

Attendees: Sarah Beganskas (DRBC); Erica Rossetti, Kathy Klein, Haley Burns, and Kate Hutelmyer (PDE); Frank McLaughlin (NJDEP); Zach Nemec (PA Sea Grant); Nathan Boon, Jamie Quinn (WPF); Kelly Knutson (CDRW); Cathy Magliochetti, Megan Mackey (EPA Region 3); Irene Purdy (EPA Region 2); Abu Moulta Ali, Chris Orvin (EPA HQ); Kim Hachadoorian (TNC).

Presentation on the Delaware River Civilian Climate Corps, Nate Boon, William Penn Foundation

Key points:

- There are 10 locations in the Delaware River, including the 4 urban waters cities, and 1-6 climate crews per location.
- Typical constituents of the crews include those that have not finished school or are re-entering society that are looking to get involved in their community and give back to the local economy, bettering themselves while becoming involved in environmental stewardship. It's not just about environmental restoration but the job itself, the job skills and training, and opportunities for growth.
- There are over 7,000 of these urban "green collar" jobs in the region.
- Where there is a climate crew program, there is an opportunity to bring those crews on to get involved in Urban Waters or other urban environmental conservation work to not only get the project done but provide economic incentives to local community members that are part of a program that is racially equitable.
- Very timely for us as well as we have to think about Justice40 and the Climate Change Executive Order.
- Gets money to the communities that actually need them. There is a large problem in rushing to get money out the door because it ends up going to large cities or NGOs that can handle it and not the most disadvantaged community members.
- Asks to consider workforce development in our own institutions and to always consider the HUMAN component in the environmental/water sector.

Q&A/Discussion

- *How can we take lessons learned from our larger cities in the region and apply them to smaller urban areas that are equally or even more disadvantaged?* –The need for the work is everywhere. Even in our more rural or suburban areas, we need to mobilize labor. We can make sure that there is some sort of organization doing equitable workforce development, whether we partner with them or create one within an existing structure.
- *What federal agencies are you working with for the CCC, and where can we expand it?* - Mostly working with state service commissions that are responsible for AmeriCorps. However not every climate crew is through AmeriCorps, so sometimes it requires different kinds of partnerships. Other agencies that are important to recognize are state agencies, county/city groups, and even water utilities.

- *Are the people working in the climate crews making a living wage? How long is their term of service? And how are we helping them transition from this particular job into something else?* –Participants earn a \$15 minimum wage and have other additional supports. The wrap around costs will vary but need to be considered in program costs. Terms of service are typically 6 months to a year, with an opportunity to renew. Supplementing these programs is something to consider.

Key takeaways on how to best engage with Urban Waters:

- Direct financial resources to community service corps. Always support local community members. Hire local climate crews to help with your environmental restoration projects.
- Bring workforce development partners into Urban Waters. Fill in gaps.
 - Federal:
 - AmeriCorps
 - DOI
 - USFS
 - Local
 - PowerCorps PHL or Camden
 - Water utilities

Next meeting: June 19, 2022, 11-12EST on Zoom. www.DelawareEstuary.org/save-the-estuary/urban-waters/