

Policy Learning and Political Context: Analyzing Responses to Colorado's Extreme Flood Events of 2013

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Codebook for Interview Transcription

Research Questions and Hypotheses:

RQ1: What factors are associated with observed variations in policy change and learning in flood mitigation and prevention at the local level?

H1: Policy change and learning will vary across communities based on extent of flood damage, resource availability, political factors, public opinion, perceptions of flood risk, and degree of openness of decision-making processes.

RQ2: How do political context and available resources within communities influence policy change and successful adaptation to extreme flood events?

H2: We expect to see communities with (1) greater post-flood resource availability (e.g., financial, technical, relationship/network, public support) and (2) more extensive shifts in resources to demonstrate greater levels of policy change and learning.

H3: We expect to see communities with (1) election and legislative cycles that coincide with flood recovery, (2) widespread and severe flood damage, and (3) public support for local government recovery action to demonstrate greater levels of policy change and learning.

RQ3: How and to what extent does public perception of flood risks and preferences towards policy alternatives influence policy change and learning?

H4: In communities where the public is (1) more knowledgeable about community-wide flood damage and government flood recovery efforts, and (2) where recovery processes have been more open to public input, we expect to see higher levels of public support for recovery action and we expect also to see greater levels of policy change and learning.

H5: In communities with more than one active advocacy coalition, we expect to see greater levels of policy change when the public's risk perception and policy preferences align with those of a pro-change coalition.

RQ4: Do communities with a higher level of democratic governance demonstrate a greater degree of policy learning or policy adaptation to extreme flood events?

H6: Communities with greater openness in collaborative and public involvement processes are expected to display greater levels of policy change and learning in response to the floods.

H7: Communities where greater levels of local knowledge of flood risks and damage are present, along with public input regarding recovery goals being incorporated into planning processes, are expected to see higher levels of public support for policy outcomes and greater policy change and learning.

RQ5: What beliefs do stakeholders have about extreme flooding, including causes, consequences, future risks, and appropriate responses, and how do these beliefs influence policy learning and adaptation?

H8: In communities with an adversarial subsystem, with coalitions holding conflicting policy belief systems about the floods causes, consequences, and future risks, we expect to see a lesser degree of policy change and learning than in those communities with collaborative subsystems (Nohrstedt and Weible, 2010).

H9: In communities where stakeholders hold beliefs consistent with (1) expert causal explanations of the 2013 floods, (2) official community flood damage estimates, and (3) predictions of increased flood vulnerability due to climate change or human development patterns, we expect to see stakeholders more involved in public recovery processes and more supportive of policy change towards community adaptation to flood risk.

RQ6: How do the study findings support or refute established policy process theories and advance the theoretical understanding of how and to what extent floods affect policy learning and change?

Coding Instructions:

- Coders should read through the full transcript prior to beginning coding
- Coders should review codebook before coding
- When coding, coders should:
 - Code entire sentences, including any necessary contextual information around that sentence (when appropriate or necessary)
 - If coding for a single word using a ‘find’ search, read the entire question response by the subject in order to capture any context surrounding the word in question
 - Code for a single category of code at a time (i.e. code an entire document for all codes under super-code ‘INFOSOUR’ and then return to the beginning of the transcript to code for all codes under super-code ‘ORGSIND’)
 - Code segments of text into multiple codes, if appropriate (i.e. codes are not mutually exclusive)
 - Treat the super-code (e.g. INFOSOUR) as a bin to put text that should be under the broad category but may not fit within one of the sub-codes
 - After coding, return to this super-code to determine if additional sub-codes should be created (i.e. emergent categories of data per Corbin and Strauss)

CODEBOOK:

- **RESOURCE – Mentions of resources that were helpful, or would have been helpful**
 - FINANC – Mentions of financial resources (e.g. FEMA aid, etc.)
 - TECH – Mentions of technical resources (e.g. GIS mapping, etc.)
 - NGO – Mentions of NGOs or faith-based organizations
 - VOLUN – Mentions of individual volunteers
 - PARTNER – Mentions of partnerships with other governments or NGOs
 - GOVT – Mentions of their own internal government resources

- **POLITICS – Mentions of political factors that help or hinder recovery**
 - PUBLIC – Mentions of public opinion or public support/lack of support for recovery
 - ELECT – Mentions of elections or other electoral political considerations
 - IDEOL – Mentions of political ideologies
 - COUNCIL – Mentions of city/town council politics

- **PERCEPT – Mentions of perceptions of flood causes or future risk**
 - CLIMATE – Mentions of climate change associated risk or cause
 - FLUKE – Mentions of the event being a fluke event
 - PLAIN – Mentions of building in the floodplain
 - LIKELY – Mentions of higher likelihood of future floods
 - NOTLIKE – Mentions of lower likelihood of future floods
 - KNOWL – Mentions of the knowledge of citizens or elected officials regarding risk or causes

- **PROCESS – Mentions of the recovery process**
 - MEET – Mentions of meetings held with public or other groups
 - WEBINFO – Mentions of using the internet or social media to inform the public
 - COLLAB – Mentions of collaborations between groups or citizens
 - STKHLD – Mentions of stakeholders' opinions or actions
 - COALIT – Mentions of the formation of coalitions
 - EXTERNAL – Mentions of collaborating with external entities (consultants, funders, etc.)

- **FLOOD – Mentions of the extent and type of damage**
 - W/WW – Mentions of damage to water or wastewater treatment
 - TRANSP – Mentions of damage to transportation
 - COMM – Mentions of damage to communications
 - PARKS – Mentions of damage to parks or open space
 - RESID – Mentions of residential damage
 - BUSIN – Mentions of commercial damage
 - INFRAST – Mentions of city infrastructure damage (versus residential, etc.)
 - EXTENT – Mentions of the extent of damage (cost, severity, etc.)

- TIME – Mentions of the projected timelines for recovery
- **ACTIONS – Mentions of specific actions taken by the community to recover**
 - FEES – Mentions of passing fees to pay for recovery
 - SHORT – Mentions of short-term projects (small repairs, etc.)
 - LONG – Mentions of long-term projects
 - POLITIC – Mentions of political actions
 - BACK – Mentions of ‘putting it back the way it was’
 - REDUND – Mentions of attempts to make the infrastructure more redundant in the future
 - RESIL – Mentions of policies working towards overall resilience
- **GOALS – Mentions of the long-term goals or vision for recovery**
 - RESIL – Mentions of explicit or implicit resilience thinking
 - SAME – Mentions of ‘putting it back the same way’ or similar thinking
 - LIMITS – Mentions of wanting to build more resilient, but limits to it
 - SPECIF – Mentions of specific goals or plans (project, ideas, processes) to get to resilience
- **LESSONS (FINANCE) – Mentions of financial lessons learned from recovery process**
 - FEMALESS – Direct lessons about how to work with the FEMA or STATE reimbursement processes (including information sources/programs that have been helpful in the reimbursement process)
 - CUSHION – Lessons about the size of budgetary cushion or reserve that is necessary in preparation for disasters (including any actual changes to budget/cushion that have been made as a result of experiences with the flood)
 - ORGCHANGE – Any organizational or personnel changes made as a result of the lessons from recovery
 - PRIORITIZE – Mentions of the connection between available funding and the prioritization of recovery projects or actions.
 - RESIL – Mentions of how the available funding sources specifically helped or hindered efforts to increase resiliency in the recovery process (as opposed to broad resiliency goals or actions coded above)
- **LESSONS (WATERSHED) – Mentions of lessons learned at the watershed level from recovery process**
 - WATERSHED – Mentions of direct lessons about how to plan on watershed level for disasters
 - COOPER – Mentions of lessons at watershed level about collaboration or cooperative planning for development and disasters
 - WSHCHANGE – FOR COALITIONS EXISTING PRE-FLOOD, mentions of changes among partners or coalitions from the flood experiences

- **WATERCOAL – Mentions of coalition structure, lessons, or future prospects**
 - FORM – Description of the motivation for forming the watershed coalition
 - FUND – Description of how coalitions are funded
 - STRUCT – Descriptions of how coalitions are organized, leadership, or hierarchy
 - PLAN – Descriptions of how the watershed coalition interacts with new or existing watershed plans (or prioritizes projects in planning process)
 - PARTN – Descriptions of partnerships and cooperative relationships related to the watershed coalition
 - ACTION – Mentions of specific recovery actions being taken by the watershed coalitions
 - BARRIER – Descriptions of barriers to success for coalitions
 - SUCC – Descriptions of successful outcomes (or promising opportunities) from coalitions
 - LONGTERM – Statements about the long-term prospects for the coalitions