What’s the Catch? Urban Fishing Programs, Stakeholders, and Water Quality

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Overview

• Context of our case study
• Case study findings
  • Partnerships
  • Inter-agency gaps
  • Tools and implications for resource managers

Photo: fishing.history.blogspot.com
Urban Fishing Program Case Study

• First joint agency-city NRM partnership and program in IA

• Agency water improvement grant motivates city and agency to focus on watershed improvements, stakeholder engagement, and potential for a city-wide urban fishing program

• Agency contracts with ISU to document program process and development
Top-down, expert-driven, “If we stock it, they will come” changing to a process-oriented, collaborative, evolving, iterative process (Carlsson & Berkes 2005, Koontz et al. 2004, Plummer & Fitzgibbon 2004)
Partnerships

• The shift from managing fish and aquatic habitats to managing social networks and relationships (Barber and Taylor 1990) is consistent with trends in NRM (Natcher et al. 2005)

• Agency staff fluent in the technical skills needed for NRM but new to the time & process needed for collaboration (Wondolleck and Yaffee 2000)
Gaps

• Lack of analysis of partnership formation and maintenance is a theoretical oversight in NRM literature (Carlsson & Berkes 2005, Natcher et al. 2005)

• “Idealized narrative” (Conley and Moote 2003) in which co-management viewed as a panacea (Carlsson and Berkes 2005)
Social Capital

• “created when the relations among persons change in ways that facilitate action [...] it is embodied in the relations among persons” (Coleman 1990)

• Bonding capital (similar interests/goals); Bridging capital (capacity to link to groups with dissimilar interests/goals); linking capital (connections with external agencies) (Pretty 2003)
Research Questions

1. What existing and potential partnerships might be key to this program’s development?

2. What opportunities or capacity might these partnerships build within urban communities as they engage in public health, urban food source, watershed improvement, or ecological awareness initiatives?

3. What are the barriers these partnerships may encounter within the community or city and state level agencies?
Strategizing agency and community partnerships: a case study of an urban fishing program

**Urban fishing program managers**
- 2007 AFS Symposium on Urban Fisheries review
- Interviews with 6 UFP managers outside of IA

**Agency partnerships**
- Evolution of city government and state natural resource agency partnership
- 24 interviews

**Community partnerships**
- Existing neighborhood and community groups
- 5 focus groups
Summary of Findings

**Stakeholders & Partnerships**
- Existing community engagement
- Water quality & program sustainability concerns

**Gaps & Process**
- Opportunities for resource sharing, education, collaboration
- Communication challenges

**Tools and Next steps**
- Designate point-people who assume ownership of program process
- Incorporate feedback and evaluation
Recognition of Need for Partnerships

• You know, one of the things we’ve learned in fisheries over the last 50 years is it’s not just stocking fish. If we can produce good water quality, we can produce fish. And so that’s one of our major goals of our units now is to try and engage with other agencies to try and improve water quality. _IDNR Interview 22_

• I was just astounded that they had the foresight to understand that they could fulfill their mission in a much more significant way by joining forces with local government. [...] _City Interview 18_
Challenges to Partnerships

I think we want people to work in the urban area, but we don’t give them all the tools and all the staff that they need. And because of that, you’re just always scrambling to get something done—to work with this group, that group, scrambling to get the fish in the lake [...]. We don’t put a big enough emphasis on our urban areas and evaluating what’s working and what’s not. We just, we try to hit it from all these sides [...].

_UFP Manager Interview 21_
What’s the catch? Inter-Agency Gaps

**Impaired** natural resource can be improved through identified projects and opportunities

**Civic stakeholders** engage in long-term planning & evaluation of process or official goals e.g., improved water quality; increased rec. opportunities

**Designated point person responsible for the program process**

**Community stakeholders** engage in short-term planning & evaluation of task or operative goals, e.g. watershed education

**Partnerships** emerge through improvements, management, maintenance, knowledge & resource sharing
Social Planning

• Process through which diverse stakeholders provide input to shape solutions to identified problems (Weil 2005; Rothman 1995)

• Social planning may mitigate the impact of funding and staffing cuts to government social programs (Weil 1996)
## Template for Strategizing Partnerships

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STAKEHOLDERS</th>
<th>INTEREST</th>
<th>ROLE</th>
<th>SUPPORT</th>
<th>INFLUENCE</th>
<th>NEED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>AGENCIES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Municipal Department 1</td>
<td>Improved water quality</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
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<tr>
<td>State Agency 1</td>
<td>Increased recreational opportunities in urban areas</td>
<td>Key</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
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<tr>
<td>County Agency 1</td>
<td>Improved water quality</td>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NEIGHBORHOODS</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood 1</td>
<td>Pond improvements</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood 2</td>
<td>Increase park use; nostalgia</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
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<tr>
<td>Neighborhood 3</td>
<td>Increase park use; create a resource</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neighborhood 4</td>
<td>Increase park use; improve the pond</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
UFP Process

**INPUTS / RESOURCES**
- Staffing
- Funding
- Org/Community support

**ACTIVITIES**
- Pond improvements
- Events/Trainings
- Educational opportunities

**OUTPUTS**
- Materials
- Program Model

**OUTCOMES**
- Collaboration
- Watershed improvements
- Replication

**IMPACT**
- Changes within Agencies Communities Watershed
Implications

• Water quality may be one “hook” to engage urban community stakeholders NRM; however, the sustainability of a program depends upon…

• **Key partners who fill gaps** in knowledge and resources are needed in emerging programs

• **Staff who bridge the gaps in knowledge & training** (Sarason and Lorentz 1998) and **increased training of existing staff** (Ballard 2008; Selin and Chavez 1995) may help in the creation and maintenance of emerging NRM partnerships

• **Job positions of natural resource managers need revision** to emphasize management of partnerships, feedback, and program process
Acknowledgements

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  ▪ Des Moines residents

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References


Questions and Discussion