



May 30, 2007

I am a non-traditional student returning back to school to receive a bachelors degree in Natural Resource Management under plant, animal, and soil sciences. For the past two years I have been taking refresher courses as well as working on core classes. During the most recent semester (Spring 07) I was enrolled in NRM 106 Orientation to Natural Resource Management. As part of the class, I mapped out my future natural resource management courses last April. In addition to NRM 106 I also took the NRM 290 field trip course, Resource Management Issues at High Latitudes, this past spring.

In the NRM field trip course, I learned that one of the most important aspects of being a natural resource manager is communication. I noticed when we visited the various agencies and in the presentations that communication was the most important factor influencing decision making in resource issues with opposing sides. The manager is expected to present and speak for the proposed changes to inform the public of expected outcomes and results. It should not matter if the opposing opinions come from state agencies, federal agencies, recreational groups, conservation advocates, or the general public, the manager should remain professional in stating facts and expectations regardless of potential consequences. I agree with this process and the expected mitigating role of the manager between all parties.

Another example of good communication is the ability by the manager to remain professional in representing the views and policies of an agency. An example of this was illustrated during the field trip for a very small community. Representatives

from BLM, NPS, and AHTNA worked together to resolve an issue about easements through discussions and other types of communications. All three representatives made it perfectly clear that "...this is how my agency views this issue..." It was easy to tell that these agency employees worked well together regardless of the situation and were able to sustain their professional relationships as well as remain friends outside work while expressing views from opposing sides and their agency.

I am impressed with the mitigating work ethic, demonstrated to us during the field trip. Especially, the ability of resource managers to work together despite opposing opinions and still be able to interact, work together and consider each other as friends. Communication is the core of many jobs. For a process related to decision making that influences many people and opinions, communication is particularly critical. I agree with the professional mitigating model for natural resource managers to effectively communicate and I am willing to implement this process in future employment situations.