	2
<p>Input the people from the local basis – been a disconnect there. There is only so much the congress can do. Having these sessions on a regular bases would help and relate that the congressional staff. Structure where there would be a possibility would be great. Real opportunities.</p>	2
<p>Government! Big supporter of Gov't and needed in this country and have a great gov't system. Survey the people – to many rules and regulations not enough talking between agencies, restrictions on conservation. Need communication and need to say we the people – fairness into restrictions and reasons why it is.</p>	2
<p>Schools, grade school – looks like prisons – fences (no nature there). Nice if the fed gov't (multi agency) get together with high school math/science create a nature environmental center. Staff could be mentors to help get a science group going. Bringing science and math into school get rid of concrete put ponds, grass, trees. If they are not on grass how can they relate to the environment? If we don't educate them about the outdoors - later they might not have any concern in the future to fund the programs. Mentor programs in schools!!</p>	2
<p>Respect recon, as land owners we recognize to preserve and it is the goal to pass on to next generation. Regulations appear to be not based on scientific justification and get very frustrated. Must be science based.</p>	2
<p>Funding – National debt is our concern and challenge. We have a lot of great programs 13.4</p>	2

trill in debt. Keep this in mind.	
Tribes are also facing the same issues – getting kids interested in outdoors – hunting. Don't forget your tribal neighbor. They have a lot of things that they could do better and need help on. Bigger benefits for fed tribal wildlife program. 100 tribes apply 40 get funded tremendous need out there only a fraction funded. Those programs are what they really rely on but don't faze them out.	2
Missouri river recovery project. The river needs things done on the ground not in the meeting room. Walk the walk not just talk the talk.	2
Hunting and fishing is dependent on the upcoming generations. Access to private lands is one of the greatest concerns for sportsman (for hunting and fishing). Private land owners are key to the success of an access program. Importance of USDA conservation programs, need more incentives for landowners to allow access to wildlife and fish populations. Next farm bill needs to include funding provided to landowners to allow access to their lands so people can have a place to hunt, fish, and view wildlife. Currently, South Dakota rents 1.25 million acres of walk in access for sportsmen (in SD). Need more funding to pay landowners to increase access. Farm bill appropriations important for allowing access. Access is important to CRP, WRP, EQUIP and private landowners cost share important for future access.	2
People have to be aware of how agricultural technology is improving. Cargill and other major agriculture companies are looking at states from Texas to North Dakota to produce more crops. This area of the United States has the highest potential of increasing the amount of bushels of wheat, corn, and soybeans. This new technology is going to put extreme pressure on native grasslands. We are going to lose native prairies at an exponential rate because of new agricultural technology. The federal government needs to take money out of production subsidies and put funding to conservation. When corn is \$5 and soybeans is \$11 a bushel, conservation funding currently does not meet those economics. Landowners do not the economic incentives for native prairie conservation or CRP when row crop farming is much more economically sound. Partners for Wildlife Program (USFWS) is important and critical to conserving grasslands and wetlands. Local control is crucial in how conservation programs are administered. Reconnecting people to outdoors can only be done from the local area. Conservation needs to be more convenient and economical. Federal government needs to get out subsidizing production agriculture and needs to move those dollars used for subsidies and fund conservation. Grasslands are threatened the most threatened areas in this country. The SAFE program from Pheasants Forever is important to private landowners and to conservation of grasslands. There is currently not enough funding for SAFE. Private landowners want to increase the acres of land in programs such as SAFE, but there is not enough funding. More demand than the funding available. Conservation has to be on the terms of the landowners.	2
Invasive species are having a major impact in our ecosystems. Emerald ash borer is a local example and is knocking at the door and going to affect riparian corridors in this area. Need funding to address invasive species issues. Funding is needed to mitigate against noxious weeds. Need to improve weed free forage programs. Invasive species is a significant challenge now and the foreseeable future.	2
Where is the school representation to this meeting? Why is there nobody at this meeting from the public schools and universities? We are missing those people that deal with children.	2
We don't know what is coming from technologies of row crop production. Row crop	2

production is moving further west. Federal policy to preserve a way of life; need to understand what impacts the future impacts will be. Nobody in South Dakota wants our lands to look like Iowa. But that is where we are heading. Progress in agriculture is good, but conservation is going to lose. Conservation and agriculture plays against each other. Need to protect multiple uses. Agriculture and conservation is on two sides. Conservation always loses to agriculture because of economics.	
Crop insurance is retarded, farmable wetland programs are good. Government's role should not have to choose between agriculture and conservation. Need to re-look at crop insurance program. SAFE is farmer friendly. Crop production always wins against conservation. Conservation has to compete. Acres have to compete. People are looking to U.S. to feed the world. Cargill sees this as profit. The economic pressures from agriculture are reducing what we can conserve. Funding needs to go to conservation	2
Need state funding for conservation. Unintended consequences of crop insurance. Farming insurance subsidizes sod-busting. Can't be relying on the government to bail agriculture out when the land should have remained in grasslands instead of crop production.	2
How do we get a realistic result to the president?	2
The primary role that the federal government can serve is to ensure continuation of the commitment of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to administer the program and to provide additional funding to meet the demand by landowners and conservationists to protect these important areas for their many benefits.	3
The easement program has seen great success because of the partnership between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, non-profit conservation organizations like Ducks Unlimited, the South Dakota Game, Fish and Parks and private landowners.	3
I was on the staff of the presidential commission 25 years ago, under Ronald Reagan's program on Americans Outdoors. 25 years ago, Lawrence Rockwell created LWCF fund. I was editor of the report, and the #1 recommendation from all the data input was for full dedication to fund 1 billion dollars per year; which is still in the same place. We need full funding. The #2 recommendation was on the comprehensive climate change and energy legislature. We still address these issues today as a nation. Federal incentive funding for state and national plans to connect families to nature was the 3rd recommendation. The #4 recommendation was on regulation reform of the Corp of Engineers for river management, placing greater weight plans for wildlife and natural system benefits.	3
I'm wondering if we can keep LWCF funds from being raided for whoever needs it, and if there's a way for protected lands to stay protected forever?	3
There's a huge issue in some areas, over 50% of royalties have been used to fund other things. LWCF should get full allocations. We need to make it clear that there is full support to fund 900 million. I am a strong advocate to make permanent appropriations to go into LWCF. There is a good chance of fixing that.	3
The federal government can access and buy more land to accomplish goals. As a people affected by recession, we can't manage what we've got. If the government can't manage what they have why buy more? There are lots of things going on like the Mountain Pine Beetle, wild fires, etc., all those need to be taken care off. It will take money out of recreation and other areas that are low in priority. The government needs to take care of what it's got before it expands. The private sector is the most important sector. It should be upheld and supported by the government and not stifled by it.	3
I too, share concern about additional acquisition of property. These local areas can't lose more families, and when the fed government buys a ranch you lose the family and the	3

livestock and these small areas can't handle that. It appears as though in many federal management plans, there is no management. This is a concern of mine that the management is not consistent. Right now we're in build fuel and burn mod. The real concern and need is to manage the land we own before acquire additional lands. Just because funding is there, does not mean there is reason to add more.	
One way the federal government can be effective is to make it simple. Both the field (staff) and producers struggle with the paperwork and the bureaucracy. Simple is nice, simple is preferred. There are a lot of struggles in all the agencies with cultural resources. There are crazy things to accomplish; too much paperwork. The web is nice, but in agriculture, it is not a web based community. Most farmers have no access to internet. The process is too complicated.	3
From a non-profit point of view from the YMCA, the Y enjoys working with outdoor education, but we don't have the resources to expose kids and families to what is out there. It's different teaching them in a classroom and a city park. We need to take them out in nature. We took a child who lived in the city to the badlands, and wow, what an impact on that child. Too many times because of economics and legal/liability issues, nonprofits and schools can't do that. We need to look down the road and start with kids and families, plant the seeds and expose kids to what's out there. The education process is the step being left out. It has one of the biggest impacts.	3
Offer stability – need increase funding, sod saver reinstated. So many of the programs that do work need to be permanently funded.	3
No child left inside – taxing non consumptive users.	3
Historical grants, they work with tribal historical preservations funds. They need to fully fund historical grants.	3
Equally share the land conservation fund. It can be used local, state and tribal.	3
Emraps program – can help do their job like Missouri river. Continued support.	3
Be aware of what it has going in here. Northern great plains – grassland areas. Historical grazing. Put to large areas plants animals. Fed gov't can do good just in getting all agencies together to manage to protect this resource. Deal with tribal people – partnership. PI owners, grassland easements, prairie potholes – this leg is all critical and effects PR – mindful of that and increase funding. Spending money sensibly.	3
Bring LWCF back to the original concept. Design to the health of the people. Back to the state and local gov't. Should be fully funded.	3
Reprioritize where the money is spent. Their tribe has a biological grant only ____ acres with 2 biologists. Reinstate those funds and look back to our tribes – don't have access like the states have. They are limited (2 grants re-funded).	3
Land and Water Conservation Fund, SDGFP supports the funding that fund, when originally started in the 60's, money was split 40/60. That ratio mandate was removed at some point. Federal agencies now keep more of the share. Currently, 16% funding goes to the states and 84% to federal agencies. SD has great use of that money. Need to get that split to 50/50. Last year had a request for \$1.5 million from cities and counties and SD could only fund \$300K. Need more to be more equitable between the federal and state governments. All these federal programs need a local match. If we want children in the outdoors, federal money is important to accomplish these goals.	3
State does not have control of how to spend the funding that comes from the federal government. States don't have access to royalties from off shore drilling. Local control or a higher role, local input of how funding is spent on local efforts. Locals know where the ducks	3

<p>are and going and what habitats to protect. Locals know the issues of the land. Need to let local participants determine how funding is spent. Local decision making process is important. Level of equity between federal and local organizations needs to increase.</p>	
<p>Federal funding is essential for Historical sites. Access to these historical sites is critical to people (children) federal funding is critical. Try to purchase private land. Then state agencies will be able to protect archeological sites.</p>	3
<p>Land water conservation fund, it has to be a partnership. 600,000+ dollars since project started in the 1960's. Not enough funding because it sectioned so many ways. 16% is not enough funding for sustaining this program. Local governments have directed staff to find matching funds. Need to protect that funding. Fear that funding is going to land acquisition. Tennis facilities are wearing out. Swimming pools wearing out need maintenance. Schools and other local partners put funding together to improve tennis facilities.</p>	3
<p>Federal trail program from transportation budget for off-road vehicles gets a percentage of the fuel taxes. That funding is important as 40% goes to non-motorized and 40% to motorized trails, while the other 20% to other activities. This funding source is critical to recreation. It is a matching fund grant program. Mitchell Lakes Trail in South Dakota is just one example. Local communities match the funds. Lake Poinsett trail and Lake Oahe trail are more examples. These trails get people outdoors. It's in the Transportation Bill, portion of that bill funds these local trails. Trail projects are on both private and public lands.</p>	3
<p>Highway Transportation Bill - budget looks like it won't have funding for trails. That program is in question right now. It has been in place for nearly 15 years. Now with so much infrastructure that needs maintenance, there is considerable competition for that funding. But the funding from this bill is essential for trails and connection to outdoors. Folks are willing to work together for these trail projects. Need that funding in the transportation bills.</p>	3
<p>As we move ahead on the 4 questions, is this the way we should be going? A lot of the assets that we have on public lands (National Forests, National Grasslands, Wildlife Refuges, state parks) are under used. I don't believe the government needs to spend more money on new projects or land acquisition. There is currently a backlog of maintenance on federal lands now. Ross invites young people to hunt. There is a problem now with people not getting out of the vehicles to hike or hunt. The Issac Walton league is a successful group. 4-H is also successful. Local managers and biologists from the National Forest Service have local programs that are good for the youth. I strongly disagree that the AGO is needed. The EQIP program is tailored to the best use of the land and livestock. The program looks at soil and drainages and what is the most appropriate for conservation. National Grasslands are mismanaged because of top down management from Washington D.C. and other regional offices. There is a need to listen to the land and local people. The land needs to be managed at the local level. The federal government needs to deal with the property that they already own. Parents need to take responsibility to take kids outside themselves. The AGO appears to be a top down organization. Maximize the federal and state lands that we already have and maintain and enhance them.</p>	3
<p>We need to utilize what is already in the hands of the federal government. Federal government agencies are not taking care of what they already have. Before expand or control more private lands, we need to enhance the federal lands that already exist. What are the impacts to private lands? We are expected to feed the world through agriculture. Agriculture can't pay the price of conservation. We need to pull Nintendo game boys and iPods from kids. Parents are willing to spend dollars on technology. Parents need to change their attitude. If we went to 3 channels on TV, more kids would go outside. We need to</p>	3

know that food produced and that is in grocery stores are safe. For people that come from urban areas, the outdoors are a foreign place. Outdoor information maybe overload because people are not accustomed to being outdoors. However, South Dakota people already know the importance of outdoors. Conservation has to come from the local level. Agriculture plays important role in conservation, but at the same time agriculture needs to put food on the table.	
Local should have more input on conservation. Don't need somebody from Washington D.C. to tell us how to do conservation. Local control over programs. More weight should be given to local conservation groups.	3
Is there going to be a report emailed back to the participants in the listening group? Desire to have the notes from this session to the participants.	3
Investments made now in these areas are a great conservation bargain at \$250-\$400/acre for perpetual protection and will forever ensure heritage of these areas are preserved for future generations	4
The Key for increased success in the easement program is increased funding. The land and Water Conservation Fund could serve as an important source of funding to significantly advance protection of these priceless prairie landscapes while they are still available for conservation.	4
Hot fax hot off the press, YMCA USA national office has received a grant to give out to smaller YMCAs for purpose of teaching conservation water safety. It was accomplished through new partnerships with private organizations to provide funds. Example given, we have 0.75 million kids in after school programs. Partnering can reach a lot of people. It is a tool we have that is underutilized.	4
One concern with government agencies is that we through money at the problem. A lot of ranchers look at NRCS as a place to go for money for water development, but they don't understand what water development is all about. Educational disconnect between people, the landowner and the people that benefit from the land. There needs to be more emphasis on education than legislation. If you don't educate then you can't pass on what we are trying to accomplish. It's not just about the money but the conservation benefit that it brings. One thing we are doing in SD will see next year, Leopold Conservation Award, we showcase people that are doing good conservation, showcase what people on the land are doing. How do we get reconnected with them? We have an open door at our ranch to show people what we are doing. I was raised that there is not a wetland that could not be drained. Government was paying us to do it. Had help from game and parks to blast wetlands and make them deeper. It is tough to overcome those old ways of thinking.	4
Some tools that are needed from my organizations perspective: When we are dealing with government agencies people get moved from one position to another and you lose institutional knowledge. We have to start over and retrain or educate the new employees. Also the new employees would come in and not email us. We need tools in place to bring new people up to speed and inform them of our group. Need to recognize the value of institutional knowledge. Government needs a tool to keep people around or pass on the institutional knowledge to the next person. I do an educational thing at the fair and I have a resources poster and I show the kids a picture of a hamburger and ask where does that come from? They say McDonalds. There is a disconnect on understanding what comes from our resources. Need to teach kids food and resources come from the land not the store. Also, when you are talking about programs for kids you need to involve the parents. Parents are probably not going to go look at the trail their kids experienced unless you get them involved	4

too.	
Two tools: 1) permanent dedicated funds for state agencies. States deal with fluctuating budget numbers yet issues are getting more complicated. Not enough money comes from hunting/fishing licenses. Need a more dedicated funding source for state agencies. 2) Additional volunteers. Nonprofits need more volunteers, for youth hunts, habitats projects, finding ways so that everyone finds ways to enjoy outdoors whether they are a hunter or not. We need tools that bring more volunteers to groups.	4
Fish and wildlife have a proportion of funding, sorry Dave. There are other agencies that need dedicated funding. For example, local conservation districts can really use some money.	4
My experience is that most successful projects have been done at the local level. Unless people have an organization structure they are a part of then they don't get involved. Place biologists in local offices so people can go to them directly with questions. Need somebody there locally to walk them thru the rules is critical. It does not come from the top. They need somebody local that they can trust, somebody that can visit their land. Need to institutionalize that in partners program and fill the gap between federal and state agencies. It's hard to get that institutionalized but it is critical	4
National Park Service is unique in that they have a division that comes out to communities. Need to build partnerships and help start the process if they do not know how to get an easement on private property. If other agencies also did the same then a lot more locals would find an avenue to get involved.	4
Good news can benefit from volunteers – potential for volunteers (baby boomers). Great grandchildren's initiative – give something back to the next generation and next.	4
Not only grant but technical assistance, maintaining the level of employees to deliver the programs out on the ground.	4
Non consumptive uses – works with sportsman's groups – have members that don't hunt or fish and want to contribute but don't have a vehicle. Fed people get some thought and get a program together.	4
Why does all the money go to GFP? Nothing in it for the rancher - GFP take all the money.	4
Coordination to allow pl to open their land but not be liable!	4
Migratory conservation stamp (duck stamp) not just for duck hunters 98% goes to purchase land. If few manage it they need to do a better job publishing and educating them about them. JR duck stamp another avenue – environmental education.	4
Duck stamp increasing – hunters would not have any issue raising the stamp.	4
Few people but population is growing, 39 species of bird flying byways as a kid, but restudy shows only 15 species today. Other wildlife populations diminishing too. Growth of prairie dogs, poisoned in past killed other animals too (coyotes). No longer living in wilderness area, grass not that tall. Civilization crept in. South Dakota is growing. DM&E railroad study of fugitive coal dust, deer migration, and hunting will be very little – he became active then. United Farmer Ranch annual convention attended. Wants to become active again, haven't been for some time. Wants to be part of answer, happy to be here.	N/A