

*Environmental Business Council of New England, Inc.  
Sustainable Solutions Lab at the University of Massachusetts Boston*

## **Sweltering Heat Waves and Increasing Drought: Can the Northeast handle the heat?**

Friday, June 3, 2022

University of Massachusetts Club | Boston, Massachusetts  
*(Streaming virtually on Zoom)*



**Save the Date! September 30, 2022**  
Next Climate Adaptation Forum

EBC & Sustainable Solutions Lab at UMass Boston – Quarterly Climate Adaptation Forum  
EBC Contact: Ann Gisinger, [agisinger@ebcne.org](mailto:agisinger@ebcne.org) | SSL Contact: Rebecca Herst, [rebecca.herst@umb.edu](mailto:rebecca.herst@umb.edu)  
[www.climateadaptationforum.org](http://www.climateadaptationforum.org)

## AGENDA

- 8:15 a.m. Registration & Networking** (*in-person attendees*)
- 9:00 a.m. Welcome**
- Kelly Knee, Forum Organizer  
Executive Director of Ocean Sciences, RPS North America
- Program Introduction – What You Will Learn:**
- Aaron Weieneth, AICP, Forum Co-Chair  
Manager of Climate Change and Resilience, AECOM
- 9:10 a.m. Keynote Presentation: Responding to Drought and Climate Change in the West**
- Brenda Burman, Executive Strategy Advisor, Central Arizona Project
- Keynote Q&A Moderator:** Aaron Weieneth, AICP, AECOM
- 9:45 a.m. Assessing Drought Impacts Through Local Knowledge and Seasonal Observations: A case from southwestern tribal lands**
- Dr. Margaret Redsteer – presenting remotely  
Assistant Professor, School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences  
University of Washington Bothell
- 10:05 a.m. Preparing the Commonwealth for Extremes**
- Viki Zoltay, Hydrologist, Office of Water Resources, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
- 10:25 a.m. Networking Break** (*Breakout Rooms for Virtual Attendees*)
- 10:50 a.m. New Approaches to Managing Heat in the Nation's Hottest Large City**
- David Hondula – presenting virtually  
Director, Office of Heat Response and Mitigation, City of Phoenix, AZ
- 11:10 a.m. Heat Resilience Solutions for Boston: Preparing for the impacts of hotter summers**
- Zoe Davis, Climate Resilience Project Coordinator, City of Boston, MA
- 11:30 a.m. Panel Discussion**
- Panel Moderator:** Melanie Gárate, Forum Co-Chair  
Climate Resiliency Manager, Mystic River Watershed Association
- Panelists:**
- Dr. Margaret Redsteer, University of Washington Bothell
  - Viki Zoltay, Commonwealth of Massachusetts
  - David Hondula, City of Phoenix, AZ
  - Zoe Davis, City of Boston, MA
- 11:55 a.m. Closing Remarks**
- Gabriela Boscio Santos, Forum Organizer  
Associate Director, Sustainable Solutions Lab, UMass Boston
  - Rebecca Herst, Forum Organizer  
Director, Sustainable Solutions Lab, UMass Boston
- 12:00 p.m. Adjourn**

## FORUM CO-CHAIRS

**Melanie Gárate**, Climate Resilience Manager  
Mystic River Watershed Association  
20 Academy Street, Suite 306, Arlington, MA 02476-6401  
781-330-5485 | melanie.garate@mysticriver.org

Melanie Gárate is the Climate Resilience Manager for the Mystic River Watershed Association (MyRWA) in the Boston area. At MyRWA, she works with municipal staff, community based organizations, public health officials, and local residents to increase climate resiliency regionally. With community equity and health as a priority, she focuses on enhancing climate solutions within the watershed via nature based solutions and social change. Prior to MyRWA, Melanie focused on coastal conservation and environmental education in the greater Boston area at Mass Audubon and the New England Aquarium. Melanie holds a Master of Science degree in Marine Ecology and Climate Change from the University of Rhode Island, where she obtained a NSF Graduate Research Fellowship to study mangrove ecology and perform community outreach in Puerto Rico.

**Aaron Weieneth**, Manager of Climate Change and Resilience  
AECOM  
250 Apollo Drive, Chelmsford, MA 01824  
978-905-3225 | 617-251-8304 | aaron.weieneth@aecom.com

Aaron is an environmental planning specialist with almost 20 years of experience in hazard mitigation planning, climate change adaptation and resilience services, socioeconomic and demographic analyses, water resources planning, and environmental assessments. Aaron serves as AECOM's New England Manager of Climate Change and Resilience and coordinates with technical staff across business lines to integrate climate change and resilience considerations into infrastructure and planning projects for municipal, state, and federal clients. He managed development of the Massachusetts State Hazard Mitigation and Climate Adaptation Plan—a first of its kind statewide plan that fully integrates a traditional hazard mitigation plan with a climate change adaptation plan—and is currently part of the consulting team supporting the Commonwealth's Resilient Massachusetts Action Team with implementation of the Plan's strategy. Aaron has a BA in Environmental Science from Simpson College and a MS in Geography from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst.

## KEYNOTE SPEAKER

**Brenda Burman**, Executive Strategy Advisor  
Central Arizona Project  
23636 North 7th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85024  
623-869-2621 | 480-714-3020 | bburman@cap-az.com

Brenda Burman has more than 25 years of experience working on Western water and natural resource issues, where she has been committed to finding collaborative solutions to secure reliable water supplies for communities, farms, tribes and the environment as they face drought, climate change, and infrastructure issues.

Burman joined CAP in 2021 as the new Executive Strategy Advisor. She is responsible for providing advice and leadership across multiple functional areas to recommend, develop and implement strategic and tactical plans and related policy to ensure that the CAP mission is accomplished.

Before joining CAP, Burman was the Commissioner of the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation and the first woman to hold that position. USBR is the largest provider of water and the second largest provider of hydropower in the United States, delivering over 36 million acre-feet (10 trillion gallons) of water each year to communities, tribes, and farms and 40 billion kilowatt hours of electricity.

Burman has served in many other areas of the water community: in private legal practice; as the water and energy counsel for a U.S. Senator; as senior water advisor to an environmental organization; and in senior positions for water districts.

Burman earned a Juris Doctor degree from the University of Arizona College of Law and is licensed to practice law in Arizona, Wyoming, and Colorado.

## SPEAKERS

**Zoe Davis**, Climate Resilience Project Coordinator  
City of Boston, MA  
1 City Hall Square # 709, Boston, MA 02201  
617-635-1761 | zoe.davis@boston.gov

Zoe serves as a Climate Resilience Project Manager on the Climate Ready Boston Team in the City of Boston's Environment Department. As a project manager, she supports neighborhood climate resilience planning, the integration of climate change preparedness into municipal projects and planning, as well as the development of preparedness resources for residents and other stakeholders.

Most recently, Zoe served as the project manager for Boston's Heat Plan, which presents a citywide framework to address near- and long-term heat risk in Boston. Following release of the Plan, Zoe supports the implementation of near-term heat resilience projects.

Before joining the City, Zoe served as a land stewardship coordinator and TerraCorps Service Member with the Mystic River Watershed Association. There, she organized habitat restoration projects in public parks and partnered with community groups and local government agencies to create climate education programs and forums for public discourse about coastal resilience.

**David Hondula**, Director, Office of Heat Response and Mitigation  
City of Phoenix, AZ  
200 West Washington Street, 12th Floor, Phoenix, AZ 85003  
602-534-1202 | david.hondula@phoenix.gov

David Hondula is the Director of Heat Response and Mitigation for the City of Phoenix, Arizona. In that role, he helps lead and coordinate programs that aim to protect people from dangerous summer heat and implement strategies to cool the city and make it more comfortable. Hondula joined the City in October 2021 to spearhead the nation's first publicly-funded municipal office focused on extreme heat, created as part of Phoenix's \$2.8M City Council-approved Climate and Heat Readiness Investment. He earned a Ph.D. in Environmental Sciences from the University of Virginia in 2013, and he has been a faculty member at Arizona State University's School of Geographical Sciences and Urban Planning since 2016.

**Dr. Margaret Redsteer**, Assistant Professor  
School of Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences  
University of Washington Bothell  
18115 Campus Way NE, Bothell, WA 98011-8246 USA  
mredst@uw.edu

Dr. Margaret Redsteer is an Assistant Professor at the University of Washington, Bothell where she teaches climate change adaptation policy, natural hazards and human disasters, and environmental issues. Her research focuses on the linkages of climatic and earth surface processes related to wind erosion, sand and dust storms, as well as how climate variability and land use have affected the traditional livelihoods of Indigenous people.

**Viki Zoltay**, Hydrologist  
Office of Water Resources  
Commonwealth of Massachusetts  
251 Causeway Street, Boston, MA 02114  
617-626-1384 | viki.zoltay@state.ma.us

Viki serves as the state hydrologist for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. In this role she heads up the hydrologic monitoring program that she administers as a cooperative program with the US Geological Survey monitoring weather, streamflow, groundwater and tide gages at over 200 locations throughout the state. She also heads up drought monitoring including weekly monitoring of Massachusetts drought indices and input to the US Drought Monitor as well as serving on the Massachusetts Drought Management Task Force. Her third main role is serving as a technical lead for studies in cooperation with the US Geological Survey, UMass, Tufts, Cornell and others that include topics such as climate and hydrology change projections and communicating risk based on projections, low flow statistics, evapotranspiration index revision for the drought plan and hydrologic monitoring network analyses.