

# Wallowa Whitman Forest Collaborative: *Collaborative Functionality Evaluation*



Performed by Alyssa Cudmore, MS Candidate at the University of Michigan School of Natural Resources and Environment, compiled and designed report on behalf of The Wallowa Whitman Forest Collaborative

Summer 2015

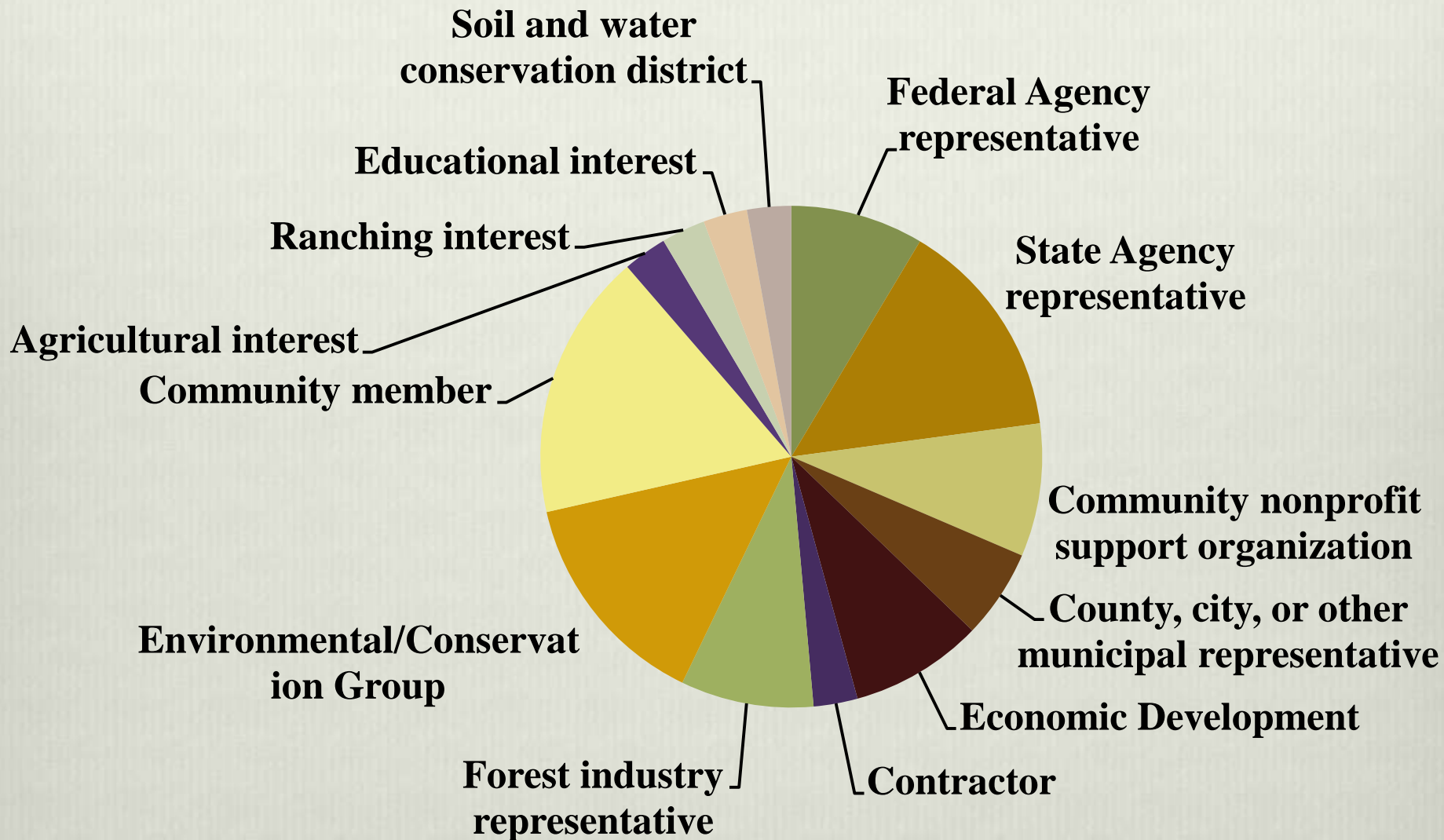
# Outline

- ❖ Methodology
- ❖ Overview of observations
- ❖ Overview of recommendations
- ❖ Summary and next steps

# Methodology

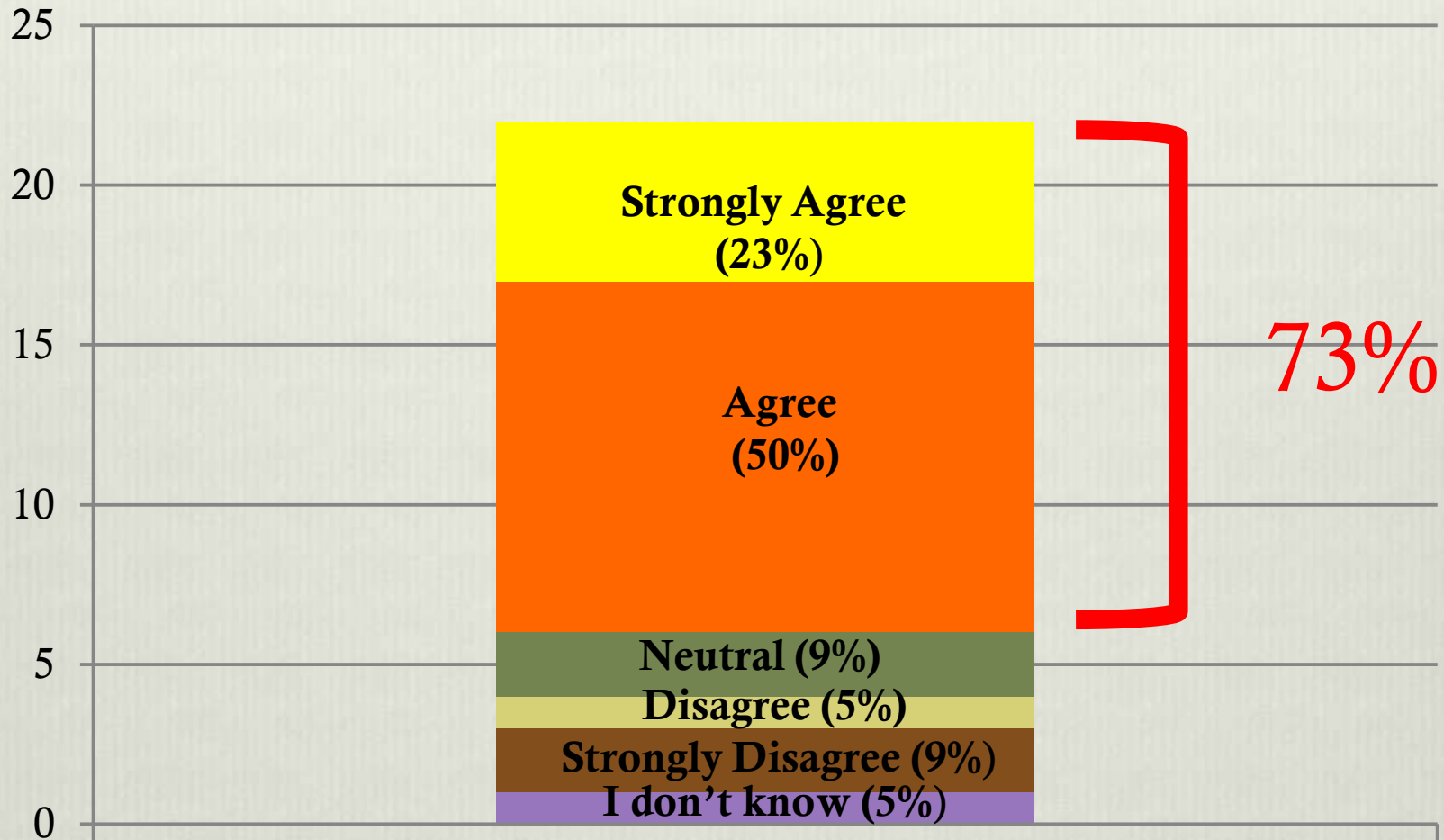
- ❖ 15 members and partners most involved in the WWFC selected to participate in 60-minute interview in July and August 2015.
- ❖ 22 out of the 27 WWFC members and partners filled out a 20-minute online survey, for a response rate of 81 percent.
- ❖ 86 percent self-identified as members who have signed Operating Principles.

*“What type of organization or group do you represent?  
Check all that apply.”*



# Observations

**Collaboration:** *Most believe collaboration is a better way to be making decisions, and that the WWFC is doing something no other group is working on in your community.*



**No other organization in the community is trying to do exactly what the collaborative is trying to do.**



**Perceived lack of shared vision:** *When asked what the collaborative is trying to achieve, most WWFC members identify similar goals, yet during interviews many voiced a concern that the group lacks a shared vision.*

- ❖ When surveyed, *every* partner and member of the collaborative without contest agreed that (1) protecting fish and wildlife habitat, (2) creating more local jobs, (3) restoring forest resiliency (4) improving relationships and trust among partners (5) reducing wildfire risk to communities, and (6) protecting water resources, are important issues the collaborative should be addressing.

**Zones of Agreement:** *Most don't feel the collaborative is ready to begin using ZOAs, but most agree the WWFC will naturally reach these agreements through working on projects, monitoring and learning from their outcomes.*

“We need to get out in the woods and reflect on what these post treatments are going to look like.

We need to work through smaller projects, monitor those, see the results, and learn together.

This will help us improve our group mental picture of what a ZOA looks like on the ground.”

*-WWFC Interviewee*



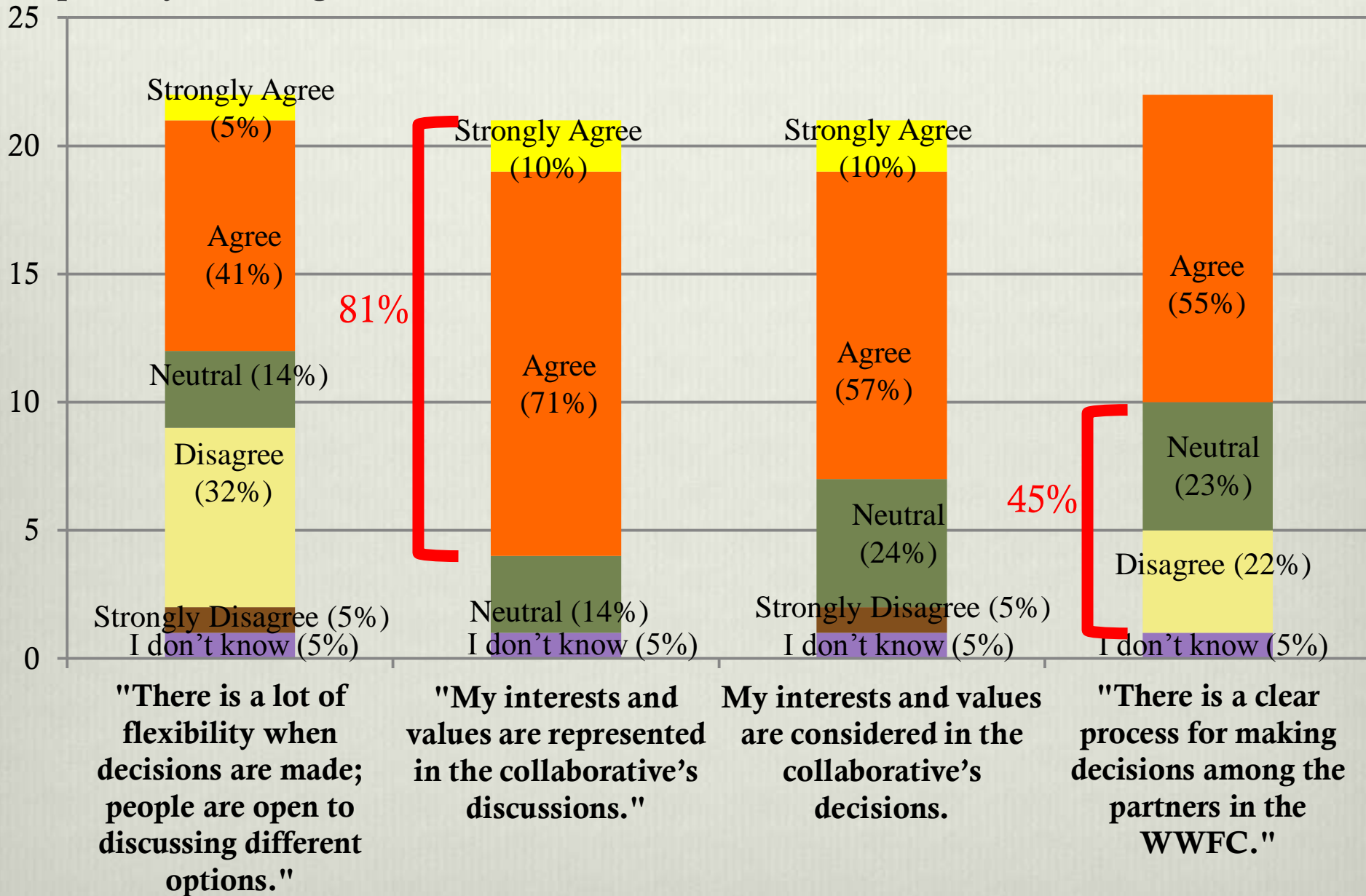
## **Finding Science/Data Group Can Agree to Use:**

*During interviews expressed concern that the group has a difficult time agreeing upon science and data to use to make their decisions.*

“Trying to figure out how to have a science discussion that is not just a debate about my science vs. your science is going to be important for our group moving forward.”

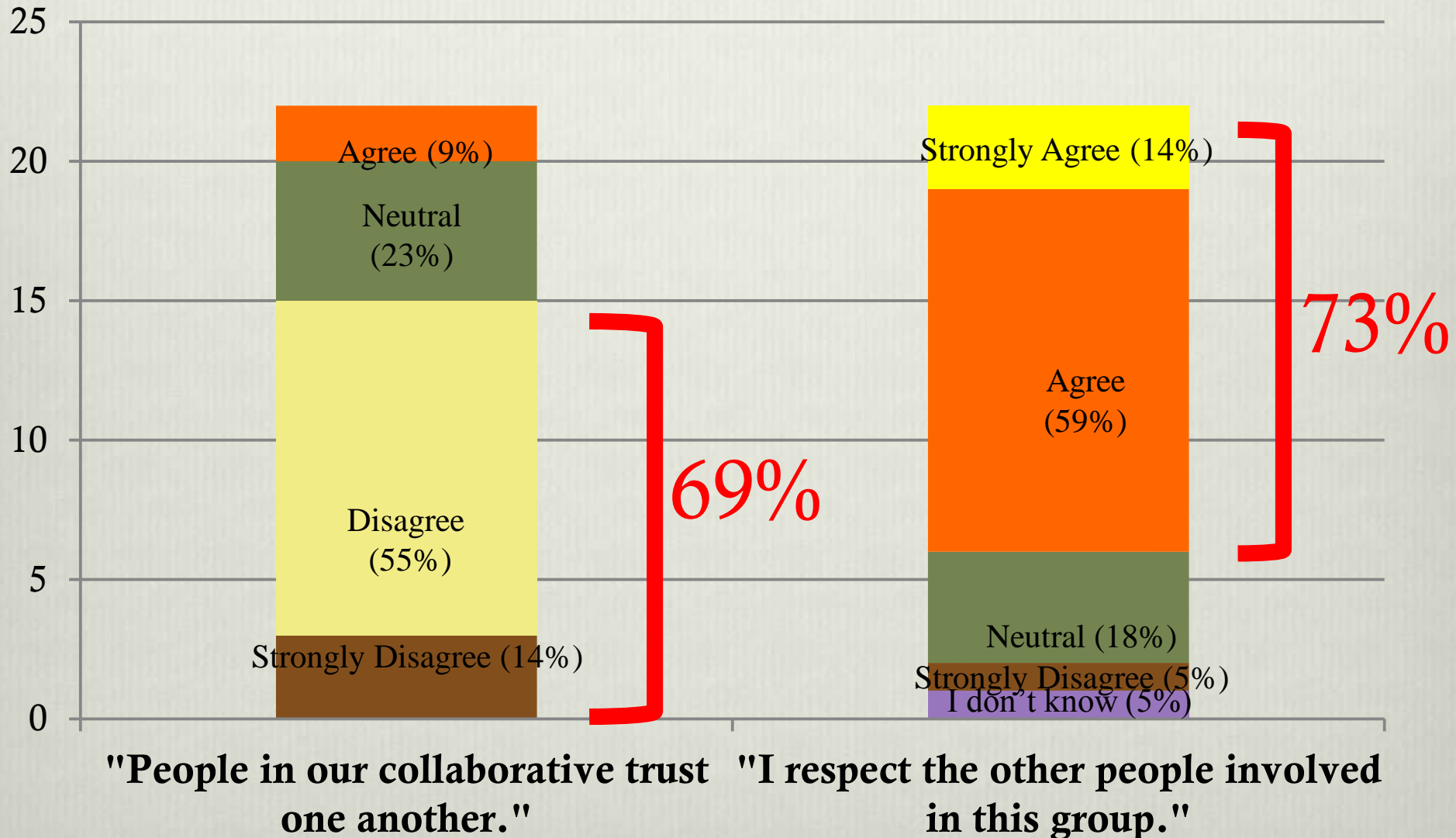
*- WWFC Interviewee*

# Decision Making: *Some in the collaborative feel that there is not a clear process for making decisions.*

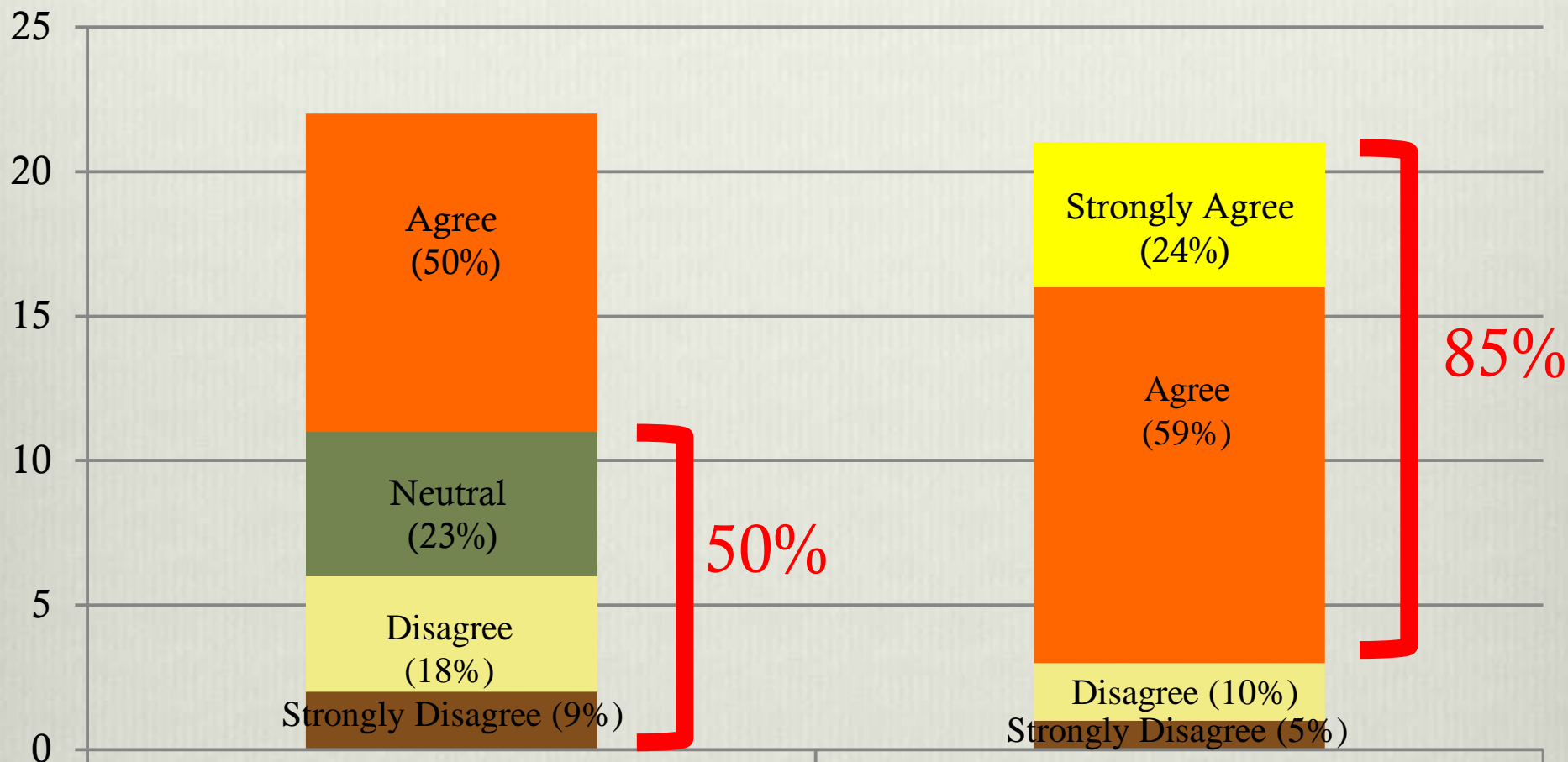


# Trust & Operating Principles:

*There is a high degree of respect between the members of the collaborative, but a medium to low level of trust.*



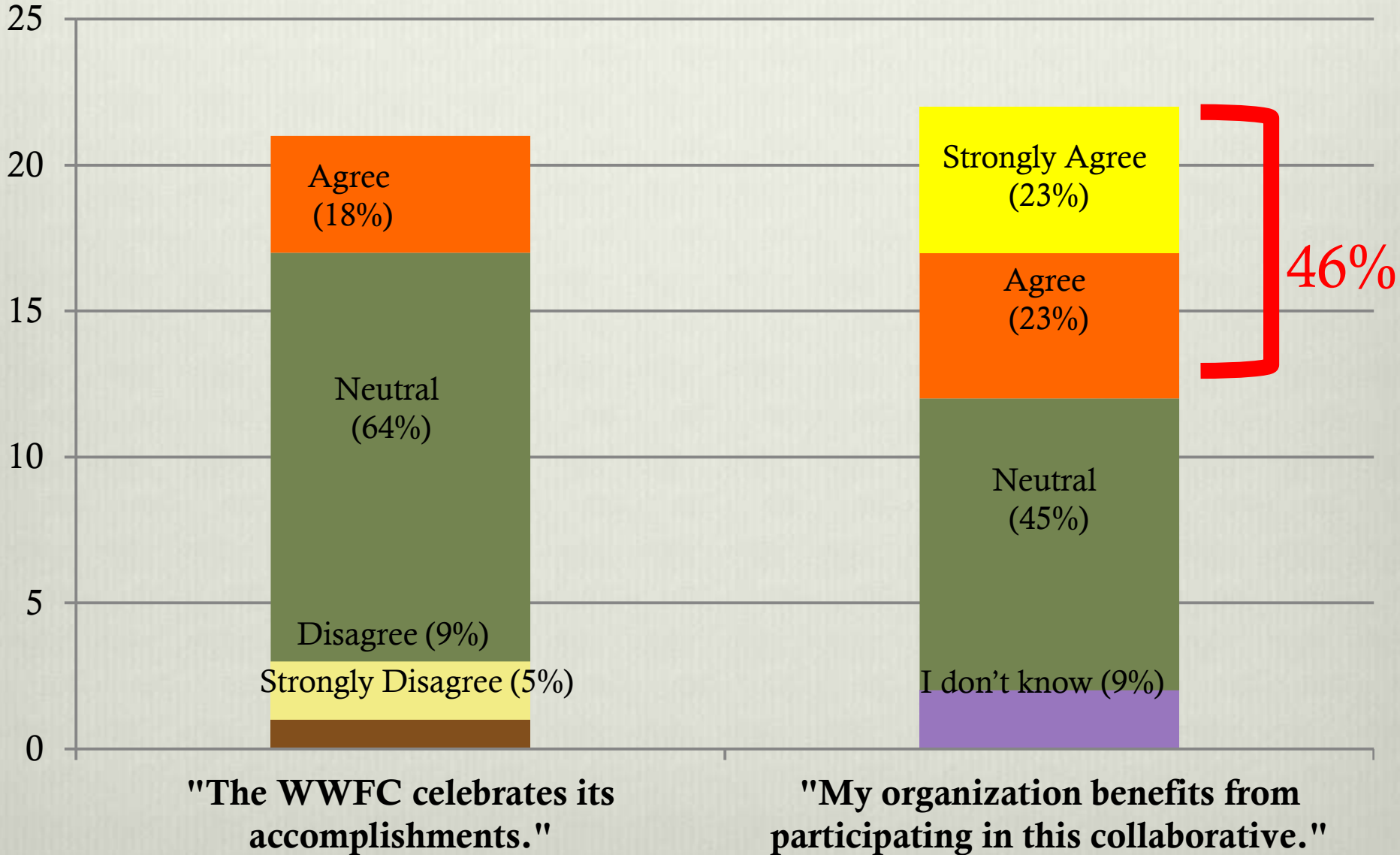
**Communication:** *While most agree communication has improved since its formation, many feel members may not be candidly communicating.*



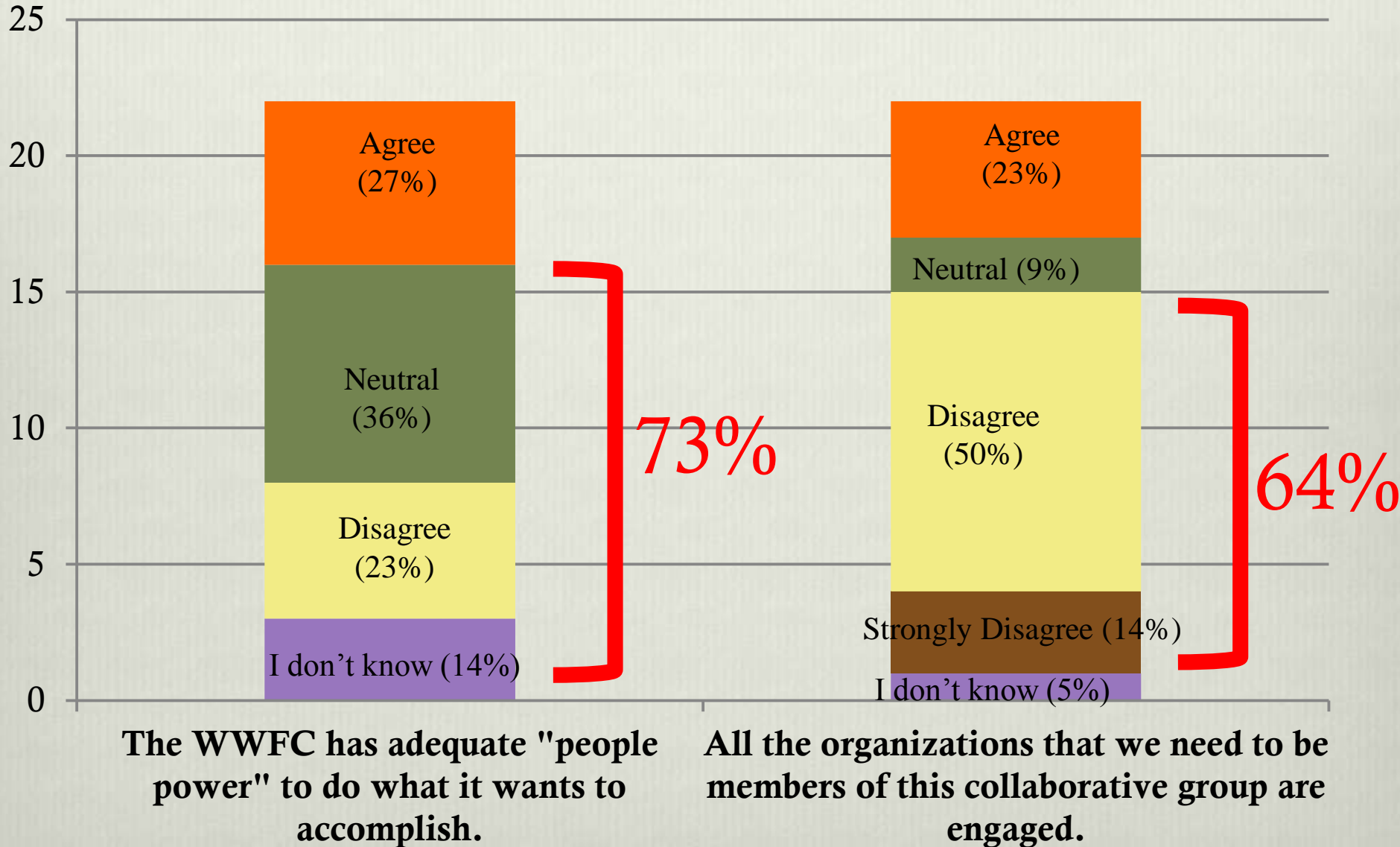
**People in this group communicate openly with one another.**

**Participating in the WWFC has increased my understanding of other members' perspectives and interests.**

# Successes and Accomplishments: *Many believe the WWFC should celebrate both minor and major accomplishments more often, and could benefit from defining what success means.*

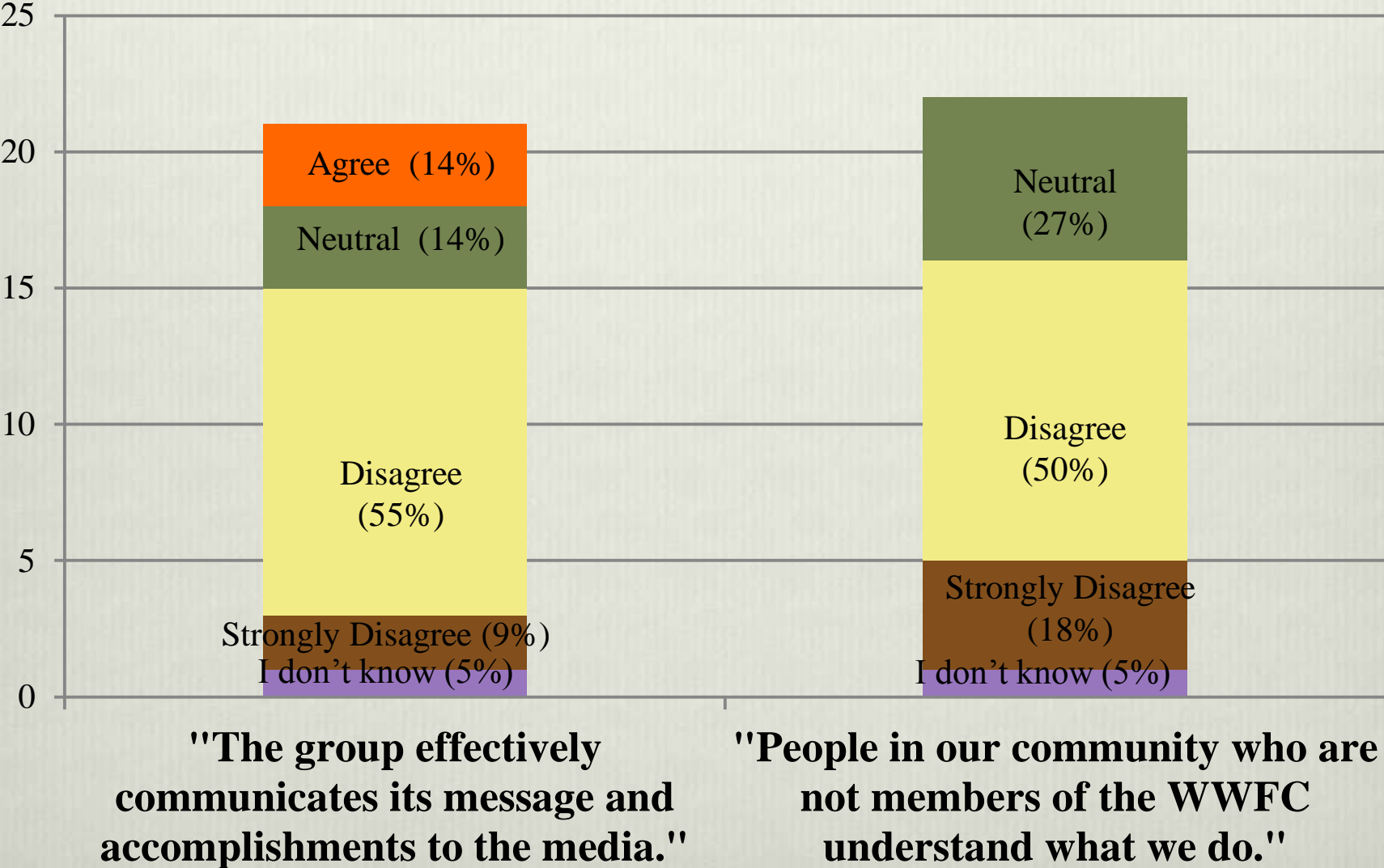


# Representation & Participation: *Most believe the right people are at the table, but think the WWFC could benefit from more active and diverse participation.*



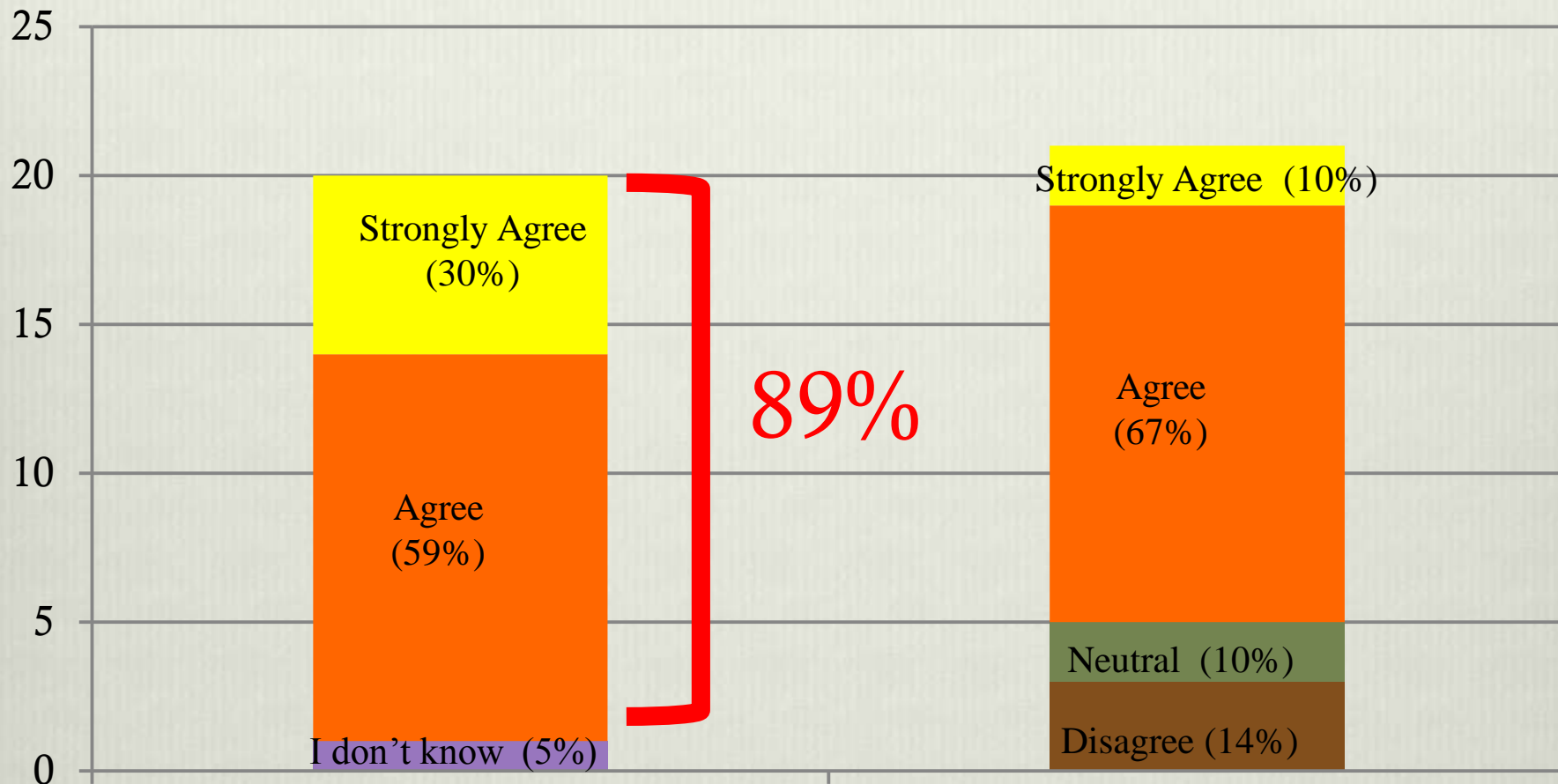


# Relationship with General Public: *The group could benefit from a discussion about how to engage the general public in Northeast Oregon.*



# Relationship with the Forest Service:

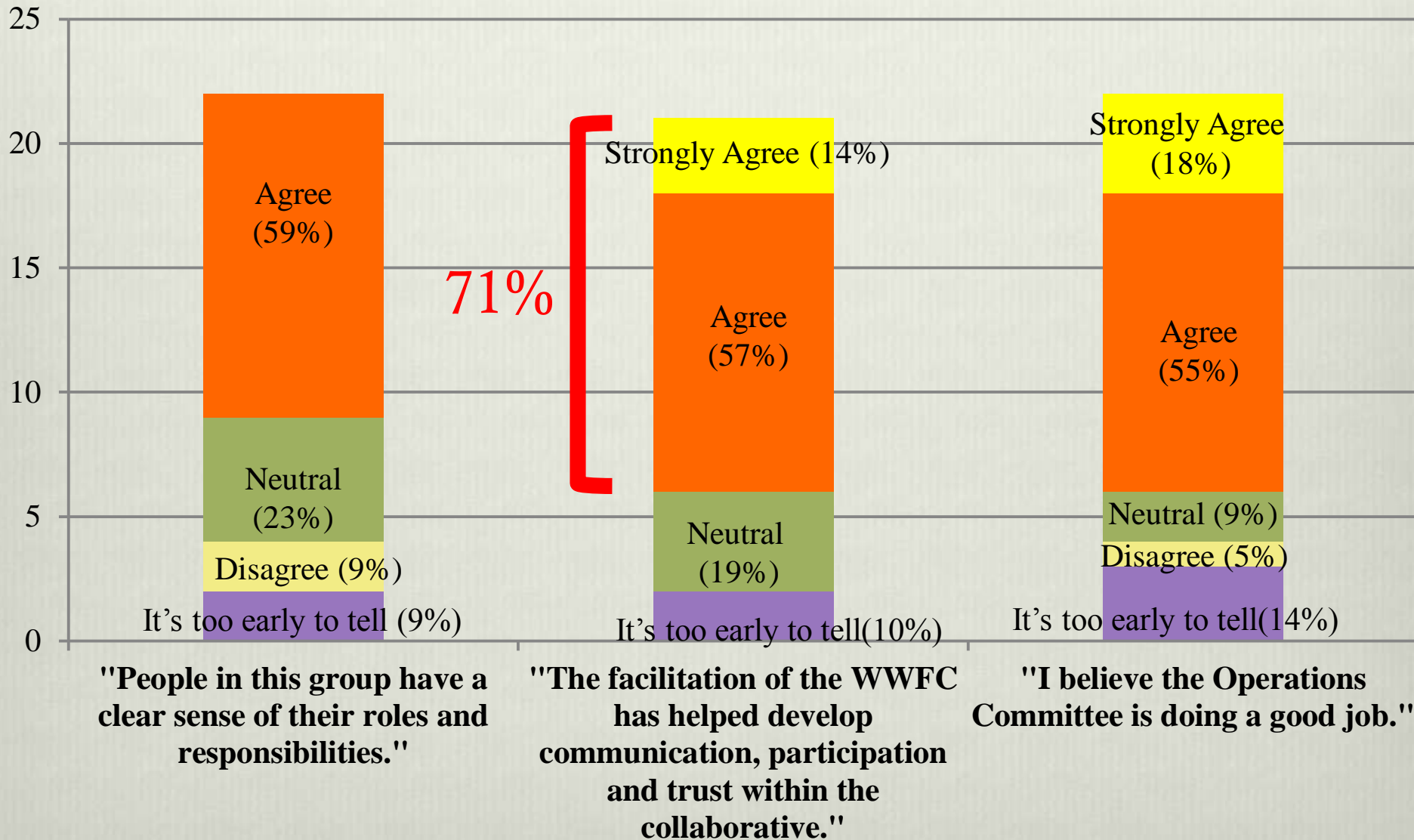
*The group feels it has a strong relationship with the Forest Service, and encourage the Forest Service to be as candid and open as they can.*



**"I can provide open, candid feedback to the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest staff."**

**"I believe the Wallowa-Whitman National Forest staff provides open, candid feedback to the collaborative members."**

# Organizational Structure: *Most agree the WWFC's organizational structure is robust and working effectively, but could benefit from added transparency.*



# Recommendations:

- ❖ **Recommendation #1**: Work on a project from beginning to end.
- ❖ **Recommendation #2**: Define success and celebrate accomplishments.
- ❖ **Recommendation #3**: Revisit Operating Principles and seek outside assistance to help group define “collaboration” and “communication.”
- ❖ **Recommendation #4**: To begin developing ZOA’s the WWFC needs to understand and trust the science and data it is using.
- ❖ **Recommendation #5**: Continue open, candid communication with Forest Service.
- ❖ **Recommendation #6**: Conversation about how to tell the WWFC’s story and how to prioritize outreach to general public.
- ❖ **Recommendation #7**: Increase internal accountability and transparency.

# Summary and next steps...

- ❖ Working on a landscape larger and more complex than any other collaborative in the state
- ❖ Collective visioning process for Wallowa, Baker and Union counties
- ❖ Softening hard lines on individual issues



# Any questions?





# Contact Information

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*Thank you!*