

Day 4: Handout

- In Practice, NI is (loosely) defined by several common characteristics, not all of which may be met by any particular feature: (1) Performs infrastructure services, (2) Consists, at least in part, of natural or living materials, (3) Provides environmental and social benefits beyond typical purposes, and (4) Enhances resilience through self-adjustment.
- These characteristics can be met across infrastructure life spans:
 - Planning and design of new infrastructure
 - Operations and maintenance of existing infrastructure
 - Sunsetting and disposal of legacy infrastructure
- NI projects are complex and must fit in the context of the landscape. All NI projects have a broader social context (equity, community use, stakeholder support) and ecological context (e.g., source-sink dynamics).
- A conventional view of infrastructure pits infrastructure vs. environment, but environmental and societal outcomes are not necessarily at odds (and they are often synergistic).
- Some common themes we heard about natural infrastructure this week.
 - NI is not new and guidance exists.
 - NI is an important tool within standard engineering practice.
 - NI is not a salve for all situations, design settings, or objectives.
 - Identifying the right team is the best to build successful projects.
- Structured decision making is a family of methods (attempting) to make rational, transparent, and (potentially) reproducible choices. These methods INFORM decisions; people make decisions. Good decision methods don't guarantee good decision outcomes.
- Concepts of critical thinking, NBS, and structured decision making sound great on paper, but they are really hard to execute in a constrained landscape. Ultimately, how do you "tell the story" of a project?
- Society asks water managers to simultaneously overcome past mismanagement, cope with present challenges, and adapt to future challenges, all while seeking novel solutions.