NC1190: Catalysts for Water Resources Protection and Restoration: Applied Social Science Research

Date of Annual Report: 08/20/2014

Report Information:

- Annual Meeting Dates: 06/02/2014- 06/04/2014
- Period Covered by Report: 10/2013-09/2014

Participants:

- Attendees: Ken Genskow, Kathy Brasier, Marc Ribaudo, Nick Babin, Amber Mace, Mark Burbach, Cody Knutson, Epping Overholt, Chole Wardofer, J. Arbuckle, Mae Davenport, Perry, Julia Olmstead, Richard Moore, Chad Cook, Kristin Floress

Brief Summary of Minutes of Annual Meeting:

The 2014 annual meeting was held at the Blue Harbor Resort in Sheboygan, Wisconsin. As in past years, team members present at the annual meeting reviewed progress on current research and joint work. Team members participated in an educational program about the restoration of the Sheboygan River, including a canoe tour of the river. Ribaudo presented on Alternative Policy Approaches for Achieving TMDL Reduction Goals. Richard Moore presented on Water Quality Trading, and Stephen Gasteyer (via phone) presented on Decision Support and Water Withdrawals in Michigan. Several sub-topics were explored by small groups, who then reported out ideas for future research to the larger group. Sub-topics included nutrient reduction strategies, catalysts for action, and citizen engagement.

Election of Officers for 2015: Kristin Floress, Chair; Linda Prokopy, Vice-Chair, J. Arbuckle, Secretary.

Next Meeting Dates and Location: The 2015 meeting is tentatively scheduled for June 2-4 in Indiana Dunes.

Accomplishments:

A summary of the 2013-2014 activities and accomplishments follow.

Objective 1: Identify and Develop Typologies of Catalysts for Change in Conservation Behavior, Resource Management, and Governance in a Water Context.

Objective 2: Determine the mechanisms and conditions by which catalysts are translated into individual, collective, and institutional action.

Objective 3: Understand and develop typologies of individual, institutional, and collective actions and social and ecological outcomes.

Objective 4: Synthesize and assess conceptual frameworks and analytical models of catalysts, conditions, and potential outcomes.

Objective 5: Identify, develop, and evaluate adaptive strategies to achieve desired actions and capacities to protect water resources.

A variety of research efforts were undertaken by team members jointly and as part of related projects that are integrated into our goals. The disproportionality sub-team of the group has been focusing on targeting practices, water quality trading, stormwater management, and other related topics as they relate to state nutrient reduction strategies (Objs 2, 3).

Several efforts are underway in Wisconsin to use and test the farmer led watershed council model that multi-state team members found to be in Iowa. Other efforts to understand and promote collective action include building resilience in citizen advisory groups, working with farmers, urban and underserved populations to examine catalysts and consequences of action, and factors constraining behavior change (Objs 2,3,5).

Implementation of TMDLs was also a focus of research and accomplishments over the past year. Several team members examined approaches for engaging people in conservation to reduce nutrient loading. In addition, social-psychological constructs were studied in a variety of populations as antecedents to action (Objs 2,3).

Important results from some of the research efforts include the cost-effectiveness of performance-based policies for influencing farmer behavior, the importance of trust and inspiration for acting as catalysts for participation in community projects, the role of institutions and governance in water management, and a social measures monitoring system used in Minnesota (Objs 2,3,4,5).

Impacts

The water leadership team (Burbach, Floress, Kaufman) completed their study, presented it at the International Symposium for Society and Natural Resources, and it has been accepted for publication in the *Journal of Leadership Education*.

The team working on the roles of catalysts and outcomes (Prokopy, Brasier, Floress) have published their typology in *Society and Natural Resources.*

Many trainings, presentations, workshops, and publications were given to citizens, policy makers, and academic audiences over the past year to disseminate the results of the various research efforts by team members. Team members have developed social monitoring systems and served on working group for their states, developed literature reviews to inform decision making, assisted collaborative watershed groups to develop strategies for addressing water management, and provided policy recommendations for water pollution problems.