

Module

5

Lesson

1

# Analyzing Public Lands Conflicts

## Lesson at a Glance

### Participant Read/Digest (10 min):

Participants will learn about a contemporary land management case study.

### Worksheet Completion (20-30 minutes):

Participants will complete a worksheet and develop a land management proposal.

### Real-Time Management Solutions and Reflection (15 minutes):

Participants will learn about solutions and current actions related to the case study and will reflect on the complicated nature of public lands management.

## Learner Outcomes

### Participations will:

- Understand that managing public lands and waters involves many complicated issues and questions.
- Identify conflicts and compromises that can occur when public lands are managed for multiple user group interests.

## Getting Ready

**Time:** 45+ minutes

**Materials:** Information about a land management case study, copies of worksheet, butcher paper, markers

**Location:** Indoor or outdoor; for a large group reflection, having a space for all participants to sit or stand in a circle would be best.

**Number of students:** 5-30

**Objective:** To provide a tool for participants to think critically about public lands conflicts and solutions.

## Participant Read/Digest (10 min)

Divide participants into groups of 2-4 people. Provide groups with a land management case study and allow time for the group to read the information. Instruct students to only read the front of their case study sheet. If participants have access to the internet, consider allowing groups to do some searching for more information on their case study (articles, maps etc).

## Worksheet Completion (20-30 minutes)

Allow time for participants to complete the case study worksheet. Participants should be prepared to present a brief overview of their case study and proposed management strategy and may utilize butcher paper and markers for their presentation if desired.

After each group presents their land management proposals, encourage participants to challenge each other's proposals and allow presenters to defend their decisions. The following questions may help groups constructively process their proposals:

1. Which interest groups received the most of what they wanted? Which received the least? Why do you think that this is an equitable way of settling this disagreement?
2. How does history play into the management decision that you are proposing/support? How do you think land managers should consider the historical context of the lands they manage in making decisions?
3. When should your management decision/proposal be revisited? What is a condition for changing the management decision in the future?
4. Which interest groups might be invisible? (For an example of an "invisible interest group" in history, you can use the example of Native peoples during the creation of the National Parks and National Forests; while not recognized at the time, they have a clear and direct interest in management today.)
5. What challenges will exist after your management plan goes into effect? Do you think that your solution will be durable and conclusive?

## Real-Time Land Management Solutions and Reflection (15 minutes)

Once participants have completed their presentations, allow each group 10 minutes to read the back of their case study sheet for information on how the issue is being addressed by land managers. In small groups, ask them to discuss the following questions:

1. How similar is your proposed management plan to the actual events that you read about?
2. Based on the user groups that you identified, was any group given preference over another in the real-time management plan? If so, why do you think that is?
3. Do you agree with the management plan/solution? If your case study doesn't have a management plan identified, in what ways can you be involved in determining the outcome? Why should you care about the outcome?

As a large group, ask participants to summarize the real-time management plans/solutions that accompany their case study and their discussion.

As a group reflection exercise, ask participants to summarize their impressions after completing this lesson in one word—you should hear words like 'confusing' or 'complicated'. Note that managing public lands for maximum benefits of the land and people is a tough job, and we can help guide decision-makers by engaging in the process along the way as discussed in Module 6.

### Adapt the Lesson

Apply this lesson to a small scale public lands parcel, a city park or greenway that students are familiar with.

Consider using this lesson as a longer-term project framework for students to engage in research and stakeholder engagement.