



Sensing: A Tool for Improving Partnerships and Collaboration

**2017 Partnership and Community
Collaboration Academy
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Engaging the Public in Dialogue (1)

What do we want to achieve?

- **Create a robust dialogue around an issue**
- **Build trust and credibility in the agency**
- **Create an outcome that people can live with**

Engaging the Public in Dialogue (2)

How are we going to get there?

- **Strive toward sound science**
- **Cast a wide net, be inclusive to all those affected**
- **Who are we missing?**
- **Minorities in general**
- **Hispanics**
- **Native Americans**
- **Working class families**
- **Single moms**
- **Youth**



Yavapai Elders- Apache Nation

“We do not like public workshops. We want you to come and talk to us.”

Probe: “We are about community, not competition.”

I would like you to attend a workshop on managing Fossil Creek: “La administracion del bosque, no nos lama la atencion. Esto es para ustedes.”

“We are both working and with kids in school, we just don't have the time to go to an evening workshop.”



**WHY PUBLIC
WORKSHOPS
DON'T
ALWAYS
WORK**





Participant observation



Semi structured
or in-depth
interviews



Focus group
interviews



What are the Four Methods Used?

- 1) Participant observation
- 2) **Semi-structured interviews**
- 3) Key informant interviews

Snowball sampling → moving from informant to informant based on their networks of knowledge

- 4) **Focus group interviews**

Key Informant Interview with Campground Host



What is Sensing?

A photograph of two women sitting at a small table in a room with many framed pictures on the wall. The woman on the left is wearing a pink shirt and blue jeans, and the woman on the right is wearing an orange shirt and khaki pants. They appear to be in a casual conversation. The room has large windows and a potted plant on the table.

Based on participatory action research

Gives voice to as many stakeholders as possible

Is a low-cost alternative to surveys in a short time

A way to mine embedded, “shop-floor” knowledge

Why is This Important to You?

Sensing can strengthen Partnerships and Collaboration through deep understanding

It can provide insights into issues and people ahead of their resolution in NEPA

By focusing on the emotional connection people have to each other it builds trust

It can provide sideboards for workshops

It can give credibility to those facilitating civic engagements and build relationships

Role and Contribution of the Chugach NF

- What is really unique and special about the Chugach? What would you share with someone who had not visited the forest?
- What are the major threats and stressors to the forest? What are the trends, risks, and uncertainties?
- What about the threats to jobs, income, and general well-being? What are the social and economic trends, risks, and uncertainties?
- Describe the general relationship between the communities, villages, towns and the CNF. What does the forest do best for the communities that they could not do without the forest?
- How does the role of the CNF compare with other resource management agencies? In your estimation, what do they do best and where do they share the same responsibilities?

Increase Revenue for Western Federal Highways, 15 internal employees

- Please describe what you do? (typical projects and partners)
- Describe your most successful partner project while working for WFH. What resources made this project successful?
- Describe the real strengths and capabilities of WFH?
- Describe the external industry trends and within other agencies (both existing and potential partners).
- What added value does WFH provide?
- What niche can WFH provide to complement existing and potential partner capabilities? How do you see WFH in the future? Or, if you had three wishes for WFH, what would they be and why?

Increase Revenue for Western Federal Highways 30 Customers in Five States

- Please describe what you do? (typical projects and partners)
- How would you describe the real strengths and capabilities of WFH?
- Describe the external industry trends and uncertainties within other agencies (both existing and potential partners).
- What added value does WFH provide to existing and potential partners?
- What niche can WFH provide to complement existing and potential partner capabilities?
- How do you see WFH in the future?

A vertical strip on the left side of the slide shows a topographic map of Arizona, with a yellow line indicating a specific route or trail.

AZ National Scenic Trail Comp Plan

- What is really unique about the AZNST?
- What are some of the trends?
- What are some of the challenges?
- What are some of solutions?
- How are the agencies cooperating?
- Do you have any thoughts for what belongs in the Comp Plan?
- Branding: What would you call the AZNST if you had to market it?
- **Backbone of Arizona**



A System Perspective

“A system perspective initially considers all aspects of a local situation, but quickly moves toward the definition of a model that focuses on only the most important elements and their relationship to each other.” James Beebe, 1995

Gathering Systems Data

System → Silverton community

Topic → camping in the immediate area

Time → summer, weekends

Relationships → Venn diagrams for the niches that each campground service provides

Values → trends, place meanings for each campground

Decision → community leaders, key informants, population segments, decision makers, NEPA process



Triangulation

The use of two or more methods to crosscheck responses and establish reliability and validity

Example: Informal mapping --- Asking someone to describe a typical daily routine on the forest using a large map



A map can often focus the conversation



Sampling



The aim is for diversity over representativeness

Sensing is about context

Surveys are about generalizing to a population

Often, I talk to about 20 people

Key Informant Interviews

Snowball Sampling

Here we identify people through networks of local knowledge

We ask locals if they know someone who has key information about the place, topic, or issue being studied

I've talked to people in hardware stores, libraries, fly fishing shops, hair salons, etc.



Focus Group Interviews

A focus group consists of two or more individuals that share a common a interest or place of interest

The setting is often a round table, or chairs in a circle, so that all can see and talk to each other

Participants should engage with each other as well as the facilitator



Go where they are comfortable like this OHV store

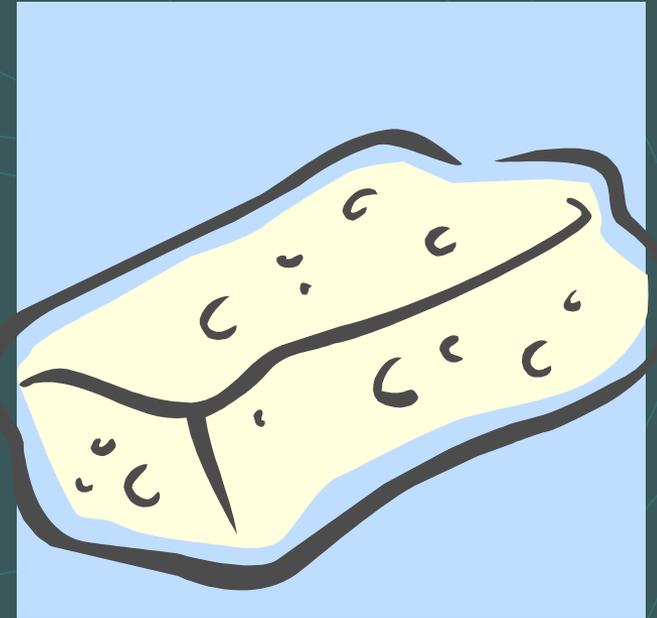


Iteration of Data and Saturation

It is best to have at least two or more people interviewing from different disciplines

Data analysis occurs after the first few interviews (iteration)

Sampling ends when results are being repeated frequently AND diversity has been achieved (saturation)



The Paperwork Reduction Act, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) applies to surveys that are administered to nine or more people using the same questions.

Sensing overcomes this restriction by the use of a conversation guide. Three actions ensure that OMB restrictions are avoided.



The results are more meaningful when people talk about what they are doing while on site.



Bracketing & Interpreting Data

Transcribe

Transcribe the interviews into a text document. Keep the interview prompts with the responses for ease of bracketing.

Read

Read the text closely paying attention to the various themes that emerge from it. Discuss the readings with at least one other person.

Assign

Assign meaning units (complete thoughts) and content brackets (themes) within the text. Mark and number all meaning units.

Classify

Classify the meaning units into their appropriate content brackets and further into groups of common themes within the brackets.

Enumerate

Enumerate the data by creating a final list of all content brackets and themes. Use this list to guide the interpretation of the data.

Campground Plans Appealed

2003, by Dale Rodenbaugh, Durango Herald



“Little Molas Lake recreation area should remain essentially underdeveloped, a group opposed to recreational user fees said Tuesday. The Western Slope No-Fee Coalition is appealing a Forest Service plan to spent \$700,000 to convert the campground into a fancier, fee-based site.”

The slide that changed everything, August 2003

Instead of having a person check a box on whether they wanted fire grates or picnic tables, I asked them, “What does this place mean to you, does it have a special meaning?”

One person paused and pointed down to a plow disc he welded into a cooking pan and said, “That there, that’s what it is all about.”



This one slide changed everything and Little Molas never received modern facilities. The community of Silverton was happy.

Little Molas Decision is Final

2004, by Dale Rodenbaugh, Herald Staff Writer

“Roughing-it types got part of what they wanted in the final environmental assessment of recreational improvements around Little Molas Lake. There’ll be no user fees, picnic tables, or potable water system.”

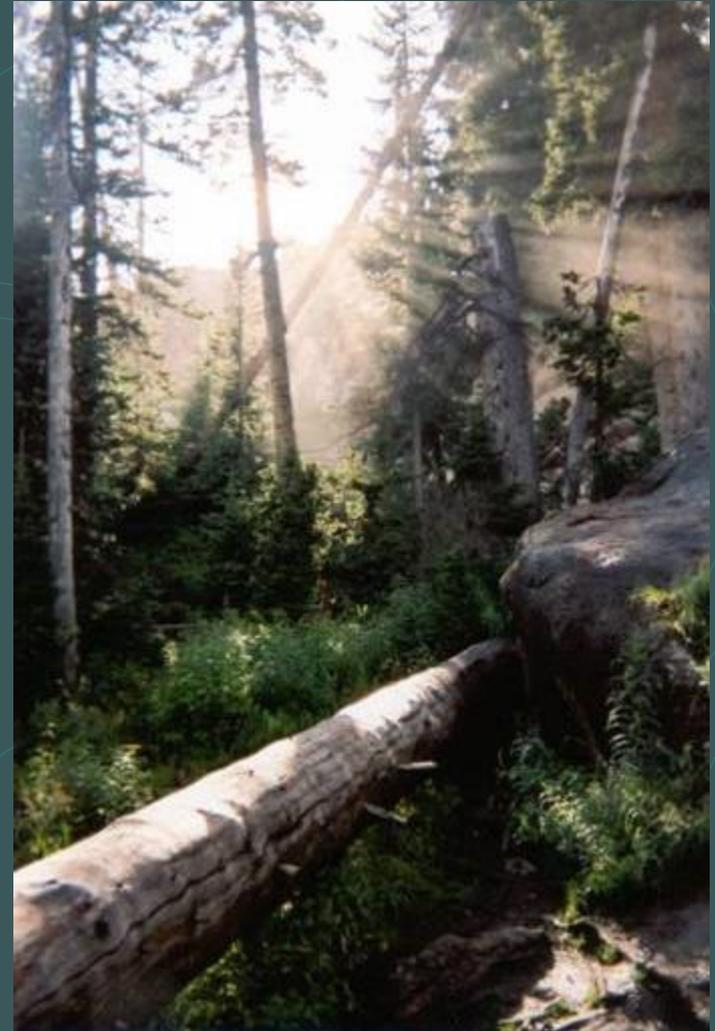
<http://durangoherald.com>

Titre, J. P., Mills, A. S., & Mallaney, M. F. (2012). Rapid Appraisal of User Stakeholders for Forest Recreation Area Planning: The Case of Little Molas. *Open Journal of Forestry*, 2(3), 164-170.

Improving Partnerships & Community Collaboration

These four methods allow community leaders, decision-makers, and citizens to engage with each other and “jump start” the learning process

By unlocking deep embedded knowledge and ideas that are below the surface, new insights can lead to better directions and a better future



Questions?

It is through story that we embrace the great breath of memory, that we can distinguish what is true.”

Barry Lopez, About this Life