Elinor Ostrom's 8 Principles for Managing A Commons

BY JAY WALLJASPER  Print

Elinor Ostrom shared the Nobel Prize in Economics in 2009 for her lifetime of scholarly work investigating how communities succeed or fail at managing common pool (finite) resources such as grazing land, forests and irrigation waters. On the Commons is a co-sponsor of a Commons Festival at Augsburg College in Minneapolis October 7-8 where she will speak. (See accompanying sidebar for details.)

Ostrom, a political scientist at Indiana University, received the Nobel Prize for her research proving the importance of the commons around the world. Her work investigating how communities co-operate to share resources drives to the heart of debates today about resource use, the public sphere and the future of the planet. She is the first woman to be awarded the Nobel in Economics.

Ostrom's achievement effectively answers popular theories about the “Tragedy of the Commons”, which has been interpreted to mean that private property is the only means of protecting finite resources from ruin or depletion. She has documented in many places around the world how communities devise ways to govern the commons to assure its survival for their needs and future generations.

A classic example of this was her field research in a Swiss village where farmers tend private plots for crops but share a communal meadow to graze their cows. While this would appear a perfect model to prove the tragedy-of-the-commons theory, Ostrom discovered that in reality there were no problems with overgrazing. That is because of a common agreement among villagers that one is allowed to graze more cows on the meadow than they can care for over the winter—a rule that dates back to 1517. Ostrom has documented similar effective examples of “governing the commons” in her research in Kenya, Guatemala, Nepal, Turkey, and Los Angeles.

Based on her extensive work, Ostrom offers 8 principles for how commons can be governed sustainably and equitably in a community.

8 Principles for Managing a Commons

1. Define clear group boundaries.
2. Match rules governing use of common goods to local needs and conditions.
3. Ensure that those affected by the rules can participate in modifying the rules.
4. Make sure the rule-making rights of community members are respected by outside authorities.
5. Develop a system, carried out by community members, for monitoring members' behavior.

6. Use graduated sanctions for rule violators.

7. Provide accessible, low-cost means for dispute resolution.

8. Build responsibility for governing the common resource in nested tiers from the lowest level up to the entire interconnected system.

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Submitted by racking on Mon, 2011-11-21 02:02.
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Usually the 2 points is contrary. That’s is to say, to make high storage density, the loading job will be more complex. Although some special racking could make the balance, but the storage management system is much more complex. Of
course AS RS system is a good solution to solve the problem, but the cost is also extremely expensive. Most of customers couldn't afford it.

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