

The Coda Files

Doug Shaw

Think being or hosting a Coda Global Fellow is mysterious and unattainable? Think again! The Coda Global Fellows program enables staff to apply their talents beyond their regular job to forward the Conservancy's global priorities. Coda Fellows can be anyone. They can be anywhere. They could even be...you. So take a step with us into...The Coda Files.

Doug Shaw thought he was taking a break from management to go back to his freshwater ecology roots, but his stint as a Coda Global Fellow, developing a cutting-edge large-scale measures framework for the Colorado River Program (CRP) was full of surprises.

"We thought it would be important to have freshwater skills, but this ended up being much less important than senior management skills to help people decide what to measure and what not to measure," Doug says.

His host, Taylor Hawes, couldn't agree more: "We needed someone like Doug who could really think outside the box and be a big picture person and also understand what these plans meant for implementation."

In 2010-2011, Doug and the CRP conducted in-person workshops and virtual exchanges to hammer out a measures framework for this river basin that encompasses six U.S. states and part of Mexico. Mike Roberts continues the CRP's measures work where Doug left off.

This exchange of expertise advanced Conservancy science by discovering:

- Sites and the state programs need to understand how they fit into the whole system work, but the basin-wide program also needs its own measures for its effectiveness;

Coda Fellow: Doug Shaw

Day Job: Assistant state director, The Nature Conservancy in Minnesota, South Dakota and North Dakota (current); director of conservation, The Nature Conservancy in Florida (at time of fellowship)

Assignment: Colorado River Program, June 2010-May 2011

Task: Develop basin-wide measures framework

Take-Home Lesson: "Finding the data needed to develop measures relevant at a scale of seven states and 250,000 square miles can be very challenging, even in such high profile and well-studied basins as the Colorado. We need to put as much thought and energy into strategies for developing meaningful data sets at that scale as into our conservation strategies themselves."



- Measures terminology varies wildly and terms should be boiled down to very simple words;
- Measures developments should be iterative, flexible and definitely non-linear.

Check out Doug and Mike's presentation at the [April 2010 Freshwater Conference](#), their [preliminary report](#) and [Mike and Taylor's Measures Brownbag WebEx](#) on Tuesday, November 1st at 1:00pm ET / 10:00am PT! **SC**

— **Jensen Montambault**, applied conservation scientist, Central Science, The Nature Conservancy

Have burning science needs? Want to share your skills with a global priority? Contact [Jolie Sibert](#), Director of the Coda Global Fellows program!