

Climate Change Adaptation Policy

**Massachusetts Bays Program
December 12, 2007**

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Outline

- Context
- Intelligence/Perspectives
- Opportunities
- Strategy
- Next Steps

Why Policy?

- Nature cannot respond quickly enough
- Climate change impacts have begun and cannot be avoided
 - No matter how much we reduce emissions climate change impacts are already happening and will continue
- Less costly if started now
- Avoid “mal-adaptation”/emergency response
- Immediate benefits

Government Roles (Stern Review)

- High-quality climate information and tools for risk management
- Land-use planning and performance standards
- Long-term policies for climate-sensitive public goods
 - including natural resources protection, coastal protection, and emergency preparedness.
- A financial safety net

Massachusetts Policy Radar Screen

- Administration/EEA
 - Emphasizing mitigation efforts (reducing GHGs)
 - For example: siting renewable energy facilities
 - Bond Bill
 - DFG Wildlife/Habitat Assessment
 - Land Acquisition
 - Other
 - Aquatic Restoration
 - Coastal Hazards Commission

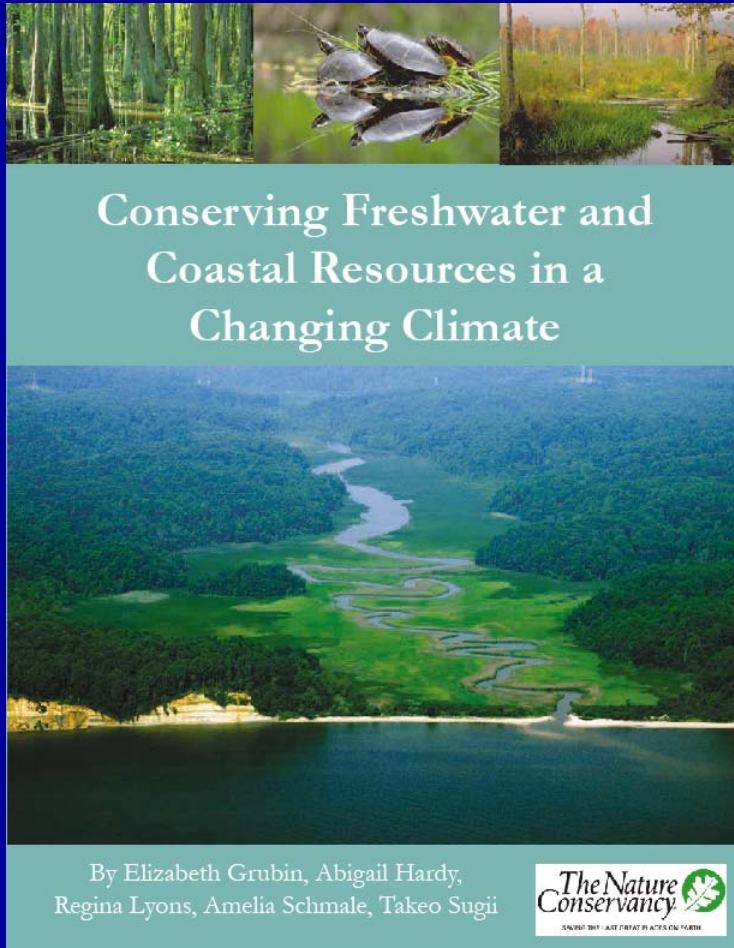
Legislature

- Support
 - Chairs of Envi Cmte on board
- Bills
 - Bond, Energy and Climate Change
- Adaptation Plan
 - EEA lead
 - Stakeholder Group

Policy Approach: “Mainstream” Adaptation

- Simultaneously apply the lens of climate change to policies/programs/projects *many of which already address* environmental stressors such as development, water usage patterns, land use, etc.
- “Adaptation strategies are seldom undertaken in response to climate change alone but can be **integrated within**, for example, water resource management, coastal defense, and risk reduction strategies.”
 - Working Group III Summary for Policymakers, IPCC

Report: Conserving Freshwater and Coastal Resources in a Changing Climate



- Aquatic Systems
 - Freshwater, coastal, wetlands
- Identifies
 - Technological tools
 - Adaptation measures
- Recommendations
 - Research
 - Investment
 - Use of strategies

Taunton River Watershed

- Whittenton Mill dam removed after near-failure in 2005 rains
- Goal: restore stream flow and fish passage for herring run
- Seeking state funds to remove aging dams to enhance habitat, public safety



Connecticut Shoreline



- Partner with UConn, CT Sea Grant on study
- Identify current salt marsh habitat: inundation contours, remote sensing (8 critical sites)
- Sea level rise, storm surge
- Predict human response: potential for marsh migration or armoring under various scenarios

Next Steps

- Participate in on-going processes
- Legislation
- Dedicated staff at EEA and agencies
- Stakeholder process
- Interagency coordination
- Policy assessment and development