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SDM Workshop Reflection

I enjoyed the workshop, I think it was especially beneficial to me as a grad student hoping to work in management, to see a bunch of people with management experience game out a real management problem. Often through coursework we learn about examples of resource management problems and, in my experience at least, these are often fairly simple and straightforward. Often all of us reviewing the case study have similar world views and naturally come to similar conclusions. Assigning different roles representing different positions and then having a discussion was a lot more interesting in examining different viewpoints and the nuance of the problem.



Later at night after class ended I was still thinking about alternative options for solving the issue of dam removal. A sort of wild idea that came to me was to take advantage of new CRISPR gene editing techniques to create a lampricide resistant strain of northern brook lamprey and lake sturgeon that would allow you to remove the dam, treat for sea lamprey, and still maintain populations of brook lamprey and lake sturgeon. This got me thinking about how the outcome of the real life SDM workshop is likely quite sensitive to both the moment in history at which it takes place and the personalities of the people who are present, in addition to the moderator as we discussed. How repeatable might the results from original workshop be if you ran it many times? If you did it again this year how might things turn out differently? (you sort of hinted at this with your comment about the zoom format being both a blessing and a curse). If the participants had different life experiences might they interact differently? If by chance certain representatives have louder personalities might that affect the give and take between opposing viewpoints? This is something the social scientists I’ve worked with think about a lot. The outcome of a group exercise can be fairly sensitive to the mixture of personalities present.



I think SDM can be super useful in solving complex problems and I wonder if, in light of potential influences by personality types and historical setting, we should revisit unsolved problems periodically to see if a new personalities and societal changes allow for a new solution to emerge.

