GETTING TO KNOW FUNCTION

Function is critical to communication in biomimetric design. Function is the pivot between life’s wisdom and what we are trying to achieve intentionally. The first step in applying a biomimicry approach to your design or challenge is to identify what you want your design to do. It is VERY important to identify the real challenge of “what do you want your design to DO?” This is very different from “What do you want to design?” Each challenge team has identified your challenge which may already articulate your function. As a team, go through this exercise to become familiar with the process and to make sure you are clear on the function of your challenge.

In this exercise, you will practice identifying the function of a design. As you read through each of the statements, as what it is the “design” needs to do. It is likely that your FUNCTIONS will be verbs. There may be several correct answers for each example, but don’t spend too much time thinking over these:

1. There are too many plastic drink bottles in our trash and we want to find a solution that will result in less trash.

2. Some people don’t want Raid on the shelf in their home, but they don’t want bugs either.

3. Xcel Energy wants to build a large solar plant in the San Luis Valley.

4. A river channel built by the Army corps of Engineers is too small and needs to be enlarged.

5. Our school district wants to place recycling bins in local elementary schools.

6. The U.S. Forest Service wants to “right size” their fleet of vehicles.

7. A dirt road in my community is bumpy and needs to be paved.

8. The National Park Service wants to stock Medano Creek with native fish.

9. Plastic bottles are about to be banned because they contain BPA.

10. I set the curfew for my teenage son at 12;00AM on weekends.

11. I can’t sell my fabrics in Europe because the dyes contain heavy metals.

12. Since the new housing development was built, we need to add another wastewater treatment plant.

13. Our county wants to recycle building materials from houses that are to be demolished.

14. I want to bring people in my community closer to Nature.

15. Flower spread their DNA via seed dispersal.