

Understanding ISSUE FRAMING

A "condition"

(existing situation or latent condition)

Won't always be seen as a problem or an opportunity



A "problem" or "opportunity"

(has the public's attention)

Condition captures public attention by showing how it harms or meets their interests



A "priority issue"

(achieves priority status of key decision makers)

Issue is *seen as urgent* and there is a feeling that *something can be done about it*, thus rising on the policy agenda

"...effective public leaders do not necessarily promote solutions; they promote problems. Thus, they are *advocates for issue emergence*, but not necessarily strong advocates for a *particular solution or policy position*."

An issue becomes a priority for someone when it is seen as 1) *important*, 2) *urgent*, and 3) there is a sense that something can be done about it (*do-ability*). Factors that influence people's willingness to engage in collective efforts are: 1) it is a *priority issue* for them; 2) there is a perceived sense of *interdependence*; and 3) they feel *compelled to join* for some reason.

Issue framing critically impacts whether a condition becomes a priority issue people feel compelled to work together on. Issue framing tools include: data, stories, images and leveraging focusing events. Community leaders strategically use these tools to frame issues in ways that draw stakeholders together to tackle community and regional issues.

(Drawn from *Catalytic Leadership* by Jeffrey S. Luke, 1998)

What are alternative ways to frame my community/regional issue?