

Notes from the Breakout Session, “Maturing: Outreach to Stakeholders and Planning Your Regional Conservation Effort”

Moderators: Nancy Patch and Charlie Hancock with the Cold Hollow to Canada initiative

Notes prepared by Jeb Stevens

Participants gathered to discuss challenges and tips for maturing RCPs. Much of the time was spent on introductions of RCPs and their challenges; the rest on addressing those challenges.

Introductions:

- Cold Hollow to Canada
 - Maturing organization
 - 3 focus areas: Outreach and education (nexus of information), citizen science program, conservation and planning for wildlife habitat and timber management
 - What’s next: Cross boundary management, forest management on landscape scale
- Fairfield County Regional Conservation Partnership
 - Urban setting
 - Formed steering committee, devising strategic action plan
 - USFS grant outreach
 - Crossing state boundary into Westchester Co NY
 - Mostly volunteer staff
 - “Uninvolved” land owners, parcelization
 - Mapping for conservation
- Mass-Vermont Woodlands Partnership
 - NEFA grant
 - Three pronged approach: new land owner outreach, intergenerational outreach, Foresters for Birds workshops
 - Targeted mailings using TELE approach, targeting ‘woodland retreat’ owners, response not what they hoped
- West Suburban Conservation Council
 - Engagement on stewardship issues
 - Online info platform
- Kestrel Land Trust/Forever Farmland Initiative
 - Increase farmland in CT River valley
- Monadnock Conservancy, Quabbin to Cardigan Partnership
 - Outreach to woodland retreat owners. Response not what they hoped.
 - More staff capacity wanted
 - Social media for outreach
- N.E.F.F.
 - Also MassConn- New engagement strategies
 - USFS grant for new engagement strategies for forest management
- North Atlantic Landscape Conservation Cooperative
 - 13-state scale
 - Partnership between 30 government agencies, NGOs
 - Development of landscape scale conservation science
 - Funding science projects. Putting science in hands of practitioners and RCPs
- Forever Farmland Initiative
 - Goal: Increase pace/quantity of farmland in CT River Valley
 - 6 primary land trust partnerships
 - Awareness, outreach to land owners & municipalities, helping them to achieve goals. Use website to communicate issues

Discussion Outline:

Introduce yourself:

- Name
- Organization
- Name of RCP
- What’s next for your partnership?

Discussion on Biggest Challenges, Needs, and Opportunities

- What is the number one challenge and or need your partnership has faced or is facing?
- What strategy has been particularly effective in your efforts?
- What are the most compelling opportunities for RCPs in this group?

- More of a strategic regional farmland conservation planning vision for future.
[moved to abbreviated format for introductions at this point]

- Androscoggin River Watershed Council, Mahoosuc Initiative
 - Conservation acres
- N.E.W.T.
 - Wildlands and Woodlands mosaic
- Salmon Falls Watershed Collaborative
- Lower Connecticut River and Coastal Region Land Trust Exchange
 - Collaborative planning
- Mass-Conn Sustainable Forest Partnership
 - Forest Legacy
- 12 Rivers Conservation Collaborative
 - Regional plan
- Sweetwater Trust
 - 65,000 acres Maine
 - Invasive plants management
 - Trail development
- Kennebec Woodland Partnership
 - Engaging landowners
 - Local Wood
- Rensselaer Plateau Alliance
 - Regional conservation plan/study
 - Community buy-in



Discussion on Issues and Challenges:

- RCP has done a strategic vision, tried some outreach, how do you move on from that?
- How do you teach and convince people that their landscape is under threat?
 - Connect conservation values and human health
 - Do not deliberate too much internally, just get out there and talk to the public
- How do you increase staff/increase staffing time? How do you increase capacity?
- How can funding be sustained/increased?
 - Funder diversity, connect to things like public health, etc.
- How do you ensure that all partnership members get something out of the partnership?
 - Regular meetings to keep people engaged in the process as a solution
- Challenge: To achieve balance between partnership landscape goals and individual local land trust goals
- Challenge: Partnerships that protect areas with small parcels easily overlooked in the context of a general focus on protecting large wilderness areas
 - Diversity of land base between RCPs
 - Acknowledge balance between large tracts and urban conservation
- Ensuring RCP work has value to each partner
 - Outcomes
 - All objectives represented
- Importance of conservation planning
 - To the people
 - Putting it into action > As a path to funding, targeting your sources
- Strategic vision
 - As definition for funders: What? Why?
- Funder diversity based on location
 - Strengths
 - Stakeholders
- Challenge: How can you get better response from land owners targeted for Woods Forum type events/TELE approach?