

Center for Community-Based Resource Management (CBRM)

Natural Resources Institute, University of Manitoba

CBRM Database

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Case Study Name:	Social networks and community-based natural resource management		
Authors:	Lauber, T. B., D. J. Decker, and B. A. Knuth		
Document Type:	paper in scientific journal		
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Region:	North America		
Country:	United States		
Ecosystem Type:	mountain ecosystems		
Social Characteristics:	community inside protected area		
Scale of Study:	district/municipality		
Resource Type:	forestry (timber)		
Type of Initiative:	co-management		
Community-Based Work:	resource management		
Keywords:	capacity, collaboration, community-based management, social networks		
Summary:	We conducted case studies of three successful examples of collaborative, community-based natural		

resource conservation and development. Our purpose was to: (1) identify the functions served by interactions within the social networks of involved stakeholders; (2) describe key structural properties of these social networks; and (3) determine how these structural properties varied when the networks were serving different functions. The case studies relied on semi-structured, in-depth interviews of 8 to 11 key stakeholders at each site who had played a significant role in the collaborative projects. Interview questions focused on the roles played by key stakeholders and the functions of interactions between them. Interactions allowed the exchange of ideas, provided access to funding, and enabled some stakeholders to influence others. The exchange of ideas involved the largest number of stakeholders, the highest percentage of local stakeholders, and the highest density of interactions. Our findings demonstrated the value of tailoring strategies for involving stakeholders to meet different needs during a collaborative, community-based natural resource management project. Widespread involvement of local stakeholders may be most appropriate when ideas for a project are being developed. During efforts to exert influence to secure project approvals or funding, however, involving specific individuals with political connections or influence on possible sources of funds may be critical. Our findings are consistent with past work that has postulated that social networks may require specific characteristics to meet different needs in community-based environmental management.