

# Consent at WIPP



Opening the First Successful  
Permanent Nuclear Waste  
Storage Facility in the United  
States

# The Waste Isolation Pilot Project was in Trouble



Ten years, over a billion dollars invested, and no joy

- Carlsbad, New Mexico Project Site
- Albuquerque Oversight
- Washington D.C. Super Oversight
- A neutral site: St. Louis
- A consent-based process was applied
- Progress restored.

# Principals of the Process



- Institutional memory is short, process endures
- Nothing sticks unless you are affected somehow
- Nothing improves unless you are involved or represented authentically
- All stakeholders are there, so that no “wicked fairy” emerges later
- Wrestle contentious issues through to resolution without confrontation.
- Follow a proven sequence that prioritizes issues

# The Proven Sequence



- **Develop** a detailed description of the best possible outcome
- **Think** of all the ways to achieve that success
- **Set** priorities
- **Organize** an action agenda
- **Work** the plan
- **Repeat** every six months and when changing circumstances demand.

# Sources for the **Process**



- *Recreating Democracy, Breathing New Life into American Communities* by Lloyd Wells & Larry Lemmel
- The Running Start Institute, Michael T. Kelly, PhD, President
- Department of Energy, Office of the Secretary
- Google “Consensual Democracy.”