

3rd Annual LISS Sustainable and Resilient Communities Workshop



Long Island Sound Study
A Partnership to Restore and Protect the Sound



Session #3: Planning for Inundation—Considerations for Engaging in Buyout Programs to Increase Community Resilience

Wednesday, December 11, 2024 – 10 AM-12 PM

Register here:

https://cornell.zoom.us/meeting/register/tJlrceuvqzsoGdeHZgq7mDW2G_xm4FN1t_Du

This session will feature presentations and discussion centered around different aspects of planning for inundation, particularly challenges and successes related to participating in buyout programs.

Presentation titles and short bios are provided below for all guest speakers.



Session Facilitator: Alison Branco, Ph.D

Director of Climate Adaptation, The Nature Conservancy in NY
(she/her)

Dr. Alison Branco is the Director of Climate Adaptation for The Nature Conservancy in New York, where she works with communities and governments to plan for and adapt to climate change. Dr. Branco holds degrees from Connecticut College and the University of Connecticut and has work experience on the East Coast of the US and in Western Australia. Most recently, Alison served as Director of the Peconic Estuary Program, Part of EPA's National Estuary Program. Now with the Nature Conservancy, she leads a statewide team engaging across New York's diverse floodplains to help build healthy and resilient shoreline communities for the long-term benefit of both people and nature.



Rye Brook, NY Case Study: Voluntary buyouts of flood-prone properties

Chris Bradbury, Administrator, Village of Rye Brook

Michal Nowak, Superintendent of Public Works and Engineering, Village of Rye Brook

Chris has over 34 years' experience in local government administration, including the past 24 years as the Rye Brook Village Administrator. He previously worked in the Manager's Office for the City of Rye and the Village of Croton-on-Hudson. Chris has a BA from Hobart College and an MPA from Pace University. He is a past President of the Municipal Administrators Association and the NYS City/County Managers Association and has been an ICMA Credentialed Manager since May 2002.



Michal has 20 years' experience in local government with the Village of Rye Brook, including the past 14 as Superintendent of Public Works and Engineering. He is past President of the New York Metro American Public Works Association, past President of the Westchester County Association of Municipal Public Works Administrators, and an International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist. Michal is a Circuit Rider for the Cornell Local Technical Assistance program and presents on Reducing Liabilities for Highway and Public Works

Departments and Powers and Duties of Highway Superintendents. Michal has obtained the Cornell LTAP Road Master 4 designation.



Lessons from Sandy: Evolving Buyout Strategies for Resilient Communities

Rachel Wieder, Chief of Staff, Homeownership and Community Development, NYS Homes and Community Renewal (*she/her*)

Rachel Wieder is an urban planning professional with over fifteen years of experience in the affordable housing and community development sector. Her career is dedicated to developing and preserving affordable housing, with a spirit of commitment to environmental sustainability and climate justice. As Chief of Staff for Homeownership and Community Development at NYS Homes and Community Renewal, she provides executive oversight for the NYS Office of Resilient Homes and Communities (RHC) and strategic guidance on programming throughout the Agency. Previous roles include Director of the Superstorm Sandy flood buyout and acquisition programs for the NYS Governor's Office of Storm Recovery. Rachel has an undergraduate degree in Environmental Studies from San

Francisco State University and a master's degree in urban studies from New York University. She currently lives in Brooklyn, NY with her husband and three young children.



Creating Space for Emotions in Retreat and Relocation Work

Jessica Brunacini, Ph.D, Director of the Coastal Training Program, Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve (*she/her*)

Jessica Brunacini is a coastal resilience scholar-practitioner who has nearly two decades of experience working in climate change engagement, planning, and research. In her current role as the Director of the Coastal Training Program at the Wells National Estuarine Research Reserve, she partners with Maine's coastal communities, municipal officials, regional planning organizations, and state agencies to increase knowledge and capacity for climate adaptation. She is particularly interested in identifying engaged, equitable, and empathetic approaches for supporting communities who are exploring options for "getting out of harm's way." Jessica holds a dual degree Ph.D. in Community Sustainability and Environmental Science and Policy from Michigan State University, and M.A. in Environmental Conservation Education from New York University, and a B.A in Fine Arts from the University of New Mexico.