

Town Hall Session Proposal – ACES 2018

Title: *Creating New Opportunities for Shared Investments in Working Forest Lands*

Description:

As market mechanisms for forest and land-use carbon offsets, wetland/stream credits, habitat credits, water quality offsets, source water protection agreements, and other ecosystem assets have matured in the United States, opportunities for private landowners to generate revenue flows from ecological restoration and preservation projects are growing. The “restoration economy” offers possibilities to provide additional sources of income for landowners, reward good stewardship, and preserve working lands.

One role for federal agencies such as the Forest Service in promoting sustainably managed working landscapes is to identify priority areas for public and private investment in public benefits from state, private, and tribal forestlands. Priority areas are determined by a combination of ecosystem goods and services delivery, as well as likely potential for private investment success.

The Conservation Finance Team at the Forest Service works to increase the total amount of financing available for all-lands forest stewardship, restoration, and protection through partnerships with the conservation finance and environmental markets sectors.

The Forest Service, USDA Office of Environmental Markets, Forest Trends’ Ecosystem Marketplace, and the Environmental Protection Agency’s EnviroAtlas team are collaborating, in consultation with private and NGO stakeholders, to identify opportunities for shared investments in working forest lands. The ultimate goal is to stimulate partnerships to support revenue generation from sustainably managed state, private and tribal working lands. An initial geospatial screening tool and metrics indicating investment potential have been developed.

This town hall will examine findings to date on opportunities in markets for forest carbon offsets, wetland and stream mitigation credits, and habitat conservation for working forest lands. Those initial findings will serve as a springboard into a broader facilitated discussion of how public agencies can help support shared investments, appropriate roles for public, private, and NGO stakeholders, and key considerations in the pursuit of specific market opportunities or regional conservation priorities. Our goal in this Town Hall is to gather feedback on work to date and to engage potential partners for subsequent phases of the product, including exploring additional market opportunities (such as for small-diameter timber products or source water protection investments), identifying useful models and case studies on facilitating shared investments on working lands; discussing needs in terms of information, tools, and resources; and considering opportunities for collaboration on joint fundraising and piloting innovative investment models.

Proposed Agenda (90 minutes)

- Introduction: The USFS Conservation Finance Team’s emerging strategy (10 minutes)
- Opportunities for shared investments: Results from an initial screening tool (15 minutes)
- Private sector perspectives on scaling up investments on working forest lands (15 minutes)
- Facilitated/break-out discussion to gather feedback from the ACES community on key considerations for a long-term strategy for developing technical assistance and outreach from state and federal agencies to private landowners on opportunities to engage in conservation activities on working lands (50 minutes)

Audience

The target audience includes public, private, and NGO entities working on conservation issues on state, private, and tribal forestlands interested in exploring new financing and funding opportunities for restoration. We hope to continue to engage with many Town Hall participants following the ACES conference.

Organizers

Name	Organization	Email	Phone
	<i>Primary contact</i>		
Kelley Hamrick	Forest Trends	KHamrick@ecosystemmarketplace.com >	202-298-3007
	<i>Organizers</i>		
Chris Hartley	USDA Office of Environmental Markets	chartley@oce.usda.gov	202-690-0832
Catherine (Tommie) Herbert	USDA Forest Service Conservation Finance Team	catherinetherbert@fs.fed.us	202-604-7757
Anne Neale	EPA EnviroAtlas	Neale.Anne@epa.gov	919-541-3832

Description of qualifications:

Kelley Hamrick is the Program Manager of Forest Trends' Ecosystem Marketplace and Supply Change initiatives. She has authored or co-authored over 15 reports, including flagship annual reports on the State of Private Investment in Conservation and the State of Voluntary Carbon Markets. Prior to joining Forest Trends, Kelley worked at the U.S. Embassy Copenhagen's Environment, Science, Technology and Health Regional Hub, the U.S. Department of State's Office of Environment and Conservation, and the International Food Policy Research Institute. She graduated with honors from American University with a BA in International Relations.

Christopher Hartley is the Deputy Director and Senior Environmental Markets Analyst with the USDA Office of Environmental Markets. He is responsible for the development of policy, tools, and metrics to support landowner participation in ecosystem services markets. He holds a Doctorate in Agricultural Ecology and masters' degrees in Agronomy and International Agricultural Development from the University of California – Davis. In addition, he is a Certified Crop Advisor, and a licensed Pest Control Advisor with more than 25 years of experience working in support of production agriculture and the promotion of clean air, clean water and a safe and abundant food supply.

Tommie Herbert is the National Conservation Finance Lead with US Forest Service. Prior to the Forest Service, Tommie completed a Master of Forestry from the Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies. Here, her coursework focused on forest management and conservation finance. She co-founded a student interest group on Conservation Investing, was Vice President of the Society of American Foresters, managed a webinar series called 'Nature's Returns: Investing in Ecosystem Services', and was a teaching fellow for Forest Operations. She worked from 2009-2012 for Forest Trends to build capacity, through training and policy advising, for ecosystem services transactions and environmental markets

frameworks in Tropical America and East & Southern Africa. Tommie has also worked with the Environmental Defense Fund's (EDF) Land, Water, and Wildlife Program delivering research reports and conservation policy analyses for sustainable agriculture in the Chesapeake Bay watershed.

Anne Neale is the EnviroAtlas Project Lead, in EPA's National Exposure Research Laboratory. She has over 25 years as an EPA researcher and has worked on many exciting and rewarding projects, including the U.S. atomic testing program, the Exxon Valdez Oil Spill Bioremediation project, the National Surface Water Survey, the Environmental Monitoring and Assessment Program, the Landscape Indicators for Pesticides Study for Mid-Atlantic Coastal Streams, and for the past several year, EnviroAtlas. Anne has a broad background that includes landscape ecology, geospatial and statistical analysis, and field studies. Her work has focused on examining relationships between spatial patterns of landscape characteristics and conditions of and risks to ecological resources and ecosystem services. Specifically, she have developed empirical models relating nutrients, pesticides, sediments and bird species diversity to general landscape characteristics in the Mid-Atlantic region of the U.S. For the past several years, Anne has been applying the experience gained over her career to lead the EnviroAtlas effort. This effort, led by EPA, is the product of multiple agencies and other organizations.