



Northeast Climate Science Center Stakeholder Interviews and Neutral Assessment

Facilitators Jody Erikson and Doug Thompson interviewed thirty-one¹ stakeholders from federal and state agencies, non-governmental organizations and others to assess key interests, aspirations and concerns regarding climate science research needs in general and the work of the incipient Northeast Climate Science Center (NECSC) in particular. Each of these interviews, which took place between September 25 and October 31, typically lasted from 30-45 minutes although some were closer to an hour in length. Respondents were promised anonymity but not strict confidentiality, i.e., the conversations were not for personal or organizational attribution but the facilitators would be reporting common themes, shared, complementary and competing interests and where the “centers of gravity” seemed to exist to the NECSC.

This report first summarizes key themes in six topic areas: 1) Familiarity with the NECSC; 2) NECSC overall function and purpose; 3) specific research areas of interest; 4) potential approaches or criteria to prioritize and/or sequence research topics; 5) NECSC organization/operation; and 6) design and facilitation of the January 2013 workshops. Appendix A contains a list of the principal topics explored during these interviews and some of the specific questions available to the facilitators to draw upon as appropriate within the context of any particular conversation. Appendix B contains a few highlighted quotes and comments drawn from selected interviews to give a flavor of some of the sentiments expressed. Appendix C contains the compiled raw interview notes for those interested in examining the source material more closely.

Key Themes in Topic Areas

Familiarity with the NECSC

Most respondents had heard of the NECSC but indicated a lack of detailed knowledge. Some were quite familiar, having helped set up informational meetings or joined webinars; others said they knew little or nothing at all about it. A number of those interviewed said they thought they understood the overall purpose of the NECSC but were waiting for it to come into better focus and get up and running. On the “wariness to welcoming” scale, most parties fell toward the welcoming end of the spectrum and indicated a willingness to engage with NECSC in ways to help it be successful. The only respondents that hadn’t heard very much about NECSC were those with specifically agricultural interests, and all were interested in learning more.

Potential Implication: Respondents generally understood that a lack of knowledge about the NECSC simply resulted from it being a relatively new entity rather than any failures of communication. Most of

¹ This number is correct as of November 1, 2012; additional interviews are scheduled.

those to whom we spoke seem receptive to working with the NECSC as it takes shape thereby providing a window (albeit not a limitless one) of opportunity to forge relationships and create approaches long on service and short on bureaucracy.

NECSC Overall Function and Purpose

In response to questions about NECSC overall purpose and function, stakeholders freely offered input about where the best higher-level focus should be. Responses varied significantly although certain themes sounded repeatedly. These included assuming a “leadership” role and functioning as both an “integrator” (helping parties allocate effort efficiently and benefit from each other’s work) and “gap filler” (pursuing currently unaddressed needs).

Several spoke of the importance of having “actionable” information that would help resource managers make more informed decisions about allocation of staff and financial resources now and for the future. Another key function flagged by several respondents related to collating and transferring information in accessible and user friendly ways—“one stop shopping” for the LCCs and other customers was mentioned a number of times. Some respondents speculated that the NECSC could serve an important “translation role” between research scientists and boots-on-the-ground managers. Most stakeholders imagined the NECSC as having a broad focus both in terms of geography and subject matter although a few cautioned against getting spread too thin and suggested that the Center ought to develop a limited number of specialty areas.

Potential Implication: The NECSC will likely need to grapple with the question of whether it is more a “mile wide and an inch deep” or an “inch wide and mile deep” (assuming that a “mile wide and a mile deep” is not possible). This may not be an entirely binary choice, however, as perhaps for some functions the NECSC will operate broadly while also having particular areas of expertise.

Specific Areas of Interest

I have little patience with scientists who take a board of wood, look for its thinnest part, and drill a great number of holes where drilling is easy. –A. Einstein

When asked for specific climate research needs or priorities, stakeholders gave a wide range of responses from particular questions of interest to topics with broad applicability. For the more complete list of topics raised during the interviews, refer to Appendix C below. Some recurring areas of interest included in no particular order:

- ▶ Agricultural adaptation (e.g., helping farmers with direct and indirect climate impacts)
- ▶ Improved modeling of river flows
- ▶ “Actionable” information to assist with regulatory work (e.g., TMDLs)
- ▶ Downscaling to help with on the ground decisions
- ▶ Urban areas, especially as possible areas of foreshadowing for more rural locations
- ▶ Sea and/or lake level change issues
- ▶ Biological responses and biological adaptation strategies
- ▶ Link between changing climate and relatively unchanging geology
- ▶ Critical assessment of various models
- ▶ Impacts to various waterbody types and indigenous species
- ▶ Linking current monitoring capabilities to predicted threats

- ▶ Evaluate effectiveness of policy options (e.g., in-lieu fee programs, nutrient reduction approaches)
- ▶ Develop methods for identifying priority preservation approaches to mitigate climate impacts and promote resilience
- ▶ Vulnerability assessments to inform adaptation strategies and/or best practices
- ▶ Unique issues and challenges associated with urban landscapes/parks
- ▶ Developing scenario planning tools and understanding sensitivity to different variables
- ▶ Relationships between climate change and invasive species

Potential Implications: Where respondents stood on this question, unsurprisingly, depended largely upon where they sat. Those responsible for water resource management tended to favor work at improved hydrologic modeling in response to anticipated climate effects; agricultural interests saw a need for information that would help farmers make decisions about land use, infrastructure, crop choices and so forth; those involved with managing fish and wildlife resources would like to see a greater emphasis on studying biological response and adaptation and, if a necessary consequence, less effort toward refining physical models; and those working in more urban settings felt greater attention to their particular needs would be welcome. LCC respondents fell into the same categories as above depending on the person's background (e.g., water background, then priorities were focused on water; urban background, then priorities were more urban focused).

Several fault lines emerged among the respondents as well. A number mentioned the importance of addressing sea level rise issues while a few felt that area has been overemphasized to the detriment of other needs. Some of those interviewed felt a need for continued work on predictive models with a particular interest in reliable downscaling; others felt strongly that model refinements or attempts to downscale were less valuable than focusing on biological responses and adaptation strategies.

Suggested Approaches or Criteria for Prioritization

When asked to accept the premise that it is not possible to do everything, at least not all at once, and to stand in the shoes of NECSC, respondents suggested several approaches to prioritizing needs. One frequently mentioned criterion was to favor work that had broad geographic applicability (e.g., across several LCCs). A number of those interviewed placed value on outputs that were "actionable" and useful for decision makers; a closely related value was for information that addressed the most immediate or urgent needs. A couple of respondents noted that priorities might be set as a mutual arising of identified needs and NECSC partner institution capabilities. A few of those interviewed mentioned that work which fills gaps should be given greater weight. Risk considerations were raised as well with the thought being research focused on areas of most significant concern should be given higher priority. Research that would build upon, synthesize or integrate existing "stovepipe" areas of work would be helpful according to some stakeholders.

Potential Implications: There is significant congruence in how stakeholders view this question and differing ideas are more complementary than antagonistic. They identified a constellation of factors that might help NECSC categorize research needs into some sort of priority scheme. Higher priority topics, according to the collective view of those interviewed would have one or more of these factors: broad geographic applicability, provide useful/actionable information, not duplicate efforts underway, have elements that synthesize or integrate other work; and be within the capability of the NECSC.

NECSC Organization and Operation

The facilitators also sought stakeholder views about issues related to the organization and operation of the NECSC. Parties were also asked to raise any sensitivities or concerns about which the facilitators or the NECSC should remain mindful.

One common echo was the importance of close, collaborative engagement with the LCCs. Several mentioned that it would be helpful if the NECSC were attuned to the differences between land management (e.g., FWS/NPS) and non-land management agencies (e.g., EPA). Some suggested that the NECSC form a subgroup of key stakeholders to help think through issues related to organization, governance and communication.

In terms of preferred mode(s) of communication, answers varied. Some favored a monthly or quarterly newsletter of some kind. Several felt that webinars can be a useful tool for conveying information when arranging in-person meetings proves too daunting. A few mentioned a belief that the NECSC should consider its audience to include not only scientists and natural resource managers but the general public as well. Having good “people skills” in the NECSC leadership should, according to some, be as or more important than a scientific background.

With respect to concerns and sensitivities, stakeholders most often cited “partner fatigue” and lack of resources (limited staff and money). A number of respondents observed that the dizzying array of work going in various state and federal agencies, academic institutions, non-profits and even industry makes it nearly impossible to keep track of it all, much less see how various efforts fit together. Some expressed concern that without careful coordination, the NECSC could come to duplicate, confuse or work at cross-purposes to the LCCs. Agricultural interests do not feel that they have always been included in the LCC structure and hope that will not be the case with the NECSC. Several stakeholders pointed to the sheer geographic reach of the NECSC as a major management challenge.

Potential Implications: Many of the stakeholders interviewed saw themselves in organizations that are over-worked, underfunded and “partnered-out.” It suggests that NECSC will need to find ways to combat the signal-to-noise problem and engage its key partners in efficient and frugal ways. Insofar as possible, it may serve NECSC to find ways in both reality and perception to make the lives of its stakeholders and customers easier rather appear as a well-intentioned effort that drains energy and time already in short supply.

January Meetings

Upon being asked, stakeholders had suggestions for the design and facilitation of the two upcoming meetings in January 2013. A number of respondents indicated an interest in learning about the NECSC and where it currently sees itself in terms of organization, functions, priorities and relationships with other parties. In general, the respondents felt comfortable with reacting to proposals and options rather than a “blank slate” meeting. Several stakeholders stressed the importance of being clear on meeting purposes and forthright about what aspects have been determined and what is open for discussion. Others recommended that NECSC think hard about who should attend these meetings—those at a policy level or persons of a more scientific/technical orientation or, perhaps, a blend. Some of those interviewed felt these meetings should also be used to promote relationship building both among those attending and between participants and NECSC. There were some specific suggestions relating to conduct of the meeting (e.g., break out rooms, electronic polling and the like) which are listed in the summary comments in Appendix C.

Potential Implications: Responses from the stakeholders suggest that most of those attending the meeting would like an opportunity to get to know the NECSC and have a better sense of how it is taking shape. There also seems to be a willingness, perhaps even a preference, to be able to react to some options and proposals rather than create something from whole cloth or cover ground already trodden by the LCCs. It would therefore seem important for meeting participants to have a clear idea of which aspects are essentially settled, which ones are eligible to modification and which are fully open to discussion. In terms of meeting structure, generally educational pieces are best done in plenary and more focused deliberative work done in whole or in part in smaller groups.

Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Question Template

Key Topics for Exploration

- a. Experience and interest in Climate change – job, job type, perspective?
- b. Key interests in climate change research? What are other stakeholders' interests different from yours? How do they work together or in conflict?
- c. Interaction with NECSC so far?
- d. Best organization of the NECSC? What would it look like? Substantively and process?
- e. Biggest challenges or sensitivities for the NECSC?
- f. Top climate change research priorities – specific or general?
- g. Criteria used to pick a small number for 2-year focus?
- h. Advice about the meeting? What does success look like? – process, substance; do, don't do

Potential Interview Questions

Primer – better understand person and their interest/experience in the issues

- 1) *How do you see yourself involved with or affected by climate change issues in your work? Why climate change issues and you?*
- 2) *What interaction have you had, if any, with the Northeast Climate Science Center? What impressions do you have of the NECSC?*
- 3) *How would you describe your key interests when it comes to climate change research? What do you see as the key interests of the other land use managers/players? To what extent do you think these various interests would seem to be shared, complementary and opposing?*

Governance and potential value

- 4) *Suppose you were czar for the day and could write the script for exactly how the NECSC could best be of assistance to you and/or your organization. What would that look like?*

- 5) *Conversely, what are the challenges...what can go wrong to make the NECSC less rather than more useful? Are there any particular sensitivities among the parties about which we should be aware?*

Priorities – substance of the stakeholder process

- 6) *Getting down to some specifics, what are your top priorities, up to three of them, for climate change research?*
- 7) *As currently envisioned, a focus of the stakeholder meetings will be identifying and prioritizing climate science research needs. Assuming it is not possible to do everything, certainly not everything all at once, what criteria should be used to prioritize research needs in terms of importance and/or sequence?*

Process – ensure process meets their needs and expectations

- 8) *As you may know, the NECSC will be hosting two meetings in January aimed at hearing the perspectives of its “clients and customers,” i.e., those interests it intends to serve and benefit through its work. Do you have any advice to NECSC about how it should approach these meetings?*
- 9) *More specifically, what would you like to see come out of these meetings? What should be the meeting objectives? Fill in the blanks: This would be an excellent meeting if _____ . This meeting would be a waste of time if _____ .*
- 10) *As a related matter, I am part of the team that will be facilitating these two meetings. Do you have any advice or cautions for us as facilitators?*
- 11) *Who else should we be talking with over the next few weeks?*
- 12) *Are there any questions we should have asked but did not or which you would like ask yourself and answer while we are together?*
- 13) *Anything else?*

Appendix B: In Their Own Words

We really welcome the presence of the NECSC and believe its success will greatly benefit our work.

I have to admit that I did not even recognize the acronym “NECSC.”

I would catalogue the needs into four categories: 1) Need for relevant basic research; 2) Need for products (reports, maps) that are useable; 3) Need for services—train us in downscaling or train us on how to use a particular product; 4) Need for changes in policy.

We would love to see the NECSC be the place for one-stop shopping for models and other relevant information which could be used by the LCCs and others.

Nothing is more useful than downscaling the models and scenarios—we can couple that with local knowledge and other areas of expertise to make better management decisions.

There is sort of continuum from basic climate science on one end to local scale decisions on the other. On that spectrum we go from downsizing models, to impacts habitats, systems, and populations, then finally how to the work of decision makers at a smaller scale. LCC starts on the decision maker end and works toward the middle and the NECSC should work from the basic climate science end and to the middle.

It doesn't really help me to have more refined models or to have things resolved three tenths of a degree better. Instead the focus needs to shift to how natural and human systems respond to the known trends, how we can minimize deleterious effects and how to adapt.

The work done under the auspices of the NECSC should be foundational and broadly applicable. By that I mean it should illuminate underlying processes which those at the local level can use by inputting their own information or adapting it to fit to local circumstances.

The NECSC has a real opportunity to step back and think about things at a scale which others are not able to do.

I am concerned that if not approached carefully, the NECSC may complicate the work of the LCCs. I hope the NECSC works hand and glove with the LCCs so they are adding tangible value rather than just bureaucratizing the system further.

I hope the NECSC will engage more broadly than the LCCs. Talk with transportation, urban, agricultural and energy people as well, not just the fin and fur crowd.

The marine world is huge and somewhat unto itself; NECSC might consider explicitly leaving that to others (e.g. NOAA) to mitigate the risk of being spread too thin.

NECSC will probably hear a clamor for more precision on smaller spatial and temporal scales but not that is the most fruitful avenue forward. Better for us to learn how systems will or can adapt.

Think in terms of addressing the greatest risks. To me that means issues related to sea level rise rather than whether some bird population migrates a hundred miles north over the next 25 years.

As for the meetings, my main advice is that it should clear why we are there and why is our input desired. Quite frustrating to travel, provide input and never hear anything again. Whether my remarks make it to

the top of the list or not is less important. But be clear whether we are there solely to learn stuff, refine a partially baked product or whether it is really a blue sky situation.

This initial work by the NECSC is good. I thought the LCC process rushed and chaotic—I hope you facilitators can slow things down and help them get it right.

Appendix C: Compiled Interview Notes

Familiarity with NECSC

- Not much interaction to date and did not recognize the acronym
- Know their purpose, waiting for it to get up and running
- Pretty good idea; have worked with UMass folks
- Some familiarity and mimics what we do with partnering with academic institutions rather than staffing up internally
- Not much interaction thus far
- Potential partners will ask, “Who are you and where do I fit?”

NECSC Overall Function and Purpose

- Be the source of science and money
- Help prioritize and de-prioritize work by identifying where climate change will have greatest impact
- Need to tease out climate change effects from other stressors; focus on latter wrongheaded if being trumped by former
- Provide the data support for decision making (others would use this information to make planning seamless)
- Thinking has evolved; used to want better downscale models but now think learning that the best predictions are refined another 0.3 degrees not so helpful...we have the pointer and now need to focus on biological response rather than fine tuning models.
- Adaptive capacity, how will species we care about react?
- Cannot look at climate change as a single stressor but in context of other problems such as fragmentation
- Ensure the right set of data is available (source of big/high level data, others would then use that consistent data in other assessments and work
- Potential partners will ask, “Who are you and where do I fit?”
- Needs to decide if the NECSC is primarily an “integrator” or “gap-filler” or both
- Be a one-stop shop for getting information and understanding the whole picture of what is known (understand what has been done, what is being done and/or about to be done) – create friendly search functions
- Like to see the CSC be a leader on some things, be a unifying and summarizing force; need E.O. Wilson “consilience” types.
- Fill gaps
- Love to see NE Maps and useable information; maps are incredibly compelling
- CSC be one stop shopping for models and information to feed into LCCs

- Help us manage various stressors; climate change likely one of the largest long-term but less clear in short term when competing with acute environmental insults
- Build relationships to reduce duplications
- Develop areas of specialty and don't spread itself too thinly
- Link science to local communities
- Concerned that the way the NECSC has been structured will significantly hinder its effectiveness; among other things may be New England-centric and southern parts will get short-changed (although not intentionally)
- Focus on streams and tributaries perspective (advantage USGS' widely known expertise in this area)
- Convene the LCCs to have a unified voice/actions
- Can't talk about specific priorities, not my role but do believe we need agreed upon climate predictions in a given landscape just as we have a shared habitat classification system
- Focus on the link between scientists and managers
- Focus on landscape level needs

Priorities

- Rapid inventory - inventory what is being done and available
- Develop basic climate literacy (some don't know what they don't know, and what to do about it)
- Market and distribute methodologies into the right hands
- Agriculture
 - o What can be done at the Farm Bill policy level?
 - o What would make a farmer decide to put land in conservation or make decisions that are more protective
 - o How can farmers prepared for direct climate change impacts – infrastructure decisions, crop choices
 - o How can farmers prepare for indirect climate change impacts (e.g. drought in the west increases pressure on mid-west farmers)
 - o Impacts on political climate that will effect agriculture policies (pressures and drivers; e.g. more ethanol production)
 - o Predictions on drought, heat (length and severity)
 - o Changes that impact invasives and changes to wildlife range (species staying longer in the area or moving into the area)
 - o What will each area look like (identify locations that have a similar climate to what an area will become; e.g. Kansas will look like northern Texas) – allowing farmers to get information on techniques that work in those areas to better adapt to the change
- Long term sustainability of native fauna
- Downscaling work to know where to put assets
 - o Link localized knowledge
 - o Learn locally, apply regionally
 - o Make it actionable (digest the information and recommend actions)
 - o Identify areas for agencies to protect more aggressively and facilitate remediation
- Downscaling of climate modeling with specific foci; interested in timescale when birds will move as confidence intervals are quite wide
- Water
 - o Hydrologic flows and ecological issues

- Information that informs Chesapeake Bay and TMDL issues
- Sea level rise – basic information and anticipated changes
- Impacts of climate change on bodies of water and on organisms and the effect on the ecosystem (nutrient enrichment, hypoxia, temperature)
 - How will water temperature and invasive species change over time (to control nutrients and restore water resources)
 - What policy approaches will reduce nutrients within the context of climate change effects
- Identify the next big threat to water resources, and how will it show up in monitoring so that preparations are taken for protection (on the ground and policy) – will current monitoring programs identify it early
- Drought (as well as sea level rise)
- Aquatic and upland resources – what should be preserved (and how) for climate resilience
- Impacts on Great Lakes fisheries
- Urban/Climate change
 - What is the link between urban core and wilderness; what is the urban impacts on rural areas (urban areas as feeder for invasives and impacts)
 - What do urban areas indicate about rural areas (e.g. urban forests may show what rural forests will be in 20-50 years)
 - Urban parks which have unique challenges
 - Predictive meteorological data – heat (duration and severity), precipitation and rainfall (particularly rainfall on top of snow's impact on urban drainage)
 - Green infrastructure
 - Infrastructure that stands up to severe events (roads, buildings etc.)
 - How to develop implementable plans (Larissa Larson, U. MI School of Urban Planning & Natural Resources has done some of this work)
- Biological response to physical models; need more on that and less on physical side
- Adaptation strategies
- Certain features (e.g. underlying geology) that are not changing so habitats will change in ways that are predictable to an extent
- See different views presented with CSC weighing in about merits and strong/weak suits of each
- Habitat requirements for species and determine alternatives (e.g. bear needs white pine, what elements of white pine does it need and where else are those elements; why need the plant and ensure that needs are met regardless of plant's existence)
- Ecosystem approach – document winners and losers (not just the charismatic species); if change happens what species are hurt
- Identify where the greatest probability of change will occur to answer questions of how to respond (mitigate, move-on, etc.)
- Complete project work
- Capitalize on “in Lieu of” funds and programs
- Identify future areas for rehabilitation and how to implement wet land mitigation (holistic rather than piece meal)
- Trans boundary
- Identify, or information to identify, economic value of preservation
- Identify what actions to take now in preparation for the future
- Provide a framework for vulnerability assessments that lead to adaptation strategies (and/or best practices)

- Provide reliability in projecting into the future in different timeframes (clarify faith in mid and long term projections)
- Identify and provide data needed to do more interpretive assessments (vulnerability, scenario planning, etc.); leave interpretive assessments up to others
- Scenario planning
- Variability assessment
- Invasive Species/climate change in 20-50 years (not currently investing in this)
- Cost/benefit analysis on Green infrastructure – what works the best
- Changes that change tribal traditions – can you preserve traditions?

Suggested Approaches or Criteria for Prioritization

- Biggest bang for the buck
- Look for commonalities
- Useful and useable for management
- Easily used in the field
- Fits into the farm bill revision/implementation cycle
- Risk considerations (e.g., upward bird migration may not be as serious as sea level rise)
- Shows public practices are working
- Illuminates the underlying processes which then can be applied in specific circumstances; avoid individual species
- Driven by local needs – more likely to have results be implemented because it meets a known need; locals will be more engaged
- Applicable on landscape level; don't drift into small geographic areas unless techniques clearly replicable more broadly
- Applies broadly in shorter timeframe – breadth and depth balance
- Builds on or complements existing work
- Fills a gap
- Information that allows management of populations and people so that we can try to be ahead or at least alongside the response curves
- Improves coordination among agencies/stakeholders; addressing something no one else is
- Meets an immediate need, or emerging issue
- Applies on ecosystem scale
- Addresses gaps in trend data
- Involves and impacts multiple agencies and stakeholders
- Addresses agency action plans and other reports with policy recommendations (e.g. National Ocean Policy, standards from water quality agreement)
- Likely to protect/prepare for resiliency (most likely to succeed and important for success)
- Produces results that are actionable or closer to recommended action –
- Develops/generates foundational data –will use in actions or further data development
- Avoids duplication
- Leads towards adaptive strategies

NECSC Organization and Operation

- Engage with LCCs – direct input

- seat on the Steering committee;
- help select projects
- politically engaged
- coordinate the LCCs – unified action/voice
- Regular communications
 - Monthly email or newsletter
 - Periodic newsletter - include progress reports and national information (link national and regional)
 - Newsletter – in substantive sections, easy for people to go to what they care about
- NECSC should be in a leadership role, step back and think at a scale that others might not be able to do
- Need to be mindful of differences between land management agencies and non-land management agencies; more effort to engage state land management agencies as well as federal
- Collaborative feel, not a competitive feel (drink beer and/or bourbon together) – learn about each other, build relationships where people want to work together
- NECSC audience should be broader than scientists and land managers and include the general public
- Need NECSC leadership that has good organizational and people skills; scientific pedigree less important
- Develop a subgroup to design the governance – include those who would benefit from the CSC
- Needs to be bottom up
- Depends on who is at the table
- Open
- Lots of coordination among partnerships, inter-agency groups and intra agency (e.g. NECSC crosses several NOAA regions)
- Attend federal family group meetings/conferences at different levels (e.g. Belly-Achers Ball, mid-level managers meeting)
- Web links – with notifications of updates
- Webinars
- USGS and FWS need close and on-going coordination
- Be explicit about unique CSC role and role between LCC, JV, CSC) – what each does individually, and how they link
- Be transparent about gathering input and how it will be used, work undertaken, etc. (need to know all things were considered)
- Invite and explicit level of staff from all agencies (currently different agencies sending different level) – not administrative level
- Conduct a network analysis to reach the right people with the strong networks

Challenges

- Partner fatigue and lack of resources
 - States don't have the resources to engage in all the partnerships – LCC, JV, Watershed groups, etc.
 - Agencies have limited budgets and staff - staff is retiring and not hiring replacements
 - Lack of travel funds for many –
 - Meet in different locations
 - Do as much as possible electronically
 - Use calls only to make decisions – keep them short

- Needs to feel like investing in climate science not USGS
- Identify pathways between LCCs and CSCs; there are a whole bunch of regional based science efforts and these need to work together
- Does not appear that there has been much coordination with LCCs
- Biggest concern is that it may be an unworkable structure
- State departments of agriculture may feel left out as they have been for several LCCs
- Tough road trying to capture such a large area and will be pulled in different directions although she has much credibility
- Staying on top of all that is being done in climate change – so many different agencies, partnerships, stakeholders; it is hard to know what one’s own agency is doing, let alone everyone else
- Considerable risk of overlap and duplication, signal to noise concern
- Region is very diverse
- Capacity doesn’t match demand – how to decide where to apply capacity
- Role confusion between LCCs and CSCs (current fact sheets aren’t clear, still confusion and overlap)
- Translating information into a language that can be applied in a variety of places and by a variety of people/interdisciplinary (e.g. public land managers, municipal governments, farmers)
- Impacts of policy on ability to take lasting action
- Perception that the CSC is New England or Eastern focused because it is housed at UMass
- Inclination for organizations to compete with each other

January Meetings

- Make sure break out groups have good/clear priorities before leaving the room (spend ½ time discussion and ½ on clarifying agreement on top priorities)
- Would like to leave meeting with a good understanding of adaptation strategies—sounds good but what does it really mean in practice?
- Leave time at the end to build agreement on the top priority items (otherwise it will be a long list)
- Charettes useful to evaluate overall priorities
- Use the “clicker gadgets” (3)
- Focus on understanding why there is commonality or agreement – this helps with buy-in
- Think hard about whether the meeting should be mainly policy or technical people
- Inform participants about the CSC and how it may improve their lives
 - o Clarify that not everything is Win/Win, with complexity of problems sometimes best is ‘I can live with it and understand why’
- Learn from participants
- Think about how to organize discussions and any breakout groups: By sector? Products? Media?
- Provide prep materials (homework) – hit the ground running and allow for more agreement building than information building
- Would like to know NECSC better...what have scientists been doing? What do they want to do? Like to learn different strengths of different partners
- Come in with some things for participants to react to rather than totally open-ended

- Provide information on basics about NECSC – what it is doing, done, going to do; its mandate, purpose and objectives; documents and planning
- Worthwhile if can come away from meeting with an understanding of where it wants to focus its research
- Facilitators should deal with most vocal people
- Focus strategically, holistically (not just on their individual needs)
- Focus on getting the work done and walk out with intended outcome (not just talk)
- 75% focus on work and 25% focus on building relationships
- Provide a list of relevant regional and national meetings
- Be clear on the purpose, outputs, expectations of the meeting
- Present assessment results
- Think about who should participate—upper level administrators or boots on the ground types? Advantages either way but need to tie agenda/discussion to audience and vice versa

DRAFT