

SESSION 3

TAMPA BAY

***Numeric Nutrient Criteria:
Improving Water Quality in
an Urban Setting***



Introduction and Session Overview

The third session of NRLI's Class XIII took place October 10-12 in Pinellas County, Florida. The objectives of the session were to: 1) identify causes and conflicts that impact effective participatory discussions; 2) explore the implications of differing beliefs and values on participatory decision-making; 3) visit Weedon Island and speak with estuary stakeholders working on water quality; 4) share practicum ideas and progress; and 5) practice using the timeline tool. The session began with lunch in Tangerine South, a private dining room in the Hilton Hotel in St. Petersburg's Bayfront neighborhood. Following lunch, NRLI Project Team Member, Paul Monaghan, led the cohort through a Looking Back—Looking Forward exercise where NRLI participants reminisced on the previous two session activities and negotiation skills learned. Monaghan then informed the class about the objectives and future activities of the third NRLI session in the Tampa Bay.

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Numeric Nutrient Criteria: Improving Water Quality in an Urban Setting

Part 1: "Framework for Understanding Conflict"

Jon Dain led "Framework for Understanding Conflict," an exercise with the objectives of deconstructing normative views on conflict. NRLI participants were asked to write emotions, synonyms, or thoughts that arise when hearing the word, "conflict", on a large post-it. Fellows then arranged the words from least intense to most intense on the wall. Dain then used the backdrop to contrast the potential benefits of conflict in facilitation against the emotional reactions that the word evokes. This exercise proved a great challenge to NRLI Fellows who expressed discomfort at the notion of productive conflict, yet proved to be a great exercise to facilitate conversation that expands the role of using conflict as a tool for facilitation.



Jon Dain leads "Framework for Understanding Conflict" with NRLI fellows

Context Speaker

In the 1970s, the Estuary was unproductive and unhealthy. National media attention galvanized the community to take action. The Tampa Bay Estuary Program (TBEP) was established in 1991 to assist the Tampa Bay area in developing a comprehensive plan to restore and protect the Tampa Bay. Holly Greening, Director of the Tampa Bay Estuary Program, presented information about the history of the Numeric Nutrient Criteria Agreement that transformed the Tampa Bay waters from a lifeless water body, to a productive estuary. The success of the agreement is largely due to the TBEP being viewed as an independent, data-driven entity whose position helped to bring parties with opposing views (e.g., the Sierra Club and local fertilizer manufacturing companies) to a discussion that respected differing values and interests.



One example of the data-driven perspective of the TBEP was the focus on one indicator, the quantity of seagrass in the Bay. Seagrass is an aquatic plant that thrives under favorable environmental conditions (e.g., adequate sunlight, sufficient dissolved oxygen). These conditions were compromised in the polluted, algae-filled waters that plagued the Tampa Bay. By focusing on one indicator that could be readily monitored, the TBEP was able to guide the attention of stakeholders towards a common goal, with less attention on values, which can be polarizing.

Greening's presentation was well received by the Fellows and was more conversational in nature thanks to the Q&A throughout the presentation.

NRLI Director, Bruce Delaney, led fellows in a conflict-management activity, "Drama by the River".

Drama by the River

Fellows were asked to independently rank fictional actors based on their perceived level of the actors' wrong-doings in a particular scenario. Later, fellows were asked to construct rankings of actors' wrong-doings in small groups. Large-group discussion of the activity was less focused on the rankings and their justifications, but what strategies/factors influenced or hindered group consensus. Most groups discussed the importance of empathetic listening, and willingness to "live with" the majority opinion of the group, even if it wasn't their own opinion. Fellows also discussed how empathetic listening also contributed to willingness to modify rankings once new perspectives were shared.



NRLI fellows split into groups to construct rankings of actors' wrong-doings

Weedon Island

Day Two

Day two used a combination of field trips and formal and informal discussions with local stakeholders to expand on the issues discussed by previous speakers. The day's activities also continued to challenge fellows' perceptions of conflict management.

Field Trip—Weedon Island

NRLI alumna, Libby Carnahan, Florida Sea Grant - Pinellas County, and Lindsay Cross, - Tampa Bay Estuary Program, led fellows on a 2-hour canoe field trip through the mangroves of the Tampa Bay. The launch site was Weedon Island, a federal preserve managed by Pinellas County Extension. Fellows were able to participate in discussions about the impact of waterfront property on water quality and the history of mangrove channels while passing these issues along the watery trail. The climax of the trip was leaving the mangrove channels to canoe into the opening of the Tampa Bay where seagrass, mullet fish, and other aquatic life could be observed. The trip demonstrated that the stakeholders of the Tampa Bay Estuary were able to accomplish tremendous goals to improve estuary water quality in a relatively short amount of time. The presence of automobiles along the bridges that cross the Tampa Bay illustrated that more work is still to be done to address the role of non-point nitrogen sources of pollution.



Above NRLI fellows canoe through the mangroves of the Tampa Bay

Overview

Day 2 used a combination of field trips and formal and informal discussions with local stakeholders to expand on the issues discussed by previous speakers. The day's activities also included the reading discussion and further instruction on understanding conflict. Day 2 ended with a fabulous dinner at the Red Mesa Cantina.



Reading Discussion

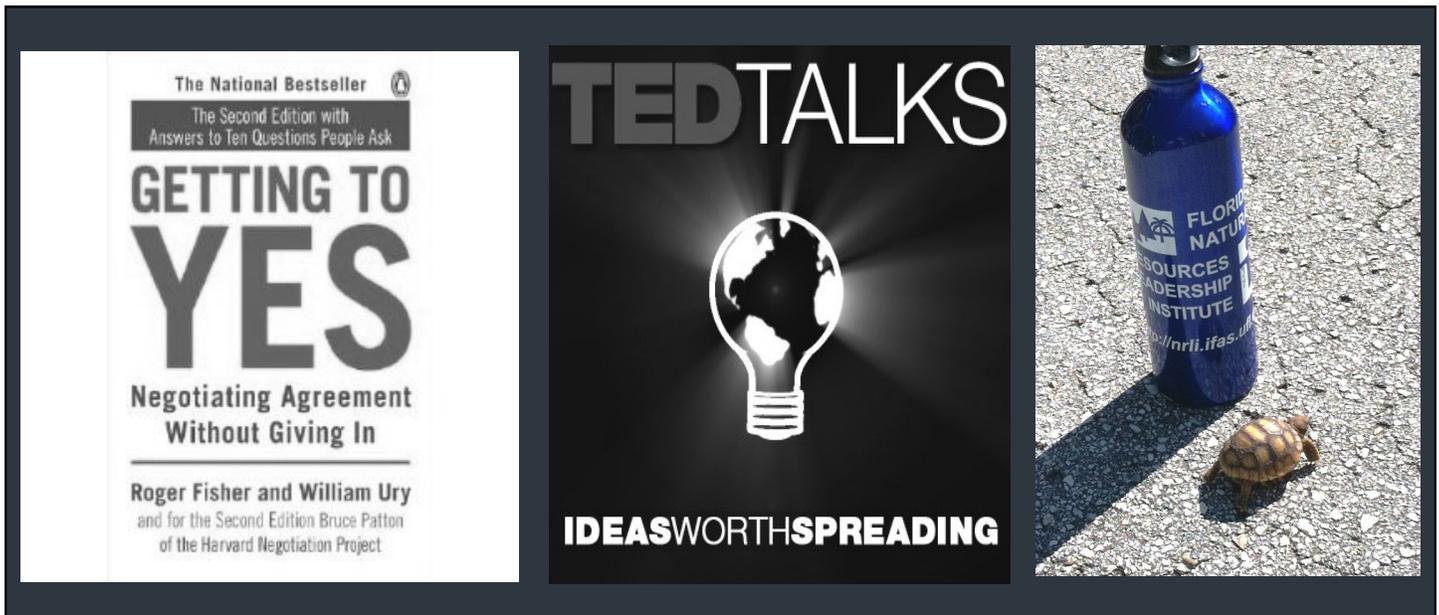
After a wonderful morning canoeing along Weedon Island, the Fellows returned to the Visitor's Center for the first in a two-part reading discussion led by Craig Faulhaber. Reading assignments for session three included:

Getting to Yes (Fisher and Ury - Chapter 3: pp. 40-59)

Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making (Kaner - Chapter 2: pp. 23-29)

I'm O.K., You're Biased (NYT April 2006) I'm Ok You're Biased.doc

Dan Ariely - Are we in control of our emotions: (TEDTalks) http://www.ted.com/talks/dan_ariely_asks_are_we_in_control_of_our_own_decisions.html



Faulhaber's first exercise focused on "how the brain works" related to the Dan Ariel TED Talk. Fellows were asked to pair into groups to discuss two questions 1) what are the challenges the results pose for participatory decision-making; and 2) how could understanding the results help us navigate the participatory decision-making process? The Fellows were then charged with enumerating challenges and opportunities. Opportunity responses included such items as bias recognition, awareness of framing, analysis and understanding of a situation, self-awareness, trusted sources and understanding of stakeholders. Challenge responses included such items as entrenchment, rush to decision-making, connecting stakeholders to science and making decisions not based upon merits, but due to influence by surrounding factors.

READING DISCUSSION-CONTINUED

Part 2 of the reading session focused on using NRLI acquired skills to communicate interests through use of a role playing exercise. Faulhaber challenged the group to divide into two groups representing the Republican and Democratic Parties to express interests with regard to a budget resolution. At this point, the Federal Government was in a partial shutdown due to disagreements in Congressional funding including the Affordable Care Act. Our charge was to adapt principles within the reading assignments to clearly communicate our specific interests, acknowledge the other party's interests, highlight shared and compatible interests, put the problem before the solution, discuss path forward and push hard for the interest while being soft on the people. Since this topic is highly controversial and touches on Fellow's values and interests, it was an interesting and somewhat uncomfortable exercise.

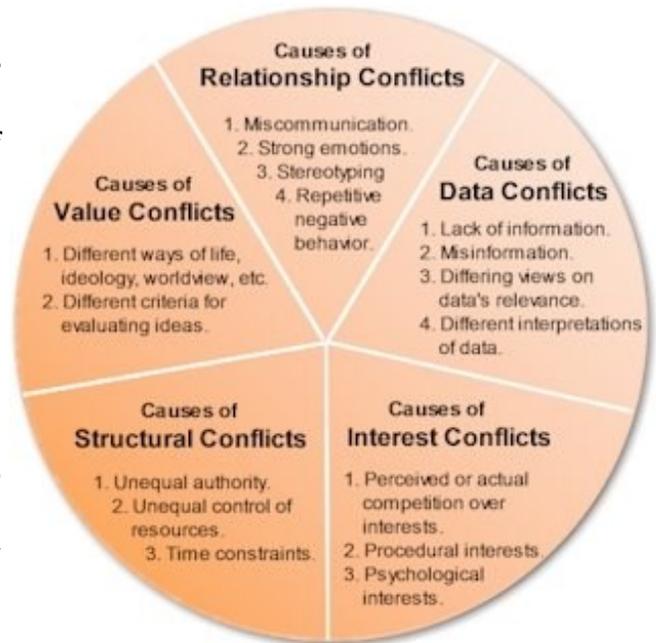
STAKEHOLDER PANEL DISCUSSION

This session's stakeholder panel was different from our previous experiences in that it did not involve a traditional format in which stakeholders were seated as a panel engaging in dialogue based upon specific Fellow questions. For the Tampa Session, an interview process was employed in which the Fellows were divided into groups to interview an individual panel member. Joy Hazell prepped the fellows for this interview technique by highlighting a typical interview process. This process involved introductions, an icebreaker (i.e. what was your role in the process), probing questions (what do you mean by that, why), specific questions (i.e. what did you give up in the process, what techniques did you use to reach consensus) and any wrap up questions (i.e. what advice would you give). Once the stakeholder panel members arrived, moderator David Tipple welcomed and thanked the members for their participation. Tipple was very welcoming and quickly set the panel members at ease. The stakeholders introduced themselves and briefly explained their interests and roles. Stakeholders included Craig Kovach, CF Industries; Kelli Hammer-Levy, Pinellas County Watershed Management; Maury McDonald, Florida Department of Environmental Protection; Cathy Harrelson, Gulf Restoration Network; Darryl Smith, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services; and Joe Joyce, University of Florida. Fellows and panel members then broke into their previously assigned groups to complete the interviews.

During the break after the individual interviews, Fellows engaged in additional insightful conversations with stakeholder panel members that they did not have the opportunity to interview. After the break, David Tipple and Paul Monaghan lead a Debrief of the Stakeholder Panel. During this exercise, Fellows again broke into their interview groups to review the process, NRLI concepts (e.g. conflict management, stakeholder engagement, etc.) and then presented an overview to the larger group. This format successfully allowed in-depth, more personal interaction with individual panel members. However, some drawbacks of this method included the missed opportunity to hear in greater detail from all panel members or to hear different stakeholder responses to Fellow questions.

Understanding Conflict Part 2

In “Understanding Conflict Part 2,” Jon Dain introduced “The Circle of Conflict” by Christopher Moore. The Circle of Conflict is divided into wedges with each wedge representing potential causes of conflict. Data, structural, relationships, values and interests make up the five wedges of the circle. Each wedge can be the source of the problem or multiple wedges can be the cause of the problem. This concept can be applied to a conflict to assist in determining the underlying cause(s).



The first wedge is data or information. One source of conflict could be that data is missing or flawed or that individual stakeholders disagree on the relevance, interpretation or assessment of the data. By understanding one of these key elements as the root cause, you may be able to work through the conflict. The structural wedge can include issues such as unequal authority, unequal control of resources, and time constraints. This is one of the wedges that can often be resolved. Relationships are the focus of the third wedge center around how stakeholders relate to each other and how their behavior may contribute to the conflict. Misperceptions or stereotypes of others are common causes of relationship conflicts as is poor communication, miscommunication or prior negative interactions between stakeholders. Values comprise the fourth wedge and are often the most difficult to overcome. Value conflicts center on different ways of life, ideology or world view. Another example is stakeholders having different criteria for evaluating ideas. The final wedge is interests. A good way to characterize interests is “why” stakeholders take a certain position or the motivation for their actions. At the Cedar Key, the concept of the Triangle of Interests was introduced. This triangle assists negotiations by recognizing how the interdependent needs of emotional, procedural and substantive issues impact and affect stakeholders throughout the decision-making process. This final wedge of the Circle of Conflict requires inspection of stakeholders’ motivations to determine whether it could be an underlying cause of conflict. Skills acquired during NRLI can be used to assist in resolving interest conflicts.

Dain then drew an imaginary line across the diameter of the Circle of Conflict, with value, relationship and data conflicts above the line and structural and interest conflicts below the line. He indicated that conflicts below the line (i.e. structural and interest) are resolvable using our acquired NRLI skills, however, conflicts above the line are much harder to resolve. For example, value conflicts cannot be negotiated as was exemplified during Thursday’s “Drama by the River” exercise. By using the Circle of Conflict, you can begin to analyze the problem from a more objective viewpoint and untangle your problem with less effort and wasted energy.

Day 3 Overview

Day three started with an early morning breakfast followed by classroom activities and discussion, a timeline activity, debrief and feedback. We all departed after lunch with many newly acquired skills and a better understanding of the definition of conflicts, interests and participatory decision-making.

Practicum Proposal and Mentor Meeting

Fellows were assigned mentors and broke into groups to discuss the initial Practicum Proposal and Situational Assessment. Detailed Draft Practicum Plan including a time table, proposed methodology and proposed method of evaluation are due by the next session.

Planning Collaboration: Timeline Tool

Jon Dain and Paul Monaghan then introduced the concept of time into thinking about conflicts and presented the Timeline Tool as a potential measure for revealing interests and other sources of conflict. A Timeline Tool can be used to review and sort out key historical events in chronological order and to identify different phases/stages in a conflict. Fellows were asked to use their experiences at NRLI as the basis for drawing a timeline of events. The Fellows decided to split the timeline into four segments including pre-NRLI, Apalachicola Session, Cedar Key Session and Tampa Bay Session and were asked to identify key events and milestones. Monaghan then gave the Fellows colored stickers and instructed us to place the dots at certain timeframes along the timeline to answer three questions regarding our experience. It was very interesting to note the different periods of time that Fellows assigned their dots to answer the three questions and further highlighted how people perceive and feel things differently. Monaghan then asked how this tool could be applied to practicum ideas and was thought to be a good fit for species issues highlighted by Craig Faulhaber's and Gina Ralph's Practicum Proposals.



NRLI Class XIII creating timeline



NRLI fellows participating in timeline activity introduced by Jon Dain and Paul Monaghan

Debrief and Feedback

Lara Miller introduced a creative method for the session debrief through use of a Body Part Debrief Exercise. Fellows were divided into groups and pictures of different body parts were provided including eyes, stomach, brain, heart, hand and ear. Each group was asked to answer questions related to each body part. For example, the stomach could represent “something that took guts for you to do” or the ear could represent “something you listened to.” Fellows then presented their body parts to the group and taped them onto their illustration of a person (or zombie) to recap highlights from the Tampa Bay session. This was a fun, effective way to provide an overview of the weekend. Kudos to Miller for her creativity.

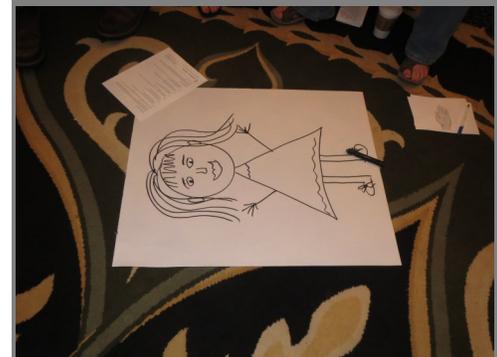
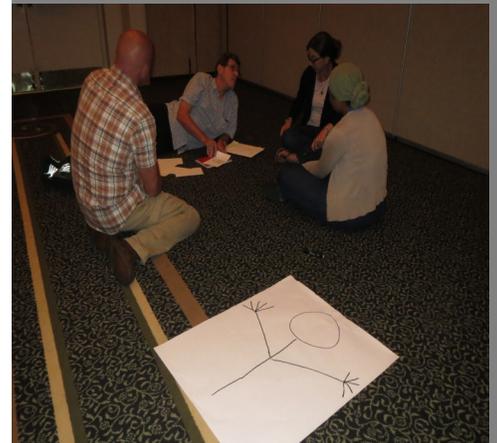
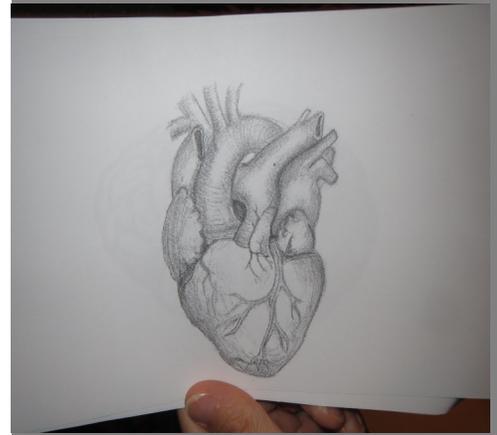
Bob Buschbacher, Jynessa Dutka-Gianelli and Lauren Hrcirik diligently collected feedback from NRLI Fellows throughout the three day weekend. They effectively highlighted and presented feedback on all aspects of the weekend from canoeing at Weedon Island (loved it) to the posh hotel accommodations, context speaker, Mexican fiesta and Drama by the River. The consensus was another great NRLI experience and many thanks to our fearless instructors.

On deck for November: Miami, here we come!

Extra tidbits, trivia or fun facts, etc. about the study topic or session area/venue. These will be included as space allows.

One reminder of just how small a world it truly is was the connection between Dutka-Gianelli and Stakeholder Panelist Mauryn McDonald. Dutka-Gianelli met and befriended McDonald’s sister while she was a graduate student in Guam!

“In order to be part of the solution, you need to be part of the dialogue”
Craig Kovach, CF Industries



Above: NRLI fellows take part of the body part debrief with Lara Miller.