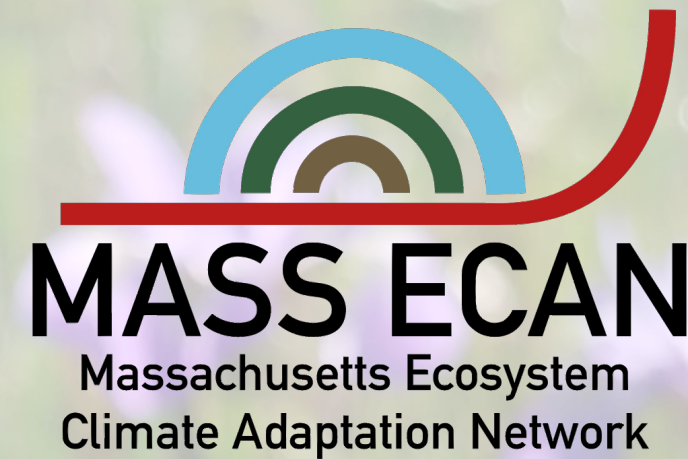


PROMOTING CLIMATE ADAPTATION AND WATERSHED-SCALE COLLABORATION IN MASSACHUSETTS

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Introduction

As climate change becomes a growing concern, the need for projects that help ecosystems adapt to a changing climate has increased immensely. Such adaptation projects require collaboration across different disciplines and communities to determine the best actions to take. Our project worked to promote climate adaptation and watershed-scale climate collaboration in an existing network for climate practitioners.



Background

- The Massachusetts Ecosystem Climate Adaptation Network (Mass ECAN) is a community of practice of climate adaptation practitioners and researchers who are interested in ecosystems and natural resource conservation
- It was started in 2017 as a way to connect people working to enhance the adaptation field in the state
- Mass ECAN aims to advance the climate adaptation field in our state by building community, sharing knowledge, and fostering collaboration

Activities/Projects

- **Draft monthly newsletter**
 - A way to share news about the field including recent reports, relevant job and funding opportunities, special projects and events, and member spotlights
- **Plan annual fall events series**
 - This year, Mass ECAN is hosting several field trips to climate adaptation sites around the state as well as a virtual networking event and workshop
- **Research MA-based climate professionals**
 - Recruit new members to join Mass ECAN to grow the network and increase knowledge sharing and collaboration

Key Findings/Outcomes

- Collaborative work is critical when working to solve complex problems like climate change
- It is essential that the climate adaptation field prioritize network building
- The complicated nature of climate change makes working with people from different communities and with different expertise very beneficial
- Addressing climate change with a watershed-scale approach allows a vast problem to be brought down to a manageable size, while still maintaining a large enough scale to be actionable

Watershed-Scale Climate Collaboration

One project included producing an information sheet on the importance of watershed-scale climate collaboration. I worked with the Mass ECAN-affiliated Climate Communications and Slow the Flow work groups to create this one-page output. We drafted content and compiled information and photos in order to produce an engaging and informational product to make the case for watershed-scale climate collaboration.



Climate change is an urgent crisis that requires swift coordinated action. With no time to reinvent the wheel for each specific location and situation, it is important to collaborate to plan for climate adaptation at a broader, yet still manageable, scale. Here in Massachusetts, we are seeing the impacts of climate change on all systems, with impacts related to water, such as floods and droughts, particularly visible. To address these impacts at an appropriate scale, Watershed-Scale Climate Collaboratives have been growing in regions across the state. These Watershed-Scale Climate Collaboratives are groups of organizations and individuals from across municipal boundaries that tackle climate adaptation and resilience at the watershed level. This watershed-scale collaborative approach can effectively and efficiently get in front of climate change impacts.

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Background photo credit: Carolyn Gorss