



SNAMP Facilitating Collaborative Adaptive Management Workshop #3 notes

Auburn – March 14th 2013 9:00 to noon; Oakhurst – April 18th 9:00 to noon

In attendance:

Auburn:

Mike Brenner – Natural Resource Cons. Service
Holly George – UC Cooperative Extension
Peter Hopkinson – UC Berkeley
Kim Ingram – UC Cooperative Extension
Kelly Larvie – CalFire
Lynn Lorenson – Nevada Co. Resource Cons. Dist.
Gia Martynn – Plumas Corp
Kim Rodrigues – UC Cooperative Extension
Evan Smith – Natural Resource Cons. Service

Kelley Aubushon – Cal Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
Joe Bridges – UC Berkeley Fisher team
Brittany Dyer – Yosemite Sequoia RC & D
Rebecca Garcia – USFS Sierra National Forest
Jeannie Habben – Central Sierra Watershed Com.
Alex Krevitz – Kunak Wildlife Studies
Anne Lombardo – UC Cooperative Extension
Fadzayi Mashiri – UC Cooperative Extension
Cheryl Moxley – Cal Dept. of Fish & Wildlife

Both:

Susie Kocher – UC Cooperative Extension

Oakhurst:

I. Introduction and review: At both events, after introductions, Kim Rodrigues reviewed the content of the second workshop and the goals of the whole workshop series: to improve communication and facilitation skills between natural resource managers and stakeholders, to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the collaboration process, and to develop these skills in others for future involvement.

Individuals introduced themselves, identified a shape (circle, square, rectangle, triangle, wavy line) that they resonated with, named one tool from the workshop that was most useful to them, and listed their remaining desired outcomes for the last workshop.

Specifics goals of attendees at both third workshops were to:

- Review how to establish ground rules and get buy in from the group
- Review decision making process
- Get ideas on how to stay focused on the issue at hand without letting back stories or backstabbing take over
- Learn how to reign conversations back in when trouble starts
- Learn how to deal with a difficult leader/bully
- Learn how to deal with non-team players
- Learn how to deal with lack of outcome results

Participants in Oakhurst said they were already using these tools learned at the first two workshops:

- Building and maintaining relationship tools
- Consulting difficult participants for pre-meeting work
- Learning to listen more sympathetically
- Identifying the decision maker and method of decision making

Review of process tools: The groups in both locations did the jigsaw puzzle exercise. Since participants identified in an earlier workshop that the majority of problems with meetings are process related, having all these key processes in place can set up a group for a successful meeting. Participants were paired up to present one of the four pieces of the puzzle:

- 1) Identify desired outcomes: Write out the concrete goals of products (plans, lists, agreements) or knowledge (understanding, learning, agreement)
- 2) Create a workable agenda: Include introduction, time frame, content/topics, conclusion/wrap up and opportunity for feedback
- 3) Clarify meeting ground rules: Stick to agenda, focus on outcomes, encourage all to participate, be respectful, no swearing, no interruptions
- 4) Identify roles and responsibilities: Group members are engaged and active, facilitation is unbiased and leads the group to their goals, recorder keeps track in writing, meeting leader develops agenda, runs the group, and gives it vision

II. Learning styles and group dynamics: The shape exercise was offered as one example of team building exercises. The shape that appeals to you may have some bearing on your personality, skills or mood for the day according to <http://psychometricshapes.co.uk/>. Kim made the point that all types are needed within a group to keep it functioning well. Relationships are one part of the results/process/relationships triangle of success for collaborative processes. It is hard to get buy in on making time for relationship building, but success typically comes from learning to balance the three sides of this triangle.

Another exercise to identify different learning and thinking styles that affect group dynamics is the “6 Thinking Hats” exercise (from Edward DeBono’s 1999 book - *Six Thinking Hats*.). We may shift back from different modes of thinking when considering an issue, or we may have one style that we use most often. It is important to be aware of the hat you and others wear. They all bring many valuable perspectives to the table. Facilitators must be careful not to let any one style dominate.

The styles are 1) *White hat* – This style is about facts and information. 2) *Yellow hat* – This style is optimistic. The best or most positive aspects of an issue are considered. 3) *Black hat* – The pessimist considers all the negative potential impacts about an issue. 4) *Red hat* – This is the emotional hat. 5) *Green hat* – This thinking style considers the most creative ways to address an issue. 6) *Blue hat* – This thinking style focuses on the big picture and how the issue is related to others.

Participants from both groups identified a contentious issue and practiced identifying potential stakeholder responses to it. In Auburn, participants brainstormed how a group might react to a proposed clearcut harvest. In Oakhurst, the group considered the current proposal of removing horses and stables from Yosemite National Park and putting RV parking there instead.

- 1) White hat thinking would describe the facts
 - The location and cost of the project
 - The justification – what are the environmental impact of stables
 - The number of RV spaces to be constructed, number of people served
- 2) Yellow hat thinking would identify the positive impact of the project
 - More people and RV’s could be accommodated, this would expose more families and children to the out of doors
 - Additional users would generate more revenue
 - There would be fewer flies and water quality impacts from manure

- 3) Black hat thinking would identify all the negative aspects
 - This is paving paradise
 - It's an erosion of horseman's rights and is disrespectful of rural culture
- 4) Red hat thinking would focus on the emotional impacts
 - Those poor horses will need to find new homes
 - I will miss that great horse I rode there Trigger
 - This is poking a hole in my childhood memories
 - Now I can't share this experience with my kids
- 5) Green hat thinking would try to find a creative "BOTH AND" solution
 - Maybe there could be a pony park at the RV park for children
 - A community garden could be put there instead to grow produce for park restaurants
 - Maybe we could have both more RV parking and stables
- 6) Blue hat thinking would look at the big picture
 - How could the increase in revenue from the proposed project be used to make improvements at the park?
 - How would the change affect vehicle emissions and what are the climate change impacts?

Kim shared that identifying these styles of thinking can be key for directing a productive conversation. If the group gets stuck on one mode, the facilitator can suggest that everyone try a different hat and see how it changes their group understanding of an issue, which can then lead to key agreements.

Stages of group development – Kim shared a definition of a group as all the people in an elevator. Once the elevator gets stuck, the must work together to get out of the elevator. Thus a group is a diverse entity while a team shares a vision or goal. Groups can be said to go through stages of team development:

- Forming – defining shared outcomes, developing goals
- Storming – expressing individual opinions, dealing with conflict
- Norming – developing norms and group definitions about an issue or how to deal with issues
- Performing – functioning smoothly based on the processes worked on in previous stages

Where a group might be on this scale is fluid affected by addition of content or participants. Teams may go back and forth through these stages. Identifying where a group is on this scale can help the facilitator anticipate the issues and processes needed for successful meetings.

III. Reducing conflict: Conflict occurs when there are opposing positions that do not allow a group to come to agreement. Kim shared the concept of the ladder of inference as a way to reduce conflict. All individuals interpret what they see and hear and what it means and so what others are saying to them. They climb the ladder of inference from the facts to ultimately develop positions. There can be confusion and misunderstanding when we climb the ladder of inference too quickly and engage in conflict against those of differing positions without understanding their underlying issues. In Auburn, Kim went through a role playing exercise to show how this works. One person opposed a timber harvest on nearby timber company lands while the other supported it. A key to resolving this conflict was to climb back down the ladder by identifying shared interests and then trying to find the underlying issues.

In this example, both parties agreed that the harvest would produce common economic benefits and improve of forest health. No one was against harvesting per se. With further exploration, the group learned that person opposing the harvest was concerned about the amount of log truck traffic that would be going through the neighborhood as children were getting on and off their school buses. By limiting the travel periods of the log

trucks, the harvester was able to get agreement from those opposing the project. This conflict could not have reduced without a safe environment for the conversation.

IV. Dealing with difficult behaviors: Kim reviewed the module on dealing with difficult behaviors at both meetings. Specific behaviors were nominated by the group in Oakhurst. Then the group identified process tools to deal with these:

- 1) *Lack of progress/deliverables – Solutions:*
 - Take good notes that can help the group remember their progress and celebrate it when it comes
 - Identify clear desired outcomes that are specific and measurable
 - Be sure to have an agenda item for next steps that identifies action items and deadlines
 - In the wrap up section ask if the group met expectations – brainstorm with the group how to improve
- 2) *Some staff members say no solution is possible because of liability concerns*
 - Work with the group to identify the actual boundaries and constraints
 - Define the legal facts up front
 - Host multiple meetings that accommodate staff’s concerns about liability with a particular audience
- 3) *A group member throws up road blocks all the time*
 - Ask the group to change to a different color hat and brainstorm an optimistic solution
 - Identify the underlying issues by asking for white hat information
 - Do some meeting prework – call ahead of time to see if there is a blocking issue
 - Throw the issue out to the group for input
- 4) *Some in the group are not invested in (have no buy-in) to an outcome*
 - Revisit the meeting’s desired outcomes, understandings and agreements
 - Ask if this the right meeting for them
 - Pull the individual over for a private conversation during a break to explore underlying issues
 - Use meeting leader to restate the reason for the desired outcome
 - Point the participant to ground rules about active participation
- 5) *Someone in the group doesn’t speak up*
 - Exercise patience – not everyone is comfortable weighing in immediately, allow them time to process
 - Check with the individual during a break
 - Go around the room but allow people who don’t want to speak up to pass
- 6) *Someone in the group speaks up too much*
 - Remind them of the ground rules (say it once)
 - Accept and legitimize their concern
 - Actively seek input from others in the group
- 7) *Someone in the group doesn’t attend regularly but freely shares lots of uniformed opinions*
 - Ask for the group’s feedback on how to draw the person in
 - Think hard before expelling a member from the group
- 8) *Someone in the group is unprepared for the meeting topic*
 - Direct participants to documents in advance
 - Offer to meet/contact them before the meeting and offer a briefing
 - Give a very short review of progress to date
- 9) *Someone in the group is self proclaimed expert*
 - Thank them for their input
 - Ask them to provide their information to the other technical members of the group
 - Acknowledge different expertise of the group

- 10) *Problems with communication up and down an organization's hierarchy, Internal audience/external presence drops bombs; Internal speaker derails the meeting*
 - Do meeting pre-work to identify potential problems
 - Develop ground rules for members of the organization during the meeting so they understand expectations in the meeting
- 11) *Some in the meeting are showing a lot of anger/passion*
 - Identify their concerns and validate them
 - Record their concerns
 - Defer their issue to the parking lot

V. Integration and capacity transfer: The UCCE team has set up a collaborative tools site. This is a list serve/page within the UC system that anyone can access. Participants will all be invited to join and can share resources, questions, events etc. on the site. We will send an invitation to all those who have attended the workshops.

VI. Wrap up: next steps and evaluation: Participants were asked to fill out the workshop series post survey so researchers with the Sierra Nevada Adaptive Management Project could measure their learning during the workshop. Results, when known, will be shared with the group.

Then participants were asked what worked well in the workshop and what could be better next time. Participants in Auburn said they liked having a small group, the role modeling exercises and scenarios, and the review of past topics. In Oakhurst, participants said the workshop was excellent and enjoyed the style and format including the open dialog and how open the facilitator was to all input. They appreciated the content, the diverse group and the many examples and stories.

Suggestions for improving the workshop were to have more time, to have more interactive small groups and role playing, to revisit the initial homework, using more scenarios and role playing, and to have a better facility. Sending the agenda earlier and emailing the whole curriculum package when it is available were suggested as improvements as well. It is also better to check in with the group on changes in process (such as when moving the meeting outdoors).

Suggestions for useful follow up activities or workshops include:

- Meet for a full day or two instead of the half days – having a bag lunch is ok
- Charge a nominal fee to encourage constant participation
- Placer County Water Agency and Sierra Nevada Conservancy have nice meeting rooms in Auburn
- Have a follow-up workshop in 3-6 months
- Collaborative tools site will be a great resource – create/share scenarios that participants can work through in the meantime
- The initial homework can be revamped as an assignment and to inform the follow-up workshop
- Post the workshop notes to the collaborative tools site
- Create a module on identifying/honoring/dealing with cultural differences in CAM

Participants also filled out written evaluation forms. They ranked the workshop as very good/excellent. Their expectations for this workshop were met (60%) and exceeded (40%). 60% said the pace of this workshop was just right, 40% said it was too fast. Additional rankings are shown below.

SNAMP CAM Workshop 3 evaluation responses, March and April 2013

