
**Governor's Council on Climate Change (GC3)
Climate Smart Agriculture & Forestry Working Group
MEETING MINUTES**

Meeting Date: September 1, 2022

Meeting Time: 11:00 AM - 12:30 PM

Zoom Recording: [Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry Working Group Meeting](#)

ATTENDANCE: GC3 Working Group Members in bold

Name:
Alanis Allen
Francia Alvarez
Luke Anderson
Mark Ashton, Science and Technology Liaison
Hannah Beath
Ashley Benitez-Ou
Lori Brown
Mary Buchanan
Juliet Cain
Cheryl Cappiali
Dan Carr
Frank Cervo
Elizabeth Chandler
Christian Dimkpa
Robert Fahey
Amanda Fargo-Johnson
Rebecca French
Sigrun Gadwa
Chelsea Gazillo
Rosa Goldman
Eric Hammerling
Lisa Hayden
Jason Hegenauer
Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt, Co-chair [GC3 Member]
David Irvin
Dylan Kirk
Kip Kolesinskas
Aaron Lefland
Robert Maddox
Christopher Martin, Co-chair
Adam Matlock
Hallie Mertzger
Kat Morris
Joan Nichols
Amy B. Paterson
Jamie Pottern

Hannah Reichle
Scott Rogers
Kayleigh Royston, Designee of Com. Hurlburt
Lilian Ruiz
Itamar Shabtai
Anna Shugrue
Janna Siller
Jamie Smith
Latha Swamy
Suzanne Treyger
Andrea Urbano
Jeffrey Ward
Sarah Watson, DEEP Liaison
Jason White
Leigh Whittinghill
Michael Wrobel
Ann Frank Zitkus

AGENDA & NOTES

Welcome and Introduction: Sarah Watson, DEEP Liaison

Ground Rules:

- Meeting is recorded and a link will be posted
- Announcement that the chat is public record, but may be used for questions and comments by working group members
- Working group members are asked to post their names and affiliation in the chat
- Reminder that the discussion portion is reserved for working group members
- Announcement that non-working group members should mute and turn video off until public comment

Co-chair Introduction: Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt, Department of Agriculture and Christopher Martin, Forestry Director, Designee of Commissioner, Mason Trumble

Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt

- Thanks current members and the 2020 working group for providing a great foundation for this year's work
- Notes appreciation of joining Agriculture and Forestry fields together as we move forward to more granular work
- Asks that all working group members try to attend the upcoming meetings in order to adhere to the timeline

Christopher Martin, Forestry Director, Designee of Commissioner Trumble

- Notes the overlap between Agriculture and Forestry goals, initiatives, and directives
- Emphasizes the importance of working group member participation as drivers of success for GC3

Presentation, Legislative History: Chelsea Gazillo, American Farmland Trust, New England Policy Manager and Working Lands Alliance, Director

- Introduced by Commissioner Hurlburt
- Presentation Summary:
 - Climate change impacts in agriculture:
 - It has become difficult for farmers to predict weather patterns and mitigate factors that affect crops, animals, and soil health
 - Protecting farmland combats climate change
 - Undeveloped farmland sequesters greenhouse gas emissions
 - Connecticut lost 6% of its farmland in the last 15 years to low density residential land use
 - Connecticut farmland is extremely expensive (13k/acre)
 - Solar development:
 - Part of the mitigation effort, but care must be taken to not convert farmland
 - Solar development is increasing significantly and is projecting to increase solar grid by 79% increase by 2040
 - This would require a significant portion of land if all solar is land-based
 - Supporting healthy soil:
 - USDA-NRCS has identified 4 soil health principles:
 - Maximize continuous living roots
 - Minimize disturbances
 - Maximize soil cover
 - Maximize biodiversity
 - Great potential to reduce CO2 emissions by using land management and grazing practice changes
 - No-till
 - Compost spreading
 - Connecticut is investing in climate smart agriculture
 - HB5506: updated Department of Agriculture grant program to support farmers who employ climate smart agriculture methods
 - HB5506:
 - Goes into effect Oct. 1
 - Commissioner can pay farmers up front to reduce costs
 - Allows for purchase of farm equipment
 - Farmers can also use funds to pay for technical assistance
 - Updates the definition of agriculture restoration practices to include climate smart practices, including in urban communities
 - Allots \$14 million for climate smart agriculture

- \$7 million for climate smart farming
 - \$7 million to replenish the farmland restoration and climate resiliency grant program
- Comments and Questions:
 - **Commissioner Hurlburt:** Notes Jim Hyde, USDA, had a conflict, but has sent notes to be included in the minutes (*see below*)
 - **Lillian Ruiz:** Notes that NACD Action regionally will focus on climate smart agriculture and communications at the state level
 - **Andrea Urbano:** The definition of climate smart agriculture included sequestering carbon, but not storing. Can Chelsea expand on that?
 - Answer: **Chelsea Gazillo:** Unsure why USDA did not include carbon storage
 - **Kip Kolesinskas:** Emphasizes that these practices will continue to evolve and don't include all adaptation and resiliency practices that we would like to see right now
 - **Commissioner Hurlburt:** In absence of congressional action, USDA has been trying to pull together things to create a similar outcome, but it isn't as robust as we'd like
 - Question from **Francia Alvarez:** Are nurseries eligible for funding?
 - Answer: **Commissioner Hurlburt:** Potentially yes, as they can incorporate climate smart practices
 - **Andrea Urbano:** Has any funding been allocated to incentivize implementation of practices (490 affiliated incentive)
 - **Commissioner Hurlburt:** asks Joan Nichols to answer
 - **Joan Nichols:** 490 provides tax benefit to farmland owners and farms. It's effective, but it's challenging because it is administered by local assessors, and it is difficult to not make things harder for them.
 - **Eric Hammerling:** Can they receive more information on what is expected of working group members and how previous research will be used?
 - Answer: **Commissioner Hurlburt:** 2022 convening of the working group gives us the opportunity to continue outstanding work and build from previous work. Also notes the report requirement from Commissioner Dykes. Lastly, notes there is room for policy sub-groups to form.
 - **Chris Martin:** Part of the working group priorities will be driving where there is room for improvement
 - **Rebecca French,** Director, Office of Climate Planning: gives overview of legislation that came out of previous GC3 process
 - **Lisa Hayden:** In forestry sector there is significant potential to reduce emissions through forest conservation, improved reforestation practices, replacing CO2-intensive materials with more wood-based practices in mid-rise buildings and other studies are coming to light

Presentation, Department of Agriculture, Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry Grant Program: Commissioner Bryan Hurlburt

- Shared Department of Agriculture mission
- Reiterated funding announcement and clarified it is released in quarterly allotments
- Presentation Summary:
 - Value of climate smart agriculture practices:
 - Notes implementing climate smart agriculture increases the initial cost of production due to purchasing equipment or changing strategies that may reduce yield
 - These costs will balance out over time
 - Important to remember that farms are businesses that must be supported in order to remain viable
 - **Farmland Restoration and Climate Resiliency Plan: Small grants**
 - Specific farm considerations
 - \$20,000 cap or 50% of project cost share
 - Can advance costs
 - Add new considerations, like improvement of water sources
 - Examples of what funding can go to:
 - Technical assistance:
 - Soil scientists or consultants paid through funding
 - Purchasing new equipment
 - Funding to retrofit or add alternative energy production
 - Can place solar array on working land or marginal land
 - Implement anaerobic digester support
 - Integration of plastic alternatives to reduce use of fossil fuel products
 - **Farmland Restoration and Climate Resiliency Plan: Large grants**
 - Broader scope of funding than farm program
 - No match requirements and no maximum cap
 - Grant categories: Nonprofit, Soil and Water Conservation District, UCONN, Municipality Considerations
 - **New, Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry Nonprofit Grant Program Proposal:**
 - Will be announced in October with disbursements in Quarter 1, 2023
 - Nonprofit grant program proposal: \$1.5 million
 - 2 awards for long-term projects that require multi-year assistance
 - Nonprofit grant program proposal: \$500,000
 - Regional applications
 - 4 awards for shorter term projects geared towards small farms or organizations
- Comments and Questions:

- Commissioner Hurlburt: Is 500k too large and should we consider smaller allotments? Goal is to spend down \$7 million in one fiscal year.
 - Answer: Kat Morris via chat: Microgrants are useful if there is consideration for a third, smaller category
- Commissioner Hurlburt: Forestry isn't specifically mentioned, but is eligible and there will be a multi-disciplinary board to determine approved projects since it falls outside the Department of Agriculture's expertise
- Commissioner Hurlburt: Announcement of an Environmental Analyst 2 position to lead the grant effort

Public Comments: *For full comments please see the Zoom recording and/or audio transcript*

- **Robert Maddox:**

- Owns 65-acre PDR farm (first protected organic farm in the state) but, like others, they are facing increasing costs despite reimbursement programs attempting to alleviate it
- Suggestion: provide a 200% reimbursement grant to encourage more certified organic farms and alleviate costs

- **Adam Matlock, Winnett Food Forest:**

- Practicing regenerative agriculture
- Curious if any of the funding or initiatives proposed can be utilized by smaller scale. Is there a minimum parcel of land?
- Small scale projects can lead to more food security and contribute to state resiliency
- Commissioner Hurlburt responded: any size land is eligible, but there is a cap and match requirement, so he encourages smaller operations to join together and apply to the new, proposed grant

Discussion of Climate Smart Agriculture Practices: *For full comments please see the Zoom recording and/or audio transcript*

- **Kip Kolesinskas:** Suggests some of the initial \$7 million could go to capacity. For instance, we don't have in-state capacity to do a high-volume of soil testing, but we could train additional organizations
- **Mark Ashton:** Weak spots for these kinds of initiatives tend to be monitoring implementation. Do the grant programs need to be monitored by UCONN or other scientific institutions that can attest to incremental benefits by auditing program?
- **Lilian Ruiz:** Encourages working group members and other attendees to keep efforts uniform and use a "blanket" method of everyone working at once
- **Commissioner Hurlburt:** Key to not lose the large farms, but to strike a balance between supporting the large and small farms
- **Jim Hyde:** *Written comments submitted directly to Co-chairs and attached below.*

- Missing the ease of old cyclical payments from the FSA/NRCS system from the 80's/90's; farms reported their acres and then payment went through for programs they selected
- For farmer's sake, it is worth discussing if we can tie the new programs into something existing, so information connects and there aren't multiple reports to different agencies/programs
- There is agreement that the large farms are what allow the small farms to have access to the agriculture services. All farms have access to programs and funds.
- Discussion on making funds available for Market Loss or the cost of transition from one system to a new system. For example, transitioning from conventional till to no-till, there can be a learning curve, in addition to the direct costs of new or different equipment. The potential or risk of market loss should be considered.
- Very strong interest in direct payments to help cover costs of new equipment for farms interested in making changes.
- Progressive farming includes:
 - Keeping soils covered
 - Thinking of soils as a living ecosystem
 - Cover crops – late termination for increased root growth/soil benefits, nutrient recovery
 - No-till for soil ecosystem and erosion
 - Drag lines for reduced soil compaction (greatly increasing problem with larger equipment and time demands)
- Education component: Allocating money to hire teachers or consultants for field time/face time for 1:1 trouble shooting to teach farms new methods or technologies.
 - New equipment must be combined with training to be efficient and to take the burden off the farm, which has competing priorities
 - Putting money in the programs that would give someone the time and space to be able to teach and mentor farms would help the learning curve and reduce the acceptance time among the farm community
- Demonstration plots: As part of the education to help farmers teach farmers about new or different methods to manage soils, crops, animals, water.
 - Having a designated place set up that is doing it right, or understands how to do these new things, where farms can go, talk, call up for advice or information.
- Energy Panels (solar) and battery packs: Some farms think energy production and storage on farms (roofs, not land) would be something progressive and potentially helpful for both farms and society.

Closing Comments: Kayleigh Royston, Designee of Commissioner Hurlburt

- Acknowledged discussion in the chat related to indigenous involvement in climate smart agriculture initiatives
- Noted the next meeting will have a forestry focus

Meeting Adjourned

Resources

1. [Agenda](#)
2. [Link to slides and recording](#)
3. [Climate Smart Agriculture and Forestry \(CSAF\) Mitigation Practice List](#)
4. [Climate Solutions Newsletter](#)
5. [Sub-group Reports](#)
6. [PRFCT Future Report](#)
7. [Executive Order 21-3](#)
8. [GC3 Phase 1 Report, 2021](#)
9. [Send additional comments or questions](#)

Chat Record

00:23:29 Jason White: Jason White, Director, CT Agricultural Experiment Station (CAES). Working Group Member

00:23:32 Hannah Reichle: Hannah Reichle - MetroCOG Regional Planner

00:23:44 Lori Brown CTLCV: Lori Brown, Executive Director, CT League of Conservation Voters

00:23:49 Chelsea Gazillo WLA/AFT: Chelsea Gazillo, Working Lands Alliance/American Farmland Trust - Working Group Member

00:23:57 Eric Hammerling, CFPA: Hi Everyone, Eric Hammerling, Executive Director, Connecticut Forest & Park Association, WG Member

00:24:07 Juliet Cain: Juliet Cain, Chair Darien Pollinator Pathway

00:24:10 Joan Nichols: Joan Nichols, Executive Director, CT Farm Bureau Association, Member

00:24:10 Lilian Ruiz: Lilian Ruiz, Council on Soil and Water Conservation, group member.

00:24:18 Anna Shugrue: Anna Shugrue - NECCOG Regional Planner, working group member

00:24:34 kip kolesinskas: Kip Kolesinskas, Co-Chair Working lands Alliance, Conservation consultant

00:24:37 Amanda Fargo-Johnson: Amanda Fargo-Johnson, CT Resource Conservation & Development - working group member

00:24:54 Jamie Potters, American Farmland Trust: Jamie Potters, American Farmland Trust

00:25:06 Kayleigh Royston: Kayleigh Royston, Ph.D. -Connecticut Department of Agriculture

00:25:14 Andrea Urbano, CT DEEP Forestry: Andrea Urbano, CT DEEP Division of Forestry Private and Municipal Lands Unit, WG member

00:25:46 Rebecca French: Rebecca French, Director Office of Climate Planning, CT Dept. of Energy & Environmental Protection - assisting with working group coordination for the GC3.

00:27:13 Robert Fahey: Robert Fahey, Associate Professor, University of Connecticut, Department of Natural Resources and the Environment

00:27:21 Sarah Watson, CT DEEP Office of Climate Planning - DEEP Liaison: Sarah Watson, Senior Analyst in Office of Climate Planning, CT DEEP. DEEP Liaison for the Working Group.

00:27:25 Rebecca French: For working group members of Climate Smart Agriculture & Forestry - please introduce yourself in the chat

00:27:51 Lisa Hayden: Lisa Hayden, Outreach Manager, New England Forestry Foundation

00:30:12 Rebecca French: Agenda for today's meeting: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/climatechange/GC3/GC3-2022-agendas-and-minutes/GC3_Climate-Smart-Agriculture_Forestry-Agenda-090122.pdf

00:31:56 Frank Cervo - CT DEEP Forestry: Frank Cervo (he/his), Service Forester, DEEP Forestry, Private & Municipal Lands

00:32:23 Michael Wrobel: Michael Wrobel

00:33:39 Hallie Mertzger4: There seems to be growing resistance to using wood products in place of high carbon-emitting substances such as concrete, steel, and plastic. How should the state respond?

00:33:42 Michael Wrobel: Michael Wrobel President of the Connecticut Greenhouse Growers Association

00:37:24 Sarah Watson, CT DEEP Office of Climate Planning - DEEP Liaison: For those joining late, if you are a working group member, please introduce yourself in the chat. There will be a public comment period toward the end of this meeting and you can sign up to speak by sending me a direct message.

00:38:01 Mark Ashton: Mark Ashton - Yale

00:38:57 David Irvin: David Irvin, I have been a forester for 32 years, 26 of those years with the DEEP Forestry Division, responsible for management of a few state forests in Western Connecticut.

00:42:45 Bryan Hurlburt: For everyone's awareness, Jim Hyde is USDA NRCS's representative to this Working Group. He had a prior commitment, but as you can see, it is critically important that NRCS plays a role in any state effort.

00:43:26 Andrea Urbano, CT DEEP Forestry: can you speak to why the definition of climate smart agriculture includes sequestering carbon and not storing carbon? Is there a distinction is climate smart agricultural practices that enhance sequestration versus increase carbon storage?

00:44:48 Latha Swamy, City of New Haven: Latha Swamy, Director of Food & Agriculture Policy for the City of New Haven (which is a unique municipal position - only ~20 similar positions exist in the country).

00:46:38 Rebecca French: All slides and a recording of the meeting will be available here: <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Climate-Change/GC3/Working-Group-Meetings-2022>

00:47:20 Chelsea Gazillo WLA/AFT:
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/PA_NRCSConsumption/download?cid=nrcseprd1905826&ext=pdf

00:49:02 Lilian Ruiz: Great presentation Chelsea, great summary of such a complex scenario. Looking forward to the work ahead.

00:50:05 Kat Morris | IJJA Fellow | she/her: what is the difference between the two?

00:50:26 Chelsea Gazillo WLA/AFT:
https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/wps/PA_NRCSConsumption/download?cid=nrcseprd1905826&ext=pdf

00:50:34 Lilian Ruiz: Storing can be just "retaining"

00:50:54 Amy B. Paterson - CLCC: Will there be information presented for the record on threats to forestland?

00:51:26 Ann Frank Zitkus: I am advocating for Ecosystem Service Payments for Landowners for services provided by their living land: carbon storage; water retention and purification; clean air creation and purification, also biodiversity preservation, and more. Our living forests are a wealth that needs to have a monetary value placed on their living services. Tools measuring carbon storage must be made available. DEEP should increase reserves of forest preserved to become Old Growth (Old Forest Management) to maximize carbon storage and sequestration, ecosystem services, and biodiversity preservation.

Agriculture: promote Silvopastoralism and incorporating trees throughout agriculture practices

About construction: less tear-downs; more renovations, more repurposing, more recycling of wood materials. Utilize low-carbon concrete that is available now, promote zero-emissions concrete creation. Thank you

00:52:04 Frank Cervo - CT DEEP Forestry: Carbon sequestration is the process by which carbon is removed from the atmosphere, whereas carbon storage is the process by which carbon is held somewhere other than in the atmosphere

00:52:12 Andrea Urbano, CT DEEP Forestry: good question, Kat! Carbon sequestration is the process of taking C out of the atmosphere. in a vegetative system, this occurs through/by photosynthesis. Carbon storage refers to the amount of carbon retained in a specific carbon pool

00:52:32 Kat Morris | IJJA Fellow | she/her: thank you!

00:52:44 Chelsea Gazillo WLA/AFT: Here is also WLA's press release on the passage of the budget: <https://workinglandsalliance.org/working-lands-alliance-a-project-of-the-american-farmland-trust-statement-on-the-passage-of-connecticuts-adjustments-for-the-2023-biennium-budget/>

00:53:50 Chelsea Gazillo WLA/AFT: I will add that we used the USDA-NRCS definition of climate-smart ag and forestry in our legislation this year but it does not mean we could not go back and create a state definition of climate-smart ag and forestry

00:55:18 Kat Morris | IJJA Fellow | she/her: is this working group working on policy and non-policy ways to address barriers for small urban farms

00:57:24 Chelsea Gazillo WLA/AFT: this working group could discuss those barriers and come up with recommendations.

00:59:24 Amanda Fargo-Johnson: We would be in favor of a state definition on climate smart agriculture so that energy resiliency issues are not excluded.

01:01:09 David Irvin: The majority of our state forests are designated areas that will not be a part of active management, as part of the forest inventory and management plan development process. Having professional foresters on the ground to make these decisions helps DEEP to choose the right areas to set aside and forest stands that are healthy and beneficial for long-term storage, rather than decision-making that could be more arbitrary. But management of forests is an important part of carbon sequestering and storage, and DEEP has to responsibly manage for declining ecosystems and more rare wildlife habitat, as well as provide a supply of sustainable wood for forest products. Young forests continue to be greatly lacking in our state and these other objectives cannot be ignored.

01:01:56 Chelsea Gazillo WLA/AFT: all good questions, Eric!

01:02:57 Luke Anderson (they/them) - 350CT & UVM Food Systems MS Program:

I appreciated Chelsea's acknowledgment that many of the named practices to support healthy soil are agroecological practices that have been used by Indigenous peoples on these lands for millennia. Given the overlap of Indigenous justice and food sovereignty and climate resilient agriculture, I'd be interested to hear from Commissioner Hurlburt's presentation about what efforts if any have been taken to make room for Indigenous leadership in the push for climate smart ag in our state and/or what resources might be dedicated to helping our state's Indigenous populations re-establish traditional growing practices.

01:04:58 Ann Frank Zitkus: Ecosystem Service Payments would help landowners get an income by keeping their land and forests in natural condition instead of selling for development.

DEEP should have a separate division of Forest Ecology that prioritizes forests for their Natural Processes and Ecosystem Services, keeps forests living to become Old Growth.

01:05:29 Kat Morris | IJJA Fellow | she/her: when might the next meeting be?

01:06:05 Joan Nichols CT Farm Bureau: Related to PA 490...the Open Space classification has significant value but is underutilized because it is a municipal option of which only about 45 towns have adopted. Welcome furthering the discussion on 490.

01:06:06 Kat Morris | IJJA Fellow | she/her: can timing consider the work hours of farmers

01:06:29 Ann Frank Zitkus: Andrea Urbano has great observations. PA 490 should be enhanced to give state-funded credits or payments to landowners, not just reduce the amount of taxes they pay.

01:06:59 Rebecca French: @kat and everyone. Office of Climate Planning will send out meeting invites to working group members and all meetings will be noticed to the public in the Climate Solutions newsletter and on the Secretary of State website per state requirements.

01:08:01 Rebecca French: Sign up (<https://confirmsubscription.com/h/j/19E73F2E0479003B>) for the Climate Solutions Newsletter. Check the Climate Solutions box to receive climate change and GC3 news, information, and updates.

01:10:33 David Irvin: Foresters in DEEP are as close to forest ecologists that I am aware of. Designation and managing old forestland management areas are a part of the program of management of these units of state forest. This may include inaccessible and inoperable areas, those with special unique character, and any areas that show specific old

growth character or are likely to develop such. We are all getting trained both in "old growth" and carbon storage and sequestration on a regular basis today.

01:11:09 Amy B. Paterson - CLCC: Thanks, Eric! For those who are interested reports from the sub-groups of the GC3 Working and Natural Lands Working Group are available here: <https://portal.ct.gov/DEEP/Climate-Change/GC3/GC3-Working-group-reports>

01:11:55 Eric Hammerling, CFPA: PRFCT Future Report: <https://www.ctwoodlands.org/sites/default/files//FINAL%20PRFCT%20Future%20Working%20Group%20Recommendations%2012.14.21.pdf>

01:12:24 Ann Frank Zitkus: There is an important misunderstanding about carbon sequestration often stated. However, most scientists agree that carbon sequestration is generally understandable as a function of the amount of leaves in the forest. Thus old forests have far higher sequestration and storage than new forests or scrub shrub.

01:12:53 Sarah Watson, CT DEEP Office of Climate Planning - DEEP Liaison: Link to Executive Order 21-3 site: <https://portal.ct.gov/ConnecticutClimateAction/Executive-Order/Executive-Order-No-21-3>

01:14:11 Rebecca French, CT DEEP, Climate Planning: Here is the Governor's Council on Climate Change recommendations from the 2020 working group process: https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/DEEP/climatechange/GC3/GC3_Phase1_Report_Jan2021.pdf

01:15:15 Andrea Urbano, CT DEEP Forestry: Thank you Ann. I like your idea of ecosystem service payments. It's important to find ways to make climate smart practices more feasible for landowners with the goal of keeping our farms and forests in tact. As David mentioned, DEEP Forestry does employ passive management (makes informed decisions based on forestry data and other considerations to designate forested acreage to function as reserves/controls/no harvested timber)- quite a bit to my understanding. But active forest management is also critical in this era of change to promote forest resilience, climate change mitigation benefits, and has been proven effective in expediting old-growth forest conditions. To a point made earlier, active forestry can also play a critical role in the States' investment in renewable resources. Locally sourced wood is renewable and sustainable :)

01:18:01 David Irvin: There is certainly no one size fits all prescription for forest land that is best for carbon. It is an oversimplification. A diverse forest that includes different age classes and does not exclude species and ecosystems that are disturbance-dependent is best for a healthy forest environment and climate change mitigation. This is something that forest professionals have to balance and keep in mind at all times.

01:18:07 Andrea Urbano, CT DEEP Forestry: Ann, since photosynthesis (the process through which carbon is sequestered) occurs through foliage, it is important to have healthy tree crowns and good live crown ratios. However carbon sequestration rates are actually greatest in younger forests, as this is when trees and vegetation grow most rapidly. Carbon storage rates tend to be greatest in older forests. This is because roughly 50% of a tree's wood/biomass is carbon.

01:19:26 Amy B. Paterson - CLCC: I need to drop off early to attend an event (and here's public congrats to DEEP and partners on the Whip-Poor-Will Woods Forest Legacy Program project!) Thanks for this opportunity. I look forward to the next meeting.

01:23:23 Ann Frank Zitkus: Andrea, the rate of growth of a small tree is of course fast, but the amount of growth of large trees is so much larger. So this equates to greater sequestration in the larger growing tree. But I very much appreciate your great point about supporting landowners by giving them an incentive to keep their land providing ecosystem services.

01:24:52 Hallie Mertzger4: Is there a point at which tree growth stops and senescence begins? Presumably it would depend on species and local habitat conditions.

01:26:22 Kat Morris | IIJA Fellow | she/her: is there a request minimum

01:26:30 Kat Morris | IIJA Fellow | she/her: maximum

01:27:28 Kat Morris | IIJA Fellow | she/her: who is the intended prime candidate for successful application

01:27:56 David Irvin: Ann, be sure to keep in mind that a larger tree is going to certainly sequester more than a tiny sapling, but what you would really be comparing is space, not individual trees. There are FAR more small trees per acre than large older growth trees. So it's not a one to one comparison. You may have a space with a few old trees, but three times as many pole-size trees, and hundreds of saplings. It is important to maintain a healthy and diverse forest across the landscape with older forests for long-term storage (as long as they are healthy and naturally long-lived tree species), and younger forests for sequestration.

01:27:56 Frank Cervo - CT DEEP Forestry: There are many, many factors which influence forest carbon sequestration and storage rates. We, as a working group, will consider all of these things in our recommendations and actions going forward. Thank you, Ann, for your comments.

01:28:14 Kat Morris | IIJA Fellow | she/her: will they have to be legally declared a non-profit

01:28:39 Kat Morris | IIJA Fellow | she/her: or would a fiscal sponsor suffice

01:30:03 Ann Frank Zitkus: In a living forest, as an old tree declines, new growth is supported and promoted. And new habitat is provided. Old Growth forest in Connecticut is almost non-existent; we should provide for much more forest to be reserved to become Old Growth.

01:30:04 Lisa Hayden: Are only active agricultural landowners eligible for these programs? Many woodland owners do not have farmland on their property or are actively managing their land for timber - Is there some part of the program they would be eligible for?

01:31:06 Lisa Hayden: Sorry - Many owners are not actively managing their forest for timber... so would they be included?

01:31:08 kip kolesinskas: Forest landowners can and do participate in NRCS conservation programs. There may be some practices that they currently don't cover

01:31:11 Eric Hammerling, CFPA: Would "establish equipment sharing programs" funding include actual purchases of equipment? And could it include equipment that might help improve forestry practices as Lisa H mentioned?

01:34:19 David Irvin: I agree, Ann! But I believe I may have failed to communicate that DEEP is doing that. It must be done with proper on the ground analysis of resources. Most of our forests in Connecticut average 100-120 years of age at this time and are well on their way to that potential. Feel free to reach out directly to our Division, including myself personally, if you wish, david.irvin@ct.gov, as a starting point. It may be interesting to even

plan a field visit together to discuss the many thoughts and views we certainly share in common.

01:35:53 Kat Morris | IJJA Fellow | she/her: microgrants are always useful if there could be a third, smaller category

01:38:09 Luke Anderson (they/them) - 350CT & UVM Food Systems MS Program:
I want to reiterate my question from earlier about whether there's been any effort to hold space for leadership and allocate resources for the Indigenous populations of our state

01:38:37 Kat Morris | IJJA Fellow | she/her: +++

01:40:47 Rebecca French, CT DEEP, Climate Planning: We encourage working group members to continue posting comments and questions in the chat in the interest of time and we can follow up after the meeting.

01:47:00 Leigh Whittinghill: UConn was mentioned specifically under one of the programs. I am wondering what types of projects you envision coming out of UConn (extension vs research) and if the language specifically states UConn or includes other research and outreach institutions?

01:49:25 Jason White, CAES: I have to hop off for another meeting

01:51:42 Amanda Fargo-Johnson: Due to timing today where should we send our comments and suggestions on this topic?

01:51:51 Luke Anderson (they/them) - 350CT & UVM Food Systems MS Program:
Market regulations to increase accessibility of non-hybridized seed and resources to help farmers practice seed saving so that seeds can actually adapt over time to the changing climate of our region is also critical to climate-smart ag, would reduce costs to farmers in the long run (as would other agroecological practices to reduce farmers' dependencies on ag corporations for new farm inputs), and would help promote biodiversity of the region, one of the planetary boundaries we're accelerating past largely as a result of the agricultural practices of our food system. Prioritizing leadership of Indigenous seed keepers in our state and region in doing this is vital too since Indigenous populations protect 80% of the world's biodiversity and in CT in particular many towns pushed their communities off their lands under settlers' rationale that they weren't using land as "efficiently" as the industrial-style practices that have proliferated and decimated ecologies since.

01:52:13 kip kolesinskas: I would certainly include the ag experiment station in all aspects of this initiative, proposals, implementation.

01:52:14 Alanis Allen, DEEP Office of Climate Planning: Send comments to DEEP.ClimateChange@ct.gov

01:52:55 Amanda Fargo-Johnson: Thanks, I need to jump off. I'll follow up

01:54:22 Ann Frank Zitkus: Luke Anderson has an important message; we can and should include indigenous people and learn from indigenous peoples' practices.

01:55:44 Luke Anderson (they/them) - 350CT & UVM Food Systems MS Program:
I also want to call attention to the fact that transitions to fossil gas, biofuels, and other carbon and other GHG-emitting energy sources are not the "climate smart" measures they were presented to be. Clean fossil fuels are a myth.

01:56:48 Joan Nichols CT Farm Bureau: Can there be a component similar to the NE SARE grants whereby the outcome and benefit of the projects must be shared with other producers?

01:57:29 Lilian Ruiz: I do not mean to concentrate the funds- but to concentrate the ACTIONS- get a good topic/action/effort and apply widely on all landscapes.

01:57:50 Chelsea Gazillo WLA/AFT: soil and water conservation districts

01:57:59 Kat Morris | IJJA Fellow | she/her: noting Luke's comment on Indigenous leadership rather than public comment participation.

01:58:13 Luke Anderson (they/them) - 350CT & UVM Food Systems MS Program:
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01:58:42 Andrea Urbano, CT DEEP Forestry: It would behoove us to integrate forestry practices, or ensure at least that we target forest landowners in our marketing, etc. efforts to make applicants clearly aware that this applies to and benefits forest landowners.

01:59:09 Eric Hammerling, CFPA: Do we have a next meeting date?

01:59:32 Sarah Watson, CT DEEP Office of Climate Planning - DEEP Liaison: Send comments to DEEP.ClimateChange@ct.gov

01:59:50 kip kolesinskas: hope the presentations will be posted soon

02:00:14 Rebecca French, CT DEEP, Climate Planning: We will send presentations to all attendees/registrants ASAP

02:00:52 Scott Rogers: Need to run. Thanks for the information.

02:01:47 Luke Anderson (they/them) - 350CT & UVM Food Systems MS Program:
Appreciate it. Thanks!

02:03:48 Ann Frank Zitkus: who should we send agenda suggestions to?

02:04:05 Alanis Allen, DEEP Office of Climate Planning:
DEEP.ClimateChange@ct.gov

02:04:08 Joan Nichols CT Farm Bureau: Thank you! Good meeting and great presentations.

02:04:35 Lilian Ruiz: Wonderful meeting. Thank you.

02:04:36 Cheryl Cappiali: Thanks everyone. Great meeting

02:04:50 Hallie Mertzger4: Thanks!

02:05:02 Michael Wrobel: thank you excellent meeting!

02:05:06 Andrea Urbano, CT DEEP Forestry: Thank you all!

02:05:07 Chelsea Gazillo WLA/AFT: thanks everyone!

Subject: RE: [External Email]Reminder: Climate Smart Ag. and Forestry Working Group, 9/1
Date: Tuesday, August 30, 2022 at 7:48:25 AM Eastern Daylight Time
From: Hyde, James - NRCS, Tolland CT
To: Hurlburt, Bryan, Trumble, Mason, Martin, Christopher, Royston, Kayleigh, French, Rebecca, Watson, Sarah, Allen, Alanis, Morgart, Thomas - NRCS, Tolland, CT
Attachments: image001.png, image002.png

EXTERNAL EMAIL: This email originated from outside of the organization. Do not click any links or open any attachments unless you trust the sender and know the content is safe.

Good morning Everyone,

I'm responding to this email to mention I am extremely interested in this work and would very much like to participate this Thur (9/1) from 11-12:30, but I am on training for the week and unable to get away for this meeting.

I have been talking to farms about this workgroups presence, efforts, and interests. The farms are very interested and curious to learn more about the program and where things might go, what a program might offer in both substance and finance. Some of the initial notes they mentioned thought could be helpful for the program

(these are fairly raw notes/unfiltered notes)

- The old cyclical payments from the old FSA/NRCS system from the 80's/90's when farms reported their acres and then payment went through for programs they'd signed up for seemed like a good idea, wish it could be that simple again
- Wondered if it could be tied to reporting acres with an existing program they already do so they don't have another program to chase or keep track of; tie the new programs into something existing so information connects and not multiple reporting to different agencies/programs.
- At mention of preference for small farms or limited funds for very large farms, there was some thought, but they agreed the large farms are what allow the smalls farms to have access to the ag services. Without the large farms around and supported, the direct and indirect farm services would be much more difficult for the small farms to get. They thought it important that all farms have access to programs and funds.
- Discussion on making funds available for Market Loss or the cost of change to transition from one system to a new system. For example, transitioning from conventional till to no-till, there can be a learning curve, in addition to the direct costs of new or different equipment. The potential or risk of market loss should be considered.
- Progressive Farming – very strong interest in direct payments to help cover costs of new equipment for farms interested in making changes. They believe in
 - Keeping soils covered
 - Thinking of soils as a living ecosystem
 - Cover crops – late termination for increased root growth/soil benefits, nutrient recovery

- No-till for soil ecosystem and erosion
- Drag lines for reduced soil compaction (greatly increasing problem with larger equipment and time demands)
- Education component: putting monies in programs to hire teachers or consultants field time and face time for 1:1 trouble shooting to teach farms new methods or technologies. It's nice/helpful to get monies to purchase equipment or encourage new managements, but without someone to help guide how to make the changes, its all on the farm to teach themselves and that's getting harder to do with all the existing demands for their time already. Putting money in the programs that would give someone the time and space to be able to teach and mentor farms would help the learning curve and reduce the acceptance time among the farm community.
 - Demonstration plots – as part of the education to help farmers teach farmers about new or different methods to manage soils, crops, animals, water. Having a designated place set up that is doing it right, or understands how to do these new things, where farms can go, talk, call up for advice or information.
- Energy Panels (solar) and battery packs – a couple of the farms mentioned their experience with solar and with energy and thought energy production and storage on farms (roofs, not land) would be something progressive and potentially helpful for both farms and society.

Jim Hyde
 State Agronomist
 USDA NRCS
 344 Merrow Road, Suite A
 Tolland, CT 06084
 860-871-4022 (o)



CERTIFIED
CROP ADVISER



nutrient
stewardship

From: Beath, Hannah <Hannah.Beath@ct.gov> **On Behalf Of** DEEP ClimateChange

Sent: Monday, August 29, 2022 3:57 PM

Cc: Hurlburt, Bryan <Bryan.Hurlburt@ct.gov>; Trumble, Mason <Mason.Trumble@ct.gov>; Christopher Martin <christopher.martin@ct.gov>; Royston, Kayleigh <Kayleigh.Royston@ct.gov>; French, Rebecca <Rebecca.French@ct.gov>; Watson, Sarah <Sarah.Watson@ct.gov>; Allen, Alanis <Alanis.Allen@ct.gov>

Subject: [External Email]Reminder: Climate Smart Ag. and Forestry Working Group, 9/1

[External Email]

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Good afternoon,