

NWQMC and River Rally
Joint / Overlapping Conference
Discussion

Barb Horn

Jeff Schloss

Approach

This would be a onetime venture, not a “continual” practice at this time. Both entities realize the two different cultures of each organization and national conference at the same acknowledging overlap in mission, goals and some common target audiences. Both entities value leveraging resources and creating synergy for the right purpose. Spring 2012 will be just before the elections and it could be effective to bring together a large gathering from this perspective.

Needs

- balance the unique culture and approach of each organization/event while
- creating an intentional overlap, a program, events, workshops, etc. that leveraged the common goals, issues and target audiences we have
- work out all meeting logistics such as registration, billing, invoicing, program, marketing approach, messaging, etc.
- Both entities would need to break even and cannot “lose” at the expense of this effort

Some Pro's

- Getting volunteers/grassroots groups together with scientist, regulators, practitioners with an intentional agenda could further everyone's work in terms of rate of success, breadth and depth
- New partnerships could be developed and fostered that would not otherwise happen
- Leveraging resources could bring a different set/ more hard to get speakers, trainers, exhibitors
- Leveraging resources could help save some resources for sponsors and attendees
- Entities providing scholarships (30 plus sources for Rally, YSI for NWQMC, EPA for example) might contribute more seeing the collaboration and value
- Higher cross exposure to each organization mission/goals/approach and conference, increased membership

Con's

- Effort for coordination will likely be higher up front for each organization– for a greater payoff in results
- Higher risk for miscommunication and slip ups (increase those involved, increase mistakes)
- Some costs could be higher than if hosting own conference
- Participants of either organization will not like “losing” their unique event as it has always been
- Might lose the interest of some participants from each group if focus is not kept interesting to all.

Possible Approaches

- 1. A panel of examples and then a facilitated work session of USGS regional science offices / vol organizations in same region – goal is to understand each others scope of work/mission and collaborate on something together, even if that is to continue to meet
- 2. A panel of examples, then a facilitated work session for grassroots advocacy groups and state agencies in same region, - same goal – to understand needs of each other and how could better work together.
- 3. Joint panels, or presentations or focus on topical areas – goal would be to find ways to educate each other, work together, not duplicate, leverage, etc. Examples of topical areas could be ground water, nutrients, quantity/hydrology, biological criteria/assessments – or 5-10 of the hot topics for both groups.
- 4. A lunch or dinner with a powerful speaker meaningful to both entities