

# NATURAL RESOURCES CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROGRAM

## THE UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA

### GUIDELINES FOR FINAL EVALUATION OF KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS, AND ABILITIES

The University of Montana's Natural Resources Conflict Resolution (NRCR) Program is designed to lay a foundation that enables students to:

- Foster meaningful citizen participation;
- Engage in deliberative dialogue;
- Negotiate effective agreements;
- Resolve multi-party disputes;
- Design and manage collaborative processes;
- Practice collaborative leadership; and
- Design institutions for collaborative governance.

The curriculum for the NRCR Program includes a total of 15 credits. Graduate students who complete the necessary requirements of the NRCR Program will be awarded a *Certificate of Achievement in Natural Resources Conflict Resolution*, which will be recognized on the student's official transcript.

### FINAL EVALUATION

1. Prepare a short summary of courses taken for NRCR Program and your graduate degree, along with conferences, workshops, and work experience; explain how each activity helped you develop knowledge, skills, and abilities in natural resource conflict resolution according to the five analytical competencies outlined on the following pages.
2. Complete the attached assessment of your knowledge, skills, and abilities.
3. Meet with NRCR Program Chair to review 1 and 2.
4. Submit a 150-word testimonial reflecting on the value of the NRCR Program to your graduate education and career goals.

To make sure the certificate appears on your official transcript, you need to complete the *Application for Graduation – Certificate Programs*, also available at <https://naturalresourcespolicy.org/natural-resources-conflict-resolution/graduation-app.pdf>. One of the co-chairs of the NRCR Program must sign the form before you submit it to the Graduate School, and after you complete all the requirements for the program.

# Assessment of Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities

## Natural Resources Conflict Resolution

Please complete the following self-assessment prior to meeting with the Chair of the NRCR Program. The purpose of this self-assessment is to compel you to reflect on the status of your knowledge, skills, and abilities relative to collaboration and conflict resolution, and to inform and frame the final evaluation conversation with one of the co-chairs of the NRCR Program. The final evaluation should highlight your strengths as well as areas for continued improvement.

The self-assessment is organized around five major competencies needed to prevent and resolve natural resource conflict<sup>1</sup>. As you complete this assessment, keep in mind the two key perspectives emphasized throughout the program – *interested party* (i.e., negotiator) and *process manager* (i.e., facilitator and/or mediator).

**Analytical Competency** – The process of preventing and resolving natural resource conflicts revolves around multiple parties, interests, and values; complex issues; incomplete information and knowledge; and multiple approaches to engaging stakeholders, building agreements, and resolving conflicts. Analytical competencies help interested parties and process managers make sense of complex issues; manage information to solve problems; and design, manage, and adapt effective processes.

**Process Competency** – Collaboration and conflict resolution are, by definition, processes that engage people in face-to-face dialogue and deliberation. People with diverse interests and perspectives come together and learn about each other and the issues at hand. They engage in formal negotiation and informal conversation. This process of engagement requires competency in communication, process design, teamwork, and negotiation. Through these competencies, interested parties and process managers jointly create the conditions required to build trust, facilitate communication, and seek understanding and agreement.

**Leadership and Management Competency** – Natural resource conflict resolution, particularly through collaborative processes, requires special leadership and management competence to motivate and guide people. All interested participants are leaders in their own right, representing different jurisdictions or constituencies, interests, and perspectives -- as well as drawing on their own power and authority. Working across legal, institutional, cultural, knowledge, and other boundaries likewise requires a special type of “facilitative” or “collaborative” leadership.

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<sup>1</sup> This assessment framework is adapted in part from Kirk Emerson and L. Steven Smutko, *UNCG Guide to Collaborative Capacities* (Policy Consensus Initiative and University Network for Collaborative Governance, 2011).

***Knowledge Management Competency*** – Managing knowledge – its generation, translation, and distribution – is critical to prevent and resolve natural resource conflicts. This skill set begins with the process of assembling all available information relevant to the problem or opportunity at hand, and then extends to assessing what participants know, don't know, and need to know to make informed decisions. It includes integrating scientific and technical information, along with culturally significant and local relevant information. These objectives may be enhanced through the use of information and communication technology.

***Professional Accountability Competency*** – Engaging in negotiation, collaboration, and consensus-seeking processes to build agreement and resolve conflicts on natural resource issues implies a certain type of professional integrity and accountability (i.e., ethics) – one that places a premium on participating in good faith, being open and transparent, following-through on your commitments, and – in the case of process managers – separating personal values from the issues under consideration.

Please use the following scale to assess your competency for each knowledge, skill, and ability:

1 = *Emergent*

Familiar with the ideas based largely on classroom readings and discussion.

2 = *Developing*

Some experience applying theory and methods both in and out of the classroom.

3 = *Competent*

Working knowledge of theory; significant practical experience outside the classroom.

## Natural Resources Conflict Resolution Self-Assessment Tool

<i>Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities</i>	<i>Documents/Courses/Conferences To demonstrate the KSA</i>	<i>Assessment</i>
<b>ANALYTICAL COMPETENCY</b>		
<b>History of Conflict Resolution Theory and Methods</b> – Appreciate the history of alternative approaches to govern natural resources, engage citizens in public decisions, and resolve natural resource conflicts.		<b>1    2    3</b>
<b>Stakeholder Analysis</b> -- Identify stakeholders and key issues; map the interests and concerns of stakeholders, including decision-makers; clarify options for citizen participation and public dispute resolution; and determine if and when collaboration, consensus building, or conflict resolution is appropriate.		<b>1    2    3</b>
<b>Social, Political, Legal, &amp; Institutional Context</b> – Analyze these contextual variables to clarify incentives and/or constraints to collaboration and conflict resolution.		<b>1    2    3</b>
<b>Decision Analysis for Negotiation and Agreement Seeking</b> – Use analytical and strategic thinking to more clearly and explicitly define problems, generate creative options, evaluate the consequences and trade-offs of options, and maximize mutual gains.		<b>1    2    3</b>
<b>Measuring Outcomes &amp; Impacts of Conflict Resolution Processes</b> – Apply alternative methods to evaluate the effectiveness of collaboration and other approaches to shape public policy and resolve natural resource disputes; develop evaluation criteria and indicators of success, including both process and outcome metrics.		<b>1    2    3</b>

<p><b>Applications</b> — Adapt principles and strategies to public participation, community-based collaboration, partnerships, networks, administrative rulemaking, environmental impact assessment, resource planning, legislative policymaking, multi-jurisdictional issues, inter-agency coordination, court-connected disputes, intractable disputes, dispute systems design, collaborative governance, and international environmental issues.</p>		<p><b>1    2    3</b></p>
<p><b>PROCESS COMPETENCY</b></p>		
<p><b>Communication</b> – This skill set includes active listening, presenting ideas and information, and persuading or influencing others; use different communication modes and media to reach different audiences; be sensitive with cross-cultural communication.</p>		<p><b>1    2    3</b></p>
<p><b>Process Design</b> — Design public processes that are inclusive, informed, and deliberative. Tailor the process to meet the needs and interests of stakeholders, and in a way that respects legal, political, biological, and other constraints</p>		<p><b>1    2    3</b></p>
<p><b>Teamwork</b> – This critical skill set includes competency in managing group dynamics; building coalitions; working effectively in teams with diverse interests, knowledge, and skills; and communicating within internal teams and in multiparty forums.</p>		<p><b>1    2    3</b></p>
<p><b>Negotiation</b> — Participate effectively in multi-party public processes; work with others to find mutual gain solutions; create and claim value; sequence issues; package options; and manage communication between representatives and their constituent groups.</p>		<p><b>1    2    3</b></p>

<b>LEADERSHIP &amp; MANAGEMENT COMPETENCY</b>		
<p><b>Leadership Roles</b> – Appreciate the different types of leadership needed in collaboration and conflict resolution – sponsors, conveners, facilitators, participants, experts, others. Distinguish roles and responsibilities. Avoid conflicts of interest.</p>		<p><b>1    2    3</b></p>
<p><b>Collaborative Leadership</b> — Enable people with different viewpoints to accomplish a task that none of them could accomplish individually; lead as a peer, not a superior; encourage and facilitate cooperation, pride, trust, and group identity; foster commitment and team spirit; work with others to achieve common goals and realize a sense of shared accomplishment; manage and resolve conflicts in a constructive manner; and manage effective meetings.</p>		<p><b>1    2    3</b></p>
<p><b>Political &amp; Entrepreneurial Skills</b> –Inspire new ways of thinking, new perspectives on problems, and new approaches to shared decision making. Develop the power of persuasion, ability to instill confidence and trust, and sensitivity to timing and flexibility of the decision-making arena to help other people overcome fear and resistance.</p>		<p><b>1    2    3</b></p>
<p><b>Facilitation and Mediation</b> -- Understand the value of impartial, nonpartisan facilitators and mediators in complex, multi-party natural resources issues. Develop a working knowledge of the role of process managers in assessing situations, designing the right process, facilitating meetings, mediating disputes, drafting documents, and monitoring implementation. Know when a facilitator or mediator is needed, what to look for in a qualified process manager, and how to select such a person or team.</p>		<p><b>1    2    3</b></p>

<b>KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT COMPETENCY</b>		
<p><b>Joint Fact Finding</b> – Assess information requirements for informed decision-making; embrace different ways of knowing and learning; apply joint fact-finding methods and standards to collect, analyze, and synthesize information; help people with diverse viewpoints build a common understanding of complex issues and resolve scientific and technical disputes.</p>		<p><b>1    2    3</b></p>
<p><b>Role of Experts</b> -- Clarify the role of scientific experts and technical information in providing baseline information, generating options, evaluating trade-offs, and invigorating the process of agreement building and dispute resolution.</p>		<p><b>1    2    3</b></p>
<p><b>Adaptive Management</b> – Employ the principles and strategies of adaptive management during a collaborative or other conflict resolution process (i.e., adapt the process as needed), as well as during the process of implementation – as new ideas, information, and stakeholders emerge and other relevant variables change.</p>		<p><b>1    2    3</b></p>
<p><b>Information and Communication Technology</b> – Appreciate the value of computer-based decision support and spatial analysis tools, along with web-based communications &amp; social networking tools. Understand the merits of computing and communication technology in preventing and resolving natural resource conflicts.</p>		<p><b>1    2    3</b></p>

<b>PROFESSIONAL ACCOUNTABILITY</b>		
<b>Code of Professional Conduct</b> -- Familiar with one or more “codes of professional conduct” related to the field of collaboration and conflict resolution – e.g., Association for Conflict Resolution, International Association for Public Participation, International Association of Facilitators.		<b>1    2    3</b>
<b>Personal &amp; Professional Development</b> -- Reflect on personal and professional effectiveness and seek feedback.		<b>1    2    3</b>

### Discussion Questions

1. What is the most valuable lesson you have learned about natural resources policy, governance, and conflict resolution?
2. What are your top 2-3 strengths in collaboration and conflict resolution?
3. What are the 2-3 areas where you most want to improve relative to collaboration and conflict resolution?
4. How would you most like to use and/or apply your skills in natural resources collaboration and conflict resolution?