

US EPA ARCHIVE DOCUMENT

EPA'S COLLABORATION NETWORK NEWS



"Public Involvement brings the pieces together"

Spring 2008

This is the tenth volume of *Network News*. I hope you will find something you can use immediately or at least one item of interest to you. Please send me news items, URLs or releases for new reports and trainings and other information you feel will interest the readers.

I so appreciate your continuing to share and send *Network News* to others. After each issue there are new people asking to receive notice of the next issue's availability and that's because of you. Thanks.

Please keep sharing and telling anyone interested in the publication to e-mail the Editor [bonner.patricia@epa.gov]. Anyone wishing to be dropped from the notification list can also send an e-mail to me. *Pat*

In This Issue:

- GAO report on Cooperative Conservation -GAO was asked to determine experts' views on collaborative resource management, how selected collaborative efforts have addressed conflicts and improved resources, and challenges that agencies face as they participate in such efforts and how the Cooperative Conservation initiative has addressed them. Read about GAO's findings and more.
- The Pueblo Radon Project - Nearly half of Colorado's homes that have been tested for radon exceed the recommended 4 picocurie per cubic liter of air level. Learn what Pueblo residents are doing about radon.
- AIL has arrived -The AIL is a monthly, publicly-available, web-based listing of EPA regulatory actions that are just entering the development stage. See what's planned and share the news with your stakeholders.
- Stewardship report from the National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT) - "EPA should reframe its mission with stewardship as the unifying theme and ethic and EPA should strive to become the world's premier stewardship model and catalyst." Learn how NACEPT suggests EPA approach implementing the group's recommendations.



Collaboration Training at EPA -- In the last issue of *Network News* you read about plans for recruiting and certifying a group of trainers to facilitate "Working Together: An Introduction to Collaborative Decision Making." From May 6 – 8, 2008 twenty people experienced the intensive 20+ hours training to become certified to facilitate the workshop content and will begin to offer collaboration training for their regions, labs and offices.

The new trainers represent the offices of Air and Radiation [HQ and RTP], Enforcement and Compliance Assurance and its Office of Environmental Justice, Water, Environmental Information, Cooperative Environmental Management, Prevention, Pesticides and Toxic Substances, Policy, Economics and Innovation, Administration and Resource Management, the Narragansett and RTP labs of the Office of Research and Development, Regions 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9.

You should start looking for messages and posters about local offerings of "Working Together" this summer.

These journals recently released online editions:

- [Journal of Public Deliberation](#)
- [Democracy: A Journal of Ideas](#)
- [International Journal of Public Participation](#)

Research on Civic Engagement and Local Government – Philanthropy for Active Civic Engagement (PACE) is conducting an intensive research project to document, analyze and disseminate information on cutting edge civic/public engagement efforts by local government. Practitioners, community activists, public officials, etc. are invited to share descriptions of projects, programs and innovative practices by local government by emailing [Mike McGrath](#)

New resources from Center for Advances in Public Engagement (CAPE) – CAPE, a center launched in 2007 and housed at Public Agenda, is conducting efforts to research, develop and disseminate new insights and best practices to build the field of practitioners, funders and academics.

Last fall CAPE released several new thought pieces to advance the public engagement movement. "**Public Engagement: A Primer from Public Agenda**" provides an introductory look at the core principles of authentic public engagement, as well as the key practices and strategies needed to create the conditions for greater community engagement in public life. The primer examines the methodologies that bridge the divide between experts, leaders and the public and that build the capacity of citizens and communities to address pressing public problems. Public Agenda's "Citizen Choicework" model is discussed as a powerful and proven approach to stoke civic dialogue and action. The primer emphasizes the capacity building approach of public

engagement and calls for a greater reliance on public dialogue to find common ground on difficult issues.

“Reframing ‘Framing,’” by **Will Friedman** explores the relationship of “framing,” that is presenting information and messages to elicit certain impacts, to fostering citizenship and generating democratic dialogue. The study contrasts “framing public issues for deliberation,” to “framing public issues for persuasion” common among political players. The “framing for persuasion” model has generated much discussion about how to change language and reposition political ideology in more motivating ways. Friedman’s piece assesses the democratic implications of those differences for the media, political and civic leadership and civic engagement. The essay examines the shortcomings of the limited context in which framing is currently conceived and stresses the importance of reframing “framing” in terms of its democratic purpose rather than for advancing partisan agendas.

Transforming Public Life: A Decade of Citizen Engagement in Bridgeport is unusual in that it is a long-term, comprehensive study of how civic experimentation has unfolded in one community. This case study by Will Friedman, Alison Kadlec and Lara Birnback, outlines how public engagement has become an integral part of Bridgeport, Connecticut’s civic life. Bridgeport struggles with high unemployment, violent crime and drugs and discordant community relations. But the city is witnessing real civic renewal resulting from roughly a decade of hard work by organizations, citizens and local leaders.

“Transforming Public Life” illustrates how public engagement on education issues was launched through a series of community conversations, collaboratively conducted with Public Agenda, the Bridgeport Public Education Fund, the Institute for Educational Leadership, the Connecticut-based William Caspar Graustein Memorial Fund and the Connecticut League of Women Voters. It shows how citizen engagement strategies and practices have extended beyond education, the issue around which this effort began, to other civic areas and how engagement has had an important impact on how decisions are generally made in that community. According to the study, “When it comes time to solve community problems or make and implement policy, the institutions, organizations and individuals of Bridgeport defy business as usual through a remarkably inclusive and deliberative citizen-centered approach to problem solving.”

For these and other downloadable publications, see
[\[http://www.publicagenda.org/pubengage/pe_cape.cfm\]](http://www.publicagenda.org/pubengage/pe_cape.cfm).

Cunningham, McKinney, and Furdell [ed.], *Tapping the Power of City Hall to Build Equitable Communities* – This book is part of a larger National League of Cities effort to explore how democratic governance efforts can address issues of equity and opportunity. Kiran Cunningham, Hannah McKinney, and Phyllis Furdell use ten in-depth case studies to show what local officials have learned about how to combine participatory governance processes, improved services to low-income neighborhoods, and community building and leadership development. Each chapter can be downloaded at
http://www.nlc.org/resources_for_cities/programs_services/poverty_reduction_strategy_project/poverty2006.aspx.

Request for Applications Announced for Environmental Justice Small Grants [EJSG] Program [Funding Opportunity Number: EPA-OECA-OEJ-08-01, Closing Date for Applications: June 30, 2008 – EPA's Office of Environmental Justice (OEJ) established the Environmental Justice Small Grants Program (EJSG) in fiscal year (FY) 1994. The purpose of this grant program is to support and empower low-income and minority communities to develop locally-based solutions to their sometimes disproportionate share of environmental and public health issues. The EJSG Program is designed to assist recipients in building collaborative partnerships that will help them understand and address those issues.

Successful collaborative partnerships with other stakeholders involve well-designed Strategic plans to build, maintain and sustain the partnerships, and to work towards addressing the local environmental and/or public health issues. Nationally, up to \$800,000 is available to non-profit organizations, a city, township, county government, or Native American tribal government.

Details @ <http://www.epa.gov/compliance/environmentaljustice/grants/ej-smgrants.html>

Building Multicultural Environmental Awareness - EPA has two new publications to increase environmental awareness among multilingual communities. *Teach English, Teach about the Environment* [<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/education/pdfs/tsol.pdf> or you may need to scroll down and find the document on [<http://www.epa.gov/epaoswer/education/teachers.htm>] is a curriculum to help teach adult students English, while introducing basic concepts about the environment and individual environmental responsibility. The concepts in the curriculum can help immigrants understand their role in contributing towards cleaner and healthier communities by reducing, reusing and recycling. The second publication, *Working Together for a Healthy Environment – A Guide for Multi-Cultural Community Groups* [<http://www.epa.gov/osw/docs/cbo-guide.pdf> – paste this in your browser], is designed to help community-based organizations plan community events that promote reducing, reusing and recycling. It has a brief introduction on the inside cover in Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, and Korean.

Opportunity to contribute to *Environment UK* – This two-year old magazine is produced quarterly and was set up as a networking tool for environmental professionals to encourage communication across industries. In April, its editor, Alex Stacey, announced that the magazine will now be available on line.

He is seeking news stories, case studies and feature ideas for future issues of the magazine or for the website. If you have any questions or comments please contact him at editor@enuk.net. You will need Adobe Flash to access the most recent issue @ http://view.vcab.com/showvcab.aspx?vcabid=29W9b6hU6d7pc_ The E-version of Environment UK is available free of charge and can be distributed freely to anyone you feel may be interested.

OMB Watch Launched Regulatory Resource Center in March – This spring OMB Watch [a nonprofit government group that promotes open government, accountability and citizen participation] launched [Regulatory Resource Center](http://www.ombwatch.org/regresources) [www.ombwatch.org/regresources]. The Resource Center provides tips for advocates

who want to get involved in regulatory decision making and educational resources for anyone interested in how the federal regulatory process works.

The first part of the Regulatory Resource Center is the Advocacy Center. The Advocacy Center shows users how to comment on federal regulations and provides instructions for using Regulations.gov [<http://www.regulations.gov/search/index.jsp>], the government's portal for public comments. The Advocacy Center also has instructions for filing a petition for rulemaking and tips on how to read the Federal Register.

The second part of the Resource Center is the Policy Library. The Policy Library contains a flowchart showing how rules move through the regulatory pipeline; a list and brief description of rulemaking agencies; background information describing how the regulatory process works from beginning to end; and a glossary of common terms relating to regulation. The Policy Library also has a reference section, which provides links to legislation, executive orders, and government reports on regulatory policy.

In October 2007, OMB Watch released a developmental version of the Regulatory Resource Center and surveyed the public for comments and ideas. Responses to the survey were overwhelmingly positive. A number of respondents complimented OMB Watch on its efforts to centralize all information about the regulatory process in one place. OMB Watch will continue to improve the site based on public needs, comments, and concerns. We welcome and encourage feedback at any time. E-mail the group with your comments at regresources@ombwatch.org.

Regulatory Information Web site - EPA is sharing more information about ways the public can get involved in environmental regulation. We've added new features to one of its most popular websites for environmental regulatory information. This site – titled Laws, Regulations, Guidance and Dockets [www.epa.gov/lawsregs] is often the public's first exposure to EPA's regulatory activities. It now has easier ways to search and comment on EPA regulations and significant guidance documents, and to learn how environmental regulations are written. The site also includes new sections for finding regulations and related documents, plus regulatory history, statutory authority, supporting analyses, compliance information, and guidance for implementation. For the first time, searches for regulatory information can be done by topics such as water or air, or by business sectors such as transportation or construction. The new site is easily accessible from EPA's homepage. Look for "Laws, Regulations, Guidance & Dockets" in the left-hand navigation bar.

Making It Their Own - You voted, and now ... the results are in. After receiving more than 15,000 votes online, the Case Foundation is proud to present the Make It Your Own Awards™ [<http://www.casefoundation.org/make-it-your-own/final-four/list>] -- the four individuals whose projects those who voted found the most innovative, the most inspiring, and the most capable of creating lasting solutions for their communities. These four will each receive \$25,000 to help turn their dreams into reality.

The Kodak American Greenways Awards Program - Eastman Kodak, The Conservation Fund, and the National Geographic Society provide small grants to stimulate the planning and design of greenways in communities throughout America. Made possible by a generous grant from Eastman Kodak, the program also honors groups and individuals whose ingenuity and creativity foster the creation of greenways.

Since 1993, the American Greenways Program of The Conservation Fund has acknowledged individuals, organizations, corporations and public agencies for their exemplary leadership and efforts to enhance the nation's outdoor heritage. The Conservation Fund has partnered with the Eastman Kodak Company to honor these leaders through the Kodak American Greenways Awards program.

- View the [2007 Awards Announcement](#)
- Learn more about current and past [National Award winners](#).
- 2008 Grant Guidelines ([Download PDF](#))
- View the [2008 Application](#)

Greenways are corridors of protected, public and private land established along rivers, stream valleys, ridges, abandoned railroad corridors, utility rights-of-way, canals, scenic roads or other linear features. They link recreational, cultural, and natural features, provide pathways for people and wildlife, protect forests, wetlands and grasslands, and improve the quality of life for everyone.

The goals of the Greenways program are:

- Develop new, action-oriented greenway projects
- Assist grassroots greenway organizations.
- Leverage additional money for conservation and greenway development
- Recognize and encourage greenway proponents and organizations

For additional information: The Conservation Fund, 703-525-6300, or kodakawards@conservationfund.org



Featured Upcoming Events

The 2008 NCDD Conference in Austin, TX - NCDD's fourth National Conference on Dialogue & Deliberation will take place **October 3rd through 5th**, 2008 (with pre-conference trainings on the 2nd). NCDD's high-energy, highly participatory conferences bring together practitioners, scholars, public leaders, trainers, artists, activists, teachers, and students from all of the various streams of practice that exist in the field. For information and registration, go to: http://www.thataway.org/events/?page_id=6 Watch NCDD's 5-minute video at www.thataway.org/8bc723 to see why you might want to participate in this event.

IAP2 International Conference: "Public Participation and Corporate Social Responsibility: from why to how" - The 2008 IAP2 international conference, runs from

27th – 29th August, 2008, in Glasgow at the University of Strathclyde. It will be attractive to those in business, local authorities, the professions and third sectors, government, the armed forces, health and community sectors – in fact all those areas that would wish to perform public participation well, or perhaps better, than is happening at the moment.

This will be a conference that is highly interactive: it will be both intellectually demanding and demonstrate good engagement processes. Interested? Contact Diane Coyle on diane.coyle@strath.ac.uk for more information and a conference pack.

Appreciative Inquiry: A Change Process that Builds Upon the Best -- [In –person or by phone – see last line.] Are you interested in learning new ways to facilitate problem solving and change processes in your organization? Are you weary of wading through the muck and mire of understanding problems and the seemingly endless contemplation of all of the things that have gone wrong, why they went wrong, and how they went wrong? Appreciative Inquiry (AI) might be just what you are looking for. AI is a change process that searches for the best in people, their organizations, and that which is relevant to them. AI is a "glass half full" approach that builds upon successes and desired future states and outcomes. Come imagine your desired future.

Merri L. Hanson - Peninsula Mediation & ADR, Director, Principle Mediator and Trainer will be the presenter. The event is presented by The Interagency ADR Working Group, Workplace Conflict Management Section on Tuesday, June 3, 2008 at Noon - 1:30 PM At the US Department of Energy [1000 Independence Ave, SW, Room GJ-015, Washington, DC. Directions: Orange/Blue Line-Smithsonian/Holocaust Museum/Bureau of Engraving and Printing Exit; Yellow Line-L'Enfant Plaza/Maryland Ave. Exit Please allow extra time for security procedures.]

Please RSVP by May 27, 2008, with name, citizenship, and agency/employer to: Cindy Mazur, ADR Director, FEMA, at cindy.mazur@dhs.gov. Questions? Call Cindy at (202)646-4094.

If you would like to listen via teleconference, please contact Pamela Pontillo at Pamela.Pontillo@hq.doe.gov.

The [Making Every Voice Matter conference program](#) is now available. The Everyday Democracy [formerly Study Circles] National Conference will be held June 12 – 14 at the Denver, Colorado Renaissance Hotel. The panelist lineup for the opening plenary "Making Democracy Real, Day-to-Day is: Archon Fung, Martha L. McCoy, Pedro Antonio Noguera, Ph.D, Makani Themba-Nixon, and Gloria Rubio-Cortes. They will address the question, "How does your work relate to national efforts to address poverty, racism and education?" The program includes a broad range of workshops to energize, challenge and inspire your dialogue-to-change work. A few highlights:

- "Bringing Action Ideas to Life: Action Planning, From Day One"
- "Making the Web Work for You"
- "Dismantling Racism: An Essential Element in Creating Community Change"



Featured Articles

GAO Report on Cooperative Conservation Review [“Opportunities Exist to Enhance Federal Participation in Collaborative Efforts to Reduce Conflicts and Improve Natural Resource Conditions”]

Why GAO did the Study

Conflict over the use of our nation’s natural resources, along with increased ecological problems, has led land managers to seek cooperative means to resolve natural resource conflicts and problems. Collaborative resource management is one such approach that communities began using in the 1980s and 1990s. The 2004 Executive Order on Cooperative Conservation encourages such efforts.

GAO was asked to determine (1) experts’ views on collaborative resource management, (2) how selected collaborative efforts have addressed conflicts and improved resources, and (3) challenges that agencies face as they participate in such efforts and how the Cooperative Conservation initiative has addressed them. GAO reviewed experts’ journal articles, studied seven collaborative groups, and interviewed group members and federal and other public officials.

GAO is recommending that CEQ and the Departments of the Interior and Agriculture take several actions to develop a long-term plan, guidance, and tools that could enhance their management and support of collaborative efforts.

What GAO Found

Experts generally view collaborative resource management that involves public and private stakeholders in natural resource decisions as an effective approach for managing natural resources. Several benefits can result from using collaborative resource management, including reduced conflict and litigation and improved natural resource conditions, according to the experts. A number of collaborative practices, such as seeking inclusive representation, establishing leadership, and identifying a common goal among the participants have been central to successful collaborative management efforts.

The success of these groups is often judged by whether they increase participation and cooperation or improve natural resource conditions. Many experts also note that there are limitations to the approach, such as the time and resources it takes to bring people together to work on a problem and reach a decision. [Table 1, from the full GAO report, arrays benefits and limitations.]

Most of the seven collaborative resource management efforts GAO studied in several states across the country were successful in achieving participation and cooperation among their members and improving natural resource conditions. In six of the cases,

those involved were able to reduce or avoid the kinds of conflicts that can arise when dealing with contentious natural resource problems.

All the efforts, particularly those that effectively reduced or avoided conflict, used at least several of the collaborative practices described by the experts. For example, one effort obtained broad community representation and successfully identified a common goal of using fire, after decades of suppression, to restore the health of a large grasslands area surrounding the community. Also, members of almost all the efforts studied said they have been able to achieve many of their goals for sustaining or improving the condition of specific natural resources. However, for most of these efforts no data were collected on a broad scale to show the effect of their work on overall resource conditions across a large area or landscape.

Federal land and resource management agencies—the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and National Park Service, and the Department of Agriculture's Forest Service—face key challenges to participating in collaborative resource management efforts, according to the experts, federal officials, and participants in the efforts GAO studied. For example, the agencies face challenges in determining whether to participate in a collaborative effort, measuring participation and monitoring results, and sharing agency and group experiences.

Table 1: Benefits and Limitations of Collaborative Processes

Components	Description
Category: Benefits	
Reduction in Conflict and Litigation	Conflict is reduced and better managed, which may prevent parties resorting to litigation.
Better Natural Resource Results	More creative solutions are identified and better decisions are made because a broad array of knowledge, including local information, is incorporated into decisions. Solutions are easier to implement because there is typically less opposition, sometimes leading to a cost savings.
Shared Ownership and Authority	Ownership and responsibility for a problem are shared and state and federal agencies become partners with local agencies and groups. Such joint stewardship can make federal and state programs more locally relevant and can increase fairness in the process.
Increased Trust	Increased trust among participants, between organizations, and between decision makers.
Improved Communication	Communication is improved and becomes more open and honest.
Increased Understanding	Participants learn about and gain an understanding and appreciation of the natural resource problem and of other participants' perspectives, including local knowledge.
Increased Community Capacity	Increased community capacity involves increased public engagement and awareness, social networks, and community ability to engage in dialogue.
Category: Limitations	
Process Difficult/Time-Consuming	The process can be inefficient, slow, and require large amounts of resources.
Process Does Not Always Work	There are circumstances in which collaboration or reaching consensus is not possible for reasons such as irreconcilable differences, particular groups derailing the process, or a resistance to change.
Category: Critiques	
Process Is Not Equitable	Power is not equally balanced among participants, placing some at a disadvantage and making the process undemocratic. Not all groups who have a legitimate interest may be able to participate, which may mean that their concerns are not addressed. For example, national environmental groups cannot participate in all local efforts.

Results in One, or More, Groups Being Co-opted	The collaborative group is taken over or assimilated by a more powerful or established interest.
May Produce Least Common Denominator	The focus on consensus as an end result can lead to a solution that is a compromise that may not necessarily reflect the best science or the view of any group.
Reduced Accountability	Lessened accountability to the public or individual constituencies occurs through aspects of the process such as devolving federal authority to collaborative groups and removing discussion from the public eye.

As a part of the interagency Cooperative Conservation initiative led by the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ), the federal government has made progress in addressing these challenges. Yet, additional opportunities exist to develop and disseminate tools, examples, and guidance that further address the challenges, as well as to better structure and direct the initiative to achieve the vision of Cooperative Conservation, which involves a number of actions by multiple agencies over the long term.

Failure to pursue such opportunities and to create a long-term plan to achieve the vision may limit the effectiveness of the federal government's initiative and collaborative efforts. [Here ends Highlights (<http://www.gao.gov/highlights/d08262high.pdf>) of GAO-08-262 <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d08262.pdf>, a report to the Chairman, Subcommittee on Public Lands and Forests, Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, U.S. Senate. The remainder of this article summarizes areas of the report that the Editor saw as particularly transferable to EPA's collaboration work.]

The GAO report noted that key challenges [Table 2] that the agencies face fall within the following major areas:

•**Improving employees' collaborative skills.** Often, federal employees are technical experts and may not have the skills and experience to collaborate. Collaborative skills include the ability to conduct meetings, involve relevant stakeholders, resolve disputes, and share technical information to make it accessible to groups.

•**Determining whether to participate in a particular collaborative effort.** Opportunities to collaborate continually emerge as community members initiate efforts. However, without understanding the external factors that may affect success, federal land and resource management agencies may become involved and invest resources in a collaborative effort that has little chance of succeeding.

Table 2 - Key Challenges	
Challenge	Description
Improving Federal Employees' Collaborative Skills	Skill and experience interacting and communicating with the public and conflict resolution skills.
Determining Whether to Participate in a Collaborative Effort	Evaluating particular factors that will affect whether a collaborative effort is likely to succeed in particular circumstances. Such factors include the capacity for the community to engage in such efforts, which may depend on the community having leaders, social networks, and local infrastructure and institutions that facilitate civic involvement; and external conditional factors such as an issue that has a history of litigation and viewpoints rooted in the community that participants bring with them into a collaborative effort such as stereotypes or a history of distrust among community members.

Sustaining Participation	Achieving and sustaining the consistent participation of all relevant stakeholders and people with collaborative, leadership, and technical skills and being able to build trust and equal footing among the participants. Also includes a lack of sufficient time, money, or people to fully support a collaborative effort.
Measuring and Monitoring for Accountability	Achieving and demonstrating accountability through measuring participation and monitoring natural resources given the long time horizons of natural resource results.
Working within Federal Laws and Agency Policies	Agency support of collaboration through culture, funding, laws, and policies, and relationships with other agencies and organizations.

Source: GAO analysis

•**Sustaining federal employees’ participation over time.** Agency employees can contribute scientific and technical expertise, such as habitat identification and mapping skills, to help plan and focus the group’s work. Limited participation by federal agencies may constrain the amount of work that can be planned and therefore accomplished by both the agency and the group.

•**Measuring participation and monitoring results to ensure accountability.** Participation in and natural resource results of collaborative efforts are difficult to measure and collaborative efforts often lack a systematic approach for monitoring the results. A lack of measuring or monitoring data may make it difficult for agencies and their partners to demonstrate and be accountable for their results and justify their continued participation.

•**Sharing agency and group experiences with collaboration.** Collaborative groups are scattered throughout the United States and do not have many opportunities to meet and share experiences. Although Web sites and guidebooks exist to share information, without venues to bring collaborative groups together, it is more difficult for group members to learn and benefit directly from each other’s experience.

•**Working within the framework of federal statutes and agency policies to support collaboration.** Some federal laws and agency policies appear to be inconsistent with collaboration. Without evaluating the laws and policies involved, the federal agencies cannot determine the changes needed to better balance collaboration with good government practices. [See EPA’s Legal Framework Supports Collaboration @ <http://www.epa.gov/publicinvolvement/LegalAuthorities.pdf>.]

While group structure and process may differ, GAO found that many experts identified collaborative practices that groups share and that can contribute to effective collaboration. The experts primarily identified the following practices through studying various existing collaborative resource management efforts:

•**Seek inclusive representation.** All stakeholders—individuals and organizations whose interests are affected by the process or its outcome—should be included in the process by participating or being represented.

•**Develop a collaborative process.** Though processes vary, good ones fit the needs and circumstances of their situation. And obtain commitment from the participants that an agreement will be implemented.

•**Pursue flexibility, openness, and respect.** Flexibility, transparency, and respect should be built into the collaborative process.

•**Find leadership.** Collaborative groups need to find credible leaders capable of articulating a strong vision, and build skills so that these leaders can effectively represent the interests of their organizations.

•**Identify or develop a common goal.** By establishing a goal based on what the group shares in common—a sense of place or community, mutual goals, or mutual fears—rather than on where there is disagreement among missions or philosophies, a collaborative group can shape its own vision and define its own purpose.

•**Develop a process for obtaining information.** It is important to develop a common factual base, which can be accomplished by all participants jointly gathering and developing a common understanding of relevant data. This process allows the stakeholders to [review and weigh before they agree to] accept the facts themselves, rather than having the facts disseminated to them through experts.

•**Leverage available resources.** Since collaboration can take time and resources to accomplish such activities as building trust among the participants, setting up the ground rules for the process, attending meetings, conducting project work, and monitoring and evaluating the results of work performed, it is important for groups to ensure that they identify and leverage sufficient funding to get the group started and to accomplish the objectives.

•**Provide incentives.** Economic incentives can help collaborative efforts achieve their goals.

•**Monitor results for accountability.** To be effective, the participants in groups need to be accountable to their constituencies and to their process, and funding organizations expect accountability for the time, effort, money, or patience they invest. Therefore, designing protocols to monitor and evaluate progress toward a collaborative group's goals, from both an environmental and a social perspective, is important.

Recommendations for Executive Action

To enhance the federal government's support of and participation in collaborative resource management efforts, we recommend that the Chairman of CEQ, working with the Secretaries of Agriculture and the Interior, direct the interagency task force to take the following actions:

1. Disseminate, more widely, tools for the agencies to use in assessing and determining if, when, and how to participate in a particular collaborative effort and how to sustain their participation over time.
2. Identify examples of groups that have conducted natural resource monitoring, including at the landscape level, and develop and disseminate guidance or protocols for others to use in setting up such monitoring efforts.
3. Hold periodic national or regional meetings and conferences to bring groups together to share collaborative experiences, identify further challenges, and learn from the lessons of other collaborative groups.

4. Identify and evaluate, with input from OMB, legal and policy changes concerning federal financial assistance that would enhance collaborative efforts.

5. Identify goals, actions, responsible work groups and agencies, and time frames for carrying out the actions needed to implement the Cooperative Conservation initiative, including collaborative resource management, and document these through a written plan, memorandum of understanding, or other appropriate means.

Furthermore, to ensure that federal agencies can work well with collaborative groups, GAO recommends that the Secretaries of the Interior and Agriculture take action to develop a joint policy to ensure consistent implementation of ethics rules governing federal employee participation on nonprofit boards that represent collaborative groups.

AIL ARRIVES Action Initiation List: epa.gov/lawsregs/search/ail.html

EPA is making federal environmental regulation more transparent. EPA's new Action Initiation List (AIL) is a monthly, publicly-available, web-based listing of EPA regulatory actions that are just entering the development stage. EPA is using AILs to notify the public about new rules and other regulatory actions. Keep in mind that AILs will not post immediately. You can access a given month's list roughly 15 days after the close of the month (e.g., the April 2008 AIL will post about May 15th).

Formerly, the public had to wait for EPA's *Semiannual Regulatory Agenda* epa.gov/lawsregs/search/regagenda.html, which is updated only every six months, to learn about new regulatory actions. The principal purpose of AIL is to provide stakeholders in EPA's mission with a "virtually real-time" alternative.

The AIL provides summaries, agency contacts, and other information about the rules EPA has approved for development. For example, the March 2008 AIL announced the agency's plans to issue an advanced notice of proposed rulemaking for greenhouse gases in late spring. This notice will solicit public input as EPA considers the specific effects of climate change and potential regulation of greenhouse gas emissions from stationary and mobile sources under the Clean Air Act. The March AIL also announced the agency's plans to propose a rulemaking that builds on EPA's existing renewable fuels standard program. The expansion of the program was mandated by the 2007 Energy Independence and Security Act.

EPA's Office of Congressional and Intergovernmental Relations sought this new mechanism to help meet the needs of its key constituents --EPA's state and local government partners -- the people who often are charged with implementing federal environmental regulations. Clearly, effective intergovernmental consultation can only occur if EPA's partners are able to plan and prepare for it. But, in addition to providing state and local government professionals with the earliest possible notification that new (and often resource-intensive) requirements will be coming their way, the AIL will also help the *entire range* of EPA stakeholders more effectively plan their participation in the rule development process.

EPA recognizes that timely, meaningful stakeholder involvement is an indispensable part of the rule development process. EPA's new AIL, as a planning resource for our customers, is one more tool to help ensure that the Agency's "culture of collaboration" will continue to flourish.



THE PUEBLO RADON PROJECT

by

Michael Wenstrom, EPA Region 8

On a Wednesday evening, residents filled the main meeting room of the Rawlins Public Library in Pueblo to learn about the potential threat that radon poses for Pueblo's families. The **Pueblo CAREs** project sponsored a presentation by Doug Kladder, also known as "Mr. Radon". Doug spoke

for more than two hours about what radon is, how we may become exposed to radon and how we might mitigate our exposures. The assembled community members were most interested in whether they and their families might be exposed to radon in their homes.

The principal goal of this meeting was to bring the Pueblo community together to increase understanding and to realistically assess the risks to the community from exposure to radon. EPA recently sponsored a "Radon Month" campaign. Region 8 has responded to that initiative by assisting the Pueblo community, through its CARE [Community Action for a Renewed Environment] grantee to assist in learning about and responding to the threat of radon in Pueblo.

According to statistics gathered by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE), nearly one half of Colorado's homes that have been tested for radon exceed the recommended 4 picocurie per cubic liter of air level. Levels above 4 picocuries are recommended to be mitigated to reduce the prospective incidence of lung cancer which radon promotes.

A quick analysis of historical statistics reveals that the average level of radon for those homes tested in Pueblo City and County is about 8 picocuries (the range of levels tested is 2-135 picocuries). Those statistics were generated from data sorted by Zip Code. Thus, we now know roughly where higher exposures are found. However, at this time, we do not know the specific neighborhoods where exposures may be high.



The State of Colorado's Radon Program made coupons available to secure free testing kits. Additionally, the EPA [National Exposure Research Laboratory](#) in Las Vegas supplied the project with radon measurement units under its Outreach Program. These are being distributed to the community with particular attention paid to environmental justice neighborhoods. The Pueblo City/County Health Department is distributing the kits, at no charge. The project

is asking for a report back on the results, so that we can better identify neighborhoods at greatest risk.

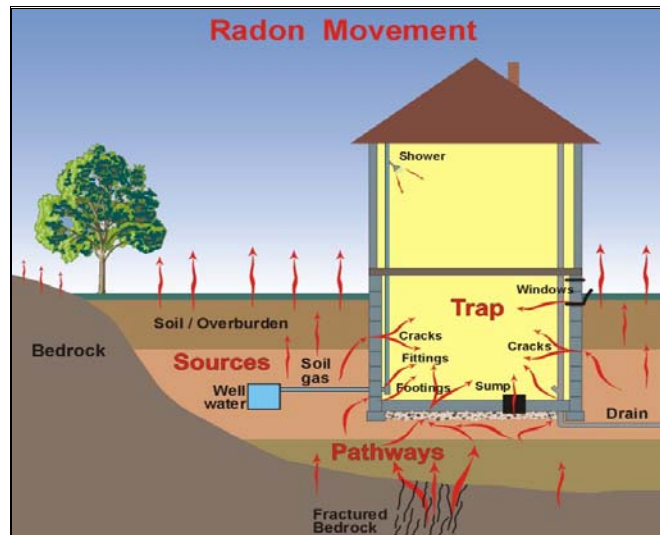


The results of the tests will be analyzed to determine the current level of risk from radon in Pueblo residences. This information will then be shared with the larger community to encourage more widespread testing. There will also be outreach to the home construction trades to encourage them to include radon mitigation in high risk areas in new home construction.

One of the larger challenges identified by the community is the mitigation of risk in homes showing high levels of radon, but for which the cost of mitigation is beyond the means of the homeowner. We are discussing ideas for innovative approaches for working with homeowners who face this problem.



Additionally, we are investigating several sources of potential funding to address this challenge. Sources identified to date include HUD funds for low-income home improvement, using energy retrofit resources, identifying grant funds and creating a matching grant program to pair with identified resources to encourage community residents to step in and help their neighbors.



Make Stewardship EPA's Unifying Theme

That's what EPA's independent National Advisory Council for Environmental Policy and Technology (NACEPT) urged in its recent report: "EPA should reframe its mission with stewardship as the unifying theme and ethic and EPA should strive to become the world's premier stewardship model and catalyst." NACEPT recommends that EPA focus all of its tools – strong regulatory programs, grants, voluntary partnerships and information programs – in this direction.

The report says that the success of EPA's stewardship efforts will be determined by the extent to which other institutions and individuals become stewards, and adds that working towards sustainability through environmental stewardship and collaboration is everyone's business. Environmental stewardship is the responsibility for environmental quality shared by all those whose actions affect the environment.

NACEPT advises, consults with and makes recommendations to the EPA Administrator on a broad range of environmental policy, technology and management issues. The Council is a balanced panel of representatives from academia, business and industry, non-governmental organizations, and state, local, and tribal governments.

For the full report, *Everyone's Business: Working Towards Sustainability Through Environmental Stewardship and Collaboration*, March 2008, copy and paste this link into your browser: <http://www.epa.gov/ocem/nacept/reports/pdf/2008-0328-everyones-business-final.pdf>

[The remainder of this article uses the NACEPT memo transmitting the report to Administrator Johnson.]

"NACEPT built on EPA's Innovation Action Council's November 2005 report, *Everyday Choices: Opportunities for Environmental Stewardship*, which defines stewardship as 'taking responsibility for our choices'. Stewardship [for NACEPT] is 'a systemic approach to addressing the challenge of sustainability—economic, environmental and social.' Strong regulatory programs are key tools in fostering responsibility, especially when they are integrated with the full policy toolbox that also includes grants, voluntary partnerships, and information programs. To deliver on this challenge, EPA must invest in building the skills and competencies necessary for stewardship and drive stewardship deep into its organizational culture.

The concept of stewardship is a logical—and timely—step in EPA's ongoing evolution. It is not a new idea. The National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969 provides the direction and underlying authority to implement our recommendations. We commend EPA for already doing much to advance stewardship but, as we state in our report, there is much more to do.

Although EPA has a critical role to play in stewardship, its role is only one piece of the overall systemic solution. The success of EPA's stewardship efforts will be determined by the extent to which other institutions and individuals become stewards. Collaborative governance, which engages all stakeholders in the design and direction of environmental policy, is a key strategy toward that end. Working towards sustainability through environmental stewardship and collaboration is indeed everyone's business.

Fully embracing environmental stewardship will not be easy for EPA or the rest of society, but it is one of the best ways to ensure future prosperity. Implementing the full

scope of our recommendations will require continuing EPA management attention and a long-term, sustained investment. Paradigm shifts take time and patience as well as strategic implementation. EPA's successful implementation of pollution prevention illustrates how this can be accomplished...

Every day individuals and institutions make a myriad of choices that affect the environment for better or worse. Interest in sustainability and environmental stewardship is surging throughout the country and the world. Now is the time for EPA to recast its role to provide the leadership needed for society to reach the next level of environmental quality.

With EPA at the forefront, environmental stewardship that is pursued in a vigorously collaborative manner should be everyone's business. Informed actions by millions of individuals and institutions can truly put us on the path to sustainability. This is the Council's vision and its hope for the future."

Next Steps -- The Innovation Action Council discussed NACEPT's *Everyone's Business* report at its April 30, 2008 meeting. Several members and staff spoke about coordinating internal discussions within their offices and regions about NACEPT's recommendations and how they might be implemented. [Pages 2 – 5 list recommendations, findings and immediate steps @ <http://www.epa.gov/ocem/nacept/reports/pdf/2008-0328-everyones-business-final.pdf>]

Network News Staff

Pat Bonner (202) 566-2204 bonner.patricia@epa.gov



"Public Involvement brings the pieces together"