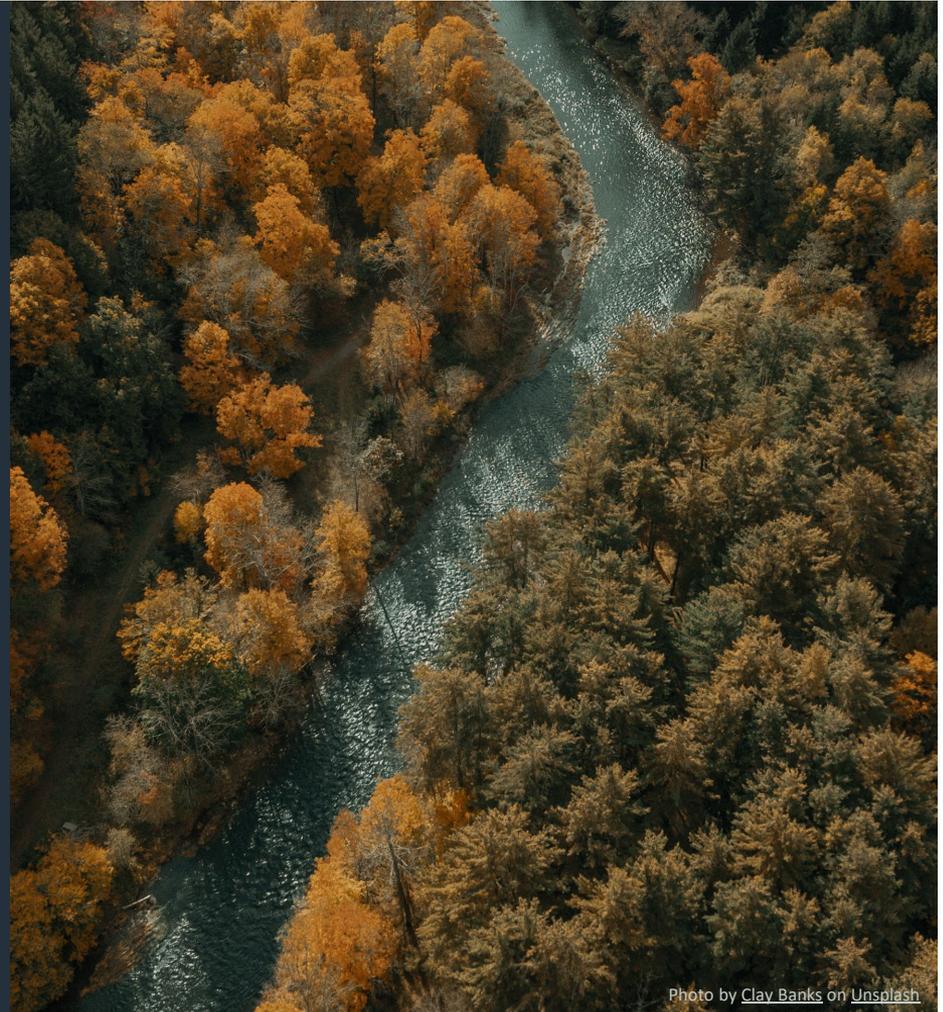


Understanding the interactions between flooding adaptation and well-being and equity in rural NY

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THE BIG PICTURE...

NbS for Climate
adaptation policies
and interventions
do not exist in an
ecological vacuum



Adaptation
strategies interact
with social
inequities



To produce
AND
exacerbate
inequity

Understanding this
interaction



More equitable and
effective climate
adaptation

But adaptation is
multi-scalar and
place-based.



How do nature-based solutions for flood adaptation interact with equity issues to impact the well-being of rural communities?



Buyouts or Strategic Retreat

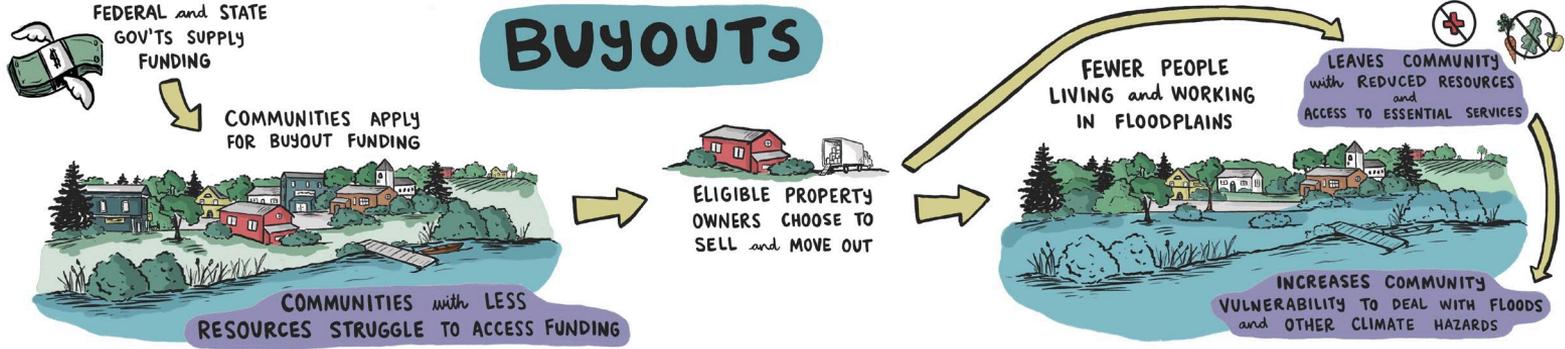
- Buyouts – purchase floodplain properties as a method of incentivizing people to move away from high-risk areas (Kodis et al. 2021).
- We don't know much about the social/economic and system led impacts of buyouts.
- We know very little about the distribution of these potential buyout impacts in rural communities....

The New York Times

Climate Change Is Bankrupting America's Small Towns

Repeated shocks from hurricanes, fires and floods are pushing some rural communities, already struggling economically, to the brink of financial collapse.

INTERACTIONS
between
CLIMATE
ADAPTATION
and
INEQUITY



Town of Olive, NY

- Small rural Catskills township, hit hard in Irene
- Has a small business sector almost completely in the 100-year floodplain
- Participating in a buyout program funded by NYC DEP.



Owners of Boiceville properties try to choose between relocation and floodproofing

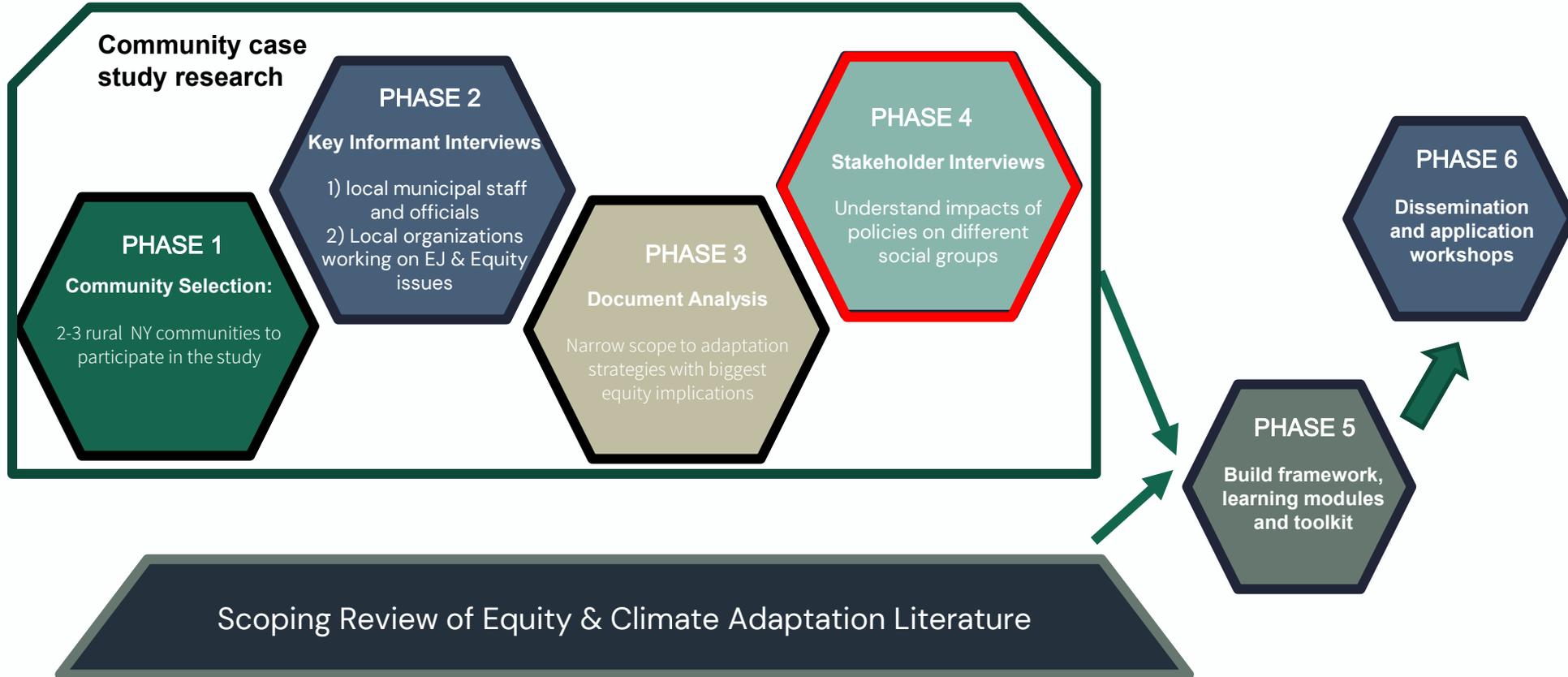
by Violet Snow — January 8, 2019 in Politics & Government

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Flooding in Boiceville due to Hurricane Irene in 2011. (LFA)

How are we studying these issues on a local level?



But what is equity and how do we recognize it in environmental contexts?

Distributional Equity

- How are the costs, benefits and risks spread across different groups?

Procedural Equity

- Whose voices are heard in the decision-making process?

Structural/ Contextual Equity

- Are we considering the of historical, cultural and institutional dynamics that have advantaged some and disadvantages others

Recognitional Equity

- Who/what are we prioritizing?
- What values, well-being and rights are we prioritizing?

Case Study # 1: Town of Olive

Focus: DEP Buyout program

RQ: How do buy-outs in the Town of Olive influence rural equity and well-being and how do pre-existing issues of equity influence the program?

Findings from KI interviews and document analysis:

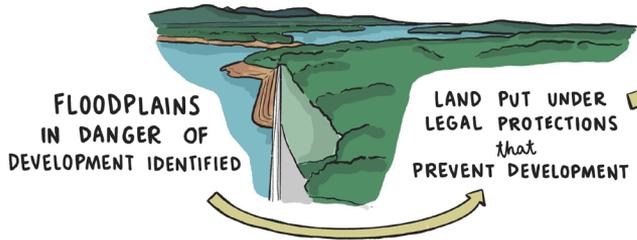
- **Buyout program designed to support local decision making** but the potential for long term impacts is unclear
- Is choosing between bad and terrible really decision-making power?
- Interactions between different types of equity – historical legacy of eminent domain...

Next Steps: Interviews with community members and local leaders

- What are the perceived costs and benefits of the decisions of the buyout program on
 - Property owners?
 - Community members who are not the property owners?
- Do property owners and local decision-makers feel a sense of agency in this process? What parts of the process are most salient to their feeling of agency?

FLOODPLAIN PROTECTIONS

INTERACTIONS
between
CLIMATE
ADAPTATION
and
INEQUITY



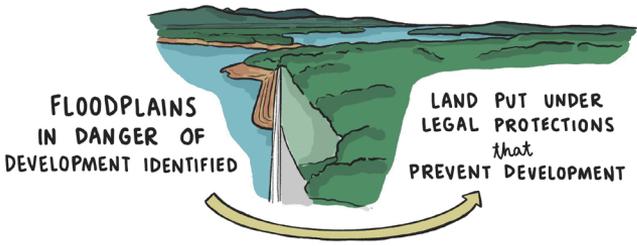
PUTS INCREASED
PRESSURE on
HOUSING STOCK



INCREASED HOUSING
INSECURITY

DECREASES FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN FLOOD PRONE PLACES
and REDUCES FLOOD IMPACT on EXISTING DEVELOPMENT

CREATING
EQUITY
through
ADAPTATION



FUNDING to COMPENSATE
COMMUNITY for HOUSING
INSECURITY IMPACTS



DECREASES FUTURE DEVELOPMENT IN FLOOD PRONE PLACES
and REDUCES FLOOD IMPACT on EXISTING AFFORDABLE DEVELOPMENT

Case Study # 2: Ulster County

Focus: Housing Crisis & Floodplain protections

RQ 1: How do local government leaders in Ulster County perceive the tension between floodplain protections and the affordable housing crisis? How do those perceptions impact their plans to navigate this tension?

**Have thoughts? Know someone that does?
Contact me!**

Findings from KI interviews and document analysis:

- Media/discourse around floodplain protections make the connection to housing crisis, but policies and local laws are less clear.
- Little to no mention of this tension in land use plans and community growth plans

Next Steps: Interviews with decision-makers and local leaders

- How do local leaders understand this tension? What does that mean for future floodplain protection initiatives?

What's Next?

Using case studies to:

- Equity and Climate Adaptation Toolkit for practitioners
- Case Study learning modules for training

Are you from Ulster County and have thoughts about the relationship between floodplain protection and the housing crisis?

Do you want access to these resources when they are done?

Email me! sarah.walker-1@colorado.edu

