

Survey Questions:

Session 1: Do you have any ideas you would like to share about how a partnership with a water utility could help advance your local conservation goals?

→ Several people indicated that they have just been made aware of the opportunity to work with a water utility to advance conservation and are excited to learn more.

→ Utilities can offer great technical resources such as water quality monitoring, mapping, and outreach and education programming - in addition to the potential for funding for conservation and assistance from their staff.

→ A lot of interest in partnering with water utilities to develop green infrastructure projects to address nutrient runoff through; pay for success models, selling compliance opportunities, upstream conservation BMPs and voluntary but incentivized municipal participation in MS4-type watershed or multiple-watershed regional utility.

Session 2: What do you think is the best opportunity for your organization to capture financing for natural climate solutions?

→ Collaborations are key. Responses highlight the need to foster new collaborations and partnerships in order to do this work. Partnerships with municipalities, state agencies, land trusts, and the private sector were mentioned. Many respondents are primed for NCS projects and looking for partners.

-Collaborate with other conservation/environmental organizations to apply for governmental and foundation financing and grants.

-I work for a state agency and am primarily interested in how to support municipal and land trust partners with land conservation efforts. It's good to hear that new programs are emerging that will target smaller properties since we just don't have many opportunities currently to participate in C markets. There's growing municipal interest in conservation finance options and I'd like to know more about how this might fit into their options.

-We have prioritized and cataloged unprotected forest parcels regionally - and as a collaborative know both who owns those parcels and the land trusts and local people who have access to those landowners. We are an important connector of landowners to public and private efforts providing financing for NCS, as well as providing local land trust holders if lands are protected.

Also, following on decades of increasingly-strategic land protection, we are also the owners of many forested parcels that are already primed for management consistent with carbon science. We are low-hanging fruit for working with public and private ventures.

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-As mostly small organizations, we are better situated as partners and providers of the "raw ingredients" than to be orchestrating large projects ourselves—we need introductions to trusted partners who can take the lead.

→ Continued development of carbon markets to meet New England's needs - Opportunities to aggregate small landowners for carbon projects, the viability of carbon credit on working lands, city forest credits, incentives that value mass timber for its carbon benefits, expand financing for conserving salt marshes/ wetlands/ riparian forests and/or managing practices of adjacent lands - to maximize carbon storage potential of current or future salt marshes.

→ Addressing community concerns e.g. flooding, water quality, quality of life.

Session 3: Who is missing from this healthy places, healthy people conversation?

→ Several attendees felt the session was comprehensive.

→ More housing, transportation voices, people who live in these places we're talking about, resource providers who work directly with vulnerable communities (counselors, food access advocates, meals for wheels drivers, economic development agencies, refugee and immigrant communities, educators/schools (COVID opened opportunities for a broader discussion around outdoor classrooms/place-based curriculum), community development finance institutions, etc.) people who have first-hand knowledge of what barriers and opportunities are.

→ Environmental regulators who are involved with managing nonpoint source pollutants affecting public health and policy. A Land practitioner to tie it all together.

→ Insurance industry (we had a health insurance representative present, however)

Overarching Questions:

1. What did you learn today that you're most excited to share with your colleagues?

→ A lot of excitement around the cross-sector sharing and coordination/ growing interest in integrated (environment, social/equity) investment projects. New uncharted territory!

→ Opportunities for collaboration with water utilities

→ Overview of NCS

→ Resilient Bridgeport case study

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→ TNC Family Forest Program

→ New financing strategies

2. How likely would you be to participate in more frequent Conservation Finance Roundtables in the future?

→ All 46 responses were “likely” or “very likely.”

Polls:

1. What type of organization do you work for?

→ The majority work for land trusts followed by NGOs.

2. Clean Water Investments:

How likely is your organization to pursue water utility partnerships?

→ 39% already doing it, 26% eager to try, 36% not sure how to get started

→ Potential to expand this model into our networks and development of toolkits and trainings.

3. Natural Climate Solutions:

Is your organization expected to complete a carbon or other natural climate solution project within the next year?

→ 20% already have, 35% are working on one now, 37% are considering it, but have not started, 6% considered it and decided it wasn't for us, 8% say what?

3. Healthy People & Communities:

Does your work address and leverage the connections between conservation, communities, and healthy people?

→ 77% Yes, our work directly supports healthy people and places, 20% not really, but we are actively looking for ways to integrate these ideas in our work, 3% would like to, but we aren't sure where to start.

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→ Reach out to the attendees and discuss the work that they are doing, a high percentage of the attendees indicated that their work supports healthy people and places - what can we learn from them?