Regional Networks Leadership Academy
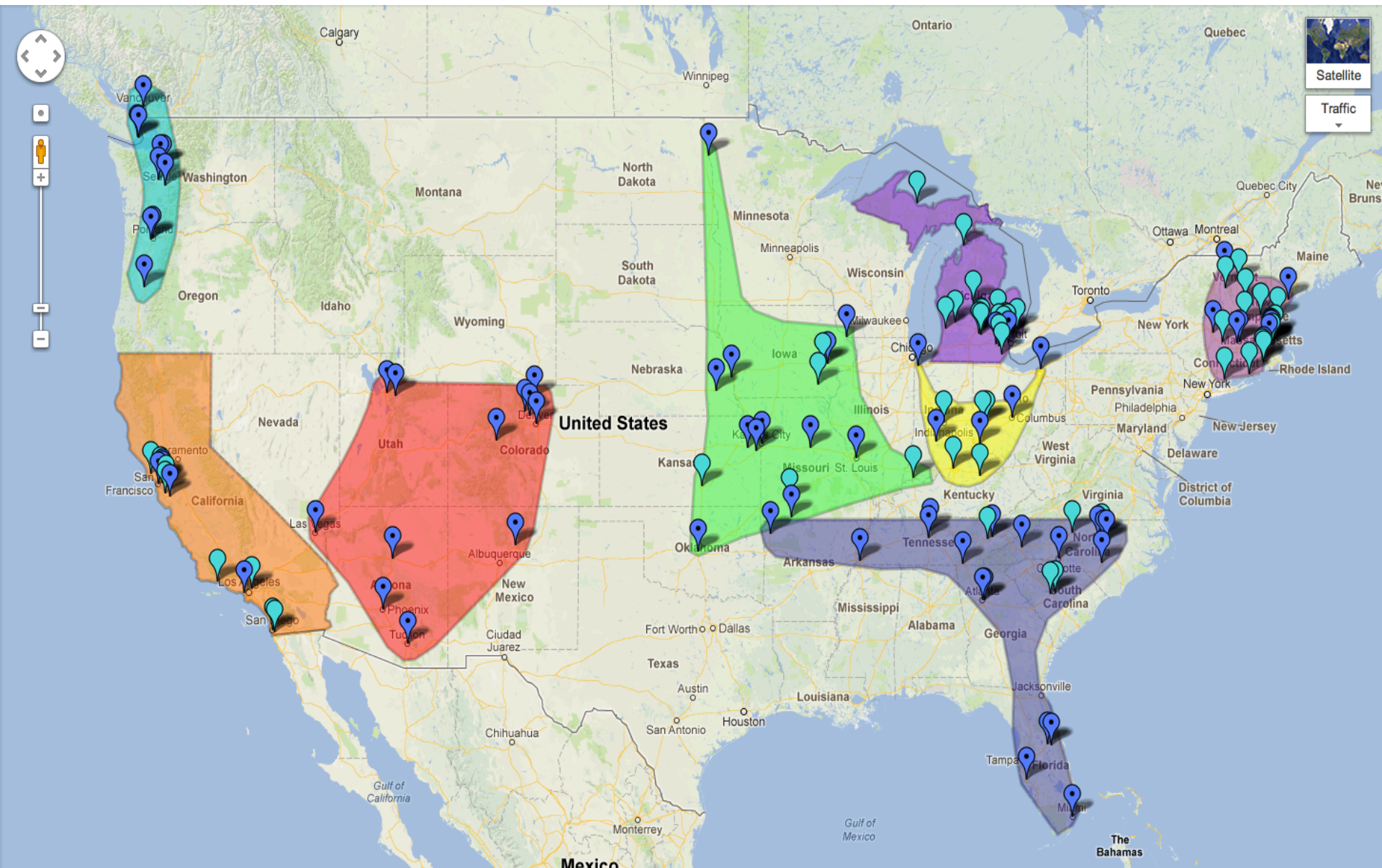
March 18-20, 2013

Supported by

Urban Sustainability Directors Network and Innovation Network for Communities

"TERRITORIES" OF THE REGIONAL NETWORKS

Purpose & Objectives

Purpose

To help current and future leaders of regional networks to further develop the skills, knowledge, and plans needed to guide their networks. **Each network's team will produce a draft work plan for its network.**

Objectives

These topics will be addressed at the Leadership Academy:
1) How to strengthen **connectivity** among your network members.
2) How to improve **sharing/learning** among your network members.
3) Developing a 1-2 year **work plan**/budget, with performance targets, for your regional network.
4) How to mobilize network members to advance **collaborative network projects**.
5) Designing and managing effective **face-to-face network meetings**.
6) Strategies for **fund raising** for your networks.
7) Managing **leadership succession** in your network.
8) Managing network **interactions with its environment**: partners, funders, etc.

Participants

California	David Assmann, SF
	Garrett Fitzgerald, Oakland
	Carol Misseldine, executive director
	Shannon Parry, Santa Monica
Cascadia	Michael Armstrong, Portland OR
	Roy Brooke, Victoria, BC
Heartland	Barbara Buffaloe, Columbia MO
	Cori Burbach, Dubuque IA
	Dennis Murphey, KC
Michigan	Nate Geinzer, Farmington Hills
	Jamie Kidwell, Ann Arbor
	Dave Norwood, Dearborn MI
New England	Rhett Lamb, Keene NH
	Troy Moon, Portland ME
Ohio-Kentucky-Indiana	Larry Falkin, Cincinnati
	Lamees Mubaslat, Montgomery Cty, OH
Southeast	David Jones, Orange County, FL
	Susanna Sutherland, Knoxville
	Maggie Ullman, Asheville
Western Adaptation Alliance	Vicki Bennett, Salt Lake City
	Leslie Ethen, Tucson
	Nicole Woodman, Flagstaff
Resources	USDN: Mia Arter, Julia Parzen
	INC: Pete Plastrik, Laura Bartsch

Network Work Plan Template

1. Background about Network
2. Goals/Objectives for Next 2 Years
3. Network Partners
4. Network Activities to Achieve Goals/Objectives
5. Network Management to Achieve Goals/Objectives
6. Network Infrastructure
7. Quarter-by-Quarter Activities/Management for Next 1 Year
8. Milestone Indicators for Quarterly Progress
9. Value/Role of USDN Regional Network Coordinating Committee for the Network

Academy Resources

- ✓ Survey results for each network
- ✓ Connectivity Maps for each network
- ✓ Initial observations for each network
- ✓ Aggregated patterns from networks' survey results & connectivity maps + USDN 2012 data
- ✓ USDN: Julia Parzen, Mia Arter
- ✓ INC: Pete Plastrik, Laura Bartsch
- ✓ Carol Misseldine, director, Green Cities California & "2012 Environmental Hero of the North Bay"
- ✓ Regional network building guidebook (Plastrik & Parzen)

Meeting Agenda By Topics in Order

1. Network Building Basics
2. Looking Across the Regional Networks
3. Weaving Connections
4. Goals and Metrics
5. Sharing and Learning... and Then Collaborating
6. F2F Meetings
7. Network Activities
8. Leadership Succession
9. Staffing/Coordination
10. Budgeting, Fundraising & Partnering
11. Management & Infrastructure
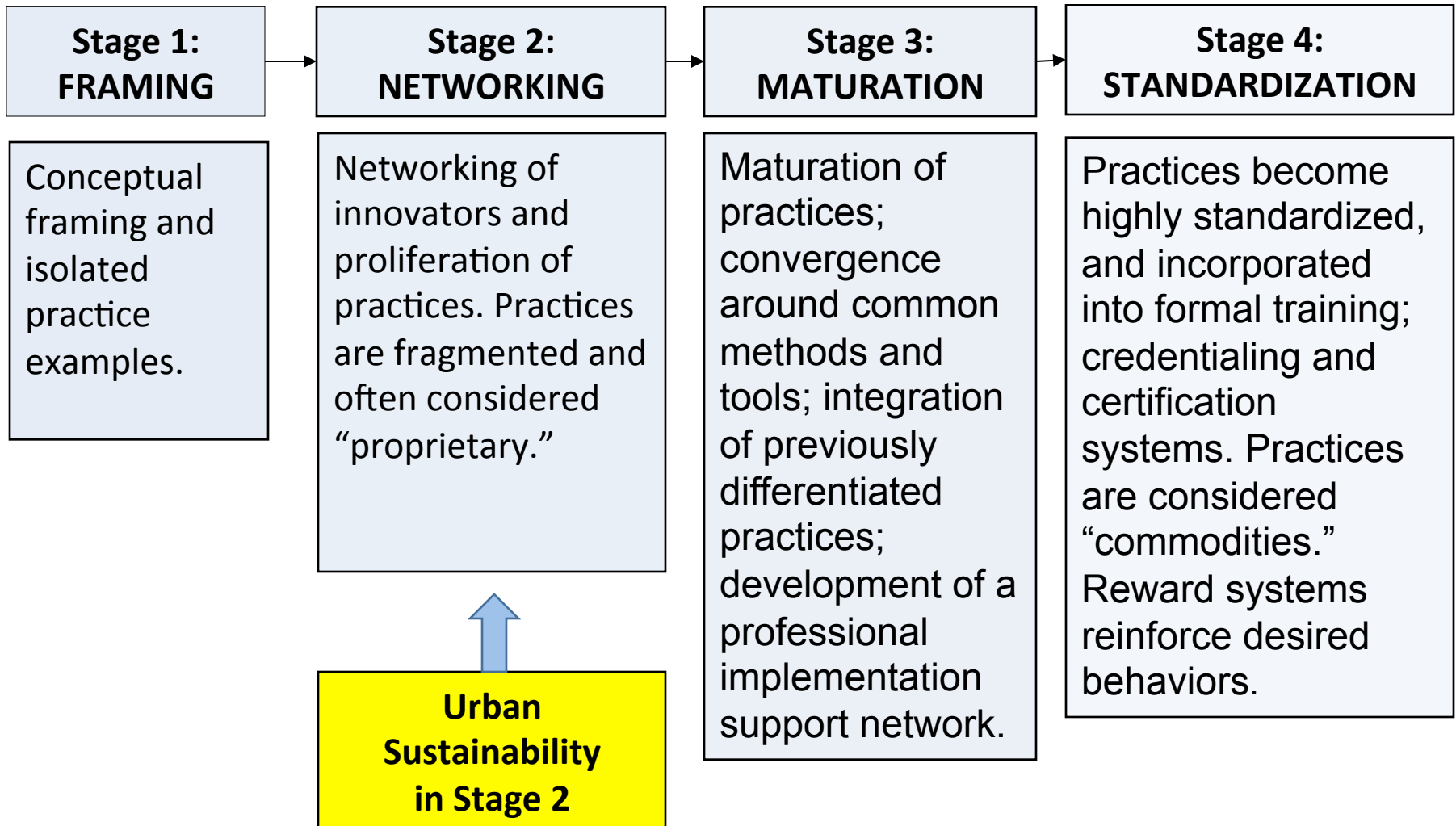12. USDN & the Regional Networks

USDN'S EVOLUTION
JULIA PARZEN
MARCH 12, 2013

Rational for Forming a Network
(Stage of Field Development)

Stage 1: FRAMING	Stage 2: NETWORKING	Stage 3: MATURATION	Stage 4: STANDARDIZATION
Conceptual framing and isolated practice examples.	Networking of innovators and proliferation of practices. Practices are fragmented and often considered "proprietary."	Maturation of practices; convergence around common methods and tools; integration of previously differentiated practices; development of a professional implementation support network.	Practices become highly standardized, and incorporated into formal training; credentialing and certification systems. Practices are considered "commodities." Reward systems reinforce desired behaviors.

Urban Sustainability in Stage 2

Plan for a Genuine Network (An on-going, generative environment)

Build on Existing Connections

"Who do you want to invite to join?"
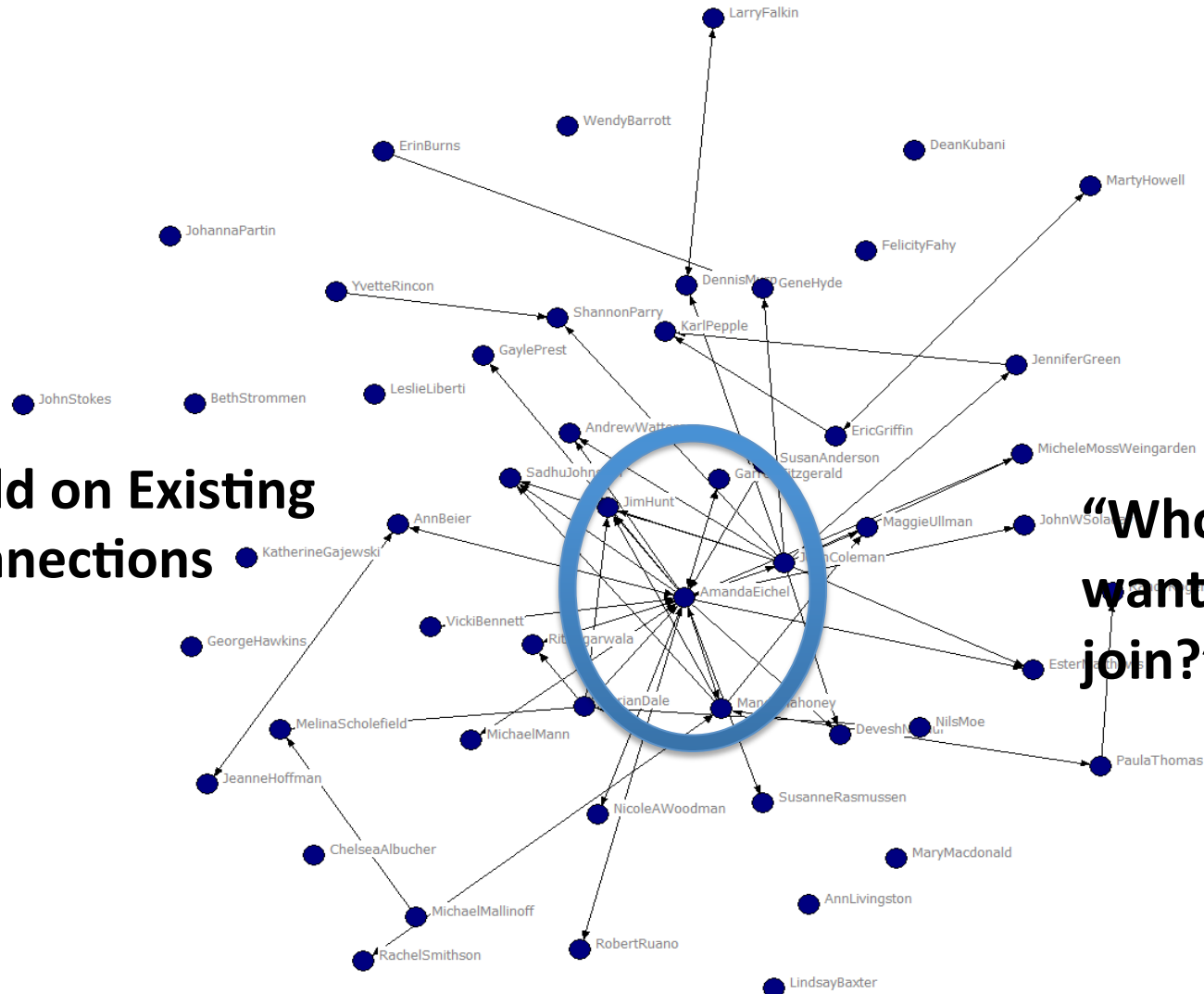
Weaving Needs to Be Someone's Job

- Focus foremost on building connectivity, the source of all generative activity

  "Weavers" act like brokers – connecting players together; keeping their ears to the ground; fixing problems; helping members maximize the value they receive - INC

- Watch for members to connect

- Bring small groups together

- Bring members opportunities based upon their interests, but be prepared for them to be refused

- Create other Weavers (Member Circles)

USDN fosters peer exchange and learning through:

- Weekly E-News

- USDN Members Only Website (usdn.org)

- Monthly USDN Idea Sharing Conference Calls

- Small Group Discussion MarketPlace

- Peer to Peer User Groups

- Annual Meeting

- Member Surveys

- **Brokering connections using all of above**

INC/USDN

Collect and Analyze Data and Use it To Make Connections and Allocate Resources

- **Network Maps** – Where are future leaders? Who needs help to connect? Are relationships generating activity?

- **Member Participation** – Where is the energy? Where should resources go and not go?

- **Member Comments** – Are there members to connect because of shared interests or ways they can help each other?

- **Member Satisfaction** – What do members say to keep and to toss out?

USDN Members Believe the Network Is Delivering on Their Top Value Propositions

Members are creating new knowledge or insights together.

Members are adding value to each other's work.

Members are working jointly to advance network goals.

The network is meeting its strategic goals and objectives.

■ % Strongly Agree
■ % Somewhat Agree

0% 20% 40% 60% 80% 100%

USDN Member Survey July-August 2011

INC/USDN

14
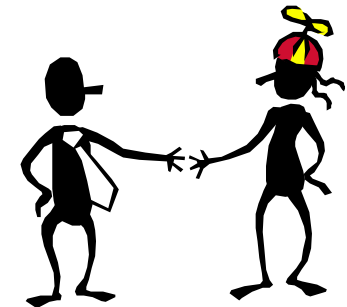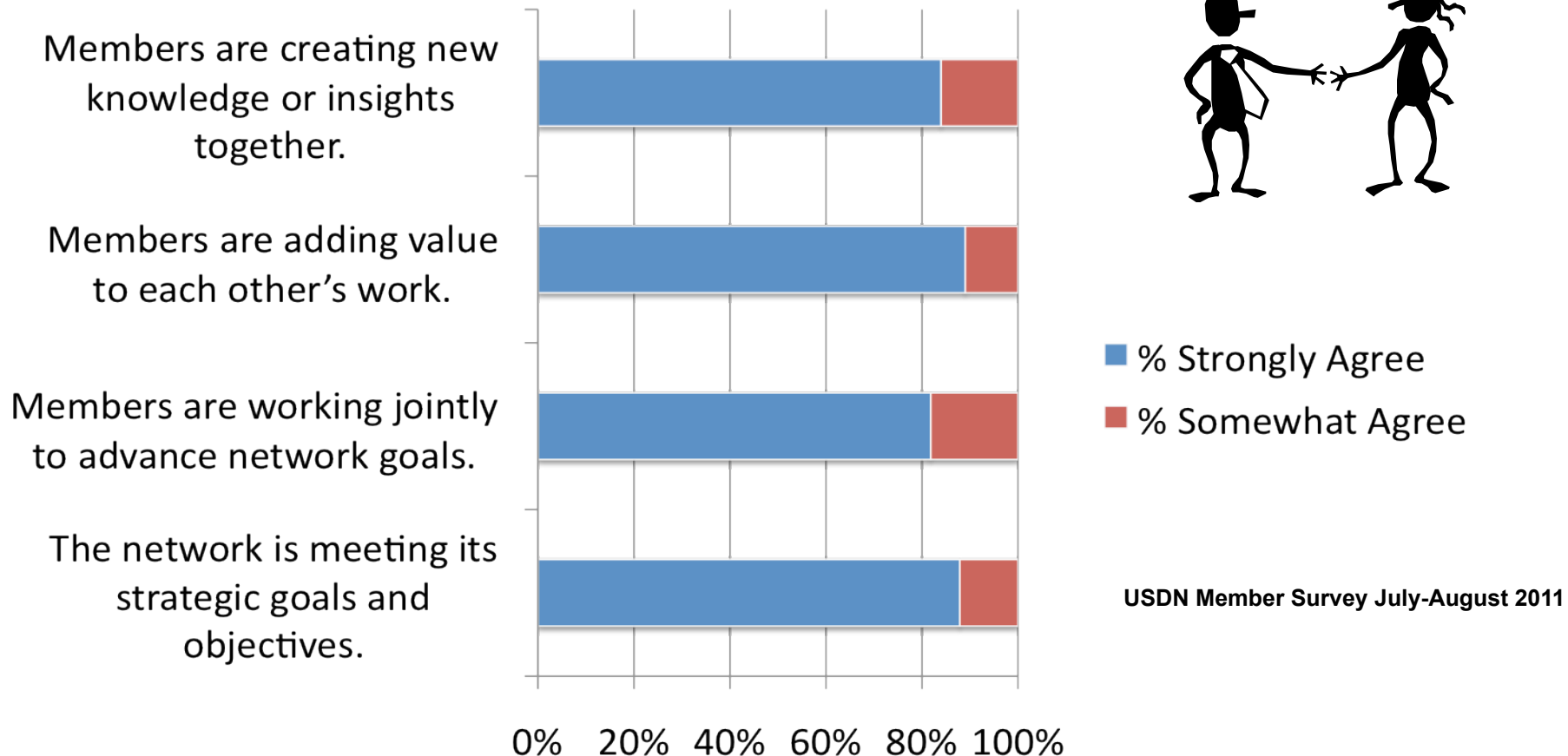
Listen to the Members – Be Open to Change

- 2009: Members want not just monthly calls, but also small group discussions: Created marketplace

- 2010: Members expressed strong support for seeding regional or state sustainability directors' networks: Sought funding to hire INC

- 2011: Found the more members participate in the network, the more they get out of it: Raised participation requirements

- 2012: Found members did not like 3 annual member surveys: Cut back to 2 surveys

Maybe Get a Bit Ahead of Members

- 2009: As connectivity grew, looked for a way to explore appetite for collaboration, launched $100,000 Innovation Fund

- 2010: As members became more involved in USDN activities, began to use member surveys to test appetite for new approaches

- 2011: As members focused on need for additional funding for sustainability, sought a new funding source which became the Local Sustainability Matching Fund

- And On: Always asking: Where might the network go next?

This is Not a Service Organization

- Require that members do the work (with support available from USDN staff)
- End activities when member interest wanes
- Start anew each year
- Require reciprocity
- Keep raising the bar on membership requirements
- Don't own; Support

TRUST
Built Through Reciprocity

% of Core Members Meeting Membership Expectations
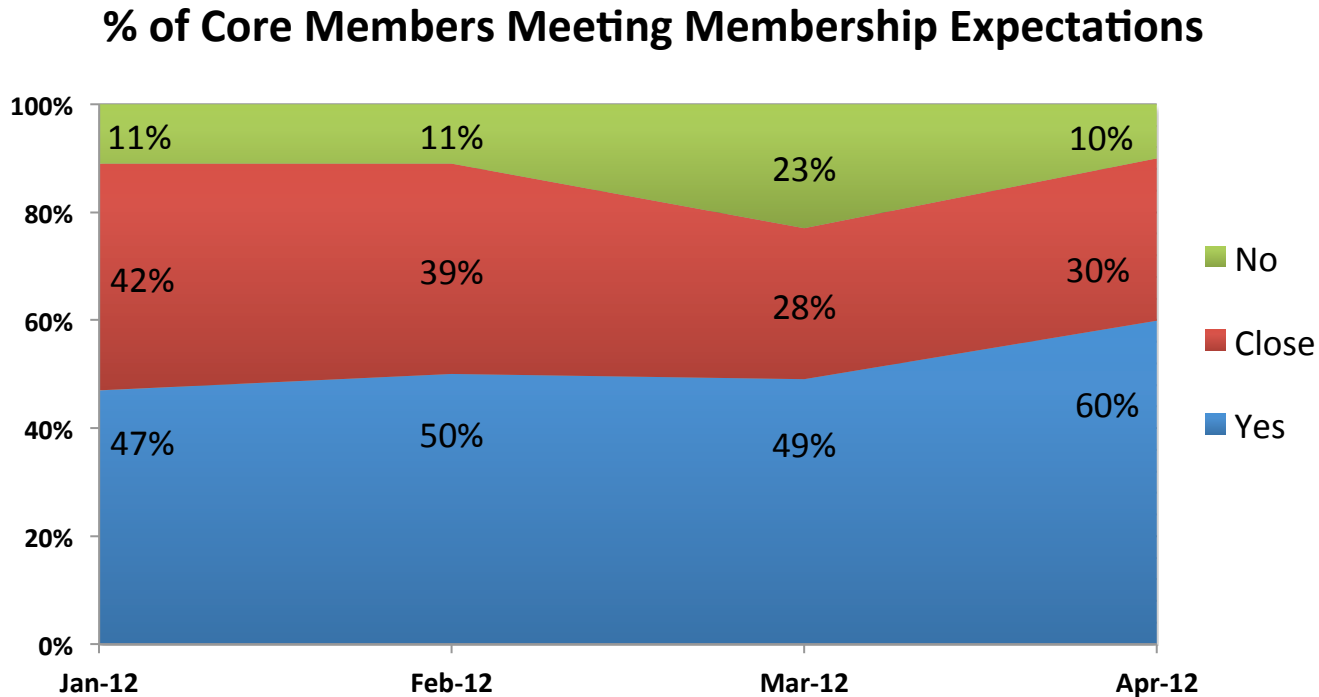
USDN members commit to actively learn from, assist, and collaborate with their peers and regularly contribute time and effort to the Network.

Constantly Plan for Succession

- Recruit replacements when members leave the network

- Cycle leaders off Planning and other Committees

- Continually seek out new leaders and provide them with opportunities to lead

Even Through Many Changes, We have Stuck With Core Principles

- The members do the work

- USDN cannot speak for the members

- Members will keep the network a safe place to share failures and successes

- The fuel for all value in the network is building relationships of trust

USDN Evolution

	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4
Membership	35	70	Added Associate Members- 100	115
Connectivity	Moderate	Higher	Higher	Higher
Leaders	7	10	30	60
Participation Requirements	Low	Higher	Even higher and enforced	
Dues	Very low	Significantly higher		

USDN Evolution

	Yr 1	Yr 2	Yr 3	Yr 4
Weavers	Staff and Consultants	Staff and Consultants	Staff and Planning Committees (Member Circles)	Key Nodes?
Activities	Monthly Calls, A few Groups, Annual Meeting	More Groups, Small Group Discussion MarketPlace	Even More Groups and led by Co-Chairs	Groups with More Specific Purposes
Innovation Fund		$100,000, 2 cities	$200,000, 3 cities	$400,000, 3 cities
Staffing	.5 staff	1 staff	1.8 staff	2 staff
Communications	Linkedin (low use)	SCI (low use)	SCI (low use)	USDN.org (higher use) designed by members

NETWORK BUILDING BASICS

A *NETWORK* is a continually evolving set of "nodes" connected by "links."

a) Fully Connected Topology
b) Bus Topology
c) Star Topology
d) Ring Topology
e) Tree Topology
f) Mesh Topology
g) Hybrid Topology (example: combination of Star topology and Bus topology)
h) Dual Ring Topology
i) Linear Topology
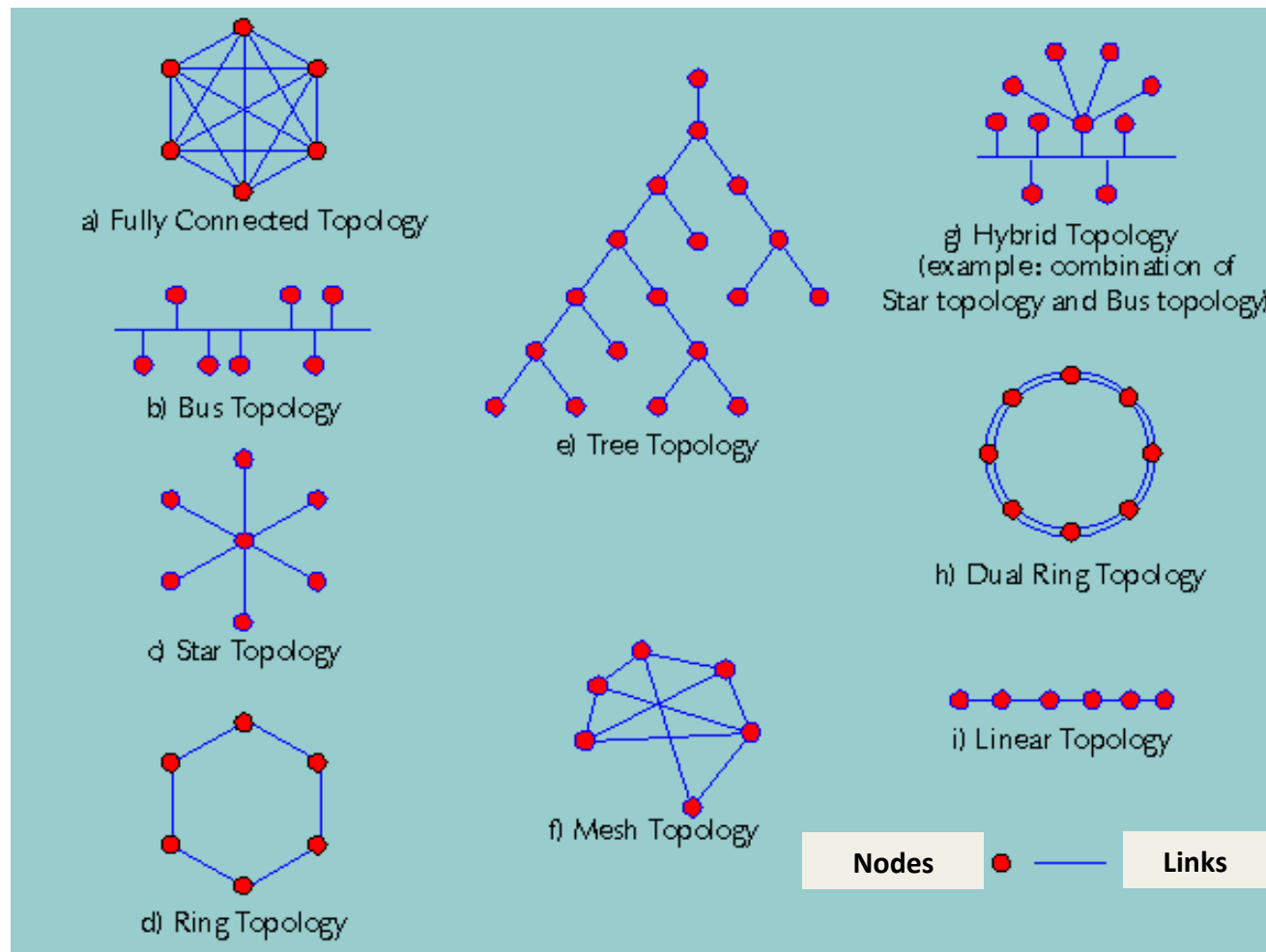
Nodes ● —— Links

- "Nodes" are *people*
- "Links" are *relationships*

Ego

Anatomy of Network Relationships

Node ←————— **Link** —————→ **Node**
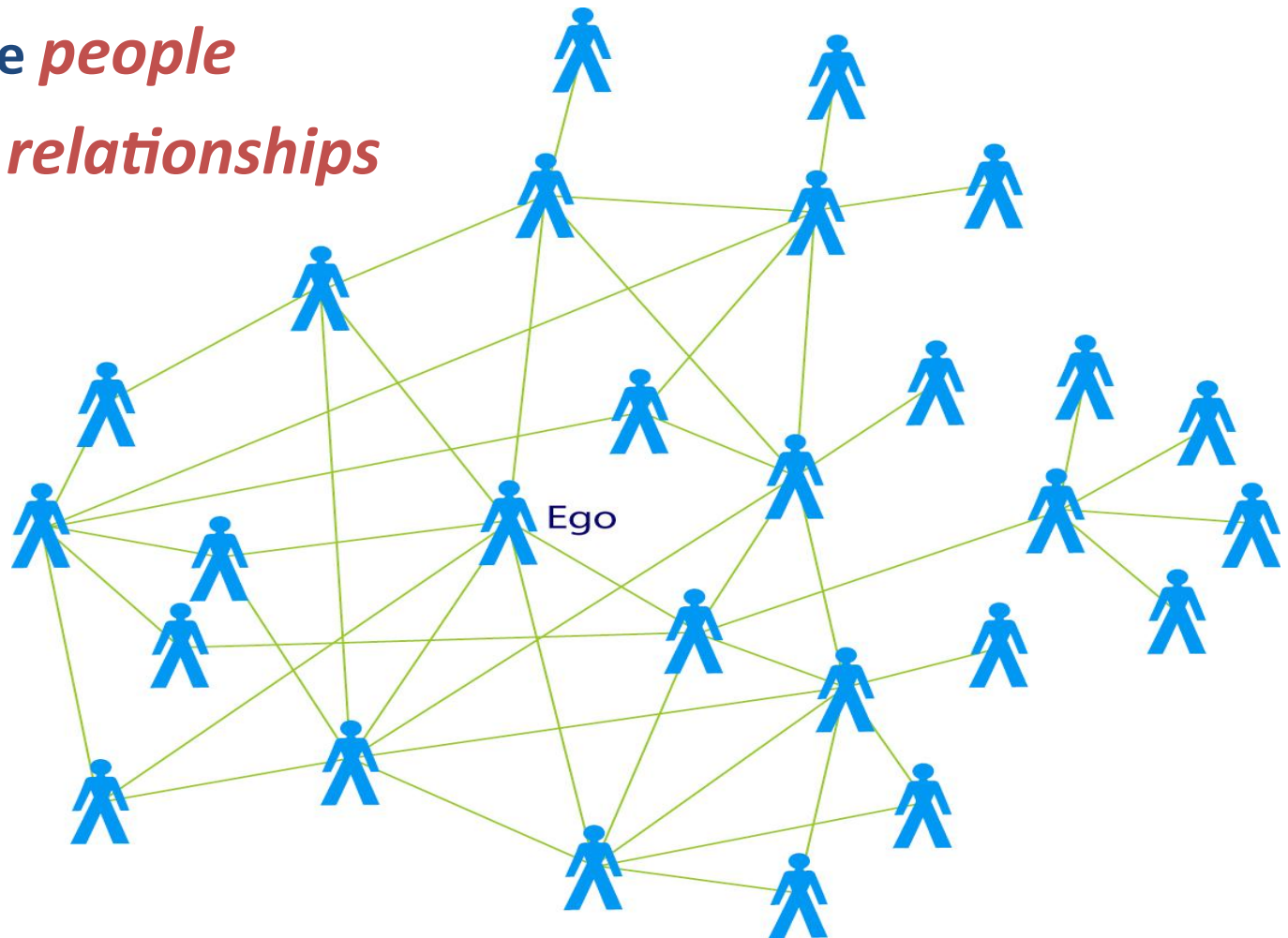
What Flows Through Link (Sources of Value to Members)
- Connections
- Knowledge
- Competencies
- Resources

What Makes Linking Work
- Trust
- Reciprocity
- Diversity
- Complementarity

Social Networks

- **Other things being equal, it is easier to access ideas and information from people who are closely connected in network terms (from friends, and from friends of friends, for example) than from people who are three or more steps removed.**

- **Outliers (nodes on the periphery of a network) often have access to ideas and information that people at the core do not.**
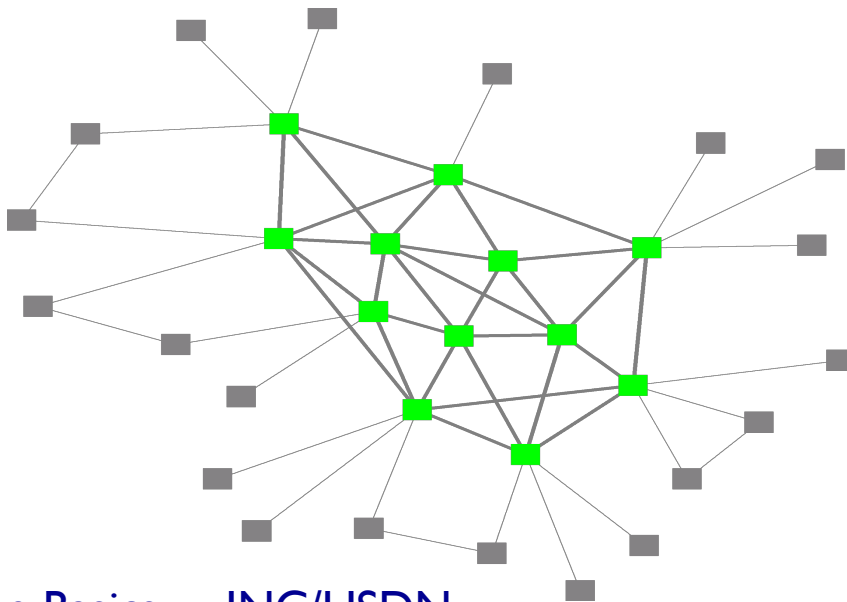
- **Strong ties** in closely knit networks are a source of **valuable social capital**

- **Weak ties** - provide **access to external assets**

- **Highly connected "hubs" are effective in spreading ideas and connections**

- **"Dense clusters" are ideal for close collaboration and peer exchange**

- **"Boundary spanners" bridge isolated network clusters**

- **Multi-purpose social ties tend to be stronger, which means more can be leveraged through them.**
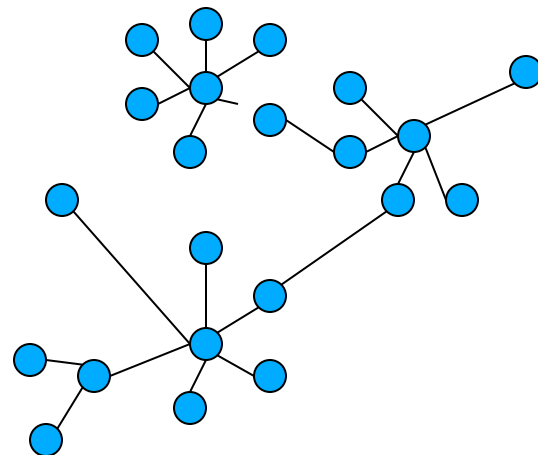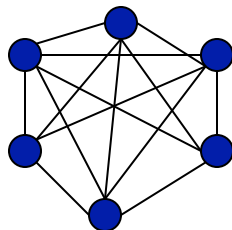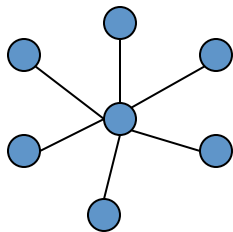
Network __Building__ is about Creating Ties Within Core and To Periphery

- **Who's connected to whom? Who's not connected but should be?**

- **Where are the hubs and brokers? How can we assist them?**

- **Where are the bottlenecks? Can we eliminate them?**

- **Are new connections forming? Clusters emerging? Collaborations advancing ?**

- **Where are the network's resources? Are they effectively used?**

- **How is the network evolving and what are the implications?**

Reviewing the Basics   INC/USDN

Characteristics of Networks

- **A network has less formal structure than an organization and it is more fluid**

- **Participation is voluntary and the agenda is driven by the members**

- **Network participants have a high degree of freedom to make choices**

- **Decision making is distributive in nature, not centralized**

- **Participation is as needed, not full time**

What Networks Are Good At

"**Small World**" **Reach** – **By bringing together novel combinations of people and reaching across bridges to other networks.**

More Rapid Growth – **Networks can quickly add relationships and bridges to other networks.**

More Rapid Diffusion – **Through these relationships and bridges.**

Greater Resilience – **Nodes quickly reorganize around disruptions or bottlenecks.**

Greater Adaptability – **Networks evolve and regroup with relative ease.**

Different Types of Networks

Producing → **Foster joint action for specialized outcomes**

Aligning → **Develop and spread a shared point of view**

Connecting → **Allow easy flow of information and relationships**

Lower Commitment, Trust   Higher Commitment, Trust

CONNECTING *Information*	→	**ALIGNING** *Identity*	→	**PRODUCING** *Initiative*

Connects people to allow easy flow of and access to information and transactions

Aligns people in ways that help them form more collective transactions than a connectivity network will do

Individuals come to share a set of ideas, language, or standards

Fosters joint action by people or organizations —has a specific purpose

- *Policy action*
- *Advocacy*
- *Learning*
- *Knowledge production and dissemination*

Networks Can Focus On Many Different Outcomes

- **Learning** – Create and spread new knowledge

- **Advocacy** – Advocate for particular policies

- **Innovation** – Innovate to solve social problems

- **Branding** – Marketing, communications and shared branding

Key Enabling Infrastructure By Network Type

Type of Network		
Connecting	Aligning	Producing
• **Members-only Web site with networking tools** • **Meeting planning & facilitation** • **Shared calendaring** • **"Opt In" learning processes** • **Member input systems**	• **Collaborative work processes + Web site** • **Capacity to analyze, compare, and synthesize frameworks, definitions, etc.** • **Formal decision-making processes to "endorse" alignment mechanisms (e.g., standards)**	• **Capacity to negotiate production agreements among members (with partners)** • **Project management and project budgeting capacity** • **Formal governance of all producers** • **Performance accountability mechanisms** • **Pricing and marketing capacity** • **Sales, fulfillment, & financial management**

Typical Features of Successful Networks

- **Identity.** There is a clear and common "identity" associated with the network – the members share a common purpose. This identity creates a predisposition to trust other members of the network.

- **Reciprocity.** Network members engage in reciprocity – they both give and they get – and there are clear rules about member transactions.

- **Member Leadership.** The bulk of the work is done by the members. Nothing is done without it being led by network champions.

- **Value.** Members see the network as adding real value to the accomplishment of their aspirations.

- **Facilitation.** The network is facilitated by a low-ego, high performance "broker" or "facilitator" who the members personally trust.

- **Infrastructure**. There is a well-functioning network support infrastructure in place.

"No one runs USDN. It has a coordinator, but no board of directors, no executive director or CEO, no legal entity to receive funder's checks, no employees. All it really has are members—volunteers—who direct and adapt the network through their dialogue and actions. How else to get scores of independent cities to collaborate and amass to address common problems?"

--- Guidebook for Building Regional

Networks for Urban Sustainability 2.0

Some Roles in Network Leadership
(The same person can play many of these roles.)

Organizing	Establishes purpose and value propositions of the network. Establishes first members of network and connects them to each other. Attracts initial resources for the network.
Weaving	Works to increase connections among nodes, both the number of links and the bandwidth quality of links. Also may focus on growing the network by connecting to new nodes.
Funder	Provides initial and ongoing resources for organizing the network, supporting development of connections, alignment, and production, and coordination for the network. May play role of initial organizer of network
Facilitating	Helps network members to establish collective value proposition and negotiate collective action plans for production.
Coordinating	Helps nodes to undertake collective action for production, by ensuring the flow of necessary information and other resources, development and implementation of agreements among nodes.
Coaching	Advises organizers, weavers, facilitators, and coordinators about how best to perform their roles in building networks.
Stewardship	Informally helps to build the network, but as a member of the network, not as a formal position-role within the network

Practices for Net-Centric Leadership
Institute for Conservation Leadership, "The Less Visible Leader"

Catalyzes a culture of spirited cooperation
1. Listens deeply to fully appreciate and understand the diversity of perspectives and motivations held by all involved.
2. Shows gratitude and encourages mutual appreciation for the ideas and contributions of all.
3. Regularly uses both/and thinking to identify solutions that meet both shared and individual goals and needs.
4. Communicates openly and clearly, matching the medium to the message.
5. Fosters opportunities (at all levels of the system) to develop camaraderie and trust

Shares power and generates momentum
6. Creates space for others to step up and contribute
7. Embraces ambiguity and encourages experiments and innovations
8. Helps the group to develop enough infrastructure to effectively make decisions and keeps everyone moving forward
9. Pays attention to conflicts in values and beliefs and productively orchestrates resolution

Stays true to the long-term vision while navigating frequent twists and turns
10. Persistently holds a clear picture of the purpose for working together
11. Helps those inside and outside the collaborative effort understand the progress that is being made as well as the roots of that success.
12. Courageously continues to adapt in an effort to successfully achieve the long-term vision.

Network leadership requires a combination of "low ego" (let the members lead and decide) and "high expectations" (don't let anyone waste other people's time). It requires **understanding** the content area; **asking and listening** closely to member needs; and **shaping opportunities** for action that are easy to say "yes" or "no" to.

- ✓ Generating opportunities and "Aha!" moments, but letting the network do the work

- ✓ Balancing between the needs of the "parts" and the "whole."

- ✓ Balancing autonomy with collective control.

- ✓ Balancing stability and change.

- ✓ Ensuring effective communications.

- ✓ "Policing" the network.

Network Design Questions

1. What **kind** of network do you want to build?
2. What is the "**value proposition**" that attracts people to participate?
3. What is the initial **membership**?
4. How should the network be **governed**?
5. What should the network **structure** be?
6. How will the network be **funded**?
7. What are the **operating principles**?
8. Who will **build** the network?
9. How will you **evaluate** the network?

Multiple & Shifting Value Propositions

Top 3 Most Important Value Propositions Across All Regions & USDN

1. Have access to trusted information about urban sustainability issues
2. Keep abreast of what other cities are accomplishing
3. Get to know many colleagues with whom I can share

Structure Matters
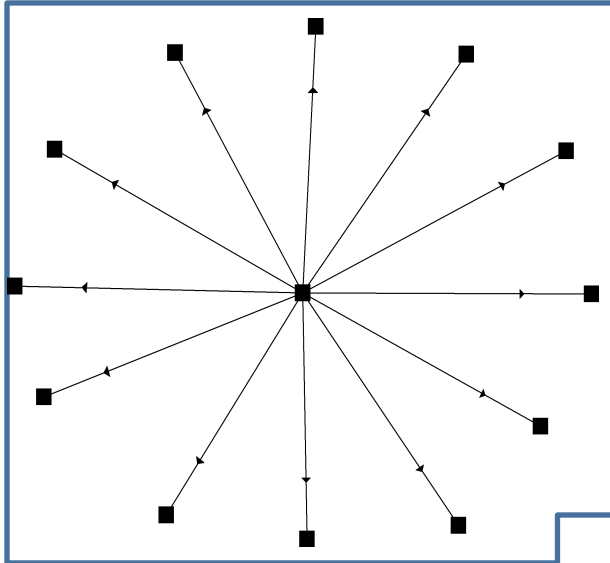
HUB & SPOKE

BRANCHES
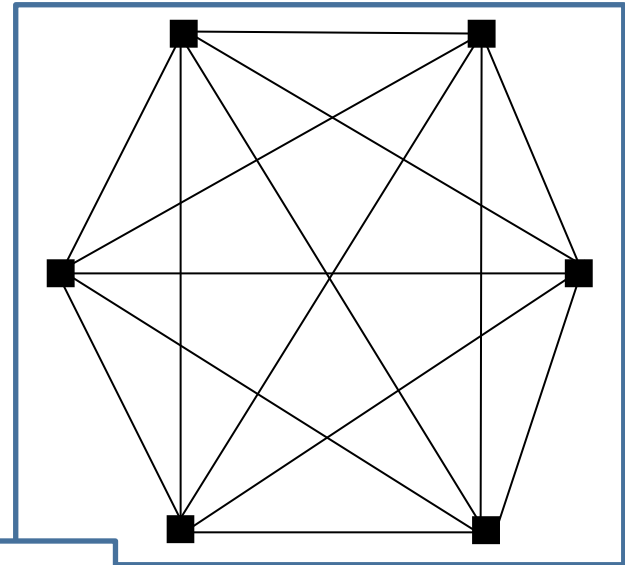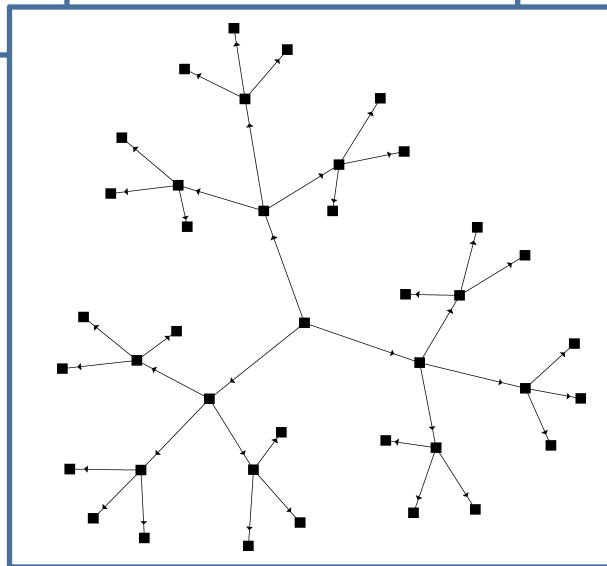
CLUSTER

DIFFERENCES IN NETWORK STRUCTURES

- **Which net shows least connectivity?**
- **Which is most dependent on a single node?**
- **Which can most easily/quickly reach all the nodes?**
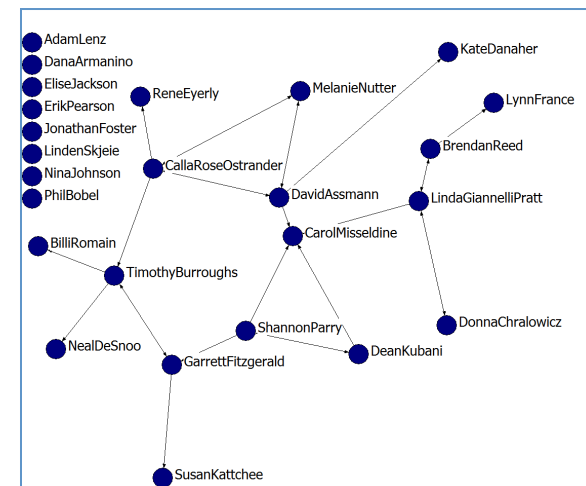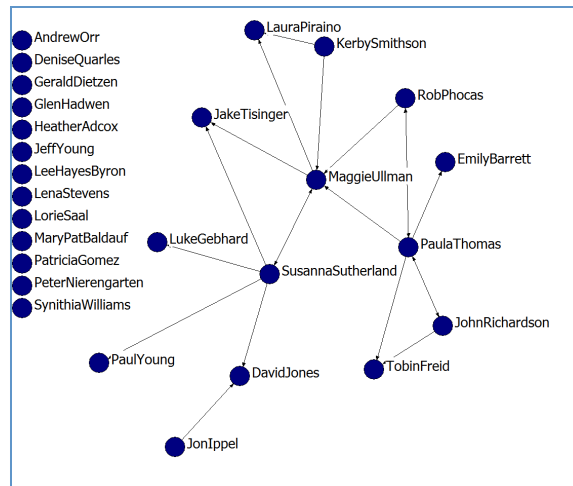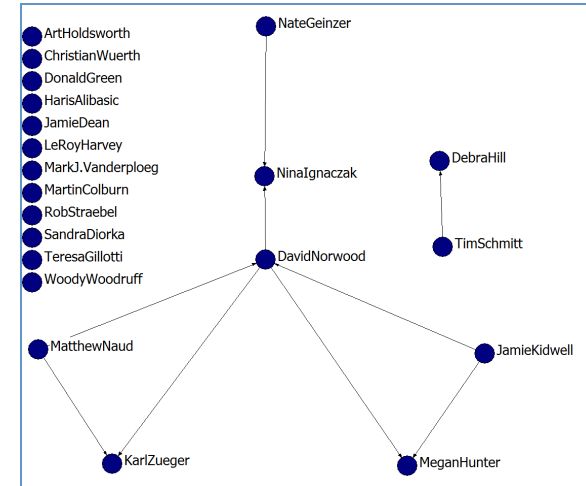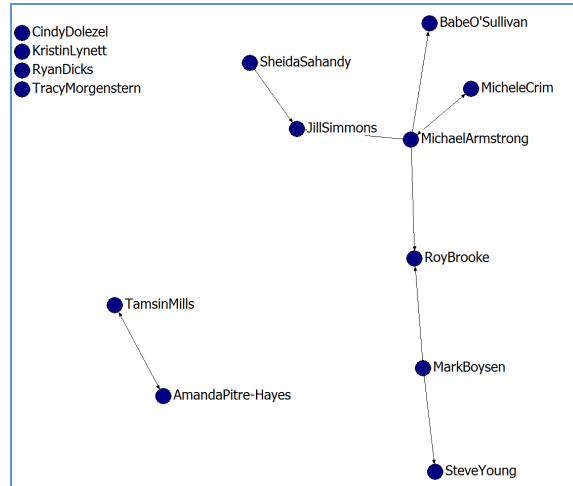
How Will the Network Be Funded?
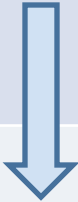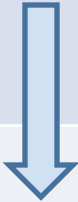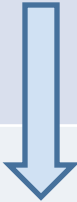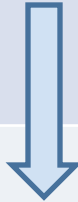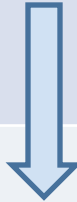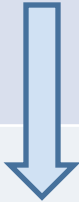
- **Operating grants**

- **Member fees**

- **Project fund raising**

- **Volunteer time and sweat equity**

- **Partner contributions**

Network Management Questions

1. How should the network grow and evolve?

2. How will the network plan?

3. What "member management" should occur (e.g., onboarding)?

4. What additional infrastructure is needed?

5. How should the network's brand be managed?

6. What external relationships should the network develop?

AGGREGATION: ACROSS THE REGIONAL NETWORKS

Stages of Regional Net Development

Stage	Description					
	Connectivity	**Leadership**	**Activity**	**Communication**	**Coordination**	**Satisfaction**
Start Up	Few strong connections among members; small core of connected members	Committed founders	Exchange and learning, 1-2 F2F meetings so far	Some but not much communication btwn meetings	Ad hoc capacity	Most members see opportunity, but network not yet delivering
Start Up/ Near Mature	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓	↓
Near Mature						
Mature	Larger core of strongly connected members	2nd generation leaders in place	3-4 years of F2F meetings; evolution of activities	Strong communications infrastructure often used by members	Consistent, effective capacity	Broad, high level of member satisfaction

Regions at a Glance

	Year Start	Geography	Stage	Ave. Ties per Person (>=2)
CA	2007	State	Mature	4.2
Cascadia	2012	Small region	Start Up	2.4
Heartland	2010	Large region	Near Mature	7.5
Michigan	2010	State	Start Up/Near Mature	2.2
NE	2010	Small region	Start Up/Near Mature	1.7
O-K-I	2012	Small region	Start Up	1.5
SE	2012	Large region	Start Up	3.3
WAA	2010	Large region	Near Mature	4.1
USDN	2009	N. America	Mature	6.8
				4.5 (2011)
				2.4 (2010)
				1.2 (2009)

Top 3 Most Important Value Propositions Across All Regions & USDN

1. Have access to trusted information about urban sustainability issues
2. Keep abreast of what other cities are accomplishing
3. Get to know many colleagues with whom I can share

Value Proposition Satisfaction:
"Have access to trusted information"
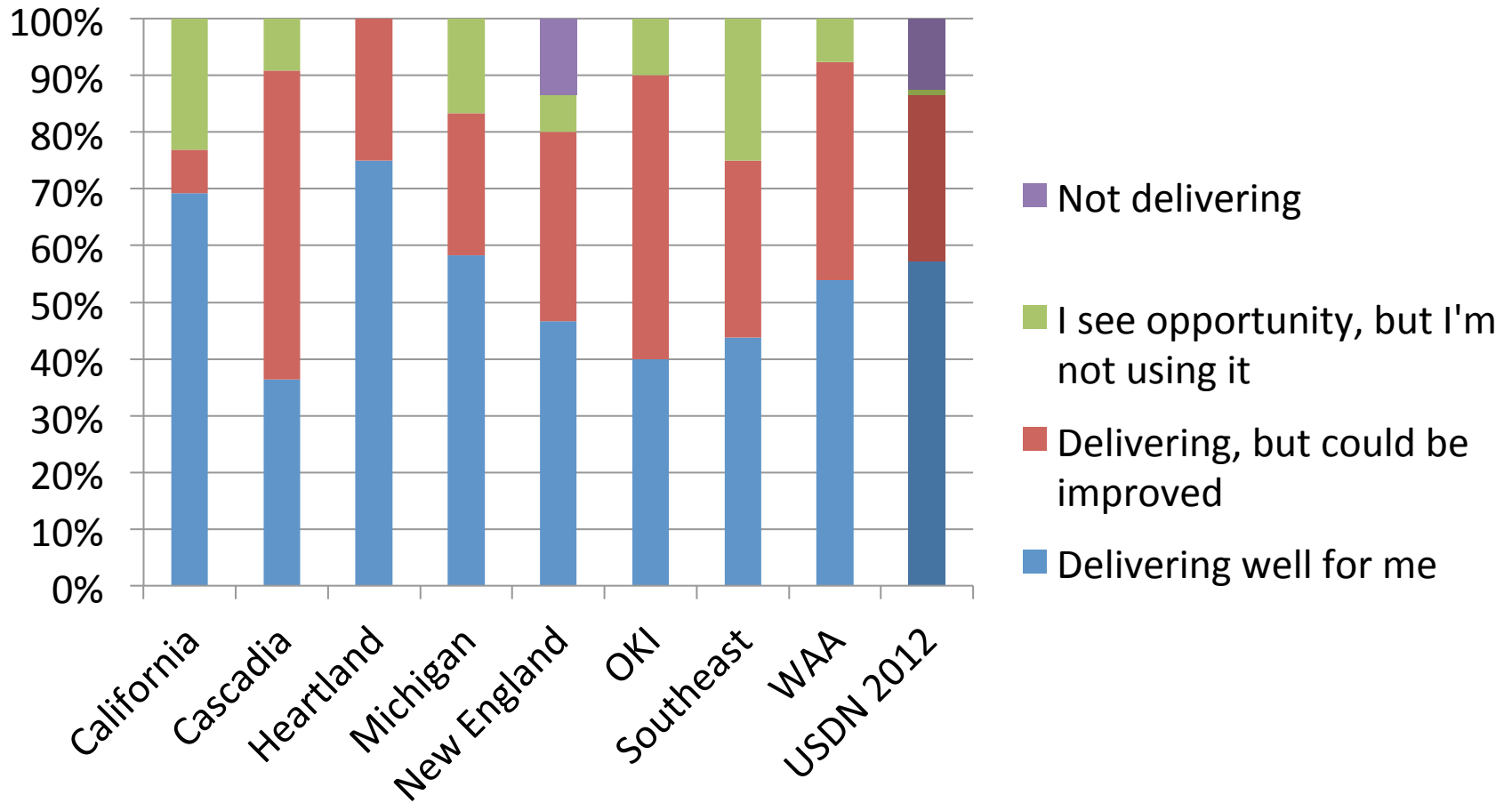
Value Proposition Satisfaction:
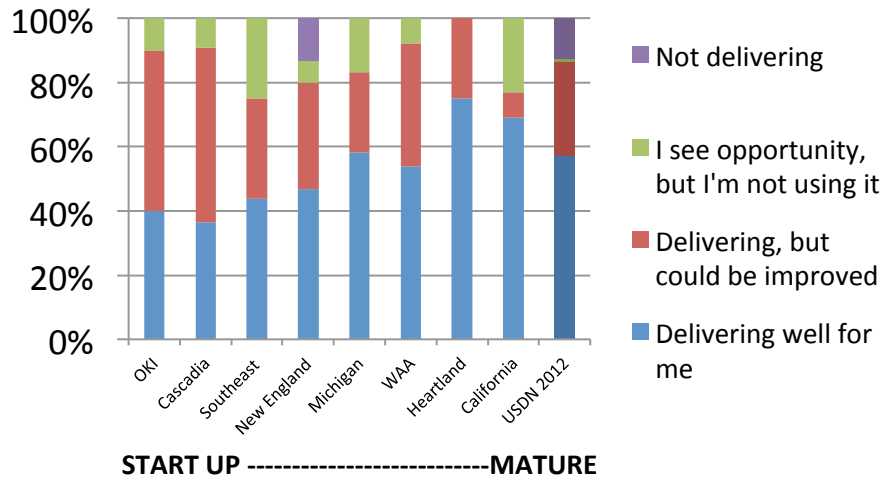## "Keep abreast of what other cities are accomplishing"

Legend:
- Not delivering
- I see opportunity, but I'm not using it
- Delivering, but could be improved
- Delivering well for me

X-axis categories: California, Cascadia, Heartland, Michigan, New England, OKI, Southeast, WAA, USDN 2012
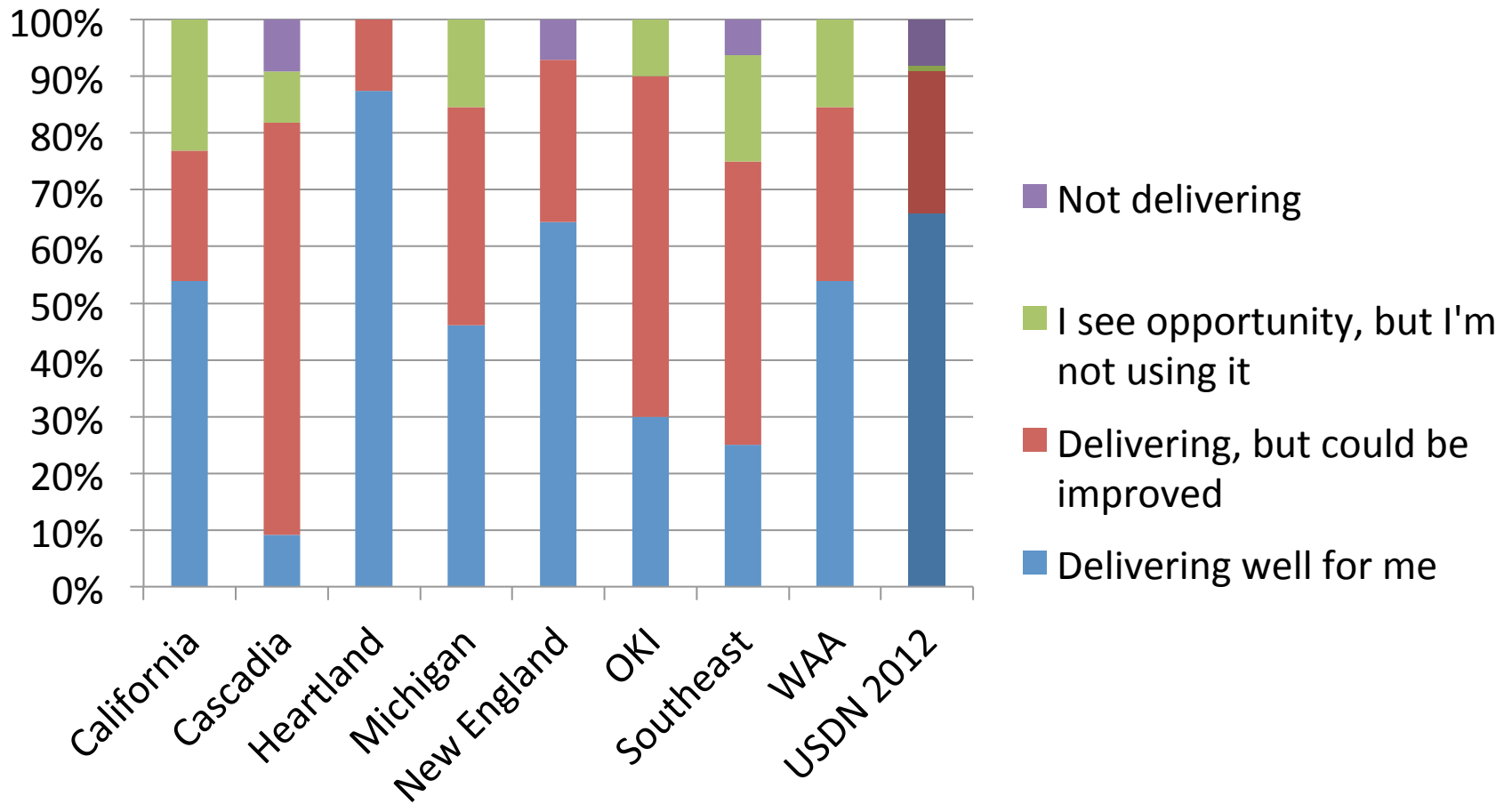
Value Proposition Satisfaction:
"Get to know many colleagues"
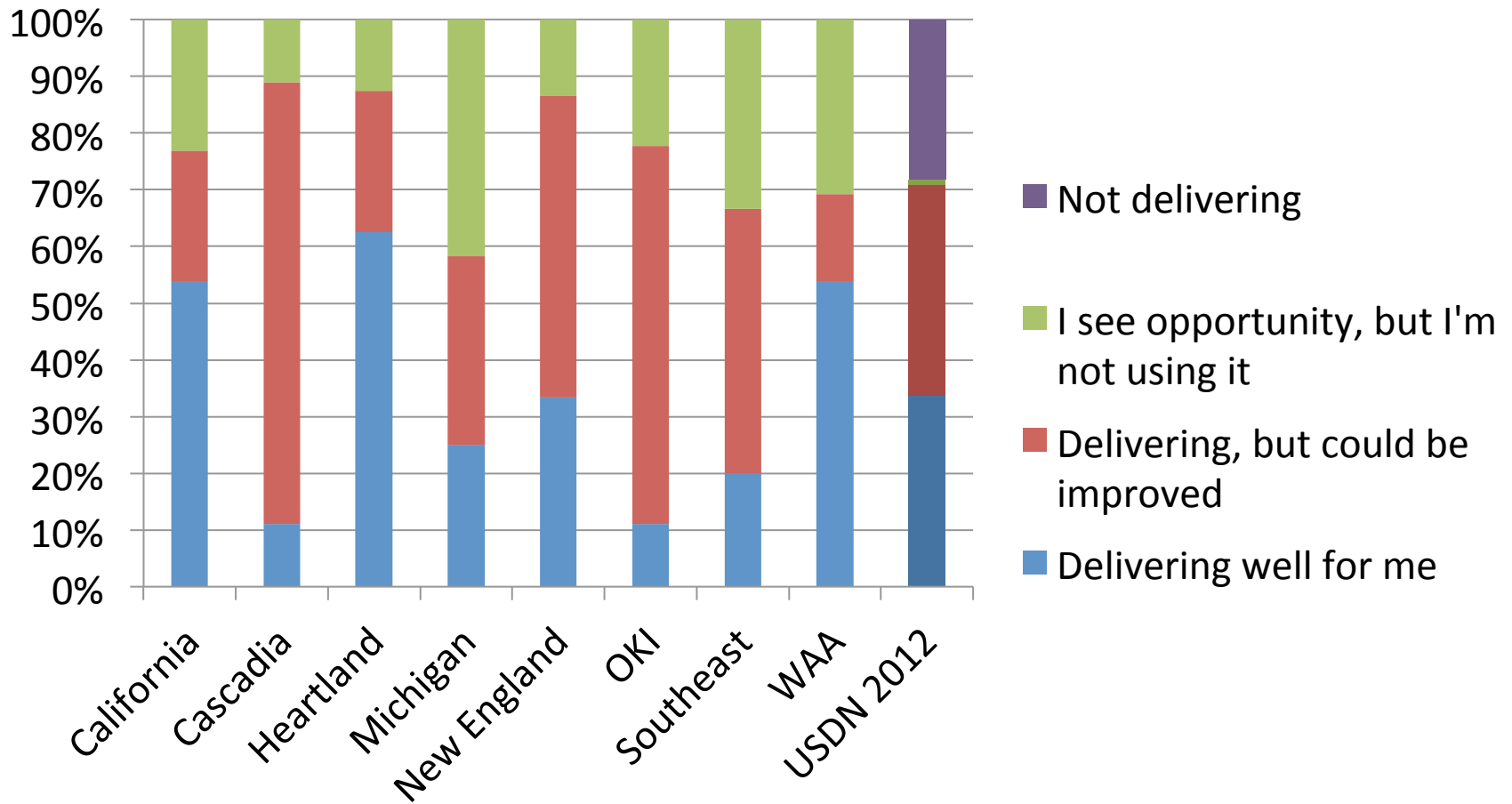
Value Proposition Satisfaction by Network Maturity

"Have Access to Trusted Information"

"Keep Abreast of What Other Cities Accomplish"
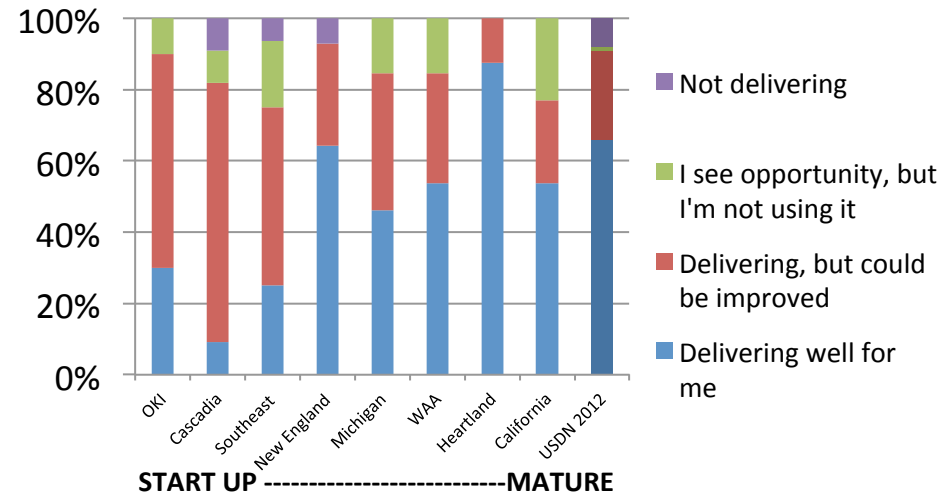
"Get to Know Many Colleagues"
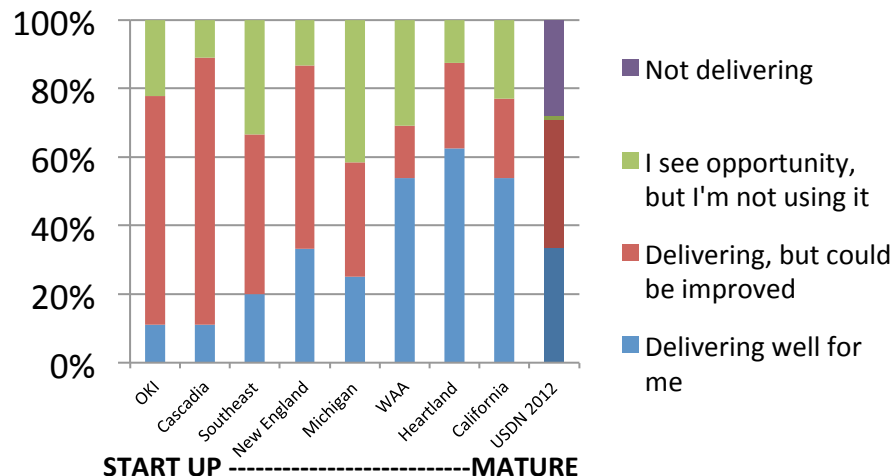
Impact of Network Tally

	CA	Casc	Heart	MI	NE	OKI	SE	WAA	Total
Find solution	7	2	6	3	5	4	2	6	35
Avoid problem	4	4	7	2	2	3	3	5	30
Make a change	8	3	6	3	5	2	2	4	33
Gain support	8	6	10	7	9	5	8	7	62
Save time	8	5	10	3	3	2	4	6	41
Save money	6	3	3	1	2	1	2	3	21

222 instances of regional network impact

2013 Topics Mentioned by Members

Food systems	CA, Cas, Heart, MI, NE
Green infrastructure	NE
Bldg energy efficiency	Heart, MI, NE, OKI, SE
Adaptation planning	**CA, Cas, Heart, MI, NE, OKI, WAA**
Bike/car sharing	CA
Green Economy	Cas,
Water (stormwater, flood, conservation)	Cas, Heart, MI, SE, WAA
Govt purchasing	Cas
Climate change communications	Cas
Municipal facilities energy reduction	Heart,
Waste diversion	OKI
Behavior change	MI, SE

MAPPING CONNECTIONS

ALL LEVELS

Cascadia
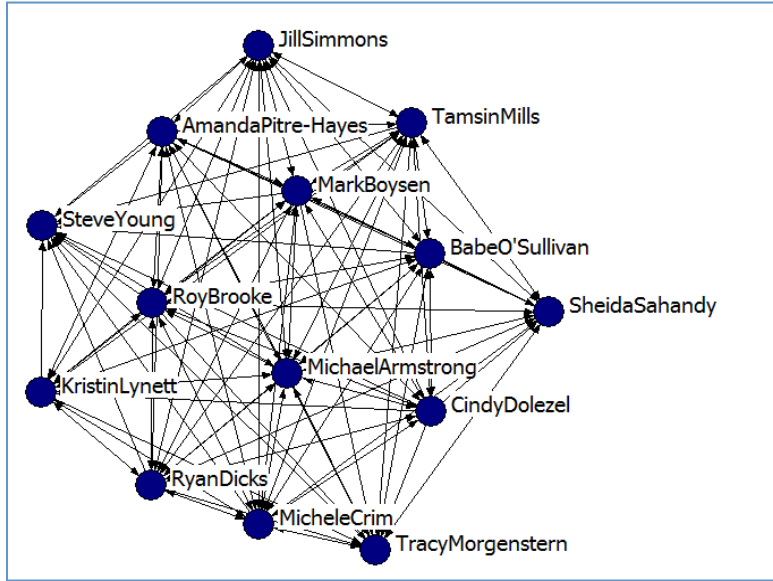
California
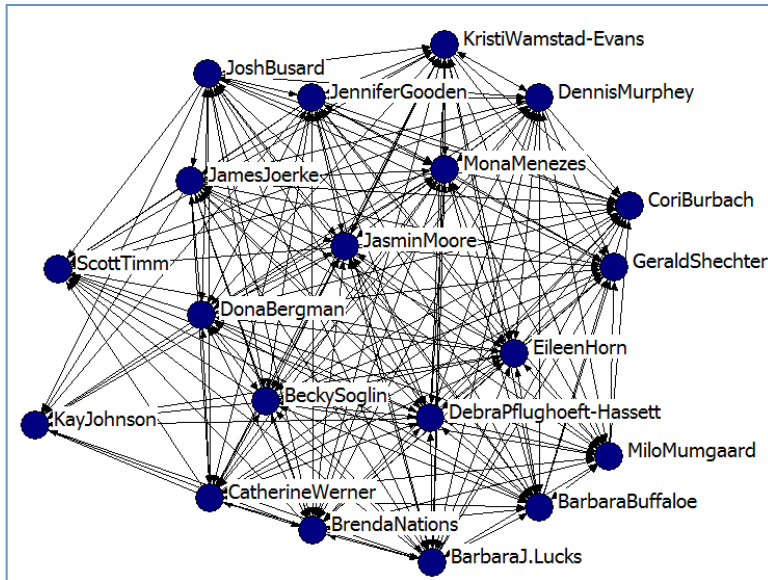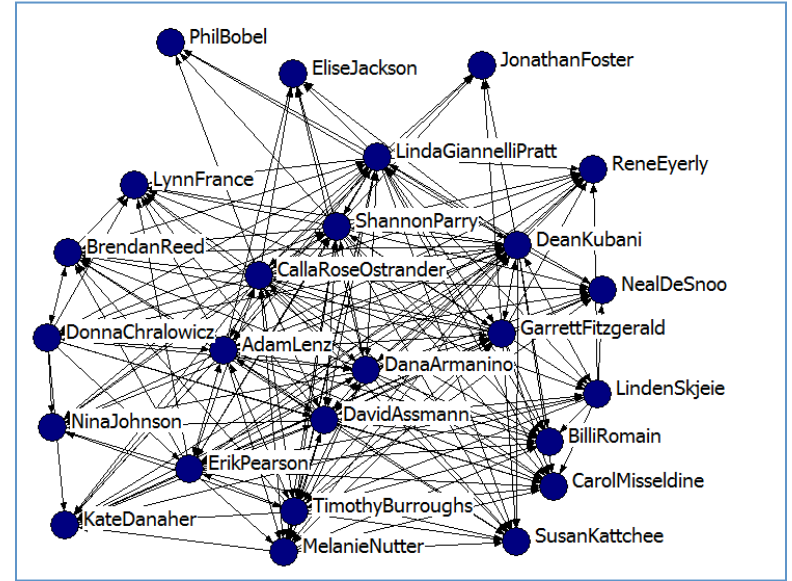
Heartland
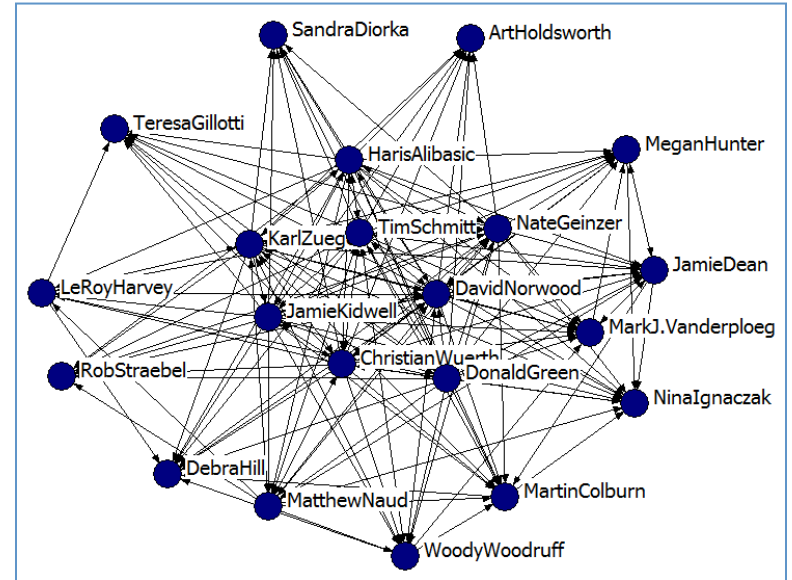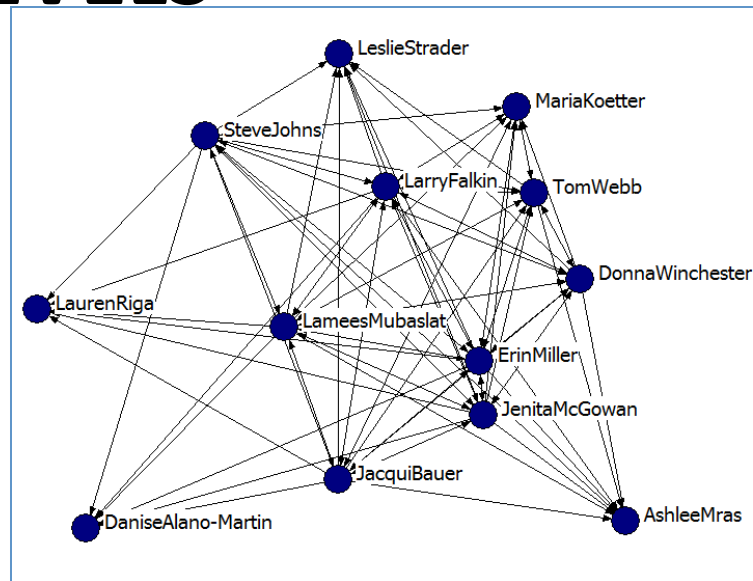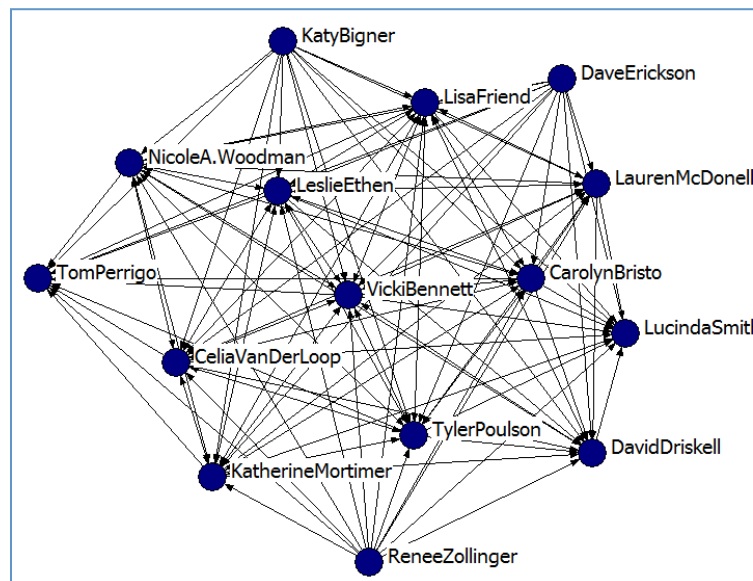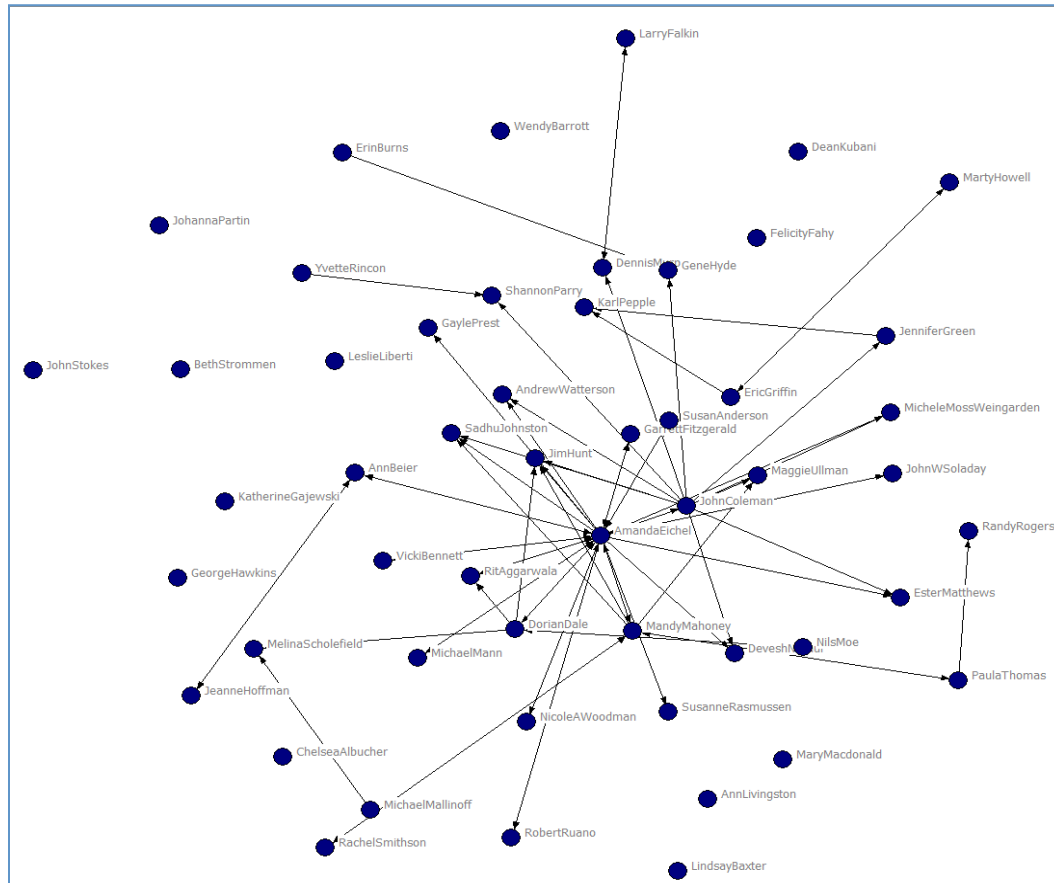
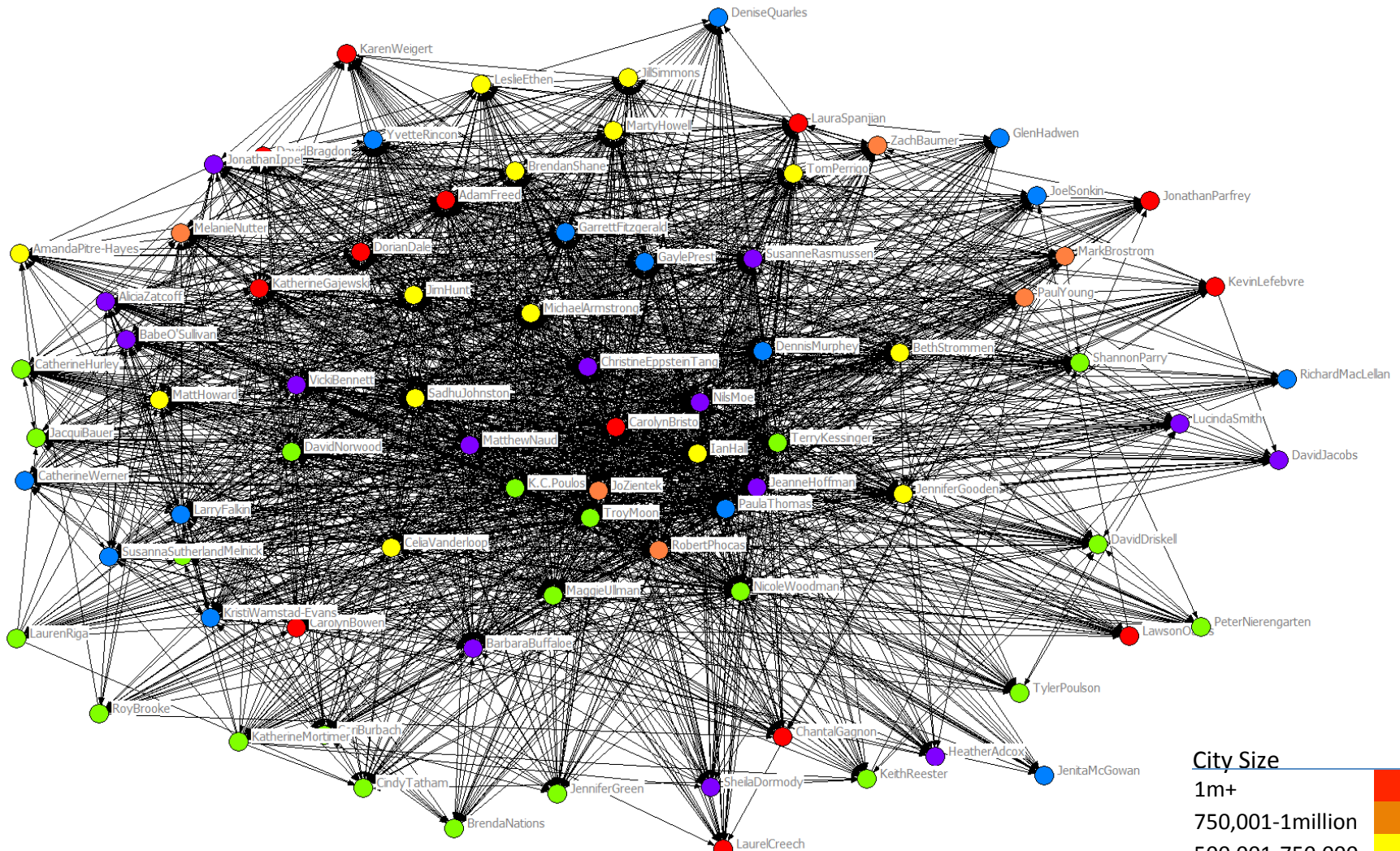

Michigan

ALL LEVELS

New England
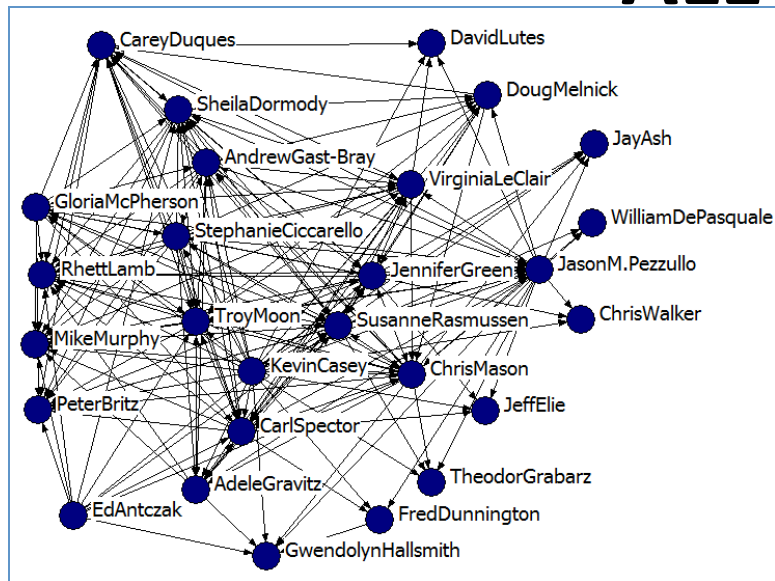
OKI
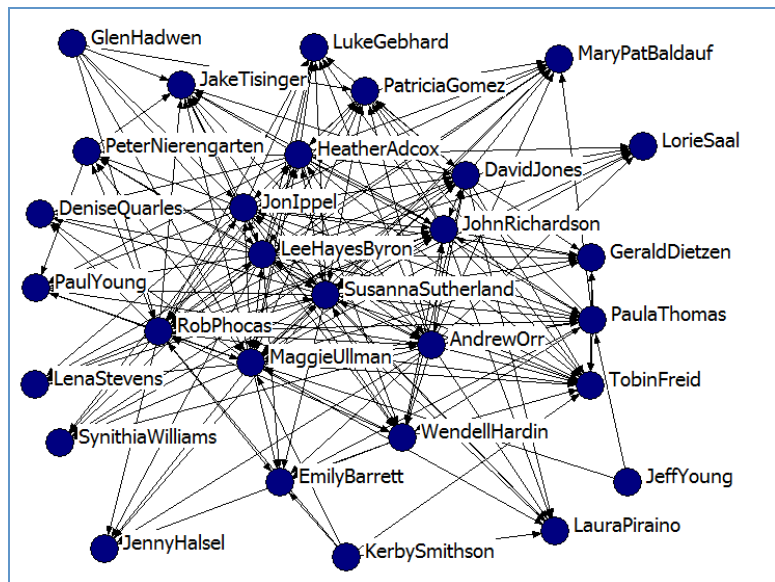
Southeast

Western

USDN – All Levels -- 2009

USDN 2012 All Levels

1 = Introduced, infrequently info exchange
2= Information exchange >1/month
3= Exchange info, collaborate on projects
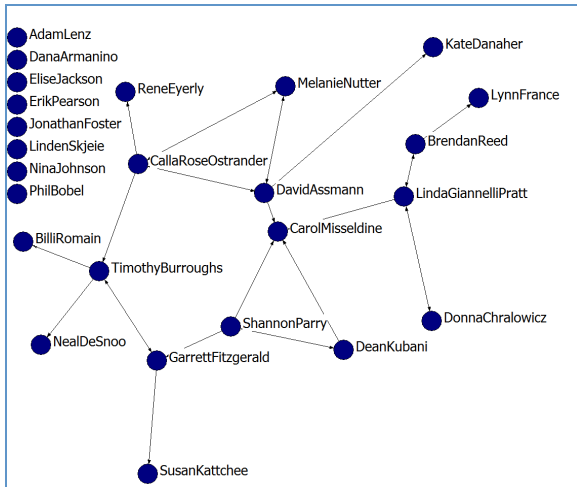4=Collaborate, rely on

City Size
1m+
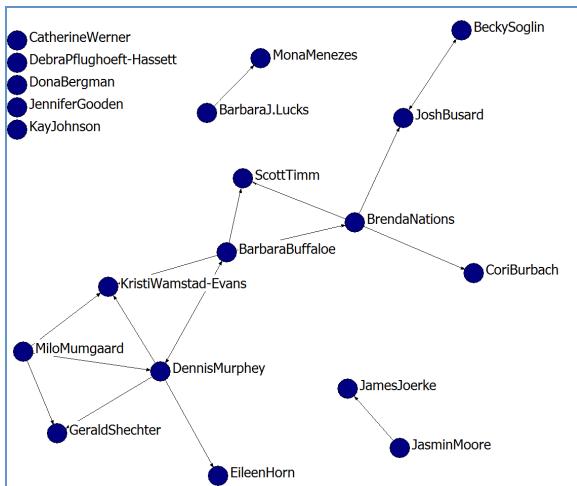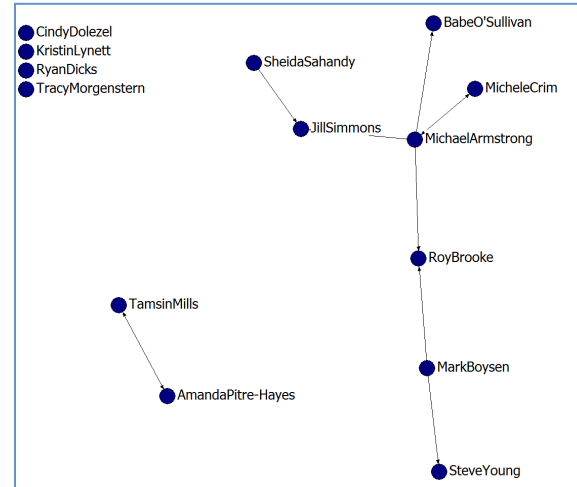750,001-1million
500,001-750,000
250,001-500,000
100,001-250,000
Under100,000
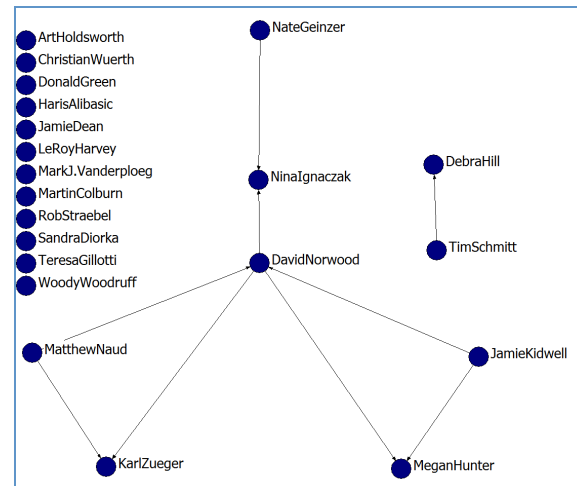
6

Level 4 (Collaborate with & rely on for advice)
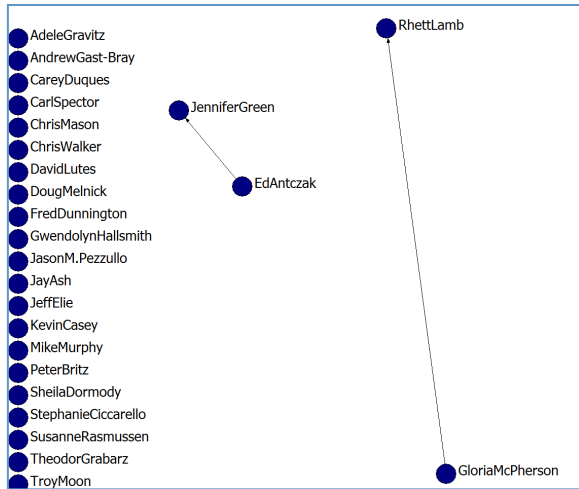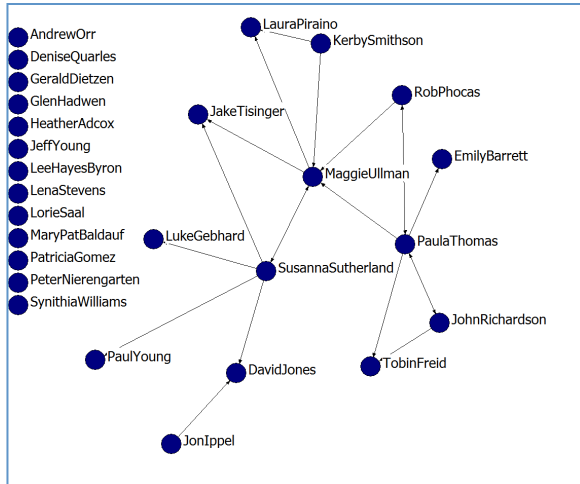
California

Cascadia

Heartland

Michigan

Level 4 (Collaborate with & rely on for advice)

New England

- AdeleGravitz
- AndrewGast-Bray
- CareyDuques
- CarlSpector
- ChrisMason
- ChrisWalker
- DavidLutes
- DougMelnick
- FredDunnington
- GwendolynHallsmith
- JasonM.Pezzullo
- JayAsh
- JeffElie
- KevinCasey
- MikeMurphy
- PeterBritz
- SheilaDormody
- StephanieCiccarello
- SusanneRasmussen
- TheodorGrabarz
- TroyMoon

RhettLamb
JenniferGreen
EdAntczak
GloriaMcPherson

O-K-I

- AshleeMras
- JenitaMcGowan
- LaurenRiga
- MariaKoetter
- TomWebb

DaniseAlano-Martin
LeslieStrader
JacquiBauer
ErinMiller
LameesMubaslat
DonnaWinchester
SteveJohns
LarryFalkin

Southeast

- AndrewOrr
- DeniseQuarles
- GeraldDietzen
- GlenHadwen
- HeatherAdcox
- JeffYoung
- LeeHayesByron
- LenaStevens
- LorieSaal
- MaryPatBaldauf
- PatriciaGomez
- PeterNierengarten
- SynithiaWilliams

LauraPiraino
KerbySmithson
RobPhocas
JakeTisinger
EmilyBarrett
MaggieUllman
PaulaThomas
LukeGebhard
SusannaSutherland
JohnRichardson
PaulYoung
DavidJones
TobinFreid
JonIppel

WAA

- DavidDriskell
- LaurenMcDonell
- LisaFriend
- TomPerrigo

KatyBigner
DaveErickson
YLucindaSmith
CeliaVanDerLoop
KatherineMortimer
NicoleA.Woodman
ReneeZollinger
VickiBennett
LeslieEthen
TylerPoulson
CarolynBristo

USDN 2012
Connections = 4

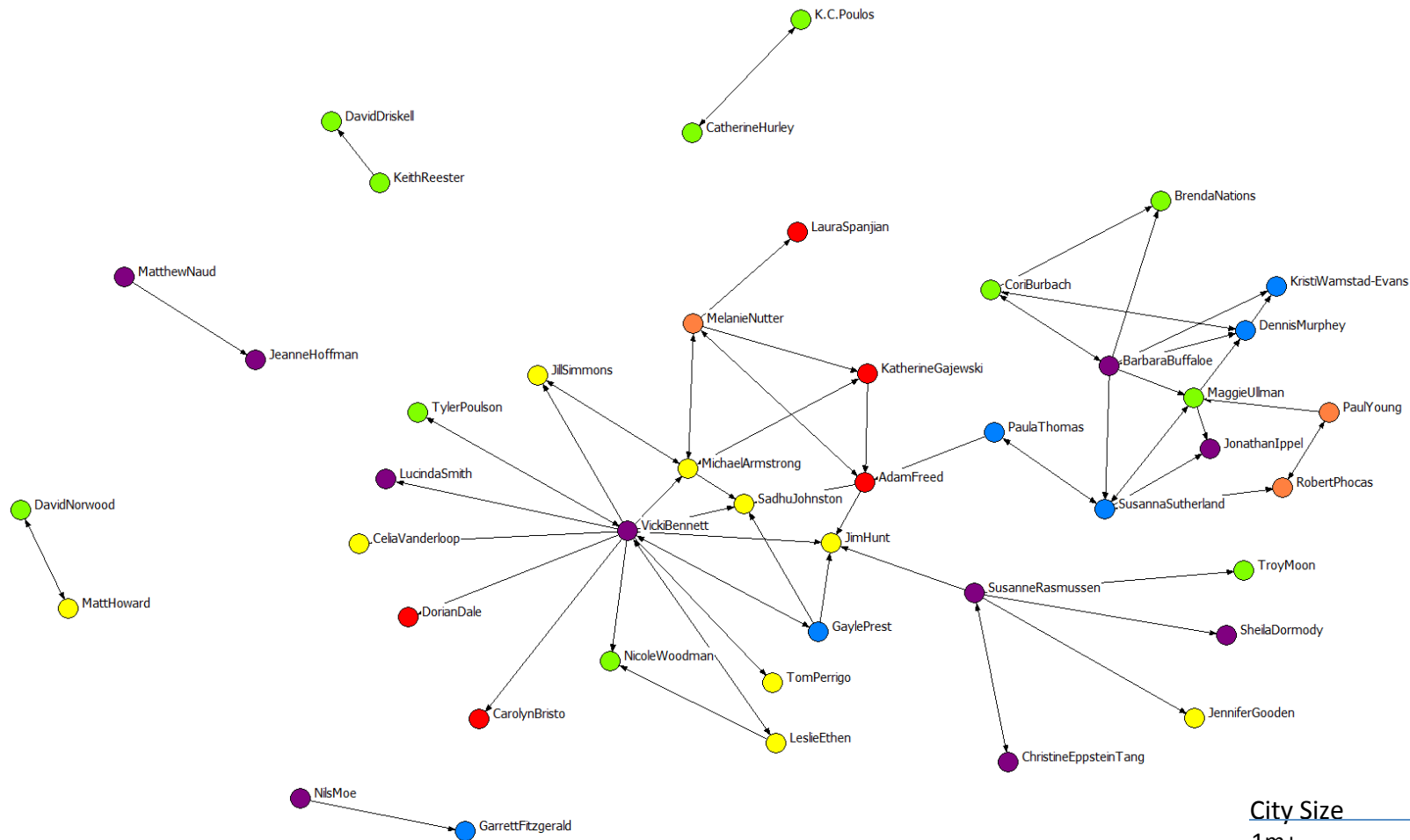**I depend on this person regularly for important advice and have worked with him/her on more than one project**

City Size
1m+
750,001-1million
500,001-750,000
250,001-500,000
100,001-250,000
Under100,000

64

EVOLUTION OF CONNECTIVITY
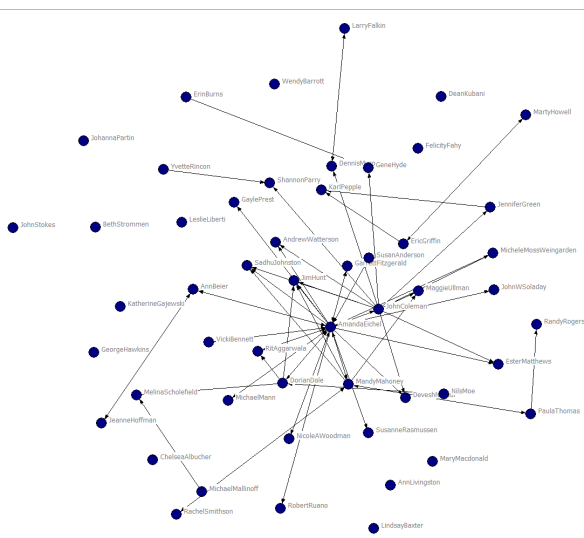
USDN >=2 EVOLUTION

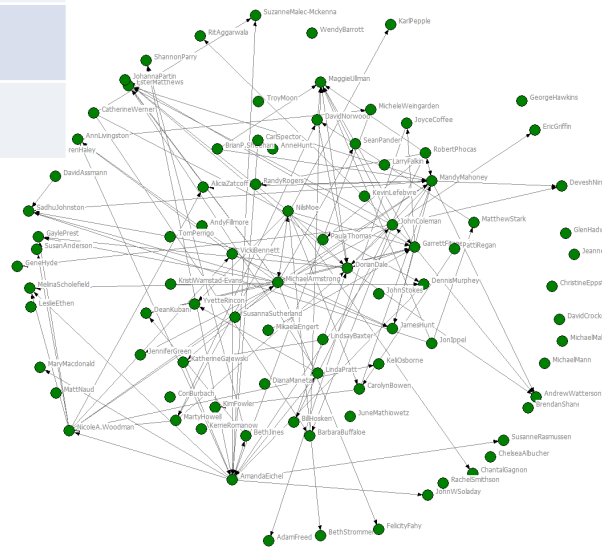2= Information exchange >1/month
3= Exchange info, collaborate on projects
4=Collaborate, rely on*

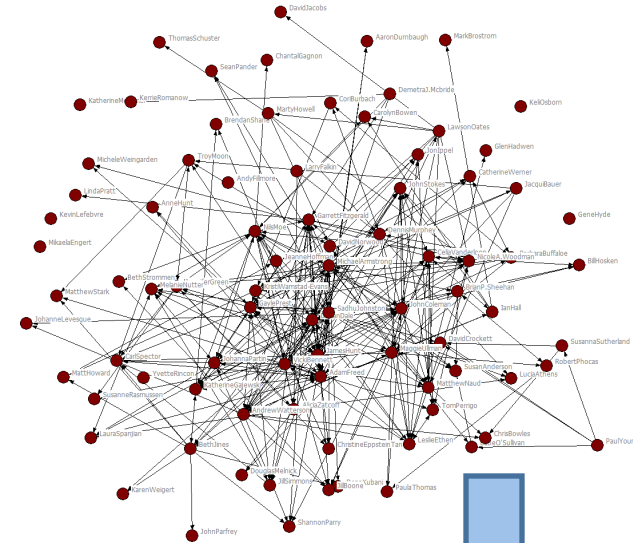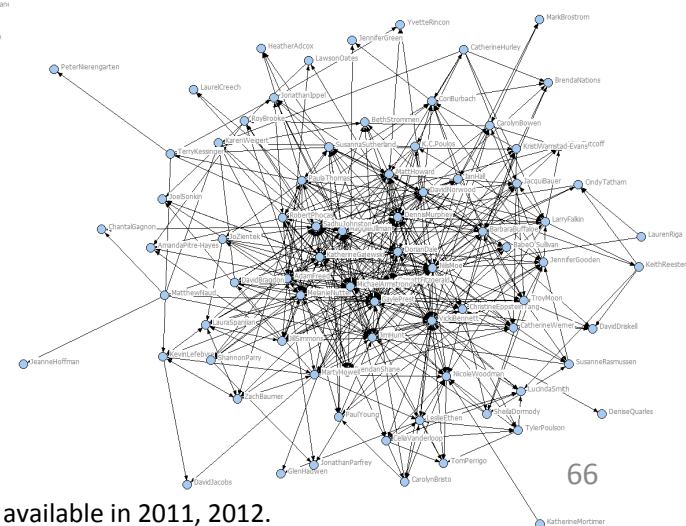| Year	#	Density	Avg # ties
2009	55	2.2%	1.2
2010	90	2.7%	2.4
2011	85	5.3%	4.5
2012	82	8%	6.88

2011

2010

2009

2012

*This response only available in 2011, 2012.

Increasing, Strengthening—With An Interesting New Dynamic

- For 4th year in row, member connectivity increased in # and strength.
- Network "resilience"—ability to withstand changes in membership—appears to be strong; overall connectivity keeps increasing as does large core of highly connected members, in spite of turnover of 34% (2010), 9% (2011), and 23% (2012).
- As we've seen in previous years:
  - ❑ Size of city and value proposition are not significant factors in who connects with whom.
  - ❑ The longer a member's tenure in USDN, the more connections and the more the intensity of their connections.
  - ❑ Planning Committee members continue to have high levels of connectivity throughout the network.
- **New Dynamic:** Regional network connections and activities are increasing and becoming important factor in member connectivity and satisfaction.

INTER-REGION CONNECTIONS

Selected Connectors >=2

From USDN 2012 survey

Legend:
- California
- Cascadia
- Heartland
- Michigan
- New England
- Ohio-Jndiana-Kentucky
- Southeast
- Western Adaptation Alliance
- Prairie State
- Canada
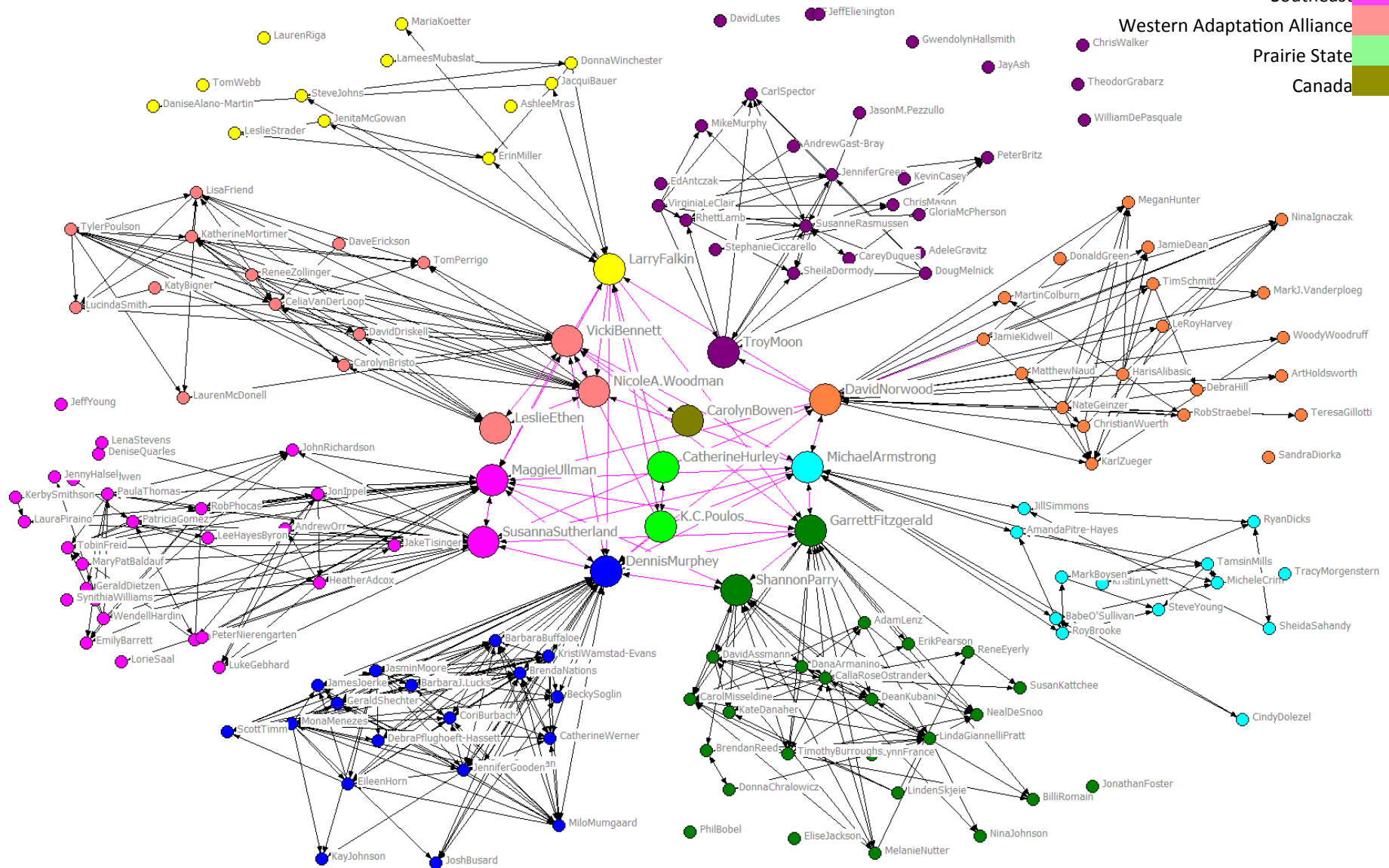
WEAVING CONNECTIONS

Anatomy of Network Relationships

"Trust is the glue that holds networks together."

Trust is personal.
Trust is the core network asset.

- Trust is built by:
  - Increasing the **bandwidth** of information that flows between nodes
  - Experiencing **reciprocity**

Different Types of Networks

Feature	Connecting	Aligning	Producing
Value Proposition	**I can connect faster to many other people**	I can build a sense of shared identity and purpose	I can produce desired outcomes more effectively
Role of Network Builder	<u>Weaving</u>—**helping people meet each other, increase ease of sharing and searching for information**	<u>Facilitating</u>—helping people to explore potential shared identity and value propositions	<u>Coordinating</u>—helping people plan and implement collaborative actions

Weaver Roles

- "Weavers" act like **brokers** – connecting players together; keeping their ears to the ground; fixing problems; helping members maximize the value they receive

- Weavers need to both know about network building, <u>and</u> have standing in the content area of the network

Weavers Increase & Manage Connectivity

- **Who's connected to whom? Who's not connected but should be?**

- **Where are the hubs and brokers? How can we assist them?**

- **Where are the bottlenecks? Can we eliminate them?**

- **Are new connections forming? Clusters emerging? Collaborations advancing ?**

- **Where are the network's resources? Are they effectively used?**

- **How is the network evolving and what are the implications?**

GOALS & METRICS

Types of Goals

Goal	Metrics
Connectivity	• Density, average # of ties, reach • Quality of links • Others
Network Health	• Member satisfaction • Member participation • Member diversity • Financial health • Network reputation/positioning • Others
Outcomes/Impacts	• Impacts reported by members • Investment/partners attracted • Others
Others?	

Focus on member value – avoid being funder-centric

Set goals appropriate to network's stage of development

USDN Network Evaluation (2012)

- **Annual Network Connectivity Mapping**
  - Density of network connections
  - Depth of the connections (i.e. sharing or collaborating?)

- **Score Card** for Member Participation in Network Activities and Contribution to Network Value Creation

- **Annual survey of members on:**
  - New contacts and relationships with sustainability directors
  - Ideas and practices adopted because of USDN participation
  - Progress made in addressing key challenges
  - Satisfaction with USDN
  - Effectiveness of USDN activities
  - Impact of participating in USDN

FROM SHARING AND LEARNING… TO COLLABORATING

USDN Members Walk the Talk

**% of Core Primary Members
in at least one Working Group, User Group, or
Committee**
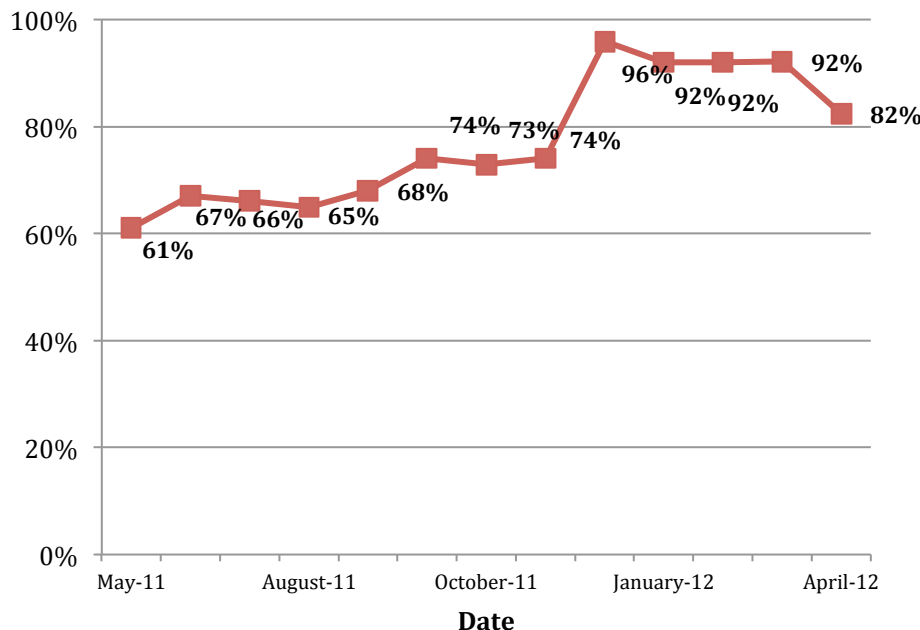
USDN Groups:

- Bike Sharing User Group
- Climate Change Adaptation User Group
- Eco-Districts User Group
- Food Systems User Group
- Net Zero Buildings User Group
- Policy Working Group
- Policy Communications Working Group
- Regional Network Coordinating Committee
- Rental Housing User Group
- Sustainability Indicators User Group
- Sustainable Behavior Pilot Projects Group
- Sustainable Behavior User Group
- Sustainable Economic Development User Group
- USDN Communications Committee

USDN Enabling Infrastructure
Information Sharing Tools

USDN fosters peer exchange and learning through:

- Weekly E-News
- USDN Members Only Website (usdn.org)
- Monthly USDN Idea Sharing Conference Calls
- Small Group Discussion MarketPlace
- Peer to Peer User Groups
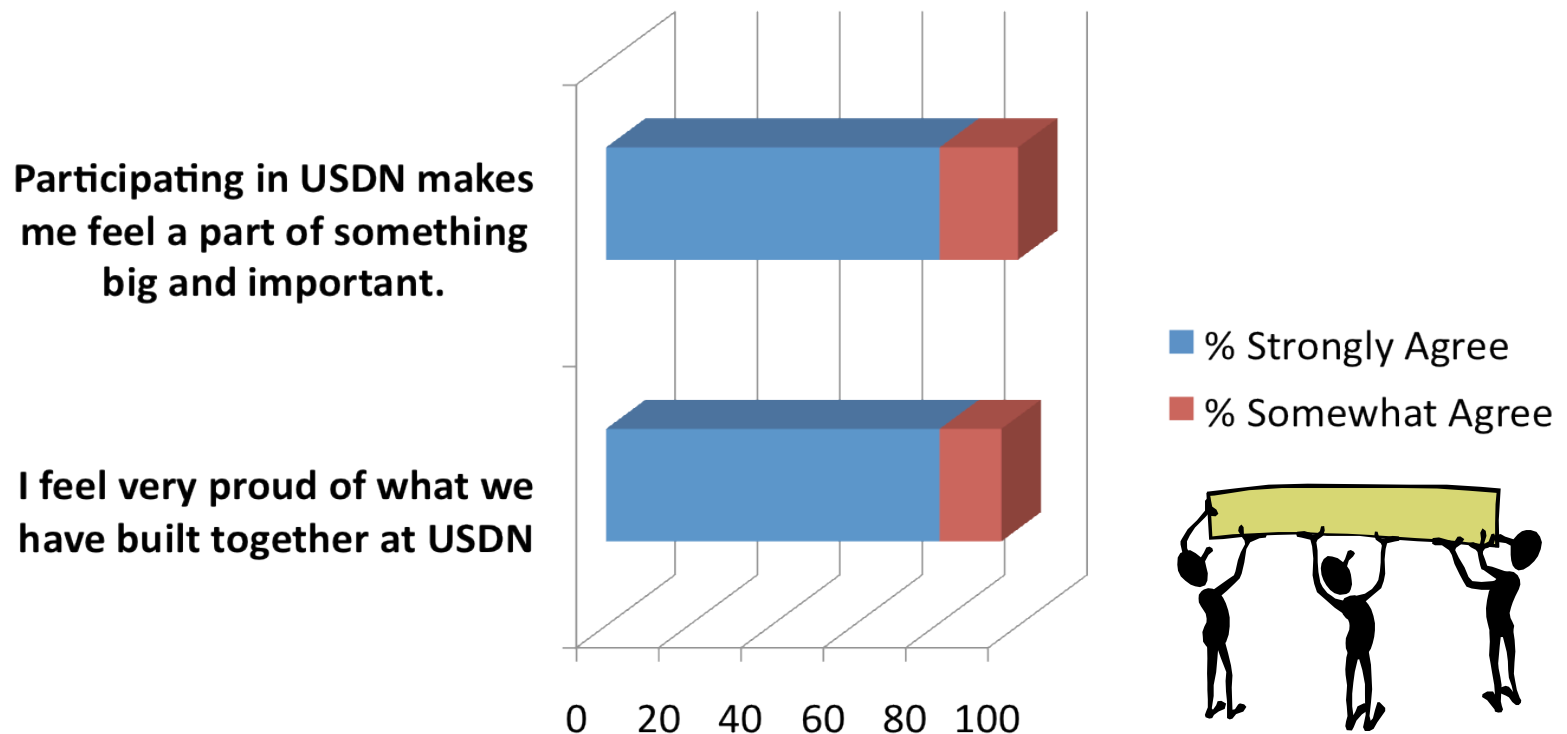- Annual Meeting
- Member Surveys

USDN Enabling Infrastructure
Innovation System (Came Later)

USDN supports collaboration across member jurisdictions on the identification, development and distribution of key urban sustainability innovations for products, policies and/or projects by:

- Helping members to Identify priorities for innovation

- Helping members come together to craft innovation proposals that address these priorities and identify key partners

- Funding collaborative grants for the best projects through an **Urban Sustainability Innovation (USI) Fund**

- Disseminating results through USDN, regional networks, key partners, and the **Funders' Network Local Sustainability Matching Fund**

USDN Members Have Come to Believe the Network Also Spurs Collaboration & Joint Stakes

*All USDN members strongly agree or agree that they feel very proud of what they have built together at USDN, and feel part of something big and important by participating in USDN.*

Participating in USDN makes me feel a part of something big and important.

I feel very proud of what we have built together at USDN

■ % Strongly Agree

■ % Somewhat Agree

0   20   40   60   80   100

Value to Members of the Innovation Fund

- Individual Member: Of those members who have participated in the innovation fund program, the majority rate it high impact.
- Field Building: The Innovation Fund provides a voice of the customer about what are key innovations.

USDN has tried several methods for helping members develop and share innovations. Please identify which you have participated in and the impact of each method.
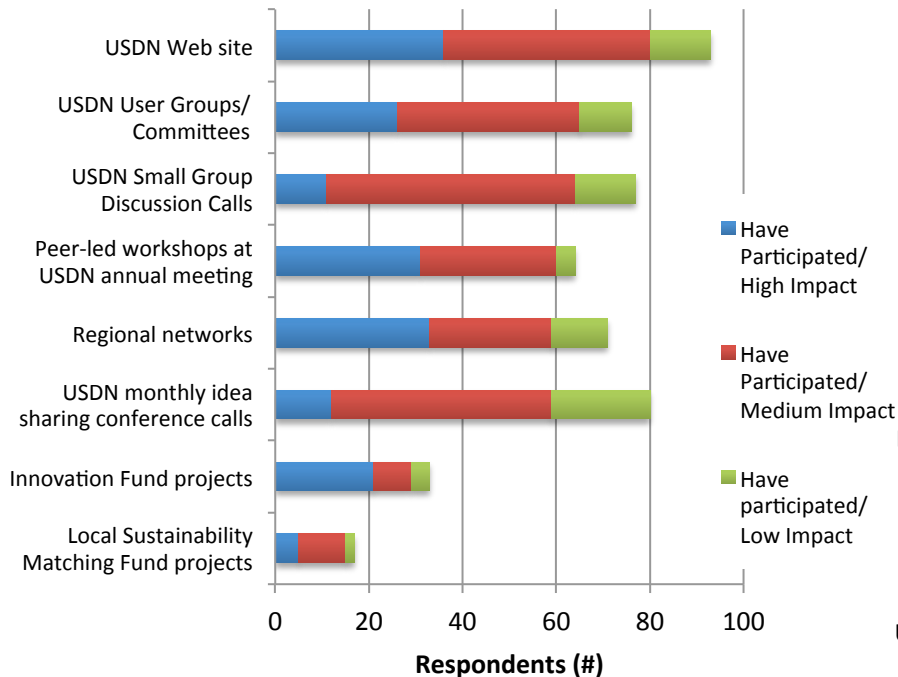
Of Participating Respondents, % Rate Method as "High Impact"
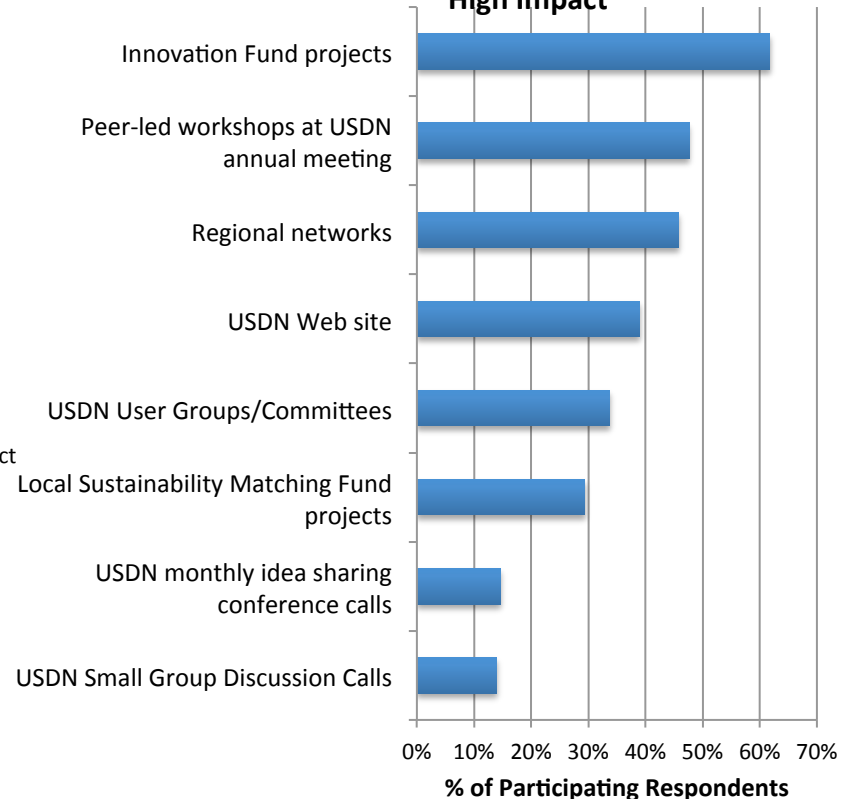
What the Networks Do

Activity Type	USDN	Regional Networks (Examples)
F2F Meeting	1 per year – 3 days	All networks have 1-2 F2F meetings annually, 1-2 days
Sharing/exchange/ learning	Workshops (annual meeting) User Groups Monthly Conference Calls	Member sharing: achievements, challenges, topics of interest, local initiatives, lessons learned Monthly calls (notes distributed) SSDN: monthly newsletter Heartland: Peer city visits
Alignment	Fundraising proposals Federal policy group Communications group	Fundraising proposals WAA: Adaptation planning
Project Collaboration (often requires external partners)	Innovation Fund Local Sustainability Matching Fund	CA: single-use bags, master environmental assessment Heartland: Urban Ag scan (Innovation Fund), member presentations in other settings SSDN: No Carolina working group/utilities, TN bi-monthly trouble-shooting calls
Branding	Logo, descriptive materials, outreach to funders	Presentations/webinars by members
Internal communications	Usdn.org Weekly e-newsletter	Some using usdn.org Email, listserv, Goggledocs
Public Web site	In development	CA, others?

A Collaboration Continuum

This activity...	Requires these resources...	Factors for effectiveness
Exchanging Information with each other (e.g., peer-based topic workshops at F2F meetings, conference calls)	• Shared interest • Time to exchange information • Time to discuss • "Opt in" by participants (low risk & commitment)	• Identify high-priority interests • Clarify interest at a level of specificity • Identify those with good information • Prepare "presenters" • Set sufficient time for discussion • Facilitate sharing/discussion around what *others* want to know • Have opportunities for continued exploration • Post presentations/discussion notes • Identify "lessons learned" and cases that might be valuable for others
Aligning with each other (e.g., following a process such as adaptation planning together; agreeing on a policy agenda)	• Shared interest • More time to develop & refine/negotiate shared ideas, language, and understand different points of view • May need facilitation • May need research • Time/capacity to draft agreement • "Opt in" and "stay in" by participants (medium risk & commitment)	• Identify high-priority, high-value interests • Define core terms • Clarify how agreement/consensus will be reached • Openness, willing to learn, on part of participants
Producing a shared outcome together (e.g., lobbying for legislation, awarding Innovation Fund grants)	• Shared interest • Set goals, timetable • May require facilitation • Time/effort to acquire resources—funding, capacity • Process management & coordination with production schedule • Time for joint decision-making & guidance • "Stay in" and "produce" by participants (high risk & commitment)	• Identify high priority, high-value, "we want to make it happen" interests • Maintain participants' engagement—don't out-source to staff/manager

F2F MEETINGS

Design Network F2F Meetings to...

1) **Increase connectivity**

   - Mix it up, "forced" connections, buddies, lots of unstructured networking time

2) **Satisfy members' value propositions**

   - Activities that provide quality high-priority information

   - Get members to present/facilitate

3) **Explore new possible member activities**

   - Provide a taste of next-stage activities

4) **Expose funders/partners**

   - Invite & allow them to participate

5) **Create a good vibe/momentum**

   - Check in/mid-course corrections

   - End on strong note (members' takeaways)

6) **Evaluate & improve**

- **Tips from CA (Carol)**
- **Designing with Julia: 2013 USDN Annual Meeting**

NETWORK ACTIVITIES

What the Networks Do

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Public Web site	In development	CA, others?

LEADERSHIP SUCCESSION

Heartland
Overall Connectivity (Levels 1-4)

1 = Introduced, infrequently info exchange
2 = Information exchange >1/month
3 = Exchange info, collaborate on projects
4 = Collaborate, rely on

Or, How Dennis Lost His Centrality
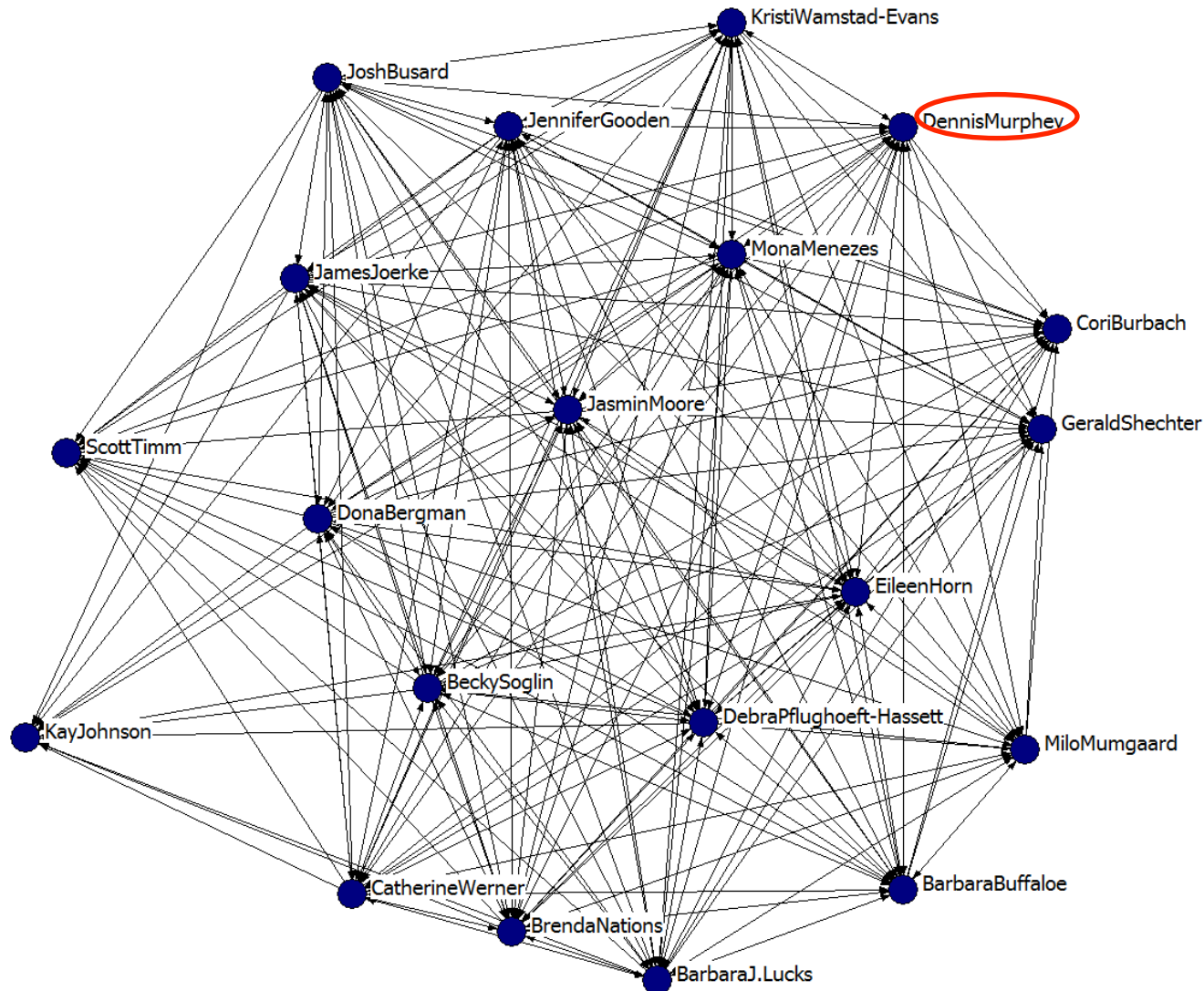
Heartland
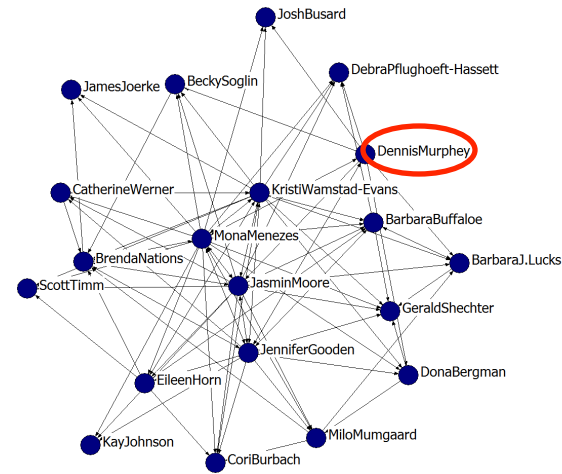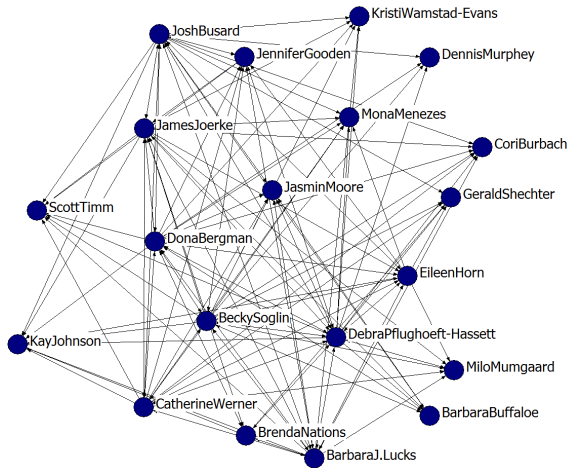## Each Level of Connectivity

1 = Introduced, infrequently info exchange
2 = Information exchange >1/month
3 = Exchange info, collaborate on projects
4 = Collaborate, rely on

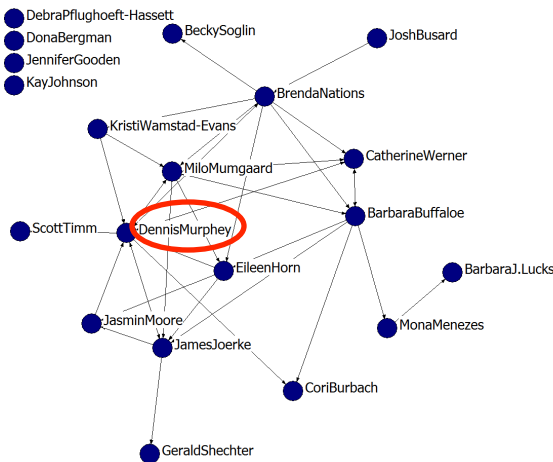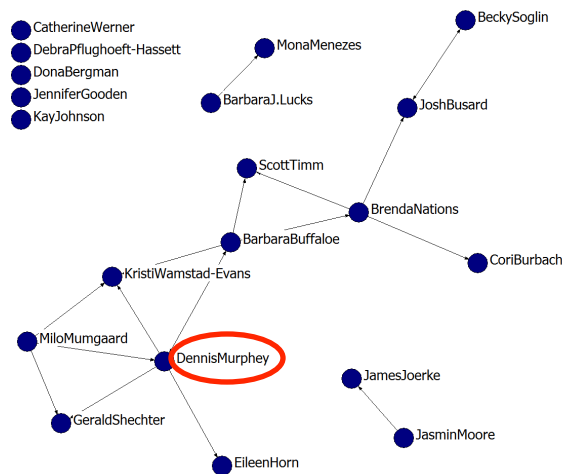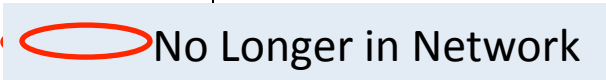## Or, How Dennis Lost His Centrality

Introduced (Level 1)

Information Exchange (Level 2)

Exchange and Collaborate (Level 3)

Collaborate, Rely On (Level 4)

93

Succession in USDN
2009 Connectivity Map

No Longer in Network

Some Roles in Network Leadership
(The same person can play many of these roles.)

Organizing	Establishes purpose and value propositions of the network. Establishes first members of network and connects them to each other. Attracts initial resources for the network.
Weaving	Works to increase connections among nodes, both the number of links and the bandwidth quality of links. Also may focus on growing the network by connecting to new nodes.
Funder	Provides initial and ongoing resources for organizing the network, supporting development of connections, alignment, and production, and coordination for the network. May play role of initial organizer of network
Facilitating	Helps network members to establish collective value proposition and negotiate collective action plans for production.
Coordinating	Helps nodes to undertake collective action for production, by ensuring the flow of necessary information and other resources, development and implementation of agreements among nodes.
Coaching	Advises organizers, weavers, facilitators, and coordinators about how best to perform their roles in building networks.
Stewardship	Informally helps to build the network, but as a member of the network, not as a formal position-role within the network

Practices for Net-Centric Leadership
Institute for Conservation Leadership, "The Less Visible Leader"

Catalyzes a culture of spirited cooperation
1. Listens deeply to fully appreciate and understand the diversity of perspectives and motivations held by all involved.
2. Shows gratitude and encourages mutual appreciation for the ideas and contributions of all.
3. Regularly uses both/and thinking to identify solutions that meet both shared and individual goals and needs.
4. Communicates openly and clearly, matching the medium to the message.
5. Fosters opportunities (at all levels of the system) to develop camaraderie and trust

Shares power and generates momentum
6. Creates space for others to step up and contribute
7. Embraces ambiguity and encourages experiments and innovations
8. Helps the group to develop enough infrastructure to effectively make decisions and keeps everyone moving forward
9. Pays attention to conflicts in values and beliefs and productively orchestrates resolution

Stays true to the long-term vision while navigating frequent twists and turns
10. Persistently holds a clear picture of the purpose for working together
11. Helps those inside and outside the collaborative effort understand the progress that is being made as well as the roots of that success.
12. Courageously continues to adapt in an effort to successfully achieve the long-term vision.

STAFFING/COORDINATION

Typical Network Coordinator Functions

Network Development	• Support network goal setting and the development of plans • Monitor and promote progress with network plans • Maintain Network member database • Identify opportunities to create and strengthen network connections (network weaving) • Orient new members (including coaching on healthy network practices)
Internal Communications	• Organize, convene, and schedule network meetings (develop agendas, assist with goal setting, minutes recorded and shared) • Provide written updates and reports of all activities to Network members on a regular basis • Maintain network online capacities (Directory, Web site, etc.)
External Communications	• Respond to all requests for updates and reports from funders • Serve as liaison with other organizations and networks to promote coordination of efforts. • Promote activities and goals of the Network and those of its members
Network Research/ Data Collection	• Facilitate data collection necessary for assessing and evaluating network health and effectiveness of network activities • Support creation of white papers/ reports
Network Finances	• Review and monitor budget • Identify and pursue funding opportunities

BUDGETING & FUNDRAISING

Regional Networks Leadership Academy

Network Costs and Funding

- Network costs are determined by network purpose.

- Network resources can come from in-kind "sweat equity"; grants; selling services; and member funding.

- Network resources must be allocated through an open and equitable process.

> *"The allocation of funds, once raised, can be potentially contentious, if the relationships among members have not been well formed, and if agreements for the division of resources have not been reached in an open and transparent fashion."*
> (Heather Creech, "Form Follows Function")

How Will the Network Be Funded?

- **Operating grants**

- **Member fees**

- **Project fund raising**

- **Volunteer time and sweat equity**

- **Partner contributions**

Budget Framework

| FIXED COSTS		VARIABLE COSTS	
Network Convening • Travel expenses • Meeting space • Food, lodging • Facilitation • Materials	$250-$500 average per person per meeting, but many ways to offset costs	**Projects**	• Project development costs • Project implementation & management • Consultants
Communications • Conference calls • Web site/server • Software (Dropbox, Yammer, etc) • Databases		As network becomes bigger and more ambitious, costs will increase (better communications, more network coordination, more project development)	
Staffing • Logistics coordination • Network coordination (weaving, project development, fundraising, facilitation, etc.)	Logistics: part-time loaner Network: part-time, but higher skill set & engagement with members	1. Roll fixed costs into funding for projects. 2. Don't undertake projects that are not paid for. 3. Expand network of potential funding sources (including members)	

PARTNERING

INFRASTRUCTURE & NETWORK MANAGEMENT

Valued Communications Modes

Most valued communications mode is the Annual Meeting

More than half of members find high value in:

Off-line Connections, User Groups, Scans/Best Practices,

Posts on USDN.org, Innovation Fund, and Regional Networks

Value of USDN Communication Modes

Legend:
- High Value
- Medium Value
- Low Value
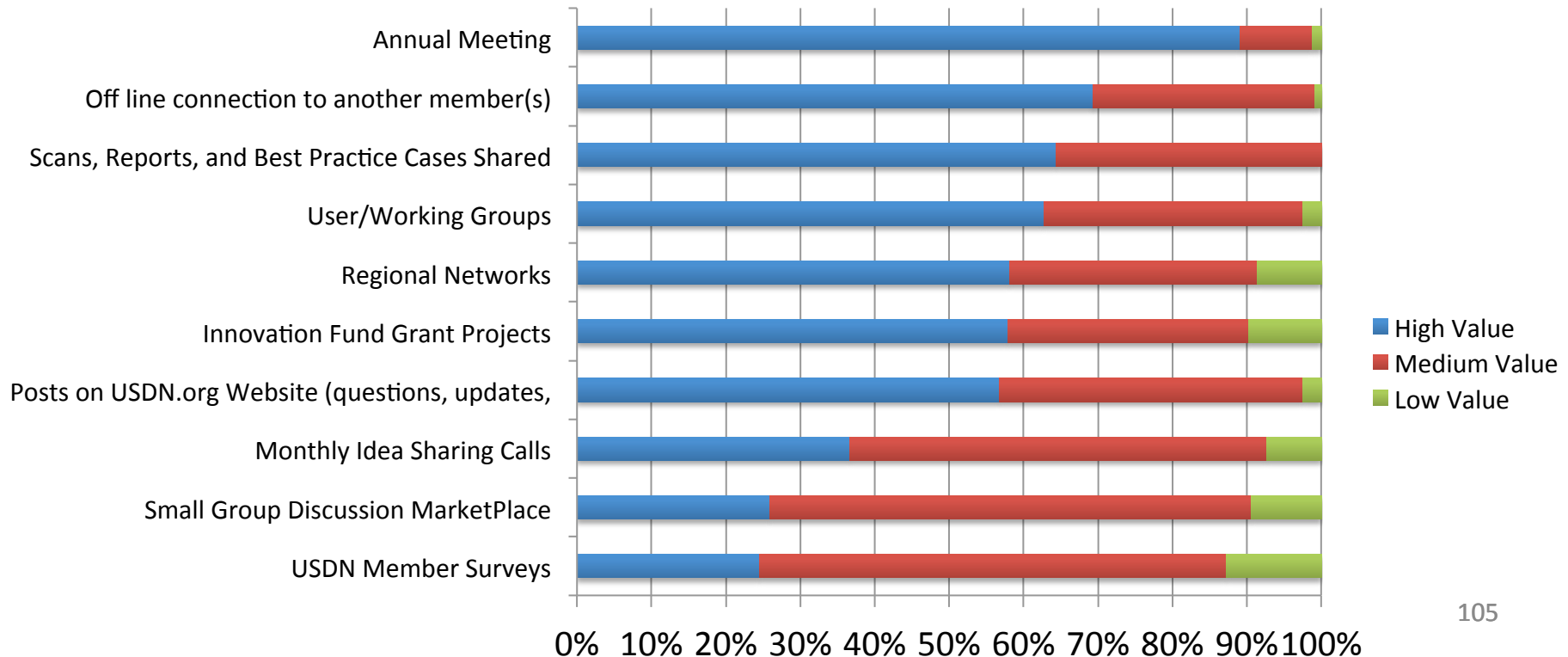
Learning and Evolving

- Make the network do the work.

  – Minimize "delegation" opportunities

- Let connections flow to value.

  - Organize around what members want, not around what "should be happening" & drop what's not working

- Let variation create unplanned opportunities; don't try to march in lockstep

- Watch closely/Seek frequent feedback/Continually re-evaluate.

- Keep plans flexible.

USDN & THE REGIONAL NETWORKS

"TERRITORIES" OF THE REGIONAL NETWORKS
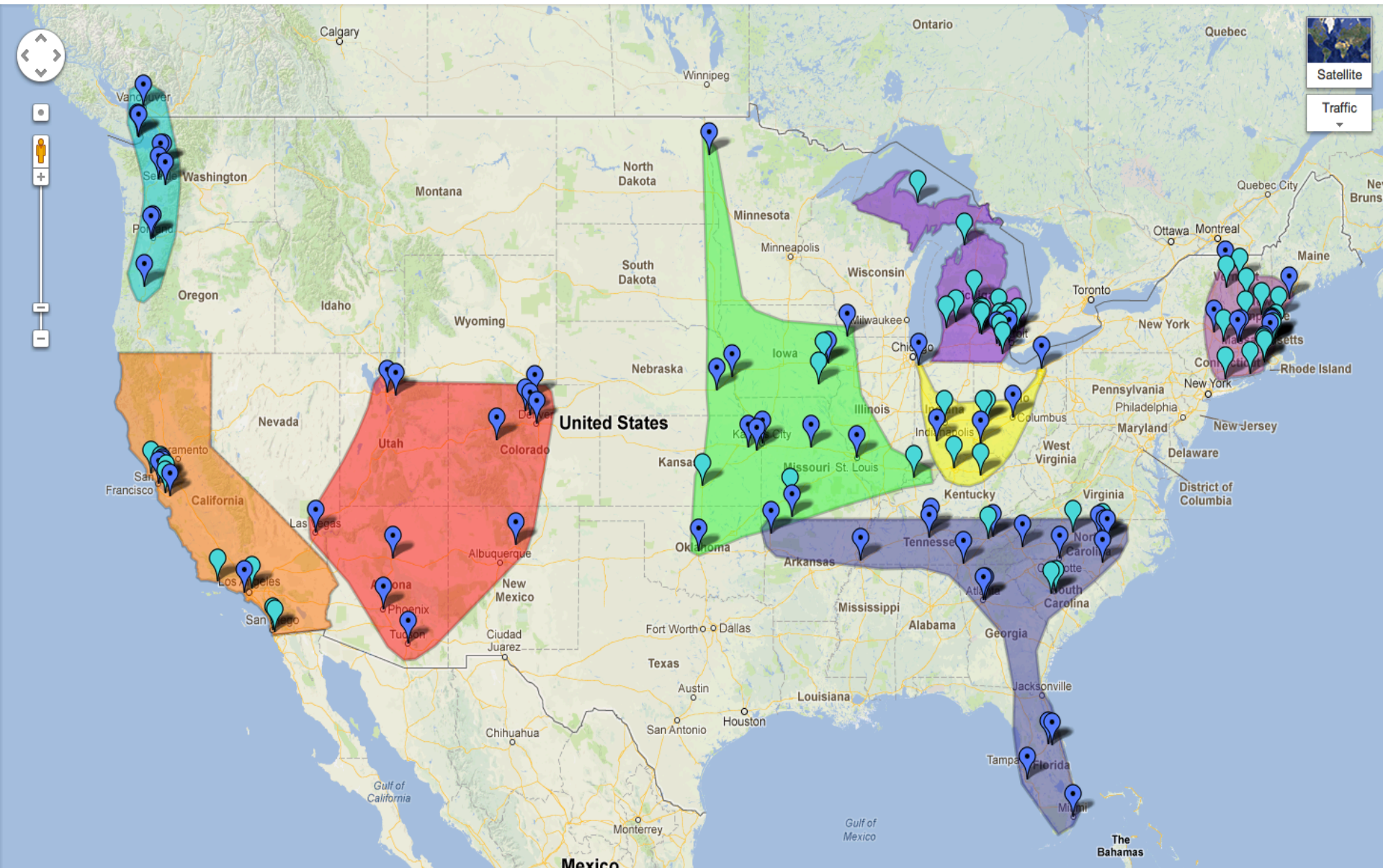
Report to USDN Planning Committee – September 2012

- **A New Dynamic:** Regional network connections and activities are increasing and becoming important factor in member connectivity and satisfaction.

About 2/3 of most strongly connected members also connected within regional networks

1 = Introduced, infrequently info exchange
2= Information exchange >1/month

3= Exchange info, collaborate on projects
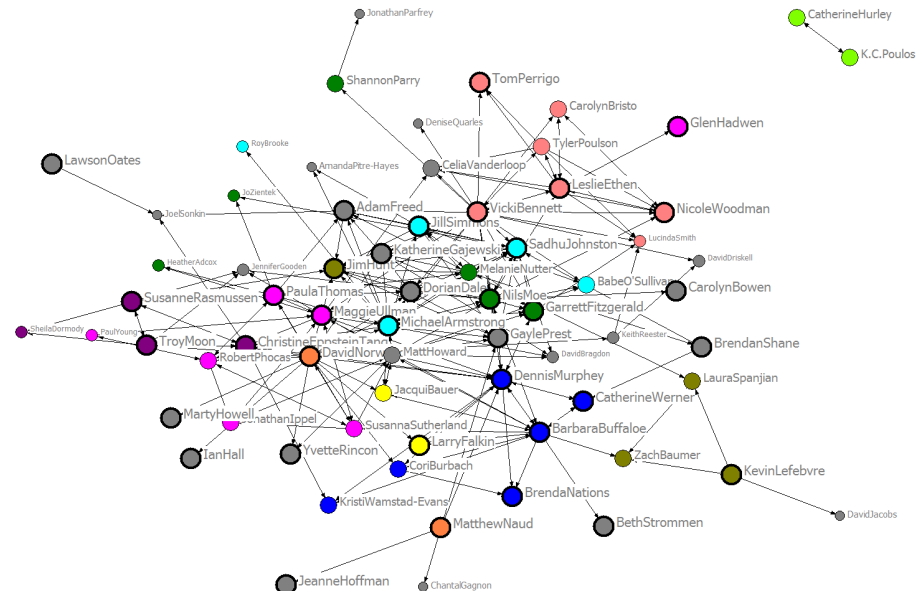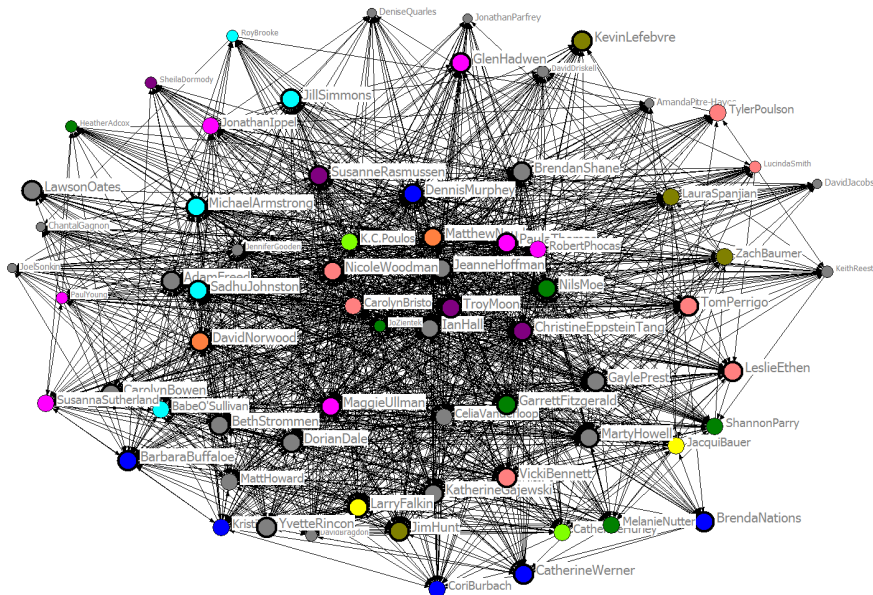
More than 2 years	80% of ties
1-2 years	16.5% of ties
Less than 1 year	3.5% of ties

More than 2 years	87.5% of ties
1-2 years	11% of ties
Less than 1 year	1.5% of ties

California
Cascadia
Heartland
Michigan
New England
Ohio-Indiana-Kentucky
Prairie State
Southeast
Texas
Western Adaptation Alliance

Regional Network Implications
USDN Planning Committee 9/2012

Congratulations, it's happening: regional networks are taking hold. But still fragile (leadership, coordination, funding)

Relationships <u>within</u> regional networks becoming larger, important dynamic within USDN national membership

Value for USDN Mission
1. <u>Practice</u>: Regional nets beginning to become hubs for sharing practice, collaborating on projects
2. <u>Field Building</u>: Regional nets expand the reach of USDN brand into non-member communities
3. Contributes to network-leadership within national network

Big Questions
1. As connectivity of USDN members within regional networks increases, will this become a more important dynamic than national connections? Could USDN become more of a "confederation" of regions, rather than a national connector?
2. How to differentiate between what the regional nets and the national network are good at/should be doing? (Need to do this over next few years)

111

Impact of Regional Networks Tally
February 2013

	CA	Casc	Heart	MI	NE	OKI	SE	WAA	Total
Find solution	7	2	6	3	5	4	2	6	35
Avoid problem	4	4	7	2	2	3	3	5	30
Make a change	8	3	6	3	5	2	2	4	33
Gain support	8	6	10	7	9	5	8	7	62
Save time	8	5	10	3	3	2	4	6	41
Save money	6	3	3	1	2	1	2	3	21

222 instances of regional network impact

# 2013 Topics Mentioned by Regional Network Members

Food systems	CA, Cas, Heart, MI, NE
Green infrastructure	NE
Bldg energy efficiency	Heart, MI, NE, OKI, SE
Adaptation planning	**CA, Cas, Heart, MI, NE, OKI, WAA**
Bike/car sharing	CA
Green Economy	Cas,
Water (stormwater, flood, conservation)	Cas, Heart, MI, SE, WAA
Govt purchasing	Cas
Climate change communications	Cas
Municipal facilities energy reduction	Heart,
Waste diversion	OKI
Behavior change	MI, SE

What the Networks Do

Activity Type	USDN	Regional Networks
F2F Meeting	1 per year – 3 days	All networks have 1-2 F2F meetings annually, 1-2 days
Sharing/exchange/ learning	Workshops (annual meeting) User Groups Monthly Conference Calls	Member sharing: achievements, challenges, topics of interest, local initiatives, lessons learned Monthly calls (notes distributed) SSDN: monthly newsletter Heartland: Peer city visits
Alignment	Fundraising proposals Federal policy group Communications group	Fundraising proposals
Project Collaboration (often requires external partners)	Innovation Fund Local Sustainability Matching Fund	WAA: Adaptation planning CA: single-use bags, master environmental assessment Heartland: Urban Ag scan (Innovation Fund), member presentations in other settings SSDN: No Carolina working group/utilities, TN bi-monthly trouble-shooting calls
Branding	Logo, descriptive materials, outreach to funders	Presentations/webinars by members
Internal communications	Usdn.org Weekly e-newsletter	Some using usdn.org Email, listserv, Goggledocs
Public Web site	In development	CA, others?

Selected Connectors >=2

From USDN 2012 survey + Regional networks survey 2013
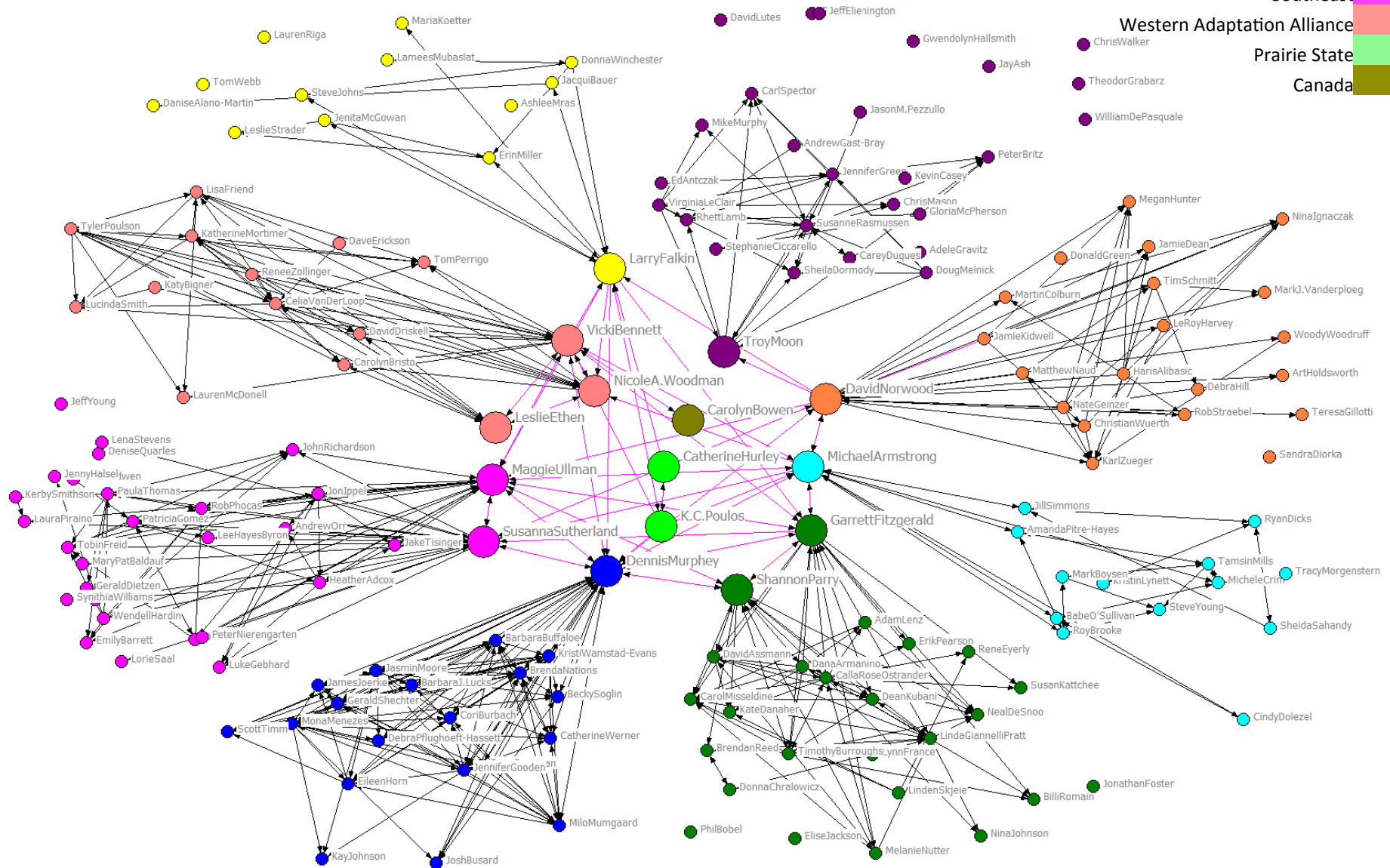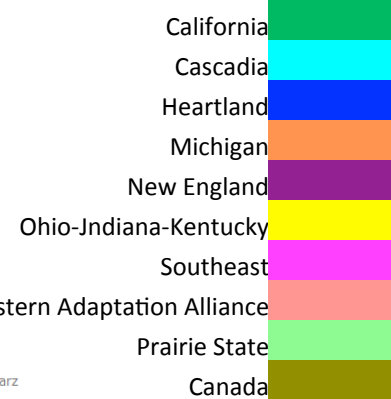
What's Different/Similar Across Regions?

Climate (hot/cold, dry/wet, etc.)
Characteristics of Various Urban Systems
- Transportation
- Energy Supply
- Etc.

Political Culture
- Role/Leadership of Local Governments
- Tolerance for Government Mandates

Others?

What is USDN Doing that Regions Can Take Advantage Of?

- Innovation Fund
- Local Sustainability Matching Fund
- Federal Policy Working Group
- Communications/Messaging Working Group
- Etc.