



## A Climate Resiliency Coalition for the SuAsCo Watershed



The town of Stow is working with OARS to form a Climate Resiliency Coalition to accelerate implementation of climate resiliency projects in the Sudbury-Assabet-Concord (SuAsCo) watershed. It will put into action those priorities of MAPC's MAGIC [Climate Change Resilience Plan](#) (2017), the Municipal Vulnerability Preparedness (MVP) plans, and emerging priorities that can best be addressed through intermunicipal and regional projects.

### Approach

Initiated in May 2021 with a one-year Accelerating Climate Resiliency grant from the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) to the town of Stow, in December 2021 OARS received a grant from the Foundation for MetroWest to support the staff time to continue the work through 2024.

The Coalition focusses on the intersection of water-related and natural resource climate vulnerabilities, particularly water supply, flooding, and extreme heat. Past natural disasters show that socioeconomic resilience can be as important as resilient infrastructure in determining who suffers the most from extreme weather. The Coalition aims to build resilience with community members on the frontline of climate change in particular.

The Coalition facilitator (OARS) is working with municipal staff and community organizations involved in sustainability or climate change and frontline group representatives on the following tasks:

- Identify stakeholders and hold outreach conversations/small group meetings;
- Compile data provided by municipal partners and identify data gaps;
- Convene three Coalition meetings in Year 1 to identify shared climate resilience priorities;
- Identify cross boundary, action-oriented goals and agree upon shared threatened resource(s);
- Hold webinars to build capacity of members;
- Identify funding opportunities and support inter-municipal grant applications;
- Communicate with the public; share lessons learned; participate in MAPC's Resilience Community of Practice (RCOP).

### Municipal Involvement

Each municipality in the Coalition will commit to support the Coalition's work through the participation of specific municipal staff, the pursuit of shared action-oriented goals, and in developing proposals to further the work prioritized by the Coalition when funding opportunities arise. Municipalities will contribute to data collection, conversations and meetings, and developing action project details.

### Climate and the SuAsCo Watershed

The MAGIC [Climate Change Resilience Plan](#) (2017) was the first non-coastal regional resilience plan in the Commonwealth, with a detailed vulnerability assessment showing drinking water infrastructure and outdoor workers as having the highest vulnerabilities, followed by aquatic resources, wastewater infrastructure, the built environment and transportation. Top **Action Strategies**: increase clean energy projects; protect and restore natural resources, use green infrastructure, expand access to public transportation, reform regulation and zoning, preserve agricultural land, and advocate for State action and funding.

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*Other MAPC Project partners and supporters: Sudbury Valley Trustees (SVT); MetroWest Conservation Alliance (MCA); SuAsCo Wild & Scenic River Stewardship Council (RSC); Massachusetts Ecosystem Climate Adaptation Network (MassECAN); Towns of Acton, Bedford, Bolton, Boxborough, Lexington, and Lincoln.*