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THE UNITED STATES FOREST SERVICE:
A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF EMPLOYEES AND
THE IMPACTS OF COLLABORATION

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The United States Forest Service: A Qualitative Study of Employees and The Impacts Of Collaboration

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Social changes over the past several decades have led to an increase in legislation mandating public participation in public land management. Like most legislation there were no specific requirements on how to achieve this mandate which left the decision up to federal agencies. For the United States Forest Service, public participation models have not been overly successful. The conflict has affected both the public and USFS employees. The latest model of public participation is collaboration. For this study collaboration was compared to deliberative democracy. Deliberative democracy shares many of the same characteristics as collaboration and the theory was used to explain what employees believe about collaboration. For this study, twenty five in depth interviews were conducted to gain information on how USFS employees believed this latest model may have an impact. The questions were aimed at finding out about perceived barriers to collaboration as well as possible benefits. It included finding out the direct impacts of required collaboration on employees and their jobs. This study also looked at the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program that requires the USFS to work with a citizen based collaborative in implementing and monitoring forest restoration.

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INTRODUCTION

Society and Federal Land

The General Land Office (GLO), established in 1812 within the department of the Treasury, was the first federal agency directly responsible for public lands. The primary objective for those running the office was land survey and disposal. In 1849, Congress established the Department of the Interior (DOI) to take over responsibility for the nation's internal affairs, including the GLO. Though now under a new department, the focus was still on disposal, a focus that would continue for several more decades (Rasband, Salzman, and Squillace 2009: 210).

The way society thinks about public land would undergo a gradual change over the next few decades. Some were beginning to see value in preserving federal ownership of the land while others saw value in the resources of the land, such as timber and minerals. With this changing vision, the amount of public lands began to grow. In 1874, Congress reserved two million acres of land in Wyoming for Yellowstone National Park then, in 1890, established three national parks, Yosemite, Sequoia and General Grant. In 1891, Congress passed the General Revision Act giving the president the authority to “set apart and reserve...public lands wholly or in part covered with timber or undergrowth, whether of commercial value or not, as public reservations” (26 stat. 1095). Within two years President Harrison had added fourteen forest reserves. By 1901, there were forty six million acres of national forest. But the real explosion in forest reserves came from President Roosevelt who, between 1901 and 1909, added millions of acres increasing the forest reserves to 172.5 million acres. In comparison, today there are 193 million acres in 155 national forests and 20 national grasslands. (USFS 2012)

As a result of the addition of land, there was a need for the creation of agencies to oversee and manage the land. The newly created federal agencies were heavily influenced by their first leaders. In Washington D.C, the creation of the United States Forest Service (USFS) in 1905 was a result of political infighting. Gifford Pinchot used his influence to get the responsibility of the forests moved from the (DOI) to the Department of Agriculture (USDA) where he was quickly appointed as the new Chief. Gifford Pinchot was a conservationist who battled both the timber companies and preservationists to fulfill his utilitarian vision of what the national forests should be. His philosophy of “the greatest good for the greatest number in the long run” has had a lasting effect on the USFS. His idea was to conserve the nation’s forests using scientific management and planned use and renewal. Pinchot coined the term “conservation ethic” and believed that forestry was the “art of producing from the forest whatever it can yield for the service of man,” with an eye on conservation so that the production lasted for all future generations. (USFS 2012)

While early bureau chiefs had tremendous influence on the development of the USFS, later bureau chiefs had to contend with more outside influence. Beginning in the 1960s, the public’s interest in forest management increased as did the demand for timber and public use of the forests for recreation purposes. This increased use and changing perspective is seen in the laws that were beginning to be passed that directly impacted forest management. These include the Multiple Use Sustained Yield Act (MUSYA) of 1960 and the Wilderness Act of 1964. MUSYA changed the purpose of the forest service from timber production and watershed protection to include outdoor recreation, range management for livestock grazing, and habitat enhancement for wildlife and aquatic species. The Wilderness Act placed numerous acres of

land already under the management of the USFS in a new category, eliminating timber harvesting and road building among other multiple uses.

In 1969 the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was passed. NEPA is considered to be the “first major statute of the modern era of environmental law” (Rasband et al 2009:258) NEPA requires Federal agencies to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) on “major Federal actions significantly affecting the quality of the human environment” (42 U.S.C §4332(2)(C)). This disclosure requirement provides the real teeth in NEPA, giving the public the means to put pressure on federal agencies to protect the environment. Public pressure continued to escalate in the 1970s with high levels of opposition to clear cutting. Clear cutting is the practice of harvesting all trees on a site and then growing a new, even-aged stand of harvestable trees. While this generates new timber, it leaves an area clear of all trees for many years and removes the diversity from the forest. Opposition to this practice was brought to national attention in both the Bolle report, on the Bitterroot National Forest in Montana, and the Church report, on the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia. A lawsuit about the clearcutting in the Monongahela National Forest stopped clearcutting practices on the National Forests and ultimately led to the National Forest Management Act of 1976 (NFMA) (16 U.S.C. §§ 1600-1614).

In the decades since these laws were passed, the USFS has had increasing challenges with public trust and the perception that the agency is not listening. The public’s expectation was to have more input into the decision making process. Many people see the USFS’s public meetings as nothing more than informational gatherings that meet the letter of the law but not the spirit. In the past few years, the USFS has made changes to try to counter that perception. One of those changes is to embrace the idea of collaboration. In writing the most recent planning

rules, the USFS held public meetings all over the country, gathering input before the process rather than just giving out information after the fact. In 2009, the USFS published new NEPA regulations that included collaboration as a way of meeting the public participation mandate of NEPA. The idea of citizen collaboration was growing and the push from these groups to be involved was strong. Often these groups felt that they had knowledge of the place that the federal government experts were missing. As the push continued, collaboration became a part of public lands management.

This paper will investigate two citizen-based collaboratives that work with the USFS: The Southwestern Crown Collaborative (SWCC) and The Clearwater Basin Collaborative (CBC). These two groups are currently working with the USFS on large landscape-level restoration projects through the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP). Through a competitive application process, both of these collaboratives were awarded CFLRP funding. This program was established by Congress in 2009 in part to “encourage ecological, economic, and social sustainability... to benefit local rural economies, and improve forest health” (USFS 2012).

The goals of this research project are to 1) determine if the differences in the type of involvement the USFS has with the collaborative has any effect on employees of the USFS; 2) determine what, if any, impact the different structure and composition of the collaboratives has on the process; 3) ascertain the amount of training on collaboration that USFS employees received; and 4) to determine the impact on USFS employees of adding collaboration to the job requirements.

The SWCC and the CBC each focus on specific locations on the national forest. The SWCC is located in Montana and focuses on an area known as the Southwestern Crown of the Continent. The CBC is located in Idaho and focuses on the Clearwater Drainage.

CHAPTER ONE: LEGISLATION

An important element to understand in public land management is the role of Congress. Decades of legislative action tells the history of how and why federal land management agencies were created. Much of this legislative action was a result of the changing social values that society placed on public lands. Those changing values fueled changes in public land management, changes that put increasing pressure on public land management agencies to conform not only to new ideas and laws but to continue to meet the old as well. The history of forested land follows the progression of the social value of public lands from a focus on disposal to one of conservation. This conservation ethic eventually included not only the land, but what the land supports. This progression of changing legislation moved the USFS from an agency with almost full autonomy in decision making to one with a high level of public scrutiny.

The history of public land management legislation is centered on two themes. First, changing social values over the past several decades have driven Congress to pass numerous laws gradually increasing the level of public participation in public land management. Second, these laws build upon each other in a layer of rules and regulations that must be taken into account on every USFS action or proposal. This chapter will look at the legislation that created public lands and the USFS; it will then look at the legislation that has determined how that agency must manage the forest and how the public will be included in its decision making.

EARLY PUBLIC LAND LEGISLATION

Federal ownership of land dates back to the very beginnings of this country and was centered on generating revenue and advancing settlement to the west (Rasband et al. 2009: 83). This advancement was achieved in large part through The Homestead Act of 1862 (NA, RG11, May

20, 1862). The Homestead Act gave the right to patent 160 acres of federal land to those who met the criteria in the Act. Within the same legislation, land grants to the railroad companies gave alternating tracts of land along the proposed railroad. These one square mile tracts came with an option to trade any tract of land for another that would better suit the purposes of the railroad company. The land grants to the railroad companies are what created the checkerboard of public lands that today's agencies must manage. During this same time period, in contrast to the federal disposal of land, there is evidence of increasing social pressure for the federal government to retain some public lands. For example, in 1864, Yosemite Valley and The Mariposa Big Tree Grove were ceded to the State of California for public recreational use (Rasband et al. 2009:130). In 1891, Congress passed the General Revision Act (26 Stat. 1103) giving the President the authority to set aside any land bearing forests as public reservations.

PUBLIC LAND MANAGEMENT LEGISLATION

The Organic Act of 1897

Under the Secretary of the Department of the Interior, the General Land Office (GLO) was responsible for land management. In 1897, to facilitate better management of federal forested land, Congress passed the Organic Act. At that time, most of the land being added to forest reserves was located in the western portion of the United States. This removed a large portion of land from revenue production for those states. To help smooth over that controversy, the act released back land that was set aside by the proclamation of February 22, 1897. Located in Wyoming, Utah, Montana, Washington, Idaho, and South Dakota, the land was once again available for disposal. However, any lands not disposed of by March 1, 1897, would again become part of the forest reserves (USDA 2012). More importantly for the future was the mandate on adding and managing future forested lands. The act requires that future public lands are to be established only for the improvement and protection of the forest, or for the "purpose of securing

favorable conditions of water flows, and to furnish a continuous supply of timber...” (USDA 2012). In 1905, The Transfer Act moved the responsibility of the forest reserves to the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), changed the name of the agency to the United States Forest Service (USFS), and began calling the forest reserves national forests. Today the USFS is still operating under the mandates of the Organic Act.

The Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act of 1960

The most active period for natural resource and public land management legislation was the 1960s and 1970s. During this period there were multiple pieces of legislation aimed at improving the environment and directing the agencies deemed responsible for public land management. The legislation reflected the slowly changing attitude of society regarding the value of natural resources such as air, water, flora and fauna.

Two changes in society that led to the increased conflict in natural resource and public land management were an increase in the number of middle class persons and a new emphasis on consumption and leisure. With the end of World War II and the passage of the GI Bill there was an increased demand for new housing and business construction. Prior to this time, little of the nation’s timber supply had come from the national forests. The average production levels prior to the 1950s were 3.5 billion board feet per year. With the building boom demanding more timber, the production levels increased to an average of 10 billion board feet per year by the end of the decade (Hirt 1994:131). The booming economy gave people not only the means to buy houses and other goods, but the ability to afford leisure time. This new middle class began to go to the national forests for recreation purposes. The number of visits increased dramatically, from 35 million visits per year to nearly 90 million visits per year from 1953 to 1960 (Hirt 1994:156).

The Organic Act did not include recreation as one of the purposes of the national forests. In response to the increased interest in recreation, the USFS sought and achieved passage of the

Multiple-Use Sustained Yield Act (MUSYA) of 1960(16 U.S.C. §§528-531). This act marked the first time that recreation and other non-consumptive uses were part of the management of the nation's forests. MUSYA stated, "That it is the policy of the Congress that the national forests are established and shall be administered for outdoor recreation, range, timber, watershed, and wildlife and fish purposes." (Public Law 86-517). The Act also made it clear that these purposes were to "...be supplemental to, but not in derogation of..." (Public law 86-517) the original purposes established by the Organic Act. This left open the question of whether or not timber production was more important than the other uses of the forests and also left the interpretation up to the discretion of the USFS.

MUSYA maintained the USFS's autonomy in decision-making and management of the nation's forests. It talked about giving due consideration to the "relative values" of the various resources but did little to smooth out the conflict between competing interests. MUSYA also failed to give legal entry points to those new interest groups to present their positions or participate in any planning or decision-making.

The National Forest Management Act of 1976

The next piece of legislation aimed at how the USFS manages public lands is the National Forest Management Act (NFMA) of 1976. Controversy and public opinion was again the driving force. At this time, clearcutting timber was standard practice in forestry. To the public, the removal of all trees was decimating to the forests and left ugly scars on the land. People were concerned over the increased risk of erosion and the effect of the changing landscape on wildlife. Some clear-cuts were also being terraced to improve timber production, a practice which further emphasized the drastic changes in the landscape. As larger and larger tracts of the forest were being cut, concern over this practice increased. In 1969, a commission was formed in Missoula, Montana to look at the issue on the Bitterroot National Forest. Named

the Bolle Report, after Arnold Bolle, Head of the Forestry Department at the University of Montana who headed up the commission, the commission's report, released in 1970, strongly criticized the USFS for a failure to look at true multiple uses and an overemphasis on timber production (Rasband et al. 2009: 1234). In West Virginia, on the Monongahela National Forest, similar concerns were raised in the Church Report. Senator Frank Church was the chair of the Public Lands Subcommittee of the Senate Interior Committee. His report focused on clearcutting in the Monongahela and four national forests in Wyoming. Congress responded with a Bill in 1974, the Forest Rangelands Renewable Resources Planning Act (Public Law 93-378, 88 Stat. 476). This act required the USFS to prepare management plans for land and resource but is thought to have done little to change or "rein in the Agency," (Rasband et al. 2009:1234).

Not until losing the lawsuit over clearcutting on the Monongahela, which effectively stopped all clearcutting on the national forests, did the USFS face the reality of the changing politics of land use management. In *West Virginia Div. of Izaak Walton League of America, Inc. v. Butz* (522 F.2d 945 (4th cir. 1975)) the decision was that the USFS had violated the Organic Act by allowing the process of clearcutting. By interpreting the Organic Act to require marking each tree separately, the courts effectively stopped all clearcutting on national forests and paved the way for reform (Rasband et al. 2009: 298). In its decision, the courts stated that the appropriate place for reform was not in the courts, but with Congress. In 1976, Congress passed its reform bill, the National Forest Management Act (NFMA), (16 U.S.C. §§ 1600-1614) which it wrote as an amendment to the 1974, Forest Rangelands Renewable Resources Planning Act.

NFMA is the primary statute that governs all USFS planning today. With the Act, Congress stated that managing renewable resources was a complex issue that changed over time.

They wanted the USFS and other agencies to serve the public interests by assessing those resources and developing a national renewable resource program that was to be periodically reviewed. Key to the current study they also found that “to serve the national interest, the renewable resource program must be based on a comprehensive assessment of present and anticipated uses...”. Federal agencies were directed to look at the demand and supply of renewable resources from both private and public land. This was to be accomplished “through analysis of environmental and economic impacts, coordination of multiple use and sustained yield opportunities as provided in the Multiple-Use, Sustained-Yield Act of 1960 (74 Stat. 215; 16 U.S.C. 528-531), and public participation in the development of the program” (USFS 2012).

From the Organic Act of 1897 to NFMA in 1976, land management practices have evolved. Changing social values pushed Congress to pass legislation to preserve public lands and create public land management agencies. Legislation was written regarding why to reserve forested land and what it was to be used for. The original law still gives the USFS its mandate to manage the land with subsequent laws adding to it. However, to manage forested land is not the only mandate that affects the USFS or the employees who are charged with the management of public lands. Over the same period of time increased demand for public participation in all federal decision making was pushing Congress to pass other types of management legislation. As federal agencies were growing, a more open process in decision making was called for.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION LEGISLATION

The Administrative Procedures Act of 1946

The Administrative Procedures Act (APA) of 1946 was a major piece of legislation that impacted all agencies of the federal government. The APA is the law under which all federal agencies promulgate rules and adjudicate conflicts (Rasband et al. 2009:223). In order to follow statutory mandates from Congress, an agency creates rules. Too often in environmental law the

statutes written by Congress contain vague language (Nie 2008:104). It is then up to the agency, through the APA, to “implement, interpret, or prescribe law or policy,” based on that vague language. Rules promulgated by an agency act as a law and are equally enforceable.

Rule-making includes three important elements: information, participation and accountability (Nie 2008:104). Information: the APA requires that agencies provide information to the public in the form of a notice published in the *Federal Register*. Participation: the mandate on participation requires that the agency give the public a chance to participate in the rule making. This can be through submitting written data, views or arguments, with or without oral presentation. This is often seen as a minimum standard as there is nothing to prevent the agencies from going further in their efforts to include the public. Accountability: this is accomplished through judicial review. The reviewing court looks at whether an agency action is “arbitrary, capricious, an abuse of discretion, or otherwise not in accordance with law” (5 USC § 706(2)(a)). While rule making has certainly changed since the APA was enacted, these three core elements remain (Nie 2008:105)

The National Environmental Policy Act of 1969

In 1969, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) was passed. NEPA was intended to create a national policy that would “encourage productive and enjoyable harmony between man and his environment.” The intention was to try to prevent environmental damage from federal action while building scientific knowledge of the ecosystem. NEPA also created the Council of Environmental Quality (CEQ). It is the CEQ that established specific regulations on how an agency was supposed to meet the new NEPA requirements, including public participation.

One of the most important aspects of NEPA is the requirement that federal agencies prepare a detailed statement of the environmental impacts of any major proposed action (42 U.S.C. §4332 102(C)(i)). In preparing an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS), the agency must go through a scoping process. This process must include public participation. This can be in the form of written comments, public meetings or both. After the initial scoping period, the agency then prepares a draft EIS which must be distributed for comment. There is a specific comment period included in the draft after which the final EIS is released. This final EIS must include responses to those public comments that were directly relevant to the analysis. With the final EIS published, a Record of Decision (ROD) can then be published in the Federal Register. The ROD must include a “discussion of the factors used in making the decision and how the decision minimizes environmental impacts.” NEPA does not require an agency to choose the action that causes the least amount of environmental impact or to choose the most environmentally beneficial option.

The USFS worked with NEPA guidelines issued by the CEQ to issue public involvement guidelines of its own. These guidelines encouraged decision makers to involve the public and offered a variety of methods to attain this goal. Again, these were guidelines. The decision on how and when to involve the public was left up to each forest, allowing for local discretion by forest personnel. This was part of the continued Forest Service culture of autonomy and local decision making that allowed the USFS to tailor public involvement to specific situations. NEPA portrayed public involvement as an information gathering tool, something that the USFS could use to help local officials make better decisions. It is this idea of locality in decision making and the autonomy of the USFS culture that still permeates public involvement for the USFS.

The Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972

The Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) of 1972 was passed by Congress to establish guidelines for the use of citizen advisory groups. Many federal agencies were already using advisory groups. Congress, in writing this legislation, was trying to ensure that these advisory groups were objective and open and not just special interest groups. FACA formalized the establishment of advisory groups by creating a process that agencies are to follow in “establishing, operating, overseeing and terminating” (5 U.S.C Appendix 2 §§1-16) citizen advisory groups. So, while agencies such as the USFS were trying to incorporate more public participation, with FACA they ended up with increased legislation and another layer of rules and regulations to contend with in natural resource and public land management.

FOREST RESTORATION LEGISLATION ***The Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program***

In 2009, Congress passed the Omnibus Public Land Management Act. Title IV of the Act is a section on Forest Landscape Restoration. One of the additions to public lands management is the idea of managing on a larger scale. As mentioned earlier, the land that has become national forests is found in a checkerboard pattern of one mile squares. Interspersed with state and privately owned land, these checkerboards were created when the country was mapped out by a grid system that was adopted by the Continental Congress as the Land Ordinance of 1785 (Rasband et al. 2009:116). This land division along straight lines was based on the relatively flat landscapes of the east and did not take into account the different landscape or climate of the western portion of the country. This method of creating boundaries has created a lot of conflict over the years in how to best manage the forests. One former USFS Bureau Chief is quoted saying, “ecological systems don’t come in squares” (Nie 2008:21).

Previous legislation makes the USFS responsible for more than just the forest. Their mandate includes preserving watersheds and managing the flora and fauna, while other laws make them responsible for the overall health of the public lands they are managing. This responsibility means thinking beyond the square boundaries of the checkerboard system. To truly manage the national forest for overall health they need to take into account the landscape and its unique features. Title IV of the Omnibus Public Land Management Act gives them a way to do just that. The purpose of Title IV is to encourage the use of collaboration among local, national and private interests for ecological, economic and social sustainability. The act encourages the use of ecological restoration to reduce wildfire risks and costs and to achieve forest and watershed health.

To encourage a strong collaborative effort, Title IV created the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP). Through this program, collaborative groups that work with the USFS can submit a proposal for funding. The money is not a grant and does not go to the collaborative but becomes part of that forest's budget. To be eligible for selection, the proposal must include at least 50,000 acres that is comprised of mostly USFS land. The collaborative proposal must identify and prioritize ecological restoration treatments for a ten year period. The landscape must be accessible by existing or proposed infrastructure and the restoration efforts must reduce the risk of wildfire by removing woody biomass. CFLRP requires that the restoration effort benefit local communities through employment opportunities as well as the reduction of wildfire risks. As in most legislative acts there are numerous requirements for record keeping and reporting. The CFLRP funds up to ten proposals per fiscal year, but no more than two proposals in one Forest Service Region per year. The number of

proposal accepted must also be based on the availability of adequate funding levels within the budget.

The CFLRP fund is not an addition to the USFS budget but is money that is part of the general budget. The money appropriated for the fund is set aside to pay for up to fifty percent of the costs of the restoration. Each forest that is approved for funding from CFLRP is required to match the funding. They may do this from money from their budget, as well as using outside funds and volunteer hours. As with any proposed action on public lands, the USFS must create a plan that includes following NEPA. This, as mentioned earlier, requires an EIS. The CFLRP funding does not cover the costs of the planning or the work on an EIS.

SUMMARY

Public land management has been controversial from the beginning. To keep or not to keep, to use or to preserve, are questions whose answers vary with the changing values of society. There are 193 million acres of land the USFS is responsible for managing. The public has determined that they want that land managed for multiple uses that include timber as well as recreation. They want the land managed for overall health and the security of the flora and fauna that relies on public lands. Conflicts arise when different groups have different opinions on what managing for multiple use means.

Today, the USFS has a list of laws that they must follow, and each law has its own rules and regulations. The latest addition is collaboration with outside interests in order to try to mitigate conflict and create plans that everyone agrees upon. While the mandate of the CFLRP is not full agreement on everything, the idea behind collaboration is to get a group of people with mutual, but differing interests, to come together to find a way to communicate and problem

solve. Collaboration may be a way to find some resolution to the conflicts in public land management by the USFS.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

Understanding the types of public participation recognized by the industry is necessary to learn how public participation has progressed for the USFS. To facilitate that understanding a spectrum created by The International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) on the levels of involvement was utilized. The IAP2 was founded in 1990 to promote and improve the practice of public participation and is considered a leader in the field of public participation. As the type of public participation central to this thesis, collaboration will be discussed in detail. Collaboration is a grass roots movement that has managed to become an accepted practice in land management. Deliberative democracy will be discussed as a possible theory to help in understanding public participation and collaboration.

PUBLIC PARTICIPATION *Types of Participation*

In 2007, the International Association for Public Participation (IAP2) created the IAP2 spectrum of public participation. This spectrum labeled five levels of public impact through participation with federal agencies (Appendix A.): inform, consult, involve, collaborate and empower. On the IAP2 spectrum each of these types of public participation is considered to have an increasing level of impact. The United States Forest Service (USFS), while working to meet the mandate of public participation from multiple laws, has participated in all but one of the types of public participation labeled by the IAP2. The progression of the USFS in public participation began with the lowest level, to inform, and today is trying to use the level of collaboration to include the public in land management decision making.

Though the IAP2 model can be used to follow the evolution of public participation in the USFS, some of the labels are somewhat misleading when applied specifically to that agency. For the USFS, the level of involvement early on was to “inform”. This label accurately reflects the public participation goal at the time it was used. The informational level is the lowest level of public participation according to the IAP2. To achieve this, the USFS used informational meetings to inform the public of projects and plans. The informational meeting, or open house gave the public a chance to hear what the USFS was planning but did not include a real exchange of information. It was the lack of input that left the public frustrated and with the belief that the USFS was not listening.

The next level on the spectrum is “consult”. This label that is somewhat misleading in the level of involvement. This level is still mostly informational in nature and in does not include consulting with the public. It adds only an agency’s willingness to listen to and acknowledge the public’s concerns. While the label is not completely accurate, the level of involvement reflects the USFS’ progression in public participation. At this level, the agency provides feedback to the public on how public input influenced the decision. Examples of this level are public comment and surveys, focus groups and public meetings. This style of public meeting was the standard with the USFS and other federal agencies for years. Rather than create a higher level of satisfaction, these public meetings often left the public frustrated and with a lack of trust in the USFS.

To “involve” is the next step in the IAP2 spectrum. This level of impact has the agency working with the public to ensure that their concerns are directly reflected in the developed alternative and requires feedback on how public input influenced the decisions. This level of the spectrum gives workshops and deliberative polling as examples of techniques to use to involve

the public. For the USFS, this level was met with the requirements of the EIS or EA and included publicizing the alternatives developed due to public comment and participation.

“Collaborate” is next on the spectrum and requires the agency to look to the public for advice and innovative ideas. It means incorporating the advice and recommendations into decisions to the extent possible. This is done through citizen advisory groups, consensus building and public participation in decision-making. Nationally, the USFS used this method when writing the 2010 Forest Plan. At the forest level, the use of collaboration is growing.

The last stage on the IAP2 spectrum is “empower”. This is another label that is misleading when applied to a federal agency. To empower has a different meaning when applied to public participation than when applied to the individual or the public as a whole. In general, when society talks about empowering it implies the idea of taking ownership of values and opinions. An example of this definition is seen in the legislation that changed public land management. That is the public empowering themselves to have a say in public land management. But on the IAP2 spectrum, empowerment places the final decision-making in the hands of the public with the agency implementing the decision. For a land management agency, this would be considered devolution of power and is not allowed by law. The examples of this type of technique are citizen juries and voting ballots.

Success of Participation

The introduction of public participation requirements through various pieces of legislation did not include guidelines on how to meet the publics’ needs. One exception to this was NEPA. With the creation of the CEQ, NEPA included where in the process to include public participation with scoping and public comment on an EIS. Even with this directive there was little or no help on the best way for any agency to provide successful public participation or

utilize the resulting information. Because of this, public participation in federal decision making has not been completely successful in helping the public achieve its goals regarding public land management (Leach 2006).

In the past decade, the frustration and disagreements over public land management practices have led to litigation and lawsuits, lobbying campaigns and administrative appeals. This approach is expensive. It creates division between the public and the agency which reverberates beyond the immediate issue (Brick, et al. 2001). Despite the lack of success and resulting frustrations, the public continues to push for a more participatory role in public land management. For some, collaboration is one type of public participation in public land management that does a better job of satisfying public interests and meeting the needs in public participation.

COLLABORATION

Of the types of public participation on the IAP2 spectrum, collaboration is the highest level of public involvement the USFS is allowed. The empowerment level, which is the last level of the spectrum, is considered devolution of power by the agency and, by law, is not allowed. With this practice increasing in public land management, an understanding of collaboration is needed. Collaboration is a process. It is a group of people, referred to as stakeholders, working together to solve a common problem or reach a common goal. Collaborative groups are as diverse as the people who create them and the conflicts they are looking to resolve. Articles on collaboration are numerous but a solid definition of collaboration is difficult to find. What is given is a set of common characteristics or principles needed to establish an effective collaborative group. To understand the concept of true collaboration requires knowledge of these fundamental characteristics.

The characteristics of collaboration will vary depending on which expert you ask but there are some that seem to be core characteristics. These characteristics are not listed in order of importance and are thought to be equally important in creating a workable collaborative group. Collaborative groups should:

- Include a diverse range of stakeholders to incorporate all possible interests (Innes et al. 1999: 412; Snow 2001:2; Leach et al. 2009). The representation of all interests is one of the differences between a citizen collaborative and a special interest group.
- Establish a clear purpose or goal (Innes et al. 1999: 412; Snow 2001:2; Leach et al. 2009). This will keep the group on track and help maintain cohesion among people with diverse interests and values.
- Engage the participants in discussions aimed at consensus and have rules in place to guide the group towards that goal.
- Include local participants as well as a cross section of organizations.
- Grant all participants the same opportunities for joint fact finding and the sharing of information, as complete information is necessary for quality decision making (Innes et al. 2004; Leach et al. 2009; McKinney 2010).
- Establish a protocol to include an understanding that conflict within the group is to be handled in a civilized manner and that all participants deserve equal respect (Innes et al. 1999; Leach et al. 2009).
- Seek sustainability. The long term management of public lands requires a long term commitment from the group. It is vital for groups that take on this task to have a plan for sustaining membership.

- Be completely voluntary. This voluntary status has been a tenet of citizen collaboration from the beginning (Snow 2004:2; Wondelleck 2010:321).

There are those who see benefits to collaboration and those who believe it has too many barriers to succeed. Those who believe in collaboration see it as a way to build long term, mutually beneficial relationships. These are relationships not only between the collaborative group and the agency but between the stakeholders who make up the collaborative group.

Donald Snow refers to stakeholders as "... a coalition of the unlike" (2001:6) as they are people who do not usually work together and are often adversaries on the very conflict they are now trying to solve. In working toward a common goal they can begin to see the other side and build better trust. One of the other benefits hoped for with collaboration in public land management is the reduction of litigation and conflict through improved management of the resources. In addition, the incorporation of specialized local knowledge is thought to improve local support and decision making (GAO 2013).

Collaboration has limitations and has become another source of conflict in public land management. Collaboration can be difficult due to the very diversity of people that it seeks to involve. The process is time consuming and it can be difficult for volunteer members to meet all the demands. In addition, not all problems have a collaborative solution. Some conflicts can be too big or too complicated for consensus and the lack of agreement can stalemate a group. It can also be hard to ensure that all interests are represented. This can be due to a lack of motivation to participate or a lack of capacity in time or resources to attend meetings. There is a concern that trying to reach a consensus does not always lead to the best decision, that the decision is based on a least common denominator solution that is too much of a compromise.

There are many arguments for and against collaboration in public governance. Arguments for it include the assertion that traditional decision-making methods have not worked in the past and so will not work in the future (Kenney 2000). Supporters argue that there are many examples of natural resource collaboratives that have already achieved success (Kemmis and McKinney 2011). Skeptics of collaboration question the idea that current decision making processes are fundamentally flawed. According to Kenney (2000), critics assert a lack of belief that environmental viewpoints are adequately represented in the collaborative group process. Additionally, Kenney reports a common opinion among skeptics is that the process of collaboration does not lead to efficient decision making (Kenney 2000). Regardless of the arguments for or against it, collaboration in public land management is happening. The USFS now has rules and regulations that include collaboration as a legitimate means of public participation. For example, in 1997, the USFS adopted a policy statement encouraging the use of collaboration (USFS 2012). In 2009, they placed specific language in their NEPA regulations about collaboration (Van de Wetering 2006).

It is clear that public participation in public land management is an ongoing and ever changing process. While there is little agreement on the reason past public participation models have lacked support, there are some theories that propose ambivalence in citizen participation in public administration (King et al 1998). Others theories speak of a lack of citizen power (Innes. et al 2004). In political science, some have argued that representative government by elites is appropriate and that true public participation is unworkable in this type of bureaucracy. The theory proposed that seems to give the best understanding of the development of collaboration is the theory of deliberative democracy (Dahl 1989). Deliberative democracy is based on the idea that democracy itself is a process of dialogue, deliberation and decision-making on how to best

meet the interests of society. As collaboration is also based on meeting the interests of society, using this theory, collaboration and the information gathered from interviews can be analyzed to help understand the impacts on the USFS employees.

DELIBERATIVE DEMOCRACY

Deliberative democracy is posed as an ideal form of democracy where the interests of individual citizens get as much attention as the well-organized interest groups (Susskind 2006). In today's representative politics, the role of citizens is too often relegated to voting. This form of government provides little if any opportunity for the average person to participate in any meaningful way in policy making decisions. (Hartz-Karp and Briand 2009). In contrast, deliberative democracy, in theory, provides a way for any citizen to participate in decision-making.

Definitions of deliberative democracy vary, but theorists tend to agree on certain characteristics: (Guttmann and Thompson 1996, Leach 2004, Gastil and Levine 2005).

- Inclusiveness - provides an inclusive form of discourse in which citizens collectively and cooperatively analyze a problem.
- Diversity - requires multiple options that reflect different sets of values or value-priorities held by members of the public
- Conscientiousness - weighs arguments for and against each option in light of the criteria established.
- Ongoing - provides a period of continuing discussion.
- Equal consideration – values ideas on their merit not on who is advocating a particular view.

Two conceptual questions in the literature are: Who initiates the deliberation and who participates? Button and Ryfe (2005) present a typology of initiation and participation. Three different types of entities often initiate deliberation: grassroots civic organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGO's) and government organizations. Button and Ryfe (2005:23) define these group types: grassroots civic organizations are groups "such as neighborhood associations"; NGO's are groups "such as the League of Women voters"; and government organizations are "planning agencies" such as the USFS. Participation can be by self-selection, random selection and stakeholder selection. Self-selection is defined as involving a 'personal invitation, from friend to friend, neighbor to neighbor or community organizer to citizen' (2005:23). Random selection is said is self-explanatory but they include jury selection and deliberative polling as examples. Stakeholder selection involves the identification, by organizers, of groups or individuals likely to be affected by a decision (Button and Ryfe 2005).

In deliberative democracy, decisions must be preceded by authentic deliberation. Authentic deliberation is free from distortions of unequal political power and influence. One of the concerns of those who advocate deliberation is the domination of non-deliberative talk and other strategic behaviors in deliberative actions (Button and Ryfe 2005:22). There are other concerns to keep in mind when looking at deliberative democracy. In their article, "Institutionalizing Deliberative Democracy", Janette Hartz-Karp and Michael K. Briand (2009: 134-135) look at some of those concerns.

- Deliberative democracy does not automatically generate consensus. Although views can change during the course of a deliberate discussion this does not always mean a unanimous agreement will be reached. Therefore, in deliberative democracy, majority rule should still be utilized.

- Good deliberation does not just happen; it requires expertise, time and resources.
- Deliberation must include an ever increasing number of participants in order to achieve a level of significance on national public issues.
- Even good deliberation does not always lead to social or political change.
- Citizen government is often a slow and messy way to conduct business.
- Citizens and officials both need to see results in order to continue the process.
- When utilizing citizens, officials must prepare themselves for a more time consuming and demanding way of serving the public interest.

Deliberative public participation has benefits and advantages. Many of the advantages listed by Hartz-Karpf and Briand (2005: 132-133) are similar to those listed for collaboration.

- Deliberative strategies can help communities address challenging problems that the government is unable to solve on its own.
- Questioning by citizens helps officials improve policies and the policy-making process.
- Deliberative participation can help to bring officials and citizens closer.
- Decision makers working alongside citizens help to strengthen both the government and the community.
- Even when a decision is not reached, deliberation helps to open minds and increases understanding of others and their needs.
- Deliberative governance strategies help show that the relationship between government and civil society and between social movements and formal political institutions is not “zero-sum”.

In talking about deliberative democracy, citizen participation is important, but it is the role of the government that may be the key to success. According to Habermas,

...the success of deliberative politics depends not on a collectively acting citizenry but on the institutionalization of the corresponding procedures and conditions of communication, as well as on the interplay of institutionalized deliberative processes with informally developed public opinions (Habermas 1996:298).

For the USFS and other government planning agencies this means looking at current rules and regulations as well as legislation that governs how they do business.

Over the past four to five decades, changing social values have pushed forward changes in legislation in public land management. The continued push toward a better form of public participation may bring a more deliberative process to public land management. One of the conclusions that Hartz-Karp and Briand formed was that “institutionalizing deliberative practices would not replace representative government, but rather would supplement it...” (2009:125).

Deliberative democracy depends on principles of equality and fairness. Inclusiveness and diversity in participants assumes all arguments are represented and ongoing deliberation and respectful treatment of all views implies that all ideas will be heard. But Gutmann and Thompson (1996) talk about the moral argument in American democracy. Disagreements in public land management are often based on moral differences. Deliberative democracy, while calling for respectful treatment of all participants, “does not assume that the results of all actual deliberations are just” (Gutmann and Thompson 1996:17).

For the USFS, collaboration is one method of public participation currently used to answer the moral argument. While not only operating under the principles of deliberative democracy, the USFS, by engaging in collaborative processes meets some of those principles. Collaboration uses deliberation, it requires an atmosphere of respect and diversity and gives everyone a chance to be heard. To understand how that process is working requires study and evaluation of the processes and the people involved.

EVALUATING COLLABORATIVE PROCESSES

As the number of collaborative efforts grows, both critics and proponents of collaboration seek evaluation. While some collaboratives have engaged in self-evaluation, there has been little evaluation of the relationships between the USFS and working collaboratives. One article reported on the findings of two separate studies about collaboration in general that included the USFS (Carr. 1998). This article looked at attitudes toward collaborative planning as well as the uses of, support for, benefits of, barriers to, and future of collaborative planning in natural resource management. The findings show that, in general, there is support for the collaborative process and that it is seen as beneficial. Carr's article reported disagreement on perceived barriers, between the two groups. USFS employees reported barriers such as personal agendas, lack of support from line officers and the heavily politicized nature of the process. Both the employees and the partners also felt that the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) presented significant barriers such as limiting efforts to information gathering while presenting stumbling blocks for both citizens and USFS employees. The sides differed in their opinion of the level of incentive for the partner groups. The USFS employees felt that the availability of the administrative appeals process gave the partner groups little incentive to participate in collaboration while the partner groups felt that participation was a primary avenue in influencing

agency decision making. Both groups agreed that collaboration would continue to be part of the future of natural resource planning and management.

In 2006, William Leach looked at the history of public participation with the USFS. His article, “Public Involvement In USDA Forest Service Policymaking: A Literature Review” summarized the findings of twenty five studies that reported conclusions on the “keys to success” (Leach 2006:44). While the article looked at studies of different types of public participation, the findings are relevant when looking at collaboration as a type of public participation. The findings talked about process design traits that included facilitation, scope, realistic objectives funding and inclusiveness. The findings included comments on participant traits like active involvement by agency staff, cooperative and enthusiastic participants and trust. The need for strong leadership, continuity of participants and motivation were also reported. All of these are also traits or characteristics of collaboration. Leach concluded, “The USFS appears to be particularly well positioned to take advantage of the latest findings from research on collaborative planning” (Leach 2006:48).

SUMMARY

The study of collaboration has been extensive while the study of USFS employees and collaboration is more limited. Carr’s article (1998) gave a general outline of USFS employees’ attitudes on the collaborative process. What is missing is information on how collaboration impacts USFS employees’ in their jobs. Some of the suggestions from the original participants in the two studies Carr looked at have been implemented, like the addition of collaboration into the rules and regulations for the USFS.

There is a need for continued study of the collaborative process and specifically, the impacts that it has on participants, especially on federal employees. If collaboration and

deliberative processes are becoming the norm in decision-making in the federal government, then a more thorough study of the impacts of these processes on employees is called for. With new legislation, a new process adds an additional layer of requirements along with the rules and regulations that go with it. While the research for this study looked at many of the same issues reported in Carr's article (1998), the overall attempt was to ascertain the impact of the process on USFS employees' feelings about their jobs with the addition of collaboration.

This thesis utilizes the principles of the theory of deliberative democracy to understand the implications of the process of collaboration and its impact on USFS employees. Deliberative democracy shares many characteristics with collaboration and the use of this theory will help in understanding the meaning of and possible impacts of collaboration on USFS employees. Deliberative democracy theory will also be used to study the institution and culture of the USFS in relation to collaboration and USFS employees' perceptions.

For years citizens have relied on legislative measures to participate in public land management decisions. Social change was the driving force behind many of the legislative acts. While there are examples of citizen groups using legislation to influence public land management, this option does not necessarily result in institutional change. Habermas' idea, that deliberative democracy does not rely on citizen's participation but instead requires a change in the institutions for deliberative processes to succeed, is an important link in looking at the USFS and its use of deliberative democracy in the form of collaboration. Any changes made in the way the government conducts public participation and decision making will impact not only USFS employees but also the culture and the future of the agency. This thesis will examine collaboration to determine the impact on USFS employees of adding the process to job requirements.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODS

RESEARCH APPROACH

This is a qualitative study of the effects of required participation in collaboration on USFS employees. A qualitative study was used because in-depth interviews were needed to gather information on individual perceptions of collaboration. USFS employees were recruited using purposive sampling to participate in confidential interviews. Purposive sampling is the use of knowledge by the researcher in selecting representative samples from a population (Singleton 2010: 173-174). This sampling protocol required the participant to be a current USFS employee whose job requires them to interact with or participate in one of the two collaboratives.

The two collaboratives were chosen because they both had CFLRP funding and are located within Region One of the USFS. Looking at two groups that were working under the same program, the CFLRP, allowed the study to look at the differences in the makeup of the collaboratives rather than the type of work they were doing and to determine if the differences had an impact on USFS employees. The design of the collaboratives, while not a primary focus of this study, was looked at as part of the overall question of how collaboration impacts USFS employees. Using two groups that are located in the same USFS Region added a level of stability at the upper management level and eliminated the need to consider differences at that level as a variable. The geographic location of the groups allowed the researcher to attend several group meetings, as well as conduct some in-person interviews.

The two collaboratives selected for this study meet the core characteristics of collaboration. They share many commonalities and have some significant differences. The following is a description of the way in which these collaboratives began and a comparison of

some of their similarities and differences. To gain a better understanding of the groups, one person from each collaborative was interviewed. Each interview utilized the same interview guide (Appendix B).

THE COLLABORATIVES

The Clearwater Basin Collaborative

What is now known as the Clearwater Basin Collaborative began as a grassroots campaign to protect an area of land in North Central Idaho referred to as the Great Burn Area. In 1971, to protect this area of land, the Great Burn Study Group (GBSG) was founded. In 2000, after losing one particularly lengthy fight over Fish Lake on the North Fork District of the Clearwater National Forest in Idaho, the GBSG set up a meeting to discuss other options. The Konkelville Consortium was created. In August of 2007, they were approached by a representative from U.S. Senator Mike Crapo's office. The Senator was interested in what the group was doing and told them that if they could meet his requests then he would consider convening a formal collaborative. The requests were to get together a list of people representing all the interests in the basin that were problem solvers, raise enough money to get a nationally known facilitator, and use that person to launch a free meeting. They were also to get the tribe involved and change the name. They met these conditions, and in addition, expanded the boundaries to include not just the North Fork of the Clearwater but the entire Clearwater Basin Watershed (Map Appendix C). The name was changed to the Clearwater Basin Collaborative (CBC) and Senator Crapo convened the first meeting in May of 2008.

The Southwestern Crown Collaborative

The Southwestern Crown Collaborative (SWCC) is located in Montana with boundaries that encompass the Southwestern Crown of the Continent (Map Appendix D). In contrast to the

CBC, the SWCC was a group created for the express purpose of applying for the CFLRP funding. In 2009, a group of people that were already involved in various collaborative efforts held a biomass summit in Seeley Lake, Montana. The goal of the summit was to bring the Blackfoot, Clearwater and Swan areas together to work on plans to sustain the ecology of the area. After this meeting, one of the members mentioned the CFLRP and suggested that the group consider applying. The SWCC began meeting in July 2009 to write the proposal for CFLRP funding.

Similarities between the SWCC and the CBC

The SWCC and the CBC have some of the same characteristics because they are both collaboratives and follow the accepted principles. Not surprisingly, most of the similarities are found in the operating protocols. Both of the collaboratives are consensus based, have the same thumbs up, thumbs sideways, or thumbs down voting styles, and expect anyone who opposes the proposal being voted on to have a reason as well as an appropriate alternative. Each group is a voluntary organization and the meetings are open to the public.

The collaboratives are both grassroots organizations that began with people on the ground wanting to help protect an area of public land the way they saw fit. The purposes of the collaboratives, while not the same, are very similar. The purpose of the SWCC is to collaborate with the USFS sharing information and ideas on restoration and management opportunities and to foster public learning on restoration and natural resource management. The CBC states their purpose a bit differently. They see their purpose as to provide recommendations for actions concerning the use and management of the land. They want to be part of protecting the ecological and economic health of the natural resources of the area. While the wording is different, the goal is similar: to work with the USFS to achieve overall health of forested lands.

In talking with representatives from both collaboratives, the unstated goals are also similar: to build better relationships between the USFS and the public.

Neither of these groups are FACA groups; they are considered strictly informational groups that do not direct the USFS but provide information on behalf of the public's interests. They each have members with previous collaboration experience and members who work actively on other collaborative groups. They are both located in Region One of the USFS, though the CBC is in Idaho and the SWCC is in Montana. Both groups were approved for CFLRP funding.

Differences between the SWCC and the CBC

The collaboratives also have some differences, differences that change the way they operate and interact with the USFS. The SWCC has USFS employees as voting members of the collaborative. The CBC takes care to ensure that USFS participation with the collaborative is in an informational capacity only. The CBC did not even allow USFS participation in the early meetings. Today, the membership of the CBC is essentially closed. The only way to become a member at this point is to be nominated by a current member. The steering committee then votes to determine if that person or organization is a good fit. In contrast, the SWCC has an open membership policy. Anyone who attends two meetings and submits a letter of support for the implementation of the CFLRP on the SW Crown and a written agreement to abide by the charter is a full voting member as of their third meeting.

Major funding differences exist as well. The CBC actively pursues outside funding for facilitation and other projects while the SWCC receives no funding. While both groups began as grassroots organizations, the reason for being created is vastly different. The SWCC was created solely for the purposes of obtaining CFLRP funding. Because of this it has only operated since

2009. The CBC was created out of mutual interest in protecting an area of land back in 2000. This has given the CBC more time to work together as a group although members of the SWCC have worked together on other collaboratives. The CBC utilizes an outside facilitator for meetings that deal with more contentious issues while the SWCC co-chairs facilitate regular meetings. The CBC Operating Protocols Document, while containing much of the same information as the SWCC Charter, is much more detailed, including rules of conduct, media protocols, budget and financial plan information. Finally, the SWCC covers three Ranger Districts, each on a different National Forest. The CBC covers several Ranger Districts as well but they are all within the same National Forest.

One of the keys to collaboration is the inclusion of diverse points of view. Both the SWCC and the CBC include representatives of a variety of interests including industry, recreation, environmental groups and local communities. The membership is voluntary but very different in design. One of the struggles in collaboration is sustainability of the group. Participating in a long term project requires commitment and dedication as well as the time to participate. The difference in membership design makes the SWCC more vulnerable to lack of participation than the design of the CBC. In the CBC, if a member needs to step away for any reason then an alternate is named to take their place. In the SWCC, representatives of organizations may have this option but individual members are less likely to find someone to take over if they can no longer participate.

The difference in funding may also have an impact on the relationship between the CBC and the USFS. This has the possibility of being a significant difference as funding and budgets are a major issue for federal agencies. The CBC has written their operating protocols in a more formal and detailed manner than the SWCC. After attending multiple meetings for both

collaboratives, I did not see that there was any difference in the way they operate or the respect that each individual speaking was given.

The inclusion of USFS employees as members of the SWCC may make the USFS more vulnerable to accusations of outside influence and violation of FACA rules. In order to address that issue, the SWCC made the decision to not have USFS employees act as chairs of the executive committee but have USFS employees continue to be part of the voting membership. Representation from the USFS is fairly stable and includes the Rangers from all three districts. The Forest Supervisors rotate official representation, but all are welcome to attend any and all meetings.

SAMPLING METHODS

After determining which collaboratives to look at, the next step in the study was to gain permission from each Forest Supervisor. As mentioned, there are three forests involved with the SWCC and one with the CBC. I sent an email letter (Appendix E) to each of the four Forest Supervisors asking for permission to interview USFS employees and requesting help in creating a list of appropriate people to talk to. Permission was granted by all four Forest Supervisors. Two of the Forest Supervisors had staff assist in the creation of the lists of possible participants. In the other two forests, the District Ranger created the list of possible participants. For each of the forests involved, the Forest Supervisor as well as the District Rangers within those forests was also asked to participate in an interview.

INTERVIEW PROCEDURE

Prior to conducting any interviews, I completed *Human Subjects Protection Training* through the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and submitted the IRB checklist and application. My project was approved by the IRB as exempt. Due to the exempt status and the need to

conduct some interviews by phone, an informed consent form was not sent to each participant to sign. Participation was completely voluntary and all interviews were confidential. Full confidentiality was chosen so that USFS employees could be assured there would be no repercussions for expressing their personal opinions. Each participant was asked for permission to record before the interview started and all granted permission once reassured that confidentiality was guaranteed and that no names would be reported anywhere in the results.

Fifty people were contacted by email requesting their participation in the study with twenty five agreeing to participate. Nine of the interviews were in person with the remainder conducted over the phone. Most of the participants were scheduled after contact through email. Of the fifty people contacted, five were through purposive sampling. Seven returned the first email with a positive response but failed to respond to further emails or voice messages.

Interviews averaged fifty minutes with some as short as twenty five minutes and a few going for more than an hour. The same interview guide was used for all interviews (Appendix F). Phone conversations were recorded using a small personal recorder and the speaker on my cell phone. Phone interviews were conducted from my house to further assure confidentiality. In person interviews were conducted in USFS offices. Those agreeing to in-person interviews were aware that people in the office knew who I was and why I was there. They were assured that nothing in the study would be attributed to them and the interviews were conducted in a closed office.

The interview style, while following the guide, was conversational in nature. During interviews I employed the use of probes or follow up questions to clarify answers. Knowledge of policy and laws was helpful in developing a rapport and showing a level of understanding to

the participants. During the interviews, the participants appeared to be open and forthcoming with their opinions.

INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

Interview transcription began while still conducting interviews. Interview recordings and transcription were saved to a personal computer that only I have access to. Transcribing was done at home to eliminate breach of confidentiality. During analysis it was important to keep the two case studies separate in order to determine if the differences in the collaboratives design had any impact. Labeling the interviews based on which collaborative the USFS employee worked with was the only identifying label given. To analyze the data, themes were created using both the interview guide and themes found to recur throughout the interviews. Transcribed interviews were color coded by theme and subthemes, when found. Coding was done by hand; no software programs were used. Recorded interviews were used to not only ensure accurate data but to document the tone of the interview as well. Consistent methods were utilized to ensure data quality and accuracy. My personal bias and assumptions were recognized and care was taken to keep them out of all interview conversations.

POSSIBLE BIAS IN SAMPLING

While each forest was chosen using the same criteria, the differences in the ways in which the original participant lists were created might cause bias in sampling. As mentioned, two of the forests generated lists from the Forest Supervisors Office while the other two were generated by the District Rangers. It is possible that the Forest Supervisors Offices used different criteria than the District Rangers in generating the lists of potential participants. While conducting interviews, I also utilized a form of network sampling. Network sampling is asking participants to identify other people with whom they are linked (Singleton 2010: 177). While not

all participants identified other members of the USFS for contact, many had particular people they wanted to make sure were included. Several of the interviews in this study came from those additional names. The inclusion of network sampling could lead to additional participants with the same or similar feelings as the person who passes on the name being interviewed. This has the potential to bias the study in favor of that opinion.

The lack of inclusion of all persons from the original list may also suggest a bias. The possible participants on the original lists all met the criteria. The lack of participation from those who choose not to respond could be significant. These possible biases were discussed when designing the study. It was decided that even with those issues the study could contribute valuable information.

All participants in this study appeared to be forthcoming with information and all conversations were open and complete. The participants expressed interest in the study and the fact that it was about them and not just about collaboration. Many of the participants remarked that they were asked to do a lot of interviews on about collaboration, especially recently. Most attributed this to the CFLRP and the increased awareness of collaboration in public land management.

RESEARCHER CREDIBILITY

Prior to beginning this research I completed two years of graduate study that focused on natural resources conflict resolution, environmental policy and law. I completed two courses in methods, a contemporary social theory course and a practicum. The practicum was a qualitative study of people involved with the Montana Environmental Policy Act. This study gave me experience with in-depth in-person interviews and data analysis as well as public presentation of the data.

CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS

As the interviews were conducted, certain themes emerged. The main themes from the interview questions were Training, Support, the Benefits of and Barriers to Collaboration, the Benefits and Drawbacks of CFLRP, Forest Management, Knowledge of Collaboration in the USFS, the Importance of Collaboration to the USFS, and Suggestions for Improving Collaboration in the USFS. The following analysis will talk about what USFS employees said and the impressions they gave in interviews. I will address the specific research questions that this data may or may not answer in Chapter Five.

TRAINING

Each employee was asked if they had received any training in collaboration. This training could be from inside or outside of their work for the USFS. The answers ranged from a simple no to a list of the trainings employees had taken. Some employees questioned the existence of training in collaboration, with comments like, “If such a thing exists I have never heard of it.” Others questioned the validity of collaborative training, “I don’t know that you could train anybody for this.” Most answers talked about on-the-job-training. There was a common theme that on-the-job training was just how it was done.

For those individuals who mentioned training through the United States Forest Service (USFS) it was mostly middle manager, leadership types of trainings or NEPA training. One employee talked of multiple, specific collaboration trainings. These were trainings from outside of the agency and were sought out by the employee. Even with participation in training, this individual mentioned his on-the-job training and experience. For many, the experience they gain

on the job, through trial and error has been the most significant form of learning about the process of collaboration.

During conversations about training, many mentioned personal interest, attitude and willingness as necessary factors for successful collaboration. Comments included talking about being collaborative by nature and having passion for many of the things that the collaboratives are doing. Employees mentioned that the right attitude and a willingness to work with others was also a key to making things happen in collaboration.

The benefit of training, while not a specific question, was brought up by various employees. Some were ambivalent that training would have any significant impact and said they thought that time was a bigger issue. Other employees thought training would be a waste of time and that “you can learn more by actually working with them [collaboratives] than you can in any classroom setting.” For the rest, training in collaboration was not only looked at positively, but also inevitability with comments about “new courses in the future not only on the importance of collaboration but on how to do it, on how to be effective.”

When talking about training, some mentioned specific needs that training could meet. Employees were almost unanimous in the belief that collaboration takes a lot of time. The lack of understanding by some of the large amount of time that collaboration requires was thought to be “something that training would give awareness to for forest service employees and in that respect help them understand that hey, it does take a little bit longer.”

The use of training to keep collaboration moving forward was also mentioned. This addresses the idea of the sustainability of a group and how training of USFS employees could help that part of the process. It is essential in any type of deliberative democracy that you

continue to work on sustainability. Employee comments included the knowledge that “you only have so many people to help in collaboration; we cannot have them walk away because the process is taking too long. So the better informed that everybody is on the process will ultimately improve the process [of collaboration].”

In general, the training levels of the group were varied with most having no training other than on the job. Training is something that is looked on favorably by most of the employees. Some are involved in the training of others as well as creating collaborations over the course of their careers with the USFS.

SUPPORT

Employees were asked about the support they received from the USFS to participate in collaboration. Most employees gave answers based on whether they felt supported and by whom. Employees spoke positively regarding the support for collaboration within the USFS. When talking about support, the level of involvement was also an important component for employees. While the involvement from an immediate supervisor was talked about the most, involvement and support from all levels was mentioned. Comments such as “my immediate supervisor has been very strong...so that has been a real positive” were common. Others thought that “the Regional Foresters and the Chiefs have all been very supportive.” The overall impression that was given by the employees is that “...upper level management is very strongly supportive.”

There was discussion on what type of support would lead to better collaboration. While all thought that leadership support was important, it was the support of the District Rangers that was mentioned as the most important level of support in having a successful relationship with the collaborative. It was stated that “it really falls to the Ranger in your District being the most

critical person because the ranger is your decision maker for your Forest Service Ranger District. The Ranger's attitude, the Ranger's approach I mean. He has more to do with your success."

A few mentioned that there was hesitancy in support within the agency early in the process. There were questions from within the agency about "people who don't work for the USFS." Employees wondered how these outsiders would "know anything about how to manage the resources better?" The concern was often over whether or not the end result would be better "than if we just keep everything in house and we just do it within our own tunnel or box?" This hesitancy was thought to be a result of an internal struggle "...at the forest level." Employees mentioned that with some "there is hesitancy to fully grasp [collaboration] and accept it." It was mentioned that after a few years, as the team gained more experience, management "has definitely been more supportive."

The discussion about support included the national level of support from within the agency and from the federal government. The fact that the "USFS was interested in moving the forest in the direction of collaboration" has been noticed by some employees since the 1990s. The other factor that showed employees a national level of support was the passage of the CFLRP. One employee was very clear:

"I think the whole program of CFLR should speak for itself as far as the national emphasis on collaboration because you couldn't compete unless you are working with a collaborative. So I think the agency right now sees the collaborative process as the wave of the future so are very supportive."

Leadership and the level of support was an important factor to most employees. Even when there was hesitancy, the leaders support for attempting collaboration was important. The USFS is a culture based on leader's intent. While the employees talked mostly about immediate supervisors, the intent up to the Chief of the USFS is a factor. For employees the "...leader's intent from the Chief is plain. Collaboration is something that he expects us to be doing." This simple fact means that at least some employees will be participating in collaboration. At all levels, the employees mentioned in various ways that their immediate leaders intent has a big impact on their ability to collaborate.

THE BENEFITS OF AND BARRIERS TO COLLABORATION

Employees were asked to talk about collaboration in general terms, not specific to any one group. This question asked about the benefits of collaboration to the USFS and the barriers to collaborating within the USFS. One employee remarked that the correct term to use would be challenges not barriers. Barriers stop things, but even with challenges, the USFS will continue to collaborate.

Benefits

In deliberative democracy the idea is that deliberative participation can bring officials and citizens closer together and that when decision makers work alongside citizens it helps to strengthen both the government and the community. The question here was what are the benefits of collaboration for the USFS? This question was not specific to any one collaborative or to the CFLRP. The question was designed to obtain feedback on what employees believe collaboration does for the USFS. Did they see it as something that will bring the two sides closer together and

strengthen the community? Answers to the question gave examples of what collaboration has already accomplished as well as what many hope it will accomplish in the future.

One of the benefits of collaboration was believed to be increased transparency as an agency. The ability for the public to really see and understand what the agency is trying to accomplish. In working with collaboratives it gave employees the opportunity to work with people who really wanted to help the agency. They talked about it giving them “better opportunities to communicate on some of our problems, strengths and weaknesses.” It was thought that the collaboratives would “be advocates” for the agency.

Along with the transparency, collaboration was seen as a way to help build the public’s trust in the agency and its personnel, while improving the agency’s public image. Collaboration “makes us look good.” The idea was that collaboration “makes us more approachable and that is a good thing.” Collaboration builds trust through the increased ability to talk to different interest holders. That ability to communicate was believed then to lead to agency projects “being more successful because the community does not feel like [the project] is being shoved down their throat.”

The increased community ownership of projects was believed to be directly related to the ability to work with the public in a collaborative fashion on designing plans and project. The rewards of working together were not just for the public but also for the employees: “It is much more rewarding as a person on the inside or on the outside, who is concerned with contemporary land management, to work together up front.” The fact that the ideas were generated by the collaboratives and the USFS together was believed to give them more validity with the communities and interest holders. The ideas are “more place based, more value driven, more here is what your community desires.”

In some cases, the support included collaborative groups advocating the projects to the public during USFS open houses. In one district the advocacy from the collaborative was seen as a huge step for the entire community. In speaking of this incident the employee was especially animated and the excitement over the success was clearly evident in the employee's voice.

“You have people who are advocating for site specific projects. Looking at landscape type, how is this project going to fit into the landscape so we can achieve even more or obtain our goals on a larger scale. And it has become theirs. We have had projects that when we go through the environmental process, the NEPA phase, we hold open houses and ... the collaborative members are answering the questions and showing the maps and explaining the science or whatever it is. So there is that ownership piece where it is not the government but it is community driven.”

Collaboration was also seen as a way to improve communication through an increased level of understanding. Real communication can get lost in letters and informational types of communication. Increasing the level of personal interaction was seen as a way to improve that process and provide a true understanding of the interests of the USFS, the collaboratives, and the various interests groups involved. One employee told a story of how his interpretation of a letter was very different than what the letter writer intended.

” When you get letters, you unintentionally put your own interpretation on it. I have had it happen where I was putting a literal meaning to something that they meant to be taken as general sorts of statements. It was in talking to them that this came out and we came to a better understanding.”

These types of conversations were also thought to lead to a better understanding by the public about the “USFS and how we operate.” That understanding also helps to build trust and

was thought to be “beneficial in helping the USFS build rapport with those outside parties.” The use of collaboration was seen as a way to “help people who are really opposed to what we are doing understand what we are doing.” The ability to help the public understand what the agency has to go through to bring a project or plan to implementation was beneficial to employees. It was believed that by “working on the individual projects with us, [the public can really] get to learn a lot about the NEPA process, how it works” so they can have a better understanding of what is required to get “through the process.”

To work with the public was seen as a chance for education on both sides. Not only does the public gain a better understanding of the USFS but the employees get a chance for a better understanding of the public’s interests. The chance for the USFS employees to take an idea then “be able to sit at the same table and listen to all the diverse groups” was thought to really bring about “a better understanding of the resource and the economic issues that we all deal with.”

Employees also mentioned the benefit of increased understanding between members of the collaboratives. The improved relationship between people who were typically adversaries was another layer of trust and relationship building that came from collaboration. Deliberative participation is a way to show that “people have more in common than they have big differences.” One type of incident mentioned numerous times was collaborative members speaking up for a group that was not able to send representation. This had a greater impact when it was one member speaking up for a group that represented an opposing view. The story was told about multiple situations including a field trip into the forest and a trip to speak in front of congress. This employee was adamant in showing that the people within the collaborative are really working together and are strong advocates for what the collaborative stands for. It begins with

“Someone saying, ‘Well they are not here so I will represent them’, and people go ‘Oh, really’ and they start giving their speech about we need access, or we need this and that. Now, here is a hard core environmentalist doing that for say, a recreation group or motorized vehicle group and it sets people back on their heels. That is the beauty of it. I have seen the timber folks do the same thing, ‘so and so is not here so I need to make sure they are represented’, and folks go ‘wow, that is kind of cool’. And the trusts build.”

On a trip to Washington,

“You have the timber guy talk about wilderness or the environmentalist talk about timber cuts and it shocks the Senators and Congressmen because they are going ‘this is not normal’. I mean these people are advocating something that is the opposite of what they normally advocate for.”

This type of advocating reinforces the notion that deliberative democracy in the form of collaboration is a relationship between the agency, society and the social movements that push for change. Without a relationship built on trust and mutual interests those on opposite sides of an issue would not be advocating for each other.

The opportunity to build better relationships and improve communication for agency personnel was seen as a benefit of collaboration. For some, that meant a challenge to step outside of their personal comfort zone. Collaboration “is forcing the internal folks to communicate better.” One employee believed that “many of us in the USFS are introverts” and the fact that collaboration “forces us to go out on field trips and explain ourselves” was beneficial. In fact for this employee, “the most fun part of the job has been working with the

collaborative and going to the meetings and discussing what we are doing and making friends with those folks.”

Another area where collaboration pushed employees was in their scale of thinking. Collaboration was believed to have improved the approach of the USFS to project planning and design by increasing the size of the projects and pushing the thinking of USFS employees out of the box. For some, the years of litigation had left thinking in what they termed a “safe manner.” The ideas were built around what they could get through to implementation without all the appeals and litigation or major roadblocks from environmental or industry groups. Employees stated that collaboration is “going to help change the way we do business...in how we approach things. Collaboration will allow the USFS to look at it a little differently, to approach it from a broader scale.” With the addition of collaboration the employees believe they “have support for that now; this is good.”

Along with bigger ideas, another change in the agency’s approach and the increased involvement of collaboratives was better decision making. The larger number and greater variety of interests and ideas at the table, it was believed, would lead to more thoughtful decision making. “There are many agendas that get brought to the table, and eventually the agency has to make the decision. But I think that bringing people together and talking through all that is a strong benefit.” It was also stated that the “the more people you can bring to the table the more there is a caring and understanding of the points of view and that can inform a better decision.” Overall, the more thoughtful the decision making due to collaboration and the interests that it introduces, the more it pushes ideas that may not have been considered otherwise. Those decisions were believed then to be better, more considered and, more supported. This type of

deliberative collaboration can help address problems that the USFS could not solve on its own due to years of appeals and litigation.

An area of the deliberative process of collaboration that improved decision making was the ability to bring in outside experts. This opportunity to use people outside of the USFS was believed to be important in adding to the knowledge base for projects and to increase the public's support. "Local knowledge [is useful and something] that you don't have as an agency." The resources brought in to support a project or plan can lead to more support from the community. The "support from outside the agency, that people will look at and say well, it is not just the USFS this other expert thinks it is good and they have no ownership." This type of support can be crucial to getting a project to implementation instead of getting bogged down in litigation.

Some employees talked about the personal benefits as well as agency benefits. Collaboration creates a change in how conflict in public land management can be handled. That change was seen as a personal benefit for USFS employees. Collaboration also gives them a chance to show the public the level of integrity and commitment that USFS employees bring to the job. Collaboration gives them the ability to handle conflict in a way "that is constructive instead of destructive, an interest based approach. It doesn't say that conflict disagreement is bad; it says how we are going to take this disagreement and treat each other respectfully along the way. That is key."

The ability to show the pride and the dedication that USFS employees have for their jobs and the mission of the forest service came through when talking about collaboration. Meeting with people so "those outside parties are able to have a face with the name on the projects" brought a different dynamic to the process. Through collaborative action, the public can

“see that these folks [USFS employees] really do care about what they are doing and are trying to do the best job that they can. I would say that a great value is in the relationship component and building that trust between the members of the collaborative and the USFS Staff.”

Finally, having fewer decisions appealed and litigated was an important benefit. Some believed it was happening now while others saw it as a hope for the future. The idea was that you will go to court less often and “get appealed less often as you build better trust relationships and work in that zone of agreement.” The benefit to this was allowing the USFS to move forward on projects rather than having them tied up in lengthy appeals. The budget was a factor in this as well. When talking of the opportunity to mitigate the number of lawsuits one comment summed up the issue quite well.

“I would much rather spend money on planning and implementing than on talking to the lawyers... We are spending more money writing depositions and briefs and all this stuff and nothing is happening and that is not a wise use of the taxpayers’ dollars.”

While it was hoped that collaboration would lessen the number of appeals and the amount of litigation the right to utilize the process was also thought to remain important. One element of deliberative democracy that needs to be remembered is that it does not automatically generate consensus or agreement. Collaboration may lessen litigation but “it does not eliminate it. If you go into it with that notion, that we are going to collaborate and we will never get litigated again then you are foolhardy.”

Barriers

Employees replied with a range of answers to the question of barriers or challenges in collaboration. The responses included talk about the challenges inside the USFS, within the collaborative groups and from outside groups that do not believe in collaboration at all.

Employees recognized that some of the challenges are already disappearing and some of them will always be a part of the process.

The challenge within the agency that was mentioned most was the time factor. One of the concerns in deliberative democracy is that it is more time consuming. In utilizing collaboration with citizen groups it is important that agencies understand that it takes more time and is a demanding way of serving the public interest. For employees, the time it takes to participate with a collaborative group was a major challenge and, the amount of time required to participate was often underestimated by the agency. This was believed to be a “real dilemma for the agency in terms of giving their people enough time to truly be involved in these things. Recognizing that it takes a huge amount of time and being okay with that.”

Time was also a consideration when it came to the long term project of managing public lands and the idea of sustainability of collaboration and collaborative groups. Sustainability is a major principle in collaboration and deliberative democracy. When dealing with long term issues such as public land management, employees believed that “one of the things that makes collaboration complicated is that forests generally take a long time to grow. They take a long time to produce outputs.” This time frame can work against the sustainability of the groups involved as, according to deliberative democracy, both citizens and officials need to see results in order to continue the process.

The final aspect of the time challenge, time added to an already busy job, was a significant challenge for employees. Collaboration was often seen as “just one more thing that we have to do---preparation time, meeting time, travel time.” For some that included a feeling that collaboration did not add to the end product but required a lot of time to “get where we

would have been if we had not engaged in collaboration at all.” If meetings happen to be scheduled during the employees off time then attendance is often on personal time.

Resistance to collaboration, by some USFS employees, was also talked about as a challenge within the agency. Several reasons were given for possible resistance from employees including personality, lack of interest and fear. The idea was that many USFS employees are more “on the introverted end of things. So going to meetings and trying to explain your actions and solicit ideas may not be...our strong point. It is almost like people poking their head out the door and going ‘oh people, I don’t want to talk to people.’” It was believed that for those who were resistant it was also a “mindset of ‘just let me go and design my projects. I don’t want to have to bother with having to spend my time.’” The last factor in resistance was the feeling of a loss of control over the project.

Employees mentioned other inside concerns like the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA). “Working around the advisory group status, the formal advisory group status has its challenges.” While neither of the collaboratives in this study are a FACA group, employees “are continually walking that fine line and trying to make sure we are not violating FACA. We have been accused of that and so far have defended it well.”

The budget is another area that makes collaboration a challenge. The manner in which Congress passes the budget leaves planning for future projects challenging to say the least. The timeline is one aspect of that challenge. “Even though the fiscal budget begins in September we don't know if we have the money until Congress passes the budget which can be March or April.” This is even harder when long term projects are subject to annual budget cuts.

“One of the challenges is in not knowing if [the money] is coming for sure. It makes it difficult to plan. I have to start planning for the next fiscal year,

so do I plan for the money and put my regular budget elsewhere? That is a challenge.”

There is also the concern over the fine line between collaboration and abdicating authority. “It is a very gray line between collaboration and your authority and responsibility that you cannot abdicate.” This is something that makes collaboration a bit more difficult for employees that may want to get involved with a collaborative group or are looking to start the collaborative process themselves.

USFS employees also have to keep in mind the land they are managing is public land and they have the responsibility of ensuring national representation in decision making.

“These are national forests and while collaboration can happen with people representing national groups, you also have people who do not live near that have an interest and deserve a say so. That is often difficult to bring all of those pieces together.”

There are a number of challenges that reflect influence from both inside and outside of the agency. Collaboration is an acceptable means to meet some of the public participation requirements of certain laws, rules and regulations. However, there are other requirements in those laws, rules and regulations that USFS employees have to follow on every project. Ensuring compliance with the laws, participating in collaboration and continuing to deal with appeals and litigation are all part of the challenge the agency faces daily.

One of those challenges is the fact that, while collaboration is an acceptable means of public participation, it does not remove other avenues. Scoping and public comment through NEPA still give someone who chooses not to collaborate the chance to “participate nominally through the NEPA process” and regardless of any “amount of agreement and they can take you

to court.” This is the challenge of dealing with all of the old laws and adding on new ones. Deliberative democracy uses the ideal that majority should rule in order to deal with the knowledge that the process does not always generate consensus. Right now the USFS “can design the most happy project in the world where everybody is saying, ‘what a great project’, but it still has to survive procedurally, it has to survive an appeal and potentially a lawsuit.”

The lack of understanding or knowledge by the public and collaboratives of the layers of laws, rules and regulations is also a challenge to the agency. The collaboratives often want to speed things up and get frustrated when that cannot happen. The lack of knowledge of all the layers and what things can be done and what the priorities are may slow down progress. The priority level of certain things is one area that makes collaborating difficult. An example of this was given regarding a project that in the meetings and on paper was well supported. But when a trip was taken to the area, the visual of the area brought up other issues for members of the collaborative. When looking at the area, concern over lynx habitat ruled the discussion on the ground. For the USFS employees this was frustrating as there were other factors in play.

“For instance, this [area of the forest] was in the WUI [Wildland Urban Interface] and fuels reduction in the WUI takes precedence over habitat. We also know that there are 500 acres that we dropped from treatment for lynx habitat outside the WUI.”

Within the agency the lack of a tradition of collaboration was mentioned as a challenge. The current culture of the USFS is one of expertise and professional decision making while in the early years of Gifford Pinchot, it was a more community based agency. The more recent model that “we are the experts and we should be telling people how to do things is the model that

we have been using for years and years and years.” This is the tradition that current employees have based their careers on.

A challenge from outside of the agency is the lack of belief in collaboration by some groups and individuals. Whether this lack of belief is in collaboration as a process or applies to collaboration in public land management does not change the impact. Many who do not believe in collaboration and/or do not participate in collaboration, will continue to participate in the process of public land management. This may be through channels such as public comment or appeals and litigation, but that participation, while important, is in addition to collaboration for the USFS. Employees understood that this is something that will always have to be dealt with. “There will always be people who will not get involved in collaboration and so there will always be people and groups that will oppose what the USFS is doing.”

The other factor that employees see contributing to the lack of interest in participating in collaboration is the idea of conflict as an industry. The history of conflict with the USFS has been established and some believe there are people, individuals and groups, who have made a career out of that conflict. Many employees also mentioned those who simply do not want things to change and those who just want to sue. Employees believe that “some members of the public purposely choose not to participate in collaboration. They want to keep things the way they are to maintain their perceived power to appeal and challenge things.”

THE BENEFITS AND DRAWBACKS OF THE COLLABORATIVE FOREST LANDSCAPE RESTORATION PROGRAM

Employees were asked to discuss the benefits and drawbacks specific to the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP). More specific than the discussion on

collaboration, the conversation on CFLRP often reflected some of the same types of benefits and challenges in collaboration. Due to the specific rules and regulations that the CFLRP has, the employees were very specific in what they saw as the benefits and the drawbacks that were different from other types of collaboration.

Benefits of CFLRP

The question was what are the benefits of the CFLRP to the USFS? Employees mentioned benefits based on personal experience working with the group as well as the impact on the job and the projects that they were a part of.

Employees talked about CFLRP collaboration in terms of increased internal relationships. With the USFS operating in a culture of autonomy, each forest is run independently of the others regardless of shared boundaries or ecosystems. The CFLRP in Montana includes districts from three National Forests. Employees in all three of those districts mentioned the ability to work more closely with the other forests as a benefit. The opportunity was seen as a way to be “really able to learn from each other. That is great.” This not only helps on the projects that are part of the CFLRP but internally helps to erase some of the “we work on our forest, you work on yours” attitude.

Working together was also mentioned as a benefit in spreading out the work load by utilizing specialist from each forest. “It has taken some of the pressure off of our own specialists” to share the workload with the other forests. “They still have involvement as projects evolve and people refine things yet they do not have to spend that initial time as they did before.”

Employees also talked about the CFLRP allowing more restoration projects on the forest and pushing the vision of the USFS. They now have the ability to do more restorative work and projects that are of ecological benefit. The collaboration allows them to focus restoration on a watershed level and pushes them to look at the entire landscape and not just pieces of it.

Behind the increased ability for restoration and the larger view, is the increased funding that the CFLRP provides. With many of the employees, the first response to the question of benefits from the CFLRP was simply, increased funding. The additional funds, aimed at restoration, were seen by some as a bigger benefit than collaboration itself. One employee, speaking softly and thoughtfully stated, “the word collaboration is just moderately important, but CFLRP money, very important.”

The increased funding was also a benefit in boosting the ability for some to really make an impact. The money was a benefit for them in that it allowed USFS employees to really do the type of work that is important to them and to the forest. With a voice full of incredulity one employee talked of the money and what it meant to them and their career.

“It is the money; I mean wow we would never have been able to fund some of the things they are talking about funding. I mean, this is a once in a career opportunity for me. [My type of] restoration is expensive, it takes a long time to do and it might actually happen. That is staggering.”

The ability to get more done is seen as having “changed management” of the forest. While the forest is putting out the same number of timber sales, they are “doing more weed spraying, are spending more money on cutthroat genetics and lake trout netting and stuff like that. So those are very good things.” Employees talked about the ability to do more projects in a

manner that transmitted a level of excitement that they would be able to pursue the passion they had for the type of work they had chosen.

The national emphasis of the CFLRP was also a benefit. Creating an act that requires collaboration in order to get increased funding for restoration was seen as an attempt by Congress to move collaboration into the national conversation. The current collaboration on CFLRP projects was also seen as a great relationship building opportunity. The hope was that those relationships will outlast the funding, “ultimately, I believe that we will be collaborating without CFLRP funding but the CFLRP funding really helps us. It really encouraged it and focused it and brought it to national attention.”

Drawbacks

When asked what the drawbacks to CFLRP might be, the answers often paralleled the benefits. One of the drawbacks that employees talked about in relation to multiple areas of collaboration was the funding. CFLRP funding created what employees referred to as the “have and have not’s,” those that are getting additional funding and those who are not. Funding issues resulted when one area of a forest or district is within the CFLRP boundary and one is not. The “downfall” in the funding was thought to be that it was site specific. One project is getting funded but another, that may only be a few miles away and is seen by employees as just as important is not getting any money. This is an also an issue for those National Forests who either did not apply or whose proposal was not accepted for funding. Employees talked about this issue having an impact within districts, between districts, and within the entire USFS system. Some of the employees work for more than one district and see the issue first hand. While they are able to work on great projects for one district they may have to ignore the other.

With the funding from the CFLRP comes a match requirement. The forest that gets the funding must match that funding either with appropriated dollars from their budget or through other ways such as volunteer hours or other funding sources. Again, while this is a benefit to the area receiving the funding, that match requirement can cause funds to be diverted from other areas and districts creating more have and have not scenarios. Requiring matching funds was also seen as an additional way that the CFLRP influenced forest management, causing priorities to shift based on money. For some forests, “the CFLR matching requirements actually causes us to divert some of the money from other parts of the forest.” Others spoke of the changes in priority of projects. The funding “influences us in that we have raised the priority of projects inside the CFLR area because we are able to get matching funds. So a dollar spent in that portion of the district means we can get two dollars of work done.”

Another CFLRP drawback comes from how the boundaries were drawn. For both collaborative proposals, the boundaries of the CFLRP area included multiple districts. Some districts were entirely included in CFLRP boundary while others were split with a portion of the district outside of the CFLRP boundary. This created some challenges in funding projects on the split areas. On one forest they had to “find alternate funding sources for the part [of the project] that falls outside [of the CFLRP boundary].”

“Often then that part will move slowly. For example we have a brush cutting project and the part inside the CFLR area is already done and we have only a small portion of the area outside of the CFLR done because there is not enough funding.”

This area was an improvement project for elk habitat. The employee was asked about the imbalance and if it created any additional problems such as overgrazing of the improved area.

The answer was alarming in ways that this study does not deal with but shows the impact of changes to USFS employees' jobs.

“The elk don't know that they are moving in and out of the CFLR area they just know they have improved habitat. If we had our traditional elk populations here then I would say yes it would be a serious concern but our elk populations are like literally ten percent of what they were twenty years ago so it is not an issue now.”

Where the money comes from is also a funding drawback for many of the employees. Funding for the USFS is a frustrating process in general. The constant wait for Congress to approve funding and never knowing for sure what will be funded and by how much applies to CFLRP funding as well. While all of the proposals are for ten years, Congress funds the program year by year. But that funding is not additional money for the USFS; it comes from the USFS budget which, like the boundary issue, creates areas that are not getting as much as the CFLRP area. This not only has ramifications for the districts within a National Forest that are not part of the CFLRP but for National Forests that are not part of the program. “Not only are they not getting it, but the CFLR money came off the top (of the national budget) so what they are getting is less.”

The increase in restoration projects, while welcome, increased the workload for USFS employees. One reason is again, the funding. Funding did not include any money for planning. CFLRP money is to be used for implementation and monitoring only. The restrictions on funding not only increase the workload but can influence which projects get funded. One employee gave the example of an increase in workload: “normally in a given year I put out two collection agreements. Last year I put out eight and I have no more help.” While this increase is stressful, employees in general were happy about the increase in restoration projects that are

getting done. The change in priority of projects due to funding was a concern for many employees. The lack of planning money has, in some instances, led to areas “choosing projects that are a lower priority because you have the environmental planning done or you can use simple environmental planning rather than some of the higher priority projects that might take an EIS to get done.”

FOREST MANAGEMENT

Though they often talked about how collaboration influenced some decisions at the forest level, employees were also specifically asked if they thought that the presence of a collaborative on the forest influenced forest management. There was some disagreement on this subject as a few said that they did not think so, while others said they believed that having the collaborative involved did influence the management of the forest.

One of the things they talked about was the concept of “thinking bigger.” This idea is part of the benefits to collaboration but was also mentioned in answer to forest management. In this application, thinking bigger is not referring to the size of the project but the way in which the USFS is looking at forest management and incorporating collaboration. With collaboration “you've got this diversity of thought and dialogue that was not there before.” The process of collaboration “pushed us to think bigger and allowed us to have better communications about what we are doing on the ground why we are doing it.”

USFS rules and regulations require public participation. “That is the purpose of public participation” to influence how the forest is managed. For employees, collaboration “is a forum for public comment, a particular approach to public participation.” In decision making, “any public comment helps you shape things, in a collaborative you work out a lot of things before you put things down as a decision.”

THE IMPORTANCE OF COLLABORATION IN THE USFS

Employees discussed the importance of collaboration in the USFS in two ways: how important it was and why it was important. Those who spoke of the level of importance focused on the emphasis that the USFS as an agency and their supervisor put on collaboration. The implication from employees in this question was that, whether or not they had a personal belief in collaboration, if the USFS considers it important then it is important. The perception is that the agency considers it a priority. “It is one of the top things that we are expected to do as leaders.” From District Rangers to the Washington Office, the level of commitment to collaboration was considered to be high.

Employees who spoke about why collaboration was important gave reasons that were similar to the benefits listed earlier: the inclusion of local knowledge, reduced appeals and litigation, better decisions and more efficiency. The locals “that we collaborate with have a strong knowledge of the landscape and can add to what the agency knows.” By using that local knowledge employees believe that “we end up more knowledgeable about what is [happening] on the ground.” Some “feel it will reduce appeals and litigation in the long run.” Finally, employees think that the importance of collaboration comes from the fact that it will lead to better decision making and more efficiency in project planning.

KNOWLEDGE OF COLLABORATION WITHIN THE USFS

Employees were asked about what they thought was the level of knowledge of collaboration within the USFS. The current level of knowledge about collaboration within the USFS as a whole was rated by most employees as fairly low. “There isn’t a true understanding of what you are doing and why you are spending time on [collaboration].” Employees do not believe that everybody understands or recognizes the amount of time that collaboration requires,

“especially to prepare things, do the background work so that you are prepared, get everyone together in the same room, the level of commitment.”

Employees did believe that the level of knowledge was growing and that collaboration was moving toward being a part of the USFS culture. A growing knowledge “both in the forest service as well as with our stakeholders” of what it takes to collaborate in the forest service is happening, we are moving forward. Like good deliberation, the process of collaboration does not just happen; it requires expertise, time and resources. Employees acknowledged that requirement and also believe that the “knowledge level is increasing as we have continued to work with the [collaborative].” It was important to some to make sure that everyone knows, “that we are still learning. That there is a huge range of both understanding and skill within the agency and that it is a process and is going to take time.” Others believe that “the USFS is moving towards a culture of collaboration.”

SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVING COLLABORATION WITHIN THE USFS

Employees were asked if they had any suggestions for improving the process of collaboration in the USFS. The suggestions included training, creating a more collaborative culture in the USFS, and increasing public education on the processes the USFS is required to follow.

In discussing how to help USFS employees be more successful in collaboration, training was the most popular answer. For some employees, training would increase the success of collaboration by giving an understanding of the requirements of the process. Specifically, laying out ground rules, understanding the expectations, and what we are trying to accomplish.” For others, a better understanding of collaboration would decrease the resistance from those who

think they are being asked to “let them tell us how to do our job.” Budgeting for training was also seen as a problem.

“On a tight budget it is hard to invest in training. With travel camps it is hard to send people to training. Maybe prioritizing training for this and who needs to have those skills in the near and long term and making that investment.”

Many employees also brought up the USFS culture when talking about improvements. The USFS has a very strong, expert based culture. Employees suggested creating a culture of collaboration, one that includes collaboration at higher levels and as early in the process as possible as well as simply making it an expectation. For one employee the rewards for collaboration have already been felt. “I believe I have been rewarded both in career advancement and recognition and both of those have been important to me.” A key in changing the culture was thought to be leader’s intent. Keeping the “leaders intent out there...because if they [the leaders] are all saying the leaders intent is this is how we do business then the others will say, okay this is an expectation of me.”

One employee gave an example of how the idea of collaboration as a culture could work. It is based on a previous position with the USFS and shows the change in thought processes from an expert base to deliberative base.

“On [a past forest] we had what we called wall to wall collaboration. So everybody on the forest understood, ‘Oh, I have an idea’ and the first thing that comes into your mind after you get that nice idea is ‘Who do I need to talk to about this? Who do I need to bring to the table to discuss it?’ Because it might be a great idea or it might need some tweaking.”

With future USFS culture in mind, some suggested that collaboration and the requirements of that process become a part of the hiring criteria within the USFS. The need to have everyone understand that from the day they begin they are “expected to be open-minded and listen to the public and here is the way we do business. So from day one the culture starts for a new employee, then twenty years from now it will just be the way we do business.”

For some employees, one of the most frustrating parts of the process of collaboration was the public’s lack of knowledge of the all the rules, regulations and restrictions on the USFS. Those employees believed that some type of public education on USFS processes would be helpful in improving collaboration. The lack of understanding of the processes and restrictions of the USFS can lead to frustrations on both sides of the table. One employee gave an example of that situation.

“Understanding more about our processes is a big help. [For example], in one meeting the district had [a set of] areas and the partners had [a set of] areas and they were not even close. Once they sat down together to talk about all of the rules and regulations that we have to contend with and all of the parameters that we have to live within, the partners spots and the forest service spots were almost identical. That is the real beauty of collaboration.”

It was also suggested that current policies do not make it easy to collaborate. Many of the employees thought it was time to look at those policies. The way in which we budget was one area that employees thought should be looked at when adding collaboration. “I think we need to look at how the budget and funding works ...with the front end investment that is required for collaboration.” Others thought that some of the policies may be outdated because “collaboration was not even talked about” when they were written.

Specifically, for improving the CFLRP, employees mentioned the restrictions on funding. The lack of money for planning is a real challenge when it comes to the CFLR Program. NEPA is a large part of any project. The budget constraints from the lack of money allocated for planning has been shown to change the way the USFS prioritizes some project. Changing LFRP to “allocate some of the money to NEPA planning” was something employees advocated.” One criticism is that the CFLRP “is an accelerated program and it is hard to keep up your NEPA planning on an accelerated project with no more money.”

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

In his foreword to *Across the Great Divide*, Daniel Kemmis wonders “whether we in the west might ever manage to create a politics worthy of this place” (2001:xi). Kemmis questions the adversarial nature of politics and “couldn’t quite understand” when people who cared about the land, in seemingly similar ways, could only formulate policy “as if they had nothing in common with each other” (2001:xi). This questioning can easily be applied to the years of environmental and industry groups fighting over public land management. In the late 1980s, the early efforts that would become collaboration began to appear (Snow 2001). These efforts came from the growing realization that the lawsuits, appeals and other “straight-line approaches to hard environmental issues are often narrow, usually expensive, and almost always divisive” (Snow 2001:3).

Since then, collaboration has become a controversial yet accepted way to bring people together in public land management. While there are many who do not see it as anything more than another fad challenging the “existing paradigm of environmental decision making” (Snow 2001:161), collaboration has found its way into the rules and regulations that mandate how the USFS operates. Collaboration is now an approved method for meeting public participation mandates and is a requirement of the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program (CFLRP).

What is missing is information on how collaboration affects USFS employees who do not have a lot of choice. One of the tenets of collaboration and deliberative democracy is that participation must be voluntary. For USFS employees this may not be the case. The following four research questions were the original focus of the study. As with most qualitative research,

the interviews revealed other relevant information. This information will be discussed later in this chapter.

The goals of this research project were to 1) determine if the differences in the type of involvement the USFS has with the collaborative has any effect on employees of the USFS; 2) determine what, if any, impact the different structure and composition of the collaboratives has on the process; 3) ascertain the amount of training on collaboration that USFS employees received; and 4) to determine the impact on USFS employees of adding collaboration to the job requirements.

The first question refers to the difference in level of involvement of USFS employees in the collaboratives. The CBC in Idaho does not have any member of the USFS as part of the collaborative. They specifically designed the collaborative in that way, and during the early years of establishment did not even have the USFS at the table. The SWCC in Montana has USFS employees as active members of the collaborative and has from the very beginning. The goal was to determine from the interviews if there was a significant difference in the way USFS employees spoke about the process, the collaborative or anything else pertaining to the makeup of the collaborative. The simple answer is that no significant difference was detected. What was also discovered is that, while the membership status may be different there was no apparent difference in participation levels of the USFS with the collaborative. The level of commitment of the USFS did not reflect the difference in status with the collaborative. Though the USFS in Idaho is not part of the CBC, management expects attendance and participation at all meetings and many of the employees attend subcommittee meetings as well. Spontaneous comments from employees reflected similar attitudes and experiences regardless of which collaborative they were interacting with.

The second question also looked at whether differences in the design of the collaboratives affected the process of collaboration and if the presence of USFS employees as voting members changed anything for the employees. Employees reported similar levels of commitment from the USFS in participation and project development regardless of the type of collaboration. In speaking with employees, the same level of support was reported regarding meeting participation and supervisor expectations. Again, there was no significant difference in the processes when USFS employees were voting members and when they were not. This may not be true within the collaborative, but more observation would be necessary to draw more general conclusions.

The third question was a direct question asked of all employees. While it was a specific question about the amount of training they had received, it was also an attempt to understand the attitude toward and interest in training. The majority of employees reported having received no training in collaboration and some questioned if training was even possible. It was reported by most that on-the-job training was the way they had learned to collaborate. For those employees that had training in collaboration, training was very important when making suggestions for improvement.

The last question addresses the impact of collaboration on USFS employees.' Employees were asked a series of questions regarding participation levels, the increase in time required to collaborate, and the general impact of collaboration on their jobs. Collaboration was reported to have a significant amount of impact for most employees. Those whose jobs were impacted on the project level seemed to have the greatest increase in workload while those who attended meetings and worked directly with the collaborative reported the biggest impact on time. All employees reported recognizing that collaboration had a significant impact on some jobs within the USFS, even when that impact was on a co-worker.

IMPROVING COLLABORATION WITHIN THE USFS

Employees were asked to give specific suggestions for improving collaboration within the USFS. Using the theory of deliberative democracy those suggestions can be put into categories to assist in understanding changes that can be made to improve the process of collaboration within the USFS.

Training

Deliberative democracy requires expertise. Employees acknowledged the need for more knowledge and the lack of expertise by many in the USFS. Training on collaborative processes should be provided to all USFS employees who will be required to participate directly in collaboration processes, including supporting and supervisory staff. Increasing the level of expertise within the agency will have a direct impact on the success of collaboration. Training in collaboration should also occur at supervisory levels even when those individuals will not directly participate in collaboration. The knowledge of the time and resources needed to collaborate is as important for those USFS employees who are responsible for the hiring, scheduling and budgeting of collaborative processes as it is for the people directly involved in collaboration. Without the knowledge of the needs of employees who collaborate, those who support and supervise these employees cannot adequately provide for those needs.

Increased training in collaboration will also provide benefits to those who are currently skeptical of the process. It was mentioned that there are numerous employees who are fearful of or have no interest in collaboration. If those individuals had a better understanding of collaboration they may be more supportive of the process in the future even if they do not have a personal interest. Training may also help to alleviate some of the challenges mentioned, such as the amount of time that collaboration can take. With adequate training, the time spent on

collaboration may be cut. At the very least the learning curve will be shorter than with the current practice of on-the-job training that most mentioned.

USFS Culture

Throughout the study, the culture of the USFS was mentioned in a variety of ways. The culture of the USFS was one of the challenges of collaboration. The expert based culture, where the employee has the knowledge and the public needs to be educated on the best way to proceed, has been in place for many years. While the founder of the USFS, Gifford Pinchot, understood the benefits of community, the changes in social values and the myriad of laws, rules and regulations pushed the agency to this more professional, expert based model. The consequence of that model was a feeling of disconnect from the communities attached to National Forest lands. The resulting conflict and litigation have left the agency with a more adversarial relationship with the public.

The promotion of better relationships through deliberative democracy is something that many in the agency recognize as beneficial. Collaboration with those who have a more adversarial outlook toward the agency and its manner of public land management is seen by employees as a way to improve those relationships. Changing the culture of the agency to enhance the ability of employees to participate in collaboration is recommended by employees and the tenets of deliberative democracy.

A change in USFS culture toward a more collaborative outlook would also increase the agency's ability to participate in ongoing discussions, which is another principle of deliberative democracy. Collaboration, to truly make a difference, needs to be continuous in nature. It needs to maintain sustainability in process and employees. Agency culture often has employees frequently changing positions. While no one wants to slow down an individual's ability to move

up in their career, the agency should take a closer look at the impact of frequent moves by key personnel on the success of collaboration.

Public Knowledge of the USFS

While deliberative democracy holds that equal consideration of all ideas is necessary for success, the lack of public knowledge regarding many of the rules and regulations that the USFS must follow makes this very difficult. A better public understanding of the complete picture of USFS activities and what they are and are not able to do would allow the public to present ideas the USFS is allowed to consider. If someone in the public is proposing something that is impossible under current rules and regulations, then that idea fails to get equal consideration. Employees believed that finding a way to educate the public regarding many of the processes, rules and regulations that the USFS and other government agencies must follow would improve the process and allow for a more considered discussion. Many employees found that once someone had an understanding of the reasons something could happen or not, the flow of ideas as well as the process improved.

Deliberative Democracy and Collaboration

Deliberative democracy has many of the core characteristics of collaboration. Of collaboration, Kemmis and McKinney stated, “It is only by employing many of the techniques and skills of deliberation that collaborative stakeholders have any chance of finding mutually satisfactory solutions to the very challenging problems they so often take on” (2011:28). One difference between collaboration and deliberation has to do with the role of problem solving. Deliberation is often seen as an abstract method focused on discussion, while collaboration is an action oriented method focused on problem solving (Susskind 2006). In the case of collaboration with the USFS, problem solving is definitely the focus. As with collaboration,

deliberative democracy has two sides. The advantages and challenges of collaboration often parallel deliberative democracy. Looking at the advantages and challenges may answer the question; is collaboration a valuable tool to deliberative democracy or even in public participation?

ADVANTAGES

Deliberative democracy is a method of public participation used to achieve social or political change. According to USFS employees, collaboration has provided the means for the process of deliberative democracy to occur between the agency and the public. In the case of public land management and the USFS, positive changes brought about through collaboration include improved relationships, an increased understanding of others' needs and interests, and improved decision making.

One of the advantages of deliberative democracy, according to its proponents is that it leads to improved relationships. As reported by USFS employees, the current collaboration with the SWCC and the CBC is leading to an improvement in several types of relationships. Relationships between the communities involved in collaboration and the USFS have seen significant improvement. The relationships between adversaries within the communities and the collaboratives have evolved, at least in relationship to the collaborative, into more respectful and mutually beneficial relationships. Collaboration has increased the opportunity for USFS employees to interact with, not only the community but USFS employees on other forests. These improved relationships were seen as having a positive impact not only on the success of the projects but also on the people involved.

An increased understanding of others' needs and interests was also reported as a result of collaboration. For employees, the ability to meet with people and talk to them rather than simply

getting a comment often lead to a better understanding of the interests and concerns and to better communication. Collaboration, as a deliberative process, provides the public with a better understanding of the agencies needs and interests. Collaboration was seen as a chance to meet and have a deliberative discussion in a safe atmosphere. The face to face time allowed relationships to build which in turn increased trust and understanding between the people involved.

Another advantage of deliberative democracy is the ability to make better decisions. Collaboration was seen as a method that pushed the agency to “think bigger” which, for many employees, led to better decisions. In the past, the amount of litigation and appeals had people within the agency proposing smaller and safer projects. The requirement of the CFLRP to look at things from a landscape level was something that everyone welcomed. Deliberative democracy, in the form of required collaboration, gave employees a method and place to look at the bigger picture. For public land management, the changes seen from the collaborative actions looked at in this study, are good examples of deliberative democracy leading directly to social and political changes.

Additional advantages mentioned included the use of local knowledge, the increased level of trust in the USFS by the public, and the decrease in conflict over public land management issues. Many of the employees were hopeful that collaboration would reduce the conflicts and lessen the amount of litigation the USFS has to deal with. They also liked that collaboration gave them a chance to show the public the level in interest and integrity that USFS employees feel for the land.

CHALLENGES

Good deliberation does not just happen; it requires expertise, time and resources. This core concept of deliberative democracy represents the challenges within the USFS of participation in collaboration. Comments by employees reflected the need for improvement in all of these areas. The amount of time that is required to participate in collaboration has not been fully understood by the USFS or oftentimes the employees themselves. This translates into increased stress on top of the increase in workload. Deliberative democracy is a slow and messy business and using collaboration as the means to achieve change takes time. For some employees this is time spent on actual collaboration as well as on the increase in projects. For others, the impact was on time unavailable for the portion of their job that was separate from the collaborative work.

Good deliberative democracy requires expertise. The USFS, as an agency, received less than favorable marks from employees in the level of knowledge that many in the agency have about collaboration. Discussion about the collaborative process included the knowledge of the time it requires, knowledge about the process, and knowledge by the public. In order for there to be successful deliberative democracy, participants in collaboration need to have a high level of understanding and expertise regarding the process.

Deliberative democracy also requires inclusiveness and diversity. This principle is even more important when dealing with public resources as the USFS does. For the USFS, the concerns and challenges of collaboration include the need to ensure that national interests are met. Inclusivity can be hard to ensure when dealing with those who do not believe in collaboration and therefore refuse to participate. One way that it can be accomplished is by using collaboration as an additional layer of public participation. This uses the concept of adding

deliberative democracy as a supplement to representative government (Hartz-Karp and Briand 2009)

In deliberative democracy the emphasis is often on citizen participation. Indeed, much of this thesis is looking at the individual citizen in the form of USFS employees. Habermas (1996) however, suggested that a change in the institution is necessary for deliberative processes to succeed. This difference in looking at deliberative processes is important when looking at the USFS and collaboration. The USFS is a culture of professional experts. Many of the employees felt that there was resistance by some to participate in collaboration. Others recognized a need to create a culture of collaboration within the agency in order to bring about change. The advantages and challenges found using deliberative democracy theory are real advantages and challenges USFS employees' deal with on a regular basis. As an institution, the USFS' challenge is to increase the advantages and decrease the impact of the challenges.

CONCLUSION

Public participation is an important part of public land management. Changing social values have had a great impact on the laws that regulate public land management by agencies like the USFS. Those same changing social values have promoted a more deliberative process in adding collaboration. The success of that process will depend in large part on the ability of the USFS to adapt and change to this new type of public participation. At the same time, it is important for the public to understand that every time they demand a new process or piece of legislation, previous legislation is not necessarily removed but an additional layer of rules and regulations that federal agency employees must learn and follow is added.

Deliberative democracy states that good deliberation requires resources. For USFS employees this means money for training, time to take the training and time to participate in

collaboration. The lack of time and training is too often a budget issue for the USFS. As with other types of legislation, Congress failed to look at the entire picture when passing the CFLRP. A core challenge of this program is the requirement of collaboration without an increase in the overall budget. The CFLRP program has been beneficial in providing funds for more ground level projects, but it did not increase the total USFS budget nor provide specific funds for planning.

Although more money for projects increased the workload for many employees, most still reported that this was a positive aspect of the program. This attitude says more about the commitment of the employees than in the program. Employees overwhelmingly expressed a high level of pride in what they do. They are on the job to make a difference and want to do good work. The employee comment that this is a “once in a career opportunity” and the tone of voice that indicated a bit of disbelief that it was happening illustrates the lack of resources in the past. It also shows the excitement about new opportunities and what those opportunities will allow them to achieve. What frustrated many employees was the way the funding was structured. The USFS faces constant challenges with a shrinking budget. The fact that Congress added something that requires more training and additional time and work, yet did not allocate money to fund the program, was something most employees saw as a flaw.

While the USFS can improve the process of collaboration by embracing the ideals of deliberative democracy, The United States is still governed by representative democracy. It is the elected Congress that creates the budget and new legislation regarding public land management. Both congress and the public that elects them have to understand that deliberative democracy in the form of collaboration is often slower. This process is going to require more resources. That means that federal agencies need to have adequate budgets to do the work the public is asking

them to do. It also means that Congress needs to step up and not continue to pass budgets at the last minute. Society cannot continue to expect the USFS to plan for long term management of public land on a short term budgeting process. Society may push for changes through democratic processes like voting, but at the end of the day the USFS must follow mandated practices. Until change in social values changes the mandates or current laws, the most the USFS can do is to look for ways to improve the process of collaboration for employees and the public.

The founding of the USFS was political. A belief that the Department of the Interior was corrupt led Gifford Pinchot in 1905, to use his relationship with President Roosevelt to move the management of the forest reserves to the United States Department of Agriculture. Pinchot also used his relationship with Roosevelt to move forward a conservation ethic in public land management. The Chief of the USFS, Pinchot was now a key advisor to the President. The two men shared a strong conservation ethic and led a remarkable campaign to increase the amount of public land, adding millions of acres to the National Forest.

Politics has been as influential in building the United States Forest Service as the timber industry, the environmental movement, preservationists, or conservationists. Politics now needs to return the USFS to its roots in the ideals of Gifford Pinchot. We must manage public land, and especially forests, for the long term. In his famous quote, “the greatest good to the greatest number of people for the longest time,” Pinchot is talking about the purpose of conservation. The reason for the National Forest was to encourage the use of the resources for all citizens for as long as possible. Pinchot understood that the forests were not an inexhaustible resource and that without proper management the United States could lose one of its greatest resources.

Today, the USFS understands this more than ever. The changing climate of politics, real climate change and past practices have left the forests vulnerable. Without a new direction in politics that will allow the USFS to move forward with what the forest needs and what the public wants they will continue to struggle. Deliberative democracy and collaboration is one way that change can and is happening. For the USFS to be successful in this new political climate they need the resources of time, expertise and funding. Employees are as committed today as Gifford Pinchot was in 1905. To help them in that commitment, Congress and the public need to embrace the ideals of deliberative democracy and give the USFS the tools to succeed.

APPENDIX A: IAP2 SPECTRUM



IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation



International Association
for Public Participation



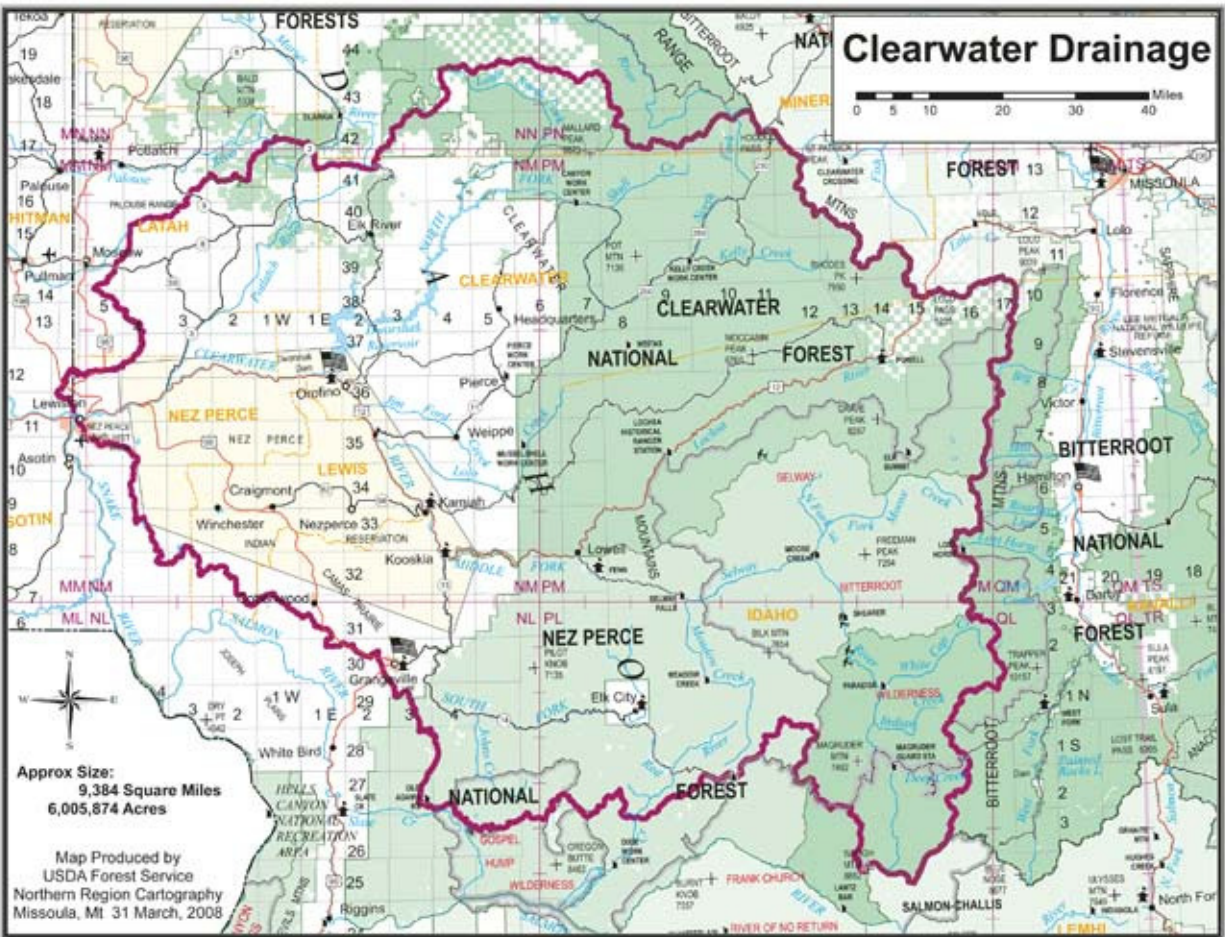
	Inform	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Empower
Public participation goal	To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision-making in the hands of the public.
Promise to the public	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.
Example techniques	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Fact sheets ▪ Web sites ▪ Open houses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Public comment ▪ Focus groups ▪ Surveys ▪ Public meetings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Workshops ▪ Deliberative polling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen advisory committees ▪ Consensus-building ▪ Participatory decision-making 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Citizen juries ▪ Ballots ▪ Delegated decision

APPENDIX B:

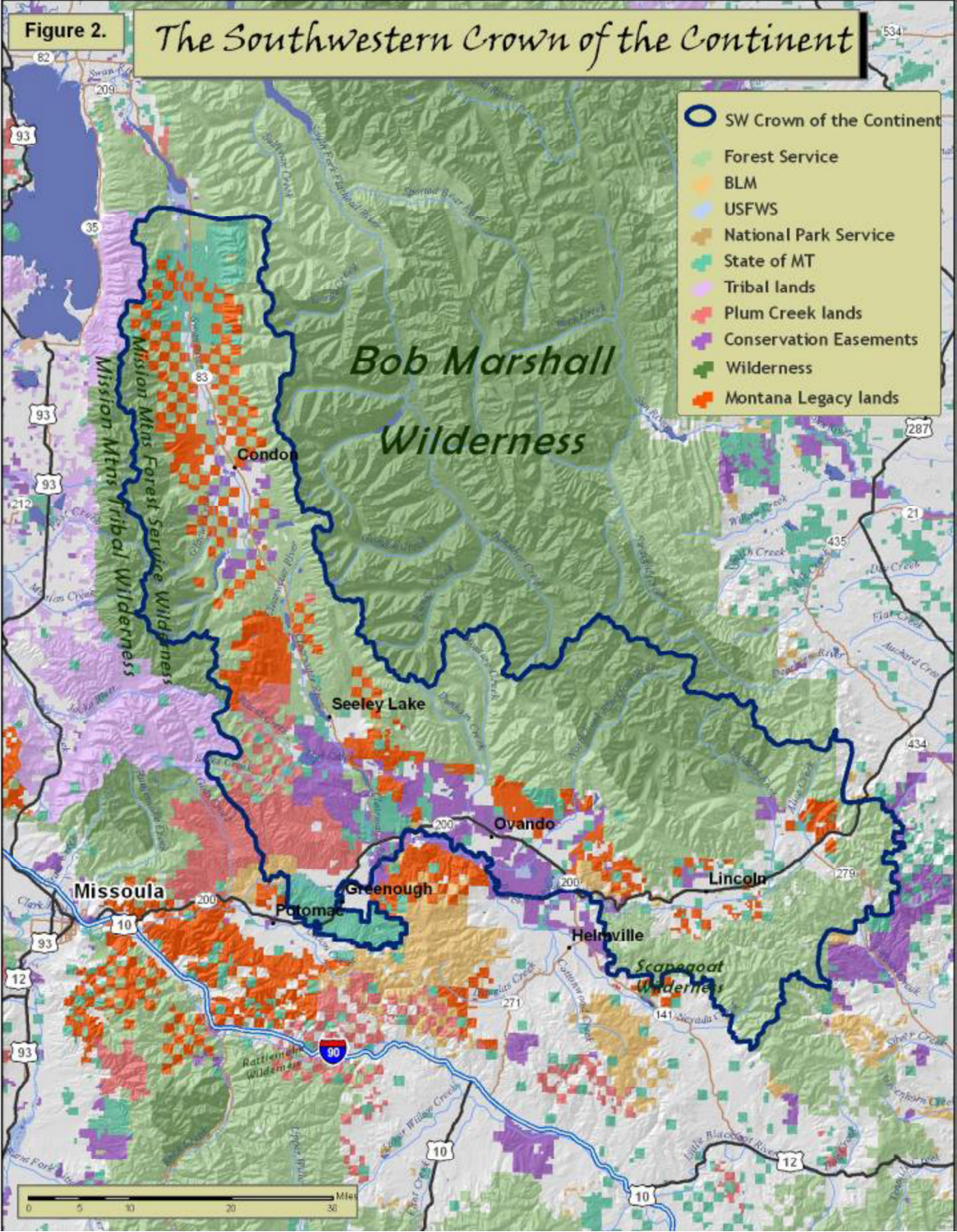
Interview Guidelines Southwestern Crown Collaborative and Clearwater Basin Collaborative

1. Tell me how the collaborative was established.
2. Is the current membership open?
3. How would someone in the public get involved?
4. How did you become a member of the collaborative?
5. Have you worked on any other collaboratives? In what capacity
6. What do you see as your primary role in this collaborative?
7. What do you see as the collaboratives primary role?
8. Tell me about the benefits of collaboration in natural resource management? Drawbacks?
9. What barriers do you see in the process of collaboration with the USFS?
10. What can you tell me about the CFLRP program? Benefits. Drawbacks.
11. What can you tell me about working with the USFS?
12. Do you have any suggestions for the future of collaboration in natural resource management?

APPENDIX C: MAP OF THE CLEARWATER BASIN COLLABORATIVE (CBC) BOUNDARY



Appendix D:
Southwestern Crown of the Continent Map



APPENDIX E

Sandra Treadaway
University of Montana
Department of Sociology
406-529-9042

Rick Brazell
Forest Supervisor
Clearwater National Forest
Orofino, ID 83855

Mr. Brazell,

I am a graduate student at the University of Montana seeking a master's degree in Rural and Environmental Sociology and a graduate level certification in Natural Resource Conflict Resolution. My particular area of interest is in collaboration and place-based methods of forest management. I am contacting you to request permission to conduct a study that involves the employees in the Clearwater and Nez Perce National Forests.

The purpose of the study is to determine the effect of working with a citizen based collaborative on employees of the USFS. In your area the Clearwater Basin Collaborative is an active group that is very interested in the management of the Clearwater Basin Watershed. My research is qualitative based research that involves talking to participants to gather information from their perspective.

If you agree to allow employees to participate, I will schedule an interview at a mutually agreed upon time either in person or over the phone. I may record the conversation, and will take notes to keep a record of what is said. **Pursuant to University guidelines for research subject confidentiality, the individual responses to the questions will be confidential, and individuals will not be quoted in the study write-up.** Only I and my advisers will have access to the original notes and recordings.

With your permission and assistance in gathering a list of participants I would like to conduct the interviews in November and December. At this time I do not have a firm list of interview questions but will be happy to supply those to you prior to the actual interviews.

Thank you for your consideration and if you have any questions please contact me directly at 406-529-9042 or Sandra.treadaway@umontana.edu.

Sandra Treadaway
University of Montana
Department of Sociology
Graduate Student

APPENDIX F:

Interview Guidelines United States Forest Service Employees

1. Tell me about your work for the USFS.
 - a. Current position
 - b. Past positions
 - c. Responsibilities
 - d. Daily routines
 - e. Length of employment

2. What can you tell me about collaboration and the USFS?
 - a. Training
 - b. Support
 - c. Knowledge of
 - d. Importance
 - e. Impressions
 - f. Benefits
 - g. Barriers

3. What is your level of involvement with the (SWCC/CBC)?

4. How has working with the (SWCC/CBC) influenced management on the forest?

5. Have you worked with any other collaboratives?
 - a. In what capacity?

6. What suggestions would you make to improve the process of collaboration in forest management?

7. What can you tell me about CFRLP funding? Benefits? Drawbacks?

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