

RESEARCH PROJECT TECHNICAL COMPLETION REPORT

---

Institution University of Connecticut Date of Report August 28, 1967  
OWRR Project No. A-006 (CONN) OWRR Agreement No. 14-01-0001-727  
Project Title The Role of Regional Planning in the Public Management of Water Resources:  
The Case of the Farmington River Basin.  
Principal Investigator(s) R. E. Kasperson  
Project Began (Mo.-Yr.) May 1965 Project Ended (Mo.-Yr.) June 1966

---

Project Objectives: The fundamental problem of the study may be stated as follows: How well do the existing organizational structure and planning processes serve the public interest in the development of water resources in the Farmington River Basin. Such an investigation has much relevance for current research in water resources, since, in the final analysis, public decisions will determine much of the use of these resources. This study should properly be regarded as a prototype since it will delimit profitable areas for future research. Finally, it is, in a sense, a study of a study because it is concerned with the ultimate success of the Farmington River Plan prepared by Travelers Research.

Achievement of Project Objectives: Initially, the researcher reviewed past plans and efforts by various governmental agencies in the Farmington Basin. A large-scale interviewing program successfully gathered information concerning attitudes and behavior by different agencies and groups in the planning process. Information was collected at four major levels. At the grass-root level, 375 interviews were taken with citizens in their homes in an effort to determine awareness and perception of water resource problems and personal activities taken to deal with these problems. At the interest group level, 340 questionnaires were collected from members of the Farmington River Watershed Association. Open-ended interviews were also conducted with representatives of most of the towns represented in the Watershed. Individual town programs were assessed, and the degree of interaction between local officials and governmental agencies evaluated. Finally, twelve of the twenty-two governmental agencies or organizations concerned with resource management in the Farmington Valley were interviewed.

Research Procedures Used: The methodology employed for the study began with a series of models and theory of water resource planning. Essentially, this was a comparison of normative theory with the empirical situation. Interviews were distributed according to a stratified sample with individuals selected by random clusters within strata. Interview and questionnaire results were analyzed within contingency tables and with chi-square significance tests.

Research Results: Evidence from the study indicates a duplication of functions was common among governmental agencies concerned with water resources. There was, however, an impressive state of interagency communication. Agencies were much more extensively involved in the data gathering effort than in the evaluation and recommendation stages. Analysis of the membership of the major valley interest group shows an absence of Massachusetts residents and communities among its 709 members. Members' views of the public interest strongly favor use of waters from the Connecticut River to meet future supply needs and recreational uses of water-supply reservoirs.

List of Publications: "Political Organization and the Planning of Water Resource Development in the Farmington Valley: A Preliminary Profile", R. E. Kasperson. (in press)

Abstract: Evidence indicates a duplication of functions by state agencies within the watershed. Overlaps are particularly evident between agencies charged with multiple use and single use responsibilities. Policy conflicts are particularly common between water supply and recreation agencies. Research did uncover, however, an impressive state of interagency communication. Interaction between government agencies and local officials was more uneven. Those concerned with water supply and quality generally had much greater interaction than multiple use and recreation agencies. The role of agencies in the formulation and support of the Farmington Plan varied widely. Most agencies were involved extensively in the data gathering stage but only intermittently in the evaluation and recommendation stages. Agency representatives suggested a number of reservations to the plan. Analysis of the membership of the Farmington River Watershed Association indicates a disturbing absence of Massachusetts residents and communities among the 709 members. Questionnaire results suggest that most individuals learn of the organization by interpersonal communication. Members also tend to be activists who engage in various other conservation activities. The members' views of the public interest strongly favored the use of waters from the Connecticut River over the construction of several new watershed reservoirs. A high proportion also favored boating on water supply reservoirs, although opinion was much more evenly divided on the desirability of swimming. Finally, most respondents reflected a desire for the long-run preservation of rural landscape and life in the valley.

Keywords: \*Policy conflicts, interagency communication, interaction, \*planning, watershed association, membership, \*public interest, recreation, water supply.