

## CHAPTER 13: SCOTT RIVER COORDINATED RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COUNCIL

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Scott River Valley, Northern California  
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*The Scott River CRMP Council attempts to balance the health of anadromous fish runs with the economic stability of a rural California community. This case highlights the challenges of building trust among extremely diverse stakeholders, working collaboratively with strong personalities, and making watershed management changes within an adjudicated water system.*

### Interviews:

**Allan Kramer**, non-industrial timber owner, (3/9/99)  
**Dennis Maria**, California Department of Fish and Game, (3/10/99)  
**Felice Pace**, Klamath Forest Alliance, (3/21/99)  
**Jeff Fowle**, Cattleman's Association, (3/9/99)  
**Jennifer (Jeffy) Davis Marx**, CRMP coordinator 1996 - present, (3/7/99)  
**Ken Maurer**, Marble Mountain Audubon Society, (3/17/99)  
**Mike Bryan**, Scott Valley Irrigation District, (3/10/99)  
**Mary Roehrich**, small landowner, (3/11/99)  
**Sari Sommarstrom**, CRMP coordinator, (1992-1996)

## PART I: BACKGROUND

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### Origin and Issues \*

When gold miners first discovered the Scott River in the 1850s, there was little doubt that northern California's pristine beauty was an integral part of the region's wealth. Lying adjacent to the mountainous Oregon border, Scott River Valley is located within Siskiyou County---a 6,313 square mile region whose ecological diversity rivals that of the Appalachians. The 819 square mile watershed (42% US Forest Service land, 13% private ranch land) comprises a segment of the Klamath National Forest that spans six distinct ecosystems, ranging from high elevation Douglas fir forests to broadleaf evergreens that paint the riparian lowlands. Indeed, dramatic variation in elevation, hydrology and soil where the Scott tributary joins the Klamath River make the valley a veritable wildlife treasure. Originally known as 'Beaver Valley' for its lucrative French and native American fur trading, the region is still recognized as a world class fishery where fall-run salmon were once caught with a pitchfork instead of rod and reel.

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\* Background information was compiled from various group publications and web sites listed at the end of this document.

Today, however, the Scott Valley and its river look far different than years past. Impacts began with the gold rush of the 1800s when dream seekers arrived in droves in search of fortune. With them came mining dredges, tailing deposits, and sedimentation plumes that damaged streams. When agriculture followed in the soil rich lowlands, mining ditches were converted to irrigation channels and riverbanks cleared of vegetation for farming and livestock. Timbering also began in the upland regions of the watershed, causing logjams and destroying habitat. By 1920, the landscape had been stripped bare of the large Cottonwoods and tall pines that once shadowed the Scott's banks. Adding to change, Siskiyou County requested the Army Corps of Engineers to clear debris and 'straighten' the river after a series of mid-century floods---effectively slowing run-off and lowering the water table. Crop conversion to more profitable but thirsty alfalfa crops took more flow from the river. Levees and permanent bank stabilization, established between 1940 and 1974, put the final clutches on the river's flow. These impacts would forever alter the Scott River and its ability to support fish runs.

### ***Environmental Crisis***

Evidence mounted with environmental awareness in the 1970s that farming and logging were taking their toll on riparian habitat. Federal and state agencies followed with substantial proof that rising water temperatures and increased sedimentation affected the annual return of anadromous fish.<sup>†</sup> Indeed, numbers of Coho Salmon, King Salmon and Steelhead Trout were steadily dropping. By the 1980s, federal-state cooperative efforts to study and restore riparian zones---such as the Klamath River Basin Fisheries Restoration Program--were underway. Species and river listings under the Endangered Species Act and Clean Water Act heightened attention on what was becoming a clash of conservation and economics in the Northwest. Soon residents of Scott Valley witnessed neighboring farming and timber communities engage in expensive lawsuits with uncertain outcomes. Cases like the Spotted Owl sent a lightning rod message about the fate of resource dependent communities facing environmental regulation. Fearing a similar economic blow, the local Resource Conservation District (RCD) and residents began to consider how to proactively head-off such a disaster.

### ***Formation of the Scott Valley CRMP Council --- Early Stages***

In 1992, the RCD decided to follow the advice of local conservationists and form a Coordinated Resource Management Planning Council (CRMP) in hope of skirting future fish listings. Originally developed by cooperative extensions agents in the 1940s to manage natural resource management issues, the CRMP process was gaining renewed attention in the West as a voluntary means of bringing landowners, agencies and interested parties together to resolve resource disputes. Drawing on the example of other successful regional CRMPs, the RCD convened a public meeting at the local grange hall in June to openly discuss the concerns of the community. To the surprise of many, an audience of 60 people showed with a host of issues in tow. As one observer described, the meeting quickly became a "chaotic Pandora's box" in which "every problem under the

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<sup>†</sup> Anadromous fish, such as salmon and trout species, spend the majority of their lives in the ocean only coming back to their freshwater stream of birth to mate.

sun was put on the table” (Sommarstrom). Particularly controversial issues were the control of river flow, the restoration of riparian zones, and the looming impact of a Coho listing. Overwhelmed by the experience, the conservation district facilitator frantically passed his business card to a friend during the meeting. On the back it read "HELP!!!" in bold letters. Indeed, the meeting was out control and boded an omen of the challenging process the Scott River CRMP would become.

### ***Participants***

Membership in the CRMP represented the diverse viewpoints in the Scott River community. This was due to the open nature of the first public meeting and announcements in the local paper that the CRMP was forming. Originally consisting of 18 decision-makers that were part of the initial gathering, the group has since grown to over 30 active representatives. These include six federal and state agencies (California Department of Fish and Game, United States Forest Service (USFS), California Department of Forestry / Fire, Regional Water Quality Control, and Natural Resource Conservation Service), two environmental groups (Klamath Forest Alliance, Marble Mountain Audubon Society), and five farming organizations (Cattlemen's Association, Farm Bureau, Scott Valley Irrigation, Scott Valley Hay Growers, Siskiyou Resource Conservation District). There are also several small landowners involved that have property adjacent to the river. Finally, Quartz Valley Native American reservation and the local timber company serve as inactive members because the river's management does not directly affect either party. They may enter the process fully at any future time.

### **Organization and Process**

After the initial public hearing in June, the RCD decided to host the first official Scott Valley CRMP meeting three months later in September. The group would have no authority of its own. Rather, its power would come from landowners, agencies, local organizations and residents working cooperatively to form management plans that the RCD would implement. Decision-making is consensus-based with the ability of any member to veto or stand aside if they do not agree with a decision.<sup>‡</sup> In terms of staff, the group operated for the first four years with several voluntary elected chairpersons who organized and ran meetings. The CRMP has not used an official facilitator with the exception of a 2-year period in 1994 when management of controversial issues and subsequent difficulty controlling meetings made it necessary. Due to increasing time requirements of volunteers, the council hired its first paid coordinator (Jeffy Marx) in 1996 to manage internal communications and guide development of plans and reports.

The CRMP Council's **long-term goal** --- *to seek coordinated resource management in the Scott River watershed, which will produce and maintain a healthy and productive watershed and community*--- has remained consistent over the years.

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<sup>‡</sup> CRMP members wear color-coded tags to represent ‘voting’ or ‘non-voting’ status. Voting consists of approving or disapproving of a group decision and gives the member the ability to veto a decision. State and federal agencies are non-voting CRMP members and serve only an advisory role on scientific and economic issues.

Its **short-term goal**, however, has become more detailed and broad. Originally focused on exclusively managing flow levels to protect migration and spawning conditions, the Council now *seeks coordinate the resource management of the upland areas with use of sub-watershed groups* through the following **objectives**:<sup>§</sup>

- *Reintroduce fire* into the uplands in order to reduce the risk of catastrophic fire, reduce vegetation density, and contribute to building health soil.
- *Manage forest density* where it is not sustainable given site conditions.
- *Ensure the Scott River road system does not contribute to degradation.*
- *Identify problem areas* in the watershed.
- *Encourage use of best available science* in management techniques.
- *Investigate water storage possibilities* that do not affect fisheries and wildlife.
- *Coordinate and combine data collection* to develop priorities and aid decision-making.

To achieve these objectives, four subcommittees are used to break the 30-person council into manageable decision-making units. Committees and their focus are the:

- *Water Committee* - focused on water use, water rights, and ground water issues;
- *Upland Vegetation Management Committee*- focused on water yield improvement, fuel management, wildlife habitat improvement, water quality protection and rangeland improvement;
- *Fisheries Riparian Habitat Committee*- focused on artificial propagation, harvesting, poaching, predation, habitat restoration and emergency conditions; and
- *Agriculture Committee*- focused on water quantity & quality, riparian areas, bank erosion, stock-watering and private property rights.

These committees embody the current focus of the Council. They are attended by at least one CRMP member with invitations to individuals outside the CRMP to agencies who wish to participate.

### ***Meetings***

The CRMP normally has regular monthly meetings (third Tuesday) that alternate locations between the two main towns of the valley, Etna and Fort Jones. This helps accommodate the 40-mile drive some members must make to attend meetings. The council met more often between 1994 and 1996 because of time-intensive decision making sessions and to break-up the long hours consensus building requires. By the end of this period, many regular members were “burnt out by 4-hour meetings” (Marx). As a result, after 1996 it was decided to scale back to bimonthly meetings with education events during off-meeting months. CRMP members currently spend anywhere between 3 to 10 hours per month on CRMP business.

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<sup>§</sup> The CRMP's objectives have been simplified for clarity. See Upland Management Action Plan listed in Sources for full text.

## ***Funding***

The CRMP is primarily funded by grants obtained from the Klamath Basin Fisheries Task Force (KBFT), a non-profit organization called *For the Sake of Salmon*, the California Department of Conservation, and most recently the California Department of Fish and Game. Other projects prioritized by the CRMP and implemented by the Siskiyou RCD have tapped funding from the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the University of California-Davis, and small foundations. Total funding since inception of the CRMP surpassed \$2 million dollars in 1999. Key to the CRMP's financial success has been its relationship with the Siskiyou RCD. The CRMP helps funnel conservation dollars to the area because of its popular multi-interest process, while the trust and long-term relationship between RCD and landowners has gained broad involvement from watershed residents. This complementary partnership gives the CRMP unique "informal power" to promote management changes on the Scott River beyond its advisory role to agencies (Marx).

## **Outcomes**

To date, the Scott River CRMP has provided an "essential forum" for dealing with resource management in the Valley. Although three years of intensive discussion and argument we required for the Council to complete the first watershed management plan in 1995, substantial restoration progress has since been made. Notable achievements include:

- Bank stabilization, fish screening, and habitat restoration efforts;
- Productive joint fact-finding sessions for project data collection;
- Equalization of river water temperatures; and
- Establishment of monitoring systems.

As one former chairman explains, "it took a long time to create the problems we have now, and it will take a long time to fix them." For now, the Council has attempted to address less controversial projects first in hopes of confronting more tenuous issues down the road.

In contrast, some members doubt that protecting fall salmon runs can be done without addressing broader underlying political issues. One of these is the adjudication of the river in 1980 by the State Water Resources Control Board that allocates more than four times the total amount of water in the Scott to ranchers for crops and livestock. Additional concern stems from timber activity on Forest Service land contributing to sedimentation in the upland watershed. Former chair Sari Sommarstrom notes, "There is simply not enough water available to meet the needs of the fish *and* all the stakeholders. Something or someone has got to give."

Given these conditions, conflict is commonplace in the group. For example, one group member filed for endangered listing of the Coho Salmon in 1994 and again for the Steelhead Trout in February 1999 --- both unbeknownst to the Council. While some view these actions as the right of any member to pursue their interests, others see it as an

affront to the commitment of the group to work through problems outside of the court. In the words of one member, "What we are dealing with is a matter of trust, and our trust has been broken." "On the other hand," notes another participant, "without the fire under the feet that legal action represents, the group would unlikely make the tough management choices." Coordinator Jeffy Marx summarizes the tension saying "It's been a bit of roller coaster, with periods of successful decision-making and other times of total roadblock---and it will be interesting to say the least to see if we can survive this latest bump in the road."

## **PART II: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES**

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### **Why Collaboration?**

The choice to collaborate in the Scott River CRMP was triggered by the threat of the Coho listing. Though not visible to the entire community, the local RCD saw the increasingly effective use of lawsuits as an environmentalist strategy in the Northwest and feared its effects on the economy. Siskiyou RCD knew it had to expand its approach beyond a one-on-one restoration effort with farmers. Watershed consultant Sari Sommarstrom and local environmentalist Felice Pace played important roles in bringing the threat to their attention. As Pace recalls "We went to the RCD and told them the Coho listing was coming and they had better get out in front of it. Because RCD is the link to land management decisions with landowners, it was obvious they needed to be the lead organization."

Participants had a broad range of reasons for participating in a collaborative effort. Landowners like Mary Roerich with river side property, for example, wanted to get involved to hope to at least have a say in land management activity. Farmers and ranchers were more concerned with how a potential listing would affect their businesses while others admit they hoped to "capitalize" on RCD funds for restoration efforts. Agency representatives perceive the CRMP as an opportunity to improve its struggling relationship and reputation of distrust with landowners. Finally, environmental groups like the Klamath Fisheries Alliance believe the CRMP to be an effective avenue to simultaneously support cooperative conservation efforts and species protection. Indeed, all participants feel that a "well functioning CRMP" could deter federal regulators from promulgating economically detrimental regulation.

### ***Alternatives***

According to participants, there was no reasonable alternative to the collaborative process. The listing of the Coho appeared imminent and a lawsuit battle was financially prohibitive. The one exception is Klamath Forest Alliance representative Felice Pace who chose to remain part of the CRMP while pursuing endangered species listings to force resolution of Coho and Steelhead protection. Explaining his choice, Pace remarks that "There is often an unspoken caveat or expectation that if you are participating in a collaborative effort, you will refrain from using other means, particularly litigation. But I don't agree. Others push their interests, such as lobbying for agriculture interests by the Farm Bureau, yet are never called to task for pursuing their interests outside the CRMP."

Opinion is sharply divided on Pace's actions, with some believing it has been "inappropriate" and others feeling resolute that the valley's problems would be "largely where they were" without his legal intervention. Many participants now sense the group will break-up and the RCD may form its own watershed management group as a result of the division among group members.

### *Advice*

Given the controversy, participants offered broad advice about the form and role of collaborative decision making:

- Former coordinator Sari Sommarstrom remarks, "Make sure your CRMP is an open process. In its best form, CRMPs give a personal face to government in big states like California"... "it should also be a door that reduces the threat of lawsuits that can destroy communities economically."
- Mary Roehrich adds, "Members of the group need to be understanding and cooperative with their intent to make changes. If not, you should expect to get nowhere."
- Regarding the form of the CRMP, environmental representative Felice Pace suggests the need for collaborative efforts to be democratic: "Ultimately I think [collaborative efforts] should be based on solely democratic institutions like the RCD which is an elected body. It was a compromise we made at the time. [Forming the CRMP Council as a separate unit from the RCD in order to attract broad support]. However, I like the idea of a government institution running local watershed management efforts better than the non-profit model. It so happens that most communities support [watershed projects], but what if they didn't? Where is the democratic access to the part of the community that does not like them?"
- Former-coordinator Sari Sommarstrom also cautions about the difficulties of forming a collaborative group to deal with deep seeded natural resource management issues: "Trying to do the voluntary cooperative thing when the bottom line is lack of water and fish is pretty much impossible once you get past the honeymoon stage. That's not to say that you can't get something done with collaboration, but it requires a lot of hand holding sometimes. I see it as analogous to step Alcoholics Anonymous program. We are all addicted to water out here, but we can at least make some progress one step at a time."
- California Department of Fish and Game representative Dennis Maria voices similar frustrations: "Because we are using a collaborative consensus-based framework, sometimes it seems like there's no way to achieve adequate answers to the larger problems. Re-adjudication appears to be the only way, because no one wants to give up anything. Right now farmers have [all the water] and nothing short of changing the law is going to alter that."

- Finally, Sommarstrom expressed caution about collaborative processes: "You see, you never start these groups without knowing where you are going with them. That's my lesson from our first meeting. The Pandora's box approach says 'we can deal with any issue and anyone can be involved, anytime, anyplace, but it doesn't work. Once you open that box you can never close it again. Afterward, it never got back in control."

### **Ensuring Representation**

Ensuring representation has not been a major difficulty for the Scott River CRMP despite the small size of the valley. In fact, interest from environmentalists, local government, landowners and interest groups has ensured broad involvement. However, many feel the impact of the lawsuits on group trust poses future challenge.

### ***Challenges***

#### *Lawsuit impact*

Involving independent and cautious ranchers in the group has been a constant challenge to the group. The filing for endangered species listings, perceived by a number of participants as a "threat that goes above the group and that unfairly forces national law on local issues" has now inflamed this problem. The result has been the loss of a number of participants and resignation of two chairpersons. As one participant notes, "I'm not going to be involved in a process where folks might be going behind my back." While the actions of Felice Pace are not intended to be "secretive," perception has augmented anti-environmental property rights sentiment in the valley. As cattlemen Jeff Fowle observes, "Those feds should come out here themselves and see how well we are managing...because if they think that [an endangered species listing] can provide answers...well, they're dead wrong."

### ***Strategies***

A number of strategies were applied to improve representation:

#### *Formation of subcommittees*

The use of subcommittees was seen a way of building trust in smaller groups and getting individuals more directly involved with decision making.

#### *Facilitation*

A facilitator was hired to manage meetings after the contentious 1994 listing of the Coho Salmon. Establishing ground rules helped calm discussion and keep people at the table.

#### *Small projects first*

Attempting smaller restoration projects first became the mantra to ensure participation and trust building. Many participants believe that "from small successes and broadly represented achievements, larger issues can be addressed down the road" (Marx).



### *Social Activities*

Issue educational sessions combined with social events also help involve valley residents. For example, a water law seminar held by the group in 1995 was attended by residents and farmers as a mean of sharing information on the legal parameters of water distribution in the valley. A warm meal was served in the grange hall that created "an inviting atmosphere for exchange." Another success was the old-timers video project. Considered a good "table-leveler," elderly farmers and ranchers were asked to recount the resource conditions of the valley over the past century. Learning from these residents helped involve them in the group's activities and provided opportunity to contribute to the Council's knowledge base (Roerich).

### *Advice*

Participants felt that ensuring adequate and fair representation in collaborative processes is a constant challenge. They offered the following reflections and advice:

- "You just have to muddle through it", said environmentalist Felice Pace, "You can never guarantee that you'll have perfect representation. I only suggest that the bottom line be that the door be open for democracy to function. And if someone wants to walk out, they should be allowed to as well."
- Allan Kramer speaks to the importance of having good leadership: "Finding the right representative for a particular group is particularly important. You can't have someone coming in with their guns blazing and not listening. You need a representative willing to hear what others are saying. If you don't do that, you might as well not be at the table."
- Sommarstrom contrasts the notion that CRMP should be wide open. In her words: "I'm not sure if these processes can run fairly and allow adequate representation if just anyone is allowed to participate. It has been so difficult with [one individual] that it nearly destroyed the group and discouraged many from participating. It's not that [the person's] point of view can't be represented, it's just that his style of interaction makes it hard for others to feel comfortable and to participate."
- Coordinator Jeffy Marx speaks to the importance of having the right kind of people at the table: "It has to do with choosing people who can operate in the consensus process. This is really an important piece of the equation. You have to be someone who can stay open and listen and remember what he or she learned in kindergarten-- such as containing anger. I don't mean you can't vent, but you definitely can't go into the physical realm. You also need to have good listeners in general and a good neutral facilitator at least to start out with to help train people in the process."

### **Accommodating Diverse Interests**

Accommodating diverse interests has challenged the Scott River CRMP Council. Environmental, rancher, and agency concerns vary widely. The clash of recent lawsuits with the independent culture of the valley again plays a significant role.

## *Challenges*

### *Property rights activism*

Scott River Valley's property rights activism (known locally as the 'Jeffersonian mindset') has made reaction to lawsuits even more adversarial. <sup>\*\*</sup> Central to this division, is the controversial role the RCD plays as both a CRMP member and the representative of landowner interests. According to one participant, "RCD has been afraid to seek restoration watershed management changes too quickly for fear that they would lose their constituency." In the words of another, "RCD is effectively seeking to sanitize every CRMP decision so as not to scare ranchers off." The result has been an arduous and frustrating process limited to non-confrontational projects (e.g. tree planting, bank stabilization). Coordinator Jeffy Marks sums the situation aptly: "We go by the premise that we need to seek agreement where agreement can be found and leave the real tough points aside for now. This may sound like we would never deal with the main issues. But most of us believe that if you build trust and make agreements where you can on the smaller issues, sooner or later you end up coming around to those tough points when folks better understand each others' points of view."

## *Strategies*

### *Seek middle ground*

Seeking middle ground continues to be the centerpiece to the CRMP Council's approach to addressing diverse interests. Meanwhile, Felice Pace filed for listing the Steelhead as an endangered species in February 1999 to bring attention to the politically sensitive issue of water flow. He believes that "lawsuits act as the fire under the feet that force all concerns onto table. While some participants feel this is painfully necessary others have threatened to leave the group.

When asked if Pace had violated members' trust one CRMP member remarks: "Well if I log off my land without permission maybe I've done the same thing. If my cows are muckin' up the river, maybe I've done the same thing. Just because Pace filed lawsuits doesn't mean he's not working hard at the table to solve other parts of the equation. Yeah, the KFA has damaged trust, but its not an excuse to back out of process. We need every viewpoint, including theirs. Using the lawsuit issue to reject them is hogwash. It's totally out of line."

## *Advice*

Advice from participants focuses on the effect of the lawsuit on trust within a diverse group:

- "I think we have to own up to the fact that a lot of our success has to do with outside factors like species listings. If we don't deal with it, it will be dealt to us. I'd like to

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<sup>\*\*</sup> The Siskiyou region of California has attempted to succeed from the U.S. several times. As late as 1941, the county put forward legislation to form the State of Jefferson--modeled after Thomas Jefferson's state's rights policies. The attempt was swept away by the winds of WWII late that same year.

say it's all the consensus process, but its really a combination of what's happening on the outside and feeling like we can take some control through the collaborative process" (Mary Roehrich)

- Felice Pace feels that conflict resulting from diverse interests is a natural occurrence: "We must accept that there is a tremendous amount of outside pressure on all sides and that everyone is playing their own game at some level. Don't be fooled. What we are going through is social change and the idea that we can all get together and do this without conflict or pressures that builds to arguments is naive and wrong."
- He also feels the need for proper forums to handle the conflict: "There will always be some sections of society that want change and other parts that resist it. When there is resistance there is sure to be conflict. Therefore you need institutions that are capable of dealing with that conflict, as opposed to those that want to avoid it"(Felice Pace).
- Jeff Fowle believes "taking the middle ground yields the quickest results with the least detrimental effect on the community. People can cut us all they want because its taken us 6 or 7 years just to get this far, but they have to remember that learning where to give and take can be slow and crucial part of that."
- Mike Bryan also supports compromise: "You can't have the attitude of minimizing or maximizing anything. Instead, you have to think 'optimum' for the group or situation. It's when you're optimizing for individual concerns that things start to erupt."
- Jeffrey Marx sees the process as challenge of balancing risk and trust: "It comes down to the people being willing to stretch further with their values...to take risk. And the ability to take risks requires trust. You see, you have to remember that it's a slow step by step process. If people want to see immediate results I don't think its going to happen, in most cases. It's a very long process and there is no way to evaluate our group in this regard except to ask if we are still working in our process."
- Jeff Fowle advocates trying to put together as diverse a group as possible: "I pity the group that tries to find 10 or 12 people with equal knowledge and interests. When that happens I can guarantee you that there's something they're not thinking about. It would do us good to recall how Teddy Roosevelt surrounded himself with a cabinet of which four of them he despised. But he brought them there because they made him think. You could say the same of our CRMP in that there are people we may not like personally, but we can all find some respect for where they are coming from."
- Lastly, once people are at the table, Allan Kramer suggests looking for the following characteristics: "Seek representatives with patience, good communication skills, and willingness to work with others."

## **Dealing with Scientific Issues**

Incomplete understanding of the causes of fish run declines, lack of data, and inability to manage and coordinate available information were the primary scientific concerns of the Scott Valley CRMP. These stemmed from persistent disagreement between agencies and experts regarding the relationship between agriculture activity, sedimentation, water quality and the health of fish runs.

### ***Challenges***

#### ***Managing scientific information***

Coordination and assimilation of information from multiple participating agencies has been burdensome. Not only is the process adhoc, there is no one person responsible for the job. Moreover, participants complain of "proprietary behavior over information" between agencies. As Mike Bryan notes, "getting the right scientific information is expensive and time intensive...and when you get down to the nitty gritty, the agency folks don't always know the answers."

It was suggested that the CRMP coordinator take on this immense responsibility. However, as a former schoolteacher working only part time, Jeffy Marx replies she "neither has the time nor professional expertise to take on such an immense task."

#### ***Isolation***

The valley's rural isolation makes tapping external expertise extremely difficult. Though the CRMP could greatly benefit from outside knowledge, the valley is four hours from the nearest university (Sommarstrom). Moreover, ranchers and farmers resist being told what to do after poor experiences with academics that lack ability to empathize with rural concerns.

#### ***Politicizing Science***

Finally, property rights groups in the valley use the *incomplete* understanding of factors affecting watershed health as a way of debunking conservation efforts. Sympathetic landowners have impeded agencies from conducting scientific test on their property, citing the river's non-navigability status to prevent access. In addition, the Natural Resource Conservation Service office has a reputation for being pro-farming and slowing the transfer of watershed conservation information. According to one participant, "Unfortunately, [NRCS representatives] here tend to think about the riparian zone as synonymous with the sacrifice zone---the kind of place where you can let your cows hang out while you protect your pasture."

### ***Strategies***

#### ***Educational workshops / Outdoor field-trips / Joint-fact finding sessions***

Participants agree that bringing landowners and agency representatives shoulder to shoulder can break the barriers of information sharing. Issue seminars (e.g. water rights), an 'old-timers' video project to gather a resource history of the valley, and site visits to proposed management zones have been particularly successful. Fish and Game

representative Dennis Maria remarks that these types of information exchange in the valley are "obligatory" because "to do anything out here requires the blessing of the landowners."

#### *Formation of a technical advisory group*

The CRMP council is also seeking funding through grants to hire an independent scientific advisor to head up a technical advisory group composed of agency personnel. Though agencies agree on the need for this measure, the concept is still under development and awaits financial support.

#### *Advice*

Participants are frustrated by scientific dilemmas facing the CRMP and offer few suggestions:

- Felice Pace believes this problem very much shaped by the cultural and political climate of Scott Valley. "All I can add is that environmental groups have a responsibility to make sure the core scientific issues are on the table. I think we have a unique responsibility to make the core issues clearer and to focus the scientific questions. Agencies share the same responsibility."
- Sari Sommarstrom advises making sure everyone has the same information. "You need to try to instill as much information sharing as possible to sift out the facts. I constantly refer to Julia's five public land management objectives in doing this. You see, it's not just that people need to be educated. They need mutual education to take place. In our case it took three years to become literate on the issues".
- Finally, Jeffy Marx suggests that it's helpful to have a coordinator versed in the relevant science issues. "The first chair of this process [Sari Sommarstrom] had a background in geology as well as working with groups. Comparatively, I came to this process as an ex-schoolteacher with little understanding of the science involved. I've learned my way but I think these processes could benefit from coordinators who have both the time and expertise to manage the scientific information."

#### **Accommodating Diverse Capabilities**

Agency, environmental and agricultural stakeholders bring a diverse range of skills, resources, and power to table, particularly in terms of scientific knowledge, legal power, and the ability to negotiate. This circumstance has been frustrating for some. As one participant describes, "Unequal power is a problem of the world in general, and what we have in our CRMP is just a little slice of the same thing."

#### *Challenges*

##### *Agency control of the process*

At the beginning, Scott River CRMP participants feared that agencies would "run away with the process" by controlling access to technical information. Trust building through

the passage of time and open access to subcommittees has largely eased this concern though some ranchers remain skeptical, believing the research is flawed or skewed against their interests.

### *RCD's influence*

Many Council members feel the RCD is biased toward agriculture interests because of its role as both initiator of the CRMP and a participant. "At the beginning," one participant recalls, "it seems the RCD thought the consensus process was just another name for majority rule. Because they already had the trust of landowners, they attempted to load the CRMP by putting multiple representatives of the agriculture interest groups on board. In other words, they wanted to make sure that, no matter what, they had a majority."

### *Difficulty working with strong personalities*

Finally, participants cited difficulty working with Felice Pace. Criticized for being "obstinate" and "abusive" in his behavior during meetings, he was accused of violating the group's trust by filing lawsuits unannounced. While, most concurred that his presence has been a significant challenge, others feel that legal actions are not any different in effect than "the Farm Bureau lobbying for agricultural interest or a farmer knowingly letting his cows muck up the stream." (Maurer) Nonetheless, some CRMP members have dropped out of the process citing Pace's "irascible personality" as the reason for their departure. One participant describes the experience in the following way: "[He] broke the rules many times but people were afraid because of his ability to get the Sierra Club Legal Defense Fund and others with big money to sue landowners. Frankly I don't think the group will ever have trust as long as he's involved. That doesn't mean his interests can be represented. It's the personality that represents those interests that's the problem."

### *Strategies*

#### *Facilitation*

The group hired a facilitator in 1994 to manage increasingly contentious meetings. According to CRMP members, this "helped immensely" and was very important to establishing ground rules and maintaining meeting etiquette. After two years, however, the group decided to continue without a professional facilitator in order to save money. Now similar problems have arisen again, aggravated by the Steelhead listing. Though Jeffy Marx currently serves as an informal facilitator, this is criticized by some who feel her inherent involvement in forming management plans could skew the manner in which she handles issues.

#### *Advice*

Participants offer a range of conflicting opinion about how to accommodate unequal power and skills in a collaborative process:

- Timberland owner Allen Kramer describes unequal power among group participants this way: "It's not just an Achilles' heel of collaboration, it's an Achilles' heel of the world----and there is precious little we can do about it."

- Sommarstrom talks about the need for instituting measures to remove people from the group: "The lesson I learned is that you pick your people carefully as to who is going to be at the table. Not just the interest groups, but whom from those groups you work with. Maybe there needs to be a ground rule so you can kick people off if you need to."
- She also speaks to the importance of defining the consensus process up front: "It's crucial that everyone really have a common definition of what consensus means when they first begin the process. If you don't take the time to do that in your group, like we didn't, you'll have to work through a lot of issues late with representatives trying to stack the cards in their favor."
- Felice Pace believes training is the key aspect that can improve communication in the process: "State and federal agencies need lots of training with these groups because they often come in with too much arrogance. They need to learn how to talk to rural folks and explain the issues."
- He also advocates a mechanism for participants: "You need a training component in the process so that people become empowered. That can be a source of conflict, however, because generally those who have power want to keep it. But that's exactly what we need to do if we are going to make democracy work in watershed management."
- Fowle reflects on the difficulty that strong personalities can have on a collaborative process: "Everyone has to come into this process willing to give something. When there are people seeking their way or the highway, it won't work. For our CRMP it's Felice Pace and the Klamath Forest Alliance. For others it might be timber or agriculture representatives. They aren't filing lawsuits but they *are* digging their heels in and having the same effect Felice is having on the Council. I'm sure every group has a member like this, but you need to figure out how to work with it and not reject them."
- Finally, Pace reflects: "The idea that the collaborative process is a culture of personality is all wrong. In my mind, it doesn't have much to do with who's involved. We are just fooling ourselves. It's basically a myth. It's really about real differences between interests and how those interests respond to change."

### **Insights Particular to this Case**

#### ***Addressing Underlying Political Frameworks: Water Adjudication***

The Scott River CRMP exemplifies the limits of collaboration within a legal framework. According to many participants, northern California water adjudication represents a power imbalance that cannot be changed without involvement of the courts. "There is only so much water," remarks Sari Sommarstrom, "and when push comes to shove, farmers of valley have the lion's share and won't be willing to give that up without a fight." For that reason Felice Pace continues to file lawsuits as a way of "shifting the

balance." He adds, "I believe collaboration is the ideal way, but I think we have to be realists and know that there will be losers and winners in this process. Collaboration has its limits." Audubon Society representative Ken Maurer further comments that "Someone needs to make a judgement for us with that will force us to address issues we are afraid of. If it takes the KFA forcing agencies to their job, then I commend them for it" (Maurer).

### ***Managing Difficult Personalities***

Accommodating Felice Pace's personality is perhaps the most salient issue of the Scott River CRMP. Some feel his presence provided the threat that forced stakeholders to address the major issues while others sense his aggressive behavior damages the collaborative process and ability of others to participate without intimidation. This quandary raises a difficult questions about whether a collaborative decision-making body should have a right to remove someone from a group and, if so, under what conditions.

### ***Determining Group Success***

Finally, former chair Sari Sommarstrom offers two questions she believes can help measure the success of a collaborative group:

- "Has group internalized better management practices for sharing and building on information?" and;
- "Have participants changed their attitudes and practices as a result of the group?"



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