

ACES 2018 Town Hall (60-90 minutes)
December 2018 | Washington, D.C.

Title: Incorporating Ecosystem Services through Nature-Based Solutions: Diverse Perspectives from the Business World

Description:

This Town Hall session will focus on discussing early successes in nature-based solutions, particularly natural infrastructure and green infrastructure, in the private sector. We will discuss how companies are starting to analyze and incorporate the benefits of nature-based solutions into project design and the challenges of fully incorporating the benefits of nature-based solutions into internal decision-making processes. For each of these key topics we will discuss the issue by engaging panelists from different industries including transportation, manufacturing, and energy. Each panelist will share stories of their own company's perceptions of ecosystem services and nature-based solutions and their own successes and challenges in driving adoption of nature-based solutions internally. We will end by discussing additional areas of research and policy needs to help encourage broader private investment in nature-based solutions.

Town Hall Discussion:

The town hall discussion will explore a number of questions relating to private sector adoption of nature-based solutions.

1. How does your company define and talk about nature-based solutions?
2. In what ways do you see nature-based solutions benefiting your company?
3. How can we start to incorporate the benefits of nature-based solutions into project design and project decision-making?
4. What are some of the most successful nature-based solutions that you have been able to implement? What made these successful?
5. What are some of the challenges and barriers to implementing nature-based solutions within your company?
6. What are the top research areas related to the adoption of nature-based solutions that still need to be addressed?
7. What are some of the biggest policy barriers to driving adoption of nature-based solutions? What are some of the biggest policy opportunities to driving adoption of nature-based solutions?
8. What important lessons have you learned through collaborations with academics, non-governmental organizations, and policy makers?

Session Agenda:

15 minutes: Introductory remarks by moderators Martha Rogers and Nathan Cummins and introduction of other panelists

25 minutes: Facilitated town hall discussion around benefits of nature-based solutions and success stories

25 minutes: Facilitated town hall discussion around challenges to implementing nature-based solutions and research and policy needs

15 minutes: Facilitated town hall discussion around paths forward and collaboration needs

Audience:

The target audience for this town hall is every discipline represented at ACES. The town hall is designed, in part, to highlight the research and policy needs to help driver further adoption of nature-based solutions in the private sector.

Conference Themes:

This town hall intersects a number of ACES' key program themes, most notably: business sector approaches and ecosystem services and the private sector: finance, investment, and corporate sustainability. More broadly, the town hall will touch on themes relating to communication and education about ecosystem services; examples of how ecosystem services are used to inform public and private decisions; and valuation of ecosystem services.

Speakers:

Martha Rogers joined The Nature Conservancy in 2017 as the Natural Capital Economist in the Center for Sustainability Science. She is the technical lead for the TNC-Dow Collaboration, working closely with Dow staff to help test and implement the company's ten-year Valuing Nature Goal, which aims to generate one billion in business value from projects that are good for business and better for ecosystems. Beyond the TNC-Dow Collaboration, she is working to build a broader business case for natural infrastructure investments. Prior to joining the Nature Conservancy, she was an Associate with The Brattle Group, an economics consulting firm. At The Brattle Group, she focused on the application of economic research to environmental and telecommunications regulatory and litigation cases, working with stakeholders in both the public and private sectors. Martha completed her Ph.D. in Applied Economics at the University of Minnesota, and her B.A. in Economics and Mathematics from Williams College.

Nathan Cummins leads The Nature Conservancy's Business Council, which is a consultative forum and collaborative platform for action and learning to advance the business case for nature with industry-leading companies. Prior to his work on the Business Council, Nathan lobbied for The Nature Conservancy on federal legislation and infrastructure policy. Before joining TNC, Nathan worked at the White House Council on Environmental Quality, focusing on public engagement with key Obama Administration environmental initiatives. Nathan has served in multiple political campaign positions in local and national races, is a graduate of DePauw University and currently pursuing his MBA at Georgetown McDonough's School of Business.

Tommy Polzin, currently serves as Sustainability Program Manager for Nature and Ecosystem Services for The Dow Chemical Company. In this role, Tommy is responsible for overseeing activities associated with Dow's 2025 Sustainability Goal to Value Nature, an ambitious goal to generate \$1 billion dollars in long term value to Dow from projects that are better for nature. He also serves as project manager for Dow's ongoing collaboration with The Nature Conservancy and manages Dow's conservation monetization efforts. Tommy joined Dow's Sustainability Leadership Program in 2013 where he identified key energy efficiency opportunities across the lab and office real estate portfolio. He began working fulltime for Dow in 2014 to create a targeted sustainability

program focused on reducing environmental impact and improving health and wellness in Dow's facilities. Prior to joining Dow, Tommy worked in business development for a solar PV start up and greenhouse gas mitigation policy for an international climate focused non-profit. Tommy has an MBA from University of Michigan and a BSFS from Georgetown University.

In addition to the three speakers listed here, we will draw on other private sector expertise within The Nature Conservancy's Business Council. The Business Council is a collaborative platform for leading companies based around the globe to recognize value, gain expertise, and share experiences in corporate practices that will help create a world where people and nature thrive. We plan to include two to three additional speakers from the Business Council, with exact individuals being finalized at a later date.

Organizer Contact Information:

Martha Rogers, Ph.D.
Natural Capital Economist, The Nature Conservancy
1101 West River Parkway, Suite 200
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415
martha.rogers@tnc.org
(440) 340-1486

Nathan Cummins
Corporate Engagement Associate, The Nature Conservancy
4245 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 100
Arlington, Virginia 22203
ncummins@tnc.org
(703) 841-4212