

## Appendix 1: Interview and Focus Group Draft Scripts

### **For Land Managers and Local Decision Makers**

#### Background and informed consent

##### *Introduction:*

Thank you for taking the time to talk with me/us. As you know, I'm a social science researcher at the Environmental Protection Agency in Narragansett. With me are my colleagues [insert names]. They will be observing the discussion and taking notes, mostly to help me remember what was said and to help refine our methods, but won't be participating, so please pretend that they're not here.

Our project focuses on the factors that influence whether the public will support riparian and fresh water wetland restoration. We're focusing on the Woonasquatucket watershed, but also on more general approaches that could be applied in other locations.

The purpose of this interview is to get a sense of your perspectives on the most important issues related to public support or opposition to restoring rivers, streams, and fresh water wetlands. We're interested in hearing about both specific locations and projects that you're familiar with, and also your general understanding of these issues. Based on our initial discussions with people like you, we'll be conducting focus groups of the general public, to understand their thoughts and opinions about restoration in the watershed.

[Early interviews] Our plan is to focus on one or two specific locations in the watershed, and we'll be asking you for your input on selecting those locations.

[Later interviews] We are focusing on [name particular location(s) in the watershed], and would like to know more about your experiences there.

The ultimate goal is to provide information and approaches that would help people like you to accomplish restoration in the watershed.

We will keep all interview data confidential to the extent required by law both in terms of your name and the name of any organization you might be affiliated with, unless you prefer otherwise. (Discuss if needed).

I will ask a question and allow you to respond, and I may ask follow-up questions to make sure I understand. There are no right or wrong answers. I just want your thoughts and understanding. The interview should last no more than 1 ½ hours.

I am taking notes, and would like to record our discussion so that I don't miss anything. It can be hard to remember everything that happens, and to make sure that things are remembered in context. Is recording OK with you? And the last thing I need is your consent - do you consent to being interviewed?

Do you have any questions before we begin?

OK, let's start.

#### Example Questions

1. What is your involvement with restoration of freshwater systems in the region?

2. What do you see as the key barriers to successful freshwater restoration in the region?

Potential follow ups and focusing questions:

-- What are the key barriers related to public opinions and opposition?

3. What do you see as the key supporting factors for successful freshwater restoration in the region?

Potential follow ups and focusing questions:

-- What are the key supporting factors related to public opinions and support?

4. How do you see local landowner and resident decision making influencing the barriers to or success of restoration efforts?

Potential follow ups and focusing questions:

-- Has this changed over time?

-- Does it vary by location or group of people?

5. What factors do you think would be most likely to facilitate successful restoration in the region?

6. [Early interviews] Are there specific locations or cases where these issues are or have been particularly important?

[Later interviews] What is your experience with public responses to restoration in [specific location]?

General interviewer prompts to use after initial questions:

Anything else? Could you tell me more about that? Can you give any specific examples of that? What causes that?

Why is that important? How does that work? Can you give me an example of that? How does that affect people?

Why was that a problem? Why was that successful?

End with:

Is there anything else you would like to add?

## For Local Residents

### Background and informed consent

#### *Introduction:*

Thank you all for coming. My name is [name], and I'll be facilitating the discussion today. I'm a social science researcher at the Environmental Protection Agency in Narragansett. With me are my colleagues [insert names]. They will be observing the discussion, mostly to take notes and help me remember what was said, but won't be participating. You can just pretend that they're not here.

The purpose of this focus group is to help us to understand your opinions about restoring rivers, streams, and wetlands in your neighborhood and [state specific area]. We are interested in talking with members of the general public [or, alternatively, insert name of a specific stakeholder group], and we hope that what you tell us will help managers make better decisions related to restoration efforts in this area, and better incorporate perspectives of people like you.

I plan to keep all interview data confidential to the extent permitted by law both in terms of your name and the name of any organization you might be affiliated with unless you prefer otherwise. (Discuss if needed).

I will ask a question and allow you to respond, and I may ask follow-up questions to make sure I understand. We're not looking for technical information – we're interested in your thoughts and opinions. There are no right or wrong answers. The discussion should last about an hour and a half. We'll take a short break in the middle, and will be done by [state time, 1.5 hours after start time].

We're taking notes, and would like to record our discussion so that I don't miss anything. It can be hard to remember everything that happens, and to make sure that things are remembered in context. Is recording OK with you?

And the last thing I need is your consent - do you consent to being interviewed?

Do you have any questions before we begin? OK, let's start.

### Open-Ended Questions

1. Are you familiar with the Woonasquatucket River? What do you know about the river?  
Follow up: how about streams that flow into the Woonasquatucket?  
[Show map(s)] This is the area we're talking about.
2. Do you interact with the river or streams that flow into it at all? How? What about the river or its streams are important to you and why?
3. Are you familiar with the term "riparian area"? What does it mean to you?  
Follow up: this is how we are defining "riparian area" [give general definition and show pictures of examples]
4. Do you live near a riparian area, or can you think of one in the area? Where, how far?
5. [Show photos of different types of riparian buffers] Looking at these photographs, are these riparian conditions desirable in your neighborhood? Why or why not?
6. Are you familiar with the term "ecological restoration"? What does that mean to you?  
Follow up: this is how we are defining "restoration" [give general definition and show pictures of examples]

7. Have you noticed any riparian restoration efforts in your community? Have you been involved in those efforts? What are your thoughts about those efforts?
8. Do you know of any organizations involved in the management and possibly restoration of public spaces in your community? Are you involved in any of those organizations?
9. Do you trust in these organizations to do a good job? Why or why not?
10. Thinking of a riparian area near you, what are your thoughts about how riparian areas affect streams and rivers?
11. How do you think waters and riparian areas of the Woonasquatucket affect Narragansett Bay?

General interviewer prompts to use after initial questions:

Anything else? Could you tell me more about that? Can you give any specific examples of that? What causes that? Why is that important? How does that work? Can you give me an example of that? How does that affect people? Why was that a problem? Why was that successful?

[Can use a similar set of questions for freshwater wetlands if we decide to focus on both riparian and wetland restoration. We will decide this based on initial interviews and selection of case study site(s)]

End with:

Is there anything else you would like to add?