COLLABORATIVE RESOURCE MANAGEMENT TRAINING FOR PUGET SOUND

Puget Sound is home to more than 200 species of fish. Not all have economic or survival value to human populations and not all are endangered. Three – Puget Sound Chinook salmon, Hood Canal summer chum, and bull trout – are protected under the Endangered Species Act and require comprehensive plans to restore populations to sustainable levels. Over the past two decades, Indian tribes and resource management officials from Washington state have worked together to reduce salmon harvest levels by as much as 90%. Local governments have also taken steps to control damaging land use practices within the Puget Sound basin. More recently, efforts have emerged at the grassroots level to develop comprehensive strategies to meet the needs of people and healthy watersheds within the basin.

Natural resource managers are not new to the worsening salmon situation, or the need to restore health to basin watersheds. However, Puget Sound’s resources are managed by a growing number of public agencies at the federal, tribal, state, and local level. The diversity of resources and resource values that they represent, coupled with the large number of public agencies actively involved in natural resource management, has created difficult challenges for public managers. Add to this the growing social diversity within communities and the evolving professional diversity within public agencies, and you have a complexity of resource management challenges that few places rival.

While interagency coordination, consultation, and public involvement have helped address some of these challenges, more work is needed to bridge these gaps. Moreover, resource managers are growing ever more conscious of the connectedness of natural resource components, and the need to focus on larger ecosystems, including their dynamic social, economic, and ecological systems. This is never more true than it is in Puget Sound.

Addressing these growing challenges and managing natural resources more systemically requires a different approach. Agencies and publics have found such an approach through Collaborative Resource Management (CRM). CRM is a systematic process through which agencies and publics achieve multiple goals while respecting mandates, policies, and cultural differences. CRM is a comprehensive set of principles, processes, and skills that change the way organizations and individuals interact with each other. CRM is not a panacea for natural resource conflict. Where it has been effectively implemented, however, CRM has shown great promise in a growing number of difficult and complex resource management situations.

The Ecosystem Management Initiative in the University of Michigan’s School of Natural Resources and Environment, in cooperation with the US Department of Interior’s Office of Collaborative Action and Dispute Resolution, is offering a 4½-day interagency CRM training workshop that is tailored for Puget Sound. The workshop is designed to help professional resource managers effectively design, manage, and participate in collaborative processes at multiple levels. It is designed to stimulate emerging collaborative efforts as well as to sustain and add value to on-going processes. Finally, it is designed to help managers address scientific and technical uncertainty, as well as the role of adaptive management in natural resource decisions.

For more information visit www.snre.umich.edu/emi/collaboration/cc.htm or email David_Emmerson@ios.doi.gov or adotzour@umich.edu
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You will learn:

Principles of Collaboration
- What is collaboration and what motivates it?
- What are the benefits of a collaborative approach?
- What challenges are facing collaboration?
- What characteristics of a problem make it amenable to a collaborative solution?
- When is a collaborative solution appropriate?
- What are the principles of effective negotiation?

How to Design and Manage Collaborative Processes for Ecosystem Management
- What are the stages of collaborative problem solving?
- When is it in your organization’s best interest to participate?
- How does one convene a collaborative project?
- How can a group develop a common purpose?
- What are ways to learn collaboratively through joint fact-finding?
- How do you manage adaptively?
- How can you measure the success of your project?
- What are effective ways of dealing with the public?

How to Understand and Overcome Challenges
- How can you effectively deal with the human dimensions of collaboration?
- How should you communicate with the media about your collaboration?
- What are ways to navigate the legal and political challenges of collaboration?

How to Apply the Concepts of the Course to your Work
- How can you enhance the capacity of your organization?
- How can you incorporate collaboration into your work?