COLLABORATIVE NATIONAL FOREST MANAGEMENT
IN TRINITY COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

By

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ABSTRACT
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Naomi Merwin

Many natural resource conflicts are characterized by intractability and resistance to resolution. The fields of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and collaborative-based resource management (CBRM) prescribe applicable conflict resolution practices to address intractable natural resource conflicts. Decades-long conflicts in the Pacific Northwest over national forest management present a multitude of cases of natural resources-based intractable conflicts and the various attempts that have been made to solve them. This project uses a case study to discuss the ADR practice of frame analysis and CBRM’s advisory group approach to address intractable natural resource conflicts in Trinity County. This project investigates how stakeholder identity and stakeholder inclusivity contribute to natural resource conflict intractability. Specifically, this project questions ADR’s use of rigid stakeholder identity categorization. Instead, I suggest embracing the breadth of identities that is typical of stakeholders living in rural communities. This project also discusses the importance of stakeholder inclusivity in the CBRM advisory group model, focusing on the positive incorporation of stakeholder groups who promote points of view that are potentially destructive to collaborative processes. The goal of this project is to add to the understanding of conflict resolution processes that seek to resolve intractable natural resource conflicts. This project assists ADR and CRBM practitioners, local stakeholders, and federal land management agencies
who are working to resolve intractable national forest management conflicts in forest-dependent communities.

**Key Words:** collaborative-based resource management, alternative dispute resolution, natural resource management, forest-dependent community, frame analysis, conflict intractability, stakeholder identity, stakeholder inclusivity, Trinity County, Trinity Collaborative.
DEDICATION
To forest-dependent communities, may this project assist in achieving both community
well-being and the ecological health of national forests.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS
I would first like to thank the members of the Trinity Collaborative who volunteer
their time and energy to making Trinity County a safer and more viable place to live.
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ADR</td>
<td>Alternative Dispute Resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AMA</td>
<td>Adaptive Management Area</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BATNA</td>
<td>Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement</td>
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<tr>
<td>BLM</td>
<td>Bureau of Land Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBFM</td>
<td>Collaborative-Based Forest Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>CBRM</td>
<td>Collaborative-Based Resource Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>CCM</td>
<td>Constant Comparative Method</td>
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<tr>
<td>CWPP</td>
<td>Community Wildfire Protection Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>ESA</td>
<td>Endangered Species Act of 1973</td>
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<tr>
<td>FACA</td>
<td>Federal Advisory Committee Act of 1972</td>
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<tr>
<td>HOA</td>
<td>Homeowners Association</td>
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<tr>
<td>MOU</td>
<td>Memorandum of Understanding</td>
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<tr>
<td>NEPA</td>
<td>National Environmental Policy Act of 1969</td>
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<td>NFMA</td>
<td>National Forest Management Act of 1976</td>
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<td>NRCS</td>
<td>Natural Resources Conservation Service</td>
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<td>NWFP</td>
<td>Northwest Forest Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>PAC</td>
<td>Provincial Advisory Committee</td>
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<tr>
<td>QLG</td>
<td>Quincy Library Group</td>
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<tr>
<td>RC&amp;D</td>
<td>Resource Conservation &amp; Development</td>
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<tr>
<td>SFCRMP</td>
<td>South Fork Coordinated Resource Management Plan</td>
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<tr>
<td>SRSCSA</td>
<td>Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act of 2000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abbreviation</td>
<td>Full Name</td>
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<td>--------------</td>
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<tr>
<td>TBRG</td>
<td>Trinity Bio Region Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCBOS</td>
<td>Trinity County Board of Supervisors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TCFSC</td>
<td>Trinity County Fire Safe Council</td>
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<tr>
<td>TCRCD</td>
<td>Trinity Country Resource Conservation District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TFG</td>
<td>Trinity Forestry Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCCE</td>
<td>University of California Cooperative Extension</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>USDA</td>
<td>United States Department of Agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>USFS</td>
<td>United States Forest Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>WRTC</td>
<td>Hayfork Watershed Research &amp; Training Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WUI</td>
<td>Wildland/Urbam Interface</td>
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Conflict is a fundamental element of society (Coser 1956: 18) and frame analysis is an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) method used to understand conflict and promote opportunities for resolution (Lewicki et al. 2003; Poirier Elliott 1999: 213). Natural resource use conflicts are prevalent throughout the world and both the alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and collaborative-based resource management (CBRM) fields have responded by creating models to address natural resource conflicts. Applying frame analysis of stakeholder identity and stakeholder inclusivity in the context of CBRM aids in understanding the relationship between stakeholder identity and stakeholder inclusivity on natural resource conflict intractability. However, the literature does not address the potential complexity underlying situations where individual stakeholders fit into more than one, or even several, stakeholder categories. This project provides an alternative method of handling stakeholder identity than those identified in ADR and frame analysis literature. Allowing stakeholders to “wear many hats” rather than using rigid stakeholder identity categories is a powerful tool that can be used to prevent or reduce conflict intractability in rural communities. In addition, this project also highlights the importance of stakeholder inclusivity in CBRM focusing on how to incorporate stakeholder groups who promote points of view that are potentially destructive to the collaborative process.

This project discusses a forest-dependent community that depends upon access to and appropriate management of national forests for their economic, social, and ecological
viability, and increasingly public safety. The case study is based on a CBRM advisory
group, the Trinity County Collaborative Group (Trinity Collaborative), located in Trinity
County, California. The study describes the Trinity Collaborative’s endeavor to
cooperatively and collaboratively address intractable natural resource conflicts, focusing
heavily on national forest management. The Trinity Collaborative is the most recent
iteration of CBRM efforts in Trinity County to address national forest management
conflicts that have afflicted Trinity County, and the greater Pacific Northwest region, for
decades. These national forest-based intractable conflicts have led to ecological
degradation and have negatively affected local communities’ wellbeing throughout the
West.

The Trinity Collaborative formed in 2013 due to continued conflict over natural
resource management issues. The Trinity County Board of Supervisors (TCBOS), the
Trinity County Resource Conservation District (TCRCD) and the Hayfork Watershed
Research and Training Center (WRTC) determined that county government could benefit
from a natural resource advisory group. The purpose of the Trinity Collaborative is to
advise the TCBOS on natural resource issues. To fulfill that purpose, the Trinity
Collaborative has established a collaborative process between Trinity County
stakeholders and federal land management agencies, which make up a majority of the
land base in Trinity County, to allow for discussion of natural resource management. The
hope for the Trinity Collaborative is that the group will improve the economic,
ecological, and social wellbeing of Trinity County.
In early 2013, an informal visit from the Secretary of the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) and the Chief of the United States Forest Service (USFS) contributed to the energy surrounding the idea of the Trinity Collaborative. The TCBOS sanctioned the convening of the Trinity Collaborative and two Trinity County supervisors were assigned to the group. The USDA provided a development grant for the formation of the Trinity Collaborative which was administered through the TCRCD. The TCRCD took the next step in establishing the Trinity Collaborative and retained a facilitation team to conduct a situation assessment, guide the collaborative process, and facilitate public meetings. I was hired as part of the facilitation team along with a fellow Humboldt State University graduate student, Sarah Aldinger, Sociology professor and veteran mediator Dr. Elizabeth Watson, and the executive director of the TCRCD, Alex Cousins.

Once I decided to use the Trinity Collaborative as my master’s project, I placed myself in dual roles of both group facilitator and student researcher. There were very specific functions I performed for each role. For example, as a facilitator I conducted a situation assessment. As a researcher I kept a reflective journal on the meetings, detailing my observations and emerging research ideas. As I executed functions specific to one role, it strengthened my overall performance in both roles. Encompassing both facilitator and researcher roles increased my engagement with the Trinity Collaborative and encouraged deeper insight into ADR and CBRM fields.

This project provides insights regarding stakeholder identity and stakeholder inclusivity that will be particularly useful to practitioners of ADR and conveners of
CBRM groups working with rural or resource-dependent communities. Overall, this project contributes to the efficacy of ADR’s frame analysis approach to understanding and resolving conflict and the successful incorporation of stakeholders in CBRM practices.

**Organization of the Project**

In Chapter One, I detailed the purpose of this master’s project, provided background information on the formation of the case study, and discussed my dual roles in the Trinity Collaborative. Next I will provide an outline of the project.

In Chapter Two, I review literature topics relevant to the project. I begin by describing the sociological definitions of conflict and the sociological functions that conflict brings to society. I then explore the utility of using frame analysis to understand conflict and discuss the importance of reframing. I address several sources of conflict intractability, including how stakeholder identities and stakeholder inclusivity contribute to conflict intractability. In the next section I turn toward a review of public involvement in national forest management. I begin with a history of national forest management and the USFS. I then explore the concept of forest-dependent communities and focus on the impacts of the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP) on forest-dependent communities in the Pacific Northwest. I conclude my review with a discussion on CBRM and concerns regarding public input into federal land management decisions.

In Chapter Three, I present and defend my research approach and methods, specifically my use of an embedded case study design and constant comparative method
(CCM) of data analysis. I go into detail describing the ADR practice of conducting a situation assessment, which I undertook as a facilitator for the Trinity Collaborative. Lastly, I explain the decision-making process behind my case study selection, including some of my personal background and connection to the case study location.

In Chapter Four, I discuss the case study beginning with an introduction and background to Trinity County, California. I then provide a brief history of selected local CBRM efforts in Trinity County. I finish by introducing the Trinity Collaborative, describing the impetus of its formation, my involvement, and some of its short history.

In Chapter Five, I present the situation assessment that I undertook as part of the facilitation team during the initial formation of the Trinity Collaborative. The situation assessment outlines the breadth of issues and concerns, presents an analysis of areas of potential agreement as well as areas of interest divergence, and provides recommendations for moving forward.

In Chapter Six, I apply the concepts of stakeholder identity and stakeholder inclusivity on conflict intractability to the case study of the Trinity Collaborative. I finish by returning to a discussion of the sources of intractability in relation to national forest management in Trinity County. I attend to the sources that had moved toward tractability before the formation of the Trinity Collaborative, sources that the Trinity Collaborative has addressed, and sources of intractability that continue to challenge the Trinity Collaborative.
A Sociological Examination of Conflict and Frame Analysis

Definitions of conflict

The New Oxford American Dictionary defines conflict as “a serious disagreement or argument, typically a protracted one,” with a sub-definition adding, “an incompatibility between two or more opinions, principles, or interests” (Jewell and Abate 2001: 360). These definitions highlight important characteristics of conflict. First, that conflict occurs between stakeholders (whether individuals or organizations) because of differences or incompatibility among the stakeholders. Second, defining conflict as protracted is important because it helps to distinguish conflict from a dispute episode. Conflict is a process that is created through actions, dispute episodes, that stakeholders engage in. Lewicki et al. also highlight the importance of separating conflict from a dispute stating that a “dispute is an episode that becomes actualized in specific issues and events” while “[conflict] refers to the fundamental and underlying incompatibilities that divide parties” (2003: 37); such as stakeholders’ identities, issues, or the decision-making system. The terms fundamental and underlying further qualify the sources of conflict as deeply rooted, which assists in understanding the persistence or intractability of many conflicts.

In his 1956 book exploring conflict as a sociological concept, Coser defines social conflict as “a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources
in which the aims of the opponents are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals” (8). The term *struggle* supports earlier statements that conflict emerges through actions, and that conflict is often a process of struggle. Furthermore, Coser supports the sources of conflict—opinions, principles, or interests—by claiming that conflict is a process of struggle over status, and/or power, and/or resources, and that stakeholders within this process have desired outcomes.

Lewicki et al. discuss another important characteristic of conflict situations, tractability. They define intractable conflicts as those that are “long standing and elude resolution” (2003: 38). Intractable conflicts differ in their degree of divisiveness, intensity, pervasiveness, and complexity (Lewicki et al. 2003: 38-41). Tractability is best understood as a continuum, rather than two discrete categories, with tractability at one end, intractability at the other, and myriad positions between. A conflict may oscillate between tractability and intractability depending on dispute episodes that take place. The section on conflict and framing will discuss conflict tractability in further detail. In sum, for the purposes of this project, I define conflict as a protracted, interactive process of dispute episodes between stakeholders that emerges due to fundamental incompatibilities over status, power and resources.

*Functions of conflict*

The roles of conflict have been studied by researchers from many of the social sciences including sociology, anthropology, political science, and business. Furthermore, the roles of conflict discussed by academics are not always congruent. For example,
Coser outlines two opposing perspectives on the role that conflict has in society that have been debated among social scientists, one of conflict as a dysfunctional component of society, the other of conflict as necessary and potentially beneficial for society (1956).

First, Coser investigates an argument supporting conflict as a socially destructive phenomenon made by sociologist George A. Lundberg. It begins with the assumption that conflict is a result of the absence of communication. According to Coser, Lundberg argues that “communication is the essence of social process; abstinence from communication is the essence of conflict; therefore conflict is dysfunctional” (Lundberg via Coser 1956: 23). The introduction of abstinence from communication as a characteristic of conflict is antagonistic to the qualities of conflict outlined earlier. Miscommunication can contribute to conflict, but conflict, as a process, requires communication because it is necessarily interactive. If there is complete abstinence from communication there is no interaction through which conflict can become actualized. This is not to disregard that the absence of communication can become a disruptive dispute episode within a conflict, hindering the potential resolution of the conflict, but an absence of communication generally does not constitute an entire conflict process.

Coser continues by evaluating the underlying interests between social scientists who argue that conflict is primarily destructive and social scientists who argue that conflict can prove to be socially beneficial. Coser states that proponents of the dysfunctional role of conflict are interested in conserving institutional structures (1956: 23), and exalt the values of conformity, order and stability. He continues to say that proponents of the socially beneficial roles of conflict are concerned with progressive
institutional change (1956: 23), and view “conflict and cooperation” as “phases of the same process” (1956: 18). The valuing of conservation or progression often indicates fundamental philosophical affiliations. The attributes and functions of conflict may be argued, but the fact remains that conflict is a universal social phenomenon (Spradley & McCurdy 2003: 301). Conflict is present in every society and is an important part of understanding human behavior, including the functions of “conflict [a]s a form of socialization” and “conflict [a]s an essential element in group formation and the persistence of group life” (Coser 1956: 31). Conflict, it would seem, is not a stage in human progression that will one day be overcome, but an inherent quality of human culture and society.

I generally follow in the tradition of social scientists, such as Coser, who support the claim of conflict as a “fundamental and constructive part of social organization” (1956: 18), and that conflict and cooperation work together to promote social progress. Which leads to the question: Why does conflict not always operate in this manner? Abundant historic examples provide evidence that conflict can be expressed in extremely dysfunctional manners, void of any degree of social benefit. It is important to question why conflict may present itself either as social dysfunction or as social change. Whether conflict promotes dysfunction or progression has to do with the conflict management processes used to address the conflict. Therefore, another aspect of the functions of conflict is the focus on the conflict management and resolution process itself, specifically how the process is structured. In their 2010 book, Ball, Caldwell, and Pranis discuss political participation and participatory planning, they argue that “within conflict and
turbulence are enormous opportunities” (2010: 17). The processes through which conflict is addressed and resolved are pivotal in shaping conflict outcomes toward positive social change or continued social dysfunction. This indicates the importance of understanding how conflict resolution processes can contribute to positive social change.

Conflict framing and reframing

Frame analysis is used as a method of understanding conflict and informing methods of conflict resolution (Dewulf, Gray, Putnam, Lewicki, Aarts, Bouwen and van Woerkum 2009; Lewicki et al. 2003; Putnam and Holmer 1999; Rogan 2006; Shmueli, Elliott and Kaufman 2006). Stakeholders use frames as interpretive lenses and as strategic tools (Shmueli et al. 2006). When applied to conflict, stakeholders use frames as interpretive lenses to make sense of why the conflict is occurring, similar to the process of naming, blaming, and claiming outlined in Putnam and Holmer’s issue development framing perspective (1999: 138). Stakeholders use frames as strategic tools to both rationalize and promote their perspective of a situation (Shmueli et al. 2009: 208). Frame analysis is a key component to conflict resolution because it provides explanations of conflict and others’ behavior, and can influence conflict aspects such as cooperative-competitive orientations, expectations for an outcome, and appropriate conflict resolution modes (Putnam and Holmer 1999: 129).

Frame analysis demonstrates that framing often plays a role in conflict creation and maintenance (Dewulf et al. 2009; Lewicki et al. 2003). For example, Dewulf et al. state that framing is salient to conflict research because “conflicts are associated with
differences in disputants’ frames about the issue, what is important and how to respond to problems” (2009: 156). Putnam and Holmer state that framing contributes to intractability in three instances: 1) when stakeholders use different types of frames, 2) when stakeholders have different content for the same frame, and 3) when inferences are made at different levels of abstraction. These discrepancies lead to ambiguity and can cause conflict (1999: 136). Furthermore, Lewicki et al. outline five roles that frames play in conflict “creation, evolution, and perpetuation” (2003: 15): 1) frames define what the issues of a problem or conflict are, 2) frames shape what type of actions are available for resolving a conflict, 3) frames are used to protect oneself, 4) frames are used as a platform for asserting ‘rights’, and 5) frames are strategic tools used to further reinforce self-justification of particular actions and promote and spur specific actions in others (2003: 15-19). Evidence shows that differences in stakeholders’ framing can promote conflict intractability. It also shows that frame analysis—understanding stakeholders’ use of frames in conflict—can help mediators understand and manage conflict intractability, and the process of reframing can help mediators and stakeholders promote tractability (Lewicki et al. 2003; Shmueli et al. 2006). In other words, the relationship between framing and intractability is reflexive. Framing contributes to and can signal the development of both tractability and intractability.

Reframing occurs when stakeholders change their frames. Stakeholders shift or unfreeze past interpretations or understandings of an issue or other stakeholders. Reframing takes place when stakeholders’ frames are challenged, when new information is presented, or when different metaphors or analogies are used (Putnam and Holmer
1999: 140). Reframing requires stakeholders to engage in perspective taking, meaning stakeholders must be willing to admit their perspective is not the only valid perspective, or meaning, and stakeholders must be open to investigating other stakeholders’ perspectives. If stakeholders’ frames shift toward mutual alignment, then a conflict can also shift toward tractability and resolution (Lewicki et al. 2003: 32; Putnam and Holmer 1999: 140). Reframing often requires a neutral or outside party, such as a facilitator, to help adversarial stakeholders engage in perspective taking (Lewicki et al. 2003: 32).

There are several specific techniques for reframing, including moving from specific interests and goals to more general ones, breaking issues down into smaller parts, and shifting from position-based concerns to interest-based concerns (Lewicki et al. 2003: 34).

There are numerous frame categories discussed in ADR literature (Lewicki et al. 2003; Putnam and Holmer 1999; Rogan 2006; Shmueli et al. 2006). A few examples of frame categories used are: identity and characterization frames, conflict management frames, and gain/loss frames. This project attends specifically to identity frames. Identity frames are how stakeholders present themselves to others and can include demographics, social memberships and personal philosophies (Lewicki et al. 2003: 21). Characterization frames refer to how stakeholders understand other stakeholders’ identities. Conflict management frames represent stakeholders’ preferences for how a conflict should be addressed such as joint problem solving, adjudication, or violence. Gain/loss frames, prevalent in natural resource disputes, highlight how stakeholders
create a reference point in which they judge other stakeholders’ actions as a gain or loss for themselves (Lewicki et al. 2003).

Frame analysis in ADR is used for two primary purposes, first, to create an understanding of the conflict, such as a situation assessment1, and second, to assist ADR practitioners in facilitating conflict resolution. Conflict resolution facilitators often conduct a situation assessment of the conflict context and use that knowledge and their skills to aid the stakeholders in reframing the conflict to increase conflict tractability and the chances of a successful resolution (Lewicki et al. 2003).

Six sources of conflict intractability

Lewicki et al. define intractability as a fluid concept that applies to the divergence of stakeholder opinions regarding conflict issues and conflict resolution; further defining intractable conflicts as ones “that are long-standing and elude resolution” (2003: 38). Intractability should be thought of as a continuum with conflict moving back and forth along the tractability spectrum throughout various dispute episodes (2003: 37). The tractability continuum shifts by degrees from implementing problem-solving techniques, reaching common ground, and achieving resolution toward intractability where relationships are antagonistic, decision-making techniques promote win/lose situations, and resolution appears elusive (Lewicki et al. 2003: 39). The intractability sources discussed can contribute to tractability or intractability, depending on both the

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1 ADR literature uses various terms for this concept, including conflict assessment, conflict analysis, situation analysis, issues analysis, and issues assessment. For this project I use the term situation assessment.
stakeholders’ actions and how conflict decision making is facilitated. Often, when perceptions regarding conflict sources among stakeholders differ, this tends to exacerbate, or push conflict toward intractability. When perceptions regarding these sources can be aligned, this tends to push conflict closer toward tractability and therefore resolution (Coser 1956; Lewicki, et al. 2003: 36; Spradley and McCurdy 2003).

There are several primary sources that contribute to conflict intractability: 1) value and moral based issues; 2) organization of the social system the conflict is seated within; 3) destructive conflict cycles; 4) conflict management frames; 5) stakeholder identity and characterization frames; and 6) stakeholder inclusivity (Coser 1956; Lewicki et al. 2003; Spradley & McCurdy 2003). I will describe each of the sources’ influence on conflict intractability, attending specifically to stakeholder identity and stakeholder inclusivity.

*Systems of Values and Morals*

A value system is made up of the cultural knowledge of what is desirable. As there are many cultures, there are also many value systems (Spradley and McCurdy 2003: 301). When issues regarding value systems surface, they are often judged morally, meaning other stakeholders assign a moral judgment of good or bad to the value system. When this happens, the conflict becomes centered on the morality, or correctness, of the value system. Differing value or moral systems promote conflict intractability because they shift focus from the interests and needs to a defense of the morality of the value system (Lewicki et al. 2003: 46).
For example, conflict often arises when a stakeholder behaves in nonconformity to the dominant value system in place. Conflict can arise when stakeholders adhere to different value systems, or exalt values differentially (Lewicki et al. 2003: 43; Spradley and McCurdy 2003: 301). Stakeholders often blame other stakeholders’ actions as causing the conflict rather than acknowledging the value differences stakeholders have which drive the conflict. The actions and behaviors of the stakeholders are often seen as causing the conflict while the root values that drive actions and behaviors are left implicit and not addressed. In many cases the nonconforming behavior is regarded as the basis of the conflict and the proposed resolution is to discontinue the behavior.

In addition, there are two types of conflicts relating to values, dissensual and consensual. In dissensual conflicts, stakeholders do not agree on the values ascribed to. In consensual conflicts, stakeholders agree on the values, but disagree on the allocation of values to achieve resolution. (Lewicki et al. 2003: 46). I will provide an example to illustrate the difference. Imagine there is a sum of money to be spent on a specific plot of forest, but stakeholders cannot agree how to use the money. If the stakeholders cannot agree on how the plot should be managed—fire resilience, timber production, ecological restoration, public recreation—then the stakeholders do not agree on the values ascribed to, making it a dissensual conflict. If the stakeholders agree that the plot should be managed for fire resilience, but cannot agree on how that management should be done—controlled burning, thinning, shaded fuel breaks—then the stakeholders do not agree on the allocation of the values in achieving fire resilience, making it a consensual conflict.
Disagreement over the value system is often at the root of a conflict and must be adequately addressed for genuine progress toward tractability and resolution to take place. This is extremely difficult due to conflict overlays: the intersection of values rooted in such aspects of society as economics, religion, and social equity which guide stakeholders’ behaviors (Lewicki et al. 2003: 46).

*Organization of the Social System*

The social system that handles conflict is known by the social sciences as the legal system, with laws being the “cultural knowledge that people use to settle disputes by means of agents who have the recognized authority to do so” (Spradley and McCurdy 2003: 301). Social control frames are stakeholders’ ideas about how social decisions should be made and include two dimensions: the degree of stakeholder interdependency and the degree of ownership over the decision (Lewicki et al. 2003:28). The type of social or legal system in place often dictates what resolution methods are available and legitimate to use in addressing a given conflict.

Furthermore, ambiguous or overprescribed social systems can contribute to conflict intractability (Lewicki et al. 2003: 48-49). An example of an overprescribed social system is a homeowner’s association (HOA). HOAs have been criticized for constraining owners’ autonomy and self-determination of their private property on issues such as landscaping, fences, and even house-paint colors.
**Destructive Conflict Cycles**

Destructive conflict cycles, if not broken, promote intractability. Conflict escalation grows with time as “stakes become higher and the moral commitments become deeper” (Lewicki et al. 2003: 50). Conflicts can escalate and spiral into destructive processes where interest-based concerns are forgotten, and the aims of the stakeholders, as Coser notes, “are to neutralize, injure or eliminate their rivals” (1956: 8). The basis of the conflict becomes lost as stakeholders direct their efforts to tearing each other down. This often manifests in attempts to delegitimize opposing stakeholders in the eyes of the remaining stakeholders, the community, and those with decision-making authority.

**Conflict Management Frames**

Conflict management frames can both indicate and contribute to conflict intractability. Examples of conflict management frames include avoidance, joint problem solving, adjudication, expert-authority decision, and sabotage (Lewicki et al. 2003: 25-27). Disagreement over the appropriate methods for addressing and resolving conflict can hinder conflict tractability. Often stakeholders promote specific conflict management methods that they believe will serve their interests over other stakeholders’ interests.

For example, a married couple with children going through a divorce may have different ideas about which conflict management method will best serve their interests. A father may promote the use of a family mediator to facilitate custody issues because he believes mediation will facilitate equal custody rights, where a mother may prefer to go through a court system because of the history of courts awarding custody rights to the
mother. In this example, different frames on how a conflict should be resolved, through joint problem solving or adjudication, promote intractability of the conflict because neither stakeholder can agree to the conflict management process.

Conflict management frames of avoidance, adjudication, and sabotage often lead to escalating dispute episodes and signal protracted conflict intractability (Lewicki et al. 2003: 54-55). Adjudication and sabotage are particularly destructive because they create an antagonistic relationship between stakeholders, promote distrust, and create win/lose scenarios. They are also more likely to be used in conflict situations where distrust and antagonistic relationships already exist, creating a negative feedback loop and promoting further destructive conflict cycles. Furthermore, adjudication can also often lead to dissatisfactory outcomes for the stakeholder promoting that method of conflict resolution. Adjudication is often used as a stop-gap to prevent or promote a specific action rather than address possibilities of resolving conflict. Therefore, a stakeholder group may win a ruling through adjudication but may still be left with an unresolved conflict.

**Stakeholder Identity**

Stakeholders’ identities are how they see themselves, the social groups they are a part of, and the categories they identify with. Beyond demographic characteristics there are four other common categories that inform identity: 1) location or place, 2) community or occupational roles, 3) affiliations with institutions, and 4) personal interests. Identity is also constructed through comparison to other people and groups, often highlighting the differences between them. Conflict can both threaten stakeholders’ identities and
challenge the legitimacy of how they have defined themselves (Lewicki et al. 2003: 21-23).

Stakeholders’ identities are intimately linked to their ideology. Ideology is a system of political, social and cultural ideas, values, and behavioral prescriptions at the super-individual or societal level that guide and legitimize beliefs, behaviors, and actions (Van Dijk 1998: 3). Ideological stances often lend credibility to stakeholder’s identity-based claims because shared ideology creates shared identity among stakeholders in a stakeholder group. Essentially, stakeholders use shared ideology to lend support to and legitimize their actions. In addition, Coser argues that ideological-based stances spur conflict intensity because stakeholders see themselves as representatives of a social ideology and justify their actions as self-righteous and unselfish (1956: 112).

Furthermore, stakeholders make characterizations about the other stakeholders involved in a conflict. Often the negative or positive determinations rely on the group identity of the other stakeholder. Identity-based and ideology-based disputes should be addressed before conflict issues because they tend to promote antagonistic, position-based, win/lose conflict resolution frames rather than mutually beneficial, joint fact-finding, interest-based modes of conflict resolution (Lewicki et al. 2003).

**Stakeholder Inclusivity**

Collaborative decision making is not usually a quick and easy process. Excluding stakeholders often gives those who are at the table the impression that all the stakeholders are in agreement, that implementing decisions will be easy, and that the group is
resolving conflicts. Decisions made without the inclusion of all stakeholders often break down as soon as the larger public is notified of the intent to implement the decision. At this point it is difficult to gain buy-in from stakeholders who were excluded from the process at the beginning, and they often become active opponents to the decisions (Susskind and Thomas-Larmer 1999: 105). The purposeful or accidental exclusion of stakeholders in the decision-making process usually results in contestation of a decision and promotes conflict intractability (Susskind 1999: 38; Susskind and Thomas-Larmer 1999: 105). Problems implementing a decision arise when stakeholders who were excluded are expected to buy in or assist with the implementation of the decision that was made without their input.

For example, a city council has been advised that public safety has been identified as an issue in a specific community in their city. The city council members, wanting to show that they are responsive to citizen needs, have several discussions with city planners and decide that a new police station should be built to address the public safety concerns. A public notice is circulated noting the council’s decision to build a new police station. Immediately residents from the community start protesting the police station, and attacking the city council as not having addressed their community’s needs. The city council members do not understand the negative reaction or accusations. Why was their well-meaning decision attacked? The answer lies in the unintentional exclusion of stakeholders, in this case community members with local knowledge, in discussions over how to best address public safety. Once the city council invited the community to discuss public safety, the city council learned that the public safety issues concerned fire risk and
that the community wanted to see a fire station built. Because the community was not involved in the decision making process, their interest-based concerns were not introduced and the city council’s decision met with resistance.

It may be easy to see diversity as a cause of intractability, but it is how diversity is handled which contributes to the intractability of a conflict. Respecting the diversity of stakeholders in a conflict, and purposefully attending to inclusion rather than exclusion, lends to conflict tractability, credibility of the decision-making process, and bolsters decision implementation (Moore and Woodrow 1999: 624; Potapchuk and Crocker 1999: 534; Straus 1999: 147, 306-307). Promoting stakeholder diversity in collaborative decision-making highlights needs and concerns that may prove to be key contributions in promoting conflict tractability and resolution, aspects that would otherwise go unmentioned in the absence of stakeholder diversity. Understanding the reflexive relationship between framing, reframing, and intractability in conflict resolution and decision making aids both ADR practitioners and stakeholders alike in promoting conflict tractability and mutually beneficial decision outcomes. Now that I have provided a review of the theoretical components of ADR’s frame analysis on conflict intractability and resolution, I will turn toward a discussion of community involvement in natural resource management.
Community Involvement in National Forest Management

National forest management history

The creation of forest reserves beginning with the 1891 Forest Reserve Act and subsequent 1905 management transfer to the USFS converted millions of acres of forests from private use and sale to a public resource (Hays 2009: 1). The designation change from private asset to public resource established a history of managing these forests for public purposes amidst private use claims (Hays 2009: 1). For many decades the, USFS management of national forests focused on livestock grazing and the development of timber production (Thomas, Franklin, Gordon, and Johnson 2006: 279), including a legacy of fire-suppression (Hays 2009: 9). This narrow focus spurred many public interest groups to promote a wider focus of management objectives, including wildlife enhancement and public enjoyment. By the 1930s the USFS responded by creating the Division of Wildlife and the National Park Service, but national forests were still primarily managed for timber production. The 1960s saw a shift with the passage of the Multiple-Use and Sustained-Yield Act of 1960, which legitimized multiple uses of national forests and placed demands on the USFS that they would manage for these different use expectations such as recreation, hunting, and aesthetics (Hays 2009: 14, 55-56). In 1964 the Wilderness Act was passed, setting apart millions of acres of wilderness areas, many to be managed by the USFS (Hays 2009: 87).

In addition, in the latter part of the twentieth century, national forest objectives expanded beyond management of resources seen as useful for human consumption, to
management for biodiversity and overall ecosystem health (Moote 2008: 244). Managing for threatened and endangered species and ecological sustainability were solidified with the passage of the 1973 Endangered Species Act (ESA) and the 1976 National Forest Management Act (NFMA) (Hays 2009: 13-14, 112-113; National Forest Foundation 2013). In addition, in the 1960s and 1970s an ecological perspective of forest management was gaining traction with both scientists and citizens (Hays 2009).

The USFS had difficulty adjusting to the broadened management focus as Hays outlined in his 2009 book on the history of the agency: “The [USFS] had confined itself to a narrow slice of the forest biological world and now it was unprepared to consider . . . the ecological world evolving around it” (2009: 108). Not only were the traditional management objectives of the USFS being transformed, the traditional role of the forestry professional was shifting (Haynes and Grinspoon 2006: 59). As forest management objectives changed and broadened beyond timber production, the culture of the agency also changed, as expert “–ologists” from various disciplines began filling specialist positions within the agency (Hays 2009). USFS capacity was also constrained by an increased workload, a decreased workforce and gaps in the workforce skills necessary to accomplish ecosystem-based management. The agency faced continued budgetary reductions—including massive budgetary shifts to emergency fire suppression (Charnley et al. 2008a; Thomas et al. 2006). The 1980s and 1990s were decades mired in conflict, largely due to the tension between the USFS’ historic vision of silviculture-focused management and the new focus on ecosystem management. In addition, public interest groups used the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the ESA, and the
NFMA to ensure that the USFS was following ecological mandates and environmental laws. These lawsuits led to declines in timber harvesting. Decline in the timber industry coupled with increased concern over timber harvesting practices and protection of old-growth forests in national forests further prompted both regional and localized conflicts (Charnley, McLain, and Donohue 2008a: 746; Hays 2009; Moote 2008). The USFS as an agency has followed a difficult path as its traditional forestry management paradigm has shifted from timber production to ecosystem health, and it has encountered reduced capacity while facing increasingly complex ecosystem management objectives (Charnley, Donoghue, Stuart, Dillingham, Buttolph, Kay, McLain, Moseley, Phillips, and Tobe 2006a).

The Pacific Northwest could be considered an epicenter of national forest management gridlock in the 1990s as environmental groups sued the USFS over projects that were impacting the Northern Spotted Owl’s territory. These lawsuits often led to stalled timber harvestings and spurred regional and local conflicts over national forest management and timber harvesting (Charnley et al. 2008a; Hays 2009). This gridlock led to the creation of the Northwest Forest Plan (NWFP). The NWFP was a shift toward ecosystem management at the watershed level. The plan was implemented to protect biological diversity through old growth and aquatic conservation (Charnley 2008: 55; Hays 2009: 117). The NWFP has had negative impacts on many communities, largely in connection to the 90 percent decrease in timber harvests, which presented a sudden and dramatic change for the Pacific Northwest region (Danks 2008: 188). These impacts were not always felt evenly across communities. Some rebounded easily while others
continue to struggle under the NWFP and decreased federal timber sales (Charnley et al. 2006a: 15; Danks 2008: 188).

**Forest-dependent communities and the northwest forest plan**

The epitomized picture of rural America focuses on America’s agricultural heritage and rural farming lifestyles. A less frequently portrayed aspect of rural America is forest-dependent communities. Both agricultural and forest-dependent communities confront the challenges that face rural America, including high percentages of unemployment and poverty, lack of infrastructure and telecommunications, and the inability to attract and maintain a skilled workforce and industries (Drabenstott 1999).

Many forest-dependent communities confront a set of challenges distinct from agricultural communities as a result of land tenure. Rural agricultural communities struggle with the tension between small-scale family farmers and larger industrial operations. Theirs is a challenge of operation and production costs, and market competition (Drabenscott 1999; Kusel 1996). Forest-dependent communities face two interrelated land tenure challenges. First, the tension between private industrial forests and public forest lands produces similar market challenges in terms of operation and production costs, and market competition. Second are the social, economic, and ecological impacts felt by forest-dependent communities as a result of public ownership and federal management of surrounding forests.

It is understandable that public ownership and federal management of a natural resource would have impacts on the local communities, but what makes a community
forest-dependent and what does that really mean? Until the late 1980s, the term forest-based community was used to depict the relationship between community stability and sustained-yield timber harvests. The USFS follows an economics-based description by defining a forest-dependent community as one where timber products comprise at least 10 percent of employment and where local wood processing industries use at least 50 percent federal timber (Charnley et al. 2008a: 747). At the onset of the 1990s definitions of the traditional forest-based community followed regional and national trends (Moseley and Reyes 2008). Conceptions of community stability broadened to encompass other indicators of community well-being beyond economics. Essentially the term community stability broadened to community resiliency. In addition, forest-dependence, initially defined in terms of timber production, expanded to include cultural and lifestyle connections (Charnley, Donoghue, Stuart, Dillingham, Buttolph, Kay, McLain, Moseley, Phillips, and Tobe 2006b: 28; Kusel 1996: 363; Moseley and Reyes 2008: 328).

Furthermore, Charnley, Donohue, and Moseley indicate there is a spatial component to the impacts national forest management has on forest-dependent communities. Citing the impacts of the NWFP on communities in the Pacific Northwest, they discuss the increase in negative impacts on communities within a five mile radius of a national forest. In their analysis, communities outside this radius show diminished social, economic and cultural connections to forests (2008b: 442). For the purposes of this project, I define a forest-dependent community as the following: a community in close proximity to national forest land with a history of dependency on forest products for
its livelihood and continuing economic and social relationships between the community and the forest landscape.

Forest-dependent communities located near or surrounded by public lands are strongly affected by the federal government’s laws, mandates, regulations and management decisions for forestlands and resources. This centralized authority has myriad impacts on local communities’ economic opportunities, availability of a tax base for local infrastructure and public services, and public access to and use of natural resources (Cleckley 1997; Medley Daniel 2011). Forest-dependent economies are particularly sensitive to national forest management. Historically, in lieu of tax revenues based on national forest land acreage, county governments received 25 percent of the revenue from national forest timber sales (Charnley et al. 2008b: 443; Thomas 2003: 156). When federal timber sales plummet, or cease, so do county funds for public services. To counteract decreasing federal timber sales after national forest policies shifted toward ecosystem management in the 1990s, the Secure Rural Schools and Community Self-Determination Act (SRSCSA) was passed in 2000. The law initially stabilized federal funding to communities with national forestlands in proportion to the peak harvest returns of the 1980s. However, today while forest-dependent economies still struggle, the annually reauthorized SRSCSA is on a specific timeline of decreasing payments (Charnley et al. 2008b: 443; Medley Daniel 2011: 1). Additional economic uncertainty, following decreased federal timber sales, spills over into the entire economic system of forest-dependent communities, resulting in a negative economic spiral. Local public services become underfunded and supporting industries such as local lumber mills
and timber products manufacturers struggle to maintain productivity, causing local unemployment and poverty to increase and threatening overall community viability.

Many communities in the Pacific Northwest were established around areas of timber production, and for many of these communities timber production is still the foundation of the economy, especially for communities surrounded by national forests (Charnley et al. 2008a: 743; Moseley and Reyes 2008: 328). In the 1990s changing forest management values, the listing of the Northern Spotted Owl as a protected species, and continued litigation between public interest groups and the USFS all but halted federal timber sales on national forests in the Pacific Northwest (Danks 2008: 188). The region became a veritable battleground between the USFS and the public regarding how national forest management should balance environmental protection and timber harvesting. At the community scale, battles between the USFS and forest-dependent communities flared regarding the future well-being of those communities. Conflicts among community members also surged as residents sided along pro-environment and pro-timber industry lines in a debate that pitted environmental regulation and endangered species against jobs and community well-being, a time period referred to as the timber wars (DellaSala and Williams 2006: 274; Danks 2008: 188; Haynes and Grinspoon 2006: 75, 78; Lewicki et al. 2003: 63).

The Quincy Library Group (QLG) provides a good example of a CBRM group’s efforts to address conflict stemming from the timber wars and how the actions of external groups had a unifying effect on local stakeholders. Residents of Plumas County, like in many conflicts in the West, initially took up positions aligning themselves as either pro-
timber or pro-environment supporters. Amidst failed appeals regarding the USFS’ Plumas Forest Plan and continued reductions in timber harvests, the QLG was formed in 1992 by a county supervisor, a forester, and a local environmental advocate (Lewicki et al. 2003: 63-64). A member of the QLG group suggested that local stakeholders were able to come together because, “environmentalists and loggers had a common love of the forest and a common foe in the Forest Service” (Lewicki et al. 2003: 71). The impetus behind the formation of the QLG was to create an alternative forest plan to present to the USFS that had the support of the community. They started with an alternative plan developed by a local environmental group with the assistance of national environmental organizations. The QLG was able to develop a five-year plan describing future desired conditions for over 2.5 million acres of national forest that they could all agree upon, but after stalled implementation on the side of the USFS, the QLG partnered with a congressman in order to pass the Forest Plan as a bill, H.R. 858 The Quincy Library Group Forest Recovery and Economic Stability Act of 1997 (Lewicki et al. 2003: 74, 77). At this point, national environmental groups began a massive negative campaign against the Bill even though many of their local chapter representatives had contributed to the Forest Plan the Bill was based on (Lewicki et al. 2003: 77).

This case highlights the impacts that external groups, in this case the USFS and national environmental organizations, can have on local CBRM processes. On one side, frustrations with the USFS broke down hard-line stakeholder identities, creating enough community cohesion to allow for the QLG to form. On the other side, national environmental organizations blocked the decision outcomes of the QLG, framing the plan
as “local control” over public lands (Lewicki et al. 2003: 75). This case is an example of the impacts the Northern Spotted Owl and the timber wars had on much of the West. Regions that fell under the NWFP, a plan created to move beyond the timber wars gridlock, were further impacted with the plan’s passage.

The NWFP is an interagency and multidisciplinary ecosystem management plan created in response to the Pacific Northwest’s regional conflict regarding the endangered Northern Spotted Owl, timber harvesting, and federal agency compliance with the ESA, and NFMA, and NEPA (Danks 2008: 188; Sturtevant and Donoghue 2008: 28; Thomas et al. 2006). The aims of the NWFP were to protect old growth habitats and endangered species while helping forest-dependent communities affected by the reduction in federal timber sales adapt and diversify their economies (Charnley 2008: 55). Reduced workforce and budgets limited federal agencies’ ability to achieve NWFP goals (Charnley et al. 2006a: 14; Thomas et al. 2006: 284). More than three thousand national forest jobs were lost between 1993 and 2002, leading to a consolidation of field offices, office closures in some communities, and a loss of line officers (Charnley et al. 2006a: 14). The loss of USFS personnel negatively impacted community capacity (Charnley et al. 2008a: 759; Charnley et al. 2008b: 446; Haynes and Grinspoon 2006: 64). In addition to job loss, the USFS budget declined by 35 percent between 1993 and 2003, largely attributable to reduced federal timber sales, which meant limited agency spending for non-fuels-related forest management (Charnley et al. 2006a: 14). This resulted in the USFS becoming reactive, specifically in relation to fuels reduction work, focusing instead on fire suppression activities (Charnley et al. 2006a). The difficulties the USFS
has faced in implementing the NWFP is an example of the capacity constraints the agency faces and the difficulty the agency has had in shifting objectives from timber production to ecosystem management (Thomas et al. 2006: 286).

The NWFP has had different impacts on forest-dependent communities across the Pacific Northwest. These were not felt evenly across communities. Some rebounded easily while others continue to struggle under the NWFP and decreased federal timber sales (Charnley et al. 2006a: 15; Danks 2008: 188). Communities that felt impacts most were those whose economies depended on timber, specifically federal timber sales in the 1980s, were located within five miles of a national forest, and whose residents relied on the USFS for jobs (Charnley et al. 2008b: 441-442). Negative impacts on forest-dependent communities included a decrease in socioeconomic prosperity, curtailed economic and employment opportunities—including the loss of thirty thousand jobs in the region (Charnley et al. 2006a: 13), an outmigration of skilled workers, a decrease in timber industry wages, an unsteady timber supply, and blaming and finger-pointing among local residents (Danks 2008: 188; Charnley et al. 2008a: 747; Charnley et al. 2008b: 441; Thomas et al. 2006: 284). At the community level, the finger-pointing and blaming that rose out of the NWFP exacerbated existing forest conflicts.

For many forest-dependent communities, the NWFP increased conflict—something the plan was meant to mitigate. Rural residents of forest-dependent communities felt that their values and access to resources were not protected, while the forest values urban constituents held were protected (Haynes and Grinspoon 2006: 64). Communities also felt the regional focus of the NWFP decreased local control in decision
making processes (Haynes and Grinspoon 2006: 63-64). Feelings over lack of protection of their values and loss of control, coupled with negative impacts on community well-being and community capacity, fueled polarization within communities (Danks 2208: 188). Polarization in turn invigorated the argument that environmental regulation, and jobs and community well-being were antithetical (Haynes and Grinspoon 2006). Out of the tensions, collaborative-based forest management (CBFM) emerged as an approach to address national forest conflicts and the role public input might play in national forest management decisions.

Collaborative-based forest management

Some proponents of collaboration have strict interpretations of what forms collaboration can encompass, recognizing only partnerships, advisory councils, and co-management agreements as being truly collaborative. Still others suggest that collaboration also requires stakeholders to engage in shared decisionmaking and implementation of those decisions (Moote 2008: 248-249). Wondolleck and Yaffee (2000) discuss the primary characteristics of collaboration in natural resource management as being voluntary, face-to-face cooperation among two or more stakeholders working interdependently to solve an issue or achieve a goal that neither stakeholder can achieve alone. In addition, they note that collaboration in natural resource management is usually place-based and can encompass diverse arrangements or relationships (Wondolleck and Yaffee 2000: xii, 4). Social capital is an important aspect that facilitates collaboration and comanagement between stakeholders. Social capital,
which Danks defines as the “trust, norms and networks that support cooperation” (2000: 7) facilitates co-management among stakeholders bridging the public-government divide.

CBRM is rooted in participatory governance, adaptive management, international development, and ADR (Moote 2008: 247-248). CBRM approaches have gained traction in the United States due to several factors including increasing awareness of the high costs of conflict impasse on the environment and communities, and increased distrust of government agencies’ ability to address resource issues and respond to community needs (Moote 2008: 245; Wondolleck and Yaffee 2000). CBFM is a specific application of CBRM to forest ecosystems. Danks (2008) describes CBFM as “an approach to achieving the dual goals of ecological health and socioeconomic well-being by incorporating local communities into sustainable forest management” (186). Moote (2008) differentiates between CBFM and community-based forestry; she argues that CBFM groups do not necessarily include local community stakeholders, while community-based forestry may not include broader interests (245-246). Moote also notes the expectations that CBFM groups establish a participatory process, create shared knowledge, encourage local empowerment, and resolve conflict (2008: 249). CBFM has increased in response to the declining timber industry and the shift toward ecological forest management, and like CBRM attempts to move beyond conflict impasse and build trust between agencies and communities (Danks 2008: Moote 2008: 245). CBFM groups often require an outside party to help the group negotiate contentious issues and maintain an environment that promotes consensus decision making. A facilitator is a neutral person who enables groups to work effectively by encouraging stakeholders to engage in
their best thinking in order to address the substantive issues (Kaner, Lind, Toldi, Fisk, and Berger 1996: xi, 32; Poirier Elliott 1999: 207; Susskind 1999: 7). The facilitator has multiple roles in the CBFM process, including encouraging full participation and representation of stakeholders, promoting shared learning and mutual understanding, creating a space for problem solving by fostering a win/win mentality, and structuring collaborative processes in an effective manner (Kaner et al. 1996; Poirier Elliott 1999). Groups that face difficult challenges, such as multidimensional conflicts, are likely to benefit from facilitation that enables the group to make inclusive, lasting, consensus-based decisions (Kaner et al. 1996: 32). Many CBFM groups have experienced success in reducing conflict and achieving results that would not have been attainable without the collaborative effort. Other CBFM groups have lamented the length of time, sometimes years, it can take before agreement on objectives or project implementation can be achieved (Moote 2008: 250). Finally some CBFM groups have failed due to overreaching geographic capacity, or stakeholders’ decision that their best alternative to a negotiated agreement (BATNA) is more desirable than a negotiated agreement (McKearnan and Fairman 1999: 366; Moote 2008: 250-251). CBFM proponents seek forest management arrangements that include communities in the decision making and implementation of forest management (Danks 2008: 185).

Historically, national forest management decisions were made in top-down fashion within centralized government agencies, which left place-based communities little opportunity to participate in the decision-making process (Wondolleck and Yaffee 2000: 11). NEPA was the first legislation passed that required agencies to allow for
public input into their decision-making process (Hays: 2009: 124, 127; Leach 2006: 43; Moote 2008: 246; Steelman and Ascher 1997: 1). Since then, federal agencies have struggled with public input mandates, uncertain as to what they are required to do with the information gathered and how they are supposed to weigh public interests (Brick et al. 2001: 36; Moote 2008: 246; Wondolleck 1988: 171-175). Public input in USFS decision making is challenged by both ambiguity and over-prescription of social system as a federal agency. How decision makers in the USFS are supposed to interpret and implement public input in their decision making is unclear. In many cases, stakeholders make considerable effort to participate and contribute their input. When decisions are made that do not reflect their input, stakeholders feel like their input was not considered. The ambiguity in the system fails both agency personnel making decisions and public stakeholders. Agency personnel are required to collect public input but are left with no guidance on how to incorporate it into decision making, and public stakeholders lack a clear understanding of the outcomes that can be expected from their contribution. In addition, the short public comment periods and complex requirements to obtain standing in the highly regulated NEPA process have arguably constrained public involvement (Council on Environmental Quality (U.S.) 2007).

The USFS has evolved through various iterations of what public input meant, from defensive ‘listening sessions’ to the USFS as an unbiased arbiter, but history has shown that generating agreement for USFS decisions has been challenging (Leach 2006: 43-44; Steelman and Ascher 1997: 75; Wondolleck 1988: 173). The desired outcome for public input in national forest management is to ensure that decisions are made in a
manner that balances public interests (Wondolleck 1988: 170), yet complaints regarding public input abound. Many people feel that public interest groups are wielding too much power in decision making, and others remained unsatisfied with the decision outcomes agencies promote after public input is provided (Lewicki et al. 2003: 69; Moote 2008: 246; Wondolleck and Yaffee 2000:13).

The 1972 Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) was passed in response to the former concern that public interest groups were having unfair influence in public affairs (Long and Beierle 1999: 3). FACA regulates the roles and relationship that nongovernmental entities can have with federal agencies regarding federal decision making (Brick, Snow, and Van De Wetering 2001: 107; Long and Beierle 1999: ii). National forest management decisions have a history of being divisive, controversial and known to spur mistrust (Hays 2009: 126; Lewicki, Gray and Elliott 2003: 63-89; Wondolleck 1988: 13). The USFS has vigorously defended its decisions against appeals, lawsuits, Congressional actions, and public protests. Often the impacts of these decisions provided little benefit, and even hindered the development and prosperity of local communities (Wondolleck 1988). Furthermore, the physical and psychological gap between rural communities and centralized natural resource management impacts forest-dependent communities’ political voice, resource distribution, and research opportunities (Danks 2000: 3).

Emerging CBFM efforts in the Western United States to address the declining timber industry and shifts toward ecosystem management objectives in the 1990s coincided with shifts in the USFS toward adaptive comanagement models (Danks 2008:
Comanagement means coordination among agency and resource managers and laypeople—including the local citizenry—in managing ecosystems. Adaptive means managing through a cycle of scientifically-based experimental management, incorporating understanding and learning, and a reapplication of improved management principles (Moote 2008: 247).

In the Pacific Northwest, the implementation of the NWFP provided an opportunity to realize new methods of CBFM, including adaptive comanagement principles in lands allocated as adaptive management areas (AMAs). AMAs are land allocations designated under the NWFP as areas where adaptive management could take place that encouraged experimenting with different management approaches to achieve ecological, economic, and social objectives. Ten AMAs were designated under the NWFP, including the 350,000-acre Hayfork AMA in Trinity County. In addition to AMA allocations, lands categorized as Matrix are where a majority of timber harvest and silvicultural activities are conducted (REO 2013b). One of the ways in which the NWFP expected to assuage forest management conflicts was through increased comanagement among agencies and between agencies and local stakeholders. Two institutions were implemented to address agency-local stakeholder collaboration, provincial advisory committees (PACs) and AMAs (Donoghue, Stuart, and Charnley 2006: 1). PACs consisted of representatives of land management and government agencies and a selection of local stakeholders from the specific province as outlined in the NWFP. The purpose of the PAC was to provide a forum for information exchange at the provincial level and to advise successful implementation of the NWFP (REO 2013a). Despite the
NWFP’s attempts at adaptive comanagement, many forest-dependent communities experienced increased local conflicts and a decreased sense of local control in national forest decision-making processes (Haynes and Grinspoon 2006: 63-64). The adaptive comanagement strategies of the NWFP came in a time period when grassroots CBFM groups were emerging throughout the West in response to the NWFP (Lewicki et al. 2003). These emerging grassroots groups held on to the hope that CBFM rooted in the ADR principles of mutual gain, interest-based negotiation, and consensus decision-making could reduce national forest conflicts (Moote 2008).

At the same time as agency-local stakeholder collaboration was strengthening, the federal government was sued for violating FACA over CBFM groups’ involvement in the NWFP. This led federal land management agencies to dissolve ties with many CBFM groups and to impose onerous requirements on CBFM groups that wanted to continue partnerships with federal agencies under FACA requirements (Brick et al. 2001: 107; Long and Beierle 1999). The lawsuit over FACA, which was upheld, highlighted the challenge of legitimacy that CBFM groups hold as representational bodies and decision-making authorities. In other words, CBFM groups that are not elected, or appointed by elected officials, are not considered governance entities and therefore lack authority over public resource decision making (Moote 2008: 253). Concerns pertaining to decision-making authority over public resources are rigid. Federal agencies must address national-level values and interests, and furthermore, FACA requires that CBRM groups meet legal strictures and that the agencies retain the ultimate decision-making authority (Long and Beierle 1999).
In this literature review, I have outlined frame analysis as both a way of understanding conflict intractability and as an ADR approach of moving conflict toward tractability and resolution. I have also discussed the relationship between stakeholder identity and stakeholder inclusivity on conflict intractability. Finally, I have provided a brief history of national forest management and forest-dependent communities, including the impacts that the NWFP has had on the West and the role that public input and CBFM groups play in national forest management. In the next chapter, I outline the research methods utilized for this project, including the use of a situation assessment as an ADR approach to resolving conflict, and the choice behind the case study selection.
CHAPTER THREE
Research Design

Methods

This research utilizes an embedded case study approach (Berg 2009: 318) to analyze the interaction of stakeholder identities and stakeholder inclusivity on conflict intractability in the context of collaborative national forest management in Trinity County. Yin, in Creswell (2007) supports using a case study approach when “you deliberately want to cover contextual conditions—believing that they might be highly pertinent to your phenomenon of study” (Creswell 2007: 76). As further elaborated in my discussion in Chapter Six, the contextual history of national forest management in Trinity County proved to be extremely relevant for the analysis of stakeholder identity and stakeholder inclusivity in the case study.

True to the features of a case study format, data were gathered from multiple sources using multiple methods (Berg 2009; Creswell 2007), including analysis of archival documents and videos, semi-structured interviews, and participant observation of Trinity Collaborative meetings. The analysis method utilized in this project was the constant comparative method (CCM) which uses a grounded theory approach to qualitative analysis (Berg 2009: 320; Boeije 2002). Appropriately titled, CCM is focused on comparing data with research questions and ideas; CCM requires researcher interpretation of data in order to categorize and determine relations between concepts (Berg 2009: 320). CCM is iterative in that new data and insights are compared to and
build off of the insights from old data, a process Boeije calls the “cycle of comparison” (2002: 393).

In addition, I applied CCM to reflexively analyze the dual roles I have encompassed throughout this process. Comparing my roles as facilitator and researcher illuminated how my direct involvement with the Trinity Collaborative, as a facilitator, has increased the theoretical depth of my understanding of the concepts of stakeholder identity and stakeholder inclusivity, and the impacts they have on conflict intractability. My familiarity with the research topic, due to my facilitation role as well as my connection to place, allowed me to question theories of ADR practices and consider alternatives. I believe this more profound connection to my research topic resulted in other beneficial results such as increased awareness of the more nuanced behaviors I observed, and a heightened investment into the research topic and process outcome. The only impediment I encountered as a result of my dual roles as researcher/facilitator was my ability to clearly delineate my roles for the purposes of writing this project. Much of my experience in the facilitator role contributed to my academic insights, and when it came to discussing my researcher role it easily became melded with the research roles I took on as a facilitator. To the best of my ability, I have noted in this project which role I held while accomplishing certain activities.

As of the writing of this project, the Trinity Collaborative has met for ten full-day meetings. I have attended all meetings in my dual roles as meeting facilitator and researcher participant-observer. This has provided me the opportunity to use both the
publicly available collective memory documents and videos from the meetings and my personal notes and reflections of the meetings as additional data to analyze in this project.

True to CCM, I have interpreted and looked for links within the data compiled from the documents, videos, interviews, and personal notes and reflections. Rather than utilizing computer software to accomplish such comparisons, I have relied on handwritten index cards identifying specific categorizations and memos linking data to the ADR concepts of stakeholder identity, stakeholder inclusivity, and conflict intractability.

**Situation Assessment**

Chapter Two of *The Consensus Building Handbook* outlines how to conduct a situation assessment (Susskind and Thomas-Larmer 1999). The objectives of conducting a situation assessment are “to identify stakeholders and key issues, analyze the feasibility of moving forward, and design a work plan for proceeding” (Susskind and Thomas-Larmer 1999: 103). The primary purpose of conducting a situation assessment is to determine whether proceeding with a consensus-building effort is possible and advisable, and how the consensus-building process should be structured (Susskind and Thomas-Larmer 1999: 104). My contribution to the situation assessment was done as a facilitator, but the information gained was essential to my focus on the concepts of stakeholder identity and stakeholder inclusivity as discussed in this project. Susskind and Thomas-Larmer (1999) outline six phases of conducting a situation assessment: 1) introductions,
2) information gathering, 3) analysis, 4) process design, 5) report writing, and 6) report distribution.

The introduction phase consists of the conveners informing the assessor of what is expected from the situation assessment, gathering information about the conflict situation, and preparing for stakeholder interviews. The convening parties of the Trinity Collaborative included the TCRCD, the WRTC, and the TCBOS. A meeting was scheduled with the assessor, in this case the facilitation team, to discuss what was expected from the team. From this meeting it was agreed that the facilitation team would accomplish four things: 1) conduct a situation assessment to be presented to the community during a public forum, 2) determine if proceeding with a consensus-building process was appropriate, and if determined appropriate, 3) assist stakeholders in designing a consensus-building process and finally, 4) facilitate the meetings.

Background information on the conflict situation was provided by the conveners in the form of two white papers developed by a group of Trinity County citizens, which broadly outlined community concerns and focused on specific actionable issues in regard to public lands management and economic development in Trinity County.¹ In addition to reading the white papers, I conducted additional information gathering by reviewing national forest collaborative efforts from the local to the national scale. My review of other collaborative efforts had a two-fold purpose: to compare aspects of stakeholder identity and stakeholder inclusivity, and to provide an important foundation from which to approach and develop the Trinity Collaborative situation assessment and collaborative

¹ See Appendix A: Trinity County White Papers
process. In total I compared ten collaborative efforts; four were Trinity County specific and six were from the Northwest and Southwest regions. In my review, I asked five specific questions: 1) what is the group’s purpose and what issues do they cover, 2) who are the stakeholders, 3) what is their organizational structure and decision-making process, 4) what successes did they have and, 5) what barriers did they encounter? From this data, I created a grid outlining information gained from the five questions asked of each of the collaborative efforts. The grid comparison of collaborative groups assisted both my research and my thinking in the formation and development of an operating structure of the Trinity Collaborative. In addition, I compared the stakeholder categories involved in these collaborative groups in relation to my interview roster to help inform both the interview roster and interview questions.

To prepare for stakeholder interviews, I developed a questionnaire based on recommendations from the *Handbook on Consensus Building* to use in producing a situation assessment (Susskind and Thomas-Larmer 1999: 112-113). It was adapted to the context-specific aspects of Trinity County and natural resource management. Interview participants were identified through a multitiered outreach process. Initial participants were identified based on their past participation in a series of meetings on various issues salient to land management in Trinity County. These potential interview participants were notified by the conveners that a facilitation team would be conducting interviews for a situation assessment. Specific individuals were selected from the aforementioned meetings roster list with additional input from the Trinity County

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3 See Appendix B: Interview Questionnaire
Resource Conservation District, the Hayfork Watershed Research and Training Center, and the Trinity County government. In addition, all initial interview participants were asked during the interview for input on additional interview participants (Carlson 1999: 185). Lastly, once the situation assessment was presented to the community, all community members were invited to request an interview appointment with one of the Trinity Collaborative facilitation team members.

In all, 40 interviews were conducted by the facilitation team. I personally conducted 16 interviews ranging in extent from 20 minutes to over two hours. The majority of interview participants were residents of Trinity County, with the exception of some federal and state agency employees. They represented various aspects of Trinity County, including local industry and economy, environmental advocacy, recreation, government, agriculture, land management and stewardship, fire and public safety, and concerned citizens.

Phase three of the situation assessment protocol as outlined by Susskind and Thomas-Larmer is the analysis phase (1999: 116-119). Analysis of the interviews was accomplished with the assistance of the qualitative analysis computer software program, Atlas.ti. I utilized the fragmenting and connecting approach outlined by Boeije for CCM in which the researcher fragments information by identifying categories from the data and then connects the data fragments to the overarching research question (2002: 394).

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4 The overarching research question for the interviews was to assess the feasibility of moving forward with a collaborative, consensus-building process to address natural resource conflicts in Trinity County.
As per CCM, frame analysis methods, and as outlined in the analysis phase of conducting a situation assessment, I initially interpreted and created stakeholder categories for the interview participants in order to categorize and compare both different stakeholder categories and different interests among and between stakeholder categories (Boeije 2002; Susskind and Thomas-Larmer 1999). It was immediately apparent that the rigidity of stakeholder categories or groups would be problematic in this context. At this point, I deviated from recommendations made by Susskind and Thomas-Larmer to create a Matrix of Stakeholder Issues (1999:117-119). Instead of sorting the issues by stakeholder category, I outlined areas of overlapping interests and opportunities for mutual gain as well as areas of divergence and potential barriers. This choice reflected an understanding of the historical sensitivity surrounding identity-based positions in national forest management conflicts that permeated Trinity County in the 1980s and 1990s timber wars. I avoided directly categorizing stakeholder groups in the situation assessment to avoid rigid identity frames and to allow the interests to be the focus.

Issues of stakeholder identity have also been noted as a challenge by other scholars of frame analysis. In her thesis on stakeholder collaboration in the Canadian hemp industry, Owen discusses the challenges she faced in creating distinct boundaries between stakeholder categories, noting that stakeholders seemed to wear various hats (Owen 2012: 46). In addition, in her research in Trinity County, Danks noted that stakeholders wore more than one hat and that stakeholders holding multifaceted

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5 See Appendix C: Interview Analysis Code Categories for the specific codes used in data analysis.
relationships to the forest created the “potential for greater understanding of the forest management options and the priorities and viewpoints of others” (2000: 217).

Phase four of conducting a situation assessment is to determine the feasibility of moving forward with a consensus-building process and process design (Susskind and Thomas-Larmer 1999: 119-120). The facilitators determined that a consensus-building process would be useful and likely to bring success in addressing the broad natural resource conflict Trinity County faced. This determination was made based on the overlapping areas of agreement and the willingness expressed by stakeholders to engage in a consensus-building process. Specific process recommendations were then provided in the written situation assessment, and are discussed in detail in Chapter Five.

Phases five and six of conducting a situation assessment outline what should be included in the formal written situation assessment report and how to distribute the report (Susskind and Thomas-Larmer 1999: 128-130). The results of the situation assessment were compiled into both written and oral presentation formats. The written situation assessment was shared on the Trinity Collaborative web site and a situation assessment presentation was provided to the community at a well-attended public meeting. It has been eight months since the first public meeting where the situation assessment was presented. In the next chapter I discuss Trinity County and its collaborative history and describe the Trinity Collaborative from its inception and formation, to organization, action, and preliminary results.

6 The written situation assessment was adapted for this project and can be found in Chapter Five. The situation assessment PowerPoint presentation given to the community is found under Appendix D: Situation Assessment Presentation.
Case Study Selection

I chose Trinity County as my research area for several reasons, the first of which is that I am a native of Trinity County. It is an area that is significant to me. I was born and raised within Trinity County and wanted to contribute to the community in which I was raised. Furthermore, I believe that Trinity County is an underserved community. It has high unemployment and poverty, and a roller coaster economy that has historically been based on resource extraction (Medley Daniel 2011: 2).

In addition, I believe that rural interests easily become marginalized because they are outnumbered by the voices of constituents in urban areas who often have different priorities. There is often a large geographical gap between rural communities and centralized governments. As one Trinity County supervisor lamented, small counties have to be loud in Sacramento “otherwise the small, rural communities tend to get the shaft” (Morris 2010). Therefore, my selection of Trinity County as the locus of my research aligned with both my personal and academic ideals.

The foundation of my involvement with the collaborative began long before its inception, during my time as a student of Dr. Elizabeth Watson’s dispute resolution course at Humboldt State University in the Spring of 2011. The course offered the opportunity to conduct a situation assessment, and I knew that I wanted to pursue a topic relevant to Trinity County. While the final situation assessment on medical marijuana issues in Trinity County, prepared by me and two other students, did not materialize as my project topic, I was convinced of the benefits of conducting a situation assessment and the understanding it could bring.
In the winter of 2012, I was approached by Dr. Elizabeth Watson regarding an opportunity to become involved with a collaborative process forming to address land management issues in Trinity County. I knew that this was an amazing opportunity to contribute my educational skills and passion to a process that fit with my ideals and could greatly benefit my home county. In addition, as Chapkis claims, I saw my “proximity and engagement [as] resources, not just impediments, to good research” (Chapkis 2010: 490). In sum, the case study selection resulted from a mixture of fortuitous opportunity and my passion and determination to contribute to work that would benefit Trinity County.
CHAPTER FOUR
Case Study

Trinity County, California

“Since the Gold Rush, Trinity County has been a hinterland where extractive industries have supported most residents, enriching a few and impoverishing others. Much of the area’s natural wealth—be it in water, trees or cattle, have been exported to outside markets. Waves of people have come to Trinity County with each boom associated with mining, timber, or dam-building. Competition between different resource uses, old and new residents, extraction and subsistence, have led to numerous conflicts dating back 150 years—some resolved peacefully, others with violence” (Danks 2000: 125).

Trinity County is located in far Northern California where its geographic size of over two million acres is countered by its sparse population of just over 13,700 residents (U.S. Census Bureau 2010), making Trinity County a rural community. Trinity County is considered to be part of the Klamath-Siskiyou eco-region which has been recognized for its biological diversity and designated as an area of global botanical significance by the World Conservation Union (Bunn 2007; Danks 2000; Thomas 2003: 155). Trinity County’s geography and environment have had and continue to maintain important roles due to gold mining, timber production, and its heavily forested terrain and abundant rivers. In addition, because of Trinity County’s relatively intact forest systems, it has an important global role in carbon sequestration, especially in light of climate change and adaptation (Medley Daniel 2011). Trinity County’s extensive river systems are part of the Klamath Basin watershed and are considered important spawning ground for several anadromous fish species, including the endangered coho and chinook salmon (Bunn 2007). Trinity County is home to Trinity Lake, California’s third largest reservoir. It is
an important resource for tourism locally. When the Trinity Dam was first built, 90 percent of the inflow waters were diverted from the reservoir into the Sacramento River and the Central Valley Irrigation Project. Today, after intense battles over the water resources and fish habitat, 50 percent of river flows remain in the river (Medley Daniel 2011: 2; TRRP 2013). In addition, Ruth Lake Reservoir, located at the headwaters of the Mad River in the southern reaches of Trinity County, provides water for both the peoples and industries of California’s North Coast region.

Due to several factors, including boom and bust industrial cycles and forest-dependence, Trinity County’s unemployment and poverty rates have generally been above the state average. Data sets for the period 2006 through 2010 show Trinity County’s poverty rate to be 15.1 percent compared to California’s 13.7 percent and unemployment rates for Trinity County to be 13.4 percent to California’s 9.0 percent (U.S. Census Bureau 2010). Unemployment has reached as high as 22.2 percent in Trinity County (Trinity Journal Staff 2010), with the 2011 annual report citing unemployment at 17.8 percent (State of California Employment Development Department 2010).

Trinity County’s communities qualify as forest-dependent communities: they are in close proximity to national forestland, they have a history of dependency on forest products for their livelihood, and the forest continues to have important economic and social roles for the communities of Trinity County. Trinity County, while rich in natural resources, has over 70 percent of its land managed by the USFS. With its low population density, the county has little political power in Sacramento. Many residents believe the
state sees Trinity County as a source of natural resources to be extracted but not as communities to be invested in (Morris 2010). The debate over resource politics and power differentials has led to renewal of a 1940s political movement to establish the rural, resource-rich areas of Northern California and Southern Oregon as a separate political entity known as the State of Jefferson (Horowitz 2009). The State of Jefferson movement idealizes regional control over natural resources, which conflict with the significant land percentage the USFS manages in Trinity County, and is rooted in identity frames of self-sufficiency and independence. The State of Jefferson movement in Trinity County is also bolstered by a national renewal of the political philosophy of states’ rights to exert power versus the federal government’s rights. Both the State of Jefferson movement and states’ rights arguments find support in Trinity County, and some residents hold very anti-federal government points of view.

Trinity County’s economy is heavily forest-dependent with three national forests: Shasta-Trinity, Mendocino, and Six Rivers, comprising over 72 percent of the county’s land base (Medley Daniel 2011: 6). Having a high percentage of the landscape under federal management makes Trinity County extremely sensitive to public land laws and mandates (Medley Daniel 2011). Trinity County confronts the challenges that face rural, forest-dependent communities. It also faces the unique challenges that stem from a majority of its land base being federally managed public forests. Two major challenges emerge in relation to Trinity County’s national forest land-base: wildfire risk and economic impacts.
Wildfires impact public safety, natural resources, economic livelihoods, and the overall ecosystem health of the region. A history of federal policies suppressing wildfires coupled with increased fuel loading in national forests has resulted in devastating wildfires. Wildfires in Trinity County have increased in the last two decades. Between 1999 and 2009, 433,835 acres burned (Trinity County Fire Safe Council 2010: 9). Figure 1.1 shows wildfire incidents since 1910. Concern over public safety is so great that the TCBOS declared a state of emergency in 2008, stating that fuel loads were a “threat to public safety, health and economic stability due to the probability of catastrophic fires” (Trinity County Fire Safe Council 2010: 108). The summer of 2008, locally referred to as the Summer of Smoke, in which lightning fires burned from June through September, is an example of the impacts wildfire has on public safety, social and environmental health, and the local economy.

Wildfires are a dangerous threat to public safety. Ten firefighters lost their lives battling the 2008 fires, while protecting the lives and property of local residents (Trinity Journal Staff 2008). In addition, Trinity County experienced 17 weeks of severe smoke impacting air quality (Trinity County Fire Safe Council 2010: 9). While fire is a natural ecological phenomenon, the increased fuels loads in Trinity County mean that fires often threaten ecosystem functions. Intensely-burning fires can slow vegetation regeneration, denude wildlife habitat for endangered and other native species, and cause erosion and water quality problems (Trinity County Fire Safe Council 2010: 9). It is tragic to burn in a region where significant tracts of old growth forest have
Figure 1.1: Trinity County Fire History
been placed under protection for the Northern Spotted Owl, at a great loss in potential income for local timber communities.

The increased prevalence of wildfires impacts the local economy by destroying the county’s timber base, disrupting commodity flow, and creating poor conditions for recreation. The timber, tourism and recreation, and wine industries were negatively affected by the 2008 fire season (Davis, Moseley, Jakes and Nielsen-Pincus 2011: 3). It is also likely that the 2008 fires may have been the tipping point for retail business closures for businesses that were already struggling from the national economic recession.

In addition to the economic impacts wildfire has on the region, even more specific economic impacts have been felt from the decline in national forest timber sales. As discussed previously, county governments received 25 percent of the revenue from national forest timber sales (Thomas 2003: 156). Timber sales from national forests also provide timber for local mills. When national forest timber sales decline, it impacts the local economy twofold, the public services sector suffers and private industry struggles.

Charnley et al. note that timber industry employment in the region of California covered under the NWFP stood at 31 percent in the 1970s and dropped by 50 percent in the 1980s (2006b: 1). This correlates with the decline in timber harvests in national forests since the late 1980s (Lloyd and Sokolow 2001). In just the last five years in Trinity County, the percentage of board feet taken from national forests has not gone above 15 percent of the total timber harvested in Trinity County (Trinity Journal Staff 2013). Furthermore, the only remaining local lumber mill in operation estimates that 20
percent or fewer of their logs come from Trinity County, the rest come from the greater Northern California and Pacific Northwest area (Gittelsohn 2010).

The decline of the timber industry, a major source of employment in Trinity County, left many people, including generational timber workers, unemployed. Marijuana production emerged as one of few options for those who wanted to maintain their livelihoods in the area (McKubbrey 2007: 39). California’s 1996 medical marijuana legislation created opportunities for Californians to secure compensation for producing marijuana for both dispensaries and as caregivers for medical marijuana patients with legal production from the federal government (Gerber 2004: 95). Medical, and illicit, marijuana protection has filled an economic void in Trinity County, providing a lucrative economic opportunity in a region where few exist and those present are shrinking. In addition, youth are increasingly pursuing marijuana production over higher education and other forms of employment.

Economic recession and budgetary impacts have played a role in decreased USFS activity and projects in Trinity County. In addition, continued conflict, including appeals and litigation on projects, have prevented and stalled all types of projects from occurring in the Shasta-Trinity National Forest. While Trinity County’s legacy of conflict over national forest management is substantial, so is its history of collaborative efforts to address national natural resource issues.
Collaborative-Based Resource Management in Trinity County

There have been several collaborative efforts focused on landscape management and resource use that have given rise to temporary and permanent collaborative groups in Trinity County. These groups have emerged for varied purposes to address different natural resource issues and have had an array of organizational structures and decision-making mechanisms. They have met with mixed successes, challenges, and disappointments (Danks 2000). In this section, I outline a brief history of three groups in Trinity County which have collaborated on natural resource management: the Trinity Bio Region Group (TBRG), the Trinity County Fire Safe Council (TCFSC), and the South Fork Coordinated Resource Management Planning (SFCRMP). I then discuss the complementary relationships between these groups and the TCRCD and WRTC in project implementation. Finally, I draw comparisons between the literature and these groups on social capital and authority in decisionmaking.

Trinity bio region group

TBRG formed in 1992 under California’s Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) regarding a “Coordinated Regional Strategy to Conserve Biological Diversity” (California Biodiversity Council 2013). The MOU outlined that watershed regions would establish bioregion councils to address biodiversity in natural resource management (California Biodiversity Council 2013; Danks 2000: 166). Throughout California, Bio Region Councils were formed with the goal that contentious issues, especially those dealing with the ESA, could be addressed before they became full-blown
conflicts (California Biodiversity Council 2013). In Trinity County, it was hoped that TBRG could present solutions to conflicts that had flared in the area for decades between local environmental advocates and timber industry supporters (Danks 2000). The focus of TBRG was healthy forests and healthy communities within the Trinity River watershed, and their purpose was to develop and present positions and suggestions to government agencies involved in natural resource management. The group acted as an advisory council on natural resource management policy as well as competing for Northwest Economic Adjustment Initiative funds (Danks 2000: 165; Middleton and Baker 2002: 9; Thomas 2003: 171). The success of TBRG was that it brought local environmental advocates and timber industry supporters together in a space where all sides learned that they shared similar ideas and goals for the social, ecological, and economic health of Trinity County (Danks 2000: 224; Thomas 2003: 172). As Middleton and Baker note, perhaps the greatest success of the Trinity Bio Region Group was the foundation of social capital it built which future collaborative groups would benefit from (2002: 6). The challenge that the TBRG faced was the prevailing animosity the group encountered during the time of Yellow Ribbon Campaigns and elevated levels of vitriol among Trinity County residents (Danks 2000; Thomas 2003: 173).

*Trinity county fire safe council*

In 1998, the TCBOS natural resource advisory council appointed a subcommittee to address wildfire management; that committee evolved into the TCFSC (Everett 2008: 218). The TCFSC operates under an MOU signed by local, state, and federal land
management agencies and local nongovernmental organizations such as the 16 volunteer fire departments in Trinity County, to “improve cooperation and coordination in all aspects of wildfire management in Trinity County” (TCFSC 2013; WFD 2013). The major success of the TCFSC is the collaborative development of its fire plan, the Community Wildfire Protection Plan (CWPP), originally drafted in 1999 through 2005, and now in its second iteration (Everett 2008: 222; TCFSC 2013). Collaboration with local residents included three phases where residents were able to interact with maps and contribute their knowledge to improve wildfire emergency response, identify and prioritize community values, and determine wildland/urban interface (WUI) zones in order to focus fuels reduction projects (Everett 2008). The WUI is defined differently by various government agencies that hold fire suppression functions, but relates to housing density and wildfire buffers (CWPP 2010: 18). The success of the TCFSC’s collaborative process is evident in broad support for the CWPP and its proposed fuels reduction projects. In addition, the Trinity Collaborative voted to support the CWPP and is currently discussing how specific projects in federal land management agencies’ programs of work complement the projects suggested in the CWPP. Challenges the TCFSC face include securing funds for proposed project implementation and securing involvement from absentee landowners (Everett 2008: 223-224).

South fork coordinated resource management planning

In 1993 the Trinity River Restoration undertook an action plan for the restoration of the South Fork Trinity River’s fisheries and was advised to pursue a CRMP program
The SFCRMP was formed in 1994 under California’s Coordinated Resource Management and Planning MOU (California Department of Fish and Wildlife 2013). The SF CRMP’s purpose was to help restore fisheries on the South Fork of the Trinity River. They addressed specific contributors to fisheries’ decline such as sediment and erosion control from ranching, mining and logging, riparian restoration, and water quality enhancement (California Biodiversity News 1996; Danks 2000: 194-195; TCRCD 2013). The SFCRMP successfully developed the East Fork/Smokey Creek watershed analysis which has since been utilized by local natural resource management organizations and agencies to aid in project planning and implementation (TCRCD 2013). Building social capital is an objective of CRMPs and the SFCRMP built social capital across land ownership boundaries through the exchange of technical information and assistance (Danks 2000: 226). The SFCRMP has faced two challenges relating to process and implementation. First, the SFCRMP meetings, which fell on week, or working days, might have posed a barrier to participation for some stakeholders. As Danks notes, weekday meetings may discourage working people from attending (2000: 201). Second, an event that marred the success of the group occurred when the USFS implemented different activities that those recommended by the SFCRMP group in the watershed analysis, leading to appeals from a local environmental organization (Danks 2000: 277).

One barrier that all three above-mentioned groups faced is project implementation. Each of these groups can be considered a CBRM group: TBRG was a consensus-based group, and the TCFSC and SFCRMP qualify as interagency and citizen
groups (Danks 2000: 203; Everett 2008). The primary functions of these groups were to build social capital and consensus on locally important and often conflicted topics. When it comes time to implementing projects, CBRM groups benefit from relationships with groups that can get work done on the ground. TBRG, the TCFSC, and the SFCRMP all benefitted from and relied on comanagement with two local entities, the WRTC and the TCRCD to accomplish project implementation (Danks 2000; Everett 2008).

*The hayfork watershed research and training center and the trinity county resource conservation district*

The WRTC formed in 1992 with support of the TBRG and incorporated as a 501(c)3 organization in 1995 that could accept funding, conduct research, and implement project ideas that found consensus in TBRG (Danks 2000: 178, 231). One of the first activities the WRTC undertook, with support from TBRG, was their Ecosystem Management Technician Training Program (Danks 2000: 247). The project was undertaken in response to the NWFP in order to retrain timber workers as ecosystem managers. The training program successfully retrained over 50 people who had lost their jobs in the wake of the NWFP and the closure of the Sierra Pacific Mill in Hayfork (Danks 2000: 250; Middleton and Baker 2002: 12). The WRTC and the TCRCD have both partnered with the TCFSC to implement fuels management projects outlined in the CWPP (Everett 2008: 223). The TCRCD, established in 1956, is considered a special conservation district in California responsible for conservation projects within Trinity County (Danks 2000: 154-155). In addition to working with the TCFSC, The TCRCD
worked closely with SFCRMP providing staff and office service, and technical expertise on the East Fork/Smoky Creek watershed assessment (Danks 2000: 156, 201, 266). Furthermore, the TCRCD has a record of successful comanagement with federal land management agencies. For example, the TCRCD and BLM jointly manage the Weaverville Community Forest (WCF) under a stewardship contract. The stewardship contract allows the TCRCD and BLM to cooperatively manage the community forest based on objectives defined by the local community (WCF 2013).

Together these CBRM groups and implementing organizations had varied degrees of success. What they have shown is that community partnerships with federal land management agencies can lead to natural resource management practices that benefit and fulfill the goals and values of both local forest-dependent communities and the national public. Clearly, social capital has been built that bridged different community factions, consensus built recommendations were forwarded to land management agencies, and tangible outcomes have resulted in additional employment opportunities and implementation of projects (Danks 2000). It is important to note that transparency in these collaborative processes contributed to successful decision making, project implementation, and a foundation of social capital that had positive influence on CBRM groups in the future.

Other barriers encountered by these groups included limited access to funds, a declining membership base in which time and energy investments become too great for fewer and fewer volunteers to handle, and when stakeholders become frustrated with the process and its outcomes (Danks 2000: 211). For example, many local environmental
advocates network with larger national environmental organizations. Tensions may mount when local environmental advocates find themselves at odds with national environmental organizations over local, collaboratively made decisions, forcing local environmental advocates into conflict with their environmental advocacy partners.

A final barrier that these CBRM groups encountered was their lack of authority to hold land management agencies accountable to implementing consensus-based decisions. Often CBRM groups have unrealistic expectations regarding what federal agencies will and can do with the consensus-based decisions promoted by their group. This goes back to the discussion regarding the lack of clarity over the purpose and intent of public input in national agency decision-making processes (Steelman and Ascher 1997: 81).

The Trinity County Collaborative Group

The Trinity Collaborative formed in 2013 due to continued conflict over natural resource management issues. The TCBOS, along with local natural resource management organizations, determined that the county government could benefit from a natural resource advisory group. A facilitation team was hired to conduct a situation assessment and provide guidance and facilitation of the formation of the group. The Trinity Collaborative is a formal, volunteer-citizen-based natural resource advisory group to the TCBOS. The group qualifies as a CBRM group because they cooperate face-to-face on a voluntary basis with the intent to address natural resource issues that cannot be solved by any one stakeholder group independently. The group covers issues that affect the entirety of the county, and in acknowledgement to the desire to be inclusive of all
county residents, rotate their meetings between Weaverville and Hayfork. In addition to its majority of citizen-volunteers representing multiple aspects of Trinity County’s communities, Trinity Collaborative members also include representatives of local watershed organizations, environmental advocacy organizations, the public utilities district, county supervisors, local Native American tribes, and various state and federal agency representatives including USFS, TCRCD, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), University of California Cooperative Extension (UCCE), USDA Rural Development, and Resource Conservation and Development (RC&D). Many of the Trinity Collaborative members have participated in collaborative efforts in Trinity County in the past.

Members of the Trinity Collaborative acknowledge that past natural resource extraction processes caused ecological destruction and imbalance, and they support natural resource management that attends to social, ecological, and economic needs. The mission statement of the Trinity Collaborative is as follows:

“To create and recommend for implementation, natural resources, land management and economic development strategies driven by local values and goals that: 1) acknowledge the interrelation between community, economy and ecology; 2) provide solutions for sustainable and resilient economic and ecological practices and projects; 3) foster a culture of stewardship; 4) improve our community, economy and ecology; 5) create a better place for future generations” (Trinity Collaborative 2013).

The Trinity Collaborative has over 55 active members, is led by a paid facilitation team, including me, and is comprised of four subgroups: the forestry working group, known as the Trinity Forestry Group (TFG), an economic and infrastructure committee, a recreation committee, and an agriculture committee. A majority of the active members
are also active in the TFG, and each of the other committees is comprised of half a dozen to a dozen members.

As of the time of this project’s writing, the Trinity Collaborative had concluded ten meetings, with the first two meetings being devoted to developing a charter to guide the group’s operating and decision-making procedures. All members are required to follow the principles and guidelines of their operating charter, which cover such aspects as meeting ground rules, membership requirements, and guidelines for interfacing with the public. With its organizational structure in place, the group has worked on approaches to move forward through the contentious natural resource issues they face.

While still young in its inception, the Trinity Collaborative has already demonstrated successful collaborative action. This is due in large part to the rich experience local residents have had in participating in collaborative efforts in the past. In addition, the facilitators and the Trinity Collaborative stakeholders have minimized the emphasis on individual identities and group-specific membership. This has enabled stakeholders to embrace the shared vision they have constructed through their meetings, field trips, and charter.

The Trinity Collaborative has already addressed two major issues of import to Trinity County: wildfire risk and the local economy. The Trinity Collaborative’s support for a USFS determination of emergency status for a restoration and salvage project in an area of the county that burned in 2011 aided in the USFS’s approval of that determination. In addition, the timber salvage sale component of the post-fire restoration

\footnote{See Appendix E: Trinity County Collaborative Group Charter.}
sold to the local lumber mill. The emergency status determination increased the speed at
which the project activities could commence, even in the face of potential appeal and
litigation. The determination meant timber could be salvaged before it deteriorated,
which decreased the fuels load on the landscape, which lessened the wildfire risk should
a wildfire event occur in the area again. The Trinity Collaborative’s action had twofold
benefits on local communities: reduced wildfire risk and increased local economic
opportunity. In addition, it made the Trinity Collaborative feel successful in that the
decisive actions they took were listened to and had an impact.

In addition to having a direct and immediate impact from its actions, the Trinity
Collaborative also successfully secured a grant from the National Forest Foundation with
the WRTC acting as the Trinity Collaborative’s fiscal sponsor. The Community Capacity
and Land Stewardship grant will enable the Trinity Collaborative to carry out a
workforce capability and infrastructure assessment, recreational opportunities and
investments assessment, and an evaluative assessment of the agreements made within the
TFG in the next year. In addition, some of the funds secured in the grant will go directly
to local contracting and labor for data collection and assessment, providing further local
economic benefit.

In addition to the shared actions undertaken as a full collaborative group, each
subgroup is working on its own programs and tackling topic-specific issues. The full
Trinity Collaborative group meets at least once monthly. Work groups and committees
often meet in addition to the monthly Trinity Collaborative meetings to work on their
specific issues and projects. The TFG is working closely with the USFS and the BLM on
defining appropriate methods of providing input on their respective programs of work, as well as looking at appropriate management objectives for specific land allocations. Wildfire risk is always high on the priorities list, so the TFG is also discussing specific fuels reduction methods and looking closely at the prescriptions outlined in the Trinity CWPP.

The economic and infrastructure committee is working on a workforce assessment as well as clarifying appropriate research questions to determine what impacts the medical and illicit marijuana industries have on the county. In addition, the committee is evaluating input strategies into the Trinity County general plan, a document in need of update and revision.

The recreation committee is addressing several issues relating to Trinity Lake management as well as developing proposals for a multiple-use Trinity Lake trail that would circumnavigate the reservoir. They are further investigating expansion of campgrounds as well as campground improvements throughout the county so campsites can accommodate all types of recreationists.

The agriculture committee is putting together a countywide survey to assess agricultural opportunities and barriers to practicing agriculture which land managers face, as well as researching cooperative agricultural models that could be applied in Trinity County.

The Trinity Collaborative was formed in response to continued conflict and impasse over natural resource management that has resulted in public safety concerns, economic difficulties, and community strife. In its short history, the Trinity
Collaborative has waded through contentious issues, come to mutual understanding and agreement, and succeeded in taking action that resulted in positive and productive outcomes. If the Trinity Collaborative continues on its track of being a permanent natural resource advisory group, they will have many additional chances to accomplish their vision of being an “inclusive and successful natural resources, land management and economic development advisory group that supports safe and vibrant communities, thriving economies, and ecological resilience, through sustainable resource use and stewardship practices” (Trinity Collaborative 2013).
CHAPTER FIVE
Situation Assessment

Introduction

The initial situation assessment and process facilitation is currently funded jointly by the USDA, the TCBOS, and the TCRCD. It is expected that the funding currently available will take the collaborative through the end of 2013. The situation assessment was conducted to develop an understanding of the issues facing Trinity County and the history behind them, determine the stakeholder parties that should be involved in the Collaborative, and provide recommendations on how the collaborative process should proceed. The facilitation team conducted over 40 interviews to aid in constructing the situation assessment. At the culmination of the situation assessment, a public presentation was hosted in Weaverville to share with the public the results of the situation assessment and provide opportunities to become involved in the formation of the Trinity Collaborative. The situation assessment sought to outline stakeholders’ areas of concern and their primary interests, to identify opportunities for mutual agreement, to uncover areas of divergence, and to provide process recommendations.

Areas of Concern and/or Interest

Stakeholder interests fall into ten broad and often overlapping categories: federal land management, forest stewardship, fire, economic development, ecological restoration, watershed management, recreation and tourism, infrastructure and communications, education and training, and agriculture. While several interest categories share similar
concerns—federal land management and forest stewardship, or ecological restoration and watershed management—these categories were distinguished to preserve nuances in the concerns expressed. Outlined below is a summary of concerns expressed for each interest category.

**Federal land management**

- NEPA is ineffective. It cannot pass environmental scrutiny and/or meet economic feasibility.
- There are a lack of communication and weak relationships between federal land management agencies and local communities.
- Local communities want greater input on federal land management decisions.
- Local communities want projects scaled to grant contracts to local employers.
- Transfer management of the Trinity Lake National Recreation Area into local control.

**Forest stewardship**

- Recognize that forests are a renewable resource by promoting practices that support sustained timber yield and manage for non-timber forest products.
- Engage in active management and projects that improve forest health and provide local economic and labor benefits. For example, thinning for forest health and fire resilience.
- Use technical advisors and peer-review science to inform stewardship practices and projects.
• Make stewardship decisions based on healthy forests, not economics.

Fire

• Buildup of fuels leads to increased wildfire risk to forest landscapes, wildlife, communities, and safety personnel. For example, managed stands are like ‘matchbooks’.
• Implement projects in recent burn areas.
• Engage in forest management that contributes to fire-safe communities and fire-resilient forests.
• Fire is a part of natural forest renewal—treat landscapes for fire reintroduction.
• Implement projects that are supported in the CWPP.

Economic development

• Create more job opportunities and career-ladder jobs so Trinity County can attract and retain skilled employees.
• Management of Trinity County’s natural resources should create jobs for Trinity County’s citizens.
• Develop new forest-based markets—non-timber forest products, biomass, pine, landscaping materials, value-added manufacturing, research station.
• Generate our own economy rather than relying on grants and government funding.
• Use fuels reduction projects to jump-start local economy.
Ecological restoration

- Implement forest practices that are based on peer-review science and benefit the landscape and wildlife.
- Thin from below and treat for fire reintroduction.
- Manage understory of late seral reserves to enhance old growth characteristics.

Watershed management

- Engage in watershed management practices that enhance forest landscapes and protect waterways and wildlife.
- Engage in projects that promote ecological and economic sustainability.
- Promote preserving intact landscapes and late seral reserves.
- Address climate adaptation and strive for resilient ecosystems.

Recreation and tourism

- Increase public access to lakes, rivers, roads, trails, and forests.
- Clear and maintain trails.
- Address Trinity Lake management concerns—houseboat permits and low-water boat ramps.
- Promote all of Trinity County’s recreation opportunities.

Infrastructure and communication

- Address the lack of high-speed internet and cellular connectivity.
- Engage in research to better understand the communication networks available.
- Build local capacity and networking infrastructure.

**Education and training**

- Create economic opportunities in Trinity County to keep trained employees local.
- Promote education/training opportunities to be available locally.
- Access to and use of best available peer-review science.
- Foster a community that cares about and understands how local ecosystems work and takes pride in stewardship and management practices.
- Focusing on educating the general public, local communities, and youth about local ecosystems and forest management is important.

**Agriculture**

- Enhance Trinity County’s food security by developing local food systems.
- Use local food production to contribute to a healthy community.
- Local food production has a ‘multiplier effect’ on the local economy.
- Increase Trinity County’s agricultural sales.

**Opportunities for Mutual Agreement**

The most broadly shared interest among stakeholders is the desire to participate in changing the status quo of land management practices in Trinity County. Stakeholders want to establish a mechanism to provide input and guidance on management and projects affecting Trinity County’s public lands. In addition, there is a desire to provide recommendations on management and projects in a timely manner. Stakeholders want to
see action and this may contribute to a greater capacity to reach consensus than has been experienced in Trinity County in recent decades. Several specific topics also received broad support, including community wildfire protection: biomass research and projects: projects in Matrix, AMA and the WUI; improving the relationship between federal land management agencies and Trinity County communities; concerns regarding NEPA efficacy; and concerns regarding Trinity Lake National Recreation Area management practices.

**Community wildfire protection**

Stakeholders demonstrated agreement over fuels reduction and projects in the WUI. If the group is eager to begin projects as soon as possible, a fuels reduction project in one or more of the WUIs is likely to gain broad support as well as build the capacity and confidence of the collaborative. The group could benefit from coordinating with the TCFSC on project selection using the CWPP, which gathered extensive community input regarding potential fuels reduction projects.

Another broadly supported role of forest management related to wildfire is thinning managed plantations. Plantation thinning not only addresses safety concerns but also could generate jobs. Thinning projects in the managed timber plantations, referred to as ‘matches’ ready to ignite, would help to reduce wildfire risk generally. However, because these areas would be scattered geographically beyond the WUI, they would contribute less directly to community wildfire protection than projects in the WUI.
Biomass research and projects

Removal of biomass would reduce forest fuel loads, thereby contributing to wildfire protection. The harvested biomass could provide an additional source of raw material for the local lumber mill, potentially increasing production, and creating local employment opportunities. Two aspects need to be researched in order to make this approach feasible: 1) research into biomass markets and types of utilization/products and, 2) a long-term supply of biomass to make it economically viable for the local mill to invest in the necessary infrastructure to process this new raw material.

Projects in matrix, adaptive management areas, and wildland/urban interface

Projects that take place in Matrix, AMAs, and WUIs are likely to have broader support than projects in other forest landscapes. Matrix and AMA already possess the distinction of being areas designated for experimental management, and the WUI has already been discussed as an area to implement management practices addressing community wildfire protection.

Relationship between federal land management agencies and trinity county communities

A key concern among stakeholders is improving the relationship between federal land management agencies and local communities, primarily with regard to communication, responsiveness, and transparency. The USDA Secretary’s current interest in forest-dependent Trinity County could lead to the development of additional protocols to ensure that the residents of forest-dependent communities in the West are kept informed and allowed to participate in the federal land management decisions that
impact their lives daily. Additional measures could also be taken to ensure that federal land management agencies are utilizing best practices to communicate with and respond to local concerns.

**National environmental policy act efficacy**

Stakeholders’ concerns regarding NEPA are related to environmental protection and economic feasibility. The NEPA process has been criticized due to specific projects’ NEPA documents being unable to withstand appeal or litigation raised from environmental scrutiny. In addition, NEPA is criticized when projects are not bid on due to their lack of economic feasibility. Engaging stakeholders to embark on joint fact-finding with land management agencies may be useful in moving forward with future projects that require analysis under NEPA.

**Trinity lake national recreation area management**

Trinity Lake is a major tourist attraction in Trinity County and contributes to the local economy. Stakeholders expressed widely shared concerns over specific lake management issues and practices. Many stakeholders expressed the need to expedite construction of a low-water boat ramp for drought years. Stakeholders also discussed addressing restrictions on houseboat permits and overnight allowances.

**Areas of Potential Divergence**

Because of the breadth of concerns represented by stakeholders, they may find prioritizing which issues to address, and in which order, a difficult task. In addition to prioritizing the diverse concerns, there are two specific forest management topics that
highlight where stakeholder concerns were not aligned: management priorities in late seral reserves and timber harvesting practices.

*Late seral reserves*

Stakeholder opinions regarding late seral reserves, or old growth stands, represent perhaps the most extreme differences among stakeholders. Stakeholder concerns ranged from an ‘off limits’ position, to arguments that selective harvesting should be undertaken.

*Timber harvest practices*

While timber harvest practices may not present an immediate barrier, they will most certainly emerge as a key component when determining the level of support for specific projects. Three timber harvest aspects mentioned were diameter measurements of harvested trees, the percentage of canopy cover remaining, and amount of ground disturbance.

Appropriate management objectives for late seral reserves and timber harvest practices are topics that carry the potential to renew antagonistic relationships between pro-environment and pro-timber stakeholders. While the topics discussed above have posed formidable barriers and divided Trinity County residents in the past, Trinity County’s rich collaborative history has dissipated the environment/timber divide Trinity county residents experienced in the 1990s. This has led to unlikely combinations of residents working together on joint fact-finding adventures and even projects. The trust that has been built will likely facilitate moving through these more controversial aspects of forest management.
Process Recommendations

Based on the analysis of the interviews conducted and the history of collaborative approaches to resource management in Trinity County, the facilitation team recommended that the group should move forward in establishing a consensus-building collaborative group. The rest of this section will outline some of the possibilities the team discussed for the collaborative process and structure, including goals of the collaborative, issues covered, who should be a participant, a time frame and schedule of meetings, the group’s relationship to other decision-making entities, and future budget and funding mechanisms.

Goals

A primary goal of the group could be to generate a unified voice from the broad stakeholder groups to provide recommendations to the TCBOS on natural resource issues such as: the level of community support for management practices and specific projects, preparation of NEPA documents, and appropriate scale of projects to derive local benefits.

Another goal could encompass developing self-sufficiency and capacity as well as building community involvement and information about natural resource issues facing Trinity County. Because of the potential to include diverse stakeholders and perspectives in the group, it could serve as a networking hub to connect various community organizations and provide information for the larger community on current events and issues facing Trinity County.
Because of the immediate public safety concern, another goal of the group could be to work directly with the CWPP to specifically address community wildfire safety and protection on all levels. The group could engage with the Trinity County Fire Safe Council and collaborate on shared wildfire goals such as providing public education on disaster preparedness, determining levels of support for current fuels reduction projects, and designing and promoting fuels reduction projects.

**Issues covered**

Eight of the ten areas of interest and/or concern outlined in the findings section are related to natural resources. The other two areas, infrastructure and communications, and training and education, are vital to building the capacity that is necessary for groups and communities to function effectively.

It might be beneficial for the group to prioritize and act on specific interests and/or concerns rather than outline which broad issues the group will cover, and which will be excluded. For example, stakeholders discussing a project that will reduce fuels in a WUI might decide that it is a more urgent priority than treating late seral reserves for fire reintroduction. These will be the types of decisions that the group may have to make on a case-by-case basis.

There will be a balancing act between becoming lost in the enormity of the breadth of issues to be covered and not establishing a scope too narrow to comprehensively address the interconnected reality of these concerns and interests.
Participants included

All interested individuals and organizations that have a stake in land management in Trinity County should be invited to participate in the group. Individuals and organizations that have knowledge or expertise in forest management, economic development, collaborative processes, or Trinity County should be encouraged to participate.

Time frame and meeting schedule

One of the functions the conveners envisioned for the group was to establish it as a permanent natural resource advisory group to the TCBOS. If this is accomplished, the time frame the group will be operating under is perpetuity. To effectively engage with and address natural resource issues, the facilitation team recommends meeting at least once a month. Because stakeholders are volunteers with other engagements and commitments, it is unlikely that the group as a whole will meet more often than once per month. In addition, a set monthly meeting schedule should be established.

Because of the distances between communities in Trinity County, it is also necessary to address where meetings will be held. The facilitation team recommends two options: 1) stationary meetings in a location most central to all stakeholders and that would require the least amount of travel for stakeholders living the farthest out or, 2) rotating meetings to be held in selected communities, which would allow stakeholders to share the burden of traveling.
Relationship to other decision-making entities

The group is a TCBOS-sanctioned advisory board. The group will have an advisory role to the TCBOS who in turn will interact with other agencies, government-to-government. The Collaborative will not have a formal relationship with government land management agencies, but will coordinate with agencies in order to obtain information and conduct joint fact-finding and shared learning.

Stakeholders indicated that coordination and collaboration with other local organizations is important. It would benefit the group to assess whether other organizations are working on similar issues and work out a method of networking with these organizations, including soliciting key members’ participation in the group itself.

Budget and funding

Self-sufficiency has been cited by stakeholders as an important component to include in the group structure and process. Because of this interest, stakeholders might want to investigate methods of generating an operational budget. While financial self-sufficiency may be the ideal, additional opportunities for grants or other government funding should also be researched and applied for.
CHAPTER SIX
Discussion

Stakeholder Identities

Conflict resolution literature discusses the importance of identifying and categorizing individuals and institutions that have a stake in the conflict, generally called stakeholders (Carlson 1999: 185). Stakeholders are ordinarily categorized according to the major interests they represent in relation to the conflict at hand. However, the literature does not address the potential complexity underlying categorizing stakeholders in situations where individual stakeholders may “wear many hats” or fit into more than one or even several stakeholder categories. In such cases, likely typical in small communities, rigid stakeholder categorization may exacerbate underlying conflict. The formation process of the Trinity Collaborative provides a case in point.

As a facilitator, I used frame analysis of stakeholder identities and the history of stakeholder identities, to help lower the possibility of recurring dispute episodes from past conflicts spilling over into the formation of the Trinity Collaborative. If stakeholders use frames as a tool to rationalize and promote their perspectives as Shmueli et al. claim (2009), asking an individual to attach themselves into a single or exclusive identity category precludes the breadth of identities that an individual may actually experience and promote.

As already discussed, Trinity County has a long history of natural resource use conflicts that were divided along the stakeholder identities of pro-environment or pro-
timber. With this in mind, the facilitation team determined that it would be counterproductive to have the participants of the situation assessment label their identity categories, because in the past such categories were responsible for increased strife and tension in national forest management. Therefore, while creating the interview questionnaire, the facilitation team purposefully decided not to ask identity-categorizing questions. Instead, the question that most closely explored identity-relevant information was the first question, “What is your involvement in land management/economic development?”

Asking what involvement stakeholders felt they had in land management allowed stakeholders to share multiple roles and levels of involvement, without restricting them to job titles or similarly limited identity categories. Furthermore, allowing for a range of identities allowed stakeholders to utilize different frames to understand the conflict situation and allowed them greater ability to appreciate other stakeholders’ framing of the conflict situation. This increased flexibility in approaching the conflict situation allowed stakeholders to develop understanding and sympathy for other viewpoints and also promoted a mentality of seeking adaptation rather than compromise. In addition, because other stakeholders’ viewpoints are now seen as valid, there is a greater desire to work together to solve what is seen as a common problem.

Stakeholder responses implicitly supported the decision to avoid identity-categorizing questions. Many stakeholders specifically stated that they had more than one role in relation to land management, as well as expressing understanding for the viewpoints of stakeholders who occupied different roles. In addition, in recent years
there have been examples of coordination and collaboration on projects among different stakeholder groups that historically were unheard-of. The hardline identities of the not-too-distant past have softened. The current reality of Trinity County residents reflects a much more fluid and diverse understanding of identity than is discussed in a majority of ADR and framing literature.

Dispute mediators and facilitators use the knowledge generated from the situation assessment and their own experience and skills to aid in resolving complex conflicts (Lewicki et al. 2003; Susskind and Thomas-Larmer 1999). In this case, reframing rigid stakeholder identity categories accomplished two things. It promoted more fluid interpretations of identity, allowing stakeholders to “wear many hats,” and it centered attention on stakeholder interests and concerns rather than stakeholders’ identities. The shift of focus from stakeholder identity disputes to interest-based disputes indicated that residents’ participation in earlier CBRM groups built social capital and reduced identity-based disputes.

Events discussed with facilitators during interviews indicate that it is likely the actual transition of reframing from rigid stakeholder identities to multiple, “many hats” stakeholder identities, as well as the prioritization of interest-based concerns above identity-based disputes, began long before the current facilitation team conducted interviews and prepared the situation assessment. The facilitators’ decision not to pursue identity-based information and promote the Matrix of Support highlights the situational sensitivity and historical knowledge that they brought to the conflict resolution process. It is a case of facilitators recognizing and fostering an environment of coordination and
collaboration that had already begun to take root within the community. This further supports Chapkis’ claim that proximity and engagement can prove beneficial to both research and practice (2010: 490).

Finally, an additional discussion regarding local stakeholders’ engagement with reframing from identity- to interest-based concerns is warranted. While evidence suggests that the process of identity reframing took place, another influence affecting the process is that of the external antagonist. Coser states that conflict with an external stakeholder increases the internal cohesion of the core even in groups that have a history of internal conflict (1956: 88).

In the context of the Trinity Collaborative, the various identities of local stakeholders—meaning Trinity County residents—are subsumed within the overarching power of the USFS over national forests. Tensions regarding responsiveness, project implementation, and organizational capacity due to budget and staffing constraints of the USFS took prominence over the history of local identity-based conflicts. This would suggest that in addition to a stakeholder identity reframing event, the current internal cohesion is also due to a shift in the identity-based dispute figureheads. There has been a shift from tension between local environmental advocates and timber industry supporters, to an increasing focus on local versus federal management. A potential outcome of this identity reframing is that local stakeholders may frame the USFS as needing assistance from local stakeholders due to their capacity and organizational constraints. This framing changes the relationship between local stakeholders and federal land management agencies from a paternal/subordinate relationship to more of a partnership. Framing the
relationship as a partnership could foster a sense of local ownership and buy-in into national forest management decisions.

In addition, there is a potentially emerging external antagonist for the Trinity Collaborative, national environmental organizations. Local environmental advocates, some now members of the Trinity Collaborative, have worked with larger environmental partners to address a wide range of environmental concerns and issues and met with mutual success. Recently, the Trinity Collaborative has experienced resistance from some of the national environmental organizations on forest management decisions it has made. This has placed local environmental advocates in a delicate situation defending locally-driven, consensus-made decisions to their national allies. It is unknown at this point how the national environmental organizations will respond or how this tension will impact the Trinity Collaborative.

While uncertain at this point, it is likely that an identity shift has taken place in large part due to the social capital built and mutually shared interest-based concerns regarding two common external threats: wildfire risk and the employment void. Three large fires occurred in Trinity County in the last 15 years, destroying homes, threatening the county hospital, and burning hundreds of thousands of acres. Wildfire is perhaps the strongest external threat bringing together the diverse residents of Trinity County to work together to preserve their homes, communities and landscapes. Another shared interest-based concern is the lack of jobs and how that impacts youth. I previously discussed how marijuana production has filled an economic and employment void in Trinity County and how youth are increasingly pursuing marijuana production. Increased marijuana
production, due to the lack of employment opportunities for youth, is another common external threat.

The true nature of the internal cohesion which has allowed the Trinity Collaborative to form and operate will likely not be evident for some time. Its form will be reflected in the continued functioning of the Trinity Collaborative and the success of their decision making, project implementation, and follow-through. It is my hope that lasting stakeholder identity reframing has taken place among local stakeholders. As Coser notes, “the degree of group consensus prior to the outbreak of the [external] conflict seems to be the most important factor affecting cohesion” (1956: 92-93). The shift from identity-based to interest-based issues supports the likelihood of creating lasting resolution to the interest-based concerns Trinity County faces (Lewicki et al. 2003).

Stakeholder Inclusivity

Decisions that are reached through a collaborative process that emphasizes inclusivity are more balanced, will garner more support from decision makers, and tend to be more implementable. In addition, ensuring inclusivity in the collaborative process reduces the chances of consensus-made decisions being challenged by outside or external forces (Carlson 1999: 185). Ball et al. note, “A good, inclusive process is more likely to produce outcomes that are widely supported and successful” (2010: 17). When a decision has been reached among stakeholders with competing interests and values, its credibility is less likely to be questioned (Ball et al. 2010: 40-41; Carlson 1999: 185).
Simply stated, the more viewpoints a collaborative process incorporates into the outcome, the greater the probability that all issues will be vetted during the decision-making process. Including different viewpoints allows for a broader discussion of conflict and promotes innovative thinking. Stakeholders become pieces of the conflict puzzle and must learn how to fit various interests and values together to complete the resolution picture (Ball et al. 2010: 119).

The benefits of inclusivity in a collaborative process are substantial. Inclusivity is necessary to maintain the credibility and sustainability of a collaborative process. But incorporating diversity can be extremely challenging for both the process facilitator and the collaborative members. Stakeholders may bring viewpoints to the process that are outside the typical parameters of the standard definition of the conflict context. For example, the Trinity Collaborative has encountered a stakeholder point of view that challenges federal law, arguing that the USFS lacks authority over national forests and decision-making authority lies with the local government. How does a collaborative group, which includes the USFS and other government agencies as members, handle the involvement of stakeholders with such perspectives? This point of view has the power to be an extremely destructive force within a collaborative process focused on national forest management for two primary reasons. First, it contributes to intractability by questioning the legitimacy of the socio-political context the group is operating in. Second, it seeks to exclude a key stakeholder group from the decision-making process entirely.
It is necessary to investigate what may be directing this manner of thinking. In this example, the argument against authority is rooted in a history of mistrust in the competence of the USFS and the agency’s ability to take into consideration what is good for local communities. This social control frame, while potentially destructive, can also become a source for building trust, social capacity, and conflict tractability because it highlights the very real, issues-based conflict regarding trust among the stakeholders.

Acknowledging the lack of trust and promoting methods in which to build trust between stakeholder groups shifts the conflict from the social control frame to the issue-based trust concerns and provides a foundation from which increased trust and capacity can be built. This will increase stakeholder inclusivity and further strengthen the cohesion of the group.

**Conflict Intractability**

The history of natural resource use in Trinity County exemplifies my definition of conflict as a protracted, interactive process of dispute episodes between stakeholders that emerge due to fundamental incompatibilities over status, power, and resources. Different stakeholder groups throughout time have struggled with each other over this resource-rich land, including settlers and Native Americans, Caucasian miners and Chinese miners, timber workers and environmental advocates, and local and federal governments (Danks 2000: 125).

Unfortunately, many historic natural resource conflict outcomes have resulted in genocide, oppression, harassment, and community strife (Danks 2000: 125). Yet, while
natural resource dispute episodes continue, there is tremendous opportunity to realize positive social, ecological, and economic outcomes by implementing processes of cooperation and collaboration that will aid in promoting tractability of natural resource conflicts (Ball et al. 2010).

In the case of natural resource conflicts in Trinity County, it is apparent that many of the sources of intractability discussed within the literature such as destructive conflict cycles, conflict management frames, stakeholder identity and characterization frames, and exclusion of stakeholders (Coser 1956; Lewicki et al. 2003; Spradley & McCurdy 2003) have moved toward tractability in recent years.

Stakeholder identity and stakeholder inclusivity offer key insights into moving conflicts from intractable to tractable. As discussed previously, often identity-based disputes need to be addressed before the substantive issues of a conflict can be addressed. Stakeholders need to acknowledge their identities, both introspectively and externally to other stakeholders, in order to understand the links between those identities and their values, opinions, and interests (Lewicki et al. 2003). The Trinity Collaborative is addressing natural resource conflicts in a collaborative manner. Natural resource conflicts have already moved in a tractable direction due to the identity reframing that has taken place and due to the diversity of perspectives included in the Trinity Collaborative’s membership base.

The Trinity Collaborative has the opportunity to address two other sources of intractability: the organization of the social system in which the conflict is seated, and value- and moral-based concerns. In addressing the organization of the social system—
methodologies of public input into national forest management and policy—the Trinity Collaborative is working with the USFS and other federal land management agencies and their programs of work. By focusing on the interest-based concerns and working through those issues with their diverse membership base, the Trinity Collaborative will contribute significantly to national forest management policies that balance the social, ecological, and economic interests of everyone who has a stake in national forests.
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Trinity County, CA has a demonstrated record of success in innovation and collaboration with public sector projects forest management. The Trinity County Resource Advisory Committee has been one of the most successful in the nation, the Post Mountain Collaborative Group launched one of the first stewardship contracts of its type in Region 5, and the Weaverville Community Forest serves as a national award winning example of community collaboration with the U.S. Bureau of Land Management and U.S. Forest Service. Trinity County supports peer reviewed, science based, management of our public lands leading to healthy fire resilient forests that produce sustainable outputs and habitats.

The time is now to expand the geographic scope and depth of these successes to achieve a balance of ecological, economic and social outcomes for Trinity County and the broader American public.

Key areas will need additional attention and support from the USDA

Collaboration

Historically, the Shasta-Trinity unit of the USFS has struggled to sustain consistent, open and effective collaboration with Trinity County stakeholders. The USFS can achieve increased public support and capitalize on local knowledge of the landscape and forest operations by emphasizing unified collaboration with the local community and stakeholders in planning and packaging projects and contracts for economic and ecological viability and local benefits such as jobs, access, public safety, healthy watersheds and resilient forests. National stakeholders will benefit from healthy watersheds and healthy forest reserves. County government, community members, and stakeholders are poised to have a standing collaborative engagement with the USFS that can ensure the provision of these benefits.

Effective Planning

The USFS has been unable to produce viable projects, in part, because of ineffective project design, NEPA planning and documentation. Local institutions, specialists, contractors, environmentalist and businesses are capable and prepared to lend their capacity to NEPA planning, project design, surveys and layout. Cooperative and
participating agreements with institutions such as the Trinity County RCD and Watershed Center are proven successful models.

**Contracting for Consistency and Economic Viability**

To achieve economic viability, and ecological and social benefits, contract design and administration must align with the needs of industry and the values of local stakeholders, and/or encourage the development of new capacities for biomass utilization. Contracts should be designed at a scale and frequency that allows for sustained infrastructure investment, and should be designed to enhance or, at least, sustain ecological resilience of a proposed project site.

Across the West there are a number of examples of new contracting strategies that improve the stability and economic viability of timber and biomass supplies so that local private industry can be sustained while creating incentives for new investments in biomass utilization. The necessary legal authorities exist and there are several models to consider; 10-year stewardship contracts, master stewardship agreements, and consistent contracting aligned with local needs are all potentially viable approaches. It is time to work together to put in place a model that sustains and grows Trinity County’s forest industry, businesses and workforce.

**Improved Interagency Coordination**

The working relationships between the USFS, NMFS and USFWS are essential to developing ecologically appropriate and legally defensible projects. In the past, breakdowns in coordination have impeded efficient and successful project planning efforts. These challenges stand to be compounded as the agencies seek to interpret and implement the recently adopted Recovery Plan for the Northern Spotted Owl.

Increased focus on developing guidance and improving coordination at both the Secretary's-level within the USDA and USDOI, along with increased coordination at the field office level, can help to establish clear processes and standards for accomplishing the goals of the Recovery Plan while still implementing Forest Plans and abiding by other relevant laws.

**Restoring administration to the “Trinity National Forest”**

The joint administration of the Shasta and Trinity National Forests as the Shasta-Trinity National Forest has become a barrier to successful accomplishment of public goals and objectives for the Trinity Forest. Increased staffing in Redding results in increased travel costs, decreased district-level staffing, disengagement and a bleeding of benefits from Forest communities. An increase in staff knowledge of the local landscapes is essential to the goals of balancing ecological, economic and social outcomes. Separating administrative management back to a Trinity National Forest, headquartered in Trinity County, will result in increased efficiency, effectiveness and accountability in the management and administration of the public lands. In addition, maintaining a strong local presence by USFS staff in Trinity County will reinstate the USFS as part of the community.
Research Support
In making management decisions, Trinity County would like to have the support of researchers to help interpret, learn from and test the best available science. Using peer reviewed science, such as that produced by the USFS Pacific Southwest Research Station will help to make better-informed decisions about land management and facilitate adaptive management.

Collaborative Opportunities

Fire and fuels management
Cooperating on fire and fuels management is essential to forest ecosystem sustainability, productivity, and public safety and wellbeing. It is essential to:
• Utilize peer-reviewed science to support management decisions
• Continue implementing the Trinity County Community Wildfire Protection Plan
• Develop innovative NEPA strategies, focusing on larger-scale projects supporting economic viability, social outcomes and ecological resilience
• Increase the use of prescribed fire in addition to cooperative fire management with local Volunteer Fire Departments
• Assist contractors and partners to grow and leverage local resources for accomplishing prescribed burning goals, while also improving capacity to manage wildfires
• Enhance post-fire management to reduce long term risk and hazards to communities, balanced with protecting ecological values

Plantations and Programmatic NEPA
There is a history of neglect associated with planation management on the Trinity National Forest. The USFS has made a substantial investment in the establishment of the plantations, but has struggled to follow through with intended management. Plantation management is an area of long-standing social agreement and is considered an essential public-trust responsibility, while also being a legal obligation under the Forest Plan. Managing plantations provides a near-term economic opportunity associated with local service work, a foundation for the development of biomass utilization infrastructure and markets, and as a future economic forest resource for the county and the nation. There have been challenges in developing projects using a “programmatic NEPA” strategy due to impasses reached with regulatory agencies and limitations in planning capacity, even though other Forest’s and regulatory offices have succeeded with programmatic NEPA. The Secretary’s office should coordinate with appropriate Department of Interior and Council on Environmental Quality officials to explore strategies and issue guidance, within existing environmental law, policy and regulation, to facilitate efficient, appropriate and legal approaches.

Natural stands
Much of the Forest is made up of “natural stands”; those which have received selective or no harvesting in the past and have been left to fire excluded natural regeneration. This management legacy, coupled with fire suppression and the associated fuels accumulations, has diminished the ecological integrity and resilience of these stands, decreased wildlife habitat values, and increased the risk of uncharacteristic fire and impacts to communities and other social values. They also represent the majority of the economically viable timber and biomass resources available on the Forest. While much of this designation falls under the new “critical habitat” designation in the Northern Spotted Owl Recovery Plan, fuels reduction, ecological restoration and active forest management are essential and compatible uses that must be carried out.

• Wildland Urban Interface – A focus on developing economically viable projects that produce both timber volume, biomass, and strategically reduce fuels so that fire can play a natural role on the landscape, is part of the solution. This can jointly reduce suppression costs, increase timber volume output, and protect community and ecological values.

• Matrix – Over 500,000 acres is designated as “Adaptive Management Area” under the Northwest Forest Plan. This land allocation is supposed to serve as an area to experiment with and learn how to implement ecological forestry, providing for the needs of species of concern while also increasing ecological resilience, economic outputs and social outcomes. There is an extensive road system across most of this land allocation. A suite of innovative and landscape-scale projects in the matrix, supported by the community and aligned with local industry, will accomplish ecologically appropriate and sustainable forest management. They can also serve as the foundation of building collaborative agreement, learning, and practicing adaptive management over time.

• Late Successional Reserves – Active forest management in this allocation is more controversial and poses the most significant limitations to achieving fuels and timber objectives. However, it also offers some of the highest quality critical habitat for late-seral dependent species, and is often located on strategic ridges essential to landscape-scale fuels and fire management strategies. Specific projects, if appropriately designed and implemented, could yield both small sawtimber and biomass. Collaboration around existing and proposed LSR projects can improve ecological, economic and social outcomes from these projects.

Conclusions

Restoring local administration of the Trinity National Forest to the extent of those districts lying primarily within the bounds of Trinity County will greatly increase efficiencies of managing these public lands. This, along with coordinated local investments and USDA support we’ve highlighted; collaboration, effective planning, contracting for consistency and economic viability, and improve interagency coordination, will provide opportunities for ecologically sound, economically sustainable, and socially accepted management of forest lands in Trinity County.
These efforts, and the increased local economic benefits generated through active management of public forest lands in Trinity County, will reduce the continued dependence for federally budgeted funds over time. We must not lose sight of the fact that the Secure Rural Schools and Roads Program has sustained our county roads and school systems, which are absolutely necessary for our economic and social wellbeing. While the changes in forest management described above should have very positive local economic impacts through job creation and associated benefits, those impacts will not eliminate the critical need for the Secure Rural Schools and Roads Program. Therefore a separate, long term funding mechanism for Secure Rural Schools and Road must be found. We believe that Trinity County and the Shasta-Trinity and Six Rivers National Forests can work together in partnership and collaboration to enhance local economic viability through forest management ensuring healthy ecosystems, fire resilient forests, and healthy communities into the future.

**The Opportunity to Promote Economic Development and Sustainable Communities in Trinity County through Effective Collaboration**

*January 2013*

The U.S. Department of Agriculture can significantly affect the viability of Trinity County in four ways:
1) Help Trinity County maximize its local food system
2) Implement co-management of the Trinity Unit of the National Recreation Area
3) Change practices of the U.S. Forest Service that are barriers to economic development
4) Develop an economic support network for forest counties

Some specific recommendations are provided below. For long-term viability and to deal with unforeseen issues, we strongly recommend that a collaborative system be implemented to provide a mechanism for rebuilding and sustaining our county. Such collaboration will benefit the USDA, especially the Forest Service, and community and national stakeholders.

**Help Maximize the Trinity County Food System**

Trinity is geographically isolated by distance, rugged terrain and limited transportation corridors. Events such as snow storms, rock slides and forest fires cut us off from the nearest urban areas with services. Our local farms want to achieve food security by expanding and connecting the pieces of our rudimentary food system, which currently include farmers markets, CSAs, locally-supplemented food banks, and livestock production. Trinity County’s specific needs include shared-use commercial kitchens, cold storage facilities, a mobile poultry processing unit, and a Mobile Harvesting Unit for large animals.
Trinity County wants to expand our school gardens and agricultural marketing website, develop a farm-to-school program, and assist beginning farmers and ranchers. We need USDA assistance with these efforts.

**Implement Co-Management of the Trinity Unit of the Shasta-Trinity NRA**

Tourism is currently the largest source of non-governmental employment in Trinity County. The Trinity Unit of the National Recreation Area contains the features that are most attractive for recreation, including Trinity and Lewiston Lakes. Currently, NRA decisions and policies are made with minimal opportunity for public input or coordination. Co-management of the NRA is vital to promote recreational features and resolve conflicts. Examples of steps that the NRA should take include:

1. Facilitate use of Trinity and Lewiston Lakes, by modifying policies to encourage (not discourage as currently happens) marinas, houseboats, boating access and other water recreation.
2. Amend the Travel Management Plan to resolve inconsistencies, for example street-legal vehicles can traverse the lake bottom at low water levels, but OHVs are prohibited.

**Change USFS Practices that are Barriers to Economic Development**

The USFS controls over 72% of the land in Trinity County. As the largest land manager, changes to their policies and procedures would greatly enhance employment opportunities and grow local businesses.

*Opportunity to Promote Economic Development and Sustainable Communities*

1. The USFS must assist entities building basic infrastructure in the County, rather than impeding them. Examples of steps that the Shasta-Trinity NF should take include:
   a. Expedite the construction of communication towers (cell phone and Broadband) in non-wilderness areas. These towers require special use permits, but are given low priority or denied by USFS staff. The resulting lack of cell phone coverage in many parts of the County is a public safety concern and the lack of Broadband access creates a digital divide.
   b. Facilitate the maintenance of power corridors through USFS lands so that we have reliable power and reduced extended power outages after heavy snow and tree fall. Such power outages have caused local businesses to lose perishable inventory, made location of businesses here less attractive, and risk public safety.
   c. Allow construction of new power lines to serve existing off-grid communities, when appropriate and maintainable, rather than requiring new buried lines. For example, the NRA has not allowed extension of above-ground power lines to the off-grid community of East Fork, home to the County’s largest winery.
   d. Facilitate the operation of County airports by assisting, rather than obstructing, the implementation of FAA and DOT standards and efficiencies, such as the removal of hazard trees in flight paths and completion of the Trinity Center Airport Townsite Act land transfer.
2. The USFS must increase recreational opportunities. Examples include:
a. Incorporate planning for motorized and non-motorized winter sports in recreation plans.
b. Ease contractual requirements and regulatory burdens on outfitters, particularly horse and llama packers.
c. Ease the requirement for special use permits for group hikes in the forest.

3. The USFS must help local businesses compete for USFS dollars and consider appropriate use of USFS lands for income generation. Examples of steps that the Shasta-Trinity NF should take include:
   a. Amend concession and contracting requirements to allow smaller, local companies to compete. For example, the concession for campgrounds in northern Trinity County was recently combined with Shasta Lake. Local potential bidders were unable to cover such a large geographic area. The resulting out-of-county concessionaire imports non-local employees and supplies and provides reduced services.
   b. Utilize existing policies that promote purchases from local suppliers and contractors.
   c. Consider lease (or other appropriate mechanism) of Adaptive Management Areas for encouraging the growth and subsequent harvest of special forest products.

**Develop an Economic Support Network for Forest Counties**

We realize that there are numerous USDA programs and funding sources intended to help rural communities. However, we currently do not have the community or institutional capacity to take advantage of these programs. In addition, some of the funding criteria make it virtually impossible for small population, forested communities to compete. The 2010 Jobs, Economic Development and Sustainable Communities report by USDA Rural Development, California, contains numerous recommendations that would help Trinity County and we strongly support implementation of that report. Some of the specific recommendations are reiterated below.

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**Opportunity to Promote Economic Development and Sustainable Communities**

1. Assign Rural Development and other USDA staff to an office in Trinity County on a part-time, limited term basis (pg 30) to help build local capacity to access USDA funding and programs.

2. USDA/RD should amend criteria for applications for USDA funding to allow forest counties to compete on an equal footing with traditional agriculture. a. Trinity County is over 2 million acres, with consistently high poverty rates, yet overall does not meet the criteria for set asides for a persistent poverty county. USDA should use census block group data, rather than county-wide data in determining eligibility for funding (pg 28).

   b. USDA should consider adding additional criteria that reflect economic constraints in forest counties. For example, the percent of land owned by the federal government, match required per capita, and remoteness.

   c. Trinity County is known for production of marijuana, in part because of the large areas of federal lands coopted by growers. Farms and vineyards raising legitimate crops must compete for water, labor, and materials, which raises production costs. USDA should consider this competition, by using metrics such as the CAMP statistics, in determining funding eligibility. USDA provided funding and technical assistance to poppy growers in
Afghanistan to promote alternative crops, but does not provide similar assistance to farmers in the U.S.
3. USDA should assist in the planning and/or implementation of three large-scale job incubator-type projects that will contribute to a sustainable economy. a. Provide funding or technical assistance to develop a proposal for locating a Data Center in Trinity County. We have the assets to attract such a facility (inexpensive “100% carbon-free” power, mild climate, interested landowner, etc) but do not have the capacity to compile or market a proposal. 
  b. Locate a pilot project, research station or similar facility in Trinity that focuses on methods to treat biomass. Use the biomass in Trinity as a feedstock for an industrial pilot-scale facility, such as the nanocellulose facility created by the Forest Products laboratory, to serve as a model for forest management in the western U.S.
  c. Provide assistance in developing the Trinity Alps Lifelong Learning (TALL) Institute to foster sound natural resource management and provide public education about environmental stewardship, community forestry and urban/forest activities.
4. USDA must provide assistance (funding, technical, or political) to expand Broadband and high-speed access in Trinity County.
5. USDA should assist in developing career training paths for forest counties, including employment in the forest, farm and hospitality industries.
6. USDA can help Trinity County develop a strong tourism industry by partnering in the implementation the 2012 Trinity County Regional Marketing Plan and Advertising Campaign. Using a capacity building grant from the Economic Development Administration, the Trinity County Chamber of Commerce is actively implementing several objectives in the action plan, including a proposed Tourism Business Improvement District.
7. USDA/RD should reconsider the funding caps under the Community Facilities Grants. With increased construction costs, the current caps are inadequate to complete a basic structure, such as a fire station, even with community matching funds.
APPENDIX B
INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

What is your involvement in land management/economic development?
What issues/concerns are important to you, and why?
Are there others you are not very concerned about?
What is the history of these issues/concerns in Trinity County?
Are there any barriers to implementing these issues/concerns?
Are there any opportunities which would facilitate implementing these issues/concerns?
What other individuals or organizations have a stake in these issues?
What are the interests and concerns of those individuals or organizations, as you see them?
Would you be willing to engage in a consensus building effort designed to address this situation?
Do you have any concerns about participating in this process?
Do you have any concerns about the WRTC (Hayfork Watershed Research & Training Center) or TCRCD (Trinity County Resource Conservation District) convening this process?
Is there anyone else that you feel it would be important to include in this process?
Would you be willing to share their contact information?
Is there anything that we have talked about that you would like to remain confidential?
May I contact you again if the need arises?
Thank you for your time.
Appendix C
Interview Analysis Code Categories

Stakeholder Identity
Agriculture person
Economic person
Education person
Environmental person
Fire person
Forester
Government person
Recreation person
Watershed person

Issue
Agriculture
Concerns about process
Economy
Ecosystem restoration
Education/training
Fire
Forestry/forest stewardship
Infrastructure/communication
NEPA
Public safety
Recreation/tourism
USFS
Watershed management
Weaverville Community Forest

Opportunity
Fire
Economy
Ecosystem restoration
Education/training
Forestry
General
Recreation/tourism
USFS
Secretary of Agriculture/USFS Chief
Watershed management
Weaverville Community Forest
Barrier
Economy
Ecosystem restoration
Education/training
Infrastructure
Forestry
General
Recreation/tourism
USFS
Watershed management
Trinity County Collaborative Group

Situation Assessment

Facilitation Team

- Professional & impartial facilitation
- Include all stakeholders equally & fairly
- Process design
- Discuss group organization & decision making processes
- Encouraging & maintaining a positive & productive collaborative environment
- Collective memory
- Trinity County Collaborative Group website:
  trinitycollaborative.net
- **Please sign the sign-in sheet!**
Introduction

- Trinity County faces complex natural resources & economic development issues
  - Recognized need to develop broadly-supported natural resources & economic development approaches
- Board of Supervisors, Trinity County Resource Conservation District, and the Hayfork Watershed Center agree to pursue the formation of a Trinity County Collaborative Group
- Retain a facilitation team to conduct a situation assessment and initiate public process and collaborative formation

Stakeholder Concerns

- Federal land management
- Forest Stewardship
- Fire!
- Economic Development
- Ecological Restoration
- Watershed Management
- Recreation & Tourism
- Infrastructure & Communications
- Education & Training
- Agriculture
- Collaborative process
**Stakeholder Concerns**

- Forest Stewardship & Federal Lands Management
- Watershed Management & Ecological Restoration
- Economic Development
- Recreation & Tourism
- Infrastructure, Communications, Education & Training
- Fire
- Agriculture

**FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT**

- National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) issues
- Paralyzed due to lack of budget and centralization
- Local control: re-administer forest boundaries
- Lost capacity and productive attitude
- Improve USFS contracting to include locals
- Poor use of funds
- Law enforcement issues
- Need to streamline stewardship contracts
- Post-fire issues
- Trinity not treated the same as Shasta side
- Land management plans not economical
- Use of outside contractors for projects
- Transition power to local level
- Outside interests de-railing projects
- Loss of expertise-retiring locals
- Agencies have difficulty connecting to communities
- Lack of support
- Maintaining rural outposts and local workforce
FEDERAL LAND MANAGEMENT

BAR LiERS
- Community and USFS not on same page
- Lack of implementation of Northwest Forest Plan (NFP)
- Economic feasibility of projects
- Lack of action planning
- Lack of responsiveness & collaboration
- Concern agencies won't follow through
- USFS is too heavy with foresters
- Funding
- NEPA preparedness
- Litigation
- Short term thinking
- Defeatist attitudes
- Stewardship contracts with USFS lengthy and difficult
- Risk averse administration

OPPORTUNITIES
- Collaborative planning with local communities
- Local USFS administrative district
- Having input into USFS budget
- Able to go to USFS with 'one voice' local NEPA team-collaborative could assist with NEPA planning
- Contracting
- 2008 Fire, Stafford Fire
- Develop projects for USFS that will allow the line officers to be successful
- Provide buy-in on projects to present to agencies
- USFS Stewardship coordinator or AIA coordinator position
- Interagency coordination
- Planning projects to scale for viability and resilience
- Science-based projects

FOREST STEWARDSHIP

- Active forest management to make forest ecosystems healthier, derive economic benefit & create labor
- Forestry projects that make sense economically and environmentally
- Sustained yield without damaging the forest-sustainable harvest
- Environmental restoration
- National forests important as a renewable resource for public use
- Small projects by locals
- Light management & smaller projects
- Local control: re-administer forest boundaries
- Need to bring in technical advisers-use peer-reviewed science
- Non-Timber Forest Products
- Active plantation management-thinning
- Keep sediment out of the creeks
- Fire safe communities & fire-resilient forests
- Need to be able to go in after burns
- Aligning economic development with good forest stewardship
- Economics are by-product, not the focus
- Opposed to cutting big trees
- Harvest small diameter trees
- Support thinning from below
- Allow woodcutting permits
- Increase locally produced timber
- Develop pine market
- Small diameter logs
- Biomass: value added manufacturing, plastics, co-generation, cottage industries
FOREST STEWARDSHIP

BARRIERS
- Lack of concern for re-stocking
- Litigation
- Agreement on the levels of manipulation/management
- Mill only takes fir and we have pines
- National environmental groups are preservationist only
- Using environmentalism as an excuse for inaction
- Harvesting blocked
- Lack of infrastructure for intensive management

OPPORTUNITIES
- Work in adaptive management & matrix areas
- Create small projects to scale for local contracts
- Explore biomass market & opportunities
- Lots of material to work with on public lands
- People want to work in the woods
- Options with cedar and princess pine
- Local contracting opportunities
- Forest can pay for itself, merchantable trees
- Use projects USFS has we can tweak them
- Recent fires as a catalyst for change
- Projects with 2008 Fires, Stafford Fire

FIRE

- Forest health for communities, wildlife & fire-fighting employees
- Fire-safe communities & public safety
- Fire Resilient Forest Fire Plan
- Treat federal lands for fire
- Fire is a part of natural ecology
- Prepare landscapes so fire regimes can be reintroduced
- Manage Late Seral Reserves to reduce fire risk
- Owls burn in fires too
- Defensible space on a larger scale
- Focus on projects that aid the community wildfire protection plan
- Suppression & protection costs
- Fire suppression
- Prioritize wildlife/urban interface zones (WUI)-fire breaks
- No management=increased fire/insects
- We’re way behind the fire curve
- 100 years of fuel build up in our forests
- Send small logs to Weaverville
- Greenhouse gas emissions and sequestration
- Need to improve economy and provide good jobs so trained fire fighters can stay here
- Local fire safe councils
- Fuels management-fuels reduction
- Reduce fuel load to jump start economy & create local jobs
- Stand density
**FIRE**

**BARRIERS**
- High fire risk
- Management inaction
- Stand density
- Market availability for salvage
- NEPA
- Fuels reduction funding
- Contracting procedures

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- High fire consciousness
- Post-fire logging can deal with fuels overload
- Common safety concerns
- Projects within WUI areas
- Local fire safe councils
- Locally trained fire fighters
- Reduce fire danger through thinning plantations

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**ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT**

- Timber is our economy: trees are Trinity County’s resource need to utilize them & all natural resources
- Create cottage industries
- An economy built on all ideas!
- Generate our own economy, can’t rely on government or grants
- Projects that create products and pay for fuels removal
- Reduce fuels load to jump start economy using local labor
- Hiring/attracting local talent/skills
- Native species propagation
- Jobs – No Boom/Bust
  - Create management and career-ladder jobs
  - Jobs in the woods
  - (re)manufacturing jobs - wood plant, caliney, construction
- Biomass opportunities: landscaping materials, mulch, rocks, etc., pellet factory, co-generation, market chips, sawdust, saw dust, small diameter logs, plastics, value added manufacturing
- Boater recreation
- Utilize farmlands

- Non-Timber Forest Products (x-mas trees, hardwoods, medicinal, food)
- Hire small local contractors for work
- Creating an economic base for families
- Promote an environment where people can start, go into and grow businesses
- Relationship between public safety and increased economic development at the local level
- Develop pine market (with kiln)
- Silicon Valley of natural resources
- Have our own research station; web demonstrations in resources management
- Logging-sustainable harvests
- Aligning economic development with good forest stewardship
- Watershed restoration and forest management: design projects to scale for local contractors
- Forest communities are staking for wood
- Local food production benefits local economy, multiplier effect
- Freight costs make local forests more important
- Focus on projects with economic, ecological and social benefits
## ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

### BARRIERS
- Trinity River Lumber needs guarantee of biomass
- Biomass doesn't pay for itself
- Biomass not economical due to increased fuel costs, haul distance, etc
- Shrinking workforce—losing experienced workers
- Lack of young work force
- Recession
- Extractive resources not coming back, can't rely on that economy
- Lots of locals overtaxed, or don’t have the education or interest in issues
- No market for thinning trees
- Short term thinking

### OPPORTUNITIES
- Biomass plant at TRL
- Explore biomass market
- Biomass could pay for plantation management
- Work in WUI areas—merchantable timber there
- Create small projects to get the community back into the woods
- Income from water sent south
- Low cost electricity
- Promote Trinity County
- Chamber of Commerce interactive storefront
- Keep it local and it will cost out
- Partnerships with fair/utilize fairgrounds
- Local niche markets
- People looking for jobs
- Forest can pay for itself, merchantable trees

## ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

- Address Stafford burn-reforestation project
- Forest practices that are neutral or benefit landscape and wildlife
- Active management to promote healthy forests, for social, ecological and economic benefit
- Need to use peer-reviewed science
- Prepare landscapes so fire can be reintroduced
- Managing for ecosystem health while considering economics
- Thinning from below
- Enhance forests
ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION

BARRIERS
- Concern that timber industry wants to go back to 70's and 80's practices
- Marijuana industry causing increasing environmental damage
- NEPA failures

OPPORTUNITIES
- Restoration opportunities for 2008 Fires, Stafford Fire
- Work in Adaptive Management Areas
- Use current scientific data on forest ecology
- Adaptive management

WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

- Neutral or beneficial landscape impacts-enhance the forest!
- Protect watersheds
- Keep sediment out of waterways
- Fire-safe communities & fire resilient forests
- Prepare landscapes so fire can be reintroduced
- Reduce fire risk in LSRs
- Manage understory of LSRs to enhance old growth characteristics
- Promote intact landscapes and LSRs
- Reduce fuel loads
- Create employment
- Active plantation management
- Explore biomass opportunities

- Wildlife protection
- Address climate adaptation
- Need to work with people who live within proposed project areas
- Make a livable community
- Resilient Ecosystems
- Innovation
- Local pride of stewardship
- Managing for ecosystem health while considering economics
- Ecological and Economic Sustainability
- Forest health for communities and forest employees
- Manage lands in a way that is beneficial to ecosystem & communities
- Base practices on peer-reviewed science-inventory & science
WATERSHED MANAGEMENT

BARRIERS
- Environmental damage from marijuana plantations
- Concern that timber industry wants to go back to 70's and 80's practices
- Agency support and cooperation
- Funding

OPPORTUNITIES
- Biomass could pay for plantation management
- Local pride of stewardship
- Contracting
- Local knowledge
- National credibility of local watershed efforts

RECREATION & TOURISM

- Public access to lakes, rivers, roads, trails & forests
- Clearing trails/trails maintenance
- Houseboat permits and regulations
- Low boat ramp for Trinity Lake
- Consider tourism throughout the county: Hyampom, Hayfork, Southern Trinity
- Bolster/develop recreation

- Wilderness area promised other lands for multiple use but has not happened
- Trinity lake management
- Houseboat permits/overnights
- Contract NRA management to local small businesses
- Advertise Trinity County's recreation opportunities
- Fire danger and public safety
RECREATION & TOURISM

BARRIERS
- Travel management plagues across roads
- Unable to clear trails-FS says no
- Anemic tourism
- Lack of events
- Lack of marketing about TC and what it has to offer
- Limited services
- Lack of lodging in parts of county

OPPORTUNITIES
- Untapped potential for recreation
- Lots of room to grow
- Open up FS roads to touring companies
- Chamber of Commerce interactive storefront
- Create a county events coordinator
- Plenty of capacity on Trinity Lake
- Jeep tours, gold mining tours, bike trails between communities, haunted highway tours
- Fly fishing & wine fair
- Back country, cross country skiing
- Winter fishing
- Backpacking
- More hands-on booths at museum
- Public/private partnerships for tours
- Positive public perception of talents recreation
- Summer camps

INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNICATIONS

- Cellphone towers
- Build local capacity & productive relationships on all levels
- Develop/import talented and skilled labor force
- Create a Trinity County research station

- Increased advertising for Trinity County
- Need analysis of communications networks available in Trinity County for information & idea sharing
- Broadband—need this to attract people
**INFRASTRUCTURE & COMMUNICATIONS**

**BARRIERS**
- Communications (broadband) crux of problem
- Lack of infrastructure
- No services
- Local capacity constrained communications systems
- Natural resources people don't communicate with public well
- Geography and isolation

**OPPORTUNITIES**
- Look at the broadband project in Happy Camp
- Link Trinity County to broader multi-county networks
- Innovation

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**EDUCATION & TRAINING**

- Create economic opportunities for people who are trained here so they can stay here
- Create degree/certificate programs in Trinity County
- Need to use best available, peer-reviewed science
- Need to get information to Communities
- Need to educate general public

- Community that cares about and understands how ecosystem works
- Need to work with people who live in potential project areas
- Educate and encourage youth to pursue higher education in relevant fields
- Teach kids about land management through schools and local camps
EDUCATION & TRAINING

BARRIERS
- Lots of locals overtaxed, or don’t have the education or interest in issues
- Lack of real data
- Poor methodology

OPPORTUNITIES
- RCD & WRTC sharing more data, i.e.: GIS data
- Working technology in; demonstrating data and educating public
- Shasta College Outreach
- HSU Extension

AGRICULTURE

- Food security, what happens in event of crisis, can county feed itself?
- Utilize local knowledge
- Local Food Systems
- Grow food locally for schools & hospital

- Local food production benefits local economy, “multiplier effect”
- Trinity County agricultural sales
- Healthy communities
AGRICULTURE

BARRIERS
- Funding for local projects
- Lack of infrastructure
- Water availability
- Local culture
- Aging farmers and ranchers
- There are buyers but no product
- Economics
- Fuel costs/haul distance

OPPORTUNITIES
- Potential to increase agricultural sales
- Local culture & knowledge
- Market for local products
- Community Supported Agriculture (CSA)
- Mobile Poultry Unit
- Trinity Homegrown Foods membership
- Farmer’s Markets
- School and Hospital Markets

COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

- “another collaborative?”
- Importance of transparency
- Public outreach and representation
- Explore collaborative models & decision making processes
- Need to establish a sustainable, self-funded collaboration
- Need to bring in technical advisors
- Role of facilitators=not decision makers
  - Facilitator’s assist with rules & time keeping
  - Facilitators need to not have preconceived notions
- Concern about public behavior
  - Steamrollers
  - Minority like to sabotage process

- Should only address natural resource issues- other issues should be separate
- Stakeholders need to be pared down
- Consistent participation
- Daytime meetings bad for working people
- Concern about timing, length & location of meetings
- Reliving history and past fights
- Need to open it up to the community at large-need new voices at the table
- Speakers going off track before full discussion completed
- Weaverville does not represent county-need to include all of Trinity County
- Be willing to adapt and move forward
### Collaborative Process

#### Barriers
- Fighting among ourselves
- Do we have will to move forward?
- Getting bogged down in details
- Past conflicts can hear the tension in peoples’ voices
- Public comment period with FS has no teeth—need different approach
- Loss of local knowledge
- Lack of awareness
- Mistrust and Animosity blocking the process
- Lots if talk, no action
- Vague objective
- Conflicts of interest
- Too much focus on Weaverville

#### Opportunities
- Community ready to take action
- Spotlight from USDA
- Naming and reframing past conflicts
- All sides frustrated; feeling more connect and ready to move forward with more meaningful conversations
- Believes collaboration works
- Place to develop innovative ideas
- New vision of the future
- Local knowledge
- Common safety concerns
- New Perspectives

### Areas of Agreement

#### Need to do something! Take action!
- Desire for increased local representation in forest & recreation management
- Managing forests for community & forest health
- Plantation stand management
- Fire-resilient forests & fire-safe communities
- WCF is a good model of successful collaboration
- Increasing public information & education
- Focus on scale and viability of projects

#### Importance of long term thinking
- Projects need to be based on science—need to have technical/scientific advisors
- Start with projects addressing wildland/urban interface, fire-safety & plantation management
- Focus on matrix and adaptive management areas
- Generate local employment & hire locally!
- Opportunities for stewardship contracts
- Research biomass opportunities
Participation Requirements

- Time & energy!
- Consistent attendance or participation
- Attend all meetings
- Be part of committees
- Being a conduit with community
- Be able to spend time on ‘homework’
- Have an honest desire to work on the issues and an open willingness to adapt
- Have patience and respect for the opinions of others
- Commitment to the process & to progress
- Help developing and following charter/bylaws
Collaborative Group Actions

- Monthly or bi-monthly meetings to organize Group
  - Schedule meeting dates
- Stakeholders
  - How to become a stakeholder
  - Options for selecting stakeholders
- Issues box & blank cards-please
  - Please sign the sign-in sheet!

Resources

- Trinity County Collaborative Group Website: [http://trinitycollaborative.net/](http://trinitycollaborative.net/)
- Check out the Successes, Charters & Bylaws of other Collaborative Groups:
  - 4 Forest Restoration Initiative: [http://www.4fri.org/index.html](http://www.4fri.org/index.html)
  - Blue Mountains Forest Partners: [https://sites.google.com/site/bluemountainsforestpartners/](https://sites.google.com/site/bluemountainsforestpartners/)
  - Amador-Calaveras Consensus Group: [https://acconsensus.wordpress.com/](https://acconsensus.wordpress.com/)
  - Dinkey Creek Collaborative: [http://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/sierra/landmanagement/planning/?cid=stelprdb5351838&width=full](http://www.fs.usda.gov/detailfull/sierra/landmanagement/planning/?cid=stelprdb5351838&width=full)
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APPENDIX E
TRINITY COUNTY COLLABORATIVE GROUP CHARTER

Trinity County Collaborative Group Charter
www.trinitycollaborative.net

**Background**

Controversy over public and private forest and rangeland management, wildfire risks and impacts, water use and rights, and the decline of the natural resource-based economy in Trinity County has made apparent the need for a sustained, cohesive and collaborative strategy for identifying and pursuing broadly-supported natural resource approaches for the county, and the public and private land managers charged as the stewards of our lands and waters.

Local and federal land management agencies can achieve increased public support and capitalize on local knowledge of the landscape and forest operations by emphasizing unified collaboration with the local community and stakeholders in planning and packaging projects and contracts for economic, ecological and social viability.

In the fall of 2012, the Trinity County Board of Supervisors approved the formation of a natural resources and economic development advisory group and assigned two Supervisors to the effort. During the winter, a group representing agencies at the national, state, regional and local levels participated in a series of meetings with Trinity County representatives and citizens, to work towards a revitalized economic, social and ecological condition in the county. One of the priority actions that resulted from those meetings was to form a countywide collaborative to address land management in Trinity County.

In Spring 2013 the Trinity County Collaborative Group (hereby referred to as Collaborative) formed as a joint effort between Trinity County citizens, organizations, businesses and government, and federal land management agencies to collaborate on natural resource, land management and economic development approaches.

**Purpose/Overview**

The purpose of this charter is to outline an operating process for members of the Collaborative. It explains the structure, planning and decision-making process, and procedural guidelines for members of the Collaborative. Collaborative members developed this charter together and are willing to abide by and adhere to this
document. This is a living document and may evolve to suit the needs and opportunities of the Collaborative.

Vision, Mission & Goals

Vision: The vision of the Collaborative is to be an inclusive and successful natural resources, land management and economic development advisory group that supports safe and vibrant communities, thriving economies, and ecological resilience, through sustainable resource use and stewardship practices.

Mission: The mission of the Collaborative is to create and recommend for implementation, natural resources, land management and economic development strategies driven by local values and goals that: 1) acknowledge the interrelation between community, economy and ecology; 2) provide solutions for sustainable and resilient economic and ecological practices and projects; 3) foster a culture of stewardship; 4) improve our community, economy and ecology; 5) create a better place for future generations.

Goals:
- Create local capacity for an engaged and educated community.
- Advise the Trinity County Board of Supervisors on practices and projects that fit the vision and mission of the Collaborative.
- Promote practices and projects that contribute to public safety and fire resilience.
- Develop a strong economic base.
- Work with agencies and partners on designing and implementing projects that fit the vision and mission of the Collaborative.

Guiding Principles

- The Collaborative has the support of the Trinity County Board of Supervisors.
- The Collaborative will recognize other local groups’ efforts and strive to maintain consistency and coordination with these groups.
- The Collaborative will maintain high standards for evaluating progress and success.
- The Collaborative will strive to make decisions based on peer-reviewed science, local knowledge and experience.
- The Collaborative will respect and recognize the legitimacy of all viewpoints.
• the Collaborative will attempt to achieve the highest possible level of transparency and inclusion.
• All Collaborative members will respect the ground rules, guiding principles, vision, mission and goals of the Collaborative.
• The Collaborative will maintain an environment that promotes open, frank and constructive discussion. Collaborative members recognize that such an environment must be built on mutual respect and trust, and each commits to avoid actions that would damage that trust.

Ground Rules

1. Members will practice self-control and group policing for all ground rules.
2. Members will show respect for other members and their time.
3. Members are responsible for staying up to date and coming to meetings prepared.
4. Personal attacks will not be tolerated.
5. Process-bullying will not be tolerated.
6. Members should be prepared to respect and participate in any issue raised by the collaborative.
7. Members should strive to speak and share their viewpoints so that others can hear them.
8. Members should help each other ‘reframe’ viewpoints so they can be heard.
9. Members wear lots of ‘hats’ within the community; acknowledge your roles and interests.
10. Speak one person at a time and refrain from side conversations.
11. Facilitators will seek to hear from people who haven’t spoken before those who have already been heard.
12. Collaborative members will set the agenda.
13. Respect the facilitators and the agenda-stay on topic.
14. Cell phones will be silenced during meetings- emergency personnel excepted.
15. Group will discuss items thoroughly before voting.
16. Ground rules may be removed, revised or added through membership voting.
17. The Collaborative will self-evaluate its progress based on quantifiable definition(s) of success.
18. The Collaborative will not backtrack for any member.

Becoming a Member

In order to become a voting member of the Collaborative, a new participant must complete the following:
• Attend two consecutive meetings as a contributing participant without voting privileges.
• Demonstrate that they are knowledgeable about the background, history and current issues of the group.

If necessary, a current member may act as a mentor to help the new participant get up to speed.

**Active Membership Status (Effective 5/17/13)**

The following requirements will be used to maintain active membership status in the event of absence(s) from Collaborative meetings:

• A member who misses one meeting will be expected to inform themselves of the issues discussed and decisions made during their absence.
• A member who misses three or more consecutive meetings must attend two consecutive meetings as a contributing observer without voting privileges in order to reinstate active membership status and voting privileges.
• Members may send a designated proxy to participate in full collaborative and/or work group meetings for one or two consecutive absences.
  o A proxy must be an informed affiliate or member of the organization, business, entity or individual being represented, and be able to represent the active member in decision-making.
  o Members must inform their proxy of their absence before the missed meeting.
  o Proxies must notify the facilitators who they are a proxy for at the beginning of the meeting and must write ‘proxy’ and their initials on the meeting sign-in sheet for the member that they are a proxy for, otherwise the member will be considered absent.
  o A member may only serve as a proxy for another member for two consecutive meetings; if a member is absent three consecutive meetings they will need to re-establish their membership status as outlined.
  o Members may only be a proxy for one person at a time.

**Role of Federal, State and Local Government Agency Representatives**
• Government agency representatives will participate in the Collaborative as voting members.
• Agency representatives will report to their organizations and superiors through regularly scheduled agency meetings and will be committed to relaying the status of the Collaborative through the proper channels.
• Agency representatives will provide transparency about the limitations of their authority and seek to inform the Collaborative about agency policies and constraints that may affect the goals of the Collaborative.
• Government representatives will strive to align and communicate with other agencies in an effort to form government-government relationships that will strengthen the efforts of the Collaborative.
• Government agency representatives will be committed to the collaborative process and maintain active engagement at meetings, project planning, etc. They will offer resource information, share historical data and provide local knowledge and technical expertise.

**Decision Making**

The Collaborative will strive to achieve the highest level of consensus possible on every decision. All active members will be voting members. In the event that full consensus cannot be achieved, decisions will be made based on the following modified consensus guidelines:

- A voting member must be present or identify a designated proxy in order to submit a vote; absentee voting will not be accepted.
- Modified consensus is 80% consensus, and represents a majority vote.
- Members in the minority who disagree with the vote are strongly encouraged, but not required, to voice their reasons for the group to discuss as a whole.
- Additional voting may take place after minority viewpoints are discussed to determine if there is a change in the level of consensus.
- A Collaborative member or a facilitator must call for a re-vote, otherwise the original vote will stand.
- A record of decision may be made when modified consensus (80%) has been reached after minority viewpoints have been shared, discussed and voted on.
- Any member who disagrees with the record of decision may ask to have their dissent included with the record of decision.
- Time sensitive issues: If an issue requires an action to be taken before the next meeting date members will utilize the Trinity County Collaborative Group forum (available at: [http://www.trinitycollaborative.net/forum/](http://www.trinitycollaborative.net/forum/)) to disseminate necessary information and to call for a vote. Members must be notified via e-mail that a time sensitive issue has been posted to the forum. Information must be available...
no less than seven days before a vote can be recorded, and an ending time for accepting votes must be displayed.

**Public Observation & Input**

- Collaborative meetings will be open to public observation.
- Facilitated public input will be allowed at Collaborative meetings.
- Members of the public who would like to contribute their input must arrive at the meeting on time and check-in with the meeting facilitator.
- Guidelines for public comment will be announced at the beginning of each meeting.
- Public input will be restricted to three minutes per person; this may be waived at the discretion of the Collaborative.
- Public input on a potential actionable item will be allowed after the completion of Collaborative members’ discussion of the item and prior to voting.
- Public input on items not covered by the agenda will be allowed at the end of the meeting.

**Meetings & Agenda**

- Meetings will alternate between Weaverville and Hayfork.
- All meetings will be video and/or audio recorded for both Collaborative members and public access.
- Full Collaborative meetings will be held on the third Friday of every month, and more frequently according to the needs and discretion of Collaborative members.
- Work group meetings will be held during full group meetings and more frequently according to the needs and discretion of the work groups.
- Agendas will be posted to the website and distributed via e-mail at least one week prior to the meeting. In order to accommodate time sensitive and emergency issues the finalized agenda will be re-sent 24 hours prior to the meeting with any noted changes.
  - Additionally there will be a standing agenda item to address time sensitive or emergency issues.

**Internal and External Communication**
The Collaborative will strive for complete internal and external transparency in all communication between members and when reporting out to the public. With this principle in mind, the following efforts will be made by the group:

- Meeting agenda and any documents relevant to the next meeting will be circulated no later than one week prior to the scheduled meeting.
- Attendance list, collective memory, records of decisions made, and any other notes that are generated from meetings will be distributed via an e-mail list as well as posted to the Collaborative website (www.trinitycollaborative.net) no later than one week after the meeting has taken place.
- Collaborative members’ contact information will be kept private and for internal use only.
- Collaborative meetings will be announced in the Trinity Journal and on the website.
- Public announcements regarding any formal recommendations made by the Collaborative to the Trinity County Board of Supervisors will be listed in the Board of Supervisors agenda.
- Regular reports will be made at the Trinity County Board of Supervisors meetings.
- Interested parties and meeting attendees will be included in the Collaborative’s e-mail list and will receive announcements and documentation for each meeting.

In an effort to maintain mutual respect and trust within the Collaborative, when communicating externally about the Collaborative’s work, including communicating with the news media, elected officials, political appointees, and agency employees, each member agrees to:

- Speak only for themselves or the organization they represent.
- Where the Collaborative has agreed to proceed, but there are members that have expressed reservations, the intent of any outside expression of those reservations will not be to undercut the Collaborative’s agreement. In addition, members with reservations should be treated respectfully.
- Avoid interpreting the motivations of others.
- Consider the impact that a public statement may have on the Collaborative, mutual trust, and the ability for the Collaborative to complete its work.

### Media

The Collaborative will identify designated media liaisons who will represent the efforts of the Collaborative to the media. All media inquiries should be referred to these
individuals. In the event a press release is needed, Collaborative members will collectively review and approve the content before distribution. With the exception of public access video, the local news media will not be expressly invited to Collaborative meetings, but are welcome to attend as public observers.

**Evaluation**

The Collaborative will create benchmarks and criteria with which to measure and monitor the success and progress of the endeavors of the Collaborative. Evaluation criteria may also be created by work groups and committees for specific projects, and based on the objectives and goals of those particular projects.

**Work Groups & Committees**

Due to the many varied and timely issues facing Trinity County, the Collaborative recognizes the importance of creating work groups and committees designed to approach various tasks expeditiously and with focus. The intent, composition and structure of the work groups and committees will be decided by the entire Collaborative and will depend largely on the objectives, goals and needs of the work groups and committees themselves.

- Work groups and committees will schedule their own meetings on an as needed basis.
- Work groups and committees will report to the collaborative group on any interim meetings that have taken place. Reports should focus on the major topics of discussion, the direction the work group/committee is moving in, and any actions taken.
- Voting in work groups/committees will follow the same decision-making procedure as it is outlined for the Collaborative.