

Bringing Together Farmers, Landowners, Communities, Government and Scientists to Develop Creative Strategies to Reduce Runoff Pollution in Two Small Watersheds in Wisconsin and Illinois



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Who are we and why are we here?

- UW – Madison Researchers
- Interdisciplinary & participatory research



Discussion

- What does collaboration mean?
- What does participation mean?

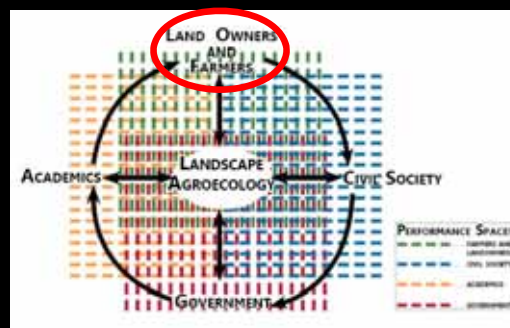
Collaboration and participation are essential to reduce nonpoint source pollution because:

- 1) Command and control and incentive based programs are ineffective
- 2) Create opportunities for different forms of expertise and provides a space for differing views and compromise

Today's Presentation

1. Our Process
2. Two Watersheds
3. Results
 - Farmers / Landowners
 - Community
 - Academics
 - Government
4. Concluding remarks

The Process



Fostering Participation: Farmer and Landowner Outreach

- Attained parcel data for watersheds
- Interviewed local dealers and farmers to include farmers renting in the area who did not own land
- Sent letters of invitation to approximately 180 farmers/landowners
- Received RSVP cards for attendance; Follow-up phone calls
- 42 attended in Illinois; 34 in Wisconsin



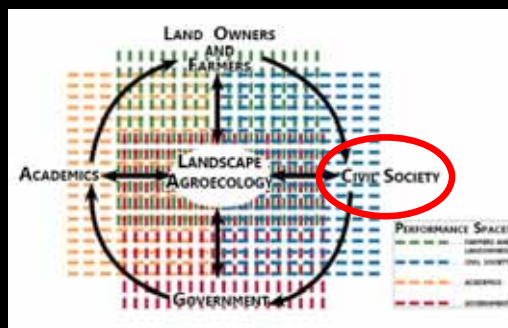
1. Brief Presentation
2. Divide into small groups to develop strategies; Avoid dominance of group stars (McAreavy, 2006)
3. Rejoin and consolidate strategies
4. Anonymously vote for top strategies and group representatives

Interviews



- Interviewed 45 farmers and landowners in Illinois and Wisconsin
- Multifunctional goals across and within the fence-line

The Process



Fostering Participation: Community Outreach

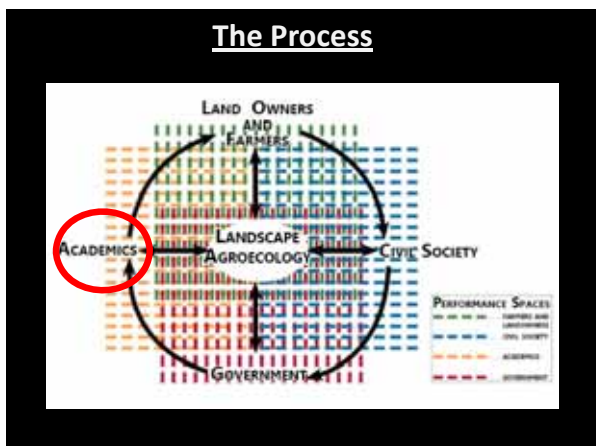
- Outreach to civic and religious organizations
- Featured in local news coverage before meetings



Fostering Participation: Community Outreach

- Advertisements in newspapers and on radio
- Distributed and posted 150 fliers in each watershed
- 15 attended in IL; 13 attended in WI

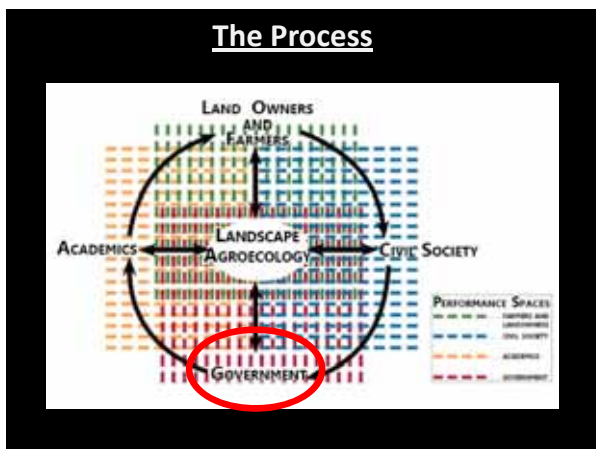




Fostering Participation: Academic Outreach

- Sent out emails to department chairs at local universities and community colleges
- Sent some direct invitations when contact info available
- 12 attended in IL; 8 attended in WI

- Review community and farmer/landowner strategies
- Discuss
- Develop complementary projects and additional ideas
- Foster collaboration



Fostering Action: Government Outreach

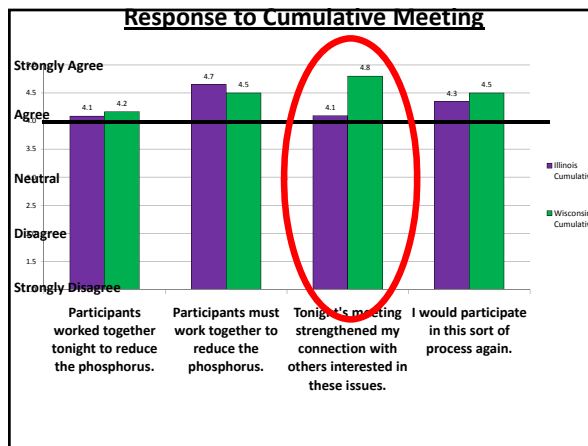
- Contacted local organizations before project began.
- Contacted individual agency representatives to review strategies and work to implement strategies.

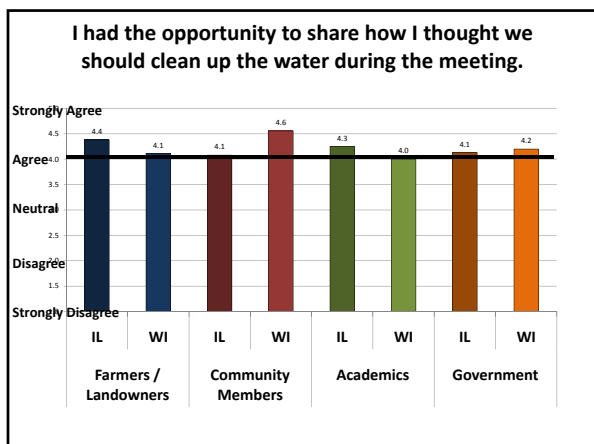
- Review community and farmer/landowner strategies
- Discuss
- Integrate strategies into planning/pursue funds
- Foster collaboration

Cumulative Meeting

Presentations vs Resource Fair

- Everyone comes together to integrate knowledge and different capacities for action
- Strategies are backbone of plan to implement change





Today's Presentation

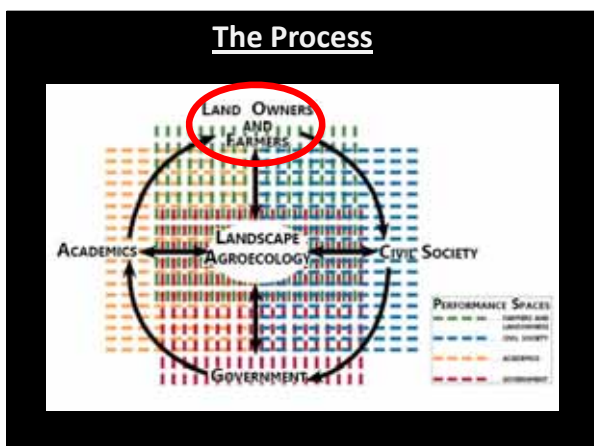
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A Tale of Two Watersheds

Characteristic *	Illinois	Wisconsin
*County scale unless otherwise noted		
Average Farm Size	404 acres	222 acres
Average Cropland Value (per acre)	~ 10,000	6,271
Cash Rent (Non-irrigated cropland)	\$196	\$130
Corn Yield (bushels per acre)	188	157
Livestock Percent of Market	10	55
Percent Corn or Soy (watershed scale)	90	60
Percent Other Agriculture (watershed scale)	6	15
Population	32,915	100,350
Population Density	56 people/sq. mile	181 people/sq. mile

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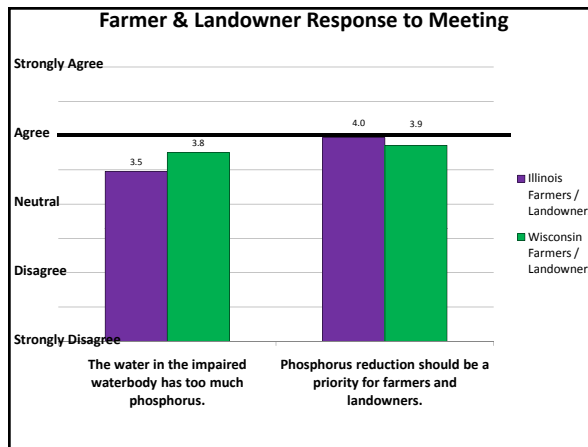
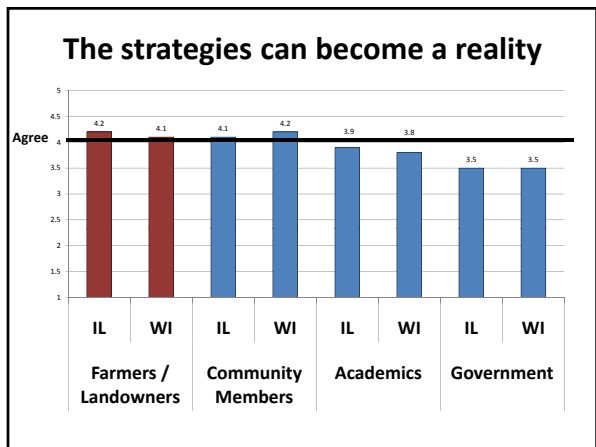
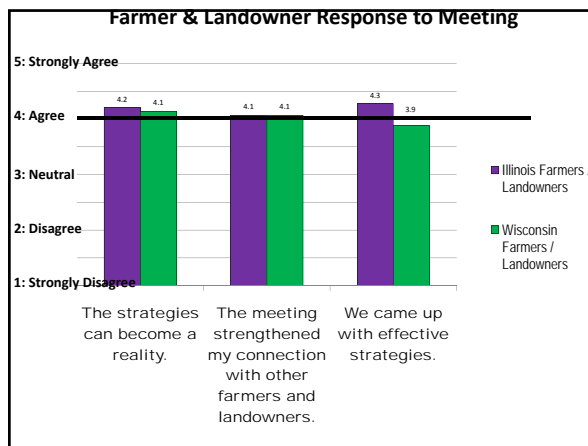


Farmers and Landowners: Summary

- Overall a positive response to process
- Differences between Wisconsin and Illinois
 - Participation level
 - Collaboration

Farmer & Landowner Top Strategies

Illinois	Wisconsin
1. Erosion Control	1. More Monitoring
2. Conservation Reserve Program	2. Erosion Control
3. Conservation Tillage	3. Fertilizer Application
4. Bioenergy Feedstock	4. More Information
5. More Information	5. Restrict Residential Phosphorus



Illinois Farmer & Landowner Examples

“The meeting was excellent.... The best thing you did at the meeting was the group of people that you got to help with this. Because you were lucky enough to get a top notch group.”

“As for as the meeting goes, I thought it was well organized and a good idea.... And, what we come up with, I would say is successful.”

Wisconsin Farmer Example

“And so, its really stupid to have a problem looking at ways to reduce the phosphorus level in the creek, in our water body, without knowing what the source of the phosphorus is. Til you pin it down... its like saying we have to fix this, without knowing what's wrong.”



Success in Illinois through Collaboration

- Farmers are leading the continuation of the process
- EPA grant
- On farm demonstrations of switchgrass plot and fertilizer injection equipment



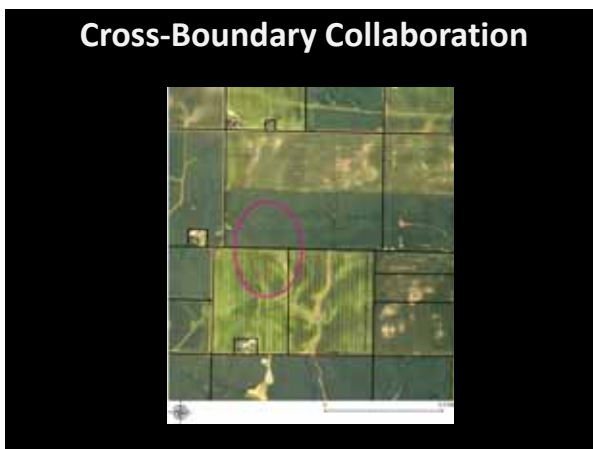

Illinois Example

Joe:

“If Mike decides to put a grassed waterway in, I would do my part and finish it.... It would be good for both of us.”

Mike:

“If he wanted to work on it now, I wouldn’t even be opposed to ...destroying some beans in that area.... I don’t think that would be a problem [to utilize the grass], his son-in-law has cattle.”



Wisconsin Farmers & Landowners

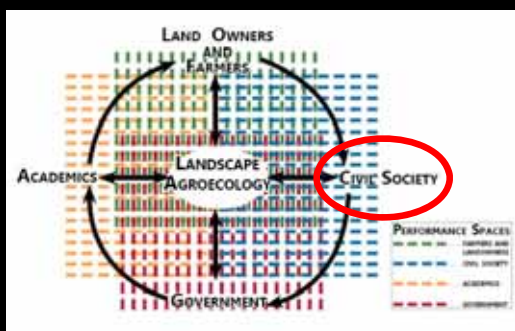
- Farmers have largely dropped out of process
- Remaining landowners focused on specific sources of phosphorus and personal conflicts




Wisconsin Example

“There’s really nothing out here anymore.... You got a couple feedlots, and they think they are exempt from everything. Like I said, their goddamn lots drain right in the water, and its like, whatever. We just put a whole new well in on our farm, and we are 300 feet deep. We’re like, ‘screw you.’”

The Process



Community Members: Summary

Positive response to meeting

- Similarities between the two watersheds
- Lower participation and confidence in the process
- Continued involvement of local leaders



Community Member Strategies

Illinois

1. Modify Phosphorus Application
2. Grassed Filter Strips
3. More Information and Education
4. Erosion Control
5. Conservation Reserve Program

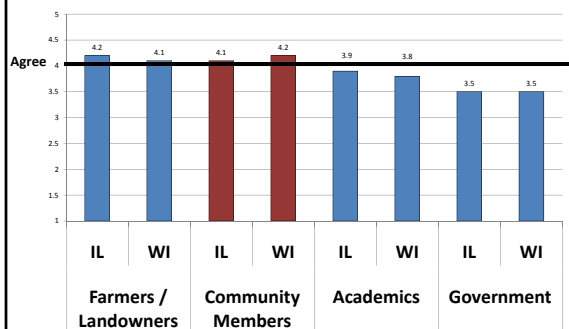
Wisconsin

1. More Monitoring
2. Nutrient Management Planning
3. Buffer Strips
4. Develop Website
5. Restricted Fertilizer Use

Community Response to Meeting



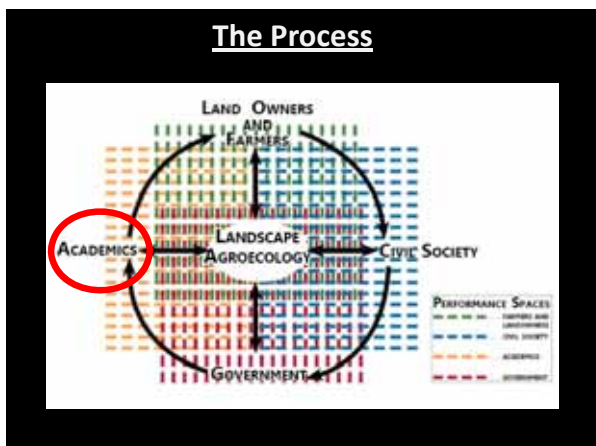
The strategies can become a reality



Is policy more effective if farmers and community members identify strategies first, before the government?

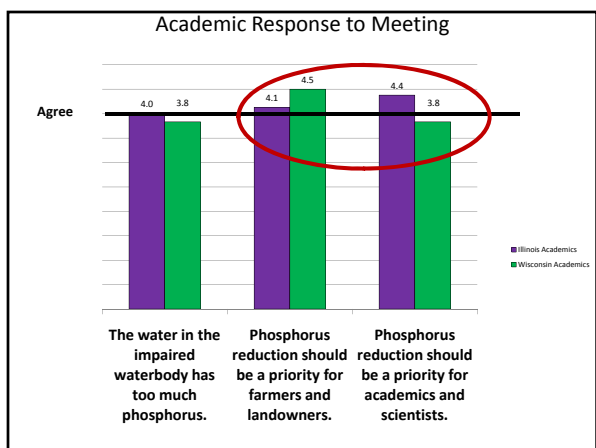
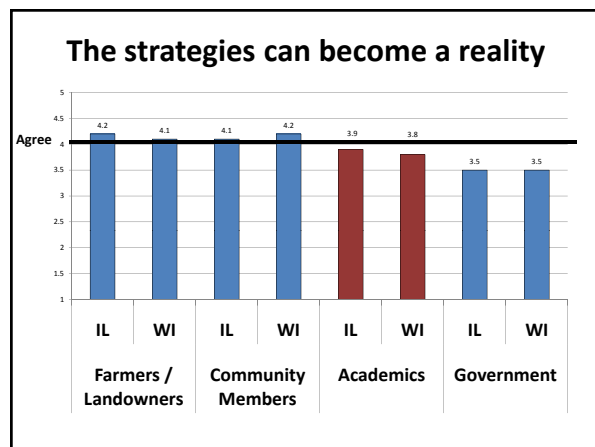
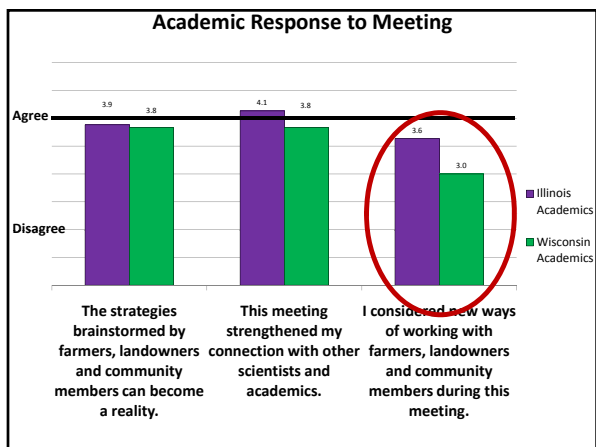
“Yes. All parties working together to resolve a community problem.”

“Yes. Especially now, people distrust the government. Grassroots efforts are always better because people are more engaged.”



Academics: Summary

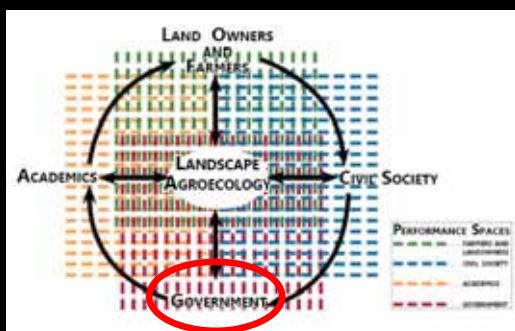
- Guarded optimism
- Continued strong involvement in both watersheds
- Some integration of research goals
- Not all opportunities are being utilized for collaboration



Is policy more effective if farmers and community members identify strategies first, before the government?

“To a certain extent. As noted during the meeting, unless these community members, farmers, landowners have prior experience and knowledge with such issues, the government has the monetary, knowledge-based, and people-based resources (for lack of a better word).”

The Process

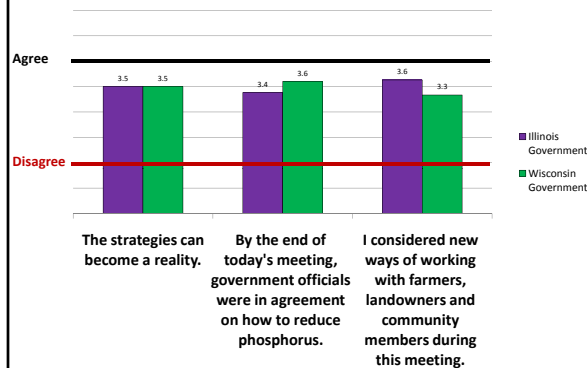


Government: Summary

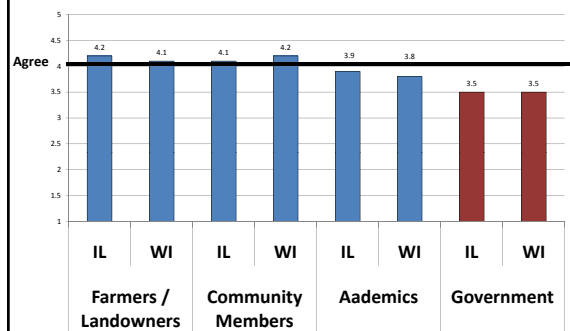
- Pessimists of the process
- Stark contrast between Illinois and Wisconsin
 - Resistance vs support for process
 - Perception of problem
 - Relationship between government and other participants



Government Evaluations



The strategies can become a reality



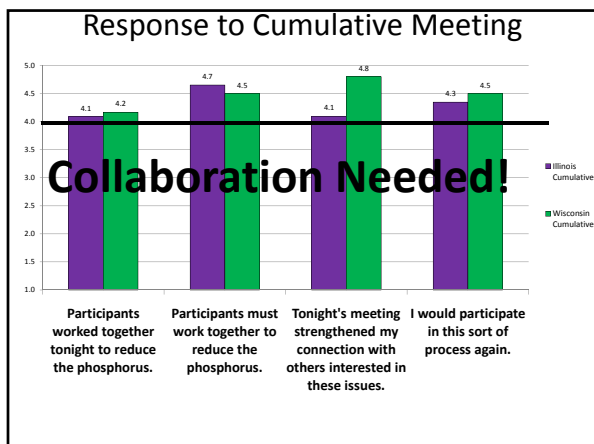
Illinois Government Example

“Well, I think my issue with this is ... when we're talking about a public water supply, and people start using the word *pollution*, it creates a public perception that is, uh, not exactly conducive to our consumer confidence. And especially when the lake is technically not impaired. “

Wisconsin Government Example

“I have major concerns about the prioritization versus effectiveness. Good ideas but not for all - very simplified - I'm much more interested in the info from one-on-one interviews.”

“ I think this is an excellent idea, but I believe more participation and follow-ups would help.”



- ### Outline
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- ### Strengths of Collaboration
- Investment of farmers, landowners, and community members in process and strategies
 - Emergence of strong groups and individuals
 - New ideas and alliances
 - Group dynamics can produce collective action
 - Some monitoring is necessary

- ### Challenges for Collaboration
- Meeting-phobia
 - Time and money – *The Devil is in the Details!*
 - Potential for collective inaction
 - Maintaining momentum
 - Need a local facilitator?

Thank You!



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