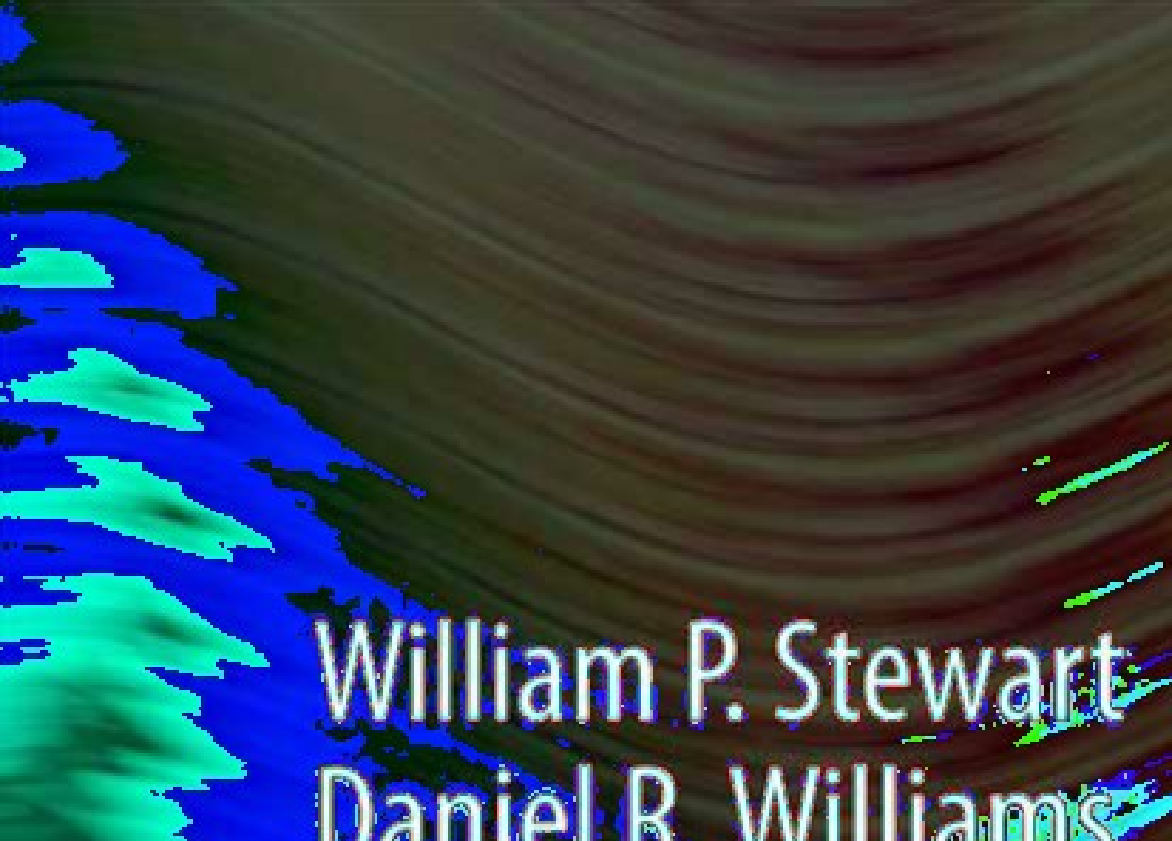

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Place-Based Conservation

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Place-Based Conservation

Perspectives from the Social Sciences

Springer

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Preface

The seed was planted in 2006. The three of us were in Vancouver for the 12th International Symposium on Society and Resource Management (ISSRM). Along with other colleagues we recently completed a workshop focused on understanding concepts of place in research and management (Kruger, Hall, & Stiefel, 2008, *Understanding Concepts of Place in Recreation Research and Management*, PNW-GTR-744). The lively dialogue of the Vancouver ISSRM led to a continuation of strategies to connect place research to management practice. We found ourselves moving between two distinct sets of concurrent sessions—those on place and those on planning and policy. We were intrigued by both yet concerned they were not referencing one another's thoughts. The "problem" for place researchers was to characterize human relationships to place, and the "problem" for planning and policy scholars was focused on governance processes that democratize and enhance collaboration. We imagined the potential insight from integrating these two streams of thought.

We wondered if others saw the potential. At the 13th ISSRM in Park City, Utah in 2007, we organized a panel session to calibrate the level of interest in exploring the insight of connecting place to decision-making. We were grateful that Jim Burchfield (University of Montana) and Tarla Rai Peterson (Texas A&M University) joined as part of our panel discussion, as well as a spirited audience interested in the topic. From there we organized a call for abstracts, a peer-review process, and ultimately the framework for this book project. Along the way we met for an intimate workshop at the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center on the southwestern shore of Lake Superior in September, 2008. The workshop was designed for contributors to build on one another, to learn about connections and tensions between our work, and ultimately to shape a set of chapters that connect place to conservation practice.

It was clear that we had an enthusiastic group of contributors. During the course of subsequent ISSRMs in Burlington, Vermont (2008), and Vienna, Austria (2009), many of us met in planned sessions to further connect our ideas and explore place as a central concept for conservation decision-making. We listened well to one another, shared comments, and withstood serial peer-reviews of short abstracts,

extended abstracts, rough drafts, and final drafts. We even employed a professional copy editor who engaged us in the most extensive red-lining imaginable.

As the development of the book evolved we became aware of unique perspectives in which the social sciences approach place. The concept of "place" has been used across many disciplines, and is often used synonymously with geographic location. For example in their edited book *Place Matters*, Wright and Scholz (2005) portray geospatial configurations as being essential to understand advancement in marine fisheries conservation. In this case "place" refers to the physical geography of specific locations on the ocean's floor. Place also has been used by ecologists to connote the natural history of any given site. For example in an edited book *The Ecology of Place*, Billick and Price (2010) champion the virtues of ecological research focused on small field sites and the thoroughness of scientifically studying a single site, or in their terms, development of a "place-centered database." Because the concept has been applied in such distinct ways and has been integrated with everyday language, a growing contribution of this book was to distinguish "place" in ways that justify, clarify, and shape sensitivities regarding social scientific approaches to place.

We have many people to thank. The ISSRMs have been a wonderful set of forums without which we—quite literally—would not have come together. The U.S.D.A. Forest Service was generous in their support for several aspects in the development of this book. In particular, the Rocky Mountain Research Station provided resources to organize and under-write the developmental stages, including the workshop in northern Wisconsin, and the final stage to ensure a coherently written text. The Pacific Northwest Research Station also provided resources that moved this project forward at crucial times. From the University of Idaho, Troy Hall provided advice in the early stages of this project, served as a reviewer, and facilitated our place-based workshop. We are indebted to Matt Carroll of Washington State University and Paul Gobster of the U.S.D.A. Forest Service Northern Research Station for their review comments on a previous draft of the entire book; their comments came at an important juncture in our thinking and helped frame the book as perspectives from the social sciences. At the University of Illinois Jonathan Hicks was an important force who maintained a website for the project, organized the flow of reviews and comments, and along with James Barkley, planned the workshop; Douglas Heintz also of the University of Illinois provided technical assistance along with checks for citations and references.

The staff of the Northern Great Lakes Visitor Center was as warm and welcoming as could be for a workshop of 25 people, and it was made even more enjoyable by the delectable set of meals and snacks prepared by the Ashland Baking Company. We are also grateful for Noreen Parks of Port Townsend, Washington, for the most rigorous copy editing we have ever withstood; the text of the book would be quite different without her able assistance. Lastly, we appreciate Springer-Verlag staff for their confidence in our work and their patience with the many iterations of our chapter review process.

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Chapter 1
The Emergence of Place-Based Conservation

Daniel R. Williams, William P. Stewart, and Linda E. Kruger

Abstract Place has emerged as a significant topic within conservation research and practice. The transformative changes connected to contemporary conservation are related to recognition of multi-scaled, social-ecological dynamics; emergent, multi-scaled governance structures; and rising importance of place-specific meanings and local knowledge. These transformative changes are central to place-based conservation and closely tied to the social sciences. There is no singular approach to place-based conservation; however there are ways to organize the complexity of related ideas. This chapter overviews the purpose of the book as a resource for researchers and practitioners to build the conceptual grounding for place-based conservation, including characterizations of the meaning of place, their relevance to conservation, and an explanation for the organization of the book.

Keywords Concept of place • Place meaning • Polycentric governance • Complexity theory • Enlightenment science

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The concept of *place* has become an increasingly prominent topic with mounting influence on natural resource management and conservation practice. Examples of place-based conservation include collaborative landscape stewardship, climate change adaptation, ecosystem management, conservation legislation, regional tourism planning, open-space preservation, and community development. The growing attention to place-based conservation is most often acknowledged in the context of extending greater consideration to place-specific values, meanings, and relationships in management practice. However, a broad range of professionals increasingly recognizes the importance of scale and place-based processes as emerging frontiers for natural resource management (Adger, Barnett, Chapin, & Ellemor, 2011; Billick & Price, 2010; Gillen, 2004; Olsen, Kleiven, Skjoldal, & von Quillfeldt, 2011; Williams, 2008).

This frontier has several fronts. One focuses on charting place-based values and sentiments as embodied in ideas such as *sense of place, special places*, and *place attachment* among stakeholders and local residents (Kruger & Jakes, 2003). Another emphasizes the importance of context-sensitive management and collaborative place-based planning processes (Mason, 2007). A third frontier derives from place-based considerations emerging from diverse disciplines such as ecology, computer science, urban planning, public health, and community development (Billick & Price, 2010; Gillen, 2004).

Sensing this new frontier, U.S. government conservation agencies have begun to address issues of place. Recognizing the complexity of integrating conservation efforts across all species and resources, in 2010 the U.S. Department of Interior established a nationwide network of 21 Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs). The aim is to move away from the bureaucratic stovepipes of resource responsibilities and jurisdictional boundaries to facilitate conservation planning at a scale and scope beyond the capacity of any one organization. The resulting LCCs are regional place-based partnerships comprised of federal, state, tribal, local, nonprofit and private stakeholders to facilitate communication, share the results of research, and strategically target and implement additional research and actions to meet shared conservation goals (Wood & Hoffman, 2011, p. 9). In another example, the Pacific Northwest Region of the U.S. Forest Service has put "valuing places" at the top of its strategic agenda as a core management task and has been a leader in efforts to map *sense-of-place values* across the region (Hall, Farnum, Slider, & Ludlow, 2009). Similarly, in developing a management plan The New River Gorge National River in West Virginia (administered by the U.S. National Park Service) sponsored a dialogue with stakeholders on the values connected to the park and made an effort to reflect a shared sense of stewardship in the park's mission. Outside the U.S., the Department of Urban Affairs and Planning in New South Wales, Australia, has adopted a "Plan First" initiative to promote "a place-based approach to plan preparation," in part to stress "the role of local communities in defining a sense of identity and how local agencies can specify and deliver environmental sustainability" (Gillen, 2004, p. 215). Similarly, Olsen et al. (2011) point to a case study in Norway to highlight the growing international interest in the development and implementation of place-based management through the designation of marine

protected areas and similar designations "where identification of key ecosystem functions and boundaries have carried a large weight in defining the area boundaries … in contrast to other examples of area-based management that have political or management parentage" (p. 258). Elsewhere, Lejano and Ingram (2007) draw lessons for what they describe as place-based conservation in the Republic of the Philippines's Turtle Islands by showing how context-sensitive management that respects local traditions proved superior to regulatory approaches in conserving endangered marine turtles.

While these isolated examples indicate an increasing interest in place-based conservation, the transformative changes in the resource conservation practice that they portend are beginning to drive the conservation agenda at the highest policy levels and yet remain murky in the minds of many natural resource managers. As one example, one author (Williams) recently attended the first National Landscape Conservation Cooperative Workshop (organized by the U.S. Department of Interior and held in Denver Colorado in March 2012, with over 400 conservation scientists and practitioners in attendance) in which discussions and debates over the value, vision, and political viability of landscape-scale conservation dominated the plenary sessions. While there was evident enthusiasm for the LCC idea overall, the effectiveness of the approach was still very much in question. Thus a key aim of this book is to examine both the social science foundations and emerging practices that underlie this move towards place-based conservation.

As used in this book, *place-based conservation* signifies a "spatial turn" in ecological, social, and political thought (Pugh, 2009) and a "quieter revolution" (i.e., less regulatory and more collaborative) in conservation practice (Mason, 2007) both of which have emerged over the past quarter-century. Conceptually, a simple, unifying definition of place-based conservation is difficult to pin down and may not be necessary. In a more comprehensive sense the term reflects three broad, interrelated changes to conservation practice relative to classic multiple-use management, which predominated over most of the twentieth century. First, it involves a shift in the framing of analyses from non-spatial modeling of the production of resource commodities to multi-scaled modeling of complex, social-ecological system dynamics, as reflected in the literature on ecosystem management (Christensen et al., 1996) and ecological resilience (Gunderson, 2000). Second, it involves a shift from largely top-down, expert-driven decision-making structures to polycentric governance emphasizing inclusiveness and collaboration (Wessells, 2010; Young et al., 2007). Third, place-based conservation encompasses wider considerations of local knowledge (Fischer, 2000) and the historical, cultural, and symbolic significance of places, emphasizing the context within which people derive meaning and identity in their lives (Adger et al., 2011; Brandenburg & Carroll, 1995).

These altered perspectives have contributed to a more geographically explicit emphasis in conservation compared to earlier utilitarian models. The results expand spatial considerations both upward and downward in scale. Consistent with the turn toward ecosystem management and complexity theory in ecology over the past two decades, place-based conservation involves expanding analytical horizons from highly localized sites to broader examinations of landscape-scale interactions and processes.

With respect to knowledge and governance, however, place-based conservation is often motivated by a stronger role for more localized and bottom-up decision-making processes. In either case, a greater appreciation of polycentricity and interactions at multiple scales has emerged, such that considerations of place and scale have become indispensable factors organizing conservation science and practice.

Despite increasing references to place in conservation practice, place in geography and social research remains a complex idea that continues to challenge philosophers and scientists (Casey, 1998). On the one hand, it would be difficult to navigate, much less make sense of, the world without a fundamental ability to distinguish places and recognize the names we give them. Place names function as a powerful geographic short-hand for conveying material, cultural and locational significance. On the other hand, in everyday life we give little thought to the way places come into being and change over time. We often speak of named places as if their existence is objective, natural, and enduring, and yet places are created and continuously transformed by human discourse and action. Understanding the social processes that create and transform places is essential to advancing place-based conservation. To that end, this introductory chapter aims to provide an orientation to three questions:

- What is "place"? Specifically, how has the concept been understood in social science?
- Why "place-based" conservation? In what sense has conservation practice *not* been place-based and why should anyone care?
- How do the various topics treated in this book connect place to conservation science and practice?

1.1 What Is Place?

In everyday life the experience of place is ubiquitous, and place itself is taken for granted. Humans naturally divide the world into more or less discrete, hierarchically nested places. As suggested earlier, it would be hard to carry on almost any conversation without employing place names, yet we rarely stop to think about the social processes that brought them into being and all that they have come to signify. Take Portland, Oregon, for example. When did the territory now identified as Portland become Portland, the place? In the vicinity of Portland, the Columbia River serves as the boundary between Oregon and Washington. The Columbia River is also a place, with meaning drawn from, among other sources, accounts from Lewis and Clark of their expedition two centuries ago. Oregon, Washington, Portland, and the Columbia River had no meaning to Anglo-Europeans before the Lewis and Clark Expedition, but meanings and identities emerged as a result of it. Also, the native peoples who occupied the area connoted by these names today had their own maps and place names of significance to them, which helped guide these early explorers.

Put simply, places are meaningful locations (Cresswell, 2004). A place is not only materially "carved out" of space, it is "also interpreted, narrated, understood,

felt, and imagined … the meaning or value of the same place is labile—flexible in the hands of different people or cultures, malleable over time, and inevitably contested" (Gieryn, 2000, p. 465). This characterization reflects something of a working consensus among geographers (Agnew & Duncan, 1989; Cresswell, 2004) that place embodies three elements. First, there is an obvious materiality to places. Water indeed flows through the Columbia River Gorge to the Pacific Ocean. Second, places have geographic location—that is, human-imposed (socially negotiated) boundaries, which are embedded in and embed other places of larger and smaller scales. The city of Portland has politically negotiated boundaries and is nested within the American political entity called Oregon. Third, places have significance because humans invest them with meanings, which are often expressed in stories—historical and other narrative accounts, including oral traditions of the native peoples who occupied or otherwise experienced those places. Unlike a resource, which only has utility for certain purposes, a place is imbued with a storied past, both natural and human. This ultimately distinguishes the idea of place from mere physical (material) space. Thus each place is unique in the world, with history, stories, and meanings that are pliable across time.

Of the three elements of place—materiality, location, and meaning—social science perspectives typically emphasize meaning. From a sociological perspective, "Space is what place becomes when the unique gathering of things, meanings, and values sucked are out. Put positively, place is space filled by people, practices, objects and representations" (Gieryn, 2000, p. 465). Places are literally and figuratively created by the collective actions of various local and extra-local actors, groups, and stakeholders—each serving in some way to establish, maintain, or negotiate varying senses of the place. Because places are constituted by people through their material and discursive practices, their meanings are often politically contested. It is this socially negotiated, politically contested quality that makes place ideas such a powerful lens for understanding natural resource management.

Central to geographers' notions of place, the term *meaning* is used throughout this book to describe various forms of knowledge and beliefs about a place (including scientific and traditional or local forms of knowledge), as well as deeper, more emotional, symbolic relationships between a person or group and a place. This notion of relationship implies past experience or history with the place as well as identification with it by individuals and groups (Kruger, 2001; Kruger & Jakes, 2003). The place perspective recognizes that meanings exist beyond those traditionally acknowledged within natural resource assessments (e.g., symbolic, spiritual, historical), and that there may be little consensus on a place's meaning within society. Also, place meanings are not inherent or fixed properties of places but result from continuous social and political processes of negotiation and contestation. Much of the political conflict in conservation planning is over whose meanings will prevail.

In addition to possessing material, locational, and meaning features, different approaches and terminologies are associated with the concept of place. For example, *sense of place* is a term often favored by architects, designers, planners, and some human geographers. Sometimes sense of place seems to refer simply to images, beliefs, ideas, or cognitions linked to a geographic location. Designers, literary

writers, and others may articulate a somewhat different perspective, referring to evoked feelings and suggestions that certain places exude positive feelings, harmony, or character. In this context sense of place connotes a degree of authenticity or inherent character. For example, Kunstler (1993) writes about the "geography of nowhere" as a critique of America's bland suburban, retail, and freeway landscapes that lack any palpable sense of place. This implied idealized connotation of authenticity makes the notion of sense of place popular within certain radical environmental philosophies (e.g., bioregionalism, deep ecology) that suggest human beings are estranged from place and have lost their sense of place in the world and/or their connection to the "community of life" (Grumbine, 1992; McGinnis, House, & Jordan, 1999).

Sense of place often comes with an implied normative or prescriptive quality to define actions and behaviors deemed appropriate to the place. It is difficult and inappropriate to limit the characterization of place to mere descriptive meaning. Consider everyday encounters in which people characterize places, say a back yard, wildlife refuge, neighborhood park, or 40 acres of farmland. These descriptions imply a "right" and "wrong" behavior for the given place. Gieryn (2000) refers to such qualities as the "normative landscape," effectively emphasizing the social expectations about what is "in place" and "out of place"—that is, acceptable versus deviant behavior in a given place. By centering conservation dialogue on the use and governance of a specific place, the conflicting norms of right and wrong behavior or use emerge in the context of the various meanings associated with that specific place. This differs from utilitarian approaches that proposed actions without reference to the location where they might eventually occur. In the U.S., for example, the Forest Service often developed its forest plans that called for a specified level of harvest without identifying exactly where on the landscape the harvest might eventually take place. In essence management choices are framed as votes for or against specific uses of resources rather than consideration of how those practices affect meanings and relationships to specific places.

Place attachment is a term often attributed to Tuan's (1974) idea of topophilia (love of place), which focuses on how strongly people feel a sense of connection to a particular place. The term captures (often in a quantitative but somewhat narrow sense) the important distinction between valuing a place for its goods and services and the deeper emotional and symbolic relationships people form with a place. Early application of place attachment as a value in resource management sought to move beyond the commodity view of resources as storehouses or venues for satisfying material needs (Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, & Watson, 1992). Place attachment is sometimes mischaracterized as simply positive regard for a place without understanding the strong personal meanings and sentiments behind the attachment. Often people do not merely prefer one place over another; they cherish certain places, much as they cherish their children (Williams, 2008). This kind of strong emotion, which usually develops over time, is deeply rooted in our personal experiences.

Geographers have also examined place as a "fundamental means through which we make sense of the world and through which we act" (Sack, 1992, p. 1). In other words, place gives structure to our knowledge of the world and our activity within it. For example, Sack shows how knowledge perspectives vary geographically between "views from somewhere" (subjective everyday experiences of limited

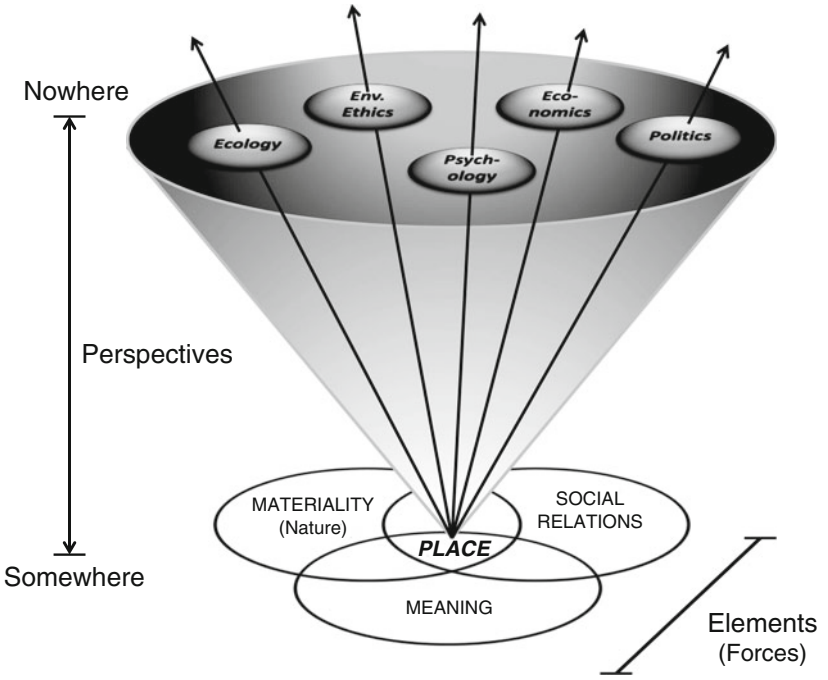

Fig. 1.1 The role of place in creating knowledge (Adapted from Sack, 1992)

generality) and "views from nowhere" (objective and generalizable perspectives) (see Fig. 1.1). Most scientific and technical knowledge is oriented toward the latter, with a high degree of generalizability from place to place. However, generalizability comes at the cost of constriction of knowledge into often narrowly defined disciplines. In recent decades social scientists have championed increasing attention to the view from somewhere, emphasizing the importance of context, local conditions, and place-specific culture in shaping knowledge and well-being (Finnegan, 2008; Fischer, 2000; Preston, 2000). This heightened emphasis on the importance of local context in making sense of the world reasserts the role of the direct, subjective, and emplaced experience as a legitimate form of knowledge relevant to decision-making, and it has played a foundational role in advancing a place-based approach to conservation (Bray & Velazquez, 2009; Fischer, 2000).

1.2 Why Place-Based Conservation?

In addition to laying the foundation for the chapters to follow, it is important to understand the social and intellectual forces driving a place-based approach to conservation practice. First, in what sense has conservation practice *not* been place-based? Second, why is place-based conservation intuitively appealing to

the public as well as practitioners? To answer the first question we need to examine the shifting intellectual outlook on the role of science and technical analysis in the rational management of natural resources. Understanding the second question requires us to examine contemporary social trends shaping perceptions of landscape values and the pace of landscape change.

1.3 The Transformative Potential Underlying Place-Based Conservation

The content of this book builds from the premise that a shift towards place-based conservation is underway, bringing with it a fundamental transformation in thinking to both conservation science and practice when measured against a deeply institutionalized history of multiple-use public lands management. This transformation has been underway at least since the emergence of the concept of ecosystem management in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Browman & Stergiou, 2004; Christensen et al., 1996; Salwasser, 1990). Some researchers have gone so far as to describe it as a paradigm shift in resource management from valuing commodities to valuing more holistic entities ranging from communities (Kruger, 2003; Rolston & Coufal, 1991) to ecosystems (Freemuth, 1998) and places (Williams & Stewart, 1998). While these various formulations of the changing paradigm have much in common—they are all in some way or another post-utilitarian (Kruger, 2001; Williams, 2002a)—place has emerged as one of the most inclusive ways to frame the changing practice of natural resource conservation.

From 1901 to 1909, considered the golden era of American conservationism, the guiding principles of practice became entrenched in the professional and institutional cultures behind the management of over 100 million acres of U.S. public land set aside for the public good. Two core principles of utilitarian conservation were: (1) to use scientific principles to drive land management decisions in order to be independent from the whims of public values; and (2) to become independent of the federal appropriations process by relying on revenue from sales of natural resources for administrative funding (Dana & Fairfax, 1980, Ch. 3). These principles were not forcibly questioned until the 1950s, when societal values regarding public lands expanded beyond market-based commodities (e.g., timber, forage, minerals) and land management agencies were pressured to consider a wider range of public values in their decision-making (Culhane, 1981; Hays, 1999; Twight, 1983). Given decades of privileging technical efficiency and discounting broader (non-utilitarian) public values, place-based conservation has been counter-intuitive to traditions of professional land management (Priscoli & Wolf, 2009; Sarewitz, 2004). However, in the past few decades land management agencies have tangled with increasingly complex problems that force them to reexamine the nature and role of science and technical information in their solution (Allen, Tainter, Pires, & Hoekstra, 2001; Larsen et al., 1990), suggesting in part a need to reinvent the practice of conservation (Minteer & Manning, 2003) and make it more participatory and inclusive (Mason, 2007).

In the 1980s, despite established agency cultures and professional identities built on scientific expertise, U.S. conservation agencies began to question their core traditions and seek pathways for transformation. At the outset this involved two fundamental changes to conservation practice that had guided multiple-use resource management throughout much of the twentieth century (Williams & Patterson, 1996). The first change involved expanding the spatial-temporal unit of analysis beyond the site and stand levels of traditional forest practice (e.g., in silviculture) and beginning to examine resource management from the perspective of a holistic, dynamic, multi-scaled landscape. The second change broadened consideration beyond the almost exclusive focus on economic or utilitarian concerns (as exemplified by the use of linear programming tools such as FORPLAN, a strategic forest-level planning and optimization program, to assess the economic or financial efficiency of resource allocations) to embrace a wider array of ecological and public values.

A key to understanding the transformative implications of place-based conservation is to consider place a social analogue to the ecosystem concept. As Williams and Stewart (1998) suggested, both concepts (place and ecosystem) recognize that society values natural resources in ways not easily or necessarily captured by the commodity and production metaphors of "use" and "yield." Both notions seek to localize and contextualize knowledge and address spatial and temporal scales (see also Morse, Hall, & Kruger, 2009). Recognizing the processes and meanings that constitute a place, however, adds a significant human role in making and using the landscape, which is often absent in ecological analyses. Negotiating a shared sense of place that incorporates both natural and social history enables managers to seek common ground without locking people into discordant utilitarian, environmentalist, or preservationist positions. That is, it may be possible to build a level of consensus around a shared sense of place because it naturally leads to a discussion of desired future conditions in both ecological and human terms.

These changes in conservation practice are reflected by a broader conceptual shift in the sciences and philosophy in which the concepts of place, scale, and spatiality have become essential organizing concepts (Billick & Price, 2010; Finnegan, 2008; Gieryn, 2000; Schneider, 2001; Wright & Scholz, 2005). Over the past two decades place ideas have helped to elucidate a more systemic and embedded view of reality in the social and natural sciences. This is certainly the case in the social sciences, where human geography is being rediscovered not only by disciplines such as economics, psychology, sociology, political science, communications, and anthropology, but within geography itself. Similarly, in ecology and urban and regional planning—where landscape and place have always had currency—spatiality is being taken more seriously (Healey, 1997). This change has elevated the importance of space, time, and context in a shift away from the reductionist views of science that reached ascendancy in the mid-twentieth century based upon the intellectual foundation of traditional utilitarian conservation.

Adopting new ecological perspectives on content and scale of analysis is only part of the transformation. What makes valuing or conserving places truly transformative is that it challenges cherished notions of objective science and knowledge that have traditionally legitimized conservation practice. Put another way, recognizing

that we socially construct the places we experience challenges the supremacy of Enlightenment science and reason that underwrites utilitarian conservation. The Enlightenment ideal of science involves an epistemology (theory of knowledge) variously described as promoting a singular "god's-eye" (Hayles, 1995) or "view from nowhere" (Nagel, 1986; Sack, 1992) that is "insufficiently enlightened about its own conception of reason" (Schmidt, 1998, p. 420). To put this in spatial or place-specific terms, the Enlightenment understanding of science promotes a "placeless," depersonalized, universal orientation to the world (see Fig. 1.1). It does this by continually seeking a more distant point of view, further from somewhere (the intimate realm of everyday experience) and toward a more remote and objective point of view that is virtually nowhere (Sack, 1992) and not actually experienced by anyone. Though profoundly useful for gaining certain forms of generalizable knowledge, the drive for a universal "god's-eye" view inevitably obscures the particular meanings and relationships associated with a specific place as it is experienced by people. In the utilitarian tradition objects and features of a place were seen as components of abstract categories (e.g., forest types, recreation opportunity classes, fuel conditions). This limitation was evident to the Forest Service policy team that reviewed the first round of national forest planning (Larsen et al., 1990) in that the highly abstract computerized optimization models such as FORPLAN held little meaning for the public, with output that was difficult to comprehend even for the planners running these models.

In addition, moving from the highly subjective and holistic knowledge from somewhere to the more distant and objective view from nowhere tends to reduce and fragment knowledge along disciplinary and theoretical lines. In Fig. 1.1, Sack (1992) uses the image of an inverted cone rising and expanding above the horizontal plane to illustrate how the process of abstraction isolates and segments our understanding of places. From his model we can better appreciate how past conservation science and practice has largely deployed abstract technical lenses closer to nowhere. Nature was primarily viewed through a lens of "yield" (as from a factory or farm), neglecting larger-scale ecological processes and interactions. Social relations (value preferences and tradeoffs) were examined through the technical lenses of microeconomics, management science, and linear programming in the hope of avoiding political controversies. Meanings were largely confined to notions of economic utility and user preferences for measurable goods and services, overlooking harder-to-define historical, cultural, personal, and spiritual meanings and values. Yet important uses, meanings, and values of a place are context-specific and experienced closer to somewhere. The more managers sought the view from nowhere, the harder it was to include the somewhere (what could be called the indigenous or local knowledge, meaning, or sense of place) in their model, which nevertheless remained a key part of the whole they sought to value in conservation practices. Often this resulted in a disconnect between people and planning processes, generating conflict over and resistance to management plans.

In sum, places encompass a variety of uses, meanings, and values for individuals, groups, and cultures that are difficult to identify using conventional scientific/technical tools for resource analysis. Any particular tract of land may be home to "local" people; an exotic, human-less "other" to foreigners and tourists, or a genetic reservoir

to scientists and environmentalists. To counteract the narrowing effect of the view from nowhere, Entrikin (1991) suggested recognizing intermediary forms of knowledge between somewhere and nowhere, which he described as a view or position of "betweenness"—that is, informed by scientific discourse while also being historically and spatially specific. Thus place-based conservation involves a fundamental repositioning between the scientific/technical view from nowhere and a more appreciated and enriched view from somewhere.

1.4 The Intuitive Appeal of Place-Based Conservation

Interest in place extends well beyond obscure academic debates about Enlightenment science and the view from nowhere. The idea of place has popular and professional appeal (Beatley & Manning, 1997; Kruger & Jakes, 2003; Lippard, 1997; Mason, 2007; Spretnak, 1997). Although place ideas have been widely used in geography, architecture, and regional planning since the early 1970s (Healey, 1997), more recently the growing emphasis on collaborative landscape-scale governance has amplified interest in place concepts within the natural resources field (Adger et al., 2011; Kruger & Williams, 2007; Nie & Fiebig, 2010). Treating nature as a collection of saleable products or commodities, or isolating properties of the environment in order to study them scientifically leaves many people—lay and professional alike—with a sense that the larger whole (the place itself) has somehow been lost along the way. This was the case with respect to much of the reaction described in the U.S. Forest Service's internal critique of its technical approach to forest planning (Larsen et al., 1990). While early formulations such as ecosystem management attempted to put traditional conservation science into a broader spatial and historic context, most U.S. agency planning processes have not fully addressed the richness of human meanings and relationships to the land that people express and want to see represented (Farnum & Kruger, 2008; Kruger & Williams, 2007).

A key driving force behind the increasing discussion of place can also be found in public angst about globalization and the accelerating pace of change in contemporary society (Cresswell, 2004; Massey, 2005; Sheppard, 2002). The experience and meaning of known and cherished places increasingly is transformed by seemingly uncontrollable, distant, global-scale processes—from climate change and oil spills to economic interdependence, transnational corporate capitalism, and ubiquitous travel and migration. Concerns about the character and quality of places have increased with the spread of mass culture and consumption. For many people the social, technological, and economic forces of globalization appear to have weakened local distinctiveness. Also, relatively inexpensive transportation and new information technologies enable more people to experience ever more parts of the world through international trade, travel, and the media (Urry, 2000).

Ironically, the impact of globalization has been to make places more important, not less (Massey, 2005; Sheppard, 2002; Zimmerer, 2006). With the spread of globalization, the once taken-for-granted, subconscious meanings of a place now seem

threatened by nearly every proposed change to the local landscape. Proposals for new land uses—whether theme parks, prisons, wildlife preserves, timber harvests, land exchanges, or shopping malls—communicate a sense of place defined by an outsider (e.g., a scientist, government, corporation, etc.) and threaten the local sense of place, thus representing the power of the outsider over the local (Williams & Stewart, 1998).

At the same time that globalization threatens local control over place, it invites more and more distant stakeholders to make claims on what a place means and how it should be used (Williams & Van Patten, 2006). In other words, a more globalized, diverse culture often supports a more expansive set of place meanings than might be recognized locally. Some of these more-distant claims may recognize a place (e.g., as wilderness or a World Heritage Site) in ways that go beyond traditionally prescribed meanings and favor some other form of development. Thus at times globalization may appear to some as a positive influence in the protection of certain place values otherwise threatened by indigenous, national, or corporate exploitation, while at the same time evoking denigration from others as a dangerous, destabilizing force reshaping places from afar (Williams, 2002b).

1.5 Advancing Place-Based Conservation: Social Science Perspectives

In striving for an ever-more objective or generalizable view from nowhere, the philosophies of utilitarian conservation and scientific management have done much to advance our understanding of the material qualities and locational (spatial) structure of natural resources. Modern science has enabled us to describe myriad environmental conditions and model the distribution of biophysical processes such as the effects of different soil types on the flow of water, genetic variability in sub-species of birds, and impacts of wildfire on the carbon cycle—to name but a few. Using tools such as remote-sensing and geographic information systems (GIS), we have enlarged capacities to identify and map precise locations on Earth's surface in ways not imaginable a century ago. To be sure, such advances are highly worthwhile as part of a matrix of methods and information relevant to conservation practice. However as we develop increasingly powerful views from nowhere, we risk leaving out a core component of place-based conservation, the context-rich view from somewhere. The social sciences have much to offer in filling this void.

Until fairly recently we have lacked the theoretical justification and analytical tools for capturing the view from somewhere as an integral partner in conservation practice. Too often the knowledge, experience, and social significance of specific places have not been given the serious consideration afforded to more technical and ostensibly objective perspectives (Kruger & Shannon, 2000). We need to understand and incorporate indigenous knowledge and meanings attributed to places by people who live, work, play, and/or otherwise occupy these places. But the focus for most discussions of environmental controversies and the institutional structures that guide them have centered on the technicalities of laws and planning process, rather

than the more subjective aspects of place that typically animate these discussions. For example, Yaffee (1994) provided an excellent account of how controversies over the technical planning processes surrounding logging in the U.S. Pacific Northwest during the 1970s–1980s centered on issues of scientific uncertainty, jurisdictional ambiguity, and administrative cultures—to the detriment of productive dialogue about the meaning and use of specific places. Responding to the limitations of traditional practices of conservation, this book offers social science perspectives on how to reinvigorate the view from somewhere, or to borrow from Gieryn (2000), open up more "space for place" in the practice of conservation.

The book is divided into four sections that build on a particular theme in the social science of place. The first section examines conceptual issues of place-based conservation. Because place and place-based conservation have been applied in diverse ways, it is important to distinguish and clarify social science approaches. These chapters emphasize the idea that place-based practice in environmental and natural resource management involves a fundamental rethinking of its institutional context. They each portray a significant problem that traditional planning models have been poorly equipped to address, while offering suggestions for how place-based conservation might resolve them. Thus these chapters discuss the roles of, and interactions among, science, practice, scale, governance, organizational and agency cultures, and community relationships to place.

The book's second section examines the source of the deep relationships that people develop with places and landscapes. Individual relationships with environments are a beginning point for understanding the concept of place. For most people, the places where they grow up, live, work, and play contribute to a sense of identity, value, and wholeness. The chapters in this section break down the issues that make place challenging for planners. These experiences and relationships are the wellspring of place meanings and sentiments that drive conservation policies and debates. The authors in this section discuss ideas such as felt value, lived experience, and the development of deep-seated intimacy with place, demonstrating how experience, knowledge, and identification with particular places are central to place-based conservation.

The third section explores the ways in which human relationships with places are represented, become more visible and public, and are transformed by conservation practices. Place meanings are for the most part taken for granted and are not easy to articulate. We all have places that are important to us for any number of reasons yet we do not often think about what a place means to us or why it is important or special. Because meanings are more than simply statements of preference, representing place meanings requires a conscious process of building a context—say, someone's life or a group narrative—in which to understand the meanings ascribed to a place. This section addresses the difficulties inherent in representing place meanings and identifies processes through which they become public and (potentially) integrated in planning processes. This section posits that successful place-based conservation efforts involve innovation in governance strategies along with collective place-making, that address how meanings are created, contested, and transformed through public discourse.

Place-based conservation does not necessarily imply the need for new techniques or revamping strategies for public involvement, and the fourth section on "mapping

place" illustrates the application of traditional techniques for place-based conservation. Whereas some researchers start with the concept of place and derive planning process from the concept, others start with the traditional tools of land-use planners and fit the concept to adaptations of the tools. Such is the case with chapters of this section, which recognize that maps ground land-use plans in the physical world, and offer a common basis for dialogue amongst stakeholders. Geographic Information Systems (GIS) allow spatial information to be digitized and mapped for various kinds of analysis. Although the concept of place is embedded in frameworks of social construction, felt senses, and lived experiences, it is the physical groundings of place that emerge in the chapters of this section.

1.6 Articulating Place Through Lenses of the Social Sciences

The goal of this book is to provide a foundation for a better understanding of place-based conservation through the various lenses of the social sciences. Although there is no singular approach to place here, this collection of essays articulates place as a social science construct distinct from other approaches for understanding and applying a practice of place. It asserts a more human-centered approach to conservation and considers context-specific knowledge and values on equal footing with generalizable, context-independent scientific knowledge. Beginning a decision-making process with context-specific knowledge provides the foundation for the exploration of common ground through the sharing of place-specific values and meanings and opens the door to dialogue that may lead to improved outcomes that do not necessarily compete with each other (Young, 1996). At the same time, place-based conservation recognizes the potential for conflict and works to provide venues for bringing people with different meanings and sentiments together to build understanding and respect among stakeholders.

Place-based conservation has begun to catch on among land managers as they increasingly recognize that their responsibilities extend beyond managing natural resources to provide goods and services to serving as stewards for places that people know and value. Yet it remains unclear how to effectively translate the intuitive appeal of place into practice. Because the research on place is quite diverse, diffuse, and sometimes contradictory (Patterson & Williams, 2005) one aim of this book is to provide a resource for researchers and practitioners to help build the conceptual grounding necessary to work with these ideas successfully.

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Part I
Conceptual Issues of Place-Based Conservation

Chapter 2
Science, Practice, and Place

Daniel R. Williams

Abstract Place-oriented inquiry and practice are proposed as keys to overcoming the persistent gap between science and practice. This chapter begins by describing some of the reasons science fails to simplify conservation practice, highlighting the challenges associated with the social and ecological sciences of multi-scaled complexity. Place concepts help scientists and practitioners address the inevitably incomplete, plural, and uncertain character of all knowledge and suggest productive ways forward that not only embrace this pluralism but find greater efficacy and advantage in the multiplicity of context-dependent positions occupied by scientists and practitioners, each differentially shaped by individual life history. The chapter then highlights a growing body of literature in sociology and public administration that has begun to address the broad challenge of governing complex social-ecological systems. These emerging theories recognize that much of contemporary governance takes place outside formal government institutions and bureaucracies and involves increasingly complex linkages and collaborations among multiple public and private organizations. In governing complex systems informed practice can be conceived as guided by the emergent wisdom of networked actors and institutions governing complex systems, each informing one another in a collaborative form of rationality that operates both horizontally (place to place) and vertically (upwards and downwards in scale).

Keywords Complexity theory • Knowledge pluralism • Positionality • Phronesis • Adaptive governance

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2.1 Bridging the Science-Practice Gap

A frequently stated goal at conferences for natural resource professionals is that of narrowing the all-too-prevalent divide between scientific research findings and their application in the real world—commonly referred to as the science-practice gap. Sometimes conservation agencies bring scientists and managers together around specific areas of practice for the express purpose of closing the gap. Typical meeting sessions have dealt with a range of management practice domains—for example, endangered fisheries, fire and fuels management, and managing high-elevation wilderness trails. The fact that the gulf between science and practice is so frequently discussed suggests efforts to close the gap have been largely unsuccessful. Substantive differences aside, from a social science perspective they all seem destined to fail. This chapter argues that the science-practice gap persists and even widens over time, not because scientists and managers lack a commitment to communicate or simply fail to do so. Rather, the problem reflects fundamental differences between the aims of science, which generally seek to transcend place, and the nature of practice, which is by necessity place-based. In other words, the gap persists because science and practice are driven by divergent goals: science aspires to produce context-independent principles whereas practice requires context-dependent synthesis.

One case exemplifying this predicament occurred in discussions among U.S. federal agency scientists concerning managers' needs for improved science-based information in making decisions about managing wildfires in riparian areas, particularly when endangered fish species are at risk. In keeping with ecological complexity theory, much of the discussion focused on dynamic landscape processes and identifying criteria for defining a resilient landscape. Research ecologists pointed to ever greater complexity of the multi-scaled, dynamic landscapes under consideration, which effectively made the appropriate prescription for any one stream network elusive if not undeterminable. These ecologists argued that no singular riparian condition could be considered necessarily better or healthier than another, because the viability of endangered fish populations actually hinged on a dynamic spatial variety in which some patches (streams) were in the process of becoming better habitat for a given species and some worse habitat.

Adding to the complexity and uncertainty for management prescriptions, one could arrive at contradictory recommendations, depending on disciplinary focus. For example, because stream culverts disrupt the movement of fish through a network of streams, they may be viewed as impediments to the adaptive dynamics sought by systems ecologists. From this perspective removing culverts would increase the connectivity of streams, ostensibly benefitting fish survival. At the same time if a manager is concerned about the spread of invasive aquatic species, removing culverts also facilitates the spread of such species, with potentially negative impacts. Rather than clarifying best management practices, scientific advances can generate confusion among managers over effective management options. Best practice in any given situation often depends on conditions and actions in adjacent

landscapes, as well as interactions at both high and lower scales of decision-making. In managing complex systems, the overarching challenge, then, is sorting out how each manager, applying his/her expertise in meeting their responsibilities—in effect taking partially informed actions—can best accommodate the knowledge and actions of other managers who seek to do the same.

This science-practice conundrum originates partly from the widespread assumption that scientific understanding produces an increasingly definitive and integrated body of knowledge—a kind of "gods-eye" (objective and integrated) grasp of the world (see Chap. 1). However this supposition is challenged by the mounting evidence of the spatially situated quality or "positionality" of science claims (Finnegan, 2008; Rose, 1997). This work suggests that every scientist occupies a subjective position or place in the world, shaped by culture, training, personal experience, etc., which limits and conditions that scientist's knowledge (Livingston, 2003). Likewise, for citizens and practitioners, knowledge is always partial and liable over time to become more fragmented rather than integrated (Whatmore, 2009). Described another way,

> [Even] after the best of scientific studies a judgment must be made about the relevance of a piece of scientific research to a manager's … practical question at hand. In this judgment science is not at all helpful … [H]ow to integrate the kind of knowledge that science can give with the practical judgment about what the [managerial] situation requires [remains one of the] great unresolved questions. (Hummel, 1994, p. 314)

Addressing this "great unresolved question" requires an exploration of the realm of practice, beginning with an examination of how place concepts illuminate the challenges in trying to bridge the science-practice gap. This chapter posits that beyond trying to inform problems with an integrated top-down view of knowledge, informed action can be conceived as guided by the collective wisdom of networked actors and institutions governing complex systems, each informing one another in a collaborative form of rationality that operates both horizontally (place to place) and vertically (upwards and downwards in scale).

2.2 Why Science Fails to Simply Practice

While the idea that science can perfect environmental decision-making is largely taken for granted among professional environmental managers, some social scientists have been more skeptical (Allen, Tainter, Pires, & Hoekstra, 2001; Flyvbjerg, 2001; Sarewitz, 2004). Drawing from anthropology and ecology for example, Tainter and colleagues (Allen et al., 2001; Tainter, 1988) point to social/institutional limits on managing complex systems by examining how system complexity has contributed to the collapse of civilizations in the past. In particular Tainter (1988) details the history of collapse in arguing that the evolution of a complex social-ecological system (i.e., a given society and its resource base) tends over time to outstrip that society's own institutional capacity to manage such systems. As a society grows and mature humans tend to apply the easiest and least costly solutions to problems first. Over time, as

new problems emerge solutions come at higher costs or require proportionally more inputs—that is, there's a diminishing return on problem-solving, resulting in societal collapse or a deliberate decision to return to a more simplified system. While a society can employ energy or technology to manage complexity to some degree the cognitive challenge of complexity (i.e., the need to synthesize and integrate the exponential growth of knowledge at multiple scales) persists.

Drawing from contemporary political science, Sarewitz (2004) argues that science makes environmental controversies worse for several reasons. First, science allows contesting parties to assemble their own bodies of relevant and legitimate facts (which is compounded by universal access to information via the Internet). Second, the embeddedness of these facts in a variety of disciplinary perspectives brings with them a diversity of normative implications. Third, despite the progressive expansion of scientific understanding, overall scientific uncertainty persists and grows due to the irreducible plurality and disunity of scientific disciplines. This problem is further amplified by the diverse political, cultural, and institutional contexts involved in the conduct and interpretation of scientific research. In spite of widespread belief to the contrary, a strong case can be made that the growing complexity of knowledge decreases institutional efficiency, increases scientific uncertainty, and amplifies policy conflict.

2.3 Place and Pluralism

The persistent, if not widening, gap between science and practice cannot be solved by more, better, or more focused science. Nor can it be solved simply by finding more effective ways to communicate new science to practitioners. Continuing to address the gap based on a hierarchically oriented mindset that excludes context and operates within a unidirectional, *from*-science-*to*-practice framework exacerbates the problem. In such a model knowledge will always expand much faster than individual and collective capacities to absorb, process, and apply it to particular situations and circumstances. But knowledge need not be conceived of as a collection of ideas, facts, and values waiting to be integrated into some grand unifying model that presumably any manager could easily and effectively apply. What might we gain by conceiving of the structure of knowledge in context-dependent, spatial-ecological terms that account for places and the people associated with them? What leverage on the science-practice gap might be gained by recognizing that important knowledge is produced and distributed within a network of emplaced, partially informed practitioners representing various aspects of experience and understanding and organized within both vertical and horizontal planes of relationships?

Two key features of such a spatial/relational view are the subjective *positionality* (as opposed to gods-eye objectivism) of observer-actors and the irreducible *pluralism* of knowledge (contra a singular unity). Positionality recognizes that all observers can attain only a partial, incomplete understanding of the world due to their unique positioning within any particular slice of spatial-temporal reality (Livingston,

2003). This varied positioning means that there is no unified platform from which all knowledge can be gathered and integrated into a single understanding. Rather, by comprehending the world from multiple, competing vantage points the pluralistic view enriches each perspective and reveals assumptions that otherwise may have remained hidden—particularly to those playing dominant roles in producing knowledge (Hayles, 1995).

Geography and spatial studies highlight three varieties of knowledge pluralism. The first involves an *ontological* focus on place (Patterson & Williams, 2005). Ontological pluralism is strongly associated with cultural differences and competing systems of meaning across groups of stakeholders and domains of expertise. It represents the aspect of multiplicity in the nature of what exists—that is, the contents of reality and the physical location of those contents. The ontological pluralism of place encompasses the different material qualities and meanings people associate with a place, which is often discussed in terms of competing senses of place held by various groups of stakeholders (Williams, 2002).

Whereas research on place is typically occupied with ontological descriptions, some philosophers and geographers have drawn on place and spatiality to advance an *epistemic* perspective on knowledge—place as a way of seeing and thinking about the world (Entrikin, 1991; Sack, 1992). As Sack (1992, p. 1) argues, place is more than mere setting or container of reality. It is integral to how human beings experience and organize their world, a "fundamental means through which we make sense of the world and through which we act." Likewise for Hayles (1995), our positioned, embodied, human-situated interaction with the world conditions how we can understand it.

Accordingly, place provides a way to organize diverse disciplinary viewpoints that represent both context-independent (objective, scientific) and context-dependent (subjective, local) lenses or positions through which knowledge is generated (see also Chap. 1, Fig. 1.1). This epistemic pluralism helps transcend what geographers regard as a deep and long-running tension within Western intellectual traditions between universalist (context-independent) and particularist (context-dependent) views of knowledge (Entrikin, 1991; See also Fischer, 2000; Flyvbjerg, 2001; Williams, 2002). Specifically, place helps to tackle the growing disciplinary fragmentation of knowledge, bridges the epistemological divide between local/contextual knowledge and global/generalizable knowledge, and validates and organizes knowledge originating in a bottom-up synthesis of networks of actors.

The knowledge and wisdom required to manage complex social-ecological systems is not likely to emerge solely out of top-down, expert-driven knowledge systems (which become too unwieldy and expensive), but through the combined and less formally coordinated efforts of more embedded practitioners (managers) learning though their own local efforts. In other words, the future of practice and solving problems is more likely to be organized and directed from what Entrikin (1991) refers to as the epistemological position of *betweenness*. This position is informed by top-down scientific discourse and invigorated through bottom-up engagement in which practitioners play a more prominent role in the production and validation of knowledge.

The third variety of pluralism is *axiological,* which focuses on normative lenses or prescriptive valuations about place. It seeks to recognize the diverse social processes for prescribing particular valuations, preferences, and choices. These may range from the technical lenses of economics and decision science, to legal-political systems and institutions, to moral-ethical systems embedded in culture, religion, and moral philosophy. Axiological pluralism contrasts with monistic theories of value (see Norton, 1996) that dominate the fields of economics and rational choice theory in political science. Accordingly, all goods are assumed to be commensurable on a single-value dimension such as utility or money. Within natural resource management the monistic approach reached its zenith with operations research thinking in which experts would identify the outcomes of plan alternatives, economists would measure their values, and analysts would calculate the most efficient alternative. In contrast, pluralist theories of value (Anderson, 1993; Price, 2004) highlight the incommensurability of values. The reconciliation of the plurality of values for places cannot be reduced to a singular metric as in economics. Rather it requires reconciling a plurality of social processes and institutional arrangements by which society orders, evaluates, and decides about their relative production, maintenance, and distribution.

The interactions among the three types of pluralism (ontological, epistemological, and axiological) compounds the pluralism associated with each dimension. For example, the pursuit of universal, context-independent knowledge has served to constrain the ontological meanings and values of nature to the tangible utilitarian realm; epistemologically narrow what counts as legitimate means to knowledge; and marginalized the context-dependent knowledge of place and the particular (Entrikin, 1991). This same impulse for context-independent knowledge has also constrained the methods for adjudicating among competing values and preferences in conservation policy and resource management (Williams, 2002). For practice the core challenge is to recognize the diverse ways in which a community or society orders or chooses among alternative courses of action and learns how to negotiate within and across these different kinds of pluralism. In other words, practice requires social institutions that can recognize and negotiate among pluralistic conceptions of the good to be pursued and address the political and pragmatic task of adjudicating among competing representations of a place that are produced as a result of ontological and epistemological pluralism.

Place is important for understanding the persistence of the science-practice gap and the irreconcilable ubiquity of knowledge pluralism. When dealing with complex social-ecological systems, all attempts to close the gap and overcome plurality and uncertainty ultimately rely on being able to attain a universal, context-independent, gods-eye view of reality. Alternatively adopting a spatial (place-based) perspective helps to recognize that all knowledge—even exalted scientific knowledge—is to a significant degree local (context-dependent), because all observers/actors occupy a particular position from which to observe the world. Still, any diverse pluralistic culture must somehow manage to coexist in shared spaces despite unrelenting social differences (Healey, 1997; Kemmis, 1990). Pluralism operates in the realm of practice by recognizing and profiting from different kinds of knowledge and skills.

Conservation practice requires the cultivation of the capacity or habit for collective sense-making that moves beyond the mere application of science and technical know-how. In other words, it is through practice embedded in actual places that knowledge pluralism and value differences are ultimately reconciled.

The point here is not to argue against investing in science, only that it is unreasonable to expect those investments alone to deliver efficient and effective solutions to complex problems. At the very least we need to recognize that those engaged in practice cannot be expected to absorb all the latest, often conflicting science that might be relevant to their duties. Rather the need is to develop strategies for using and accessing practitioners' accumulated wisdom to help harmonize their particular local efforts across efforts in adjacent spaces and at different spatial scales. Addressing the science-practice gap requires a rethinking of how practical knowledge is produced and applied. This needs to happen at the level of the individual practitioner, as well as in the realms of management institutions and governance.

2.4 Place and Practice

Given chronic system complexity and ambiguity (plurality) and limited institutional and cognitive capacities to process ever-grander, yet unrelentingly incomplete models of reality, one strategy for addressing the science-practice gap is to elevate practice as a form of knowledge production and management. Place and spatiality facilitate such an elevation by highlighting different ways of knowing and acting that emphasize "knowledge nested in a context of time and local circumstance" (Fischer, 2000, p. 69). A number of social scientists (Fischer, 2000; Flyvbjerg, 2001; Scott, 1998) have focused on a kind of epistemic pluralism that can be found in the Aristotelian intellectual virtues of *epiteme* (abstract scientific knowledge), *techne* (technical knowledge found in a craft), and *phronesis* or *mētis* (prudent, practical wisdom). These authors make the case that we could do more to integrate and profit from the practical and informal knowledge that exists among both occupants/users of places and emplaced professional practitioners.

Scott (1998) characterizes local, practical knowledge as the lost art of *mētis*—local, experiential knowledge that resists simplification into deductive principles that can be readily transferred through book learning, which has been systematically replaced by state-inspired projects of rational management. Scott documents numerous examples of "natural and social failures of thin, formulaic simplifications" (p. 309) imposed on society through the agency of state power. (His first case example deals with the failures of utilitarian logic that inspired mono-cropped, even-aged forestry in early modern Europe.) He notes that large-scale processes and events are inevitably far more complex than any models we can devise to map them. What these management schemes "ignore—and often suppress—are precisely the practical skills that underwrite any complex activity…variously called know-how…common sense, experience, a knack or *mētis*" (p. 311). He argues that the state has sought hegemony over the former as a form of social control rather than an ongoing dialogue between practical knowledge and formal scientific knowledge.

The application of fire science offers an example of this distinction. One of the most exalted topics in fire science is fire-behavior modeling, which is intended to help fire-fighters anticipate how a wildfire will spread. But as one highly experienced fire manager once explained, he would never rely on such models, which he saw as over-simplified and exceedingly poor at factoring in local topography and meteorology. He would much rather rely on his experience in fighting wildfires in his district and elsewhere.

Flyvbjerg (2001, 2006) offers a similar line of reasoning. Whereas Scott examines the failure of certain state-inspired schemes, Flybjerg directs his gaze more generally at "why social inquiry fails" and "how it can succeed again" (Flyvbjerg, 2001). He seeks to resurrect the idea of *phronesis* as the primary domain of the social sciences—in sharp contrast to the natural science model rooted in *episteme* and *techne*. He employs *phronesis* to highlight the comparative advantages of practical wisdom based on "an intimate familiarity with the contingences and uncertainties of various forms of social practice embedded in complex social settings" (Caterino & Schram, 2006, p. 9). *Phronesis* concerns the kinds of value judgments and decisions that are "so commonly involved in political and administrative practices that any attempts to reduce them [to *episteme* or *techne*] or comprehend them in those terms are misguided" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 68). According to Flyvbjerg, *phronesis* was deemed most important to Aristotle because it balances instrumental rationality with value-rationality, which he considered crucial to the sustained happiness of citizens in any society. Yet it is that very balance that has been upset by the dominance of instrumental rationalities behind *episteme* and *techne,* as evidenced in part by the fact that modern languages no longer have a word containing a variant of *phronesis*.

In comparing Scott's use of *mētis* to Flyvbjerg's *phronesis*, *mētis* appears closer to the idea of local knowledge or wisdom. It is not as refined and systematized as *techne* (which by Scott's reckoning is more universal, organized, and ultimately expressible in the form of rules, principles, and propositions), but is rooted in a history of local problem-solving. For Flyvbjerg *phronesis* is tied more closely to political/administrative skills involved in reasoning about values, the good life, and the exercise of power. Both emphasize *emplaced* knowledge and stand in contrast to the god's-eye view from nowhere, or what Scott calls "thin simplifications" that "can never generate a functioning community, city or economy" (p. 310). Both kinds of knowledge exist among practitioners and can be cultivated within organizations and institutions.

A key argument of Flyvbjerg is that social science (and arguably practice) should not seek to emulate natural science by trying to build predictive models, but instead focus on case-study knowledge, which typically reveals a kind of practical wisdom emphasizing value rationality and power rather than the maximization of specific outcomes or objectives. This kind of practical wisdom is difficult to organize from above. It is shaped and evaluated by the practitioners themselves rather than produced and transmitted via expert systems (though experts can certainly help). Finally, such a distributed, bottom-up system of knowledge creation tends to counter the otherwise diminishing returns and escalating costs of traditional hierarchically directed information systems.

Flyvbjerg makes a number of recommendations for how to practice "social science that matters." He advocates conducting context-dependent, case-study research, in keeping with Aristotelian *phronesis*, which involves deep knowledge of circumstances and concrete examples. This approach doesn't necessarily exclude generalizations, but they would be based on the examination of many particular instances. This occurs in business, medicine, law, and other professions, in which learning cases is fundamental to developing practical knowledge applicable to a range of situations.

A second recommendation is to balance instrumental/technical rationality with what Flyvbjerg calls value rationality to describe the social analysis of societal goals, values and interests. The purpose of social science should be to help individuals, organizations, and societies to think and act with greater value rationality. Emphasizing value questions over the technical rationality typically sought in natural science, forces practitioners to face the contextual nature of problems instead of assuming some universal foundation. Social scientific validity comes from testing assumptions through the comparison of cases or contexts (e.g., different positionality) where competing interpretations can be examined and deliberated.

His third recommendation is to make the subject of power a core part of analyses. Questions for consideration might include: Who gains and who loses? What kinds of power relations are involved? Are there possibilities to change these power relations and would it be desirable to do so? What kinds of power relations apply to those asking the questions? In other words, who governs and what governmental rationalities are at work? A broad consideration of power-related issues contrasts starkly with the traditionally utilitarian emphasis in natural resource management, which has avoided power questions in the vain hope that technical rationality would render them irrelevant.

Fourth, in addition to asking the usual "why" questions, Flyvbjerg recommends focusing on narrative or "how" questions as a way to develop descriptions or interpretations of a situation from the perspective of the participants. Histories and narratives are fundamental to social inquiry and practice because they acknowledge the past in consideration of the future and help humans to anticipate situations before they arise. They also distinguish a place-based approach from a resource-oriented one. While places are imbued with natural and social histories, the notion of resource focuses on present and future utility. Indeed, the idea of resource ignores context, strips the landscape of history, and eliminates pre-existing meanings that might constrain its use.

Finally, according to Flyvbjerg the aim of social science is to provide input for ongoing social dialogue and practice in a society rather than to produce generalized, unequivocally verified knowledge. Thus social scientists should aim to build dialogue between diverse stakeholders using social knowledge to inform and facilitate the dialogue without taking it over.

Although intended more for individual social science researchers, these recommendations could also benefit the training of practitioners in many professional fields. As suggested earlier the relatively greater emphasis on learning from real-world practice marks an important distinction between the professions and academic

disciplines. Professional knowledge places greater emphasis on inductive, situational, bottom-up learning than on a top-down, deductive extension of theory.

Part of the challenge of such a bottom-up knowledge system involves the structuring of the interactions among practitioners. Professionals of one sort or another spend a great deal of time sharing their case knowledge. But applying this to complex social-ecological systems suggests another aspect of case-based knowledge. In such contexts the health of the overall system depends on the combined actions of many practitioners, each responsible for various parts, whether divided by geography (e.g., a wilderness), resource (e.g., wildlife), and/or process or function (e.g., wildfire). The overall performance of a system at any scale depends on the collective actions or inactions of managers distributed across space, scales, and functions.

The solution is not likely to be found in traditional approaches to the transfer of knowledge from expert to practice but by learning to take into account the actions and individual partial understandings of diverse practitioners distributed across resource specialties, landscapes, and scales. Envisioning practice as *emplaced knowing* reframes the practitioner as part of a network and knowledge/learning as a distributed product/process of learning that occurs within a community of practice.

According to Wenger (1998), such communities are distinguished by their shared identity based on a common domain of interest. They act as a community by sharing information, engaging in joint activities, and assisting and learning from each other. Over time and sustained interaction they develop a shared practice in some domain, which typically builds on shared resources, experiences, tools and methods, and so forth. Practice communities draw from members' knowledge and experience to advance situation-specific problem-solving. They might do this by requesting information from community members, seeking out people with specific experiences suited to a particular problem at hand, making site visits, documenting cases and solutions, and mapping knowledge and gaps in knowledge. In sum, it is at least as important to help practitioners better organize themselves as communities of practice as it is to produce the next scientific synthesis of knowledge, which by necessity will emphasize context-independent knowledge.

2.5 Place and Governance

Thus far the science-practice gap has been described as a knowledge problem without much regard to the structures within which practice is ultimately carried out. While a pluralist conception of knowledge gives greater recognition to the wisdom and experience of emplaced practitioners (and citizens), learning and operating in real places and developing context-dependent knowledge also needs to be addressed at an institutional or governance level. An expanded conception of practice that nevertheless remains embedded primarily within the existing institutional structures of hierarchical governance will do little to escape the vice of complexity and uncertainty. Recognizing this, Scott (1998) concludes his

work by making a case for *mētis*-friendly institutional structures that emphasize plurality and diversity. He notes that in natural systems diversity is "demonstrably more stable, more self-sufficient, and less vulnerable" (p. 353). As with complex natural systems, *mētis*-friendly institutions benefit from diversity, redundancy, and decentralization.

Within natural resource conservation many have turned to various forms of adaptive management (Stankey, Clark, & Bormann, 2005) or adaptive governance (Scholz & Stiftel, 2005) as place-based strategies for confronting the chronic insufficiency of knowledge in the face of complexity, uncertainty, and change typically faced by natural resource managers. In theory adaptive management involves multi-scalar, place-sensitive policy experimentation (and by implication more case/context-sensitive knowledge). As often practiced, however, adaptive management tends to privilege formal scientific knowledge (*episteme*) over other forms of knowledge held by practitioners and citizens and is insufficiently adaptive in its conception of values as fixed, immutable preferences (Norton, 1999; Norton & Steinemann, 2001). As a pragmatic approach to adjudicating among the plurality of competing management prescriptions for a place or landscape, adaptive management "pays little attention to the question of what types of institutional structures and processes are required for the approach to work on a large scale basis" (McLain & Lee, 1996, p. 446). This approach also tends to be costly and time-consuming, making it a less-than-attractive means for improving the benefit-cost ratio of problem-solving. Prompted by a recognition that effective institutions for adaptive management defy standardization (Stankey et al., 2005, p. 51–52), social scientists have offered the concept of adaptive governance to emphasize the importance of context and the value of institutional diversity in sustaining complex social-ecological systems (Folke, Han, Olsson, & Norberg, 2005).

The emerging discourse on adaptive governance coming out of ecological systems theory conveys strongly prescriptive ideals in citing such positive virtues of institutional diversity, wider public participation, and enlarged social capacity and flexibility to respond to unplanned change. A less normatively disposed discourse examining how governance practices have evolved in response to global-scale social complexity has emerged in sociology (Ilcan & Phillips, 2008; Urry, 2003) and public administration (Pierre, 2000; Pierre & Peters, 2005; Rhodes, 1997). First and foremost, governance is distinguished from government. The traditional notion of government is "state-centric" and addresses how government institutions steer society and the economy. On the other hand governance tends to be associated with a "society-centric" examination of the coordination and self-governance that occurs via networks and partnerships. What was previously thought of as the indisputable role of government is increasingly seen as the province of various societal institutions (Pierre, 2000). Accordingly much of contemporary governance takes place outside formal government institutions and bureaucracies. Thus it involves increasingly complex linkages and collaborations among multiple public and private organizations (see Chap. 3). The governance of complex systems emphasizes the need to reconcile traditional top-down, hierarchical public administration (built along vertical

lines of authority) with emerging, complex, social networks of stakeholders and governmental and nongovernmental organizations—all linked by horizontal lines of interaction. These perspectives contrast with the early-twentieth century technocratic institutions of governance developed during the heyday of scientific management, which nowadays are not as well suited to administering social-ecological systems marked by dynamic, multi-scaled complexity.

Traditional models of governance start with the organization as the basic building block in a system in which top officials direct management practice to accomplish program goals. The idea of governance coming out of public administration and sociology describes the ways in which government increasingly relies on partnerships and networks to accomplish its programs, partly driven by the growing complexity of global-scale social interactions. The growth of governance by complex networks of governmental and non-governmental (NGO) actors and institutions has been propelled by a sense that government has become "'overloaded,' that is, unable to resolve all the tasks and demands placed upon it by society" (Pierre, 2000, p. 4). Some have even suggested that government has largely been replaced by "self-organizing" markets and networks of organizations and actors (Rhodes, 1997).

Such a view of governance comports well with the view of complex adaptive systems in which pluralism and uncertainty dominate and institutional capacities struggle to keep pace with complexity. The challenge of governing in the face of excessive complexity and uncertainty can be addressed, especially at local scales, when self-organizing networks of practitioners, institutions, NGOs, and others come together and begin to direct the system. This is particularly evident in dealing with large-scale ecological disturbances such as the mountain pine beetle outbreak in Colorado where the scale and complexity of the problem exceeds the capacity of any existing organization to address the problem on its own (see Chap. 3). One potential downside to place-based conservation is the potential for parochial interests to trump larger-scale policy interests, as demonstrated by the NIMBY ("not-in-my-backyard") response to many proposed projects. Recognizing this problem, Williams and Matheny (1995) show how various models of democracy play different roles depending on scale. At larger, wider geographic scales, politics involving traditional interest groups provides a means for settling on the basic rules to govern site selection decisions. But once these rules are established context-specific dialogue (NIMBY) ensues because decisions begin to matter to local constituencies in ways that are obscure and remote to all but the most committed interest groups when viewed from afar. Others similarly note that at the local level place provides an important basis for forming a polity (e.g., Kemmis, 1990). Whatever social differences exist over the management of a place, often there is at least a shared concern for that place. In other words, place-focused deliberation promotes some degree of commonality among stakeholders to facilitate and motivate political action as propinquity encourages people to "make sense together while living differently" (Healey, 1997). A key task of any area governance process is to work toward some shared, pragmatic sense of place.

2.6 Conclusion

Faced with irreducible pluralism in the knowledge and meanings of places, irreconcilable diversity in the practice and products of science, and incommensurable differences in valuation, what practitioner wouldn't wish for some all-powerful analytic tool to close the gap between knowledge and practice? But framing the science-practice gap as a failure to communicate—as is often the case in a top-down conception of expertise—constitutes a major source of the problem: knowledge will always expand faster than the capacity of professionals to learn and apply it to particular situations and circumstances. Clearly, investing in science and the expansion of knowledge will always be important, but it is unreasonable to expect those investments alone to yield increasing efficiencies in solving complex problems. Those engaged in practice cannot be expected to absorb or master all the latest science that might apply to their practice. Place helps us rethink the science-practice nexus. It does this by putting more emphasis on the capacity of emplaced and experienced agents to act and learn in networked systems that underscore horizontal linkages. In a model of hierarchical governance, practice responds to direction from above. In a networked, partnered, deliberative model of governance knowledge emerges from the network of actors—each possessing some partial, context-dependent knowledge.

A focus on specific places helps to ameliorate the disciplinary fragmentation of knowledge. First, it confronts the subjective positioning of scientific observers, reminding us of the inherent selectivity of all representations of knowledge. Second, by helping to organize and validate knowledge originating in a bottom-up synthesis of networked practitioners, a focus on place reduces the epistemic tension between local/context-dependent and global/context-independent knowledge. Finally, a place perspective can help address the capacity limits of top-down, expert-driven knowledge systems by recognizing and capitalizing on the accumulated wisdom of emplaced practitioners acquiring and sharing case-specific knowledge.

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Chapter 3
Conservation Connecting Multiple Scales of Place

Courtney Flint

Abstract This chapter stretches the notion of place and its role in conservation by exploring interactions across multiple scales via new forms of governance. This process may enable rural, resource-dependent communities, previously deemed incapable of asserting much influence on decision-making, to engage in extra-local relationships to better serve their community interests. Theoretical explorations of place, scale, community and regional fields, and governance are followed by a summary of emerging place-based influences on decision-making in the context of recent widespread landscape disturbance in north central Colorado. In this case, new relationships were forged via expanding place and multi-scale linkages and innovative forms of governance.

Keywords Community • Regional scale governance • Spaces of engagement • Spaces of dependence • Geometries of power

Places are not static, bounded spots on the earth. As people carry out their everyday lives, their interactions are continually creating and changing places. The literature of social science abundantly documents people-place interactions, particularly regarding how interactions within places shape local identities, social organization, conservation practice, decision-making, and the meanings of places across landscapes (Brandenburg & Carroll, 1995; Cheng, Kruger, & Daniels, 2003; Kemmis, 1990; Williams & Stewart, 1998). This chapter extends the investigation of place to consider extra-local linkages across space and scale in shaping place-oriented

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decision-making, drawing on the literature of human geography and community sociology and observations of resource management governance in the context of forest disturbance in Colorado.

Staeheli (2003) described place as the result of a "layering of activities that constantly make and remake it" (p. 162). Drawing on Massey's (1979) geologic metaphor, Staeheli highlighted the role of human activity over time in constructing and constituting places. However, place is more than a mere product of human action; it is also a dynamic process. In other words, places are always "becoming" (Pred, 1984). This dynamic notion of place relies on an appreciation that decisions and actions at multiple levels—individual, household, neighborhood, community, regional, national, and global—construct and shape the meanings and implications of places (Massey, 1994).

Without a doubt, processes and pressures at global and national scales influence the position and character of places. But places, or more importantly the people and institutions within and among places, are not merely at the mercy of larger-scale processes such as the movements of the world economy and global politics (Castree, 2003). Humans take deliberate actions to influence processes at broader scales, particularly with respect to shaping the nature of their own place. In doing so they have a degree of "agency" in controlling their destinies and those of the places they reside in. Thus local actions are capable of not only *reacting to* global pressures but also *acting back on them* (Castree, p. 180).

This notion of reaching out beyond the confines of a particular place is central to understanding not only global dynamics, but regional experience as well. Place-oriented actions and decisions often rely upon extra-local interactions that stretch spatial and organizational concepts of place (Cox, 1998). Thus there are multiple scales at work in shaping the character and experience of place.

In the theoretical discussion that follows, the concepts of place, scale, community and regional fields, and governance help to orient a conceptual framework for understanding extra-local place-oriented action. Thoughts are offered on how we might consider place-based conservation and decision-making within a regional context. Also discussed is a case from north-central Colorado exemplifying places engaged in regional-scale interaction and governance in the context of landscape disturbance.

3.1 Framing Place

As Castree suggested, "Places are not what they used to be" (2003, p. 165). In this statement Castree referred to changes in how places have been conceptualized. Historically, considerable geographic attention was fixed on differentiating places from one another (Hartshorne, 1939). Certainly even today few would deny that places are unique, different, and independent in many ways (Castree, 2003; Kirby, 1989). The politics, experiences, and human-environment relations in Vail, Colorado,

are hardly the same as those in Walden, Colorado. Likewise, neither of these places are the same as they were 2, 10, or 50 years ago.[1]

Despite an appreciation for uniqueness and differentiation, places are rarely conceptualized as isolated from one another, and they are influenced by structural processes operating at other scales. Recognizing these aspects is essential to understanding the role of place in decision-making (Castree, 2003; Cox, 1998; Kirby, 1989). The increasing interaction and interdependence of places across landscapes suggests we need a more dynamic interpretation of place to capture the special contexts and everyday processes that shape life and interactions among people and their environments (Castree, 2003; Staeheli, 2003). As Castree suggested, people cannot put up barriers to the outside world and survive. Interconnections and linkages between places are critically important (Paasi, 2004).

The idea that people operate, attach, or identify only with a narrow notion of place is a disempowering and oversimplified view of human activity and human-environment interactions. The concept of scale is useful for expanding an appreciation of place to match the realities of identity and action for real people.

3.2 Scale as an Organizing Concept for Connecting Places

Places don't exist in isolation; they simultaneously operate within larger spheres of activity, or scales (Howitt, 2003). The concept of scales provides a useful way to organize connectivity from local to global. However, scale is as much of a "troubling and even chaotic concept" (Howitt, p. 138) as place (Staeheli, 2003). Though often treated as neat, discretely bounded units/levels; separate, concentric rings; or rungs on a ladder (Howitt, p. 145), portrayals of scales as rigid, hierarchical systems are problematic. In reality, connections between places and levels of society and the environment may involve more "awkward juxtapositions and jumps" (Howitt, p. 145). In other words, interactions among multiple scales need not rely on notions of nestedness or contiguity in order for connections to occur. On a cautionary note, splitting up the world into discrete, separate parts or levels may overemphasize scale as an organizing framework and deemphasize processes that are not scale-dependent or operate within scales (Brenner, 2001; Marston, 2000). The key to a useful conceptualization of scale is appreciating the fluidity of connections that exist between varying levels of engagement and interaction among people, as well as between people and their environment (Brenner, 2001).

The fact that various disciplines often specialize in analyses at different scales complicates integrating processes across scales (Agnew & Duncan, 1989). For

[1] This example follows from Kirby (1989) who suggested that "city politics in Houston could never be confused with city politics in San Francisco" (p. 323), and from Massey (1994) who focused on the changes in places and the conceptualization of place over time.

example, political science typically focuses on the role of the state, psychologists tend to focus on individuals, and sociologists frequently delineate their work in terms of households or communities. Since different processes and phenomena are critical at different scales, the historical problem of scale separation is somewhat understandable (Morse, Hall, & Kruger, 2009). However, an ability to transcend multiple scales is essential to fully recognizing the interactions among processes and phenomena (Morse et al., 2009). Thus it is all the more important for interdisciplinary work to seek keenly to understand multi-scale linkages and to eschew prioritizing one scale over all others (Swyngedouw, 1997). Furthermore, appreciating connectivity across scales not only reduces uncertainty about change but helps build capacity for holistic problem-solving and ethical inclusion of multiple interests. As Howitt (2003) puts it, "(T)he scale politics of power, identity and sustainability offers dispossessed, marginalized, and disadvantaged peoples a better framework for political action across and between multiple scales" (p. 139). To understand the interdependence and actions of places from a multi-scale perspective, Cox (1998) distinguishes between *spaces of dependence* and *spaces of engagement*. He describes spaces of dependence as humans' dominant areas of local interest, wherein their activities contribute to place-based identities. In addition, "Local agents are participants in a much more spatially extensive set of exchange relations than those contained within the bounds of a particular place" (Cox, p. 4). These other places and scales people routinely connect with beyond their primary locality are the broader spaces of engagement.

This engagement across space stretches the notion of place as people develop affinity and meanings for more extensive spaces. Given a definition of place as a space imbued with meaning, these more encompassing scales of interaction also can be viewed as places. New place-based meanings may emerge for them, resulting in regional or even wider identities and shifting levels of decision-making. All of this serves to change or enhance original place-based meanings, interpretations, and actions.

It should be emphasized that this larger-scale interaction by people beyond their places or spaces of dependence, while likely and common, may not always have the effect of enhancing or empowering place-based identities or meanings. While conceived largely as positive phenomena, this may not always be the case. For example, Hall and Stern (2009) describe the reluctance of a rural community in Ontario to fully engage in regional collaboration, instead seeking to maintain more direct lines of access to provincial and federal government funding. Poorer communities may not always benefit from participation in regional collaboration (Hall & Stern, 2009), as the "geometry of power" within regions may empower some localities or interests while marginalizing others (Edwards, Goodwin, Pemberton, & Woods, 2001). In their examination of rural governance in Wales, Edwards et al. (2001) found that some regional partnerships actually strengthened the position or power of the state rather than localities or communities, while others empowered local groups and community development by opening up access to resources regionally. The success or failure of regional collaboration or spaces of engagement for places is influenced by the sociopolitical geography within regions, as

vulnerabilities and capacities to benefit from regional engagement are not ubiquitous. It is useful, therefore, to think about place in the context of regional governance and decision-making.

3.3 Place-Oriented Governance in Rural Regions

The contemporary neo-liberal political context emphasizes the devolution of decision-making and a shift from the *dominance of government*, or the role of the state and directly elected officials (Painter & Goodwin, 1995), to *governance*, otherwise defined as "Any strategy, tactic, process, procedure, or programme for controlling, regulating, shaping, mastering, or exercising authority over others in a nation, organization or locality" (Rose, 1999, p. 15).

This decentralizing shift in decision-making has passed responsibility to lower scales—in essence, to places—facilitating the emergence of new players, relationships, and capacities to act on behalf of common interests. As Rose (1999) suggested, "The pattern or structure that emerges is the result of the interactions of a range of political actors—of which the state is only one" (p. 16).

Johnston highlighted political actions by those with power in society—people "who use space and create places in the pursuit of their goals" (1991, p. 68). Although the emergence of new institutions and forums for decision-making at different scales at first appears to be an opportunity for places to assert themselves in self-determination, in places lacking capacity it can be also be a burden (Flint & Brennan, 2006; Herbert, 2005). Particularly in rural areas, new institutional arrangements may be slow to emerge and benefits may not emerge as readily (Jones & Little, 2000). The question remains whether those without power in rural society or regions have a voice, or indeed any ability to use space or create places that fit their identity and goals.

The notion of governance at the local scale and the concept of place are tightly related to the concept of community (see Chap. 5). Community as a concept is as contested as place (Luloff, Krannich, Theodori, Koons-Trentelman, & Williams, 2004). While many definitions of community exist, a territorial or place-based component is commonly found (Wilkinson, 1991). In an interactional interpretation of community (Flint & Luloff, 2005; Wilkinson, 1991), place plays an important but incomplete role in the emergence of community. Community emerges through collective actions by people who share common interests and care about the place in which they live (Flint & Luloff, 2005; Luloff & Bridger, 2003; Wilkinson, 1991). Therefore, although place and community are not synonymous they are strongly linked.

The concept of a "community field" is helpful in understanding how people with diverse social interests join together in the common concerns of a community to take action or influence decisions about their shared place (Theodori, 2005; Wilkinson, 1991). This concept can extend beyond the scale of locality as when communities come together to address the general interests of a larger region to

influence decision-making, i.e., the development of a regional community field (Flint, Luloff, & Theodori, 2010). This type of extra-local interaction relates closely to Cox's (1998) notion of spaces of engagement.

Rural communities with economies based primarily on natural resources often have a legacy of dependence, powerlessness, and being subject to decisions made at higher scales. During recent decades they have suffered from a shifting national emphasis on urban issues and sources of capital, along with a general preoccupation with national and international security issues (Flint & Luloff, 2005). On their own rural communities may lack the resources and capacities to assess group needs and desires, reconcile conflicting interests, and channel their efforts to shape and develop places, to suit their collective vision. However, with interaction among communities across landscapes, local communities may find that elements and meanings of their place are shared with extra-local groups, thus catalyzing the potential for collective action and participation in new forms of governance operating within larger regions or spaces of engagement (Cox, 1998). An example of this phenomenon follows.

3.4 Forging New Relationships Amidst Landscape Disturbance in North Central Colorado

In a five-county region spanning more than one million acres of north central Colorado,[2] mountain pine beetles are causing massive tree mortality. A landscape disturbance of this magnitude challenges place meanings for residents, visitors, workers, and recreationists in and around forested areas. The continuing outbreak affects not only neighborhoods and communities, but interactions across broader regional landscapes (Flint, McFarlane, & Müller, 2009; Qin & Flint, 2010). As the crisis has unfolded forest-oriented communities have assumed new roles informing state and federal policies. Regional discussions of global climate change and impacts on forest disturbance and management strategies show that places in Colorado also have links to global processes.

Particularly at more local scales, communities and places can be key loci for conservation decision-making. The everyday interface between people and the forest environment occurs in localities whereby place-based experiences are shared by people with multiple interests. Decision-making in the context of forest disturbance is influenced or limited by larger-scale structures such as state and federal regulations, but there is also a degree of autonomy for actions to emerge locally. Individuals make decisions about what to do with their own property. Within homeowner associations and neighborhoods residents collaborate (or choose not to collaborate) to regulate activities within delineated areas. City governments enact regulations and

[2] Communities included in the study of this region are Breckenridge, Dillon, Frisco, Granby, Kremmling, Silverthorne, Steamboat Springs, Vail, and most of Jackson County. Counties are Eagle, Grand, Jackson, Routt, and Summit.

restrictions on forest management, influence risk management strategies such as local fire prevention and response, and shape policies regarding local development that impacts wildland-urban interface zones. County commissioners facilitate dialogue across multiple interests and exercise jurisdiction over rural issues, including land use and forest management, outside of city limits. Locally based representatives of state and federal land management agencies interact with local interests as they seek to manage regional public lands. In these ways agency representatives create a bridge between local interests and state and federal scales of decision-making. While there are opportunities for local action to emerge in response to forest disturbance, capacity for interaction and collective action is not always present in neighborhoods, communities, and other local scales. To paraphrase Cox (1998), the spaces of dependence around each local community are often inadequate for dealing with the multi-scale implications of changing landscapes by forest disturbance.

However, in north central Colorado during the recent mountain pine beetle outbreak novel governance relationships have emerged as representatives of different interest groups, communities, and organizations tapped into existing networks and formed new linkages to influence decision-making and action. These new spaces of engagement continue to influence state and national policies to redefine regional places and identities. It should be noted that a factor working against effective cooperative decision-making is the rapid turnover in local representatives from the primary agencies dealing with forest management issues (the U.S. Forest Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, and Colorado State Forest Service). The replacement of district rangers and field officers every couple of years tends to erode the institutional history or memory of interaction with local interests and communities.

The Colorado Bark Beetle Cooperative[3] (CBBC) offers a compelling example of place and scale interaction influencing decision-making. Organized in 2005 and remaining active in 2012, this diverse group of participants included representatives from local governments and federal forest management agencies. The cooperative engaged in regular dialogue with private landowners, major utility companies, conservation districts, water districts, and industry leaders in open meetings and workshops. CBBC representatives traveled to Washington D.C. to meet with agency and congressional representatives and to lobby for funds and policies to support forest management efforts to mitigate risks associated with the mountain pine beetles in Colorado. Through these interactions the representatives came to realize that despite variations in local perceptions and opinions about the best courses of action, different places in the region were coping with many of the same disturbance processes and management needs. Through extra-local interaction community representatives were able to collectively visualize regional and place-based strategies for promoting and locating forest industry activities in communities more tolerant of resource extraction, while prioritizing aesthetic and conservation strategies around more exclusive amenity communities having higher land values.

[3] This effort was initially named the Northern Colorado Bark Beetle Cooperative (NCBBC).

Place interaction occurred on a smaller, grassroots scale as well. In Summit County citizens formed a local forest health task force as part of an initiative called "Our Future Summit." The group's bimonthly meetings provides a venue (a space of engagement) for citizens representing themselves, homeowner associations, or non-profit organizations from communities within and beyond Summit County to interact and learn about forest health issues and initiate local and regional efforts to mitigate risks. Thus amidst a major forest disturbance and changing landscape new relationships for governance have emerged in north central Colorado. Local and non-state actors have taken over some natural resource management functions and the regional identity has incorporated new forms of interaction that facilitate political action. These changes have not come without difficulties and tension. Disparities remain, along with disagreements between wealthy communities such as Vail and Breckenridge and less economically endowed ones found in areas of Grand and Jackson counties. Also, there are still areas with limited capacities for collaboration on behalf of shared places and interests or weak representation at higher scales of governance. In some situations community engagement beyond places is low because of strong government representation—as seen in Vail, where city officials were observed to dominate many engagement efforts, squeezing out broader civic participation. In other cases conflicts of interest, tensions between newcomers and longtime residents, and poor economic conditions (such as in Jackson County) seem to block full engagement in assertive decision-making and collective action. Instability in federal agency representation at the local level also continues to deter continuity, institutional memory, and an ability to facilitate collaborative processes. The Colorado situation exemplifies what the literature on rural governance describes as the emergent "geometries of power" (Edwards et al., 2001, p. 291) in which regional collaboration may or may not work to the advantage of every community or locality within a region (Hall & Stern, 2009).

3.5 Conclusion

Concerted effort is needed to avoid contentious conflict and entrenched place-limited orientations. New forms of multi-scale engagement and connectivity among places can expand place-based identities to broader regional scales. However, such interaction may not always empower localities as the expansion of place-based decision-making restructures regional geometries of power (Edwards et al., 2001). In general, north central Colorado regional collaboration and governance around issues related to forest disturbance empowered people in places to address their shared vulnerabilities and common goals around a new regional identity. Places can maintain their identity and meaning for residents in regional interaction while becoming more familiar with the opportunities made possible by extra-local and multi-scale interactions.

How can social processes and institutions promote the benefits of extra-local or multiple place interactions and reduce the barriers to and limitations of such

interaction? For researchers and agency representatives promoting natural resource management strategies a key consideration ties back to the conception of place. Researchers do not always use the same definitions of place and place meanings as the people who associate with them (Staeheli, 2003). Thus it is important to incorporate local knowledge and local meanings into research on places, taking care not to impose partial interpretations of place on local stakeholders, especially where places at risk are concerned. For research and resource conservation outcomes to be locally relevant and oriented toward improving human and environmental well-being, local people should be encouraged to articulate their own place meanings as well as their engagements beyond their own localities and communities.

Just as interactions among people with diverse interests contribute to the process of local community building interactions among people from multiple places within a region may foster collective interpretations of their shared landscape and regional processes. Concerted effort is needed to break down cultural, political, and logistical barriers that can stymie the emergence of these wider spaces of engagement. Successful place-based conservation may well rely on our ability to think outside the box—or place—to fully appreciate the role of place in decision-making.

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Chapter 4
Organizational Cultures and Place-Based Conservation

Patricia A. Stokowski

Abstract Organizational cultures are important to individuals and to groups because they offer guidelines about how to act and deal with change, and they provide internal logic for "why things are the way they are." Analysis of the cultural aspects of organizational behavior can lead to a more complete understanding of how conservation agencies develop and use culture strategically, particularly in conceptualizing and managing resource places. Drawing examples from public lands management, this chapter considers how research about organizational culture can provide insights about place-based conservation.

Keywords Organizational identity • Organizational culture • Discourse • Philosophical traditions in planning • Symbolism • Communication

Natural resource management agencies are notable for developing strong organizational cultures that provide a sense of cohesion and occupational enculturation for their members (Carroll, 1989). Shared symbols emerge within those cultures—symbols that represent the organization's identity and values and strategically support agency management goals—to institutionalize meaningful cultural practices in the ways they "impose upon the world a particular conception of how things…are and how men (sic) are therefore obliged to act" (Geertz, 1973, p. 316). The internal culture of a resource management agency thus bears directly on its public image and on its view of itself relative to others in the broader social and cultural environment.

The concept of *culture* refers to the array of personal and social practices through which people make sense of the world and their lives, and the shared symbols through

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which people give meaning to their actions. In the broadest sense culture can be defined as the "historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic forms by means of which men (sic) communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about and attitudes towards life" (Geertz, 1973, p. 89). Applied to social groups and organizations, the concept of culture encompasses the traditions, rituals, beliefs, ideologies, ways of speaking, stories, habits, myths, patterns of behavior, and other features of shared experience that distinguish a group and give its members a sense of uniqueness and solidarity. Developed over time in social groups, community settings, organizations, and nations, cultural symbols and practices provide guidelines and routines that lend order to reality, languages of sense-making, and an array of artifacts around which personal identity and collective behavior may be organized.

Culture influences how agencies think about places and place management. Because a natural resource agency's work always involves making decisions about the management of specific locales, the idea of place is of central importance to agency functions. Analyzing cultural aspects of agency organizational behaviors can reveal how agencies apprehend places, organize their work relative to ideas about place, and strategically use elements of organizational culture to reinforce their ideas about place. This chapter examines the question of how organizational processes internal to resource management agencies can yield both richer understanding and better decision-making for the management of place.

4.1 Resource Management Agencies and Place

The idea of place has always been implicit in deliberation about natural resource management and policy, and conceptualizations about place have led to particular ways of organizing for agency action. Few places come to our attention in "raw form," stripped of personal impressions, prior knowledge, histories, and meanings. This is obvious for iconic sites (such as the Old Faithful geyser in Yellowstone National Park), but it is equally true for common or local settings that also have been endowed with personal or public sentiment. Moreover, the group of people who have strong feelings for specific places can extend beyond those most familiar with them and those who manage them to individuals who have never directly experienced those meaningful places. The ways in which public agencies envision places and how they manage places has long-term implications for conservation, as well as for individuals and communities.

Natural resource places are fundamental inputs to managerial decision-making. Administratively, managers of natural resource agencies have traditionally defined places as physical settings valued for utilitarian, economic, social, or sentimental reasons. These sites have identifiable commodity characteristics; demarcated borders; measurable quantities (acres, board feet, user opportunities); and specific purposes (timber harvest, watershed protection, recreation). This conceptualization assumes that place is a tangible, physical entity, a geographic area—a setting to be managed

by agency staff educated in the sciences of ecology and human behavior and authorized politically to oversee resource uses for the public good. A manager's knowledge of place, then, arises from the direct experience of managing objects in nature. While benevolent in spirit, this approach to resource management is conditioned by the structures and functions of rational, efficient, scientifically based organizational systems. Top-down decision-making is the norm and managers are considered to have special knowledge and authority.

Places, however, can also be viewed as *subjective* sites of debate, interpretation and contested meaning—actual but also imagined settings that encourage the flourishing of feelings, attitudes, values, and behaviors. This view invests the physical settings and objects of place with sentiments and meanings held by people to whom that setting matters. Places are described by their social and cultural importance, historical uses and transformations, and the ways in which various groups have appropriated them (Sokolove, Fairfax, & Holland, 2002). That is, "Place meanings are expressions of how people come to know and value a biophysical setting" (Cheng & Daniels, 2003, p. 843). Within this conceptualization, a *sense of place* refers to the personal, social, historical, and sociocultural meanings held by individuals and groups (agency members as well as interested publics) affiliated with specific settings and sites.

This idea of place, whereby it is subjective, multifaceted, and shared, calls for a management philosophy that relies less on top-down control and instead emphasizes shared understandings and participatory processes (see Farnum & Kruger, 2008). Participatory processes are deliberative; they rely on collaboration and interpersonal interactions. Through shared dialogue and involvement individual citizens, interest groups, and agency leaders can share their direct understandings of places. This facilitates mutual learning and appreciation of diverse views, and ideally contributes to the consideration of alternative resource management strategies.

These two views of resource management—top-down versus collaborative—can be examined within the context of John Friedmann's (1987) analysis of the philosophical traditions of scientifically based planning. Asking "How do we make a good society?," Friedmann describes four philosophical traditions that result in different approaches to societal planning.

The *social reform* perspective, grounded in scientific reasoning and focused on the continual improvement of institutional processes across society, involves benevolent leaders working with experts to provide for the well-being of citizens. The standard resource management work of public institutions (e.g., local, state and federal governments) illustrates this tradition. In counterpoint to this, the *social mobilization* tradition centers on the actions of grassroots organizations to effect either disengagement or confrontation with prevailing forces of social order. Utopian as well as revolutionary groups fit within this tradition. The *social learning* tradition, departing from mechanistic explanations about human behavior, invokes collaboration, trust, and learning within small groups to achieve goals. Examples of this tradition can be found in non-hierarchical, matrix-like models of social collaboration. The tradition of *policy analysis*, grounded in efficiency and technology, is expert-driven and focuses on achieving the best technical outcomes of planning processes. The National Atmospheric & Space Administration (NASA) illustrates this approach.

Traditional resource management (which conceives of places as natural objects awaiting technical solutions) tends to primarily apply the philosophies of bureaucratic social reform, sometimes incorporating expert-driven policy analysis approaches to rationalize and justify scientific claims. More recent collaborative approaches in resource management (where places are viewed as contexts for personal and social meaning) reflect social mobilization and social learning perspectives. These integrate deliberative, participatory processes within more traditional bureaucratic decision-making models or work outside societal institutions.

The colloquialism "form follows function" is useful here. When agencies define place as the location for a set of physical objects in nature, top-down styles of management and decision-making predominate, promoting standardized, technical solutions. On the other hand, when places are viewed as centers of meaning, more flexible and emergent social learning approaches and social mobilization are needed. By incorporating inclusive processes of shared interaction during planning and decision-making, deliberative practices encourage managers and citizens to develop and share new understandings of the meaningful qualities of places.

Increasing interest in collaborative approaches illustrates a shift over time in conservation agencies' perspectives on and decision-making about the management of place. Collaborative approaches tend to encourage mutual learning about each participant's cultures during decision-making processes, but frequently the agency retains primacy in setting the agenda for action by defining relevant questions, overseeing the process of participation, and retaining position as the final decision-maker. How such encounters are managed culturally is an important issue for research, but Friedmann's model offers little insight about the fine details of decision-making about places. The received wisdom is that bureaucracies make rational decisions "deliberately considering and weighing alternatives, deciding on a course of action that promises the best returns, and acting accordingly" (Fuchs, 2001, p. 127). That explanation, however, seems to consider bureaucratic decision-making processes as necessary and inviolate. One way to explore the issue of culture in resource management decision-making is to move away from structural and functional aspects of organizing, towards cultural aspects of organizational behavior.

4.2 Organizational Culture and Resource Management

In the U.S. and abroad, federal, state, and local government agencies have coordinated much of the formal decision-making related to planning, use, and protection of natural resource places. Though public resource management agencies differ in their sizes, missions, responsibilities, degrees of centralization, funding, staff, and administrative autonomy, they are also similar in important ways. As bureaucratic organizations, each manages multiple units across all or part of a region; hires staff members who have strong commitments to conservation; and tend to rely on science, efficiency, and measures of accountability in doing their work. While public agencies stand apart from corporations, other businesses, and non-profits,

fundamentally they are organizations—systems of human activity, intentionally created to achieve specific goals. As such, public agencies share certain characteristics with all organizations, including predictable routines, linked roles arranged hierarchically or otherwise, internally coordinated activities, systems of rules and controls, stocks of knowledge, unique organizational cultures, and boundaries that are to some extent permeable (Aldrich, 1999).

Of these characteristics, it is the culture of conservation agencies that is of considerable interest in analyzing the management of place. Employees are immersed, to greater or lesser degrees, in an organization's continually evolving cultural system (and even before and after joining an organization, they are also deeply enmeshed in the broader cultures of their communities and society). As Aldrich (1999) notes, "Organizational cultures do not develop in isolation from the surrounding society … Organizations are sites for the *reproduction* of cultural norms and practices, but they also *generate* cultural norms and practices" (pp. 155–156). Cultural systems operate at several levels simultaneously, then, ordering the world and giving meaning to human experience.

Organizational cultures offer implicit guidelines about professional behavior, meaningful actions, and expectations for oneself and others. The value of studies on organizational culture is well-illustrated by Kaufman's (1960) classic analysis of the functional coherence and internal control of the U.S. Forest Service's operations and philosophies, examined through the daily work of its rangers. In related research, Twight (1983) examines the ways that power and values intersect to produce political decisions made by that same agency relative to Olympic National Park. Both studies show that certain qualities of agency culture reinforce individual identification with and commitment to the organization, which serves to sustain the patterned, functional activities of the Forest Service (a generalization also appropriate to other resource management agencies). As Twight notes, "An organization's value orientation constitutes a shared frame of reference, which includes sanctioned patterns prescribing the approved way of doing things and the established goals of that body. This orientation controls an organization's perceived purpose in society and filters its perceptions of public demands" (p. 25).

Within natural resource professions, U.S. agencies are seen to have strong and unique cultures. Colfer (1978) provides an example of Forest Service culture in a study of the interactions between logging families and public agency employees in a remote town in Washington. Colfer observes that, "Many Forest Service personnel and their families refer to the Forest Service as 'one big happy family'" (p. 209). The author notes that use of the family metaphor gave agency employees and their kin a sense of cohesion and connectedness within the organization, as well as an identity beyond it. Strong organizational cultures, however, also may have potentially negative consequences, as Kennedy (1988) points out in his analysis of "groupthink" in the Forest Service during the 1950s and 1960s. Entrenched and isolating organizational practices can be obstacles to changing an agency's direction, goals, and response patterns. For example, the Forest Service's dominant metaphor of forests as production "machines" (Fairfax, 2005; Kennedy & Quigley, 1998), and its replacement with a more organic and participatory model of forest ecosystem management, required shifts in both external world-views and internal organizational culture.

4.3 Agency Discourse: A Component of Organizational Culture

Much of a public agency's work lies in communicating with internal and external constituents, so the ways in which an agency conducts discourse is of particular interest in studies of organizational culture. Van Dijk (1997, p. 3) defines discourse as "talk and text in context," and Hajer (1995) explains the term as referring to the "specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, and categorizations that are produced, reproduced and transformed in a particular set of practices and through which meaning is given to physical and social realities" (p. 44). These "language(s) of the workplace" are keys to understanding "the routine and dramatic performances of managers and employees, and a wide variety of shared practices that help an organization know its own uniqueness" (Eisenberg & Goodall, 1993, p. 115).

Discourses are deployed by organizations and agencies to explain and reinforce organizational values, beliefs, and behaviors. Constructed within all types of communications media (spoken language, written texts, nonverbal messages), agencies have innumerable opportunities to construct original stories about their own worldviews, and then to use various methods of persuasive communication to disseminate these messages internally and externally. Discourses are bounded by context, as well as agency intent and skill. "Discourse is social," writes Macdonell (1986, p. 1), and "possibilities for meaning are pinned down and made into definite meanings through the social and institutional position from which the discourse comes" (p. 12). This should not imply that meanings emerge fully formed and set in stone. Language is malleable (i.e., the same words can be interpreted in a variety of ways), shifting across contexts, audiences, and speakers. And, the meanings of messages are continually adjusted by communicators in interaction. Such fluidity makes discourse effective in reaching diverse sets of people, but it also means that discourses are always subject to interpretation and recrafting. As Fiske (1989) observes, "Discourse does not reveal the "truth" about the world, it makes meanings that serve some interests better than others and inserts these meanings into the constant play of domination and subordination, of power and resistances, that characterizes late capitalistic societies" (p. 170).

Blommaert (2005) says it another way: "People speak *from* a place" (p. 223). The same is true for agencies and organizations. Organizational cultures, built from and reproducing patterns of habitual behaviors and routine ways of seeing the world, presuppose the rightness and inevitability of an agency's or manager's discourses. The management of place can be seen as an arena of language-based cultural performance—one drawn around particular kinds of questions and issues, orientations to places, types of social interactions, decision-making choices, administrative rules and responsibilities, and practical applications. Within these contexts place discourses that diverge from those produced by powerful organizations and mangers—for example, discourses originating outside the organization that challenge interpretations—are likely to be challenged, treated with skepticism, or ignored within decision-making processes.

How do analyses of organizational culture and the manifestations of it in organizational discourse help agencies make better decisions about place? One example can be seen in agency-sponsored programming for interpretive services, where a manager's use of specific images and language is strategic and intentional, aiming to stimulate particular kinds of effects across audiences. Interpretive materials and presentations are "one kind of institutionalized rhetorical situation by which persuasive messages are delivered to receptive audiences" by credible agency personnel (Stokowski, 1990, p. 47). These messages usually are intended to educate, entertain, or move audiences to action, but they also work to expose on-site visitors (and sometimes others off-site) to the ideals and goals of the managing agency and to its slate of meanings about specific resource places. Indeed, building a loyal, supportive, knowledgeable constituency is one of the more important purposes of interpretive communication.

Peterson's (1988) analysis of the mythic structure of park interpretive materials at Grand Teton National Park provides a telling example of cultural discourses of place. Her study reveals that the agency's preservationist interpretive messages were drawn around religious and mystical themes, effectively reducing visitors to passive observers expected to submit to nature's god-like processes. Examination of the text, however, revealed a hidden contradiction: If the national park is a "holy place" where nature itself is in charge, what is the role of park administrators, and how can their managerial actions be justified? Implicit in the interpretive story is the notion that managers serve as nature's direct representatives, helping nature succeed at its work—a rationale, one might observe, that not only provides considerable latitude in making management decisions, but also elevates agency personnel to partners with nature, a status certainly above that of park visitors, the ostensible owners of the public lands.

Natural resource planning is another context in which the discourses associated with organizational culture can impact agency decision-making. The shift from thinking about places as objects to places as contexts for human meaning has produced new approaches to place-based planning—"land and natural resource planning efforts that bring together diverse human values, uses, experiences, and activities tied to specific geographic locations" (Farnum & Kruger, 2008, p. 1). Place-based planning has appeal because it implies that decisions will be more local, more participatory, and more meaningful in outcome—presumably without the objectification of place that may accompany traditional managerial practice. But the elasticity of place meanings and their reciprocal power to interact with other agency and societal discourses are often overlooked in planning efforts eager to fulfill citizen participation goals by obtaining the broadest possible set of comments from the widest range of citizens and groups. Cataloguing and categorizing place meanings as reflecting only individual beliefs or decontextualized sentiments ignores their importance as rich, substantive discourses produced by an array of cultural groups engaged in communication about resource places.

Agency discourse is also significant in relation to conservation issues beyond federal public lands management (e.g., in watershed planning, partnership

formation, and ecosystem management). Conservation may be viewed as an historically well-defined philosophy and set of principles, but as Vivanco (2003) points out, "Conservation is never simply about what kind of nature people imagine or…want to preserve or restore; it is also an important arena in which they, explicitly or implicitly, project and reimagine social relationships and cultural institutions" (p. 59). The notion of incorporating multicultural relationships associated with places into the management of resource places is not new. But it has most often been applied in the context of international visitors or different ethnic and cultural groups using recreation sites such as picnic areas and campgrounds. Cultural sensitivity, however, is equally necessary in working with the diversity of organizational, group, and community cultures within the same local area or society. In this respect discourse assumes great importance, for people speaking about the same geographic places may not be speaking at all about the same "place." A positive outcome of the analysis of organizational culture and discourses is that agency employees as well as external publics may come to appreciate the values, symbols, structures of meanings, and points of intersection across social groups. The result may be new kinds of cross-cultural dialogue, sharing of ideas, experiences of customs, and a reinvigoration of alternatives for management.

Such beneficial changes might include enhancing relationships between natural resource agencies and communities affected by management activities. In one illustrative case (Stock, 1999), a resource management agency undertook the reconstruction of a remote historic railroad site without adequate public support from the small town through which the site access road ran. Both agency officials and local community leaders saw an opportunity for tourism development, but each group defined the situation differently, valued different qualities of the community and the region, symbolized their attachments differently, and had different ways of expressing views about appropriate community goals; that is, they could not build bridges between their different cultures. Little productive dialogue occurred and a collaborative approach to planning never emerged.

Structural changes to deliberative processes may fail to change decision-making in the absence of accompanying cultural openness or change. As Cronon (1995) observes, "Ecosystems are profoundly historical, meaning that they exist in time and are the products as much of their own past as of the timelessly abstract processes we think we see going on in them" (p. *ix*) This raises questions about how managers might incorporate broader historic and cultural contexts in sensitive decision-making, even when those contexts support divergent or opposing place meanings. When agency cultures are strong, it is sometimes difficult to understand that others may reasonably see things differently, and conflicts about acceptable alternatives for place management may exist. Yet if managers seek plurality in decision-making, then cultural openness, capacity for making change, and a focus on the emergent qualities of multiple place discourses are needed. Collaborative planning practices would be richer if more focused attention was given to the cultural aspects of groups, organizations and communities affiliated with resource places.

4.4 Managing Place in the Context of Agency Cultures

This chapter calls for the study of natural resource agency cultures and consideration of their roles in the management of resource places. But what about place should be more fully incorporated into place-based conservation? And how can a cultural view of resource agencies and their organizational behaviors lead to better agency decision-making and more effective management of meaningful places? This section offers several suggestions.

First, as noted above, an understanding of the organizational cultures of resource management agencies can lead to richer knowledge about how agencies work, how they think about places, and how they attempt to justify for their employees and outsiders the choices they make about place management. Critical analysis of organizational meanings about place, the discourses that symbolize place, and the agency cultures that support these may move agencies and citizens towards more substantive and complex definitions and approaches to place, and more vigorous and flexible forms of public action in natural resource management.

Second, the analysis of agency cultures could help clarify important questions about the nature of decisions in natural resource management. In making decisions about place, agencies typically conduct resource inventories, analyze uses of place, and consider long-range scenarios and alternatives for use and management. Gathering such information is relevant for developing and implementing programs and plans, making financial investments, adjusting staffing, evaluating alternative strategies for resource protection and use, and formulating policy. A frequent result, though, is that processes of decision-making somehow become hidden behind data collection and analysis.

Recognizing this, Fuchs (2001) suggests that a more useful definition of the concept of decision is "a schema for assigning organizational responsibility and allocating praise and blame" (p. 128). From this perspective, place behaviors and meanings, as well as decision processes themselves, should be reconceptualized as discourses that deploy verbal and non-verbal forms of symbolic communication to exert individual and collective control and coordination in complex social environments. Analysis of public and organizational discourses can show how choices and decisions are endowed with a group's cultural meanings. In juxtaposing and blending public and agency discourses, then, decision-making processes should be seen as having internal logic, supporting or challenging organizational structures of authority and power, and tightly interwoven with rituals, symbols, and ideologies.

Third, just as individuals represent more than their roles and positions, agencies are more than impassive organizations conducting business in standardized ways, immune from change and unrelentingly predictable. Research about resource management organizations should aim to understand how agencies use elements of organizational culture strategically and under different social and political conditions to frame and enact management decisions. One outcome of such analysis may be a new research program about "language as a way of being in place" focused differentially on individual, group, and agency behavior.

Researchers who study place have analyzed language as content-laden utterances about place and as expressions of people's feelings about place—not as the primary *behavior* of individuals and organizations in place. An agency's responsiveness to issues associated with place management may require the application of new research about how place stimulates language behavior that is central to personal experience and group cohesion.

Fourth, current trends in natural resource decision-making are towards developing new ways of organizing and governing towards shared community and societal well-being and responsibility. Traditional practices and behaviors sometimes do not respond quickly enough to emerging needs, but cultural analysis of resource management agencies, communities and other organizations may provide new tools and strategies for collaboration in the face of change. Roadblocks in traditional agency approaches may be overcome by creating new, shared cultures of collaboration between agencies, other groups, and individuals.

A prevailing narrative relating to new place-based land use planning and management initiatives is that "deeply rooted communities, thoughtfully and deliberately shaping their environmental futures" work in ways that are "democratic, inclusive, informed, mutually respectful" (Mason, 2008). But this is an ideal and not always a reality. It is also a code for emphasizing the virtues of local environments, small geographic scales, and deep familiarity with people and place (Kemmis, 1990). Such close connectedness reflects strong ties between people. But strong social ties and networks in which people typically are similar to one another in social and demographic qualities (Granovetter, 1973) may inhibit new ideas and close out new participants. Alternatively, as Mason (p. 46) notes, sometimes "local problems are in no small part the product of extra-local processes," and communities may not have the resources needed to solve the problems (see Chap. 3). A role remains for government expertise, funds, and incentives to broaden and support local planning and land use management initiatives. Wondolleck and Yaffee (2000) reinforce this idea in their analysis of successful collaborative cases, in which they show that a sense of place and a sense of community can serve to foster collaborative activities. These authors write, "Places can be powerful symbols that encourage people to reframe their identity and interact with individuals or groups that historically have been viewed as "outside" their geographic, interest-based, or perceptual boundaries" (Wondolleck & Yaffee, p. 74).

Efforts to build cultural capacity based on shared ideas about place may facilitate formation of linkages between agencies and communities that mitigate some of the problems. McGinnis, Woolley, and Gamman (1999) write that "More than reliance on good scientific information, technology, and the resolution of value-based conflict…collaboration can also be achieved by recognizing and cultivating shared understandings or commonly held values and beliefs that are inherent to community-based watershed planning" (p. 1). Such bonds often occur around places, as Manzo and Perkins (2006) observed: "Affective bonds to places can help inspire action because people are motivated to seek, stay in, protect, and improve places that are meaningful to them" (p. 347). Moreover, a culture of care may also grow up among people who share those affections.

Additionally, an agency with a strong internal culture focused on shared interactions about place and its social meanings can develop adaptive skills by building relationships to foster learning opportunities. In the words of Armitage (2005, p. 706), "Adaptive capacity is largely a function of social and institutional relationships and the manner in which social actors mediate among contested interests to avoid potentially negative…action outcomes," a point also echoed by Berkes (2009). Though individuals with strong organizational identities may find it difficult to adopt broader perspectives, "Establishing a common group identity may be an important step towards enhancing collaboration among stakeholders and fostering shared ways of knowing" (Cheng & Daniels, 2003, p. 852). The message is that social practices which build shared cultures will contribute to success in resource management.

4.5 Conclusions

Wuthnow et al. (1984) write that "The principle questions for cultural analysis now not only include the meaning of symbols but the conditions, patterns, and rules of use which render symbols meaningful" (p. 247). Organizations, as much as individuals and social groups, use culture to establish and reinforce identity and belongingness. A full analysis of natural resource agency culture (together with analyses of community culture and interorganizational relationships) would necessarily also consider the role of place management in supporting organizational identity and culture.

This chapter suggests that the nature of an organization's culture influences its conceptions of place and its approaches to place management. Focusing on agency discourses would seem to be a very useful starting point for studying cultural aspects of place-making and its role in resource planning and management. Moreover, ideas about resource management and place are relevant to the discussion of agency culture not only because an agency's work is to manage specific places, but also because places may "work back" on agencies reciprocally, helping to define, challenge, contest, or give meaning to operational practices. That is, while agency managers execute decisions about places from positions of political distance and power, places are immediate, meaningful, and peopled, challenging an agency's objective stance. This happens most visibly when natural changes disrupt agency plans; when interest groups attempt to publicly delimit the meanings of specific places; or when individuals or communities use a site in ways unintended by managers. Thus, while managers may intend to shape places congruent with an agency's vision, places maybe seen to resist such attempts.

The production of particular discourses of place, generated by and within natural resource agencies, is intimately linked to other processes of power and control in agency systems (Stokowski, 2002). To the extent that decision-making constitutes much of the day-to-day work of managers, organizational culture and its relation to agency decision-making about resource places are areas of fruitful study. Among the many worthy study topics related to organizational cultures of natural resource agencies are important questions about how agency employees understand

organizational cultures and participate in their perpetuation; the reciprocal effects of organizational culture on the behaviors of staff and leaders; and the ways in which the cultures of agencies, interest groups and individuals interact to accomplish (or thwart) social and political goals. In practical terms resource agency managers are particularly well-positioned to influence staff attitudes and action regarding places (Brown & Humphreys, 2006, p. 248), and the ways in which managers and staff incorporate symbols of place into group identity rituals can reveal much about the control of place meanings in public dialogues.

While the focus here is on natural resource agencies, the ideas discussed also apply to other organizations, groups, and communities involved in natural and cultural resource management and decision-making. Resource places are not only sources of commodities, or recreation sites people visit, or far-off places that capture the imagination. They are integrated into the life histories of people living in communities and oriented to specific geographic locales or regions. As McCullough (2003) observes, "Our communities and landscapes are patchworks of natural and cultural resources and…changes to incidental parts can ultimately transform the whole" (p. 40). We save natural and cultural places so that we can also save our own selves, our communities, and our collective identities; the interdependence of these factors is also the reason that organizational and community cultures are so important in agency resource management.

Recent calls for finding ways to incorporate place meanings into planning processes imply that the process itself is adequately able to incorporate new approaches and ideas. But what if standard processes of planning are themselves problematic? Langston (1995) notes that we need to work with landscapes "by forming close connections to a place but also being willing to adapt to the character of the place [in a] combination of mobility and connection" (p. 303). The same insight might be applied to our managing authorities: Organizations should aim to be pliable, adaptable, and able to respond to new circumstances, needs and concerns with investment in cultural aspects of management.

A full analysis of agency discourse and agency culture remains to be written. Perhaps the initial revelation in that process will be that culture is not only a specific feature of agencies but that the work of an agency is actually produced by and through its cultures—particularly its discourses. And that revelation may mean everything for how an agency thinks about and, with others, makes decisions about place.

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Chapter 5
Community, Place, and Conservation

Gene L. Theodori and Gerard T. Kyle

Abstract This chapter develops an analytical framework for examining the associations of community, place, and conservation. Community is characterized by place-oriented collective actions among a local population, through which residents express a shared sense of identity while engaging in the common concerns of life in the local society. Community-based natural resource management and conservation activities rooted in the assumptions, propositions, and concepts presented in this chapter have the potential to truly enhance the focus and effectiveness of resource management policies and practices at the *community* level.

Keywords Community-based natural resource management • Community field • Community theory • Interactional theory • Community development

Today the term *community* is commonly invoked in the literature on natural resources, ecosystem management, and conservation. Domain-specific expressions such as "community fisheries management," "community forestry," "community watershed management," and "community wildlife management"—as well as the overarching phrase "community natural resource management"—are commonplace in popular and scientific writings. In recent years a preponderance of papers and journal articles have been published on community-based natural resource management

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and decision-making issues (Luloff, Krannich, Theodori, Trentelman, & Williams, 2004). This relatively large body of research—much of it conducted in the developing countries of southern Asia and Africa—has provided an overview of the paradigmatic shift from scientifically-based, top-down decision-making characterized by centralized, expert-driven, rational-comprehensive management, to an approach that promotes the integration of communities into natural resource management and decision-making processes (Brosius, Tsing, & Zerner, 1998; Conley & Moote, 2003; Cortner & Moote, 1999; Lachapelle, McCool, & Patterson, 2003; Lee & Field, 2005; Weber, 2000). This research also has provided empirical information on a variety of community-related natural resource management and conservation topics, spanning the gamut from implementation to evaluation (Carr & Halvorsen, 2001; Kellert, Mehta, Ebbin, & Lichtenfeld, 2000; Kruger & Shannon, 2000; Wittayapak & Dearden, 1999).

Theoretically, the core premises underlying community-based natural resource management are very appealing. Included among the principal assumptions of devolving natural resource management activities to local communities are the ideas:

> …that local populations have a greater interest in the sustainable use of resources than does the state or distant corporate managers; that local communities are more cognizant of the intricacies of local ecological processes and practices; and that they are more able to effectively manage those resources through local or 'traditional' forms of access (Brosius et al., 1998, p. 158).

Nonetheless, numerous questions regarding the strengths and limitations of community-based natural resource management abound in the literature (Bradshaw, 2003; Cortner et al., 2001; Gray, Fisher, & Jungwirth, 2001; Weber, 2000).

A fundamental issue in the extant community-based natural resource management literature is the problem of definition. Upon careful examination of both the international and domestic research, it becomes increasingly evident that no shared theoretical foundation or common use of the concept of community exists (Agrawal & Gibson, 1999; Flint, Luloff, & Finley, 2008; Kumar, 2005; Luloff et al., 2004). Undoubtedly such variations in conceptual orientations and use have led to a somewhat complex and cloudy knowledge base with respect to community and its linkages to natural resource management. Underscoring this issue with respect to the increasing popularity of the phrase "community-based forestry," Flint et al. (2008, p. 526) ask, "Where is 'community' in community-based forestry?"

Concomitant issues related to definitions and uses of the concept of community abound in the place literature (Agnew, 1987, 1989; Entrikin, 1991; Eyles, 1985). Whereas the term *community* frequently appears in the place literature, it is rarely, if ever, rooted in any theoretical perspective of social organization, much less defined. As such, place researchers have tended to use *a priori* definitions of community that are generally deduced from objective indicators that may have little in common with any subjective interpretations held by community members. Thus, community is often equated with a geopolitically-bounded territory (e.g., a township, neighborhood, city, county). A central theme throughout much of the place

literature is the identification of settings within territories to which individuals, most often the local residents, ascribe meaning and sentiment. A vast majority of these studies have focused empirically on a particular aspect of human-place bonding (e.g. place attachment, place identity, place dependence, sense of place) within a territorial setting, which is generally referenced as a community (Fried, 2000; Hidalgo & Hernández, 2001; Low & Altman, 1992; Speller, Lyons, & Twigger-Ross, 2002). Virtually no attention is given to the social organization and/or processes girding community, the role of community for the manner in which residents ascribe meaning and sentiment to place, or to community theory.

For natural resource managers and/or policymakers interested in decision-making at a local community level, certain conceptual concerns must be addressed. These include defining the concept of community and explicating its relationship to place (see Chap. 4). This chapter presents an analytical framework for examining the association of community and place and focusing natural resource management issues upon aspects of this relationship, specifically as it pertains to U.S. public lands. In the U.S., patterns of natural resource ownership and management systems differ significantly from their counterparts in most developing countries. In many developing countries, often a substantial portion of natural resources in the public domain are shared as communal property and/or managed as state property through leases or other agreements between residents and the central government. Conversely, as Flint et al. (2008) note, natural resources in the U.S. "are sometimes figuratively shared, but management decisions are made in a complex jurisdictional mosaic where private landowners maintain control over their land and resources while public land is managed in a bureaucratic, top-down approach" (p. 528).

Despite recent rhetoric espousing the integration of communities into conservation decision-making, management decisions involving U.S. public resources ultimately reside with government agencies. Policies and management decisions continue to be made by agency scientists with specific disciplinary expertise, promoting a disconnect between decision-making and communities:

> Even today, policies are legitimated by chartering scientific studies and policy and management decisions by developing 'scientific-based plans.' Communities, especially territorial communities, are the recipients of 'rational' decisions made by experts – what we today often refer to as the many 'ologists': biologists, ecologists, sociologists, ornithologists, etc. Professional decision-makers may solicit community 'input,' and make decisions in the interests of interested publics, including communities. Community participation is often avoided because it is replete with the sorts of 'messiness' that was to be supplanted by rationality and science-based decisions (Lee & Field, 2005, p. 291).

Arguably much of this messiness stems from a lack of systematic theory and misunderstandings about what a community is, how a community develops, and how community is related to place. The discussion below is based on an interactional theory of community (Kaufman, 1959, 1985; Wilkinson, 1970a, 1991), which asserts that community is a field of place-oriented social interaction. Through this lens we aim to highlight the potential applications of the interactional approach for public agency natural resource managers.

5.1 Community and Place

Place has been and remains a critical component in social scientific studies of community. In Day's summation,

> … the whole approach to community studies displays a certain circularity. Places are singled out for study because they appear to constitute viable communities, and once they are investigated and documented, the findings are read as showing precisely what a real community is like (Day, 2006, p. 32).

If in fact place is a logical point to begin the search for community, how does one know when he/she has *found* community? Let us assume that one does find community in or around a place, as is often the case; then, of what significance does that place hold for community? Concomitantly, what influence does community have on place? And most importantly for this discussion, what are the associations between place, community, and natural resource management and decision-making? Attempts at theoretically answering the last question have been relatively naïve in the natural resource management and decision-making literature. However, the interactional theory of community advocated by Harold Kaufman (1959, 1985) and Kenneth Wilkinson (1970a, 1991)—and further elaborated upon by others—provides a useful framework for addressing these questions and applying aspects of place-community relationships to conservation decision-making.

For the present discussion the term *place* is grounded in Gieryn's (2000) definition, which posits that place has three necessary and sufficient features: geographic location, material form, and investment with meaning and value. This definition is also consistent with that of other scholars' conceptualization of place (Agnew, 1987, 1989; Entrikin, 1991; Eyles, 1985; Relph, 1976; Seamon, 1982; Tuan, 1977).

Community here refers to that sociological unit of analysis conventionally referred to as "*the* community." Use of the article "the" specifies the phenomenon that occurs "in a particular kind of territorial and social environment" (Wilkinson, 1986, p. 3)—as distinct from alternative, non-local uses of community (cf. Bernard, 1973; Wilkinson, 1986). As opposed to community, *the* community refers to "settlements … in which *locale* is a basic component" (Bernard, 1973, p. 3; emphasis in original). Three major theories assume local territory as the base for community: human ecology (Hawley, 1950; Park, 1936; Quinn, 1960); social systems (Sanders, 1966; Warren, 1978); and the interactional theory of community (Kaufman, 1959, 1985; Wilkinson, 1970a, 1991). All of these emphasize the concept of place, although in varying degrees and at different scales.

In the interactional perspective (Kaufman, 1959, 1985; Wilkinson, 1970a, 1991), place is viewed as a necessary but not sufficient condition for a community. No local community exists nowhere; every local community exists in some geographic location. In and around this locality are material forms, both natural and human-made. The physical locale with its material forms is invested with meanings and sentiments that are imagined, felt, and understood in varying degrees by residents and, often, non-residents. These meanings and values frequently are expressed and perpetuated through public discourse, collective representations, and rhetorical devices, including

heritage narratives and community typifications (Bridger, 1996; Maines & Bridger, 1992; Suttles, 1984).

In addition to place, which "is an essential element of community" (Wilkinson, 1991, p. 19), community also requires a more or less complete local society and place-oriented collective actions. A local society refers to the social institutions and associations that span the broad range of human interests in the shared life of a local population (e.g., economic, educational, familial, medical, political, religious). Place-oriented collective actions refer to the process of interrelated actions through which people express a shared sense of identity while working together to address common concerns in the locale and local society. The place-oriented collective actions—also referred to as the "community field"—represent the inherent and indispensable ingredient of community from the interactional perspective (Kaufman, 1959, 1985; Wilkinson, 1970a, 1991). The community field provides a unique framework for examining the relationship of community to place, and for focusing natural resource management and conservation decision-making issues upon aspects of this relationship.

5.2 Community Field: A Generalizing Place-Oriented Social Action Field

As outlined by Kaufman (1959, 1985) and Wilkinson (1970a, 1991), local settlements are marked by the presence of several more or less distinct social fields. A social field can be defined as an unfolding, loosely bounded, constantly changing, interconnected process of social interaction displaying unity through time around an identifiable set of interests. It is characterized by a sequence of actions (e.g., projects, programs, activities, events) performed by different actors (leaders and other participants) working in or through associations such as formal organizations and informal groups.

Multiple social fields comprised of both local and extra-local actors and associations exist and act in any local population. While these social fields can and often do overlap and blend into one another, each is generally marked by its own identity, organization, core interactional properties, and specific and/or institutional interests. Common recognizable social fields found in many local settlements include those pursuing interests in education, government, faith-based services, economy, recreation, health care, social services, land use, transportation, and environmental protection. The actors and associations of various social fields may share similar perspectives, or they may maintain intensely incompatible ideas. Accordance, as well as conflict, confrontation, competition, marginalization, disenfranchisement, and/or challenges for leadership commonly occur within and among social fields (Theodori, 2005).

When the actors and associations of the various social fields converge and interact on place-relevant matters, the potential exists to form a community field. From the interactional perspective, a community field is the mechanism that integrates multiple social fields into an interactional community. Community, from the interactional perspective, arises

> when the latent bond of common interest in the place—the shared investment in the common field of existential experience—draws people together and enables them to express common sentiments through joint action (Wilkinson, 1991, p. 7).

In fact, the underlying reason why a community "hangs together," according to Wilkinson (1991, p. 37), is because of the community field.

A community field is a place-oriented social field that is related to, yet distinguished from, other activity fields. Unlike most social fields that are typically focused on furthering their own special interests, a community field pursues the interests of the larger population. In other words, the interest that guides a community field is an interest in social structure rather than an interest solely in specific goals of the particular social fields. As with more narrowly directed social fields, a community field is comprised of actors, associations, and actions oriented toward certain interests. However, unlike other social fields:

> …the interests [in a community field] are generalized and intrinsic; they are not specialized or instrumental. The community field cuts across organized groups and across other interaction fields in a local population. It abstracts and combines the locality-relevant aspects of the special interest fields, and integrates the other fields into a generalized whole. It does this by creating and maintaining linkages among fields that otherwise are directed toward more limited interests (Wilkinson, 1991, p. 36).

The central feature distinguishing a community field from other social action fields is the generalization of place-oriented actions across interest lines. Generalization gives structure to the entire community as an interactional phenomenon by linking and coordinating the common place-relevant interests and behaviors of multiple social fields. In essence, a community field interlinks and organizes the various social action fields and binds the knowledge, experience, resources, and energy of multiple social fields for the common good. Nonetheless,

> …the coordinating actions undertaken in the community field do not necessarily harmonize diverse interests or completely bridge different perspectives and viewpoints. Instead, the community field brings into focus common interests in local aspects of local life. And, of equal importance, as the linkages that comprise the community field proliferate, they lead to a more inclusive decision-making process (Bridger & Luloff, 1999, p. 384).

While the potential for a community field to emerge exists in all human territorial settlements, the extent to which this happens is highly variable, in part because of numerous structural constraints that operate at regional, national, and international levels, ultimately affecting local communities in greater or lesser ways (Theodori, 2008). Factors such as: inequality (e.g., racial, ethnic, class, gender); poverty; ruralness; size and concentration of population; and deficits in economic and social services (Wilkinson, 1991) often impede the natural processes of local social interaction and, in turn, the emergence of a community field. It follows, then, that the community field is a variable—a matter of degree. The presence of the community field is what differentiates a community—that "natural disposition among people who interact with one another on various matters that comprise a common life" (Wilkinson, 1991, p. 7)—from an aggregation of individuals who may or may not share a *sense of community* in and around a place with a more or less complete local society. Such variance has implications for place and any natural resource management and decision-making activities that may be undertaken.

To summarize, place is a necessary but not sufficient condition for the local community. Community also requires a more or less complete local society and a community field. Yet a community field is not a given. Instead, as argued below, a community field emerges in a population and persists as long as local citizens ensure its survival. The idea that community is an interactional phenomenon provides a unique way of thinking about how to build, strengthen, and nurture the community field. This is accomplished through the process of community development.

5.3 Community Development

The process of community development—that is, "purposive action undertaken with positive intentions at improving community structure" (Theodori, 2005, p. 666)—is what is needed for the community field to materialize and flourish in a local settlement. From the interactional approach, community development can be viewed as a process of building, strengthening, and maintaining the community field (Wilkinson, 1972, 1991). Promoting community development requires concerted efforts at multiple levels (e.g., local, state, and federal) to surmount the aforementioned structural impediments that restrict and/or suppress the emergence of the community field. Attempts at the local level without action at other levels, and vice versa, are likely to be less successful than a coordinated, multi-pronged effort (Theodori, 2008). Nonetheless, while efforts at other levels are necessary, community development is unlikely to happen without local initiative.

Four principles underlie the process of community development from the interactional perspective (Theodori, 2005; Wilkinson, 1972, 1989, 1991). First, community development is purposive; it is the intentional consequence of actors and associations interacting to initiate and maintain community among themselves. Second, community development is positive; the intentions revolve around a shared commitment to improving the community. Third, community development is structure-oriented. The purposive and positive actions of actors and associations are direct attempts to establish, strengthen, and/or sustain the community as an interlinking and coordinating structure of human relationships. And fourth, the essence of community development as an interactional phenomenon resides in collaborative actions toward common goals—not necessarily in the achievement of those goals.

In the process of community development, individuals, informal groups, and formal organizations, despite their differences, consciously work to increase the number and/or reinforce the strength of relationships among the various social fields while reducing (or circumventing) barriers to cooperation and communication. With time and effort, these newly formed relationships encourage mutual understanding and trust, thus promoting social well-being (Wilkinson, 1979).

It is important to draw a distinction between two broad types of development, namely *development in community* and *development of community* (Summers, 1986; Theodori, 2005; Wilkinson, 1991). While development *of* community aims to build, strengthen, and maintain the community field, development *in* community primarily refers to socioeconomic improvements and infrastructural enhancements.

This includes: economic growth; modernization; improved service delivery; and business retention, expansion, and recruitment activities.

Likewise there are two major spheres of community action, generally known as *task-accomplishment* and *structure-building* (Cartwright & Zander, 1968; Kaufman, 1959; Theodori, 2005; Wilkinson, 1970b, 1991). Community actions that occur in social fields concerned with specialized or limited interests often have a task-accomplishment orientation, meaning the activities move people toward specific goals generally related to a particular project in a specific field of interest. Task-accomplishment processes can be broken down into five stages or episodes (Bales & Strodtbeck, 1951). As Wilkinson suggests (1970b, 1991), these include: (1) initiation and spread of interest, which involves recognizing and discussing an issue as a potential focus for group action; (2) organization of sponsorship; that is, identifying an existing structure (i.e., a committee, group, organization) or establishing a new one to deal with the issue; (3) goal setting and strategy formation; (4) recruitment, or mobilizing resources, such as participants, facilities, and finances; and finally (5) implementation, which involves applying resources and employing strategies to deal with the issue.

These same stages apply to conceptually frame the structure-building actions related to a community field. In this case, initiation and spread of interest involves generating widespread consciousness of an issue among various social fields in a community. Organization of sponsorship entails forming multi-interest, interorganizational linkages to coordinate actions within and across the various social fields. Goal setting and strategy formation involves developing short-term strategies and long-range goals that transcend the special interests of particular social fields. Recruitment involves encouraging participation from the various social fields. And implementation involves applying resources and employing strategies to create, reinforce, and sustain relationships and lines of communication between/among the various social fields. In practice, the stages for both task-accomplishment and structure-building activities rarely are well sequenced. Task-accomplishment activities within a specific social field and structure-building activities at a multiple social field level can begin at any stage, frequently backtracking and leaping ahead.

In any given community, development in community and development of community, along with task-accomplishment and structure-building activities, make and shape places and have direct implications for proposed natural resource management and conservation decision-making. However, the social interactions associated with the processes of structure-building are likely to construct place and affect natural resource management and decision-making in a qualitatively different manner than those that only occur with a task-accomplishment orientation. When actors and associations within a community field engage in both task-accomplishment actions and structure-building activities, the place that emerges assumes a *gestalt*-like character that is greater than the sum of the parts derived from individual social fields. And, the involvement of the community field in decision-making and proposed programs for natural resource management will be *community-based* as opposed to reflecting the interest of some other unit(s) of organization.

5.4 Potential Applications for Natural Resource Managers and Public Agency Personnel

Good theory typically leads to good application. While other perspectives of community (e.g., human ecology and social systems) may be worthy of consideration, the interactional theory has much to offer natural resource managers and other agency personnel who interact with local population settlements in and around public lands and protected areas. Natural resource decision-making rooted in the interactional approach has considerable potential to enhance the focus and effectiveness of resource management policies and practices at the community level.

Before proposing or engaging in activities related to community-based natural resource management, managers must assess the extent of community in a local population. The aforementioned essential elements of community—place, a more or less complete local society, and a community field—provide criteria for such an assessment. At the outset, managers and agency personnel must understand place and its significance for a local population. Knowledgeable local sources can help familiarize managers with details on the physical locale, its associated natural and human-made material forms, and the meanings and values that local residents attribute to their place.

In addition to understanding place, natural resource managers and agency personnel must recognize the extent and comprehensiveness of the local society. Local societies generally vary in the quantity and quality of their respective social and economic institutions. Concerted efforts must be undertaken by natural resource managers and agency personnel to enhance their knowledge of the social institutions and associations that are and are not manifest within the local settlement. Also, natural resource managers and agency personnel must discern the horizontal and vertical patterns of relationships among the local social units that comprise the various social institutions (Warren, 1978).

Last, but not least, natural resource managers and agency personnel must assess the presence and strength of the community field. With help from locally knowledgeable sources, public agency natural resource managers must first inventory the various social fields that exist within and/or share interest in a local settlement. The inventory should detail the principal actors (i.e., formal and informal leaders) and associations (i.e., formal organizations and informal groups), as well as major past and ongoing projects, programs, and other activities. Moreover, the inventory should differentiate between social fields that are highly oriented to the locality versus those that are less so and account for the use-value and exchange-value orientations of each social field. Unlike their counterparts, social fields that are highly oriented to the locality are clearly identified with it and tend to involve local residents as primary actors and leaders. As opposed to those with use-value orientations, social fields oriented to exchange value are generally concerned with maximizing economic profits through the commodification of places and resources in and around the local community. Typically, these social fields are directed by local and/or extra-local elites who more or less control the mechanisms for local decision-making and growth.

Next, with the help of knowledgeable local sources, natural resource managers and agency personnel must map all existing or past connections between and among the various social fields. It is important to view these linkages temporally, because while social fields maintain identity through time around a particular set of interests, they change continuously as actors and associations, each with their respective actions, move in and out of contact with the process. This strategy allows resource managers to determine which social fields share/d similar ideas on place-relevant matters and which display/ed differences in opinions. This exercise also should reveal which social fields customarily work/ed together on place-relevant matters, and which ones are (or have been) traditionally hostile to one another. This process will provide an evaluation of the presence and strength of the community field, and it will highlight potential points of conflict to be carefully negotiated.

5.5 Conclusion

The presence of strong community fields representing the shared, overlapping place-relevant interests of all segments of the local population is required to successfully integrate communities in and around our nation's public lands into natural resource management and decision-making. And community development—purposive, positive, and structure-oriented actions aimed at constructing, enhancing, and/or sustaining channels of cooperation and communication between and among various social fields—is needed for strong community fields to materialize and flourish. In addition to conventional output-based components, natural resource management plans must incorporate structure-building activities, and efforts to foster development of community at the local level must be a key ingredient in management practices and policies. Thus much of the messiness regarding community participation in place-based conservation can be rectified with conscious, systematic endeavors aimed at cultivating and nurturing the community field.

Finally, as natural resource managers in public agencies work to increase and reinforce relationships among various social fields and improve cooperation and communication, they must make a concerted effort themselves to communicate openly and honestly. Such communication, including full disclosure about potentially positive aspects and negative consequences of proposed management plans and activities, is likely to reduce the chances of inaccuracies, rumors, and future litigation. All of the efforts suggested above will surely entail investments in time and money, but the failure to implement them may prove to be even more time-consuming and costly. Echoing sentiments by Flint et al. (2008), "simply invoking community in discussions and efforts relating to access to and management of forest and other natural resources without a clear understanding of the term in frameworks, methods, and implementation endangers efforts to link natural resource management with improvements in community well-being" (p. 535).

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Part II
Experiencing Place

Chapter 6
Sensing Value in Place

Herbert Schroeder

Abstract The concept of value provides a natural connection between place and conservation decision-making. Different ways of thinking about value lead to varying approaches to making decisions, some of which may be better than others for dealing with place-based values. Individual experiences of value are grounded in an implicit, felt dimension of awareness, and this dimension must be taken into account if place-based values are to function effectively in conservation decisions. Experiential practices for accessing this implicit dimension may help people to articulate and communicate their felt sense of place, providing a basis for a group decision-making process that better reflects and includes the value of place.

Keywords Felt value • Held value • Assigned value • Experiential decision-making • Focusing • Felt knowing

The concept of value provides a natural connection between place and conservation decision-making, the two domains that are the focus of this book. On the one hand, the concept of value is implicit in the process of decision-making. We invest time and effort into making decisions because we believe some possible outcomes of our actions have greater value than others. We seek to identify the outcomes that offer the greatest value, and we choose the actions that we believe are most likely to bring about those outcomes. Without some notion of value there would be no reason for making decisions and no basis for choosing one alternative outcome over another.

On the other hand, the idea of value is also implied in discussions of place attachment and sense of place. Saying that someone has an attachment to a place means that they value the place in a certain way. In the literature on place sense of place is

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implicitly or explicitly regarded as a quality that enhances the value of a place—a quality worth creating, cherishing, and protecting in the places where we live, work, and recreate. Thus the basic question addressed in this book could very well be framed as, "How can the *value of place* be represented in the conservation decision-making process?"

In this chapter I explore the concept of value as it relates to the individual's experience of place. Different ways of understanding the concept of value lead to different approaches to decision-making, some of which seem better suited than others for including place in conservation decisions. I argue that the experience of value is grounded in an implicitly felt dimension of awareness, and that this dimension must be taken into account if place-based values are to function effectively in decision-making. Finally, I discuss how experiential practices for accessing the implicit dimension may help people to articulate and communicate their felt sense of place, providing a basis for a decision-making process that better reflects and includes the value of place.

6.1 The Concept of Value

"Value" refers to a fundamental dimension of human existence. Issues of value pervade our experience of the world and are involved in virtually all areas of human speech and action, ranging from simple choices of what to have for dinner to basic questions about the meaning and purpose of one's life. The English word "value" comes from an Indo-European root, *wal-*, which means "to be strong." Related words derived from the same root include valor, validity, and valence (Ayto, 1990; Morris, 1969). In the English language the concept of value is linked to ideas of motivation and emotion via the metaphor of physical force and motion. The words "motivate" and "emotion" come from an Indo-European word meaning "to push" or "to move" (Ayto; Morris). Thus the etymology of these words suggests that saying something has value means that it has the strength to move us emotionally and motivate our behavior.

Despite the ubiquity and importance of value in human life, finding a precise, scientific definition for this concept is problematic. Different philosophical schools and scientific disciplines have developed diverse definitions and theories for understanding what value is and how it functions in human behavior and experience. A review of that entire literature is beyond the scope of this chapter. Instead I take as my starting point a frequently-cited paper by Brown (1984), which examines how the concept of value is used in resource allocation decisions. Brown points out several distinct ways in which value has been defined in the literature, and presents a simple conceptual model for understanding how these different value concepts are related. This chapter builds on Brown's ideas and extends them in a way that I believe more accurately represents the character of place-based values and provides a more effective basis for including the value of place in conservation decision-making.

6.2 Three Realms of Value

Brown (1984) focuses on value concepts that relate directly to human preference. In a literature review of value concepts, he describes three "realms" of value, in which preference-related value concepts are defined in distinctly different ways. The *conceptual realm* deals with the basis of preference, the *relational realm* with the act of preferring, and the *object realm* with the result or outcome of preference.

In the conceptual realm *held value* is defined as "an enduring conception of the preferable which influences choice and action" (Brown, 1984, p. 232). Held values are labels that identify basic modes of behavior, end-states, and qualities that are good or desirable, such as honesty, freedom, beauty, and loyalty.

In the object realm *assigned value* is defined as "the expressed relative importance or worth of an object to an individual or group in a given context" (Brown, 1984, p. 233). Assigned values are behavioral expressions of preference for one thing in comparison to others and can take many forms (e.g., verbal statements of liking, purchases of goods or services, preference ratings on numerical scales in surveys, etc.).

Brown is less direct about defining a value concept for the relational realm than for the conceptual and object realms. He characterizes value in the relational realm as much in terms of what it is not as in terms of what it is:

> [In the relational realm] value is neither a concept held by the subject nor something attributed to the object, but merely that which arises from the preference of a subject for an object in a given context. Here, value is not an intrinsic quality of anything—rather, it emerges from the interaction between a subject and an object. … Value in the relational realm is not observable; it is only at the feeling level (Brown, 1984, p. 233).

While somewhat vague, this definition seems to characterize value in the relational realm as a feeling that arises from a person's preference for an object in a given context. Brown does not provide a distinct name for this concept of value, and he seems to downplay its importance by saying that it is "merely" that which arises from the preference of a subject for an object and "only" at the feeling level.

Brown depicts the relationship between the three realms of value in a simple diagram (Fig. 6.1). In this diagram the relational realm is represented by "preference relationships" (which apparently refers to an ordering of objects relative to each other in terms of an individual's preferences). Held values in the conceptual realm give rise to preference relations in the relational realm, which in turn give rise to assigned values in the object realm. Thus in Brown's account held values are the basis of preference and assigned values are the end result of preference, while the relational realm is merely an unobservable, intermediate step on the

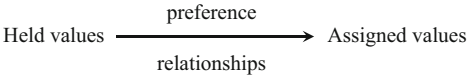

Fig. 6.1 Brown's depiction of the relationship between the three realms of value

causal pathway from held to assigned value. Value in the relational realm is a kind of epiphenomenon—a mere feeling that apparently does not merit much attention.

In a follow-up to Brown's (1984) article, Hetherington, Daniel, and Brown (1994) reiterate that the relational realm of value consists of "unobservable thoughts, feelings, or psychological states" (p. 538). They assert that the role of research on environmental values is to identify and measure the relationship between latent concepts of value (held values) and manifest expressions of value (assigned values). They do not discuss the role (if any) of the relational realm in such research. Similarly, a recent review of literature on environmental values (Dietz, Fitzgerald, & Shwom, 2005), discusses value mostly in terms of concepts and behaviors—the dominant question being how general concepts of what is good or desirable influence people's overt choices and actions. The role of feeling in this process receives virtually no attention. Other authors citing Brown (e.g., More, Averill, & Stevens, 1996) also tend to focus on held value and assigned value while ignoring value in the relational realm.

Thus most research on environmental values and decision-making has largely ignored the relational realm, where the "act of preferring" actually occurs (Brown, 1984, p. 232). Rather than inquire into the function of feeling and its relationship to held and assigned values, researchers usually seem to assume that people employ (or should employ) a mathematical process to compute assigned values for specific objects based on their general held values. For example, one frequently used model of human decision-making involves breaking down objects or decision outcomes into sets of attributes or components, assigning an "importance weight" to each attribute—presumably reflecting a person's or a group's held values—and then calculating the weighted sum of all the attributes for an object to obtain an assigned value. This general model—known as multi-attribute utility theory (Keeney & Raiffa, 1993)—is the basis for many decision-making methods and practices, such as cost-benefit analysis and conjoint analysis.

In the application of multi-attribute utility theory to decision-making, value is treated as an abstract quantity rather than as a subjective feeling. Once the importance weights are determined, in principle a decision can be made simply by carrying out a numerical computation. Thus a mathematical formula for calculating assigned values replaces actual experiences of liking or disliking and accepting or rejecting. This approach, while very useful in many kinds of decision situations, may not be well-suited for those in which sense of place is important. The theory assumes that a place is a bundle of attributes or components whose separate values can be added up to determine the value of the whole. Research on sense of place, however, suggests that place is a holistic, dynamic, experiential phenomenon that cannot be reduced to a simple, additive model (Bott, Cantrill, & Myers, 2003; Brooks, Wallace, & Williams, 2006; Patterson, Watson, Williams, & Roggenbuck, 1998). In other words, the value of a place is not just the sum of the values of its various parts. The unique, hard-to-define, *gestalt* qualities of places as people actually experience them tend to drop out of such an analytical decision-making process.

6.3 Felt Value

To incorporate the holistic, subjective experience of place into decision-making, the role of value in Brown's relational realm needs to be reconsidered. The relational realm needs to be accorded the same importance as the conceptual and object realms in our understanding of value. This requires a shift from a cognitive, analytical view of the value of place to an affective, experiential perspective in which the *process* of making decisions matters as much as the end results of decisions.

In the relational realm value is not an abstract concept about what is good or preferable, nor is it a numerical quantity that can be multiplied and added up to arrive at a measurement of worth. Rather value is an immediate feeling of liking or disliking, approving or disapproving, accepting or rejecting. In his philosophical analysis of relational value meanings, Jessup (1943, 1949) argues that this kind of felt experience is the essence of value. Unlike Brown (1984) and Hetherington et al. (1994)—who see value in the relational realm as unobservable and inaccessible to empirical study—Jessup (1949) argues that feeling is directly observable and constitutes essential data for the study of values. Feeling, he says, is an element of awareness that an individual can attend to as it occurs and remember and reflect upon later. The occurrence and quality of feeling can be checked by an individual's repeated experience and compared to reports of feelings by others. In Jessup's words, "Felt-value or feeling is on a par with sensation. Somehow, judgments of fact come out of sensations; and equally, somehow value-judgments come out of felt-values" (p. 138). Following Jessup, I use the term "felt value" to designate value in the relational realm, defining it as the immediate, subjective feeling of importance, worth, or significance that something has for an individual.

Recognizing that the relational realm is not a black box but is accessible to observation allows us to take a closer look at how the three realms of value relate to each other in the human process of valuing. Brown's scheme implies that the valuing process originates with abstract concepts about what is good or desirable (held values). Felt value does not occur until after a preference ordering of objects has been established based on held values. Inquiry into the actual experience of value by the methods of phenomenological psychology, however, suggests that feeling is involved in every aspect of the human phenomenon of valuing. Held values are not simply abstract concepts about what is good or preferable, but involve an inherent feeling of importance or "requiredness" (Fuller, 1990), which gives them their motivational force. In Jessup's (1949) account, "value-judgments" (which correspond to Brown's held values) emerge from felt values and retain the feeling quality characteristic of value. A concept of the preferable devoid of any feeling of liking or approval cannot, according to Jessup, function as a value. A purely intellectual idea of honesty, for example, would be no more able to motivate our behavior than an abstract concept of blueness or roundness.

From an experiential perspective it may make more sense to say that held values arise from felt values, instead of vice versa. That is, held values are generalized concepts about what is desirable, which emerge over time from our feelings of liking and disliking in particular circumstances and situations. But it is also true that, as we formulate abstract held values, our underlying felt values may change as a result. A similar

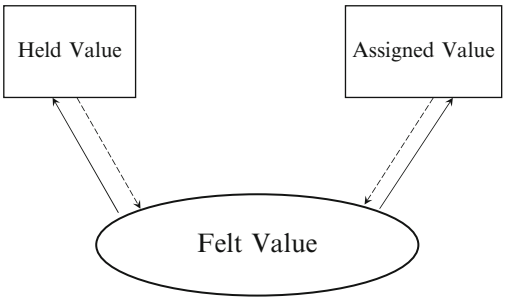

Fig. 6.2 An experiential view of the relationship between the three realms of value

consideration applies to assigned values. In the act of expressing the worth of specific things, the felt values on which our assigned values are based may undergo change. This implies that the relationship between the three realms of value is not as linear as Brown pictured it, but is more interactive and dynamic, as depicted in Fig. 6.2. As they give rise to held values and assigned values, felt values themselves may shift and change.

6.4 Implicit Awareness and the Felt Value of Place

Within our immediate experience, I contend, felt value underlies and is more fundamental than either held values or assigned values. At the same time, however, we are able to think conceptually and reason abstractly about our values. Once we have formed concepts of the preferable (held values), we are able to logically infer what our assigned values ought to be based on those held values. We can and often do use such deductions to guide our decision-making. Sometimes, however, the assigned values we deduce logically from our held values don't seem to match up with our "gut feelings" about the options we are choosing among. In other words, having made a decision based on a rational analysis of the alternatives in light of our held values, we may still feel uncomfortable with and reluctant to accept the outcome. When this happens it suggests that something at the feeling level has been missed or passed over by our rational thought process. Some facet of felt value is not adequately conceptualized and represented by our system of held values.

In this case no amount of conceptual thinking or logical reasoning based on abstract held values will lead to a resolution of the decision problem. The only way to resolve such an impasse is to work it through at the feeling level, to explore how our general concepts of the preferable relate to the intricate, felt texture of the particular situation we are facing. In the words of experiential psychologist and philosopher Eugene Gendlin,

> … one hasn't really got the decision (only a general formula for it) as long as one is still unresolved in one's feelings. Feelings are not just intra-psychic entities, they are one's sense of the real situation, how one is in the situation … . Universal principles and willed standpoints [i.e., held values] haven't really been realized at all until they are realized in terms of the living texture (Gendlin, 1971).

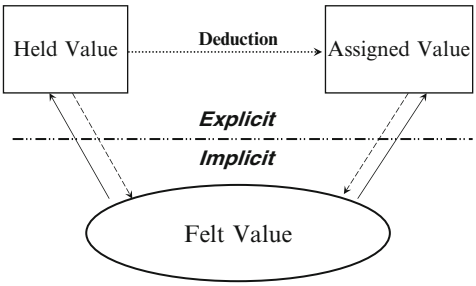

Fig. 6.3 Explicit and implicit levels of awareness in relation to the three realms of value

Gendlin's (1996a, 1997a, 1997b) seminal work on the philosophy and psychology of the implicit suggests that the relationship between felt value, held value, and assigned value need to be understood in terms of a distinction between explicit and implicit levels of awareness (Fig. 6.3). Held value and assigned value manifest at the explicit level. We can express them in words, name them, communicate them, and make logical deductions about them. In contrast, felt value functions at the implicit level. Although we experience it and it plays a vital role in everything we do, we generally do not have it in words or explicit concepts. The implicit level of experience is like a backdrop or background of feeling that stays on the fringe of awareness and is often overlooked. More than just an affective tone that colors our experience, it is the whole *felt meaning* of our experience before we put that meaning into words (Gendlin, 1997a).

Place meaning and place attachment, I contend, are phenomena that function primarily at the implicit level. Sense of place is really a *felt* sense of place—an implicit, preverbal sense of the kind studied by experiential psychologists. Gendlin defines a felt sense as

> … a bodily awareness of a situation or person or event. An internal aura that encompasses everything you feel and know about the given subject at a given time—encompasses it and communicates it to you all at once rather than detail by detail (Gendlin, 1981, p. 32).

Gendlin emphasizes that a felt sense is not the same thing as an emotion. It is both more subtle and more intricate than an emotion; it embodies the whole meaning or structure of a situation and implies the diverse ways in which the situation might unfold and develop. A felt sense conveys far more information than can be expressed in words and concepts at the explicit level. In particular, this means that the implicit felt sense of a place and of its value to a person is too intricate to be captured in a multi-attribute utility model. The felt value of a place is not mathematically determined by how well the place complies with a pre-specified list of held values. Instead the felt value of a place embodies a person's entire history and experience of interacting with that place and with other places. Relevant dimensions of value emerge from a person's holistic felt sense of place and may change depending on the context. Thus incorporating sense of place in decision-making requires practices that do not bypass the implicit level of experience and do not ignore or lose touch with the felt value

that underlies held and assigned values. A place-based decision-making process needs to include some means for directly accessing and working with this implicit, felt level of experience.

6.5 Experiential Practice and Value Process

In his research on psychotherapy, Gendlin (1981, 1996a) found that when people paid attention to their unclear, implicit felt sense of a situation in a particular way, they could experience a shift in the felt sense that brought new insights and changed the way they felt about and related to the situation. Clients who were able to do this had consistently better outcomes from their therapy than those who simply talked about their issues at a conceptual level. Gendlin (1981) developed a method, called *focusing*, to help people tune into this level of awareness and facilitate such shifts. It involves a series of six steps:

1. Clearing a space: In this preliminary step, the focuser "inventories" the most prominent issues, concerns, and problems that she or he is presently aware of and temporarily sets them aside to create a positive and receptive state of mind for the next steps to unfold.
2. Getting a felt sense: The focuser selects an issue or concern (or, in the context of this chapter, a place); senses the whole, unclear bodily feeling of it; and stays with that feeling without analyzing or drawing any conclusions about it.
3. Finding a "handle" for the felt sense: This involves finding a word, short phrase, or image that fits the quality of the felt sense. This "handle" should come from the felt sense itself rather than being externally imposed.
4. Resonating: The focuser checks the 'rightness' of the handle by going back and forth between the words or image and the felt sense. If the handle fits, he or she will feel a response or a slight change in the felt sense.
5. Asking: The focuser next asks what the felt sense is all about and waits for an answer to come out of the felt sense itself. With the answer comes a shift in the felt sense, which feels like an opening or release of tension with respect to the issue of concern.
6. Receiving: In this final step, the focuser accepts whatever came in the previous steps in a friendly way and spends some time taking it in before deciding whether to continue focusing or stop.

Gendlin (1981) presents these steps as an aid for learning to focus, not as a rigid process. In practice the steps may occur in any order. Each step may occur several times in a given session, and some steps may not occur at all. The whole process is done with an attitude of openness and flexibility, going along with the felt sense as it unfolds rather than trying to force it through a predefined program. A noticeable shift in the felt sense may not occur at all, or (more commonly) there may be several small shifts in the felt sense during a given focusing session.

It may be most useful to consider focusing as a general style of relating to implicit, bodily awareness rather than as a technique defined by a particular set of

steps. Gendlin characterizes focusing broadly as "…just that uncomfortable, bodily sense that's complex and you don't know what it is yet. That's all it is. It's spending time with that body sense. As soon as somebody does that, they've got focusing" (Gendlin, 1996b).

Gendlin's six-step formulation of focusing has been modified, adapted, and extended in a variety of ways based on people's experiences using it. Other practitioners have offered alternative approaches to describing and teaching focusing (e.g., Campbell & McMahon, 1997; Cornell, 1996). Ultimately, anyone who uses this kind of experiential practice must discover for themselves what does and doesn't work for them.

The fifth step in Gendlin's focusing practice, in which an explicit word or image brings a noticeable shift or change in the felt sense, is the crux of the process and thus worth examining more closely. The felt shift comes with a sense of relief or rightness, as though it were what the felt sense was wanting all along. Gendlin uses the term *carrying forward* to refer to such a shift in a felt sense. The kinds of words, images, or events that a felt sense needs in order to carry forward are implied by the felt sense even before the focuser knows explicitly what they are. The felt sense "recognizes" them when they occur and responds with an easing of tension and a sense of enlivenment.

The act of finding and making explicit something that initially is only implicit in the felt sense is sometimes called *explication*. When a felt sense is explicated, however, it does not lose its implicit character. Rather, it is carried forward into a new, different felt sense that implies something further, beyond what has already been explicated. In this way, the focusing practice proceeds through a sequence of explications by which the felt sense continues to shift and unfold in greater clarity and intricacy. From this perspective held values and assigned values can be viewed as *explications of felt value*. That is, held values and assigned values are words and actions that make explicit, in different ways, some of what is implicit in a felt sense of value. If accurately formulated, they will carry forward felt value in the way described above. If not, there will be a lingering feeling of uneasiness and a sense that the words do not convey what really matters in the situation.

Gendlin (1967) uses the term "value conclusions" to refer to a person's explicitly stated preferences, choices, and goals (i.e., held and assigned values). He argues that an adequate understanding of values must consider not only a person's value conclusions *per se*, but also the process by which the person reaches them. Effective personal decision-making is not driven by general value beliefs held at a conceptual level, but is responsive to the implicit, highly specific, experiential aspects of the situation facing an individual.

> The order in which experiential valuing occurs is the reverse of how it is often portrayed. We do not first adopt value-conclusions from some system and then apply them to choose between different possibilities. First we must confront and differentiate experienced meanings (felt meanings). Then we find that these now differentiated felt meanings have a significant feel of good or bad, resolved or conflicted. If the latter, we resolve them by differentiating still further and further (Gendlin, 1967).

The process of differentiating felt meanings is what Gendlin formulates and teaches in the steps of his focusing practice. When a person adopts value conclusions without engaging in some such experiential process, he argues, she or he will be unable to "adapt, creatively employ, explain, show in detail, [or] respond well to certain situations requiring these values" and in worst case may experience "confusion, denial, conflict, and surrender of certain areas of enterprise" (Gendlin, 1967).

While set specifically in the context of psychotherapy, Gendlin's discussion of values and experiential practice is relevant to any situation that involves important and difficult decisions. Experiential practices such as focusing have been applied to various areas outside psychotherapy, such as dream interpretation (Gendlin, 1986); creative writing (Perl, 2004); conflict resolution (McGuire, 2008); spirituality (Campbell & McMahon, 1997); environmental psychology (Schroeder, 2008); ecopsychology (Fisher, 2002); phenomenological psychology (Shapiro, 1985); qualitative research (Todres, 2007); and philosophy (Gendlin, 1997b; Hendricks, 2004). In an earlier paper (Schroeder, 1990) I demonstrated the use of Gendlin's focusing practice in explicating the felt value in my experience of a natural environment. By focusing on my felt sense of a favorite place, a forested arboretum, I was able to identify and express why I felt a sense of rightness and belonging in that place. Aspects of my experience of the place that previously were only implicitly felt became explicit, enabling me to articulate more clearly why I valued that place so strongly.

6.6 Application to Place-Based Conservation

Recently interest has grown in the application of experiential practices to enhancing decision-making in people's private lives (Afford, 2008; Cornell, 2006), as well as in professional fields including business (Johnson & Barak, 2007; McGuire, 2008); medicine (Grindler-Katonah, 1999; Prado Flores, 2007); education (Doi, 2008); the arts (Crvenkovic, 2008); and environmental management (Walkerden, 2005). Anecdotal evidence suggests that working with the implicit felt sense of a complex or difficult issue may help individuals make better decisions, find creative alternatives that they otherwise might not have thought of, and feel more confident in their final decision. And some individuals have reported that basing a decision on their felt sense of a difficult situation empowered them to resist pressure from expert authorities and participate more proactively with professionals in deciding on a course of action (Darer, 2007; Hendricks-Gendlin, 2003).

Because experiential practices such as focusing are based in the individual level of experience, their most obvious application to decision-making is in situations where one individual must make a decision about which they feel ambivalent or conflicted. For example, in the context of place-based management a landowner considering how to manage a forested parcel owned by his or her family for generations might receive advice from a forest ecology expert to thin the forest and remove non-native trees to promote the health of the ecosystem. The landowner might feel

pressured to follow this recommendation, since it conforms to general beliefs about caring for the environment and is backed by the authority of science. At the same time, complex feelings relating to family history and traditions with respect to the property might cause the landowner to feel hesitant about acting on the expert's advice. Explicating her or his intricate felt meanings and values about the land would likely help the landowner resolve the problem. However, if those meanings and values remain implicit and unacknowledged the landowner may make a decision that appears rational and reasonable at the time but will later cause regret.

While a decision involving a property with a sole owner can be difficult, most decisions about managing places are far more complex because they involve multiple owners or stakeholders with different ways of knowing and valuing the same place. In such situations individuals must be able to not only access and express their own felt sense of value for a place but also take into account the values, meanings, and feelings of others involved in the decision.

Focusing and other experiential practices have an intrinsic social aspect that comes into play when they are used in a group context. The presence of another person can have a profound effect on a person's ability to engage in such practices. Being heard and responded to by a person who is open, accepting, and nonjudgmental can help an individual go deeper into their felt sense of an issue or problem. On the other hand, a listener who responds with judgments, advice, and opinions, or tries to direct the focuser's process according to their own personal agenda, interferes with the process and may make it hard for the focuser to stay with and carry forward their felt sense of a situation. For this reason guidelines for facilitation and interpersonal communication are an important part of the training in focusing and related practices (Cornell & McGavin, 2002).

Focusing practitioners are developing approaches to group and community decision-making and conflict resolution that incorporate this social dimension of experiential practice. For example, McGuire (2007b) describes a structured group process based on focusing for collaborative, consensual decision-making in support groups. McGuire (2007a) presents a similar process for use by teams in hierarchical organizations such as businesses and governments. In this process group members share the leadership roles of agenda-setting, time-keeping, process-monitoring, and recording. The process is designed to provide individuals with opportunities to find their felt sense of the topic under discussion, to speak from that felt sense without interruption, and to know that other group members have listened to and accurately heard them. In this way group interactions serve to support and maintain the participants' awareness of their implicit, felt values and to bring them constructively into the decision process. During this process, specific procedures are provided for working through conflicts and other obstacles to reaching consensus.

Using a structured collaborative decision-making process such as McGuire's (2007a) in a place-based conservation context ideally would enable participants to stay in touch with their implicit felt sense of values underlying the issues and choices under discussion in an atmosphere of mutual respect and support, working toward a decision that respects everyone's sense of place. Adapting this type of approach to decision-making on contentious public land-use issues could prove challenging,

however, since it requires a high degree of trust among participants, a willingness to step back from entrenched positions, and a commitment to really listen to those with whom one may disagree. Everyone involved would need to commit to using such an experientially based, consensual process in reaching a decision as a group.

In situations where a structured experiential process such as McGuire's is not feasible, there still may be opportunities for individuals engaged in group decision-making (both professionals and members of the public) to draw informally upon their implicit, felt sense of value and encourage and support others in doing the same. Based on personal experience at the local community level, Walkerden (2005) offers insights into how the implicit dimension or "felt knowing" can be brought into environmental decision-making. He argues that working from felt knowing—as opposed to relying completely on technical rationality—is central to skillful environmental practice and facilitates collaboration across disciplines. Working from felt knowing involves "slowing down in the midst of conversation, thinking, writing, experimenting and observing….[and] taking in a layer of knowing that it is easy to feel in a background way without heeding" (Walkerden, 2005, p. 183). He suggests specific ways for doing this:

- Paying attention to feelings of unease, "inklings," and intimations in meetings and interactions; and allowing time to let such feelings unfold and become clearer so that they can be made explicit and be expressed.
- Pausing from time to time to provide space and stillness in which issues and ideas about the matter at hand are allowed to arise spontaneously.
- Feeling for "fresh edges" in situations that seem to require innovation and creative ways of moving forward.
- Asking one's felt knowing specific questions to draw out facets of a decision that are as yet implicit and unclearly sensed—for example, asking "Does this make political sense?" or "How will this sit with our colleagues and managers?"

6.7 Conclusion

Brown (1984) made an important contribution to understanding the concept of value in natural resource management by identifying and distinguishing between the main uses of this concept across diverse disciplines. To clarify the nature of economic values (one form of assigned value) he focused mainly on the object realm and, to a lesser extent, the conceptual realm of value. In this chapter I have attempted to expand on Brown's approach and adapt it to place-based values by offering a fuller account of value in the relational realm (felt value) and of the relationship between the three realms of value.

The experiential decision-making practices described above—whether structured or informal, and whether used in an individual or a group context—all aspire to provide individuals involved in decision-making with ways to access the implicit, felt level of meaning that holistically encompasses their awareness of all the

complexities and nuances of a situation. This is the level at which felt value is lived. Rather than treating value as a numerical quantity—with or without a dollar sign—and reducing decision-making to a computational exercise, these practices encourage individuals to stay in touch with felt value so that its relevant aspects will not be left out of the decision process. When the decision process fails to acknowledge and respect implicit values and meanings, conflict and hidden agendas are more likely to arise, and stakeholders are less likely to be committed to carrying out the decisions that are reached.

While these considerations apply to any decision-making context, they seem especially relevant to place-based conservation. Places are complex amalgams of social, perceptual, and ecological dimensions that are experienced and lived largely at an implicit level. Without a deliberate effort to explicate the felt sense of place, the meanings and values of a place are likely to remain unexpressed and unrepresented in the decision process. Abstract values and norms, scientific assessments, and economic considerations may then dominate the decision while important, context-specific facets of people's relationships to the place are ignored. When implicit meanings are acknowledged and individuals are supported in speaking about them, the decision process can stay grounded in people's genuine felt senses of the value of a place. At the same time the act of explicating felt value into verbal expressions of held value and assigned value may carry forward stakeholders' initially vague, implicit feelings of value into a clearer and more vivid awareness of how and why a particular place is important to them. In this way employing experiential practices in place-based conservation may lead not only to better decisions about places, but also to a deeper and stronger sense of place.

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Chapter 7
Place Meanings as Lived Experience

James R. Barkley and Linda E. Kruger

Abstract The history of stakeholder dialogue around conservation issues has been marked by controversy and conflict. This chapter describes a theoretical perspective of divisive political ideology compounded by an exclusive reliance on scientific knowledge. It suggests that the expression of stakeholders' place-related emotion through stories of lived experience can play an important role in natural resource planning. Through the sharing of experiential knowledge during pre-planning phases stakeholders have the capacity to refocus dialogue in ways that build upon commonly held memories and place meanings.

Keywords Lived experience • Emotion • Stories • Experiential knowledge • Meanings

The ways in which humans experience, relate to, and remember the environment entail emotional processes that help define important places, prompt political participation, and influence preferred planning outcomes. The significance of these emotional perspectives argues for designing a way to productively integrate them into natural resource planning. And yet historically stakeholder representation in planning dialogues has muted emotional and imaginative place meanings in favor of ideological positioning supporting a more technical perspective. While a technical perspective is necessary, it may not be adequate to represent the spectrum of stakeholder perspectives. The planning

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process would also benefit from discussions that address stakeholders' feelings about the area under consideration. This chapter, written from the perspective of lived experience, addresses the role of memory and emotion in support of a theoretical platform for improving stakeholder representation in park and natural resource planning.

7.1 Ideology and the Expert-Public Gap: Roadblocks to Optimal Planning

Political scientist Martin Nie (2003) asserts that most political arenas focused on park and wildland management are stilted by historically embattled ideologies. Driving and reinforcing this ideological embattlement are "wicked problems that characterize most public policy and planning issues" (Nie, p. 309). These "wicked" problems are social controversies that lack technical solutions and are generally managed (not solved) in a process of political judgments, adaptive management regimes, and/or fragmented planning forums (Allen & Gould, 1986). Nie identifies a lack of effective communication and the crisis orientation among interest groups as roadblocks to expanding dialogue. Stakeholders continually draw upon their entrenched ideologies during dialogue and negotiations, which results in an inability to move beyond simplistic, adversarial, and deeply ingrained rhetoric, thus hindering progress toward intended goals.

The knowledge and experience gap between experts and the general public influences representation in land management in a manner that can exacerbate historic ideological conflict. Two conditions contribute to this divide. First, experts frequently dismiss citizen views as less informed; and second, citizens may have difficulty in finding a political foothold for their perspectives (Yankelovich, 1991, p. 4). The result of this trend is a diminishing capacity for the lay public to represent itself in expert-based decision-making forums. As Yankelovich (p. 3) notes, "It is sometimes difficult to believe that the public and policy-making experts in the U.S. share the same language and culture." This situation diminishes public access to representation in resource planning and erodes the potential for self-governance, frustrating stakeholders. Unfortunately it has defined the national democratic process in land management and has alienated an interested and often concerned public.

As a result of ideological rifts and the cultural codification of knowledge within a traditional scientific perspective (Bell, 1962, p. 25), emotionally volatile stakeholder engagement is common in park and natural resource management. In *Wisdom of the Spotted Owl*, Yaffee (1994) describes how the behavioral biases of human actors and organizations contributed to poor policymaking for spotted owl habitat protection in Pacific Northwest forests. Tension and conflict prevailed as emotions ran high in what was, and still is, an ideological battleground of iconic significance. Furthermore the scientific debate over policy mandates in the Endangered Species Act continues to define the conflict.

This theme of emotionally fueled conflict among stakeholders engaged in natural resource planning—including scientists and resource managers who often have the

final say in policy decisions—recurs time and again in contested issues ranging from offshore drilling on the Pacific coast (Freudenburg & Gramling, 1994) to impacts from animal feedlot operations in the Midwest (Johnsen, 2003), to cultural clashes over Atlantic coastal fishing rights (Lynch, 1993). (See Chap. 2, on the prevailing and historically exclusive technical-rational approach to land-use planning.)

While land-use decision-making typically pays considerable (and warranted) attention to technical issues, the inclusion of additional forms of knowledge—often referred to as "other ways of knowing"—is essential. Emphasizing the role of emotion, this chapter examines the need for stakeholder dialogue and sharing of place meanings that extend beyond the historical bias toward traditional scientific perspectives in land-use management. Emotion often is at the center of place meaning and political activity. Recognizing the transformative power of emotion, we suggest that an increased focus on place meanings among politically active stakeholders might create space and opportunity for improving dialogue surrounding park and natural resource planning.

7.2 Stakeholders and Democratic Representation

In the latter part of the twentieth century U.S. democracy witnessed a heightened prominence of "identity politics" centered on negotiation, contestation, and representation of multiple perspectives (Benhabib, 1996). The rise of conservation-based ecological organizations serves as an example of this trend, with political representation taken up by such groups as the Sierra Club, Earth First, and others—each with its unique identity and political ideology. These organizations, along with local stakeholders, citizen groups, and other special interests, bring issues relevant to land-use planning and natural resource management to public and political attention. Local stakeholders are typically residents within or near an area of concern, and as such they represent potentially vital sources of the kind of experiential, emotional knowledge that is critical to expanding the dialogue around place-based conservation.

Our democratic processes need to account for the emotional energy that catalyzes politicized ideology and shapes place meaning. The basic theoretical underpinning of a sense of place or place meaning (used interchangeably here) is that space becomes place as a consequence of an emotional transformation (Relph, 1976; Tuan, 1972). To understand place meanings, therefore, is to understand emotional transformation of physical space to human place. And as with place meanings, political ideology results from emotional transformation (Lerner, 1939). As political scientist Daniel Bell points out:

> … What gives ideology its force is its passion.… One might say, in fact that the most important, latent, function of ideology is to tap emotion. Other than religion (and war and nationalism), there have been few forms of channelizing emotional energy.… Ideology fuses these energies and channels them into politics (Bell, 1962, p. 400).

Ideology catalyzed by emotion takes a representative turn through human enactment. With strong feelings for places of interest and how they should be managed,

politically active stakeholders that have a personal history with an area are positioned at the emotional nexus of place and political ideology. Such stakeholders have the capacity to enhance democratic representation in park and natural resource planning by sharing their experiential, emotional knowledge of a place.

As members of organized interest groups and as frequent visitors to the areas of interest, individual stakeholders who are members of larger organized groups are seen as important and relevant participants in researching place meanings. As these representatives discuss their lived experiences in their important places the door is open for productive entrée of emotional knowledge into stakeholder dialogue.

7.3 Emotion

Given the crucial role of emotion in expanding stakeholder dialogue, sociological considerations may be helpful in exploring strategies for representation that move beyond politically and scientifically simplified meanings of place. The sociological aspects of emotion relevant to this discussion include feelings arising directly from the lived experience and sentiments associated with sharing them with others. Denzin (1985) refers to these two modes as the "lived body" and "intentional value feelings", respectively. These feelings immediately link the individual with her environment and provide

> …[an] orientation to the interactional world of experience…they are accessible to others and they can furnish the foundations for socially shared feelings.... Others are able to vicariously share in the subject's feelings.… The subject can communicate and 'give' these feelings to others, thereby allowing them to enter into a field of emotional experience with him (Denzin, 1985, p. 230).

Such commonly understood feelings give meaning to places. And, when "felt reflections, cognitive and emotional, about feelings" (Denzin, 1985, p. 230) are expressed in stories of the lived experience—delivered in a manner appropriate to a given political context and ideological framework—they provide an interpretive mechanism for understanding stakeholders' emotions associated with places.

7.4 Lived Experience and Place Meanings

As a philosophical orientation toward knowledge and knowing reality, lived experience holds central the idea that through the actual experience of something its essence may be felt and understood as reality (Fals-Borda & Rahman, 1991). As a series of temporal, spatial organizations that in its most basic form involves our immediate consciousness of life prior to reflection (Dilthey, 1985; Sartre, 1957/1985), it is through our memories and stories of the lived experience that the places of our experience are imbued with meaning. When the management areas of interest serve as a setting through which the individual has passed previously, memories and

stories of the experience provide insight into what those important places mean. When these stories are shared among stakeholders in place-making processes—as exemplified by 'learning circles' (Chap. 11)—it is a form of social learning by which emotional knowledge may be addressed to the advantage of stakeholder dialogue by creating shared memories and place meanings.

The power of a lived experience perspective is realized in a democracy defined by identity politics, where place meanings may serve to critically nuance communication among individuals speaking for their affiliate interest groups. Place-making processes among local stakeholders—undergirded by a lived experience perspective—are a way to build trust by facilitating the representation of emotion in seeking to understand what people are feeling, not why they feel that way. Local stakeholders are individuals who live in the region and stand in at local and/or regional meetings to carry the message of organized interest groups. Sitting at the crossroads of place meaning and political ideology, these stakeholders should be afforded an opportunity to share their experiential knowledge of the area. This is in keeping with the imperative of a manager-as-stakeholder to "understand the emergent qualities of place-making and place meanings in order to respond to patterns of discourse shaped by structured communicators linked across social networks" (Stokowski, 2008, p. 54). By sharing these stories a public memory may be forged that can present new possibilities for future planning efforts by creating shared place meanings that focus on the emotional source that drives stakeholder engagement.

With a focus on value theory, Schroeder (Chap. 6) provides another way of viewing the two modes of emotion described here. With 'felt value' underpinning both 'held' and 'assigned' values, the process of value determination is one of experiencing and feeling made explicit through 'held' or 'assigned' values. Schroeder further describes a relationship whereby the formation of abstract 'held' and 'assigned' values can transform the original 'felt values.' In this cyclical framework of value determination, the lived experience is accounted for according to a developing framework of [explicit] 'held' and 'assigned' values that are both informed by, and serve to inform, [implicit] 'felt values.' Thus feelings of lived experience include implicit, felt values and the feelings experienced while telling about the lived experience in turn shape our explicit, held and assigned values.

Drawing on her personal history, Olstad (Chap. 8) illustrates how the two modes of emotion associated with lived experience can intersect. Using poetic description she invites readers to vicariously experience the emotions that the landscapes of the Red and Painted deserts evoke in her (the first emotional mode) while she reflects on her sentiments in telling about her lived experience (the second emotional mode). As a social theorist she concludes that there is a need for both scientifically based information and experiential knowledge.

Both Schroeder and Olstad highlight the centrality of lived experience in understanding place values and meanings with each author delineating between an internal, personal understanding of lived experience and an external, shared representation of this knowledge. In each case the role of emotion changes from the personal experience, or felt sense, to the public representation of this knowledge in the form of held and assigned values.

A planning process that invites expression of feelings associated with place experiences and subsequent stories about them provides a means for incorporating stakeholders' emotionally invested place meanings. In focusing on *how* people feel about places important to them and not *why* they feel a certain way such an approach supports the open sharing of stories of lived experience as a common source of knowledge. Centering stakeholder dialogue on lived experience thus increases the capacity for what environmental historian Keith Basso (1996) describes as "place-making." As he describes it:

> … place-making is a way of constructing history itself, of inventing it, of fashioning novel versions of 'what happened here.' For every developed place-world manifests itself as a possible state of affairs, and whenever these constructions are accepted by other people as credible and convincing—or plausible and provocative, or arresting and intriguing—they enrich the common stock on which everyone can draw to muse on past events, interpret their significance, and imagine them anew (Basso, 1996, p. 6).

Place-making, by sharing stories of lived experience, provides an avenue for creating common values and meanings among multiple stakeholders. An exemplary place-making forum is described by Stewart, Glover and Barkley (Chap. 11). The authors describe how "learning circles" supported by photo-elicitation techniques facilitate access to feelings of the lived experience and for understanding feelings while telling about them. In their account of the learning circle format, as implemented in three different land-use scenarios, the authors illustrate the creation of shared emotional space among stakeholders that fostered empathy and shared understanding. Amsden, Stedman, & Kruger (Chap. 9) also used photo-elicitation to prompt memories of volunteer experiences that helped volunteers form and later share personal place meanings.

The sharing of place meanings among politically active stakeholders provides a bridge for natural resource managers to gain a deeper understanding of the frequently strong emotions that typify controversial issues in planning and policymaking. In the absence of such an understanding of place meanings managers retain a limited perspective on the importance of a place to local stakeholders. In the report "Understanding Concepts of Place in Recreation Research Management" (Kruger, Hall, & Stiefel, 2008), Stokowski describes a history of research and theory on place that points to place meanings as both emotional and constantly in flux (pp. 31–60). In championing the sharing of experiential knowledge in place-making processes Stokowski extends a charge to managers-as-stakeholders:

> A manager's imperative then, should be to understand the emergent qualities of place-making and place meanings in order to respond to patterns of discourse shaped by structured communicators linked across social networks. In this effort managers should err on the side of variety rather than constraint in allowing resource settings to be as open as possible to social and cultural behaviors through which place meanings may be expressed (Stokowski, 2008, p. 54).

In this vein natural resource managers would be well served by encouraging place-making exercises such as the learning circles described by Stewart, Glover, and Barkley (Chap. 11) and the community self-assessment process described by Kruger and Shannon (2000).

7.5 Remembering the Lived Experience

The recounting of personal experiences rooted in place contributes to the formation of shared memories that are integral to place meanings. The relationship between the memory and the lived experience is central to understanding the significance of certain places for stakeholders.

In this discussion lived experience refers to a series of temporal, spatial organizations that in its most basic form involves our immediate consciousness of life prior to reflection (Dilthey, 1985; Sartre, 1957/1985). Thus defined, lived experience exists solely in its representation; that is, it does not exist outside of memory (Denzin, 1992). Where Schroeder's (Chap. 6) implicit, felt value is preverbal, the definition of lived experience offered here is pre-reflective. That is, for an individual to form an idea of a lived experience he must remember it. Where Olstad (Chap. 8) juxtaposes personal place meanings with shared or public place meanings, lived experience and the associated process of remembering described here lie at the root of both private and public representations of place. The only way we can come to know and understand our lived experience is through acts of remembering and sharing those memories. Stewart, Glover, and Barkley (Chap. 11) embrace the idea of requisite remembering in coming to understand lived experience in their use of learning circle exercises. In this case the authors used photographs to prompt memories and stories of lived experience among stakeholders in land-use planning processes.

It is through the implicit role of memory that emotion finds an entrée into stakeholder dialogue surrounding land-use planning. The process of memory construction is imaginative and emotional (Denzin, 2001), as the act of remembering occurs in the present but refers to the past (Huyssen, 2003). Recollection is not only reiterative; it is also socially influenced (Bartlett, 1932/1967; Durkheim, 1924/1974; Halbwachs, 1941/1992). The people and places associated with our experiences shape our memories and stories. Condensation, elaboration, and invention commonly characterize ordinary remembering (Bartlett, p. 205), and the ways in which memories and stories are reshaped are constantly in flux. It is through social interaction (Schwartz, 1989) that place meanings derived from memories of the lived experience are represented to a broader audience.

Memory is an active process, not something that is passively received by the individual. Humans choose to remember and account for their experiences according to their individual relationship with social processes. Anthropologist James Wertsch (2001) uses the concept of 'mediated action' to describe the functional relationship between the individual and society (Wertsch, 1998; Vygotsky, 1982/1987). The theoretical framework of mediated action holds that the cultural tools available to an individual within a society mediate all human action. Cultural tools made available by society are actively "consumed" and frequently transformed through the use patterns of individuals (Wertsch, 1998). In other words, humans are not simply passive recipients of memories bestowed by sociocultural forces.

The remembrance and retelling of personal stories is a social and emotional process. The individual sentiment is transformed in association with the collective

sentiment (Durkheim, 1924/1974). Similarly individual memory arises within a collective perspective, and shared memory is realized through the memory of the individual (Halbwachs, 1941/1992). In this sense the group cannot express itself separately from its members (Bartlett, 1967). Thus the individual memory and the shared memory are mutually linked. Understood as such, the construction of memory is an ongoing process of reception and appropriation (Bartlett, 1932/1967; Halbwachs, 1941/1992; Wertsch, 1998) through which individuals serve to represent collective sentiment.

Historian John Bodnar discusses this process in terms of "public memory", which is continuously created even as it is drawn upon to bring the past, present, and future together in relevant ways. He writes:

> Public memory is produced from a political discussion that involves not so much specific economic or moral problems but rather fundamental issues about the entire existence of a society: its organization, structure of power, and the very meaning of its past and present.… Its function is to mediate the competing restatements of reality these antinomies express. Because it takes the form of an ideological system with special language, beliefs, symbols, and stories, people can use it as a cognitive device to mediate competing interpretations and privilege some explanations over others (Bodnar, 1992, p. 14).

This description speaks to the power and utility of public memory, but also alludes to limitations in efforts to strategically garner collective remembrance. Bringing stakeholders together to share stories of lived experience (e.g., learning circles and community forums) can refocus dialogue from a traditional scientific perspective and provide a means for mediating multiple perspectives, thus fostering communal memory. Discussing lived experience and creating public memories is a way to 'enrich the common stock' (Basso, 1996, p. 6) among representative stakeholders while keeping tabs on emotional place meanings that, along with our memories, change over time. Public memory may be viewed as a newly shared ideology and a way to channel emotional energy (Bell, 1962, p. 400); nonetheless it can potentially turn into another layer of entrenchment in an already adversarial political arena.

Perhaps a more serious concern is the privilege afforded to [re]creators of public memory. In situations where local stakeholders participate in the creation of public memory, the determination of memorable and meaningful aspects of place may rest with a self-selected group of stakeholders who choose to engage in the planning process.

For public memory to serve as a foundational concept in promoting a more informed and productive planning dialogue these limitations need to be addressed. An important first step would be to conduct place-making activities prior to the formal planning process. As Stewart, Glover, & Barkley note (Chap. 11) the knowledge gained from these activities is an appropriate precursor to the broader planning process. Such a shift would allow experiential knowledge to expand and improve the planning dialogue. The privilege that is afforded to those that take part in selective place-making processes is further addressed through the characteristic focus on local representative stakeholders. These individuals are appropriate for these types of pre-planning efforts according to their capacity for experiential knowledge

(i.e., as frequent visitors to relevant sites) and their ability to represent special interests (i.e., as member-representatives of larger affiliate interest groups) within an identity politic.

In addressing the limitation of public memory as a form of ideology the primary concern is to avoid the oversimplification of shared meanings, so that meanings don't become static ideological representations prone to inappropriate application in park and natural resource planning processes. Repeated place-making forums may provide opportunities for ongoing dialogue as the management situation shifts and changes over time.

7.6 Conclusion

Sharing stories of lived experience serves to identify place, political ideology, and the emotions inherent in them. The expression of memories and place meanings through such stories provides a tool for productively incorporating emotional knowledge in park and natural resource planning. This approach is a departure from the history of stagnant dialogue in natural resource planning based on embattled stakeholder ideologies and exclusive expert-based planning. Perspectives from lived experience offer an alternative form of representation with a capacity for creating shared place meanings, memories, and visions for a less contentious future.

Born of a hopeful vision for land-use decision-making and planning processes for America's public parks and other natural resource areas, place-making is conceptualized here as an avenue by which agreement may be reached, or perhaps conflict more fully understood among political actors. As these representatives discuss their lived experiences in their important places the door is open for the emotional knowledge that is shared to further become a part of public memory. In other words, place-making among stakeholders can [re]shape a public memory that frames emotional knowledge—that which catalyzes political ideology and defines sense of place—as a source of shared meaning and not of a priori conflict. This public memory, resulting from place-making activity as a precursor to formal planning, can expand stakeholder dialogue through the productive inclusion of emotional knowledge by sharing and understanding place meanings from a lived experience perspective.

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Chapter 8
Personal Experience and Public Place Creation

Tyra Olstad

Abstract There is a place in Wyoming called the Red Desert. It has tangible characteristics—land and sky, sagebrush and antelope, fences and roads—but if you visit, you will do more than just register these features. You will take memories from and layer meaning upon the landscape, personally investing in the place. This chapter portrays the development of personal place meanings of the Red Desert and describes social and political processes with the potential to translate them into public meanings of place.

Keywords Red Desert • Painted Desert • Public place meanings • Personal place meanings • Public place creation • Resource conflict

> This is the most beautiful place on earth. There are many such places. (Abbey, 1968/1990)

There is a place called the Red Desert. The landscape there doesn't look particularly red, but its yawning expanses of dusty greasewood easily appear deserted. The "miles and miles of nothing but miles," as one resident describes it (quoted in Clifford, 2002, p. 3), add up to an overwhelming sense of space—featureless, limitless, meaningless space.

But the Red Desert is more than space; it exists as a *place*—a unique mosaic of material features: land and sky, sagebrush and antelope, fences and roads. I've seen this landscape and you can too, just by driving across Wyoming on Interstate 80. Better yet, you can pause somewhere between Rawlins and Rock Springs to look,

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smell, listen, and feel—literally sense—this place. As your mind filters and favors certain sensations, you might feel pleased by the wildness of the uninterrupted vistas or hear desolation howling in the incessant winds. Regardless of your experience, you'll take memories from this landscape and layer meaning upon it.

If you don't have time to actually go to the Red Desert, you can view photographs of it and read descriptions about it. Many people have shared their personal experiences and perceptions of this place, hoping to convince others that it's not just meaningless space. They want you to care about it—they *need* you to care about it—because you own it. The Red Desert is mostly public land belonging to citizens with myriad conceptions of its economic and sociocultural value.

The Rock Springs, Rawlins, and Lander offices of the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) have the difficult duty of reconciling different perceptions for and valuations of the Red Desert. BLM decisions that determine land use—notwithstanding the multiple-use principle—recognize and give preference to particular physical, cultural, and aesthetic resources over others. This can easily lead to controversy. When the BLM issued Draft Environmental Impact Statements that proposed expanding oil and gas development in parts of the Red Desert, officials were astounded by the volume and vehemence of public response. Dozens of organizations and thousands of individuals contacted the agency to express deep concern. In order to describe and defend abstract, value-laden concepts of qualities such as beauty and wildness, people wrote and spoke most often in terms of "I," "my," "we," and "our," using their personal experiences and opinions to ground debate over *their* Red Desert.

Land management officials have grown increasingly aware of the need to integrate individual senses of place into policies and procedures (Davenport & Anderson, 2005; Mitchell, Force, Carroll, & McLauglin, 1993; Williams & Stewart, 1998). But what is a *sense of place*? How is it created and used? As researchers seek to understand the process of public place creation they often focus on the material characteristics of meaningless space, the sociocultural values layered on this space, and the political processes that regulate appropriate use (Cheng, Kruger, & Daniels, 2003; Eisenhauer, Krannich, & Blahna, 2000; Greider & Garkovich, 1994). While these are all important factors they fail to include personal elements of place creation. Phenomenological and psychological research, meanwhile, explores the meaning and significance of individuals' interactions with their environments (Brown & Toadvine, 2003; Casey, 1996, 2001; Proshansky, Fabian, & Kaminof, 1983; Shumaker & Taylor, 1983; Stedman, 2002). To link all these concepts social scientists and public land management officials need to consider the relationship between the sociopolitical land management decision-making process and individuals' sensations, perceptions, and values—that is, how personal experiences affect public place creation.

In exploring the public conflict over the Red Desert, I cannot help but discuss another Western place: a million-acre swath of colorful badlands that arcs across northeastern Arizona, known as the Painted Desert. It shares many ecological and cultural characteristics with the Red Desert (Bailey, 1983; McNab & Avers, 1994), but to me the Painted Desert feels distinctly different. In part this is because it encompasses 53,000 acres of designated wilderness (within Petrified Forest National Park). But it also feels different because it embodies my own personal experiences—my memory of land and sky. It is *my* desert.

I invite you to join me on an intellectual tour of the Red Desert, followed by a vicarious visit to the Painted Desert. Comparing and contrasting my understanding and attachment to these places will provide a foundation for exploring the creation of public and personal places and the implications for phenomenological research and land management policy.

8.1 My Red Desert

I had never heard of the Red Desert until controversy over energy development began to infiltrate local and national media. People's expressions of attachment to a seemingly empty place intrigued me, so I paid attention to journal articles, radio reports, travel guides, websites, and letters to newspapers. The more I learned from these sources, the more I wanted to know. How did people perceive the desert? What sorts of relationships had they developed with the place? How did they communicate their feelings and positions?

To answer these questions, I reviewed academic literature, analyzed management documents, and interviewed a variety of interested stakeholders, who were encouraged to discuss personal opinions as opposed to representative positions. After months of formal, structured research, I thought I had developed a well-informed sense of the controversy. It seemed to boil down to the equation coined by Terry Tempest Williams (2002, p. 3): "place + people = politics." She goes on to note that "the simplicity becomes complicated very quickly as abstractions of philosophy and rhetoric turn into ground scrimmages." In order to understand the people and the place, all I had to do was separate the philosophy and rhetoric from the real world; all I had to do was experience the place first-hand.

Thus I found myself driving across south-central Wyoming late one April afternoon. I had already been cautioned by a representative of the Biodiversity Conservation Alliance that "the face of the Red Desert that people see driving through on the interstate does not reflect the richest wildlife habitats, or the prettiest landscapes, or the areas that are pristine and untouched." Verily, the views were dominated by dusty sagebrush, cracked pavement, and a few wispy clouds—the kind of scenery that typifies stock Western landscapes. That afternoon, however, I had a vested interest in the territory outside my window. Somewhere in that expanse, I knew, were herds of wild horses! Habitat for sage grouse! Ancient petroglyphs, wagon trail ruts, fossils, and other secret delights.

Having also heard from the Friends of the Red Desert organization that it is "a land that gives up its secrets grudgingly" (Friends of the Red Desert, 2008), I was equipped with lots of water, sturdy hiking boots, maps of local roads, and a long list of destinations and directions for getting to them. I hoped to spend days hunting out local favorite places with names such as Adobe Town, Desolation Flats, and Jack Morrow Hills. I would experience it all!

Then during the night a cold front moved through. I awoke to a landscape of featureless whiteness buried under a sullen gray sky. I tried maneuvering down a dirt road called Wild Horse Loop, but when my car rebelled against the mix of clay

and ice I returned to the main road and headed northeast. I knew I was passing by photogenic features with colorful names like Killpecker Dunes and Boars Tusk, but I couldn't see them through the storm. Turning eastward I stopped to read a historic marker, but the winds were so fierce that I didn't get out of the car. The visitor center in Lander was closed, so I continued on southeast to Rawlins, where I merged back onto Interstate 80. There I was, crossing back through the heart of the Red Desert. So much for my effort to deeply experience the place.

The Red Desert's most vocal supporters insist that their place "has a way of drawing you in, inviting you to explore its mysteries" ("Wyoming's Red Desert," 2006). But the message I got was to leave. I was cold, tired, and didn't connect with the land at all. Instead my conception of the place remained flat—a list of names and map of boundaries with no memories attached.

Well, actually, there's one memory—of the rush of delight I felt when I turned off the highway, parked near a gas well-pad, pulled out the Utah and Arizona maps and, with snow swirling dryly across my windshield, planned my route south to the Painted Desert—to *my* place.

8.2 My Painted Desert

When I first paused to consider the "Welcome to Petrified Forest National Park" sign one gray November morning many years ago, I had no idea what to expect. I only knew it was in Arizona and that I could work there instead of spending another long winter in New Hampshire. After stopping at the visitor center to glance at the exhibits and watch an interpretive film about the Chinle Formation, ancestral Pueblans, and short-grass prairie, I drove out into the scrub-studded landscape. A half-mile down the road at the first overlook, I felt the bottom drop out of my sense of space. There it was: the Painted Desert, a labyrinth of vibrant clay hills stretching beyond the horizon, rolling large as the sky, bigger and grander than anything I'd ever known.

Though the sky was raw and the landscape forbidding, I felt compelled to go for a hike. I hiked the switch backs down the access trail. Bidding farewell to the junipers on the rim, I dropped into a dry wash, slipped tentatively around the nose of a cliff, and felt a whoosh of cold, dry wind burst into my lungs. The Painted Desert! I was standing in it, breathing it in. There were no bootprints, no cairns, no other signs of humanity to cling to—just the earth and clouds and me.

I spent the rest of the winter cultivating a relationship between myself and this place, seeking a sense of belonging—"an existential insideness," as Relph (1976) puts it. I learned to locate myself according to the bends in the Lithodendron Wash, the lonely vertical features on the horizon, the layers of stone and time. I explored Angels Garden and the Black Forest, discovered the petrified stump field and petroglyph panels. I found pottery shards and fossilized bones, blazing paintbrush, and bobcat prints. Once I tripped over a geologic marker—a 3-in. piece of metal hammered

into the ground—surrounded by thousands of acres of sandstone and bentonite and undulating sagebrush. I became infatuated with everything and everywhere in the Painted Desert.

After one season as a National Park Service volunteer—a season spent writing letters describing my adventures, filling sketchbooks with my artistic impressions, spending innumerable hours contemplating the landscape—I felt I had barely scratched the surface. As Yi-Fu Tuan (1977, pp. 183–184) writes, "[a]bstract knowledge about a place can be acquired in short order. But the 'feel' of a place takes longer to acquire. It is made up of experiences, mostly fleeting and undramatic, repeated day after day and over the span of years." So I returned a year-and-a-half later, then again and again, learning to slow down and savor experiences—tracing centuries of swirls in sandstone, thinking like a lizard basking in the sun, swimming in the scent of monsoon rains. I stretched out under the Milky Way, savored the sunrises and sunsets, walked out far into the desert every morning and evening, attuning myself to the rhythms of time and space.

With all this experience fermenting in my mind I couldn't understand why others did not seem to similarly appreciate the desert, with its "stillness, solitude, and space; an unobstructed view every day and every night of sun, sky, stars, clouds, mountains, moon, cliff rock and canyons; a sense of time enough to let thought and feeling range from here to the end of the world and back" (Abbey, 1968/1990, p. 39). When a new roommate arrived one summer and wanted to leave because she couldn't bear the dryness and desolation, I implored her to just give the place time. I encouraged her to stay, saying she would grow to love it, thinking how can anyone not? Indeed after a few weeks she became interested in the local history, then the night sky and the plants, animals, play of light and shadow on the land.

My job as a park ranger was to provide visitors with information about their national park and encourage them to pause and gain a deeper, personal connection to the place. I gave hundreds of interpretive talks about park geology, archaeology, ecology, and recent history, trying to share my own passion. But surprisingly few would linger to ask questions. I wrote articles for the park newsletter, made paintings for school programs, drew wildflowers for bulletins, and photographed bones for scientific publications, knowing that my efforts barely scratched the surface of the richness of the place. Watching visitors pause to snap photographs of some scene before continuing on to the Grand Canyon or Sedona, I wanted to shout, "Photographs won't do it justice! It's not just scenery!" I wanted to shake them, tell them "It's a sense, it's a feel, it's a *place*!" Edward Abbey gave voice to this same sentiment in *Desert Solitaire*, where he writes

> In the first place you can't see anything from a car; you've got to get out of the goddamned contraption and walk, better yet crawl, on hands and knees, over the sandstone and through the thornbush and cactus. When traces of blood begin to mark your trail you'll see something, maybe (Abbey, 1968/1990, p. xiv).

The more time I spent with the sandstone and cacti of the Painted Desert—leaving my fair share of blood—the more I understood how passionately a person can care for a place, how deeply it can become part of them, and how desperately they will

want to both share and protect it. Fortunately, no drastic measures are needed to preserve the Painted Desert; as a wilderness area within a national park it already benefits from the highest level of federal land protection. Furthermore no immediate threats exist that might alter the material characteristics of the place (my place). My memories of the land and my desires for future experiences remain safely intact.

However such is not the case for the Red Desert, where changing management priorities and land-use proposals have created an atmosphere of insecurity for users as well as heightened awareness of and appreciation for the place. The Red Desert warrants another visit.

8.3 Our Red Desert

When the BLM issued a Draft Environmental Impact Statement that proposed allowing more roads and gas wells in the Red Desert, they unleashed what has been labeled "an ideological battle…among those who value what is here. Some value what lies on the surface; some value what lies beneath" (Clifford, 2002). This may be an oversimplification however. The breadth and depth of the controversy suggests a complex interaction between "two types of attachment: attachment to the specific area itself and attachment to the type of area it represents" (Williams et al., 1992, p. 19).

Feelings of attachment to a type of place, such as pristine wilderness, empower the creation of an identifiable public place. Recognizing this, non-governmental organizations such as Friends of the Red Desert (FRD), Biodiversity Conservation Alliance (BCA), and the Sierra Club launched a campaign to educate the public on the area's scenic wonders and ecological richness. In promoting it as the "Wild Heart of the West" these groups were determined to dispel the notion that the desert was simply an empty void with no redeeming qualities. Interviewees echoed the "myth" of "an empty void," paraphrasing other people out there who believed "It's just the desert. If you gotta wreck someplace, it oughta be this place" (BLM employee, personal communication, May 5, 2006) and that "there's so much open space out there, so much undeveloped space that we can afford to just carve it up willy-nilly" (artist, personal communication, Feb 4, 2007). As defenders counter, "When you let roads develop willy-nilly there is a loss of solitude" (Bill Crump, quoted in Clifford, 2002).

Desert, space, and solitude are powerful symbols—ones that have captured public imagination and sometimes "generate[d] a response from people, even among people who have never even been to the place in dispute" (Cheng et al., 2003, p. 97). People who have never been to the Red Desert can develop a sense of the place from the articles, brochures, photos, and websites of the BCA, FRD, Wyoming Wilderness Alliance, and other advocates. Using specific locations as symbols for abstract ideals, these materials promote a political position—namely establishment of a National Conservation Area (NCA).

However there's disagreement over the location and extent of the Red Desert. Some people consider it to be a half-million-acre patch of rusty soil north of

Interstate 80 referred to as the "Red Strip," or "Red Desert Basin." Others define it as a six-million-acre expanse stretching from Lander, Wyoming, to the Colorado border, much of which belongs to the ecologically diverse Great Divide Basin. This lack of a unified geographic definition complicates the decision-making process so that stakeholders aren't always debating management of the same biophysical "Red Desert."

While the Red Desert exists as a geographically ambiguous idea of space and solitude, it also evokes powerful memories of and attachment to specific places. The campaign to "Save the Red Desert" draws strongly (and effectively) on the recognition and use of personal experiences. Rather than simply advocate certain uses for the Red Desert, non-governmental organizations have encouraged people to share their stories publicly by exhibiting photos and paintings and writing articles describing specific memories of the desert. In the same vein advocates are urged to contact their governmental representatives and share their personal feelings and experiences about the place rather than spouting out rhetorical positions.

Desert preservation groups also have focused much effort on getting people into the desert to experience the scale and grandeur of the place for themselves. Tourism brochures detail scenic desert drives and BLM hand-outs provide directions to popular spots. Websites offer suggestions for hiking destinations with luring statements such as, "Every Wyoming outdoors person must take a trip soon to the Red Desert and experience the thrill and enchantment of hiking through the maze of Honeycomb Buttes without another person or sound but that of the wind." The BCA offers a number of guided driving and backpacking expeditions. As a member of the organization describes the strategy:

> The best way for people to feel investment in these landscapes and to understand the need to protect them is not to send them a ten-page diatribe or talk on the radio or be in the newspaper—that doesn't convey it. All you have to do is set people in front of this landscape, and without saying anything to them at all, they get it (BCA employee, personal communication, September 6, 2006).

What is "it"? Scholars have identified it variously as a "construction," "perception," "interpretation," or "endowment of value" (Cheng et al., 2003; Davenport & Anderson, 2005; Stedman, 2003; Tuan, 1977; Williams & Stewart, 1998). Those who have experienced the Red Desert might describe it as "a sense of the space, the sound of the grass, the smell of the wind" (Lillegraven, personal communication, February 4, 2007). In any case it's a highly personal appreciation for a public place.

8.4 Our Deserts

You may not realize that the Painted Desert is part of one of your national parks and/or that the Red Desert belongs to your national heritage. You may acknowledge the value of oil and gas and disapprove of the expansion of public lands. However you don't need to backpack through the desert wilderness area or even drive across Wyoming to understand that people love these places and know them as their own.

The difficulty lies in weaving personal experiences and values and places into a web of support for public land management practices. Tuan notes that "[w]e are in the habit of denying or forgetting the real nature of our experiences in favor of the cliché of public speech" (1977, p. 204). Although made 30 years ago, his observation still rings true, especially in relation to public land management. It's far too easy for individuals to abandon their own stories in the public sphere and instead attempt to assert political positions. As one BCA employee put it, "Well, I have a personal opinion and I have a professional opinion." Even citizens who are not speaking for or employed by an agency or group may choose to recite stock lines such as, "I urge you to adopt the Western Heritage Alternative for a revised Great Divide Plan that will balance industrial uses of *my public lands* with the needs of public recreation, clean air and water, and desert wildlife" (BCA letter template, 2008, emphasis added).

The sociopolitical sphere undervalues personal perceptions and beliefs, preferring cold, hard usage of the term "our public lands" over intimate, passionate appeals for personal places. Yet it is individual experience and attachment that often fuel debates over land management. As Gary Snyder (1990, p. 39) reminds us, "Our relation to the natural world takes place in a *place*, and it must be grounded in information and experience." I have learned as much as I can about the Red Desert but I haven't seen, smelled, or felt the landscape directly as others have, so I haven't formed their kind of attachment. But I can empathize. When I see a photographer's images of Boars Tusk, I think of my Pilot Rock in the Painted Desert. When people talk about watching daybreak over the hills of Adobe Town, I remember my sunrise strolls toward Chinle Mesa. When I read about the impacts of road construction in Wyoming, I recall tiptoeing across cryptobiotic soils in Arizona. And when I talk to ranchers, scientists, managers, visitors, and citizens about their Red Desert, I tell them about my Painted Desert. It's an exchange, an inclusion, a deepening of understanding and respect.

The theorist in me says that if you want to fully comprehend the conflict over the Red Desert, you need to ground yourself with both information and experience, to recognize it as a place. Read official management documents, peruse opinion pieces and personal testimonies, look at photographs, listen to stories, and think about it as you would a place you love. Then even if you think you understand the depth of people's attachment to the place, *go* to the Red Desert. Stop somewhere, get out of the car, explore, feel the ground, smell the sky—go.

(After that, perhaps, pull out your maps, plan a route south, and head onward—to see the Painted Desert. It's the most beautiful place on earth.)

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Chapter 9
Volunteer Meanings in the Making of Place

Ben Amsden, Richard C. Stedman, and Linda E. Kruger

Abstract Volunteers have an impact on the places and landscapes in which they work. They create personalized place meanings based on experience—from the activities in which they engage, the institutions they are working for, or some combination of both. The relationships between their place meaning and identity creation are related, and have consequences for the conversations they have with visitors and managers regarding their sense of place. The place meanings described by the Streamwatch volunteers of Alaska's Russian River are identified, and portrayed as "place making" by directly changing the landscape through restoration work, and communicated by their teaching of managers, visitors, and other stakeholders.

Keywords Volunteer meanings • Streamwatch • Restoration • Education • Volunteers • Sense of place

Cooper Landing, a town of roughly 400 year-round residents, is tucked deep inside the heart of Alaska's beautiful and rugged Kenai Peninsula. For many visitors to Alaska, Cooper Landing is a prized destination because of the Russian River, a

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12-mile span connecting the Upper Russian Lake with the Kenai River. The confluence of the Russian and Kenai rivers is one of Alaska's most popular fishing areas due to its proximity to Anchorage and its abundance of trout, Coho (silver) salmon, and Sockeye (red) salmon. Together the Kenai and the Russian Rivers support over 60,000 fish per year, and fishermen capture about half of them (Alaska Department of Fish & Game, 2007). At the height of the April-to-August season more than a thousand fishermen can be seen fishing the river at the same time, often standing shoulder to shoulder along the riverbanks. Because of the popularity of the Russian River and the number of fishermen, several issues threaten the area. Trampled vegetation and the resulting erosion affect fish habitat by eliminating shade on the river, which raises water temperatures and increases stream velocity (Alaska Department of Fish & Game). Also, fishing and its associated human and animal wastes (from fish-cleaning, dogs, litter, etc.) attract large numbers of bears and seagulls. To address these problem in 1994 the U.S. Forest Service implemented Streamwatch, a volunteer-based program designed to educate fishermen on resource-friendly fishing practices and habitat protection. By 2005 the program included 39 volunteers, who typically served for periods of up to 2 weeks at a time.

Programs such as Streamwatch and the volunteers who staff them are important to discussions of place-based conservation. Volunteers have a considerable impact on the places and landscapes in which they work. Their economic importance is obvious; many programs could not survive without the (nearly) free workforce that volunteers represent. Less obvious but also noteworthy is that volunteers are, in effect, "making" place. That is, volunteers create personalized place meanings based on experience—from the activities in which they engage, the institutions they are working for, or some combination of both. From a management perspective the landscape in which a volunteer program operates will thus be re-made or re-interpreted through the lenses of these meanings. This chapter explores the concept of "making place" in the context of theoretical studies on sense of place and a qualitative study of Streamwatch volunteers that describes the place-making process as it has unfolded along the Russian River.

9.1 Sense of Place, Volunteer Meanings, and the Place-Making Process

People often maintain a deep connection to the places in which they live, work, and play. This sense of place is built upon the meanings people create as they directly experience and interact with the multiple settings and activities that define their daily lives (Relph, 1976). Whether directly experienced (e.g., hiking a trail) or symbolic (a memory of visiting a special place), the settings and activities that drive sense of place often work in tandem to create place meaning.

Volunteering is a classic though little studied example of an activity that, in combination with a significant setting, gives rise to place-based meanings. Interacting with a special place informs how people view themselves in terms of their surrounding

environment (Proshansky, 1978; Stedman, Beckley, Wallace, & Ambard, 2004). This is akin to the creation of place-based identity (Gooch, 2003), which gives volunteers a sense of what they're doing and why (Glynn, 2000). For instance, while activities such as boating, hiking, and hunting in a national forest may contribute to developing an identity as an outdoorsman, a weekend spent maintaining a trail or serving as a backcountry caretaker in that same forest may foster an identity as a steward or protector. This relationship between place meaning and identity creation is in keeping with the social-psychological literature on volunteering (Glynn, 2000; Penner, Finkelstein, & Brannick, 2005; Piliavin & Callero, 1991).

Volunteering also creates place meanings that are embedded in social and personal contexts, often simultaneously. These contexts help people use their volunteer activity to realize personal goals and strengthen social ties. Much of this depends on whether the volunteer is working alone or in a group. When working alone volunteers may choose to participate in activities that reflect their personal history and sense of self (Hustinx & Lammertyn, 2003), while strengthening social ties is often more of the motive driving volunteers who choose to work in a group (Wilson, 2000). Furthermore meanings and identities may be social in the sense that participants may view themselves as representatives of an institution, agency, or some other group.

Ultimately place meanings influence the processes and outcomes of making place through volunteer work. Volunteers create and contribute to the settings and landscapes of their lives and communities either directly or indirectly. For example, imagine a group of volunteers who come together once a month to perform maintenance on a long-distance hiking trail that runs through their home state. As they work they make place directly by trimming brush, removing blown-down trees, and so forth. Also, through the process of collaborating with others volunteers make place indirectly by engaging in social activities such as sharing skills and ideas or potentially communicating with passing hikers. In other words, the volunteer activity itself (e.g., developing an identity as an outdoorsman, forging a new social network, or developing new skills) has contributed to place-making by giving the volunteer a set of meanings that serves as foundation for engaging in their work and interacting with (and sometimes teaching) others.

Understanding the place-making process requires deciphering a complex recipe that includes volunteer settings, activities, lived experience (Chap. 7) and derived place meanings. The Russian River Streamwatch program provides a good case study for examining emergent place meanings, the ways in which they inform the place-making process, and the importance of this to resource managers.

9.2 The Streamwatch Volunteers

To learn more about the Streamwatch volunteers' place meanings, the authors interviewed program participants, collected activity-related photos, and conducted a qualitative analysis based on the approach of Stedman & Beckley (Stedman et al.,

2004). In conjunction with the U.S. Forest Service ten volunteers were selected using purposive sampling. These participants were issued single-use cameras and asked to capture aspects of their daily lives and volunteer work that were most meaningful to them, represented their reason(s) for volunteering, or demonstrated what they would miss most if they ceased volunteering.

Once the cameras were collected and the film was developed volunteers were interviewed to review the photos and retrieve the underlying personal stories. Discussion of each photo centered on getting the respondent to "describe the content of the picture, what they were attempting to represent, and why they took it" (Stedman et al., 2004, p. 588). During the interviews, which lasted between 45 min and 3 h, participants were free to explore tangents, bring in other people (several included their spouses in the project), and provide additional materials (such as notes or other photographs). By conveying their place meanings both visually and verbally, the participants were able to *show*, instead of just *tell*, specific details of the places important to them. The photo and interview-based data were coded and reorganized to identify emergent place meanings, which were then distilled into four place-based themes.

9.3 Volunteer Meanings and the Making of Place

Each of the four identified themes connects place and activity, linking the important places in and around the Russian River with the meanings that emerged from participating in the Streamwatch program. In addition these themes show how meanings contribute to the making of place. The first two themes—*The Russian River: How it is 'supposed' to be* and *The campground as a place to teach and give back*—demonstrate how volunteers use their meanings to create place both directly (through hands-on activity) and indirectly (through interpretation and teaching). The second two themes—*The campground as a social space: Interacting with like-minded volunteers* and *Recreation at the Russian River and in Cooper Landing*—have additional implications for volunteer theory, as they reflect new avenues for public participation as a form of volunteering and new perspectives on the leisure motives that drive volunteer activity.

9.3.1 The Russian River: How It Is 'Supposed' to Be

The river itself was very significant to the volunteers as both an actual setting and a symbolic meaning. In terms of setting it embodied a wide range of past and present experiences, including volunteer and non-volunteer-related ones. With respect to meaning the river epitomized the importance volunteers placed on the conservation of Alaska's natural resources.

To Martin, a retired volunteer from Anchorage, conservation meant working to restore the landscape to the state it was in prior to human impact. In a photo of a little-used hiking trail leading into the wilderness, Martin pointed out the expansion of the forest and how it had overgrown a power line. He suggested that the trail

signified how the landscape might have appeared in the past. By participating in Streamwatch, Martin could express his vision by helping to restore this natural area. Similarly, Dave (a 5-year veteran volunteer) provided a photo of a 'keep off' sign nearly overgrown by the vegetation it was intended to protect. He reflected on how the sign had been placed on a patch of once-bare ground, and how it symbolized the belief that his actions and those of his fellow Streamwatch volunteers could facilitate dramatic improvement in the landscape over time.

This idea of Streamwatch as a vehicle for conserving the landscape shed light on why certain volunteers participate. Several participants voiced an enduring love for the Russian River as a motive for volunteering. This was the case for Sarah (a 66-year-old retiree and 5-year Streamwatch volunteer), who showed a photo of a treasured stretch of river bank known as "Cottonwood Corner." Similarly, Dave (a 56-year-old retiree) offered a photo of a beloved place where he wants his ashes spread when he dies. He explained that his love for the area spurred him to volunteer in order to convince other visitors to "stop and look at these things and appreciate them more."

The participants also voiced a connection to the area's wildlife. Interestingly even some of the photos without animal images represented a wildlife meaning. For instance, multiple volunteers showed photos of places where they had once encountered an animal, and one photo featured a group of people viewing a bear in the distance. The emergence of wildlife-based meanings suggests that animals themselves are important to the volunteers' sense of place. As well, the known presence of wildlife is a key reason why volunteers feel their Streamwatch work is significant. Charlotte (a 62-year old resident of Moose Pass in her ninth year with the program) described how the increasing bear population in and around the campground had provided an additional incentive to her volunteering. She said that warning visitors about bears and other wildlife is a primary program responsibility, and thus it affects how volunteers and the public relate to the landscape.

9.3.2 The Campground as a Place to Teach and Give Back

Another place meaning described by the Streamwatch volunteers involved their ability to construct and maintain the role of teacher. A major program requirement is to educate fishermen in resource-friendly fishing practices and help visitors avoid attracting bears that populate the area. To this end volunteers patrol the boardwalk, observing visitor behavior, providing interpretative information, answering questions, and offering assistance and advice. This opportunity to "be an expert" about the facilities, the agency, and the Streamwatch mission was of great importance to volunteers. For some the campground itself symbolized this opportunity. In other cases it was symbolized by the act and process of volunteering. Megan (a middle-aged resident of the nearby town of Moose Pass) indicated the importance of teaching fishermen about bears. She suggested that while some fishermen were resistant to this information, most (she estimated about 75%) were responsive to the larger message of eco-friendly fishing practices, mainly because most visitors "are in awe of the place."

The volunteers also expressed meanings centered on the consequence of protecting the facilities used by visitors and volunteers. This was often couched in terms of "giving back" or working towards the upkeep of facilities involved in the place meanings they developed in the past. Many saw Forest Service facilities built along the river as a public good, and were strongly connected to their roles as maintainers. Martin provided a photo of one such structure: a staircase erected to prevent further erosion from a steep trail leading from the parking lot to the river. Martin relayed that such amenities complemented his landscape-based meanings that focused on shoreline restoration. In his interview he also conveyed pride in his role in the upkeep of facilities, in part because he felt he had contributed to the overuse of the Russian River in the past. By participating in the Streamwatch program and helping to build and maintain the boardwalk and the staircase he could give back to the place that had previously given something to him.

The meanings attached to the act of teaching and giving back were also manifested in volunteer perceptions of being a vital part of something official. Volunteers were purposely given official-looking uniforms and materials, at least in part to foster a sense of authority and expertise that would make them more convincing and respectable to the general public. It is important to note, however, that despite the appearance of authority volunteers continued to see their interactions with visitors as those of a teacher, not an enforcer.

A number of photos and interviews revealed volunteer pride in the establishment of Streamwatch as an "official" program. Some of Megan's photos depicted the installation of pre-printed, professional-looking interpretive signage bearing the Streamwatch logo. In describing her good feelings about her volunteer role and the Forest Service commitment to the program, she noted, "Official signage helps get our point across, and the Forest Service has done a good job with the signage. They change the signs to reflect evolving needs and things get updated. As a result, people are taking time to read the signs."

Sarah also provided a picture of an interpretive sign, but her connection to it was different. While interpretive signs were important to some volunteers because they were current and official-looking, her sign was also important for its message. According to Sarah the sign "shows what's happening. It contains a picture of the 'before,' so you can compare it to what you see in front of you." Sarah also indicated that this sign made her feel "official" because it offered a chance to participate in interpretation—an activity which she saw as usually reserved for paid Forest Service staff. She was proud of her expertise and happy to share it in an official capacity.

9.3.3 The Campground as a Social Space: Interacting with Like-Minded Volunteers

The third theme describing meanings held by participants revolved around the importance of relationships cultivated during the volunteer experience. The act of creating and maintaining friendships represented fun, solidarity, and purpose, and it proved to

be a highlight of volunteering in Streamwatch. Many participants suggested that seeing familiar people was one of the main reasons they returned to the program each year. Marissa (a volunteer in her mid-40s) used a photo of two other volunteers staying at a nearby campsite to describe her enjoyment of socializing: "Tom and Elaine are friends who camp with us. We like the social aspect of meeting other volunteers. When we started, we already knew some folks, but we have met many more."

The teamwork among volunteers also took on social meaning for many. Charlotte, who gathered several Streamwatch members for a group photo, contended that "relationships are the reason you come back." Appearing in this photo and many others was Alicia, the Streamwatch Coordinator and Forest Service Liaison. The volunteers held Alicia in high esteem for three reasons. First, they saw her as a reliable expert to whom they could turn for advice, instruction, and resources. Second, they felt she did a great job training and recruiting volunteers, mainly because of her ability to account for differences among people and accommodate their various needs. Third and most importantly, many volunteers considered her a close friend. Ultimately Alicia was a key reason volunteers repeatedly returned to Streamwatch. To the dismay of many volunteers Alicia was due to retire at the end of the summer during which the research was conducted, and nearly everyone said she would be missed.

The volunteers also suggested that socially oriented meanings emerged from the ways in which the group was rewarded and recognized by the Forest Service. Meredith (a 60-year-old resident of Cooper Landing) and Dave provided photos of the covered pavilion at the campground, the site of the annual volunteer picnic held to thank the volunteers and recognize their participation in the Streamwatch program. This event not only signified gratitude from the Forest Service and the Kenai River Sportfishing Association, but also provided a setting for socializing among volunteers who might see each other only occasionally throughout the summer. Nearly all the volunteers reported that recognition at the picnic inspired them to continue their efforts.

Political meanings also sometimes arose from socializing with like-minded volunteers, which served to connect them to local civic interests. Carter (a 47-year-old Cooper Landing resident and 5-year Streamwatch veteran) provided a photo of a gated roadway. He had spearheaded an effort to persuade the Forest Service to unlock the gate, allowing passage to local residents. The political relationships nurtured through this effort contributed strongly to his sense of place and pride in his collaborators, many of whom were not involved with Streamwatch. In this case it was volunteering in general—not just Streamwatch—that fostered personal meanings of comradeship and accomplishment.

9.3.4 Recreation at the Russian River and in Cooper Landing

In the final theme, several Streamwatch participants saw their volunteering as a form of recreation, evidenced by photos depicting the complimentary campsites made available at the Russian River Campground to volunteers from outside the local area.

Many remarked that the free campsites made their efforts seem less like work and more like recreation. Indeed after their shifts they could return to their campsites and engage in the same recreation activities as paying campers. The free campsites also helped many to afford participating in the program, as a 2-week campground stay typically costs about $200. Furthermore the campsite arrangement fostered camaraderie. In instances where their work shifts overlapped some volunteers chose to share a site, which served to strengthen old friendships and develop new ones.

In the case of the free campsites recreation could be concurrent with volunteer activity. In other instances, however, volunteers saw recreational opportunities as rewards for doing their work. Dave provided a photo of him and his wife fishing and remarked that the chance to pursue this pastime was one reason they volunteered. This suggests that although sometimes recreation occurs along with the volunteer activity, at other times volunteering is peripheral to the recreation. Either way, nearly all participants viewed Streamwatch as a chance to do some good while having access to valuable recreational opportunities.

9.4 Implications of the Place-Making Process

The four themes discussed above describe place meanings held by Streamwatch volunteers that emerged jointly from the nature of the experience (program participation) and the setting (the Russian River) in which that experience took place. The program offered an opportunity for the participants to combine a significant place with a special activity (volunteering). Their participation allowed them to create or express place-based identities such as teacher and/or protector while acting as a vehicle for teamwork-based social growth that provided a sense that they were contributing to a greater, place-based good.

These findings reveal two major ways in which Streamwatch volunteers contribute to place-making. First, they directly impact the landscape and facilities through maintenance and restoration work. By building boardwalks, installing fences, removing trash, and so forth, volunteers are giving their energy back to a place that they felt had given much to them—conserving and even (re)creating the area to reflect their ideas about how it is "supposed to be." At its core this is a very direct form of participatory action. While some volunteers change the place through indirect activities such as attending meetings or advocating for management change, the Streamwatch volunteers are engaging in a direct form of public participation for the preservation of the Russian River landscape.

Second, the volunteers interpreted and communicated about the place for both visitors and each other, thus "re-creating" the landscape. In so doing they shared common meanings of playing the role of teachers tasked with spreading the Forest Service message. This shared identity, based on the Streamwatch mission of resource conservation and shoreline protection, is distinct from other place meanings because it emphasizes the activity—and the pride associated with it—more than the place. Nonetheless the Forest Service established Streamwatch to specifically protect an

area of the Russian River, implying that the roles of both the agency and the volunteers encompass more than resource management. Both the Forest Service and the Streamwatch participants serve as place-makers who use the meanings derived from their teaching (and the experiences and behaviors that inform them) to influence public perceptions of the place.

9.5 Lessons for Management and Policy

The Streamwatch program owes its success largely to the hard work, dedication, and enthusiasm of its volunteers. The photographic approach used in the study to evaluate participants' place meanings and their roles in making place offers a useful starting point for natural resource managers and decision-makers to gain perspectives toward improving public outreach to prospective volunteers. What can managers learn from the place-making process? Most significantly the subjects in this research saw volunteering in Streamwatch as fun, as portrayed in their photos and repeated references to their enjoyment of seeing wildlife, socializing with their comrades and the program in general. Thus managers would be wise to focus on opportunities or programs that characterize the volunteer site as a pleasurable place to work. Also, the emergence of volunteers' identities as experts and professionals (fostered by uniforms and training) suggests that managers should continue to provide opportunities for volunteers to emphasize the "official" nature of the work.

Managers could employ a written handbook for recruitment that uses place meanings as a tool for volunteer recruitment, possibly in the form of detailed place descriptions to entice potential volunteers. Such a handbook might include a training manual with a section on developing and sharing place-based information in a teaching style. Managers could also make use of a manual of best practices aimed at the long-term retention of volunteers in specific places. Over time, assessing the usefulness of such materials could help managers gain a better understanding of how activities, place meanings, and social relationships inform the place-making process in which their volunteers engage.

Finally, it is crucial for managers to consider the sources of their volunteers' place meanings and the degree to which they are free to express them. For example, volunteers connect to their activity partly by the orientation, resources, and perspective of the institution they represent. The meanings they hold for the landscape and the act of volunteering are influenced by the official requirements and positions of management agencies such as the Forest Service. Thus, the experiences that contribute to volunteer place meanings are structurally influenced. In this sense volunteers—and the meanings they make—may further manifest agency goals and visions. Their identities as teachers, rather than enforcers, may foster public receptiveness to their efforts.

Sense of place can be a useful avenue for reaching out to the volunteers who have become critical to the future of valued places such as the Russian River. As budgets shrink and services decline it makes sense to work to implement place-based

conservation practices with those who donate time and energy to support recreation spaces and their management. While an elucidation of sense of place has direct implications for management, it can also help volunteers better understand what they do, providing them with a foundation for having repeated, satisfying, and fulfilling volunteer experiences.

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Part III
Representing Place

Chapter 10
Integrating Divergent Representations of Place into Decision Contexts

Damon M. Hall, Susan J. Gilbertz, Cristi C. Horton, and Tarla Rai Peterson

Abstract Places are specific locations within a landscape that humans have bound, ordered, and defined by communication. Conflict arises when groups must reconcile different ways they socially represent a shared place. Because land managers cannot control the spectrum of meaningful representations of a managed site, they need to understand how representations of place connect meaning to culture via practices of everyday life. Based on interviews with stakeholders along the Yellowstone River, the authors compiled a cultural inventory that reveals the connections between place and everyday practices. This led to the development of a conceptual framework for integrating divergent place representations that could support more effective management.

Keywords Cultural inventory • Collective memory • Lived experiences • River representation • Yellowstone

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Environmental conflict arises when divergent representations of a shared resource clash. Representations of place—which act as containers for group identities and interests—become political points of struggle for control over the interpretive framework that directs land use and planning. A shared vocabulary helps groups of people work together (Burke, 1959; Peterson, 1997). When groups share a common vocabulary of terms for representing a place, the managerial decisions for that site are viewed as credible and legitimate.

The social dynamics of group representation of place operate largely independently of managerial control. Nonetheless to be effective managers need to understand how place representation connects meaning and language to culture via the activities of daily life and their consequences. Such an understanding is useful for framing decisions from representations of place offered by local stakeholders.

Place meanings may be used as rich demographic data. They may also be observed in their politically engaged form as representations that struggle for legitimacy in decision-making. Because natural resource management includes managing both material and symbolic (e.g., meanings, images, signs, abstractions, terms, subtexts, etc.; cf. Greider & Garkovich, 1994) landscapes, managers need to understand both. This chapter focuses on the political functions of vernacular representations of place. It presents the cultural inventory as a tool to enable managers to understand how people connect symbolic and material resources as part of their representations of place.

In response to resource management needs, the authors designed and conducted a cultural inventory to discover and document dominant representations of the Yellowstone River (Hall, Gilbertz, Horton, & Peterson, 2012). Landowners, recreationists, civic leaders, and agriculturalists living along the river (representing the major groups of resource users) were interviewed to gain an understanding of how residents individually and collectively represented their place. Analysis of the interview transcripts suggests that attention to localized cultural discourses can provide decision-makers with a useful conceptual framework for integrating divergent place representations into decision-making processes, thus improving resource management.

10.1 Place Meanings and Place Representation

People connect to place in significant and lasting ways that influence their identities, sense of belonging, and rootedness. Natural resource scholars have examined the expression of individual place meanings to account for their significance within planning by discerning landscape valuation in terms beyond, but not mutually exclusive from, economics (Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, & Watson, 1992). Resource users' affective valuations of place meaning—expressed through metrics of attachment, sense of place, place identification, etc. (Patterson & Williams, 2005)—are described as indicators of use-value and behavior.

Although identifying the psychometrics of place meaning is useful, it has limited value for increasing our understanding of communication processes that contribute

to meaning and the political contexts wherein that meaning operates. Here the interest concerns how group practices of representing place impact resource management. Thus the focus is on understanding the communicative process of making meaning for a place, that is, representing place. This chapter argues that understanding how place representation functions in the political realm can improve the ability of decision-makers to understand diverse resource users who have developed divergent and apparently irreconcilable place meanings.

10.2 The Work of Place Representation

Spoken and written communication about place and the names assigned to it influence how people think and act in particular places. Numerous scholars have examined connections between communication and place, from language and place-making (cf. Greider & Garkovich, 1994; Herndl & Brown, 1996; Lefebvre, 1991; Meinig, 1979; Spirn, 1998; Tuan, 1991) to discourse and management (cf. Berdoulay, 1989; Dryzek, 1997; Myerson & Rydin, 1994; Norton, 2005; Stokowski, 2002; Wolf & Klein, 2007). They argue that representations of place in public discourse make sense of complexity, unite disparate persons, anchor collective memory, and give authority to subscribers.

Representation of any sort connects meaning and language to culture via everyday practices. Here "representation" is defined as the generation of meaning through language; that is, the link between concepts and language that encompasses the material world of objects, people, and events, including imaginary ones (Hall, 1997, p. 17). Representations live through communicative practices such as storytelling, which function as sources of explanation, comprehension, thought, meaning, and so forth (Carbaugh & Rudnik, 2006; Entrikin, 1991; Gilbertz, 2002; Stegner, 1992). Stories representing place are convincingly logical, follow a structural and temporal order, and embody implied values. Narratives about place simultaneously structure and express an understanding of the experienced world (Burke, 1969; Lakoff & Johnson, 2003). Thus, identifying particular places by naming and labeling them serves to concurrently construct and communicate the allowable behaviors and appropriate practices within that place (Burke, 1969; Cronon, 1992; de Certeau, 1984). Henri Lefebvre (1991) likens representations of space to street signs that are intended to guide, direct, command, and orchestrate behavior. By naming and framing normative practices appropriate for particular sites, place representation reinforces certain management options while excluding others. The representation of place, then, is a cultural practice whereby people use various modes of communication to establish and adjust legitimate uses of space (Rose, 1994).

Because people depend on communication to enable cooperation in the face of division, they seek a common language to conceptualize, discuss, and manage natural systems (Burke, 1959; Peterson, 1997). Each stakeholder group (e.g., community, governing agency, industry, etc.) develops a set of terms that guides decision-making by framing a notion of the "proper" relationship between humans and the natural world. As such, "language reveals much about a profession, about its preoccupations,

about the social, political, economic, and scientific forces that bear down upon it, and also about its readiness to confront those forces effectively" (Guttenberg, 1993, p. 1). The discourse of conservation, for example, has relied upon technical knowledge to understand and manage the natural environment within institutional, legal, and bureaucratic capacities and frameworks. This traditionally discursive approach may limit options for place-based conservation.

As Sack (2001) puts it, when people represent a place they "bind, order, and define it by communication." This process has both constitutive and instrumental functions. Representing place legitimizes certain cognitive schemes and excludes others. Representations produce what is commonly known about a particular landscape and the range of acceptable activities within its boundaries. They also delineate the basis of a landscape's value. How groups represent place simultaneously defines it in terms of its physical borders; describes its character and utility; and suggests its future, including how it should be managed.

10.3 Place Representation by Flattening Versus Deepening

Edward Casey (2002) argues that representations of place slice up space into pictures that flatten and/or deepen space. Representations that flatten space make sense of complexity by translating landscape's idiosyncrasies into gridlines, contours, and other classifications with the aim of accurate orientation, definition, and utilization. Flattened space is a bounded place displayed in terms generalizable, accessible, calculable, and isometric. It is the realm of abstract space or space as object (Lefebvre, 1991). Space in this form is represented in Euclidian geometry and often conceptualized without the potentially confounding presence of human subjects, which could threaten its objective representation.

An alternative way of representing place is by deepening it to explore the subjective experience, often through artistic or poetic accounts. While flattened representation locates the human subject *above place* to ensure the physically precise replication of reality, a deepened representation of place focuses more on the active participation of the experiencing subject *in place*. Both deep and flat representations of place are social practices, capable of uniting disparate persons, anchoring collective memory, and giving authority to those subscribing to the representation. Conflict arises when groups must reconcile deepened and flattened place representations that differ considerably. Consequently the mundane and seemingly benign social act of representing place can create substantial barriers to managerial success.

10.4 The Yellowstone River Cultural Inventory

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers ("the Corps") regulates riparian corridor activities under the authority of Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act and Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA). Since assuming CWA permitting duties in the mid

1970s, the Corps has processed 156 permits for activities related to bank stabilization along the upper Yellowstone River (Park County, MT). Over two-thirds of the permitted actions occurred during or after 200-year floods in 1996 and 1997 (Auble et al., 2004). The high volume of permit requests prompted a grassroots call for a cumulative impact study on the potential environmental and ecological impacts of these projects.

The subsequent study—which focused on the physical features, biological resources, and the historical floodplain of the Yellowstone River—included maps, inventories, and other organized data. When the Corps decided to include social and cultural dimensions as well, the authors suggested compiling a cultural inventory to augment the study.

10.5 Historical Context

In 1806, the Yellowstone River was the return route taken by Captain William Clark to rendezvous with Meriwether Lewis at the Missouri River confluence for their return trip to Washington D.C. (DeVoto, 1953). A major objective of the famed Lewis and Clark expedition journey was, according to President Jefferson, "to explore the Missouri River and such principal streams of it as by its course…may offer the most direct & practicable water communication across this continent, for the purposes of commerce with Asia" (Woodger & Toropov, 2004, p. 150). Lewis and Clark represented these lands with maps made from survey measurements that isometrically *flattened* the landscape to paper. Their journals provided a *deep* account chronicling the plants and wildlife, indigenous peoples and practices, weather and topography according to lived subjective experience. The expedition reports included the first Euro-American documentation of the Yellowstone River.

The Yellowstone River remains much as it was when Clark traveled its length. It is still the longest undammed river in the United States, offering scenic and recreational amenities attractive to visitors and residents alike. At the same time, considerable change has occurred. Exactly two centuries after Clark's journey down the Yellowstone the authors interviewed 313 riverfront landowners and users along the entire length of the Yellowstone, from the point where it leaves federal jurisdiction in Yellowstone National Park to its confluence with the Missouri River (Gilbertz, Horton, & Hall, 2007). The study divided the river into five geographic sections to ensure appropriate representation of stakeholder interests and to account for geographic differences. To complement the interviews, the authors gathered relevant sociocultural texts; observations, and ephemera, and thematically analyzed all materials (cf. Peterson et al., 1994). The resulting project report encompassed several cross-sectional themes relevant for policy; it used 1,700 unique verbatim quotes from interview participants to provide evidence and explain these themes (Gilbertz et al., 2007). Place representations were identified based on their frequency in the comments, the degree of connectedness between frequent comments, and magnitude of importance within individual interviews and across river sections.

10.6 Inventory of Place Representations

The findings revealed that people who live near and use the Yellowstone River hold myriad place representations of it that clearly reflect meaningful aspects of their lives: occupations, hobbies, relationships with the land, loves and fears, education, expertise, daily activities, river uses, family legacy, etc. Among the local parlance, sayings, and phrases that quietly heap meaning, value, and purpose onto this resource, three representations consistently stood out and each merits detailed consideration.

10.6.1 The Lifeblood of the Valley

Perhaps the most dominant image of the Yellowstone River among agriculturalists, recreationists, civic leaders, and other long-time residents is that of the river as "the lifeblood of the valley," or an essential element in the creation and maintenance of valley life. As one civic leader remarked, "The Yellowstone River is the lifeblood as far as ag and recreation goes [sic]. It is what draws people here. It is the main artery." For this administrator, in the sense of revenue streams, representing the river as "lifeblood" flattens it in economic and legal terms relating it to food crops and other commodities, businesses, and services. One informant noted that the "vast majority of the economy is within the boundaries of that river." The river supplies irrigation water for crops, livestock, and drinking water for humans, serving as a "lifeline" to sustain communities and enable further development. The river as "lifeblood" evokes flat descriptions of biophysical forces. Residents understand that the valley's productive agricultural lands are linked to the dynamic forces of seasonal flooding. The "June rise" ensures the fertility of the fields and the regeneration of bottomland cottonwood forests. The river also provides habitat and nutrients for fish and wildlife and maintains humidity throughout the seasons in the arid landscape. As another informant concluded, "[the river] is the most important thing. It provides water for drinking, flood irrigation, and recreation. It is the lifeblood of our community."

Descriptions of the Yellowstone as the lifeblood of the valley also include deep subjective representations. One agriculturalist compared the river to "… an artery in your body. It is a vital part of this valley. It is the lifeblood of the valley." Local practices also figure significantly in deep representations of the place. Everyday farming operations involved with raising sugar beets, spring wheat, and others irrigated crops are passed down through generations. The rhythms of flood irrigation practices are viewed as part of the lifeblood. Resource users interviewed spoke of opening and closing ditch gates, monitoring furrows to ensure optimal flow, and pulling irrigation boots off and on. They pointed out common sights such as ditch hoes and other field machinery, all operating in rhythm with the river. These practices and mental images are ingrained in community values and

they represent the river as a provider. From this perspective, resource users expressed an ethic of protecting the river, which included preserving water rights for irrigation and recreation.

10.6.2 A Great Playground

Another dominant representation of the river related to the lifeblood metaphor is that of a playground, a place to relax, and a refuge from the stresses of everyday life. In the words of a resident, "There is a lot of river there….It is a great playground." This representation builds on the river's name-sharing with Yellowstone National Park. As one civic leader explained, people have an image of the park even if they have never been there. "I describe it [the Yellowstone River] as an extension of Yellowstone [National Park]. You attach things like the fishing culture, the hiking, the outdoor mountain recreation."

Playground images of the river typically begin with an account of the ideal recreational experience: the enjoyment of solitude, wildlife, peace, rest, natural beauty, or encountering the wild.

> I've always gravitated towards it because it's always relaxed me….The fog comes up off the water….The sun pops up and your line is singing out there and you look down and see the little crystals on it, then I see a herd of elk crossing a couple hundred yards from me. (Angler)

Many see river recreation as a way to regain their sense of well-being, whether through fly-fishing the cold waters or bait-fishing the warm waters; hunting deer, waterfowl, pheasants, wild asparagus, mushrooms, or agates; hiking, bird-watching, boating, inner-tubing, or swimming; or just sitting and watching the water. Recreationists as well as agriculturalists, civic managers, and landowners frequently used the playground metaphor.

The deep representation of felt experience when fly-fishing, hunting, boating, etc. is thoroughly intertwined with flattening representation, as the Yellowstone River becomes an object of business and a legal arena of recreational permitting and licensing, bag limits, waterfowl habitat designations, and state laws governing stream access. Flattened representations depict the river as a producer of revenue for outfitters, guides, private landowners, fishing shops, hotels, and restaurants. This allows calculable financial valuations of the river's recreational assets at specific points along its length. The salience of the playground metaphor drives riverfront development and the local real estate industry. The gridlines and contours that flatten this place include motorboat restrictions, development of public access points, state investments in the management of fisheries, and map-making for boating and angling.

The economic motif of the playground metaphor is most visible near the northern entrance of Yellowstone National Park, where post cards, calendars, brochures, and other items depicting the Yellowstone as a sublimely wild river are sold. Resource users associate the river with Yellowstone National Park, and materials advertising

the Park as a tourist destination reinforce the playground place representation for the Yellowstone.

Norman Maclean's book *A River Runs Through It* (1976) and the 1992 film version of it reinforce this deep representation of the river as a place of play. Although the story was about the Big Blackfoot River, the movie was filmed in Paradise Valley on the Yellowstone River. One result of what some locals disdainfully call "The Movie," was that fly-fishers flocked to the Yellowstone River in hordes. Leighton (1998) describes this phenomenon as a "battalion of outfitters, guides, and other full- and part-time trout bums" eager to exploit the region's resources in the "final Gold Rush," (p. 46). Participants attributed the movie-reinforced representation of the river as playground as influential on home-site preferences and impacted property values.

10.6.3 A National Treasure

The unique status of the Yellowstone River as the longest undammed river in the country contributes to its representation as a national treasure and to notions of its wildness. Informants said that this characteristic enhances the quality of experience on the river for users and the quality of life for residents. Indeed *National Geographic Magazine* labeled the Yellowstone River as "the last best river" (Chapple, 1997), borrowing from a Montana state tourism campaign that promoted the state as "the last best place." Local residents from across the political spectrum are especially protective of "their" river. Such sentiments date back (at least) to the 1958 proposal to build the Allen Spur Dam, which locals viewed as threatening to both natural resources and private property rights. Interviewees for the cultural inventory used the idea of the river as a unique national treasure to explain why most attempts to control the river were inappropriate:

> You don't want to dam this river. This is one of the—THE—last wild rivers in Montana, and it may be the last wild river in the nation. There is no dam on the Yellowstone, and we really don't want a dam on the Yellowstone. (Recreationist)

As with any national treasure, the Yellowstone River was often represented as needing protection, as articulated here:

> I guess living next to the Yellowstone, you get such a loyalty to it. It is something that has to be protected and you can't give it away…It just got into a real almost a spiritual thing—when you live next door to it, it becomes something bigger than property rights and that sort of thing. (Resident)

Many informants similarly expressed a sense of responsibility or duty to safeguard the river. In the words of one recreationist, "To alter [the river] or to change that in any way would be a national loss, a national tragedy…this is our national heritage." By representing the river as a national treasure, informants elevated the importance of protecting it as a rare remnant of the truly wild in nature. Residents often spoke about how "lucky" and "privileged" they felt to live along the river, noting that so many other rivers in the country are dammed.

These deep representations of place interact across stakeholder categories, uniting streamside residents, agriculturalists, and recreationists in appreciation for this place. Some commenters demonstrated the feeling that the river fostered awareness of their interconnectedness with the natural world:

> It is a national treasure. It is at the river that I best understand my role as a human being on this planet. I am part of nature too, as you are, and we all are. When you stand by the river you have a tendency to realize that. (Recreationist)

The national treasure metaphor also allows flat representations. In this case, the discussion swirls around cost-benefit assessments of water storage, flood protection, and potential for electrical power generation. The river's relatively free-flowing status also makes it vulnerable to flattened images that devalue many of the felt experiences described above. Subjective descriptions of the river's "spirituality," for example, are of little use if the river's value is predicated solely on the dollar value of its use for irrigation or the dollar cost for flood prevention. Whether described as the lifeblood of the valley, an incredible playground, or a national treasure, the Yellowstone River emerged as a place with distinctive deepened and flattened characteristics that offer clues for conservation decision-making.

10.7 Conflicting Place Representations in the Public Realm

Different representative images of the same place can clash. The battleground is in public conversation where each seeks to reframe the place to create 'proper' ways of thinking about access rights, management authority, the quality and quantity of the resource, and legitimate uses of it. Opposing representations of place are "meeting points of tremendous pressures coming from rival word-users, each of whom would like to appropriate the word for his [sic] own purposes" (Guttenberg, 1993, p. 6). Such disparate perspectives of a site and the coordination of competing interests are often referred to as the *politics of place* (cf. Cheng, Kruger, & Daniels, 2003; Jackson, 1987; Kemmis, 1990; Norton, 2005; Norton & Hannon, 1997; Yung, Friemund, & Belsky, 2003).

Past management initiatives for the Yellowstone River illustrate this clash and resonate in contemporary accounts of river users. In 1958, a state delegation led by U.S. Senator James E. Murray (Montana) and the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation (BLM) proposed damming the Yellowstone River at Paradise Valley to provide water storage and hydropower (Nolt, 2007). Based on the BLM's flattened representation of the place, the valley was an ideal dam site (Wheelwright, 1978). The 380-ft tall Allen Spur Dam was to house a 250-MW power plant and a 30-mile reservoir covering 20,000 acres (Nolt). A grassroots campaign soon emerged to offer an alternative deep representation of the river as a site of meaningful experiences important to Montanans. By 1963, the Park County Commissioners, Rod and Gun Club, and Farm Bureau had joined to oppose the dam, citing concerns over the projected losses of farmland and fish and wildlife habitat (Nolt). In the face of organized local opposition, interest in the proposed dam subsided until the energy crisis of the 1970s,

when it resurfaced as bountiful source of water for developing the nearby Fort Union coalfields.

Fishermen opposed the second attempt to dam the river in the early 1970s on the grounds that it would have flooded trout spawning creeks, impacting the endangered Yellowstone cutthroat trout and threatening the river's best trout fishery. In contesting the dam, their public strategy was to represent the river as a blue-ribbon fly-fishing destination and an ideal location for riverfront vacation homes, with the expressed intention of attracting wealthy fishing enthusiasts to move to the valley. They reasoned that populating the valley with expensive vacation homes would increase the BLM's project costs for necessary regulatory "takings," thereby skewing cost-benefit calculations for siting the dam in the valley.

The fly-fishing community of Paradise Valley and multiple Greater Yellowstone advocacy organizations, together with other recreational users and agriculturalists, harnessed the symbolic prowess of "Yellowstone" to save the river and its natural amenities. Dam opponents also used the media coverage of the controversy and brought visitors to Paradise Valley, the bed of the proposed reservoir. A 1978 *Life* article titled "Great River in Crisis" told the story of the proposed dam as a demand for a "30-mile long storage tank." It described the threats to the undammed wonderland alongside full-page aerial color photos of local mountain scenery and quotes from a "ruddy-faced Montana cowboy with tears in his eyes" (Wheelwright, 1978). The campaign worked. During initial stages of the Bureau's planning, regional and national outcry—including the sentiments of the influx of recreation-oriented homeowners—surged and ultimately the project was abandoned.

Today Paradise Valley's strong constituency of recreation-oriented, preservationist residents—old-timers as well as vacation homeowners—oppose further consideration of the Allen Spur Dam. However, the fly-fishing experience has changed. Some describe fishing the valley stretch of the river as "floating through a subdivision." Others no longer fish that reach of the river because of the loss of wild attributes. Furthermore, annual flooding and the close proximity of new residents' homes have led to the installation of large boulders (rip-rap) that affect water flow in the river channel. One of the leaders in the campaign that capitalized on the river as a playground commented that although he was happy to have saved the river, the campaign's success had backfired. Along with other advocates he lamented that their representation of place had contributed to "loving the river to death" and damaged the ecological amenities that they had sought to protect.

As in this example, representations of place regularly "intervene in" and "modify spatial textures" according to a truth-teller's interests (Lefebvre, 1991, p. 42). Participants in the advocacy campaign in opposition to the dam recognized that controlling the dominant representations of place was one means of influencing decision-making. And indeed their representation of Paradise Valley affected agency behavior, interpretive frames, and decision-making. But their successful struggle to shape acceptable uses for the river, so as to exclude the dam, had the unforeseen consequence of spurring momentum for riverfront development.

10.8 Enhancing Decisions by Reconciling Competing Representations of Place

Like measures to stabilize banks along a wild river, words and images armor the boundaries of place. Different interest groups advance representations of place that favor certain knowledge they believe will stabilize or extend their advantage over other interests (Cheng et al., 2003; Kemmis, 1990). Any representation, for example, deflects opposing worldviews to protect the preferred image of a place. As riverfront landowners and agriculturalists on the undammed Yellowstone River know, all bank stabilization efforts are temporary and require frequent repairs, perhaps even redesign. Likewise, decision-makers must frequently revise management approaches in light of shifting place representations.

Through the process of interviewing Yellowstone River stakeholders, listening to their stories, learning about their everyday lives on the river, and participating in their events, a kaleidoscope of images and descriptions emerged. They were strikingly diverse and yet threaded together by the materiality of the natural system, the legal status of the river as a shared resource, and vernacular phrases that resonated throughout the community. In describing their place along the river, each informant articulated a unique image based on their lived experiences of the river. Responses displayed how participants perceived the riparian areas, formed their views on flooding and bank stabilization, and articulated their interests and desires for future management. Using names ranging from "monster" to "prom queen," informants represented the Yellowstone River as a meaningful resource in their lives.

While data collection for the inventory was organized around interest groups and geographic segments of the river, many of the place representations that emerged cut across locations and stakeholder categories. This demonstrated one strength of analyzing how place enters everyday discourse via representation that is potentially useful for decision-makers. The authors chose to emphasize conceptual representations of place rather than orient to classifications, typologies, or categorizations of individual informants. This emphasis allowed for a better understanding of the complex processes by which people conceive, experience, and reconcile place when confronted by multiple overlapping representations. Focusing on the multiplicity of perspectives about the place rather than on the informant may enable decision makers to deemphasize entrenched positions and identity based politics.

By shifting attention from personalized meanings of place to the ways in which discourse actively represents place, the cultural inventory offers a means to identify the shared meanings expressed by interest groups via representations of place. This redirection towards the representation of place as both deepened and flattened space suggests opportunities for advisors, planners and decision-makers to explicitly incorporate multiple meanings, effects, and outcomes into their decision calculus. By taking a dynamic view of place representation, decision-makers may become more conscious of the potential impacts of seemingly benign acts of place representation and strategic reframing. Awareness of the dynamism of place representation

may enhance opportunities for managers and the public to collaborate in producing legitimate knowledge about shared places via shared vocabularies.

Managing natural resources necessarily includes managing symbolic resources—the diverse set of salient images, terms, phrases, and symbols used to represent a shared natural resource. A particularly precarious and daunting task that decision-makers must perform within the politics of place is the coordination and management of legitimate information. Classifying and naming places is essential for planning and management, but it is also complicated because shared places are discussed and constructed by many parties voicing diverse perspectives in planning processes. Each voiced representation is accompanied by a mixture of diverse perspectives including disciplinary scientific lenses, bureaucratic viewpoints, and a multi-generational heritage of lived experiences. The challenge for decision-makers in reconciling different place representations is rhetorical. Besides attending to the consequences of physical actions on managed lands, managers must also deal with associated symbolic actions. Managing natural resource sites requires gathering and disaggregating deep representations of place to be integrated into flattened managerial frameworks and administrative policies. To understand the role of these representations in decision-making and knowledge formation, managers can ask questions such as: What are the dominant representations of this managed place? What are the origins and assumptions of each? How do shared place meanings enter decision-making? Which representations clash? What effects do place representations have upon planning scenarios and why? What are the potential consequences of publicly approving or rejecting different representations? How can place representations be reconciled in a way that leverages perspectives of place to inform the common management objectives for a site?

By carefully reflecting on representations of place, managers can better understand stakeholders' beliefs, rationales underlying various viewpoints, and arguments. Considering representations of place may reveal potential unintended consequences of an adopted representation or alternative. Managers may become aware of power dynamics, calling attention to political strategies within representations that oversimplify, omit, or distract from productive planning. Vocabularies used by managers to discuss place representation should be inclusive of and respectful to local meanings. Members of the local community are valuable allies for implementing resource decisions. Understanding and explicitly including the interests of those involved, and then communicating to landowners and residents using local terminology may mitigate the off-putting scientific jargon.

To effectively incorporate place representation into deliberation, decision-makers must understand decision making as a participatory process of social construction that both flattens and deepens space. These elements range from the abiotic, biotic, and social factors of a flattened representation, to visions for the future of that place and its users that exemplify deep representations. The perpetual challenge lies in fashioning an appropriately blended conceptualization of a place useful for creating and enacting locally salient policies. Flat representations run the risk of oversimplifying and abstracting to the point that they ignore political realities or neglect the health of the resource (cf. Peterson, Hall, Feldspausch, & Peterson, 2010).

And deep representations of place may become so over-personalized that they are limited to the needs of powerful interest groups omitting and obscuring important ecological functions.

With these cautions in mind, an analysis of place representation can inform decision-making in important ways and even offer resource professionals an inventive or liberating dimension. Because place is socially constructed, it can be socially reconstructed. From this perspective, natural resource planning and decision-making can be viewed as practices of creating legitimate discourses that guide place users. When the discourses of place representation entrenches widely disparate positions and forces people to choose sides, decision-makers can remind participants that there is only one material place to share, a single common ground. Managers can use existing place representations as a basis for composing representations that promote fresh ways of viewing shared common ground.

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Chapter 11
Sharing Stories of Place to Foster Social Learning

William P. Stewart, Troy D. Glover, and James R. Barkley

Abstract Sharing stories about places reveals the emotions of stakeholders and facilitates dialogue that promotes social learning beneficial to land-use planning. There are several entrenched forces in society that prevent planning from treating environments as places. "Learning circles" are one strategy to overcome these forces and lay a foundational dialogue for place-based conservation. The authors applied this approach in three cases and evaluated its effectiveness in: (1) valuing stakeholders' emotional expression; (2) allowing participants to feel safe in sharing their place stories; and (3) recognizing that sharing place meanings can help create new public values for a landscape.

Keywords Public involvement • Civic discovery • Crisis of representation • Preplanning • Stakeholder emotions

Research on place underscores a need for social learning. It also recognizes complexity in place meanings (Manzo, 2005), the potential for conflict among stakeholders (Measham & Baker, 2005), and the need to create new public values for places

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(Kruger & Shannon, 2000; Schusler, Decker, & Pfeffer, 2003). The implications of place research often point to the benefits of planning processes that include dialogue in which stakeholders can share their place meanings, values, and emotions. Over the past few decades land-use planning has shifted toward such dialogic processes (Daniels & Walker, 2001). However not all public discussions for land-use planning are conducive to social learning or lead to constructive dialogue (Parson & Clark, 1995; Sarewitz, 2004). Many forums are framed by agencies as opportunities for public expression of viewpoints and participation in planning processes (Germain, Floyd, & Stehman, 2001). Rather than generating decisions through learning processes that involves exchanges between multiple parties, these events frequently result in stakeholders confirming their personal understandings of the issues and reinforcing stereotypes of each other (Blahna & Yonts-Shepard, 1989; Gramling & Freudenburg, 1994; Keen, Brown, & Dyball, 2005). While previous researchers have explored strategies for social learning in the context of land-use planning, additional efforts are needed to directly link social learning to sharing meanings and emotions of place (Friedman, 1984; Stokowski, 2008).

This chapter is concerned with advancing social learning about place before the initiation of a formal planning process. Such a pre-planning phase would have two aims: (1) to lay the foundation for an appreciative dialogue about place, detached from technical issues of planning (i.e., Where to put roads? What size habitat is necessary?); and (2) to build a base for positive relationships among stakeholders. Planning often begins in negative ways by focusing on identifying problems, scoping the issues, and inviting reactions to a preferred alternative (Germain et al., 2001), thereby opening the door to conflict and opposition from its inception. In contrast, prefacing the planning process with a social learning phase sets a different tone, which can be especially helpful when multiple values and place meanings appear potentially incompatible and when agency staff want to build relationships with (and among) stakeholders (Schusler et al., 2003). The crux of social learning involves simple acts of individuals publicly representing their sense of place and listening to each other (Parson & Clark, 1995), thereby developing dialogue that creates new public values to understand the issues at hand (Keen et al., 2005). The purpose of such an exercise is not to reach consensus or resolve differences but rather to foster an understanding of multiple place meanings and open opportunities for new ones to emerge. Traditionally planning processes have not included this type of dialogue yet it is vital for the effective implementation of conservation decisions (Blahna & Yonts-Shepard, 1989).

Stories about place connect people to their environments. The sense of time developed in such narratives is critical to understanding people-place relationships (Cronon, 1992), which are best represented through stories of one's lived experience (Stewart, 2008). Story-telling is a natural way for organizing experiences, emotions, and values into meaningful wholes, and researchers have suggested that strategies encouraging this process could facilitate land-use planning (Fine, 2002; Kruger & Shannon, 2000; Richardson, 1990).

This chapter argues that place-based conservation requires social learning, which centers on the recognition of environments as places to which people form emotional

attachments (Chap. 2). Beginning with the identification of major challenges in place-based conservation, the authors offer a strategy for social learning that aims to address these challenges in three different contexts.

11.1 Emotions About Place

One goal of sharing place stories and the emotions associated with them is to provide a positive starting point for planning. Some researchers discuss place-based emotions as an important part of land-use decision-making (Kennedy & Vining, 2007), but others cast emotions as irrational, unscientific, hard to understand, and ultimately irrelevant to planning (Davidson-Hunt & O'Flaherty, 2007). Consequently the expression of emotions in public decision-making contexts often is not formally anticipated, or is perceived as negative (e.g., anger, frustration, sadness) or counterproductive to dialogue. Thus planning processes generally avoid including emotional representation and, in doing so, neglect the knowledge that comes from this public expression. Social learning through the sharing of place meanings is a strategy designed to introduce emotions as important knowledge for planning. Sharing stories about place uniquely explains a person or community and their relationships to an environment (Patterson, Grenny, McMillan, & Switzler, 2002, pp. 98–101).

Sense of place refers to people's relationships with environments, and place attachment connotes the emotions linked to such relationships (Chap. 1). Considerable research on place attachment has assessed the strength of the attachment rather than the emotion behind it (Bricker & Kerstetter, 2000; Stedman, 2003). Social learning about place recognizes the critical importance of emotions in place relationships and allows unique, face-to-face representations of place attachment. People understand emotions best when they are shown rather than told. A *telling* of emotions is a summary or some other abstracted representation of someone's felt emotions, in which the listener receives the information but is not changed by it. For example, a social scientist reports on the emotions recounted by participants in his/her study (Denzin, 1985). In contrast, a *showing* of emotions is to experience the emotion at the time of representation. In contrast to a telling of emotions, audiences who witness a showing of emotions feel the impact of the emotion and are changed by it (Denzin, 2001). The traditional role for social scientists dictates that they represent the telling of emotions, provide summary statistics, and ostensibly characterize their subjects in an objective manner. Most social scientists generally do not encourage the showing of emotions as part of their research, nor are they comfortable in roles where they participate and become emotionally influenced by their subjects. Thus facilitating the sharing of place-related stories and emotions among stakeholders requires social scientists and planners to expand their traditional roles (Chaps. 7 and 8).

Social learning occurs when witnessing a showing of emotions and its influence on immediate experience. In his work on social learning, Walkerden (2005) refers to the resulting change in the listener's experience as "felt knowledge." Positing that it originates from felt meaning, it is an essential foundation to work through

complex situations requiring collaboration and innovation (pp. 175–180; Gendlin, 1997; Chap. 6). Walkerden argues that Western traditions have privileged logical reasoning at the expense of feeling, intuition, and personal experience. He suggests that felt meaning is about "making sense together—embracing learning within a social context, and specifically embracing dialogue" (p. 179). He also claims that by detaching from fundamentally logical and professional ways of knowing, people can open up to new ways of referencing knowledge and exploring felt meanings with one another (Chap. 6). For Walkerden, planning processes historically have been dominated by technical rationality and need to allow space for the expression of felt meanings in public dialogue. In a similar fashion place-based conservation frames felt meanings and emotions as fundamental starting points for decision-making processes.

11.2 Public Dialogue About Place

A dialogue is an interaction that extends beyond simple conversation about individual perspectives. In advocating the need for new strategies of public involvement, Ison (2005) claims that a dialogue is about thinking together. Unlike a debate it offers the opportunity for participants to represent their perspectives and jointly create new meanings (Bohm, 1996; see also Bitzer, 1968; Stokowski, 2002). Through the mutual back-and-forth of dialogue people articulate their thoughts and clarify, challenge, support, and/or criticize ideas arising among participants. Often a speaker's words fail to accurately represent her/his intentions and what listeners hear may also contrast with a speaker's intentions. However if the dialogue is structured appropriately such disparities are reconciled through the meaningful exchange of ideas, and something new emerges that connects the various viewpoints. Stated differently, a dialogue is not simply representing one's view to make known information to the person. A dialogue is about two or more people making something new together. Such a process transcends the outcomes of traditional forums for public involvement that typically frame differences between stakeholders in adversarial ways.

Creating dialogic forums about place provides a promising starting point for planning. Fisher and Ury (1981, pp. 41–57) argue that public dialogue should facilitate a focus on stakeholders representing their motives and values rather than promoting their political positions. By viewing dialogue as a "free flow of meaning" among people, Patterson et al. (2002) develop strategies to "expand the pool of shared meanings" (pp. 21–25). Through expression in dialogue participants' personal meanings become shared meanings, and as the pool of shared meaning grows, so too does a group's synergy and ability to make decisions for themselves. Patterson et al. recognize the difficulties of building "a group's IQ," claiming that building cohesiveness requires "develop[ing] the tools that make it safe for us to….come to a shared pool of meaning" (p. 25). They understand that successful public dialogue demands conditions that allow participants to share stories in ways that freely express thoughts, meanings, and emotions.

Gratton and Ghoshal (2002) argue that the quality of dialogue lies at the heart of any strategy for improving organizational creativity and a group's dynamics of working together. They recognize the "denial" of emotions in workplace discourse and the privileged position of technical rationality in traditional planning (p. 214). They found that the most successful organizations enable explicit representation of emotions in decision-making dialogue, which promotes creativity and fosters stronger working relationships. Therefore they recommend that organizations cultivate conditions that encourage emotional expression to enhance the capacity to make good decisions.

11.3 Social Learning About Place

Social learning engages people to share their perspectives, develop a common framework, and value their collective experience as a basis for action (Keen et al., 2005; Korten, 1981). Daniels and Walker (2001, pp. 4–8) note that land managers are well-positioned to initiate social learning processes. Social learning is an essential first step toward an understanding of environments as places (Measham & Baker, 2005; Williams & Stewart, 1998) and the formation of new public values to address the increasing complexity of environmental decision-making (Reich, 1985; Yankelovich, 1991).

To assert that environments are places may seem like a platitude; people generally take for granted the places in their lives and most understand that environments are linked to a sense of place. Yet entrenched forces that run counter to this notion often prevent planning from treating environments as places. First, science—which focuses on generalizable knowledge and universal truths—occupies a long-standing, privileged status in environmental decision-making (Allen & Gould, 1986; Fischer, 2000; Irwin, 1995; Yaffee, 1994). Viewing an environment as an exemplar of certain scientific facts invites comparison with other similar environments and de-emphasizes the uniqueness of any given one. Sarewitz (2004) argues that scientific knowledge has traditionally held a central role in environmental controversies because of a "shared view of science as a disinterested force that could guide political decision-making by providing appropriate facts—so long as it was kept separate from politics" (p. 388). He observes that scientific facts are not detached from human values, even though people on all sides of controversies validate their value preferences based upon the same body of facts (p. 397). He suggests that because environmental values and place meanings are largely unacknowledged in most planning processes, environmental issues become overly "scientized." Sarewitz claims that, ironically, scientific narratives have become the primary means by which values surface within environmental controversies.

Another obstacle that hinders planning from treating environments as places is the influence of culture and the policy-making history of land management agencies. From mission statements to on-the-ground policy implementation, these forces understandably push for consistency and alignment with precedence rather than consideration of

the uniqueness of locale or exception to a rule (Twight, 1983; Vining & Ebreo, 1991). The significance of cultural and professional bias in agencies has spawned a literature stream exploring their impacts on decision-making (Clarke & McCool, 1996; Foresta, 1984; Jasanoff, 1990; Priscoli & Wolf, 2009) and their tendency to work against the recognition of environments as places by framing localized meanings as policy challenges.

Furthermore decision-making within land-management agencies involves a range of stakeholders, many of whom learn to work the system in their best interests and gain favorable outcomes (Yaffee, 1994). To varying degrees interest groups and stakeholders use scientific expertise and agency policy precedents to argue their positions and frame their cases (Sarewitz, 2004). In doing this, stakeholders treat environments as battlegrounds for national ideological conflicts while neglecting the representation of their own place meanings (Chap. 7; Gottlieb, 1993; Nie, 2003).

In short, while it is easy to claim that environments are places, in the practice of decision-making there is unwitting resistance to this claim. Thus a significant portion of stakeholders have learned to work together in ways that avoid seeing environments as places. Viewing environments as places involves recognizing that people and communities are parts of those environments. Place stories reflect this understanding, and while a story ostensibly centers on a specific environment it also reveals much about the storyteller. Western society generally views aboriginal people as being intimately tied to their land and holding deep-seated place meanings. Measham and Baker (2005) counter these ideas, arguing that all cultures believe "wisdom sits in places" whether they know it or not (a reference to Basso's work with Apache Indians, 1996). They urge planners to prioritize the representation of place meanings as central to environmental decision-making (Measham & Baker, pp. 96–101). At the crux of place-based conservation is a dialogue process that engages stakeholders to learn about each other's place meanings (Keen et al., 2005, pp. 6–18).

The above discussion points to the need for strategies to foster social learning in conservation planning practices. To provide conditions conducive to social learning planners need to structure stakeholder forums in ways that: (1) allow participants to feel comfortable sharing stories about place; (2) value emotional expression; and (3) recognize that sharing place meanings creates new public values for a landscape. Fortunately with the progress of environmental decision-making in the past few decades, promising planning strategies exist for addressing these challenges (Davidson-Hunt & O'Flaherty, 2007; Ison, 2005; Schusler et al., 2003; Walkerden, 2005).

The remainder of this chapter describes one such strategy developed and applied in conservation planning contexts at three sites: Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie (located near Chicago, Illinois, and administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture); Grand Canyon National Park (a World Heritage Site administered by the National Park Service in northwestern Arizona); and the municipal Urbana Park District (associated with a mid-sized urban area in central Illinois). Studies involving the authors used a photo elicitation technique to engage stakeholders at these places in a two-phase process, starting with reflection on a personal sense of place,

followed by sharing place stories in a forum called a learning circle. An overview of the methods is presented here (for further background see Glover, Stewart, & Gladdys, 2008; Stewart, Barkley, Kerins, Gladdys, & Glover, 2007; Stewart, Larkin, & Liebert, 2003).

11.4 Eliciting Stories About Place

All three sites were either in an initial stage of planning or had not yet formally embarked on a planning process. Study participants included citizen-stakeholders—recruited based on participation in agency-sponsored public events or previous participation in land-use planning processes—representatives from various interest groups, and agency personnel. The number of participants varied from 15 to 25 between the three locations. Each participant received a disposable camera with instructions to take pictures around the study sites featuring places important to them.

The researchers used the participants' photographs to facilitate conversations that elicited place meanings and landscape values through the telling of lived experiences. This process, referred to as an auto-driven photo elicitation conversation (APEC), works particularly well for research that requires a telling of deep-seated personal experience due to its capacity to equalize power between researcher and participant, which distinguishes it from traditional social science techniques. In the APEC the researcher prompts the participant to discuss the significance of places photographed, but mostly maintains a listening mode, allowing the participant to come to an understanding of their place meanings. From the APEC and the follow-up with researchers regarding review of transcripts and modifications to their narratives about places, stakeholders deliberated with their own set of place meanings.

11.5 Learning Circles

The second phase of the process was a kind of group APEC, referred to as a "learning circle." In preparation for this, stakeholders were asked to identify two or three photographs to aid them in sharing their place meanings. The photos were projected onto a screen during their presentation. Discussions were tape-recorded and transcribed to allow for a review of the dialogue. Finally, stakeholders were asked to reflect on the discussion and record their reactions in writing during the learning circles.

11.5.1 Feeling Safe Sharing Stories About Place

The learning circles, coupled with use of stakeholders' photographs, directed attention on places not people. Stakeholders viewed each other's pictures and considered

place meanings rather than focusing on the presenter. With an emphasis in learning circle dialogue on the environment rather than individuals, people were likely to feel safe and comfortable sharing their stories of place. Indicative of this focus on places stakeholders often introduced themselves in reference to their place meanings. For example, some participants explained their reasons for residing or visiting certain places; others described their personal environmental history as if to provide a foundation for their current stories of place. These meanings often connected with deeply held values about their family history, such as an appreciation for parents and grandparents, a sense of national identity and cultural pride, or a personal or family-based land ethic.

Aided by images of places projected onto a screen stakeholders' stories described their connections with places, exemplifying the concepts of "place identity" and "topophilia," which posits that people construct deep personal relationships with environments (Chap. 1). Because of the perception that these discussions were about places rather than the storytellers, the conversations about place meanings unfolded with ease.

As part of the strategy to deflect attention away from individuals and toward places the truth-claims of stories were not subject to debate or questioning. Because each stakeholder had followed the same process of taking photographs and having conversations about the importance of their places, the stories and visual images were received as genuine, and the task of sharing stories became familiar and comfortable. For example, one stakeholder reflected, "I really don't like public speaking, but talking about something I know about and love helps me to become a better speaker." Another wrote that "Sharing memories of places is as good as any ice breaker." The transcripts from the learning circles and final written reflections of the participants suggested that stakeholders felt safe and comfortable sharing their place stories, and no one questioned the accuracy of the stories, credibility of the speakers, or genuineness of emotions.

11.5.2 Building Contexts to Represent Emotional Attachment to Place

The descriptions of special places often unfolded in the context of personal history, which fostered a re-living of experiences. The use of photographs served as a powerful prompt for reflecting on place meanings and building a social context for revealing emotional attachments to place. With the audience focused on a visual image of the place, a showing of emotions came naturally to most speakers.

The photographs also were instrumental in creating a shared memory that fostered empathy for speakers. From feelings expressed in a story, visual images took on emotional significance and became shared symbols that brought the group into the speaker's emotional sphere (Harper, 2000). This led to an atmosphere of mutual caring within the circle, even though implicit differences in political agendas existed between participants. In the learning circles at all three sites there were instances of silence as

speakers and participants choked up or held back tears. At times spontaneous smiles and collective curiosity arose as speakers described their place histories. The emotions that surfaced (particularly those that evoked tears) were generally associated with family connections to place and the potential for their disruption. When memories of one's ancestors or expectations for one's children were shared the emotional attachments were palpable.

It was evident that stakeholders did not plan to show emotions or become involved with each other as part of their expectations for the learning circles. The emotions were spontaneous and authentic, and the collective empathy sincere. The shared emotions created an intimacy and established a basis for trust among stakeholders that traditional planning processes cannot replicate. As one stakeholder wrote, "[I] learned we all have the same values…[even though] a lot of the pictures were different…[the learning circle] seemed to bring us together as a group."

11.5.3 Creating New Public Values for Place

Several storytellers recounted the history of a place to help explain its current state of conditions. Often the intent of such stories was to communicate the speaker's interpretation of the landscape and enhance the ability of listeners to see it similarly. By telling place histories to others, stakeholders shared their own rationales for ways in which a place came into being. Conversations around place histories often led to perceptions that enriched place meanings in light of current conditions, so that individual viewpoints were woven into a more complex and multi-layered place history. Such exchanges were invariably perceived as adding value to the overall discussion, in contrast to other stakeholder forums where participants sometimes become adversarial about their "truth."

Stakeholders' written reflections about the learning circles indicated that new meanings were created for several places. One participant wrote, "It was neat to hear about other people's perceptions and histories. This has helped me to see some of the places differently." Another noted, "The next time I go to [a specific wooded area], I will think of Frances [name changed] and her sisters collecting walnuts with her grandmother. I didn't even know there were walnut trees growing there." The personalized contexts of the stories were easily understood by participants, such that several reported that they will "see some of the places differently."

It was clear from agency personnel included in the learning circles that they and their peers hold a diverse set of stories rather than embrace a singular sense of place. Public perceptions during traditional planning processes may stereotype agencies and their staff into a monolithic and faceless entity (i.e., *the* Park Service or *the* Forest Service), failing to understand the complexity of agency decision-making (Freudenburg & Gramling, 1994). For example, agency stakeholders from the Grand Canyon spoke about the toils of constructing trails, appreciation for sublime nature, teaching student groups about natural history, and patriotic meanings of a landscape. Listening to such experiences and learning the place meanings of agency participants allowed the other stakeholders to view the agency and its staff in a different light

(Schusler et al., 2003). An important part of creating new public values for a place is for stakeholders to see each other from new perspectives.

Within the learning circles differences between place meanings were generally non-threatening and easy to understand. Dialogue about commonalities and differences seemed to progress without the anxiety and tension typical of traditional forums such as public hearings or planning workshops. This atmosphere was highly conducive to social learning, as exemplified by a stakeholder who wrote, "I learned that I am more of preservationist than I ever realized….and that thinking about the future as well as the past is very important to me."

In another example, agency staff at Midewin learned about stakeholder goals for ecological restoration. While agency directives generally focused on restoring an historic prairie landscape devoid of any signs of human development, stakeholders appreciated place meanings of a contemporary prairie that included vestiges of the various eras of human presence there. By broadening the vision for ecological restoration, participants shared and took ownership in a new public value for the prairie (Stewart et al., 2003, 2007). The dialogue about Midewin place meanings allowed stakeholders to discover each other and shape new, shared values for their place.

11.6 Conclusion

A first step in place-based conservation is to recognize that people often need assistance in knowing their own place meanings. The effectiveness of learning circles lies in their capacity to frame environments as places. All stakeholders in the learning circles described here became more aware of their place meanings. Western culture does not encourage individuals to reflect on their sense of place, nor does it support collective deliberation about a community's sense of place. The photo elicitation technique legitimized environments as places. In the learning circles stakeholders became comfortable sharing their place meanings and learning about others. Dialogue centered on place meanings—such as that facilitated by learning circles—can serve as a focused starting point for place-based conservation.

The learning circles shifted dialogue from stakeholder-planner to stakeholder-stakeholder relationships, where agency staff members were part of the mix of participants. Such a shift has many consequences that hold promise for innovative discussion to support new pubic values for place, including creating a safe and comfortable space for sharing stories and emotional attachments of place. The dialogue of the learning circles was about sharing with fellow stakeholders not about speaking to authority. Because the format of the learning circles felt safe emotions emerged and participants were open to learning about place meanings.

Public speaking was noticeably easy for participants, in part because they talked about their places not themselves. Thus participants were able to view differences in terms of alternate ways to care about a place, and interpersonal differences that could have led to tension were neutralized. Values for landscapes were expressed as part of one's lived experience of place, including the teaching of landscape history,

rather than manifesting as an ideological or adversarial relationship. The learning circles underscored the extent to which all stakeholders cared deeply about their places. The widespread feeling of caring for environments created a collective appreciation for multiple ways to value them as reflected in the openness of conversations that explored compatibility between place histories.

Learning circles function to create a positive dialogue among stakeholders prior to beginning the formal steps of a planning process. Germain et al. (2001) propose that stakeholders should be engaged early in any planning process in order to grant them a stake in the outcome rather than simply reacting to a proposed action. They recommend the development of a "pre-NEPA [National Environmental Policy Act]" public involvement strategy that allows stakeholders to be proactive in planning. Although Germain et al. focus on procedural issues, they suggest that a structured stakeholder dialogue will alleviate conflict and lead to improved outcomes. This chapter asserts that place meanings should be at the heart of such a strategy and it should occur prior to formal planning. To this end learning circles can provide a foundation for stakeholders to build upon in subsequent planning processes.

Learning circles not only facilitated stakeholders to represent themselves in non-adversarial contexts, they also functioned as a forum for stakeholders to learn about each other. In their argument for a civic science Kruger and Shannon (2000) championed the need to explore strategies that allowed people to express their lived experiences to others in ways that led to social learning. An important consequence of such learning was the inception of new public values for the places being discussed. This is not to say that the "old" landscape values or past place meanings were forgotten or replaced. The claim is that learning circles humanized stakeholders to each other and opened opportunities to learn about their various contemporary relationships with the land. As a result the learning circles fostered a climate of compatibility for additional layers of place meanings and enriched traditional landscape values in ways that departed from entrenched ideology.

Photo elicitation and learning circles are not meant for every land-use planning process. The nature of the strategy requires intimacy and commitment for individuals to complete the process. In the studies described here the number of stakeholders was limited to 25, which for many land-use decision processes would exclude some interested parties. Several points of contact are necessary to facilitate the distribution of cameras, interviews, transcripts and revisions, and coordination of a learning circle. Some stakeholders may view this as burdensome. With more than 25 participants learning circle intimacy could be diminished. This strategy for social learning is best applicable to a defined set of stakeholders rather than general public involvement.

Photo elicitation coupled with learning circles is but one strategy in which stakeholders can feel safe and comfortable sharing their place stories; there are many other strategies for dialogue. The primary measure for evaluating such strategy is the degree to which it fosters discussion about place meanings, thereby laying a foundation for place-based conservation planning. Coordinating a discussion about place does not come naturally for many agency staff, experts, and stakeholders. Simpler to say than do, any strategy for place-based conservation needs to structure stakeholder dialogue to focus on environments as places.

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Chapter 12
Rural Property, Collective Action, and Place-Based Conservation

Paul Van Auken and Shaun Golding

Abstract Place-based conservation is manifest in rural responses to planning and land-use change. Place meanings are often perceived as individualistic, subjective, and benign, when in fact they can also be viewed as collective, objective, and inherently conflictive. Described here is an extended case study that explores how modifications to an urban-based theory of place and property interests can more fully illuminate rural events and conservation planning. An in-depth exploration of rural property interests may help to provide greater understanding of the role of place in rural planning environments and bring greater attention to unique features of the rural landscape.

Keywords Rural amenity • Affordable housing • Place attachment • Social conflicts • Rural land colonization

Truly democratic decision-making invites the collision of multiple interests. When communities make decisions about land use, divergent relationships to property can give rise to competing rhetoric, culminating in discord. Rural amenity areas face unique opportunities and challenges based upon their attractive landscapes and recreational opportunities, which yield new people and perspectives. In such locales, where connections to place are simultaneously influenced by desires for both economic

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growth and preservation, planning incites particularly fervent debate. Individuals organize around property interests and mobilize civil society to maximize their power in the public dialogue.

This chapter examines how personal orientations to place become public as they are absorbed into planning processes and civil society. The discussion is based on more than 40 interviews conducted from 2005 to 2007 in two rural communities of Wisconsin that were experiencing amenity-driven change. Participants were asked to photograph scenes of personal importance in their community. These photos provided a tool for initiating conversations with them—a format that facilitated thorough interviews and seemed to effectively capture their place attachments. For context the authors further interviewed key informants, observed participants at land-use meetings and community activities, and followed events and public discourse via local newspapers.[1] An iterative qualitative analysis was then conducted, applying extended case method that involved detailed comparison of the observations to an established theoretical framework (Burawoy, 1991) for the purpose of understanding how a specific context may serve to refine a particular theory.

Contemporary land-use theory has tended to focus on urban environments (cf. Logan & Molotch, 1987; McCann, 2002; Perkins, Thorns, & Newton, 2008), but the research described here suggests that rural settings also warrant attention, particularly where planning initiatives encounter dissent. Lacking a contemporary theory of rural land politics the authors related the observations reported here to Davis's (1991) theory of collective action around urban property. Similar to Davis's work the findings indicate that local stakeholders with political positions on land use may represent multiple interests. Concerns related to common interpretations of place predominated, however, and were a crucial factor in dividing local stakeholders in the politics of land use. The authors argue that while local actors may not necessarily be conscious of them, distinct but overlapping property orientations unique to rural scenarios profoundly impact place-making.

While decision-makers have begun to consider amenity communities and the place concept (Manzo & Perkins, 2006; Spain, 1993) rural land-use planning continues to spur conflict even among people who apparently share place meanings (Golding, 2012; Van Auken, 2010). As Jensen and Field (2005) argue, rural planning "necessarily must include the individual, and often divergent, interests of the landowners and residents" (p. 259). This chapter suggests that an understanding of how and why groups organize around property should inform planning processes. Collective action may evoke opposition to planning processes but it can also engender the type of authentic democratic participation that planning aims to incorporate.

[1] This process was also being carried out in two rural Norwegian communities during the same period, yielding comparative data that is presented elsewhere but helps form the context of this chapter (cf. Van Auken, 2010).

12.1 Contested Ground: Urban Theory Tested in a Rural Setting

In *Contested Ground*, John E. Davis (1991) advances a framework for analyzing collective action in urban neighborhoods that provides a useful starting point for understanding the political-economic processes underlying development. Davis argues that while issues of class, race, gender, and religion often contribute to conflict, divisions based on locality generally develop along lines of domestic property interests (those related to housing). These interests usually remain latent until change occurs; for instance, interests become visible when a threat to property rights or an opportunity to enhance property value arises concerned people respond by engaging in collective action. According to Davis, there are two primary property interests, accommodation and accumulation, which are based on the use (accommodation) or exchange (accumulation) value of the property. Conflict frequently develops between people focused on the intrinsic value of homes and those oriented toward profiting from residential real estate. Davis expounds on the "relational advantages" of these two categories. For accommodative interests these are: autonomy; security (stability of tenure—the right to occupy the space and physical safety); and amenity (quantity and quality of living space). The relational advantages of accumulative interests, on the other hand, are: equity (unencumbered value in land and buildings); liquidity (income potential); and legacy (inheritability). These interests are material, as they originate in relations surrounding physical entities—i.e., land and property used for shelter. Furthermore they "are *objective* in the sense that one's position in relation to domestic property carries a probability of particular benefits, a susceptibility to particular costs, and a propensity to act in certain ways that inhere in the position itself" (p. 56, emphasis in original). A key point is that people have certain inherent interests whether or not they realize it or act upon them. These interests "are a latent relational bond, existing among similarly situated individuals, which may become the basis for solidarity and collective action among persons who are otherwise isolated and very different" (p. 57).

Davis argues that divisions develop between people and groups with fundamentally different domestic property interests. Those with primarily accommodative interests include private tenants, public housing tenants, residents of social (collectively owned) property, and household homeowners (whose homes are mainly valued as dwelling places, and secondarily as investments). Such actors are most concerned with the useful or beneficial features of neighborhoods—the communal living space characterized by trust, support, and friendship. They may be thought of has having a cluster of *community* interests, vested as they are in having pleasant and affordable places to live. In contrast, property capitalists are those with accumulative (or *commodity*) interests, including developers, land speculators, landlords, and acquisitive homeowners (those who purchase with the intent of renovating and selling at a profit). They may use the rhetoric of community but do so to enhance the marketing of a commodity, engaging in "colonization of urban land as a means of accumulation" (Cox, 1981, as cited in Davis, 1991, p. 297).

Davis notes that while these are useful ideal types reality is often less clear-cut. The same people may have competing interests. For example, threats to home equity—via a proposed low-income apartment complex, for example—can turn community-minded homeowners into (perhaps reluctant) defenders of the status quo, acting upon their accumulative interests. In other cases the home-place may become a site of resistance to capitalist relations, as the stark difference between accommodative and accumulative interests become clear; for example, if a luxury condominium tower were proposed to replace a section of single-family homes, these same homeowners may act in defense of accommodative interests such as security and amenity. Finally and most importantly, Davis notes that this complex mosaic of motives around property interests may compel individuals to act collaboratively when their interests align.

12.2 Application of Framework to Our U.S. Case

Bayfield County, Wisconsin, lies on the northern periphery of the American Midwest, bordering Lake Superior. With a setting that includes several hundred thousand acres of public forest and the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore, the county has transitioned away from its historical dependence on extractive industries and toward a highly seasonal service-based economy. The county attracts more than $100 million in annual tourism revenue, which helps to support an estimated 3,400 jobs (Olivo, 2011). Despite its tiny year-round population of around 500 the historic city of Bayfield is the center of local tourism due to its bucolic charm and proximity to the Apostle Islands. Increasingly, new housing (much of it seasonal) is built on hillsides with lake views and adjacent to public lands, which is consistent with national trends (Davenport & Anderson, 2005). Such development is slowly extending into rural townships and working-class communities such as Washburn—the Bayfield County seat, with a declining population of about 2,100—and has led to concerns about erosion, water quality, forest fragmentation, and habitat loss. These issues fall under the official jurisdiction of the county's 29 municipal and tribal governments.

While the development of the Apostle Islands into a national park in the 1960s and 1970s created significant controversy and acrimony that persists to a degree, recent years have seen rising conflict in Bayfield County over comprehensive land-use planning and private land-use decisions. This has been the most visible in Washburn, where a new group known as Washburn Alive supported sustainability-oriented candidates in the local election of 2004. Their efforts helped to elect a relative newcomer and strong champion of comprehensive planning as mayor along with two new city councilors. Together they formed a new regime in local politics driven by concern about development and sustainability. With their leadership, Washburn became the first eco-municipality in the U.S., meaning that the local government pledged to make the environment a key consideration in all decisions. This distinction and the 2004 election results were particularly noteworthy

because Washburn was formerly a DuPont company town, with a history of environmental issues due to the operation of a large munitions plant there for five decades.

Support for Washburn Alive flourished in response to the city's proposed sale of lakefront property to a private developer who seemed out of touch with community interests. The developer proposed a 60-unit condominium facility near a popular walking trail, arguing that its elderly occupants would not "cost the community anything, because they don't need anything. Their kids are all grown up; they don't need the schools" (O'Brien, 2004). These remarks were an affront to some members of the community, especially in light of its declining school enrollment and recent municipal investments in local infrastructure. Also, while residents of new condominiums in a nearby township clearly benefit from improved infrastructure in Washburn they had previously objected to contributing to such upgrades, setting a worrisome precedent for long-time residents. In response to the new condominium proposal, Washburn Alive circulated anti-development petitions, and others pushed for the property to be designated a natural area.

Still other local residents welcomed the proposed development, which complied with the existing land-use plan and was supported by the previous administration and other stakeholders. A local realtor argued that Washburn's waterfront is its "biggest jewel" and "one of the only things we have to bring income into" the community (O'Brien, 2004). In a 2004 ballot referendum the development proposal was handily defeated, but the victory proved to be short-lived.

The momentum of green politics in Washburn was thwarted in part by changes in state and local politics. As in many rural areas of the state, Wisconsin's Comprehensive Planning Act of 1999 divided the community. This "smart-growth law" required all municipalities to draft a comprehensive plan by 2010 or forfeit their planning autonomy and funding. Some state residents credit the law with helping to curb sprawl and protect natural resources, but others assert that the state uses it to appropriate power over local land-use decisions (Jacobson, 2004). Following the 2004 election local stakeholders began working on Washburn's smart-growth plan, which generated significant controversy. Some believed the plan's emphasis on sustainability would sacrifice needed economic development. The plan was approved by a narrow margin in 2007 but the election of Washburn's former city administrator to the city council spurred a return to a pro-development governing body, which soon moved to rescind the new plan (Hollish, 2007).

Davis's framework for collective action is helpful for understanding the complex set of place interests found in locales like Bayfield County and their ramifications for rural communities and conservation. This particular case features the same primary actors as Davis's urban case, including "household homeowners" (interested in equity, but primarily in accommodation), "acquisitive homeowners" (whose chief concern is liquidity), developers, landlords and tenants, and even stakeholders in "social property." Individuals and groups in Bayfield County can also be seen to primarily have community or commodity interests, as elaborated on below.

12.2.1 Community Interests

Most importantly, members of this group wish to be able to afford to live in a community where they have strong ties and/or employment. They believe in the "right to stay put" (Hartman, 1984). In terms of the Davis framework their defining property interest is security—being secure in housing tenure and use status. They may also have strong interests in autonomy, equity, legacy, and amenity (the quality of their living space) stemming from their domestic property. Collective community interests are exemplified by the Bayfield Housing Trust (BHT). One of a handful of such trusts in Wisconsin, the BHT is designed to provide affordable housing by selling homes at below-market prices to qualified individuals with low or modest incomes. The land is retained in trust for the community for the purpose of providing affordable housing in perpetuity (Town of Bayfield, 2005). Dedicated to producing what Davis (1991) terms "social property" the BHT embodies local community interests, yet its prominence has receded in recent years.

12.2.2 Commodity Interests

According to Logan and Molotch (1987), "All capitalist places are the creation of activists who push hard to alter how markets function, how prices are set, and how lives are affected" (p. 3). Realtors, developers, and acquisitive homeowners are Bayfield County's primary actors in the arena of commodity interests. In the words of one Washburn resident, "in the last 10 years there's been a huge influx of people coming from somewhere else to cash in on what's here." A year-round resident of rural Bayfield echoes this sentiment:

> You go down this road to the golf course, most of those homes are second homes…and for many years, there were one or two real estate brokers in town. Now, I bet there's eight or ten…and the real-estate market or brokers are really driving prices up. And…that, I think, is a real negative to our community.

Those with commodity interests may support (in action or rhetoric) efforts to maintain a "living community" but their defining concern is to profit from home sales, property rentals, and land development. Therefore the interests of these "placemakers" inherently and antagonistically conflict with community interests. One local realtor heavily involved in local smart-growth planning expressed feeling this tension at a personal level: "Trying to balance preservation and development is always a big dilemma for me as realtor."

12.3 Extending the Framework to Include *Place Interests*

To understand the events unfolding in Bayfield County the authors modified Davis's framework to account for a major difference between rural and urban contexts. Davis illuminates the diverse interests involved in development and accentuates the

central role played by material relations to property. He emphasizes that either use or exchange value shape settlement patterns, as does much of the writing on place-making. Such literature interprets place attachment as a subset of the use value of property for individuals, and communal visions of place are relatively inconsequential (Davis, 1991; Logan & Molotch, 1987). This case illuminates the struggle over place itself that unfolds in areas that are attractive to investors and migrants alike, those blessed with natural amenities being prime examples.

In Bayfield County strong place orientations have emerged through responses to change, particularly in the city of Bayfield. An increasingly popular destination, it projects a strong place identity or what might be called a place "brand." Such brands are used to capitalize on impending development by inviting change that is deemed appropriate. For example, while Bayfield has been a destination since the nineteenth century, its brand started to develop after the Apostle Islands National Lakeshore was created and a local comprehensive land use plan was written in the 1970s. The mayor during the period of the authors' fieldwork explained how this initial land use plan helped establish a place identity that persists:

> The plan said, 'Bayfield is a great place.' It looked at all the past times, the good and the bad, and 'here's all the things that we need to do to keep it nice.' And they went and put in place architectural standards, the world's toughest sign ordinance, and created an historic district. These things were a hard sell in place like this, but thirty years later they are reasonably well accepted.

According to the mayor the biggest challenge facing the community is "just trying to keep Bayfield as Bayfield—the same thing they were dealing with 30 years ago—and having the fortitude to stick with it." The primary reason for his optimism was that, "Bayfield still looks like Bayfield. We still have the Apostle Islands, hundreds of thousands of forest acres, and Lake Superior."

Nearby Washburn faces a similar imperative to develop a brand, as spending by seasonal residents and tourists has become vital to its modern economy. Authenticity is part of its public image and developing brand. The town's former mayor asserted that, "what everybody likes about (Washburn) is that it's a residential community, and they like the amenities that are here, so as far as amenity development [goes]; for me it's quality of life. That's the only thing we've got here." She and other informants argued that a focus on authenticity and small-town quality of life would not only serve current residents' interests but also attract certain visitors and newcomers.

This pervasive and resonant stake in place suggests that place interests comprise a third category in an interest mosaic for rural amenity areas (Fig. 12.1). The three categories—community interests, commodity interests, and place interests—overlap, but each has a defining property interest that is inherently at odds with the others.

Davis focuses on tenurial categories (e.g., tenant versus homeowner), which clearly have important ramifications for locality-based collective action, but gives relatively little attention to the divide between community and commodity interests. The broader interest clusters seem to be more relevant to cases like Bayfield County, where the qualities of place itself are such a powerful draw. As community and commodity interests were discussed above, the third category is addressed below.

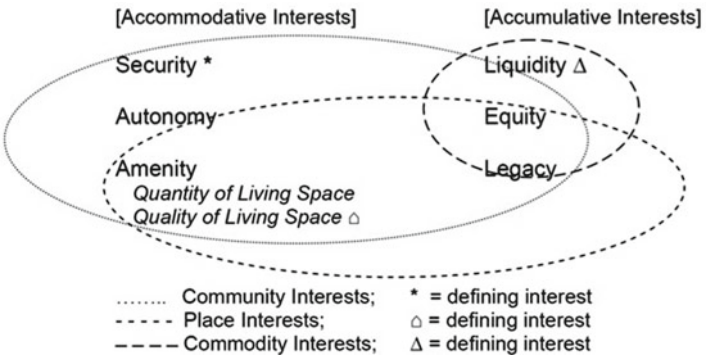

Fig. 12.1 Property-interest mosaic for rural amenity areas

12.3.1 Place Interests

This interest cluster seems to be comprised primarily of educated, middle-class homeowners in the Bayfield County case, but it may also include renters. The defining interest of members of this group is in the quality of their living space, including the physical attributes of their homes, but primarily in the broader context of the place in which they live. Similar to people identified with community interests, members of the place cluster are concerned with security, autonomy, equity, and legacy. However their incomes and personal preferences have influenced their selection of a specific community for seasonal or year-round living based on the presence of amenities such as forests, public lands, coastal landscapes, and recreational areas. Such place-based qualities define their interest, which they will work hard to protect.

The place-based commitment to preservation may be tolerated or even welcomed by those with commodity interests (who may realize increased property values near protected places) and community interests (who may also value amenities). But an overarching goal of the place interest cluster is to restrict development, and this inherently clashes with the pursuit of liquidity by commodity interests. Furthermore the preservation of land and historical buildings may help to "produce a thoroughly gentrified, affluent neighborhood that is eventually devoid of all who are different than themselves" (Davis, 1991, p. 246). In other words, though this may not be their intent, the defense of amenity by those with primarily place interests can jeopardize the security of those with community interests, placing them at odds with this cluster as well.

The Bayfield Regional Conservancy (BRC), founded in 1996, preserves land through acquisition, conservation easements, and partnerships. By taking land off the free market and creating public access to private space BRC engages in what Davis would call "radical" action. In partnership with the Bayfield town government the BRC created the second farmland preservation program in Wisconsin, and one of the few in the Midwest, through which it has preserved over 200 fruit-growing acres. BRC has also preserved forest and shoreline valued for ecological, recreational, cultural, and aesthetic reasons, and now has more than 2,000 total acres in conservation. With over

400 member households and 20 active volunteers BRC is successfully filling the void between the market and the state in the conservation arena, generally without direct connection to local planning efforts. The organization's former director explained the differences between relative newcomers and "old-timers":

> Half [our members] have been here 20–25 years—these people started it. The other half came up in the last ten years for the natural beauty and want to see it preserved…[There are no "old-timers" on the board because] they see it as their entitlement to make money on selling the land. They love the land, but in a [hardscrabble] way…we don't have a real conflict with them—it's people coming in from the outside with money that antagonize them.

Those with community interests may, particularly in backstage discussions, decry the influence of "tree huggers," or the "kayak crowd." But they seem less likely to blame people from the place-interest category for threatening their property security than they would the developers or investors from the commodity interest cluster, since the potential negative impact is more apparent with a new condominium development than a preserved patch of forest. The BRC board promotes the perpetuation of a "living community" and there may be issues of common interest among all three clusters. However the BRC's primary goal to preserve the landscape of the region attracts most members, including in-migrants drawn to the area's amenities. A seasonal resident from Minneapolis, for example, recently renovated a former fisherman's home in Bayfield after she and her husband "fell in love with the lake." She indicated that they have not yet formed relationships with local people but hope to be more involved and join the BRC in the future.

The Bayfield Housing Trust, devoted to affordable housing, was created in the same era as the BRC but faded from the scene with the ascendance of place and commodity interests. The trust acquired only one property in the city of Bayfield, and multiple families have occupied it. But in contrast to the vitality of the BRC, the BHT now is basically dormant according to one of its founders. This situation supports the notion that two major forces—residents primarily interested in place and landscape preservation and those dedicated to commodity and property development—have reshaped the local political and civic arenas.

12.4 Place-Based Conflict and Collective Action

The research presented here demonstrates that "to have an interest in a parcel of domestic property within a specific territorial space is to become enmeshed in a complex web of local and extra-local relations…that 'orient' one's behavior in a particular way" (Davis, 1991, p. 59). Land-use planning forces the issues of future development and landscape preservation onto the civic stage, compelling stakeholders to make decisions with a sense of urgency, as if a convoy of bulldozers were heading toward the places they love. Use and exchange values were important considerations for local stakeholders. However, place-related factors also shaped planning processes by drawing in participants focused on place. This has

led to collective action, dominated during recent years by relative newcomers. Historic preservation has been a priority for some, particularly in Bayfield, but most of those interested in place tend to emphasize scenic and recreational values, which are seen as increasingly threatened by development.

Washburn Alive objected to the idea of local government promoting the private liquidity of the proposed condominium developer, but the group's primary concern centered on the preservation of amenities—the lakeshore walking trail and relatively unspoiled lakefront—which would be vulnerable to development under the government's land use plan. Condominium advocates included those with community interests who perceived that such a project would improve the overall economy. Community, commodity, and place interests inevitably clashed, pitting place-interested activists against the local government and the pro-development camp. Davis (1991) argues that while governmental entities are "part of the encapsulating social structure" (p. 259) in which local groups act, they do not fit neatly into his framework. However, in the Washburn situation government intervention was indeed oriented toward particular property interests. Decisions made about one relatively small land parcel proved to have major consequences, highlighting the pivotal role of government in the rural property-interest mosaic.

The BRC has also acted decisively throughout the region to preserve amenity. The group has responded to activity by developers and acquisitive homeowners seeking to develop land for liquidity, personal consumption, and/or equity—interests that oppose the amenity values of its members and others. Moreover while the BRC has not encountered much opposition from area "old-timers," the perception that those stakeholders are disinterested in the group's activities may hint at incipient conflict that has not yet materialized. As Davis (1991) notes, "People may find themselves antagonistically related, even if they neither recognize nor want such enmity, simply because of a different and conflicting stake in domestic property" (p. 59). The tangible efforts of the BRC, historic preservationists, and other Bayfield County place defenders have earned many supporters. However, such efforts inadvertently contribute to gentrification and an increasingly seasonal population, which could have detrimental effects on the local economy and other community interests. In the Bayfield County study direct interpersonal conflict occurred between seasonal residents themselves based upon, for example, the size and placement of a new seasonal home. This supports the notion that domestic property interests trump divisions between social subgroups, in some cases placing people from the same local subgroup (seasonal resident or newcomer) into different interest clusters, while in other cases uniting insiders, outsiders, newcomers, old-timers, and so forth into the same interest cluster.

Furthermore, the research suggests that place-based development may stifle some types of collective action. In Bayfield County gentrification has led to the stratification of rural neighborhoods and an exodus of working-class families. The proportion of housing units in the city of Bayfield that are considered seasonal doubled in the 1990s, and the year-round population subsequently dropped by over 20% in the most recent decade (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). According to the former mayor, many people were displaced by higher taxes and rents and the loss of year-round jobs. Many former residents and current local workers—who would likely fall into the community interest

cluster—have moved from the city of Bayfield to more affordable homes in Washburn, the nearby Red Cliff reservation, or out of the area. Their defining interest in security may be objectively and antagonistically related to the defining interests of the place and commodity clusters, but their diminishing numbers hamper the potential for recognizing their common interests, which is the first step towards collective action.

Finally, the conflicting tendencies of class stratification were pervasive. Although Davis (1991) stresses that conflict occurs between interest groups and not classes, the Bayfield study provided evidence for a natural convergence between the two, as exemplified in the creation of a committee to draw up local architectural guidelines. Two members opposed any governmental action related to historic preservation, which turned a "6-month project into an 18-month one," according to Bayfield's former mayor. One was an acquisitive homeowner who profited from "flipping" local houses, the other a wealthy woman and relatively recent migrant. Said the mayor, "Some of us were concerned about how our guidelines might limit the options for lower-income people, new teachers, and so forth, and the woman…said, 'those people don't belong here.'" Further it was suggested by some in the study that more urbanites with place interests were needed to help save amenity areas from themselves, while others decried the fact that landscapes and buildings were indeed being preserved in Bayfield County but year-round communities were not.

12.5 Conclusion

This chapter aims to make three primary contributions. The failure of planning in some of the most threatened natural places has puzzled many. Thus the research reported on here offers a more nuanced perspective on stakeholders and how they organize. Residents of communities seem to unanimously cherish the landscape and pace of life that characterize minimal development. Yet when presented with an opportunity to curtail future development through planning many communities seem unable to reach consensus. It may be convenient to blame partisan politics for these stalemates but this is an inadequate explanation.

The rural property-interest mosaic provides an appropriate focus to the complex array of interests influencing rural land-use politics. This perspective recognizes that one stakeholder can embody multiple, conflicting interests, but consciousness and organization in the public realm are likely to result directly from defining interests in rural property. Planners often classify stakeholders under a single land-use interest, such as development, conservation, preservation, speculation, or gentrification. While convenient this labeling strengthens the prevalence of political stereotypes and disenfranchises stakeholders from the very interests that must be tapped in order to reach compromises around land use. Even as planning attempts to become increasingly participatory, it often overlooks the interests in property that underlie divisions in planning perspectives. This argues for decision-making processes to be independent of polarizing land-use policies and for conservation measures to recognize the complexity in individual attachments to land.

Second, this work should challenge scholars of planning, politics, and the social sciences to draw connections between the similar place themes evolving in their respective fields. The notion of place as space imbued with human meanings has been demonstrated in many places and at multiple social scales (cf. Hanna, Dale, & Ling, 2009; Kaltenborn & Williams, 2002; Tuan, 1977). Place meaning can be created and maintained by individuals or it can be agreed upon and maintained by groups (cf. Davenport & Anderson, 2005; Perkins et al., 2008). Also, place is invoked as a socially nuanced substitute for geographic location. Place-making, for example, often refers to the political economy of growth and development in a specific locality. However, this discussion has established that as commitments to spatial and economic patterns of development, land-use plans are an important link between place meanings and the capitalist process of place-making. This chapter charts a conceptual terrain between place concepts and literatures that needs further exploration as place becomes an increasingly jargonized term.

Finally, for scholars and practitioners alike, this framework for understanding rural land use sheds light on the importance of using *community*-oriented benchmarks for measuring success. The success of group decision-making is not necessarily reflected in economic growth or even in political unity. But the incorporation of place values into planning should not be viewed as the salve that will bring harmony and rootedness to bureaucratic and ineffectual processes, either. Successful place-making often translates into heightened inequality, and thus the politics of planning, conservation, and development will shift inevitably and interminably. As Wilkinson (1991) proposes, it is the "free flow of authentic interaction among people whose lives are interconnected in a local society" (p. 104) that defines successful community. Accordingly, land-use conflicts such as those described here represent instances of authentic, collective interaction that has the potential to build community, which is critical to social and ecological well-being (Beatley, 2004; Wilkinson, 1991).

In conclusion, place-based conflict can yield fruitful public discussion that may prove to be a first step toward democratic, community-based decision-making. Planning and decision-making are complex and divisive—not because place is absent from these processes, but because planning is often not designed to recognize and incorporate its complexity. A locally informed understanding of the rural property-interest mosaic may help to harness the inherent potential in strong but diverse interests in place.

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Chapter 13
Whose Sense of Place? A Political Ecology of Amenity Development

Patrick T. Hurley

Abstract Using a political ecology framework, this chapter examines the ways in which sense of place and amenity migration contributes to alternative residential development, which relies on uneven use of conservation subdivision features in the American West. Based on case studies from Central Oregon, this chapter demonstrates how senses of place and developer decision-making are tied to wider political economic changes. It highlights the roles that amenity migrants and developers—two groups that are sometimes identical—play in landscape transformations that simultaneously draw on a particular sense of place and commodify landscapes in new ways.

Keywords Amenity development • Rural housing • New exurbanism • Resource dependent communities • Parcelization

Exurbanization has attracted much attention in the United States in recent years, particularly because of the impacts that sprawl (unplanned, low-density, commercial and residential growth) can have on rural landscapes in areas that have experienced rapid in-migration. Concerns about the myriad ways that residential development reconfigures local ecologies include habitat loss, fragmentation, and alteration (DeStefano & DeGraaf 2003; Johnson & Klemens 2005; Theobald, 2004); declines in the species associated with these altered habitats (DeStefano & DeGraaf, 2003; Lenth, Knight, & Gilbert, 2006); and impacts on land use that affect traditional livelihoods (Hurley, Halfacre, Levine, & Burke, 2008). Likewise critics have bemoaned sprawl's role in creating a "placelessness" (Duany, Plater-Zyberk, Speck, 2000) that contributes to a loss of natural resource production. In response to these ecological,

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aesthetic, and resource concerns, several new development approaches have emerged. One approach, referred to as "new urbanism" (McCann, 1995; Till 2001; Zimmerman, 2001), features specific design features intended to minimize environmental impacts while creating residential spaces that better fit in with their rural surroundings and maintain some forms of agricultural production (Arendt, 1996; Bjelland, Maley, Cowger, & Barajas, 2006).

Exurbanization is the result of a move by formerly urban peoples to rural places in search of a better "quality of life" in places characterized by abundant natural and/or cultural amenities (Gosnell & Abrams, 2011). Literature on this so-called "amenity migration" argues that economic restructuring is reshaping cultures and economies of places and communities historically tied to natural resource extraction. As new peoples, often with very different ideas about nature and higher levels of education and greater wealth, arrive in these places, new land-use decision-making priorities often emerge (Cadieux & Hurley, 2011; Taylor, 2011). But what role do amenity migrants and their sense of place play in efforts to create alternative developments in the exurban American West? This chapter draws on the political ecology literature to examine the interplay between amenity migration, environmental management trends in the context of urbanization, and the developer's sense of place in the design and construction of alternative residential development in exurban areas (see Bjelland et al., 2006). Also discussed are projects in Central Oregon that highlight the intersection of regional socioeconomic processes with specific developers' sense of place to produce development alternatives that commodify landscapes in specific ways. The chapter underscores a need for researchers to investigate processes of migration and residential development that produce, or potentially contest, diverse place meanings within urbanizing regions.

13.1 Amenity Migration and Exurban Development in the American West

Economic restructuring in the American West has been a key feature of many natural-resource-dependent communities in recent decades (Jackson & Kuhlken, 2006; Nelson, 2001; Travis, 2007). Economies of real estate have replaced economies built on extraction (e.g., Brogden & Greenberg, 2003; Ghose, 2004; Walker & Fortmann, 2003). Amenity migration has become an important factor in explaining population growth (Nelson, 2006). High-amenity counties typically have experienced greater rates of growth than low-amenity ones, with far lower densities occurring in non-metropolitan areas than in nearby metropolitan areas (Nelson, 2006; Vias & Carruthers, 2005). In Idaho amenity-related residential development has led to uneven development in non-metropolitan areas formerly predominated by natural resource production (Smutny, 2002). Population growth in counties that include public lands is often higher than local averages, with growth rates differing among counties with lands owned by specific federal lands agencies (i.e., U.S. Forest Service vs. Bureau of Land Management) as a function of amenities (i.e., forests vs.

grasslands) and not management priorities (Frentz, Farmer, Guldin, & Smith, 2004). These results suggest that high-amenity, exurban areas are characterized by lower-density parcelization rather than high-density land development.

Research on amenity migration has revealed variations in land management within counties and communities and on individual parcels. Residential development and social change often lead to the creation of communities within communities. For example, work by Halseth (1998) in rural British Columbia highlights the emergence of distinctive social communities associated with proximity to particular amenities (e.g., lakeshores), while long-time residents continue to live in areas further afield of lakes. Changes in landownership patterns, such as an increase in absentee owners, often results in more diverse land management that focuses on amenity or conservation values, instead of traditional production values (Gosnell, Haggerty, & Travis, 2006). In many instances shifts in environmental management at the county, community, and parcel levels have led to land-use conflicts over priorities (Shumway & Otterstrom, 2001).

Walker and Fortmann (2003) attribute the source of such land-use conflicts in the American West to the cultural and economic changes associated with amenity in-migration. In their work conflict is rooted in the ways that competing rural capitalisms seek to economically benefit from different landscape qualities (i.e., amenities vs. resource commodities). Importantly Walker and Fortmann (2003) argue that one form of rural capitalism, the emerging real estate industry, emphasizes protecting the quality of natural landscapes through planning and development-related decisions precisely because these landscape-attributes positively impact real estate values. Robbins, Martin, and Gilbertz (2012) argue that fear of run-away, and just plain ugly, development in exurban areas of the American West leads to demands for new land-use controls even in places where government intervention has long been anathema. Brogden and Greenberg (2003) empirically demonstrate the importance of amenity migration and changing place meanings in reassigning resource access rights from agricultural users to environmental users. This reassignment occurs through property markets and new environmental management schemes.

13.2 A Political Ecology of Sense of Place and Amenity Development

Political ecology examines "linkages between social systems and ecological systems" (Berkes, 2004, p. 624), by combining "the concerns of ecology with a broadly defined political economy" (Blaikie & Brookfield, 1987, p. 17). Political ecologists view biophysical systems as the products of politics that "are related in various ways to social relations of production and decision-making about resource use… [T]hese are exercised in diverse arenas, on multiple scales, and infused with cultural knowledge and value" (Paulson & Gezon, 2005, p. 209). From this perspective individual land manager decisions are conditioned responses to political-economic processes operating at scales ranging from local to global.

In explicating the politics of environmental management (e.g., Robbins, 2004)—that is, the logical rationales underlying the various forms of appropriate environmental management—political ecologists have noted that new "nature-society" hybrids have proliferated in contemporary global environmental management. These schemes use land-use zones and associated rules to "contain in space" specific human activities (e.g., hunting, farming, housing), thereby minimizing biophysical impacts on the environment while expanding markets (Zimmerer, 2000, 2006). Zimmerer focuses on biodiversity conservation in the developing world, but his insights also apply to emerging environmental management in other human-dominated landscapes. Thus nature-society hybrids are the products of privatization and commodification, which rest on particular constructions of environmental scarcity and sensitivity that encourage private enterprise to value ecological resources appropriately.

The types of nature-society hybrids emerging in particular regions have not been well studied. A notable exception is Reed's (2007) examination of two biosphere reserves, one in British Columbia and the other in Alberta. Reed's study reveals the importance of regional processes in shaping "formal and informal institutional arrangements" that characterize emergent (and uneven) environmental management regimes. These processes include property exchanges accompanying changes in regional economies and demographics; the influence of these changes on land valuations (i.e., various forms of commodification and marketing nature); rules and norms governing formal planning and land-use decision-making; and re-territorialization, that is the social processes that establish rules for administering natural resource access, use, and production.

Reed also compares the development of the two Canadian reserves, highlighting the roles of diverse social actors in advocating for the establishment of each reserve and calling for what they see as appropriate management strategies. In the British Columbia reserve activists, scientists, First Nation groups, and governmental officials are involved in revising forestry management goals. In contrast, in Alberta privately run land trusts dominate the management of lakes and wildlife. Reed's work demonstrates that these different configurations of environmental management have emerged due to tensions between civic society and private entities. These cases illustrate links between the forces of privatization/commodification and processes of globalization and nationalization (Zimmerer, 2000). Both areas of research also raise questions about the influence of sense of place on changes in environmental management.

13.3 Sense of Place and Environmental Management

Research on sense of place often seeks to better understand the meanings and attachment people place on their environments, including satisfaction with where they live and perceptions about environmental quality/degradation (Kaltenborn, 1999; Williams & Stewart, 1998). Biophysical environments and political contestation affect these meanings and perceptions (Johnson, Halfacre, & Hurley, 2009; Larsen,

Sorenson, McDermott, Long, & Post, 2007; Stedman, 2003). Similarly sense of place influences land-use decision-making (Stewart, 2008). Place meanings are complex, with different meanings for the same location subject to efforts by individuals or groups "to manipulate and market" their perspectives (Cheng, Kruger, & Daniels, 2003).

Power (i.e., social, economic, and political) and access to capital are key factors in creating place meanings for given locations (e.g., Harner, 2001). This finding resonates with political ecology research of environmental management, because it makes explicit the relationship between power and flows of capital that affect the social dynamics that produce new views about appropriate uses of environments (Robbins, 2004). For example, Johnson et al. (2009) demonstrate that marginalized communities may strategically embrace new ideas of ecological integrity and global conservation, even if these new ways of viewing landscapes differ from those of many long-term residents. However, their findings also suggest that efforts to protect particular environments by groups associated with different sides of in-migration and urbanization processes, and the actions of individuals and groups collectively, can lead to the formation of new place meanings. Yet none of these studies specifically addresses new design approaches associated with residential development practices.

13.4 New Exurbanism and the "Quest for Authentic Place"

As noted by Bjelland et al. (2006), one of the many changes in urban land development during the past decade has been the rise of "new urbanism." This design approach aims to create forms of compact residential development that are more environmentally responsible and aesthetically pleasing than conventional housing. This design style emphasizes design features meant to create a distinctive sense of place, often along with conservation design principles that encourage land protection. Using these principles developers typically limit the sizes of residential lots; cluster houses and lots together to maximize open space; and alter layouts to avoid areas with conservation, production, or recreational values (Arendt, 1996). Future development often is prohibited in common areas through deed restrictions or conservation easements (e.g., held by local government or a land trust). Finally, homeowner bylaws generally encourage ecologically appropriate activities for residential and conserved areas (Arendt). Such features not only address diverse environmental management issues but reflect place meanings attached to specific landscape elements. Thus this design-oriented land development underlies what Bjelland et al. refer to as new urbanism's "quest for authentic place."

Scholars have criticized new urbanism's innovations, dissecting ways that political-economic changes are leading developers to recast social and biophysical environments as spaces in need of protection while producing housing developments for elites. For example, in the Puget Sound (Washington) new housing designs are not fueled by demand necessarily, but rather regional social and

economic conditions have enabled novel environmental designs to take advantage of niche housing markets there (Veninga, 2004). In the Minneapolis-St. Paul area of Minnesota local developers have fostered new "niche products" that conserve nature and make builders more money, while also potentially further contributing to sprawl (Bjelland et al., 2006). And, at Prairie Crossing, Illinois, which labels itself a "conservation community," nature is mobilized in defense of the suburban dream, representing both a nostalgic defense of the Midwestern frontier and a poor model of sustainability (Zimmerman, 2001). Such projects discursively and materially package nature in ways that play on "Edenic myths" and rural idylls in a new form of "green politics" (Till, 2001). Overall these observations suggest this new green politics is actively producing nature-society hybrids through sense-of-place design features that may or may not contribute to a form of social exclusion that characterizes the suburban project (Duncan & Duncan, 2004).

At the same time urban ecologists also point out that lifestyle factors and worldviews increasingly influence the environmental management on individual land parcels, with landscape and aesthetic concerns often trumping ecological ones (Larson et al., 2009). Nonetheless developers potentially can foster management approaches that provide both environmental and recreational benefits (Larsen & Harlan, 2006). Indeed, as Nassauer, Wang, & Dayrell (2009) suggest, developer-led initiatives may provide the best way to bridge this gap.

13.5 Natural Amenity and Land-Use Change in Central Oregon

The case studies discussed here focus on Deschutes and Wasco (Fig. 13.1) counties, located on the eastern slopes of the Cascade Mountains in Central Oregon. The region is home to the Deschutes River, a significant tributary to the Columbia River renowned for its fly-fishing opportunities. While both counties share many natural amenities associated with communities experiencing rapid growth elsewhere, their experiences with development are quite different.

Since 2000 the Deschutes County seat, Bend, has ranked as Oregon's fastest growing metropolitan area and one of the fastest growing metropolitan areas nationwide (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009a). Bend lies close to the Mt. Bachelor ski area and boasts an abundance of sunny days (McGranahan, 1999). In contrast Wasco County enjoys considerably less sunshine—a disparity in weather that has likely contributed to its slower growth (U.S. Census Bureau, 2009b) and smaller influx of retirees and second home buyers. Wasco's major metropolitan area, The Dalles and its environs, have been overshadowed by rapid, amenity-related growth in and around the towns of Hood River and White Salmon (across the Columbia River in Washington State)—both revered windsurfing sites. While the histories of shifting land-use in Deschutes and Wasco counties share important similarities the scope of change has differed. In 1973 a new land-use planning system emerged in Oregon (Walker & Hurley, 2011). Its innovative sprawl-containing features came partly in response to the rapid partitioning of rural parcels in southwestern

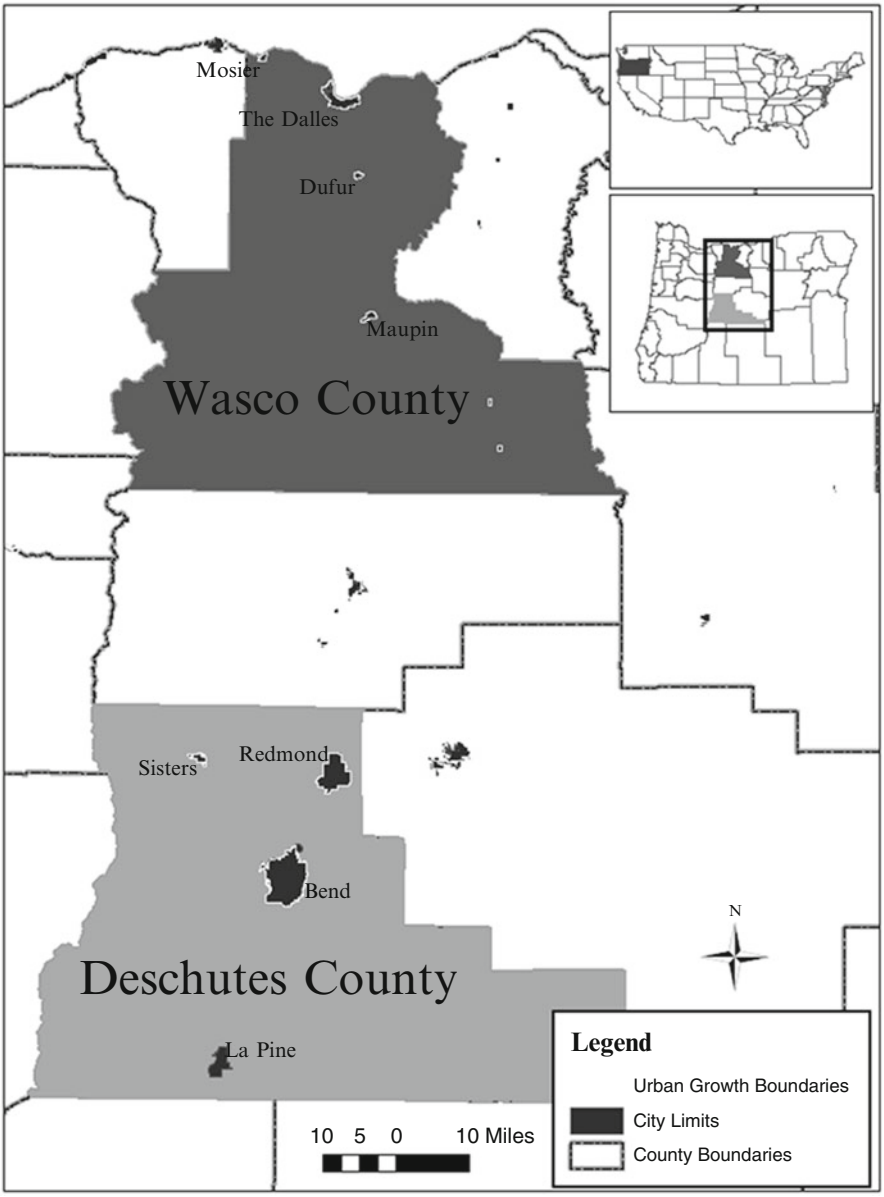

Fig. 13.1 Map of study area, highlighting Deschutes and Wasco counties, in Central Oregon (Source: Oregon Geospatial Data Clearinghouse 2009)

Deschutes County during the late 1960s. By the time the new system was enacted in Deschutes, however, much of the rural landscape had been subdivided into five-acre parcels. Similarly portions of northern Wasco County experienced parcelization and land speculation just prior and after 1973, albeit to a much lesser extent

than Deschutes. The resulting parcelization pattern and densities largely set development entitlements for future projects.

Rural parcelization has prompted concerns over its impacts on agriculture and the environment in both counties. In Deschutes County conservation groups such as the Deschutes Basin Land Trust and the Deschutes River Conservancy pursued efforts to protect critical wildlife and high-desert habitats (e.g., sagebrush steppe, native grasslands, and Ponderosa pine forests); augment in-stream flows for fish in the Deschutes River and its tributaries; and retain working forests and farms. In Wasco County some residents worry about sprawl destroying the county's cherry orchards. Meanwhile land trusts have strived to preserve local woodland habitats and the rich diversity of wildflowers.

This examination of the intersection of amenity migration and land development is based on a wide-ranging review of development projects in Deschutes and Wasco counties, including their design features, relationships to local development trends, and relationship to area conservation issues. The analysis drew on proposals and county planning documents; real estate marketing materials; and "subdivision" governance documents (e.g., contracts, covenants, and restrictions; and design guidelines). Using design and governance documents I evaluated conservation goals and environmental management rules for individual projects. During visits to the counties in May 2006 and May 2007 I conducted interviews with county land-use planners, representatives from land trusts and other conservation organizations, project investors/developers, and residents/landowners in the communities.

13.6 Whose Sense of Place? Developing Amenity in Central Oregon

> We call this a preservation ranch… we're preserving the ranch by putting occasional residents on ranch, non-farm properties… (Phone Interview, 2-27-2007).

Amenity development projects in the case study areas have not widely applied the full suite of conservation design principles (described above); however specific features, often in combination, are commonly employed. Only two communities in Deschutes and one in Wasco employed all features: limited lot size, clustering of houses, altered layout, easements on common areas, and ecologically-oriented bylaws. Although Deschutes County has more amenity development projects, features such as open space preservation, clustering, and novel forms of environmental governance are more predominant in Wasco County. Design elements in both areas most commonly relate to place meanings that value biodiversity protection, such as guidelines on planting practices, even for projects that neither cluster houses nor reduce lot sizes. Indeed, the one Wasco County project features large lots, but its bylaws emphasize the protection of native flora and fauna. In Deschutes a project places strict review procedures on plantings. Despite these similarities there are important differences in the pathways, namely through the developer, that marry particular senses of place with environmental management forms.

13.7 Whose Development?

> We wouldn't need land-use planners if every developer lived in the developments they did. (Interview, Wasco County, 5-31-2006).

Residential projects in Deschutes and Wasco counties challenge attempts to paint developers in broad-brushed strokes. For example, only one of the ten projects was undertaken by a large developer—a former timber company—whose project bylaws provide strict guidance on appropriate land management activities, including rules about native species plantings. Indeed, the recurrent theme among the 11 projects examined was the active role of amenity in-migrants—not development companies—in creating these alternative residential schemes. In six cases in-migrants with extensive development expertise participated in the land purchase, helped design the project layout and features, and oversaw implementation. Of these, two were built by individuals with extensive development experience elsewhere. Four projects are home to those in-migrants today; another was until the individual became too old to live unassisted. One of the in-migrant developers was responsible for two projects. Another project is home to the "developer," but this project features parcelization of family land to create second homes for friends and other potential buyers.

In Wasco County a reluctant local environmentalist entered the picture to act as developer and produce a different landscape outcome. Having learned that "developers are the enemy" at an early age, he leveraged his life savings to purchase a property for which an equestrian-oriented, 21-home project had been proposed. Despite his declared intention for a conservation-oriented venture local conservation groups opposed it on the grounds that it would destroy the area's local ecology. In creating a new project with strict ecological bylaws he sought to ensure that part of northern Wasco County's oak-pine woodlands would not be "destroyed." The resulting nine-home project situated houses away from sensitive areas and worked with a local land trust to place easements on key ecological features (e.g., stream corridor and riparian habitats). This incident, along with development trends in the two counties, suggests some developers attempt to create their *own* ideal residential community, in which they draw personal links to specific amenities and not just those that might be highly marketable to potential buyers.

By paying attention to local environmental contexts amenity developers create projects imbued with specific place meanings and distinguish their developments in key ways. A former county planner suggested that when a "landowner comes in and creates the community that they're going to retire in, they're already looking to do all the things that we try to do by ordinance and they wind up doing it through the homeowners' association, covenants, lease-back options—all these other tools that we can't really regulate very readily…." Interestingly, however, Deschutes and Wasco land trusts initially hesitated to get involved with some projects, because they did not want to be perceived as facilitating the development of landscapes with important ecological and conservation values. Once the projects were approved by county officials, however, land trusts saw the importance of participating to ensure protection of ecological meanings associated with these places.

13.8 Which Rural Amenity?

> We didn't create a little Hollywood set, you know. This [ranch] is the real deal. And people recognize that and appreciate… looking across green pastures, [seeing] cows in the field. (Interview, Deschutes County, 6-9-2006).

Marketing materials for the projects are quite diverse, but vividly depict the sense of place constructions behind individual projects. Panoramic pictures highlight the rugged Central Oregon landscape and majestic mountain views, and descriptions detail various types of recreation, the area's wildlife and plants, and dimensions of ecological stewardship or conservation. One site includes a rustic storybook theme that plays on iconic imagery of the "Old West" and invites potential buyers to surround themselves with "a real Central Oregon ranch."

Residential development has taken place primarily on lands historically used for agriculture or resource extraction. In each case the surrounding landscape plays an important role in attracting buyers. In Wasco County, for example, where ranching predominated in the past, four of the five developments are located on former grazing lands. These projects—sited in a narrow band of woodlands dominated by Oregon white oak, near long-established cherry orchards—contain lots featuring small rock escarpments and intermittent views of regional mountain peaks or the Columbia River. By contrast Deschutes projects, primarily situated on former timber and ranching lands, lie in the transition zone between Ponderosa Pine forest and Central Oregon high-desert land. Still, individual environmental features, such as private, up-close views of one of the state's premier geologic features or irrigated fields that offer pastoral respites from the characteristic desert vegetation of the local area, also serve as a key dimension in signaling distinctive ownership opportunities.

These residential development projects have not only reconfigured landscapes but have also introduced new land-uses that alter place meanings. In Wasco County residents and wildlife now wander hillsides where cattle once roamed and barbed wire that previously demarcated grazing lands has been transformed into place-based art. In Deschutes County, on the other hand, subtle changes in management have evolved, but greater continuity with past place meanings still exists. For example, cattle still graze on common areas in one Deschutes project. To some extent, though, this continuity is maintained by strict agricultural zoning controls imposed by the county and state.

Still, developers have used these constraints to market place meanings that simultaneously commodify landscapes in new ways and generate environmental benefits. Benefitting from historic water rights, for example, two projects include agricultural activities on portions of the conserved open space. In one (i.e., the case described above), irrigated land supports cattle grazing; in the other, hay production. In both cases communities have invested in new irrigation measures that allow them to conserve water and supplement in-stream flows for salmonids through transfers of water rights to a local conservation group. Despite being near a premier fly-fishing river, one project engineered a trout stream complete with meanders, pools and

riffles, and native riparian vegetation. Meanwhile all of the communities feature walking trails generally without public access. One project includes horse trails linked to several thousand acres of public land. Indeed close proximity to areas managed by federal agencies (e.g., the Bureau of Land Management and the U.S. Forest Service) or private conservation groups (e.g., The Nature Conservancy) is a common feature of these developments.

13.9 Whose Environmental Management?

> I'm a minority of one, totally. I hate [clearing brush]. Yeah it's better for [preventing] fire, but it's devastating to much of the habitat… all the wonderful under story, serviceberry, and snowberry, and deer brush… all the wonderful low plants… (Interview, Wasco County, 6-6-2006).

Environmental management of open space/common areas associated with the projects studied involves various entities, including local governments, regional land trusts, and the U.S. Forest Service. All of the Wasco projects incorporate open space with walking trails that are protected from future development. In one commons area a conservation easement held by a regional land trust protects riparian areas. The land trust has sponsored riparian habitat improvements and the local government developed trails through another property that allowed community access to an adjacent park. But more often than not it is homeowners associations that own and manage common areas of a project. At least one association organizes regular land stewardship work parties, including using state funds to help with improving wildlife habitat and minimizing fire danger. In other cases association rules require landowners to abide by strict landscaping and planting guidelines, such as landscaping only with specified native plants and restoring plants and rocks in disturbed construction sites.

Interviews with residents revealed the importance of biophysical environments and developer commitments to environmental protection in determining their purchase. While dramatic views of regional natural features were clearly a significant factor, residents spoke about environmental management features within their communities as a strong influence in their decisions. In non-agriculturally oriented projects residents valued the respect for native vegetation upheld in community bylaws, emphasizing that native vegetation reduces water consumption and supports wildlife habitats. These residents spoke of wildlife in their yards and the sense that their communities tread lightly on the landscape. Similarly home-owners in agriculture-oriented projects voiced their enjoyment of "oases in the desert" and appreciation for a lifestyle opportunity that helps to maintain rural traditions.

Despite such sentiments landowner activities may or may not match the sense of place and management established by the developer. In one Wasco project a new resident negotiated with the developer to install a fruit orchard, while in Deschutes a resident planted a small apple orchard. In both cases uses are consistent with the meanings the respective developers place on a cultural landscape that is tied to regional agricultural history. But in a Wasco County project noted for its strict ecological covenants and habitat focus, when a few residents tried to amend rules to

allow horses other residents contested this effort and ultimately prevailed. Regardless of the land's ranching history a majority of residents saw horses as inappropriate given the new ecology-oriented meanings they associate with the area's oak woodlands. This example points to ways that place meanings among residents in a specific project may come into conflict with one another. More often, however, this mismatch is tied to similar place meanings but different levels of commitment to environmental protection and aesthetic concerns. In one case residents complained that the emphasis on housing aesthetics in their community's bylaws presented a barrier to the installation of solar panels. They saw this situation as inconsistent with the developer's supposed concern for conservation. In another case a resident was frustrated by the lack of awareness among neighbors and the developer-resident about the need to remove invasive species and oak management. This resident organized regular work parties to remove exotics, but discussions about improving oak habitat through tree thinning were resisted by the developer-resident, reflecting differing place meanings associated with forests, forest change, and untouched nature.

13.10 Conclusion

Using a political ecology framework to examine the relationship of sense of place to amenity migration and evolving environmental management practices in the cases discussed above reveals several important points. First, differing ideas about landscape qualities, place meanings, and environmental management play out within the wider context of regional changes and among competing rural capitalisms. Access to capital, both by developers and residents, is key to fusing a sense of place with management in particular places. However the distinction between developers and residents is not as clear as the literature often assumes; indeed they may be one and the same. Many of the Central Oregon developers interviewed here are in-migrants whose presence is directly tied to the process of amenity migration. These individuals comprise what might be best described as *amenity developers*, owing both to their links to the political-economic changes that drew them to these locations *and* to their active role in producing specific landscapes that reinforce this process. For these resident amenity-developers, regional and global capital is critical in realizing their personal place meanings not just on one parcel but across an entire subdivision.

In amenity residential projects developers discursively *and* materially alter landscapes and resource uses by deploying new design features and imposing environmental management practices. Personal values shape practices that valorize particular uses (e.g., agriculture or wildlife habitat) within specific spaces, which fashions marketable natural amenities and thereby create a set of place meanings that re-commodify landscapes. These ensure control of landscapes in a way that conforms to the developer's vision. Amenity developers see different place meanings and act based on diverse motivations, sometimes attempting to create alternatives to wider practices in the locations and communities where they build. For one amenity developer, his project was the last resort to make things 'right' on the landscape and prevent what he viewed as the

materialization of inappropriate and inauthentic place meanings. In another case the project represented an opportunity for a long-time developer to deviate from the conventional development process and "do things differently." This developer's efforts illuminate the creation of idealized places by individuals affiliated with (yet still distrustful of) the "conventional" development process' impacts on landscapes. For other developers the conservation design features may represent the path of least resistance, providing a niche product that allows a project to "pencil out" in economically rewarding ways and/or minimize institutional barriers created by county planning controls.

For non-developer residents the proliferation of such projects means that those individuals or households with sufficient money have greater choice within the real estate market. Buyers can both consume the amenities that result from emergent place meanings and purchase into a community with a set of management practices that ostensibly will protect *their* place meaning. This is not to argue that this arrangement has no social or ecological consequences (e.g., DeStefano & DeGraaf, 2003; Hurley & Halfacre, 2011) or that social and economic exclusion does not limit access to housing opportunities in these projects (e.g., Duncan & Duncan 2004). Still, while many landowners in the project are in-migrants some developments may offer affordable housing choices for county residents as well.

Environmental management practices in areas experiencing amenity-related urbanization remain uneven. While planning creates some constraints on the types of place meanings that can be inscribed into the landscape, land trusts are important to the creation of lasting place meanings that blend agriculture and conservation. Providing an agricultural amenity maintains continuity with the history of these places while providing legitimacy to the ecological protection features associated with the aesthetic and recreational amenities that are flowing rivers. Remembering that place connections are often diverse, nuanced, and multi-layered (Cheng et al., 2003), this study suggests a need to tease apart the ways that place meanings are produced by developers *and* the amenity migrants who purchase properties in their developments. Although developers rely on particular place meanings to attract amenity buyers, residents may contest those meanings and challenge the management practices that protect a developer's own sense of place in the development. This topic warrants further study. A similar focus on sense of place might reveal important distinctions among environmental management strategies by landowners in conventional residential developments.

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Part IV
Mapping Place

Chapter 14
Participatory Place Mapping in Fire Planning

Michael Cacciapaglia and Laurie Yung

Abstract Place situates social phenomena in geographical space, and thus the concept of place demands careful consideration of the role of scale and how different scales interact. This chapter discusses a study that used participatory mapping methods to examine the relationship between place meanings and proposed management actions. The results showed that while participating landowners readily described and mapped special places, site-specific special places did not influence views on fire and fuels management. Instead landowner preferences for fire and fuels management were situated almost entirely at larger scales and explained by broader worldviews and ideologies about proper stewardship and the appropriate human-nature relationship. Getting scale "right" is critically important for public lands managers engaged in project planning at multiple scales.

Keywords Wildland fire • Wildland-urban interface • Land-use conflicts • Timber production • Mutual learning

The question of how to manage fire and fuels in ways that accomplish ecological and social goals is of growing importance. In many western forests fuels have accumulated as a result of decades of fire suppression. Higher fuel loads increase the risk of catastrophic or stand-replacing fires. Climate change may exacerbate the situation by increasing both the frequency and intensity of fires in the American West. At the same time rural residential development within forested landscapes has expanded and forest landowners living in the wildland urban interface (WUI) are disproportionately impacted by fire and fuel treatments. Forest fires and fuel management can affect economic resources, scenic views, and private property. As local communities are

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brought into the conversation about the management of nearby forests it is particularly important to understand the views of forest landowners on the management of fire and fuels. Research into place may provide important insights into landowner views on environmental change and proposed management actions related to fire and fuels.

This chapter explores the potential of participatory mapping to link place to decision-making. It describes a study on the Kootenai National Forest in northwest Montana, which utilized in-depth interviews and a computer-based participatory mapping exercise to understand landowner place meanings and the relationship between these meanings and views on fire and fuel management. In contrast to assumptions common in the literature this study found that forest landowners were willing and able to identify and describe special places, but these places had little or no relationship with landowner views on fire and fuel management in the same landscape. Rather management preferences were related to broader ideologies about appropriate stewardship and the human-nature relationship that landowners applied across the broad landscape. Below we describe this scalar mismatch and the implications for planning and management and for the use of participatory mapping.

14.1 From Place Research to Participatory Mapping

As described earlier in this book people's relationships with place emerge from a complex mix of memory, meaning, history, experience, symbolism, practice, values, and interests. Place meanings are important to people's relationships with place, but they are not necessarily shared or agreed upon. Even in small, rural communities there are multiple and sometimes competing views (Belsky, 2002; DuPruis & Vandergeest, 1996). Thus place meanings are part of a broader sociopolitical landscape characterized by agreement and difference, shared and contested ideas, and—especially in the case of fire and fuel management in the West—conflict over natural resource management.

Decisions about fire and fuels management are frequently site-specific (e.g. the decision to thin particular stands of trees or conduct prescribed burning), and in such cases understanding site-specific place meanings and the extent to which people consider a place "special" may be critical. As one researcher notes:

> When people have highly valued aesthetic and emotional experiences in specific places… these places…take on particular importance for them and become "special places." People become attached to such places (Schroeder, 2002).

Schroeder (2004) also suggests that understanding special places can help managers protect the qualities that people value in particular locations on the landscape.

Despite extensive research and improved understanding of place meanings and special places very few studies examine the relationship between place meanings and specific management actions. Far too often researchers and decision-makers make seemingly logical but potentially unfounded assumptions about the relationship between place meanings and proposed management actions. They assume that a

given action threatens particular meanings or that the meanings influence views on actions. In the absence of empirical evidence for such relationships managers are left guessing at how meanings influence public views on proposed management actions and how management actions might impact relationships with place. For example, if a campsite is important to local residents should it be protected from catastrophic fire through thinning? If tourists value a scenic view should managers attempt to maintain that landscape's aesthetic qualities? To make effective decisions on such issues managers need to better understand whether (and if so, under what conditions) place meanings influence opinions on management actions.

Participatory mapping provides a method to link people's views on place with their ideas about specific management proposals and to specifically examine how they relate spatially. Mapping has become increasingly important in place research because it provides a window into the spatial nature of place meanings and a way to represent such meanings visually. Geospatial data, usually in the form of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) maps, is a critical component of natural resource decision-making. However to date social scientists have struggled to capture complex and nuanced social data in such formats. Furthermore, because of the technical expertise it demands GIS is oftentimes an inaccessible technology and is thus difficult to utilize to engage the public. But if social data such as place meanings can be adequately represented in a visual format, such information might be more accessible to a range of interested parties. For example, participatory GIS exercises could be incorporated into public involvement processes mandated by the National Environmental Policy Act. Also, collaborative groups could employ participatory mapping as they negotiate and envision proposed projects. Frequently a visual aid such as a map can elicit different reactions and clarify important ambiguities present in abstract group discussions. Some place researchers suggest that this type of interaction can contribute to mutual learning, trust building, and other benefits (Carver, 2003; Gunderson, Watson, Nelson, & Titre, 2004; Williams, 1995).

In the past two decades mapping tools have been used to understand the spatial components of public views on issues such as the placement of nuclear waste (Evans, Kingston, & Carver, 2004), conservation and tourism development (Raymond & Brown, 2007), ecosystem services (Raymond et al., 2009), and legislation on national scenic byways (Brown, 2003). Early efforts involved working with pencils or markers and paper maps (see Gunderson & Watson, 2007) or placing stickers-dots on maps to represent various environmental values (see Brown, 2006). Gradually these methods have given way to digital mapping techniques. Brown continues to advance the landscape values/sticker-dot methods, now in digital form, while McIntyre and others (Yuan, McIntyre, Payne, & Moore, 2004) have developed a process using GIS points and polygons. Carver and collaborators have developed computer-based programs that allow participants to paint locations with a spray can tool and describe their importance (see Carver et al., 2009). As transdisciplinary work becomes more common and GIS technology becomes more accessible efforts to map supposedly qualitative data in quantitative ways will no doubt continue.

The research described here was part of a larger research program focused on mapping place meanings to better understand local views on fire, fuels, and wilderness.

The initial study by Gunderson and Watson (2007) used paper-and- pencil mapping to understand residents' relationships with the Selway-Bitterroot Wilderness in Montana. In the second study (described in Chap. 16) Watson et al. (2008) applied Carver's computer-based mapping method to investigate place meanings and threats posed by activities to reduce fuels and wildfires on the Flathead Reservation in western Montana. The research described here represents the third iteration of the study.

14.2 Fire and Fuel Management on the Kootenai National Forest

Fuel build-up and the expansion of rural residential development, combined with prolonged drought and the risk of high-intensity, stand-replacing fires, have pushed the issue of fire to the forefront in Western rural communities. The 2000 National Fire Plan suggests that federal agencies and local governments "respond to…severe fires, reduce the impacts of these wildland fires on rural communities, [and] reduce immediate hazards to communities in the wildland-urban interface" (United States Department of the Interior [USDI] & United States Department of Agriculture [USDA], 2000, p.1). The plan recommends that National Forests invest in projects to reduce fire risk and work directly with communities to do so.

Although many studies have examined the economic and ecological aspects of fire (Agee, 1993; Arno & Allison-Bunnell, 2002) the social and cultural aspects of wildland fire have received much less attention. Yet as Daniel, Weidemann, and Hines (2003) note, "support for fuel-reduction strategies hinges on public perception and evaluation of a complex set of tradeoffs among uncertain and potentially conflicting values…[including] fire safety and aesthetic/amenity values." Previous social science research on fire has established that landowners in the wildland-urban interface (WUI) often prioritize the aesthetic qualities of their property over reducing fire hazards there (Daniel et al., 2003; Winter, Vogt, & Fried, 2000). Nelson, Monroe, and Johnson (2005) found that homeowners in Minnesota and Florida managed tradeoffs between an array of values including "naturalness, aesthetics, wildlife considerations, recreation and privacy" when making decisions about fire safety on their property. Many landowners who favored thinning on public lands did not favor it on their own property for aesthetic reasons. This seeming contradiction is well documented (e.g., Daniel et al., 2003; Vogt, 2003; Winter & Fried, 2000).

The study reported here was conducted in the rural, forested community of Libby, Montana, located in the Kootenai National Forest (KNF). The Cabinet Mountains Wilderness (CMW) lies at the southern end of the KNF. Within miles of Libby, the Cabinet Range descends steeply into heavily forested foothills. The Cabinet landscape includes a wilderness, roadless areas, and areas managed for multiple uses, including some timber production. National Forest lands gradually transition into clusters of rural residential development and some isolated homes completely ensconced by the National Forest lands. This zone,

where private parcels adjoin and intersperse public and private forest lands, comprises the WUI.

Like many rural communities across the West the economy of Libby historically was based on natural resources extraction, namely, mining and logging. Now the region is evolving to a more diverse economy in which extractive natural resource industries are not as dominant as they were in the past. Some residents and community organizations see a future in the growing service sector, including tourism and recreation. However this vision does not represent the views of many residents who still rely on and champion the traditional livelihoods based on timber and ore. Furthermore local views on fire and fuel management in the WUI vary considerably, and land managers have the difficult job of negotiating the interests and needs of different groups. Conflict over management of public lands has figured prominently in local politics. However if decision-makers can better understand residents' relationships with place they may be able to work through such conflict and achieve more desirable management results for local communities.

14.3 Integrating Participatory Mapping into Qualitative Interviews

To better understand the meanings and views of local landowners the first author conducted in-depth, semi-structured interviews with forest landowners during the summer of 2007. The qualitative method of extended interviews was chosen to gain insight into complex place meanings and views on fire and fuel management, and connections between the two. A forest landowner was defined as an individual or family who own a parcel of forested land adjacent to or within close proximity (<1 mile) of the Kootenai National Forest. In total 29 interviews were conducted with 37 participants. Seven married couples were interviewed together, as were one landowner and his property manager. A diverse sample was achieved by using nonprobability, purposive sampling that included landowners who varied in length of residence, gender, age, political affiliation, ethnicity, and occupation. An interview guide ensured that interviews were systematic and that data was comparable across interviews, while also allowing for unanticipated topics to emerge. Interview questions focused on landowner relationships with specific sites and the landscape as a whole. Landowners were also asked about wildland fire and fuel management.

After detailed discussion of place meanings and views on fire and fuels, landowners completed a computer-based mapping exercise adapted from the Tagger mapping program developed by Carver, Evans, and Fritz (2002), and described by Watson and others (Chap. 16). This mapping program aims to capture "fuzzy" boundaries—rather than the points, lines, and polygons commonly employed in GIS-based mapping—by using a "spray can" tool which allows landowners to mark locations on the map by "painting" them with bright colors. Landowners can make marks of various sizes and shapes at locations on a large map that displays topographic features, landownership,

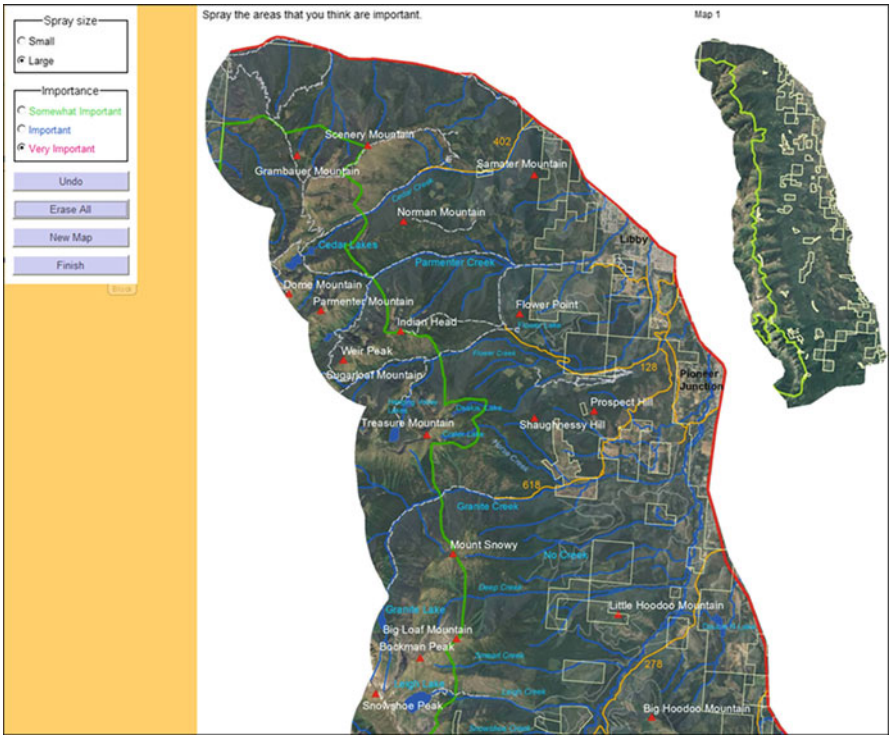

Fig. 14.1 Computer-based mapping exercise

and human developments. There is also an option to "paint" the entire landscape on a small inset map (see Fig. 14.1).

The mapping exercise asked landowners to mark important places (or even the entire landscape) on the map and describe the importance of such places. They were able to make multiple maps, identifying locations as important for different reasons. Landowners made between one and eight maps, with an average of 3.25 maps. There was an option to designate sites as "very important," "important," or "somewhat important;" almost all landowners selected the first label for the duration of the mapping exercise, identifying all of their important places as "very important."

In the next step landowners were asked to map their preferences for three different fire and fuel management alternatives—wildland fire use, prescribed fire, and mechanical thinning. Landowners were provided with descriptions of each of these options using lay terminology and standard Forest Service definitions. Landowners then created three maps related to fire and fuels, identifying locations where each of the three management options was not acceptable. Because this mapping exercise was embedded in an in-person interview, landowners verbally described why specific places were important or why specific fuel treatments were unacceptable in

particular locations (unlike the mapping exercise described in Chap. 16, which required participants to describe or "tag" locations on the map by writing text in a box on the computer).

The mapping exercise allowed the researchers to better understand the spatial dimensions of landowners' place meanings and their preferences for fire and fuel management. It also served as an elicitation tool, deepening the dialogue between the first author and participating landowners by enabling them to visually represent and spatially delineate their place meanings and management preferences. The expectation at the outset of the project was that maps would also demonstrate a spatial relationship between special places (or site-specific meanings) and views on fire and fuels. In other words, the aim was to provide evidence for the hypothesis that understanding special places would help managers understand which management actions might be supported or opposed. Other objectives were to assess the ability of the participatory mapping to spatially represent social data in a meaningful visual format and learn if place meanings could be represented spatially in a way that captured the complexity of those meanings and provided accessible GIS data to managers. Because the mapping exercise was embedded in a qualitative interview it was possible to evaluate what was learned from the conventional portion of the interview versus the mapping exercise versus the two combined.

14.4 Connecting Place Meanings on Fire and Fuels Management: Why Scale Matters

The results of the mapping exercise revealed that place meanings and views on fire and fuel management were indeed connected, but not necessarily at the scale suggested by previous research. Although landowners' place meanings operated on scales ranging from site-specific "special places" to the entire landscape their views on fire and fuel management were situated almost exclusively at the landscape scale. Furthermore management preferences were not connected to special places but to landscape-scale place meanings. These findings have important implications for how place research can be applied to decision-making.

Landowners in this study mapped and described special places, often in great detail, but ultimately argued that the entire landscape was more important than specific sites. Landowners described place meanings at multiple scales, from the very discreet (e.g. a particular stand of blue spruce trees) to the very broad (e.g. the entire Cabinet Mountains range). Landowners marked their special places on the map, sometimes meticulously, and discussed them in great detail, often relating personal stories, experiences, and memories. Special places fit into four general categories: (1) personal property, (2) recreational areas, (3) scenic views, and (4) hunting and gathering areas. For example, one landowner explained his huckleberry

gathering activities in great detail, as this activity was both an annual rite and part of living traditionally. He says:

> Well, it's all important to me. But up in the Scenery Mountain country this is all really important, because at one time this used to be really good huckleberrying right in here. And in Cedar Lakes it still is… My family is old-time huckleberries. I probably know more about huckleberries than most people in the world.

This landowner wove memory, story, family, and subsistence together to convey the contemporary and historical significance of these places. He went on to discuss how the gathering ritual connected him to both his cultural heritage and to the land. Landowners attached multiple meanings to specific areas, as these special places were the sites of annual getaways, family events, important memories, subsistence resources, and environmental values.

But despite their willingness to describe and map special places landowners overwhelmingly related to the Cabinet Mountains as a whole landscape, and they repeatedly cautioned the interviewer against overemphasizing specific sites. This was exemplified by the landowner who prefaced his remarks on special huckleberry spots with "Well, it's all important to me." Before that landowner would talk about the significance of huckleberries, he felt compelled to convey the importance of the entire landscape. Most of the landowners echoed this sentiment.

In another example, when asked about her special places and how they influenced her ideas about management, another landowner responded:

> You can't single out a specific area in my mind that's better than another.…It's all really important. I don't want to give it a lesser degree and say, well my place is more important and just, you know, 20 miles around is important. No, it's all important. It's all home…I can't say that I only want to take care of my spot, I don't care what happens to the rest. That's just so irresponsible to me.

Another landowner concurred:

> Well, it is [all important], because everything is part of the whole. You can't look at it… I mean, you can. Of course you can analyze different areas. But everything is related to everything else. And it all has to be important. We can't just have this microbe focus on one, little area without taking everything into consideration.

Some landowners actually resisted identifying any spatial locations as more or less important than the entire landscape. They argued that although they could identify favorite places management agencies must take a broader view of the whole landscape.

14.5 Preferences for Fire and Fuels Management and Landscape-Scale Place Meanings

In keeping with their focus on the entire landscape nearly all landowners situated their preferences about fire and fuel management at the landscape level. Many contended they had no spatially specific preferences, instead marking the inset map

with the entire landscape. For example, when asked to map the locations he found unacceptable for thinning, one long-term resident, said:

> I don't think that I could say this mile-wide band on my [property] perimeter is more important than what's up adjacent to the dam. It's not any more important than the whole thing. When I talk about that they need to be managing "it", "it" is all of it. They need to start managing the whole thing [the whole National Forest]. And this piece [indicating his private property] isn't any more important to me than beyond that.

In his thinking about fire and fuel management this landowner did not see his private property as separate from the broader Cabinet landscape. The notion that one person would expect management to accommodate his personal special place seemed offensive to him and his ideas of community responsibility and stewardship. Many other landowners in the study also suggested that management needs to account for the whole landscape as opposed to privileging specific locations.

To explain their management preferences landowners drew on complex sets of meanings, values, interests, and ideologies. Ideas about aesthetics, appropriate use of resources, the meaning of stewardship, and the human role in nature underlay two narratives about the Cabinet landscapes—one emphasizing a working forest and resource use; the other centering on natural processes and non-commodity values. Landowners who describe the Cabinets as a working landscape privileged economic interests and resource use. They argued that humans are stewards who have dominion over the forest and a responsibility to actively manage and benefit from natural resources. Thus allowing wildland fires or prescribed fires to burn was seen as a violation of these responsibilities, as evident in the following interview excerpts where two different landowners explain that their maps depict their opposition to such practices at the landscape scale.

> I think that's poor management. We're stewards of the land. If we weren't going to be stewards of the land, then we shouldn't be here, and we should just let nature take its course. But we are. We live here, and we have a responsibility.

> But I think [not thinning and allowing trees to burn] is wasting resources. And in wasting the resources you also allow the ground fuels to accumulate, and so when you do have the fires they're just that much worse. It needs to be harvested rather than wasted.

Landowners who described a working forest narrative also emphasized that resource extraction is the most appropriate use of the forest, park-like stands with widely-spaced trees are aesthetically appealing, and fire is generally bad. Landowners who subscribed to this view mapped and described thinning as the most acceptable means of fuel reduction, because it provides "jobs in the woods," useable timber products, and fire protection.

In contrast a smaller but significant portion of landowners—including many newcomers as well as some long-term residents—described the Cabinets landscape as a natural forest, emphasizing intrinsic value, wildlife, and ecological values. For this group appropriate use of the forest by humans is largely confined to recreational and aesthetic enjoyment rather than commercial resource extraction. They described fire as generally "good," "natural," and "part of the ecosystem." Below, two landowners connect their views on fire and fuel management to notions of the Cabinets as a natural landscape.

> I have a really hard time with thinning by machine in that I have little faith in the system. I wonder what that really means to the animals and to the rest of the terrain when they go in and thin. The idea of it is probably nice. But I wonder what the reality of it is. I'd say it's unacceptable. Just as a general thing. I don't have specific places.

> I have no problem with burning as a practice. That's necessary. It's natural, and it needs to be utilized…I think that's appropriate because fire is a natural part of the ecological cycle so I have no problem with it at all.

These landowners also emphasized stewardship but envisioned appropriate stewardship as generally "hands-off," suggesting that humans should not interfere in ecological systems. For these landowners thinning was seen as intrusive, and controlled burning and/or wildland fire use were preferred for their "regenerative" effect and because they "restore the balance of nature." Natural landscape landowners preferred a "natural" or "pristine" look to the forest (i.e., unmanaged) without overt signs of human activity.

The working and natural landscape narratives represent more than mere descriptions of a place; they are both embedded in and contain ideas about the proper use and management of the forest and its resources. Although special places are part of landowners' relationship with the landscape they were not invoked in explanations of fire and fuel management preferences. Instead landowners connected management preferences to landscape-scale narratives of place.

14.6 Resident Adaptability: Rethinking Special Places

Researchers and managers often assume that relationships with special places are of paramount concern when people consider proposed management actions. In Schroeder's (2002) words, "When a person's "special place" is lost or altered by a human action such as a timber harvest… or by a sudden natural change such as a fire… the person may experience intense emotions such as grief and anger" (p. 12). Similarly a Forest Service employee interviewed for this project suggested that local support for fuel reduction would be dramatically impacted by people's passion for special places. According to this manager large-scale fuel reductions are necessary to protect landowners and the community of Libby from severe fires, but "the likelihood of that ever happening is pretty low because you're getting into that very special area that people are pretty passionate about." Both researchers and managers imagine a strong and direct link between special places and responses to management actions and environmental change.

In this study relationships with special places, though important to landowners, had little bearing on preferences for fire and fuel management. Very few landowners felt strongly about proposed alterations to their special places. Instead most were very willing to accept change in their special places, acknowledging with equanimity that such change is an inevitable and integral part of the forest landscape. Several landowners maintained that their places will remain special even in

the face of dramatic ecological and aesthetic change (such as fire) or significant management intervention (such as fuel reduction). Others said that they would find new special places if fire destroyed the old ones, indicating that in certain situations special places may actually be substitutable. Rarely did a forest landowner in this study conclude that their special places should be accommodated by a fire management decision.

Differences between residents and visitors might explain why this study's conclusions contradict much of the literature on special places, which has focused largely on recreationists, who might have different kinds of attachments to specific geographic locations. The relationships that recreationists have with special places may be more salient because in at least some cases recreationists only experience the landscape in a limited set of locations. In contrast, residents experience many different locations on the landscape, and they have multiple relationships with these locations. Thus for residents place meanings may be connected to larger number of geographic sites and these meanings may be more diverse, drawing from livelihood activities, recreational use during different seasons, views on community history, and ideas about appropriate land management. Furthermore landowners who reside in the WUI are directly affected by forest management and experience such management on a daily basis. Finally, because fire and fuel management is such a prominent local issue landowners may simply prioritize such management actions over special places.

The lesson here is that the relationship between place and management decisions may be highly contextualized. The population of interest and the specific management issue (e.g., fire, water quality, wildlife habitat, etc.) may change the way place meanings interact with management preferences.

14.7 It Could Be the Forest, Not the Trees: Avoiding a Scalar Mismatch

It is often assumed that a variety of social phenomena operate at the same scale, including place meanings and public views on management actions. As described above past research has suggested that understanding how people view special places on the landscape will help managers understand which management actions will be acceptable in which locations. Because place situates social phenomenon in geographical space the place concept demands that we think more carefully about the role of scale and how different scales interact.

In this study landowner preferences for fire and fuel management were situated almost exclusively at the landscape scale and were not related to special places. Instead management preferences were connected to meanings and broader ideologies that landowners explicitly situated at the landscape scale. In other words, the stories that landowners told about the Cabinets landscape as a whole and about their relationship with this landscape, which revealed meanings, values, and interests associated with the area, were closely connected to views on fire and fuels.

There existed in this study a mismatch in scale between special places and management preferences, which was revealed in large part through the mapping exercise. Getting scale "right" is critically important to management, especially for public lands managers engaged in project planning at multiple scales, from site-specific treatments to landscape level restoration. In certain situations if managers are not alert to a potential mismatch they might rely on information about special places in making decisions and overlook social phenomena that might be more relevant to management preferences. In the Cabinet Mountains area a fuel management decision based on accommodating special places would have overlooked the values and interests that were actually linked to landowner preferences for fuel treatments. This sort of scalar mismatch could have resulted in inaccurate conclusions about public views on fire and fuel management options, potentially leading to increased local conflict or public opposition to National Forest management efforts.

Decision-makers and researchers need to be attentive to place meanings that operate at different scales and choose the appropriate scale to provide insight into the management issue of interest. It also should be noted that not all management preferences will be tied to specific locations on the forest; some management preferences will be tied to broad values and interests that people apply to the entire landscape, ideas about proper forest management and resource use, local economies and decision-making, and the meaning of stewardship. To the extent that these ideas are applied across the landscape they may be grounded more in political ideologies about the role of humans in nature and environmental management as opposed to relationships with place. If so, the broader sociopolitical landscape is also important to understanding views on fire and fuels (see Cacciapaglia, Yung, & Patterson, 2012 for more detail on these findings).

14.8 Using Participatory Mapping to Understand Local Views

Social mapping, or the spatial representation of values, views, and interests on GIS-based maps for inclusion in decision-making, is becoming increasingly popular. As federal, state, and local agencies work towards greater civic participation and democratization, tools that map social data may become a key part of planning. If social data (such as data on relationships to place) can be adequately represented on GIS maps, then decision-makers might be able to integrate such data with biophysical data.

In this study participatory mapping provided insights beyond traditional interviews. First, the mapping exercise provided an important elicitation tool, deepening discussions on place and fire and fuels. Second, the technique used in the study was critical in understanding the issues of scale. A mapping process that privileged site-specific phenomena such as special places would likely have overlooked the scalar mismatch described above. Thus in order to capture the social phenomena most relevant to the decision at hand it is important that mapping exercises allow landowners to identify locations at a variety of scales.

Including this mapping exercise in a qualitative interview in which landowners could comment on their experience with it made possible an assessment of the effectiveness of mapping in capturing the complexity of social views. The maps alone did not adequately capture or represent the rich detail of place meanings or the complexity of views on fire and fuels. Thus mapping cannot be seen as a substitute for other types of social research; it is not a quick method for obtaining the same information in a handy GIS format. Maps of special places may only capture certain components of individuals' and communities' complex relationships with places. By attempting to incorporate place research into planning via mapping decision-makers may paradoxically run the risk of reducing the complexity of local relationships—the complexity that makes these relationships so critical to planning. Decision-makers need to include more than just maps of social data to truly understand public views on proposed management actions.

14.9 Conclusion

Participatory mapping provides an important mechanism for linking place to decision-making. However to realize the potential of participatory mapping researchers must attend to issues of scale and how place meanings fit into the larger sociopolitical landscape. To fully integrate the lived experiences, stories, values, and interests of stakeholders mapping should be combined with other methods of gathering social data, and mapping results should be understood within the context of a broader program of social research.

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Chapter 15
Participatory Mapping of Place Values in Northwestern Ontario

Norman McIntyre, Perrine Lesueur, and Jeff Moore

Abstract Place values are conceptualized as the meanings and experiences of the people who live, work, and play in the area valued. The challenge of place-based conservation is to represent these values through discursive processes that build understanding rather than some objective assessment of their utility. Place values were identified through a survey of residents associated with the boreal forests of northwestern Ontario, Canada, where land and access issues are often contentious and land management is dominated by forest companies and remote tourism operators. Understanding the spatial distribution and character of place values provided an opportunity for managers to better integrate forestry company activities, remote tourism operations, and recreation.

Keywords Spatial values • Timber harvest • Crown land • GIS public participation • Place representation

Some researchers have argued that place-based conservation has become more popular in recent years (e.g., Farnum & Kruger, 2008). This is partly due to increased involvement of planners and managers in community-based collaborative partnerships that have encouraged a move away from traditional "one-size-fits-all" planning models (McIntyre, Moore, & Yuan, 2008). Place-based planning approaches are focused on

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specific planning contexts and are collaborative in that they recognize that people form strong bonds to places and want to be involved in influencing the future direction of change in such places.

Maps have traditionally served as a major tool in representing resources, particularly those associated with biophysical and recreational use (e.g., forest types, topography, recreation sites). With the increased availability and reduced cost of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) technologies spatial representation can now be applied a range of situations beyond traditional geography and demographics (Steinberg & Steinberg, 2006). Most recently the development of internet-based GIS has further extended the scope and possibilities for various publics to be involved in community-based planning (Carver, Evans, Kingston, & Turton, 2001) or what has come to be called "public-participation GIS" (ppGIS). These new technologies have enabled experimentation with various Web-based approaches to eliciting and mapping a variety of social data associated with issues ranging from neighborhood regeneration (Kingston, 2007) to environmental concerns (Evans, Kingston, & Carver, 2004).

Despite these developments impediments persist in integrating social data into natural resource planning. One problems is that social scientists are reluctant to collect and represent such data spatially (McIntyre, Yuan, Payne, & Moore, 2004; Williams, 2008). Also there are attitudinal and legislative constraints to recognizing the legitimate contribution of such "soft" data in enhancing public input (Farnum & Reed, 2008). Beyond this a number of broader theoretical and practical challenges arise in eliciting and spatially representing the "emotional ties and feelings of connectedness that people have for places" (Farnum & Kruger, 2008, p. 2) in decision-making. These challenges fall into four categories: the conceptualization of place values; how place values are elicited; how place values are represented spatially; and how place values are incorporated into decision-making. This chapter discusses these challenges in the context of a study on the values local residents attach to the boreal forest landscape of northwestern Ontario, Canada.

15.1 The Conceptualization of Place Values

More, Averill, and Stevens (1996) suggested that Brown (1984) provided a basis for a common understanding of the concept of values in natural resource management. His preference-related view of values is useful given that much of the contestation surrounding recreational use centers on the preference of one value (e.g., economic) over another (e.g., recreation). Brown distinguishes two major value realms: held and assigned. The former he defined as "an enduring concept of the preferable which influences choice and action," (p. 232) and the latter as "the expressed relative importance or worth of an object to an individual or group in a given context" (p. 233).

The concept of "held" forest values has been applied in studies on forests and forest ecosystems (e.g., Brown & Reed, 2000; Manning, Valliere, & Minteer, 1999; Xu & Bengston, 1997). Although this concept may be less relevant at the site or

locality level the notion of "assigned" values is useful in mapping forest values, as this process involves making choices among particular forest sites or localities and attaching values to them (McIntyre, Yuan, Payne, & Moore, 2004).

15.2 Eliciting Place Values from Users of Natural Resource Areas

Kuentzel, Tritton, Dennis, & Wang (1997) argue that the main difficulty with incorporating values into public participation processes is a lack of recognition of philosophical and theoretical differences about how people form values. They suggest that three dominant perspectives are in play: social utility (Bengston, 1994; Driver, Brown, Stankey, & Gregoire, 1987); social cohesiveness (Parsons, 1951); and social discourse or constructivist (Giddens, 1984).

In conceptualizing forest values the authors adopted a discursive approach, which recognizes that place values are "constructed through the interaction of individuals and structures in a socio-institutional context in places—they have a 'geography'" (Davies, 2003, p. 82). This is congruent with place research (e.g., Kreuger & Casey, 2000; Satterfield, 2002; Chaps. 14 and 16) that acknowledges the need to elicit context-specific values embodying the meanings and experiences of people who live, work, or play in that space as a precursor to place mapping. This approach contrasts with Brown (1984), which although recognizing qualitative acts of preferring (the relational realm) focuses on a quantitative social utility perspective (Kuentzel et al., 1997). Schroeder (Chap. 6) explores this relational realm, articulating it as "an implicit, felt dimension of awareness" that connects the realms of held and assigned values. He suggests that an essential part of eliciting and understanding place values is to create a space for feelings with regard to preferences about places. This moves the methods of place valuation from a focus on lists of attributes or values devised by researchers to a discursive process of developing an understanding of contextual place meanings.

The discursive approach adopted in this study involved a combination of focus groups and place mapping to develop a list of values for an area of boreal forest, which provided the basis for a recreational survey involving residents of Thunder Bay, Ontario, and visitors from the U.S. and other parts of Canada (for full details refer McIntyre et al., 2004, 2008). Analysis of the responses to the relative importance of the various values enabled the development of a boreal forest values scale used in the case study reported later in this chapter.

15.3 Spatial Representation of Place Values

At a practical level a major difficulty in including values data in planning has been the reluctance of social scientists to collect and represent these data spatially. Spatial representation of user values is important in integrating place-based meanings into

Geographic Information System (GIS) technologies used in resource-based decision models (Ghose, 2001). The growing emphasis on place-based, value-centered meanings requires that social scientists involved in planning recognize this need.

Limitations of map size have hampered research dependent on the collection of spatial data through surveys. Restrictions on the level of detail that can be communicated to respondents can impede their ability to accurately indicate places of interest. Recently developments in GIS technology enabling its use on the Internet (Kingston, 2007) have largely overcome these difficulties allowing lay professionals and the general public to contribute detailed spatial data in planning contexts (Carver et al., 2001; Kingston, Carver, Evans, & Turton, 2000). The case study discussed here combined a Web-based GIS survey and a conventional paper-map survey to elicit and map the place values of residents who use the boreal forest landscape along the north shore of Lake Superior in Canada (hereafter referred to as "the North Shore").

The remainder of this chapter focuses on discussing the issue of incorporating place values into decision-making. Prior to discussing the case study proper the authors provide some background information on forest management in Canada generally and more specifically in the province of Ontario.

15.4 Managing Crown Lands in Canada and Ontario

The public nature of most of the lands in Canada and the institutional arrangements governing resources defines the country's forest management. In most provinces the vast majority of the land is publicly-owned "Crown Land." Eighty-seven percent of the province of Ontario is Crown Land. In the northern section of the province 95% of the lands belong to the Crown (Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources [OMNR], 2008). Thus most forestry occurs on public land, which also supports other activities. Unlike the U.S., where forestry in national forests is managed at the federal level, the management of Crown land resources is a constitutionally mandated responsibility of the provinces. The role of the Canadian Forest Service is limited to science and policy, leaving the planning and management of forestry to ministries or departments in each province.

The Ontario Ministry of Natural Resources (OMNR) is responsible for managing Crown Lands to meet objectives that include ecosystem health, development and sustainability of natural resources, protection of natural heritage values, and the provision of recreation opportunities (OMNR, 2007, p. 1). The provincial land-use strategy of Ontario's Living Legacy sets the direction for management on more than 78 million acres of Crown land, encompassing most of the land currently available for forest harvesting. Approximately 15% of this land is conserved in protected areas, and another 4% is designated as Enhanced Management Areas (EMAs) intended to protect recreation, fish and wildlife, or remoteness (OMNR, p. 7). With little formal planning for the remaining 80% of the Crown land, managing recreation therein rests by default with the forest management planning process.

The province is divided into forest management units (FMUs) with timber harvesting rights for each licensed to private forestry companies. Under the Ontario Crown Forest Sustainability Act of 1994 the management of FMUs includes taking into account forest health along with social and economic values, including recreation. However although the OMNR publishes 35 guides on methods for protecting various forest values on Crown lands none address recreation. Thus in practice recreation values are most often dealt with on a case-by-case basis in response to public concerns.

15.5 Mapping North Shore Values and Recreational Use Characteristics

Values attached to places are socially constructed (Satterfield, 2002), which justifies an interpretive approach to their elicitation. Such an approach, however, presents a problem in that values are often expressed in ways that are unique to individuals—e.g., "a river where my grandfather took me fishing" (Patterson & Williams, 1998). Thus the main challenge in incorporating values into decision-making is to interpret the values so that they represent individual variation and yet are sufficiently generalizable to be managerially useful. The following case study describes an approach that meets this challenge.

The study area (Fig. 15.1) encompassed the southern portions of several FMUs, Conservation Reserves, and EMAs. Two of these EMAs provide management direction for forestry and recreation management along the shorelines of Lakes Superior and Nipigon. The former constitutes the southern boundary of the study area. Its western, eastern, and northern limits were defined arbitrarily because the actual recreational ranges of the residents were unknown. The study focused on the place values and outdoor activity characteristics of residents in the north shore communities of Red Rock, Nipigon, Schreiber, Terrace Bay, and Marathon.

The authors obtained a sample of 750 residents and their contact information from a commercially available database. To achieve maximum demographic representation in the survey the percentages of population in the five north shore communities (derived from census data) were used to select a random sample from each community. Because of difficulties with Internet access in some areas paper versions of the Web-based GIS survey designed for the project (Lesueur, 2008) also were available to potential respondents.

The survey collected information on characteristics of residents (e.g., gender, age, place of residence) and their outdoor recreation use (e.g., frequency, seasonal use, and types of activities). Respondents were asked to mark sites, areas, and routes used for their recreation on a digital or paper map. When a respondent located a place on the map he/she was prompted to rate the relative importance of seven value statements on a five-point scale (5 = very important) and indicate personal recreation use characteristics specific to that site. The value statements were derived by factor analysis of data from an earlier study in a similar boreal forest area west of

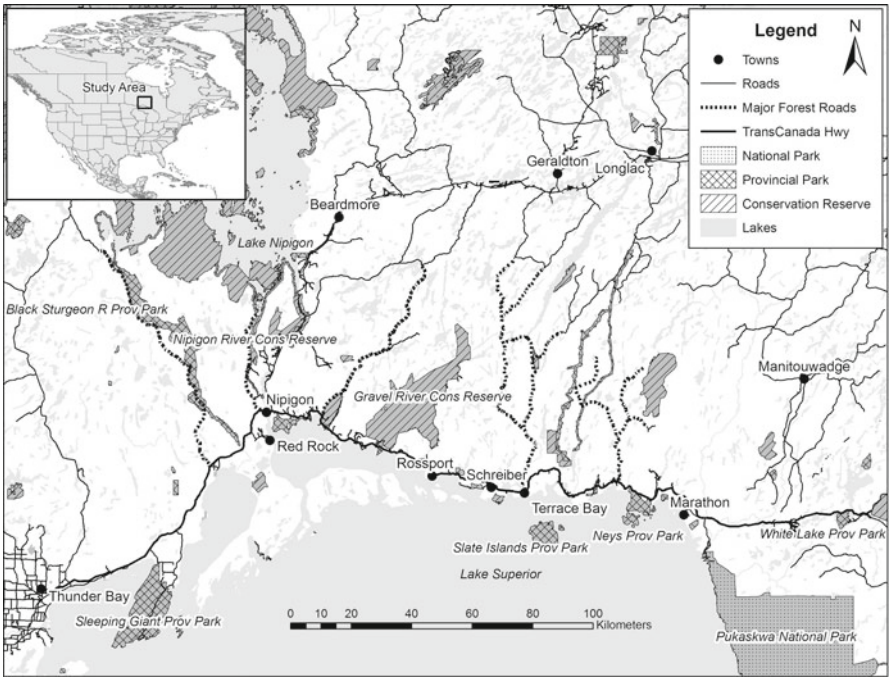

Fig. 15.1 Map of the study area (showing localities mentioned in the text)

Thunder Bay (McIntyre et al., 2004). The value categories were: wilderness and solitude, adventure, recreational diversity, wildlife, family recreation, consumptive recreation, and other values.

The first four categories are relatively self-explanatory. The other three combine social, recreational and physical characteristics of valued places. For example, family recreation comprised value statements like "a good place for families," "a place to keep for future generations" and "beautiful lakes." Consumptive recreation included "a good place for hunting and fishing," "good access," and notably "friends and camaraderie" as components of this factor. Other values connoted benefits such as a place for learning, economic support for local communities, a sacred place, and a place where a person can feel at home.

Of the 750 surveys distributed, 201 (27%) were completed, giving an overall response rate of 27%. These data provided information on 408 recreation sites across the region. The spatial distribution of responses was not significantly different from demographic distribution; however, many more men (76%) responded than women (24%), and younger persons (less than 40 years old) were underrepresented in comparison to census figures. A majority of the respondents (62%) had lived in the area for more than 20 years. In summary there is some confidence in the spatial representation of responses but less so for gender and age.

15.6 Recreation Use Patterns and Place Values of North Shore Residents

The first stage of the analysis mapped the broad recreational use patterns of residents using a density analysis procedure in ArcGIS. As Fig. 15.2 indicates, areas of higher use occurred along Lake Superior shores; the highways and forest roads around the main towns and along the Nipigon River and Lake Nipigon. These data suggest that the recreational activity of people living between Red Rock and Terrace Bay is largely confined to about 150 km (90 miles) north of the Trans-Canada Highway and west as far as Lake Nipigon. Road access to the north is relatively limited for Marathon residents who tend to recreate to the south in Pukaskwa National Park or west, within the study area.

The survey responses showed that consumptive values ranked as the most important (mean value = 3.55); followed by wilderness and solitude (3.4), family recreation (3.2), wildlife (3.1), and adventure (3.0). Recreation diversity (2.4) and other values (1.4) were rated as relatively unimportant. This pattern is similarly evident in a previous regional study (McIntyre et al., 2004) in which residents demonstrated a strong valuing of the boreal forest for consumptive activities such as fishing and hunting—a preference shared with visitors from the U.S. but not with other Canadians whose primary forest values related to learning, economic, and sacred purposes.

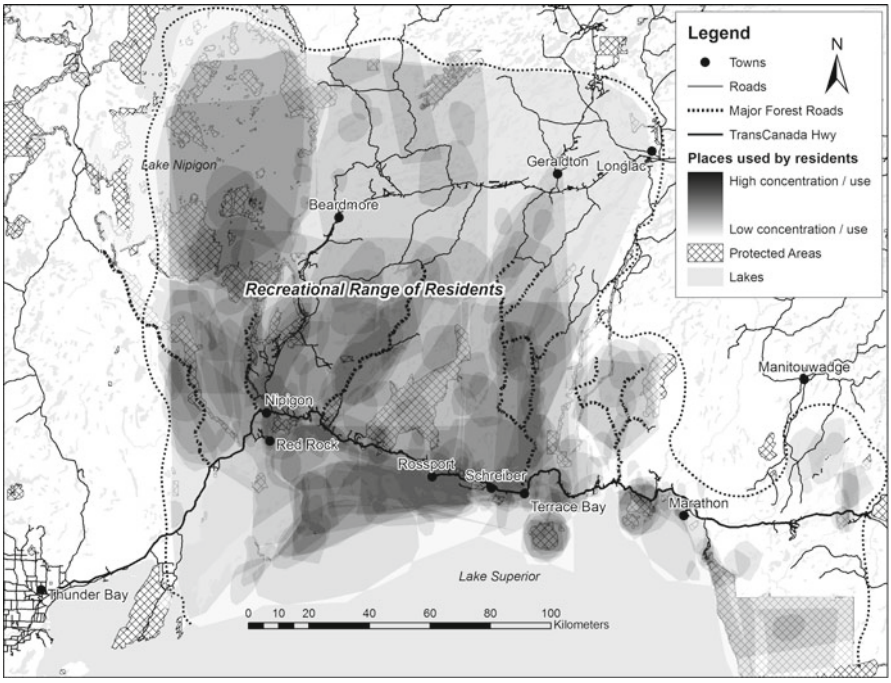

Fig. 15.2 Recreational use patterns of north shore residents

The analysis showed that females rated wilderness and solitude and adventure significantly higher than males. All age groups attributed similar importance to consumptive values and wilderness and solitude. However for the 40–59 year cohort, family recreation (mean value = 3.45) was second in importance to consumptive recreation, and for the youngest cohort (20–39 years) adventure commanded the highest rating (3.73).

15.7 Distribution and Characteristics of Valued Places

The second stage of the analysis classified the 408 places marked by respondents on the basis of the seven values. A combination of K-Means Cluster Analysis and Discriminant Analysis was used to classify the 408 places. The former procedure enabled classification on the basis of the seven values rated by respondents and the latter indicated the value or value combinations that best discriminated between the various clusters of sites. Four site clusters were identified: (a) consumptive recreation (159 sites); (b) other values (70 sites); (c) family recreation (95 sites); and (d) recreation diversity and wildlife and adventure (84 sites). A correct classification of 96% indicated that the four clusters were well discriminated by the predictor variables (values or value combinations).

These data enabled the authors to map the distribution of the cluster sites and delineate areas valued for individual values and value combinations. The cluster sites for other values and recreation diversity and wildlife and adventure were rather uniformly distributed across the study area, indicating that the other values cluster captured the importance of economic benefits to the community and significance as a sacred place where residents can learn about nature and feel at home. Furthermore the results revealed that residents perceived the North Shore as a place for viewing wildlife, having adventures, and enjoying diverse recreation opportunities. This diversity was reflected in the range of activities (e.g., fishing, relaxation, hiking, camping, canoeing, etc.) occurring at the sites as indicated by respondents. Overall the sites in this value cluster received the highest frequencies of use in all seasons.

In contrast, as seen in Fig. 15.3 sites valued for family recreation were the most spatially concentrated, occurring relatively close to population centers along the Trans-Canada Highway and major Crown land access roads (e.g., around Nipigon and Red Rock), as well as coastal waters of Lake Superior. Recreation activities at these sites include hiking, camping, nature and relaxation, and canoeing and other water sports carried out mainly in the summer.

Consumptive recreation, shown in Fig. 15.4, also centered on road access and was more widely distributed than family recreation, with sites concentrated in sheltered or near shore areas of Lakes Superior and Nipigon and within the boreal forest delineated by major timber-harvesting roads radiating out from townships. The main activities associated with this value cluster were fishing, hunting, and camping. As would be expected, summer was the peak season for these activities, with fall and spring following in frequency and winter the lowest usage.

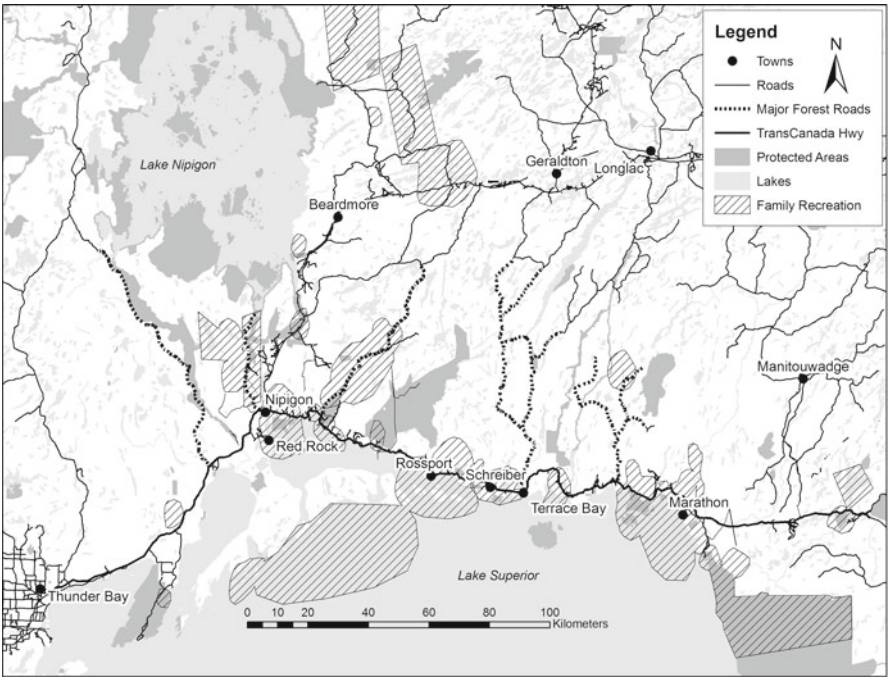

Fig. 15.3 Distribution of sites valued for family recreation

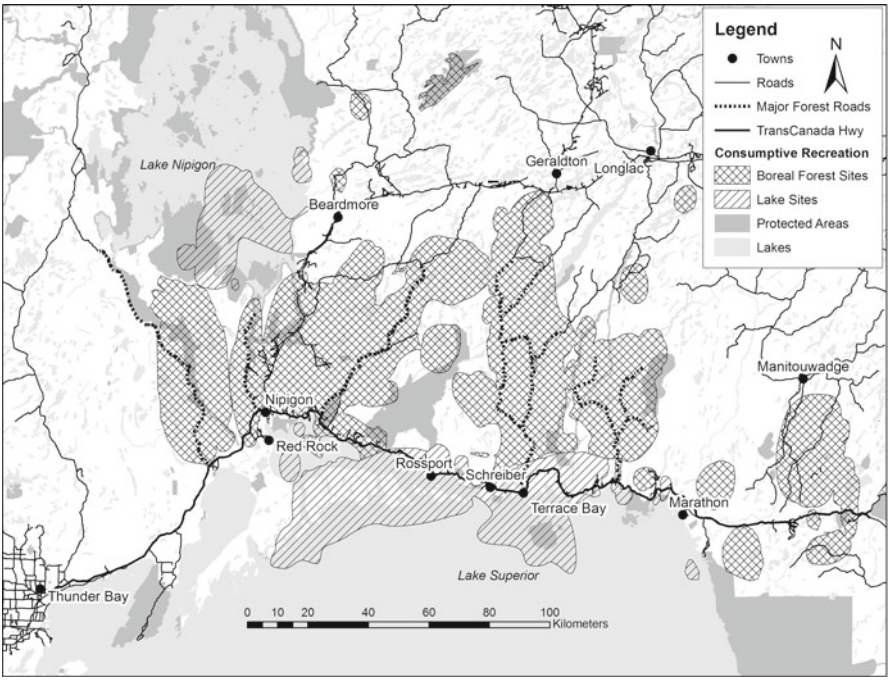

Fig. 15.4 Distribution of sites valued for consumptive recreation

15.8 The Incorporation of Place Values into Decision-Making

The study data suggest that the values attached to the North Shore are predominantly recreational and center on opportunities for social interaction and activities, with other values being apparently less prominent. Thus residents' place attachments could be characterized as place-dependent (Altman & Low, 1992), although conversations, interviews and focus group discussions with residents also pointed to strong identification with special places in the boreal forest as indicated in both the recognition of and widespread distribution of sites included in the other values cluster.

It should be noted that residents generally responded negatively to a pilot survey prompt to name their "special places," so they were asked to first specify the places they used and follow up with the values associated with them. Consequently the emphasis on places used may have biased responses towards use values, resulting in an underrepresentation of the broader values expressed in the category of other values. This cautionary note is mitigated by the observation that previous work in the boreal forests to the west of Thunder Bay provided similar results (McIntyre et al., 2004).

The analysis showed that sites associated with family recreation values were adjacent to the Trans-Canada Highway, a main focus for tourism and recreational opportunities. Many of these sites are on protected lands such as provincial parks and conservation reserves. Examples include the 53 km Casque Isles Trail, which follows the Lake Superior shoreline between Rossport and Terrace Bay (Casque Isles Trail, 2007); a number of provincial parks with camp grounds and walking trails (e.g., Neys and White Lake); and conservation reserves (e.g., Gravel River) that fringe the Trans-Canada Highway between Nipigon and Marathon. Other readily accessible, attractive recreation areas are the beaches at Rossport, Schreiber and Terrace Bay, and the Nipigon River (see Fig. 15.1). In addition much of land adjacent to Lakes Superior and Nipigon is contained within EMAs that are managed to protect recreation opportunities.

In summary a large percentage of the areas valued for family recreation and consumptive recreation is managed by provincial, municipal, and federal systems that generally support the maintenance of these valued places. The remaining consumptive recreation areas, which lie within actively harvested sections of the boreal forest, pose challenges in accommodating recreation values.

15.9 Consumptive Recreation Values and Boreal Forest Timber Management

Road building for timber harvesting has traditionally provided access to desirable recreation areas such as lakes and rivers. In Ontario clear-cutting and subsequent re-growth provide a variety of habitats that are attractive to game animals such as moose and, as a consequence, to hunters. As Williams, Patterson, Roggenbuck, and Watson (1992) note, a sense of place or place attachment can develop with repeated visits and growing familiarity with places. The data from this study indicate that

residents have developed specific types of utilitarian, symbolic, and emotional attachments with places in the northern boreal forest. Such attachments have been made possible through access provided principally by timber harvesting activities. As Fig. 15.4 indicates, many areas valued for consumptive recreation are defined by roads radiating out from the townships on the shores of Lake Superior (e.g., Nipigon, Terrace Bay). This observation emphasizes the fact that the majority of recreation in this part of the boreal forest is motorized because of the difficulty of the terrain and distances involved. Management of road access is therefore especially important. It is also often contentious (Hunt, Lemelin, & Saunders, 2009), as it involves negotiation among forest product companies, management agencies, tourism operators, First Nations, tourists, and residents.

Once long-term management goals, harvesting areas and primary road corridors have been established through the forest management planning process. Timber harvesting companies (in conjunction with the management agency) are responsible for road construction, maintenance and decommissioning. Just as timber harvesting can open access to new areas its cessation may result in the de-commissioning of roads—through the removal of water crossings and/or destruction of the road bed or simply allowing them to deteriorate over time—which effectively closes off forest access points. This is a typical pattern in clear-cut operations in the northern boreal forest in Ontario where cutting, clearing, and re-growth accompanied by changes in road access form part of a repetitive cycle of harvesting. For recreationists who can find other locales opened by a new phase of timber-cutting for pursuing their desired activity this may not be a problem. In colloquial terms they "follow the bulldozer to the next fishable lake." But for others timber road closures may mean losing access to places that have become special—and unsubstitutable—to them.

Nonetheless major forest access roads generally persist for 25–50 years while secondary and tertiary roads are often shorter-lived due to the expenses of maintaining them once extractive activities have ceased in an area. It should be noted that other means of controlling recreational access to an area exist, including travel or camping restrictions, signage, and gates. Although these are generally used to protect remote tourism values they are often controversial (Hunt et al., 2009).

Although the timber harvesting concerns have been primarily responsible for maintaining forest roads, recently the Ontario provincial government has agreed to grant financial assistance for this work, opening the possibility of maintaining access to selected areas even when harvesting has been discontinued.

Thus the current system of boreal forest management privileges forestry companies and remote tourism operations, with the forest management planning process typically giving little consideration to proactive planning for independent recreation. However exceptions have occurred in particularly contentious cases (e.g., Wawa District in Hunt et al., 2009), which emphasizes the point made earlier that recreation issues are treated generally on a case-by-case basis.

The official recognition of recreation areas—as required under multiple-use provisions of the Ontario Crown Forest Sustainability Act 1994—offers a means to proactively integrate recreation into the forest planning process, thereby enhancing public benefits. Spatial data such as those collected in this study allows the identification of

recreation areas, and the inclusion of data on values attached to various areas can guide managers in ensuring the protection or enhancement of these values. For example, areas of high recreation values could be designated as EMAs with provisions to promote integration of timber harvesting with recreation.

15.10 Conclusion

The boreal forest recreation study described in this chapter addressed the construction of recreation values, their elicitation and mapping, and their integration with decision-making in natural resource management. The Web-based survey used to explore the recreation patterns of northern Ontario residents yielded a range of information of potential value to forest managers. The results also showed that specific places in the forest hold utilitarian, symbolic, and emotional values for residents.

While the current emphasis on forestry in the management of northern Ontario Crown Lands creates serendipitous recreational opportunities (via logging roads), proactive planning for recreation in general has yet to be integrated into forest planning processes. Thus established forest recreational access can persist or disappear depending on cycles of forestry activities. An understanding of the spatial distribution of recreation use sites and their associated values, such as those revealed in the case study, can provide managers with the information necessary for making decisions about road maintenance priorities, the creation of special management zones, and other measures to better integrate forestry and recreation activities.

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Chapter 16
Place Mapping to Protect Cultural Landscapes on Tribal Lands

Alan Watson, Stephen Carver, Roian Matt, Tim Waters, Kari Gunderson, and Brett Davis

Abstract Relational marketing provides a framework for examining and preserving human relationships with landscapes, including place meanings. On the Flathead Indian Reservation in Montana, a Web-based mapping exercise allowed residents to locate and describe places that hold meaning for them, indicate the scale and intensity of those meanings, and characterize their perceptions of threats to these places. Here results are presented from a mapping exercise designed to facilitate group discussions with forest managers and the public regarding fuel treatments on tribally managed lands. The method built trust among tribal and non-tribal residents

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and improved fire planners' understanding of relationships between proposed actions and place meanings.

Keywords Relational marketing • Trust building • Land conflicts • Wilderness buffer zones • Place meanings

In their writings on human relationships with public lands, Watson and Borrie (2003, 2006) describe a form of relational marketing focused on building and maintaining relationships, in which the public represents the primary stakeholders (both customers and partners) of public lands services. This contrasts markedly with private-sector marketing, which centers on generating revenue through repeated transactions with customers (Garbarino & Johnson, 1999; Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Borrie, Christensen, Watson, Miller, and McCollum (2002) used relational marketing to demonstrate how public attitudes toward recreation fees in the U.S. depend on the ways that people relate to public lands and managers. They noted the value of segmenting the public based on these relationships to better understand response to public lands policies, instead of using more transactive or demographic attributes. These authors have also built upon this framework to justify and propose a system to guide monitoring of changing relationships between the public and public protected areas (Watson & Borrie, 2006).

Most private sector marketing approaches focus on transactions between individuals (or organizations) and customers, have distinct beginnings, short durations, and clear endings. On the other hand, relational exchanges acknowledge effects of previous contacts and knowledge, persist longer, and reflect an ongoing process (Dwyer, Schurr, & Oh, 1987). Watson and Borrie (2006) suggest that when services are provided on public lands (or other collectively held lands) the most appropriate view of "customer service" is the fostering of a relationship between individuals and public lands. Protection of this relationship often focuses on protection from publicly perceived threats. Fulfilling the public purposes of such lands falls under the stewardship responsibilities of managing agencies, wherein commitment and trust are primary ingredients for successful relational marketing (Morgan & Hunt, 1994; Watson & Borrie, 2003).

Of course not all customers desire the same relationship with a producer of goods or services. Thus it may be prudent for organizations to pursue both transactional and relational marketing, as customers may exist on a continuum of transactional to collaborative exchanges. In the public sector, however, members of the public are by definition involved in a collaborative relationship with the responsible stewardship agency. While a collaborative relationship exists for all people the level of commitment (measured by intensity of relational meanings) for the services provided by an agency and the level of trust instilled among members of the public may vary substantially. As argued in this chapter relational marketing suggests that understanding the variability in trust, commitment, and meanings attached to protected areas is paramount in developing and implementing public policy that meets the mandates of public lands (Watson & Borrie, 2006).

16.1 A Cultural Landscape with Contrasting Meanings

On Montana's Flathead Indian Reservation the tribal council designated the 92,000-acre Mission Mountains Tribal Wilderness (Fig. 16.1) in 1982 at the urging of many tribal members. The wilderness is a symbol of the overarching

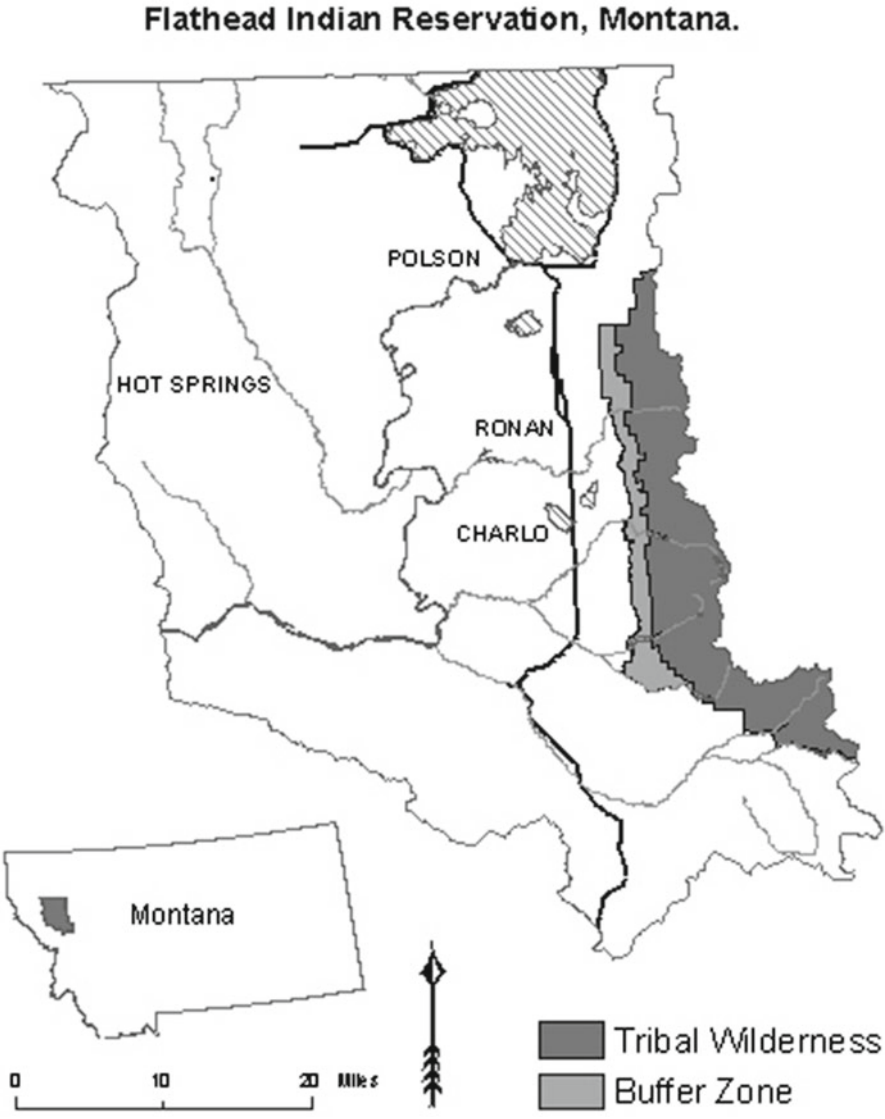

Fig. 16.1 The Mission Mountain Tribal Wilderness is bordered to the west by the Tribal Buffer Zone (Figure courtesy the Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes)

relationship the Confederated Salish and Kootenai tribes once had with the northern Rocky Mountains. The tribes also established protection in 1987 for an additional 22,000 acres west of the wilderness to serve as a buffer zone against unwanted human activities. The wilderness buffer zone essentially established a checks-and-balances system that assured deliberation and conscious decision-making to ensure that trust is protected and wilderness values do not deteriorate. This parcel of land—half of which is owned by the tribe, half by tribal and non-tribal individuals—contains a few homes and roads and remains a working landscape within the community. Both the wilderness and the buffer zone are considered protected cultural as well as natural landscapes; thus major decisions about the management of these areas are subject to review by the Tribal Cultural Committee, the Tribal Council and other tribal members.

To successfully improve forest health within that wilderness buffer zone and increase opportunities to restore fire in the wilderness the Tribal Forestry Department and the public are working together to find solutions to increasingly threatening fuel buildups. Decades of fire suppression within the wilderness buffer zone have resulted in heavy accumulations of dead wood on the forest floor, a dense understory of brush and young trees, and closed forest canopy—all of which renders the forest highly susceptible to destructive wildfires, disease, and infestations of pine bark beetle and other harmful insects. At the same time improving forest health demands the use of fire to restore a structure that makes it more fire-resilient over the long term. Although the tribal people and their governing agencies are ostensibly committed to seeing fire restored in the wilderness the situation of fuels abundance in the buffer zone has been a serious obstacle.

Also some tribal members have expressed a lack of trust in the tribal forestry agency to manage resources for non-monetary as well as monetary values, which has stymied the implementation of the agency's proposal to manipulate vegetation in the buffer zone. The purposes of the project reported on in this chapter were to employ a new method of engaging the public, together with land managers, to articulate the meanings attached to the landscape; identify ways to preserve these meanings; build trust between the community and land managers; and improve forest health.

16.2 A Participatory Approach to Understanding Values at Risk

Developing a better understanding of public responses to management actions at the landscape level (such as fuel treatments) calls for a means to accurately map landscapes in the context of the meanings people attribute to them. Such an approach would ideally allow for linking meanings to specific locations and create understanding of the things threatening those meanings in those places. To identify significant places or areas past studies have compiled information such as the number of people indicating a place is important, the type of meaning attributed to it,

and its scale (Carver et al., 2009). However as Carver et al. note, the methods for mapping meaning could become more effective by increasing the number of people engaging in this type of activity, sharpening accuracy of scale representation, capturing the intensity of meanings, and identifying perceived threats to them.

The traditionally used process of meeting with individuals or focus groups and leading them through written exercises to elicit information about these important areas while simultaneously documenting the discussion has proven cumbersome and difficult for researchers (Gunderson & Watson, 2007). Attempts to substitute survey mailings for this complex task have typically produced unacceptably low response rates particularly in rural areas with indigenous sub-populations. Also problematic was that individual relationships with local landscapes are essentially "fuzzy" and not easily captured using traditional map-based features, such as points, lines and polygons. Thus estimates of scale in previous studies have lacked accuracy, and the intensity of meanings attached to places has not been captured at all.

To address these issues the project described here adopts "fuzzy" methods (ways to describe mental landscapes) of capturing the landscape areas for which people hold a particular meaning. Computer-based GIS (Geographic Information System) techniques are used to capture information about fuzzy spatial concepts such as vagueness and approximation in defining spatial pattern and extent and (un)certainty and importance in the relative values and meanings attached to these. This type of data collection and storage system can be used both online over the Internet and offline on a stand-alone laptop facilitated by a member of the research team.

16.3 Mapping Relationships on the Flathead Indian Reservation

A combination of qualitative, culturally sensitive research and a Web-based mapping exercise employing fuzzy mapping methods was used to develop understanding of the meanings tribal members attach to the buffer zone, articulate trust issues, and describe perceived threats to these meanings. An important step in this process was distinguishing between meanings associated with the wilderness and the buffer zone by tribal and non-tribal residents. To do this the authors conducted interviews with 22 tribal members and non-tribal residents of the Flathead Reservation to solicit information on the meanings associated with these landscapes. The interview results are described in Watson, Knotek, Matt, and Yung (2007) and Watson, Matt, Knotek, Williams, and Yung (2011). Following the protocol of Lewis and Sheppard (2005) key informants were selected.

This chapter focuses on tribal member meanings for the buffer zone, categorized by Watson et al. (2008) as: (1) the role of the buffer zone in protecting the wilderness area and serving as a transitional area in connecting people to it; (2) access and functional attachments; (3) personal and cultural attachments; (4) wildlife and water quality; and (5) recreation, privacy, and scenic values. Each of these categories is discussed below.

16.3.1 The Buffer Zone's Role in Protecting the Wilderness Area and Connecting People to It

Tribal members viewed the wilderness and the buffer zone similarly in some ways, as evident from their frequent comments on the interconnection between the two. Many informants think that decisions about the buffer zone should be made primarily in the context of wilderness protection, given that the buffer zone provides not only physical protection but also a transition to the wilderness even for those who never enter it. As one interviewee put it:

> The buffer zone was created to help, again, buffer from development, buffer from, you know, manage the buffer zone in a way to help preserve the wilderness. I think it should be managed in a way to where it protects, where the main focus is on the wilderness. That is how you manage the buffer zone, how you protect the buffer zone, how you keep the buffer zone intact and do things in there, always focusing on how it's going to benefit the wilderness, not necessarily the people that are in the area but the wilderness. (Interview 1)

16.3.2 Access and Functional Attachments

Because the buffer zone lies at a lower elevation than the wilderness area and regulations allow for greater accessibility to it tribal members use it for a wider range of activities. In the words of an interviewee:

> But in the buffer zone that was a much more gentle transition and much more accessible area for us. Right out the back door. It's an area where I go to more frequently when I don't have longer periods of time to walk or to gather plant materials or to participate in other activities that are important in my spare time. (Interview 16)

Tribal members often described the buffer zone as a working landscape—a place representing functional value, such as community opportunities for subsistence hunting, logging, and plant-collecting. As another tribal member describes it:

> I know growing up the importance of the buffer zone was—and it still is—important because there's a lot of small-scale logging that happened. People's families were raised on that money… [And] I know families that still subsist off of that deer or that elk that they got that was brought down because of places like the buffer zone, because the animals come down further for grazing when they get heavy, high snow and those areas down low are able to support them. And I think if that goes away there's going to be a lot of problems for people, not just their way of life, their way of living. It's just that still all trickles down. (Interview 15)

16.3.3 Personal and Cultural Attachments

Tribal members also frequently described personal attachments to the wilderness buffer zone, referring to it as a place they grew up in and used for access to

the wilderness and in some cases as a final resting place for relatives. Regardless of the land's official designation it holds unique meanings for tribal members, as indicated by this response to the question on the buffer zone's significance:

> It's like I say, it was probably culture. Because, see, before you get up, really up into the wilderness area there, I know probably 10 or 15 families from the old people that died, they'd take them up there and hide them and bury them. And only four or five people would know where they'd be. Well, it's getting now to where them are even dying so you're losing it. (Interview 20)

Tribal members' relationships with the wilderness buffer zone often extend beyond individual attachments to culturally symbolic ones imbued with their cultural activities and spiritual meanings. Often there is little differentiation between the wilderness area and the buffer zone, as expressed by this interviewee:

> To me they [the wilderness and the buffer zone] still have that peace of spirituality of the mountains, of connection… to the past, to the families that are still there…. I just hope that whatever the outcome is that somehow people will understand how important that is. It's a way of life to a lot of people. It's part of their lives and its survival. To me it's survival. (Interview 1)

16.3.4 Wildlife and Water Quality

Tribal members often see the wilderness and the buffer zone as equally important in protecting wildlife and water quality, as evident in these comments:

> Right up above there, there's some grass about this long and the bear likes to eat that, the grizzly bear. And there's another area down the canal from me. And they got a big area there where the grizzly bear, and the bear likes that grass…I really like the animals in there….if people move in there the grizzly bear will move away. The deer will too and all those things. So we got to keep those places closed…. (Interview 13)

> And the water that comes down from the mountain is coming down the buffer zone and everything. It helps to keep all our trees and keep the moisture, which some just comes down… for the people to use. Yeah, water is the most important thing in our lives. (Interview 12)

16.3.5 Recreation, Privacy, and Scenic Values

Tribal members are only somewhat likely to assign recreation values to the buffer zone, as they tend to consider it more of a working landscape with wilderness protection value. However a lot of recreation goes on there and people appreciate the scenic qualities and remoteness from dense residential areas. In response to the

question of what is important about the buffer zone interviewees made comments such as:

> Well, I think that the biggest importance is it is a place where people can go recreate. And I think by extension of your own soul that you need to do that and you need to get into the woods if you have that opportunity. (Interview 22)

> And then another big reason [the buffer zone is important] is the solitude. You know what hunting season is like off the reservation. You know, there's orange everywhere. And up there, even though we can hunt year round up there, I think that spreads the hunters out…. So you can actually enjoy hunting more than off the reservation …. a lot of it is just being able to get away from people. (Interview 23)

16.4 Trust and Conflict

A sub-goal in the interviews was to facilitate informants to talk about trust issues and conflicts that threaten the sustainability of the buffer zone, and many tribal members did so. Their comments offer valuable insights for future engagement with the public and management of this area, as summarized below.

The tribe's mistrust of forestry interests was a key underlying reason for designation of the Mission Mountains Tribal Wilderness. The community feared that without designation intensive logging might occur and they would lose their connection with the Mission Mountains. The establishment of the wilderness buffer zone underscored the tribe's lack of confidence in common forestry practices that would now be limited from extending directly to the wilderness border. As the following comments demonstrate, some of the current conflict and mistrust comes from the history of forestry in the Missions and from the perception that new residents bring different values into the community. For example:

> People that don't understand the process of nature, the people that don't know, that don't look beyond what the visual, they don't look beyond what it really provides. So they come here and end up staying here. And instead of learning the values of a place like this they try to put in their own values. (Interview 1)

> When I saw the boundary lines of where the wilderness boundary was being proposed… I was pretty taken back by that because I thought, wow, there's a little bit of, to me, at the time I was thinking of trickery or, you know, because when I would think that it should be down here, and most of the Tribal members thought it should be down here … (Interview 10)

> I don't know how other people feel, but it looks just unnatural and used, like there wasn't the respectful hand that went across that area, that landscape. And I think that's what people fear, because I've seen examples of forestry logging practices and they don't want to see that in the Missions. And I know that's an issue for the buffer zone. And I don't know, I do hold a little bit of distrust for forestry practices just because of my own personal experience…. (Interview 15)

> You know Forestry has great software that they've used in the past to sort of be able to allow people to visualize that through computer graphic generation, but that's still, even though it's nice, it's different than actually seeing a place that's had that done to it. So I think that's something that the tribe needs to look at and for people to sort of gain trust back into Forestry because of things that have happened in the past. (Interview 15)

> I think that there is a lot of controversy now in the management of the buffer zone. And I think that Tribal Forestry Department is interested in entry. And it's unfortunate that there's such a high level of distrust or mistrust… But the proposal to change the buffer zone management plan and engage in commercial timber harvest is not a way to instill confidence in the tribal membership that they're really interested in hazard fuel reduction. (Interview 16)

16.5 Mapping Meanings for the Buffer Zone

Phase I of this research focused on learning about the place meanings associated with the buffer zone and the sources of conflict and threats to them. In this second phase interviewees were asked to contribute to maps that connected this information to the landscape (Watson et al., 2008) employing a computer interface based on the "Tagger" software developed by Evans and Waters (2007). This software, set up to operate within a standard Web browser (Carver et al., 2009) uses a "spray can" tool that allows users to delineate fuzzy areas of varying intensity (denoting importance) on a map. Attribute information can be attached to the fuzzy area through the use of free-format text input boxes. The Tagger software converts each sprayed area into standard image formats (gif and GeoTIFF). The image and associated attribute information are stored and can be viewed either as an individual entity or combined into an aggregate average map based on all the users' responses.

To broaden participation, over a 3-month period community residents also were invited to contribute to the maps either by direct input to the Web-based version or with the help of a visiting research assistant who brought a laptop computer to them.

16.6 Results of the Mapping Activities

In the analysis stage of the project maps illustrating relationships with the buffer zone were developed in a two-step process that provided: (1) maps for individual layers of meanings; and (2) an overall picture of the locations of meanings on the landscape and the average of their intensity of importance.

Some 40 tribal members contributed 180 maps that encompassed all five layers of meanings. These provided the basis for developing the overall map that depicts "hot spots" representing averaged responses. Thus areas shown at the highest color

intensity represent places that are deemed of greatest importance based on the strongest consensus among tribal members regardless of the meaning attached (Carver et al., 2009).

The maps suggest that participants generally agree that wilderness protection is attached broadly to the buffer zone. The scale was extensive and likely indicates that many people simply chose the option of applying this meaning at a specific, consistent level of intensity to the entire map. It is a strongly held belief across many tribal members. The map depicting meanings for wildlife and water also indicated relatively broad beliefs and high consensus on importance among tribal members. However in this case meanings were not as widely distributed as on the wilderness protection map but are very intense at many places. These meanings are attached to most places by at least some people.

The other three layers of meanings were much less likely to be broadly indicated as important across the landscape though they were intensely attached to some places. When averaged with the previous two maps it is clear to see how the overall map is developed and what it represents in relation to each of the five layer maps (Carver et al., 2009).

16.7 Phase III Application

The maps described above provide managers and the public with a good understanding of the locations and relative significance of the various types of meanings attached to the landscape, and they offer a means for building trust between stakeholders and managers committed to including this information in local decision-making. The results have been used to guide discussions about proposed fuel treatments in the buffer zone and resolve differences in beliefs about proper treatments.

To assist fire planners in understanding how proposed management actions intersect with local community values at risk additional maps were generated to illustrate the locations of wildfire-associated threats. These maps were used to stimulate public discussions and help clarify fire management priorities. Analysis of the maps and public input revealed that place meanings important to tribal members were at risk. The perceived threats to these meanings included fire, logging, vegetative change, private land ownership within the buffer zone, impacts of all-terrain vehicles, livestock grazing, crowding, recreation use, evidence of past drug manufacturing operations, and lack of respect for the land by users. For the purposes of this analysis related to forest health issues in the buffer zone the threats of fire, logging, and vegetative change merited additional study. Another set of maps were created that showed across all five layers of meanings those places where any of these three threats were indicated.

Regarding the threat from fire tribal members described risks to cultural areas, the potential for catastrophic fire events, the presence of hazardous fuels, and fire–fighting activities as threatening to local place meanings. Plotted collectively the

perceived fire-related threats are extensive and widely distributed. Even more intense and broadly distributed were the risks associated with the logging threat. Tribal members described this threat in terms that included loggers, large-scale logging, commercial logging, clear-cutting, irresponsible logging, incompatible timber harvest, and so forth.

16.8 Implications for Decision-Making

Analysis linked these mapped meanings to the threats respondents perceive associated with each layer of meaning. These are the priority inputs (location, meaning, intensity of meanings, and threat) that managers must integrate with resource management objectives to maintain public trust. Focus groups composed of tribal members and facilitated by the Tribal Forestry Community Outreach Education Specialist met with Forestry Department staff who are proposing general fuel treatments in the buffer zone. These groups focused on three needs: (1) to further clarify the threat (or benefit) of logging on the various layers of meanings ascribed to specific places; (2) to further clarify the threat (or benefit) of fire (i.e., wildfire, prescribed fire or exclusion of fire) on layers of meanings; and (3) to assist department staff in understanding of how tribal members evaluate tradeoffs between these two threats to their place meanings and how various decisions will affect mutual trust.

This final stage of the project concentrated on applying the newly gained knowledge about place meanings to decision-making and evaluating whether stakeholders believe their participation will contribute to better solutions. Generally the outcomes of this third phase received a positive evaluation by participating tribal members. Although much was learned about how fire and logging threatened important tribal places the most important gain, as evidenced during the focus groups, was the recognition of the need for a method of managing tradeoffs. Most participating tribal members oppose forestry activities in the buffer zone that are aimed at revenue generation and some extremely anti-logging attitudes were apparent. Similarly many are fearful of the catastrophic potential for any type of fire from any source.

The authors hope that future attempts to further resolve conflict over actions in the buffer zone will address the tradeoffs between fire and vegetation removal. If managers can work with tribal members to describe these tradeoffs in terms of the impacts to local place meanings and establish acceptable limits, this can help remove the longstanding and heretofore tenacious obstacles to logging and fire introduction and allow these activities to proceed within agreed-upon constraints and be held accountable through long-term monitoring. Through these processes healthier forests, renewed public trust, and protected natural and cultural resources for the Salish and Kootenai tribes of the Flathead Indian Reservation may evolve.

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Chapter 17
Place Attachment for Wildland Recreation Planning

Neal Christensen and James Burchfield

Abstract Public land managers are challenged to develop strategies to assess public interests for wildland places. Organized stakeholder groups are often the most powerful means available to articulate interests in a public planning process. This chapter argues for improved citizen representation based on an understanding of place attachment. Place attachment is most fully expressed through the interaction of beliefs, emotions, and behaviors related to a particular place. The case study described in this chapter used survey research to assess place attachment within a local community involved in planning for a national forest stewardship project in southwestern Montana. The motorized recreation use plan was contentious among off-highway vehicle enthusiasts and other stakeholders. Identifying segments of the public according to place attachments revealed unrecognized community alliances and potential opportunities for collaboration.

Keywords Public Land Use Planning • Citizen involvement • Community segmentation • Survey research • Public participation

While citizen involvement in planning for the management of public lands is becoming common, meaningful consideration of widely varied public views remains a challenge for managers. Public land managers need to improve the effectiveness of public involvement in land use planning decisions to realize the full potential.

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Effective public involvement can enhance honest and meaningful relationships with citizens and contribute to more balanced, integrated, and equitable management decisions (Kruger, 2003). One of the great challenges for planners is to use public input to develop a deeper understanding of widely varied stakeholder interests; and to apply that understanding to seek the optimal balance of interests within the public purpose and the social and ecological constraints of the planning area.

Planning for wildland recreation on multiple-use national forest lands can involve a particularly diverse range of stakeholders, from motorized and nonmotorized recreationists, to nearby property owners, tourism businesses, grazers, and timber companies. Everyone living near these public lands has an interest in management policies. Citizens interested in learning about and influencing public land use planning often participate through organized stakeholder groups. Stakeholder groups enhance the power of individual members through their coordinated efforts at public meetings and collaborative decision-making processes, and their ability to provide professional lobbying and organized letter-writing campaigns. However, individual participants may be poorly represented by stakeholder groups. Special-interest stakeholder groups commonly focus on a narrow set of objectives, while their constituents are unique individuals with varied interests, values, and perspectives.

In public wildland recreation planning, contention may be centered on whether or not a particular activity, such as motorized off-road use, should be allowed in a specific place. Public collaborative planning processes often fail to find solutions to contentious issues like motorized recreation, not only because stakeholder groups struggle against each other, but also because these groups cannot agree internally on acceptable management options (Marston, 2001; Moseley, 2001; Snow, 2001). As Leach (2003) notes, issues of inclusion and representation represent difficult barriers to collaboration. In this chapter, we suggest addressing the challenge of diverse stakeholder representation in public wildland recreation planning through a focus on common interests driven by place attachment rather than on more narrowly defined special interests.

17.1 Place Attachment to Public Wildlands

Developing a full understanding about place attachment is dependent on examining multiple forms of human expression. Low and Altman (1992) describe place attachment as involving a synergy between behaviors, beliefs, and emotions. Their description of place attachment overlaps with concepts like sense of place and place identity (Williams & Vaske, 2003). Our view of place attachment follows Low and Altman's framework of a complex interaction of human expression, and it is influenced by Tuan's focus on emotions and values in *Topophilia* (1974) and by Schreyer, Jacob, and White's (1981) description of a connection between beliefs, values, and wildland recreation behavior.

In our view of human/place interaction, recreation activity participation contributes to forming place attachment and also becomes an expression of that attachment.

Moreover, a person's unique attachment to a particular place is better understood by considering a combination of behavioral, cognitive, and emotional components of human expression than by a singular focus on one of these dimensions – the most common in recreation planning being activity participation behaviors. While assessing all of these forms of expression is important to understanding place attachment, place attachments can be formed in the absence of direct onsite experience. A person can form an attachment to a wildland place they have never been to if they assign values to that place that are not directly related to use, such as existence and bequest values. Likewise, a person can develop emotional ties with a specific place because of what it symbolizes, like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge or Yellowstone National Park, even if they have not been there.

Assessment of citizens' attachments to a particular public wildland place is a useful social science inquiry because attachments are likely to be related to opinions about management. A number of authors have described connections between people's ties to public places and their views about conflict and appropriate management decisions (e.g., Brown, Reed, & Harris, 2002; Cheng, Kruger, & Daniels, 2003; Davenport & Anderson, 2005). The following case study presents evidence that views about recreation management options can be more closely related to stakeholders' attachment to a place than to their history of participation in a specific recreation activity at that place. This suggests the utility of a public planning perspective that recognizes place attachment as a strong determinant of stakeholder interests. The case study used social science research to assess place attachment and related attitudes in a local community. Social science research can be helpful in a planning process informed by citizens' attachment to a public wildland place because of the complexity of considering multiple forms of expression.

17.2 Case Study of Wildland Recreation Planning

This section demonstrates the relevance of a place attachment perspective by describing a case study of a contentious national forest planning effort. The planning effort involved a forest stewardship project that proposed to use a variety of programs to address ecosystem health within a particular watershed of the Bitterroot National Forest in southwestern Montana. The authors of this chapter conducted a series of public meetings, sponsored by the state university extension service, to clarify issues within the stewardship plan and to collaboratively develop a local community preferred alternative. The meetings were well attended, with the final meeting including nearly 50 interested citizens. Almost all of the participants were from the small local community, and most attended all four of the public input meetings in the series.

One of the controversial components of the stewardship proposal was a travel plan that addressed recreational off-highway vehicle (OHV) access in the project area. Travel management was a contentious issue forest-wide and also as a specific component of the stewardship project. Although the public meetings were not intended

to be limited to any particular issue within the stewardship proposal, the majority of discussions centered on the travel management plan. The OHV travel plan was contested by off-highway vehicle enthusiasts who desired more access and different types of experiences as well as by local property owners and others who were concerned about the impacts of motorized recreation in the project area.

From the meetings and the resulting evidence presented to Forest Service managers the local community appeared somewhat evenly divided on opinions about appropriate OHV management, and those opinions were particularly polarized, entrenched, and widespread. The later community meetings were actually becoming physically divided, with opposing sides sitting across the room from each other. Arguments within the two primary stakeholder groups during the meetings (self-identified as the motorized and quiet user groups) appeared to use peer pressure to discourage members from working with the opposing side. The series of public meetings ultimately failed to achieve significant agreement among the participants about appropriate motorized recreation management in the project area. Lacking wide support, the Forest Service dropped consideration of motorized recreation from the stewardship project in favor of addressing it later within a forest-wide travel planning process.

17.3 Case Study Place Attachment Questionnaire

Following the public meetings, the authors administered a survey to the local community to assess opinions about OHV travel planning and to find out if concerns about the travel plan were related to local residents' place attachment to the project area. Based on the insights from the meetings, and following a case study design, we developed a locally-specific questionnaire to assess place attachment and attitudes about management in the stewardship project area (see Yin (2003) for general case study design principles). The questionnaire developed for the case study assessed all three components of human expression toward place described by Low and Altman (1992), including activity participation (behaviors); assigned values (beliefs); and psychological dependence and identity (emotions). The survey also included questions to evaluate management of motorized recreation. Each section of the survey is described below in more detail.

Place attachment – related behaviors were measured in the survey using a set of 16 questions about recreation activity participation history in the project area. In this study we focused on onsite recreation. Other types of behavior-related questions could also be used in this type of survey to understand place attachment, including for example, the history of participation in stewardship projects or of providing public input to planning efforts in the study area. Figure 17.1 shows 4 of the 16 recreation activity items that we included in the case study questionnaire.

The questionnaire included 11 items about assigned values toward the project area. These represent the cognitive belief form of expression of place attachment. Figure 17.2 shows an example of four of the assigned value items intended to measure believes about the importance of the local national forest.

Q1. Which of the following recreation activities have **you and other members of your household** done in the Bitterroot National Forest? *(Check all that apply)*

	Have you personally participated: In the past year *or* In your lifetime	Other household member(s) did this activity in the past year
Walking or hiking	☐	☐
Overnight backpacking	☐	☐
Fishing	☐	☐
Horseback riding	☐	☐

Fig. 17.1 Example of activity participation items from the case study questionnaire

Q2. How **important** to you are each of the following values that may be associated with the Bitterroot National Forest? *(Circle one response for each type of value that best represents the importance you place on it)*

	Not at all Important	Slightly Important	Moderately Important	Very Important
Watershed protection	NI	SI	MI	VI
Economic value of timber resources	NI	SI	MI	VI
Economic value of recreation visitor spending in the area	NI	SI	MI	VI
Wildlife and fish habitat protection	NI	SI	MI	VI

Fig. 17.2 Example of assigned value items from the case study questionnaire

The third set of questionnaire items in the case study measured two aspects of emotional connection to place. Williams and Vaske (2003) identified these types of connections as place identity and place dependence. We included 11 items in the questionnaire representing place identity and place dependence to measure emotional expression of place attachment. Figure 17.3 depicts three of the items, with the first two related to place identity and the third item exemplifying place dependence. Researchers could also include other indicators of emotional expression of

Q3. How much do you **agree or disagree** with each of the following statements? *(Circle one response for each statement that best represents your level of agreement)*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
The Bitterroot National Forest means a lot to me.	SD	D	N	A	SA
I identify strongly with the Bitterroot National Forest	SD	D	N	A	SA
I would enjoy doing the things I do in the Bitterroot National Forest just as much at a similar place.	SD	D	N	A	SA

Fig. 17.3 Example of emotional connection items from the case study questionnaire

Q8. Tell us whether you **oppose or support** the following recreation and travel management options for the Bitterroot National Forest. *(Circle one response for each statement that best represents your level of support or opposition)*

	Strongly oppose	Oppose	Not Sure	Support	Strongly support
Open more currently gated roads to motorized access during the summer months.	SO	O	N	S	SS
Close some roads or trails that are currently open to motorized use to provide more nonmotorized recreation opportunities.	SO	O	N	S	SS
Close some roads or trails currently open to motorized use if it improves wildlife habitat or water quality.	SO	O	N	S	SS

Fig. 17.4 Example of management items from the case study questionnaire

connections to place to strengthen a survey assessment within the affective domain of expression (for example, felt values as described by Schroeder, Chap. 6).

The fourth section of the questionnaire assessed opinions about management options for recreation use of the project area. Questions about recreation management were worded rather generally, but were intended to measure realistic tradeoffs in the project area. Figure 17.4 shows three opinion items from the questionnaire that were focused on motorized recreation management options.

17.4 Case Study Community Survey Results

The case study employed a segmentation approach to assess the community survey results that is often used in business market research (Parasuraman, 1986). This statistical segmentation approach divides the respondents into groups of individuals with similar, identifiable characteristics. A combination of factor and cluster statistical analyses was used to segment respondents into groups with similar types of place attachment (see Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2006 for these statistical methods). Survey results showed six distinct community segments defined by their combination of the three forms of expression of place attachment toward the project area.

We conducted the case study survey to better understand attitudes across community stakeholder groups about the contentious, but narrowly defined issue of OHV access. Based on the public meetings, we expected the survey to show two distinct community segments reflecting the opposing stakeholder group interests. The survey results from the activity participation questions should reflect the division between motorized and nonmotorized orientations. Figure 17.5 plots participation rates in motorized and nonmotorized activities in the project area for each of the six community segments. The plot clearly shows three community segments with similar, high rates of participation in motorized activities (the segments are plotted by ID number and the motorized user segments are circled for easy identification). Figure 17.5 also shows three segments with similar low rates of participation in motorized activities (segments one and four with low levels of participation across all activities, and segment five with higher levels of nonmotorized activity participation). It is easy to visualize the quiet user and motorized stakeholder groups represented on the left and right sides of this graph as they were self-organized on the left and right sides of the community hall during the final public meeting.

To understand how place attachment orientation could inform collaboration, the place attachment segments were compared on their responses to motorized recreation management options. Figure 17.6 shows the community segments' views on two related issues about motorized access. These were measured using the second and third items of the survey question shown in Fig. 17.4. The plot compares responses to two items asking respondents if access for OHV's should be limited for environmental reasons and for the purpose of enhancing nonmotorized recreation opportunities. Plotting the six community segments on their attitudes about OHV management in the project area shows different results than would be expected from the combination of contentious public meetings and the activity participation groupings shown in Fig. 17.5.

Figure 17.6 shows study results that are somewhat surprising when compared to the polarized tone of the public meetings held in the same community prior to the survey. The plot suggests mutual support across activity-based stakeholder groups and previously unrecognized alliances that could enable more creative and cooperative solutions to this contentious public land management issue. Of the three community segments representing OHV users (*circled for reference*), only segment three opposes

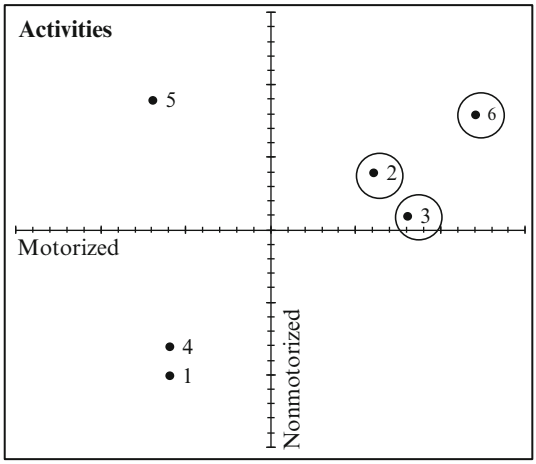

Fig. 17.5 Community segments plotted on their participation rates in motorized and nonmotorized activities (Segments with high levels of motorized recreation activity participation are *circled* for reference)

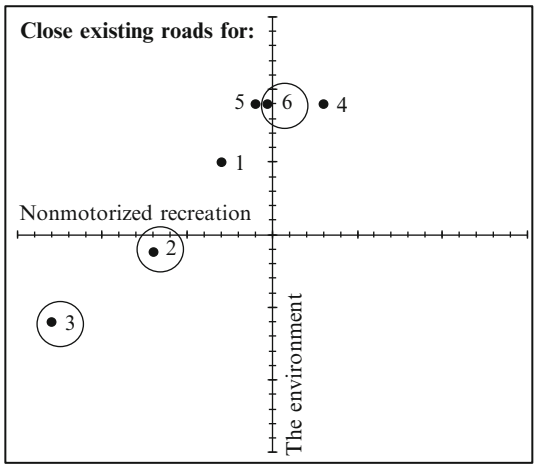

Fig. 17.6 Community segments plotted on their opinions about motorized recreation management (Segments with high levels of motorized recreation activity participation are *circled* for reference)

compromise on road closures, even if the purpose of the closure is to protect the environment. Members of segment six (with high levels of OHV use) have opinions about road closures more closely aligned with the segments that do not use OHVs on the forest. In contrast to the outcome of the public meetings, these results suggest there is room for compromise in the development of the community's preferred alternative for OHV management in the project area. The plot also indicates fairly wide support in the community for appropriate OHV use on the forest. A concern that often arose at the public meetings was that if OHV users compromised on any road closures, they risked losing their few remaining opportunities on the forest. However, Fig. 17.6 shows that segment four is the only one of the six community segments that would favor enhancing nonmotorized recreation by reducing existing motorized opportunities. Rather than a polarizing focus on activity-based stakeholders, these results suggest the utility of developing place attachment-based alliances.

17.5 Discussion

The case study example demonstrates how information derived from place attachment research can inform the planning process. A typical wildland recreation planning process would consider all motorized users as one stakeholder group with a common set of interests and concerns. Our case study found this apparent dichotomy within a series of community meetings designed to obtain public input. Yet, further research of the local community revealed multiple types of stakeholders on either side of a seemingly dichotomous controversy. Each of the six groups identified in the market-segmentation research had unique types of place attachments with the project planning area, had different concerns about the condition of its resources, and also had differing opinions about management solutions. This study presents managers with a more detailed and nuanced view of public expectations and reveals potential alliances that could support or oppose a given management option.

The research approach used in the case study allows the public and land managers to better consider the nature of citizens' attachments to specific places in land-use planning decisions. Developing this information early in the process could reduce conflict during public input of wildland recreation planning. Lélé and Norgaard (1996) describe how social science can facilitate public interaction and collaboration through the development of mutual understanding. They contend that the role of scientists is to help identify like-minded communities and to understand the differential concerns of these communities and the effects of various policies on them. Stokowski (2002) describes how social actors attempt to shape the contested meanings of places through language, discourse, and social context, in order to influence decision-making in recreation and natural resources management. Efforts to influence planning during the public meetings described in our case study could be characterized this way. During the discussions, peer pressure within stakeholder groups appeared to limit the discussion to a narrow set of concerns and alternatives. Stokowski concludes that understanding the processes of place-meaning formation can reveal strategies for challenging existing social values and resolution processes, thus allowing more appropriate consideration of place attachments by managers and the public in natural resource management decisions. Public land stakeholder groups organized around a specific goal might poorly represent the interests of a local community. Public input discussions informed by knowledge of the types of place attachment held by stakeholders could help foster cooperation and identifying management solutions that account for the diverse relationships to public wildland places demonstrated in the case study example.

In addition to informing the discussion, developing understanding of stakeholders' place attachments can contribute to more positive feelings by members of the public about the planning process. McCool and Guthrie (2001) describe a number of process-related elements that contribute to successful public input in controversial natural resource planning efforts. These include building interpersonal relationships and increasing participants' feelings that they are being heard and understood. Shindler and Neburka (1997, p. 19) also found that local people evaluate the success

of natural resource planning by how much their own ideas and concerns are considered. Place attachment research used to inform a collaborative planning process may improve the effectiveness of public participation by developing a more thorough understanding of local residents' views and by enhancing feelings among the public that their views have been heard and understood.

Successful public involvement that recognizes and acknowledges place attachments, and the interaction between place-related emotions, beliefs and behaviors, could improve public land management beyond a specific project. Wondolleck and Yaffee (2000) suggest that more effectively involving the public in land-use planning can shape the values that people assign to natural resources and foster a sense of responsibility toward the public good. Managers could use place attachment research to identify and foster relationships with certain community segments in an attempt to improve their stewardship orientation toward local public lands. For example, place attachment research may suggest opportunities to demonstrate appropriate recreational behaviors or provide information to specific segments that may have deep emotional ties and concerns about the place but who might lack first-hand cognitive knowledge or behavioral experience to form realistic expectations about conditions and management alternatives.

This chapter argues that applying a place attachment research approach uncovers the types of shared values and goals that define like-minded communities, and therefore, may improve upon the practice of accounting for diverse stakeholder interests. All public places cannot serve all purposes to all people, so it is necessary to allocate uses at least partially based on the compatibility with the public purpose of the place and the potential for conflict with other legitimate uses. Place attachment information from survey research may help guide managers to make those decisions by developing understanding of how important specific places are to different groups of citizens, why they are important, and what would be required of possible substitute locations. This research provides a clearer view of the major types of interests in the local population, as well as shedding light on some of the characteristics of citizens holding relatively extreme views compared to those with moderate stances that are more likely to reach agreement.

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Chapter 18
Conclusion: From Describing to Prescribing—Transitioning to Place-Based Conservation

William P. Stewart, Daniel R. Williams, and Linda E. Kruger

Abstract The chapters of this book describe various perspectives from the social sciences of place-based conservation. The prescriptive implications are often close to the surface and become entangled with them. This chapter highlights four overlapping approaches to the practice of place-based conservation and acknowledges the difficulty of separating descriptions from prescriptions: (1) a planning process, (2) an emergent process, (3) an organizing concept, and (4) a framework for policy. Yet to be considered are the incorporation of cultivating new communication channels, developing civic capacity, identifying appropriate roles for expertise, integrating multiple geographic scales, and customizing governance strategies. Addressing these challenges will support transitions to place-based conservation.

Keywords Land-use planning • Natural resource policy • Civic capacity • Stakeholder conflicts • Multiscalar governance

Reflecting back on the content of this book one can see an important tension between descriptive and prescriptive accounts of place-based practices in conservation. As social scientists the contributors to this volume have described the diversity of

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place-based practices emerging in conservation and the forces driving these changes. The chapters reflect various frameworks for characterizing, interpreting, and otherwise providing commentary on practices familiar to the authors, along with rationales for adopting place-based conservation and suggestions for improving its application in natural resource decision-making. At the same time the implicit premise of each chapter is that utilitarian models of conservation have exhausted their ability to address today's levels of complexity and uncertainty. Out of necessity conservation agencies are experimenting with different forms of governance and operational approaches in efforts to manage land and create working solutions in their practice of conservation. At some point the delineation between describing the operations of place-based conservation and prescribing a path forward becomes blurred. Place-based strategies for conservation are receiving increasing consideration as conservation moves toward broader inclusion of the public in decision-making, expanded sensitivity to local socio-ecological dynamics, incorporation of local and traditional knowledge, enhanced recognition of multi-scalar processes, and greater flexibility in governance structure.

Because this book is directed at conservation decision-making practices, prescriptive implications are close to the surface of the descriptive activity of the science, and ultimately, difficult to untangle from each other. Thus this chapter highlights four overlapping approaches to the practice of place-based conservation.

18.1 Approaches to the Practice of Place-Based Conservation

Considering that conservation manifests through on-the-ground actions some might argue that conservation has always been place-based. As Williams (Chap. 2) points out, all practice by necessity requires some level of context-dependent synthesis. Yet utilitarian conservation practice often has overtly aimed to transcend place and context by seeking a more scientific and generalized account of the most fungible resource commodities embedded in the landscape (Larsen et al., 1990). This model of resource management has relied heavily on professional expertise to conduct technical analysis for identifying conservation strategies and assessing their consequences (Kruger, 1996). One major strategy of place-based conservation has been simply to set aside large land tracts as nature preserves in an effort to insulate them from the most transformative pressures of the modern world. In recent decades however, conservation practitioners have begun to recognize that resources are embedded in complex and ecologically and socially dynamic places at multiple scales. Beyond broadening the framework for managing resources conservation practice has been challenged to confront the ways local contexts are interconnected and embedded across multiple spatial and temporal scales (Allen & Hoekstra, 1992; Lejano & Ingram, 2007; Schneider, 2001; Silver, 2008).

On another level place-based conservation is still emerging as an alternative application of conservation practice. For example, place-based practices have made inroads in governing bodies such as watershed councils. However these practices have remained largely embedded within traditionally isolated bureaucratic entities focused on conserving specific resources or designated preserves—irrespective of context, scale, and place meanings critical to the advancement of place-based conservation. The evolution of this book is another case in point. At the outset the intention was simple: to advance the integration of social science research on place with the practice of conservation. Somewhat unexpectedly in the ensuing dialogue among the contributors myriad implications surfaced for place as a powerful force for organizing conservation in an overall sense.

Yet merely understanding social science perspectives on place will not ensure their incorporation into conservation practices. For instance, implementing actions to more fully address place-based knowledge might be considered worthwhile even as such knowledge continues to be disparaged as lacking a utilitarian orientation. Place-based knowledge detached from scientific frameworks is sometimes viewed as emotional, arbitrary, and subjective within rational conservation processes focused on technical aspects of resources allocation. However when conservation is reduced to technical frameworks of decision-making, what counts as legitimate characterization of a place is controlled by scientific and technical experts (Appleyard, 1979). Thus in a curious twist constituents with local knowledge and non-utilitarian place meanings are finding ways to represent their "views from somewhere" through scientific expertise (Sarewitz, 2004). To be sure such expertise has legitimate claims to participate in framing the meanings of place, but many other meanings also merit representation and legitimacy in decision-making forums. And it is easier to integrate broader understandings of a place into conservation when processes are purposely designed for this than when processes exclude, tolerate, or otherwise treat them in superfluous ways.

Merging social science perspectives on place into conservation decision-making has implications for governance. Place inspires a geographic turn in thinking that calls for integration of multiple scales and jurisdictions. Traditions associated with organizational and professional culture, scientific privilege, and special interest groups sometimes run counter to certain place meanings (Chaps. 4 and 11). With the growing recognition of the importance of place for organizing conservation the complexities of multi-scalar place meanings and complexity of coupling social and ecological systems demand greater attention (Davidson, 2010; Fischer, 2000). Places are spatially embedded (or nested; see Morse, Hall, & Kruger, 2009) and associated with distinct meanings, material attributes, and processes unique to each scale. Emphasizing the importance of relationships to place the contributors to this book have articulated the need for a socio-ecological understanding that connects policies and operations across multiple scales through polycentric governance. As described in previous chapters place-based conservation can potentially address this complex need by engaging stakeholders across different geographic scales through strategies for legitimizing stakeholders' relationships with place and connect them with governance forums.

This book also offers methods for representing and negotiating place-meanings and suggests ways to integrate them into governance structures. Put simply place-based conservation is the integration of the ideally perspective-free objective view sought in natural sciences, which Entrikin (1991) terms the "view from nowhere," with the context-dependent experiences of "somewhere," which reflect place specific meanings, knowledge, and sentiments. As Kruger, Hall, and Stiefel note (2008), several overlapping approaches to the practice of place-based conservation have emerged. Four of these came into focus during the development of this book. They are place-based conservation as: (1) a planning process, (2) an emergent process, (3) an organizing concept, and (4) a framework for policy. They provide collective insight into the various ways in which place-based conservation can be implemented. These approaches focus on ways people come to understand and make decisions about the practice of conservation. Distinct from other starting points for conservation, these strategies reflect the human proclivity to form deep-seated relationships with places and assert that human relationships with places have significant roles to play in the practice of conservation.

18.2 Place-Based Conservation as a Planning Process

The first approach involves the relatively straightforward recognition that conservation planning is about the disposition of somewhere (a place) and not just something (a resource). It recognizes that places are associated with diverse, often competing meanings that are "pliable in the hands of different people and malleable over time" (Gieryn, 2000, p. 467). Much of the impetus behind place-based conservation is a desire to recognize and give legitimacy to more holistic, systemic, and contextual qualities of places and landscapes. The goal reflects increasing concern for capturing and incorporating diverse forms of knowledge and the full range of place meanings and values into conservation planning.

People not only have diverse and evolving relationships to places but often ground their claims in normative or ethical terms that add political dimensions to places. Recent years have seen a growing interest in the idea of the politics of place within the natural resources field (Cheng, Kruger, & Daniels, 2003; Masuda & Garvin, 2008; Wulfhorst, Rimbey, & Darden, 2006; Yung, Freimund, & Belsky, 2003) to account for the fact that different groups of people hold competing meanings for a place. At the same time place meanings and identities serve to define social group differences (e.g., locals versus outsiders). Acknowledging places as repositories of meaning requires resource managers and planners to come to terms with the multiple meanings put forth to represent a place and the potential for conflicting meanings.

Historically the utilitarian view recognized that stakeholder groups assigned different levels of utility to various resource commodities. The meanings of these natural resources did not stray far from their assigned utilities, and often the meanings were not viewed as being consciously assigned; rather they were framed as an inherent property of the resource. In contrast the place perspective recognizes that resources are imbued with symbolic, spiritual, and historical meanings—as well as meanings associated with

commodity values—and that constituents may hold to different meanings. Focusing attention on planning processes reminds us that place meanings often reflect temporary snapshots, so to speak, from within evolving socio-political process of negotiation and contestation. Much of the conflict in natural resource planning centers on whose meanings will prevail, and plans for resource management frequently constitute a sense of place that empowers the planners' meanings over those of other constituents (Appleyard, 1979; Kruger & Shannon, 2000). In contrast place-based conservation involves a value-explicit, political approach to planning that in effect adjudicates among competing meanings and practices by shifting the emphasis from expert-defined place meanings toward a process driven by dialogue and negotiation (Ansell & Gash, 2008).

A key premise of utilitarian resource management has been that science could eliminate politics in the service of the public interest by using rational methods—such as "decision" science (i.e., economic valuation, linear programming)—to evaluate conservation alternatives and resolve difficult value questions. In contrast place-based conservation addresses the underlying politics directly by seeking place-specific stakeholder collaboration to address management conflicts (Kruger, 1996).

One goal of place-based conservation is to invigorate the process for identifying relevant meanings of a place and transform them from individual or interest-based to collectively negotiated aspirations. This calls for a planning process that broadens the discourse from a narrow focus on "my place" to a broader one of "our place." Such a process would allow participants to identify and share place meanings, potentially leading to mutual understanding and the legitimization of diverse views (Chaps. 8, 9, 11, 13, and 17). Ideally such negotiation and legitimization of place meanings should precede discussions about resource allocation, recommended actions, and science-informed judgments—all of which contribute to place meanings and are compatible with place-based conservation.

Although greater consensus on the meaning of place may result from such a process, planning processes also should allow for dissent and expanded meanings. As an example, in 1991 following years of pressure from American Indian groups Custer Battlefield National Monument was renamed Little Bighorn Battlefield National Monument to recognize all Americans who sacrificed their lives there. As part of its planning process memorial markers are still being added to honor the Cheyenne warriors who died more than a century ago (Denzin, 2011; Greene, 2008). Important functions of planning processes are to elicit the various relationships to place and recognize them as accumulated layers of meaning rather than a consensual or timeless whole. To be clear, place-based conservation is not a call for homogenizing place or to work toward a monolithic agreement.

18.3 Place-Based Conservation as an Emergent Process

Places are always changing, always becoming. Likewise place-based conservation is an emergent—that is, evolving—process of prescribing courses of action and responding to change. A process that ideally emphasizes a strong sense of collaboration and inclusiveness unfolds in creative and dynamic ways. Place-based collaboration

requires an engaged community of constituents willing to work through resistance and negotiate power relationships (Chaps. 2, 3, 9, 11, and 16; see also Kruger, 2001). The process is advanced by a spirit of citizenship and self-governance distinct from traditional conservation, which often implies "being governed" and done "by the government" (Mason, 2007).

Place-based conservation is also emergent in the sense that it lacks standard protocols or institutionalized guidelines and is influenced by local and extra-local participation. For example, localized conservation planning forums on ecological restoration often devote significant attention to place meanings through a dynamic process in which socio-political forces play out in the dialogue. Such projects depend on community-based involvement for their vision, initiation, and ultimately for the sustained maintenance of the place (Jordan, 2003). Among restoration advocates it is widely agreed that restoration objectives should consider the diverse views of local residents and their senses of history (Ehrenfeld, 2000; Higgs, 2003) and indeed goals usually must be negotiated during planning (Davis & Slobodkin, 2004; Hull & Robertson, 2000).

For instance, in the American Midwest the widespread appreciation of native flora and the notion of prairie restoration sometimes clashes with the need for removing trees to restore such landscapes (Vining, Tyler, & Kweon, 2000). For people who consider themselves environmentalists eradicating non-native vegetation may seem destructive to wildlife habitat and other ecosystem benefits and threatening their sense of place (Gobster & Barro, 2000). As implementation phases begin others may learn about the project and realize that they value the historic aspects of the prairie. Within the on-going dialogue they voice concerns for inclusion of human-made structures in restoring the landscape (Stewart, Liebert, & Larkin, 2004). In several Midwestern restoration projects unfolding and participatory planning processes have allowed a variety of voices to affect the goals of the project and new relationships to place come to light (Tyler & Blader, 2000; West, 2001).

As part of an emergent process place meanings are accumulated, contested, and reconciled, and ultimately serve as a primary force behind decision-making. This is a distinct approach to place-based conservation grounded in local engagement and multi-lateral governance structures. Whereas place-based conservation as a planning process begins with the need to legitimatize place meanings and practices, emergent processes disclose the need to establish place meanings as the process unfolds and may lead to an evolution of the planning process to address implications of new place meanings. These new place meanings enter the dialogue due to individuals who experience a latent sense of place or felt value (Chap. 6) or due to a community of people discovering their collective identity through the planning dialogue (Chap. 17).

18.4 Place-Based Conservation as an Organizing Concept

Part of the power of place-based conservation is its potential for organizing myriad facts and values from a range of perspectives. Organizational power lies with the various levels of governance and institutional processes for negotiating place

meanings. Places are embedded in multiple geographic scales, each of which holds potentially distinct ecological, economic, social, and political implications. Each level of governance has a complex history shaped by institutions, agencies, special interest groups, and other constituencies with preferred relationships to place. For conservation practices to account for the compatibilities and tensions across these realms is an enormous undertaking. However the first step is to open up a public process of identifying and representing the mix of place relationships. Transparency in connections between various layers of governance allows constituents to understand the organizational layout.

This book's section on mapping place meanings provides excellent examples of utilizing place as an organizing concept. Explicitly mapping place meanings organizes subsequent steps in land-use planning. Several chapters illustrate the accumulation of meanings and embeddedness of place within socio-ecological systems and show ways in which multiple levels of governance are relevant to conservation decision-making (Chaps. 14, 13, 15, and 12). For Watson et al. research on the Flathead Indian Reservation (Chap. 16) mapping place was essential in establishing a basis for a trusting relationship with governmental agencies. Place as an organizing concept enabled tribal participants to talk about their lives and publicly recognize their connections to place, allowing individual's to transcend some of their reluctance to "go public" with their personal/cultural relationship to place. Christensen and Burchfield's feedback to constituents regarding nuances of their place meanings encouraged a thoughtful public involvement process that exposed previous myths of dichotomies and polarization (Chap. 17). This is not to say conflict was resolved but to assert a starting point for public involvement in a community that otherwise might not understand its own diversity of place-meanings. Although each of these points in hindsight appears obvious, without a framework that emphasized the importance of place meanings the organizing potential of place would not have been realized.

18.5 Place-Based Conservation as Framework for Policy

The fourth place-based conservation approach relates to legislation and policy. Although no single chapter of the book directly addresses this, legislated place meaning has a rich precedence in conservation law. An obvious example is the establishment of national parks in the U.S. that use enactment language to characterize normative meanings of place. Naming a place as "Yellowstone National Park" coupled with language that asserts its meanings in terms of a "public park or pleasuring ground for the benefit and enjoyment [of the nation's people]" (17 Stat. 32) provides an enduring framework for policy. Not only providing meanings of place, legislation may also contain language with explicit detail on the operations of publicly designated places.

Throughout the world protected areas exist where governments or other authorities have officially defined place meanings by legal decree. Such directives are generally abstract in language, leaving implementation largely to the discretion of administrative authorities, but at times they include prescriptive mandates. For example, the

1972 World Heritage Convention of the United Nations (UNESCO) stipulates criteria for designating sites to protect natural and cultural heritage. Currently UNESCO's list of World Heritage sites includes more than 900 places, where site administrators are responsible for managing the places according to well-defined guidelines.

Another example of place-based policy including specific mandates is the Illinois Land Conservation Act of 1995 (P.L. 104–106), which established the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie. The legislation divided up 26,000 acres of the former Joliet Arsenal into a restoration site for a prairie, a veterans' cemetery, two landfills, and two industrial parks, and described place meanings and guidelines for implementing future policies at Midewin. Place-based conservation is increasingly approached as a framework for legislation. In the 1990s an impetus for place-based legislation in the U.S. came from entrenched polarization and paralysis in decision-making which led the U.S. Congress to establish decision-making structures to clarify land management goals. This often included the formation of governing boards associated with particular locations (see Nie & Fiebig, 2010, who describe several cases of place-based legislation on forested lands in the American West). Place-based conservation fits well with multi-scalar governance in that it identifies public values beyond resource uses and specifies material and locational aspects of place (Keiter, 2003). Place meanings are indirectly reflected in the goals generally stated in terms of wilderness, stewardship, resource production, sustainable production, and/or restoration of ecosystem health (Nie & Fiebig).

The governance challenge would be to reconcile legislated place meanings from a national perspective to implementation at the regional and local levels. For example, Bray and Velazquez (2009; see also several essays in Callicott & Nelson, 1998) describe problems related to displacing indigenous peoples by applying the American wilderness concept to the developing world. Central governments essentially imposed legislated place meanings without any concerted effort to reconcile them with localized place meanings, resulting in the forcible removal of people from their various homelands in Latin America. Due to the recognition of such contrasts in place meanings between national and local levels Bray and Velazquez (2009) predict the future of conservation to be one of co-management of people-centered protected areas that "derives its legitimacy from multi-scale and participatory governance" (p. 13). Note that Bray and Velazquez (2009) focus on the rights of indigenous people as opposed to the imperatives of state-sponsored legislation; they did not explicitly account for other kinds of place meanings that also will need to be reconciled as part of any co-management regime.

18.6 Moving Forward with Place-Based Conservation

For place-based conservation to move forward several issues need further consideration. These can be viewed as tensions sensitive to challenge, rather than as limitations or barriers, and will exist as sticking points in the transition to place-centered forms of conservation practice. The tensions characterized below

influence each other and will likely arise concomitantly. In order to move forward with place-based conservation further research and incorporation of the following actions are needed.

18.6.1 Cultivating New Communication Channels

Place-based conservation efforts require participants to be open to developing functional relationships with one another. Fostering communication channels that invite participants to listen, learn, and share with their peers poses challenges particularly when polarization and political fragmentation prevail. Attitudes of sustained open-mindedness in participants and the structuring of stakeholder forums to encourage appreciative dialogue can help overcome such barriers to communication. However more talking does not necessarily lead to more learning. Research directed at structuring stakeholder forums to create appreciative dialogue is a growing area of interest and urgently needed. Fortunately research interest is growing in these areas. As well burgeoning communication technologies and social media are expanding networking among those who care about places (Pahre, 2011).

18.6.2 Developing Civic Capacity

Some scholars posit that society operates on an assumed distrust of people and organizations (Nie & Fiebig, 2010). A basis of place-based conservation is the need to build trust. Nie and Fiebig note that the implementation of some environmental legislation has been fraught with uncertainty, distrust among stakeholders, and lack of coherence in agency actions. This history points to the need for restoring civic capacity for decision-making either prior to, or as part of the process of, initiating practices related to place-based conservation. Depending on the extent of polarization developing civic capacity may be a long-term undertaking that requires significant commitment and energy across stakeholders. This challenge is related to the need for cultivating new communication channels, for at some point stakeholders will need to talk, listen, and allow opportunities to learn from each other. There are currently several techniques to build civic capacity (Daniels & Walker, 2001). Adapting such techniques to contexts of place-based conservation will take continued research and creative development.

Sometimes relationships to place are not discussed with outsiders due to a history of distrust between groups. In such instances asking stakeholders to openly share place meanings may lead them to opt out of public dialogue. At other times stakeholders may withhold place meanings to protect the locations of resources (e.g., best hunting spots, berry-picking patches, swimming holes) or keep secret some intimate knowledge of place. Building civic capacity is about increasing trust among people who share living and working places; trust is an important element to effective place-based conservation.

18.6.3 Identifying Appropriate Roles for Expertise

Some versions of place-based conservation are directed at integrating scientific knowledge and understanding of a place rather than seeking inclusive stakeholder dialogue and identifying public place meanings. Place knowledge evolves as new constituents enter the dialogue, bringing fresh information and subsequent evolution in collective knowledge. Although some place-based knowledge is tied to science (e.g., habitat for certain species) other knowledge is not (e.g., information about a tribal ceremonial site). Recognizing various kinds of knowledge suggests a need for appropriate strategies for integrating science and other expertise into place-based conservation. Such recognition is about accommodating various kinds of expertise while also withstanding resistance and coercion by special interest groups.

In other words, there are needs to further circumscribe the roles for science and expertise. To be sure scientists and managers are stakeholders of places and their place meanings also need representation. While their relationships to place are worthwhile to share with other constituents, they are not automatically privileged nor viewed as more legitimate than the place meanings of others. Rather scientific and managerial meanings should be considered in contexts of other stakeholders' meanings.

18.6.4 Integrating Multiple Geographic Scales

Questions of scale are an inherent part of place-based conservation approaches. The integration of decision-making authority across levels of governance is a tension explicitly identified with place as an organizing concept. However it exists across all four approaches to place-based conservation. Mapping place meanings may be appropriate given the various scales of planning, and likewise collaboration may also have an optimum range of scale for which it is most suitable. Geographic scale is explicit within participatory mapping exercises and not only corresponds with explicit meanings of place but reflects the people whose voices are identified (Chap. 13). Multiple geographic scales are not just about multiple physical scales but relational scales of people and place. For example, two people at the same planning forum may represent different geographic scales regarding their place (i.e., regional versus local relationships to place). To move forward governance structures need transformation in ways that are more polycentric (and multilateral) than hierarchical (and linear).

Flint (Chap. 3) addresses another aspect of integration of geographic scales by suggesting that new spaces of engagement are needed to encourage connections (see also Cox, 1998; Chap. 5). Rather than operating through discrete levels, new forms of governance integrate and connect actors from multiple places with shared purposes across larger scales. While the participatory mapping

chapters pair people with their places without addressing governance structure, Flint's chapter characterizes the need to re-think governance structure to create new spaces of engagement. Essentially these new spaces of engagement could provide authority that reconciles and legitimizes various relationships to place across multiple levels of state, region, and locale. Research that identifies capacities to integrate and form connections across geographic scales comprises an important set of questions for implementing place-based conservation and moving it forward.

18.6.5 Customizing Governance Strategies

Place-based conservation is not given to a "cookbook approach" for prescribing decision-making practices nor is it likely to evolve into standardized environmental assessments or step-by-step guidelines. For some the state of the practice may appear risky and vague. The lack of specific guidelines or structure poses a risk of the process becoming politically hijacked by a powerful interest group particularly in situations where trust is lacking. Without specific guidelines for implementation place-based conservation may lead to constituent concern about outcomes and suspicion of hidden agendas. On the other hand there is ample room for creative opportunities to break through stale conflicts of the past (Chap. 12).

Also needed are improved methods that connect the mapping of place meanings to a socio-political process of making shared meanings and collaborative action. In some contexts the mapping of place meanings may suffice as a starting point for place-based conservation, while in others developing an innovative socio-political process is an appropriate beginning. The nature of place-based conservation is highly conducive to customizing the approach to governance in ways that fit the socio-ecological context. The customization will be based upon reconciliation of the above tensions that generates a relatively inclusive dialogue, integrates scientific expertise with a diverse set of place meanings, and situates places within a multi-scalar context considering various creative policy tools for governance. The lack of specific guidelines will result in opportunities for inspiration drawing from the deep-seated significance of people's relationships to places and the ability to customize governance strategies that fit and feel right.

18.7 Making the Transition

The shift to place-based conservation has been occurring over several decades and it is still unfolding. As in most public decision-making contexts some participants will be invested in maintaining the status quo and may resist a transition to place-based conservation. Many are skilled in using the current system to their advantage,

and changes to the process of decision-making and planning practices could reduce their influence. Thus despite the appropriateness and benefits of place-based conservation political resistance may thwart its implementation in some instances.

Although much has been written about place-based collaboration the transition to place-based conservation likely involves adjusting institutional practices and reinterpreting policies to allow for collaborative forums and customization of governance structure. Evidence for this can be found in the U.S. Department of Interior's establishment of Landscape Conservation Collaboratives, aimed at coordinating conservation initiatives nationwide (Wood & Hoffman, 2011). Australia's movement toward "connectivity conservation" (Wyborn, 2011) is another example. The extent to which existing conservation-related policies support place-based conservation merits further study.

Making the transition to place-based conservation is related to the challenges of cultivating new communication channels, developing civic capacity, identifying appropriate roles for expertise, integrating multiple geographic scales, and customizing governance strategies. If these changes occur in concert the shift in locus of power will likely be organic and perceived as a natural evolution. There are numerous examples of governance structures and decision-making contexts in which this shift is in progress (Wyborn, 2011). Studying these cases would be helpful in determining "best practices" for transitioning to place-based conservation.

On the surface place-based conservation is a simple and intuitive set of approaches—simple because it is centered on people-place relationships, intuitive because of its compelling premise that people naturally form relationships with places. Yet considering traditions of the practice place-based conservation is transformative and complex. It shifts the focus from resource conservation and product/service delivery to a more holistic and collaborative style of governance that operates at multiple scales. From this perspective place meanings are negotiated among constituents in a process of co-creation that includes scientific and technical assessment. The negotiation is complex because it encompasses competing uses, knowledge, expectations, and norms for given places. Additional layers of complexity come from the contemporary emphasis on the conservation of ecosystem services and political negotiation over dynamic socio-ecological systems. In short the integration of knowledge with conservation practice can only be achieved within place-based contexts.

Ultimately place-based conservation is a *way of thinking* about conservation practice. It deliberates on places that people care about, allowing for controversy and dialogue up front. But it is also a strategy for dealing with the enormous complexity that comes with recognizing interconnectedness of dynamic social and ecological processes at multiple scales. Some stakeholders, institutions, and professionals likely will continue to resist the shift to place-based conservation, and many challenges remain in its implementation. But the transition is inevitable. Place-based conservation brings specificity to the management of places that people identify with, care about, and want reflected in conservation.

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