

Measuring, Valuing and Creating Markets for Non-Extractive Ecosystem Services Associated with Bivalve Shellfish

September 24-25, 2008

University of Rhode Island, Kingston, RI

Meeting Information

Hosts: Jim Opaluch, University of Rhode Island (URI)
Rob Brumbaugh and Caitlyn Toropova, The Nature Conservancy (TNC)
Dan Nees, Forest Trends

Overview

Bivalve shellfish such as clams, oysters and mussels are examples of natural resources where direct economic returns have historically been associated with harvest and extraction. When left in place, however, these natural assets provide a host of other ecosystem services that also have value, although historically these have been realized outside of the marketplace.

This interdisciplinary workshop will bring together ~35 experts in natural and social sciences, including academics, policy makers and practitioners to summarize the most practical and policy-relevant means of valuing non-extractive ecosystem services associated with bivalve shellfish. In addition, workshop participants will identify opportunities to develop market institutions in which to capitalize and trade such non-extractive services. Examples of non-extractive services include improved water clarity from shellfish filter-feeding activities, denitrification in sediments, enhanced fish productivity from healthy shellfish reefs, and shoreline stabilization from intertidal shellfish reefs and beds.

Workshop Objectives: (1) Identify and quantify non-extractive ecosystem services that have direct or indirect economic value (i.e., those with documented value or those services that might reasonably be expected to be of significant economic value); (2) Synthesize ecological information and compile case studies of valuation methodologies directly useful for supporting management decisions; (3) Identify market institutions for each ecosystem service that could potentially be effective in providing private incentives; and (4) Identify critical information gaps and design a research agenda for addressing these information gaps in near-term.

In advance of the workshop, participants will receive a draft white paper that will provide a framework for workshop discussions. At the workshop, following an introductory public symposium with three invited presentations, workshop participants will be assigned to working groups to develop the concepts and recommendations identified in the workshop objectives.

Anticipated Outcomes: This will be an interactive, working meeting designed to bring together leaders in various fields to advance the science and practice of measuring, valuing and creating markets for shellfish services. Specific outcomes will include:

- Publication of proceedings as a book with contributed chapters and input from participants
- Application of recommendations in pilot projects initiated and/or supported by workshop participants

Timeline

July – distribution of workshop invitations, draft agenda and initial workshop logistics

August – distribution of final agenda and white paper

September – final logistics and workshop

December – draft outline of proceedings and finalizing writing assignments/contributions.

Questions: Rob Brumbaugh (rbrumbaugh@tnc.org) OR Jim Opaluch (jimo@uri.edu)

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