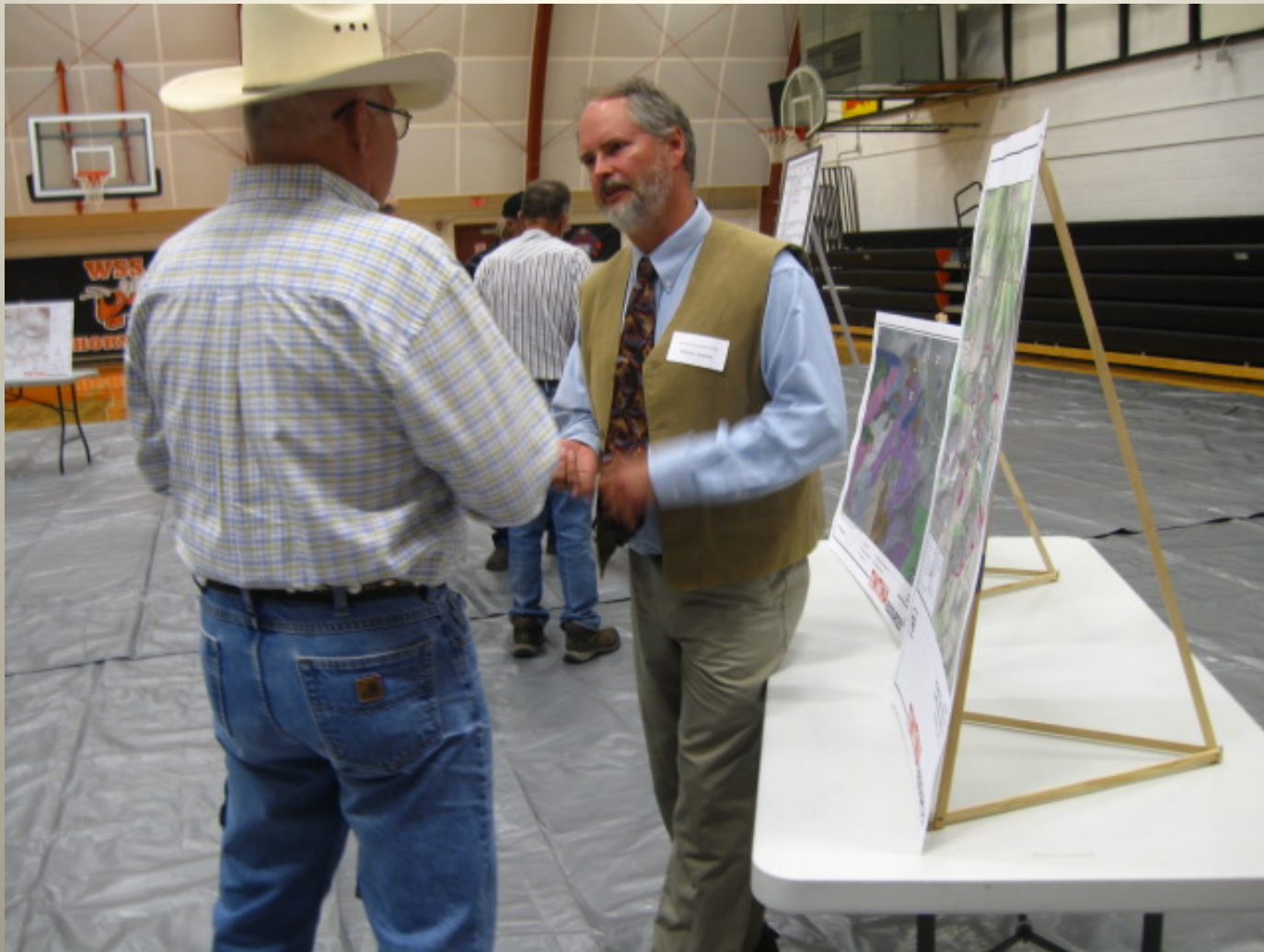


Community Interaction and Public Perception



Enacted In 1971, MEPA significantly expanded the public right to participate in the decisions of government ... **look before you leap**” - *A Guide to the Montana Environmental Policy Act, 2013*



Here are a few models

The “Highly Regulated” model

The project where the agency folks (greatly) outnumber members of the public who are interested



The “Golden Sunlight” model

- Public meetings are Company pep rallies
- Everyone shows up
- Small community
- Local interest
- Local political interest
- Concerns/substantive comments are registered through written comments

The “Angry Mob” model

Pickers, organizing, yelling

[Otter Creek Coal Mine](#)





statewide, regional,
national and even
international
implications and
interest

The “Who Woulda’ Thunk” model

“Acid Mine Drainage”

“Tributary of the Smith River”



BILLINGS GAZETTE

**Proposed Black Butte Copper Project
near White Sulphur Springs draws
thousands of comments**

Comments

- NGOs hiring professional consultants
- Form letter campaigns

Obama flooded with 1M comments slamming fracking

August 26, 2013 | By Barbara Vergetis Lundin

The public comment period for the Department of Interior Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) second version of its Proposed "Oil and Gas; Hydraulic Fracturing on Federal and Indian Lands" rule, which apply to more than

- Never underestimate the amount of time this is going to take
- Don't be afraid to adapt

Listen

Even if you're not listening, pretend to listen –
even if you don't care, pretend to care



Support Groups

If this is all too touchy feely for you – get in line

Mantra

patience, professionalism, and perseverance



6 steps to recovery

- Step 1 – We admit we cannot (completely) avoid public processes
- Step 2 – We understand that public perception cannot be ignored and can be shaped by our actions
- Step 3 – We admit that, maybe in the past, we have feared or loathed public processes and discounted public perception

6 steps to recovery

- Step 4 – We make a decision that embracing public input and community involvement might actually be a good thing
- Step 5 – We acknowledge that, often, public processes actually improve the project and help us understand it better
- Step 6 – We help each other embrace public processes and value public perception

Thank you

Questions