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# **Nevada Sage-Grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants**

**Prepared for the Nevada Department of Wildlife and Cooperators**

## **University of Nevada Cooperative Extension Contributors**

**Brad Schultz, Resource Specialist, North-Central Local Planning Area**

Extension Educator, Winnemucca

**Maria Ryan, Project Coordinator, Facilitator, White Pine - Lincoln Local Planning Area**

Formerly Area Specialist, Natural Resources, Las Vegas

Biologist III, Southern Nevada Water Authority, Las Vegas

**Jerry Buk, Facilitator, North-Central Local Planning Area**

Central-Northeast Area Director, Fallon

**Rod Davis, Facilitator, South-Central Planning Area**

Extension Educator, Battle Mountain

**Staci Emm, Facilitator, North-Central Planning Area**

Extension Educator, Hawthorne

**Steve Lewis, Facilitator, Bi-State Planning Area**

Extension Educator, Minden

**Michael Havercamp, Facilitator, Governor's Planning Team**

Formerly State Specialist, Human Development and Family Studies, Reno

Extension State Specialist, Emeritus

**Marlene Rebori, Facilitator, Washoe-Modoc Planning Area**

Area Specialist, Community and Organizational Development, Reno

**Sherman Swanson, Resource Specialist**

State Specialist, Riparian and Rangeland Resources, Reno

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**Table of Contents**

Introduction ..... 5

Methods ..... 6

Results ..... 7

    Planning Group Composition ..... 7

    Time Commitments..... 9

    Changes in Respondents’ Knowledge and Abilities ..... 15

    Respondents’ Perceptions and Continued Participation ..... 17

    Effectiveness of the Planning Process..... 19

        Within Paid and Nonpaid Groups ..... 19

        Between Paid and Nonpaid Groups ..... 21

    Personal Experiences During the Planning Process..... 23

    Overall Experience..... 25

    UNCE’s Facilitation Effort ..... 28

        Strengths ..... 28

        Improving Facilitation..... 28

Discussion..... 31

Conclusions..... 38

References..... 42

**List of Tables**

**Table 1.** The number of paid and nonpaid respondents by planning group ..... 8

**Table 2.** The number of paid and nonpaid respondents in the six interest categories they represented during the planning process..... 9

**Table 3.** Reasons participants ended their participation in the planning process..... 15

**Table 4.** Survey respondents’ reasons for either continuing or discontinuing their participation in the future..... 18

**Table 5.** Planning group effectiveness as reported by paid and nonpaid respondents, respectively, at the beginning and end of the planning process. For mean values, 1 is low, 3 moderate, and 5 high. SD is the standard deviation. MD is the difference between the mean values at the beginning and end of the process for paid and nonpaid respondents, respectively. Bold values are significant at  $P \leq 0.05$ . ..... 20

**Table 6.** Planning group effectiveness at the beginning and end of the planning process, and stratified by paid and nonpaid participants. For mean values, 1 is low, 3 moderate, and 5 high. SD is the standard deviation. MD is the difference between the mean values for paid and nonpaid respondents, respectively. Bold values are significantly different at  $P \leq 0.05$ . ..... 22

**Table 7.** Respondents’ opinions about the quality of their personal experiences (1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree) at the end of the planning process. Results are stratified by paid and nonpaid participants. SD is standard deviation. MD is the difference between the mean values for paid and nonpaid participants. .... 24

**Table 8.** Paid and nonpaid survey respondents’ ratings about outcomes of the group planning process and their likelihood of remaining involved in sage-grouse conservation planning. SD is standard deviation. MD is the difference between mean values for paid and nonpaid respondents. Bold p-values are significantly different at  $P \leq 0.05$ . ..... 26

**Table 9.** Respondents’ qualitative responses for how they would improve the collaborative planning process..... 27

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

<b>Table 10.</b> Paid and nonpaid respondents' qualitative responses about the strengths of UNCE's facilitation effort. ....	29
<b>Table 11.</b> Respondents' suggestions about how to improve UNCE's facilitation effort.....	30

### List of Figures

<b>Figure 1.</b> The mean duration (months) participants engaged in the Nevada sage-grouse planning process. Error bars represent one standard deviation. Columns with different letters are significantly different ( $P \leq 0.5$ ). ....	10
<b>Figure 2.</b> The maximum duration of paid and nonpaid participation in the Nevada sage-grouse planning process.....	11
<b>Figures 3a to 3d.</b> The amount of time paid and nonpaid respondents spent in four different group functions: a) in meetings and events; b) travel; c) preparation and d) fund-raising and grant writing.....	12-13
<b>Figure 4.</b> Survey respondents' ratings about how their participation affected their knowledge and abilities in 13 areas related to the planning process. Bold statements are significantly different at $P \leq 0.05$ . 1 = not affected and 5 = highly affected. Error bars represent one standard deviation.....	16
<b>Figure 5.</b> Number of paid and nonpaid respondents who plan to continue and not continue future planning efforts.....	17

### INTRODUCTION

The state of Nevada initiated a statewide planning process for sage-grouse in August 2000. The initial planning team of 28 members developed a conservation strategy focused around the development of six local (but multi-county) conservation plans that would be merged into one statewide plan. The development of the local plans began in November 2001 with a statewide meeting. Local planning groups started meeting in late 2001 and submitted their conservation plans in June 2004 (Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Team, 2004).

Almost 500 individuals participated in the planning process, which was considered a collaborative effort between federal, state and local governments, the agricultural community and interested residents of the state. In late 2004, the Nevada Department of Wildlife (NDOW) contracted with the University of Nevada Cooperative Extension (UNCE) to evaluate the collaborative planning process. The results of this evaluation were published by UNCE in 2006 (Ryan et al., 2006).

The initial evaluation placed all of the respondents into one large data set and summarized the results with respect to the characteristics of the participants, changes in their knowledge and abilities, perceptions and effectiveness of the planning process, the participants' probability of continued participation in the planning process and their personal experiences during the planning process. While this approach provided data that could be used to improve future collaborative planning process, its value was limited because it did not stratify the group into sub-populations.

The sage-grouse planning process in Nevada occurred across three years and included almost 500 individuals from multiple levels of government and the private sector. Undoubtedly, there are multiple sub-populations within this group that viewed the planning process or components of the planning process differently. Across all participants, slightly more than half volunteered their time. It is intuitive that volunteer or nonpaid participants view at least some aspects of the planning process differently than their paid counterparts. This paper builds on the work of Ryan et al. (2006) and reports how paid and nonpaid participants viewed the sage-grouse planning effort in Nevada.

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

### METHODS

UNCE faculty who facilitated the planning process developed a draft survey instrument to capture participants' perceptions of the process. They incorporated input from NDOW staff and other UNCE faculty involved in the planning process into a final survey. The data collected focused on respondents' perceptions about the conservation planning process, their individual roles within the process, and assessments regarding group function. UNCE cooperated with the Center for Program Evaluation and Partnership Development Services (CPEPDS) at the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) to administer the survey, summarize the data and interpret the preliminary results (Christiansen & Mitchell, 2005).

The survey was mailed to 494 individuals who participated in the planning process. UNCE faculty were excluded due to potential conflict of interest. The name and address of each survey recipient was obtained from mailing lists used by each local planning group. To increase the response rate, pre-notification postcards were sent to planning group participants in February 2005, alerting them to the upcoming survey (Dillman, 2000). Three days later, the survey was mailed to all participants, along with a signed cover letter and pre-stamped reply envelope.

Three weeks after the first survey was mailed, a second survey and pre-stamped envelope were mailed to survey recipients who had not responded. All responses were sent directly to CPEPDS. Respondents' replies were voluntary and anonymous (e.g., no individual-specific information was collected). The response rate was 36% (n=176). The CPEPDS developed the summary statistics and initially classified the narrative responses into discrete categories. These categories were further modified by the authors.

Data were classified into two groups: paid and nonpaid participants. For each group and survey question, the appropriate summary and descriptive statistics were calculated. Depending on the parameter, calculated statistics included the total number of respondents, the percent of respondents, the mean, the standard deviation, mean difference (i.e., the difference between two mean values) and p-value. The Wilcoxon Rank Sum Test (Analytical Software, 2000) was used to test for statistical differences between mean values for paid and nonpaid respondents. This nonparametric test was used because response categories were typically rankings (i.e., ranging from strongly

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

agree to disagree). Categories were converted to specific values (e.g., strongly agree = 1 and strongly disagree = 5) and mean values calculated. Survey topics that included a series of multiple questions were analyzed with the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test. This test determined whether the distribution of responses between paid and nonpaid respondents was similar. Both mean separation and distribution tests were considered significantly different if the p-value was less than or equal to 0.05. For most tests, actual p-values are reported so readers can draw their own conclusions about the significant difference between means or distributions.

Data from Elko County are not included in the summary and descriptive statistics because the planning process initiated by the Northeastern Nevada Stewardship Group (NNSG) started two years before creation of the other five sage-grouse planning groups. Also, the planning process implemented by the NNSG differed from the other local planning groups. It was not facilitated by a UNCE faculty member and it used a watershed approach. The other local planning groups used the population management unit (PMU) concept created by the Governor's sage-grouse planning team. Finally, the NNSG process focused on both sage-grouse and other sagebrush obligate species. The strategy developed by the Governor's Team addressed only sage-grouse.

## RESULTS

### Planning Group Composition

The collective planning process had almost equal numbers of paid and nonpaid respondents (See Table 1). The distribution for paid and nonpaid respondents across planning groups varied but was not significantly different ( $P=0.51$ ). The Bi-State, Governor's Team, South-Central and White Pine County groups had equal or nearly equal distribution among paid and nonpaid respondents. The difference between paid and nonpaid respondents was two individuals or less. The Lincoln County and North Central planning groups were skewed toward a higher percentage of nonpaid respondents. For Lincoln County, there were twice as many nonpaid as paid respondents. For the North-Central group, the ratio was 1.5 nonpaid respondents per paid respondent. The reverse held for the Washoe-Modoc planning group: 1.6 paid respondents per nonpaid respondent.

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

**Table 1.** The number of paid and nonpaid respondents by planning group.

Planning Group	Paid (n)	Nonpaid (n)
Bi-State	23	25
Washoe-Modoc	18	10
Governor's Team	13	11
North Central	13	20
South Central	7	8
Lincoln County	5	11
White Pine County	5	5
Northeast	3	1
<b>Totals</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>91</b>

Table 2 shows the distribution of paid and nonpaid respondents by their primary interest. The distribution was significantly different ( $P < 0.01$ ). More than 75% of the paid respondents worked for some level of government. Of these, 46% were federal employees, 29% state employees and 25% local government (Ryan et al., 2006). Government was the only category for which paid outnumbered nonpaid respondents. For environmental, ranching/farming and hunting interests, nonpaid respondents outnumbered paid respondents ranging from 3:1 to 8:1. For the categories of recreation and other, the respective number of paid and nonpaid respondents was similar.



## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

**Table 2.** The number of paid and nonpaid respondents in the six interest categories they represented during the planning process.

Interest	Paid (n)	Nonpaid (n)
Government	60	14
Ranching/Farming	5	41
Environmental	4	11
Hunting	3	11
Recreation	2	3
Other	5	7
Totals	79	87

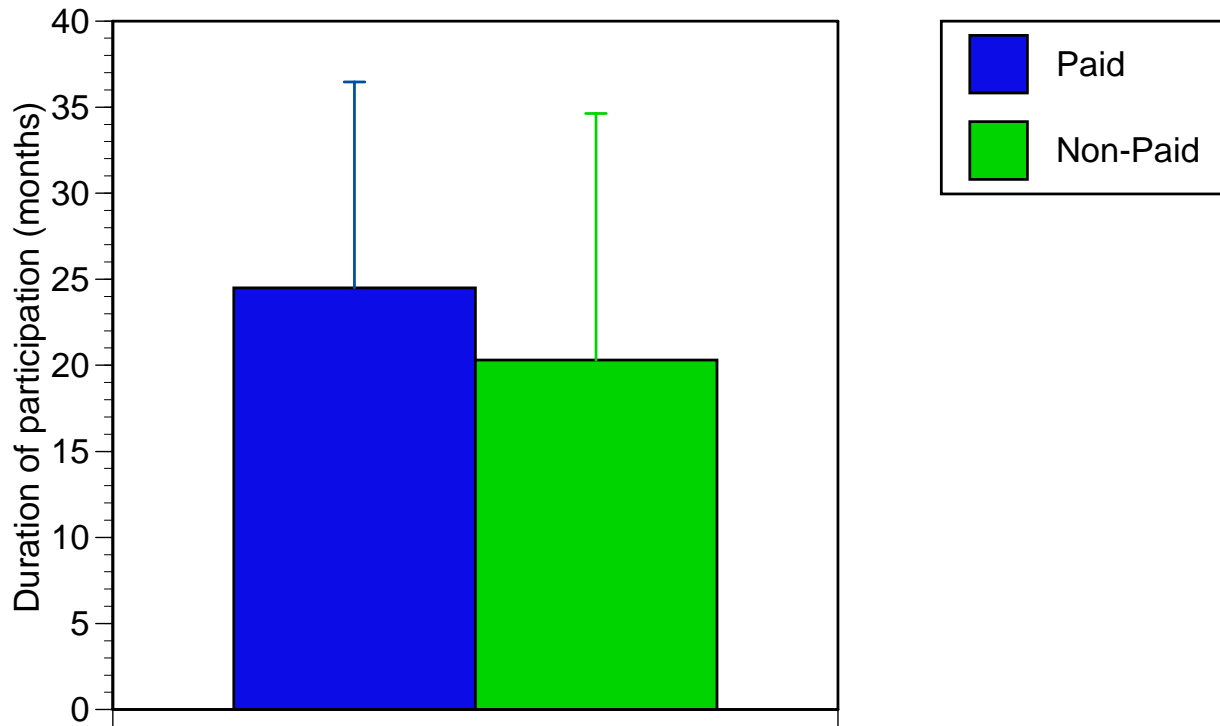
### Time Commitments

The mean duration of participation for paid respondents was significantly longer ( $P \leq 0.05$ ) than for nonpaid respondents. The difference was almost five months (See Figure 1). Figure 2 shows the maximum duration of participation for paid and nonpaid respondents. There was a significant difference ( $P = 0.03$ ) in their respective distributions. For nonpaid respondents, 73% participated in the planning process for 24 months or less, and more than one-third ended their participation within 12 months. For paid respondents, 67% had a maximum duration of 24 months or less. Only a small number of respondents participated beyond 36 months. Paid respondents were much more likely to participate for at least 12 months.

Figures 3a-3d show the amount of time respondents spent in four general planning activities each month. These were attending meetings and events, traveling to and from meetings and events, preparing for meetings and raising funds or writing grants. For all four activities, most respondents contributed less than four hours per month.

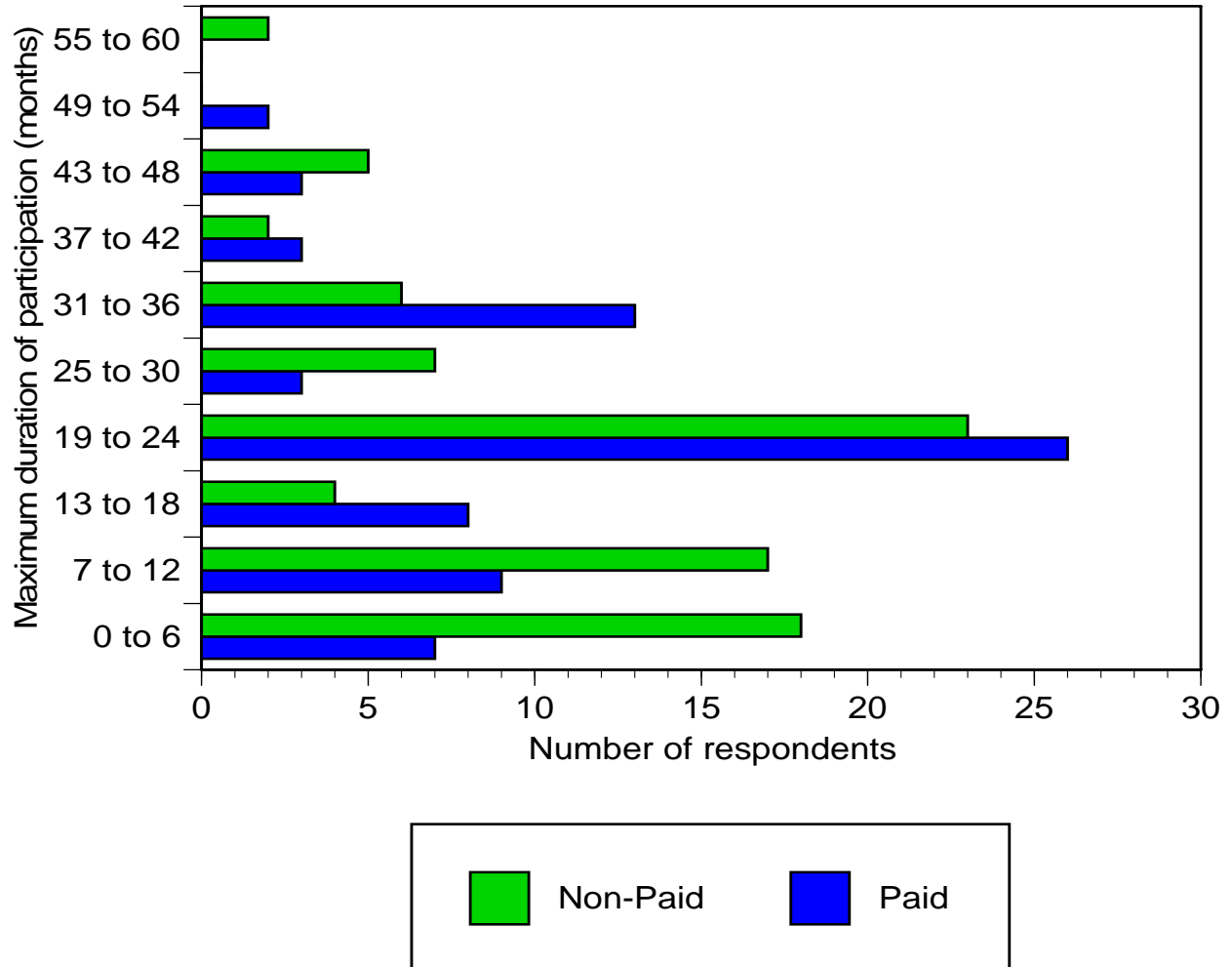
## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

**Figure 1.** The mean duration (months) participants engaged in the Nevada sage-grouse planning process. Error bars represent one standard deviation. Columns with different letters are significantly different ( $P \leq 0.5$ ).



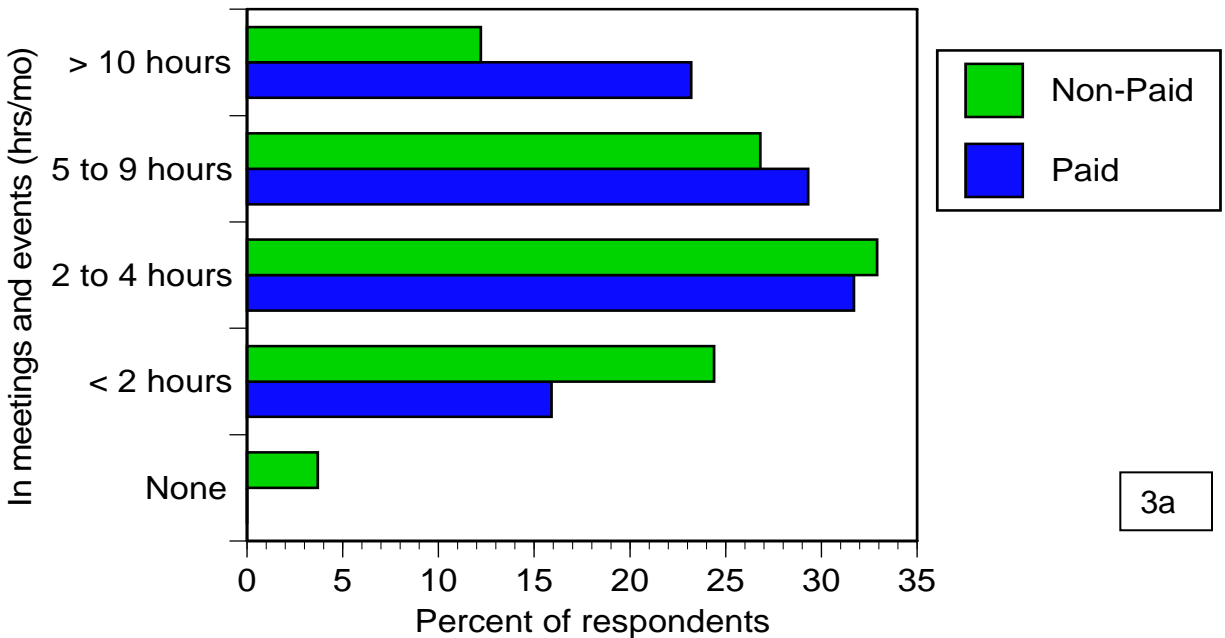
## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

**Figure 2.** The maximum duration of paid and nonpaid participation in the Nevada sage-grouse planning process.

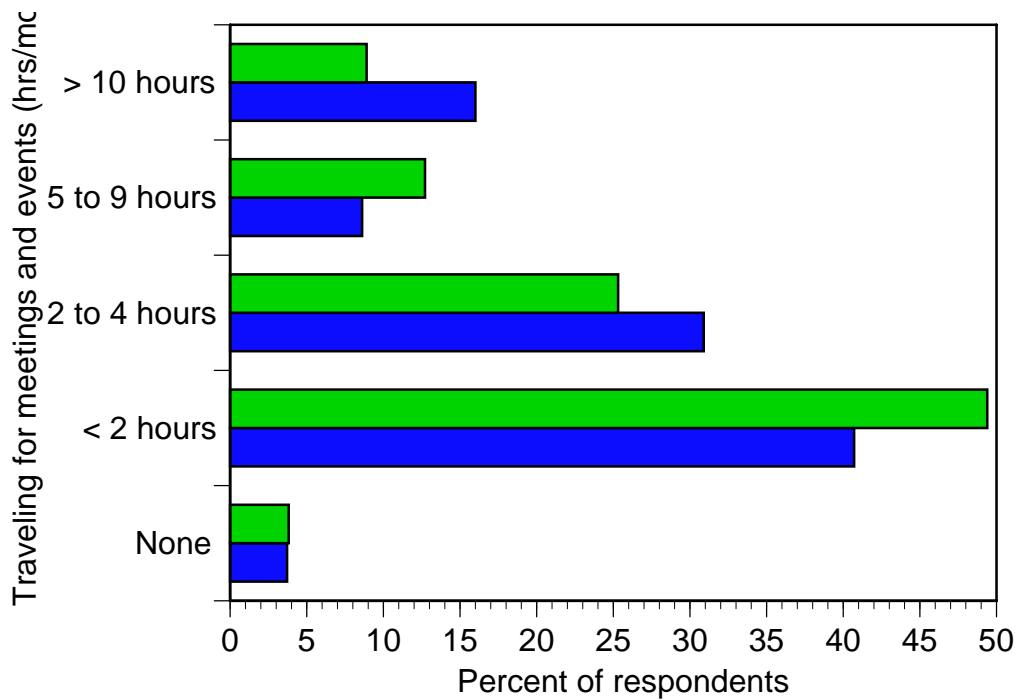


## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

**Figures 3a to 3d.** The amount of time paid and nonpaid respondents spent in four different group functions: a) in meetings and events; b) travel; c) preparation and d) fund-raising and grant writing.

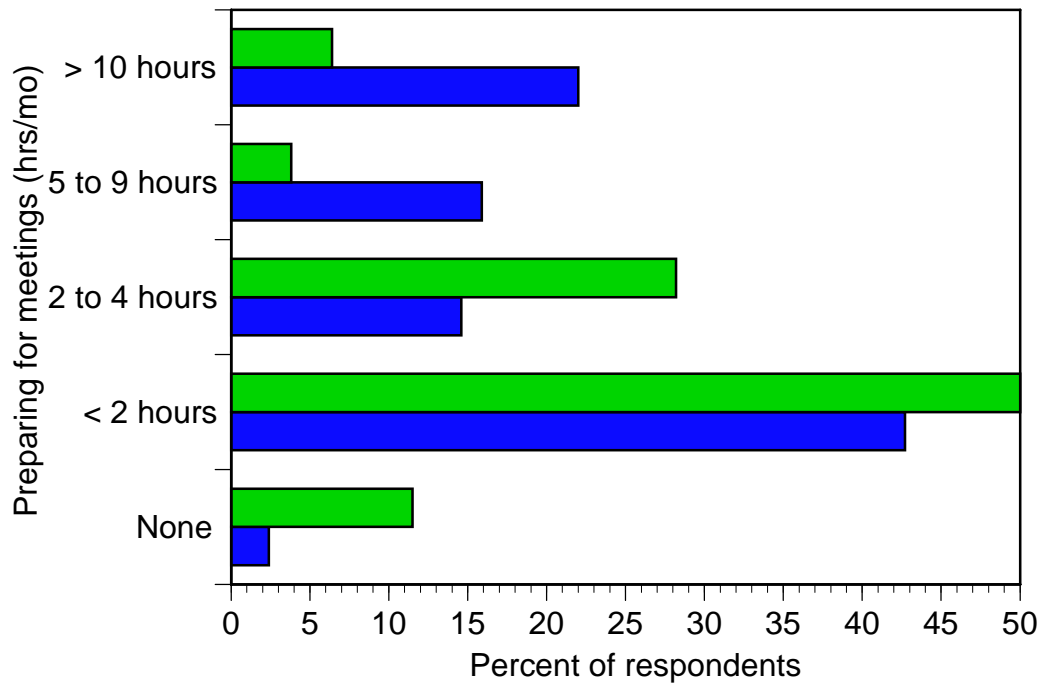


3a

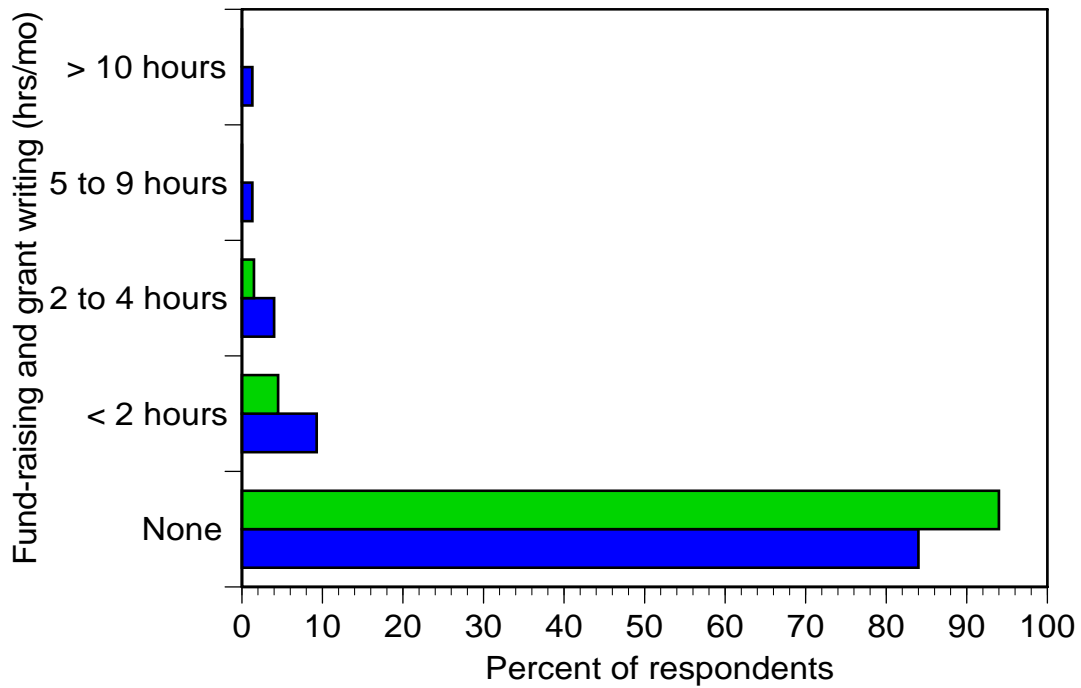


3b

**Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants**



3c



3d

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

Paid and nonpaid respondents had a similar distribution ( $P=0.31$ ) of responses for attendance at meetings and events (See Figure 3a). Paid respondents, however, were more likely to spend five hours or more each month attending meetings or events. This was particularly true for time commitments greater than ten hours.

The distribution among paid and nonpaid participants for the amount of time spent traveling for meetings and events was similar ( $P=0.87$ ; See Figure 3b). Closer examination, however, reveals some differences among paid and nonpaid respondents. Once travel time for meetings and events exceeded two hours per month, nonpaid respondents had a steady decline in participation. A similar decline occurred for paid respondents but was smaller. Paid respondents were more likely than nonpaid respondents to travel more than two hours per month, and twice as likely to travel more than ten hours per month.

The distribution of time commitment to prepare for meetings was significantly different ( $P<0.01$ ) for paid and nonpaid respondents (See Figure 3c). Nonpaid respondents were much more likely to spend two hours or less each month preparing for meetings. At the other extreme, almost 40% of paid respondents spent five hours or more each month preparing for meetings. Only 11% of nonpaid participants committed this amount of time. Paid respondents were three times more likely to spend more than 10 hours per month preparing for meetings.

More than 80% of respondents contributed no time to raising funds or writing grant applications (See Figure 3d). The responses among paid and nonpaid respondents were similar ( $P=0.73$ ). The few respondents who contributed to this task generally committed less than two hours each month.

Some participants in the planning process quit before local plans were completed. Their reasons are summarized in Table 3. Paid and nonpaid participants had significantly different ( $P=0.00$ ) distributions in their responses. For paid respondents, 36% stated they quit because of a change in their job assignment. Only 4% of the nonpaid respondents stated this reason. For nonpaid respondents, over 30% quit because they were frustrated with the planning process, felt it was moving too slowly, or that their viewpoint was not being heard or valued. Only 12% of paid respondents stated similar reasons. For both paid and nonpaid respondents, 26% cited either a lack of time and/or

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

other commitments. Only 7% of nonpaid respondents stated they quit because there was too much involvement from government agencies. Among paid respondents (mostly government employees), none identified this reason.

**Table 3.** Reasons participants ended their participation in the planning process.

Reason	Paid -----%-----	Nonpaid
Job or job assignment changed	36	4
Lack of time/other commitments	26	26
Frustrated with group; lack of progress in group	9	13
Travel distance too far or too expensive	9	7
No longer informed about meeting dates and times	6	3
Felt viewpoint not being heard and/or valued; other agendas operating in the groups	3	18
Group completed plans	0	9
Too much NDOW/BLM/government agency input in group	0	7
Other	12	12

## Changes in Respondents' Knowledge and Abilities

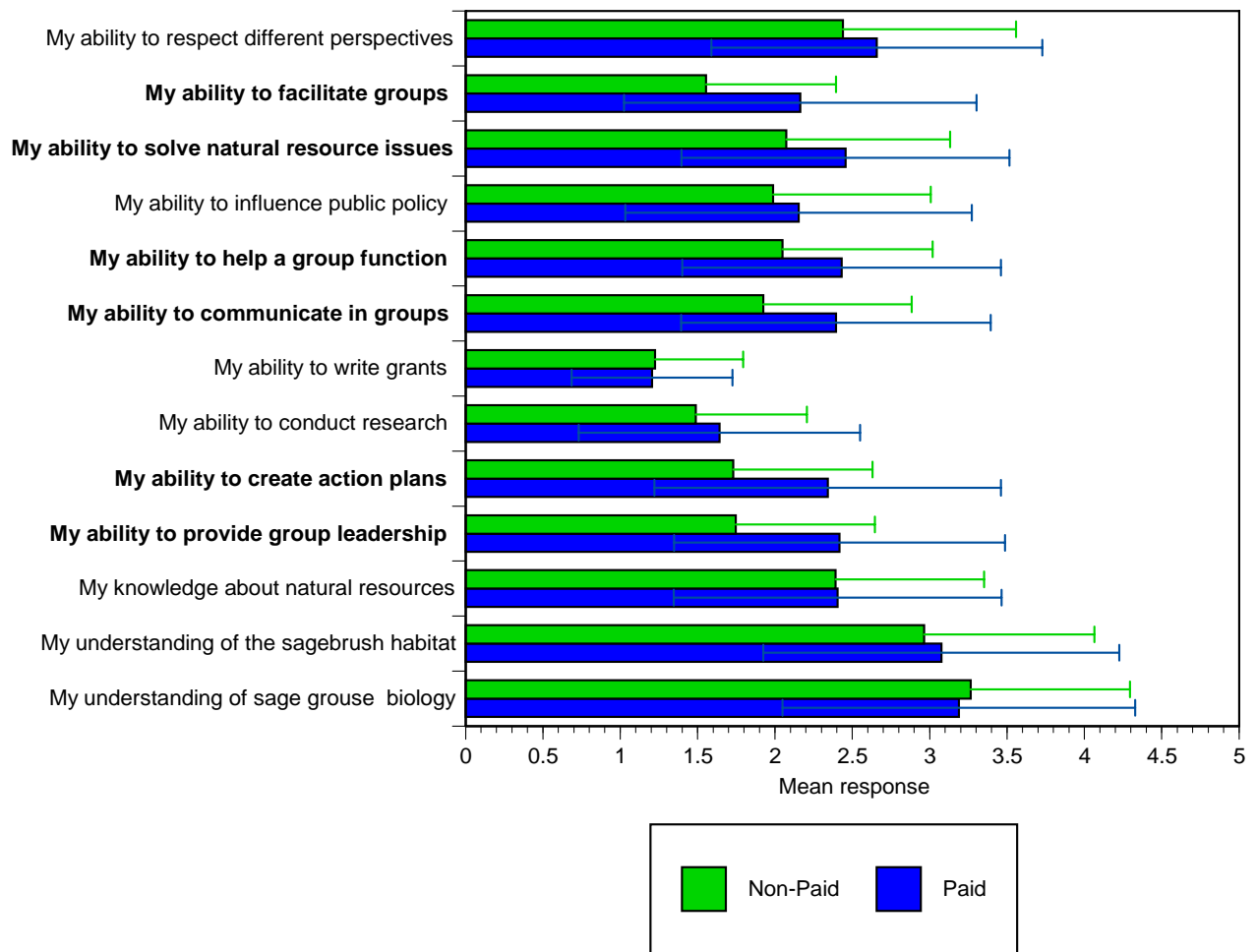
The planning process had the potential to improve each participant's knowledge and abilities for 13 parameters (See Figure 4). For most parameters, both paid and nonpaid respondents identified a slight to moderate increase in their knowledge and/or abilities. The two exceptions were their ability to write grants and to conduct research. Both groups identified very small knowledge gains in these two areas. This is an expected result since few agency employees, ranchers and/or farmers are formally trained in and/or regularly pursue these tasks. There were significant differences ( $P < 0.05$ )

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

between paid and nonpaid respondents for six functions. These were an individual's ability to:

- 1) facilitate groups;
- 2) help solve natural resource issues;
- 3) help a group function;
- 4) communicate in groups;
- 5) create action plans; and
- 6) provide group leadership.

**Figure 4.** Survey respondents' ratings about how their participation affected their knowledge and abilities in 13 areas related to the planning process. Bold statements are significantly different at  $P \leq 0.05$ . 1 = not affected and 5 = highly affected. Error bars represent one standard deviation.





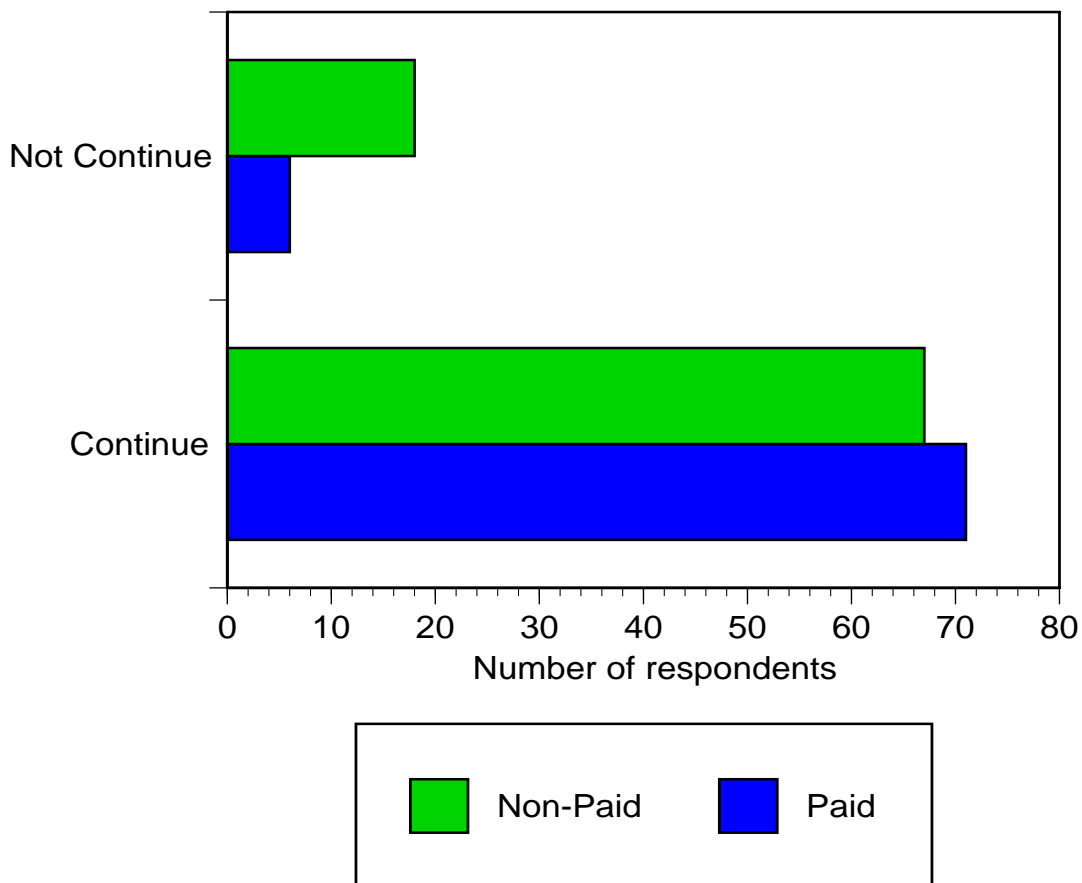
## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

For all six functions, paid respondents identified a higher rating for their knowledge and/or abilities than did nonpaid respondents. The reasons why paid respondents believed they gained more knowledge and ability are unknown.

### Continued Participation

The planning process had slightly more nonpaid respondents than paid respondents (Ryan et al., 2006). Paid respondents, however, were slightly more likely to continue their efforts (See Figure 5). Nonpaid respondents were three times more likely than paid respondents to discontinue the planning process.

**Figure 5.** Number of paid and nonpaid respondents who plan to continue and not continue future planning efforts.



## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

The respective reasons that paid and nonpaid respondents stated for continuing with the planning process had some overlap (See Table 4). The overall distribution of their responses, however, was significantly different ( $P=0.00$ ). A similar percentage of both groups stated they would continue participation because it was important for the species, its habitat, and/or wildlife in general. Similar percentages of both groups had the desire to stay informed and/or see the plan implemented. Nonpaid respondents, however, were more likely to remain engaged because they believed the conservation effort could affect ranching and/or private-public land issues. Paid respondents were more likely to state they would continue because it was their job. Not a single nonpaid respondent stated their job was a reason to continue participation.

**Table 4.** Survey respondents' reasons for either continuing or discontinuing their participation in the future.

	Paid		Nonpaid	
	n	%	n	%
<b>Continue Participation</b>				
Part of job	18	31	0	0
Important for species and habitat and wildlife in general	15	26	17	30
To stay informed and see plan implemented	10	17	10	18
Impact on ranching; public-private land issues	9	16	22	39
Other	6	10	8	13
<b>Discontinue Participation</b>				
Process was not effective	3	38	9	56
Lack of time and other issues	2	25	2	13
Changing jobs	1	13	2	13
Other	2	25	3	19

## **Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants**

The primary reason that nonpaid participants planned to stop their participation was a belief that the process was ineffective (See Table 4). They stated this belief three times more often than paid participants. A small number of both paid and nonpaid respondents planned to stop their participation because they lacked the time and/or expected to change their job.

### **Effectiveness of the Planning Process**

#### **Within Paid and Nonpaid Groups**

Both paid and nonpaid respondents identified positive changes for 13 parameters of group effectiveness (See Table 5). The only group effectiveness parameter rated lower at the end of the planning process was “educating the group,” and only for nonpaid respondents. Both paid and nonpaid respondents identified a statistically significant ( $P \leq 0.05$ ) increase in group effectiveness for:

- 1) dealing with critical sage-grouse conservation issues;
- 2) staying on task during meetings; and
- 3) preparing reports.

Only paid respondents identified significant ( $P \leq 0.05$ ) improvements for listening to different points of view and fund-raising. Fund-raising, despite having a statistically significant improvement at the end of the planning process, had a low group effectiveness rating (See Table 5). From a functional perspective, this improvement was meaningless because the critical mass of people trained in this skill probably was not present.

Only nonpaid respondents identified a statistically significant ( $P < 0.05$ ) improvement in group effectiveness for carrying out tasks and actions and acknowledging success. Both paid and nonpaid respondents lacked statistically significant ( $P \geq 0.06$ ) gains in group effectiveness for:

- 1) developing procedures to conduct business;
- 2) involving different interests and perspectives;
- 3) resolving conflict;
- 4) communicating with external groups;
- 5) educating the group; and
- 6) networking with agencies, groups, and collaborators.

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

**Table 5.** Planning group effectiveness as reported by paid and nonpaid respondents, respectively, at the beginning and end of the planning process. For mean values, 1 is low, 3 moderate, and 5 high. SD is the standard deviation. MD is the difference between the mean values at the beginning and end of the process for paid and nonpaid respondents, respectively. Bold values are significant at  $P \leq 0.05$ .

Survey Question	Paid Participants						Nonpaid Participants					
	Beginning		End		MD	p-value	Beginning		End		MD	p-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Dealing with critical sage-grouse conservation issues	2.42	1.09	3.13	1.15	0.71	<b>0.00</b>	2.68	1.12	3.48	1.13	0.80	<b>0.00</b>
Staying on task during meetings	2.67	1.11	3.04	1.07	0.37	<b>0.04</b>	2.88	1.06	3.35	1.03	0.47	<b>0.01</b>
Carrying out tasks and actions	2.73	0.92	2.96	1.06	0.23	0.17	2.85	0.95	3.29	1.02	0.44	<b>0.01</b>
Listening to different points of view	3.07	1.03	3.42	0.97	0.35	<b>0.03</b>	3.29	1.09	3.40	1.17	0.11	0.56
Developing procedures to conduct business	2.83	0.96	3.46	3.71	0.63	0.16	3.06	0.94	3.13	1.05	0.07	0.68
Involving different interests and perspectives	3.07	1.04	3.27	1.12	0.20	0.26	3.07	1.12	3.18	1.13	0.11	0.56
Preparing reports	2.55	1.01	2.96	1.00	0.41	<b>0.02</b>	2.74	1.19	3.34	1.07	0.60	<b>0.00</b>
Fund-raising	1.56	0.82	1.94	0.98	0.38	<b>0.01</b>	1.55	1.02	1.85	1.05	0.30	0.12
Resolving conflict	3.03	3.60	3.04	1.13	0.01	0.97	2.69	1.15	3.04	1.17	0.35	0.07
Communicating with external groups	2.76	0.93	3.01	1.09	0.25	0.13	2.77	1.14	3.11	1.19	0.34	0.10
Educating the group	3.18	1.03	3.34	1.08	0.16	0.37	3.72	4.74	3.22	1.16	-0.50	0.38
Networking with agencies, groups, and collaborators	3.22	1.01	3.28	1.06	0.06	0.70	3.04	1.10	3.25	1.20	0.21	0.29
Acknowledging success	2.80	0.96	3.06	1.01	0.26	0.12	2.85	1.04	3.30	1.13	0.45	<b>0.02</b>

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

Nonpaid respondents, however, showed a trend toward a significant increase in group effectiveness for resolving conflict ( $P=0.07$ ) and communicating with external groups ( $P=0.10$ ). Paid respondents identified smaller gains in group effectiveness for both parameters.

### Between Paid and Nonpaid Groups

There were no significant ( $P \geq 0.05$ ) statistical differences between paid and nonpaid respondents for group effectiveness ratings at the beginning of the planning process. (See Table 6.) Other than for fund-raising, both groups rated group effectiveness parameters slightly (value = 2) to moderately (value = 3) effective. Both groups rated fund-raising as ineffective. Nonpaid respondents rated group effectiveness higher for 9 of the 13 parameters. From the largest to smallest mean difference, these parameters were:

- 1) educating the group;
- 2) dealing with critical sage-grouse conservation issues;
- 3) developing procedures to conduct business;
- 4) listening to different points of view;
- 5) staying on task during meetings;
- 6) preparing reports;
- 7) carrying out tasks and actions;
- 8) acknowledging success; and
- 9) communicating with external groups.

There was no difference in the group effectiveness rating for involving different interests and perspectives. Both paid and nonpaid respondents rated this parameter moderately effective. The slightly higher standard deviation for nonpaid participants indicates slightly more variability in their responses.

Paid respondents had higher group effectiveness ratings for:

- 1) resolving conflict;
- 2) networking with agencies, groups, and collaborators; and
- 3) fund-raising.

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

**Table 6.** Planning group effectiveness at the beginning and end of the planning process, and stratified by paid and nonpaid participants. For mean values, 1 is low, 3 moderate, and 5 high. SD is the standard deviation. MD is the difference between the mean values for paid and nonpaid respondents, respectively. Bold values are significantly different at  $P \leq 0.05$ .

Survey Question	Beginning of Process						End of Process					
	Paid		Nonpaid		MD	p-value	Paid		Nonpaid		MD	p-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD			Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
Dealing with critical sage-grouse conservation issues	2.42	1.09	2.68	1.12	0.26	0.16	3.13	1.15	3.48	1.13	0.35	0.07
Staying on task during meetings	2.67	1.11	2.88	1.06	0.21	0.22	3.04	1.07	3.35	1.03	0.31	0.08
Carrying out tasks and actions	2.73	0.92	2.85	0.95	0.12	0.43	2.96	1.06	3.29	1.02	0.33	0.06
Listening to different points of view	3.07	1.03	3.29	1.09	0.22	0.21	3.42	0.97	3.40	1.17	-0.02	0.88
Developing procedures to conduct business	2.83	0.96	3.06	0.94	0.23	0.12	3.46	3.71	3.13	1.05	-0.33	0.47
Involving different interests and perspectives	3.07	1.04	3.07	1.12	0.00	0.97	3.27	1.12	3.18	1.13	-0.09	0.63
Preparing reports	2.55	1.01	2.74	1.19	0.19	0.30	2.96	1.00	3.43	1.07	0.47	<b>0.03</b>
Fund-raising	1.56	0.82	1.55	1.02	-0.01	0.95	1.94	0.98	1.85	1.05	-0.09	0.63
Resolving conflict	3.03	3.61	2.69	1.15	-0.34	0.45	3.04	1.13	3.04	1.17	0.00	0.99
Communicating with external groups	2.76	0.93	2.77	1.14	0.01	0.93	3.01	1.09	3.11	1.19	0.10	0.64
Educating the group	3.18	1.03	3.72	4.74	0.54	0.34	3.34	1.08	3.22	1.16	-0.12	0.54
Networking with agencies, groups, and collaborators	3.22	1.01	3.04	1.10	-0.18	0.31	3.28	1.06	3.25	1.20	-0.03	0.87
Acknowledging success	2.80	0.96	2.85	1.04	0.05	0.77	3.06	1.01	3.30	1.13	0.24	0.19

## **Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants**

At the end of the planning process, paid and nonpaid respondents rated all group effectiveness parameters, except for fund-raising as moderately effective. Both groups rated fund-raising as slightly effective. Preparing reports was the only group effectiveness parameter with a significant difference ( $P \leq 0.05$ ) between paid and nonpaid respondents. Nonpaid respondents identified a significantly higher ( $P \leq 0.05$ ) group effectiveness rating. Nonpaid respondents rated six group effectiveness parameters higher than did paid respondents. From the largest to smallest mean difference, these were:

- 1) preparing reports;
- 2) dealing with critical sage-grouse conservation issues;
- 3) carrying out tasks and actions;
- 4) staying on task during meetings;
- 5) acknowledging success; and
- 6) communicating with external groups.

There was no difference between paid and nonpaid respondents for resolving conflict. Both rated the process moderately effective. Paid respondents rated six areas more effective than nonpaid respondents. From the largest to smallest mean difference these were:

- 1) developing procedures to conduct business;
- 2) educating the group;
- 3) involving different interests and perspectives;
- 4) fund-raising;
- 5) networking with agencies, groups, and collaborators; and
- 6) listening to different points of view.

### **Personal Experiences During the Planning Process**

The survey measured six parameters related to the quality of each participant's personal experiences during the planning process. Both paid and nonpaid respondents identified strong (value = 2) to moderate (value = 3) agreement for all six parameters about the quality of their personal experience during the planning process (See Table 7). Respondents generally indicated that their viewpoint was heard, they were valued as a group member, they felt comfortable in their group, made a contribution to their group, that their group's recommendations were part of the final plan and that UNCE's

**Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants**

**Table 7.** Respondents' opinions about the quality of their personal experiences (1 = strongly agree and 5 = strongly disagree) at the end of the planning process. Results are stratified by paid and nonpaid participants. SD is standard deviation. MD is the difference between the mean values for paid and nonpaid participants.

Survey Question	<u>Paid</u>		<u>Nonpaid</u>		MD	p-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
I felt my viewpoint was heard	2.47	0.93	2.46	1.12	0.01	0.91
I felt valued as a group member	2.38	0.89	2.63	1.09	-0.25	0.13
I felt comfortable in the group	2.16	0.80	2.30	0.88	-0.14	0.28
I felt that I made a contribution to the group	2.18	0.80	2.31	0.91	-0.13	0.36
I felt my group's recommendations were incorporated into the final plan	2.51	0.94	2.55	1.06	-0.04	0.81
I felt that UNCE's facilitation was important to our group's success	2.14	1.10	2.27	1.17	-0.13	0.46



## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

facilitation of the process effort contributed to their group's success. The mean value for each parameter was statistically similar ( $P \geq 0.05$ ). None of the comparisons between paid and nonpaid respondents had an absolute mean difference larger than 0.25, and five had a mean difference of 0.14 or less.

For nonpaid respondents, two trends are evident. First, the mean value of their responses usually was higher than that of paid respondents. This indicates slightly less agreement with paid respondents for five of the six parameters measured. Also, nonpaid respondents had a higher standard deviation for each attribute. The larger standard deviations indicate greater variability in the answers of nonpaid respondents. As a group, nonpaid respondents appear slightly less satisfied and more variable with their personal experiences than were their paid colleagues.

### Overall Experience

There was no significant difference between paid and nonpaid respondents with respect to their experiences as part of the sage-grouse planning process or their belief about how effective proposed actions will be for conserving sage-grouse (See Table 8). Both groups considered their efforts moderately good and the proposed actions moderately effective. There was equal variation in their respective responses about their experience as part of the conservation planning process. Nonpaid respondents did have slightly more variation in their responses about the effectiveness of the proposed actions for conserving sage-grouse.

Despite a long collaborative planning process, neither paid nor nonpaid respondents changed their sense of trust with government agencies. The mean value of both groups was virtually neutral (value = 3). Nonpaid respondents, however, had substantially higher variability in their responses. Nonpaid respondents were significantly ( $P \leq 0.05$ ) more likely to state they would continue with the planning process or participate in plan implementation.

Both paid and nonpaid respondents provided suggestions for improving the collaborative planning process (See Table 9). There was a significant difference ( $P \leq 0.01$ ) in the distribution of responses between paid and nonpaid respondents. Paid respondents were much more likely to suggest the following improvements:

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

**Table 8.** Paid and nonpaid survey respondents' ratings about outcomes of the group planning process and their likelihood of remaining involved in sage-grouse conservation planning. SD is standard deviation. MD is the difference between mean values for paid and nonpaid respondents. Bold p-values are significantly different at  $P \leq 0.05$ .

Survey Question	<u>Paid</u>		<u>Nonpaid</u>		MD	p-value
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD		
How would you rate your experience being part of the sage-grouse conservation planning process? <i>(1 = not good to 4 = very good)</i>	2.76	0.89	2.60	0.90	0.16	0.26
How effective do you feel the proposed actions will be in terms of conserving the sage-grouse? <i>(1 = not effective to 4 = very effective)</i>	2.48	0.78	2.60	0.94	-0.12	0.37
How has your sense of trust in governmental agencies changed because of this process? <i>(1 = much worse to 5 = much better)</i>	2.94	0.59	3.01	0.78	-0.07	0.54
Will you continue to stay involved with sage-grouse conservation planning or plan implementation in the future? <i>(1 = yes and 2 = no)</i>	1.08	0.27	1.22	0.45	-0.14	<b>0.02</b>

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

**Table 9.** Respondents' qualitative responses for how they would improve the collaborative planning process.

Suggestion	Paid		Nonpaid	
	n	%	n	%
Fewer meetings, shorter process, less bureaucracy, and better information dissemination	7	10	8	14
Better define the problem, goals, objectives, and success	7	10	1	2
Continue to meet, plan, and implement	7	10	3	5
Too many interest groups	7	10	1	2
Involve wider range of interest groups	6	8	7	12
More collaboration/better consensus	5	7	11	19
Less government agency involvement	4	6	5	9
Improve facilitation	4	6	0	0
More field trips, field research or projects	4	6	3	5
Increase funding	3	4	0	0
Better coordination between Governor's Conservation Team and local groups	3	4	1	2
Eliminate consensus building	2	3	0	0
More agency commitment	2	3	2	3
Better focus on hard issues and historical trends in resources and bird numbers	1	1	3	3
More technical support/information	1	1	2	3
Improve agency accountability/responsibility	0	0	4	7
Other	5	7	7	12

## **Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants**

- 1) continue to meet;
- 2) plan and implement;
- 3) improve facilitation;
- 4) reduce the number of interest groups; and
- 5) better define the problem, goals, objectives and definition of success.

Nonpaid respondents were much more likely to cite the need for more collaboration and better consensus, and improved agency accountability and/or responsibility. The percent of paid and nonpaid respondents providing other suggestions was similar.

### **UNCE's Facilitation**

#### **Strengths**

The distribution of responses between paid and nonpaid respondents about the strengths of UNCE's facilitation effort (See Table 10) had a trend toward a statistically significant difference ( $P=0.15$ ). Paid and nonpaid respondents commented on most facilitation strengths in roughly the same proportion. Paid respondents, however, were twice as likely to state that the facilitators kept the group focused and on track. Nonpaid respondents had a relatively large number of comments that could not be classified into a discrete category.

#### **Improving Facilitation**

Suggestions for improving UNCE's facilitation effort trended toward a statistically significant ( $P=0.11$ ) distribution between paid and nonpaid respondents (See Table 11). Paid respondents commented more often about the need for facilitators to remove bias from the process. Nonpaid respondents commented more about the need for UNCE to remain involved and/or be present for all meetings, have better communication with producers and laymen, involve a wider range of respondents, and/or obtain better input from respondents. Among these suggestions, the only ones that facilitators have control over are being present for all meetings and obtaining better participation from producers. The suggestion that UNCE's facilitators remain involved does not identify a facilitation weakness, but is a request for UNCE to remain engaged in future planning efforts. Having a wider range of participants is the role of the project's proponents and sponsors, not the facilitator. A facilitator's role is to enhance communication among those present, not to get them to the table.

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

**Table 10.** Paid and nonpaid respondents' qualitative responses about the strengths of UNCE's facilitation effort.

Strength	Paid		Nonpaid	
	n	%	n	%
Facilitator was good, excellent, professional or experienced	22	22	17	22
Conflict resolution, consensus building, or allowing all viewpoints to be heard	22	22	13	17
Kept the group focused/on track	21	21	8	10
Provided organization	10	10	7	9
Kept things moving	10	10	8	10
Neutral, objective, or fair	6	6	8	10
Provided leadership	4	4	3	4
Brought in outside resources	3	3	4	5
Other	0	0	9	12

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

**Table 11.** Respondents' suggestions about how to improve UNCE's facilitation effort.

Suggested Improvement	Paid		Nonpaid	
	n	%	n	%
Remove bias	8	15	5	8
Provide stronger, better or more facilitators	7	13	6	10
Better define goals, end products or success	6	11	5	8
Move process quicker or remain on task	4	7	3	5
Ensure that facilitators have better knowledge of subject matter	3	5	3	5
Remain involved	3	5	6	10
Less process and more result	2	4	2	3
Use technology to reduce travel	1	2	0	0
Make sure all know the facilitators' role	1	2	1	2
Schedule meetings to accommodate participants' schedules	1	2	1	2
Provide better administrative support	1	2	0	0
Facilitators present for all meetings	1	2	4	7
Improve communication with producers/laymen	1	2	6	10
Wider range of participants or better input from participants	1	2	5	8
Have less government involvement	0	0	2	3
Have continuity among government participants	0	0	4	7
Other	7	13	4	7
Do not know	8	15	6	10

### DISCUSSION

There were numerous statistically significant differences between paid and nonpaid respondents. Paid respondents were overwhelmingly government employees and nonpaid respondents largely farmers and ranchers. Nonpaid participants were engaged for a significantly ( $P \leq 0.05$ ) shorter period of time (Figures 1 and 2). This may be related to several qualitative reasons they identified for ending their participation (Table 3). Nonpaid respondents were more likely to quit from frustration due to poor communication and/or a perception about lack of progress. Also, they were much more likely to state that there was too much input from government agencies and their viewpoint was not being heard or valued. Ryan et al. (2006) noted that 60% of the respondents who quit the planning process early identified two reasons: 1) lack of time or other commitments and 2) their job or job assignments changed. Both paid and nonpaid participants that ended their participation early identified the cause equally as insufficient time and/or other commitments. Paid participants were nine times more likely to quit early because their job assignment changed. These data suggest that government agencies can make a long-term commitment to a planning process but their individual employees cannot. The lack of continuity at the individual level may be critical if an individual's local knowledge, or knowledge gained during the planning process, dramatically improves the group's ability to develop ecologically sound management goals, objectives and implementation actions at the appropriate spatial and temporal scales. Ranchers and farmers often have long tenure on a landscape, which can provide invaluable insight through anecdotal observation. Their input, however, is only from their perspective. It is important and invaluable but seldom complete. Collaborative planning processes are less likely to succeed or at least achieve the best possible outcome when they lose participants with long-term institutional and/or anecdotal/observational information that complements information provided by ranchers, farmers and other local residents.

One unexpected outcome was nonpaid participants being slightly less likely to quit earlier than paid participants because their travel distance was too far or costs too expensive (Table 3). Paid participants typically have their travel costs covered by their employer, yet they were slightly more likely to identify travel costs and/or time as a reason to end their participation early.

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

The general lack of significant differences for the amount of time committed to most planning activities (Figures 3a-3d) suggests that the type of planning activity, not a participant's status as paid or nonpaid, largely determines the amount of time an individual commits to the process. The only significant difference between paid and nonpaid participants was preparation for meetings (Figure 3c). Only about 10% of nonpaid respondents committed more than four hours per month toward meeting preparation. Forty percent of paid participants committed more than four hours per month toward meeting preparation. Paid participants were more than three times as likely to commit more than 10 hours per month to meeting preparation. These results strongly suggest that collaborative planning processes that require substantial inputs of preparation time between organized meetings will have less input from nonpaid participants. The results do not clarify whether lower time inputs from nonpaid participants were because of: 1) time constraints related to their job, farm or ranch commitments that were additive to the sage-grouse planning effort; or 2) whether the specific preparation tasks required data and/or other resources for which paid participants (mostly government employees) had either easier or sole access. If the latter were true, it may explain why nonpaid participants who ended their participation early in the planning process were likely to state their viewpoint was not being heard or valued, and/or there was too much agency involvement (Table 3). Participants who spent more time collecting data or information about contentious issues probably had more input at meetings and ultimately more influence on group decisions.

The data indicate that neither paid nor nonpaid participants readily pursue fund-raising and grant writing activities (Figure 3d). Both tasks are time- and labor-intensive, and individuals who regularly raise funds and/or write grants typically have supplemental training and/or education in these tasks. Also, they have time dedicated toward these activities. After preparing for, traveling to and participating in planning meetings, both paid and nonpaid respondents probably had insufficient time to learn the nuances of grant writing and fund-raising, let alone adequate skills for these tasks. There undoubtedly was a large opportunity cost related to their work or careers. Time-intensive collaborative planning processes, which include high-cost implementation phases funded largely from external grants, are unlikely to acquire adequate funds if the only labor and expertise available are from the planning group. Resources will have to be provided to hire professional fund-raising staff.



## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

More than 50% of respondents identified a slight to high knowledge gain for 11 of 13 planning group functions (Ryan et al., 2006). Knowledge gains for six group functions, however, were not equal ( $P \leq 0.05$ ) between paid and nonpaid participants (Figure 4). Some of the similarities, however, may be more important than the differences. Both paid and nonpaid respondents identified moderate, but similar ( $P \geq 0.05$ ) improvement for their ability to respect different perspectives, their knowledge about natural resources, their understanding of sagebrush habitat and their understanding of sage-grouse biology. This represents an important positive outcome from the collaborative planning process. Both groups, regardless of their actual or perceived knowledge at the beginning of the process, enhanced their ability to listen to others, discuss complex subject matter, and synthesize relevant material – all essential tasks for completion of a collaborative management plan.

Of potential concern is why both paid and nonpaid respondents expressed only a slight improvement in their ability to solve natural resource issues and create action plans (Figure 4). Both groups indicated a moderate gain in their understanding of sagebrush habitat and sage-grouse biology (Figure 4), but appeared less able to transfer knowledge gains into tangible efforts to solve natural resource issues and/or create action plans. This suggests that participants in collaborative planning processes must focus not only on improving their technical and scientific knowledge, but also about how they can transfer knowledge gains at the individual and group levels into discrete and realistic action plans. More collective knowledge, without the ability to use that knowledge to develop acceptable solutions, may be the underlying reason why nonpaid participants expressed frustrations about lack of group progress, viewpoints not being heard and too much agency involvement (Table 3).

Most respondents who were engaged in the planning process when they completed the survey stated they planned to continue with future planning efforts (Figure 5). For participants who stated they were quitting the process, their reasons (Table 4) had substantial overlap with respondents who quit before the draft plans were submitted (Table 3). This suggests that some roadblocks to participation were never corrected. After plan submission, similar numbers of paid respondents said they would not continue because they lacked time, were changing jobs or were frustrated with the process. Nonpaid respondents, however, were much more likely to quit because they viewed the planning process as ineffective. The nonpaid respondents' perceptions

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

about the lack of an effective process may reflect their smaller gains in knowledge and skills for their ability to:

- 1) facilitate a planning group;
- 2) solve natural resource issues;
- 3) help a group function;
- 4) communicate in groups;
- 5) create action plans; and
- 6) provide group leadership.

These results further illustrate that implementing, sustaining and successfully concluding a collaborative planning process through plan implementation requires substantially more than improving technical knowledge of the subject material. Collaborative processes must not only let participants be heard but incorporate their input into the solutions.

Respondents' replies about how participation affected their knowledge and abilities for 13 planning process parameters provides some, but not complete, insight about how paid and nonpaid participants rated group effectiveness. Moderate gains in knowledge about sage-grouse biology and sagebrush habitats (ecology) by both groups (Figure 4) apparently resulted in substantial and statistically significant increases in group effectiveness for dealing with critical sage-grouse conservation issues (Table 5), at least from the "science" perspective. Nonpaid participants identified significant improvements in group effectiveness for staying on task during meetings and carrying out tasks and actions (Table 5), but small gains in their individual ability to help groups function and communicate (Figure 4). This suggests that participants had the ability to recognize and separate individual and group benefits. Also, it suggests that a few of the individuals in each planning group may have had a disproportionate influence on group success. Support for these conclusions is suggested by the low (nonpaid) to slight (paid) rating that respondents indicated for improvements in their ability to provide group leadership, compared to the moderate (>3.0) to moderately high ratings both respondent groups indicated for most group effectiveness parameters (Table 5). At the individual level (Figure 4), both paid and nonpaid respondents identified low knowledge and skill for their ability to create action plans, but significant improvements for preparing reports. These results, collectively, support the notion that group efforts provide a better and/or more effective result than individuals working separately. The planning groups, in other

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

words, were more than the sum of their individual parts.

It is unclear why nonpaid participants identified a substantial decline in group effectiveness for educating the group (Table 5). This decline may reflect a low rating from respondents who either had quit or planned to quit the planning process and believed the process lacked progress or was ineffective, felt that their viewpoint was not heard, or valued or thought there was too much agency involvement (Tables 3 and 4).

Both paid and nonpaid respondents rated most planning effectiveness parameters similarly ( $P>0.05$ ) at the beginning and end of the process (Table 6). The values of these data, however, are the magnitude and directional changes of the mean differences, not the lack of statistical significance. At the beginning of the process, nonpaid respondents rated nine of the 13 group effectiveness parameters higher than paid respondents. At the end of the process, three of these parameters – educating the group, developing procedures to conduct business, and listening to different points of view – were rated as more effective by paid respondents. All three parameters are critical for keeping individual participants engaged, and participants who perceive themselves as ineffective in one or more of these parameters probably are susceptible to frustration and more likely to quit the process. Paid respondents identified larger gains for these three parameters and at the end of the process rated them higher than did nonpaid respondents. This may shed light on why more nonpaid respondents quit or planned to quit the process at higher rates than paid participants. Nonpaid members (i.e., volunteer participants) who believed they did not improve group effectiveness for: 1) listening to different points of view; 2) developing efficient procedures for conducting business; or 3) educating group members about their perspectives, probably were more likely to leave the process. This occurred, in part, because the planning process was a time-intensive multi-year activity. This is especially true for reasons other than a change in job assignment.

A desired outcome of the planning process was the similarity between paid and nonpaid respondents for the quality of their individual experiences during the planning process (Table 7). The planning process was a time-consuming multi-year activity. For many nonpaid participants, the outcome and/or the subsequent implementation phase may have had a direct effect on their agricultural operations, potentially affecting their finances. Their participation and cooperation, however, is critical for successful

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

implementation of the conservation actions developed by each planning group. If nonpaid participants, as a group, had perceived they were not treated as equal players with paid participants (mostly government employees) then it is even more probable they would have discontinued future efforts (see Tables 2 and 4).

The lack of significant differences ( $P \leq 0.05$ ) between paid and nonpaid groups about the quality of their experience (Table 7) may be less important than the actual values they reported. The mean response for both groups was between neutral and strongly agree (value = 1); thus, respondents generally had a positive perspective. For both paid and nonpaid respondents, the question with the strongest agreement was “UNCE’s facilitation was important to our group’s success.” The intent of facilitation is to make participants comfortable and to maximize their input and contributions. The opinion parameters with the next highest level of positive agreement were “I felt comfortable in the group” and “I felt that I made a contribution to the group.” Responses to these two questions also had the smallest variability (i.e., standard deviation) among respondents. Both the positive response and the comparatively smaller standard deviation, collectively, suggest that the facilitated effort helped most participants believe they were equal contributors to the planning effort.

Paid and nonpaid participants had positive opinions about their involvement in the larger scale planning process, but this did not translate into an equal willingness for continued involvement (Table 8). Nonpaid respondents were significantly more likely ( $P \leq 0.05$ ) to leave the planning process when draft plans were submitted. Two factors may account for this outcome. First, a minority of nonpaid respondents thought the process was ineffective, but they outnumbered their paid counterparts by three to one (Table 4). Second, 31% of paid respondents were continuing their effort because it was part of their job (Table 4). If they had a choice, some may have opted out of future efforts.

The significantly different distribution of responses about how to improve the planning process (Table 9) is largely the result of different perspectives about the involvement of different interest groups, collaboration and consensus. Paid respondents (overwhelmingly government employees) were divided about whether to increase or decrease the number of interest groups participating and/or their breadth. They had a similar division about more or less consensus-building. Nonpaid respondents were nearly unanimous (18 of 19 comments) in their support for involving more interest

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

groups and increasing collaboration. Also, not a single paid respondent commented about improving agency accountability and responsibility, but 7% of the comments by nonpaid respondents stated otherwise. These collective data suggest that a large minority of paid respondents believed the planning process would have been “better” (i.e., smoother, quicker) if the nonpaid interest groups had not been involved. This belief was diametrically opposite to that of a large number of nonpaid participants. This probably explains why nonpaid respondents who quit the process early (38%) readily identified issues related to frustration, their viewpoints not being heard, and too much agency involvement (Table 3).

Paid respondents commented much more frequently that the planning groups needed to better define the management problem, management goals and objectives, and measurements of success (Table 9, row 2). These comments parallel the finding that paid respondents believed the planning groups were “less effective” at dealing with critical sage-grouse conservation issues, carrying out tasks and actions, and creating action plans (Table 6). This result may reflect the low ratings (i.e., slightly effective) that paid respondents had about their knowledge gain for their ability to help solve natural resource issues and influence public policy (Figure 4). The moderate gain in knowledge and understanding about sagebrush habitats and sage-grouse biology identified by both groups was judged insufficient to create appropriate management goals, objectives and measurements of success by seven paid respondents, but only one nonpaid respondent (Table 9). This begs the question, did these seven individuals have unrealistic expectations about the planning process or superior knowledge about the complexity of the issue, but knowledge they were unable to convey to the other participants? The answer remains unknown.

All of the respondents’ comments about the strength of UNCE’s facilitators revolved around parameters that a facilitator can control (Table 10). Substantial overlap among comments, and a similar proportion of individuals providing the same comments, strongly suggests that the facilitators created a viable working environment for both paid and nonpaid participants. This is supported by the moderately strong belief among paid and nonpaid respondents that UNCE’s facilitation role was important to the group’s success (Table 7, line 6). Many participants, however, lacked a clear understanding about a facilitator’s role (Table 11). Most comments about the facilitators’ weaknesses addressed issues outside the facilitators’ control or responsibility. For example, better

## **Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants**

defining the goals, end products and definitions of success; scheduling meetings to accommodate participants' schedules; involving more groups and/or less government; and maintaining continuity among government participants are not components of the facilitators' role. These responsibilities belong with the participants and/or the sponsoring agencies. Facilitators are process experts, not subject matter experts. Their role is to enhance and clarify the exchange of information among participants during meetings. Finally, continued involvement of facilitators largely depends upon the sponsoring agencies. If they identify a need for facilitators and provide appropriate financial (e.g., travel costs) and administrative support (e.g., preparation of minutes, meeting arrangements, etc.), facilitators are likely to remain engaged.

### **CONCLUSIONS**

Collaborative planning processes typically are composed of both paid and nonpaid participants, and probably other sub-populations. The sponsors of any collaborative planning process should realize there is the potential for substantial differences between numerous sub-populations. For a collaborative effort to deliver a complete and viable resource management plan there must be substantial, if not complete, input from all participants; hence, all sub-populations. Optimal input is more likely to occur when participants and sponsoring organizations understand the differences between the sub-groups that form a collaborative effort.

This study shows that paid (part of their job) and nonpaid (not a direct part of their job) participants in a collaborative planning effort will devote different amounts of time toward the effort. As the duration of the effort lengthens, and/or the amount of time required for specific tasks increases, paid participants are more likely to be the primary contributors. The participation of nonpaid participants drops off dramatically when any specific activity requires more than five hours of commitment per month.

Paid and nonpaid participants are likely to quit multi-year planning processes for very different reasons. Paid participants, largely government employees in this study, are much more likely to change jobs or responsibilities. Nonpaid participants (largely farmers and ranchers in this effort) are more likely to become frustrated with slowness and/or bureaucracy inherent in any collaborative effort. Little can be done to keep individuals from seeking new jobs in a different geographic area. Agencies, however, should consider keeping individuals who have changed jobs, but not work locations,

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

engaged in long-term planning activities throughout their duration. This is particularly true when institutional memory and/or local experience and relationships are critical for success.

When possible, the sponsors and participants of planning processes must find approaches that shorten the process to enhance the long-term participation of nonpaid participants. Every hour that nonpaid participants contribute to a planning process is an opportunity cost to their business. They either have to hire additional help to replace themselves or work additional hours. For multi-year processes, the burden eventually becomes too large and they end their participation at a higher rate than paid participants.

A facilitated effort can increase the technical knowledge needed by participants to develop a collaborative management plan. Both paid and nonpaid participants acknowledged almost equal gains in information about sage-grouse biology and sagebrush habitats. Technical knowledge gains, however, did not translate into similar knowledge gains for creating action plans or solving natural resource issues, particularly for the nonpaid participants. Individual gains in scientific knowledge about an issue become less valuable if the knowledge cannot be transferred into quality action plans that solve management issues. The lack of a significant gain in solving natural resource issues and creating action plans, however, does not mean that the majority of participants believed they were ineffective at doing these tasks.

For this planning effort, most of the participants were government agency staff, ranchers or farmers. The typical education level for most participants was a bachelor's degree, with very little formal training in research design and methodology, grant writing and fund-raising. The results clearly show that participants without extensive training in these areas will not obtain this knowledge through a collaborative planning process. If conducting research and obtaining external funds through grants are desired outcomes for participants of a collaborative planning process (and/or the subsequent implementation phase), the participants will need additional intensive training or the project's sponsors will have to hire external experts.

Both respondent groups identified relatively small gains in their individual ability to help groups function and communicate, but large gains in group effectiveness for staying on

## Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants

task, preparing reports, and dealing with critical issues. Participants had the ability to separate individual and group achievements, or lack thereof. This demonstrates that group efforts deliver a better product than individual efforts. The results also suggest that a small number of individuals in each planning group may have had a disproportionate influence on group success. The specific reasons why a few individuals in each group may have contributed to moderately high perceptions of group success is unclear. These individuals may have conducted the majority of the work (Ryan et al., 2006), had better knowledge and communication skills, or a combination of these and/or other unknown parameters.

Paid and nonpaid respondents had very different perspectives about the role of government agencies, the need to include a wide range of interest groups and the need for collaboration. Paid (government employee) respondents were less likely to identify the need for involving more interest groups and improving collaboration than were nonpaid respondents. Nonpaid respondents were more likely to state a need for less government involvement and better accountability and responsibility for government agencies. The responses for these issues were written qualitative statements from a minority of participants. It remains unclear whether these perceptions transcend the majority of both paid and nonpaid respondents. Regardless, future planning efforts must recognize that the different sub-populations of the planning group will have strong differences of opinion about the roles of government employees/agencies, collaboration, and participant interest groups. Since effective groups develop better products than individual members or sub-groups, it is imperative that potential barriers among sub-groups be eliminated or minimized to the extent possible. Also, the sponsoring agency must value and include input from collaborators in their action and implementation plans. If the sponsoring agency is unable or unwilling to include input from collaborators then it is better not to initiate a collaborative process. Lack of inclusion results in more than a loss of participants; credibility is lost, which erodes relationships with stakeholders. Participants, particularly nonpaid participants, are attending at a personal cost to themselves, their families and/or their business. They not only must feel they are being heard and their input valued, they must see some of their input incorporated into the process and future implementation projects. Otherwise it is not worth their personal commitment (i.e., opportunity cost) in time and money. At least a large minority of respondents illustrated a clear lack of understanding about the role of facilitators. Many of their suggestions about how to improve UNCE's facilitation effort have nothing to do



## **Nevada Sage-grouse Conservation Planning Facilitation Study: Paid vs. Nonpaid Participants**

with the roles and responsibilities of a facilitator (Bens, 1999). The sponsoring organizations need to ensure that all participants understand the specific purpose and role of a facilitator. Only then will participants have appropriate expectations.

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