

EPA REGION 10 STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

WORKSHOP SUMMARY

Date of Workshop: June 10, 1992

This summary of the EPA Region 10 Strategic Planning Workshop, held on June 10, 1992, reflects the results from a day long brainstorming session with workshop participants. The workshop was organized to provide a forum to hear perspectives of individuals that work to protect the environment in Region 10, and to gather data for consideration in the Region's long-term planning process.

The summary cites opinions from leaders involved with environmental issues in the Pacific Northwest. Region 10 will consider these ideas and perspectives as it develops long-term plans.

The Region appreciates workshop participants' enthusiastic participation and the general goodwill expressed toward Region 10 throughout the day.

SUMMARY OF THE EPA REGION 10 STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP

I. BACKGROUND

Region 10 has chosen a novel, perhaps unique, approach to the formulation of the FY95 strategic plan. In the past, strategic planning has been conducted exclusively within the Regional Office. This year, Region 10 decided to broaden the range of viewpoints contributing to the strategic plan. In particular, the Region wanted the perspective of those groups and individuals identified as EPA's partners in concern for the environment. EPA is confident that by expanding participation the final strategic plan will be more relevant and useful to the Region as a whole. This workshop was organized specifically to provide a forum for developing information which will serve as the basis for the remainder of the planning process.

II. INTRODUCTION

This paper summarizes the FY95 Strategic Planning Workshop sponsored by EPA Region 10 and held on June 10th, 1992. The purpose of the workshop was to bring Regional environmental leaders together with EPA Region 10's senior managers to discuss how EPA Region 10 can best "add value" to environmental protection efforts in the Pacific Northwest. The goal of the workshop was to discuss collectively emerging environmental threats and opportunities and how EPA, given its strengths and weaknesses, can best respond to them. The workshop was the first step in EPA's long-term planning process; EPA will use the results of the workshop in the development of its strategic plan, which will be used to guide the Region's activities over the next five years.

The workshop involved thirty-two participants, drawn from the broad array of constituencies in the Region 10 community:

- private industry;
- federal, tribal, state and local government officials;
- public interest groups;
- agriculture; and
- academia.

(A list of the participants is attached to this meeting summary.)

III. RESULTS OF THE DAY'S MEETING

The Workshop exceeded Region 10's expectations. All participants maintained high levels of enthusiasm, actively participated and expressed general goodwill toward EPA Region 10. At the conclusion, both internal and external participants expressed satisfaction with the spirit of the Workshop, that of working together on a common goal.

IV. WORKSHOP AGENDA

Dana Rasmussen, EPA Region 10 Administrator, set the stage for the workshop. After providing a brief background on the Region's strategic planning process and the purpose of the day, Dana presented EPA's mission and some of the Agency's major challenges.

EPA's mission is to implement national environmental laws by providing oversight, technical assistance, and enforcement options to and through the states and tribal governments. Environmental protection challenges are being passed down closer to the public as more and more federal laws (such as drinking water and stormwater rules) impose requirements on local governments. Dana shared that one of the challenges she is faced with is finding the best way to work with communities so that they can be most effective. In addition, EPA is finding that traditional approaches to environmental problems (e.g., "command and control") will not work as they have in the past. We all have limited resources which we must use to our best advantage.

In presenting EPA's 10 themes, or main areas of focus, to the group, Dana expressed that the themes are designed to reflect EPA's view on the future of environmental regulation. She emphasized that the EPA believes it is critical to:

- Build state, local and tribal capacity to implement the laws since those closest to the problem often offer the best solution;
- Reduce environmental risk by basing decisions on the best available scientific information and make a commitment to keep the best science current;
- Prevent pollution before it is created;
- Promote public environmental education and stewardship;
- Assure that statutory mandates are implemented so they promote the most environmental benefit;
- Use voluntary and cooperative approaches to complement environmental regulation and enforcement;
- Recognize that cross-media and geographic approaches hold the future of environmental protection; and
- Foster the integration of economic concerns and environmental protection to assure sustainable development.

Along with stressing the Agency's 10 themes, Dana Rasmussen pointed out that under the leadership of Bill Reilly and Hank Habicht, more and more emphasis is being placed on the

importance of implementing federal policies in Regional offices. This direction gives the Regions, states and tribes more influence on national policy than ever before. Regions are working with greater flexibility to focus on local environmental needs.

In concluding her remarks, Dana Rasmussen stressed the importance of hearing from each workshop participant. Ideas generated would be used as input for the Region's strategic planning process. The goal for the day: work together to identify the ways in which EPA Region 10 can add value in environmental protection.

After Dana's opening remarks, discussion focussed on three major topics:

- Region 10's strengths and weaknesses;
- Region 10's threats and opportunities; and
- How EPA Region 10 can add value to environmental protection efforts.

V. STRUCTURE OF THE MEETING

Through both small group and then full group discussions, participants discussed the Region's strengths, weaknesses, threats, and opportunities. A discussion by the full group was held at the end of the day on how EPA Region 10 can add value to environmental protection efforts. (A workshop agenda is attached to this meeting summary.)

This paper follows the agenda items as they occurred and summarizes in turn each of the three major discussions. Within the following sections, the ideas generated in the small groups are first presented and then comments made in the small or large groups about the ideas, their relative priority, or their linkages to one another are provided. For this summary, the list of ideas is not broken out by small group; the ideas have been combined and similar ones consolidated to make the summary more readable. (A full list of the ideas generated in each group is attached.)

VI. STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

- A. Definition.** EPA Region 10's strengths and weaknesses were defined as programs, policies, or other characteristics of EPA which are either effective, and therefore constitute strengths, or are ineffective, and therefore constitute weaknesses.

Participants stressed that EPA possesses both strengths and weaknesses and that, in many cases, strengths and weaknesses are closely related. For example, participants identified EPA's funding of state and local environmental programs as a strength; at the same time, they identified a lack of *sufficient* EPA funding for state and local programs as a weakness.

Participants also noted that although Region 10 is committed and open to change in order to be a more effective organization within the Region (e.g., emphasizing the

strengths and deemphasizing the weaknesses cited by workshop participants), *accomplishing this change will be difficult*. For example, participants cited the directions and priorities set by the Executive Branch, Congress, and EPA Headquarters, which may be different than those set by the Region.

- B. Strengths.** Listed below are the strengths identified by workshop participants. They are grouped in two broad categories: internal strengths, which pertain to EPA's staff and programs; and external strengths, which pertain to EPA's relationship with its partners.

Internal Strengths

- ***Professional, competent staff.*** EPA Region 10 staff is seen as dedicated, culturally diverse, and well-trained. The staff possesses scientific and technical competence which gives it credibility in its interaction with others.
- ***Innovative Programs.*** EPA's emphasis on pollution prevention and geographic initiatives are examples of EPA's willingness to try new approaches to solve environmental problems.
- ***Strong enforcement program.*** A strong enforcement program is necessary and demonstrates EPA's commitment to environmental protection. EPA enforces laws fairly and equitably and, as a federal agency, is able to "take the heat", because it is not subject to local and regional political pressure.

External Strengths

- ***Regional leadership promotes climate for change.*** EPA Region 10's leadership is demonstrated by its ability to bring together diverse constituencies and its involvement in interagency partnerships. Emphasis on the importance of change for improvement establishes an openness that enhances these relationships. On a less tangible level, EPA is generally viewed as the nation's primary "protector of the environment" and as the keeper of the "environmental ethic."
- ***Regional autonomy enables solutions to be tailored to local problems.*** Decentralized authority and the Region's proximity to the states allow EPA programs to be tailored to local problems.
- ***Funding of state and local programs.*** EPA's monetary resources and its funding of state and local programs are a valuable and essential component of environmental protection in the Region.

- ***Responsiveness to state and local "partners".*** EPA provides state and local governments with the opportunity for comment and feedback on its programs, is cooperative, and provides states with technical assistance.

C. Weaknesses. The weaknesses cited by workshop participants have been grouped below according to internal weaknesses, which focus on EPA staff and programs, and external weaknesses, which focus on EPA's relationship to its partners.

Internal Weaknesses

- ***Staff weaknesses.*** At the staff level, EPA staff need to develop a greater awareness of what's transpiring "on the ground". EPA staff also have a tendency to deal too much with the details and specifics of a program or problem and not with the "big picture". The Operations Offices could use more staff. The EPA management team lacks diversity.
- ***Insufficient resources for innovative approaches.*** The agency's budget does not provide adequate support for pollution prevention and other innovative strategies. This leads to a discrepancy between or "mixed signals" about what the Agency says is important and what it does.
- ***Lack of multimedia integration.*** EPA's programs are not well integrated, preventing EPA from taking into account the cumulative impacts of a problem on the air, water, and land.
- ***EPA is "Data Rich and Information Poor."*** Participants commented that although EPA collects an extensive amount of data, it is not often enough applied and used to solve concrete problems; the data is instead used to pursue "science for science's sake."
- ***Weak (slow) decision-making.*** EPA's decision-making process is slow, subject to conflicting internal directions, and is "risk-adverse": the Agency is too cautious when uncertain and too bound by precedent.
- ***Inconsistent decision-making.*** EPA and state agencies, which have overlapping responsibilities, are inconsistent in their application of enforcement and other measures. EPA is also inconsistent in the way that it applies its policies in different states and situations.
- ***Lack of follow-up.*** EPA does not follow-up on the activities that it sets in motion. For example, EPA Region 10 loses control of enforcement cases to the Department of Justice and to EPA Headquarters soon after they begin.

- ***Unrealistic expectations.*** A wide disparity exists between EPA's environmental protection goals and what the agency and its partners can realistically accomplish within existing political, legal, and economic constraints. Internally, the agency needs to reexamine and follow-through on its priorities and cultivate the ability to say "no". Externally, it is unrealistic of EPA to expect to transfer responsibilities to state and local governments when their revenues are dwindling.

External Weaknesses

- ***Need more outreach to customers.*** EPA has not communicated with and involved sufficiently the general public, Indian tribes, and other entities such as agricultural organizations. As a result, EPA's role and activities (other than as regulator) are not well understood; the agency is "invisible" to many of its customers.
- ***Unequal partnerships.*** There is insufficient collaboration and consensus-building with EPA's partners to identify problems, set priorities, and develop management strategies. EPA views state/local governments and others as "customers" and not as "partners." Unequal partnerships contribute to a lack of trust between EPA and its partners.
- ***Rigidity of regulations.*** The regulations which EPA enforces, and by association EPA, are viewed as too rigid. To the extent that there is Regional autonomy enabling regulatory flexibility, it is not well understood externally.

D. Large Group Discussion of Strengths and Weaknesses

After presentation of the ideas generated in each of the small groups, discussion in the large group centered on three topics: 1) the balance between EPA's strengths and weaknesses; 2) whether the Agency is in a transition and the type and degree of transition the agency is undergoing; and 3) how EPA can most effectively work both with its partners and within its political, legal, and economic constraints.

Balance between EPA's strengths and weaknesses

Workshop participants emphasized that EPA possesses both strengths and weaknesses. The strengths identified by participants tended to be relatively uniform across the three small groups. In contrast, there was a greater diversity of opinion across the small groups regarding EPA's weaknesses.

EPA Region 10 is an agency in transition

Participants discussed that EPA Region 10 is undergoing a fundamental shift characterized, in part, by the following: increasing partnerships, leveraging of resources, emphasizing the use of technical assistance, and developing innovative approaches such as pollution prevention. Participants noted that the Region generally seems to be on the right track, with some needed additions such as better communication of EPA strengths (e.g., technical expertise), so that partners can make use of them. The list of strengths and weaknesses provides insight into what the Region should emphasize to continue and enhance its transition and what it should de-emphasize.

Participants also noted, however, that there is a "disconnect" between the transition that the Region is attempting to make and what the President, Congress, and EPA Headquarters are proposing; this will likely prevent the Region from fully making the transition it envisions. There are also a lot of expectations which the Region needs to fulfill on a day to day basis that will tend to keep the Region on its current course.

EPA Region 10 and its partners

EPA Region 10 should explore the strengths and weaknesses of its partners, so that the Region and its partners can work together in a way in which their strengths and weaknesses complement each other. Participants also encouraged EPA to focus on what it can accomplish and to start work on it; EPA's partners recognize and can accept that EPA operates under a lot of constraints (political, legal, economic), however those constraints need not prevent progress from being made.

VII. OPPORTUNITIES AND THREATS IN REGION 10

- A. Definition.** Opportunities and threats were defined as forces, trends, and other conditions external to EPA which the agency can either take advantage of or minimize to enhance its environmental protection efforts. Sources of opportunities include political, economic, social and technological forces and trends.
- B. Opportunities.** Workshop participants identified the following opportunities in EPA Region 10:

Increasing Interest in Environmental Protection

- ***Strong public interest in the environment.*** The general public has become more interested in protecting the environment through recycling and other means. As a result, opportunities exist for EPA to encourage environmental stewardship through expanded education efforts (including K through 12 children). Providing accurate information will enable citizens to take

responsibility for and action on environmental problems and will enhance their support for EPA's efforts. EPA can also take advantage of the fact that many people live in the Pacific Northwest because of its beauty and may be more willing to help protect it.

- ***Increasing interest by businesses in environmental protection.*** The attitude of industry towards environmental protection appears to be changing, as reflected in the growth of "green" businesses, and cleaner technologies. This provides the opportunity for EPA to form more cooperative relationships with business.
- ***Increasing interest in EPA by the Executive Branch and Congress.*** Congressional and Executive Branch interest in EPA provides the opportunity for the Agency to continue its dialogue with them to help ensure that the Agency's environmental short- and long-term goals are met.

Increased Need for Public Outreach

- ***Formation of new alliances.*** Because the management of environmental problems has grown beyond the mission of EPA, because of declining EPA resources, and because of increased interest in environmental protection, there is the need for and opportunity to build stronger alliances with other government agencies, Indian tribes, industry, universities, and the general public. These alliances will help leverage resources for environmental protection and ensure that environmental problems are more fully addressed.
- ***Communication and outreach through use of the public media.*** EPA can use the news media and other forms of communication to effect environmental change. The public media provides EPA with the opportunity to communicate its new paradigms (which should be communicated in an understandable way); increase its role as an advocate for the environment; and build a basis of support and activism.

Evolving EPA Programs

- ***Development of innovative approaches.*** The development of innovative approaches such as pollution prevention and market-based incentives provide an opportunity for EPA to deal positively and effectively with changing environmental problems (e.g., the increase in nonpoint source problems) for which traditional command and control approaches are not as effective.
- ***Availability of data.*** EPA possesses an abundance of good data on the environment. This provides EPA with the opportunity, which it has not yet taken full advantage of, to decide how the data can best be used and

interpreted for specific applications and problems at the federal state, and local level (e.g., to track environmental progress).

- ***The advent of long-term strategic planning.*** Within the context of its current emphasis on long-term planning, EPA should take the opportunity to develop a plan for the future which clearly defines EPA's role in environmental protection, its goals, and how and when it will achieve them. EPA should take a broad "ecological systems", rather than a piecemeal, approach to its environmental protection efforts.

Emerging Environmental Issues

- ***International environmental protection.*** Opportunities exist for the Region to become involved in international environmental policy because of its proximity to the Pacific Rim and Canada, as well as the growing need for U.S. environmental assistance in developing countries and Eastern Europe.
- ***Growth management.*** Growth management is an important issue which EPA could be involved in through, for example, ensuring that environmental considerations are incorporated into growth management plans.
- ***Environmental equity.*** Environmental equity is becoming an increasingly important issue. EPA's role could involve directing environmental resources to disadvantaged communities (e.g., to ensure that native villages have adequate sewer and water systems).

C. **Threats.** Workshop participants identified the following threats:

Decreasing Resources

- ***Decreasing EPA funding.*** The decreasing amount of resources available to EPA, which reflects the general economic decline worldwide, means that EPA's efforts will necessarily decrease. The need for EPA to set priorities will become increasingly important.
- ***Increased competition for resources for social and environmental priorities.*** As the quality of life in both cities and rural areas decreases (e.g., decaying infrastructure, lack of education and job opportunities for minorities), there will be increased competition for resources to accomplish social and environmental policy goals.

Emerging Challenges to Effective Public and Partnership Involvement

- *Burdensome environmental concerns and regulations.* As the public becomes more aware of the myriad environmental problems which exist and as regulations become more stringent, there is the possibility that the public and industry will feel overburdened and that as a result interest and concern for the environment will wane.
- *Public expectations too high.* Public expectations are misaligned with what EPA is capable of accomplishing, which leads to a lack of confidence in EPA. EPA's inability to meet goals and timelines set by Congress intensifies the problem.
- *Diverse constituencies are not recognized.* EPA, particularly at the staff level, does not fully recognize and involve the wide variety of constituencies concerned and affected by environmental issues. This undermines the success of EPA's efforts.

Emerging Environmental Issues

- *Loss of Wetlands.* The degradation of wetlands constitutes an environmental threat which EPA should respond to.
- *Property Rights.* The issue of property rights and "takings" between private landowners and the government is an emerging issue, particularly as a tight economy and diminishing natural resources increase the demand for those resources.

D. Large Group Discussion of Threats and Opportunities

During and after the presentation of the ideas generated in each of the small groups, comments in the large group centered on two topics: 1) the relationship between threats and opportunities; and 2) the role of the economy in creating threats and opportunities.

Relationship between threats and opportunities

Participants commented that many threats and opportunities are "opposite sides of the same coin," and that, depending on EPA's perspective and action, the same trend or condition can become either an opportunity or a threat. For example, while EPA's decreasing budget is generally viewed as a threat to environmental protection, it also provides the agency with the opportunity and motivation to better prioritize its goals and activities and make the always difficult choices about competing environmental problems. Another example is the "threat" that the communications media presents because of its tendency to entertain rather

than inform the public. However, the media also presents an opportunity for EPA to improve the type of coverage which environmental issues receive.

The role of the economy in creating threats and opportunities

The economy was a recurring theme in each of the small group discussions. The downturn in the economy has affected and will continue to affect EPA's budget. The depressed economy may also begin to strain public goodwill towards the environment, as people become more reluctant to spend their limited resources for environmental protection. The issue of property rights and "takings" has become an important issue, and is intensified by the sluggish economy. Participants noted that the fiscal reality is that EPA will have to spend less, and that more resources will have to be leveraged from public and private sources to maintain the same level of environmental protection.

VIII. DISCUSSION OF HOW EPA REGION 10 CAN ADD ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE

Listed below are the suggestions made by participants on how EPA can add value to environmental protection efforts. The suggestions fell into two broad categories: 1) increasing community outreach; and 2) how to get started with taking action on ideas generated in the workshop.

Increase Community Outreach, Using a Variety of Approaches

- ***Increase the frequency of outreach.*** It would be useful to have key members of the executive team interact more frequently with state and community leaders. To facilitate this, partnerships could be put in place to collectively set priorities.
- ***Increase the amount of time spent "in the field."*** EPA needs to get out into the communities and talk to mayors and other leaders. Environmental problems may be bigger or smaller than expected when looked at in the field.
- ***Begin an interactive dialogue with customers early in the process.*** A dialogue with states should be started about whether there are regulatory problems or issues that they would like to discuss; EPA should not just "show up" when there is bad news.
- ***Involve nongovernmental organizations, other government agencies, and industry.*** EPA should communicate with and involve nongovernmental organizations, other government agencies, and industry. Involving the nongovernmental organizations and other government agencies is important because many environmental issues are beyond EPA's scope. Involving industry is important because industry currently sees EPA only as enforcers and permit writers.

- ***Use formal and informal processes.*** Both formal and informal processes should be used for state and community outreach (e.g., formal meetings and informal one-on-one lunches). EPA's forum with ASARCO was cited as an example of a successful process.
- ***Act as a catalyst for the creation of organizations.*** EPA should continue to develop and promote organizations like the Pollution Prevention Research Center; EPA is a natural catalyst for creating this kind of an organization.
- ***Publicize successes.*** When a program approach or process has worked, EPA should make sure it is well publicized so that others can learn about the approach.

Take Action, With Some Caveats

- ***Use a variety of forums to initiate action.*** The Region should take action sooner rather than later on suggestions made in the workshop. EPA Region 10 staff should be informed of what transpired at the workshop, and then the following vehicles could be used to initiate activities suggested by the workshop: 1) State-EPA Agreement; 2) changes in the workforce; 3) the organization of state directors ("Gang of 15") for national policy issues; and 4) pilot projects.
- ***Provide education and training.*** If a new course of action is set, it is essential that the education and training necessary to undertake the new tasks is provided.
- ***Check with partners before action is taken.*** The workshop stopped short of making recommendations on specific actions; the Region should get validation on any specific actions from its partners.
- ***Act on workshop's common themes.*** EPA should find the most common themes identified in the workshop and incorporate them into its long-term plan.
- ***Follow through on activities.*** EPA needs to keep constancy of purpose and follow-through in mind, so that it does not try to do too much at once and fail.
- ***Remember that change is difficult.*** As EPA sets itself on a new course, it must remember that change invariably leads to conflict.

IX. NEXT STEPS

The strategic planning workshop was the first step in EPA's long-term planning process. In addition to this workshop, EPA will hold two subsequent internal retreats involving Region 10's Executive Team. Those retreats will focus on developing strategic options for the Region, establishing criteria by which to evaluate the options, and then ultimately developing a strategic plan for the Region. The results of the workshop will be used by Region 10 in its two subsequent retreats to help identify and select strategic options. The target completion date for the five-year strategic plan is January 1, 1993.

ATTACHMENTS

COMPLETE LIST
OF STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES
GENERATED
IN SMALL GROUPS

GROUP ONE - STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

Technical assistance provider

Request/use input from VARIOUS groups

EPA becoming more visible

EPA's involvement with a variety of agencies

Philosophy of "doing the right thing"

Perception of good quality people

Represents concern for environment, has a large political constituency

Reilly viewed as a "reasonable" person

Innovative

Can "take the heat" - not subject to local/regional political pressure

Ability to "bring heat" to local level re enforcement

EPA headquarters promotes autonomy - can tailor to local problems

Working toward P2 rather than pollution control

WEAKNESSES

Not advertised very well

Could do what we do better

Science for science's sake

Regional autonomy not yet understood externally

Tendency to deal with the too specific, details

GROUP ONE - STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Autonomy promoted by EPA headquarters sometimes leads to inconsistencies between Regions

Divisive = state/EPA agencies inconsistent in enforcement rules. Prefer to deal with **one** entity.

Budget for Agency does not support working toward P2 rather than pollution control - mixed signal re P2/enforcement

Invisible to Aq. Agencies. Would like more alignment with conservation districts and EPA.

Public perception that state agencies are responsible for funding, etc., rather than EPA. EPA only seen as regulator.

Deficient in "big picture focus" - media outreach

Enforcement cases - EPA loses control (to Justice Department, EPA Headquarters) after case begins!

Expectation - transfer to state/local government when their revenues are dwindling

High standards/low resources: need to reexamine priorities/objectives

Cannot rely on government resources to accomplish this (idea of leveraging)

Succeed in state/EPA partnership to that EPA has become invisible

Unclear goals as to what state/region wants to achieve (Identify three to four goals and make public focus for average citizen).

More awareness of what's going on "on the ground" by EPA staff

GROUP TWO - STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

TOP SIX STRENGTHS

- **Regional leadership promotes climate for change**
- **Strong enforcement program**
- **Professional competence**
- **Scientific/technical competence**
- **People**
- **EPA staff located near states**

TOP EIGHT WEAKNESSES

- **Inadequate involvement of state/local communities in problem identification**
- **Weak (slow) decision making**
- **Lack of multi-media integration**
- **Risk avoidance**
- **Insufficient OPS staff**
- **Lack of outreach to [customer]**
- **Lack of consensus in problem solving**
- **"Beans" versus compliance-driven**

STRENGTHS (numbers are votes given)

People (6)

Professional competence (8)

Traditional command/control (3)

Funding - state/local (0)

Scientific/Technical competence (8)

Sensitive to "partners" in state/local (0)

Regional flexibility (4)

EPA staff near states (6)

GROUP TWO - STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Regional leadership is promoting climate for change (11)

Strong enforcement program (10) ·

Recognizes customers (1)

Resources for conventional programs(3)

Fair/equity in applying federal law (1)

WEAKNESSES (numbers are votes given)

Weak/slow decision making (6)

Lack of diversity on management team

Lack of multi-media integration (5)

Risk avoidance (5)

- too cautious when uncertain
- too bound by precedent

Impractical (0)

Insufficient staff in OPS Offices (5)

Lack of customer outreach (5)

Rigidity in regulations

Perception of EPA as "enemy"

Tackling environmental problems beyond EPA mandate

Lack of consensus/collaboration in problem solving (5)

Regulatory barriers

Working with tribes (4)

GROUP TWO - STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Inability to say "no"

Trouble making choices (0)

Enforcement follow-up (1)

"Beans" versus Compliance (5)

All follow-up (not just enforcement) (2)

Inadequate involvement of state/local communities in priority setting, other problem identification (7)

Seeing us as "customers" rather than "partners" (3)

Resources for innovation (0)

Lack of trust in EPA (0)

Don't share "political problems" regarding Beans (1)

EPA doesn't trust (0)

Lawyer-driven decisions (0)

Lack of resources (1)

GROUP THREE - STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

STRENGTHS

Desire to be on cutting edge

Decentralized authority

Staff dedication

Staff diversity (cultural perspectives)

Willingness to take risk at regulatory level

Senior management cooperativeness

Interagency partnerships (state/federal/local)

A lot of resources (people/\$\$)

Commitment to TQM

Environmental ethic

Geographic initiatives

Enforcement

Data collection/tracking

Training

Permitting within media

Giving money

EPA journal/publications

Providing states with opportunities for input

Responding to Hill

GROUP THREE - STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Technical expertise/science (technical credibility)

Creativity/innovation

Responsiveness

Operates as a "buffer"

Interpreting EPA/HQs guidance

Being 3,000 miles away from Washington, DC

Good reputation with public (EPA versus IRS, etc.)

- "the protector of the environment"

WEAKNESSES

Political credibility

"Disconnect" between what EPA wants to do technically and what it can do politically

Communicating "uncertainty" (risk)

Legal constraints

Communicating with public

Inconsistent application of policies

Lack of cross-media

Reluctance to recognize economic realities (win/lose)

Management view of EPA mission is narrowly defined

Inconsistent/conflicting direction (internally)

Use of data collected/tracked: "data rich/information poor"

GROUP THREE - STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Info used when collected by meetings, etc.

Lack of diversity

Undisciplined autonomy at staff level (management/staff relations)

Measuring success through enforcement

Follow through on "risk-based" priority setting

Short-term focus

Partnerships: lack of understanding constraints (not an "equal" partnership)

**COMPLETE LIST
OF THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES
GENERATED
IN SMALL GROUPS**

GROUP ONE - THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

EPA is going to "wear people out" - need to bring out citizen good will

Look to future - where/how does environmental protection fit in - needs to be defined.

Accountability - clear definition: where do we want to go and how long it will take to get there

Uncertainty on part of industry regarding outcome of inspections (ie state vs EPA regulations/interpretation)

Economic accountability

General wetlands issue

Disaster toxins - international issues especially affecting the Arctic: What will be the EPA's role?

Incentives to accomplish objectives (rather than fines)

Widening disparity between growth/no growth areas regarding resources

An advocacy role for EPA (partnerships)

Work more with "on the ground" agencies

Outreach by government to universities to industry

Public expectations of EPA misaligned with what we are capable of accomplishing

Inability to meet political timelines which lead to additional time pressure

Inability to do what we say we are going to do

A fixation with new things (don't finish things) - institutional problem

Need constancy of purpose (Region 10 develop a few goals and follow through?)

Invent new ways of defining problems that build in citizen judgements/sense of responsibility

Use public media to "advertise" new paradigms/show success & goals/milestones

GROUP ONE - THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Provide accurate information so that citizens can take action

Excellent data available

Need decisions regarding data usage - what data do we need/use? How does data affect partners?

Inability to identify risk versus non risk

Need to recognize the variety of constituencies by lower level staff

Economic changes = threat and opportunity

Notion of environmental issues has grown beyond mission of EPA (now under other agencies as well)

Large scope policy goals - what is EPA's role in this?

Take "ecological systems" broad approach rather than piecemeal

Broaden EPA activities by pulling in other federal, state and public

GROUP TWO - THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

TRENDS

Increased Executive Branch interest in EPA

Increased public interest

- Recycling
- Technology transfer
- Education

Decreasing extractable resources

"Pollution" is changing from few to many sources [point/non-point]

Economic decline worldwide

Instantaneous worldwide communication

Continued Congressional interest in federal enforcement

Interest in environmental indicators

Environmental stewardship

- churches
- children

Increase in successful collaboration locally among diverse interests (timber/fish/wildlife)

Stalemate increased nationally

Demographic changes

- aging baby boomers

Increase in conflicts between environment and economics ("biodiversity versus jobs")

Increase in economic benefit from P2

Decrease in quality of life in cities/rural areas

Increase in quality of life in suburbs

GROUP TWO - THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Decaying infrastructure

Increase in "Sound Bite" media

Decrease in opportunities in education, employment and survival skills for minorities

OPPORTUNITIES

Increase integration of environmental and other policies

Build basis of support (EPA "champions")

Increase energy conservation

Use education/communication to impact environmental change

"Can enforce upon the few - not the many."

Pollution Prevention allows "win/win" - shifts resources from enforcement to education, cleanup to prevention

Changing perception on "environmental problem"

- integrate environment into planning

Partnership essential

Leverage resources

- state
- local
- federal

New alliances

Market-based solutions

Direct environmental resources to disadvantaged communities (Environmental Equity)

- sewer/water systems in native villages

Quality scientific data and interpretation

GROUP TWO - THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Expanded education and information transfer

- Get facts out

Continue dialogue with Congress

EPA tells more understandable story

Localize support for change

EPA "activism" on more than just Earth Day

GROUP THREE - THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

THREATS

Fiscal reality

Less visible, more complex environmental problems

Solutions are behavioral, not technical (individual/personal)

Population less literate/less technically skilled (in sciences)

Small business/industry (regulatory) overload

Effectiveness of dealing with small businesses

Population growth in the Northwest

Economic downturn

Environment versus jobs

Urban versus rural interests - polarization

Segregation of interests

More compelling, competing issues

Broadcast/print media

Loss in faith in government at all levels

Drought (water quantity/quality)

Raising expectations of public with less money

New federalism

Major problems in country will consume resources

Lose credibility through punitive enforcement

Loss of EPA relevance in eyes of public in regard to natural resources

Last frontier (important waste issues)

GROUP THREE - THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Property issues/"takings"

OPPORTUNITIES

Positive growth toward cleaner technology, infrastructure

Growth management - EPA can be involved

Industry attitude changing

"Green Businesses"

Policy cover to move in directions that make sense

Maintain credibility in enforcement (pollution prevention)

Proximity to Pacific Rim/Canada

Developing Countries

Building relationships with tribes

Catalyst for integration

Prioritize issues (lack of funding will force)

Strengthening technical underpinnings

At limits of "command and control"

To make choices

Respond to "hunger" for environmental information (especially K-12)

Respond to need of technical transfer

Capitalize on demographics

Northwest as special

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FY95 STRATEGIC PLANNING CUSTOMER RETREAT LIST
Revised June 9, 1992

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WORKSHOP AGENDA

AGENDA
FY95 STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKSHOP
Wyndham Gardens Hotel
June 10, 1992

8-8:30	REGISTRATION AND COFFEE	
8:30-9:00	WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION	Rasmussen
9:00-9:30	EPA REGION 10: THE REGIONAL ADMINISTRATOR'S VIEW	Rasmussen
9:30-12:00	DISCUSSION OF REGION 10'S STRENGTHS/WEAKNESSES	
	90 minutes Small Group Discussion	
	30 minutes Small Group Reports	
	30 minutes Large Group Discussion	
12:00-12:45	Lunch Break	
12:30-12:45	INTRODUCTION TO EPA REGION 10'S THREATS AND OPPORTUNITIES	Emison
12:45-3:00	DISCUSSION OF REGION 10'S THREATS/OPPORTUNITIES	
	75 minutes Small Group Discussion	
	30 minutes Small Group Reports	
	30 minutes Large Group Discussion	
3:00-3:15	Break	
3:15-4:00	DISCUSSION OF HOW EPA REGION 10 CAN ADD ENVIRONMENTAL VALUE	Participants
4:00	CLOSING REMARKS	Rasmussen
4:30	ADJOURN	