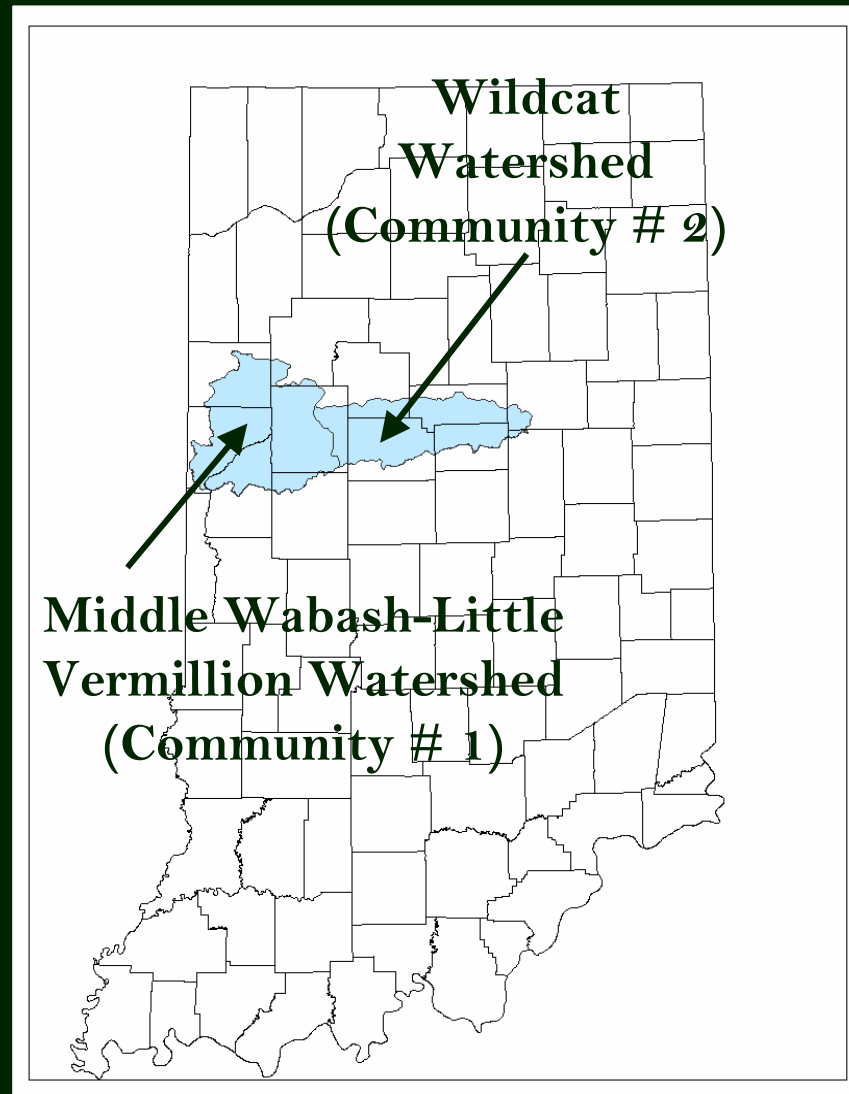

Northern Indiana Collaborative Groups

Kenli A. Schaaf

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Forest Land Conservation: An Indiana Portfolio

Location in North-central Indiana



Background

- Interviews with private landowners Summer 2002 and Summer 2003
 - Convene Natural Resources Community Forums, beginning in April 2004 in two north-central watersheds
 - Purpose: “...provide a place and time where participants can engage in a dialogue to uncover common interests in natural resources and develop ideas as to how to take action...”
 - Invitations to all landowners (> 1 acre) in study area and agency personnel in county
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Structure of Forums

- Conveners provide:
 - Flexible meeting agenda
 - Refreshments
 - Maps
 - Supplies (flip charts, pens, notebooks)
 - Discussion points
 - Neutral facilitation
 - Meeting minutes
 - Evaluation opportunities
 - Participants provide:
 - Discussion
 - Ideas for focus, goals, and activities of forums
 - Knowledge about community and others interests
 - Commitment
 - Direction
-

Meeting Places



Community # 1

Community # 2



Methodology

- Host the Natural Resources Community Forum
 - Observation of the process
 - Record of the forum discussion (meeting minutes)
 - Reflective journal
 - Focus group interviews
-

Forum Attendance

- In both communities:
 - Approximately 5 – 11 landowners/meeting
 - Range in acreage ownership
 - Both “active” and “non-active” private landowners
 - Core groups of participants in each watershed
 - Previous participation in interview -or- invitation from forum participant
 - Participation from natural resources agency personnel
-

Progression of Discussion:

Community # 1

- *Forum # 1*: Introduction; Presentation of interview results; Discussion on issues and challenges
 - *Forum # 2*: Issues, experiences, and ideas; Solutions and resources
 - *Forum # 3*: Presentation on collaborative natural resources management from U.S.; Discussion on goals, focus, and means
 - *Forum # 4*: Discussion on goals, focus, and means
 - *Forum # 5*: Presentation on survey of woodland owners; Planning discussion (grants and presentations)
 - *Forum # 6*: Presentation on Water Quality; Discussion on where to go next; Learn about forests
 - *Forum # 7*: Planning for future activities
 - *Forum # 8 (future)*: Meeting with Drainage Board
 - *Forum # 9 (future)*: Meeting with IL watershed group
-

Progression of Discussion:

Community # 2

- *Forum # 1*: Introduction; Presentation of interview results; Discussion on issues and challenges
- *Forum # 2*: Issues, experiences, and ideas; Solutions and resources
- *Forum # 3*: Presentation from a panel of natural resource agency personnel (NRCS, DNR, SWCD, County Planner)
- *Forum # 4*: Discussion on goals, focus, and means; Cameras distributed for Landscape Photo Documentation Project
- *Forum # 5*: Discussion on septic systems; Decision to have local presenter join the group
- *Forum # 6*: Presentation from local organization focused on Wildcat Creek; Discussion on what landowners would like to see; Septic systems and water quality
- *Forum # 7*: Landscape Photo Documentation Project (discussion of photos, location, and next steps)
- *Forum # 8 (future)*: Presentation from Extension specialist

Current Situation

- Participant ownership of Forums in Community # 1
 - Participants organizing November and December Forums
 - Lack of ownership of Forums in Community # 2
 - Perceived as “Learning Circle”
 - Kenli organizing speakers
-

Why Different Routes?: Speculation on the Differences

- *Focus*: Specific place-based resources v. broader interests
 - *Stakeholder commitment*: Perception of having a “stake” in process and outcome
 - *Levels of concern*: Perception of immediate, galvanizing concern v. general interest in issues
 - *Efficacy*: Perception of ability to affect change
 - *Presence of natural resources*: Creeks serving as focal point
 - *Existing groups*: Level of existing activity in watersheds
 - *Participants*: Willingness to engage in dialogue and vision for forum
-

Potential Outputs and Outcomes: Community # 1

- Feedback
 - *“Not attending is no sign of our disinterest. Think you are doing a great job and would like to support your efforts.”*
 - *“...very much interested in finding common ground with the others...”*
 - Participants inviting speakers & organizing direction of forums
 - Dialogue on issues of importance
 - Spring workshop series
 - Establishment of self-sustaining group of landowners
-

Potential Outputs and Outcomes: Community # 2

- Conversation on issues of importance
 - Landscape photo documentation project
 - Learning about natural resources issues and existing programs
-

What's Working?:

And Speculations on Why It's Working...

- Finding key focal points:
 - Water quality: Particular streams (sense of place)
 - Recreation opportunities: Public access
 - Aesthetic qualities: Rural character
 - Education: Involving youth
 - General discussions
 - Using networks of participants to achieve collective results
 - Willingness to buy into process
-

What's Not Working?: And Speculations on Why It's Not Working...

- Nebulous nature of these Forums
 - No perceived crisis
 - No perceived common vision
 - Lack of commitment from participants
 - Ensuring adequate participation
 - Concern over lack of involvement from others
 - Difficult to keep conversation focused
 - Timeline
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Is This Collaboration?

- “...A process through which parties who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible” (Gray, 1989, p. 5)
- Multiple stakeholders
 - Open and inclusive to others
- Discourse-based
- Learning-focused
- Voluntary pooling of resources
- Process requirements
 - Interdependence
 - Work constructively
 - Joint ownership of decisions
 - Collective responsibility of direction
 - Emergent and dynamic process (synergy)

Next Steps

- Continue facilitation of Forums until December
 - Reassess need for facilitation
 - Begin analysis of process for key topics:
 - Social capital (trust, networks, norms)
 - Sense of place (attachment, dependence, identity, satisfaction)
 - Community/community attachment (social, environmental, identity)
 - Collaboration (antecedents, process, outputs and outcomes; effectiveness of this approach)
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Thank you!

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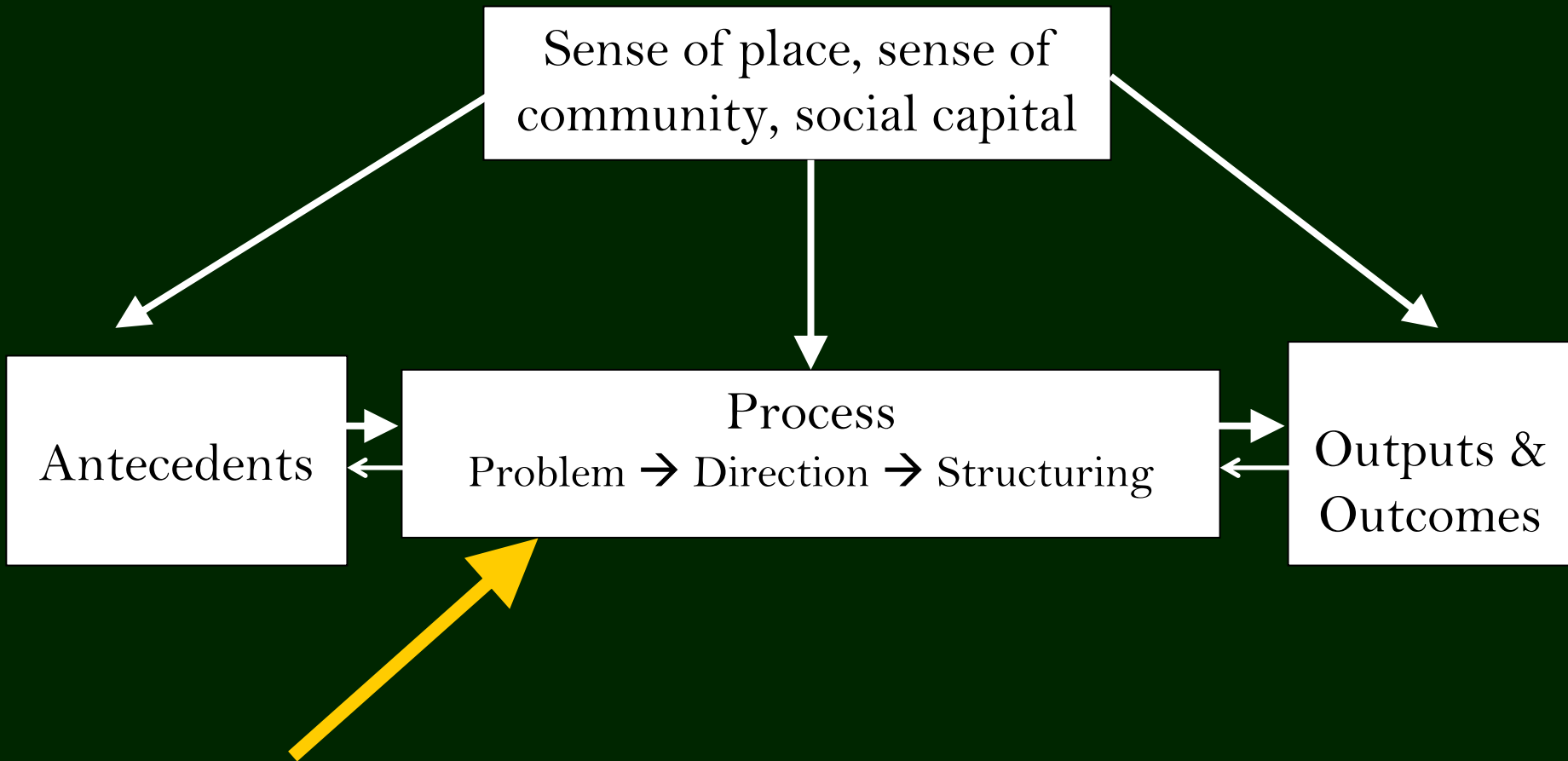
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Techniques Employed to Facilitate Collaboration

- Meeting minutes
 - Parallel handouts in each Forum
 - Welcome sheet, meeting outline (agenda), participant evaluation of meeting
 - Guidelines
 - Flip chart record
 - Landscape Photo Documentation Project
(Community # 2)
-

Framework



A New Form of Governance?

- Call for “the kind of forum through which new, local norms of conservationist management are most readily established...need [*for*] governance... landowner-initiated, landowner-controlled” (Elmendorf, 2003)
-

Landscape Photo Documentation Project: Community # 2



- Photograph focus
 - Creeks,
 - Public access
 - Wooded corridors, woodland
 - Habitat
 - Prairie
 - Rural character
 - Farming practices

Landscape Photo Documentation Project: Community # 2

