

## 2020 CONSERVATION BANKING WEBINAR SERIES

# SPEAKER BIOS

### Webinar #3: Setting the State for Success – Strategic Site Selection & Durable Site Protection Mechanisms

**Katie Allen** leads The Conservation Fund's Conservation Leadership Network (CLN) in the development, execution and evaluation of The Fund's range of services related to innovative partnership programs, capacity building trainings, sustainability consulting and technical assistance. Katie works with community, governmental, and corporate partners to build capacity among leaders to enable on the ground conservation solutions and reach sustainable economic development goals.

Since 2010, Katie has designed and led several national and place-based initiatives for The Fund including the Federal Lands Livability Initiative, the National Workshop on Water Quality Trading, and Appalachian Gateway Community workshops and sustainable tourism assessments. She serves as facilitator for CLN's long-standing and highly-acclaimed Balancing Nature and Commerce Course, Mitigation Banking for Inter-Agency Review Teams Course, and Conservation Banking Course, as well as their regional offerings across the country. She holds a Masters of City and Regional Planning in Environmental and Land Use Planning from the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and a Bachelor of Science in Communications from Boston University.

**Matt Gause** is the Ecological Resources & Land Stewardship Director at Westervelt Ecological Services and oversees Westervelt's new project entitlement and operations and is also responsible for overseeing stewardship activities on over 27,000 acres of conserved properties in California, the Rocky Mountain region and the southeastern United States. Mr. Gause has over 27 years of experience with wetland and habitat restoration including the restoration of vernal pools, riparian forest, tidal marsh, and floodplain wetlands. He has also worked on the establishment and operation of over 24 conservation banks in California and has extensive experience identifying and developing mitigation for projects permitted under the federal Clean Water Act, federal Endangered Species Act and California state Endangered Species Act. Additionally, Mr. Gause has managed conserved lands for more than 15 threatened or endangered species on preserves throughout California.

Mr. Gause also provides site suitability analyses for mitigation projects, including restoration suitability, threatened and endangered species, easement restriction analysis, and future land management cost estimation. He also develops and implements both baseline and long-term land management and monitoring strategies for mitigation and conservation landscapes. Mr. Gause is a Certified Ecological Restoration Practitioner (CERP) and received a Bachelor of Science in Botany from the University of California at Davis.

**Valerie Layne** is an Ecologist with the US Army Corps of Engineers Institute for Water Resources (IWR) in Alexandria, VA. She supports the USACE Regulatory Program through developing and delivering trainings on compensatory mitigation for USACE regulators, and as the National Administrator for the Regulatory In-lieu Fee and Bank Information Tracking System (RIBITS), working with the RIBITS team to ensure RIBITS continues to meet the needs of the regulatory community. Prior to joining IWR, she was a Senior Biologist with the US Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) for over a decade, where she specialized in joint-agency review and guidance for

compensatory mitigation projects, including mitigation and conservation banks, served on IRTs in two Corps Districts, and was a RIBITS Super-Administrator for the Service. All told, she has nearly 30 years' experience ranging from biological inventories, special status species surveys, and monitoring ecological restoration and mitigation projects in the non-profit and private sectors, to regulatory with the federal government.

**Michelle Mattson** is a stream and wetland ecologist with the Corps' Institute for Water Resources (IWR). She has 18 years of experience as an environmental consultant and regulator conducting functional and conditional assessments and working with restoration teams to design, install and monitor restoration and compensatory mitigation projects. Michelle has supported the development of watershed-based programmatic permitting and advance mitigation programs including SAMPs, mitigation banks and ILF programs.

**Deborah (Deblyn) Mead** is the National Mitigation Lead for the Bureau of Land Management. She joined the BLM after a 20-year career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Deblyn held various positions in the Ecological Services Program at USFWS in the field and at headquarters, including Entomologist and Senior Biologist. She has been instrumental in developing mitigation policy, guidance, and tools at the field and national levels for 25 years. Early in her career she worked for the U.S. Geological Survey on a 3-year Phase II contaminants study in the Klamath Basin. Then as a biological consultant for 2 years, during which time she worked on energy projects in California and the southwest. Deblyn also developed and taught community college courses in biology and entomology. She holds a bachelor's degree in zoology from the University of California, Davis, and a master's degree in ecology and systematic biology from San Francisco State University.

**Clint Miller** joined The Conservation Fund in 2008 and serves as the Midwest Project Director. He works throughout ten Midwestern states including the Dakotas, Nebraska, Missouri, Illinois, Wisconsin, Kansas, Oklahoma, Arkansas and Iowa. He is the Fund's lead on implementation of the Midwest Habitat Mitigation Project, a \$22 million compensatory mitigation program for a 600-mile oil pipeline running across four states.

Clint is a seasoned conservation professional who has worked since 1988 in land conservation and wildlife management from Alaska and Florida to the Great Plains. He is a recognized expert negotiator and facilitator, working with federal, state and local agencies, corporations and families on complex real estate transactions, conservation easements, mitigation, public and private funding and finance.

Clint is a commissioner on the Land Trust Accreditation Commission. He previously worked as a regional director for the Minnesota Land Trust and led a community-based conservation program for The Nature Conservancy in the Dakotas. Clint spent 12 years as a wildlife biologist and land manager.

**Jeff Phillips**, BA, MA, is a senior fish and wildlife biologist with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service field office in Ventura, California. Mr. Phillips started with the Fish and Wildlife Service under the Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) while earning his Master's degree at the University of California Santa Barbara's Donald Bren School of Environmental Science & Management in 2004. He was appointed to a full-time Presidential Management Fellowship position upon completion of his Master's degree in June 2005. Since then, he has worked as an environmental contaminants biologist specializing in natural resource damage assessment and oil spill response for the Ventura field office (2005-2007) and the Pacific Islands field office in Honolulu, Hawaii (2007-2010), then as the geographic division supervisor for the Ventura field office South Coast division (2010-2015), and most recently as the Ventura field office Conservation Banking Coordinator.

From 2005 to 2007 Mr. Phillips was a member of the City of Santa Barbara Creeks Restoration and Water Quality Improvement Program Advisory Committee, appointed as a land use / environmental specialist. The Creeks Committee advises the Santa Barbara city council on an approximately \$2 million annual budget devoted to water quality improvement and creek restoration. From 2010 to 2015 Mr. Phillips served on the board of directors for Santa Barbara Channelkeeper, a grassroots non-profit organization whose mission is to protect and restore the Santa Barbara Channel and its watersheds through science-based advocacy, education, field work and enforcement.

Prior to entering graduate school, Mr. Phillips worked as a scientific advisor to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region IX Emergency Response Office, contracted under the Superfund Technical Assessment and Response Team (START). He performed a variety of emergency response duties in the U.S. and abroad, focusing on environmental sampling and reporting. He was honored with a letter of commendation in 2001 for service during the Washington D.C. anthrax attacks.

In 1999 and 2000, Mr. Phillips lived in Argentina to open a satellite office for Artesian Environmental Consultants. While in Buenos Aires, he focused on marketing and startup operations for the company while also executing environmental site assessment and remediation projects throughout the country and becoming fluent in Spanish.

Mr. Phillips received his Bachelor of Arts degree in Environmental Conservation with a minor in Environmental, Population and Organismic Biology from the University of Colorado – Boulder in 1994. He has always loved the outdoors and spends his free time surfing, fishing, traveling and hiking with his wife, son, and family dogs.

**Veronica Rowan** is an attorney with the Department of the Interior, Office of the Solicitor, Pacific Southwest Region. Veronica primarily advises the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Region 8 and associated Field Offices. Her field of expertise includes the implementation and application of a variety of federal statutes including the Endangered Species Act, Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act and various other statutes, as well as legal issues related to property and contract law. Veronica is one of a few attorneys in the Solicitor's office that advises the Conservation Banking Program. Veronica holds a Bachelor of Science in environmental studies from Rutgers University and a Juris Doctorate from the University of California, Davis. She joined the Solicitor's office by way of its Honors Program in 2004.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information, go to the [Webinar Series Information](#) page. All webinars will be recorded and uploaded to this website.