

Title: Getting Better Biodiversity Outcomes from Coordinated Environmental Markets

Description:

Environmental markets have the potential to enhance, improve, or conserve important elements of ecosystems; however, given that many declining species are specialized in their habitat requirements, their conservation requires coordinated, informed, and specific decision-making and actions. Environmental markets will not necessarily reverse species declines and enhance biodiversity without strong incentives for landowners and detailed conservation frameworks in place to specify and quantify targeted habitat outcomes and ecosystem services. Habitat exchanges are an emerging subset of environmental markets, specifically designed to achieve net benefits for vulnerable species through targeted mitigation across land ownership and sector boundaries, creating a mechanism for landscape-scale conservation of habitat on private and public lands.

During this workshop, we will explore the evolution of habitat markets and how such markets should be designed to achieve the greatest net benefit, covering both biological and regulatory considerations of habitat market design. Additionally, we will discuss scenarios in which it could be appropriate (or not) to combine (by stacking or bundling) habitat markets with other environmental markets or other conservation incentives in ways that add value, while avoiding pitfalls such as double-dipping, legal inconsistency, or market incompatibility. We will emphasize topics pertaining to achieving compatibility among conservation incentives, such as the interface of markets with federal conservation programs, stacking emerging habitat markets with established environmental (e.g. greenhouse gas or water) markets, and the challenge of establishing baselines for landowners enrolling in habitat markets.

Other topics that may be covered include temporal aspects of credits (e.g. temporary vs. permanent credits, order of credit generation) and how to incentivize specific habitat outcomes, in contrast to traditional practice-based conservation payments.

Target Audience:

Stakeholders in multiple environmental markets, including but not limited to market participants (buyers and sellers of credits, goods, and services), technical specialists, agencies and regulators, producer groups, and conservation organizations. Individuals and organizations developing environmental markets should be cognizant of potential for market interface. Anyone who works to maximize environmental benefits, including habitat, or who is interested in the interaction between environmental markets would benefit from this session. We hope to reach the greater ecosystem service community to increase awareness and knowledge and encourage productive thinking around the opportunities and challenges for designing and coordinating habitat-friendly environmental markets and other economically savvy forms of conservation incentives.

Format:

The half-day workshop will consist of expert speaker panels and Q&A discussion, as well as scenario analysis from domestic and international case studies.

Workshop Contact:

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