USDA Forest Service
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Socio-Environmental Contexts and Forest Planning

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Socio-Env Contexts?

- Social, cultural & economic dimensions of rural communities linked to local natural environments

- Concept of place

  (Wondolleck & Yaffee, 2000; Brick et al., 2001; Kusel and Adler, 2003; Baker & Kusel, 2003)

- What drives place-based socio-env. contexts? Identified? Measured? Incorporated into forest planning?

Regional/Global Processes of Socio-Economic transformation

Regional Scale
Rural Change in the New West

(Rasker, 1994; Rudzitis, 1993, 1999; Power, 1996; Reibsame et al., 1997; Beyers & Nelson, 2000; Nelson, 2001; Travis, 2007)

- Declining traditional resource-extraction industries
- Rising service-sector economies
  - Tourism, recreation, "footloose" industries
- Rapid influx of ex-urban amenity migrants
  - Suburbanization, ex-urbanization
  - Habitat fragmentation & wildfire risk WUI
- (Public) land use conflict
  - Contrasting environmental values & economic interests

- Identified in rural areas throughout the US and abroad
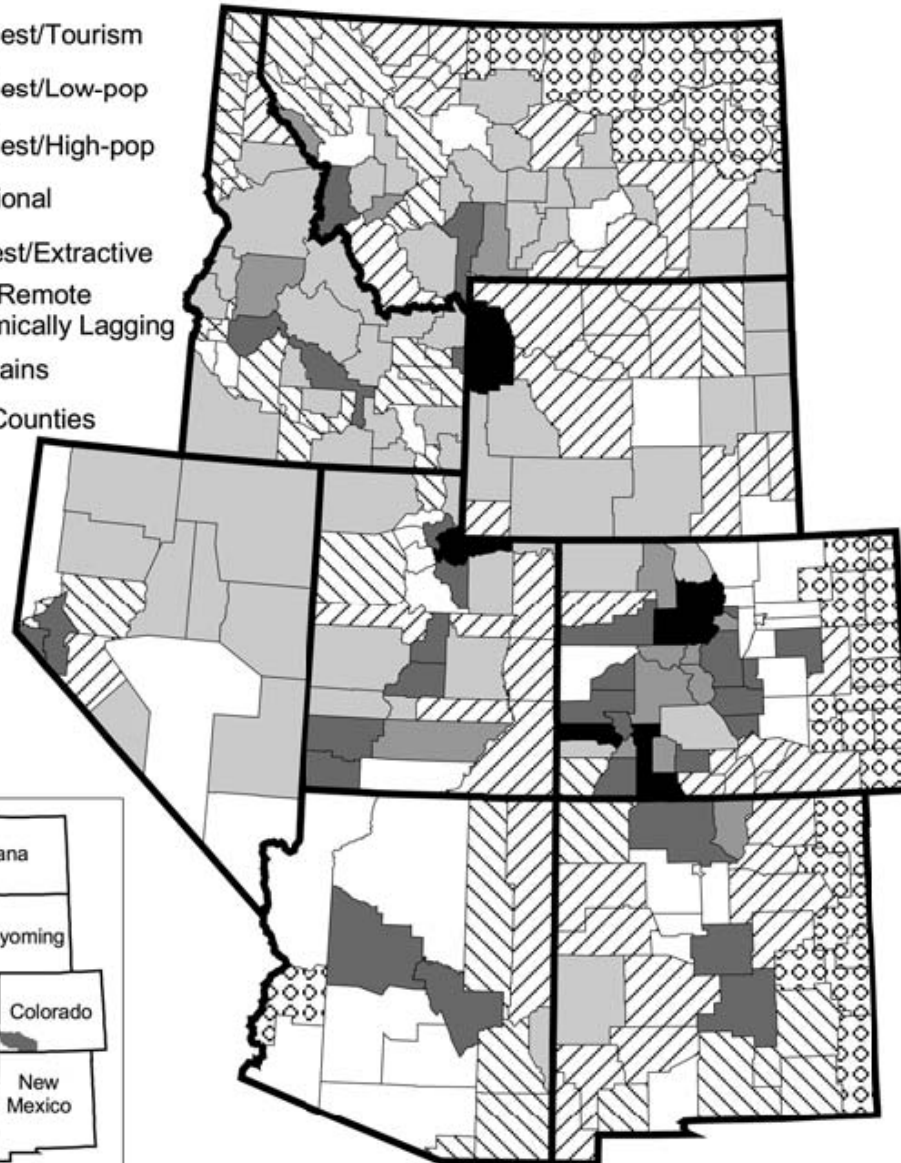
Local-Scale Diversity

(Reibsame et al., 1997; Shumway & Otterstrom, 2001; Crawford & Wilson, 2005; Winkler et al., 2007)

- Uneven geography of New West
  - Most "advanced" New West communities receive most in-migration & economic growth
  - Emerging concentrations of wealth & urbanization
  - Contrast with majority of rural communities remaining dependent on resource-extraction

Legend:
- New West/Tourism
- New West/Low-pop
- New West/High-pop
- Transitional
- Old West/Extractive
- Forest Remote Economically Lagging
- High Plains
- Metro Counties

N

Montana
Idaho
Wyoming
Nevada
Utah
Colorado
Arizona
New Mexico

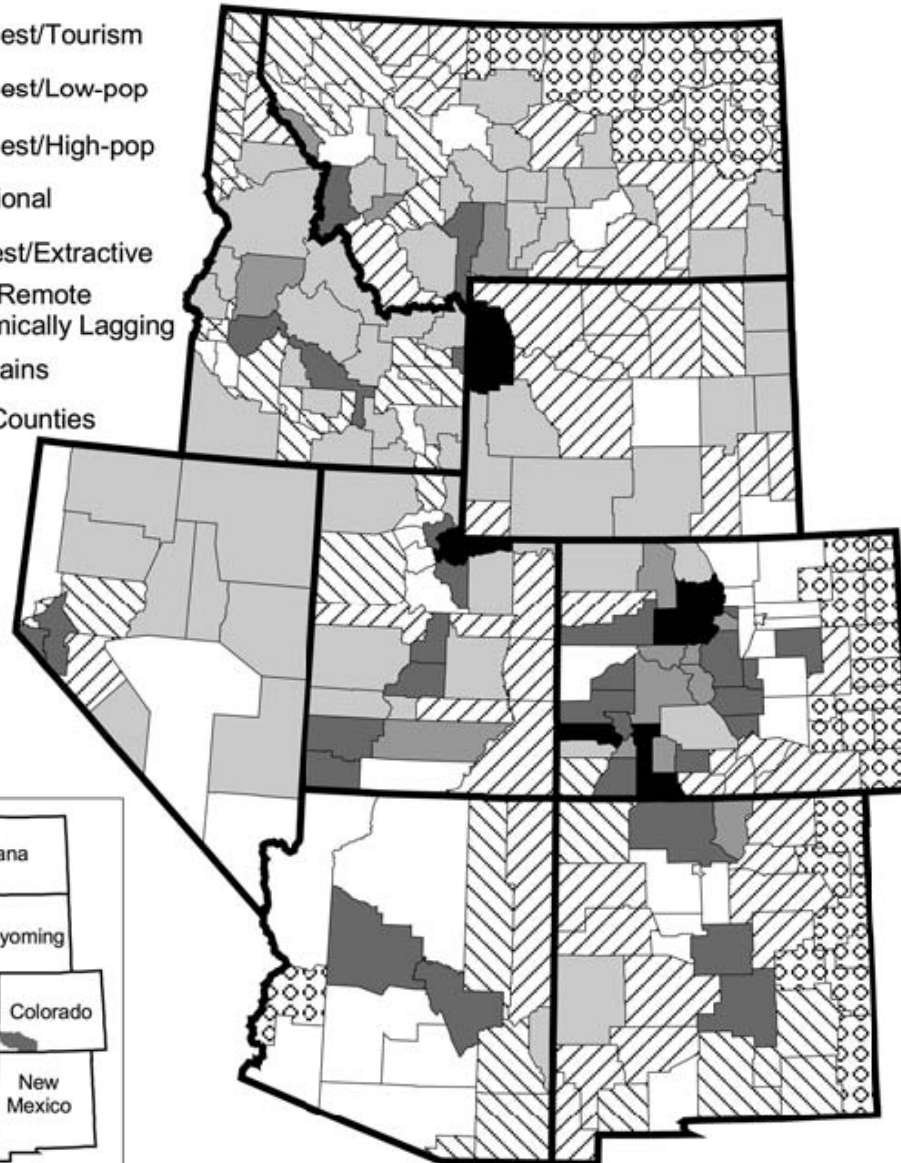100   0   100   200 Miles

San Juan National Forest in gray

Source: Crawford & Wilson, 2005

How do these diverse, place-based socio-env contexts
link up with collaborative forest management & planning?

Source: Crawford & Wilson, 2005

- Socio-Env Context

- Management Priorities

- Form & Structure

Context

- Adv. New West change
  - Rapid urbanization
  - Diversified economy
  - NAU
- Coconino N.F.
- Larger urban area

Form & Structure

- Formal cooperative agreement w/ USFS
- Participation emphasis institutional rep.
- Formal decision making & group interaction

GREATER FLAGSTAFF FORESTS PARTNERSHIP

WWW.GFFP.ORG

Management Priorities

1. Restore natural ecosystem functions of ponderosa pine
2. Reduce risk of catastrophic fire in WUI
3. Research, test, develop, & demonstrate key ecological, economic, and social dimensions of restoration efforts.

Ponderosa Pine Forest Partnership

Context

- Transitional (Meso-NW)
- Montezuma vs. La Plata Cnty

Management Priorities

1. Ecological restoration & economic development
   - PP restoration
   - Selective cutting & Pre-scribed burning
   - Viable local timber industry

Form & Structure

- Participants: SJNF Dist, loc gov, CO Timber Assoc, Universities, Env Org
- Informal decision-making, ad hoc
  - Emphasize individual relations

Context

- Negative NW transition
  - Decline in Timber Sales
  - Mexican Spotted Owl
  - Loss of local mill (1993)
- Community conflict
  - County-supremacy movement

Form & Structure

- Open participation
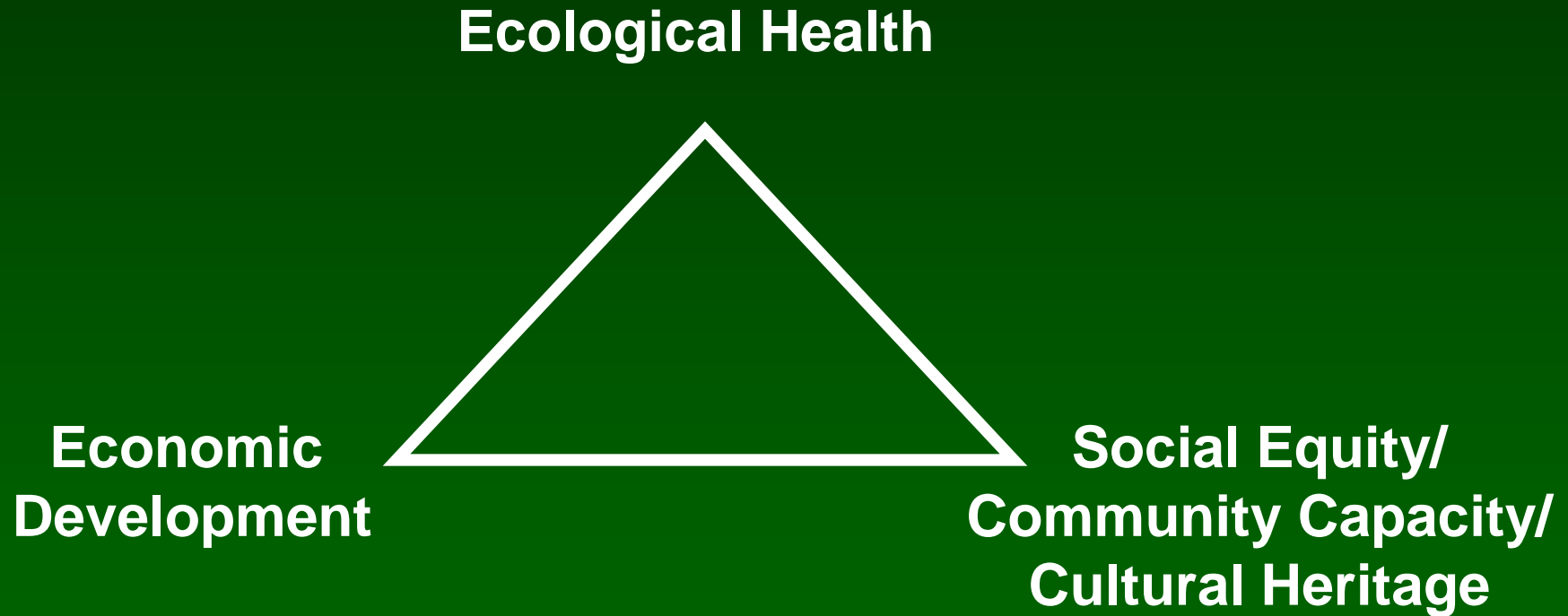- Informal but moderated, emphasis on individual relations

Management Priorities

- Build community capacity to resolve conflicts
- Develop infrastructure for new local logging industry based on ecological restoration
  - Youth Conservation Corps

3-Legged Stool (modified)
Ideal Goals of Community Forestry

Ecological Health

Economic Development

Social Equity/ Community Capacity/ Cultural Heritage

(Baker & Kusel, 2003; McDermott, 2009)

Implications for Forest Planning?

Socio-Env Context & Forest Planning

Symbiotic Relationship

Socio-Env Contexts
Inform
Forest Planning Process

- Public participation
- Facilitation/scoping process
- Helping to define forest planning priorities, guidelines & standards

Forest Planning assists rural communities by mediating and addressing contextual issues

- Via collaborative process itself
  – Social capital (community capacity, cohesion)
    (Wagner & Fernandez-Gimenez, 2008)
  – Collaborative learning (Daniels & Walker, 2001)
- Via plan implementation
  – Planning priorities, standards and guidelines

Forest Planning Rule

- Public Participation & Collaborative Facilitation
  - Adaptive to local soc-env contexts
  - Acknowledge role/value of collaborative interaction in its own right
- Term Definitions (e.g., sustainability)
  - Inclusive of diversity of contextual issues & forest values and use priorities
    - (ecological, economic, social)
- Implementation, Evaluation & Monitoring
  - Adaptable/Flexible to recognize opportunities for local participation & stewardship