



Connection and Action in the Black River Watershed

Adirondack Climate Outreach & Resilience Network
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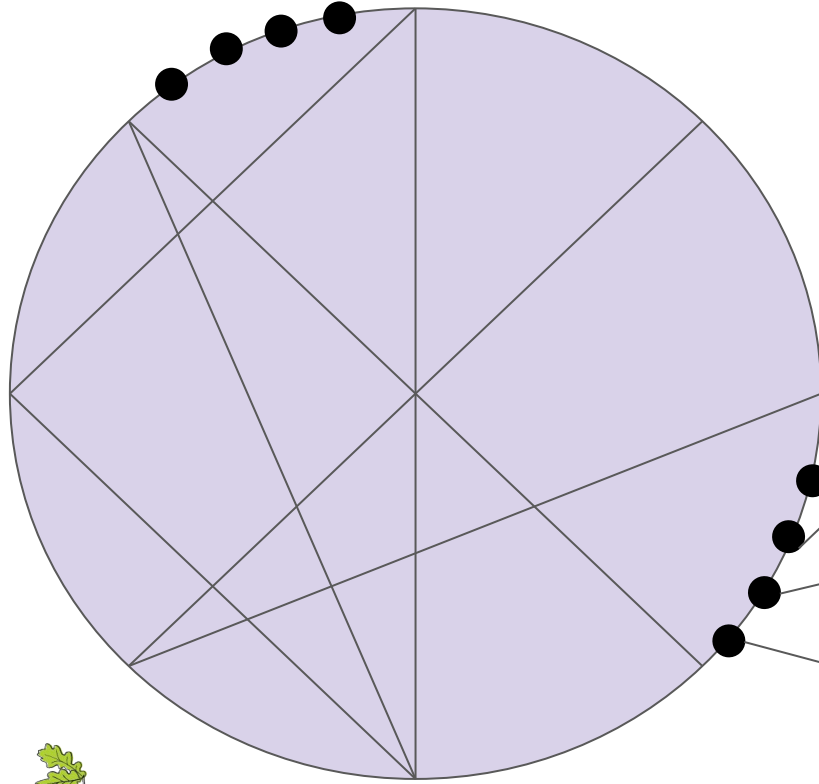
Goals

- **Create meaningful connections across diverse partners**
- **Develop a shared overview of solutions, helpers, and collaborative actions for the Black River Watershed**
- **Take action!**

Community Norms

- Share thoughts, feedback, and questions
- Listen actively
- Build on the ideas of others
- Disagree respectfully to increase understanding
- Feel free to share messy, brainstormed, not-fully-cooked ideas
- If we can't answer your question, we'll write it down and research it
- Make time for each person to participate
- **ORACLE: Only Right Answer Comes from Lived Experience**

Community Builder



1. Pick ONE pen/pencil color and 4 consecutive dots on the circle.
2. Next to your 4 dots list these four things:
 - Your name & organization, and/or the community that you live in.
 - What you do, who your organization serves.
 - Why you love what you do, and/or what you love about the watershed.
 - What challenge/issue in the Black River Watershed is at the top of your mind in this moment.

A Shared Plate of Spaghetti

- Introduce yourself (only 2 minutes per person)
- Draw lines from your dots on the circle to another person's dot as you find you have things in common
- Pay attention to any common challenges or themes that might be emerging in your group



Why you love what you do - some quotes from your shared spaghetti

Common themes: helping, improving, solving problems, creativity, connection between natural and human communities, outdoor work

- Helping the people of the village
- I love to solve puzzles
- Public serving
- I work with the people in the community
- I make a difference in people's and the Planet's quality of life
- Educating all types of people and diversity of work
- Challenge and reward of the job
- Helping people solve natural resource issues
- Love to Learn
- Working with a diverse variety of people
- People
- Protecting and working with local residents
- I love the quality of life that open spaces, rural character, and a healthy ecosystem, which this job brings to Tug Hill communities
- I have the opportunity to make change
- I love that I can help make our environment a better place for humans and flora/fauna
- Challenging and different, day to day
- I care deeply about environmental improvement and this job allows me to contribute to that.
- Being outdoors

- Renewable aspects of energy co-exist with environment
- Positive impact on future available and quality of natural resources in a way that allows for public use
- Protects residents in the floodplain from severe flooding
- Producing useful raw material for society, while protecting natural resources and long term forest sustainability
- Love connecting people with the outdoors
- I get to be part of the creative phases of projects
- Working with diverse people, solving problems
- I love being able to directly help local communities
- Working to protect places I love with people who are inspiring and passionate
- Learn new things, with with all sorts of people, impact on how NYS environmental protection is implemented
- Making communities a better place to work, live and play for all types of people
- Visible impact in community
- Insight into a wide variety of community initiatives and projects

What you love about the Black River Watershed - more quotes from your shared spaghetti

Common themes: rural, vast, and diverse landscapes; connection; home; recreation

- Love how vast an area the Black River connects
- Rural landscapes
- Watershed is home to me, it's health matters to me
- Abundant Outdoor Recreation
- The huge variety of topography and habitats
- Lots of open space
- Lots of places to kayak
- Varied landscapes
- Diverse watershed
- The beauty and tranquility
- I love the remote headwaters of the BRW!

Priority Challenges & Issues in the BRW



Work with your group to prioritize...

- ONE Black River Watershed challenge/issue from your shared circle to elevate to the whole group
- A second issue to have as back-up in case another group has the same challenge identified
- Write these in marker on the BIG yellow sticky notes

PRIORITY WATERSHED
CHALLENGE OR ISSUE

Whole Room Share Out

- Go around the room and share the challenges and issues each group prioritized

PRIORITY WATERSHED
CHALLENGE OR ISSUE

Brainstorming Solutions & Helpers

Solutions & Helpers Wall

Solutions									
Helpers existing & potential									
What I might do to help									

Common Themes from the Solutions and Helpers Wall

Solutions:

- Increased funding
- Increased communication, messaging, storytelling, case studies - make it fun, go to where the people are (community events), improve social perceptions of science
- Nature-based solutions
- Land use planning and zoning (including for off-road vehicles)
- Resiliency Hub
- Basic, robust data collection; Community (aka “Citizen) Science
- Early education - especially hands-on education

Helpers:

- “Everyone. It takes everyone.” - Tug Hill Commission, DEC, County SWCDs, teachers, museums and nature centers, grant writers, recreationists, elected officials, farmers
- “Find the local champions and help them tell their stories.”

“People Hours” that went into creating the Solutions & Helpers Wall

12 minutes x ~60 people = 720 people minutes → 720 minutes ÷ 60 min/hr = 12 People Hours!!!!

Together, in just 12 minutes, you put in the equivalent of a day and a half of work to collectively brainstorm solutions for the BRW! Wow! Social Cohesion for the win!

Follow DEC
Stream Crossing
Guidance

#1 Flooding
Culverts/Bridges

5

create wetlands
improve drainage,
understand connectivity

collaboration &
teamwork

green infra-
structure

land use
development
improvements
in farming lands

improving
infrastructure

Survey
Capital Plan
Funding

Floodplain reconnection/
improves soils /
reduces siltation

environmental
bond act!

State agency
grants -
CEAs!

local
planning
boards

FEMA mapping

Engineers +
Consultants

Update
flood mapping
(idar)

Engineering
Support

Grant writing

\$

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT -
How do you get the "right"
message at to the right population
groups & cut through the noise

meet people
where they are
at! farmers
markets, etc

find the local
champions &
help them tell
their stories

Relevant,
engaging
social media
platforms

Clear, established
procedures to
hear from
residents /
stakeholders
about their concerns

IMPROVED
COMMUNAL

consistent
public communication
(newsletters, website
updates, surveys)

Colleges
+
Universities

consultants
planners
community based
organizations
kids!

Tug Hill
Tomorrow
Land
Trust

Tug Hill
Commission

State & local
Districts
Non-profit orgs
State agencies

Meet more
in person
Listen

Join Citizen
Science initiatives

Water Quality
- Increased use of recreational
vehicles
- Land development - misuse
- inappropriate development
Regulation enforcement

ATV
increased
regulations

More
funding

Address pollutant
sources -
reparation efforts
setback laws

Routine
water quality
monitoring

\$

Buffer
zones

Tug Hill
Tomorrow
Land trust

Ag + markets
Homes +
community
Renewal

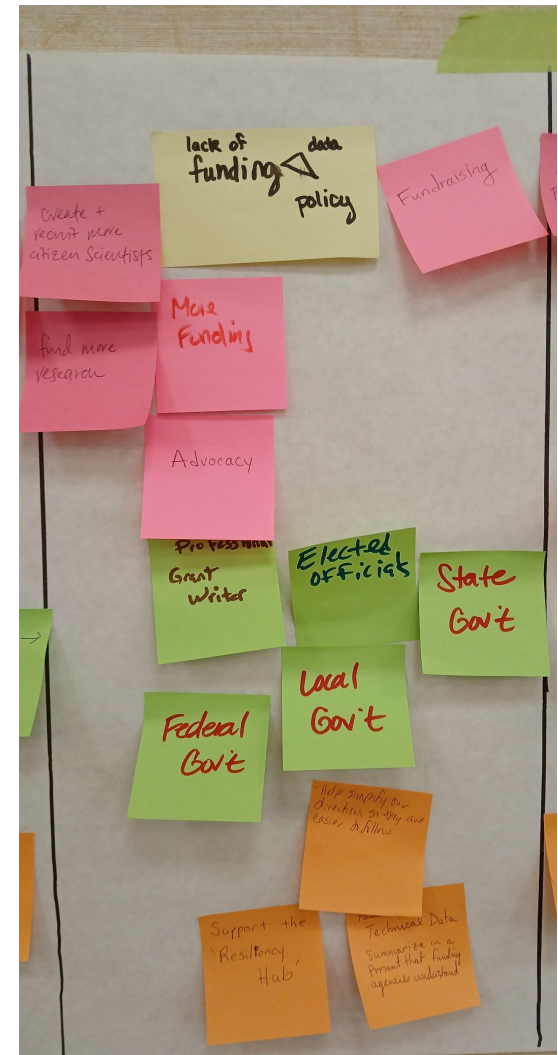
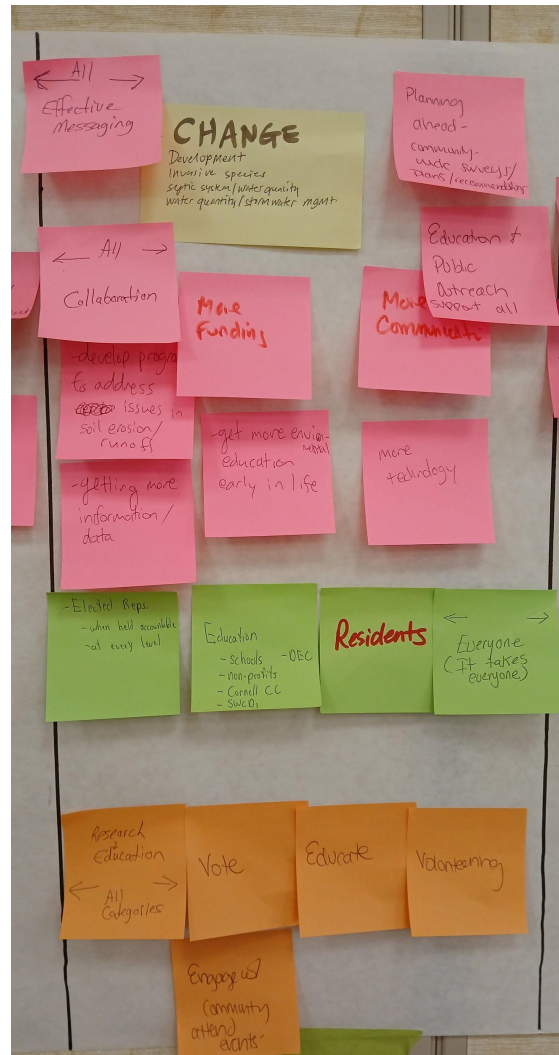
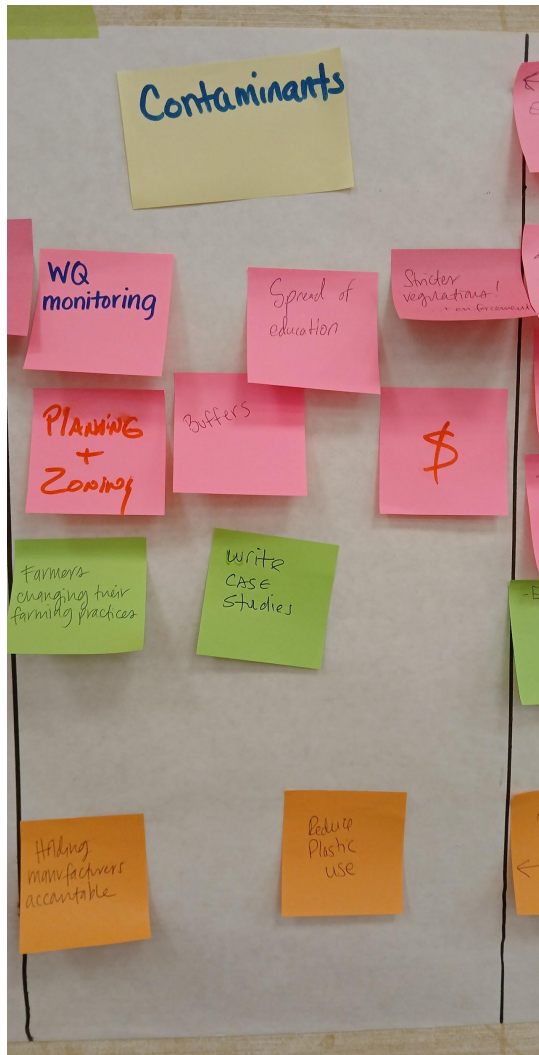
DEC!
various grant
programs

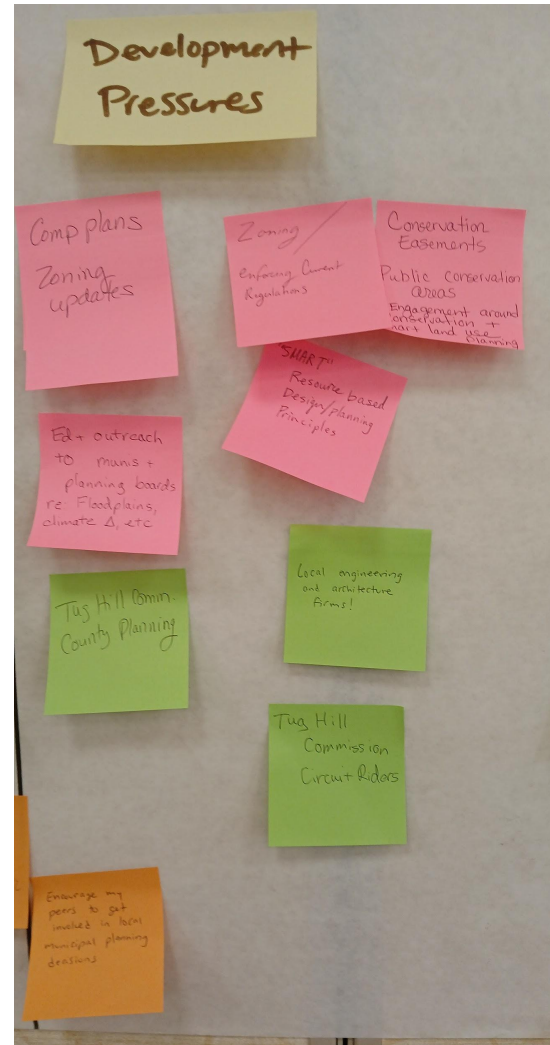
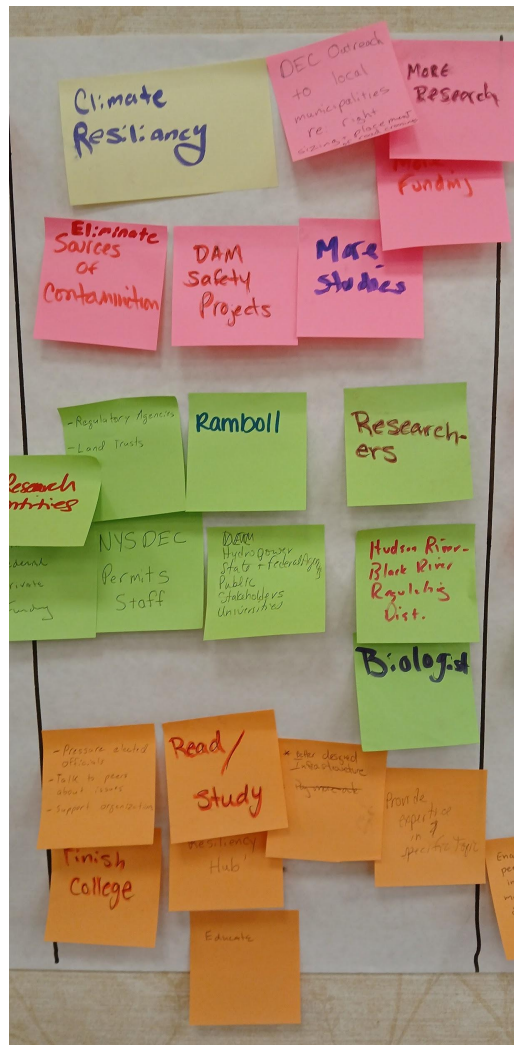
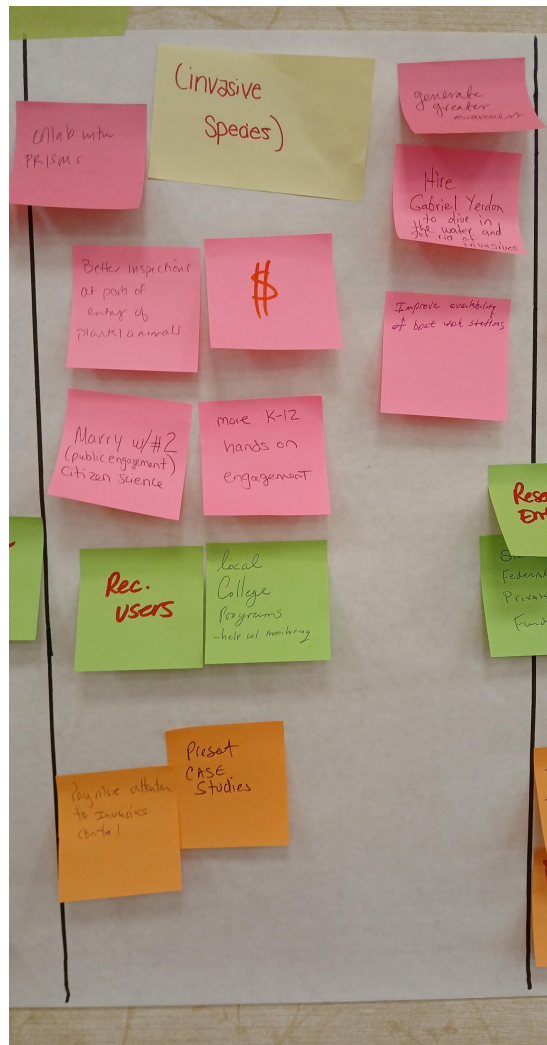
SWCD

Farm
change
farms

Not flush
wipes!

Hold
manure
accounts





Education



Engage Outreach
to Gen Pop
- Engage
- Online info hubs
- News letter

Plenty → we need
more of them
→ Ship to Dig in
the field/area
→ Layer down planning

Hands-on
real world
learning
experiences

Online
forum / Facebook
groups to put
out → back at people

Collaboration
w/ other
Agencies

Volunteer workshops
w/ schools / municipalities
- Stream cleanups
- Tree plantings

Rain
spots

Schools

Grade school
teachers

Tug Hill
Commission

Consistent
programming
at all ages
format &
informal

Share
lectures

Build more
long term
relationships with
partners to
deliver info &
program

Nature program
to get kids
and families
outside and
learning about
water

Put up
pollinator
garden
in my "yard"

Continue to pull in
local teachers in DEC
- Outreach (teachers)
- DEC (teachers)
- Outreach (teachers)
- DEC (teachers)
- Outreach (teachers)
- DEC (teachers)

Workshops
- Engage
- School teachers
- Environmental nature
- Education

DEC
to train the
next generation

Contact Info Exchange & ACTIONS WALL

- 1. Share your business card, or write your contact info on a Post-It**
- 2. Populate the ACTIONS WALL**
 - Write down three Actions you will follow up on in the next 30 days
 - People to follow up with?
 - Actions you can take to address these issues?
 - Communications you can do - within your organization or with your audiences - to share the importance of addressing watershed issues?
 - More learning you would like to do?
 - Add your name
 - Stick your Actions on the Action Wall, take a photo, check out other people's actions

Common Themes From Your Action Wall

- follow up with/collaborate with {name or organization - often the person or org that was named was at DEC, County SWCD, or Tug Hill Commission}
- host a community event, fun activity
- meet neighbors, get organizing with neighbors
- attend a NAACC training, get a copy of the Trout Unlimited culverts presentation
- get outside, go fishing, walk to work, read nature books, put a sign on my pollinator garden, install my japanese beetle trap,
- incorporate more storytelling
- youth education/outreach
- volunteer
- influence policy, talk to people about why conservation matters, educate friends and family
- learn diverse perspectives, connect with disadvantaged communities, ask questions, “Ask people who are not in the science community about their concerns in the watershed,” “Get a little louder”
- inventories and research topics - trees, invasives, fish, birds, water quality
- develop new resiliency hub
- learn about town comprehensive plans, BRW and other watershed plans
- climate communications, case studies, newsletters





