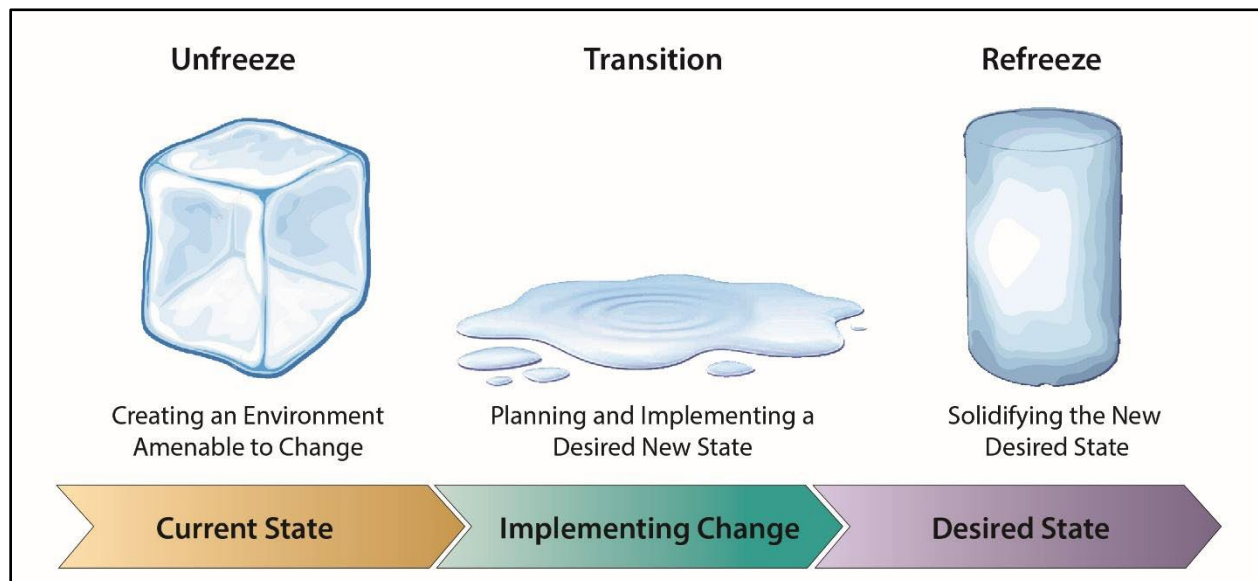




National Park Service Collaboration Network

Action Plan



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National Park Service Collaboration Network

Action Plan

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Introduction

Collaboration within the National Park Service

The National Park Service (NPS) Collaboration Network is a group of dedicated employees who recognize the value of collaboration. We believe that we best serve our parks, and the American people, when we embrace our collective power—the diversity of skills, people, experiences, and expertise that comprise our NPS community. We believe that the mission of preserving our resources, unimpaired, for this and future generations is what unites us across disciplines and administrative boundaries.

To this end, our work is to pave the way for a successful cultural shift—a shift to a more collaborative environment within our organization. This plan summarizes why we think this shift is needed, what a shift to a collaborative culture looks like, and outlines the steps we are taking to realize this change.

Why a Culture Shift?

The Problem

The National Park Service, like many organizations, has a compartmentalized organizational structure. Different disciplines are separated into individual administrative divisions or programs and funding is allocated accordingly. Such separation and resulting isolation creates barriers that can lead to “silos,” with each division viewing their work through the selective lens of their own discipline. Such separation and resulting isolation creates barriers where there is greater incentive to compete for available resources than to work cohesively toward our common mission. (Figure 1)



Figure 1. Seeing the world through a selective disciplinary lens, a compartmentalized institutional structure, and separate funding channels all contribute to organizations whose work forces may reflect programmatic silos rather than a unified effort toward a common goal.

While there are currently pockets of collaboration, most NPS disciplines, divisions, or programs (i.e., silos) tend to act independently of each other. The problems that can arise from such independence include:

- Competition among silos for available resources
- Inefficiencies
- Duplication of effort
- Inconsistent or even conflicting management direction

Although these issues are often acknowledged as problems resulting from compartmentalization, a less reported but perhaps even more important issue is that we miss out on the breadth of perspectives that comes from examining our parks and our work through multidisciplinary lenses.

Each individual program has its own goals, but these are not independent of the NPS mission. Building programmatic empires is of little value if they do not contribute effectively to achieving the overall NPS mission. While we have no expectation of changing the organizational structure of the NPS, we do hope to build bridges among the silos to enable a shared vision of our collective purpose, as well as facilitate a much greater exchange of ideas and perspectives.

Collaboration as Part of the Solution

The role of collaboration in today's environment is shifting from an advantage to a necessity for achieving our collective NPS mission. Collaboration offers the ability to leverage increasingly limited resources through shared costs and responsibilities. Although advantages in cost and efficiency are often expressed as a primary justification for collaboration, they are not the only reason and may not even be the most important reason for a more collaborative work environment.

Collaboration offers substantial opportunities for more effective stewardship through:

Greater Innovation - The diversity of expertise and skills afforded by collaboration provides a richer set of ideas and innovations from which to draw.

Leveraging a Diverse Set of Perspectives and Skills – In addition to more innovative solutions, the richer set of ideas and skill sets can increase problem-solving capacity.

Employee Skill-building – The exposure to multi-disciplinary perspectives and problem-solving improves the skill sets and increases the capacities of the individuals who are involved.

Broader (Big Picture) Vision – Working with others improves our understanding of how the different divisions and disciplines all contribute to the overall NPS mission.

Greater Cohesion of our Work Force – A better understanding of how the different divisions and disciplines contribute to the overall mission also leads to employees feeling valued for their unique skills and contributions.

Collaboration is not without its challenges, but when it is successful, it improves the effectiveness and efficiency of our efforts. Working together across disciplines and incorporating a broader array of perspectives increases the potential for innovative problem solving. And it increases the relevance of individual divisions and programs to parks, which must manage for a wide range of interconnected resources.

A Shared Vision for a More Collaborative Culture

We distinguish collaboration from other associations by the nature of the relationship.

We define a relationship as collaboration when two or more parties (or units), often with widely varied interests or expertise, develop a shared vision.

They are working jointly toward one or more common goals, even if their contribution to achieving those goals may differ.

A definition of collaboration such as this is commonly used when describing projects and endeavors using a collaborative approach (Figure 2).

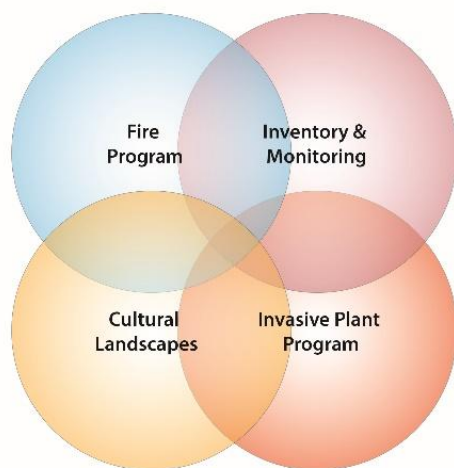


Figure 2. During a given collaborative project, different NPS units may work jointly toward common goals.

The shared vision we seek goes beyond project-based collaboration; rather, it is for a shift in our NPS culture to a more collaborative environment. Although we want collaborative projects to thrive and be successful, we also strive for a spirit of collaboration that permeates all aspects of what we do and

how we interact with our colleagues. Our vision is that the entire NPS workforce will be transformed so that a collaborative spirit will be a dominant force for how we operate (Figure 3).

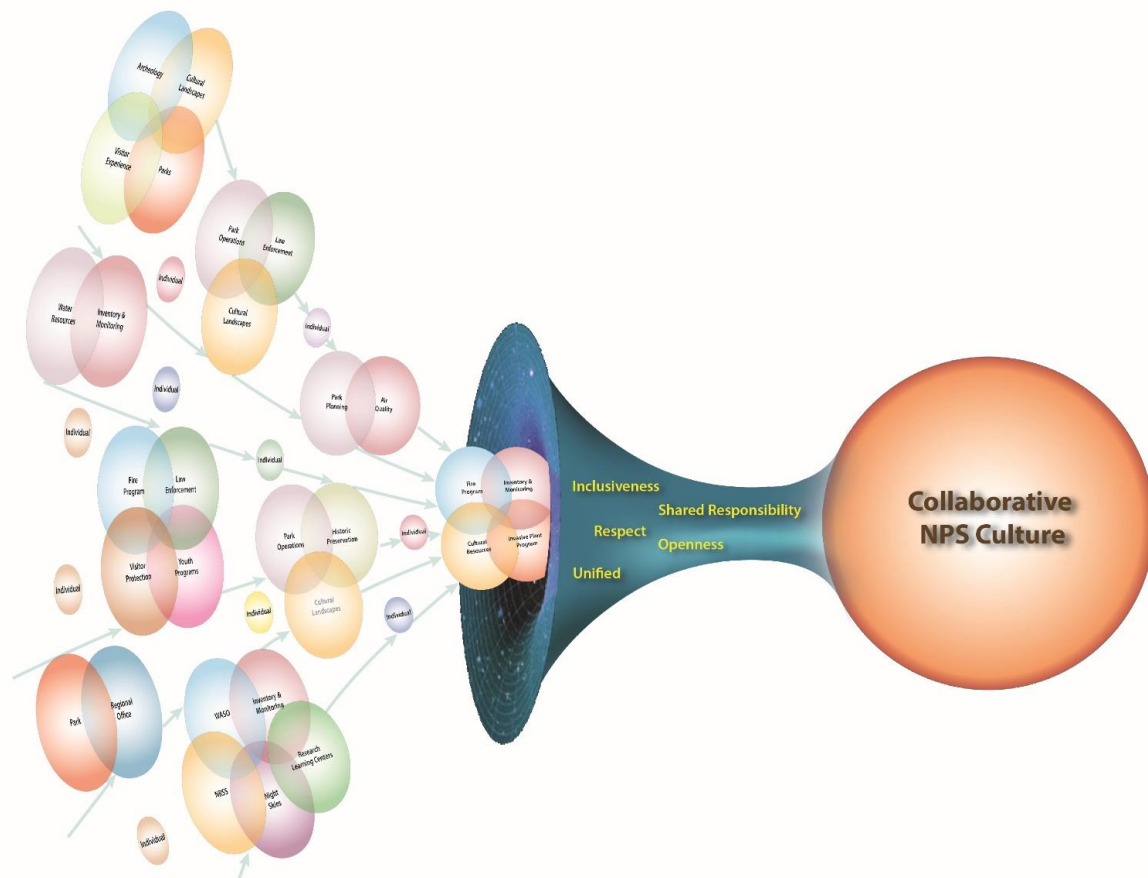


Figure 3. Our vision extends beyond collaboration on individual projects, or among individuals or programs to one where the NPS culture is transformed to embrace a more collaborative spirit.

The NPS Collaboration Network

The NPS Collaboration Network was formed in June, 2018, when a group of individuals who saw the value of collaboration came together and decided to work as a team to advance that cause. The group formation was a merging of efforts from two primary sources. Approximately half of our original team had participated in the NPS GOAL Academy¹, the bureau's primary leadership and organizational advancement program. An interdisciplinary project team within that program focused on advancing collaboration within the NPS, which culminated in presenting a collaboration toolkit² in May, 2017.

The other half of the current Collaboration Network participated in a March, 2016 collaboration clinic hosted by the Inventory and Monitoring Division and the Biological Resources Division,

¹ <https://mylearning.nps.gov/program-areas/leadership-training/top-level-program-area-2/goal-academy/>

² <https://drive.google.com/file/d/1tdgv8Z3-Zro4x4eCIM9cB4kIqHSJnrYF/view?usp=sharing>

which was facilitated by the NPS Collaboration Clinics Team sponsored by the NPS Rivers, Trails & Conservation Assistance Program (RTCA). This clinic brought together approximately 45 participants, representing seven collaborative projects from a range of divisions and programs, to explore ways to advance collaboration within the NPS. Four participants from this effort joined forces with the members of the GOAL Academy project to form what is now the NPS Collaboration Network.

Our Scope and Emphasis

Collaboration can take many forms, which we applaud when it advances the mission of the NPS. However, the recent NPS emphasis on collaboration has been on collaboration between NPS and external groups (e.g., local communities and friends groups, other agencies, conservation organizations and NGOs). Much less emphasis and resources have been dedicated to collaboration *within* the NPS organization (among parks, divisions, programs, etc.).

We intend to complement those efforts by facilitating a culture shift within the NPS where collaboration is the recognized standard for how we work and results in better stewardship of our parks. Stewardship of NPS resources improves when we leverage the full range of skills, perspectives, and experience among us.

Our Network Structure

The organizational and functional structure of the NPS Collaboration Network consists of a core workgroup, subgroups focused on different areas of emphasis, satellite groups that include

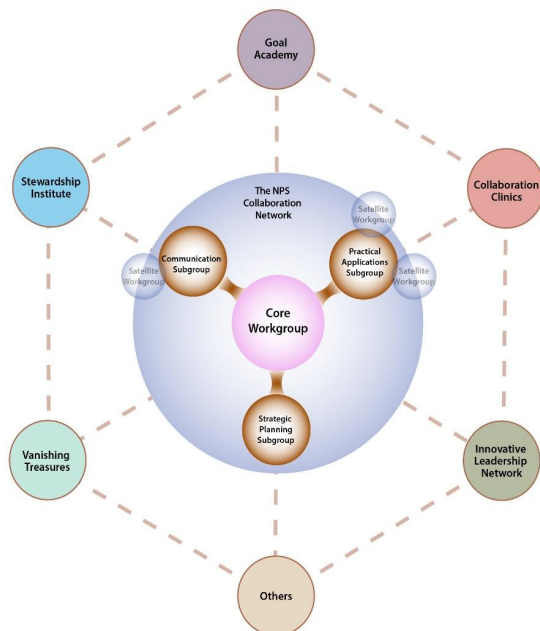


Figure 4. A graphic representation of the NPS Collaboration Network's organizational and functional structure.

individuals not formally associated with the core work group, and a network of other individuals and groups with whom we try to form strategic alliances and synergy to advance a collaborative environment (Figure 4).

The Core Work Group

Our core workgroup is made up of eight to twelve members (currently nine), which forms the primary decision body of the network. We try to ensure that this group has members from different directorates and has a diverse set of skills and backgrounds. We now operate without a designated leader; however, we rotate the duties of facilitation and note-taking for meetings.

We hope to maintain at least one member of the core group for whom advancing a collaborative environment is a part of their assigned responsibilities rather than a collateral duty. This position is not a group leader, but would help ensure continuity of our efforts and fill voids where needed. At the onset of this effort, this role was fulfilled via a detail sponsored by the Inventory and Monitoring Division. In the future, our goal is to rotate (e.g., every six months) the responsibilities of this lead position among core group members. We will seek funding that is shared among directorates and programs to pay a portion of that person's time to devote to these duties, with the approval of their organizational unit.

Core Subgroups

Within the core workgroup, there are subgroups that focus on areas needed to move this effort forward. Membership in each of the subgroups is fluid, and core group members may cross over boundaries as their interests and skills warrant.

Currently there are three subgroups: strategic planning; communication; and practical applications.

The ***strategic planning subgroup*** focuses on ways to reach our goal of a culture shift within the NPS organization from a strategic standpoint. This action plan is an example of a product from this subgroup.

The ***communication subgroup*** focuses on planning and implementing communication efforts with others. It identifies key audiences, develops products related to our key messages, and determines the form and media for effective messaging. This group is also building a “Collaborative Leadership” group³ on the NPS Common Learning Portal (CLP)—a place to share stories of collaboration and to encourage learning from successes as well as failures. The CLP will also include discussion forums and support and training tools.

The ***practical applications subgroup*** focuses on tools to support efforts to shift to a collaborative culture. One example is Working Together Against Weeds (WTAW). WTAW is an approach to invasive plant management that emerged from the NPS Pacific West Region. The idea behind this initiative is that stopping the spread of invasive plants requires an “all hands on deck” interdisciplinary effort. At park units that choose to participate,

³ <https://mylearning.nps.gov/groups/collaborative-leadership/>

workshops are conducted and include staff from all aspects of park management—resource managers, facilities managers, interpreters. WTAW has learned that each of these disciplines has a role, whether it's park operations ensuring that maintenance vehicles are not spreading weeds; to interpreters talking to visitors about actions they can take to avoid spreading weeds. This is just the kind of applied collaboration that we can learn from; for example, what ingredients make it successful? And we have a great story to tell of collaboration in action.

Satellite Groups

Satellite Groups are similar to a subgroup. They have a specific focus (e.g., projects), but they include members who are not part of the core work group. An example of such a project is a nascent effort to make databases from different programs, with differing structures and emphases, accessible across programs and disciplines. The goal is to better incorporate a wide range of data into interdisciplinary planning and management.

Extended Networking with Other Groups

Our network is not the only effort focused on improving collaboration within and beyond the NPS. Several other efforts have a similar intent but with differing areas of emphasis. For example, Collaboration Clinics emphasized training and community outreach, whereas others, such as the Stewardship Institute, emphasize building the NPS collaborative capacity and leadership to address the needs of 21st century park management. We intend to develop and maintain relationships with other such groups, with all benefiting from each others' work to advance a culture of collaboration without duplicating efforts.

Our Action Plan Approach

This action plan is intended to be a living document that expresses who we are, what we are trying to accomplish, and how we expect to achieve the change we seek. As a living document, we expect this plan to evolve as our work moves forward and evolves (Figure 5). Such evolution should take into account the successes and failures that we encounter as we move forward. We intend to follow an established work plan with details to include by whom and by when tasks will be accomplished. This action plan will also incorporate, as needed and with an appropriate level of detail, any other intermediate planning efforts that we may undertake.



Figure 5. This plan will be a living document that evolves as our work moves forward.

Creating the Shift to a More Collaborative Culture

In the sections below we describe a vision for a more collaborative culture within the NPS. This vision represents the overall shift that we are hoping to accomplish. Such a shift does not occur all at once; rather, it occurs through an ongoing process.

The steps of this process include tasks that we undertake, the subsequent products and outcomes, and the expected incremental shifts in the culture. Although there are many ways that we could organize our planning, we recognize three distinct, but *not* mutually exclusive, phases of our efforts, which are:

- Phase one - creating an environment that is amenable to change
- Phase two - planning and implementing a new desired state (i.e., the culture shift we are trying to obtain)
- Phase three - solidifying the new desired state as an institutional norm.

For each of these phases, we identified the incremental shifts that we hope to accomplish as well as the tasks and their outcomes that we have determined are needed to help realize those shifts.

The NPS workforce is dedicated and deeply committed to the NPS mission of stewardship of our nation's resources. However, meeting the mission requires continual improvement and adaptation as challenges and threats change over time.

The compartmentalized structure within the NPS and the corresponding isolation of divisions and programs present obstacles to meeting the challenges we face.

Collaboration in today's environment has shifted. Previously, it was an advantage; it's now a necessity for achieving our collective NPS Mission.

Through collaboration, we leverage increasingly limited resources and simultaneously strengthen our collective abilities. We seek to strengthen our already-dedicated workforce by shifting from an environment where isolation impedes our collective value and strength, to one where a collaborative culture helps to break down barriers and creates a more unified organization that works toward a common mission.

The Culture Shift We Are Striving to Achieve

The National Park Service honors its commitment to the stewardship of our treasured national resources by fully embracing the collective power of the breadth and diversity of skills, experiences, and disciplines of its workforce.

We all have a common NPS mission.

Contribution to achieving the NPS mission is equally, if not, more important than the goals of our individual units and programs.

We are respectful to all.

We respect the unique skills, experiences, and perspectives of all NPS employees (and others) regardless of position, function, or seniority within the agency.

We use our full collective capacity to solve problems.

We apply our collective skills and resources to fix what's broken or do what's needed to achieve the NPS mission.

Leadership encourages and supports collaboration.

Leadership and direct supervisors support and encourage collaboration with other units when it helps to achieve a common goal regardless of equitability among units or programs.

We work as a unified system.

We honor our commitment to the taxpayers to care for our shared national resources. We work together and share information in order to seek solutions and achieve common goals. Collaboration promotes innovation, mutual learning, and expands possibilities.

Change Philosophy

We began this effort by reviewing the literature on strategic approaches to successfully instituting change in organizations. Not surprisingly there are many papers, but almost all were variations on a few common themes.

The most simple of these themes is a widely cited model by Lewin (1951). This simple, three-step model is often referred to as the Freeze/Unfreeze Model (Figure 6), which consists of three primary steps.

Unfreeze creates an environment that is amenable to change.

Transition is the planning and implementing of a new desired state.

Refreeze solidifies the new desired state as a new institutional "norm."

Although this model has three identifiable steps, they are not mutually exclusive. One action may contribute to more than one step. Each of these steps represents an area of emphasis along a gradient that may also help set the stage for future steps or reinforce earlier steps.

Most of the other common models we encountered were elaborations of this simple three-step model. The primary differences among models is in how they lumped, split, and emphasized themes. Thus, we use this model as a general framework and conceptual basis for our approach to creating a more collaborative environment within the NPS.

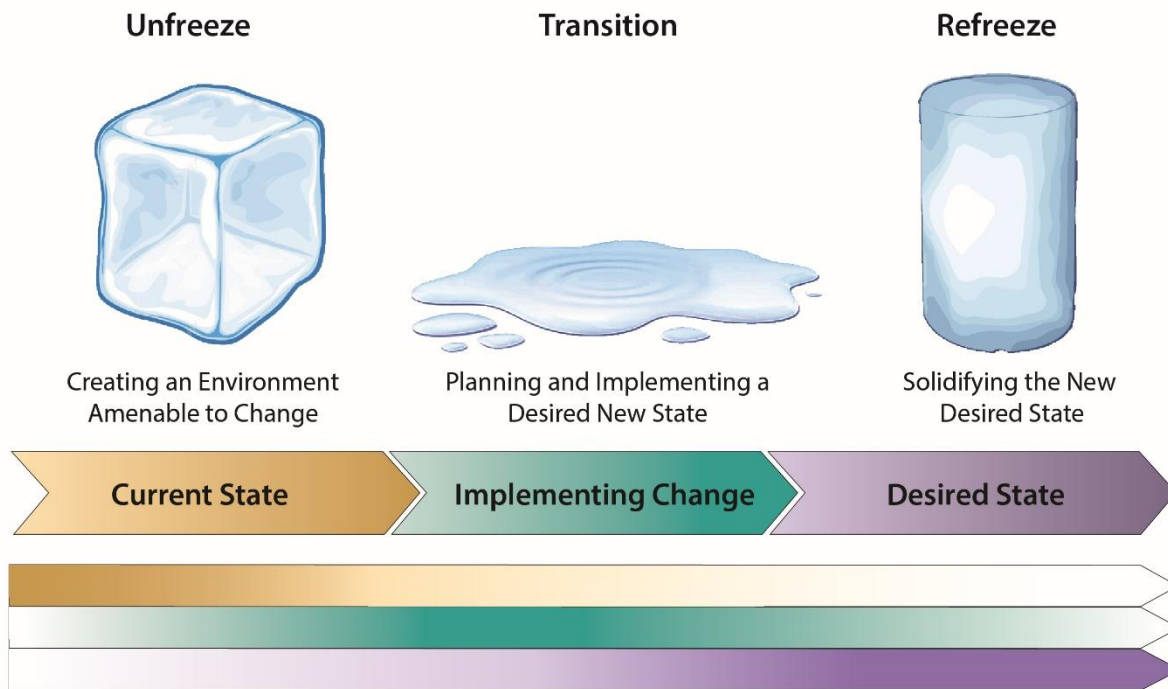


Figure 6. Lewin's Freeze/Unfreeze Model (Lewin 1951) consists of three primary phases: (1) Unfreezing entails creating an environment that is amenable to change, (2) a Transition that entails the planning and implementing of a new desired state, and (3) Refreezing that entails solidifying the new desired state as a new institutional "norm." The three colored arrows at the bottom of the figure illustrate that although this model has three identifiable steps, they are not mutually exclusive. One action may contribute to more than one step.

Creating an Environment Amenable to Change

To facilitate a shift in our culture, first we need receptivity and, we hope, even enthusiasm for the shift. From a strategic standpoint, receptivity requires identifying and addressing resistance to change, and identifying driving forces that can overcome resistance and drive the shift. Resistance can include the feeling that change is not necessary, or that the way things are now is just fine, or the belief that change will make things worse. Driving forces focus on the value of change, including a belief that change is needed and there is enthusiasm about the possibilities for a better way of doing things.

This two sided approach was also addressed by Lewin (1943) in what is known as force field analysis. Force field analysis recognizes two opposing forces: forces that resist change (i.e., the barriers) and forces that drive change (positive forces) (Figure 7). Lewin argues that the status quo is maintained when the two opposing forces are at an equilibrium. Change to a new desired state (e.g., a culture shift) becomes possible when the driving forces are stronger than the resisting forces. From a strategic standpoint, this implies that an effort is needed to overcome the barriers to change, while simultaneously building support for change. For this effort to succeed, we will need to make a compelling case for change. This includes identifying problems with the status quo as well as

presenting an alternative (i.e., a more collaborative environment) that is embraced as a better approach.

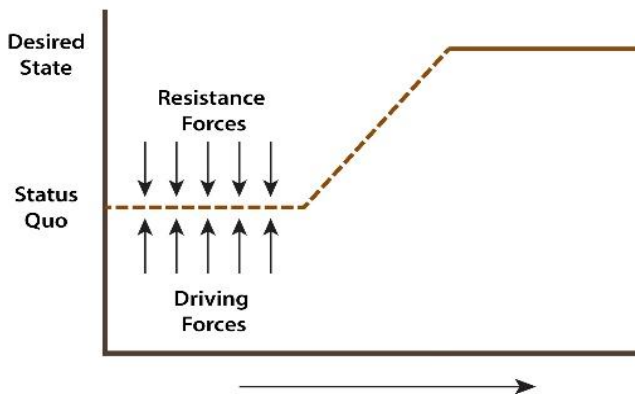


Figure 7. Lewin's (1943) force field model. Under this model, the status quo is maintained when the forces of resistance are at an equilibrium with the positive driving forces. A shift to a new desired state is only possible when the driving forces are stronger than the resisting forces.

The outcome that we are trying to achieve from this stage is that **the NPS community is receptive to a shift toward a more collaborative culture.** We have started to make a general case for a shift toward this receptivity. Below, in Table 1, are specific actions that we intend to take to achieve the outcome described above.

Table 1. The actions (tasks) our network intends to take in order to achieve the outcome of the NPS community being receptive to a shift toward a more collaborative culture.

Tasks	Resulting Products/Outputs	Expected Outcome(s) or Incremental Shift(s)
Assess barriers and opportunities. ¹	Document and maintain list of barriers and potential solutions.	NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.
Garner tangible support from leadership at all levels.	Present the NPS Collaboration Network culture shift goal to NRAG.	NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.
Garner tangible support from leadership at all levels.	Present the NPS Collaboration Network culture shift goal to other bodies similar to NRAG (e.g., CRAG, Regional Groups, and Superintendents Academy).	NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.
Garner tangible support from leadership at all levels.	Promotional materials have been developed in a variety of media formats.	NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.
Garner tangible support from leadership at all levels.	Core group members have each developed an elevator speech to describe this effort that works for them.	NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.

Tasks	Resulting Products/Outputs	Expected Outcome(s) or Incremental Shift(s)
Identify and compile collaboration case studies.	Case studies posted on the CLP in a variety of media formats (e.g., written narratives and video clips).	NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.
Develop common messaging. ¹	Core group is named – The NPS Collaboration Network.	NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.
Develop common messaging. ¹	Common collaborative and divisive words are identified and available as reference.	NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.
Develop common messaging. ¹	Core group's mission, vision, and values are created and posted on the CLP.	NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.
Develop common messaging. ¹	Common messaging is incorporated into promotional and educational products and distributed (e.g., to the CLP, via webinar, flyers/briefs, Inside NPS articles, etc).	NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.
Develop common messaging. ¹	Tag lines and visual identity (e.g., logo, etc) are created.	NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.
Develop common messaging. ¹	A consensus is achieved re Operational definition of collaboration and posted on the CLP.	NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.

¹ This task is applicable to more than one phase of our effort and may be repeated in other tables.

Planning and Implementing a New Desired State

As stated in our introductory sections, we believe that collaboration results in more efficient and effective work, and it makes us better stewards of the resources that we are charged with protecting because we embrace the full range of diversity and skills found within the NPS. We have described above the culture shift we seek in order to create a more collaborative environment. This phase focuses on what we are doing to plan and implement that culture shift after the NPS is amenable to such a change.

The first outcome we are trying to achieve during this phase is

The culture shift that we have defined, including its evolution as we move forward, represents a shared vision among the NPS community.

After developing a shared vision of the shift we are trying to achieve within the NPS, that vision must be implemented. Experience has taught us that a culture shift toward a more collaborative

environment can't be successfully mandated from the top; rather, collaboration emerges when willing partners recognize a need for or the value of a collaborative endeavor. Examples of relevant successful collaborative efforts, which illustrate the advantages of collaboration for achieving programmatic goals as well as our NPS mission, are valuable in inspiring a shift.

We considered by what means the use of collaborative approaches can be spread within the NPS. Being inspired by other collaborative efforts is one of the mechanisms that facilitates spread; however, this mechanism can be slow and inefficient. “Passive” mechanisms of advancing collaboration (e.g., encouragement and support from the top) are necessary but not sufficient for collaboration to spread and the culture shift to be realized. Thus, part of our strategy is an enhanced version of a simple spread model, where there are several layers of support for collaborative endeavors that help to move from a passive spread model to an active one. These layers of support increase the likelihood that collaborative efforts will be successful, while actively communicating about the demonstrative successful and relevant collaborative efforts (Figure 8). This approach is also an extension of the first phase of our efforts in that we are working to leverage the driving (positive) forces for change while overcoming the barriers and challenges.

We indicated above that advancing a more collaborative culture is unlikely to succeed by being mandated from the top. One clarification of this “limitation” is that we strongly believe that tangible support and encouragement from leadership is necessary, but not sufficient, to achieve the culture shifts we hope to attain. Thus, the next outcome we are trying to achieve during this phase is that:

Leadership and supervisors encourage and support collaborative endeavors.

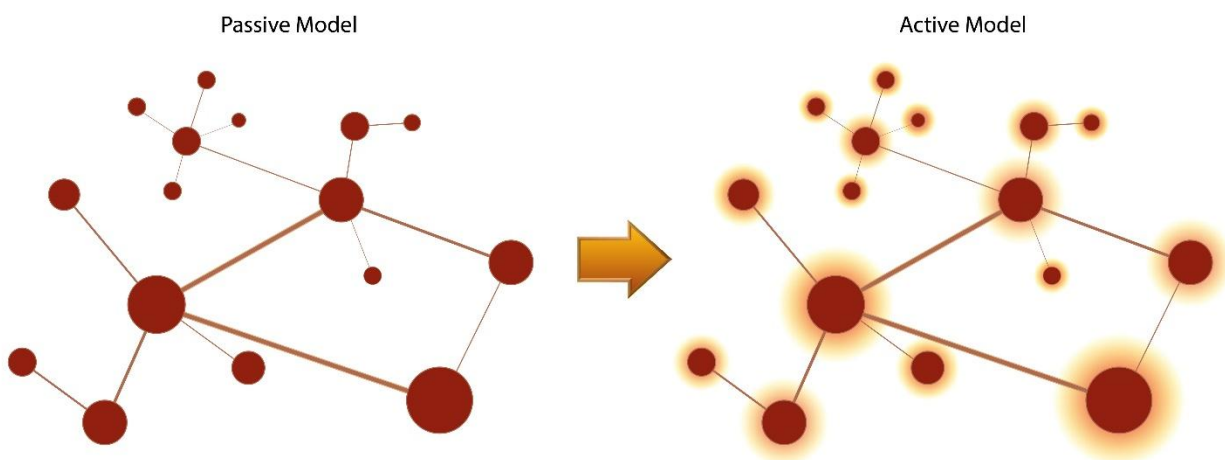


Figure 8. Advancing collaboration via encouragement and word of mouth can be a slow and inefficient process. Our intent is to enhance this process by shifting from a “passive” spread model to an “active” one by building layers of support to increase spread as well as the probability of success for collaborative endeavors.

A recent survey, conducted by members of our group from the GOAL Academy, indicated that out of 82 responses by NPS employees, 23% indicated that a lack of management support created obstacles to collaboration. An additional 16% noted that supervisory directives limit opportunities for interdivisional interaction and collaboration.

However, this does not imply that leadership is against collaboration— quite the contrary. There are numerous examples of leadership support for greater collaboration. The survey results do imply that this support may not be fully conveyed as tangible actions that meet the needs of those wishing to do collaborative work. As such, we are reaching out to leadership and supervisors and encouraging them to use their authority as well as their influence to promote a more collaborative culture. More specific actions and their expected outputs are identified below in Table 2.

In addition to support from leadership, we believe that there must also be a foundation of tools, training, and resources to facilitate the spread and success of collaborative efforts. This leads to an additional outcome we hope to achieve as part of this phase of our efforts which is

The NPS community has the tools, training, and resources for collaboration to succeed.

Our communication subgroup plays a key role in achieving this outcome. They help bring together communication specialists to effectively communicate the value of collaboration through case studies, examples, and stories of successful collaborations relevant to specific, key audiences. This group is working with others to develop a site for collaborators on the NPS Common Learning Portal.⁴ This site will support collaborators and be a central location for best practices, resources, and open conversations on collaboration. It will be a shared learning environment, a community of practice, and a capacity-building channel for working in collaboration. More specific actions and their expected outputs are identified below in Table 2.

Table 2. The actions (tasks) our network intends to take in order to achieve the outcomes for the implementation phase of achieving a shift toward a more collaborative culture.

Tasks	Resulting Products/Outputs	Expected Outcome(s) or Incremental Shift(s)
Build and post support components (tools/tool kit) of the CLP.	EPAP language is developed, gathered, and posted on the CLP.	NPS staff have the tools and support for collaboration to succeed.
Build and post support components (tools/tool kit) of the CLP.	Table ⁵ (or other format) of collaboration projects – descriptions, email contact - posted on the CLP and updated regularly.	NPS staff have the tools and support for collaboration to succeed.

⁴ <https://mylearning.nps.gov/groups/collaborative-leadership/>

⁵ https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1a767XofLmRAO_jJ8f-onkw6Gprc4mmkA

Tasks	Resulting Products/Outputs	Expected Outcome(s) or Incremental Shift(s)
Build and post support components (tools/tool kit) of the CLP.	Blog/discussion forum activated on CLP as a means to get and give assistance with issues/obstacles and share lessons learned, etc. related to collaborative efforts.	NPS staff have the tools and support for collaboration to succeed.
Build and post support components (tools/tool kit) of the CLP.	List and contact information for collaboration champions posted on the CLP and updated regularly.	NPS staff have the tools and support for collaboration to succeed.
Increase awareness of CLP resources. ¹	Implement marketing plan.	NPS staff have the tools and support for collaboration to succeed. NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.
Prepare and execute PSA videos. ¹	PSA videos that increase awareness of value of collaboration are developed and made available.	NPS staff have the tools and support for collaboration to succeed. NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.
Execute and prepare videos highlighting collaborative efforts. ¹	Videos that tell the stories of collaboration are developed and made available.	NPS staff have the tools and support for collaboration to succeed. NPS staff are receptive to change and to collaborating.
Garner tangible support from leadership at all levels. ¹	Funding is secured to support facilitation and mentoring of collaborative projects.	NPS staff have the tools and support for collaboration to succeed.
Garner tangible support from leadership at all levels. ¹	Tangible support (e.g., funding, encouragement, staff time, etc) is secured for collaborative endeavors.	NPS staff have the tools and support for collaboration to succeed.
Engage with other collaborative groups for synergy and to leverage actions.	A connection and coordination is established with other collaborative groups. NPS Collaboration Network liaison is selected help facilitate this connection.	NPS staff have the tools and support for collaboration to succeed. A collaborative culture is a shared vision among NPS staff.
Develop facilitation support network for collaborative efforts.	A network of facilitators is developed and supported.	NPS staff have the tools and support for collaboration to succeed.
Develop facilitation support network for collaborative efforts.	Facilitation training needs are identified and developed if needed to support collaborative efforts.	NPS staff have the tools and support for collaboration to succeed.

Tasks	Resulting Products/Outputs	Expected Outcome(s) or Incremental Shift(s)
Establish and support subgroups as needed to facilitate specific projects and needs to further internal NPS collaboration. ¹	RSS WTAW Invasive species subgroup Cultural Landscapes Project	NPS staff have the tools and support for collaboration to succeed. A collaborative culture is a shared vision among NPS staff.

¹ This task is applicable to more than one phase of our effort and may be repeated in other tables.

Institutionalizing a New Desired State

All of our efforts to achieve a shift toward a more collaborative environment are of little value if they do not become an integral part of the NPS way of doing business. The third phase of our efforts focuses on institutionalizing what we have accomplished so that collaboration is an inherent part of how we operate as an organization. This entails reinforcing efforts that have been successful as well as revising and adapting those that have been less successful. The primary outcome we hope to achieve as part of this phase of our efforts is

A collaborative environment is part of the shared vision among the NPS community and is a routine consideration for how we operate as a unified organization.

Implementing change is a learning process that always includes uncertainty about how we effectively achieve desired outcomes. Planning for this uncertainty and adjusting the strategy when necessary can greatly improve the chances of success. As our strategy is implemented and desired outcomes are achieved, steps need to be taken to institutionalize the desired environment as the new “norm.” This can be done through changes in policy and directives as well as reinforcing this environment as an operational standard. Specific actions and their expected outputs to achieve this outcome are identified below in Table 3.

Table 3. The actions (tasks) our network intends to take in order to achieve the outcomes for institutionalizing a new desired state.

Tasks	Resulting Products/Outputs	Expected Outcome(s) or Incremental Shift(s)
Work with leadership to better incorporate collaboration into policies, directives, and initiatives (refreezing and implementation).	Policies, directives, and initiatives have incorporated collaboration as a core component of NPS practices.	A collaborative culture is a shared vision among NPS staff.
Develop measures of success of outcomes and the culture shift.	Milestones (measures of success) have been developed and implemented.	A collaborative culture is a shared vision among NPS staff.
Use milestones and success measures as a basis for adapting and adopting collaboration strategy. ¹	Strategic planning and implementation actions have been revised and adapted as needed based on effectiveness and success.	A collaborative culture is a shared vision among NPS staff.
Develop common messaging that helps to promote a culture of respect. ¹	All products incorporate messaging that promotes mutual respect.	A collaborative culture is a shared vision among NPS staff. Supervisors set the example; encourage and reward collaborative work.
Develop common messaging that helps to promote a culture of respect. ¹	EPAP language incorporates messaging that promotes mutual respect.	A collaborative culture is a shared vision among NPS staff. Supervisors set the example; encourage and reward collaborative work.

¹ This task is applicable to more than one phase of our effort and may be repeated in other tables.

For Further Reading

Principles of Collaboration

Organizational Change

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The Coproduction of Science

The idea behind the co-production of science is quite close to an emerging branch of ecology called Translational Ecology. The initial paper by Beier et al., and the other is by Enquist et al. from a special edition for *Frontiers in Ecology* devoted to this topic. are a good introduction to the concept.

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