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Adaptive Governance



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“Learning from Regions: A Comparative Appraisal of
Climate, Water, and Human Interactions in the Colorado and
Columbia River Systems”

ADAPTIVE GOVERNANCE

On the possible transition from scientific
management to adaptive governance

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THANKS TO

Collaborators on *Adaptive Governance* (in progress): T. A. Steelman, L. Coe-Juell, C. M. Cromley, C. A. Edwards, & D. W. Tucker,

Collaborators on *Finding Common Ground: Governance and Natural Resources in the American West* (Yale University Press, 2002):

C. H. Colburn, C. M. Cromley, R. A. Klein, & E. A. Olson

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SCIENTIFIC MANAGEMENT

- Taylor & other management systems
 - ICC hearings 1910 set off efficiency craze
- Progressive Conservationists
 - “The crux of the gospel of efficiency lay in a rational and scientific method of making basic technological decisions through a single, central authority.” (Hays, 1959)
- Aspirations of Gospel of Efficiency

ASPIRATIONS

- Science: Utilize latest knowledge and expert, disinterested personnel
- Policy: Apply technology on behalf of efficiency, to eliminate waste
- Decision Making: Rely on single, central authority for optimal decisions
 - Bureaucratic (top down) implementation

PARTIAL INCORPORATION

- Overall, “an attempt to supplant conflict with a ‘scientific’ approach...” (Hays)
- Defeated by political conflict: pressure groups & eventually iron triangles
- Remnants nevertheless survive, e. g.
 - Bison management in Yellowstone
 - USFS reaction to Quincy Library Group
 - Klamath Basin Water Crisis, 2001

PRESENT REALITIES

“Today, anyone can delay or even stop your process by lobbying Congress, initiating court action, or rallying grass roots efforts to oppose your action.

“You cannot take away their right to fight.

“Thus you need to pay attention to their issues and actively seek their participation and consent.” (Bur Rec, 1998)

ADAPTIVE GOVERNANCE

- Emergent, in response to unresolved problems at local level
- Community-based initiatives in various forms take the lead
 - Cases: 15-Mile Reach, Camino Real
 - Diffusion & Adaption: Grassbanking, The Oregon Plan, Community-Based Forestry
- Focus here on 15-Mile Reach PBO

15-MILE REACH

- Part of Colorado River main stem upstream from Grand Junction
- Severe depletion of spring peak and late summer instream flows for water users
 - Many diversions upstream to East Slope
 - West Slope water demands as well
- Prime habitat for recovery of Colorado pikeminnow and other species

PBO CONTEXT

- Upper Basin Recovery Program, 1988
- Revised to clarify criteria, respons, 1993
- Near blow-up in 1996-97
 - Ute Conservation District application
- * 15-Mile Reach PBO, December 1999
- Since then, diffusion & adaptation
 - New paradigm for Upper Basin & beyond

PBO DECISION-MAKING

- Situation reduced to 15-Mile Reach
- Participants more inclusive & respons.
- Perspectives varied
 - Diverse interests: recovery, depletions, etc.
 - Shared interests in avoiding reinitiation
- Resources: local & scientific knowledge
- Strategies: decision by consensus

PBO POLICY

- Programmatic: multiple ends & means
- New depletions: 120k aft/yr in 2 blocks
- Recovery criteria & procedures
 - Fish counts at 2015 or 50k in depletions
 - Annual counts to detect significant decline
 - Reinitiation without positive fish response
- Recovery actions: instream flow & more

PBO SCIENCE

- Model projections considered uncertain
 - Water users not convinced by science
- Depletions & recovery actions
 - Quadrupled late summer instream flow
 - Meet project instream flow requirements
 - Come up short in spring peak, but add cfs
- Observations: “Let the Fish Tell Us”

GOVERNANCE...

- Adapts to real people, not cardboard caricatures sometimes created...
- Adapts to difference and changes on ground, not one-size-fits-all
- Adapts to 21st century realities
 - Applied science incomplete, uncertain
 - Policy problems political, seldom technical
 - No single, central authority

PROSPECTS

- 21st realities force devolution of decision
- Expect more opposition from remnants of scientific management
- Expect more Independent rediscoveries of adaptive governance
- Much depends upon personalities
- Are there any satisfactory alternatives?