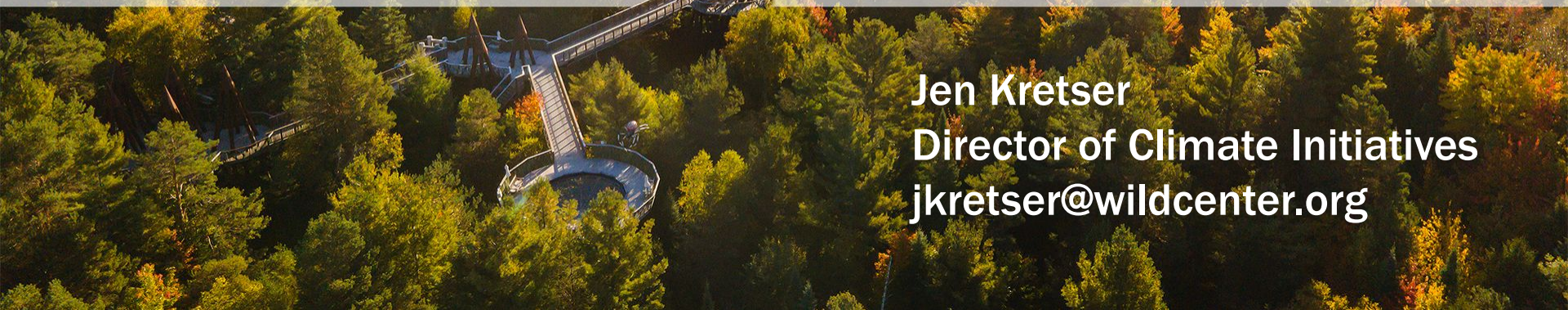




The Wild Center



Jen Kretser
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Climate Program Values



Place-based



Youth-driven



Action-oriented



Hopeful



Solutions-focused



Equitable

Partnerships

Youth Climate Summits





Sciole
Theresean
Nichele
Erenous Moutre

Art in Action

- murals
- sustainable fashion (clothes)
- multi disciplinary expression
- difficult to change perception
- attaching meanings

How does art spark change?

Art in Action

Lauren Fitzgerald, Metro Arts
Nichole Gord, Cumberland River Compact





UNC
SPARTAN

Human
Impact

N.C.

RIVER BASIN

Agriculture

Cape
Fear

Natural
Disaster

CLIMATE

ire Science
Medicine And
Science Unit

Youth & Local Government Guides

Free Resources
on our website



The Case for Climate Action

Everyone, including you, can join the fight against climate change. We need action on every scale, from the global to the local, to prepare and respond to this crisis. Climate change is not only a future issue—it's happening right now, in our communities.

In New York State, we are already experiencing warmer seasons, increased rainfall and sea level rise due to climate change. Low-income communities, communities of color and rural communities are hit the hardest by these issues. This means that these groups (and young representatives from them!) should be at the center of selecting and implementing climate solutions. You need and deserve to be a part of decisions that impact your future. When your skills and enthusiasm are paired with the influence of local government, you can be a force for positive change.



PART 1: NEW YORK STATE'S CLIMATE SMART COMMUNITIES PROGRAM

Why Participate in the CSC Program?

Local governments can do a lot to prepare their communities for climate change. By joining the Climate Smart Communities program, they can turn **climate change awareness into action**. The program also helps municipalities create short-term and long-term goals for building climate resilience.

The Climate Smart Communities certification program is:

- **Structured:** Climate change is a daunting challenge. The certification program allows communities to approach it as a series of manageable, localized tasks. Participating communities can draw on advice and experience from state-level experts.
- **Adaptable:** The CSC certification process includes big and small projects you can tackle, from clean energy to habitat management and infrastructure to climate education. No matter how small your community (or budget) is, the program can be tailored to meet your needs.
- **Collaborative:** Because the program is so comprehensive, it encourages building community partnerships. This provides a perfect opportunity to bring a new generation into public service. Adding youth to the mix diversifies and strengthens the task force.
- **Rewarding:** CSC participation makes it easier to access grant funding and technical assistance and can lead to state-level recognition.

Your job is to help persuade your local government to join CSC. As local governments weigh whether to participate, officials will evaluate the pros and cons. They will most likely be interested in understanding costs associated with joining (resources, money, time, etc.) As you begin the CSC process, keep the benefits in mind.

CSC CERTIFICATION PROGRAM BENEFITS TO LOCAL GOVERNMENTS:

- **Money.** Participating in the CSC program boosts your community's chances to win CSC grants and other state awards.
- **Resources.** The program offers communities technical assistance, training, tools and mentorship to achieve their climate goals.
- **Community Health.** Leads to increases in air quality, walkability, green spaces, energy efficiency and investment in the local economy.
- **Climate Resilience.** Helps communities adapt and prepare for extreme heat, flooding and other climate impacts.





The Wild Center at COP26. We spoke on panels, and advocated for climate education and more inclusion of youth.

5 Steps for starting a Youth Climate Summit

Free Resources
on our website



YOUTH CLIMATE SUMMIT MASTER CHECKLIST



Climate Change Community Asset Map

- Who in your community is already working on climate change? Who may want to contribute to a Youth Climate Summit?
- [Click here for more resources on Community Asset Mapping.](#)



Form a Youth Climate Summit Steering Committee with partners, teachers, and youth to determine:

- Audience: What age students? How many participants? From where?
- Scope: One-day or multi-day summit?
- Venue.
- Date: No conflicts with school schedules.
- Planning timeline.



Build an Audience

- Schedule meetings with school leadership, teachers, and students to build buy-in and recruit participants.
- Meet with students about forming a summit planning team.



Logistics

- Create an agenda that includes:
 - Climate Science 101 or similar presentation.
 - A variety of speakers, including youth, who are prepared to engage a young audience.
 - Time for Climate Action Planning.
 - Thematic workshop tracks.

Prepare a budget that reflects:

- Donations from funders, sponsors, and partnerships.
- Speaker honorariums, including youth speakers.
- Venue costs, including equipment and tech requirements.
- Locally sourced, plant-based meals.
- Functional swag.

Develop a communication plan for:

- Participants: Have a timeline for sharing registration, event logistics, attendee expectations, and follow-up information.
- Media: Send out press releases and media advisories.
- VIPs: Invite local decision-makers to the Summit.

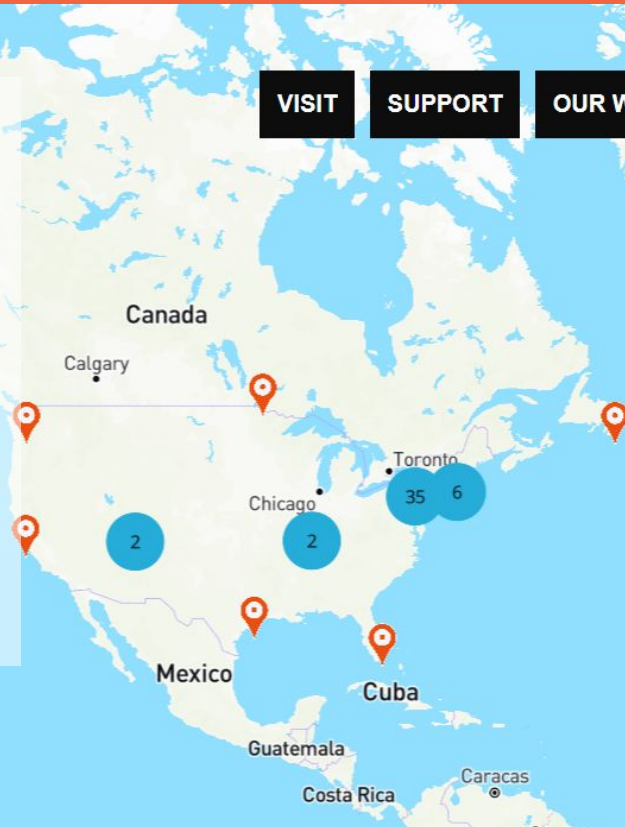


Summit Essentials

- Youth Engagement: Ensure youth are actively engaged in every step of the process, including on the steering committee, on student planning teams, and as speakers.
- Make sure student planning teams have task-oriented work groups, like Logistics, Social Media and Art.

Youth Climate Summit Network

250
Summits
worldwide in
10
Countries &
27
States

[VISIT](#)[SUPPORT](#)[OUR WORK](#)[ABOUT US](#)[SHOP](#)[BUY TICKETS](#)

Find a Summit

[Climate Collective Youth Climate Summit](#)[Pittsburgh Youth Climate Action Summit](#)[YES! Delaware Youth Environmental Summit](#)[Maryland Green Schools Youth Summit](#)[Mohawk Valley Youth Climate Summit](#)[Frontenac Arch Biosphere Youth Climate Action Summit](#)[Sagebrush Steppe Youth Climate Summit](#)[Constitution Marsh Virtual YCS](#)[Sweden Youth Climate Summit](#)[Durham Youth Climate Summit](#)

Climate Solutions Exhibition



CLIMATE
SOLUTIONS

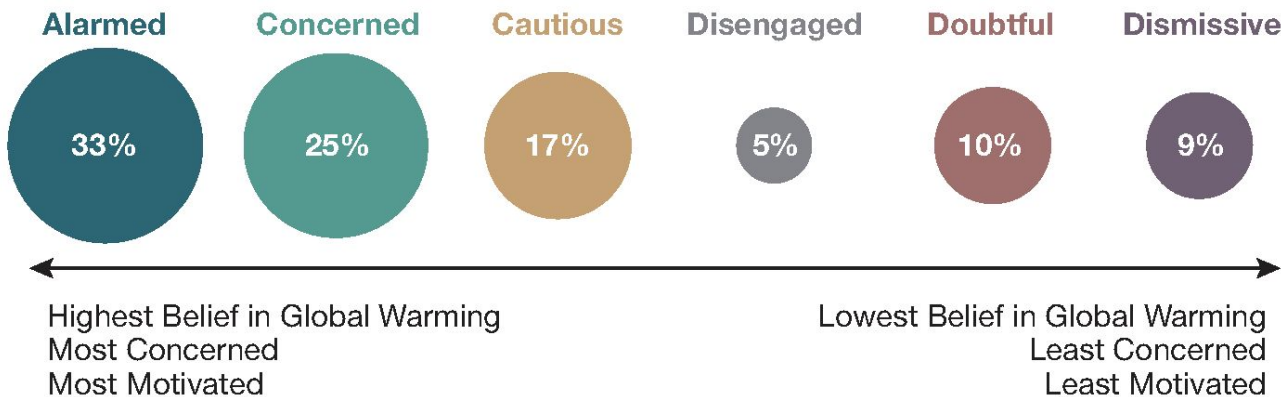


THE
WILD
CENTER



SASSY

Global Warming's Six Americas is an audience segmentation tool designed to help people better understand their own climate views as well as others. The original questionnaire was based on 36 items, but has now been reduced to just four questions in the **Six Americas Super Short Survey, Yay!**

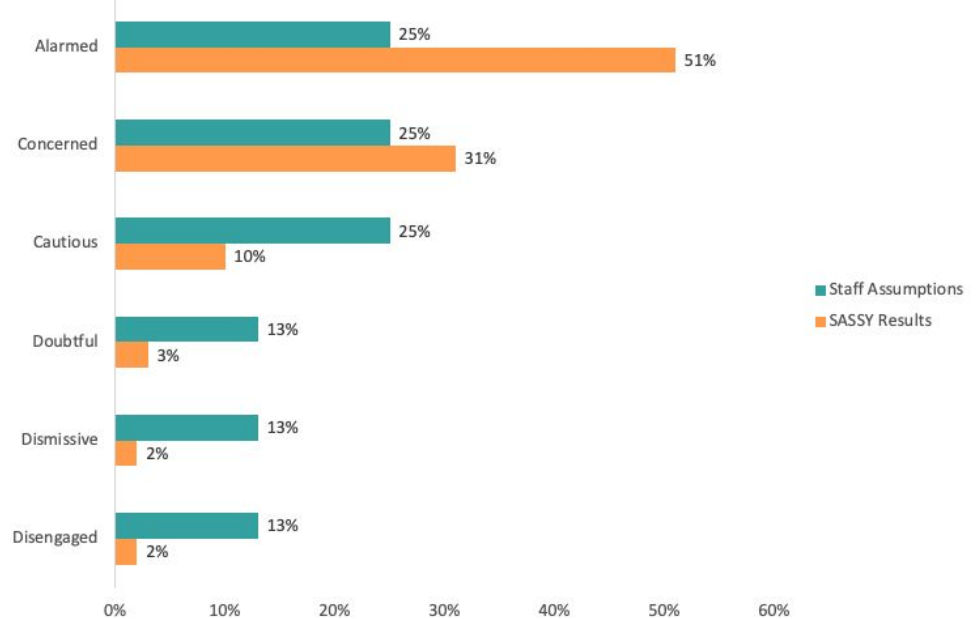


September 2021
(n= 1,006)

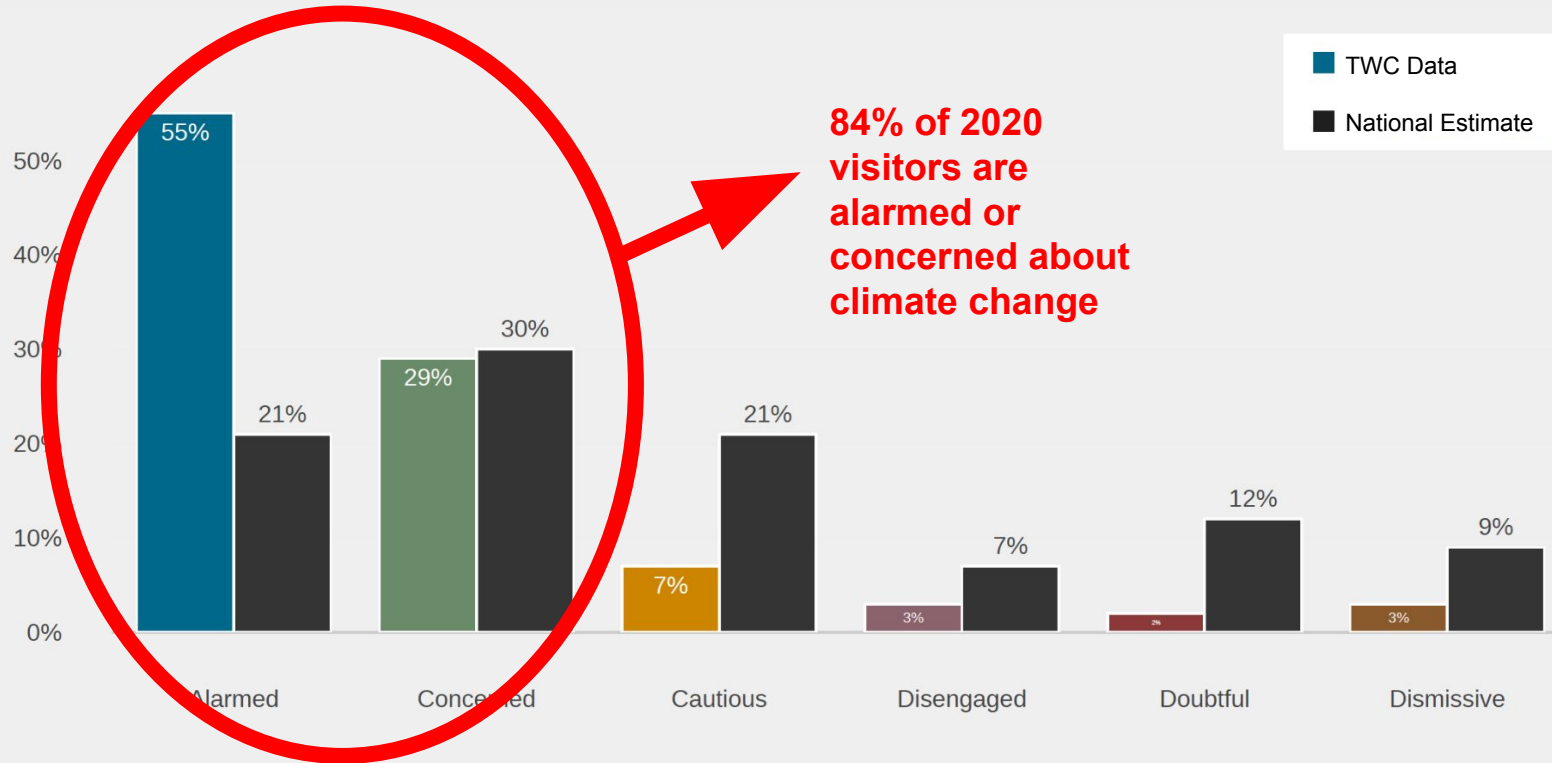


We conducted a **staff survey** to estimate where our visitors might fall on this spectrum. Most staff estimated that our visitors would fall in the cautious to disengaged categories.

The Wild Center's staff assumptions about their audiences' stance on climate change was substantially different from the truth



General Visitors (2020) vs. National Estimates (March 2018)



PROJECT COMPONENTS

3,000-square-foot focal Solutions Exhibit - Opened July 2022

Solutions Tinkering Studio (inside exhibit)

- Explore and create solutions
- Develop a problem solving mindset

Campus Integration

- Connect green infrastructure to climate solutions - pathway to Net Zero
- NOAA Science on a Sphere special programs
- 17 minute movie in theater - *The Age of Humans*
- Significant increase in climate change programs
- Staff Training
- Cafe and Store
- GHG Inventory
- Climate & Risk Resilience for our campus and our community



BIG IDEA

People across sectors, generations, and backgrounds are building a web of climate solutions and are inviting all of us to find our place in the climate movement.





Adirondack Building Conference

Audience: contractors, builders, planners, architects, designers

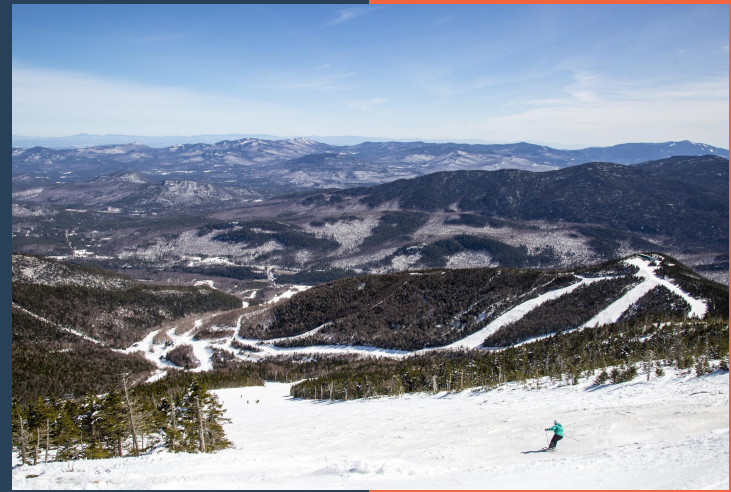
**Share & learn about the latest building technology
green building practices, ideas
and best practices**



Wintergreen

Winter Culture & Economy

**Highlight personal stories,
impacts of climate change,
demonstrate solutions as
our winters warm**



Adirondack Climate Outreach & Resilience Network

ACORN's mission is to plant the seeds that catalyze regional climate conversations, connect neighbors with neighbors, and foster community-level leadership that builds on the strength of our region from the ground up.

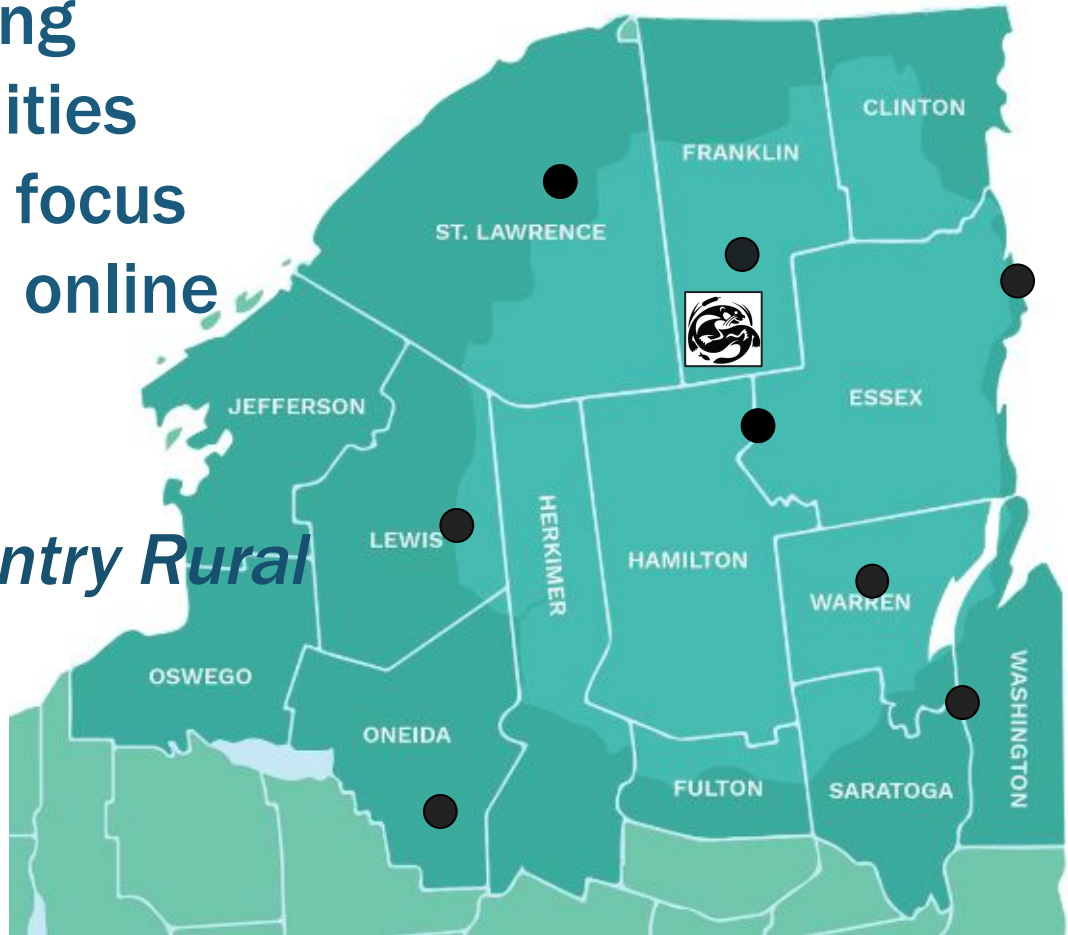


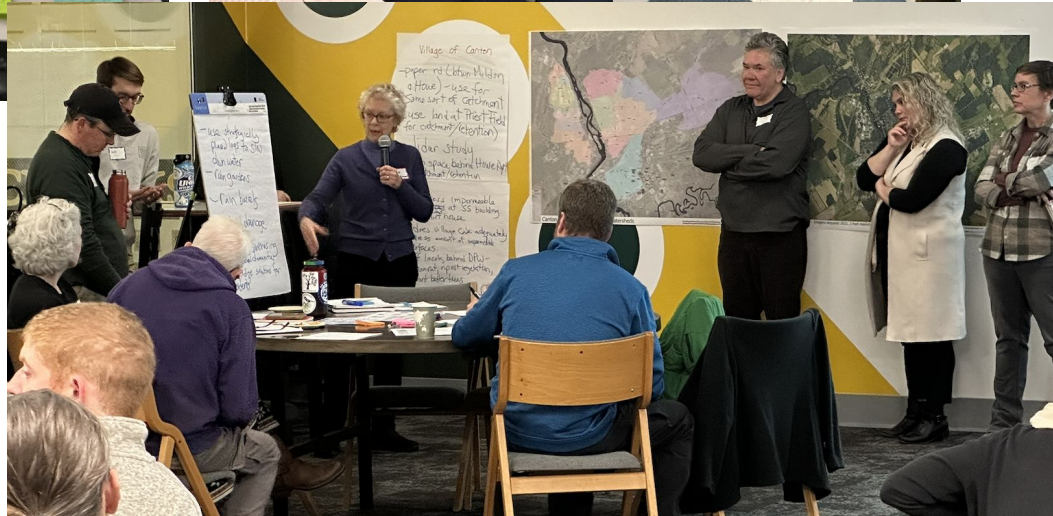
ACORN
Adirondack Climate Outreach and Resilience Network



12 Community Listening Sessions, 65 communities represented, over 100 focus groups/meetings + an online survey

May 2025 - *North Country Rural Resilience Roadmap*





Adirondack Climate Conference





Thank You!

Jen Kretser, Director of Climate Initiatives

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www.wildclimatesolutions.com/virtual-visit/

www.wildcenter.org/youthclimate



@wildcenter



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