

Forest Conservation and Stewardship:

A joint meeting of the Heart of the Lakes and the Michigan Inter-Tribal Council

This meeting is designed to gather natural resource professionals from Michigan's tribes, land conservancies, and other organizations around a common theme— forest conservation in an era of rapid change. Emerging threats like climate change, deer browse, and forest pests can cross all ownerships and have the potential to alter our shared natural environment in profound ways over the next century. We all have a stake in learning from each other and addressing challenges cooperatively where possible. This meeting is designed to share the best available information on potential impacts on Michigan's forests and best practices on how to prepare for these changes. A day-long workshop on the second day will provide an opportunity for hands-on training, for people who want to do a deeper dive into climate change and to consider climate adaptation actions for their own real-world project.

Day 1: Emerging Issues for Michigan's Forests

9:30 **Registration & Coffee**

10:00 **Welcome & Introduction**

10:30 **Our Shared Purpose: Forest Conservation and Protection**

Dialog session to share information and discuss the different tools, opportunities, and constraints that apply to tribes, land trusts, and other organizations with regard to forest conservation and stewardship

12:00 **Lunch**

12:45 **Forest Health Issue #1: Deer Browse**

Dustin Bronson, Wisconsin DNR

1:30 **Forest Health Issue #2: Invasive Species, Pests, and Diseases**

Bob Heyd, Michigan DNR

Deb McCullough, Michigan State University

2:15 **Break**

2:45 **Forest Health Issue #3: Climate change**

Jon Fosgitt, Compass Land Consultants

3:15 **How to Prepare: Adaptation and Forest Conservation**

Stephen Handler

4:00 **Questions and Discussion**

- *Moderated discussion session with the afternoon speakers*

4:30 **Adjourn**

Day 2: Hands-on Adaptation Planning

This second day will be an active, hands-on training for a limited number of people. The goal for the day is to use the NIACS Adaptation Workbook process to identify climate change risks and adaptation actions for a real-world land management project. Through this training, participants will be able to:

- Think about site-level characteristics that will determine climate change impacts at local scales
- Identify challenges and opportunities for land management projects
- Develop actionable steps to adapt forests to changing conditions

We require participants to develop a project idea prior to this training, which will help make the best use of time. Prior to the training, we will contact participants registered for Day 2 to discuss the goals and organization of the training and answer any lingering questions. We will also work with participants to identify a project that will be used during the training. We encourage small groups of people to work together during this training, including people from different organizations!

8:00 **Registration & Coffee**

8:30 **Introduction**

Introduce participants and instructors.

Share your name, location, and a few details about the project you brought to the workshop.

Outline objectives and agenda for training.

Key Objectives:

1. *This workshop will be useful to your work*
2. *You will think about climate change at a scale that is meaningful*
3. *You'll get familiar with the Adaptation Workbook process, which will provide useful structure to a complex issue. This is a brand new issue for many land managers, so the additional structure will be helpful until considering climate change becomes second nature.*
4. *As facilitators, our role is not to steer you to the "right answer" for your projects and we don't expect that any one "right answer" exists for climate adaptation. Don't put that pressure on yourselves. Instead, think deliberately, transparently discuss your risks from climate change, and come up with adaptation actions you can support with a good rationale.*

Give a short presentation that shows how an example project completed the Adaptation Workbook start to finish.

9:00 **Adaptation Workbook Step 2: Climate Change Impacts on Land Management Projects**

Identify additional climate change impacts most relevant to each project and location.

Facilitation Notes:

Climate impacts information was already covered in a pre-workshop webinar. Give a short presentation to recap the purpose of this step and illustrate examples of how to complete Step 2 worksheets. Give people ~30 minutes to review list of regional climate impacts summarized from earlier presentations and work on Step 2 worksheet.

The purpose of Step 2 is to consider how climate change may affect a particular location given specific site conditions. Based on a review of the literature, we prepared a list of ~20 potential climate change impacts for the region. Your job is to consider how these general changes may (or may not) affect your project area. Focus specifically on what particular conditions at that specific place – such as landform, past management history, species composition, or anything else—makes it more or less vulnerable. Stress the importance of adding project-level considerations and notes to modify the regional climate impacts. The next step will focus more specifically on management – try to keep your focus on the site conditions and the place in this step.

Discuss these considerations among your team members. Then, you will provide a relative ranking of the importance of these potential impacts to your project area. Each project will get 20 “points” to distribute across these impacts based on how important they are to the site. So, for example, you can give 1 point to 20 different impacts, or you can give 10 points to your two biggest impacts. You can split them anyway that you’d like.

Dot-Voting Activity and Large-group discussion

Hang one-page sheets (1 climate impact, printed large per page) and a large map around the room while groups work.

To share the ideas from each group, we are going to give each group 21 dot stickers (different colors for each group). Allocate 20 of the dots among the impact sheets on the wall based upon your ranking of the priority of each impact. If only 3 impacts are most important to your project area, you can divide the point among those three. If 10 impacts are concerning for you, divide your points accordingly. If any of the impacts were positive, put a + mark on the dot. Use the remaining dot to locate your project location on the map.

Climate Impacts Discussion Questions:

- *Note which impacts received the most dots among all the groups. Ask the groups to explain why certain impacts were a priority for their project area. Different groups may have prioritized the same impact for different reasons!*
- *Have the groups explain how they assigned priorities to the different climate impacts. Be sure to have them explain the site-level considerations for their project area.*
- *Ask the groups to talk about interactions or overlaps they discussed among the list of climate impacts.*
- *Note any “surprises” among the group allocation of dots – did some impacts receive no votes? Where any highly-ranking impacts surprising to the facilitator? Ask the groups to explain their rationale.*
- *Let the groups ask each other questions*

10:15 **Adaptation Workbook Step 3: Challenges & Opportunities for Meeting Management Objectives**

Identify challenges and opportunities relevant to the project management objectives.

Evaluate whether it is feasible to achieve management objectives.

Facilitation Notes:

Give a short presentation to recap the purpose of this step and illustrate examples of how to complete Step 3 worksheets. Be sure to define challenges, opportunities, and feasibility. Also clearly distinguish Step 3 (focus on management objectives) from Step 2 (focus on the site or the project location).

People will want to jump ahead and start problem solving and suggesting adaptation ideas at this point. Ask them to jot those ideas down and then re-direct them to finish their feasibility rationale for their management objectives. Step 3 is where they describe their rationale for either continuing with business as usual or pursuing new and different adaptation actions.

Give participants ~30-45 mins to work on their Step 3 worksheets before explaining the activities.

Challenges and Opportunities Activity

Ask groups to select their top 3 challenges and top 3 opportunities and write those succinctly (5 words or less) on large sticky notes. Emphasize and show an example of summarizing an idea concisely and writing big so people can read it. Challenges are written on red sticky notes, and opportunities on green. Divide a wall in half and ask the groups to post their challenges and opportunities as they complete the task. Facilitators can look for common topics or themes and group the sticky notes into clusters.

Challenges and Opportunities Discussion Questions

- *Why did these challenges rise to the top of your list?*
- *Are any of your challenges “show stoppers?”*
- *How might climate change make it easier to accomplish your work?*
- *Did any opportunities surprise you?*

Feasibility Activity

Ask the groups to select three of their priority management objectives (some groups may have many objectives to consider).

Each group summarizes their management objectives on individual large sticky notes (may have to write shorthand or abbreviate).

Facilitators post a “feasibility scale” from Low to High on a wall or on the floor with blue painter’s tape or other material.

Ask the groups to arrange their management objectives according to their feasibility ratings on the Step 3 workbook. Specifically ask them to consider the near-term feasibility of their objectives (10-20 years).

Feasibility Discussion Questions

- *Ask people to explain their feasibility ratings, choosing examples from the Low, Medium, and High points on the spectrum. Make sure people explain their rationale clearly and connect the dots from specific climate impacts to site-level considerations to their management objectives.*
- *For folks with Low Feasibility objectives – will you consider modifying or re-writing your objectives?*
- *Would your feasibility ratings be different if you took a long-term outlook? (+50 yrs) Ask people to consider and re-position their sticky notes according to their long-term feasibility ratings.*

11:30 Adaptation Workbook Step 4: Identifying Adaptation Approaches and Tactics

Select potential adaptation actions from the menu of Adaptation Strategies and Approaches.

Evaluate potential adaptation tactics and decide which ones to recommend

Facilitation Notes:

Give a short presentation to recap the purpose of this step and illustrate examples of how to complete Step 4 worksheets. Be sure to define adaptation as well as the different adaptation “options” of resilience, resistance, and transition. Clearly explain the purpose of the NIACS adaptation menus and how participants should work with the strategies and approaches to develop their own specific tactics for implementation.

12:00 Lunch

1:00 Adaptation Workbook Step 4: Identifying Adaptation Approaches and Tactics - Continued

Groups continue to brainstorm and refine possible adaptation actions.

Facilitation Notes:

Give groups a lot of time for reflection and discussion on this step. Circulate and check in with groups to see what ideas they are identifying from the menus.

If groups have a hard time getting started, ask them to first identify things that they are ALREADY doing from the menus—it is important to take credit for the climate adaptation that you’re already involved in, even if you don’t directly call it adaptation. Then ask them to find items that are small tweaks or adjustments beyond business as usual. Finally ask them to identify items from the menu that would be major changes or entirely new and different actions.

Poster Session Activity:

Ask each group to summarize their adaptation ideas succinctly on a large sheet of poster paper. Show the groups a template and encourage them to get creative! (Provide markers, tape, etc.)

At a minimum, posters should include:

- *Project title*
- *Primary management objectives*
- *Priority climate change impacts, challenges, and opportunities*
- *Adaptation tactics*

Ask half of the groups to hang their posters on the wall. One representative from each group remains at the group’s poster, while everyone else has the freedom to roam and ask questions of the other groups. Encourage people to circulate and visit multiple posters! Make sure people are sharing suggestions as well as asking questions. After 15-20 minutes, ask the remaining groups to hang their posters and repeat the discussion session.

Adaptation Discussion Questions:

- *How many of the potential adaptation actions did you ultimately recommend to move forward?*

- *Of the ones that you did not select, do you think that you might implement these in the future? If so, when? Why?*
- *When you look at all of the recommended actions, do they add up and address your biggest challenges?*
- *What is common across all groups, suggesting bigger issues that need to be addressed?*

2:45 **Break**

3:15 **Adaptation Workbook Step 5: Identifying Monitoring Metrics and Evaluating Effectiveness**
Identify metrics to use to evaluate the effectiveness of adaptation actions

Facilitation Notes:

Give a short presentation to recap the purpose of this step and illustrate examples of how to complete Step 5 worksheets. Clearly explain the purpose to create a practical monitoring plan that focuses on “effectiveness” of the adaptation actions.

Give groups ~30 mins to discuss ideas and complete the Step 5 worksheets. Circulate among the groups and encourage them to be clear about criteria/thresholds for success and notes on how they might implement the monitoring plan.

Have this discussion as a large group, no activity planned for this workshop.

Monitoring Discussion Questions:

- *What things could you monitor to assess the effectiveness of your adaptation actions?*
- *What resources are available that could help you monitor the effectiveness of an adaptation action?*
- *Who might you partner with to accomplish your monitoring goals?*

4:00 **Next Steps & Wrap-up**

*Discuss opportunities for coordination, learning, or shared resources.
 Describe next steps and expectations for moving forward.*

Facilitation Notes:

Make sure people fill out evaluation forms. Tell them we run a lot of these workshops and we’re continually looking for ways to improve!

Set up a photo station or scanner if available to get copies of the project team worksheets, at least 1 clean copy per group.

Stress that NIACS will continue working with project teams beyond the workshop! We encourage people to share their ideas and project details as “adaptation demonstration projects” on www.forestadaptation.org. Show an example and explain how we’ll work with them to post their project summaries.

Thank everyone for their time!

4:30 **Adjourn**