

Background and Justification

The agriculture industry in Ontario is consistently plagued with complex policy issues arising from multi-stakeholder interests; both farm and non-farm oriented. With future policy developments adopting approaches that build social capital and capacity, minimum conflict among the regulator and the regulated can be achieved. Successful agricultural policy is argued to rely on collaboration, communication, and learning to develop trust and understanding among multi-stakeholders. There is, however, limited available information regarding the roles which learning and knowledge transfer and translation through meaningful dialogue have in the development of policy. Riege and Lindsay (2006) confirm in noting that “[h]ow knowledge management theories and frameworks are applied in the public sector is not well understood due to little evidence being published in the literature” (p. 24). My research will investigate the processes involved between stakeholders that resulted in the development and implementation of Nutrient Management policy in Ontario. The specific collaborative and social capital building processes executed in this development are of large focus.



Source: Ontario 9-1-1 Advisory Board, 2010



Source: The Blue Shink Blog, 2012

Research Goals and Objectives

- 1) To assess the perspective to the major stakeholders (provincial government, municipalities, producers and non-farm interests) in the development of Nutrient Management regulation and compliance management in Ontario.
- 2) Develop and carry out an assessment of the role of learning and dialogue in creating trust and understanding among stakeholders in the development of provincial nutrient management policy and the larger advisory committee process.
- 3) Conduct an assessment of the collaborative tools utilized in the formation and implementation of current and successful nutrient management policy in Ontario using the Deliberative Democratic Evaluation model.
- 4) Development of a collaborative model to facilitate policy formation, implementation, and the building of social capacity utilizing the processes executed in the development of current nutrient management policy in Ontario.

Methodology

- **Literature Review**
 - Nutrient management and policy in Ontario
 - Collaborative planning theory
 - Deliberative Democratic Evaluation Model
 - Social learning and capacity building
 - Dialogue and communication in multi-stakeholder decision making
- **Key Informant Interviews**
 - Ontario Provincial Government Agencies
 - Examples: *OMAFRA and MOE*
 - Farming Organizations
 - Examples: *Ontario Cattlemen's Association, OFA, etc.*
 - Local Government/Municipalities
 - Examples: *Wellington County, ROMA, etc.*
 - ENGOs, Academia, and Public Interest
 - Examples: *Ducks Unlimited, University of Waterloo, etc.*

* KII's are semi-structured and executed using the Delphi method.



Deliverables

- 1) Identification of the processes and steps involved in successful policy development in Ontario.
- 2) Identification of the specific roles of learning, knowledge transfer and translation, and effective dialogue in the formation of successful policy development.
- 3) Identification of the limiting factors or barriers to successful policy formation and implementation and how they relate to the capacities of the various stakeholders.
- 4) Development of a collaborative model for successful future policy development using the Deliberative Democratic Evaluation model.

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