

Lessons Learned

- Commitment of each and every individual participant to **engage with each other with civility and respect** – even when not in agreement – was essential to the success of the process.
- Willingness of agency staff and representatives of other groups **to think flexibly about options** – even constrained by their organizational parameters – helped in coming up with workable solutions.

- The **urgency of the deadline** (in terms of both imminence and importance) helped keep participants focused and engaged.
- The combination of a **neutral forum** and facilitation, highly competent **project management**, and continuous engagement from **high-level decision-makers** was instrumental to moving the process forward.

- Having a **mechanism to bring credible scientific and technical information** into the dialogue helped prevent things getting bogged down due to lack of data.

- Having a clear **communications strategy** and more proactive outreach might have helped foster a greater sense of transparency.
- Investing time in the early stages of the process to **clarify the purpose of the process** (e.g. information sharing vs. decision-making) as well as **roles, responsibilities and logistics** might have avoided some confusion and made some participants more comfortable with the process.

- Finding the **right balance between clarity of process and structure and ability to be adaptive and flexible** can help keep participants engaged while being open to new ideas, new information, and being able to respond to emerging external factors.

- Finding ways to provide **smaller organizations or counties** with **supplemental resources** could help address barriers in terms of transportation, lodging, staff time, etc., allowing them to participate more fully in the process.
- Holding more **meetings in Eastern Oregon** could have helped mitigate some of this pressure on participants from this region.

- A robust analysis of **social and economic impacts** – an issue of significant importance to local affected communities - could help inform development of more explicit strategies to address social and economic challenges.
- Corollary: Fully embracing the **concerns of the communities/participants that are likely to be the most affected** can help promote fairness and confidence in the process.

Feel free to get in touch....

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