



Sagadahoc County Urban and Community Forest Project: Summary of Stakeholder Consultation Meeting, September 5, 2013

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Introduction

The stakeholder meeting had three sessions about the Sagadahoc County Urban and Community Forest Project. Each session started with a presentation and was followed by a discussion of key questions provided to help Manomet ensure that the project deliverables and outcomes aligned well with stakeholder needs. This report summarizes the presentation in each session, stakeholder input, and take-home points.

Participants: Angela Twitchell (Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust), Chris Cabot (Brunswick-Topsham Land Trust and Kennebec Estuary Land Trust), Tom Hoerth (City of Bath), Amanda Mahaffey (Forest Guild), Warren Whitney (Maine Coast Heritage Trust), Jan Santerre (Maine Forest Service), Andy Whitman (Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences), Ethel Wilkerson (Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences), Ryan Wynne (Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences), and Julie Renaud Evans (Northern Forest Center).

Session 1: Climate Change Vulnerability

The session's goal was to find the best way to convey adaptation strategies to key audiences. The session began with a modest review of climate change vulnerability and possible impacts to community and urban forests. Key points included:

- Many exotic species will do better than native species with small increases in CO₂.
- Current species including eastern Hemlock, balsam fir, and red spruce are predicted to decline in future scenarios due to climate change; the ocean might ameliorate near-shore climate and help reduce loss of spruce and fir along the coast.
- White pine, red oak and red maple are at less risk.

Manomet presented one approach to developing useful information for land trusts, municipalities, and other landowners regarding climate change adaptation. They proposed to develop a relatively short checklist of key, "no-regrets" strategies and practices that could be applied by users with some technical information provided. The stakeholders offered the following points:

- They like the checklist approach but suggested many good and helpful improvements.
- There are three audiences requiring different documents: land trusts, landowners, and urban foresters.
- "Weatherwise" title is good but need an alternative wording for BMPs and perhaps for use of "urban."
- Remove strategies (BMPs) that do not pertain directly to "Weatherwise" forestry practices.
- Add 2-3 sentence explanations for each check box strategy and add hyperlinks of supporting information to facilitate learning more.

Planned Outcome: Manomet will create short checklists with links to supporting material specific to land trusts, foresters and forest landowners, and municipal staff.

Session 2: Using i-Tree Platform to Track Community and Urban Forests

The goal of the session was to understand how users might use the i-Tree Platform. The session first reviewed the i-Tree Platform and three of its components:

- i-Tree Canopy: Easiest to use, provides coarse cover type estimations and the ability to estimate change in cover over time in Google Earth—ability to assess changes in community over time.
- i-Tree Vue: Coarse scale estimations of cover types and ecosystem services (e.g., carbon storage/sequestration, pollution removal)—provides landscape-scale cover type analysis of trees.
- i-Tree Eco: Provides accurate and detailed information about forest structure and ecosystem services, requires field data and a higher level of skills to complete analysis.

The discussion focused on two questions: Who are the audiences for these tools? What is the best way to market these tools to these audiences?

- Many land trusts are too small to use in house but the programs could be useful for consultants that work with them.
- Town planners, regional planners and consulting planners might be a key audience, especially if communities are starting to pay attention to the value of their trees.
- i-Tree could be used to engage youth, e.g., City of Portland, where forester is using tablets and service-learning projects.

Planned Outcome: Manomet will prepare short case studies aimed at potential users for i-Tree Canopy, Vue, Hydro and Eco. These case studies will emphasize practicality, outputs, and potential users of the platforms.

Session 3: Best Ways to “Market” Urban and Community Forests

This last session had a short presentation on marketing and was followed by deeper discussion about two key questions:

1. Who are the key audiences for urban and community forests?
 - Urban and community forests are diverse, from a tree pit in downtown, to neighborhood yards and landscape trees, to more continuous coverage forests owned by municipalities.
 - Towns, town officials, planning communities, municipal governments, donors, and general public.
2. How do you “market” urban and community forests? What works? What does not work?
 - Importance of getting snowmobilers and fishermen involved in small towns.
 - Educating business owners and towns about the importance of forests for income from recreation, making information about public forests available to them.
 - Recreation, wildlife, water, scenery make forests important to people, rather than the ecosystem services.
 - Engaging the next generation: Service learning projects, Randolph Community Forest - Randolph, NH has annual field days, adopting trees, using QRL codes to identify value/benefits/adoptees of trees in municipalities.

Take-Home Points: Marketing urban forests requires direct engagement and meeting people where they are. While the i-Tree platform is helpful and provides the scientific underpinning for the value of urban and community forests, urban foresters and land trusts still need to engage people in their communities. For kids, school-related activities can be leveraged to pull in families. For businesses, trees can be used to help attract customers. For land owners, trees can beautify their surroundings.



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