

Mass ECAN Conference 2019
Speaker Bios



Sara Burns, Water Resources Scientist, The Nature Conservancy-

Sara is a water resource scientist with the Massachusetts Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. She works with a range of partners and technical experts around Massachusetts to plan, fund, and construct nature-based solutions to improve water quality, reconnect aquatic ecosystems, and reduce natural hazard impacts. Sara is a certified MVP service provider and has a MS in Environmental Science from Indiana University.

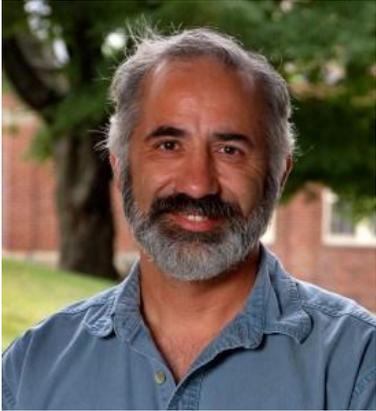
Lauren de la Parra, Creative Climate Solutions- Lauren is an interdisciplinary practitioner working to advance the mainstreaming of green infrastructure as a key strategy for urban climate resilience. Through research and writing, outreach and engagement, she leverages the power of creativity to shift culture and reformulate relationships between people and nature in cities. She holds an MS in Sustainability Science from UMass Amherst, and lives in Boston.



Elizabeth Gladfelter, Conservation Commissioner, Town of Falmouth- Betsy has a Guest Investigator at the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution's Marine Policy Center since 1997. As Conservation Commissioner, she has served for 9 years as Chair or Vice-Chair and coordinated the Coonamessett River restoration project since 2009. Betsy is also active on an Advisory Board for the University of the Virgin Islands. Her interests include management with emphasis on protected areas and fisheries, and policy decisions affecting individuals and institutions engaged in scientific research and education. She received her M.S. in Marine Science from the University of the Pacific and her Ph.D in Biology from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Karen Grey, President and Executive Director of Wildlands Trust- Karen has served as President and ED since 2007. Under her leadership, Wildlands Trust has grown their protected land portfolio significantly, as well as the operating budget, endowment, staff, and programming. Karen's vision led to the Davis-Douglas Farm, a transformational project that resulted in a new educational facility and headquarters for Wildlands and the protection of an historic Plymouth landmark. Karen serves as the vice president of the Massachusetts Land Trust Coalition and makes herself available as an adviser to small organizations and land trusts. She began her conservation career at the Manomet Center for Conservation Sciences where she held several management positions during her 17-year tenure, including chief operating officer, director of marketing and development, and assistant director. Karen lives in Duxbury with her family. She is a graduate of the University of Vermont.





Scott Jackson, Extension Associate Professor, Department of Environmental Conservation UMass Amherst- Scott's research interests include aquatic connectivity, wetland and saltmarsh assessment and monitoring, impacts of roads and highways on wildlife, and landscape-based ecological assessment. Scott helped develop the Massachusetts Wildlife Climate Action Tool and is interested in helping practitioners access climate science for on-the-ground ecosystem conservation. Scott has also developed standards for road-stream crossing structures; survey protocols for assessing passability, risk of failure, and disruption of emergency services; and approaches for prioritizing crossing replacement. He currently coordinates the North Atlantic Aquatic Connectivity Collaborative. Scott is chair of the Whately Conservation Commission and the Kestrel Land Trust Board of Trustees, and serves on the Board of Directors for the Massachusetts Association of Conservation Commissions (MACC).

Katherine Kahl, Extension Assistant Professor, UMass Amherst- Katie is an Extension Assistant Professor of Sustainable Fisheries & Coastal Resilience and works out of the UMass Gloucester Marine Station. Her work focuses on bridging University capacity with community and regional partners around coastal resilience, sustainable fisheries and blue economy issues on the North Shore. Her professional experience spans conservation policy, local and regional green infrastructure planning, climate change and coastal resilience strategy development, and managing coastal conservation planning and implementation. Katie received her master's and doctoral degrees from Michigan State University. Katie lives in West Gloucester with her husband and sons.



Lisa Kumpf, Aquatic Scientist, Charles River Watershed Association- Lisa works as project coordinator for CRWA's Field Science programs such as Volunteer Monthly Monitoring, Flagging, and Canoeing for Clean Water. Lisa previously served as the Rita Barron Fellow from June 2018 to February 2019. She has previously worked at Mass Audubon and other nonprofit organizations in the state. Lisa loves combining her passions for science and education to engage citizens with the natural world around them! Lisa has a B.S. in Geology from UMass Amherst and is finishing her M.S. in Geology from Boston College where she does research on the Yellow River Delta in China. Outside of her work at the CRWA, Lisa enjoys singing, hiking, playing with her cats, and spending time with her family.

Mia Mansfield, Director of Climate Adaptation and Resilience, Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs- Mia directs implementation of the State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan, and the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) Program. Previously, Mia managed the Climate Ready Boston initiative for the City of Boston Office of Environment, Energy and Open Space. She led the City's climate adaptation efforts, including implementation of the Climate Ready Boston plan, the City's participation in the Metro Boston Preparedness Taskforce, and collaboration with ongoing planning processes like Imagine Boston 2030, Go Boston 2030 and the Resilience Strategy. She has a Master's in City Planning from MIT's Department of Urban Studies and Planning and a BA from Brandeis University.





Dr. Susanne Moser, Director/Principal Researcher of Susanne Moser Research & Consulting; Research Faculty at Antioch University New England- In her research and work with local, state and federal government agencies and non-governmental organizations, Susanne focuses on adaptation in coastal areas, transformation, decision support, and effective climate change communication in support of social change. She is co-editor of the books *Successful Adaptation* (2013) and *Creating a Climate for Change: Communicating Climate Change and Facilitating Social Change* (2007). She has also contributed to the IPCC, National, and California Climate Assessments, among others. Susi is a fellow of the Aldo Leopold Leadership, Kavli Frontiers of Science, Donella Meadows Leadership, Google Science Communication, and Walton Sustainability Solutions Programs. Before moving to Hadley, MA, Susanne worked for 10 years in CA and was a Fellow at Stanford's Woods Institute for the Environment.

Melissa Ocana, Climate Adaptation Coordinator, UMass Extension - Melissa coordinates partnerships and encourages climate adaptation with natural resource conservation in mind. While focused on MA, she also engages in regional and national climate adaptation efforts, such as serving on the Climate Adaptation Fund Advisory Council and co-chairing the National Adaptation Forum Program Committee. Previously, Melissa ran a capacity building and grants program for NJ environmental nonprofits. She has also been Asst. to the Climate Change Policy Advisor at the US Fish & Wildlife Service, working on the National Fish, Wildlife, and Plants Climate Adaptation Strategy through a Congressional Hispanic Caucus Institute Fellowship. She also worked on natural resource policy as a Fellow in the House of Representatives. Melissa has a BA from Vassar College and MS in Wildlife Science from Oregon State University.



Robert O'Connor, Director of Land and Forests, Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs- Bob O'Connor is the Director of the Division of Conservation Services for the state environmental agencies of Massachusetts. He coordinates land conservation efforts among land trusts, municipalities and state divisions. He also coordinates the forestry and forest conservation efforts among environmental agencies and private landowners. Previously, he was the statewide Director of the Watershed Initiative and the Director of Natural Resources for the agency that supplies drinking water to the Boston Metro area. Prior to this, he was the Superintendent of Quabbin Reservoir. He has a B.S. in Forestry from SUNY Syracuse, and an M.B.A. and Masters in Conflict Resolution and Mediation from UMass Boston.



Gretchen Rabinkin, Executive Director, Boston Society of Landscape Architects (BSLA)—Gretchen leads the BSLA, the Massachusetts and Maine chapter of the American Society of Landscape Architects. She works with the board to guide strategic direction and oversees all operations, including organizing design professionals in a variety of pro bono and community engagement initiatives, such as with the Friends of the East Boston Greenway. Prior to joining BSLA, Gretchen was Director of Civic Initiatives for the Boston Society of Architects (BSA) and BSA Foundation, and led the Community Design Resource Center program. At the BSA, she initiated community resiliency preparedness activities with multiple neighborhood and academic partners, organized the BSA Urban Design Workshops, and served on the steering committee for the Boston Living with Water International Design Competition. Gretchen led the architecture program at Smith College from 2000-2006, and has taught extensively. Gretchen received a BA from Smith College and a MArch from the Harvard Graduate School of Design.





Eric Roberts, Coastal Resilience Specialist, The Nature Conservancy- Trained as an environmental scientist and policy analyst and with expertise in stakeholder engagement and consensus building processes, Eric now works with state and federal agencies and local communities to address climate change vulnerabilities. Previously, he has worked on environmental issues with a range of science, policy, and philanthropic organizations. Before joining TNC, he served as a U.S. Peace Corps Volunteer in Paraguay, collaborated with NOAA in Washington State, and most recently worked with the Consensus Building Institute and Mott Philanthropic. He holds a M.S. from the University of Michigan School of Natural Resources and Environment and a B.S. from Indiana University.

Kara Runsten, Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness Manager, EOEEA- Kara she administers the MVP grant program that provides support for cities and towns in Massachusetts to begin the process of planning for climate change resiliency and implementing priority projects. Kara has experience working in the government, consulting, nonprofit, and philanthropic sectors. Her studies and work experience focus on environmental policy and planning, specifically municipal climate change planning and domestic ocean policy. She also has an interest and experience in collaborative problem-solving and stakeholder engagement. Prior to her current role, Kara worked at Kim Lundgren Associates, Inc., a consulting firm that works with local governments on their climate action planning processes. She also worked for the City of Boston's Climate Ready Boston initiative while in graduate school. She holds a B.A. in Public Policy from Stanford University and a Master's in City Planning from MIT.



John Scanlon, Habitat Program Supervisor, MassWildlife- John is responsible for identifying, prioritizing, and administering habitat restoration and management operations designed to benefit rare and declining species across 200,000 acres of state wildlife lands. He also oversees technical assistance to private landowners interested in improving habitat on their lands, and works in the MassWildlife Land Acquisition Program. John has a Bachelor's degree in Wildlife Management from the University of Maine at Orono, and a Master's degree in Wildlife Science from Virginia Tech. He is a Certified Wildlife Biologist through The Wildlife Society, a Certified Forester through the Society of American Foresters, and a Massachusetts Licensed Forester.



Rosalie Starvish, Water Resources Engineer, GZA GeoEnvironmental, Inc.- Rosalie manages and designs projects related to stormwater and watershed management, water quality, lake and pond restoration, hazard mitigation, flood impact and flood control for private and municipal clients in the Pioneer Valley and beyond, working out of GZA's Springfield office. She is Vice Chair of the Mass Association for Floodplain Management (massFM), a Certified Floodplain Manager, and a Certified Professional in Municipal Stormwater Management through Envirocert International, Inc. She is currently wrapping up the design and permitting of several projects in the City of Northampton that will use green stormwater infrastructure to mitigate existing and future runoff, and will improve the resiliency of existing infrastructure to impacts from increased intense precipitation.





Sarah White, State Hazard Mitigation Officer, Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency- Sarah supervises the Hazard Mitigation Unit including State and Local Hazard Mitigation Planning and Hazard Mitigation Assistance Grant Programs. She has helped manage the State Hazard Mitigation Plan, including the statewide natural hazard risk and vulnerability assessment and the framework for hazard mitigation and adaptation activities for the Commonwealth. Sarah is also an instructor at the Massachusetts Maritime Academy and teaches Hazard Risk Management in the MS in Emergency Management (MSEM) Program. Sarah has worked at MEMA since 2006.

Alexandra Vecchio, Climate Change Program Coordinator, Mass Audubon- Alexandra is responsible for drafting, implementing, and evaluating the organization's statewide climate change strategy. In particular, she oversees climate change education programs, public outreach and community engagement, local climate advocacy efforts, internal and external climate communications, and offers scientific and policy consultation to external partners. In addition, Alexandra is a certified Provider for the MVP Program and helps communities identify actions to reduce climate vulnerabilities and strengthen their assets. She has a Master of Environmental Management from Yale School of Forestry and Environmental Studies where she specialized in the intersection of climate change adaptation, land use planning, and water resource management. Previously, Alexandra supported the development and implementation of climate action plans for both universities and cities, and has extensive experience in community engagement, outreach, and organizing. Prior to graduate school, Alexandra worked as a Legislative Assistant for Congressman Mike Quigley handling a variety of federal policy issues including energy, environment, and climate change.

