

THE WILLIAM D. RUCKELSHAUS CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WASHINGTON



Michael Kern
Director

Michael Kern has almost 25 years of experience in helping diverse groups reach common ground on public policy issues in Washington and the Pacific Northwest. Prior to joining the Center, he was a Senior Associate at Triangle Associates Inc., providing facilitation, mediation, public involvement, strategic planning, project management and other services. He has also provided these services at non-profit and academic institutions for the North Cascades Initiative, Hatchery Reform Project, Hanford Openness Workshops and other projects.

KEYS AREAS OF EXPERTISE

Facilitation/Mediation
Dispute Assessment/Conflict Resolution
Project Management/Strategic Planning
Public Involvement/Visioning
Marketing/Fund Raising
Organizational Development
Intergovernmental Relations
Cross-Cultural Communication

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

US Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution (ECR)
National Roster of ECR Professionals
University Network for Collaborative Governance
Association for Conflict Resolution Environment and Public Policy Section
International Association for Conflict Management
American Society for Public Administration
National Coalition for Deliberation and Dialogue
Association for Public Policy Analysis and Management

EDUCATION AND TRAINING

University of Washington (UW)
MPA, Evans School of Public Policy and Governance 1995,
Pi Alpha Alpha
BFA, School of Art, 1989, Phi Beta Kappa

Training in facilitation, mediation, dispute resolution, public involvement and project management from UW School of Law, UW Evans School of Public Affairs, Dispute Resolution Center of Snohomish County, Public Conversations Project, International Association for Public Participation, etc.

Selected Project Experience

Chehalis Basin Strategy, 2012-present: Provided oversight and strategic advice for this project that has been helping a Governor-appointed work group and others break through many decades of catastrophic floods and declining aquatic resources, followed by study and stalemate, in the Chehalis Basin in southwest Washington. For the first time, there is broad agreement for next steps to reduce flood damage, enhance salmon populations, and support the prosperity of communities.

SR 530 Landslide Commission, 2014: Provided oversight and strategic advice to the facilitation team for a joint commission formed by the Governor and Snohomish County Executive in response to the SR 530 landslide of March 2014 that took the lives of 43 people in the Stillaguamish Valley. The Commission reviewed the incident and the collective response, and provided consensus recommendations to help plan and respond to similar events.

Eldercare Workforce, 2012 - present: Helping lead a national network of university policy centers that has launched an effort to build state level consensus on eldercare workforce issues and actions to meet the challenges of the "age wave" in the coming decade. Project oversight and strategic advice to a team led by the UW Health Policy Center on project that is examining eldercare workforce capacity in Washington state.

Aviation Biofuels, 2010-present: Served on the stakeholder group participating in the Sustainable Aviation Biofuels Northwest assessment. Now providing oversight and strategic advice for the Center's team on the Northwest Advanced Renewables Alliance, a five year, \$40 million project supported by USDA to explore woody biomass as a source of aviation biofuels.

Voluntary Stewardship Program, 2010-2013: Provided oversight and strategic advice to the Center's facilitation team for this project that led to a landmark agreement and state legislation on how to collaboratively protect and enhance environmentally critical areas on agricultural land, while preserving a strong farm economy.

Civil Public Discourse, 2011- present: Leading the Center's exploration of the current status of civil public discourse in the state, region, and nation to understand how it compares to other periods in history, what effects this is having on policy processes, and what the Center and other organizations can do about it.

Selected Project Experience, continued

Washington Growth Management Hearings Boards (GMHBs) Efficiency Study and Restructuring Analysis, 2009: Authored a study identifying alternatives for GMHB restructuring that save costs while maintaining function. The study reviewed caseload indicators and trends, and was based on assessment interviews with over 35 internal and external stakeholders and government representatives. It served as the basis for restructuring legislation adopted by the Legislature in 2010.

Seattle Green Building Task Force, 2008 – 2009: Facilitated this Task Force, charged with advising City staff and the Mayor on energy efficiency, land use and other policy options to help make Seattle the nation's "green building capital." This included helping the Seattle Office of Sustainability and the Environment (OSE) and Department of Planning and Development (DPD) design the process; interviewing and interacting with Task Force members; and facilitating meetings of the 50-member Task Force and its two 25-member subcommittees.

US Forest Service NEPA for the 21st Century Initiative, 2009: Planned and facilitated a series of videoconference/webinar "virtual" meetings for advisory board members at locations across the country, for this initiative being conducted to examine the interconnected processes that are involved in accomplishing National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) planning within the Forest Service.

Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR) Sustainable Recreation Work Group, 2008 – 2009: Facilitated meetings in eastern and western Washington of a 32-member stakeholder group convened by the Washington Legislature to make recommendations to DNR on providing diverse recreation on its forested/aquatic trust lands, while protecting environmental assets and securing sustainable funding. Helped the group reach a consensus vision for recreation on DNR land for a December 2008 progress report to the Legislature.

Seattle Shoreline Master Program (SMP) Update, 2008 – 2009: Designed and facilitated a series of community visioning workshops and drafted a citizens' shoreline vision from the resulting input. Interviewed candidates for and facilitated a 20-member Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) tasked with providing input to Seattle DPD on technical and policy issues related to the SMP update, which implements state Shoreline Management Act guidelines. Helped the CAC author a report containing its findings and recommendations.

North Cascades Initiative, 2006 – 2007: Helped launch this initiative to create a collaborative vision for the North Cascades region including conservation, outdoor recreation and economic development for adjacent communities; worked collaboratively with federal, state, local and tribal governments; grassroots and national conservation and recreation groups; timber, agricultural and other business interests; and urban and rural communities in eastern and western Washington.

Puget Sound/Coastal Washington and Columbia River Hatchery Reform, 2000 – 2009: Provided facilitation, project management and communications for a Congressionally-funded effort to reform state, tribal and federal hatchery programs across western Washington; facilitated the independent Hatchery Scientific Review Group (HSRG), a state/tribal technical work group, and a stakeholder coalition. Facilitated a US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) initiative to apply hatchery reform principles, tools and recommendations to all hatcheries USFWS owns or operates in the Columbia River Basin. Helped the HSRG author the final report on its three-year review of Columbia Basin programs.

Hanford Openness Workshops, 1997 – 2000: Facilitated workshops at which a normally divisive set of stakeholders worked together to develop recommendations for improving open decision-making at the Hanford Nuclear Site, near the Tri-Cities in eastern Washington; helped federal, state and tribal government representatives work effectively and collegially with whistleblowers, down-winders, academics, and workers' rights, public health and conservation activists to produce two sets of highly-praised recommendations on topics including employee openness, information tools, declassification, public involvement, performance measures and tribal issues.

Tribal Risk Roundtable, 1998: Facilitated a roundtable discussion hosted by the Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation (CTUIR) and co-sponsored by CTUIR and the University of Washington (UW) at which representatives of 23 tribes/tribal nations discussed with state and federal representatives the unique tribal risk management concerns involved in cleanup of the nation's nuclear sites. Facilitated the roundtable steering committee which included representatives from CTUIR, UW, the Council of Energy Resource Tribes, the Nez Perce Tribe and the Yakama Nation.

SalmonCorps Program Evaluation, 1996: Conducted an evaluation of this AmeriCorps program on five Indian reservations across the Columbia/Snake River Basin. Conducted interviews with headquarters and field staff, including tribal leaders and youth, on the Yakama, Warm Springs, Umatilla, Nez Perce and Shoshone-Bannock reservations. Produced a report documenting program strengths and areas for improvement.

Tribes and Counties Intergovernmental Cooperation Project, 1990 – 1996: Planning, facilitating, research, writing and other tasks for this foundation-funded project to improve working relationship between tribal and county governments on land use planning, environmental protection and solid waste management. Included designing and directing a leadership development project with Seattle's Indian Heritage High School to introduce Native youth to tribal governments, colleges and organizations.

8/26/15