THE MIDEWIN NATIONAL TALLGRASS PRAIRIE: AN EXAMINATION OF TRUST BETWEEN NATURAL RESOURCE AGENCIES AND LOCAL COMMUNITIES

Case Study I

FINAL REPORT

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USDA Forest Service North Central Research Station

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Project background
In June 2003, the University of Minnesota (UMN), in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service (USFS) North Central Research Station, initiated a research project to better understand the relationships between natural resource management agencies and local communities. The fundamental assumptions of this project are: 1) trust is important to effective natural resource management, 2) by exploring agency-community associations in a variety of contexts, researchers can better understand dimensions of trust as well as identify factors and mechanisms that enhance and diminish trust, and in turn 3) researchers can develop a set of guidelines to help managers build trust between the agency and the local community. With these assumptions in mind, UMN and USFS researchers embarked on case studies of six federally protected natural areas in the Midwest and their local communities.

This report describes the research conducted at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie. The project's prime objectives are to:

1. Explore agency personnel and local community members' perceptions of trust between natural resource management agencies and communities.

2. Examine the expectations intrinsic to community members' trust in agencies.

3. Identify factors that promote or hinder the production and maintenance of trust.

4. Establish ways in which agencies can build and sustain trust between local community members and agencies.

We chose an interpretive research approach using in-depth interviewing and qualitative data analysis as the project's driving methodological framework for two reasons. First, trust is a highly complex, subjective, and dynamic phenomenon. Past research in social psychology suggests that while trust is fundamentally individual—granted and monitored through the culmination of a host of internal psychological processes, it is also deeply imbedded in a social context—expressed in social interactions and influenced by social processes. Second, relatively little empirical work has been done investigating trust in the context of natural resource management, making this project highly exploratory in nature.

Need for research
American citizens' overall trust in government has dramatically declined since the mid 1960s according to several public opinion polls. Wondolleck and Yaffee (2000) recognize that natural resource management agencies are facing similar challenges in garnering public trust and fostering citizen involvement. According to Frenz, Voth, Burns, & Sperry (2000) forging strong community relationships has a multitude of agency benefits, including increasing support for planning and management, generating a friendly work environment, improving access to local knowledge, and promoting collaboration.

The concept of trust
According to Barber (1983) trust is essential to every social relationship or social system and is integral to the exercise of power. Barber's definition of trust reflects two sets of expectations fundamental to a trusting relationship. The first is the expectation that an individual (or organization) is technically competent and able to perform well. In other words, for person A to trust person B, person A must perceive that person B has the expertise (i.e. combination of knowledge and skills) to act appropriately or make the right decisions. The second definition is tied to the expectation that an individual (or

organization) is morally competent and will show particular concern for others' values ahead of his or her own. Trust is granted if person A perceives that person B will not be self-serving in decision making.

Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie
In 1996 through the grassroots efforts of local community members and the direction of the USFS, the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie (Midewin) became the first national tallgrass prairie in the U.S. administered by the USFS. Although several restoration projects were quickly underway, according to community leaders, locals lamented the slow progress at Midewin, especially the lack of recreational opportunities available. To date six interim trails exist, but public access to the majority of the tallgrass prairie is limited to guided tours and volunteer restoration projects. According to Midewin officials, several sites within the Midewin are highly contaminated making safe public access a difficult task. Midewin serves as a unique setting for examining trust, since the local communities and the USFS have a relatively short history together. In the words of one community member, "We have never, in this part of the country, northeastern Illinois, dealt with a federal entity. This is new. This is unique."

Study methods
A sample of residents living in nearby communities and USFS personnel working at Midewin were interviewed. Community participants were identified through a network sampling scheme, in which key informants were contacted and asked to provide names of other community members who have a stake in the management of Midewin. The sampling plan was designed to capture a range of perspectives on the agency-community relationship. In total, 14 community members and seven agency personnel were interviewed during June 2003. It should be noted that eleven of the community participants resided or owned property within the immediate surrounding communities and three community participants resided in the larger northeastern Illinois community. A UMN researcher conducted all interviews.

On average, agency participants were in their forties, had been USFS employees for 16 years, and had worked at Midewin for four years (Table 1). Community participants' average age was 47. They had lived an average of 44 years in the community. Ninety-three percent of community participants and 57 percent of agency participants reported being involved in local organizations. Fifty percent of community participants and 47 percent of agency participants recreated at Midewin. The UMN field researcher used an interview guide (Appendix A) to keep participant comments focused during the interview process, while allowing participants the freedom to express their own perspectives. UMN researchers analyzed the interview text for insights and underlying themes related to study objectives. Data analysis followed qualitative analysis procedures as described by Strauss & Corbin (1997).

Study findings
Analysis of the 21 interviews uncovered several themes associated with participants' perceptions of trust, their expectations, and factors they perceive inhibit or promote trust. The study findings are arranged in four sections: 1) perceptions of trust, 2) components of trust, 3) challenges to trust, and 4) opportunities for trust.

Study participants were asked to characterize the agency-community relationship. Community members were asked if they as individuals trust the USFS. Both participant groups were asked if they believe adjacent communities trust the USFS to manage Midewin. Many study participants explained how important it is that the community trusts the agency. Overall, participants perceived trust to be important to proper functioning of the USFS at Midewin. The local communities' trust in the agency was described as playing a pivotal role in volunteerism and in turn, the success of prairie restoration projects.

Community participants were asked what they expect of natural resource management in managing natural resource areas and to what extent the USFS has met those expectations at Midewin. Overall, community participants' narratives reflect a clear set of expectations for the transaction (outcomes) and for the relationship (process) components of agency-community trust.

Within the transaction component of trust, three key themes emerged:

- Values
- Knowledge
- Capacity

Within the relationship component of trust, three distinct phases emerged:

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Cooperation

The first three themes represent expectations that community members have for the outcomes of management decisions and actions. Community participants expect that management decisions and actions will reflect or demonstrate certain values, knowledge, and capacity. Overall, community participants expressed a range of values for Midewin, which they believe should be protected by the USFS. A mix of knowledge and skills also was emphasized as imperative to effective management. The third theme, capacity, encompasses expectations for the USFS to accomplish what it sets out to do. The relationship component represents the expectations community members have for the process of decision making and action taking. Community participants expressed varying expectations with respect to three phases of the relationship: communication, collaboration, and cooperation.

Three categories of challenges emerged during data analysis: community-, agency-, and site-based challenges. Community-based challenges are tied to community attributes, such as community values, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. They include:

- Competing agency community values
- Limited understanding of agency within the community
- Lack of experience with agency planning process
- Little awareness of agency constraints and limitations
- Lack of restoration knowledge
- Lack of participation in planning

Agency participants also pointed to themselves, their own unit and the agency as being the source of some challenges to building trust. Agency-based challenges include:

- Limited community interactions
- Communication gaps
- Unclear communication
- Procedural requirements
- Slow planning process
- Heavy workload and small workforce
- Midewin identity within USFS

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The site, too, was deemed a source of challenges in promoting trust. Site-based challenges identified by agency participants are:

- Site condition
- Prairie ecology
- Size of unit

Community and agency participants identified several opportunities for building trust that exist in the Midewin local community. They include:

- Community support
- Shared values
- Clear mission
- Visible progress
- Dedicated and honest staff
- Communication tools
- Strong volunteer network
- Community benefits

Discussion and recommendations
The study findings support the notion that no single perspective captures the complexities and subjectivity of trust. The community's trust in the agency is multidimensional and is influenced by several different factors. Although the purpose of this study was not to measure trust, the findings suggest that many community members have a significant amount of trust in the USFS to manage Midewin. At the same time, the findings also indicate that trust is not absolute or eternal. Five recommendations are offered:

- Identify opportunities to incorporate local community values into management
- Identify and integrate local knowledge into management
- Demonstrate capacity to turn planning into action
- Prioritize long-term community relationship building
- Interpret management and empower community members

By seeking opportunities to incorporate community values into management programs and policies within the guiding framework of Midewin's mission, managers can bridge the gap between seemingly incompatible agency and community values. To do so, managers should go out into the local communities to identify community goals and ascertain how Midewin might fit into those goals.

Many agencies wisely have begun to employ the services of locals as interpreters and tour guides. The next step is to tap into the broader range of local expertise and become a hub for community learning. Midewin managers should identify a variety of local experts—historians, craftspeople, storytellers, artists, photographers, writers, agriculturalists, and recreationists to lead programs at Midewin, highlighting local knowledge. Community experts can serve as agency advisers and as a liaison between the agency and the community.

Many community participants were cognizant of examples of progress at Midewin—the new administration building, a riverbank restoration project, the seed beds. However, in general, participants were convinced that the community as a whole is less aware of progress and in turn, questions the agency's capacity. Therefore, not only do Midewin managers need to continue to make visible progress, but they also need to focus on increasing the community's awareness of the progress made.

One clear message from this study is that the USFS and the community need to get to know each other and build strong relationships. Although the mere passage of time may help, the USFS needs to prioritize relationship building and in particular community engagement to ensure that trust endures. Many agency participants stressed the importance of USFS personnel participating in community organizations and attending community events.

If managers are going to increase community participation, improve support for policies, and get community buy-in to agency programs, they must invest in management interpretation that demonstrates how the USFS works. The community needs the opportunity to learn who the USFS is, what Midewin means to the USFS, how the agency manages, and how it incorporates public input. Management interpretation should go beyond general management plans and Internet web pages. It needs to be understandable and relevant to the local community audience.

In June 2003, the University of Minnesota (UMN) Department of Forest Resources, in cooperation with the USDA Forest Service North Central Research Station, initiated a research project to better understand the relationships between natural resource management agencies and local communities. Since the 1960s, public disenchantment with the traditional top-down style of government decision making has spurred new initiatives giving citizens a voice in government programs. One such initiative is outlined in the National Environmental Protection Act of 1970, which mandates public involvement in natural resource planning and provides a framework for the public involvement process. As individual citizens and interest groups take on a more formidable role in natural resource decision making, issues of trust once again have taken center stage. Nowhere are natural resource decisions more contentious or issues of trust more relevant than in the communities adjacent to or encompassed by protected natural areas. For agencies, building trust in local communities can be daunting. These "gateway communities" are frequently the first to feel the effects of a protected area's establishment and its administering agency's programs and policies. Local community members, especially those with emotional attachments to or economic reliance on the area, regularly weigh the costs and benefits of management decisions. A community's trust in the agency plays a critical role in the effectiveness and durability of management decisions. Similarly, as agencies face budget cutbacks and pressures to provide more opportunities for higher quality recreation experiences to a growing and diversifying population, the need for partnerships and trust in management becomes dire.

The fundamental assumptions of this project are: 1) trust is important to effective natural resource management, 2) by exploring agency-community associations in a variety of contexts, researchers can better understand the multiple dimensions of trust and identify factors and mechanisms that enhance and diminish trust, and in turn 3) researchers can develop a set of guidelines to help managers build trust between the agency and the local community. With these assumptions in mind, USFS and UMN researchers embarked on six case studies of the following federally protected natural areas in the Midwest and their local communities:

- Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie (U.S. Forest Service),
- Kaskaskia Watershed Projects (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers),
- Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore (National Park Service),
- Hiawatha National Forest (U.S. Forest Service),
- Ozark National Scenic Riverway (National Park Service), and
- Mark Twain National Forest (U.S. Forest Service).

This report describes the research conducted at Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie, the first of six case studies completed.

Objectives and driving methodological framework
The project's prime objectives are to:

1. Explore agency personnel and local community members' perceptions of trust between natural resource management agencies and communities.

2. Examine the expectations intrinsic to trust between agencies and communities.

3. Identify factors that promote or hinder the production and maintenance of trust.

4. Establish ways in which agencies can build and sustain trust between local community members and agencies.

We chose an interpretive research approach using in-depth interviewing and qualitative data analysis as the project's driving methodological framework for two reasons. First, trust is a highly complex, subjective, and dynamic phenomenon. Past research in social psychology suggests that while trust is fundamentally individual, granted and monitored through the culmination of a host of internal psychological processes, it is also deeply imbedded in a social context and expressed in social interactions and influenced by social processes. Second, relatively little empirical work has investigated trust in the context of natural resource management, making this project highly exploratory in nature. Exploratory research is quite distinct from the traditional hypothesis driven research paradigm and demands an alternative method. Interpretive research thrives under these conditions. Interpretive research acknowledges multiple perspectives and embraces the complexities and context of real-world phenomena. In-depth interviewing and qualitative analysis allow for creativity and flexibility in data collection and interpretation; so that as new information is revealed the research process can adapt. It should be emphasized here that the purpose of this project is not to measure trust, but rather to gain insight into the multiple meanings of trust as well as ways to build trust between agencies and local communities.

Need for research
American citizens' overall trust in government has dramatically declined since the mid 1960s according to several public opinion polls. Hart and Teeter (1999) noted this trend in their national public opinion study conducted for the Council for Excellence in Government, which focused on attitudes toward government. They found that only 29 percent of Americans trusted the government to do what is right just about always or most of the time, whereas in 1964 over 75 percent trusted the government just about always or most of the time. Furthermore, they revealed that over 60 percent of Americans feel disconnected from government, over 50 percent feel that government policies do not reflect their values, and over 45 percent feel that government is generally not effective in solving problems. Putnam (1995) points to the steady decline in civic engagement or participation in organized groups as tantamount to a decline in individual and organizational trust. He further argues that social capital or "the connections among individuals—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them" is deteriorating in the United States.

Wondolleck and Yaffee (2000) recognize that natural resource management agencies are facing similar challenges in garnering public trust and fostering citizen involvement. They call the decline of trust in natural resource management agencies' authority an outgrowth of national sentiment towards federal government. In a study of media portrayal of the U.S. Forest Service (USFS), Bengston and Fan (1999) found that of the attitudes expressed in media coverage related to the agency's stewardship and ethics, 40 percent were negative. Hammond (1994) found that only 57 percent of respondents to a national survey of attitudes toward the USFS expressed confidence in the agency to contribute to good forest management. The implications of public trust in natural resource planning and decision making is far-reaching. For example, a study of place-based and interest-based communities revealed social trust in the agency as a strong predictor of perceptions and attitudes toward a proposed recreation fee program (Winter, Palucki, & Burkhardt, 1999).

According to Frenz, Voth, Burns, & Sperry (2000) forging strong community relationships has a multitude of agency benefits, including increasing support for planning and management, generating a friendly work environment, improving access to local knowledge, and promoting collaboration.

The concept of trust
According to Barber (1983) trust is essential to every social relationship or social system and is integral to the exercise of power. He points out that the exercise of power or "the specification of goals for the

relationship or system, the creation of means to achieve these goals, and the creation and maintenance of sufficient common values to provide consensus about the means and goals" (pg. 20) is fundamental to all stable social relationships and systems. Trust maintains stable relationships and systems by reducing chaos and facilitating goal attainment. Distrust, on the other hand, breeds skepticism, fear, and in some cases opposition, which can result in a complete breakdown of the relationship.

Barber (1983) offers a two-part definition of trust reflecting distinct sets of expectations fundamental to a trusting relationship. The first is the expectation that an individual (or organization) is technically competent and able to perform well. In other words, for person A to trust person B, person A must perceive that person B has the expertise (i.e. combination of knowledge and skills) to act appropriately or make the right decisions. The second definition is tied to the expectation that an individual (or organization) is morally competent and will show particular concern for others' values ahead of his or her own. Trust is granted if person A perceives that person B will not be self-serving in decision making. Applying this two-part trust definition in the context of natural resource management means that for local community members to trust a public land management agency, they must perceive that the agency is knowledgeable, skillful, and will incorporate values beyond its own agency values into decision-making. The granting and fulfillment of trust can be a complex, dynamic, and long-lasting process. In fact, Barber (1983) argues that trust is never entirely realized, and, once granted, trust must be actively maintained.

Shannon (1990) likens the process of building trust to the creation of a "social contract" or a binding agreement that addresses the values and objectives of both the resource managers and community. Trust also has received considerable attention in business management and organizational science. In their review of the treatments of trust across different disciplines, Rosseau, Sitkin, Burt and Camerer (1998) found many similarities including a basic agreement on the meaning of trust. They note that across fields of study trust is viewed as "a psychological state comprising the intention to accept vulnerability based upon positive expectations of the intentions or behaviors of another" (pg. 395). These authors also identified two basic types of trust in the literature, calculative trust and relational trust. Calculative trust is based on what is exchanged in a trust transaction. Calculative trust implies that information is present (e.g., reputation or certification) to support perceptions of benevolent actions. On the other hand, relational trust is developed through "repeated interactions over time" (pg. 399) in which positive expectations are built. Oftentimes emotions enter into the relationship as attachments are formed. Calculative trust is limited to expectations for the exchange and is often terminated once the exchange is completed. Relational trust includes a wider spectrum of expectations based on the exchange, emotional connections, and shared identity. Relational trust is more likely to endure situations in which calculative expectations are not met. As Borrie, Christensen, Watson, Miller, and McCollum (2002) argue, relationship building enables citizens to monitor how managers meet varying short-term and long-term public interests. Thus, in a relationship developed through repeated interactions, each party has more opportunity to get to know one another, including the challenges each party faces.

Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie
In 1996 through the grassroots efforts of local community members and the direction of the USFS, the Midewin National Tallgrass Prairie (Midewin) became the first national tallgrass prairie in the U.S. administered by the USFS. Midewin is located just 40 miles south of Chicago in northeastern Illinois. At its inception, over 20,000 acres of what was once a United States Army munitions plant was divided into two industrial parks, a national cemetery, a county landfill, and Midewin. The USFS drafted a general management plan for Midewin in 1999 outlining its primary objective: the conservation and restoration of plant and wildlife species native to the upland prairie landscape. The plan was approved in 2000. Although several restoration projects were shortly underway, local community members began to lament what they perceived to be slow progress at Midewin, especially the dearth of recreational opportunities available. To date six interim trails exist, but public access to the majority of the tallgrass prairie is limited to guided tours and volunteer restoration projects. Midewin officials are concerned because several sites

within the Midewin are highly contaminated making it difficult to provide safe public access. Evidence of the area's rich cultural history, though, is clearly evident. The landscape provided rich farmland to European American settlers from the early 19th century through 1940, when the U.S. government exercised its power of eminent domain and forced farmers off their land. Production at the munitions plant spanned 37 years—from 1940 to 1977. Hundreds of TNT processing and storage buildings and miles of fencing remain on the property today. Realizing the tallgrass prairie vision of Midewin may take decades. The 19,165 acre national tallgrass prairie contains only small fragments of prairie habitat, the rest largely altered from decades of munitions and agricultural production. As the Chicago area's urban growth boundary has expanded, land-use trends in the region have shifted from agriculture to residential and industrial development, including a newly constructed NASCAR raceway, located only a few miles from Midewin's headquarters.

Midewin serves as a unique setting for examining trust, since the communities surrounding the prairie and the USFS have a relatively short history together. As one community member described, "We have never, in this part of the country, northeastern Illinois, dealt with a federal entity. This is new. This is unique."

STUDY METHODS

In the summer of 2003 a UMN field researcher contacted and interviewed seven agency personnel and fourteen community members. It should be noted that 11 of the community participants resided or owned property within the immediate surrounding communities and three community participants resided in the larger northeastern Illinois community. The sampling plan was designed to capture a range of perspectives on the agency-community relationship. With this objective in mind, we identified agency participants who represent different:

- Tenures with agency and site
- Grades or positions within the agency
- Sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., sex & age)

Community participants were identified through a network sampling scheme, in which key informants were contacted and asked to provide names of other community members who have a stake in the management of Midewin. Community members were contacted who represent different:

- Lengths of residence
- Levels of involvement in management
- Interests in management (i.e., occupation & participation in recreation activities)
- Sociodemographic characteristics (e.g., sex & age)

Participation in the interviews was voluntary and all attempts were made to maintain participants' confidentiality and anonymity. Only one person refused to participate in the study. On average, agency participants were in their forties, had been USFS employees for 16 years, and had worked at Midewin for four years (Table 1). Community participants' average age was 47. They had lived in the community an average of 44 years. Ninety-three percent of community participants and 57 percent of agency participants reported being involved in local organizations. Fifty percent of community participants and 47 percent of agency participants recreate at Midewin.

The UMN field researcher used an interview guide (Appendix A) to keep participants on track during the interview, while allowing participants the freedom to express their own perspectives. This style of interviewing is known as semi-structured, because it is more like a "guided conversation" than a rigid

question and answer session. Interviews were tape recorded (or recorded by hand at participants' request) and transcribed verbatim. The interviews lasted from 45 minutes to 90 minutes. The researcher took detailed field notes following interviews.

UMN researchers analyzed the interview text for insights and underlying themes related to the study objectives. Data analysis followed qualitative analysis procedures as described by Strauss & Corbin (1997). First, individual lines of text were numbered to simplify the basic practice of referencing and retrieving text. Next, concepts within the text were systematically coded using representative labels, such as "staff turnover" or "budget constraints." These concepts were organized into appropriate categories using concept maps and tables. Throughout analysis, categories were created, collapsed, or consolidated until an appropriate framework for understanding the data emerged. This process of data interpretation is highly iterative and creative. Several strategies were used to enhance theoretical sensitivity and ensure the trustworthiness of findings, including constant comparison of cases, questioning (i.e., asking who, what, when, and why), negative case analysis (i.e., attempts to challenge or contest interpretations), and multiple researcher corroboration (Marshall & Rossman, 1998). In addition, individual transcripts were sent back to study participants for review and verification. The goal of the data analysis process was to establish themes and uncover relationships and patterns among those themes grounded in the interview text thereby providing a deeper understanding of the relationship between the Midewin community and the managing agency.

Table 1. MNTP study participant profile

	Sex		Age (mean)	Years in community (mean)	Involved in community orgs. (%)	Engaged in onsite activities (%)	Years at MNTP (mean)	Years with USFS (mean)
	Female	Male						
Community (n=14)	4	10	58	44	93	50	-	-
Agency (n=7)	4	3	47	4	57	43	4	16

STUDY FINDINGS

Analysis of the 21 interviews uncovered several themes associated with participants' perceptions of trust, their expectations, and the factors they perceive inhibit or promote trust. The study findings are arranged in four sections: 1) perceptions of trust, 2) components of trust, 3) challenges to trust, and 4) opportunities for trust. The first section is drawn from agency and community participants' perceptions and examines the importance of trust and the current status of trust at Midewin. The second section outlines community participants' expectations for management of Midewin. The third section describes several factors identified by agency participants that hinder trust. Finally, the fourth section highlights factors identified by agency and community participants that promote trust.

Perceptions of trust
Study participants were asked to characterize the agency-community relationship. Community members were asked if they, as individuals, trust the USFS. Both participant groups were asked if they believe the community trusts the USFS to manage Midewin. Many study participants explained how important it is that the community trusts the agency. Overall, participants perceived trust to be important in the proper functioning of the USFS at Midewin. The local communities' trust in the agency was described as playing a pivotal role in volunteerism and in turn, the success of prairie restoration projects. The following

excerpts, the first two from agency participants and the third from a community participant, reveal that mutual trust is needed because the agency and the community depend on one another.

> *It's vital. We couldn't do half of what we're doing now without public involvement, because we depend so much on volunteers, more so on most of the Forest Service units. I don't think we could function without them.*

> *I think it is important, otherwise we can't work. We can't just sit here in a vacuum. The challenge has been, because we are the Forest Service, we have these national expectations. ...We can't operate unless we have the public involved with us and they trust us and we trust them.*

> *Well, I think it is extremely important, because I think of us who have been involved for so long have put in so much time and effort into all these different hearings and writing comments... I think we count on the expertise these people have to do a good job... They really do have some very good people who have spent above and beyond that their job would call for to cooperate with us and set things up for us...and they need to because they depend on volunteers so much that they can't afford to lose the confidence and the trust that people have in them.*

Perceptions of the current status of trust between the USFS and the local community varied. Many participants claimed that although the initial relationship could have been characterized as lacking trust, trust was on the rise. To many participants, trust has increased as the community has gotten to know individual staff at Midewin. An agency participant explained,

> *In many instances, for the first time, they're now dealing with the Forest Service as individuals, as faces they can put a name with.... Their past experience with the Forest Service has been one of distrust, their current relationship is "well, maybe these guys...aren't as bad as we thought...." They still don't trust the Forest Service nationally, but they're willing to trust the Forest Service locally.*

A community participant stated that he put extra effort into getting to know the Midewin staff and his trust was strengthened.

> *When I first was on the planning and zoning commission...there was some mistrust, almost hostility between the city and the Forest Service. But I made a point of going out and getting to know [the former supervisor] and talk to them. ...I had a sense there was some bad feelings, but they were quickly dispelled. It's almost like anything, when you get to know somebody and understand them, it is difficult to dislike them.*

An agency participant attributed growing trust in the agency to its ability to show progress. She explained, "I think it's grown, definitely grown. Again, what they may see as a lengthy, cumbersome process, now that some time has passed and they're seeing implementation of many of the projects that were taking forever. [That] has gained us a lot of public trust. And I think it will continue to grow."

Many community participants cited broader agency qualities as grounds for trust, such as the agency's ability to work with other agencies and to incorporate public input into management.

> *Do I trust them? I have no reason not to trust them. I think they've got some good capabilities. I think they're also being advised by a core of other agencies and*

organizations that aren't going to let them do the wrong thing, so I don't think there's too much risk involved there.

Yep, I sure do. They have to have public input and it's our responsibility to give them input…. They're not doing anything behind anybody's back. It's all in print.

Some community participants contemplated their trust in the USFS, acknowledging specific management issues, broader management philosophies, or a general skepticism of government that may impinge on their trust:

I would say, yes, I think I trust them with the majority of the things that they do. I guess the concern areas that I have with Midewin is that it is a very big land mass and they have field tiles and they don't just drain the land at Midewin, they drain the farms surrounding Midewin…. If they break those tiles inside there, they need to make sure that they fix those so that everything outside of their boundary line is still working.

Yes and no. We trust the Midewin personnel, near total trust. They believe in the project. Sometimes they have to put in extra hours and work with people like myself…and answer our questions. I couldn't ask for a better group. …But I don't know all the people at the regional level. Some of the Forest Service people likely want to be planting and cutting trees. Some of that older philosophy is still out there. …You can have turn around with different philosophies and that's something we're always afraid of. …I trust them to the point that the person leading it has a philosophy that's consistent with my philosophy.

I have no reason not to trust the Forest Service. Do I trust government? That's another question. I can't say that I mistrust the Forest Service, but I think I understand the process and I think I understand what the government does and doesn't do. And I certainly understand the kind of issues around funding. There are a lot of things beyond the Forest Service's control too. …There is this overall sense that policy makers often say one thing but do something else, and that isn't necessarily that they lie. …They promise you that they have funding, and then it is cut. Well, there might be reasons for that. What I expect is that they do their darnedest to make good on what they promise.

In some cases, community participants criticized the agency's management of Midewin and admitted having very little or no trust in the USFS. When asked if he trusted the USFS to manage Midewin one participant replied,

When they first got there, they didn't do anything at all. …The problem that I had initially was simply the land swap. I knew that any facility that would split Midewin…you know you can't get from one place to another place in Midewin without crossing a railroad track? You can't. That's dumb management. And dumb management is created by dumb people. …The answer to your question is no.

The components of trust
One major objective of this study was to examine the expectations intrinsic to trust. In other words, what elements of the agency-community association promote or hinder trust? To gather this information, community participants were asked what they expect of an agency in managing natural resource areas and to what extent the USFS has met those expectations at Midewin. While some participants provided a broad overview of their expectations, many gave detailed descriptions of what they believe the USFS's role should be at Midewin. Participants generally assessed the USFS's performance with respect to those

expectations. Overall, community participants' narratives reflect a clear set of expectations for the transaction (outcomes) and for the relationship (process) components of agency-community trust.

Within the transaction component of trust, three key themes emerged:
- Values
- Knowledge
- Capacity

Within the relationship component of trust, three distinct phases emerged:
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Cooperation

The trust transaction

Analysis revealed that one set of agency responsibilities revolves around generating outcomes, including decisions and actions that reflect or demonstrate certain values, knowledge, and capacity. Overall, community participants expressed a range of values for Midewin that they believe should be protected by the USFS. Incorporating a mix of knowledge and skills also was emphasized as integral to effective management. The third theme, capacity, encompasses expectations for the USFS to accomplish what it sets out to do.

Values:

A diverse mix of values was revealed as central to community expectations. Community participants, themselves, expressed a wide range of values for Midewin and in turn, expected many of these values to be protected through planning and management. These values include:

- Research
- Ecological restoration
- Conservation
- Education
- Recreation
- Agriculture
- Cultural history
- Community character
- Economics

According to some community participants, values associated with restoration, resource protection, education, and recreation, as articulated in Midewin's founding legislation, should be the agency's chief priority. These participants generally appreciated consistency in management and urged the USFS to stringently abide by its general management plan.

> *The legislation that created Midewin states that the whole purpose, number one, is to restore habitat, to restore the natural native ecosystems. And so, I expect them to do that to the best of their ability. ...And the other purposes that are stated in the legislation are the second and the third one is that they maintain agricultural leases...and let the farmers know when they have to give them up...and provide educational and research opportunities. And the fourth one, which I get concerned that it might become number one, is recreational opportunities that are compatible with the above.*

> *I expect them to take sort of a big view and really emphasize the natural amenities, the biodiversity, opportunities, as opposed to the economic potential. And I think that's the intent here.*

On the other hand, some community participants characterized the USFS as "purists" who need to learn to compromise and show some flexibility. One participant argued that the fences around Midewin serve as a symbol to him of the USFS's restrictive management philosophy. He said, "I think their constituency is a microcosm…. It is very narrow and focused on preservation rather than usage. Otherwise, why would the fences still be up?" A second participant suggested that restoration science should not always supplant social values like recreation and education.

> *When we first started, there was a lot of talk of introducing bison to the Midewin and that was a very exciting thing. And some of us were really excited about it. Now when, they finally finished the plan, bison were not in it. They are saying, "Oh, maybe in 10 years." …The bison, I think sometimes they're purists in that they…are talking that if…they can't be in a natural state out there roaming for security reasons or habitat reasons, then we really don't want them. …this was an animal that was native to the region and…what would be the harm? …the education value and the excitement would bring the people around. And so sometimes they are more scientifically pure about those things. They want to manage it in a way that is totally natural. But to me, a compromise on that would be [good].*

Similarly, several community participants stressed local values, such as cultural history, economic, and rural character values. One participant said succinctly, "I expect them to be sensitive to the needs of our community. Another participant admitted that despite his love for wildlife, he supports active management when wildlife encroaches on local agricultural production.

> *I love wildlife, but when wildlife blocks dams, creeks and all that and creates backflow into farmers' fields or backyards, they need to be more active in removing those dams… You know, with wildlife you're going to have those problems. Everybody loves wildlife, but when they do damage, you don't want them at all. That's part of the give and take. I think our people like the give and take, but they want people to be reasonable too and that's all we're asking…*

The distinction between urban recreation values and rural economic values was recognized, as well. One participant described Midewin as a potential asset to urban communities, while another participant focused on the economic impacts to Midewin's adjacent rural communities.

> *I know that [the Forest Service] wants to add value in the urban communities. They need to really focus on that more and be willing to change… The rules that they have found worthwhile in other kinds of settings, they need to just think differently here in the Chicago metropolitan area.)*

> *We're the playground for a very, very large community…many from the Chicagoland area come down and utilize all these facilities, but it doesn't generate any revenue for those of us who continue to provide. And…[the USFS is] continually buying more property… Isn't 16,000 acres of grassland enough? And every time they buy a parcel of property, the way our taxes are set up, if you own a home your taxes automatically go up… And the benefits don't outweigh the cost. The entire state or nation benefits, but just this community pays the cost.*

Public access and recreation were hot topics in the interviews. Participants generally expect management to provide opportunities for a diversity of recreation experiences.

> *[Midewin] means potential. It means potentially a real refuge for people who want a wonderful outdoor experience. A chance to seek out nature and a chance for people who perhaps can not afford to travel far beyond to see a natural ecosystem restored and to actually just have the fun of being outside hiking and biking.*

> *I expect them to understand the value of the resource. I expect them to protect the resource, and restore it... And I expect them, because it belongs to the public, to make it available to the public in some way that the public can enjoy it.*

Another participant acknowledged that some of his values might not be realized at Midewin, but found comfort in knowing that Midewin exists and will exist in perpetuity.

> *It may not do everything that I want, but it's there and it will be there from here on out. That's one of the things that's motivating me, that we'll have this long after I'm gone. There will be apartments and townhouses right up to the border maybe, but inside you'll have the turkeys and coyotes and all kinds of critters, and opportunities to bicycle, hike, bird watch, and horseback ride and just walk around and look around.*

Besides the fundamental disagreement over the value priorities at Midewin, changing values because of staff turnover or politics was seen as an obstacle to the community's trust in the USFS. One community participant asserted that he is concerned that national economic values might supersede those revered at the local level.

> *I think we've had some good managers and some good supervisors...but you can also have turn around with different philosophies and that's something we're always afraid of. ...There can become a need from the higher levels in the government that say "mine it, dig it, destroy it" because it's best for the economy of the nation. That's what scares me.*

Knowledge:
Community participants expect that Midewin staff possesses a certain level and mix of knowledge and expertise. According to those interviewed, management decisions and actions should reflect:

- Science
- Creativity
- Practicality
- Experience

When asked what he expects of a natural resource management agency, one participant quickly replied, "I expect it to be done scientifically, for one thing." Scientifically sound decision making was a common expectation.

> *They will manage it well; the way they think things should be done. They have a guy with a Ph.D. in horticulture.... And they have reasons to believe that's what should be done. It will be well done, whether it's what I want or not. And I certainly would trust them.*

> *That's asking me if the doctor has good credentials. I can't judge whether they are good at what they do. My assumption is that they know what they're doing, but I'm not qualified to make a professional judgment on a horticulturist, botanist, entomologist...I'm strictly an amateur. I like trees and flowers and animals—flora and fauna. Liking them does not make me a biologist. Yeah, I have no reason not to [trust the USFS].*

The need for creativity in management also was important to participants. One participant described Midewin as a unique site that demands creative thinking in decision making.

> *The Forest Service has some marvelous, marvelous people. And I think we've been lucky to have people who are able to think outside the box and be able to work through what appears to me to be a pretty thick bureaucracy. It makes it difficult to take a new, creative approach to this piece of land. And although there are other sites...that are close to urban areas, this is truly a unique situation for any number of reasons... So I think those challenges require some very creative thinking.*

To some community participants, practicality is a key expectation. A few participants criticized the USFS for not demonstrating practicality or not including local knowledge in management.

> *They bought an appreciable amount of high-priced farm equipment to put in some specialized seeds of grass, and it's sitting out there in the wind, rain, snow, all that. They finally got approval to build a huge machine shed and now these tools are out of sight. ...When [people] see these things out in the weather all the time, well, the Forest Service was looked at as not being too bright.*

> *A lot of people do not understand why they are removing the trees. I know the reasoning behind it is that predators following along fencerows come into the fields...and so they are trying to decrease predation and increase habitat. ...I know it has upset a lot of people because it changes the view. It changed the view of [a local landowner], I think it was blocking out some unsightly view. And they took all the trees down because it was part of their plan. And I do think sometimes if common sense says that it is not going to make a huge difference if it is along the road anyway.... There probably are a few times when if they worked with an adjoining landowner, you know, that would have probably eased the situation. I can imagine if it were within my view that it would be kind of upsetting.*

> *There isn't anybody that works at Midewin that has ever done anything like this before. And they don't listen to the comments that people give when they come out with the environmental assessment. They don't listen...because they've already made up their minds... They've got one person who believes that it should be done this way without regard to what the public thinks.*

Once again, staff turnover surfaced as a barrier to trusting the knowledge and expertise of the USFS. According to one community participant, losing agency personnel means losing a reserve of valuable information.

> *When you lose that person, you lose part of your history and part of the information and communications and contacts. Then you have to start them all over again. That's why it's so important that we have input into getting somebody who's willing to get up to speed and do the job.*

A second community participant recognized the uncertainty of the prairie restoration science as a barrier to trusting the USFS. He questioned current knowledge and argued, "They say they are going to restore the prairie to its original style. Nobody knows what that area was originally. Nobody knows what it was. …Maybe there were trees there."

Capacity:
The final transactional expectation is tied to the agency's capacity to act. In general community participants expect the USFS to possess and control the resources it needs to follow through on decisions. One participant explained, "I expect it to be done quicker than it has been done. …I am 58 years old and I hope I see something come out of that before I die. They are moving too slow for my blood…" Participants also expect the agency and its personnel to show a commitment to making progress at Midewin. A fourth expectation related to capacity was that the agency would not squander its resources. A few participants criticized the USFS for being inefficient. Capacity expectations are linked to:

- Resources
- Commitment
- Efficiency

In many instances, participants criticized the USFS for an inability to turn planning into action, especially within the context of public access.

> When you start to evaluate progress, you start to say, "Well, it felt like things were moving, but guess what, it is still not open. Guess what, we only have a three mile trail outside the fence." Is that progress? …My sense is that the outside communities that aren't involved in Midewin think nothing has happened.

> I don't think that in this day and age in areas like this the patience is there for a planning process that takes six years…. If you do a plan, you've got to bring enough resources to do it within a year or two and that's it.. …It was almost inexcusable that the planning process didn't go quicker.

Others described having the feeling that the USFS was not entirely committed to Midewin.

> The legislation was passed in 1996 and the property still isn't open to the general public virtually at all. So this is seven years later, and it feels like the bureaucracy has really not put this at the top of their list.

Several participants, however, praised the staff at Midewin for their dedication and work ethic. For some this quality directly contributed to their trust in the USFS.

> One thing that impresses me is how dedicated they are. They're not just bureaucrats punching a time clock. They actually believe in what they are doing. I may not agree sometimes with some of the things, but I always respect their beliefs. It is not just a job to them.

> We trust the Midewin personnel, near total trust. They believe in the project. Sometimes they have to put in extra hours to work with people like myself…and answer our questions. I couldn't ask for a better group of people.

Budget constraints, agency structure, site limitations, and procedural requirements were offered by community participants as major obstacles that the agency must overcome to demonstrate capacity. One participant said, "It takes forever to get anything done, they've got so many rules and regulations. And you can't just do it without going through all these hoops."

> *Budget is a big thing. I have a hard time understanding how somebody who has their own printing press can run short of money. But...I understand [laughter]. I don't know if they have enough autonomy, that they're free to make decisions. If I were hiring an executive to run something, I would like to give him a longer leash than I think they have. They have to go back to people who have no clue.*

> *I think for a number of reasons, it has taken a very long time to even begin to get the show on the road so to speak. There's the legal process of transferring land and the fact that there's environmental contamination. ...There is a lot of environmental cleanup to do. You know, it isn't always easy working with the Army, which is an understatement to say the least. So I think there were problems there beyond the Forest Service's control.*

> *I think that they made a few bad assignments to Midewin where they allow people who were really just thinking of getting ready for retirement.... We should be looking for the best of the bunch.... There has been a lot of changeover.*

The trust relationship
In addition to being asked what they expect of a natural resource management agency, community participants were asked to characterize their individual relationship and the community's relationship with the USFS. Overall, the relationship is seen as an opportunity to get to know the agency and how the agency operates. All of the community participants described the types of interactions they've had with the USFS, which were grouped into three broad phases of the relationship:

- Communication
- Collaboration
- Cooperation

Within these phases, participants had particular expectations and were able to articulate the extent to which the USFS has met those expectations.

Communication:
The communication phase of the agency-community relationship reflects the formal and informal interactions between community members and the agency in which information is shared. The most obvious means of communication is through dialogue at planning meetings or during agency sponsored events. However, informal dialogue in the community setting—on the street, at the grocery store, or at social events—was also an important means of sharing information between the groups. Communication is seen as integral to keeping the community abreast of who the agency is, what its values are, how much progress it has made, and what challenges it faces in managing Midewin. Community study participants expect honest, clear, and frequent communication with the agency. Several participants praised Midewin employees for their accessibility and responsiveness.

> *I would expect them to keep communication open with the public and keep us informed of where we stand, and to be honest about what the situation is—whether they have the money to do things or not, or if there is a problem and something is not going to work out. I would expect that they would let people know.*

When we have picnics and parties that is when you get to know people. And they come off being very friendly and eager to help and give you information on whatever you want to know.

What I find is that if my group has questions, or myself as an individual, they're accessible. I can get to them, I can talk to them, I can e-mail them, and they e-mail me back with the information. There's a real dialogue there, which I think is really important.

Previously...there was an apprehension about what everybody was up to and if you finished a meeting with them, it was, did they tell you everything, or did they not tell you something on purpose? So I think that what's happened over a period of time is that you kind of learn people, where they're going and what their objectives are. I think recently within the past year, with the new supervisor there, to me it's kind of a fresh approach, because she's pretty candid. She comes out and says what she feels and we do the same and we try to work with things, and then we part friends.

Some participants alleged that while the agency may have good communication with special interest groups, its communication with the broader local community is weak. A few participants acknowledged that only those who are actively involved in agency programs know what's going on at Midewin. This has led to misconceptions about the USFS, according to one participant. Another participant asserted that agency language is vague. He argued that the agency needs to communicate more clearly with the community, especially during environmental assessments.

Nobody knows what's going on. You can't trust them or distrust them unless you know what's going on.

The community in general really doesn't know too much about Midewin. Those who are in the circle are the only ones that communicate with Midewin.

Unless you are involved in some type of environmental activity, I don't think that you know much about them. I know them because I'm involved in this stuff. I know some of the kids, especially the kids who ride four-wheelers, can't stand the Forest Service, because they're always nailing them for riding.... So they look at them as the tree police, or police wannabes. I say, "No, they work for the Forest Service and they're federal and you don't mess around with the federal government." And they're like, "Oh well, we can outrun them." But I think overall, the community doesn't know they exist.

When an environmental assessment is filed, there is very little definition of what they're really going to do. And I would think that before it is filed, they would take a broad group of people and insist that those people come down and show those people exactly what they were going to do. ...on the environmental assessment of tree removal, they said they would selectively remove trees. What in the world does selectively mean? When you cut 99 percent of the trees, is that selectively removing the trees?

We try to get to know them. That works very well until somebody moves on and you spend five years making a relationship and all of a sudden, there's another person there and you've got to start the relationship over.

Collaboration:
The collaboration phase represents the planning and decision making process. The term collaboration connotes shared responsibility and power. Perceptions of the decision making process varied. Some community participants felt that the planning process has been fair and that management decisions reflect public input.

> *They didn't make any management decisions without being mandated to ask, "what do you want?" of many people. They had four different plans and they asked, "Do you want this kind? Or this kind?" They had all kinds of input, then they made their decision…*

> *I have been impressed with…some of the creative thinking that is going along and the willingness to work with communities and work with other public agencies. …There is a real sense of cooperation, taking part in partnerships, really trying to address the requests of the public the best they can.*

Other participants believed that more public involvement is needed. A few participants expressed great skepticism in the validity of the process, suggesting that the agency is merely going through the motions when gathering public input.

> *I testified when the original usage proposal was going in. …And I thought that was an exercise in futility. I think that they just took testimony and had their plan already in place. I don't think they used any testimony from anyone. I think it was an exercise in, "well, let's go out and have a public hearing, but we're going to do what we're going to do anyway, but we need to go through this."*

Two distinct barriers were mentioned as having an effect on the decision making process. According to one participant, the complexity of the NEPA process and the management issues at hand requires consistent involvement from those participating.

> *I don't think it could be any fairer. It's a very open process. The NEPA process, which I use that word loosely, allows for many layers of planning over a long period of time. However, the unfairness of it is in the fact that you have to be involved, not just in one meeting or two meetings, it takes many meetings to fully understand the process and what is being discussed.*

A second community participant had a similar complaint and implied that the time commitment required in the planning process may disproportionately affect local community members.

> *I think that they did a really good job when they did the whole planning process initially…the prairie plan. I thought they did a good job, but again, it turned out to be more the environmental people, the people who were interested in the environment. There's a whole segment of the population that does not even have time. We have one child. We can be involved in a lot, let alone a family of three who's running kids left and right. So you've got a whole segment of the population who's so dang busy that they don't even know this place is right in their own backyard.*

Cooperation:
The cooperation phase entails the process of acting and achieving benefits. Cooperation suggests mutual responsibility and mutual rewards. Some participants emphasized the expectation that the agency will provide opportunities for the local community to get involved.

I'd say the good majority of the people do trust what's going on out there and I think that when more and more people have the opportunity to partake in what they're offering and the different programs and activities, there's going to be more people saying this money was well spent.

They're cooperating with us in terms of achieving contiguity to the industrial park for purposes of annexation and in exchange we work in cooperation with them to get good city services out there.

I served on [a city economic development committee]. When there was a project that would benefit them, they were all for it, regardless of whether it would benefit another tax district or anyone else involved. And if they thought it infringed on their image, they were totally against it.

Historical distrust of government was revealed as an issue for some community members. One participant recalled tensions between the agency and descendents of families who were forced to give up their land when the Army established the munitions plant in 1940.

When [the U.S. Army] bought this land, people only had 30 days to get out of there and it'd been in their family for three generations. One of them had just put a new house on the farm. They said, thirty days, just get out. We'll harvest your crops for you and pay you for them. And they all got market price—whatever it was worth to the world, not the people who lived there. There's still a feeling yet, by some of the descendents of those people that we should be able to buy it back…. So there's some negative there.

Challenges to building trust
One of the primary objectives of this project is to identify factors and mechanisms that inhibit trust between natural resource agencies and communities. As illustrated above, community participants were aware of several obstacles, such as staff turnover, budget constraints, procedural requirements, and site condition to building trust. However, agency participants had a much more exhaustive list of the challenges they face in building trust. Therefore, this section is focused on the constraints or barriers agency participants identified as influencing the agency-community relationship or the agency's ability to uphold its end of the trust transaction. As one agency participant concluded, "For us, there's no question in my mind that as we look at this strategy to open, our biggest challenge is going to be to manage expectations." A list of the challenges and correlating interview excerpts is included in Appendix B.

Community-based challenges
Community-based challenges are tied to community attributes, such as community values, knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors. They include:

- Competing agency community values
- Limited understanding of agency within the community
- Lack of experience with agency planning process
- Little awareness of agency constraints and limitations
- Lack of restoration knowledge
- Lack of participation in planning

Each of these challenges was described as impacting trust outcomes or the trust process or both components of trust. The agency's ability to meet values, knowledge, and capacity expectations is impacted by competing values and limited awareness or understanding of the agency and its goals within

the community. Single issue interest groups were perceived to pose a particularly difficult challenge to managers. For example, one agency participant described the clash between hunters' values and the agency values. She said, "I think the hunting groups might be a little bit tougher to please, because they see the increasing restoration and the hunting area is decreasing in size. And their pursuit is becoming more limited. But then, as a multiple use agency we have to look at the concerns of all of the public." Challenges such as unfamiliarity with the planning process and lack of participation impact the agency's ability to build relationships with the community. Perhaps the biggest overall constraint is that because the USFS is relatively new to the area, the community's limited knowledge can lead to misconceptions. One agency participant described an interaction she had with a community member who mistakenly reprimanded her at a farm stand for the actions of another agency.

> *I have a Midewin t-shirt and I was wearing it one day and went to get something from a farm stand. This guy just went off after me. You know what he was really mad about was the Forest Preserve District... And somehow I was part of that in his eyes. ...There's a lot of people here who have no idea what the Forest Service is.*

Another participant surmised, "We are the new kid on the block and they're just getting used to us, and…people just don't know what we are and just don't know quite what to think of us. That can be frustrating." A few agency participants called for broader participation from the community.

> *The participation we have had I think has been good. What I would like to see more of is the amount of participation. There are still some groups I would like to see involved with us, that haven't been... You know we've got lots of input from the horse groups and we've got adequate input from the Sierra Club. ...I would like to see more people involved with this. There are a few charter audiences I don't think we hit at all for a lot of reasons.*

Agency-based challenges
Agency participants also pointed to themselves, their own unit, and the agency as being the source of some challenges to building trust. Agency-based challenges include:

- Limited community interactions
- Communication gaps
- Unclear communication
- Procedural requirements
- Slow planning process
- Heavy workload and small workforce
- Midewin identity within USFS

A few agency participants admitted that their limited community engagement on an informal or personal level might affect the agency-community relationship. Some participants who don't live in the local communities stated that their professional relationships with the community would be improved if they participated more in community events and joined community groups. Communication gaps and unclear communication were identified as barriers. Participants called for more consistent communication and clearer language in agency documents during and between planning processes. The slow planning process and specifically procedural requirements were seen as an obstacle to demonstrating progress and engaging the community. Midewin's small workforce coupled with a heavy workload also posed challenges to building trust according to agency participants.

> *One of the conflicts that always comes up…is the demands on the workforce. I do a fair amount of evening meetings, [other personnel] do evening meetings. As we look at*

intensifying the on the ground management, some of the things that fall off are some of those evening meetings that have bought us a lot in terms of public ownership and expectation. ...How do we not let some of those critical things that come down to the foundation of public trust fall through the cracks, because we have so many process requirements and a lot of internal things that we have to do?

Site-based challenges

The site was also deemed a source of some challenges in promoting agency-community trust. Site-based challenges identified by agency participants are:

- Site condition
- Prairie ecology
- Size of unit

Agency participants acknowledged that site condition, specifically degraded prairie habitat and contaminated water and soil, and the difficult task of restoring prairie ecological processes posed a significant challenge to building trusting relationships with community members.

> *One of the things that limits public use of this area, and one of the reasons why there's still a lot of people who don't look at Midewin as public land, is the fact that we've had to take this very conservative approach to public access. The fences are still there, the gates are still there, the locks are still there. ...So, if we can work with the Army and facilitate them to get some things done that allow us...to provide public access, then the public's perception of this place will begin to change.*

The size of the unit was also seen as a challenge. Contrary to some community participants, agency participants viewed Midewin as a small site. One agency participant noted, "People thought Midewin was big enough to satisfy everybody's needs, when to the Forest Service, this is like the tiniest spot."

Opportunities for trust

Community and agency participants identified several opportunities for building trust that exist in the Midewin local community. They include:

- Shared values
- Clear mission
- Visible progress
- Dedicated and honest staff
- Communication tools
- Strong volunteer network
- Community benefits

Many community participants praised Midewin personnel for their dedication, responsiveness, and honesty. Several participants provided examples of specific interactions in which they received information or advice from agency personnel. The volunteer network was also seen as an avenue for building trust by sparking enthusiasm.

> *One of our partners proposed a project to do some stream bank stabilization. Prairie Creek Preservation, based out of Manhattan...came out to plant a bunch of different prairie species. And then just a couple of weeks ago...probably 40 to 50 people came out to view the project and now the flowers are blooming. It's green. It's not a big raw, bare*

soil slope anymore. And the people were very enthusiastic. The ones who had actually worked on the project…it meant a whole lot to them.

DISCUSSION

The study findings support the notion that no single perspective captures the complexities and subjectivity of trust. The community's trust in the agency is multilayered and is influenced by several different factors. Although the purpose of this study was not to measure trust, the findings suggest that many community members have a significant amount of trust in the USFS to manage Midewin. At the same time, the findings also indicate that trust is not absolute or eternal. The community's trust and even the trust of individual community members in the agency ebbs and flows. Therefore, establishing exactly what the community expects from the agency is imperative. Trust is granted when the agency fulfills the community's expectations. So what does the community expect? Simply put, it expects certain management outcomes and particular processes for monitoring those outcomes. Trust then is fundamentally grounded in 1) what the agency provides the community in return for its trust, or *the transaction* and 2) how opportunities are created that enable the community to register its expectations for the agency and monitor outcomes, or *the relationship*.

The transaction component of trust is predicated on expectations for *what* is exchanged when trust is granted. Community members trust the USFS based on what they get, or don't get, in return, specifically the values protected, knowledge used, and evidence of capacity. These expectations are linked to trust *outcomes*. The relationship component of trust represents the expectations for *how* the exchange is registered and monitored through some form of interaction. Under this dimension, the community trusts the USFS based on communication (i.e., how information is exchanged), collaboration (i.e., how decisions are made), and cooperation (i.e., how actions are implemented and benefits are attained). These expectations are linked to the trust *process*. Attributes associated with outcomes and process are not mutually exclusive in building trust, rather they overlap and interact to build or diminish trust. These components are illustrated in the trust concept model below (Figure 1). The core element of this model is the trust building framework represented by the relationship and transaction boxes. The balloons around the periphery represent the social, political, and physical environments of the agency-community association.

As the model indicates, the community's transaction expectations are three-fold. The community has expectations about the values, knowledge, and capacity that are reflected in management decisions and actions. Some community members expect that the agency to uphold values as they are stated in Midewin's founding legislation and general management plan. Other community members expect more flexibility. Many community participants called for an increased sensitivity to community values, such as education, economic and rural character values. According to community participants the USFS should use science, creativity, practicality, and local knowledge when making decisions and taking action. In general, participants expressed faith in agency science, but perceive a dearth in the agency's practical knowledge or as some community members label it, "common sense." They also argued for the integration of local knowledge into planning and decision making. Capacity also is important to the local community. Community participants expect the USFS to possess and control the resources needed to make decisions and take action. They also expect the USFS to show commitment to Midewin programs and policies. Perhaps the most significant message from community participants is that if the agency does not have the capacity or commitment to turn decisions into actions, the community will struggle to trust the agency. An appropriate analogy might be the case of a patient trusting a physician to perform a surgical procedure. No matter how well-meaning and knowledgeable the surgeon is, if he or she does not have the resources (e.g., appropriate medical equipment and adequate supporting staff) to successfully

complete and follow-up on the operation, the patient undoubtedly will not trust the doctor to perform the surgery and would seek medical help elsewhere.

The community's relationship expectations can be organized into three phases: communication, collaboration, and cooperation. Talking, deciding, and achieving together gives the community several and diverse types of opportunities to get to know the agency. Agency and community participants overwhelmingly agree that getting to know each other plays a key role in building trust. The relationship enables the community to register trust expectations and monitor the trust transaction. According to community participants, communication should be frequent, consistent and straightforward. The community wants to know what's going on at Midewin. Many agency participants noted that increased participation in community sponsored events and organizations would help the agency and community to get to know each other. Many community participants acknowledged that the planning process has fostered collaboration in decision making. However, others questioned the sincerity of the process and how willing the agency is to listen to community input. Cooperation, including acting and achieving benefits together, was a frequent topic of conversation with both community and agency participants. The community expects the agency to involve them in the implementation stages of management.

The agency, community, and social, political and biophysical settings coalesce, creating several unique challenges and opportunities with respect to building trust. These elements are represented by the balloons (four circles and the oval) at the top of the model. The agency plays a dominating role in the trust building framework, including its particular organizational structure and set of policies and procedures. The agency also is bounded by its resources, including financial, physical, and human resources. Individual agency personnel also influence the trust-building framework. Individuals bring their own values, knowledge, and emotions into the management arena.

Similar to the agency, the community and interest groups within the community bring certain structure, policies, underlying values, and resources to the management arena. Community resources include social, human, and financial capital. The community member plays an important role by imparting personal values, knowledge, and emotions in natural resource management.

The social, political, and biophysical setting provides another level of complexity including distinct place-based opportunities and constraints in the trust-building framework. The most significant challenges to building the community's trust in the USFS at Midewin are linked to expectations for capacity and communication. Community participants questioned the slow progress at Midewin.

The literature suggests that relational trust is a function of perceptions of vulnerability and positive expectations developed through repeated interaction. These two elements were supported in this study. Community members and agency personnel interviewed described varying levels of community dependence on the agency for economic revenue, recreation opportunities, and open space protection. They also acknowledged various degrees of interaction or participation in planning and management. These variables, dependence on outcomes and participation in the process, translate into different expectations and diverging forms of trust. The findings suggest that those community members who have a high or complex dependence on the agency and tend to be engaged in the various phases of the relationship are likely to base their trust on the management process, or an evaluation of communication, collaboration, and cooperation between the agency and community. Conversely, those community members who have a high dependence on the agency but tend not to be engaged are likely to base their trust on management outcomes. When engagement is lacking, trust is based largely on an evaluation of the values, knowledge, and capacity displayed in management outcomes. According to Rosseau et al. (1998) this form of trust (transactional trust) is less durable. However, trust that is based on repeated interaction (relational trust) is more likely to be sustained, even when outcomes expectations are not

achieved. Community members who do not perceive they are dependent on the agency may be more likely to trust or distrust based on normative cues (e.g., what their friends or family members think).

One exception noted in the literature has been labeled the "frustration effect" (Hunt & Haider, 2001). If the process itself is viewed to be unfair, then repeated interaction will only exacerbate distrust. For example, a Midewin community member who is highly dependent on the USFS and tends to participate in the various phases of the relationship, but feels that communication, collaboration, or cooperation is unjust may become increasingly aggravated and untrusting. These stakeholders may ultimately become the biggest opponents to agency decisions and actions.

The upshot of this means that Midewin managers interested in building trust should first identify what types of community members exist: those with high or low dependence on outcomes and those who are or aren't actively engaged in the process and second, they should establish which type they are targeting. Managers then can prioritize and tailor trust building strategies for each community type.

Recommendations for overcoming challenges to and exploiting opportunities for building trust are provided below. The study findings and recommendations also are summarized in Appendix C.
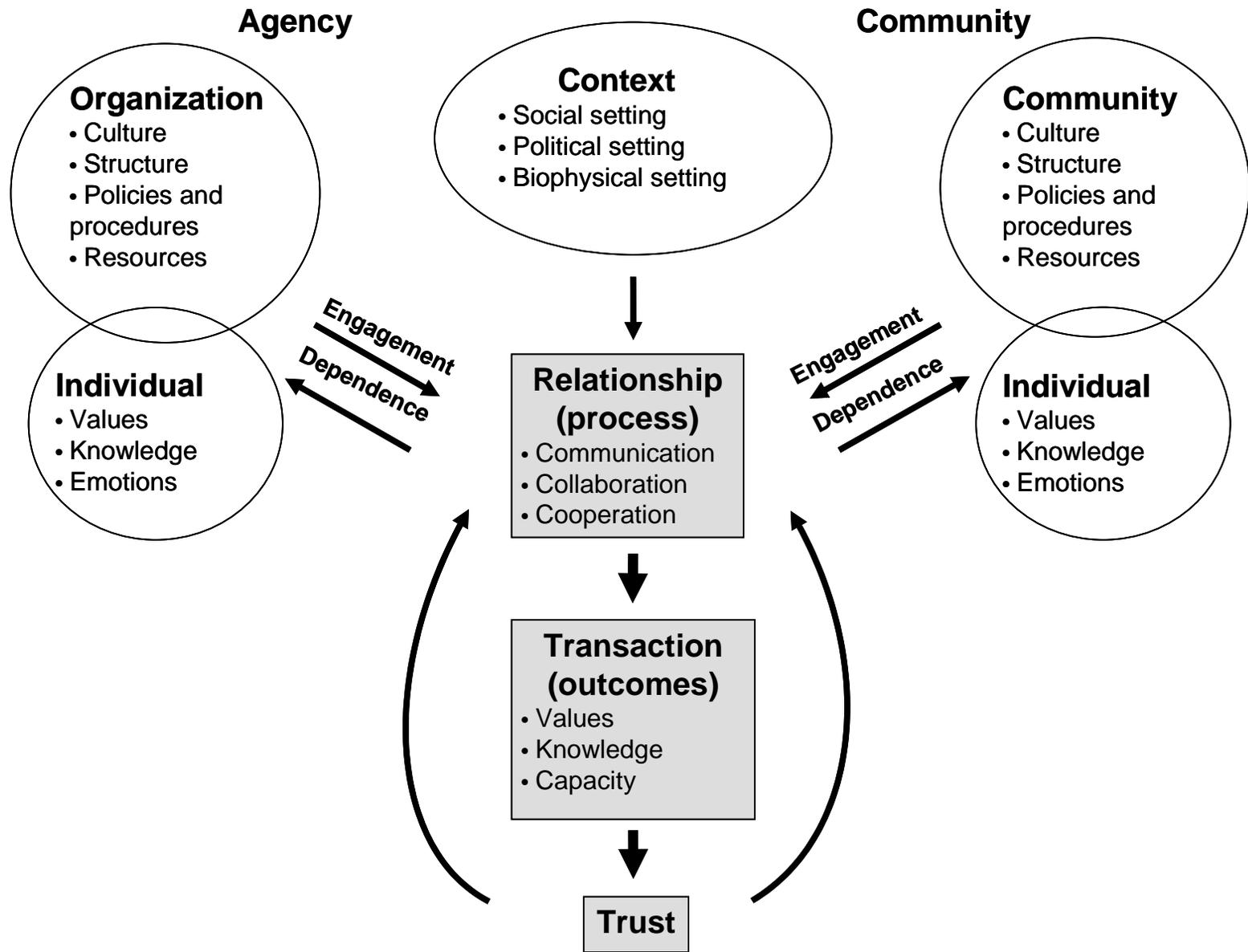
Agency

Community

Organization
- Culture
- Structure
- Policies and procedures
- Resources

Context
- Social setting
- Political setting
- Biophysical setting

Community
- Culture
- Structure
- Policies and procedures
- Resources

Engagement

Dependence

Engagement

Dependence

Individual
- Values
- Knowledge
- Emotions

Relationship (process)
- Communication
- Collaboration
- Cooperation

Individual
- Values
- Knowledge
- Emotions

Transaction (outcomes)
- Values
- Knowledge
- Capacity

Trust

Figure 1. The Trust Building Framework

Based on the study findings, five overarching recommendations are described below.

Recommendation 1: Identify opportunities to incorporate local community values into management
The study revealed that one of the community's expectations is linked to the values that the USFS upholds and protects at Midewin. Some community members favored strict implementation of Midewin's general management plan, while others urged more flexibility and sensitivity to local community values. Managers need to do both. By seeking opportunities to incorporate community values into management programs and policies within the guiding framework of Midewin's mission, managers can bridge the gap between seemingly incompatible agency and community values. To do so, managers should go out into the local communities to identify community goals and ascertain how Midewin might fit into those goals. In some instances, goals may reflect a clear conflict of values. However, many times creativity and perseverance can overshadow differences. For example, hiring community members as employees, using local contractors, and patronizing local businesses all contribute to a community's economic goals. Sponsoring or hosting local events is another effective strategy for incorporating community values into management. Cultural interpretation programs provide opportunities for locals to identify with Midewin on a personal level. Interpretation of the community's role in Midewin's establishment and current management, including community contributions and sacrifices, helps to pay tribute to these efforts. Telling the story of how Midewin came to be and highlighting the stories of farmers who were forced to leave their property in the 1940s, as well as the stories of those who lobbied Congress in the 1990s acknowledges and validates Midewin's roots in the local community. Further research into community culture and interests, such as a community needs assessment would assist managers in identifying opportunities for outreach. Research, similar to Stewart, Leibert, and Larkin (2004) who examined the meanings Illinois residents attach to local community landscapes through autophotography and Davenport and Anderson (2005) who used in-depth interviewing to explore the meanings Nebraska residents attach to a national scenic helps managers to promote and protect a sense of place. Similar studies focusing on the meanings local community members ascribe to Midewin are recommended.

Recommendation 2: Identify and integrate local knowledge into management
Every community has its local experts. Whether they are highly knowledgeable or skilled in the community's historical or present-day culture, local experts represent an invaluable resource to natural resource agencies. Many agencies wisely have begun to employ the services of locals as interpreters and tour guides. The next step is to tap into the broader range of local expertise and to become a hub for community learning. Midewin managers should identify a variety of local experts—historians, craftspeople, storytellers, artists, photographers, writers, agriculturalists, and recreationists to lead programs at Midewin, showcasing local knowledge. Community experts can serve as agency advisers and liaisons between the agency and the community. Several community participants valued opportunities for learning about prairie ecology and restoration. Community experts and agency personnel can collaborate to develop these types of programs, such as prairie demonstration sites, landscaping classes, and home garden kits, aimed at the local community. Through these programs, community members can be encouraged to apply what they learn at Midewin to their own backyards.

Recommendation 3: Demonstrate capacity to turn planning into action
Capacity emerged as an important expectation the community holds for the USFS. Agency participants also were aware of concerns related to turning planning into action at Midewin. Several agency participants identified obstacles, such as legal requirements, site conditions, and the deliberate nature of prairie restoration that have made progress slow. Many community participants were cognizant of examples of progress at Midewin—the new administration building, a riverbank restoration project, the seedbeds. However, in general, participants were convinced that the community as a whole is less aware of progress and in turn, questions the agency's capacity. Therefore, not only do Midewin managers need

to continue to make visible progress, but they also need to focus on increasing the community's awareness of the progress made. Whether it is consistent updates in print media, like agency newsletters or local papers, or well-advertised bus trips out to the tallgrass prairie, the agency needs to send the message that personnel are working hard and that hard work is paying off. A common stereotype of government programs and agencies is that they are wasteful of resources, and in turn of taxpayers' money. This perception surfaced in a few community participant interviews. In addition to demonstrating that it has the resources and the commitment to make progress, the USFS needs to be mindful that this perception exists and should demonstrate careful allocation and use of its resources.

Recommendation 4: Prioritize long-term community relationship building
One clear message from this study is that the USFS and the community need to get to know each other better to build stronger relationships. While the mere passage of time may help, the USFS needs to prioritize relationship building and in particular community engagement to ensure that trust will endure. Many agency participants stressed the importance of USFS personnel participating in community organizations and attending community events. These informal, repeated interactions build strong relationships, as community members begin to identify with agency staff on a personal level. As the community's impressions and expectations of the USFS become increasingly grounded in face-to-face interactions (versus reputation or stereotypes) and assuming these interactions are positive, trust will grow. Furthermore, trust built through this process tends to be more durable than trust based solely on management outcomes (Rosseau et al., 1998). Managers should keep in mind that the local community has a much longer memory than the agency. When information about current management is lacking, community members may rely on reputations or stereotypes to guide their impressions. While trust takes time to build, it can be lost quickly. A few community members shared stories about particular interactions or what they deemed to be broken promises that have had long-lasting effects on their perceptions of the agency. What types of community engagement are needed? Community participants called for consistent and honest communication, sincere and meaningful collaboration, and jointly implemented and mutually benefiting actions. The key to getting the community to engage in management is to go out into the community and motivate community members to get involved. One of the biggest barriers identified by both participant groups was staff turnover. This phenomenon, common to natural resource agencies breaks down the relationship. Those personal connections so integral to building trust frequently are lost when employees leave. The USFS should create an environment that rewards extended tenures at one unit. Additionally, each unit should consider how it can promote a smoother transition from one employee to the next.

Recommendation 5: Interpret management and empower community members
A constant theme from agency participants' perspectives is that the community lacks the understanding and awareness of agency responsibilities, the planning process, and prairie restoration. After all, as one agency participant observed, the USFS is the "new kid on the block." The USFS has only been present in northeastern Illinois for eight years and consequently, it is faced with a bit of an identity crisis. According to participants, the community has confused the USFS with other natural resource agencies and stereotyped the agency as "tree police." If managers are to increase community participation, improve support for policies, and get the community to buy into agency programs, it has to invest in management interpretation that demonstrates how the USFS works. The community needs the opportunity to learn who the USFS is, what Midewin means to the USFS, how the agency manages, and how it incorporates public input. Management interpretation should go beyond general management plans and Internet web pages. It needs to be understandable and relevant to the local community audience.

This project was designed to help natural resource agencies understand trust and develop strategies for building trust in local communities. This report helps Midewin managers establish community expectations, identify challenges and opportunities, and prioritize steps toward building trust. However, as several participants recognized, the agency has experienced increasing internal demands and in particular,

heightened procedural requirements. The result—what has been labeled "process predicament"— is a slower, more deliberate and complex process that has stymied agency personnel's ability to demonstrate capacity and to build relationships in the local community. Rosseau et al. (1998) argue that institutional controls and mechanisms intended to foster trust, may actually work against trust. Standardizing the process makes personalizing the process more difficult. Managers at Midewin must find creative ways to adapt the standardized public participation process to the local context. Many of the recommendations above can guide agency personnel in how to engage the community.

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Agency Interview Guide

Your connection to community and place
1. Tell me what it is like to work in this community.
    A. Do you feel like you are a part of this community?
    B. What does this community mean to you?

Your relationship with the community
2. What are your impressions of the community?

3. Do you trust the community to help manage [ ] National Forest?
    A. What has prompted this feeling?
    B. Has your trust changed? How?
    C. How important is it that you trust the USFS?

4. Describe for me your relationship with the community here.
    A. Tell me about some of your interactions with the community.
    B. What has been your role in planning and decision making processes?

5. What effects has your relationship with the community had on the management of [ ] National Forest?

The agency's relationship with the community
6. What do you think the community expects of a public land management agency?
    A. To what extent do you think the USFS has fulfilled those expectations?

7. Do you think the community trusts the USFS to manage [ ] National Forest?
    A. What has led you to think this?
    B. Has the community's trust changed? How?
    C. How important is it that the community trusts the USFS?

8. How would you characterize the relationship between the community and the USFS?
    A. Tell me about some of the interactions between the community and the USFS?
    B. What has been the community's role in planning and decision-making processes?
    C. Is it fair?

9. What effects has the community had on the management of [ ] National Forest?

Perspectives on management
10. What goes into the agency's management decisions?
    A. What knowledge and information are used?
    B. Whose (or what) values are considered?

11. How have management decisions affected the community?

12. How have management decisions affected [ ] National Forest?

Vision for the future
13. What are some ways in which you can improve your relationship with the community?

14. What are some ways in which the USFS can improve its relationship with the community?

15. What are some ways in which the USFS can improve its management of [ ] National Forest?

16. Suppose the USFS followed your suggestions, how would this influence the community's trust in the USFS?
    A. How would this influence their support of the agency's management decisions?

17. What would it take for the community to trust the agency to manage [ ] National Forest? **OR** What would it take for the community's trust in the agency to be maintained?

18. Is there anything else I should know about your perspective?

Community Interview Guide

Your connection to community and place
1. Tell me what it is like to live in this community.
   A. What does living in this community mean to you?

2. What is it like to live near [ ] National Forest
   A. What does living near [ ] National Forest mean to you?

Your relationship with the agency
3. What do you expect of a public land management agency in managing natural resource areas?
   A. To what extent has the USFS fulfilled your expectations?

4. Do you trust the USFS?
   A. What has prompted you to feel this way?

5. What are your impressions of the USFS here at [ ] National Forest?

6. Do you trust the USFS to manage [ ] National Forest?
   A. What has prompted this feeling?
   B. Has your trust changed? How?
   C. How important is it that you trust the USFS?

7. Describe for me your relationship with the USFS here at [ ] National Forest.
   A. Tell me about some of your interactions with the USFS.
   B. What has been your role in planning and decision making processes?

8. What effects have you had on the management of [ ] National Forest?

The community's relationship with the agency
9. Do you think the community trusts the USFS to manage [ ] National Forest?
   A. What has led you to think this?
   B. Has the community's trust changed? How?
   C. How important is it that the community trusts the USFS?

10. How would you characterize the relationship between the community and the USFS?
   A. Tell me about some of the interactions between the community and the USFS?
   B. What has been the community's role in planning and decision-making processes?
   C. Is it fair?

11. What effects has the community had on the management of [ ] National Forest?

Perspectives on management
12. What goes into the agency's management decisions?
   A. What knowledge or information is used?
   B. Whose or what values are considered?

13. How have management decisions affected the community?

14. How have management decisions affected [ ] National Forest?

Vision for the future
15. What are some ways in which the USFS can improve its relationship with you?

16. What are some ways in which the USFS can improve its relationship with the community?

17. What are some ways in which the USFS can improve its management of [ ] National Forest?

18. Suppose the USFS followed your suggestions, how would this influence your overall trust in the USFS?

   A. How would this influence your support of the agency's management decisions?

19. What would it take for you to trust the agency to manage [ ] National Forest? **OR** What would it take for your trust in the agency to be maintained?

20. Is there anything else I should know about your perspective?

Agency perspectives	Challenges	Interview excerpts
Community-based	Competing values	There is nothing but positive stuff that can happen from restoring this Army base. That is something I value very highly, but when you live in a small town that is economically depressed or thinks that it is economically depressed, you wind up being at odds with some of the people some of the times.

We're supposed to restore native habitat. Well, in this place native habitat is prairie, and that means in a lot of places cutting down trees. We say it's vegetation control, removal of exotic species; bottom line is it's cutting down trees. …In the context of the majority of the people who are here right now, that's what it has looked like forever, in the context of their forever. So if removing trees is restoring native habitat, they don't like it, because it's changing what they think it has looked like for a long time. That puts what we feel is our mandate or our mission directly in conflict with a community of users out there.

I think the hunting groups might be a little bit tougher to please, because they see the increasing restoration and their hunting area is decreasing in size and their pursuit is becoming more limited. |
	Limited understanding of mission	You know we're part of the United States Forest Service, it's a national tallgrass prairie. We're not a Wilmington tallgrass prairie or a Will County tallgrass prairie… We're here just as much for the guy down thee street in Wilmington; we're here just as much for the dock worker in New Jersey or the accountant in San Francisco… I mean, they all have equal stake in it. …We're part of the federal government and we have a higher constituency to answer to. …I do not think they have a true understanding of that.
	Lack of restoration knowledge	…To a lot of our public, the idea of restoring prairie means you can put the prairie plant seeds out there, and the next year you have prairie restoration. So, we have tried working on this, creating this expectation that a restoration…to prairie may take five to ten years.
	Lack of awareness of agency constraints	I think sometimes there isn't the understanding by the public that we can't do that because there are some areas with hazardous materials that haven't yet been cleaned up by the Army. So we really can't open up all of Midewin.
	Identity crisis	I have a Midewin t-shirt and I was wearing it one day and went to get something from a farm stand. This guy just went off after me. You know what he was really mad about was the Forest Preserve District… And somehow I was part of that in his eyes. …There's a lot of people here who have no idea what the Forest Service is.
	Unfamiliarity with planning process	In a sense, one of the jobs we have is to slow people down. Yeah, we know you want to go out and do all these things and make it happen quickly, but whoa, wait a minute; there are some things we have to do. That's one of the challenges here. …There are a lot of people here who, for the first time since it's in their backyard, are having to come to grips with the Forest Service decision making process.
	Lack of participation	The participation we have had I think has been good. What I would like to see more of is the amount of participation. There are still some groups I would like to see involved with us, that haven't been… You know we've got lots of input from the horse groups and we've got adequate input from the Sierra Club. …I would like to see more people involved with this. There are a few charter audiences I don't think we hit at all for a lot of reasons.
Agency-based	Limited community engagement	I think if I lived in the city of Wilmington and participated local community things, then that would certainly help me to get to know the city of Wilmington and this micro Midewin community better. …If I lived here and participated in town meetings and went to a local church and was actively involved in that, yeah that would help more in my relationship with the community.
	Communication gaps	During the planning time, we met with a lot of groups on a fairly frequent basis and then since we're through with that big planning part, there's less contact there. …I think early on as project proposals come up [we need] to offer more on the ground public involvement opportunities. …I can think of two projects out of eight or nine NEPA projects where we invited the public to come out on the site and look at different alternatives…. We haven't done enough of that.

Appendix B (continued). Agency participants' perceptions of challenges to building trust

Agency perspectives	Challenges	Interview excerpts
Agency-based	Unclear communication	If you look at our history of decisions, I wouldn't say that I think we've been deceptive…. We knew that changing hunting habitat would be an issue, and instead of taking it on up front and saying, "you know, there aren't going to be trees around here guys." We couched the language in, "we're going to remove wood vegetation." Well, what does that mean? Certainly in the decisions that we've been working on [now], we're trying to lay that stuff out. I think that there was a perception amongst some of the public that when the Forest Service got it, it would be open and it would be fixed. Well, it ain't open and it ain't fixed. …There's no question in my mind, if you look at the redevelopment plans and the expectations that were generated then, there was the thought that when the Forest Service had it, it would become available to the public. That's the biggest expectation problem we have.
	Slow planning process	We're a large organization. We have certain processes that we have to go through to make decisions and those take time. …Because we're such a large organizations, there's rules and procedures that take time and sometimes different groups or people would like to see something happen much faster. …To me, that's the largest barrier.
	Heavy workload/ small workforce	I think one of the conflicts that always comes up…is the demands on the workforce. I do a fair amount of evening meetings, [other personnel] do evening meetings. As we look at intensifying the on the ground management, some of the things that fall off are some of those evening meetings that have bought us a lot in terms of public ownership and expectation. …How do we not let some of those critical things that come down to the foundation of public trust fall through the cracks, because we have so many process requirements and a lot of internal things that we have to do? We will never have a much bigger workforce than this, I don't think, because we're so small and people don't understand that we're a supervisor's office and a district office with all those responsibilities and they don't go away because we're little. They just get spread out and it's harder to maintain the skill. It's harder to maintain the knowledge.
	Midewin identity in USFS	Any chance I get to talk to someone and get them out here is what I focus on. …And actually that is internally as well as externally. I joke around a little bit about, you know, I have got 38,000 people in the Forest Service to educate about who we are. And I've got less now. I've got about 37,383 left to do. We're such a little fish. They're dealing with much bigger programs, much bigger issues. You know, we've suggested that Midewin be a pilot for this or a pilot for that, but you don't have the controversy, you don't have the big ticket items. [They say,] "yeah, we want to help you, but we've got to deal with the crisis of the day."
Site-based	Site condition	One of the things that limits public use of this area, and one of the reasons why there's still a lot of people who don't look at Midewin as public land, is the fact that we've had to take this very conservative approach to public access. The fences are still there, the gates are still there, the locks are still there. …So, if we can work with the Army and facilitate them to get some things done that allow us…to provide public access, then the public's perception of this place will begin to change.
	Prairie ecology	For me, part of it is that you have to learn the language to become comfortable in that place. It's like I have to know the plants and the trees and here, the prairie flowers and grasses and things. I don't know the prairie grasses and flowers as well…because I worked in a forested area. …I come out and volunteer myself …because I'm trying to find that personal connection to the land.
	Size of unit	People thought Midewin was big enough to satisfy everybody's needs, when to the Forest Service, this is like the tiniest spot.

APPENDIX C. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

		Expectations	Challenges	Opportunities	Recommendations
Transaction	Values	• Research • Ecological restoration • Conservation • Education • Recreation • Agriculture • Cultural history • Community character • Economics	• Competing values • Changing values • National mandate • Single issue interest groups • Limited community engagement • Staff turnover	• Shared values • Clear mission	• Emphasize shared values • Acknowledge competing values • Be upfront about changing values
	Knowledge	• Science • Creativity • Practicality • Experience	• Lack of restoration knowledge • Limited community engagement • Staff turnover	• Strong volunteer network	• Develop education and interpretation programs aimed at general public • Seek local knowledge and creativity. Develop cultural interpretation programs in cooperation with local experts. • Be upfront about changing knowledge
	Capacity	• Resources • Commitment • Efficiency	• Budget constraints • Understaffed • Agency procedural requirements • Site constraints	• Dedicated personnel	• Demonstrate capacity to turn planning into action • Become more visible in the community
Relationship	Communication	• Honest and open • Clear • Frequent • Inclusive	• Limited community engagement • Staff turnover	• Community enthusiasm • Quarterly newsletters • Responsive personnel	• Get to know each other on each other's turf • Retain staff. Promote smooth transitions when employees leave • Maintain consistent, clear, and honest communication
	Collaboration	• Local input • Sincere and meaningful	• Limited community engagement • Staff turnover	• Community enthusiasm • Partners abound	• Demonstrate how community input is incorporated into decisions
	Cooperation	• Joint action taking • Mutual benefits • Reciprocity	• Limited community engagement	• Community enthusiasm • Partners abound	• Exploit mutual benefits