



Joanna L. Nelson, PhD

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Summary

Ecologist and conservation scientist: forest conservation, fire ecology and wildfire resilience in the North American West, land stewardship, watershed science, and land-sea interactions, from headwaters to the sea. Building science-to-action projects, stakeholder relationships, collaboration and action, including respectful partnerships with Native nations and Indigenous communities around cultural burning, land stewardship, and marine stewardship and access.

Skills

- Leadership and communication
- Fire ecology, wildfire resilience, conservation ecology, climate solutions
- Estuarine and coastal-marine ecology
- Facilitation for groups
- Project Management
- Writing
- Research and science-to-action
- Strategy
- R (programming language)
- GIS
- Microsoft Office and Zoom
- Languages: Spanish, French, Hebrew, and Modern Greek

Experience

DIRECTOR OF SCIENCE & CONSERVATION PLANNING, SAVE THE REDWOODS LEAGUE - 2021 TO THE PRESENT

I direct all aspects of Save the Redwoods League's science programs, which focus on coast-redwood and giant-sequoia forest health and restoration in a time of rapid environmental change and climate disruption; work in multi-partner coalitions with government agencies, Indigenous and Native nations and communities, and applied science researchers; manage a budget of approximately \$800,000; and lead Science/DEI/Justice efforts.

FOUNDER AND PRINCIPAL, LANDSEA SCIENCE – 2015-2021

Independent researcher and consultant in conservation science, wildfire resilience and response, sustainability, and project management for successful outcomes. Supporting communities, agencies, and non-profits to act on and adapt to climate disruption from an evidence base. For example, a) with the Amah Mutsun Land Trust (AMLT) as Co-Director of Stewardship, braiding climate science with traditional knowledge, I effectively traversed a continuum from research to action. I worked with the Native Stewards in the land trust on

restoration and cultural- and prescribed-burning to reduce catastrophic wildfire. This resulted in safe work and expanded positive relationships with land-management and fire agencies; and b) with eight U.S. National Estuarine Research Reserves (NERRs), which are coastal science centers, I completed science, science-communication, and facilitation phases of the project. I surveyed end users (coastal managers), reported results back to researchers, convened the expert Advisory Committee, investigated the scientific literature, and facilitated a group of 20 scientists in reaching consensus on evidence for action. This resulted in evidence-based action to restore and maintain coastal marshes in the face of sea-level rise.

NATURE NET SCIENCE FELLOW, STANFORD/NATURE CONSERVANCY – 2013-2015

Created new science directly application to conservation action. Tackled the problem of data scarcity in watershed protection programs in Latin America Water Funds Partnership, while building monitoring and evaluations programs; posed solutions in Ridge to Reef connectivity where logging interrupts coral-reef-fisheries livelihoods in Fiji and Melanesia; and conducted Salinas River watershed research in Central Coastal California. Managed projects across university and non-profit cultures, and across five different countries. Worked with experts as advisors: Drs. David Freyberg (Water Resources), Becky Chaplin-Kramer (Agroecology), and Mary Ruckelshaus (Fisheries and Marine Ecology) of Stanford.

ECOLOGIST AND POSTDOCTORAL FELLOW, STANFORD UNIVERSITY – 2012-2013

With the Natural Capital Project, a non-profit focused on ecosystem services science, I used strong analytical and experimental design skills to design and coordinate a monitoring network within watersheds in four countries in Latin America. Evaluated the effectiveness of water funds – shared conservation, finance, and governance structures – to provide safe drinking water to downstream cities, based on land management of upstream farmers and ranchers. Supported experimental-design phase through field implementation, and traveled to Quito, Ecuador, to work with multiple stakeholders.

SUMMARY OF PROJECT MANAGEMENT EXPERIENCE

I write and manage contracts, Scope of Work descriptions, budgets, and multiple, simultaneous milestones and deadlines for projects; experience as an independent researcher and consultant as well as Director of Science in a non-profit. Completed courses in the Stanford Advanced Management Program. Manage projects with partners from California/US to Latin America; South Africa; and with university, government-agency, and tribal-council partners in Alaska. Co-managed Indigenous forest restoration with AMLT and Save the Redwoods League in Santa Cruz County, California.

Education

University of California, Santa Cruz – Environmental Studies PhD (Ecology) 2011

Stanford University – Earth Systems MS 1999

Stanford University – Earth Systems BS 1997 (honors & Phi Beta Kappa)