M1. Problem Statement

Enhance Awareness
Cross Cultural Communication:
Communities & Conservation

wfsc.tamu.edu/jpackard/wfsc681
• Conservation professionals interact with diverse stakeholders (Brewer 2003; Paolisso 2006; Paolisso 2007)

• Conflict that can arise when conservation orientations collide (Racevskis and Lupi 2006; Salamon 2003; Walker 2003)

• Residents may view newcomers as “political threats” (Walker and Fortmann 2003:469)
• Diverse views of “conservation” as cultural boundaries
  – Anthropocentric- “humans have priority”
  – Biocentric- “nature has priority”
  – Humans & nature are interdependent
• Not just a continuum in one dimension
  “anthropocentric vs. biocentric”
• Communication across cultural boundaries evokes
  – underlying “hidden mind” (subconscious mental model)
  – surface lenses (conscious filtering of information)
Cultural model approach

- Cognitive
- “How each person makes sense of the world around”
- Tacit / intuitive
- Often resistant to change
- Varies between cultural groups

Quinn and Holland 1987, Strauss and Quinn 1997
stakeholder perspectives as cultural lenses

- Cognitive
- Explicit choice
- May switch due to learning
- “A lens both filters and focuses information”
- Usually within a cultural group

Weeks and Packard 1992
Relevance to research

• Ethics- respect diverse perspectives of participants
  – “do no harm” (rights to be informed & not participate)
  – Invite all stakeholders to the table (inclusion)
  – Learn each other’s languages (translate materials)

• Professional development
  – Prepare to interface with diverse stakeholders

• Collaborative learning
  – When stakeholders listen to each others views, the problem may be reframed, opening more options for solutions
summary

• This training addresses the problems encountered by conservation professionals who interface with diverse local stakeholders

• Cross cultural communication involves reaching across boundaries that arise when knowledge is tacit (subconsciously shared)

• Although underlying cultural models may be unlikely to change, stakeholders can learn to view a problem through the lens of another