



Increasing Stakeholder Engagement through Innovative Web-Based Communications and Conversations

Roundtable on Sustainable Forests

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Hunt Valley, MD





Acknowledgements

- Simon Bridge, Canadian Forest Service
- Sarah LaPlante, USDA Forest Service
- Sarah McCreary, National Association of State Foresters





What is Web 2.0?

- A new generation of web-based tools to facilitate increased collaboration and dialogue rather than just information publishing (Web 1.0).
- "A web of data, not a web of content."
- "The web as a platform for interacting."
- An electronic platform for re-mixing data to meet the needs of the user.





What is Web 2.0?

- Includes tools such as:
 - Web logs (blogs)
 - Wiki's
 - Really simple syndication (RSS)
 - Tagging
 - Podcasts
 - And many other applications and tools





The internet and Web 2.0 tools are not intended to replace other forms and methods for having discussions.

Web 2.0 can be a supplement to existing methods.





What is RSF currently doing on the web?

- Announcing national meetings and technical workshops.
- Publishing and archiving Roundtable work:
 - Meeting agendas
 - Presentations
 - Work plans
 - Reports





RSF experiences with web-based information collection

- 2005 – On-Line Stakeholder Consultation on Potential Refinements to the C&I
 - 22 questions
 - Designed and managed by Dialogue by Design
 - 2,400 invitations to participate
 - 95 respondents
 - 944 responses to the 22 questions





RSF experiences with web-based information collection

- 2007–Consultation to Guide the Preparation of the 2010 National Report on Sustainable Forests
 - Web-based consultation instrument
 - 2,439 e-mail invitations to participate
 - 280 respondents
 - All 50 states were represented





Why are we talking about this?

- Roundtable Work Plan:
 - Report and monitor the progress towards sustainable forests
 - Coordinate with related national data and indicator efforts
 - Foster sustainable forest management through the application of the C&I
 - Engage the broader community of forest stakeholders at multiple scales





Why are we talking about this?

- The COWG was charged to:
 - Identify and further define the audience for the National Report
 - Develop strategies to enhance the use of the 2010 report
 - Provide input to the redesign of the Roundtable website





Why are we talking about this?

- COWG Work Plan:

“Invite Simon Bridge, Canadian Forest Service, to make a presentation about using the internet to increase utilization of national report data and increase RSF participation.”





Why would the RSF be interested?

- To expand the dialogue about sustainable forests
- Broaden and deepen the dialogue
- Participants at all scales can participate and have a voice
- Increase the understanding, use, and relevance of the C&I
- Give voice to a wide diversity of viewpoints regarding sustainable forests
- Increase knowledge delivery
- Receive feedback from users at all scales





How might the RSF use Web 2.0?

- Add an RSF entry into Wikipedia
- Post RSF news to existing blogs
- Create an RSF blog
- Provide RSS
- Provide raw data from the National Report for users to use, format, analyze and interpret in their own way.





What are some concerns?

- Not everyone is web-savvy
- Not everyone wants to be web-savvy
- Disadvantages stakeholders who do not have access to the Web
- May create an undesirable image of the Roundtable
- Consume limited resources of the RSF
- Costs may outweigh the benefits





Next steps—on your own

- Visit some sustainable forests blogs:

- Search: sustainable forests blogs
- Examples of blogs that are focused on sustainable forests:

- sustainableforestry.blogspot.com
- arboreality.blogspot.com/
- sustainabilitylawblog.com/sustainable_forestry/
- foresttalk.com (Canada's forestry blog)
- saveancientforests.blogspot.com





Example for C&I Reporting:

Northeastern Area Forest Sustainability Indicators Information System





NA Indicators Info System

- Database driven
- Scientists can upload content
- Option for data review before posting
- More dynamic reporting of information





NA Indicators Info System

- More options for user
 - Select state, multistate, other scales for trend graphs
 - Download data, save images
 - Links to additional data and resources





NA Indicators Info System

- Other features we considered
 - More robust mapping (expensive)
 - User comment on each metric





NA Indicators Info System

What if adapted for National Level?

- Reduce information requests—reach more people?
- Combine reporting of national analyses with delivery of regional and state trend data?
- Provide technical documentation and links to data sources and additional resources?
- Provide better interconnection between indicators?
- Forum for user dialog—perspectives, data sources, comments, etc. for each Criterion/Indicator?





Next Steps—On Your Own

- Subscribe to RSS at some sites that interest you
- Create your own wiki page
- Share your experiences with the COWG





Now—Small group discussions

Please discuss the following questions...





Discussion Questions

1. What experiences—personal or professional—have you had in using the web to carry on conversations, create communities of interest, or other approaches to on-line interactions?
2. What are some specific examples of sites you have used or seen that are effective?
3. What approaches, collectively referred to as Web 2.0, might pose opportunities for the Roundtable?





Discussion Questions

4. How could Web 2.0 tools be used to seek input on the public draft of the 2010 report as well as to expand the use of the report when it is released?
5. As the COWG continues to explore Web 2.0, what recommendations, comments, or concerns do you have for the work group?

Can you provide assistance to the COWG as it explores Web 2.0 ideas?

If so, contact Eric Norland, enorland@csrees.usda.gov

