



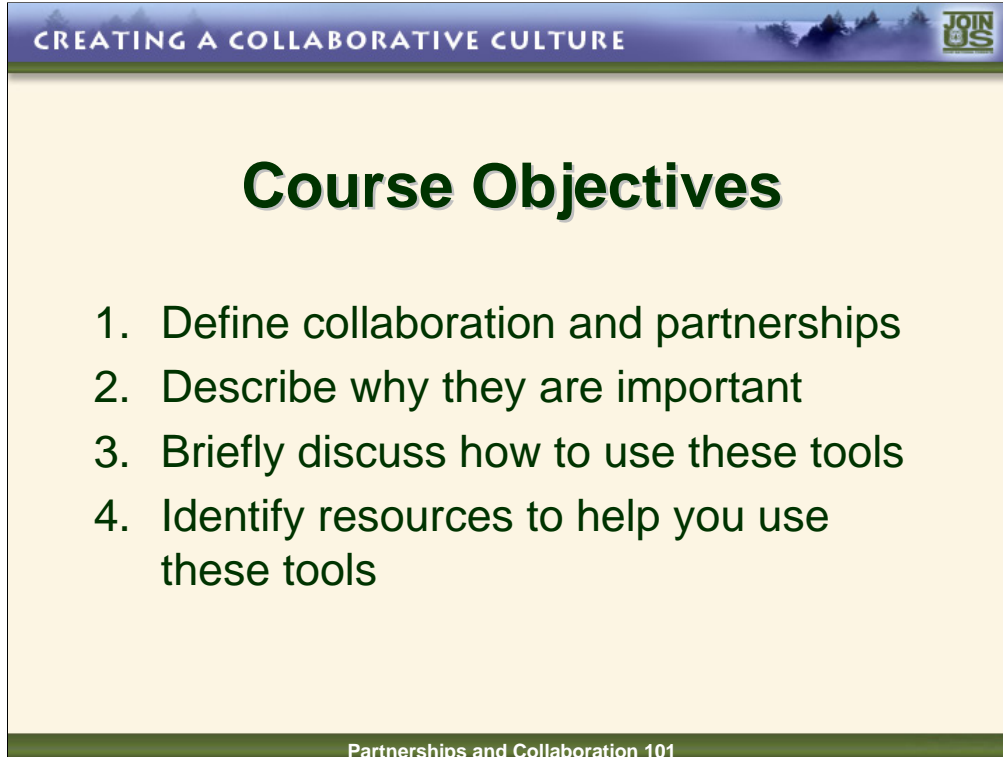
CREATING A COLLABORATIVE CULTURE 

# Partnerships & Collaboration 101



Partnerships and Collaboration 101

You may have heard talk about partnerships and collaboration and today I would like to give a brief overview of both of these tools. These are tools that anyone and everyone can use in their daily work.



The slide features a blue header with the text "CREATING A COLLABORATIVE CULTURE" and a "JOIN US" logo. The main content area is yellow and contains the title "Course Objectives" and a numbered list of four points. A green footer contains the text "Partnerships and Collaboration 101".

**CREATING A COLLABORATIVE CULTURE**

**Course Objectives**

1. Define collaboration and partnerships
2. Describe why they are important
3. Briefly discuss how to use these tools
4. Identify resources to help you use these tools

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The four things I would like to cover are listed here.

1. First, you may have heard different descriptions of collaboration and partnerships and we will discuss what it means in the forest service.
2. Second, you will see why these tools are important to all employees.
3. Third, we will discuss a few important things you should know as you use these tools.
4. Fourth, I've listed some resources available to help you use these tools.



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**Collaboration and Partnerships**

Chief, Dale Bosworth said\*:


*“We need to treat our publics as equals. Instead of educating the public we should work with them, involving them at every step of the way in our decision making. Our role at the Forest Service has changed: we still have an obligation to lead, but as organizers and facilitators rather than as experts who have all the answers, because we don’t.”*

\*Dale Bosworth, Centennial Congress Report Out, 1/6/05

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Our leadership is describing a change in our organizational culture. Our role is now one of organizers and facilitators, bringing people together and involving them in the decision making process. This includes collaboration and partnerships.

The whole point here is to focus our discussion on mutual benefits. We will be better agency employees if we serve the public by focusing on meeting partner needs as well as our own.

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## What do we mean by collaboration?

- **Collaboration-** *A process where people with diverse interests share knowledge and resources to improve outcomes and/or enhance decisions.*
- Partnerships often result from collaborative efforts.



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There are many definitions floating around, but the key is -collaboration is a process where different interests seek common-ground solutions.

**The decision-making authority still resides with the line officer or the person responsible for the final decision.** The line officer, however, may choose to make his or her decision based on the results of collaborative efforts.

Collaboration can help us engage the community's of interest and/or place to make better and more widely-supported decisions.

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## Collaboration isn't IN the way, it IS the way

In the past 5 years law, regulation, and policy have required collaboration:

- National Fire Plan
- Healthy Forest Initiative
- Healthy Forest Restoration Act
- Stewardship Contracting
- Secure Rural Schools (RAC)
- Executive Order on Cooperative Conservation
- National Forest Management Act-Planning Rule
- OHV Planning Rule

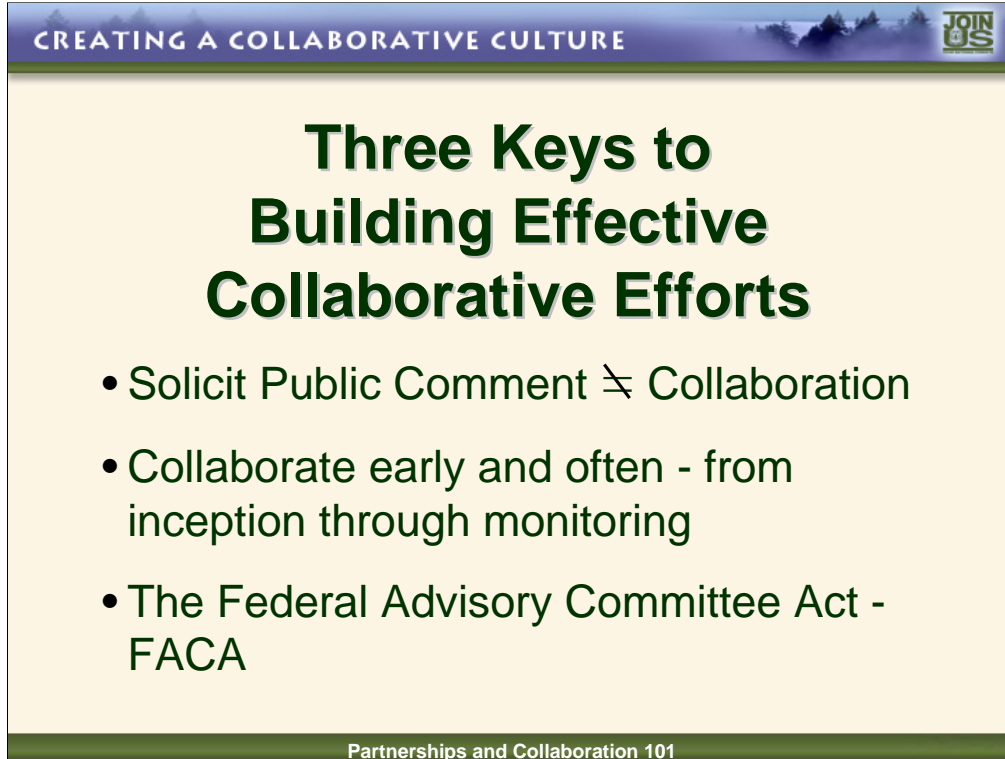
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Collaboration isn't optional any more. It's required in most recent pieces of legislation that apply to our work.

For example:

**HFRA states** in Section 104(f) "PUBLIC COLLABORATION.—In order to encourage meaningful public participation during reparation of authorized hazardous fuel reduction projects, the **Secretary shall** facilitate collaboration among State and local governments and Indian tribes, and participation of interested persons, during the preparation of each authorized fuel reduction project...."

**The Planning rule** says, " **The Responsible Official must** use a collaborative and participatory approach to land management planning, ...by engaging the skills and interests of appropriate combinations of Forest Service staff, consultants, contractors, other Federal agencies, federally recognized Indian Tribes, State or local governments, or other interested or affected communities, groups, or persons."



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## Three Keys to Building Effective Collaborative Efforts

- Solicit Public Comment ≠ Collaboration
- Collaborate early and often - from inception through monitoring
- The Federal Advisory Committee Act - FACA

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We will review these 3 topics in more detail because they are critical to the success of collaborative efforts.

Solicit public comment means scoping to some and public review to others but the point is this is not a collaborative process.

Collaboration means early and often discussion seeking common agreements that might inform options.

Collaboration happens no matter where you sit – whether it is in state and private or research, on the forest or on a district.....

## Options for Public Involvement

Collaboration does not mean giving up decision-making authority

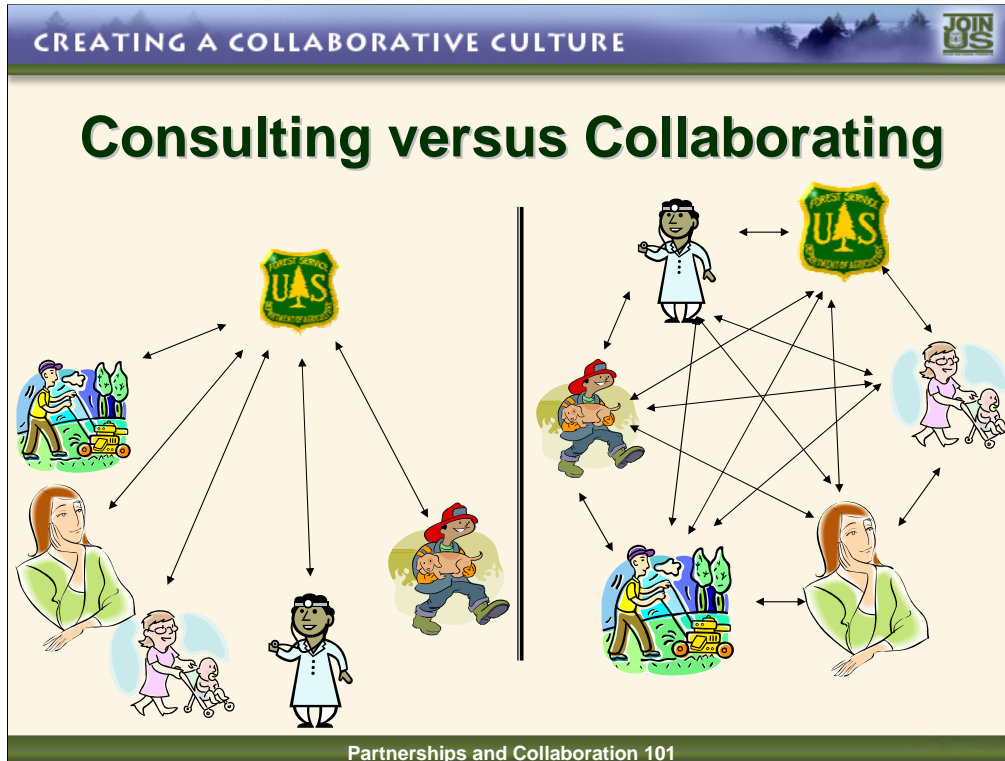
<p><b>Inform</b></p> <p><u>Goal:</u> provide objective information</p> <p><u>Tools:</u> Fact Sheets Newsletter Letters News Release Website</p> <p><u>Intent:</u> Provide Information</p>	<p><b>Consult</b></p> <p><u>Goal:</u> obtain feedback</p> <p><u>Tools:</u> Surveys Open house Public meeting News release Website</p> <p><u>Intent:</u> Seek input &amp; feedback</p>	<p><b>Involve</b></p> <p><u>Goal:</u> ensure issues are understood &amp; considered</p> <p><u>Tools:</u> Workshops Partnerships Public meeting</p>	<p><b>Collaborate</b></p> <p><u>Goal:</u> partner in each step of the process that leads to a Decision.</p> <p><u>Tools:</u> Consensus bldg Facilitate resolution FACA groups Mediation Negotiation Non-FACA team</p> <p><u>Intent:</u> Convene interests to reach zone of agreement</p>
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### HANDOUT- SCOPING vs. COLLABORATION

Most of us are familiar with “scoping” as we apply it during our NEPA processes.

For most of us, that has meant informing and maybe consulting with interested public. You’ll notice that our **scoping is NOT collaboration**. The intent of collaboration is to convene interests, develop a zone of agreement around an issue or problem. then use this zone of agreement to develop solutions to the issue or problem.

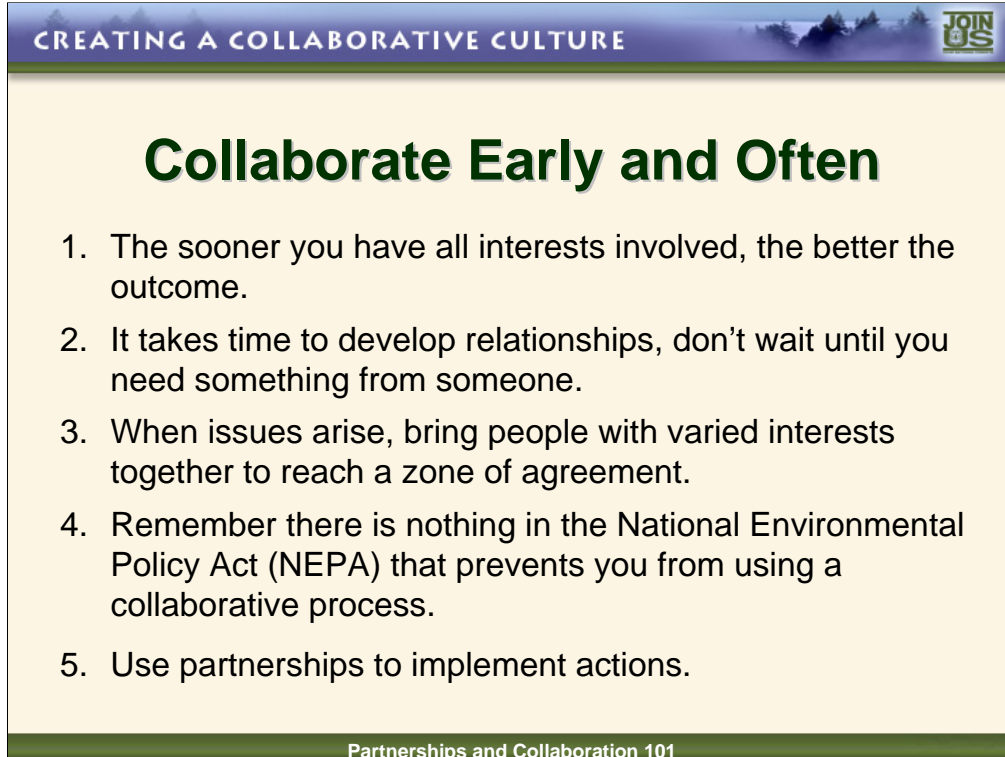
Collaboration creates a “zone of agreement” where diverse interests develop solutions to problems, as opposed to what we generally think of as a “decision-making” process. Importantly, it **does not transfer government authority**. The line officer is still responsible for making decisions within his or her authority.



Collaboration takes us away from the front of the room and puts us at the table with other interests. This is not just federal government but applies to all situations and parties. We may:

1. provide a meeting space,
2. utilize another agency as a convener or pay for a facilitator, and
3. provide the framework (decision space) for discussion.

When various interests problem-solve and develop a consensus alternative there is a much higher likelihood of success for that alternative.




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## Collaborate Early and Often

1. The sooner you have all interests involved, the better the outcome.
2. It takes time to develop relationships, don't wait until you need something from someone.
3. When issues arise, bring people with varied interests together to reach a zone of agreement.
4. Remember there is nothing in the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) that prevents you from using a collaborative process.
5. Use partnerships to implement actions.


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1. Convene all the various interests at the earliest stages of decision making or problem solving. The sooner you have all interests involved, the better the outcome.
2. Relationships are developed over time. It's important to start **before** the emergency or conflict.
3. When you begin problem identification, begin collaboration. Various interests can develop a common vision for a watershed or other analysis area.
4. There is nothing in NEPA or it's regulations that prohibits collaboration. Use partnerships to implement actions and for collaborative (multi-party) monitoring once the project has been implemented.

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# **Understanding the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA)**


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## Working with Groups that Include Public and Federal Participants

**Make these decisions:**

- 1. What is the goal of the get-together?**
- 2. What process or structure will be used to achieve the goal?**



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1. What is the goal of the group get-together?
  - Information exchange – finding out what others know about a situation (indigenous and local, academic studies, and professional experience)
  - Opinion gathering – hearing the individual opinions of both groups and individuals
  - Agreement-seeking – working toward agreement on how to proceed with a particular action or make a decision
2. What process or structure will be used to achieve goal?
  - Workshop
  - Agency-sponsored meeting or community sponsored focus-group structure
  - Formally organized Federal Advisory Committee
  - Meetings of local, state, tribal and federal governmental representatives

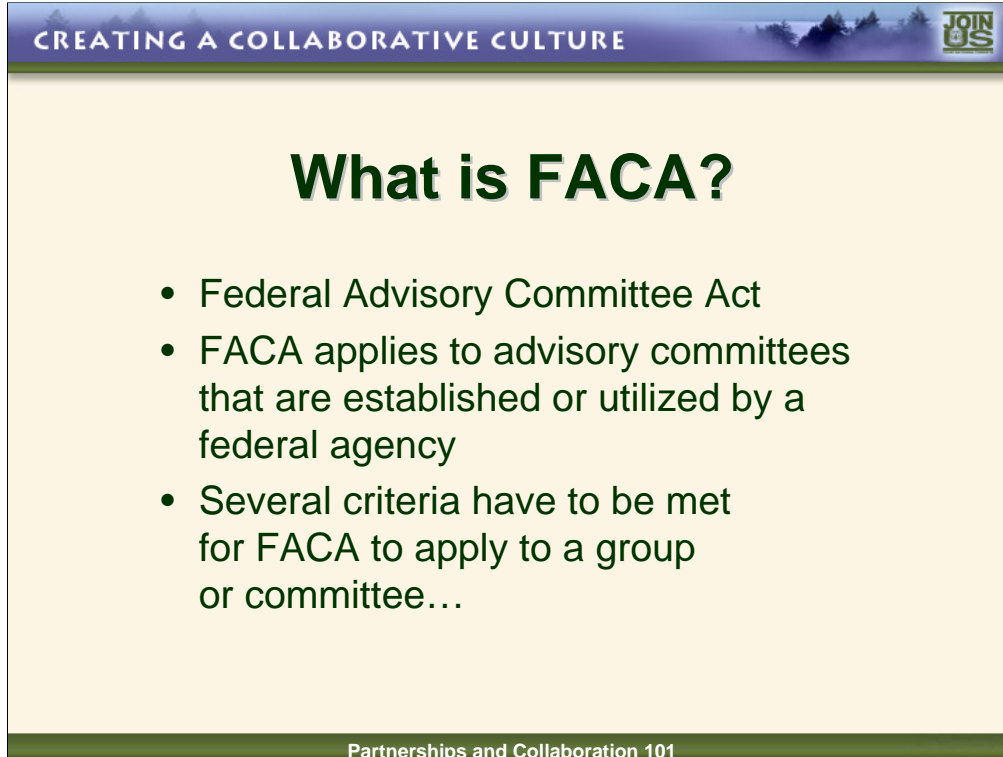
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## **Working with Groups that Include Public and Federal Participants**

**If the Forest Service chooses the participants and controls the agenda,**

**Then the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) may apply...**

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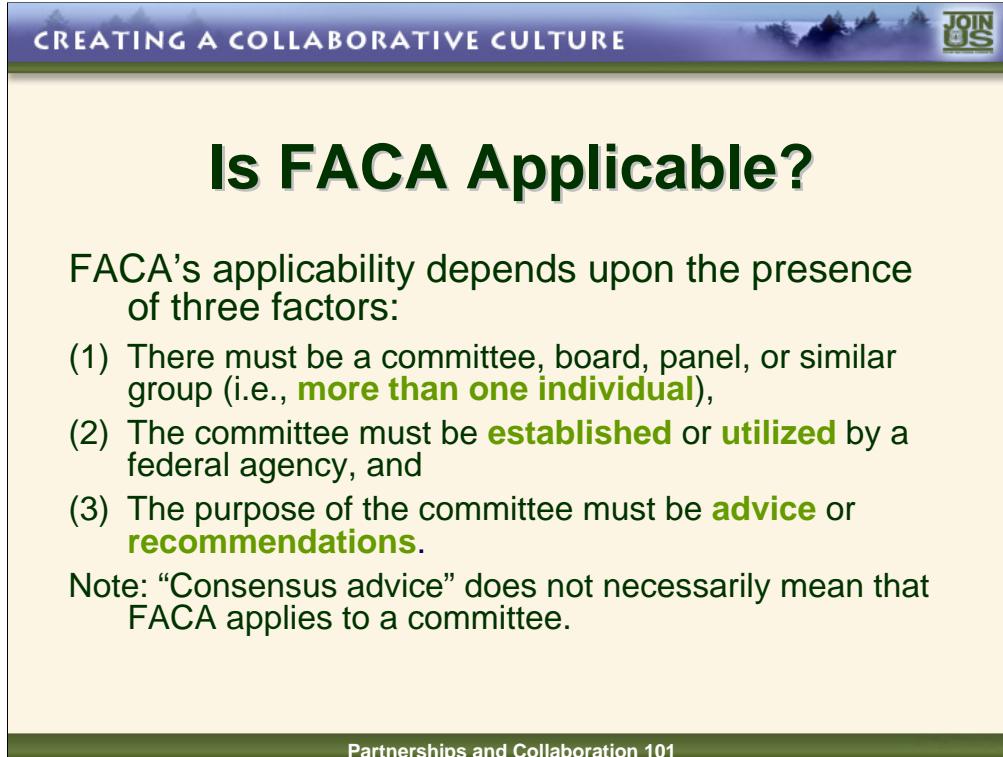
## What is FACA?

- Federal Advisory Committee Act
- FACA applies to advisory committees that are established or utilized by a federal agency
- Several criteria have to be met for FACA to apply to a group or committee...

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The Federal Advisory Committee Act was enacted to minimize the number of federal committees and to make the advisory committee process more transparent. The law only applies to advisory committees established or utilized by a federal agency. If you do not meet the criteria for a FACA committee this act does not apply.



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## Is FACA Applicable?

FACA's applicability depends upon the presence of three factors:

- (1) There must be a committee, board, panel, or similar group (i.e., **more than one individual**),
- (2) The committee must be **established** or **utilized** by a federal agency, and
- (3) The purpose of the committee must be **advice** or **recommendations**.


Note: "Consensus advice" does not necessarily mean that FACA applies to a committee.

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-FACA was passed in 1972. It was designed to help control the undue influence of special interests on advisory committees by balancing committee membership, opening committee meetings and minutes to the public, and controlling the number of committees formed.

FACA does NOT apply in several situations:

1. If the committee is composed wholly of federal employees;
2. If the meetings are held between federal officials and elected officers of state, local, and tribal governments (or their designated employees);
3. If the committee provides individual, as opposed to consensus, advice;
4. If the committee is a civic group whose primary function is to render a public service with respect to a federal program; or
5. If the committee was established to make recommendations to state or local officials or agencies.

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## Do You Need to Worry about FACA?

If you say yes to one or more of the following, then you should consult your FACA Coordinator or the official regulations at 41 CFR 102-3 or website: [www.GSA.gov](http://www.GSA.gov)

**Established**

- Did the Forest Service create or organize the group?

**Utilized**

- Is the group's agenda tightly controlled or managed by the Forest Service?
- Does the Forest Service sponsor or fund the group, in whole or in part?

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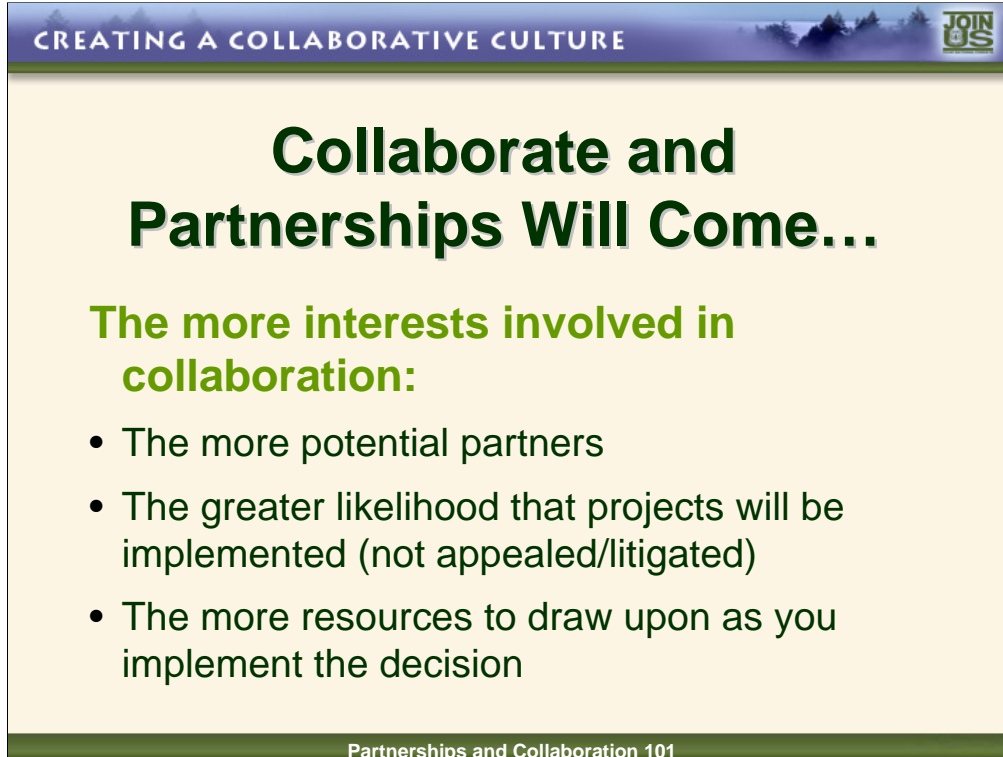
1. FACA mandates that advisory committees comply with several procedural requirements, including having balanced membership, providing the public with notice of committee meetings in advance, permitting the public to attend meetings, and disclosing records and meeting minutes to interested persons.



## Do You Need to Worry about FACA?

- Does the Forest Service request that the group undertake specific tasks?
- Does the group have an organized structure, fixed membership, and/or a specific purpose identified by the Forest Service?





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**Collaborate and Partnerships Will Come...**

**The more interests involved in collaboration:**

- The more potential partners
- The greater likelihood that projects will be implemented (not appealed/litigated)
- The more resources to draw upon as you implement the decision

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Collaboration during the decision-making process paves the way for partnerships.

- As people help develop a vision and actions, they become committed to the outcome. The various interests who help us make decisions are often willing partners in the implementation and monitoring of those projects.
- When you have consensus from various interests, the likelihood of a challenge diminishes. In many cases, your collaborators will intervene on your behalf if there is a challenge.
- Every person knows somebody who knows somebody. As a result of those connections, there are resources available that you never imagined.



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## What Do We Mean by Partnerships?

**Partnership** - *a relationship where people work together to achieve goals that are meaningful to all parties.*

Federal policy defines partnerships as *“arrangements that are voluntary, mutually beneficial, and entered into for the purpose of mutually agreed upon objectives.”*

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Partnerships are defined here in the broadest sense. They may be formal or informal. We may partner with others toward a common goal without any formal agreement. In some cases partnerships will require some type of agreement such as a volunteer agreement, a collection agreement, or a memorandum of understanding.

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## Partnerships

**Partnerships are a Billion Dollar Program**

In fiscal year 2004

\$545,000,000 in Forest Service funds  
+\$486,000,000 in cooperator contributions  
\$1,031,000,000 toward Forest Service goals

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Partnerships are a billion dollar forest service program. Our job is to figure out how to get work done. It's like the role of a supervisor or line officer. The job is to engage others in caring for the public lands and resources they love.

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## Why Partner?

- Leverage funds and resources
- Meet objectives and public expectations
- Solve problems
- Engage people in the management of their national forests
- Shared support



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There are many benefits to partnerships.

- Don't have the money or resources to do what you would like. Ask yourself, "Who would have an interest in this project or problem?"
- Difficulty meeting targets? Find who can help with either resources or funding.
- Have a problem you can't figure out? Maybe someone else has the answer- but you have to ask.
- The more people are engaged in the process, the more support you will have for the results. People love what they know and protect what they love



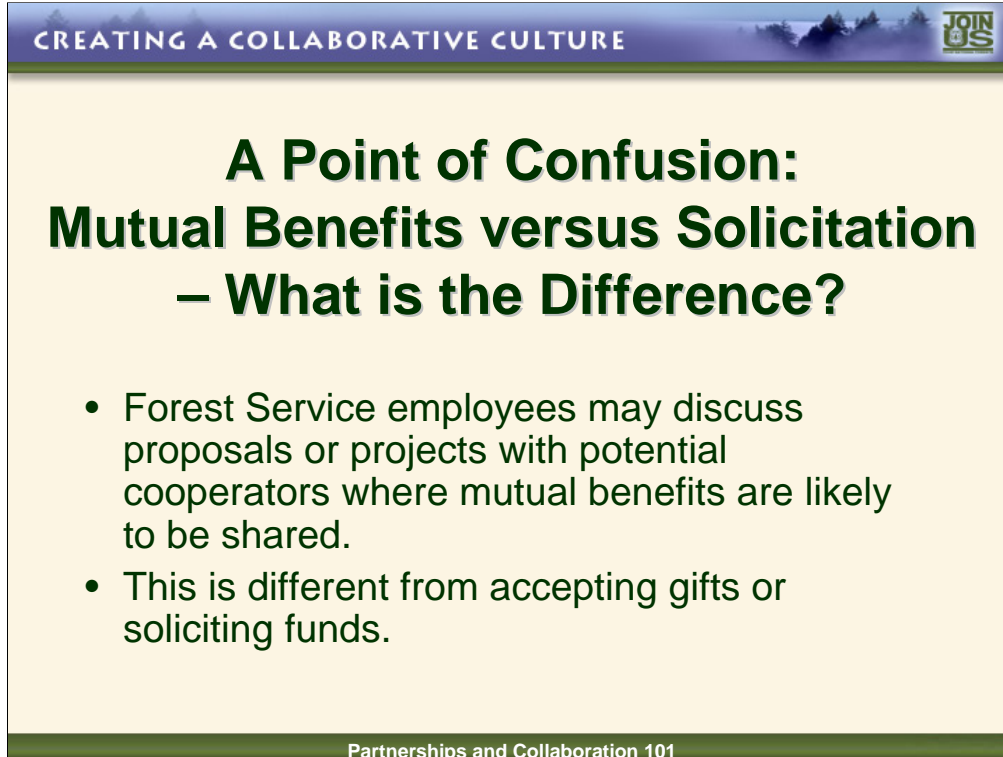
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## How Can I Develop Partnerships?

- If funds or resources are exchanged, an agreement is required.
- It may be as easy as a volunteer agreement or it may be a multiparty agreement.
- Contact your grants & agreements specialist for assistance.

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Formal partnership agreements are required when funds or resources are exchanged. Most of us know about volunteer agreements that can be pretty simple. Talk with your grants and agreements specialist to see if an agreement is involved.



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**A Point of Confusion:  
Mutual Benefits versus Solicitation  
– What is the Difference?**

- Forest Service employees may discuss proposals or projects with potential cooperators where mutual benefits are likely to be shared.
- This is different from accepting gifts or soliciting funds.

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There is no ethical concern when you are discussing potential partnerships with others. If you solicit funds or gifts— especially from a prohibited source, there is an ethical conflict. Discussing a potential partnership with mutual benefits is not soliciting.

You may not solicit or accept “gifts” given directly or indirectly from licensees, applicants, contractors, anyone seeking business with USDA, anyone with interests that you could affect in your official capacity, or an organization with a majority of members who meet the above description. These entities are called “prohibited sources.” Find out more at: <http://www.usoge.gov/>

Partner contributions in support of a mutual benefit agreement are not considered “gifts or donations” under the terms of gift acceptance laws and regulations

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**Tools/Resources for Collaboration**

- **Third-party mediators and facilitators** – U.S. Institute for Environmental Conflict Resolution list
- **Universities and non-profit organizations** provide resources for convening, facilitating and recording collaboration
- **Red Lodge Clearinghouse** for collaborative conservation at:  
<http://www.redlodgeclearinghouse.org/>

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There are many resources to help us collaboration. In many cases we should not be at the front of the room and someone outside the agency should lead the collaboration process. Other agencies, contractors, universities, non-profits or others may have the skills to help lead the collaboration process.

Websites such as the Red Lodge clearinghouse are helpful resources.



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## Tools/Resources for Partnerships

- **The Partnership Guide** - available on the web at: <http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org/>
- **Friends Groups** - Do you have one?
- **Decision Trees** for hazardous fuels reduction at: <http://www.partnershipresourcecenter.org/resources/mp-tools/index.php>
- **Regional and National Partnership Websites** - check your regional webpage for partnerships

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The partnership guide is the most comprehensive resource available to answer questions about partnerships. It's available on the partnership resource center. Other websites listed here provide helpful tools.

Friends groups or other non-profits can help develop partnerships with various interests and they can also obtain grants.

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## In Summary...

- 1. Collaboration:** a process where individuals or groups with different interests come together to seek common-ground solutions
- 2. Partnership:** a relationship where people work together to achieve goals meaningful to all parties.



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In summary, here are the definitions of collaboration and partnerships. This should help develop common expectations.

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## Collaboration and Partnerships are Important Because...

1. Collaboration is required by various laws and we need to lead as organizers and facilitators rather than as experts.
2. Partnerships help us solve problems, leverage resources, meet objectives, and build support.

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Just a reminder that these tools are important to all employees, not only because they are required in various laws, but also because they help us become more effective in our jobs.

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## Acknowledgements

- Pinchot Institute for Conservation
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- US Forest Service, including:
  - **National Partnership Network, National Partnership Office, National Forest System, NFS – Business Operations, Research and Development, State and Private Forestry**

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## Looking for More Training? Here's a complete list of modules.

- Partnerships and Collaboration 101
- Collaboration 200
- Meeting Objectives Through Partnerships 201
- Developing a Partnership 202
- Partnership Authorities and Instruments 203
- Partnership Conduct and Ethics 204
- Understanding Nonprofits and National Forest Foundation 205
- Partnership Administration 301
- Step by Step Partnership Administration 302
- Partnership and Collaboration Tools 303

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