



Human-Wildlife Conflict Collaboration (HWCC)

Benefiting Conservation through Conflict Resolution

Human-wildlife conflict is as much a conflict between humans and wildlife, as it is a conflict *between humans about wildlife*. Wildlife issues at the center of conversation conflicts may serve as surrogates for underlying conflicts involving struggles for group recognition, identity, status, and other less tangible resources. Unless these deeper patterns of conflict and the relationships embedded within them are addressed, conservation solutions will be neither sustainable nor successful. Fortunately, there are many relevant tools and approaches developed in the field of conflict resolution that can be successfully adapted to benefit conservation and communities around the world. By drawing on tools and lessons learned from the conflict resolution field, conservation organizations and professionals will become more effective and be better prepared to address this deeper level of human-wildlife conflict.



The Human-Wildlife Conflict Collaboration (HWCC) is the only organization working with conflict prevention and reconciliation specialists to adapt conflict resolution practices and processes to the field of conservation. Through a practical training program for its members, conservation professionals, often skilled in the science of wildlife, but less so in the art of the human dimensions of their work, will be empowered to be more effective in achieving their conservation goals.

Often, underlying dynamics and conflicts mean that human-wildlife conflicts are more complex than they first appear. For example, as any conservation manager knows, money alone is often insufficient when trying to compensate an angry farmer for the cost of livestock killed by a predator (or preventing retaliation against the predator). Any researcher who has time and again added up the “actual” damage done by wildlife and found it was consistently considerably less than the “perceived” damage reported by farmers or ranchers also knows that human-wildlife conflict has deeper, more complex roots and a variety of symptoms that can not simply be understood with a superficial attention to facts, figures and financial remuneration. Any park manager who has attempted to work with communities surrounding protected areas only to find that the community’s lack of trust and respect in the conservation or park authorities impedes their efforts knows that the community is likely harboring a conflict underneath the surface of their relationship. However, through membership with HWCC, conservation professionals will develop the skills and acumen to address and mitigate for these complicated, often non-transparent, dynamics.



Given the ongoing relationship between conservation programs and surrounding communities, sustainable conservation must develop conflict resolution and prevention approaches that address these deeper conflict patterns and relationships. HWCC provides members with the necessary conflict resolution skills to positively transform local conflicts into healthy partnerships and enduring coexistence.

To participate or for more information on HWCC, visit us at www.humanwildlifeconflict.org