

## CHAPTER 4: MAPPING THE TERRAIN

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### I. INTRODUCTION

Natural resource collaborative initiatives are varied and diverse by nature. With growing administrative and popular support for increased citizen participation in decision-making, agencies, community and non-profit organizations, local governments and individuals are creating new ways of managing natural resources. Partnerships involve different people and groups, have different goals, organizational structures and operating procedures. Sometimes they are the result of government programs, projects or policies such as ecosystem management or the Bureau of Land Management's Resource Advisory Councils. They often represent innovation adapted to local situations and have unique characteristics. In the words of one Coordinated Resource Management (CRM) chair, "CRMs are like snowflakes; no two are alike" (Weter, 1999). The same may be said of watershed councils, sustainable community initiatives, habitat conservation planning processes, ecosystem management projects, land trust planning projects and other collaborative partnerships.

The objective of this chapter is to describe the landscape of natural resource collaborative partnerships. Without judging effectiveness or suggesting appropriate characteristics, we hope to depict the range and variation of some of the collaborative initiatives throughout the country.

In order to understand a landscape, it is useful to map the terrain, charting prominent landmarks and significant variation. In examining over 450 cases of environmental collaborative efforts, we identified some of the dimensions along which partnerships vary. A collaborative partnership as portrayed on this map is defined as *an association of individuals or organizations working together to solve environmental problems within a defined geographic boundary*. These may include groups that do not fit everyone's criteria or model of collaborative groups. While we certainly want to avoid adding to the confusion, it seems essential to include the spectrum of different groups in order to provide a synopsis of some differentiating characteristics. Therefore, we have included case examples in this chapter that fall outside of the specific kind of partnership that will be analyzed in the in-depth case studies.

Partnerships can vary in terms of the nature of their origin, issues, organizational structure, process and outcomes. Within each of these broad categories, we have outlined a series of inter-linked dimensions. Neither the categories nor the dimensions should be seen as sealed boxes, but rather pathways to aid navigation across a complex terrain.

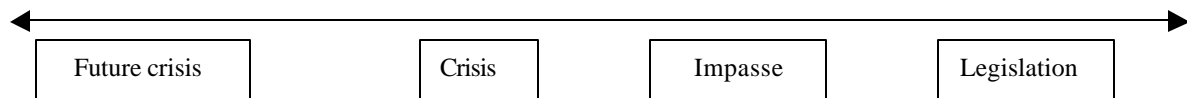
## II. ORIGIN

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Collaborative partnerships vary according to the range of issues and forces that prompt their formation. The socio-historical environment in which a partnership originates often sets the stage for the nature of the group. Both the level of conflict and sense of urgency create a range of climates for collaboration. The partnership initiator may influence the mission and structure of the group, its process and outcomes. Driven individuals are often paramount to formation of a collaborative initiative. Government agency programs that emphasize collaboration and citizen input may provide the framework and funding, but ultimately both the creation and sustainability of a group depends on the dedication of the people involved. Dimensions in this section attempt to chart various aspects of partnership origins such as their:

- Trigger
- Initiator
- Timing

### *Trigger*



The formation of collaborative processes can be traced back to a particular trigger or set of triggers. *A trigger is the catalyst for the creation of the group.* It may be as organic as an individual's concern over the future or current degradation of a resource, or as institutionalized as a federal mandate. Deadlock refers to the common situation when conflict between opposing interests halts decision making or action. No one stakeholder can influence outcomes without involving other concerned parties. Often, triggers work concurrently to motivate a shift in policy towards a collaborative approach.

In Montana, the Blackfoot Challenge (see chapter 6) formed in order to ward off the **future crisis** that citizens foresaw in their valley. Similar to many small towns in the West, residents of the valley began to see an influx of new people with new ideas. Agencies responsible for managing valley resources each had their own agendas and no one was looking at the larger picture. In order to coordinate efforts and avoid any future crises, a few local visionaries convened a forum to get all of these interests together.

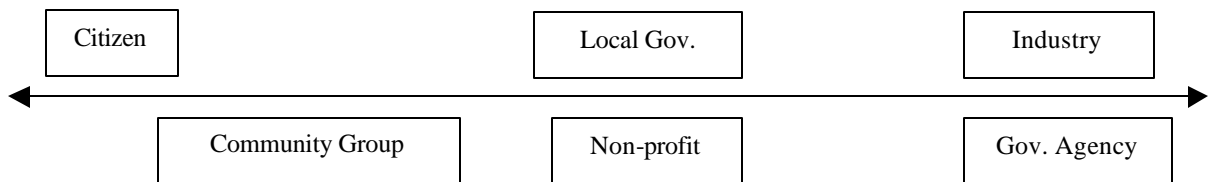
Many partnerships are less proactive, forming only after the problem has already become a crisis issue demanding immediately attention. For example, the Coeur d'Alene watershed in Idaho suffered from severe heavy metal contamination, erosion, sedimentation, thermal and nutrient pollution. This **resource crisis** was caused by mismanagement of the traditional industries of the areas: mining, timber, grazing, and farming. Degradation of the watershed triggered a collaborative approach when it began affecting that same resource base. Instead of a Superfund approach, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and Coeur d'Alene tribe decided to unite other stakeholders to

create a management plan and conduct small-scale clean-up projects (University of Colorado NRLC, 1996: 2-11).

A crisis can often lead to conflict over how the problem should be solved. **Impasse** between stakeholders can also trigger a collaborative initiative. For instance, the Clark Fork River in Montana was designated a Superfund site when arsenic was discovered in the river in 1981. After years of court battles over jurisdiction and financial responsibility, the Clark Fork Basin Committee formed to focus instead on a basin management plan that would address the concerns of all stakeholders regarding both water quality and quantity (Snow, 1996).

On the far end of the continuum, the Minnesota Forest Resource Council, formed in 1995 by the Sustainable Forest Resource Act, illustrates a **legislative trigger**. This state legislation mandated the Governor to appoint thirteen representatives of various interest groups to lead current and future state forestland policies ([www.frc.state.mn.us](http://www.frc.state.mn.us)). On the other side of the country, the Washington State legislature passed the Nisqually River Management Plan in 1987. The legislation created the Nisqually River Council, an inter-agency body that coordinates the implementation of the plan and oversees land management decision-making within the river basin (EPA, 1994:119).

### *Initiator*



Related to the trigger (what initiates) is the issue of *who initiates the partnership*. The continuum for the initiator illustrates an increasing level of power or resources. An individual citizen represents one endpoint and a government agency the other. The exact position on the continuum will vary depending on location and the nature of the initiator. Some local governments are more powerful than an industry; a non-profit may have more, equal, or less power than other entities depending on its size, membership, age and resources.

The Malpai Borderlands Initiative exemplifies a **citizen-initiated** partnership. Local ranchers and private landowners from the Arizona and New Mexico border started this collaborative partnership that now involves local, state and federal agencies, The Nature Conservancy and the University of Arizona, among others. The founders were concerned with the loss of unfragmented open space, productive grasslands and ecological diversity in the region (Yaffee et al, 1996:183). Citizens also initiated the Blackfoot Challenge near Missoula, Montana in order to create a forum through which to coordinate the management of the Blackfoot River basin (see Chapter 6). Landowners were particularly interested in maintaining local control over management strategies in the valley (Lindbergh, 1999).

The Dudley Street Neighborhood Initiative (DSNI) represents a **community-based** planning and organizing entity in the Roxbury / North Dorchester area of Boston. Formed in 1984, businesses, churches, ethnic groups, and non-profit organizations came together to revive

their neighborhood that was nearly devastated by arson, disinvestment, and neglect. Their purpose is to organize and empower residents of the area to create a safe and economically thriving region (<http://www.dsni.org/>).

The Sonoran Institute, a **non-profit organization**, has also initiated several collaborative initiatives (<http://www.sonoran.org/si/index.html>). It is dedicated to promoting community-based strategies that preserve the ecological integrity of protected lands while meeting the economic aspirations of adjoining landowners and communities. One example is the planning process in Red Lodge, Montana that resulted in the formation of the Beartooth Front Community Forum. The Forum plans and implements a variety of projects to maintain the community's environmental, social and economic sustainability.

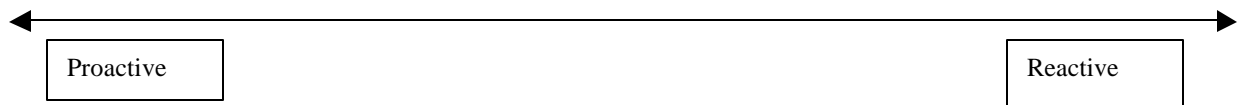
Trout Unlimited (TU), a national **non-profit** organization with local chapters throughout the U.S, has initiated collaborative partnerships focused on river and watershed resources. In southwest Wisconsin, Trout Unlimited applied the Home Rivers Initiative model to an "integrated ecosystem management" project for the Kickapoo River watershed. TU coordinates a diverse team of agencies, sports clubs, conservation groups, business interests and other individuals and groups on a local coordinating committee that works with TU to oversee project activities (Hewitt and Born, 1998).

An example of a **local government** initiated partnership is the Solid Waste Planning Committee, created by the Washtenaw County Department of Environment and Infrastructure in Ann Arbor, Michigan. The committee, comprised of diverse interests, was established to comply with Michigan's 1994 Natural Resource and Environmental Protection Act ([www.co.washtenaw.mi.us/depts/eis/swpc](http://www.co.washtenaw.mi.us/depts/eis/swpc)).

There are several examples of **industry** initiated collaborative planning or assessment efforts. The Weyerhaeuser Corporation took the lead in Washington State to conduct watershed analyses addressing multiple concerns for all of their land holdings. The company has voluntarily expanded the program to Oregon, California and Idaho (Blackmore, 1999). In North Carolina, Weyerhaeuser and the Environmental Defense Fund jointly initiated a process to develop a long-term management plan for the Parker Tract, a 100,000-acre coastal plain forest owned by Weyerhaeuser. The partnership, similar to those initiated by the Nature Conservancy or other land trusts, proposes to maintain the ecological integrity of the property while continuing to yield sufficient economic profit ([http://www.activemedia-guide.com/profile\\_weyerhr.htm](http://www.activemedia-guide.com/profile_weyerhr.htm)).

Land management **agencies** along with the EPA are increasingly looking to collaboration as a way to achieve their goals. On the mid-Atlantic coast, the EPA and state agencies created the Chesapeake Bay Program to manage a number of issues affecting the bay and its larger watershed. Since land is mostly private, agencies encouraged landowners, environmentalists and other citizens to participate in the program (Yaffee et al, 1996: 113).

## *Timing*



Partnerships also differ with respect to the timing of formation relative to the state of the resource. Some collaborative groups form proactively in anticipation of a perceived future threat to a valued resource. The group may also be established in response to problems experienced in other communities. More common are those groups that are initiated in reaction to an apparent problem, or when a crisis situation is evident.

The Willapa ecosystem in southwestern Washington State includes productive forests and encompasses one of the cleanest, most productive estuaries in the continental United States. The Willapa Alliance, a partnership of diverse interests formed to address the need for a sustainable development plan to **proactively** “enhance the diversity, productivity and health of Willapa’s unique environment, to promote sustainable economic development, and to expand the choices available to the people who live here” (Zeller, 1997, p.11). Another example of a proactive group is the Beartooth Front Community Forum in Red Lodge, Montana. Red Lodge, a gateway to Yellowstone National Park, has seen increased tourism and anticipates future changes in its socioeconomic base. Residents of Beartooth initiated the Forum in order to identify potential threats to the community and develop a vision for the future (Concern / Community SRI, 1998).

In contrast, all Habitat Conservation Planning processes (HCP) start because of **reaction** to actual or future endangered species listings under the Endangered Species Act. The Volusia County HCP was also spurred on by a citizen lawsuit over impacts and to avert the takings of five species of sea turtle in Volusia County, Florida. All five species are listed as threatened or endangered. The HCP proposes to minimize threats to the species by involving stakeholders in the planning process ([www.ncedr.org/casestudies/hcp/volusia.html](http://www.ncedr.org/casestudies/hcp/volusia.html)).

### **III. ISSUE**

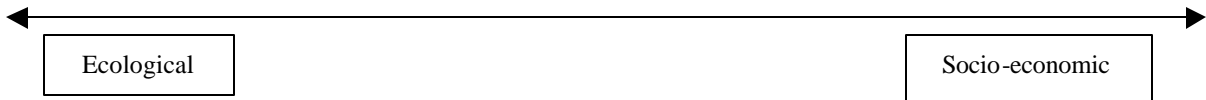
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By opening the door to participation from diverse interests, collaborative partnerships address a comprehensive range of issues. Mission and scope both affect the nature of issues. Some partnerships retain a very narrow focus, while others integrate the myriad social, economic and ecological factors that influence the health of a community. Land ownership can affect the kinds of issues dealt with and raise questions about the party ultimately responsible for the resource at stake. Issues may be scientifically or socially complex, emerging or at crisis stage, and variable in terms of visibility to the community at large. Some of the dimensions of issue are:

- Focus
- Number
- Land ownership
- Resource responsibility
- Scientific complexity
- Stage

- Visibility

**Focus**



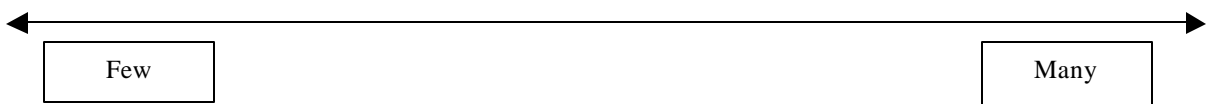
Collaborative partnerships address issues that range along a continuum of solely ecological to primarily social concerns related to resource management. Yet, when diverse stakeholders are involved, most collaborative partnerships consider both social and ecological issues. Moreover, groups vary according to emphasis placed on these social or environmental concerns.

The Karner Blue Butterfly Habitat Conservation Planning process in Wisconsin is an example of a partnership dealing primarily with **ecological issues**, namely the management of disturbance-dependent habitat. The committee is particularly concerned with monitoring the existence of wild lupine, *Lupinus perrems*, which provides food for the butterfly’s larval stage (Yaffee et al, 1996:169).

In contrast, the Sustainable Development Task Force of Northhampton County, Virginia, created to address the challenges produced by a declining population and economic upheaval in the seafood and agricultural industries, portrays a partnership with dominant **socio-economic interests**. The Task Force proposes to protect and enhance the county’s natural assets in order to encourage the development of “heritage tourism” which members hope will “improve the quality of life of the county’s people and retain its young people as they enter the work force.” Although land stewardship is an objective, the primary purpose of the partnership is socio-economic sustainability (EPA, 1997: p.3-23).

The Ponderosa Pine Partnership in Montezuma County, Colorado illustrates the marriage of **ecological and socio-economic concerns** most common in collaborative initiatives. The partnership joins the San Juan-Rio Grande National Forest, Montezuma County, Fort Lewis College, environmental organizations, Colorado State Forest Service, The CO Division of Wildlife and local timber industries. Both economic and ecological goals are addressed “in a way that furthers both.” Combining the interests of its stakeholders, the partnership promotes harvesting small diameter trees from unhealthy mid-elevation ponderosa pine stands in order to restore the forest and support the struggling local timber industry (Shelly, 1999).

**Number of Issues**



Related to scientific complexity, is the sheer number of issues the collaborative group attempts to address. These may include both ecological and social / economic issues. For example, a CRM may focus only on establishing best management practices for grazing on public and private rangeland. On the other hand, most sustainable community initiatives

address a much wider range of issues, including pollution prevention, watershed health, economic development, urban revitalization, and youth development.

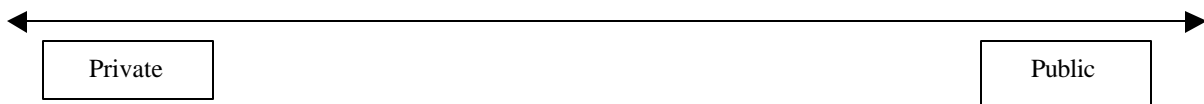
In west central Montana, the Devil’s Kitchen Management Team concentrates on a **limited number** of issues. The partnership unites ranchers, federal and state agencies, sportsmen and outfitters in an effort to address conflict between increasing elk herds and cattle ranching on lands surrounding the Gates of the Mountains Wilderness Area. Although the team is looking at expanding the range of issues they address, the primary focus of the group is directly related to impacts of wild and domestic grazing (Zeller, 1997).

The Kiowa Grasslands Integrated Resource Management Program in New Mexico is another example of a group focused on limited issues. This program is a product of collaboration between the Forest Service, the Soil Conservation Service, and several local ranchers. They convened to work together in developing a coordinated integrated management plan to help ranchers (who operated on private and public land and were interested in improving environmental quality) to manage their land as a single operating unit (Wondolleck and Yaffee, 1994).

The Los Angeles / San Gabriel Rivers Watershed Council formed precisely because of the realization that single-issue flood control projects did not address the range of issues and problems facing the communities of the Los Angeles Basin. The council plans to develop a multi-purpose watershed plan that addresses a **multitude of connected issues**: water conservation and storage, recreation, wildlife corridors and neighborhood enhancement ([www.r5.fs.fed.us/forestmana...html/collaborativeleadership.html](http://www.r5.fs.fed.us/forestmana...html/collaborativeleadership.html), 3/1/99). Multi-issue approaches are common to many watershed councils, especially those in urban areas.

Like numerous sustainable community initiatives, Sustainable Racine in Wisconsin addresses **many** issues of concern to the community leaders who make up its board. The broad range of issues include water quality, land use and open space planning, education, downtown and neighborhood redevelopment, transportation, economic opportunities, civic engagement and culture and arts, among others (Thomas, 1999).

### *Land Ownership*



Resources addressed by collaborative partnerships can also be mapped on a continuum of land ownership, from private land issues to resources located on purely public lands. Reflecting land ownership patterns across the U.S., many western collaborative groups focus more on public resources whereas eastern groups have a greater proportion of private resources at stake (Yaffee et al, 1996). On the other end of the continuum sustainable communities, Habitat Conservation Planning processes, and eastern watershed councils encompass mostly private lands.

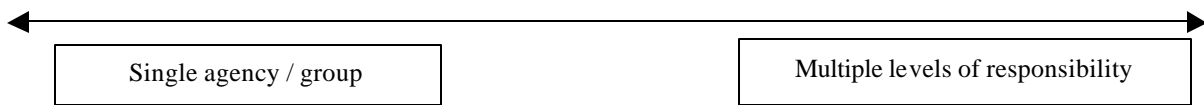
In northeastern Ohio for example, the Fish Creek Watershed Project encompasses 70,400 acres of private agriculture land in an effort to protect habitat for fresh water mussels via improving water quality. The Indiana DNR, the Ohio DNR, USFS, and The Nature Conservancy are working together to decrease run-off and subsequent siltation of the creek.

Collaborative partnerships that focus on **public** land management are often in a very different league. Institutionalized groups like the BLM's Resource Advisory Councils only deal with issues related to management on BLM lands. Other partnerships that deal with public lands may be very organic and particular to one community. For example, the Tonasket Citizens Council in Washington State brought together diverse interests in the community to discuss management of the Okanogan National Forest. The council not only improved understanding of issues and concerns within the community, but provided advice and guidance for the Tonasket Ranger District's forest management decisions (Wondolleck and Yaffee, 1994). The Quincy Library Group also focuses solely on management of lands contained in the Plumas, Lassen and Tahoe National Forests.

The Blue Ridge/ Berryessa Natural Area Partnership proposes to “cooperatively manage and enhance the Blue Ridge / Berryessa Natural Area,” which encompasses **both public** (BLM, Bureau of Reclamation, California State) **and private lands**. The partnership is a newly formed initiative involving the BLM, California state agencies, the University of California, Napa County, six land trusts, a mining company, and three ranches in the collaborative management of 300,000 acres of natural, agricultural and recreational land in the Cache and Putah Creek watersheds in Napa County, California (BRBNAP, 1998).

Another example of a mixed land ownership partnership is the Bridge Creek Coordinated Resource Management Planning Group (CRMP) in north central Oregon. In this case, the Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, the Issac Walton League and seventeen private ranchers work together to manage 109,000 acres of USFS land and 89,000 acres of private property to improve grazing land, control weeds, and enhance stream conditions (<http://endeavor.des.ucdavis.edu/wpi/ProjectDescription.asp>).

**Responsibility**



The dimension of responsibility describes *the range of parties responsible for dealing with the group's issue or problem of concern*. Collaboration can occur when the responsibility for the resource or issue clearly belongs to one entity, or where multiple parties are responsible for an issue or set of issues.

Following the model of a collaborative initiative in Gunnison, Colorado the Bureau of Land Management created its 24 Resource Advisory Councils (RACs) in 1995 to provide management advice for BLM lands. Each RAC is sanctioned by the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) and made up of twelve to fifteen diverse stakeholders appointed by

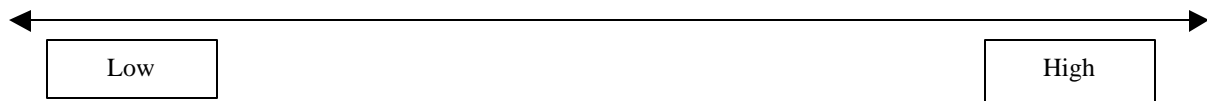


the Secretary of the Interior from individuals nominated by the public and state governors (<http://npr.gov/library/nprct/annrpt/vp-rpt96/secret4/environ4.html>). RACs address only issues directly related to BLM land management.

In the Applegate watershed, as in many watersheds, **multiple** agencies are responsible for separate parcels of land. The USDA Forest Service manages the national forest lands, the BLM manages other pieces, and individual landowners, ranchers and farmers manage their respective properties, yet no one organization is responsible for the watershed as a whole. The Applegate Partnership formed to fill this void, serving as a model for many other collaborative watershed initiatives in the west.

Similarly, because watershed planning does not fit neatly within the bounds of the city or any one government entity, the Cross Lake Watershed Citizens Advisory Committee was established by the mayor of Shreveport, Louisiana to “objectively and fairly analyze watershed issues which may affect **multiple** jurisdictions.” While other agencies maintain authority over specific activities or areas within the watershed, the committee is responsible for the protection of the watershed as a whole ([www.crosslakela.com/committee.html](http://www.crosslakela.com/committee.html)).

### *Scientific complexity*



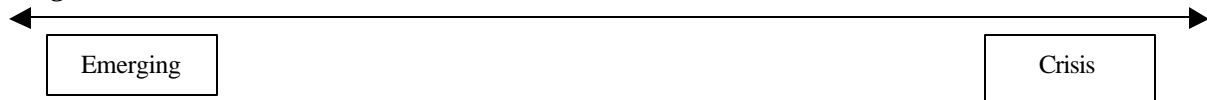
Scientific complexity is one of the most difficult dimensions to measure. The level of uncertainty often defines the scientific complexity of an issue, as does the amount of available knowledge about the issue at hand. Certain resource management issues are by nature more complex than others. For example, endangered species habitat management is highly scientifically complex while land use planning to control urban sprawl is less scientifically than socially complex.

The San Diego Multi-species HCP demonstrates a **high** level of scientific complexity. The HCP committee serves as an umbrella for nine sub-area plans and covers 85 listed and unlisted species. Moreover, individual HCPs were developed to preserve autonomy of multiple jurisdictions while maintaining coverage and permitting benefits of the larger regional plan (<http://www.ncedr.org/casestudies/hcp/sandiego.htm>).

In contrast, though the development of the national forest recreation plan in the St. Petersburg Ranger District in Alaska involved stakeholders with significant value differences, the collaborative process dealt with very **low scientific complexity**.

The Nanticoke Watershed Alliance (Chapter 10) is another example of a group that primarily deals with issues that are low in scientific complexity such as land-use planning, boat traffic studies, water quality monitoring, and general information sharing. However, the group is now beginning to explore the cause of rising levels of pfiesteria and coliform bacteria in the watershed - a more scientifically complex task.

### *Stage*

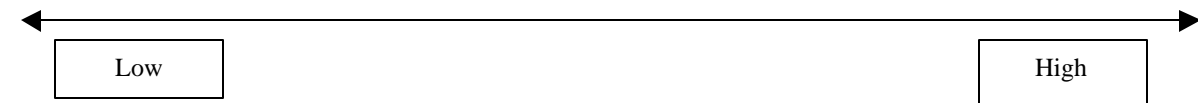


Issue stage refers to the state of the issue at the time the partnership forms. Issues may be emergent, or newly recognized by the community. This end of the continuum usually correlates to proactive timing. Crisis issues are those which are already causing severe environmental degradation, economic decline, or human health repercussions.

**Emerging issues** are apparent in the case of the McKenzie Watershed Council (see Chapter 9). Although the McKenzie River boasts extremely high water quality, population growth and increasing development were beginning to impact the river. The watershed council formed to address these impacts as they surface.

Again, the Clark Fork Basin Committee is useful to exemplify a group reacting to crisis issue. When arsenic was discovered in the water and Superfund designation ensued, people realized they had to come together to address water quality in the region (Snow, 1996).

### *Visibility*



While many natural resource management issues are controversial, some attract more attention and create more conflict than others. Issue visibility refers to the number of people who were aware of the problem before the formation of a collaborative partnership.

The Quinn River Riparian Improvement and Demonstration Project in the remote Humboldt National Forest of Nevada exemplifies a **low visibility** issue. In this case, excessive grazing was contributing to erosion and thermal pollution problems that were little known before Forest Service personnel met with local ranchers in 1989 to tackle the problem (Wondolleck and Yaffee, 1994).

The Citizen Management Committee of central Idaho and western Montana illustrates a group dealing with a **highly visible** issue: grizzly bear reintroduction in the Bitterroot Ecosystem. The controversy surrounding the issue has so far impeded the implementation of the committee's recovery plan ([www.nwf.org/endangered/grizzly/bear.html](http://www.nwf.org/endangered/grizzly/bear.html), France, 1998).

## IV. ORGANIZATION

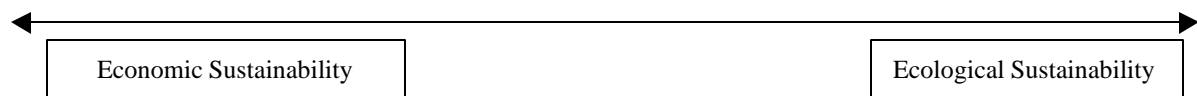
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Although collaborative processes may be only part of the larger mission of an organization, here we define “organization” as that of the collaborative partnership itself. For example, the Soil and Water Conservation District may manage several resource management projects, one of which is a collaborative process involving landowners, federal agencies and local businesses. When describing the variation in organizational structures, we are focusing on the characteristics of the collaborative group, not that of the parent organization.

Dimensions of organization include:

- Mission
- Objective
- Structure
- Link to existing authority
- Funding source
- Resource stability
- Decision authority
- Membership
- Geographic scale
- Visibility
- Life span
- Duration

### *Mission*



A defining characteristic of collaborative groups is their mission. Mission refers to the ultimate purpose of the partnership. Some groups form because of economic crisis or stagnation, job exodus, or a changing economic base. The primary purpose of these partnerships, although environmental issues are part of their foundation, is to maintain a healthy economy. On the other end of the scale are groups primarily concerned with ecological health, with limited interest in economic issues.

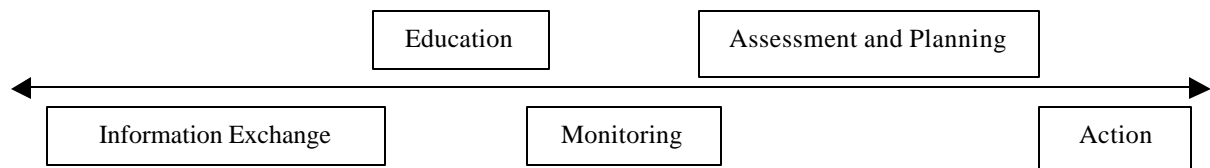
Most of the groups in the Sustainable Communities Network (SCN), for example, focus primarily on **economic sustainability**. SCN, which has documented case studies of community-based groups from all fifty states working to ensure sustainable growth, links people to both resources and other groups ([www.sustainable.org](http://www.sustainable.org)).

In the Santa Rosa Mountains in Nevada, the Humboldt County Riparian Coalition illustrates a partnership concerned primarily with **ecological sustainability**. The group involved ranchers, the BLM, Nevada Department of Wildlife, and the Forest Service in an effort to define and demonstrate sound riparian management practices along the Quinn River.

Although ranchers have also seen economic benefits of the project in terms of healthier cattle, the Coalition’s mission was to restore the river to “blue ribbon status” (Wondolleck and Yaffee, 1994).

Most common are partnerships that fall in the middle of the range, with a mission that includes both **economic and ecological sustainability**. In the Swan River Valley in northwest Montana, for instance, citizens formed an ad hoc committee as a result of community division over socio-economic and environmental changes. In order to deal with the most pressing issue, the declining timber economy, the committee had to address all facets of the community. Outcomes included an economic diversification plan and land management recommendations for non-industrial private landowners (Cestero, 1999:39).

### *Objective*



Linked to mission are the specific objectives of the partnership. While groups fall generally into categories along this range, it is not meant to represent mutually exclusive objectives. Indeed, partnerships that aim for specific on-the-ground projects or policy changes often include information exchange and planning as precursor objectives. There are however, partnerships that fall at other points on the range and do not ever propose the implementation of concrete action.

The Eastern Upper Peninsula Partners in Ecosystem Management unites public and private landowners in the eastern Upper Peninsula of Michigan in a forum for **information exchange**. The partnership is comprised of the Michigan DNR, NPS, TNC, USFWS, USDA Forest Service, and Champion International and Mead Corporations. The partnership does not engage in land management planning, nor does it attempt to force changes on individual participants. Rather, the focus of the group is to provide an open forum for discussion of common issues, the exchange of ideas, and to act as a catalyst for voluntary change (Williams and Ellefson, 1996).

Similarly, when the Canyon Country Partnership was formed in southeast Utah in 1994, the purpose of the group was to resolve issues among diverse stakeholders by consensus. However, after struggling with polarization around contentious issues, the partnership has evolved into a forum for information exchange rather than a problem-solving group ([www.nbs.nau.edu/Forum/Sourcebooks/canyon-country.html](http://www.nbs.nau.edu/Forum/Sourcebooks/canyon-country.html)).

Some watershed councils, like the Upper Stony Creek Watershed Project, focus on **education** in hopes of addressing the necessary changes in behavior that accompany watershed improvement. The primary issue in this watershed is that of livestock management. The group realized that in order to change management, there had to be changes in human behavior so they built in an educational component that provides for

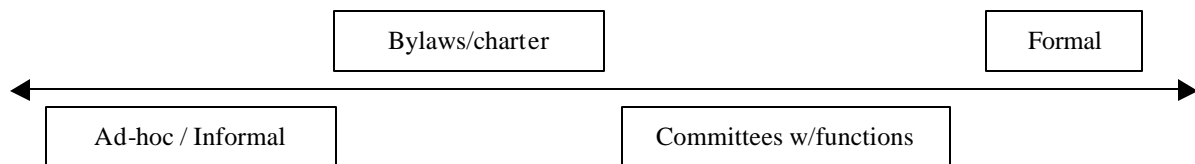
annual workshops, demonstration exercises, guest speakers and other educational instruction for the landowners. Attendance at the educational sessions is required for eligibility for certain cost share management practices ([http://www.brsf.org/nafec/wc\\_a.htm#7b2](http://www.brsf.org/nafec/wc_a.htm#7b2) from the H.S.U. web site, "Upper Stony Creek, CA").

**Assessment and Planning:** In 1998, the Board of County Commissioners of Gaston County, North Carolina initiated a broad based citizen advisory group to conduct a strategic planning process. The Quality of Natural Resources Commission (QNRC), made up of representatives of the county’s municipalities, businesses, industries, environmental organizations, county boards and agencies, and citizens at large, examines the state of natural resources in the county, reviews environmental concerns and makes recommendations to the Board of Commissioners. The Commission, assisted by the NC Cooperative Extension Service, evaluated surface water groundwater and air quality and commissioned a survey of county residents. Although the Commission does not implement any projects, it continues to monitor air and water quality and to update the assessment ([www.bae.ncsu.edu/bae/program/ension/publicat/arep/stratpln.html](http://www.bae.ncsu.edu/bae/program/ension/publicat/arep/stratpln.html)).

**Monitoring:** In Badger Creek, Colorado, an MOU was signed in 1981 and collection of monitoring data became the emphasis for federal groups (<http://www.nbs.nau.edu/CPO/Forum/Sourcebooks/bcwm.html>). Monitoring of vegetation, sediment loads, stream channel morphology, weather and climate, and wildlife numbers and habitat are all done by professionals, with inclusion and assistance from nonprofessional individuals and interest groups. Most management actions are based on the analysis of previous management efforts on both public and private lands ([http://www.brsf.org/nafec/wc\\_a.htm#7b2](http://www.brsf.org/nafec/wc_a.htm#7b2)).

**Action:** In 1993 in Norfolk, Virginia, the Elizabeth River Project formed because of the interest of four concerned citizens in improving the quality of the Elizabeth River. Although the project’s mission includes creating a partnership and raising appreciation of the river’s assets, the primary goal is action “to restore the Elizabeth River system to the highest practical level of environmental quality.” The project plans to “increase vegetated buffers, wetland acreage and forested areas . . . implement habitat enhancement programs . . . reduce sediment contamination in the Elizabeth River . . . and remove abandoned vessels and pilings” (Western Center for Environmental Decision-Making, 1998: p.34).

**Structure**



Collaborative partnerships are organized differently and range from informal loosely organized groups to highly structured organizations. A group with informal organizational structure has no written bylaws or charter, no paid staff and the coordination of group activities is ad-hoc. On the other end of the scale are formally organized groups with legal status, paid coordinators, and complex division of tasks.

The Swan Citizen's Ad hoc Committee is an example of an ad-hoc group that is **informally structured** with no bylaws, dues or official membership. The committee is a loose association of interested individuals, run and maintained by the core group of permanent valley residents who initiated the effort (Cestero, 1999: 39).

Many partnerships in the formative stage or in a process of evolution, have not yet developed a more formal division of tasks, but do have a **charter** stating the partnership members, goals, and by-laws. The Nanticoke Watershed Alliance in Maryland and Delaware functions according to their by-laws. Besides the Board of Directors, which sets policy for the group, general members are not assigned specific tasks. Members are encouraged to attend meetings to share information and to educate themselves (see Chapter 10).

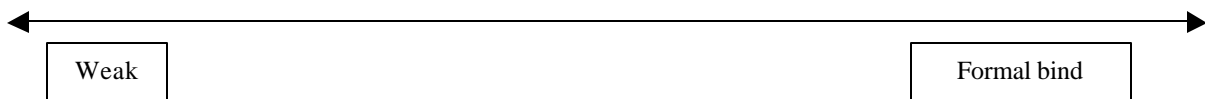
Other partnerships are organized with **committees** that carry out different tasks. The Henry's Fork Watershed Council, for example, divides itself into three subgroups: the Citizen's Group, the Technical Team, and the Agency Roundtable. The Citizen's Group (business, conservation, and community interests) reviews proposals and then decides which proposals will meet local needs. The Technical Team coordinates and oversees research efforts and helps integrate research findings into Council decisions. The Agency Roundtable is comprised of twenty government entities with management and regulatory jurisdiction in the basin.

In Juneau, Alaska, the Mendenhall Watershed Partnership also functions through five active subcommittees, including public education, community development, storm water management, restoration, and funding and organization (Mendenhall Watershed Partnership, 1999; Hanna, 1999).

Compared to newer partnerships, the Merrimack River Watershed Council in Massachusetts, formed in 1976, is one of the oldest and also most **formal** collaborative partnerships. It has evolved from an ad-hoc citizens advocacy group in the seventies to a 501(c) 3 non-profit organization with a diverse board. Board members represent environmental, business, citizen and community interests. Both its age and size (the watershed of interest covers 5,010 square miles) have led to the creation of a well-established organization (Laffin, 1999).

### ***Link to Existing Authority***

Two separate continuums illustrate the nature of linkages to existing authorities.

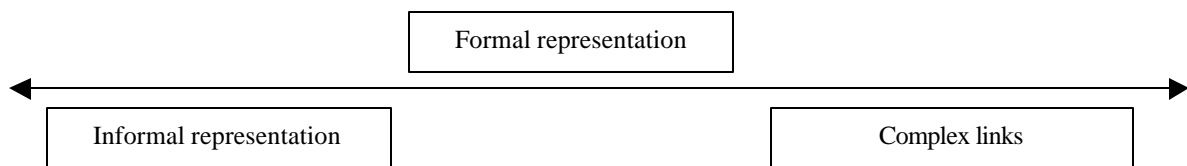


The first continuum describes the existence and strength of the link between the partnership and the agency or agencies with responsibility for managing the resource of interest. At the far left are groups with only a weak connection to existing authority. The work of the group is independent of agency decision-making processes, there are no agency participants and only limited communication between the collaborative and other authorities. Formally bound

groups have a legally recognized link to the decision-making authority. Examples of formally bound groups are the BLM's Resource Advisory Councils or other groups chartered under the Federal Advisory Committee Act.

The Quincy Library Group is an example of a partnership with **weak** links to existing authority. The group, which developed a forest management plan for the Plumas, Lassen, and Tahoe National Forests, is ad-hoc and had limited involvement of the USFS in plan development.

In contrast, the BLM's Resource Advisory Councils illustrate the nature of a **formal bind** to a resource management agency. RACs are convened, facilitated and funded by the BLM and sanctioned under the Federal Advisory Committee Act. Although the BLM representative does not actively participate as a group member, the agency must consider the recommendations contributed by the RAC. RAC members can appeal agency management decisions directly to the Secretary of the Interior.



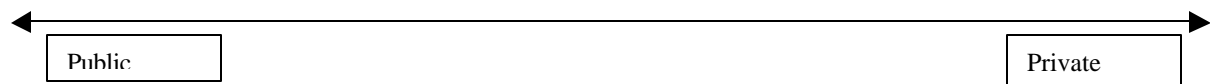
*The second aspect of this dimension describes the nature of the link. Understanding the links to authority is similar to understanding the way the responsible agency participates in the collaborative process. Representation and resources are two linking elements.*

**Informal** representation refers to agency personnel who become group members primarily out of a personal interest rather than solely to fulfill a professional duty. Their input is generally looked upon by members as one of purely scientific expertise unencumbered by stigma that can arise from representing a government agency. In the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance, for instance, a member of the Maryland Department of Natural Resources clearly chooses to be a part of the collaborative process because she cares about the watershed and feels she can help others make sound decisions. She just happens to also be an agency representative, and if anything, her title as Watershed Protection Specialist gives her added credibility among group members.

**Formal** representation refers to agency personnel who officially represent the agencies in the collaborative process. Often they are appointed to participate as part of their job duties. Their participation may be as a member of the decision-making group (executive committee, board, etc.) or as a member of a technical committee that advises the collaborative group on scientific issues. The Sonoita Valley Planning Partnership in Arizona involves official representatives of the BLM, AZ Fish and Game Department, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Natural Resource Conservation Service.

On the far end of the scale are groups with **complex links** to agencies. These links are usually developed through available funding sources, like the Governor's Watershed Enhancement Board in Oregon, section 319 of the Clean Water Act, or the EPA's Community Based Environmental Protection program ([www.epa.gov/ecocommunity](http://www.epa.gov/ecocommunity)). Agencies with access to funding may initiate a collaborative group or be able to allocate resources to an existing process. Support may also include managing funds, or providing a facilitator or office space. The most formal link that exists is when an agency initiates and leads the collaborative process. Some of the National Estuary Programs ([www.epa.gov/nep](http://www.epa.gov/nep)) like the Barataria-Terrebonne National Estuary Program in Louisiana include multi-stakeholder committees. The EPA and the state of Louisiana coordinate both the program and stakeholder participation in planning and decision-making.

### *Source of Funding*



Collaborative groups receive funding from a number of sources. Funds may come from private sources, public sources or a combination of the two.

State legislatures are one source of **public funding** for collaborative initiatives. Oregon's Governor's Watershed Enhancement Board (GWEB) provides funding to certified watershed councils throughout the state. As a state mandated interagency coordinating body, the Nisqually Watershed Council in Washington State also receives funding from the legislature (University of Colorado, Natural Resources Law Center, 1996). The EPA also provides funding for partnerships through the National Estuaries Program, the Community-Based Environmental Protection program, the Clean Water Act, and other sources. Public funding may also include local funds provided by county, city or state governments. For example, the Corpus Christi Bay National Estuary Program, which involves stakeholders on five committees, received start-up funding from the EPA for the first four years, and now depends on state funding for the remainder of the 20-40 year program (Yaffee et al, 1996: 125).

**Private funding** sources include foundations, non-profit organizations, business donations and member dues. The Cannon River Watershed Partnership, for instance, receives the majority of its funding from private sources, including The Nature Conservancy, The McKnight Foundation, local businesses, conservation and sportsmen's clubs, and membership dues. Often, one organization provides start-up funding. The Sonoran Institute, a non-profit organization, supplied initial funding for the San Rafael Valley Land Trust in Santa Cruz County, Arizona. The partnership, initiated and facilitated by the Sonoran Institute, involves ranchers, the USFS and the Sonoran Institute in rangeland management on private land in the San Rafael Valley.

Once again, most collaborative partnerships fall in the center of this dimension. Partnerships mention funding as one of the primary challenges to collaborative resource management. Therefore, funding often comes from **diverse sources**, including federal and foundation grants, locally raised funds, business partnerships, and in-kind support from agencies or non-profit organizations. The Blackfoot Challenge is an example of a group seeking both private



and public funding. The Challenge receives financial resources from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife’s Partners of Wildlife Program, Trout Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited and Pheasants Forever. BLM provides in-kind support such as office materials as well as a cash grant. The Challenge actively pursues private funds as well.

**Resource Stability**

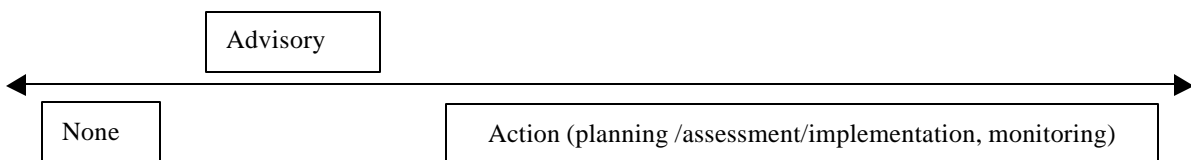


Resource stability among partnerships also differs. On one end of the spectrum are groups with limited or sporadic funding and / or in-kind support. Available resources are often allocated to actively seek new funding sources. These groups may have an abundance of resources at a particular point in time, but no guarantee of continuity. On the other hand, some partnerships secure long-term funding or support through government programs like the Governor’s Watershed Enhancement Board.

San Miguel Planning Team and Watershed Coalition San Miguel in Telluride, Colorado, is an example of a group with **unstable** funding sources. To maintain its function, all Coalition members contribute financial resources for meetings and projects. Additionally, the group has received some small grants. The River Ranger is employed through the US Forest Service, but all other members donate funds as well. Even with current contributions, obtaining outside funding has been a challenge to the group ([http://www.brsf.org/nafec/wc\\_3.htm#11](http://www.brsf.org/nafec/wc_3.htm#11)).

Collaborative groups with formal ties to a government program like the National Estuaries Program, or formal advisory committees tend to have more **stable, long-term** funding sources. State legislation can also influence financial stability. Oregon is a case in point. The Governor's Watershed Enhancement Board was created by the state legislature to provide guidelines and financial support to watershed councils throughout the state.

**Decision Authority**



Collaborative groups have diverse roles in resource management decision-making. Decision authority refers to the impact that a collaborative group’s conclusions and recommendations can have on formal decisions affecting the resource. Groups whose primary purpose is information exchange usually have no decision-making authority, although they may serve as the impetus for projects implemented by individual member organizations. When focused on public lands, adhoc processes with no links to existing authority usually have no decision authority.

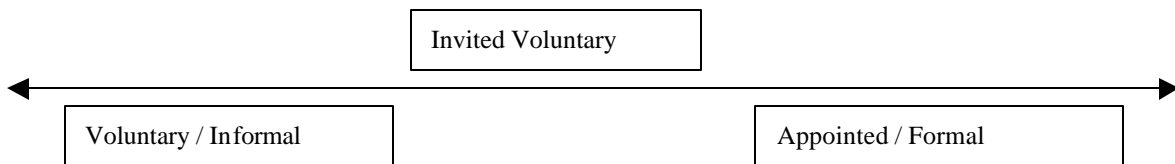
Some groups have formal advisory authority as described in the section on linkages. The advice and recommendations of a sanctioned advisory committee can have a significant impact on the management decisions made by an agency. Other groups make decisions that lead to action, for example, the development of a plan or a restoration project that will be implemented by the group itself or an agency.

The Eastern Upper Peninsula Partners in Ecosystem Management is a group with **no decision authority**. The partnership describes itself as “fundamentally opposed to handing out management directives to its members” (Williams and Ellefson, 1996). Ace Basin Task Force Partnership in the southeast region of South Carolina, provides another example of a group with no decision authority. Ace Basin Partnership is a "non-voting, very informal entity for sharing information and acts as a collective voice at times" (Hamilton, 1999).

Resource Advisory Councils illustrate groups with **advisory** decision authority. RACs, sanctioned under FACA, provide management advice to the BLM on range land issues. Their decisions do not result in automatic incorporation into management policy or action, but they are treated as a legitimate voice that influences the agency’s decisions. CRM groups also serve in an advisory role. Close ties to agency representatives make it improbable that an agency would go against a consensus decision produced in a CRM forum. There are also many other committees that serve an advisory role to a specific agency. For instance, the Ridgecrest Resource Area Steering Committee in California was created “to help the Bureau of Land Management determine good land use decisions by incorporating public input from day 1. To provide a forum for user groups and to obtain consensus on resource conservation planning” (<http://endeavor.des.ucdavis.edu/wpi/ProjectDescription.asp?ProjectPK=304>, 98).

The Feather River Coordinated Resource Management Group is made up of 21 formal participant organizations (agencies, local governments, landowner associations, etc) and other non-formal participants (community groups, private consultants, county agencies, etc) from Plumas County, California. The partnership makes decisions that result in on-the-ground **project implementation**. For example, the CRM group has demonstrated innovative stream restoration techniques such as meadow rewatering, check dam building, and fish ladders (U of CO NRLC, 1996).

**Membership**



The membership dimension defines the ways collaborative groups determine who comprises the group and how they became involved. Members are those participants who contribute to the decision-making process. Groups with voluntary informal membership are open to everyone with an interest. People participate of their own accord and anyone who attends a meeting is considered a member. Formal membership refers to groups whose members are

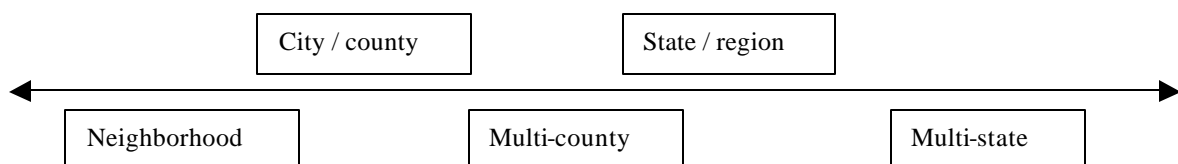
appointed because they represent a particular viewpoint. All RACs have formal membership. In between the two extremes are groups who have invited particular stakeholders to participate because of the interest groups they speak for. It is important to distinguish between people who represent a particular constituent group in the partnership, and those that participate as individuals with a set of interests and concerns.

In Montana, the Muddy Creek Project Task Force is an informal group that is open to anyone who wants to participate. All local residents were invited to participate, and participation is voluntary (University of Colorado Natural Resources Law Center, 1996). Another Montana partnership, the Blackfoot Challenge, keeps participation in the partnership very informal. Anyone who comes to a meeting is considered a member and can participate in decision-making (Lindbergh, 1999). The Applegate Partnership bases part of their success on the distinction between “participatory rather than representative democracy” (Cestero, 1999). Partnership members may hold some of the same views as their interest group, but do not represent them in any formal sense.

HCPs generally invite participants, but the stakeholder role is voluntary. The Karner Blue Butterfly HCP illustrates this process. The McKenzie River Watershed Council also has a more formal membership structure. Council participants represent organizations or agencies that are formal partners of the council. Partners are invited to participate because of the community of interest they represent, and there are explicit rules outlining the process by which new partners can be added to the council. Partners name alternates who will attend meetings and represent their interests in the case of an absence. ([www.pond.net/~mwc/backgrnd.htm#groundrules](http://www.pond.net/~mwc/backgrnd.htm#groundrules)).

In contrast, the Mississippi Headwaters Board Advisory Committee in Minnesota is composed of **formally appointed** members. Each of the eight counties with commissioners on the Headwaters Board appoints a citizen and a technical representative to the advisory committee. Citizens may also apply to participate as “at-large” members. The Board, which has regulatory authority over the river corridor, selects the at-large members to represent the diversity of interests in the river corridor. The committee has included members representing timber company interests, environmental organizations, realtors, Northern State Power, and local associations. The committee has a formal role in reviewing Board proposals, developing work plans, and bringing issues and ideas to the Board for consideration (Eclow, 1999).

### *Geographical Scale*



*Geographic scale refers to how the partnership defines its boundaries of concern. This dimension differs from the geopolitical scale of the outcomes (p.27) in that it is an*

organizational characteristic. The group is made up of members who are associated with a particular place within geographic bounds. All participants may be affiliated with one neighborhood or the partnership may unite members of diverse locales across a more extensive area (e.g. a macro-watershed).

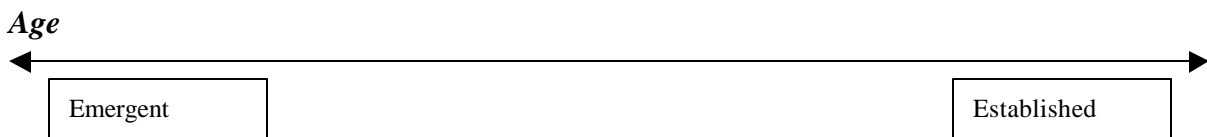
The Nos Quedamos committee represents a broad-based grassroots coalition of residents, city officials, businesses and others concerned about the future of the Melrose Commons **neighborhood** east of Yankee Stadium in the Bronx, New York. Now a non-profit organization, Nos Quedamos brings the concerns of the mostly Latino and African American community into the urban renewal planning process. Neighborhood sustainability issues include creating open spaces, water recapture and recycling, green housing development, and public transportation ([www.sustainable.org/casestudies/newyork/NY\\_epa\\_nosquedamos.html](http://www.sustainable.org/casestudies/newyork/NY_epa_nosquedamos.html)).

A group that defines its geographic bounds as those of a **city** is the Chattanooga Institute for Sustainable Development. Recognized as a model sustainable communities initiative, the Institute unites business, community and government leaders in the effort to make Chattanooga, Tennessee the “most sustainable city in America” ([http://emagazine.com/march-april\\_1998/0398curr\\_chattanooga.html](http://emagazine.com/march-april_1998/0398curr_chattanooga.html)).

The Darby Partnership in central Ohio exemplifies a **multi-county** group. This partnership works with the six county Darby Creek watershed (Smith, 1999). This group also involves members from local, state and federal agencies, citizens, as well several non-governmental organizations.

The Karner Blue Butterfly HCP exemplifies a **state or regional** collaborative effort. Involving 27 private and public land stakeholders consisting of primarily of agencies, timber companies and resident landowners in Wisconsin, the HCP formed a successful state-wide conservation plan for the federally listed Karner blue butterfly (<http://www.ncedr.org/casestudies/hcp/karner.htm>).

The Tri-State Implementation Council oversees, revises and educates the public about the Clark Fork-Pend Oreille watershed. This **multi-state** effort addresses 26,000 square miles in northern Idaho, northeastern Washington and western Montana (Concern, 1998).

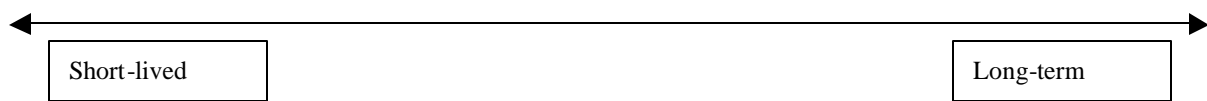


The age of the partnership is a critical factor that relates to many other dimensions. Because of the dynamic nature of collaborative groups, emergent groups differ greatly from those that are well established.

The Long Tom Watershed Council in Eugene, Oregon is one example of the dozens of new watershed councils that have formed as a result of the state legislation creating the Governor's Watershed Enhancement Board and the funding sources it provides. **Emergent** groups like the Long Tom have the opportunity to incorporate many of the lessons learned from other partnerships (Erickson, 1998).

On the other hand, The Modoc-Washaw Experimental Stewardship Program covering 2.2 million acres of predominantly public land in northeast California and northwest Nevada is quite **established**. Authorized by Congress through the Bureau of Land Management in 1979, the program involves 29 rancher permittees on public lands along with agencies in grazing and wildlife improvement strategies (Cleary, 1998).

### *Duration*



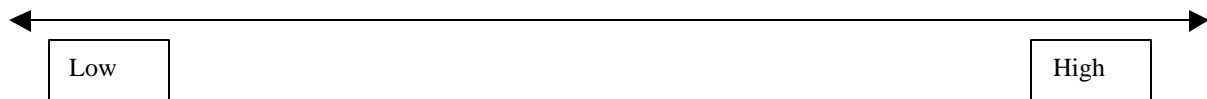
Another aspect of age is the proposed duration of the partnership. Collaborative groups may have short-term goals, such as the development of a land management plan. After the plan is finished, many partnerships shift to an information-sharing network or dissipate altogether. Others form with long-term goals that require on-going management. These partnerships are organizationally more complex and dynamic through time.

**Short-term** collaborative partnerships are common in the planning realm. For example, in Washtenaw County, Michigan, the Solid Waste Planning Committee was created with the specific goal of updating the solid waste management plan for the county. A broad base of stakeholders joined together for the short-term task of developing the plan. Once the plan is finished, the committee will disband.

The Connecticut River Joint Commission is one of the oldest collaborative resource management groups in the country, providing an example of a **long-term** partnership. The commission has overseen watershed management issues in the Connecticut River Basin since 1974. Groups that form to deal with long-term issues like watershed management or ecosystem management usually evolve significantly. While the Connecticut River partnership began as an advocacy organization, in the 1990's the organization has consciously diversified its board of directors to represent a wide range of stakeholders and focus on collaborative problem solving.

The Vermont Forest Resource Advisory Council provides an example of a diverse collaborative group that functions only **as needed**. The council was mandated by the Vermont state legislature to address policy issues relating to forest sustainability, aerial spraying, clear cutting, and rural economic development. In the mid 1990s, the council came together to collaborate on a statewide plan. They produced their last report in 1997 and will disperse until needed again.

## *Visibility*



A partnership may have high or low visibility, either within the community, a larger regional or even national scale. Visibility refers to the number of people outside the partnership who know it exists and what it does. Some factors that affect visibility include media coverage and political support or opposition.

An example of a **low visibility** group is the White Pine CRM initiative in east central Nevada. Composed of a 21 member steering committee of mostly agency personnel and ranchers, the group is steadily working since 1992 at developing elk management, cattle grazing strategy and urban development plans on that encompass remote public lands (<http://endeavor.des.ucdavis.edu/wpi/ProjectDescription.asp>).

The Quincy Library Group, on the other hand, represents a **high visibility group**. Begun by members of the town of Quincy to enhance forestry practices in the Tahoe, Lassen, and Plumas National Forests in northern California, the group gained the spotlight when it went to Congress to turn its forest plan into successful legislation in 1998 ([http://www.qlg.org/public\\_html/contents/chron.htm](http://www.qlg.org/public_html/contents/chron.htm)).

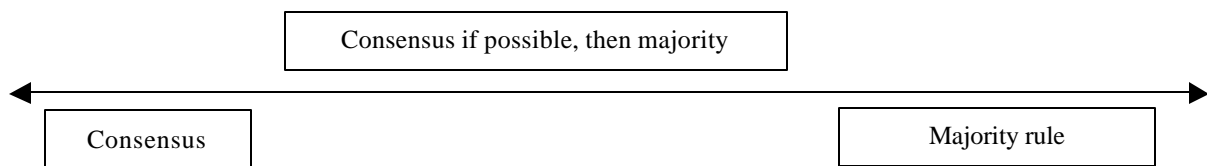
## V. PROCESS

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When examining the nature of the process, we refer to what actually happens at the table. How do participants voice concerns, make decisions and act within the collaborative construct? The dimensions explored here include:

- Decision rule
- Facilitation
- Transparency
- Frequency of meetings
- Representation
- Agency involvement
- Personal investment

### *Decision Rule*



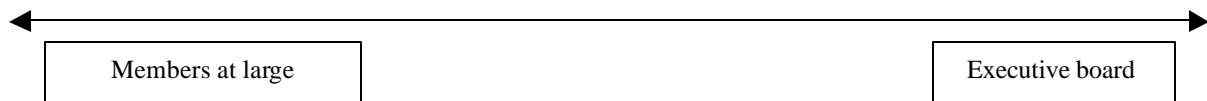
Although collaborative partnerships are commonly referred to as “consensus groups,” the decision-rule used within groups is not always based on a consensus approach. A decision rule of pure consensus requires all participants to agree to a decision before any action is taken. Decisions may also be made by majority rule.

By their rules, all Coordinated Resource Management planning processes are **consensus**-based. Many other groups define their decision-rule as consensus, with varying levels of detail in the definition. For example, the McKenzie River Watershed Council recognizes five levels of consensus ranging from “wholeheartedly agree” to “serious concerns, but can live with the decision” ([www.pond.net/~mwc/backgrnd.htm#groundrules](http://www.pond.net/~mwc/backgrnd.htm#groundrules)). The Tensas Basin Technical Steering Committee also makes decisions by consensus, with any one member holding veto power. The Louisiana committee is made up of nineteen members representing a cross-section of basin interests. The committee works to develop model demonstration projects that meet the concerns of both farmers and conservationists. Participants include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the local Levee District, The Nature Conservancy, six farmers, the Louisiana Dept of Agriculture and Forestry and others (EPA<sup>1</sup>, 1998).

**Majority Rule:** The Nanticoke Watershed Alliance, a bi-state effort in Maryland and Delaware, uses an absolute majority rule to make decisions. An absolute majority is a simple majority of yeas and neas. When a quorum is present, an absolute majority of the voting members present decide any matter voted on by the members (NWA, 1998).

**Mixed:** The Northwest Resource Advisory Council in Colorado (see in-depth case study), although it strives for consensus, a decision rule system is set up where the group only needs a 3/5 ratio from each of the three membership categories to pass a resolution.

### *Decision-makers*



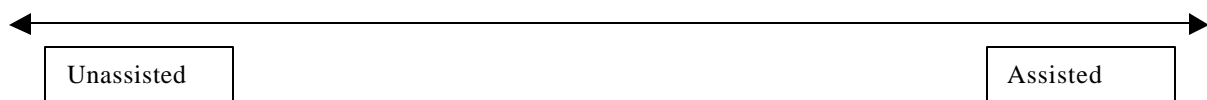
Another important distinction illustrated in the above continuum is variation in the decision-making entity. Given the highly varied organizational structures of partnerships, the decision-making body also varies. Some partnerships give voice and vote to all members. Others delegate ultimate decision-making authority to an executive committee or board. Within either body, the decision rule may be consensus or majority or a combination.

The Scott River Watershed CRMP Council, for example, (Chapter 13) demands that all **members at large** vote on decisions (with the exception of agency personnel). Focused on the protection of salmon habitat, the group believes the landowner-based nature of protection necessitates voting power for all stakeholders ([http://watershed.org/wmchome/news/win\\_91/coop\\_plan.html](http://watershed.org/wmchome/news/win_91/coop_plan.html)).

The Owl Mountain Partnership (Chapter 12), in Jackson County, Colorado, is composed of general membership as well as a steering committee. The **steering committee** acts as the group's decision-maker. This committee is composed primarily of ranchers, an environmental representative, and agency personnel, and serves as the governing body to establish goals and objectives as well as make any formal recommendations and/or decisions (Porter, 1999).

The Nanticoke Watershed Alliance (Chapter 10), an example of a collaborative group in which the Board of Directors sets the policies of the group and has ultimate decision-making authority. Members are given opportunity to share information and voice concerns, but it is the Board of Directors that determines what stance or direction the Nanticoke Watershed Alliance will take on a particular issue (Frech, 1999).

### *Facilitation*



Decision-making process may be either assisted by a neutral facilitator or unassisted / self-facilitated.

**Unassisted:** The Double H Ranch CRM in Ten Sleep Wyoming represents a small livestock forage improvement partnership that has met informally since 1992. Consisting of a mere

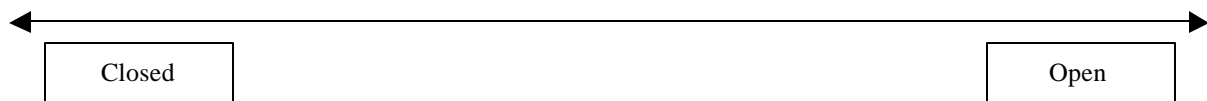


ten participants from state agencies along with ranchers, the group has never seen the need to run meetings with professional facilitator (Weeter, 1998).

**Assisted:** In comparison, the Clark County HCP process (Chapter 7) has used a highly skilled facilitator for nearly nine years. Aimed at protecting the habitat of the Desert Tortoise through conservation of public lands, multiple stakeholder interest accompanied by heated feelings over the issue of public land access and protection have made facilitation of meetings a necessity ([www.ncedr.org/casestudies/hcp/clark.htm](http://www.ncedr.org/casestudies/hcp/clark.htm)).

Finally, many partnerships begin with assistance from a neutral facilitator, but then continue on their own once established. The Animas River Stakeholders Group (Chapter 5), for instance, was formed in 1994 when the Colorado Center for Environmental Management was asked by the Colorado Department of Health to help organize interested parties to address metal contamination in the Animas Valley, a historic mining community. Once the group gained momentum, internal members replaced the outside facilitator on a voluntary basis (Buffalo River Stewardship Foundation, 1999).

### *Transparency*

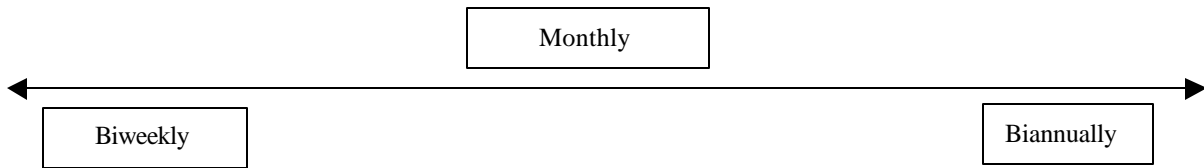


Collaborative decision-making also varies in the degree to which the process is open or closed. In an open process, the *non-participating* public has access to the decisions made and information exchanged at the table. Participation may be closed yet the process remains open. For example, a FACA chartered advisory committee may limit participation to chosen stakeholders, but by law must be fully open to the public.

In the Blackfoot Challenge (Chapter 6), meetings are entirely **open** to the larger public. All stakeholders in the Blackfoot Valley are encouraged to become part of the process and different conduits for communication announcing meetings and projects are used to recruit as many people as possible. Participants in the Blackfoot Challenge do not want residents to feel that resource decisions are being made for them.

The San Miguel River Coalition, based in Telluride, Colorado, feels that to keep the group focused and collaborative in nature, meetings should be **closed** to the public. Coalition members include the BLM, the USFS, San Miguel County, the Town of Telluride, Telluride Mountain Village Metro District, The Nature Conservancy, and representatives from the private sector (Buffalo River Stewardship Foundation, 1999).

### *Frequency of meetings*



Meeting frequency varies not only from partnership to partnership, but also within partnerships. Organizationally complex groups with committee functions may meet only twice a year as a whole group. However the working committees or executive committee meet monthly. Groups may also meet as needed given the nature of current projects. Other groups find it necessary to meet regularly and often. The culture of the group also affects meetings. For example, groups that include ranchers meet during down times such as early winter and avoid meeting during calving season.

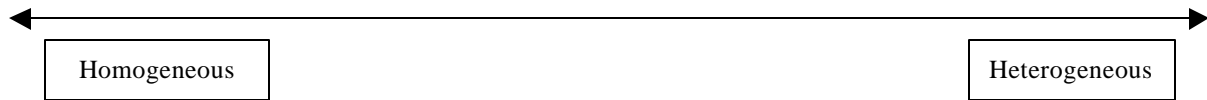
The Applegate Partnership in Southwestern Oregon convenes **biweekly**. Participants feel that the frequency of these meetings is fundamental to maintaining the forward momentum of the group. At one point, the group tried meeting once a month but many participants felt that this was too infrequent so they switched back to the original plan of biweekly meetings (Shipley, 1999).

The Nanticoke Watershed Alliance (Chapter 10) meets **monthly**. The Board of Directors meetings and the general membership meetings both meet on the same day, at the same location (the Greater Salisbury Building in Salisbury, Maryland), but at different times. The President of the Board of Directors runs both meetings (Frech, 1999).

Chicago Wilderness is a regional partnership of 76 public and private organizations that have joined forces to protect the remaining natural areas in the greater Chicago region. The membership meets **bi-annually** at the Congress of Chicago Wilderness and has the ability to propose and vote on resolutions (Chicago Wilderness, 1999).

**As needed/irregularly:** Finally, the Three-Quarter Circle Ranch CRM (Chapter 14) has an irregular meeting schedule. Though the group met once a month for the first two years when establishing its goals and objectives for increasing biodiversity and economic growth, the busy lives of its partners does not permit regular meetings, particularly during calving season. As such, the group continues to meet only a few times a year as needed to address new issues as they arise.

## *Representation*

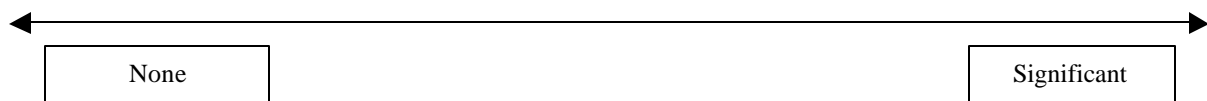


Representation denotes the composition of stakeholders participating in the process. While the term “collaboration” infers the alliance of distinct individuals (or organizations) working towards a common goal, groups vary in terms of the diversity of perspectives represented. Homogeneous groups include only participants with overlapping or shared viewpoints on the issue at hand and may even exclude some stakeholders from the process. Heterogeneous groups on the other hand, are very diverse, including all interested stakeholders. There are, of course, many partnerships that fall in between.

In Rice County, Minnesota, the Big Woods Project formed in 1992 as a collaborative partnership to save remaining remnants of the Big Woods ecosystem. Although partners come from diverse backgrounds, they have relatively **homogeneous** ideals and perspectives regarding the importance of preservation. Members include several environmental citizen groups, the Minnesota DNR, local government, the Nature Conservancy, the Cannon River Watershed Partnership, and the River Bend Nature Center, among others ([www.dnr.state.mn.us/ebm/ebm\\_works/bigwood1.htm](http://www.dnr.state.mn.us/ebm/ebm_works/bigwood1.htm)). There are no participants with conflicting viewpoints involved on the steering committee (Canon, 1999).

In contrast, the participants in the Henry’s Fork Watershed Council in Ashton, Idaho are a heterogeneous group, including environmental, business, tribal, and agricultural interests. Once bitter adversaries, the participants came together to collaborate over sedimentation, irrigation, grazing and trout habitat (among other issues) (University of Colorado Natural Resources Law Center, 1996).

## *Agency Involvement*



Agency involvement describes the extent to which representatives of government agencies (local, state or federal) participate in the collaborative process. The role agencies play can vary from non-existent to significant. Groups that act completely autonomously with no agency participation fall on one end of the scale. Partnerships with significant agency participation include those initiated by agencies such as RACs or HCPs. Groups at this end often receive funding or other support from an agency, and include formal agency representation in the decision-making process.

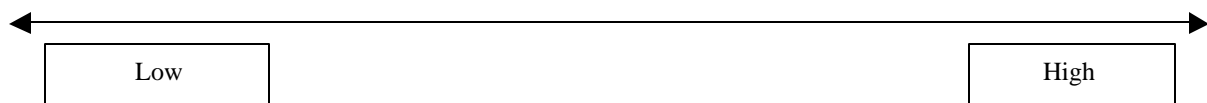
The Quincy Library Group again illustrates a group with little or **no agency involvement**. Initiated in 1992, the group has been recognized for not incorporating the Forest Service

directly in its design and development of management plans for three national forests in northern California (<http://www.qlg.org/>)

In contrast, The Clay County Beach Ridges Forum in northwest Minnesota illustrates the **significant** role played by the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR). The Minnesota Legislature funded the project that established the Forum, which was coordinated and facilitated by the DNR. The Forum was a short-term process that brought a broad base of interests together to “identify and recommend ways to achieve a balance between the protection of our natural prairie heritage and environmentally yet economically sound gravel mining opportunities through appropriate land use management” (MN DNR, 1997: p. 4). Although the local Steering Committee made decisions and recommendations, the DNR was essential to the work of the forum. DNR staff was responsible for administrative tasks, technical assistance, the creation of a GIS database, the production of educational materials and the final report, and the eventual implementation of the Forum’s recommendations.

Often, agency involvement falls in the middle, with agency representatives participating as group members or serving as technical consultants. For example, the Long Tom Watershed Council in Oregon has a technical advisory committee made up of agency representatives, environmental consultants, and university professors. Committee members can be called upon as needed to provide advice or review project proposals (Erickson, 1998).

### ***Personal Investment***



Personal cost describes the level of participants’ personal investment in making a process work. Investment may be in terms of time, money or other resources. More formal agency dominated partnerships often require less personal investment from participants compared to grass-roots community level collaborative initiatives. Low time investment means attendance at occasional meetings, while high investment signifies consistent involvement of participants in meetings, committee work, or on-the-ground projects. It is important to note that not all participants commit the same amount of time to a process. Partnerships often describe a core group of committed individuals. The time investment dimension refers to those participants, rather than the occasional interested meeting attendee.

For most members of the Darby Partnership (Chapter 8) in central Ohio, personal investment is **low**. Darby Partnership meetings consist of very informal discussions and no member is bound to any decision made by the group. Meetings rarely go beyond information sharing (Devlin, 1999).

The Clark County HCP (Chapter 7) exemplifies **high personal investment**. Meetings are held in Las Vegas and many members travel over 100 miles round trip to attend meetings; some environmental groups fly in. Depending on the issue at hand, the group sometimes meets several times a month. Representatives of multiple-user groups usually have to give up

a day of work to participate. Meetings over the Desert Tortoise HCP lasted up to 12 hours at a time. Despite the level of investment required, almost all of the stakeholders have participated continuously since the process started ten years ago (Selzer, 1999).

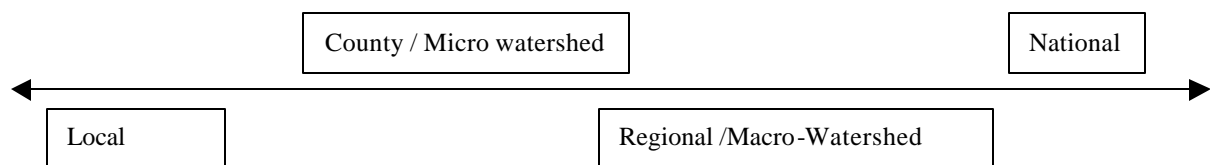
## VI. OUTCOMES

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Collaborative partnerships result in a variety of outcomes. Outcomes may be concrete projects directly affecting the resource, or they may be abstract impacts such as education, social cohesion, or relationship building. Some of the dimensions of partnership outcomes are:

- Geopolitical impact
- Social impact
- Products

### *Geopolitical Impact*



An important dimension of outcomes is their geopolitical impact. Some collaborative partnerships have impacts on a limited political boundary, such as a neighborhood or town. Others can have national impacts, if they result in the passing of legislation or a change in national policy. In between are initiatives that impact resource management on a micro or macro-watershed scale, and those that have statewide impacts.

**Local:** The Beartooth Front Community Forum, represents a local effort by the town of Red Lodge, Montana near Yellowstone. To control increasing urban growth and protect open-space, the group has worked since the early 1990s to conduct regional water quality monitoring, develop a city growth master plan, and promote affordable housing development. (Beartooth Front Community Forum, 1996).

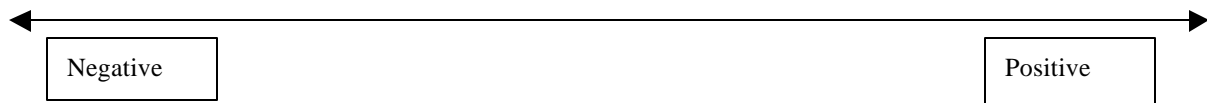
**Micro-watershed:** Several watershed initiatives have associated sub-basin groups that address and affect a much smaller geographic area. For example, the Mohawk Sub-Basin group is a community-based effort associated with the McKenzie Watershed Council in Oregon (see chapter 5). The Mohawk Group addresses issues related to a micro-watershed within the McKenzie River basin. Decisions made within the group, including implementation of on-the-ground restoration projects, affect only the sub-basin.

Although the proposed “Citizens Management Alternative” for grizzly bear reintroduction in the Selway-Bitterroot Ecosystem is still working its way through the NEPA process, if adopted, it would impact a wilderness region of nearly 4 million acres. The plan, drafted by a

coalition of environmental and timber interests, proposes a Citizens' Management Committee that would co-manage bear reintroduction along with the Fish and Wildlife Service in the Selway-Bitterroot region along the Idaho/ Montana border (France, 1998; Cestero, 1999; Kenworthy, 1997).

**National:** EPA Negotiated Rule-making processes are a good example of collaborative processes that result in outcomes having a national impact. Involving diverse stakeholders in deliberating the reach and content of regulating and implementing federal environmental laws, the recommendations emerging from these processes become proposed rules that will be applied nationwide.

### *Social Impact*



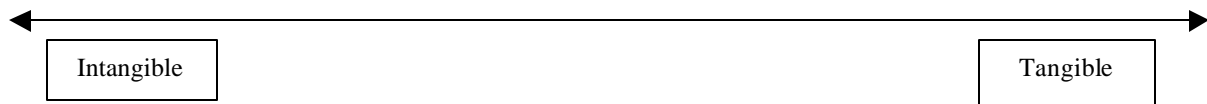
Collaborative partnerships often have a significant impact on their communities. Social impact is one primary outcome, and it may be positive or negative. Most partnerships report positive social impacts such as increased understanding, communication, trust and cohesion among stakeholders. However some groups may cause increased division, conflict and distrust in the community. Characteristics of group organization, process, and representation influence where a particular group falls on this spectrum.

An example of **negative** social impact can be seen in the case of the Sitka, Alaska "Sustainable Communities Initiative." In 1993, Sitka townspeople, fishermen, loggers and Native Americans joined together to confront the economic crisis caused when the community's largest employer, the Alaska Pulp Plant, closed. The Sitka initiative addressed concerns that new economic development should be environmentally sound. The group brought a referendum to local elections calling for sustainable logging practices and an end to clear-cutting. The measure failed twice and heightened conflict between citizens and the timber industry that had not been involved in the process and felt that outside environmental interests had influenced the ballot process.

In contrast, participants in the Dry Creek Basin Resource Management Committee in Norwood, Colorado note the **positive** social impacts the committee has had on the community. The process has improved interpersonal relationships and enhanced trust, education and community building. Networks formed between residents and agency representatives expand beyond the bounds of the committee to benefit other projects (<http://www.endeavor.des.ucdavis.edu/wpi/ProjectDescription>).

Members of the Swan Citizens' Ad-hoc Committee in the Swan Valley of northwestern Montana also cite the positive social impacts resulting from the committee's work. Collaboration builds "the community's capacity to deal with change," as well as reducing polarization and creating a forum for information exchange (Cestero, 1999).

## *Products*



Specific outcomes may vary and often change through time. Thus, this particular dimension is represented on a dynamic continuum. Outcomes range from intangible to tangible products. An example of an intangible product of collaborative initiatives is the creation of a network of stakeholders for information exchange. Tangible products include on-the-ground projects like streambed restoration or the implementation of an alternative management plan for a forest or other resource. In the center of the continuum fall partnerships that develop a plan, but do not implement it. Many collaborative groups form in order to develop a plan to be implemented by a separate resource management agency. One product does not preclude another; instead a partnership must often develop a network and some type of plan before achieving on the ground change.

The Chattooga River Watershed Coalition, is an affiliation of organizations and agencies with an interest in the health of the Chattooga River in Georgia. The Coalition's primary outcome is the creation of an information-sharing **network** (Chattooga River Watershed Coalition, 1997).

On the San Carlos Apache Indian Reservation in east-central Arizona, a diverse team of community members, Tribal Council and administration, Bureau of Indian Affairs, and other affected federal, state, and local agencies joined together to develop a Strategic **Plan** that addresses a complex range of issues, including the sustainable use of the tribe's natural resources. Through an on-going series of workshops, participants continue to address issues and identify strategies (Philbin, 1998).

Since its inception in 1991, Owl Mountain Partnership (Chapter 12) has focused much of its time on completing **projects**. Projects include a vegetative inventory, sagebrush treatment, realigning fences, soil studies and irrigation projects (Porter, 1999). Currently Owl Mountain Partnership is going through changes that many believe will lead them to more of a policy-based partnership with less of a focus on on-the-ground projects.

## VII. CONCLUSION

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Given the diversity of collaborative activity across the country, it is difficult to make assumptions about the decision-making of individual partnerships without examining them in more depth. Often the critiques of these initiatives assume that what happens in one situation can be extrapolated to other collaborative efforts. With what we had learned about their range and variation, we knew that while partnerships must certainly face numerous challenges, the nature of those challenges and the strategies used to deal with them must certainly vary from case to case. In the interest of exploring a few select cases<sup>1</sup> in more depth, we conducted in-depth interviews with participants and affected observers in ten partnerships.

Our understanding of the common critiques of collaboration<sup>2</sup> informed the development of interview questions that explored challenges and opportunities that partnerships face, and investigated the strategies used by both individuals and the group to overcome these challenges.

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<sup>1</sup> See Chapter 2: Methodology for clarification of case selection criteria

<sup>2</sup> See Chapter 3: Critiques of Collaboration



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