

A Perspective on Governance and Relevancy for the Washington Fish and Wildlife Commission

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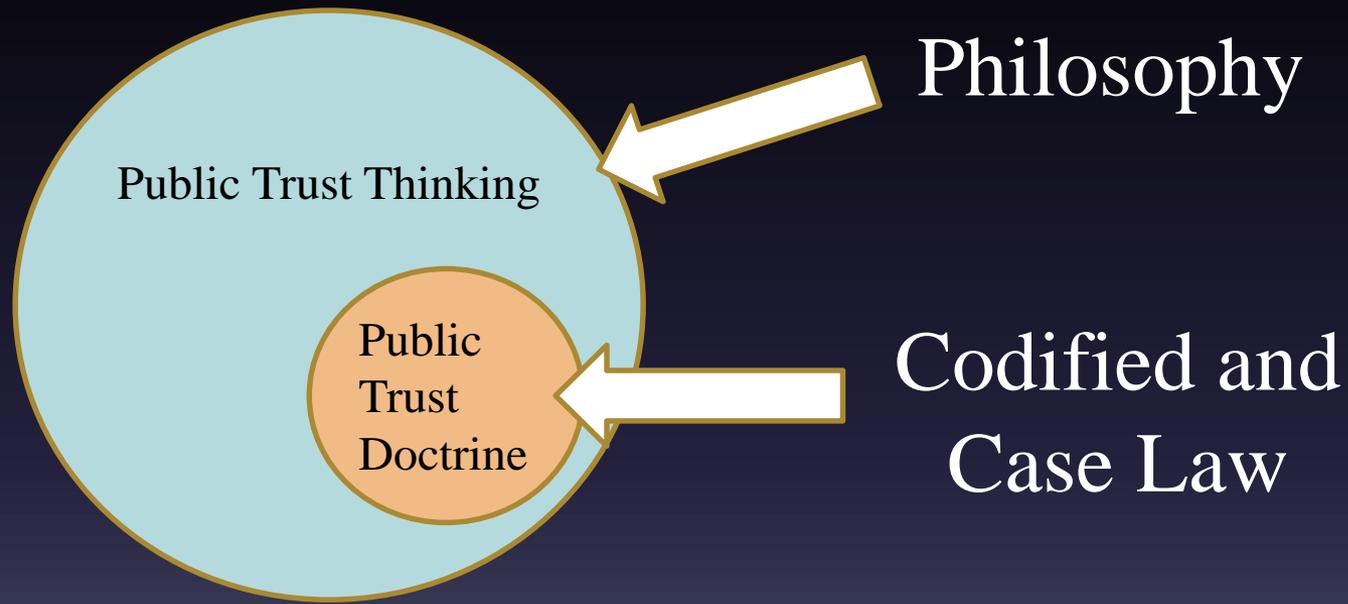
Wildlife Management Institute



What is Governance?

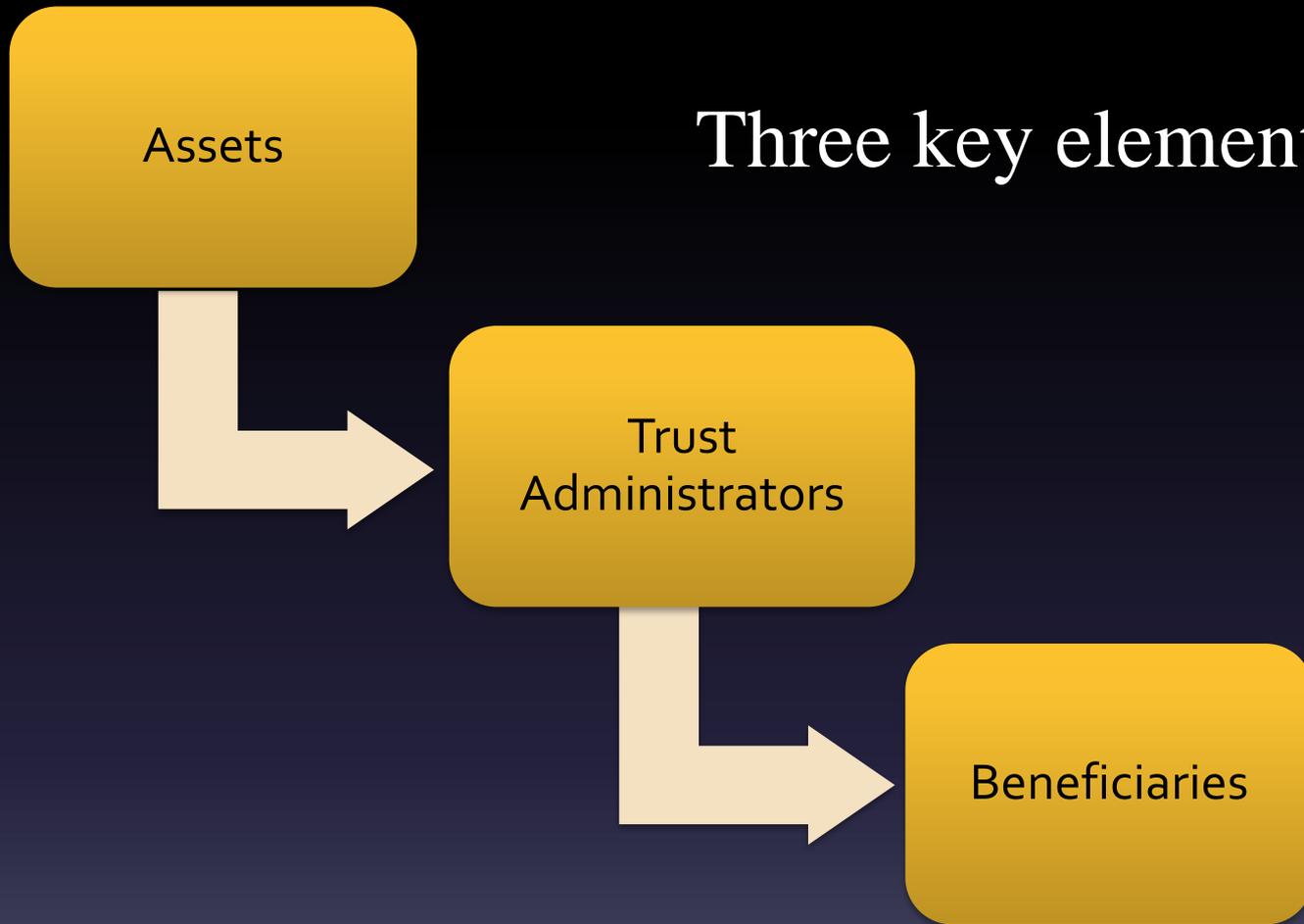
The practices and processes that determine how decisions are made and implemented, and how responsibilities are exercised.

Public Trust Thinking & The Public Trust Doctrine



Public Trust Management

Three key elements



Fish & Wildlife Trust Administrators

Roles & Responsibilities

Trustees

(Elected/Appointed Officials)

- **Fiduciary duty to the people**
- **High level policy decision-makers**
- **Allocate benefits of the trust**
- **Accountable to the people**

Trust Managers

(WDFW Professional Staff)

- **Ministerial/executive duties**
- **Recommend, but do not decide, policy**
- **Monitor resources and manage programs**
- **Accountable to trustees**

Evolution of Conservation

Protection/Preservation

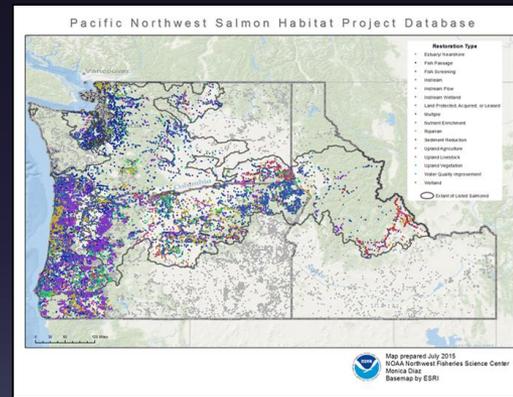
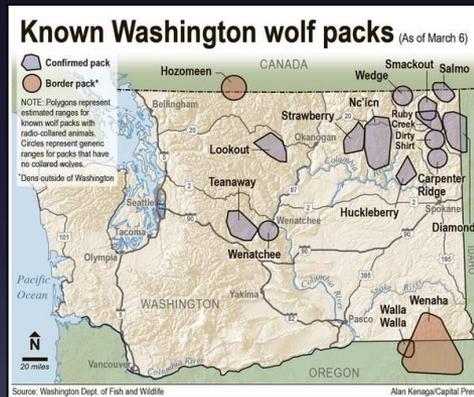
(Late 1800s – 1930s)



Focused on Regulation and Law Enforcement

Evolution of Conservation

Expanding Agency Programs (1970s – Today)



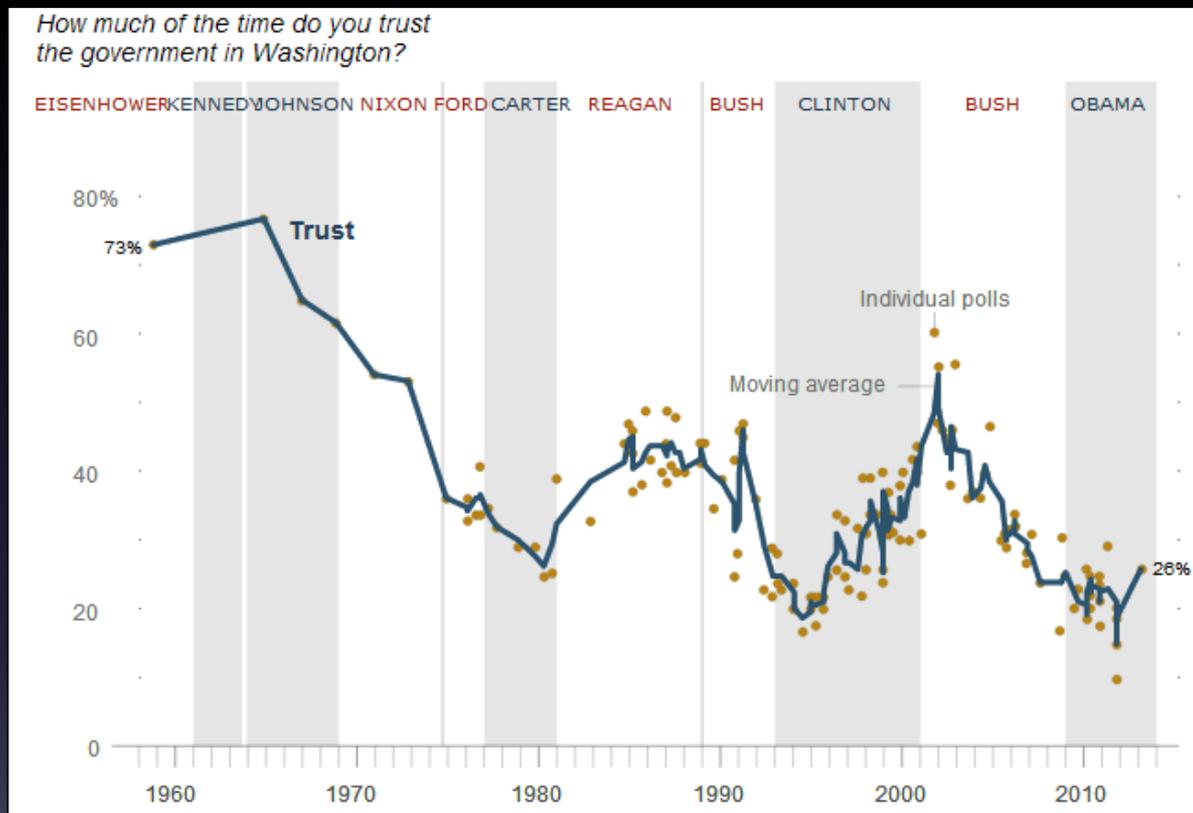
Evolution of Conservation

Expanding Stakeholder Involvement
(1970s – Today)



Evolution of Conservation

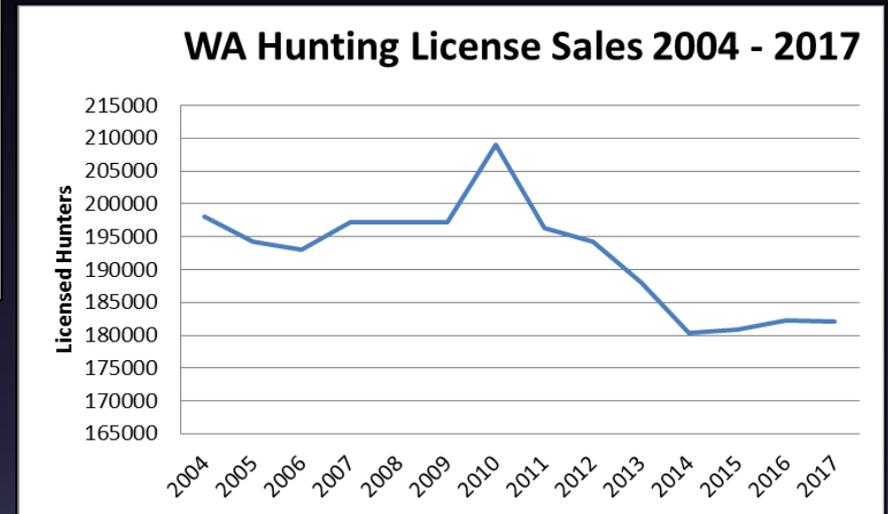
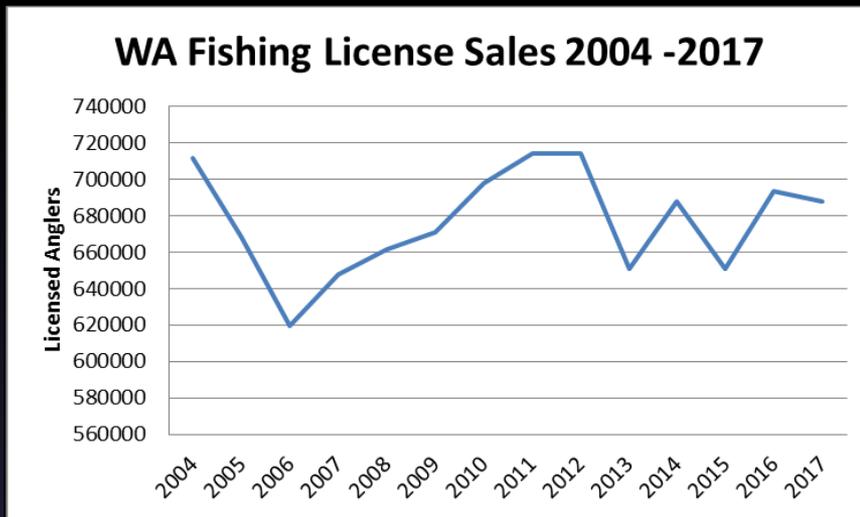
Declining Trust in Government



Source: Pew Research Center

Evolution of Conservation

Stable or Declining License Sales



Demographic Changes

Increasing population

Aging population

Increasing minorities

Increasing cultural diversity

Socio-economic Changes

Increased urbanization

Service v. production economy

Technological innovation

Detachment from nature

Is Conservation Relevant?

- Trend in funding and priorities for federal agencies
- Lack of state general fund support
- Few states with alternative funding – MO, AR, VA, MN
- Legislators' focus on partisan/fiscal/ideological issues
- Federal land transfer movement
- Lack of citizen recognition of F&W agency

How we think of conservation

Wildlife population management and control

Protection of sensitive species and biodiversity

Hunting and fishing participation

Sustained Yield

Regulation

Habitat management

How others think of conservation

Air quality

Resiliency

Water quality and quantity

Public health

Flood retention

Outdoor recreation

Ground water recharge

Aesthetics / Open space

Climate regulation

Physical and mental well-

Caring about wildlife

being

What Needs to Change?

- **Narrow focus → broader perspective**
- **Static priorities → adaptable to meet modern challenges**
- **Declining relevance → valued and supported**

What Should NOT Change?

None left out



$$\Sigma \neq 0$$



None left behind

What Should Guide Change?

Public Trust Thinking

Good Governance



Wildlife Governance Principles

Public Trust Thinking

- **Fish & Wildlife resources are an endowment**
- **Fish & Wildlife resources are not suited to private ownership**
- **All citizens deserve fair consideration**
- **Current decisions should avoid foreclosing future options**
- **Trust administrators must be transparent**
- **Citizens can hold trustees accountable**

Good Governance

- Responsive to the public
- Participatory decision-making
- Transparent decision-making
- Equitable and inclusive
- Consensus-oriented decisions
- Accountable to public
- Effective and efficient use of public resources

Wildlife Governance Principles

Normative, aspirational statements developed to:

- Improve practices, procedures and programs.
- Increase quality & quantity of stakeholder engagement.
- Increase diversity of input.
- Increase adaptability and relevance.



Wildlife Governance Principles

Designed to support:

- Strategic thinking & organizational adaptability.
- Evidence-based and broadly-informed decision-making.
- Inclusivity and diversity.
- Transparency and accountability.
- Capacity for conservation.



Wildlife Governance...

- Will be adaptable and responsive to citizens' current needs and interests, while also being forward-looking to conserve options of future generations.
- Will seek and incorporate multiple and diverse perspectives.
- Will apply social and ecological science, citizens' knowledge, and trust administrators' judgment.
- Will produce multiple, sustainable benefits for all beneficiaries.

Wildlife Governance...

- Will ensure that trust administrators are responsible for maintaining trust resources and allocating benefits from the trust.
- Will be publicly accessible and transparent.
- Wildlife governance will ensure that trust administrators are publicly accountable.
- Will include means for citizens to become informed and engaged in decision making.

Wildlife Governance...

- Will include opportunities for trust administrators to meet their obligations in partnerships with non-governmental entities.
- Will facilitate collaboration and coordination across ecological, jurisdictional and ownership boundaries.

From Principles to Practices

Principles – individual normative statements



Themes – common attributes of principles



Traits – characteristics an agency possesses



Practices - behaviors or actions performed by an agency that support or impede the WGPs

From Principles to Practices

Wildlife governance will be adaptable and responsive to citizens' current needs and interests, while also being forward-looking to conserve options of future generations.



Strategic Thinking & Organizational Adaptability



Proactive



Reactive



Using strategic planning tools to set realistic goals

From Principles to Practices

Wildlife governance will apply social and ecological science, citizens' knowledge, and trust administrators' judgment.



Evidence-based and broadly informed decision-making



**Decisions informed
by facts**



**Decisions unduly
influenced by politics**



Informing decisions with data and supportive evidence

From Principles to Practices

Wildlife governance will include opportunities for trust administrators to meet their obligations in partnerships with non-governmental entities.



Capacity for Conservation



**Collaborative/
Cooperative**



**Isolated and
Uncooperative**



Partnering with other agencies/NGOs to increase capacity

Where to Start?



Assessment of Agency Alignment with Governance Principles

Results for
BUREAU OF WILDLIFE
NYS Department of Environmental Conservation

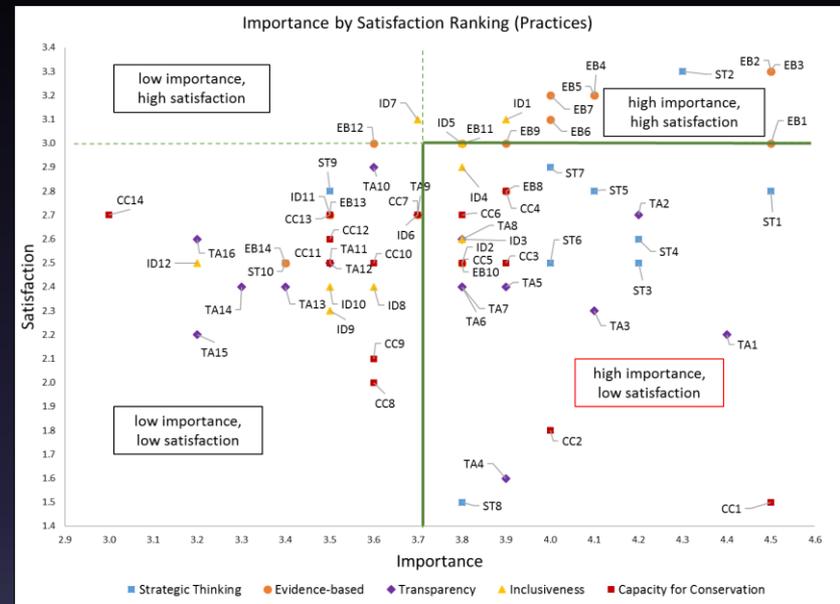
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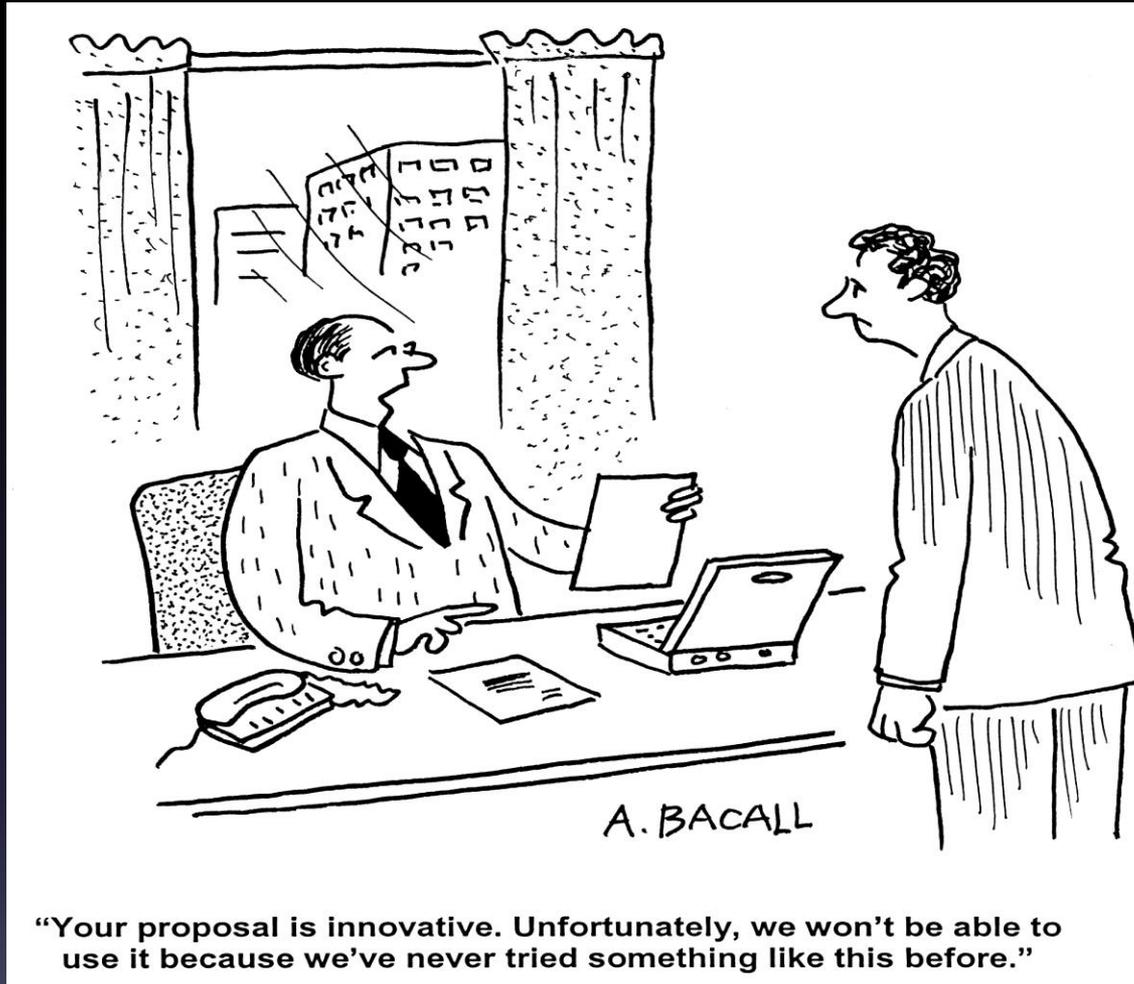
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On-line assessment of:

- 32 Traits
- 66 Practices



Can we afford to wait?



Conservation's Path Forward



Thank You

