

Northwest New Jersey

Rivers Conference

Connecting Community, Ecotourism & Environment



Workshop Descriptions & Presenter Information:

Workshop Session 1: 9:30 – 10:45

1.1: Environmental Commissions: the *why* and *how* of getting started in your community.

Presented by Jennifer Coffey (ANJEC)

Facilitator:

This workshop will explore the community benefits of having an environmental commission drawn from ANJEC's members and others. It is intended for citizens and elected officials interested in starting or invigorating an existing Environmental Commission.

New Jersey's enabling statute for environmental commissions (NJS 40:56A and amendments of 1972, 1975, 1989) and local ordinance preparation will be covered samples from DRWI Highlands Cluster. The Municipal Land Use Law's (40:55D) environmental commission provisions will also be covered. Basic requirements under the Open Public Records Act, and the Open Public Meetings Act will be outlined. Recommendations on how to operate effectively on an on-going basis will be provided.

1.2 The Benefits of Land Preservation

Presented by: Ben Spinelli & Frank Pinto (Greener by Design)

Facilitator: George Stafford

An overview of the major land preservation programs in New Jersey. How they operate, how to qualify, what to expect and what the major benefits are for private landowners. We will cover municipal, county and state open space purchase programs and the NJ Farmland Preservation program. Discussion will include how property is valued, how land owners are paid, how properties are evaluated and other pertinent issues.

1.3 Using Ecotourism to Promote Economic Development

Presented by Michele Archie, Harbinger Consulting group, Tammie Horsfield (Sussex County Chamber of Commerce) & Marc Saluk (Hunterdon County)

Facilitator: Kristine Rogers

Protecting the environment doesn't have to be in conflict with economic development. Learn how Northern New Jersey officials are promoting the region's natural resources to drive growth in their counties. Participants will hear from several panelists who will provide examples of how their communities are using nature to encourage people to spend time and money in local municipalities while they explore the outdoors.

Through this workshop, attendees will develop a greater understanding of the multiple benefits of ecotourism to New Jersey's environment, society, and economy as they receive tips from the presenters about how to promote economic growth in their own towns.

1.4 What to do with your Environmental Degree?

Presented by Amanda Lotto (Americorps) & Kevin Zerbe (Passaic River Initiative) & Kyle Richter (Muscunetong Watershed Association)

Facilitator: Kyle Richter

Working towards a degree in the environmental sciences? Unsure of what you will do with your degree once you graduate? This panel will bring together professionals from different aspects of the environmental fields to give you an idea of what opportunities await you once you graduate.

Workshop Session 2: 11:15 – 12:30

2.1 The Benefits of Conforming with the Highlands Regional Master Plan

Presented by Lisa Plevin & Keri Green (New Jersey Highlands Water Protection & Planning Council)

Facilitator: George Stafford

The NJ Highlands Council will present a workshop on the benefits of conforming with the Regional Master Plan, with an emphasis on the Delaware River Watershed and its communities. Delaware Watershed specific topics could include dam removal, stream corridor restoration, stormwater management, Water Use & Conservation Management Plans, etc.

2.2 New Jersey Conservation Blueprint

Presented by John Hasse (Rowan University), Eric Olsen (The Nature Conservancy) & Adam Taylor (NJ Green Acres)

Facilitator: Eric Olsen

New Jersey's Conservation Blueprint is the most comprehensive prioritization mapping project ever undertaken in the state. Starting in 2015, the New Jersey Conservation Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, and the GeoLab at Rowan University led a steering committee of 20+ organizations working within the state to create Priority Land Models for each of the Blueprint's four Themes: Water, Ecology, Agriculture and Community Green Space. This session will provide attendees with the opportunity to learn about the successful state-wide multi-stakeholder collaboration between funders, land trusts, state, county and municipal governments. The Blueprint is being used by planners, land conservation professionals, state agencies, environmental commission member and municipal green teams among others to easily access information that is often only available to GIS professionals.

The session will highlight and demonstrate how the newly enhanced Blueprint is being used for land management including farmland preservation, land stewardship and ecological land planning. In addition to sharing the history of the project, an introduction to the technology and an overview of the priority models, the presenters will also share specific conservation success case studies from users within New Jersey. New Jersey's Conservation Blueprint showcases how collaboration within the land conservation community can result in accelerating the pace and quality of preserving the best of the state's remaining lands.

2.3 The Morris Canal Greenway: The intersection of history, recreation and water quality advocacy

Presented by Joseph Macasek (President, Canal Society), Elliott Ruga (New Jersey Highlands Coalition) & Ben Spinelli (Greener by Design)

Facilitator: Elliott Ruga

The story of the Morris Canal, how it transformed the NJ Highlands and influenced the development of northern New Jersey is multi-faceted and fascinating. With the ambitious plan for a 102 mile heritage and recreational trail connecting the Delaware River with the Hudson River across the State, the Morris Canal Greenway will provide new opportunities to raise awareness about the importance of protecting our water resources and to promote a watershed ethic.

This workshop will provide a history of the Canal; discuss the status of the Morris Canal Greenway; and offer tools to help connect recreational and heritage trail users with the importance of water resource protection.

2.4 Improving the Local Food System: Sustainable Agriculture and Food Waste Reduction

Presented by Bridgett Hilshey (North Jersey RC&D) & Lisa Kelly (Foodshed Alliance)

Facilitator: Laura Tessieri

Agricultural production can impact water quality, soil health, and climate resiliency. North Jersey RC&D recognizes local farms with positive environmental stewardship through the River Friendly Farm Certification. Learn how farms are improving their operations to be more environmentally and economically sustainable and how local communities can be supportive.

The Foodshed Alliance's LocalShare program addresses food insecurity and food excess by sending volunteers to local farms to "glean" or harvest food that would otherwise go to waste and deliver it to food pantries to feed those in need. In 2018, more than 90,000 lbs. of fresh fruits and vegetables were rescued and delivered to local food pantries.

Workshop Session 3: 2:45 – 3:30

3.1 Protecting your local environment in the municipal process

Presented by Jennifer Coffey (ANJEC)

Facilitator:

This workshop will deal generally with the importance of environmental planning and management at the municipal level. Environmental Resource Inventories (ERIs), Master Plans and Land use ordinances will be discussed from the perspective of protecting the local environment. Techniques to effectively carry out Community Outreach and Environmental Education will also be discussed.

3.2 Working Together to Solve New Jersey's Stormwater Problems

Christopher Obropta (Rutgers Cooperative Extension)

Facilitator: Juniper Leifer

The Rutgers Cooperative Extension Water Resources Program has been working closely with NGOs throughout the State of New Jersey to further planning and development of stormwater infrastructure. This presentation will discuss several of these partnerships and the resulting green infrastructure projects that have been installed. The roles of the project partners, funding arrangements, and sharing of staffing resources also will be discussed.

Participants will learn about:

- The latest stormwater research from academia
- Identifying opportunities to install green infrastructure to better manage stormwater
- Designing green infrastructure projects
- Grant writing to secure funding to implement stormwater projects
- Providing construction oversight during project implementation
- Assisting with post-construction maintenance of stormwater infrastructure projects

3.3 Wild Trout, Benthic Macroinvertebrates, and New Jersey Water Quality Policy in 2019

Presented by Maria Berezin (Raritan Headwaters Assoc.), others TBC.

Facilitator: George Cassa

Learn why the existence of wild trout, including NJ's official fresh water fish – the wild brook trout – in Highlands Open Waters is so important to 6.2 million NJ residents who depend on this irreplaceable public trust resource for basic human survival. The focus will be on two recent science-based regulatory initiatives that were supported by the results of carefully planned programs of field work and analysis. Last year's major overhaul of Wild Trout Stream regulations and the 2019 Category One stream list additions are key policy initiatives that serve the administratively independent functions of surface water quality management and fisheries management

Find out how the presence of self-sustaining populations of wild trout in a waterbody affects New Jersey's regulatory regimes for land use planning and fisheries management, and the relationship between land use planning and surface water quality in the NJ Highlands. Learn how the comprehensive research that documents the breeding success of wild trout in many NJ Highlands Open Waters led to the adoption of NJ's landmark 2018 Wild Trout Stream fishing regulations.

3.4 Stream Restoration Resources for Municipalities

Presented by Michelle DiBlasio (The Nature Conservancy) & Marc Virgilio (U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service)

Facilitator: Kristine Rogers

In this workshop you will learn how municipalities can secure funding and materials to conduct stream restoration projects in their own townships. Participants will learn about The Nature Conservancy's Roots for Rivers program that provides funding for streamside tree planting projects in addition to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program that offers technical and financial assistance for floodplain/wetlands restoration and wildlife habitat improvement projects.

Presenter Information:



Michele Archie, Harbinger Consulting Group

Michele leads Harbinger Consulting's Geotourism work, having supported National Geographic programs for the Greater Yellowstone (ID/MT/WY) and Scenic Wild Delaware River (NJ/NY/PA). She is active with the International Geotourism Council, and has worked with other sustainable tourism studies and initiatives across the country from Texas to New York to Montana. Michele has authored two *Making Connections* reports for National Parks Conservation Association that highlight the value of natural assets, outdoor recreation, and tourism in the middle and upper Delaware River region. She is currently working with Appalachian Trail Conservancy on an outdoor recreation economic assessment and sustainable travel initiative involving three A.T. Communities and other communities in a five-county area along the northeast portion of Kittatinny Ridge in New Jersey and Pennsylvania.



Maria Berezin, Watershed Scientist, Raritan Headwaters Association

Maria has a Master's degree in environmental science from Drexel University and has worked mainly on using fish populations to assess water quality and on the impacts of invasive aquatic organisms on food web structure. Prior to joining RHA, she worked as a fisheries technician for New Jersey Division of Fish and Wildlife in the Bureau of Freshwater Fisheries, and for the Academy of Natural Sciences in Philadelphia as a research technician in the fisheries section of the Patrick Center for Environmental Research. Maria studied marine ecosystems both with Rutgers University Marine Field Station and in her time as an undergraduate with Stockton University.



George Cassa, Trustee for NJ Highlands Coalition & Raritan Headwaters Association

George is a graduate of the US Merchant Marine Academy and worked in the ship design field for over 40 years. A lifelong NJ resident, he was a trustee of the Great Swamp Watershed Association for several years. He is a member, trustee and a past president of the NJ Highlands Coalition, where he represents the Alliance for Historic Hamlets, a preservation advocacy group in Hunterdon County. He is a trustee of the Raritan Headwaters Association and serves on the board of the Morris County Trust for Historic Preservation. He has co-owned Shannon's Fly and Tackle Shop in Califon, NJ, since 2005.



Jennifer Coffey, Executive Director, ANJEC

Jennifer joined Association of New Jersey Environmental Commissions (ANJEC) in July 2014. For 10 years prior, she served as the Policy Director for central New Jersey's first watershed association, the Stony Brook-Millstone Watershed Association. She chaired the Upper Freehold Environmental Commission for seven years and also served as a member of the Planning Board. Jennifer is a member of the New Jersey State Water Supply Advisory Council and the New Jersey Society of Women Environmental Professionals. She holds a Bachelor's Degree in Communications from Stockton University and dual Master's Degrees in Environmental Policy and Environmental Science from the New Jersey Institute of Technology.



Michelle DiBlasio, The Nature Conservancy, New Jersey Chapter

Michelle joined The Nature Conservancy's New Jersey Chapter in 2015 and for the last four years has helped to lead the on-the-ground field efforts throughout NJ's northern freshwater systems. At TNC, she oversees the implementation of various freshwater conservation projects ranging from floodplain restoration management; including planning and designing reforestation projects, to collecting, managing, and assessing water quality data for watershed-scale monitoring. Michelle previously worked for TNC's New York Chapter as a Wetland Restoration Technician. She received her Associates in Communications from Sussex County Community College and earned her Bachelors of Science in Wildlife Science from the State University of New York-College of Environmental Science and Forestry.



Keri Green, Science Manager, New Jersey Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council

Keri has been with the Highlands Council for nine years and her depth of knowledge in natural resource management is extensive. Keri manages the Science staff at the Council, providing technical expertise and guidance to municipalities, sister agencies, landowners and other stakeholders. Prior to joining the Highlands Council staff, Keri worked in environmental consulting. Her skills in Rare, Threatened and Endangered species surveys, ecological inventories, and environmental sampling were utilized by clients across the country. Keri received her B.S. in Natural Resource Management and Applied Ecology from Rutgers University, Cook College. She is also a NJ Certified Teacher of High School Science.



Bridgett Hilshey, Agricultural Specialist, North Jersey Resource Conservation & Development

Bridgett is an Agricultural Specialist at North Jersey RC&D. Her specialty is in promoting soil health initiatives and sustainable agriculture. She has championed the River Friendly Farm Certification, updating its website and marketing library, as well as, preparing the program for future growth. Prior to North Jersey RC&D, Bridgett worked for the National Park Service, and the University of Vermont Center for Sustainable Agriculture. Bridgett holds a B.S. in Environmental Science from Western Washington University and a M.S. in Soil Science from the University of Vermont.



John Hasse, Ph. D., AICP, Director Geospatial Research Lab, Rowan University

John is a professor of geography and director of the Geospatial Research Lab at Rowan University. He is actively engaged in multiple funded projects that provide open source geovisualization of geospatial data in support of environmental management, sustainable community planning and education. John's work in geospatial techniques for land use analysis is recognized throughout the state. He and the GeoLab team have been instrumental in developing the NJ MAP web mapping platform that powers the NJ Conservation Blueprint.



Tammie Horsfield, President, Sussex County Chamber of Commerce

Tammie is well known throughout New Jersey as a leader in business development, networking, marketing, tourism, economic development and more. As President of the Sussex County Chamber of Commerce (1990-present), the Sussex County Economic Development Partnership, Inc. (1997- present) and also directs six other local Chamber affiliates. She is the Sussex Skylands/Sussex County, NJ Destination Marketing Organization (DMO) representative as designated by the State of NJ Division of Travel & Tourism, and is a Certified Destination Management Executive (CDME), the tourism industry's highest individual educational achievement.



Lisa Kelly, Development & Communications Director, Foodshed Alliance

Lisa has been Development and Communications Director of the Foodshed Alliance since 2009, authoring the *Regional Foodshed Resiliency Plan* and the *Food Hub Feasibility Study* report. Her responsibilities include fundraising, grant-writing, marketing and communications. She founded a charter school based on mission of

environmental sustainability and a two-day regional music/environmental festival. A graduate of Seton Hall University, she is also consultant specializing in fundraising, development, marketing and communications in a variety of nonprofit and for-profit sectors.



Amanda Lotto, Program Manager, AmeriCorps Watershed Ambassadors

Now in her 7th year working for the NJ DEP, Amanda is currently managing the AmeriCorps New Jersey Watershed Ambassadors Program, housed within the Division of Water Monitoring and Standards. This program annually employs 20 “Watershed Ambassadors” throughout NJ who engage citizens in stewardship service opportunities that restore floodplains, plant trees, install rain gardens, build rain barrels, conduct cleanups, and implement many other BMPs. Prior to joining the division, she spent her 1st year with DEP providing Superstorm Sandy Recovery assistance in the Hazard Mitigation Grant Program, helping residents of Monmouth County recover. She then moved to Pesticide Compliance and Enforcement, where she was responsible for conducting agricultural pesticide use inspections and enforcing the WPS-Worker Protection Standard. Prior to joining the DEP full time, she, herself, served as a Watershed Ambassador in the Barnegat Bay watershed during 2011-2012. She is a Graduate of Montclair State University, where she studied Geography with an Environmental Studies Concentration.



Joseph Macasek, President of the Canal Society of New Jersey

Joseph has had a life-long interest in local New Jersey history and industrial archeology, and has pursued this interest on both a personal and leadership level. He is President of the Canal Society of New Jersey, former President of the Roebling Chapter of the Society for Industrial Archeology, Director of Communication for the Friends of Historic Speedwell, and serves on the Morris County Heritage Commission. He is the author of the *Guide to the Morris Canal in Morris County* and offers lectures on local history topics and industrial archaeology. Currently Joseph is chairman the Canal Society of New Jersey’s Morris Canal Greenway Committee and a member of the North Jersey Transportation and Planning Authorities Greenway Working Group Executive Committee. These committees are working with county officials and in local communities to create a state-wide Morris Canal Greenway corridor. The Greenway is active in six counties with numerous projects working to preserve and restore sections of the canal. This project received a Smart Growth Award from New Jersey Futures.



Chris Obropta, Ph.D., P.E., Rutgers University

Chris is the Extension Specialist in Water Resources with Rutgers Cooperative Extension, and a Professor with the Department of Environmental Sciences at the School of Environmental & Biological Sciences at Rutgers University. His specific experience includes watershed restoration, onsite wastewater treatment system design and management, wasteload allocations and TMDL studies, stormwater management, wetland design, effluent dilution analyses, longshore sediment transport, computer-aided design, and geographic information systems (GIS). He teaches Bioresource Engineering Design I & II, where he directs student design teams to develop solutions to complex real-life engineering problems. He has a doctorate in Civil Engineering from Stevens Institute of Technology, an M.S. in Civil Engineering from New Jersey Institute of Technology, and a B.S. in Civil Engineering from New Jersey Institute of Technology. Prior to joining Rutgers, Dr. Obropta was an environmental consultant for 12 years at Omni Environmental Corporation. Dr. Obropta has a background in watershed management, water quality modeling, hydrologic and hydraulic modeling, and coastal engineering.



Eric Olsen, Director of Lands Program, The Nature Conservancy

Eric currently serves as the director of the Lands Program for the N.J. Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. In this role, working with a team of four, he oversees land protection, land management and land policy work for the Chapter. During his tenure with TNC, Eric has worked on several forest and freshwater initiatives including land protection, stewardship, and river restoration projects.



Frank Pinto, Principal, Greener by Design

Frank is a principal of Greener by Design and his expertise is land use and municipal planning. He has 25 years of experience in the public sector with increasing responsibility, working for the County of Morris, New Jersey. He is now using that experience to assist landowners, non-profits, local and county governments with issues related to farm management, land use, policy, farmland tax assessment, open space planning, open space land management, affordable housing policy, strategic planning and non-profit business development. He graduated from Old Dominion University with a B.S. in Geography and Fairleigh Dickinson University with an M.P.A.



Lisa Plevin, Executive Director, New Jersey Highlands Water Protection & Planning Council

. Lisa has more than 35 years of experience in government and nonprofit leadership roles, with particular expertise in environmental policy and management. Her background includes significant work in environmental advocacy and natural resource protection. Prior to joining the Highlands Council staff, Lisa held the role of Deputy Director, Environment and Energy for Governor Phil Murphy. In that role, she served as policy lead for the Environment and Energy Transition Committee, collaborating with committee members and stakeholder groups to identify key priorities and implementation strategies that formed the foundation of the committee's report to the Governor. Lisa's experience also includes serving as Chief of Staff for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Region 2. Before that, Lisa spent much of her career with U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg, serving as a senior advisor on environmental issues in New Jersey. Additionally, Lisa has held several roles in the nonprofit sector, supporting organizations focused on community development, environmental advocacy, and public policy. Lisa holds a BS in Environmental Science from the Richard Stockton College of New Jersey. She is a member of the Parsippany Environmental Advisory Council and has been a resident of Parsippany for over 20 years.



Kyle Richter, Watershed Programs Coordinator, Musconetcong Watershed Association & North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development

Kyle works as Watershed Programs Coordinator for MWA and North Jersey Resource Conservation and Development Council (NJRC&D). Having a shared mission of protecting and improving the Musconetcong River, its watershed and northwestern New Jersey agriculture, these two organizations have partnered on projects and officially became affiliated in 2016. Kyle is a shared employee between the two organizations and works with municipalities, schools and communities to promote a sense of pride and stewardship for the Musconetcong watershed area as well as surrounding watersheds through education programs and restoration and green infrastructure projects. Prior to joining MWA, Kyle taught environmental education for 5 years at YMCA Camp Bernie and worked on developing STEM education curriculum at the Institute of Marine and Coastal Sciences at Rutgers University. Kyle grew up in Southwest Florida and came to New Jersey to attend Rutgers University where he graduated with a B.S. in Marine Science. Kyle also earned a Professional Certificate in Watershed Management from Michigan State University.



Elliott Ruga, Policy & Communications Director, New Jersey Highlands Coalition

Elliott is Policy and Communications Director at the New Jersey Highlands Coalition, and staff liaison with the Coalition's Cultural Resources Committee. Elliott is the Chairman of the Town of Boonton Historic Preservation Commission. He is also the Chairman of the Boonton Trails Committee, which is planning the Boonton Iron Works & Morris Canal Heritage Trail, which will also serve as the official Boonton segment of the Morris Canal Greenway. Elliott is a former member of the Morris County Heritage Commission.



Marc Saluk, Director of Economic Development, Hunterdon County

Marc has been the economic development director for Hunterdon County, New Jersey for three years, after many years executing economic development initiatives in the Midwest. Under Marc's direction, the county has developed a model for growth that builds upon the environmental assets of the county, including the many local Preserved Farmland and Open Space programs, as well as the New Jersey Highlands. Hunterdon prides itself on not just taking these factors into account when planning economic development, but on positioning these assets as strengths and on strong partnerships with the organizations that run them. Among the county's many current programs are initiatives that grow the clean tech sector, promote local agritourism assets, develop riverside parks, and encourage small business growth and innovation. Marc will be discussing these and other programs that successfully marry Hunterdon's economic future with its rural character.



Ben Spinelli, Esq., Principal, Greener by Design

Ben is an expert in land use issues. His career includes 20 years as a trial attorney where he handled a wide array of litigation matters as well as representing clients in the areas of municipal law, land use, real estate and planning. He served as a senior adviser to the President's FEMA Hurricane Sandy Recovery Task Force on matters of local government, land use and planning; served as Executive Director of the Office of Smart Growth; and served three terms as the mayor of Chester Township where his accomplishments included the permanent preservation of over 3,000 acres of environmentally important open space and farmland. Ben was an original member of the Highlands Council, the founder and president of the Raritan-Highlands Planning Compact and is a Senior Fellow with the Environmental Leadership Program in Washington D.C. He graduated from Muhlenberg College with a B.A. in Political Science and History and received his J.D. from Seton Hall University-School of Law. Ben is an adjunct professor at NJIT's School of College of Science and Liberal Arts.



Adam Taylor, County Steward & Compliance Officer, NJ Green Acres

Adam Taylor earned a MA in Sustainability Studies from Ramapo College of New Jersey focusing on identifying opportunities for land and natural resource conservation, as well as being a steward to lands that have already been preserved. He currently works part-time for the State of New Jersey's Green Acres Program as a County Steward for Cumberland, Passaic, Morris, Salem and Union counties within the Bureau of Legal Services and Stewardship. Adam is also a Project Manager for Rowan University Geolab's NJ Conservation Blueprint and has taught as an adjunct. As a graduate student, he led the Blueprint's Steering Committee and other members of the state-wide conservation community in a group concept mapping exercise to help identify how the Blueprint could best help protect land in New Jersey.



Daniel Van Abs, Ph. D., AICP, Associate Professor, Rutgers University

Dan Van Abs is an Associate Professor of Practice for Water, Society & Environment at Rutgers University, School of Environmental and Biological Sciences, where he focuses on planning, and management policy for water infrastructure, water supply, wastewater and watershed protection. Previously, he served in New Jersey state government for over 26 years, as: Senior Director for Planning & Science with the Highlands Water Protection and Planning Council, where he managed staff efforts regarding implementation of the Highlands Regional Master Plan; Director of Watershed Protection, NJ Water Supply Authority; and with the NJ Department of Environmental Protection for 12 years, six as manager for statewide water resources planning. Dan was Technical Director of the Passaic River Coalition. He holds a Ph.D. in Environmental Science from SUNY-College of Environmental Science and Forestry. He is a licensed Professional Planner in New Jersey and former Chair of the New Jersey Clean Water Council. Dan is co-editor with Karen O'Neill of a new Rutgers University Press book (June 2016) *Taking Chances: The Coast After Sandy*.



Marc Virgilio, US Fish & Wildlife Service

Marc is a biologist with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and works on a variety of habitat restoration projects including pollinator grasslands, wetlands, and living shorelines. The Partners Program assists private landowners (and governments below state level) with habitat improvement projects that benefit federal trust resources, including federally listed species, migratory birds, and diadromous fish. Assistance can be in the form of technical assistance with design/permitting, materials such as plants/seed, and equipment for site preparation, invasive plant removal, and planting.



Kevin Zerbe, Research Assistant, Passaic River Institute, Montclair State University

Kevin is an aquatic ecologist and climate adaptation specialist who works primarily in freshwater ecosystems. His research interests include aquatic connectivity, surface water quality, and climate vulnerability analysis. He is a doctoral student in Montclair State University's Environmental Management program, and his dissertation is centered on the recolonization of anadromous fishes in freshwater ecosystems through improved connectivity and watershed restoration. Before beginning his doctoral studies at Montclair State, Kevin was a climate adaptation consultant based in Seattle, WA. He has authored and co-authored multiple climate adaptation plans for local, tribal, and state government agencies across the U.S., with the majority of these plans aimed at conserving valuable natural resources through climate-informed management. He holds a BS in Urban & Regional Planning from Virginia Commonwealth University and a MS in Natural Resource Management from the University of Denver.