

Citizen Influence on Policy: What Works?



Types of Democracy

- Direct, Participatory Democracy
- Pluralism
- Representative, Indirect Democracy
- Technocracy } Rule on behalf of the people
- Elitism

- Different policy arenas tend to follow different models

What Works – Educating Yourself

1. Where the policymaking is taking place
2. What the process is of that particular form of policymaking is
3. GOOD research on the problem
4. Clear and concise communication of the problem
5. Understanding the other players, what their definitions, stakes and resources are + what other constituent groups the MoC etc are being influenced by

Where is the policy?

3 Branches and 4 Levels of Government

- Levels:
 - Local Government = ~ 87,000 in the US
 - State Government = 50
 - Federal Government = 1
 - International – e.g. International Joint Commission
- Branches and Points of Entry
 - Legislative – Lobbying, Hearings, Campaigns, Letters
 - Executive – Campaigns, Administrative Rulemaking, Citizen Panels
 - Judicial – standing in suit or amicus curiae

- **DNR Spring Wildlife & Fisheries Proposed Rules Hearing and Annual Conservation Congress County Meeting**
- **Monday, April 12, 2010 at 7:00 PM**
- **[Spring Hearing Locations](#)**
- If you have an interest in natural resources, conservation, hunting, fishing, trapping or outdoor recreation in Wisconsin then the Spring Hearings are for you.
- On Monday, April 12, there will be 72 public hearings, one in each county starting at 7:00 p.m. where individuals interested in natural resources management have an opportunity to provide their input by non-binding vote and testimony to the [Department of Natural Resources](#), [Natural Resources Board](#) and the [Conservation Congress](#) on proposed hunting and fishing rule changes and advisory questions.
- **[2010 Questionnaire](#)**
- County residents have the option to run for election to the Conservation Congress and to elect delegates from their county to represent their county views regarding natural resources on the Conservation Congress. Also, individuals have the opportunity to bring forth new conservation issues of a statewide nature to the attention of the Conservation Congress through the citizen resolution process.
- **For Your Information**
- [WCC How to Write a Resolution](#)
- [WCC Resolution Process](#)
- [WCC Election Process](#)
- [First Time Guidelines--English](#)
- [First Time Guidelines--Hmong](#)
- **2009 Spring Hearings**
- [2009 Spring Hearing Questionnaire \[PDF 1,353KB\]](#)
- [2009 Statewide Spring Hearing Results \[PDF 14KB\]](#)
- Results by County
- [County Resolution Results](#)

Sources of Policy Initiatives

- Legislature
 - Bills and Statutes
 - <http://thomas.loc.gov>
 - <http://www.legis.state.wi.us/>
 - Click on “searchable infobase”
 - Relevant committees – schedules, members etc.
- Executive
 - www.whitehouse.gov
 - www.firstgov.gov
 - www.regulations.gov

 - <http://www.wisgov.state.wi.us/>
 - http://www.wisconsin.gov/state/core/agency_index.html
 - <http://www.dnr.state.wi.us/>

Government Research Sources

- Library of Congress
- Congressional Research Service
- CBO/OMB etc.
- Agency evaluations
- WI Legislative Reference Bureau – the Wisconsin Blue Book

Other Sources

- Academic Research
- News → Source
- Personal Stories
- Surveys

- What do you think is the *best* thing about Wisconsin?
(Please probe for specifics, ask what about it do they like and if they say more than one, ask them to tell you which they think is the best and type in ONLY ONE (open-ended)
Spring 2008

- 1. Environment (52%)
- 2. The People (18%)
- 3. Communities (9%)
- 4. Government/Politics/Media (8%)
- 5. Values (3%)
- 6. Overall Lifestyle/Quality of Life (3%)
- 7. Economy/Jobs/Cost of Living (1%)

- Environment
- Weather – 4 seasons (19% of overall responses)
- Beautiful Scenic (10%)
- Nature (6%)
- Water/Lakes (5%)
- Clean Environment (1%)
- Variety of Outdoor Activities (5%)
- The North (2%)
- Parks (2%)
- Wide-open spaces (1%)
- Other (1%)

- The People
- Are friendly/nice/down-to-earth (12%)
- Family is here (5%)
- Diversity of people (1%)

- Communities
- Rural areas/life (2%)
- Safe (2%)
- Lots to do (1.5%)
- Small Communities (1%)
- Packers (1%)
- Brats, Cheese, Beer (1%)
- Other (1%)

- Government/Politics/Media
- Education (4%)

- Values
- Midwest Values (1%)
- Blue Collar Values (<1%)
- Family Oriented (2%)

Problem Definition Components

What is not as it should be?

- Causes & Culpability
- Scope (Policy Envelope)
- Boundaries:
 - Location,
 - length of time existed,
 - historical events that shaped it,
 - Magnitude - how many and how much, Rate of change, Severity, Proximity, Distribution/Incidence, Effects
- Crisis/Emergency
- Target/Problem Populations

The Politics of Problem Definition

- Identify different actors involved
 - How are they affected/What do they have at stake / how do they define the problem
 - what values underlie their definitions
 - What solutions do they prefer
 - What resources do they have

What MoCs Do & How they Decide

- Constituency
 - Casework
 - Porkbrelling
 - Committee assignments
 - Delegate model of decision making
- Policy
 - Area of expertise
 - Make major policy decisions
 - Trustee model of decision making
- Party
 - Logrolling
 - Committee Assignments
 - Party line model of decision making

Variables Affecting Likelihood of Getting Policy

- Good Research and Understanding of Process
- Clear Presentation
- Media
- Access
- Policy Entrepreneur
- Ready Solution – Affordable, Feasible
- Salience and Conflict

Saliency and Conflict

	SALIENCY	
CONFLICT	HIGH	LOW
HIGH	Public & Gov't agendas - symbolic outcome?	Worst chance of being placed on the agenda
LOW	Best chance of being placed on the agenda	Institutional agenda - subgovernments

Broad -vs- Narrow Costs & Benefits

	COSTS	
BENEFITS	BROAD	NARROW
BROAD		
NARROW		

Problem Definition Exercise

- Groups of 5:
- Issue : A Lake in a particular WI town
- Roles –
 - Developer
 - DNR Wildlife Biologist
 - Mayor of town in which lake is situated
 - Property owner along the lake
 - Owner of local jet ski and powerboat store and launch site
- From Perspective of Role – what are your issues with regard to lake policy in the town? What would you like to see happen?

- Out of role, for you, what do you see as the most important problem facing lakes in WI? Define this problem as clearly as possible – group members help clarify by asking questions.
- What is the level of government most appropriate for you to influence policy?
- What part of that government is involved in policymaking?
- How would you go about influencing this body?
- What do you think – given the problem definition variables and actors involved in the problem – would be the most effective way for you to influence policy?