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# Role of Land Grant University in Influencing Environmental Policy

Loretta Singletary  
University of Nevada  
Cooperative Extension

# Complex Environmental Issues

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- Historically provided agricultural expertise



# Environmental Issues More Complex

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- Population increases
- Number of farms/farmers decrease
- Issues involve many stakeholders
- Involve numerous competing value systems



# Our Role is to Empower Communities

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- Collaborative Processes that Seek to...
  - Empower Citizens
  - Address Environmental Issues
  - Resolve Conflict
  - Shape Effective Policy



# Roles as Teachers

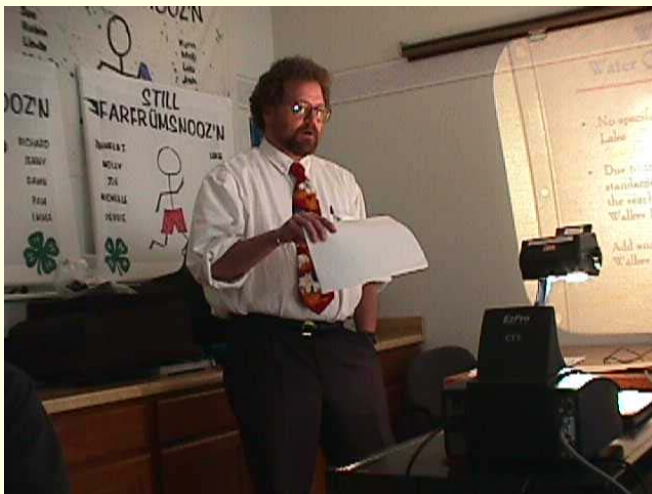
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- Design collaborative processes
- Teach citizens skills to fully participate
  - Speaking
  - Listening
  - Developing respect for divergent views
  - Working with scientific information and data
- Set examples of diplomacy

# Role as Researcher and Analyst

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- Provide information—gather, interpret, share relevant research
- Conduct objective analyses
- Anticipate emerging issues
- Share specialized technical research



# Collaborative Process Roles

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- Network -- increase citizens' knowledge base and capacity to make informed, respectful decisions
- Convene -- recognize issue, identify stakeholders, gain support for collaborative process
- Facilitate -- guide group through collaborative process to seek options for resolving conflict
- Mediate -- practice shuttle diplomacy to create level playing field for group work

# Skills to Acquire or Master

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- Collect, analyze, report scientific data
- Work with scientific and technical information
- Create an atmosphere for collaboration
- Communicate effectively
- Facilitate group discussion and decisions
- Create partnerships



# Tailor Collaborative Process to Fit Local Situations

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- Conduct situation assessment
- Determine ripeness for collaboration
- Teach or strengthen citizens' skills to participate fully
- Create options via information exchange and identify issues that emerge
- Secure commitment of parties to proposed actions (policy)

# What Determines Ripeness?

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- Key groups are identified and willing to negotiate
- Each group is represented
- Each group can influence outcome
- Issues are understood
- Enough data to make decisions
- Science/technical information is understood
- Reasonable deadlines are in place
- Dispute does not focus on values

# Tailor Collaborative Process to Fit Local Situations

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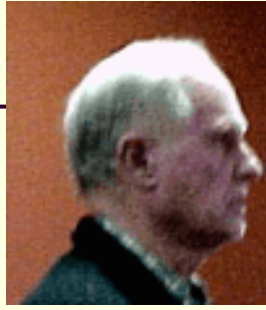
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# Tailor Collaborative Process to Fit Local Situations

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- Implement agreement
- Monitor compliance
- Be willing to return to the table (adaptive)
- Amend and reshape policy via process

# Walker River Basin Advisors



# Lasting Water Conflict

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- Current description of situation superficial
- Conflict history traced to the 1800s
- New stakeholders and interests enliven the conflict
- Situation assessment determines collaborative process is useful and/or effective path

# Educate, Research and Collaborate

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- Public Forums demonstrate inclusion while identifying and clarifying issues
- Citizen Study Groups teach citizens about technical complexities environmental conflict involves
- Study Tours develop relationships outside the meeting room and provide varied and rich learning opportunities

# Specific Impacts

■ More citizens became aware of the dispute	34	4.39
■ I was treated fairly and with respect	34	4.38
■ I heard diverse viewpoints of others	36	4.31
■ Citizens learned about underlying issues	35	4.31
■ I interacted with diverse interests	35	4.29
■ I shared my views with others involved	34	4.21
■ I learned about technical issues	34	4.19
■ I better understand the viewpoints of others	35	4.17
■ Learned how to manage a dispute	34	4.15
■ I improved my ability to communicate	33	4.06
■ More citizens became actively involved	34	4.00
■ More citizens learned about solutions	34	3.97
■ I improved my relationship with others	30	3.87
■ I learned about collaboration	31	3.81
■ I helped others to clarify the problem	32	3.50
■ I improved my collaborative skills	32	3.44
■ I believe lasting solutions are possible	32	2.94

Code Rating: 5 = very effective; 1 = ineffective



# Power to Influence Policy?

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- Impacts are measurable and positive
- Three years following the process, majority of WRBAC members voluntarily involved in negotiations to resolve conflict
- Shape basin-wide policy
- Resulting agreement and similar such agreements eventually provide the foundation for large scale policy formulation

# Role of Land Grant University

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- Continues to evolve as environmental conflicts and complexity increase
- Extension professionals continue to seek effective methods for engaging communities
- Increase and improve impact measurements
- Extension professionals request more skill building opportunities, reaffirming the importance of this relatively new role