

Conservation Action Planning

Conservation Action Planning (CAP) is straightforward and proven approach for planning, implementing and measuring success for large landscapes or other conservation projects. CAP is science-based, strategic and collaborative. The CAP methods were developed and refined over 20 years by Greg Low and others at The Nature Conservancy, and CAP has been applied at over 1,000 conservation projects.

CAP guides a landscape or project at any scale to:

- identify the focal ecological systems, species, or other resources of interest
- determine the key attributes for each resource's long-term health
- determine the current condition
- identify the most critical threats likely to impair future condition
- develop strategies to abate the threats and/or restore the resources
- implement the strategies, monitor the outcomes and use that information to adapt and learn throughout the life of the project.

The CAP methodology has been deployed successfully by hundreds of teams working to conserve species, sites, ecosystems, landscapes, watersheds and seascapes across the globe. It works for any scale of political boundary or resource ownership.

The CAP framework has been applied for varied other uses – for example, Greg Low worked with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Southern Nevada Water Authority to develop a CAP-based biological monitoring program for assessing future impacts of potential southern Nevada groundwater withdrawals. Greg also facilitated a series of workshops with scientists to complete an ecosystem health assessment for the Great Salt Lake

CAP was one of the cornerstone building blocks for developing the “The Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation.”

A landscape conservation handbook which describes CAP methods and tools, along with CAP software, are made available at no cost by Applied Conservation to any interested practitioner <http://appliedconservation.com/resources/>.

