

RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT AND PEOPLE

The theme of your meeting is excellent. It is timely to consider man and his environment in a broad setting. We are most concerned in resource development in meeting the needs of the people.

These needs are met in direct relation to the way people participate either directly or indirectly in planning for the use, care, and development of their land, water, and related resources.

Resource development as used in this paper means local citizens 2) determining their needs and desires, 1) taking stock of their resources and resource potentials, 3) establishing their objectives, 4) setting priorities, and 5) finally setting in motion an action program to reach their goals and objectives. It is a continuing process and people must continually be involved every step of the way.

First, what is a resource? One basic concept in resource development is "Resources are Not--They Become--As a Result of Man's Increasing Knowledge and Needs."

For example, coal is neutral in the ground. It is really not a resource until man adapts it to his own ends. It becomes a resource in the service of man.

Material used by Norman A. Berg, Deputy Administrator for Field Services, Soil Conservation Service, U. S. Department of Agriculture, Washington, D. C., in Alaska during the period November 6-12, 1968.

Oil, for example, wasn't considered a valuable resource when first discovered. When Colonel Drake, a railroad conductor out of work, discovered oil in Titusville, Pennsylvania, it was first used as a cure and sold in whiskey barrels.

Resources used to be looked upon as static--a room full of goodies--and when the goodies were used up you were through, so the conservation philosophy was to use as few resources as possible.

Have you ever tried to list all the resources in your community or your State? Do not stop with soil and water, air and related physical resources, but rather consider the multiple use of the resources which man uses or needs in his total environment.

What do most of us see or think about when we mention a river or stream? We obviously think about the water and its uses, but what about the stream channel? A stream channel is more than a place where water runs. It's a part of the water disposal system for the area under differing conditions of runoff. It may have land form, lending itself to a storage reservoir. It may speed up or slow down runoff water. It adds character to the landscape. Through some eyes it may be natural beauty, through others, it may appear as a menace. It may have historic value to some individuals in the community. Man places the values upon resources.

The larger the area being considered, the broader the scope of resources involved and the greater the number and kinds of people who will be concerned. Here, then lies the secret of action - large scale involvement of local people in both planning and action phases of resource development. We are not talking about agriculture or farming and ranching alone, but all segments of the area's economy and the life of the community.

We must think of each individual parcel of land as a part of a community, a county, area, State, region, yes, even nation and world. Agriculture, industry, all business, State and local government, and civic groups and many others are affected. Since it is a concern of theirs, then each part of the social and economic body must be included in resource planning and development action. To do otherwise, provides no basis for assuming that individual and local groups will spend their time and finances on resource development despite the fact it may be economically feasible and make substantial contribution to individual or community progress.

Effective resource development does not just happen. There are some essential ingredients that makes it happen. Let's look into some of these important ingredients.

First, what kind of a community do people really want? A dialogue must start between the citizens relating to the kind of an environment they desire for themselves and their families. In a democracy like we perceive in America, the citizenry have always insisted that they decide the direction they want for the development of their community. The professional may come into the picture with special skills and competence to help them carry out the course they have started for themselves.

One of the first skills needed is in communications. Person-to-person, small groups, neighborhood gatherings, civic club meetings, newspapers, radio, TV, and other media help the people think, talk, and finally act on the future of their community. Public opinion is and in turn public policy is developed.

Next the wishes of the local people are expressed through their elected officials--the town council, the county board, or some other responsible body with power to carry out the desires of the citizenry. A citizen group or civic organization can start the ball rolling but before firm community planning and development becomes much of a reality, the appropriate governing body or decision makers must effectively be brought into and support the community effort.

This is really the time for the technician to enter on the scene to help the people carry out their community development ideas, and aspirations. What really are their desires? They are not as easy to determine, yet resource planning goals that truly reflect the needs, wants, potentials, and desires of the people are a must. What are the general boundaries or size of the area under consideration? The technician does not decide this, but he can suggest that a resource development area should be sufficiently large to permit the development of its human and physical resources but small enough for local leadership to be effective. Leaders must be able to meet and work together without undue hardship or physical barriers between them as they establish and carry out their goals.

There are different levels of planning which influence the resources. For example, some decisions reached by State government influence resources throughout the State whereas other decisions apply (or not made) at the county or smaller community level.

Goal setting and inventories have many ramifications in the resource planning activity. There is a frequent argument as to which comes first the goals or the inventories. There are those who say the local people cannot establish goals until a thorough analysis has been made of all physical resources and alternatives determined. Others hold that goals are necessary before time and money are spent on inventories. I believe both are right as long as the local people are establishing the goals and helping determine the inventories needed at any given time.

Hear all the people - The desires, goals, needs, and aspirations of all the people must be considered in the planning process if the plans are to be carried out. This means not just communicating with the middle class and their leaders. The very poor, the very rich, the old timers, the newcomers, various ethnic groups, those whom are already known to agree, and those who are expected to disagree must have their voice at the beginning. The people who do not normally attend community meetings, civic clubs, etc., need to be heard.

Past experiences on public issues such as school bond issues, road improvements, public land purchase, water rights, local, State, or national politics can all influence people's attitude toward land, water, and the environment.

All interests in the land deserve consideration, both vested and hoped for. People draw different conclusions from the same information depending upon their interest, background, and time horizon for a given resource use. I need spend no time with groups pointing out the demands for land, water, and related resources. On the other hand, it's easy to leave out some key yet obscure user or potential user when it

comes to establishing realistic goals for the future of land in the community.

New needs, thoughts, and aspirations for the land and water will surface as more people become involved in the resource planning process. I have heard of many cases in which the local people, when they really started looking into inventorying their community, they found new potentials and real problems. Such remarks as--I didn't realize that only 20 percent of our county was prime farmland, and that's where all the new houses are being built. We better take steps to save that lake site. Look what's being built in the flood plain. Did you know the soils of our area were so different?

This is an excellent setting for the people and agency people to start talking about the multiple use, compatible and complementary use of land and water.

Environment - As the theme of this meeting suggests, there is a new dimension appearing on the horizon in resource planning. Namely, a quality environment. I trust each of you have your definition for a quality environment. I will not attempt to define or describe it, but I would pose the question, how is it going to influence the goals of people for their community? We dare not brush it aside!

In finding out what people want for their community, it is equally important to discover what they do not want. It may reveal areas of misinformation or strong prejudices. For example, there may be people who think resource planning and development is or will only lead to zoning, and they historically are opposed to anything that sounds like planning and zoning. The findings can serve as a guide for items needing special emphasis in the information program. We all know

zoning is but one tool to help a community carry out its plans.

The ingredients we have discussed thus far cannot be obtained with an instrument. The person-to-person dialogue is necessary to involve people in resource planning. Stuart Chapin, Jr., in his book, "Urban Land-Use Planning," says "A soundly conceived method of investigating attitudes in many respects provides information just as basic to the technical land-use planning process as the land-use survey." ^{1/} This is a bit shocking to some of us who spend a great deal of time and effort on physical inventories such as soil surveys, etc.

Mr. Chapin in this book also observes a strong possibility that some planning may reflect more of the planners values than those of the people in the community. ^{1/} This brings us to a few of the bad or questionable ingredients that may creep into our mix of people and technicians such as:

"This is best" attitude whereby a few leaders, the technicians, or both feel that resource planning should proceed with or without citizen involvement because it is in the public interest therefore, resource improvement projects, bond issues and ordinances can be sold or passed which will carry out the plan.

You in this organization know that the citizens of a community will only carry out those parts of a plan which they feel they were instrumental in developing so as to make their community a better place to live, work, and play.

I participated at a Resource Planning Workshop this summer for Soil Conservation Service personnel in New Jersey where Mrs. William Morgan, Former Director of the League of Women Voters of the United States, spoke on the subject, "Expanding Citizen Involvement in Conservation," and said:

"Let me make clear at the outset where our League positions on water resources fit into your activities. For almost ten years the League of Women Voters has been working for better coordination of Federal water agencies and programs to secure improved over-all long range planning and development of water resources. Since 1960 the League has firmly maintained that 'Comprehensive planning, development, and water management on a regional basis is essential to the optimum development of the Nation's water resources.' We believe that procedures should be used which provide information and full opportunity for citizen participation in policy decisions affecting the directions water resources development will take.

"We would like to challenge you who are experts and specialists to give greater attention to generating interest and evaluating alternatives for consideration by the public. We would like you to present citizens with information about practical alternatives, so that people might have a chance to discuss those choices and, through their representatives, express their preferences before final decisions are made.

"You see, what we really want to do is to have a chance to understand the problems, the alternatives, and express our wishes during every phase of the development of a plan, rather than to be confronted with an accomplished fact to which we are asked to react. We would like to have you maintain flexibility in your planning to accommodate future land and water uses, and most of all to include us from the beginning and not wait until your plans are at such a stage of perfection that we have only two choices--to accept a plan or reject it.

"Under such circumstances it should be no surprise to you that an often ungrateful and disinterested public rejects a plan. We who urge citizen involvement have learned that you cannot treat people like children--deny them the significant facts in understandable form--and then complain that they lack awareness and do not exercise citizen responsibility. We need significant facts, but you, the experts, must provide facts translated into layman's terms--not mysterious, hard-to-read charts and technical reports which we are not trained to understand.

"We think we have a right to make value judgments about resource developments taking place in our own areas. And citizens are very perceptive about this process. They can detect pretense of consulting them about insignificant parts of a plan. They resent reluctance to modify decisions previously made by the specialists."^{2/}

Superimposed technology - New technology (regardless of its merits or need) cannot be superimposed upon the culture of a community. Rather the people of the community must reach out and bring in the new technology to help meet felt needs in their culture.

The "Afraid to let go" attitude by technicians can keep local people from fulfilling their rightful responsibility. Dr. Donald R. Fessler, Extension Sociologist of Virginia Polytechnic Institute in his excellent bulletin, "Citizen Participation in Resource Development--A Concept" points out the importance of group training, the benefits of group motivation and in describing the success of community improvement depending on the faith of the technician in local people says:

"Nowhere is the resource development approach more meaningful than in the community improvement program which has been operating in many States, particularly in the Southeast, during the past dozen or more years. In this program it has been demonstrated over and over again that where the professional workers have trained community leaders to accept their rightful responsibilities, the results have been gratifying. On the other hand, where the professional lacked faith to let go, the accomplishments have generally been negligible." 3/

The role of the technicians in planning particularly resource planning is to advise, counsel, motivate, provide technical know-how, look for potentials, explore potentials, then step aside and let the citizens make the decisions for the development of their community.

They--the local people--must say what will be done, how, where, when, who, and how will it be paid.

Keeping the people involved - Citizens frequently become aroused about a specific or immediate issue especially if it is a very visible one such as the proverbial slaughter house on the next farm or the re-location of a highway. However, once the issue has been settled or moved to another part of the community, people lose interest fast. One of the challenges to both technicians and elected leaders is to keep the people involved.

Interest in the community and a sense of responsibility for it is admirable but few continue on a free will basis to attend weekly or monthly meetings, contact others especially if they do not agree with us unless the cause and our experience is personally satisfying. Adaptations from the Adult Education Association pamphlet, "Working with Volunteers" gives some general guidelines which technicians need to keep in mind as they work with local people in resource planning, such as: 4/

- (1) Continued participation depends on rewards in his or her scale of values.
- (2) They must see the relations of the part they are asked to contribute, however small, to the total effort.
- (3) They must be made to feel the importance of their contribution.
Has it or will it result in community improvement?
- (4) Their first efforts must be simple enough to sense some achievement or progress. A little success goes a long way toward maintaining interest.
- (5) They must have opportunity to grow and learn. Interest stops where there is stagnation. Continued involvement demands new challenges.

- (6) Local leaders must be given the opportunity and encouraged to make as many decisions as possible. Growth is shown by the capacity to make intelligent decisions.
- (7) Local leaders work best in a friendly, warm atmosphere, where they feel their efforts are obviously needed and appreciated. A "pat on the back," a letter acknowledging a service rendered, their name in the news all help people feel they are needed.
- (8) Local leaders must not be taken for granted. Although the resource planning effort may be very important in our eyes, the local leader could be doing other things for pleasure or immediate monetary profit.
- (9) Local leaders must be kept informed of the latest developments in the organization or effort even though they may not be directly involved at the moment. They will become more intimately involved if they know the problems, potentials, and successes of the activity.
- (10) Technicians or professionals must care enough about the local leaders to know their strengths. A speaking acquaintance does not mean we really know a person or create understanding. All people have talents and become enthusiastic when they feel they are making a contribution to a community effort.

We must recognize that there is tremendous competition for the time and effort of community leaders--both volunteer and elected. The skilled technician will exercise to the highest degree the art of working with people some call this human engineering.

In stressing the importance and role of citizens, I do not want to minimize the role of the professional workers in helping the local people think out ahead, plan, and carry out an action program.

Everyone must be in on the act.

Government - Federal, State, and local agencies and departments both inside and outside of Agriculture.

Organizations - Of all types, such as civic, social, labor, women's groups, etc.

Churches -

Business and Industry - Bankers, manufacturers, processors, suppliers.

Educational institutions

Special purpose districts such as soil and water conservation districts.

Community or neighborhood groups.

We must think broad, think big if we are to fully develop our resources to meet the needs of man and a quality environment.

Daniel Burnham, one of the early planners who envisioned a beautiful waterfront for the city of Chicago, captured the vision and action that I believe you can give to resource development in North Dakota when he said:

"Make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood and probably themselves will not be realized. Make big plans; aim high in hope and work, remembering that a noble, logical diagram once recorded will never die, but long after we are gone will be a living thing, asserting itself with ever growing insistency. Remember that our sons and grandsons are going to do things that would stagger us. Let your watchword be order and your beacon beauty."