Social Science Training and Resource Needs Assessment

Brad Milley
Policy Analysis and Science Assistance Branch (PASA)
Fort Collins Science Center
U.S. Geological Survey

Natalie Sexton, USFWS and Kirsten Leong, NPS

U.S. Department of the Interior
U.S. Geological Survey
Needs Assessment Objectives

- Capacity of natural resource agencies to provide their staff with social science trainings and resources
- Agencies’ overall social science capacity
- Current trainings and resources
- Relative importance of different types of social science trainings and resources
- Importance of and satisfaction with trainings and resources
Survey Details

- Key-informant sampling
  - Department of Interior agencies, USFS, and ten state agencies.
- Web-based survey
- Mixed methods data collection
- Built off of a previous rapid assessment effort
Preliminary Results

- 32 respondents
- 53% response rate
- 12 agencies represented
Training and Resource Capacity

Current capacity

- no capacity
- medium capacity

Desired future condition

- significantly decrease
- moderately decrease
- slightly decrease
- stay the same
- slightly increase
- moderately increase
- significantly increase
Training and Resource Capacity

- **Current capacity**
  - Lack of expertise
  - Not enough staff
  - Financial constraints
  - Not a high priority
  - Disconnect between staff and management

- **Desired future condition**
  - Most important issue
  - Need for social science information
  - Capacity is low
Agencies’ Overall Social Science Capacity

Current capacity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>no capacity</td>
<td>medium capacity</td>
<td>high capacity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Desired future condition

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>significantly decrease</td>
<td>moderately decrease</td>
<td>slightly decrease</td>
<td>stay the same</td>
<td>slightly increase</td>
<td>moderately increase</td>
<td>significantly increase</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Agencies’ Overall Social Science Capacity

- Current capacity
  - Lack of staff
  - Lack of awareness
- Desired future condition
  - Social science critical to agency success
  - Ability to operate more effectively
Available Trainings

- Who participated?
  - 19 respondents
  - BLM (3), BOEM (1), DOC (1), IUCN (1), NOAA (3), NPS (3), USACE (1), USAID (1), USFS (1), USFWS (3), ? (1)

Training Types Offered

- In-Person
- Archived Web
- Live Web
- Call In
- Other

- Agency Offers HD Training?
  - Yes 78%
  - No 11%
  - Not Sure 11%

- Have You Participated?
  - Yes 57%
  - No 43%
What training is available?

- BLM
  - Social and Economic Aspects of Planning
  - Reading the Human Landscape (in development)
  - Economic Concepts and Methods (in development)
  - Social Concepts and Methods (in development)
- IUCN
  - Natural resource governance training in various countries
  - Protected area management training in various countries
  - Climate change adaptation training
- NOAA
  - Managing Visitor Use in Coastal and Marine Protected Areas
  - Planning for Meaningful Evaluation
  - Project Design and Evaluation
  - Public Issues and Conflict Management
  - Negotiating for Coastal Resources
What training is available? continued...

- NPS
  - Analyzing and Transforming Conflict to Create Sustainable Solutions for People and Wildlife
  - Periodic trainings offered in conjunction with The Wildlife Society
  - NPS sponsors and sends staff to the Human Dimensions of Fish and Wildlife Management conference
  - Web-based training modules are in development

- USAID
  - Environment and Natural Resource Management suite of courses including climate change impact on development

- USFWS
  - Human Dimensions of Natural Resource Conservation Broadcast Series
  - FWS Communications and Outreach Workshop
  - Public Outreach and Education Overview and Program Planning
  - Balancing Nature and Commerce in Communities that Neighbor Public Lands
  - Connecting People to Nature with Birds
What have we learned?

- Social science capacity low to medium
- Reasons include lack of staff, budgetary constraints, and lack of awareness as to need
- Reasons = barriers
What have we learned?

- Course types preference;
  - how to interpret social science,
  - what is social science, and
  - how to conduct research
- Greatest need exists for internal trainings and resources
Thank you!

Brad Milley
Policy Analysis and Science Assistance Branch (PASA)
Fort Collins Science Center
U.S. Geological Survey