



# Elizabeth Cooper

Senior Associate

Consensus Building Institute

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## PROFESSIONAL SUMMARY

Elizabeth is a mediator and facilitator skilled in process design, multi-party public dispute facilitation, collaborative problem solving, and community engagement. Her facilitation work focuses on integrating the perspectives and interests of key stakeholders and communities into the development of complex policy and technical responses to issues at the intersection of the built and natural environment. She has particular expertise working with municipal, state, and federal agencies on climate adaptation, land use/transportation planning, water resources, and agriculture issues. She also works with government and non-profit organizations to strengthen collaborative capacity and guide strategic planning.

## EXPERIENCE

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| 2016-Present | <b>Consensus Building Institute</b><br><i>Senior Associate, previously Associate</i>   | Cambridge, MA |
|              | Design, manage, and facilitate consensus-building processes for a range of public policy issues and disputes. Guide strategic planning and strengthen collaborative capacity in government and non-profit organizations. |               |
| 2015-2016    | <b>Water Diplomacy Research Center, Tufts University</b><br><i>Research and Writing Associate for Water Diplomacy Blog</i>   | Medford, MA   |
|              | Led research and writing on series of papers applying complexity science and negotiation theory to analyze transboundary water disputes.   |               |
| 2013-2015    | <b>Center for Governance and Sustainability, UMass Boston</b><br><i>Research Associate</i>   | Boston, MA    |
|              | Drafted policy briefs addressing environmental convention national reporting methods and their effectiveness, based on primary data analysis. Applied for grants, drafted project literature.                            |               |

## EDUCATION

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| 2017 | <b>University of Massachusetts, Boston</b><br><i>Conflict Resolution, MA</i>            | Boston, MA       |
| 2010 | <b>Mount Holyoke College</b><br><i>Critical Social Thought, BA, graduated cum laude</i> | South Hadley, MA |

## SELECTED PROJECTS

### CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENCE

**Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs State Climate Assessment**, September 2021-present. Facilitator for the Commonwealth's 2022 Climate Assessment, which will feed into the State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan. Develop stakeholder engagement plan, create community engagement materials to achieve a layered, inclusive engagement approach, convene a group of Community Liaisons to serve as ambassadors and partners for on-the-ground engagement of communities, especially environmental justice communities. Design engagement process and facilitate stakeholder meetings.

**Lincoln Institute of Land Policy / Climigration Network**, 2020-present. Facilitate dialogues with grassroots leaders representing frontline, underserved communities across the U.S. facing questions of whether and how to relocate due to severe climate impacts on their homes. Facilitate participants' learning from each other across diverse contexts, assist them in developing shared, collaborative statements to influence funding and policy.

**Plum Island Economic Analysis for Sea Level Rise Decision Making**, Newbury and Newburyport, MA. 2020-2021. One of a team of two facilitators leading a collaborative research project funded through the Massachusetts Municipal Vulnerability (MVP) program. Facilitated a community advisory group of stakeholders representing key interests and leading public engagement over the course of the project. The project provided economic and fiscal data about the costs and benefits of managing Plum Island (a barrier island) in the face of coming sea level rise for use in future decision making by Newbury and Newburyport.

**Climate Resilience Zoning Task Force**, Cambridge, MA, 2019-2021. Facilitated a 25-member multi-stakeholder committee including developers, residents, labor, environmental experts, and city staff. With technical support, this committee developed and reached agreement on enhancements to city zoning that will increase climate resilience given future predictions of heat, precipitation and sea level rise.

**Resilient Mystic Collaborative**, Mystic River Watershed, MA, 2020-2021. Assisted in facilitation of the collaborative, which brings together municipalities from across the watershed to share case studies, research, best practices, and lessons learned to strengthen local-scale climate resilience; advocate for improved policy and funding responses to climate impacts; and develop shared projects to address resilience challenges regionally. Provided project management for a study to address social resilience to climate impacts in the Lower Mystic watershed.

**Scituate 50-year Coastal Vision**, Scituate, MA, 2019-2020. Co-facilitated community process to develop a long-term vision for a resilient coastline for one of the communities most vulnerable to climate impacts on the east coast. Developed and implemented extensive community engagement plan to reach community members through neighborhood gatherings, online forums, and public meetings. Guide the community to build a positive vision of what it wants to see on the coast in the future, and help weigh options and tradeoffs to help achieve the vision.

**Climate Change Preparedness and Resilience Plan**, Cambridge, MA, 2019-2021. Assisted with facilitation of public meetings for the City's effort to develop its first ever climate change preparedness and resilience plan. Results of this intensive planning effort will be folded into Cambridge's long-term plan and will be undertaken by a suite of partners.

**The Nature Conservancy - New York Climate Adaptation Team Strategy**, New York State, 2019. Assisted with in-depth stakeholder assessment and facilitated process to develop strategic focus to strengthen

the impact of the Conservancy's New York State Climate Adaptation Team's efforts to build resilience to flooding in the state.

**Climigration Network**, Cambridge, MA, 2019. Facilitator of the board and working groups of the Climigration Network, a community of practice on the subject of helping communities consider managed retreat among climate adaptation options. Worked with team to enhance impact of the Network to catalyze communities, practitioners, and thought leaders confronting climate change-induced migration.

## ENVIRONMENT, AGRICULTURE, AND NATURAL RESOURCES

**New York State Energy Research and Development Authority – Technical Working Group on Solar Development and Agricultural Lands**, 2021-present. Co-facilitator of a technical working group that serves as a forum to address concerns relating to solar development and potential conflicts with agricultural operations and lands of greatest importance. Facilitate discussions in which stakeholders can openly communicate concerns, identify information needs, and learn of the actions that each of these stakeholder groups could (or are) taking to address these concerns to improve outcomes.

**Vermont Soil Conservation Practice and Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) Working Group**, Montpelier, Vermont, 2019-present. Co-facilitation of Working Group convened by the Agency of Agriculture, Food, and Markets to develop recommendations for financial incentives designed to encourage farmers in Vermont to implement agricultural practices that improve soil health, enhance crop resilience, increase carbon storage and stormwater storage capacity, and reduce agricultural runoff to waters. Facilitate meetings and webinars on PES program design, improved soil health and management practices, and strategies to catalyze a paradigm shift to recognize and value land stewardship in agriculture across the state.

**Newtown Creek Superfund Site Community Advisory Group**, Brooklyn and Queens, New York, 2019-2020. Assisted in facilitation of a group of diverse interests providing input to EPA on the development and implementation of plans to remediate water, soil, and sediment contamination from multiple heavily industrialized sites along Newtown Creek.

**Hudson River PCBs Superfund Site Community Advisory Group**, Fort Edward, NY, 2019. Assisted in facilitation of a 25-member group of diverse and divergent interests providing input to EPA on the implementation of the Record of Decision to dredge, dewater, and transport Hudson River sediments contaminated with PCBs from the operations of two General Electric manufacturing facilities.

**Housatonic River PCB Cleanup Citizens' Coordinating Council**, Pittsfield, MA, 2019-present. Assisted in facilitation of a 25-member group of diverse and divergent interests providing input to EPA on the implementation of the Consent Decree to remediate river sediment and soil sites in and along the Housatonic River from PCBs from the operations of General Electric manufacturing facilities.

## WATER RESOURCES

**USEPA Southeast New England Program: Massachusetts and Rhode Island Stormwater Accounting and Tracking Project**, 2021-present. Facilitate a working group bringing together engineers and planners from municipalities in Massachusetts and Rhode Island along with EPA Region 1 National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Permit Program staff, stormwater program staff from the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management (DEM), and technical consultants, to help build municipal capacity to track and account for stormwater management best management practices. Facilitate collaboration to assist municipal partners in adopting tracking and accounting tools, identify data gaps and challenges, and develop action plans.

**Chesapeake Bay Funders' Network Capacity Building Initiative Assessment**, Virginia, Maryland, Delaware, 2020-2021. Conducted capacity assessment in two watersheds of the Chesapeake Bay to determine opportunities and capacity needs to strengthen collaboration among diverse actors to achieve long-term water quality goals for Chesapeake Bay. Synthesized findings and developed recommendations to pooled funding initiative for future grant-making.

**Wolastoq First Nations and Federal Watershed Collaboration**, Maine and New Brunswick, 2019-present. Assist in facilitation for a process of the Maliseet First Nations and Tribe and Canadian and US federal agencies to strengthen cooperation, provide information sharing and learning and a strategic plan for collaborative action to restore salmon and ecosystems in the St. John River watersheds.

**Mystic River Watershed Initiative**, Greater Boston Area, 2019-2020. Supported the Environmental Protection Agency (Region 1) and the many non-profit and agency members working collaboratively to clean up the water in the Mystic River Watershed. This included leading an in-depth collaborative effort to bring regulators, stormwater experts and municipal leaders together to share information and develop concrete workplans and helping to plan steering committee and subgroup meetings, assisting with facilitation of large events, providing meeting summaries, and other facilitation services.

**Dams and Sediment in the Hudson River**, Hudson River Valley, NY, 2019. Assisted in facilitation for a collaborative research project studying what happens to sediments trapped behind dams when dams are removed. The multi-disciplinary team included modelers and ecologists doing field work. The CBI team managed overall project coordination and facilitated regular advisory committee meetings at which regulators, designers and local officials share concerns and hopes for the project. Project outcomes included field data from six impoundments and models of sediment transport.

## LAND USE AND PLANNING

**Net Zero Transportation Plan**, Cambridge, MA, March 2022-present. Lead stakeholder engagement for the development of a racial equity-based Net Zero Transportation Plan for the City, including helping form and then facilitating a stakeholder committee to build awareness and understanding of key transportation data sources, indicators, and emissions inventory methodologies; incorporate stakeholder feedback to support an equity framework for the Plan; review, prioritize, and build consensus around strategies and actions for inclusion in the Plan; and build commitment to implement the Plan in a collaborative matter, including identifying key resource needs and next steps.

**Port Infrastructure Working Group**, Cambridge, MA, May 2021-present. Facilitate a diverse working group of community representatives to guide priorities for infrastructure improvements to address climate-induced flooding and heat impacts. Facilitate and execute a broad community engagement strategy to ensure improvements are responsive to community needs.

**Lower Mystic Regional Working Group**, Somerville, Boston, and Everett, MA, 2016-2018. Assisted in facilitation and community engagement for a multi-agency and -city process to develop, model, and prioritize actions for multi-modal transportation improvements in and around one of the more vexing transportation planning problems in Greater Boston. Process included integrating land use and transportation modeling and future scenarios, extensive public engagement, and robust mobility modeling.

**Envision Cambridge Citywide Plan**, Cambridge MA, 2016. Part of consultant team developing Cambridge's first ever comprehensive plan. This included planning for and facilitation of public workshops, focus groups, and providing consultation on meeting materials and other engagement efforts being undertaken for Envision Cambridge.

## COASTS AND OCEANS / MARINE RESOURCES

**Aquaculture Stewardship Council Fish Welfare Standard**, 2020-present. Facilitate the development of common standards for fish welfare in aquaculture. Guide a multi-stakeholder, consensus-building process among environmental and advocacy groups, aquaculture producers and researchers.

**National Marine Fisheries Service Atlantic Large Whale Take Reduction Team**, 2020-present. Co-facilitator of multi-party stakeholder Take Reduction Team tasked with providing consensus advice on strategies to reduce the incidental take of large whales in the Atlantic due to impacts from fishing industry, shipping, and ecosystem changes driven by climate change and other factors. Take Reduction Teams are mandated under the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING

**“Our Path Forward” Strategy for Boston Area National Parks Service Three-site Park**, Greater Boston Area, 2019-present. Facilitate internal NPS process and stakeholder engagement effort to strengthen strategy for the three-site park comprised of the Frederick Law Olmsted National Historic Site (NHS), the John Fitzgerald Kennedy NHS, and the Longfellow House – Washington’s Headquarters NHS. Develop plans for the park’s archives, interpretation, outreach, operations, facilities, and management.

**Expansion Plan Implementation and Organizational Restructuring – Massachusetts Department of Ecological Restoration**, Boston, MA, 2019-present. Co-facilitate meetings of leadership of the Division to implement the organization’s expansion plan, including aligning the use of expansion resources with the organization’s strategic goals, helping determine how to prioritize and allocate staff effort across a range of objectives, and integrating new position hires into the Division. Develop and implement consultation approaches to engage staff and seek their input in division planning.

**ConnectMaine Stakeholder Engagement for Development of New Grant Process for Broadband Investment**, 2020. Assisted ConnectMaine in developing strategy to revise its grant objectives and criteria, and elicit meaningful stakeholder input to inform those decisions. Facilitated a series of public meetings and synthesized stakeholder input into actionable feedback for incorporation into a new grant process.

## ORGANIZATIONAL TRAINING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

**C40 City Advisers Conflict Resolution and Mediation Training**, 2021. Co-trainer for cohort of City Advisers in the Americas, Europe, Africa, and Asia working with cities to develop climate action plans. Training focused on conflict resolution and mediation skills, including preparing for and managing difficult conversations and meetings, negotiating solutions to meet organizational goals and those of other stakeholders, mediating conflicts and building consensus across departments, sectors, and communities involved in urban climate action.

**Green Climate Fund (GCF) Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM) Training**, Songdo, South Korea, 2019-2020. Assisted in design and development of face-to-face and online training for GCF Direct Accredited Entities on the development, strengthening, and operation of grievance mechanisms in the context of international development, with a focus on issues relevant to climate change mitigation and adaptation.

## SELECTED PUBLICATIONS AND PRESENTATIONS

**Pathways to Climate Resilience; Strategies for the Greater Boston Area.** 2019, co-authored with Ona Ferguson and Osamu Kumasaka. This report, written for the Barr Foundation, describes the current suite of leading activities on climate resilience at a municipal scale in eastern Massachusetts, outlines strategies, and identifies opportunities for action.

Cooper, Elizabeth S. **“Community Engagement 101: Why you need to involve the public, and how to do it well.”** Presented at: Cape Cod Commission One Cape Summit. 2016 June 24. Hyannis, Massachusetts.

Cooper, Elizabeth S. **“A Critical Analysis of the Role of the Climate Secretariat in UNFCCC Negotiations”** Paper presented at: Conflict Studies & Global Governance: The New Generation of Ideas. 2014 Oct. 31-Nov. 1. Boston, Massachusetts.

Aguirre, Jessica C. and Elizabeth Cooper. **“Evo Morales, Climate Change, and the Paradoxes of a Social-Movement Presidency.”** Latin American Perspectives 37 (2010): 238-44.

Insight posts about complex transboundary water conflicts for Water Diplomacy at Tufts:

<http://blog.waterdiplomacy.org/>