

STAC WORKSHOP ON RISING WATER TEMPERATURES



DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS AND IMPLEMENTATION ACTIONS
INVOLVING FORESTRY

FORESTRY WORKGROUP
JUNE 1, 2022

WHAT'S NEEDED?

- Workshop discussions on January 12 and March 15 are the building blocks
- Many FWG members participated
- In particular, focus on the Implementing Actions
- Need sharper focus on who should take the Actions
- Is it practical to build these Actions in ongoing programs?
- Are the priorities right?

COLDWATER FISHERIES AND HABITATS

Recommendation: accelerate conservation to protect streams supporting healthy aquatic life, especially native brook trout

Implementing Actions:

- Prioritize protecting forested watersheds and riparian buffers with quality brook trout habitat by maintaining and enhancing current forest cover
- Promote good agricultural stewardship, including better use of cooling BMPs, to minimize impacts of agricultural land use in watershed with high quality brook trout habitat
- In priority coldwater habitat areas for conservation and restoration: develop stronger engagement with private landowners and work with local governments
- Implement habitat restoration in degraded landscapes, including reforestation...and restoration of degraded streams...while minimizing loss of mature riparian trees

RURAL WATERS AND HABITATS

Recommendation: work to strategically restore forests and aquatic habitats while promoting good agricultural stewardship practices that can reduce the amount of heated runoff being generated by farms

Implementing Actions:

- Improve forest cover throughout the landscape and ensure rivers and streams are well buffered
- Use improved Bay watershed mapping to prioritize specific headwater stream reaches where riparian buffer plantings can exert the greatest cooling impact in rural watersheds
- Use aquatic habitat restoration to improve connectivity between suitable habitat patches and improve access to thermal refugia
- Improve technical assistance and programs available to private landowners for tree planting and conservation
- Work with local government planning departments to modify codes and laws for conservation BMPs and cooling practices

URBAN WATERS AND HABITATS

Recommendation: Improve use of BMPs to reduce amount of heated runoff entering waterways, especially in underserved urban areas which historically suffer the worst heating and human health outcomes

Implementing Actions:

- Decrease amount of lawns in cities, using lawn conversation programs to increase urban tree cover
- Encourage retention and expansion of urban tree cover (both riparian and upstream), especially in underserved urban areas
- Use aquatic habitat restoration to improve connectivity between suitable habitat patches and improve access to thermal refugia
- Emphasize the multiple co-benefits of cooler BMPs...to better communicate...and access additional sources of funding.

BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

Recommendation: Work to minimize the extent to which water quality BMPs are further heating waterways and strategically use cooling BMPs to counteract the warming effects of climate change and land use where possible

Implementing Actions:

- For cooling practices whose efficacy is likely to be impacted by climate change, provide design recommendations to ensure these practices will remain resilient to likely future climate scenarios. This could include updating forestry BMP plant lists...or encouraging diversity in plant selection to hedge against potential losses to invasive pests and plants.
- Where heating BMPs are needed to effectively address water quality concerns...take a whole farm...whole landscape approach to ensure enough cooling BMPs to offset any warming attributed to heating BMPs.

