



**The Model Forest Policy Program  
and the Cumberland River Compact present**

**Climate Solutions University:  
Forest and Water Strategies**

**2015 Adaptation Planning Curriculum**

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**Syllabus In-Brief**

[www.mfpp.org](http://www.mfpp.org)

Climate Solutions University is designed to bring climate resilience to communities and regions through climate adaptation planning and implementation. The planning curriculum guides selected communities through a one-year planning process including team engagement, risk assessment, and adaptation planning. The results are community specific climate adaptation steps that bring health and safety to vulnerable populations and increase regional climate resilience by protecting natural resources and the ecosystem services necessary for quality of life. The curriculum guides participating communities through the following adaptation steps:

1. Decide to Take Action and Activate a Diverse Planning Team
2. Assess Climate Risks and Opportunities for People, Forest, Water, and Economic Resources
3. Develop Adaptation Strategies, Recommendations and Action Plans
4. Build Public Support and Implement the Action Strategies

**In 2015 the CSU Adaptation Planning program will:**

- Empower four regional communities to become more **climate resilient** through forest, water and economic strategies by completing the one-year CSU climate adaptation planning process.
- Facilitate the development of four effective and actionable community-based **climate adaptation plans**.
- Support **implementation** of adaptation actions to achieve measurable **outcomes** of safe and prosperous people, healthy forested watersheds and more sustainable communities in face of climate change.

The CSU planning process is modeled after the four-step process developed in King County, WA and outlined in the “Climate Action Planning: A Guide for Local, Regional and State Governments”, which is used as a key resource document. The original process was refined with the experiences of two pilot projects carried out in Idaho and Tennessee in 2008 and 2009 and CSU planning years of 2010-2014, with a total of 29 communities participating through December 2014. The curriculum has further evolved in 2014 and 2015 to adopt an ecosystem services framework to base the risk assessment and regional collaborative planning process upon.

The CSU planning process is delivered in 2015 with 7 Learning Modules delivered in a series of 27 total webinars, delivered from Feb 3 – Nov 17, 2015. The curriculum learning modules include the following components:

- A CSU online classroom for module materials and archived resources, available for log in here: [http://www.mfpp.org/Climate\\_Solutions\\_University](http://www.mfpp.org/Climate_Solutions_University)
- Bi-weekly, live distance learning webinars with interactive participation

- Access to recorded module materials, webinar recordings and pdfs of presentations
- CSU Planning Worksheets and Checklists to guide planning steps and deliverables
- Outline of draft plans to be completed in stages
- Guidance documents for plan content and plan formatting
- Ecosystem Services Assessment Tool and Guide
- Key assessment and planning resources and additional reading lists
- Bi-weekly group consulting conference calls
- Peer-to-peer learning networks through listserv, forums, and conference calls.

### **CSU Project Products and Outcomes:**

As a result of this community planning process each community will complete;

1. A Community Climate Adaptation Action Plan – Final Community Draft due on November 20
2. CSU Evaluation Form and Year-End Interview Process – Completed by December 4
3. Active pursuit of resources and community support to implement the plan in 2015 and beyond
4. Participation as CSU alum in support of planning community activities in 2016

The CSU process is highly focused on building a diverse planning and implementation team that is committed to contributing to the planning process AND supporting practical implementation of the adaptation strategies in the plan. Every aspect of the curriculum is aimed at creating a plan that will actually be put into action because it is specific, practical, fundable, and has community support. The goals and objectives will be aligned with actionable steps to benefit people and protect forest, water and economic resources, leading to increases resilience to climate change impacts at the local and regional level. The evaluation process is designed to illuminate and improve the planning process and help recruit and prepare new communities to participate in the CSU process in future years.

Each learning module will include Planning Worksheets with research and reporting assignments that are directly relevant to producing these final planning documents. These reports will be drafted in sections throughout the planning period as the communities complete their assignments and receive guidance and assistance from the CSU Team.

Guidelines, templates and examples of adaptation plans are available for communities to use in their work. Teams are encouraged to review the guidelines and keep them in mind as sections of work proceed with each learning module.

### **Expectations of Community Participants:**

The community project leaders will coordinate and be responsible for the community planning process. The project leader provides at least a half-time effort (20 hours per week) to leadership of the project, team management, and completing of planning tasks. Responsibilities of the project leader include conducting local team engagement and community activities; participating in all webinars and consulting calls; completing all planning steps guided by worksheets, checklists and templates; and serving as one of the principal authors of the adaptation plan by drafting the plan and participating in the revision and finalizing process with input from the CSU Staff and planning team.

The Community Project Leader is also responsible for sharing the learning from the curriculum with local team members and supporters. This includes webinar sharing with core team members and outreach with climate education to broader community audiences. All communities are encouraged to include a Co-Leader who will participate in the live webinar sessions, assist with project work, and be available anytime the project leader cannot participate. Additional local team members are encouraged to participate in the webinars or view the archived recordings and assist the project leader with project tasks.

In addition to the specific webinar and conference call dates detailed below, community project leaders are asked to **reserve the regular Tuesday time period every week as CSU work time** and be available for additional bonus presentations, conference calls, coaching sessions or team work as needed.

This CSU Syllabus In brief below offers the basic outline of the curriculum educational sessions. Additional detailed information and resource documents are available through the CSU website at the link above.

**Learning Modules – Topics and Calendar:** **Webinar Date**

**Module 1: Orientation**

#1 Technology Briefing.....	Feb	03
#2 Introductions and Successful Adaptation .....	Feb	10
#3 Overview Climate Change, CSU Program, and Team Building .....	Feb	17

**Module 2: Strategic Planning Process and Skills**

#1 Agile Strategic Planning Approach and Stakeholder Engagement .....	Feb	24
#2 Ecosystem Services Framework for Risk Assessment .....	Mar	10
#3 Engagement with Vulnerable Communities .....	Mar	24
#4 Identifying Potential Climate Solutions and Opportunities.....	Apr	07
#5 Preparing for In-Depth Assessment Process .....	Apr	21
#6 Community Presentations of Preliminary Findings .....	Apr	28

**Module 3: Climate Risk Assessment**

#1 Landscape Assessment: Terrestrial .....	May	05
#2 Landscape Assessment: Watersheds .....	May	19
#3 Risk Assessment: Rural Conditions .....	Jun	02
#4 Risk Assessment: Urban Conditions .....	Jun	16
#5 Risk Assessment: Vulnerable Populations .....	Jun	30

**Module 4: Climate Solutions Assessment**

#1 On-the-Ground Adaptation Practices .....	Jul	14
#2 Public Policy Adaptation Strategies .....	Jul	28
#3 Education, Incentives, and Political Strategies .....	Aug	11
#4 Community Presentations of Assessment Findings .....	Aug	25

**Module 5: Adaptation Action Plan**

#1 Action Planning: Strategies and Action Steps .....	Sep	15
#2 Action Planning: Strategies and Action Steps .....	Sep	29

**Module 6: Climate Adaptation Plan (CAP) Reviews**

#1 CAP Review #1 .....	Oct	06
#2 CAP Review #2 .....	Oct	13
#3 CAP Review #3 .....	Oct	20
#4 CAP Review #4 .....	Oct	27

**Module 7: Community Presentations**

#1 Community Presentation: Region 1 .....	Nov	03
#2 Community Presentation: Region 2 .....	Nov	10
#3 Outcomes and Evaluation .....	Nov	17

**Climate Adaptation Plan – Final Plan Due Date.....** Nov 20

All Core Curriculum Webinars and Community Sessions are 90 minutes and take place on:  
Tuesdays starting at 9:55 am PT /10:55 am MT /11:55 pm CT/12:55 pm ET.

Webinars will occur every other week. In addition to the specific dates above, this weekly Tuesday time period should be reserved by all Community Project Leaders for CSU sessions, to include group consultation calls, bonus webinars, collaborative tasks, or other special topic opportunities during the year.

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For Questions Contact:  
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