



SNAMP Structural Facilitation Training Summary Notes

USFS Bass Lake office

April 24, 2008 9-4

In Attendance:

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Key Agreements:

1. The goal of these workshops is to share some facilitation skills to assist in future adaptive management discussions; to encourage all of the participants to create a shared responsibility for success.
2. It is important to define how the scientists involved in the process are going to be integrated with the public.
3. These workshops should begin with more backgrounds and definitions about SNAMP and its goals and structure.

Introduction to project: Kim Rodrigues described the goal of the meeting as introduction of facilitation methods and exploration of how they fit within adaptive management. Participants suggested starting these trainings with more background on the historical context of SNAMP so that people have common understanding. Kim reviewed the background of the 2001 and 2004 Record of Decision (ROD) from the Sierra Nevada Framework, the need for a neutral 3rd party, the role of USCT, and work plan development. Non-negotiable elements that frame the project include the ROD, the project MOU, legal rulings, the Clean Water Act, and CEQA/NEPA. Negotiated constraints include the seven year project time frame, the funding supply and the scientific methods being used. The first big meeting was in 2005.

The SNAMP Public Participation Team feels there is a need for structural facilitation support to improve mutual learning. One of the goals of SNAMP is to better define adaptive management. The Public Participation Team is trying to emphasize the importance of communication and so is holding trainings on facilitation. For communication to be successful, we must recognize cross cultural/organizational strengths. Even though everyone has different skills, interests and methods, they all have the same goal and they should each have a say in the process. With so many diverse groups, there can be different agendas, but there must be a common goal. The

facilitation method assumes that people want to work collaboratively. Success is determined by results, process and relationship outcomes.

Structural Facilitation: Kim Rodrigues guided the group through a consideration of the importance of process in adaptive management and how to improve process: the consequences of poor communication, the need to anchor the meaning of words, the problems with making inferences, and the limitations and usefulness of boundaries and constraints.

Consequences of poor communication: The group listed the following effects of poor communication: distrust, rebellion, and lack of cooperation, anger and inefficiency. When project information is not managed or shared appropriately it affects present and future projects. Meetings are a key way of sharing information, however many meetings have problems. Attendees have been to meetings that were unproductive because they involved accusations, manipulation, poor facilitation, not keeping to the agenda, allowing ancillary topics, lack of follow up and work outside of meetings. Improving meeting process and learning facilitation can help improve meetings and avoid some of these pitfalls. One example is building ground rules to avoid personal attacks

Anchoring the meaning of words: It's also important to anchor the meaning of words by asking who, what, when, where, and how. "Fished scale" is an example of a word that needs better definition and context. Improving language supports adaptive management by fostering better understanding, getting everyone on the same page and setting a context where it is safe to ask questions.

Inferences: Inferences cause miscommunication and are a common result of use of excessive technical jargon, acronyms and abbreviations, accusations, and assumptions. It is human to take the concrete and make inferences. To get on the same page as someone you are not communicating well with, it is important to get down to the language of reporting.

Boundaries and constraints: Anchoring a project through defining boundaries and negotiating constraints streamlines the meeting process, allows for development of common agreements, simplifies a complex issue and makes things easier to grasp by defining the issue. Boundaries for the SNAMP project are the Record of Decision 2004. Other boundaries were developed in the initial process in February 2005. One is that UC is a neutral third party to help resolve the conflict between the USFS and the state.

Key agreements help establish constraints by determining what you have to work with and what you *have* to work with. They help define expectations and what is important to the project and what drives this project. Steps to building an agreement include checking for understanding.

Adaptive Management: Adaptive management emphasizes uncertainty and the need for deliberate experimentation. No one currently knows the effects of SPLATs. These projects will help to build an answer. However, communication efforts have been poor. The decision making process being used is participatory: when given information, the UCST decides whether or not to use it and the reason why or why not is given. The UCST has 2 weeks to respond to public comments or concerns.

It is important to define adaptive management in order to develop a common understanding, ground the project in what is already known, and deepen our understanding as it applies to SNAMP. The Public Participation Team is doing outreach and workshops and reminding stakeholders of key agreements to ground everyone in the history of the project and allow them to walk through this process together

Role of the Integration Team: The Integration Team has been developed to create a dialogue about what is going on with the stakeholders, UCST and USFS. It will be used to share the emerging baseline data from the science teams and assess whether we are on the right track. May 27th is the first with the Fire and Forest Health Team. Owls and Fishers will follow.

Expected results from adaptive management: The group suggested that the Integration Team focus on the follow results:

1. Develop more understanding of the whole picture:
 - Identify boundaries for USFS.
 - Define goals up front.
 - Develop tools and a modeling program to integrate this and implement adaptive management elsewhere. (Methods, Models, Results, Communication)
2. Educate the public about what good research science is:
 - Demonstrate the role of peer-reviewed science in forest policy.
 - Develop public access to data to show how organizations do their work. Shared data will lead to shared understandings.
 - Agree on WHAT to study, how, why and reach the goal with diverse interests together.
 - Frame results for scientists and the public.
 - Empower the USFS research capacity to take on the neutral 3rd party role.
3. Promote alternatives to how the forests are managed now:
 - Regulate the USFS long term, so that public interests are kept in mind.

Expected processes from successful adaptive management: The group suggested the following types of processes to support adaptive management:

1. Definition of the adaptive management process.
 - Definition of roles and responsibilities in this process.
2. Open and transparent practices.
 - Clear definition of proposed adjustments to management within applicable boundaries.
 - Articulation of trade offs.
 - Identification and sharing of information, sources and data.
3. Engaging volunteers in meaningful ways UP FRONT (retirees, other local knowledge).

Expected relationships from successful adaptive management: The group suggested the following relationship outcomes:

1. Improved trust between the USFS and the public.
2. Fully functioning; sustainable integration team that are local and national.
 - Integration of Congress and the Undersecretary of Agriculture
 - Integration of county government needs to be integrated since they are a pressure point for action.

How might we engage more public participants? Attendees suggested that incentives and a clear description of why the project is important are needed. One on one work with individuals who are committed and a web media vehicle were suggested. Developing field trips and kinesthetic learning opportunities to engage people in a way that may be better than theorizing the implementation of this plan.

They also said that a **visual representation of the structure of the project would help communicate to attendees of these meetings. It should include the science team, branches, their function, etc.** Any science team member needs to be crystal clear in their function and how that fits into the framework. **It is also important to portray who the USFS players are and what their responsibilities are, especially who is monitoring whom.**

To build the capacity of the Integration Team, give them a role and make it an agreement. Report back often from the central brain of SNAMP and progress.

Meeting evaluation: Participants said that the strengths of meeting were flexibility and the ability to change the agenda to describe the complexity of SNAMP more completely based on attendee needs. Initial relationships were built. Lunch was also good. Improvements could be made by adding a diagram that shows the structure of the project.

Action Items: The group suggested distributing notes, updating the training, circulating feedback on the first IT meeting, emailing the newsletters to the stakeholders when they come out. It would also be good to invite UCST to district interdisciplinary team meetings.