

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1N7DQPq81BTH13pAsck7MkJKbridAlgc526fPN>
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Group 1 notes:

- Describe an experience you've had seeking funding and finance for climate resilience work in a rural community. What challenges did you encounter?

Overwhelm

Quick turnaround time

Large pots of money

Makes it feel like "this is not for me" - it's for someone else who has the skill/capacity (even if they might - the initial shock can be a lot)

In our county we have a single planner for the entire planning department - that person doesn't have time to write a grant

When there are external shocks it's even harder - e.g. wildfire. Folks are impacted by displacement, people who might have the ability/skills to seek funding and finance are dealing with basic recovery (e.g. having to drive 3 hours to the post office because their town no longer has a post office)

Challenges are varied and many - a lot of typical sources of funding (foundations and state government) does not value capacity and project management - a lot of it is just for project implementation. There's no desire to fund the pre-work to get communities to the spot to do the projects.

CTNC - we are a land trust.

Can't even see what's possible full time

I don't think we've really gotten the METRICS for capacity building that funders are looking for (and can so easily site when there is a project at the end of the pipe)

Trying to break the cycle of just caring about projects, but it's hard

And even if you do care about projects - Projects get destroyed during disasters

Need more support for pre-disaster and planning activities

Private funding just isn't deep enough to make meaningful change. Federal government is the biggest player.

Bad sentiments about people parachuting in after disasters and then leaving

- What progress has been made on improving access to funding and finance for climate resilience work in rural communities? What has enabled that progress and subsequent increased access?

To the capacity building question - several years ago, California funded a capacity program for forest/wildfire resilience, specifically designed to support organizational development, project development, and planning. It has been a game changer. Sharing in case it can be a model for other states. This has been a huge asset in our rural region to leverage capacity investments into significant resources for planning and implementation.

<https://www.conservation.ca.gov/dlrp/grant-programs/Pages/Regional-Forest-and-Fire-Capacity-Program.aspx#:~:text=T%E2%80%8Bhe%20Regional%20Forest,%E2%80%8Bed%20communities%E2%80%8B%E2%80%8B>

There was some great state level advocacy, seed investment from the state

RISE - regions innovating for Small Economies (NC)

Building capacity across jurisdictions by collaborating regionally

Eliminate match

Really need more public funding

Bonds is a fascinating idea - Western NC there is/was support for bonds for public schools - need to

Bonds is a huge market

Rural Housing Service (RHS): Climate change has a profound effect on the RHS portfolio because of direct structural impacts to the portfolio's single and multifamily properties, and also RD's support of essential community facilities. RHS programs will increasingly be required to consider financing for pre-disaster, resilience-related construction and improvements. Older building codes will need to be reevaluated to improve the inadequate construction of existing facilities and remove any barriers to accessibility.

- What public funding opportunities (e.g. federal or state) are currently being used to advance climate resilience work in rural communities (whether or not they are explicitly designed for climate resilience)? What new opportunities are coming online that seem particularly promising? Why?
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- What are important considerations about rural community context that may make particular funding and finance mechanisms (e.g. grants, loans, bonds, etc) more or less appropriate or accessible?

Group 2 notes:

- Describe an experience you've had seeking funding and finance for climate resilience work in a rural community. What challenges did you encounter?
 - Participant 1: I worked for gov, but none of the staff can help with grantwriting
 - Participant 2:: yes I've had this prob too, silos or lanes of work that don't merge
 - Participant 3: Regional intermediaries - who is doing the work? County-level or ? What about Fed agencies? Often an intermediary - might be CDFI or a community college. Transformational investments in regions needed rather than project level. Who will do the work;

- Participant 2: so many of the grants don't allow for overhead. Can't sustain the work and the community carrying capacity. Leveraging the work of other rural anchors, like community colleges and other institutions.
- Hard to find who to work with - identifying the anchor institutions who have the capacity to do the work.
- Participant 1: ecosystem mapping, forming relationships to establish what is happening there. Unincorporated communities may have community councils, who appoints those folks, may not be representational.
- What progress has been made on improving access to funding and finance for climate resilience work in rural communities? What has enabled that progress and subsequent increased access?
 - Example: entity is trying to go for DOE grant on solar on coal mine. Potential for influx of money, not long term jobs. Installer jobs, then only 2 full times. Money comes in, but what are the mechanisms for web of folks. Taking Ag land out of production, what is supporting the farming community.
 - Community benefit agreements and DOE grants - Reimagine Appalachia is doing work around this concept and they have toolkits.
 - Participant 4: Build community agreement in ahead of time, right now we have weak mechanisms and lower capacity. How do we provide more clear pathways at the onset. Vs 20 funding streams. Too much of hindsight, and the community is left to figure it out.
 - Participant 3: ASAP can bring together rural leaders nationally to leverage through ASAP a national voice, to tell funders, hey we need our own funding streams because we can't compete.
- What public funding opportunities (e.g. federal or state) are currently being used to advance climate resilience work in rural communities (whether or not they are explicitly designed for climate resilience)? What new opportunities are coming online that seem particularly promising? Why?
 - Participant 3: Smaller farms, hustling hard to survive - farming and then secondary revenue streams. CSA, farmers markets, carbon sequestration funding, multi-benefit would be great to get going. Farmers and farm workers need to be part of the solution and economic regeneration.
 - Fiber shed - California organization, focus on local fibersheds where clothes are created locally.
 - Community land trusts are an important tool.
 - HUD funding streams are out of the box, USDA funding.
 - Brookings report on federal funding for rural: <https://www.brookings.edu/collection/reimagining-rural-policy/>
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Group 3 notes:

- Describe an experience you've had seeking funding and finance for climate resilience work in a rural community. What challenges did you encounter?
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Group 4 notes:

- Describe an experience you've had seeking funding and finance for climate resilience work in a rural community. What challenges did you encounter?
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Overwhelm

Lack of capacity for carrying out requirements, lack of personnel

Match requirements - let's eliminate it

Finding ways to leverage funds into more funding

Maybe focus more broadly than local governments? (who is getting the funding?)

Finding funding for pre-project work, collaboration, and project development can be really challenging (with public and private) - need more of those

Bringing in community members as part of the solution - roles for farmers, farmworkers

I think that one thing that came up in our group that I'm thinking a lot about is that the absolute amount of funding (even with big leveraged buckets) is not enough to address the current (and coming) challenge.

1. Based on this conversation, what changes should ASAP make to the funding and finance assessments over the next few months?
1. Based on what you know about ASAP's capabilities and the needs in this space, what activities for increasing rural communities access to climate resilience funding and finance should ASAP pursue following the planning grant?
2. Based on this conversation, and what you know about the needs in this space, what additional work is needed to increase access in rural communities to climate resilience funding and finance? What people/organizations do you recommend to be part of that work?
 - a. Farmers union
 - b. ASAP should advocate for rural communities on national level