

A person is climbing a large, textured rock formation. The climber is silhouetted against a vibrant sunset sky with shades of blue, purple, and orange. The rock is a light tan color with a rough, porous texture. The climber is positioned in the lower middle of the frame, with a rope visible. The overall scene is one of challenge and achievement.

## Increasing

### Situation:

One objective of the 4-H Initiative Team is to “empower volunteers to become key players in 4-H youth development programs.”

The Wyoming State 4-H Leaders Council consists of 11 elected adult volunteers and two youth representatives. The council has struggled with its purpose, ineffective communication, and poor participation in meetings. There was a disconnect between the state 4-H leaders council and the state 4-H office.

County 4-H councils can be instrumental in providing valuable input for county 4-H programs. To improve the function of both the state and county leaders councils, the state 4-H volunteer specialists facilitated a workshop to help state 4-H leaders council members identify the purposes of the group. Several workshops at both the county and state level provided leadership and organizational training to volunteers.

### Impacts:

The Wyoming State 4-H Leaders Council members identified their purposes at their September 2009 meeting:

- To provide input for change to strengthen and unify the statewide 4-H program.
- To provide guidance to secure resources as well as educational advancements/opportunities.
- To promote the statewide recognition program.
- To assist and promote communication from state offices to counties as well as leaders, clubs, and 4-H members.

## effectiveness of county and state 4-H leaders councils

The County 4-H Leadership Retreat planning team conducted two successful retreats. Feedback from participants in both was positive.

A process to make changes to the Wyoming 4-H Program was developed in collaboration between the state 4-H leaders council and the state 4-H office. The guidelines are on the Wyoming 4-H website under Volunteer Resources.

Use of Web meetings six times a year increased communication between the state 4-H council members and the state 4-H office. Evaluation to assess communication and partnerships with three different audiences was completed in 2010. While progress has been made in almost all areas, the evaluation revealed issues that need to be addressed.

A Likert scale was used to determine progress on issues identified with ratings two years ago and today: extremely poor=1; below average=2; average =3; above average=4; excellent =5

(Hardly hear a word  
from anyone )

(Communication is open from anyone.  
I can be actively involved)

Communication within the state 4-H leaders council (n=7)

- Improved from 1.4 two years ago to 4.1 today

Communication between the state 4-H office and the state 4-H leaders council (n=7)

- Improved from 2.8 two years ago to 4.7 today

Communication between the state 4-H leaders council and county 4-H programs (n=7)

- Improved from 1.2 two years ago to 2.8 today

On the following questions the following scale was used:

1=extremely poor 2=below average 3=average 4=above average 5=Excellent

(A partnership did not exist)

(We were full partners to effect  
and implement a state-wide 4-H program)

Partnership between the state 4-H office and the Wyoming State 4-H Leaders Council (n=6)

- Improved from 1.6 two years ago to 3.3 today

Partnership between the Wyoming State 4-H Leaders Council and the state development committees (n=6)

- Improved from 1.1 two years ago to 2.3 today

Partnership between the Wyoming State 4-H Leaders Council and county 4-H programs (n=6)

- Improved from 1.1 two years ago to 3.1 today

We will continue efforts to improve partnerships and communication to enhance volunteer leadership in the program.

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