

JFS Project Notes

Developing the Research Questions

Background:

During the summer and fall of 2006, the JFS Research Team will be conducting a series of case studies of collaboration in community wildfire protection plans (CWPP's) among ten communities. Over the past year, based on three pilot studies, discussions with the projects advisory committee, and an extensive conceptual development process, the primary research questions have been formulated for discussion with key community participants.

Although the actual questions are not presented in this **Project Update**, the general guide and substantive topics are illustrated below.

Purpose:

The primary intent of this **Update** is to acquaint interested parties with the general framework for the upcoming case study research, and the significant areas of inquiry being pursued.

Focus:

The inquiry into collaboration in CWPP development is focused within three primary areas: the *community context* at the time the CWPP was being developed; the *process* steps and collaborative methods utilized to formulate the CWPP; and the immediate and longer term *outcomes* of constructing and implementing the CWPP.

Community Context:

This section of the case study seeks to understand the community situations within which the CWPP's were developed. Exploration focuses on the following topics:

- How has the community approached natural resource and/or wildfire issues in the past?
- How has wildfire been understood as a community concern?
- What governmental and non-governmental groups have been involved in wildfire protection in the past?

CWPP Collaborative Process:

This area of questions addresses the methods and procedures utilized by the community and its representatives to produce the CWPP. Among the themes addressed are the following:

- How the CWPP was initiated.
- Who the major involved players were.
- The use of goals and objective and the decision-making process.
- Critical resources and tools used.
- Methods for sharing information within the collaborative process.

Outcomes of the CWPP Process:

In the final section of the inquiry, attention is focused on the outcomes resulting from the community's collaborative work to create and implement a wildfire protection plan. The types of potential outcomes to be explored include the following:

- New community understandings of the wildfire problem or issue.
- Whether relationships among community members and organizations have changed.
- The CWPP's action plan and its relationship to the four goals of the National Fire Plan—i.e., reducing fuels, restoring forests, private property responsibility for fuels management, and improving wildfire suppression efforts.
- Challenges to on-going CWPP implementation.
- Overall “lessons learned” from the collaborative CWPP process.

Looking Ahead:

As a key part of the inquiry into the role of collaboration in CWPP development, the Project Team is building ways to make available the most significant lessons learned as well as challenges experienced by the ten case study communities. This effort is called Knowledge Transfer, and it will essentially mirror the important findings which result from the three sections above, i.e. the community context, the collaborative CWPP process, and the outcomes of planning and implementation.

KT Concept Mapping		
Context	Process	Outcomes
<u>Collaborative Capacities:</u> Community Problem-solving history Previous Involvement In Wildfire Issues Preparedness-working together-responsibility Capacity-networking Perceptions of Wildfire Threat-Framing	Initiation approaches Entrepreneurship/ Leadership/organizations/ intermediaries Participant Invitation approaches Representation/Key Partner Roles/ Contributions Decision-making process and criteria Process Design/use of CWPP template or not	Shared Understanding of Wildfire risks, WUI, etc Increased Community Awareness Social Learning New/Improved relationships Community Capacity Ability to achieve NFP Goals
<u>Community Resource Base:</u> Background Capitals and assets	Information sharing/content and process/learning Wildfire Issue Framing	Implementation potential Challenges experienced
Content elements such as maps, guidebooks, directives, plans, and fire assessment tools and models may occur across all three of these areas.		

Additional Information on the Research Protocol:

If additional information is sought on the research methods and procedures for the ten case study communities, it can be obtained through contacting the following members of the research team:

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Additional Information on the Knowledge Transfer:

Several explanatory documents are available on the knowledge transfer component of the JFS Project. They will soon be available on the project website at
<http://jfsp.fortlewis.edu/reports.asp>.

Information can also be obtained by contacting either of the following staff members

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