

What Does Regional Resilience Look Like?

Session 3D – Ballroom D
2017 RCP Network Gathering

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Request to participants to put on an index card:

Is your RCP (or are you) working on Climate Resiliency or Adaptation?

If yes – How?

If no – Why not?

If not yet – What's in the way?

What and why

Why do we need to be resilient?

What do we mean by resiliency?

What does it look like?

Discussion notes

- Definition of resiliency
 - Ability to bounce back
 - Ability to bounce forward
 - Ability to maintain structure and functionality despite disturbance
- Why is it important?
 - TG - More rain, more drought
 - Impacts – invasive species, algae blooms, ... other secondary impacts not talked about up front
 - Decoupling of seasonal changes and feeding patterns
 - Unsustainability of ski industry throughout New England
 - SC - Comment from police chief - more people out at night when cool – nothing for them to do → increase in crime
 - Heat index gone up – doesn't cool down at night
 - Timber harvests more difficult to get done because of warmer weather- too muddy
 - Stopped doing forestry in winter – now do in summer and count on drought
 - More frost heaves
- Interconnection between RCPs and smart growth
 - Regional climate adaptation groups forming in similar areas – last year's topic
- What does regional resiliency look like – either how groups work together or other?
What's going to take things to the next level?
 - Natural resource protection zoning
 - New York City (NYC) - Less development along coast/wetland buffers, re-greening

- NYC harbor adaptation--under water – replenishing oyster beds – buffers, food systems
- More civics related activities/workshops/dialogues – social systems need resiliency when things start collapsing
- Rhode Island – focus has been on coastal, ignoring forests – trying to get forests in to the dialogue, they mitigate/prevent flooding
- Conserve financing – increased in local ballot measures
- Large landscape connectivity for wildlife – terrestrial and aquatic
- Dialogue, sharing best practices among networks/towns – communication channels open for when disasters happen but not waiting until then
- How decisions made – reactive responses to catastrophes blow up existing funded programs – need to invent proactive planning strategies for funding
- Planning ahead –shorter term solutions for long term problems – greater than 30 years
- Sprawl – look at drivers/pushers – income related, people can't afford to live in cities – watch out for sprawl
- Think about changes in demographics/communities due to sea level rise
- Infrastructure – dams, etc., built to future standards
- Global scale – mass migrations, refugees (current issues)
- Regional public transportation networks
- Need to incorporate into the ethical culture – need to develop will in the community
- Lots of data available but not necessarily useful. Needs to be made understandable to non-science types.
- Sustainable development - plan for the community you want to have in the future

What's working – Need economic, social, and environmental resilience

- Handout with things you can do to improve community resilience
- Rhode Island – there was a roadmap but the Tea Party successfully stopped some of it – SC has run into situations where local planning commission push back – say it is un-American to tell people what to do with their land
- TG– have data, have maps, have information, but it's not being used. Don't have the knowledge local people need to bring to the table to make it work
- Feels like gap between people making decisions and people doing land conservation
- Local landowners, activists in their communities who have knowledge – garden clubs, local boards, conservation boards. Expanding partners – need to look at those on the ground. Science teachers at local schools, for example.
- One partnership has map, trying to figure out how to communicate with community. Looking at locals telling the story.
- Cluster development, school projects – start out on the right track but budgets typically get cut. People say they agree but don't show up at meetings to support it. Nobody

making money because people not asking for it. Small incremental things may feel significant but do add up. Needs general education – why this is important.

- Example - Rain garden – hard to sell, nobody to maintain, then it looks bad, don't get support for more

Moving Forward - What is the next step and what is the barrier preventing you from getting there?

- Funding
- Political
- public understanding
- time/capacity
- all of the above

Specific actions – three levels:

- Small town ideas
- Large watershed/state wide
- Very Large – New England region

Discussion comments:

- Colleges/universities – struggling to come up with strategies. Want a template to start with.
- Good to start small, but large landscape problems can't be solved at small level. Mass state – looking at climate vulnerabilities across the state. Community resilience building workshops – following model from TNC.
- Conservation is happening across New England states. Every state has a hazard mitigation plan.
- Need to get people together to learn together. Need to educate people.
- Build robust communication system on many levels. Fact-based ways for adults and fun-based for kids.
- Get kids involved
- Networks – way to communicate better with peers, also out with community
- Climate resilience toolkit with activities, PowerPoint, etc. TG - There are many that already exist. RAINE tool. TNC. More in handout.
- Need to disseminate the tools and help implement them. Need help implementing plans after they are developed.
- Need more person to person communication, make part of daily conversations.
- Problem is so big, hard for people to understand. They tune out. Need specific action plans that break down by role for different organizations, i.e., planning boards. Need a simple way to get people to the info/action plans they need, like a simple questionnaire.
- Individual landowners – keep it local with regional perspective
- RCP website – would be good to have a link to climate resources