

Unit 2: Building a Vulnerability Assessment

Defining Objectives and Scope

*“If you don’t know where you’re going,
Any road will get you there.”* --Lewis Carroll

Good objectives help make sure you are solving the right problem

They are essential in order to

- Select an appropriate VA approach
- Identify necessary information
- Make decisions during the VA process
- Get the VA results used

VA objectives vs. conservation objectives

- VA objectives inform *the focus and scope of the assessment*
- VA can help in evaluation/identification of conservation goals and objectives

Setting goals and objectives for a VA

- What *problems* are you addressing?
- What *decisions* need to be supported?
- What do you ultimately want to *achieve*?



A few steps to help identify objectives

1. Write down all the concerns you hope to address after the VA is complete
 - What would be nice to know?
 - What's most important to know?
2. Translate concerns into succinct objectives

Translating concerns into objectives

1. Use directional language when possible

Concern: I want to do a vulnerability assessment for my park, but I'm worried it'll be really expensive.

Possible objectives:

- *Maximize* the extent assessed within park boundary
- *Minimize* cost of assessment

Translating concerns into objectives

2. Avoid objectives with ambiguous direction

Concern: I'm worried that I'll put a lot of effort into an assessment that never gets used.

Possible objective:

- Optimize the assessment to inform management decisions

Translating concerns into objectives

2. Avoid objectives with ambiguous direction

Concern: I'm worried that I'll put a lot of effort into an assessment that never gets used.

Possible objective:

- ~~– Optimize the assessment to inform management decisions~~
- Maximize engagement of targeted assessment users

Tips for writing good objectives

- Be clear:
 - What you want
 - When you want it
 - How you'd know (measure success)
- Focus on fundamental objectives more than how you'll achieve them

Getting to Fundamental Objectives

WITI – Why Is That Important?

When your answer is:

- *“Just because (it is an essential area of concern)”*
- *“It’s the law”*
- *“This is important”*
- *“Inherent value”*

You have reached a fundamental objective.

My objective is to acquire downscaled climate change projections for My Fabulous National Park

- *Why?*

My objective is to acquire downscaled climate change projections for My Fabulous National Park

- **Why? More exposure = more vulnerability and increased need for mgmt**
 - *Why manage and monitor?*

My objective is to acquire downscaled climate change projections for My Fabulous National Park

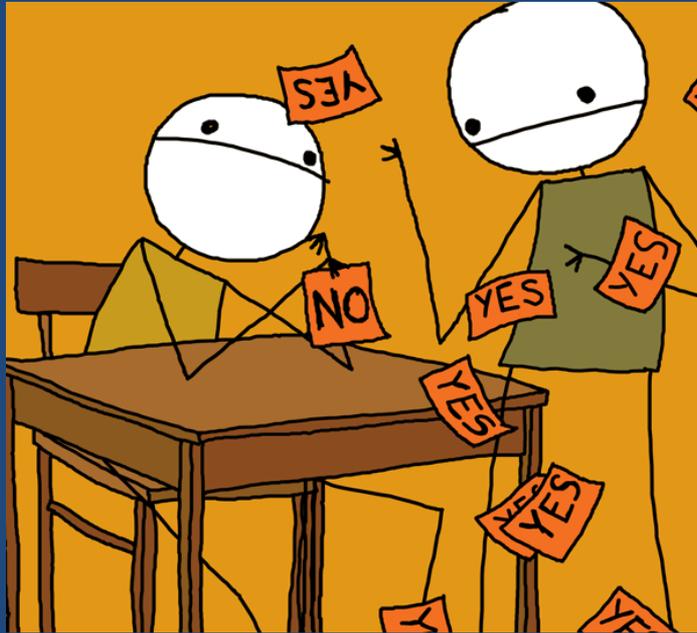
- Why? More exposure = more species response and increased need for mgmt
 - *Why manage and monitor?*
- **Because NPS is obliged to “conserve the scenery...and the wild life therein” (NPS Organic Act)**
 - **FUNDAMENTAL OBJECTIVE**

The objective of my CCVA is to understand the relative vulnerability of the species in my refuge to climate change.

My objective in performing a vulnerability assessment is to prioritize restoration projects.

My fundamental objective is to maximize the likelihood that the Ozark hellbender will be de-listed. I will do a CCVA to minimize the risk of selecting management measures that are highly vulnerable to climate change.

“Extra” or optional slides

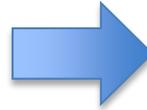


- A note on definitions

Broader **What Do We Hope to Accomplish and Why?** *More specific*

Agree
climate-
informed
goals

Goals
Overarching vision
for the
conservation effort;
the *why*

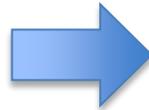


Objectives
More specific
outcomes in support
of goals;
the *what*

Broader **How Can We Accomplish This?** *More specific*

Identify
broad range
of options

**General
Strategies**



**Possible
Options**



**Specific
Actions**

Which Actions Should We Carry Out?

Evaluate,
compare, and
select actions

Which best
achieve
conservation
goals?

Which meet
climate-
smart
criteria?

How practical/
feasible are
they?