

CONSERVATION PARTNERSHIPS

A Field Guide to Public-Private Partnering
for Natural Resource Conservation



Management Institute for
Environment and
Business



National
Fish and Wildlife
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PREFACE

Too little time and money, and too much to do? Think partnership!

When two people choose to work together to accomplish what neither can do alone, they're likely to use the word partnership. In times of shrinking budgets and increased public demands, many federal and state agencies are touting the benefits of cross-agency and public-private partnerships and their important role in accomplishing agency objectives. Public-agency personnel now have the opportunity, and in some cases the mandate, to participate in partnerships.

For environmental matters, a voluntary partnership can address issues across agency and organization boundaries, and serve as an alternative to time-consuming legislative or costly legal actions. A partnership is a way of working with people to focus on what you can do, together, if you so choose. Vision, energy and optimism flow from the participants. Partnership is a process which can build on potential; a tool for project and program managers to use in meeting short- or long-term objectives.

III

Converting the insights and experiences of partnership participants into practical tips and "how-to's," this handbook is designed to help agency employees and partners alike increase the successful field-level use of environmental partnerships.

Section I: An Introduction to Partnerships introduces basic concepts, and provides initial guidance on selecting projects and locating potential partners. Written with first-time partners in mind, this section can also serve as a refresher for the more experienced.

Section II: Action Through Partnerships addresses the mechanics of making a partnership successful in achieving its goals once the project and the people are in place.

Section III: Partnership in Practice offers some insights to possible partnership complications, and concludes with a look at the future of partnership efforts.

This handbook is designed as a reference to help both the novice and the experienced practitioner successfully use partnerships as equitable, effective and efficient means of achieving results. Use the Table of Contents to identify chapters or charts that address your specific needs.

SECTION I

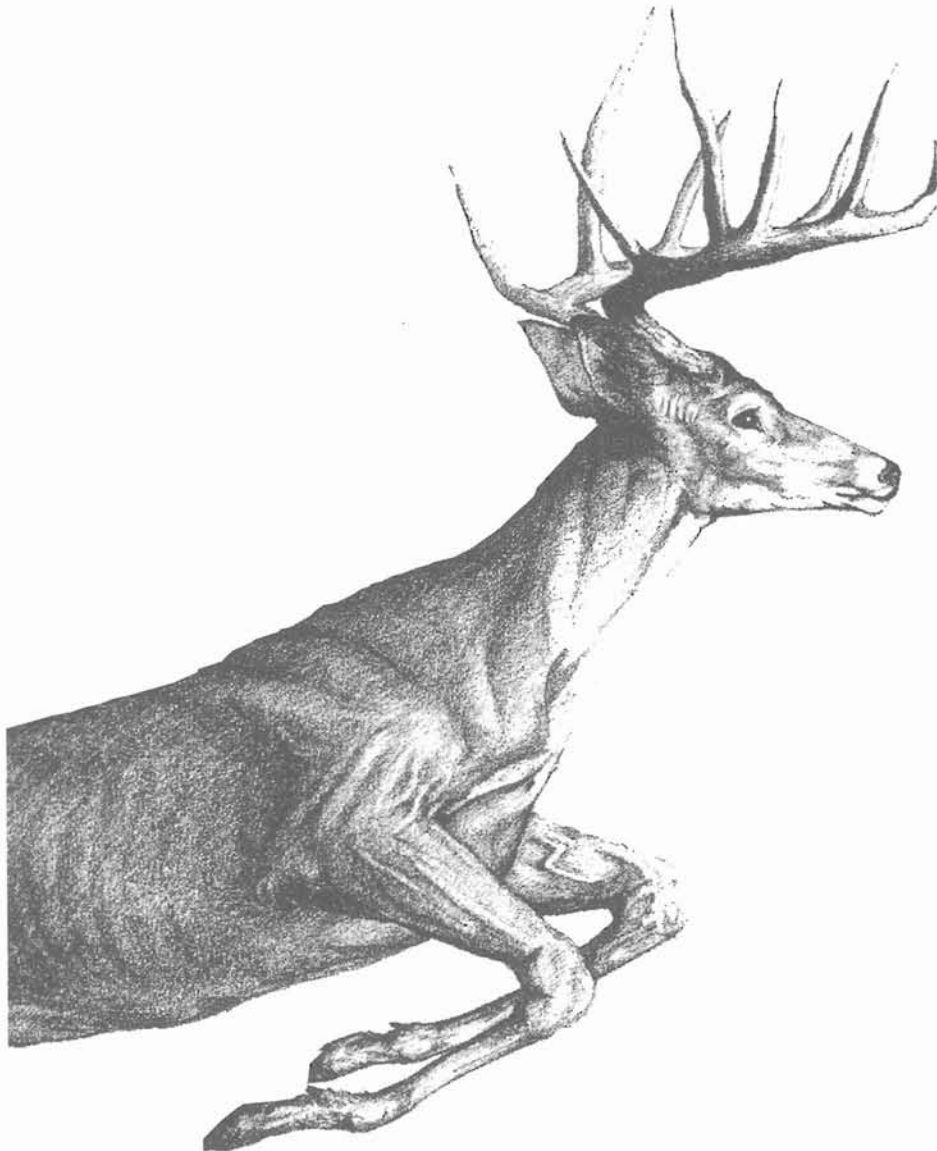
An Introduction to Partnerships

Chapter 1: Partnership — An Overview

Chapter 2: Projects and Partnerships

Chapter 3: Finding Partners

Chapter 4: Starting a Partnership



1. PARTNERSHIP – AN OVERVIEW

Success Through Partnerships:

A Range of Possibilities

Refuge Manager Ron Bisbee faced a large water project with a budget shortfall. His goal was to find a partner capable of making up the funding difference. Working with Dan Hunter, a neighbor and local Phillips Petroleum Company employee, Ron secured funding from Phillips, and later, Ducks Unlimited (DU). The balance was provided through a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) matching grant. Since then, Hunter and Phillips have become increasingly involved with Ron's projects on the refuge.

Nivra Kelley, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) co-op student, found herself face-to-face with a class of sixth graders trying to understand wetlands. Working with the students' teacher, Nivra developed Adopt-A-Wetland as a way to "teach wetland conservation to our youth." The initial collaboration between Nivra and the sixth-grade class expanded to include FWS, Environmental Protection Agency, local universities and school districts, and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

Al Trout was a refuge manager with a 65,000-acre refuge restoration project, with no staff and a minimal budget. Al arrived in August; retired engineer Bob Ebeling walked in the door in October and offered himself as a full-time volunteer. Al and Bob divided up the tasks, and eighteen months later the refuge was reopened to the public.

Why Partnerships?

They work.

Ron Bisbee, Nivra Kelley and Al Trout each credit partnership in the success of their respective projects. For Ron, a partnership funded a scheduled project — and much more. For Nivra, a partnership provided access to an audience and support to spread the word. For Al, a partnership opened up unthought of possibilities.

Partnerships can be a new way of doing business.

What is a Partnership?

As defined in this handbook, a partnership refers to any voluntary collaboration among organizations working toward a common objective.

Used to its full potential, a partnership builds synergistically on the time, talent, and support of all partners to mutual benefit and interest.

In practice, a partnership is a win/win situation — everyone feels rewarded by participating.



New Partnership Opportunities for Government Agencies

Partnerships have traditionally been formed to pursue goals that were beyond the reach of individuals or single organizations. Reduced budgets and expanded mandates have already prompted government agencies to find partners that can financially assist agencies in meeting both large and small objectives. But the potential is much greater.

Interest in ecological and conservation issues is rising. When concerns converge, an unprecedented opportunity exists for agencies, corporations, non-profit organizations and the general public to creatively develop efficient and effective partnerships to address these concerns.

“We recognized that we didn’t know what we were doing, but we had decided that we needed to do it anyway.”

Gary T. Meyers, Executive Director
Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency
on starting the North American Waterfowl Management Plan

Making Partnerships Work for You

Successful partnerships have often started with friendly conversation over a cup of coffee. No formal process — just interested people talking to one another and exploring areas of common interest; identifying ways to work together or offering suggestions on others who might be interested; realizing they can accomplish more by working together than apart and acting on that realization.

If you know people with mutual interests, you know potential partners. If you can identify benefits for the potential partners as well as for yourself, you have the basis for a partnership. If you’d like help in developing a partnership to accomplish your objective — keep reading.



2. PROJECTS AND PARTNERSHIPS

Success Through Partnerships:

Ron Bisbee and Wolfweed Reservoir

Ron Bisbee, Manager of the Brazoria National Wildlife Refuge in Texas, organized a partnership with Phillips Petroleum and Ducks Unlimited in 1992 to complete a project identified as a priority of the Texas Mid-Coast Initiative Plan of the Gulf Coast Joint Venture. Ron had talked about the project with his friend Dan Hunter from the local Phillips plant in Sweeny. That initial contact led to Phillips, and subsequently DU and NFWF, each giving \$25,000 to help fund a \$270,000 system of dikes and pumps to create the 374-acre Wolfweed Reservoir and an adjacent 350-acre moist soil area.

As this project progressed, Ron kept in contact with Dan, who with Phillips has worked more and more with Ron. Phillips' Sweeny facility hosted Ron and his staff for their refuge planning retreat. Dan also provided the plant's quality control director, Mike Woolbert, as a facilitator for the meeting, to help Ron and his staff evaluate priorities of refuge work assignments.

Dan has also discussed working with the FWS Private Lands program. Phillips may use its welding shop in Sweeny to fabricate water control structures for private landowners during slack times at the shop. This allows Phillips employees to contribute to a local project of high environmental value.

A Project Someone Wants

Ron Bisbee had a common dilemma — not enough funding to complete a project. Yet a conversation with a friend at the local Phillips Petroleum facility was all it took to gain entry, and eventually a grant from Phillips for a project in its backyard and of interest to its employees.

Choose the Right Project

Situations like Bisbee's are often the catalyst for partnerships. Someone in need looks for a colleague who can help complete the project or task.

When people join in partnership each sees themselves as gaining something the others have to offer.

Partnerships that succeed are of mutual benefit to participants. Partnerships that fail are not. Pick a project that offers benefits to your partners, as well as to yourself.



Some General Benefits of Voluntary Partnerships

While people join partnerships to accomplish what can't be done alone, partners will often identify different benefits from the same project. For example, a new greenway can represent habitat for the agency, an example of corporate stewardship for business, a biodiversity reserve for the conservation group, an outdoor laboratory for schools and a tourist-attracting revenue source for the community.

Shared Purpose. Broad-based participation can speed initial project accomplishments and build long-term support for partnership — and often partners' — goals and objectives.

Increased Resources. Organizations can increase the usefulness of such resources as knowledge, skills, materials, and financial support by pooling them with others for greater impact.

Shared Efficiency. By pooling their efforts, organizations can reduce duplication and accomplish more with the same level of effort.

Innovative Solutions. Partnerships can bring together people with a variety of experiences and perspectives; who, working together, can develop a wide range of options from which to select the best solutions.

Better Communication. As people work together, they learn about each other, understand each other better and often trust each other more. Improved lines of communication can also help to lessen other conflicts by making people more willing to talk to one another.

Increased Public Support. Partnerships can provide agencies and others with stronger local support on legislative and regulatory issues, by increasing participant understanding of agency and organization goals and methods.

Increased Organizational Morale and Image. Organizations report improved morale from involvement with partnerships that increase productivity or otherwise help the organization to fulfill its mission. Partnerships may also improve the public's perception of participants.

The Recent Rise of Partnerships

Regulation has been the traditional solution to environmental problems, and litigation has often been the chosen path for resolving disputes associated with these problems.

“Command and control” regulations, which mandate both levels of environmental quality and management practices, have generated positive results but also have inherent limitations. Even with the emergence of promising “market-based” incentives to adopt good behavior, the underlying priority-setting process remains unchanged.

Now, government agencies — the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service and Forest Service — are encouraging the use of partnerships as creative natural resource management programs. Environmental partnerships can produce effective and efficient projects and can provide a wide range of benefits to the participants.

The Five “I”s of a Partnership

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Identify | Who are the potential partners ? |
| Interest | Do you share common interests? |
| Inform | Provide them materials about the project |
| Involve | Invite them to participate in the project |
| Invest | Ask for their financial support |

The Working Draft

While any formal partnership documents will ultimately be written by the partners, a one- to two-page working draft is a useful tool in the early stages of discussion. The draft should be revised as people join the partnership.

Figure 1. FOUR MAJOR ELEMENTS OF A WORKING DRAFT

(1) General Description

Describe the proposed partnership, its goals and activities. Include a one-sentence capsule statement, such as "Protect, restore, and enhance 30,000 acres of wetlands in the lower Mississippi River Valley to increase the recruitment of migratory birds." Briefly explain the need for the project and the reason the proposed partnership is the right way to address the problem. Be clear, concise and compelling.

(2) Activities List and Timetable

List projects and include measurable milestones or deadlines for specific activities as appropriate. Due dates and the overall completion dates should be realistic. Allow time for organizations to share information.

(3) Roles, Responsibilities and Gains

Outlining tasks is important in order to know what is required for specific portions of the project and to coordinate activities. The breakdown should eventually list each person or organization along with the activities for which they are responsible. Include a rough estimate of the time needed to complete each activity. In allocating responsibility, an effort should be made to equitably distribute the workload.

(4) Budget

The draft budget outlines the start-up costs and reasonably projects the operating expenses of the project as currently envisioned. As appropriate, list: direct labor expenses, including employee benefits; contractual expenses; travel; land purchases; supplies, including equipment, printing, publications, materials, and leased property and miscellaneous. Look at indirect costs like rent and staff support. Include financial and in-kind resources that participating organizations have already promised.

Figure 2. SOME OBSERVATIONS ON PARTNERSHIPS

- Partnerships are formed among organizations, but succeed because of individuals.
- A successful partnership usually has a strong leader who champions the partnership projects and goals with vision, energy and enthusiasm.
- The people directly affected by a partnership goal are usually the ones most willing and able to work for it.
- Shared agendas, joint decision-making and mutual benefit constitute a partnership; money facilitates the projects.
- Senior level support lets a partnership operate easily within the rest of the organization and displays the organization's commitment to other partners and to the general public.
- Organizations must be willing to share responsibility and should enter partnerships with the intention of being an active part of the process.
- A partnership presents an opportunity for organizations to work together beyond business-as-usual, day-to-day activities.
- Most partnerships are proactive and involve action beyond what is required by regulation or policy.

3. FINDING PARTNERS

Success Through Partnerships:

Nivra Kelley and Adopt-A-Wetland

In February 1991, Nivra Kelley, a cooperative education student at FWS Corpus Christi field office, was talking to a sixth-grade class at Calallen Middle School about the importance of wetlands. As she spoke, she felt that these students did not really understand wetland ecosystems.

Afterward, a student asked her what the class could do to save wetlands. "I thought it was a good question. I sat down with their teacher later that evening, and the program was born." They decided that kids would respond best by actually going and seeing wetlands.

Adopt-A-Wetland began in February 1992 with the pilot project comprised of area schools, including Calallen Middle School. The goal of the program is to "teach wetland conservation to our youth." Students (K-12) learn about wetlands through:

- Monitoring a wetland for 9-12 months,
- Conducting classroom activities, and
- Surveying sites for restoration projects.

The early efforts were supported by FWS and the Center for Coastal Studies at Corpus Christi State University. As Nivra established Adopt-A-Wetland at more schools, she was able to get grants from EPA and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to develop training for teachers, support materials and a video.

Nivra is now expanding the program to other schools and youth organizations across Texas and hopes to make the program statewide within the next few years.

From "What If?" to "Why Not?"

When Nivra Kelley started talking to a sixth-grade teacher, it's unlikely that the word "partnership" ever entered the conversation. Nivra and the teacher were both interested in kids and wetlands. The ideas started to flow. Adopt-A-Wetland began to gain momentum.

In designing a classroom project, Nivra created a partnership.

Three Ways to Start

Every partnership starts with a goal or project. As in Adopt-A-Wetland, creating partnerships for project results happens three ways:

Informal Adopt-A-Wetland started casually through a question and response.

Formal Prospective Adopt-A-Wetland partners were then identified and approached with the express request to join the existing program.

Open Door Other partners came forward on their own — opportunity knocking.



People are the Key

Prospective partners have two characteristics: interest and the ability to participate. People make partnerships capable of achieving results. People are the linkage to ideas and information; to technical and financial resources; to the energy, enthusiasm and persistence that are the hallmarks of a successful project.

Start in Your Own Backyard

To find prospective partners, first identify local organizations likely to be interested in the project's goals and expand your scope as needed. The following list and objectives include reasons and ways that different groups may participate, and discussion points that may increase interest in participating. Different types of government agreements are presented in Figure 3 found on page 9.

Partnerships are formed among organizations, but succeed because of individuals.

Government Agencies: Agency employees may be able to find additional support in their agency by working with staff in other divisions, through the Challenge Cost-Share program or from pools of money intended for related types of uses. Federal, state and local agencies not yet involved with the partnerships may have programs and goals aligned with the partnership. National agency staff generally participate at the national level, while regional staff work for regional projects.

Discussion point: *"The partnership is in the public interest."* Agency employees must feel (and be able to show) that time spent on projects of the partnership serves the public. Agency employees also need to show that work with partners avoids any semblance of perceived favoritism toward other partnership members, especially those in the private sector.

Corporations: Corporations can involve their staffs and contractors, provide in-kind contributions of materials and equipment, and fund projects through their foundation or corporate giving programs. Corporations generally look for projects that help the communities where employees live.

Discussion point: *"Our goals overlap."* Corporations must answer to their stockholders. The goals of a partnership must support or complement the corporation's mission, which often addresses the environment. Agency staff can work with company liaisons to clarify goals and help alleviate concerns of regulatory repercussions.

Not-for-profit Organizations: Groups such as conservation organizations, community groups, and professional societies and associations may be willing to join a partnership. They can involve staff; offer access to and support from their membership, which can be large and politically influential; and publicize the project through newsletters and public forums.

Discussion point: *"We're more effective if we work together."* Since most not-for-profit organizations rely on voluntary donations of time and money to achieve their objectives, the partnership project must enhance the not-for-profit's effectiveness in the eyes of its membership and board. If prospective partners have clashed in legal battles or other conflicts, people may be cautious about working together. Focus on commonalities; "agree to disagree" on other issues.

Philanthropic Foundations: Most foundations are organized to provide financial support to non-profit organizations for projects that fall within specified areas of interest to the foundation. Some foundations are expanding their mission to provide technical and in-kind support, i.e., shared executive programs or donations of software and hardware.

Discussion point: *"We advance your stated mission."* Foundations generally have a published set of guidelines, and specific steps for seeking foundation involvement. Read and follow the guidelines for each foundation.

Sources of Names

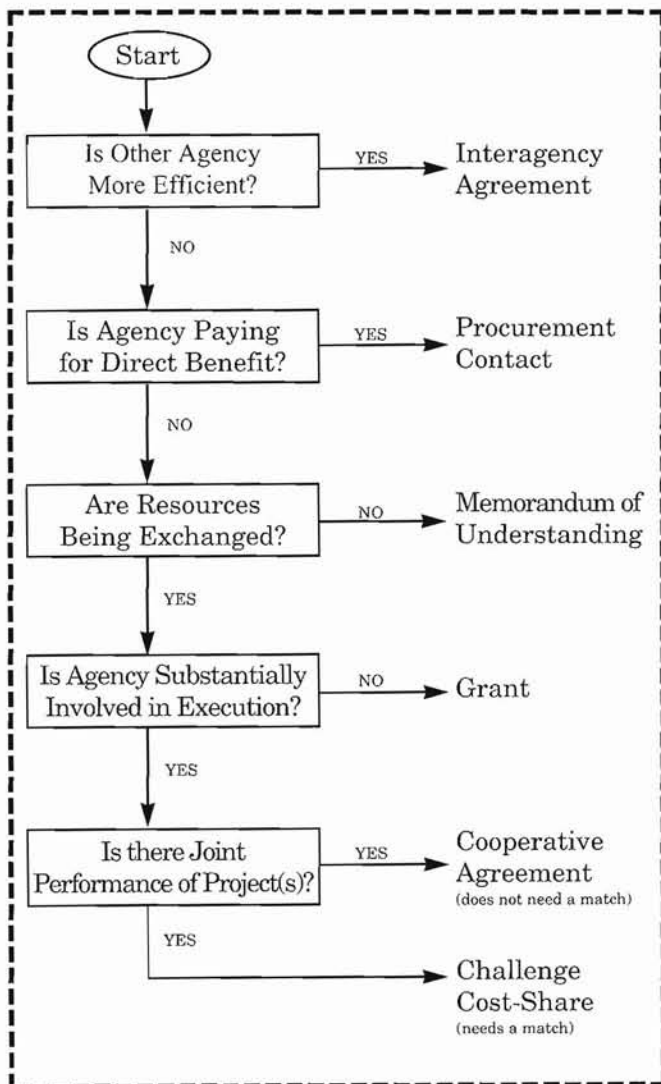
Ask family, friends and professional acquaintances for suggestions. Use the telephone yellow pages to identify local names and kinds of companies. Consult your local librarian for suggested directories and other resource guides. Computer-assisted data searches can broaden your reach. *See also Figure 7: Sources of Information, page 21.*

Considerations

For government employees evaluating projects and prospects for a partnership, it is important to consider:

- the project's relevance to the broad agency mandate,
- the agency's ability to fulfill these goals working alone,
- the opportunities — and risks — inherent in a collaboration, and
- the benefits for both the agency and the prospective partners.

Figure 3. OPTIONS FOR WORKING TOGETHER



Some Mechanisms for Collaboration

An agency's role in a partnership determines which mechanism is best suited. Whatever mechanism is chosen, it should clearly define the goals, objectives, and specific short-term targets.

Interagency Agreements are used when one agency is providing payments, goods or services to another agency. For federal agencies, the Economy Act allows for this if an efficiency gain can be realized.

Procurement Arrangements are used when the agency pays to receive a direct benefit. While it may resemble a partnership in some cases, this situation is not a partnership in the spirit of our earlier definition and must be treated like other procurement actions.

Memoranda of Understanding are most commonly used to establish partnerships and document specific responsibilities; signatories agree to work toward mutual goals, perform joint work, or share research results, but no obligation of funds may be included.

Grants allow an agency to transfer money, property, services or anything of value to an outside group for a project of mutual interest where substantial agency involvement is not anticipated.

Cooperative Agreements let an agency transfer money, property, services or anything of value to an outside group for a project of mutual interest where substantial agency involvement is anticipated.

Challenge Cost-Sharing (CCS) is for federal agencies, such as FWS, BLM, and Forest Service, and requires recipients to match this money with non-federal funds, labor, materials, equipment or land and water, typically of one-to-one.

For additional information, contact your State/Regional Joint Venture coordinator, Challenge Cost-Share Office, or Contracting Office.

4. STARTING A PARTNERSHIP

Success Through Partnership:

FWS/SWCD... NFWF

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (FWS) Partners for Wildlife Program, through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), and North Central Region of the National Association of Conservation Districts (NACD) have joined together to restore wetlands on private land in the Midwest.

The FWS Division of Private Lands (DPL), Twin Cities, wanted to increase wetland restoration efforts on private lands, but lacked personnel. The Soil and Water Conservation districts (SWCDs) in the North Central Region had a solid network with their county offices, but lacked experience restoring wetlands. DPL proposed that:

- SWCDs contact local landowners and raise one half of the funds;
- DPL administer the program and FWS provide technical assistance; and
- NFWF match SWCD's funds.

NACD identified 68 SWCDs in eight states of the North Central Region that thought they could get \$400,000 in funds to restore more than 1,400 acres in 1992. DPL went to NFWF with this proposal.

NFWF proposed an alternative — to match \$.50 for every non-federal dollar rather than dollar for dollar, up to \$300,000, for a potential grant amount of \$900,000, to be administered by DPL.

The proposal was accepted. In the first year, 32 SWCDs in seven midwest states participated in 38 projects, restoring approximately 2,063 acres.

Point, Counterpoint

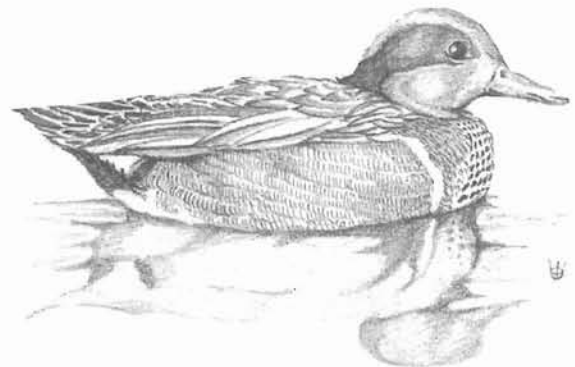
The FWS Twin Cities Regional Office and Soil and Water Conservation Districts in the Midwest formed a partnership as described at left to identify 2,063 acres of drained wetlands to restore. The partnership also identified additional partners and sources of financial support.

When NFWF agreed to participate if the challenge grant were restructured, a new regional strategy developed that emphasized local projects. The collective association resulted in restoration of a greater amount of wetland acreage than originally anticipated.

Getting to Yes

The FWS/SWCD partnership could easily have collapsed if positions — 1 to 1 match versus 1 to 2 match — had taken precedence over interests — “we can restore more wetlands.”

Even the simplest of partnerships requires agreement among partners to get started. This chapter is designed to help facilitate that initial agreement.



Reaching Wise Agreements Efficiently and Amicably

People in search of partners know what they want to do and what they want their partners to do. If they define help as financial support, they may be unprepared for help offered as advice or an extra hand.

When people step away from positions — “Help is money!” “No, help is ideas!” — and start working with issues — “Help gets us from here to there”— they are engaging in negotiation on the merits. Robert Fisher and William Ury developed the concept in **Getting to Yes** (1981). They distill their system for reaching wise and fair agreements to *people, interests, options and criteria*, as follows:

Separate the People from the Problem

Because discussions involve people, egos and emotions can creep into and sidetrack otherwise good agreements. Success means concentrating on the common purpose, attacking the problem and not each other. Relationships are built separately, based on accurate perceptions, clear communication, appropriate emotion and a forward-looking, purposeful outlook. Focus on the problem, not the people.

Focus on Interests, Not Positions

Positions generally represent people’s underlying interests — the multiple desires and concerns which motivate them. Compatible interests are often behind conflicting positions, as exemplified in the FWS/SWCD agreement with NFWF. To identify interests, ask “Why?” and “Why not?” When people can discuss interests in specific concrete terms, they can work toward agreement which reconciles those interests. Be soft on people, hard on the problem.

“Never underestimate the power of good food to bring people together.”

**Ron Bisbee, Refuge Manager
Brazoria (TX) National Wildlife Refuge**

Invent Options for Mutual Gain

Before trying to reach agreement, identify choices that advance shared interests and creatively reconcile differing interests. Mutual gain often means the same option must offer different benefits to different people. Brainstorming can generate possibilities for consideration. Weak but acceptable options may be strengthened through brainstorming.

Insist that Any Agreement be Based on Some Objective Standard

Objective criteria can facilitate agreement by providing a framework for decision making. A standard based on fairness and efficiency may mean a group decides to first define all the roles in a project before anyone can decide who fills which role. Each participant has an incentive to design an equitable and efficient project. Try to jointly define objective criteria for each issue. Be open to reason: yield to principle, not to pressure.

Figure 4. PARTNERSHIP ASSESSMENT GUIDE

A partnership is a means to an end. Before initiating or entering a partnership agreement, participants might wish to consider the following questions addressing characteristics of a good partnership project:

(1) Will the partnership project solve or significantly impact a problem?

The project should accomplish some good, or else everyone is wasting valuable time and money.

(2) Are the goals in the public interest and within the agency’s mandate?

A clear relationship should exist between the agency’s mission and the project(s) of the partnership.

(3) Are cooperation and collaboration needed to do the project?

The proposed partnership should be able to achieve more significant results than any one of the organizations can accomplish alone.

(4) Do your prospective partners all have a reason to participate in the partnership?

Each partner should gain specific benefits by participating, and each should have something to offer the partnership. Together, the partners should have the necessary resources and skills to accomplish the project in an acceptable length of time.

(5) Has the partnership identified all groups needed for the project to succeed?

The partners should collectively have the authority to undertake the project. The partnership should attempt to include all directly interested and affected parties.

(6) Will the partnership be voluntary and equitable?

Each partner should understand and accept the goals and objectives of the partnership, and the role they are to play in accomplishing the objectives. Determine if a precedent allows your agency to support the project and participate as a voluntary partner.

NOTES

SECTION II

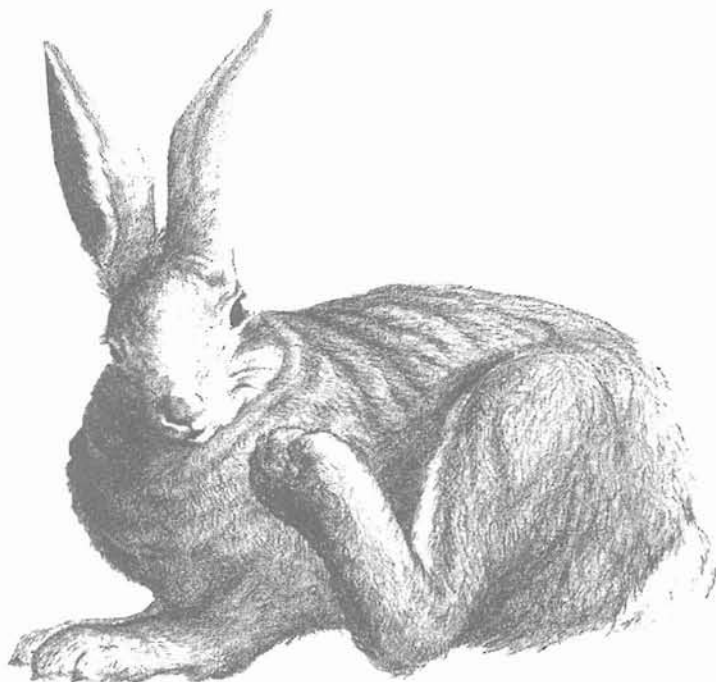
Action Through Partnerships

Chapter 5: Shaping the Partnership

Chapter 6: Financing Partnership Projects

Chapter 7: Implementing Partnership Projects

Chapter 8: Communicating Success



5. SHAPING THE PARTNERSHIP

Success Through Partnerships:

Roger Hollevoet and Greater Prairie Chicken Reintroduction

In 1990 Roger Hollevoet, FWS Project Coordinator for the Kelleys Slough Wildlife Project near Grand Forks, ND, saw an opportunity for the reintroduction of Greater Prairie Chickens in North Dakota. Sufficient grassland existed to support the needs of a viable prairie chicken population due to the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP). However, he did not know how he would get the necessary resources to release and monitor the prairie chickens.

Prairie chickens, once abundant, have dwindled in numbers as large areas of grasslands habitat have been converted to agriculture. But in recent years, 34,000 acres of farmland have been enrolled in CRP and returned to grassland. This and 10,500 acres of state and federal land are enough to support a long-term population of 300-500 birds.

Roger looked for a wide range of state agencies and local groups that could contribute small amounts of money or in-kind resources. He coordinated his management efforts with two research projects. Two-thirds of Roger's resources were in-kind donations, which consisted mainly of volunteer time and purchase or use of equipment from various government agencies, area wildlife agencies, and local citizens.

It All Adds Up

A week of annual leave. A credit for truck repair. Sign posting. Free veterinary exams. An airline ticket.

These are just a few of the multitude of contributions which Roger Hollevoet's successful partnership generated during 1992.

Creating a broad-based partnership took time, but Roger's work has resulted in a strong network of people dedicated to the reintroduction of prairie chickens.



The Next Step

Once people agree to join a partnership, formalizing the relationship is the usual next step. Most partnerships start with a written agreement that allows the partners to work together.

A written description detailing the partnership's plans for accomplishing objectives should follow. ***This is particularly critical if the partnership plans to seek additional financial or in-kind support.*** The working draft can be a good starting point.

Keep it Simple

Simplicity and brevity are virtues in writing the work plan. Like the working draft (Chapter 2), the plan should be part pragmatic description of how the partnership will work and part sales tool to entice grantors to aid the project. Highlight merits of the partnership while keeping projections realistic so the participants can meet the goals. Update the work plan as necessary to incorporate progress.

The plan must be accepted by all partnership members, who may want to reconsider people, interests, options and criteria (Chapter 4) as they review the draft. Differing reasons for wanting to get involved in the partnership will result in unequal commitments among partners; this should be recognized and defined at the outset.

Committees and Task Forces

How decisions are made can be as important as which decisions are made in a partnership. Ideally, decision making involves all partnership members, but in large partnerships this can be difficult for day-to-day matters.

As collaborations among diverse organizations, partnerships need to have a structure that accommodates differences in approaches and viewpoints. Structural flexibility can sometimes lead to problems in getting the specific projects done. Some formality, through the selection of committees or task forces, may be useful for deciding project priorities, needs, and costs; managing projects; communicating with participating organizations and other audiences; and reporting progress.

Accountability

A good working plan serves as an objective way to evaluate the activities of a partnership. The plan states the intended goals, timetable, and budget at the outset, and actual results can be compared in order to evaluate the effectiveness of the partnership.

Important Note: Avoid the words *advisory committee* if working with more than one federal agency. The Federal Advisory Committee Act restricts federal agencies to working only with other federal agencies in an official advisory situation. Use terms such as action groups or cluster groups instead.

Figure 5. SOME “DO’S” AND “DON’TS” OF PARTNERSHIP

DO:

- ✓ Take the initiative. Talk to people. Think creatively about ways to work with others to achieve common goals.
- ✓ Put ideas in writing for people who may be interested. Make sure to represent these as ideas rather than an agreement.
- ✓ Clearly define the objectives of a potential partnership, the resources that each participant would bring to the activity, and benefits that each stand to gain.
- ✓ Be inclusive. Early on, involve people whose approval or participation will ultimately be required.
- ✓ Learn about prospective partners; be comfortable with their reputations and capabilities before joining the partnership.
- ✓ Be realistic in estimating the often lengthy time periods required to initiate and implement a partnership.
- ✓ Investigate alternative strategies for achieving the objective. Are other avenues or other partners better suited to accomplish the objectives?
- ✓ Focus on the end result.

DON’T:

- ✓ Limit the ways you use partnerships to further agency objectives.
- ✓ Endorse an external product that will be put up for sale.
- ✓ Wait until the last minute to bring in supervisors, public affairs, or agreement specialists to review the contemplated partnership.
- ✓ Exceed your authority to solicit partnership funding from private sources.
- ✓ Get into turf battles.
- ✓ Get frustrated if there are delays. Time periods are estimates only!



6. FINANCING PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

Success Through Partnership:

Pat Dwyer and the Fish Technology Center

Pat Dwyer was trying to increase the fluvial arctic grayling stock at the Fish Technology Center in Bozeman, MT, in 1990.

Pat was trying to develop a broodstock for restocking the arctic graylings in Big Hole River. The resulting fry would be released as the core part of an arctic grayling recovery program. However, he did not have a covered raceway to provide the subdued light that arctic graylings prefer.

The FishAmerica Foundation expressed an interest when Pat approached them, and he applied for a grant in February 1991. FishAmerica contributed \$3,000 for the purchase of the cover in December. The cover was installed in January 1992.

Jontie Aldrich and the Oklahoma Field Office

Jontie Aldrich, Private Lands Biologist for the Oklahoma Field Office, was aware of used pipe available from ARKLA Pipeline Group of Shreveport, LA. In 1992 alone, over 1,000 feet of pipe had been removed from ARKLA's pipelines as routine maintenance.

Aldrich approached John Shafer of ARKLA, who agreed to donate the pipe to the Service. The donation allowed FWS to receive an in-kind contribution of almost \$14,000. To date, 25 water-control structures have helped to restore 500 acres of Oklahoma wetlands.

Time and Money

Pat Dwyer, in Bozeman, MT, had an interested ally in the FishAmerica Foundation of Washington, DC. Two years after Pat's search for support began, the money was in place.

Jontie Aldrich approached John Shafer, the local ARKLA rep, about used pipe. In no time at all, in-kind support — donated pipe — was facilitating wetlands restoration through water-control structures.

Similar partnership projects — one concrete need, one interested group — can be successful while still having very different time frames. Simple may not always mean quick.

Work the Plan

The partnership's working plan serves as the basis for proposals when seeking grants or other support from outside sources.

The working plan addresses many of the questions that these grantors will ask and will make proposal writing much easier. Further, the presence of a solid plan demonstrates to grantors that your partnership is well thought out and organized.

Leveraging the Partnership

Many organizations, including government agencies, use partnerships as a way to leverage funds — that is, the strength of the partnership is used as a selling tool to gain additional resources. A partnership can combine the fiscal resources of participants and outside funding sources to accomplish projects that no one organization could handle on its own. In distributing costs and tasks over a range of participants, a partnership maximizes the value of each group's contribution.

Determining Support Within the Partnership

The primary support for a project is usually the partnership members. Organizations will base participation on two factors: interest in the project and availability of resources.

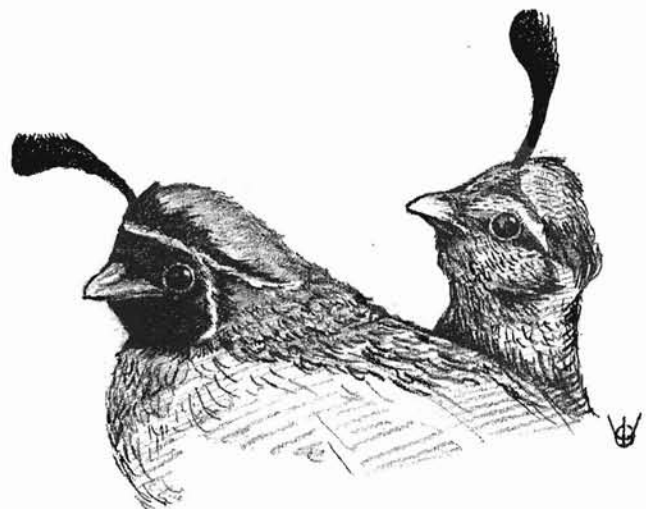
In-Kind Contributions include a wide range of non-monetary items from land to volunteered time to office space and supplies. Each organization should examine the project list and report which items they can deliver, and when.

Financial Support may be discretionary for general project support or restricted to specific uses. It may be a direct grant in advance; a reimbursement after expenditures are made; or a matching grant, available only after a pre-determined amount is raised.

If the partnership cannot support the project and needs to seek outside resources, traditional fundraising may be an option.

Figure 6. A CHECKLIST FOR PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

- _____ Clearly define the project using measurable terms.
- _____ List goods and services needed for the project.
- _____ Identify resources in the partnership, including schedule of availability.
- _____ Identify resources that must be obtained from other sources, and:
 - _____ Work with partners to develop a list of possible grantors;
 - _____ Develop a strategy for approaching potential grantors;
 - _____ Produce a completed funding proposal.
- _____ Implement project as resources are obtained.



Outside Support: Identify the Need

Refine the budget to show pledged and needed support.

Before seeking outside support, partners must clearly define the need. The project budget lists all required goods

and services along with their cost or cost estimate. The sum of these projected expenses gives the partnership a total cost or "bottom line" for the project. The outside need is the difference between total costs and the financial and in-kind support to which the partnership members have committed.

SAMPLE BUDGET

Project Period: 10/1/92 - 9/30/93

| | <u>SUB</u> | <u>TOTAL</u> |
|---|------------|------------------|
| Labor | | \$30,000 |
| Coordinator | 20,000 | |
| Administrative Assistant | 10,000 | |
| Contractual | | \$53,000 |
| Wildlife Biologist | 10,000 | |
| Welders | 43,000 | |
| Supplies | | \$82,000 |
| Pipe (approx. 4,000 ft.) | 40,000 | |
| Fabrication (i.e., welding) | 10,000 | |
| Birdboxes (500 @ \$50 per box) | 25,000 | |
| Office Space | 7,000 | |
| Travel | | \$7,000 |
| Auto Expense (@ \$.25 per mile) | 5,000 | |
| Meetings in Washington, DC, in July | 2,000 | |
| Other | | \$18,000 |
| Printing Costs | 8,000 | |
| (User Manuals 2,000) | | |
| (Education Materials 6,000) | | |
| Distribution Costs | 10,000 | |
| Total Project Budget | | \$190,000 |

SAMPLE FUNDING ASSESSMENT

| | <u>Sub</u> | <u>Committed</u> | <u>Needed</u> |
|------------------------------------|------------|------------------|------------------|
| Partnership Needs | | | \$190,000 |
| Sources | | \$170,000 | |
| ACME Corporation | 78,000 | | |
| In-Kind (Piping and Welders) | 53,000 | | |
| Cash | 25,000 | | |
| Smith and Jones (Office Space) | 7,000 | | |
| Foster's Lumber Yard (Birdboxes) | 25,000 | | |
| State Fish and Wildlife Department | 15,000 | | |
| FWS Challenge Cost-Share | 45,000 | | |
| Financing Needs | | | \$20,000 |

NOTE: Include notes to explain underlying budget assumptions so others can evaluate the pragmatism of the estimates and determine if estimates are consistent with the grantor's own assessment.

Outside Support: Work with Partners to Develop a List of Grantors

Identify which organizations are likely to be interested in the project's goals and have the resources to fund it.

A Few Words About Funding Sources

Funders usually give because it's their organization's or department's job to give. An organization may decide to use grants as a means of encouraging certain types of projects or behaviors; to increase awareness of their products; or to strengthen their relationship with the community. Unlike partners, funders don't need to be fully engaged in a project, but they must still have a good reason to support it.

A funding group may express an interest in joining the partnership; evaluate them as any other potential partner.

While the term partnership is used to describe many relationships between organizations, the role of a funder, also called a donor or grantor, is often limited to financial or material in-kind support. Outside funding is provided voluntarily, but the collaboration that defines a partnership is generally absent.

Where Are the Funders?

Potential funders may be found in all sectors. As always, begin by looking locally. A brainstorming session among partnership members is a good way to jog people's memories regarding their networks. A contact inside an organization can often link you quickly with the appropriate person. The more prospects one can identify, the better the chances of finding the financing necessary to move the project forward.

If the local network seems limited, the following may be useful, as may sources in Chapter 3. A list of publications for grant seekers appears at the end of this section.

Government Agencies: Agencies have a variety of mechanisms for funding projects, and usually have dedicated personnel to respond to inquiries. Locating programs can be difficult, so be persistent and keep looking. Consult regional Joint Venture Coordinators,

Challenge Cost Share Staff, or Contracting Staff. Each agency program has a set of guidelines on procedures and eligibility.

Agency budgets are based on legislative appropriations, and budgets can fluctuate from year to year. As a result, agencies cannot commit until their budget is determined and cannot commit for more than one year at a time. The need to spend appropriations within a given year can also speed grant-making late in the fiscal year.

Corporations: Corporations give through two mechanisms: corporate foundations and operating funds. Corporate foundations are similar to other foundations in that they have been set up to distribute funds, generally to 501(c)(3) charitable, tax-exempt organizations, and formal application procedures must be followed. Some corporate foundations have substantial budgets, and most are listed in foundation directories.

Community relations offices often exist in company facilities to support local projects. Community relations giving is often based on operating funds, so availability may fluctuate, but the grants are often dispersed quickly. Corporations are interested in projects from which employees benefit or in which employees are involved. A corporation can be both a local partner and a national foundation funder.

Banks, trusts and other community-dependent service providers are also possible sources of support for local partnership projects that benefit the community. Ask about both community relations grants and in-kind services.

“Whether we expect dividends in dollars or in human betterment, we [grantors] need to be sure that the gift or the investment is a wise one.”

John D. Rockefeller

Philanthropic Foundations: Foundations are legally required to give away an amount equal to at least five percent of their assets annually, in order to maintain their tax-exempt status. Foundations are directed by a Board of Trustees, who review staff recommendations and approve proposals for funding. Many family estates are converted to small foundations with family as staff and active but often unadvertised giving programs.

Foundations must file in their state of registration, a federal tax form known as a nine-ninety (990PF), which lists all grants awarded during the year. Fortunately, in most states some group has reviewed the 990s and developed a directory of the state's foundations. Since the single most common restriction on foundations is geographic — they support projects only in certain locations — a state directory, usually located at the library, is very useful.

Foundation guidelines and deadlines for funding cycles can be obtained from the foundation, or may be found in one of the reference sources cited on this page. Libraries, particularly in larger cities, have extensive foundation reference materials.

Not-for-profit Organizations: Conservation organizations, professional societies and associations may have programs to provide financial or in-kind support for which the partnership project would qualify. Local colleges and universities can provide technical support and facilities and can be particularly valuable resources for locating information on funding sources. Virtually every school now has a development office to develop new sources of academic program support. Also look for local chapters of professional societies for fund-raisers.

Research each prospective funding source. Find out:

- What have they funded in the past? Are these efforts consistent or in conflict with the proposed projects?
- How important is the project to their giving program? To their mission?
- What is their timetable for grant giving?
- Who is the project officer to whom funding inquiries should be directed?

Figure 7. SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR GRANT SEEKERS

Start with your local library for information on grant sources. Ask the librarian for assistance.

The Foundation Center is an independent national service organization established to be an authoritative source of information on private philanthropic giving. It has a nationwide network of cooperating collections, available to the public free of charge. Check the list of locations in Appendix A, or call (800) 424-9836 to inquire about the nearest collection.

The core collection includes **The Foundation Directory**, a series of grants' guides by subject (including the **National Guide to Funding for the Environment and Animal Welfare**), indexes of recent grants, and material supplied by grantors themselves, including 990s. In addition, it publishes the **User-Friendly Guide**, a useful and highly recommended primer on grantsmanship.

The Grantsmanship Center publishes a Whole Nonprofit Catalog and provides grantsmanship training. For information, call (213) 482-9860.

The Taft Group publishes directories of funding sources, such as the Taft Corporate Giving Directory, and management materials. For a catalogue, call (800) 877-TAFT.

Sourcebooks on Foundations

Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance, US Gov't Printing Office, Washington, DC 20402

The Environmental Grantmakers Association Annual Directory. (212)373-4260

Corporate 500: The Directory of Corporate Philanthropy. Public Management Institute. For information, call (415) 896-1900

Environmental Grantmaking Foundations. The Environmental Data Research Institute. For information, call (800) 724-1857.

Outside Support: Develop a Strategy to Approach Potential Grantors

Before submitting proposals, develop a comprehensive plan for how to achieve the funding objective.

Are you looking for \$10,000 from each of 10 organizations, or for one organization that will provide the total? Are the groups that you plan to approach likely to want to be associated with each other as supporters of the project? Who's going to do the fund raising? Who's going to keep the money when its received?

Fund raising can take time, and follow-through is the single most critical factor for many grantors. Develop a schedule and stick to it. If your project is large or will involve many donors, ask an experienced fund raiser for some advice.

There are two options for initiating a contact with a prospective grantor:

Through Personal Introduction: People give to people. Work to find someone to introduce you to key staff at a potential funding organization, or to make the request on behalf of the partnership. The number of people seeking grants multiplies daily; an introduction can significantly enhance chances for serious funding consideration.

On Your Own Initiative: If you do not have an introduction, prepare a short and thoughtful summary proposal — known as a case statement — for review. In the initial call or letter — your homework should tell you which is preferred — explain why this proposal should be of interest to this particular funding source. This reason may be different for each organization you contact.

Develop a sheet of key points for phone calls and letters:

- | | |
|------------|-----------------|
| ✓ Vision | ✓ Timetable |
| ✓ Approach | ✓ Funding Needs |
| ✓ Partners | |

Be prepared to send a full funding proposal package, including supporting documentation of your organization's previous work.

Following the initial contact, a full proposal may be requested. If so, follow application requirements to the letter. Recognize that most funding organizations approve projects on a formal schedule, anywhere from one to twelve times per year, although two to four times a year is the norm. Keep records of when each potential funder is likely to consider your project proposal. Plan to follow up if it is two weeks past the review date and you haven't heard anything. It is important to know when your proposal has been rejected — and expect it to happen — so that you don't wait on support that isn't there. Remember, "No," is an invitation to apply again at a later date.

Figure 8. CARDINAL RULES OF GRANT SEEKING

If you need it now, you have started your fund-raising process too late. Average funding cycles range from three months to two years.

Big grants take no more work than small grants. Ask for and follow the grantor's guidelines.

Do your homework — perceptions start with the first contact. Be prepared for your first phone call by knowing why the organization should be interested. Edit and re-edit documents to present the project most effectively.

Be concrete. Grantors look for projects that address a real need with measurable results. Show how the partnership will accomplish the project, and list the members — grantors like to know who they will be supporting and who else is contributing and how much.

People give to people. When grantors consider supporting a project, they may want to meet principal players. Energy and optimism, combined with a well-grounded sense of reality, can generate similar feelings in grantors.

Only rarely can you have too big of a vision or ask for too much support.

Look for local sources — there are more than you think.

Above all else, **maintain integrity.** Do not overstate potential impacts, play organizations off against one another, or otherwise misrepresent intentions.

Outside Support: Create the Formal Funding Proposal

Each proposal is a unique document, tailored for the objectives and requirements of the individual grantor.

Your time is valuable — use it effectively by reviewing the grantor’s guidelines to determine which details to highlight and which type of format to use. Sending out a standard form to all potential sources gets treated as a form letter.

As funding requests increase in both number and scope, funders are getting increasingly innovative in their requests for information. Expect a lot of emphasis on evaluation criteria — how you will know when your project has succeeded, and how you will verify progress toward your goal. For example, habitat enhancement projects with requests for acquisition funds may generate significant questions about alternatives, including more private/public partnerships.

Elements of a Funding Proposal Package — but Expect the Unexpected

Cover Letter or a Letter of Transmittal

Treat this as an executive summary (see *Figure 10, page 25*). Take the initiative; specify how and when you plan to follow up. Include the following information:

- ✓ Partnership and its member organizations
- ✓ The need for the project and the effectiveness of the partnership
- ✓ The project’s fit with the partnership’s goals
- ✓ Relevance of this project to the grantor’s goals
- ✓ Amount requested
- ✓ Other potential and realized donors

The Proposal

Brevity and clarity are essential. Organizations get many proposals, and your proposal, as others, is only scanned initially. The grantor should be able to understand the nature and the importance of the program quickly and easily. Jargon and technical language should be avoided as much as possible.

“If I can’t understand the title, I don’t fund it.”

Whitney Tilt
National Fish & Wildlife Foundation

Most proposals use the same general information, most of which should come from the partnership’s working plan. Adapt it to the requested format.

Additional Materials

This section includes items suggested by the funding source, such as letters of support, IRS tax exemption designation, financial statements, and other related documents.

A list of generally requested proposal components follows.

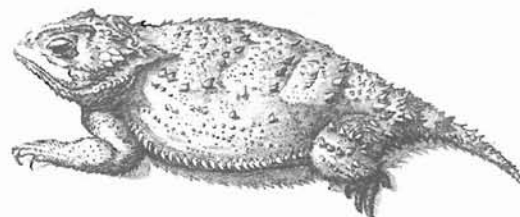


Figure 9. GENERAL CONTENTS OF A FORMAL FUNDING PROPOSAL

Project Summary is a one-page summary that is clear, concise, and specific. This is possibly the most important page of the proposal since it is the first section a reviewer will read. It should be a well-considered abstract of the proposal that outlines the partnership, its objectives, projects, and costs.

Statement of Need describes the situation that led to the formation of the partnership. It should focus on the specific problem that the partnership will address. The lack of funding should not be listed as a problem, but as an opportunity.

Goals and Objectives establish clearly the benefits and impacts of the partnership. The connection between the need and the partnership should be clearly developed. Goals are broad statements about the general thrust, such as biodiversity. Objectives are the specific, measurable outcomes of the partnership.

Introduction to Partnership develops the project's credibility by citing qualifications and capabilities of individuals and organizations in the partnership. This section should include how and why the partnership started and unique aspects of the partnership. Similarities between the partnership and the grantor may be mentioned.

Approach describes the projects of a partnership to reach the objectives. It focuses on the means rather than the ends of a partnership and justifies the chosen course. Discuss the reasons in selecting these projects over alternatives. **Mention the reason for selecting this prospective funder, including benefits for the funder.**

Evaluation presents a plan for determining the degree to which the stated objectives are met. The purpose is to measure effectiveness of the partnership and to assess the need for adjustments in the program to improve its focus on the goals. This section should demonstrate your grasp of the issue but should not be overly technical.

Future Actions identifies the future of the projects after the partnership meets its goals and objectives. Grantors may not be interested in providing continued support for the partnership but do want a concrete plan for following up. Explain other potential sources for funding for annual operating expenses after the grant period ends.

Biography provides biographical information on key individuals and project leaders, and information on organizations of all partnership members.

Budget clearly states costs of the project and the assumptions used to develop these estimates. It should be clear to the grantor which costs they will meet and those to be met by others. A list of other funding sources should be included.

"If you haven't told us what you want by the end of the third paragraph, chances are you're not going to get it."

John C. West
Phillips Petroleum Foundation

Figure 10. OUTSIDE SUPPORT: SAMPLE LETTER

November 2, 1993
June Archer, Program Director
T. L. Cee Foundation
Three Harrison Street
Here There, ST 22222

Dear Ms. Archer,

The Friends of Backbey request consideration of the trustees of the T.L. Cee Foundation for a grant of \$3,000 to be used for restoration of fleaflicker breeding grounds in the Backbey Wetlands Preserve, Clarin County.

Friends of Backbey has entered into a partnership with the Clarin County Chapter of the DuBose Society, the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Association of Wetland Specialists to repair wetland damage Clarin County sustained from Hurricane Allen. According to Fish and Wildlife Service biologists, the fleaflicker breeding grounds must be restored by next spring or we will lose the recently-introduced flock.

The entire wetlands restoration project will cost \$45,000. Working together with our partners we will restore three water control structures, replant more than 3,500 plugs of seagrass as a stabilizer and recreate the breeding thickets destroyed in the storm. The State Office of Water will provide heavy equipment and the Department of Horticulture at Crown University is already growing the seagrass plugs. The \$3,000 requested from the Cee Foundation will be used for artificial breeding thicket frames.

Friends of Backbey has been working to conserve the resources of Backbey since 1886, and recently won the regional Perot Award for effective volunteer programs. The Dubose Society has been active in Clarin County since 1963 and recently sponsored the twentieth annual community clean-up, recycling more than 20 tons of material.

We recently heard Cee Foundation President Marilyn Cee identify critical habitat and community partnership as two priority areas for the Foundation. We believe our request is consistent with those priorities. As suggested by your assistant, Maddie Owens, we have enclosed a one-page project abstract and budget and our tax-exempt certificates. We hope this project is of sufficient interest to the T.L. Cee Foundation to warrant a full proposal, and will contact you in two weeks.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. Thank you for your interest and consideration.

Sincerely,



Dr. Alice Nickel, President
Friends of Backbey



Simon Choi, Chair
Clarin County Chapter,
DuBose Society

Figure 11. OUTSIDE SUPPORT: FOR FURTHER READING

BOOKS

Burns, Michael. **Proposal Writer's Guide**. Hartford, Conn.: Development and Technical Assistance Center, 1989.

Hall, Mary. **Getting Funded: A Complete Guide to Proposal Writing**. Portland, OR: Continuing Education Publications, 1988.

Kiritz, Norton J. and Jerry Mundel. **Program Planning and Proposal Writing**. The Grantsmanship Center, Los Angeles, CA, 1988.

Northwest Michigan Resource Conservation and Development Council, Inc.
Developing Partnership Agreements: A Process to Resolve Resource Management Issues in the 1990s. Traverse City, MI: Northwest Michigan RC&D Council, Inc., 1992.

Siegel, Eric, Loren Schultz, Brian Ford, and David Carney. **The Ernst & Young Business Plan Guide**. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1987.

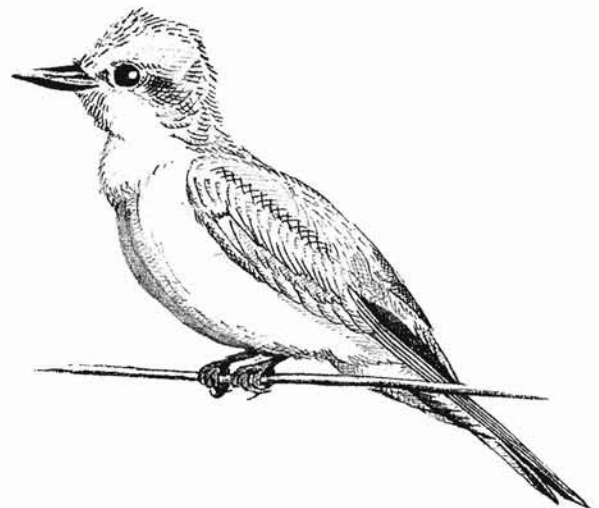
PERIODICALS

The Chronicle of Philanthropy (800) 347-6969

GOVERNMENT PUBLICATIONS

If looking for funds from a federal agency, check the Office of Management and Budget (OMB) about funding rules and procedures. You can order the following circulars from the OMB Publications Office at (202) 395-7332:

- A-87 Cost Principles for State and Local Governments
- A-122 Cost Principles for Nonprofit Organizations
- A-102 Grants and Cooperative Agreements with State and Local Governments
- A-110 Grants and Agreements with Institutions of Higher Education, Hospitals, and Other Nonprofits



7. IMPLEMENTING PARTNERSHIP PROJECTS

Success Through Partnership:

Al Trout and Bear River Refuge

Al Trout had a big problem: where to start restoring the 65,000-acre Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge in Utah. The Great Salt Lake rose in the mid-1980s due to runoff from greater than average rain and snow. This flooded the refuge, which was on the northern edge of the lake. After five years, the high-salinity waters receded and revealed a mostly barren refuge.

Al had arrived as Refuge Manager in August 1989. He had no staff but himself. He had no equipment. He had no money.

In October, Bob Ebeling walked into Al's office and said, "I want a job." Al explained that he could not afford to hire anyone, but Bob said, "Hey boss, I've spent thirty years of my life hunting ducks here, and I want to give some of my life back to the ducks." Al signed on Bob as a full-time volunteer.

Bob had the expertise as a retired hydraulic engineer to assess the damage to structures from the flooding and to plan restoration activities.

Al decided to split his duties with Bob: Al would focus on getting appropriations for construction, and Bob would focus on field operations. Bob soon surveyed and documented the damage, and he worked with Al to prioritize projects.

Bob had soon recruited the Box Elder Wildlife Federation and other friends. They successfully repaired dikes and bridges. Further, Bob contacted local companies about donating materials and money.

Due in large part to Bob's work, Bear River reopened to the public in July 1991.

"I Want a Job!"

When Bob Ebeling entered Al Trout's office, Al had no idea that the answer to his 65,000-acre problem had just walked in the door.

Al's considered options for restoring the refuge probably never included a full-time, volunteer hydraulic engineer with the ability to make things happen. But, Al and Bob made it work — by sharing the responsibilities, including decision-making.

Getting Things Done

Turn efforts from thinking about projects to actually doing them and the role of hands-on people begin to emerge.

Leaders in forming the partnership may not be as active in day-to-day project implementation and management because of the difference in roles.

Leadership provides vision, incentive, and motivation, while management addresses details, agenda items, and next steps. Availability of effective people is an advantage of partnerships with broad membership.

"Things come to those who wait, but only the things left by those who hustle."

Abraham Lincoln

Managing More than the Project

Your partnership is expected to have more than enough experience to implement its projects, so this handbook will not address project management. However, the partnership should decide which partner is best equipped to manage the grant. Sometimes it is easier for a non-governmental organization to be the grant manager.

Grant management is the critical follow-up step to successful outside financing. More than participants, grantors want to be certain that the money or goods they provide is properly used. Grant management tracks the flow of money from the grantor through the partnership to project vendors and suppliers. The partnership must have a *grant manager* to supervise this process; this may or may not be the project manager. Someone must also be designated to accept the money and to dispense it.

Getting the Money. After the award, the first step is to get the money from the grantor. This is a different process for different types of grants — discretionary for general project support or restricted to specific uses; a direct grant in advance; a reimbursement after expenditures are made; or a matching grant, available only after a pre-determined amount is raised. Each grantor will specify the terms of their grant.

Money received in advance should be kept in a separate account that allows accrued interest to be determined. Grantors often want to know how much interest is earned. They will not want this money back, but they do want to know that the money is being managed wisely.

Internal Tracking of a Grant. The grant manager should get all receipts from expenditures for the partnership and all time sheets for persons employed by the partnership. A monthly or quarterly budget report for the project allows the partnership to track the grant spending rate — determine how the money is spent, and if there is sufficient funding.

External Reports to Grantors. Grantors need periodic progress reports on their grants. Follow each grantor's guidelines; they will usually state when they want reports (quarterly, biannually) and what information and format they prefer.

Final Report. At the conclusion of the project, grantors will want a final report to show the impact of their assistance. The report will generally include a project description and financial report. *Know in advance if grantors want original documentation like receipts and time sheets.* Any remaining money may need to be returned to the grantor.

Audit of Project Finances. An audit may be required at the end of each fiscal year of the project; check with legal or tax counsel. An auditor checks the partnership's records to see if the amount of money received equals or exceeds the amount of money paid out, compared to any reports sent to grantors. An auditor will look to see if grants earmarked for a specific project were spent on the project.

8. COMMUNICATING SUCCESS

Communicating within the Partnership

The project's up and running — tell people what's going on. A consistent flow of information to the people in the partnership means all participants can:

- have equal access to common information;
- report progress to supervisors and communications staff;
- be ready to pitch in if circumstances warrant;
- avoid surprises; and
- increase their knowledge of the other organizations.

Early communications are particularly important; they help people stay tied in to what's going on, and establish the working credibility of the partnership. Decide who will provide updates on even small gains both for the partnership and for the organizations. Grantors also need to receive regular communications, especially if progress is due to direct support. All participants should have a current copy of the partnership agreement, working plan, and calendar of upcoming events.

Communicating with the “Outside World”

One major benefit of a partnership is the public relations aspect. Cooperation is often newsworthy — take advantage of it and communicate with the general public. Ask your agency specialists for advice. Keep a scrapbook of press releases and newspaper clippings, as well as video tapes of features and interviews.

Identify Key Contacts within the Partnership: The partnership needs to identify people willing to work with the media, and develop a list of names and addresses that can be distributed with press releases or other written material.

Organize a Network: A communications committee or the general membership should identify newspapers, television stations, and radio stations that cover the area affected by the partnership. Include newsletters of regional or local organizations with an interest in your project. Develop a list of contact names with addresses, phone numbers, and fax numbers.

Stay in Touch: Participants who already have strong contacts with the press may help the partnership to build a presence. Contact the media network when the partnership has newsworthy happenings. Keep providing information and give people chances to get interested in the partnership. Update the network as people move or change jobs.

Figure 12. TIPS FOR DEALING WITH THE MEDIA

The partnership must be two things when dealing with the media: honest and brief. Spokespeople need to have the facts on hand and pass them to the media in a form that they can use quickly and easily.

Honest. Spokespeople need to be honest in dealing with the media and avoid being too zealous about the partnership. If a good spokesperson doesn't know an answer, he or she admits it, then checks to find out, and follows up with the media.

Brief. Items for the media should be succinct. The media will have a limited amount of time and space to devote to the partnership.

News releases are the main way of passing information to the media. They should be direct and factual with the main point and the five Ws (Who, What, When, Where, and Why) laid out in the first two or three sentences and the rest of the details should fit on no more than two pages, double-spaced. They should use concrete examples to which the general public can relate. The writing style should be free of jargon and designed for the general public to understand.

As television has grown in power in recent years, the general public has become more and more reliant on a sound bite — a ten to thirty second statement — to define an issue or event. Interviews for television news shows are one of the best ways to bring exposure to a partnership. As with a news release, focus on one point and have a concrete example. Further, the film crew may want to film the activities in progress; spokespeople should know what actions are occurring that day.

Checklist of necessary items in a news release

- ✓ Date of release
- ✓ Name and phone number
- ✓ Descriptive heading
- ✓ The five “W”s (Who, What, When, Where and Why)
- ✓ Partnership name
- ✓ Participating organizations' names
- ✓ How to get photographs (if available)

“A remark made ‘off the record’ often ends up as egg ‘on the face’.”

John C. West
Phillips Petroleum Foundation

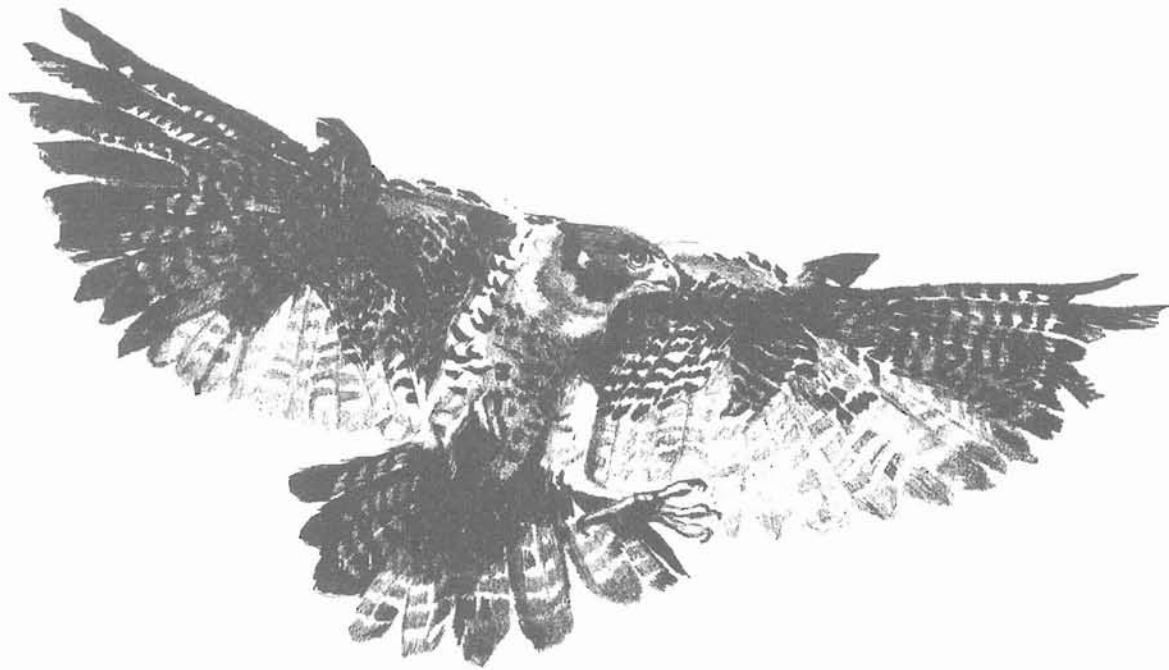
NOTES

SECTION III

Partnership in Practice

Chapter 9: Troubleshooting

Chapter 10: Moving On...



9. TROUBLESHOOTING

Challenges to Partnership Success

Even with a growing encouragement of partnerships, agencies may face administrative challenges when they try to formalize a partnership. The rules governing collaborations for the most part are agency-specific. If problems arise, consider the possible causes listed below.

Structural Barriers

Differences. Each agency and organization has its own mission or mandate. Agency mandates have evolved from original missions and influences from legislative bodies, user groups, and the public. Organizational missions are similarly unique to each group. In focusing on their primary functions, incentives to work with each other may not be clear to prospective partners.

Competition. Agencies compete with each other for budgets and publicity. Many agencies may be reluctant to allow other agencies to be involved in their budgetary process or share in the publicity for an important project, especially if the recognition feeds back into the appropriation process. Similarly, not-for-profit organizations may feel that a partnership threatens their unique niche for fund raising.

Misperceptions about other organizations can be the biggest stumbling block to a partnership.

Geography. Some partnership projects require activities at both the national and regional levels. Lack of jurisdictional overlap among agencies and regional offices may contribute to lack of participation in a project.

Purpose. The partnership's goals must be within the scope of agency and organizational mandates. As the missions of agencies and organizations are evolving, they may allow more cooperation than prospective partners may be comfortable in accepting.

Semantics. The word *partner* has a legal definition in each of the fifty states. Many other words involved in partnership agreements can mean more than one thing to some people. In working to protect the agencies and organizations they represent, legal counsel may reject

language as too restrictive or inappropriate for the intent of the partnership relationship.

Procedural Barriers

Interested Parties. Agencies must be careful about perceived conflict of interest when receiving money or other in-kind assistance from for-profit partners or other interested parties. The agency may fear being seen as receiving or providing improper or questionable assistance.

Use of Public Funds. Barriers can arise due to spending public money in conjunction with private participation in the partnership.

Procurement Regulations. Agencies may have to go through formal procurement procedures before being able to accept goods or services that give the agency a direct benefit. These regulations can alienate other partnership members who feel that the agency does not trust them.

The best way to overcome administrative barriers to partnerships is to anticipate them. Work with supervisors, procurement and legal personnel.

Personnel Regulations and Labor Laws. Agencies have regulations concerning minimum wages and other personnel issues that can affect manpower assistance from not-for-profits or corporations.

Advertising and Logos. Agencies must not appear to endorse corporations or products or serve as a marketing channel. Yet many participants join partnerships with public relations as a principal objective. Partnerships often face restrictions on private-sector logos on government-supported projects.

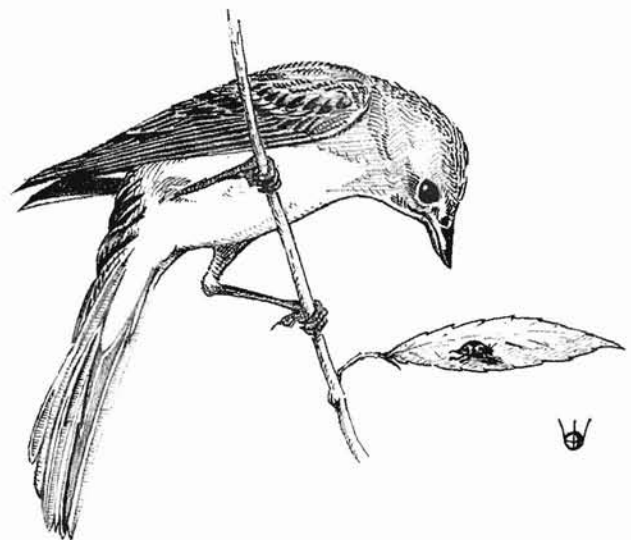
People Problems

Early meetings can be awkward. Where a history of contention exists, some members may be waiting to attack their long-time enemies — or may fear such an attack. Be aware that some venting of pent-up anger may occur. Do not try to stop it, but do try to focus attention instead on the commonalities of all interests. If the history of conflict

is very long and hard to overcome, then consider using a facilitator. Building trust between partners is critical to success.

Facilitators or brokers are external groups or individuals that can work with the participating organizations to make the partnership run more smoothly. Facilitators and brokers derive their benefits from the process of creating a successful solution instead of from the actual outcome itself. Because these are neutral outside third parties, organizations are usually willing to use facilitators when they feel they cannot come to an agreement on their own.

“A good idea doesn’t care who has it.”
Anonymous



10. MOVING ON...

Success Through Partnerships:

New Opportunities

Congratulations! The project is a success. Now what? Are new challenges on the horizon? What is the potential of the current partnership to address those new challenges?

As partnership projects are completed, or environmental situations change, it's a good idea for members to look back over the project to assess the partnership's strengths and accomplishments, and look forward to determine the next step.

What to Measure?

Partnerships can be evaluated on:

- broad environmental benefits;
- specific project goals and accomplishments;
- relationship-building among partners;
- potential for future collaboration.

The original agreement defined the broad goals. The working plan has the project descriptions and timetable, which can be compared against progress and final reports to assess the actual results of the partnership project.

Partnership success may also be measured by the benefits received from the partnership process itself.

Renew or Retire?

Partners often realize they share other common goals. This commonality creates a self-interest for each to continue the collaboration. From working together, some partners will have built a solid relationship that will deepen, leading to increased collaboration. Organizations may also want to continue using the partnership format if it represents environmental progress. One should consider factors such as how well organizations mesh with or complement one another.

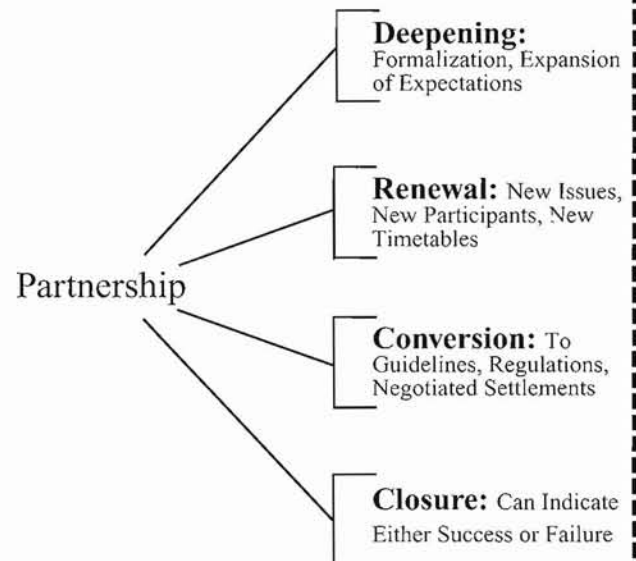
Successful resolution of an issue through partnership may also result in conversion to accepted, institutionalized practice with no need for the partnership. Closure of a partnership does not imply failure. Many successful partnerships have included sunset clauses — language to

end the partnership on or before a given date, to define the urgency of action. Through useful dialogues with the involved people and organizations, the partnership may experience renewal, reforming to accomplish a completely new initiative.

Measures of Success

- Ron Bisbee has been able to acquire a new pump for the Wolfweed Reservoir due to the cooperation of Phillips Petroleum and Ducks Unlimited. The pump allows greater control of water levels so that he can manage the habitat more effectively.
- Nivra Kelley has found support from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and the Wray Trust to create training materials for elementary school teachers. The Adopt-A-Wetland program is now able to expand more rapidly to schools across Texas.
- Bob Ebeling's hard work paid off for Al Trout since they were able to reopen Bear River Refuge in less than two years. In fact, restoration work is progressing so well that Al is now looking at plans to expand the refuge.

Figure 13. PARTNERSHIP MIGRATION PATHS



This handbook was produced as a partnership effort.
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Appendix

A. List of Foundation Center Cooperative Collections



Printed on recycled paper.

