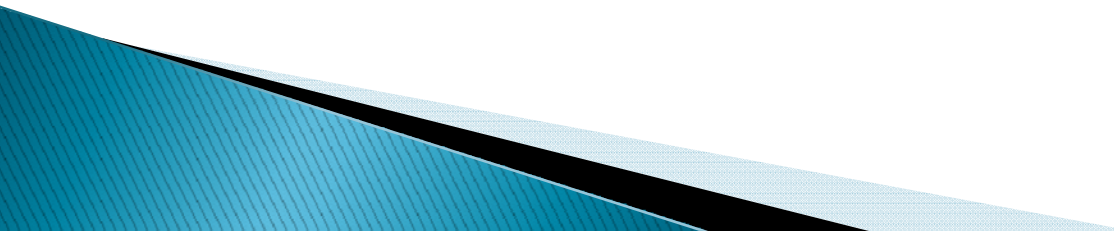


Foundations for Public Participation in Resources Development

Nickie Vlavianos
November 19, 2010

Key Questions

- ▶ Why is public participation in government decision-making necessary or desirable?
 - ▶ What does effective public participation look like?
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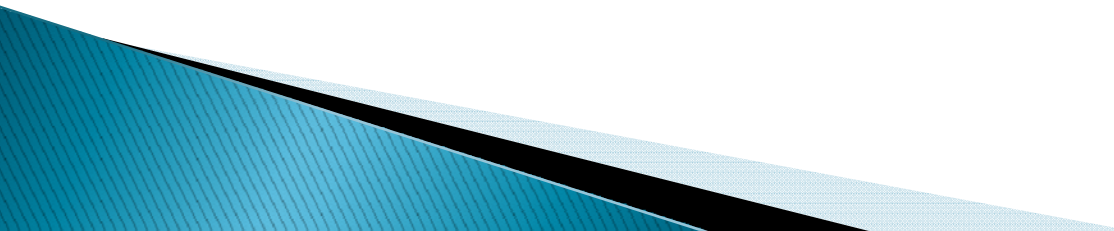
Political Aspects

“...the extent to which there should be public participation, and how it should occur, go straight to the heart of a nation’s political values, its concept of the state and the state’s relationship with its citizens, and its concept of how public business is properly carried out.”

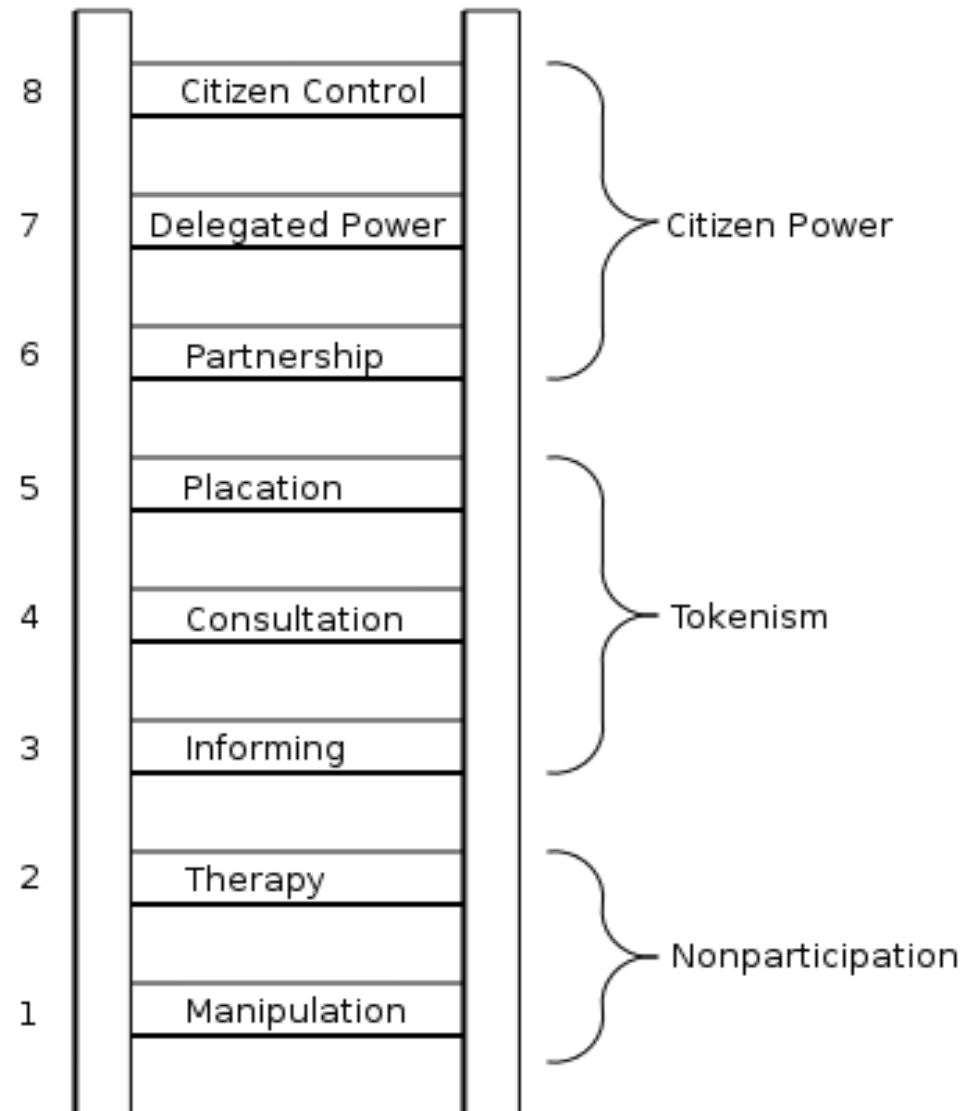
(Barry Barton)



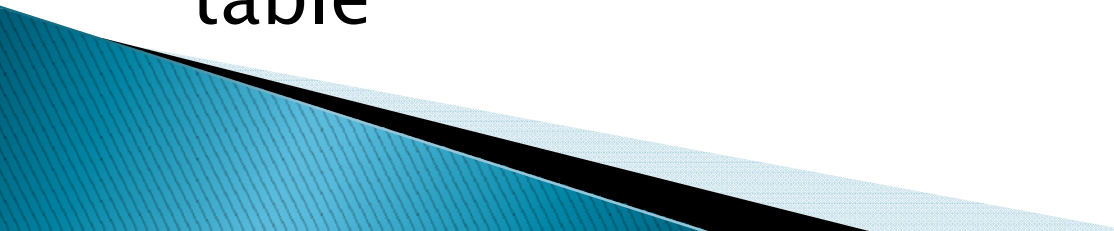
A Complex Topic

- ▶ Hard to define goals and how to achieve those goals
 - ▶ No universal definition
 - ▶ One size does not fit all
 - ▶ Can take many forms
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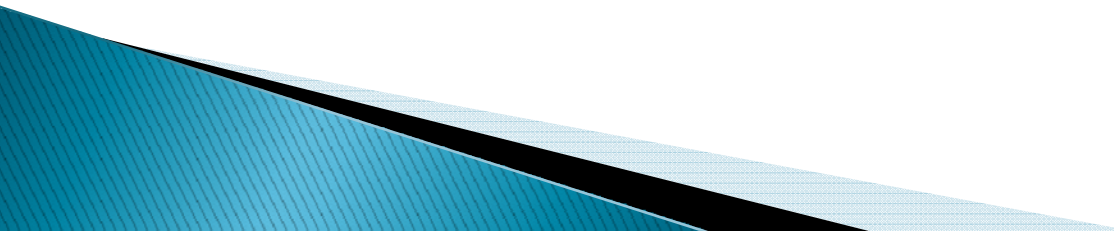
Arnstein's Ladder



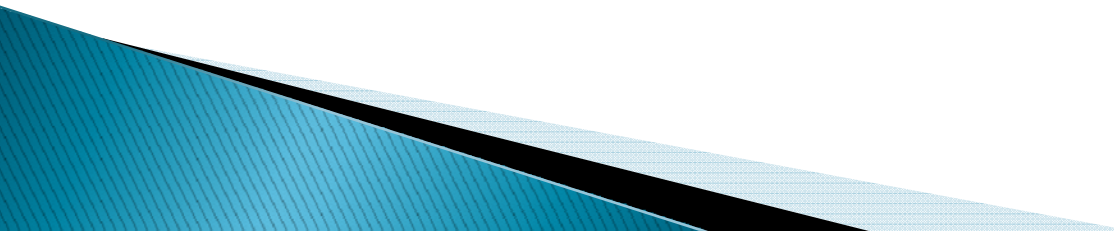
Rationale

- ▶ Sometimes required by law
 - ▶ Educates the public
 - ▶ Allows for better & unbiased decisions
 - ▶ Allows for broader information gathering
 - ▶ Is part of democracy
 - ▶ Legitimizes decisions
 - ▶ Allows for broader interests to be “at the table”
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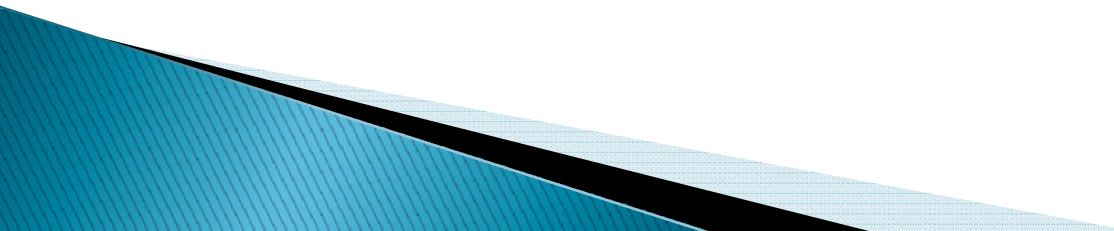
Rationale continued

- ▶ Increases accountability and transparency of governmental decision-making
 - ▶ Builds trust & collaborative relationships
 - ▶ Reduces transaction costs for all
 - ▶ Avoids & manages conflict
- 


Rationale continued

- ▶ Is justified/required because of the public nature of natural resources
 - ▶ Is justified/required in order to make decisions in the public interest
 - ▶ Is necessary/desirable because of the complex nature of resources management
 - ▶ “Sustainable Development” requires it
- 

Criteria

- ▶ Who will be part of the process?
 - *E.g.*, All those having an “interest” or only those “directly affected”?
 - If Albertans generally, how will stakeholder groups be chosen?
 - ▶ Appropriate Access
 - Especially for high level citizen engagement, includes clear rules on who will be at the table & removal of barriers to participate (financial and competence issues)
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Criteria continued

- ▶ Clear & Accepted Rules of Process
 - What rules will govern the process?
 - How will those rules be set?
 - *e.g.*, Timelines? Mandate? Rules of debate? Scope of debate? Access to Information? Conflict management? Outputs? Financial and competence barriers?
 - ▶ Equality, accountability, transparency and a lack of bias are key
 - ▶ Outcomes/Monitoring
- 

References

- ▶ Barry Barton, “Underlying Concepts and Theoretical Issues in Public Participation in Resources Development” in Zillman, Lucas, Pring, eds., *Human Rights in Resources Development* (Oxford, 2002) at 77
- ▶ Sherry R. Arnstein, “A Ladder of Citizen Participation” (1969) 35 *Journal of American Institute of Planners* 216