

# Forests, Urban Trees, and Climate Change

Delaware Valley Regional Planning Commission  
October 25, 2016

## Panelist Biographies

**Joan S. Blaustein, Director, Urban Forestry and Ecosystem Management Division, Philadelphia Parks and Recreation**, oversees the division that is responsible for maintaining and restoring the park system's 5,400 acres of forests, streams, lakes, meadows and wetlands; managing the urban tree canopy, which includes promoting tree planting and care on public and private lands; and advancing the city's urban agriculture efforts. She formerly headed the Faimount Park Environment, Stewardship & Education Division. Born and raised near Pittsburgh Pennsylvania, she graduated from the University Pittsburgh, and spent 30 years working at a variety of public sector and non-profit organizations focusing on environmental work, before moving to Philadelphia in 2006. She lives in Mt. Airy where she tends her own urban forest.

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**Greg Czarnecki, Climate Change & Research Coordinator, PA Department of Conservation and Natural Resources**, is currently overseeing the development of DCNR's climate change adaptation plan and is the author of *DCNR and Climate Change – Preparing for the Future*, a white paper that outlines a strategic approach to dealing with the impacts of climate change on the department's mission and the state parks and state forests it manages. He has lectured and written widely on the impacts of climate change on natural resources, and is a coauthor of the Pennsylvania Climate Change Adaptation Plan and the Mid-Atlantic Forest Ecosystem Vulnerability Assessment and Synthesis, which is currently in development.

Previously he served as the Executive Director of the Wild Resource Conservation Program, Director of The Nature Conservancy's Pennsylvania Science Office, and as the Ombudsman for the Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection. He holds a B.S. in biology from Gannon University and an M.S. in biology from Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. Greg serves on the Boards of the Pennsylvania Academy of Science, the Pennsylvania Biological Survey, is a member of the Gannon University Board of Trustees, and serves on numerous other advisory committees.

A native of Erie, he now lives in Hummelstown, PA with his wife, teenage daughter, and a slightly crazy Springer Spaniel.

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**Jason Grabosky, Ph.D., Ecology Evolution and Natural Resources, Rutgers School of Environmental and Biological Sciences**, is the Editor in Chief of the Journal of Arboriculture & Urban Forestry, chair of the New Jersey Emerald Ash Borer Taskforce, and also serves as the Co-Director of the Center for Landscape Resilience, a joint venture of Rutgers NJAES and the USDA forest Service. At Rutgers University, he is the John and Eleanor Kuser Faculty Scholar in Urban and Community Forestry. He leads classes in tree care and urban forestry, and his research broadly addresses tree biology and management in designed landscapes.

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**Sarah C. Low, Field Station Team Leader and Biological Scientist, US Forest Service Northern Research Station**, focuses on bridging the gaps between policy, planning, and science, specifically as it relates to the interaction of people and nature. In her role at the Philadelphia Field Station, Ms. Low leads a group of researchers and practitioners who focus on the role trees, forests, and natural resources play in making cities more livable. The group specifically focuses on the ecosystem value of trees and forests, factors that influence tree mortality, socio-ecological impacts of green infrastructure, and youth engagement. The Field Station aims to develop and deliver science that helps decision making on the local and regional levels.

Ms. Low's passion for the natural world drives her interest in environmental conservation and community engagement. She holds a Bachelor of Science in Fish and Wildlife Conservation and a Master of Science in Watershed Science and Management from the University of Massachusetts Amherst. She has worked in ecological restoration, community forestry, trail design, stewardship, and park management for fifteen years.

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**Jason Lubar, Board Certified Master Arborist, Associate Director of Urban Forestry, The Morris Arboretum of the University of Pennsylvania**, has worked in this position for fourteen years. His career has focused on educating a wide audience about trees and natural resources. He teaches professional-level arboricultural courses at Morris Arboretum, presents at international conferences, and supports Morris Arboretum's educational mission by providing a wide-range of tree-related services to a diversity of clients including design firms, arborists, townships and municipalities, schools, and corporations.

Jason is a Board Member of the PennDel Chapter of the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA), serves on ISA's Council of Representatives and is a Board Certified Master Arborist and a member of the American Society of Consulting Arborists. He also is on the Executive Board and is treasurer of the Pennsylvania's Urban and Community Forestry Council.

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**Sarah Wu, Deputy Director, City of Philadelphia Office of Sustainability**, manages the City of Philadelphia's climate adaptation planning process and is overseeing the update of *Greenworks Philadelphia*, the City's comprehensive sustainability plan. She also co-chairs the Philadelphia Food Policy Advisory Council, which facilitates the development of policies that improve access for Philadelphia residents to culturally appropriate, nutritionally sound, and affordable food that is grown locally through environmentally sustainable practices.

Prior to joining the Office of Sustainability, Sarah helped implement Opportunity NYC, an incentive program working to improve the health, employment, and education of New Yorkers in poverty; served on New York University's Sustainability Task Force; and researched national environmental policies at the Environmental Law Institute in Washington, DC.

Sarah holds an undergraduate degree from Williams College and a Masters in Urban Planning from New York University.

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