Ecosystem-Based Management and Dialogic Stakeholder Theory in Small Protected Areas Management

by

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Abstract

Small exurban protected areas face many threats due to their size and near-urban locations. To remain ecologically viable they require an ecosystem-based approach to management, including practicable connections to the surrounding physical and social landscapes. Physically they require buffers and habitat connectivity, and socially the staff must work proactively with stakeholders. Current stakeholder interactions at small protected areas are reported to be inadequate and the purpose of this thesis was to find alternatives. Use of dialogic stakeholder theory, a critical constructionist communication theory that focuses on other rather than self, was explored through interviews and focus groups with small protected area professionals from across North America. The results were synthesized into two practical frameworks to guide small protected area management. The frameworks include ecosystem-based management principles, recognition of the key role control plays in all interactions, and genuine dialogue, information, consent, voice, forums, conflict, negotiation, collaboration and participation.
Acknowledgements

To my Mother: I owe you everything for starting me down the path of lifelong learning and showing me that there was more out there. Thank you for encouraging me to go after it.

To my husband Neil: Here’s to the next 25+ years exploring together. Thank you for your unwavering support and gentle reminders that, “Yes, I would finish it.”

To our daughters Natalie and Rebecca: You are amazing young women and the inspiration for my conservation ethic. I hope there will always be plenty of protected areas for you to enjoy.

To the Cross Conservation Area Board of Directors: Thank you for permitting me to undertake this thesis. I hope it will be useful to you and the Area.

To my staff: Thank you for patiently putting up with me not always being there for you. You are a phenomenal group of dedicated people; just what a small protected area needs.

To the various small protected area staff who took time from their very busy schedules to talk with me on the phone, send me materials, or participate in my focus groups: You are a special group of people and I hope your enthusiasm for your protected areas does not diminish - you are needed.

And finally, a special thank you to my Supervisor Mike Quinn, and committee members Barbara Schneider and Byron Miller for your expert guidance and for everything you helped me learn along the way.
Dedication

I dedicate this thesis to Ann and Sandy Cross who donated 4800 acres of their own land to become the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area, the foremost small protected area in my mind.
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We abuse land because we regard it as a commodity belonging to us.
When we see land as a community to which we belong,
we may begin to use it with love and respect.  
\textit{Aldo Leopold}

Ecosystems are not only more complex than we think,
they are more complex than we can think.  
\textit{Frank Egler}

A communication process in which there is a discussion where everyone merely has a say
is quite different from one where all reach and commit to a decision together.  
\textit{Stanley Deetz & Devon Brown}
Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Ecosystem-based management (EBM) has gained widespread acceptance as the preferred approach to managing protected areas. This management philosophy implies that to be ecologically viable over the long term, protected areas need to be integrated into the surrounding physical and social landscapes. Small exurban protected areas (SPAs) are a unique subset of protected areas due to their size and near urban location, and as the surrounding physical landscape is further developed, the social landscape will become more important to the ecological future of these protected areas. The various stakeholders that impact on, or are impacted by, the small protected area (SPA) will play an increasingly important role in the future success of the SPA.

One of the most difficult challenges faced by managers of SPAs is working with stakeholders, and the current practices seem inadequate due to a lack of time, resources, knowledge, and support, and other issues. Given the importance of stakeholders to the future ecological viability of these areas, this topic warrants consideration of valid alternatives to the current practices for working with stakeholders.

A review of normative stakeholder theory revealed a potential alternative: the dialogic stakeholder model or dialogic stakeholder theory (DST). This critical interpretivist communication-based theory stresses uncovering politics and control issues, working together, creating decisions together and engaging in genuine dialogue for the benefit of all. Utilizing the DST in the SPA setting may result in more engaged and satisfied stakeholders, leading to enhanced integration of the protected area into both the social and physical surroundings. This thesis provides two practical frameworks to guide management at SPAs based on both EBM and the DST.

1.2 Research Question

In what ways can staff of SPAs use DST and EBM to better integrate the protected areas into the surrounding physical and social landscapes?
1.3 Thesis Statement

SPAs are embedded within both physical and social landscapes, and successful SPA management requires due consideration to both elements. Current management practices are inadequate and alternatives are needed. Within the physical landscape SPA management should be guided by an EBM strategy and management plans that recognize the SPA as an important part of the landscape. The social landscape is mired in issues related to politics and control. These power-related issues may be overcome through more inclusive communication approaches such as the DST and its key elements: Genuine Dialogue, Information, Forums, Voice and Consent, Conflict and Negotiation, and Collaboration and Participation. Together EBM and DST approaches provide useful frameworks for overcoming both physical isolation of the SPA and stakeholder-related issues.

1.4 Study Objectives

1) To explore the theory and practice of: protected area ecosystem management, human geography and communication-based stakeholder theory.

2) To interview staff of SPAs to determine the contexts within which they operate, the current status of stakeholder involvement at their sites and their views on the DST.

3) To discuss the DST in more detail with staff of SPAs through focus groups to determine the feasibility of utilizing this theory at their sites.

4) To combine all of the above to generate a new stakeholder framework suitable for use at SPAs.
1.5 Rationale for Research

The research has been completed for the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area, Calgary, Alberta, Canada. (See Appendix A for more information on the Conservation Area.) I have been Executive Director of this SPA for 15 years and have personally seen the growing impacts and issues facing this area due to the increasing development in the surrounding landscape. Since the increasing development is a social issue, I chose to study stakeholder theory and relate it to the SPA context. This led me to the University of Calgary and the Resources and the Environment Program. The resulting interdisciplinary thesis incorporates the fields of human geography, environmental science and communication studies.

Frameworks outlining key ecosystem and stakeholder considerations for SPAs would be useful and practical management tools, especially as a starting point for resource-challenged SPAs. It is my hope that the resulting practical frameworks will be valuable to the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area as well as other SPAs.

1.6 Need for Research

Many cities in both Canada and the United States are growing at rapid rates. The Brookings Institute in Washington, D.C. reported that western American cities grew at an average rate of 19 percent between 1990 and 2000 (Glaeser & Shapiro 2001). Many cities grew at considerably higher rates; for example, Las Vegas, Nevada had a population increase of 83.3% between the same years (US Census Bureau 2001). As the fastest growing city in Canada, Calgary had a 15.8 percent increase in population between 1996 and 2001 (Statistics Canada 2002). Oshawa and Toronto followed with 10.2 and 9.8 percent population increases respectively (Statistics Canada 2002).

SPAs located on the outskirts of these growing cities are facing tremendous pressures due to the increase in development in the surrounding landscape. SPAs are an important component of the landscape. For example, in Canada in 1990, 80% of the non government conservation lands were less than 1000 ha in size (Curthoys Brown 1995, p. 55).

1) SPAs provide the following valuable biophysical benefits. They:
   - are one component of an overall ecosystem management plan that should include a blend of reserves of all sizes,
   - provide biological subsidies for the more heavily used and impacted protected areas,
   - can provide living stepping stones to other protected areas if they are connected by suitable movement corridors, also act as habitat patches for plants and wildlife,
   - provide for a reduction in habitat isolation,
   - contribute to conservation of biodiversity and can be important contributors to long term regional diversity,
   - provide space for native plant species and may protect rare communities of plants,
   - can be useful as benchmarks or control areas, even if they are not pristine, as they may be the only benchmarks and refuge areas located within a fragmented landscape,
   - may be a good base for restoration of threatened species,
   - may be the only economically feasible option for protected areas, i.e., larger ones may no longer be economically possible,
   - provide the opportunity to experiment with different management strategies on a small scale.

2) SPAs provide valuable human benefits. They:
   - provide for enhancement of pro-conservation attitudes,
   - are important places for people to connect to nature,
   - provide recreation opportunities,
• give people a chance to be stewards and take ownership of the local environment, which may expand to ownership for the environment in general,
• provide excellent opportunities for education,
• provide ideal sites for scientific research,
• offer opportunities for local people to contribute indigenous validation of biophysical data, as well as contribute to stewardship and monitoring programs,
• provide an opportunity for people to become better informed and more involved in decision making regarding the environment.

There is very little literature specifically on SPAs (Miller & Hobbs 2002); however, the literature that does exist clearly shows that SPAs are ecologically threatened. SPAs have unique management needs, as they are (Christensen et al. 1996; Curthoys Brown 1995; Franklin 1997; Grumbine 1992; Herkert 1997; Jacobson & Marynowski 1997; Mattson et al. 1996; Miller & Hobbs 2002; Schwartz & Van Mantgem 1997; Shafer 1995, 1997):
• often already in an ecologically compromised condition,
• likely to increase in numbers as opportunities to protect large tracts will diminish,
• likely to require intensive management to maintain or restore their ecological viability.

SPAs form a unique subset of protected areas and are also subject to the same issues that larger protected areas face, i.e., they cannot exist in isolation and more attention to the human landscape is required (Carr 1995; Dearden & Dempsey 2004; Dearden 1993; Grumbine 1994, 1997; Meffe et al. 2002; Noss 1995; Noss & Cooperrider 1994; Parks Canada Agency 2000; Quinn 2002; Searle 2000; Soule 1999a, b; Theobald & Hobbs 2002; Woodley 1993; Woodley & Forbes 1994; Yaffee 1999, 1996; Zorn et al. 2001).

Paying more attention to the human dimension involved in protected areas requires focusing on stakeholders. A review of the EBM protected area and small
protected area literature revealed that while stakeholders were considered important, guidance on the topic was limited (Dalton 2005). The stakeholder theory literature was then reviewed in an attempt to unveil an approach suitable to protected areas. This review revealed that while there are many prescriptive guides to working with stakeholders, the theory they are based on is confusing and disorganized (Freeman 2000; Hasnas 1998; Jones & Wicks 1999) and this cookbook form of stakeholder literature does not necessarily provide clear guidance to managers. For example, Chase (2001, p. 46) reported that even after taking advantage of the stakeholder cookbooks and attending training sessions, “managers still express frustration about how to proceed.”

The normative stakeholder theory from the business ethics field was then explored in further detail and also revealed weaknesses. The search for an appropriate stakeholder approach continued and I decided to take a model from the organizational communication discourse, i.e., the DST, and develop it into one specifically suited to the SPA venue.

1.7 Definitions

For the purposes of the study the following definitions were used.

A small exurban protected area (SPA) is a park, preserve or conservation area less than 5000 acres (2023 ha), which has as its main focus protection of the environment, is located on the outskirts of a rapidly growing city, and is still surrounded predominantly by rural countryside, e.g., agriculture land, forests or country residential land use.

The term landscape is used to represent, “an area made up of a distinct association of forms both physical and cultural” (Johnson et al. 2000). The term physical landscape refers to the natural elements such as landforms, bodies of water, flora and fauna, and lighting and weather conditions (Johnston et al. 2000). The term cultural or social landscape refers to the, “concern for both the socio-cultural and political processes that shape landscapes as well as the role that landscapes play in these processes” (Johnson et al. 2000, p. 430). The community members and other stakeholders are an important part of the social landscape.
**Ecosystem-based management (EBM)** is, “… an approach to guiding human activity using collaborative, interdisciplinary, and adaptive methods with the long-term goal of sustaining desired future conditions of ecologically bounded areas, that in turn, support healthy, sustainable communities” (Quinn 2002). The two terms ‘ecosystem-based management’ and ‘ecosystem management’ are often used interchangeably. EBM seems to be a more accurate term relative to SPAs as this term stresses management based on ecosystems, as opposed to management of ecosystems. The term EBM also suggests that the principal activity is management, not the ecosystem itself (Pirot et al. 2000; Quinn 2002). At protected areas EBM includes both internal and external issues.

**Ecological integrity** has been described by the Parks Canada Agency, “An ecosystem has integrity when it is deemed characteristic for its natural region, including the composition and abundance of native species and biological communities, rates of change and supporting processes” (Parks Canada Agency 2000, p. 2). Reed Noss (1995, p. 20) suggests that ecological integrity is “integrating and holistic” as it pulls together many ideas. In his opinion an ecosystem with integrity would possess ecological health, biodiversity, stability, sustainability, naturalness, wildness and beauty.

**Stakeholders** have been defined as, “Any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the firm’s objective” (Freeman 1984, p. 25). For this thesis the firm is the protected area and the groups or individuals would be those who can affect or are affected by the protected area and its place within the ecosystem, e.g., public, landowners, community members, local governing bodies, planners, land developers and so on.

**Dialogic Stakeholder Theory (DST)** is a communication-based theory proposed by Stanley Deetz, a professor in the Communication Department at the University of Colorado in Boulder. Deetz espouses transforming communications, which he believes will lead to a transformation of business and society. He states that, “Dialogic communication suggests that meaning is always incomplete and partial, and the reason I talk with others is to better understand what I and they mean, hoping to find new and more satisfying ways of being together” (Deetz 1995, p. 97-98). His DST is a critical theory that takes aim at the status quo and proposes a change model since, “Only a
‘reformed stakeholder’ conception of workplaces, coupled with more adequate communication processes can adequately address these larger issues” (Deetz 2003, p. 607).

1.8 Assumptions

I undertook a naturalistic qualitative study with the resulting research design consisting of human-oriented interview and focus group methods (Crotty 1998). These human-oriented methods included SPA staff as it was assumed that they had valuable experiences and knowledge useful to this study. It also provided the study with an important grounding in reality and generated ideal future networking opportunities.

I also assumed that changes were needed in terms of working with stakeholders at SPAs. This led me to explore the critical inquiry perspective, in which the status quo must be questioned. As Neuman (2003, p. 81) notes, “Critical social science defines social science as a critical process of inquiry that goes beyond surface illusions to uncover the real structures in the material world in order to help people change conditions and build a better world for themselves.” Burgoyne and Reynolds (1997, p. 4) add that, “Critical theories continuously question all the claims, assumptions, contradictions, omissions and value judgments that are built into normative, descriptive and interpretative theories.”

I tried to assume a critical stance since this seemed to complement the DST; however, I discovered that critical social science is difficult to do. I had established a level of trust with my participants and did not want to break it by being too critical of them. I tried to be analytically critical without being negatively critical to the individuals.

The critical social science paradigm also provides a suitable action-oriented perspective from which to work and allows for a close connection between the researcher and the participants, and between theory and reality (Neuman 2003). A critical theory, “… grows and interacts with the world it seeks to explain” (Neuman 2003, p. 85). This close connection was ideal for my study and I assumed that my dual role as researcher and SPA manager was a benefit and not a detriment. As a professional I am directly
involved in and interested in the topic at hand; therefore, the distance between me and the research was limited. This reality is stated up front to ensure full transparency.

1.9 Value of Research

This research should be relevant to any SPA as it provides functional frameworks based on both theory and practical experience. It places emphasis on the human dimension that cannot be ignored in these places where the number of stakeholders is high and growing. This research seeks to provide an alternative to the status quo, which according to the study participants, is not working.

It also provides an important connection between natural science and social science; a connection the EBM philosophy values. The connection between the EBM and DST theories is also close as both espouse a more holistic way of dealing with people, and recognize that people are an important element in the landscape.

In order to keep the benefits of the research extensive the results and analysis have been broadly presented, i.e., to be of relevance to any SPA. Specific recommendations for the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area will be developed after thesis completion.

1.10 Conclusion

Having made the case for the research and outlined my research question, thesis statement and assumptions, I will now detail the remainder of my work starting with specifics on the methods used, moving along to the review of the literature, following with the interview and focus group results and my analysis of the same, and concluding with the recommendations and proposed frameworks for use in SPA management.
Chapter Two: Methods

2.1 Introduction

The methods for this research project consisted of qualitative approaches implemented in three stages. In Stage One I undertook reviews of literature within two major fields- ecosystem-based management and stakeholder theory. In Stage Two I undertook phone interviews with staff of SPAs at nine sites across North America. In Stage Three I sought the input of SPA professionals in two different geographical areas via two focus group workshops. Analysis was undertaken as part of each stage and embedded in all results and results analysis.

In preparation for undertaking qualitative research with human subjects and per University of Calgary policy, ethics approval was sought and received in November 2004 (Appendix B).

After making a case for the qualitative research approach, I will outline the three methods used in the research and finish with a discussion on the limitations of the methods.

2.2 Qualitative Approach

The study of stakeholders and SPAs is a complex human issue that is not in need of measurement as much as it is in need of interpretation and understanding (Merriam 1988). This reality made it a topic ideally suited to qualitative approaches; therefore, an interpretivist social science paradigm was chosen over the positivistic, deductive, hypothesis-generating model of scientific research.

The qualitative research approach has been defined by Creswell (1998, p. 15):

Qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on distinct methodological traditions of inquiry that explores a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyzes words, reports, detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting.
The qualitative approach seemed logical for this study that consisted of exploring a social phenomenon consisting of, “a world of complexity and plurality,” rather than “a world of simplicity and uniformity” (Feagin et al. 1991, p.23). Likewise, a naturalistic inquiry seemed suitable to this study of the real world of SPAs. The study also seemed suited to practical social science research since it involved improving decision making processes, avoiding pitfalls and ensuring the best success possible (Haider & Morford 2004).

Qualitative research involves using a variety of methods and choosing from a wide range of tools, none of which are strictly set in advance (Denzin & Lincoln 1994). This multi-method approach lends itself to finding better ways to understand the worlds being studied and it was hoped that the tools chosen for this study would assist in understanding the multiple realities of the SPA world.

The role of the researcher in qualitative research is critical and as Denzin and Lincoln (1994) describe it, there is an “intimate” relationship between the researcher and what is being studied. The researcher becomes a variable in the study and helps to construct the reality as she is the prime data collection and analysis instrument (Feagin et al. 1991). Miller and Glassner (1997) believe that researchers should be members of the group they study as this helps to create a level of trust. I believed that my 20 years experience working in the SPA field would provide the instincts and grounding that I required and also help to gain the trust of the participants. I also acquired valuable theoretical knowledge and practical experience in research through a graduate level research methods course.

Qualitative research invokes discussion on four fronts; credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Guba 1981). Credibility, in the form of plausible findings, was sought through transcribing full texts of the interviews and through undertaking three passes of the recordings from the focus groups, as well as seeking member checks to verify the texts for both. Referential adequacy was sought through testing the field data against the literature review findings and finally, the overall report was sent to the participants for comments prior to finalization.
Transferability was sought through purposive site and respondent selection using predetermined criteria; resulting in a similar context for all (Guba 1981). Full transferability was not expected as such a small sampling of a large number of potential SPAs across North America was utilized; however, it is hoped that the results will achieve some transferability to the SPA setting.

Dependability was addressed through triangulation, or the use of various methods in combination, including interviews and focus groups. Detailed notes on all processes were maintained and all texts saved in original format in order to establish a reliable audit trail (Guba 1981). The involvement of the same researcher for both the interviews and focus groups, as well as the data collection and analysis, also helped ensure dependable results (Knodel 1993).

Confirmability was addressed through the use of triangulation and the transparent revelation that the researcher was also a SPA manager. Reflectivity was practiced though informing the participants of the researcher’s epistemological assumptions (Guba 1981). The question of reliability, i.e., being able to replicate the study, so important in quantitative research, was not an issue in this study. Depth and richness, not repetition, were the focus (Feagin et al. 1991) and the concern was in understanding a social phenomenon in great depth and not in being able to repeat the study to obtain the same results again.

2.3 Stage One - Literature Review

Unofficially, my review of relevant literature has been taking place for the last 20 years, while officially it has spanned the last three years since initiating graduate studies. The literature review for this study attempted to heed the advice of Tornquist (1986) who described the purpose of the literature review as: establishing the context of the research, showing how the researcher is building on other work, and establishing a need for the research. She also points out that it is not meant to be a summary of the academic fields and advises restricting the general material to a minimum. The advice of Yin (1994) was also heeded and the literature review was undertaken not to develop the answers but to further refine the questions.
The literature review for this thesis spanned two distinct fields; EBM; with an emphasis on SPAs, and social sciences; with an emphasis on communication studies and stakeholder theory. For both topic areas a variety of sources and search vehicles were utilized in an effort to obtain the most topical information possible. Searches included the Theses Canada Portal, CISTI, ISI Web of Science, Environment Abstracts, Wilson Social Sciences Abstracts, Applied Sciences Index, and International Bibliography of Social Sciences.

Topics explored within each discourse are shown in Table 1. The peripheral topics were the most general, and therefore read first as an introduction to the topic areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ECOSYSTEM-BASED MGMNT.</th>
<th>SOCIAL SCIENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Primary:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Primary:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SPAs management</td>
<td>• DST</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• SPAs and EBM</td>
<td>• Work of Stanley Deetz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Secondary:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Secondary:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Protected areas EBM</td>
<td>• Normative stakeholder theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Human dimension of EBM</td>
<td>• Alternatives to normative stakeholder theory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Exurban setting</td>
<td>• Methodology and research methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Peripheral:</strong></td>
<td><strong>Peripheral:</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• EBM in general</td>
<td>• Stakeholder theory in general</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Collaborative models in EBM and protected areas</td>
<td>• Sustainable development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parks and protected areas</td>
<td>• Bioregionalism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Environmental ethics</td>
<td>• Organizational communication</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 1 provides a graphic display of the interdisciplinary aspect of the project and how the disciplines are seen to merge together to generate one possible solution for working with stakeholders at SPAs.

2.4 Stage Two - Phone Interviews

2.4.1 Introduction

Phone interviews were undertaken as a means to establish the context of SPAs and test the use of the DST at these sites. Multiple interview sites were chosen over a single site as this afforded the opportunity to learn more about different locales rather than just one place (Yin 1984). This decision may have resulted in less depth to the results; however, the resulting breadth seemed well suited to this study.
After discussing the rationale for interviews and the site and respondent selection criteria, details on the actual interviews and coding and analysis will be covered.

### 2.4.2 Rationale for Interview Method

The use of the interview method was guided by the work of Holstein and Gubrium who started their book on active interviewing by noting that, “Interviewing seems to be the universal mode of systematic inquiry” (Holstein & Gubrium 1995, p. 1). The authors go on to point out that interviews are, “interpretively active” and “reality-constructing, meaning-making occasions” (Holstein & Gubrium 1995, p. 4). They believe that all interviews should be seen as active endeavours in which the interviewer and interviewees are creating meaning together. Full active interviewing as described by Holstein and Gubrium (Tornquist 1986) did not seem feasible for the phone interviews when time was limited; however, the concepts were used as much as possible. For instance, fully open ended discussion was not possible, but fully structured, closed-ended questions were not suitable; therefore, semi-structured interviews were used. A series of questions was developed based on the literature as advised by Glesne (1999) and these questions provided a base for discussion. However, in keeping with the tenets of active interviewing they were not strictly adhered to and the interviewees were allowed to tell their stories. Prompts were used as needed to keep the discussion flowing.

### 2.4.3 Selection Criteria

The ten fastest growing cities in Canada and the USA were identified using urban growth statistics located on the Internet. Table 2 shows Canadian census data and Table 3 shows American census data.
Table 2 Ten Fastest Growing Cities in Canada (based on Population and Dwelling Counts, for Census Metropolitan Areas from 2001 and 1996 Censuses)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Metropolitan Area Name</th>
<th>Population</th>
<th>% Change (1996-2001)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Calgary (Alta.)</td>
<td>951,395</td>
<td>15.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Oshawa (Ont.)</td>
<td>296,298</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Toronto (Ont.)</td>
<td>4,682,897</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Edmonton (Alta.)</td>
<td>937,845</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Vancouver (B.C.)</td>
<td>1,986,965</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Kitchener (Ont.)</td>
<td>414,284</td>
<td>8.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Abbotsford (B.C.)</td>
<td>147,370</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Windsor (Ont.)</td>
<td>307,877</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Ottawa - Hull (Ont. /Que.)</td>
<td>1,063,664</td>
<td>6.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Hamilton (Ont.)</td>
<td>662,401</td>
<td>6.1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note- Includes Census metropolitan areas only, i.e., urban core must have a population of at least 100,000. Census agglomeration areas, i.e., in which the urban core has a population of at least 10,000 but not more than 100,000, have not been included.


Table 3 Ten Fastest Growing Cities in the USA (based on Percent Population Change from 1990-2000)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Metropolitan Area Name</th>
<th>% Change (1990-2000)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Las Vegas, NV--AZ</td>
<td>83.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Naples, FL</td>
<td>65.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Yuma, AZ</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>McAllen--Edinburg--Mission, TX</td>
<td>48.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Austin--San Marcos, TX</td>
<td>47.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Fayetteville--Springdale--Rogers, AR</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Boise City, ID</td>
<td>46.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Phoenix--Mesa, AZ</td>
<td>45.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Laredo, TX</td>
<td>44.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Provo--Orem, UT</td>
<td>39.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Next, SPAs located near these growing urban centers were identified through exhaustive Internet searches, making good use of Google and MapQuest. More detailed Internet research on each potential site was then undertaken to determine if the protected area seemed to meet the following criteria for site selection:

- SPA in North America (i.e., no larger than 5000 acres or 2023 ha),
- located on the outskirts of a growing urban area, yet still surrounded mainly by rural countryside,
- willing to be involved in the study and willing to discuss their workings with the surrounding community and stakeholders,
- ecological or protection focus, versus a recreation-oriented park.

No distance criteria from the city were set as in some cases cities and suburbs were so extensive that finding a rural area meant looking well beyond the growing city. Generally sites within a city were not chosen as they did not qualify as exurban, although upon talking to participants it was discovered that some sites were more surrounded by developments than originally thought. A variety of sizes of SPAs and managing agencies was chosen to provide diversity and depth in the study.

One potential SPA outside of each of the fastest growing cities was identified and contacted by an initial email (Appendix C) to determine: if they did meet the criteria, if they were interested in being involved in the study, and who should be contacted to discuss the study in more detail. In total, 16 sites were initially contacted, nine replied and agreed to participate, five did not respond at all even after a follow up email, and two originally replied but did not follow up with the signed consent form. For expediency the list was then finalized with those who were interested in being involved.

The sites originally approached and those confirmed for involvement are shown in Tables 4 and 5. Figure 2 shows the fastest growing cities in Canada and the USA, including cities with an involved SPA. Information on the nine surveyed sites is in Appendix D.
### Table 4: Potential and Confirmed Canadian Interview Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITIES (IN ORDER OF GROWTH FROM FASTEST GROWING)</th>
<th>POTENTIAL INTERVIEW SITES</th>
<th>INTERVIEWED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Calgary, Alberta</td>
<td>Brown Lowery and Fish Creek Provincial Parks</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Oshawa, Ontario</td>
<td>Long Sault Conservation Area</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Toronto area, Ontario</td>
<td>Mono Cliffs Natural Environment Park</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Edmonton, Alberta</td>
<td>Coyote Lake Conservation Area</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Vancouver &amp; Abbotsford, B.C.</td>
<td>Kanaka Creek Regional Park</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Kitchener, Ontario</td>
<td>Grand River, Laurel Creek and Shade’s Mills Conservation Areas</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Windsor, Ontario</td>
<td>Point Pelee National Park</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Ottawa, Ontario</td>
<td>Stony Swamp Conservation Area</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 5: Potential and Confirmed American Interview Sites

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITIES (IN ORDER OF GROWTH FROM FASTEST GROWING)</th>
<th>POTENTIAL INTERVIEW SITES</th>
<th>INTERVIEWED</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Las Vegas, Nevada</td>
<td>The Wetlands Park</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Naples, Florida</td>
<td>No suitable sites found</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Yuma, Arizona</td>
<td>Betty’s Kitchen</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. McAllen-Edinburgh-Mission, Texas</td>
<td>Santa Ana Refuge</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Austin, Texas</td>
<td>Wild Basin Preserve</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, Arkansas</td>
<td>Lake Fayetteville or Lake Sequoyah</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Boise City, Idaho</td>
<td>Boise Hills Gulch Reserve</td>
<td>NO</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Phoenix, Arizona</td>
<td>Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area</td>
<td>YES</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 2 Canadian and American Fastest Growing Cities, showing Interview Sites

**Canadian Cities**  
(In Order of Growth from Fastest Growing)  
1. Calgary, Alberta  
2. Oshawa, Ontario  
3. Toronto Area, Ontario  
4. Edmonton, Alberta  
5. Vancouver and Abbotsford, British Columbia  
6. Kitchener, Ontario  
7. Windsor, Ontario  
8. Ottawa, Ontario

**American Cities**  
(In Order of Growth from Fastest Growing)  
1. Las Vegas, Nevada  
2. Naples, Florida  
3. Yuma, Arizona  
4. McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, Texas  
5. Austin, Texas  
6. Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, Arkansas  
7. Boise City, Idaho  
8. Phoenix, Arizona
2.4.4 Phone Interviews

Once the sites had confirmed interest the recommended interviewee was sent an email seeking their involvement, including the ‘Initial Email to Potential Interview Sites’ found in Appendix C. Once the informants agreed to be interviewed they were provided with the ‘Initial Informational Email for Interviewees’ (Appendix E) as well as the ‘Informed Consent Agreement’ (Appendix F) for their signatures. As per University of Calgary ethics policy, each participant signed and submitted a consent form prior to their involvement. The logistics related to the phone interview were then determined and phone interviews were held in May and June 2005.

The semi-structured interview questions were developed based on the literature review and designed to determine the shared context of the SPA and the current state of stakeholder involvement at these sites, as well as collect their opinions on the potential for use of the DST at these areas. ‘Final Interview Questions’ (Appendix G), along with background and definitions were sent to the interviewees one week prior to the interviews.

The participants were staff from appropriate SPAs, and were interviewed on a professional basis; therefore, no personal questions were asked. No remuneration was provided and English was spoken by all the informants. Participants were eligible to withdraw at any time; however, no participants chose to withdraw from the interviews.

All the interviews were completed over the phone due to the high expense associated with traveling to each protected area. Interviews were taped using a digital recorder and phone connector, after receiving the signed permission of each of the interviewees. Out of respect to the key informants the interview times were set up to accommodate their schedules and the interviews restricted to 60 minutes.

Upon the conclusion of the interviews the digital files were transcribed by a professional transcriber. The researcher then fixed transcription errors, deciphered indiscernible words and tidied up the interview texts, being careful not to lose any relevant data. Draft interview texts were sent to each of the interviewees for their review.
They were asked to add comments and/or change their own text if errors were obvious to them and to provide permission to use any of their text in the final document. Feedback was received from six of the 11 interviewees and four requested changes, which were promptly incorporated into the transcribed texts. Of the six who responded, five approved the use of their text for quotes and one indicated that he preferred not to have his texts used as identifiable quotes. After multiple reminders, the other five did not respond with text changes or permission to use their texts as quotes. As a result, all direct quotes have been presented as anonymous.

As per University of Calgary ethics policy my supervisor will keep the raw data for two years after the thesis defense and then have the audio tapes erased and the notes and drafts destroyed.

2.4.5 Coding and Analysis

Once the interviews were transcribed the data were then coded using an open coding process. Strauss and Corbin (1990, p. 62) describe open coding as, “the part of analysis that pertains specifically to the naming and categorizing of phenomena through close examination of the data.” The intent of the open coding was to examine the data in detail, look for similarities and differences and accurately conceptualize the texts. Analysis was inherent in all stages of open coding since developing themes was a selective process involving researcher interpretation.

As per Neuman (2003) and Strauss and Corbin (1990) the coding consisted of three passes; open, axial, and selective coding. Each pass was undertaken independently and clean copies of each interview text generated for each pass. In each pass the interviews were analyzed in random order to reduce interviewer bias.

In pass one open coding was used to summarize the key points and develop the initial list of themes or concepts. The text was summarized on a question by question basis and scribed on the interview text in a right margin column created for coding purposes. Pass one was useful for refreshing my memory on each interview, summarizing the key points raised by each interviewee for each question and discovering the themes (Strauss & Corbin 1990).
In pass two, axial coding was undertaken in an attempt to review and examine the key themes and further categorize the data, i.e., create broader labels for the phenomena, rather than merely summarizing the points (Neuman 2003). The interview questions remained the focal point of the analyses as they served as a general filter, identifying the main themes of interest to the research (Knodel 1993). At this stage similar concepts were amalgamated in an attempt to bring them together as a series of statements pertaining to each question.

Finally, pass three consisted of selective coding in which the major themes and statements were verified through cross checking with the raw interview transcripts: to verify that all the raw interview data had been incorporated, to determine if any new themes had emerged and to monitor for missed points.

Next I sought to move from mechanical text coding to analysis, or as Neuman (2003) describes it, from description to general interpretation. I then became the, “writer-as-interpreter” (Denzin & Lincoln 1994) as I moved the text from interview notes to research text to an interpretive document and finally the public text. In this interpretive component of the analysis I searched for patterns and relevant points for inclusion in the concluding framework. As a result of this step my results include an analysis component, while the thoughts presented in the analysis sections involve a critique of the data and/or references to the DST or other literature.

In the coding and analysis of the data I attempted to be as open and unbiased as possible; but remained ever mindful of the fact that a researcher’s background and interests will always greatly affect their interpretation of the data. Emerson, Fretz and Shaw (1995) note that even two researchers from the same field may generate entirely different codes and memos, and as a result their final interpretations would be different.

Cross case analysis, i.e., comparisons between interview texts, was only undertaken to a limited extent as the purpose was not to compare and contrast data between interviews, but to generate ideas for change; therefore, all ideas were considered relevant. Where apparent and appropriate the interview results were quantified and are presented in tables in Appendix H.
2.5 Stage Three - Focus Group Interviews

2.5.1 Introduction

The final method used in this study consisted of two focus groups, designed to build on the results of the first two stages and allow for more in-depth discussion on the DST. The rationale for focus groups, site and respondent selection criteria, details on methodology and coding and analysis will now be detailed.

2.5.2 Rationale for Focus Group Interview Method

Focus groups are a type of group interview including eight to ten people who are brought together at a centralized location to provide feedback on a series of questions of relevance to the researcher, sponsor or client (Greenbaum 1988). For the purposes of this research a mini focus group was selected as the preferred methodology over a full focus group, with the only difference being the number of participants. Where a full focus group typically involves eight to ten people, a mini group only includes four to six people (Greenbaum 1988). It is believed that the mini group provides more in-depth discussion since in theory each person has more time to contribute. Mini groups are also used when it is not feasible to recruit more people, such as in the specialized SPA setting (Greenbaum 1988).

Frey and Fontana (1993) point out that the focus group setting is usually formal, a moderator is typically in charge and the questions are usually structured with a clear aim or purpose. In each of my focus groups a formal board room setting was used, the questions were clearly structured based on the DST, and I took on the role of moderator as described by Greenbaum (1988, p. 85), “The moderator is the captain of the ship, the leader of the orchestra and the surgeon with the scalpel all in one.” Morrison (1998) stresses that the success of the focus group is very much dependent on the moderator’s ability, and I hoped that my many years experience working with people contributed to the success of the focus groups.
The advantages of focus groups are numerous. Many benefits specifically related to this study were uncovered in the literature (Albrecht et al. 1993; Creswell 1998; Frey & Fontana 1993; Greenbaum 1988; Holstein & Gubrium 1999; King 1998; Knodel 1993; Morgan 1993; Morgan & Krueger 1993; Morrison 1998; Neuman 2003):

- focus groups are ideally suited for testing new products or ideas,
- focus groups can be used to obtain in-depth information, and to validate concepts and ideas generated by other research methods,
- they allow for an extension of the one on one interview technique, and provide the opportunity for a face to face situation lacking in phone interviews, this provides the opportunity to observe non-verbal clues,
- they encourage interaction between participants, and allow groups to create their own meaning as they reflect on their own experiences and thoughts in relation to others,
- they are more personal than phone calls and surveys and the setting can be used to help establish rapport and encourage free expression,
- focus groups uncover and allow diversity as they encourage people to talk to each other and answer each other’s questions,
- they are well suited for homogeneous groups, provided all are given an opportunity to participate,
- they make good use of limited time and are relatively inexpensive,
- focus group situations are ideally suited to the use of active listening, e.g., in which the construction of reality is a joint venture between the researcher and the participants, and meaning is always being created.

2.5.3 Selection Criteria

Following the analysis of the phone interviews one American and one Canadian interviewee were contacted for potential involvement in the focus group stage of the research. These interviewees were selected based on their stated interest in being more involved, and once asked, they both agreed to assist with the focus groups. These Focus
Group Organizers were asked to put together a selection of focus group participants who were staff of SPAs meeting the criteria outlined earlier, and were willing and able to be involved in the focus group.

In order to ensure that suitable candidates were selected, I had conversations with each of the Organizers to clarify my needs and encourage them to do their best to find suitable people. Leaving this task to them may have been a limitation to the study, but I determined that it was best left in their hands since I did not know anybody else in their geographical locations.

The Organizers then sent the chosen focus group participants an email I provided including the ‘Initial Informational Email Letter’ in Appendix I and the ‘Informed Consent Agreement’ for their signature (Appendix J). As per University of Calgary ethics policy each participant signed and submitted the consent form prior to his/her involvement.

A ‘Pre Focus Group Information Package’ (Appendix K) was sent to the participants one week prior to the meetings. The Pre Focus Group Information Package included the agenda, definitions, study background, portions of the literature review, key elements of the DST, references and two academic journal articles on the DST.

The participants were involved on a professional basis and no personal questions were asked. No remuneration was provided and English was spoken by all the participants. They were eligible to withdraw at any time; however, no participants chose to withdraw from the study.

### 2.5.4 Focus Groups

Two focus group workshops were undertaken in November of 2005. For the convenience of the participants each focus group lasted no more than three hours, lunch and snacks were provided, and the meetings were held during working hours. To ensure a more accurate analysis of the content the focus group discussions were taped with the permission of the participants.

At each focus group I welcomed all the participants and then presented a PowerPoint slide show to provide background information, the interview results and the
key elements of the DST. This information sharing was considered important grounding for the focus group discussion to follow (Albrecht et al. 1993).

The focus groups were not aimed at reaching consensus or making decisions, but were directed at gathering as many ideas and opinions on the new concepts as possible (Morgan & Krueger 1993). Both Greenbaum (1988) and Knodel (1993) advise that a moderate number of general concepts or issues be developed and the moderator improvise comments and questions within this general framework. This open ended format stimulates thoughts and allows for creativity in the process. To accomplish this and in order to make the most of the limited time allocated to the focus group session I separated the DST into six key elements and based the discussion questions on these elements. The discussion questions, which were used as a general guide only, can be found in Appendix L.

At the end of each focus group I thanked the participants with a small gift and advised them of the next steps in my work, including my pending request for their feedback on the transcribed notes.

2.5.5 Coding and Analysis

It was decided that typing up a full transcription of the many different voices and conversations in the focus groups would be too difficult to undertake and inconvenient for the allotted timeline. Instead I fully reviewed each of the two focus group tapes three times, took detailed notes on each pass, and fine tuned the notes with each listen. Many pages of summarized transcript notes resulted and these ‘Focus Group Results-Key Points’ (Appendix M) were sent to the individual participants for feedback on their own focus group only. Seven of the 11 participants responded after two reminder emails and no changes were requested.

The remainder of the coding and analysis was similar to the steps used for the Interviews (see Section 2.4.5.). Again, analysis was an essential component of all stages of coding as researcher interpretation was involved throughout.
As per University of Calgary ethics policy my supervisor will keep the raw data for two years after the thesis defense and then have the audio tapes erased and the notes and drafts destroyed.

2.6 Limitations of the Methods

A number of limitations to the methods existed. First, the literature review was limited by the topics chosen. For example, within the EBM and protected area fields a wealth of information existed; however, literature on SPAs was very limited. This dearth of information restricted the number of references to SPAs specifically, and meant that in many cases the broader literature on EBM and protected areas had to be used as a stand in for SPAs, despite the fact that it is unclear whether SPAs are similar to other protected areas in all cases.

In terms of the literature review within the social sciences field, once the decision had been made to focus on normative stakeholder theory, other stakeholder materials had to be excluded due to time constraints. For example, the various descriptive and instrumental stakeholder theories, including the collaborative, community-based, and adaptive resource management stakeholder models were not explored.

Secondly, within the interview and focus group methods there is potential for researcher bias; however, this notion of contamination is only relevant if a limited view of the subject as a commodity is taken (Holstein & Gubrium 1999). For example, if the interviewee is perceived to be only a vessel holding all the right answers, then it is possible to contaminate their responses; however, if their responses are viewed as products of the interactions then the bias concern is eliminated as, “all participants in an interview are inevitably implicated in making meaning” (Holstein & Gubrium 1999, p. 118). I chose to see the participants as ‘producers of reality’, rather than as ‘storehouses of the right answers’; thus eliminating the bias concern.

Definitions of terms were provided; however, it was unclear whether or not people read them and how they interpreted them. The term conflict seemed to evoke emotion immediately and what constituted conflict varied from one participant to the next. Also, the ecosystem management term seemed to be understood differently by the
various respondents and there also seemed to be confusion with the overall concept of the place of the SPA in the landscape as the focus of the discussions. Unless prompted, most respondents used internal examples, e.g., internal park management issues; rather than external landscape oriented ones. EBM does refer to both internal and external management issues and the internal ones may have been more directly applicable to the participants.

Overall, the small sample size excluded many SPAs in North America. The sites were selected to meet predetermined criteria and of the 16 sites contacted only nine replied and were willing to provide an interviewee. The other seven sites, and those not even considered for involvement, may have generated interesting and relevant data had they also been involved. Due to the low numbers involved, statistically valid results were not produced and as a result, the findings cannot be generalized to the broader population but it is hoped that the result can be generalized or transferred “cautiously” to the specific population being studied (Feagin et al. 1991). Also, the agencies involved in the study included mainly government parks departments at various levels. This resulted in a distinct government focus to the results. In a future study it would be interesting and useful to involve non government organizations, such as the new land trusts and other conservation organizations.

Next, the participants may have created limitations to the study. For example, the interviewees self-selected; however, they may not have been the most appropriate personnel to be involved as other staff members may have been better suited for this particular study. The participants in both the interviews and focus groups were protected area staff, and involving other stakeholders would have given the study more depth and breadth.

All interviews were conducted over the phone and were therefore consistent in procedure; however, the phone is a non personal medium. In face to face interviews more rapport may have been established and more interview depth may have resulted. Due to the limitations of phone conversations the interviews were held to 60 minutes while longer interviews may have provided more in depth responses and discussion. Also, second interviews may have provided the extra time required for further discussions.
In terms of interview questions, sections A and B took up more time than section C as they were easier and more descriptive questions. As a result, the questions in Section C, which related directly to stakeholder processes, may have been given short shrift. In retrospect more time should have been allocated to open and free flowing discussion regarding the statements in Section C.

In the focus groups the discussion was based entirely on the six key elements of the DST as interpreted by the researcher. My predispositions were therefore incorporated in both the PowerPoint presentation at the beginning of the session and in the discussion. As a result, incomplete data and inaccurate interpretations were distinct possibilities. Also, more time in the focus groups would have greatly increased the opportunity for free flowing discussion, new meaning creation and movement beyond my predispositions. A second focus group session in each geographic area would have likely added many new ideas and more insight into the topic at hand.
Chapter Three: Literature Review

3.1 Introduction

The two distinct disciplines of ecosystem-based management for protected areas and stakeholder theory will be reviewed in this chapter and due to their differences have been kept separate. A review of these two topics was required in order to further develop the research question and interview/focus group questions, and complete the results and analysis.

3.2 Ecosystem-Based Management (EBM)

3.2.1 Introduction

EBM implies focusing on resource and environmental issues at the landscape scale over longer periods of time, rather than on a single species or commodity over the short term. It is a holistic, long term approach, which emphasizes ecological, rather than political boundaries (Quinn 2002). Woodley and Forbes (1994) point out that ecosystem management is seen as a comprehensive way to deal with sometimes overwhelming issues. Saunders, Hobbs and Margules (1991, p. 27) add their voices to the EBM discourse when they stress that, “There is a pressing need for an integrated approach that treats the landscape as a whole instead of as a collection of separate biotic and legal entities.”

Other terms have been used to describe this general approach to land and people management. For example, Curthoys Brown (1995) describes other terminology used: holistic land stewardship, regional landscape approach, multiple use model, and holistic resource management. Other terms used in the literature include: collaborative resource management, community-based conservation, and landscape ecology. Due to time limitations these other terms have been addressed only perfunctorily in this thesis. Sustainable development and bioregionalism were reviewed as background to this thesis as they also describe similar approaches to land and people management.
Much has been written about EBM since it gained popularity as a management strategy in the early 1990’s. To summarize the information on the topic, Edward Grumbine researched the current literature and published two, now classic, articles in Conservation Biology in 1994 and 1997. He listed and described the ten dominant themes of ecosystem management based on the current literature. The first six themes focus on the biophysical components of ecosystem management while the last four focus on the human dimensions of ecosystem management (Grumbine 1994, 1997).

The biophysical themes of ecosystem management include: hierarchical context, ecological boundaries, ecological integrity, data collection, adaptive management, and monitoring. Together these themes suggest taking a systems view, using ecological rather than political boundaries, considering the long term health of the environment, collecting and sharing data, and learning by doing.

The last four themes focus on the human dimension and include: interagency cooperation, organizational change, humans embedded in nature, and values. These themes suggest that agencies must work together to overcome management challenges and that they may need to re-organize along ecosystem management themes in order to be effective. The themes also stress that humans are part of the ecosystem and that their values will always play a dominant role in ecosystem management. As Grumbine (1994; 1997) points out, we cannot change the biological basis of sustainability but we can change our values, attitudes and behaviours.

Since Grumbine wrote his two articles, various authors have noted that his work lacked a communication theme; likely because the literature of the day lacked this important theme. Communication and education are now being included in EBM work. For example, for Ontario’s National Parks, Zorn, Stephenson and Grigoriev (2001) created an ecosystem management program and assessment process and included 11 ecosystem management themes, based on Grumbine’s ten themes with the addition of communications.
3.2.2 Protected Areas and EBM

EBM seems to be the current framework used by many agencies responsible for protected areas. It has been adopted by major land management agencies in North America, including the Parks Canada Agency, US National Parks Service, US Fish and Wildlife, and US Forest Services. It is also being encouraged on an international scale by the World Conservation Union (IUCN). Proponents of EBM suggest that this landscape-level approach to protected areas management is required as a single agency can no longer deal with the increasing complexity of issues ranging from the variable nature of nature to human impacts on the landscape (Curthoys Brown 1995).

There are many challenges to overcome in the implementation of EBM at protected areas. Biophysical challenges include, but are not limited to (Franklin 1997; Haney & Power 1996; Primack 1993; Wipond 1998):

- the complexity of ecosystems,
- the impacts of roads,
- the fact that no protected area is large enough in itself to allow for dynamic equilibrium,
- the notion that protected areas may lead to a siege mentality in which species in parks are protected while species outside parks are exploited,
- the fact that park and protected area boundaries are not usually selected for natural features,
- the difficulties of understanding and working with the huge temporal and spatial scales covered by ecosystems.

Social challenges are many and include, but are not limited to (Mason 1999; Wipond 1998; Woodley & Forbes 1994; Yaffee 1999):

- difficulties working with the many partners and stakeholders,
- lack of resources including data, money, staff, time,
- increased human visitation of protected areas,
- bureaucracies and public policies,
- the role of values in land use decisions.
Ideas for implementing EBM at protected areas are many and varied, including, but not limited to the following approaches:

- take an incremental approach to change (Grumbine 1994),
- adopt the Precautionary Principle (Pirot et al. 2000),
- use a watershed approach in which protected areas are integrated in a matrix of appropriately managed areas, including the use of buffer zones, adequate, useable corridors and the replication of habitat areas (Grumbine 1992; Jensen et al. 1996; Noss & Cooperrider 1994; Primack 1993; Shafer 1995, 1997, 1999),
- minimize roads (Noss et al. 1996),
- create specific ecosystem management plans for different areas (Grumbine 1992),
- focus on long term planning (Lertzman et al. 1997),
- increase the role of private lands in conservation (Grumbine 1992),
- modify public policy and laws and encourage more open government (Grumbine 1992),
- use more and varied tools for private conservation, i.e., market based incentives, financial compensation, zoning law changes, outright purchases, leasing agreements, tax incentives, conservation easements, land trusts, stewardship programs, education, and so on (Christensen et al. 1996; Grumbine 1992; Johnson 1997; Rowntree 1995).

The issues faced by protected areas are wicked, i.e., the problems are not easily defined and the solutions are significant, yet are not simple or easily reached. In the original article that launched the term wicked Rittel and Webber (1973, p. 160) use the word to describe public policy and planning issues that are “malignant, vicious, tricky or aggressive,” as opposed to tame problems that are easily solved, such as simple problems within the mathematical and engineering worlds. EBM is considered one approach to dealing with the wicked problems faced by protected areas (Rauscher 1999) and greater emphasis on the social sciences in natural resource management is another (Patterson & Williams 1998). Allen and Gould (1986) add that people make the problems wicked and
people are the only ones who can solve them. They note that, “Emphasis on people within the organization and on external customers is the central element when wicked problems are successfully handled” (Allen & Gould 1986, p. 23).

Post-normal science, as presented by Ravetz, (1999; 2002; 2004) presents another potential approach to wicked problems. Ravetz believes that a new view of science is required in order to counter the: uncertain facts, disputed values, high stakes, and urgent decisions required in many current issues. Post-normal science advocates new approaches such as: broadening peer communities to include the public, engaging in mutual learning, expanding problem solving to wider audiences, fostering open-ended dialogue, and encouraging the broadest feasible involvement of citizens.

### 3.2.3 Human Dimension of EBM

One of the hallmarks of EBM is its recognition of the important part that human values play in the ecosystem being managed (Grumbine 1994; Lertzman et al. 1997; Meffe et al. 2002). We seem to have realized that, “Ecosystem management is as much about managing human activity as it is about managing land and water” (Christensen et al. 1996, p. 676).

Despite this recognition, the human dimension has not been given enough attention in ecosystem management (Grumbine 1994, 1997; McCormick 1999; Meffe et al. 2002; Quinn 2002; Yaffee 1999). This seems largely due to the fact that ecosystem management emerged from within the natural resources and science realms, while wicked problems are mainly social issues. Politics in EBM is unavoidable and as Czech and Krausman (1997) point out, the idea of managing by landscape units and integrating biological, physical and social sciences is not new but, “… the fact that such an old idea is untried is a testament to political difficulties” (Czech & Krausman 1997, p. 671).

Obviously, better approaches to working with humans within an EBM philosophy are still required. Various authors have pointed out new approaches or important considerations. For example, Kessler and others (1992) note that we still need new management approaches that better reflect the way people think about the land and the values we place on it. Allen and Hoekstra (1994) contend that we cannot protect
everything for all time and therefore we need to recognize that our values are an integral part of sustainability. In a paper prepared for the Parks Canada Agency, Nepstad (1993) revealed that when the agency adopted an ecosystem management approach they needed to initiate new dialogues and establish collective decision making; “Considering that ecosystem management requires an integrated approach, there is an urgent need to thoroughly examine and understand the relationship between humans and the environment” (Nepstad 1993, p.10).

The biggest challenge according to Fiedler et al. (1997) is not to increase the intellectual tools but rather to better learn how to communicate the need for science-based conservation. Scientists have to become better at articulating their concerns and goals and be able to “shake empires” (Fielder et al. 1997, p. 91). Allen and Hoekstra (1994) also point out that we need more collaboration between natural and social scientists.

We need to work collaboratively with stakeholders but this collaboration must be deep and meaningful (Yaffee 1999). As Grumbine pointed out in 1994, managers need to gain a better understanding of conservation sciences but they also must foster cooperation and open up decision making. This dialogue must take place at various levels and include willingness to consider policy changes. These multiple jurisdictions can be seen as, “creating problems or creating opportunities” (Westphal 1995, p. 45).

Zorn, Stephenson and Grigoriev (2001) point out that the problems in EBM occur when stakeholders are not adequately involved in decision making right from the start. They advise undertaking stakeholder analysis, including consideration for the various human factors such as demographics, interests, locations, sense of place and values; and they propose an 11 part assessment program to help parks identify their ecosystem management needs. They acknowledge that parks often just need starting points and examples to initiate EBM on the ground.

Staff members are important stakeholders and may need to assume new roles in an effort to advance EBM. Sparkes (2003) concludes her article on social capital and EBM with the suggestion that an emerging role of ecosystem managers includes, “facilitating the building and monitoring of stewardship focused social capital within the
landscapes they manage” (Sparkes 2003, p. 11), including diversifying the type of social capital they themselves hold within the community. This appears to be a clear call to managers to place more emphasis on their social landscape.

Adrian Phillips, currently Senior Advisor to the IUCN on World Heritage, concurs and he suggests that many problems faced by protected areas may be addressed through the involvement of protected area managers in outward looking initiatives. He makes a strong case for a new view of protected areas as being: more aligned with rural people, more focused on human rights, more participatory, more democratic, more systematic and networked and involving more partners (Phillips 2003). He also reflects on the involvement of stakeholders and notes that while they may be essential they will make enormous demands on already over-extended protected area resources. Defining who the stakeholders are and how to reconcile competing demands will also be challenging to protected area staff (Phillips 2003).

Driver, Manning & Peterson (1996) recognize that while physical ecosystem components are easily defined and mapped, social components are not. Human ecology has different boundaries depending on people’s lifestyles, issues, and so on. These are much more arbitrary than physical elements and therefore not as easily established. While SPAs will likely focus on the local and multi community level, they need to be aware of how they fit into the regional, national and global pictures as well. Swyngedouw (1997) introduced the new term Glocalization to stress that the local and global are deeply intertwined, and that this rescaling impacts the economy and society, including SPAs.

Carr (1995) states that people are part of ecosystems, and that ecosystem management is really a human endeavour as it seeks the well being of people and communities, as well as the health of the natural ecosystem. The challenge is to devise processes and policies that integrate divisions into solutions. This involves attempting to predict the future and Carr acknowledges that this is tougher for the human dimension than for the biophysical dimension. As information is lacking it will be an information intensive endeavour and research will be required in many different areas. Carr concludes that dealing with ever-changing social issues is difficult but that they can be dealt with and a better profession and strengthened relations with the public can result (Carr 1995).
Quoting Western, Primack (1993) notes that if we can’t save nature outside protected areas, not much will survive inside protected areas. A study by the General Accounting Office in the United States found that less than 10% of the species protected by the Endangered Species Act are actually found on federal land (Bean & Wilcove, 1997). The remaining 90% of the endangered species in the United States are found on private lands. In an international study, Machlis and Tichnell (cited in Curthoys Brown 1995) reported that the most serious problems facing protected areas originate on the adjacent lands. Human uses on the adjacent lands may not be compatible with the ecological viability of the protected area. Harris and Gallagher (cited in Curthoys Brown 1995) believe that what happens in the regional setting is more important than what is happening within the preserve. Therefore, a landscape-level approach to protected area management is required as a single agency can no longer deal with the increasing complexity of issues (Curthoys Brown 1995).

Other writers have pointed out that while public lands, including protected areas, are an important component of land conservation; private lands are also extremely valuable. Norton (2000) notes that in the New Zealand conservation literature only 19% of the papers concentrated on private land and he believes that the focus needs to shift to pay more attention to modified systems. As a way to take advantage of the conservation benefits of private lands, Newburn, Reed et al. advocate a, “…comprehensive approach to conservation that integrates incentive-based tools with land use planning” (Newburn et al. 2005, p. 1419). Likewise, Theobald and Hobbs (2002) propose a planning framework consisting of four components critical to protecting biodiversity on private lands. Stakeholder involvement is one of the four components, along with spatial modeling of critical habitat, analysis of possible scenarios and, evaluation and monitoring.

From a planner’s perspective Elmendorf (1997) advises that EBM is similar to good land use planning as it invites broad based participation, working across jurisdictional boundaries, collecting and monitoring data on a large scale, and so on. He does caution that in his opinion EBM has to fit within standard planning processes to be accepted by the planning profession.
As a summary to the human dimension element of EBM, Roe (1996, pp. 671-673) lists ten suggestions for dealing with the complexities of environments and their management:

- expect differences in how people perceive the world,
- expect confusion,
- avoid arguments over boundaries and instead focus on the important interactions,
- allow for evolution in ecosystem management,
- work with a multidisciplinary team of experts,
- deal with ecosystem management on a case-by-case basis,
- clarify key stakeholders so planning is an inside-out process,
- use local leaders and residents as the experts,
- commit to an evolutionary process,
- accept that politics, not complexity, is the real obstacle to realizing ecosystem management.

Although the collaborative resource management literature was not studied in detail, a cursory look revealed that there are numerous suggested methods for improving the human dimension of EBM. For example, the Ecosystem Management Initiative of the University of Michigan has a multitude of resources and case studies on collaboration and negotiation within the natural resources field (University of Michigan 2006). Meffe and associates (2002) also describe various stakeholder principles and techniques in their textbook titled *Ecosystem Management, Adaptive, Community-Based Conservation*. Wondolleck and Yaffee (2000) present ideas for making collaboration work, including many examples from real world experiences and advice for those wishing to undertake collaboration within the natural resources management world. The sustainable development movement also seeks to amalgamate humans and resource use in an attempt to, “…meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Johnston et al. 2000, p. 812).
3.2.4 Relevance to SPAs

The literature on SPAs is very limited, and on the topic of EBM at SPAs it is virtually non-existent; therefore, the previously described information on EBM and EBM at protected areas was considered relevant to SPAs since SPAs are foremost protected areas, albeit ones with unique characteristics.

For example, all of Grumbine’s goals and themes are relevant to EBM at SPAs. The biophysical themes are critical to EBM at SPAs, as without consideration to these biophysical elements, small areas are not likely to maintain their ecological integrity over the long term. Data collection and monitoring are particularly important to SPAs as they may indicate when critical ecological thresholds have been reached. Adaptive management, i.e., taking an experimental approach to management, is also vital to SPAs as it is a flexible and financially sound approach suitable for small sites with limited resources.

The human dimension of EBM is particularly relevant to SPAs as human use is more concentrated and active around SPAs since these areas tend to be more closely associated with human development. All of Grumbine’s human-related themes will require careful consideration at SPAs. The additional themes of communication and education are also critical for SPAs where human use and local decisions will have tremendous impacts on the area, and the opportunities for education are numerous.

3.3 Small Protected Areas (SPAs)

3.3.1 Introduction

The lack of literature on SPAs has been noted by Curthoys (1995) and Miller and Hobbs (2002). Miller and Hobbs (2002, p. 331) researched the conservation biology literature for articles on current conservation research in urban, suburban and exurban areas. They found that less than 6% of the papers described work in these non-wilderness areas. The authors concluded that this area of research needs more attention, especially as
the SPAs are typically found where people live and work, and offer an ideal opportunity for garnering public support for parks and protected areas in general. SPAs may be seen as an emerging sub discipline of protected areas and EBM.

3.3.2 Value of SPAs

SPAs are valuable for many reasons. From a biophysical perspective, SPAs are important as one component of an overall ecosystem management plan which should include a blend of reserves of all sizes (Christensen et al., 1996; Schwartz and Van Mantgem, 1997, Shafer, 1995; Shafer, 1997). It is now recognized that large protected areas are critical yet they are not sufficient for conservation of biodiversity. Dearden and Dempsey (2004, p. 235) reference work by Landry et al. when they note that research shows that all protected areas are too small to maintain ecological integrity on their own; therefore all protected areas may be considered small protected areas.

Recognizing that protected areas alone cannot sustain ecological integrity has led to the belief that there is need for a broader focus in conservation planning; one that encompasses protected areas, smaller reserves and unprotected lands (Miller & Hobbs, 2002). Current thinking in conservation biology also suggests that new views of the landscape are required. In these new views the usual urban-rural, human-natural, developed-conservation dichotomies are being replaced by a continuum of land uses, such as the reserve-cultivated ecosystem-modified ecosystem range proposed by Hunter (2000) and the continuum of destruction proposed by McIntyre and Hobbs (1999). Meine (2001) believes that we have lost a sense of purpose due to the rural-urban schism and that we need to renew connections across the entire landscape. These new ways of looking at landscapes may provide valuable insights for SPAs.

SPAs can also provide important habitat for wildlife and plant species not adequately protected in larger protected areas (Herkert, 1997). If connected by suitable movement corridors, SPAs can serve as habitat patches or stopping over points for wide ranging species such as carnivores.

Impacts on wildlife have not been thoroughly studied for the SPA setting, although research does exist. Gurd, Nudds and Rivard (2001) studied wildlife reserves for
mammal conservation requirements and determined that few reserves were large enough to avoid loss of mammal species but that combining small reserves via buffer zones and immigration corridors may reduce species loss. In a similar avian-focused study Donnelly and Marzluff (2004) determined that small reserves had little value for some bird species, while larger reserves had exceptional conservation value for other bird species. They concluded that a heterogeneous landscape provided for the best bird diversity.

Natural areas have a critical role to play in society, as they can be useful as benchmarks or control areas, even if they are not large or pristine. Because EBM is often experimental, protected areas are essential as the control areas in the experimental process (Christensen et al., 1996). SPAs may be the only benchmarks and refuge areas located within a fragmented landscape.

SPAs may be the only natural way to protect rare communities of plants. These SPAs may also form a good base for restoration of threatened species (Herkert, 1997). As settlement spreads small reserves may be the only economically feasible option for protected areas, as larger ones may no longer be economically possible (Miller & Hobbs, 2002).

SPAs also have much to offer within the human dimension of EBM. People need small natural areas near them to help them feel connected to nature. These small areas also give people a chance to be stewards and take ownership of the local environment. This may expand to ownership for the environment in general (Schwartz & Van Mantgem, 1997).

Schwartz and Van Mantgem (1997) also suggest that small reserves offer the opportunity to experiment with different management strategies. This is ideal for implementing adaptive management techniques, i.e., learning by doing. Different reserves may be able to experiment with different approaches and share successes and failures with each other.

Shafer (1995) argues that small reserves fill a worthy niche in conservation strategies for preserving biodiversity, but they also provide excellent opportunities for scientific research. For example, local people can contribute to EBM by providing
indigenous validation of biophysical data, as well as contributing to stewardship and monitoring programs (Franklin, 1997).

SPAs can play a vital role in education. For example, a study of public ecosystem management knowledge at a SPA in Florida found that people lack basic ecological knowledge, but were neutral to slightly positive about endangered species, fire ecology and ecosystem management of forests. The researchers concluded that people would respond positively to programs aimed at increasing their knowledge and attitudes towards ecosystem management (Jacobson & Marynowski, 1997).

Citizens can be roused to action by ecological education (Grumbine, 1992). For example, education is needed to change people’s value towards carnivores. So far the emphasis has been on regulating separation between people and dangerous animals. In order to live in harmony with carnivores people need to be better informed and more involved in decision making (Mattson et al., 1996). Education can provide the link between these two.

In summary, SPAs are valuable as they protect biodiversity, provide habitat for some species not adequately protected in large reserves, serve as a base for restoration efforts, act as benchmark areas, provide people with nature close to home, provide opportunities for stewardship, and provide educational and research opportunities.

The success of biodiversity conservation depends on broad based public support and we have failed to gain this, in part because we have focused on large, remote protected areas. We need to focus more on areas closer to home to better reach people in order to gain support for protected areas and conservation in general.

### 3.3.3 Threats to SPAs

The most common feature that SPAs share is the number of threats and challenges they face. In a study undertaken as a PhD dissertation at the University of Alberta, Curthoys Brown noted that all SPAs had two things in common: the lack of a national identity and an, “ecologically compromised condition” (Curthoys Brown 1995, p. 2). She
then proceeded to identify the four most common threats to ecological viability at SPAs as (Curthoys Brown 1995, p. 35):

- inadequate internal resources (funding and staff),
- human encroachment (urbanization and industrial/agricultural activities),
- human abuse and misuse of protected area,
- exotic species invasion.

In a similar vein, Shafer (1995, p. 84) lists the top ten threats to small reserves as:

- residential/commercial development, roads and pipelines, and sewage treatment plants,
- ditching or irrigation, dredging or channelization, and dams,
- off road vehicles, vandalism, hunting or fishing, and hiking or trampling,
- logging, cultivation, and grazing,
- urban runoff and sewage,
- exotic species,
- oil or gas, rock, sand or gravel, and coal excavation,
- wind,
- coastal erosion,
- aircraft overflights.

One of the greatest threats to SPAs is their small size. As the reserve size gets smaller the effects of external influences become greater. Parks and Harcourt (2002, p. 804) noted that small reserves are, “…surrounded by a potentially more adverse environment than are large reserves.” To overcome this barrier an integrated approach that places the reserve in the broader landscape is necessary (Janzen 1983).

The most serious barrier to developing the holistic system needed for SPAs is society’s lack of appreciation of the natural environment in general. This results in a lack of funding for protected areas as well as an increase in management-related issues. These realities point to a need to place more emphasis on both protected areas and the lands beyond the protected area’s boundaries (Brown 1992).
3.3.4 Role of Management

SPAs cannot be established and then left alone; the previous section on threats indicates the ongoing struggles SPAs face. Due to the multitude of internal and external threats, SPAs will require intensive management to ensure the long term protection of ecological integrity (Shafer 1995). Christensen et al. (1996) believe that most SPAs can be classified as intensive or semi natural in terms of their use, mainly due to their proximity to humans. They believe that these heavily used areas will require moderate to intensive management.

Factors requiring almost constant attention at SPAs will include natural and human disturbances, manipulation of fire regimes, succession, imbalance of animal populations, protection from invasive exotic plants and animals, population and genetic change of rare species, altered hydrology, and increased visitor pressure (Herkert 1997).

Management of SPAs requires constant attention and the literature provides a number of recommendations. For example, Grumbine (1992) advises that each SPA should have its own management plan since each area exists in a unique context. Elmendorf (1997), a planner, suggests that combining community development and EBM would be positive to SPAs since they are an important part of the community. Schafer (1997) notes that it may be relatively easy to implement EBM at SPAs as they are often protected and managed by private organizations, rather than bureaucratic government agencies.

Curthoys Brown (1995, pp. 68-78) generated 11 attributes for successful management of SPAs:
- clear mandate,
- large-scale focus,
- community involvement,
- advocacy work,
- research, monitoring and evaluation,
- partnerships and networks,
- ecosystem restoration,
• minimization of visitor impacts,
• maximization of visitor experiences,
• innovative management,
• strong dedication of stewards.

SPAs require a landscape-based approach to management as they cannot meet all the needs for conservation of biodiversity on their own. Regional planning must include small reserves and habitat connectivity; and management should be directed at the mosaic not just the reserve (Elmendorf 1997; Herkert 1997). An important attribute of excellence for SPAs as noted by 88% of the respondents in Curthoys Brown’s study was, “A large-scale management focus involving long term protection of ecological processes both within and beyond the SPA boundary” (1995, p. 80).

EBM is not a panacea for SPAs but it does offer broader opportunities than more restricted myopic management philosophies (McCormick 1999). It also offers an opportunity for dealing with threats and unknowns in an organized and holistic manner. The alternative is an inward looking approach that ignores external happenings and may doom the area to a bleak future.

3.3.5 Exurban

The term exurban is a relatively new one; adding another component to the typical urban-rural continuum, as they are areas located on the outskirts of cities but not developed at urban or suburban density levels, nor are they intact agricultural lands. Exurban developments may be referred to as: country residential, acreages, ranchettes, hobby farms, rural residential, and the most creative of all, the rurban area. As the definition in the Introduction chapter points out, they are places typically inhabited by the wealthy who, for various reasons, and due to various socioeconomic and technological changes, have chosen to live, and possibly work, at home in the countryside (Maestas et al. 2003).

The recent rate of increase in exurban developments is phenomenal. Theobald (2005, p. 33) studied landscape patterns of exurban growth and determined that across the
United States exurban land now occupies five to ten times more area than urban and suburban densities and it has been growing at a rate of 10-15% per year.

The near-urban land is considered to have important ecological value to the urban centre and the environment in general. For example, in a Master’s thesis focused on urban natural areas Neil Cory (2002) describes the increasing threats to biodiversity as urban areas grow, and he stresses the need to view the surrounding countryside as a functioning ecosystem and to maintain it as one in order to uphold biodiversity in the urban natural areas. Agricultural crop land and ranches provide critical functions as they provide food for a growing population.

Very few studies on the impacts of development in the exurban area have been undertaken. Studies by Maestas et al. (2003) show that exurban house cats and dogs have negative impacts on wildlife, human garbage attracts pest species, artificial nest boxes promote some bird species but not others, human friendly birds increase in abundance, non native plants increase while native plant species diminish, and in general biodiversity decreases. They also determined that the reserves in these areas, i.e., SPAs, were ecologically degraded and they recommended an increase in conservation attention to private lands. Odell and Knight (2001) add that very little research has focused on avian responses to exurban development, although research on deer, bobcats and gray foxes in exurban areas has taken place.

The developments located within these exurban areas are generally surrounded by original ecosystem types compared to suburban areas in which the surrounding land use matrix is urban (Odell & Knight 2001). This suggests that there is potential for successful conservation efforts in the exurban areas.

From a planning perspective, scholars and practitioners are proposing ways to deal with the influx of people into the exurban areas. For instance, Conservation Design for Subdivisions (Arendt 1996) provides a practical guide for creating open space networks, including the use of conservation easements, linkages to green space, cluster development and so on. Likewise, in an article entitled Incorporating Ecology into Land Use Planning, the authors (Odell et al. 2003) advocate for 100 metre buffers between
human developments and natural features, and for cluster housing with zones of
development placing the houses furthest from the natural habitat features.

Some writers feel that too much support is given to exurban area parks to the
detriment of an overall conservation strategy. Battisti and Gippoliti (2004) point out that
protected areas near urban centres generally have more public support than ones located
further away and this places too much public pressure on saving exurban areas for
outdoor recreational opportunities, while undeveloped remote areas that may be critical to
an overall conservation strategy are excluded.

Development in exurban areas is likely to continue to increase and SPAs in these
areas will become more valuable and also more impacted with the increased use of the
protected areas and the surrounding landscape.

3.3.6 Conclusion

According to the EBM paradigm, to be ecologically viable over the long-term
small exurban protected areas should be connected to the landscape, both physically and
socially. Physically they need to be connected to other viable habitat areas by way of
wildlife corridors, and socially they need to be connected to their users, partners and the
people living in the immediate vicinity. SPAs exist at the nexus of the physical landscape
and the social world- here stakeholders become an element critical to the success of the
SPA.

3.4 Stakeholder Theory

3.4.1 Introduction

In what is considered the seminal book in the field of stakeholder theory R.
Edward Freeman defines stakeholders as, “Any group or individual who can affect or is
affected by the achievement of the firm’s objective” (Freeman 1984, p. 25). In this text he
introduces the new stakeholder model in opposition to the old stockholder business
model. The stakeholder model is now pervasive in the business world and has developed
into a growing discourse as evidenced by its inclusion in management journals and encyclopedias, and its increased use by consultants (Donaldson 2002). In this new view a conceptual shift has been made from the owner/managerial model of business to a model that recognizes various groups and individuals as having an impact on or being impacted by the company (Deetz 2001). No longer are the stockholders the only group management must consider in their planning and operations.

The stakeholder theory discourse seems to be in a state of confusion and there is much disagreement between scholars. Hasnas (1998) believes that this confusion is due to the fact that the term is used to denote both empirical theories of management, e.g., how to operate stakeholder programs, and also to describe the normative or ethical aspects of stakeholders in business. In an attempt to clarify the confusion, Donaldson and Preston (cited in Mellahi & Wood 2003) present a much referenced categorization of stakeholder theory into three types: descriptive, instrumental, and normative theory. To set the context, the first two will be briefly described although these theories were not reviewed in depth for this thesis, as the focus was on the latter, i.e., the normative stakeholder theory.

Descriptive or empirical stakeholder theories describe ways for organizations and managers to interact with stakeholders (Hendry 2001; Jones & Wicks 1999). For example, within the management literature there is a profusion of descriptive texts and prescriptive articles on processes for involving stakeholders. The theory underlying these check lists and action plans is not always obvious.

Instrumental stakeholder theory relates to the link between effective management of stakeholders and the firm’s success. For example, this theory relates how involving stakeholders can lead to increased profits and other benefits to the company. In this case stakeholders are seen as the means to certain ends (Hendry 2001; Mellahi & Wood 2003).

Lastly, normative stakeholder theory is the one most developed in the business literature and focuses on the moral rationale behind involving stakeholders. Normative theories are concerned with how stakeholders are treated, i.e., either as means or as ends (Mellahi & Wood 2003) and make suggestions for how managers ought to behave...
towards and include stakeholders (Freeman 1994). As normative stakeholder theories are of most interest to this thesis they will now be reviewed in more detail.

3.4.2 Normative Stakeholder Theory

Three key issues have emerged within the normative stakeholder theory discourse. These issues are considered wicked, as defined earlier, and are cause for much debate in the literature. The normative stakeholder theory is found lacking, as it does not seem able to provide plausible and practical solutions to address these issues. They are briefly described here as the issues are of relevance to this thesis.

The first issue entails the rationale for involving stakeholders. As to be expected from a morality-based discourse, it is addressed in great detail in the normative stakeholder theory literature. Two opposing viewpoints exist. The utilitarian or instrumental view seems to be dominant and in this view, stakeholders are seen merely as means to an end, i.e., the value of stakeholders emanates from their ability to help a firm achieve its main objective of increasing stockholder wealth. Stakeholder involvement is considered a gift from management (Mellahi & Wood 2003).

The opposing view, the moral or Kantian view, suggests that stakeholders have intrinsic value and the company therefore has an obligation to uphold their rights just because the stakeholders exist. In this perspective stakeholders are ends in themselves and not merely means to a company’s ends (Dunn & Burton 1996). Some authors believe that stakeholders should be served to the maximum (Goodijk 2003; Kaler 2003) while others believe that business and ethics do not mix very well and the underlying profit motive will always take precedence (Freeman 1994; 2000; Freeman & Phillips 2002).

Another key issue being debated in the normative stakeholder theory is the identification or definition of stakeholders; mainly how broad or narrow to define them. Some writers, such as Mitroff (1983) and Weiss (1994) have used Freeman’s broad definition while others have expanded it even more. For example, Goodijk (2003, p. 227) offered a very broad definition when he stated that stakeholders should be more generally defined as, “individuals and entities/institutions who may influence or be affected by the functioning of the company: shareholders, employees, customers, pressure groups, civic
institutions, etc.” The risk of such a broad definition is succinctly summed up by Gregg (2001, p. 4), “… in a stakeholder world a corporation could easily become accountable to almost anyone or everyone; as is well known, an organization that is accountable to all easily becomes accountable to no one.”

Other scholars feel that it is better to narrowly define stakeholders. Phillips (1997) points out that the problem with a broad definition is not the issue of identifying and dealing with those groups that can affect the company, but rather the other side of the coin; defining those groups that are affected by the company and therefore worthy of company attention. Max Clarkson described stakeholders as, “persons or groups that stand to benefit from or be harmed by corporate activity” (Cited in Donaldson 2002, p. 108). Clarkson and others felt that the term should only be used to refer to parties that “bear risk as a result of the firm’s activities” (Cited in Vidaver-Cohen 1999, p. 39). Alkhafaji (1989) recommends a return to the one-sided, definition presented by the Stanford Research Institute in which stakeholders are defined as a group with a direct interest in the survival of the corporation, i.e., without their support the corporation might not exist.

The third key issue in the normative stakeholder theory is the question of elevated status for some groups of stakeholders. Again, there seems to be two camps within the stakeholder theory discourse.

Gregg (2001) believes that the shareholders are the only ones who matter since they are the ones taking the risks and that stakeholders do not warrant any extra consideration beyond a basic level. Clarkson (cited in Donaldson 2002) also believed that stockholders, by virtue of their risk taking, were entitled to an elevated status among the stakeholder groups. Kaler (2003) feels that all stakeholders should be served but within categories depending on their connection. For example, stakeholders can be classified as having weak or strong connections and accountability should be matched to these perceived connections, i.e., ranging from minimum to maximum accountability.

On the other side of the debate, Freeman (1994), Goodijk (2003), Smith (2003), and Phillips (1997) believe that all stakeholders should be treated equally, although they clarify that the company’s overall goal is to remain in existence and this can only be
achieved by balancing the interests of all stakeholders, only some of whom are the shareholders with a profit motive.

These three key issues have been debated endlessly in the business ethics literature with no obvious resolution in sight. Many of the involved scholars have noted that until these issues are solved normative stakeholder theory will lack a firm grounding. Some scholars have suggested that rather than continue to debate these three issues alternative stakeholder models are required.

3.4.3 Alternatives to Normative Stakeholder Theory

The scholars appealing for new stakeholder models point out that current stakeholder theory and practice are both hegemonic as they perpetuate the existing power structures and systems. The current focus is clearly on management and how to make the work of management easier and more productive. They recommend that more heterogeneous stakeholder models are necessary to overcome the hegemony and the present management-oriented perspective. Alternatives I uncovered within the current normative stakeholder discourse include: a feminist perspective, the convergent stakeholder theory, and a social contract model.

The feminist perspective calls for greater emphasis on caring and taking relationships more seriously as corporations are perceived as being made up of webs of relationships. From this perspective, all stakeholders are important and there should not be an elevation of some groups over others; likewise, interdependencies should be recognized and embraced as people work together to meet challenges. Wicks and Gilbert et al. (1994), Dunn (1996), Freeman (1994; 2000), and Dunn and Burton (1996) have all written from a feminist perspective and encourage giving voice to previously silenced stakeholders. Dunn and Burton (1996, p. 3) point out that, “An approach to stakeholder theory based on feminist philosophy emphasizes a firm’s responsibilities to all stakeholders instead of a conflict between the rights of shareholders versus the rights of non-shareholder stakeholders.” Building on the principles of caring and cooperation, rather than competition and justice, feminism encourages companies and stakeholders to work together to create win-win scenarios.
Jones and Wicks (1999) make a case for combining instrumental and normative stakeholder theory discourses into a new practical and normatively sound theory they call *Convergent Stakeholder Theory*. In this new theory managers would be given ways to do business that are both moral and workable. According to Jones and Wicks, this new theory would solve the problem that instrumental theories do not include any moral compunction to involve stakeholders. The development of this theory and its transference to the practical world of management remain to be seen.

The social contract model is one of the newest stakeholder theory in the business ethics literature and is challenging the stakeholder theory for preeminence within the business ethics discourse (Bishop 2000; Hasnas 1998). Hasnas (1998) explains that just as the stockholder theory was replaced by the stakeholder theory, the stakeholder theory may be replaced by the social contract theory. This new theory asserts that businesses are obligated to enhance the welfare of society in return for society giving permission to the companies to exist. Building on the social responsibility model the social contract theory suggests that this obligation to society may be accomplished through stakeholder involvement, as well as other means.

### 3.4.4 Relevance to SPAs

This normative stakeholder theory review from the business ethics literature was considered relevant to the study of SPAs as the key issues are similar regardless of the situation. For example, the rationale for involving stakeholders, how to define stakeholders, and how equal different stakeholders are, are all very relevant to the SPA world and will be addressed in later chapters. In keeping with the opinions of the normative stakeholder theory pundits, my research verified the need for new alternatives. While the presented three alternatives to the current normative theory were intriguing, I wished to explore an alternative from another discourse, i.e., the organization communication field. I also wished to explore a critical theory in more depth, as it is my belief that the status quo regarding stakeholders at SPAs is inadequate. This led me to Stanley Deetz and another normative stakeholder theory, the Dialogic Stakeholder Theory.
3.5 Dialogic Stakeholder Theory (DST)

After introducing the theory and outlining its theoretical underpinnings, the DST will be described in more detail focusing on its attributes and six key elements. Lastly, the limitations of the model will be addressed.

3.5.1 Introduction

The struggle of our times is to build the practices of working together. This is the hope of a dialogic theory of communication (Deetz & Simpson 2004).


Stanley Deetz (PhD, Ohio University) is currently a professor of communication at the University of Colorado in Boulder, USA. He is interested in organizational theory, organizational communication and communication theory (Deetz 1997) and is considered one of the foremost critical theorists within these fields (Schneider 2003). In various articles and books he espouses transforming communications, an action which he believes will lead to a transformation of business and society (Alvesson & Deetz 1996; Deetz 1995, 1997, 2001, 2003; Deetz et al. 2000). He believes that (Deetz 1997, p. 119):

Communication is not just a phenomenon of study, but can provide important new explanations. Powerful disciplines, compelling theories, and productive research arise in relation to human situations lending insight into them and transforming them at once.

He also believes that, “Communication in its democratic form is productive rather than reproductive. It produces what self and other can experience rather than reproduces
what either has” (Deetz 1992, p. 341). Deetz and Brown (2004) add that communication must be viewed systematically and that alternative concepts and practices of making decisions together must be developed.

The benefits of this reformed stakeholder model as presented by Deetz and associates are as follows (Deetz 2003; Deetz & Brown 2004):

- provides a unified way of understanding organizational life,
- directs the evaluation of existing organizational forms and activities,
- provides guidance for education of members,
- includes multiple social values in the decisional chain and communication processes,
- provides guidance for redesign of organizational structures and practices,
- increases efficiency, effectiveness and social good,
- generates more creative solutions,
- reduces costs from litigation and regulation,
- uses conflict and difference to generate creative win-win situations.

Interestingly, the DST hearkens back to R. Edward Freeman’s original stakeholder work as both theories stress that stakeholders should be represented and considered in decision making, and both focus on conversation. It seems that sometimes we have to go back to the beginning to move forward.

3.5.2 Theoretical Underpinnings

The DST is a, “politically responsive constructionist theory of communication” that focuses on other rather than self (Deetz & Simpson 2004, p. 143). Deetz’ work readily fits alongside the business ethics discussions on normative stakeholder theory as he focuses on the social responsibilities of business (Deetz 1999); however, unlike most of the pundits in the business ethics field he takes a critical theory perspective. In opposition to the generally accepted liberal and humanistic views of the world, critical theory involves a critique of the status quo and a commitment to making the world a better place for all. Critical theorist’s work takes aim at the status quo as they seek to
eliminate domination and create worlds that emphasize equality and democracy (Alvesson & Willmott 1996; Deetz 2001, 2005; Nord & Jermier 1992; Seeger 2004). Critical theorists also take a dissensus view of the world as they believe that through conflict new and better solutions can be generated (Alvesson & Deetz 1996).

Deetz’ research is also based on a critical interpretivist approach which he describes as, “critical interpretivist research has as a goal appropriately directed action as well as understanding” (Deetz 1982, p. 139). He adds that as people talk they clarify and change their own meaning and this leads to new conceptions and understandings. Nord and Jermier (1992) believe that the critical interpretivist approach is useful provided it does not become another tool of control, and provided that perpetual critique is involved. Kersten (1986) points out that what we consider good communication is actually based on unquestioning acceptance of the goals of others, usually the elites. He suggests that within the critical interpretivist approach communication is recognized as invested with meaning by people, constantly evolving, and requiring an examination of the different purposes and motives people have. This strategy may result in less domination and constraint and fits with Deetz view that, “communication is irreversible” (Deetz 1982, p. 135).

In developing his critical theory Deetz draws upon the work of Gadamar, i.e., Genuine Conversation (Deetz 1992; Deetz et al. 1997; Deetz & Simpson 2004), and Habermas, i.e., Ideal Speech Situation (Alvesson & Deetz 1996; Deetz 1992; Deetz 1998; Deetz & Brown 2004; Deetz et al. 1997; Deetz & Simpson 2004; Held 1980; Miller 1992), two areas of interest to critical theorists.

Gadamar’s Genuine Conversation focuses not on what each person says but on what the subject matter says to each, i.e., the focus of the conversation is not each other’s views, but what emerges as they create common meaning together (Deetz 1992). Deetz acknowledges that achieving Genuine Conversation is difficult and that Gadamar’s work lacked allowance for politics and Habermas seemed to take over the theory at this point (Deetz 1992).

Habermas goal is to develop a theory of society with practical intentions and to self-emancipate people from domination (Held 1980). This communicative action
perspective recognizes that distortions abound in the communication process due to, “common presumptions made by speaker and listener” (Deetz 2005, p. 168) and that the Ideal Speech Situation must be recovered. The four required conditions for this recovery are: equal opportunities to be involved, no preconceived notions of authority or privilege, rights and responsibilities must be negotiated through action, and that people need to be able to express their own interests, needs and feelings in their own way (Deetz 2005). Habermas wants to see decision making that is, “based on the strength of the good, well grounded argument provided in an open forum rather than authority, tradition, ideology or exclusion of participants” (Alvesson & Deetz 1996, p. 202).

Deetz believes that Habermas work is exemplary but weakened by its lack of recognition of the various forms of resistance people use to rebel against power (Deetz 2005). Held (1980) adds that consensus achieved by coercion is immoral. They both agree that distorted communication must be unmasked before the Ideal Speech Situation and Genuine Conversation are achieved. Deetz believes that this will be achieved through changes to our daily communication micro-practices, especially in the workplace (Deetz 1992).

3.5.3 Workplace Focus

Deetz’ main area of study is the workplace and notably workplace democracy, therefore much of his work has a management focus. He feels that organizations suffer from a management bias and that practices emphasize hierarchal domination through language and access to information and voice (Deetz 1992; Deetz 1995, 1999, 2003; Deetz & Brown 2004; Deetz et al. 2000).

He is not alone in this belief. Alvesson and Wilmott (1996), two other critical theorists working in the organizational communication field, stress that management is not neutral; they believe that ways must be found to give more of a voice to managers as people not just as managers. They also believe that greater voice must be given to others affected by management and point out that a critical theory of management seeks to challenge the legitimacy of oppressive practices (Alvesson & Wilmott 1996). Seeger (2004) encourages drawing on multiple stakeholder views to promote diversity and
genuine participation in organizations while Cheney (1995) points out that the irony of workplace democracy is that democracy seldom exists in the workplace.

As a critical theorist, Deetz seeks to create communicative contexts where power is suspended or held in check so that more creative and representative decisions can be made (Deetz 2005). He notes that most workplace democracy is focused on representation in decision making, e.g., creating new structures for different classes, genders and stakes to express their interests. He claims that this focus on representation should be replaced by taking a closer look at how these different groups are produced within a closed system in order to expose the conflict, especially the suppressed conflict, and enable all to be more responsive (Deetz 1992).

Critics of Deetz claim that he is anti-business or anti-profit and he is careful to clarify that he is not, but that he wants to broaden the workplace focus away from just financial considerations, and get others more involved in the decision making process (Deetz 1999; Deetz 2000). In order to do this he believes we need a reformed stakeholder conception of the workplace. Fundamental changes are needed and he would replace the old control-oriented model with a new multi-stakeholder model that includes collaboration, commitment to co-determination, commitment to coordinating conflicting interests, and acceptance of heterogeneity (Deetz 1992).

### 3.5.4 Current Situation

Deetz believes that the current situation regarding stakeholders in organizations is not working due to: liberalism, managerialism and distorted communications.

In liberalism, which is predominant in Western society, the individual is the principal focus and his or her rights trump over societal or collective rights (Johnston et al. 2000). As a result, everybody wants to be heard and nobody wants to listen (Zoller 2000). Deetz and Simpson clarify that the current paradigm regarding dialogue is a humanistic model that privileges the dominant paradigm of individualism, while their, “politically responsive constructionist theory of communication” focuses on other rather than self (Deetz & Simpson 2004, p.143).
Managerialism is another issue. Within this issue, management’s values are usually the predominant ones and stakeholder programs are directed at the manager’s objectives. Stakeholders, including employees, are still considered external; therefore, everything is still under the control of management. More attention on who makes decisions, how they are made and what and whose values are involved is needed (Deetz 2003; Deetz & Brown 2004; Deetz et al. 1997). Corporations need to be more responsive to social issues, including internal ones, but he warns that care must be taken to avoid replacing the status quo with another specific group’s agenda. Only a, “reformed conception of workplaces coupled with more adequate communication processes” will adequately address the issue (Deetz 2003, p. 607). He maintains that the problem is not a lack of morality in managers but the lack of other voices, debate and negotiation.

Distorted communications can also impact stakeholder involvement. Communications can be distorted in two ways, either: systematical distortion, in which there is strategic manipulation without overt awareness, as in the case of people unknowingly going along with those in power; or discursive disclosure, in which conflict is suppressed, as some groups are marginalized or denied rights, while other groups are privileged (Deetz 1992). Deetz also believes that the internet and email are responsible for distorted communication since no meaningful dialogue takes place through these media (Deetz & Brown 2004).

The DST attempts to account for the oversights in Gadamar and Habermas’ theories as well as the previously described weaknesses in current organizational systems. In a typically positive statement, Deetz, Cohen and Edley maintain that, “The dialogic model offers our best hope, a hope guided by a model for action” (Deetz et al. 1997, p. 223).
3.5.5 Attributes of the DST

Genuine Dialogue

The Oxford dictionary defines dialogue as, “conversation between two or more people” and “a discussion intended to explore a subject or to resolve a problem” (Soanes 2001). Genuine dialogue goes beyond this definition in a number of ways.

Genuine dialogue includes recognition of the political contexts and control struggles that underlie all situations. It is about giving up control at multiple levels and recognizing that the discussion, and not compliance, is the key (Deetz et al. 1997). Deetz clarifies that the problem is not the participants in the discussion, but the nature of the discussion (Deetz 2003). He adds that we need to make changes to our daily micro-practices to overcome these struggles (Deetz 1992, 2004; Deetz et al. 1997).

To participate in better discussions we need to shift from the liberal rights, humanist perspective, in which the right to speak is given highest priority, to a model in which all participants’ interests are heard (Deetz 1992). Participants in the dialogue have their stakes and points of view but they must be willing to give up control, e.g., by seeing their point of view as temporary and being open to movement to a new position (Deetz et al. 1997). If stakeholders work from this base they are open to change and genuine dialogue can occur. Putnam (1999) indicates that participants who engage in dialogue, “… suspend defensive exchange, share and learn from experiences, foster deeper inquiry, and resist synthesis or compromise” (Putnam 1999, p. 63). She goes on to note that genuine dialogue works to incorporate diverse voices as it balances individual autonomy with organizational constraints.

Zoller (2000) explains that dialogic communication is risky and that a major part of the process is education into the process itself and the importance of genuine dialogue. She points out that participants risk their positions in order to, “arrive at new understandings, and a commitment to keep the conversation going” (Zoller 2000, p. 193). When facilitating a stakeholder process she stresses to participants that they do not have to jump straight to a solution and that they need to recognize that solutions cannot be predetermined but must evolve from the process.
Zoller’s (2000, pp. 194-5) recipe of essential ingredients for community dialogue includes that they:

- are open, with broad-based participation, early and throughout the process,
- have a diverse coalition,
- empower people, especially those who are not mainstream power holders,
- develop relationships of trust and respect,
- face frustration, cynicism and hopelessness with commitment and momentum.

In the closing reflections to a forum on dialogue Deetz (Heath et al. 2006, pp.369-370) reiterates that while scholars differ in their views of dialogue, there is much in common regarding the ideal dialogic conditions:

At the minimum, we might expect reciprocity of opportunity for expression; some equality in expression skills; the setting aside of authority relations, organizational positions, and other external sources of power; the open investigation of member positions and “wants” to more freely ascertain their interests; open sharing of information and transparency of decision processes; and the opening of fact and knowledge claims to redeterminization based on contestation of claims and of advantaged modes of knowledge creation.

He also clarifies that these conditions are seldom met and that limits must be acknowledged or overcome (Heath et al. 2006).

Dialogic Communication Matrix

Dialogic communication suggests that meaning is always incomplete and partial, and the reason I talk with others is to better understand what I and they mean, hoping to find new and more satisfying ways of being together (Deetz 1995, pp. 97-98).

In *Transforming Communication, Transforming Business* Deetz (1995) presents a four by four matrix showing the difference between communication and information (Figure 3). On the horizontal axis he shows decision practices ranging from domination
and control to codetermination and coordination. This axis represents a continuum in which at one extreme decisions are made through control by those in power and at the other extreme decisions are made by cooperative means. On the vertical axis he shows political practices ranging from constitutive to expression processes. This axis represents the, “pragmatic force of messages” (Deetz 1995, p. 98) or what messages do for us. At the expression end messages are assumed to contain real information that is neutral and easily reproduced. At the constitutive end messages are actively created by the communicators, and are produced rather than reproduced.

A diagonal line is shown bisecting his quadrants. Above this line represents communication and information while below the line represents orientation only. He believes that the best communication practices reside above the diagonal line in the lower right quadrant as it contains a high level of codetermination and coordination and a high level of constitutive processes. Within this quadrant people are actively communicating as opposed to merely sharing information; in this area dialogic communication takes place. He recommends that in stakeholder situations we aim to operate in this area.

**Figure 3 Communication and Information Orientations**

![Figure 3 Communication and Information Orientations](Deetz 1995, p. 98).
Let us ground our studies in the world rather than in the literature. I think we should return to our communities to discuss problems and see the various ways a communication perspective can address them, to ask what kind of a world we want as well as what kind of world we have. I am glad we can talk to each other in a civil fashion, but I wished we talked better with others in the civic arena (Deetz 2000, p. 112).

The DST recognizes that communication is not value neutral and all organizations are political, not just economic sites (Deetz 1999). Deetz and Brown (2004) point out that structural changes are not the solution as these alone won’t open the debate if the underlying politics are not unmasked. Deetz also notes that recognizing stakeholders does not make an organization more political but merely recognizes that the politics already exist.

Deetz favours trading in the hierarchical or control model and replacing it with a participatory model. Within the hierarchical model senior managers manage, knowledge is an important asset for power, teaching moves downward, managers think and employees do and people at the top matter most. In a participatory model people self-manage, learning and knowledge are valued and shared in both directions, all people think about the same things from different perspectives and everyone’s rights, accountability and dignity are supported and honored (Deetz et al. 2000, p. 96). Deetz et al. believe that this participatory model is more enlightened and more suitable to stakeholder involvement.

In a participatory model the other voices are taken more seriously. He believes that we must allow for differing opinions and balance our freedom of speech with a more important democratic notion; that all opinions deserve to be heard. In allowing for heterogeneity we will give other voices, e.g., all stakeholders, the ability to be heard (Deetz 1997). He does caution that it is not enough just to increase the forums for stakeholder representation; we also need to increase the stakeholder voices and truly hear them (Deetz 2001). Deetz and Simpson clarify that we need to aim for, “less self-
expression and more self-destruction,” and be willing to give up one’s quest for control (Deetz & Simpson 2004, p. 143).

3.5.6 Elements of the DST

In order to be effective, a dialogic stakeholder theory must be practical enough to use in any stakeholder situation in any organization. Based on a review of work by Deetz and others, six practical components of the dialogic stakeholder theory have been identified. For the purposes of this section these components will be reviewed independently; however, it is recognized that to be effective in practice they are all connected and must all be considered. Genuine Dialogue, as described previously, is considered to be the glue holding them all together.


Forums

A variety of forums are typically used for stakeholder involvement. For example, open houses, town hall meetings, suggestion boxes, mail in and on line surveys and so on are all popular stakeholder forums.

Forums are often greeted with cynicism by people as they are products of the liberal democracy paradigm in which meaning is assumed to already exist and needs only to be adequately communicated. Stakeholders seem to readily catch on to the shallowness of this approach. Dalton (2005) mentions that existing forums tend to prevent stakeholders from engaging in dialogue and are usually biased toward the, “interested and well-informed citizens” (Dalton 2005, p. 1394).
Deetz and Simpson (2004) believe that just providing the forums is not enough. “Forums plus freedom does not equal positive productive participation” as the loudest, most vocal speakers can easily drown out the, “chorus of free voices” (Deetz & Brown 2004, p. 179). Providing increased levels of involvement does not necessarily mean better decisions, especially if the involvement continues to merely represent the status quo or the views of the power holders. Access to forums is also problematic as the forums do not always meet people where they are and as a result not all stakeholders are represented.

Deetz and associates recognize that a variety of forums are required; however, they also point out that a variety of methods within forums are needed to meet the needs of a variety of people (Deetz & Brown 2004). The focus should be on what happens in the forums, e.g., the genuine dialogue and full participation in decision making to provide all participants with an equal right to codetermination (Deetz et al. 1997). As Deetz, Cohen and Edley so eloquently remind us, “account for the different sizes of megaphones and don’t let the loudest drown out the others” (Deetz et al. 1997, p. 220). Differences should be optimized, modes of interaction that investigate and deconstruct experiences encouraged, and mutually satisfying decision making models used (Deetz & Brown 2004).

Equal access to forums must be provided. For example, babysitting and transportation may be required to reduce the barriers and assist some stakeholders in participating (Deetz & Brown 2004; Deetz et al. 1997). The days of the week and timing of the stakeholder forums may also need to be planned accordingly. Zoller feels that, “when we want meaningful interaction we have to meet people where they are at, not where we want them to be” (Zoller 2000, p. 206).

Deetz and others believe that there has been too much focus on forums to the detriment of other important aspects of stakeholder involvement. Just creating new forums, e.g., new strategies or new programs, is not enough as they will likely continue to foster the status quo (Deetz 1992); instead, a new lens for viewing stakeholder involvement is required. Viewing through this new lens does not necessarily involve developing brand new stakeholder programs but looking differently at the existing ones and finding ways to make them more relevant, accessible and open.
Information

Information is crucial to all communication endeavours and for stakeholders to fully participate they must have information to be able to understand and analyze their own interests.

Problems associated with information include the following. Information can be a major tool of control and easily manipulated to serve the purposes of a certain group, usually the group in power, thereby perpetuating the status quo (Deetz 2004). Inadequate, complex or distorted information may keep stakeholders from fully understanding and therefore fully participating. Also, stakeholders may be lacking information on the process itself. Finally, the information may be provided too late to be useful to stakeholders.

Within the DST is the recognition that to ensure full participation, stakeholders require timely, adequate, understandable and undistorted information on the topic (Deetz 2004; Deetz & Simpson 2004). They also require enough information on the process or forums to knowingly participate (Zoller 2000). Deetz and Brown (2004) add that these points are particularly relevant for the environmental field when including environmental groups early on in the process can generate creative and more economically viable solutions.

Information is a tool of power and the first step into addressing this inequality is to ask some tough questions such as, “Who is this information best serving?” Whose language is this?” and “Are all stakeholders represented or just some?” (Deetz et al. 1997).

Every effort should be made to ensure that information is not skewed or biased (Deetz 1999). The Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc. provides a positive example as they encourage deliberate dialogue in public involvement, and they try to ensure that their information is factual and objective, and that it describes different legitimate perspectives. To achieve this they have the information reviewed by external experts, and host a workshop specifically geared to the review of the information before it is made available for the public (Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc. 2005). They believe
that it is important to include a *working through* stage in which people absorb and discuss the information before a resolution is reached.

**Control**

For the purposes of this literature review, control is described as one element in the DST when in fact it is the overarching problem that has led to the need for a DST. This issue derives from the fact that generally people who are in control want to maintain this control to the exclusion of others. Politics are pervasive and power struggles common in our various worlds.

Deetz states that the fundamental issue in the move to stakeholder participation is, “… control and how different groups are represented” (Deetz 1995, p. 4). He asks (Deetz 1999, p. 319), “If power is not equally distributed among various stakeholders, and the voices of these groups are not heard, will the situated responses arrived at through this discourse reflect the interests of anyone other than those currently in powerful positions?”

Control is an insidious issue since managers and others in charge of stakeholder programs are usually selected for their positions due to certain skills and experiences within the field; and their job descriptions describe them as being in charge. While the authoritative management style is less predominant today, it still exists to some extent as managers seek to retain the control they are used to having (Chase 2001). The result is a lack of empowerment on the part of some of the stakeholders. Deetz believes that it is generally not the individual managers at fault but the control systems that are in place in organizations (Deetz 2001). He believes that organizations should be re-organized in such a manner to become, “a site of stakeholder coordination rather than a site of control” (Deetz 2001).

Deetz has pointed out that many stakeholder programs, especially employee participation programs, merely suppress conflicts under a cloak of control. Instead of a democratic process they use the illusion of participation to conceal control and this limits discussion, decision making and democracy (Deetz 1997). He and Simpson stress that the liberal humanist-centred view of dialogue only perpetuates control, “The stage is set for control of self and control of others” (Deetz & Simpson 2004, p. 142).
He believes that managers have trouble distinguishing between leading the organization and controlling it, and that such a control-based system does not let all perspectives be known (Deetz et al. 1997). Within the DST he suggests that it is necessary to distinguish between leading and controlling as, “Open discussion rather than the expectation of compliance is key to successful change and empowerment” (Deetz et al. 2000, p. 102).

The answer to control by corporations and others is a, “… renewed public discussion” (Deetz 1992, p. 158) as we seek to encourage equal participation through communication.

**Conflict and Negotiation**

…the ultimate point is not in arguing it out to get it right, but to reclaim the suppressed tensions and conflicts among the many contemporary stakeholders to negotiate a life together based in appreciation of difference and responsive decision making (Deetz 2001).

Deetz believes that conflict and differences are often suppressed in our attempt to be conciliatory in stakeholder processes, and as a result certain forms of reasoning and interests become privileged. Without conflict we have hegemony and this is a sure sign that only the views of the privileged are being represented (Deetz 2004). He also believes that consensus without dissensus is stifling and maladaptive (Deetz 2001).

In the DST Deetz proposes an *age of negotiation* as a means to help us recover the conflicts of our modern world by first bringing them to the forefront (Deetz 1997). He favours allowing conflict as he believes that this action will result in more creative solutions, greater balance and increased productivity (Deetz 1992). Deetz and Simpson (2004) want to see renewed opportunity for contestation as they believe that it is only through conflict that difference can be explored and negotiated.

Deetz prefers negotiation over advocacy since negotiation focuses on a commitment to common goals rather than the expression of self-interest; and he and his associates feel that there should be less asserting of one’s opinions and more attention on the *otherness* around them (Deetz 1997; Deetz & Simpson 2004). Deetz, Cohen and
Edley (1997) recognize that risk is involved in this focus on the other and on many goals, not just the ones desired by individual stakeholders. In an address to the International Communication Association Deetz (1997, p. 123) stated to the group, “…that with careful attention to communication we can learn to live happily in a world filled with continuous fundamental negotiations, and that people in such a world can make much more satisfying decisions together.”

Conflict must be reclaimed and allowed to emerge in order to avoid suppression of alternative concepts and possibilities. We do not overcome fears by controlling and holding onto traditions but by making edifying decisions together (Deetz et al. 1997). According to Deetz and Brown our goal should be to create groups with differences; e.g., in race, gender, and opinion; and use those differences to foster creativity (Deetz & Brown 2004).

Deetz does not provide much in the way of a recipe book for reclaiming conflict; however, he does refer people to the conflict negotiation literature and suggests that these techniques should be used in regular stakeholder situations and not just in the more drastic conflict resolution situations (Deetz et al. 1997). In Managing Interpersonal Communication, Deetz and Stevenson (1986) point out that the term management of conflict is a better one than conflict resolution as it places the focus on the action, not the solution.

Voice and Consent

The lack of voice even when appropriate forums results from constrained decisional contexts, inadequate or distorted information, socialization and colonization activities and the solicitation of consent where stakeholders choose to suppress their own needs and internal value conflicts (Deetz & Brown 2004, p. 173).

There are many reasons voices are unheard. Deetz and Brown list them as: constrained decisional contexts, inadequate or distorted information, socialization and colonization activities and the solicitation of consent where stakeholders choose, “to suppress their own needs and internal value conflicts” (Deetz & Brown 2004, p. 173).
Lack of voice can also result from the control systems of an organization, not just the bureaucracy (Deetz 2001).

Using voice as a way to study communications provides an alternative perspective. It focuses on, “…who can speak, when and in what way” (Putnam 1998, p. 148). Putnam (1999) describes the four ways voice can be perceived as distorted: lack of ability to represent one owns interests, dominated by the prevailing group, ignored due to the marginalization of the group, e.g., due to gender, race or ethnicity, and lastly, limited in access to opportunities to truly be heard.

Consent is a key reason for lack of voice. In consent, participants do not know their own interests or knowingly give them up in favour of the dominant interests. This silencing of voices is insidious as the participants are usually not aware that they have taken on the interest of the dominant group. Putnam (1998; 1999) agrees that voice is distorted due to consent and that powerful groups use communication for organizational control, resulting in hegemonic situations, unlikely to change. Deetz warns us that where there is consent there are suppressed conflicts and this hinders true negotiation.

Within a higher moral theory such as the DST the marginalized groups need to find a space to participate and to have their voices heard (Deetz et al. 1997). Voice must be increased at the expense of systematically distorted communications (Deetz et al. 1997) and we must be aware of the deadening force of consent (Deetz 1995). Deetz believes that new conceptions of interaction are needed to improve collaborative decision making (Deetz 2001) and the capacity for differences must be present (Deetz & Brown 2004). Increasing voice requires a reconstruction of the actors and the structures, as well as providing information that is not skewed (Deetz 1999).

Deetz and Simpson (1999; 2004) note that both forum and voice need to be considered; since many stakeholder programs have increased numbers and types of forums but this has not necessarily improved the stakeholder dialogue and involvement if the programs have not allowed for increased voice. Most forums take existing thoughts and ideas as given; instead we should explore idea formation, realizing that the thoughts originated somewhere and have been taken on by the person as their own although they may belong to the dominant group (Deetz & Brown 2004).
The people with the loudest megaphones should not be allowed to drown out meaningful discussion as in a truly participatory process all voices need to be heard, regardless of megaphone size (Deetz & Brown 2004).

Collaboration and Participation

Collaboration focuses on reaching a common understanding and mutual commitment to a decision by focusing on the ends to be achieved rather than the preferred means of achieving. It requires a different attitude going into meetings and a different form of interaction in meetings (Deetz & Brown 2004, p. 185).

Deetz favours a collaborative approach which he and Brown describe as being different from an adversarial approach in a number of ways as shown on Table 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADVERSARIAL COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>COLLABORATIVE COMMUNICATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members are adversaries.</td>
<td>Members are joint problem solvers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking comes from a position or preferred means of accomplishment.</td>
<td>Speaking comes from an outcome wishing to be accomplished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion becomes polarized around positions.</td>
<td>Dialogue focuses on complex underlying interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion narrows options.</td>
<td>Dialogue broadens field of options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facts are used to support positions.</td>
<td>Joint search is used to discover the facts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks winning arguments.</td>
<td>Seeks workable options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of the problem is accomplished before meeting.</td>
<td>Definition of the problem is a joint achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final responsibility for the decision rests with others.</td>
<td>Final responsibility for the decision rests with the group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source- (Deetz & Brown 2004, p. 186).
Deetz and associates recommend a participatory, not representative, democracy. Zoller (2000) notes that it is perilous to let some people speak on behalf of the community as a whole since if they are speaking on behalf of their group they already have a specific point of view and likely have solutions in mind. In dialogic communication they should not enter the dialogue with a fixed position but be open to new possibilities. She advocates instead for broad-based participation in community dialogue. In a study of natural resource managers and stakeholder involvement, Chase (2001) also stresses the need for participatory democracy to replace representative democracy.

We live in an age of participation and we readily seem to involve people in decision making; however, Deetz and other critical theorists suggest that this participation is often still dominated by someone else’s objectives, control and influence. It will not be true dialogue until stakeholders are considered a legitimate part of an organization, and there is renewed public discussion and equal participation throughout the stakeholder process (Deetz 1992; Deetz 2001; Deetz & Brown 2004).

The question Deetz asks and tries to answer is, “How can we engage in communications that enables equal participation in our collective formation” (Deetz 1992)? One of his answers is:

The change is from seeing what the individual’s point of view is and how it is presented, to determining whether the interaction includes all relevant positions and interests. Interaction cannot be effective in terms of social efficiency without representing the various interests, whether intentionally represented by the participants or not (Deetz 1992, p. 165).

Deetz claims that the biggest problem isn’t that we don’t know what to do; the problem is that we haven’t wanted it enough. We are afraid to let go of our control and we are risk aversive. We need to get over these aversions and move on. Deetz indicates that we have good models to use in business and that we have the capacity to develop even better ones.
In his conclusion to *Corporate Governance, Communication, and Getting Social Values into the Decisional Chain*, he sums up his theory:

Clearly, a reformed stakeholder conception of workplaces can enhance the application of critical communication theory to the workplace for the sake of greater responsibility and more effective production. Such a conception can (a) provide a unified way of understanding the complex processes of organizational life, (b) direct the evaluation of existing organizational forms and activities, and (c) provide guidance for the education of members and redesign of organizational structures and practices.

Corporate social responsibility—responsiveness to the needs of the wider society—can be made possible by the inclusion of multiple social values into the decisional chain and the development of communication processes that use the situations of conflict and difference to generate creative win-win responses (Deetz 2003, p. 610).

### 3.5.7 Other Similar Theories

Through the research process other theories with similarities to the DST were discovered and they warrant further exploration for the world of SPAs, especially if they already include an environmental inclination. Five of these theories will be briefly explained.

A new term *public ecology* has been proposed within the conservation biology field as an alternative that bridges the gap between science and policy. In this new view human values, context and effective communication are paramount (Robertson & Hull 2001).

In *Environmental Democracy*, (Mason 1999) the author presents his case for increased emphasis on both democracy and the environment as he believes that this combined focus will result in a more involved citizenry and a better environment for all. Mason defines environmental democracy as, “a participatory and ecologically rational form of collective decision-making; it prioritizes judgments based on long-term generalizable interest, facilitated by communicative political procedures and a radicalization of existing liberal rights” (Mason 1999, p. 1). Mason hopes that by being
more involved in the democratic options offered to us that we will become more aware of the impacts we are having on the environment.

As described previously, the view of many modern issues as *wicked* (Rittel & Webber 1973) provides a way to analyze the difficult situations SPAs find themselves in; and *post-normal science* (Ravetz 1999, 2002, 2004) presents a new way to view science as more inclusive and open to participation by all. The preceding three views have similarities to the DST as all three recognize the need to see the modern situation as complex and requiring more involvement by its citizens.

Dalton (2005) created a framework for involving stakeholders in marine protected area management. Her *Successful Participatory Process* includes five elements: active stakeholder involvement, complete information exchange, fair decision making, efficient administration and positive participant interactions (Dalton 2005, p. 1395). Most of these elements mesh with the tenets of the DST.

### 3.5.8 Limitations to the DST

As a critical theorist Deetz presents a view which may be considered radical by scholars and others. For example, one of his clients objected to his ideas and complained that, “they seemed Marxist to him” (Deetz 2000, p. 106). Another potential weakness in the DST was pointed out by Zoller (2000) who believed that it seemed too focused on the facilitator of the model while the participants were not given enough consideration.

Deetz admits that it will not be easy to implement his stakeholder theory model. He agrees that incorporating other stakeholder voices will be challenging and that new concepts of governance and decision making will be required. He says, “Any expanded inclusion of stakeholder groups and the social values they represent involves cost” (Deetz 2003, p. 609).

Other limitations to Deetz model include its predominant focus on the business world as he refers mainly to corporations. He barely touches on government, non-government, and community groups; therefore, the applicability of his theory to these other agencies must be considered carefully. In *Democracy In an Age of Corporate Colonization*, he does relate the relevance of his work to government, “the new
managerial logic that dominates corporations is actively present in government as well” (Deetz 1992, p. 349). For this thesis, non–corporate examples of the theory in practice were sought out and reviewed, e.g., Zoller, Simpson, Deetz, and Putnam (Deetz 2000; Putnam 1999; Simpson 2005; Zoller 2000).

His work is theoretical, and while it provides many ideas for where to go with stakeholder theory, it provides little in the way of a road map for how to get there. There has been some transference of the DST to the real world, e.g., McPherson and Deetz (2005) report on a joint enterprise they undertook to combine theory and practice in a high technology change initiative. They conclude the article with a positive thought, “In the best collaborative research projects, organizational members will learn new approaches to workplace issues through the communication theories we present, and we will learn how the demands of everyday work life affect the practice of those theories” (McPherson & Deetz 2005, p. 96). In addition, in the conclusion to her edited book Engaging Communication, Transforming Organizations, Scholarship of Engagement in Action, Simpson (2005) confirms that there are many examples to look to in terms of the transference of communication theory to action.

Lastly, Deetz seems to be proposing a model that is not just organization-based, but is societal-based. This may present a model that is so overwhelming that it is unmanageable within the sphere of influence of organizations, corporate or otherwise. It may be calling for radical societal changes that people are not willing or able to enact.

### 3.5.9 Conclusion

In terms of the three key issues identified within the stakeholder theory discourse Deetz and the DST would likely weigh in as follows: stakeholders should be involved because they have the intrinsic or Kantian right to be respected and to have a voice, stakeholders should be defined as broadly as possible to ensure all voices are heard within the specific context under discussion, and lastly, stakeholders should be heard equally. He would also agree that management should give up control and stakeholder programs should be offered in an open, truly participatory manner with negotiation and communication as necessary elements.
Transferring this new model to practice in the real world is the true test, and the research relating his theory to the world of management via empirical studies has been instructive. In the end it is not the empirical evidence that matters, for as Deetz (1995) points out, we have all the models and all the information we need; all we really need now is the willpower to change. He asks (Deetz 1995, p. 173), “If not us, then who?” This is a good question for the normative stakeholder scholars to address and seems like an excellent starting point in motivating the move toward a new way of doing business.

Deetz recognizes that there are many existing ‘how to’ stakeholder models and programs and that with some tweaking they can fulfill the dialogic communication criteria; the important thing is wanting to make the changes and getting to it, despite the risks. All these models and prescriptive formula have merit for techniques and Deetz would not dismiss them; instead, I believe he would advise people to use the techniques but look more deeply at the underlying history and political atmospheres and seek to uncover the hegemony and control, replacing them through attention to information, forums, conflict, negotiation, voice, consent, collaboration, and participation.

Deetz clarifies that there is no one answer and that solutions exist everywhere. He agrees with many disgruntled scholars and practitioners that the talk has been greater than implementation. He feels that the reason solutions are eluding us is that we continue to use the same system for the solution that has caused the problem, e.g., just instituting a new participation program or a new strategy means that we haven’t changed the underlying problems and all that has changed is the type of our frustration. His answer is to engage in a micro practice of democracy inside ourselves and in everyday living and working. He believes that only small choices and small changes made everyday will make a difference in the end (Deetz 1992).

Conservation has become more participatory as evidenced by the rise in stakeholder involvement in conservation issues. Participatory approaches are destined to continue to dominate and flourish as Ludwig, quoted in Berkes, stated, “… the age of management is over” (Berkes 2004, p. 628). It seems that Deetz would concur with this notion and the DST may provide the bridge to help SPA management deal with this new reality.
Chapter Four: Interview Results and Analysis

4.1 Introduction

The purpose of the phone interviews was to provide the context of the small exurban protected area, describe how staff at these areas currently works with stakeholders, and seek their input on three ways of working with stakeholders according to the DST. The ‘Final Interview Questions’ are in Appendix G.

The interview was divided into three sections. In Section A the focus was on the agency’s policies and the interviewee’s position, in Section B the discussion zeroed in on issues and impacts felt by the SPA as a result of surrounding land uses, and in Section C the focus shifted to stakeholder involvement and their opinions on the relevance of the three stakeholder statements.

The results from each section will now be detailed. Double quotes portray the actual words used by the participants. As per the coding and analysis description in the Methods chapter, analysis is inherent in each set of results, since theme and statement creation involved researcher interpretation. In the analysis sections deeper examination is involved as I combined EBM and the DST theory.

4.2 Interview Section A

4.2.1 Agencies and Positions

I interviewed 11 people who represented only nine protected areas since two people from the same site were interviewed simultaneously, and one interviewee was recently retired, and therefore did not represent an agency. Of the nine agencies represented six were Canadian and three were American.

Sites were pre-selected specifically to represent a variety of agencies in order to obtain a diversity of perspectives and as a result, the varied agencies represented by the interviewees included: one national park, three regional authorities, two provincial parks, two district/county parks departments, and one county parks department/non governmental organization in partnership. Lastly, the independent interviewee did not
represent any agency, although most of his examples related to his recently vacated position in a national park.

Four of the 11 respondents were park managers or assistant managers who described their positions as involving responsibility for all facets of park management. Five were planners who dealt with park planning issues rather than park management per se. One respondent was a land steward responsible for the day-to-day operations of the protected area including habitat management, endangered species surveys and maintenance. Finally, the independent respondent had recently retired from a position as a park’s ecosystem manager.

When asked to describe their positions none of the respondents mentioned being responsible for ecosystem management or anything specifically related to landscape issues. An exception to this may have been the independent interviewee, i.e., if he had still been in his recently vacated position he would likely have described it as including ecosystem management since his title was Ecosystem Manager.

Two of the 11 respondents were female; one a manager and one a planner. For the purposes of this thesis, gender-neutral descriptions have been used as much as possible and when necessary the male gender was utilized to reduce unnecessary emphasis on the two female respondents.

Analysis

The interviewees consisted of a small sample of SPA staff and therefore generalization to the broad field of SPAs must be undertaken cautiously. They also represented mainly government agencies and transference to non–profit organizations may be limited.

Considering the importance of EBM to SPAs and the focus of this thesis, it was surprising that when asked to describe their positions none of the respondents mentioned that their job entailed involvement in broader landscape issues. This may be explained by a general tendency in protected area management to overemphasize the internal focus of EBM, while looking outward to lands beyond the protected area boundary has been downplayed, likely due to the political difficulties associated with taking such a view. It
may fall to enlightened SPA staff members to elevate consideration for the external environment within their agency.

4.2.2 Ecosystem Management

In the next interview question respondents were asked to talk about their agency’s ecosystem management mandate, policy or plan. Four key points emerged from the responses to this question.

Ecosystem Management Policy

According to the respondents seven of the nine agencies had some kind of ecosystem management policy, although only one agency seemed to use the actual term ecosystem management. In two cases when the term ecosystem management was not used the interviewees made a direct connection between the terms their agency used and the term ecosystem management. One respondent mentioned that he doubted if anyone in his agency would even know what the term ecosystem management meant!

In seven of the nine cases, regardless of the exact term used, the ecosystem management policy was located at a higher level in the agency and designed to provide direction to all sites within their jurisdiction. It was therefore not specific to the protected area involved. At one site, the ecosystem management policy was designated at a landscape level, since it was created by an organization with a landscape scale mandate.

Since the policies were not collected and reviewed it is unclear how much emphasis is placed on the landscape beyond the boundaries of the protected area versus how much of the EBM policy is actually related to internal management issues.

Landscape Scale Initiatives

Three of the surveyed sites were managed by regional scale agencies whose focus included the broader landscape, not just the protected areas within the region. These sites were involved in landscape scale initiatives by virtue of their agency’s mandate.
All the remaining sites were managed by specific government agencies responsible for managing distinct protected areas, not regions. These separate and stand alone protected areas seemed to work towards ecosystem management through involvement in regional initiatives and five of the sites described being involved in such initiatives. Another agency or a consortium operated these multi stakeholder initiatives with the SPA taking part as just one of many stakeholders. These broader initiatives seem critical to SPAs as they provide means for the area to be involved in the landscape and to forward their concerns regarding the external park environment. One interviewee pointed out that the broader initiative ensured that the protected areas were managed in a consistent way and the initiative allowed for both development of land and conservation. Another respondent noted that these initiatives provided a much-needed source of funding for the participating agencies.

Involvement in this larger group means that the protected area is not in control and as described by one respondent, does not “wield the hammer”. In return for this trade-off the agency establishes trust and builds credibility. For example, at Fish Creek Provincial Park they used to have to invite themselves to participate in various landscape scale initiatives and now they are invited to many, and in some cases they are asked to lead.

In working together, the agencies present a united front, are seen as making good use of resources, can plan for different recreational uses at different sites and are often eligible for funding. For example, as members of the Balcones Canyonland Preserve, a multi-agency conservation effort, Wild Basin Preserve can apply for grants for endangered species studies and other projects. At Long Sault Conservation Area regional planning allows them to direct some recreational uses away from their site to another more suitable site nearby.

The approaches taken by SPA staff to be involved in landscape initiatives ranged from passive to active. Passive approaches included waiting for someone to ask them to be involved, e.g., initially Fish Creek waited to be invited onto landscape scale committees, while active approaches consisted of taking the initiative to start the project, e.g., Stony Swamp staff initiated a regional deer management committee.
Staff roles varied from passive to active in terms of their involvement in external issues. As an example of passive involvement, Kanaka Creek will “express concern” with proposed developments, while Stony Swamp will comment on plans generated by others. Likewise in Fish Creek they deal with each proposed plan individually as it is presented.

At a more active level, Stony Swamp can reject proposals and request Environmental Assessments on proposed developments. They also chair meetings and facilitate processes on behalf of the landscape initiative. It seemed to be easier for the three agencies run by regional groups to participate in landscape level initiatives since their mandate was broad enough to allow for this kind of involvement.

A variety of strategies was used when dealing with other stakeholders on landscape initiatives. At Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area a staff member used his contacts with the local council to ensure a proposed plan for the reintroduction of big horn sheep was presented for their discussion. At Kanaka Creek they believe that educating and informing people about watershed issues is a major responsibility of the park and will support, but not lead, education workshops. Also at Kanaka Creek research is undertaken and made available on a watershed basis. This information is outside the scope of the Kanaka Creek Park yet is provided to assist decision makers at the regional scale. At Point Pelee National Park they make available financial and technical support for local initiatives aimed at providing landowners with native plants and expertise for natural landscaping.

Site Specific Management Planning

Five of the protected area staff interviewed mentioned that they had generated specific management plans recently and stakeholder input was sought via various forums throughout this planning process. As a result of including stakeholder comments and concerns, these planning document were given strong weighting by the respondents who, unsolicited by the interviewer, mentioned that just having something on paper helped them when dealing with stakeholders on ecosystem issues as the management plans provided them with validation for their management actions.
Multiple Mandates

Surveyed protected areas were selected to ensure that they had primarily a natural environment focus as opposed to recreation-oriented parks; therefore, it is not surprising that their key mandate was environmental protection. The five most commonly mentioned mandates were:

- protection (n=8),
- recreation (n=7),
- heritage appreciation and education (n=7),
- opportunities for discovery (n=2),
- tourism (n=2).

Other mandates mentioned once each included: social benefits, providing open space, development of land, research and community participation.

While protection was their key mandate each protected area seemed to have a variety of mandates, and some of the respondents felt this diluted their ecological mandate. For example, one respondent commented that although protection of the natural environment was listed as being paramount at their site they also had to provide trails and recreational opportunities and that these were often in conflict with their protection mandate.

Three of the 11 respondents noted how much vision had played a part in the establishment of the SPA. The interviewee from Wild Basin described with pride their own group of seven, ie seven women who were responsible for the lands being purchased for the preserve. Other interviewees commented on how lucky the people were to have the protected area set aside and how newcomers to the area were lucky to have it to use. The SPA as a natural amenity is often what draws people in to an area, noted one respondent.

The name of a protected area is important as it helps realize the principal mandate. For instance, the Spur Cross representative extolled the benefits of being a Conservation Area, rather than a park, since as a Conservation Area they have a more
environmentally friendly vision and mission and are able to justify their actions accordingly. Likewise, at Wild Basin Nature Preserve the respondent indicated that the staff appreciates the name Preserve, since it allows them more latitude to place the environmental mandate first.

Analysis

Key elements of ecosystem management seem to be recognized at the agency level even if the term is not used. While it is encouraging to hear that many SPAs have EBM policies, it is unclear how protected area specific they are and how broadly they look at the landscape.

An assessment of 12 EBM themes, based on Grumbine and others, was undertaken to determine the extent the interviewees referenced EBM themes. Table 7 shows the results, which indicate that the biophysical themes of hierarchical context and ecological boundaries, along with the social themes of interagency cooperation, humans embedded in nature, and communication, all received full representation and were therefore important to the interviewees, within the context of the discussion. Recognition of the role of values and education also ranked highly, receiving 90% and 80% response rates respectively. An analysis of this nature was undertaken with caution as the lack of attention to an EBM theme does not indicate that it is not important to the agency and 100% attention to a theme does not represent reality, e.g., the agency may support using ecological boundaries but not be able to use them in actuality.

Adaptive management concepts were not presented at all and monitoring and data collection were only mentioned by some of the respondents. This is likely due to the fact that the main purpose of the interviews was to discuss the context of the protected area in the landscape and their work with stakeholders, and not to discuss internal management issues.

The lack of clarity regarding the protected area’s role beyond their own boundaries is a common problem. Curthoys Brown reported that 38% of the SPAs she surveyed lacked regional system plans (1995, p. 69). When protected areas do get
involved in the broader landscape, they do so reluctantly. For example, in the Calgary Herald newspaper on August 30, 2003 the Waterton Lakes National Park Superintendent cautiously talked about issues taking place outside the park boundary, noting that the agency had only recently started to get involved in such issues. He cautions that what happens around them is out of their control and that all the neighbouring jurisdictions have their own priorities and that, “sometimes the decisions we make aren’t popular with each other” (Semmens 2003, p. OS3).

The interviewees recognized the need for landscape scale initiatives. This need is acknowledged in the conservation literature, e.g., Knight and Clark (1998) encourage cooperation across boundaries, including collaborative interactions between citizens, businesses, public officials, and land management agencies. They stress the need for, “inclusive, problem-oriented decision processes on cross-border issues” (Knight & Clark 1998, p.181).

Park specific management plans are common. Curthoys Brown (1995, p. 68) noted that 81% of the SPAs she surveyed had written management plans. One of the interviewees noted how powerful something is once it is written down- as if writing it down gives it life. While these park specific management plans are a valuable management tool, they may be put to even better use by including the requirement to be involved in landscape–scale initiatives.

Multiple mandates seem to be cause for concern to many of the interview respondents. Curthoys Brown (1995) reported that SPAs typically fulfill a wide range of management objectives and that a clear protection mandate was essential for success at SPAs. The vision for the future of the SPA is an important guide to management and the required management plans could be employed to confirm a vision and commitment to the primary mandate of protection.
Table 7 EBM Themes Included in Interview Texts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EBM THEMES (AS IDENTIFIED BY GRUMBINE AND OTHERS)</th>
<th># OF INTERVIEWEES REFERRING TO THE THEME</th>
<th>ANALYSIS</th>
<th>RELEVANT QUOTES</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>1. Hierarchical context</strong>&lt;br&gt;e.g., systems view, long term approaches.</td>
<td>100% (10/10)</td>
<td>Strongly represented by interviewees.</td>
<td>“We’ve got to get our whole management of ecosystems to the point that they are as important as everything else in life.”&lt;br&gt;“We are one participant in the watershed planning.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>2. Ecological boundaries</strong>&lt;br&gt;e.g., buffers and wildlife corridors, watershed approach.</td>
<td>100% (10/10)</td>
<td>Strongly represented by interviewees.</td>
<td>“We have to get them to recognize that actually they have to give us some buffer.”&lt;br&gt;“Our ultimate goal…is to reduce fragmentation.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>3. Ecological integrity</strong>&lt;br&gt;e.g., prioritizing to long term health, including restoration.</td>
<td>70% (7/10)</td>
<td>Somewhat represented by interviewees.</td>
<td>“[We are an] ecosystem that is under stress.”&lt;br&gt;“We focus on green zones or specific areas of interest [outside the protected area].”&lt;br&gt;“We don’t do any active management.”</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>4. Data collection</strong>&lt;br&gt;e.g., ongoing collection of data.</td>
<td>70% (7/10)</td>
<td>Somewhat important to the interviewees.</td>
<td>“Now we are going in better armed…we have the whole information thing.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>5. Monitoring</strong>&lt;br&gt;e.g., ongoing collection of data.</td>
<td>30% (3/10)</td>
<td>Low importance to the interviewees.</td>
<td>“We could never generate enough money to do the proper long term ecological studies.”</td>
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<td>EBM THEMES (AS IDENTIFIED BY GRUMBINE AND OTHERS)</td>
<td># OF INTERVIEWEES REFERRING TO THE THEME</td>
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<td>6. Adaptive management</td>
<td>0% (0/10)</td>
<td>None presented by interviewees.</td>
<td>None presented by interviewees.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Interagency cooperation e.g., agencies working together.</td>
<td>100% (10/10)</td>
<td>Strongly presented by interviewees since this was one of the key topics of the interviews.</td>
<td>“We feel uncomfortable initiating that [i.e., external initiatives].” “I think we’ve come to a really good compromise, we’re both meeting our goals.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Organizational change e.g., re-organizing along ecosystem management themes.</td>
<td>30% (3/10)</td>
<td>Low importance. The three comments associated with this theme were not suggesting that the organizational change had taken place, but that some kind of change was necessary.</td>
<td>“It’s going to take some real institutional reform.” “We are waiting on senior management [for a project approval].” “That’s driven by politics, you open your big mouth and then where are you?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Humans embedded in nature e.g., recognizing that humans are part of the ecosystem, working with stakeholders.</td>
<td>100% (10/10)</td>
<td>Strongly represented by interviewees since this was one of the key topics of the interviews.</td>
<td>“We have to work with all stakeholders to create a plan that does that [maintaining escape corridors].” “We’ve made some significant gains [in paying attention to the community, communications, and stakeholders].” “It all boils down to relationships, you know.”</td>
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<td>EBM THEMES (AS IDENTIFIED BY GRUMBINE AND OTHERS)</td>
<td># OF INTERVIEWEES REFERRING TO THE THEME</td>
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| **10. Values**  
e.g., recognizing that values will always play a dominant role in ecosystem management. | 90% (9/10) | Strongly represented by interviewees since this was one of the key topics of the interviews. | “People around us are extremely wealthy and just don’t care about any of this.”  
“They complain about some of the natural amenities.”  
“They feel it is their right to use these natural areas as they wish.”  
“We could not attract people we felt should care.”  
“If we are talking about SPAs… we’re going to end up talking about private land use rights.” |
| **11. Education**  
e.g., programs or information provided to educate people about the protected area or conservation in general. | 80% (8/10) | Strongly represented by interviewees, indicating that this is considered an important element of EBM at SPAs. | “We cannot be perceived as being the leader… but…we can be perceived as the educators.”  
“We’ve got to talk about the future sometimes…it changes their perceptions.”  
“Education is the answer to everything.”  
“We’ve created a whole culture of disconnect from the environment…we need to reconnect people.” |
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<tr>
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| 12. Communication  e.g., sharing information, seeking opportunities to communicate with stakeholders, both formal and informal. | 100% (10/10) | Strongly represented by half the respondents and indirectly represented by the other half, through references to working with stakeholders in themes 7, 9, and 10. | “Results have to get published…so not everybody is reinventing the wheel at the same time.”  
“We’ve gone to their group… just to talk.”  
“Making an effort to go to their meetings and making you available.”  
“We have to have intelligence, commitment and an ability to communicate.” |
4.2.3 Stakeholders

When interviewees were asked to describe their agency’s mandate related to working with stakeholders only five of the nine sites surveyed indicated that they had an official stakeholder policy. Those sites without an official policy noted that their agency still had an inclination to work with stakeholders, despite the lack of a policy. In one case the agency did not have a stakeholder policy *per se* but had a mandate to “offer inclusive forms of government”. Another agency indicated that they did not have a stakeholder policy but used a “community participation model” for working with their stakeholders.

Typical stakeholder groups that SPAs work with as identified by the interviewees include:

- adjacent landowners, i.e., people living right on the border of the area,
- local landowners, e.g., nearby farmers and homeowners,
- community residents, e.g., from nearby towns or urban centres,
- park users,
- planners,
- the general public,
- local regulatory bodies, i.e., local government,
- utility and service agencies, e.g., highways and utility providers,
- state or provincial government agencies, e.g., Fish and Wildlife, Public Lands, Forest Services,
- not for profit groups, e.g., naturalist clubs, Park Friends groups,
- staff and ex staff,
- volunteers and ex volunteers,
- First Nations,
private companies, e.g., aggregate extraction companies.

Nine of the respondents indicated that formal stakeholder involvement was planned for and executed mainly for the completion of the specific park management plan. Beyond the official management planning process stakeholder were engaged on an issue by issue basis. This generally involved a one on one situation between the park and an individual; for example, the park would be in touch with one of the adjacent landowners regarding an infraction or in touch with a group such as a trail association regarding the route of the trail through the park. It is not clear whether this issue by issue stakeholder involvement is covered in the various stakeholder policies, as this was not discussed nor investigated.

Working with stakeholders can “bog you down” and is “tough” states one of the respondents. The greatest barrier to working with stakeholders seemed to be a lack of resources including staff, funding and time. This barrier forces protected areas to prioritize and in one case, a small exurban protected area was lowered in priority, in order to allow the agency to focus its limited resources on other more viable areas. Time is also “wasted” over a long process when representative’s change and the new ones need to be bought up to speed. One respondent mentioned that there is a need for constant education; something he felt was draining on park resources.

In some instances ongoing communication with stakeholders was maintained through an advisory committee or a Park Friends group. For example, at Point Pelee National Park an advisory group composed of individuals meets regularly and at Fish Creek Provincial Park the Park Friends group provides the park with a link to the stakeholders.

Analysis

Many of the SPAs interviewed do not have an official stakeholder policy although they recognize the value and importance of involving stakeholders. Stakeholders are mainly involved at management planning time and otherwise are dealt with on an issue by issue basis as needed. Regardless whether ecosystem management and stakeholders
were officially recognized the SPAs studied did have to deal with an increasing variety and number of stakeholders. It is expected that working with stakeholders will continue to be a necessary component of parks planning and management. Creating a stakeholder policy and strategy will help SPAs deal with stakeholders in a proactive, rather than reactive, manner.

It is encouraging to note that stakeholders are being recognized as important by SPA staff and to note the wide definition of stakeholders used. A broad definition of stakeholders is likely best in the SPA setting where many people can impact or are impacted by the area.

The focus on stakeholders mainly at management planning time seems limited and focus on ongoing relationship building should be undertaken as recommended very strongly by the recently retired Ecosystem Manager. The Advisory Committee/Friends Group models are worth exploring in more depth as potential ways to engage stakeholders in an ongoing basis.

4.3 Interview Section B

4.3.1 Surrounding Land Uses

In the next question respondents were asked to identify land uses taking place within a five mile radius. The complete list is in Appendix H and the results fit into eight general categories, including:

- working landscapes, e.g., farming, forestry, gravel extraction,
- country residential acreages of various forms,
- suburban housing at mid to high density development levels,
- amenities, e.g., hotel, golf course, educational centre, commercial, retail,
- essential services, e.g., transmission lines, roads,
- private or public undeveloped lands, including other nature preserves,
- water,
• First People’s land.

It is not surprising that the surrounding land uses mentioned most often in this study were country residential acreages, suburban housing development and roads since the studied protected areas were chosen for their exurban locations.

In some cases the lands surrounding the protected areas are still largely undeveloped, i.e., as working landscapes or public lands. These complementary land uses provide a welcome alternative to development; however, as noted by the respondents they bring their own set of issues. For instance, the various management regimes may conflict and confuse users, and the boundaries may not be obvious. One SPA has First People’s land on its border and while this provides an ideal extension of the park’s natural habitat, it also requires sometimes challenging communication and cooperation between the two agencies.

Analysis

The results clearly show that these SPAs are nested within a changing landscape, one that is likely to continue changing if current trends continue. These current and future land uses can be perceived as either opportunity or threat. For example, while the undeveloped lands pose a threat to the nearby SPA since they may be developed at any time, they also provide an opportunity as they may continue to offer a valuable buffer to the SPA, as well as continued wildlife habitat and habitat connectors. If the lands are still undeveloped there are opportunities for partnerships to benefit both the landowners and the protected area agencies.

4.3.2 Issues and Impacts of Surrounding Land Uses

In the next two questions respondents were asked to identify the social/cultural issues associated with the nearby land uses and the resulting ecological impacts. Issues and impacts varied from site to site as the following table indicates; however, they all show that the SPAs are feeling the impacts not only from the increase in surrounding
landowners but also from the increased number of residents in nearby towns and cities as these urbanites and suburbanites discover the natural amenities of the SPAs.

**Table 8 Specific Issues and Impacts of Surrounding Land Use on Sites Interviewed**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Small Protected Area</th>
<th>Specific Issues and Impacts</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Brown Lowery and Fish Creek Provincial Parks, Calgary, Alberta</td>
<td>Brown Lowery is surrounded by acreages and considered ecologically to be an island already. Fish Creek, now surrounded by the city, was designed for 600,000 visits per year and now experiences close to three million visitors per year.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Point Pelee National Park, Windsor, Ontario</td>
<td>Park usage is down since the 1970’s; however, high usage continues to take place during the vulnerable times of year for wildlife.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area, Phoenix, Arizona</td>
<td>The west boundary is largely state owned public land and it may be sold for development at any time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wetlands Park, Las Vegas, Nevada</td>
<td>The public lands located on the north of the park may not offer the park its valuable buffer for long as this fastest growing American city continues to require lands for development. In the future block walls will surround the park.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kanaka Creek Park, Vancouver, British Columbia</td>
<td>This protected area suffers from its linear nature as the narrow park leads to more edge impacts from the surrounding development.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Long Sault Conservation Area, Oshawa, Ontario</td>
<td>Remnants of private property make enclaves into the protected area and the Area’s managing body cannot afford to purchase these valuable lands to make them part of the conservation area. Also the Conservation Area is increasingly being used “as a municipal park” by nearby urbanites.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stony Swamp Conservation Area, Ottawa, Ontario</td>
<td>Although part of the National Capital Commission, a landscape based organization; this Area is completely surrounded by development. Local landowners blame the Area for local flooding and random trail creation is rampant.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mono Cliffs Provincial Park, Toronto, Ontario</td>
<td>Due to pressures from stakeholders this is one of the few provincial parks in Ontario that allows horseback riding. Parking lots have been a major issue due to pressures from wealthy landowners not wanting the lots near their land or roads.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wild Basin Nature Preserve, Austin, Texas</td>
<td>A wide road on their west boundary funnels their creek through pipes and carries a multitude of weeds into the preserve. Some adjacent landowners dump waste in the preserve and others have cut gates into the fence to provide private access points.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
There were many similarities between the issues and impacts and they easily divided into four categories: issues associated with increased use of the protected area itself, issues related to increased use of the surrounding landscape, impacts affecting the protected areas directly and those impacting the surrounding landscape/ecosystem.

Most of the sites surveyed already had some development backing right onto their borders and this was a cause for concern to many of the respondents. In the words of one of the respondents:

   I think the real issue is that most of the people that are around us are extremely wealthy and they just really don’t care about any of this. And I don’t know if that’s true if you were to talk to each of them individually, but the person that I know had a bad experience and is not involved now.

Impacts created by adjacent landowners were many and varied and included:

- dumping waste in the park,
- removing trees and other vegetation from park,
- adding non native vegetation to the park,
- cutting own gate in boundary fence,
- developing trespass trails,
- poaching wildlife,
- feeding wildlife,
- causing noise pollution,
- roaming pets impacting park wildlife.

A complete list of issues and impacts, including those created by adjacent landowners, can be found in Appendix H.

Analysis

All the SPAs are facing the same issues with similar impacts as a result of their small size and proximity to a large growing city. These issues and the resulting impacts
require active management and the day to day operations can easily drain the protected area’s resources, leaving little time for external concerns.

Adjacent landowners pose multiple threats to the SPAs and despite the impacts this group can have on the protected area they were not recognized as a unique group of stakeholders. Identifying them as a unique group would be a first step toward working in collaboration with them.

4.3.3 Desired Landscape Surrounding the SPAs

When asked to describe how they would like the landscape around their protected area to look in order to ensure a successful future, the interviewees generated 14 different responses. The most common three responses were the need for: wildlife corridors connecting the protected area to other viable habitats, buffers around the protected area, and a reduction in the fragmentation of the surrounding landscape. The complete list of responses is in Appendix H.

Wildlife Corridors

The respondents noted that to be ecologically viable SPAs must be connected to other viable habitat patches. This may mean keeping existing habitat intact, protecting streams and riparian areas, or rehabilitating denuded lands. For example, at Point Pelee National Park they have recently initiated efforts to restore unused farmland back to its native wetlands and at Long Sault Conservation Area they would like to see the nearby gravel pits restored to viable wildlife habitat.

At two sites corridors were seen as connecting protected areas for human use and not necessarily for wildlife purposes and these respondents felt that any connection was better than none. One site was not concerned with connectivity since their site was already completely surrounded by suburban development.
Buffers

Respondents expressed concern with the development occurring right on their borders and recommended buffers between the protected area and the homes. One respondent suggested that the adjacent back yards should be seen as an extension of the protected area, not the other way around. Another interviewee noted that they currently do not have any fences delineating their boundaries and this creates opportunities for egress into the park as landowners take advantage of the situation. In my experience even fences do not necessarily make a difference as I have noticed adjacent landowners move boundary fences to create a larger yard for themselves!

Less Landscape Fragmentation

The protected area employees interviewed expressed deep concern for the overall landscape fragmentation taking place. Overall, they felt it needed to be lessened and they presented varied and different ways to achieve this goal. For instance, one site facing housing subdivision pressures felt that farmland was a better alternative to the high density development occurring on its border. Meanwhile at a site not facing imminent subdivision development, the respondent believed that large acreages with estate homes were a better alternative to farms since the acreage owners were allowing the land to return to its natural state and they likely had the money and inclination to undertake habitat enhancements.

Analysis

The opinions of the interviewees mesh with the current thinking in the EBM field. For example, the desire for wildlife corridors connecting the protected area to other viable habitats, buffers around the protected area, and a reduction in the fragmentation of the surrounding landscape can all be found in the EBM literature (Grumbine 1994, 1997; Leopold 1966; Noss 1995; Noss & Cooperrider 1994; Noss et al. 1996; Quinn 2002; Soule 1999a, b; Theobald & Hobbs 2002; Woodley & Forbes 1994). This suggests that
the current thinking in the EBM, conservation biology and landscape ecology literature is being seriously considered by SPA staff.

4.4 Interview Section C

In this section interviewees were asked to comment on three ideal stakeholder situation statements. The statements were created to reflect the DST described in the literature review section and to pertain to park controlled stakeholder situations, i.e., when the SPA was in control of the stakeholder situation. The purpose of the discussion on these three statements was to determine if the DST had merit for SPAs in the opinions of the interviewees.

First, all but one of the respondents was asked if they agree that the three statements reflected an ideal way to work with stakeholders. All the asked interviewees agreed that the statements did reflect the ideal way to work with stakeholders; but, a few interviewees noted that these ideals did not represent reality.

4.4.1 Statement One

It is important that all relevant points and interests are heard in a stakeholder process, i.e., one person or one group’s agenda cannot be allowed to dominate.

Overall, there was agreement that having all relevant points presented generated a better product due to the different experiences and ideas being brought forward. One respondent pointed out that mutual benefits can accrue from working with a dominant group of stakeholders. There was also consensus that letting everyone have their say is a long and involved process and takes up valuable time that SPA managers do not necessarily have.

Three key themes emerged from the responses to this statement: some groups/people will try to dominate, defining and involving relevant stakeholders is difficult and lastly, the topics being discussed should be relevant, as determined by the staff.
Theme 1.1 - Domination by Some

Respondents noted that three different groups of stakeholders would often try to dominate a stakeholder process: the local landowners, specific users/user groups and the protected area staff.

The local landowners were often older and more established, and concerned about changes to their way of life. In other cases the local landowners were new and affluent and used their contacts and resources to forward their own concerns. It was difficult for one of the respondents to relate to the affluent landowners and he stated:

> I think we would do a lot more if we had a lot more time to do it in, and I think there’s a relationship there that it’s hard for someone who’s out there sweating, pulling out invasives to meet with someone who sits in a bank building and launders money for -- I don’t know what they do. Actually, their world is as inconceivable as mine is to them, and so I think bridging that gap is tough and it requires time and energy. And, of course, time is money. That’s what all this comes down to.

A few different respondents pointed out that special interest groups often demand preferential treatment and can scuttle a stakeholder process due to their power as they seek to ensure their preferred use remained unaffected or was improved. For example, at one park a trails association often dominated the discussion in an effort to secure improved access for their trail users. At another protected area the wealthy landowners sought legal assistance in their battle to fulfill their own objectives.

The role of protected area staff in leading a stakeholder process was of concern to the respondents and they mentioned that protected area staff can dominate a stakeholder process and drastically affect the outcome due to their power position. For example, one respondent described a conflict laden stakeholder situation in which the group fell apart due to the views of the park employee facilitating the session:

> Sometimes the personalities -- the leader of the group that will have to be totally unbiased and be totally a facilitator, not clearly have a vested interest. In this particular case the person who led the group was a staff member at the protected area and probably had preconceived ideas about certain things, and that didn’t go well with certain groups.
Interviewees pointed out that the dual role of process facilitator and content expert is a difficult one for staff and that they are seen as having an agenda when they take the lead. They feel that they do have a role to play and like to be respected for their knowledge; they also believe that people are generally accepting of their knowledge on scientific matters while not giving them the same due on social science issues. One interviewee pointed out that the non protected area stakeholders do not see the whole picture as the staff do. Respondents also struggled with the role of protected area staff in landscape initiatives and questioned how involved the protected area staff should be when the issue is landscape related, rather than protected area related.

**Theme 1.2- Defining and Involving Stakeholders**

The interviewees identified many difficulties involved with defining stakeholders and ensuring that only the relevant stakeholders were involved.

First, identifying the stakeholders is an onerous task fraught with difficulties and uncertainties. Generating the original list of stakeholders is a time consuming and costly endeavour and it is expensive to keep up as contacts are constantly changing. Interviewees were divided regarding the breadth of stakeholders to include on the list. Some felt that a broad definition of stakeholders was necessary, i.e., any one who self-identified should be considered a stakeholder, and others believed that a narrow definition is more suitable for a small exurban protected area. A few different respondents commented that relationships were a key consideration and that regardless of the number of stakeholders the personal contact was paramount. One respondent advocated repeat involvement by stakeholder groups due to the value of the networks created, an action that he believed would lead to smoother flowing future processes.

Secondly, the question of representation was raised by the respondents. Some protected areas use Friends groups to represent their stakeholders. For instance, Fish Creek Provincial Park has three different associated societies that they rely on for various aspects of support. Point Pelee National Park uses a different approach and has an advisory committee composed of individuals rather than groups as they have found that
group representatives change so quickly that involving individuals ensures a more long term commitment (Zorn et al. 2001).

Third, identifying relevant groups and contacts was not a guarantee that the groups would be represented as park-identified stakeholders were not necessarily interested in being involved. For instance, at Kanaka Creek Park staff would like to involve provincial recreation organizations in the decision making; however, these groups rarely show interest. The relevant stakeholders often must be sought out as they will not necessarily come on their own.

Lastly, user groups that are not considered relevant may show up and try to participate in a stakeholder process. For example, at one new protected area the motorized users participated in the stakeholder process despite the mandate against their use:

And once they realized I was serious it got very heated, and at a couple of the public meetings, you know, they were very vocal and very upset with us. And so if any of the stakeholders left the table completely dissatisfied, I’m sure that was them. But my decision was not to seek any sort of compromise or consensus on it because we’d already established in our governmental agreements we were going to manage the protected area in a non-motorized fashion. And so it was just -- you know, some issues you just can’t find the middle ground, and on that one, we didn’t.

**Theme 1.3- Relevant Discussion**

Lastly, respondents found that it is often very difficult to keep people focused on the topic while in a public forum. They felt that discussion was often irrelevant and ended up wasting valuable time. Respondents noted that parameters and ground rules should be set to ensure that the talk is relevant or to avoid emotional venting. One respondent commented, “I agree with you that relevant points are the important ones because so often people come in with just really wild, wild concepts that are not going to go much further because there’s no scientific basis for them.” It was mentioned a few times that
stakeholders do not always have all the information and once they get it they are more open to changes.

The respondents endorsed debate but clarified that the context must be clear and the discussion focused on issues they felt were relevant. They identified the benefits to keeping the discussion clear and focused as: saving time, being respectful, and ensuring the discussion stayed focused on issues that are within the scope of the agency. For instance, one respondent pointed out there is no sense talking about something that is totally outside the scope, mandate or control of the park.

**Analysis**

Three key themes emerged from the responses to this statement: some groups/people will try to dominate, defining and involving relevant stakeholders is difficult and lastly, the topics being discussed should be relevant.

On the topic of domination by some people and groups the DST would narrow this down to a question of control and point out that the control needs to be unmasked. The DST advises the use of Gadamar’s Genuine Conversation, in which the focus is on creating meaning together; and Habermas Ideal Speech Situation, in which there are equal opportunities to be involved and no preconceived notions of authority or privilege are given (Alvesson & Deetz 1996; Deetz 1992; Deetz 2005; Held 1980). Domination may also be countered through attention to both Voice and Consent as described in the literature review.

The role of staff in SPA stakeholder processes is one warranting more consideration since staff can be seen as a strength and a weakness in this regard. Their strengths include: content expertise and enthusiasm, and commitment to improving the SPA situation. Too much staff control and bias are considered weaknesses and Deetz has noted that these concerns are not specific to SPAs, but that it is a widespread issue. The DST favours releasing control and bias through rethinking the communication processes and taking a closer look at the formation of the current situation. In the case of SPAs this will mean taking a closer look at the specific issues of Information and Control, with staff and the stakeholders being open to giving up some control.
Normative stakeholder theory, including the original work of Freeman and the DST, advises that a wide definition of stakeholders is needed and that stakeholders are seen as either those who can affect the area or those who are affected by the area (Freeman 1984, 2000; Freeman & Phillips 2002). These notions seem to suit the SPA setting where there are many potential stakeholders due to the public nature of the area. The number is likely only to increase as more development surrounds the protected area.

The DST suggests that all topics are relevant even if they are not feasible management options, since there is value in engaging in dialogue on the topics. One interviewee agrees, “But, you know, that -- you’ve got to be careful before you start doing that winnowing, because if you’re not listening you’re not going to be able to hear if there is a nugget in there that you haven’t thought about.” Genuine dialogue is a cornerstone of the DST and favours hearing all points, whether they are relevant to the protected area staff or not (Deetz 1992; Deetz & Brown 2004; Deetz et al. 1997; Putnam 1999).

Time is a precious commodity for SPA staff and allowing free flowing discussion seems like a waste of this resource. Managers seem to allow limited discussion and then stress moving onto the decisions and actions. Zoller (2000) notes that many participants in a stakeholder process also want to move quickly to the action phase. She advocates for education on the need for dialogue first, with the hope that this understanding will encourage people to slow down and allow the dialogue to occur, with decisions and actions evolving through the process.

4.4.2 Statement Two

Forums that facilitate debate of conflicting viewpoints are necessary for the most creative solutions to emerge.

The discussion around this statement resulted in the emergence of three key themes: conflicting groups are often not present, forums can facilitate debate and creativity, and societal and institutional climates do not always foster debate and creativity.
Theme 2.1- Conflicting Groups Not Present

The respondents were divided regarding whether or not to include potentially conflicting groups in the stakeholder process. Some respondents felt that the conflicting groups should be involved and encouraged to work together to generate an amicable solution, while other respondents believed that some groups should not be invited, and these groups should be dealt with individually rather than as part of the stakeholder process. For example, at Mono Cliffs the snowmobile group approached the park for assistance despite the fact that their particular form of recreation is not allowed in the park. Instead of seeking changes to the park mandate to include their use they used the stakeholder forum to seek assistance in creating a trail on nearby private land. This successful partnership generated much good will between the park and a potentially disruptive group.

The potentially conflicting groups seemed to divide into two categories, i.e., external groups whose interests and concerns were beyond the control of the protected area and internal conflicting groups whose interests were directly applicable to park management.

Examples of external conflicting groups include potential land developers and planners. These groups were not always invited to participate in a stakeholder process; in fact one interviewee cautioned to watch out for developers as they will, “use you in a sleazy manner.” Another respondent affirmed that at their protected area potential developers were not considered stakeholders and another interviewee mentioned that the developers were not relevant enough to be included separately.

One person commented on dealings with a neighbour whom he believes to also be a local developer:

But he came to us to try to get some leverage from an environmental organization to get what he wanted, which was that building to not be built or to be built differently…and the whole thing comes down to he really doesn’t want that building where it blocks his view. So I would bet you he’s a developer, but I can’t say for sure. He’s certainly a little slimy.
Internal conflicting groups seemed easier for the SPA managers to work with since they were under the control of the park. These consisted mainly of users with conflicting uses or uses considered unacceptable to the protected area. One respondent pointed out that even in regards to internal issues a solution was not always possible:

So in trying to resolve it or coming up with a recommendation to resolve it, they actually put together a committee of a number of different stakeholders, some who were for mountain bike use for instance, some who were against it or cautious about it. I put them all in room and basically got them to pound it out. Now, the process didn’t work, it came very close to working, but at the 12th hour it was basically scuttled by one of those stakeholder groups. So the process didn’t work, and then I guess it went to the non-stakeholder involvement where we took the recommendations that the committee had made to that point and then decided what we were going to do with them ourselves.

Theme 2.2- Forums, Debate and Creativity

There seemed to be agreement on the notion that an increased variety of stakeholder forums would produce better and more creative results. A variety of stakeholder forums were used successfully in order to reach different people including: open houses, special meetings, participant workbooks, sessions with staff and ex staff and volunteers and ex-volunteers, public meetings, written submissions, focus groups, issue-based committees, ongoing advisory groups, lessons learned forums, monthly mixers on site and surveys.

Well run forums can also lead to better and more creative results. Different respondents described techniques they have successfully used when working with stakeholders, including: use professional facilitators, offer a variety of forums, offer multiple numbers of sessions, ensure two way communications, use active listening, establish ground rules for sessions, be open and flexible and seek creative solutions.
Theme 2.3- Climates, Debate and Creativity

Societal and institutional climates were both identified as barriers that may limit debate and creativity and therefore be counter to the intent of this second statement. A few respondents noted that institutional climates tend to encourage posturing, and that government agencies are not set up to work together. They also pointed out that society does not encourage collaboration and that a major paradigm shift is required before we will. One respondent noted:

So it’s going to take, in my mind, almost a revolution in cultural thinking to move this in a big way. But I have to say that I don’t see this as an obstacle, though. It would sure help if in our educational institutions that that’s how kids are taught, problem solving, but they’re not.

On the positive side, institutional and societal climates can change for the better, reported one respondent as he described a restoration project that the protected area had desired for a long time. Due to societal changes and increased support for environmental initiatives the long awaited project is now being considered.

Analysis

The discussion around this statement resulted in the emergence of three key themes: conflicting groups are often not present, forums can facilitate debate and creativity, and societal and institutional climates do not always foster debate and creativity. In responding to this statement interviewees were agreeing in principle with the DST, although they noted some issues in transferring this idea to practice.

They agreed with the need for a variety of forums and seemed to be doing a good job of providing the variety and using different techniques within the forums. This is very encouraging; however, within the DST extra elements need to be considered such as ensuring: voice is released, consent is uncovered, information is unbiased and full collaboration is encouraged (Deetz 1982; Deetz 1992; Deetz 1995, 1997, 1999; Deetz 2000; Deetz 2001, 2003; Deetz 2004; Deetz 2005; Deetz & Brown 2004; Deetz et al. 1997; Deetz & Simpson 2004; Deetz et al. 2000).
Conflict seemed to make the SPA staff uncomfortable and they tended to avoid it, especially related to people or organizations they expect to be troublesome, e.g., developers and conflicting user groups. When they did allow for the conflicting debate it seemed to take an inordinate amount of time. The DST favours taking the time to allow the conflict and not shying away from the potentially troublesome groups since the best solutions will emerge from genuine dialogue. Deetz stresses that if conflict is embraced as a management strategy it can readily be solved through: identifying the type of conflict, clarifying the importance of the conflict, understanding the complexity of the conflict, and knowing the energy and resources available for conflict management (Deetz & Stevenson 1986, pp. 207-209).

The lack of societal support for collaboration, creativity and debate is of concern to SPA managers and a major impetus behind the DST as a change-oriented model; therefore, the SPA staff and DST pundits are in synchronization on this issue.

4.4.3 Statement Three

All participants in a stakeholder process should see their initial position as temporary and be willing to change, in order to reach a collaborative decision together.

For this statement three key themes emerged: people will not change their position, people will change given the right circumstances and lastly, that the old method of stakeholder involvement is no longer viable.

Theme 3.1- People will Not Change their Position

Two reasons emerged for people not being willing to change their position; they either have a vested interest or they desire the status quo.

In the first instance stakeholders may have a financial interest and are therefore unwilling or unable to move their positions. For example, jeep tour operators at Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area were unwilling to change their position regarding operating in the protected area as it was a major source of revenue to them.
Respondents noted that people were often unwilling to change their position as they desired the status quo. The interviewee from Long Sault Conservation Area pointed out that the older, more established residents seemed to be against any form of change at all. At Mono Cliffs local people objected to a parking lot at the end of their road as they did not wish to see the park opened up for more use. This desire for status quo also reflected the vested interest they have in their land. Adjacent landowners seem especially vocal about changes since both their way of life and property values are impacted by the protected area.

Staff and board members were identified specifically as two groups often unwilling to change as they have their own perceptions of priorities. They also can be under the impression that they know best since they believe they can see the whole picture and have more expertise than the other stakeholders. One respondent noted, “I think that there’s a group of people here that really are more concerned with money than they are with the land.” There seemed to be less positioning and ownership when a small exurban protected area was involved in an external initiative, i.e., when they were not the agency in charge.

**Theme 3.2- Education Leads to Change**

Respondents also brought up the opposing notion that people will change given the right circumstances. Education emerged as the key change agent and was mentioned many times by the respondents. Some typical education related comments included: “people need information to be able to see the whole picture, there is a need for constant education, information brings trust, and science and information are still required, even if they are expensive.”

Other circumstances contributing to change included: pointing out the personal benefits to people, devoting time to relationship building, maintaining open communication, encouraging creativity and flexibility, listening genuinely, collaborating, consensus building and, attempting to fix the disconnect between people and the environment.
It was mentioned a few times that affluent land owners seemed more open to learning and trying new land management techniques than older, more established farming or ranching landowners. As described by one interviewee:

Now, one thing I think really enhances this area is the estate properties. For the most part they don’t do any intensive farming or anything like that. A lot of their properties revert to a more natural setting- in succession it’s still the open field. But it really enhances our park as we see less and less intensive farming in the area.

Staff learning emerged as a key concept and the need for staff to be open and flexible was discussed a few times. It was felt that staff learn from doing and they get better with practice. The organization also gets better with practice:

And I know we, as an organization, have learned so much that it’s just -- the only thing I can say is that I want to keep learning and I want to get away from the us-them mentality and the confrontational end of it. Like we’re all in this together and it’s the protected area that needs your consideration.

Another respondent pointed out that education of agency staff regarding the importance of ecosystem management is critical as it seems to be slow to catch on as a concept and in the EBM model it is important for all staff to support it:

… in terms of getting the staff up to speed to be able to develop those kinds of things themselves are really an important aspect to communications. And a lot of things you may end up talking about don’t seem to make a lot of sense right from the start because a lot of times that cellular vision, it’s great for, say, you and your second in command and some guy from central office to come up with the provision and go peddling it around to the community, but you’ve got to get your staff to believe it too, to understand it.

Education of community members was also discussed by the respondents and it was considered important for many reasons, not the least of which was the likelihood that protected area champions would then emerge:

When it finally reached that critical mass where there was something there, a champion floated up out of the system
and for a small protected area to have champions outside its own staff, I think is really a critical thing.

Theme 3.3- New Solutions for Working with Stakeholders Required

According to respondents the old style of stakeholder involvement is no longer valid and a more collaborative model is required. This old style was described as “window dressing” public involvement, where there is minimal and limited participation by stakeholders. Under this old style the park staff prepares a management plan in isolation and presents a near final draft to the stakeholders for comments. This old style will no longer work as, “we can no longer afford either ecologically, financially or socially to operate as islands.”

According to the interviewees a new collaborative model would include: ongoing planning and stakeholder involvement, two way communications, more involvement by the stakeholders, and institutional reform that would encourage agencies to work together. Issues related to this type of change include: concerns with perceptions, constantly changing players, mending the disconnect with nature, trying too hard, as well as the typical issues related to the scarcity of time and resources. The need to be better at the social sciences was also discussed by some respondents. All in all the respondents seemed to feel that a new stakeholder process was required and in some cases they indicated that they were already implementing this new process.

Analysis

For this statement three key themes emerged: people will not change their position, people will change given the right circumstances, e.g., education, and lastly, that the old method of stakeholder involvement is no longer viable.

As a critical theory the DST recommends change; therefore, those people who are perpetuating the hegemony and unwilling to change would be encouraged to question their motives and open up to other possibilities through genuine dialogue. The people who do not wish their own worlds to be affected by the outside world are proponents of
the NIMBY phenomenon, i.e., Not in My Backyard. In *Rethinking NIMBY* Lake (1993) argues that NIMBYism is a result of the constant pressure between capital and the state, capital and the community and the state and the community as they are all inextricably linked. He suggests that it is easier for the state and capital to focus on the problem of NIMBYism than it is to deal with the real problems, i.e., the negative impacts of capitalism. In this article and *Volunteers, NIMBYs, and Environmental Justice: Dilemmas of Democratic Practice* Lake (1996), Lake clearly states his belief in digging deeper and confronting the problems at the source. This perspective is in keeping with the DST’s emphasis on looking beneath the surface for the underlying motives and control issues.

Education is seen as a major tool of change by the interviewees. The DST supports education and learning; however, it also recommends caution to ensure that the education does not merely perpetuate the hegemony. This would be achieved through considering all the elements in the DST when planning educational opportunities.

The DST proposes a new approach to stakeholder involvement and it is hoped that it will be able to offer SPAs viable alternatives to the old methods. Although some respondents indicated they were already using the new collaborative model I think it is important to point out that they are likely not using the DST theory, and that the current new collaborative models should still be subject to analysis and improvement based on the DST. In all the above considerations it would be important to recall that enacting the DST in reality is easier said than done.

4.5 Conclusion

The interviews provided the context of the small exurban protected area, described how protected area staff currently works with stakeholders and generated nine themes based on three statements related to stakeholder involvement as purported by the DST.

In comparing the nine themes emerging from the interviews to the attributes of successful SPA management (Curthoys Brown 1995) it became apparent that there were many similarities and overlaps. I was able to find an example for each of her 11 attributes within the interview texts and it was interesting to note that the four most recognized
attributes in the Curthoys Brown study were directly related to the human component of ecosystem management.

Based on these results it was apparent that the DST had merit for SPAs and was worth investigating in more detail. The interviews also generated excellent questions for inclusion in the Frameworks. The focus groups were then developed as a means to further explore the applicability of the DST for SPAs.
Chapter Five: Focus Group Results and Analysis

5.1 Introduction

The interviews undertaken in Stage Two supported the potential use of the DST at SPAs, and in order to examine the theory in this context in more depth two focus groups were held. One took place in Southern Ontario, Canada at Point Pelee National Park and the other was held near Phoenix, Arizona, USA at the Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area.

The purpose of the focus groups was to draw upon the experiences of professionals in SPA management by obtaining their feedback on the relevance of the DST for use at SPAs. Eleven professionals (six women and five men) participated in the workshops, seven in Ontario and four in Arizona. At the Point Pelee focus group the participants were all staff from the Park itself and already had an easy going rapport. One of the participants was a workplace student and her participation was negligible as she only listened to the conversation and acted as my assistant. At the Spur Cross focus group the four participants were from different parks and agencies; however, the rapport was excellent as they all seemed to already know each other. The focus group format is located in Appendix K.

The focus groups were run as mini workshops in which I first presented my interpretation of the DST through a series of PowerPoint slides and then facilitated a discussion on the relevance of the theory for the SPA context. The theory was deconstructed into six key concepts in order to facilitate discussion: Information, Control, Voice and Consent, Forum, Conflict and Negotiation, and Collaboration and Participation. Problems with the current situation within each concept were described and alternatives as per the DST were presented for discussion. The questions used to initiate the discussion can be found in Appendix L.

The resulting discussions will be detailed per concept after a presentation of general comments made by the focus group participants. The results from both focus groups have been presented together as the results were similar enough for compilation and the purpose was to dialogue on the DST, and not to compare and contrast the two
groups. As per the interview results, the focus group results have been presented as both Results, which involved interpretation to synthesize the key points, and Analysis, which included the addition of the DST as a means to bring context and theory together. Double quotes represent the actual words of the participants.

5.2 General Comments on the Theory

5.2.1 Introduction

Focus group participants were eager to talk about the theory in general, specifically its applicability to the SPA context. Their general points seemed to fit into three categories that will now be explored.

5.2.2 Government Agencies

The participants made it very clear that they felt that government agencies were different than corporations and that the model could not be transferred directly to the SPA setting. Since their agencies were responsible for management of public lands they felt that they had a “trust” to uphold to the public. This trust establishes a line that agencies cannot cross and therefore limits their ability to negotiate or collaborate since the consequences of crossing the line may be dire for the ecological future of the protected area. One participant noted that it is hard to find common ground when there is no compromise to be made.

They also mentioned that relationships are key to any stakeholder model and in government these can be difficult to develop and foster due to lack of staff time and also due to the political nature of government offices, when “until the next election you don’t know what you think.”

As members of a government agency SPA staff has limited ability to negotiate with stakeholders as there is usually someone higher up in the organization designated to be the spokesperson and make the decisions. The focus group participants felt disempowered by this reality.
SPAs often have an official agency mandated obligation to undertake consultation; however, according to the participants many times they undertake to fulfill the obligation with little regard for the results. This led one focus group participant to suggest that the process is “disingenuous” and a “charade”.

Focus group participants also expressed frustration with knowing how to engage in dialogic communication but being hampered by the lack of support from their agency. In their opinions, government agencies often pay lip service to the collaborative model, while not providing staff with the support to enact it:

> Our organization has a mandate to do consultation and our CEO supports “values” and “engaging stakeholders”. As a staff we know we know this and have supported these concepts for a long time, but we are lacking support from the organization to do them. If we are not doing this we are not valuable.

**Analysis**

The agency-related issues raised by the participants are very real and overwhelming and it seems like the current stakeholder processes lack heart and authenticity. The numbers game, i.e., where reporting statistics to a superior is more important than the actual content and engagement of the stakeholders, is a shallow one and the DST seeks to replace this approach with a deeper, more meaningful one.

Organizational support to engage in a new stakeholder dialogue may be limited at the present time; however, Deetz claims that it is the micro-practice changes that will make a difference (1992). It is hoped that these bottom-up, daily changes will have impacts on the overall organization.

I believe that I placed too much emphasis on the corporate side of the DST in my preamble to the focus groups. This led the groups to discuss this topic in great detail when in fact the potential problems with transferring a seemingly corporate–based theory to a government or non-government setting may be unfounded as the theory refers mainly to *organizations*, having risen from within the organizational communication discourse. Corporations, government and non-government agencies are all *organizations* as defined in the Oxford dictionary, “an organized group of people with a particular purpose”
To be fair to the focus group participants who raised these points; they did make their comments before we had fully explored the theory.

The theory may be more difficult to apply to settings where control is insidious and long standing traditions reign, e.g., government agencies. It may be more easily transferred to the SPAs that are managed by non-governmental groups, such as small private conservation areas and land trust organizations. Government agencies, with their built in hegemony may, however, be the organizations most in need of the DST.

5.2.3 Transferring Theory to Practice

Participants in both focus groups felt that they were aware of the dialogic model, knew how to enact it and believed that using it would benefit the protected area. They likened it to a basic communication model or a co-management model they studied in school. They did express interest in learning more about the model and even if already using it, felt that there was more to learn from it. “This is good stuff and we can all benefit from revisiting it even if we think we know it already.” They felt that at the very least it would encourage employees to enter into a stakeholder process with a more open mind and a more approachable manner.

One enterprising participant created a graph to share with the focus group at the end of the session. He illustrated that he felt the agency needed to reach the critical point at which collaboration could increase without increased time commitment on the part of the staff. Another participant added that it was at this juncture between collaboration and time that they usually tended to “bail out”.

Another participant was very clear about his opinion, “It is damn near impossible to put this theory into practice.”

Analysis

The focus groups participants were not likely familiar with the DST specifically, since the DST is a critical theory and therefore not mainstream. It is encouraging that the participants felt it was “good stuff” and worth learning more about.
As far as reaching a magic point on a graph where time spent on stakeholders is reduced and stakeholder involvement and satisfaction increased; I am not sure this is a realistic goal. Stakeholders will always take time and they deserve it from us, because they are ends in themselves, not means to an end, as described within the Kantian view of stakeholders (Dunn & Burton 1996). It is hoped that once the DST is in use time will be saved through proactively engaging stakeholders, thereby reducing the issue-based fires that currently seem to regularly ignite.

The DST is a normative stakeholder theory and as such makes no pretense at providing prescriptions for practice. Deetz recognizes that there are many good prescriptions for collaboration, and he encourages us to consult them for guidance in practice:

I, like he, am tired of the usual deadening force of the how question. There are thousands of companies doing something about stakeholders; there are thousands of suggestions readily available in books on participation, empowerment, conflict negotiation, and planning. We do not need another lesson in how. If another lesson would do it, we would be doing it already. It is time for us to say that it is time (Deetz 1995, p. 184).

It will not be easy to implement and Deetz acknowledges this fact in his conclusion to *Transforming Communication, Transforming Business*, “The dialogic communication alternative -- constitutive codetermination -- as a participatory democracy is still very difficult to work out in either conception or practice” (Deetz 1995, p. 174).

### 5.2.4 Barriers

Lastly, the participants identified a number of barriers that were keeping them from engaging in dialogic communication. The key barriers were a lack of time, money and other resources. One participant returned again and again to his mantra, “We need more time, money and resources.”

They suggested that the SPA setting may be prohibitive to working with stakeholders since they are located in a unique environment where the audiences are less homogeneous than audiences around more remote parks. They felt that these near urban
audiences knew less about the protected area and vice versa. One participant noted that budgets seemed to be allocated based on protected area size and that SPAs needed more staff and resources rather than less. They also pointed out that it is difficult to keep up with the immigration trends.

Participants suggested that the model may be best suited to SPAs with a relatively broad mandate, e.g., recreation and conservation, as opposed to preservation-oriented areas. They felt that in protected areas with multiple mandates there would be more room for negotiation compared to a preservation-oriented area with a stricter mandate.

The focus group participants noted that the model seems better suited to situations where people are already interested since it assumes that people want to be engaged and that they are open to discussing multiple issues, not just their own specific interests.

Another participant felt that the model doesn’t account for the three way balance needed in SPAs, i.e., economic, ecologic and socio-political. Unfortunately, there was no time left to pursue this train of thought.

One participant pointed out that staff often lacked the confidence to undertake stakeholder collaboration and that it is easier and cheaper to stay at their current level than to venture into new territory. Stakeholder tasks were described as extra to their day to day operational tasks and they felt that they were constantly in crisis management mode. In this state of constant upheaval they felt that it was nearly impossible to move from theory to practice.

Analysis

The many barriers to engaging stakeholders in genuine dialogue present a quandary, one that will likely always exist in resource-deficient SPAs.

The lack of time may be solved through initially taking the time to develop a stakeholder strategy, including identifying the stakeholder groups and how to best reach each of them. This may be time well spent rather than focusing on the solutions, which in the DST would be worked through in a collaborative manner. This may require SPA staff to further develop their people-based management skills and not focus solely on the
scientific realm of area management. Time may also be saved through networking and sharing resources with other SPAs.

Rittel and Webber, the creators of the term *wicked problems*, predicted in 1973 that in the future natural resource managers would have more heterogeneous audiences to deal with and that this would generate even more wicked issues (Rittel & Webber 1973). The difficulties that are now experienced by SPAs in dealing with the plurality of publics indicate that Rittel and Webber were correct. As our society becomes more heterogeneous the minorities become more difficult to classify and know. Within the DST everyone should be treated as unique; therefore, it should not matter whether groups are homogeneous or heterogeneous. Operationalizing this concept will be a difficult task.

All SPAs are organizations, as pointed out earlier, and this means that the DST should be applicable, regardless of how specific and conservation-oriented their mandate. Protected areas with a more limited mandate may need to be up front with the stakeholders regarding the topics that are truly off-limits to decision making, e.g., legislated regulations and mandate-specific features. In this case I believe the DST would encourage people to dialogue on these issues anyway, and then move on to consideration of other ways to help stakeholders reach reasonable goals, such as in the case of the park staff working with the snowmobile users at Mono Cliffs Park to find a suitable location nearby for enjoying their park-prohibited activity.

The lack of interest on the part of potential stakeholders may be a function of past experiences in which they were poorly treated or their input was disregarded. SPA staff may have an uphill battle to overcome these past transgressions in stakeholder dealings. Through attention to forum, uncovering consent and releasing voice, the stakeholder’s trust may be rebuilt and they may be willing to reenter the world of participation.

Stakeholder work seemed to be an extra task on top of all the other day to day duties of SPA staff. This most likely reflects a lack of agency support for stakeholder involvement. As the enlightened ones, SPA staff may have to advocate for this agenda within their agency and encourage stronger emphasis on stakeholders, which may result in more resources being allocated to this aspect of management. It may backfire and merely create more work for the staff; however, in my experience protected area staff
members are dedicated and enthusiastic and willing to go the extra mile since conservation is something they are passionate about.

5.3 Concept #1- Information

5.3.1 Introduction

In the PowerPoint presentations at the beginning of the focus groups I described the Information concept in the following manner.

- The problem with information is that it is often inadequate or distorted and this may keep people from fully understanding and therefore fully participating.
- Information has the power to perpetuate the status quo.
- Alternatives based on the DST include: provide stakeholders with timely, adequate and undistorted information and include information on both the process and the topic.

5.3.2 Value of Information

Participants wholeheartedly agreed that information was valuable and extremely important to SPAs and stakeholders. They felt that stakeholders needed information for a variety of reasons: in order to have the appropriate values, to be able to comment properly, to avoid going off on tangents, and to avoid dealing in opinion only.

5.3.3 Issues with Information

Despite believing in the value of information the participants pointed out many information-related issues.

Information is often distorted and inaccurate, most notably when an external agency is involved. Participants from both focus groups specifically mentioned the media and their tendency to sensationalize stories. Other closely associated agencies, such as a Friends group can unknowingly disseminate inaccurate information, while local developers do not always provide full disclosure to the new homeowners. In all these
cases the protected area staff is not responsible for the erroneous information but is responsible for dealing with the problems created. Control of information was an issue of great interest to the participants and they felt that problems arose mainly when the information was out of their control.

Information is not always provided in a timely manner. For example, one participant mentioned that he did not feel it was adequate to provide information at the Open House and expect people to immediately absorb it and be prepared to discuss it. Another participant pointed out that they tended to hold off working with any stakeholders until they had all the information themselves since they wanted to look their best. One participant noted that in Canada in general we seem to take too long to gather information and we stall making important decisions until it is often too late.

A few participants pointed out that information was not always getting to the affected people, often resulting in disgruntled stakeholders. One participant pointed out that there is a hierarchy of information dissemination. It starts with informing themselves, sharing with other staff next and finally, sharing with stakeholders. Often they did not even get the information out to other staff, let alone to the stakeholders. In cases involving other agencies staff felt they often lacked the necessary information themselves, thus hampering their ability to share it with others. They felt that information should be more readily shared between agencies, especially if the issues are mutual.

One focus group felt that many people did not have a thorough enough understanding of the issues to be able to comment. The protected area would be required to make a huge investment in time to get people to the point where they have enough information to be able to provide valuable input. In many cases, just getting the stakeholders to show interest was a major challenge.

One SPA staff member’s frustration was evident:

I don’t want your opinion because I know you don’t have the values that I have to implement in my mandate. It is so far off of where you are that if I can’t get you to a certain spot I know what is going to come out of your mouth. You don’t care if ten endangered species go off the list. So I am not going to ask your opinion because I can’t do that.
Focus group participants acknowledged that often scientific information is complex and needs distillation to make it palatable to the stakeholders. This distillation involves bias at every stage but cannot be avoided as staff are constantly bombarded with new priorities and do not have the time or resources to adequately address this issue. This issue is exacerbated by the changing nature of the scientific information. They felt they did their best to provide unbiased information within their time constraints.

Despite the issues with information, one respondent was positive about the value of sharing information among SPAs:

And then, of course, those results have to get published where other parks and other developers can find them and see this is what happened in San Antonio or wherever, Calgary, and worked, and this is a model we can emulate. You know, not everybody should be reinventing the wheel at the same time.

5.3.4 Analysis

Participants acknowledged that information is extremely important, but often: distorted, inaccurate, out of staff control, untimely, inadequate, not distributed properly, too complex, biased and constantly changing. They felt that all the issues were a function of a lack of resources and that there was a distinct lack of time to devote to information creation, dissemination and revision. Staff would like to be able to provide timely, accurate and undistorted information but are at a loss for how to achieve this goal.

Within the DST is the recognition that to ensure full participation, stakeholders require timely, adequate, and undistorted information on both the topic and the process (Deetz 2004; Deetz & Simpson 2004). Deetz adds that this is particularly relevant for the environmental field (Deetz 2004).

Acknowledging the value of information and the associated issues seems like a perfect starting point since this implies that information will not be taken for granted and suggests that staff will make an effort to build in time for it. With limited resources it seems to make sense for SPAs to utilize the new ubiquitous electronic technologies for widespread information sharing at minimal cost. Deetz is cautious about electronic forms
of communication as they do not involve dialogue; in this case they are being recommended only to provide the stakeholders with the initial information needed to fully participate. In contrast to Deetz’ view of the Internet, Ravetz (2004) believes that it may be a constructive source of support within the post-normal science paradigm.

Bias in the information may be controlled through the use of outside non partisan writers, when fund are available, or through a process used by the Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc. whereby materials are vetted by external experts and reviewed in a preliminary workshop before being made available to the stakeholders (Canadian Policy Research Networks Inc. 2005).

5.4 Concept #2- Control

5.4.1 Introduction

In the PowerPoint presentations at the beginning of the focus groups I described the Control concept in the following manner.

- The problem with control is that those in charge take or are given control and generally wish to keep it and, as a result the stakeholders are not usually included in the full process.
- Alternatively, according to the DST, managers need to increase willingness to change, be willing to give up control, be willing to learn themselves and try to involve stakeholders as early as possible.
- They also should aim for less “self-expression and more self-destruction”, i.e., be willing to tear down their preconceived ideas.

The topic of control generated lively discussion in both focus groups. Topics ranged from the fact that sometimes control cannot be given up, to the notion that staff should not give it up, and lastly, to the ways to give up control when required.
5.4.2 Control Cannot be Given Up

Ironically, the ability to give up control is often out of the control of the employees as they are required to follow the agency’s policies and procedures. These policies, whether written or unwritten, guide how the employees deal with stakeholders, who has the decision making powers, and what the protected area is permitted to do within its mandate. These policies left some focus group participants feeling disempowered and disrespected.

Stakeholder feedback is not always used and the participants stressed that when stakeholder feedback is not used and the protected area maintains full control, it is important to get back to the stakeholders and provide personalized feedback, although time to undertake this task is limited.

Sometimes control is not within the protected area’s mandate, for instance when land beyond their boundaries is involved. One way to obtain control in this external setting is to establish local initiatives; however, the long term role of the protected area in these initiatives is unclear and when they pull back to focus on other park priorities the initiatives may flounder.

5.4.3 Staff Should Not Give Up Control

Some of the focus group participants felt that staff members are not doing their jobs if they give up control. They believe that employees are in their positions as a result of their expertise and it is their professional responsibility to maintain control of themselves and the group. One participant pointed out that the stakeholders are not likely to come up with any new ideas not already thought of by the paid staff. Another participant said they cannot just give up control to the “cross section of humanity”. Another noted that if no one is in control of a stakeholder situation then the group can get “unruly or emotional”. Someone else pointed out that every ship requires a captain and a protected area is no different.
5.4.4 When Giving Up Control

A few participants discussed the idea that they should look for areas in which they can give up control wherever possible. They noted that the stakeholders appreciate it when you give them some concessions even if you retain much of the control. Another participant mentioned that they must have confidence that the stakeholders can handle it, before giving up control to them. Others pointed out that they have to be careful that they do not give away too much control or else the stakeholders will expect too much and take advantage of them.

Even when seeming to give up control to the stakeholders the employees can subtly retain much of it. For example, at one new protected area equestrian use was desired by some of the stakeholders and due to this pressure the park approved horse use against their own wishes. Park designers then proceeded to plan the trail system to make horse use difficult, resulting in little equestrian use to date.

Keeping control is also evident in the example of lip service consultation only:

> Whether we choose to use their opinions or not we can say, ‘we fulfilled our obligation to let you talk’ but we know the direction we want to go and we fulfilled our obligation whether we use your input or not is a different story.

Focus group participants acknowledged that this type of consultation is not genuine or collaborative.

5.4.5 Analysis

Participants explained that in many cases control cannot be given up. They also believed that it should not be given up easily by the staff; and when control is given up it is important that staff still retain some control.

After the interviews and focus groups and a careful rethinking of my own experiences I have realized that protected area staff are control-oriented; because we are hired for our ability to take charge and get the job done, and because we were trained in a command and control mentality. This control focus is likely no different from that to be found in any other organization; government, corporate or otherwise. Managers suffer
from managerialism and Deetz recommends replacing this with more attention to who makes decisions, how they are made and what and whose values are involved (Deetz 2003; Deetz & Brown 2004; Deetz et al. 1997). This new way of thinking involves giving up control in favour of more collaboration, even at the staff level.

The need to replace this command and control approach with a more open and democratic one is stressed by Knight and Clark (1998) as critical for landscape scale initiatives and cross border cooperation. Command and control approaches are often closely associated with government agencies, who find it difficult to change from authoritative or transactional to co-managerial approaches (Chase 2001). Enacting these changes may require some soul searching on the part of SPA staff.

Sometimes control cannot be given up and the focus group participants felt strongly about this fact. When control cannot be given up dialogue should focus on ways the SPA can work with the stakeholders, while keeping the Area’s mandate and long term ecological integrity goals in the forefront. This is in keeping with the advice of some of the participants who felt that they should be on guard for areas in which they can give up control since this action is well received by the stakeholders.

In the DST all stakeholders are asked to give up some control; however, those who have the most to lose will be the least likely to let go. In keeping with Genuine Dialogue and the Ideal Speech Situation it is hoped that stakeholders who are being treated fairly and are fully engaged will not seek to take advantage of the SPAs and that staff will not need to maintain control through passive aggressive means.

5.5 Concept #3- Voice and Consent

5.5.1 Introduction

In the PowerPoint presentations at the beginning of the focus groups I described the Voice and Consent concepts in the following manner.

- There is a lack of voice, i.e., capacity for differences to be presented and there is too much consent, whereby people give up their own needs and values, usually unknowingly, in favour of the dominant paradigm.
• The alternatives as presented by the DST suggest the need to focus on freeing voice in forums, i.e., allowing differences, questioning the status quo, and seeking to uncover consent, and then replacing it with self-expression.

5.5.2 Too Much Dissent

Participants turned the notion of lack of voice and too much consent on its head as they felt that the problem was not too much consent but too much dissent. The only people they ever seem to hear from are the ones who have issues or complaints. They felt that generally the people who spoke up were from special interest groups, they had particular issues, or they were of a certain personality type, i.e., the ones who like to self-express in public forums. They noted that some people self-express ad nauseam but it is usually the same comment every time they speak up. They also pointed out that some people just seem to like to attend meetings and object even if they have little or no background on the issue.

The dissenters are the most vocal and staff rarely hears from the people who are happy with the protected area. Staff recognized that these people were consenting, but since they hear so many complaint-driven comments indicated that they would be thrilled to receive more positive comments from the consenters. They feel that the public has given them a well-deserved trust and if people consent it is just their way of showing that they approve of the protected area management.

One participant thought that in protected areas they really only want to hear the positive points or the ones that correspond to their own. When stakeholders raise issues or ideas that are diametrically opposed to the protected area’s, the staff doesn’t really listen or they listen only to fulfill their obligation to offer public consultation. Acknowledging this led one participant to describe their stakeholder process as “hollow”.

5.5.3 Heterogeneous Audiences

Focus group participants recognized that different cultures self-express differently and they find it a struggle to understand these different forms of self-expression. This
heterogeneous audience requires a variety of different forums to reach all the different personality and cultural types. Staff members acknowledged that there may be better ways to reach these different groups but that resources limit their options. One participant questioned whether they may need to pay people to get their input, especially people from groups that do not typically get involved.

5.5.4 Difficulty Balancing Individual Needs against Societal Good

The groups also discussed how difficult it is to deal with opposing voices; they regularly struggle with the balance between social good and the rights of the individual landowners. They acknowledged the need to realize the different values people hold but not necessarily cater to these needs or they risk diluting the protected area’s mandate.

5.5.5 Analysis

The focus group participants felt that there is not a lack of consent but too much dissent; and hearing all this dissent makes them actually appreciate the consenters. They are challenged by the heterogeneous audiences and the opposing values that they have to deal with on a regular basis.

Voice and Consent were the most difficult concepts to discuss at the focus groups, in part due to my limited understanding of them, and the fact that they are from the critical realm and therefore not mainstream ideas.

Under the DST attempts to involve all stakeholders fairly may reduce the number of dissenters and allow the consenters the space to be involved. The dissenters are likely the ones with the most to benefit from a perpetuation of the status quo and their underlying motives must be revealed. Recognizing that politics is involved is an important first step. Looking beyond the dissenters may seem like a counterproductive move but this act acknowledges that there are more stakeholders out there than the proverbial squeaky wheels.

Heterogeneous stakeholder groups seem like a unique feature of SPAs, as they are located within the growing exurban areas, as compared to the more homogenous groups found around the more remote protected areas. This fact must be accepted by SPA staff
and dealt with as creatively as possible. There is also a need to recognize that all people are unique and that heterogeneity will likely become the norm.

The difficulty of balancing individual rights against societal good was unfortunately relegated to a limited portion of the focus group discussion. This is truly a wicked problem and one of the most important ones SPAs face. Room to address the issue in this thesis is limited; other than to acknowledge that SPA staff needs to be aware that while they may be coming from a biocentric worldview, the various stakeholders are likely to be more anthropocentric in their views.

The biocentric worldview seeks to fulfill Aldo Leopold’s land ethic which states that, “A land ethic changes the role of Homo sapiens from conqueror of the land community to plain member and citizen of it” (Cited in Alexander 1990, p. 162). Like the DST, the biocentric worldview is a critical perspective, and its proponents are typically alienated from the majority who subscribe to the more common anthropocentric paradigm in which humans are given elevated status over the rest of nature.

The EBM paradigm evolved to bring these two sides together; however, so far it has failed, in part due to the fact that to the anthropocentric-oriented stakeholders even EBM may be too radical or too biocentric. The bioregionalism discourse also attempts to bring the two sides together, although it is also mainly a biocentric view and therefore may seem radical to the human-centred majority (Alexander 1990; Berthold-Bond 2002; Diffenderfer 1997; McGinnis 2000; McTaggart 1993; Sale 1985, 2001).

How these seemingly disparate worldviews can merge; an action which would greatly assist SPA staff, remains to be seen and until then these wicked issues will continue to vex SPAs.

5.6 Concept #4- Forums

5.6.1 Introduction

In the PowerPoint presentations at the beginning of the focus groups I described the Forum concept in the following manner.

- The problem is the emphasis on the types and numbers of forums (e.g., open houses, online surveys, suggestion boxes, mail in surveys, etc.) to
the detriment of the content being discussed and the discussion is often bland due to the homogeneity of the group.

- Alternatives to meet all needs, based on the DST, included: enabling equal access to stakeholder forums, providing a variety and increased number of stakeholder forums, focusing on opportunities for discussion and meaningful interaction at forums, aiming for diversity and not just providing more forums.
- “A communication process in which there is a discussion where everyone merely has a say is quite different from one where all reach and commit to a decision together” (Deetz & Brown 2004).

### 5.6.2 Successful Forums

All participants felt that they were much better now at providing a variety of different types of forums to reach their varied audiences. Typical forums mentioned by the focus group participants include: education programs, joint agency projects, written comments in various forms, and informal methods.

Education programs were acknowledged to be the best way to reach youth, also referred to as, “the stakeholders of tomorrow”. Participants believe that with education regarding the value of protected areas the children will care for and be knowledgeable about protected areas when they are older. One focus group acknowledged that they may have missed the boat with “Joe Average” in the short term, and that the only short term solution was to work with local politicians on mutually beneficial projects.

Joint agency collaborations were described as tremendous forums for working with special groups. Homeowners Associations were described as an excellent intermediary between the protected area and local homeowners while Advisory Committees provided external input into park operations.

Written comments from stakeholders were considered valuable as they provide a means for the quieter types to comment, they force people to think before speaking, they help keep control in a public forum, they take advantage of computer and Internet technology, and they can be submitted anonymously. Focus group participants pointed
out that they still need to reach the people where they are at, e.g., since most people in the community do not visit the park office it doesn’t make sense to include comment cards at this location.

Participants believe that they are being less insular and that they do more informal work with stakeholders now. Informal involvement included: phone calls, emails, chatting while working side by side with stakeholders, staying late after a session to talk and so on. On a day to day basis they consult more with stakeholders and recognize that this reaching out will be valuable in the long term as stakeholders may become influential protected area champions at key times, such as during the budget approval process. One participant noted that these informal interactions still involved time that he felt he didn’t have.

5.6.3 Barriers

Despite offering more and different types of forums, participants still believe there are key barriers keeping them from doing their best.

They mentioned that they know there are better techniques to use but they lack the resources to use them. Drama, an ongoing newsletter, and a local call-in radio talk show were mentioned as tools they thought would work for them but indicated that at current resource levels they would not be able to try them. They explained that when they do try new techniques these are an “extra” and are the first thing to “fall off the table” when they have to attend to their “real work”.

In many cases the forum types are dictated by the agency and these may or may not be suitable for the specific protected area. The protected area employees noted that they need the flexibility to be able to cater the stakeholder processes to their particular audiences. They felt that many times the forums are still focused mainly on fulfilling their obligation to offer stakeholder consultation, and not on the discussion or outcomes.

Lastly, finding ways to reach the apathetic people or those who don’t have the time is a major forum-related issue. Focus group participants did point out that people respond better to special issues rather than ongoing management topics.
5.6.4 Analysis

Forums have increased in variety and type; however, lack of resources, agency control and apathy all act as barriers to more complete stakeholder involvement in the opinions of the focus group participants.

It was encouraging to hear of the many and varied successful stakeholder forums currently being used at SPAs and sharing ideas among these protected areas may help to make better use of limited resources. It was clear that each SPA has unique needs and therefore stakeholder strategies should be site specific, rather than using the current agency-wide formula.

Informal stakeholder forums, e.g., phone calls, emails, casual personal contact, were discussed at both focus groups and there was recognition of the value of this relationship building as an ongoing and extremely valuable stakeholder forum. Including this form of stakeholder involvement as part of an overall stakeholder strategy may be a way to capture the importance of this ongoing relationship building.

Stakeholders seem more drawn to specific issue-oriented forums rather than general ones and this suggests that SPA may want to choose their battles and not saturate the stakeholders with constant issue bombardment. For example, in terms of prioritizing, most internal management issues may be best dealt with by the staff and agency, and stakeholder involvement saved for external, ecosystem-based issues.

5.7 Concept #5- Conflict and Negotiation

5.7.1 Introduction

In the PowerPoint presentations at the beginning of the focus groups I described the Conflict and Negotiation concepts in the following manner.

- Conflict is often suppressed in our attempt to be conciliatory in stakeholder forums.
- The DST suggests that conflict should be allowed to emerge as this action will result in more creative and better solutions. Fostering conflicts and tensions will also bring balance.
• Official negotiation techniques should be used in all stakeholder processes.

5.7.2 Suppress Conflict

The term conflict was cause for confusion since it seemed to mean something different to each person. Some participants perceived conflict as negative and to be avoided at all costs, while others felt it was positive and to be encouraged.

Those participants who felt it should be suppressed were in the majority and the general consensus seemed to be that conflict was suppressed at the agency level. The agencies had unwritten mandates to avoid unpleasantness and to maintain a low profile. Government agencies were seen as handcuffed in terms of their use of conflict as compared to corporations. The agency usually had a designated spokesperson whose job included dealing with conflict and this restricted the role of SPA staff in dealing with conflict and suggested to them that they were not trusted or capable. As government agencies they are also restricted by the whims of different entities and often find themselves caught between two different departments with two different mandates, e.g., one department encourages protecting wetlands and another one encourages filling them for use as agricultural lands. One person very clearly stated that conflict should not be encouraged if the resources to handle it are not available. She claimed that it is better for an agency to be unknown and ignored than hated with a burning passion, “Stay under the radar, stay low.” Encouraging conflict was taboo for staff as it was seen to be a “CLM-Career Limiting Move”.

Participants also noted that conflict could be suppressed by individuals. For example, staff or volunteers who have been in place for awhile may suppress conflict as they wish to maintain the status quo and/or their control. Staff may also unknowingly be encouraging conflict if they take their mandate and responsibility too seriously and are too rigid to acknowledge other views.
5.7.3 Allow Conflict

A few participants felt that conflict should be allowed and that it would result in better solutions. One enthusiastically claimed, “Bring it on.” They discussed the criteria that must be met in order to work effectively with conflict. First, staff members need conflict management and negotiation skills in order to be confident and capable in conflict situations. Secondly, the stakeholders need to know the rules for conflict management and agree to follow them in order to maintain some semblance of control in a conflict-enabled stakeholder forum. Third, if a potentially conflict laden position is taken by staff they need to ensure that as a group they are consistent and coordinated in their messages.

5.7.4 Analysis

Conflict means different things to different people and while most felt it should be suppressed, some felt it should be encouraged under the right circumstances. Conflict was also a difficult discussion item as some respondents tended to shy away from the topic, facilitator included.

If conflict is to be encouraged, staff must feel prepared for it and heed Deetz’ advice to take training in conflict resolution and negotiation. Outside facilitators trained in conflict resolution may be better suited to lead some conflict laden situations. These external resources have added value in that they may also be perceived as less biased than protected area staff. Since resources for external facilitators are likely limited, SPAs may be able to facilitate sessions for each other, although they may still be perceived as biased.

5.8 Concept #6- Collaboration and Participation

5.8.1 Introduction

In the PowerPoint presentations at the beginning of the focus groups I described the Collaboration and Participation concepts in the following manner.
• The current collaborative ways of working with stakeholders do not always work and people need and want a new model of stakeholder involvement.

• The DST states that, “Collaboration focuses on the reaching of a common understanding and mutual commitment to a decision by focusing on the ends to be achieved rather than the preferred means of achievement or present positions.”

• Opportunities for equal participation should be provided since all stakeholders deserve to be heard, not just those with the loudest megaphones. The overall goal is not to hear what all have to say but to include all relevant points and interests.

• Deetz calls for a shift to participative democracy as representative democracy is counter to the premise of dialogic communication. He believes that all stakeholders should enter a process without a stake in the ground.

5.8.2 Defining Stakeholders

Defining SPA stakeholders is problematic as almost everyone can be considered a stakeholder since the land has been set aside as a public trust. The focus group participants consider SPAs to be hampered by this broad identification of stakeholders, compared to corporations who are seen to be accountable to the stockholders only. Keeping up with the existing identified stakeholders is already overwhelming and will become more complex as the number of local homeowners and land uses around SPAs continue to increase. This will be an ongoing issue for SPAs.

5.8.3 Partnerships

Closely linked partnerships are seen as an important means of collaboration, although they are recognized as a double edged sword. For example, a Park Friends group may cause confusion regarding roles but are still valuable as they increase
stakeholder involvement, and reduce costs and duplication. Partnerships involving surrounding land use agencies provide an ideal means for interagency cooperation and communication, although multi-jurisdictional protected areas seem to cause confusion for the users who are often unclear about the different rules on the different properties. Regional coordinating groups were seen as a worthwhile collaborative effort but also cause confusion and are difficult to keep together. Partnerships may also include joint education initiatives and the participants felt they could be involved in more of these to reduce duplication and make better use of limited educational resources. Joint projects may also help dissenting groups see things from each other’s perspectives and reduce the animosity between them.

Direct contact with stakeholders is seen as the best means of communication as this reduces the communication errors and allows more opportunity for relationship building. One participant noted how excited he is when someone calls him up and asks how “We” are going to solve the problem, not how “You” are going to take care of it. To him this is a sure sign collaboration is occurring and that the partnerships are working.

5.8.4 Lip Service to Collaboration

Lastly, an agency may support collaboration and participation in theory but not provide the resources to make it reality. This lip service is frustrating for staff members who want to see a more open and collaborative process, and seemingly have the support for this agenda, only to discover that it is an extra to their already overcrowded daily agenda. In some participant’s opinions their agency has not reached the point where the consequences for not collaborating are dire enough to force them to undertake it. The staff feels they are lacking support from the organization to enact true collaboration; instead they have a process that is hollow, disingenuous and a charade.

One participant described their new process, which sounds distinctly like the old process:

We are no longer doing the old style of consultation. We are being more collaborative, i.e., we give them all the information and let them come to the same conclusion we did.
5.8.5 *Analysis*

Problems in collaboration and participation include the difficulty with defining stakeholders, the issues involved in joint partnerships, and agencies paying only lip service to stakeholder involvement.

Defining stakeholders is not a SPA specific issue as the sheer number of articles devoted to this topic in the business ethics literature can attest (Donaldson 2002). Some focus group participants seemed to have a naïve notion that corporations have it easier since they are only responsible to their stockholders. Obviously, the corporate world is very interested in the stakeholder model as evidenced by the voluminous business ethics discourse on the topic (Freeman 1984; Freeman & Phillips 2002; Hasnas 1998; Smith 2003). All organizations face the dilemma of how widely to define stakeholders and once defined how to work with them.

A wide definition of stakeholders seems most suitable for SPAs, with this caution in mind, “but in a stakeholder world, a corporation could easily become accountable to almost anyone or everyone; as is well known, an organization that is accountable to all easily becomes accountable to no one” (Gregg 2001, p. 4).

SPA staff and volunteers are important human resources and should be included in any definition of stakeholders. The “strong dedication of stewards” including staff and volunteers, was one of the most highly rated attributes of excellence to emerge from the Curthoys Brown study (1995). The importance of these people cannot be underestimated.

Joint partnerships have both pros and cons. Working with the community was recognized as an important characteristic of excellence for SPAs (Curthoys Brown 1995), therefore it may be prudent to plan for community related partnerships in a proactive manner. This would give the protected area an opportunity to determine strategies that will best work for them and allow them to avoid, “trying to be everything to everybody.” Through partnerships and networks SPAs can increase their ecological boundaries, even if not their political boundaries (Curthoys Brown 1995). Partnerships are also an important means of overcoming the shortage of staff, time and funding for SPAs (Brown 1992).
In planning for working with the community the following three groups should be given extra consideration as important stakeholders:

- adjacent landowners, a.k.a. neighbours,
- owners/managers of undeveloped lands,
- land developers and subdivision planners.

As pointed out earlier adjacent landowners can have major impacts on the SPA but they also have the potential to be major champions for the area. Perhaps the use of the term *neighbour* is more appropriate since it implies friendship and watching out for each other. These neighbours are generally wealthy and may at first resist the inclusiveness of the DST; however, this does not discharge the SPAs of their obligations to work with this group in a genuine manner.

Owners or managers of undeveloped surrounding land, e.g., other nature preserves, public lands, resource extraction areas, are important stakeholders who should be given more attention as these lands provide a physical extension to the SPA. The SPA should be involved in some manner in any planned changes to these areas as the developments will have major impacts on the SPA.

Developers and subdivision planners seem to be generally ignored and yet this group should not be, as they literally change the face of the landscape. On this note, one of the respondents exclaimed, “We are missing the boat on this one…early, early tapping into these developers.” Being in touch with them in the early planning stages may provide the SPA with the avenue to forward their concerns regarding the environmental impacts of the developments. The DST requires delving in more depth into the political landscape and may require the SPAs to become more political themselves. Accepting that developers and planners exist does not imply that the SPA approves of their plans. A more proactive approach, including making known their concerns, is preferable to a silence that is more often than not taken as tacit approval. One respondent noted that his protected area was being used as leverage by stakeholders seeking their own ends. To turn this around into a win-win scenario requires the SPA to be more active in advocating their own needs.
Partnerships, despite the issues, seem like an ideal opportunity for SPAs to be involved in landscape scale initiatives that are essential to their future ecological viability. As only one of the stakeholders, the process will be out of the control of the SPA staff; however this can be seen as an opportunity to build relationships, create trust and advance the DST and its principles!

The focus groups were very useful as they generated interesting discussion and raised many points for consideration in transferring the DST to the SPA setting, including many of the questions listed in Tables 9 and 10.

5.9 Conclusion

Based on the interviews and focus groups, I generated the following six conclusions:

1. SPA staff members are supportive of the EBM approach, but it is not being fully used in practice for a variety of reasons.

2. SPA staff members believe there is need for a new approach to working with stakeholders and they generally supported the DST as a new approach.

3. SPA staff members are supportive of the DST elements of Information, Forums, Collaboration and Participation, but barriers to full implementation exist:
   - lack of agency support,
   - lack of resources; especially time and money,
   - existing stakeholders,
   - lack of knowledge and skills on their part,
   - lack of agency vision that includes an important role for the SPA within the physical and social landscapes.

4. SPA staff were not fully supportive of the DST elements of Control, Voice and Consent, and Conflict and Negotiation, and they noted these issues:
   - control belongs to the agency and cannot be given up, it is the job of the staff to keep control, when control is given up it should be under staff control,
• they do not want to encourage more voices as the many voices they already hear are difficult enough to deal with,
• consenters are welcome, since dissenters are the most vocal,
• conflict is suppressed and discouraged by their agencies, and they are uncomfortable with conflict.

5. These barriers and issues are real and must be taken seriously; however, the agencies and staff themselves can be seen as contributing to the issues.

6. The DST has validity as an approach to working with stakeholders at SPAs, provided staff members and others are open to change.
Chapter Six: Frameworks and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of the thesis was to develop a framework that included both EBM and DST and was suitable for the SPA setting. Upon compilation of the results it was apparent that such a framework should include a combination of SPA context identification, EBM considerations, general recommendations based on Interview and Focus Group Results, and the six DST elements of Information, Control, Voice and Consent, Forum, Conflict and Negotiation, and Collaboration and Participation, plus reference to Genuine Dialogue.

As per EBM principles two Frameworks have emerged: one focusing on the role of the SPA in the physical landscape, the other focusing on the SPA in the social landscape, using the DST as a guide. Both Frameworks will now be described, including recommendations that summarize the research resulting from the thesis, and the questions required to operationalize the frameworks.

The questions in Tables 9 and 10 were produced through a review of all the relevant theories and ideas generated in the thesis, with strong emphasis on EBM, DST and the participant’s feedback. I did not want to create another cookbook for EBM or stakeholder operations; hence, the provision of questions to guide SPA managers, and not the answers. As noted previously, each SPA is in a unique context within its physical and social landscapes; therefore, specific guidance is not a feasible outcome of this thesis. It is my hope that the questions enable the SPAs to each create their own strategies that are sensitive to their own needs and context.

6.2 Framework #1- The SPA in the Physical Landscape

6.2.1 Introduction

In Framework #1 (Figure 4) the SPA is shown near the centre of the landscape protected by a jagged buffer, with the surrounding grey area representing the physical landscape in which the area is embedded, including human developments. The white
circles represent potential habitat nodes with the black lines representing linkages between these areas and the SPA and to potential habitat areas beyond the ecosystem boundary. The broken exterior line highlights the flexible ecosystem boundary.

**Figure 4 Framework #1- The SPA in the Biophysical Landscape**

- **Physical Landscape (including human developments)**
- **Legend for Framework #1**
  - Dark grey area= physical landscape, including human developments
  - Black lines= Corridors or linkages between habitat nodes
  - Broken exterior line= flexible ecosystem boundaries
6.2.2 Framework #1- Components and Recommendations

The SPA in the Physical Landscape

Regardless of size, a SPA that has been set aside to protect environmental features must be seen as part of the landscape, since on its own it is too small to maintain ecological integrity over the long term. A new Vision of the SPA as an important part of the landscape, an EBM Policy, and an EBM Plan are three critical elements in the achievement of this objective.

In order to see the SPA as an important part of the landscape, a new dominant paradigm is required. This will necessitate a shift in worldviews from the prevailing anthropocentric, human-centred view, to a more ecocentric, earth-centred view. The shift need not be extreme and the most realistic end result would likely be a central meeting point. This will require proponents from each side to shift worldviews as they acknowledge each other’s perspectives. This shift recognizes that the best we can hope for is a blend of development and protection on the landscape. In this central worldview scenario the SPA would be given some recognition and consideration.

In my opinion, a paradigm shift towards considering ecological integrity as a management goal on the landscape, not just at protected areas, is worth considering in more depth. I have always been intrigued by John Livingston’s suggestion that we consider the whole environment (in the Arctic) to be a protected area and allow development enclaves on a case by case basis only (Dearden 1993). Discussion around this idea, and other topics such as NIMBY, scale issues, sustainable development, and ecosystem boundaries, should be encouraged on a regional scale as part of a visioning exercise.

Upon completion of a Vision for the SPA, a directly related EBM Policy should be crafted. Policies are important guiding documents for SPA staff, and this tool should be used to its fullest extent. As noted by one respondent, policies need to provide direction, but they should be general enough not to be stifling; neither should they be
seen as the bare minimum. Creating or modifying an EBM Policy based on the work in this thesis would give SPAs the start they need for securing their place in the landscape and help to provide recognition for both the environment within and outside the protected area.

The EBM Policy may be given another name; however, it is important that it includes an active role for the SPA in the broader landscape, that it is written down and widely distributed, and that it includes stakeholders in all aspects of development and realization. The name of the protected area should be examined as part of the policy development process, since it may be appropriate to change a protected area’s name to better reflect the protection mandate.

Agreeing to undertake the development of a stakeholder-informed EBM Policy would show agency support for the principles of ecosystem-based management, recognize the role of the SPA as one component in a bigger system, and also recognize the value of stakeholder involvement. As described earlier, government agencies may have a more difficult time making these changes; however, as Deetz points out it is the daily micro-practice changes that really make a difference.

Directly flowing from the EBM Policy should be a protected area specific Management Plan; also created with stakeholder input and written down to give it due weighting. SPAs rely heavily on management plans; and this medium should also be used to its full advantage. Since management plans are generally required for SPAs the extra time commitment for this shift to an EBM plan need not be extensive.

If possible, the protection mandate should be elevated above the other required mandates, rather than seeing it as just one of many directives. This will require the agency to take a firm stand towards key protection issues, while being open to potential modifications on other issues. The Management Plan should also include a comprehensive identification of the current context of the SPA, e.g., threats and opportunities, and issues and impacts. It should also include strong support for stakeholder involvement at planning time as well as for ongoing relationship building and informal stakeholder interactions. This may help staff to fit stakeholders in as part of their work, rather than them being an extra task.
Crafting a new Vision, and developing an EBM Policy and Plan may be areas in which enlightened SPA managers can take the lead and encourage an agency-wide change; recognizing that as Chase (2001, p. 8) points out, “Institutional transformation is complex and multi-faceted; it involves people in every level of the agency as well as outside the agency, and it takes years to accomplish.” These documents may already exist at a SPA and may only need modifications using an EBM lens.

**Corridors, Buffers and Habitat Nodes**

As described in the conservation biology literature and by the participants; habitat linkages or wildlife corridors, buffers, and a less fragmented landscape are required in order to maintain the SPA’s ecological integrity into the future. Due to limited resources, SPAs will need to be open to using creative means to achieving these goals.

Corridors or linkages are seen as an important means of expanding the biophysical benefits of the SPA, since they allow for wildlife and plant movement across the landscape. Consideration must be given to where the linkages lead, since it is not very constructive to lead the wildlife towards a building or into a freeway! Habitat nodes may include people’s backyards or agricultural fields; they do not have to be officially designated protected areas. Considering corridors and habitat nodes within the scope of regional planning will benefit the environment in general and not only the SPA.

Buffers around the SPA are shown as jagged in the framework since they will likely be variable in size and shape. They may consist of extra land designated as protected area, or privately owned land with limits on use and development. At SPAs where the houses already back onto the protected area a neighbour program can be developed to encourage the view that the adjacent backyards are an extension of the park, not the other way around.

**6.2.3 Operationalizing Framework #1**

In an attempt to operationalize the preceding framework I created a series of questions for managers of SPAs to ask themselves when thinking about the SPA in the
surrounding physical landscape. The questions have been divided into the elements described above, and answers to the questions may form the beginnings of a Vision, EBM Policy and EBM Plan for the SPA.

Table 9 Framework #1 Components and Questions for Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENT – THE SPA IN THE PHYSICAL LANDSCAPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. What is our vision for the SPA? What do we think it will look like in 5, 10, 20 and 100 years? What do we want it to look like in 5, 10, 20 or 100 years?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What role do we see the SPA playing in the landscape?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do we want to take a different view of the landscape and how can we do this?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. How can we encourage others to view the landscape differently?</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. What is the current context of the SPA, including the surrounding physical and human landscapes?</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. How do we define the boundaries of our ecosystem? Is this a flexible enough description? How can we change it?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. How can we best achieve a heterogeneous landscape?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. What challenges do we face with regard to the surrounding physical landscape?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. What issues and impacts do we face? Use the Issues and Impacts Matrix below to identify them:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Increased use of protected area:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C. Increased use of surrounding landscape:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. What are the priority challenges, threats, issues and impacts?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. How can we turn threats and challenges into opportunities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. What can we do to reduce landscape fragmentation?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. What rare plants or animals can be found in the landscape? What can we do to protect them and use them as focal points?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. What native habitat is intact or suitable for restoration efforts?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. How can we share our successes with others?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. What limitations does our agency place on us and how can we work within them?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. What external initiatives can we start to help the SPA in the long term? What will our long term role be in these initiatives?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
18. In what ways can community development and SPA management planning work together?

19. What are the long term regional plans for the landscape and how can we be involved? How can we encourage less landscape fragmentation and reduced road building?

20. How can we encourage use of the Precautionary Principle?

21. What wicked problems do we face and how do we plan to overcome them?

22. How is the SPA impacted by each of: the local, regional, national and international scales?

23. What are our mandates? How high is the protection mandate? Can we elevate it?

24. Do we have an existing EBM policy? Does it include environments internal and external to the SPA? How can we modify it to include more emphasis on the external environment?

25. What landscape scale initiatives are we now involved in? Are they successful? Should we consider other initiatives?

26. What is the current state of our management plan? Can we update it ASAP and include EBM principles?

27. How can we use Grumbine’s six themes related to biophysical elements of EBM:
   - hierarchical context,
   - ecological boundaries,
   - ecological integrity,
   - data collection,
   - adaptive management,
   - monitoring?

### COMPONENT- CORRIDORS, BUFFERS AND HABITAT NODES

1. Are wildlife corridors possible? How else can we achieve connection to other habitat areas?

2. What can we do to achieve habitat connections via wildlife corridors?

3. What can we do to achieve a buffer on our borders?

4. If all the surrounding land is already developed, how can we improve the existing situation to create the effects of a buffer?

5. What habitat in the surrounding landscape is important for our area to be connected to? How can we use spatial modeling and other tools to identify critical habitat?

6. What role can the private lands play in the landscape? What tools and incentives are available for private landowners? How can we share this information?
7. What impacts is the nearby growing city going to have on us? How can we be proactive regarding these impacts?

6.3 Framework #2- The SPA in the Social Landscape

6.3.1 Introduction

Framework #2 (Figure 5) represents the SPA within the social landscape. In this framework the SPA and its jagged buffer are shown near the centre, while the grey area now represents the social landscape which is made up of stakeholders and the political and control issues that accompany them. In recognition of the critical role Control plays in relation to all elements of stakeholder interactions it was elevated in stature and shown as the base upon which all other elements are embedded. The SPA is shown off centre to denote that it is not the focal point or most critical element of the social landscape -- although SPA staff may disagree. The white circles represent the remaining five elements of the DST that must be considered in genuine stakeholder interactions. The black lines represent the Genuine Dialogue that is required to bind all the components together into a cohesive whole, including stakeholders from beyond the official boundary. The broken exterior line indicates the flexible boundaries of the social landscape.

6.3.2 Framework #2- Components and Recommendations

The SPA in the Social Landscape

As in Framework #1 a SPA that has been set aside to protect environmental features has to be seen as part of the landscape, since on its own it is too small to maintain ecological integrity over the long term. Being part of the physical landscape involves interacting with the social landscape. This involvement can be reactive or proactive; with the latter preferred due to its ability to help SPA staff save time in the long term and be prepared for potential issues. Proactively involving stakeholders involves relationship building and networking; two actions that can provide ongoing support to SPAs.
A Stakeholder Strategy is an important tool enabling a SPA to be proactive. This policy should flow from the Vision, EBM Policy and protected area specific EBM Management Plan discussed in the preceding section. All four should be directly linked, protected area specific, and involve stakeholders in development and implementation. They should be endorsed at the agency level to ensure a degree of consistency among sites but be specific enough to work at the park level. Key stakeholder groups to give extra consideration in the strategy development should include the adjacent landowners, developers/planners and landowners of undeveloped lands. The agency’s image should be also addressed through the Stakeholder Strategy development.

Figure 5 Framework #2- The SPA in the Social Landscape

Legend for Framework #2
Dark grey= Social Landscape, i.e., Stakeholders and Control
Black lines= Genuine Dialogue, required to connect all elements
Broken exterior line= flexible social boundaries
Stakeholders

Based on the research for this thesis, stakeholder identification is critical and a broad definition of stakeholders is recommended for a SPA, where many people are affected by or affect the protected area. Although developing and maintaining a list can be an onerous task, it is required to build relationships and attempt to keep stakeholders informed and involved.

The Stakeholder Strategy should include time for staff to build stakeholder relationships on an ongoing basis, and to work with stakeholders in an informal manner, i.e., day to day contacts.

The term *stakeholder* suggests that a stake is firmly planted in the ground and I believe that based on the principles of the DST this term should be replaced with one that does not imply taking such a firm stand. Instead, participants in a collaborative process should be willing to listen to others, be open to changes and fully engage as partners in creating new meaning together.

Other stakeholder considerations are addressed in Table 10.

Control

As covered previously, Control is seen as not just one element of the DST but the element that underlies all stakeholder interactions and necessitates the need for the DST. From this perspective Control must be addressed prior to addressing other stakeholder issues. Control related issues include the control the agency maintains over the employees, the control the employees seek to obtain or maintain over each other and the stakeholders and the control the stakeholders seek to obtain or maintain over the agency, the staff or each other. Tackling the Control issue involves accepting that politics exist, and seeking to uncover the relevant issues and self interests of the stakeholders. These must be tempered against the needs of the protected area.

Along with other managers, SPA staff members are victims of managerialism, liberal rights, and the command and control management philosophy. In order to break
free from these shackles SPA staff needs a new management philosophy and practical techniques for implementing the new philosophy.

Deetz attempts to level the playing field by uncovering Control and seeking to replace it with open relationships; however, in reality there will always be uneven relationships and those who are unwilling to give up power and control. As a normative theory the DST appeals to people’s higher morals, altruism and a belief in a better world. Acknowledging that control is an issue at SPAs is an important first step.

Five Elements of the DST

Each of the five elements of the DST was considered important by the participants although to varying degrees and for different reasons. Information and Forum were the two elements with the least variance between my interpretation of the theory and the participant’s views. Voice and Consent seemed to be the least understood of the elements; however, due to the strong emphasis on Control in the DST these elements are considered important for SPA staff to seek to better understand, and incorporate into their operations.

Conflict was cause for confusion and differing opinions; however, Negotiation was considered important. The DST favours releasing conflict and while this seemed like it would be difficult to achieve within the agency climate, it is still worth considering as a valuable way to expose control. All participants agreed that Collaboration and Participation are necessary strategies for SPAs and many noted that they were already using various collaborative approaches. The DST challenges these people to continue to offer collaboration but temper it with attention to the other elements of the DST.

Genuine Dialogue

Genuine Dialogue is shown as a critical element connecting all the others. This involves seeking face to face communication whenever possible, aiming for the Ideal Speech Situation and freeing voice as described earlier. For Genuine Dialogue to occur it is important that the liberal, humanist view of talking is explored in more depth and replaced with a more open dialogue based on equal rights to participate.
6.3.3 Operationalizing Framework #2

In an attempt to operationalize the preceding framework I created a series of questions for managers of SPAs to ask themselves when thinking about the SPA in the surrounding social landscape, i.e., related to working with stakeholders. The questions have been divided into the components described above, and answers to the questions may form the beginnings of a Stakeholder Strategy for the SPA.

Table 10 Framework #2 Components and Questions for Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENT- THE SPA IN THE SOCIAL LANDSCAPE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How can we use the six social themes of EBM as identified by Grumbine and others:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• interagency cooperation,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• organizational change,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• humans embedded in nature,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• values,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• communication,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• education?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. What challenges do we face in regard to the social landscape surrounding the SPA?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. How can we change these challenges to opportunities?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. How can we more actively involve people as stewards of the land and encourage them to take ownership for the SPA and the surrounding landscape?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How much are we impacted by liberalism, managerialism and distorted communication in our interactions?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COMPONENT- STAKEHOLDERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. How do we define stakeholders now, i.e., who do we consider to be stakeholders?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Why do we think working with stakeholders is important?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do we privilege some stakeholders over others? Who and why?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do we have a Stakeholder Policy or Plan?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Note- If yes, evaluate it. If no, create one!

5. What are our plans for ongoing stakeholder involvement, i.e., relationship building?
6. What is our current image with our stakeholders? How can we improve this image?
7. How would we like to define stakeholders, i.e., who do we think our stakeholders should be?
   Note- Define stakeholders in 2 main groups: those we affect and those who affect us.
8. How can we reach the ones who do not seem to want to be involved? How much effort should we put into this task?
9. Who do we consider to be irrelevant stakeholders and should we reconsider? Why or why not?
10. What are the priority issues we need or want to include stakeholders in?
11. How can we let stakeholders know that we recognize their right to be involved?
12. How can we involve stakeholders from the very beginning?
13. How can we make use of a group of interested stakeholders, i.e., a Friends group or Advisory Committee?
   Note- Consider naming the group appropriately based on their role, i.e., collaborative committee, stakeholder committee, other?
14. Who will likely be champions for us and how can we cultivate the relationships?
15. How can we work better with our adjacent landowners?
   Note- Consider calling them Neighbours as a friendlier term.
16. How can we work better with developers/planners?
17. How can we work better with owners/managers of surrounding undeveloped land?
18. How can we plan for the heterogeneous stakeholders we now have or will have?
19. Have we included staff and volunteers as stakeholders? How can we make best use of these groups?
20. How can we reduce the time spent on list upkeep?
   Notes- Consider sharing lists with other agencies (within freedom of information regulations) or having people update their own info via online forms.

COMPONENT- CONTROL and POLITICS

1. What is the political climate we are embedded in?
   Note- Acknowledging that there are politics does not make us more political, it just means accepting what is happening around us.
2. In what ways can we see control underlying interactions:
   • by the agency,
• by staff and volunteers,
• by management,
• by stakeholders?

3. What groups or individuals are trying to dominate and how can we counter this domination?

4. How can we uncover the control and better work with others?

5. As managers do we lead or control?

6. How much control do we have with stakeholders, i.e., mandated by the agency?

7. Within our agencies, how can we increase our authority to work with stakeholders?

8. In what areas can we give up control?

9. What is keeping people from being open to change?

10. In what areas can we absolutely not give up control? Why?

11. How will we address the areas in which we cannot give up control?

12. How can we ensure we are treating the stakeholders fairly?

13. Can we use an external facilitator rather than run a forum ourselves, to reduce control?

14. What changes to our daily micro-practices can we make to uncover and release control?

---

**COMPONENT- INFORMATION**

1. Who is this information best serving?

2. Whose language is this information written in?

3. Are all stakeholders represented in the information?

4. What kinds of information do we now use?

5. What kinds of information should we use?

6. How can we ensure the information gets to the stakeholders in a timely manner?

7. How can we ensure it is accurate and unbiased?

8. Who can we get to review it in an impartial manner?

9. How can we best share it with our stakeholder groups?

10. How can we ensure it is not perpetuating the status quo?

11. How can we make use of electronic technologies, without overdoing it?

12. How can education be used to assist in our stakeholder dealings?

13. How can we ensure that the education efforts are not merely tools of control?
14. How can information and education be used to help people change their minds, when necessary?
15. How can we help staff members/volunteers/stakeholders to be constantly learning?
16. How can we share more information between agencies?
17. How can we better work with the media to avoid misrepresentation?
18. How can we reduce our control of information when necessary?
19. How can we make better use of the Internet without overusing this tool?
20. In what ways can we better communicate science to the non-scientific world?

**COMPONENT- CONFLICT AND NEGOTIATION**

1. How do we want to define conflict, i.e., how extreme or mild?
2. What groups/individuals are likely to be in conflict with each other and us? Why? What is the history behind each?
3. How do we want to deal with each situation, i.e., what is our conflict strategy?
4. How can we avoid avoiding them?
5. How can we release conflict, i.e., expose it and deal with it?
6. Have we seen creativity emerge from a conflict situation?
7. How can we recognize that everyone is unique and allow for this in our operations?
8. Who can we contact to act as conflict negotiator?
9. Is staff trained in negotiation techniques?
10. How can we best relate the rules of conflict to the group?
11. How might we as staff be causing conflict?
12. What can we do to foster debate and creativity?
13. How can we help to open society and our institutions to debate and creativity?
14. How different does conflict look if we consider it conflict management rather than conflict resolution?
15. How can we enter an age of negotiation?

**COMPONENT- FORUMS**

**Types and Numbers**

1. What types of forums are we now using?
2. What ones work best at reaching the stakeholders?
3. What forums do we think will work best for each stakeholder group?
4. How many forums do we need to have and how many people do we want to reach?
5. How can we be sure we are reaching our stakeholders with information on the forums, i.e., so they know how they can participate?
6. How can we make better use of informal forums, i.e., day to day activities, chatting, phone calls and so on?
7. How can we reach people where they are at?
8. How can we provide equal access to reduce any barriers to participation?
9. Who can we turn to for assistance with new forums we would like to try?
10. How can we avoid the number game, i.e., offering stakeholder forums just to generate numbers for management?

Running Forums
1. How do we currently run our forums?
2. How can we run them to be less controlling?
3. How can we improve the content of the forums to ensure more voice and less consent?
4. How can we use informal forums, i.e., ongoing communication, to our advantage?
5. How can we ensure no one/group is dominating?
6. How do we keep people on track and discussing relevant topics? Is it critical that they be kept on track? Who decides what is relevant?
7. How do we now suppress debate? How do we encourage debate?
8. How do we suppress creativity? How do we encourage creativity?
9. How can we make sure we include information on the process and the issues?

COMPONENT- VOICE AND CONSENT

1. Where is the common ground between us and the dissenters?
   Note- Use this common ground as a starting point!
2. What voices are we hearing loudest?
3. How can we work with these dissenters?
4. How can we help to create more satisfied stakeholders and fewer dissenters?
5. How can we encourage people to share their positive stories and not just their issues?
6. What voices are likely being suppressed or distorted?
7. How can we free the suppressed voices?
8. How can we use forums to free voice?
9. Who is consenting? How can we tell who is consenting?
10. How can we overcome the consent?
11. What politics are behind the consenters and dissenters?

12. How can we develop relationships of trust and respect?

13. How can we acknowledge that all people are unique and that heterogeneity is the norm?

COMPONENT- COLLABORATION AND PARTICIPATION

1. Do we want collaboration, e.g., as per the table below highlighting the differences between Adversarial and Collaborative Approaches?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ADVERSARIAL COMMUNICATION</th>
<th>COLLABORATIVE COMMUNICATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Members are adversaries.</td>
<td>Members are joint problem solvers.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking comes from a position or preferred means of accomplishment.</td>
<td>Speaking comes from an outcome wishing to be accomplished.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion becomes polarized around positions.</td>
<td>Dialogue focuses on complex underlying interests.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion narrows options.</td>
<td>Dialogue broadens field of options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facts are used to support positions.</td>
<td>Joint search is used to discover the facts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeks winning arguments.</td>
<td>Seeks workable options.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of the problem is accomplished before meeting.</td>
<td>Definition of the problem is a joint achievement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final responsibility for the decision rests with others.</td>
<td>Final responsibility for the decision rests with the group.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source- (Deetz & Brown 2004, p. 186).

2. What can we do to ensure collaboration?

3. How can we make the best use of the resources we do have?

4. What collaborative models do we currently use? Would we like to continue using them?

Note- Use the DST as a lens through which to view the existing models to determine
changes needed.

5. Who can we call on to help us?
6. How can we work together for reform and with whom?
7. What is stopping us from using a more collaborative model? How can we overcome these barriers?

8. How can we be sure to share both content and process knowledge with our stakeholders?

*Note*—content knowledge is relevant information and process knowledge is information on the processes being used, i.e., the DST.

9. How can we make use of partnerships, interagency cooperation and regional coordinating groups?
10. How can we ensure that we are not just paying lip service to collaboration?
11. Do we want more participation?
12. Do we want participatory democracy or representative democracy? How do we achieve either?
13. How can we encourage more participation? How can we ensure that the other voices are included in the participation?
14. How can we ensure that the collaboration is deep and meaningful?
15. How can we ensure active communication and not just information sharing?
16. How can we account for and overcome society’s lack of support for SPAs, EBM, DST, Genuine Dialogue and Collaboration?
17. How can we encourage discussions into individual rights versus societal good?

**COMPONENT—GENUINE DIALOGUE**

1. How can we ensure that Genuine Dialogue is occurring at all levels?
2. How can we ensure that conditions are right for the Ideal Speech Situation?
3. Is free flowing discussion necessary and if so, how do we ensure it happens? How can we allow time for this kind of discussion?
4. How can we ensure that two-way communications is possible and achievable?
5. How can we better focus on face to face communication?
6. How can we help all stakeholders to better understand each other and be open to change?
7. How can we ensure that meaning is constantly evolving and being created together?
8. When there is a problem, how can we see the problem as the issue, not the individual?
6.4 Amalgamation of the Frameworks

The frameworks have been presented as two different entities; one focuses on the biophysical landscape and the other focuses on the social landscape. In the best interests of the SPAs, and following an EBM approach, these two frameworks must be merged in practice. The merging of these two frameworks is similar to using a pair of binoculars to view the landscape, as shown in Figure 6. In this metaphor the physical and social frameworks represent the two lenses of the binoculars and in order to to view a clear, realistic, three dimensional image of the surrounding landscape both lenses must be aligned and focused. If both frameworks are utilized and merged, the SPA may be able to create a place for itself; one that recognizes its value to both people and the environment. It will not be an easy task to realize these two frameworks, nor to merge them in reality.

Figure 6 Amalgamating the Frameworks
Chapter Seven: Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

In wrapping up the thesis there are a few final points worth considering. The lack of resources, need for SPA networking and staff learning, further study ideas, limitations, and thoughts on the management focus of the thesis will all be briefly addressed before concluding the thesis.

7.2 Overcoming Lack of Resources

Lack of resources is the greatest issue facing SPAs. There is no question that stakeholders take time and will likely require more time in the future. Time will also be required to implement the ideas presented in this document. It is hoped that creating a Vision, EBM Policy and Management Plan, and Stakeholder Strategy, based on the frameworks and management questions, will lead to an elevation of these elements in the everyday work of SPA staff and thus lead to more effective use of existing resources or to increased resources as the SPA receives more support.

Time saving ideas presented by the various participants include:

- sharing resources, skills and experiences among agencies whenever possible,
- planning, prioritizing and following through with plans,
- creating partnerships that enable win-win scenarios,
- brainstorming creative solutions,
- advocating for ongoing stakeholder work to be part of everyone’s job description,
- enacting a stakeholder strategy to improve stakeholder relations and reduce the number of reactive situations,
- taking advantage of the electronic resources available,
- facilitating stakeholder forums sessions for each other.
In the end it is a matter of prioritizing, and if EBM and stakeholders are considered important by SPA agencies and staff, then time and resources will be allocated for them.

7.3 Staff Networking and Learning

SPAs are emerging as a unique subset of protected areas. Due to rapid urban growth and conservation movements, such as the rise in land trusts, the number of SPAs will likely grow. As unique areas they have different and more time sensitive needs than the larger, more remote protected areas. This suggests that there may be the need for a specific networking organization for SPAs. The SPA Network, i.e., SPAN, may act as a bridge to assist SPAs through cross jurisdictional sharing of resources and knowledge, thus reducing the need for each area to reinvent the wheel every time they have an issue. Electronic resources will make this a relatively inexpensive venture. This network may also assist staff to learn more about the DST and other stakeholder processes, share experiences with others facing the same trials, and create a sense of camaraderie as people face the same issues.

Ongoing learning should be encouraged for all staff to remain informed of developments in the sciences and social sciences, including learning more about working with stakeholders through courses or practical experiences. SPA staff will need to evaluate their current leadership styles, question the status quo, and look deeper to uncover the local politics as they seek to give up some control for the long term benefit of the SPA. Increased confidence should emerge from increased learning and experiences.

7.4 Limitations to the Study

Limitations to the methods and the DST have been presented earlier in the document in Sections 2.6 and 3.5.8 respectively. Other limitations to the study also exist.

I recognized early in the study that I was only working with a small percentage of the potential SPAs across North America and within the chosen sample I was only talking with one-two staff members per site. The sites I chose all represented government
agencies since these are the ones most easily discovered on the Internet. Future studies involving more sites, more staff, non-government sites, and non-staff stakeholders would help to overcome these limitations.

The DST was the focus of the study and therefore exploration into other stakeholder theories and practices was limited. The choice to focus on the DST was a practical one and was in no way meant to imply that the DST is the only stakeholder theory worth pursuing at protected areas.

A major limitation consisted of the management focus of the study. As stated in the introductory chapter my experience as a SPA manager was acknowledged and considered to be a strength; however, the resulting managerial focus influenced my understanding of the DST and my suggested uses of the theory.

In creating a framework including the DST I found myself in a conundrum as I realized that I was moving it from a normative theory to a descriptive one, and I was creating a managerial-focused framework. Both these actions seemed somewhat counter to the DST. With these considerations in mind, and focusing on my intended audience of managers, I created frameworks that would not provide the answers but would encourage the questions. It is my hope that if managers use the DST as a lens through which to view their stakeholder dealings, the short term result will be more true collaboration, with the end result being an improved landscape in and around the SPAs. My sincerest apologies to Stanley Deetz and his associates for any perceived misuse and misinterpretation of their work as I moved it from theory to practice.

The Frameworks and Management Tables have been presented as potential tools for use by SPA management. They may be viewed as overwhelming and unachievable within the SPA setting. I tried to capture all the points raised through the study and realize that some of the questions will be more relevant than others depending on the setting. I encourage SPAs to use the parts most applicable to them.
7.5 Further Study

Utilizing the DST at SPAs seems like an idea that is worth pursuing in more detail. One next step might be to take the suggestions presented in this thesis and test them in a SPA setting. It is my intention to undertake this challenge at my SPA, the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area. Another useful action may be to undertake content analysis of SPA policies and texts in order to search for unintended bias and initiate exploration into the DST information concept in more detail. Studying control in more depth in relation to the SPA setting would also be instructive. Larger protected areas may also benefit from use of the DST and research into this topic should be undertaken. Including stakeholders beyond protected area staff in DST related research studies would be interesting and instructive.

The specific world of SPAs is in need of much research to help practitioners better understand the issues and to generate potential solutions. Normative stakeholder theories and the DST both require the attention of scholars to further develop the discourses, including transferability of the theories to practice. Other similar theories exist and these may provide useful guidance to practitioners alongside or in lieu of the DST. The emerging theories that bridge the human and social dimensions of EBM are also worth exploring in more depth in relation to the SPA setting.

7.6 Final Conclusion

Small exurban protected areas are a unique and valuable subset of protected areas. Due to their near urban location and small size they are threatened by human actions, both in the protected area and on the surrounding landscape. According to the EBM philosophy, in order to survive in the long term SPAs need to be seen as part of the physical and social landscapes.

In terms of the physical landscape this involves being connected to other habitat nodes via wildlife corridors and being protected from external influences by buffers. In terms of the social landscape this involves recognizing the various and numerous stakeholders who will play an increasingly important role in the management of the SPA
and the surrounding landscape. It also involves recognizing that control and politics underlie all interactions and that these must be revealed in order to foster genuine dialogue and true collaboration.

The DST offers an alternative to existing stakeholder theories. Not all the study participants agreed with all the principles of the DST and they pointed out that it will be difficult to use in reality; however, I believe that it is still worth pursuing within the SPA setting. Even if it cannot be enacted in its entirety SPA staff may benefit from using parts of the model.

EBM and the DST are both valid approaches for SPAs to use in overcoming the obstacles within the physical and social landscapes, and two frameworks based on these approaches have emerged through the study. It is my hope that these Frameworks will provide staff of SPAs the tools they need to more effectively manage these important protected areas.

Merging EBM and DST at SPAs will not be an easy task as it involves transferring two critical theories into practice. This will require making changes to how we manage, and changes within ourselves. Many of these changes must start at the staff level since the staff are the ones considering the welfare of the protected area on a daily basis. It is my belief that SPA staff members are up to the challenge.
REFERENCES


Communication- Views from the Helm for the 21st Century. Allyn and Bacon, Boston.


Science and Management of Protected Areas. SAMPAA, Wolfville, Nova Scotia, Canada.


APPENDIX A: ANN AND SANDY CROSS CONSERVATION AREA

The Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area consists of 4800 acres of rolling foothills land donated by Ann and Sandy Cross for the protection of wildlife habitat and conservation education. Located just southwest of the City of Calgary, Alberta, Canada the Area is open to hikers by appointment only.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area is dedicated to:

- protecting habitat and providing space for native wildlife,
- offering conservation education programs, particularly to young people, without jeopardizing area wildlife and habitat,
- managing human use of the area through entry by appointment only.

HISTORY

Sandy Cross, the son of one of the Calgary Stampede’s “Big Four” A.E. Cross, and Helen Rothney Macleod, started purchasing land south of Calgary in 1945 for what would become Rothney Farm and eventually the Conservation Area. In 1987 Ann and Sandy Cross donated nearly 2,000 acres of their land to the Province of Alberta. At the time it was the largest private land donation in Canadian history and The Nature Conservancy of Canada operated the Area. In 1991 a fund raising campaign raised two million dollars to build the education centre, Belvedere House, and establish a management fund for program and facility operation.

In 1996 Ann and Sandy Cross donated an additional 2,800 acres of land to bring the total size of the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area to 4,800 acres or 7.5 square miles. In 1996 the Sandy Cross Conservation Foundation was created to manage the newly enlarged Conservation Area.

In 2002 the Sandy Cross Conservation Foundation was the proud recipient of the Alberta Emerald Award for Excellence in Environmental Education. These awards recognize Albertans for outstanding achievements in projects that protect, preserve, enhance and sustain the environment. In 2002 the Sandy Cross Conservation Foundation commissioned the hardcover book, Paradise Preserved: The Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area by writer Bruce Masterman and photographer Mike Sturk.

Sadly, on December 13, 2003 Sandy Cross passed away at 89 years of age.

In 2005 the Grassland and Grouse Project was initiated in memory of Sandy Cross. This three-year habitat management plan focuses on protecting the Area’s remaining native grassland and monitoring for Sharp-tailed Grouse and other grasslands birds.
FACTS

- The Area is 50% Aspen forest, 42% pastures of introduced grasses and 8% native prairie.
- Two thousand acres of the area are accessible to the public, including over 20 kilometres of scenic hiking trails, and 8.3 kilometres of self-guided interpretive trails.
- Belvedere House is wheelchair accessible, as is a two-kilometre gravel path next to the facility.
- Over 75 volunteers annually contribute more than 4,000 hours to the Area. Volunteers assist with education, communication, area stewardship, maintenance, and habitat management.
- Local naturalist and volunteer Olga Droppo has recorded more than 300 plant species within the Conservation Area.
- Research projects in conjunction with both the University of Calgary and the University of Alberta have been undertaken in the Area. Wildlife movement patterns, ecological indicators, restoration of native prairie and stakeholder communications have all been studied.
- The Area supports the highest concentration of red-tailed hawks in North America according to a University of Calgary study.
- The Aspen Forest is home to a number of animals and birds ranging from the Deer Mouse to Moose, and from the Pileated Woodpecker to the Great Horned Owl.
- The Conservation Area sits high on the western edge of the Alberta syncline with glaciers and rivers having eroded away much of the land around it.

EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Over 55,000 youth and others have participated in the education programs at the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area since it opened to the public in 1993.

The Nature Discovery School Program, sponsored by the Suncor Energy Foundation, is aimed at students in Grades 1 to 9 to help teach youth about the environment and conservation. In addition to these school programs self-guided programs for groups such as Girl Guides and Boy Scouts are offered. Summer day camp programs are also offered to young people.

In 1998 the Area began offering Conservation Education programs for families, adults and children. Topics have included birds, wildflowers, animal tracks and signs, elk, nature photography, insects and ecology to name a few.

In 2001 the Area proudly piloted the Chevron Open Minds Program. This fantastic program gives school children an opportunity to visit the Area every day for one week rather than the usual one-day visit. Eight to ten weeks of Cross Conservation Open Minds School are offered each year.

The Sandy Cross Conservation Foundation is a registered charity # 898776331 RR0001. For more information about the area, please call (403) 931-1042 or visit the web page at www.crossconservation.org
CERTIFICATION OF INSTITUTIONAL ETHICS REVIEW

This is to certify that the Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board at the University of Calgary has examined the following research proposal and found the proposed research involving human subjects to be in accordance with University of Calgary Guidelines and the Tri-Council Policy Statement on "Ethical Conduct in Research Using Human Subjects". This form and accompanying letter constitute the Certification of Institutional Ethics Review.

File no: 4188  
Applicant(s): Jacqueline F. Gibson  
Department: Resources & Environment Program  
Project Title: A Communications-Based Approach to Ecosystem Management for Small Exurban Protected Areas  
Sponsor (if applicable):  

Restrictions:

This Certification is subject to the following conditions:

1. Approval is granted only for the project and purposes described in the application.
2. Any modifications to the authorized protocol must be submitted to the Chair, Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board for approval.
3. A progress report must be submitted 12 months from the date of this Certification, and should provide the expected completion date for the project.
4. Written notification must be sent to the Board when the project is complete or terminated.

Janice Dickin, Ph.D., LLB,  
Chair  
Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board  

Distribution: (1) Applicant, (2) Supervisor (if applicable), (3) Chair, Department/Faculty Research Ethics Committee, (4) Sponsor, (5) Conjoint Faculties Research Ethics Board (6) Research Services.

2500 University Drive N.W., Calgary, Alberta, Canada T2N 1N4 • www.ucalgary.ca
Greetings, I am writing to you from Calgary, Alberta, Canada, to determine if someone from your organization would be willing to participate in a study I am undertaking for my Master’s thesis. I am working with Dr. Michael Quinn of the University of Calgary (quinn@ucalgary.ca, (403) 220-7013) and my research is entitled, “A communications-based approach to ecosystem management for small exurban protected areas.” I am interested in talking to a Park Manager or Planner regarding how your agency works with the community and stakeholders around one of the Parks in Maricopa County.

I am Executive Director of a small protected area located just outside Calgary (the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area – www.crossconservation.org) and I am undertaking this thesis as a means to improve the future for our Conservation Area (and hopefully others as well).

At this point I am trying to locate ten to 12 parks from across North America to include in my study. Qualifying sites must meet the following criteria:

- be a small protected area, i.e., park, reserve or conservation area under 5000 acres (2023 ha), which has as its main focus protection of the environment. For example, a park with hiking or cross country ski trails would qualify, while a park with only playgrounds and tennis courts would not.
- be located on the outskirts of a rapidly growing city, yet still surrounded mostly by rural countryside, i.e., agriculture land, forests or country residential land use. For example, parks within the city or ones surrounded by land slated for city subdivision would not qualify.
- have a Manager, Director or staff person who is involved with the surrounding community or stakeholders, and is willing to be interviewed for approximately one hour over the phone in March or April of this year.

I have researched the area surrounding Phoenix and I noticed that there are 3 parks which seem to meet the criteria above, e.g., Spur Cross, Usery Mtn., and Cave Creek. Could you please clarify which one you think best meets the criteria and who should I talk to in more detail about being involved in the study?

I look forward to hearing from you. If you would like more information please feel free to contact me at (403) 931-3377 or by email at jfgilson@ucalgary.ca. Thank you for considering this request!

Sincerely,
Jacquie Gilson
Masters Candidate, University of Calgary and
Executive Director, Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PROTECTED AREA NAME</th>
<th>CLOSEST CITY</th>
<th>PROVINCE OR STATE</th>
<th>MANAGING AGENCY</th>
<th>ACRES (HECTARES)</th>
<th>WEBSITE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Point Pelee National Park</td>
<td>Windsor</td>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>Parks Canada Agency</td>
<td>3207 (1298)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/on/pelee/index_e.asp">www.pc.gc.ca/pn-np/on/pelee/index_e.asp</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mono Cliffs Natural Env. Park</td>
<td>Toronto-Orangeville</td>
<td>Ontario</td>
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<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>Greater Vancouver Regional District</td>
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<td>Clark County</td>
<td>2900 (1174)</td>
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<td>Spur Cross Ranch Conserv. Area</td>
<td>Phoenix</td>
<td>Arizona</td>
<td>Maricopa County Parks/Rec. Dept.</td>
<td>2154 (872)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.maricopa.gov/parks/spur%5Fcross/">www.maricopa.gov/parks/spur%5Fcross/</a></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
March 24, 2005 Resources and the Environment/Faculty of Environmental Design

Greetings, I am writing to you from sunny Calgary, Alberta, Canada to seek your official permission to be interviewed for a study I am undertaking for my Master’s thesis. I am working with Dr. Michael Quinn of the University of Calgary and my research is entitled, “A communications-based approach to ecosystem management for small exurban protected areas.” I am Executive Director of a small exurban protected area located just outside Calgary (the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area – www.crossconservation.org) and I am undertaking this thesis as a means to improve the future for our Conservation Area (and hopefully others as well).

My thesis has an interdisciplinary focus and includes the fields of environmental science, geography and communication studies. With this interdisciplinarity in mind the objectives of my study are:

1) To explore the academic fields of: protected area ecosystem management theory, and communications-based stakeholder theory.
2) To interview managers of small exurban protected areas to determine the current status of stakeholder involvement at their sites.
3) To combine the two theoretical fields and current practices of stakeholder involvement, as per Objectives 1 and 2 above, to generate a new communications-based approach suitable for use at small exurban protected areas.
4) To discuss the new approach with professional small exurban protected area managers to determine the feasibility of utilizing this new approach at their sites.

My research will involve three stages and I would like you to be involved in Stage 1. In Stage 1 I will interview staff of small exurban protected areas at approximately 12 sites across North America. In Stage 2 I will analyze the results of the interviews and combine these with the theoretical results of my literature reviews. In Stage 3 I will bounce the new ideas off 2 focus groups composed of SPA staff in two areas only- Calgary and one other site, to be announced. I will share all the findings of my research with you and I hope your site will benefit from the results.

To select my sites for Stage 1 I researched the fastest growing cities in Canada and the USA and selected small protected areas (i.e., under 5000 acres) located on the outskirts of...
these growing cities. The resulting cities and sites I hope to include in my study are as follows:

**CANADIAN CITIES AND INTERVIEW SITES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITIES (IN ORDER OF GROWTH FROM FASTEST GROWING)</th>
<th>PARK, PRESERVE, OR CONSERVATION AREA INTERVIEW SITES</th>
<th>ASSOCIATED AGENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Calgary, Alberta</td>
<td>Fish Creek and Brown Lowery Provincial Parks</td>
<td>Alberta Provincial Parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Oshawa, Ontario</td>
<td>Long Sault Conservation Area</td>
<td>Central Lake Ontario Conservation Authority</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Toronto area, Ontario</td>
<td>Mono Cliffs Natural Environment Park</td>
<td>Ontario Provincial Parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Edmonton, Alberta</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Vancouver and Abbotsford, B.C.</td>
<td>Kanaka Creek Regional Park</td>
<td>Greater Vancouver Regional District</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Kitchener, Ontario</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Windsor, Ontario</td>
<td>Point Pelee National Park</td>
<td>Parks Canada National Parks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Ottawa, Ontario</td>
<td>Stony Swamp Conservation Area</td>
<td>National Capital Commission</td>
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**AMERICAN CITIES AND INTERVIEW SITES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CITY (IN ORDER OF GROWTH FROM FASTEST GROWING)</th>
<th>PARK, PRESERVE OR CONSERVATION AREA INTERVIEW SITES</th>
<th>ASSOCIATED AGENCY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Las Vegas, Nevada</td>
<td>The Wetlands Park</td>
<td>Clark County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Naples, Florida</td>
<td>unknown</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. McAllen-Edinburg-Mission, Texas</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Austin, Texas</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Fayetteville-Springdale-Rogers, Arkansas</td>
<td>unknown</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Boise City, Idaho</td>
<td>Boise Hills Gulch Reserve</td>
<td>City of Boise</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Phoenix, Arizona</td>
<td>Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area</td>
<td>Maricopa County</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
I have chosen your site as it is a small exurban protected area and as per our earlier emails you have agreed to be interviewed based on your involvement with stakeholders and the community around your protected area. The interview will relate directly to your professional position and no personal questions will be asked. Your involvement will consist of approximately 1 hour of time for a phone interview. I will call or email you to set up a phone interview time that is convenient to you. Interviews will take place between the end of April and early May 2005.

As part of the process the University of Calgary requires you to sign a Consent Form and I would appreciate your approval to tape the interview since this will improve the accuracy of my work. Please read and sign the attached Consent Form and fax it back to me at (403) 931-1045 or (403) 931-2042.

If you would like more information please feel free to contact me at (403) 931-3377 or by email at jfgilson@ucalgary.ca. Alternatively, feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr. Michael Quinn, quinn@ucalgary.ca, (403) 220-7013. I look forward to receiving your signed consent form by April 8 and setting up an interview time with you. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jacquie Gilson

Jacquie Gilson
Masters Candidate, University of Calgary and
Executive Director, Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area
March 24, 2005

Informed Consent Agreement Form for Jacquie (Jacqueline) Gilson Interviews

**Research Project Title:** A communications-based approach to ecosystem management for small exurban protected areas

**Investigator:** Jacquie (Jacqueline) Gilson

I am a master’s student in the Resources and the Environment Program/Faculty of Environmental Design and Executive Director of a small exurban protected area (Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area) and I am carrying out a thesis on developing a communications-based approach to ecosystem management for small exurban protected areas.

I wish to interview you due to your professional knowledge of this issue as a small protected area manager/director/employee. I do not expect any risk to you in participating in this study. Your participation will involve answering some questions over the phone requiring about 60 minutes of your time. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time, in which case records of any information collected from you would be destroyed.

All responses to these questions will be considered public and may be cited in my thesis. If I attribute any material directly to you, I will send you the material and obtain your verbal approval to use the material. If I do not hear from you within two weeks, I will contact you to discuss your permission to be cited. With your permission (please see next page), I would like to make an audio recording of the interview to improve the accuracy of my work.

I will keep the interview notes, drafts and audio tapes in a locked drawer at the university or my home office. After the study is finished, they will be kept by my supervisor for two years as is required by our Faculty ethics guidelines. After that, the interviews will be destroyed.

This consent form, a copy of which you should keep, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and
what your participation will involve. If you would like more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.

Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. If you have further questions concerning matters related to this research, please contact:

Jacquie Gilson (403) 931-3377 jfgilson@ucalgary.ca
Dr. Mike Quinn (Supervisor) (403) 220-7013 quinn@ucalgary.ca

If you have any questions or issues concerning this project that are not related to the specifics of the research, you may also contact the Research Services Office at (403) 220-3782 and ask for Mrs. Patricia Evans.

----------------------------------------- Signatures as Required -----------------------------------------

I agree to participate in this project:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant’s Name</th>
<th>Agency</th>
<th>Phone number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td></td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant’s Signature</th>
<th>Date</th>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Jacquie Gilson  March 24, 2005
Investigator’s Signature

---------------------- I agree to audio recording of the interview.
Participant’s initials

Please retain a copy of this consent form for your records and reference.
Thank you! Please fax back to (403) 931-1045 or (403) 931-2042.
APPENDIX G: FINAL INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A. Introduction
1. For the records please state your name, title and your agency.
2. Please describe your position with ______________________ (agency), specifically as it relates to ______________________ (Park, Preserve or Conservation Area).
3. Would you please describe your agency’s mandate related to ecosystem management? Do you have an official policy or plan for ecosystem management? (If so, may I obtain a copy?)
4. Would you please describe your agency’s mandate related to working with stakeholders? Do you have an official policy or plan for working with stakeholders? (If so, may I obtain a copy?)

B. Ecosystem Management Issues and Impacts
1. To give me a better understanding of your protected area’s place in the landscape, please describe the land uses that now surround your protected area, i.e., within a five mile radius.
2. Please describe the top three social/cultural issues associated with these land uses and their impacts on the protected area.
3. In what ways do you see ______________________ (protected area) being impacted ecologically by the surrounding land uses?
4. In your opinion what should the landscape around your protected area look like to ensure a successful future for your protected area, i.e., to ensure the ecological integrity of the protected area? Probe re wildlife corridors.

C. Communication-based theory
Please discuss each of the following three statements as they pertain to your small protected area's dealings with stakeholders related to your protected area’s place in the broader landscape. To help focus discussion please consider the following four questions related to each statement.

To start- ask if they consider the following statements to represent the ideal world of stakeholder involvement.

Stakeholder Ideal Situation Statements (as described in the dialogic communication literature):
1. It is important that all relevant points and interests are heard in a stakeholder process, i.e., one person or one group’s agenda cannot be allowed to dominate.
2. Forums that facilitate debate of conflicting viewpoints are necessary for the most creative solutions to emerge.
3. All participants in a stakeholder process should see their initial position as temporary and be willing to change, in order to reach a collaborative decision together.
Questions related to each statement:
For each of the three statements above consider the following:

1. Thinking of your protected area’s place in the broader landscape, please describe a specific example related to this statement. (Probe- think of regional initiatives that they are part of but do not lead. Specifically ask re their involvement with their neighbouring landowners and developers).

2. If you had success utilizing the approach described in the statement, please share how it translated into success for the protected area.

3. If you were not able to use the approach described in the statement, what barriers were present and in your opinion, how could these barriers be removed? Please describe the breakdown and the actions taken by the participants.

4. Do you have any more comments on this statement before we move on to the next one?

D. Conclusion
From your experiences in protected areas management is anything major missing from the list of ideal stakeholder situations above? Please elaborate.
Is there anything you would like to add or clarify?
Do you have any questions for me at this time?
APPENDIX H: TABLES OF INTERVIEW RESULTS

Table 1 All Surrounding Land Uses as Described by Respondents

- Suburban development, i.e., medium to high density development (n=6)
- Highways/Roads (n=6)
- Working agricultural land in either crops or grazing (n=5)
- Small village with housing subdivisions (n=3)
- Estate homes (n=3)
- Active forestry area (n=3)
- Horse or hobby farms (n=2)
- Aggregate extraction (n=2)
- Farms with severed off acreages (n=2)
- Hotel (n=2)
- Resort i.e., ski or golf (n=2)
- Acreages with country homes (n=2)
- Cottages, converted to homes (n=2)
- Undeveloped private lands (n=2)
- Undeveloped public lands (n=2)
- Another nature preserve (n=2)
- Educational centre
- Industrial land uses
- Water
- Drained wetlands, now used as farmland
- Commercial/Retail
- Farms converted to weekend homes
- Transmission lines
- First People’s Land.

Table 2 Issues and Impacts of Surrounding Land Uses on Small Protected Area

- Wildlife and human/pet interactions, including feeding wildlife and increase in pest species (e.g., deer and meso-predators) (n=6)
- Pollution from lawn chemicals, fertilizers, and septic tanks, plus air and noise pollution (n=6)
- Spread of non native species and reduction of native species (n=5)
- Unlawful entry points into preserve (n=3)
- Trespass/undesignated trails (n=3)
- Transportation and utility corridor issues, i.e., noise, road kill, parking and traffic (n=3)
- Dumping refuse in park, e.g., water, garbage, lawn cuttings, soil (n=3)
- Storm water management issues (n=2)
• Visibility issues, including tree removal due to danger and disputes re visibility blockage (n=2)
• Fencing issues, i.e., unclear boundaries due to lack of fencing or inappropriate fencing (n=2).

Table 3 Desired Landscape Surrounding Small Protected Area

• Wildlife corridors connecting to other natural areas (n=9)
• Recreational trail linkages to other sites (n=2)
• Large agricultural areas (n=2)
• Less fragmentation of landscape (n=2)
• Increased buffers around and better care of riparian areas (n=2)
• Rehabilitation of lands, i.e., gravel pits, old farms (n=2)
• Improved fencing to clearly define boundaries (n=2)
• Decreased invasive species around protected area, encourage use of native species (n=2)
• Larger protected area
• Status quo with surrounding development
• Deer fencing to keep deer out
• Increased buffer around protected area
• Landscape planning with a watershed approach
• Increase in number of estate properties.

Table 4 Stakeholder Involvement Forums used by the Interviewees

• Open houses
• Public meetings
• Written submissions
• Annual meetings
• Focus groups
• Participant workbooks
• Issue based committees
• Special interest group meetings
• Workshops for ex staff or ex volunteers
• Individual meetings
• Ongoing advisory groups
• Lessons Learned Forum
• Friends group
• Committees including advisory, land management, sub committees
• Monthly Mixers on site
• Surveys.
Table 5 Solutions Described by Interviewees

- Wait for stakeholders to come to them
- Approach stakeholders only when undertaking a plan
- Work with stakeholders on an ongoing basis
- Support other agency’s initiatives
- Provide resources and technical support for external projects
- Seek out various partners
- Include monitoring and implementation components in all plans
- Work with Universities to undertake needed research
- Constant negotiations
- Work with developers earlier
- Obtain political will and support
- Find a champion
- Have results published – success story for others to emulate
- Speak up- ask and ye shall receive
- Relationship building critical, get to know them
- Involve the stakeholders early so they take ownership
- Leaders and Followers needed
- Do something for them- build trust, go beyond
- Encourage locals to volunteer, more likely with new landowners not farmers
- Get on lists
- Be consistent with your responses and messages
- Active and consistent involvement, do what you can and what you say you will do
- Work with people face to face
- Don’t be afraid of maps and spatial assessments
- Build on surveys and networks to create more relationships.

Table 6 Examples of Landscape-scale Initiatives that Small Exurban Protected Areas are Participating in

- Restoration of old farmland back to wetland
- Recovery of fish and riparian areas
- Reintroduction of big horn sheep
- Water diversion and planning initiatives
- Landscape scale initiatives
- Deer management working group
- Highway widening projects
- River valley committees
- Providing alternative dog off leash areas
- Work with land developers on a one on one basis
- Network with planners across North America
- Watershed planning
• Work with local non government organizations to support landowner initiatives
• Regional conservation programs
• Local public space initiatives
• Assist a new organization i.e., Friends of an area.

Table 7 Strategies Used by Small Exurban Protected Areas in Landscape Initiatives

• Use contacts to get something done
• Comment on plans generated by others
• Not allowed to tell others what to do
• Do not let others tell them what to do
• Even partnership
• Express concern
• Reject proposals
• Ask for Environmental Assessments
• Prepare joint management plan
• Rotating chair of committee
• Deal with each plan individually
• Looked to for leadership
• Facilitate process
• Wait for others to take initiative
• Educate and inform
• Establish working group
• Undertake study of a broader area than protected area
• Provide money and support for programs
• Involved
• Approaches used by others
• Support workshops.
Table 8 Summary of Themes Related to Three Stakeholder Statements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>STATEMENTS</th>
<th>THEMES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 1. It is important that all relevant points and interests are heard in a stakeholder process, i.e., one person or one group’s agenda cannot be allowed to dominate. | **Theme 1.1**- Domination by Some, e.g., the local landowners, specific users/user groups and the protected area staff.  
**Theme 1.2**- Defining and Involving Stakeholders, e.g., identifying the stakeholders, representation, ensuring the relevant ones are involved and non relevant ones are not.  
**Theme 1.3**- Relevant Discussion, e.g., it is often very difficult to keep people on track while in a public forum, the context must be clear and the discussion focused on relevant issues. |
| 2. Forums that facilitate debate of conflicting viewpoints are necessary for the most creative solutions to emerge. | **Theme 2.1**- Conflicting Groups Not Present, e.g., External and internal conflicting groups not always involved.  
**Theme 2.2**- Forums, Debate and Creativity, e.g., a variety of forums and well run forums can generate debate and creativity.  
**Theme 2.3**- Climates, Debate and Creativity, e.g., societal and institutional climates are both barriers to debate and creativity. |
| 3. All participants in a stakeholder process should see their initial position as temporary and be willing to change, in order to reach a collaborative decision together. | **Theme 3.1**- People will not Change their Position if they have a vested interest or desire status quo.  
**Theme 3.2**- Education can Lead to Change, people will change given the right circumstances.  
**Theme 3.3**- New Solutions for Working with Stakeholders Required, e.g., a more collaborative model is required. Other solutions include new view of land, success breeding success, positive agency image, vision and name, involvement in landscape scale initiatives. |
Greetings and thank you for agreeing to participate in my focus group workshop related to stakeholders and small protected areas. This focus group is the final stage in my Master’s thesis, which I hope to complete and defend by the end of winter. Currently I am generating a draft framework from a combination of the results of my interviews and the literature on stakeholder theory. At the workshop I will present my draft framework for discussion and seek your input regarding the feasibility of using the framework in the real world of small protected areas.

I really appreciate your willingness to be involved and look forward to discussing these topics with you!

I have attached an official letter outlining my research project and your involvement in more detail. Included in the file is an informed consent letter that the University of Calgary Research Ethics Board requires you to sign and return to me at the focus group. Please contact me if you have any questions about this official consent.

The details of the Focus Group Workshop are as follows:
• Date- Thursday, November 3, 2005
• Time- 9:30 a.m. to Noon
• Location- Park Administration Building, Point Pelee
• Lunch- provided
• Preparation- I will send some reading material to you via email approximately 1 week prior to the focus group
• To bring- your signed consent form, your thinking cap and your appetite!

Thank you so much to --------- for taking on the task of organizing the participants and details on my behalf. I look forward to seeing everyone on November 3.

Jacquie Gilson
Masters Candidate, University of Calgary and Executive Director, Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area. www.crossconservation.org (If you would like to know more about the conservation area I manage).
Greetings, I am writing to you from sunny Calgary, Alberta, Canada to seek your official permission to be involved in a study I am undertaking for my Master’s thesis. I am working with Dr. Michael Quinn of the University of Calgary and my research is entitled, “Utilizing dialogic communication theory and ecosystem-based management to better integrate small exurban protected areas into the surrounding physical and cultural landscapes.” I am Executive Director of a small protected area located just outside Calgary (the Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area – www.crossconservation.org) and I am undertaking this thesis as a means to improve the future for our Conservation Area (and hopefully others as well).

My thesis has an interdisciplinary focus and includes the fields of environmental science, geography and communication studies. With this interdisciplinarity in mind the objectives of my study are:

1) To explore the academic fields of: protected area ecosystem management theory, and communications-based stakeholder theory.
2) To interview managers of small exurban protected areas to determine the current status of stakeholder involvement at their sites.
3) To combine the two theoretical fields and current practices of stakeholder involvement, as per Objectives 1 and 2 above, to generate a new communications-based approach suitable for use at small exurban protected areas.
4) To discuss the new approach with professional small exurban protected area managers to determine the feasibility of utilizing this new approach at their sites.

As described above, my research involves 4 stages and I would like you to be involved in Stage 4. After completing my research in Stage 1 I undertook Stage 2 in which I interviewed professional staff of small exurban protected areas at 9 sites across North America. I am currently working on Stage 3, i.e., analyzing the results of the interviews and combining these with the theoretical results of my literature reviews. In Stage 4 I will bounce the new ideas off 2 focus groups composed of professional staff in two areas only- Point Pelee National Park in Ontario, Canada and Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area near Phoenix, Arizona. I will share all the findings of my research with you and I hope your site will benefit from the results.

You have been chosen to participate in the focus group due to your experience in small protected area management. The focus group discussion will relate directly to your professional position and no personal questions will be asked. Your involvement will consist of a half day meeting. The focus group schedule is as follows:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus Group</th>
<th>Date and Time</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Preparation required</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Point Pelee National Park, Ontario</td>
<td>Thursday, November 3, 9:30 a.m. to Noon Lunch provided</td>
<td>Park Administration Building, Leamington, Ontario</td>
<td>Read materials I send to you via email one week prior to the Focus Group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spur Cross Ranch Conservation Area, Cave Creek, Arizona</td>
<td>Thursday, November 17, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Lunch provided</td>
<td>Town Hall, Cave Creek, AZ</td>
<td>Read materials I send to you via email one week prior to the Focus Group</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As part of the process the University of Calgary requires you to sign a Consent Form and I would appreciate your approval to tape the focus group discussion since this will improve the accuracy of my work. Please read and sign the attached Consent Form and bring it with you to the focus group.

If you would like more information please feel free to contact me at (403) 931-3377 or by email at jfgilson@ucalgary.ca. Alternatively, feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr. Michael Quinn, at quinn@ucalgary.ca or (403) 220-7013. I look forward to meeting with you! Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jacquie Gilson

Jacquie Gilson
Masters Candidate, University of Calgary and
Executive Director, Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area
September 23, 2005  Faculty of Environmental Design/Resources and the Environment

Informed Consent Agreement Form for Jacquie (Jacqueline) Gilson Interviews

**Research Project Title:** Utilizing dialogic communication theory and ecosystem-based management to better integrate small exurban protected areas into the surrounding physical and cultural landscapes.

**Investigator:** Jacquie (Jacqueline) Gilson

I am a master’s student in the Resources and the Environment Program/Faculty of Environmental Design and Executive Director of a small exurban protected area (Ann and Sandy Cross Conservation Area) and I am carrying out a thesis on developing a communications-based approach to ecosystem management for small exurban protected areas.

I would like you to be involved in the Focus Group discussion due to your professional experience in small protected area management. I do not expect any risk to you in participating in this study. Your participation will involve discussing topics arising from my research and will require approximately one half a day. Your participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time, in which case records of any information collected from you would be destroyed.

All focus group discussion will be considered public and may be cited in my thesis; however, I will not attribute any material directly to you or your agency. With your permission (please see next page), I would like to make an audio recording of the interview to improve the accuracy of my work.

I will keep the focus group notes, drafts and audio tapes in a locked drawer at the university or my home office. After the study is finished, they will be kept by my supervisor for two years as is required by our Faculty ethics guidelines. After that, the focus group notes will be destroyed.

This consent form, a copy of which you should keep, is only part of the process of informed consent. It should give you the basic idea of what the research is about and what your participation will involve. If you would like more details about something mentioned here, or information not included here, you should feel free to ask. Please take the time to read this carefully and to understand any accompanying information.
Your signature on this form indicates that you have understood to your satisfaction the information regarding participation in the research project and agree to participate as a subject. In no way does this waive your legal rights nor release the investigators, sponsors, or involved institutions from their legal and professional responsibilities. You are free to withdraw from the study at any time. Your continued participation should be as informed as your initial consent, so you should feel free to ask for clarification or new information throughout your participation. If you have further questions concerning matters related to this research, please contact:

Jacquie Gilson  (403) 931-3377  jfgilson@ucalgary.ca

Dr. Mike Quinn  (Supervisor)  (403) 220-7013  quinn@ucalgary.ca

If you have any questions or issues concerning this project that are not related to the specifics of the research, you may also contact the Research Services Office at (403) 220-3782 and ask for Mrs. Patricia Evans.

----------------------------------------- Signatures as Required -----------------------------------

I agree to participate in this project

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<tr>
<th>Participant’s Name</th>
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Participant’s Signature  Date

Jacquie Gilson  September 19, 2005

Investigator’s Signature  Date

I agree to audio recording of the interview.

Participant’s initials

Please bring a copy of this signed consent form to the focus group meeting and keep a copy for your records and reference.

Thank you!
Greetings!

Thank you once again for agreeing to participate in my Focus Group workshop on Thursday, November 17, 2005! I am looking forward to meeting everyone and know that we will have some interesting discussions!

Attached please find the following: official information on my thesis and the consent form to sign, Pre-Focus Group Information, and background reading material. The University of Calgary Ethics Board requires me to have you sign a consent form and if you could come a few minutes early to take care of this required paperwork I would appreciate it.

The Pre-Focus Group Information is the most important thing to review before we meet. It includes the agenda and purpose as well as background information on my thesis and the dialogic communication theory. Lastly, the background reading material is optional and is in a Word file called Key Issues- this article is kind of heavy and theoretical- enjoy, but don’t let it scare you away! (My apologies for the poor quality of the file- we had to scan it in from a book.)

Thank you. See you Thursday, November 17! Please feel free to email me or call me at (403) 931-3377 if you have any questions prior to our meeting.

Jacquie Gilson

Reminder-
Meeting place and time: Thursday, November 17, 2005, 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. at the Cave Creek Town Hall, Meeting Room (please arrive at 9:30 a.m. for coffee/tea and paperwork)
Point Pelee Focus Group

Meeting place and time: Park Admin Building, Board Room on Thursday, November 3, 2005, starting at 9:30 a.m. (9:00 a.m. for coffee/tea/paperwork!)

Purpose of Focus Group
The purpose of the focus group is to draw upon your experiences in small protected area management and obtain your feedback on the relevance of the dialogic stakeholder theory for use at small protected areas.

Draft Focus Group Agenda

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<tr>
<td>9:00ish</td>
<td>Arrive, have coffee/tea, complete paperwork, chit chat!</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:30 a.m.</td>
<td>Welcome and thanks for attending! Agenda review and housekeeping.</td>
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<td>9:40</td>
<td>PowerPoint presentation on my thesis, Cross Conservation Area, interview results, and the small protected area context.</td>
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<tr>
<td>9:55</td>
<td>Introduction to Dialogic Stakeholder Theory and key elements.</td>
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<td>10:15</td>
<td>Break – stretch, refill drinks.</td>
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<td>10:30</td>
<td>Introduction to Focus Group Discussion, i.e., ground rules and questions to address in discussion.</td>
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<td>10:40</td>
<td>Work through 6 key elements, discussing each element from your experience in the protected area field.</td>
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<td>Noon</td>
<td>Lunch (provided courtesy of University of Calgary!) - stop and eat, possibly continue for one half to one hour after lunch if needed?</td>
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Definitions
A **small exurban protected area** is a park, reserve or conservation area under 5000 acres (2023 ha), which has as its main focus protection of the environment, is located on the outskirts of a rapidly growing city, and is still surrounded predominantly by rural countryside, i.e., agriculture land, forests or country residential land use.

**Ecosystem management** is “… an approach to guiding human activity using collaborative, interdisciplinary, and adaptive methods with the long-term goal of sustaining desired future conditions of ecologically bounded areas, that in turn, support healthy, sustainable communities.” (Quinn 2002).

**Ecological integrity** has been described by the Parks Canada Agency- “An ecosystem has integrity when it is deemed characteristic for its natural region, including the composition and abundance of native species and biological communities, rates of change and supporting processes” (Parks Canada Agency 2000). Reed Noss (1995) suggests that ecological integrity is ‘integrating and holistic’ as it pulls together many ideas. In his
opinion an ecosystem with integrity would possess ecological health, biodiversity, stability, sustainability, naturalness, wildness and beauty.

**Stakeholders** have been defined as, “Any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the firm’s objective” (Freeman 1984, p. 25). For our purposes the firm is the protected area and the groups or individuals would be those who can affect or are affected by the protected area and its place within the ecosystem, e.g., public, landowners, community members, local governing bodies, planners, land developers and so on.

**Dialogic communication** suggests that meaning is always incomplete and partial and that we talk with others to better understand each other as together we find new and more satisfying ways of understanding and creating. In dialogic communication we need to recognize multiple stakeholders, engage in genuine conversations, and encourage equal participation, open negotiations and collaborative processes.

**Introduction and Background Information**

**Working title**
Utilizing dialogic communication theory and ecosystem-based management to better integrate small exurban protected areas into the surrounding physical and cultural/human landscapes

**Research Question**
In what ways can managers of small exurban protected areas use dialogic communication theory and ecosystem-based management to better integrate protected areas into the surrounding physical and cultural/human landscapes?

**Statement of Problem**
The ecosystem management paradigm suggests that to be ecologically viable over the long term, small exurban protected areas need to be both physically and culturally integrated into the surrounding landscape. By definition, ecosystem-based management covers both the physical and human aspects of managing landscapes; however, there seems to be a lack of attention to the human side of ecosystem-based management. It is acknowledged that the human aspects, i.e., stakeholders, are critical to the future ecological integrity of protected areas.

A review of the stakeholder theory revealed that the field is weak and in need of improvement and alternatives. Dialogic communication theory describes one alternative for working with stakeholders. Utilizing this alternative lens may result in more engaged and satisfied stakeholders, leading to enhanced integration of the protected area into the physical and cultural landscape.
**Thesis Objectives**

1) To explore the academic fields of: protected area ecosystem management theory, and communications-based stakeholder theory.
2) To interview managers/planners of small protected areas to determine the contexts they operate within and the current status of stakeholder involvement at their sites.
3) To discuss the dialogic communication theory with professional small protected area managers/planners through focus groups to determine the feasibility of utilizing this theory at their sites.
4) To combine all of the above to generate a new stakeholder framework suitable for use at small protected areas.

**Purpose of Research**

The purpose of the research is to develop a practical, communications-based approach to working with stakeholders within an ecosystem management paradigm at small exurban protected areas. The research involves combining theory from two different fields, i.e., ecosystem-based management and organizational communications, in order to develop a new approach to working with stakeholders associated with the landscape around small exurban protected areas.

My work is grounded in the notion that the status quo regarding stakeholders is not effective and therefore a new model is necessary. In reviewing the change-oriented literature regarding stakeholders I determined that the dialogic communication theory was worth exploring in more detail.

**Backgrounder on Ecosystem-Based Management**

(From my incomplete literature review!)

Ecosystem-based management implies focusing on resource and environmental issues at the landscape level over longer periods of time, rather than on a single species or commodity over the short term. It is a holistic, long term approach, which emphasizes ecological, rather than political boundaries (Quinn, 2000). Woodley and Forbes (1994) point out that ecosystem management is seen as a comprehensive way to deal with sometimes overwhelming issues. Grumbine (1994) noted that the literature in the ecosystem management field divided into biophysical and cultural themes and that challenges exist in both.

Biophysical challenges include, but are not limited to:

- Ecosystems are complex, i.e., “Ecosystems are not only more complex than we think; they are more complex than we can think” (Haney & Power 1996).
- Roads have major impacts on the protected areas (Franklin 1997).
- No protected area is large enough in itself to allow for dynamic equilibrium; therefore no protected area system will be fully representative of all the spatio-temporal variables that are needed for biodiversity conservation.
• Protected areas may lead to a siege mentality in which species in parks are protected while species outside parks are exploited (Primack 1993).
• Park and protected area boundaries are not usually selected for natural features.
• It is difficult to understand and work with the huge temporal and spatial scales covered by ecosystems (Wipond 1998).

Social challenges are many and include, but are not limited to:
• Difficulties working with the many partners and stakeholders (Woodley & Forbes 1994; Yaffee 1999).
• Lack of resources, including data, money, staff, time (Wipond 1998).
• Increased human visitation of protected areas (Wipond 1998).
• Bureaucracies and public policies (Yaffee 1999).
• The role of values in land use decisions (Mattson et al. 1996).

Solutions for overcoming the challenges of implementing ecosystem-based management at protected areas are many and varied, including, but not limited to the following ideas:
• Take an incremental approach to change (Grumbine 1994).
• Adopt the Precautionary Principle (Pirot et al. 2000).
• Use a watershed approach in which protected areas are integrated in a matrix of appropriately managed areas, including: the use of buffer zones; adequate, useable corridors; and the replication of habitat areas (Grumbine 1992; Jensen et al. 1996) (Shafer 1995, 1997) (Noss & Cooperrider 1994).
• Minimize impacts of roads (Noss et al. 1996).
• Create specific ecosystem management plans for each area (Grumbine 1992).
• Focus on long term planning (Lertzman et al. 1997).
• Increase the role for private lands in conservation (Grumbine 1992).
• Modify public policy and laws and encourage more open government (Grumbine 1992).
• Use more and varied tools for private conservation, i.e., market based incentives, financial compensation, zoning law changes, outright purchase, leasing agreements, tax incentives, conservation easements, land trusts, stewardship programs, and education and so on (Christensen et al. 1996; Grumbine 1992; Johnson 1997; Rowntree 1995).

In summary, proponents of ecosystem-based management suggest that a landscape-level approach to protected areas management is required as a single agency can no longer deal with the increasing complexity of issues ranging from the variable nature of nature to human impacts on the landscape (Curthoys Brown 1995).

**Human Dimension of Ecosystem-Based Management**
Various authors (Grumbine 1994, 1997; McCormick 1999; Quinn 2002) have pointed out that the human dimension has not been given enough attention in ecosystem management. We now seem to realize that, “ecosystem management is as much about
managing human activity as it is about managing land and water” (Christensen et al. 1996, p.676).

Human values are an important part of the ecosystem being managed and one of the hallmarks of ecosystem management is its recognition of this fact (Lertzman et al. 1997). Despite this recognition Kessler et al. (1992) note that we still need new management approaches that better reflect the way people think about the land and the values we place on it. Allen and Hoekstra (1994) contend that we cannot protect everything for all time and therefore we need to recognize that our values are an integral part of sustainability. They conclude that we cannot narrowly focus on the ecology of the biophysical systems; we need to involve stakeholders and we need collaboration between natural and social scientists.

**Small Protected Area Context and Issues** *(from my literature review and interviews)*

**Summary of Interview Results**

**Small Protected Area Context**

The interviews consisted of conversations with 11 staff of small protected areas located on the outskirts of a number of growing cities across Canada and the United States. All the areas were united in their common experience of increased use and increased pressures from a variety of external sources. Some had official recognition of the need to be involved in the surrounding landscape while others did not officially recognize this need. Likewise, while only some had official recognition of the need to work with stakeholders, most did work with stakeholders, officially at management planning time and otherwise on an issue basis. Varying degrees of development were found around the protected areas ranging from cottages, to estate homes to urbanized areas, and industrial developments. Most small protected area employees interviewed desired connectivity to other natural areas and desired a buffer between their area and the surrounding land uses. They also wished to see the landscape surrounding them less fragmented.

Regardless whether ecosystem management and stakeholders were officially recognized, the small protected area studied did have to deal with an increasing variety and number of stakeholders. It is expected that working with stakeholders will continue to be a necessary component of park planning and management.

**Interview Questions re Stakeholders**

In summary, respondents agree that it is important to hear all relevant points and interests in a stakeholder process; however, they noted that this is easier said than done as certain groups do try to dominate, people do not always stay on topic and the relevant stakeholders are not always involved. They also felt that debate can generate creative results but that for various reasons conflicting groups are not always consulted, and forums may foster creativity while organizational and social climates do not. Lastly, they believed that people may not be willing to change due to vested interests or change
aversion, or that people may change given the right circumstances, such as provided with education and information. In the end there was a call for a new collaborative model to guide working with stakeholders and various ideas for this new model were presented by the respondents.

2. Small Protected Area Context and Issues
(From my literature review and interviews)
- Small in size, i.e., relative to more remote parks.
- Close to where people live and work, i.e., in exurban areas surrounding the suburbs.
- Surrounding land uses vary but housing is becoming predominant.
- External threats increasing as surrounding landscape is undergoing rapid development.
- Increased use of protected areas as surrounding populations increase, potential for misuse and abuse increasing.
- Suffer from inadequate resources, i.e., staff, funding, support, etc.
- Adjacent neighbours have potential to be supporters or abusers.
- Have multiple mandates to consider, not just ecological integrity of land.
- Limited involvement of stakeholders, i.e., mainly at management planning time.
- Internal management issues increasing and intensive internal management required, i.e., to control impacts, exotic species, etc.
- Due to size cannot meet all biodiversity needs on their own. Risk becoming islands in sea of development.
- Recognize need to be involved in landscape scale initiatives, but unsure of role to play.
- Small protected area staff desire to see connectivity to other natural habitat, buffers around their areas and less landscape fragmentation.

Backgrounder on Dialogic Communication Theory (from the literature)

Introduction
The struggle of our times is to build the practices of working together. This is the hope of a dialogic theory of communication (Deetz & Simpson 2004).

This is only one alternative to the other morality based stakeholder theories. It has been developed mainly by Stanley Deetz, currently a professor of communication at the University of Colorado in Boulder. He is interested in organizational theory, organizational communication and communication theory (Deetz 1982; Deetz 1992; Deetz 1995, 1997, 1999, 2001, 2003; Deetz 2004; Deetz 2005; Deetz & Brown 2004; Deetz et al. 1997; Deetz & Simpson 2004; Deetz et al. 2000).

It is a change/reform model that presents an option to the status quo. Deetz feels that the status quo is not working due to: liberal rights (everyone wants to talk and no one wants to listen), managerialism (managers are in control and afraid to give it up) and distorted
communications (i.e., strategic manipulation without overt awareness, as in the case of people going along with those in power, or discursive disclosure in which conflict is suppressed, as some groups are marginalized or denied rights, while other groups are privileged).

It takes a constructivist approach, in which meaning is produced not reproduced, e.g., meaning is produced through talking with others, not just repeating what you have heard. Recognizing stakeholders does not make an organization more ‘political’, but merely recognizes that the politics already exist and need to be unmasked. The theory encourages people to engage in genuine dialogue in which all participants’ interests are heard and people see their views as being only temporary or in production. Recommends replacing the old control-oriented models with: collaboration, commitment to co-determination, reclaiming/coordinating conflict, and moving from merely providing information to active expression, involvement, codetermination and coordination. He is not suggesting that all existing methods of working with stakeholders be thrown out, but rather that his theory may be used as a lens for analyzing existing programs and perhaps developing new approaches accordingly. His work is not prescriptive, i.e., it doesn’t include ‘how to’ lists.

\[
\text{A communication process in which there is a discussion where everyone merely has a say is quite different from one where all reach and commit to a decision together (Deetz & Brown 2004, p.182).}
\]

Key Elements of Dialogic Stakeholder Theory

**Information**- Inadequate or distorted information may keep people from fully understanding and therefore fully participating; information has power to perpetuate the status quo. As an alternative provide stakeholders with timely, adequate and undistorted information on both the process and the topic.

**Control** – Those in charge take control and generally wish to keep it. As an alternative increase willingness to change; and aim for less “self-expression and more self-destruction”.

**Voice and Consent**- There is a lack of ‘voice’ (i.e., ability of all people to be heard and express an opinion) and too much ‘consent’ (i.e., whereby people give up their own interests, usually unknowingly, in favour of the dominant paradigm). As an alternative encourage genuine two way discussion between all stakeholders (i.e., assume you only partially understand and need conversation to create new and more creative solutions together).

**Forums**- These typically include various stakeholder involvement techniques like open houses, town hall meetings, suggestion boxes, mail in surveys and so on. Too much focus has been put on the types of forums and not enough on the discussions. As an alternative we should provide equal access to and a variety of stakeholder forums to meet all needs.
The focus should be on opportunities for discussion and meaningful interaction at forums, not just more providing more forums.

**Conflict and Negotiation**- Conflict is often suppressed in our attempt to be conciliatory in stakeholder processes. As a critical theorist Deetz favours allowing conflict to emerge as he believes that this action will result in more creative solutions. If conflicts and tensions are fostered, greater balance and increased productivity will result.

**Collaboration and Participation**- People are calling for a new model of stakeholder involvement. Deetz’ answer is to provide opportunities for equal participation, i.e., all are heard, not just those with the loudest megaphones. He believes that all affected stakeholders have a right to be equal participants, to be heard, and to create decisions together. A shift to participative democracy is needed. He believes that representative democracy is perilous as when some people speak on behalf of the community they already have a fixed point of view and in dialogic communication they should not enter the dialogue with a fixed position, but be open to discussion and producing a solution together.
APPENDIX L: FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

A. General Thoughts on Theory?

B. For each element/concept-

1. How is this concept/element applicable to the small protected area setting?
2. What are the barriers to using this at a small protected area and how can the barriers be overcome?
3. How could you see modifying what you now do to include this element in your stakeholder dealings?
4. REMEMBER- keep the context of Small protected area in mind for each element/concept! Plus relate your specific experiences!
APPENDIX M: FOCUS GROUP RESULTS- KEY POINTS

General Comments on Theory

- Government entities are different than businesses. For instance, government agencies have an obligation to show that they have done consultation; however, it doesn’t matter whether or not it was successful.
- Since the main focus of a protected area is conservation all viewpoints are not equal. To be seriously considered a stakeholder opinion has to be within the context of the mandate of the protected area.
- Letting go of the control of a stakeholder forum is not suitable for public meetings as they need to be focused and controlled to keep the unruly participants in line.
- We are already using this model but it is still valuable and it has elements we can learn from.
- The model may be more useful in a protected area with multiple mandates rather than a strictly preservation oriented protected area since it provides a useful tool for dealing with the variety of stakeholders and provides ways to develop negotiated results. In preservation oriented protected areas there is less room for negotiation.
- Natural resource managers are people managers too and they are constantly engaged in a magic balancing act.
- Using the model would help staff enter into a stakeholder process with a better attitude and a more approachable manner.
- Employees have to follow the stakeholder process established by their agency, “Until we sell them on this modification to the process.” “But we have to make it their idea.”
- “This is good stuff and we can all benefit from revisiting it even if we think we know it already.”
- “Whether we choose to use their opinions or not we can say, ‘we fulfilled our obligation to let you talk’ but we know the direction we want to go and we fulfilled our obligation whether we use your input or not is a different story.”
- “It is damn near impossible to put this theory into practice.”
- It is difficult for government to use this theory since government represents others. They are entrusted with an important mandate and therefore can’t always change their position due to the potentially devastating consequences.
- Information is critical; stakeholders need all the information or they tend to go off on tangents and deal in opinion only.
- It seems like a co-management model we studied in school- one common goal with many ways to reach it.
- The model is the same as a basic communication model. You know the ideal ways to communicate but many variables can get in the way to prevent you from doing what you know is right.
The small protected area model in a large population density suggests that you need more people and money rather than less, e.g., resources should not be based on the size of the protected area.

How to do it, i.e., the theory and how to do it practically are both required.

Our agency seems to want to be more open and collaborative but it takes time and money and there would need to be ten times the number of people and money and it would require ten times the meetings.

We need to find the critical point at which we can increase our stakeholder involvement without taking up more time. “We usually bale out when we reach this point.”

Relationship building is critical. You need to make ongoing commitments to the relationship and build up the trust. The investment needs consistency and long term support. “Until the election you don’t know what you believe in.”

It is difficult keeping up with the different immigrations trends and keeping up with the different ways.

Youth and education are the only solution in the long term and in the short term we have to work with the politicians (and really rich people).

Rural audiences near more remote protected areas are more homogeneous than urban audiences near small protected areas. The more urban the park is the more people there are, the less we know about the urban audience and the less they know about the protected area.

The model doesn’t reflect the three way balance required in conservation, i.e., economic, ecological and socio-political factors.

Element #1- Information

The information out there is often distorted and people perceive the small protected area as big.

Our short term, day to day operations do not involve consultation, but long term goals, which do involve consultation, are often extras so we don’t get to them.

Information is needed at different levels; starting with ourselves, staff next and finally, the stakeholders. We rarely get passed sharing information among staff.

Protected area information is often complex and overwhelming, and needs to be distilled for general consumption, but this distillation adds bias.

People don’t realize that resource conservation is an evolving science and that staff do not have all the answer, instead we work under an adaptive management model and learn as we go.

Management issues vary with location of protected areas, i.e., more remote ones have fewer issues.

It is difficult to balance societal good and individual landowner rights.

Information dissemination is important but waves of new priorities are constantly bombarding us and we are constantly in a panic situation and in crisis management mode.
• There is a difference between being oblivious to proper collaborative methods and knowing but not having the time.
• In Canada we seem intent on getting all the information before we act and by then it may be too late.
• We haven’t yet realized the consequences of not consulting people and therefore, it is easier not to consult.
• “We are no longer doing the old style of consultation. We are being more collaborative, i.e., we give them all the information and let them come to the same conclusion we did.”
• Consultation can be both formal and informal. We are being less insular and now reach out more on a day by day informal basis. This takes time but less time than the formal stakeholder processes.
• The challenge is to get undistorted information out to people; but we recognize that there is opportunity for distortion at every stage.
• The content of newspapers and media articles are not within staff control and when the information is inaccurate, park staff pay the price as people believe what they have read and refer to it regularly, forcing staff to attempt to set the record straight. Even when protected area staff work with good journalists, the editors or headliners may add their bias or change the story to make it more sensational, resulting in the same misinformation issue for staff to deal with. Rebuttals do not solve the problem as not everyone will see them and the damage is difficult to undo.
• Fixing the miscommunication issue would involve park staff taking a more direct role in article writing or editing; and retraining the various partnership agency staff and volunteers.
• Information provided at the time of the open house does not give people enough time to absorb it and be ready to participate in a discussion.
• It is always a challenge to find and reach the affected or targeted people.
• There is usually somebody who misses out on the information and is angry about it.
• Having closely linked agencies i.e., groups in partnership, may cause confusion as people are unclear regarding who plays what role. This is exacerbated when the information provided by the different agencies is inconsistent, unclear or inaccurate.
• Agencies are not very good at letting people know what they do with their provided input. When the information is in alignment with the agency’s, it is used and if it is diametrically opposed, it is not.
• The public are not likely to come up with new ideas not already considered by the paid staff.
• It is a disingenuous process, a charade, as the agency does the process and then does whatever they wanted to do anyway, but they fulfilled their obligation to give people an opportunity to comment.
• It is not a democratic process; some topics are dead ducks when they walk in. This results in some stakeholders no longer participating as they know they are
not going to get what they want. On a one on one basis staff let stakeholders know of the alternative venues for their recreational activities.

- How do we find the common ground when there is no compromise to be made and we have to work with a win-lose situation?
- In one case since the support of the equestrian crowd was needed, equestrian use was approved, but the trails were designed for walking, in effect almost eliminating equestrian use of the trails.
- Staff has to be careful when dealing with various user groups since a domino effect will happen, whereby if you provide something for one group, other groups soon want concessions too, thus opening the floodgates and possibly diluting your mandate.
- Each agency makes its own decisions regarding its own jurisdiction, but if they think it will affect another agency they should, out of courtesy, inform the others; however, agencies are not usually given an opportunity to input on each others plans.
- Multi-jurisdictional areas are confusing for the users since they do not necessarily know where the boundaries are and when the rules change.
- There is no regional coordinating group but on a specific issue basis groups are sometimes brought together, however, it is difficult for agencies to keep it together, therefore it is difficult for the user groups to keep it together.

**Element #2- Control**

- We talk about giving up control (i.e., with volunteers) but first we need to have a level of confidence that they have the knowledge and ability to handle it.
- The concept of giving up control is good in theory but difficult in practice, especially when you have diametrically opposed viewpoints being presented.
- Even if staff do not give up control they must remain respectful of others opinions, not suppress concepts and be on their best behavior in a stakeholder forum.
- Staff members are in their positions due to their expertise and cannot give up the control to the cross section of humanity.
- Staff needs to be able to distance themselves emotionally and not take the stakeholder comments personally. If staff loses control they run the risk of having the stakeholders get emotional with each other.
- It is important to recognize that some personalities will be more likely to be involved in some types of forums due to their personalities, i.e., the people who like to talk in front of people or stand up against issues will show up and the others will stay at home.
- Stakeholders appreciate it when they have a chance to voice their concern and you listen to them.
- Stakeholders appreciate it when they get some concessions, even if they do not get everything they wanted.
• We cannot give up control in some areas due to our mandate and legislation but we should look for areas in which we can give up control.
• When we can’t give up control we have better success with the stakeholders when we get back to people and explain why.
• There always needs to be somebody in control and to make the final decision even if they take the feedback from the group.
• Control is not usually ours to give up but is mandated by the organization.
• Employees are not treated like stakeholders by the organization.
• We hesitate to involve people early as we want to wait until we have all the information and to be sure that the organization really supports it.
• We realize that we cannot control beyond the boundaries issues but we can help start local initiatives; however, there is risk involved when we back off from these local initiatives and leave them to the community as they may falter or fail at this point.
• When we give up control and open up to a dialogic process we run the risk of having people mess with us and demoralize the process so we have to choose people carefully, but we realize that this is a measure of control itself.
• As staff we want to look smart and competent and it is a natural instinct to wait to involve others until we have all the information. To fight this natural instinct you have to step back and make an effort to involve people sooner.
• We have to make decisions but it is important to explain our decisions and rationale to stakeholders in a personalized follow up so they understand why the park did what they did.

Element #3- Voice and Consent

• We are better now at using different and varied forums to give people a variety of ways to comment, e.g., some people can take home and think about what they want to say before returning it.
• It is important to provide a variety of avenues, even if it means inviting them to stay and talk to you after.
• It is important to recognize that in an exurban environment you have a variety of cultures who all self-express differently.
• Creative tools for self-expression exist, i.e., theater, but limited resources prevent us from using these tools.
• We fight apathy to our issues and it is a struggle to elevate our issues to the level where people even know about them. To many of the local cultures natural areas are not important at all. Usually the people who comment have some kind of a problem or issue and the rest don’t even seem to care.
• The knowledge level of people on nature is very low and the protected area needs to make a major investment to get people to the point where they can provide valuable input.
• “Nature is small; it is not in your head.” “They don’t even like it. It is evil.”
“Natural habitat is shrinking. Knowledge is shrinking. The ability to communicate is shrinking and everything is working against you.”

“Without the initial investment your cynicism is so big on I don’t want their opinion because I know you don’t have the value that I have to implement in my mandate. It is so far off of where you are that if I can’t get you to a certain spot I know what is going to come out of your mouth. You don’t care if ten endangered species go off the list. So I am not going to ask your opinion because I can’t do that.”

We have to realize what people value but it distorts our messages if we cater to these values.

The problem is not that there is too much consent but that there is too much dissent at public meetings. People who are happy with the status quo don’t usually show up or comment; the ones who do comment are usually from special interest groups or have a private agenda.

Staff would be happy to receive more positive feedback from the stakeholders, as they usually feel like they are getting beaten up.

Some people self-express ad nauseum but it is usually the same comment every time they speak up.

Some people seem to like to attend meetings and object even though they have no background on the subject matter.

In the corporate world you wouldn’t need to worry about what the competition thinks but in a protected area everyone can be a stakeholder. In a corporation the shareholders think they are the only ones who count but in a protected area setting everyone counts.

In a corporation all elements would be represented but at a protected area forum staff deal with negative agendas and special interest groups mainly, yet there is a public trust given by the rest of the stakeholders.

Protected area staff have to take seriously the trust they have been given by the public since the public consent to give them the authority to manage the land in the public’s best interest (even if they do not use the protected area). This trust is usually well earned.

When the agency speaks up related to issues from beyond their boundaries they are only treated as one of the citizens, i.e., they are not given special consideration by the other agencies.

Other agencies they work with often seem to let people voice their opinions only in order to fulfill their obligation to offer public consultation.

**Element #4- Forums**

We offer a good variety of forums but the agency seems mostly concerned with fulfilling their organizational obligations to provide forums rather than the actual results.

Most comments we get from stakeholders are complaint driven.
Regardless of the number and type of forums there will always be people who are disgruntled because they didn’t hear about the opportunities for commenting.

The protected area does what it can within its constraints, i.e., they cannot afford to send out 100,000 notices, although in some situations they send out mailings to people within a 1 mile radius.

Forums used include: website for information dissemination, on line comment form, emails to protected area staff, media releases, open houses, silent forum with only written comments allowed, and speaker cards (i.e., submit card and be recognized before being allowed to speak).

Written comments sometimes work better than other forums because they force people to slow down and think before commenting. They also keep people from feeding off each other and taking the discussion in a direction staff don’t want it to go.

Written comments provide a good vehicle for disagreeing neighbours to each voice their opinions anonymously.

Staff need to be adequately informed of park and area happenings (i.e., even regarding nearby developments) so they can adequately communicate information to the stakeholders.

At times the information is second hand to the stakeholders (i.e., developers do not always make full disclosure to landowners) and when key points are missed the stakeholders often erroneously blame the park.

Homeowner associations provide an excellent forum for reaching stakeholders living nearby.

We are plugged into the same system as the rest of the parks across Canada and the formats we currently use are better suited to these other parks.

We need to get to the people who don’t care or don’t have time. We need to get them turned around so more people care and have basic knowledge.

People seem to respond to issues only. Then they will speak up, even though they had an opportunity before.

We need ongoing communication with stakeholders, i.e., newsletter, so they have ongoing information and then when an issue comes up they are prepared.

The long term solution is the next generation, i.e., reaching children through education. When they are older they will care and have more knowledge and come out to your groups. In the short term we have missed the boat on Joe average and can continue to try to get him, but the only short term solution is to work with local politicians, i.e., work on common goals with them. They are the power players.

It is cheaper and easier to continue to do things the way they have always been done since change takes time and money and investment.

We need to be more creative and create new forums, e.g., call in radio, to reach the people who haven’t thought about them in years.

Confidence has been a barrier to date.

We tried to create education partnerships with local organizations to have a county wide education program since we all have similar messages. We could do
much more of this if we teamed up with other people. We have been real leaders in this area. We have reached out a lot but the reaching out process is over and above the day to day work you have to do.

- We find that we try a new forum and then it falls off the plate due to other priorities, then it loses the momentum and we have to start over again.

Element #5- Conflict

- If conflict is going to be allowed staff need conflict management skills and participants need to know the rules or things will get out of control.
- Our organization has typically suppressed conflict and is afraid of it.
- Managing conflict takes time and money and we should suppress it unless we have the time to do it right. “Stay under the radar, stay low.”
- Usually there is one spokesperson in Ottawa, so dealing with conflict is taken away from the staff. The agency is worried that staff will speak up on issues that they do not know enough about.
- It is better for people to not even know the agency name than to hate them with a loathing, burning passion. We are afraid of people hating us.
- Conflict can result in something positive, i.e., the noxious weed act in Ontario.
- The park has a stand that the staff has to support but they need some freedom too, especially when they are sharing ideas and dialoging. For example, they should be able to tell people where to go to effect change.
- Don’t want to make a CLM- career limiting move.
- As staff we can take a stand but it has to be consistent and coordinated.
- We understand the value of conflict but realize that we are constrained by the government’s position. Government positions vary from department to department, i.e., they are trying to protect wetlands and other agencies support draining them for public health.
- We are handcuffed compared to a corporation since they can just make up their mind to do something and then do it.
- The term conflict can mean different things to different people.
- Divergent opinions are good but losing control is not.
- Divergent opinions can be squelched by a person who is set in their position and who suppresses conflict in an attempt to maintain their control and the status quo.
- Protected area staff themselves may cause conflict by seeming rigid as they get too wound up in their positions and their attempt to fulfill their mandate.
- Homeowner agencies can be a valuable go-between to help solve conflicts and negotiate between the protected area and the homeowners.
- Staff members are pleased when they reach the stage in their relationship that the stakeholders say, “What can we (together) do about this issue?”
- Public relations are a large part of protected area staff roles.
Element #6- Collaboration and Participation

- Original advisory board consisted of specific user groups and issue-oriented people who seemed there mainly to pursue their own agendas. On the old board people were often so issue-oriented that they could only talk about that one thing.
- The reestablished advisory committee represents local demographics, i.e., age, gender, culture, recreational activities, professional backgrounds and expertise, rather than specific user groups.
- We cannot reach and involve everyone, but at management planning time we try to reach more people than just those on the advisory committee.
- When we give the advisory committee a task and ask them to go to the community they decide who they are going to talk to so it is somewhat biased.
- The model only provides one way to be engaged. It assumes that people want to be engaged and are open to multiple issues and not just specific self interests.
- We don’t reach some people and we may need to pay people to provide us with their input in order to reach a random selection of society, especially the ones who don’t really know about nature or care about the park.
- We have to meet people where they are at, i.e., we cannot rely on an in-park comment card when we want to reach people who don’t usually show up to the park.
- Socio-economic and social science research on our community is needed so that we have this information before we attempt to reach them. We have this in our plan but it is extra to our regular jobs.
- Our organization has a mandate to do consultation and our CEO supports “values” and “engaging stakeholders”. As a staff we know we know this and have supported these concepts for a long time, but we are lacking support from the organization to do them. If we are not doing this we are not valuable.
- Overall goal is to hear all points whether relevant or not, the relevancy should be determined later.
- It is good to have go-between contacts but direct contact allows for personal relationship building with the stakeholders and reduces the miscommunication errors.
- Some people will hide behind the agencies they represent when they are actually only representing themselves. Knowing this we have to dig deeper and uncover their true motives.
- Informal settings provide comfortable venues for stakeholders and staff to voice opinions.
- Stakeholders, such as volunteers, love it when you “walk the walk with them” or “play in the dirt with them”.
- Staff reputations are important and word of mouth communication by stakeholders contributes positively or negatively to the reputations. This communication is rarely neutral.
- Informal stakeholder dealings pay off positively over time.
• Relationship building with stakeholders can pay off for the protected area as the individuals may become your champions at critical times, i.e., budget time.
• Emotions can run high between dissenting groups but joint projects help to build positive relationships.
• It is difficult to identify stakeholders since anybody can be a stakeholder in our field.
• More and more people will become protected area stakeholders especially in growing areas with so many transplants moving near protected areas.