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Proposed Chapter Working Title:
NPS Public Participation Policies, Communities of Interest, and Communities of Place

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Abstract
Laws and policies increasingly direct protected-area managers to involve the public in management decisions, including publics at local and regional or national scales. These publics include communities of place, who share resources and interact regularly with the protected area and its management, and communities of interest, organized around specific interests or passions related to protected area resources. A range of philosophical approaches to public participation exist, some of which are better suited to engaging communities of place, and others better suited to communities of interest. National Park Service (NPS) policies regarding public participation reflect both types of approaches, which some have interpreted as contradictory. These policies, however, are not alternatives; they are used contemporaneously, depending on the context, scope, and nature of the management issue. This paper examines the implications of NPS public participation policies that privilege communities of interest vs. communities of place, and discusses situations in which one or the other approach is better suited to achieve NPS mandates. These approaches differ fundamentally on a number of dimensions, including: conceptions of park function, community structure, community members, goals of participation, and participatory processes. Recognizing assumptions underlying approaches to participation can assist natural resource managers who strive to meet their public-trust mandate in selecting among stakeholder engagement processes that are better suited for communities of place or communities of interest. Integrating both communities' "sense of place" in protected-area management creates a challenge to governance not easily overcome by managers attempting to fulfill their responsibilities for public involvement. This paper illuminates the challenges and suggests ways that attention to both communities can be accommodated.

Introduction

The National Park Service manages special places in trust for the benefit of current and future generations (National Park Service Act, 1916). Over the past century, the National Park System has expanded from isolated parks created to preserve America's scenic treasures (Runte, 1997; Sellars, 1997) to include new kinds of parks, including: recreation areas, wild rivers, heritage areas, and historic sites. Parks not only are being created in or near more populated areas, but also are attracting amenity migrants who seek to improve quality of life by living near protected areas (Howe et al., 1997). Thus, many parks now are embedded in and part of broader communities that present increasingly complex management challenges. The NPS recognizes that parks are not isolated or insulated from their broader communities, and that actions in parks

affect these communities just as actions in communities affect parks (National Park Service, 2001b).

With the NPS's broadening sphere of influence comes increased responsibility to ensure that: (1) the public understands and supports park management undertaken on their behalf, and (2) public input is adequately considered in park management decisions. Yet, the public no longer can be viewed as an aggregate of individuals with interests in a distant place. Parks are a national resource and national publics must be considered in decision-making, but local publics may have different concerns given their direct and ongoing interactions with park resources or management. This distinction has been described as the difference between communities of interest (i.e., people who share a common interest or passion, regardless of their location or degree of interaction) and communities of place (i.e., people who are bound together because of *where* they reside, work, visit or otherwise spend a continuous portion of their time) (Patterson et al., 2003).

These growing needs for NPS communication with and engagement of different publics reflect current trends experienced by many public agencies charged with managing protected areas. The philosophical approach used to design public involvement processes affects the degree and scope of the public's impact on decisions. This paper examines the implications of different approaches to including people in the management of special places, using the U.S. National Park Service as an example.

The National Park Service and Public Participation

This section will briefly describe laws and policies that direct NPS public participation activities, especially those related to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA, 1969). The key distinction is between procedural compliance with legal public participation requirements (e.g., the DO-12 Handbook, National Park Service, 2001a), and public participation that fulfills broader purposes (e.g., Director's Order 75A, National Park Service, 2003).

Public Participation Paradigms

The term "public participation" can be applied to many forms of interaction between government and citizens. Philosophical approaches to public participation have been described as a continuum that reflects the degree of citizen engagement and power in the decision-making process, ranging from nonparticipation, where the goal is providing information and building awareness, to co-management, where citizens are embraced as partners in the final decision and management implementation (Arnstein, 1969; Chase et al., 2002; Decker & Chase, 1997; National Park Service, 2003). Leong et al. (in press) examined these approaches with respect to implied assumptions about community structure, function, and capacity for collective action and identified three distinct public participation paradigms: top-down governance, public input, and public engagement. Assumptions underlying each paradigm potentially influence interactions between natural resource management agencies and different communities of stakeholders; each will be outlined briefly.

Public Input vs. Public Engagement

Assumptions for the two paradigms that reflect active solicitation of public involvement (public input and public engagement) will be examined in more detail with respect to implications for NPS, namely whose "sense of place" is reflected in management decisions and how that vision is incorporated into NPS planning. The two paradigms place emphasis on different aspects of park function, relationship between the park and the public, conception of the public, goals of public participation, and characteristics of participatory processes (Table 1). We will demonstrate how underlying assumptions affect each point in Table 1 and provide evidence from NPS managers and public participation practitioners to support our observations.

This section will be the main emphasis of the paper.

Implications for Communities

Collectively, the above observations reveal that the public input paradigm privileges communities of interest, while the public engagement paradigm privileges communities of place. NPS Management Policies (2006) direct the agency to manage special places for current and future generations of both communities. The tension potential is clear in this situation. In this section, we will address the following questions:

1. How do you balance communities of interest and communities of place?
2. Are there phases of issue evolution where certain approaches are more appropriate than others?
3. How to you address individual stakeholder preferences (may require a combination of approaches)?
4. Are certain approaches more appropriate for certain types of impacts (primary vs. collateral)?

Conclusion

According to the NPS, "The public includes all of the individuals, organizations and other entities who have an interest in or knowledge about, are served by, or serve in, the parks and programs administered by the NPS…[including] NPS employees (National Park Service, 2003, p. 4)." Consequently, managers face the paradox of including all segments of the public in planning, yet each approach to active public participation gives advantages to some segments of the public over others, and may not be logistically feasible in some situations. Application of these philosophically different approaches has been challenging in the NPS. To support policy, we suggest scenarios in which some approaches may be more suitable than others.

Additional research is needed to clarify the relationship between success of different approaches to public participation and the various stages within the life of a natural resource issue (i.e., from issue definition to formulation of an action plan, to implementing activities), bearing in mind that stakeholders also will have individual preferences and varying comfort levels with different means for providing input. While this paper examines community and participation from the perspective of the NPS, a federal land management agency, the same considerations would apply whenever the community of interest is broader than the community of place.

Table 1. Implications of procedural and substantive policies related to NEPA on conceptions of park function, community structure, community members, goals of participation, and participatory processes.

Public Input Policy Paradigm: Macro view of "the public"	**Public Engagement Policy Paradigm: Micro view of "the public"**
NEPA Section 102: Procedural Requirements	NEPA Section 101: Productive Harmony
DO-12 Handbook	DO-75A and DO-52A
Function of Park	
Identify alternate ways to preserve the resource while providing for enjoyment	Identify alternate ways to provide for enjoyment while preserving the resource
Park has specific functions mandated by law	Park also fulfills more general functions
Focus on serving national public	Focus includes serving local public
Relationship between Park and the Public	
Park is an island, independent	Park is part of community, interdependent
Local community = adjacent landowners + interested parties	Local community= park + adjacent landowners + interested parties
"us" and "them"	"we"
Conception of the Public	
Focus on special interest groups, stakeholders with specific concerns	Stakeholders are whole people who fill many roles, beyond their specific stake
Diversity in views leads to adversity/conflict	Diversity in views leads to creativity
Goals of Public Participation	
Compliance	Planning
Public gives input to park problem	Park help solves aspect of community problem (shared cultural meanings)
Focus on process criteria	Focus on outcomes of processes
Characteristics of Participatory Processes	
Need to regulate process, formal	Addition of informal communication
Learning=what stakeholders want	Learning=what is the range of possibilities
Listen (2-way asymmetric comm.)	Dialogue (2-way symmetric comm.)
Negotiation=zero sum bargaining	Negotiation=mutual gain discussions
Position based	Interest based
Consensus=all parties must agree on substance of outcome	Consensus=all parties must be able to live with substance of outcome

References: