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# **Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3)**

## **MEETING MINUTES**

### **Working and Natural Lands Working Group**

#### **Forests Sub-Group**

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**Meeting Date:** May 21, 2020

**Meeting Time:** 6:00 — 8:00 p.m.

**Meeting Location:** Join Zoom Meeting

<https://ctdeep.zoom.us/j/94103016176>

Meeting ID: 941 0301 6176

Dial from your location

1-646-876-9923

## **ATTENDENCE**

<b>Sub-Group Member</b>	<b>Title</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Present</b>
Eric Hammerling, <b>Chair</b>	Executive Director	Connecticut Forest and Park Association	
Tim Abbott	Regional Conservation and Greenprint Director	Housatonic Valley Association	
Mark Ashton	Director of School Forests	Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies	
Patrick Comins	Executive Director	Connecticut Audubon Society	
Thomas Easley	Assistant Dean of Community & Inclusion	Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies	
Robert Fahey	Assistant Professor	University of Connecticut, Natural Resources and the Environment	
Edward Faison	Senior Ecologist	Highstead	
David Gumbart	Director of Land Management	The Nature Conservancy, CT	
Lisa Hayden	Landowner Outreach Coordinator	New England Forestry Foundation	
Charles Leigus	General Manager	Supreme Forest Products, Inc.	
Amy Paterson	Executive Director	Connecticut Land Conservation Council	
Herb Virgo	Executive Director	Keney Park Sustainability Project	∅

Associated Staff	Title	Organization	Present
Christopher Martin, Sub-Group Staff Assistant	Director/State Forester	Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	
Jaimeson Sinclair, Sub-Group Staff Assistant	Director, DEEP Air Bureau, Engineering Division	Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	
Cary Lynch, Staff Lead, WNLWG	Research Analyst, Office of Climate Change Technology & Research	Department of Energy and Environmental Protection	

## AGENDA & NOTES

*Eric Hammerling, Executive Director, CFPAs*

**(5 minutes)**

*Welcome and Introductions:* Chair Hammerling welcomes all to the 8<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Forests Subgroup of the Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3). The Chair briefly introduces the evening's topic and two expert presenters; Tony Leiserowitz and Mary Tyrrell, followed by a public comment period and Dan Peracchio, DEEP's Forest Planner and lead author for Connecticut's 2020 Forest Action Plan for a progress update.

Chair Hammerling then provides a summary of the Forests Sub-Group work to-date.

- Formed at the end of January 2020
- Reviewed recommendations of CT's 2011 Climate Adaptation Plan.
- Discussed changes in scientific understanding since 2011.
- Looked at models to use as Baselines for Carbon storage/Climate mitigation.
- Addressed forest issues in urban areas such as equity, green infrastructure, air quality, and the many benefits of trees to people.
- Reviewed various forest management approaches to achieve increased carbon storage, sequestration, biodiversity, and forest health.
- Learned about protecting vulnerable human and natural communities.
- Considered developing meaningful forest protection goals and implementing related funding mechanisms.

The Chair makes a point of acknowledging members of the Forests Sub-Group for their time and involvement, encouraging them to maintain their enthusiasm for the final push toward a GC3 draft report and recommendations to be submitted by the end of June. Chair Hammerling reminds all of the online resources from past Forests Subgroup meetings located on CFPAs website at [ctwoodlands.org](http://ctwoodlands.org), and DEEP's web pages related to the GC3 and the Forests Sub-Group.

The Chair then conducts a member roll call, reviews proper Zoom etiquette including muting audio, and how the public comment will proceed. Chair Hammerling extends a hearty appreciation to assisting DEEP staff members Chris Martin, Cary Lynch, and Jaimeson Sinclair.

Up to 35 participants on Zoom.

**I. Aligning with municipal/regional adaptation efforts (60 minutes)**

1. Anthony Leiserowitz, Director of the Yale Program in Climate Communication – communicating with the public about forests and climate. Presentation posted on GC3 website. A couple of important hyperlinks; 1) [Climate Communication | Yale Climate Opinion Maps \(2019\)](#) and [Yale Climate Connections](#).
2. Mary Tyrrell - communicating with forest landowners about forests and climate.

**II. Public comments (20 minutes)**

**Susan Masino, Simsbury, Co-chair GC3 Science & Technology Working Group.** Reemphasizes the importance of linking health and climate. Keeping forests as forests is not a clear enough message. We need some forests for resource extraction, some for scientific monitoring, and some to be left alone. Landowners need to get information on a full range of choices. References locally grown wood stamping program in Connecticut.

**Chelsea, Trinity College.** Took part of public opinion survey of Southern New England forests, what the public wants from forests. Results showed many respondents want to preserve forests with legal protection for old growth forests and protecting against invasive species. Currently there is insufficient protection for forests.

**Chris Donnelly, DEEP Urban Forester.** Reflects on his parents who grew up during the Great Depression, nothing goes to waste. Times have changed to now more of a consumer mentality with an excess of experts. Self-reliance seems preferred over getting information from experts. Healthy skepticism, towards experts vs experience. How to communicate with the public. Poses the question; What role do we expect from forest landowners with regards to mitigating and adapting to climate change.

**III. Connecticut's Forest Action Plan Update (15 minutes)**

1. Dan Peracchio, DEEP Forest Planner – Summary actions to date, preliminary findings, updated timeline and steps to completion. Updated USDA Forest Service submittal deadline from June 2020 to December 31, 2020 due to COVID-19 business disruptions.

**IV. Next Steps and Adjourn (5 minutes)**

Chair reviews next steps, timeline to draft report and reviews Section assignments. Section drafts need to be complete by June 12<sup>th</sup>

Final Report Sections	Person(s) Responsible
Introduction & Acknowledgements	Eric H.

<b>Societal &amp; Ecosystem Benefits of Forests</b>	Lisa Hayden
<b>Status of CT Forests</b>	Chris M./Dan P.
<b>Climate Threats to Vulnerable Populations (human)</b>	Thomas Easley & Herb Virgo
<b>Climate Threats to Vulnerable Populations (natural)</b>	Patrick Comins
<b>Adaptation/Resilience Considerations</b>	Mark Ashton & Charlie Leigus
<b>Mitigation Considerations</b>	Ed Faison
<b>2011 Climate Plan Priorities &amp; Progress</b>	Eric H./Chris M.
<b>2011 Climate Plan Additional Recs</b>	All (from Survey Responses)
<b>2018 Climate Plan Review</b>	Eric H./Cary L.
<b>Forest Baseline for Recommendations</b>	Cary Lynch
<b>Making Forests more Resilient (1-5 &amp; 5-10 year actions)</b>	Bob Fahey & Mark Ashton
<b>Maximizing Forest Mitigation (1-5 &amp; 5-10 year actions)</b>	Tim Abbott/Ed Faison
<b>Funding Programs &amp; Resources Needed</b>	Amy Paterson
<b>Synergies or Conflicts with other GC3 Groups</b>	Eric H./Cary L.
<b>Vision for CT's Future Forests</b>	Eric H.
<b>Engaging the Public in Vision for Forests</b>	Eric H./EEJ Working Group
<b>Glossary &amp; Additional Resources</b>	Eric H./Chris M.

With the following additions/changes:

- Dave Gumbart will join Lisa Hayden on the section focused on Societal and Ecosystem Benefits;
- Ed Faison will join Mark Ashton and Bob Fahey to work on recommendations on Adaptation & Resilience;
- Lisa Hayden will work with Eric Hammerling on the section Sharing the Vision for Forests with the Public.

Next Public meeting will be June 18<sup>th</sup> 1PM to 3PM. Zoom conferencing information forthcoming.

**Meeting Adjourns 8:02PM**