



**Seattle Town Hall**  
**Tuesday, November 18, 2014**

# **Why Farmers and Environmentalists Need Each Other**

**Don Stuart**  
**[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)**



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

**A Paradox for Farmers**

# A Paradox – For Farmers

- Incentives could reduce need for regulation
- Deny problems
- Incentives underfunded
- Compromised effectiveness
- Problems worsen
- Drumbeat for regulation grows

**Don Stuart**  
[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

**A Paradox for Environmentalists**

# A Paradox – For Environmentalists

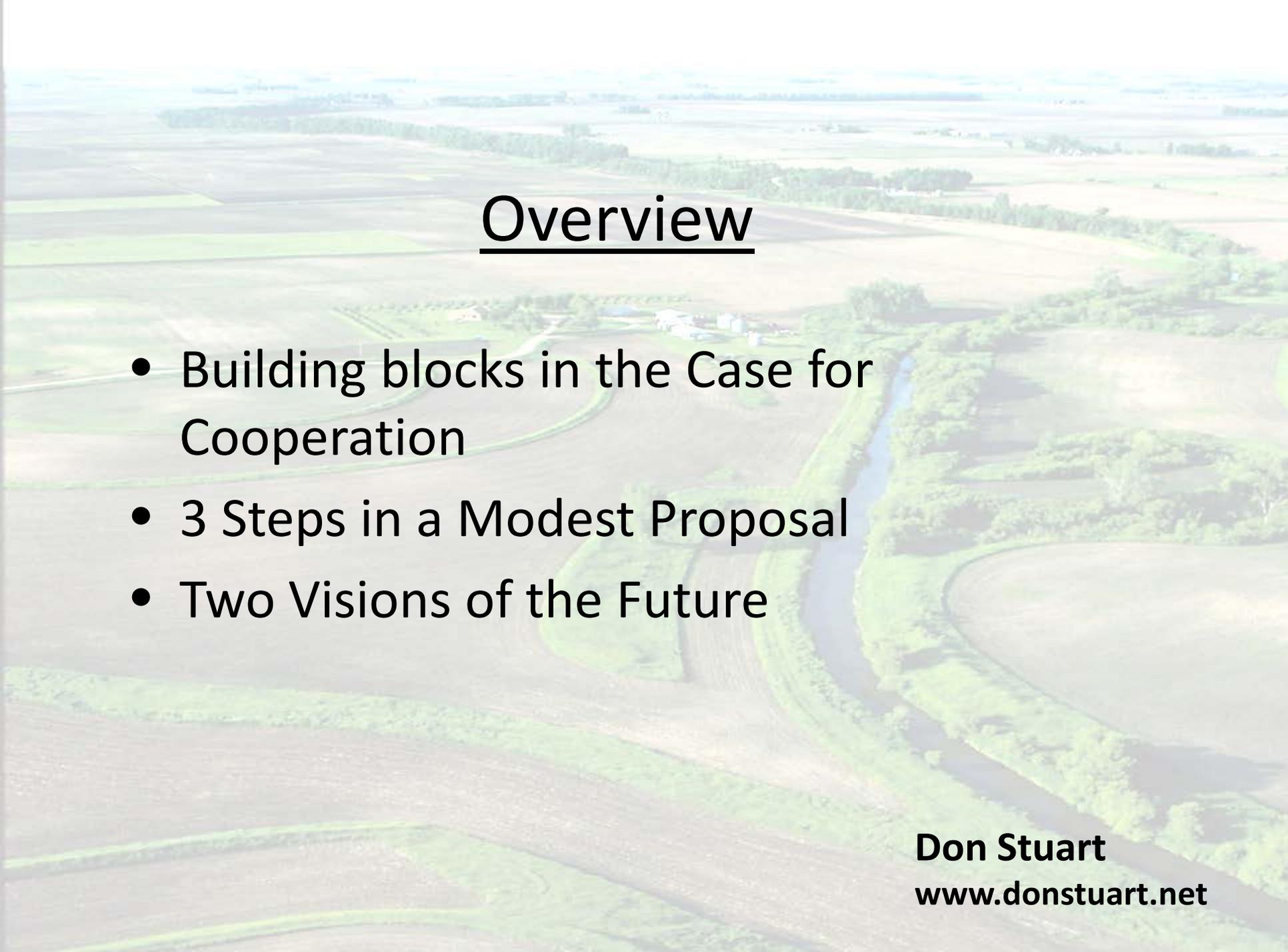
- Regulations can accelerate farm loss
  - Harmful development
  - Lost mitigation and lift
- Cannot acknowledge alternative solutions
- Regulations victim of stalemate
- Problems worsen

**Don Stuart**  
[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

Overview

An aerial photograph of a rural landscape. A winding river flows through the center, bordered by lush green trees. The surrounding area is a patchwork of agricultural fields in various shades of green and brown. In the middle ground, a small farmstead with several buildings and silos is visible. The background shows a vast, flat expanse of land under a clear sky.

# Overview

- Building blocks in the Case for Cooperation
- 3 Steps in a Modest Proposal
- Two Visions of the Future



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

**An Inevitable Relationship**

The Case for Cooperation:

# An Inevitable Farmer- Environmental Relationship

- 2 million farms in U.S.
- 50% of U.S. land base in agriculture
- Farms use 80% of nation's fresh water
- Profound impacts on the environment

Will they fight or will they cooperate?

**Don Stuart**

[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)



## Ag's Environmental Risks

Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS



The Case for Cooperation:

# Agriculture's Environmental Risks

- **Water Quality:**
  - Runoff of nutrients, pesticides, and sediment
- **Air Quality:**
  - Climate impacts from fertilizers & livestock methane
- **Wildlife Habitat:**
  - Displaced wildlife, blocked migration, fish habitat
- **Human Health:**
  - E-coli, pesticides

**Don Stuart**

[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

**Farms Vulnerable to Regulation**

The Case for Cooperation:

# Farm Vulnerability to Regulation

- Ag can be regulated
  - Farm practice legislation
- Unique landscapes, crops, and circumstances
- Small, family businesses
- Multinational food conglomerates
- Unforgiving Global marketplace



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

**Lost Farms – Degraded Environment**

The Case for Cooperation:

# When Farms Disappear: Degraded Environment

- Urban water pollution
- Diminished plant uptake of surface water pollutants
- Greenhouse gasses from lost vegetative cover and increased transportation
- Lost aquifer recharge
- Increased flooding
- Lost wildlife habitat

**Don Stuart**

[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

**Lost Farms – Mitigation & Lift**

The Case for Cooperation:

# When Farms Disappear: Lost Opportunities for Mitigation and Lift

- Water quality
  - Crop rotation, contour farming, buffer strips, cover crops
- Greenhouse gas offsets
  - No till, precision ag, anaerobic digesters, vegetation of uncultivated areas
- Fish & wildlife habitat
  - Buffers & wetlands in uncultivated areas, fence line openings, wildlife cover crops
  - Swans & dairies

**Don Stuart**  
[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

**Array of Solutions**

The Case for Cooperation:

# An Impressive Array of Solutions

- Practice rules
- Zoning
- Conservation Incentives
- Conservation Economics
- Environmental Markets
- Consumer Marketplace
- Purchase Dev. Rights
- Economic Viability

**Two Categories** - Voluntary - Involuntary



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

**Role of Fairness**

The Case for Cooperation:

# The Role of Fairness

- Nobody likes to be a patsy
- Whatever we do will cost someone something
- Incentives place burden on public
- Regulation places burden on regulated industry
- Need for reasoned allocation of burden of the fix
- Sense of fairness essential to securing political support for any solution
- Lake WA Salmon habitat example

**Don Stuart**

[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

**Use Every Possible Tool**

The Case for Cooperation:  
**Use Every Possible Tool**

- Need all for fairness:
  - Some better for one group – some for another
- Big problem - ignoring some solutions, increases burdens on the rest
- Try everything to see what works
- Need all to get support for any



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

What is possible with cooperation

# What is Possible with Cooperation

- An environment-friendly agriculture industry would be hugely helpful for the environment
  - Increased farmer conservation
  - Address critical issues strategically
  - Address sprawl, climate, water quality, aquifer recharge
- A farm-friendly environmental community would be hugely helpful for agriculture
  - Support incentives and environmental markets
  - Limit regulatory threat
  - Enhanced public support for ag.

**Don Stuart**

[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

**Solutions: Step 1 – Common Ground**

## 3 steps in a Modest Proposal:

# Step 1 - Identify Common Ground

- How to fairly allocate responsibility
- Improving the effectiveness of incentives
- Funding PDR programs
- Creating markets for farm-environmental services
- Research environmental benefits of farms
- Increasing demand for locally grown food
- Community education about agriculture

**Don Stuart**

**Solutions: Ste** [www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)



Photo courtesy of Martha Jordan

**Solutions Step 2 - Interactions**

3 steps in a Modest Proposal:

## Step 2 - Stimulate Interactions

- Leaders in farm, environmental, non-profit groups and agencies step forward to actively promote:
  - Exchanges of speakers
  - Newsletter article exchange
  - Joint public presentations of pro and con
  - Joint submissions to media
  - Joint use of membership lists
  - Trade show booth exchanges
  - Joint public educational tours
  - Farm-environmental leader one-on-ones
  - Maryhill Museum example

**Don Stuart**

**[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)**



Photo courtesy of Marian Ryan

**Solutions Step 3 – Public Commitment**

3 steps in a Modest Proposal:

## Step 3 - Public Commitment to Collaborative Forums

- Public agencies and officials support collaborative outcomes on key issues:
  - Commitment by government to fund and support programs on which agreement can be reached
  - Financial and other support for the process through to conclusion
  - Establish clear purposes and goals
  - Enlist commitments by participants

**Don Stuart**  
[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)

## Two Visions of the Future:

### Vision One:

# Farms and the Environment are Dying

## The perspective:

- Farms are a temporary or tolerated land use awaiting future development.
- The environment is a problem to leave for our children.

## Two Visions of the Future:

# **Vision 1 – Farms and the Environment are Dying**

### The consequences:

- Farmers & Environmentalist continue to fight
- Political stalemate continues
- No funding for incentives—no action on regulation
- Land use controls ineffective—no funding for PDR
- Cities sprawl
- The environment degrades

**Don Stuart**

[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)

**COMMERCIAL ZONING**  
**SHOPPING CENTER**  
**DEVELOPMENT ON**  
**THIS SITE**



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

## Two Visions of the Future:

### Vision Two:

# Farms and the Environment are Sustaining

## The perspective:

- Both farms and the environment must flourish.
- Each must mutually reinforce the other if either is to succeed

**Don Stuart**

[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)

## Two Visions of the Future:

### Vision Two:

# **Farms and the Environment are Sustaining**

## The consequences:

- Farmers & Environmentalists cooperate
- Environmental burdens allocated fairly
- Their coalition acquires immense political clout
- Public supports both farms and the environment
- Sprawl controlled, the environment improves
- Agriculture is beloved as a model for a green, responsible industry

**Don Stuart**

[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)



Photo courtesy of USDA/NRCS

# Contact information

Don Stuart

Stuart Consulting

[www.donstuart.net](http://www.donstuart.net)

[dondstuart@gmail.com](mailto:dondstuart@gmail.com)

Now Available from Washington State  
University Press and other booksellers:

**Barnyards and Birkenstocks: Why**  
**Farmers and Environmentalists Need**  
**Each Other** by Don Stuart.

