

CENTRAL WASATCH ENVIRONMENTAL DASHBOARD



"The signers of the Accord seek a natural ecosystem that is conserved, protected and restored such that it is healthy, functional, and resilient for current and future generations."

- The Accord, 2015

Project Managers

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What is the Environmental Dashboard?

The Dashboard is a tool for decision makers to track the Central Wasatch's environmental health and evaluate impacts in future planning discussions. It is the intention of the Mountain Accord that the Dashboard is a legacy project and will be updated on a regular basis. It is scientifically based, data rich, and technically credible.

The Dashboard compiles data currently collected throughout the Central Wasatch Mountains in a way that provides a picture of the complete health of the mountain range, as well as a mechanism for measuring the health moving forward. Phase II of the Dashboard includes an online connection for people interested in tracking the progress of the key indicators.

Who is Involved?

Steering Committee- Guides the direction of the Dashboard and collaborates with the Dashboard project managers and consulting team to ensure the Mountain Accord community is represented and the guiding principles of Mountain Accord are met.

Technical Experts-This scientific community shares technical expertise with the consulting team to identify the key targets and indicators to measure the health of the Central Wasatch, connects them with research and resources to establish science-based thresholds for these indicators, and assists the team in accessing data.

Timeline

Step I – Framework, Data Analysis and Written Report (2016-2017):

Dashboard Framework-With the help of the Technical Committee, and building on the work of the Mountain Accord Environmental System Group,

- 2. Create Data Information System-**A GIS database of the Mountain Accord Project Area
- 3. Compile Existing Data; Assess Current Conditions & Gap Analysis-**Work with Mountain Accord Technical Committee to compile existing data and based on the framework, assess current conditions and the departure from desired conditions.
- 4. Written Existing Conditions Report (August 2017)-**Summarizes the current environmental and ecological conditions of the area.
- 5. Written Dashboard Report (December 2017)-**The Dashboard report discusses current conditions, highlights areas that are functioning in good or very good condition and those that need attention.

Step II –Online Public Dashboard (2017-2018):

- 1. Translate Written Report-** Step II translates the Dashboard written report into an online publicly accessible tool. This tool is to be both a spatial and graphical dashboard. This is a legacy project and will be updated regularly.
- 2. Soft-Launch -**During the development of Step I, select data will be included on the Salt Lake County MetroStat online dashboard as a "Soft-Launch" to the final Mountain Accord Environmental Dashboard.

DECEMBER 2016 UPDATE

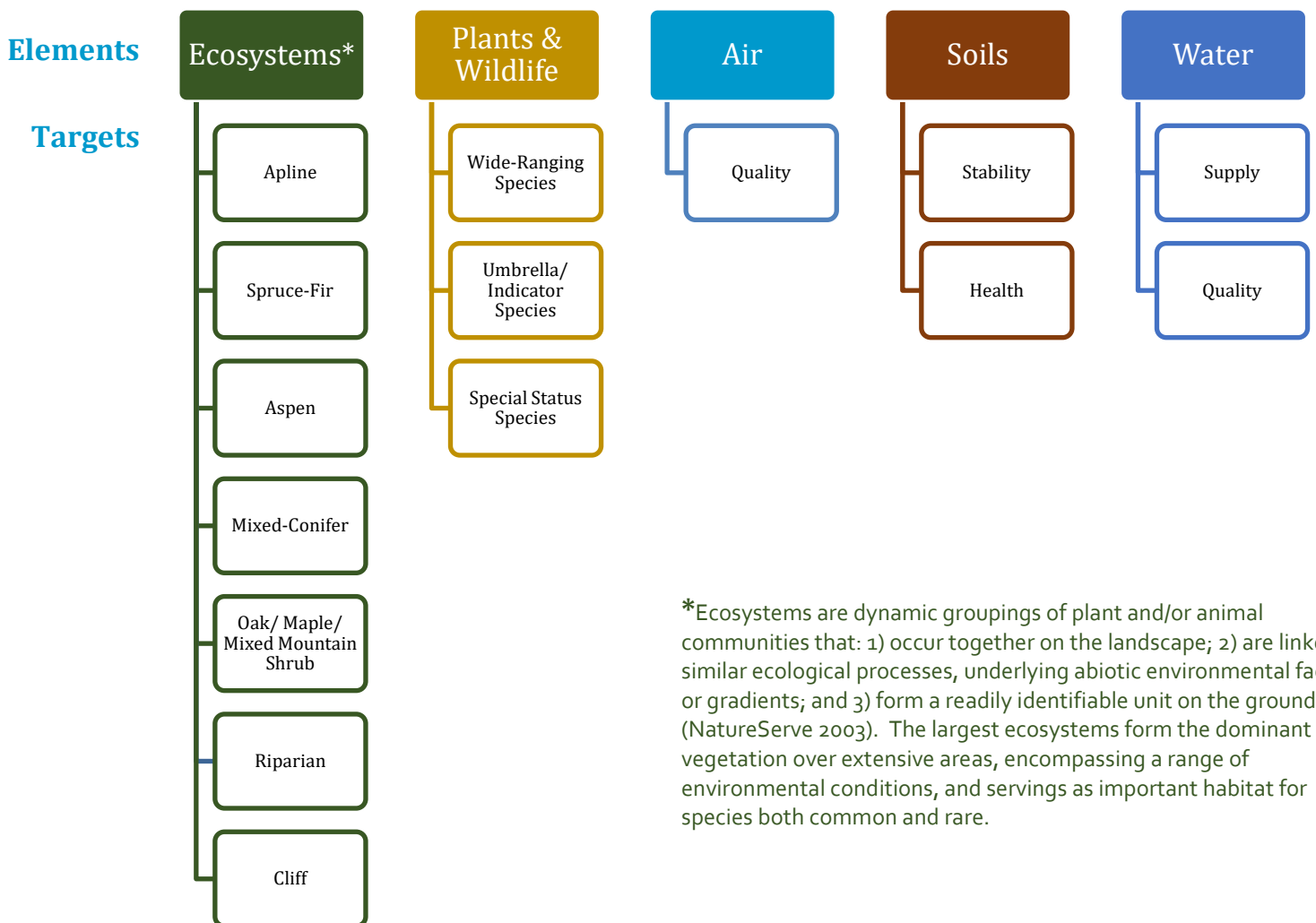
Dashboard Terminology and Organization

The project team has defined the overall organizational framework and terminology for the Dashboard, as follows:

Element	High-level topic area that provides the organizing structure of the Dashboard
Target	Broadly categorized components that are the focus of analysis and reporting
Nested Target	Sub-categories under each target that help define or focus attention on the specific constituent part of the broad targets
Indicator	Metrics used to evaluate the health or condition of the targets
Threshold	Levels of magnitude or intensity that define the indicator's health and scope

Preliminary Dashboard Framework (DRAFT)

The first levels of the Dashboard Framework, including elements, targets, and nested targets have been developed. Note that this structure may evolve as nested targets and indicators are identified, and that some nested targets and indicators may relate to more than one element (e.g., umbrella/indicator species may relate to both Ecosystems and Plants & Wildlife elements).



Next steps will include discussions with technical experts through December 2016 to review this organizational structure, and to identify potential nested targets, corresponding indicators, and preliminary thresholds.

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Frequently Asked Questions

General Information

How can I get involved?

Check the Mountain Accord website (MountainAccord.com/Environmental-Dashboard) for the latest information about the Environmental Dashboard project including meeting notes, event notices, and draft materials. Contact the Project Managers (see contact information at right) with any questions or to provide comments on the Dashboard.

Who is the audience for the Environmental Dashboard?

The vision is for the Dashboard to be a data-rich, and technically credible tool that anyone can understand and use. Some may use it to simply better understand current environmental conditions and monitor changes over time. Others might use it as a framework to consider benefits and tradeoffs of future projects, plans, or other decisions.

How will the Dashboard inform future planning and decision making?

The Environmental Dashboard will help establish a common baseline of existing conditions against which potential decisions can be tested and considered. The Dashboard will support decision-making at the watershed scale, showing the current conditions of an area, applicable indicators, and the threats and stressors that should be considered. Thresholds for each indicator will provide the levels of magnitude or intensity that define its health and scope, and decision-makers can assess whether a proposed plan or project will impact an indicator and if so, how it might impact the overall indicator health or threshold level.

Data Platform and Logistics

Will the information that is generated from the Dashboard be accessible? If so, in what format?

The first phase of the Dashboard effort will result in a written report that will be accessible in PDF format. The second phase of the Dashboard effort will translate the written report into an online, publicly accessible tool that provides both spatial and graphical results.

What data sets are being used and how will they be maintained?

The Environmental Dashboard will feature spatial data using a Geographic Information System (GIS) linked data information system. Data sources and maintenance will be widely dependent upon the indicator and available data. For some indicators, live connections to existing online data sets or platforms are expected, automating the update and maintenance process. For other indicators, periodic updates to or refreshing of data sets will be required for ongoing maintenance of the Dashboard.

How will data gaps be addressed?

During the assessment of current conditions for each indicator, data sources will be inventoried and reviewed for suitability. In the event that adequate data are not available for an indicator (due to format, coverage, lack of data, or other reason), this will be noted as a data gap. After all data gaps are identified, a list of data gaps that are a priority to fill will be developed, including recommended parameters for new data collections or amendments to currently collected data. Since the Dashboard is an ongoing project, these priority data gaps may be addressed and filled over time.

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How often will the Dashboard need to be updated?

The indicators selected and availability of data for those indicators will determine the frequency of updates. As part of the Dashboard Framework and written report, the anticipated frequency of and recommendations for updates will be identified.

Will the Wasatch Back be included in the Dashboard?

Yes, the full Central Wasatch area will be included – both back and front. We know that watersheds do not follow jurisdictional boundaries and therefore the project will use a holistic watershed approach.

Scientific Basis and Framework Rationale

How does the Dashboard relate to ongoing conservation management planning by various agencies and jurisdictions in the Mountain Accord study area, including United States Forest Service (USFS)?

The Environmental Dashboard project aims to complement, align, and support other conservation management planning efforts in the region. The Environmental Dashboard draws upon these current efforts to help establish a common set of indicators and data sets to monitor. In turn, the existing and future conservation management plans will help detail specific implementation strategies that will support and enhance the conditions of the Dashboard indicators.

Where will climate change fit in to the Dashboard framework?

Climate change is an overarching stressor that may impact all of the Dashboard elements and indicators. At first, the Dashboard will simply document current environmental conditions for each Dashboard indicator. Over time, stressors on the environment may create departures from existing conditions, and these trends will be monitored for each indicator. For example, stream health will be influenced by myriad variables, including climate change. Monitoring stream health indicators over time will reveal the extent to which climate change and other stressors are impacting stream health. Additionally, each element and indicator will include narrative information about potential threats and stressors, including climate change impacts. The Dashboard will be able to inform future climate impact analyses, vulnerability assessments and resiliency planning.

What about people? We're the biggest stressors on the environment?

Human activities such as development, recreation, and transportation create impacts on the natural environment. Through the dashboard we will be evaluating the current condition of select elements of the environment – that serve as surrogates for the health of the entire system – and accounting for the impacts humans are having on the natural environment. For example, if we measure the health of our waterways and find sections that get de-watered, which impacts wildlife, we register that as a degraded condition. The next step would be to identify the human action that is causing the negative effect and ultimately develop strategies that can mitigate the impact if necessary.

Will representatives from academia be included in the Dashboard development?

Yes, representatives (both professors and researchers) from educational institutions including University of Utah, Utah State University, and Brigham Young University are included on our committee of technical experts who will be reviewing and informing the Dashboard development.