

USGS Leadership 201
Action Learning Scenarios
Electronic Presentation

1. “#Water – Think USGS”
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3. Team Members:
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Rona Peters, Regional Management Officer, Pacific and Alaska Regions
4. Class Date: July 21-25, 2014
5. Tools Used:
 - a. Ground Rules – Set the stage on how to work together and summarized our daily activities/advancements.
 - b. Visual Explorer – helped us frame the question
 - c. Polarity – Pivoting point for the group. Activity was performed to determine what we would focus – determined single topic under a larger umbrella
 - d. Stick ‘Em Up Brainstorming – Performed twice to determine public value and excitement of water. Generated a large list of the uses of water.
 - e. Storytelling – This session made us realize that USGS does not tell enough stories to support this broader mission. A disconnect of our science from our stories. It was here that we also realized that there is a culture change that needs to occur. It was clear that our lack of taking ownership prevents us from telling effective stories.
 - f. Converging Grid – Assisted in identifying the Acceptability and Implementation of a cultural change of better science storytelling within USGS
 - g. PMI Pillow – Assisted in determining the overarching program to be communicated: Water Availability
 - h. Wordle – Used to represent our problem from USGS reports
 - i. Dictionary – Generated additional thoughts
 - j. Brain Writing – Generated additional thoughts
 - k. 5 Why’s and a How – Generated additional thoughts
6. Recommendations/Implementations:

The Problem:

- There are numerous examples of USGS science being used by other entities where USGS contribution and involvement is not identified.
- USGS needs to take ownership of our Water Science activities and become the leader for Water Science in the Nation to attain more appropriated funding.

Recommendations:

- It is necessary to raise the visibility of USGS water science to attain more appropriated funding.
- USGS needs to undergo a culture change to foster and train our employees to communicate their science in a more effective manner to connect to public needs and values such as competing and various uses, emotional attachments, economics and hazards.
- Implement a Campaign to establish USGS as the leader in Water Availability

USGS is going to own Water Availability

- It our mission;
- USGS provides the basis for sound decision making;
- We can focus on this without other mission areas being impacted;
- We have a national and international presence; and
- It addresses the whole water system and can be connected to all other USGS Water Science.

Implementation of the Cultural Change:

- 1) Take advantage of existing DOI and USGS investments in Water Census.
- 2) Use this as a framework for telling these USGS science stories.
- 3) To do that we will need to work with employees involved in the program to help them become comfortable and effective at telling stories.
- 4) Recognize that leadership will need to be comfortable with employees telling stories.
- 5) Public needs are captured by the headlines and activities that are occurring across the landscape.
- 6) Identify stories that USGS wants to tell and work with scientists to screen their stories to meet the public needs.
- 7) These stories need to be communicated in a timely manner as relevant societal issues arise or prior to them arising.
- 8) Quality of our science is essential to the USGS mission – work with OC and OSQI to make sure the stories maintain scientific integrity.
- 9) Representatives from OSQI, OC, SPN need to participate in the team to implement the initial program.
- 10) Team would help identify the stories that will be most effective to tell.
- 11) Create a mechanism for more field employees the opportunity to elevate interesting activities to be communicated.
- 12) Communication should be by further leveraging existing and cutting edge communication vehicles such as Twitter, Facebook, Instagram, U Tube.

13) As societal needs and values arise, we will need to be able to determine if there are associated science projects/stories to tell. This will require a database search tool on our science products and narratives/proposals.

Impact of this Approach

- Changing our stories so that they are now reflective of what the public wants to make the emotional connections. When they think of their water issues they will think of the USGS.
- If the public is more aware and recognizes the need for USGS water science then Congress, following the needs of their constituents, and the Administration will be likely to support USGS Water Mission.
- This can be expanded to other critical water science areas which will benefit from the cultural change being made.
- We are all here in Leadership 201 to learn how to be leaders in USGS.
- USGS needs to learn how to be a leader in Water Science through more effective story telling.