**Notes from Program Task Force- April 1, 2013**

**EEN- Pacific Coast forum**

**Participants Present:**

Abby Ruskey -- Executive Director, e3Washington which is state affiliate of NAAEE.

V Nemanis -- Ottawa. Retired from Environment Canada. Launched EEN Canada.

Richard Gelb -- King County, WA -- Lead for a large utility at the county, focused on natural resource and environment issues. Has attended some EENs, works with Abby on e3. Has worked in Environmental Ed a lot, been to a lot of camp-like meetings.

Kirsten Evans- The Nature Conservancy -- based in Miami, summers in Seattle. Hasn't attended an EEN before.

Christina Kakoyannis -- Evaluation officer for National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. Worked at OSU, involved in OPEN, then did a fellowship under Katherine Dawes At EPA, worked with Matt and others to develop the first two EENs. Works from Colorado. Serving as AEA Environmental. Evaluation TIG representative to EEN.

Andy Rowe- 30 years in natural resource evaluation, lives Salt Spring Island, B.C., works U.S., South Africa, Canada.; economist; past president of CA Evaluation Society; working on legacy, writing, training, esp. "rapid impact evaluation."

Michael Coe- Portland based environmental consultant. Former Education Northwest evaluation/researcher, background in psychology. Active since 2007 in agriculture, academia and environmental evaluation.

Shawn Morford- Program Evaluation Manager with Rural Development Initiatives, an Oregon-based non- profit. Also consults in environmental/natural resource evaluation. Office and home west of Portland. Lived in worked in B.C. Canada, 1995-2006.

**History of EEN—Matt Keene**

EEN began in 2006. Invited 40, 80 attended. Have had as many as 300 in recent years. Two major goals: learning and networking.

Discussion about making this session more practical, less theoretical and focus on case studies than the national meetings. Focus on NW region. Bringing together practitioners and users of evaluation. Desire to produce something: an inventory of evaluations? Social network analysis of the group before, during, and after? Happy to speak more details to anyone …

**Forum theme**

Matt asked for thoughts or ideas on forum themes.

Beverly: triple bottom line. Build toward AEA theme for next year, incorporating environment. Bev will do a keynote in Atlanta in July at AEA/CDC event Evaluation with the triple bottom line, Adaptive action and sustainability in complex ecology ....Environment + social + economic

Christina -- NFWF interested in how you evaluate the sustainability of an effort. Not much in the literature. Asked what topics might be most relevant for the PNW and OPEN? Can we build on prior OPEN conference themes? Interested in how social/behavioral change comes about and becomes sustained? How to evaluate whether efforts will gain momentum and become sustainable? How to evaluate capacity of partnerships?

Andy -- Adaptive management = evaluation use. AM is not very successful in practice.

[New book from UN on evaluating sustainable development]. Things are moving rapidly -- where do we need to be in 5-10 years? Interventions will be changing rapidly, we need to be ready. Get ahead of the curve.

In PNW we have impressive, effective tribal governments involved in natural resource and environmental management. In Oregon in particular, e.g. Warm Springs, and cross-tribal organizations around water, trees, salmon. Good place to look at sustainability and making change happen. Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs have gone from being enemies of federal agencies to partners with feds and PGE which he thinks is incredibly progressive. Interested in reduced divisions between resource users (hook and bullet crowd) and those interested in conservation.

Richard -- weave together these ideas already mentioned -- King County often doesn't look at unilateral evaluation of a program, but the effectiveness of collaborations and collective efforts. Interested in holistic and collaborative learning in multi-party settings. Also has a methods

question: how do we bake in the learning in a project or program design, integrate evaluation rather than having it be separate, so the learning is delivered and structured into the program activities. King County trying to make this the norm rather than adding eval on as a separate activity.

Michael – Society for Conservation Biology/AEA focus on bringing disciplines together, different approaches used in evaluation research, + focus on key policy questions where evaluation research is needed to inform current decisions, hot topics, places where there is potential leverage.

V -- Case studies with program manager and evaluator talking through their differing perspectives on specific projects.

Abby -- role of evaluation in creating change, being a vehicle for instigating change as well as managing and measuring change, in collective contexts. Thousands of people, many sectors involved in e3, so network analysis is important; social complexity; how do we get a handle, design and develop models for that?

**What do we want to learn?**

Beverly: broad picture of evaluation in the environmental sector for the public good. What does "getting ahead of the curve" mean in this sector? How do we bring people together to make a difference?

Sense of where we are in the broad pic to get evaluation moving us forward toward general public good. How systems changes and how partnerships are used.

Christina: Address how people interact with the environment. How does social change come about so it’s sustaining. Enough momentum to carry on. Social behavior – how it occurs and how to evaluate it. Network analysis. When is there sufficient capacity to carry something out, to change the landscape. Have examples and get input from others on how we do make change in society sustainable.

Andy: mediators working in environmental conflict resolution use role-playing and other training methods that might be useful. Have one of them do a demonstration, involving the audience in role play?

Abby: Role of leadership and leadership transition in the evaluation of sustainability of an initiative -- and the organizational structure in which a program takes place, and the sustainability of those structures. Applicability of these tools in different cultural and economic settings. What is being generated from within communities that are being evaluated?

Kirsten: Systems, ...[hard to hear phone] ... utilization of evaluation findings by senior managers, lessons learned on how to make evaluation matter and result in useful change in policy. Utilization of results.

Richard G: Applications in different environmental areas.

V: How does evaluation make a difference in program or policy arenas?

Christina: how do we evaluate the sustainability of an effort. Hard to find good examples now. How sustainable is a program goal into the long term.

Richard: Enjoy the diversity of getting up to speed up on applications classical to social behavior. I enjoy the breadth. Evaluation practice across a range of topic areas.

Michael: Like the theme of the Society for Conservation Biology: connecting stakeholders and disciplines. Fact that lots of people are doing evaluation from diff. backgrounds and organizations, lots of diversity. Starting from problem based approach… regional fit. I would like to hear from funders what their questions are – policy questions that they wish they had good evaluation on. Identify some key policy questions. What are research design and evaluation problems in answering them, and what are the different perspectives in answering them.

V- if you could get evaluator and program manager in the same room to talk about diff. perspectives of the same event. Need good relationship between them. Open and candid. V- how is EE heard and make a difference in the policy and program arena.

Shawn- very practical interest based on the structure of the evaluation community and the demand. What is the place for evaluators in the natural resource and environmental landscape. What are the needs, what are the skills needed, and who is filling the need and do we have the structures in place to ensure that supply meets the demand?

**Format:**

Given that we have informal setting:

Matt: Two extremes: speakers, and breakouts----- and unconference. Probably end up somewhere in between. How would you like best to learn?

Richard: leverage the natural informal camp-type setting—use EEnvironmental education format --- cooperative in nature. Interactive learning. Both learner and teacher. Participatory setting. Likes the"waterfall" game in which each person teaches and learns from each individual in turn.

Kirsten –{hard to hear phone} let everyone introduce themselves and their interests to find out who you want to talk with more.

Christina: definitely support interactive approach. More about networking than presentations. Capitalize on the setting.

Beverly: unconference format was surprisingly engaging and useful, would be useful to use some aspects of that, world cafe, etc.

Andy: There are some excellent mediators working in environmental conflict resolution in PNW. Role playing, very instructive. Promote active listening. Evaluators need these skills since many of us have research backgrounds. Have them do a demonstration.

Michael: Previous conference on research on educational effectiveness was about the same size as ours. They did more plenary and fewer breakout sessions. Everyone in room together. Not just teaching, but engaging. Gave everyone a common things to go forward with. People liked being in the same room. Use engaging plenary talks/discussions with whole group to provide common experiences/examples of environmental evaluation to the group that will stimulate networking, free discussions?

Abby: how far in advance do you know is coming? Surveying them ahead of time. Manual we designed to help with this.

Christina: Speed dating sessions at beginning. Quick wrapping up at end of session.

**Keynoter ideas:**

Andy’s recommendation: Kai Lee- of Packard Foundation. Using evaluation to develop theories of change. New approach to funding. Adaptive funding. Currently working with Andy on using evaluation to develop theories of change and implementation of a new approach to funding science

Matt recommendation: Beverly Parsons.