

BACKGROUND & AUDIENCES

The Northern Forest is a 30-million-acre, largely intact forest ecosystem spanning northern Maine, New Hampshire, Vermont, and New York.



The region is home to more than 2 million people, many in rural communities.



Local citizens face critical land use and management decisions in the wake of unprecedented environmental and economic changes.

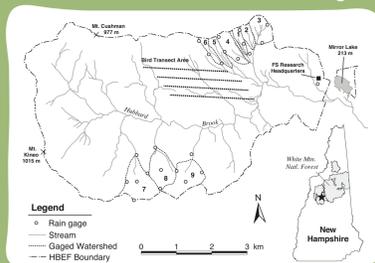
In the heart of the Northern Forest lies the Hubbard Brook Experimental Forest, a long term ecological research (LTER) site managed by the USDA Forest Service.



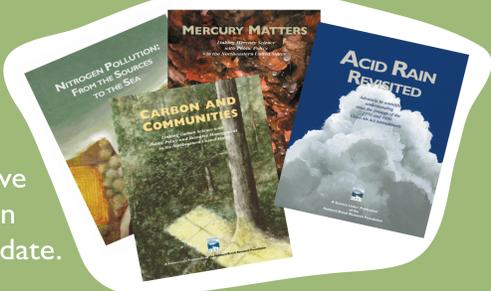
Here, researchers from all over the world study the structure and function of the forest ecosystem.

Major research themes:

- climate change
- air pollution
- water
- invasive pests and diseases
- extreme weather events

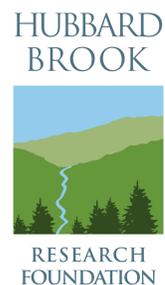


While Hubbard Brook scientists have a long track record of engagement with policymakers, they have had limited interaction with local citizens to date.



Forest Science Dialogues

DRL #1322871



A pathways project to develop and test mechanisms for dialogue-based engagement between ecosystem scientists and local citizens in the rural Northeast.



MAJOR ACTIVITIES

Hubbard Brook Roundtables

- Needs Assessment Roundtable
- Climate Change Roundtable
- Local Decision-Maker Roundtable

Training for Scientists

- PES Workshop
- AAAS Sci Comm Workshop

Training for Conveners

- Facilitation workshop
- Investigation of other PES practices

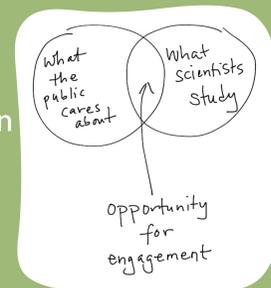
Co-Designed Post-Dialogue Activities

- Systematic review of social science data
- Survey of community of scientists
- Climate Adaptation Workshop
- Climate Change Fact Sheet for Landowners
- Development of engagement infrastructure: website, social media, scientists speakers bureau

- 1-2-day facilitated dialogue sessions
- 20-30 invited participants: "network gatekeepers"
- Pre-dialogue interviews and synthesis report to inform agenda
- Co-designed outcome activities or products to reach wider audiences
- Post-dialogue report

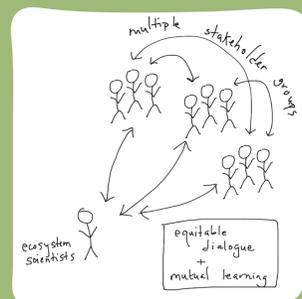
GOALS

To bridge the gap between the scientists who study the Northern Forest and the people who live in and depend on this ecosystem.



To support mutual learning through dialogue:

- For ecosystem scientists to increase their knowledge, understanding, and awareness of the perspectives, values, and needs of local citizens.



- For local citizens to increase their knowledge, understanding, and awareness of the science of the surrounding environment.

To work with scientists and local community leaders to co-design and test mechanisms for Public Engagement with Science (PES) that are scalable and reproducible at other research sites.

LEADERSHIP & PARTNERS

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WHAT WE ARE LEARNING

We are finding three modes of dialogue practice:

I. Formative dialogues that show direction.

Periodic "needs assessment" dialogues convened to inform research decisions made by ecosystem scientists and/or future directions for PES practice. Possible products: research agendas or proposals.



II. Dialogues that lead to the co-production of ecosystem knowledge with scientists and publics.

Action-oriented sessions convened to address social or environmental problems. Possible products: op-ed articles, fact sheets, white papers, policy- or stakeholder-relevant scientific syntheses.



III. Dialogues that broaden engagement and participation.

Dialogue sessions convened to build new relationships between scientists, stakeholder groups, practitioners, and community members who may be underrepresented in other PES activities. May or may not lead to products — the dialogue itself is the desired outcome.

