

Management TRACKS



News from the Organization of Wildlife Planners

An affiliate of the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Organizational Transformation: The Roles and Nuances of Leadership¹

By Dan Decker, Cornell University, and Cynthia Jacobson, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

We ended the first of our two articles on transformational change in state fish and wildlife agencies (SFWAs) noting that leadership is key to organizational transformation. To help us articulate the importance of transformative leadership, we turn to the work of John Kotter (Kotter 1996: 21), who offers an eight-stage process for transformative change in an organization. We have adapted his wording to align better with the SFWA context:

Eight-stage Process:

1. Establishing a sense of urgency.
2. Creating the guiding coalition.
3. Developing a vision and strategy.
4. Communicating the change vision.
5. Empowering broad-based action.
6. Generating short-term wins.
7. Consolidating change and producing more change.
8. Anchoring new approaches in the culture.

Our research and experience concur with Kotter: the driving force behind strategic transformation is leadership. SFWA leaders play key roles in every stage of the transformation process.

¹ This article is extracted from a paper in press in the 2010 North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference.

² Goal, boundary, and activity expansion were discussed in the previous article (Fall 2010).

Fundamentally, leaders have the authority to make transformation a priority and guide the vision leading to goal, boundary, and activity expansion within an agency.²

Management vs. Leadership vs. Transformative Leadership

We have observed approaches taken by individual SFWA leaders ranging from being an activist for reform, to enabling lieutenants to spearhead change, to providing incentives to catalyze and facilitate change. Although intentions are good, the approaches often fall short of transformative leadership, so outcomes tend to be ephemeral and lack long-term vision and resilience. We can turn to Kotter again to shed some light on why this may be the case.

Management versus leadership. Kotter, like many others who have studied what makes organizations effective, distinguishes between management and leadership as follows (Kotter 1996:25-26):

Management involves planning and budgeting, organizing and staffing, controlling and problem solving. It produces a degree of predictability and order that is comfortable for many people in a bureaucracy and produces short-term results expected by various stakeholders.

Leadership involves establishing direction, aligning people, motivating and inspiring. It produces change, often to a dramatic degree, and has the potential to produce extremely useful change for ensuring future of an organization.

Many people in decision-making roles frame the problem of “pressures to change” as the need to “manage change.” Kotter (1996:27) asserts that organizations “led” by managers have bureaucratic cultures that can smother those who want to respond to shifting conditions. He concludes that, “The combination of cultures that resist change and managers who have not been taught how to lead change is lethal.” (Kotter 1996:29)

Managing change versus leading change. Purposeful transformation of an organization can happen incrementally or abruptly. Incrementalism, though common, is minimally adequate in times when the context necessitating transformation is evolving slowly. Incrementalism is inadequate, however, when (a) the context is changing very quickly or (b) the rate of organizational change has trailed the rate of context change to the point that the organization is steadily falling behind (a large gap exists).

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The Prez Sez...

A few words from the OWP president

*By Michele Beucler,
Idaho Department of Fish and Game*

Much of this Spring Issue is dedicated to the notion of *transforming state fish and wildlife agencies*. I can't think of a more important cause for the OWP to support. I suppose it's a bit selfish: I am utterly dependent on this planet, wildlife is part of the planet, and state fish and wildlife agencies manage wildlife. Our organizations must transform. Managing wildlife in trust for the citizens must go beyond making hunting and fishing better. It's not going to be easy.

Almost five years ago, I gave birth to my son. Despite all the reading, contemplating, and deliberating I did before he was born, my life completely transformed in ways I never could have imagined. In retrospect, *nothing* could have prepared me for it. It is an amazing journey – from making a conscious decision to have a child, writhing through the painful birthing process, to continuously negotiating with him and teaching him how to make his own choices. To add a layer of complexity, I navigate these waters with my husband, who often has different ideas and approaches than I do. Life in our house often is messy and loud.

Employees of fish and wildlife agencies often refer to their organization as a family. This was very true in my agency recently, when two of our co-workers were killed in a helicopter crash on their way to count salmon redds. Our director encouraged everyone to attend the memorial in northern Idaho, and he even paid people's time and travel (thanks, Dad). About two hundred cried together and laughed together and even though we all know that flying is dangerous, nothing can prepare us emotionally for when a colleague falls from the sky.

Transformation is a process of death and rebirth. Old forms go, making space



for new life. Saying goodbyes and letting go are painful, sometimes so painful that we avoid them. The birthing process also is painful – and dangerous – and there is always the fear-hope of the baby being healthy. Agency transformation is also a process of death-rebirth. It's easy to fear and avoid. Yet, our organizations must take the risk or else face losing support from the broader citizenry and letting our power in wildlife conservation slip through our fingers.

It's time for a family meeting. It's time to embark on an amazing journey full of unknowns. We need to communicate, deliberate, and negotiate within our organizations, come to an understanding of our different ideas and approaches to running these organizations. Our houses may get messy and loud at times.

I am counting on the transformation of state fish and wildlife agencies so that my beautiful son can live a long, safe, and secure life with not only the opportunity to hunt, fish, and view wildlife, but also with the knowledge that his momma did her best to leave him a life-sustaining planet. After all, state fish and wildlife agencies manage wildlife, and wildlife is a part of the planet – a planet on which he is utterly dependent.

--Michele Beucler

Field Notes

Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

Planning. Our Strategic Plan 2007-2011 is on the cusp of extension or revision/renewal. Governor Herbert has been re-elected for a 4-year term starting in 2011. Jim Karpowitz, our incumbent Director, has called for an update of our Strategic Plan in March. The Wildlife Board has made a dramatic change to mule deer hunting in Utah, going to a unit-by-unit system and thereby reducing hunter opportunity by 13,000 tags annually. An entirely new Mule Deer Management Plan will result, with the loss of the traditional choice of hunting regions. Acceptance of the move has experienced both internal and external challenges, not least of which is the decrease in funding for agency operations.

Administration. Turnover on our Wildlife Board has completely replaced the former members, giving rise to a de-emphasis of biological science-based management in favor of socioeconomic and trophy concerns. While this is neither good nor bad, it shows that the prominence of our publics and stakeholders is waxing while the professional influence is waning.

Robert Hasenyager, who had served as the Utah Wildlife In Need (UWIN) Foundation executive director for the past two years, is retired from that entity. Thanks, Bob! His successor has as yet to be named.

Wildlife Action Plan. The 10-year anniversary of "WAPs" is being celebrated nationwide, and Utah's WAP is transitioning from its fledgling stage as we integrate internal and external threads that strengthen the weave of our agency tapestry: how do we truly embrace

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NOMINATION PERIOD OPEN FOR NATIONAL CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE FELLOWS

Online registration to nominate an individual for the next cohort of the National Conservation Leadership Institute (NCLI) is open now through April 30, 2011. Applicants must be nominated by their organization's chief executive. Individuals from state fish and wildlife agencies, federal conservation agency employees, tribal members, industry employees, and NGO employees are encouraged to apply.

The NCLI was created to train tomorrow's conservation leaders in the latest leadership thinking and practice. Each Fellow will focus on a variety of issues, including a specific leadership challenge from his or her own agency or organization. Becoming an NCLI Fellow is a major step in career advancement with the aim of contributing to the future of conservation. The NCLI is suited for the highest-potential, future leaders. For details, visit www.conservation-leadership.org, or contact Dr. Sally Guynn, sallyg@matteam.org or 304.876.7395.



NATIONAL CONSERVATION LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE

NOMINATIONS

are now being accepted

february 1 – april 30, 2011

Information @ WWW.conservationleadership.org

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MAT's online leadership development courses employ an interactive, instructor-led approach. The registration deadline for spring classes approaches!

The Adaptive Leader ♦ **Leader as Supervisor**

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Spring 2011 Online Course Schedule:

Registration closes March 18
Courses begin April 11
4-Week courses end May 8
6-Week courses end May 22

New! Webinars*

Creative and Critical Thinking, 2nd Ed.
May 12
Problem-Solving and Decision-Making
April 30

For details, visit <http://www.matteam.org/joomla/content/view/78/284/>

*While in the testing phase, these webinars are offered at no cost to state fish and wildlife agency employees.

Organizational Transformation...

Continued from page 1

Depending on many factors, a SFWA may be in either situation “a” or “b.” In either case, one doesn’t manage an agency out of the situation—one leads an agency to a desired future condition. If the chasm has been allowed to grow too long and has become too wide, a giant leap—a transformational change—may be required.

Management, normal leadership, and transformative leadership are all necessary to achieve agency transformation. None are sufficient by themselves or in couplets. The roles are complementary:

Management is an action-oriented practice, involving processes, resources and technology to execute progressively more efficient work. Management is focused on doing things right.

Normal leadership is an outcome-oriented activity, with the most significant aspects being analysis, decision making and communication. Normal leadership is focused on doing the right things.

Transformative leadership is largely focused on helping people envision a desired future, articulating that vision, engaging a coalition to work toward that vision, and empowering other leaders and managers in the agency to focus on the vision. It is about creating a vision so compelling and attractive that it overcomes dependence on historical rationales and premises, relationships and understandings, methods and outcomes. Transformative leadership, therefore, is focused on encouraging others to imagine what at first might be an unimaginable future to them, and then aiding them to embrace and work toward that future.

Competent management and normal leadership are necessary to achieve change, but transformative leadership is vital to identify what the agency is going to transform into. Someone has to create and guide the coalition that will provide a vision leading to the goal, boundary and activity transformations identified in the first article in this set. Imagining organizational transformation as a journey, our view of this tripartite

relationship of management, normal leadership, and transformative leadership goes like this: management maintains the gyroscope, normal leadership keeps an eye on the compass, and transformative leadership defines the destination. Transformative change needs all three components, but will not occur with just the first two components, or with only the last.

Taking the First Step

Patterson et al. (2003) observe that SFWAs emerged in a social context (i.e., values, interests, needs, etc. at a particular time) with respect to human-wildlife interactions that has changed markedly during the last 20 years. SFWAs must evolve to reflect contemporary societal norms and values (Patterson et al. 2003) and thereby maintain their legitimacy and viability (Scott 2001).

As the gap widens between what SFWAs generally are now versus what they need to be to meet the diversity of needs and interests of contemporary society, leaders must wonder, what is needed to help launch a SFWA on the transformational change journey? Based on feedback we received from leaders participating in a transformational change workshop at the 2010 North American Wildlife and Natural Resources conference, more dialogue, support within the profession, and training of SFWA leaders is needed to help them navigate the rapidly changing environment for SFWAs. They seek training of the type offered by the National Conservation Leadership Institute training program [Ed. note: see p. 3] to gain expertise for transformative change and continual adaptation to emerging challenges and opportunities.

Conclusion

We conclude this pair of articles with a question: Is it possible that the largest

barrier to launching a transformational change process is the will to do so? Resistance to change can manifest itself in many ways, but denial, deferral, and indecision seem common. Furthermore, despite the commitment of SFWAs to the North American Model of Wildlife Conservation and to the Public Trust Doctrine that is at its core, discovery of an inclusive, shared goal for fish and wildlife conservation and management that works for most current and potential stakeholders has proven elusive.

We urgently need a more comprehensive vision of fish and wildlife conservation that is galvanizing rather than polarizing, that produces solidarity rather than divisiveness. That compelling, inclusive vision needs to be discovered and then serve as the destination to motivate SFWA transformation. Perhaps new approaches to engaging diverse stakeholders in collaborative conservation, such as those stimulated by State Wildlife Action Planning processes or more recently, via new collaborative efforts like the Department of the Interior’s Landscape Conservation Cooperatives program, are heading SFWAs and their conservation partners in the right direction already. OWP can play an important role by ensuring that states are learning from one another and that training of transformative leaders is occurring.

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Dr. Daniel Decker is a Professor and Director of the Human Dimensions Research Unit at Cornell University who studies and advises leaders in state fish and wildlife agencies about organizational change.

Dr. Cynthia Jacobson Assistant Regional Director, Science Applications, Alaska Region for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

TRANSFORMATION OF STATE WILDLIFE AGENCIES: LESSONS LEARNED AND STRATEGIES FOR MAKING PROGRESS

WHEN: Tuesday, March 15, 2011, 8:30-4:30

WHERE: Westin Crown Center, Century B Room

North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference, Kansas City

State Fish and Wildlife Agencies are struggling to address new and emerging conservation challenges while retaining core programs. Within these organizations, there is a tension of losing relevance to society if change doesn't happen and losing the traditional base if change does happen. Organizational transformation is a challenging endeavor, and it requires courage.

Join Your Colleagues in taking the how-tos of organizational transformation to a more advanced level. This workshop builds upon last year's transformation workshop at the North American Conference and a workshop held at the Pathways to Success Conference last September.

Case Studies by State Agency Leaders

- Leadership for cultural change...Maine
- Adapting to changing times...New Hampshire
- Integrating diverse public interest...Montana
- Sustaining the legacy...Missouri
- Planning, realignment and hope...Michigan
- Transformation is a marathon, not a sprint...Florida

Learn, Apply and Energize: Adaptive Leadership

- Understand why remaining relevant is not a technical problem.
- Honestly examine organizational values and cultures.
- Identify the stakeholders in an agency transformation.
- Convene and support bold conversations in your organization.

RSVP for the workshop (encouraged but not required) to michele.beucler@idfg.idaho.gov

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Field Notes, Utah *Continued from page 3*

managing the human ecosystem such that traditional game and sport fish management priorities are encompassed within the agenda of "managing all species and their habitats are important" paradigm? Major progress has been made, especially when it comes to building a comprehensive GIS mapping of the species and their associated habitats of greatest conservation need; and because we now realize how important internal

solidarity, collaboration, and coordination are not only for WAP implementation but for agency efficacy overall.

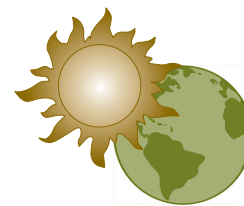
Leadership Development. Dana Dolson has now been the Leadership Development Program (LDP) Coordinator for 3 years, having become a certified instructor-facilitator of 5 MAT online courses and 3 in-person courses (i.e., Publics, Problems & Politics; Emotional Intelligence) and of FranklinCovey's course,

"Leading at the Speed of Trust." Of the total of 71 employees who are active LDP participants, approximately 12 staff completed all 5 required and 3 elective courses, so they are embarking on their final required "Stretch Assignments." It is a fun and exciting time to be engaged in guiding collaborative learning!



OWP Supports Regional Dialogues on Climate Change Adaptation

By Dave Chadwick, Colorado Division of Wildlife



In 2010, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies received a Multistate Conservation Grant to host regional climate change workshops for fish and wildlife agencies. The goal of these workshops was to improve coordination among states in planning for the effects of climate change. Facing a complex topic and short timeline, the Association turned to the Organization of Wildlife Planners for help in facilitating these workshops.

Chris Burkett (Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries) facilitated the southeast workshop, on August 3-4, 2010, in Mansfield, Georgia. Over 50 people attended, representing southeastern state wildlife agencies and several federal and nongovernmental partners. Through a day and a half of discussion, the group identified a series of regional science priorities and proposed the creation of a climate change working group within

the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies.

“The creativity and energy of my colleagues from across the Southeast is always an inspiration to me,” commented Burkett. “Even when faced with a complicated, politically-charged topic like climate change, they never waver in their enthusiasm for protecting fish and wildlife for future generations.”

Brian Stenquist (Minnesota Department of Natural Resources) moderated the discussion at the Midwest workshop, which took place on December 11-12, 2010, in Minneapolis. After briefings on several case studies of climate change planning from around the region, the group identified several research, outreach, and planning needs.

The western climate workshop was held on January 7, 2011, and moderated by Dave Chadwick (Colorado Division of Wildlife). After a morning discussion

with directors, a smaller set of agency staff spent the afternoon identifying concrete steps to help wildlife agencies integrate climate change into their operations. The group also considered outreach strategies to ensure that the public understands how climate change fits in with agencies’ longstanding wildlife conservation activities.

“The Organization of Wildlife Planners’ facilitators helped keep participants focused and helped identify some concrete steps that states can collectively take to address climate change,” said Arpita Choudhury, the Association’s Science and Research Liaison. “That was not an easy task by any stretch of the imagination. Chris, Brian, and Dave were true professionals that were crucial in making the workshops a success.”

For complete results of the workshops, visit the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies web site at www.fish-wildlife.org.

Florida Dives into Training for Climate Change Adaptation

By Doug Parsons, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Beginning in February 2011, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) will begin a new science training program: the Climate Change Certification of Completion. The goal of the 10-month long training is to provide FWC employees with grounding in the science of climate change and the basics of wildlife adaptation. Nearly 100 FWC employees have registered for the training, representing the broad spectrum of the agency from species experts to land managers to law enforcement personnel. Very few science training opportunities exist for employees, so there is a huge demand for this type of resource. Each month an invited speaker will present on a new topic, followed by a facilitated discussion. Each participant is also required

to complete readings and participate in the online forums. At the end of the 10-month course, each participant must develop and give a presentation conveying how they will integrate adaptation principles into the work they are currently doing.

Depending on the course’s effectiveness in the first year, FWC will offer this training every year, providing new and existing employees access to the latest science on this emerging issue. FWC has recruited speakers from throughout the United States, presenting on such diverse topics as climate science, impacts to wildlife, adaptation planning, institutional responses to climate change, communicating climate change publicly,

and tools and resources for adaptation planning. FWC is putting on this course at no cost to employees and using very little of agency resources. Many of the invited speakers see this training as an opportunity to share their expertise with a very targeted and highly skilled audience. FWC is also making use of online learning resources as they coordinate this effort for staff located in various regional offices throughout the state.

For more information regarding this course, please contact Doug Parsons at doug.parsons@myfwc.com.



Sustainability – What Is It? And Why Is It Relevant to the Conservation Community?

By Joe Starinchak, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Mark McDermid, Tom Eggert, and Mike Staggs, Wisconsin DNR

What is sustainability? Although a universally accepted definition of this increasingly popular concept is elusive, a simple definition of sustainability focuses on improving the quality of human life while living within the carrying capacity of supporting ecosystems. This broad concept initially gained traction from the Brundtland Commission's report to the United Nations in 1987 and its relationship with sustainable development. Since then, the concept has gained considerably more ground because of the mounting evidence globally that declining fisheries, biodiversity losses, deforestation, mass species extinctions, climate change, degraded habitat, and decreasing water quality and quantity are not only dramatic, but threaten our very existence. And with the convergence of changing consumer expectations and the rise of global business leaders like Patagonia, Interface Global, Walmart and GE, all of which have embraced sustainability, it has emerged as a 21st-century business driver. Unfortunately, continued human population growth and individual consumptive behaviors are still putting considerable stress upon our natural resources.

So, why is sustainability, as a new business driver for the private sector, relevant to the conservation community? Many of the places that we hunt, fish, hike, camp, boat, and so on continue to degrade and many face new risks every day. This is not new, nor is the North American conservation model that has provided our communities with prosperity and effective conservation funding for the past 50 years. What is new is the incredible opportunity created by the intersection of the traditional conservation model, pervasive business interests in sustainability, and environmental needs that transcend the limits of both the conservation and traditional regulatory models. The Sportfish and Wildlife Restoration Programs are an amazing testament to a unique partnership be-

tween the hunting and fishing industries, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the States; these programs will continue to be an important part of the overall fabric of U.S. conservation. Through them, we have a true collaborative model to build upon that offers shared approaches to the complex environmental problems we currently face and contributes additional stability to conservation we have secured and will pursue. The concept of sustainability is incredibly relevant because it provides the conservation community with an inclusive platform to effectively engage the private sector, unleashing business's power *well* by doing *good* in recognized and effective ways.

With the States leading the way exploring this changing landscape through formal workshops, there is no time like the present to integrate sustainability into business, government, and conservation decision making, building upon some very familiar tenets of our conservation legacy. While this might seem incremental, it has the potential to be transformational. The Wisconsin DNR is working hard to be on the leading edge of change, putting feelers out to the private sector to hear how a traditionally siloed regulatory and resource management agency can work collaboratively to achieve superior environmental performance and reduce the impacts of business. The state has unique laws that provide a bipartisan living laboratory. Plus, the USFWS is engaging in this partnership because, as the country's only national fish and wildlife agency, the Service sees sustainability as an opportunity to elevate fish and wildlife conservation and harness the power of the private sector to help address today's complex conservation issues. Sustainability is approached as a broad, ready-made platform that is already understood by businesses, and Wisconsin is looking to create additional synergy with a potential meeting of sustainability leaders. They seem to be asking a straightforward question: How do we create the ideal state for growing a green bottom line? If this

meeting occurs, it could soon create tremendous new opportunities for the conservation community.



Field Notes

Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency

Planning. We'll begin soon on the next iteration of our Strategic Plan, the sixth version since we started in 1982. The current Plan expires in March 2012; it takes nearly a year to create a new one.

Administration. Our Chief of Wildlife has gone to work for the USFWS in one of the new Landscape Conservation Cooperatives, and our Chief of Enforcement has retired. In the past four years we've also replaced our Director, both Assistant Directors, and our Fisheries Chief.

Too many cranes? For several years we've promoted the migrating sandhill cranes as a premiere watchable wildlife species. We now have so many sandhill cranes that we'd like to offer the opportunity to hunt them, and some landowners would like relief from the nuisance levels of these large and impressive birds. Birdwatchers, meanwhile, think otherwise...

WNS afflicts Tennessee bats. White nose syndrome has been found in Tennessee's bats and we are dedicating a substantial amount of our nongame efforts to monitoring and combating the loss of bat populations. Climate change is still a priority concern for State Wildlife Grants funding, but WNS poses a more immediate threat.

For more OWP news, visit www.owpweb.org

OWP Helps U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service with CMS Planning

By Joe Starinchak, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

As the single greatest threat to global biodiversity, the ever-expanding issue of invasive species is becoming a predictable consequence of our new globalized society and a major threat to fish and wildlife conservation in the United States. The Great Lakes (sea lampreys, Asian carp) and Everglades ecosystems (pythons) are compelling examples of how large-scale ecosystems are harmed by the impacts of human-facilitated invasive species incursions. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is proactively addressing this complex social, economic, human health, and environmental issue by seeking to improve its overall approach and effectiveness in preventing and controlling the spread of aquatic invasive species. To this end, the Branch of Aquatic Invasive Species, nested within the USFWS Fisheries and Habitat Conservation Program, called upon the

expertise of the Organization of Wildlife Planners for assistance.

Dana Dolsen, Human Dimensions and Leadership Development Coordinator for the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, and Steve McMullin, Associate Department Head and Professor of Fish and Wildlife at Virginia Tech, spent two days in mid-December with the Branch of Aquatic Invasive Species and other Fisheries staff in Washington, D.C., providing an overview of Comprehensive Management Systems (CMSs). They explained how engaging in a CMS development process, and the interconnected, multi-tiered management platform it provides, would render significant benefits for the agency in managing the complexity of the invasives issue.

The Fisheries Program is considering this approach because it will allow the Aquatic Invasives Branch to create clear, achievable direction and evaluate whether program ob-

jectives are being met and management processes are functioning effectively.

Writes Branch Chief Craig Martin, "A CMS is needed by [the branch] to strategically align our budgets and programmatic activities to the highest priority outcomes needed to address aquatic invasive species prevention, control, and management. The Program must focus its resources to proactively respond to this conservation challenge and multi-billion dollar problem in the U.S.... We believe a CMS will help us achieve these objectives. [McMullin and Dolsen provided] an outstanding overview of CMS. [With their assistance], I remain hopeful that we will be able to begin developing and implementing a CMS that will help us prioritize our activities and resources to better achieve our resource outcomes for the American public...."



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