

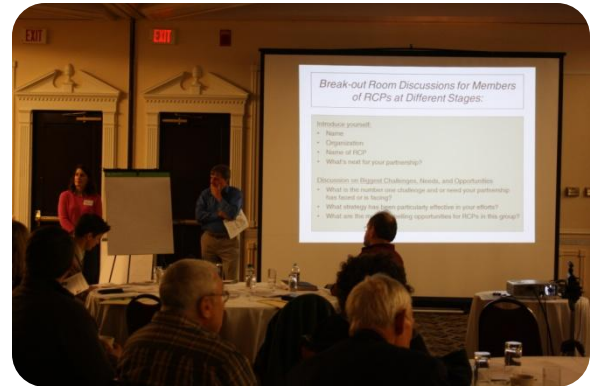
Notes from the “Conserving: Moving Forward with a Coordinated or Collaborative Land Protection Effort” Breakout Session

Moderators: Karen Young and Paul Dest with Mt. Agamenticus to the Sea Initiative

Notes prepared by Sarah Ganong

Introductions:

- **Mount Agamenticus to the Sea (MtA2C)** six towns in southern Maine, very focused on municipal outreach/planning. Paul Dest, Karen Young, Tin Smith, Keith Fletcher
- **Chateaugay-Notown Conservation Project** longstanding multi-partner initiatives. Siobhan Smith
- **Friends of the Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge** in the Connecticut River Watershed, protected over 2,000 in the last three years. Covers all 7.2 million acres.
- **Great Bay Resource Protection Partnership** Dea Brickner-Wood
- **High Peaks Initiative** Lloyd Grisham, Paul Mitchell. Focused on salmon restoration and trail protection and preservation.
- **Litchfield Hills Greenprint Collaborative**, northwest Connecticut, Tim Abbott, covers 28 towns and 28 land trusts. Sub-regional RCPs within the Greenprint seem to be where they're most effective and what they're moving towards
- **Mahoosuc Initiative** Jim Mitchell, Wolf Tone. Collaborative with three-four large organizations and works well with municipal groups in particular.
- **North Quabbin Regional Landscape Partnership** Organize and help facilitate landscape-scale projects, provide technical assistance and grant assistance to municipalities, and landowner outreach. Jay Rasku, Matthias Nevins, Brian Hall, Sarah Wells, David Graham Wolf
- **Orange County Headwaters Project** Steve Long, based in Vermont, partner with land trusts, The Conservation Fund, and Redstart Forestry (consulting foresters)
- **Quabbin to Cardigan Partnership** Chris Wells, coalition of 20+ organizations in NH and MA. Developed a conservation plan for the region, run a small grants program for transaction cost to help get protection done on targeted acres. New small grants program aimed at increasing hiking trails. Primarily land trusts.
- **West Suburban Conservation Council** Don McIver, Nick Olson, lots of volunteer land trusts. Biggest challenge is development pressure. Run many workshops aimed at educating landowners to create easements. Working with Sudbury Valley Trustees, trying to conserve areas with development pressure between Boston, Worcester, Lowell. Smaller groups have sprung up, so they're focused as the organizer but not doing much on-the-ground work
- **Land for Good** Farmland access, tenure, transfer, Jim Hafner.
- **Wild and Scenic Rivers** with the National Park Service, groups trying to make connections and make the Blueway relevant and how to build partnerships
- **Trust for Public Land** Clem Clay, works on the Blueway and builds around watersheds to make conservation happen



- **Forever Farmland** in Massachusetts, unique because they're trying to connect to larger food systems issues to make a healthy food system on a local level
- **Staying Connected** Phil Huffman, big regional conservation partnership, working to build out of scientific vision of Two Countries One Forest to sustain landscape connections across northern Appalachians for people and animals.
- **Community Forest Collaborative** Marci Lyman, interested in role of community forests as large landscape conservation strategy and to build wealth in rural communities
- **New England Forestry Foundation** Steven Johnson, helps regional partnerships jump from maturing to conserving, focused on watershed conservation, works with public water suppliers to raise money

Challenges these RCPs face

- Not enough money
- Not all partners remain active
- They're no longer new and exciting, so funders want more than success. They're often looking for the next big thing, so how can we make ourselves true to our principles but still be "new" and exciting?
- Maintaining/sustaining operational support past a capital campaign
- Building capacity to accomplish social mission without adding staff
- Implementing new mission components
- Respecting individuality of members but still achieving larger collaborative projects
- How do conservation and food organizations bridge the gap between people who farm (pollute the water) and conserve (steal land from farming)?
- Bridging interests/developing new partnerships between groups that are seemingly at odds with their missions
- When you combine organizations to work on single larger mission, how do the interests of the smaller organizations play a role? How do they/can they change what they do to reach bigger goals?
- Building corporate relationships—what's their role beyond CSR and gift-giving?
- Different conservation projects on the same land—watershed and wind power source
- How do you bring more diversity into partnerships to reach a broader cross-section of community needs?
- How do you face conservation issues when you look at climate projections? Balancing attempts to slow climate change vs. adapting to climate change that's definitely going to happen.
- Dealing with future societal changes, including climate migration
- Decision makers must understand addressing conservation addresses climate change
- How much land needs to be set aside for future food production?
- How do you know if it's better to make more RCPs or combine the ones that exist? What's the ideal scale for an RCP? It seems like too much overlap can be bad.
- Not a lot of protection/assistance from government programs, but we want our actions to be consistent with what we're doing (like the Highway bill, the third largest Congressional appropriation)

Placed-based setting matters to local stakeholders, so we need to define the "box of locality" and make people interested, while still working across boundaries. We're local for a reason, so bring everyone in.