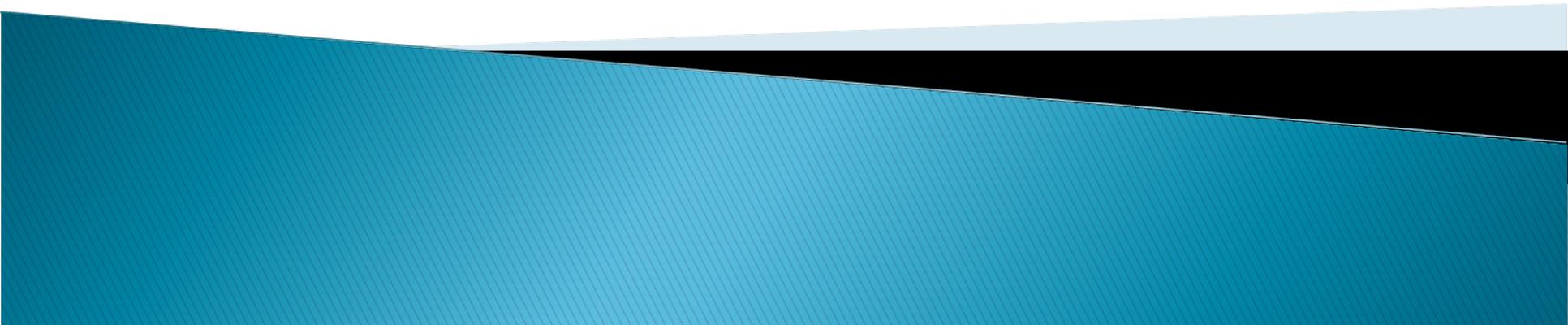
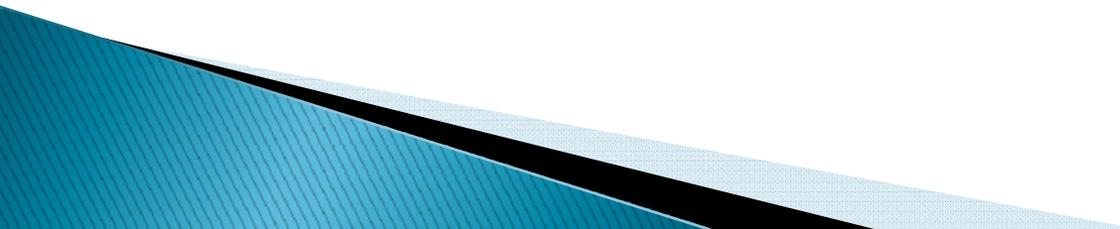


# Foundations for Public Participation in Resources Development

Nickie Vlavianos  
November 19, 2010



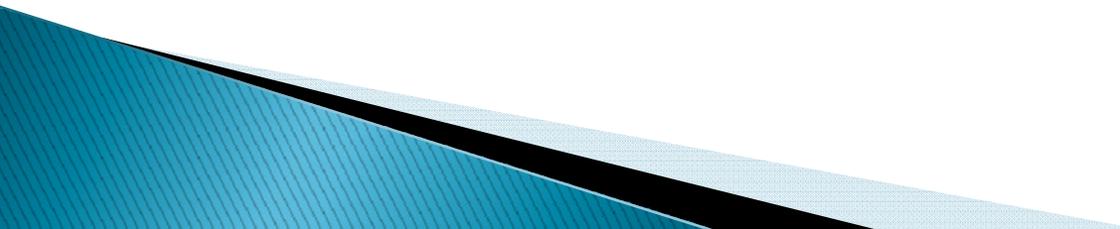
# Key Questions

- ▶ Why is public participation in government decision-making necessary or desirable?
  - ▶ What does effective public participation look like?
- 

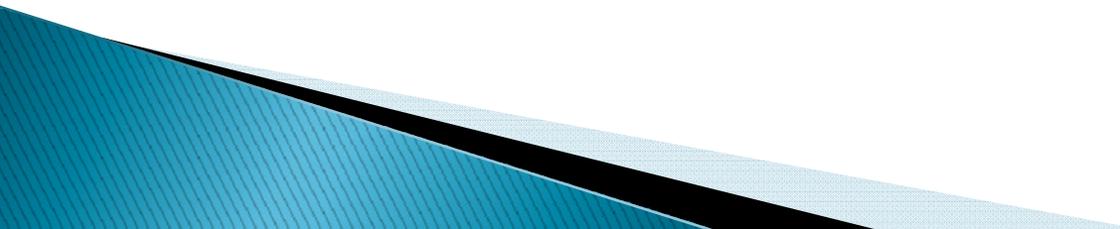
# Political Aspects

“...the extent to which there should be public participation, and how it should occur, go straight to the heart of a nation’s political values, its concept of the state and the state’s relationship with its citizens, and its concept of how public business is properly carried out.”

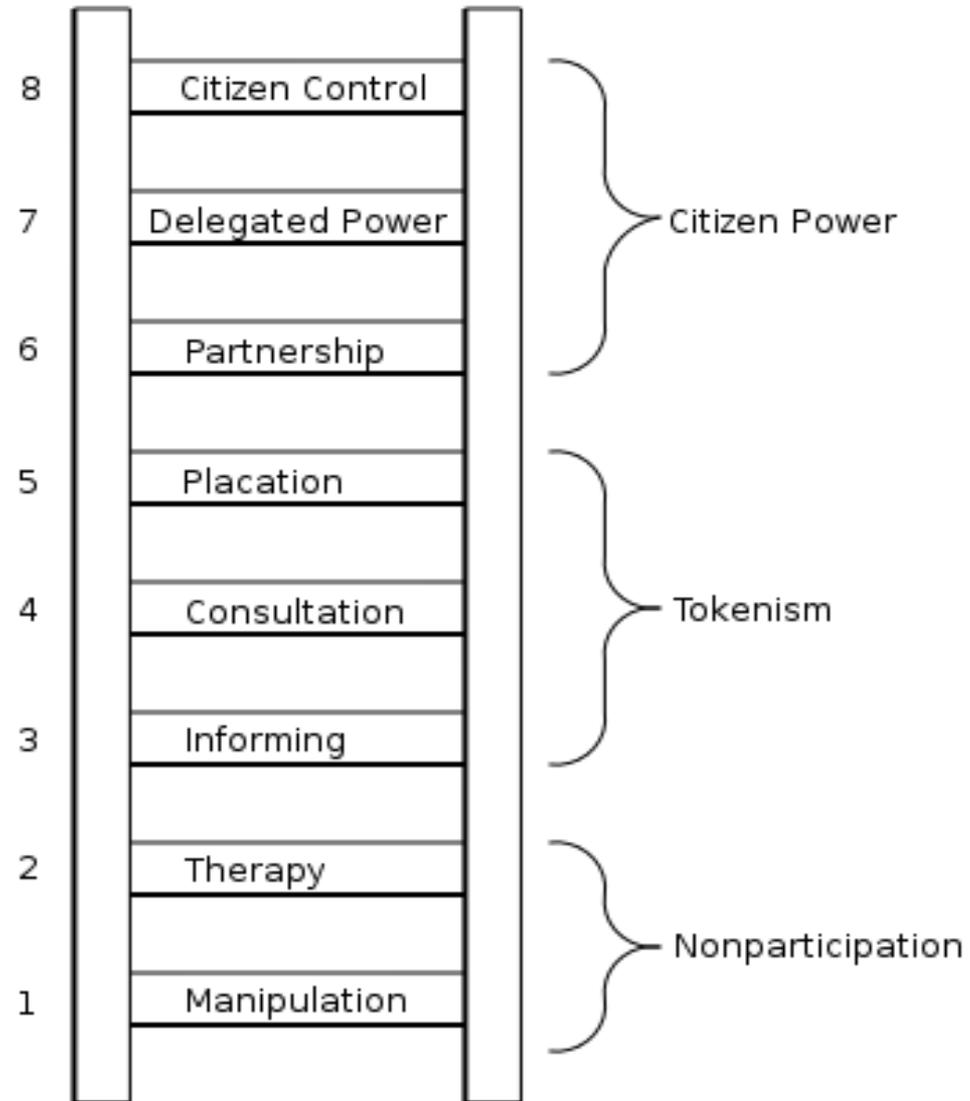
(Barry Barton)



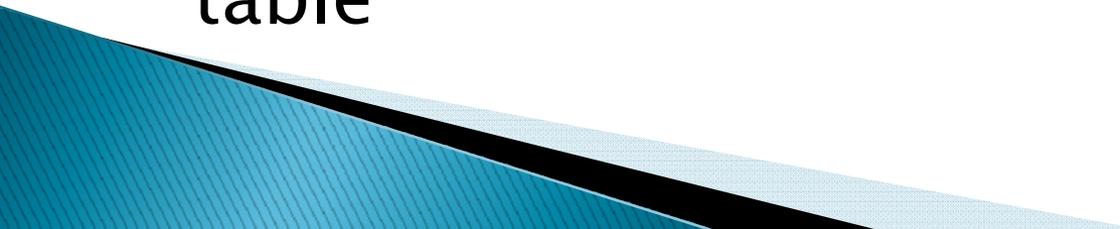
# A Complex Topic

- ▶ Hard to define goals and how to achieve those goals
  - ▶ No universal definition
  - ▶ One size does not fit all
  - ▶ Can take many forms
- 

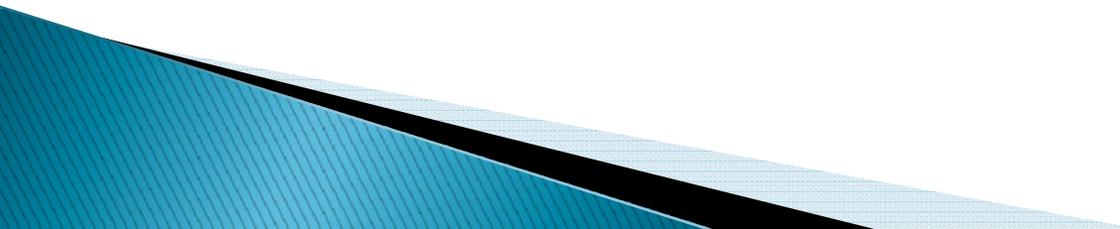
# Arnstein's Ladder



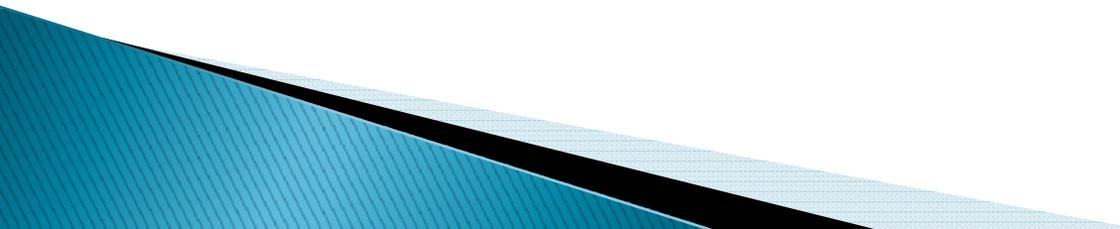
# Rationale

- ▶ Sometimes required by law
  - ▶ Educates the public
  - ▶ Allows for better & unbiased decisions
  - ▶ Allows for broader information gathering
  - ▶ Is part of democracy
  - ▶ Legitimizes decisions
  - ▶ Allows for broader interests to be “at the table”
- 

# Rationale continued

- ▶ Increases accountability and transparency of governmental decision-making
  - ▶ Builds trust & collaborative relationships
  - ▶ Reduces transaction costs for all
  - ▶ Avoids & manages conflict
- 

# Rationale continued

- ▶ Is justified/required because of the public nature of natural resources
  - ▶ Is justified/required in order to make decisions in the public interest
  - ▶ Is necessary/desirable because of the complex nature of resources management
  - ▶ “Sustainable Development” requires it
- 

# Criteria

- ▶ Who will be part of the process?
  - *E.g.*, All those having an “interest” or only those “directly affected”?
  - If Albertans generally, how will stakeholder groups be chosen?
- ▶ **Appropriate Access**
  - Especially for high level citizen engagement, includes clear rules on who will be at the table & removal of barriers to participate (financial and competence issues)

# Criteria continued

- ▶ Clear & Accepted Rules of Process
    - What rules will govern the process?
    - How will those rules be set?
      - *e.g.*, Timelines? Mandate? Rules of debate? Scope of debate? Access to Information? Conflict management? Outputs? Financial and competence barriers?
  - ▶ Equality, accountability, transparency and a lack of bias are key
  - ▶ Outcomes / Monitoring
- 

# References

- ▶ Barry Barton, “Underlying Concepts and Theoretical Issues in Public Participation in Resources Development” in Zillman, Lucas, Pring, eds., *Human Rights in Resources Development* (Oxford, 2002) at 77
- ▶ Sherry R. Arnstein, “A Ladder of Citizen Participation” (1969) 35 *Journal of American Institute of Planners* 216