

CREATING A COLLABORATIVE CULTURE 

Objectives

- Define collaboration
- Explore collaboration and decision-making
- Understand the benefits
- Learn about mandates
- Investigate challenges
- Practice working collaboratively
- Avoid potential pitfalls
- Provide additional resources

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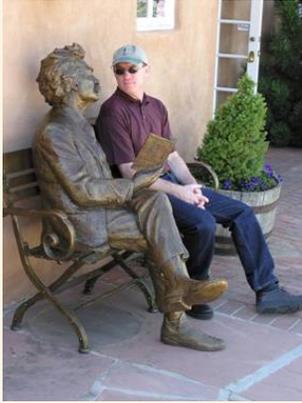
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Defining Collaboration

It is NOT one-way communication.

It IS **meaningful, two-way dialogue.**

Essentially, collaboration is a **process** where people with **diverse interests**, share knowledge to **improve outcomes and/or enhance decisions.**



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NOTES:

- *According to FSH 2409.19, “the use of scoping letters alone does not meet the intent of collaborative efforts...”*

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What is Collaboration?

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Options for Public Involvement

Collaboration does not mean giving up decision-making authority

<p>Inform</p> <p><u>Goal:</u> provide objective information</p> <p><u>Tools:</u> Fact Sheets Newsletter Letters News Release Website</p> <p><u>Intent:</u> Provide Information</p>	<p>Consult</p> <p><u>Goal:</u> obtain feedback</p> <p><u>Tools:</u> Surveys Open house Public meeting News release Website</p> <p><u>Intent:</u> Seek input & feedback</p>	<p>Involve</p> <p><u>Goal:</u> ensure issues are understood & considered</p> <p><u>Tools:</u> Workshops Partnerships Public meeting</p>	<p>Collaborate</p> <p><u>Goal:</u> partner in each step of the process that leads to a Decision.</p> <p><u>Tools:</u> Consensus bldg Facilitate resolution FACA groups Mediation Negotiation Non-FACA team</p> <p><u>Intent:</u> Convene interests to reach zone of agreement</p>
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HANDOUT- SCOPING vs. COLLABORATION

Most of us are familiar with “scoping” as we apply it during our NEPA processes. For most of us, that has meant informing and maybe consulting with interested public. You’ll notice that our **scoping is NOT collaboration**. The intent of collaboration is to convene interests, develop a zone of agreement around an issue or problem. then use this zone of agreement to develop solutions to the issue or problem.

Collaboration creates a “zone of agreement” where diverse interests develop solutions to problems, as opposed to what we generally think of as a “decision-making” process. Importantly, it **does not transfer government authority**. The line officer is still responsible for making decisions within his or her authority.

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Collaboration & Decision Making

- Well-defined collaborative processes **do not transfer government authority**; government agencies are responsible for their actions and retain their decision-making authority.
- While participants may challenge the decisions authorities ultimately make, they cannot challenge their authority to make those decisions.

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NOTES:

Emphasize resolution of the paradox with the following example from “Ecosystem Management in the United States: An Assessment of Current Experience” by Yaffee, et al. (or use a local example): The East Fork Management Plan initiated by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department (WGFD) was developed to perpetuate the region’s wildlife by preserving sufficient habitat. A technical committee, consisting of WGFD representatives, USFS and BLM officials, industry groups, conservation organizations, and local officials wrote the management plan for the entire 350,000 acre Wind River ecosystem. Range data collected by the committee was analyzed jointly and then used by the federal agencies in reissuing grazing permits on federal lands.

Collaboration & Decision Making

The Paradox

Participants share power through the collaborative process **but do not share the agency's authority.** The collaborative process seeks to create a zone of agreement among participants where workable solutions can be reached.

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Key Characteristics of Collaboration

Collaborative processes identify what participants agree on and then seek to grow that space.

In this way, collaboration is more like **problem solving** than decision making.

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NOTES:

Emphasize key characteristics with the following example from “Ecosystem Management in the United States: An Assessment of Current Experience” by Yaffee, et al. (or use a local example): The Eastern Upper Peninsula Ecosystem Management Consortium encompasses several distinct ecosystems in the eastern one-third of Michigan’s Upper Peninsula (UP). The project began in the early 1990’s to address questions that kept arising on issues that cross ownership boundaries. Initiated by the Forest Management Division in the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR), the consortium was designed to facilitate communication among the various stakeholders in the region including federal agencies, industrial timber landowners, the Nature Conservancy, and MDNR. The consortium met regularly and as special projects arose, various subgroups were set up to address those tasks. The consortium’s activities have focused on classifying the land base into ecosystems and gathering information to describe these lands, their current uses, and the natural processes occurring there. Through building trust among diverse landowners the consortium has restored degraded areas, reduced identified ecological stresses, and shifted management away from single species or resources to management of the ecosystem. Participants noted that key factors facilitating their progress included: a need to work together, the development of trust among stakeholders, a common set of goals, the informal nature of the coalition, and the exchange of useful information.

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Key Characteristics of Collaboration

Effective collaboration incorporates the following key ingredients:

- Meetings that are **civil and open** to diverse groups;
- Deliberations that are **thoughtful and frank**, and that take **local needs** into account; and
- A sense of **trust** within the group.

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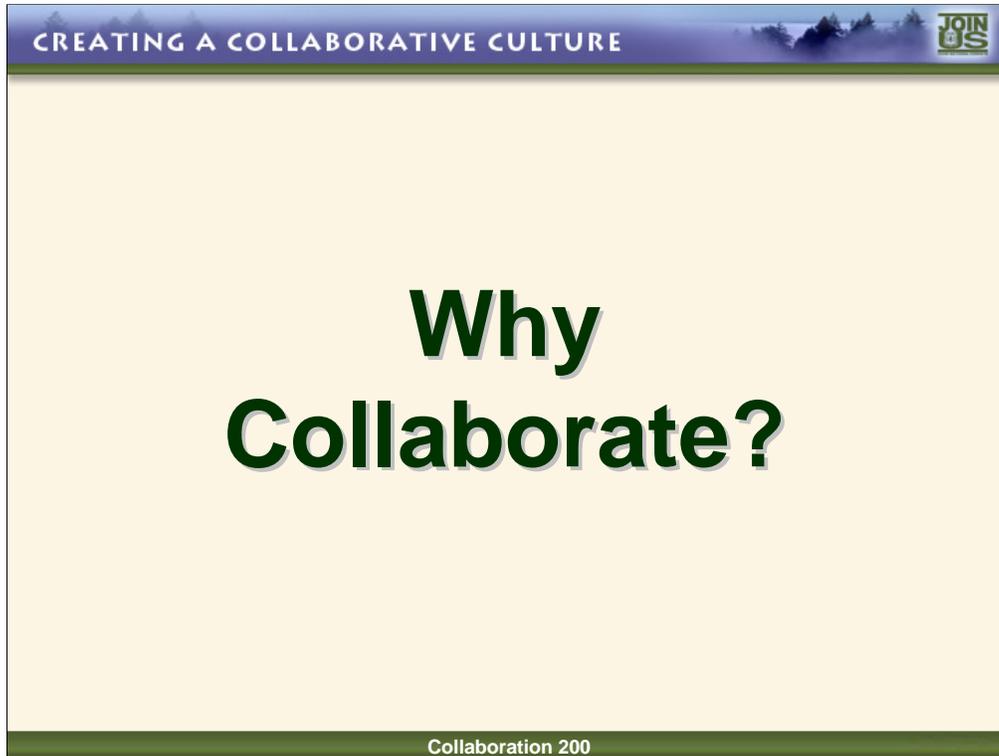
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In other words,

It's all about

- Building sustainable relationships,
- Managing expectations, and
- Respectful consideration of diverse interests.

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**Why
Collaborate?**

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Legislative Mandates for Collaboration

- **Healthy Forests Restoration Act (2003):**
*Mandates the use of **collaborative processes** to reduce wildfire risk in communities and on federal land.*
- **Resource Advisory Committees:**
*Authorized under the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (2000) “The purpose of a resource advisory committee shall be to **improve collaborative relationships** and to **provide advice and recommendations** to the land management agencies...”*

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Agency Mandates for Collaboration

- **Stewardship Contracting:**

According to FSH 2409.19, local units involved in a stewardship contracting project should:

- Work in a collaborative manner,
- Seek early involvement of outside groups, and
- Actively engage any interested person.

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Agency Mandates for Collaboration

- **OHV Planning Rule:**
Work collaboratively to develop travel management plans
- **New Forest Planning Rule (2005):**
States that the Responsible Official (Forest Supervisor) must provide “open and meaningful” public participation.

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Other Mandates for Collaboration

- **Executive Order on Cooperative Conservation (2004):**
*Requires federal agencies to “implement laws relating to the environment and natural resources in a manner that **promotes cooperative conservation**, with an emphasis on appropriate **inclusion of local participation** in Federal decisionmaking...”*

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Other Mandates for Collaboration

- **10-Year Comprehensive Strategy (2001):**
*(A collaborative approach to operationalizing the National Fire Plan.) Includes **collaboration as both a goal and a guiding principle**. The Strategy's Implementation Plan includes a **framework for collaboration**.*

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Work-Related Benefits of Collaboration

- **Effective Outcomes**
Collaboration frequently results in **innovative** projects and policies that **extend across traditional jurisdictions.**



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Work-Related Benefits of Collaboration

- **New Perspectives**
Conventional decision-making can bring about change through new rules and policies, but only collaboration can truly
shift peoples' underlying attitudes.

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Benefits of Collaboration for Partners

Mutual Learning: Collaboration allows participants to learn from one another and work toward a **deeper understanding** of important issues and constraints.

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Benefits of Collaboration for Partners

New Networks:
Collaboration builds “social capital” by **increasing trust**, often leading to the creation of **new organizations** for sharing information and undertaking collective projects.



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Social Benefits

- **A Sense of Shared Ownership:**
Problem-solving power is shared in a collaborative process, and this often translates into a sense of **shared responsibility** for the land.
- **Reduced Conflict:**
Meaningful involvement can ultimately lead to **less disagreements** in the future.



“Collaboration is the understanding that in spite of our differences, we are all in this together.”

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Benefits of Collaboration to the Natural Resources

- Collaboration succeeds in **solving ecological problems** by focusing on shared values.
- Collaboration builds **longer-lasting solutions** to natural resource management issues.

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Notes: Parties seeking solutions to environmental problems often find themselves in dispute over the accuracy of various technical reports and experts. Research has shown that these differences generally cannot be resolved at the technical level but are rooted in the values embedded in each report or opinion. In order to reach agreement on the acceptability of technical input, parties will need to agree on the underlying values. To do this often requires making predictions about the future as well, since predicting natural evolution of the environment depends on what actions are taken by humans with respect to regulation, new technology, and the like. Collaborative designs, then, must include some bases for the parties to explore the common values against which they would like to judge technical assessments. To do this, designs should build in methods for exploring mutually desired future conditions.

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Benefits of Collaboration to the Natural Resources



“When we see land as a community to which we belong, we may begin to use it with love and respect. There is no other way for land to survive the impact of mechanized man...”

- Aldo Leopold, *The Sand County Almanac*

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Expect a few bumps in the road if...

- The conflict is rooted in deeply held **differences**
- One stakeholder decides to take **action alone**
- Someone threatens to take **legal action**
- A respected **organizer cannot be found**
- Large differences in **power among participants** exists
- The issues are too threatening because of **historical rivalry**
- Past interventions have been **repeatedly ineffective**

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Sometimes a challenge is worth taking on, and at times require more preparation to be effective. Sometimes, the challenge just may prove to be too great to either take on, or formidable due to the circumstances at the moment in time. Benefit of a collaborative process is that you don't have to face this challenge alone.

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How Does Collaboration Work?

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Working with Groups that Include Public and Federal Participants

Make these decisions:

1. What is the goal of the group get-together?
2. What process or structure will be used to achieve the goal?

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1. What is the goal of the group get-together?
 - Information exchange – finding out what others know about a situation (indigenous and local, academic studies, and professional experience)
 - Opinion gathering – hearing the individual opinions of both groups and individuals
 - Agreement-seeking – working toward agreement on how to proceed with a particular action or make a decision
2. What process or structure will be used to achieve goal?
 - Workshop
 - Agency-sponsored meeting or community sponsored focus-group structure
 - Formally organized Federal Advisory Committee
 - Meetings of local, state, tribal and federal governmental representatives

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If the Forest Service chooses the participants and controls the agenda,
then the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) may apply...

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Is FACA Applicable?

FACA's applicability depends upon the presence of three factors:

1. There must be a committee, board, panel, or similar group (i.e., **more than one individual**),
2. The committee must be **established** or **utilized** by a federal agency, and
3. The purpose of the committee must be **advice** or **recommendations**.

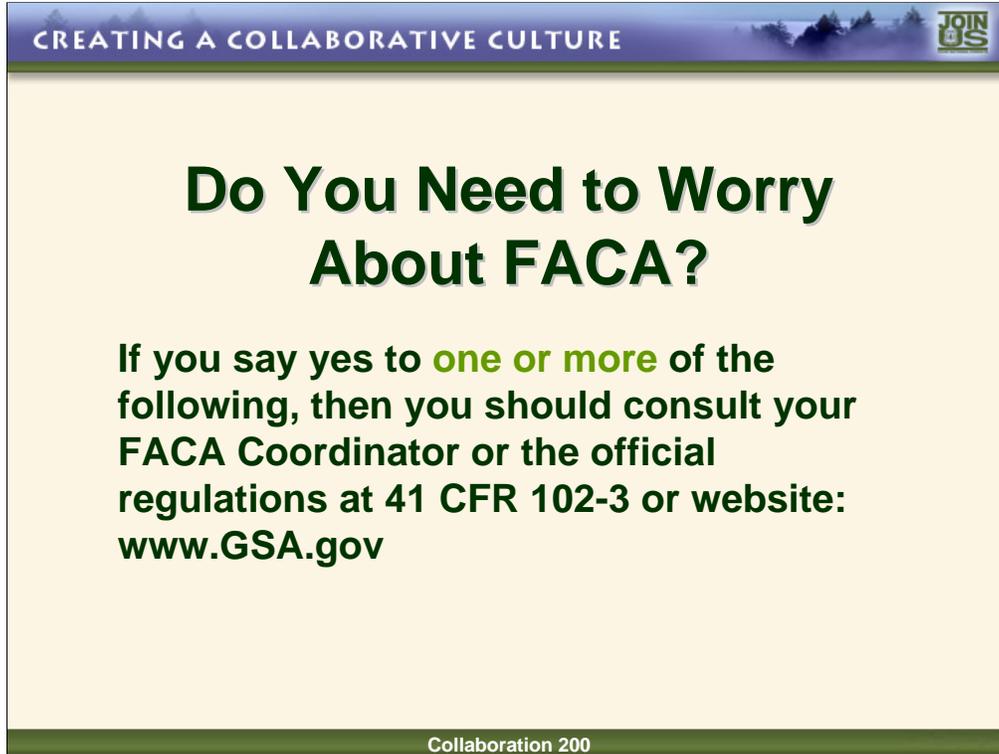
Note: "Consensus advice" does not necessarily mean that FACA applies to a committee.

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-FACA was passed in 1972. It was designed to help control the undue influence of special interests on advisory committees by balancing committee membership, opening committee meetings and minutes to the public, and controlling the number of committees formed.

FACA does NOT apply in several situations:

1. If the committee is composed wholly of federal employees;
2. If the meetings are held between federal officials and elected officers of state, local, and tribal governments (or their designated employees);
3. If the committee provides individual, as opposed to consensus, advice;
4. If the committee is a civic group whose primary function is to render a public service with respect to a federal program; or
5. If the committee was established to make recommendations to state or local officials or agencies.



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Do You Need to Worry About FACA?

If you say yes to **one or more** of the following, then you should consult your FACA Coordinator or the official regulations at 41 CFR 102-3 or website: www.GSA.gov

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1. FACA mandates that advisory committees comply with several procedural requirements, including having balanced membership, providing the public with notice of committee meetings in advance, permitting the public to attend meetings, and disclosing records and meeting minutes to interested persons.

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Established

- Did the FS create or organize the group?

Utilized

- Is the group's agenda tightly controlled or managed by the FS?
- Does the FS sponsor or fund the group, in whole or in part?
- Does the FS request that the group undertake specific tasks?
- Does the group have an organized structure, fixed membership, and/or a specific purpose identified by the Forest Service?

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Moving Past FACA...

To build an **effective collaborative process** consider:

- Some pointers on getting started,
- Drawing people in,
- Keeping them at the table,
- Engaging in respectful dialog,
- Leading a productive meeting, and
- Avoiding potential pitfalls...

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How to Get Started*

- **Determine who should be involved.**
Identify key ambassadors and strive for diversity.
- **Seek out local sources of advice and assistance.**
Consult with community groups, local educational institutions, and others for recommendations on participants.
- **Make a plan.**
Articulate what you hope to achieve - spell out the group's goals clearly and concisely.
- **Look for common ground.**
Identify those issues or concerns that people agree on and build from there.

**Keep in mind that Forest Service personnel aren't always the initiators of a collaborative.*

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Some other tips for getting things started on the right foot:

- Think about who the “key ambassadors” are and their ability to influence the group they represent,
then invite them to the table. Also, don't identify them by job title or organization: learn who is trusted by the group they represent and can best deliver collaborative outcomes.
- Make sure that everyone involved in the collaborative process has a guaranteed seat at the table.
- It is essential to have an established grievance process that allows partners to express any concerns or complaints.
- Be sure to establish (and follow!) procedural rules.
- As you design the structure of your collaborative process, keep your mind open to the potential for modifications down the road.

How to Draw People In

- **Be proactive.**
- **Attend relevant local community events.**
- **Make personal invitations.**
- **Post notice of your meetings far and wide.**



How to Keep People at the Table

- Be clear about **desires and expected outcomes**, then be sure to stick to them.
- **Agree to a plan**, then ensure there's no surprises.
- Stay within the **“zone of agreement,”** then conflict is reduced



Engaging People in Dialogue

- Remind people to **check their old disputes and prejudices** at the door.
- Make a sincere effort to **give everyone the opportunity to speak.**



Engaging People in Dialogue

- When responding to another person's point, suggest that people **identify both how they agree and how they disagree**.
- Encourage people to try to **understand the intent** of the person speaking before deciding to disagree.
- Assume that **no one has the entire answer** and that everyone has part of the answer.

A Specific Facilitation Technique for Encouraging Dialog

Consider the following statements:

***“This water belongs to all of us.
The sheep belong to me.”***

While both statements are true, when put together in the context of natural resource management they can appear contradictory.

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A *Specific* Facilitation Technique for Encouraging Dialog

Collaboration allows us to **reframe these statements as open-ended questions.**

For this example, you could ask:

“How do we sustain the water and the sheep?”

In this way, you **as a facilitator** can help participants learn to see the matter from a **more inclusive perspective.**

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Leading a Productive Meeting

Here are a few pointers:

- Ensure the **decision process** is clearly defined and adhered to.
- Explain the **purpose** of the meeting.
- Ask participants to share their **expectations**.
- Keep the group **focused** during discussions.
- Be sure the group **gains closure on points of agreement and disagreement** before moving on to the next topic.
- **Stay positive!**



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Successful Collaborative Processes



- Build **respectful relationships**
- **Share** the resources and rewards.

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- Collaboration is more successful if there is broad representation of all affected parties. Strive to create an open and easily accessible process where community members are encouraged to participate.
- Be aware that formal networks of organizations may not adequately or fairly represent the full spectrum of public values and interests.
- Collaboration is dependent upon the day-to-day relationship building that creates trust and understanding. This should be on-going and not just when another's assistance and input is needed.
- Our agency must be clear about appropriate roles, responsibilities and sideboards for the collaborative group as well as laws and regulations that guide federal land management. Without clearly defined parameters, group and individual expectations may become muddled and exceed appropriate participatory levels.
- Scale matters: selecting the appropriate scale for a particular community must match the community's values and sense of place. In other words, start small, building out from the zone of agreement rather than trying to incorporate the full spectrum of possibilities then arguing down to a zone of agreement. Also, the scale may be different than we assume based on a scientific perspective.
- Giving up control of the *process* to a community group does not mean giving up decision-making authority.
- Collaborative groups must have access to the information they need to make successful decisions. This includes scientific, legal, and socio-economic information.
- Gaining support from all levels of the agency is important to assure that local decisions developed with partners are sustainable. It is also important in order to assure agency budget support.

Successful Collaborative Processes

- Agree upon **guidelines** early on.
- Work at an **appropriate scale**.
- Encourage **diverse participation** and communication.
- Give the group as much **control** as possible.
- **Communicate** and build internal support.

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Addressing Potential Pitfalls

- Lack of Skills
- Difficult People
- Same Old Crowd
- Lack of Resources
- Extended Time Frames



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Lack of Skills

Enroll in one of the many training workshops available in both the public and private sectors.

Difficult People

Convey that collaboration does NOT have to be consensus-based; focus on areas of common ground or the “zone of agreement.”

Same Old Crowd or STP (same ten people)

Employ some new outreach techniques (refer to “How to Draw People In”).

Lack of Resources

Build line-officer support. Seek partnerships for mutual benefit.

Extended Time Frames

Gain line officer support and understanding that while collaboration may take more time up front, it can save time and money in reduced litigation costs and result in longer-term solutions.

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Things to Remember...

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Key Lessons

- **Commit yourself** to a collaborative process
- **Be inclusive** and **communicate** openly with everyone involved
- **Don't get locked into the traditional NEPA model** of scoping
- Early on in the process, **establish a way** for the group to arrive at decisions



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Key Lessons

- **Think big**, but keep your expectations realistic.
- **Share your success stories and lessons** learned with your colleagues.
- **Tie into existing community-based opportunities** by attending town meetings and meetings organized by local groups.



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Other ideas:

- Thank people for their input and show them how their involvement made a difference.

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Resources for Helping with the Collaborative Process

(see handout)

- Tailoring a **community-based** collaborative process
- Understanding **FACA**
- Leading **productive meetings**
- **Facilitation** techniques
- Managing **conflict**

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(See handout for copy of these notes)

NOTES: For help in designing a **collaborative process unique to your community** consider contacting WestCAN, the Western Collaboration Action Network. This pilot program has been created to provide you with the necessary resources, whether on-line, on the phone, or in person, to help you build effective collaborative strategies. For more information contact Steve Kratville, Region 1 Partnership Coordinator at sjkratville@fs.fed.us or by phone at 406-329-3141.

Understanding FACA. For web access to legislation, regulation, and other guidance go to www.GSA.gov click on "policy", then on "management of Federal Advisory Committees," then on "legislation and regulations"

- Federal Advisory Committee Management; Final Rule (41 CFR Parts 101-6 and 102-3)
- Federal Advisory Committee Act, as amended
- For details on how to establish and manage a Federal advisory committee according to USDA requirements see www.fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/pao/faca

Productive meetings and facilitation techniques. The BLM Collaboration Desk Guide provides valuable information on collaborative processes. <http://www.blm.gov/partnerships/tools.htm>

Also, numerous courses at beginning, intermediate and advanced levels can be found on the Partnership Resource Center website: www.partnershipresourcecenter.org - click on "resources for partnerships" then on "training"

Managing Conflict. NOTES: The USDA Forest Service Northern Region Training Academy sponsors an excellent "Conflict Partnership Workshop" presented by Dr. Dudley Weeks. Dr. Week's book, "The Eight Essential Steps to Conflict Resolution: Preserving Relationships at Work, at Home, and in the Community" is also another great resource (1994, Penguin Putnam Inc., ISBN # 0-87477-751-8).

Another powerful resource is the PBS aired film "The Fire Next Time," created by Patrice O'Neill of The Working Group. O'Neill's [The Fire Next Time](http://www.theworkinggroup.org) follows a deeply divided group of Montana citizens caught in a web of conflict over growth, the environment and the power of talk radio. "The Fire Next Time" is available on DVD and VHS. To purchase a copy, contact: The Working Group, 1611 Telegraph Ave. # 1400, Oakland, CA 94612. Or via the web at: www.theworkinggroup.org Email: info@theworkinggroup.org or by phone at : (510) 268-9675.

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Resources for Helping with Collaborative Plans & Projects (see handout)

- Fire and fuel management
(e.g. Community Wildfire Protection Plans)
- Forest Plan revision
- Working with Resource Advisory Committees (RACs)
- Stewardship contracts/agreements

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(See Handout)

Fire and fuel management

NOTES: In conjunction with the Forest Service, Oregon State University created a 25 minute DVD and workbook called: *Communication Strategies for Fire Management*. This resource provides valuable information on how to build a successful Community Wildfire Protection Plan. To obtain a copy contact Margaret Petersen, Region 6 Partnership Coordinator, at mpetersen02@fs.fed.us or by phone at 503-808-2414.

Forest Plan revision

NOTES: A recent applied research project funded by the Forest Service entitled, "The Utilization of Collaborative Processes in Forest Planning" outlines methods and strategies for using collaboration in Forest Plan revision. Copies of the report can be obtained from Dr. Tony Cheng at Colorado State University: chengt@cnr.colostate.edu or Dr. Sam Burns at Fort Lewis College: Burns_s@fortlewis.edu

Working with Resource Advisory Committees (RACs)

NOTES: A recent report by the Sierra Institute for Community and Environment highlights the effective performance of a number of Forest Service RACs across the country. The report can be found at <http://www.sierrainstitute.us/SecureRuralSchools.html>

Another good resource for RACs can be found at

http://www.notes.fs.fed.us:81/r4/payments_to_states.nsf

Stewardship contracts/agreements

NOTES: For resources on stewardship contract/agreement resources go to: <http://fsweb.wo.fs.fed.us/fm/stewardship/index.shtml>

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Collaboration Information Resources

- Collaboration training catalog available at:
<http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org>
- Third-party mediators and facilitators – U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution:
<http://www.ecr.gov/>
- Red Lodge Clearinghouse for collaborative conservation:
<http://www.redlodgeclearinghouse.org>
- Your local agency Partnership Coordinators:
<http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org/working-locally/>

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(See Handout)

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Final Thoughts

- Collaboration is a **meaningful, two-way dialogue** that allows diverse stakeholders to develop **widely supported solutions** to questions of concern
- Collaboration has **many benefits**
 - Effective outcomes
 - New networks
 - Reduced conflict
 - Longer-lasting solutions
- Collaboration is now in **law and policy**.
- **YOU** can start a collaborative process by **reaching out** to your community and creating a **zone of agreement** for finding effective solutions.

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COLLABORATION: *A Light in the Forest*



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And of course, friends and family who graciously donated pictures of their loved ones!

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Looking for More Training? Here's a complete list of modules.

- Partnerships and Collaboration 101
- Collaboration 200
- Meeting Objectives Through Partnerships 201
- Developing a Partnership 202
- Partnership Authorities and Instruments 203
- Partnership Conduct and Ethics 204
- Understanding Nonprofits and National Forest Foundation 205
- Partnership Administration 301
- Step by Step Partnership Administration 302
- Partnership and Collaboration Tools 303

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