Seeking Solutions to Difficult Environmental Problems

Effective Collaboration in Natural Resources Management

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Why bother?

- Landscape scale issues.
- Very few decisions in natural resources are made in a vacuum.
- Not sure of the extent of the problems or the extent of the solutions…both are generally unknown
- Maximize gains among all parties

Problem Complexity

- Multiple parties, issues, time considerations

- Conflicting value orientations

- Policy and precedent

- Science & technology (cognitive demands)

- Uncertainty and ambiguity

- High stakes

Collaboration

- The process and structures of public policy decision making and management that engage people constructively across the public, private and nonprofit sectors in order to carry out a public purpose that could not otherwise be accomplished.

Adapted from Emerson, K., Nabatchi, T., & Balogh, S. (2011). An Integrative Framework for Collaborative Governance. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*.

Collaboration & Negotiation

- Two sides to the same coin.
- Collaboration is 'negotiation' among many parties.
- It is FOTE: a Full, Open and Transparent Exchange.
- The result is a collaborative decision.
- Negotiation in this sense is a positive-sum game, not a zero-sum game.
- To make positive gains, one must help other stakeholders make gains too.

Collaboration is Difficult

- We often position ourselves for a zero-sum outcome
- We lack a systematic approach for preparing and conducting collaboration
- We are limited by institutional and cultural norms
- We are trapped by ego and emotion

But, Very Possible

Platte Valley, Wyoming Range and Mule Deer, Sage Grouse, Black Hills forestry, Governor's Task Force on Forests – many examples of successful collaboration in WY.
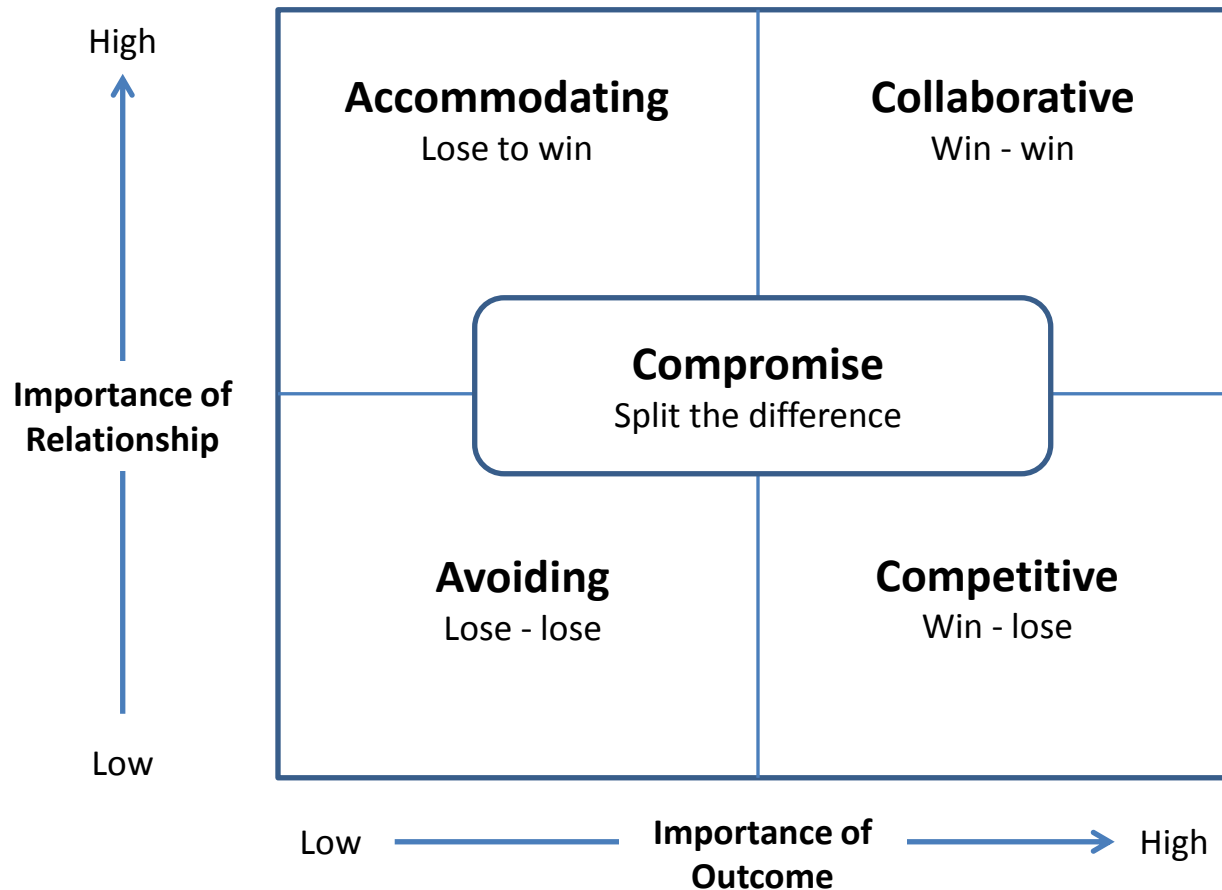
Requirements:

• Recognize possibilities for mutual gain

• Help constituents understand how collaboration works and can benefit them.

• Listen, ask questions, find common ground.

• More than any facilitator, you can make this successful.
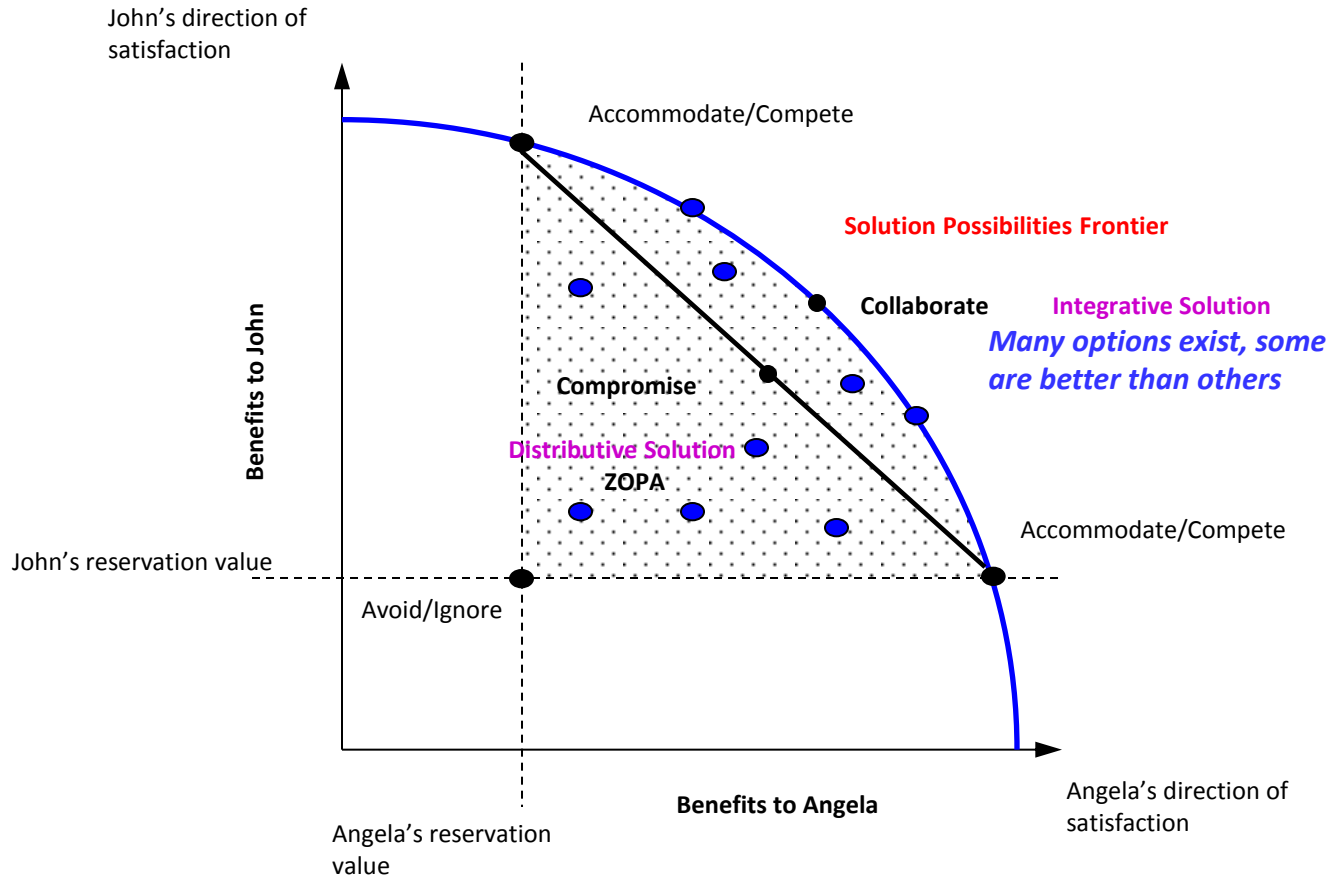
THE COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

# In any collaboration, 3 domains are in play:
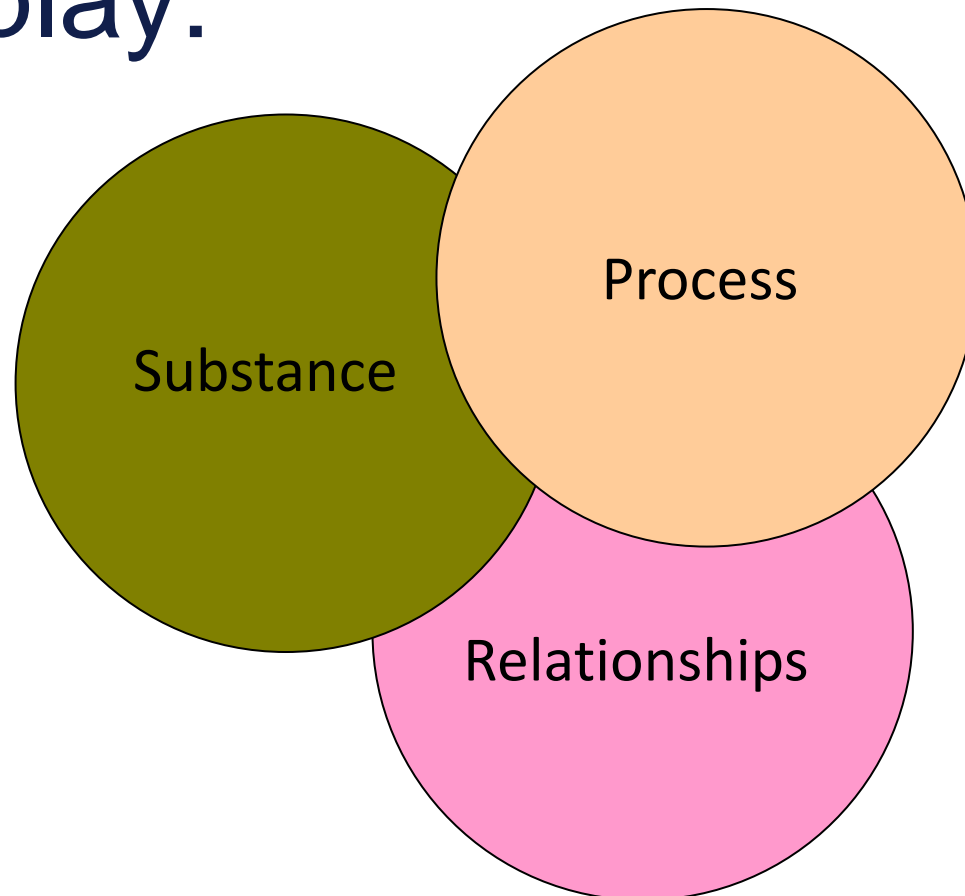
The Challenges

1. Engaging in a logical and robust consensus building process while accommodating conflict.

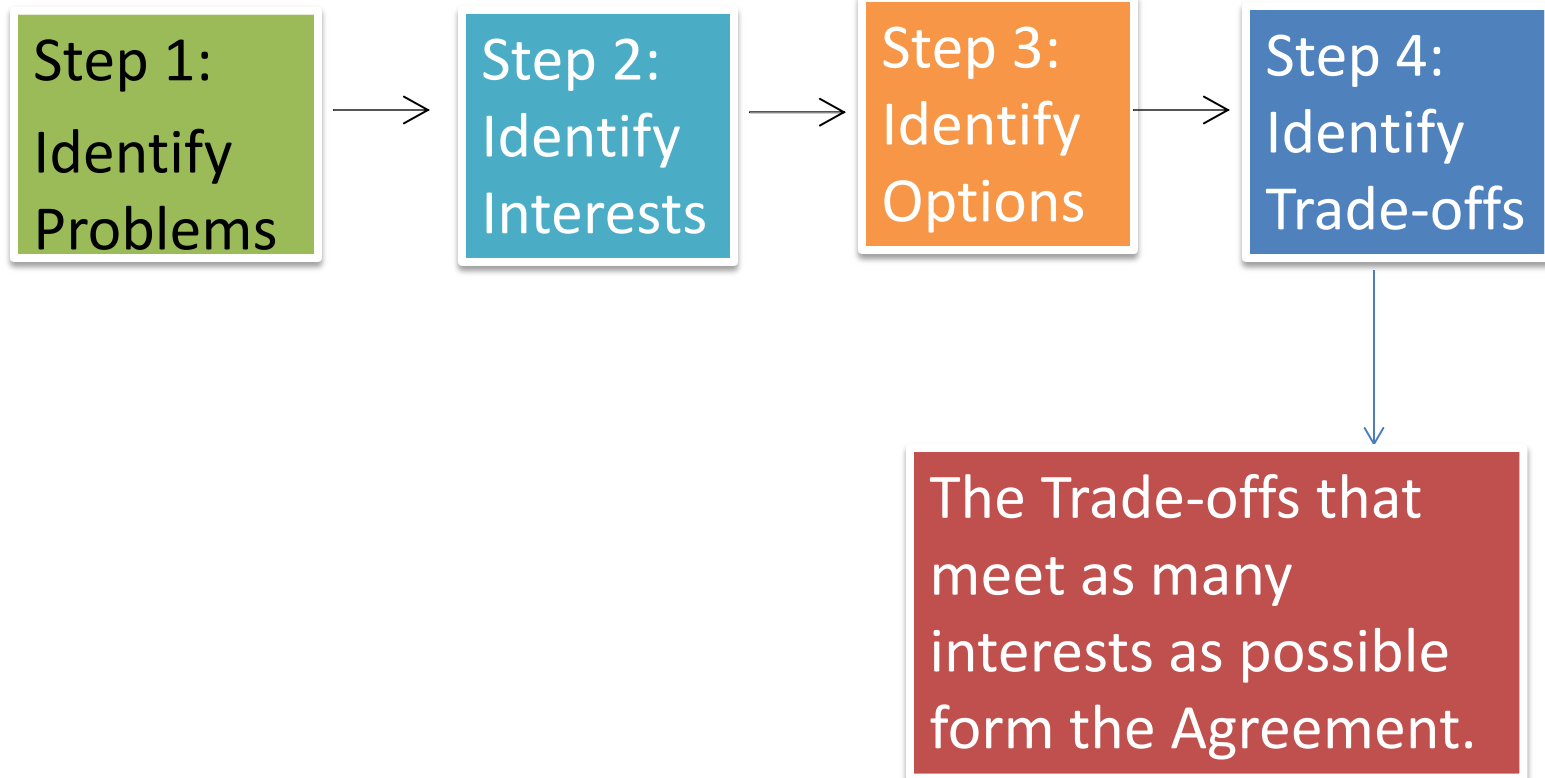2. Creating value for all stakeholders

Principled Negotiation

- Separate the people from the problem
- Focus on interests not positions
- Generate options for mutual gain
- Evaluate options using objective criteria
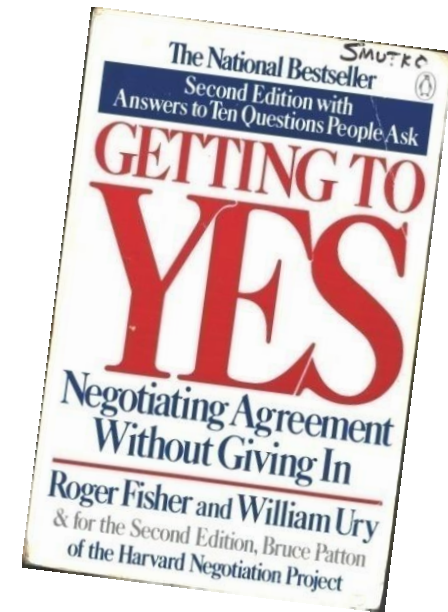
A Consensus-Building Process

Step 1: Identify Problems → **Step 2:** Identify Interests → **Step 3:** Identify Options → **Step 4:** Identify Trade-offs

The Trade-offs that meet as many interests as possible form the Agreement.

Step 1: Identify Problems

- Learn how different stakeholders view the problem.
- Avoid assumptions.
- Will allow participants to gain insight into what options are going to be most feasible.
- Allows participants to gain clarity on the scope of work ahead.

Step 2: Identify Interests

- Learn what is important to different stakeholders and why.

- Will allow participants to gain insight into what trade-offs are going to be most feasible.

- Allows participants to gain clarity on where there is the most disagreement and where there appears to be more agreement.

Step 3: Identify Options

- Identify all the possible solutions that exist.
- During option generation, participants learn in more depth from eachother about the issue and the possibilities.

Step 4: Identify Trade-Offs

- Explore the pro's and con's of all options.
- Explore the level of agreement with all options.
- Find as many options as possible that meet as many interests as possible
- This is the hard work.
- This is where agreement will emerge if it exists.

Collaboration Drivers

- Leadership
- Consequential incentives
- Interdependence
- Uncertainty

Why bother?

- Landscape scale issues.
- Very few decisions in natural resources are made in a vacuum.
- Not sure of the extent of the problems or the extent of the solutions…both are generally unknown.
- You may end up with a solution that no one could have predicted and is a win-win.

Questions?