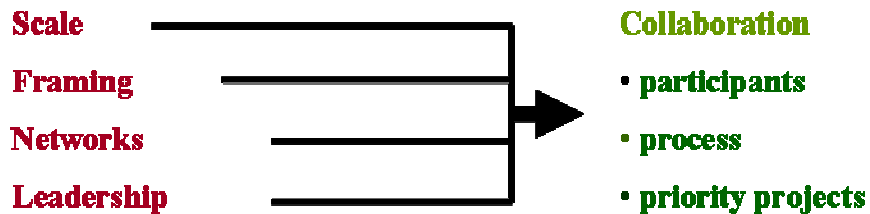


# COMMUNITY WILDFIRE PROTECTION PLANS

Enhancing Collaboration & Building Community Capacity

## Quick-Guide #10: Factors that Influence Collaboration

*Collaboration* involves diverse stakeholders working together to resolve conflicts or achieve goals that cannot be achieved alone. In community wildfire protection plans, there are a number of factors that influence the collaborative process, in terms of who participates, the process itself, and the types and priorities for projects.

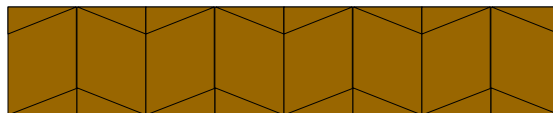


### Scale

A CWPP must be “agreed to by the applicable local government, local fire department, and State agency responsible for forest management...” (HFRA 2003). This applicable local government term has been widely interpreted when it comes to the planning scale of CWPPs, and ultimately impacts the collaborative process. There is no best scale to work at: pick the scale where you can make something happen! Consider the tension between:



(over)





## Framing

Framing really means how people understand the wildfire problem. In terms of CWPPs and collaboration, the framing of the wildfire issue in a community can have a strong influence over who is invited to participate. To avoid excluding participants, you must evaluate the boundaries of your frame when you begin a CWPP.

Some common frames that were identified in our case study communities included:

- ◇ Safety: focused on access/egress, evacuation, and improved suppression efforts; included emergency management and land management agencies
- ◇ Fuels Reduction: project priorities included prescribed burning and mechanical thinning; these plans required strong leadership from federal and state land management agencies
- ◇ Restoration and Watershed Protection: projects may focus on forest health and require cooperation from multiple levels and groups including environmental interests.

## Networks

The networks brought into a CWPP process can also influence the collaborative process, especially the ability to access additional resources and bring in the right people.

- ◇ Start with good relationships and pre-existing networks.
- ◇ Trust across networks leads to increased openness to share information and willingness to consider future collaboration.
- ◇ The networks pulled into the CWPP process influence who is involved and the resources available.
- ◇ Not all networks need to be involved to the same degree. Some can be kept in the CWPP process through information links alone.
- ◇ Individuals who represent two networks might be an efficient means to strengthen how different networks can support the CWPP.

## Leadership

Several different aspects of leadership influence the collaborative CWPP process. In particular, local leadership is important, as local leaders can provide heart, goals, and links to others, and act as “spark plugs” or “cheerleaders.” Local leaders can also provide:

- ◇ legitimacy – in terms of collaboration, local leadership can legitimize the plan in the eyes of the community and bring in additional support and interest;
- ◇ local knowledge – volunteer fire departments, local officials, and even local field staff bring local knowledge to the table; and
- ◇ political influence – without local leadership, a CWPP may lack political influence and the will to get things done.

Another important aspect of leadership is the idea of intermediaries. An intermediary is an individual or organization that brings networks and resources to the CWPP process, and bridges gaps in information and resources. Often times, an intermediary shares knowledge and experience with multiple CWPPs. In some of our case study communities, an intermediary was a true neutral third party, such as a quasi-governmental planning commission or a paid consultant. In other communities, key participants in the CWPP played critical leadership and intermediary roles and functions at different steps in the process.

