

"Using Social Ecology, the Science
of Community, to Mobilize Citizens
and Partnerships for Climate
Change"

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JAMES KENT ASSOCIATES
Global Cultural Analysts

Are you in the right room?

Training Workshop Assumptions

1. Individual citizens are required for successful climate change adaptations.
2. Citizen perceptions and current activities are the starting point for successful engagement.
3. Efforts to "learn community" must precede and inform subsequent efforts.

Training Objectives

1. Make the case for the importance of citizen engagement at the cultural level.
2. Present a conceptual framework by which to understand community and a methodology to act.
3. Develop a set of strategies with participants for use back home by which to foster citizen ownership of climate change work.

Social Ecology

Social Ecology

is the process of individuals becoming conscious of their environment to foster actions that optimize benefits of intentional change in order to sustain ecological systems.

Social Ecology

Five Propositions

Proposition One:

Individual power is essential for maintaining the productivity of the human environment.

Power is the ability of the individual to understand, participate in, predict and control his or her environment.

Individual power is essential to maintain a vigorous community and a healthy relationship between citizens, industry and government.

Social Ecology

Five Propositions

Proposition Two:

People everywhere develop an attachment to a geographic place

characterized by a set of natural boundaries created by physical, biological, social, cultural and economic systems (a *bio-social* ecosystem).

These human-geographic boundaries are natural management boundaries.

Social Ecology

Five Propositions

Proposition Three:

Unique beliefs, traditions, and stories tie people to a specific place, to the land, and to social/kinship networks.

Informal networks and caretaking systems form the social capital by which communities sustain themselves.

Social Ecology

Five Propositions

Proposition Four:

Since humans and nature rely on shared landscapes, the current status of “productive harmony” (NEPA balance of physical/social environments) must be described.

The best opportunities for adaptive change are through the cultural alignment of formal, institutional systems with informal community systems.

Social Ecology

Five Propositions

Proposition Five:

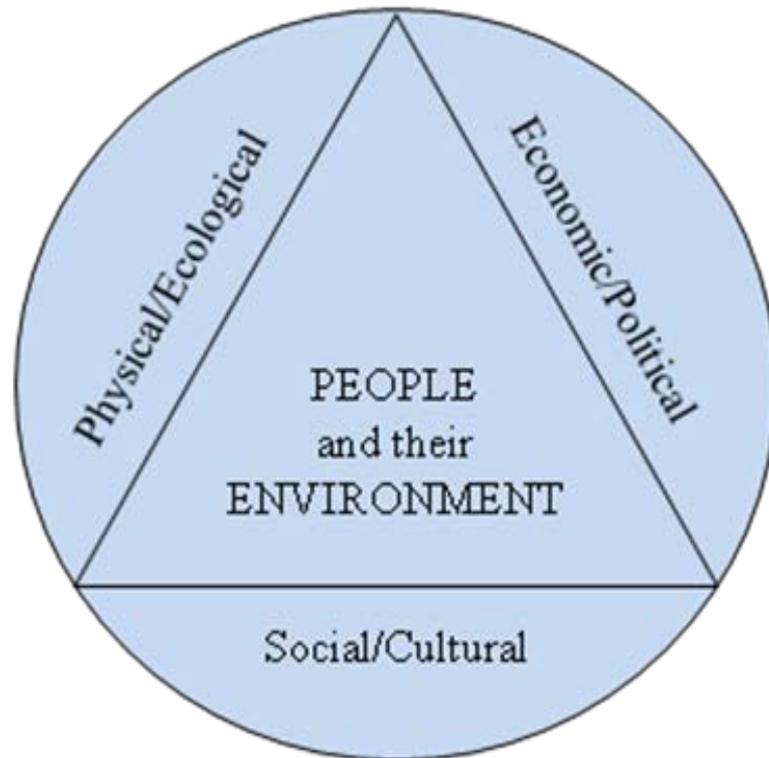
Social ecology is thus not only a scientific enterprise (The Discovery Process) ["What's out there?"]

but an action methodology (Human Geographic Issue Management Systems) ["What do I do with it?"]

that builds citizen and institutional capacity for creating and enhancing healthy environments.

Community As A Social Ecosystem

"A social ecosystem is a culturally-defined geographic area within which people manage their lives and resources."



A high-contrast, black and white photograph. The foreground shows a person's hands, wearing a dark, textured glove, holding a small, light-colored object, possibly a bird chick, against a background of a dense, bright, textured surface, likely a forest canopy or a large rock formation. The lighting is dramatic, with deep shadows and bright highlights.

The Last Green Valley



Northeast Connecticut, Quinebaug River drainage









BEAR HILL RD

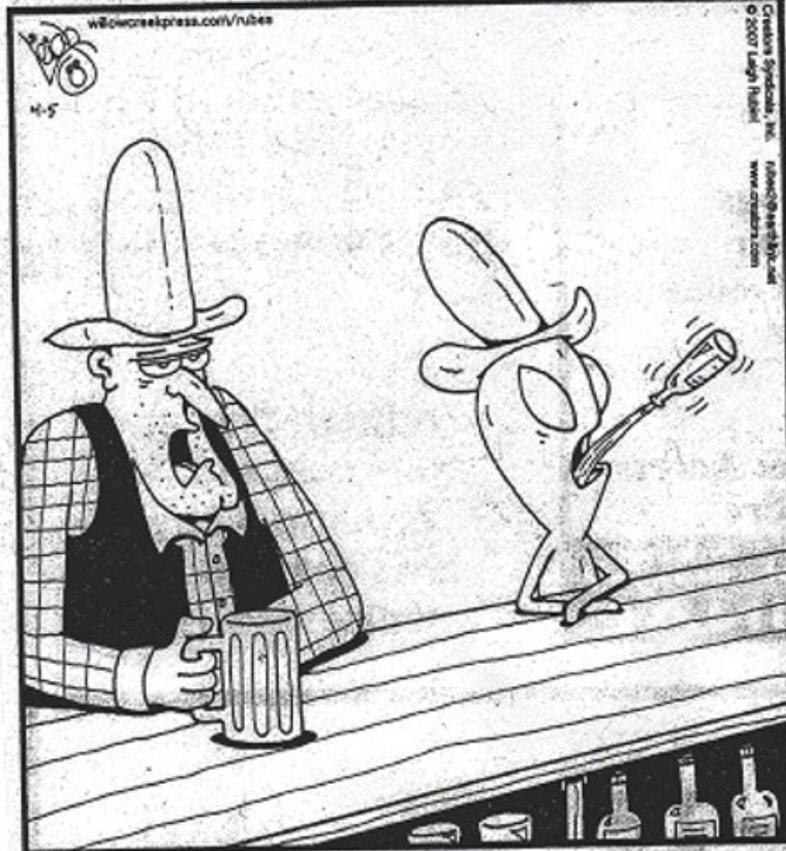
How an **OUTSIDER** became an **INSIDER**

In March 1987, Gary Severson was a stranger in Kimball. He was an official from a company that wanted to build a hazardous waste incinerator that stirred community opposition. In the seven years since, he has become a community activist, helping to lead economic development activities in Kimball and around Nebraska.



Rubes

Leigh Rubin



"You're not from around these parts, are you, stranger?"

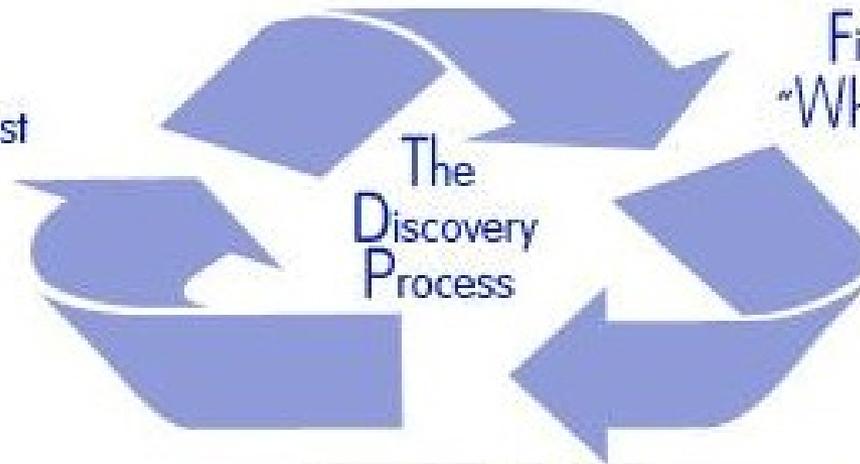
3 Concepts That Position an Agency or Company for Citizen-Oriented Management and Policy

1. Informal Networks and Local Routines
2. Human Geography
3. Citizen Issues

The Discovery Process at a Glance...

Enter the routines of the community.

Align your proposals with community interest and foster Resilience & Empowerment



Find the gathering places: "Who else should I talk to?"



Describe the community using the 7 Cultural Descriptors.



Identify the informal network caretakers and discover how communication happens.



Identify current issues and local trends.

The Discovery Process™

Entering the routines...



"Hanging out"... The use of gathering places



Seven Cultural Descriptors



"Who else do I talk with...?"

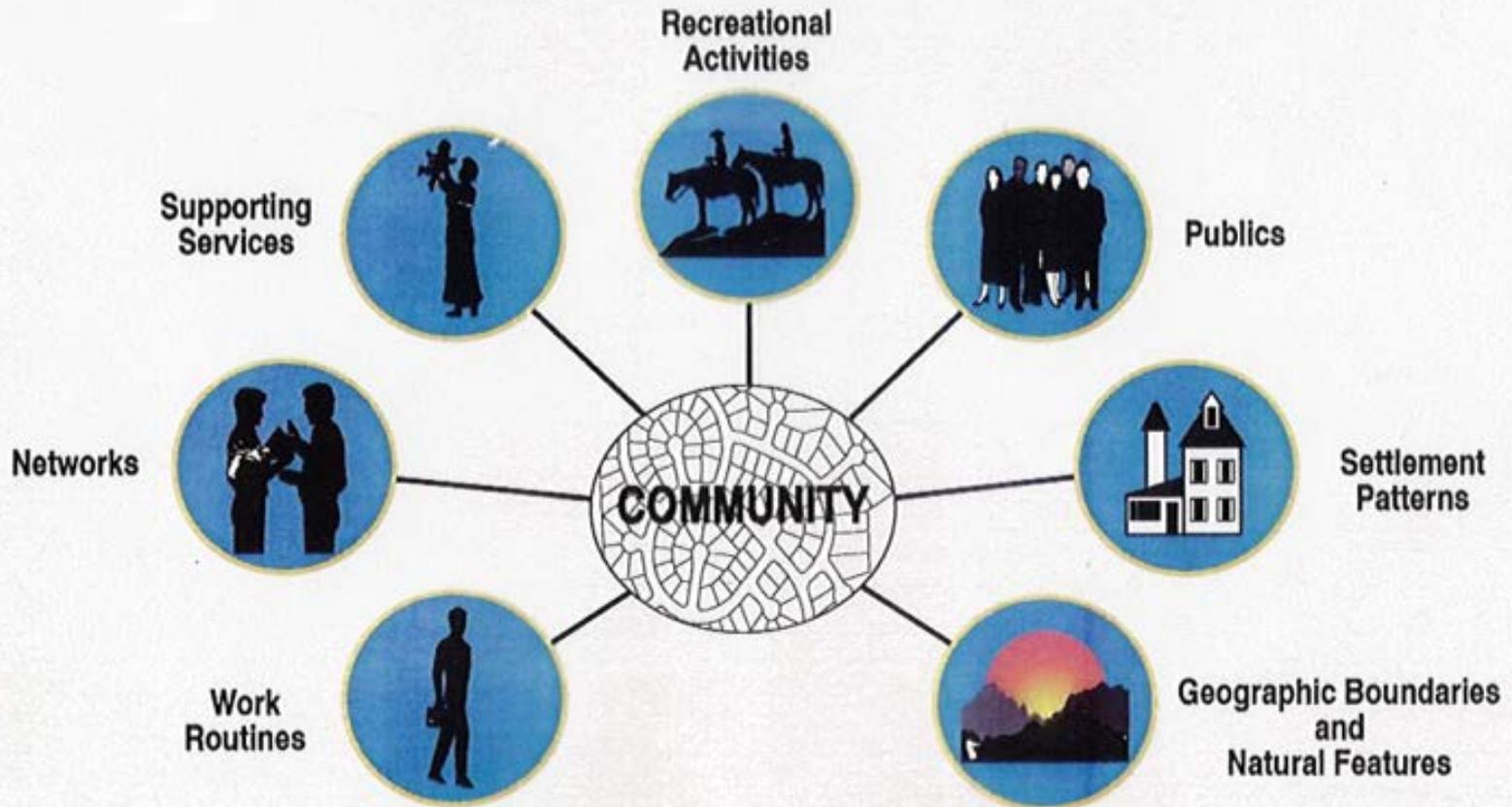


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"The process is this--one puts down endless observations, questions and remarks. The number grows and grows. Eventually they all seem headed in one direction and then they whirl like sparks out of a bonfire. And then one day they seem to mean something."

John Steinbeck

Seven Cultural Descriptors



<http://www.jkagroup.com/methods/7culturalDescriptors.htm>

Exercise #1: Who are the Publics?

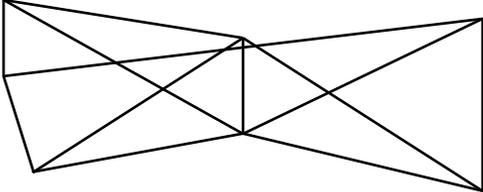
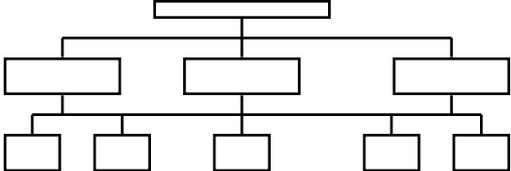
A public is any segment of the population that can be grouped together because of some recognized demographic feature or common set of interests.

Exercise:

Describe the publics in the community setting of a climate change program.

Their interests, and

Their communication patterns

TWO FORMS OF CITIZEN ORGANIZATION	
HORIZONTAL / INFORMAL	VERTICAL / FORMAL
STRUCTURE	
	
FUNCTION	
Caretaking Survival Cultural	Political Economic Ideological
CHARACTERISTICS	
Respected leaders Flexible goals Internal recognition of members Informal communication Gathering places and natural routines	Elected/appointed leaders Organizational goals Membership list Formal communication Meeting locations and scheduled times

Eight Informal Network Archetypes

Caretaker

Trusted by others
Utilized in time of stress
"Let us talk over the idea."

Gatekeeper

Narrows entry
"I can hook you up."

Communicator

"Did you know...?"
"I heard that..."

Authenticator

Knowledge and wisdom from the culture
Provides cultural interpretations to technical data and information
"This is how we do it here."

Storyteller

"In the past..."
"We used to do it this way..."

Bridger

Two cultures
Two languages
"I know somebody from..."
"This is what they're saying..."

Opportunist

Use of public setting for personal gain
"We in the community..."
"My people...."

Historian

History of their geographic place, carriers of the events that have happened over the lifetime of the community. They know critical information.

GATHERING PLACES



At the heart of every community are gathering places where people naturally congregate to talk about current events. These places provide a structure for local network systems to thrive.



How to tell a gathering place...

Can you change a menu item?

Is there a bulletin board?

Is the site accessible, convenient?

Is the cost reasonable?

Are the signs friendly?

Is there a "character"?



Are there newspaper boxes out front?

Do people know each other? Is there cross-table talk?

Are there certain "types" at certain hours?

Three Questions for Use in the Discovery Process™

Why do you live here?

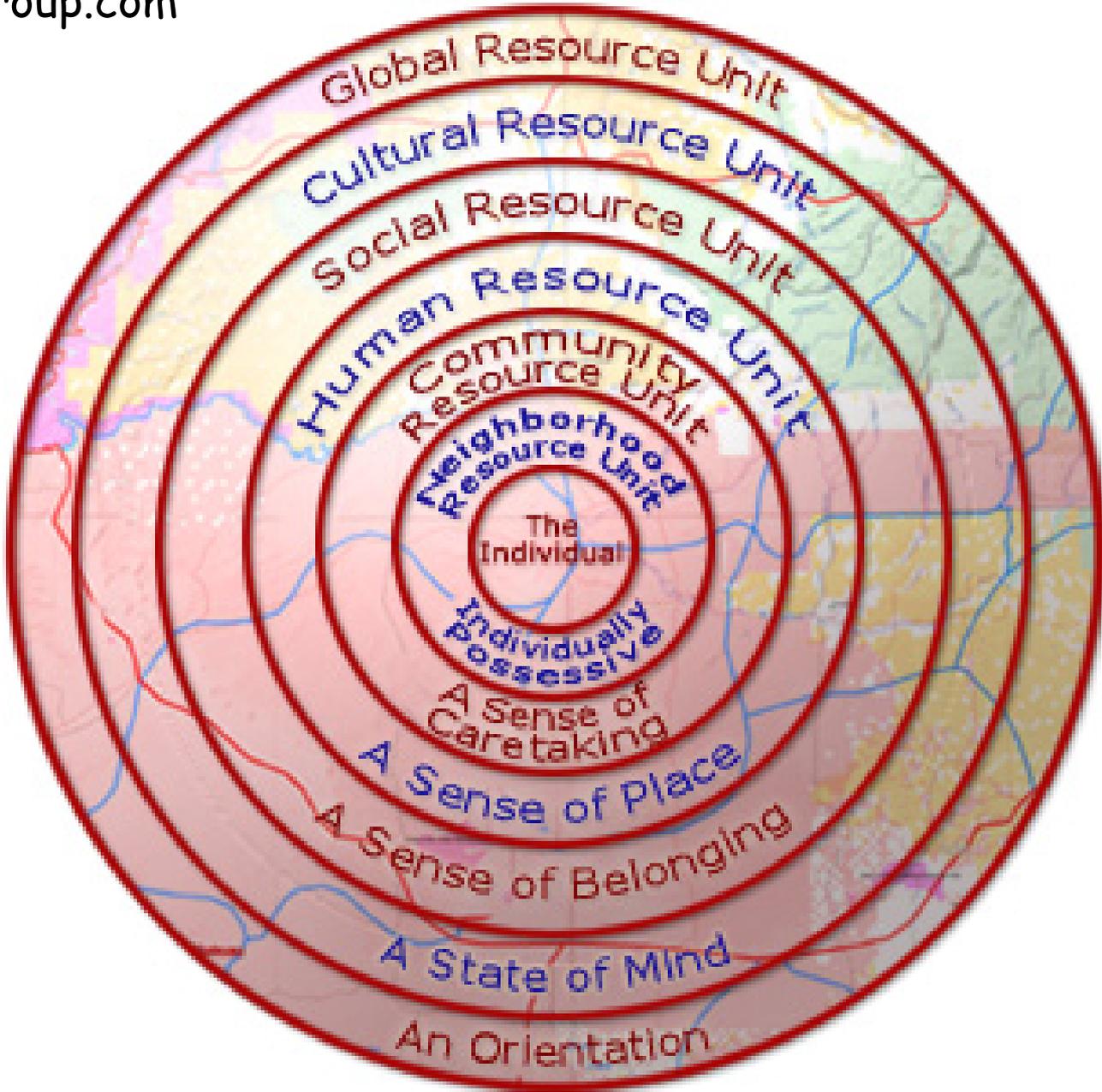
This gives us past culture based on traditions, beliefs, and stories of place. Important for indexing your current activity.

Why do you stay?

This lets us understand present methods of survival, management of their environment and predictive skills as well as cultural maintenance and caretaking activities.

What would you change to make staying better for you?

This gives us the future action needed for a fuller life by assisting with the resolution of emerging, existing and disruptive issues. This keeps you at the interest (emerging and existing issue resolution) rather than at the positional level (disruptive issue conflict)



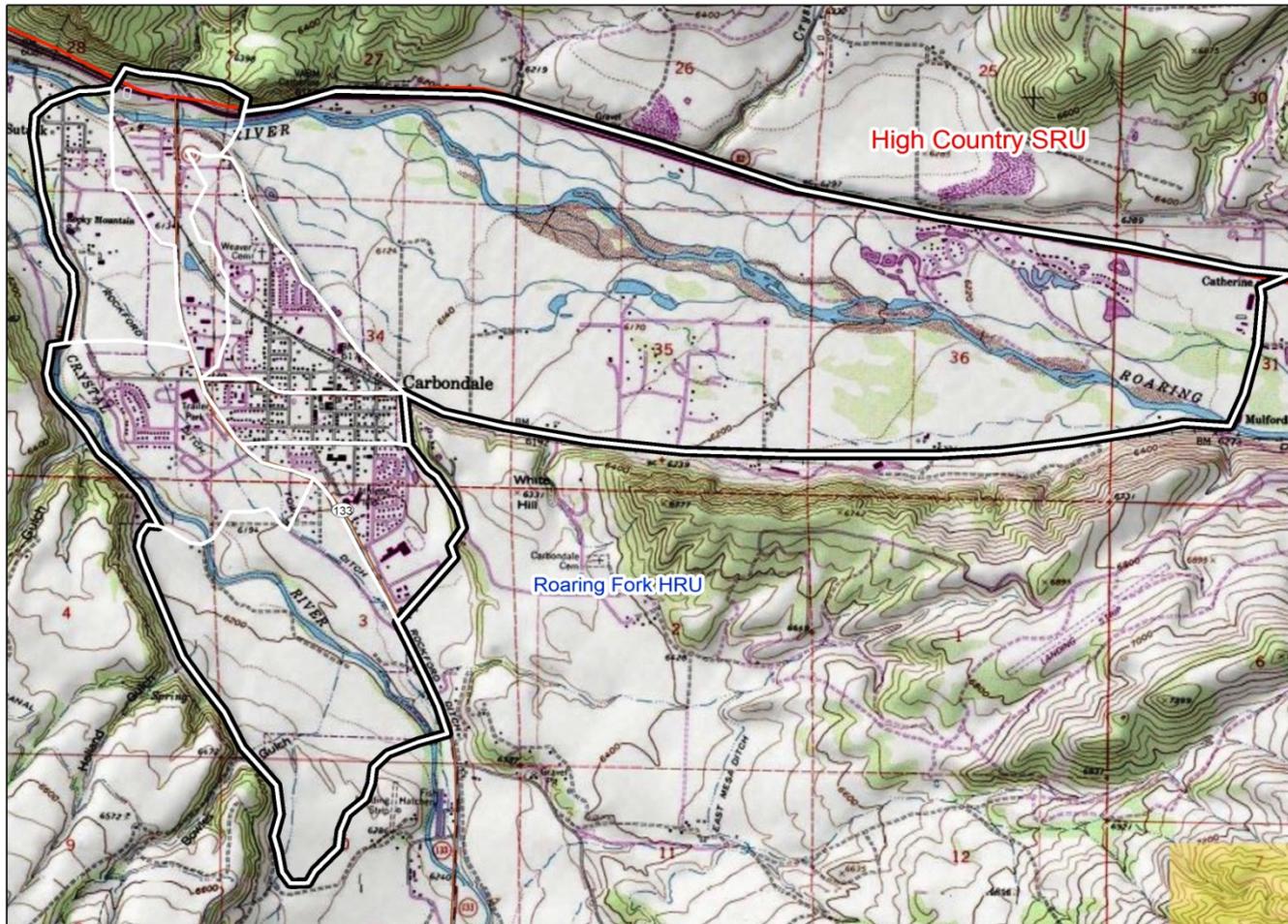


"Climate Change and the Language of Geographic Place"

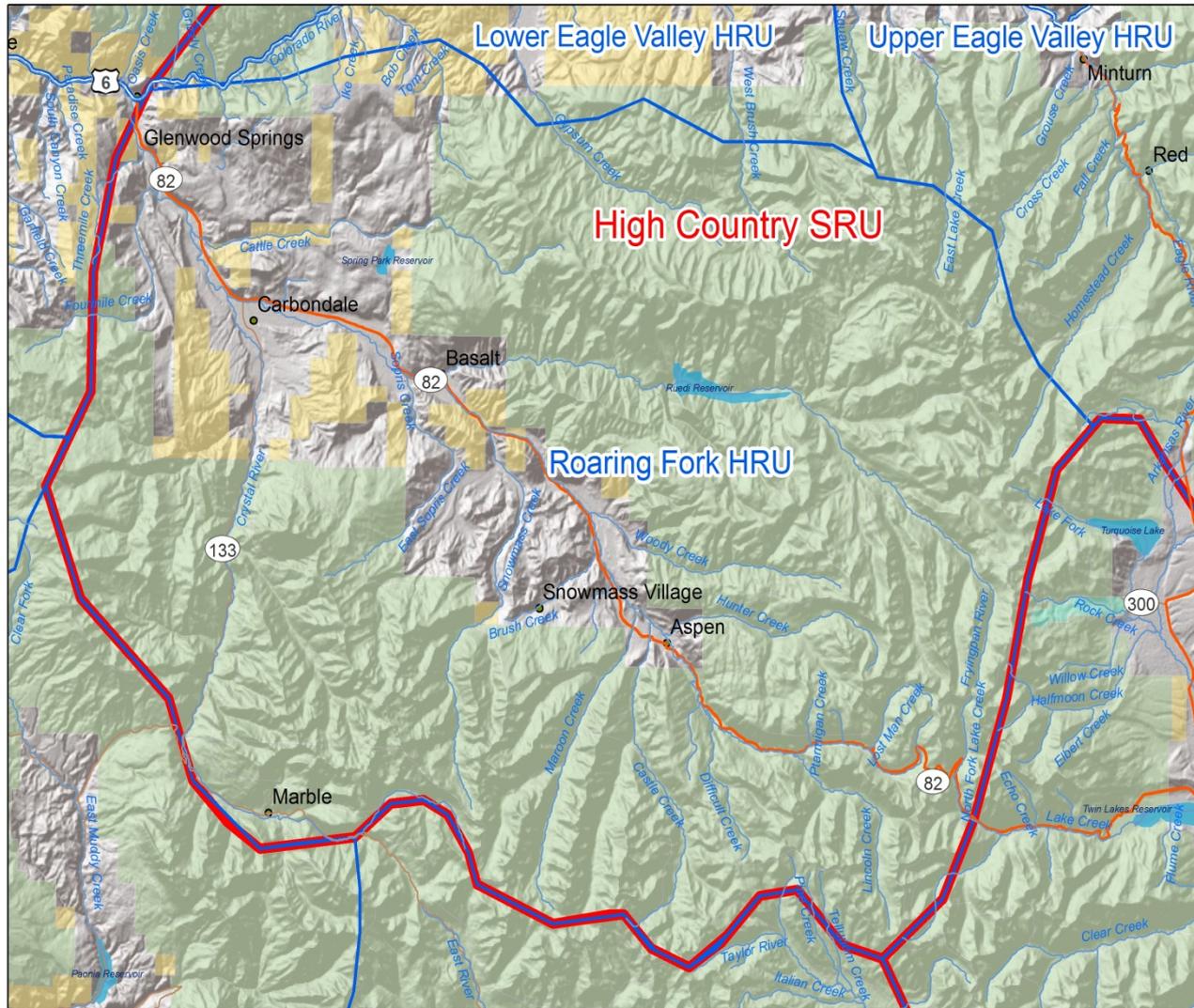
www.jkagroup.com; "What's new?"

<http://www.jkagroup.com/Docs/Climate-Change-and-the-Language-of-Geographic-Place-final-chapter.pdf>

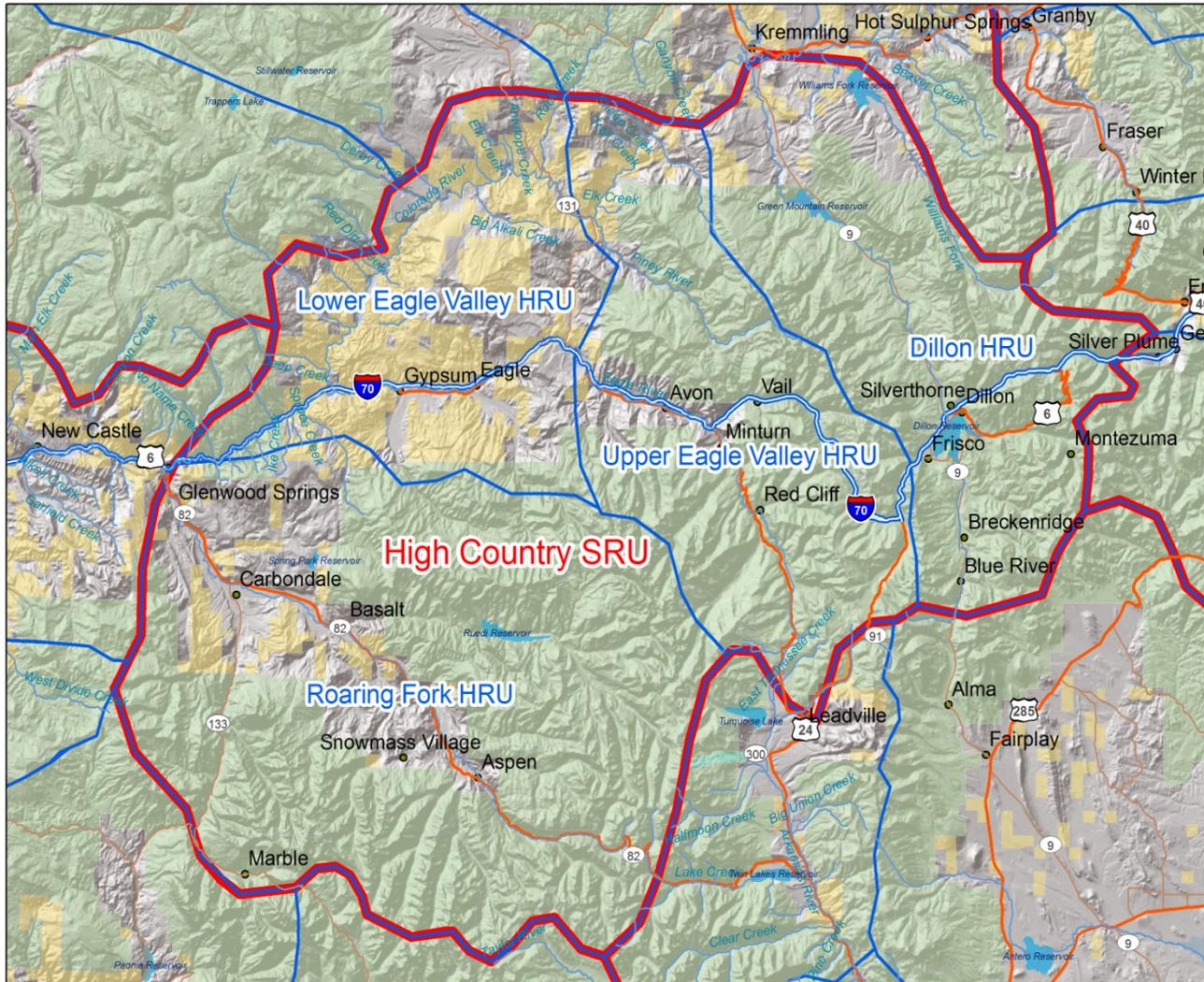
Neighborhood Resource Units (NRUs) within the Carbondale Community Resource Unit (CRU)



The Roaring Fork Human Resource Unit (HRU)



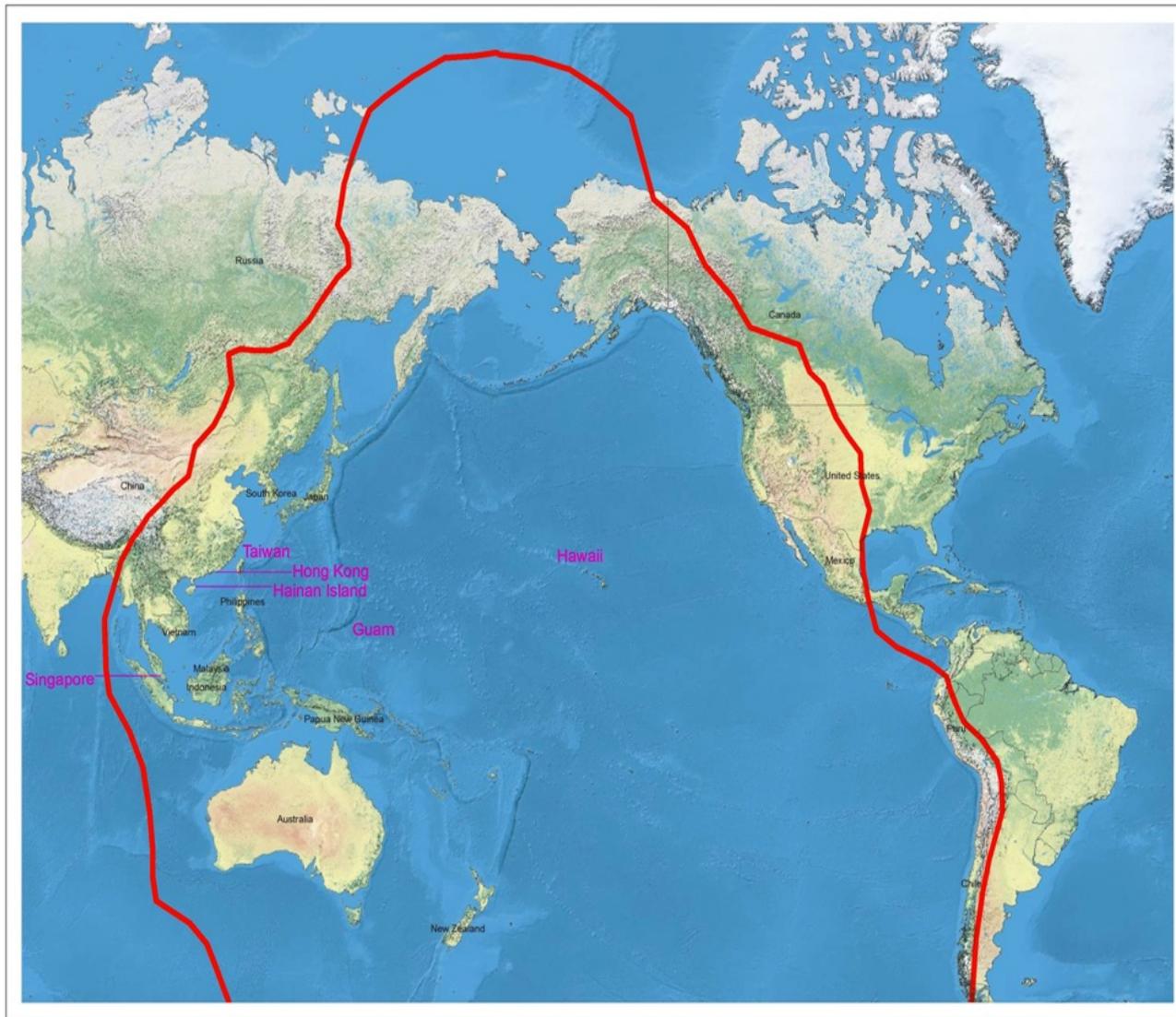
The High Country Social Resource Unit (SRU)



Social Resource Units (SRUs) of the Rocky Mountain Front Range Cultural Resource Unit (CuRU)



The Pacific Rim Global Resource Unit

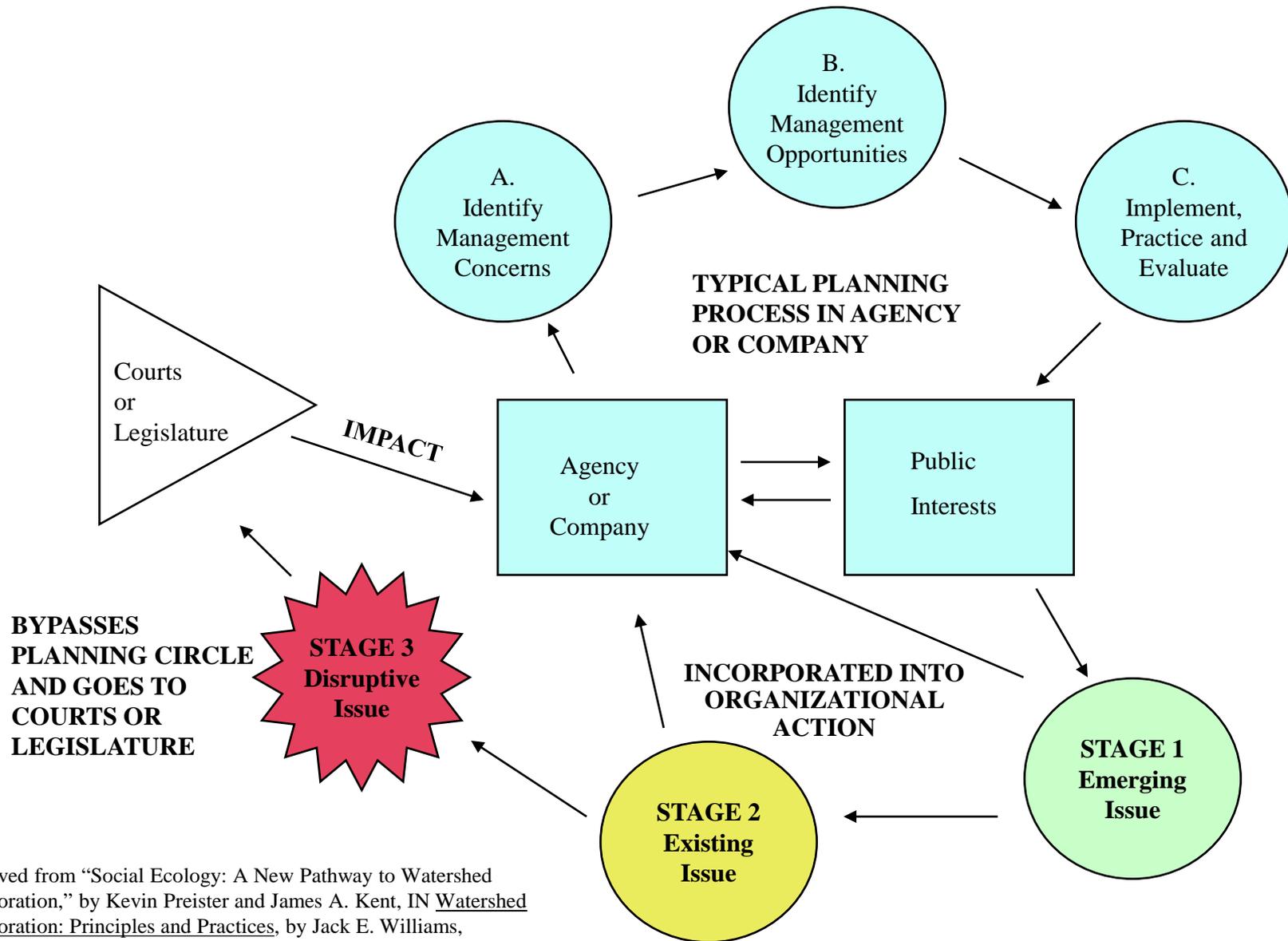




Exercise #2:

1. Make a rough human geographic map of the area you work in at two scales.
2. How will knowledge of "citizen-defined geographic place" assist in mobilizing citizens in climate change programs?

The Bio-Social Ecosystem: The Process of Issue Management



Derived from "Social Ecology: A New Pathway to Watershed Restoration," by Kevin Preister and James A. Kent, IN Watershed Restoration: Principles and Practices, by Jack E. Williams, Christopher A. Wood and Michael P. Dombeck (eds.), Bethesda, MD.: American Fisheries Society, 1997.

Themes versus Issues

"I am against growth."

"I am against growth because the parks are overcrowded and my kids have no place to play."

"There are sacred spots around here that must be treated with respect."

"The beach is sacred to our people."

"You can't trust government."

"We are ranching country. We take care of our own around here."

"They never sent us the results of the soil testing on our property."

"There is a peregrine falcon pair that nests nearby."

"The County is trying to upgrade this road into a freeway."

"The agency inflated the board footage it reported in its timber sale from its earlier press release."

An Issue Management Program

Strategy Question:

How can we _____ in _____ (a geographic location) so that we can also _____
_____?

Citizen Issues	Management Concerns	Communication & Action Opportunities

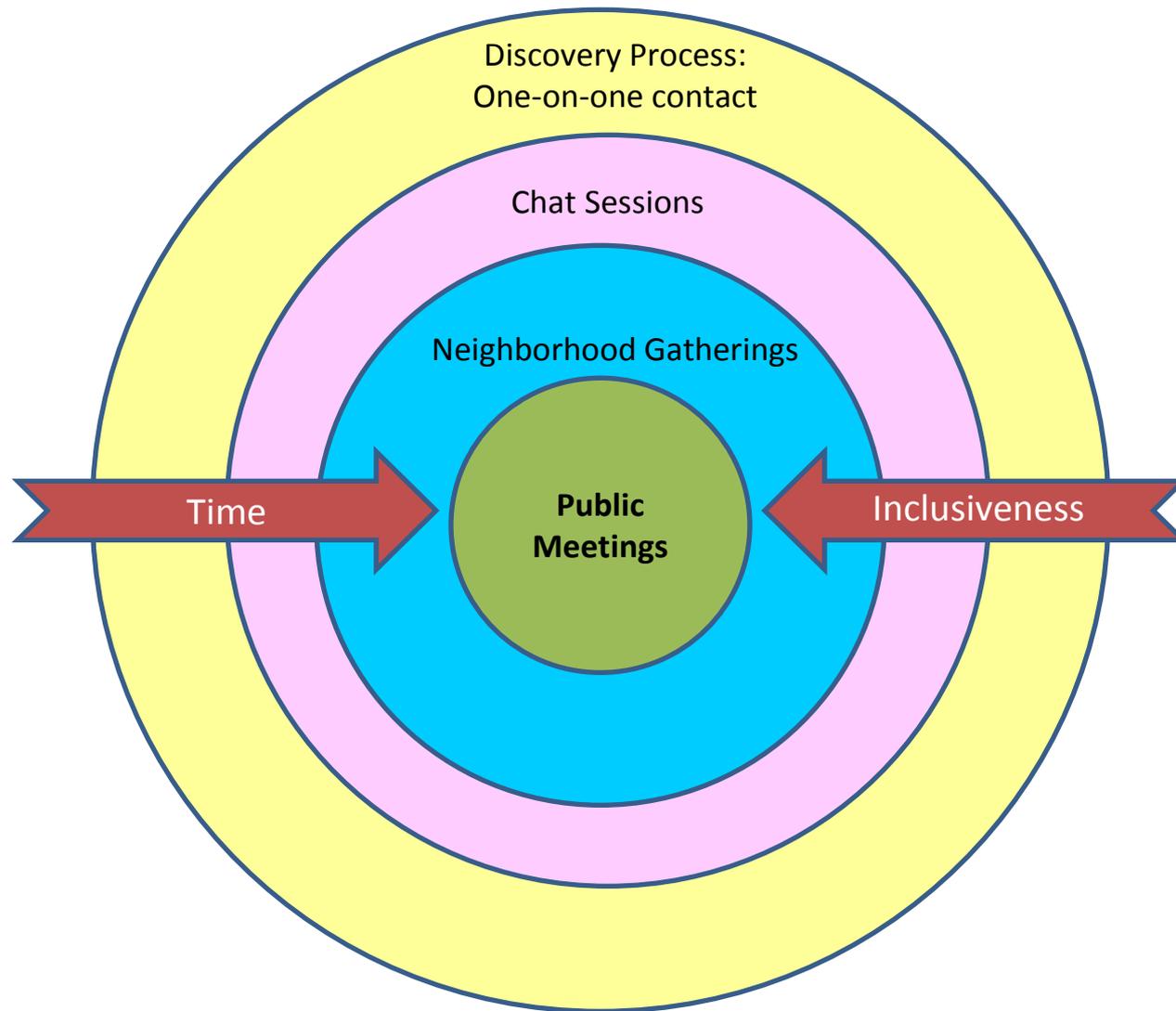
Exercise #3:

1. Develop a strategy question using the format provided.
2. What are likely citizen issues related to the Strategy Question? Who owns the citizen issue?
3. What are likely management concerns related to the Strategy Question and who has them?
4. What are the communication and action opportunities that would respond to the most citizen issues and management concerns?

Exercise #4: Discuss ideas for building support and consensus for resolving your strategy question.

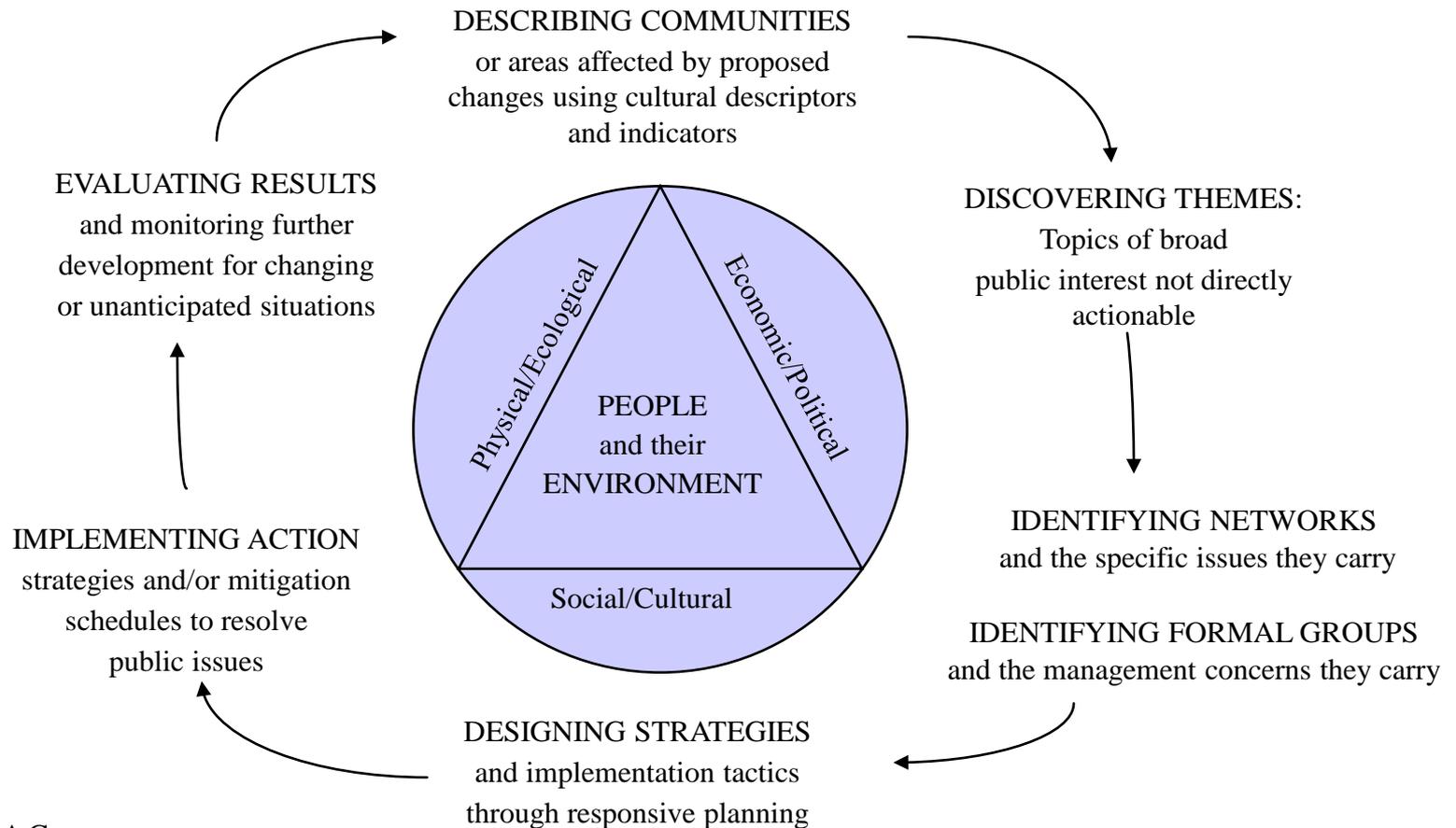
1. What strategies are possible for communication with informal networks and formal groups to identify citizen issues and opportunities?
2. How will you stay "grounded" with citizens through the many steps of implementing a climate change program?
3. What are the opportunities for "turning over" (what?) to citizens in a way that builds "ownership"?

A Graduated Approach to Citizen Engagement



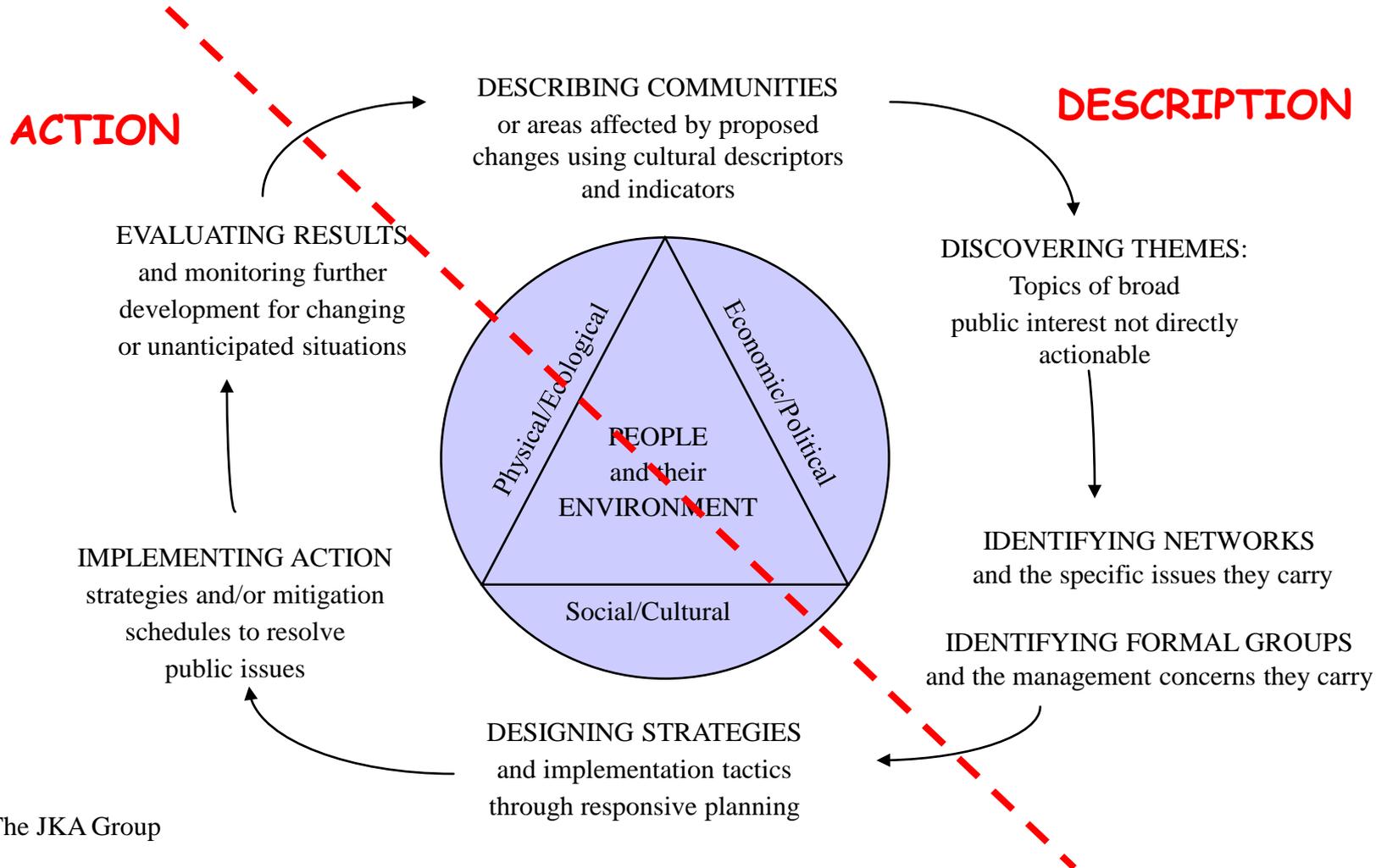
The Discovery Process™ Strategy for Action

The Discovery Process™ Strategy for Action

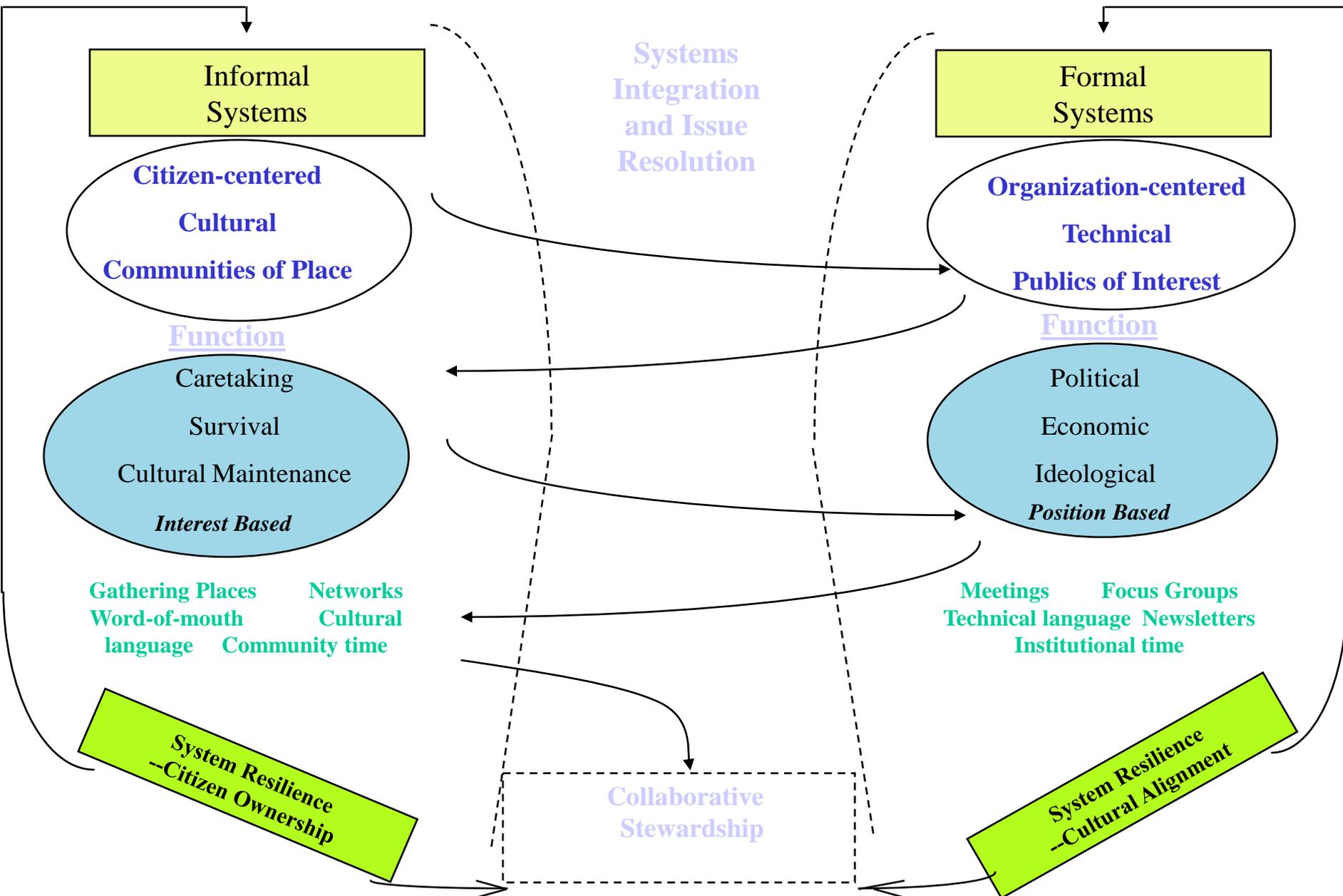


The Discovery Process™ Strategy for Action

The Discovery Process™ Strategy for Action



Informal/Formal Systems of Community--The Role of the Transformational Leader



A Bio-Social Model for Ecosystem Management

